Before Orthodoxy The Satanic Verses in Early Islam

SHAHAB AHMED

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Harvard University Press Cambridge, Massachusetts London, England 2017

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First printing

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Ahmed, Shahab, 1966–2015, author. Title: Before orthodoxy : the Satanic Verses in early Islam / Shahab Ahmed. Description: Cambridge, Massachusetts : Harvard University Press, 2017. | Includes bibliographical references and index. Identifiers: LCCN 2016047420 | ISBN 9780674047426 (hc) Subjects: LCSH: Islamic heresies. | Islam—Controversial literature. | Islam—History—To 1500. | Islam—Origin. | Muòhammad, Prophet, -632. Classification: LCC BP167.5 .A36 2017 | DDC 297.1/25163—dc23 LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2016047420

Jacket image: The pre-Islamic Arabian deities Al-Lat, Al-Uzza and Manat, Hatra (temple 5), 1st century CE/Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images. Jacket design: Annamarie McMahon Why To the memory of my maternal grandmother,

Sayyıdah Țayyıbah <u>Gh</u>awsīyah <u>Kh</u>ātūn,

my first teacher of Islamic history

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Introduction How Does Truth Happen?

In olden times, the earth was stationary, and the sun and the sky used to revolve around it. Poets used to say: By night and day the seven heav'ns revolve! And then a person by the name of Galileo came along and began to make the earth revolve around the sun. The priests were very angry that someone had put them in such a spin. By giving due punishment to Galileo, they put a stop to these sorts of movements, but even so they could not stop the world from rotating, and it still goes on moving in the same old way.

—IBN-E INSHĀ¹

This book was conceived as the first volume of a history of Muslim attitudes to the Satanic verses incident, covering the fourteen hundred years from the beginning of Islam down to the present day. The "Satanic verses incident" is the name given in Western scholarship to what is known in the Islamic tradition as *qiṣṣat algharānīq*, "The Story of the Cranes" or "The Story of the Maidens," which narrates the occasion on which the Prophet Muḥammad is reported to have mistaken words suggested to him by Satan as being Divine Communication—that is, as being part of the Qur'ān. These Satanic verses praise the pagan deities of the Prophet's tribe and ac-

¹Ibn-e Insha, *Urdu: The Final Book* (translated by David Matthews), Islamabad: Alhamra, 2001, 28–29.

knowledge their power to intercede with the supreme God. By uttering the Satanic verses, Muḥammad thus committed the error of compromising the fundamental theological principle of the Divine Message of which he was Messenger—namely, the absolute and exclusive unicity ($tawh\bar{t}d$) of the One God, Allāh.

The facticity and historicity of the Satanic verses incident are today (with a few maverick exceptions) universally rejected by Muslims of *all* sects and interpretative movements-Sunnī, Twelver Shī'ī, Ismā'īlī Shī'ī, Aḥmadī, Ibādī, Hanafī, Shāfi'ī, Mālikī, Hanbalī, Wahhābī, Salafī, Deobandī, Barelvī, and so forth—routinely on pain of heresy (kufr)—that is, on pain of being deemed not a Muslim. The Satanic verses incident is understood as calling into question the integrity of the process of Divine Communication to Muhammadand thus the integrity of the Text of the Qur'an. The universal rejection of the Satanic verses incident constitutes an instance of contemporary Islamic *orthodoxy*—that is to say, it is the only truth that a Muslim qua Muslim may legitimately hold on the matter. For the last two hundred years, to be a Muslim, one should believe that the Satanic verses incident did not take place-that is, the contemporary Muslim should not believe that the Prophet Muhammad recited verses of Satanic suggestion as Divine inspiration. In other words, for modern Muslims, the Satanic verses incident is something entirely unthinkable.

The reason for my writing this book is that, as a straightforward matter of historical fact, this Islamic orthodoxy of the rejection of the facticity of the Satanic verses incident has not always obtained. The fundamental finding of the present volume is that in the first two centuries of Islam, Muslim attitudes to the Satanic verses incident were effectively the direct opposite of what they are today.² This volume studies no less than fifty historical reports that narrate the Satanic verses incident and that were transmitted by the first generations of Muslims. This study of the Satanic verses incident in the historical memory of the early Muslim community will demonstrate in detail that the incident constituted an absolutely standard element in the memory of early Muslims of the life of their Prophet. In

²Shahab Ahmed, "The Satanic Verses Incident in the Memory of the Early Muslim Community: An Analysis of the Early *riwāyahs* and Their *isnāds*," PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 1999.

other words, the early Muslim community believed almost universally that the Satanic verses incident was a true historical fact. As far as the overwhelming majority of the Muslim community in the first two hundred years was concerned, the Messenger of God did indeed, on at least one occasion, mistake words of Satanic suggestion as being of Divine inspiration. For the early Muslims, the Satanic verses incident was something entirely *thinkable*.

The juxtaposition of these two realities-the fact that the Muslim community in the first two hundred years of Islam pretty much universally believed the Satanic verses incident to be true, while the Muslim community in the last two hundred years of Islam pretty much universally believes the Satanic verses incident to be untrue-calls into being a number of simple but far-reaching historical questions. How was the Satanic verses incident transformed in Muslim consciousness from fact into anathema, from something entirely thinkable into something categorically unthinkable? How did the truth in the historical Muslim community go from being the one thing to the opposite thing? How did this happen? When did this happen? Where did this happen? Why did this happen? At whose hands did this happen? The history of Muslim attitudes to the Satanic verses incident is thus a case study in a larger question central to the history of all human societies: how does truth happen? These questions will not, however, be answered fully in the present volume, which presents the foundational historical data along with a detailed account of the attitudes of Muslims to the Satanic verses incident in the first two centuries of Islam. [Publisher's note: Author Shahab Ahmed died before writing the anticipated second and third volumes of this work.]

The history of Muslim attitudes to the Satanic verses incident is a history of the formation of a unit of *orthodoxy*. By orthodoxy, I mean in the first instance any belief, or set of beliefs, including means for arriving at a belief, the proponents of which hold that it is the only valid and correct belief—that is, the only truth, or means for arriving at truth, on that particular matter. However, if we were to stop our definition here, we would not yet have *orthodoxy*; rather, we have only a *claim* to orthodoxy from which people may yet dissent. For orthodoxy to obtain as a social fact—that is: for a single truth-claim to establish and maintain itself in society as the sole and

exclusive truth—it is necessary, as a practical matter, for the proponents of that truth-claim to be in a position to impose sanction (which need not necessary be legal sanction) upon dissenters. Orthodoxy, in other words, is not merely an intellectual phenomenon: it is also social phenomenon—it is, as Talal Asad has famously said, "not a mere body of opinion, but a distinct relationship—a relation-ship of power."³

The most successful orthodoxies, however, are those for which no sanction need ever be imposed at all-for the simple reason that there are no dissenters. One such example of a supremely successful orthodoxy is the belief, universally held today, that the earth is round—or, strictly speaking, is a geoid. This is a truth-claim for the maintenance of which no sanction need be imposed, for the simple reason that it is a truth-claim from which there are effectively no dissenters (the minuscule Flat Earth Society notwithstanding). That the earth is "round" is universally accepted as true—that the earth is "round" is an *orthodoxy*.⁴ Certainly, if someone were to dissent from this truth-claim, it would result in sanction-this might take the form of that person's family and friends doubting his/her soundness of mind, and thus treating him/her differently to how they would treat a "normal" person; or, if that person happened to be an astrophysicist, in his/her being ostracized and rejected by his/ her colleagues, who would no longer regard the person as one of them. In other words, communities and orthodoxies are mutually constitutive: communities are constituted by their adherence to crucial and definitive orthodoxies of their making, and a person's nonadherence to a constitutive orthodoxy has the effect of placing him outside that community of truth. The historical process of the formation of orthodoxy is a process of the historical process of community—of a community of truth.

The process of the historical formation of authoritative truth in the demographically vast and geographically dispersed community of Muslims is particularly interesting since—unlike Christians, for

³Talal Asad, *The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam*, Washington, DC: Georgetown University Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, 1986, 15.

⁴ It should be clear that here I am using the term "orthodoxy" without prejudice to whether a given object of belief is *really* true—an orthodoxy is simply a belief that is universally held to be (really) true.

example—Muslims did not develop the institutional equivalent of a Church: that is, an institution whose cadres are expressly invested with the corporate authority and mechanisms for the determination of authoritative truth, and for the constitution of a community in that truth. There is no equivalent in the history of societies of Muslims to the institutional mechanism of a church council that is constituted precisely to determine the constitution of the truth that in turn constitutes the communion of salvation. Rather, what obtains is a loose community of scholars dispersed through a vast geographical space, holding to different, textually constituted legal and theological sects and schools of thought, and living in relationships of ongoing negotiation with political power in a variety of dispensations, on the one hand, and also in relationships of negotiation with other groups and formations of 'ulamā', on the other. In such a context, how does a single position come to be universally established as authoritatively true?

Of course, Islam is not the only truth-phenomenon characterized by the absence of a church institution. There is also no church in Judaism. However, the human and historical phenomenon of Islam is distinguished from Judaism (and from Christianity) by the fact that, from its very outset, Islam was an imperial religion the articulation of whose truths took place in a context charged with the demands of imperial power. Second, by virtue of the rapid and prolific geographical expansion of the early Islamic polity, Muslims have from the very outset had to articulate the truth-content of Islam in a demographically and geographically vast, dispersed, and diverse context. The territorial expansion of the Islamic polity began even before the death of the Prophet Muhammad, and within a century the territories of the Umayyad caliphate extended from the African shore of the Atlantic to the River Indus, from Yemen to Transoxania. Muslims never enjoyed the prolonged historical comfort of articulating their formative truths on an insulated local scale, or as minority communities whose formulations were of relatively little consequence for anyone beyond themselves.

Of course, Islam is not alone in being bound up with the constitution of a vast imperial domain: one might readily cite neo-Confucianism in China as a similar imperial phenomenon. However, two differences between Islam and neo-Confucianism are crucial for thinking about the formation of orthodoxy. The first is that whereas neo-Confucianism in China was the constitutive truth of what was, for the bulk of its history, ethnically and linguistically a relatively homogenous space, Islam, in contrast, formed in a prolifically diverse ethnic and linguistic space whose communities were influenced by vastly divergent normative notions of truth. Second, neo-Confucianism was the constitutive truth of what was a territory ruled by at most two, and often by a just a single political dispensation. Islam has been for the overwhelming bulk of its history ruled by a myriad of different polities.

Again: in this diffuse social, structural, and spatial circumstance, how did a single truth-claim come to be established as authoritative and exclusive—especially, a truth-claim that is the opposite of that with which Muslims began? What is the process by which orthodoxy formed among Muslims on the question of the Satanic verses?

Scholarship on the Satanic verses incident in both the Islamic and Western academies has effectively confined itself to the question of whether the incident really took place. This issue, however, is of little interest to me. What I am concerned with is not whether the Satanic verses incident really happened, but whether or not Muslims through history *believed* it to have happened: if so, why; and if not, why not? To the extent that it is possible to demarcate in broad brushstrokes across such a vast geographical space a time line for the formation of orthodoxy on the Satanic verses, it appears somewhat as follows. In the first two hundred years of Islam, from about 600 to 800, acceptance of the historicity of the Satanic verses incident was the near-universal position. Over the period from about 800 to 1100, rejection of the incident presents itself more regularly in the literature: in this period it seems that the number of scholars who accept and reject the incident is roughly equal. However, in this period, those rejecting the incident rarely question statedly the orthodoxy of those who accept it: rather, the sentiment seems to be Allahu a'lam, "God knows best!" In the rough period 1100–1800, rejection of the incident becomes established as the dominant position and those who reject the incident regularly accuse those who accept it of "denying (the Truth)" (*kufr*)—that is, of unbelief tantamount to heresy. Nonetheless, a number of historically important figures continue to argue in this period for the facticity of the incident, and hold that to

believe the incident to be true (as they do) is entirely consonant with Islam.⁵ Finally, in the period after about 1800, rejection of the incident becomes near universal. In this period, the handful of Muslim scholars who accept the incident both tend not to be recognized as *'ulamā'* by the mutually acknowledging community of traditionally trained *'ulamā'*, and to have a larger reputation as "unorthodox" (or outright heretical) among Muslims at large.

The question of the formation of Islamic orthodoxy might well be investigated through any number of case studies. However, what makes the Satanic verses incident a particularly (perhaps uniquely) productive case study in the formation of orthodoxy is the fact that implicated in the incident are fundamental questions about the nature of Muhammad's Prophethood and the nature of Divine Revelation-that is, the two foundational component elements of Islamthat impinge on and were of concern to scholars engaged in almost every intellectual field in the history of Islam. As such, the incident was treated in a wide range of disciplines and genres across fourteen hundred years: tafsīr (Qur'ān exegesis), Hadīth and the sciences of Hadīth transmission, sīrāh-maghāzī (epic biography of Muhammad), ta'rīkh (history), dalā'il and shamā'il (devotional biography of Muhammad), philosophy, kalām-theology, jurisprudence and legal theory (usul al-fiqh), Sufism, and, in the modern period in particular, rebuttals of Christian polemicists and Orientalists of the Western academy. What emerges from this range of treatments of the incident is nothing less than a dizzying interdisciplinary debate conducted by Muslim scholars who approach the questions at hand on the varied basis of different criteria and methods of argumentation developed and employed in different disciplines and fields of knowledge. We have noted, above, the contrast between the first two hundred years and the last two hundred years of Islamic historybetween near-universal acceptance of the incident and near-universal rejection. The history of Muslim attitudes to the Satanic verses in the intervening millennium is the history of formation of Islamic orthodoxy on this question. It is a history made complicated by the

⁵See Shahab Ahmed, "Ibn Taymiyyah and the Satanic Verses," *Studia Islamica* 87 (1998) 67–124; and Shahab Ahmed, "Satanic Verses," in *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 531–536 (hereafter *EQ*).

simultaneous, overlapping, and interacting presence of a number of different and variant trajectories: by the fact of different Muslims in different places and at different times variously accepting and rejecting the incident on the basis of different epistemologies, all of which claimed equally to be fully and legitimately Islamic, while being perfectly aware of other positions and claims.

The rejection of the historicity of the Satanic verses incident that constitutes Islamic orthodoxy today is a position that is founded on rational argumentation. The Satanic verses incident is rejected as untrue on the basis of two epistemological principles, one of which we may call a historiographical principle, and the other a theological principle. These two epistemological principles are the criteria by which Muslims assess the truth-value of the claim that Muḥammad mistook Satanic suggestion for Divine Communication—they are the principles by which the determination of truth is made. The authority of these two epistemological principles is universally accepted in the Muslim community today: they are, in other words, the epistemological principles of Islamic orthodoxy.

The historiographical principle on the basis of which the Satanic verses incident is rejected as untrue is the fundamental principle of Hadith methodology. As is well-known, all historical reports (riwāyah) in the early Muslim community take the same textual format—namely, a chain of transmitters to which is appended a narrative body (or matn). A riwāyah thus takes the form so-and-so heard from so-and-so who heard from so-and-so who heard from so-and-so that the Prophet did such-and-such or said such-and-such. The basic principle of Hadīth transmission is that the truth-value of a report is assayed, in the first instance, on the basis of the reputation for veracity and reliability of the individuals in the chain, on knowledge that each person in fact studied with the person from whom he claims to have reported, and finally that the transmission should go back in an unbroken chain to an eyewitness. It is for this evidentiary reason that the chain of transmitters is called the *isnād* or "support" (for the *matn*-body). Now, as regards the Satanic verses incident, all but one of the fifty reports that narrate the incident are carried by defective chains of transmission—that is, by isnād-supports that include at least one (if not more) unreliable transmitters, or by chains that are incomplete and do not go back to an eyewitness (interestingly, the sole report that does have a sound and complete, or <u>sahīh</u>, chain has never been noticed or commented upon after its initial fourth-/tenth-century citation—for all practical purposes of historical memory, it had no subsequent existence in the memory of Muslims). Thus, on the basis of the epistemological principle of *isnad*assessment—a principle that acquired such universal authority that the great scholar Fazlur Rahman straightforwardly termed it "Islamic Methodology in History"⁶—the story of the Satanic verses incident is deemed untrue on evidentiary grounds, and thus did not actually take place as a matter of historical fact.

The theological principle on the basis of which the Satanic verses incident is rejected as untrue is the principle of 'ismat al-anbiya' or the "Protection of Prophets"-meaning God's protection of His Prophets from sin and/or error. Although there is some disagreement among the various sects and schools of thought of Muslims as to the exact portfolio of God's protection of His Prophets, there is universal agreement today that Prophets are protected from the commission of error in the transmission of Divine Communication else, there would be no guarantee of the integrity and uncorruptedness of the Text of the Qur'an. The principle of 'ismat al-anbiya' is grounded in such Qur'anic pronouncements-that is, in statements by God Himself—as "Indeed, it is We who have sent down upon you the Remembrance; and We, indeed, are its Guardians,"7 "Falsehood does not come to it, neither from between his hands, nor from behind him,"⁸ and, of course, the famous passage, "Nor does he speak from his own desire, Indeed, it is nothing other than an inspiration, inspired!"9 Given the logical necessity of the guarantee of the integrity of the process of Divine Communication to Muhammad, as attested by God Himself, the Satanic verses incident is deemed on the basis of the epistemological principle of 'ismat al-anbiya' to be impossible, and thus not to have taken place as a matter of historical fact.

Now, it is simply not possible to accept the authority of *either* of these two epistemological principles, and simultaneously to accept

⁷ innā naḥnu nazzalnā al-dhikra wa-innā la-hu la-ḥāfiẓūn, Qur'ān 15:9 al-Ḥijr.

⁸ lā ya'tī-hi al-bāțilu min bayni yaday-hi wa-lā min khalfi-hi, Qur'ān 41:42 Fuṣṣilat.

⁶Fazlur Rahman, *Islamic Methodology in History* (Karachi: Central Institute of Islamic Research, 1965).

⁹wa-al-najmi idhā hawā: mā dalla şāhibu-kum wa-mā ghawā: wa-mā yanțiqu 'an alhawā: in huwa illā wahyun yūhā; Qur'ān 53:1-4 al-Najm.

the historicity of the Satanic verses incident. If one accepts the epistemological principle that reports are assayed on the basis of the isnāds, one cannot accept the Satanic verses incident. Similarly, if one accepts that Prophets are protected by God from the commission of error in the transmission of Divine Communication, one cannot accept the historicity of the Satanic verses incident. Thus, at any moment in history, for any Muslim to have accepted the Satanic verses incident, that Muslim cannot have accepted the authority and applicability of these two epistemological principles of orthodoxy. It means that, at that historical moment, in that place, and for that person, these two truth-making principles were themselves not true: that person must have been operating by some other epistemological principles than those that eventually became epistemological orthodoxy. In other words, the history of the formation of early Islamic orthodoxy is not only also the history of the formation of Islamic epistemology as a history of how something became the truth; it is also the history of the criteria by which truth is constituted. It is the history of the truth, and of its social and intellectual infrastructure.



How to Read the Earliest Sources?

How often have I said to you that when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth? —SHERLOCK HOLMES¹

In order to understand the historical process by which the Muslim community came to constitute orthodoxy by its universal rejection of the Satanic verses incident, we must first understand why it is that the early Muslim community accepted the Satanic verses incident in the first place. And in order to understand why it is that the early Muslim community accepted the Satanic verses incident, we must first examine when and how it is that the Satanic verses incident came to constitute a standard element in the early community's memory of the life of its Prophet. This, in turn, can be accomplished only through a close textual analysis of the earliest narratives of the Satanic verses incident that are preserved in the Islamic literature. This analysis of the earliest reports of the Satanic verses incident will be carried out in Chapter 2, and will aim to answer two sets of broad questions.

¹A. Conan Doyle, *Stories of Sherlock Holmes: A Study in Scarlet, The Sign of the Four* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1904), 195.

The first set of questions pertains to the transmission of the narratives. When—that is, around what date—were narratives of the Satanic verses incident transmitted and circulated in the early Muslim community? How widely circulated were these narratives? Where were these narratives in circulation? How widely accepted were they? Who circulated and accepted these narratives? Who did not accept and circulate them? In the context of what literary genres or cultural projects were these narratives transmitted? What were the mechanisms and practices by which they were transmitted?

The second set of questions pertains to the content of the narratives. What was the textual content of these narratives? What does the content of these narratives tell us about the understanding of the Satanic verses incident in the early Muslim community? What do the narratives of the Satanic verses incident tell us about the understanding of Muḥammad and his Prophethood in the early Muslim community?

A third set of questions pertains to both content and transmission: What do the identity and nature of the genres, projects, and practitioners who accepted or rejected the reports tell us about the understanding of Muḥammad and his Prophethood in the early Muslim community?

These questions cannot, however, themselves be answered without first determining a coherent method by which to read the highly problematic early Islamic sources on the life of Muḥammad. Here, in Chapter 1, we will lay out just such a method.² The early Muslim memory of the life the Prophet is preserved today in works compiled between the mid-second and late fourth centuries. As described in the introduction, the various units of information that made up this collective historical memory³ were transmitted among the early Muslims in the same way as all other historical knowledge—namely, in the form of the *riwāyah* (narrative report), which is composed of a *matn* or "body," an often relatively brief individual unit of textual narrative, attached to an *isnād* or "support," a chain of the names of

² The methodological discussion that is being undertaken here is a development of an argument I first put forward in my doctoral dissertation: Ahmed, "The Satanic Verses Incident in the Memory of the Early Muslim Community," 14–34.

³Throughout this study, I am using the term "historical memory" to mean "that which was remembered about the past," with no implications as to the factual status of this material.

the persons who transmitted the report. By an *early riwāyah*, I mean one that is carried by an *isnād* that goes back to the first half of the second century at the latest. The analysis of each *riwāyah* in Chapter 2 will be directed at the following summary goals:⁴

- 1. Through the individual and comparative analysis of the respective *isnāds* and *matns*, to date each report—that is, to ascertain the earliest time at which we may reasonably take the report to have been in circulation.
- 2. To identify, in the early Islamic biographical literature, the individual first- and second-century scholars who are recorded in the *isnāds* as having transmitted accounts of the incident.
- 3. To locate, through the identification of the scholars in the *isnāds*, the geographical region where each report was in circulation.
- 4. To examine, through an analytical reading of the text (*matn*) of the narrative of each *riwāyah*, how the Satanic verses incident was understood by the early Muslim community.

The execution of these goals is, however, considerably complicated by the fact that the documentary status of the Muslim historical memory literature from the first three centuries of Islam—of which the reports of the Satanic verses form a part—is one of the most disputed subjects in modern scholarship on early Islam.⁵ No semblance of consensus has as yet been reached on the fundamental question of direct relevance to the present study: *to what degree can the contents of these second- to fourth-century texts be taken as a genuine transmission of the historical memory of the first-century Muslim community*? There is, in other words, no consensus as to whether there is any means of actually tracing the transmission history of a *riwāyah*—which is what I am proposing to do. There is also no consensus on whether the contents of these second- to fourth-century texts can be taken as narrating historical fact—but since the present study is expressly unconcerned with the issue of the historicity of the Satanic verses

⁴These goals will be presented in greater detail at the outset of Chapter 2.

⁵For an excellent summary of the dispute, see Fred M. Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins: the Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing* (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1998), 1–30.

incident, we are spared here the need to address this latter point. There is, however, no escape from the first question.

Is it, then, possible to trace the transmission history of a *riwāyah* through the analysis of its *isnād* and *matn*? Two further sets of questions must be addressed. The first set pertains to *who* was doing the transmitting. *Do* isnāds *represent genuine chains of transmission*—that is, do they contain the names of real individuals who actually transmitted from each other the report in question, or are they, either in whole or in part, fabrications? And what is the historical value of the data about transmitters that is preserved in the early Islamic biographical literature?

The second set of questions pertains to what was being transmitted. Were reports transmitted with a concern to preserve their exact received wording (what the Islamic scholarly tradition calls *al-riwāyah bi-al-lafz*, and what modern scholarship generally associates with written transmission), or were they transmitted with a concern to preserve the essential points of their meaning (what the Islamic scholarly tradition calls *al-riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā*, and what modern scholarship generally associates with oral transmission)? To what extent were reports subject to redaction and recension in the process of transmission, and how does one ascribe authorship in the case of a report that is subject to these processes?

In what follows, I will argue that it is indeed possible to trace transmission history in the category of reports that I am examining here. While I am certainly not the first to make a case for the feasibility of what is now sometimes called *"isnād-cum-matn* analysis,"⁶ I am seeking here to re-locate the grounds of the argument from strictly

⁶On "isnād-cum-matn or matn-cum-isnād analysis," see its leading advocate, Harald Motzki, "Dating Muslim Traditions: A Survey," Arabica 52 (2005), 204-253, at 250-253. For important examples of different ways in which isnād-cum-matn analyses have been undertaken (but not always named as such), see Iftikhar Zaman, "The Science of *rijāl* as a Method in the Study of Hadīths," Journal of Islamic Studies 5 (1994), 1-34; Ahmed, "The Satanic Verses Incident in the Memory of the Early Muslim Community"; Harald Motzki, "The Prophet and the Cat: On Dating Mālik's Muwațța' and Legal Traditions," Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam 22 (1998) 18-83; Harald Motzki, "The Murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq: On the Origin and Reliability of Some maghāzī-Reports," in The Biography of Muḥammad: The Issue of the Sources, ed. Harald Motzki (Leiden: Brill, 2000) 170-239; and Andreas Görke, "The Historical Tradition about al-Ḥudaybiya: A Study of 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr's Account," in The Biography of Muḥammad, ed. Motzki, 240-275. technical issues of textual composition to the broader context of the social and cultural constitution of historical memory—this with a view towards laying the foundations for tracing the formation of or-thodoxy on the question of the Satanic verses.

In short, before we can go on, in Chapter 2, to analyze the transmission history of the Satanic verses incident in the early Islamic sources, we must first, here in Chapter 1, address the knotty question of how to read the early Islamic sources. We begin with a little recognized but highly significant statement of the obvious: the issue of how to read the early Islamic sources is not merely a question about text; it is a question about culture. The early Islamic sources, like all texts, are literary products that are expressive of the culture(s) of the society that produced them, and the processes by which these texts were produced also tell us important things about the culture(s) of that society. If we find ourselves unable to read the sources as being other than monolithic and monovalent, we will likely conceive of the society that produced them in similarly monolithic and monovalent terms; and, similarly, if we conceive of early Islamic society as monolithic and monovalent, we will likely conceive of the texts they produced in similar terms. If, on the other hand, we are able to read the sources as being multivocal and polyvalent, we will likely conceive of the society that produced them as similarly multivocal and polyvalent—and vice versa.⁷ In other words, questions about how to read the early Islamic sources, including questions about the authenticity of isnāds and the textual constitution of matns, are not merely technical questions but questions about the production of culture-that is, about the relationship between the cultural product and the society *that produced it*. The cultural product we are dealing with here—the historical memory of the Satanic verses incident in the early Muslim community—is truth. Since this truth was subsequently constituted and valorized differently by different societies of Muslims in different times in history, the history of Muslim attitudes towards the Satanic verses incident is a history of a changing relationship not

⁷ "Monolithic" is the term used by the author of a valuable recent work on Islamic historiography to characterize the "world of learning" of the first half of the second century, as distinct from subsequent periods; Chase F. Robinson, *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 30. It is my argument that this characterization of the earliest period is incorrect, and that this is demonstrated by the sources themselves—as will be seen in Part 1 of this book.

only between those subsequent Islamic societies and the historical memory of early Islamic society, but also specifically between the culture and production of truth in those subsequent Islamic societies and their memory of the production of truth in the early Islamic society that authored and transmitted the Satanic verses incident. Thus, the question of how to read the early Islamic sources is crucial not only to the investigation of the place of the Satanic verses incident in early Islamic society, but also foundational to the history of the subsequent development of Muslim attitudes to the Satanic verses incident—and to the formation of orthodoxy concerning the incident.

We will deal, first, with the question of how to read *isnāds*. In the modern study of the transmission of historical memory in the first three centuries of Islam, the tendency has been very much to assume that what we are dealing with is essentially a single monolithic and monovalent phenomenon-that of the transmission of what is usually called "early Muslim tradition." The criterion for how to read isnāds in the transmission of "early Muslim tradition" has been established through studies carried out, in the main, on *riwāvahs* drawn from Hadīth collections-that is to say, on *riwāyahs* contained in works compiled between about 200 and 400 as a part of a project undertaken by a particular self-constituted scholarly community, the ahl al-hadīth ("Hadīth folk"), to prescribe laws, praxes, and creeds that might be accredited as definitively Islamic. While Hadith-that is, reports about the words and deeds of the Prophet that are viewed as establishing authoritative legal, praxial, and creedal norms-were, no doubt, transmitted in some degree and form from the very beginning of Islam, the Hadīth literature assumed its full scale and form only with the rise in the second and third centuries of a movement of scholars expressly committed to the establishment of Islamic norms through such reports. Accompanying the rise of this Hadīth movement was the elaboration by its proponents of a science of Hadīthessentially a science for the verification of reports through the evaluation of their transmission history—in which the *isnād* constituted the primary basis for establishing genuine transmission.⁸ Isnāds

⁸ The closest thing we have to a history of the emergence of the Hadīth movement is the important study of Scott C. Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, Hadīth *Literature*, *and the Articulation of Sunnī Islam: The Legacy of the Generation of Ibn Sa'd*, *Ibn Ma'īn*, *and Ibn Hanbal* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

were to be assessed on the basis of the reputation for reliability and veracity of the individuals in the *isnād*, and by the knowledge that individuals represented as having transmitted from each other were actually in a position to have done so (by fact of being contemporaries, and of being physically in the same place), and on the completeness of the chain (the fact of its going back in an unbroken line of reliable transmitters to a reliable eyewitness). An *isnād* that met all of the criteria of each individual transmitter being accredited as reliable, of each transmitter being known to have indeed transmitted from and to the respective individuals indicated in the isnād, and of being a complete chain going back to an eye-/ear-witness, was deemed sahih-that is, is sound or correct or true-on which basis the information carried by the *isnād*, the *matn* or "body," might also be deemed *sahīh*/sound, correct, and true (assuming that it did not contradict the Qur'ān). Hence, the titles of the canonical Hadīth collections: al-Sahīh, "The True" or "Sound" or "Correct." Integral to the development of the science of Hadīth was thus the elaboration of a literature about transmitters—that is, of a *biographical* literature. This biographical literature formed the database of the 'ilm al-rijāl ("science of men"-which also included a few women, some very significant) and was primarily concerned with recording the dates of an individual, the names of his teachers and students, and his reputation for veracity and reliability. Islamic orthodoxy holds that the Hadīth movement succeeded in separating sound reports from less sound and unsound reports through the extensive and scrupulous assessment of isnāds.

Modern Western scholarship, on the other hand, is broadly agreed that, in order to provide "early Muslim tradition" with a transmission history that matched up to the methodological criteria of the new science of Hadīth, there took place in some degree—from about 150 onwards—a fabrication of *isnāds*; sometimes of the whole *isnād*, and sometimes of a section of the part of the *isnād* containing the names of the earliest supposed transmitters. This fabrication of *isnāds* constituted, in effect, the fabrication of a transmission history for "early Muslim tradition." Where modern Western scholarship is in fierce disagreement, both with itself and with traditional Islamic scholarship, is as to the scale and historical effect of this process of fabrication: essentially, are *isnāds* to be trusted as representing genuine transmission histories or not, and is there any way of telling? The critical impasse or "stalemate"⁹ at which modern scholars have arrived has been neatly summed up by Michael Cook:

At one end of the spectrum, we can readily discern what might be called a "Zāhirī" position: the author of a tradition is none other than the authority to which it is ascribed, and its transmitters are those named in the *isnād*. Everything, in short, is pretty much as it seems to be.... At the other end of the spectrum there is an opposing "Bāṭinī" view: roughly, that the material that concerns us is precipitated at the end of the second century of the supposed Hijra, and with little ascertainable prehistory.... As might be anticipated, most scholars fall more or less lamely between these two stools.¹⁰

Since the "Āāhirī" ("exoteric") position would seem to pose no difficulties for someone attempting the dating of reports, I will address myself here only to the "Bāṭinī" ("esoteric") view, which derives considerably from Joseph Schacht's classic 1950 study *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*. That work, while it dealt exclusively with legal, praxial, and creedal reports, applied its conclusions broadly to the transmission of "early Muslim tradition" as a whole, including historical and exegetical tradition.¹¹ Schacht argued that these reports were put into circulation in the second and third centuries, and that their *isnāds* were largely fabricated and were attached to the reports in order to furnish the reports with the appearance of authoritative antiquity. Since a report had to have a complete *isnād* in order to be authoritative, *isnāds*, in Schacht's famous phrase, exhibited "a tendency to grow backwards and to claim higher and higher authority until they

⁹ See Gregor Schoeler, "Foundations for a New Biography of Muhammad: The Production and Evaluation of the Corpus of Traditions from 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr," in *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins*, ed. Herbert Berg (Leiden: Brill), 2003, 21–28, at 21.

¹⁰ Michael Cook, "Eschatology and the Dating of Traditions," *Princeton Papers in Near Eastern Studies* 1 (1993), 23–47, at 23–24.

¹¹Clarendon: Oxford University Press. See also Schacht's "A Revaluation of Islamic Tradition," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 49 (1949), 143–154, where he argued that historical reports are no more than legal reports in another guise (to be discussed ahead). Schacht, of course, drew on the seminal work of Ignaz Goldziher, particularly the chapter, "On the Development of the Hadīth" in his *Muslim Studies* (translated by C. R. Barber and S. M. Stern) (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1971), 17–251 (*Muhammedanische Studien*, Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1890).

arrive at the Prophet."¹² Hence, the less complete the *isnād*, the older it was likely to be.¹³ Schacht's conclusions were effectively taken as a datum-line by a number of scholars—Cook's "Bāṭinī school"—who elaborated from them a deeply skeptical approach to the transmission history of early Muslim tradition. The premise on which this approach proceeded has been nicely summed up by Fred Donner:

If forgeries were rife among even the most apparently trustworthy *hadīths*, how could we be sure that other kinds of accounts, including apparently early historical ones relying on similar chains of authorities for their warrant of authenticity, were not also merely later fabrications made for political, religious, or other ends?¹⁴

The Bāṭinī-Skeptics enjoyed a period of ascendancy, but their approach has been challenged over the last two decades by a number of scholars who, in different ways, have argued for the early dating of different portions of the early Muslim historical memory literature.¹⁵ The erosion of the erstwhile authority of the Bāṭinī-Skeptics has led to a situation that is pithily summed up by Chase F. Robinson: "If one can no longer assume that all Prophetic *hadīth* are forged or that there is no authentic material in the *sīrah*, no one has yet proposed a reasonable way of distinguishing between authentic and inauthentic."¹⁶

In my view, the study of the life of Muḥammad in the memory of the early Muslim community has, in most approaches taken thus

¹²Schacht, Origins, 5, see also 166.

¹³ Schacht, *Origins*, 39, 165.

¹⁴ Donner, *Narratives*, 20.

¹⁵ Important representative works in this vein include Harald Motzki, *The Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence: Meccan Fiqh before the Classical Schools* (Leiden: Brill, 2002) (*Die Anfänge der islamischen Jurisprudenz: Ihre Entwicklung in Mekka bis zur Mitte des 2 / 8 Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1991); Iftikhar Zaman, "The Science of *rijāl*"; Michael Lecker, "The Death of the Prophet Muḥammad's Father: Did Wāqidī Invent Some of the Evidence?," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesselschaft* 145 (1995) 9-27; Gregor Schoeler, *Charakter und Authentie der muslimischen Überlieferung über das Leben Mohammeds* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1996); Ahmed, "The Satanic Verses Incident in the Memory of the Early Muslim Community"; Andreas Görke, "Eschatology, History, and the Common Link: A Study in Methodology," in *Method and Theory*, ed. Berg, 179–208.

¹⁶ Chase F. Robinson, "Reconstructing Early Islam: Truth and Consequences," in *Method and Theory*, ed. Berg, 101–134, at 122.

far, been critically limited by an impaired vision of its subject, which has been taken to be essentially a single literary corpus-usually referred to as "early Muslim tradition"—and (correspondingly) by an impaired vision of the early Islamic society that produced "early Muslim tradition." I would argue that the Satanic verses incident is a part of what is better called the "historical memory materials" (with an emphasis on the plural) transmitted by the early Muslim community on the life of the Prophet Muhammad. It would seem almost trite to emphasize here that the historical memory materials on the life of Muhammad were collected in works that fall into three main literary genres: sīrah-maghāzī (best rendered as "epic biography"), tafsir (Qur'anic exegesis), and Hadith (words and deeds of the Prophet that establish authoritative norms). However, it has not been generally recognized that sīrah-maghāzī, tafsīr, and Hadīth in the first two centuries of Islam were not only distinct literary genres but also overlapping yet ultimately distinct truth projects, with different goals, different practitioners, different materials, different methods, different forms, different values, and different meanings. As such, there is no prima facie reason why the history of transmission of the memory of the Prophet in one of these three different projects—Hadīth—should be the same as in the other projects.¹⁷

¹⁷The following is the development of an argument I first put forward in my 1999 doctoral dissertation, "The Satanic Verses Incident in the Memory of the Early Muslim Community." The fact, but not the full significance, of the differentiated nature of "early Muslim tradition" has since been noted by Robert Hoyland: "Early Muslim scholars give a third hint as to how best to set about writing the biography of Muhammad, and it is one that ... has not been paid sufficient attention by modern Islamicists. It consists in the recognition that what Western researchers simply call the 'Tradition' is a very diverse body of material that comprises many different genres, that is possessed of different origins and forms, and so on. This is evident from the variety of terms applied to this material (athar, ahadith, akhbar, siyar, maghazi, qisas, etc.), from the different ways of describing its transmission (haddatha, akhbara, qala, za'ama, ajaza, nawala, etc.), and from the varying judgements that transmitters pass on one another"; Robert Hoyland, "Writing the Biography of Muhammad: Problems and Solutions," History Compass 5 (2007), 581-602, at 589. Tarif Khalidi has developed this idea further: "One might argue that the dominant portrait of Muhammad in the Hadith was 'Muhammad the model teacher'; whereas in the Sira the dominant portrait is 'Muhammad in history.' Thus, a division of territory occurs. The Hadith takes care of one aspect of Muhammad, one image, while the Sira takes care of another. One might say that the Hadith and the Sira satisfied two different needs of the believers: Muhammad as lawgiver and Muhammad as a prophet who lived through and fulfilled a certain prophetic mission or ministry"; Tarif Khalidi, Images of Muhammad: Narratives

The aim of the second- and third-century scholars of the Hadīth movement was to define, constitute, and establish legal, praxial, and creedal norms through the authoritative documentation of the words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad as produced from the historical memory of the early Muslim community. The Hadīth scholars were concerned with *prescribing* the specific content of Islam and, as such, their project fused with that of a closely related endeavor, that of the elaboration of Islamic law. To both these ultimately integrated fields, Hadīth and law, the memory of the life and personality of the Prophet existed primarily to provide authoritative Prophetic statements and acts on the basis of which to lay down in detail the specific legal, praxial, and creedal rules by which the members of the community should live. This, in turn, required the development of a methodology to establish authoritatively the authenticity of reports containing the Prophetic norms—hence the evolution of a science of isnāds. The importance of the isnād as the criterion of authenticity is, of course, precisely what called forth the fabrication of *isnāds*. The Hadith project, then, was a self-consciously authoritative and prescriptive discourse aimed at defining the normative legal, praxial, and creedal content of Islam, and thus at constituting the articulated identity of the Muslim community. The Hadīth project invested these prescribed Islamic norms with social authority through the purposive appropriation, validation, and legitimation of the historical memory of the Prophet Muhammad.

Second- and third-century scholars working in $s\bar{i}rah$ -magh $\bar{a}z\bar{i}$ or $tafs\bar{i}r$ were also concerned with the historical memory of the life of Muḥammad, and the literature they produced also played a role in the formation of the identity of the ummah—but the relationship of the $s\bar{i}rah$ -magh $\bar{a}z\bar{i}$ discourse with the formation of Muslim identity was quite different to that of Ḥadīth. Scholars collecting $s\bar{i}rah$ -magh $\bar{a}z\bar{i}$ material were primarily concerned not with establishing norms of religious praxis but rather with constructing a narrative of the moral-historical epic of the life of the Prophet in his heroic

of the Prophet in Islam across the Centuries (New York: Doubleday, 2009), 58–59. More recently Andreas Görke has also argued "that maghāzī and hadīth emerged as separate fields." "The Relationship between maghāzi and hadīth in Early Islamic Scholarship," Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies 74 (2011) 171–185.

struggle to found the Divinely guided human Community (al-ummah *al-muslimah*). By narrating the foundational epic of the community, the sīrah-maghāzī project provided a repertoire of heroic, moral, and dramatic motifs through the common attachment to which the identity of the members of new community of Muslims might coalesce and integrate. Thus, unlike the Hadīth project, whose self-assigned role was *prescriptive* and *authoritative*, the *sīrah-maghāzī* project served an associative and *convocative* function in the formation of the identity of the early Muslim community. Sīrah-maghāzī works also differed starkly from Hadīth works in regard to structure. The structure of sīrah-maghāzī works was determined by their concern for the elaboration of a larger sequential narrative of the Prophet's life. This narrative is, of course, markedly absent from Hadīth works, where individual reports are presented in an atomistic and decontextualized manner under the rubric of the legal and doctrinal subject category to which the particular report relates.¹⁸ The overwhelming majority of Hadīth reports simply do not appear in sīrahmaghāzī works, and vice versa.¹⁹

Scholars undertaking exegesis of the Qur'ān (tafsir), on the other hand, were endeavoring to interpret a Divine Revelation that, it was recognized, was a highly allusive and often abstruse text whose points of reference were the historical events and cultural environment of the Prophet's life. This meant that the Qur'ān could not be understood without knowledge of those events and that environment. Most of the contents of the Qur'ān are not directly related

¹⁸ In other words, contrary to superficial appearance, *sīrah-maghāzī* and *hadīth* are precisely *not* "cut from the same cloth" as Chase Robinson asserts; see *Islamic Historiography*, 16.

¹⁹Schacht seems not to have taken this fact into consideration when stating, "As regards the biography of the Prophet, traditions of legal and historical interest cannot possibly be divided from one another . . . seemingly historical information on the Prophet is only the background for legal doctrines and therefore devoid of independent value"; see "Revaluation," 150. The fact is that the bulk of historical reports never found legal use, and the only canonical Hadīth collection to contain a section on *maghāzī* is the *Saḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī. None of the canonical Hadīth collections contains a narrative of the Prophet's life. For the view that the "critique of Hadīth by Goldziher, Schacht, and others does not necessarily apply to the materials used in the *Sīrah*," see also W. Montgomery Watt and M. V. McDonald (translators and annotators), "Translator's Foreword," *The History of al-Ṭabarī Volume VI: Muḥammad at Mecca* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), xix.

to legal and praxial issues,²⁰ as a result of which most of the reports collected in *tafsīr* works do not appear in Hadīth works and are also not taken up in juristic works.²¹ A greater overlap does exist, however, between tafsir and sirah-maghāzi, particularly as a consequence of the concern of the *mufassirūn* (exegetes) to establish the occasion of Revelation (sabab al-nuzūl) for individual Qur'ānic verses-that is, to identify on what occasion in the Prophet's life a particular verse was revealed; however, the bulk of the reports that make up the two genres is, again, not shared. Also, unlike sīrahmaghāzī works, where individual narratives appear at the juncture where they fit into the larger biographical narrative, *tafsir* reports are directed at explaining the particular verse under exegesis at the point at which it occurs in the Qur'an. This fundamental difference in the overarching structure of the works composed in these two genres resulted in marked differences in the textual formulation and elaboration of even those reports of which the basic content was common to both genres.²²

Thus, while all of the *sīrah-maghāzī*, *tafsīr*, and Ḥadīth scholars were dealing with the historical memory of the early community on the life of its founder, these three discourses differed in regard to discursive purpose, structure, content, method, and meaning. In other words *sīrah-maghāzī*, *tafsīr*, and Ḥadīth constituted three *overlapping but fundamentally distinct* discourses treating the historical memory of the Prophet in the second to third century of Islam. Consequently, there is no obvious reason why the transmission history of the reports contained in one of these discourses—namely, Ḥadīth—should be representative of the transmission history of *sīrah-maghāzī* and/or *tafsīr* reports, as has generally been assumed. Indeed, one might reasonably suppose the opposite: that the transmission histories within the respective discourses were *different*, and that *riwāyahs* contained in second- and third-century *sīrah-maghāzī*

²⁰ It is generally understood that 500 of the 6,236 verses in the Qur'ān relate to legal and praxial norms.

²¹Of the canonical Hadīth collections, only al-Bukhārī and al-Tirmidhī contain a $b\bar{a}b\,al$ -tafsīr of any length, although al-Nasā'ī composed a separate Tafsīr that survives (al-Bukhārī and Ibn Mājah are recorded as having done so but there is no indication that these were ever cited, which makes one suspect that the works in question were, in fact, the $b\bar{a}b\,al$ -tafsīr of their respective Hadīth collections).

²² This will be illustrated repeatedly in Chapter 2.

and *tafsīr* works should, therefore, be assessed quite differently from those in Hadīth works.

It may reasonably be objected, however, that since some first- and second-century scholars transmitted reports in all three of the areas of sīrah-maghāzī, tafsīr, and Hadīth, it is hard to see how one can speak of distinct scholarly projects. However, the fact of the matter is that, despite some overlap in personnel, the respective scholars who made up the three projects were largely not the same people—and they were not the same people because they did not utilize the same scholarly methods for the same purposes. The evidence for this is found in the *al-jarh* wa-al-ta'dīl biographical literature produced by the scholars of the Hadith movement, beginning from the second half of the second century, and compiled, in particular, in the third century.²³ The *al-jarh wa-al-ta'dīl*—literally "discrediting and accrediting"—literature is biographical material compiled by the post-formative Hadith scholars for the express purpose of identifying who was a good *muhaddith* and who was not: that is to say, who should be counted as a *bona fide* member of the scholarly project of Hadith transmission, and who should not. As Muslim b. Hajjāj (d. 261) notes revealingly from an eminent figure of the early second-century Hadīth movement, 'Abd Allāh b. Dhakwān (d. 130),²⁴ in the methodological introduction to his canonical Hadīth collection, the Sahīh, "In Medina, I have met one hundred people, each one of whom was reliable. Hadith from them were not accepted [however], because they did not belong, as was said, to the ahl al-hadīth."25

In the *al-jarh wa-al-ta dīl* literature, the second- and third-century scholars of the Hadīth movement repeatedly criticized scholars

²³ See Lucas, Constructive Critics, 67–73. For a list of prominent second- and third-century Hadīth scholars who produced al-jarh wa-al-ta'dīl works, see G.H.A. Juynboll, Muslim Tradition: Studies in Chronology, Provenance and Authorship of Early Hadīth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 165.

²⁴On him, see Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī, *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'* (edited by Shu'ayb Arna'ūţ) (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1985), 5:445–451.

²⁵G.H.A. Juynboll, "Muslim's Introduction to His Ṣaḥīḥ, Translated and Annotated with an Excursus on the Chronology of *fitna* and *bid'a," Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 5 (1984), 263–311, at 278—I have substituted the word "Hadīth" for Juynboll's "tradition." The original reads: *adraktu bi-al-Madīnah mi'atan kulla-hum ma'mūn mā yu'khadh 'an-hum al-ḥadīth yuqāl laysa min ahli-hi*; Muslim b. Hajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim bi-sharḥ al-Nawawī* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2000), 1:81.

primarily engaged in the transmission of $s\bar{r}rah$ -magh $\bar{a}z\bar{i}$ and $tafs\bar{i}r$ reports simply for not doing things in the way that Hadīth scholars did them, as regards both the texts that they chose to transmit and the methodologies that informed their transmission. Indeed, a recurrent way of discrediting someone as an unreliable Hadīth transmitter was, in effect, simply to point out that he was not really a Hadīth scholar at all but rather a *mufassir* or one of the *ahl almaghāzī*.²⁶ In this way, the Hadīth movement identified and legitimated its personnel and its modus operandi, while simultaneously identifying those who did not belong to it and delegitimating their modi operandi.²⁷

A strikingly eminent example of this is the single most famous biographer of the Prophet, Muḥammad Ibn Isḥāq (85–151),²⁸ one of our

- ²⁶ This phenomenon was noted with regard to *tafsīr* scholars more than half a century ago by Harris Birkeland: "It is a notorious fact that numerous interpreters, who had not achieved a fame in other branches of religious science, viz. in *ḥadit* or *qirā'a* or *fiqh*, but were only known as interpreters, were held to be unreliable"; Harris Birkeland, *Old Muslim Opposition against Interpretation of the Koran* (Oslo: Jacob Dybwad, 1955), 26. In this remarkably prescient monograph, Birkeland identified several extremely revealing phenomena in the early sources, even if he did not always understand their significance.
- ²⁷ Michael Cooperson has aptly characterized the treatment in the biographical literature by the *ahl al-hadīth* of the *sīrah-maghāzī* scholars (whom he classifies as *akhbārīs—khabar*, plural: *akhbār*, being the term generally applied to a historical report that is not a Hadīth report) as "collective self-assertion through *akhbārī* bashing"; Michael Cooperson, *Classical Arabic Biography: The Heirs of the Prophets in the Age of al-Ma'mūn* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 2000, 5, footnote 23.
- ²⁸ For important sources on Ibn Ishāq, see Abū Ja'far Muhammad b. 'Amr b. Mūsā b. Hammād al-'Uqaylī (d.322), Kitāb al-du'afā' wa-man nusiba ilā al-kidhb wawad' al-hadīth (edited by Hamdī b. 'Abd al-Majīd b. Ismā'īl al-Salafī) (Riyadh: Dār al-Ṣumay'ī), 4:1195-1201; Abū Aḥmad 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Adī al-Jurjānī (edited by Suhayl Zakkār) (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1984), al-Kāmil fī du'afā' al-rijāl, 3:102-112; al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1931), 1:214-234; al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 7:33-55; Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, Tahdhīb al-tahdhīb (Hyderabad: Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniyyah, 1329-1331), 9:38-46; Josef Horovitz, "The Earliest Biographies of the Prophet and Their Authors III," Islamic Culture 2 (1928), 164-182, at 169-182; A. Guillaume's "Introduction" to The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ibn Ishāq's Sirat Rasūl Allāh (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), xiii-xli; H. R. Idris, "Réflexions sur Ibn Ishāq," Studia Islamica 17 (1958) 23-35; Rudolf Sellheim, "Prophet, Chalif und Geschichte: die Muhammed-Biographie des Ibn Ishaq," Oriens 18 (1967) 33-91; Sezgin, GAS, 1:288-290; J. M. B. Jones, "Ibn Ishak," in H. A. R. Gibb et al. (eds.), Encyclopaedia of Islam (Leiden: Brill [new edition], 1960-1999) (hereafter EI2); Muhammad 'Abd Allāh Abū Şu'aylik, Muhammad Ibn Ishāq: imām ahl al-maghāzī wa-al-siyar

sources for a narrative of the Satanic verses incident, whose career as a man of learning culminated in his migration from Madīnah to the newly built 'Abbāsid capital city of Baghdad and his appointment there by the Caliph al-Manşūr as tutor of his son, the future Caliph al-Mahdī. In addition to Ibn Ishāq's work in sīrah-maghāzī, he is reported also to have transmitted a vast number of reports dealing with ahkām (legal, praxial, and creedal norms), which were the rightful historical memory materials of the *muhaddithūn*.²⁹ However, we find in the *al-jarh wa-al-ta'dīl* literature that Ibn Ishāq was widely criticized by the Hadīth scholars for quoting from unreliable or anonymous people,³⁰ for copying down reports from other people's books without studying them with the owner,³¹ for not taking sufficient care with his *isnāds*,³² and for simply transmitting lies³³—in other words, for failing to observe Hadīth methodology in his evaluation and transmission of reports. Unsurprisingly, then, we find that Yahyā b. Ma'in (d. 233), one of the founders of Hadith methodology, said of Ibn Ishāq, "I do not like to use him as an authority in regard to religious obligations [mā uhibbu an ahtajja bi-hi fī al-farā'id]."³⁴ On the other hand, the pre-Hadīth movement scholar Muhammad b. Shihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 124), who was a teacher of Ibn Ishāq, is reported as saying that Ibn Ishāq was "one of the most learned of men in maghāzī [min a'lam al-nās bi-hā]."35 This dual assessment of Ibn Ishāq comes together in the remark attributed to the great hero of the Hadīth movement, Ahmad b. Hanbal (d. 241): "In maghāzī and the like, he is to be written from; in regard to the halāl and harām (the permissible

⁽Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, 1994) (where a very full list of medieval biographies of Ibn Isḥāq is given at 38–40); and Mustafa Fayda, "İbn İshak," *TDVİA*.

²⁹By one account, seventeen thousand such reports; see al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 7:39.

³⁰See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 7:50; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 9:42.

³¹ kāna rajulan yashtahī al-ḥadīth kāna ya'khudh kutub al-nās fa-yaḍa'u-hā fī kutubi-hi, quoted from Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal in al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 1:229; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 9:43.

³² Ahmad b. Hanbal: ra'aytu-hu yuhaddith 'an al-jamā'ah bi-al-hadīth al-wāhid wa-lā yufaşşilu kalām dhā min kalām dhā; see al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, Tārīkh Baghdād, 1:230.

³³He was called "a liar [kādhib / kadhdhāb]"; see al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh* Baghdād, 1:223.

³⁴ See Abū al-Fath Muhammad b. Muhammad Ibn Sayyid al-Nās (d.734), 'Uyūn al-athar fī funūn al-maghāzī wa-al-shamā'il wa-al-siyar (Beirut: Dar al-Āfāq al-Jadīdah, 1982), 17.

³⁵See al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 1:219.

and impermissible) . . . he needs to have his hand pulled and his fingers squeezed [yahtāju ilā... maddi yadi-hi wa-dammi asābi'i-hi]."36 Ibn Hanbal's son, 'Abd Allāh (d. 288), added that his father did not consider Ibn Ishāq an authority on the sunan³⁷—that is, on the sunnah of the Prophet—which are the words and deeds of the Prophet that establish legal, praxial, and creedal norms, and are precisely the historical memory materials with which the Hadīth movement was primarily concerned. In other words, Ibn Ishāq was generally regarded as an authority in sīrah-maghāzī-reports on the words, deeds, and actions of the Prophet that are not directed at establishing legal, praxial, and creedal norms-but generally not well regarded as a transmitter of Hadith-the words, deeds, and actions of the Prophet that *are* directed at establishing legal, praxial, and creedal norms. His credibility as a transmitter of legal, praxial, and creedal norms was further undermined by accusations of being doctrinally suspect-he was alleged to harbor Mu'tazilī (qadariyyah) and Shī'ī sympathies (tashayyu').38 The prominent 'ilm al-rijāl authority al-Firyābī (d. 212) labeled Ibn Ishāq a "heretic [zindīq]," while the most celebrated jurist of second-century Madīnah, Mālik b. Anas (d. 179), the eponymous founder of the Mālikī legal school, who was famously hostile to Ibn Ishāq, called him a "liar [kadhdhāb]" and an "Antichrist [dajjāl]."39

We will see Hadīth scholars making this dual assessment of the *sīrah-maghāzī* scholars, as well as of *tafsīr* scholars, throughout this study. The tacit logic of the Hadīth scholars' assessment is worth reiterating: each of the historical memory projects possessed its own culture, and this culture affected the approach of a *sīrah-maghāzī* or *tafsīr* scholar to legal, praxial, and creedal reports (or, for that matter, that of a Hadīth scholar to *tafsīr* or *sīrah-maghāzī* reports). Thus, Ibn Isḥāq's methodology was unacceptable when applied to Hadīth reports, but acceptable when applied to *sīrah-maghāzī* reports. That the Hadīth scholars should find Ibn Isḥāq's methodology

³⁶ See Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, 'Uyūn al-athar, 17.

³⁷ lam yakun yahtajju bi-hi fī al-sunan, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Tārīkh Baghdād, 1:230; Ibn Ḥajar, Tahdhīb, 9:44.

³⁸ The latter charge meaning that he supported the claim of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and his descendants to the leadership of the community; see Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, 48–49.

³⁹ See Ibn 'Adī, al-Kāmil fī du'afā' al-rijāl, 3:103.

categorically unacceptable is perfectly understandable given the various deficiencies listed earlier. But why should they find his methodology acceptable in $s\bar{s}rah$ -magh $\bar{a}z\bar{\imath}$?⁴⁰ There are two answers to this. First, if $s\bar{s}rah$ -magh $\bar{a}z\bar{\imath}$ materials were to be rejected on the basis of bad isn $\bar{a}ds$, there would be virtually no narrative history of the life of the Prophet in existence since the vast majority of materials treated by $s\bar{s}rah$ -magh $\bar{a}z\bar{\imath}$ scholars were transmitted by what, in Hadīth terms, were bad isn $\bar{a}ds$.⁴¹ The same applies to tafs $\bar{s}r$: "In fact, every tafs $\bar{s}r$ before the time about 200 had to be rejected from the standpoint of later criticism."⁴² As Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal famously noted, "Three

- ⁴⁰This recurring dual assessment is in itself sufficient evidence to establish that Schacht was quite wrong to state—alongside his assertion that historical reports are really legal reports—that "the authorities for legal and historical information are to a great deal identical" ("Revaluation," 150). This was the exception and not the rule. The question of why a scholar should be seen simultaneously as a bad Hadīth transmitter but as an authority in sīrah-maghazi or tafsīr is an extremely important one, the larger significance of which has received little consideration. See, however, the valuable, if brief, observations of Ella Landau-Tasseron, "Sayf Ibn 'Umar in Medieval and Modern Scholarship," Der Islam 67 (1990) 1-26, at 6-9 (where, in addition to Sayf b. 'Umar, the muhaddithūn's treatment of Ibn Ishāq and another major biographer of Muhammad, al-Wāqidī, is also examined); see also the remarks of Fred Donner, Narratives, 257-258. Tarif Khalidi answers this question in somewhat benign terms of division of labor: "by the time of Ibn Ishaq, the first of the four founding fathers, the Sira and the Muhammadan Hadith were two quite distinct disciplines. This is illustrated by the fact that while Ibn Ishaq's Sira of Muhamad was held in very high esteem, Hadith experts held that his isnads were untrustworthy and his Muhammadan Hadiths, especially those with legal import, should not be accepted.... Here then one detects a parting of the ways. The Hadith was taken over by the Hadith experts and lawyers of Islam while the Sira was taken over by the biographers and historians (akhbaris)." Images of Muhammad, 59.
- ⁴¹It is extremely instructive to see how the seventh/eighth-century Egyptian scholar Ibn Sayyid al-Nās (671/1273-734/1334) begins his biography of the Prophet with a defense of Ibn Isḥāq and al-Wāqidī against the attacks of the *ahl al-Hadīth* by distinguishing between his high status as a scholar of *maghāzī* and his indifferent reputation as a scholar of Ḥadīth; see his 'Uyūn al-athar, 15-23. Ella Landau-Tasseron points out that "The reason why he felt obliged to do so seems to be the fact that the works of Ibn Isḥāq and Wāqidī have become the foundation of the whole *Sīra* literature, and holding negative opinion about them meant the shaking of this foundation and the placing of the historical value of the *Sīra* under the shade of doubt." See "Sayf Ibn 'Umar," 8-9.
- ⁴²This is the statement of Harris Birkeland, who goes on to say, "What is stated above explains why practically all the numerous commentaries from the time before al-Tabarī has been lost... Orthodoxy did not recognize them." See the larger discussion in *Old Muslim Opposition*, 19–28; the quotations are at 27 and 28. An important question that arises here is why the *ahl al-Hadīth* during 150 to 300

genres [*kutub*] have no *isnād* / no final source [*aṣl*]: *maghāzī*, eschatology [*malāḥim*], and *tafsīr*."⁴³

The extant early $s\bar{i}rah$ -magh $\bar{a}z\bar{i}$ and $tafs\bar{i}r$ works provide ample evidence of the fact that, unlike the Hadīth scholars, $s\bar{i}rah$ -magh $\bar{a}z\bar{i}$ and $tafs\bar{i}r$ scholars did not generally furnish their reports with complete $isn\bar{a}ds$. Most $riw\bar{a}yahs$ in $s\bar{i}rah$ -magh $\bar{a}z\bar{i}$ and $tafs\bar{i}r$ works either are mursal (pl. mar $\bar{a}s\bar{i}l$)—that is, the $isn\bar{a}d$ stops at a $t\bar{a}bi'\bar{i}$ (literally, a "Follower," meaning a member of the first-century generations who lived after the death of the Prophet) rather than a $sah\bar{a}b\bar{i}$ (a "Companion" contemporary of the Prophet) (this is particularly the case in $tafs\bar{i}r$)—or are transmitted from obscure, unreliable, or sometimes anonymous individuals⁴⁴ or by the collective $isn\bar{a}d$ or "combined report," whereby a number of reports would be combined into a single narrative cited collectively by more than one $isn\bar{a}d$, thus making it impossible to know what was crucial in Hadīth methodology: the identity of the individual authority with whom the text originated. This is particularly the case in $s\bar{i}rah$ -magh $\bar{a}z\bar{i}$.⁴⁵ All such reports

chose retrospectively to reject as Hadīth transmitters *some* early scholars active in *sīrah-maghāzī* (e.g., Ibn Ishāq) and *tafsīr* (e.g., al-Suddī, for whom see **Riwāyah** 20, ahead), but to accept others (e.g., al-Zuhrī, see **Riwāyah** 9; and Qatādah b. Di'āmah, see **Riwāyah** 23), even when this latter group had also transmitted doctrinally problematic *sīrah-maghāzī* and *tafsīr* reports with poor *isnāds*. No one seems to have given much attention to this since Birkeland's acute observation that "when a scholar of the past was generally recognized as a reliable authority, the tendentious biographical literature tried to minimize or even suppress his activity in *tafsīr* as much as possible, and tried to make him a traditionist, a Reader, or a *muftī*." *Old Muslim Opposition*, 20. The answer may again lie considerably in the fact of necessity: to reject al-Zuhrī's reports, for example, would not only make a palpable dent in the corpus of *sīrah-maghāzī* but also, more importantly for the Hadīth movement, significantly reduce the number of reliably transmitted Hadīth: "Abū Dāwūd puts the number of reports transmitted by al-Zuhrī as 2200, half of which were *ḥadīth*." Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, 66.

⁴³ This, too, was presciently noted by Birkeland, Old Muslim Opposition, 16–19. For the different wordings of this statement, see Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi uşūl al-tafsīr (edited by 'Adnān Zarzūr) (Kuwait: Dār al-Qur'ān al-Karīm, 1972), 52.

⁴⁴ See, for example, James Robson, "Ibn Ishāq's Use of the *isnād*," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library 38 (1955–56), 449–465, from which it is clear that Ibn Ishāq was unconcerned about providing sahīh isnāds. As Tarif Khalidi has squarely noted, "Ibn Ishaq was prepared to accept other criteria of veracity besides that of personal witness, the backbone of *isnad*"; see his Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 39.

⁴⁵ On the collective *isnād* or combined report, see Marsden Jones, "The Maghāzī Literature," in *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period* (edited by A. F. L. Beeston, T. M. Johnstone, R. B.

were categorically unacceptable in the transmission of Hadīth, but to accommodate the overwhelming reality of their ubiquity in *sīrahmaghāzī* and *tafsīr*, the Hadīth scholars produced the concessionary principle of *al-tarakhkhuṣ / al-tajawwuz / al-tasāhul fī al-raqā'iq*: essentially, the application of lenient standards of *isnād* appraisal in regard precisely to those reports that do not carry a legal, praxial, or creedal ruling (*raqā'iq*).⁴⁶

But-and this is an important question-why is it that reports transmitted in the genres of sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr (as opposed to those limited sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr reports that appear in Hadīth works) largely failed to acquire full isnāds in the period 150-250, when the rise of the Hadīth movement made the complete isnād the basis for validation of reports? There are two ways in which to understand this phenomenon: either second- and third-century sīrahmaghāzī and tafsīr scholars were consistently imperfect practitioners of Hadīth methodology—meaning that they recognized that in order to establish authoritative fact it was important to transmit reports with sound complete *isnāds* but somehow, in spite of this, they usually failed to do so; or, more plausibly, these scholars had a very different set of cultural, and thus methodological, concerns in which it simply was not crucial to establish the truth-value of reports through the Hadīth leitmotif of providing complete *isnāds* made up of sound transmitters. Indeed, a fundamental and little recognized cultural difference between the projects of early sirah-maghāzī and *tafsīr* on the one hand and Hadīth on the other is precisely that whereas Hadith, by virtue of its function, sought to be prescriptive and authoritative, sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr did not. We have already noted how sīrah-maghāzī literature functioned to provide the new community with a foundational epic with which the new community could affiliate itself. Thus, rather than seeking to be authoritative and prescriptive, sīrah-maghāzī sought to be dramatic and evocative, to

Serjeant, and R. R. Smith), 344–351, at 347–348; Michael Lecker, "Wāqidī's Account on the Status of the Jews of Medina: A Study of a Combined Report," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 54 (1995), 15–32, at 18–27; and Donner, *Narratives*, 264–65, footnote 31.

⁴⁶ See, for example, al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī: fī al-halāl wa-al-harām wa-al-sunan waal-ahkām tashaddadnā fī al-asānīd wa-idhā rawaynā 'an al-nabī fī fadā'il al-a'māl wa-mā lā yada' hukman wa-lā yarfa'u-hu tasāhalnā fī al-asānīd; his al-Kifāyah fī 'ilm al-riwāyah (Hyderabad: Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniyyah, 1357), 134.

furnish the new community with a powerful vocabulary of motifsheroic, ethical, prosopographical, geographical, rhetorical, miraculous, and so forth-with which the community could affiliate and through which it could express its values and ethos. To accomplish this, sīrah-maghāzī scholars did not need to sift out reliable reports from unreliable—rather, they were casting their nets as widely as possible in the sea of epic lore of the early community on the life of its founder. Thus, they did not need to claim for themselves the indisputable authority that arose from complete *isnāds* made up of unimpeachable individuals-and they did not provide them. As for early *tafsīr*, what is most striking about the project—and strikingly little noted in the modern scholarship—is the *exploratory* and *multivocal* nature of the early exegetical literature. The literature of early Qur'an exegesis comprises a range of interpretations on almost every verse of the Qur'an, with strikingly little attempt to invest interpretations with the finality of categorical Prophetic authority. Even when it comes to the individual who is regarded as the founder and greatest authority figure of early *tafsīr*, the "mythic ancestor"⁴⁷ 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Abbās (d. 68), there is effectively no evidence in regard to the contradictory interpretations attributed to him that suggests that early *tafsir* scholars disputed the attribution of these contradictory interpretations in an attempt to validate one interpretation over others. Indeed, the students of Ibn 'Abbās regularly transmitted on their own authority interpretations that were different to those that they attributed to their great master.⁴⁸ As Birkeland rightly noted, "It remains a problem why all Isnads leading to disciples of Ibn 'Abbās were not prolonged backwards to the latter himself. His name cannot possibly have been omitted secondarily."49 Early tafsīr seems, thus, to have been, in the first instance, an *exploration* of the Divine Word and, as such, was apparently more concerned with the *range of* possibilities contained in the Divine Word than with exclusive truthclaims about the Divine Word. This, in turn, meant the early mufassirūn, too, did not need to invest truth-claims with the authority of complete *isnāds* from unimpeachable authority figures. It is thus

⁴⁷The phrase is that of Claude Gilliot, "Portrait 'mythique' d'Ibn 'Abbās," *Arabica* 32 (1985), 127–184.

⁴⁸We will see examples of this in Chapter 2.

⁴⁹ Old Muslim Opposition, 36.

only logical that neither *tafsīr* scholars nor *sīrah-maghāzī* scholars compiled biographical dictionaries to legitimate and delegitimate transmitters.⁵⁰ As a result, we are today dependent for our knowledge of the transmitters of the early Muslim historical memory of the life of Muḥammad exclusively on the narrative constructed by the Ḥadīth movement, a narrative that is, in both senses of word, highly *partial*.

In other words, the hostility of the Hadīth scholars towards the ahl al-sīrah / al-maghāzī and mufassirūn arose not because the sīrahmaghāzī scholars "imitated the muḥaddithūn, or applied the tools and methods of Hadīth to foreign materials so that it could eventually pass as Hadīth" (as Landau-Tasseron suggests),⁵¹ but for quite the opposite reason: apparently, the ahl al-sīrah / al-maghāzī and the mufassirūn simply did not think it was crucial to furnish complete isnāds at all. The projects of early sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr apparently neither had use for nor recognized the authority of the methodology developed by the Hadīth movement; had they done so, they would surely, from 150 onwards, have fabricated complete isnāds with which to upgrade their deficient reports, instead of continuing to transmit them with bad isnāds.⁵²

Having concluded that *sīrah-maghāzī* and *tafsīr* scholars in the post-150 period were evidently not in the habit of fabricating complete *isnāds*, the question to be asked is how, in the light of this, one is to assess their incomplete, collective, or otherwise weak *isnāds*. The logical implication would seem to be that the deficient *isnāds* that carry *sīrah-maghāzī* and *tafsīr* reports are very likely *not fabricated at all*. After all, if these incomplete *isnāds* are fabricated, this would

⁵⁰ I disagree with the explanation of Chase Robinson: "There is no way around concluding that insecurities were at work. Lacking a method that was distinct from traditionism (many were targeted for traditionists' barbs about several of their methods)... our historians deliberately kept their heads low during much of the classical period." *Islamic Historiography*, 113. In my view it is precisely the fact that historians and *mufassirūn* were secure in their own methodologies that led them not to compile biographical dictionaries, for the simple reason that their methods did not require a literature assessing the reputations of transmitters.
⁵¹Landau-Tasseron, "Sayf Ibn 'Umar," 7.

⁵² Indeed, the attitude of these two projects towards Hadīth methodology would seem to differ only in degree from that of the second-century historian 'Awānah b. al-Hakam (d. 147/764-765 or 158/774-775), who declared, "I gave up Hadīth because I couldn't stand the *isnād*"; cited by Cooperson, *Classical Arabic Biography*, 4.

mean that whereas sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr scholars found it necessary to fabricate *isnāds* in the period before 150, when incomplete isnāds were sufficient certification of the genealogy of reports, they somehow managed to resist the pressure (and the habit) of fabricating *isnāds* in the period after 150 when complete *isnāds* gradually became the preeminent epistemological device for the establishment of the truth-value of reports.⁵³ It is hard to imagine why this should be the case. If, then, we have a bad *isnād* contained in a *sīrah-maghāzī* or *tafsīr* work, there would seem to be no substantive reason (besides native skepticism) to think-in the absence of specific external evidence to suggest otherwise—that the *isnād* is fabricated, and that it does not, indeed, genuinely represent the chain of transmitters by which this information was transmitted. It is upon this principle that my analysis proceeds: in the genres of sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr, weak isnāds should be taken at face value as in actual fact representing a genuine transmission history for the report in question, unless there is specific reason to suggest otherwise.⁵⁴

Now, assuming that an *isnād* represents a genuine chain of transmission does not, of course, necessarily imply that the information carried in the report is true. However, the facticity of reports is not what we are concerned with here, only the genuineness of

⁵³ Indeed, Schacht's own logic can be taken to the same conclusions. Schacht notes how *sīrah-maghāzī* reports with legal bearing were incorporated into legal discourse in the second half of the second century, and states that "this reception of 'historical' traditions into legal discussion went parallel with their acquiring increasingly elaborate *isnāds*" (*Origins*, 139). The implication of Schacht's statement is that those *sīrah-maghāzī* (and *tafsīr*) reports that were of no direct legal or praxial bearing (i.e., the majority) were not subject to the same *isnād* fabrication process as were legal and praxial materials; these nonlegal and nonpraxial reports ought not, therefore, to be subject to Schacht's thesis. See also James Robson, "Standards Applied by Muslim Traditionists," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 43 (1961), 459–479, at 461; and Rudi Paret, "Die Lücke in der Überlieferung über den Islam," in *Westösliche Abhandlungen: Rudolf Tschudi zum siebzigsten Geburtstag überreicht von Freunden und Schülern*, ed. Fritz Meier (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz), 1954, 147–153, which makes a different case for the greater reliability of nonlegal Hadīth.

⁵⁴None of this, of course, is to be applied to reports in Hadīth works. The question of how to assess good *isnāds* found in *sīrah-maghāzī* and *tafsīr* works is a more difficult one, although the default assumption would be that they are suspicious by virtue of their resembling Hadīth *isnāds*. This question does not arise in the present study, perhaps precisely because the Satanic verses reports were not transmitted as a part of the Hadīth project.

transmission, which will enable us to date reports. Also, assuming that an *isnād* is genuine does not necessarily imply that the transmission history it presents is *complete*. There is simply no reason to assume that scholars always cited the full available *isnād*; given that abbreviation of *isnāds* was not uncommon even among early Hadīth scholars, it was probably the more so among early *sīrah-maghāzī* and *tafsīr* scholars.⁵⁵ Our working principle is that these *isnāds* represent genuine transmission histories *as far back as they go*, while leaving open the possibility that the entire report, or some of the motifs and ideas it contains, may well have entered circulation at some earlier point, or have been derived from the broader scholarly environment of the earliest recorded transmitter.⁵⁶

The fact that Hadīth scholars were prepared to accept the "deficient" (i.e., different) methodologies of the *sīrah-maghāzī* and *tafsīr* scholars when applied to *sīrah-maghāzī* and *tafsīr* reports, but not in regard to Hadīth reports, may no doubt be attributed to the fact that *sīrah-maghāzī* and *tafsīr* materials did not seek, in the first instance, to establish legal, praxial, and creedal norms.⁵⁷ Since the business of documenting legal, praxial, and creedal norms was, of course, precisely the business of defining the specific detailed content of Islam, what the scholars of the Hadīth movement were in effect doing was to arrogate to themselves *the authority to prescribe the definitive content of Islam*. The Hadīth project was concerned not simply with sorting reports with good *isnāds* from reports with bad ones but with distinguishing, by means of good *isnāds*, reports with doctrinally acceptable content from reports with unacceptable doctrinal content. Other scholarly projects were nonthreatening and,

⁵⁵For the practice among Ḥadīth scholars, see al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Kifāyah*, 417–418, the chapter entitled, "On the Ḥadīth which the Transmitter Sometimes Takes Back (to a *ṣaḥābi* / the Prophet) [*yarfaʿu-hu tāratan*] and Sometimes Stops (at a *tābiʿ*ī) [*yaqifu-hu*]: What Is Its Ruling?"

⁵⁶Our working principle will be tested—and proved correct—in the course of Part 1. On the latter point, see Marsden Jones's argument that early second-century *sīrah-maghāzī* scholars drew on a common pool of available material: in his "Ibn Isḥāq and al-Wāqidī: The Dream of 'Ātika and the Raid to Na<u>kh</u>la in Relation to the Charge of Plagiarism," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 22 (1959), 41–51.

⁵⁷This statement is, of course, less applicable to the *tafsīr* project than to the *sīrah-maghāzī* project; nonetheless, the fact is that the bulk of early Qur'ān commentary did not deal with praxial and legal issues.

hence, legitimate so long as they did not trespass into this project of the authoritative constituting of truth: in instances where sirahmaghāzī and tafsīr reports had no problematic doctrinal implications, it did not matter to the Hadīth scholars if the isnāds of these reports did not fulfill the criteria for authoritative validation. Here, the accommodative principle of al-tarakhkhus / al-tajawwuz / altasāhul fī al-ragā'ig was applied. Problems arose when materials transmitted in the *sīrah-maghāzī* and *tafsīr* literature were at odds with the norms that the Hadīth project was seeking to establish as Islamic—in other words, when these sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr reports presented alternative norms to those of the Hadith project. This danger was ever-present since, like Hadīth, sīrah-maghāzī and *tafsir* drew on the potentially normative historical memory of the life of Muhammad: it was thus essential for Hadīth scholarship to assert and retain its legitimizing authority vis-à-vis these potentially problematic historical memory materials. So, when the Hadīth authorities said of a scholar that he was good in maghāzī, but not in Hadīth or ahkām, what this meant was that as long as he transmitted reports that, by virtue of irrelevance or conformity, did not conflict with the Hadīth project of establishing legal, praxial, and creedal norms, his reports were acceptable. However, in the event of his transmitting something that impinged upon or clashed with the Islam of the Hadīth movement, the fact that this individual did not conform to the transmission methodology of the ahl al-Hadīth could and would be invoked in order to discredit that individual as an unreliable transmitter, and thereby to reject those problematic reports as unreliably transmitted and therefore false. Through this assertion of the *epistemological authority* of the Hadith movement, the ahl al-Hadith asserted their exclusive authority to determine the content of Islam. The Satanic verses incident, it will be seen, constitutes a classic example of this clash over the right to determine normative Islam by authoring and authorizing the memory of the person and Prophethood of Muhammad.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ The only study of which I am aware that thinks seriously about the cultural consequences of the differences between the genres of *sīrah-maghāzī* and Ḥadīth is Gordon D. Newby, "Imitating Muḥammad in Two Genres: Mimesis and Problems of Genre in Sîrah and Sunnah," *Medieval Encounters* 3 (1997), 266–283. While confused on some fundamental points, Newby makes a number of genuinely important observations: "Sîrah, was a narrative . . . Sunnah was a non-narrative,

Thus, the point being made by the second- to third-century Hadīth scholars when they criticized sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr scholars in the *al-jarh wa-al-ta'dīl* literature was precisely that Hadīth, sīrah-maghāzī, and tafsīr were different discourses-that is, different cultural projects whose respective practitioners transmitted different materials and used different methodologies to assess those materials. As far as the Hadīth scholars were concerned, the Hadīth textual corpus was made up of reports that possessed better *isnāds*, meaning that they were the product of a transmission history that was superior to and more authoritative than that of the sīrah-maghāzī and tafsir corpuses. In the logic of modern Bāținī-Skeptical scholarship, the transmission history of Hadīth reports—the isnāds—must be seen as different and superior by fact of being more purposefully fabricated. The point that we are emphasizing here, however, is that of difference: the respective isnāds of Hadīth reports, on the one hand, and of sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr reports, on the other, are neither the result of nor expressive of the same transmission historyand thus the isnāds of sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr reports simply cannot be coherently or productively assessed in terms of the isnāds of Hadīth reports.

Proceeding on the working principle elaborated earlier—that *sīrah-maghāzī* and *tafsīr isnāds*, more likely than not, represent a chain of genuine transmission—we come now to the second issue raised at the outset. This is the question of *what was being transmitted, and how?*

disjointed and atomized representation of Muhammad . . . each form became identified with different groups . . . the word Sunnah came to refer specifically to short narratives and vignettes (Hadîth) that could be used as sources of legal authority ... Sunnah meaning normative practice.... The narrative biography, the Sîrah, located Muhammad in time and space.... But, if Muhammad were to be the paradigm for the community for all time, he would have to be timeless. Hence, the non-narrative, a-historic Muhammad was presented in discreet, atomized accounts each having validity for establishing precedent regardless of the time and place.... The result was a tension where the adherence to Sunnah is often construed to be at variance with adherence to the mythic image of Muhammad of the Sîrah. Ibn Ishâq's Sîrah was eventually epitomized and stripped of . . . some of its more 'popular' elements about Muhammad, and Ibn Ishâq was himself condemned as a Shî'ite.... These early biographies of Muhammad seem to be part of an already existing North Arab literary form known as the Ayyâm al-'Arab, the 'Battle Days of the Arab.'... Early Muslims used the Ayyâm al-'Arab ... to 'prove' that their new tribe was superior and that their new tribal leader, Muhammad, was the most noble in birth and deeds." Newby, "Imitating Muhammad," 267-269.

These are in fact two separate but related questions. First, how were reports being transmitted: in writing, or orally, or in some combination of the two, and (how) did methods of transmission change over time? Second, what was being transmitted: the specific wording of a report (*al-riwāyah bi-al-laf*z) or the meaning of the report (*al-riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā*), and (how) did attitudes towards literal and paraphrastic transmission change over time?

In a work published in 1968, Muhammad Mustafa Azami gathered copious evidence of writing as a standard feature of the transmission of knowledge in the first two centuries of Islam.⁵⁹ Azami argued that transmission of knowledge in the first two centuries was practiced through a combination of writing and lecturing: teachers lectured, students wrote down what was taught, and these notes were then used as an aid to memory in lecturing. Some teachers lectured directly from their notes, others prided themselves on lecturing only from memory (i.e., that which they had memorized from their notes), some teachers apparently forbade students to write down their lectures, and others insisted they write them down; some students first wrote down and then memorized, and others first memorized and then wrote down.⁶⁰ Azami's thesis on the performance of transmission was largely ignored in the Western academy, but his basic findings were eventually confirmed in a series of articles published between 1985 and 1992 by Gregor Schoeler.⁶¹ Unlike Azami, however, Schoeler made the important distinction between the mode of transmission-that is, whether oral or written-and the *content* of transmission-that is, whether literal or paraphrastic. While Azami seems to assume that transmission was word-for-word and that texts stabilized very early, Schoeler argued that transmission was *initially* concerned with conveying the meaning of the account in question (al-riwāvah bi-al-ma'nā), and

⁵⁹ M. M. Azami, *Studies in Early Hadīth Literature* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1968), 18–186. See also Sprenger, "On the Origin and Progress of Writing Down Historical Facts among the Musalmans," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 25 (1856), 308–329, 375–381.

⁶⁰ Azami, Studies, 186-197.

⁶¹These important articles, published in German, have been now translated by Uwe Vagelpohl and edited by James E. Montgomery as Gregor Schoeler, *The Oral and the Written in Early Islam* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006). Schoeler never cites Azami.

only at a *later* stage with the preservation of the exact *wording* of the text (*al-riwāyah bi-al-lafẓ*).⁶² It was during the earlier stage, that of *al-riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā*, that reports underwent considerable rewording. This latter point is extremely important for the issue of the stabilization of texts, and thus for the questions of authorship and dating of the accounts of the Satanic verses, for which reason it will be appropriate to take it up here.

That the phenomenon of *al-riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā* was widespread in the first two centuries of Islam is actually well attested and detailed in crucial source material that not only was relatively neglected by Schoeler but also actually provides stronger and more direct and detailed evidence than the sources from which Schoeler constructs his argument—namely, the early post-formative works on the sciences of Hadīth, which, while distinctly uncomfortable with al-riwāyah *bi-al-ma'nā*, nonetheless treat *al-riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā* as a historical fait accompli. Thus, al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463/1071), writing at a historical juncture when the Hadīth movement had begun firmly to establish its epistemological authority in Islamic discourses, devotes a lengthy discussion to the disagreement over the permissibility of *al-riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā*,⁶³ in which he first cites the strong purist principle preferred by classical Hadīth scholars: transmission should be literal. He then points out, however, that *al-riwāyah* bi-al-ma'nā was permitted by the Prophet64 and historically practiced by the sahābah and tābi'ūn, for which reason it is legitimate. He describes several specific forms of al-riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā that were practiced by the early generations: substituting synonyms for the words of the received text,⁶⁵ rearrangement of the received text

⁶²On this point, see also Gregor Schoeler, Charakter und Authentie der muslimischen Überlieferung über das Leben Mohammeds (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1996), 113; now translated as Gregor Schoeler, The Biography of Muhammad: Nature and Authenticity (New York: Routledge, 2011), 115.

⁶³See al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī, *Kifāyah*, 171–211; see also the discussion on *al-riwāyah bi-al-lafẓ / bi-al-ma'nā* in Muḥammad 'Ajjāj al-Khațīb, *al-Sunnah qabl al-tadwīn* (Cairo: Maktabat Wahbah, [2nd edition] 1988), 126–143, and the sources cited there.

⁶⁴ The Prophet is reported as saying, "As long as you do not permit the prohibited and prohibit the permitted, there is nothing wrong with it (*al-riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā*)"; al-Khaţīb al-Baghdādī, *Kifāyah*, 199.

⁶⁵Al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī, *Kifāyah*, 197.

(al-taqdīm wa-al-ta'khīr),66 adding to or omitting from the received text (al-ziyādah wa-al-nuqsān),67 and abridging the received text (al*ikhtişār*).⁶⁸ All these were deemed acceptable by the early transmitters as long as the meaning of the report remained unaltered. The last three practices-rearrangement, addition and omission, and abridgement-are particularly interesting as they effectively describe processes of recension and redaction, the existence of which the early Hadith authorities had to take into consideration while formulating their methodology. Al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī does not mention another practice that was anathema to the Hadīth scholars and that, as we have noted, was prevalent in the field of *sīrah-maghāzī*, culturally indifferent as it was to the notion of authoritative transmission-namely, transmission by collective isnād. Transmission by collective isnād is, of course, an instrument par excellence of alriwāyah bi-al-ma'nā as it involves combining and collating different reports into a single unit of meaning.

Given the fact that reports were being transmitted with rearrangement, addition and omission, abridgement, and collation of the received text, the question, then, is how best to identify and date the authorship of a *riwāyah* when its wording was changing during the course of transmission. The answer to this, surely, is that we must consider issues of authorship and dating at two levels, that of lafz and that of ma'nā. If we find two differently constructed sīrah-maghāzī or tafsir narratives carried by isnāds going back to the same individual, it would appear reasonable to date the common meaning of the reports as, indeed, having been transmitted from that individual, while taking the differences in wording and narrative construction as arising, if not from that individual himself, then from the subsequent process of recension in transmission. The assumption here is that a given transmission from a particular individual will stabilize as a unit of meaning before it stabilizes as a verbal unit. Two different dating methods are thus called for: *dating the meaning of the report*, and dating the words. In order to date according to meaning, however, it is first necessary to establish a unit of meaning. While this is relatively straightforward in short reports that deal with only one

⁶⁶ Al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī, Kifāyah, 207.

⁶⁷Al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī, *Kifāyah*, 207-208.

⁶⁸ Al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī, Kifāyah, 193.

hermeneutical issue, in a longer narrative containing more than one such issue, such as the reports on the Satanic verses incident, this becomes more difficult—and the matter will thus have to be addressed at the outset of Chapter 2, before we proceed to the analysis of the Satanic verses reports.



The Earliest Narrative Reports (*Riwāyahs*) and Their Transmitters

When I had lost myself, wonderstruck, in adoration of that cheek, They told me the story of Lāt and Manāt. —HĀFIZ¹

Satanic verses incident are collected and their *matns* and *isnāds* analyzed. Only in this way can we understand *when* and *how* it is that the Satanic verses incident came to constitute a standard element in the memory of the early community on the life of its Prophet, and thus answer the question: *why* did the early Muslim community accept the Satanic verses incident? Also, since it is with these very reports that Muslims have continued to engage down the centuries to the present day, the study of the earliest narratives of the Satanic verses incident forms the basis for the history of the subsequent formation of Islamic orthodoxy on the question of the Satanic verses.

This analysis will aim to answer the following three sets of questions.

¹Chūn man az 'ishq-irukhash bī-khwudu hayrān gashtam / khabar az vāqi'a-yi Lātu Manātam dādand, Hāfiz Shīrāzī (d. 792), Divān-i Khwājah Shams al-Dīn Muhammad Hāfiz Shīrāzī, ed. Taymūr Burhān Līmūdhī (Tehran: Kitābkhānah-yi Sanā'ī), 1992, 100.

The first questions pertain to the transmission of the narratives. When-that is, around what date-were narratives of the Satanic verses incident transmitted and circulated in the early Muslim community? How widely circulated were these narratives? Where were these narratives in circulation? How widely accepted were they? Who circulated and accepted these narratives? Who did not accept and circulate them? In the context of what literary genres or cultural projects were these narratives transmitted? What were the mechanisms and practices by which they were transmitted?

The second set of questions pertains to the content of the narratives. What was the textual content of these narratives? What does the content of these narratives tell us about the understanding of the Satanic verses incident in the early Muslim community? What do the narratives of the Satanic verses incident tell us about the understanding of Muhammad and his Prophethood in the early Muslim community?

A third question pertains to both content and transmission: What do the identity and nature of the genres, projects, and practitioners who accepted or rejected the reports tell us about the understanding of Muhammad and his Prophethood in the early Muslim community? The analysis of each *riwāyah* will be directed at the following goals:

- 1. I will attempt, through the individual and comparative analysis of the respective *isnāds* and *matns*, to date each report. I am not attempting to provide a date for when a particular *riwāyah* was *put* into circulation, but will confine myself to the task of trying to ascertain the earliest time at which we may reasonably take the report to have, in fact, been in circulation, while leaving open the possibility that it may actually have entered circulation at some earlier point. As a cumulative exercise, this will enable us to determine an approximate *terminus post quem* for when the Satanic verses incident was present as an element in the corpus of historical memory materials transmitted by the early Muslim community.
- 2. I will attempt to identify, in the early Islamic biographical literature, the individual first- and second-century scholars who are recorded in the *isnāds* as having transmitted accounts of the incident, so as to see what sort of literary genres and cultural projects these scholars are identified with. This will tell

us something about the literary and cultural contexts within which *riwāyahs* on the Satanic verses incident were being transmitted in early Islam, which will, in turn, provide us with a place from which to trace changes and continuities in these literary and cultural contexts in subsequent centuries.

- 3. Through the identification of the scholars in the *isnāds*, I will attempt to identify the geographical region where each report was in circulation. Cumulatively, this analysis will enable us to assess how widespread knowledge and transmission of the incident were in the early Islamic world.
- 4. I will undertake an analytical reading of the text (*matn*) of the narrative of each *riwāyah*, so as to examine how the Satanic verses incident was understood by the early Muslim community. The understanding of the incident contained in the early narratives will, of course, tell us something about how the early community understood the Prophethood of Muhammad, just as modern Muslim attitudes towards the incident reflect the understanding of Prophethood in the modern Muslim community.

As noted at the end of Chapter 1, given that reports were transmitted initially with attention to meaning (*al-riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā*) and only later with attention to their specific wording (*al-riwāyah bi-al-laf* \gtrsim), in order to date reports it is necessary first to establish a *unit of meaning*. While this is relatively straightforward in short reports that deal with only one hermeneutical issue, in a longer narrative containing more than one such issue, such as the reports on the Satanic verses incident, this becomes more difficult. The three main hermeneutical issues involved in the Satanic verses incident, which I will take as defining the respective reports as units of meaning, are:

- 1. Did the Prophet utter the Satanic verses?
- 2. Why did the Prophet utter the Satanic verses?
- 3. Did the Prophet realize on his own that he had erred, or was he unaware of having erred until he was corrected by Jibrīl?

The questions "Did the Prophet utter the verses?" and "Why did the Prophet utter the verses?" are the most important hermeneutical issues in the interpretation of the Satanic verses incident. The treatment in a given report of the third question, "Did the Prophet realize on his own that he had erred, or was he unaware of having erred until he was corrected by Jibrīl?" can affect the answer in that report to the second question: "Why did the Prophet utter the verses?"

Riwāyahs 1 to 7: From Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī

Riwāyah 1: From the Rayy Recension of the *Sīrah* of Muḥammad Ibn Isḥāq

This *riwāyah* with which, by virtue of its length and detail, it is appropriate to begin is given by Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (224–310), both in his great *tafsīr*, the *Jāmi*' *al-bayān* (in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj),² and his universal history, the *Tārīkh al-rusul wa-al-mulūk*,³ with the following *isnād*:

Muḥammad b. Ḥumayd al-Rāzī (160–248)⁴ ←⁵ Salamah b. al-Faḍl al-Rāzī (81–191) ← Muḥammad Ibn Isḥāq al-Madanī (85–151) ← Yazīd

²See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi*' *al-bayān* '*an ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1988), 17:187–188. Al-Ṭabarī completed his *tafsīr* around 290; see the study by Franz Rosenthal, "The Life and Works of al-Ṭabarī," in his annotated translation of *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, *Volume 1: General Introduction and From the Creation to the Flood* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 106.

³Al-Țabarī, *Tārīkh al-rusul wa-al-mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1990 [6th edition]), 2:337–340.

⁴As a firm rule, the death dates recorded in the Muslim biographical literature are far more reliable than the birth dates, for the simple reason that while births were generally not recorded, by the time a prominent scholar died, his death would be recorded by his colleagues and students. Birth dates were often pushed back by memorializers as a means of buttressing a scholar's credentials as earlier birth dates not only allowed for the possibility of transmission from the great ancients but also facilitated shorter chains of transmission, which were highly valued in in Ḥadīth methodology (see G. H. A. Juynboll, "The Role of *mu'ammarūn* in the Early Development of the *isnād*," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morganlandes* 81 (1991) 155–175).

⁵The arrow ← indicates the direction of transmission: here, Salamah b. al-Faḍl al-Rāzī *transmitted* the report to Muḥammad b. Ḥumayd al-Rāzī—that is, Muḥammad b. Ḥumayd al-Rāzī *received* the report from Salamah b. al-Faḍl al-Rāzī.

b. Ziyād al-Madanī (d. 130 / 140) ← Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī al-Madanī (40-108).

According to the *isnād*, this report is taken from Salamah b. al-Faḍl's recension of the *sīrah* of the famous Medinese biographer of the Prophet, Muḥammad Ibn Isḥāq (85–151). The Satanic verses incident appears in two recensions of the *sīrah* as taught by Ibn Isḥāq: the Rayy recension of Salamah b. al-Faḍl, and the Kufan recension of Yūnus b. Bukayr (see **Riwāyah 7**, below). It does not appear in Ibn Hishām's (d. 218) edition of al-Bakkā'ī's (d. 183) Kufan recension (what is generally called the *Sīrah* of Ibn Hishām).⁶ In analyzing the above *isnād*, it will be convenient to begin with the transmission forward from Ibn Isḥāq to al-Ṭabarī, and then to consider Ibn Isḥāq's sources.

In regard to Ibn Ishāq, already discussed above, only one point needs to be raised here—namely, that for the *muhaddithūn*, from the early critics of the Hadīth movement down to such modern exemplars as the Hadīth scholar Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī (1914– 1999), the mere fact of his presence in this *isnād* was sufficient basis to reject **Riwāyah 1** as inauthentic and untrue.⁷ We observe a similar phenomenon to that found in the biographical material on Ibn Ishāq in the entries in the *al-jarḥ wa-al-ta'dīl* literature on the transmitter from Ibn Ishāq, Salamah b. al-Faḍl, who studied Ibn Ishāq's *Kitāb almubtada'* and *Kitāb al-maghāzī* in Rayy.⁸ Salamah was regarded by the Hadīth scholars as an unreliable transmitter, and duly appears in the fourth-century biographical dictionaries compiled by the Hadīth scholars expressly for "weak" (*da'īf*), "rejected" (*matrūk*), and "discredited" (*majrūḥ*) Hadīth transmitters.⁹ 'Alī Ibn al-Madīnī (d. 224,

- ⁷Nāșir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Nașb al-majānīq li-nasf al-gharānīq*, (Damascus: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1952), 12.
- ⁸See Ibn Sa'd, al-Ţabaqāt al-kubrā, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aţā' (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1990), 7:267; al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 9:49-50; Ibn Ḥajar, Tahdhīb, 4:153-154; and Muţā' al-Ṭarābīshī, Ruwāt Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq ibn Yasār fī al-maghāzī wa-al-siyar wa-sā'ir al-marwiyyāt (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-Mu'āşir, 1994), 147-151.
- ⁹See Ahmad b. Shu'ayb al-Nasā'ī, Kitāb al-du'afā' wa-al-matrūkīn, ed. Būrān al-Dinnāwi and Kamāl Yūsuf al-Hut (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Kutub al-Thaqāfi-

⁶The classic edition is Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-nabawiayyah*, ed. Muṣṭafā al-Saqqā, Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī, and 'Abd al-Ḥafīẓ Shiblī (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1937).

one of the earliest compilers of a work judging Ḥadīth transmitters) said, "As soon as we left Rayy, we threw away Salamah's Ḥadīths." Despite this, Salamah's transmission of Ibn Isḥāq's *sīrah-maghāzī* works was widely regarded as outstanding. Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn recorded, "As regards Ibn Isḥāq, there is no one between Baghdad and Khurāsān more reliable than Salamah." Al-Dhahabī listed his various detractors among the Ḥadīth scholars, but added, "He was strong in *maghāzī*." It is noteworthy that Salamah's reputation as a scholar of *maghāzī* derived in considerable measure from the fact of his written transmissions. Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn said, "We wrote from him; his *maghāzī* books are the most complete [*atamm*]; there are no books more complete than his." It is reported that Salamah's transmission was highly regarded because Salamah came into possession of Ibn Isḥāq's own papyri of the *Kitāb al-mubtada'* and *Kitāb al-maghāzī*.¹⁰

Al-Tabarī took Salamah's recension of Ibn Ishāq from Muhammad b. Humayd al-Rāzī, who was one of al-Ţabarī's main teachers during the latter's sojourn in Rayy. The chain Muḥammad b. Ḥumayd ← Salamah ← Ibn Ishāq occurs in al-Ṭabarī's *Tārīkh* over 350 times, indicating the size of the work in question. In view of Muhammad b. Humayd's importance to al-Tabarī, it is interesting to note that he had a very mixed reputation among the Hadīth scholars. Al-Dāraqutnī, al-Tirmidhī, and Ahmad b. Hanbal all transmitted from him; however, the scholars of Rayy are reported as saying of Ibn Hanbal, "He didn't know him (Muhammad b. Humayd). If he knew him as we did, he would not have spoken well of him at all." The standard charge leveled against Muhammad b. Humayd was that he regularly attached matns to isnāds by which they had not been transmitted. One account goes so far as to claim that he never studied with Salamah or with 'Alī b. Mujāhid (Ibn Ishāq's other prominent Rāzī student, d. 180), but rather obtained a written copy of these two recensions of Ibn Ishāq from a third party. Whatever the truth of this accusation, Muhammad

yyah, 1985), 118; al-'Uqaylī, *Kitāb al-du'afā'*, 1:518–519; Muḥammad Ibn Ḥibbān al-Bustī, *Kitāb al-Majrūḥīn min al-muḥaddithīn wa-al-du'afā' wa-l-matrūkīn*, ed. Maḥmūd Ibrāhīm Zāyid (Aleppo: Dār al-Wa'ī, 1975–1976), 1:337–338; Ibn 'Adī, *al-Kāmil fī al-du'afā'*, 3:340.

¹⁰ See Ibn 'Adī, al-Kāmil fī al-du'afā', 3:340; al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī, Tārīkh Baghdād, 1:221; Muhammad Hamidullah, "Muḥammad Ibn Isḥaq," Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society 15 (1967), 77-100, at 95-96.

b. Humayd is being criticized here for failing to observe a fundamental tenet of Hadīth methodology—namely, studying the work with an authorized transmitter. Meanwhile, the story does acknowledge that he owned manuscript copies of these two recensions, which is presumably what made him an attractive source in al-Ṭabarī's eyes.¹¹

We may now turn back to consider Ibn Isḥāq's source for the report, the early Medinese Qur'ān authority Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī (d. 108).¹² I have found twenty-four *riwāyahs* in Ibn Isḥāq's *sīrah-maghāzī* corpus that go back to Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī, of which half are by way of Yazīd b. Ziyād al-Madanī (d. 136), a now-obscure individual from whom Mālik b. Anas also took al-Quraẓī's reports.¹³ The importance of Muḥammad b. Ka'b as a figure in early Qur'ānic studies may easily be gauged from the following. First, the following Prophetic Ḥadīth, taken as referring to al-Quraẓī, was circulated by at least three different *isnāds*: "There will come from out of the *kāhinayn* [the Banū Qurayẓah and Banū al-Naḍīr; the Jewish tribes of Madīnah] a man who will study the Qur'ān in a manner which no one after him will emulate," and, in another version, "who will be the most learned of men in regard to the

- ¹¹See Ibn Abī Hātim al-Rāzī, Kitāb al-jarh wa-al-ta'dīl, Hyderabad: Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniyyah, 1373, 7:232-233; al-'Uqaylī, Kitāb al-du'afā', 4:1222; Ibn 'Adī, al-Kāmil fī al-du'afā', 6:274-275; Ibn al-Jawzī, Kitāb al-du'afā' wa-al-matrūkīn, 3:54; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 9:127-131; al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 11:503-506; Rosenthal, "Life and Works," 17-18; al-Ţarābīshī, Ruwāt Muhammad Ibn Ishāq, 151-154; and 'Alī b. Hasan b. 'Alī b. 'Abd al-Hamīd al-Halabī al-Atharī, Dalā'il al-tahqīq li-ibtāl qişşat al-gharāniq riwāyatan wa-dirāyatan (Jiddah: Maktabat al-Şāhābah, 1992), 126-127.
- ¹² See Abū Nu'aym al-Işbahānī, *Hilyat al-awliyā*' (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1932, 3:212–221; al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 5:65–68; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 9:420–422; Sezgin, GAS, 1:32; Nisar Ahmed Faruqi, Early Muslim Historiography: A Study of the Transmitters of Arab History from the Rise of Islam up to the End of Umayyad Period (612–750 A.D.) (New Delhi: Idārah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1979), 146–155.

¹³ He had a namesake with whom he was confused. He is generally given as a mawlā of the Banū Makhzūm, and Ibn Abī Hātim says he was also a Qurazī. See Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqāt*, 6:330; al-Bukhārī, al-Tārīkh al-kabīr, Hyderabad: Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniyyah, 1360–1384 h, 2 / 4:333; Ibn Abī Hātim, Jarh, 9:263; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-islām wa-wafayāt mashāhīr al-a'lām*, ed. 'Umar 'Abd al-Salām Tadmurī, (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1987), 8:565; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 11:328, Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Hajjāj Yūsuf al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl fī asmā' al-rijāl* ed. Bashshār 'Awwād Ma'rūf (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1992), 32:132–134; Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūtī, *Is'āf al-mubațta' fī rijāl al-Muwațta'*, published with Mālik b. Anas, *Kitāb al-Muwațta'* (Cairo: Dār al-Rayyān li-al-Turāth, 1988), 2:291–404, at 3:263.

Qur'ān."¹⁴ Second, Muḥammad b. Ka'b is cited no less than sixty-two times in the extant forty-nine-folio fragment of the second-century Qur'ān commentary of the Egyptian scholar 'Abd Allāh Ibn Wahb (125–197).¹⁵ In only one of these reports does al-Quraẓī relate from a previous authority—that is to say that like **Riwāyah 1**, these are all *mursal* reports.¹⁶ All of this is strongly indicative of the existence in the second century of a body of *tafsīr* material that was recognized as representing the exegetical activity and opinion of Muḥammad b. Ka'b.¹⁷ The fact that nineteen of the reports from al-Quraẓī given in the second-century *Tafsīr* of Ibn Wahb also appear, in whole or in part, in the late third-century *Jāmi' al-bayān* of al-Ṭabarī, with different *isnāds* going back to Muḥammad b. Ka'b, but with similar wording, suggests that the transmission of the contents of Muḥammad b. Ka'b's *tafsīr* corpus stabilized considerably during the second century.¹⁸ We will have occasion to address the question of the au-

¹⁴ Muḥammad b. Ka'b's father was a Jew of the Banū Qurayẓah who, being a child at the time, escaped death when the men of that tribe were killed.

- ¹⁵ See Miklos Muranyi's model editions of 'Abd Allāh Ibn Wahb, al-Ğāmi': Tafsīr al-Qur'ān (die Koranexegese) (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993) (for the citations of the Hadīth prophesying Muḥammad b. Ka'b see p. 70, to which add Aḥmad b. al-Husayn al-Bayhaqī, Dalā'il al-nubuwwah wa-ma'rifat aḥwāl ṣāhib al-sharī'ah, ed. 'Abd al-Mu'tī Qal'ajī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1985), 6:498; and 'Abd Allāh b. Wahb, al-Ğāmi': Tafsīr al-Qur'ān: Koranexegese 2 Teil 1, (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1995).
- ¹⁶ As noted in **Chapter 1**, a *mursal* (pl. *marāsīl*) report is one in which the *isnād* stops at a *tābi* ⁵ (literally, a "Follower," meaning a member of the first-century generations who lived *after* the death of the Prophet) rather than a *şaḥābī* (a "Companion" contemporary of the Prophet). In a study of *isnāds* that carry *sīrah* reports, Muḥammad al-Ṣawwayānī rejects the **Riwāyah 1** on the basis of the poor reputations of Muḥammad b. Ḥumayd and Ibn Ishāq, and because the report is *mursal; al-Qaṣīmah: dirāsah naqdiypah li-nuṣūṣ al-sīrah al-nabawiyyah*, Riyadh: Dār Ţībah, 1989, 1:433.
- ¹⁷ This corpus has now received a study in which Al-Qurazī's report of the Satanic verses incident is duly rejected by reference to the orthodox arguments of later authorities: Akram 'Abd Khalīfah Hamad al-Dulaymī, *Muḥammad ibn Ka'b al-Qurazī wa-atharu-hu fī al-tafsīr* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah), 2009, 353–357; the biographical data on Muḥammad b. Ka'b is collated at 41–82.
- ¹⁸ In cross-checking the *Tafsir* of Ibn Wahb with the *Jāmi' al-bayān* of al-Tabarī, I have relied on the excellent indices prepared by Miklos Muranyi. The fourth-/ fifth-century Naysābūrī *mufassir* Abū al-Ishāq al-Tha'labī (d. 427) lists the *Tafsīr* of Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Qurazī among the sources for his *al-Kashf wa-al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, the transmitter from Muḥammad b. Ka'b being Abū Ma'shar; see al-Tha'labī's bibliographical introduction to his *al-Kashf wa-al-bayān*, ed. Isaiah Goldfeld as *Mufassirū sharq al-ʿālam al-islamī fī al-arba'ah al-qurūn al-hijriyyah al-ūlā* ('Akka: Srugy, 1984), 37-38.

thenticity of Ibn Isḥāq's transmission of this particular report from Muḥammad b. Ka'b in the analysis of **Riwāyah 2** below. The following is a translation of the *matn* of the report:¹⁹

When the Messenger of God saw his tribe turning away from him, and was greatly disturbed [*shaqqa 'alay-hi*] by their estrangement from that which he had brought them from God, he desired within himself [*tamannā fī nafsi-hi*] that there come to him from God something that would bring him and his tribe together [$m\bar{a}$ yuq \bar{a} ribu bayna-hu wa-bayna qawmi-hi]. Because of his love for his tribe and his concern for them [hirsi-hi 'alay-him], it would have pleased him if their harsh treatment of him should, in some measure, have been softened, to the point that [$hatt\bar{a}$]²⁰ he thought to himself about it [haddatha bi-hi nafsa-hu] and desired it [$tamann\bar{a}$ -hu] and wished for it [ahabba-hu].

So God sent down: "By the star when it sets: 'Your Companion has not gone astray [dalla], nor is he misguided [$ghaw\bar{a}$]: Nor does he speak from his own desire [$haw\bar{a}$] . . ."; and when he (the Prophet) reached the verse, "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?," Satan cast upon his tongue [$alq\bar{a}$ al-shayṭānu 'alā lisāni-hi] because of that which he had been thinking to himself about [$li-m\bar{a}^{21}$ kāna yuḥaddithu bi-hi nafsa-hu] and had been desiring [yatamannā] to bring to his people: "Those high gharānīq: Indeed, their intercession is approved [tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā: wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna la-turtada]."²²

When Quraysh heard this they were delighted $[farih\bar{u}]$. The way in which he had mentioned their gods pleased them greatly and they hearkened to him $[fa-aṣ\bar{a}kh\bar{u} \ la-hu]$, while the Believers trusted their Prophet $[wa-al-mu'min\bar{u}n \ muṣaddiq\bar{u}n \ nabiyya-hum]$ in regard to that which he brought them from their Lord, and did not suspect him of an error [khața'] or delusion [wahm] or lapse [zalal].

And when he reached the *sajdah* in the *sūrah* and completed the *sūrah*, he made the *sajdah* and the Muslims made the *sajdah* with the

¹⁹Cf., the respective translations of A. Guillaume, *Life of Muḥammad*, 165–167; and W. Montgomery Watt and M. V. McDonald (translators and annotators), *History of al-Ṭabarī Vol. VI*, 108–110.

²⁰ an yalīna la-hu ba'du mā qad ghaluza 'alay-hi min amri-him; Guillaume, Life of Muhammad, 165, mistranslates this as: "if the obstacle that made his task so difficult could be removed."

²¹Guillaume reads this as *lammā*, "when."

²²The text in the $T\bar{a}r\bar{i}kh$ has $turtaj\bar{a}$, which probably represents a scribal error as the word is given as $turtad\bar{a}$ in the rest of the narrative.

sajdah of their Prophet, believing what he brought them to be true [taṣdīqan li-mā jā'a bi-hi], and in obedience to his command. And the Qurashī and non-Qurashī Mushrikūn present in the mosque [al-masjid] made the sajdah themselves because of what they had heard in mention of their gods [li-mā sami'ū min dhikr ālihati-him], so that there remained in the mosque neither Believer nor Mushrik who had not made the sajdah, save al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah, who was a very old man and was unable to do so, so he took a handful of soil from the valley floor and made the sajdah on it.

Then the people dispersed from the mosque. Quraysh left having been greatly pleased by what they had heard in mention of their gods, saying, "Muḥammad has mentioned our gods in the most favourable manner [*bi-aḥsan al-dhikr*] and has asserted in his recitation that they are the high *gharānīq* and that their intercession is approved [*inna-hā al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna la-turtaḍā*]."

News of the *sajdah* reached those of the Companions of the Messenger of God who were in Abyssinia, and it was said: "Quraysh have accepted Islam"; so some men undertook to return while others remained behind. And Jibrīl came to the Messenger and said: "Muḥammad, what have you done? You have recited to the people that which I did not bring to you from God, and you have said that which He did not say to you! [*yā Muḥammad mā-dhā ṣana'ṭa la-qad talawta 'alā alnās mā lam āti-ka bi-hi 'an Allāh wa-qulta mā lam yaqul²³ la-ka*]." The Messenger of God was grieved [*ḥazina*] at this, and was greatly fearful of God [*khāfa min Allāh khawfan kabīran*].

So God sent down a Revelation and was Merciful to Him [*wa-kāna bi-hi raḥīman*],²⁴ comforting him and lightening the burden of the matter [*yu'azzī-hi wa-yukhaffiḍu 'alay-hi al-amr*], informing him that no Prophet or Messenger before him had desired as he had desired [*tamannā ka-mā tamannā*] nor wished as he had wished [*aḥabba ka-mā aḥabba*] but that Satan cast (something) into his desire [*illā wa-alshayṭān qad alqā fī umniyyati-hi*], just as Satan had cast (something) onto his (the Prophet's) tongue [*ka-mā alqā 'alā lisāni-hi*], and that God then removed that which Satan had cast and established His Signs clearly [*fa-nasakha Allāhu mā alqā al-shayṭānu wa-aḥkama āyāti-hi*] meaning: you (Muḥammad) are like the rest of the Prophets and Messengers. So God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he desired, Satan cast something into his

²³ In al-Ţabarī, Jāmi'al-bayān, this is vocalized as yuqāl.

²⁴ In al-Țabarī, Jāmi'al-bayān, this is presented as a Qur'ānic citation, which it is not.

desire; then God removes that which Satan casts and establishes His Signs clearly—and God is All-Knowing, All-Wise."

So God dispelled His Prophet's grief [huzn], made him secure from that which he feared, and removed [nasakha] that which Satan had cast upon his tongue in mention of their gods—they are the high gharānīq and their intercession is approved! [$inna-h\bar{a}$ al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna la-turtaḍā]—with the words of God, the Glorious, following the mention of "al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt, the third, the other": "Should you have males, and He females? That, indeed, would be an unfair division! . . ."—meaning: crooked—". . . Indeed, they are no more than names which you have named, you and your ancestors . . . ," to His words: "to whom He wills and approves [li-man yashā'u wa-yarḍā]"²⁵; meaning: how can the intercession of your gods be of benefit with God?

And when there came from God that which removed [*nasakha*] what Satan had cast onto the tongue of His Prophet, Quraysh said, "Muḥammad has regretted [*nadima*]²⁶ what he said about the status of your gods with God, and has changed it and brought something else." And those two phrases [*ḥarfān*] which Satan had cast onto the tongue of the Messenger of God had become lodged in the mouth of every Mushrik, and they became even more iniquitous than they had been before, and even more hostile to those of Quraysh who had accepted Islam and who had followed the Messenger of God.

And those of the Messenger's Companions who had left Abyssinia because of what had reached them about the people of Mecca having accepted Islam when they made the *sajdah* with the Prophet approached Mecca. When they were close to Mecca, it reached them that the conversion of the people of Mecca to Islam of which they had been speaking was false, so none of them entered Mecca except under protection or in secret.

To familiarize the reader with the incident, and to facilitate comparison with other reports, it will be useful to break the above narrative down into its component narrative elements. For the purpose of analysis, I will distinguish here between narrative units, narrative motifs, and hermeneutical elaborations. **Narrative unit** is the term

²⁵Qur'ān 53:21–26 al-Najm.

²⁶Both Guillaume and Watt translate *nadima* as "repent," which is a theologically loaded word, and is badly misleading in the present context.

I am using to denote the nine structural or dramatic units that make up the plot in the accounts of the Satanic verses. These are:

- 1. the setting or background
- 2. the specific occasion
- 3. Satan's intervention
- 4. the Satanic verses
- 5. the reaction of Quraysh
- 6. the reaction of the Muslims
- 7. correction
- 8. clarification
- 9. consequences

All or some of these narrative units may be present in a particular account of the incident, in any order or arrangement, by explicit presentation or by contextual implication.

Narrative motifs are those features of the narrative that provide the narrative units with specific content. Thus, the reaction of Quraysh may be specified by the narrative motif of the *sajdah* (prostration) of Quraysh (as above), or by a narrative motif other than the *sajdah* of Quraysh.

Narrative motifs are susceptible to a variety of hermeneutical elaborations. A hermeneutical elaboration is any element of the narrative, whether a narrative unit or narrative motif, which serves to interpret, explicate, or valorize any other element of the narrative. The different hermeneutical elaborations of any element in the narrative are what accord that element its meaning within the narrative in question, thus affecting the meaning of that narrative as a whole. For example, in the present report, the content of **narrative unit 1**—the setting for the story—is the narrative motif of the Prophet desiring an end to Quraysh's persecution of the Muslims. This narrative motif functions as a hermeneutical elaboration for another narrative motif that itself comprises the narrative unit of Satan's intervention (narrative unit 3, below)—namely, that Satan cast the Satanic verses onto the Prophet's tongue as a result of his desire to be reconciled with Quraysh. In other reports, there is no mention of the Prophet's desire to be reconciled with Quraysh as the background to the narrative; in some

cases, for example, the Prophet is simply portrayed as becoming drowsy while reciting Sūrat al-Najm, thus providing Satan with the opportunity to intervene (see **Riwāyahs 24, 25, 26**, and **27**, below). In this latter instance, the narrative motif of the Prophet's sleepiness serves as an alternative hermeneutical elaboration for the narrative unit of Satan's intervention, thus conveying a very different understanding both of the nature of the Prophet's role in precipitating Satan's intervention and of the event as a whole. Of course, the mere absence or presence of a narrative unit may itself hermeneutically affect the narrative—that is to say, may itself function as a hermeneutical elaboration.²⁷

The following are the narrative and hermeneutical elements in **Ri**-**wāyah 1**.

NARRATIVE UNIT 1: SETTING/BACKGROUND

motif 1a:	Quraysh's estrangement from the Prophet.
motif 1b:	the Prophet's desire to be reconciled with Quraysh
motif 1c:	the Prophet's desire to halt Quraysh's persecution of him—"it would have pleased him if their harsh treatment of him should, in some measure, have been softened."
motif 1d:	the Prophet's further desire that Divine Revelation be the instrument by which his desire should be accomplished.

The setting and background of the Satanic verses incident *within* **Riwāyah 1** are thus that of the Prophet's desire to be reconciled with his estranged tribe. There is, of course, also the further question of the setting and background of **Riwāyah 1** *outside* the self-contained text of the *riwāyah* itself. It was noted at the outset that al-Ṭabarī cites **Riwāyah 1** in two separate works: in the *sīrah* section of his *Tārīkh*, and in his *tafsīr*, the *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*. In the *Tārīkh*, **Riwāyah** 1 appears in a series of reports on the theme of Quraysh's opposition

²⁷I am using the terms narrative unit and narrative motif in a sense not dissimilar to Norman Calder, "From Midrash to Scripture: The Sacrifice of Abraham in Early Islamic Tradition," *Le Muséon* 101 (1982) 375-402, at 397-399. Calder, however, is preoccupied with formal issues of textual origins and oral transmission, and does not consider the relationship of narrative elements to each other in terms of hermeneutical elaboration.

to and persecution of the Prophet and his followers during the Meccan period of the Prophet's early mission; in the *tafsīr*, **Riwāyah 1** appears solely in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj. The significance of this larger textual context will be taken up repeatedly in the course of the book. For the present, it should be noted that **motifs 1b**, **1c**, and **1d** function as a hermeneutical elaboration for **narrative unit 3** ("Satan's intervention"), below.

Also, through the use of the verb *tamannā*, **motifs 1b**, **c**, and **d** present a preparatory linking phrase and gloss for Qur'ān 22:52 al-Hajj—we know from **motifs 1b**, **1c**, and **1d** that the verb *tamannā* and the noun *umniyyah* in Qur'ān 22:52 al-Hajj mean "desire" and not "recitation" (the other standard meaning of *tamannā / umniyyah*). **Motifs 1b**, **1c**, and **1d** thus function also as a hermeneutical elaboration for **motif 8a**, below (the Revelation of Qur'ān 22:52 al-Hajj).

NARRATIVE UNIT 2: OCCASION

motif 2a:	the Revelation of Sūrat al-Najm: "Your companion has
	not gone astray [<i>dalla</i>], nor is he misguided [<i>ghawā</i>]: Nor does he speak from his own desire [<i>hawā</i>]"
motif 2b:	the recitation by the Prophet of Sūrat al-Najm \ldots
motif 2c:	in the presence of the Mushrikūn
motif 2d:	at the Ka'bah

In **Riwāyah 1**, the Satanic verses incident takes place on the occasion of the Revelation to the Prophet of Sūrah al-Najm. From the logic of narrative, it appears that Sūrat al-Najm is sent down when the Prophet is at the Ka'bah (referred to, anachronistically, as "the mosque") in the presence of Quraysh), and that he recites the Sūrah out loud as it is revealed. The second and third verses of Surat al-Najm—"Your Companion has not gone astray, nor is he misguided: Nor does he speak from his own desire"—are among the Qur'ānic verses on the basis of which the principle of *'iṣmat al-anbiyā*'is established. By citing the verses in full (something that, as will be seen, is done only in the reports from Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī), **motif 2a** functions as a hermeneutical elaboration for **motifs 6a** and **6b**, below (the Muslims' conviction in the Prophet reliably transmitting Divine Revelation; and, specifically, their conviction that there was no possibility of an error [*khaṭa'*], delusion [*wahm*], or lapse [*zalal*] on the part of the Prophet). More significantly, the express citation of Qur'ān 53:2–3 al-Najm, "Your companion has not gone astray, nor is he misguided: Nor does he speak from his own desire," means that the whole narrative of the Satanic verses incident—an exemplary incident of Prophetic error—functions here as a hermeneutical elaboration of these very verses.

The text of Surat al-Najm leading up to the Satanic intervention is not quoted in full in the narrative. It is:

> By the star when it sets! Your companion has not gone astray; nor is he misguided; Nor does he speak from his own desire; Indeed, it is none other than an inspiration inspired, Taught by a great force, One possessed of power, who becomes manifest, He was upon the highest horizon, Then he drew near, and descended, Until he was but two-bow lengths away—or closer: Thus did God inspire His servant with that which He inspired him! The heart did not disbelieve that which it saw: Would you, then, dispute with him that which he saw? For, indeed, he saw him alight again, At the lote-tree of the farthest limit, By it: the garden of refuge. When that which overwhelms everything overwhelmed the lote-tree, The eye did not waver, nor did it stray: Truly he saw the Greatest Signs of his Lord! Have you seen al-Lat, and al-'Uzza, and Manat, the third, the other...²⁸

²⁸ wa-al-najmi idhā hawā / mā dalla sahibu-kum wa-mā ghawā / wa-mā yantiqu 'an al-hawā / in huwa illā wahyun yūhā / 'allama-hu shadīd al-quwā / dhū mirratin fa-istawā / wa-huwa bi-al-ufuq al-a'lā / thumma danā fa-tadallā / fa-kāna qāba qawsayni aw adnā / fa-awhā ilā 'abdi-hi mā awhā / mā kadhaba al-fu'ādu mā ra'ā / a-fa-tumārūna-hu 'alā mā yarā / wa-la-qad ra'ā-hu nazlatan ukhrā / 'inda sidrat al-muntahā / 'inda-hā jannat al-ma'wā / idh yaghshā al-sidrata mā yaghshā / mā zāgha al-başaru wa-mā taghā / la-qad ra'ā min āyāti rabbi-hi alkubrā / a-fa-ra'aytum al-lāta wa-al-'uzzā / wa-manāta al-thālithah al-ukhrā, Qur'ān 53:1-20 al-Najm.

NARRATIVE UNIT 3: SATAN'S INTERVENTION

motif 3a: When he (the Prophet) reached the verse, "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other."

Al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt are three female deities who were extensively worshipped during the pre-Islamic period in a vast geographical triangle between Yemen, Syria, and Iraq. Toufic Fahd describes them as

the three most venerated deities of the pre-Islamic pantheon... The deep attachment felt by the Thaķīf towards al-Lāt, the Aws and the <u>Kh</u>azradj towards Manāt and the <u>K</u>uraysh towards al-'Uzzā, constituted the greatest obstacle in the path of the peaceful implantation of Islam in the regions of the <u>Hidj</u>āz.²⁹

Al-Lāt is the feminine form of al-Lāh / Allāh: the name means, simply, "the goddess"—and al-Lāt was probably "the most famous goddess of the Arabs in pre-Islamic times."³⁰ There is profuse evidence of her cult throughout western Arabia from Yemen to Palmyra.³¹ It is evident from the abundant surviving statuary that in Syria (most famously, at Palmyra and Busrah al-Shām) and Iraq (most famously, at Hatrā')³² she was widely worshipped in the form of Athena,³³ but it is not clear to what extent this was the case in the Hijāz—although both

- ³¹See the excellent study by Susanne Krone, *Die altarabische Gottheit al-Lāt*, Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1992, especially the section on "Die Kult der al-Lāt im 6. und 7. Jh. n. Chr.," at 176–239, and the map indicating the places where al-Lāt is known to have been worshipped, at 585; see also Toufic Fahd, *Le Panthéon de l'Arabie centrale a la veille de l'Hégire* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1968), 111–120; and Jawād 'Alī, *al-Mufaṣṣal fī tārīkh al-'arab qabl al-islām* (Baghdad: al-Majma'al-'Ilmī al-'Irāqī, 1950–1959), 6:227–235.
- ³²See the cover illustration of this book.

²⁹ T. Fahd, "Al-Lāt," *EI2*.

³⁰ Hisham M. Al-Tawil, "Early Arab Icons: Literary and Archaeological Evidence for the Cult of Religious Images in Pre-Islamic Arabia," PhD dissertation, University of Iowa, 1993, 102–131, at 102.

³³ For illustrations, see Jean Starcky, "Allath," Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologicae Classicae (LIMC), Zurich: Artemis, 1.1: 564–570, and 1.2: Plates, "Allath," 1–46; Jean Starcky, "Allath, Athèna et la déesse syrienne," in Mythologie Gréco-Romaine, Mythologies Périphériques: Études d'iconographie, ed. Lilly Kahil and Christian Augé (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1981), 119–130, and Plates: J. Starcky I-III; and H. J. W. Drijvers, "De matre inter leones sedente: Iconography and Character of the Arab Goddess Allât," in Hommages à

the early Islamic historical tradition and excavated artifacts provide "evidence of the import of sculptures into Arabia from early times as well as exposure to external influences that led to the formulation of an indigenous sculpture tradition."³⁴ The major shrine of al-Lāt in the Hijāz was at al-Tā'if, where she was worshipped as a carved white rock that the literary evidence suggests was "a standing female figure modeled in a naturalistic style."³⁵ The shrine of al-Lāt at al-Ṭā'if was eventually destroyed when the town submitted to the Prophet a year before his death. The nineteenth-century travelers James Hamilton and Charles Doughty and in the early twentieth century Eldon Rutter were separately shown in al-Tā'if a rock that locals regarded as the remains of the statue of al-Lāt (Doughty published a sketch of the rock).³⁶ The stone is no longer *in situ*, having since apparently fallen victim to the general campaign of Saudi-Wahhābī vandalism. The memory of the worship of al-Lāt is, remarkably, still preserved in the name of an important tribe in contemporary Jordan: the Al 'Abd al-Lāt.37

Al-'Uzzā is the feminine of "al-'Azīz," "the Mighty," one of the ninety-nine Qur'ānic attributes of Allāh. There is widespread archaeological evidence of her cult in central, western, and northern Arabia (most famously, at Petra), and the literary sources tell us that she was apparently the leading female deity of Quraysh (Muḥammad is controversially remembered as having sacrificed a white sheep to

Maarten J. Vermaseren, ed. Margreet B. de Boer and T. A. Edridge (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 331–351, and Plates LXIII–LXXV.

³⁴ See G. R. D. King, "The Sculptures of the Pre-Islamic haram at Makka," in Cairo to Kabul: Afghan and Islamic Studies presented to Ralph Pinder-Wilson, ed. Warwick Ball and Leonard Harrow (London: Melisende, 2002), 144–150; the quotation is at 147; and Krone, Die altarabische Gottheit al-Lāt, 257–327.

³⁵ Al-Tawil, "Early Arab Icons," 128; see also Krone, *Die altarabische Gottheit al-Lāt*, 372–376.

³⁶ See G. R. D. King, "The Prophet Muhammad and the Breaking of the Jāhilliyyah Idols," in *Studies on Arabia in Honour of Professor G. Rex Smith*, ed. J. F. Healey and V. Porter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 91–122, at 97–98, and at 108–109, where Doughty's sketch of the stone is reproduced.

³⁷I was startled, when visiting Amman, to see this name painted large on signboards fronting several construction sites around the city: one Marwān Āl 'Abd al-Lāt is now a prominent building contractor in Jordan. Ammanīs with whom I raised this nomenclature insisted that "'Abd al-Lāt" is the plural of "'Abd Allāh"—which it is not by any stretch of the morphological imagination.

al-'Uzzā "while I was a follower of the religion of my people").³⁸ In the northern Arab regions, some of her surviving statuary takes the recognizable iconography of the Greek goddess Aphrodite, while other examples are in the form of betyls (Quraysh are also remembered as going into battle carrying statues of al-'Uzzā and of al-Lāt).³⁹ Particularly fascinating in this context is the mention in a ninth-century Greek Orthodox ritual abjuration text of the historical worship of a stone relief of Aphrodite at Mecca.⁴⁰ A stone remembered as the remains of a statue of al-'Uzzā was sketched by Doughty in late nineteenth-century al-Ṭā'if, but no longer exists.⁴¹

Manāt, apparently the goddess of Fate, or Nemesis, was probably the oldest of these Arab female deities, and similarly worshipped throughout western Arabia (there is, for example, archaeological evidence of her cult from Qaryat al-Faw, and from al-'Ulā, both approximately equidistant from Mecca in opposite directions). She was reportedly the particular deity of the Khazraj and Aws tribes of Yathrib (pre-Islamic Madīnah), the latter being known as Aws Manāt. Little statuary of Manāt survives, but in the reliefs from Palmyra she appears as a female figure carrying a measuring rod, and flanked by a crescent moon.⁴²

³⁸ See the discussion of this report in Uri Rubin, *The Eye of the Beholder: The Life of Muhammad as Viewed by the Early Muslims* (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1995), 77–81.

³⁹ See Al-Tawil, "Early Arab Icons," 131–144; Fahd, *Le Panthéon de l'Arabie*, 163–182; Fawzi Zayadine, "Al-'Uzza Aphrodite," *LIMC*, 2.1:167–169, and 2.2: Plates, "Al-'Uzza Aphrodite" 1–7; Fawzi Zayadine, "L'icononographie d'al'Uzza-Aphrodite," in *Mythologie gréco-romaine, Mythologies Périphériques: Études d'iconographie*, ed. Lilly Kahil and Christian Augé (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1981), 113–118, and Plates: F. Zayadine, I–II; M. C. A. MacDonald and Laila Nahmé, "Al-'Uzzā," *EI2*; Krone, *Die altarabische Gottheit al-Lāt*, 492–523; and 'Alī, *al-Mufaṣṣal*, 6:235–246.

⁴⁰ E. Montet, "Un rituel d'abjuration des Musulmans dans l'église Grecque," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 53 (1906), 145–163, at 153–154. See also the statement by John of Damascus (676–749) on the pre-Islamic Arabs' worship of Aphrodite and the "morning star" (Venus); Daniel J. Sahas, *John of Damascus on Islam: The "Heresy of the Ishmaelites"* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 71–72.

⁴¹King, "The Breaking of the *Jāhilliyyah* Idols," 122.

⁴² Fawzi Zayadine, "Manawat," *LIMC*, 8.1:805–806, and 8.2: Plates, "Manawat" 1–4; Al-Tawil, "Early Arab Icons," 144–151; Fahd, *Le Panthéon de l'Arabie*, 123–126; Krone, *Die altarabische Gottheit al-Lāt*, 523–539; 'Alī, *al-Mufasşal*, 6:246–253.

I have translated the verb $ra'\bar{a}$ in the phrase *a fa-ra'aytum* as "to see," and not, as it is sometimes rendered, "to consider."⁴³ My reasoning is straightforward and is both internal and external to the text of the Qur'ān: first, the verb $ra'\bar{a}$ used with the meaning "to see" occurs four times in the preceeding eight verses of Sūrat al-Najm; and second, al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt were idols—that is to say, physical objects—which Quraysh would, in the first instance, *see.*⁴⁴

motif 3b: Satan cast (*alqā al-shayṭān*) words on to the Prophet's tongue (*'alā lisāni-hi*).

The use of the phrase *alqā al-shayṭān* also functions as a preparatory link-word and gloss for Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj, and hence as a hermeneutical elaboration for **motif 8a**, below. We should note here that *al-shayṭān* (Satan) of the Qur'ān is the master "evil spirit, de-

⁴³ See, for example, Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur'ān* (Gibraltar: Dar al-Andalus, 1980), 813.

⁴⁴ For more on the deities, see F. V. Winnett, "The Daughters of Allāh," Muslim World 30 (1940); R. W. J. Austin, "Al-Gharānīq al-'Ulā: The Twilight of the Arabian Goddess," in A Miscellany of Middle Eastern Articles: In Memoriam Thomas Muir Johnstone 1924-1983, ed. A. K. Irvine, R. B. Serjeant, and G. Rex Smith (London: Longman, 1988), 15-21; Fawzi Zayadine, "The Nabatean Gods and Their Sanctuaries," in Petra Rediscovered: Lost City of the Nabateans, ed. Glenn Markoe (New York: Cincinnati Art Museum, 2003), 58-64. On the pre-Islamic religion of the Arabian peninsula in general see also the classic article of Joseph Henninger, "La Religion bedouine préislamique," in La antica società beduina, ed. F. Gabrieli (Rome: Instituto di Studi Orientali, 1959), 115-140; the extensive treatment by Jawād 'Alī, Ta'rīkh al-'arab qabl al-islām, volumes 5 and 6 (al-qism al-dīnī); and the recent summaries by Jan Retsö, The Arabs in Antiquity: Their History from the Assyrians to the Umayyads (London: Routledge, 2003), 600-622; Robert G. Hoyland, Arabia and the Arabs: From the Bronze Age to the Coming of Islam (London: Routledge, 2001), 139-166. For the hyper-skeptical view that Islam did not emerge in a culture of Arab idolatry, and that the early Arabic historical and literary sources in this regard "should not be understood primarily as a collection of Arabian traditions about Arab religion but as a collection of characteristic monotheistic traditions and ideas adapted to reflect Muslim concepts and concerns," see G. R. Hawting, "The Literary Context of the Traditional Accounts of Pre-Islamic Arab Idolatry," Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam 21 (1997) 21-41, at 25; and, at length, G. R. Hawting, The Idea of Idolatry and the Emergence of Islam: From Polemic to History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), where the Satanic verses incident is discussed at 131-149.

mon, devil"⁴⁵ whose primary role is to lead the human being away from the Divine path.

Among his tools to do this are a number of vocal attributes, he calls (XXXI, 21), simply speaks (XIV, 22, LIX, 16) promises (II, 268), and whispers (VII, 20, XX, 120; see also L, 16, CXIV, 4–5). The subtlety of the evil influence is especially suggested by the onomatopoeic *waswasa* ('whisper') in its root repetition, in its insistence that Satan does not just call or speak but comes over and over again.⁴⁶

This motif, which is not present in all the reports, serves as a hermeneutical elaboration for *motif 3b* (Satan's intervention) and, effectively, for the Satanic verses incident as a whole.

NARRATIVE UNIT 4: THE SATANIC VERSES

motif 4a: the wording: *tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā: wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna la-turtaḍā*; "Those high *gharānīq*: Indeed, their intercession is approved!"

It will be seen that the wording of the Satanic verses varies from *ri-wāyah* to *riwāyah*; however, the characterization of al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt as *gharāniq* (or as *gharāniqah*) is a consistent feature of the various texts of the Satanic verses, and appears in every full citation of the verses. I have left the terms *gharānīq* and *gharāniqah* untranslated throughout this study. This is because the word *gharānīq*, which is a plural noun, has three meanings, all of which are applicable in the present context.⁴⁷ The first meaning presents the noun *gharānīq* (and,

motif 3c: ... as a result of the Prophet's desire to reconcile with Quraysh.

⁴⁵This is the gloss given in the entry "Shayṭān," *EI2*.

⁴⁶ A. Rippin, "Shayțān 2. In the Kur'ān and Islamic Lore," *EI2* (the references in the quotation are, of course, to the Qur'ān).

⁴⁷See the following lexica: Khalīl b. Aḥmad al-Farāhīdī (d. 170), Kitāb al-'ayn (ed. Mahdī al-Makhzūmī and Ibrāhīm al-Sāmarrā'ī), Qum: Intishārat-i Uswah, 1414h, 1340; Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Azharī (d. 370), Tahdhīb al-lughah (ed. 'Abd al-'Aẓīm Maḥmūd), Cairo: al-Dār al-Miṣriyyah li-al-Ta'līf wa-al-Tarjamah, 1966), 8:224–225; al-Ṣāḥib Ismā'īl b 'Abbād (326–385), al-Muḥīţ fī al-lughah (ed. Muḥammad Ḥasan Āl Yāsīn) (Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1994), 5:153; Ismā'īl b.

much less commonly, *gharāniqah*) as the plural of *ghurnayq*, *ghurnūq*, or *ghirnawq*—"a certain aquatic bird,"⁴⁸ generally taken to be a *karkī* or crane, most likely either the "Numidian or crowned crane" (*balearica pavonina*), or the "Demoiselle crane" (*anthropoides virgo*).⁴⁹ The

- ⁴⁸ Edward William Lane, An Arabic-English Lexicon (London: Williams and Norgate, 1863), 2253.
- ⁴⁹The identification of the *gharānīq* with the Numidian crane is made in Lane, Lexicon, 2253; the Demoiselle crane is the preference of Phillipe Provençal, "The Birds Named kurki and ghirniq in Classical Arabic and Their Philological Description and Zoological Identification-A Case Study in the Processing of Ancient Scientific Knowledge in Classical Arabic Literature," Acta Orientalia 61 (2000), 7-22, which is the fullest ornithological study of the term gharānīq; see also 'Azīz al-'Alī al-'Izzī, al-Ţayr fī Hayāt al-hayawān li-al-Damīrī (Baghdad: Dār al-Shu'ūn al-Thaqāfiyyah al-'Āmmah, 1986), 179-180; see, earlier, J. J. Hess, "Miscellanea," Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft 69 (1915), 385-392, at 385-388, where the gharānīq is identified as the heron; the rendering of gharānīq as "swan" in Theodor Nöldeke and Friedrich Schwally, Geschichte des Qorans (Leipzig: Theodor Weicher, 1909), 1:100-101, footnote 4, is fancifully Germanic. For the gharnuq/gharnuq bird in the classical Arabic zoological texts, see Abū 'Uthmān b. 'Umar b. Baḥr al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255), Kitāb al-hayawān, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Hārūn (Cairo: Mu'assasat al-Halabī, 1966), 5:538-539, 7:52-54; and Kamāl al-Dīn Muhammad b. Mūsā al-Damīrī (742-808 / 1341-1405), Hayāt al-hayawān al-kubrā (Cairo: Mustafa al-Bābī al-Halabī, 1956), 2:113-117. For illustrations of both the crowned/Numidian crane and the demoiselle crane, see Oliver L. Austin Jr. (illustrated by Arthur Singer), Birds of the World: A Survey of the Twenty-Seven Orders and One Hundred and Fifty-Five Families (New York: Golden Press, 1961), 102-105. On the crowned/Numidian crane, see Leslie H.

Hammād al-Jawharī (d. 393), al-Ṣiḥāḥ: tāj al-lughah wa-ṣiḥāḥ al-'arabiyyah (ed. Īmīl Badī'Ya'qūb and Muḥammad Nabīl Ṭarīfī) (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1999), 4:297-298; 'Alī b. Ismā'īl Ibn Sīdah (d. 458), al-Muhkam wa-al-muhīt al-a'zam (ed. 'Abd al-Hamīd Hindāwī) (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2000), 6:72-73; Mahmūd b. 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144), Asās al-balāghah (Cairo: Mațba'at Dār al-Kutub al-Mișriyyah, 1923), 163; Nashwān b. Sa'īd al-Ḥimyarī (d. 573/1178), Shams al-'ulūm wa-dawā' kalām al-'arab min al-kulūm (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-Muʻaşir, 1999), 8:4933; al-Hasan b. Muḥammad al-Ṣaghānī (d. 650), al-Takmilah wa-al-dhayl wa-al-silah li-kitāb Tāj al-lughah wa-siḥāḥ al-'arabiyyah (ed. Ibrāhīm Ismā'īl al-Abyārī) (Cairo: Matba'at Dār al-Kutub, 1977), 5:127-128; Abū al-Fadl Jamāl al-Dīn Muhammad b. Mukarram Ibn Manzūr (630-711), Lisān al-arab (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1997), 5:31-32; Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Firūzābādī, al-Qāmūs al-muhīţ (ed. Muhammad Mahmūd al-Shinqīţī) (Cairo: al-Matba'ah al-Husayniyyah, 1344 h), 3:271-272; Muhammad Tāhir Fattānī Gujarātī (913-986 / 1507-1578), Majma' bihār al-anwār (Lucknow: Nawal Kishōr, 1314h), 3:20; Murtadā al-Zabīdī (1732-1791), Tāj al-'arūs min jawāhir al-qāmūs ed. 'Alī Shīrī (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1994), 13:375-377; Sa'īd al-Khūrī al-Shartūnī, Aqrab al-mawārid fī fush al-'arabiyyah wa-al-shawārid (Beirut: Matba'at Mursilī al-Yasū'iyyah, 1889), 870. See also Ṣalāh al-Dīn Khalīl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadī (696-764), Tashih al-tashif wa-tahrir al-tahrif, ed. al-Sayyid al-Sharqāwī (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1987), 393.

word *gharānīq* appears with this meaning in pre-Islamic poetry.⁵⁰ In this meaning, the phrase *al-gharāniq al-'ulā*—"the high cranes"—is understood as expressing the idea that the deities fly up to heaven to intercede with Allāh.⁵¹ Certainly, "high-flying cranes"⁵² present a spectacular sight: "Migrating cranes traveling high in the air in a strong V or a long extended echelon are a beautiful sight. When traveling any distance, as in their long migrations, they frequently fly at considerable altitudes, reportedly as high as 2 miles."⁵³

The second meaning gives *gharānīq* and *gharāniqah* as the plural of all of *ghurnayq*, *ghirnayq*, *ghurnūq*, *ghirnāwq*, *ghirnāq*, *ghirnāq*, and *ghirawnaq*, meaning "a youth white, or fair, tender, having beau-

Brown, Emil K. Urban, and Kenneth Newman, *The Birds of Africa* (London: Academic Press, 1982), 141–143; on the demoiselle crane, see 137–138. The Aghlabid sultan Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. al-Aghlab (d. 255 / 869) was known as Abū al-Gharānīq on account of his fondness for hunting the crane—see Aḥmad Ibn Abī al-Diyāf, *Itḥāf ahl al-zamān bi-akhbār mulūk tūnis wa-ʿahd al-amān* (Tunis: Kitābat al-Dawlah li-Shu'ūn al-Thaqāfiyyah wa-al-Akhbār, 1963), 110; the lake known as Umm al-Ghurānīq in present-day Libya was apparently a favorite hunting spot of his—see al-Ṭāhir Aḥmad al-Zāwī, *Mu'jam al-buldān al-Lībiyyah* (Tripoli: Maktabat al-Nūr, 1968), 40. There is also a town called al-Gharānīq in present-day Sudan. The present author had the pleasure of viewing Numidian cranes in captivity in the picturesque setting of Leeds Castle in Kent, England.

⁵⁰ See, for example, the verse attributed both to 'Antarah b. Shaddād and to 'Amr al-'Abasī, aw ța'mu ghādiyatin fī jawfi dhī hadabin / min sākin al-muzni tajrī fī al-gharānīq, cited by Ibn al-Sayyid al-Baṭalyūsī (d. 521/1127), al-Iqtidābfī sharh adab al-kuttāb (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1973), 453-454; the verse by Ta'abbaṭa Sharran, lastu bi-rā'ī thallatin qāma wasṭa-hā / ṭawīl al-'aṣā ghurnayq dahlin murassili, cited by Husayn Jum'ah, al-Hayawān fī al-sh'ir al-jāhilī (Damascus: Dāniyah, 1989), 101; and the verse by Abu al-Ṭamḥān al-Qīnī, yaẓallu tughannī-hi al-gharānīqu fawqa-hu / abā'un wa-ghīlun fawqa-hu muta'āṣiru, cited by Ibn Qutaybah (d. 276), Kitāb al-ma'ānī al-kabīr (Hyderabad: Dār al-Ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniyyah, 1949), 1:255.

⁵¹ "They claimed that the idols brought them closer to Allāh and interceded for them; hence they were likened to birds which fly up and soar high in the sky [*fa-shubbihat bi-al-ţuyūr allatī ta'lū fī al-samā' wa-tartafi'*]"; see Majd al-Dīn al-Mubārak b. Muḥammad Ibn Athīr (1149–1210), *al-Nihāyah fī gharīb al-ḥadīth wa-al-athar* (Cairo: al-Maṭba'ah al-'Uthmāniyyah, 1311*h*), 3:160. It is fascinating to note here that the great Sufi Muḥy al-Dīn Ibn 'Arabī (1165–1240) might well have used the phrase *ghirnīq/gharāniq rabb-*ī ("the *gharāniq* of my Lord") to designate the agent of Prophetic inspiration; see Gerald T. Elmore, *Islamic Sainthood in the Fullness of Time: Ibn al-'Arabī's Book of the Fabulous Gryphon* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 229, footnote 17 (the mention of the variant readings in two of the manuscripts), and 457.

 ⁵²The phrase *al-gharānīq al-'ulā* is regularly translated as "the high-flying cranes."
 ⁵³Austin, *Birds of the World*, 104.

tiful hair, and comely."⁵⁴ There are several instances of *gharāniq* being used in this sense in first-century prose and poetry.⁵⁵ *Gharānīq* is also given as a possible plural for *ghurāniqah* and *ghurāniq* (which are otherwise considered both singular and plural), meaning, specifically, "a shapely young woman [*shābbah mumtali'ah*],"⁵⁶ a usage that also appears in the early poetry.⁵⁷ Given the fact that al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt were female deities represented in naturalistic figurative statuary—and that they were, as we shall see, viewed as the daughters of Allāh—the characterization of them as comely young women is readily understandable and convincing. It is highly instructive here to note a report attributed to 'Abd Allāh Ibn "Abbās (d. 68, for whom see **Riwāyahs 35–44**, below)—and entirely unrelated to the Satanic verses incident—which links these two meanings of *gharānīq* by describing "a white *ghurnūq* bird resembling an Egyptian woman [*tā'ir abyad ghurnūq ka-anna-hu qibtiyyah*]."⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Lane, Lexicon, 2253.

⁵⁵See, for example, the statement remembered from 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 40) as an example of his eloquence, where he describes a member of the Banū Hāshim as ghurnūq min gharānīq Banī 'Abd al-Muțțalib, cited in Abū Sa'īd Manşūr b. al-Husayn al-Ābī (d. 421), Nathr al-durr, ed. Muḥammad 'Alī Qarnah (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Misriyyah al-'Āmmah li-al-Kitāb, 1980), 1:312; the verse by Jarīr (d. 110), ayna al-ulā anzalū al-nu'māna muqtasaran / am ayna abnā'u Shaybāna al-gharānīq, cited by Abū al-Faraj al-Isbahānī (d. 356), Kitāb al-aghānī, ed. 'Abd Allāh al-'Alāyilī, Mūsā Sulaymān, and Ahmad Abū Sa'īd (Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfah, 1957-1964), 9:328; the verse by al-A'shā (d. ca. 3), la-qad kāna fī ahl al-Yamāmati mankahun / wa-fityānu hizzān al-țiwāl al-gharāniqah; cited by Abū al-Mundhir Hishām b. Muhammad b. al-Sā'ib al-Kalbī (d. 204), Nasab Ma'add wa-al-Yaman al-kabīr, ed. Nājī Hasan (Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1988), 1:115; the verse by al-Uqayshir al-Mughīrah b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Amr (fl. first century), ka-anna-hunna wa-aydī al-qawmi mu'malatun / idhā tala'la'na fī aydī al-gharānīqi, cited in 'Ali b. Abī al-Faraj al-Başrī, Kitāb al-ḥamāsah al-Başriyyah (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1999), 2:946.

⁵⁶ Thus Ibn Manzūr, who says, "it is possible that *al-gharānīq* in the story is the plural of *al-ghurāniq* which means 'beautiful'"; *Lisān al-'arab*, 5:32. Note the suggestive Levantine colloquialism, *arnaqah*, plural: *arānīq*, with the same meaning of "svelte young woman"; cited by Fahd, *Le Panthéon de l'Arabie*, 90, footnote 1. It is also suggestive to note, in the context of this second meaning of *gharānīq*, that the noun *gharnaqah* means "an amorous playing with the eyes [*ghazal al-'aynayn*]"; Lane, *Lexicon*, 2253, following al-Ṣāḥib b. 'Abbād.

⁵⁷See the verse of Ibn al-A'rābī, *wa-al-lahwi 'inda bādinin ghurāniq*, cited in the entry *gharnaqa* in Ibn Sīdah, *al-Muḥkam wa-al-muḥiţ*, 6:72.

⁵⁸ Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-'arab*, 5:32; also Fattānī Gujarātī, *Majma' biḥār al-anwār*, 3:20. This important report was missed by Ilse Lichtenstadter in her exploration of the relationship between these two meanings of *gharānīq* ("water fowl" and

The third meaning of *gharānīq* is "a kind of tree, which is probably a variety of jojoba (*awsaj*); especially the young and vigorous shoots that emerge from the trunk of this tree, 'likened to a tender youth because of their freshness and beauty." Toufic Fahd regards this meaning as "well-suited to the religious context of the Arabs of the Hijāz" given the widespread worship of sacred trees (al-'Uzzā is expressly mentioned as having been worshipped in this form).⁵⁹ This usage also appears in the early poetry;⁶⁰ however, it should be noted that no subsequent source takes up this meaning of *gharānīq* in relation to the Satanic verses.

The theological concession that is made to Quraysh accords their deities the power of intercession $(shaf\bar{a}^{*}ah)$ —meaning intercession with Allāh. The Qur'ān presents the Meccans as believing in Allāh as the supreme deity, but worshipping, alongside Allāh, lesser intercessionary deities: "And they worship, side by side with Allāh, that which neither harms nor benefits them, and they say: These are our intercessors [*shufa*^{*}ā'] with Allāh."⁶¹ It is apparently to this doctrine of intercession that the concession is being made. The Qur'ān expressly accords the power of intercession with Allāh only to those to whom Allāh has granted permission to intercede, and rejects any such claim from any other party.⁶²

[&]quot;delicate youths"); "A Note on the *gharānīq* and Related Qur'ānic Problems," *Israel Oriental Studies* 5 (1975), 54–61.

⁵⁹ Fahd, Le Panthéon de l'Arabie, 90.

⁶⁰See the verse of Abū 'Amr, *wa-lā zāla yusnā sidru-hu wa-gharāniqu-hu*, cited by al-Ṣaghānī (d. 650), *al-Takmilah*, 5:138.

⁶¹Qur'ān 10:18 Yūnus. See also Qur'ān 36:23 Yā Sīn, where a character in a parable says, "Should I take deities beside Him? If the Merciful intends to harm me, their intercession will avail me nothing, nor can they save me [a-attakhidhu min dūni-hi ālihatan in yurid-ni al-raḥmānu bi-ḍurrin lā-tughni 'an-nī shafā 'atu-hum shay'an wa-lā yunqidhūn]." For the status of Allāh as supreme deity, including a discussion of the Satanic verses incident within the context of this concept, see W. Montgomery Watt, "The 'High God' in Pre-Islamic Mecca," Correspondance d'Orient 11 (1970), 499-505, at 501; see further W. Montgomery Watt, "The Qur'ān and Belief in a 'High God," Der Islam 56 (1979), 205-211; on the pre-Islamic worship of Allāh, see Krone, Die altarabische Gottheit al-Lāt, 457-491.

⁶² See, for example, Qur'ān 10:3 Yūnus—"There is no intercessor save after his leave [mā min shafī'in illā min ba'di idhni-hi]"; also Qur'ān 20:109 Ṭāhā, Qur'ān 21:28 al-Anbiyā', and Qur'ān 34:23 Saba'. For a discussion of the Qur'ānic stance visà-vis the intercessionary claims on Allāh of the pre-Islamic deities, see Alford T. Welch, "Allah and Other Supernatural Beings: The Emergence of the Qur'anic Doctrine of Tawhid," Journal of the American Academy of Religion Thematic Issue

Hishām Ibn Muḥammad al-Kalbī (d. 204), the son of the *mufas-sir* al-Kalbī cited in **Riwāyah 23**, below, mentioned a phrase similar to the various versions of the Satanic verses as having been a pre-Islamic *talbiyah* (ritual invocation) of Quraysh:

Quraysh used to circumambulate the Ka'bah and say: *wa-al-Lāt wa-al-'Uzzā wa-Manāt al-thālithah al-ukhrā fa-inna-hunna al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna la-turtajā* [Al-Lāt and al-'Uzza and Manāt, the third, the other! Indeed, they are the high *gharānīq!* And, indeed, their intercession is to be hoped for!].

If al-Kalbī's report of this *talbiyah* in the form of the words of the Satanic verses, which is the only association of the word *gharānīq* with al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt that does not derive from the incident itself,⁶³ and which does not appear in any other source, is historically accurate, then the Prophet's immediate Qurayshī audience would have understood him to be incorporating their *talbiyah* into his Divine Recitation (Qur'ān). Also, any later persons aware of this tradition would have understood the accounts of the Satanic verses incident to be presenting the Prophet as uttering the words of a Jāhilī *talbiyah* of Quraysh. However, it is important to note that there seems to be no evidence of any subsequent commentator interpreting the incident with reference to this reported *talbiyah*.⁶⁴

^{47 (1979), 733–758,} at 737–737; see also Eva Riad, "Šafā'a dans le Coran," *Orienta-lia Suecana* 30 (1981), 36–62, especially at 53.

⁶³ This may be what is intended by the incorrect statement "Gharaniq is a hapax legomenon," in the Wikipedia.com entry "Satanic Verses." See http://en.wikipe dia.org/wiki/Satanic_Verses (viewed November 1, 2013).

⁶⁴ See Abū al-Mundhir Hishām b. Muḥammad al-Kalbī, *Kitāb al-aṣnām*, ed. Aḥmad Zakī (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1924), 19. Uri Rubin takes Ibn al-Kalbī's report as representing historical fact and interprets the Muslim understanding accordingly: "When imported from the pre-Islamic into the Islamic sphere of Muḥammad's own life, this *talbiyah* became Satan's words"; *Eye of the Beholder*, 159. Several other remembered *talbiyah*s posit a relationship between the supreme deity, Allāh or al-Raḥmān, and the deities of the Satanic verses. The *talbiyah* of the Banū Hums invokes Allāh as "Lord of the third, the other, Lord of al-Lāt and 'Uzzā," the *talbiyah* of the Banū Madhḥij invokes Allāh as "Lord of al-Lāt and 'Uzzā," while that of Thaqīf has "al-Lāt and al-'Uzzā are in Your hands"; see the long list of *talbiyah*s appended, probably by a scribe in the fourth century, to the *Tafsīr* of Muqātil b. Sulaymān al-Balkhī (d. 150; for whom see **Riwāyahs 27** to 30, below), studied by M. J. Kister, "*Labbayka, allāhumma, labbayka . . .* On a Monotheistic Aspect of a Jahiliyya Practice," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam 2* (1980), 33-

NARRATIVE UNIT 5: THE REACTION OF QURAYSH

motif 5a: The *sajdah* (prostration) of the Mushrikūn accompanying the *sajdah* of the Muslims.

The reason for the *sajdah* of the Muslims is that the final verse of Sūrat al-Najm consists of the instruction "So prostrate yourselves to Allāh and worship him [*fa-usjudū li-Allāhi wa-u'budū*]."⁶⁵ The reason for the *sajdah* of the Mushrikūn is given as:

motif 5b:	"what they had heard in mention of their gods."
motif 5c:	the description of a partial <i>sajdah</i> on the part of one Mushrik unable to make the <i>sajdah</i> fully.
motif 5d:	here, the Mushrik is named as al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah, the chief of the Banū Makhzūm clan of Quraysh, a hos- tile opponent of Muḥammad's preaching who actively mocked and reviled the Prophet.
motif 5e:	Quraysh's joy at the Prophet's praise of their goddesses.
NARRATIV	E UNIT 6: THE REACTION OF THE MUSLIMS
motif 6a:	the conviction of the Muslims in the Prophet as reliably transmitting Divine Revelation.

motif 6b:	detailing of the Muslims' conviction that there was no
	possibility of an error (khața'), delusion (wahm), or lapse
	(<i>zalal</i>) on the part of the Prophet.

Through **motif 6b**, the narrative strongly appears to relate the incident directly to the question of *'iṣmat al-anbiyā'* ("protection of the Prophets"). Although the report does not explicitly use the terms *'iṣmah* or *ma'ṣūm*, the later theological debate over *'iṣmah* in the transmission

^{57,} at 55–56 (for a discussion of the scribal addition of the *talbiyahs* to the text of Muqātil's *Tafsīr*, as well as their appearance in other sources, see Tilman Seidensticker, "Sources for the History of Pre-Islamic Religion," in *The Qur'ān in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur'ānic Milieu*, ed. Angelika Neuwirth, Nicolai Sinai, and Michael Marx (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 293–321, at 298, and 306–307).

⁶⁵Qur'ān 53:62 al-Najm.

of Revelation dealt specifically with the question of the Prophet's susceptibility to error (*khața'*), delusion (*wahm*), or lapses (*zalal*).⁶⁶

motif 6c: News of the *sajdah* of Quraysh reaches the Emigrants in Abyssinia.

This functions as a hermeneutical element for **motif 9b**, below (the return of the Emigrants from Abyssinia). The flight of the weakest and most defenseless of Muḥammad's followers to Abyssinia to escape the persecution by Quraysh is generally reported to have begun in the month of Rajab in the fifth year of the Prophetic mission (i.e., five years after Muḥammad's Call to Prophethood). Al-Ṭabarī reports that the refugees numbered eighty-two men, some of whom were accompanied by their families.⁶⁷ While the Satanic verses incident itself is not dated by al-Ṭabarī, clearly it takes place after the Migration to Abyssinia.

66 See Madelung, "Isma." That the terms zalal and khata' were associated with the concept of 'ismah as early as the first century is suggested by a report that claims to preserve the text of a letter in which the Umayyad governor al-Hajjāj b. Yūsuf (d. 95) addresses the Caliph 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwan as al-ma'sum min khatal [for which read: khata'] al-qawl wa-zalal al-fi'l ("protected from errors of speech and lapses of action"); Ibn 'Abd Rabbi-hi (d. 327), Kitāb al-'iqd al-farīd, ed. Ahmad Amīn Ahmad al-Zayn and Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī (Cairo: Lajnat al-Ta'līm wa-al-Tarjamah wa-al-Nashr, 1965), 5:25, cited in Patrica Crone and Martin Hinds, God's Caliph: Religious Authority in the First Centuries of Islam (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 56. Khatal-"he erred or was wrong in his speech," Lane, Lexicon, 2:767—has the same meaning as khata', and better rhyme in the present context. M. M. Bravmann has argued, on the basis of pre-Islamic poetry and a report of a speech given by Abū Bakr on the day after the Prophet's death, that the concept that God had protected ('asama) Muhammad from "moral stumblings, sins (āfāt)" is a "genuine Arab, pre-Islamic popular motif, and the Islamic idea which applies this characteristic to Muhammad and the prophets preceding him, is based on this pre-Islamic concept"; see his "The Origin of the Principle of 'Ismah: 'Muhammad's Immunity from Sin,'" Le Muséon 88 (1975), 221-225, at 224 and 221. However, Bravmann is taking at face value just one of several "widely divergent" versions of Abū Bakr's speech, the others of which do not contain the phrase in question; see the references given in Fred M. Donner (translator), The History of al-Tabarī Volume X: The Conquest of Arabia (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 11, footnote 64. There is, however, another report of a speech by Abū Bakr in which the Prophet is described as "Protected [ma'sum] from Satan," for which see Volume 2, Chapter 1.

⁶⁷See Watt and McDonald, *History of al-Tabarī Vol. VI*, 98-101.

NARRATIVE UNIT 7: CORRECTION

motif 7a:	Jibrīl's visiting the Prophet to apprise him of Satan's intervention.
motif 7b:	Jibrīl disclaims responsibility for the Satanic verses.
motif ⁊c:	Jibrīl explicitly states the nature of the Prophet's error.

Motifs 7b and **7c** are contained in Jibrīl's words to the Prophet: "You have recited to the people that which I did not bring to you from God, and you have said that which He did not say to you!"⁶⁸ **Narrative unit 7** functions as a hermeneutical elaboration for **narrative unit 3**, making it explicit that the phrase "Satan cast upon his tongue [*alqā al-shayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi*]" means that the Prophet himself recited the Satanic verses.

motif 7d:	the Prophet's sorrow and fear at learning what had
	happened.

The sorrow and fear of the Prophet are a hermeneutical elaboration for **motif 8a**, below, the Revelation of Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj.

The inclusion or exclusion of **narrative unit 7: correction**—where the fact of Prophetic error in the transmission of Divine Revelation is confirmed by Divine agency—from the narrative of the Satanic verses incident became crucial to the hermeneutic elaboration of the Satanic verses incident—as will be seen in this chapter.

NARRATIVE UNIT 8: CLARIFICATION

motif 8a: The Revelation by God of Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj to comfort the Prophet and explain the Divine rationale behind what happened.

Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj—"We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he desired, Satan cast something into his desire; then God removes that which Satan casts and establishes His Signs clearly—and God is All-Knowing, All-Wise"⁶⁹—is a hermeneu-

⁶⁸ On Jibrīl as the agent of Divine Revelation, see J. Pedersen, "Djabrā'īl," *EI2*.
⁶⁹ wa-mā arsalnā min qabli-ka min rasūlin wa-lā nabiyyin illā idhā tamannā alqā al-

tical elaboration for the whole narrative, just as the whole narrative is a hermeneutical elaboration for Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj. Further, the fact that the narrative of the Satanic verses incident opens here with Qur'ān 53:19 al-Najm, "By the star when it sets: your Companion has not gone astray, nor is he misguided" (**motif 2a**), and closes with Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj, means also that Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj appears here as a hermeneutical elaboration of Qur'ān 53:19 al-Najm whereby the Divine pronouncement in Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj qualifies the Divine pronouncement in Qur'ān 53:19 al-Najm. Also, as noted above, the pivotal verb *tamannā* (verbal noun: *umniyyah*) in Qur'ān 22:52 has two main meanings: "to desire" and "to recite." **Motifs 1b**, **c**, and **d** have already presented a preparatory gloss for *tamannā* and *umniyyah* in Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj to mean "desire" and not "recitation."

motif 8b: The Revelation by God of abrogating verses, here Qur'ān 53:21–26 al-Najm.

The abrogating verses are not cited in full in the narrative. They are:

Should you have males, and He females?
That, indeed, would be an unfair division!
Indeed, they are no more than names which you have named, you and your ancestors! Allāh has not sent down any authority with them. Indeed, they follow nothing but conjecture and that which their souls desire [mā tahwā al-anfusu], when guidance has come to them from their Lord!
Is it for man to have what he desires [mā tamannā]?
To God belongs the First and the Last!
However many angels there are in the heavens, their intercession [shafā'atu-hum] is of no benefit, except after Allāh permits this to whom He wills and approves.⁷⁰

shaytānu fī umniyyati-hi fa-yansakhu Allāhu mā yulqī al-shaytānu thumma yuḥkimu Allāhu āyāti-hi wa-Allāhu 'alīmun ḥakīmun.

⁷⁰ a-la-kum al-dhakaru wa-la-hu al-unthā / tilka idhan qismatun dīzā / in hiya illā asmā'un sammaytumū-hā antum wa-ābā'u-kum mā anzala Allāhu bi-hā min sultānin in yattabi'ūna illā al-zanna wa-mā tahwā al-anfusu wa-la-qad jā'a-hum min rabbi-him al-hudā / am li-al-insāni mā tamannā / fa-li-Allāhi al-ākhiratu waal-ūlā / wa-kam min malakin fī al-samāwāti lā tughnī shafā'atu-hum shay'an illā min ba'di an ya'dhana Allāhu li-man yashā'u wa-yardā; Qur'ān 53:21-26 al-Najm.

The fact of there being abrogating verses is a hermeneutical elaboration for the phrase in Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj: *fa-yansakh Allāh* ("then God removes"). Most accounts do not distinguish between explicatory and abrogating verses. The majority of them give Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj as the only verse related to the incident, serving both explicatory and abrogatory functions. The place of the formal or technical concept of *naskh*—the idea of the supercession of one Divine pronouncement by another⁷¹—in the history of the Satanic verses incident will emerge in the course of this study. The importance of Qur'ān 53:21–26 being revealed only later as abrogatory verses is that this implies that *these verses were not present in the original Revelation of Sūrat al-Najm*.

Qur'an 53:21-26 al-Najm contains a number of important elements. The first is the negation of the ascription of daughters to Allāh: "Should you have males [i.e., sons], and He females [i.e., daughters]?" In the context of the Satanic verses narrative, the reference to Allāh's daughters is clearly to be taken as pointing to ascription of such a status to al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt.⁷² Second, the passage is a forceful negation of Quraysh's claims of Divine authority for their deities: "they are no more than names which you have named, you and your ancestors! Allāh has not sent down any authority with them." Specifically, the passage denies the right of intercession [shafā 'ah] that was conceded in the Satanic verses: "However many angels there are in the heavens, their intercession [shafā'atu-hum] is of no benefit, except after Allāh permits this to whom He wills and approves." The linking of intercession with angels in this passage would seem to suggest a relationship between the angels and the three deities whose intercession is now being denied. This relationship is more explicitly brought out in Riwāyah 28, below, and will thus be taken up in detail there. Finally, attention should be drawn to the presence of the verb tamannā in the verse, "Is it for man to have what he desires [tamannā]?," which is, of course, the same verb as in Qur'ān 22:52 al-Hajj, "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he desired [tamannā], Satan cast something into his desire"; and of the verb hawā

⁷¹See J. Burton, "Abrogation," EQ,

⁷²See Winnett, "The Daughters of Allah"; and Cyrus H. Gordon, "The Daughters of Baal and Allah," *Moslem World* 33 (1943), 50–51.

in the verse, "they follow nothing but conjecture and that which their souls desire [*mā tahwā al-anfusu*]," which is the same verb as used in reference to the Prophet at the opening of Sūrat al-Najm: "Nor does he speak from his own desire [*hawā*]."

NARRATIVE UNIT 9: CONSEQUENCES

motif 9a: Quraysh intensify persecution.*motif 9b:* return of some Muslims from Abyssinia.

In some reports, **motif 9b** is given at the beginning of the narrative, with the whole narrative of the incident functioning as a hermeneutical elaboration for the return of some of the Muslim refugees from Abyssinia. Note that no date is given in the narrative for the return of the refugees—the question of the timetable of events would be taken up by modern commentators in rejecting the facticity of the incident.

The hermeneutical significance of the deployment of the above **motifs 1a** to **9b** within and across the respective narratives of the incident and their significance to the eventual problematization of the Satanic verses incident will become apparent during the course of this chapter.

Riwāyah 1 presents the Satanic verses incident as a hermeneutical elaboration of the meaning of, and the relationship between, God's words, "Your companion has not gone astray, nor is he misguided: Nor does he speak from his own desire," and His words, "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he desired, Satan cast something into his desire; then God removes that which Satan casts and establishes His Signs clearly-and God is All-Knowing, All-Wise," whereby the latter Divine pronouncement is seen as qualifying the former through the narrative of the Satanic verses incident. The hermeneutical elaboration of the Satanic verses incident in Riwāyah 1 may be summarized as follows. The Prophet desired to halt Quraysh's persecution of the Muslims through the instrument of Divine Revelation. This desire on the part of the Prophet enabled Satan to cast upon his tongue verses in praise of the goddesses of Quraysh that the Prophet, who was hoping for just such verses, took as Divine Revelation and recited as such. The Prophet remained unaware of his transgression until corrected by Jibrīl.

Riwāyah 2: Abū Ma'shar's Report from Muḥammad b. Ka'b and Muḥammad b. Qays

Riwāyah 2 is given by al-Ṭabarī in both his *Jāmi al-bayān* (in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj) and his *Tārīkh*, with the following *isnād*:⁷³

al-Qāsim b. al-Ḥasan al-Baghdādī (d. 272) ← al-Ḥusayn b. Dā'ūd, Sunayd al-Miṣṣīṣī (d. 226) ← Ḥajjāj b. Muḥammad al-Miṣṣīṣī (d. 206) ← Abū Ma'shar Najīḥ b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Madanī (d. 170) ← Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī al-Madanī (40–108) and Muḥammad b. Qays al-Madanī (d. 126).

Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūțī (d. 911) adduces a foreshortened version of this report in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj in his massive Qur'ān commentary, *al-Durr al-manthūr*, citing as his sources al-Ṭabarī and Sa'īd b. Manṣūr al-Balkhī al-Makkī (d. 227).⁷⁴ Al-Suyūțī's immediate source for the latter citation is evidently the *Sunan* of Sa'īd b. Manṣūr, but the original source is far more likely to have been Sa'īd b. Manṣūr's *Tafsīr*.⁷⁵ While al-Suyūțī does not give

⁷³Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿal-bayān*, 17:186-87; *Tārīkh* 2:340-1.

⁷⁴ Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūţī, *al-Durr al-manthūr fī al-tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1983), 6:67. As the title indicates, the *Durr* is entirely a *tafsīr bi-al-ma'thūr*—that is, a Qur'ān commentary made up of reports compiled from earlier works.

⁷⁵ Al-Suyūțī provides the title of each book he used in compiling *al-Durr al-manthūr* on the first occasion that he draws upon it. That al-Suyūtī's immediate textual source for materials from Sa'id b. Manşūr was the latter's Sunan (also known as his Musannaf) is indicated at Durr, 1:14; indeed, in the list of sources for his al-Itqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān, al-Suyūtī states expressly that the Tafsīr of Sa'īd b. Mansūr is "a part of his Sunan"; see al-Itqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Fadl Ibrāhīm (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-'Aṣriyyah, 1988), 1:18. Elsewhere, al-Suyūțī records having prepared from the Sunan of Sa'īd b. Mansūr a selection that he called al-Muntaqā min Sunan Sa'īd ibn Mansūr; see al-Suyūțī's autobiography, Kitāb al-tahadduth bi-ni'mat Allāh, ed. Elizabeth Sartain (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 127. However, the version of Sa'īd b. Manṣūr's Sunan used by al-Suyūtī does not appear to have been identical with the one that partially survives today in a unique manuscript held in Riyadh in the private possession of Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abd al-'Azīz Āl Ḥumayyid, partially edited and published by the owner as Sunan Sa'id b. Mansūr (Riyadh: Dār al-Ṣumay'ī, 1993). While the extant manuscript contains an unusually lengthy Kitāb al-tafsīr, the Kitāb al-tafsīr does not seem to contain any report on the Satanic verses incident (I have checked the commentary on Sūrat al-Hajj, Sūrat al-Isrā', and Sūrat al-Najm). Also, a com-

an *isnād* linking Sa'īd b. Manṣūr to al-Quraẓī and Muḥammad b. Qays, since the biographical dictionaries record that Sa'īd b. Manṣūr transmitted directly from Abū Ma'shar, the second link in the foregoing chain, the *isnād* is very probably:

Saʻīd b. Manṣūr ← [Abū Maʻshar ←] Muḥammad b. Kaʻb <u>and</u> Muḥammad b. Qays.⁷⁶

The first-century Medinese authorities with whom this report originates are Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī, discussed in the analysis of **Riwāyah 1**, and Muḥammad b. Qays. The report is prefaced with the phrase $q\bar{a}l\bar{a}$ ("the two of them said"), meaning that this should be taken as a collective *isnād* in which the wording of the report either is a collation of two separate but similar accounts or adopts the wording of one of the accounts, as the two do not contradict each other in meaning.

parison of other of al-Suyūțī's citations in al-Durr al-manthūr from the Sunan of Sa'īd b. Mansūr with the the Riyadh MS reveals that some of these occur in relation to verses that are not commented on in the Kitāb al-tafsīr of the Riyadh MS. Al-Suyūțī, then, used a tafsīr by Sa'īd b. Mansūr that comprised a more complete commentary on the Qur'an than that contained in the extant Kitab al-tafsir of Sa'īd's Sunan. It thus seems reasonable to assume that two versions of Sa'īd b. Mansur's tafsir existed: a fuller version eventually used by al-Suyūți, and a somewhat reduced version that survives today in the Riyadh MS of Sa'īd b. Manṣūr's Sunan. Perhaps the fuller version is the one cited by al-Tha'labī (d. 427) as the Tafsīr Saʿīd b. Mansūr in the list of sources for his al-Kashf wa-al-bayān, transmitted by an *isnād* that is, we should add, entirely different to that of the Riyadh MS; see al-Tha'labī, Mufassirū sharq, 47; and Sa'īd b. Mansūr, Sunan, 1:5. In any case, it is evident that there was more than one version of the Sunan itself in circulation, as Abū Bakr Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī (d. 575) makes no mention of a Kitāb al-tafsīr in his description of the contents of what he calls the Muşannaf Sa'īd b. Manşūr al-Balkhī in his Fahrasat mā rawā-hu 'an shuyūkhi-hi, ed. Franciscus Codera Zaydayn and J. Ribera Tarrago (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1954 [revised edition]), 135-136. It should also be noted here that, in keeping with the tafsir genre, the majority of riwāyahs in Sa'īd b. Mansūr's Kitāb al-tafsīr are carried by incomplete isnāds (see the editor's introduction to the Sunan Sa'īd b. Mansūr, at 1:189-201). For Sa'īd b. Mansūr himself, see al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 10:586-590; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 4:89-90; Sezgin, GAS 1:104; and the editor's introduction to the Sunan Sa'īd b. Mansūr 1:17-19, and 59-128.

⁷⁶ That Abū Ma'shar is the link between Sa'īd b. Manşūr and Muḥammad b. Ka'b in the *isnād* for **Riwāyah 2** is supported by the appearance of the chain Sa'īd b. Manşūr ← Abū Ma'shar ← Muḥammad b. Ka'b elsewhere in Sa'īd b. Manşūr's *Kitāb al-tafsīr*; see, for example, MS Riyadh, Sa'd Āl Ḥumayyid, f. 177.

Muḥammad b. Qays was a Medinese who died around 126 and was a source also for Ibn Isḥāq.⁷⁷ The sources tell us that he was a $q\bar{a}ss$, which in the Umayyad period designated a public preacher whose primary activity "centered . . . on the teaching of the Qur'ān (where the $q\bar{a}ss$ would recite passages from it after prayers), and particularly on its interpretation, to aid the simple masses in understanding it."⁷⁸ Expounding the meaning of the Qur'ān required the presentation of contextualizing and explicative narratives; that the term qissah("narrative") should have been used for these accounts—and hence the term $q\bar{a}ss$ ("narrator," pl. qussas) for the preachers—is unsurprising given the Qur'ānic usages of term,

most of which denote reports and accounts of past nations, particularly accounts of Prophets and Messengers, which in general convey admonitions or proofs or miracles which remind people of the past and aim at directing them to the Divine paradigm or Divine Law.⁷⁹

The more scholarly qussas were, apparently, among the most learned of the early Muslims in regard to the Qur'ān and its exegesis. As such, it is instructive to note of Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Qurazī that it was simultaneously said of him that he "acted as a $q\bar{a}ss$ in the mosque at Rabadhah [$k\bar{a}na$ yaquss $f\bar{i}$ al-masjid]," and that his seance in the mosque was made up of "the most learned people in $tafs\bar{i}r$ [$k\bar{a}na$ li-Muḥammad ibn Ka'b $julas\bar{a}'$ min a'lam $al-n\bar{a}s$ $bi-al-tafs\bar{i}r$]."⁸⁰ Two more of the most important first-century mufassirs who appear in this study, Mujāhid b. Jabr (d. 102) and Qatādah b. Di'āmah (60–117),

 ⁷⁷ See Ibn Sa'd, al-Tabaqāt al-kubrā: al-qism al-mutammim li-tābi'ī ahl al-Madīnah wa-man ba'da-hum, ed. Ziyād Muḥammad Manşūr (Madīnah: al-Jāmi'ah al-Islāmiyyah, n.d.), 325; Ibn 'Asākir, Tārīkh madīnat Dimashq al-kabīr, ed. 'Alī 'Āshūr al-Janūbī (Beirut: Dār al-Ihyā' li-al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 2001), 82–86; Abū Nu'aym al-Işbahānī, Hilyah, 3:212–215; al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 5:65–68; Ibn Ḥajar, Tahdhīb, 9:420.
 ⁷⁸ On the qāşş, see Khalil 'Athamina, "Al-qaşaş: Its Emergence, Religious Origin and Its Socio-Political Impact on Early Muslim Society," Studia Islamica 76 (1992), 53–74; the quotation is at 59; and Jamāl Muḥammad Dā'ūd Jūdah, "al-Qaşaş waal-quşşāş fī sadr al-islām," Dirāsāt Tārīkhiyyah 33/34 (1989), 105–141. For a prodigious example of the qāşş as public-preacher and exegete, see the account of Mūsā al-Uswārī and 'Amr b. Qā'id al-Uswarī given in Goldziher, Muslim Studies, 153; also 'Athamina, "Al-qaşaş," 61.

⁷⁹ Jūdah, "al-Qaṣaṣ wa-al-quṣṣāṣ," 105.

⁸⁰Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 5:56.

are both also designated in the sources as $q\bar{a}ss.^{81}$ Both Muhammad b. Ka'b al-Qurazī and Muḥammad b. Qays, who is remembered as one of the great orators (*khațīb*, pl. *khuțabā'*) of early Islam,⁸² were $q\bar{a}ss$ in the employ of the exemplarily pious and learned Umayyad caliph 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz-indeed, Muhammad b. Qays seems to have been the personal "qāṣṣ of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz."83 They would thus seem to fill the characterization of the early qussās as "people with a complete religious education, almost always with a reputation for honesty who are able to attract the attention of the people thanks to their oratorical abilities."84 But despite this, the Hadīth scholars deemed Muḥammad b. Qays—as they did Muḥammad b. Ka'b—as an unreliable transmitter. In fact, this is unsurprising, as the Hadīth movement took an especially dim view of the qussās—as is exemplified in the dictum cited already in the third century of Islam by Muslim b. Hajjāj (d. 261/875) in the introduction to his canonical Hadīth collection, the *Sahīh*, "Do not seek the company of the *qussās!*,"⁸⁵ and supported by a number of Hadīths condemning the ignorance and misguidedness of the *qussās*. The historical growth of this attitude may be seen in the sixth-century Kitāb al-qussās wa-al-mudhakkirīn of the Baghdādī Hānbalī scholar Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597), which cautions precisely against contemporary qussas who teach materials not sanctioned by Hadith methodology (including the Satanic verses incident).⁸⁶ The attitude of

- ⁸¹This is noted in regard to Mujāhid b. Jabr (for whom see **Riwāyahs 31** to **33**, below), by Michael Lecker, "King Ibn Ubayy and the *Quṣṣāṣ*," in Herbert Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 29–72, at 72; and in regard to Qatādah b. Diʿāmah (for whom see **Riwāyahs 24** to **30**, below) by Jūdah, "al-Qaṣaṣ wa-al-quṣṣāṣ," 113–114.
- ⁸² He appears in the short list of famous *khuṭabā*' compiled by Abū al-Faraj Muḥammad b. Abī Ya'qūb Isḥāq Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 380), *al-Fihrist*, ed. Yūsuf 'Alī Ṭawīl (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1996), 187.
- ⁸³ For his designation as qāṣṣ 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, see Ibn 'Asākir, Tārīkh madīnat Dimashq (also noted by Lecker, "King Ibn Ubayy and the Quṣṣāṣ," 72), where it is further stated that Muḥammad b. Qays was with 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz on the day he ascended to the caliphate; for Muḥammad b. Ka'b, see Jūdah, "al-Qaṣaṣ wa-al-quṣṣāṣ," 111–112, where Jūdah is extrapolating from Muḥammad b. Ka'b's account of his personal contact with the caliph in al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, 1:270.
- ⁸⁴ Roberto Tottoli, *Biblical Prophets in the Qur'ān and Muslim Literature* (Reading: Curzon, 2002), 86.
- ⁸⁵See G. H. A. Juynboll, "Muslim's Introduction to His Ṣaḥīḥ," at 283 (one $q\bar{a}ss$ is singled out as an exception to the general proscription).
- ⁸⁶Ibn al-Jawzī, *Kitāb al-quṣṣāṣ wa-al-mudhakkirīn*, ed. Merlin L. Swartz (Beirut: Dar al-Mashriq, 1971), 102–103, 181–183.

the post-formative *ahl al-hadīth* towards the *quṣṣāṣ* is well expressed in the statement with which the tenth-/eleventh-century scholar 'Alī al-Qāri' (d. 1014/1605) prefaced his collection of these reports: "Most of the *quṣṣāṣ* and *wu''āẓ* were ignorant of *tafsīr* and its *riwāyahs*, and of Ḥadīth and its classifications."⁸⁷ Thus, as they did with the *sīrahmaghāzī* scholars such as Ibn Isḥāq, the *ahl al-ḥadīth* discredited the *quṣṣāṣ* for not following the methodology and source materials of the *ahl al-ḥadīth*. Since the *ahl al-ḥadīth* were seeking to do precisely what it is that the Umayyad *quṣṣāṣ* were appointed to do—that is, to establish religious norms in the public sphere through the circulation of narratives—their hostility to the *quṣṣāṣ* is best understood in the context of this aspiration for the proprietorship of both the Muslim memory tradition and religious authority.⁸⁸

- ⁸⁷See 'Alī al-Qāri', al-Mawdū'āt al-kubrā, ed. Muḥammad al-Sa'īd b. Basyūnī Zaghlūl (Karachi: Qadīmī Kutubkhānah, n.d.), 41–45.
- ⁸⁸ "The importance of the storytellers [qussās] in the first Muslim generations stands in contrast to the generally low regard, if not contempt, in which they were held during the classical Islamic period . . . one of the recurring accusations with which the storytellers were charged was that of spreading false ideas and misleading the believers; they were held responsible for collecting stories and divulging them without exercising any critical judgment as to their content, and as far as as the traditions concerning the prophets are concerned, for relying uncritically on legends that were full of exaggeration and of dubious origin, if not in actual conflict with the Qur'anic word. Thus the criticism directed at them by the experts of religious learning reflects both the method and content of their work: a lack of discrimination in the selection of the sources that they used and therefore of those principles that emerged and were consolidated with the development of the criticism of the extra-canonical tradition; and of the use of legends that relied on fantastic aspects and details to satisfy the curiosity and the taste of the people"; Tottoli, Biblical Prophets, 87-88. The term qāss has been too readily rendered into English as "storyteller" (as in the foregoing passage), and the problem with this is less that "it blurs the religious, political and emotional aspects of the $q\bar{a}ss$'s activity" (Lecker, "King Ibn Ubayy and the Qussās," 68) than that it is an uncritical acceptance of the pejorative characterization of one group, the qussās, by another group, the ahl al-hadīth, who were opposed to the qussās and were contesting discursive and normative authority with them. The problem with the assessment of Patricia Crone-"It is clear, then, that much of the classical Muslim understanding of the Qur'an rests on the work of popular storytellers . . . this is the major reason why the exegetical tradition is so unreliable a guide to the original meaning of the Qur'an and history alike: as might be expected of storytellers, they made up their stories in complete disregard to both"-is that she seems uncritically to understands the qussās to have been exactly who the Hadīth scholars claimed they were, and to have been doing just what the Hadith scholars claimed they were doing. See Crone, Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Uni-

The present report is related from Muhammad b. Qays and Muḥammad b. Ka'b by Abū Ma'shar Najīḥ b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Madanī (d. 170), a Medinese contemporary of Ibn Ishāq who compiled an important biography of Muhammad, his Kitāb al-maghāzī.89 Abū Ma'shar was also one of Muhammad b. 'Umar al-Wāqidī's twenty-three primary informants for the latter's Kitāb al-maghāzī,90 and al-Ţabarī drew from Abū Ma'shar's Kitāb al-khulafā' extensively in his Tārīkh.91 The phenomenon noted in the discussion of the isnād in **Riwāyah 1**, that of a prominent *sīrah-maghāzī* scholar having a bad reputation as a *muhaddith*, is also found in the reports on Abū Ma'shar. Abū Ma'shar had a truly dreadful reputation as a Hadīth transmitter: one Hadīth scholar is said to have laughed whenever he was mentioned and another called him "the biggest liar in heaven and earth." Similarly, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal said of him that he was unreliable (*laysa bi-dhāk*) and that he did not pay attention to *isnāds*, but then went on to add, "He was well-versed in maghāzī." Another scholar said, "Abū Ma'shar has a place [la-hu makān] in learning and history; his historical reports are regarded by the Imams as authoritative [ihtajja bi-hi] but they regard him as weak in Hadīth." Yahyā b. Ma'in commented, "He is weak: of his Hadith, the *riqāq* [Hadith which do not contain a legal ruling] may be recorded." Ahmad Ibn Hanbal especially commended Abū Ma'shar's transmissions from Muhammad b. Ka'b al-Qurazī: "Abū Ma'shar's tafsīr reports from

 $Mu \ hammad \ b. \ Ka'b \ are \ to \ be \ recorded."^{92} \ While \ clearly \ not \ respected$

versity Press, 1987), 216; for a critique of an example used by Crone to support her argument, see Lecker, "King Ibn Ubayy and the *Qussās*."

⁸⁹ Abū Ma'shar's *Kitāb al-maghāzī* is cited as an independent work by Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, 148; on Abū Ma'shar, see Ibn Abī Hātim, *Jar*, 8:493-494; Ibn 'Adī, *Kāmil*, 7:52-56; al-'Uqaylī, *Du'afā*', 4:1432-1433; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Du'afā*', 3:157; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 7:435-440, Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 10:419-422; Horovitz, "Biographies IV," *Islamic Culture* 2 (1928), 495-526, at 495-498; Athar Mubārakpūrī, "Imām Abū Ma'shar Sindī: ṣāḥib al-Maghāzī," *Ma'ārif* 128.3 (1981), 186-205, and 128.4 (1981), 268-292; Selman Beşaran, "Ebû Ma' 'şer es-Sindi," *TDVIA*; Marsden Jones' introduction to his edition of Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Wāqidī, *Kitāb al-maghāzī* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), 1:28-29; Sezgin, *GAS*, 1:291-292.

⁹⁰ Al-Wāqidī, al-Maghāzī, 1:1.

⁹¹The continuing importance of Abū Ma'shar's works may be gauged from the fact that al-Khaţīb al-Baghdādī obtained *ijāzahs* in fifth-/eleventh-century Baghdad authorizing him to tranmsit both Abū Ma'shar's *Kitāb al-maghāzī* and his *Kitāb al-khulafā*'. See Sezgin, *GAS*, 1:292.

⁹² yuktab min ḥadīth Abī Ma'shar aḥādīthu-hu 'an Muḥammad b. Ka'b fī al-tafsīr.

BEFORE ORTHODOXY

as a Ḥadīth transmitter, Abū Ma'shar was nonetheless recognized as a historian and as a transmitter from the celebrated *mufassir* Muḥammad b. Ka'b. The Ḥadīth scholars reject **Riwāyah 2** on the basis of Abū Ma'shar's presence in the *isnād*.⁹³

Abū Ma'shar migrated to Baghdad in about 160 to take up an appointment at the 'Abbāsid court at the direction of the Caliph al-Mahdī, which explains why the *isnād* becomes an Iraqi one. Al-Ḥajjaj b. Muḥammad al-Miṣṣīṣī, a respected Ḥadīth scholar who authored an early work on *naskh* in the Qur'ān, studied with Abū Ma'shar in Baghdad before moving to Miṣṣīṣah on the Iraq-Syria border.⁹⁴ The present report is transmitted from al-Ḥajjāj by Sunayd al-Ḥusayn b. Dā'ūd al-Missīsī.95 Sunayd, who is credited with the composition of a *Tafsīr*, had an uneven reputation as a Hadīth transmitter. He held the post of *muhtasib* (market-inspector) in Missisah, where he studied closely with al-Hajjāj. Al-Tabarī has thirty-two riwāyahs from Sunayd in his *Tārīkh*; twenty-three of these are transmitted from al-Hajjāj. Twenty-nine are by way of al-Qāsim b. al-Hasan al-Baghdādī, an obscure figure of apparently limited scholarly credentials who appears in al-Tabarī's works only as a transmitter from Sunayd. It is interesting that al-Tabarī should have chosen such an obscure individual from among his Baghdādī contemporaries as the source from whom to narrate from Sunayd; perhaps al-Qāsim b. al-Ḥasan owned a manuscript containing Sunayd's materials.⁹⁶

The following is a translation of the report. I have followed the text of al-Ṭabarī and have given the slight variants in al-Suyūṭī either in the body of the text, where they are indicated with the sign "<u>OR</u>:", or in the footnotes. As the textual transmission of al-Ṭabarī's *Tafsīr* must have stabilized well before al-Suyūṭī's time, the variants in al-

⁹³ See al-Albānī, Naşb al-majānīq, 11; al-Halabī al-Atharī, Dalā'il, 124–125; al-Ṣawwayānī rejects the isnād on the basis that it is mursal; al-Qaşīmah, 1:431.

⁹⁴ See Al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī, Tārīkh Baghdād, 8:236-239; al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 9:447-450; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 8:205-206; Shams al-Dīn Muhammad b. 'Alī b. Muhammad al-Dā'ūdi, *Tabaqāt al-mufassirīn*, ed.'Alī Muhammad 'Umar (Cairo: Maktabat Wahbah, 1972), 1:131-132.

⁹⁵ See al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 8:42–43; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 10:627–628; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 12:244–245; al-Dā'ūdi, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufassirīn*, 1:209.

⁹⁶ The sparse biographical information on him does not even record him as transmitting from Sunayd: al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 12:432–433; Ibn 'Asākir, *Tārīkh Dimashq*, 7:14; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 13:158; see also Rosenthal, *History of al-Ţabarī: Volume 1*, 192, footnote 185.

Suyūțī's text must represent either al-Suyūțī's own editorial work⁹⁷ or the wording of the *riwāyah* as recorded in the earlier *Tafsīr* of Sa'īd b. Manṣūr. The differences between the respective versions in al-Ṭabarī and al-Suyūțī are, in any case, slight and do not alter the hermeneutical construction of the narrative of the incident in any way.⁹⁸

The Messenger of God was seated in a large gathering of Quraysh. He desired [$tamann\bar{a}$], that day, that nothing come to him from God that would cause them to turn away from him [$all\bar{a}$ ya'tiya-hu min All $\bar{a}hi$ shay'un fa-yanfir \bar{u} 'an-hu].⁹⁹

And God sent down, "By the star when it sets: your Companion has not gone astray [*dalla*], nor is he misguided [*ghawā*],"¹⁰⁰ and the Messenger of God recited it [*qara'a-hā*] until he reached, "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?," when Satan cast two phrases upon him [*alqā al-shayṭānu 'alay-hi kalimatayni*]: "Those high *gharānīq!* Indeed, their intercession is hoped for! [*tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna la-turjā*]."¹⁰¹ He uttered the two phrases [*fa-takallama bi-himā*], then he went on and recited the whole *sūrah*.

At the end of the *sūrah*, he made the *sajdah*, and the whole gathering [*al-qawm*] made the *sajdah* with him. Walīd b. al-Mughīrah took some dirt to his forehead and made the *sajdah* upon it—he was an old man and was unable to make the *sajdah* (fully). They were satisfied with what he had uttered [*fa-raḍū bi-mā takallama bi-hi*] and said: "We know that Allāh gives life and death, and that it is He who creates and sustains, but these gods of ours intercede with Him on our behalf; and

⁹⁷While al-Suyuțī's Durr is a tafsīr bi-al-ma'thūr—that is, it consists entirely of reports compiled from earlier works—al-Suyūţī does not present every report separately. Rather, I have observed that when more than one of al-Suyūţī's sources cite a particular riwāyah by a common isnād or from a common first source but with textual variants across the different citations, al-Suyūţī's practice is to ignore the textual variants, and to present these textually variant reports as a single riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā. In doing so, he seems either to adjust the matn by collating the texts of the respective citations into a single "combined report," or to follow the text of just one of the citations as representative bi-al-ma'nā of the others.

⁹⁸Cf. the translation of Watt and MacDonald, *History of al-Tabarī Vol VI*, 112–113.

⁹⁹Al-Suyūțī: "that would cause them to separate from him [fa-yatafarraqū 'an-hu]."

¹⁰⁰ Al-Ţabarī, Tārīkh, adds the third verse: "nor does he speak from desire [wa-mā yanțiq 'an al-hawā]."

¹⁰¹In al-Ţabarī, Jāmi' al-bayān, and a manuscript of the Tārīkh: al-gharāniqah; in a manuscript of the Tārīkh: turtadā; in al-Suyūţī: la-turtajā.

when you give them a share, we are with you [fa- $idh\bar{a}^{102}$ ja'alta la- $h\bar{a}$ na $s\bar{i}ban fa$ -nahnu ma'a-ka]."¹⁰³

¹⁰⁴In the evening, Jibrīl came to him and he (the Prophet) went over the *sūrah* with him [*fa-'araḍa 'alay-hi al-sūrah*]. When he (the Prophet) reached the two phrases Satan had cast upon him, he (Jibrīl) said, "I did not bring you these! [*mā ji'tu-ka bi-hātayni*]." And the Messenger of God said: "I have fabricated against God and have said on God's behalf that which He did not say! [*iftaraytu 'alā Allāh wa-qultu 'alā Allāh mā lam yaqul*]." So God revealed to him [*fa-awḥā Allāh ilay-hi*]: "And they strove to tempt you away from that with which We have inspired you, that you might fabricate against Us something other than it [*wa-in kādū la-yaftinūna-ka 'an alladhī awḥaynā ilay-ka li-taftariya 'alay-nā ghayra-hu*]," until His words, "And then you would have found no helper against Us [*thumma lā tajidu la-ka 'alay-nā naṣīran*]."¹⁰⁵

He remained distressed [*maghmūm*] and anxious [*mahmūm*] until there came down: "And we have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet ...," to His words, "... And God is All-Knowing, All-Wise."

<u>OR</u>: He remained distressed and anxious because of those two phrases until there came down, "And we have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet." So He dispelled his fears and his soul was soothed [*fa-sarra 'an-hu wa-tābat nafsu-hu*].

¹⁰⁶The Emigrants in Abyssinia heard that all the people of Mecca had accepted Islam. So they returned to their clans saying, "They are dearer to us [*hum aḥabbu 'alay-nā*]." And they found the people had reverted to their former condition [*irtakasū*] when God had abrogated what Satan cast.

Given that **Riwāyahs 1** and **2** share an originating transmitter namely, Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī—it is significant that, while they differ in their wording and in the inclusion and exclusion of

¹⁰³ The paragraph is given in summary form in al-Suyūți: "At the end of the *sūrah*, he made the *sajdah*, and the whole gathering [*al-qawm*] made the *sajdah* with him. They were satisfied with what he had uttered [*fa-raḍū bi-mā takallama bi-hi*]."

¹⁰⁴Al-Ṭabarī: *qālā*, "They said:."

¹⁰² Al-Ṭabarī, Jāmi'al-bayān: fa-idh.

¹⁰⁵ The text not quoted is "in which case they would surely have taken you as a friend: And, had we not steadied you, you were, indeed, on the verge of inclining to them a little: Then We would have had you taste the double of life and the double of death," wa-idhan la-ittakhadhū-ka khalīlan / wa-law lā an thabbatnā-ka la-qad kidta tarkanu ilay-him shay'an qalīlan / idhan la-adhaqnā-ka di'fa al-ḥayāti wadi'fa al-mamāti; Qur'ān 17:73-75 al-Isrā'.

¹⁰⁶Al-Ṭabarī: *qāla*, "he said."

some narrative elements, they are entirely consistent in their interpretation of the incident.

Virtually all the narrative elements in Riwāyah 1 are present in Riwāyah 2, where they are either explicitly stated or implied by context. For example, motif 3b, that Satan's intervention was a result of the Prophet's desire, is not explicitly stated in Riwāyah 2 but is clearly implied by the flow of the narrative. On the other hand, while Riwāyah 1 does not make it explicit in narrative unit 3 (Satan's intervention) that the Prophet uttered the Satanic verses, but defers this until later (motif 7b), Riwāyah 2 contains an immediate and explicit statement of this fact: "He uttered the two phrases." The theme of persecution is not brought out in Riwāyah 2, from which motif 1c (the Prophet's desire to halt the persecution by Quraysh) and motif 9a (Quraysh intensify persecution as a result of the removal of the Satanic verses) are absent. Nonetheless, even though the Prophet's desire to reconcile Quraysh is not presented in terms of Quraysh's persecution, the context of persecution is evident from the chronological context of the incident, which is provided by the mention of the refugees in Abyssinia.

Of prospective importance is the absence from **Riwāyah 2** and other *riwāyahs* of **motif 8b**—the Revelation by God of Qur'ān 53:21-26 al-Najm as abrogating verses. Since **Riwāyah 2** says expressly that the Prophet "uttered the two phrases, then he went on and recited the whole *sūrah*," this would seem to imply that Qur'ān 53:21-26 al-Najm was part of the original revelation, and that the Prophet recited it immediately after reciting the Satanic verses.¹⁰⁷ This would

¹⁰⁷As noted above, Qur'ãn 53:21–26 al-Najm is "Should you have males, and He females? That, indeed, would be an unfair division! Indeed, they are no more than names which you have named, you and your ancestors! Allāh has not sent down any authority with them. Indeed, they follow nothing but conjecture and that which their souls desire, when guidance has come to them from their Lord! Is it for man to have what he desires? To God belongs the First and the Last! However many angels there are in the heavens, their intercession is of no benefit, except after Allāh permits this to whom He wills and approves!" The rest of Sūrat al-Najm is as follows: "Those who do not believe in the life to come call the angels by female names. They have no knowledge of it: they follow nothing but conjecture —and conjecture is no degree a sufficiency against the truth! So, avoid those who turn away from remembrance of Us and who purpose nothing but the lower life! That is their sum of knowledge; your Lord knows best who goes astray from the path, and He knows best who is guided. Allāh's is that which is in the heavens, and that which is on the

be taken up by modern opponents of the historicity of the incident as an argument against the Prophet reciting the Satanic verses.¹⁰⁸

earth; to reward those who do misdeeds in accordance with what they do, and to reward with good those who do good. Those who avoid major sins and shameful deeds-except rarely-indeed, the forgiveness of your Lord is capacious! He knows you best, when He sets you up from the earth, and when you are foetuses in the wombs of your mothers: so do not reckon your souls to be pure-he knows best who is conscious of him. Have you seen him who turns away, who gives little and is stingy? Does he know the Unseen that he might see? Or was he never informed of what is in the book of Mūsā, and of Ibrāhīm the fidelous? That no bearer of burdens will bear another's burden, and that no human being will be accountable except for what for which he strives, and that his striving will be seen, and that he will be requited for it with the fullest requital-and that the end is with your Lord. It is He who causes to laugh and to weep, and He who takes away life and gives it, and it is He who created the couple, the male and the female, from a sperm-drop as it spilled forth-and it is His to raise another life. He frees from need and gives possession. He is the Lord of Sirius. It is He who destroyed 'Ad of old, and Thamud so that no trace remained, and the people of Nūh, before, who were yet greater wrongdoers and tyrants, and he laid low the overthrown cities (of Lūt) and they were covered up and obliterated. So by which of the bounties of your Lord do you doubt? This is a warning of the warnings of old: the approaching time approaches. None but Allāh can unveil it. Are you astonished at this discourse? Do you laugh rather than weep, and raise your heads in confusion? Prostrate yourselves to Allah and worship him!" Qur'ān 53:27-62 al-Najm: inna alladhīna lā yu'minūna bi-al-ākhirati la-yusammūna al-malā'ikata tasmiyat al-unthā / wa-mā la-hum bi-hi min 'ilmin in yattabi'ūna illā al-zanna wa-inna al-zanna lā yughnī min al-haqqi shay'an / fa-a'rid 'an man tawallā 'an dhikri-nā wa-lam yurid illā al-hayāta al-dunyā / dhālika mablaghu-hum min al-'ilmi inna rabba-ka huwa a'lamu bi-man dalla 'an sabīli-hi wa-huwa a'lamu bi-man ihtadā / wa-li-Allāhi mā fī al-samāwāti wa-mā fī al-ardi li-yajziya alladhīna asā'ū bi-mā 'amilū wa-yajziya alladhīna ahsanū bi-al-husnā / alladhīna yajtanibūna kabā'ira al-ithmi wa-al-fawāhisha illā al-lamama inna rabba-ka wāsi'u al-maghfirati huwa a'lamu bi-kum idh ansha'a-kum min al-ardi wa-idh antum ajinnatun fī butūni ummahāti-kum fa-lā tuzakkū anfusakum huwa a'lamu bi-man ittaqā / a-fara'ayta alladhī tawallā / wa-a'tā qalīlan wa-akdā / a-'inda-hu 'ilmu alghaybi fa-huwa yarā / am lam yunabba' bi-mā fī suḥufi Mūsā / wa-Ibrāhīma alladhī waffā / allā taziru wāziratun wizra ukhrā / wa-an laysa li-al-insāni illā mā sa'ā / waanna sa'ya-hu sawfa yur \bar{a} / thumma yuj $z\bar{a}$ -hu al-ja $z\bar{a}$ 'a al-awf \bar{a} / wa-anna il \bar{a} rabbi-ka al-muntahā / wa-anna-hu huwa adhaka wa-abkā / wa-anna-hu huwa amāta wa-aḥyā / wa-anna-hu khalaqa al-zawjayni al-dhakara wa-al-unthā / min nutfatin idhā tumnā / wa-anna 'alay-hi al-nash'ata al-ukhrā / wa-anna-hu huwa aghnā waaqnā / wa-anna-hu huwa rabbu al-shi'rā / wa-anna-hu ahlaka 'Ādan al-ūlā / wa-Thamūda fa-mā abgā / wa-gawma Nūhin min gablu inna-hum kānū hum azlama wa-atghā / wa-al-mu'tafikata ahwā / fa-ghashshā-hā mā ghashshā / fa-bi-ayyi ālā'i rabbi-ka tatamārā / hādhā nadhīrun min al-nudhuri al-ūlā / azifati al-āzifatu / laysa la-hā min dūni Allāhi kāshifatun / a-fa-min hādhā al-hadīthi taʿjabūna / watadhakūna wa-lā tabkūna / wa-antum sāmidūna / fa-usjudū li-Allāhi wa-u budū.

¹⁰⁸ The argument that would be made is: since there is no mention of Qur'ān 53:21– 26 al-Najm being revealed as abrogating verses, we must assume that they were Also absent from **Riwāyah 2** are **motifs 6a** and **6b**—the reaction of the Muslims in Mecca—through which the issue of *'iṣmat al-anbiyā'* was alluded to in **Riwāyah 1**.¹⁰⁹ However, like **Riwāyah 1**, **Riwāyāh 2** begins by quoting the opening two verses of Surat al-Najm in full: "By the star when it sets: your Companion has not gone astray, nor is he misguided." This has the effect of setting up the Satanic verses incident as a direct hermeneutical elaboration of this Divine assertion: evidently, the Divine statement "Your Companion has not gone astray, nor is he misguided" is somehow qualified by the Divine statement "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he desired, Satan cast something into his desire; then God removes that which Satan casts and establishes His Signs clearly," with the Satanic verses incident illustrating that qualification.

Unlike **Riwāyah 1**, **Riwāyah 2** provides a time frame for the period between the Prophet's error and his correction by Jibrīl, which here takes place the same evening.¹¹⁰ At the same time, **Riwāyah 2** goes further than **Riwāyah 1** in explaining the nature of the theological concession in the Satanic verses. This is Quraysh's statement: "We know that Allāh gives life and death, and that it is He who creates and sustains, but these gods of ours intercede with Him on our behalf; and when you give them a share, we are with you," which explains to the reader that Quraysh's objection was not to the worship of Allāh but rather to the idea of the exclusivity of Allāh's divinity. What is conceded to Quraysh is, thus, precisely the claim attributed to them in Qur'ān 10:18 Yūnus and depicted there as erroneous: "They worship beside Allāh something which can neither harm nor benefit them, and say, 'These are our intercessionaries with Allāh."

recited by Muḥammad when he continued to recite Sūrat al-Najm immediately following his recitation of the Satanic verses (as he is stated in **Riwāyah 2** to have done). This means that we must understand the Prophet to have "praised and condemned al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt within four verses," which is a "confused, self-contradictory" and "illogical" notion; see Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal, *Hayāt Muḥammad* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'arif, 1935), 144.

¹⁰⁹ A less important element from **Riwāyah 1** altogether absent from **Riwāyah 2** is **motif 2d:** that the incident took place at the Ka'bah.

¹¹⁰ Watt has remarked that "the earliest versions" of the incident do not specify how much time elapsed between the Prophet's error and his proclamation of his correction. It is not clear which reports Watt regards as early, but **Riwāyah 2** seems to be first-century (see below), as is **Riwāyah 8**, below, which gives the same time frame. See also **Riwāyah 29**, below.

The wording of the Satanic verses is virtually identical in **Riwāyahs 1** and **2**, the only difference being that the last word is given as *turtaļā* and as *turtajā* in **Riwāyah 2**. The two words are both orthographically and semantically similar (the text of **Riwāyah 1** in al-Ṭabarī has *turtajā*), for which reason this difference is better taken as representing a scribal corruption rather than a different narrative tradition. The function of Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj is given identically in both accounts—namely, that of relieving the Prophet's anxiety.

The most significant difference between the two *riwāyahs* is that, in addition to Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj, **Riwāyah 2** links the Satanic verses incident to the explanatory verses of Qur'ān 17:73–75 al-Isrā':

And they strove to tempt you away from that with which We have inspired you, that you might fabricate against Us [an taftariya 'alay-nā] something other than it—in which case they would surely have taken you as a friend: And, had we not steadied you, you were, indeed, on the verge of inclining to them a little: Then We would have had you taste the double of life and the double of death; and then you would have found no helper against Us.¹¹¹

This connection is effected by a linking phrase in the narrative namely, the Prophet's saying, "I have fabricated against God [*if-taraytu 'alā Allāh*] and have said on God's behalf that which He did not say!" This linking phrase replaces **motif 7c** in **Riwāyah 1** (Jibrīl saying to the Prophet, "You have recited to the people that which I did not bring to you from God, and you have said that which He did not say to you!"). Whereas in **Riwāyah 1** the nature of the Prophet's transgression is glossed in Jibrīl's censure of the Prophet, in **Riwāyah 2**, Jibrīl only disclaims responsibility for the verses, and the gloss here is in the Prophet's own acknowledgment of his transgression.

The association of the incident with Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā' and thus with the verb *iftarā 'alā*, "to forge, fabricate or devise against," is significant because it serves to underline the Prophet's responsi-

¹¹¹wa-in kādū la-yaftinūna-ka 'an alladhī awḥaynā ilay-ka li-taftariya 'alay-nā ghayra-hu wa-idhan la-ittaakhadhū-ka khalīlan / wa-law lā an thabbatnā-ka laqad kidta tarkanu ilay-him shay'an qalīlan / idhan la-adhaqnā-ka di'fa al-hayāti wa-di'fa al-mamāti thumma lā tajidi la-ka 'alay-nā naṣīran.

bility in precipitating Satan's intervention. The link phrase in the narrative makes it clear that in seeking to reconcile Quraysh, the Prophet was hoping to receive Divine Revelation that would serve a purpose other than that of his Messengership, and the words he then uttered were inspired by this purpose and not by God: *iftaraytu 'alā* Allāh wa-qultu 'alā Allāh mā lam yaqul. The words of Qur'ān 17:73 themselves emphasize that the Prophet's act was in response to the pressure of his temporal circumstances: "And they strove to tempt you away from that with which We have inspired you, that you might fabricate against Us [an taftariya 'alay-nā] something other than it." Nonetheless, the attribution to the Prophet of the statement "I have fabricated against God [*iftaraytu 'alā Allāh*]" is a highly remarkable one in view of the Divine Declaration in Qur'ān 6:93 al-An'ām: "Who is the greater wrongdoer than he who fabricates falsehood against God [man azlamu mim-man iftarā 'alā Allāhi kadhiban]?" It is important to note, however, that in neither Riwāyah 1 nor 2 is there any suggestion that the Prophet's utterance of the Satanic verses represented a deliberate or premeditated act on his part. Rather, the incident is presented as a temporary breakdown in the Revelatory process resulting from the Prophet's human fallibility. Thus, the Satanic verses incident is informed by an underlying assumption of the existence of a contingent relationship between the process of Divine Revelation on the one hand and the fact of the Prophet's humanness and consequent emotional and psychological susceptibility to temporal circumstance on the other hand. We will have occasion to return to this concept throughout this study.

Riwāyahs 1 and **2** are in total agreement on the three fundamental hermeneutical questions:

- 1. The Prophet uttered the Satanic verses.
- 2. His uttering them was precipitated by his desire (*tamannā*) to be reconciled with Quraysh.
- 3. He was unaware of having erred until corrected by Jibrīl.

In other words, **Riwāyahs 1** and **2** represent different narrative traditions of what is essentially the same hermeneutical elaboration of the incident. At the level of basic hermeneutical issues, each report is, in effect, a *riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā* of the other. The most important difference between them is the fact that **Riwāyah 2** relates the incident to Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā', in addition to Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj.

Given the consistency of the accounts, it is instructive, first of all, to note once again the presence of Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī, a very important early Qur'ān scholar, as a common source for both reports, and secondly, to note that the reports were transmitted from him by two different *isnāds*. There is no apparent reason to doubt Muḥammad b. Isḥāq's transmission from Yazīd b. Ziyād al-Madanī. And given that Abū Ma'shar's report was itself transmitted by two separate individuals, one of whom, Sa'īd b. Manṣūr, recorded it in a partially extant work, there seems equally little reason to doubt that Abū Ma'shar did teach the report. In these circumstances, one is encouraged to accept **Riwāyahs 1** and **2** as genuinely representative of Muḥammad b. Ka'b's teaching about the Satanic verses in Madinah in the late first and early second centuries.

Riwāyah 3: al-Wāqidī's Report from al-Muṭṭalib b. Ḥanṭab and the Banū Ṣafar

Riwāyah 3 is given by Muḥammad Ibn Sa'd (168–230) in the *sīrah nabawiyyah* section of the *Kitāb al-ṭabaqat al-kabīr*, the first major biographical dictionary of the historical community of Muslims in the first two centuries of Islam. Ibn Sa'd has the report from the man for whom he worked in Baghdad as a scribe, the great Medinese historian Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Wāqidī al-Madanī, who enjoyed the patronage of the Barmakid viziers of the 'Abbāsid caliphs, and is the author of an extant *Kitāb al-maghāzī*. The report, presumably taken from al-Wāqidī's lost *Kitāb al-mubtada'*, is given with the following two *isnāds*:¹¹²

Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Wāqidī al-Madanī (130–207) ←Yūnus b. Muḥammad b. Anas b. Fuḍālah / Faḍālah al-Ṣafarī al-Madanī (71–

¹¹²Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqāt*, 1:160–61. This *riwāyah* is partially cited by Abū Ja'far Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl al-Naḥḥās (d. 338), *al-Nāsikh wa-al-mansūkh fī kitāb Allāh 'azza wa-jalla wa-ikhtilāf al-'ulamā' fī dhālika*, ed. Sulaymān b. Ibrāhīm b. 'Abd Allāh al-Lāhim (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1991), 2:528. For al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-mab'ath*, see Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, 158; see also the discussion by Marsden Jones in his introduction to al-Wāqidī, *Kitāb al-maghāzī*, 13–14.

156) ← his father, Muḥammad b. Anas b. Fuḍālah / Faḍālah al-ẓafarī al-Madanī (1-?)

and

Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Wāqidī al-Madanī (130–207) ← Kathīr b. Zayd al-Madanī (d. *circa* 158) ← al-Muṭṭalib b. Ḥanṭab al-Qurashī al-Madanī (d. *circa* 120).

As with **Riwāyah 2**, **Riwāyah 3** is carried by two *isnāds*, and we cannot tell whether the text represents a conflation of two accounts, follows the text one of the two accounts, or whether the accounts transmitted by the respective *isnāds* were identical.

Muhammad b. 'Umar al-Wāqidī presents us with another instance of a scholar who was a colossal figure among second-century historians and compilers of sīrah-maghāzī, but was rejected as an unreliable Hadīth transmitter by all the major Hadīth authorities, whose opinion of him was unfussily summed up by al-Dhahabī: "Consensus is established on al-Wāqidī's bad reputation."113 But, al-Dhahabī also observed, "It is decided that al-Wāqidī is weak [da'if]: he is needed in ghazawāt (ie., maghāzī) and history [tārīkh] ... as for matters of religious regulation [farā'id], he should not be mentioned."114 Elsewhere, al-Dhahabī adds, "He collected and compiled, and mixed the worthless with the valuable, shells with precious pearls. They repudiated him for this; but in spite of it, there is no doing without him in maghāzī."115 In al-Wāqidī's case, the principal reason for this was probably his practice of synthesizing different *riwāyahs* on the same event into a single combined report transmitted by a collective *isnād*, something which, we have seen in **Chapter 1**, was directly

¹¹³Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī, Mīzān al-i'tidāl fī naqd al-rijāl ed. 'Alī Muḥammad al-Bijāwī (Cairo: 'Īsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1964), 3:662-666, at 666; also, "The experts are as one as to his weakness as a transmitter," at 662. See also Ibn Ḥajar, Tahdhīb, 9:363-368.

¹¹⁴wa-qad taqarrara anna al-Wāqidī da'īf yuhtāj ilay-hi fi al-ghazawāt wa-al-tā'rikh, al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 9:469.

¹¹⁵wa-jama'a fa-aw'ā wa-khalața al-ghathth bi-al-samīn wa-al-kharaz bi-al-durr al-thamīn fa-ițțaraḥū-hu li-dhālika wa-ma'a hādhā fa-lā yustaghnā 'an-hu fī almaghāzī, al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 9:454. Thus, Horovitz notes, "While al-Waqidī is repudiated by the muḥaddithūn, he is held a sound authority for the sīra, the maghāzī, the conquests and fiqh"; Horovitz, "Earliest Biographies IV," 498–526, at 520.

incompatible with the methodology of the *ahl al-hadīth*.¹¹⁶ As with Ibn Ishāq and **Riwāyah 1**, al-Wāqidī's presence in the *isnād* was sufficient basis for the rejection of **Riwāyah 3** by al-Albānī and other *muhaddithūn*.¹¹⁷

In his *Țabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd adduces a total of eleven reports with the second of the foregoing *isnāds*, al-Wāqidī \leftarrow Kathīr b. Zayd \leftarrow al-Muṭṭalib b. 'Abd Allāh b. Ḥanṭab, this despite his low opinion of al-Muṭṭalib as a Ḥadīth transmitter.¹¹⁸ Kathīr b. Zayd, evidently al-Wāqidī's sole informant from al-Muṭṭalib, is a similarly obscure figure who had at best an indifferent reputation with the Ḥadīth scholars.¹¹⁹

The first chain is a family *isnād* transmitted within the Banū Zafar, a subclan of the Banū Aws in Madīnah. Yūnus b. Muḥammad b. Anas b. Fuḍālah / Faḍālah al-Zafarī is listed by al-Wāqidī as one of his twenty-three primary informants for the *Kitāb al-maghāzī*.¹²⁰ In spite of this, the biographical information on him is sparse as he evi-

- ¹¹⁶ "While writing Maghāzī, he did not follow the recognized rules of reporting and was not scrupulous in matters of *Isnād*"; Imtiaz Aḥmad, "Wāqidī as a Traditionist," *Islamic Studies* 18 (1979), 243–253, at 243; the opinions of the Ḥadīth authorities about al-Wāqidī are conveniently summarized at 247–249.
- ¹¹⁷ For al-Albānī's assessment of the *isnād* of **Riwāyah 3**, see *Naṣb al-majānīq*, 16; see also al-Halabī al-Atharī, *Dalā'il*, 106–107. The fullest demolition of al-Wāqidī is provided by the important twentieth-century South Asian scholar Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī, "European Biographies of Muhammad and Muhammad bin Omar al-Wáqidí," *The Islamic Review* 14 (1926) 135–148, 188–196; and Nadwī, "Wáqidí Again," *The Islamic Review*, 15 (1927) 136–144, 214–228, and 247–255 (a translation of an essay that first appeared in Urdu in the Azamgarh journal *al-Ma'*ārif). See the defense of al-Wāqidī by Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, '*Uyūn al-athar*, 1:23–27; the biographical study by Marsden Jones in his edition of al-Wāqidī, *Kitāb al-maghāzī*, 1:5–35; and Sezgin, *GAS*, 1:294–297.
- ¹¹⁸ Al-Muțțalib b. 'Abd Allāh b. Hanțab is an obscure figure: it is not clear if there was one individual of this name or two. See al-Bukhārī, *al-Kabīr* 7:8; Ibn Abī Hātim, *Jarḥ* 8:359; al-Mizzī, *al-Kamāl*, 28:81–85; and Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 10:228–229. In spite of his obscurity, two of the reports that Ibn Sa'd has from him are very important ones pertaining to the death of the Prophet; see Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqāt*, 2:176–177. Al-Wāqidī takes from al-Muțțalib b. Hanțab twice in the *Kitāb al-maghāzī*, and al-Ţabarī takes from him once in his *Tārīkh*, in describing the funeral of Abū Bakr. In all, six of the fourteen reports I have found from al-Muțțalib deal with deaths and funerals, perhaps indicating a special interest of sorts. Eight of the fourteen reports are about the Prophet.
- ¹¹⁹See Ibn Sa'd, *Țabaqāt mutammim*, 423–424; Ibn Abī Hātim, *Jarḥ* 7:150–151; Ibn 'Adī, *al-Kāmil fī al-du'afā*', 6:67–69; Ibn Hibbān, *al-Majrūḥīn*, 2:222–223; al-Nasā'ī, *al-Du'afā*', 206; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb* 8:413–414.

¹²⁰ Al-Wāqidī, al-Maghāzī, 1:1.

dently did not tranmsit Hadīth material.¹²¹ Nonetheless, I have found eighteen citations of Yūnus b. Muhammad al-Zafarī in al-Wāqidī's isnāds.¹²² Of these, five are in collective isnāds where al-Wāqidī has drawn on a large number of informants to provide an uninterrupted narrative of a major event. Of the remaining thirteen, seven are Yūnus b. Muhammad from his father, which would suggest that the father may well have been the original source for some of the information in the collective isnāds too. Al-Wāqidī also has two other informants who may well be sons of Yūnus's father; Ya'qūb b. Muhammad al-Zafarī and 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Muhammad b. Anas al-Zafarī.¹²³ Between them they have thirteen *riwāyahs* in the *Kitāb al-maghāzī*, two of which are from their father. Muhammad b. Anas b. Fudālah al-Zafarī, then, was a not insignificant source of the lore of the Banū Zafar that al-Wāqidī collected, with at least nine surviving riwāyahs originating with him, possibly more if one takes into consideration the combined report / collective *isnād* material. However, since he was not a Hadith transmitter, the information on him, as with al-Muttalib b. Hantab, is very limited.¹²⁴ While it is uncertain whether the mention of him in the present isnād should be taken as connoting

- ¹²³ I can find neither of them in the biographical dictionaries. 'Abd al-'Azīz also has a *riwāyah* going back to al-Muţţalib b. Hanţab.
- 124 Al-Bukhārī, al-Kabīr, 1 / 1:16; Ibn Abī Hātim, Jarh, 8:55; Yūsuf b. 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, al-Istī'āb fī ma'rifat al-ashāb, ed. 'Abd Allāh Muhammad al-Bijāwī (Cairo: Maktabat Nahdat Misr, 1960), 3:1365; 'Izz al-Dīn 'Alī Ibn al-Athīr, Usd al-ghābah fī ma'rifat al-sahābah (Cairo: al-Matba'ah al-Wahbiyyah, 1280), 4:312; Ibn Hajar, al-Iṣābah, 6:4-5, where it is said that he transmitted only one Hadīth. Yūnus's father sometimes appears as Muhammad b. Anas b. Fudālah / Fadālah and sometimes as Muhammad b. Fudalah / Fadalah (as in the above isnad), which led some Hadith scholars to question if these names referred to the same individual. However, the biographical entries on Anas b. Fudalah expressly state that Yūnus b. Muhammad was his descendant: Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Istī 'āb, 1:113; Ibn al-Athīr, Usd, 1:126. Also, Ibn Hajar points out that the name is given in both forms in family isnāds carrying the same autobiographical report, which would suggest that we are dealing with the same individual. Muhammad's father is reported to have been martyred at Uhud when Muhammad was in his infancy, which may have resulted in his being raised by his grandfather (who was still alive) with the result that he became associated with the name of his immediate guardian, Fudālah/Fadālah, rather than with that of his father, Anas.

¹²¹ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-Işābah fī tamyīz al-şaḥābah*, ed. 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Bijāwī (Cairo: Dār al-Nahḍah, 1971), 6:727–728; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqāt*, 5:462; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqāt mutammim*, 427.

¹²² Thirteen of these are in the Kitāb al-maghāzī and five in Ibn Sa'd's Tabaqāt.

a genuine fact of father-to-son transmission, it is clear that the report at hand is representative of the Ṣafarī family tradition as transmitted in Madīnah in the first half of the second century.¹²⁵

The following is a translation of the report which, it will be seen, is strikingly similar to **Riwāyah 2**. Passages that are identical in both reports are underlined.¹²⁶

The Messenger of God saw his tribe shunning him [kaffan 'an-hu]. He sat alone and desired [tamannā] and said, "Would that nothing come down to me that causes them to turn away from me [layta-hu lā yanzil 'alay-ya shay'un yunaffiru-hum 'an-nī]!"¹²⁷ Then the Messenger of God drew near to his tribe and became close to them, and they became close to him [danā min-hum wa-danū min-hu].

One day, he was sitting in one of those gatherings around the Ka'bah when he recited to them [qara'a 'alay-him], "By the star when it sets," until he reached, "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?" whereupon Satan cast two phrases upon his tongue [alqā al-shayṭānu 'alā lisāni-hi kalimatayni]: "Those high gharānīq! Indeed, their intercession is to be hoped for! [tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna la-turtajā]." The Messenger of God uttered the two phrases [fa-takallama rasūl Allāh bi-himā], then he went on and recited

¹²⁵ It is interesting to note that some of the information that al-Wāqidī has by the above *isnād* is of a kind that he is unlikely to have been able to obtain other than from his Zafarī informants, such as the location of the graves of some of the martyrs of Badr in a mountain trail off the Pass of al-Ṣafrā'. Al-Ṣafrā', just south of Madīnah (Yāqūṭ al-Ḥamawī, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, n.d., 3:412), was where Yūnus b. Muḥammad al-Zafarī lived (Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *Istī'āb*, 1:113; Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd*, 1:126), and Yūnus told al-Wāqidī that the graves were shown him by his father (al-Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 1:147). (It should be noted, however, that if we accept Muḥammad b. Fuḍālah's birth date as the year of the Hijrah, this would make him seventy when he fathered Yūnus, after which he would have to have survived long enough to pass on the family lore.) That al-Waqidī had detailed knowledge of the *sīrah*-related sacred geography of Madīnah is illustrated by his appointment as tour guide to the Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd on the latter's visit to Madīnah in 170; see Horovitz, "Earliest Biographies IV," 498–526, at 499–501.

¹²⁷Compare **Riwāyah 3**:

¹²⁶ Cf. the translation of S. Moinul Haq and H. K. Ghazanfar, *Ibn Sa'd's Kitab al-Tabaqat al-kabir*, Karachi: Pakistan Historical Society, 1967, 1:236–238.

[&]quot;The Prophet was seated in a large gathering of Quraysh. He desired [tamannā], that day, that nothing come to him from God that would cause them to turn away from him [tamannā yawma'idhin an-lā ya'tiya-hu min Allāhi shay'un fa-yanfirū 'an-hu]."

the whole $s\bar{u}rah$ and made the sajdah, and the whole gathering [alqawm] made the sajdah.¹²⁸

<u>Al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah took some dirt to his forehead and made</u> <u>the sajdah on it—as he was an old man and was unable to make the</u> <u>sajdah (fully).</u> And it is said that Abū Uḥayḥah Saʿīd b. al-ʿĀṣ, who was an old man, took dirt and raised it to his forehead and made the *sajdah* upon it. Some of them say that the one who raised dirt to his forehead was al-Walīd, some that it was Abū Uḥayḥah, and some that both of them did it.

They (Quraysh) were satisfied [*raḍū*] with what the Messenger of God had uttered [*takallama bi-hi*] and said: "We know that Allāh gives life and death, and that it is He who creates and sustains, but these gods of ours intercede with Him on our behalf; and now that you have given them a share, we are with you" [*idh jaʿalta la-hum naṣīban fa-naḥnu* maʿa-ka].

This greatly distressed [*kabura dhālika 'alā*] the Messenger of God and he sat in his house. In the evening, Jibrīl came to him and he (the Prophet) went over the *sūrah* with him [*fa-'araḍa 'alay-hi al-sūrah*]. When he reached the two phrases Satan had cast upon him, Jibrīl said: "I brought you these two phrases [*ji'tu-ka bi-hātayni al-kalimatayni*]?"¹²⁹ And the Messenger of God said: "I have said on God's behalf that which He did not say! [*qultu 'alā Allāh mā lam yaquI*]." So God revealed to him [*fa-amḥā Allāh ilay-hi*], "And they strove to tempt you away from that which we have revealed to you, that you might fabricate against us something other than it," until His words, "And then you would have found no helper against us."¹³⁰

The similarity between **Riwāyahs 2** and **3** is evident: the two reports share identically worded passages, and the construction of

¹²⁹ Compare Riwāyah 2: "When he (the Prophet) reached the two phrases Satan had cast upon him, he (Jibrīl) said, 'I did not bring you these! [mā ji'tu-ka bi-hātayni]." It is very likely that the negative particle mā has dropped out of Riwāyah 3.

¹²⁸ Compare Riwāyah 2:

And God sent down, "By the star when it sets: your Companion does not err, nor is he deceived," and the Messenger of God recited it [*qara'a-hā*] until he reached, "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?," when Satan cast two phrases upon him [*alqā al-shayṭānu 'alay-hi kalimatayni*]: "Those high *gharānīq*! Indeed, their intercession is hoped for [*tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'taa-hunna la-turjā*]!" He uttered the two phrases [*fa-takallama bi-himā*], then he went on and recited the whole *sūrah*.

¹³⁰ Qur'ān 17:73–75 al-Isrā'.

the narrative is entirely consistent across both. The substantive differences between the texts of **Riwāyahs 3** and 2 are as follows. Firstly, the opening passage of **Riwāyah 3** goes further than **Riwāyah 2** in portraying the Prophet's desire for reconciliation with Quraysh. Moreover, in **Riwāyah 3**, a degree of détente seems to have been initiated before the incident occurred: "Then the Messenger of God drew near to his tribe and became close to them and they became close to him." Secondly, **Riwāyah 3** interrupts the narrative to refer parenthetically to the existence of a disagreement over which one of the Mushrikūn made the *sajdah* by raising some dirt on his hand.

Thirdly, it is not clear in **Riwāyah 3** whether Muḥammad's error takes place while Sūrat al-Najm is in the process of being revealed to him (as is apparently the case in **Riwāyahs 1** and 2), or whether it takes place during his recitation of the *sūrah* that had already been revealed at some earlier time. While this distinction does not affect the fundamental fact of the Prophet erring in the transmission of Revelation, it can be understood to constitute a difference of emphasis: does the error take place during reception or proclamation of Revelation? Most of the *riwāyahs* either seem to imply that the error took place during a recitation of the *sūrah* at a time subsequent to its initial Revelation, or, like **Riwāyah 3**, are vague on this point.¹³¹

Fourthly, **Riwāyah 3** relates the incident only to Qur'ān 17:73-75 al-Isrā', with no mention of Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj. The reference to Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj—"He remained grieved and anxious until there came down: 'And we have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet...,' to His words, '... And God is All-Knowing, All-Wise'" which comes at the end of the narrative of **Riwāyah 3**, is omitted here; whether by accident or design we do not know. **Riwāyah 3** is, in fact, the only report on the Satanic verses that does not relate the incident to Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj. However, it seems almost certain that the absence of Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj from **Riwāyah 3** represents a later omission, and that the report as originally constituted would have gone on, like **Riwāyah 2**, to add the Revelation of Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj as the concluding element in the narrative. This is strongly

¹³¹This secondary issue will be taken up, where relevant, in the analysis of other *riwāyahs*.

suggested by the wording of the opening passage in which key words from Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj—*tamannā*, *alqā al-shayṭān*—are used in describing the incident. In the report as originally constituted, these phrases must have functioned as link-words relating the incident to Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj, as we have seen in **Riwāyahs 1** and **2**.

The high degree of similarity of the *matns* of **Riwāyahs 2** and **3** is the more striking when one realizes that there is no apparent overlap in their *isnāds*. At first glance, this would appear to undermine our working assumption, that *isnāds* in *sīrah-maghāzī* and *tafsīr* works represent genuine transmission histories unless there is good reason to suspect otherwise. How can **Riwāyah 3**, in which there is no mention of Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī, resemble the reports from Muḥammad b. Ka'b so closely that portions of it are the same *riwāyah bi-al-lafẓ*?

There is, however, evidence pointing to a direct connection between Muhammad b. Ka'b al-Qurazī and the Banū Zafar. This is the Prophetic Hadīth, noted in the analysis of Riwāyah 1, above, prophesying the appearance of Muhammad b. Ka'b: "There will come from out of the kāhinayn [Banū Qurayẓah and Banū al-Naḍīr] a man who will study the Qur'ān in a manner which no one after him will emulate." Prominent among the *isnāds* that carried this Hadīth is the following: 'Abd Allāh b. al-Mughīth b. Abī Burdah al-Zafarī \leftarrow his father \leftarrow his grandfather.¹³² This *isnād* is an irretrievably obscure one, although we do know that 'Abd Allāh b. al-Mughīth b. Abī Burdah al-Zafarī was a contemporary of Ibn Ishāq, and thus that his father and grandfather were presumably contemporaries of Muhammad b. Ka'b.¹³³ What is of significance here is the existence of a Zafarī clan isnād carrying a patently false Hadīth, the sole purpose of which was to praise Muhammad b. Ka'b's scholarship. The strong implication is that there must have been a meaningful connection between Muhammad b. Ka'b, who was a contemporary of both Yūnus b. Muhammad al-Zafarī and his father, and the Zafarī clan. In further support of this is the fact that Muhammad b. Ka'b was a confederate (*halīf*) of the Banū Aws, of which tribe the Banū

¹³²For a complete list of citations see al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 5:67, footnote 1.

¹³³ Ibn Ishāq related from him: Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrah al nabawiyyah*, 3:51. For 'Abd Allāh b. Mughīth, and for his grandfather, see Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *Istī'āb*, 4:1609– 1610; Ibn Hajar, *Isābah*, 7:38. For his father, see *Istī'āb*, 4:1443.

Zafar formed a clan.¹³⁴ Given that **Riwāyahs 2** and **3** are virtually identical, it seems very plausible that **Riwāyah 3** is the outcome of contact between the Banū Zafar and Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī. This impression is reinforced when we realize that of the five reports that relate the Satanic verses incident to Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā' (see **Riwāyahs 4, 5** and **6**, below), **Riwāyah 3** is the only one that is not attributed to Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī.

Establishing such a "hidden" transmission link between **Riwāyah 3** and the first two *riwāyahs* does not in any way conflict with our "Zāhirī" / exoteric methodology. Had there been no plausible explanation for the similarity between the two *riwāyahs*, one would have been forced to doubt the authenticity of the *isnāds*. But the fact that the transmission history given by the *isnād* in **Riwāyah 3** is apparently incomplete does not mean that it is not genuine as far as it goes. This is not a false *isnād* but an incomplete one.

As there is no reason to doubt the fact of Ibn Sa'd's transmission of this report from al-Wāqidī, or that of al-Wāqidī (born 130) from so regular an informant as Yūnus b. Muḥammad al-Ḥafarī (71-156), **Ri**wāyah 3 must have been in circulation in Madīnah in a form similar to the present one during the second quarter of the second century at the latest. This, in turn, should encourage us to accept that Ibn Ishāq and Abū Ma'shar did indeed receive Riwāyahs 1 and 2 from Muhammad b. Ka'b al-Qurazī at about the same time. This would put the origin of the narrative tradition contained in **Riwāyahs 1**, 2, and 3 back into the first century. From the high degree of consistency between the texts of Riwāyahs 1, 2, and 3, on the levels of verbal correspondence, narrative motifs, and hermeutical presentation of the incident, we may thus conclude that these reports are severally and collectively representative of the way in which the Satanic verses incident was remembered and taught by Muhammad b. Ka'b al-Qurazi in Madinah at the end of the first century.

¹³⁴ The Banū Qurayẓah were confederates of al-Aws at the time of their massacre, which would explain why Muhammad b. Ka'b, who was born in Kufah, sought their patronage when he migrated to Madīnah. Among the four Awsīs who had interceded with the Prophet for the Banū Qurayẓah had been a man of Banū ẓafar; see W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), 214.

Riwāyahs 4 to 6: Summary Reports from Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī

That linking the Satanic verses incident to Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā' was particularly associated with the exegetical activity of Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī may be gauged from the next three *riwāyahs*, which are summary versions of **Riwāyah 2**. The *riwāyahs* are cited in works compiled in Samarqand, Rayy, and Isbahan in the fourth century.

Riwāyah 4: A Summary Report from Muḥammad b. Kaʿb in the *Tafsīr* of Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī

Riwāyah 4 is a summary version of **Riwāyah 2** given in the *Tafsīr* of the early Mātūrīdī theologian Baḥr al-'Ulūm Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī (d. 375), in his commentary on Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā', with this citation:¹³⁵

Abū al-'Āliyah [Rufay' b. Mihrān al-Baṣrī (d. 93)] related from his companions, among them al-Quraẓī:

When the Prophet recited Sūrat al-Najm, and reached, "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other. . . ?," there ran upon his tongue [*jarā 'alā lisāni-hi*]: "Those high *gharānīq!* Indeed, their intercession is to be hoped for [*tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā 'ata-hunna la-turtajā*]." When he reached the *sajdah*, he made the *sajdah* and the Mushrikūn made the *sajdah* with him. Then Jibrīl came and said: "I did not bring you this." So, there came down: "And they strove to tempt you . . . ," until His words, ". . . in which case they would surely have taken you as a friend." The Prophet remained distressed [*maghmūm*] until there came down, "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he desired,¹³⁶ Satan cast something into his desire."

¹³⁵ Baḥr al-'Ulūm Abū al-Layth Naşr b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm al-Samarqandī, *Tafsīr al-Samarqandī*, ed. 'Alī Muḥammad Mu'awwaḍ, 'Ādil 'Abd al-Mawjūd, and 'Abd al-Majīd al-Nūbī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1993), 2:278.

¹³⁶While Riwāyah 4 does not indicate a meaning for *tamannā*, I am translating it as "desire" as this is al-Qurazī's gloss.

Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī's citation from Abū al-'Āliyah is of interest here. Abū al-'Āliyah Rufay' b. Mihrān al-Başrī (for whom see Riwāyah 16, below) was a great Basran mufassir and contemporary of al-Qurazī whose *tafsīr* exists today only in citations in later sources. The tafsir of Abū al-'Āliyah was, however, already cited in the second-century Tafsir of Yahya b. Sallam al-Bașri (124-200), which means that it was in circulation in Başrah, in some form, by the mid-second century (see **Riwāyah 20**, below).¹³⁷ By the time Abū al-Layth cited it in the fourth century, the *tafsīr* of Abū al-'Āliyah seems to have been in wide circulation.¹³⁸ There are five surviving riwāyahs from Abū al-'Āliyah that narrate the Satanic verses incident (Riwāyahs 16 to 20, below). The isnāds of all of these riwāyahs stop at Abū al-'Āliyah himself, and none of the *riwāyahs* relates the Satanic verses incident to Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā', but only to Qur'ān 22:52 al-Hajj. As such, Abū al-'Āliyah's attribution of Riwāyah 4 to Muhammad b. Ka'b appears to be an instance of one first-century mufassir citing the variant opinion of another first-century mufassir. **Riwāyah** 4 thus provides us with further evidence of a very early association with Muhammad b. Ka'b of the interpretation of the incident by means of Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā'. This, in turn, should encourage us to accept the core narratives in **Riwāyahs 1**, 2, and 3 as having genuinely been transmitted from Muhammad b. Ka'b.

Riwāyah 5: A Summary Report from Muḥammad b. Ka'b in the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī

Riwāyah 5 is given by al-Suyūțī in the commentary on Qur'ān 17:73

¹³⁷The commentary on Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā' in the sole extant manuscript of the *Tafsīr* of Yaḥyā b. Sallām does not cite **Riwāyah 4**; Yaḥyā b. Sallām al-Başrī, *Tafsīr Yaḥyā b. Sallām al-Taymī al-Başrī al-Qayrawānī*, ed. Hind Shalabī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2004), 2:151–152.

¹³⁸ This is evidenced by the citations from it in the respective *tafsīrs* of al-Tabarī (see **Riwāyahs 16** and **17**, below); Ibn Abī Hātim al-Rāzī (see the index of citations in the partial edition: Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Abī Hātim al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'azīm*, ed. Aḥmad 'Abd Allāh al-'Umarī al-Zahrānī [Madīnah: Maktabat al-Dār, 1988], 2:449-450); and Ibn al-Mundhir al-Naysābūrī (d. 318) (see al-Suyūṭī's citations from the *Tafsīr* of Ibn al-Mundhir, **Riwāyahs 18** and **19**, below). It was also cited as an independent work by both Ibn al-Nadīm and al-Tha'labī (see the discussion preceding **Riwāyah 16–20**, below).

al-Isrā' in *al-Durr al-manthūr*. Al-Suyūțī cites the report from Ibn Abī Hātim al-Rāzī (d. 327) from Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī.¹³⁹ As is his practice in the *Durr*, al-Suyūțī does not give either the title of his source book or an *isnād*. There is little doubt, however, that al-Suyūțī is citing from the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Abī Hātim, and is very probably abbreviating the report:¹⁴⁰

God sent down, "By the star when its sets," and the Messenger of God recited [qara'a] this verse to them: "Have you seen al-Lāt and al-'Uzzā...?" And Satan cast two phrases upon him [fa-alqā al-shayṭān 'alay-hi kalimatayn]: "Those high gharānīq! Indeed, their intercession is to be hoped for [tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā 'ata-hunna laturtajā]." The Prophet then recited the rest of the sūrah and made the sajdah. And God sent down the verse: "And they strove to tempt you away from that with which We have inspired you...." He remained distressed [maghmūm] and anxious [mahmūm] until God sent down: "And we have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet..." to His words, "... and God is All-Knowing, All-Wise."

Riwāyah 6: A Summary Report from Muḥammad b. Kaʿb in the *Tafsīr* of Abū al-Shaykh al-Iṣbahānī

Riwāyah 6, another summary report attributed to Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī and very similar to **Riwāyah 5**, is adduced by al-

¹³⁹ Al-Suyūțī, al-Durr al-manthūr, 5:318-319.

¹⁴⁰ This is another work that al-Suyūţī studied closely: he prepared a book called al-Muntaqā min Tafsīr Ibn Abī Hātim; see al-Suyūţī, Taḥadduth, 127. That al-Suyūţī is abbreviating the report is suggested by his statement in regard to Ibn Abī Hātim's Tafsīr: "I summarized it in my Tafsīr [lakhkhastu-hu fī tafsīr-ī]"; see the entry on Ibn Abī Hātim in al-Suyūţī's Tabaqāt al-mufassirīn ed. 'Alī Muḥammad 'Umar (Cairo: Maktabat Wahbah, 1976), 63. For another abridged citation by al-Suyūţī from the Tafsīr of Ibn Abī Hātim, see Riwāyah 13, below; on the legitimacy of the practice of abridging reports without changing the meaning, see Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ al-Shahrazūrī (d. 643), Muqaddimat Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, ed. 'Ā'ishah 'Abd al-Raḥmān Bint al-Shāți' (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1989 [revised edition]), 397-399. The extant portion of the Tafsīr of Ibn Abī Hātim does not cover Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā'; see the description of the contents of the extant manuscripts in the editor's introduction to 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Rāzī Ibn Abī Hātim, Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'azīm, ed. As'ad Muḥammad al-Tayyib (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-'Aṣriyyah, 1999), 1:13; for the importance of his Tafsīr, see 1:7-11.

Suyūțī in his *Asbāb al-nuzūl*¹⁴¹ from 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Ja'far Abū al-Shaykh al-Iṣbahānī (d. 369), presumably from the latter's lost *Tafsīr*.¹⁴² It is given in the citations of *asbāb al-nuzūl* for Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā'.

He recited, "By the star . . ." until, "Have you seen al-Lāt and al-'Uzzā," and Satan cast upon him [fa- $alq\bar{a}$ 'alay-hi al- $shayt\bar{a}n$]: "Those high $ghar\bar{a}n\bar{i}q$! Indeed, their intercession is to be hoped for [tilka al $ghar\bar{a}niq$ al-' $ul\bar{a}$ wa-inna $shaf\bar{a}$ 'ata-hunna la- $turtaj\bar{a}$]." So it [Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā'] came down. He remained grieved [$maghm\bar{u}m$] and anxious [$mahm\bar{u}m$] until God sent down: "And we have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he desired, Satan cast something into his desire; then God removes that which Satan casts and establishes His Signs clearly. . . ."

Riwāyahs 4, 5, and 6, attributed to Muhammad b. Ka'b, are evidently summary versions of the narrative contained in Riwāyah 2, also attributed to Muhammad b. Ka'b. All three shorter reports contain phrases found in **Riwāyah 2**, such as, "He remained grieved and anxious." These three *riwāyahs* show us how the narrative of an incident may be reduced for *tafsir* purposes to the bare information necessary to link particular Qur'anic verses to an event in the Prophet's life. It is noteworthy that the accounts are devoid of any attempt to locate the incident in the larger narrative of the Prophet's life. There is thus no mention of the Prophet's dealings with the Meccans, of what it was that precipitated Satan's intervention, or of the effect of the incident on the Prophet's mission. And while it might be posited that two of the reports, **Riwāyahs 5** and 6, do not explicitly state that the Prophet actually recited the Satanic verses, this is the most obvious meaning of the phrase "Satan cast upon him [fa-alqā 'alay-hi al-shaytān]," and the almost irresistible implication of the logic of

¹⁴¹ Al-Suyūțī, Asbāb al-nuzūl, Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-'Ulūm, n.d., 138.

¹⁴²Oddly, al-Suyūtī does not have an entry for Abū al-Shaykh al-Işbahānī in his *Tabaqāt al-mufassirīn*. See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 16:276–280; al-Dā'ūdī, *Tabaqāt almufassirīn*, 1:240–241; 'Umar Ridā Kahhālah, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifīn*, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1993, 2:276. See the study of him by 'Abd al-Ghafūr 'Abd al-Ḥaqq Ḥusayn al-Balūshī, in the introduction to his edition of Abū al-Shaykh al-Işbahānī, *Tabaqāt al-muḥaddithīn bi-Işbahān wa-al-wāridīn 'alay-hā*, Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1987, 1:73–105.

the rest of the narrative. It may be that these reports represent barebones information for an audience that was already familiar with the incident. In any case, nothing in any of **Riwāyahs 4, 5**, and **6** in any way contradicts **Riwāyah 2**.

Riwāyahs 4, 5, and **6**, as summary versions of **Riwāyah 2**, indicate the extent to which there existed in the first three centuries of Islam a widespread hermeneutical tradition in which the linking of the Satanic verses incident to both Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā' and Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj was associated with Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī.¹⁴³

Riwāyah 7: From the Maghāzī of Yūnus b. Bukayr

Riwāyah 7 is given in the *Kitāb al-maghāzī* compiled in Kūfah in the second century by Yūnus b. Bukayr al-Kūfī (d. 199) as transmitted from him by Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Jabbār al-'Uṭāridī al-Kūfī (177-272).¹⁴⁴ While Yūnus b. Bukayr had a mixed reputation among the Ḥadīth scholars,¹⁴⁵ Aḥmad al-'Uṭāridī was markedly unpopular

¹⁴³ Muhammad b. Ka'b al-Qurazī is not the only early *mufassir* to have associated the Satanic verses incident with Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā'; we will see in Riwāyah 33, below, that the famous Mujāhid b. Jabr al-Makkī (d.103) also did so.

¹⁴⁴ The authorship of Ahmad al-'Uțāridī's transmission of Yūnus' Maghāzī has been somewhat confused by the fact that its separate editors both published it as the sīrah of Ibn Ishāq: Sīrat Ibn Ishāq al-musammā bi-Kitāb al-mubtada' wa-almab'ath wa-al-maghāzī, ed. Muhammad Hamidullah (Rabat: Ma'had al-Dirāsāt wa-al-Abhāth li-al-Ta'rīb); Kitāb al-siyar wa-al-maghāzī li-Muhammad b. Ishāq al-Muțțalibi, ed. Suhayl Zakkār (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1978). All but five of the reports in the work are from Yūnus b. Bukayr. Three-fifths of the work is composed of reports Yūnus studied with Ibn Ishāq during the latter's sojourn in Kufah; many of these do not appear in the recension of Ibn Hisham. The remainder of the work is made up of more than two hundred reports taken by Yūnus from sources other than Ibn Ishaq, as was noted by Alfred Guillaume, New Light on the Life of Muhammad (Manchester: Manchester University Press, Journal of Semitic Studies Monograph No.1, [no date]), 5; and by Miklos Muranyi, "Ibn Ishāq's Kitāb al-maghāzī in der Riwāya von Yūnus B. Bukair: Bemerkungen zur frühen Überlieferungsgeschichte," Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam 14 (1991), 214-275, at 216-218; see also al-Tarābīshī, Ruwāt, 104-147. Note also the comments of Sadun Mahmud al-Samuk, "Die Historischen Überlieferungen nach Ibn Ishāg: eine Synoptische Untersuchung," Inauguraldissertation, Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universitat, Frankfurt, 1978, 82-83, footnote 1, and 94-98.

¹⁴⁵ The assessments of him cited in Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 11:434–436, are mostly complimentary; those in al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 9:245–248, are mostly negative. See also Ibn 'Adī, *Kāmil*, 7:176–178.

with them. Ibn 'Adī notes that "the Iraqis were in agreement that he was a bad transmitter," and al-Dhahabī says "they ganged up against him" (takāthara 'alay-hi), but goes onto defend al-'Utāridī as a transmitter of Yūnus's Maghāzī.¹⁴⁶ There is a revealing report that describes how some of the ashāb al-hadīth in third-century Kufah found Yūnus's Maghāzī so objectionable that they pressured the prominent Hadīth scholar Abū Kurayb Muhammad b. al-'Alā' (d. 284) into abandoning his teaching of it.¹⁴⁷ The report is the account of al-Husayn b. Hamīd b. al-Rabī'al-Lakhmī (d. 282), who clearly does not identify himself in the narrative with the *aṣhāb al-hadīth*, and is, in fact, described in the sources as the author of a work of history (la-hu kitāb muşannaf fī al-tārīkh). The story concludes with al-Lakhmī going to Ahmad al-'Utāridī and obtaining from him a manuscript of Yūnus's Maghāzī that bears an attestation of al-'Uțāridī's having studied the book with Yūnus. It was following this, says al-Dhahabī, that the *muḥaddithūn* turned on al-'Uṭāridī.¹⁴⁸ One suspects that the objections of the Hadith folk must have had to do with the content of Yūnus's Maghāzī, which includes several reports theologically problematic for the *ahl al-hadīth*, and much of which is, naturally, transmitted by weak isnāds. Al-Lakhmī's account illustrates neatly how the historical memory of the Prophet was a contested entity in the third-century community of Muslims, over which the Hadith folk were trying to establish their exclusive legitimating authority.149

The *isnād* for the report on the Satanic verses is:

¹⁴⁸ See Al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, Tārīkh Baghdād, 4:264; al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 13:57, where the incident is dated to the 240s. It is interesting to note that the account of the incident mentions that al-'Utāridī "used to play with pigeons," a practice that was anathema to Hadīth scholars: see Heinz Grotzfeld, "Al-La'b bil-hamām," in Ulrich Haarmann and Peter Bachmann (eds.), Die Islamische Welt zwischen Mittelalter und Neuzeit: Festschrift für Hans Robert Roemer zum 65. Geburstag, Beirut: Franz Steiner, 1979, 193–197.

¹⁴⁶ Ibn 'Adī, Kāmil, 1:194; al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 13:55–59. See also al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī, Tārīkh Baghdād, 4:262–265; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 1:51–52.

¹⁴⁷ For Abū Kurayb, see al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 11:394-398.

¹⁴⁹ This did not stop later Hadīth scholars from studying the work: the Damascus manuscript bears the samā' (reading certification) of al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, from whose Tārīkh Baghdād we have the foregoing biographical information of the transmitters; see Yūnus b. Bukayr/Hamidullah, Sirat Ibn Ishāq, lām-dāl; and Yūnus b. Bukayr/Zakkār, al-Siyar wa-al-maghāzī, 19.

Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Jabbār al-'Uṭāridī al-Kūfī ← Yūnus b. Bukayr al-Kūfī ← Muḥammad b. Isḥāq al-Madanī.¹⁵⁰

The following is a translation of the text of the report:¹⁵¹

They (the Emigrants in Abyssinia) remained there until it reached them that the people of Mecca had accepted Islam and had made the *sajdah*. That was because Sūrat al-Najm had been sent down to the Messenger of God. The Messenger of God recited it and every Muslim and Mushrik listened to it silently until he reached, "Have you seen al-Lāt and al-'Uzzā?" They listened to him attentively, the Muslims all the while believing in the veracity (of what they heard) [*fa-aṣākhū la-hu wa-al-muslimūn yataṣaddaqūn*].¹⁵² And people reverted [*irtadda nās*]¹⁵³ when they heard Satan's rhyming phrases [*saj*'], and said [*faqāla*]: "By Allāh, let us worship them so that they may bring us closer to Allāh [*wa-Allāhi li-naʿbud-hunna li-yuqarribū-nā ilā Allāhi zulfā*]."¹⁵⁴ Satan taught those two verses [*taynika al-āyatayni*] to every Mushrik, and their tongues were debased by them [*dhallat bi-hā*].

This greatly distressed [*kabura dhālika 'alā*] the Messenger of God, until Jibrīl came to him. He (the Prophet) complained to him (Jibrīl) about these two verses and about what he had met with from the people as a result of them [*fa-shakā ilay-hi hātayni al-āyatayni wa-mā laqiya min al-nās fī-himā*].¹⁵⁵ Jibrīl absolved himself of responsibility for them

- ¹⁵⁰ For the *isnād* by which the present manuscript was transmitted forward from al-'Uţāridī see Muranyi, "Ibn Ishāq's *Kitāb al-maghāzī* in der *Riwāya* von Yūnus b. Bukair," 225–232; and al-Ṭarābīshī, *Ruwāt*, 124–127.
- ¹⁵¹The text is in Yūnus b. Bukayr/Hamidullah, *Sirat Ibn Ishāq*, 157–158; and Yūnus b. Bukayr/Zakkār, *al-Siyar wa-al-maghāzī*, 187–188. Cf. the translation of Guillaume, *New Light*, 38–39.
- ¹⁵²I am reading *yuşaddiqūn* for *yataşaddaqūn*, which appears in both of the fifth-/ eleventh-century manuscripts edited by Hamidullah and Zakkār, and for which the lexicons provide no meaning aside from "to give *şadaqah*."
- ¹⁵³ Guillaume translates this as "Some apostatized when they heard the *saj*['] of the Satan." I prefer "reverted" to "apostatized": since the people in question were merely following what the Prophet had said, the narrative could, in fairness, hardly call them apostates.
- ¹⁵⁴ Cf. Qur'ãn 39:3 al-Zumar, wa-alladhīna ittakhadhū min dūni-hi awliyā'a mā na'bud-hum illā li-yuqarribū-nā ilā Allāhi zulfā. This Qur'ãnic reference has somehow escaped the notice of all three of Hamidullah, Zakkār, and Guillaume.
- ¹⁵⁵ Guillaume translates this as "until Gabriel came to him and complained to him of these two verses and the effect that they had upon the people"; *New Light*, 39. This is clearly incorrect as the subject of both verbs in the sentence *fa-shakā ilay-hi hātayn al-āyatayn wa-mā laqiya min al-nās fī-himā* can only be the Prophet, and not Jibrīl.

[*tabarra'a min-humā*] and said, "You have recited to the people that which I did not bring to you from God and said what He did not say to you [*la-qad talawta 'alā al-nās mā lam āti-ka bi-hi 'an Allāh 'azza wajalla wa-qulta mā lam yaqul la-ka*]."

The Messenger of God was sorely grieved [hazina huznan shadīdan] upon that and was afraid [khāfa]. So God, comforting him over it [yu'azzī-hi la-hu], sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he tamannā, Satan cast something into his umniyyah," until His words, "All-Knowing, All-Wise."

In comparing **Riwāyah 7** to **Riwāyah 1** (the other account from Ibn Isḥāq), it is clear that the two narratives are constructed very differently. **Riwāyah 7** is characterized by a number of narrative elements that distinguish it from **Riwāyahs 1** to **6**; it cannot be seen as a summary of **Riwāyah 1**. Nonetheless, given the attribution of both reports to Ibn Isḥāq, it is interesting to note that they contain identical passages. The closing passage from "You have recited to the people" until the end of the report is identical to **Riwāyah 1**. Also, the distinctive phrase *fa-aṣākhū la-hu wa-al-muslimūna yuṣaddiqūna / yataṣaddaqūna* in **Riwāyah 7** is virtually identical to **Riwāyah 1**: *fa-aṣākhū la-hu wa-al-muslimūna nabiyya-hum*—and, indeed, one of the later manuscripts of the *sīrah* of Yūnus contains the variant *muṣaddiqūna* in place of *yataṣaddaqūna*.¹⁵⁶ The verb *aṣākha la-hu* is not found in any report other than these two from Ibn Isḥāq.

Riwāyah 7, unlike **Riwāyah 1**, contains no mention of persecution by Quraysh. However, we are dealing now with a report that has come down to us in the context of a work arranged by its author. In his recension of Ibn Isḥāq, Yūnus b. Bukayr arrives at the Satanic verses incident after a long section entitled "The Trial and Suffering Which Afflicted the Companions of the Messenger of God," which culminates in the migration to Abyssinia. The theme of persecution thus forms the background to **Riwāyah 7**: the Satanic verses incident is presented in the explanation of the decision of some of the refugees to return to Mecca when they hear the Meccans have performed *sajdah* and accepted Islam—in other words, that the persecution has ended. Nonetheless, **Riwāyah 7** does not mention any desire on the part of the Prophet to be reconciled with Quraysh. The

¹⁵⁶Yūnus b. Bukayr/Zakkar, *al-Siyar wa-al-maghāzī*, 177, footnote 1.

absence of this **narrative motif** will be seen in other reports too. A further element that is absent in **Riwāyahs 1** to **6**, but that **Riwāyah 7** shares with **Riwāyah 8**, below, is the remarkable narrative motif of the Prophet complaining to Jibrīl about what had taken place. This is a poignant image, as it presents the Prophet as unhappy with the Satanic verses and their effect, even though he thought the verses had been revealed to him by God. This gives the favorable impression that the Prophet sensed that something had gone wrong, even though he did not know what it was.

The four most distinctive features in **Riwāyah 7** are as follows. First, while it is clear from the narrative as a whole that there was a Satanic intervention, there is no description of the intervention (narrative unit 3). Second, the text of the Satanic verses is not given (narrative unit 4). The narrative limits itself to an allusion to the saj' of Shaytan: this is an account of the Satanic verses incident without the Satanic verses themselves being mentioned. It should not casually be assumed here that Satan's verses are being characterized as saj' in contrast to what later Muslim orthodoxy categorized as the inimitable non-saj' of the Qur'an. The idea that the Qur'an is categorically not *saj*^c established itself only after the rise and eventual institutionalization of the doctrine of the inimitability $(i'j\bar{a}z)$ of the Qur'ān from the fourth/tenth century. Not only has Arabic-Islamic scholarship historically encompassed the view that "the greater part of the Qur'ān is saj'," but also the Mamlūk polymath al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418) specifically classified Sūrat al-Najm as being composed entirely in saj^{\cdot ,157} In this context, the confusion between the $\bar{a}y\bar{a}t$ of Sūrat al-Najm and Satan's formulation becomes more understandable; if both are *saj*['] then there would be no immediately detectable formal difference to alert either the Prophet or other listeners. Also, this might suggest why, in the correction scene in Riwāyah 7 (but not in any other *riwāyah*) the Satanic verses are accorded the same technical term— $\bar{a}yah$ —as the Qur'ān uses for its own textual units.

The third and most significant narrative feature of **Riwāyah** 7 is that it is the only report on the incident in which some of the

¹⁵⁷ See the superb article of Devin J. Stewart, "Saj' in the Qur'ān: Prosody and Structure," Journal of Arabic Literature 21 (1990), 101–139, especially 102–108 (the quotation is at 108); see also Devin J. Stewart, "Rhymed Prose," EQ.4:476–484.

Muslims are presented as having reverted to their former belief after the Prophet's uttering of the Satanic verses: *irtadda nās hīna sami'ū saj' al-shayṭān*. This narrative motif, which is not given in any other *riwāyah*, is elaborated by a fourth unique feature of **Riwāyah 7**—namely, the association of the Satanic verses incident with Qur'ān 39:3 al-Zumar: "Those who take for themselves protectors other than He (say): We worship them only so that they may bring us closer to Allāh." The words placed in the mouths of the recidivists in **Riwāyah 7**—"By Allāh, let us worship them so that they may bring us closer to Allāh [*wa-Allāhi li-na'bud-hunna li-yuqarribū-nā ilā Allāhi zulfā*]"—are drawn from this *āyah*. **Riwāyah 7** thus provides a Qur'ānic gloss for the (unmentioned) Satanic verses, illustrating that they constituted a theological concession that confirmed the legitimacy of Quraysh's belief in the intercessory role of their deities, whose function it was to bring worshippers closer to the supreme god.¹⁵⁸

These four features are unique to **Riwāyah 7** and distinguish it from all the other *riwāyahs* on the incident. The fact that **Riwāyah** 7 differs substantively from **Riwāyah 1**, which Ibn Isḥāq taught in Rayy, should not cast doubt on it being genuinely representative of Yūnus b. Bukayr's transmission from him: Yūnus says expressly in one place that "everything that is from the discourse [*ḥadīth*] of Ibn Isḥāq, he either dictated it to me, or read it to me, or told it to me."¹⁵⁹ Thus it makes most sense to understand **Riwāyah 7** as the result of Yūnus's or / and al-'Uṭāridī's own recension of a report that Ibn Isḥāq taught in Kufah. Finally, we should note the position of **Riwāyah 7** on the three fundamental hermeneutical issues:

- 1. The Prophet uttered the verses.
- 2. It is not clear why.
- 3. He was aware of something being amiss but was not sure what it was until told by Jibrīl.

¹⁵⁸ It is highly suggestive that in his commentary on Qur'ãn 39:3 al-Zumar, al-Ţabarī glosses the idea of "bringing closer to Allāh" precisely as "intercession (*shafāʿah*)," and cites earlier authorities to this effect; see Jāmiʿal-bayān, 23:194–195.

¹⁵⁹ Kullu shay' min hadith Ibn Ishāq fa-huwa amla'a-hu 'alay-ya aw qara'a-hu 'alay-ya aw haddatha-nī bi-hi; Yūnus b. Bukayr/Hamidullah, Sīrat Ibn Ishāq, 157-58, Yūnus b. Bukayr/Zakkar, al-Siyar wa-al-maghāzī, 23.

Riwāyahs 8 to 13: From 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr

Riwāyah 8: From Abū al-Aswad's Egyptian Recension of 'Urwah's *Maghāzī*

Riwāyah 8 is given in *al-Mu'jam al-kabīr* of the much-traveled and apparently long-lived Ḥadīth scholar Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān b. Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī (260–360),¹⁶⁰ with the following *isnād*:¹⁶¹

Muḥammad b. 'Amr b. Khālid al-Ḥarrānī al-Miṣrī (d. 292) ← 'Amr b. Khālid al-Ḥarrānī al-Miṣrī (d. 229) ← 'Abd Allāh Ibn Lahī'ah al-Miṣrī (97–174) ← Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān Abū al-Aswad al-Madanī al-Miṣrī (d. 136 / 7) ← 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr al-Madanī (23–94).

Riwāyah 8 is also cited from al-Ṭabarānī with some textual variants in the *Kitāb man ṣabara ṣafira* of Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Muṭṭawwi'ī al-Naysābūrī al-Makkī (fl. 435).¹⁶² Al-Muṭṭawwi'ī gives the following *isnād*:

Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan b. Bundār al-Rāzī al-Makkī (d. 409)¹⁶³ ← Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān b. Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī ← Muḥammad b. 'Amr b. Khālid al-Ḥarrānī al-Miṣrī ← 'Amr b. Khālid al-Ḥarrānī al-Miṣrī [← . . .]¹⁶⁴ ←'Urwah b. al-Zubayr.

- ¹⁶⁰ For al-Ṭabarānī, see al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 10:173; Sezgin, *GAS*, 1:195-197; and Kaḥḥālah, *Muʿjam*, 1:783.
- ¹⁶¹Al-Ṭabarānī, al-Mu'jam al-kabīr, ed. Hamdī 'Abd al-Majīd al-Salafī (Baghdad: Wizārat al-Awqāf wa-al-Shu'ūn al-Dīniyyah, 1971), 9:34–36. The same report is cited directly from al-Ṭabarānī, without the isnād, by Nūr al-Dīn 'Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Haythamī (d. 807), Majma' al-zawā'id wa-manba' al-fawā'id (Cairo: Maktabat al-Qudsī, 1352), 6:32–34; and 7:70–72.
- ¹⁶²Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Muṭṭawwi'ī al-Ghāzī al-Naysābūrī, *Kitāb man sabara ẓafira*, MS Cambridge, Oriental 1473(10), 77b–78b. Virtually nothing is known about the author; for sparse biographical information and a description of the work, see Reynold A. Nicholson, "An Unknown Biography of Muḥammad Entitled Kitábu man sabara ẓafira," in Carl Bezold (ed.), Orientalische Studien Theodor Nöldeke zum Siebsigsten Geburtstag, Gieszen: Alfred Topelmann, 1906, 1:16–32.
- ¹⁶³ A known student of al-Ṭabarānī; see al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 17:299–300.
- ¹⁶⁴ The name of the intermediary transmitter between 'Amr b. Khālid and 'Urwah is not given.

'Urwah b. al-Zubayr was, of course, one the most prominent scholarly figures in early Islamic Mecca (and is also counted among the Seven Jurisprudents [*fuqahā*'] of Madīnah who are regarded as having provided the foundation for Medinese legal thought). 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Dūrī identifies him as the founder of the study of the life of the Prophet.¹⁶⁵ While no *Kitāb al-maghāzī* from 'Urwah has survived as an independent work, the numerous *sīrah* reports going back to 'Urwah make up an extensive biographical narrative.¹⁶⁶ It is fairly certain that such a *sīrah* narrative was transmitted as a *Kitāb al-maghāzī* from 'Urwah in Egypt in the 130s by Abū al-Aswad Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Nawfal al-Madanī (d. 136/7), who is known as "*yatīm* 'Urwah" ('Urwah's orphan), his father having entrusted his upbringing to 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr.¹⁶⁷ While Abū al-Aswad's recension of 'Urwah's *Maghāzī* does not survive today as a separate work, the surviving *riwāyahs* from Abū al-Aswad are

¹⁶⁵ See al-Dūrī, Baḥth fī nash'at 'ilm al-tārīkh 'ind al-'arab, Beirut: al-Maṭba'ah al-Kāthūlikiyyah, 1960, 61; also Horovitz, "Earliest Biographies," Islamic Culture 1 (1927), 535-559, at 542-552; Faruqi, Early Muslim Historiography, 224-234.

- ¹⁶⁶ The *sīrah-maghāzī* reports from 'Urwah have now been collected and published in two separate incomplete editions: those of Muhammad Mustafa al-A'zamī, Maghāzī rasūl Allāh li-'Urwah ibn al-Zubayr bi-riwāyat Abī al-Aswad 'an-hu (alnuskhah al-mustakhrajah), Riyadh: Maktab al-Tarbiyah al-'Arabī li-Duwal al-Khalīj, 1981, where the account of the Satanic verses is cited from al-Ṭabarānī at 106-110; and those of Salwa Mursī al-Ţāhir, Bidāyat al-kitābah al-tārīkhiyyah 'ind al-'arab: awwal sīrah fī al-islām: 'Urwah ibn al-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwām, Beirut: al-Mu'assasah al-'Arabiyyah li-al-Dirāsāt wa-al-Nashr, 1995. Al-Ţāhir, who was apparently unaware of al-A'zamī's edition, used a wider range of sources but omitted al-Tabarānī, as a result of which the account of the Satanic verses incident is absent from her compilation. Ibn al-Nadīm, Fihrist, 176, records that Abū al-Hassān al-Hasan b. 'Uthmān al-Ziyādī al-Baghdādī (d. 243), a student of al-Wāqidī, either owned a copy or made a recension of a Kitāb maghāzī 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr. For the view that "the contents of what 'Urwa taught can be reconstructed ... the 'Urwa corpus turns out to comprise the basic framework of the whole sira, i.e it contains different long and detailed reports about the main events of Muhammad's life and deeds"; see Andreas Görke and Gregor Schoeler, "Reconstructing the Earliest sīra Texts: The Hiğra in the Corpus of 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr," Der Islam 82 (2005), 209-220 (the quotation is at 212-213). For "the possibility that a complete book by 'Urwah on the maghāzī never existed," see Ella Landau-Tasseron, "On the Reconstruction of Lost Sources," Al-Qantara 25 (2004) 45-90, at 53.
- ¹⁶⁷ Abū al-Aswad migrated to Egypt shortly before his death. He was viewed by posterity as possessing the same stature as Muhammad b. Shihāb al-Zuhrī and Hishām b. 'Urwah, the two other prominent transmitters from 'Urwah. See Ibn Abī Hātim, *Jarh*, 7:321; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 6:150; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 9:307–308; Sezgin, *GAS* 1:278 and 1:284; and al-A'zamī, *Maghāzī rasūl Allāh*, 61–62.

still numerous enough to have been collected and arranged in a fairly coherent biographical narrative by al-A'zamī. Almost all of Abū al-Aswad's reports from 'Urwah are transmitted by 'Abd Allāh Ibn Lahī'ah (97–174), who was $Q\bar{a}d\bar{i}$ of Egypt as well as one of the most famous Egyptian scholars of the second century.¹⁶⁸ It is noteworthy that the *isnāds* of the scattered reports transmitted by 'Abd Allāh b. Lahī'ah from Abū al-Aswad consistently stop at 'Urwah, and do not go back to eyewitnesses, something that would strongly suggest that we are dealing with fragments of what was originally a single work.¹⁶⁹ That "Abū al-Aswad went to Egypt, and transmitted there the Kitāb al-maghāzī of 'Urwah" was also the understanding of al-Dhahabī.¹⁷⁰ It is particularly significant to note of Ibn Lahī'ah that he placed great emphasis on writing, and taught from his notebooks. A report specifically records the written transmission of Ibn Lahī'ah's reports from Abū al-Aswad, and also ascribes a statement to Ibn Lahī'ah to the effect that Abū al-Aswad wrote down his materials.¹⁷¹ It was probably because of his reliance on writing that, while reports from Ibn Lahī'ah appear in three of the canonical collections, his reputation as a *muhaddith* was very mixed. So dependent was Ibn Lahī'ah on his books that Ahmad b. Hanbal refused to accredit anyone who studied with him after his house burned down around the year 170.¹⁷² The later Hadīth scholar Nūr al-Dīn al-Haythamī (d. 807) rejected Riwāyah 8 on the basis of Ibn Lahī'ah's presence in the isnād.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁸ "In fact, almost the entire book is based on the transmission of Ibn Lahī'ah"; see al-A'ẓamī, *Maghāzī rasūl Allāh*, 60, where the various transmissions of the work from 'Urwah are listed.

¹⁶⁹ See al-A'zamī, Maghāzī rasūl Allāh, 67; also Athar Mubārakpūrī, Tadvīn-i siyar o maghāzī, Lahore: Dār-ul-Navādir, 2005, 191–193.

¹⁷⁰ nazala Abū al-Aswad Miṣr wa-ḥaddatha bi-hā Kitāb al-maghāzī li-'Urwah 'an-hu, al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 6:150.

¹⁷¹ Al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 8:16-17.

¹⁷² This fire was, by all accounts, the single great disaster in Ibn Lahī'ah's life, after which it became difficult for him to teach. See al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 8:10–28; al-'Uqa-ylī, al-Du'afā', 2:694-697; Ibn 'Adī, Kāmil, 4:144-154; Ibn Hibbān, Majrūhīn, 2:11-14; Şalāh al-Dīn al-'Alā'ī, Kitāb al-mukhṭaliṭīn, Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1996, 65-68; Eerik Dickinson, The Development of Early Sunnite Hadīth Criticism: The Taqdima of Ibn Abī Hātim al-Rāzī (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 99–101; and the study by Raif Georges Khoury, 'Abd Allāh Ibn Lahīī'ah (97-174 / 715-790): juge et grand maitre de l'École Égyptienne, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1986.

¹⁷³ "This is not likely (to be) from Ibn Lahī ah [*lā yaḥtamilu / lā yuḥtumalu hādhā min Ibn Lahī ah*]"; al-Haythamī, *Majma al-zawā id*, 7:72. Al-Ḥalabī al-Ḥalabī al-Atharī,

The present transmission from Ibn Lahī'ah is by way of a fatherto-son communication. 'Amr b. Khālid al-Ḥarrānī (d. 229), a Syrian migrant to Egypt, was universally regarded as a reliable transmitter.¹⁷⁴ Little is known about his son, Muḥammad b. 'Amr (d. 292), except that he transmitted from his father.¹⁷⁵ The present *isnād* became quite well-known and, in addition to al-Ṭabarānī, it was cited by Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣbahānī (d. 430) and by Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī (384–458) in their respective *Dalā'il al-nubuwwah* works.¹⁷⁶ During al-Ṭabarānī's sojourn in Egypt, then, he studied with Muḥammad b. 'Amr what must have constituted the Egyptian version of the *maghāzī* of 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr, apparently already transmitted in writing in the 130s.

The following is the account of the Satanic verses incident:¹⁷⁷

Then those who had gone (to Abyssinia) the first time returned before (the departure of) Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib and his companions. This was when God sent down the $s\bar{u}rah$ in which He states, "By the star when it sets." The Mushrikūn¹⁷⁸ had said: "If only this man would speak favourably of our gods [*yadhkuru ālihata-nā bi-khayr*], we would secure him [*aqrarnā-hu*] and his companions. He does not speak of any of the Jews and Christians who oppose his religion with the abuse and invective [*al-shatm wa-al-sharr*]¹⁷⁹ with which he speaks of our gods."^{180, 181}

Dalā'il, 164, rejects **Riwāyah 8** on the basis that 'Amr b. Khālid studied with Ibn Lahī'ah after the library fire, but I have found no evidence for this in the sources; it appears that al-Ḥalabī al-Atharī is interpreting the remark of al-Haythamī. The editor of al-Ṭabarānī's *al-Mu'jam al-kabīr*, Ḥamdī 'Abd al-Majīd al-Salafī, rejects the transmission from Ibn Lahī'ah on the basis that "it is not from one of the 'Abd Allāhs"—that is, presumably, Ibn Lahī'ah's major students, 'Abd Allāh Ibn Wahb (for whom see see Khoury, '*Abd Allāh Ibn Lahī'ah*, 122–124 and **Riwāyah 14**, below) and 'Abd Allāh Ibn al-Mubārak (118–181; for whom see Khoury, '*Abd Allāh Ibn Lahī'ah*, 170–172); al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu'jam al-kabīr*, 9:34, footnote 8316.

¹⁷⁴ There are reports from him in the canonical collections of al-Bukhārī and Ibn Mājah. See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* 10:427–428; and Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb* 8:25–26.

¹⁷⁵ See al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-islām*, 30:286-287.

¹⁷⁶Al-Aʻẓamī, *Maghāzī rasūl Allāh*, 60.

¹⁷⁷Cf. the partial translation-*cum*-paraphrase of Uri Rubin, *Eye of the Beholder*, 160-61.

¹⁷⁸ Al-Muțțawwi'i: "the Mushrikūn of Quraysh."

¹⁷⁹Al-Muțțawwi'i: al-sharr wa-al-shatm.

¹⁸⁰ Al-Țabarānī: *bi-ālihati-nā*; al-Muțțawwi'ī: *ālihata-nā*.

¹⁸¹Al-Muttawwi'i interrupts the narrative here to give an account of Quraysh's response to the emigration of the refugees, and then resumes it.

When God sent down the *sūrah* in which He mentions, "By the star," he (the Prophet) recited [*qara'a*],¹⁸² "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?" At this point, Satan cast into it (Sūrat al-Najm) [*alqā al-shayṭānu fī-hā 'inda dhālika*] a mention of the evil ones [*dhikr al-ṭawāghīt*], and he (the Prophet) said [*fa-qāla*]: "Indeed, they are from among the high *gharānīq!* And, indeed, their intercession is to be hoped for! [*inna-hunna la-min al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā 'atahum (sic) la-turtajā*]"; that was the rhyming phrases [*saj '*] of Satan and was an instance of his sedition [*min fitnati-hi*].

Those two phrases [*hātāni al-kalimatāni*] became lodged in the heart of every Mushrik; their tongues were debased by them, they rejoiced at them [*dhallat bi-hā alsinatu-hum wa-istabsharū bi-hā*] and said: "Muḥammad has returned to his original religion and the religion of his tribe [*qad raja'a Muḥammad ilā dīni-hi al-awwal wa-dīn qawmi-hi*]."¹⁸³

And when the Messenger of God reached the end of the *sūrah* in which there is mention of "the Star,"¹⁸⁴ he made the *sajdah* and all the Muslims and Mushrikūn present made the *sajdah* along with him, except for¹⁸⁵ al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah who was an old man and who raised some dirt on his palm and made the *sajdah* on it.

Both the parties were astonished at their joint sajdah [fa-'ajaba alfarīqān kilā-humā min jamā'ati-him¹⁸⁶ fī al-sujūd] following the sajdah of the Messenger of God.

The Muslims were astonished at the Mushrikūn having made the *sajdah* when they were in a state of Unbelief [*'alā ghayr īmān wa-lā yaqīn*], the Muslims not having heard that which Satan cast onto the tongues of the Mushrikūn [*lam yakun al-muslimūn sami'ū alladhī alqā al-shayṭān 'alā alsinat al-mushrikīn*].¹⁸⁷

<u>OR:</u> The Muslims were astonished at the Mushrikūn having made the *sajdah* when they were in a state of Unbelief [*'alā ghayr īmān wa-lā yaqīn*], the Muslims not having heard that which Satan cast into the <u>ears</u> of the Mushrikūn [*lam yakun al-muslimūn sami'ū alladhī alqā alshaytān 'alā <u>ādhān</u> al-mushrikīn*].¹⁸⁸

¹⁸²Al-Muțțawwi'i: "he (the Prophet) recited [qara'a] it. And when he reached His words, 'Have you..."

¹⁸³ The phrase *wa-dīn qawmi-hi* is missing in al-A'ẓamī's edition.

¹⁸⁴Absent from al-Muttawwi'ī is "in which there is mention of 'the Star."

¹⁸⁵ Al-Țabarānī: ghayr anna; al-Muțțawwi'i: ghayr.

¹⁸⁶ al-Muțțawwi'i: min ijtimā'i-him.

¹⁸⁷ This paragraph will be referred to in the discussion below as "paragraph 6."

¹⁸⁸ Thus in al-Muțțawwi'ī.

As for the Mushrikūn, their minds¹⁸⁹ were set at ease in regard to the Prophet and his Companions when they heard what Satan cast into the *umniyyah* of the Prophet [*lammā samiʿū alladhī alqā al-shayṭān fī umniyyat al-nabī*]. Satan told them that the Messenger of God had recited them (the Satanic verses) when in *sajdah*, so they made the *sajdah* in veneration of their gods.

That phrase circulated among the people, and Satan spread it until it reached Abyssinia.¹⁹⁰ When 'Uthmān b. Maẓ'ūn and 'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd and those Meccans who were with them heard that the people had accepted Islam and prayed alongside the Messenger of God, and when news reached them of the *sajdah* of al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah on the dirt on his palm, they came quickly.

The Messenger of God was greatly distressed by this [*wa-kabura* $dh\bar{a}lika$ ' $al\bar{a}$ $ras\bar{u}l$ $All\bar{a}h$]. In the evening,¹⁹¹ Jibrīl came to him. He (the Prophet) complained to him [fa- $shak\bar{a}$ ilay-hi], so he (Jibrīl) ordered him (to recite the $s\bar{u}rah$) and he (the Prophet) recited to him [fa-qara'a 'alay-hi]. When he (the Prophet) reached them (the Satanic verses) [fa- $lamm\bar{a}$ balagha- $h\bar{a}$],

<u>OR:</u> when he (Jibrīl) heard [*sami*'*a*] (the Satanic verses)¹⁹², Jibrīl absolved himself of responsibility for them [*tabarra*'*a min*-*hā*] and said: "God protect me from these! My Lord did not send them down, nor your Lord command me with them! [*ma*'*ādh* All*āh* min hātayni mā anzala-humā rabb-ī wa-lā amara-nī bi-himā rabbu-ka]." When the Messenger of God saw this, he was greatly disturbed [*shaqqa* '*alay*-*hi*] and said: "I have obeyed Satan, and spoken his words, and he has become a partner in God's matter with me [*ața*'*tu al*-*shayțāna* wa-*takallamtu bi-kalāmi-hi wa-sharika-nī fī amr Allāh*]."

So God removed that which Satan cast [*fa-nasakha Allāhu 'azza wajalla mā alqā al-shayṭān*] and sent down upon him: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he *tamannā*, Satan cast something into his *umniyyah*; then God removes that which Satan casts and establishes His Signs clearly—and God is All-Knowing, All-Wise—to make that which Satan cast a trial for those in whose hearts is sickness, and for those whose hearts are hardened. Indeed, the Wrong-doers are in far dissension."

¹⁹²Thus in al-Muțțawwi'ī.

¹⁸⁹ Al-Ţabarānī: anfusu-hum; al-Muţţawwi'ī: nufūsu-hum.

¹⁹⁰ Al-Ţabarānī: al-Habashah; al-Muţţawwi'ī: ard al-Habashah.

¹⁹¹The word *amsā*, "in the evening," is missing from al-Muttawwi'ī.

And when God absolved him [*barra'a-hu Allāh*] of Satan's rhyming phrases and of his sedition, the Mushrikūn reverted to their errant state and their hostility. The news reached those Muslims who had been in Abyssinia and who were now approaching Mecca. They were now unable to return because of the severity of the suffering they would encounter, and were hungry and afraid. They were afraid that if they entered Mecca they would be attacked. So no man entered Mecca unless he had protection.

Riwāyah 8, then, provides a detailed account of the Satanic verses incident that, while it differs entirely in wording from Riwāyah 1, is largely congruent in meaning. Riwāyah 8 introduces a new narrative motif as a background to Satan's intervention-namely, Quraysh's offer to support the Prophet on condition that he speak favorably of their gods: "If only this man would speak favourably of our gods [yadhkuru ālihata-nā bi-khayr], we would secure him [agrarnā-hu] and his companions." Satan's intervention in the form of the Satanic verses serves to provide Muhammad with a positive response to Quraysh's offer. Here, as in Riwāyahs 1 and 2, the incident can be understood as taking place during the initial Revelation of Sūrat al-Najm. We should note that Riwāyah 8 does not explicitly present Satan's intervention as being precipitated by the Prophet's desire to be reconciled with Quraysh: no such desire is mentioned, and no gloss is provided for the meaning of tamannā in Qur'ān 22:52 al-Hajj. However, it is clear that the Prophet's utterance functions as a positive response to an offer of reconciliation.¹⁹³

Further, the Prophet's own characterization of his error is remarkable for its choice of words: "I have obeyed Satan, and spoken his words, and *he has become a partner in God's matter with me [wa-sharika-nī fī amr Allāh]*." The use of the verb *sharika* immediately provokes an association of the Prophet's error with the concept of *shirk*, the cardinal sin of associating partners with God. This is the only

¹⁹³The motif of persecution is not explicitly stated in the outset of **Riwāyah 8**, although it is self-evident in virtue of the chronological setting (the refugees having gone to Abyssinia) and the reference to the fear of persecution felt by the returning refugees when they learned that Quraysh had not converted to Islam. Cf. motifs 1b, 1c, 1d, and 3b in Riwāyah 1.

instance in the Satanic verses *riwāyahs* where the Prophet's error is characterized in this remarkable way.¹⁹⁴

Another narrative motif in **Riwāyah 8**, which we have not seen in the *riwāyahs* thus far, is that of the Muslims' confusion as to the reason why Quraysh made the sajdah behind the Prophet at the end of Sūrat al-Najm. In the present instance, the Muslims are astonished because they have not heard "that which Satan cast onto the tongues of the Mushrikūn" (in al-Ṭabarānī) or "that which Satan cast into the ears [ādhān] of the Mushrikūn" (in al-Muttawwi'i). Since al-Muțțawwi'ī is citing al-Țabarānī, we will take the wording as found in the text of al-Tabarānī as the original, and examine it first. The meaning of the phrase is none too clear, but there are two possibilities. The first is that alladhī alqā al-shaytān 'alā alsinat al-mushrikin is a rhetorical reference to Quraysh's own repetition of the Satanic verses (dhallat bi-hā alsinatu-hum) and their expressions of satisfaction with the Prophet's uttering the Satanic verses: "Muhammad has returned to his original religion and to the religion of his tribe!" This latter exclamation serves the same function in Riwāyah 8 as did the reference to Qur'ān 39:3 al-Zumar in Riwāyah 7: it graphically expresses the extent of the concession to Quraysh's religion contained in the Satanic verses, and also conveys the obliviousness of both the Muslims and the Prophet to the nature of the concession. In other words, the report is saying that the Muslims did not understand why Quraysh made the *sajdah* because they did not hear Quraysh's expressions of satisfaction with the Prophet's recitation of the Satanic verses.

If the phrase does not refer to the response of Quraysh, it can be taken only to be confusing the issue of who it is who uttered the Satanic verses in the first place. It will be noted that the passage describing Satan's intervention is somewhat vague:

When God sent down the *sūrah* in which He mentions, "By the star," he (the Prophet) recited [*qara'a*], "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?" At this point, Satan cast into it (Sūrat

¹⁹⁴ The term *amr Allāh* may here specifically connote Revelation; for the Qur'ānic relationship between the *amr* of God and Revelation, see Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'ān*, Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1980, 97–98; also J. M. S. Baljon, "The 'Amr of God in the Koran," *Acta Orientalia* 23–24 (1959), 7–18.

al-Najm) a mention of the evil ones, and he said [$alq\bar{a} al-shayt\bar{a}nu$ $f\bar{i}-h\bar{a}$ 'inda dhālika dhikr $al-taw\bar{a}gh\bar{i}t$ f $a-q\bar{a}la$]: "Indeed, they are high gharānīq! And, indeed, their intercession is to be hoped for!"; that was the rhyming phrases of Satan and was an instance of his sedition.

The text contains a potential ambiguity—namely, that it is unclear from the context whether the conjunction fa in the phrase fa- $q\bar{a}la$ expresses a change of subject from Satan ($alq\bar{a} al$ - $shayt\bar{a}n$) to the Prophet (fa- $q\bar{a}la$), or a continuation of Satan's actions: fa- $lamm\bar{a}$ anzala $All\bar{a}h$ $S\bar{u}rat$ al-Najm qara'a "a-fara'aytum al- $L\bar{a}t$ wa-al-' $Uzz\bar{a}$ wa- $Man\bar{a}t$ al- $th\bar{a}lithah$ al- $ukhr\bar{a}$ " $alq\bar{a}$ al- $shayt\bar{a}n$ 'inda- $h\bar{a}$ $h\bar{n}na$ dhakara $All\bar{a}h$ al- $taw\bar{a}gh\bar{i}t$ fa- $q\bar{a}la$ "wa-inna-hunna al- $ghar\bar{a}n\bar{i}q$ al-' $ul\bar{a}$..." Indeed, until the correction scene late in the narrative, where the Prophet explicitly acknowledges having uttered the Satanic verses—"I have obeyed Satan, and spoken his words"—the possibility exists that fa $q\bar{a}la$ refers to Satan. In this case, the phrase "that which Satan cast upon the tongues of the Mushrikūn" might be taken to convey the idea that it was the Mushrikūn, and not the Prophet, who repeated the Satanic interpolation.¹⁹⁵

The variant text of al-Muțțawwi'ī, "the Muslims having not heard that which Satan cast into the ears of the Mushrikūn," is as unclear as al-Ṭabarānī's original. Again, were it not for the correction scene, it might be possible to take the fa- $q\bar{a}la$ in the passage describing Satan's intervention as referring to Satan, and thus to construe Satan's casting into the *umniyyah* of the Prophet as being something that Satan said to the Mushrikūn alone, without the Muslims or the Prophet

¹⁹⁵This is apparently the understanding of al-A'zamī, an outright opponent of the historicity of the Satanic verses incident, who dismisses **Riwāyah 8** as self-contradictory (*kalām yunāqiḍ ākhiru-hu awwala-hu*): "Ibn Lahī'ah has said at the beginning of the *riwāyah* that Satan cast into it [*al-shaytān alqā fī-hā*] and that the Muslims did not hear them (the Satanic verses) [*wa-lam yasma'-hā al-muslimūn*], then he comes later and says that the Prophet continued to recite this phrase." Al-A'zamī is not specific about which portions of the text contradict each other; however, he relates the phrase "Satan cast into it (Sūrat al-Najm)" (second paragraph) to the phrase "the Muslims not having heard that which Satan cast onto the tongues of the Mushrikūn." His criticism seems to be that the narrative—as he understands it—initially says that it was the Mushrikūn (and not the Prophet) who uttered the Satanic verses, but later says that the Prophet uttered them. In any case, despite al-A'zamī's assertion, there is no contradiction in the narrative, only an ambiguity that is resoundingly resolved by the correction scene. See al-A'zamī, *Maghāzī rasūl Allāh*, 106–107, footnote 2.

being aware of it.¹⁹⁶ However, the fact of the correction scene removes this possibility. Since there is no doubt here that the Prophet uttered the verses, there are three ways in which we can interpret the phrase, "that which Satan cast into the ears of the Mushrikūn." The first is to assume that somehow only the Mushrikūn heard what the Prophet said. The second is to take the phrase as referring forward in the narrative to paragraph 6:

The Muslims were astonished at the Mushrikūn having made the *saj-dah* when they were in a state of Unbelief, the Muslims having not heard that which Satan cast into the ears of the Mushrikūn. As for the Mushrikūn, their minds were set at ease in regard to the Prophet and his Companions when they heard what Satan cast into the *umniyyah* of the Prophet. Satan told them that the Messenger of God had recited them (the Satanic verses) when in *sajdah*, so they made the *sajdah* in veneration of their gods.

The phrase "the Muslims not having heard that which Satan cast into the ears of the Mushrikūn" is an explanation for the Muslims' noncomprehension of the reason for Quraysh's *sajdah*. The reason for the *sajdah* is given subsequently: "Satan told them that the Messenger of God had recited them (the Satanic verses) when in *sajdah*, so they made the *sajdah* in veneration of their gods." This private communication from Satan to the Mushrikūn, which is presented as the immediate cause of their *sajdah*, may be what is meant by "that which Satan cast into the ears of the Mushrikūn." Finally, it is interesting to note, however, that the Prophet is characterized as being distressed before the correction scene. In other words, it would appear that, as in **Riwāyah 7**, the Prophet realized that something was wrong, even though he did not know what it was.

Despite the vagueness of both versions of paragraph 6, the fundamental hermeneutical position of **Riwāyah 8** is unaffected: the Prophet uttered the verses; his uttering them constituted a positive response to an offer of compromise from Quraysh; and he remained unaware of the wrongness of what he had done until informed by Jibrīl. The significance of the ambiguity of the *fa* in *fa-qāla* will become

¹⁹⁶For this notion, see the discussion of **Riwāyahs 9 to 13** from Mūsā b. 'Uqbah, below.

apparent in **Riwāyah 9**, where the narrative motif of the Prophet's acknowledgment of his error is absent.¹⁹⁷

Riwāyah 9: al-Bayhaqī's Citation of the *Maghāzī* of Mūsā b. 'Uqbah, and Ibn Kathīr's Citation from Ibn Abī Ḥātim of the *Maghāzī* of Mūsā b. 'Uqbah

While there is no means of dating **Riwāyah 8** on its own, a dating does become possible when we compare it to **Riwāyah 9**, the text of which is virtually identical to that of **Riwāyah 8**, but that comes from a different source—namely, the *Kitāb al-maghāzī* of Mūsā b. 'Uqbah (85–141). Mūsā b. 'Uqbah's *Maghāzī* has not survived intact, but was highly praised by the second-century authorities, and the extensive citations from it in the medieval literature are an indication of the importance of the work during the first eight centuries

¹⁹⁷ Riwāyah 8 has been studied by Uri Rubin within the framework of his thesis that sīrah reports were produced to provide exegetical material for the Qur'an, specifically asbāb al-nuzūl. In his view the sīrah as originally constituted had few Qur'anic references, and "Qur'anic materials only began to be applied to the non-Qur'anic basic narrative framework when the sacred scripture became standard source of guidance" (Rubin, Eye of the Beholder, 227). Rubin thus argues that Riwāyah 8 represents a later incorporation of Qur'ānic materials into two earlier reports from 'Urwah, also relating to the Meccan period and containing no Qur'anic references. One of these reports, cited by al-Ţabarī as a letter 'Urwah wrote to the Umayyad caliph 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwan, states that shortly after the refugees left for Abyssinia, important men of Quraysh accepted Islam, with the result that the Muslims became more secure in Mecca. This prompted the refugees to return. The second report, transmitted with an *isnād* ending in Ibn Lahī'ah \leftarrow Abū al-Aswad \leftarrow 'Urwah \leftarrow al-Miswar b. Makhramah b. Nawfal \leftarrow Makhramah b. Nawfal (d. 64), states that when Muhammad proclaimed his message openly in Mecca, all the Meccans initially accepted Islam, but were then dissuaded by Abū Jahl and al-Walīd b. Mughīrah. This report states that the Muslims grew so numerous at this time that some of them were unable to perform sajdah during recitation of the Qur'an because of the "crush, confined space, and large number of people." Rubin sees Riwāyah 8 as a collation of the themes in these two reports, which he assumes to be earlier, to which the Satanic verses incident was then added in order to provide a sīrah-based exegesis for Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj. Rubin's larger thesis aside, in the present instance, his logic seems to be somewhat arbitrary: one might equally take these two reports as representing later edited versions of an earlier history of the Meccan period from which all reference to the potentially offensive Satanic verses incident has been removed. See Eye of the Beholder, 156-163, 232, and 256.

of Islam.¹⁹⁸ The bulk of Mūsa's *Maghāzī* that has come down to us is in the transmission of two of his students: his nephew, Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm b. 'Uqbah, and Muḥammad b. Fulayḥ al-Madanī.¹⁹⁹

The account of the Satanic verses is cited from Mūsā b. 'Uqbah in several works, either by an *isnād* going back through Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm or one going back through Muḥammad b. Fulayḥ, or directly from a manuscript without any *isnād* at all. Although the various citations from Mūsā are largely identical or similar in wording, they contain some critical differences that radically affect the meaning of the incident, to the point where the accounts may be construed as contradicting each other.

Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm's transmission from Mūsā b. 'Uqbah is given in the *Dalā'il al-nubuwwah* of the Khurāsānī scholar Aḥmad b. al-Ḥu-sayn al-Bayhaqī (d. 458) with the following *isnād*:²⁰⁰

Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn b. al-Faḍl al-Baghdādī (335–415)²⁰¹ ← Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. 'Itāb al-Baghdādī (262–

¹⁹⁸Mālik b. Anas is quoted as describing it as "the most correct maghāzī [aṣaḥḥ almaghāzī]." A version of Mūsa's Maghāzī has been compiled, with an introductory study, by Muhammad Bāqshīsh Abū Mālik, al-Maghāzī li-Mūsā ibn 'Uqbah, Agadir: Jāmi'at Ibn Zuhr, 1994; and another by Husayn Murādī Nasab, Kitāb-e Maghāzī-ye Mūsā b. 'Uqbah al-musammā bi-al-Maghāzī al-Nabawiyyah, Qom: Dhawī al-Qurbā, 1382sh, where a list is given of some twenty-eight later historians who cited the Maghāzī of Mūsā between the second and tenth centuries (see 133-161). An earlier unpublished compilation, of which both the foregoing compilers were apparently unaware, is that of Abdu Braimah, "A Reconstruction of the Lost Book Kitāb al-maghāzī of Mūsā b. 'Uqbah," MA dissertation, American University in Cairo, 1968. For Mūsā b. 'Uqbah see Sezgin, GAS, 1:286; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 10:360-362; al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 6:114-118; Horovitz, "Earliest Biographies III," 164-167; Braimah, "Reconstruction," 12-13, 20-23; Bāqshīsh Abū Mālik, al-Maghāzī li-Mūsa, 15-37; Nasab, Kitāb-e Maghāzī-ye Mūsā, 67-96. Like 'Urwah's sīrah corpus, Mūsa's maghāzī material has yet to receive the study it requires, but see now Gregor Schoeler, "Mūsā b. 'Uqba's Maghāzī," in Harald Motzki (ed.), The Biography of Muhammad: The Issue of the Sources (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 67–97, which provides an important critical corrective to the analysis of Joseph Schacht, "On Mūsā b. 'Uqbah's Kitāb al-maghāzī," Acta Orientalia 23 (1953), 288-300, which is flawed in the first instance by Schacht's failure to differentiate between legal and historical reports. See also Jamshed Ahmad Nadwi, "Mūsā ibn-e 'Uqbah awr unkī maghāzī," Maʿārif 158.3 (1996), 101-111, and Mubārakpūrī, Tadvīn-i sivar, 203-207. ¹⁹⁹See Bāqshīsh Abū Mālik, *al-Maghāzī li-Mūsa*, 28-32.

²⁰⁰ Al-Bayhaqī, Dalā'il al-nubuwwah, 2:285-291; whence Bāqshīsh Abū Mālik, al-Maghāzī li-Mūsa, 67-69.

²⁰¹See Al-Khaţīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 2:239-240; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* 17:331-332.

344)²⁰² ← al-Qāsim b. 'Abd Allāh b. Mughīrah al-Baghdādī (d. 277)²⁰³ ← Ismā'īl b. 'Abd Allāh b. Uways al-Madanī (139–227)²⁰⁴ ← Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm b. 'Uqbah al-Madanī (d. 161 / 9)²⁰⁵ ← Mūsā b. 'Uqbah al-Madanī (85–141).

It is interesting to note from the *isnād* that Mūsā's *Maghāzī* was transmitted by scholars who seem to have been, in the first instance, *muḥaddithūn*. Ismā'īl b. 'Abd Allāh b. Uways al-Madanī appears in both the *ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī and that of Muslim, while al-Qāsim b. 'Abd Allāh is cited by al-Dāraquṭnī. Nothing further needs to be said here about this *isnād*, besides noting that the transmission moves from Madīnah to Baghdad in the third century.

Muḥammad b. Fulayḥ's transmission from Mūsā b. 'Uqbah is given in the *Tafsīr* of 'Imād al-Dīn Ismā'īl Ibn Kathīr (d. 773), who is adducing it from the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. 338).²⁰⁶ Ibn Kathīr gives Ibn Abī Ḥātim's *isnād* as:

Mūsā b. Isḥāq al-Baghdādī al-Rāzī (210–297)²⁰⁷ ← Muḥammad b. Isḥāq al-Musayyibī al-Madanī al-Baghdādī (d. 236)²⁰⁸ ← Muḥammad b. Fulayḥ al-Madanī (d. 197)²⁰⁹ ← Mūsā b. 'Uqbah ← Muḥammad b. Shihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 124).

Like the first *isnād*, the transmission from Muḥammad b. Fulayḥ is also by a well-known *muḥaddith*: reports from Muḥammad b. Isḥāq al-Musayyibī appear in Muslim and al-Dāraquṭnī. This *isnād*

- ²⁰⁵ See Ibn Sa'd (d. 230), *Țabaqāt*, 5:488-499, where Ismā'īl's having transmitted his uncle's *Maghāzī* is already recorded; also Ibn Abī Hātim, *Jarḥ*, 2:152, al-Dhahabī, *Mīzān al-i'tidāl*, 1:215; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 1:272-273.
- ²⁰⁶Abū al-Fidā' Ismā'īl Ibn Kathīr al-Qurashī al-Dimashqī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'azīm*, ed. Khālid Muḥammad Muḥarram (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-'Aṣriyyah, 1998), 3:217.
- ²⁰⁷ See Ibn Abī Hātim, Jarh, 8:135; al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, Tārīkh Baghdād, 7:52–54; al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 13:579–581.
- ²⁰⁸See al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 24:400–403; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 9:37–38. "Al-Musayyibī" is incorrectly given in Ibn Kathīr as "al-Shībī."
- ²⁰⁹See al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 26:299–301; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 9:406–407; he is , in the main, viewed favorably by the Hadīth scholars, but see also al-'Uqaylī, *Du'afā'*, 3:1279; and Ibn al-Jawzī, *Du'afā'*, 4:92.

²⁰²See Al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 5:452-453.

 ²⁰³ See Ibn Abī Hātim, Jarh, 7:112; al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, Tārīkh Baghdād, 12:433–434;
 ²⁰⁴ See al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 10:391–395; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 1:310–312.

also moves north and east. However, unlike the first one, Muḥammad b. Fulayḥ's *isnād* goes back from Mūsā b. 'Uqbah to his great teacher, Muḥammad b. Shihāb al-Zuhrī.

The following translation follows the text of al-Bayhaqī's citation of Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm's transmission, with the necessary indications of the textual variants in Muḥammad b. Fulayḥ's transmission:²¹⁰

Then, when Quraysh saw the numbers of the Prophet's Companions increasing and multiplying, they gathered their counsel, intensified their plotting, and planned to either kill the Messenger of God or drive him out. They proposed to his people that they (Quraysh) kill him and give them blood-money, but his people refused that and God guarded [mana'a] his Messenger through the shelter [himyah] of his clan. So they intensified their persecution [$ishtadd\bar{u}$ 'al \bar{a}] of those of their sons and brothers and tribesmen who followed him in the religion of God; it was a severe trial [fitnah] and a terrible upheaval [$zilz\bar{a}l$]. And there were those whom God protected [man uftutina].

When this befell the Muslims, the Prophet ordered them—when he entered the gorge [*al-shi'b*] with the Banū 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib²¹¹—to leave for Abyssinia. There was a King in Abyssinia called al-Najāshī in whose land no one was wronged, for which reason he was well spoken of. So, many of them left for Abyssinia when they were being oppressed and feared the trial. The Prophet remained behind and did not leave.

This was before the departure of Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib and his companions to Abyssinia: they left twice—those who had gone (to Abyssinia) the first time returned before the departure of Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib and his companions.

This was when God sent down Sūrat al-Najm. <u>OR:</u> Sūrat al-Najm was sent down.²¹²

The Mushrikūn had been saying: "If only this man would speak favourably of our gods [*yadhkuru ālihata-nā bi-khayr*], we would secure him [*aqrarnā-hu*] and his companions. He does not speak of the Jews and Christians who oppose his religion with the abuse and invective [*al-shatm wa-al-sharr*] with which he speaks of our gods."

- ²¹¹The reference here is to the boycott of the Banū Hāshim by Quraysh, the former being blockaded in a gorge belonging to Abū Ṭālib.
- ²¹² Thus in the citation from Muḥammad b. Fulayḥ, which begins here.

²¹⁰ The first three paragraphs are absent from the citation of Muḥammad b. Fulayḥ's transmission.

The Messenger of God was greatly distressed [*ishtadda 'alay-hi*] by the persecution [*adhā*] which had he and his Companions had suffered from them (Quraysh) and by their calling him a liar. Their errant conduct [*dalālatu-hum*] saddened him, and he desired that they be rightly-guided [*kāna yatamannā hudā-hum*].

When God sent down Sūrat al-Najm, he (the Prophet) said [$q\bar{a}la$], "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?." <u>OR</u>: When God sent down Sūrat al-Najm, he (the Prophet) said [$q\bar{a}la$], "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other? Would you have sons, and He, daughters?"²¹³

And Satan cast some words at the point when God mentioned the last of the evil ones [alqā al-shayṭānu 'inda-hā kalimātin ḥīna dhakara Allāhu 'azza wa-jalla ākhir al-ṭawāghīt], and he said [fa-qāla]: "Indeed, they are the high gharānīq! And, indeed, their intercession is what is to be hoped for!" [inna-hunna al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna la-hiya allatī turtajā] OR: [inna-hunna la-hunna al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna la-hiya allatī turtajā].²¹⁴

That was the rhyming phrases of Satan and was an instance of his sedition [*min fitnati-hi*]. Those two phrases became lodged in the heart of every Mushrik in Mecca. Their tongues slipped over them [*zallat bi-hā*];²¹⁵ they rejoiced in telling them to each other [*tabāsharū bi-hā*], and said: "Muḥammad has returned to his original religion and to the religion of his tribe."

And when the Messenger of God reached the end of al-Najm, he made the *sajdah*, and all the Muslims and Mushrikūn present made the *sajdah* along with him. However, al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah was an old man and picked up two palmfuls of dirt and made the *sajdah* on them. The two parties were astonished at their joint *sajdah* alongside the *sajdah* of the Messenger of God. The Muslims were astonished at the Mushrikūn having made the *sajdah* when they were in a state of Unbelief ['alā ghayr īmān wa-lā yaqīn]; the Muslims not having heard that which Satan cast onto the tongues of the Mushrikūn [*lam yakun al-muslimūn sami'ū alladhī alqā al-shaytān 'alā alsinat al-mushrikīn*].

<u>OR</u>: The Muslims were astonished at the Mushrikūn having made the *sajdah* when they were in a state of Unbelief [*'alā ghayr īmān wa-lā*

²¹³ Thus in the citation of Muhammad b. Fulayh.

²¹⁴ Thus in the citation of Muḥammad b. Fulayḥ.

²¹⁵ In the citation of Muhammad b. Fulayh: the orthographic variant *dhallat bi-hā*, "their tongues were debased by them."

yaqīn]; the Muslims not having heard that which Satan cast into the ears of the Mushrikūn [*al-ladhī alqā al-shayṭānu fī masāmiʿal-mushrikīn*].²¹⁶

As for the Mushrikūn, their minds were set at ease in regard to the Prophet and his Companions as a result of what had been cast into the desire of the Prophet [*li-mā ulqiya fī umniyyat al-nabī*]. Satan told them that the Messenger of God had recited them (the Satanic verses) when in *sajdah*, so they made the *sajdah* in veneration of their gods.

That phrase circulated among the people, and Satan spread it until it reached Abyssinia and the Muslims who were there. 'Uthmān b. Maẓ'ūn and his companions came to hear of it [marra bi-hā]. People were saying that the people of Mecca had accepted Islam and had prayed alongside the Messenger of God. News also reached them of al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah's sajdah on his palms. It was said that the Muslims were safe in Mecca, so they came quickly.

And God removed that which Satan cast and established His Signs clearly and protected them from Falsehood [*wa-qad nasakha Allāhu 'azza wa-jalla mā alqā al-shayṭān wa-aḥkama Allāh āyāti-hi waḥafiẓa-hā min al-bāṭil*]. God said: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he desired, Satan cast something into his desire; then God removes that which Satan casts and establishes His Signs clearly—and God is All-Knowing, All-Wise—to make that which Satan cast a trial for those in whose hearts is sickness, and for those whose hearts are hardened. Indeed, the Wrongdoers are in far dissension." And when God made clear His decree [*bayyana Allāhu qaḍāʾa-hu*] and absolved him (Muḥammad) [*barraʾa-hu*] of Satan's rhyming phrases, the Mushrikūn reverted to their errant state and their hostility towards the Muslims increased.

'Uthmān b. Maẓ'ūn and his companions were among those who had returned and, when they heard of the extreme hostility of the Mushrikūn towards the Muslims, they were unable to enter Mecca except under protection.

It is evident that, despite the fact that they are taken from different source-works, **Riwāyah 9** is strikingly similar to **Riwāyah 8**. Much of the text of **Riwāyah 9** from the beginning of the second paragraph to the end of the ninth is either identical to **Riwāyahs 8** and 9 or virtually so. Even the one significant textual variant between the transmissions of Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm and Muḥammad b. Fulayḥ—"the Muslims not

²¹⁶ Thus in the citation of Muḥammad b. Fulayḥ.

having heard that which Satan cast onto the tongues / into the ears of the Mushrikūn"—is paralleled in the variation between al-Ţabarānī and al-Muttawwi'i's citations. This similarity between Riwayahs 8 and 9 is the more remarkable for the fact that it is not exceptional as regards the transmission traditions in question: the fact of a very high degree of textual congruence between maghāzī reports transmitted from Mūsā b. 'Uqbah and those transmitted by Abū al-Aswad from 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr was first noted by al-A'zamī, and subsequently discussed by Bāqshīsh Abū Mālik and Ḥusayn Nasab.²¹⁷ This overlap is particularly striking when one considers that the *isnāds* that carry the foregoing reports are from different regions: 'Urwah's Maghāzī was transmitted by Abū al-Aswad in Egypt in the 130s, and continued to be transmitted in that country, while the transmission of Mūsa's Maghāzī went from Madīnah to Baghdad. The most plausible explanation for this similarity is one that also helps us fix a date for the reports. It has been noted that Muhammad b. Fulayh's transmission goes back from Mūsā b. 'Uqbah to his teacher Muhammad b. Shihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 124), the leading figure among the collectors of *sīrah* reports in late first- and early second-century Madīnah, described by al-Dūrī as having "founded the historical school of Madīnah."218 Riwāyah 12, below, a slight variation on Riwāyah 9, is also carried by the *isnād*, Mūsā b. 'Uqbah ← al-Zuhrī. 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr was the main maghāzī-teacher of Muhammad b. Shihāb al-Zuhrī, and al-Zuhrī was, in turn, the main maghāzī-teacher of Mūsā b. 'Uqbah. The bulk of Mūsa's surviving maghāzī material is transmitted from al-Zuhrī.²¹⁹ It thus seems highly likely that the reports that are common to both 'Urwah and Mūsā were either originally received by each of Abū al-Aswad and al-Zuhrī from 'Urwah in Madīnah before the latter's death in 94,²²⁰ or possibly received by al-Zuhrī from Abū al-Aswad before

²¹⁸ See al-Duri, Nash'at, 78–102, at 101; Michael Lecker, "Biographical Notes on Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī," Journal of Semitic Studies 41 (1996), 21–63; and Talât Koçyiğit, "İbn Şihāb ez-Zuhrī," Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyet Fakultesi Dergisi 21 (1970), 51–84.

²¹⁹ Bāqshīsh Abū Mālik, *al-Maghāzī li-Mūsa*, 26.

²²⁰ In the assessment of Gregor Schoeler: "We can safely assume that a considerable

²¹⁷ Al-A'ẓamī, Maghāzī rasūl Allāh, 88–89, Bāqshīsh Abū Mālik, al-Maghāzī li-Mūsa, 36–41; Nasab, al-Maghāzī al-nabawiyyah, 121–129. The similarity of Riwāyahs 8 and 9 was noted in the tenth/fourteenth century by al-Suyūțī, al-Durr, 6:67.

the former's death in 124.²²¹ These reports, then, must have been in circulation in Madīnah by the first two decades of the first century at the latest, and may even represent 'Urwah's own wording.²²²

As with **Riwāyahs 2** and **3**, above, establishing a "hidden" transmission link between **Riwāyahs 8** and **9** in this way does not in any way conflict with our methodology, which assumes that weak *isnāds* in *sīrah-maghāzī* and *tafsīr* works represent genuine transmission histories unless there is good reason to suspect otherwise. Had there been no plausible explanation for why these two long and apparently unconnected reports should be so similarly worded, one would have been forced to doubt the authenticity of one or both *isnāds*. But the prominent connection between Mūsā b. 'Uqbah and al-Zuhrī on the one hand, and between al-Zuhrī and 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr on the other, strongly suggests that while the transmission history given by the *isnād* in **Riwāyah 9** is incomplete, going back only to Mūsā b.

part of al-Zuhrī's source indications are authentic. This is true at any rate for a large number of traditions that al-Zuhrī transmitted from his teacher 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr, for we possess most of these traditions going back to 'Urwa not only in the al-Zuhrī transmission but also in the independent transmission of Hishām, a son of 'Urwa"; Schoeler, "Mūsā b. 'Uqba's Maghāzī," 94. While in the present instance al-Zuhri's source is not indicated, in my estimation the textual congruity and known relations of transmission are sufficient demonstration. In a series of source-critical case studies, Gregor Schoeler and Andreas Görke have argued broadly in favor of the authenticity of the bulk of the sirah corpus transmitted from 'Urwah by Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī and Hishām b. 'Urwah: "The contents of what 'Urwa taught can be reconstructed . . . the 'Urwa corpus turns out to comprise the basic framework of the whole sīra, i.e. it contains different long and detailed reports about the main events of Muhammad's life and deeds"; see Görke and Schoeler, "Reconstructing the Earliest sira Texts," 213. However, the transmission of Abū al-Aswad is regarded as "useless for a reconstruction of the contents of the original 'Urwah tradition" on the basis that "the additional elements appearing with Abū al-Aswad are not attributed to 'Urwah in any other transmissions"; Schoeler, "Foundations for a New Biography of Muhammad: The Production and Evaluation of the Corpus of Traditions from 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr," in Herbert Berg (ed.), Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 21-28, at 26. In my view, this assessment fails to consider the potential of comparing Abū al-Aswad's transmission with material transmitted by Mūsā b. 'Uqbah from al-Zuhrī, as has been done here.

²²¹According to the biographical material on the two, al-Zuhrī did transmit from Abū al-Aswad, but not vice versa.

²²² This would, of course, imply the same early dating for all of the *maghāzī* materials common to both Abū al-Aswad ← 'Urwah, and to Mūsā. A comparative study of the two *maghāzī* corpuses is much needed.

'Uqbah or al-Zuhrī instead of to 'Urwah, this does not mean that it is not genuine as far back as it goes.

In analyzing the text of **Riwāyah 9**, we must consider, first, the ways in which it differs from **Riwāyah 8**. The significant differences between **Riwāyahs 8** and **9** are as follows. First, the background of persecution is extensively brought out in **Riwāyah 9**, whereas it is only implied by context in **Riwāyah 8**. Second, **Riwāyah 9** explicitly glosses *tamannā* to mean desire—here the Prophet's desire to guide Quraysh. Third, **Riwāyah 9** does not provide a time frame for the incident. Fourth, **Riwāyah 9** does not contain the narrative motif of Jibrīl's correction of the Prophet with the Prophet's acknowledgment of having uttered the verses.

What concerns us here is the absence of the last of the foregoing narrative elements, the correction scene. We have already noted, in the discussion of **Riwāyah 8**, how the ambiguity in the *fa-qāla* phrase in the passage describing Satan's intervention is resolved only by the presence of the correction scene with its explicit statement that the Prophet uttered the Satanic verses. In the absence of the correction scene in Riwāyah 9, however, while it is still entirely possible to understand *fa-qāla* as referring to the Prophet, a case can equally now be made for the interpretation that the fa- $q\bar{a}la$ refers to Satan. This would mean that the Prophet did not utter the Satanic verses; instead, Satan uttered them and cast them onto the tongues of the Mushrikūn (Ibrāhīm b. Ismā'īl in al-Bayhaqī), or Satan uttered them and cast them into the ears of the Mushrikūn (Muhammad b. Fulayh in Ibn Kathīr).²²³ To the reader aware of the prior existence of Riwāyah 8, it is hard not to see the omission of the correction scene from Riwāyah 9 as, at the very least, a symptom of discomfort with

²²³ A new narrative element present in the citation of Muḥammad b. Fulayh that may have been intended to reinforce the idea that Satan, and not the Prophet, uttered the verses is the Prophet's recitation of Qur'ān 53:20 before Satan's intervention: "He (the Prophet) said, 'Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other? Would you have sons, and He daughters?" In Riwāyah 1, we saw Qur'ān 53:20 al-Najm—which criticizes the goddesses—given as an abrogating verse. The point, in Riwāyah 9, of having Satan's intervention take place after the Prophet recites Qur'ān 53:20 al-Najm may be to serve the argument noted above: viz., it would be illogical for the Prophet to recite the Satanic verses praising the goddesses when he had only just criticized them. However, for a report in which the Prophet is explicitly presented as reciting both Qur'ān 53:20 al-Najm and the Satanic verses, see Riwāyah 48.

the image of the Prophet saying, "I have obeyed Satan, and spoken his words, and he has become a partner in God's matter with me."224 We will see from Riwāyahs 14 and 15, below, that al-Zuhrī does not appear to have entertained any discomfort with the idea of the Prophet uttering the Satanic verses. Thus, given the absence of the correction scene in both transmissions from Mūsā b. 'Uqbah, it is very possible that that its omission is Mūsā's doing. Regardless of whether the purpose of the omission of the correction scene is to present a narrative susceptible to an interpretation of the incident that will not offend against the idea of 'ismat al-anbiya', certainly the narrative of **Riwāyah 9** is remarkably ambiguous as to precisely the most crucial hermeneutical issue at stake. Later scholars interpreted the ambiguity in **Riwāyah 9** as meaning that the Prophet did not utter the Satanic verses. The first to take this view was the third-/fourth-century Egyptian scholar Abū Ja'far al-Nahhās (d. 338), a contemporary of Ibn Abī Hātim al-Rāzī, who clearly takes the Muhammad b. Fulayh / fī masāmi'i-him version of Riwāyah 9 to mean that the Prophet did not utter the Satanic verses. The following is al-Nahhās' commentary in his al-Nāsikh wa-al-mansūkh, followed by his summary citation of Riwāyah 9:

Satan cast this into the recitation [*tilāwah*] of the Prophet without the Prophet uttering it [*wa-lam yanțiq bi-hi al-nabī*]. And the proof of this is that this is the plain meaning of the Qur'ān [*zāhir al-qur'ān*], and that the reliable authors of *sīrah* works [*al-thiqāt min aṣhāb al-siyar*] are of this opinion [*ka-dhā yarawna*].

As Mūsā b. 'Uqbah related from al-Zuhrī: "Satan cast into the recitation [*tilāwah*] of the Prophet: 'Indeed, their intercession is to be sought!,' and this became lodged in the ears of the Mushrikūn [*fa-waqarat fī masāmi*' *al-mushrikīn*] and they all followed him and made the *sajdah*. The Muslims had no knowledge of this and did not hear it [*ankara dhālika al-muslimūn wa-lam yasma'u-hu*]. The news reached the refugees in Abyssinia that the people [*al-jamā'ah*] had followed the Prophet (in

²²⁴Of course, the opposite scenario—that the correction scene was added later—is also a theoretical possibility, but is highly unlikely. We have already seen the correction scene present in **Riwāyahs 1**, 2, and 3, which date to the first century. Also, the historical development of attitudes regarding the incident has been towards the elimination over time of narrative elements that came to be seen as doctrinally objectionable, not their incorporation.

making the *sajdah*), so they approached (Mecca). God had removed that which Satan cast, so they met with persecution and hardship."²²⁵

Al-Nahhās is here using **Riwāyah 9** expressly to support the position that the Prophet did not utter the verses. It is interesting to note, however, that in order to do so he is abandoning the gloss of umnivvah as "desire" that was given in **Riwāyah 9**, and is replacing it with the alternative gloss of "recitation [tilāwah]."226 Riwāyah 9 glosses the verb tamannā as "desire"-specifically, the Prophet's desire that Quraysh be rightly guided [kāna yatamannā hudā-hum]. Thus, if **Riwāyah 9** is to be taken to mean that the Prophet did not utter the Satanic verses, the phrase "Satan cast into his desire" must be understood figuratively. In this figurative interpretation, Satan does not actually put anything into the Prophet's inner thoughts or desires, but rather does something to obstruct the fulfillment of Prophet's desire. This figurative interpretation of tamannā as "desire"—in which Satan's *ilqā*' is given the sense of "casting" a spanner in the works—appears somewhat forced, which is presumably why al-Nahhās replaced it with the meaning that is far more suitable in this context: "recitation [*tilāwah*]."

Riwāyah 10: al-Dhahabī's Citation of the *Maghāzī* of Mūsā b. 'Uqbah

Other adjustments were also made to the text of **Riwāyah 9** in order to produce the desired hermeneutical position. **Riwāyah 10**, a slightly abbreviated citation of Mūsā's *Maghāzī*, is given in the *sīrah* of the eighth-century Damascene scholar Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī (d. 748), a staunch opponent of the historicity of the incident.²²⁷

²²⁵ See al-Naḥḥās, *al-Nāsikh wa-al-mansūkh*, 2:533.

²²⁶ The earliest Arabic lexicon, the *Kitab al-'ayn* attributed to al-Khalīl b. Ahmad al-Başrī (d. 170), glosses *tamannā* in Qur'ān 22:52 al-Hajj to mean *talā*; see Mohammad-Nauman Khan, *Die exegetischen Teile des Kitab al-'Ayn: Zur altesten philologischen Koranexegese* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 1994), 288. On the attribution of the *Kitab al-'ayn* to al-Khalīl, see Gregor Schoeler, "Who Is the Author of the *Kitāb al-'ayn*?" in Schoeler, *The Oral and the Written*, 142–163.

²²⁷ Al-Dhahabī's sīrah is preserved in an autograph copy, from which it has been edited and published separately in accompaniment to both of his Tārīkh al-Islām, and his Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'; see al-Dhahabī, Tārīkh al-islām wa-țabaqāt al-

Al-Dhahabī does not give an *isnād*, but we know that he studied a copy of Mūsā's *Maghāzī*, and it is this that he must be citing.²²⁸ In the following passage, **Riwāyah 10** makes certain hermeneutically strategic omissions from the wording of **Riwāyah 9**:²²⁹

The Mushrikūn of Quraysh had been saying: "If only this man would speak favourably of our gods [*yadhkuru ālihata-nā bi-khayr*], we would secure him²³⁰ and his companions. He does not speak of the Jews and Christians who oppose him²³¹ with the abuse and invective [*al-shatm wa-al-sharr*] with which he speaks of our gods." The Messenger of God desired that they be rightly guided [*yatamannā hudā-hum*].

"Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?," was sent down. Satan cast (some) words at that point [*fa-alqā al-shayṭān 'inda-hā kalimāt*]: "Indeed they are the high *gharānīq!* And, indeed, their intercession is hoped for! [*inna-hunna al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna turtajā*]."

That was the rhyming phrases of Satan and was an instance of his sedition [*min fitnati-hi*]. Those two phrases became lodged in the heart of every Mushrik in Mecca. Their tongues were debased by them;²³² they rejoiced in telling them to each other [*tabāsharū bi-hā*], and said: "Muhammad has returned to our religion."²³³

And when the Messenger of God reached the end of al-Najm, he made the *sajdah*, and all the Muslims and Mushrikūn present made

²²⁹This passage is preceded by the following paragraph, essentially a summary of paragraphs 1 and 2 in al-Bayhaqī:

Then Quraysh gathered their counsel, intensified their plotting, and planned either to kill the Messenger of God or drive him out. They proposed to his people that they (Quraysh) kill him and give them blood-money, but his people refused that vehemently [*hamiyyatan*]. When the Prophet entered the gorge of the Banū 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, he ordered his Companions to leave for Abyssinia, and they left twice; those who left the first time returned when Sūrat al-Najm was sent down.

mashāhīr wa-al-a'lām: al-tarjamah al-nabawiyyah, ed. Muḥammad Maḥmūd Ḥamdān (Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-Miṣrī / Dār al-Kitāb al-Lubnānī, 1985), 1:140– 141; and *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā': al-sīrah al-nabawiyyah*, ed. Bashshār 'Awwāḍ Ma'rūf (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1996), 1:148–150.

²²⁸ Al-Dhahabī describes the work as follows: "As for the *Maghāzī* of Mūsā, it is bound in a small volume [*mujallad laysa bi-al-kabīr*]. We heard it [*sami'nā-hu*] and most of it is sound [*ghālibu-hu ṣaḥīḥ*]"; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 6:116.

²³⁰ Riwāyah 12 has qarrarnā-hu; Riwāyah 9 has aqrarnā-hu.

²³¹Reading man khālafa-hu for al-Dhahabī's orthographic error, man hālafa-hu.

²³² Reading *dhallat bi-hā* for the meaningless orthographic error *dallat bi-hā*.

²³³ Riwāyah 9: "Muḥammad has returned to his original religion and to the religion of his tribe."

the *sajdah* along with him. However, al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah was an old man and picked up two palmfuls of dirt and made the *sajdah* on them. The two parties were astonished at their joint *sajdah* alongside the *sajdah* of the Messenger of God. The Muslims were astonished at the Mushrikūn having made the *sajdah* when they were in a state of Unbelief ['*alā ghayr īmān wa-lā yaqīn*]; the Muslims not having heard what Satan cast [*mā alqā al-shayṭān*].²³⁴

In this citation of Mūsā's Maghāzī, through the omission of certain parts of the text, the narrative is bent to the interpretation that it is Satan, and not the Prophet, who uttered the Satanic verses. We have no means of telling, however, whether these omissions represent al-Dhahabī's own editorial work (he was, as noted above, himself opposed to the historicity of the incident) or that of an earlier transmitter. The first relevant omission is that of any reference to the Prophet being affected by the persecution of Quraysh. Compare the following passage as it appears in **Riwāyahs 9** and 10—the underlined portion is omitted from **Riwāyah 10**:

²³⁴ Riwāyah 9: "the Muslims not having heard that which Satan cast onto the tongues / into the ears of the Mushrikūn." The remainder of the citation in al-Dhahabī is as follows (the text in curly brackets is my observations):

As for the Mushrikūn, their minds were set at ease in regard to the Prophet and his Companions as a result of what had been cast into the desire of the Prophet [*li-mā ul-qiya fī umniyyat al-nabī*].

Satan told them that the Messenger of God had recited them (the Satanic verses) when in *sajdah*, so they made the *sajdah* in veneration of their gods. {The wording of this passage in al-Dhahabī is slightly different from al-Bayhaqī, but without any effect on the meaning}.

That phrase circulated among the people, and Satan spread it until it reached Abyssinia and those Muslims who were there—'Uthmān b. Maz'ūn and his companions {The difference, here, between al-Dhahabī and al-Bayhaqī is orthographic: al-Dhahabī has *hattā balaghat arḍ al-ḥabashah wa-<u>man</u> bi-hā min al-muslimīn 'Uthmān ibn Maz'ūn wa-asḥābi-hi*; while al-Bayhaqī has *wa-<u>marra</u> bi-hā min al-muslimīn 'Uthmān b. Maz'ūn wa-asḥābi-hi*}. People were saying that all the people of Mecca had accepted Islam and had prayed, and that the Muslims were safe in Mecca; so they came quickly.

And God removed that which Satan cast {**Riwāyah 9** adds: "and established his signs clearly and protected them from falsehood."} "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he desired, Satan cast something into his desire" was sent down. And when God made clear His decree [*bayyana Allāhu qaḍā'a-hu*] and absolved him [*barra'a-hu*] of Satan's rhyming phrases, the Mushrikūn reverted to their errant state and their hostility towards the Muslims increased.

'Uthmān b. Maẓ'ūn and his companions were among those who had returned and, when they heard of the extreme hostility of the Mushrikūn towards the Muslims, they were unable to enter Mecca except under protection. The Messenger of God was greatly distressed by the persecution which had he and his Companions had suffered from them (Quraysh) and by their calling him a liar. Their errant conduct saddened him, and he desired that they be rightly-guided [$k\bar{a}na$ yatamann \bar{a} huda-hum].

By removing the reference to the effect of the persecution on the Prophet, and leaving only the Prophetic desire to guide the Unbelievers, **Riwāyah** 10 removes the possibility that the Prophet might commit an act arising out of his distress at the persecution.

The second significant omission is of the ambiguous fa- $q\bar{a}la$ phrase:

When God sent down Sūrat al-Najm, he (the Prophet) said [*qāla*], "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?." Satan cast some words at that point <u>when God mentioned the last of the evil ones [alqā al-shayṭānu 'inda-hā kalimātin hīna dhakara Allāhu</u> 'azza wa-jalla ākhir al-ṭawāghīt] and he said [fa-qāla]: "Indeed, they are the high gharānīq!..."

With the removal of the *fa-qāla* phrase, there is no remaining ambiguity: Satan is the only possible actor—the Prophet plays no part in the matter. In Riwāyah 10, Satan casts something, and it becomes lodged in the hearts of the Mushrikūn who rejoice at it and proceed to ascribe it to the Prophet.²³⁵ Riwāyah 10, by judiciously editing Riwāyah 9, gives an account of the Satanic verses in which there is nothing that may be taken as a basis to suggest that the Prophet uttered the verses, thus making the incident conform to the orthodox notion of 'ismat al-anbiyā'. Here, the phrase alqā al-shaytānu fī umniyyati-hi is indeed to be understood figuratively, meaning that the Prophet desired something, and that Satan intervened to obstruct the Prophet's desire, without actually interfering with the Prophet's actions in any way. Given the theological concerns that inform Riwāyah 10, it is instructive to note that whereas in **Riwāyah 9**, Quraysh say of the Prophet, "Muhammad has returned to his original religion and the religion of his tribe [rajaʿa ilā dīni-hi al-awwal wa-dīn qawmi-hi]," in Riwāyah 10 they say, "Muḥammad has returned to our religion [ra-

²³⁵ This position would become widely held in later centuries. For an instance of a contemporary emendation of an earlier report to convey this idea, see the citation from 'Alī b. Abī Ţalḥah in the concluding discussion to **Riwāyahs 35** to 44, below.

ja'*a ilā dīni-nā*]." With the development of the image of Muḥammad as preternaturally perfect Prophet, the idea that he had ever been an idol-worshipper was itself rejected.²³⁶

Riwāyah 11: Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣbahānī's Citation of the *Maghāzī* of Mūsā b. 'Uqbah

Riwāyah 11 is an abridgement of **Riwāyah 9** that makes even bolder strategic omissions than are effected in **Riwāyah 10**. **Riwāyah 11** appears in the *Ma'rifat al-ṣaḥābah* of Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣbahānī (339–430), in the biographical entry on the Companion 'Uthmān b. Maẓ'ūn, with the following *isnād*:²³⁷

Fārūq b. 'Abd al-Kabīr al-Khaṭṭābī al-Baṣrī (d. 361)²³⁸ ← Ziyād b. Khalīl al-Tustarī al-Baṣrī (d. 286)²³⁹ ← Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm b. al-Mundhir al-Khizāmī al-Madanī (d. 236)²⁴⁰ ← Muḥammad b. Fulayḥ ← Mūsā b. 'Uqbah ← al-Zuhrī.

The persecution, at the hands of of their sons, brothers and tribesmen, of those who followed the Prophet in the religion of Allāh intensified. It was a severe trial and a terrible upheaval, and there were those whom God protected, and those who, in the trial, went astray. When this befell the Muslims, the Prophet ordered them—when he entered the gorge with the Banū 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib—to leave for Abyssinia. So, many of them left for Abyssinia when they were being oppressed and feared the trial. They set out with 'Uthmān b. Maẓʿūn as their leader, and he and his companions remained in Abyssinia until Sūrat al-Najm was sent down.

- ²³⁶ Bāqshīsh Abū Mālik prefers this phrase in al-Dhahabī to al-Bayhaqī's citation for precisely this reason: see *al-Maghāzī li-Mūsā*, 67, footnote 60. On the gradual elimination from the *sīrah* reports of the idea that the Prophet was ever an idol-worshipper, see Rubin, *Eye of the Beholder*, 77–83.
- ²³⁷ Abū Nu'aym al-Işbahānī, Ma'rifat al-şahābah, ed. 'Ādil b. Yūsuf al-'Azzāzī (Ri-yadh: Dār al-Waṭan, 1998), 4:1954; see also Abū Nu'aym al-Işbahānī, Ma'rifat al-şahābah, MS Topkapı Sarayı, III Ahmet 497 / 2, f.75a. Bāqshīsh Abū Mālik gives the misleading impression that this report is the same as Riwāyah 9; see al-Maghāzī li-Mūsa, 66, footnote 53.

²³⁸ See Siyar, 16:140-141.

²³⁹ See Tārīkh Baghdād, 8:481–482, where he is expressly noted as transmitting from Ibrāhīm b. al-Mundhir. In MS Topkapı Sarayı, III Ahmet 497 / 2, the name is given as Zayd.

²⁴⁰ See *Siyar*, 10:689–693.

When the Prophet reached the mention of the goddesses, Satan cast his rhyming phrases and sedition into the ears of the Mushrikūn, and that phrase circulated until it reached Abyssinia and those who were there—'Uthmān b. Maẓ'ūn and his companions. The news reached them of the *sajdah* of al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah on the dirt of his palm, and it was said that the Muslims were secure in Mecca, so they came quickly. God removed that which Satan cast and established His own Signs, and preserved him (Muḥammad) from fabrication and falsehood [*wa-ḥafiẓa-hu Allāh min al-firyah wa-al-bāṭil*], so the Mushrikūn reverted to their errant conduct and hostility towards the Muslims and 'Uthmān b. Maẓ'ūn and his companions were unable to enter Mecca, except under protection.

Riwāyah 11 thus goes well beyond Riwāyah 10 in its omissions from Riwāyah 9, and with far-reaching hermeneutical consequences. First of all, Riwāyah 11 omits any reference to Quraysh seeking a concession on the part of the Prophet. Second, there is no mention of the Satanic verses themselves, with the result that we do not know what it is that Satan cast, beyond that it is a "phrase" in saj'. Third, while Riwāyah 11 does not say what the phrase is that Satan cast, it is explicit as to where he cast it: "Satan cast his rhyming phrases and sedition into the ears of the Mushrikūn." The omissions of Riwāyah 11 thus make it impossible to construe the narrative as saying that the Prophet uttered verses in praise of the deities of Quraysh. In other words, Riwāyah 11 accomplishes exactly what it presents God as having accomplished: it removes that which Satan cast, and preserves the Prophet from fabrication and falsehood—that is, from the suggestion that he might have uttered the Satanic verses. In this regard, it is instructive to note that the chain of transmission forward from Muhammad b. Fulayh is comprised of reputable muhaddithūn (reports from Ibrāhīm b. al-Mundhir al-Madanī appear in three of the canonical Hadīth collections, Ziyād b. Khalīl was designated by al-Dāraqutnī as uobjectionable, and Fārūq al-Khattābī was known as "the musnad of Başrah") and that Abū Nu'aym al-Işbahānī himself was one of the first authors of a work of the genre of "devotional biography" (in which there is no mention of the Satanic verses incident).²⁴¹ In other

²⁴¹Abū Nu'aym al-Işbahānī, *Dalā'il al-nubuwwah*, ed. Muḥammad Rawwās Qal'ajī and 'Abd al-Barr 'Abbās (Beirut: Dār al-Nafā'is, 1986).

words, **Riwāyah 11** was transmitted by scholars whose disciplinary and doctrinal dispositions were very much hostile to the notion that Muḥammad should utter the Satanic verses. In their strategic adjustment of the narrative of the Satanic verses incident, **Riwāyahs 9**, **10**, and **11** are a harbinger of what would become the dominant Muslim attitude towards the incident in the coming centuries.

Riwāyah 12: al-Suyūțī's Citation from Ibn Abī Ḥātim's *Tafsīr* of the *Maghāzī* of Mūsā b. 'Uqbah

Riwāyah 11 may be contrasted with **Riwāyah 12**, another abridged version of **Riwāyah 9**, which is given in the *al-Durr al-manthūr* of al-Suyūţī.²⁴² As with Ibn Kathīr's citation of **Riwāyah 9**, al-Suyūţī is adducing the report from the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, a work we know him to have studied closely.²⁴³ However, al-Suyūţī's citation contains a significant textual variant, for which reason we are taking it as a separate report. As is his practice in the *Durr*, al-Suyūţī gives a curtailed *isnād*:

Ibn Abī Hātim [$\leftarrow \ldots$] \leftarrow Mūsā b. 'Uqbah \leftarrow al-Zuhrī.

The Mushrikūn of Quraysh had been saying: "If only this man would speak favourably of our gods [*yadhkuru ālihata-nā bi-khayr*], we would secure him [*aqrarnā-hu*] and his companions. He does not speak of the Jews and Christians who oppose his religion with the abuse and invective [*al-shatm wa-al-sharr*] with which he speaks of our gods."

The Messenger of God was greatly distressed [*ishtadda 'alay-hi*] by the persecution [$adh\bar{a}$] he and his Companions had suffered from them (Quraysh) and by their calling him a liar. Their errant conduct saddened him and he desired an end to their persecution [$yatamann\bar{a}$ kaffa adh \bar{a} -hum].

When God sent down Sūrat al-Najm, he (the Prophet) said $[q\bar{a}la]$, "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?" And Satan cast some words at the point when God mentioned the last of the evil ones $[alq\bar{a} \ al-shaytanu \ inda-ha \ kalimatin \ ha \ and hakara \ Allahu$

²⁴²Al-Suyūțī, *al-Durr*, 6:66-67.

²⁴³ See al-Suyūțī, *Taḥadduth*, 127.

'azza wa-jalla ākhir al-ṭawāghīt], and he said [fa-qāla]: "Indeed they, they are the high gharānīq! And, indeed, their intercession is what is to be hoped for! [inna-hunna la-hunna al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna la-hiya allatī turtajā]."

That was the rhyming phrases of Satan and was an instance of his sedition [*min fitnati-hi*]. Those two phrases became lodged in the heart of every Mushrik in Mecca. Their tongues were sharpened by them [*dhaliqat bi-hā*];²⁴⁴ they rejoiced in telling them to each other [*tabāsharū bi-hā*], and said: "Muḥammad has returned to his original religion and to the religion of his tribe."

And when the Messenger of God reached the end of al-Najm, he made the *sajdah*, and all the Muslims and Mushrikūn present made the *sajdah* along with him.

That phrase circulated among the people, and Satan spread it until it reached Abyssinia. And God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet. . . ." And when God made clear his decree [bayyana Allāhu qaḍā'a-hu] and absolved him [barra'a-hu] of Satan's rhyming phrases, the Mushrikūn reverted to their errant state and their hostility towards the Muslims increased.

While al-Suyūțī's citation is clearly an abridged version of **Riwāyah 9** as it is cited by Ibn Kathīr,²⁴⁵ it resolves the ambiguity in **Riwāyah 9** in the opposite manner to **Riwāyah 10**. Besides the omission of certain passages, which will be dealt with below, al-Suyūțī's abridged citation contains one particularly important textual variant. This is the specification of the Prophet's desire. We noted how, in **Riwāyah 10**, the reference to persecution in **Riwāyah 9** was omitted from the passage describing the Prophet's desire. Now compare the omissions from **Riwāyah 9** effected by **Riwāyah 10**:

The Messenger of God <u>was greatly distressed by the persecution which</u> <u>he and his Companions had suffered from them (Quraysh) and by their</u> <u>calling him a liar.</u>

<u>Their errant conduct saddened him, and he</u> desired that they be rightly-guided [*kāna yatamannā hudā-hum*].

²⁴⁴Thus in al-Suyūţī; all three verbs, *zalla*, *dhalla*, and *dhaliqa*, are, of course, orthographically similar.

²⁴⁵We noted above that al-Suyūțī said of Ibn Abī Hātim's *Tafsīr*, "I summarized it in my *Tafsīr*."

to the text of Riwāyah 12:

The Messenger of God was greatly distressed by the persecution he and his Companions had suffered from them (Quraysh) and by their calling him a liar. Their errant conduct saddened him and he desired an end to their persecution [*yatamannā kaffa adhā-hum*].

Whereas **Riwāyah 10** omitted the narrative motif of persecution from this passage as given in **Riwāyah 9**, **Riwāyah 12** makes it the focal issue. Thus, whereas in **Riwāyah 9**, the Prophet's desire is the appropriate one in terms of his mission—that he will be able to guide Quraysh to the true path—in **Riwāyah 12**, as in **Riwāyahs 1**, **2**, and **3**, the Prophet's desire is dictated by the bitter temporal reality—he wants to halt the persecution by Quraysh. While, of course, the conversion of Quraysh would result in the end of persecution, for Muḥammad to desire the end of persecution is something of a misplacement of Prophetic priorities. The difference between the *riwāyahs* is thus of hermeneutic significance, although we have no means of knowing when the change in wording occurred, whether with al-Suyūțī, or long before.

The second difference between the two citations is the absence from **Riwāyah 12** of a lengthy passage including the vague $f\bar{i}$ masāmi' phrase.²⁴⁶ This latter omission is readily understood

²⁴⁶Below are the last four paragraphs of **Riwāyah 9**. The text in common with the last two paragraphs of **Riwāyah 12** is underlined, showing the vast omissions in **Riwāyah 12**. Text exclusive to **Riwāyah 12** is given in brackets:

And when the Messenger of God reached the end of al-Najm, he made the *sajdah*, and all the Muslims and Mushrikūn present made the *sajdah* along with him. However, al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah was an old man and picked up two palmfuls of dirt and made the *sajdah* on them. The two parties were astonished at their joint *sajdah* alongside the *sajdah* of the Messenger of God. The Muslims were astonished at the Mushrikūn having made the *sajdah* when they were in a state of Unbelief [*'alā ghayr īmān wa-lā yaqīn*]; the Muslims not having heard that which Satan cast into the ears of the Mushrikūn [*alladhī alqā al-shaytānu fī masāmi' al-mushrikīn*].

As for the Mushrikūn, their minds were set at ease in regard to the Prophet and his Companions as a result of what had been cast into the desire of the Prophet [*li-mā ul-qiya fī umniyyat al-nabī*].

Satan told them that the Messenger of God had recited them (the Satanic verses) when in *sajdah*, so they made the *sajdah* in veneration of their gods . . .

That phrase circulated among the people, and Satan spread it until it reached Abyssinia and the Muslims who were there. 'Uthmān b. Maẓ'ūn and his companions came to hear of it [marra bi-hā]. People were saying that the people of Mecca had accepted Islam and had prayed alongside the Messenger of God. News also reached them of alas representing al-Suyūțī's own abridgement. The meaning of al-Suyūțī's citation can be only that the Prophet uttered the verses. Here, as in **Riwāyahs 1**, 2, and 3, the Prophet desires something and Satan casts something into the Prophet's desire that fulfills that desire. That this is indeed how al-Suyūțī understood **Riwāyah** 9 is evident in the fact that he follows his abridged citation with this remark:

Al-Bayhaqī has cited it in *al-Dalā'il*, without mentioning Ibn Shihāb [i.e., the Ibrāhīm b. Ismā'īl transmission of **Riwāyah 9**]; and al-Ṭabarānī has cited the equivalent [*mithla-hu siwā'*] [i.e., **Riwāyah 8** from 'Urwah].

In other words, al-Suyūțī is taking **Riwāyah 12**, his abridged version of Ibn Abī Ḥātim's citation of Mūsa / Muḥammad b. Fulayḥ, to carry the same meaning as al-Bayhaqī's citation of Mūsa / Ibrāhīm b. Ismā'īl (**Riwāyah 9**), and for him both of these have the same meaning as al-Ṭabarānī's citation of 'Urwah (**Riwāyah 8**), where the Prophet uttered the Satanic verses.

Riwāyah 13: al-Kilā'ī's Citation of the *Maghāzī* of Mūsā b. 'Uqbah

We finally come to **Riwāyah 13**, which straightforwardly restores the interpretation of the incident to that given in **Riwāyah 8** from

Walīd b. al-Mughīrah's *sajdah* on his palms. It was said that the Muslims were safe in Mecca, so they came quickly.

And God removed that which Satan cast and established his Signs clearly and protected them from Falsehood [*wa-qad nasakha Allāhu 'azza wa-jalla mā alqā al-shaytān wa-aḥkama Allāh āyāti-hi wa-ḥafiẓa-hā min al-bāțil*]. <u>God</u> said {sent down}: "<u>We have</u> <u>not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet</u> but that when he desired, Satan cast something into his desire; then God removes that which Satan casts and establishes his Signs clearly—and God is All-Knowing, All-Wise—to make that which Satan cast a trial for those in whose hearts is sickness, and for those whose hearts are hardened. Indeed, the Wrongdoers are in far dissension." <u>And when God made clear his decree</u> *[bayyana Allāhu qaḍā'a-hu*] and absolved him [*barra'a-hu*] of Satan's rhyming phrases, the Mushrikūn reverted to their errant state and their hostility towards the Muslims increased.

^{&#}x27;Uthmān b. Maẓ'ūn and his companions were among those who had returned and, when they heard of the extreme hostility of the Mushrikūn towards the Muslims, they were unable to enter Mecca except under protection.

'Urwah. **Riwāyah 13** is cited from Mūsa's *Maghāzī* in the *al-Iktifā' fī* maghāzī rasūl Allāh of the Andalusian scholar Sulaymān b. Mūsā al-Kilā'ī (565–634).²⁴⁷ Although al-Kilā'ī does not give an *isnād*, it is evident that he is transcribing from a manuscript of Mūsā's *Maghāzī*, which he cites among his main sources.²⁴⁸

Orthographic variants aside, **Riwāyah 13** is identical to **Riwāyah** 9, except for the presence of three additional words:²⁴⁹

The Mushrikūn of Quraysh had been saying: "If only this man would speak favourably of our gods [*yadhkuru ālihata-nā bi-khayr*], we would secure him [*aqrarnā-hu*] and his companions. He does not speak of the Jews and Christians who oppose his religion²⁵⁰ with the abuse and invective [*al-shatm wa-al-sharr*] with which he speaks of our gods."

The Messenger of God was greatly distressed [*ishtadda 'alay-hi*] by the persecution [*adhā*] which had he and his Companions had suffered²⁵¹ from them (Quraysh), and by their calling him a liar. Their errant conduct [*dalālatu-hum*] saddened him, and he desired that they be rightly-guided [*kāna yatamannā hudā-hum*].

When God sent down Sūrat al-Najm, he (the Prophet) said [*qāla*], "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?." At this point, when he mentioned the evil ones, Satan cast some words <u>onto his tongue</u> [*alqā al-shayṭānu 'inda-hā kalimātin <u>'alā lisāni-hi</u> ḥīna <i>dhakara al-ṭawāghīt*], and he (the Prophet) said [*fa-qāla*]: "Indeed, they are from among the high *gharānīq!* And, indeed, their intercession is what is to be hoped for!" [*inna-hunna la-min al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna la-hiya allatī la-turtajā*].²⁵²

- ²⁴⁷ Sulaymān b. Mūsā al-Kilā'ī, al-Iktifā' fī maghāzī rasūl Allāh wa-al-thalāthah al-khulafā', ed. Mustafā 'Abd al-Wāḥid (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1967), 1:351– 353. See also the edition al-Iktifā' bi-mā tadammana-hu min maghāzī rasūl Allāh wa-al-thalāthah al-khulafā', ed. Muḥammad Kamāl al-Dīn 'Izz al-Dīn 'Alī (Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1997). All references are to Mustafā 'Abd al-Wāḥid's edition, unless stated otherwise.
- ²⁴⁸ Al-Kilā'ī lists his main sources in his introduction. For the importance to him of Mūsa's Maghāzī, see Iktifā', 1:2, 4.
- ²⁴⁹The first paragraph in al-Bayhaqī is paraphrased in al-Kilā'ī.
- ²⁵⁰ 'Abd al-Wāḥid's edition has "those who oppose him [man khālafa-hu]," but 'Izz al-Dīn 'Alī's, like al-Bayhaqī, has man khālafa dīna-hu.
- ²⁵¹Al-Bayhaqī: *mā nāla-hu huwa wa-asḥāba-hu*; al-Kilāʿī, *mā nāla-hu wa-asḥāba-hu*.
- ²⁵²The remainder of the *riwāyah* is effectively identical to **Riwāyah 9** (my observations are given in brackets):

Riwāyah 13 thus clarifies any possible ambiguity as to the meaning of *fa-qāla* in the description of Satan's intervention by adding the crucial phrase "onto his tongue [*'alā lisāni-hi*]."²⁵³ The reader/audience of **Riwāyah 13** is left in no doubt as to the fact that the Prophet himself uttered the Satanic verses.

The two parties were astonished at their joint *sajdah* alongside the *sajdah* of the Messenger of God. The Muslims were astonished at the Mushrikūn having made the *sajdah* when they were in a state of Unbelief [*'alā ghayr īmān wa-lā yaqīn*]; the Muslims not having heard that which Satan cast onto the tongues of the Mushrikūn [*lam yakun al-muslimūn sami'ū alladhī alqā al-shayṭān 'alā alsinat al-mushrikīn*].

As for the Mushrikūn, their minds were set at ease in regard to the Prophet and his Companions as a result of that which Satan cast into the desire of the Prophet [*li-mā alqā al-shayṭān fī umniyyat al-nabī*], so they made the *sajdah* in veneration of their gods.

That phrase circulated among the people, and Satan spread it until it reached Abyssinia and those Muslims who were there—'Uthmān b. Maẓ'ūn and his companions {The orthographic difference also seen in **Riwāyah 12**—al-Kilā'ī: *ḥattā balaghat arḍ al-ḥabashah wa-man bi-hā min al-muslimīn 'Uthmān ibn Maẓ'ūn waaṣḥābi-hi*; al-Bayhaqī has *wa-marra bi-hā min al-muslimīn 'Uthmān b. Maẓ'ūn waaṣḥābi-hi*}. People were saying that the people of Mecca had accepted Islam and had prayed alongside the Messenger of God. News also reached them of al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah's *sajdah* on his palms. It was said that the Muslims were safe in Mecca, so they came quickly.

And God removed that which Satan cast and established his Signs clearly [*wa-qad nasakh Allāhu 'azza wa-jalla mā alqā al-shayṭān wa-aḥkam Allāh āyāti-hi*] {The phrase *wa-ḥafiẓa-hā min al-bāțil*—"and protected them from Falsehood"—given in al-Bayh-aqī, is not in al-Kilā'i]. God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he desired, Satan cast something into his desire; then God removes that which Satan casts and establishes his Signs clearly—and God is All-Knowing, All-Wise—to make that which Satan cast a trial for those in whose hearts is sickness, and for those whose hearts are hardened—for, indeed, the wrong-doers are in far dissension—and to teach those who have been endowed with knowledge that this is the Truth from your Lord, that they believe in it and humble their hearts to Him, for God guides those who believe to a straight path." And when God made clear his decree [*bayyana Allāhu qaāʿa-hu*] and absolved him [*barraʿa-hu*] of Satan's rhyming phrases, the Mushirkūn reverted to their errant state and their hostility towards the Muslims increased.

253 fa-lammā anzala Allāh ta'āla sūrat wa-al-najm qāla "a-fara'aytum al-Lāt wa-al-'Uzzā wa-Manāt al-thālithah al-ukhrā" alqā al-shaytān 'inda-hā 'alā lisāni-hi kalimātan hīna dhakara al-tawāghīt fa-qāla "tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā...."

That was the rhyming phrases of Satan and was an instance of his sedition [min fitnati-hi]. Those two phrases became lodged in the heart of every Mushrik in Mecca. Their tongues were debased by them {The orthographic variant, dhallat bi-hā for zallat bi-hā (al-Bayhaqī)}, they rejoiced in telling them to each other [tabāsharū bi-hā], and said "Muḥammad has returned to his original religion and to the religion of his fathers."

And when the Messenger of God reached the end of al-Najm, he made the *sajdah*, and all the Muslims and Mushrikun present with him made the *sajdah* along with him. However, al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah was an old man and picked up two palmfuls of dirt and made the *sajdah* on them.

Given that **Riwāyah 13** and **Riwāyah 9** are effectively identical except for the "onto his tongue" phrase, the question is the provenance of the phrase. Whereas it is fairly clear that **Riwāyahs 10, 11,** and **12** represent later editing of **Riwāyah 9**²⁵⁴ (although we cannot tell how much later), we have no means of knowing whether **Riwāyah 13** represents later editing, or the transmission from Mūsā of someone other than Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm and Muḥammad b. Fulayḥ,²⁵⁵ or a textual variant within one of these two transmissions; nor even of determining whether the wording of **Riwāyah 13** is older or newer than that of **Riwāyah 9**.²⁵⁶ However, the effect of the "onto his tongue" phrase in **Riwāyah 13** is to remove the ambiguity created by the omission of the correction scene. **Riwāyah 13** provides a transmission of the *Maghāzī* of Mūsā b. 'Uqbah in which the interpretation of the Satanic verses incident is the same as that in the older **Riwāyah 8**, from 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr.

Riwāyahs 8 to 13: Conclusions

The omission of the correction scene from **Riwāyah 8** produces **Riwāyah 9**, in which the *fa-qāla* phrase is now ambiguous, with the result that the narrative becomes susceptible to two contradictory interpretations on the fundamental issue of whether the Prophet uttered the Satanic verses. This ambiguity created an extremely unstable transmission tradition for the narrative of the incident contained in Mūsa's *Maghāzī*. Abū Ja'far al-Naḥḥās took **Riwāyah 9** to mean that the Prophet did not utter the Satanic verses, meaning that the

²⁵⁴ The differences are too many and too strategic for it to be otherwise.

²⁵⁵ This is a transmission of which al-Naḥhās was evidently unaware. On al-Kilā'ī's citation of Mūsā b. 'Uqbah, see Maher Jarrar, *Die Prophetenbiographie im islamischen Spanien: Ein Beitrag zur Überlieferungs und Redaktionsgeschichte*, Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1989, 231–234.

²⁵⁶ One thing that is fairly safe to assume is that the additional phrase is not al-Kilā'ī's own gloss. In the citations from his sources in the *Iktifā*' as a whole, al-Kilā'ī is generally careful to distinguish between his own comments, that which he is paraphrasing from his sources, and those passages that he cites verbatim. There seems no reason, here, not to take him at his word.

Satanic verses incident did not offend against the notion of Prophetic infallibility. However, in doing so, he recognized the awkwardness for his interpretation of taking *tamannā* to mean "desire," as is done in **Riwāyah 9**; he thus glossed *tamannā* as "recitation." In al-Dhahabī's transmission of Mūsa's *Maghāzī* (**Riwāyah 1**0), the text of **Riwāyah 9** was strategically redacted to support the interpretation that the Prophet did not utter the verses; but in al-Suyūțī's transmission (**Riwāyah 12**), the redaction of the text produced the opposite effect, making it clear that that the Prophet uttered the verses as a result of his desire to reconcile Quraysh.

While **Riwāyahs 10, 11,** and **12** are clearly later than **Riwāyah 9, Riwāyah 13,** al-Kila'ī's citation of Mūsa's *Maghāzī*, may well be coeval with **Riwāyah 9. Riwāyah 13** states unequivocally that the Prophet uttered the verses. One is thus left uncertain as to Mūsa's own teaching of the incident. It is entirely possible that Mūsā taught both interpretations as equally valid (this was the position of several commentators in the period 300-500).²⁵⁷ If he did, however, this would represent a departure from the *sīrah-maghāzī* tradition in which, as we have seen from our examination of **Riwāyahs 1** to **8**, the original position is that of **Riwāyahs 12** and **13**: that the Prophet uttered the verses. As we will see from the remaining *riwāyahs*, there is, in fact, no first-century report that takes the position that the Prophet did not utter the verses.

Riwāyahs 14 and 15: al-Zuhrī from Abū Bakr 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith

We have seen that **Riwāyah 9** is the transmission of al-Zuhrī from 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr. **Riwāyahs 14** and **15**, which are carried by different *isnāds*, represent the transmission of al-Zuhrī from another source, the Medinese *tābi*'ī Abū Bakr 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith (23–95).

²⁵⁷ See, for example, al-Tha'labī, *al-Kashfwa-al-bayān*, MS Istanbul, III Ahmet / 76 / 2, f.42.

Riwāyah 14: Probably from al-Zuhrī's *Tafsīr* with a *ṣaḥīḥ mursal isnād*

Riwāyah 14 is cited in the *Jāmi* al-bayān of al-Ṭabarī²⁵⁸ with this *isnād*:

Yūnus b. 'Abd al-A'lā al-Miṣrī (170–264) ← 'Abd Allāh b. Wahb al-Miṣrī (125–197) ← Yūnus b. Yazīd al-Aylī (d. 160) ← Muḥammad b. Shihāb al-Zuhrī (51–124) ← Abū Bakr b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith (23–95).

Al-Suyūțī cites the report in the $Durr^{259}$ from al-Ṭabarī, and also has it from 'Abd b. Ḥumayd al-Kissī / al-Kishshī / al-Kashshī al-Samarqandī (170s–249), presumably from the latter's famous *Tafsīr*.²⁶⁰ For both citations al-Suyūțī gives this foreshortened *isnād*:

Yūnus b. Yazīd ← al-Zuhrī ← Abū Bakr b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān.

Riwāyah 14 is also cited by Abū Ja'far al-Naḥḥās al-Miṣrī (d. 328) in his *al-Nāsikh wa-al-mansūkh*²⁶¹ with this *isnād*:

²⁵⁸ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿal-bayān*, 17:189.

259 Al-Suyūtī, al-Durr, 6:66.

²⁶⁰ A fragment of the *Tafsir* of 'Abd b. Humayd, extending from the beginning of Sūrat Āl 'Imrān 3:1 to Sūrat al-Nisā' 4:176, exists in the margins of MS Aya Sofya 175 (which is a copy of the *Tafsir* of Ibn Abī Hātim al-Rāzī) and has now been published: Qit'ah min Tafsīr al-Imām 'Abd b. 'Humayd, ed. Mikhlif Bnayyah al-'Irf (Beirut: Dār Ibn Hazm, 2004). While al-Suyūtī is recorded as having studied only the Musnad of 'Abd b. Humayd, he specifically cites the Tafsir of 'Abd b. Humayd in his autobiography (see al-Suyūțī, al-Tahadduth, 35); the fact that the text of the Qit'ah corresponds closely, but not exactly, to al-Suyūțī's citations in the Durr assures us that he did indeed consult this Tafsīr (MS Aya Sofya 175 was copied in 748, and thus cannot have been extracted from the Durr). This, in turn, encourages us to take al-Suyūțī at his word when he cites in the Durr other works that are now lost. Tafsīr 'Abd b. Humayd is listed by Abū Ishāq al-Tha'labī in the bibliographical introduction to his al-Kashf wa-al-bayān; see Mufassirū sharq, 48 (where the author's name is given as 'Abd al-Hamīd al-Kashshī). For 'Abd b. Humavd, who was a scholar of excellent repute from whom all of al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and al-Tirmidhī transmitted, see al-Dhahabī, Siyar 12:235-238; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb 6:455-457; Sezgin, GAS, 1:113. An abridged version of his Musnad has survived, but does not contain the present report: al-Muntakhab min Musnad 'Abd ibn Humayd, ed. Subhī al-Badrī al-Sāmarrā'ī and Maḥmūd Muḥammad Khalīl al-Sa'īdī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub, 1988).

²⁶¹Al-Naḥḥās, *al-Nāsikh wa-al-mansūkh*, 1:448-49, and 2:527-528.

al-Layth b. Sa'd al-Miṣrī (94–175)
 \leftarrow Yūnus b. Yazīd \leftarrow al-Zuhrī
 \leftarrow Abū Bakr b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 93 / 95).

Abū Bakr b. 'Abd al-Rahmān b. al-Hārith (d. 93/95), to whom this report is ascribed, was a highly respected figure in first-century Madīnah. Like 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr, he is remembered as one of the seven *faqīhs* of Madīnah and was a teacher of al-Zuhrī.²⁶² Yūnus b. Yazīd al-Aylī was al-Zuhrī's companion for twelve years, and is recorded as having related a large amount of material from al-Zuhrī. He is particularly mentioned in the sources (not necessarily favorably) for his emphasis on writing down reports.²⁶³ Both the transmitters from Yūnus b. Yazīd are numbered among the greatest Egyptian scholars of the second century. Al-Layth b. Sa'd al-Mișrī, with whom al-Naḥḥās's *isnād* terminates, was probably the most important Egyptian Hadīth scholar of his generation.²⁶⁴ 'Abd Allāh b. Wahb al-Miṣrī was the greatest Mālikī scholar of his generation; Mālik b. Anas is said to have addressed him as *faqīh Misr* ("the jurist of Egypt") and muftī ahl Misr ("the mufti of the Egyptians"). He studied with Yūnus b. Yazīd, and the sources emphasize their closeness by mentioning that Yūnus b. Yazīd attended his student's wedding feast. A fraction of his Tafsīr has survived but does not contain the commentary on Qur'an 22:52 al-Ḥajj.²⁶⁵ Yūnus b. 'Abd al-A'lā al-Miṣrī, with whom al-Ṭabarī studied during his sojourn in Egypt in the 250s, was the leading Egyptian authority of his generation on the readings of the Qur'an. He had an

- ²⁶⁴ See the study of him by Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, Kitāb al-raḥmah al-ghaythiyyah bi-al-tarjamah al-laythiyyah fī manāqib sayyidi-nā wa-mawlā-nā al-Imām al-Layth ibn Sa'd, ed. 'Abd al-Raḥmān Hasan Maḥmūd and Aḥmad 'Alī Hasan, published in Sīrat al-Imāmayn al-Layth wa-al-Shāfi'ī (Cairo: Maktabat al-Adab, 1994); also al-Dhahabī, Siyar 8:122–145; and 'Abd al-Halīm Maḥmūd (al-Layth b. Sa'd, Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣriyyah al-'Ammah li-al-Kitāb, 1977).
- ²⁶⁵ The *isnād*, Yūnus b. Yazīd ← al-Zuhrī, is in all of 'Abd Allāh Ibn Wahb's published works, the incomplete *al-Jāmi*': *Tafsīr*, 232; *al-Jāmi*': *Tafsīr* 2 / 1, 120; *al-Jāmi*'*fī* '*ulūm al-Qur'ān* ed. Miklos Muranyi (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992), 287; and *al-Jāmi*'*fī al-ḥadīth*, ed. Muṣṭafā Hasan Husayn Muḥammad Abū al-Khayr (Dammam: Dār al-Jawzī, 1996), 122. None of these works, however, contains a commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Hajj. For Ibn Wahb, see also al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 9:223-235; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 6:71-74; and Ibn 'Adī, 4:202-205, which is a defense of his reputation as a transmitter.

²⁶² See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* 4:416-419; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb* 12:30-31.

²⁶³ See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* 6:297–301; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb* 11:450–452. Aylah was located where the Jordanian port of 'Aqabah is today.

impeccable reputation as a Ḥadīth transmitter, with Ḥadīth from him appearing in three of the canonical collections.²⁶⁶

The three citations contain very slight textual variants that do not affect the meaning. The fact that there are three separate transmissions of **Riwāyah 14** from Yūnus b. Yazīd, and that the report was already cited from Yūnus in the *Tafsīr* of 'Abd b. Humayd in the first half of the third century, encourages one to date the textual formulation of **Riwāyah 14** to before Yūnus's death in 160 at the latest. With the appearance of the report in the *Tafsīr* of 'Abd b. Humayd, the transmission moves to Transoxania, which is where 'Abd seems to have taught for most of his career.²⁶⁷

Riwāyah 14 is considered a <u>saķīķ</u> mursal report: a report the transmitters of which are reliable but that goes back not to a <u>saķābī</u> but to a <u>tābi'ī</u>.²⁶⁸ Since there seems little reason to suspect that the incomplete *isnād* is forged, only the skeptic's fear of the first century should lead us to doubt Yūnus's *riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā* from al-Zuhrī, and that of al-Zuhrī from 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith.

When the Messenger of God was in Mecca, he recited [*qara'a*] to them:²⁶⁹ "By the star when it sets." When he reached: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?," he said: "Indeed, their intercession is to be hoped for [*inna shafā'ata-hā turtajā*]"—the Messenger of God did this unmindfully [*wa-sahā rasūl Allāh*].

The Mushrikūn, "in whose hearts there was sickness [alladhīna $f\bar{i}$ qulūbi-him marad],"²⁷⁰ met him and greeted him and were greatly

- ²⁶⁷ Most of those who transmitted from him have Transoxanian *nisbahs*. On a confusion over his geographical origins, see Muhammad 'Ārif 'Umarī A'ẓamī, "Kyā imām 'Abd ibn Ḥumayd sindhī-ul-asl thē?" *Ma'ārif* 143.4 (1989), 315–319.
- ²⁶⁸ Al-Suyūțī comments of his citation that the report is *mursal ṣaḥīḥ al-isnād*. Both transmissions were certified as such by the leading Ḥadīth scholar of the ninth-century, Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, in his *Fatḥ al-bārī fī Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, (Cairo: Shirkat al-Ṭība'ah al-Fanniyyah al-Muttaḥidah, n.d.), 18:40; this verdict was accepted by al-Albānī, *Naṣb al-majānīq*, 9, for whom, however, as noted above, the fact that the report is *mursal* means automatically that it is not reliable.

²⁶⁹ The exact wording of the opening phrase differs slightly between al-Ṭabarī: *inna rasūl Allāh wa-huwa bi-Makkata qara'a 'alay-him*, and al-Naḥḥās: *qara'a rasūl Allāh bi-Makkata*. The meaning is identical except for the *'alay-him* in al-Ṭabarī, meaning he "recited to them" instead of "he recited."

²⁶⁶ See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 12:348–351; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 11:440–441; Rosenthal, "Life and Works," 27–28.

²⁷⁰ Qur'ān 22:53 al-Ḥajj.

pleased at it.²⁷¹ He said to them: "But that was from Satan! [*inna-mā* dhālika min al-shayṭān]."²⁷² And God sent down: "And we have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet, but that when he *tamannā*, Satan cast (something) into his *umniyyah*, then God removes that which Satan cast."²⁷³

As in the other summary *tafsīr* reports we have seen (**Riwāyahs 4, 5**, and **6**), the incident is not, in **Riwāyah 14**, placed in the context of the larger narrative of the Prophet's life, but is rather contextualized solely by the purpose of the report, which is to explicate Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj. Given the way in which these *tafsīr* reports select only those narrative elements that are immediately relevant in relating the incident to the verse under exegesis—with the result that one is left with only a barebones narrative—it is difficult to know how these reports are intended to be read: whether as self-contained narrative units, or with the assumption of a knowledge of a more detailed version of the narrative.

Before considering how this problem affects our understanding of Riwāyah 14, it will be useful to first summarize the interpretation of the incident. First, Riwāyah 14 is clear as to the fact that the Prophet uttered the verses (curtailed here to what is usually the second verse-there is no gharānīq phrase). Second, the explanation provided—"The Messenger of God did this unmindfully [wa-sahā *rasūl Allāh*]"—is perfectly compatible with the reports we have seen thus far. We should note that the phrase wa-sahā locates the incident explicitly in the language of the debate over 'ismah, which specifically addressed the question of whether Prophets were protected from sahw.²⁷⁴ This does not mean, however, that the wa-sahā rasūl Allah phrase is necessarily a second-century theological gloss, as it is entirely possible that it is a first-century phrase as yet innocent of theological intent. Third, in contrast to the *riwāyahs* we have seen thus far, in Riwāyah 14 the Prophet is not portrayed as being unaware of having erred-and thus, by implication, as unclear about

²⁷¹The report in al-Suyūţī simply reads, "and the Mushrikūn were greatly pleased by this," omitting the phrase containing the Qur'ānic allusion, "in whose hearts there was sickness, met him and greeted him."

²⁷² In al-Suyūțī's report: alā inna-mā kāna dhālika min al-shayṭān.

 $^{^{273}}$ This is the part of the āyāh cited in al-Ṭabarī and al-Naḥḥās. Al-Suyūțī cites it to the end of 22:55.

²⁷⁴ See Madelung, "'Isma," EI2.

the nature of Revelation and his mission—until Jibrīl points out his mistake. Rather, in **Riwāyah 14**, the Prophet realizes on his own that he has erred and says, "But that was from Satan!," and God then sends down Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj to provide a Divine rationale.

Absent from **Riwāyah 14** is a direct statement as to the prevalent climate of persecution and its effect on the Prophet; there is only the statement that the action took place in Mecca. Also, **Riwāyah 14** makes no mention of Sūrat al-Najm being revealed to the Prophet, but only of the Prophet's recitation of the *sūrah*. What is more, in **Riwāyah 14** the error does not take place in a stated climate of persecution, nor in response to the Prophet's desire / Quraysh's offer to compromise. Since the error actually takes place not during the Revelation of the *sūrah* but during its subsequent recitation, the question to be asked is whether **Riwāyah 14** is presenting the Prophet's uttering the Satanic verses as a simple recitation error arising from a lack of concentration, and innocent of any external pressures.

Also, what is the time frame for the narrative: are we to take it as meaning that Quraysh immediately came up to the Prophet and congratulated him, and that the Prophet then repudiated the verses on the spot, or is this a false impression arising from the summarizing of a narrative where the event occupies a full day or more? Also, since there is no mention of the return of the refugees from Abyssinia, are we to assume that the error was without larger consequence? In other words, do we take the limited background information provided by **Riwāyah 14** as defining the meaning of the narrative, or do we take it that the summary account of **Riwāyah 14** assumes knowledge on the part of the reader/audience of where in the narrative of the Prophet's life to locate the incident?

The answer, of course, is that **Riwāyah 14** is susceptible to both approaches. However, the evidence suggests that the transmitters of **Riwāyah 14** were themselves perfectly aware of the larger context for the incident. This larger narrative appears in **Riwāyah 15**.

Riwāyah 15: Probably from al-Zuhrī's Kitāb al-maghāzī

Riwāyah 15, which goes back by another *isnād via* al-Zuhrī to 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith, is given by Ibn Sa'd in the *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt*

al-kabīr.²⁷⁵ The report is transmitted from al-Zuhrī by his nephew, Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Zuhrī, in a Medinese *isnād*:

Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Wāqidī ← Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Zuhrī (d. 157)²⁷⁶ ← al-Zuhrī ← Abū Bakr b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān.

Riwāyah 15²⁷⁷ is not a description of the Satanic verses incident itself, but rather of the return of the refugees from Abyssinia. As such, it is given by Ibn Sa'd following his citation of **Riwāyah 3** as a continuation of the narrative and, unlike **Riwāyah 14**, which has no context other than Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj, it assumes a prior sequence of events that is known to the audience of the report, but omitted from **Riwāyah 14** as irrelevant to the immediate purpose of explicating the $\bar{a}yah$:²⁷⁸

News of that *sajdah* spread among the people to the point that it reached Abyssinia. It reached the companions of the Messenger of God that the people of Mecca had made the *sajdah* and accepted Islam [*aslamū*], and that even al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah and Abū Uḥayḥah had made the *sajdah* behind the Prophet. So the people said: "If they have accepted Islam, who remains (a pagan) in Mecca?" They said, "Our clans are dearer to us ['*ashā'iru-nā aḥabbu ilay-nā*],"²⁷⁹ and they set off to return. When they were one day-hour away from Mecca [*dūna Makkata bi-sā 'atin min nahār*], they met a group of horsemen from the Banu Kinānah and asked them about Quraysh and their state of affairs. The horsemen said: "Muḥammad mentioned their gods favourably [*dhakara Muḥammad ālihata-hum bi-khayr*], so the leaders [*al-mala'*] followed him. Then he renounced them [*irtadda 'an-hā*] and went back to denouncing their gods; and they went back to evil treatment of him. That is the state in which we left them." The group discussed returning

²⁷⁵ Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1:161.

²⁷⁶ For al-Zuhrī's nephew, whose reputation with the Hadīth scholars is somewhat mixed, see al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 7:197; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 9:278–280; al-'Uqaylī, *Du'afā*', 4:1245–1248; Ibn 'Adī, *Kāmil*, 6:168.

²⁷⁷The *isnād* is weak by fact of the presence of al-Wāqidī; see al-Ṣawwayānī, *al-Qaṣīmah*, 1:423.

²⁷⁸ Cf. the translation of Moinul Haq and Ghazanfar, *Ibn Sa'd's Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt*, 238.

²⁷⁹Note the similar phrase in **Riwāyah 2:** "They are dearer to us [hum aḥabbu 'alay-nā]."

to Abyssinia; then they said, "We have come this far, let us go in and see what Quraysh are at...."

Nothing in Riwāyah 15 contradicts Riwāyah 14 on any hermeneutical issue: the Prophet says the words, there is no indication that his saying them was anything other than unmindful, and there is no mention of his needing Divine Revelation to correct himself. However, Riwāyah 15 contains a number of narrative elements that are absent from the portrayal of the incident in Riwāyah 14, primary among them being the narrative motif of persecution, but also the sajdah of Quraysh and their subsequent support of the Prophet, and the return of the refugees from Abyssinia. While Riwāyah 14 (like Riwāyahs 3 to 6) seems to present the incident in an atomized or decontextualized manner in which the narrative has no points of reference beyond itself and Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj, Riwāyah 15, through the presence of these elements, places the incident in a larger context that gives it a meaning within the historical development of the Prophet's career (as with Riwāyahs 1 to 3 and 7 to 13). In this context, it becomes more difficult to accept the Prophet's error as a simple recitational mistake innocent of external pressures. This perspective on the incident is summed up in the voice of a party-the horsemen of the Banū Kinānah—concerned not with explicating the meaning of the Qur'an but with keeping abreast of political developments in Mecca: "Muhammad mentioned their gods favourably so the leaders followed him. Then he renounced them [*irtadda 'an-hā*] and went back to denouncing their gods; and they went back to evil treatment of him."

Riwāyahs 14 and 15: Conclusions

Riwāyahs 14 and **15** thus demonstrate for us how the interpretations of the Satanic verses contained in the respective reports were affected not only by considerations of dogma—as in the transmissions of the account in the *Maghāzī* of Mūsā—but also by structural considerations, such as the discursive purpose of the texts in a particular genre, whether $s\bar{i}rah$ -magh $\bar{a}z\bar{i}$ or $tafs\bar{i}r$. It is interesting to note that al-Zuhr \bar{i} is recorded as having authored both a Tafs $\bar{i}r$ and a Kit $\bar{a}b$ almagh $\bar{a}z\bar{i}$;²⁸⁰ certainly **Riwāyah 14** would have fitted well in the former work, and **Riwāyah 15** the latter. As most of the subsequent ri $w\bar{a}yahs$ examined in this study are shorter reports taken from $tafs\bar{i}r$ works, the impact of genre on the framing of reports is something that must be borne in mind.

Riwāyahs 16 to 20: From Abū al-'Āliyah al-Baṣrī

Riwāyahs 16 to 20 are all cited from Abū al-'Āliyah Rufay' b. Mihrān al-Riyāḥī al-Baṣrī (d. 93), one of the most important Qur'ān scholars of the first century, whom we encountered in **Riwāyah 4**, above. Abū al-'Āliyah was a contemporary of the Prophet, but converted to Islam only two years after the Prophet's death. He is reported as having studied the Qur'ān with 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Ubayy b. Ka'b, Zayd b. Thābit, and 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Abbās. He had an excellent reputation among the Ḥadīth authorities, and reports from him occur in all six canonical collections.²⁸¹ His *tafsīr* corpus, which was transmitted by at least five different *isnāds*, exists today only in citations in later works, and these have not been collected or studied. It was used extensively by Yaḥyā b. Sallām al-Baṣrī (124–200; see **Riwāyah 2**0 below) and by al-Ṭabarī, while both Ibn al-Nadīm²⁸² and al-Tha'labī²⁸³ cited the *Tafsīr* of Abū al-'Āliyah as an independent work.

All five *riwāyahs* from Abū al-'Āliyah agree on the fundamental hermeneutical question of whether the Prophet uttered the Satanic

²⁸⁰ See the list of early texts prepared by Donner, *Narratives*, 301. On al-Zuhrī's *Kitāb al-maghāzī* see Mubārakpūrī, *Tadvīn-i siyar*, 185–189.

²⁸¹He is reported as having studied the Qur'ān within ten years of the Prophet's death. There is a report that states that when Ibn 'Abbās was governor of Baṣrah, he would give Abū al-'Āliyah precedence over Quraysh in seating. See al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 4:207–213; Ibn Ḥajar, Tahdhīb, 3:284–286; al-Dā'ūdi, Ṭabaqāt al-mufassirīn, 1:172–173.

²⁸²Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, 53.

²⁸³ al-Tha'labī has the *Tafsīr* of Abū al-'Āliyah by an *isnād* different to those examined here; see *Mufassirū sharq*, 36–37.

verses. Four are identical in every regard of their interpretation of the incident, even though they differ in their wording. Three of the five *riwāyahs* are *ṣaḥīḥ mursal*.

Riwāyah 16: Cited by al-Ṭabarī with a *ṣaḥīḥ mursal* Basran *isnād*

Riwāyah 16 is cited by al-Ṭabarī in the *Jāmiʿ al-bayān* in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj.²⁸⁴ It is carried by a Basran *isnād* whose members are all of sound reputation, by virtue of which the report is a *ṣaḥīḥ mursal*:²⁸⁵

Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-A'lā al-Ṣan'ānī al-Baṣrī (d. 245)²⁸⁶ ← al-Mu'tamir b. Sulaymān al-Baṣrī (107–187)²⁸⁷ ← Dā'ūd b. Abī Hind al-Baṣrī (d. 139)²⁸⁸ ← Abū al-'Āliyah al-Baṣrī (d. 93).

The report reads:²⁸⁹

Quraysh said to the Messenger of God: "Those who attend you [*julasā'u-ka*] are merely the slave of this tribe and the client of that tribe ['*abd banī fulān wa-mawlā banī fulān*]. But if you were to speak favourably of our gods [*law dhakarta ālihata-nā bi-shay'*], we would attend you and then the noblemen of the Arabs [*ashraf al-'arab*] would come to you; when they see that you are attended by the noblemen of your tribe, you would become more desirable to them [*kāna arghabu la-kum fī-ka*]."

- ²⁸⁵ For the opinion that the report is a saḥāḥ mursal, see Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, Fatḥ, 18:41-42; al-Albānī, Naṣb al-majānīq, 10. Like al-Albānī, al-Ḥalabī al-Atharī and al-Ṣawwayānī also consider mursal reports as ipso facto unreliable. In the present instance, al-Ḥalabī al-Atharī has also chosen to regard Dā'ūd b. Abī Hind as a weak transmitter and consequently to reject all the isnāds from Abū al-'Āliyah; see al-Ḥalabī al-Atharī, Dalā'il, 136; and al-Ṣawwayānī, al-Qaṣīmah, 1:424.
- ²⁸⁶ Reports from Muhammad b. 'Abd al-A'lā are included in five of the canonical collections. See 'Umar b. 'Alī b. Samurah al-Ja'dī (*fl.* 586), *Țabaqāt fuqahā 'al-Yaman*, ed. Fu'ād al-Sayyid (Cairo: Matba'at al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyyah, 1957), 73; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 9:289.
- ²⁸⁷See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 8:420–423; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 10:227.
- ²⁸⁸ See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 6:376–379; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 3:204–205.
- ²⁸⁹ Cf. the translation of Watt, *Muḥammad at Mecca* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), 102.

²⁸⁴al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿal-bayān*, 17:188.

So Satan cast into his *umniyyah* [*fa-alqā al-shayṭān fī umniyyati-hi*]. This verse came down: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?," and Satan caused (the following phrase) to run upon his tongue [*ajrā al-shayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi*]: "Those high *gharāniqah*: their intercession is to be hoped for! Their like are not forgotten! [*tilka algharāniqah al-'ulā wa-shafā'atu-hunna turjā mithlu-hunna lā yunsā*]." The Prophet made the *sajdah* when he recited it [*ḥīna qara'a-hā*], and the Muslims and Mushrikūn made the *sajdah* with him.

And when he realized what had been run upon his tongue [*fa-lammā* 'alima alladhī ujriya 'alā lisāni-hi], it distressed him greatly [kabura dhālika 'alay-hi]. So God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he tamannā, Satan cast something into his umniyyah," to His words, "and God is All-Knowing, All-Wise."

The most significant features of the foregoing account are as follows. First, there is no doubt here that the Prophet uttered the verses: this is the plain meaning of the phrase "Satan caused (the following) to run upon his tongue." Second, Riwāyah 16 begins, like Riwāyahs 8, 9, 10, 12, and 13, with an offer from Quraysh to the Prophet: that if he praises their gods, they will support him. In the present instance, their blandishment goes beyond an assurance of security to the assurance that their backing will bring Muhammad to the attention of the leaders of the tribes of Arabia. Thus, while Riwāyah 16 does not mention any desire on the part of the Prophet to be reconciled with Quraysh (tamannā is not glossed at all), the Prophet's uttering of the Satanic verses takes place in the context of Quraysh's offer to help him succeed in his mission. The wording of the Satanic verses themselves contains a phrase we have not seen in the reports examined thus far: "Their like are not forgotten!" This phrase is a significant one as it allays precisely the concerns of Quraysh: that their goddesses would be forgotten in Muhammad's monotheist doctrine.

In the *riwāyahs* examined thus far, the Prophet makes the *sajdah* after completing the recitation of Sūrat al-Najm, the final verse of which concludes with the Divine command "Make the *sajdah* to God and worship Him!" In **Riwāyah 16**, the Prophet makes the *sajdah* not in accordance with Divine command upon completing the *sūrah* but upon reciting the Satanic verses. Here, the dramatic image of the

Prophet making the *sajdah* upon praising the gods of Quraysh casts his *sajdah* as a part of his concession to Quraysh.

Like **Riwāyah 14**, **Riwāyah 16** does not contain a correction scene. In this context, the phrase "And when he realized what had been run upon his tongue, it distressed him greatly" can be understood to mean that, as in **Riwāyah 14**, the Prophet realizes on his own that he has erred. However, since the Prophet utters the verses in response to an offer of compromise from Quraysh, the fact that he realizes on his own that he has erred cannot be taken here, as it may in **Riwāyah** 14 before its contextualization by **Riwāyah 15**, to mean that this was a simple recitation error independent of external pressures.

Riwāyah 17: Also Cited by al-Ṭabarī with a *ṣaḥīḥ mursal* Basran *isnād*

Riwāyah 17 is also given by al-Ṭabarī in the *Jāmi al-bayān*, in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj, with the following *isnād*:²⁹⁰

Muḥammad b. Muthannā al-Baṣrī (167–252)²⁹¹ ← Abū al-Walīd Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik al-Ṭayālisī al-Baṣrī (133–227)²⁹² ← Ḥammād b. Salamah al-Baṣrī (d. 167)²⁹³ ← Dā'ūd b. Abī Hind al-Baṣrī (d. 139) ← Abū al-'Āliyah al-Baṣrī (d. 93).

Like **Riwāyah 16**, this is a purely Basran *isnād* and it is a *ṣaḥīḥ mursal*, all transmitters being of sound reputation.²⁹⁴ Both **Riwāyahs 16** and **17** go back to Abū al-'Āliyah *via* Dā'ūd b. Abī Hind, but the transmitters from Dā'ūd b. Abī Hind differ.

²⁹²Extensively cited by al-Bukhārī; see al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 10:341-347; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 11:45-47.

²⁹³ For this extremely prominent Hadīth transmitter, see al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 7:444–456; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 3:11–16. His memory deteriorated in old age and this affected his reputation as a transmitter; nevertheless, the long entry in Ibn 'Adī, *Kāmil*, 2:253–266, culminates in a strong affirmation of his standing.

²⁹⁴See al-Albānī, Naşb al-majānīq, 10; al-Şawwayānī, Qaşīmah, 1:428; both of whom reject the report on the basis that it is mursal.

²⁹⁰Al-Țabarī, *Jāmiʿal-bayān*, 17:188.

²⁹¹All six canonical Hadīth collections contain reports from Muhammad b. al-Muthannā al-Başrī; see al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 12:123–126; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 9:425–427.

Quraysh said: "Muḥammad! The poor and wretched and weak attend you [*yujālisu-ka al-fuqarā'wa-al-masākīn wa-duʿafā' al-nās*]. But if you were to speak favourably of our gods, we would attend you, and then the people would come to you from the horizons!"

So the Messenger of God recited [*qara'a*] Sūrat al-Najm, and when he came to this verse: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?" Satan cast onto his tongue [*fa-alqā al-shayṭānu 'alā lisāni-hi*]: "They are the high *gharāniqah*, and their intercession is to be hoped for [*wa-hiya al-gharāniqah al-'ulā wa-shafā'atu-hunna turtajā*]."

When he had finished it (Sūrat al-Najm), the Messenger of God, the Muslims and the Mushrikūn made the *sajdah*, except for Abū Uḥayḥah Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ who took a handful of dirt and made the *sajdah* upon it and said: "The time has come when Ibn Abī Kabshah speaks favourably of our gods [*āna li-Ibn Abī Kabshah an yadhkura ālihata-nā bi-khayr*]." It reached the Muslim Companions of the Messenger of God in Abyssinia that Quraysh had accepted Islam.

That which Satan cast onto his tongue [*mā alqā al-shayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi*] greatly disturbed [*ishtadda 'alā*] the Messenger of God. So God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet," to the end of the verse.

Although the wording of **Riwāyah 17** differs from that of **Riwāyah 16**, it is strikingly similar in regard to the content and arrangement of the narrative units, as well as in the hermeneutical elaboration of the incident. The two *riwāyahs* are simply *bi-al-ma*'*nā* versions of each other. Again, the Prophet utters the verses following Quraysh's offer of support, and again he realizes on his own that he has erred.

The only difference of any significance between **Riwāyahs 16** and **17** is that in **Riwāyah 17** the Prophet's *sajdah* takes place at the end of the *sūrah*. While this affects the meaning of the *sajdah* that, in contrast to **Riwāyah 16**, is no longer a part of the concession to Quraysh, it does not affect the interpretation of the incident as a whole.

A second difference is the fact that whereas **Riwāyah 16** (like **Riwāyahs 1, 2,** and **8** to **13**, above) appears to present the incident as taking place during the initial Revelation of Sūrat al-Najm—"This verse came down... and Satan caused (the following phrase) to run upon his tongue"—**Riwāyah 17** (like **Riwāyah 14**) makes no reference to the Revelation of the *sūrah*, but only to its recitation: "So the Messenger of God recited Sūrat al-Najm, and when he came to this verse . . . Satan cast onto his tongue." Whether the error takes place during Revelation or recitation, what is unaffected is the fundamental fact of the Prophet's erring in response to the blandishments of Quraysh.

We should note here, also, the difference in the wording of the Satanic verses themselves, as well as the presence of the distinctive, and possibly derogatory, reference to Muḥammad that is put in the mouth of Abū Uḥayḥah: "The time has come when Ibn Abī Kabshah speaks favourably of our gods."²⁹⁵

Riwāyah 18: Cited by al-Suyūṭī in the *Durr* from the *Tafsīrs* of al-Ṭabarī, Ibn al-Mundhir and Ibn Abī Ḥātim by an Unspecified ṣaḥīḥ isnād

Riwāyah 18 is cited from Abū al-'Āliyah by al-Suyūṭī in the *Durr* in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj.²⁹⁶ Al-Suyūṭī says he is taking it from al-Ṭabarī, Ibn Abī Ḥātim, and Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm Ibn al-Mundhir al-Naysābūrī (d. 318).²⁹⁷ While al-Suyūṭī does not

²⁹⁵Quraysh are recorded as having referred to Muhammad as Ibn Abī Kabshah on more than one occasion (see Watt, Muhammad at Mecca, 103). The Islamic tradition gives different explanations for this nomenclature. One explanation is that Abū Kabshah was the kunyah of the Prophet's maternal grandfather to whom the Prophet bore a physical resemblance; in this version, the name is entirely nonderogatory. It was also the kunyah of a man of Khuzā'ah who, like Muhammad, had refused to worship idols, and had worshipped instead the star Sirius; Quraysh thus called the Prophet after him, presumably with hostile or even derogatory intent. A third explanation is that Abū Kabshah was the kunyah of the husband of the Prophet's wet nurse; to call the Prophet after him, while not necessarily a hostile gesture, may well have been less than wholly respectful. For the foregoing, see Ibn Manzūr, Lisān al-'arab (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1997), 5:367. A fourth possibility is that the Abū Kabshah in question is a certain mawlā of the Prophet called Sulaym; in this case the appellation would most likely be derogatory. In Riwāyah 28, below, we will see al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah calling the Prophet after a female client. For the mawlā Abū Kabshah, see Abū al-Qāsim 'Alī b. al-Hasan Ibn 'Asākir, Tārīkh madīnat Dimashq: al-sīrah al-nabawiyyah, ed. Nishāt Ghazzāwī (Damascus: Majma'al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah, 1991), 2:305-306; and Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, 3:36. For a list of Abū Kabshahs, see Muhammad b. Habīb al-Baghdādī (d. 245), Kitāb al-muhabbar, ed. Ilse Lichtenstadter (Hyderabad: Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniyyah, 1942), 129.

²⁹⁶ Al-Suyūțī, *al-Durr*, 6:68. This is the first of the two reports al-Suyūțī has from Abū al-'Āliyah.

²⁹⁷ The portion of Ibn al-Mundhir's *Tafsīr* that is extant does not cover any of the āyahs related to the incident; Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm Ibn al-Mundhir, *Kitāb tafsīr*

provide an *isnād*, he states that these three authors cite the report "by a sound *isnād* [*bi-sanadin* <u>sahīh</u>]."

The Mushrikūn said to the Messenger of God: "If you mention our gods in what you say, we will attend you. No-one attends you (now) except the lowly and weak [*arādhil al-nās wa-du'afā'u-hum*]. But if people were to see us with you, they would speak about it and would come to you."

So he stood to pray and recited [qara'a], "By the star," until he reached: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other? Those high gharāniqah! Their intercession is hoped for! Their like are not forgotten! [tilka al-gharāniqah al-'ulā wa-shafā'atu-hunna turjā mithlu-hunna lā yunsā]."

And when he completed the end of the *sūrah*, he made the *sajdah* and the Muslims and Mushrikūn made the *sajdah*. And it reached Abyssinia that the people had accepted Islam. The Messenger of God was greatly disturbed at what had happened [*shaqqa dhālika 'alā rasūl Allāh*], so God sent down, "We have not sent before you," to His words, "the suffering of a barren day."

It will be apparent that while **Riwāyah 18** differs from **Riwāyahs 16** and **17** in wording, the choice, content, and arrangement of the narrative units are shared sometimes with **Riwāyah 16** and at other junctures with **Riwāyah 17**, while the interpretation of the incident is the same in all three reports. This is another case of a *bi-al-ma'nā* transmission of the same *riwāyah*. The only narrative motif in **Riwāyah 18** that is not present in either **Riwāyah 16** or **17** is that of the Prophet uttering the Satanic verses while praying. We will see this motif recurring in other *riwāyahs* below.²⁹⁸ The narrative of **Riwāyah 18** does not contain a direct reference to Satan's interference; this occurs only in the citation of Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj. None-

al-Qur'ān, ed. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-Turkī (Madīnah: Dār al-Maāthir, 2002). As with the partially extant *Tafsīr* of 'Abd b. Ḥumayd (above), the extant text of the *Tafsīr* corresponds with al-Suyūţī's citations where I have compared them, and the extant manuscripts pre-date al-Suyūţī (the earlier contains a *samā*' dated 431). For al-Suyūţī's knowledge of the work, see the entry on Ibn al-Mundhir in al-Suyūţī, *Tabaqāt al-mufassirīn*, 91. For Ibn al-Mundhir, see also al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 14:490–492; Kaḥḥālah, *Mu'jam*, 3:41, and the editor's introduction to *Tafsīr Ibn al-Mundhir* at 17–24.

²⁹⁸See Riwāyahs 23, 24, and 25.

theless, the meaning of the incident is the same here as in **Riwāyahs** 16 and 17.²⁹⁹

Since al-Suyūțī's other citations from al-Ṭabarī are largely faithful to the wording in al-Ṭabarī's *Jāmi' al-bayān* (see **Riwāyahs 2** and **14**, above, and **Riwāyahs 34** and **35**, below), one suspects that al-Suyūțī is here citing from one of the other two sources, Ibn Abī Ḥātim or Ibn al-Mundhir. In this regard, it is interesting to note that the *isnāds* by which Abū al-'Āliyah is cited in the extant portion of Ibn Abī Ḥātim's *Tafsīr* are different from those in **Riwāyahs 16** and **17**.³⁰⁰

Riwāyah 19: Cited by al-Suyūṭī in the *Durr* from the *Tafsīrs* of al-Ṭabarī, Ibn al-Mundhir, and Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī

Riwāyah 19 is also cited from Abū al-'Āliyah by al-Suyūṭī in the *Durr*, again from al-Ṭabarī, Ibn al-Mundhir, and Ibn Abī Ḥātim.³⁰¹ Again, it is very similar to all three of **Riwāyahs 16, 17**, and **18**, agreeing with them in its narrative construction and hermeneutical elaboration of the incident while differing in its wording.

Sūrat al-Najm was sent down in Mecca, and Quraysh said: "Muḥammad! The poor and wretched attend you [*yujālisu-ka al-fuqarā' wa-al-masākīn*]; (but) people would come to you from all the regions of the earth, if you were to speak favourably of our Gods, (with the result that) we attended you."

So the Messenger of God recited [*qara'a*] Sūrat al-Najm, and when he came to this verse: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?," Satan cast onto his tongue [*alqā al-shayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi*]: "They are the high *gharāniqah*, and their intercession is to be hoped for [*wa-hiya al-gharāniqah al-'ulā wa-shafā'atu-hunna turtajā*]."

When he finished the *sūrah*, he made the *sajdah*, and the Muslims and Mushrikūn made the *sajdah*, except for Abū Uḥayḥah Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ

²⁹⁹ It is also noteworthy that the wording of the Satanic verses in **Riwāyah 18** agrees with that in **Riwāyah 16**, including the distinctive phrase "Their like are not forgotten."

³⁰⁰ See Mehmet Akıf Koç, İsnad Verileri Çerçevesinde Erken Dönem Tefsir Faaliyetleri. İbn Ebî Hâtim (ö. 327/939) Tefsiri Örneğe Bir Literatür İncelemesi (Ankara: Kitâbiyât, 2003), 11 and 77.

³⁰¹Al-Suyūțī, *al-Durr*, 6:68. This is the second *riwāyah* cited by al-Suyūțī.

who took a handful of dirt and made the *sajdah* upon it and said: "The time has come when Ibn Abī Kabshah speaks favourably of our gods! [*āna li-Ibn Abī Kabshah an yadhkura ālihata-nā bi-khayr*]." This reached the Muslims who were in Abyssinia—that Quraysh had accepted Is-lam—and they wanted to approach (Mecca) [*fa-arādū an yuqbilū*].

That which Satan cast onto his tongue [*mā alqā al-shayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi*] greatly distressed [*ishtadda 'alā*] the Messenger of God and his Companions, so God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet."

Riwāyah 20: Cited by Yaḥyā b. Sallām al-Baṣrī in His Tafsīr

Riwāyah 20 is cited from Abū al-'Āliyah in the *Tafsīr* of Yaḥyā b. Sallām al-Baṣrī al-Qayrawānī (d. 200), one of the earliest Qur'ān commentaries to have come down to us in manuscript. Yaḥyā b. Sallām grew up in Baṣrah, but traveled to Egypt and Qayrawān. It was in North Africa and Spain that his *Tafsīr* acquired influence, and it is in Tunisia that substantial fragments of it, copied in the late fourth, early fifth, and early sixth centuries, are today preserved in manuscript.³⁰² With the presence of **Riwāyah 2**0 in Yaḥyā b. Sallām's *Tafsīr*, we see the transmission of the incident reach Ifriqiyah. **Riwāyah 2**0 is carried by the same initial *isnād* from Abū al-'Āliyah as is **Riwāyah 17**. Thus, as with **Riwāyahs 16** and **17** (and, according to al-Suyūțī, **18**), this is a *ṣaḥīḥ mursal* report.³⁰³ The *isnād* is:

Yaḥyā b. Sallām al-Baṣrī al-Qayrawānī ← Ḥammād b. Salamah al-Baṣrī (d. 167) ← Dā'ūd b. Abī Hind al-Baṣrī (d. 139) ← Abū al-ʿĀliyah al-Baṣrī (d. 93).

³⁰² See İsmail Cerrahoğlu, Yahya İbn Sallam ve Tefsirdeki Metodu, Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakultesi Basimevi, 1970; and Hamadi Sammoud, "Un exegete oriental en Ifriqiya: Yahyā Ibn Sallam (742–815)," Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes 33 (1970/2), 227–242, and Zakariyyā Hāshim Habīb al-Khūlī, Manhaj Yahyā b. Sallām fī al-tafsīr (Damascus: Dār al-Nawādir, 2012).

³⁰³ In the study by al-Khūlī, this *rimāyah* is given as an example of Yaḥyā b. Sallām's "exegesis of the Qur'ān by reliance on historical reports," and the historicity of the report is roundly rejected on the modern orthodox bases of *isnāds* and of *'iṣmat al-anbiyā'; Manhaj Yaḥyā b. Sallām*, 239, 252–254.

Yaḥyā b. Sallām cites the report in the commentary both on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj³⁰⁴ and on 53:19 al-Najm.³⁰⁵

The Messenger of God was standing in the Sacred Mosque [*al-masjid al-harām*] praying. He was reciting [*yaqra'u*] Sūrat al-Najm; and when he came to these verses: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?," Satan cast onto his tongue [*alqā al-shayṭān* '*alā lisāni-hi*]: "Indeed, they are from among the high gharānīq! And, indeed, their intercession is to be hoped for! [*inna-hunna min al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna turtajā*]."

This pleased the Mushrikūn [*fa-a'jaba dhālika al-mushrikīn*]. He recited the *sūrah* until he completed it; then he made the *sajdah* and the Muslims and Mushrikūn made the *sajdah*; except for Abū Uḥayḥah who took a handful of dirt and made the *sajdah* on it. This reached those Companions of the Prophet who were in Abyssinia.

The Prophet was greatly disturbed [*shaqqa 'alay-hi*] by what had come upon his tongue [*bi-mā jā'a 'alā lisāni-hi*], so God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he *tamannā*, Satan cast something into his *umniyyah*; then God removes that which Satan casts and establishes His Signs clearly—and God is All-Knowing, All-Wise—to make that which Satan cast a trial for those in whose hearts is sickness, and for those whose hearts are hardened," meaning: the Mushrikūn.

Absent from **Riwāyah 2**0 is the narrative motif that is given at the outset in **Riwāyahs 16** to **19**, that of Quraysh's offer of support. Thus, while the theme of persecution is implied by the chronology (the refugees are in Abyssinia), the Prophet's error is not presented as taking place following an offer of compromise. There is no means of knowing with certainty whether the absence of the motif of Quraysh's offer is Yaḥyā b. Sallām's omission, or constitutes an intact transmission from Abū al-'Āliyah. However, it is noteworthy that if one removes

³⁰⁴Yahyā b. Sallām al-Başrī, Tafsīr Yahyā b. Sallām, MS Tunis, al-'Abdaliyyah 134, the folios are not numbered; and Tafsīr Yahyā b. Sallām al-Taymī al-Başrī al-Qayrawānī min sūrat al-nahl ilā sūrat al-sāffāt, 1:384.

³⁰⁵ Yaḥyā b. Sallām al-Baṣrī, *Tafsīr Yaḥyā b. Sallām*, MS Tunis, Hasan Husnī 'Abd al-Wahhāb 18653; the folios are not numbered, but the commentary on 53:19 falls on the final parchment folio. Hind Shalabī apparently did not use this portion of MS Tunis, Hasan Husnī 'Abd al-Wahhāb 18653, in preparing her edition.

the initial "offer" motif from **Riwāyahs 16** to **19**, their hermeneutical elaboration of the incident is just like that of **Riwāyah 20**.

In this regard, it is instructive to note that we will see in **Riwāyahs 27** to **30**, below, that even when the same author narrates the incident at different places in the same work, the narratives may differ, not in regard to their fundamental interpretation of the incident but in regard to the narrative elements included and omitted. The same phenomenon may be observed in regard to another citation of **Riwāyah 20** itself, that found in the *Tafsīr* of the third-century North African Ibādī scholar Hūd b. Muḥakkam al-Huwwārī. It has been well demonstrated that Hūd's main source was the *Tafsīr* of Yaḥyā b. Sallām, from whom he has extensive unacknowledged verbatim citations; there is no reason to doubt that Hūd has taken his text of **Riwāyah 20** from Yaḥyā b. Sallām, especially since the text is virtually identical. Hūd's citation, however, omits certain passages, underlined below. Text that is in Hūd but not in Yaḥyā is marked by curly brackets; unmarked text is common.³⁰⁶

The Messenger of God was <u>standing</u> in the Sacred Mosque [*al-masjid al-harām*] praying. He was reciting Sūrat al-Najm; and when he came upon <u>these verses</u> {this verse}: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?," Satan cast onto his tongue: "Indeed, they are from among the high *gharānīq*! And, indeed, their intercession is to be hoped for!"

This pleased the Mushrikūn. He recited the *sūrah* until he completed it; then he made the *sajdah* and {the folk of Mecca,} the Muslims and Mushrikūn {and humans and *jinn*,} made the *sajdah*; <u>except</u> for Abū Uḥayḥah who took a handful of dirt and made the *sajdah* on it. This reached those Companions of the Prophet who were in Abyssinia.

<u>The Prophet was greatly distressed by what had come upon his</u> <u>tongue</u>, so God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger

³⁰⁶ Hūd b. Muḥakkam al-Huwwārī, *Tafsīr Kitāb Allāh al-'azīz*, ed. Balḥāj b. Sa'īd Sharīfī (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1990), 4:239. For a discussion of the relationship between the respective *Tafsīrs* of Yaḥyā b. Sallām and Hūd al-Huwwārī, see Sharīfī's valuable introduction at 1:21-25; and the review of Sharīfī's edition by İsmail Cerrahoğlu, "Eş-Şeyh Hûd b. Muhakkem el-Huvvâri 'Tefsiru Kitâbillahi'l Aziz," *Diyanet İlmi Dergi* 29.1 (1993), 117-128, at 123-127. For a study of Hūd's *Tafsīr*, see Claude Gilliot, "Le commentaire Coranique du Hūd b. Muḥakkam/ Muḥkim," *Arabica* 44 (1997), 179-233. or a Prophet but that when he *tamannā*, Satan cast something into his *umniyyah*; then God removes that which Satan casts and establishes His Signs clearly—and God is All-Knowing, All-Wise—to make that which Satan cast a trial for those in whose hearts is sickness, and for those whose hearts are hardened," meaning: the Mushrikūn.

Hūd's citation thus omits the reference to the refugees in Abyssinia, the Prophet's distress, and the sajdah of Abū Uhayhah; but the riwāyah is clearly that originally cited by Yaḥyā b. Sallām. Now, the omission of the narrative motif of the Prophet's distress is significant, not for the primary hermeneutical question of whether the Prophet uttered the verses but for the secondary issue of whether the Prophet realized on his own that he had erred. Since no correction scene with Jibrīl is given, however, there is no reason to suspect that Hūd is adjusting the narrative to take the opposite position-namely, that the Prophet was unaware of his error. Rather, the "distress" motif, alongside that of the refugees in Abyssinia and the sajdah of Abū Uhayhah, seems to have been omitted as secondary to the fundamental hermeneutical issue. One suspects that the absence of the motif of "Quraysh's offer" from Yahya's citation involved a similar editorial omission of a narrative motif present in the transmission of Dā'ūd b. Abī Hind, but that Yahyā considered to be secondary to the narrative.

Riwāyahs 16 to 20: Conclusions

Riwāyahs 16 to 20, from Abū al-'Āliyah, display a high degree of consistency in their interpretation of the Satanic verses incident, even though they are differently worded and contain some variant narrative elements. They are clearly *riwāyah bi-al-ma*'nā of each other. The sole inconsistency between them is the absence of the narrative motif of "Quraysh's offer" from **Riwāyah** 20. However, given the presence of the motif in the other four reports—including **Riwāyahs** 16 and 17, which are transmitted from Dā'ūd b. Abī Hind by different persons—this omission may well represent the editorial activity of the compiler, Yaḥyā b. Sallām al-Baṣrī. In any case, there is no reason to doubt that this motif was regarded by second-century Basrans as present in the accounts of the incident transmitted from the great Basran *mufassir* Abū al-'Āliyah. Given the consistency of interpretation in **Riwāyahs 16** to **20** combined with the fact that **Riwāyahs 16** and **17** (the two of the four for which we have *isnāds*) go back to Abū al-'Āliyah via Dā'ūd b. Abī Hind, it would appear reasonable to date the common textual formulation of the reports to before Dā'ūd's death in **136**, and to regard them as representing, in meaning, Abū al-'Āliyah's own interpretation of the incident.

> *Riwāyahs* 21 and 22: From al-Suddī

Riwāyahs 21 and **22** are two different reports cited by al-Suyūṭī in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj in the *Durr*, the *isnāds* of which include the prominent first-/second-century Kufan *mufassir* Ismā'īl al-Suddī al-Kabīr (d. 128).

Riwāyah 21: In the Tafsīr of 'Abd b. Humayd al-Samarqandī

Al-Suyūțī has **Riwāyah 21** from his copy of the *Tafsīr* of 'Abd b. Humayd al-Samarqandī (170s–249).³⁰⁷ The *isnād* is:

Ismā'īl b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Suddī al-Kūfī (d. 128) ← Abū Ṣāliḥ Bādhām al-Kūfī (d. 110 / 120).

Most of what Abū Ṣāliḥ transmitted is reported to have been *tafsīr*-related. He was very poorly regarded by the Ḥadīth scholars indeed, any possibility of rehabilitating hi reputation was put paid to by a report in which Abū Ṣāliḥ himself declares to a student that everything he has transmitted to him is a lie.³⁰⁸

³⁰⁷ Al-Suyūțī, al-Durr, 6:65.

³⁰⁸ See Ibn Sa'd, *Țabaqāt*, 6:299-300; al-Bukhārī, *al-Kabīr*, 2/1:144; Ibn Abī Hātim, *Jarḥ*, 2:431-432; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islam*, 100-110:325; Ibn Hibbān, *Majrūhīn*,

Al-Suddī was one of the two most important Qur'ān commentators in Kufah at the beginning of the second century, the other being Muḥammad b. al-Sā'ib al-Kalbī (see **Riwāyah 23**). He is reported as having studied with the great first-century Kufan Qur'ān authority 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Abbās (d. 68).³⁰⁹ Like many Kufan scholars, he was accused of harboring Shī'ī sympathies. He had a mixed reputation among the Ḥadīth scholars, who seem to have been unhappy with his *Tafsīr*. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal thought him an acceptable *muḥhaddith*, "but for the *Tafsīr* which he has produced," while Yaḥyā b. Mā'īn specifically criticized his transmission of reports from Abū Ṣāliḥ. Some Ḥadīth scholars went so far as to call him a "liar [*kadhdhāb*]."³¹⁰

The Messenger of God stood up and the Mushrikūn said, "If he mentions our god favourably, we will mention his god favourably [*in dhakara ālihata-nā bi-khayr dhakarnā ilāha-hu bi-khayr*]." And "Satan cast into his *umniyyah* [*alqā al-shayṭān fī umniyyati-hi*]": "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt the third, the other? Indeed, they are among the high *gharānīq*! And, indeed, their intercession is to be hoped for! [*inna-hunna la-fī*³¹¹ *al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-*

^{1:185;} Ibn 'Adī, *Kāmil*, 2:501–503; al-'Uqaylī, *Du'afā'*, 1:183–185; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* 5:37–38; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 1:416–417.

³⁰⁹He is also reported as having studied with 'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd (d. 33), but this would seem to be something of a chronological stretch.

³¹⁰The biographical literature on al-Suddī includes several extremely insulting reports, mostly from his senior contemporary 'Āmir b. Sharāḥīl al-Sha'bī (19-104), which have been explained as motivated by personal jealousy: al-Bukhārī, for example, thought that al-Suddī was a better Qur'ān scholar than al-Sha'bī. Al-Suddī's Tafsīr was cited as a distinct work by both Ibn al-Nadīm, Fihrist, 53; and al-Tha'labī, Mufassirū sharq, 40-41. A version of al-Suddī's extant tafsīr corpus has been collected and published by Muhammad 'Ațā' Yūsuf, Tafsīr al-Suddī al-Kabīr li-al-Imām Abī Muhammad Ismā'īl b. 'Abd al-Rahman al-Suddī al-Kabīr, Mansurah: Dār al-Wafā', 1993; with a biographical study at 17-30. Unfortunately, however, the editor has confined himself only to those reports whose isnāds terminate with al-Suddī, and omits material (e.g., Riwāyah 21) cited by al-Suddī from earlier authorities. A fuller picture of al-Suddī as a Qur'ān scholar can be obtained only with the consideration of such reports. For al-Suddī, see also al-Dhahabī, Siyar 5:264-265; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 1:313-314; Ibn 'Adī, Kāmil, 1:274-275; al-Sayyid Muhsin al-Amīn, A'yān al-shī'ah, ed. Hasan al-Amīn (Beirut: Dār al-Ta'āruf, 1986), 3:379-380; Sezgin, GAS 1:32-33. The present isnād is rejected as "very weak" by al-Albānī, Nasb al-majānīq, 14; see also al-Halabī al-Atharī, Dalā'il, 78-81.

³¹¹The preposition $f\bar{i}$ may, here, represent a copyist's misreading of *min*; however, the phrase is also found in another version of the Satanic verses: see **Riwāyah 48**, below.

hunna la-turtajā]." So God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he *tamannā*, Satan cast something into his *umniyyah*."

Riwāyah 21 is similar to **Riwāyahs 16** to **19** in that it presents the Satanic verses as a response to Quraysh's offer of compromise. While the Prophet's utterance of the verses is not explicitly stated, it is only logical to assume it in the context of this narrative: "If he mentions our gods favourably, we will mention his god favourably." While **Riwāyah 21** does not explicitly present the error as taking place during the recitation of Sūrat al-Najm, this is implied by the presence of Qur'ān 53:19, "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzza and Manāt the third, the other?," which, it is worth noting, is given here as a part of the words cast by Satan.

Riwāyah 22: In the Tafsīr of Ibn Abī Hātim al-Rāzī

The question of the dating of **Riwāyah 21** is best addressed after examining **Riwāyah 22**. **Riwāyah 22** is adduced by al-Suyūțī from the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, without an *isnād* between Ibn Abī Ḥātim and al-Suddī.³¹² A partial *isnād* for the present report is cited from the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Abī Ḥātim by Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, who does not, however, give the text of the report.³¹³ Unlike **Riwāyah 21**, this *isnād* stops at al-Suddī:

Asbāț b. Nașr al-Hamdānī al-Kūfī (d. 160 / 170) \leftarrow al-Suddī (d. 128).

In the extant portion of his *Tafsīr*, Ibn Abī Hātim transmitted reports from al-Suddī by at least four different *isnāds*, all via Asbāț.³¹⁴ Asbāţ b. Naşr al-Kūfī was generally regarded by the Hadīth authorities as weak. However, the fact of Asbāţ's transmitting al-Suddī's *Tafsīr* was noted already within two generations by Ibn Sa'd in the

³¹²See al-Suyūțī, *al-Durr*, 6:69; whence Muḥammad 'Ațā' Yūsuf, *Tafsīr al-Suddī*, 357.

³¹³ Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, 18:41.

³¹⁴ See Koç, İsnad Verileri Çerçevesinde, 2003, 67-70.

early third century.³¹⁵ The following is the account of the Satanic verses incident:

The Prophet went out to the mosque to pray [*li-yuṣallī*]. While reciting [*bayna-mā huwa yaqra'*], he said: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?" Then Satan cast onto his tongue, so he said [*fa-alqā al-shayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi fa-qāla*]: "Those high *gharāniqah*! Indeed, their intercession is to be hoped for! [*tilka al-gharāniqah al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna turtajā*]."

When he reached the end of the *sūrah*, he made the *sajdah*, and his Companions made the *sajdah*, and the Mushrikūn made the *sajdah* because of the mention of their gods. And when he raised his head, they picked him up and ran with him between the two parts of Mecca [*ḥamalū-hu fa-ishtaddū bi-hi*³¹⁶ *bayna quṭray makkata*], saying: "The Prophet of the Banī 'Abd Manāf! [*nabī Banī 'Abd Manāf*]"; until, when Jibrīl came to him, he went over (the *sūrah*) with him and recited those two phrases. Jibrīl said: "God forbid that I should have instructed you to recite this! [*maʿādh Allāh an akūna aqra'tu-ka hādhā*]." This distressed him greatly; so God sent down, comforting his soul [*yuṭayyibu nafsa-hu*]: "And we have not sent before you...."

Riwāyah 22 clearly presents a very different account of the incident to **Riwāyah 21**. This encourages one to accept the *isnāds* at face value, and to take **Riwāyah 21** as representing al-Suddī's transmission from Abū Ṣāliḥ, while **Riwāyah 22** constitutes al-Suddī's own presentation of the incident.

Riwāyah 22 returns to the idea that the Prophet uttered the Satanic verses and was not aware of having done anything wrong until corrected by Jibrīl. However, the most remarkable narrative motif in this report, which does not appear in any other *riwāyah*, is the depiction of Quraysh's reaction to the Prophet's uttering the verses: "They picked him up and ran with him between the two parts of Mecca, saying: 'The Prophet of the Banī 'Abd Manāf'!" This image of the

³¹⁵ See Ibn Sa'd, *Țabaqāt*, 6:353-354; Ibn Abī Hātim, *Jarḥ*, 2:332; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Du'afā'*, 1:96; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-islam*, 11:69-70; and Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 1:211-212. Al-Ṭabarī has al-Suddī's *Tafsīr* by way of Asbāṭ (see Sezgin, *GAS*, 1:33). For a rejection of the *isnād*, see al-Halabī al-Atharī, *Dalā'il*, 82-83.

³¹⁶ The Muhammad 'Ațā' Yūsuf edition has ashaddū 'alay-hi bi-hi. However, both editions of the Durr, which is Yūsuf's source, have fa-ishtaddū bi-hi.

Prophet being celebrated by his tribe like a footballer who has just scored a goal for his team, and in particular the celebratory phrase, "The Prophet of the Banī 'Abd Manāf!," expresses most dramatically the idea of how the Prophet's uttering the Satanic verses transformed him from outcast to hero in Meccan society. Thus, even though **Riwāyah 22** does not present the Prophet's recitation of the verses as taking place out of Muḥammad's desire to be reconciled with Quraysh, or in response to an offer of reconciliation from them, the fact that reconciliation was, in fact, effected is presented in the most vivid terms. The dramatic nature of the image leads one to suspect that it represents the sort of narrative embellishment of reports done by preachers seeking to make their lessons both more appealing and more memorable to popular audiences. One wonders here if this sort of thing is what was meant by Ibrahīm al-Nakha'ī (d. 95) when he described al-Suddī's exegesis as *tafsīr al-qawm* ("*tafsīr* of the people").³¹⁷

Riwāyah 23: From Muḥammad b. al-Sā'ib al-Kalbī

Riwāyah 23 is cited directly from the *Tafsīr* of Muḥammad b. al-Sā'ib al-Kalbī al-Kūfī (d. 146) in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj in the *Tafsīr* of Yaḥyā b. Sallām al-Baṣrī al-Qayrawānī (d. 124–200).³¹⁸

³¹⁷ See Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 1:313. It is interesting to note that it is precisely the popular quality of the narrative in **Riwāyah 22** that provoked the particular ire of the contemporary Azharī*shaykh* Muḥammad 'Urjūn, who described it as "buffoonish [*bahlawānī*], ridiculous, silly . . . playing on the emotions of the gullible and ignorant mob [*mustakhiffatan li-'awāțif al-aghmār min jahalat al-ghawghā'*]." 'Urjūn argued that the motif of Quraysh celebrating the Prophet on their shoulders is an illogical one: "The *riwāyah* does not mention anything about the attitude of the Prophet vis-à-vis this act of buffoonery, nor anything about the attitude of his uncles: when they saw him carried away shoulder-high, taken around the quarters of Mecca, how did they accept it? Were they not suspicious of this buffoonish, reckless and dubious game, when they knew that Muḥammad was wanted by the leaders of Quraysh who were waiting for the opportunity to have their will of him?" See Muḥammad al-Sadiq Ibrāhīm 'Urjūn, *Muḥammad rasūl Allāh ṣalla Allāh 'alay-hi wa-sallam: manhaj wa-risālah, baḥth wa-taḥqīq*, Beirut: Dār al-Qalam, 1985, 2:68.

³¹⁸ Yahyā b. Sallām, *Tafsīr*, MS 'Abdaliyyah, folios unnumbered; and *Tafsīr Yahyā b*. Sallām, 1:384.

It is also cited directly from al-Kalbī in the commentary on Qur'ān 53:19 al-Najm in the *Tafsīr* of the third-century North African scholar Hūd b. Muhakkam al-Huwwārī, who, as we have noted above, drew extensively on Yahyā b. Sallām's Tafsīr.³¹⁹ Yahyā b. Sallām's Tafsīr, in turn, contains numerous citations from al-Kalbī, of whom Yahyā was a very junior contemporary. Yahyā b. Sallām's authorship of the Tafsīr preserved in his name has not been questioned, and there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of his citation of al-Kalbī, who is known to have taught his *Tafsīr* in Başrah (probably at the invitation of the governor) between the years 133 and 139 when Yahyā b. Sallām was there, aged nine to fifteen.³²⁰ I have not had the opportunity to establish whether Hūd had access to al-Kalbī's Tafsīr other than in the form of its citation in the Tafsir of Yahya. Al-Kalbi was a great polymath, and his *Tafsīr* was reportedly the longest composed until his day. Harris Birkeland used al-Kalbī to illustrate the phenomenon which I have been emphasizing in this study:

It is a notorious fact that numerous interpreters who had not achieved a fame in other branches of religious sciences, viz. in *hadīt* or *qirā'a* or *fiqh*, but were only known as interpreters, were held to be unreliable. Characteristic is the verdict in Ibn Sa'd... on Muḥammad b al-Sā'ib al-Kalbī (d. 146), the great authority of pre-Islamic genealogy and history. Ibn Sa'd admits that he is *'ālim* in these branches and in *tafsīr*. How-

³¹⁹ Hūd al-Huwwārī, *Tafsīr*, 4:239–40. It is noteworthy that, unlike Yaḥyā, Hūd cites early *riwāyahs* on the incident only in his commentary on Qur'ān 53:19–21; in his commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Hajj he provides a summary of the incident followed by a paraphrastic *Tafsīr*. There is no means of knowing if Hūd is citing al-Kalbī from Yaḥyā's commentary on Qur'ān 52:19 al-Najm falls on the last surviving folio of the manuscript of Yaḥyā's *Tafsīr* and is incomplete.

³²⁰ This would have been a normal age at which for Yaḥyā to attend al-Kalbī's lectures. His Basran contemporary Ma'mar b. Rāshid (95–153) records himself as having studied with the famous Basran *mufassir* Qatādah b. Di'āmah when he was fifteen years old (see the analysis of **Riwāyah 25**, below). A study of educational practices in Nishāpur between 317 and 514 found that "typical students had begun their education by the time they reached the age 4.8–10.2"; see Richard Bulliet, "The Age Structure of Medieval Islamic Education," *Studia Islamica* 57 (1988), 105–117, at 109. Even if Yaḥyā did not study with al-Kalbī in person, the latter's *Tafsīr* must have been in circulation in Baṣrah during the course of Yaḥyā's education.

ever, he was held to be "very weak," $da\bar{i}f\bar{g}iddan$, in his transmission, $riw\bar{a}y\bar{a}...$ He is even called an liar and an unbeliever.³²¹

More than fifty manuscripts purporting to be copies of the *Tafsīr* of al-Kalbī are in existence,³²² but they have not been collectively studied—until this is done, we cannot know whether all of them are the so-called *Tanwīr al-miqbās min Tafsīr Ibn 'Abbās*, the *isnād* of which goes back to Ibn 'Abbās via al-Kalbī and Abū Ṣāliḥ Bādhām, and that has been shown to be the late third- / early fourth-century *Tafsīr* of 'Abd Allāh b. al-Mubārak al-Dīnawarī based considerably on the original *Tafsīr* of al-Kalbī.³²³ On the basis of its citation in Yaḥyā b. Sallām's *Tafsīr*, however, there is no reason to doubt that **Riwāyah 23** stems from Kūfah in the first half of the second century:

The Prophet was praying near the Ka'bah [*al-bayt*] while the Mushrikūn were seated. He recited [*qara'a*], "By the star," and thought to himself [*haddatha nafsa-hu*] until, when he reached: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?," Satan cast onto his tongue [*alqā al-shaytān 'alā lisāni-hi*]: "Indeed, they are with the high *gharānīq!*³²⁴ And, indeed, it is their intercession that is hoped

³²¹ Birkeland, Old Muslim Opposition, 26. Indeed, the ahl al-hadīth repeatedly called him a "liar (kadhdhāb)," but despite this Ibn 'Adī also recognized that "he is famous for tafsīr, and no-one has a longer or more complete Tafsīr than he"; see Ibn 'Adī, Kāmil, 6:114–120; al-'Uqaylī, Du'afā', 4:1236–1238; Ibn Hibbān, Majrūhīn, 2:253–256; Ibn al-Jawzī, Du'afā', 3:62. The standard charge of tashayyu' was leveled at al-Kalbī: among the reports attributed to him by his critics is one in which Jibrīl is said to have accidentally given some part of Divine Revelation to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib instead of the Prophet, the Prophet having stood up to do something and 'Alī having sat down in his place. See Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 9:178–181, at 179; Muḥsin al-Amīn, A'yān al-shī'ah, 9:339–340; and the article, "al-Kalbī," by Walid Atallah, EI2. Ibn Nadīm cites the Tafsīr of al-Kalbī as an independent work; Fihrist, 152.

- ³²³ See Harald Motzki, "Dating the So-Called *Tafsīr Ibn 'Abbās*: Some Additional Remarks," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 31 (2006), 147–163, which develops and emends the arguments in Andrew Rippin, "*Tafsīr Ibn 'Abbās* and Criteria for Dating Early *tafsīr* Texts," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 18 (1994), 38–83; see also Marco Scholler, "*Sīra* and *Tafsīr*: Muḥammad al-Kalbī on the Jews of Medina," in *The Biography of Muḥammad: The Issue of the Sources*, ed. Harald Motzki (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 18–48.
- ³²⁴ Hūd's citation adds here: "meaning: the angels [*ya'nī al-malā'ikah*]." Given that this phrase is one of only two differences in wording between the two citations

³²² Sezgin, GAS, 1:34-35.

for [*fa-inna-hā ma*'a³²⁵ *al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hā hiya al-murtajā*]." When he turned [*inṣarafa*] (from his prayer)³²⁶, they said: "Muḥammad has mentioned our gods!"

The Prophet said: "By God, it did not come down to me like this! [*wa-Allāhi mā ka-dhālika nazalat 'alay-ya*]." And Jibrīl came down to him and the Prophet told him (what had happened). He (Jibrīl) said: "By God, I did not teach it to you like this, nor bring it to you like this! [*wa-Allāhi mā hā-kadhā 'allamtu-ka wa-mā ji'tu bi-hā hā-kadhā*]." So God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet," to the end of the verse.

Hūd cites a further gloss directly from al-Kalbī:

"illā idhā tamannā: If he sought something wordly [*in sa'ala shay'an min al-dunyā*], Satan cast this (as) speech onto his tongue [*alqā al-shayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi hādhā al-qawl*]."³²⁷

Riwāyah 23 from al-Kalbī thus provides a very precise interpretation of the phrase *illā idhā tamannā alqā al-shayṭān fī umniyyati-hi* in Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj. In Yaḥyā's citation, by *tamannā*, it is meant that the Prophet "thought to himself [*haddatha nafsa-hu*]." Hūd's further gloss from al-Kalbī specifies the subject of the Prophet's thoughts as being something that he sought to gain from this world, as opposed to deriving from God and his Divine mission—*sa'ala shay'an min al-dunyā*. Thus, when the Prophet was reciting Sūrat al-Najm in his prayer, he became absorbed in worldly desire. Satan cast onto his tongue words that gave expression to his thoughts, and the Prophet uttered them: *alqā al-shayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi hādhā al-qawl*. In this way, **Riwāyah 23** effectively, if not explicitly, combines the two meanings for *tamannā*—"to desire" and "to recite"—to explain

⁽the other also being in the nature of a parenthetical gloss; see footnote 247, below), it seems to me that it is unlikely to be from al-Kalbī, but is rather more likely to be inserted by someone posterior to Yaḥyā. We will return to this gloss in the discussions of **Riwāyahs 25, 29**, and **48**.

³²⁵ Possibly a copyist's misreading of *min*, although *ma'a* also appears in the version of the Satanic verses in **Riwāyah 24**.

³²⁶ The phrase min salāti-hi ("from his prayer") is only in Hūd.

³²⁷ Hūd, *Tafsīr*, 4:240. Given that Yaḥyā's commentary on Qur'ān 53:19 al-Najm is incompletely preserved, there is no means of knowing if Hūd is citing this gloss of al-Kalbī from Yaḥyā's *Tafsīr* or from another source.

the Satanic verses incident. The Prophet desired something in contravention of his Divine mission, and Satan induced the Prophet to utter something that served this desire.

As in **Riwāyah 14**, the Prophet's error appears to take place during his recitation of a prior Revelation, and the Prophet realizes on his own that something has gone wrong in his recitation: "The Prophet said, 'By God, it did not come down to me like this!" However, he is confused as to exactly what has happened until Jibrīl confirms his error, which is then explained by Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj.

Riwāyahs 24 to 26: From Qatādah b. Di'āmah

Riwāyahs 24, 25, and **26** represent separate transmissions from the Basran *mufassir* Qatādah b. Di'āmah (60–117), **Riwāyah 24** having been transmitted in Baṣrah, and **Riwāyahs 25** and **26** in Ṣan'ā'.

Riwāyah 24: Cited by Yaḥyā b. Sallām al-Baṣrī in His Tafsīr

Riwāyah 24 is cited from Qatādah in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj in the *Tafsīr* of Yaḥyā b. Sallām al-Baṣrī al-Qayrawānī (124-200) with this *isnād*:³²⁸

Sa'īd b. Abī 'Arūbah al-Baṣrī (d. 156)
 \leftarrow Qatādah b. Di'āmah al-Baṣrī (60–117).

It is also cited by al-Suyūțī in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Hajj in the *Durr*. Al-Suyūțī has it from the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Abī Hātim al-Rāzī (d. 338), without an *isnād*.³²⁹

³²⁸ Yahyā b. Sallām, Tafsīr, MS 'Abdaliyyah 134, folios unnumbered; and Tafsīr Yahyā b. Sallām, 1:384.

³²⁹ Al-Suyūţī, *Durr*, 6:68. Sa'īd b. Abī 'Arūbah is present in two of the eight *isnāds* by which reports from Qatādah appear in the extant portion of the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Abī Hātim; see Koç, İsnad Verileri Çerçevesinde, 53–60.

Qatādah b. Di'āmah, who was born blind, was both a $q\bar{a}$,s, 330 and one of the most important *mufassirs* of late first- / early second-century Baṣrah, and was remembered by later Ḥadīth scholars for his phenomenal memory.³³¹ While his *tafsīr* has not survived intact, it is cited over three thousand times by al-Ṭabarī,³³² over twelve hundred times in the extant portion of the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Abī Ḥātim,³³³ was used by al-Tha'labī,³³⁴ and was studied by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463).³³⁵

Sa'īd b. Abī 'Arubah was one of the first scholars to compile a collection of Prophetic Ḥadīth according to subject matter (*awwal man sannafa al-sunan al-nabawiyyah*), although he was lax with his *isnāds* and was labeled a *mudallis*. Nonetheless, he had a generally high reputation as a Ḥadīth scholar until he lost his memory near the end of his life. Although averse to writing Ḥadīth, he is reported to have made a point of writing down the *tafsīr* of Qatādah. Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn considered him the most reliable of Qatādah's students.³³⁶ Given that the *Tafsīr* of Yaḥyā b. Sallām is a second-century source, and given the favorable attestations of Sa'īd b. Abī 'Arūbah's transmission from Qatādah, one is encouraged to accept the citations of Qatādah in the *Tafsīr* of Yaḥyā b. Sallām as, indeed, representing transmissions from Qatādah. This position will be reinforced by **Riwāyahs 27, 28**, and **29** from a student of Qatādah's *tafsīr*, Muqātil b. Sulaymān.

The following is the account of the Satanic verses:

- ³³³ See Koç, İsnad Verileri Çerçevesinde, 54.
- ³³⁴Al-Thaʻlabī, *Mufassirū sharq*, 24–26.

³³⁰ Jūdah, "al-Qaṣaṣ wa-al-quṣṣāṣ," 113-114.

³³¹See the study by 'Abd Allāh Abū al-Sa'ūd Badr, *Tafsīr Qatādah raḍiya Allāh* 'an-hu: dirāsah li-al-mufassir wa-manhaj tafsīri-hi (Cairo: 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1979), where **Riwāyah 24** is cited at 105 as an example of Qatādah's relating the Qur'ān to events in the life of the Prophet. See also Gösta Vitestam, "Qatāda b. Di'āma al-Sadūsī et la science du ḥadīt," Correspondance D'Orient 11 (1970), 490-498; Abdülhamit Birişık, "Katâde b. Diâme," *TDVİA*; al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 5:269-283; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 8:351-356; Sezgin, GAS, 1:31-32.

³³²Heribert Horst, "Zur Überlieferung im Korankommentar at-Tabarīs," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesselschaft* 103 (1953), 290–307, at 301.

³³⁵See the citation from the manuscript of al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī's *mashyakhah* in Sezgin, *GAS*, 1:32.

³³⁶ See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 6:413-418; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 4:63-66; Ibn 'Adī, *Kāmil*, 3:393-397; al-'Uqaylī, *Du'afā'*, 2:474-478 (the latter two are primarily concerned with the decline in his powers of memory). This *isnād* was apparently not cited again in the literature, and has not been commented on by either al-Albānī or al-Halabī al-Atharī.

While the Messenger of God was praying at the Station of Ibrāhīm, he became drowsy [*na'asa*]. Satan cast a phrase onto his tongue, and he uttered it [*fa-alqā al-shayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi kalimatan fa-takallama bi-hā*]; and the Mushrikūn latched onto it (using it) against him [*ta'allaqa bi-hā³³⁷ al-mushrikūn 'alay-hi*]. He said: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?"; and Satan cast onto his tongue [*fa-alqā al-shayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi*]³³⁸: "Indeed, their intercession is what is hoped for! Indeed, they are with the high *gharānīq*! [*fa-inna shafā'ata-hā hiya al-murtajā³³⁹ wa-inna-hā la-ma'a al-gharānīq al-'ulā*]."

The Mushrikūn memorized these (verses); Satan told them that the Prophet of God had recited them [*akhbara-hum al-shayṭān anna nabiyya Allāh qad qara'a-hā*], and their tongues were debased by them [*dhallat bi-hā*]. And God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet." So God repelled Satan and instructed His Prophet with His authoritative writ [*fa-dahara Allāhu al-shayṭāna walaqqana nabiyya-hu ḥujjata-hu*].³⁴⁰

Riwāyah 24 introduces a new narrative element that affects the hermeneutical elaboration of the incident. This is the phrase "He became drowsy [*na'asa*]." Here, the Prophet is depicted as uttering the Satanic verses when he was sleepy—in other words, when he was not fully alert and conscious of what he was doing. This is not dissimilar to the explanation of the incident given in **Riwāyah 14**: "The Messenger of God did this unmindfully [*wa-sahā rasūl Allāh*]." Also, as with **Riwāyah 14**, in **Riwāyah 24** the Prophet is apparently reciting a *sūrah* that has been revealed to him earlier, and the narrative motif of a desired reconciliation with Quraysh is absent. The additional element of sleepiness may, however, also be seen as specifically related to Satanic intervention as the diminished consciousness that accompanies drowsiness is understood to make the individual more vulnerable to Satan.³⁴¹ The fact that this error took place while the

³³⁷ Thus in al-Suyūțī's citation; Yaḥyā b. Sallām has ta'allaqa-hā.

³³⁸Al-Suyūtī has here: "while he was drowsy [wa-na'asa]."

³³⁹Al-Suyūtī: wa-inna shafā'ata-hā la-turtajā.

³⁴⁰ This last sentence is not in Yahyā b. Sallām.

³⁴¹ "The presence of Ash-Shaytān pervades the whole sleep process from the onset of drowsiness to waking. When a man yawns, the *hadīth* warn him to cover his mouth lest Satan enter; and he should not make any noise as he yawns, for it is the sound of Satan's laugh." Peter J. Awn, *Satan's Tragedy and Redemption: Iblīs in Sufi Psychology* (Leiden: Brill, 1983), 50.

Prophet was praying may well have been understood by an early Muslim audience in the context of the several traditions that stress the importance of avoiding drowsiness (na's) when praying and when reciting the Qur'ān.³⁴² On the other hand, it should be noted that Sūrat al-Kawthar is reported to have been revealed to Muhammad in a state of "drowsiness [ighfā']," which would suggest that while, in the present instance, the Prophet was reciting a previously revealed verse, he was nonetheless in a state associated for him with the experience of Revelation.³⁴³ We will shortly encounter the *na'asa* / drowsiness motif that characterizes Riwāyah 24 in three presentations of the Satanic verses incident (Riwāyahs 27, 28, and 29) that are given in the Tafsīr of Muqātil b. Sulayman (d. 150), whom we know to have made extensive use of Qatādah's tafsīr. While Muqātil does not expressly cite Qatādah when presenting the Satanic verses incident (it is not his method to cite his sources), we shall see that his Riwāyah 27 shares distinctive phrases with Riwāyah 24. The fact that the distinctive na'asa/drowsiness motif appears in the generation after Qatādah in two separate Basran sources, one of whom, Sa'īd b. Abī 'Arūbah, attributes it directly to Qatādah, and the other of whom, Muqātil b. Sulaymān, used Qatādah as a major source, suggests strongly that Riwāyah 24 and its na'asa/drowsiness motif is, indeed, from Qatādah.

Riwāyah 25: al-Ṭabarī's Citation of *Tafsīr Muḥammad ibn Thawr 'an Ma'mar 'an Qatādah*, and of al-Ḥasan b. Yaḥyā's Citation of Qatādah in the Baghdādī Transmission of the *Tafsīr* of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī

Riwāyahs 25 and **26** are Yemeni transmissions from Qatādah via Ma'mar b. Rāshid al-Baṣrī al-Ṣan'ānī (96-154). **Riwāyah 25** is cited

³⁴² For these traditions, including the specific warning that "drowsiness in prayer is from Satan [*al-nu^xās fī al-ṣalāt min al-shayṭān*]," see A. J. Wensinck, *Concordance et Indices de la Tradition Musulman* (Leiden: Brill, 1936), 6:484–485.

³⁴³ Later scholars have been at pains to distinguish this *ighfā* 'as "not the drowsiness of sleep, but the state that would come upon him at the time of Revelation [*laysa al-ighfā*'atu ighfā'ata al-nawm bal al-ḥālah allatī kānat ta'tarī-hi 'inda al-waḥy]"; see al-Suyūțī, *al-Itqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-ʿAṣriyyah, 1988), 1:65–66.

by al-Ṭabarī in his commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj in the *Jāmi*' *al-bayān* by two *isnāds*, both of which go back to Qatādah *via* Ma'mar b. Rāshid al-Baṣrī al-Ṣan'ānī (93–153):

Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-A'lā al-Ṣan'ānī al-Baṣrī (d. 245) ← Muḥammad b. Thawr al-Ṣan'ānī (d. 190) ← Ma'mar b. Rāshid al-Baṣrī al-Ṣan'ānī (95–153) ← Qatādah b. Di'āmah al-Baṣrī (60–117).

and

al-Ḥasan b. Yaḥyā b. Ja'd al-Jurjānī al-Baghdādī (d. 263) ← 'Abd al-Razzāq b. Hammām al-Ṣan'ānī (126–211) ← Ma'mar b. Rāshid al-Baṣrī al-Ṣan'ānī (95–153) ← Qatādah b. Di'āmah al-Baṣrī (60–117).³⁴⁴

Ma'mar b. Rāshid (96–154) was a native Basran who, by his own account, studied with Qatādah when he was fifteen years old. Although he was held in high esteem by his fellow Ḥadīth scholars, some were unhappy with the fact that he transmitted Qatādah's *Tafsīr*, this because of its poor *isnāds*. He traveled to Ṣan'ā', where the people thought so highly of him that they would not let him leave.³⁴⁵ Both of the respective transmitters from Ma'mar, Muḥammad b. Thawr and 'Abd al-Razzāq b. Hammām, are from Ṣan'ā'.

Al-Ṭabarī gives the text as coming from the first *isnād*, and adds that the second *isnād* transmits "something similar [*bi-naḥwi-hi*]," by which he means that the wording differs but the meaning is the same (see the discussion, below). In the *Jāmi al-bayān*, al-Ṭabarī regularly cites these *isnāds* in this way. The fact that the two *isnāds* diverge at the point of the transmitter from Ma'mar but nonetheless carry the same reports strongly suggests that the report should be accepted as having, indeed, been taught by Ma'mar b. Rāshid in Ṣan'ā' in the first half of the second century.

344 Al-Ṭabarī, Jāmiʿal-bayān, 17:191.

³⁴⁵ There is a delightful account of this: "When Ma'mar entered Ṣan'ā', they were loathe to let him leave them. Someone said to them, 'Shackle him [qayyidū-hu]!' So, they got him married [fa-zawwajū-hu]!" Ma'mar eventually managed to leave Ṣan'ā' after about eight years in order to perform the Hajj, and apparently did not return. See al-Dhahabī, Siyar 7:5-18; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 10:243-246; and the study by Muḥammad Ra'fat Sa'īd, Ma'mar b. Rāshid al-Ṣan'ānī: masādiru-hu wa-manhaju-hu wa-atharu-hu fī riwāyat al-hadīth (Riyadh: 'Alam al-Kutub, 1983).

In the first *isnād*, the transmitter from Ma'mar is Muḥammad b. Thawr al-Ṣan'ānī (d. 190), universally regarded as a reliable Ḥadīth transmitter. Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 380) records a work that he calls *Tafsīr Muḥammad ibn Thawr 'an Ma'mar 'an Qatādah.*³⁴⁶ The transmitter from Muḥammad b. Thawr is Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-A'lā al-Ṣan'ānī al-Baṣrī, the teacher of al-Ṭabarī whom we encountered in **Riwāyah 16**. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-A'lā al-Baṣrī's interest in this work must have been piqued by the fact of it constituting a migrant *tafsīr* transmission from the great Basran *mufassir* Qatādah, which after a century of transmission in the Yemen had now returned to its place of origin. The *Tafsīr Muḥammad ibn Thawr 'an Ma'mar 'an Qatādah* is cited by al-Ṭabarī over one thousand times in the Jāmi' al-bayān.³⁴⁷

In al-Ṭabarī's second *isnād*, the transmitter from Ma'mar is his most important pupil, 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī (126–211 / 743– 827), "the leading scholar of the Yemen" in the second half of the second century. 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī enjoyed, in the main, a high reputation among the Ḥadīth authorities,³⁴⁸ and his vast *Mūṣannaf* represents one of the earliest extant Ḥadīth collections.³⁴⁹ The present report, however, is not from the *Mūṣannaf* but from 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī's *Tafsīr*, the bulk of which is made up of reports from Ma'mar b. Rāshid. 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī's *Tafsīr*, to which we shall come in **Riwāyah 26**, has come down to us in two manuscripts. The link between 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī and al-Ṭabarī is al-Ḥasan b. Abī al-Rabī' Yaḥyā al-Baghdādī (d. 263).³⁵⁰ Al-Ḥasan b. Yaḥyā was an important transmitter of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī's

- ³⁴⁸ The quotation is from the entry on "al-Ṣanʿānī" by H. Motzki in *EI2*. The Ḥadīth authority, Yaḥyāb. Maʿīn said, "Even if 'Abd al-Razzāq was to commit apostasy, we would not leave his Ḥadīth! [*law irtadda 'Abd al-Razzāq mā taraknā ḥadītha-hu*]." See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 9:563–580; and Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 6:310–315; for negative views, see Ibn 'Adī, *Kāmil*, 5:311–315; al-'Uqaylī, *Du'afā'*, 3:857–860.
- ³⁴⁹ 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, ed. Habīb al-Raḥmān al-A'ẓamī (Jo-hannesburg: al-Majlis al-'Ilmī, 1970). For the view that the *Muṣannaf* of 'Abd al-Razzāq contains reports that may be dated to the first century of Islam, see Har-ald Motzki, "The *Muṣannaf* of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī as a Source of Authentic *aḥādīth* of the First Century A.H.," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 50, 1991, 1–21.
- ³⁵⁰ See al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 7:453-454; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 12:356-357; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 2:324-325.

 ³⁴⁶ See Ibn al-Nadim, *Fihrist*, 53; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 9:302, Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 9:89.
 ³⁴⁷ Horst, "Überlieferung," 300.

Tafsīr, and apparently al-Ṭabarī's main source for that work; this second *isnād* is cited by al-Ṭabarī 630 times in the commentary on the first twenty-six *sūrah*s in the *Jāmi*' *al-bayān*.³⁵¹ Also, at least two hundred of the reports in the published manuscript of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī's *Tafsīr* are from al-Ḥasan b. Yaḥyā.³⁵²

The following is the account of the Satanic verses in al-Ṭabarī's citation of the *Tafsīr Muḥammad ibn Thawr 'an Ma'mar 'an Qatādah* and in al-Ḥasan b. Yaḥyā's Baghdādī transmission of the *Tafsīr* of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī:³⁵³

In regard to His words: ". . . into his *umniyyah*": The Prophet desired [*yatamannā*] that God not denounce [*lā ya*'*īb*] the gods of the Mushrikūn, and Satan cast into his desire [*fa-alqā al-shayṭān fī umniyyati-hi*], and he (the Prophet) said [*fa-qāla*]: "The gods who are called upon: their intercession is to be hoped for: indeed, they are high *gharānīq* [*inna al-ālihata allatī tud*' \bar{a}^{354} *inna shafā*'*ata-hā la-turtajā wainna-hā la-al-gharānīq al-*'*ulā*]."

And God removed [*nasakha*] that and established His Signs [*waahkama āyāti-hi*], and he said [*fa-qāla*]: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other? Would you have sons, and He, daughters?," until he reached: "authority [*sulțān*]."

When Satan cast what he cast [*lammā alqā al-shayṭān mā alqā*], the Mushrikūn said: "Allāh has spoken favourably of our gods," and they were greatly pleased by it. And that is³⁵⁵ (the meaning of) God's words: "To make that which Satan cast a trial for those in whose hearts is sickness."

It is apparent here that fa- $q\bar{a}la$ in line 4 must be taken to refer to the Prophet. As in **Riwāyahs 2** and **3**, above, the Prophet desires that God not speak badly of the gods of Quraysh. God, of course, is not going to oblige, as the Prophet's desire is an illegitimate one.

³⁵¹Horst, "Überlieferung," 300.

³⁵² See the indices to 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī, in *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, ed. Musṭafā Muslim Muḥammad (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 1989), 3:257–258.

³⁵³The reports from Qatādah are rejected by al-Albānī on the basis that they are mursal, Nasb al-majānīq, 12; similarly by al-Ṣawwayānī, al-Qasīmah, 1:429.

³⁵⁴ I am reading the word *tā'-dāl-'ayn-alif maqṣūrah* as *tud'ā*, rather than *tudda'ā*, on the basis that the writing of the terminal *alif* as *alif maqṣūrah* is not of material significance in early Arabic orthography.

³⁵⁵ Reading *fa-dhālika* for *fa-dhakara* (see **Riwāyah 25**).

Instead, it is Satan who casts upon the Prophet words that fulfill his desire, and the Prophet duly utters the words. The hermeneutical elaboration of the incident in **Riwāyah 25** is thus consonant with the interpretation of the incident we have seen in other early reports (see **Riwāyahs 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 12, 13, 16** to 20, 22, and 23).

There are, however, two significant differences between Riwāyahs 24 and 25 as regards their respective hermeneutical elaborations. The first is that the distinctive and hermeneutically pivotal narrative motif of the Prophet's drowsiness is absent from Riwāyah 25-instead, we have here the motif of the Prophet's desire not to displease Quraysh. The second difference is subtle, but also hermeneutically significant: namely, that in Riwāyah 25, the Prophet does not utter the Satanic verses after reciting Qur'ān 53:19, "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third the other?" Rather, in Riwāyah 25, as in Riwāyah 1, Qur'ān 53:19-23—"Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third the other? Should you have males, and He females? That, indeed, would be an unfair division! Indeed, they are no more than names which you have named, you and your ancestors! Allāh has not sent down any authority with them"—is given here as having been revealed in abrogation of the Satanic verses. This is significant because having Qur'ān 19-23 al-Najm as the abrogating verses obviates the objection raised by some later scholars to the logic of those narratives of the Satanic verses incident that have the Prophet first utter the Satanic verses in praise of the deities of Quraysh, and then continue immediately forward in his recitation of Sūrat al-Najm to condemn the deities.³⁵⁶

These differences between **Riwāyahs 24** and **25** may appear substantive enough to induce the skeptic to question the *isnāds* and, perhaps, to doubt the attribution of one or both of **Riwāyahs 24** and **25** to Qatādah. I have already noted my view that the fact that distinctive *na'asa*/drowsiness motif appears in the generation after Qatādah in two separate Basran sources, one of whom, Sa'īd b. Abī 'Arūbah, attributes it directly to Qatādah, and the other of whom, Muqātil b. Sulaymān, used Qatādah as a major source, suggests

³⁵⁶We noted in the discussion of Riwāyah 2, above, the objection of the Egyptian modern, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal, to "confused, self-contradictory" and "illogical" notion of the Prophet having "praised and condemned al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt within four verses"; Haykal, *Hayāt Muḥammad*, 144.

strongly that **Riwāyah 24** is, indeed, from Qatādah. However, given that the Basran and Ṣan'ānī recensions are so different, one may make one of two provisional conclusions. It may be that Qatādah taught the incident in more than one way, **Riwāyah 25** being the interpretation preferred—or, simply, heard—by Ma'mar. Certainly, this is not at all implausible; we will see in **Riwāyahs 27** to 30 how Muqātil b. Sulaymān gave four slightly different presentations of the incident within his *Tafsīr*.

Alternatively, Riwāyah 25 may represent Ma'mar's own exegetical activity, building upon what he had studied with Qatādah. The latter scenario would, for the first (and only) time in this study, call into question whether an *isnād* represents a genuine transmission history. In view of our working assumption—that fabrication of *isnāds* was not systemic in the genres of sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr, and that weak isnāds should, therefore, be taken at face value as representing genuine transmission histories unless there is specific reason to suggest otherwise—we are obliged to address the question of why, in the present instance, there should be an exceptional motive for the false attribution of Riwāyah 25 to Qatādah. Here I suspect that it is significant that the two transmitters from Ma'mar, Muḥammad b. Thawr al-Ṣan'ānī and 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī, are both muhaddiths of established repute; muhaddiths, of course, were concerned with providing complete *isnāds*. It may also be of significance here that Ma'mar taught in Ṣan'ā': the great appeal of Ma'mar to the scholarly community of San'ā', located on the southern periphery of the Dar al-Islam, must have derived considerably from the fact that he had studied in the intellectual heartland of the Islamic world under such important figures as Qatādah b. Di'āmah. There would thus have been a particular incentive to emphasize the link between Ma'mar's teachings in Ṣan'ā' and the Basran authorities under whom he had studied. Nonetheless, we should note that while Riwāyah 25 differs from Riwāyah 24 in its hermeneutical elaboration of the incident, it does not contradict **Riwāyah 24** as to the fundamental point: namely, that the Prophet uttered the Satanic verses.³⁵⁷ As regards that unit of meaning, it does not at all misrepresent Qatādah.

³⁵⁷ The question of whether this difference between the *riwāyahs* attributed to Qatādah is broadly characteristic of the Basran and Ṣanʿānī transmissions of Qatādah's *tafsīr*

Riwāyah 26: From the Tafsīr of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī

Riwāyah 26 is cited in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj in the published *Tafsīr* of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī. The *Tafsīr* of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī has received three separate editions, all of which have used the two extant manuscripts: MS Ankara, Sa'ib 4216, which dates to the sixth century; and MS Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, *Tafsīr* 242, which is from the eighth century.³⁵⁸

While the *isnāds* for individual reports in this *Tafsīr* always begin with 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī, MS Dār al-Kutub, Tafsīr 242 as a whole is transmitted by this *isnād*:

Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Salām al-Khushanī al-Qurṭubī (221–286) ← Salamah b. Shabīb al-Makkī (d. 247) ← 'Abd al-Razzāq b. Hammām al-Ṣan'ānī (126–211) ← Ma'mar b. Rāshid al-Baṣrī al-Ṣan'ānī (96–154) ← Qatādah b. Di'āmah al-Baṣrī (60–117).³⁵⁹

Thus, MS Dar al-Kutub, Tafsīr 242 represents the *Tafsīr* of 'Abd al-Razzāq in the transmission of ($f\bar{i}$ riwāyat) his student, Salamah b. Shabīb al-Makkī (d. 247), a Khurāsānī who settled in Mecca. It was probably there that he studied with 'Abd al-Razzāq. He was clearly one of the *ahl al-ḥadīth*, and is cited in the canonical collections.³⁶⁰ With Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Salām al-Khushanī al-Qurṭubī (d. 286), who studied with Salamah b. Shabīb in Egypt, 'Abd al-Razzāq's *Tafsīr* was transported to Spain.³⁶¹ MS Ankara, Sa'ib 4216 is trans-

corpus can be determined only by a full comparative study of the two, something that has not yet been carried out.

³⁵⁸ The superior edition is that of Muṣṭafā Muslim Muḥammad, cited above, which contains a biographical study at 1:1–27; the others are 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'azīz al-musammā Tafsīr 'Abd al-Razzāq*, ed. 'Abd al-Mu'ṭī Amīn Qal'ajī (Beirut: Dār Ma'rifah, 1991); and 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī, *Tafsīr 'Abd al-Razzāq*, ed. Maḥmūd Muḥammad 'Abduh (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1999). On the work, see İsmail Cerrahoğlu, "Abdurrazzâk ibn Hemmâm ve tefsiri," *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyet Fakultesi Dergisi* 15 (1967), 99–111.

³⁵⁹ Regrettably, I have not seen either manuscript, and am relying on the work of the respective editors of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī's *Tafsīr*. In Muṣṭafā Muslim Muḥammad's edition, the *isnād* of the Cairo MS is given in the editor's introduction, 1:32-33, while **Riwāyah 3**0 is given at 2:40. In al-Qal'ajī's edition, the *isnād* is given in the editor's introduction at 1:32, while **Riwāyah 3**0 is at 2:35.

³⁶⁰ See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 12:256–257; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 4:146–147.

³⁶¹See Luis Molina, "Un àrabe entre muladíes: Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Salām al-

mitted by the same *isnād* as far as Salamah b. Shabīb, with no mention of any further transmitter after him.³⁶²

The following is the account of the Satanic verses in **Riwāyah 26**. It is effectively identical to **Riwāyah 25** (al-Ṭabarī's citation of the *Tafsīr* of 'Abd al-Razzāq), except that at one critical juncture the two manuscripts differ both from **Riwāyah 25** and from each other:

In regard to His words: "into his *umniyyah*": The Prophet desired [*yatamannā*] that God denounce [*ya'īb*] the gods of the Mushrikūn,³⁶³

<u>OR:</u> In regard to His words: "into his *umniyyah*": The Prophet desired [*yatamannā*] <u>that Satan denounce</u> the gods of the Mushrikūn [*an ya'ība al-shayṭānu ālihata al-mushrikīn*],³⁶⁴

and Satan cast into his desire [fa- $alq\bar{a}$ al- $shayt\bar{a}n$ $f\bar{i}$ umniyyati-hi], and he said [fa-qala]: "The gods who are called upon: their intercession is to be hoped for: indeed, they are as high $ghar\bar{a}n\bar{i}q$ [inna al- $\bar{a}lihata$ $allat\bar{i}$ tud' \bar{a}^{365} anna $shaf\bar{a}$ 'ata- $h\bar{a}$ la-turtaj \bar{a} wa-inna- $h\bar{a}$ la-bi-al- $ghar\bar{a}n\bar{i}q$ al-' $ul\bar{a}$]."

Jušanī," in Manuela Marín (ed.), *Estudios Onomástico-Biográficos de al-Andalus (Homenaje a José Maria Fórneas) VI*, Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientifícas, 1988, 337–351, translated as "An Arab among Muwallads: Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Salām al-Khushanī," in Manuela Marín (ed.) *The Formation of al-Andalus, Part 1: History and Society*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998, 115–128; Abū al-Walīd 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Azdī Ibn al-Faradī (d. 403), *Tārīkh al-'ulamā' wa-al-ruwāt li-al-'ilm bi-al-Andalus*, ed. al-Sayyid 'Izzat al-'Aṭṭār al-Ḥusaynī (Cairo: al-Khānjī, 1954), 2:16–17; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 13:459–460. 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī's *Tafsīr* was still being transmitted from al-Khushanī in Spain in the sixth century; see al-Ishbīlī, *Fahrasah*, 54–56.

³⁶² This is the assessment of 'Abduh in the introduction to his edition: 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Şan'ānī, *Tafsīr 'Abd al-Razzāq*, 1:229.

³⁶³ MS Ankara, Sa'ib 4216, noted by Muştafā Muslim Muḥammad in his edition of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī, *Tafsīr*, 2:40, footnote 1. The present analysis is indebted to Muştafā Muslim Muḥammad for his carefulness, as neither of the other two editors notes any textual variants between the manuscripts in regard to this report. Qal'ajī's text cites only the present reading; 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'azīz*, 2:335.

³⁶⁴ MS Dār al-Kutub, Tafsīr 242, noted by Muṣṭafā Muslim Muḥammad in his edition of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 2:40, footnote 1. In his edition, not only does'Abduh not note any textual variants between the manuscripts in regard to this report, but also he seems irresponsibly to collate the two versions, and has the text read "The Prophet desired that God denounce Satan and the gods of the Mushrikīn [*an ya'ība Allāhu al-shayṭāna wa-ālihata al-mushrikīn*]," *Tafsīr 'Abd al-Razzāq*, 3:410.

³⁶⁵ The editions of both Qal'ajī and 'Abduh have yud'ā [sic].

And God removed [*nasakha*] that and established His Signs [*waahkama āyāti-hi*], and he said [*fa-qāla*]: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other? Would you have sons, and He, daughters?," until he reached: "power." When Satan cast what he cast [*lammā alqā al-shayṭān mā alqā*], the Mushrikūn said: "Allāh has spoken favourably of our gods," and they were greatly pleased by it. And that is [*fa-dhālika*] (the meaning of) God's words: "To make that which Satan cast a trial for those in whose hearts is sickness."

The manuscripts of 'Abd al-Razzāq's Tafsīr thus differ from each other, and from al-Tabarī's citation of 'Abd al-Razzāq's Tafsīr, in regard to a single phrase that entirely alters the hermeneutical elaboration of the incident. Where al-Tabari's citation reads, "The Prophet desired that God not denounce [la ya'ib] the gods of the Mushrikūn," MS Sa'ib 4216 reads, "The Prophet desired that God denounce [va'ib] the gods of the Mushrikūn." In this second version, the *fa-qāla* phrase in line 5 of **Riwāyah 26** must be taken to refer to Satan and not the Prophet, unless we are to understand here that Satan managed to make the Prophet say something opposed to his own desire. Here, the Prophet desires something, Satan intervenes to obstruct it, and God then moves to fulfill it. The difference between the text of MS Sa'ib 4216 and that of Riwāyah 25 amounts, of course, to a single word: the absence of the negative particle *lā* from MS Sa'ib 4216. There are two obvious questions that raise themselves here: is the textual variance anything more than a scribal error; and, if so, which of the two wordings is the original?

It seems to me almost certain that al-Ṭabarī's text is the original one and that MS Sa'ib 4216 is a later corruption. We should begin by noting that Muṣṭafa Muslim Muḥammad points out that "most of the *riwāyahs* in the *Tafsīr* of 'Abd al-Razzāq [as published from the manuscripts] are related in al-Ṭabarī by one of two chains" namely, the two cited in **Riwāyah 25**, above.³⁶⁶ In other words, al-Ṭabarī's citations from Ma'mar *via* both Muḥammad b. Thawr and 'Abd al-Razzāq largely correspond to the citations from Ma'mar in the manuscripts of the *Tafsīr* 'Abd al-Razzāq—meaning that we are undoubtedly dealing with the same work. Al-Ṭabarī, as we have

³⁶⁶ In the introduction to his edition of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī, *Tafsīr*, 136–37.

seen, provides two different isnāds for Riwāyah 25: in addition to the citation of 'Abd al-Razzāq's Tafsīr, there is the riwāyah from the Tafsīr Muḥammad b. Thawr 'an Ma'mar 'an Qatādah. While in this instance al-Ţabarī actually cites the text from Muḥammad b. Thawr, he says that the report related by 'Abd al-Razzāq says something similar (bi-nahwi-hi). That al-Tabarī uses the word nahw to mean "the same thing as regards meaning" may be seen in the statement he makes when introducing reports that agree with his own interpretation of the Satanic verses incident (that the Prophet uttered the verses): "The *ahl al-ta'wil* have said *nahw* what we (al-Tabari) have ing over textual differences in the present instance is clear from the fact that he follows the above statement with the citation of none other than Riwāyah 25. In other words, al-Ţabarī is citing Riwāyah 25 for the express purpose of illustrating his own interpretation of the incident, and is hardly likely, in this situation, to give isnāds carrying contradictory reports from the same authority! Both texts that al-Tabarī is citing must, indeed, have said the same thing.

The remaining question, then, is why **Riwāyahs 25** and **26** differ. From my own perusal, it does not appear that, generally speaking, the reports common to the manuscripts of 'Abd al-Razzāq's *Tafsīr*, on the one hand, and those cited from 'Abd al-Razzāq by al-Ṭabarī, on the other, differ meaningfully; rather, such divergences as there are will be largely orthographic or paraphrastic in nature. This would encourage one to view the absence of the *lā* in MS Sa'ib 4216 as a scribal omission from the original text, and thus to disregard **Riwāyah 26** altogether as a hermeneutical unit representative of the *Tafsīr* of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī. What we cannot tell is whether this omission was accidental or a deliberate manipulation of the text aimed at preserving the doctrine of *'iṣmat al-anbiyā*'.³⁶⁸ The only

³⁶⁷ wa-<u>bi-naḥwi</u> mā qulnā fī dhālika qāla ahl al-ta'wīl. dhikru man qāla dhālika:...; al-Ţabarī, Jāmi' al-bayān, 17:191. Al-Ţabarī's use of naḥw corresponds to its meaning as a technical term used by classical Ḥadīth scholars: see Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Abū Shuhbah, al-Wasīt fī 'ulūm wa-muṣṭalaḥ al-ḥadīth (Jeddah: 'Ālam al-Ma'rifah, 1983), 162.

³⁶⁸ Such a manipulation might of course have been innocent in intent: one can see how a later scribe or transmitter would find it unimaginable that the Prophet would have "desired that God *not* denounce [*lā ya 'īb*] the gods of the Mushrikūn," and would have taken the *lā* as necessarily representing a scribal error. There is a

thing that is clear is that **Riwāyah 26**, whether by accident or by design, does to **Riwāyah 25** what **Riwāyah 10** does to **Riwāyah 9**: it adjusts the narrative to present an interpretation of the incident acceptable to those who found repugnant the first-century idea that the Prophet himself uttered the Satanic verses. As for the text of MS Dār al-Kutub, Tafsīr 242—"The Prophet desired <u>that Satan denounce</u> the gods of the Mushrikūn"—this has the effect of rendering the narrative of the Satanic verses incident incoherent, and may be summarily discarded as corrupt.

Once we disregard the textual variants in **Riwāyah 26** as later corruptions, we find that **Riwāyah 26** is identical to **Riwāyah 25**. In other words, we will then have two (if not three) separate transmissions of the same report from 'Abd al-Razzāq from Ma'mar, something that reinforces the attribution of **Riwāyah 25** to Ma'mar b. Rāshid (if not necessarily to Qatādah).

Riwāyahs 24 to 26: Conclusions

Riwāyah 24 may reasonably be taken to represent a transmission from Qatādah b. Di'āmah (60–117), as preserved in second-century Başrah in the *Tafsīr* of Yaḥyā b. Sallām, and thus to constitute a first-century report (a conclusion that will be reinforced as we move on to examine **Riwāyah 27** from Muqātil b. Sulaymān). Although **Riwāyah 25** is also attributed to Qatādah, it does not contain the

similar instance in one of the manuscript sources for the present study where it is incoherently stated that the Prophet "desired . . . that there *not* be sent down upon him that which would *not* drive them (Quraysh) from him [*tamannā*...*an lā yanzila 'alay-hi mā lā yunaffiru-hum 'an-hu*]," whereas the text should read, "that there *not* be sent down upon him that which *would* drive them (Quraysh) away from him," both in terms of narrative logic and because the verb *naffar/yunaffiru/ tanfīr* carries a negative connotation of repulsion, and according to the principle of *'iṣmah*, Prophets are not supposed to commit acts that cause *tanfīr*. The second "not/*lā*" is self-evidently an erroneous addition, but one of ready enough provenance: one can perfectly understand how a scribe or transmitter might be puzzled that the Prophet should want to do other than drive the Unbelievers from him. See Yaḥyā b. al-Qāsim al-Fāḍil al-Yamanī (d. 753), *Mabāḥith al-tanzīl wa-mafātiḥ abwāb al-ta'wīl*, MS London, British Library, Or. 6904, f. 166a.

na'asa motif; thus, either Qatādah related the incident in more than one way, or the report represents the further hermeneutical elaboration by Ma'mar b. Rāshid in Ṣan'ā', building on and attributed to his Basran master, Qatādah, as an authority figure. **Riwāyah 26** is no more than a textual corruption of **Riwāyah 25**; whether deliberate or accidental, we cannot tell.

Riwāyahs 27 to 30: From Muqātil b. Sulaymān

Riwāyahs 27, 28, 29, and **3**0 are given in his *Tafsīr* by Muqātil b. Sulaymān al-Balkhī al-Baṣrī (80–150), a Basran contemporary of all three of Qatādahs (to whom he was junior); Sa'īd b. Abī 'Arūbah (they were of the same generation); and Yaḥyā b. Sallām al-Baṣrī (to whom he was senior). **Riwāyahs 27, 28**, and **29** are elaborations of Qatādah's interpretation of the incident in **Riwāyah 24**.

No less a figure than Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī (d. 208) acknowledged that "compared to Muqātil, the rest were children in *tafsīr*,"³⁶⁹ but Muqātil's reputation among the *ahl al-ḥadīth* was close to uniformly appalling, with the outcome summed up by al-Dhahabī: "They rejected him by consensus."³⁷⁰ Nonetheless, the *Tafsīr* of Muqātil b. Sulaymān represents the earliest complete commentary on the Qur'ān to have come down to us in manuscript form. It was published in Cairo between 1979 and 1986,³⁷¹ but sub-

³⁶⁹ al-nās 'ayāl 'alā Muqātil fī al-tafsīr, cited in Ahmad Ismā'īl Nawfal, Mujāhid: al-Tafsīr wa-al-mufassir (al-Ghardaqah: Dār al-Şafwah, 1990), 249.

³⁷⁰ ajma'ū 'alā tarki-hi, al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 7:202.

³⁷¹Muqātil b. Sulaymān, *Tafsīr Muqātil ibn Sulaymān*, ed. 'Abd Allāh Mahmūd Shiḥātah (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣriyyah al-'Āmmah li-al-Kitāb, 1979–1986), where volume 5 includes a study of the author and the *Tafsīr*. For Muqātil, see the major article of Claude Gilliot, "Muqātil, grand exégète, traditionniste et théologien maudite," *Journal Asiatique* 279 (1991), 31–92, where Muqātil's treatment of the Satanic verses is discussed at 77–78, and the fact that "certain of Muqātil's interpretations about prophets denote a state anterior to later developments in prophetology as regards impeccability" is noted at 70, reiterated at 84, and illustrated at 70–76. See also Isaiah Goldfield, "Muqātil b. Sulaymān," *Arabic and Islamic Studies* 2 (1978), 13–30; İsmail Cerrahoğlu, "Tefsirde Mukâtil ebn Süleyman ve eserleri," *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyet Fakultesi Dergisi* 21 (1976), 1–35, and

sequently banned for its purportedly unorthodox content—the Azhar taking the same view as had the Ḥadīth movement a millennium earlier.³⁷²

Muqātil b. Sulaymān narrates the Satanic verses incident at no less than four points in his *Tafsīr*: the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj (**Riwāyah 27**); on Qur'ān 53:19–26 al-Najm (**Riwāyah 28**); on Qur'ān 109 al-Kāfirūn (**Riwāyah 29**); and on Qur'ān 39:43–45 al-Zumar (**Riwāyah 3**0).

Riwāyah 27: Muqātil's Commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj

Riwāyah 27 is given in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj:³⁷³

"We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet, but that when he *tamannā*": meaning, when he thought to himself [*haddatha nafsa-hu*]; "Satan cast into his *umniyyah*": meaning, what he was thinking to himself about $[f\bar{i} had\bar{i}thi-hi]$.³⁷⁴

Ömer Türker, Mukātil b. Süleyman, *TDVIA*. On a confusion surrounding his identity, see Patricia Crone, "A Note on Muqātil b. Hayyān and Muqātil b. Sulaymān," *Der Islam* 74 (1997), 238–249. The text of the manuscript of Muqātil's *tafsīr* contains a small number of attributed grammatical glosses that post-date Muqātil (see Gilliot, "Muqātil, grand exegete," 49), but there is no indication that the rest of the content is not Muqātil's. For the continuing transmission of his *Tafsīr*, see the four chains cited by al-Tha'labī, *Mufassirū sharq*, 39–40.

 $^{3^{372}}$ I obtained my copy of the five-volume *Tafsīr Muqātil ibn Sulaymān* in Cairo in 2000 from the proprietor of a bookstall in a carpark near the al-Ḥusayn Hospital, who specialized in "banned books [*mamnū ʿūt*]." It took him three months (and a healthy advance payment) to procure it for me. A Beirut reprint has since been issued.

³⁷³ Muqātil b. Sulaymān, *Tafsīr*, 3:132–133.

³⁷⁴ Muqātil here refers the noun *umniyyah* in Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj to the noun *amānī* in Qur'ān 2:78 al-Baqarah:

⁽This is) like God's words: "Among them are illiterate people who do not know anything of the book except for *amānī* [*wa-min-hum ummiyyūn lā ya'lamūna al-kitāba illā amāniyya*]"; He (God) is saying: except that which is related to them (by the rabbis) from it [*mā yuḥaddathū 'an-hā*]—meaning, the Torah."

The linguistic relationship that Muqātil is trying to establish here is that *umni-yyah* and *amānī* both mean "that which is spoken about"—*umniyyah* meaning "that which the Prophet thinks / talks to himself about," and *amānī* meaning "that which the rabbis talk to the illiterate Jews about." See the commentary on Qur'ān 2:78 in *Tafsīr Muqātil*, 1:118; see also Alfred Guillaume, "The Meaning of *amānīya* in Sūrah 2:73," in *The World of Islam: Studies in Honour of Phillip K. Hitti*, ed. James Kritzeck and R. Bayly Winder (London: Macmillan, 1960), 41–46.

This was (sent down) because $[wa-dh\bar{a}lika anna]$ while the Prophet was reciting in prayer $[k\bar{a}na yaqra'f\bar{i} al-sal\bar{a}t]$ at the Station of Ibrāhīm, he became drowsy [na'asa] and said: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt, the third, the other? Those high *gharānīq*! Intercession, from them, is to be sought [tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā 'inda-hā al-shafā 'ah $turtajā]." When the Unbelievers <math>[kuff\bar{a}r]$ of Quraysh heard that their gods had (the power of) intercession $[li-\bar{a}lihati-him al-shafā 'ah]$, they were delighted $[farih\bar{u}]$.

Then the Prophet came back [*raja*'a] and said: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other? Should you have males, and He females? That, indeed, would be an unfair division!"

And that is (why) He—the Glorious—said: "And God removes what Satan cast" onto the tongue of Muḥammad ['alā lisān Muḥammad]. "Then God establishes His Signs": from the falsehood that Satan casts onto the tongue of Muḥammad [al-bāṭil alladhī yulqī-hi al-shayṭān 'alā lisān Muḥammad]. "And God is All-Knowing, All-Wise."

"To make that which Satan cast" onto the tongue of the Prophet [' $al\bar{a}$ lisān al-nabī], and what they had been hoping for in regard to the intercession of their gods, "a trial for those in whose hearts is sickness," meaning: doubt.

The narrative in **Riwāyah 27** from Muqātil is clearly related to that in **Riwāyah 24** from Qatādah as it begins with the statement "The Prophet was reciting in prayer at the Station of Ibrāhīm when he became drowsy and said . . ." The narrative motif of the Prophet's drowsiness in prayer at the Station of Ibrāhīm occurs only in **Riwāyah 24**, from Qatādah, and **Riwāyahs 27**, **28**, and **29**, from Muqātil. Since Muqātil, himself a migrant to Baṣrah,³⁷⁵ is known to have drawn on Qatādah's *tafsīr* corpus in the preparation of his own *Tafsīr* (Qatādah's name occurs in both of the lists of Muqātil's authorities given in the opening passage of his *Tafsīr*),³⁷⁶ one is encouraged one to conclude that Muqātil—who does not give *isnāds* obtained this basic hermeneutical elaboration of the Satanic verses incident from the *Tafsīr* of Qatādah. This, in turn, encourages us to date **Riwāyah 24** to Qatādah's lifetime (60–117). Two elements in **Riwāyah 27** that are not in **Riwāyah 24** are the gloss of *tamannā/*

³⁷⁵ Muqātil first went to Bașrah at some point between 130 and 136. He returned there in the 140s and remained there until his death in 150 (see Muqātil, *Tafsīr*, 5:33).

³⁷⁶ Tafsīr Muqātil b. Sulaymān, 1:25.

umniyyah as "the Prophet's thoughts" and the fact of the Prophet realizing his error on his own.

Riwāyah 28: Muqātil's Commentary on Qur'ān 53:19–26 al-Najm

Riwāyah 28 is Muqātil's commentary on Qur'ān 53:19-26 al-Najm:377

"Would you have sons, and He, daughters?": when they said that the angels were the daughters of God [$h\bar{i}na \ q\bar{a}l\bar{u} \ inna \ al-mal\bar{a}'ikata \ ban\bar{a}t$ All $\bar{a}h$]. "That, then, would be an unfair division": meaning, a crooked award [$j\bar{a}'izah' awj\bar{a}'$], that they should have sons and He, daughters.

Then He mentioned their gods and said, "Indeed, they": He is saying: What are they "but names which you have named, you and your ancestors; God has not sent down any power upon them" for them to be gods!... "Indeed, you follow no more than surmise [zann]": He says that they do not have knowledge [*'ilm*] that they are gods, they only surmise what they are convinced of; that al-Lāt and al-'Uzzā and Manāt are gods....

"Or does man get what he desires [*am li-al-insān mā tamannā*]?": that the angels intercede for them. That was (sent down) because the Prophet recited [*qara'a*] Sūrat al-Najm and "By the Night when it darkens"³⁷⁸ and proclaimed them in Mecca. And when he reached, "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?," he became drowsy [*na'asa*], and Satan cast onto his tongue [*alqā al-shayṭānu 'alā lisāni-hi*] (at) that "the third, the other!": "Those high *gharānīq!* Intercession from them is to be sought [*tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā 'inda-hā alshafā'ah turtajā*]," meaning, the angels [*al-malā'ikah*]. The Unbelievers [*kuffār*] were delighted [*fariḥū*]; they had been hoping [*rajaw*] that the angels would have (the power of) intercession.

And when he reached the end of it, he made the *sajdah* and the Believers made the *sajdah* out of belief in the veracity of God [*taṣdīqan li-Allāh*], and the Unbelievers of Mecca made the *sajdah* at the mention of the gods [*'inda dhikr al-ālihah*]. Except that al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah was an old man, so he took dirt to his forehead and made the *sajdah* on it. Then he (al-Walīd) said, "He (Muḥammad) lives as Umm Ayman

³⁷⁷ Muqātil b. Sulaymān, *Tafsīr*, 4:161-162.

³⁷⁸ Qur'ān 92:1 al-Layl.

and her female companions live." Umm Ayman was the Prophet's servant; Ayman, the Prophet's servant, was killed on the Day of Khaybar.

It is particularly instructive to see how Muqātil gives slightly variant accounts of the Satanic verses incident within the same work. While both **Riwāyah 27**, the narrative in Sūrat al-Hajj, and **Riwāyah** 28, the narrative in Sūrat al-Najm, present the same interpretation of the incident, the narrative given in Muqātil's exegesis of Sūrat al-Najm omits certain narrative elements present in his exegesis of Sūrat al-Hajj, and includes others. Present in Riwāyah 28 / the commentary on Qur'ān 53:19–26, but not in **Riwāyah 27** / the commentary on Qur'an 22:52 al-Hajj, are the explicit statement of Satan's intervention, "Satan cast onto his tongue"; the disparaging remark by Abū Uhayhah; and the the motif of the *sajdah* of Quraysh (which relates directly to the recitation of Sūrat al-Najm). Present in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj, but not in Qur'ān 53:19-26 al-Najm, are the glossing of tamannā to mean "he thought to himself [haddatha nafsa-hu]" and the account of the Prophet's correcting himself by reciting Qur'ān 53:20-23 al-Najm as abrogating verses. Indeed, the account in the exegesis of Sūrat al-Najm does not actually mention that the Satanic verses were ever abrogated! In Riwāyahs 16 to 20 from Abū al-ʿĀliyah, we have seen the phenomenon of accounts from the same author that differ in wording, or in the inclusion of certain secondary narrative elements, while maintaining the same hermeneutical position. The fact of a single author giving textually variant accounts of the incident in the same work strongly suggests that we should not view narrative differences as calling into question the genuineness of transmission, unless those differences result in the same author taking irreconcilable positions on the fundamental hermeneutical questions in the narrative. The reason for the differences between the two accounts here is self-evidently related to the different exegetical issues that arise from the respective sets of verses.

Muqātil's own interpretation of the incident is clearly an elaboration of Qatādah's *na'asa* interpretation. Nonetheless, there are differences between Muqātil's and Qatādah's respective accounts; for example, in **Riwāyah 27**, Qur'ān 53:20-21 are given as abrogating verses, while they are not mentioned in **Riwāyah 24** from Qatādah. However, the narrative of **Riwāyah 27** differs from that

of Riwāyah 24 in only one important aspect: in Riwāyah 27 (as in Riwāyah 14) the Prophet apparently corrects the error on his own—"Then the Prophet came back [*raja*'a] and said . . ." While it is not clear here whether the verb *raja*'a refers to the Prophet's return from drowsiness to full consciousness, or his return to the Station of Ibrāhīm at some later juncture, the former reading seems the more logical in the context of the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Hajj; but the latter is more likely in light of the commentary on Qur'ān 53:19 al-Najm where the Prophet goes on to perform the sajdah and Quraysh follow him. While the fact that the Prophet corrects himself might seem to support the reading of Riwāyah 27 to mean that this was a simple recitation error arising from lack of concentration, Muqātil's own gloss of tamannā to mean haddatha nafsa-hu would seem to suggest otherwise. The point here is that the Prophet was not merely drowsy, but that he was also thinking to himself and that it is into those thoughts that Satan cast his verses (fi hadīthi-hi). It seems only reasonable to assume a relationship between the content of the Prophet's thoughts and his ready acceptance of Satan's suggestion.

In **Riwāyah 28**, it is interesting to note that Muqātil uses the terms "gods [ālihah]" and "angels [*malā'ikah*]" interchangeably when referring to al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt. At this point, we may recall that in Hūd b. Muḥakkam's citation of the text of **Riwāyah 23** from the *Tafsīr* of al-Kalbī, there was a gloss of the word *gharānīq*, underlined below:

when he reached, "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?," Satan cast onto his tongue: "Indeed, they are with the high *gharānīq*?"—<u>meaning the angels</u>—"And, indeed, it is their intercession that is hoped for [*fa-inna-hā maʿa al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafāʿata-hā hiya al-murtajā*]!"³⁷⁹

The pre-Islamic worship of female angels is attested in Qur'ān 43:19–20 Zukhruf: "They make the angels, who are servants of the Merciful, female... They said: Had the Merciful willed, we would not have worshipped them."³⁸⁰ The *femaleness* of the angels

³⁷⁹ Hūd b. Muḥakkam, Tafsīr, 4:239-240.

³⁸⁰ wa-ja'alū al-malā'ikah alladhīna hum 'ibād al-raḥmāni ināthan . . . wa-qālū law shā'a al-raḥmānu mā 'abadnā-hum. See also Qur'ān 34:40 Sabā': "One day He will

is expressly denied by Qur'an 53:27 al-Najm: "Those who do not believe in the life to come call the angels by female names."³⁸¹ The pre-Islamic understanding that the angels were Allāh's daughters is mentioned by Qur'ān 37:149-150 al-Ṣāffāt: "And now ask them: Does your Lord have daughters, and they, sons? Or did we create the angels female, while they watched?"³⁸² The pre-Islamic worship of intercessionary lesser deities is mentioned in Qur'ān 10:18 Yūnus: "And they worship, side by side with God, that which neither harms nor benefits them, and they say: These are our intercessors [shu $fa'\bar{a}'$] with God."³⁸³ And that at least some angels might be granted the right of intercession by God is stated in Qur'ān 53:26 al-Najm: "However many angels there are in the heavens, their intercession is of no benefit, except after Allah permits this to whom He wills and approves!"384 Finally, that al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt were the deities worshipped as intercessionary angels [malā'ikah] and daughters of Allāh [banāt Allāh] is explained in the following passage by al-Mas'ūdī (d. 346):

There was a category [*sinf*] of the Arabs who worshipped the angels [*ya'budūna al-malā'ikah*], and claimed that they were the daughters of God [*banāt Allāh*]. They worshipped them so that they (the angels) would intercede with God on their behalf [*fa-kānū ya'budūna-hā li-tashfa'a la-hum ilā Allāh*]. These are the people of whom God speaks in His words: "And they create daughters for God—the Glorious—and for themselves, what they desire";³⁸⁵ and in His words: "Have you seen

gather them (the Unbelievers) all together, and will ask the angels: Is it you they worshipped?" See further Watt, "Belief in a High God," 209–211.

³⁸¹inna alladhīna lā yu'minūna bi-al-ākhirati la-yusammūna al-malā'ikata tasmiyata al-unthā.

³⁸² fa-istafti-him a-li-rabbi-ka al-banātu wa-la-hum al-banūna / am khalaqnā al-almalā'ikata ināthan wa-hum shāhidūna. See also Qur'ān 17:40 al-Isrā': "Has, then, your Lord distinguished you with sons, and taken for Himself daughters from among the angels?"

³⁸³ wa-ya buduna min duni Allahi mā lā yadurru-hum wa-lā yanfa u-hum wa-yaquluna hā 'ulā 'i shufa 'ā 'u-nā 'ind Allāhi.

³⁸⁴ wa-kam min malakin fi al-samāwāti lā tughni shafā 'atu-hum shay'an illā min ba'di an ya'dhana Allāhu li-man yashā'u wa-yardā.

³⁸⁵wa-yaj'alūna li-Allāhi al-banāti subhāna-hu wa-la-hum mā yashtahūna, Qur'ān 16:57 al-Naḥl; "what they desire" is, of course, sons.

al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt, the third, the other? Should you have sons, and He, daughters? That, indeed, would be an unfair division!"³⁸⁶

Muqātil, then, is describing a Qurashī theology in which al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt were simultaneously seen as intercessionary lesser deities, as angels, and as daughters of Allāh. In Hūd b. Muḥakkam's citation of **Riwāyah 23**, the Satanic verses are depicted as a concession to this belief. The identification of angels with cranes (one of the two meanings of *gharānīq*) is attested in the following report in the *Sīrah* of Yūnus b. Bukayr, where the Prophet is describing the famous cleansing of his breast (*sharḥ al-ṣadr*):

The Messenger of God said: Two angels came to me in the form of two cranes [*karkariyayn*]. They had with them ice, snow and cold water. One of them opened my chest, and the other washed it, blowing out (the ice, snow and cold water) through its beak [*wa-majja al-ākhar minąāra-hu fa-ghasala-hu*].³⁸⁷

It is further interesting to note the disparaging remarks of al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah: "He lives as Umm Ayman and her female companions live." We have already noted the motif of Abū Uḥayḥah's possibly disparaging reference to the Prophet as Ibn Abī Kabshah in **Riwāyahs 17** and **19**. The present remark would appear even more likely to be derogatory. Umm Ayman was an Ethiopian slave in the household of the Prophet's father, 'Abd Allāh, who had looked after the Prophet in his childhood. The Prophet subsequently freed her, and is reported to have called her "My second

³⁸⁶ See Abū al-Hasan 'Alī b. al-Husayn al-Mas'ūdī, Murūj al-dhahab wa-ma'ādin aljawhar ed. Yūsuf As'ad Dāghir (Beirut: Dār al-Andalus, 1965), 2:102–103, where al-Mas'ūdī also distinguishes between the worship of idols, described in Qur'ān 39:3 al-Zumar, and the worship of angels, described in Qur'ān 53:19 al-Najm. See also Welch, "Allah and Other Supernatural Beings," 739–740; and Paul Arno Eichler, Die Dschinn, Teufel und Engel im Koran (Leipzig: Klein, 1928), 98–99.

³⁸⁷ See Yūnus b. Bukayr/Hamidullah, Sīrat Ibn Ishāq, 28; Yūnus b. Bukayr/Zakkār, Kitāb al-siyar wa-al-maghāzī, 51. For the argument that the two birds in this story are an instance of "primitive Islam" still influenced by "Arab paganism," see Harris Birkeland, The Opening of Muhammed's Breast (Oslo: Hos Jacob Dybwad, 1955), 56–59. There is a fascinating early report that remembers one of the Companions of the Prophet as wearing a ring that bore the motif of two cranes; see Al-Tawil, "Early Arab Icons," 61.

mother."³⁸⁸ For the Prophet to live like Umm Ayman and her female friends means that, as far as al-Walīd is concerned, the Prophet's status is no better than that of a former female slave. This not only reinforces the idea of Prophetic error but also can be taken as putting forward Quraysh's view as being that the Prophet's uttering of the Satanic verses was a concession to their authority and a humiliation for Muḥammad.

Riwāyah 29: Muqātil's Commentary on Qur'ān 109 al-Kāfirūn

Riwāyah 29 appears in Muqātil's commentary on Qur'ān 109 al-Kāfirūn ("The Unbelievers"):³⁸⁹

> Say: O, you who are Unbelievers! I worship not that which you worship! Nor do you worship that which I worship! Nor will I worship that which you worship! Nor will you worship that which I worship! To you, your religion, and to me, my religion!

The following is the account of the Satanic verses incident:

"Say: O, you Unbelievers!": this came down in regard to the Mockers [*al-mustahzi'ūn*] from among Quraysh. This was because the Prophet recited, in Mecca, "By the star when it sets!" and when he recited "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?," Satan

³⁸⁸ See al-Suyūţī, Raf' sha'n al-hubshān, ed. Şafwān Dāwūdī and Hasan 'Ibajī (Jeddah: Dār al-Qiblah, 1416h), 168–173; and Muḥammad Hasan Burayghis, Umm Ayman: hāḍinat rasūl Allāh Barakah bint Tha'labah Umm Ayman (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1998).

³⁸⁹Muqātil b. Sulaymān, *Tafsīr*, 4:887; also cited from Muqātil by Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī, *Tafsīr Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī*, 3:520, and in summary in the putative *Tafsīr* of Ibn Hibbān al-Bustī (d. 354/965), MS Istanbul University Library, A 1910, f. 158a-b. On the transmission and citation of Muqātil's *tafsīr*, see Mehmet Akıf Koç, "A Comparison of the References to Muqātil b. Sulaymān (150/767) in the Exegesis of al-Tha'labī (427/1036) with Muqātil's Own Exegesis," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 53 (2008), 59-101 (for an observation on Abū al-Layth's citations of Muqātil in particular, see 73-74). Gilliot seems not to have noticed the commentary on Sūrat al-Kāfirūn when discussing Muqātil's treatment of the Satanic verses; see "Muqātil, grand exégète," 77.

cast onto his tongue [*alqā al-shayṭānu 'alā lisāni-hi*] in his drowsiness [*fī wasni-hi*]: "Those high *gharānīq!* Intercession from them is to be sought [*tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā 'inda-hā al-shafā'ah turtajā*]."

That evening, at the rear of the Ka'bah, Abū Jahl b. Hishām, and Shaybah, and 'Utbah, the sons of Rabī'ah, and Umayyah b. Khalaf, and al-'Āṣ b. Wā'il, and the Mockers from among Quraysh said, "Muḥammad! Do not leave us until one of two conditions is fulfilled: either we enter with you into part of your religion and worship your god and you enter with us into part of our religion and worship our gods, or you dissociate yourself from our gods and we dissociate ourselves from your god." Within the hour, God sent down in regard to them: "Say: O, you Unbelievers!" to the end of the *sūrah*.

This is the only instance I have been able to find in the early sources of the linking of the Satanic verses incident to the revelation of Sūrat al-Kāfirūn, which is the Qur'ānic locus classicus for the Prophetic repudiation of the religion of Quraysh. Here, again, we have an example of how, in the genre of *tafsir*, the Qur'anic verse that is the point of reference for a narrative affects the way in which that narrative is constituted in that specific context as distinct from other contexts. The account of the Satanic verses incident in Riwāyah 29 is reduced to a summary containing only the definitive motif of the Prophet's drowsiness, and the explicit statement of the Prophet's uttering the Satanic verses, while the bulk of the narrative is directed at furnishing a context for the revelation of Qur'ān 109 al-Kāfirūn, which here takes place as a result of negotiations between Quraysh and the Prophet after Muhammad's having uttered the Satanic verses. Quraysh are presented here as taking the concession in the Satanic verses as a strategic opportunity to settle Muhammad's religious dissent once and for all-in other words, as a symptom of weakness on the part of the Prophet (as is suggested by the remark in Riwāyah 28: "He lives as Umm Ayman and her companions live"). However, Muhammad makes no further concession; rather, "within the hour" Divine intervention settles the matter by the revelation of Sūrat al-Kāfirūn. Indeed, in Riwāyah 29, it is Sūrat al-Kāfirūn that emerges as the verses that abrogate the Satanic verses and the theological concession contained therein. Also, in **Riwāyah 29**, a time frame emerges for the Satanic verses incident that is absent in **Riwāyahs 27** and **28**, whereby all the events related to the incident take place in a single day (as they do in **Riwāyahs 2**, **3**, and **8**).

Riwāyah 30: Muqātil's Commentary on Qur'ān 39:43-45 al-Zumar

Riwāyah 30 appears in Muqātil's commentary on Qur'ān 39:43-45 al-Zumar:

Or, they take intercessors beside God; say: even though they have no power over anything, nor any understanding! God's alone is all intercession, His is the dominion over the heavens and the earth; and it is to Him that you will be returned. And When God alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who do not believe in the Last Day shrink in aversion, and when mention is made of other than Him, lo, they rejoice!³⁹⁰

The following is the account of the Satanic verses incident:

"And when mention is made of those" who are worshipped "other than Him" from among the gods, "lo, they rejoice" at the mention of them. This is the day that the Prophet recited Sūrat al-Najm in Mecca, and recited [fa-qara'a] "al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt, the third, the other: those high $gharān\bar{n}q$! Intercession from them is to be sought [tilka al $gharān\bar{n}q$ al-'ulā 'inda-hā al-shafā'ah turtajā]." The Unbelievers of Mecca were delighted [$farih\bar{u}$] when they heard that they (the goddesses) have intercession [$anna la-h\bar{a} shaf\bar{a}'ah$].³⁹¹

In **Riwāyah 3**0, Muqātil again presents a slightly different narrative to those he gives elsewhere in his *Tafsīr* in accordance with the hermeneutical function of the narrative in the given Qur'ānic context. In **Riwāyah 3**0, the Satanic verses incident serves to explain the allusion in Qur'ān 39:43-45 to an occasion on which those who

³⁹⁰ am ittakhadhū min dūn Allāh shufaʿā' qul a-wa-law kānū lā yamlikūna shay'an wa-lā yaʿqilūn. qul li-allāh al-shafāʿah jamīʿan la-hu mulk al-samāwāt wa-al-ard thumma ilay-hi turjaʿūn. wa-idhā dhukira Allāh waḥda-hu ishma'azzat qulūb alladhīna lā yu'minūna bi-al-ākhirah wa-idhā dhukira alladhīna min dūni-hi idhā hum yastabshirūn.

³⁹¹Muqātil b. Sulaymān, *Tafsīr*, 3:680.

"take intercessors with God" are pleased when their intercessors are mentioned along with God. According to **Riwāyah 3**0, this allusion in Qur'ān 39:43–45 is to the Satanic verses incident, which is narrated in bare summary form with the emphasis on those narrative elements that are referents for the allusions in the Qur'ānic verses at hand: the mention of intercessionary deities alongside God, and the consequent pleasure of those who believe in intercession. The motif of the Prophet's drowsiness is entirely absent here, presumably because the point is not to explain *why* or in what circumstances the Prophet uttered the Satanic verses but merely to establish that he did, on a given occasion, mention the intercessionary deities of Quraysh along God. In **Riwāyah 32**, below, we will encounter another instance of an early *mufassir*, Mujāhid b. Jabr al-Makkī (d. 102), relating the Satanic verses incident to Qur'ān 39:43 al-Zumar. It is interesting to note that Mujāhid was one of Muqātil b. Sulaymān's sources for *tafsīr*.³⁹²

Riwāyahs 27 to 30: Conclusions

Riwāyahs 27 to 29 represent the exegetical activity of Muqātil b. Sulaymān, and are an elaboration of **Riwāyah 24** from Qatādah, one of Muqātil's stated sources, with which they share the hermeneutical elaboration of the Prophet having uttered the Satanic verses in a state of drowsiness. In **Riwāyah 27**, however, Muqātil goes beyond Qatādah's **Riwāyah 24** by glossing *tammanā/umniyyah* as "the Prophet's thoughts," thereby creating a link between that which the Prophet was thinking about and that which Satan cast. **Riwāyahs 29** and **30** extend the association of the Satanic verses incident from the three parts of the Revelation we have encountered thus far in this study—Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj, Qur'ān 53:19 al-Najm, and Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā'—to include Qur'ān 109 al-Kāfirūn and Qur'ān 39:43-45 al-Zumar. In each of the four *riwāyahs* of Muqātil, the incident is narrated slightly differently. This sharply illustrates the nature of narrative in the genre of *tafsīr*, where different narrative elements

³⁹² Nawfal, *Mujāhid*, 248-249.

are selected for inclusion and omission, and are given different emphasis, on the basis of their hermeneutical relationship with the verses under exegesis. Despite their differences, all four *riwāyahs* from Muqātil agree on the fundamental hermeneutical issues: the Prophet recited the Satanic verses, and according to **Riwāyahs 27**, **28**, and **29**—the three *riwāyahs* that are concerned with why he did so—he did this in a state of drowsiness.

Riwāyahs 31 to 33: From Mujāhid b. Jabr

Riwāyahs 31, 32, and 33 are from the important first-century *mu-fassir*, Mujāhid b. Jabr al-Makkī (d. 103/721), a student of Ibn 'Abbās whom Qatādah b. Di'āmah is reported to have called "the most learned man alive in *tafsīr* [*a'lam man baqiya bi-al-tafsīr*]," and of whom Sufyān al-Thawrī said, "If you get Mujāhid's *tafsīr*, it is enough for you." Mujāhid was also a $q\bar{a}ss$,³⁹³ and generally regarded as a reliable Ḥadīth transmitter cited in all of the four canonical *sunan* collections.³⁹⁴ He is reported to have said that he went through the entire Qur'ān with Ibn 'Abbās three times, stopping to ask him about the *sabab al-nuzīl* (occasion of Revelation) of each verse.³⁹⁵

Riwāyah 31: From Mujāhid's Commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj cited by Ibn 'Aqīlah

Riwāyah 31 is cited from Mujāhid in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj in the *al-Jawhar al-manẓūm fī al-tafsīr bi-al-marfū*' *wa-al-maḥkūm* of Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Ibn 'Aqīlah (d. 1150/1737),

³⁹³ Lecker, "King Ibn Ubayy and the Qussās," 72.

³⁹⁴ This quote is cited in the editor's introduction to Mujāhid b. Jabr, *Tafsīr al-Imām Mujāhid ibn Jabr*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Salām Abū al-Nīl (Cairo: Dār al-Fikr al-Islamī al-Ḥadīthah, 1989), 77–170, at 84; the assessments of him as a transmitter are assembled at 95. Abū al-Nīl's edition is superior to the earlier *Tafsīr Mujāhid*, ed, 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ṭāhir b. Muḥammad al-Sūratī (Islamabad: Majma' al-Buḥūth al-Islāmiyyah, n.d.), 39–53.

³⁹⁵ Nawfal, Mujāhid, 45.

a late *tafsīr bi-al-ma'thūr* that draws on a number of early Qur'ān commentaries and that—as the title indicates—restricts itself only to such reports as are carried by complete chains (*marfū*') and that thus establish an authoritative ruling (*maḥkūm*). **Riwāyah 31** is carried by this *isnād*:

'Abd b. Ḥumayd (170s-249) ← [...] ← Mujāhid (103 / 721).

The *isnād* suggests three things: first, that the *riwāyah* was recorded in the now lost *Tafsīr* of 'Abd b. Humayd;³⁹⁶ second, that Ibn 'Aqīlah is abbreviating the *isnād* by omitting the intermediary transmitters between 'Abd b. Humayd and Mujāhid (else the report can hardly be *marfū* 'or *maḥkūm*); and third, that for Ibn 'Aqīlah, reports from Mujāhid may assuredly be assumed to go back to a Companion (in this case, most likely Ibn 'Abbās), else, again, he would not consider them *marfū*' or *maḥkūm*. The following is the account of the Satanic verses incident:

The Messenger of God recited Sūrat al-Najm, Satan cast those words into his mouth [*fa-alqā al-shayṭān fī fī-hi tilka al-kalimāt*], and the Muslims prostrated themselves. Then God removed that which Satan cast onto his mouth [*thumma nasakha Allāh mā alqā al-shayṭān 'alā fī-hi*], and established His āyāt [*wa-aḥkama āyāti-hi*].³⁹⁷

In this extremely summary report, there is no mention of the text of the Satanic verses themselves. However, the phrase "Satan cast those words into his mouth [fa- $alq\bar{a}$ al- $shayt\bar{a}n$ $f\bar{i}$ $f\bar{i}$ -hi tilka al-ka $lim\bar{a}t$]" indicates that the words in question have been cited earlier in the discussion, and that the phrase is referring back to "those words." It is highly likely that Ibn 'Aqīlah is abbreviating the report, which is

³⁹⁶See Riwāyah 14, above.

³⁹⁷Muhammad b. Ahmad Ibn 'Aqīlah al-Makkī, al-Jawhar al-manzūm fī al-tafsīr bi-al-marfū' wa-al-mahkūm, MS Istanbul, Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa 60, f. 265b. On the work, see Süleyman Mollaibrahimoğlu, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesinde Bulunan Yazma Tefsirler (Metot ve Kaynakları) (Istanbul: Süleymaniye Vakfı, 2002), 439-447 (a portion of the khutbah indicating Ibn 'Aqīlah's method is reproduced at 445); on the author, see the editor's introduction to Ibn 'Aqīlah, al-Fawā'id aljalīlah fī mūsalsalāt Ibn 'Aqīlah, ed. Ridā al-Qahwahjī (Beirut: Dār al-Bashā'ir, 2000), 25-34; and Abdülhamit Birişık, "İbn Akīle," TDVIA.

one of a long list of reports he cites in relation to Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj. Certainly there is no doubt in **Riwāyah 31** that the Prophet recited Satan's words: this is emphasized in short order by the phrases "Satan cast into his mouth" and "Satan cast onto his mouth." **Riwāyah 31** does not occur in the published editions of the surviving manuscript of Mujāhid's *Tafsīr*, which represent the work in the transmission of Warqā' b. 'Umar (d. 160) from Ibn Abī Najīḥ al-Makkī (d. 132).³⁹⁸ However, there were other chains of transmission of Mujāhid's *Tafsīr*, and it is likely from one of these that 'Abd b. Ḥumayd is transmitting.³⁹⁹ An even briefer version of **Riwāyah 31** is given also by al-Suyūṭī in the *Durr* with the same *isnād*: 'Abd b. Ḥumayd \leftarrow [...] \leftarrow Mujāhid:

"The Messenger of God recited Sūrat al-Najm, Satan cast onto his mouth [$alq\bar{a} al$ -shaytān ' $al\bar{a} f\bar{i}$ -hi], and He established His Signs."⁴⁰⁰ Despite the pared-down nature of al-Suyūţī's citation, the fact that he is citing the same source as Ibn 'Aqīlah is confirmed by the presence of the unique phrase $alq\bar{a} al$ -shatān ' $al\bar{a} f\bar{i}$ -hi, which occurs nowhere other than via this isnād from Mujāhid.

Riwāyah 32: From Mujāhid's Commentary on Qur'ān 39:45 al-Zumar Cited by al-Wāḥidī

Satan's words *are* quoted in **Riwāyah 32**, which is cited by al-Wāḥidī al-Naysābūrī (d. 468), without an *isnād*, in both his middle *Tafsīr* of the Qur'ān, *al-Wasīț*,⁴⁰¹ and his long *Tafsīr*, *al-Basīț*, in the commentary on Qur'ān 39:45 al-Zumar: "And When God alone is mentioned,

³⁹⁸ The two published editions cited above are of the *Tafsīr Mujāhid* in this transmission, on which see G. Stauth, *Die Überlieferung des Korankommentars Muğāhid b. Ğabrs: Zur Frage der Rekonstruktion der in den Sammelwerken des 3. Jh. d. H. benutzen frühislamischen Quellenwerke* (Giessen: Philosophischen Fakultät der Universität Giessen, 1969); and Fred Leemhuis, "Ms. 1075 tafsīr of the Cairene Dār al-Kutub and Muğāhid's *Tafsīr,*" in R. Peters (ed.), *Proceedings of the Ninth Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants* (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 169–180.

³⁹⁹ For other chains of transmission from Mujāhid, see Nawfal, *Mujāhid*, 325–371.

⁴⁰⁰ The text is corrupt; I am reading *fa-alqā al-shaytān 'alā fī-hi <u>wa</u>-aḥkama ayāti-hi* (the necessary conjunction, *wa*, "and," is missing); al-Suyūţī, *Durr*, 6:69.

⁴⁰¹Abū al-Hasan 'Alī Ahmad al-Wāhidī, *al-Wasīţ fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, ed. 'Ādil Ahmad 'Abd al-Mawjūd, 'Alī Muhammad Mu'awwad, Ahmad Muhammad Şīrah, Ah-

the hearts of those who do not believe in the Last Day shrink in aversion, and when mention is made of other than Him, lo, they rejoice."⁴⁰²

"Lo, they rejoice!" . . . Mujāhid and Muqātil said: meaning, when⁴⁰³ the Prophet recited Sūrat al-Najm in Mecca and said [fa- $q\bar{a}la$], "Those high $ghar\bar{a}n\bar{i}q$ [tilka al- $ghar\bar{a}n\bar{i}q$ al-' $ul\bar{a}$]." The Unbelievers of Mecca were delighted [fariha] by this, when they heard that they (the god-desses) have intercession [$h\bar{i}na$ sami' \bar{u} anna la- $h\bar{a}$ shaf \bar{a} 'ah].⁴⁰⁴

Riwāyah 32 presents Mujāhid as explicating the allusion in Qur'ān 39:43-45 to an occasion on which those who "take intercessors with God" are pleased when their intercessors are mentioned along with God by relating the allusion to the Prophet's mentioning the intercessionary capacity of the deities of Quraysh in the Satanic verses: "The Unbelievers of Mecca were delighted by this, when they heard that they (the goddesses) have intercession." We have seen a similar presentation in **Riwāyah 30** in the *Tafsīr* of Muqātil b. Sulaymān, a *mu-fassir* of the next generation who, we have noted, drew on Mujāhid's *tafsīr* (it may be that Mujāhid is Muqātil's source in this instance).

It is instructive to observe that while **Riwāyah 32** quotes the first part of the text of the Satanic verses—"Those high *gharānīq* [*tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā*]"—it does not quote the second part of the Satanic verses in which the *shafā'ah* of the deities is confirmed, much in the same way that **Riwāyah 31**, while referring to "those words which Satan cast into his mouth," does not quote the text of the Satanic

mad 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Jamal, and 'Abd al-Raḥman 'Uways (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1994), 3:585.

⁴⁰² Al-Wāḥidī, *al-Basīț*, MS Istanbul, Nuruosmaniye 240, f. 18a.

⁴⁰³ The word *hīna*, "when," is not in *al-Basīț*.

⁴⁰⁴ Al-Husayn b. Mas'ūd al-Farrā' al-Baghawī (d. 516), *Tafsīr al-Baghawī: Ma'ālim al-tanzīl*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh al-Nimr, 'Uthmān Jum'ah Khumayriyyah, and Sulaymān Muslim al-Harash (Riyadh: Dār Ṭībah, 1993), 7:123, provides a similar citation:

Mujāhid and Muqātil said: that was when [*ma-dhālika ḥīna*] the Prophet recited Sūrat al-Najm and Satan cast into his *umniyyah* [*fa-alqā al-shaytānu fī umniyyati-hi*], "Those high *gharānīq* [*tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā*]," and the Unbelievers of Mecca were delighted [*fariḥa*] by this.

Al-Baghawī's source is almost certainly al-Wāḥidī's *Wasīt*, which he used in preparing his own *Tafsīr*; see Ali Eroğlu, "Mûfessir Hüseyin İbn Mes'ûd el-Bağavî ve Tefsîrindeki Usûlü," Erzurum Yüksek Islâm Enstitüsü: Öğretim Üyeliği Tezi, 1982, 150–154.

verses themselves. **Riwāyah 32** also does not occur in the published editions of the Warqā' b. 'Umar \leftarrow Ibn Abī Najīḥ al-Makkī transmission of Mujāhid's *Tafsīr*.⁴⁰⁵ But given that he was the leading student of al-Tha'labī, al-Waḥidī's citation of **Riwāyah 32** is almost certainly from one of the three alternate transmissions of Mujāhid's *Tafsīr* that are listed by al-Tha'labī in the sources to his *al-Kashf wa-al-bayān*.⁴⁰⁶ The Warqā' b. 'Umar \leftarrow Ibn Abī Najīḥ al-Makkī transmission of Mujāhid's *Tafsīr* does, however, provide a gloss for *tamannā* in Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj as meaning *qāla*, "to say"—which, it is worth noting, is entirely compatible with **Riwāyah 32**.⁴⁰⁷ Similarly, al-Suyūṭī cites each of 'Abd b. Ḥumayd and Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī as giving Mujāhid's gloss for *tamannā* to be *takallama*, "to speak," and for *umniyyati-hi* as *kalāmi-hi*, "his speech."⁴⁰⁸

Riwāyah 33: From Mujāhid's Commentary on Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā' Cited by al-Tha'labī

Riwāyah 33 is an even more cursory citation given in the commentary on Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā' in al-Tha'labī's (d. 427) *al-Kashf wa-albayān*: "Mujāhid said: 'He praised their gods and mentioned them,

⁴⁰⁵ It is instructive here to note the brief commentary in Ibn Abī Najīḥ's transmission of Mujāhid's Tafsīr on the first part of Qur'ān 39:45 al-Zumar, "And When God alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who do not believe in the Last Day shrink in aversion": "That was the day that the Messenger of God recited Sūrat al-Najm at the door of the Ka'bah." This is a fascinating statement because, like Riwāyah 31, this associates Qur'an 39:45 al-Zumar to "the day that the Messenger of God recited Sūrat al-Najm at the door of the Ka'bah"; see Tafsīr al-Imām Mujāhid b. Jabr, 579. Here, however, what is being posited is not the pleasure of those who "take intercessors with God" at the Prophet's mentioning their intercessors on that day in the Satanic verses, but rather their displeasure when their deities were not mentioned on that day (with no reference to the Satanic verses incident). If G. Stauth is correct to date the "urtext" of this transmission of the Warqā' ← Ibn Abī Najīh transmission of the Tafsīr Mujāhid to the 120s, this might indicate an early aversion on the part of this line of transmitters of Mujāhid to the Satanic verses incident; see Stauth, Die Überlieferung des Korankommentars Muğāhid, at 208-222. On this transmission, see also Fred Leemhuis, "Ms. 1075 tafsīr of the Cairene Dār al-Kutub and Muğāhid's Tafsīr," in Proceedings of the Ninth Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants, ed. R. Peters (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 169-180.

⁴⁰⁶See al-Tha'labī, *Mufassirū sharq*, 27–29.

⁴⁰⁷ Mujāhid b. Jabr, *Tafsīr al-Imām Mujāhid b. Jabr*, 483.

⁴⁰⁸ Al-Suyūțī, *Durr*, 6:69.

and they were delighted."⁴⁰⁹ While **Riwāyah 33** neither quotes the text of the Satanic verses nor even mentions any Satanic intervention, it is clear that it is a summary reference to the Satanic verses incident as there is no other occasion that can be construed as saying that the Prophet "praised their gods and mentioned them, and they were delighted." **Riwāyah 33** from Mujāhid indicates that the association of Satanic verses incident with Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā' was not limited in the early exegetical literature to Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī (**Riwāyahs 3** to **6**, above).

While the three reports from Mujāhid b. Jabr are too brief to provide any explanation of *why* the Prophet uttered the Satanic verses, all three indicate that Mujāhid evidently accepted that the Prophet did so, and indicate collectively that he associated the Satanic verses incident with all three of Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj, 17:73 al-Isrā', and 39:43-45 al-Zumar.

Riwāyah 34: From al-Ņaḥḥāk b. Muzāhim al-Balkhī

Riwāyah 34 is cited by al-Ṭabarī in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj in his *Jāmiʿal-bayān* from the first-century Khurāsānī *mufassir* al-Ṣaḥḥāk b. Muzāḥim al-Balkhī (d. 105).⁴¹⁰ Al-Suyūṭī cites it in the *Durr* from al-Ṭabarī.⁴¹¹ Al-Ṣaḥḥāk b. Muzāḥim appears to have spent most of his career in Khurāsān and Transoxania. He studied in Rayy with the famous Saʿīd b. Jubayr al-Kūfī (d. 95; see **Riwāyah** 40, below), a leading transmitter of *tafsīr* material from 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Abbās (d. 68), and would attribute reports to Ibn 'Abbās without mentioning an intermediary.⁴¹² This greatly displeased the Ḥadīth

⁴⁰⁹For the foregoing quotation, see al-Tha'labī, *al-Kashf wa-al-bayān*, ed. Abū Muḥammad Ibn 'Āshūr (Beirut: Dār al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 2002), 6:117; also MS Istanbul, III Ahmet/76/2, f. 41b. There is no commentary on Qur'ān 17:73 in the published editions of Mujāhid's *Tafsīr* via Ibn Abī Najīh.

⁴¹⁰ Al-Țabarī, Jāmi'al-bayān, 17:189.

⁴¹¹Al-Suyūțī, al-Durr, 6:67-68.

⁴¹² Al-Ţabarī uses a *Tafsīr* of Ibn 'Abbās transmitted directly from him by al-Daḥhāk. See Claude Gilliot, "La sourate al-Baqara dans le commentaire de Ţabarī," These de Doctorat de 3eme Cycle, Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1982, 1:166–179.

folk, although they acknowledged that he had "great ability [$b\bar{a}$ ' $kab\bar{i}r$] in $tafs\bar{i}r$ and qasas."⁴¹³ Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161), who considered him one of the four most important $mufassir\bar{u}n$, said of him, "Al-Daḥhāk b. Muzāḥim is known for $tafs\bar{i}r$ [' $urifa bi-al-tafs\bar{i}r$]; as far as his $riw\bar{a}yahs$ from Ibn 'Abbās, Abū Hurayrah, and everyone else he transmitted from are concerned, all of that is doubtful [$f\bar{i} dh\bar{a}lika$ kulli-hi naṣar]—but he is famous for $tafs\bar{i}r$ [ishtahara $bi-al-tafs\bar{i}r$]."⁴¹⁴ **Riwāyah 34** is transmitted from al-Daḥḥāk by an initially Marwazī $isn\bar{a}d$:

← al-Ḥusayn b. al-Faraj al-Baghdādī al-Iṣbahānī (d. 298)⁴¹⁵ ← Abū Mu'ādh al-Faḍl b. Khālid al-Marwazī (d. 211 / 826) ← 'Ubayd b. Sulaymān al-Bāhilī al-Marwazī (*fl.* second century) ← al-Ḥaḥḥāk b. Muzāḥim al-Balkhī (d. 105).

Not much is known about 'Ubayd b. Sulaymān al-Marwazī beyond the fact that he transmitted al-Đaḥḥāk's *Tafsīr* and was regarded as a reliable transmitter.⁴¹⁶ Abū Mu'ādh al-Marwazī was an important grammarian in late second- / early third-century Marw. He composed a work on the Qur'ān that was praised by the early lexicogra-

- ⁴¹³ Al-Albānī, Naşb al-majānīq, 15, rejects Riwāyah 34 on the basis that it is from al-Daḥhāk. For a study that collects opinions favorable to al-Daḥhāk and adjudges him "reliable," see Muḥammad 'Abd al-'Azīz Basyūnī Ghurāb, al-Daḥhāk b. Muzāḥim: ḥayātu-hu wa-manhaju-hu fī al-tafsīr min khilāl marwiyyāti-hi fī Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī (Ṭanṭā: Dār al-Ḥaḍārah, 2000), 58–61. Unfortunately, Ghurāb does not examine al-Daḥhāk's treatment of the Satanic verses incident.
- ⁴¹⁴ Ibn 'Adī, Kāmil, 4:95-96; see also Ibn al-Jawzī, Du'afā', 2:60; Yāqūṭ al-Ḥamawī, Mu'jam al-udabā' (Beirut: Dār al-Mustashriq, 1970), 6:15-16; al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 4:598-600, at 599; Ibn Ḥajar, Tahdhīb, 4:453; Sezgin, GAS, 1:29-30.
- ⁴¹⁵ In his Jāmi' al-bayān, al-Ṭabarī always prefaces his citation of the present isnād with the phrase huddithtu 'an al-Husayn b. al-Faraj, "I was told from / on the authority of al-Husayn b. al-Faraj." In the usage of the Hadīth scholars, this phrase indicates that there is an unnamed transmitter between al-Ṭabarī and al-Husayn b. al-Faraj; see al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, al-Kifāyah, 374; al-Albānī, Naṣb almajānīq, 15; al-Halabī al-Atharī, Dalā'il, 154. Gilliot, "al-Baqara," 1:178, has taken this to mean that, in this instance, al-Ṭabarī is transmitting by wijādah—that is to say that he simply obtained a manuscript of the work—but Gilliot's sources do not support this interpretation of the huddithtu 'an phrase. Rosenthal has mistranslated the phrase in question as "I was told by al-Husayn b. al-Faraj"; see History of al-Ṭabarī Vol 1, 227, footnote 399. Al-Ṣawwayānī rejects the isnād as "very weak" on the basis both that "the informant of al-Ṭabarī is not mentioned" and that the report is mursal; al-Qaṣīmah, 1:426.

⁴¹⁶ See Ibn Abī Hātim, Jarḥ, 9:408; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 7:67.

pher Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Azharī (282–370), who drew on it when preparing his great dictionary, the *Tahdhīb al-lughah*.⁴¹⁷ Al-Ḥusayn b. al-Faraj (d. 298) was a Baghdādī contemporary of al-Ṭabarī. It is recorded that he traveled to Isfahan, where he taught the *Maghāzī* of al-Wāqidī, and it was perhaps there that he studied al-Daḥhāk's *Tafsīr*. Given his recorded interest in *maghāzī* and *tafsīr*, it is no surprise to note that he had an appalling reputation with the Ḥadīth scholars.⁴¹⁸ Nor was he, in this regard, dissimilar to other teachers of al-Ṭabarī (see Muḥammad b. Ḥumayd al-Rāzī in **Riwāyah 1**, al-Qāsim b. al-Ḥasan in **Riwāyah 2**, and Muḥammad b. Sa'd al-'Awfī in **Riwāyah 35**, below). Al-Ṭabarī cites the present *isnād* 670 times in the *Jāmi*' *al-bayān*,⁴¹⁹ which would suggest that he had at his disposal a fairly complete manuscript of al-Daḥhāk's *Tafsīr*.

The following is the account of the Satanic verses from the *Tafsīr* of al-Daḥḥāk:

In regard to God's words: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet": While the Prophet was in Mecca, God sent down upon him (something) about the gods of the Arabs [$f\bar{i} alihat al-'arab$].⁴²⁰ So he began to recite, "al-Lāt and al-'Uzzā," and to repeat it over and over [$fa-ja'ala yatl\bar{u} al-Lāt wa-al-'Uzzā wa-yukthiru tardīda-hā$]. The people of Mecca heard the Prophet of God mentioning their gods, and were delighted by this and drew near him, listening. And Satan cast into the Prophet's recitation [$fa-alq\bar{a} al-shayt\bar{a}nf\bar{i}$ tilāwat $al-nab\bar{i}$]: "Those high $gharān\bar{i}q!$ Intercession from them is to be hoped for! [$tilka al-gharān\bar{i}q$ $al-'ulā min-h\bar{a} al-shaf\bar{a}'ah turtaj\bar{a}$]"; and the Prophet recited it like this [$fa-qara'a-h\bar{a} al-nab\bar{i} ka-dh\bar{a}lika$]. So God sent down upon him: "And we have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet. . . ," to, "God is All-Knowing, All-Wise."

- ⁴¹⁷ See Ibn Abī Hātim, Jarh, 7:351; Yāqūţ, Mu'jam al-udabā', 16:1214; Şalāh al-Dīn b. Khalīl b. Aybak al-Şafadī, al-Wāfi bi-al-wafayāt, ed. Muḥammad 'Adnān al-Bakhīt and Mustafā al-Khiyārī (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1993), 24:37; Sezgin, GAS, 8:189; and Abū Mansur Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Azhari, Tahdhīb allughah, ed. Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī (Cairo: Dār al-Kātib al-'Arabī, 1971), 1:25.
- ⁴¹⁸ For al-Husayn b. al-Faraj, see Ibn Abī Hātim, Jarh, 6:62–63; al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, Tārīkh Baghdād, 8:84–86; Ibn al-Jawzī, Du'afā', 216; Abū Nu'aym al-Işbahānī, Kitāb dhikr akhbār Işbahān, ed. Sven Dedering (Leiden: Brill, 1924), 1:329. Rosenthal is not sure that this is the correct al-Husayn b. al-Faraj; see History of al-Ţabarī Vol 1, 227, footnote 400.

⁴¹⁹Horst, "Überlieferung," 304.

⁴²⁰ Al-Suyūțī has: "(something) was sent down upon him about the gods of the Arabs."

There is a further gloss from al-Ņaḥḥāk cited by al-Ṭabarī (with the same *isnād*),⁴²¹ and by al-Suyūṭī, this time from the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Abī Hātim al-Rāzī:⁴²²

His words, *"illā idhā tamannā"*: By *tamannā* is meant: recitation [*al-tilāwah wa-al-qirā'ah*].⁴²³

"alqā al-shayṭānfī umniyyati-hi": into the recitation of the Prophet.⁴²⁴ "fa-yansakh Allāh": Jibrīl removed by God's command [nasakha Jibrīl bi-amr Allāh] that which Satan cast [mā alqā al-shayṭān] onto the tongue of the Prophet ['alā lisān al-nabī]⁴²⁵ and established His Signs clearly.

"Then God establishes His Signs clearly": then God cleansed [*yukhalliş*] the āyāt of His Book from the falsehood [*al-bāțil*] which Satan cast onto the tongue of His Prophet [*alladhī alqā al-shayṭān 'alā lisān nabiyyi-hi*].

"And God is All-Knowing" of whatever happens in His Creation; nothing is hidden from Him. "All-Wise" in His management of them, and his dealing with them howsoever He Wills and Desires.

The fact that Ibn Abī Hātim in third-/fourth-century Rayy has the same gloss from al-Đaḥḥāk as does al-Husayn b. al-Faraj in third-century Baghdad would suggest that the text of al-Đaḥḥāk's *Tafsīr* (or **Riwāyah 34**, at any rate) stabilized in the form in which Abū Mu'ādh had it already in second-century Marw.

The first observations to be made about **Riwāyah 34** are that it glosses *tamannā* to mean "to recite," and that there is no question here but that the Prophet recited the Satanic verses. The narrative in **Riwāyah 34** does, however, include a curious narrative motif. This is contained in the passage "So he began to recite, 'al-Lāt and al-'Uzzā,' and to repeat it over and over. The people of Mecca heard the Prophet of God mentioning their gods, and were delighted by this and drew near him, listening."

⁴²¹ Al-Ṭabarī, Jāmiʿal-bayān, 17:190.

⁴²²Al-Suyūțī, Durr, 6:69. For an isnād that includes 'Ubayd b. Sulaymān and by which Ibn Abī Hātim in his Tafsīr transmitted from al-Dahhāk, see Koç, İsnad Verileri Çerçevesinde, 53, 80.

 $^{^{423}\}mbox{Al-}\Bar{T}abar{\Bar{I}}$ breaks this up into two separate citations; al-Suyūți has a single citation.

⁴²⁴The gloss of *alqā al-shayṭān fī umniyyati-hi* is omitted by al-Ṭabarī.

 $^{^{425}\}mbox{Al-Suyutti's citation stops here.}$

Why, one wonders, should the Prophet repeat the phrase "al-Lāt and al-'Uzzā" aloud and over and over; and why should Quraysh gather round him as he did so? What situation is this curious image meant to convey? The answer may lie in the following passage from an anthropological study of the Nabaṭī poetry of Arabia. The author, Saad Abdullah Sowayan, is describing the physical process by which oral poets compose their poetry:

Composition is accompanied by emotional outbursts and loud vocalization. Generally speaking, a Nabațī poet does not compose in silence. Rather, he sings out his verses (*yiṣibb as-ṣōt*, *yazʿaj al-ṣōt*). Even when there are people present, the poet cannot control himself, but keeps murmuring aloud his yet unfinished verses.... Singing and loud vocalization are not only signs of an emotional outburst; they also help the poet to measure the rhythm of his verses.⁴²⁶

Sowayan illustrates this point with a citation from poetry, and with the following observation made by Alois Musil during his travels in northern Arabia in 1909:

Our omnivorous poet, Miz'el aḥū Za'êla, was composing a poem in my honour.... It was interesting to watch his procedure. He would ponder for several minutes and then recite two verses twenty or thirty times, substituting for some of the expressions new and better ones—azjan as he called them. Then he would bid Ṭâreš pay attention and remember these verses. After Ṭâreš had learnt them, Miz'el would be absorbed and silent again, and after a while he would sing the first two verses and add the third to them. Having sung them to Ṭâreš innumerable times in his shrill voice, he would ask me to write them down while he composed the rest.⁴²⁷

⁴²⁶ Saad Abdullah Sowayan, Nabaţī Poetry: The Oral Poetry of Arabia (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 98.

⁴²⁷ Alois Musil, Arabia Deserta: A Topographical Itinerary (New York: American Geographical Society of New York, 1927), 236–237; cited by Sowayan, Nabatī Poetry, 99, where he adds, "the Nabatī poet views his meters musically and determines whether or not their scansion is correct by singing them. The relation of singing to composition is indicated by the expression y'addil lhūn, which refers to the act of composition and which means 'to harmonize some tunes' or 'to straighten out some rhythms.'"

The process Musil is describing is strikingly similar to the image in **Riwāyah 34**. The Prophet is repeating a line of the Revelation over and over, very much in the manner of an oral poet; and Quraysh are gathering round, as they would with any poet, to see what will come next. It is at this juncture that Satan casts his verses into the Divine formulation. This is very probably what the image would have conveyed to a first-century Arab audience. This is certainly not to suggest that the early Muslims believed that the words of the Qur'ān were the Prophet's own poetical composition; rather, what **Riwāyah 34** indicates is that the early Muslims viewed some of the physical processes that accompanied the Revelation of the Divine Word as similar to those that accompanied the poets' search for inspiration in the composition of oral poetry,⁴²⁸ and understood the Satanic verses incident as a momentary breakdown in this process.⁴²⁹

Riwāyahs 35 to 44: Attributed to 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās

Riwāyahs 35 to 44 are attributed to 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Abbās (*3bh*–68), called *Tarjumān al-Qur'ān* ("the Translator of the Qur'ān"), *al-Baḥr*

- ⁴²⁸ One wonders if there is a relationship between this concept and Qur'ãn 75:16-17, addressed by God to Muḥammad: "Do not move your tongue with it (the Revelation) to hurry it [*lā tuḥarrik bi-hi lisāna-ka li-ta'jala bi-hi*]: bringing it together [*jam'a-hu*] and reciting it [*qur'āna-hu*] is Our task; so when We recite it [*qara'nā-hu*], follow its recitation [*qur'āna-hu*]." This is the only instance in the Qur'ān where *qur'ān* is used as a verbal noun taking an object; the phrase literally says, "*Qur'ān-*ing it (the Revelation) is Our task." See also Qur'ān 20:114: "Do not hurry the Qur'ān before it is accomplished for you." For an important study emphasizing the orality of the Qur'ān in the society of its original proclamation—"*qur'ān* originally meant 'reciting aloud'"—see William A. Graham, "The Earliest Meaning of 'Qur'ān," *Die Welt des Islams* 23-24 (1984), 361-377 (quotation at 367).
- ⁴²⁹ For an instance of the Prophet's repetition of a single Qur'ānic verse throughout Laylat al-Qadr, see Abū 'Ubayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām, *Kitāb fā'dā`il al-Qur'ān*, ed. Marwān al-'Aṭiyyah. Muḥsin Kharābah, and Wafā' Taqī al-Dīn (Damascus: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1999), 144. In the present instance, however, the context is not one in which the *sūrah* is being revealed; rather, it is the repetition of a previously revealed verse.

("the Ocean"), and Habr al-Ummah ("the Savant⁴³⁰ of the Community"), who enjoys the status in the Islamic tradition of the founder of Qur'anic studies. Ibn 'Abbas was thirteen years old when the Prophet died, and is counted as a sahābī. The medieval Qur'ānic literature contains a prodigious number of *tafsīr*-related reports, and at least a dozen different *tafsīr* works, all of which were viewed by medieval Muslim scholarship as, in some sense, going back to Ibn 'Abbās; this despite the fact that the medieval *mufassirūn* were clearly aware that reports ascribed to him were often contradictory. Claude Gilliot, building on the misgivings of earlier Western scholars, has demonstrated the extent to which the historical memory of Ibn 'Abbās was an idealized one, and has argued that, for the early Qur'an scholars, Ibn 'Abbās constituted the "mythical ancestor" to whom reports were ascribed in order to furnish them with legitimacy and authority: ascription of reports to Ibn 'Abbās cannot, therefore, be taken at face value.⁴³¹ This does not, however, affect the possibility that some of these interpretations were, indeed, discussed by the historical Ibn 'Abbās and his students, which might in part explain why contradictory views were ascribed to him. Nor does it explain why a student of Ibn 'Abbās would, in the case of reports presenting the same interpretation, ascribe one report to the presumably greater authority of Ibn 'Abbās, and another to his own presumably lesser authority without mention of Ibn 'Abbās-as will be seen to be the case for Sa'id b. Jubayr with Riwāyahs 40, 41, 43, and 44 (ascribed from Sa'id b. Jubayr to Ibn 'Abbās) and 42, 45, and 46 (ascribed to Sa'id b. Jubayr himself). And it fails even more emphatically to account for why a student of Ibn 'Abbās would attribute one interpretation to the presumably greater authority of Ibn 'Abbās, while presenting another interpretation on his own, presumably lesser, authority-as will be seen to be the case for Abū Ṣālih with Riwāyahs 36 and 39

⁴³⁰ In Qur'ānic usage, the *aḥbār* are the Jewish religious scholars.

⁴³¹See Gilliot's important article, "Portrait 'mythique' d'Ibn 'Abbās"; also Herbert Berg, "Ibn 'Abbās in 'Abbāsid-era *tafsīr*," in *'Abbasid Studies: Occasional Papers of the School of 'Abbasid Studies, Cambridge, 6-10 July 2002*, ed. James E. Montgomery, (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters en Departement Oosterse Studies, 2004), 129-146, where the earlier literature on this point is usefully surveyed. For an attempt to excavate vignettes of the historical Ibn 'Abbās see Vivianne Comerro, "La figure historique d'Ibn 'Abbâs," *Revue des monde musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 129 (2011), 127-140.

(ascribed from Abū Ṣāliḥ to Ibn 'Abbās) and **Riwāyah 21** (ascribed to Abū Ṣāliḥ himself), for 'Ikrimah with **Riwāyah 39** (ascribed from 'Ikrimah to Ibn 'Abbās) and **Riwāyah 48** (ascribed to 'Ikrimah himself), and in the following generation for al-Kalbī with **Riwāyah 39** (ascribed from al-Kalbī to Ibn 'Abbās) and **Riwāyah 24** (ascribed to al-Kalbī himself).⁴³² These "anomalies" would suggest that *isnāds* that transmit *tafsīr* reports from Ibn 'Abbās may be more of a statement of historical fact than has been suspected. Clearly, more research on the *tafsīr* corpus ascribed to Ibn 'Abbās is necessary in order to determine whether there is any way of identifying which reports, if any, are likely to have been transmitted from him.⁴³³

Riwāyah 35: From 'Ațiyyah b. Sa'd al-'Awfī

Riwāyah 35 is cited by al-Ṭabarī in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj in the *Jāmi' al-bayān*, with the following *isnād*:⁴³⁴

⁴³²As Harris Birkeland rightly noted, "It remains a problem why all Isnads leading to disciples of Ibn 'Abbās were not prolonged backwards to the latter himself. His name cannot possibly have been omitted secondarily"; Old Muslim Opposition, 36. ⁴³³ The corpus of materials ascribed by early Qur'ānic scholars to Ibn 'Abbās has yet to receive full textual study. The various *tafsir* works that were seen as going back to Ibn 'Abbās have been identified by Isaiah Goldfeld, "The Tafsīr of 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās," Der Islam 58 (1981), 125-135. On the basis of the full isnāds by which tafsīr works from Ibn 'Abbās are cited in al-Tha'labī's al-Kashf wa-al-bayān, Goldfeld has plausibly concluded that these works were transmitted as separate booksindeed, al-Tha'labī calls them "Tafsīrs textually transmitted from Ibn 'Abbās [altafsīrāt al-mansūsāt 'an Ibn 'Abbās]"; see al-Tha'labī, Mufassirū sharq, 30. For a list of tafsīr isnāds going back to Ibn 'Abbās, see the editor's introduction to Tafsīr Ibn 'Abbās al-musammā Ṣaḥīfat 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭalḥah, compiled and ed. Rāshid 'Abd al-Mun'im al-Rajjāl (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Kutub al-Thaqāfiyyah, 1991), 43-54. The monograph of Herbert Berg, The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period (Richmond: Curzon, 2000), seeks to be a study of the *tafsīr* tradition from Ibn 'Abbās but is badly flawed in its conceptual and methodological bases—see the devastating critique by Harald Motzki, "The Question of the the Authenticity of Muslim Traditions Reconsidered: A Review Article," in Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins, ed. Herbert Berg (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 211-257. I have little doubt that further and open-minded study of the tafsir corpus attributed to Ibn 'Abbās would tell us much about the culture of tafsir in the early Muslim community. For Ibn 'Abbās, see al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 3:331-339; Sezgin, GAS, 1:26-28; Laura Vecca Vaglieri, "Abd Allāh ibn al-'Abbās," EI2; Faruqi, Early Muslim Historiography, 164-170. 434 Al-Ţabarī, Jāmi'al-bayān, 17:189.

Muḥammad b. Sa'd al-'Awfī al-Baghdādī (d. 276)⁴³⁵ \leftarrow his father: Sa'd b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-'Awfī al-Baghdādī (d. 220 / 230)⁴³⁶ \leftarrow his uncle: al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥasan al-'Awfī al-Kūfī al-Baghdādī (d. 201)⁴³⁷ \leftarrow his father: al-Ḥasan b. 'Aṭiyyah al-'Awfī al-Kūfī (d. 187)⁴³⁸ \leftarrow his father: 'Aṭiyyah b. Sa'd al-'Awfī al-Kūfī (before 61–111 / 127)⁴³⁹ \leftarrow 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās (d. 68).

Al-Suyūţī cites the identical report without an *isnād*, both from al-Ṭabarī and from the now lost *Tafsīr* of Aḥmad Ibn Mardawayh al-Iṣbahānī (323-410).⁴⁴⁰ Badr al-Din al-'Aynī also cites **Riwāyah 35** from Ibn Mardawayh, both with an *isnād* and with slight textual variances, in his *'Umdat al-qāri' sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*.⁴⁴¹ Ibn Mardawyh's *isnād* is also provided by Jamāl al-Dīn al-Zayla'ī (d. 762) in his study of the reports adduced by al-Zamakhsharī (d. 544) in the latter's *al-Kashshāf*;⁴⁴² as well as by Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī

- ⁴³⁵ See al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 5:322–323; al-Dhahabī, *Mīzān*, 3:560; Şalāh al-Dīn Khalīl b. Aybak al-Şafadī, *al-Wāfi bi-al-wafayāt*, ed. Sven Dedering (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1993), 6/3:89; 'Ādil Nuwayhid, *Mu'jam al-mufassirīn*, (Beirut: Mu'assasat Nuwayhid, 1983), 531; and Johannes Fück, "Muḥammad b. Sa'd al-'Aufī," in *Studia Orientalia in Memoriam Caroli Brockelmann, Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg*, ed. Manfred Fleischammer (Halle: Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg , 1968), 85–86, where the whole *isnād* is examined.
- ⁴³⁶ See al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 9:126–127; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-islām*, 23:171.
- ⁴³⁷ See Ibn Sa'd, *Țabaqāt*, 7:239; Ibn Abī Hātim, *Jar*h, 3:48; Ibn 'Adī, *Kāmil*, 2:772; Ibn Hibbān, *Majrūhīn*, 1:246; al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 8:29–32; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 9:35–396.
- ⁴³⁸ See Ibn Abī Hātim, Jarh, 3:26; al-Bukhārī, al-Kabīr, 2:301; Ibn Hibbān, Majrūhīn, 1:234; al-Dhahabī, Mīzān, 1:503; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 8:524; and Muhsin al-Amīn, A'yān al-shī'ah, 5:153–154, which is taken entirely from Sunnī sources.
- ⁴³⁹ See Ibn Sa'd, *Țabaqāt*, 6:305; Ibn Abī Hātim, *Jarh*, 6:382; Ibn 'Adī, *Kāmil*, 5:369– 370; Ibn Hibbān, *Majrūhīn*, 2:176–177; al-'Uqaylī, *Du'afā'*, 3:1063–1064; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 7:224–226; Muhsin al-Amīn, *A'yān al-shī'ah*, *al-Mustadrak* 1: 122; Sezgin, *GAS*, 1:30–31.
- ⁴⁴⁰ Al-Suyūţī, *Durr*, 6:66. Al-Suyūţī cites extensively from Ibn Mardawayh's *Tafsīr* in the *Durr*. For Ibn Mardawayh, see al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 17:308–311; Sezgin, *GAS*, 1:225.
- ⁴⁴¹Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-ʿAynī, 'Umdat al-qāri' sharḥ ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (Cairo: Idārat al-Ṭibāʿah al-Munīriyyah, 1929), 7:100.
- ⁴⁴² Jamāl al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh b. Yūsuf b. Muḥammad al-Zayla'ī, *Takhrīj al-aḥādīth wa-al-āthār al-wāqi'ah fī tafsīr al-Kashshāf li-al-Zamakhsharī*, ed. Sultān b. Fahd al-Ṭabīshī (Riyadh: Dār al-Khuzaymah, 1414h), 3:394. Al-Zayla'ī does not provide the text of the report, but says that it is similar to **Riwāyah** 44, below.

(d. 852).⁴⁴³ Ibn Mardawayh's *isnād* is identical to that of al-Ṭabarī, with the addition of a transmitter from Muḥammad b. Sa'd al-'Awfī al-Baghdādī—namely, the respected Baghdādī $q\bar{a}d\bar{a}$ Aḥmad b. Kāmil (260–350).⁴⁴⁴

This family *isnād* is cited by al-Ṭabarī 1,560 times in the *Jāmi*⁴ *al-bayān*.⁴⁴⁵ In addition to the extensive use made of this *Tafsīr* by al-Ṭabarī, and the citations from it by Ibn Mardawayh, it was utilized by al-Tha'labī, who studied it with al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī (d. 405),⁴⁴⁶ and was also studied by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463).⁴⁴⁷ While the reports carried by this *isnād* have, to the best of my knowledge, never been studied, it is clear that they made up a large and fairly important early Qur'ān commentary, which we may call the *Tafsīr* al-'Awfī.⁴⁴⁸

'Aṭiyyah b. Sa'd al-'Awfī (d. 111/127—both disparate dates are given) was an early Shī'ī scholar of Kufah who was reportedly flogged on the orders of Ḥajjāj b. Yusuf for refusing to curse 'Alī b Abī Ṭālib. It is said of him that he had been taken as a newborn to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, and that it was 'Alī who gave him his name. In spite of these credentials, he does not appear to have been recognized by the various Shī'ī sects after their formation as distinct confessional

- ⁴⁴⁴ Ahmad b. Kāmil was a prominent scholar and sometime qādī in Kufah who seems to have enjoyed the universal respect of his contemporaries. He was a student of al-Ţabarī, a teacher of both al-Hākim al-Naysābūrī and al-Dāraquţnī (who reckoned him favorably as a muḥaddith), received a laudatory biographical notice from al-Khaţīb al-Baghdādī, and is recorded as authoring works on fiqh, tafsīr, and sīrah, none of which seem to have survived. See al-Khaţīb al-Baghdādī, Tārīkh Baghdād, 4:358; al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 15:544–546; al-Ṣafadī, al-Wāfī bī al-wafayāt (ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1993), 7:298–299; Kaḥḥālah, Mu'jam, 1:232; and Mubārakpūri, Tadvīn-i siyar, 312–313.
- ⁴⁴⁵ See Horst, "Überlieferung," 294, where, however, some of the transmitters are incorrectly identified; a similar error was made by Birkeland, *Old Muslim Opposition*, 34-42.
- ⁴⁴⁶ Al-Hākim al-Naysābūrī studied the work with Ahmad b. Kāmil. Al-Tha'labī cited it as a distinct work in the list of *al-Tafsīrāt al-manşūşāt min Ibn 'Abbās*; see al-Tha'labī, *Mufassirū sharq*, 21-22.

⁴⁴³ Ibn Hajar, *Fath*, 18:41.

⁴⁴⁷See Sezgin, *GAS*, 1:31–32.

⁴⁴⁸ A large compilation of *tafsīr* reports from 'Atiyyah b. Sa'd has been published as 'Atiyyah b. Sa'd b. Junādah al-'Awfī al-Kūfī (d. 127), *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-karīm*, ed. 'Abd al-Razzaq b. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ḥirz al-Dīn (Qum: Intishārāt-i Dalīl-i Mā, 2000), but the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Hājj containing **Riwāyah 35** and the Satanic verses incident has been omitted.

communities from the mid-second century onwards: to the best of my knowledge he does not figure in the medieval Shī'ī literature. The Kufan *mufassir* Muḥammad b. al-Sā'ib al-Kalbī (d. 146, see **Riwāyah 23**, above) was among his students and regarded him as an authority in *tafsīr*. Unsurprisingly, he had a bad reputation with the Ḥadīth scholars, not just because of his *tashayyu*' but also because of his typical *mufassir*'s failure to observe the conventions of Ḥadīth transmission.

None of 'Aṭiyyah's descendants who appear in the *isnād* was a scholar of any rank. They are generally obscure figures and, like their ancestor, have poor reputations among the Ḥadīth scholars.⁴⁴⁹ Al-Ṭabarī's teacher, Muḥammad b. Sa'd, was of no more than average reputation: while the *sunan*-compiler al-Dāraquṭnī approved of him, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī said, "He was weak [*layyin*] in Ḥadīth." That Baghdādī scholars as prominent as al-Ṭabarī and Aḥmad b. Kāmil al-Baghdādī should have studied a large work carried by such an appalling *isnād* from a scholar, Muḥammad b. Sa'd al-'Awfī, who was of no particular standing in Baghdad is strongly suggestive of three things. First, the author of the work in question was almost certainly 'Aṭiyyah b. Sa'd al-'Awfī (d. 111 / 127), as none of the transmitters from him has any reputation as a *mufassir*, nor is credited

⁴⁴⁹ By way of illustration, we may note the most prominent of them, 'Atiyyah's grandson, al-Husayn b. al-Hasan b. 'Atiyyah. He was a Qādī in Baghdad in the reigns of al-Mahdī and Hārun al-Rashīd but does not seem to have been taken very seriously as a judge. Yahyā b. Ma'īn said of him, "He was weak in judgeship and weak in Hadīth [kāna da'īfan fī al-qadā' da'īfan fī al-hadīth]." That he was not taken seriously as a scholar either is evidenced by a story cited by Al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī in which al-Husayn b. al-Hasan comically misquoted a well-known Hadīth on stealing from the spoils of war. Indeed, al-Husayn b. al-Hasan seems to have been regarded as something of a joke by the people of Baghdad. The thing for which he was most famous was the length of his beard, which came down to his knees, and fully half of his biographical entry in the Tārīkh Baghdād deals with "amusing reports about al-'Awfi's beard [tarā'if min akhbār lihyat al-'Awfi]," including a satirical poem that suggests that were the beard to be employed as a ship's sail, one might travel from China to Baghdad in two weeks (on the long beard as a derogatory motif, see Goldziher, Muslim Studies, 2:119). For assessments of the soundness of the isnād, see the study of it by Mahmūd Muhammad Shākir and Ahmad Muhammad Shākir in their incomplete edition of al-Tabarī, Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1954), 263, footnote 1; al-Albānī, Nașb al-majānīq, 17-18; Mustafā Zayd, al-Naskh fī al-Qur'ān (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1973), 2:320-322; al-Halabī al-Atharī, Dalā'il, 99-104.

with such a work.⁴⁵⁰ In fact, the biographical material on the 'Awfīs makes no mention of a family *Tafsīr*, which would suggest that al-'Awfī's descendants were not active in teaching the work.⁴⁵¹ Hence, and second, what we are most likely to be dealing with here is an evidently large manuscript that was passed down within the al-'Awfī family and came into the possession of Muḥammad b. Sa'd. Third, al-Ṭabarī was apparently indifferent here, as elsewhere, as to whether his *isnāds* conformed to the *isnād* methodology employed by the *ahl al-ḥadīth* for validating the transmission of knowledge. Otherwise, not a single one of the 1,560 reports cited by al-Ṭabarī from the *Tafsīr* al-'Awfī would have been deemed valid.⁴⁵²

The following is the account of the Satanic verses from the *Tafsīr* al-'Awfī:

His words: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he *tamannā*, Satan cast something into his *umniyyah*," to His words, "and God is All-Knowing, All-Wise":

That was because,⁴⁵³ while the Prophet was praying, the story of the gods of the Arabs [*qiṣṣat ālihat al-'arab*]⁴⁵⁴ was sent down upon him and he began to recite it [*fa-ja'ala yatlū-hā*].⁴⁵⁵ The Mushrikūn heard him⁴⁵⁶

- ⁴⁵⁰ The earliest extant citation of a *tafsīr* report from 'Ațiyyah b. Sa'd is in the *Tafsīr* of 'Abd Allāh b. Wahb (d. 197), *al-Jāmi': Tafsīr*, 264; but he is also listed by Muqātil b. Sulaymān (d. 150) in the introduction to his *Tafsīr* as one of his authorities; see Muqātil, *Tafsīr*, 1:3.
- ⁴⁵¹The only one who is recorded as having taught this *Tafsīr* is al-Ṭabarī's teacher, Muhammad b. Sa'd al-'Awfī, and it is probably for this reason that, despite his own indifferent reputation and the even poorer standing of his forebears, the biographical entries on him state that "he was from a house of learning and Hadīth [*min bayt al-'ilm wa-al-hadīth*]." It should also be noted that the absence of any mention of the work in the *'ilm al-rijāl* works is indicative of the limitations of this genre in regard to assessing anything other than the standing of a person as a *muḥaddith*.
- ⁴⁵² The same would, of course, apply to Ahmad b. Kāmil; it is interesting to note that the only stain on Ahmad's reputation as a *muhaddith* is the observation of Ibn al-Jawzī that he was "lenient (*mutasāhil*)," which he clearly needed to be to transmit the *Tafsīr* of al-'Awfī; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Du'afā'*, 1:83. Al-Albānī, who is certainly not *mutasāhil*, summarily rejects this *isnād*; *Naşb al-majānīq*, 17.

⁴⁵³ The report in al-'Aynī's citation of Ibn Mardawayh begins here.

⁴⁵⁴ The word *qiṣṣah* is not in Ibn Mardawayh / al-'Aynī.

⁴⁵⁵ The phrase *ja'ala yatlū-hā* is not in Ibn Mardawayh / al-'Aynī.

⁴⁵⁶ Al-Ţabarī: sami'a-hu al-mushrikūn; Ibn Mardawayh / al-'Aynī: sami'a al-mushrikūn yatlū-ha.

and said, 457 "We hear him 458 speaking favourably of our gods"; so they drew near him. 459

And while he was reciting it [*fa-bayna-mā huwa yatlū-hā*], when he was saying [*wa-huwa yaqūlu*]: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?"⁴⁶⁰ Satan cast [*alqā al-shayṭān*]: "Those high *gharānīq*! Intercession from them is to be hoped for! [*tilka algharānīq al-'ulā min-hā al-shafā'ah turtajā*]," and the Prophet began to recite it [*fa-ja'ala yatlū-hā*].⁴⁶¹

So Jibrīl came down and removed them $[nasakha-h\bar{a}]$ and said to him: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he *tamannā*, Satan cast something into his *umniyyah*" to His words, "and God is All-Knowing, All-Wise."

There is no doubt in **Riwāyah 35** that the Prophet uttered the Satanic verses. It would appear that *tamannā* is being glossed as "recitation [*tilāwah*]" as there is no mention of any desire on the part of the Prophet while the verb *talā* is used twice. As in **Riwāyah 34** from al-Daḥḥāk, what we apparently have here is an error that takes place during the actual process of Revelation. As in **Riwāyah 34**, there is no indication that the Prophet realizes that he has erred until he is corrected by Jibrīl.

It is interesting to note another similarity between the narratives in **Riwāyahs 35** and **34**. Although it is not stated explicitly (as it is in **Riwāyah 34**), the logic of the narrative in **Riwāyah 35** would seem to presuppose that here, too, the Prophet is repeating the verse, "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?" We are told that the Prophet is reciting Sūrat al-Najm and that when Quraysh hear him mentioning their gods, they gather round him to listen to what he has to say. There is, of course, only one mention of the gods of Quraysh in Sūrat al-Najm, so for Quraysh to hear the Prophet mentioning their gods and to then have the time to gather round him to listen, the Prophet must, by implication, be repeating the verse in question. The similarity between the narratives is

⁴⁵⁷ Al-Ṭabarī: *wa-qālū*; Ibn Mardawayh / al-'Aynī: *fa-qālū*.

⁴⁵⁸ The phrase *in-nā nasmaʿu-hu*, "we hear him," is not in Ibn Mardawayh / al-ʿAynī.
⁴⁵⁹ Al-Ṭabarī: *fa-danaw min-hu*; Ibn Mardawayh / al-ʿAynī: *fa-danaw*.

⁴⁶⁰ The phrase "when he was saying 'Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?" is not in Ibn Mardawayh / al-'Aynī.

⁴⁶¹Ibn Mardawayh / al-'Aynī: *fa-'alaqa yatlū-hā*, which has the same meaning.

underlined by the presence in both *riwāyahs* of the distinctive phrase *ālihat al-'arab* ("the gods of the Arabs"), which does not occur in any other *riwāyah*. Nonetheless, given that **Riwāyah 35** does not explicitly present the same hermeneutical elaboration as **Riwāyah 34**, it is unlikely that one would detect the "repetition" motif in **Riwāyah 35** if we did not have prior knowledge of **Riwāyah 34**.

The fact that the characteristic narrative motif in Riwāyah 34 is implied in the logic of Riwāyah 35, and the fact that they both share the *ālihat al-'arab* phrase, raises the question of whether the two reports are somehow linked as regards transmission. The most obvious candidate as a link is 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Abbās, whose tafsīr tradition al-Dahhāk is also known to have transmitted; one wonders if both Riwāyahs 34 and 35 stem from an interpretation of the incident taught by 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Abbās. Certainly, Riwāyah 35 does suggest that the "repetition" idea was not exclusive to al-Dahhāk in the first century. In the final analysis, however, since the two reports are not the same *riwāyah bi-al-lafz*, and are only by implication the same riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā, there is no particular need here to identify a common source. The fact that we were able to identify the hidden links in the cases of Riwāyahs 2 and 3, and 8 and 9, above, suggests that even if Riwāyahs 34 and 35 do stem from a common source, there is no reason to doubt that the *isnāds* are genuine as far as they go.

Finally, in view of the strong characterization of him as an early Shī'ī, it is particularly interesting that 'Aṭiyyah al-'Awfī should have adduced the Satanic verses incident in explanation of Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj in a manner that is directly contradictory to the doctrine of *'iṣmat al-anbiyā*', which, as we will see later in this book, would become so central to the Shī'ī credo from the mid-second century onwards. This is illustrative of how little later Shī'īte creeds had to do with the proto-Shī'īsm of late first- and early second-century Kufah on this point.⁴⁶²

⁴⁶²All Shī'ī sects subscribe to the doctrine of '*iṣmat al-anbiyā*' (see Madelung, "'*Iṣma*"). It is, of course, possible that al-'Awfī cited the incident in order to refute it, but there is nothing to suggest this in the sources.

Riwāyah 36: From Abū Ṣāliḥ

Riwāyah 36 is cited from Ibn 'Abbās in the *Tafsīr* of Baḥr al-'Ulūm Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī (d. 375).⁴⁶³ Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī does not give a fuller *isnād* than:

Abū Ṣāliḥ Bādhām al-Kūfī (d. 110 / 120) ← Ibn 'Abbās.

We have already encountered Abū Ṣāliḥ and his appalling reputation in **Riwāyah 21**, of which report he is also the source. The text of **Riwāyah 36**, which he transmits from Ibn 'Abbās, introduces a new narrative element we have not encountered before:

Satan came to him in the form of Jibrīl ($f\bar{i}$ sūrat Jibrīl) while he was reciting [*wa-huwa yaqra'*] the sūrah "By the star when it sets!" at the Ka'bah until, when he reached (*intahā ilā*) His words "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?" Satan cast upon his tongue [*alqā al-shaytān' alā lisāni-hi*], "Those high *gharānīq!* From them intercession is to be sought! [*tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā min-hā alshafā'ah turtajā*]." When the Mushrikūn heard that, it pleased them (*a'jaba-hum*), and when he reached the end of it (the sūrah), he made the *sajdah*, and the Mushrikūn and the Muslims made the *sajdah* with him.

Then Jibrīl came to the Prophet and said: "I did not bring you this (*mā ji'tu-ka bi-hādhā*)!" So, "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet" came down.

The motif in **Riwāyah 36** that has not appeared in any of the narratives thus far is the description of Satan appearing to Muḥammad "in the form of Jibrīl [$f\bar{i}$ ṣ $\bar{u}rat$ Jibr \bar{i} l]." This motif does not appear in **Riwāyah 21**, the *isnād* of which terminates with Abū Ṣāliḥ. This provides us with an illustration of the question raised above: why, if Ibn 'Abbās functioned in the early *tafsīr* discourse as the mythic exemplar, should the same scholar, here Abū Ṣāliḥ, have attributed only some interpretations and reports to Ibn 'Abbās' great authority, and kept other interpretations associated with his own, presumably lesser, authority? A reasonable explanation would be to take these

⁴⁶³ Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī, *Tafsīr al-Samarqandī*, 2:399–400.

attributions as real: certainly, they would suggest an indifference to the need to attribute reports to an authority figure.

The distinctive new motif in **Riwāyah 36** serves as a hermeneutical elaboration explaining how the Prophet came to utter the Satanic verses: Muḥammad mistook Satan's words for Jibrīl's words because Satan deceived him by coming to him in the same form in which Jibrīl was wont to come to him. The fact that Jibrīl disavows the verses to the Prophet can also mean only that the Prophet has not of his own accord recognized them as being from Satan. That Satan could, indeed, imitate the form of Jibrīl, and that this possibility posed a danger to the secure transmission of Divine Revelation to the Prophet, is a notion that seems to have been accepted in the early Muslim community. This is illustrated in the following report cited from al-Daḥḥāk b. Muzāḥim by al-Ṭabarī in the commentary on Qur'ān 72:27 al-Jinn, "He (God) sends to guard him (the Prophet) in front and behind":⁴⁶⁴

When the angel (of Revelation) was sent to the Prophet [*idhā bu'itha ilay-hi al-malak*], other angels [*malā'ikah*] were sent to guard him (the Prophet) front and back [*min bayni yaday-hi wa-min khalfi-hi*], lest Satan assume the form of the angel [*an yatashabbaha al-shayṭān 'alā ṣūrat al-malak*].⁴⁶⁵

This report frankly assumes not only that Satan is able to assume the form of the Angel of Revelation but also that the Prophet is not necessarily able to distinguish between Satan and the Angel of Revelation. For this reason, when the Angel of Revelation comes to the Prophet, the Angel is attended by guardian angels. This image would seem to represent an early concept of the idea of *'iṣmat al-anbiyā'* the "Protection of the Prophets." The Prophet himself being unable to distinguish between Satan and the Agent of Revelation, an external mechanism was required to ensure the security of the process of Revelation. In the Satanic verses incident, there seems to have been a breach of security.

 ⁴⁶⁴ fa-inna-hu yasluku min bayni yaday-hi wa-min khalfi-hi raşadan.
 ⁴⁶⁵ Al-Tabarī, Jāmi^c al-bayān, 29:122.

Riwāyah 37: From 'Aṭā' b. Abī Rabāḥ al-Makkī

Riwāyah 37 is cited from Ibn 'Abbās in the commentary on Sūrat al-Ḥajj in a little noticed *tafsīr* manuscript, MS Milan, Ambrosiana, Nuovo Fondo A.47, the bulk of which (including the account of the Satanic verses incident) is transmitted by the following *isnād*:

Bakr b. Sahl al-Dimyāțī (196–289) ← 'Abd al-Ghanī b. Sa'īd al-Thaqafī al-Ṣan'ānī (d. 229) ← Mūsā b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ṣan'ānī (d. 190) ← 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Jurayj al-Makkī (d. 150) ← 'Ațā' b. Abī Rabāḥ al-Makkī (d. 114 / 732) ← Ibn 'Abbās.

This manuscript seems to be an incomplete and apparently unique copy of a *tafsīr* listed by al-Tha'labī (d. 431) in the sources for his *al*-Kashf wa-al-bayān among the six "Tafsīrs textually transmitted from Ibn 'Abbās [al-tafsīrāt al-manşūşāt 'an Ibn 'Abbās]." Al-Tha'labī cites this as Tafsīr al-Dimyāțī bi-isnādi-hi—the "Tafsīr of al-Dimyāți by his *isnād*."466 The indication here is that al-Dimyāțī was not the author of the tafsir but rather its particular and pre-eminent transmitter in his generation-doubtless by virtue of his having been (exclusively?) authorized to transmit by its *isnād*. This is corroborated by the fact that in three places in the manuscript the transmission is designated by the phrase "Bakr b. Sahl bi-isnādi-hi,"467 while in a further five places the designation is "Abd al-Ghanī al-Thaqafī biisnādi-hi."468 Fuat Sezgin has attributed responsibility for transmission of the tafsīr to Mūsā b. 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Ṣan'ānī (from whom 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Thaqafī transmits), presumably because Mūsā b. 'Abd al-Rahmān is the "common link" between the above isnād and the second *isnād*, which transmits a lesser portion of the work:

⁴⁶⁶ Al-Tha'labī, *Mufassirū sharq*, 22. MS Milan, Ambrosiana, Nuovo Fondo A.47 contains the commentary from Qur'ān 19:38 Maryam to Qur'ān 37:69 al-Ṣāffāt. A further fragment of this work containing the last two sūrahs is noted by Otto Spies, "Die Bibliotheken des Hidschas," Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft 90 (1936), 83–120, at 103.

⁴⁶⁷ MS Milan, Ambrosiana, Nuovo Fondo A.47, f. 27a, 58b, 103a. The work as a whole is carried forward from Bakr b. Sahl in the Ambrosiana MS by an *isnād* (given at f. 16a) that need not be detailed here, except to note that it is different from the *isnād* by which it made its way forward to al-Tha'labī.

⁴⁶⁸ MS Milan, Ambrosiana, Nuovo Fondo A.47, f. 6b, 75a, 88a, 91b, 113b.

Bakr b. Sahl al-Dimyāțī \leftarrow 'Abd al-Ghanī b. Sa'īd al-Thaqafī al-Ṣan'ānī \leftarrow Mūsā b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ṣan'ānī \leftarrow Muqātil b. Sulaymān \leftarrow al- Ṣaḥḥāk b. Muzāḥim \leftarrow Ibn 'Abbās (this second *isnād* is also given by al-Tha'labī in his citation for the "*Tafsir* textually transmitted from Ibn 'Abbās" with the designation *Tafsīr al-Dimyāțī bi-isnādi-hi*).⁴⁶⁹

The portion of the *isnād* that goes back from Mūsā b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ṣan'ānī to Ibn 'Abbās—namely, 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Jurayj \leftarrow 'Aṭā' b. Abī Rabāḥ al-Makkī—is an extremely distinguished chain of transmission whose extensive appearance in the elaboration of early Islamic law in the *Muṣannaf* of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī has received detailed study from Harald Motzki. In the context of that collection, Motzki has identified "a number of formal criteria which speak for the genuineness of the corpus of 'Aṭā' traditions in the work of Ibn Jurayj."⁴⁷⁰ It is worth noting that al-Tha'labī gives Ibn Jurayj as the first transmitter of what he identifies as the *Tafsīr* of 'Aṭā' b. Abī Rabāḥ, for which he also gives this *isnād*:

Bakr b. Sahl al-Dimyāțī ← 'Abd al-Ghanī b. Sa'īd al-Thaqafī al-Ṣan'ānī ← Mūsā b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ṣan'ānī ← 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Jurayj al-Makkī ← 'Aṭā' b. Abī Rabāḥ al-Makkī (but without taking it back to Ibn 'Abbās).⁴⁷¹

Al-Tha'labī also cites a *Tafsīr Ibn Jurayj* by the same *isnād* up to Ibn Jurayj, but without going back beyond him either to 'Aṭā' b. Abī Rabāḥ or to Ibn 'Abbās.⁴⁷²

⁴⁶⁹ In MS Ambrosiana, Nuovo Fondo A.47, the commentary on Sūrahs al-Naml, al-'Ankabūt, al-Sajdah, and al-Malā'ikah is carried by this *isnād*; see Sezgin, *GAS*, 1:39. A. Rippin would rather attribute authorship to the later 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Thaqafī or Bakr b. Sahl; see his "Al-Zuhrī, *Naskh al-Qur'ān* and the Problem of Dating Early *tafsīr* Texts," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 47 (1984), 22–43, at 22. For the *isnāds* cited in the manuscript, see E. Griffini, "I manoscriti sudarabici di Milano," *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 2 (1908–1909) 1–38, at 7–13.

⁴⁷⁰ See Motzki, *Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence*, especially 77–171 (the quotation is at 77), and 246–262.

⁴⁷¹Al-Thaʻlabī, *Mufassirū sharq*, 31–32.

⁴⁷² Al-Tha'labī, Mufassirū sharq, 41–42. Al-Dhahabī also mentions that 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Thaqafī, the teacher of Bakr b. Sahl al-Dimyāţī, "transmitted from Mūsā b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ṣan'ānī the Kitāb al-tafsīr from Ibn Jurayj"; al-Dhahabī, Tārīkh al-islām, 16:267. Ibn Jurayj is also recorded by al-Tha'labī as a major transmitter of the Tafsīr of Mujāhid b. Jabr Al-Tha'labī, Mufassirū sharq, 27.

In other words, there is a significant historical association of the *isnād* Bakr b. Sahl al-Dimyāţī ← 'Abd al-Ghanī b. Sa'īd al-Thaqafī al-Ṣan'ānī ← Mūsā b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ṣan'ānī with the *tafsīr* corpuses from both Ibn Jurayj and 'Ațā' b. Abī Rabāḥ, and going back through these two to Ibn 'Abbās. Indeed, it is highly revealing to note that Bakr b. Sahl's isnād was sufficiently famous in his own lifetime for him to be offered substantial sums of money to teach the Tafsīr when on tour—this despite the fact that all the transmitters from Ibn Jurayj are of poor repute. The only record of Bakr b. Sahl's standing as a Hadith transmitter is that the compiler of the canonical Sunan, his contemporary al-Nasā'ī, deemed him "weak."473 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Thaqafī, who was similarly categorized as "weak in Hadīth," is an obscure figure primarily remembered for his transmission of this *tafsīr*.⁴⁷⁴ The *isnād* takes a particularly interesting turn with Mūsā b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ṣan'ānī, the transmitter from Ibn Jurayj, who was known primarily as a *mufassir*.⁴⁷⁵ The Hadīth authority Ibn Hibbān (d. 354 / 965) launched a blistering attack on this very transmission:

Mūsā b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān is a Shaykh-Anti-Christ [*shaykh dajjāl*] who fabricated Ḥadīth. 'Abd al-Ghanī b. Sa'īd al-Thaqafī transmitted from him. He (Mūsā) fabricated in the name of Ibn Jurayj from 'Aṭā' from Ibn 'Abbās a *tafsīr* book which he had collected from the discourse of al-Kalbī and Muqātil b. Sulaymān, and onto which he stuck [*alzaqa-hu bi*-] (the *isnād*) "Ibn Jurayj from 'Aṭā' from Ibn 'Abbās." Ibn 'Abbās did not teach this [*lam yuḥaddith bi-hi*], nor did 'Aṭā' hear it, nor did Ibn Jurayj hear it from 'Aṭā'. Rather, Ibn Jurayj heard from 'Aṭā' al-Khurāsānī from Ibn 'Abbās some *tafsīr* reports amounting to about a *juz*'. But (in fact) 'Aṭā' al-Khurāsānī did not hear anything from Ibn 'Abbās, nor did he relate from him. Transmission from this Shaykh (Mūsā b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān) is not permitted, and his books should only be looked at for corroborative reports [*al-i'tibār*].⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷³ For Bakr b. Sahl, see al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 13:425–427; Shams al-Din Ibn al-Jazari, *Ghāyat al-nihāyah fī tabaqāt al-qurrā'*, ed. G. Bergstraesser (Cairo: Maktabat Khānjī, 1932), 1:178.

⁴⁷⁴Al-Dhahabī, Tārīkh al-islām, 16:267; al-Dhahabī, al-Mughnī fī al-du'afā', 1:401; Ibn Hajar, Lisān al-mīzān, 4:45.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibn 'Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 6:349.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibn Hibbān, *Majrūķīn*, 2:242; see also Ibn al-Jawzī, *Du'afā'*, 3:147; al-Dhahabī, *Mīzān*, 4:211-212; Sezgin, *GAS*, 1:39.

Ibn Hibban's critique is instructive on several counts. He is most anxious to discredit the claim of the *isnād* that the *tafsīr* is transmitted from Ibn 'Abbās by such a fine *isnād* as Ibn Jurayj ← 'Ațā' b. Abī Rabāh, two major sources of early Islamic law to whom the Hadīth scholars can have no objection.⁴⁷⁷ Not only does he accuse Mūsā the "Anti-Christ" of forging the *isnād*, but also he replaces Mūsā's two distinguished jurists with two mufassirs-Muqātil b. Sulaymān and Muḥammad b. al-Sā'ib al-Kalbī—who, despite their great importance in the domain of Qur'an exegesis, are (as we have seen) thoroughly discreditable individuals in the criteria of the Hadīth movement.⁴⁷⁸ By this attribution, Ibn Hibbān succeeds in enabling the *a priori* rejection of any report in this Tafsir the content of which the ahlal-hadith find objectionable. Ibn Hibbān further claims that the 'Ațā' from whom Mūsā narrated was not 'Ațā' b. Abī Rabāh at all, but rather 'Ațā' b. Abī Muslim al-Khurasānī (d. 135),479 who did not study with Ibn 'Abbās at all. It is noteworthy, however, that al-Tha'labī cites an independent Tafsīr 'Ațā' al-Khurāsānī by a completely different isnād that includes none of the transmitters of **Riwāyah 37.**⁴⁸⁰ That Ibn Hibbān's claim was not supported even by his fellow *rijāl*-critics is evident in the fact that his junior contemporary, Ibn 'Adī, while generally suspicious of Mūsā b. 'Abd al-Rahmān, conceded that "his reporting from Ibn Jurayj from 'Ațā' from Ibn 'Abbās might be acceptable [qad yuqbal]."481

The following is the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj:⁴⁸²

His words: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he *tamannā*, Satan cast something into his *umniyyah*," meaning: into his recitation $[f\bar{i} qir\bar{a}'ati-hi]$.

That was because a satan called al-Abyad (*shaytānan yuqāl la-hu al-abyad*) had come to the Prophet in the form of Jibrīl (*fī ṣūrat Jibrīl*)

⁴⁷⁷ On 'Ațā' b. Abī Rabāḥ see Motzki, *Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence*, 246–261; on Ibn Jurayj, see Motzki, *Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence*, 268–285.

⁴⁷⁸ For al-Kalbī, see **Riwāyah 23**, and for Muqātil, see **Riwāyahs 27** to **30**, above.

⁴⁷⁹ For this figure of somewhat uncertain identity, see al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 6:140–143.

⁴⁸⁰ Al-Thaʻlabī, Mufassirū sharq, 32.

⁴⁸¹ Ibn 'Adī, al-Kāmil, 6:349.

⁴⁸² Tafsīr al-Qur'ān, MS Milan, Ambrosiana, Nuovo Fondo A.47, f.33a-b. The isnād does not immediately preceed the report, but is given at the beginning of the commentary on Sūrat al-Nūr at MS Ambrosiana, Nuovo Fondo A.47, f.43a. The commentary on Sūrat al-Hajj begins with the summary citation: Bakr b. Sahl bi-isnādi-hi; see f. 27a.

while the Prophet was reciting Sūrat al-Najm. And when he reached [*intahā ilā*], "Have you seen al-Lāt and al-'Uzzā?" he cast into the Prophet's recitation (*alqā fī qirā'at al-nabī*), "Indeed, they are the high gharāniqah! And, indeed, their intercession is to be hoped for! [*wa-inna-hunna al-gharāniqah al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna la-turtajā!*]"⁴⁸³

Like **Riwāyah 36**, **Riwāyah 37** contains the motif of *shayṭān* appearing to the Prophet "in the form of Jibrīl [$f\bar{i}$ sūrat Jibrīl]." The transmission of the $f\bar{i}$ sūrat Jibrīl motif from Ibn 'Abbās by two separate *isnāds* whose transmitters are distinct from the first generation indicates the association with Ibn 'Abbās of this motif already by the late first / early second century. Also, like **Riwāyah 36**, **Riwāyah 37** does not expressly state that the Prophet uttered the verses (and unlike **Riwāyah 36**, **Riwāyah 37** contains no correction scence), but since (as noted above) the point of the $f\bar{i}$ sūrat Jibrīl motif is to explain *shayṭan*'s deception, this is the only logical reading. **Riwāyah 37** glosses *tamannā/umniyyah* as "recitation [*qirā'ah*], which is the same meaning as in **Riwāyah 36** "while he was reciting [*wa-huwa yaqra'*]."

Riwāyah 37 does, however, contain a distinctive new motif not present in **Riwāyah 36**: it identifies the *shayṭān* in question as one al-Abyaḍ—literally, "the White One." In other words, the *al-shayṭān* of Qur'ān 22:52 is here not the arch-Satan himself but one of his henchmen. Al-Abyaḍ does not seem ever to have become a major figure in Islamic literature—which is in any case oddly impoverished as regards demonology—but he is cited by Ibn 'Ādil al-Dimashqī (d. 880) as "the *shayṭān* al-Abyaḍ who would come to the Prophet in the form of Jibrīl seeking to lead him astray,"⁴⁸⁴ by Ismā'īl Ḥaqqī Burūsawī (d. 1137/1724) as "the *shayṭān* al-Abyaḍ who comes to the

⁴⁸³A summary version of this report is cited from 'Aţā' from Ibn 'Abbās by Abū Bakr b. 'Alī al-Haddād (d. 800) in his *Tafsīr al-Haddād*, ed. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Yaḥyā (Beirut: Dār al-Madār al-Islāmī, 2003), 4:437; also MS Istanbul, Aya Sofya 189, f. 244a, and MS Istanbul, Muşalla Medresesi 12, f. 29b. "A *shayṭān* called al-Abyaḍ came to the Prophet and cast into his recitation, 'Indeed, they are the high *gharānīq!* And, indeed their intercession is to be hoped for! [*wa-inna-hā al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna la-turtajā!*].""

⁴⁸⁴ Umar b. 'Alī Ibn 'Ādil al-Dimashqī, *al-Lubāb fī 'ulūm al-kitāb*, ed. 'Ādil Ahmad 'Abd al-Mawjūd, 'Alī Muhammad Mu'awwad, Muhammad Sa'd Ramadān Hasan, and Muhammad Mitwallī al-Disūqī Harb (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1998), 20:191.

righteous in the form of the Truth (*al-ḥaqq*),"⁴⁸⁵ and by Rāghib Pāşā (1698–1763) as "the one who whispers suggestions (*yuwaswis*) to the Prophets."⁴⁸⁶ The early *tafsīr* literature expresses the idea that the Prophet needed to be guarded from al-Abyaḍ's nefarious purposes. The following is from the *Tafsīr* of Muqātil b. Sulaymān, in the commentary on Qur'ān 81:19–20 al-Takwīr, "Indeed, it is the word of a noble messenger: endowed with strength, secured with He of the Throne"⁴⁸⁷ (Qur'ān 81:25 al-Takwīr goes on to say: "It is not the word of an accursed *shayṭān*").⁴⁸⁸

When the Prophet was sent, Iblīs said, "Who is for this Prophet who has emerged from the land of Tihāmah? And a *shayṭān* called al-Abyaḍ, who was the Companion of the Prophets [*ṣāḥib al-anbiyā'*], said: "I am for him." So he came to the Prophet, and found him in the house of al-Ṣafā. When he (the Prophet) turned, al-Abyaḍ stood up in the form of Jibrīl (*fī ṣūrat Jibrīl*) to communicate to him (*li-yūḥiya ilay-hi*). So Jibrīl came down and put his hand between him and the Prophet and pushed him (al-Abyaḍ) gently. By this, he was thrust away from Mecca and landed in the furthest parts of India.⁴⁸⁹

Again, the concept here is that the Prophet could not, in his own capacity, distinguish between Jibrīl and a Satanic imitation of Jibrīl hence the need for him to be protected from his deception by angelic

- ⁴⁸⁵ Ismā'il Haqqī Burūsawī, *Tafsīr rūḥ al-bayān*, Istanbul: Matba'ah-yi 'Uthmāniyyah, 1911–1928, 9:445.
- ⁴⁸⁶ Rāghib Pāşā, Safīnat al-rāghib wa-daqīqat al-mațālib (Cairo: Būlāq, 1282h), cited by Toufic Fahd, "Anges, démons et jinns en Islam," Sources Orientales 8 (1971), 155–214, at 193 (Toufic's article is the best source I know of on Islamic demonology). One is tempted to posit an association between al-Abyad and the "whiteheaded demon" (dīb-e sar safīd) of the Persian epics; see Mahmoud Omidsalar, "Dīv," Encyclopaedia Iranica., ed. Ehsan Yarshater (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, continued by Bibliotheca Persica Press, 1982-ongoing) (EIr). Given al-Abyad's diabolical nature, one is also sorely tempted to provide a more henchman-like rendering of his name—such as "Whitey."

487 inna-hu la-qawlu rasūlin karim: dhī quwwatin 'inda dhī al-'arshi makīn.

⁴⁸⁸ wa-mā huwa bi-qawli shayṭānin rajīm.

⁴⁸⁹ Tafsīr Muqātil b. Sulaymān, 4:602–603. The fact that Muqātil nowhere adduces al-Abyad in his four separate discussions of the Satanic verses, nor suggests that Satan appeared to Muḥammad in the form of Jibrīl, as is also the case with al-Kalbī, somewhat undermines Ibn Hibbān's claim that Mūsā b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān compiled the tafsīr from the discourse of al-Kalbī and Muqātil b. Sulaymān since, as we have seen, neither of these mufassirs mentions that Satan appeared in the form of Jibrīl, or names al-Abyad.

intervention.⁴⁹⁰ And despite Jibrīl's spectacular dispatch of al-Abyaḍ to India, in the Satanic verses incident the *shayṭān* seems to have returned with more success than on his first attempt.

Riwāyah 38: Cited Directly from Ibn 'Abbās in the *Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān* of Niẓām al-Dīn al-Naysābūrī

There is a further narrative of the Satanic verses incident, **Riwāyah 38**, that like **Riwāyah 37** contains the "al-Abyad" motif; that like **Riwāyah 36** contains a correction scene; and that like both **Riwāyahs 36** and **37** contains the *fī ṣūrat Jibrīl* motif. **Riwāyah 38** is reported from Ibn 'Abbās, but without an *isnād*,⁴⁹¹ in the *Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān wa-raghā'ib al-furqān* of Niẓām al-Dīn al-Naysābūrī (d. 728).⁴⁹²

A devil called al-Abyaḍ (*shayṭānan yuqāl la-hu al-Abyaḍ*) came to him in the form of Jibrīl ($f\bar{i}$ ṣūrat Jibrīl) and cast them (the Satanic verses) upon him [$alq\bar{a}$ -hā ilay-hi], and he (the Prophet) recited them [fa-qa-ra'a-hā]. When the Mushrikūn heard that, it pleased them. Then Jibrīl came and asked him (the Prophet) to recite back to him (Jibrīl), and he recited it (Sūrat al-Najm). When he (the Prophet) reached those words, he (Jibrīl) reproached him [ankara 'alay-hi], and the Prophet said to him: "Someone came to me in your form [$at\bar{a}$ -nī ātin 'alā ṣūrati-ka and cast them (the Satanic verses) on my tongue [fa-alqā-hā 'alā lisān-ī].

In **Riwāyah 38**, that the Prophet recited what Satan cast is expressly stated twice: in the account of Satan's casting—"and he (the Prophet) recited them"—and in the correction scene where the Prophet him-

⁴⁹⁰ The author of a commentary on the *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* (necessarily, a work authored after the death of al-Suyūțī in 911/1505), one Ibn al-Yāzijī (about whom I have been able to learn nothing), expressly states that Prophets were "protected from [*'uṣimū min*] him (al-Abyaḍ)"; *Mā qarra bi-hi al-'ayn fī ḥall Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* MS Damascus, Maktabat al-Asad 12168, f. 110b.

⁴⁹¹As a rule, I have avoided presenting *direct* citations from Ibn 'Abbās in later sources as independent *riwāyahs*, but in the present case I am making an exception since this account contains the distinctive "al-Abyad" motif and thus is clearly related to **Riwāyah 37**.

⁴⁹²Nizām al-Dīn al-Hasan b. Muḥammad al-Qummī al-Naysābūrī, *Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān wa-raghā'ib al-furqān*, ed. Ibrāhīm 'Atwah 'Awad (Cairo: Muştafā al-Bābī al-Halabī, 1965), 17:110.

self explains to Jibrīl the cause of his error: "Someone came to me in your form and cast them (the Satanic verses) on my tongue." The text of the Satanic verses themselves is not given in this report, but this is likely to represent editorial economy, as the report is adduced in the context of explaining the incident that has already been narrated earlier along with the text of the Satanic verses.

Riwāyahs 36, 37, and **38** thus represent a distinctive hermeneutical elaboration of the Satanic verses incident: the Prophet was deceived into uttering the Satanic verses by Satan appearing to him in the form of Jibrīl. This interpretation of the incident was remembered from Ibn 'Abbās, and was in circulation in the early Muslim community in the late first / early second century. **Riwāyahs 37** and **38** name the Satan in question as "the White One."

Riwāyah 39: From Abū Sāliḥ; from 'Ikrimah the *mawlā of* Ibn 'Abbās; and from an Unnamed Source

Riwāyah 39, which goes back to Ibn 'Abbās by three different *isnāds*, is cited by al-Suyūṭī in the *Durr* from the *Tafsīr* of Aḥmad Ibn Mardawayh al-Iṣbahānī (323–410).⁴⁹³ Al-Suyūṭī gives only abbreviated *isnāds*, which, in two instances, are more fully provided by Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, who does not, however, cite the text of the report:⁴⁹⁴

'Abbād b. Şuhayb al-Başrī (fl.202) ← Yaḥyā b. Kathīr al-Başrī (d. 190 / 200) ← Muḥammad b. al-Sā'ib al-Kalbī al-Kūfī (d. 146) ← Abū Şāliḥ Bādhām al-Kūfī (100 / 110) ← 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Abbās (d. 68).

Abū Bakr al-Hudhalī al-Baṣrī (d. 167) <u>and</u> Ayyūb b. Kaysān al-Sakhtiyānī al-Baṣrī (68–131) ← 'Ikrimah al-Barbarī al-Baṣrī, *mawlā* of Ibn 'Abbās (d. 105 / 123) ← Ibn 'Abbās Sulaymān b. Bilāl al-Tamīmī al-Madanī (100–172) ← anonymous ← Ibn 'Abbās.

The first *isnād* contains two transmitters we have encountered transmitting other reports on the Satanic verses, Abū Ṣāliḥ Bādhām al-Kūfī (see **Riwāyahs 21** and **37**) and Muḥammad b. al-Sā'ib al-

493 Al-Suyūțī, *Durr*, 6:66.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, 18:41.

Kalbī al-Kūfī (**Riwāyah 23**).⁴⁹⁵ Again, since neither of **Riwāyahs 21** and **23** is attributed to Ibn 'Abbās, the question again arises of why, if Ibn 'Abbās functioned in the early *tafsīr* discourse as the mythic exemplar, should the same scholars have attributed only some reports to him and not others. It is further interesting to note that Ibn Mardawayh's contemporary, al-Tha'labī, cites two separate *tafsīrs*, *Tafsīr* al-Kalbī and *Tafsīr* al-Ṣāliḥī, which are both transmitted from Ibn 'Abbās by al-Kalbī from Abū Ṣāliḥ.⁴⁹⁶ The present *isnād* is initially Kufan but moves to Baṣrah with the transmitter from al-Kalbī, Yaḥyā b. Kathīr al-Baṣrī, who presumably studied with al-Kalbī during the latter's teaching appointment in Baṣrah in the 130s (see **Riwāyah 21**). Like al-Kalbī, Yaḥyā b. Kathīr was accused of *tashayyu*' and has a bad reputation with the Ḥadīth scholars.⁴⁹⁷ The transmitter from Yaḥyā, 'Abbād b. Ṣuhayb, was accused of being a Qadarī, and also has a bad reputation with the Ḥadīth scholars.⁴⁹⁸

In the second *isnād*, the transmitter from Ibn 'Abbās is probably the most important of those who related from him, his famous Berber *mawlā*, 'Ikrimah, of whom Juynboll observes: "On the one hand, the *Ḥadīth* experts did not trust him but, on the other hand, could not do without the material allegedly transmitted *via* him."⁴⁹⁹ Several authorities are remembered as considering 'Ikrimah to be the most learned of Ibn 'Abbās's companions in *tafsīr*: Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī wrote, "My father was asked which of Sa'īd b. Jubayr and 'Ikrimah was the most learned in *tafsīr*; he said, 'The companions of Ibn 'Abbās were as children ['*ayāI*] compared to 'Ikrimah.""⁵⁰⁰ 'Ikri-

- ⁴⁹⁷ For Yahyā b. Kathīr, see Ibn 'Adī, Kāmil, 7:240–241; Ibn Hibbān, Majrūhīn, 3:130; al-'Uqaylī, Du'afā', 4:1533–1534; Ibn al-Jawzī, Du'afā', 3:201–202; al-Dhahabī, Tārīkh al-islām, 190–200:477–478; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 11:267–268; al-Mizzī, Tahdhīb al-kamāl, 31:502–504.
- ⁴⁹⁸ See al-Bukhārī, al-Kabīr, 2/3:43; Ibn Abī Hātim, Jarh, 6:81–82; Ibn Hibbān, Majrūhīn, 2:164–165; al-'Uqaylī, Du'afā', 3:891–892; Ibn al-Jawzī, Du'afā', 2:74; al-Nasā'ī, Du'afā', 173. Shu'bah b. al-Hajjāj is reported to have attended a session with 'Abbād and to have emerged condemning anyone who transmitted from him.
 ⁴⁹⁹ Juynboll, Muslim Tradition, 56.
- ⁵⁰⁰ Ibn Abī Hātim, Jarh, 6-9, at 9; see al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 5:12-36, at 32; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 7:263-273; Ibn 'Adī, Kāmil, 5:266-277; Tayyar Altıkulaç, "İkrime el-Berberî," TDVIA.

⁴⁹⁵ The presence of these two in the *isnād* is sufficient reason for its rejection as unreliable by al-Albānī, *Naşb al-majānīq*, 17; al-Halabī al-Atharī, *Dalā'il*, 69–70.

⁴⁹⁶ Al-Thaʻlabī, Mufassirū sharq, 23–26.

mah's *Tafsīr* from Ibn 'Abbās was mentioned as a distinct work by two contemporaries of Ibn Mardawayh, his senior contemporary, Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 380),⁵⁰¹ and al-Tha'labī.⁵⁰² This is a Basran *isnād* and, of the transmitters from 'Ikrimah, Abū Bakr al-Hudhalī has a poor reputation as a Ḥadīth transmitter,⁵⁰³ but Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī is immaculate⁵⁰⁴ and, it is interesting to note, is specifically remembered as validating 'Ikrimah's transmissions.⁵⁰⁵

Sulaymān b. Bilāl al-Madanī, the sole named transmitter in the third, *munqați isnād*, was collector of *kharāj* in Madīnah.⁵⁰⁶ In view of the fact that he is greatly respected as a Ḥadīth transmitter, it is interesting that the link between him and Ibn 'Abbās is unnamed, a practice that was not uncommon in the second century, especially in *sīrah* reports, but that became unacceptable after the formulation of Ḥadīth methodology.⁵⁰⁷

What we have here, then, are three different *isnāds* from three different cities, Kūfah, Baṣrah, and Madīnah, all of which go back to Ibn 'Abbās and are cited as carrying the same report:⁵⁰⁸

While the Messenger of God was in Mecca, he recited [*qara'a*] Sūrat al-Najm. And when he came upon this verse: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt, the third, the other?," Satan cast onto his tongue [*alqā al-shayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi*]: "Indeed, they are the high *gharānīq* [*in*-

⁵⁰³ See Ibn Abī Hātim, Jarņ, 4:313-314; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhib, 12:45-46; al-Albānī, Naṣb al-majānīq, 17; al-Halabī al-Atharī, Dalā'il, 70-72. Shu'bah b. al-Hajjāj is reported to have said when asked his opinion of Abū Bakr al-Hudhalī as a transmitter, "Leave me to vomit!" See al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, al-Kifāyah, 114.

- ⁵⁰⁵ See al-'Uqaylī, Du'afā', 3:1075. That the *isnād*, so far as it goes, is unimpeachable, was acknowledged by al-Albānī, *Naṣb al-majānīq*, 17, but he pointed out that there had to be a flaw further along the line of transmitters as Ibn Hajar, *Fatḥ*, 18:41, had said that all three *isnāds* were weak. See also al-Halabī al-Atharī, *Dalā'il*, 72.
- ⁵⁰⁶See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, **7:**425–427; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 4:175–176.
- ⁵⁰⁷For a rejection of the *isnāds*, see al-Albānī, *Naṣb al-majānīq*, 17; al-Ḥalabī al-Atharī, *Dalā'il*, 73.
- ⁵⁰⁸ One is uncertain as to what to make of the fact that none of the *isnāds* goes further forward than the end of the second century, while Ibn Mardawayh composed his *Tafsīr* in the fourth century. In view of the lack of any positive evidence, we still just have to assume that Ibn Hajar is abbreviating the *isnāds* here (although he cites the *isnād* in full for another report from Ibn Mardawayh, **Riwāyah 35**).

⁵⁰¹Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, 53.

⁵⁰²Al-Thaʻlabī, *Mufassirū sharq*, 22.

⁵⁰⁴Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 6:15–25; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 1:397–399.

na-hā al-gharānīq al-'ulā]." So God sent down: "We have not sent before you...."

In this brief *riwāyah*, the phrase "Satan cast onto his tongue" makes it clear that **Riwāyah 39**, like **Riwāyahs 35** to **38** from Ibn 'Abbās, takes the position that the Prophet uttered the verses. Like **Riwāyah 35**, there is no explicit gloss of *tamannā*; in the absence of any contextualizing information, the implication would seem to be that it means "recitation."

Riwāyahs 40 to 44: Sa'īd b. Jubayr from Ibn 'Abbās

Riwāyahs 40 to 46 are transmitted from Sa'īd b. Jubayr al-Kūfī al-Makkī (45–94), a leading Qur'ān scholar of the first century and one of the most prominent of Ibn 'Abbās's students.

The *isnāds* of **Riwāyahs 40**, **41**, **43**, and **44** go back to Ibn 'Abbās, while those of **Riwāyahs 42**, **45**, and **46** stop at Sa'īd b. Jubayr. The *rijāl* literature acknowledges Sa'īd b. Jubayr's learning and integrity. He participated in the Kufan revolt of Ibn al-Ash'ath and, thirteen years later, was personally executed by al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf for insisting on the legitimacy of his involvement in the revolt. He is cited in all of the canonical Ḥadīth collections. However, it is noted of him that most of the reports he transmitted were *marāsīl*. While no *tafsīr* work from him has survived intact, Ibn al-Nadīm does cite a *Kitāb Tafsīr Sa'īd b. Jubayr* that, according to a report recorded by al-Dhahabī, was composed at the behest of the Umayyad caliph 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān (d. 86).⁵⁰⁹

⁵⁰⁹ The only study of the *tafsīr* corpus of Saʿīd b. Jubayr of which I am aware is the apparently unpublished doctoral thesis of Ali Akpinar, "Saîd b. Cubeyr ve Tefsîrdeki Yeri," Cümhüriyet Üniversitesi Ilahiyat Fakultesi, 1993, which I have not seen. On Saʿīd b. Jubayr, see Ibn Saʿd, *Țabaqāt*, 6:267–277; Ibn al-Nadim, *Fihrist*, 53; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 4:321–343; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 4:11–14; Sezgin, *GAS*, 1:28–29; and Johan Weststeijn and Alex De Voogt, "Saʿīd b. Ğubayr: Piety, Chess and Rebellion," *Arabica* 49 (2002) 383–386. His martyrdom at the hands of al-Ḥajjāj has received a number of commemorations, including a play by an unlikely playwright: Yūsuf al-Qaradāwī, *ʿAlim wa-ṭāghiyah: Saʿīd b. Jubayr wa-al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf: masraḥiyyah*

Riwāyahs 40, 41, and 42: 'Uthmān b. al-Aswad ← Sa'īd b. Jubayr

Riwāyahs 40, 41, and 42 represent the transmission from Sa'īd b. Jubayr of his student 'Uthmān b. al-Aswad al-Makkī (d. 150), a Ḥadīth transmitter of unimpeachable repute,⁵¹⁰ in two almost identical *isnāds* and a third separate *isnād*. One of these, **Riwāyah** 42, stops at Sa'īd b. Jubayr, while **Riwāyahs** 40 and 41 go back to 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās. The texts carried by the different *isnāds* are remarkably similar, both in narrative construction and hermeneutical elaboration of the incident.

Riwāyah 40: In the *Mukhtārah* of al-Ņiyā' al-Maqdisī with a Deficient *isnād*

Riwāyah 40, with the *isnād* going back to Ibn 'Abbās, is cited from the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Mardawayh (323–410) in a later Ḥadīth collection, the *Mukhtārah* of al-Điyā' al-Maqdisī (537–643). By al-Điyā' al-Maqdisī's own account, the work consists in the main of reports with sound *isnāds* that do not appear in the respective Ṣaḥīḥs of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, but also contains some reports carried by apparently sound *isnāds* that, in fact, contain weaknesses that al-Điyā' al-Maqdisī undertakes to identify.^{511,512}

tārīkhiyyah (Beirut: Dār al-Irshād, 1968), (now available in English translation: Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, *The Scholar and the Tyrant: Saʿīd ibn Jubayr and Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf: an historical play*, trans. S. M. Hasan al Banna (Swansea: Awakening, 2002).

⁵¹⁰ See al-Bukhārī, *al-Kabīr*, 6:213; Ibn Abī Hātim, *Jarh*, 6:144; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 6:339; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 7:107; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 19:341–344.

⁵¹¹ "These are *aḥādīth* that I have selected from among those which are not in al-Bukharī and Muslim. However . . . we sometimes cite *aḥādīth* with good *isnāds* that have a weakness [*aḥādīth bi-asānīd jiyād la-hā 'illah*], and identify the weakness of the *isnād* in order that it be known"; see the first *mujallad*, which is the only published part of the work: Diyā' al-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wāḥid b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥanbalī al-Maqdisī, *al-Aḥādīth al-mukhtārah aw al-mustakhraj min al-aḥādīth al-mukhtārah mimmā lam yukharrij-hu al-Bukhārī wa-Muslim fī ṣaḥīḥay-himā*, ed. 'Abd al-Malik b. 'Abd Allāh b. Duhaysh (Mecca: Maktabat al-Nahḍah al-Ḥadīthah, 1990–1993), 69–70.

⁵¹² Al-Diyā' al-Maqdisī, al-Ahādīth al-mukhtārah, MS Damascus, Maktabat al-Asad, Hadīth 3822, f. 235a (formerly Zāhiriyyah, Majmū' 86); this is an autograph manuscript in the author's own hand containing samā'āt ("notes of audition") dated 634—that is, within the author's lifetime. Riwāyah 40 was transcribed by al-

Aḥmad b. Mūsā Ibn Mardawayh al-Iṣbahānī ← [his father, Mūsā b. Mardawayh al-Iṣbahānī (d. 360)]⁵¹³ ← Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Mattuwayh al-Iṣbahānī (d. 302)⁵¹⁴ ← Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Muqri' al-Baghdādī (d. 300)⁵¹⁵ ← Ja'far b. Muḥammad al-Ṭayālisī al-Baghdādī (d. 282)⁵¹⁶ ← Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. 'Ar'arah al-Baṣrī al-Baghdādī (d. 231)⁵¹⁷ ← Abū 'Āṣim al-Nabīl al-Ṭaḥḥāk b. Makhlad al-Makkī al-Baṣrī (d. 212)⁵¹⁸ ← 'Uthmān b. al-Aswad al-Makkī (d. 150) ← Sa'īd b. Jubayr ← Ibn 'Abbās.

Riwāyah 40 is also cited in the *Durr* of al-Suyūţī both directly from Ibn Mardawayh and from al-Diyā' al-Maqdisī's citation of him. Al-Suyūţī does not give Ibn Mardawayh's *isnād*, but says that it is made of reliable transmitters (*sanad rijālu-hu thiqāt*).⁵¹⁹ The first four transmitters from Sa'īd b. Jubayr in Ibn Mardawayh's

Albānī, *Naṣb al-majānīq*, 8, from this unpublished manuscript (at that time in the Zāhiriyyah library), but without citing the manuscript number. For a summary description of the work, and extant manuscripts, see the study of al-Diyā' al-Maqdisī by Muḥammad Muṭī' al-Ḥāfiẓ, *al-Tanwīh wa-al-tabyīn fī sīrat muḥaddith al-Shām al-Ḥāfiẓ Diyā' al-Dīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Bashā'ir al-Islāmiyyah, 1999), 314–317–323 (the present manuscript is detailed at 318).

⁵¹³ Ibn Mardawayh does not actually cite his father in the *isnād*, but since al-Dhahabī notes at the outset of his biographical entry that Ibn Mardawayh related from Ibn Mattuwayh by way of his father, I am assuming the link here.

⁵¹⁴ See Abū Nu'aym, Akhbār Işbahān, 2:214.

⁵¹⁵ See al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 24:68–69.

⁵¹⁶ See al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 7:188–189; Abū al-Husayn Muḥammad Ibn al-Qādī Abī Ya'lā (d. 526) in the summary of Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Qādir b. 'Uthmān al-Nābulūsī (d. 797), *Țabaqāt al-ḥanābilah*, ed. Aḥmad 'Ubayd (Damascus: Maṭba'at al-I'tidāl, 1931), 85–86; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 5:346–347.

⁵¹⁷See al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī, Tārīkh Baghdād, 6:148-150; al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 11:479-483; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 1:155-158; al-Mizzī, Tahdhīb al-kamāl, 2:178-182.

⁵¹⁸ See al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 9:480–485; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 4:450–453; al-Mizzī, Tahdhīb al-kamāl, 13:281–291; also al-'Uqaylī, Du'afā', 2:610–611.

⁵¹⁹ See al-Suyūțī, *al-Durr*, 6:65. According to al-Suyūțī, this report is also cited by al-Bazzār (d. 292) and al-Ţabarānī (d. 360), which is not the case. Al-Suyūtī is referring here to **Riwāyahs 43** and 44, which are cited by al-Bazzār and al-Ţabarānī, respectively, and which both go back to Sa'īd b. Jubayr via Abū Bishr. The reports collected in the *Mukhtārah* of al-Diyā' were generally regarded by Hadīth scholars to be sound: al-Dhahabī observed, "They are Hadīths that may be used as authorities, except over that which is in al-Bukhārī and Muslim [*wa-hiya al-aḥādīth allatī yaṣluḥu an yaḥtajja bi-hā illā siwā al-ṣaḥīḥayn*]." However it is unlikely that al-Dhahabī, his characterization of the *Mukhtārah* notwithstanding, would have accepted the present *isnād*: he was a firm opponent of the Satanic verses incident. Al-Qāsim al-Birzālī (d. 739/1339) called the work the "Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Diyā'." For these, and the similar opinions of other Hadīth scholars, see al-Hāfiz, *al-Tanwīh wa-al-tabyīn*, 315–316.

isnād are, certainly, all unimpeachable. Interestingly, they also seem to have been primarily *muḥaddithūn*, although 'Uthmān b. al-Aswad also studied under two other prominent first-century *mufassirūn*, Mujāhid b. Jabr and 'Aṭiyyah b. Sa'd al-'Awfī. However, the fifth transmitter, Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Muqri' al-Baghdādī, is damagingly obscure: there seems to be only one biographical entry on him, and while he is not expressly criticized in it, his presence in the *isnād* was sufficient reason for Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī to reject the *riwāyah*.⁵²⁰ While al-Albānī's standards of *isnād* criticism are unusually severe, in the present instance his assessment seems justified. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy not only that al-Diyā al-Maqdisī does not identify any deficiency in the *isnād* but also that Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī deemed this the most reliable of the *isnāds* that transmit the Satanic verses incident.⁵²¹

The following is the narrative of the Satanic verses incident:

The Messenger of God recited [*qara'a*]: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?" and Satan cast onto his tongue [*fa-alqā al-shayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi*]: "Those high *gharānīq*: their intercession is to be hoped for! [*tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-shafā 'atu-hunna turtajā*]."⁵²²

And the Mushrikūn were greatly pleased by this and said: "He has mentioned our gods."

So Jibrīl came to him and said: "Recite to me [*iqra' 'alay-ya*] what I brought you!" And he recited: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other? Those high *gharānīq*: their intercession is hoped for!" He (Jibrīl) said: "I did not bring you this! This is from Satan! [*mā ataytu-ka bi-hādhā hādhā 'an al-shaytān*]"; or he said: "This is from Satan! I did not bring you these" [*aw qāla hādhā min al-shaytān lam āti-ka bi-hā*].⁵²³

⁵²¹aşahhu taraf hādhā al-hadīth, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalāni, al-Kāfī al-shāfī fī takhrij ahādīth al-Kashshāf, published with Mahmūd b. 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī, al-Kashshāf 'an haqā'iq al-tanzīl (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah, n.d.), 114. Ibn Hajar does not cite the matn.

⁵²²Al-Suyūțī has: tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-<u>inna</u> shafā'ata-hunna la-turtajā.

⁵²³ This is the text in Ibn Mardawayh. Al-Suyūțī's text omits the alternative version of Jibrīl's words: "or he said: 'This is from Satan! I did not bring you these [aw qāla hādhā min al-shayţān lam āti-ka bi-hā].""

⁵²⁰ Al-Albānī, *Naṣb al-majānīq*, 8–9, rejects al-Muqri' as *majhūl* (indeed, there is only one biographical entry on him, that in the *Tārīkh Baghdād*—see above); see also al-Ḥalabī al-Atharī, *Dalā'il*, 92.

So God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he $tamann\bar{a}$, Satan cast something into his umniyyah" to the end of the verse.

Riwāyah 41: In the *Tafsīr* of Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī with an Unacknowledged *ṣaḥīḥ isnād*

In fact, there is an equally—if not more—reliable *isnād* that has apparently gone unnoticed by later commentators. This is **Riwāyah 41**, effectively a summary version of **Riwāyah 40**, cited in the *Tafsīr* of Baḥr al-'Ulūm Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī with the following *isnād*:⁵²⁴

Al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad al-Sijzī al-Samarqandī (289–368) ← Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Mattuwayh al-Iṣbahānī (d. 302) ← Ja'far b. Muḥammad al-Ṭayālisī al-Baghdādī (d. 282)⁵²⁵ ← Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. 'Ar'arah al-Baṣrī al-Baghdādī ← Abū 'Āṣim al-Nabīl al-Ṭaḥḥāk b. Makhlad al-Makkī al-Baṣrī ← 'Uthmān b. al-Aswad al-Makkī⁵²⁶ ← Sa'īd b. Jubayr ← Ibn 'Abbās.

This *isnād* is almost identical to the previous one, with two differences—one of them being especially significant. This is the absence from the *isnād* of **Riwāyah 41** of the weak link in the *isnād* of **Riwāyah 40**—namely, Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Muqri' al-Baghdādī. In **Riwāyah 41**, Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Mattuwayh al-Iṣbahānī transmits directly from Ja'far al-Ṭayālisī al-Baghdādī, without the mediation of Muḥammad b. al-Muqri'; a scenario that is entirely reasonable given their death dates, and the fact that Ibn Mattuwayh is recorded as having studied in Iraq.⁵²⁷ The transmitter from Ibn

⁵²⁷ Al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 14:142. The fact that in Riwāyah 42 Muḥammad b. Mattuwayh transmits directly from Ja'far al-Ṭayālisī without the mediation of the offending Muḥammad b. al-Muqri' makes the presence of Muḥammad b. al-Muqri' in Riwāyah 41 somewhat curious as the *isnād*, to which he is effectively superfluous, functions perfectly well without him. Indeed, the fact that Muḥammad b. al-Muqri' serves no function other than to undermine the *isnād* in Riwāyah

⁵²⁴ Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī, *Tafsīr al-Samarqandī*, 2:400.

⁵²⁵ The published text gives the name as Ja'far b. Zayd al-Tayālisī, but "Zayd" is here evidently an orthographic corruption of "Muhammad."

⁵²⁶ The published text gives the name as 'Ammār b. al-Aswad, but again, "'Ammār" is here self-evidently an orthographic corruption of "'Uthmān."

Mattuwayh, al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad al-Sijzī, was the *qāḍī* of Samarqand, the leading Ḥanafī jurist of the city, and a teacher of the great Ḥadīth scholar al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī.⁵²⁸ The following is the account of the Satanic verses incident:

The Messenger of God recited: "And Manāt, the third, the other." Then he said: "Those high *gharānīq*: indeed, intercession from them is to be hoped for [*tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna al-shafā'ah min-hā turtajā*]!" So the Mushrikūn said, "He has mentioned our gods." Then the verse [Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj] was sent down.

Despite its brevity, this report contains the essential elements of the Satanic verses incident: the Prophet recited the *gharānīq* verses following his recitation of Qur'ān 53:19 al-Najm. The association of the incident with Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj straightforwardly indicates that these verses were cast by Satan onto the Prophet's tongue. Despite its immaculate *isnād*, this report was never included in any Ḥadīth collection; indeed, it seems never to have been cited again in the subsequent literature, as a result of which the Ḥadīth scholars have been spared the task of discrediting it.

Riwāyah 42: In the *Asbāb al-nuzūl* of al-Wāḥidī with an *isnād* Stopping at Sa'īd b. Jubayr

Riwāyah 42 is given by al-Wāḥidī al-Naysābūrī (d. 487) in his *Asbāb al-nuzūl*, by a different *isnād* to **Riwāyahs 4**0 and **41**. This *isnād* also goes back *via* 'Uthmān b. al-Aswad to Sa'īd b. Jubayr, but is not attributed to Ibn 'Abbās:⁵²⁹

⁴¹ reminds one of the phenomenon by which opponents of a given Hadīth would undermine that Hadīth by adding a weak link to an otherwise sound *isnād*; see Norman Calder, *Studies in Early Muslim Jurisprudence* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 235–241, on what he calls "invention in order to impugn."

⁵²⁸ See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 16:435–437; Ibn Abī al-Wafā' al-Qurashī, *al-Jawāhir al-muḍiyyah fī al-ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanafiyyah*, ed. 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Muḥammad al-Ḥulw (Cairo: 'Īsā al-Ḥalabī, 1978), 2:178.

⁵²⁹Al-Wāḥidī, Asbāb al-nuzūl, ed. Aḥmad Ṣaqr (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Jadīd, 1969), 321. Al-Wāḥidī gives a similar isnād earlier in the work (Asbāb al-nuzūl, 165): Abū Bakr al-Işbahānī ← Abū al-Shaykh al-Ḥāfiz ← Abū Yaḥyā al-Rāzī ← Sahl b.

Abū Bakr al-Ḥārithī [al-Iṣbahānī (?)]⁵³⁰ ← Abū Bakr b. Ḥayyān [Abū al-Shaykh al-Iṣbahānī (?) (274–369)]⁵³¹ ← Abū Yaḥyā 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Salm al-Rāzī al-Iṣbahānī (d. 289)⁵³² ← Sahl b. 'Uthmān al-'Askarī al-Rāzī (d. 235)⁵³³ ← Yaḥyā b. Zakariyyā b. Abī Zā'idah al-Kūfī (d. 183) / Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd b. al-Qaṭṭān al-Baṣrī (120– 198)⁵³⁴ ← 'Uthmān b. al-Aswad al-Makkī (d. 150) ← Sa'īd b. Jubayr al-Kūfī (d. 95).

Sahl b. 'Uthmān al-Rāzī is recorded as having compiled both a *Musnad* and a *Tafsīr*, both of which Abū Yaḥyā 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Rāzī is reported to have brought from Rayy to Iṣbahān. It is not un-likely that **Riwāyah 42** was contained in Sahl's *Tafsīr*:

The Messenger of God recited [*qara'a*]: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other? Those high *gharāniq*: their intercession is to be hoped for! [*tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-shafā'atuhunna turtajā*]."⁵³⁵

And the Mushrikūn were greatly pleased by this and said: "He has mentioned our gods."

^{&#}x27;Uthmān ←.... The *isnād* is duly rejected as *mursal* by al-Ṣawwayānī, *al-Qaṣimah*, 1:434.

⁵³⁰ I cannot identify this scholar; cf. the *isnād* at *Asbāb al-nuzūl*, 165, cited above.

⁵³¹The citation is: Abū Bakr [Muḥammad] b. Ḥayyān; the editor, Aḥmad al-Ṣaqr, has added the name Muḥammad. This may be Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Ja'far b. Ḥayyān Abū al-Shaykh al-Iṣbahānī (see **Riwāyah 6**, above). He is known to have transmitted from Abū Yaḥyā 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Salm, and is sometimes cited as Abū al-Shaykh b. Ḥayyān; see al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 13:530; cf. the *isnād* at *Asbāb al-nuzūl*, 165.

⁵³²See Abū Nu'aym, Akhbār Işbahān, 2:112-113; and Abū al-Shaykh al-Işbahānī, <u>Tabaqāt al-muḥaddithīn bi-Işbahān</u>, 3:530-532; al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 13:530-531.

⁵³³ See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 11:454-45; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 4:255-256; al-Mizzī, *Tah-dhīb al-kamāl*, 12:197-200.

⁵³⁴ Al-Wāḥidī merely gives this name as "Yaḥyā." Al-Albānī, Naṣb al-majānīq, 7, identifies him as Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd b. Qaṭṭān al-Baṣrī, a prodigious transmitter from 'Uthmān b. al-Aswad. However, there is no indication in the *rijāl* works that Sahl al-'Askarī transmitted from Yaḥyā b. al-Qaṭṭān. Sahl did transmit from Yaḥyā b. Abī Zā'idah, but there is no record of the latter transmitting from 'Uthmān b. al-Aswad. For Yaḥyā b. al-Qaṭṭān, see al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 9:175-189; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 11:218-220; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 31:329-343. For Yaḥyā b. Abī Zā'idah, see al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 8:299-302; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 11:208-210; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 31:305-312, al-'Uqaylī, *Du'afā*', 4:1512.

⁵³⁵ This sentence differs from Riwāyah 40 only in the omission of the phrase "and Satan cast onto his tongue [*fa-alqā al-shaytān 'alā lisāni-hi*]," and of the rhetorical particle *inna* from the Satanic verses themselves.

Jibrīl came to the Messenger of God and said: "Go over the Word of God with me [*i'riḍ 'alay-ya kalām Allāh*]!" When he went over (it) with him [*fa-lammā 'araḍa 'alay-hi*], he (Jibrīl) said: "As for this, I did not bring it to you! This is from Satan! [*ammā hādhā fa-lam āti-ka bi-hi hādhā min al-shayṭān*]."

So God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he $tamann\bar{a}$, Satan cast something into his *umniyyah*."

It is evident that Riwāyahs 40 and 42 are close paraphrases of each other in which the narrative structure is effectively identical, and that the differences in wording between the two do not in any way affect the hermeneutical elaboration of the incident. Riwāyah 40, which Ibn Mardawayh's isnād attributes to Ibn 'Abbās, is the same riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā as Riwāyah 42, the isnād of which stops at Sa'id b. al-Jubayr. Not only does this strongly suggest that the interpretation of the incident in **Riwāyahs** 40 and 42 was, indeed, transmitted by 'Uthmān b. al-Aswad from Sa'īd b. Jubayr at the end of the first-century of Islam, but also, at the level of $ma'n\bar{a}$, it becomes reasonable to attribute the report to Ibn 'Abbās. On the other hand, the question arises as to why the *isnād* for **Riwāyahs** 40 and 41 should go back to Ibn 'Abbās, while that of Riwāyah 42 stops at Sa'īd b. Jubayr, when Riwāyahs 40 and 42 are essentially the same report. This issue will be taken up in the concluding discussion for Riwāyahs 40 to 46 from Saʿīd b. Jubayr. For the moment, it should be noted that the interpretation in **Riwāyahs** 40, 41, and 42 is fundamentally no different from that in Riwāyah 35 (and the less detailed Riwāyah 39): there is no gloss of umniyyah to mean "desire" and in the absence of any contextualization of the incident, the default gloss is "recitation." Also, in Riwāyah 42, as in Riwāyah 40, the Prophet does not realize he has erred until corrected by Jibrīl, and while (it would seem, in the interest of brevity) there is no correction scene in the summary Riwāyah 41, the Prophetic error is resolved here by the revelation of Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj. All five reports represent a consistent hermeneutical tradition that is linked by three of the isnāds to Ibn 'Abbās.

Riwāyahs 43 and 44: Shu'bah ←Abū Bishr ←Sa'īd b. Jubayr ← Ibn 'Abbās

Riwāyahs 43 and **44** are transmitted from Ibn 'Abbās by what, until the sixth transmitter, is the same *isnād*. They are the only *riwāyahs* on the Satanic verses incident cited in early Ḥadīth collections, as opposed to early *sīrah-maghāzī* or *tafsīr* works.⁵³⁶

Riwāyah 43: Cited from Yūsuf b. Ḥammād al-Baṣrī in the *Musnad* of al-Bazzār with Two Cautionary Remarks

Riwāyah 43 was recorded in the *Musnad* of the widely traveled third-century Basran Ḥadīth scholar Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. 'Amr al-Bazzār (d. 292).⁵³⁷ It also appears in the *Kashf al-astār 'an zawā'id al-Bazzār* of Nūr al-Dīn al-Haythamī (d. 807),⁵³⁸ a work consisting of the *zawā'id* from al-Bazzār's *Musnad* (i.e., those reports that are not found in the canonical Ḥadīth collections).⁵³⁹ Al-Haythamī's student, Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852), then prepared an abridged version of the *Kashf al-astār* omitting those Ḥadīth to be found in the *Musnad* of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal.⁵⁴⁰ **Riwāyah 43** is given there, and was also cited from al-Bazzār by Jamāl al-Din al-Zayla'ī (d. 762) in his *Takhrīj*

- ⁵³⁸ Nūr al-Dīn al-Haythamī, Kashf al-astār 'an zawā'id al-Bazzār 'alā al-kutub alsittah, ed. Habīb al-Raḥmān al-A'ẓamī (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1979), 3:72. The text of Riwāyah 43 is also given, without the isnād, in al-Haythami, Majma' al-zawā'id, 7:115.
- ⁵³⁹For the genre of zawā'id works, of which the Mukhtārah of al-Diyā' is also an example, see 'Abd al-Salām Muḥammad 'Allūsh, 'Ilm zawā'id al-Hadīth: dirāsah wa-manhaj wa-muşannafāt (Beirut: Dār Ibn Hazm, 1995) and Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh Abū Şu'aylīk, Kutub al-zawā'id: nash'atu-hā ahammiyyatu-hā wa-subul khidmati-hā (Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, 1996).
- ⁵⁴⁰ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, Mukhtaşar zawā'id Musnad al-Bazzār 'alā al-kutub al-sittah wa-Musnad Ahmad, ed. Şabrī b. 'Abd al-Khāliq Abū Dharr (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Kutub al-Thaqāfiyyah, 1992), 2:109.

⁵³⁶ The Hadīth scholars of the middle period did not differentiate between Riwāyahs
42 and 43, taking them as the same Hadīth. Our reasons for considering them as separate *riwāyahs* will become apparent as we proceed.

⁵³⁷ Al-Bazzār, *al-Baḥr al-zakhkhār al-ma'rūf bi-Musnad al-Bazzār* (volume 11), ed. 'Ādil b. Sa'd, Madīnah: Maktabat al-'Ulūm wa-al-Hikam, 2003), 11:296–297. On al-Bazzār, see the editor's introduction to the first volume of *al-Baḥr al-zakhkhār*, ed. Maḥfuẓ al-Raḥmān Zayn Allāh, 1:8–16.

ahadith al-Kashshaf.⁵⁴¹ **Riwāyah 43** is carried by an *isnād* made up of transmitters of excellent reputation—*rijāl al-ṣahīh*, as al-Haythamī points out. The transmitter from Sa'īd b. Jubayr, Abū Bishr Ja'far b. Abī Waḥshiyyah, was universally regarded as reliable, and one report said of him that he was "the most reliable person transmitting from Sa'īd b. Jubayr."⁵⁴² The transmitter from Abū Bishr, Shu'bah b. Ḥajjāj al-Baṣrī, was one of the pioneers of the Ḥadīth movement in second-century Iraq and was particularly active in the movement against fabrication of Ḥadīth.⁵⁴³ The transmitters from Shu'bah are, similarly, *muḥaddithūn* of excellent reputation. However, the transmission apparatus of **Riwāyah 43** contains two cautionary remarks, for which reason we will quote it in full. The following is al-Bazzār's citation of **Riwāyah 43**:

Yūsuf b. Hammād [al-Baṣrī (d. 245)]⁵⁴⁴ related to us: Umayyah b. Khālid [al-Baṣrī (d. 201)]⁵⁴⁵ related to us: Shu'bah [b. Hajjāj al-Baṣrī (82–160) related to us from Abū Bishr [Ja'far b. Abī Waḥshiyyah al-Baṣrī al-Wāsiṭī (d. 125)] from Sa'īd b. Jubayr [al-Kūfī (d. 95)] from Ibn 'Abbās [d. 68]—in my estimation the Hadīth is doubtful [$f\bar{i}$ -mā aḥsib al-shakkfī al-ḥadīth].⁵⁴⁶

When the Prophet was in Mecca, he recited [*qara'a*], "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?" And there ran upon his tongue [*fa-jarā 'alā lisāni-hi*]: "Those high *gharānīq*: intercession from them is to be hoped for! [*tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā al-shafā'ah*

 ⁵⁴¹Al-Zayla'ī, *Takhrīj al-aḥādīth wa-al-āthār*, 2:391–392. According to Ibn Hajar, *Fatḥ*, 18:41, **Riwāyah 43** was also given in the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Mardawayh, but I suspect that Ibn Hajar is here conflating **Riwāyahs 43** and 44 (see below for details).
 ⁵⁴²See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 5:465–466; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 5:83–84.

⁵⁴³ See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 7:202–228; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 4:338–346; Sezgin, *GAS*, 1:92. G. H. A. Juynboll has argued that Shu'bah was so zealous in his opposition to Hadīth fabrication that he brought into circulation the famous Hadīth "Who lies about me deliberately, let him prepare his seat in the Fire [*man kadhaba 'alay-ya muta'ammidan fa-l-yatabawwa' maq'ada-hu min al-nār*]"; see G. H. A. Juynboll, "Shu'ba b. al-Hajjāj (d. 160/776) and His Position among the Traditionists of Başra," *Le Muséon* 111 (1998), 187–226.

⁵⁴⁴ See Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 11:410-411; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 32:418-420.

⁵⁴⁵ See Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 1:370-371; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 3:330-332.

⁵⁴⁶ Al-Haythamī's text has the orthographic variant *ashakku fī al-ḥadīth*, "I doubt the Ḥadīth," as does al-Zayla'ī, while Ibn Ḥajar and Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, 3:253 (where the *isnād* and al-Bazzār's subsequent remarks are cited without the narrative) have *al-shakku fī al-ḥadīth*.

*min-hā / hum*⁵⁴⁷ *turtajā*]." The Mushrikūn of Mecca⁵⁴⁸ heard this and were pleased by it [*surrū bi-hā*].

This greatly distressed [*ishtadda 'alā*] the Messenger of God.⁵⁴⁹ So God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he *tamannā*, Satan cast something into his *umniyyah*; then God removes that which Satan casts and establishes His Signs clearly."

We do not know of this *ḥadīth* being related from the Prophet by a complete *isnād* which may validly be cited [*isnād muttaşil yajūz dhik-ru-hu*] with the exception of this *isnād*; and we do not know of anyone who has provided a *sanad* for this Ḥadīth [*asnada hādhā al-ḥadīth*] from Shu'bah from Abū Bishr from Sa'īd from Ibn 'Abbās except for Umayyah; and we have heard it only from Yūsuf b. Ḥammād—and he [Yūsuf] was trustworthy [*thiqah*]. Those other than Umayyah related it as a *mursal* from Abū Bishr from Sa'īd b. Jubayr;⁵⁵⁰ albeit that this Ḥadīth is also known from al-Kalbī from Abū Ṣāliḥ from Ibn 'Abbās.⁵⁵¹ Umayyah was trustworthy and well-known [*thiqah mashhūr*].⁵⁵²

The citation contains two critical interjections: a brief comment of uncertain authorship that comes at the end of the *isnād*, and the longer commentary on the *isnād* that follows the report as a whole and is the critical contribution of al-Bazzār. The effect of both interjections is—in different degrees—to call into question the au-

⁵⁵⁰ See **Riwāyahs 46** and **47**, below.

⁵⁵²Al-Haythami and Ibn Hajar have an abbreviated version of this comment:

Al-Bazzār said: "We do not know of it being related by a complete *isnād* which may validly be cited [*isnād muttaşil yajūz dhikru-hu*] with the exception of this *isnād*— Umayyah b. Khālid {is the only one by whom it reaches back (to a Companion) and} is trustworthy and well-known *thiqah mashhūr*]—albeit that this is known in the Ḥadīth of al-Kalbī from Abū Ṣāliḥ from Ibn 'Abbās."

The portion in brackets, *tafarrada bi-waşli-hi*, is in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, 3:217, who gives al-Bazzār's *isnād* as well as his comments, but does not cite the report itself, and in al-Suyūtī, *Asbāb al-nuzūl*, 150, who cites the end of the *isnād* with al-Bazzār's comment. Al-Zayla^cī cites al-Bazzār's comment in full.

⁵⁴⁷ Al-Zayla'ī has min-hā; al-Haythamī and Ibn Ḥajar have min-hum.

⁵⁴⁸ Al-Zayla'ī has mushrikū Makkah; al-Haythamī and Ibn Hajar have mushrikū ahl Makkah.

⁵⁴⁹ In one citation of Riwāyah 42, this is given as *ishtabaha 'alā*—"the Messenger of God was confused by this"—which is an orthographic error, albeit a semantically plausible one in the context of the narrative; see Ibn Hajar, *Takhrīj ahādīth al-Kashshāf*, 114.

⁵⁵¹See **Riwāyah 39**, above.

thenticity of the *riwāyah*. By declaring that this is the only sound isnād by which he knows the Hadīth (he was evidently unaware of **Riwāyahs** 40 and 41), al-Bazzār is pointing out that this is a report transmitted on the authority of a single individual (khabar alwāhid).553 While the fact of the Hadīth being solitary does not necessarily nullify its authority in Hadīth methodology,⁵⁵⁴ it removes it from the status of a categorical proof (*al-qat*⁴) to that of a possibility subject to confirmation (al-zann): according to the fifth-century Hadīth authority al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463), "We follow and act upon what it (a solitary report) says when we think that the probability is that it is true [ta'abbadnā bi-al-'amal bi-khabari-hi matā zanannā kawna-hu sidgan]." Al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī goes on to state that a khabar al-wāhid may be rejected on the basis that its matn contradicts "reason, the firmly established ruling of the Qur'an, or the known sunnah."555 In the present case, the contents of the matn are objectionable to the orthodox concept of the 'ismah of the Prophet, and thus appear to contradict all three of reason, the Qur'an, and the sunnah. When viewed in these terms, the riwayah may be rejected.

Rejection of the $riw\bar{a}yah$ is clearly the intent of the remark appended to the $isn\bar{a}d$ —"In my estimation: I doubt the Hadīth"—even though it is unclear whether the expression of doubt is directed at the $isn\bar{a}d$ (i.e., at the genuineness of transmission) or at the *matn* (i.e., at the incompatibility of the content with orthodox dogma). Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī has (expectedly) taken the remark as a criticism of the $isn\bar{a}d$, and has rejected **Riwāyah 43** on this basis: "It is

⁵⁵³ Al-Bazzār makes this kind of *isnād*-critical observation throughout his *Musnad*; see Hişşah/Haşşah 'Abd al-'Azīz Muḥammad al-Suwaydī, "al-Bazzār wa-manhaju-hu fī Musnadi-hi al-Baḥr al-zakhkhār," *Majallat Buḥūth al-Sunnah wa-al-Sīrah* 7 (1993–1994), 332–367; and Maḥfuẓ al-Raḥmān Zayn Allāh's introduction to the first volume of *al-Baḥr al-zakhkhār*, 1:29–36.

⁵⁵⁴ Al-Shafi'ī, for instance, was a famous advocate for the acceptance of khabar alwāḥid; see Joseph Lowry, Early Islamic Legal Theory: The Risāla of Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 187-206. For the positions held by different authorities on the status of khabar al-wāḥid, and for definitions of the subcategories thereof, see James Robson, "Traditions from Individuals," Journal of Semitic Studies 9 (1964), 327-340; also al-Qādī Barhūn, al-Khabar al-wāḥid fī al-tashrī' al-islāmī wa-ḥujjiyyatu-hu (Casablanca: al-Dār al-Baydā': Maṭba'at al-Najāḥ al-Jadīdah, 1995).

⁵⁵⁵ See al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Kifāyah*, 19, and 432.

defective on account of the transmitter's uncertainty as to whether it reaches back (to a Companion) [ma'lūl bi-taraddud al-rāwī fī wasli-hi]."556 However, the remark can equally be taken as an objection to the unorthodox content of the report. There is also some ambiguity as to the author of this statement. Al-Haythamī provides a gloss in the Majma'al-zawā'id stating that the "In my estimation" remark is Sa'īd b. Jubayr's.⁵⁵⁷ But does it, in fact, make sense for Sa'īd to cast doubt on his own transmission from his great teacher, Ibn 'Abbās, or to question the doctrinal content of the report? Pace al-Haythamī, there does not appear to be any way in which Sa'īd b. Jubayr can reasonably be taken as the interjector in **Riwāyah 43**. Firstly, the wording of the *isnād*—"Yūsuf b. Hammād related to us: ... Shu'bah related to us from Sa'īd b. Jubayr from Ibn 'Abbās—in my estimation, I doubt the Hadīth ['an Sa'īd b. Jubayr 'an Ibn 'Abbās $f\bar{\imath}$ -mā aḥsibu ashukku $f\bar{\imath}$ al-ḥad $\bar{\imath}$ th]"—does not support this reading. For Sa'id b. Jubayr to be the speaker, the interjected remark should come between the mention of his name and that of Ibn 'Abbās (see Riwāyah 44, below) and the phrase should read: 'an Sa'īd b. Jubayr (qāla) fī-mā ahsibu ashukku fī al-hadīth 'an Ibn 'Abbās. Secondly, such a remark would be incongruous and anachronistic coming from Sa'īd b. Jubayr. Why should Sa'īd b. Jubayr, who is first and foremost a Qur'an scholar and whose reputation derived considerably from his having been a student of Ibn 'Abbās, relate a report from the greatest of all Qur'an scholars only to pronounce the report as unreliable in the same breath? It makes no sense for Sa'īd to doubt either the *isnād* (i.e., to doubt his own transmission from Ibn 'Abbās) or the matn (no such doubt is expressed in the other reports from Sa'id, Riwāyahs 44, 45, and 46). The disparaging phrase in **Riwāyah 43** is far more likely to have been inserted by one of the transmitters after Sa'īd b. Jubayr, all of whom were primarily muḥaddithūn, or even as a margin comment by a later muḥaddith reading or transcribing the manuscript. It is not unlikely that the author of the remark is al-Bazzār himself: as we have already noted, his Musnad is punctuated by his critical comments on the

⁵⁵⁶ See al-Albānī, Nașb al-majānīq, 5-6.

⁵⁵⁷See al-Haythamī, Majma' al-zawā'id, 7:115, where he says of Riwāyah 43 that it is "from Ibn 'Abbās in the estimation of Sa'īd b. Jubayr [fī-mā yaḥsib Sa'īd ibn Jubayr]."

various $ahad\bar{i}th$. However, by ascribing the remark to Sa'īd b. Jubayr, al-Haythamī effectively undermines any claim to reliability that the report may have.

It is instructive to note that while the compilers of the $s\bar{s}rah$ magh $\bar{a}z\bar{s}$ and $tafs\bar{s}r$ sources did not question the often weak $isn\bar{a}ds$ for the Satanic verses incident, the Hadīth scholars who transmitted **Riwāyah 43** questioned the report despite its apparently excellent $isn\bar{a}d$. We will return to this fundamental point after considering **Riwāyah 44**.

Riwāyah 44: Cited from Yūsuf b. Ḥammād al-Baṣrī in the *Muʿjam al-Kabīr* of al-Ṭabarānī and in the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Mardawayh, with an Interesting Remark

Riwāyah 44 is recorded in another Ḥadīth collection, the *al-Mu'jam al-kabīr* of Sulaymān b. Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī (260–360), with the same *isnād* as **Riwāyah 43**, but with the addition of two separate informants from whom al-Ṭabarānī received the *riwāyah*. The *isnād* contains two significant remarks, for which reason it is appropriate to quote its wording in full:⁵⁵⁸

Al-Ḥusayn b. Isḥāq al-Tustarī [d. 290]⁵⁵⁹ <u>and</u> 'Abdān ['Abd Allāh] b. Aḥmad [al-Ahwāzī al-Jawālīqī (d. 306)]⁵⁶⁰ said [$q\bar{a}l\bar{a}$]: Yūsuf b. Ḥammād transmitted to us the meaning [*ḥaddatha-nā Yūsuf ibn Ḥammād al-ma*'nā] from Umayyah b. Khālid from Shu'bah from Abū Bishr from Sa'īd b. Jubayr: I know it only from [*lā a'lamu-hu illā 'an*] Ibn 'Abbās.

Riwāyah 44 is also cited from the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Mardawayh by al-Diyā' al-Maqdisī in his *Mukhtārah*,⁵⁶¹ and by al-Zayla'ī in his

⁵⁵⁸ Al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu'jam al-kabīr*, 12:42. Al-Điyā' al-Maqdisī adduces this report from al-Ṭabarānī in his *Mukhtārah*, f.210a–b.

⁵⁵⁹ See Ibn Abī Ya'lā, *Ṭabaqāt al-ḥanābilah*, 101; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 14:57; Ibn 'Asākir, *Tārīkh Dimashq*, 7:95.

⁵⁶⁰ See al-Khațīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 9:378–379; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 14:168–173.

⁵⁶¹Al-Diyā' al-Maqdisī, *al-Mukhtārah*, f. 210a-b.

Takhrīj aḥādīth al-Kashshāf.⁵⁶² Al-Diyā' al-Maqdisī provides Ibn Mardawayh's full *isnād*:

Aḥmad b. Mūsā Ibn Mardawayh al-Iṣbahānī informed us (*akhbara-nā*) [his father, Mūsā b. Mardawayh al-Iṣbahānī informed us]⁵⁶³ Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Mattuwayh al-Iṣbahānī informed us 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. Junayd al-Rāzī (d. 291)⁵⁶⁴ <u>AND</u> Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. 'Āṣim al-Rāzī (d. 289)⁵⁶⁵ informed us Yūsuf b. Ḥammād al-Baṣrī⁵⁶⁶ informed us Umayyah b. Khālid al-Baṣrī informed us Shu'bah b. Ḥajjāj al-Baṣrī from (*'an*) Abū Bishr al-Baṣrī from Sa'īd b. Jubayr al-Kūfī: I know it only from (*lā a'lamu-hu illā 'an*) Ibn 'Abbās.

The following is the text of the report.⁵⁶⁷

[When he was in Mecca]⁵⁶⁸ the Prophet recited [*qara'a*] Sūrat al-Najm, and when⁵⁶⁹ he reached, "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?," Satan cast onto his tongue [*alqā al-shayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi*]: "Those high *gharānīq*: their intercession is to be hoped for! [*tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-shafā'atu-hā*⁵⁷⁰ / -hum turtajā]."⁵⁷¹

When he reached the end of it, he made the *sajdah*, and the Muslims and Mushrikūn made the *sajdah* [with him].⁵⁷² So God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he *tamannā*, Satan cast (something),"⁵⁷³ to His words, "the suffering of a barren day": the Day of Badr.

In the *isnād* of **Riwāyah 44**, we have the construction, "from Sa'īd b. Jubayr, I know it only from Ibn 'Abbās." As with the remark in

- ⁵⁶²Al-Zayla'ī, Takhrij al-aḥādīth wa-al-āthār, 2:394.
- ⁵⁶³As in **Riwāyah 4**0, above, I am assuming this link.
- ⁵⁶⁴ See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 14:16.
- ⁵⁶⁵ See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 13:375.
- ⁵⁶⁶Al-Zayla'ī omits the portion of the *isnād* linking Yūsuf b. Hammād to Ibn Mardawayh.
- ⁵⁶⁷ Al-Diyā' al-Maqdisī cites the text from al-Tabarānī, noting at the end only what he sees as salient textual variants. Al-Zayla'ī cites the text from Ibn Mardawayh.
- ⁵⁶⁸ The phrase kāna bi-Makkata is only in Ibn Mardawayh / al-Zayla'ī.
- ⁵⁶⁹Al-Ṭabarānī: *lammā balagha*; Ibn Mardawayh / al-Zayla'ī: *hattā balagha*.
- ⁵⁷⁰ Thus in Ibn Mardawayh / al-Zayla'ī. Al-Diyā' al-Maqdisī confirms that the variant shafā'atu-hā is in Ibn Mardawayh.

- ⁵⁷²The phrase *ma'a-hu* is only in Ibn Mardawayh / al-Zayla'ī.
- ⁵⁷³ The report stops here in Ibn Mardawayh / al-Zayla'ī.

⁵⁷¹Thus in al-Țabarānī.

Riwāyah 43, "In my estimation, I doubt the Hadīth," the immediate question is who the author of the statement is supposed to be. Al-Haythamī identifies the fourth-century compiler of the Hadīth collection, al-Tabarānī, as making the statement "I know it only from Ibn 'Abbās";574 however, this cannot be as the remark also appears in Ibn Mardawayh's citation, and the two isnāds join up only at Yūsuf b. Hammād (d. 245). Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, on the other hand, understood the remark to be Sa'īd b. Jubayr's, glossing it as follows: 'an Sa'īd ibn Jubayr <u>qāla</u> lā a'lamu-hu illā 'an Ibn 'Abbās.⁵⁷⁵ The identity of the speaker is important here because the remark means two different things according to whether it is spoken by Sa'īd b. Jubayr or by one of the transmitters after him, whether Abū Bishr, Shu'bah b. Hajjāj, Umayyah b. Khālid, or Yūsuf b. Hammād. If the author of the remark is one of the later transmitters, then he is saying what al-Bazzār said in regard to Riwāyah 43-that, in Hadīth methodology, this is a *khabar al-wāhid* and may thus be rejected on the basis of its contents. If we follow Ibn Hajar, and accept the interjection as representing Sa'īd's words, the question arises as to why Sa'īd should make an apparently gratuitous declaration that is detrimental to the credibility of his own report from Ibn 'Abbās. The answer to this may lie in the very different meanings conveyed by the statement when read in the contexts of the respective discourses of the ahl al-hadīth and the mufassirūn. While Sa'īd's reply has the effect, in Hadith methodology, of detracting from an otherwise excellent *isnād* by declaring the report a *khabar al-wāhid*, the meaning of the statement changes dramatically when we remember that Sa'id b. Jubayr was not a *muhaddith* concerned with the rules of transmission-he was, in fact, expressly criticized by the Hadith scholars for failing to transmit Hadīths with complete *isnāds*—but rather a first-century Qur'an scholar whose stature derived from his having studied with the greatest of all Qur'ān authorities, Ibn 'Abbās.

⁵⁷⁴ See al-Haythamī, Majma' al-zawā'id, 7:115, where he says of Riwāyah 44 that it is "from Ibn 'Abbās in the estimation of Sa'īd b. Jubayr [*fī-mā yaḥsib Sa'īd ibn Jubayr*]," and of Riwāyah 45 that "al-Ṭabarānī said: 'I know it only from Ibn 'Abbās."

⁵⁷⁵ See Takhrīj ahādīth al-Kashshāf, 114, where Ibn Hajar does not distinguish between al-Bazzār's citation of Riwāyah 43 and al-Tabarānī's citation of Riwāyah 44. Ibn Hajar also attributes a citation of Riwāyah 43/44 to al-Tabarī; al-Tabarī does not cite it in his Jāmi'al-bayān, but may have cited it in another work.

When seen in this light, the same statement, "I know it only from Ibn 'Abbās," instead of detracting from the report, has the effect of investing it with the very highest authority. For Sa'īd b. Jubayr to say of a report, "I know it only from Ibn 'Abbās," is for him to make the strongest possible statement validating the report, even though the self-same statement undermines the report in the methodology of a *muḥaddith*.⁵⁷⁶

Thus, whoever the author of the statement,⁵⁷⁷ it serves to provide us with a subtle illustration of a methodological clash between Hadīth scholars and tafsīr scholars. Second- and third-century Hadīth scholars were confronted with a report on the Satanic verses carried by an evidently sound *isnād*. They recorded the Hadīth but were apparently uncomfortable with its contents. Their response was to note that the report was a khabar al-wāhid (lā a'lamu-hu illā 'an Ibn 'Abbās), meaning that there was a sound methodological criterion on the basis of which to question the authenticity of the matn as doctrinally objectionable; this is the assessment of the report that the eighth-century Hadīth scholar Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī placed in the mouth of Sa'īd b. Jubayr. If, however, rather than anachronistically assign to Sa'īd b. Jubayr the vocabulary of the Hadīth sciences, we listen to him as a mufassir-transmitter from Ibn 'Abbās, the phrase lā a'lamu-hu illā 'an Ibn 'Abbās, while functioning to delegitimize the report in Hadith discourse, is transformed into a legitimizing statement in the discourse of early Qur'an scholarship. By the eighth/thirteenth century, however, in the age of ascendancy of Hadīth methodology, an unambiguous blanket statement criticizing the *riwāyah*—"In my opinion, I doubt the Ḥadīth"—was ascribed by the Hadīth scholar al-Haythamī to Sa'īd b. Jubayr, thereby placing

⁵⁷⁷ It is interesting to note that, in its wording, the statement is most logically understood as an answer to a question: *hal ta'lamu hādhā al-ḥadīth bi-sanadin ākharin* ("Do you know this Hādīth by another *isnād?*"); reply: *lā a'lamu-hu illā 'an Ibn 'Abbās* ("I know it only from Ibn 'Abbās"). The individual most likely to seek an answer to this question (as we have seen from al-Bazzār's remarks) is a Hadīth scholar trying to ascertain whether or not this is a *khabar al-wāḥid*. As we have noted, all of the transmitters of **Riwāyah 43** are *muḥaddithūn*.

⁵⁷⁶ In the early 'Abbāsid period, reports from Ibn 'Abbās were something of a collector's item at the 'Abbāsid court: "Ibn Jurayj—seeking monetary assistance from the caliph—brought him a special collection of traditions narrated exclusively on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās, the caliph's ancestor"; Muḥammad Qasim Zaman, *Religion and Politics under the Early 'Abbāsids* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 127.

the rejection of the report in the mouth of an early *mufassir*. This contestation between the methodologies of Ḥadīth scholarship and those of other intellectual discourses within Islam will be seen to be crucial to the history of Muslim attitudes towards the Satanic verses incident.

While **Riwāyahs 43** and **44** are differently worded, they both present the same interpretation of the incident. In comparing the *matns* of **Riwāyahs 43** and **44**, another remark in the *isnād* of **Riwāyah 44** is significant. This is the statement by al-Ḥusayn al-Tustarī and 'Abdān al-Jawālīqī—"Yūsuf b. Ḥammād <u>told us the meaning [al-ma'nā]</u> from Umayyah b. Khālid"—that occurs in al-Ṭabarānī's *isnād*, signifying that what Yūsuf b. Ḥammād transmitted here was not the words of the report he had received from Umayyah b. Khālid but a paraphrase conveying its meaning (*al-riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā* as opposed to *al-riwāyah bi-al-lafẓ*). This explains the difference in the wording, not only of **Riwāyahs 43** and **44**. The statement also illustrates how, by the third century, *al-riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā* had become the exception rather than the norm in Ḥadīth transmission, as it called for explicit designation in the transmission apparatus.

In both reports, it is made clear that the Prophet uttered the verses, in Riwāyah 43 through the phrase, "there ran upon his tongue," and in Riwāyah 44 through the phrase "Satan cast onto his tongue." As with Riwāyahs 35 to 42, umniyyah is not glossed as "desire," the default meaning being "recitation." The differences between Riwāyahs 43 and 44 are as follows. Riwāyah 44 contains the motif of the sajdah of Quraysh, absent in Riwāyah 43. Also the motif of the Prophet's distress, present in Riwāyah 43, is absent from Riwāyah 44. The motif of the Prophet's distress, as we have seen, suggests that he was already aware, before his correction, that something had gone wrong, although there is no indication that he corrected himself. Since Riwāyah 44 constitutes a riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā of Riwāyah 43 formulated in the late third century, these differences probably demonstrate the way in which certain motifs that recur in the reports on the Satanic verses and that were in wide circulation the distress of the Prophet, the sajdah of Quraysh-had become discretionary in a brief narration of the incident, the pivotal hermeneutical elements being whether the Prophet uttered the Satanic verses, and the meaning of tamannā. On these two points, Riwāyah 43 and **Riwāyah 44** are in total agreement, the latter doing what its *isnād* says by conveying the meaning of **Riwāyah 43** in different words.

The main difference between **Riwāyahs 43** and **44**, when taken as the same *riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā*, and **Riwāyahs 40** and **42** taken as a pair, is the absence of the correction scene in **Riwāyahs 43** and **44**. However, this does not affect the fundamental hermeneutical elaboration of the incident since **Riwāyahs 43** and **44** do not suggest that the Prophet corrected himself. Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, quite correctly, did not distinguish between the *riwāyahs* from 'Uthmān b. al-Aswad and those from Abū Bishr as regards meaning.⁵⁷⁸

The correction scene is, of course, salient to another hermeneutical question: did the Prophet realize on his own that he had erred, or did he remain unaware of this until corrected by Jibrīl? This question affects the image of the Prophet that the incident conveys: if he remained unaware of his error until corrected by Jibrīl, this would betoken a greater lack of understanding on the Prophet's part of the nature and purpose of his mission. The fact that in some *riwāyahs* (e.g., **Riwāyah 44**), the Prophet is, at least, aware that something is amiss is indicative of how the idea that the Prophet was completely unaware of having erred might have been problematic even to those who were prepared to accept that the Prophet uttered the verses. On the evidence of **Riwāyahs 43** and **44**, it would appear that the transmission tradition associated with Shu'bah \leftarrow Abū Bishr falls into this category.

> *Riwāyahs* 35 to 44: Conclusions

The most remarkable feature in the nine $riw\bar{a}yahs$ attributed to Ibn 'Abbās (and the tenth, **Riwāyah 42**, that we have attributed to him *bi-al-ma'nā*) is their hermeneutical consistency. On two fundamental points, they all present the same interpretation of the incident: they agree that the Prophet uttered the Satanic verses; and none of them makes any mention of the Prophet's desire, the default gloss

⁵⁷⁸He said expressly that they were similar as regards meaning—naḥwa-hu; Ibn Hajar, Takhrīj aḥādīth al-Kashshāf, 114.

for *tamannā* within the wording of the narratives being "recitation" [*qirā'ah*, *tilāwah*]—which is expressly stated in **Riwāyah 37**. On this second point, it is interesting to note the gloss of *tamannā* in another *tafsīr* transmission attributed to Ibn 'Abbās, that of 'Alīb. Abī Ṭalḥah al-Wālibī al-Ḥimṣī (d. 143):⁵⁷⁹ "His words, 'When he *tamannā*, Satan cast into his *umniyyah*': when he spoke, Satan cast into his speech [*idhā ḥaddatha alqā al-shayṭān fī ḥadīthi-hi*]."⁵⁸⁰ Here, too, *tamannā* is glossed not as "desire" but as the Prophet's utterances.⁵⁸¹

- 579 Cited by al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ, Tafsīr 4740; al-Ṭabarī, Jāmi' al-bayān, 17:190; al-Naḥḥās, al-Nāsikh wa-al-mansūkh, 2:530, the latter two both with the same root isnād: 'Abd Allāh b. Ṣāliḥ al-Miṣrī (d. 223), kātib al-Layth b. Sa'd ← Mu'āwiyah b. Şāliḥ al-Ḥimṣī al-Andalusī (d. 158/774) ← 'Alī b. Abī Ṭalḥah ← Ibn 'Abbās; for later citations, see al-Rajjāl (ed.), Sahīfat 'Alī ibn Abī Ţalhah, 361, footnote 4. This is the famous work of which Ahmad b. Hanbal, a contemporary of 'Abd Allāh b. Şālih al-Mişrī, said that it was worth traveling to Egypt for the sole purpose of studying its (original?) manuscript (sahīfah). Al-Tha'labī cites the work at the head of the "Tafsīrs textually transmitted from Ibn 'Abbās [al-tafsīrāt al-mansūsāt 'an Ibn 'Abbās]" given in the sources for his al-Kashf wa-al-bayān; see al Tha'labī, Mufassirū sharq, 30-31. For 'Alī b. Abī Talḥah, the isnāds that carry the transmission, the reputation of the work, and the sources that cite it, see the study by the compiler-editor Rashīd 'Abd al-Mun'im al-Rajjāl, Sāhīfat 'Alī ibn Abī Ţalḥah, 12-76; also İsmail Cerrahoğlu, "Alī İbn Abī Ţalha'nın Tefsir Sahifesi," Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyet Fakultesi Dergisi 17 (1969), 54-82. For Muʻāwiyah b. Ṣāliḥ, see Maria Isabel Fierro, "Mu'āwiya b. Ṣālih al-Hadramī al-Himṣī: Historia y legenda," in Manuela Marín, (ed.), Estudios Onomástico-Biográficos de al-Andalus I, Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientifícas, 1988, 281-412, especially 340.
- ⁵⁸⁰ One modern compiler of a *tafsīr bi-al-ma'thūr* consisting only of *sahīh* reports seems to have viewed this brief report from 'Alī b. Abī Țalḥah as sufficiently problematic to have suffixed to it the following statement in a manner that gives the impression that the statement is a part of the original text: "meaning that the Unbelievers heard that which Satan cast, and the Believers did not hear it because Satan has no authority over the Believers [*laysa li-al-shaytān 'alā al-mu'minīn min al-sultān*]"; Hikmat b. Bashīr b. Yāsīn, *al-Tafsīr al-sahīh: mawsū'at al-ṣahīḥ al-masbūr min al-tafsīr bi-al-ma'thūr* (Madīnah: Dār al-Ma'āthir, 1419), 3:421 (the allusion is to Qur'ān 16:99 al-Naḥl, *inna-hu laysa la-hu sultān 'alā alladhīna āmanū*, and similar verses). We have seen the notion that the Unbelievers alone heard the Satanic verses develop in the transmission of **Riwāyahs 8, 9**, and 10, above, but without Qur'ānic justification.
- ⁵⁸¹It should be noted that knowledge of an alternate gloss for umniyyah in Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj is ascribed to Ibn 'Abbās in the Kitāb al-lughāt fī al-Qur'ān, transmitted from Ibn 'Abbās by the immediate isnād 'Aṭā' b. Abī Rabāḥ ← Ibn Jurayj, a work whose apparent purpose in regard to Qur'ānic vocabulary is precisely to record unusual glosses specific to tribal dialects. Here, it is stated that "in the dialect of Quraysh (bi-lughat Quraysh)," umniyyah means "his thoughts (fikratu-hu)"; however, as we have seen, this dialect-specific gloss is evidently not the one that Ibn 'Abbās is remembered as having actually applied in his exegesis. See the

The variations of note in the riwāyahs attributed to Ibn 'Abbās are three. First is the distinctive hermeneutical elaboration that is present in Riwāyahs 36, 37, and 38, but nowhere else, whereby Satan deceives the Prophet by appearing to him in the form of Jibrīl. Riwāyahs 37 and 38 name the Satan in question as one al-Abyad. These motifs, while absent from the other *riwāyahs*, effect a hermeneutical elaboration that is *additional to* but does not contradict the fundamental two points stated above that constitute the common hermeneutical position of the reports attributed to Ibn 'Abbās. The second variation is in Riwāyah 35, which seems to imply the "repetition" motif contained in Riwāyah 34. However, as noted above, it is unlikely that the reader unaware of **Riwāyah 34** would detect the "repetition" motif in Riwāyah 35, and again, Riwāyah 35 in no way contradicts Riwāyahs 36 to 44. On a third point, the two transmission traditions differ: Riwāyahs 40 and 42 from 'Uthmān b. al-Aswad contain a correction scene, while Riwāyahs 43 and 44 from Abū Bishr do not. We will take up this point again in the discussion of Riwāvahs 40 to 47 below.

Riwāyahs 35 to 44 all present what is essentially the same hermeneutical elaboration of the Satanic verses incident. It is further instructive to note here that my notion that reports may meaningfully be assessed on the basis of shared hermeneutical elaboration is not my methodological innovation: it is apparently shared by Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī, who followed his citation of **Riwāyah 36** (from Abū Ṣāliḥ) with **Riwāyah 41** (from Saʿīd b. Jubayr) by saying,

edition of this work prepared from a Damascus manuscript by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid as *Kitāb al-lughāt fī al-Qur'ān akhbara bi-hi Ismā'īl b. 'Amr al-Muqri' 'an 'Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥusayn Ibn Ḥasnūn al-Muqri' bi-isnādi-hi ilā Ibn 'Abbās* (Cairo: Maţba'at al-Risālah, 1946), 37. See, also, the edition of this work from two Istanbul manuscripts, one entitled *Lughāt al-Qur'ān* and the other, erroneously, *Gharīb al-Qur'ān*, by İsmail Cerrahoğlu, who, unfortunately, followed the errant title "Tefsirde Atâ b.Ebi Rabâh ve İbn Abbâs'dan rivâyet ettiği Garibu'l-Kur'an1," *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyet Fakultesi Dergisi* 22 (1978), 17–103, at 63. For the view that the work does not "stem" from Ibn 'Abbās, see Andrew Rippin, "Ibn 'Abbās's *al-Lughāt fī al-Qur'ān," Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 44 (1981), 15–25; also see, however, Rippin's assessment that the title of the work is indeed *al-Lughāt fī al-Qur'ān*, given in his self-corrective article, "Ibn 'Abbās's *Gharīb al-Qur'ān," Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 46 (1983), 332–333.

"Saʻīd b. Jubayr relates something similar to that"⁵⁸² (i.e., something similar to **Riwāyah 36**). A cursory comparison of the two *riwāyahs* shows little similarity in wording. In categorizing them as "similar," Abū al-Layth can be referring only to their shared hermeneutical position. The fact that this interpretation is attributed to Ibn 'Abbās by six different scholars transmitting knowledge in different cities clearly shows that the idea that the Prophet uttered the Satanic verses was seen by the late first- and early second-century Qur'ān scholars who associated themselves with Ibn 'Abbās as constituting a standard element in his teachings.

Riwāyahs 45 to 47: From Sa'īd b. Jubayr without Attribution to Ibn 'Abbās

Riwāyahs 45 and **46** go back to Sa'īd b. Jubayr via Shu'bah and Abū Bishr Ja'far b. Abī Waḥshiyyah. They are not attributed to Ibn 'Abbās. **Riwāyah 47** has no *isnād*.

Riwāyah 45: Cited by al-Ṭabarī from Sa'īd b. Jubayr via Shu'bah and Abū Bishr Ja'far b. Abī Waḥshiyyah

Riwāyah 45 is given by al-Ṭabarī in the commentary on Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj in his *Jāmi' al-bayān*, with the following two Basran *isnāds*:⁵⁸³

Bundār, Muḥammad b. Bashshār al-Baṣrī (167–252) ← Ghundar, Muḥammad b. Ja'far al-Baṣrī (110–193) ← Shu'bah b. Ḥajjāj al-Baṣrī (82–160) ← Abū Bishr Ja'far b. Waḥshiyyah al-Wāsiṭī al-Baṣrī (d. 125) ← Sa'īd b. Jubayr al-Kūfī (d. 95).

and

Muḥammad b. al-Muthannā al-Baṣrī (167–251)⁵⁸⁴ ← 'Abd al-Ṣamad b.

⁵⁸²Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī, *Tafsīr al-Samarqandī*, 2:400.

⁵⁸³Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿal-bayān*, 17:188–189.

⁵⁸⁴See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 12:123–127; and Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 9:425–427.

'Abd al-Wārith al-Baṣrī (d. 207)⁵⁸⁵ ← Shu'bah b. Ḥajjāj al-Baṣrī ← Abū Bishr Ja'far b. Abī Waḥshiyyah al-Baṣrī al-Wāsiṭī ← Sa'īd b. Jubayr al-Kūfī.

Al-Ṭabarī cites the text of the report from the first *isnād*, and then gives the second *isnād* with the remark that it transmits "the same meaning [*naḥwu-hu*]." Both *isnāds* are made up of transmitters with sound reputations: they are *ṣaḥīḥ mursal* reports.⁵⁸⁶ Ghundar was the pre-eminent transmitter from the great Shu'bah b. Ḥajjāj; he studied with him for twenty years and wrote down Shu'bah's reports in a book of which 'Abd Allāh Ibn al-Mubārak (d. 181) said, "If people disagreed about a Ḥadīth from Shu'bah, the book of Ghundar would decide between them."⁵⁸⁷ Bundār, who transmitted the *riwāyah* from him, was apparently a specialist in Basran reports, and one of al-Ṭabarī's two most important Basran teachers.⁵⁸⁸

When the verse, "Have you seen al-Lāt and al-'Uzzā," came down, the Messenger of God recited it [*qara'a-hā*]; and he said [*qāla*]: "Those high *gharānīq*! Indeed, their intercession is to be hoped for! [*tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna la-turtajā*]."

Then the Messenger of God made the *sajdah*, and the Mushrikūn said, "He has not spoken favourably of our gods until today," and they made the *sajdah* with him.

So God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he $tamann\bar{a}$, Satan cast something into his um-niyyah," until His words: "the suffering of a barren day."

Riwāyah 45 strongly resembles **Riwāyahs 43** and **44** in its narrative construction, and presents the same interpretation of the incident. Again, the Prophet clearly utters the verses, and again *tamannā* apparently means "recitation."

⁵⁸⁵See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 9:516-517; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 6:327-328.

⁵⁸⁶ They are recognized as such by al-Albānī, *Naşb al-majānīq*, 5, who, of course, rejects all *marāsīl*; al-Şawwayānī, *al-Qaşīmah*, 1:427, rejects the report as "weak" on the same basis.

⁵⁸⁷ idhā ikhtalafa al-nās fī hadīth Shu'bah fa-kitāb Ghundar hakama bayna-hum; see Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 9:96–98; al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 9:98–102.

⁵⁸⁸ Out of consideration for his mother, he did not leave Başrah until she died, and busied himself collecting local traditions. See al-Dhahabi, *Siyar*, 144–149; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, 9:70–73; Sezgin, *GAS*, 1:113–114; Rosenthal, "Life and Works," 20.

Riwāyah 46: Cited by Ibn Abī Hātim al-Rāzī from Sa'īd b. Jubayr via Shu'bah and Abū Bishr Ja'far b. Abī Waḥshiyyah

Riwāyah 46 is cited by Ibn Kathīr in his *Tafsīr*, ⁵⁸⁹ and by al-Suyūṭī in his *Asbāb al-nuzūl*. ⁵⁹⁰ Both adduce the *riwāyah* from the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī. Al-Suyūṭī says that the *riwāyah* is also in al-Ṭabarī—although it is not in any surviving work of his⁵⁹¹—and in the respective *Tafsīrs* of Ibn Mardawayh and Ibn al-Mundhir. Ibn Kathīr provides Ibn Abī Ḥātim's *isnād*. Al-Suyūṭī does not cite the *isnād*, but says that it is sound [*sanad ṣaḥīḥ*], which the chain cited by Ibn Kathir certainly is:

Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. 327) ← Yūnus b. Ḥabīb al-Iṣbahānī (d. 267) ← Abū Dā'ūd Sulaymān b. Dā'ūd al-Ṭayālisī al-Baṣrī (133-203) ← Shu'bah b. Ḥajjāj al-Baṣrī ← Abū Bishr Ja'far b. Abī Waḥshiyyah al-Baṣrī al-Wāsiṭī ← Sa'īd b. Jubayr al-Kūfī.

Sulaymān b. Dā'ūd al-Ṭayālisī was an extremely prominent Ḥadīth scholar in Baṣrah in the second half of the second century. Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn preferred him above all others as a transmitter from Shu'bah.⁵⁹² He compiled an extant *Musnad*, the transmitter of which was Yūnus b. Ḥabīb al-Iṣbahānī.⁵⁹³

Even though al-Suy \bar{u} ț \bar{i} does not give the *isnād*, the wording of the texts he cites is virtually identical to that in Ibn Kath \bar{i} r, given below:

The Messenger of God recited [*qara'a*] Sūrat al-Najm in Mecca. When he reached this point [*fa-lammā balagha hādhā al-mawdi'*]:⁵⁹⁴ "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other," Satan cast onto his tongue [*alqā al-shayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi*]: "Those high *gharānīq*:

⁵⁸⁹ Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, 3:217.

⁵⁹⁰Al-Suyūțī, *Asbāb al-nuzūl*, 150.

⁵⁹¹Again, it may have been in the partially extant *Tahdhīb al-āthār*.

⁵⁹² See al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 9:378–384; Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, 4:182–186; al-Mizzī, Tahdhīb al-kamāl; Sezgin, GAS, 1:97–98.

⁵⁹³ See Ibn Abī Hātim, Jarh, 9:237-238; Abū Nu'aym, Akhbār Işbahān, 2:245-246; and al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 12:596-597. Riwāyah 46, which is mursal and not musnad, is not in the Musnad Abī Dā'ūd al-Ṭayālisī, Hyderabad: Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-Nizāmiyyah, 1321.

⁵⁹⁴ The phrase "this point [*hādhā al-mawdi'*]" is not in al-Suyūțī.

indeed, their intercession is to be hoped for [*tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna turtajā*⁵⁹⁵]."

They said: "He has not spoken favourably of our gods before today." Then he made the *sajdah* and they made the *sajdah*.

So God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet, but that when he *tamannā*, Satan cast something into his *umniyyah*, then God removes that which Satan casts and establishes His Signs clearly—and God is All-Knowing, All-Wise."⁵⁹⁶

Riwāyah 46 reads like a paraphrase of all of **Riwāyahs 43**, **44** (Shu'bah \leftarrow Abū Bishr \leftarrow Sa'īd \leftarrow Ibn 'Abbās), and **45** (Shu'bah \leftarrow Abū Bishr \leftarrow Sa'īd).

Riwāyah 47: Cited by al-Suyūțī in the *Durr* without an *isnād*

Riwāyah 47 is also cited by al-Suyūțī in the *Durr*.⁵⁹⁷ Al-Suyūțī adduces the report from al-Ṭabarī (no such report exists in any extant work by him),⁵⁹⁸ Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Abī Ḥātim, and Ibn Mardawayh. While al-Suyūțī does not provide an *isnād*, **Riwāyah 47** is almost certainly a transmission from Sa'īd b. Jubayr. Its *matn* is virtually identical to that of **Riwāyah 44** (a Shu'bah \leftarrow Abū Bishr *riwāyah*), but it contains the additional narrative unit of a correction scene:

The Messenger of God recited [*qara'a*] Sūrat al-Najm in Mecca. When he reached this point [*fa-lammā balagha hādhā al-mawdi'*]: "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā and Manāt the third, the other," Satan cast onto his tongue [*alqā al-shayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi*]: "Those high *gharānīq*: indeed, their intercession is to be hoped for [*tilka al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā'ata-hunna la-turtajā*]."

They said: "He has not spoken favourably of our gods before today." Then he made the *sajdah* and they made the *sajdah*.

After this, Jibrīl came to the Prophet and said: "Go over with me [*i'riḍ 'alay-ya*] that which I brought you." And when he reached, "Those high *gharānīq*: indeed, their intercession is desired," Jibrīl said to him:

⁵⁹⁵ Al-Suyūțī has la-turtajā.

⁵⁹⁶Al-Suyūțī cites only the opening phrase of the verse.

⁵⁹⁷Al-Suyūțī, *al-Durr*, 6:65-66.

⁵⁹⁸ Again, it may have been in the partially extant *Tahdhīb al-āthār*.

"I did not bring you this! This is from Satan! [*lam āti-ka bi-hādhā hādhā min al-shayṭān*]."

So God sent down: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet."

We have no means of identifying by which, if either, of the foregoing two chains of transmission this report is carried.⁵⁹⁹ It reads, as we have noted, like a collation of both transmission traditions.

Riwāyahs 40 to 47 from Sa'īd b. Jubayr: Conclusions

Riwāyahs 40 to 46 represent two separate transmission traditions from Sa'īd b. Jubayr: that of 'Uthmān b. al-Aswad (d. 150)—carried from him by two different chains; and that of Shu'bah (d. 160) from Abū Bishr (d. 125)-transmitted from Shu'bah by four different chains. The *riwāyahs* from Saʿīd b. Jubayr are remarkable for their hermeneutical and narrative consistency. All present what is fundamentally the same interpretation of the Satanic verses incident: the Prophet uttered the verses; and, given the absence of any reference to the Prophet's desire, tamannā would seem here to mean "recitation." The two transmission traditions differ from one another in only one significant regard: the two longer reports from 'Uthmān b. al-Aswad contain a correction scene, while the reports from Shu'bah ← Abū Bishr do not. The absence of a correction scene in the summary Riwāyah 41 from 'Uthmān b. al-Aswad nothwithstanding, this difference in the construction of the narrative is still impressive for the consistency with which it occurs between the two transmissions. One is strongly encouraged by this to take the *isnāds* at face value and recognize two distinct recensions of Sa'īd b. Jubayr's teaching on the Satanic verses, both dating from the first half of the second century.

Unlike the rest of the Satanic verses *riwāyahs*, the reports from Sa'īd b. Jubayr are, with the exception of **Riwāyah 42**, transmitted

⁵⁹⁹Al-Halabī al-Atharī, *Dalā'il*, 96, insupportably takes this as being the same as Riwāyah 45.

by scholars who were primarily muhaddithūn. Four (Riwāyahs 40, 41, 43, and 44) go back to Ibn 'Abbās, while three (Riwāyahs 42, 45, and 46) stop at Sa'īd b. Jubayr. Given the high degree of consistency of the content, one wonders why the *isnāds* for some of the reports go back to Ibn 'Abbās while others stop at Sa'īd.⁶⁰⁰ There are two main possibilities here. One, which has been forcefully argued by Uri Rubin, is that "the name of Ibn 'Abbās must have been a part of the original *isnād*," but was then omitted to weaken the doctrinally problematic report: "complete and sound *isnāds* attached to overly provocative matns could have been subjected to deliberate distortion which made them shrink, so that disapproving traditionists could dismiss the whole Hadith on the ground of defective transmission."601 Certainly, the practice of abbreviating an isnād when transmitting a report does not seem to have been in itself unusual: it was apparently the sort of thing that busy *muhaddithūn* might do for the sake of convenience, or out of forgetfulness. There is evidence that Shu'bah b. Hajjāj, the "common link" in Riwāyahs 43 to 46, himself abbreviated full *isnāds*. Since this was apparently something that could be done without raising suspicion (it did not constitute tadlīs)602 it is not unlikely that this otherwise innocent practice was deliberately applied to Riwāyahs 42, 45, and 46, so as to weaken them. This said, however, Rubin is quite wrong to assert categorically that the opposite process, "backwards growth—that is to say, improvement of the *isnād*—could not have taken place in this case ... [since] no one was interested in improving the chances of this tradition gaining wide circulation."603 There is certainly no evidence that tafsir or sirah-maghāzī scholars had any objection to accounts of

- ⁶⁰⁰ Note that the case of **Riwāyah 23**, which stops at al-Kalbī, and **Riwāyah 42**, which goes back from al-Kalbī to Ibn 'Abbās; and the case of Riwāyah 48 (see below), which stops at 'Ikrimah, and Riwāyah 42, which goes back from 'Ikrimah to Ibn 'Abbās; are both quite different from that of the riwāyahs from Sa'īd b. Jubayr. Riwāyahs 23 and 42 differ markedly in content, as do Riwāyahs 48 and 42, which makes the difference in attribution readily acceptable. However, the reports from Sa'īd b. Jubayr are all very similar in content.
- ⁶⁰¹Rubin is addressing himself to **Riwāyahs 44** to **46** (it is not clear whether he has seen Riwāyah 43); see Eye of the Beholder, 256-257.

⁶⁰² See al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, *Kifāyah*, 417-418—the chapter entitled, "On the Hadīth Which the Transmitter Sometimes Takes Back (to a sahābī / the Prophet) [yarfa'u-hu tāratan] and Sometimes Stops (at a tābi'ī) [yaqifu-hu]: What Is Its Ruling?"

⁶⁰³ Rubin, Eye of the Beholder, 256.

the Satanic verses incident gaining wide circulation; and, more to the point, it is also not at all clear just when it was that the scholars of the Hadīth movement began to object to it. Thus, it is equally possible that the reports were initially circulated with the *isnāds* terminating with Sa'īd b. Jubayr; but since Ibn 'Abbās was widely known to have been Sa'īd's primary teacher, tafsīr-related transmission from Sa'īd was generally and automatically associated with Ibn 'Abbās. In the search for complete *isnāds* that characterized the Hadīth movement, and before the time when the content of the report was universally rejected by the Hadīth movement, this assumptive association might have come to be formalized in the *isnād*, with the result that the now complete *isnād* eventually made the reports particularly problematic for those Hadīth scholars who did disapprove of their doctrinal content. These Hadith scholars then sought to undermine the isnād in the legitimate ways we have seen in **Riwāyahs 43** and **44**,⁶⁰⁴ or perhaps in the illegitimate way that it appears might have been employed in Riwāyah 40 with the possible insertion of the name of the deficient Muhammad b. al-Muqri' into an otherwise sound isnād.

Whatever the case, it is clear that as far as prominent Ḥadīth scholars in second-century Baṣrah were concerned, the first-century Kufan *mufassir* and disciple of Ibn 'Abbās, Sa'īd b. Jubayr, had taught the Satanic verses incident in explication of Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj. However, we have seen in regard to **Riwāyahs 43** and 44 that, at some point, the Ḥadīth scholars came to find the contents of the reports objectionable, and cast doubt on their authenticity.

Riwāyah 48: From 'Ikrimah, the *mawlā* of Ibn 'Abbās

Riwāyah 48 is given by al-Suyūțī in the *Durr*.⁶⁰⁵ It is adduced by him from the *Tafsīr* of 'Abd b. Humayd al-Samarqandī (170s–249), who

605 Al-Suyūțī, *al-Durr*, 6:69.

⁶⁰⁴ In the first explanation, al-Bazzār and al-Ṭabarānī emerge as remarkably scrupulous *muḥaddithūn* as, instead of simply omitting Ibn 'Abbās' name from the *isnād*, they chose to cite **Riwāyahs 43** and 44 with the complete *isnād*, accompanied by a legitimate attempt to undermine the *riwāyahs* as *khabar al-wāḥid*.

is citing 'Ikrimah (d. 107), the *mawlā* of Ibn 'Abbās. Al-Suyūṭī does not give 'Abd b. Ḥumayd's *isnād*. This report from 'Ikrimah presents a discernibly different interpretation of the Satanic verses incident from that in **Riwāyah 39** where the *isnād* goes back from 'Ikrimah to Ibn 'Abbās:

One day, the Messenger of God recited [*qara'a*], "Have you seen al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt, the third, the other? Should you have sons, and He, daughters? That, indeed, would be an unfair division!" And Satan cast onto his tongue [*alqā al-shayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi*]: "Those, then, are among the high *gharānīq!* This, then, is an intercession to be hoped for! [*tilka idhan fī al-gharānīq al-'ulā tilka idhan shafā 'atun turtajā*]."

The Messenger of God was filled with fear and anguish [*fa-fazi'a rasūl* Allāh wa-jazi'a]. So God revealed to him [*awḥā ilay-hi*]: "And, however many angels there are in the heavens, their intercession is of no benefit [*wa-kam min malakin fī al-samāwāt lā tughnī shafā 'atu-hum shay'an*]."⁶⁰⁶ Then God comforted him [*faraja 'an-hu*] and revealed to him: "We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he *tamannā*, Satan cast something into his *umniyyah*," to His words, "All-Wise."

The first thing to be noted about **Riwāyah 48** is that, as in Ibn Kathīr's citation of Muḥammad b. Fulayḥ's transmission of **Riwāyah 9** from Mūsā b. 'Uqbah, Satan's intervention takes place not upon the Prophet reciting Qur'ān 53:19 al-Najm but after he recites Qur'ān 53:22: "Should you have sons, and He, daughters? That, indeed, would be an unfair division!" We noted how in **Riwāyah 9** / Muḥammad b. Fulayḥ \leftarrow Mūsā b. 'Uqbah, where the narrative tries to avoid conveying the impression that the Prophet uttered the verses, the point of having the Prophet recite Qur'ān 53:21-22 al-Najm is probably to undermine the logic of the incident: why should the Prophet first recite verses praising them? **Riwāyah 48**, however, does not have a problem with this as it makes it clear through the phrase "Satan cast onto his tongue" that the Prophet uttered the verses after Qur'ān 53:21-22 al-Najm.⁶⁰⁷ The reason for this derives

⁶⁰⁶ Qur'ān 53:26 al-Najm.

⁶⁰⁷ It is for precisely this reason that Muhammad 'Urjūn deems the narrative in Riwāyah 48 to be incoherent, and forcefully condemns the *riwāyah* as "a stupid,

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from a second and particularly interesting element that is unique to **Riwāyah 48**—namely, that the abrogating verse that is given here is Qur'ān 53:26 al-Najm: "And however many angels there are in the heavens, their intercession is of no benefit."

The implication here is that there is an assumed identification of the angels with al-Lat, al-'Uzza, and Manat; when the Revelation deems the intercession of the angels to be invalid, it is simultaneously invalidating the intercession of these three figures. We have already noted, in the analysis of Riwāyah 28 from Muqātil b. Sulaymān, how Quraysh were remembered as having worshipped al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt in their simultaneous capacity as goddesses, intercessionary angels, and daughters of Allāh. It is to the worship of al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt as intercessionary angels and daughters of Allāh that Riwāyah 48 relates the Satanic verses incident. Thus, while the Prophet correctly transmits the Revelation denying the pagan doctrine that al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt are the daughters of Allāh (a-la-kum al-dhakar wa-la-hu al-unthā?), he nonetheless falls victim to Satan by confirming the ancillary doctrine of their status as high gharānīq (al-gharānīq al-'ulā)—that is to say, as intercessionary crane-angels. It is the specific concession to this false doctrine that God then corrects by revealing, "And however many angels there are in the heavens, their intercession is of no benefit!"

In this account, the Prophet is portrayed not as merely being distressed by what has happened but as greatly fearful of the consequences. This suggests not only that he has realized that he has erred but also that he has a sense of the magnitude of his error in the context of his Divine mission.

> *Riwāyahs* 49 and 50: From al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī

We come finally to **Riwāyahs 49** and **5**0, from Abū al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (21–110), one of the most prominent figures in the Islamic intellectual

ignorant forgery [*waḍʿ ghabiyy jahūl*]"; see his analysis of the *matn* in *Muḥammad rasūl Allāh*, 2:63–66.

tradition. Suleiman Ali Mourad has demonstrated how al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī "was transformed by his disciples, and in later scholarship, into an icon."⁶⁰⁸ Mourad has argued that the "often contradictory and irreconcilable"⁶⁰⁹ content of the works attributed to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī is the result of the attempts of competing groups in Islamic history to legitimize their respective creedal positions through reference to him, and has rejected the attribution to al-Ḥasan of several important works. Whatever parties sought to associate themselves with the legacy of al-Ḥasan, the Ḥadīth movement seems not to have been among them, and his reputation as a transmitter was poor.⁶¹⁰

Riwāyah 49: Cited from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī in *al-Nukat wa-al-'uyūn* of al-Māwardī

Riwāyah 49 is cited from al-Ḥasan in *al-Nukat wa-al-'uyūn*, the Qur'ān commentary of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Māwardī (d. 450). While Ibn al-Nadīm records both a *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* and a *Nuzūl al-Qur'ān* (neither of which is now extant) as distinct works from al-Ḥasan,⁶¹¹ al-Māwardī does not give a source or an *isnād*. Al-Māwardī is here listing the different positions taken on what it is that the Prophet actually recited.⁶¹²

The fourth (position):

Rather, he (the Prophet) said [*inna-mā qāla*]: "They are like the high gharānīq [hiya ka-al-gharānīq al-'ulā]," meaning: the angels [ya'nī al-malā'ikah]—"and their intercession is to be hoped for [wa-inna

- ⁶¹¹Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, 283, and 59. For a study of al-Hasan that assumes the accuracy of the *tafsīr* reports attributed to him, see Ahmad Ismā'īl al-Basīt, *al-Hasan mufassiran* (Amman: Dār al-Furqān, 1985).
- ⁶¹² Abū al-Hasan 'Alī b. Muhammad b. Habīb al-Māwardī, al-Nukat wa-al-'uyūn: Tafsīr al-Māwardī, ed. al-Sayyid b. 'Abd al-Maqşūd b. 'Abd al-Rahīm (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1992), 4:35; also al-Māwardī, Tafsīr al-Māwardī, ed. Khiḍr Muhammad Khiḍr (Hurghadah: Dār al-Ṣafwah, 1993), 3:97.

⁶⁰⁸ Suleiman Ali Mourad, Early Islam between Myth and History: al-Hasan al-Başrī (d. 110H / 728CE) and the Formation of His Legacy in Classical Islamic Scholarship (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 32.

⁶⁰⁹ Mourad, Early Islam between Myth and History, 241.

⁶¹⁰ Mourad, *Early Islam between Myth and History*, 47–51; Juynboll, Muslim Tradition, 49–55.

 $shaf\bar{a}$ 'ata-hum la-turtaj \bar{a}]"—meaning: according to what you say $[ay f \bar{i} qawli-kum]$. Al-Ḥasan said this.

Al-Ḥasan is here conveying the fact that the Prophet made the utterance, but is also providing two glosses of his own. The first is that al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt are being identified as "angels," as they were in **Riwāyah 23** (Hūd b. al-Muḥakkam's citation of the *Tafsīr* of al-Kalbī), **Riwāyah 28** (Muqātil b. Sulaymān), and **Riwāyah 48** ('Abd b. Ḥumayd's citation from 'Ikrimah). That al-Ḥasan took the *gharānīq* to mean "the angels" is also cited in Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Qurṭubī (d. 671/1273): "al-Ḥasan said: 'By *al-gharānīq al-'ulā* he means, the angels."⁶¹³

Al-Ḥasan's second gloss pertains to the Prophet's statement "their intercession is to be hoped for." Al-Ḥasan says that the Prophet meant by this "their intercession is to be hoped for—according to what you (i.e. Quraysh) say." The question here is what the gloss itself means. Is al-Ḥasan using the phrase $f\bar{i}$ qawli-kum to express concordance—that is, that the Prophet's utterance is agreeing with Quraysh's belief that their deities intercede with Allāh, i.e. "according to what you say"; or is al-Ḥasan using the phrase $f\bar{i}$ qawli-kum to express contrast—that is, the Prophet's utterance is disagreeing with Quraysh, i.e. "according to what you say"? In the absence of any further narrative context in al-Māwardī's citation, it is difficult to tell. While the citation of al-Ḥasan appears in the course of al-Māwardī's own treatment of Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj, there is no indication of the context in which al-Ḥasan made this statement.

Riwāyah 50: Cited from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī in *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* of al-Jaṣṣāṣ

A categorical identification of al-Ḥasan's meaning is given in **Riwāyah 5**0, which is found in the *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* of Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ (d. 370/981). Like al-Māwardī, al-Jaṣṣāṣ also does not give an *isnād* or a source, but it is very likely that he is not citing directly from

⁶¹³ Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Qurțubī, al-Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyah, 1967), 12:85.

any work of al-Ḥasan, but from a third party, as he begins with the passive phrase "It is related from al-Ḥasan [*ruwiya 'an al-Ḥasan*]." Also, like al-Māwardī, while al-Jaṣṣāṣ cites al-Ḥasan in the context of his own exegesis of Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj, there is no indication as to the context to which al-Ḥasan is addressing himself.

In the following, I have deliberately not inserted quotation marks of direct speech (which, of course, do not exist in Arabic):

It is related from al-Hasan [ruwiya 'an al-Hasan]:

When he (the Prophet) recited that in which there is mention of the idols, he (the Prophet) said to them: Rather, they are—according to you—like the high *gharānīq*, and their intercession is to be sought—according to what you say [*inna-mā hiya 'inda-kum ka-al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa-inna shafā 'ata-hunna la-turtajā fī qawli-kum*], by way of rejection against them [*'alā jihat al-nakīr 'alay-him*].⁶¹⁴

It might appear from the wording of the report that the phrases "according to you" and "according to what you say" are uttered by the Prophet; in other words, that the Prophet says, "Rather, they are, according to you, like the high *gharānīq*, and their intercession is to be sought, according to what you say," to which al-Ḥasan then appends the gloss "by way of rejection." However, in **Riwāyah 49** in al-Māwardī, the first parenthetical phrase, "according to you," is entirely absent, while the second phrase, "according to what you say," is present but is prefaced with the glossatory *ay* ("meaning:") as a clear indication that, in that **Riwāyah 49**, what follows is not a part of the Prophet's speech. In light of this, it is sensible to read these two phrases in **Riwāyah 5**0 as glosses external to the direct speech of the Prophet:

It is related from al-Ḥasan that when he (the Prophet) recited that in which there is mention of the idols, he (the Prophet) said to them: "Rather, they are"—according to you—"like the high *gharānīq*, and

⁶¹⁴ Abū Bakr Ahmad b. 'Alī al-Jaşşāş, Kitāb ahkām al-Qur'ān (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, n.d.), 2:347; also cited from al-Jaşşāş in Shēr 'Alī Shāh (compiler and editor), Tafsīr al-Hasan al-Başrī (Karachi: al-Jāmi'ah al-'Arabiyyah Ahsan al-'Ulūm, 1993), 4:136.

their intercession is to be sought"—according to what you say, by way of rejection.

Here, the phrases "according to you" and "according to what you say, by way of rejection" emerge as al-Ḥasan's own gloss. It would appear that what we have here is the earliest recorded rejection of the Satanic verses incident—a rejection not of the idea that the Prophet uttered the verses that the early memory tradition at large (but not what we have of this particular report from al-Ḥasan) attributes to Satanic suggestion but rather of the notion that the verses constituted a concession to Quraysh. Instead, the verses are presented here as being uttered in rejection of Quraysh's claim. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri thus emerges as the earliest scholar remembered actively to have rejected the Satanic verses incident. Of course, if we read **Riwāyāhs 49** and **5**0 without al-Ḥasan's interventionary glosses, there is nothing to render them incompatible with the other narratives of the incident.

Conclusions: The Satanic Verses *Riwāyahs* 1–50

The foregoing analysis of the fifty *riwāyahs* that narrate the Satanic verses incident was carried out to lay the groundwork on the basis of which to answer the fundamental question to be taken up in **Chapter 3**: *why did the early Muslim community accept the Satanic verses incident?* We began by posing two sets of questions. As regards the *transmission* of the narratives of the Satanic verses incident: when—around what date—were narratives of the Satanic verses incident transmitted and circulated in the early Muslim community? How widely circulated were these narratives? Where were these narratives in circulation? How widely accepted were they? Who circulated and accepted these narratives? Who did not accept and circulate them? In the context of what literary genres or cultural projects were these narratives transmitted? What were the mechanisms and practices by which they were transmitted?

It has emerged in the most emphatic terms that the Satanic verses incident constituted an absolutely standard element in the memory of the early Muslim community on the life of its founder. We have repeatedly dated reports of the Satanic verses incident as being in circulation among individuals involved in the historical memory projects of sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr in the late first and early second centuries of Islam.⁶¹⁵ Simply, the Satanic verses incident was ubiquitous in the earliest period of systematic collection and organization of historical memory materials on the life of Muhammad in the genres of sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr, where it was transmitted, like all other narratives, bi-al-ma'nā and by incomplete isnāds. Reports of the Satanic verses incident were recorded by virtually every compiler of a major biography of Muhammad in the first two centuries of Islam: 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr (23-94), Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (51-124), Mūsā b. 'Uqbah (85-141), Ibn Ishāq (85-151), Abū Ma'shar (d. 170), Yūnus b. Bukayr (d. 199), and al-Wāqidī (130-207). Each of the foregoing scholars incorporated the incident into the framework of a larger narrative of the life of the Prophet—that is, into a *Kitāb* al-maghāzī or a Kitāb al-sīrah. Riwāyah 1 was recorded in Salamah b. al-Fadl's Rayy recension of the Sirah of Ibn Ishāq; Riwāyah 2 in the Kitāb al-maghāzī of Abū Ma'shar; Riwāyah 3 in the Kitāb al-

⁶¹⁵ In Chapter 1, we outlined the following working principle for the dating of the reports: a bad isnād contained in a sīrah-maghāzī or tafsīr work is, in the absence of external evidence to suggest otherwise, to be taken as genuinely representing the chain of transmitters by which the information was transmitted-this on the understanding that the early part of the chain is more likely to represent a riwāyah bi-al-ma'nā than a riwāyah bi-al-lafz. This working principle was tested during the course of the analysis, and a number of observations suggest that the principle is a valid one. One is the fact that *riwāyahs* attributed to a single scholar by different isnāds display a high degree of hermeneutical consistency and a marked correspondence in narrative construction. We have seen this hermeneutical and narrative consistency most markedly in Riwāyahs 16 to 20 ascribed to Abū al-'Āliyah, and in Riwāyahs 40 to 47 attributed to Sa'īd b. al-Jubayr. We have also seen a high degree of hermeneutical consistency in Riwāyahs 35 to 44 attributed to 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās. A particularly striking instance of this consistency is in Riwāvahs 2 to 6 from Muhammad b. Ka'b al-Qurazī, all linking the incident to Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā'. In no case did we find that accounts without significant common elements were ascribed to the same authority. Our working assumption was also tested in two cases where pairs of *riwāyahs* carried by different *isnāds* transmitted virtually the same riwāyah bi-al-lafz. In these instances, for the isnāds to be genuine, there had to be some unstated link between them, it being highly unlikely that a single riwāyah bi-al-lafz of this length could have arisen independently and have been transmitted by two separate chains. In both instances, we were able to establish a very plausible link. In the case of Riwāyahs 2 and 3, we found that Riwāyah 3 derived from the known contact between the Zafarī clan and Muhammad b. Ka'b

mubtada' of al-Wāqidī (from whom it was taken by Muhammad Ibn Sa'd, 168-230, into his biography of the Prophet); Riwāyah 7 in the Kitāb al-maghāzī of Yūnus b. Bukayr; Riwāyah 8 in Abū al-Aswad's Egyptian recension of the *Kitāb al-maghāzī* of 'Urwah; **Riwāyah 9** in the Kitāb al-maghāzī of Mūsā b. 'Uqbah; and Riwāyah 15, most probably, in the Kitāb al-maghāzī of al-Zuhrī, from whom it was cited by al-Wāqidī in his Kitāb al-mubtada'. Within this narrative, the incident is consistently related to the return of some of the refugees of Abyssinia. Similarly, the first- and second-century authors of tafsīr works whom we know to have recorded the incident include almost every prominent early *mufassir*: Abū al-'Āliyah (d. 93), Sa'īd b. Jubayr (23–95), Mujāhid b. Jabr (d. 102), al-Daḥḥāk (d. 105), 'Ikrimah (d. 107), Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī (40-108), al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (21-110), Qatādah (60-117), Abū Ṣāliḥ (d. 110/120), 'Atiyyah al-'Awfī (d. 111/127), al-Suddī (d. 128), al-Kalbī (d. 146), Muqātil b. Sulaymān (80-150), Ibn Jurayj (d. 150), Ma'mar b. Rāshid (d. 154), and Yaḥyā b. Sallām al-Baṣrī (124–200). Six of these—'Ikrimah, Sa'īd b. Jubayr, Abū Ṣālih, 'Atiyyah al-'Awfī, al-Kalbī, and Ibn Jurayj-transmitted the incident on the authority of 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Abbās (d. 68), with remarkably consistent hermeneutical content.⁶¹⁶ In other words, the

al-Qurazī. In the case of Riwāyahs 8 and 9, we found that Riwāyah 9 was received by Mūsā b. 'Uqbah from his main teacher, al-Zuhrī, who was, in turn, the leading student of 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr, the author of Riwāyah 8. The fact that in both these cases we were able to establish a highly plausible transmission link between the respective riwāyahs strongly suggests that their isnāds, while incomplete, are nonetheless genuine. These findings also encourage one to accept the authenticity of the isnāds of reports such as Riwāyahs 34 and 35, which contain the same distinctive motifs but are transmitted by separate isnāds. During the course of this analysis, we have had only one occasion to conclude that an *isnād* was, perhaps, not to be taken at face value-namely, Riwāyah 25 where the final link between Ma'mar b. Rāshid and Qatādah b. Di'āmah may not represent the transmission history of the report (although, as we have seen, it is not certain that this portion of the isnād is, indeed, false). We were able, in this instance, to provide two good reasons as to why the fabrication of the final link in the *isnād* of this *riwāyah* if, indeed, it is fabricated—should be regarded as an exception in *sīrah-maghāzī*/ *tafsīr* rather than a rule. One reason is the fact that the report was transmitted from Ma'mar by scholars who were, in the first instance, muhaddithūn, and were therefore particularly concerned to establish fuller isnāds in a way that tafsīr and sīrah-maghāzī scholars were not. Thus, the anomaly posed by Riwāyah 25 does not undermine our working assumption.

⁶¹⁶The report from al-Dahhāk, as we have seen, has features to suggest that his account is also based on the teaching of Ibn 'Abbās.

Satanic verses incident constituted a standard element in first- and second-century Qur'anic exegesis, in which discourse it was invariably associated with the Revelation of Qur'ān 53:19 al-Najm and 22:52 al-Hajj and, sometimes, with the exegesis of Qur'an 17:73 al-Isra', Qur'ān 39:45 al-Zumar, and Qur'ān 109 al-Kāfirūn. Not only did the incident form a standard element in the discourses of late first- / early second-century sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr, but also the isnāds show that, by the end of the second century, accounts of the Satanic verses were being transmitted in almost every important intellectual center in the second-century Islamic world from the Hijaz to Syria to Iraq to Transoxania to North Africa: Madīna, Mecca, Başrah, Kūfah, Baghdād, Missisah, Rayy, Balkh, Samarqand, Marw, San'ā, Fustāt, and Qayrawan. Despite this universal transmission of the narratives of the Satanic verses incident in the genres of sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr, it is striking that the incident did not constitute a standard element in the third major historical memory discourse on the life of Muhammad-that of Hadīth. As we have seen, the incident is not included in any of the Hadith collections that came to be invested with canonical authority. The only Hadith collections in which the incident is recorded are noncanonical: the Musnad of al-Bazzār, the Mu'jam alkabīr of al-Ţabarānī, and the Mukhtārah of al-Diyā' al-Maqdisī. The significance of this will be taken up in Chapter 3.

A second set of questions raised at the outset addressed the *content* of the Satanic verses narratives. What does the content of these narratives tell us about the understanding of Satanic verses incident in the early Muslim community? Specifically, the understanding of the Satanic verses incident revolves around three main hermeneutical questions. Did the Prophet utter the verses? Why did he utter them? Did he realize of his own accord that he had erred, or was he unaware of this until corrected by Jibrīl?

All the first- and early second-century reports are agreed that the Prophet uttered the Satanic verses (even the maverick **Riwāyāhs 49** and **50** from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī agree that the Prophet uttered the *gharānīq* phrase). The two *riwāyahs* that are ambiguous as to the question are clearly later adjustments of early reports made so as to deflect what became the doctrinally problematic content of the narrative (**Riwāyahs 9** and **10** in relation to **Riwāyah 8**, and **Riwāyah 26** in relation to **Riwāyah 25**). The majority of reports *explicitly* mention

that the Prophet uttered the verses. This is done either by straightforward use of the verbs *takallama* or $q\bar{a}la$; or through the unambiguous phrases *alqā al-shayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi* ("Satan cast upon his tongue"), *alqā al-shayṭān 'alay-hi* ("Satan cast upon him"), *ajrā alshayṭān 'alā lisāni-hi* ("Satan caused to run upon his tongue"), *ujriya 'alā lisāni-hi* ("it was caused to run upon his tongue"), *alqā al-shayṭān* $f\bar{i}f\bar{i}$ -*hi* ("Satan cast into his mouth"); or through a correction scene in which Jibrīl points out the Prophet's error, sometimes after the Prophet recites the verses back to Jibrīl. In three reports, **Riwāyahs 12**, **21**, and **25**,⁶¹⁷ the fact of the Prophet uttering the verses is not stated explicitly, but is clearly implied by the context.

On the question of why the Prophet uttered the verses, the accounts differ. All of the reports contained in sīrah-maghāzī works, either explicitly or by contextualization (i.e., mention of the refugees in Abyssinia), present the incident as taking place in a climate of persecution by Quraysh (Riwāyahs 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15). In three of these reports—Riwāyahs 1, 2, and 3 (all from Muhammad b. Kaʻb al-Qurazī)-the Prophet is portrayed as desiring a reconciliation with Quraysh; and in two reports—Riwāyah 1 (from al-Qurazī) and Riwāyah 12 (al-Suyūțī's citation of Mūsā b. 'Uqbah ← al-Zuhrī) the Prophet is presented as desiring a respite from, or an end to, the persecution. In Riwāyah 1, the Prophet desires that Divine Revelation be the instrument by which this be effected. In Riwāyahs 2 and 3, the Prophet desires that God not send down a Revelation that will further estrange Quraysh. In these *riwāyahs*, the fact of the Prophet's taking words suggested to him by Satan as being Divine Revelation is presented as arising directly from the Prophet's misplaced desire, which, in turn, is clearly influenced by the harsh circumstances. In this interpretation, the verb *tamannā* in Qur'ān 22:52 is glossed by the narrative as "desire," and the verse reads: "We have not sent, before you, a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he desired, Satan cast something into his desire." Another background motif to the incident is the one given in **Riwāyahs 8** (from 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr); 12 and 13 (from Mūsā b. 'Uqbah);⁶¹⁸ 16, 17, 18, and 19 (Abū al-'Āliyah); and 21 (al-Suddī)—namely, Quraysh's offer of a rec-

⁶¹⁷ Riwāyah 30, when corrected, reads like Riwāyah 24.

⁶¹⁸ Also in the sanitized **Riwāyahs 9** and **10**.

onciliation with, or even active support for, the Prophet on the condition that he speak well of their gods. In all of these reports except **Riwāyah 21**, this offer takes place in a stated context of persecution; in other words, if the Prophet agrees to praise the deities of Quraysh, the persecution will stop. In all these *riwāyahs*, the Prophet's uttering the verses is presented as a response to the offer from Quraysh. Whereas **Riwāyahs 12** and **13** gloss *tamannā* as "desire," **Riwāyahs 16** to **19** and **21** do not provide any gloss for the verb.

In none of the above reports is Muhammad presented as deliberately doing something that he knows to be against the terms of his Prophetic mission; rather, Muhammad is portrayed as being under pressure, confused, and unaware of the import of his act. This point is driven home by the correction process. In those reports where Jibrīl corrects the Prophet (Riwāyahs 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 22, 23, 35, 36, 38, 40, 42, and 47), it is evident that the Prophet is not aware of having done anything wrong until he is corrected. In Riwāyahs 7 and 8, however, the Prophet is presented as already being distressed before the correction takes place. This motif conveys the idea that the Prophet has sensed that something has gone wrong, although he is still not sure what exactly it is. When he is corrected, he acknowledges his error and laments it in touchingly self-critical terms, most strikingly in Riwāyah 8: "I have obeyed Satan, and spoken his words, and he has become a partner in God's matter with me [wa-sharika-nī fī amr Allāh]." In the shorter **Riwāyahs 16** to **2**0 from Abū al-'Āliyah, there is no correction scene, and the impression is that the Prophet realizes on his own that he has erred. This suggests a lesser degree of confusion on the part of the Prophet about the nature of his Prophetic mission than is indicated in those reports where the Prophet is corrected by Jibrīl. We will return to this concept of Prophetic confusion in Chapter 3.

The fact that the *tafsīr* reports are directed, in the first instance, at explaining the particular Qur'ānic verse under exegesis, while the *sīrah-maghāzī* reports aim at linking an event to a larger narrative, produced marked differences in the formulation of the Satanic verses *riwāyahs* tranmsitted in the respective *tafsīr* and *sīrah-maghāzī* projects. The *tafsīr* reports are generally shorter than the *sīrah-maghāzī* reports and eliminate entire narrative units, thereby affecting the hermeneutical elaboration of the incident. In reading

these reports, one is uncertain as to whether they are meant to be taken as self-contained units of information, or whether they assume knowledge of the more detailed information contained in the sīrahmaghāzī tradition. Our method has been to read the tafsīr reports as self-contained unless there is more than one report from the same individual, in which case more than one reading becomes possible. This is illustrated in Riwāyahs 14 and 15, both transmitted from al-Zuhrī from Abū Bakr b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith: Riwāyah 14-evidently the tafsir report-when read in isolation gives the impression that the Prophet's uttering the Satanic verses was a simple recitation error that resulted from a lack of concentration, and was innocent of any external pressures; however, when Riwāyah 14 is read in the context of Riwāyah 15—the longer sīrah-maghāzī report—the error emerges as one that was informed by a particular political context. Among the narrative motifs that are lacking in the tafsīr reports are the persecution motif and the motif of Quraysh's offer of compromise; the former is present in none of the *tafsīr* reports save those from Abū al-'Āliyah, the latter only in the reports from Abū al-'Āliyah and **Riwāyah 21** from al-Suddī. In the absence of these motifs, the rest of the *tafsir* reports offer different hermeneutical elaborations of the incident from those discussed above. Riwāyah 25 (Ma'mar b. Rāshid's attribution to Qatādah), like Riwāyahs 2 and 3, glosses tamannā as the Prophet's desire that God not insult the deities of Quraysh. Unlike Riwāyahs 2 and 3, however, there is no reason given for the Prophet's desire (the persecution motif is absent). Nonetheless, the Prophet's error clearly results from this misplaced desire. A distinctive hermeneutical elaboration is found in Riwāyah 24 from Qatādah b. Di'āmah and developed further in Riwāyahs 27, 28, and 29 from Muqātil b. Sulaymān—namely, that the Prophet became drowsy (*na'asa*) while praying and uttered the verses in this state of drowsiness. While Qatādah does not provide any reason why the Prophet should have uttered these specific words, the fact that the error is not corrected until "God repelled Satan and instructed His Prophet with His authoritative writ" makes it difficult to interpret the incident as the simple lapse of a sleepy man. Muqātil glosses tamannā as haddatha nafsa-hu (to think to oneself), which suggests that the Prophet's sleepy utterance must have been in some way related to what he was thinking about. While **Riwāyah** 23 from al-Kalbī does not mention the Prophet's sleepiness, it also presents the Prophet as uttering the Satanic verses while distracted in prayer with thoughts that were disconsonant with his Divine mission: "If he sought something worldly, Satan cast this (as) speech upon his tongue."⁶¹⁹ A further distinctive hermeneutical elaboration is that in Riwāyahs 36, 37, and 38, where the Prophet is deceived by Satan appearing to him in the form of Jibrīl. In some reports, the Prophet's error is clearly presented as taking place while Sūrat al-Najm is being revealed; in others, he is reciting a Revelation that has evidently already been sent down. This distinction generally does not come across as particularly significant; the Prophet is, in both cases, mistaking Satanic suggestion for Divine Revelation. In one instance, however, the fact of the error taking place while the verses are being revealed is crucial to the hermeneutical elaboration of the incident. This is in Riwāyah 34 from al-Daḥḥāk b. Muzāḥim, where the process of Divine Revelation is understood as resembling the process of oral poetic composition. Here, the Prophet is portrayed as

repeating the phrase al-Lāt wa-al-'Uzzā over and over in the manner of an oral poet "straightening out his rhythms," whereupon Satan casts his verses into the Prophet's mind. The same interpretation is implied in the narrative of Riwāyah 35. Riwāyah 22, from al-Suddī, provides no explanation for the error, but places great emphasis on its political consequences: Quraysh flock to Muhammad and celebrate him as a hero, claiming him as their own Prophet: "A Prophet from the Banī 'Abd Manāf!" Other reports that provide no explanation for the error are Riwāyah 14 (from al-Zuhrī), Riwāyah 39 (attributed to Ibn 'Abbās), and Riwāyahs 40 to 47 (all of which are from Sa'īd b. Jubayr with some attributed to Ibn 'Abbās). In these reports, where there is no explicit gloss of *tamannā* and no narrative context within which to place the incident, the default meaning of tamannā is "to recite": "We have not sent, before you, a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he recited, Satan cast something into his recitation." In only one of these reports, however, is the Prophet portrayed as correcting his error on his own. In this instance (Riwāyah

⁶¹⁹ Riwāyahs 18 and 20 from Abū al-ʿĀliyah also present the error as taking place while the Prophet is praying. In Riwāyah 18, as we have seen, the error is in response to the offer from Quraysh.

14 before its contextualization by **Riwāyah 15**), it is possible to interpret the Prophet's mistake as a simple error in recitation (albeit a particularly egregious one). In one other report (**Riwāyah 48**), the Prophet realizes that he has committed an error of some magnitude, but there is no indication that he corrects himself. In the remaining reports, however, there is no suggestion that the Prophet is aware of the nature of his error, and in three of these (**Riwāyahs 40**, **42**, and **47**) he is corrected by Jibrīl. The fact that the Prophet does not correct himself, or is simply not aware of having done anything wrong, precludes one from interpreting his uttering the Satanic verses as a simple recitational aberration innocent of external factors.

Riwāyahs 49 and 50 from al-Hasan al-Basrī present us with the earliest instance of a scholar being remembered as having actively rejected the Satanic verses. It is not clear from the citations of al-Hasan whether he took this position in the context of a *tafsīr* work or in some other context. Also, no mention is made as to who it is that transmitted this position from him. Regardless of whether Riwāyahs 49 and 50 are a genuine transmission of al-Hasan al-Baṣrī's position on the Satanic verses incident, they are clearly expressive of an anxiety about the notion that the Prophet might have uttered the Satanic verses in concession to the polytheism of Quraysh. We have seen indications of this anxiety in those few Satanic verses riwāyahs that occur in the noncanonical Hadīth collections: the transmission apparatuses of Riwāyahs 43 and 44 are hedged about with cautionary statements from the *muhaddithūn* directed at undermining the validity of the *isnāds* and thus the credibility of the reports. A similar process is evident in the variant transmissions of the incident in the Maghāzī of Mūsā b. 'Uqbah (Riwāyah 9)-a work transmitted from Mūsā's students by *muḥaddithūn*; here, attempts are made at manipulating the text of the original report from 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr so as to give the impression that the Prophet did not utter the Satanic verses. These *riwāyahs*, and the fact that the incident itself did not find its way into the canonical Hadīth collections, provide a telling illustration of the discomfort of Hadīth scholars in the period circa 150 onwards with the memory of the Satanic verses incident as contained in the sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr discourses of the late first and early second centuries. We will turn to the reasons for this discomfort in Chapter 3.



Why Did the Early Muslim Community Accept the Satanic Verses Incident as Truth?

What the narratives do when they uniformly agree is to document the historical beliefs aimed at the biographical subject, beliefs which are held by the author, and perhaps the community that author represents. The history is far more one of the authors, than of the subject. —TONY K. STEWART¹

St has now been categorically established that the Satanic verses incident constituted a standard, widely circulated, and generally accepted element in the historical memory of the Muslim community on the life of Muḥammad in the first two centuries of Islam. In other words, the universal rejection of the Satanic verses incident by Islamic orthodoxy today represents the rejection of something that was held to be true by early Muslims. But before we can consider why *later* Muslims came to *reject* the Satanic verses incident, we must first ask the question: *why* did the *early* Muslim

¹Tony K. Stewart, "When Biographical Narratives Disagree: The Death of Kṛṣṇa Caitanya," *Numen* 38 (1991) 231–260, at 232.

community accept the Satanic verses incident? As stated in the introduction, Islamic orthodoxy came to reject the Satanic verses incident on the basis of two epistemological principles: the theological principle of 'ismat al-anbiya' and the Hadīth methodology principle of assaying reports by their *isnāds*. The acceptance of the Satanic verses incident in the early Muslim community indicates straightforwardly that these two epistemological principles of later orthodoxy did not enjoy universal authority in the early Muslim community—far from it. But to explain the acceptance of the Satanic verses incident in the early Muslim historical memory merely on the basis of the absence of these two epistemological principles is to present an entirely negative argument that explains only why the early Muslims *could* accept the incident, but not why they in fact did so. The question needs to be addressed on more productive terms. Now, the rejection of the Satanic verses incident obviously represents a negative evaluation of the Satanic verses incident: the incident is dissonant with the image and understanding of Muhammad and his Prophethood as constituted by Islamic orthodoxy. This straightly leads us to ask: does the fact of the acceptance of the incident in the early Muslim community mean that the early community viewed the incident in a *positive* light as something entirely *consonant* with its understanding of Muhammad and his Prophethood? What function did the Satanic verses play in the memory of the early Muslim community on the life of Muhammad? What is the incident *doing* there in the first place?

Three Distinct Discourses: Hadīth, sīrah-maghāzī, tafsīr

To answer this, we must return to explore further the implications of the fundamental point made in Chapter 1: that the historical memory of the Prophet in the early Muslim community was not monolithic but rather remembered, constructed, and transmitted in three *distinct* discourses—*sīrah-maghāzī*, *tafsīr*, and Ḥadīth and that *sīrah-maghāzī*, *tafsīr*, and Ḥadīth in the first two centuries of Islam were not merely distinct literary genres but *distinct cultural projects*, with different goals, different practitioners, different materials, different methods, different forms, different values,

and different meanings.² The identity of the Prophet as constituted by each of these historical memory discourses is directly related to the identities of the genres, projects, and practitioners that remembered, or, to be more precise, *re-membered*—that is, reconstituted him.³ The acceptance of the Satanic verses incident in *sīrah-maghāzī* and *tafsīr* is thus directly related to the respective identities of these two historical memory projects, and the rejection of Satanic verses incident in Hadīth (illustrated by the fact that the incident is not recorded in any canonical Hadith collection) is directly related to the identity of that historical memory project. In other words, the differences in the historical memory projects is important not only for the dating of reports—which is what was emphasized in Chapters 1 and 2-but also for understanding why the Satanic verses incident was accepted by early Muslims as true. To the extent to which the projects of *hadīth*, sīrah-maghāzī, and tafsīr were possessed of and governed by different methodologies of assessing the truth-value of these materials-that is, different epistemologies-they were nothing less than different truth projects. These epistemological differences in the early historical memory projects on the life of Muhammad proved foundational and crucial to the later development of Muslim attitudes towards the Satanic verses incident down the centuries.

In Chapter 1, we laid out the critical differences between the three historical memory projects. The aim of the scholars of the Hadīth movement, as it took shape in the second and third centuries of Islam, was to define, constitute, and establish legal, praxial, and creedal norms through the authoritative documentation of the words and deeds of the Prophet Muḥammad as produced from the historical memory of the early Muslim community. The Ḥadīth scholars were concerned with prescribing the specific content of Islam and, as such, the project of Ḥadīth fused with the authoritative and prescriptive project of the elaboration of Islamic law. To both these ultimately integrated fields, Ḥadīth and law, the memory of the life and personality of the Prophet existed primarily to provide Prophetic statements and acts on the basis of which to lay down in detail the specific legal, praxial, and creedal rules by which the members of the

²Some overlap notwithstanding, as demonstrated in Chapters 1 and 2.

³On "remembering" and "re-membering," see Jan Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 11.

community should live. These normative Prophetic statements and acts covered almost every sector of quotidian life, from prayer ritual to personal sanitation, to social comportment, to dietary law, to commercial practices.⁴ To lay down indisputable common norms in every area of life required, in turn, the development of a methodology to establish authoritatively the authenticity of reports containing the Prophetic norms—hence the evolution of a science of isnāds. The Hadith project, then, was a self-consciously authoritative and prescriptive discourse aimed at defining the normative legal, praxial, and creedal content of Islam, and thus at constituting the identity of the Muslim community. The Hadīth project invested these prescribed Islamic norms with social authority through the purposive appropriation, validation, and legitimation of the historical memory of the Prophet Muhammad. However-and this is the crucial point—this project did not merely require a particular *method* suited to its authoritative-prescriptive purpose; it also required a particular type of Prophet suited to its authoritative and prescriptive purpose. Given the centrality of the *authoritative* persona of the Prophet to

⁴The role of the Hadīth project in establishing religious praxis and law is conveniently illustrated by the list of chapter titles of a representative canonical collection, the Sunan of al-Nasā'ī: ritual purity (al-țahārah), water (al-miyāh), menstruation (al-havd wa-al-istihāda), bathing and cleansing without water (al-ghusl wa-al-tayammum), prayer (al-salāt), appointed times (al-mawāqīt), the call to prayer (al-adhān), mosques (al-masājid), the direction of prayer (al-qiblah), the office of Imam (al-imāmah), the beginning of the prayer (al-iftitāh), the execution of the prayer (al-tatbiq), forgetfulness in prayer (al-sahw), Friday prayer (al-jum'ah), shortening the prayer in travel (taqsīr al-salāt fī al-safar), the eclipse prayer (alkusūf), prayer for rain (al-istisqā'), prayer of fear (salāt al-khawf), the prayer of the two 'Ids (salāt al-'īdayn), staying up at night and giving up the day to pray (qiyām al-laylwa-tatawwu'al-nahār), funerals (al-janā'iz), fasting (al-siyām), alms-giving (al-zakāt), the rituals of the Pilgrimage (manāsik al-hajj), struggle in the cause of God (al-jihād), marriage (al-nikāḥ), divorce (al-țalāq), horses (al-khayl), mortmain (al-ahbās), bequests (al-wasāyā), gifts (al-nuhl wa-al-hibah), conditional gifts (alruqbā), lifetime gifts (al-'umrā), oaths and vows (al-aymān wa-al-nudhūr), sharecropping (al-muzāra'ah), prohibition of bloodshed (tahrīm al-dam), the division of land that passes into the possession of the Muslim community (qism al-fay'), pledging allegiance (al-bay'ah), sacrifice for newborn children (al-'aqīqah), sacrifice of the first-born camel foal and of a sheep in Rajab (al-fara' wa-al-'atīrah), hunting and slaughtering (al-sayd wa-al-dhabā'ih), sacrificial animals (al-dahāyā), sales (al-buyū'), compurgation (al-qasāmah), cutting the hand of the thief (qaț' al-sāriq), faith (al-īmān), adornment (al-zīnah), the conduct of judges (ādāb alqudāh), seeking refuge in God (al-isti'ādhah), and drinks (al-ashribah); see Shahab Ahmed, "Hadith i. A General Survey of the Tradition of the Prophet," EIr.

the logic of the Hadith movement, it is obvious that the idea of an infallible or impeccable Prophet whose words and deeds might reliably be taken to establish a model for detailed pious mimesis must have possessed a particular appeal for the ahl al-hadīth. As Annemarie Schimmel has noted, "The absolute obedience owed to the Prophet is meaningful only if Muhammad was free from any faults and could thus constitute an immaculate model even for the most insignificant details of life."⁵ Consequently, the image of Muhammad contained in the Satanic verses incident, that of a Prophet who fell victim to Satan and erred in the transmission of Divine Revelation, was entirely dissonant with and, indeed, constituted a normative challenge to the Hadīth movement. It is for this reason that, despite its wide circulation in the first- and second-century genres of tafsir and sirahmaghāzī, the Satanic verses incident was not included in any of the canonical Hadīth collections: the respective Sahīhs of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, the respective Sunans of Abū Dā'ūd al-Sijistānī (d. 275/888), Muḥammad b. 'Īsā al-Tirmidhī (d. 279/892), Ibn Mājah al-Qazwīnī (d. 273/886), and Ahmad b. Shu'ayb al-Nasā'ī (d. 303/915). The incident is also not recorded in the four main collections that are supplementary to the "the True Six (al-sihāh al-sittah)," the respective Sunans of 'Abd Allah b. 'Abd al-Rahman al-Darimi (d. 255/868), 'Ali b. 'Umar al-Dāraquṭnī (d. 385/995), and Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī (d. 458/1065); nor is it in the vast Musnad of the great champion of the ahlal-hadīth, Ahmad b. Hanbal. We have seen that those early muḥaddithūn who actually transmit the incident did so while either eliminating from it the most crucial narrative element—that of the Prophet himself uttering the Satanic verses (Riwāyahs 9, 10, and 11)—or undermining the *isnād* (Riwāyahs 40, 43, and 44).⁶

But this was not the case for those re-membering the Prophet in the first- and second-century projects of *sīrah-maghāzī* and *tafsīr*. Scholars collecting *sīrah-maghāzī* material were *not* primarily concerned with establishing norms of religious law and praxis for pious mimesis, but rather with constructing a narrative of the moral-historical *epic*

⁵Annemarie Schimmel, And Muhammad Is His Messenger: The Veneration of the Prophet in Islamic Piety (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 59.

⁶The only exception here is **Riwāyah 8**, which is faithfully transmitted by al-Tabarānī from Abū al-Aswad's recension of the *Sīrah* of 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr, but which already has a deficient *isnād*.

of the life of the Prophet in his heroic struggle to found the Divinely guided human Community (al-ummah al-muslimah) and set it on the path to salvation. The *sīrah nabawiyyah* is nothing if not an epic. Its central figure is a man of noble lineage but disadvantaged birth-a vulnerable orphan dependent on the protection of an aged uncle. He possesses extraordinary virtue that is recognized by all in his tribe, but is without fortune or power. This man is singled out by God to be His Messenger and charged with the mission of leading his people out of the darkness of idolatry to the salvation of monotheism; but his Message of monotheism and morality is rejected by his tribe, and draws only a few close friends and relatives, slaves and low-born freemen. His followers are persecuted; some are tortured and martyred, while others flee across the sea into exile. He is abused, spat upon, doused in offal. His uncle and wife die, and his clan is then boycotted by the tribe and almost starves to death. He seeks refuge in a nearby town, but its inhabitants have their children stone him away. And yet, just when all seems lost, men of the city of the maternal ancestor of his clan, drawn to his truthfulness, pledge him their allegiance and ask him to come to them to arbitrate their civil strife. Even so, he barely escapes with his life, surviving two assassination attempts, the second time saved only by the miraculous intervention of animals as he hides in a cave. He flees into exile as a refugee-Prophet, and while he receives some support in his new city, he is also met there with indifference, suspicion, and resentment. His tribe continues to regard him as a threat and fights three battles against him. At the first battle, his army is outnumbered three to one, but accomplishes a miraculous victory. In the second battle, indiscipline results in a disastrous defeat, and the Prophet is wounded and almost killed. In the third battle, he is besieged, but a previously unknown defensive tactic frustrates the enemy. While in exile in his new city, he entreats the one religious community that should be the natural audience for his Prophetic message, but rather than recognize him, they betray him, and must be repudiated by force of arms. Nonetheless, the truth of his Message is gradually recognized and his following increases. He builds a site for communal worship and government, institutes laws, and sends missionaries to all parts of the land and to foreign powers. His military strength grows, and his followers undertake one military action after another, until he is joined by other tribes, and finally is able to amass a great army. His own tribe now accepts a truce with him, and important individuals convert to his religion. When his tribe breaks the truce, he returns from exile with a vast army and enters as conqueror the city whence he had fled for his life less than a decade earlier. He takes the pagan temple of his tribe, destroys its idols, and returns it to the worship of the One God. His tribe submits to his Message, as do the all the tribes of his race, who send emissaries to him from every corner of the land. The once imperiled and vulnerable orphan is recognized by all as Messenger and Prophet of God, and becomes the ruler of his land and his race.

The sīrah-maghāzī is thus an epic passage from obscurity to supremacy, from darkness to light, from ignorance to salvation: a heroic story of peril, suffering, fortitude, persistence, faith, courage, and triumph, which provided the new community with a repertoire of heroic, moral, and dramatic motifs through the common attachment to which the Islamic identity of community might coalesce and integrate. "One is not far into Ibn Ishāq's work until he or she realizes that this is something tantamount to an early Muslim Homeric Odyssey. The activities and characteristics of the hero are of epic proportions, implying and shaping the destiny of a people."7 Within a century of his death, the followers of the Messenger of God, led by his tribe, had conquered half the known world. In this vast geographic space from Morocco to Transoxania, the followers of Muhammad lived as a ruling minority governing majority non-Muslim subject populations, each of which possessed their own epic narratives. In this context, the early Muslim generations retrieved and (re-)constructed—from piecemeal narratives transmitted in prose and poetry over the course of a century—the *foundational epic* of their own community. The dramatic events of the sirah-maghāzī were narrated in the early community not for authoritative prescription of conduct and creed but rather to evoke, invoke, and convoke (in this connection, it is striking how all three second-century compilers of major biographies of Muhammad—Ibn Ishāq, Abū Ma'shar, and al-Wāqidī—produced their biographies of Muhammad under the patronage of the caliphal court). Much in the same way that the performance of the

⁷Earle H. Waugh, "The Popular Muḥammad: Models in the Interpretation of an Islamic Paradigm," in *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies*, ed. Richard C. Martin (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985), 41–58, at 50.

pre-Islamic "Battle Days of the Arabs" (ayyām al-'arab) provided the literary basis for the social consolidation of pre-Islamic tribal identity, the performative transmission of the *sīrah-maghāzī*—whether in mosques or other public places (by qussās) or in majlis-gatherings (e.g., the famous majlis al-qilādah that met each night in firstcentury Madīnah)—provided the literary basis for the social consolidation of the identity of the early Muslim community.8 The subject of the sīrah-maghāzī literature was not the documentation of a quotidian Prophet who washed and ate and adjudicated disputes of sale: its subject was the dramatic commemoration of "the most important hero in our religious heritage: the Hero-Prophet."9 The sīrahmaghāzī project thus had no need of an infallible Prophetic model for pious mimesis: there is little drama to be had from a hero who never makes mistakes. Drama arises when there is the *possibility* of things going wrong, of defeat, of failure, when events must be outwitted and setbacks overcome. This is precisely what happens in the Satanic verses incident.¹⁰

- ⁸ The social history of the transmission of history in the early Muslim community is a badly neglected subject. A rare attempt to study the social settings for the transmission of *sīrah-maghāzī* in the first century of Islam is Mubārakpūrī, *Tadvīn-i siyar*, 49–100. In the highly militarized culture of early Arab-Muslim society, it is hardly surprising that so much of what was remembered of the early biography of the Prophet consisted, like the pre-Islamic *ayyām* literature, of "Battle Days" (*maghāzī*) and of poetry. The Prophet's followers are recorded to have had taken part in no less than eighty-four military engagements; see the list compiled by Mubārakpūrī, *Tadvīn-i siyar*, 25–29.
- ⁹ ahamm batal fī turāthi-nā al-dīnī: al-batal al-nabī; see Naṣr Hāmid Abū Zayd, "al-Sīrah al-nabawiyyah: sīrah shaʿbiyyah," al-Funūn al-shaʿbiyyah 32–33 (1991) 17–36, at 18. Earle H. Waugh and Naṣr Hāmid Abū Zayd are among the very few scholars to have identified the popular epic nature of the sīrah-maghāzī genre, but even they have not appreciated the implications thereof.
- ¹⁰ Uri Rubin has situated the Satanic verses incident in his larger thesis that the biography of Muḥammad represents the "adaptation" by the early Muslim community of "biblical themes" / "universal themes" of Prophethood and their "conversion to Islamic models." He identifies these biblical/universal themes as "attestation, preparation, revelation, persecution, and salvation" (*Eye of the Beholder*, 3–4). In the case of the Satanic verses incident, the adapted themes are "persecution," "isolation," and "satanic temptation": "the story . . . demonstrates once again the process of adaptation of universal prophetic themes to Islamic models such as the Qurān. The basic non-Qurānic level of the story of isolation was enriched with the Qurānic passages of satanic temptation"; Rubin, *Eye of the Beholder*, 162. In this context, Rubin has recognized the dramatic quality of the story: "the Qurānic passages of satanic temptation . . . provided dramatic air to the story of the two *fitnas* suffered by the Prophet in Mecca," "the dramatic story of temptation";

The *positive dramatic function* of the Satanic verses incident in the foundational epic of the early Muslim community may be illustrated by locating it in the narrative of events as constructed in the $s\bar{s}rah$ -magh $\bar{a}z\bar{s}$ section of the $T\bar{a}r\bar{s}kh$ of al-Ṭabarī. The passage of events leading up to the incident is as follows. Three years after he received his first Revelation, during which time his followers practiced their religion only in secret,

The Messenger of God was commanded to proclaim the divine message which he had received, to declare it publicly to the people, and to summon them to God. . . . When he did so, they did not withdraw from him or reject him in any way . . . until he spoke of their gods and denounced them. When he did this, they took exception to it and united in opposition and hostility to him. . . . His uncle, Abū Talib was friendly to him, however, and protected him from harm.... Eventually, they went to Abū Tālib again. "Abū Tālib," they said, "... we can no longer endure this vilification of our forefathers, this derision of our traditional values and this abuse of our gods. Either you restrain him, or we shall fight both of you. . . ." Abū Ṭālib sent for the Messenger of God . . . and said, "Nephew, here are the shaykhs and nobles of your tribe. They have asked for justice against you, that you should desist from reviling their gods and they will leave you to your god." "Uncle," he said, "shall I not summon them to something which is better for them than their gods?" "What do you summon them to?" he asked. He replied, "I summon them to utter a saying through which the Arabs will submit to them and they will rule over the non-Arabs." Abū Jahl said from among the gathering, "What is it, by your father? We will give you it, and ten like it." He answered, "That you should say, 'There is no deity but God.'" They took fright at that and said, "Ask for anything rather than that!" But he said, "If you were to bring me the sun and put it into my hand, I would not ask you for anything other than this." They rose up to leave in anger and said, "By God, we shall revile you and your God who commands you to do this!" ... After this, the situation deteriorated, hostility became more bitter, and people

Eye of the Beholder, 162, 166. However, the problem with Rubin's treatment of the Muslims' memory of Muhammad as someone being made to enact the script of biblical/universal prophethood is that the person that emerges is an oddly and unrecognizably passive figure. What is lost is what we have seen to be a defining feature of Muhammad as Prophet—namely, his active and dynamic role as hero. It is only in the context of the *heroic epic* of Prophethood that the dramatic function of the Satanic verses takes on its full meaning and function.

withdrew from one another and showed more hatred to one another. Then the Quravsh incited one another against those in their various clans who had become Companions of the Messenger of God and had accepted Islam with him. Every clan fell upon those of its members who were Muslims, tormenting them and trying to force them to leave their religion. . . .¹¹ When the Muslims were treated in this way, the Messenger of God commanded them to emigrate to Abyssinia . . . the main body of them went to Abyssinia because of the coercion they were being subjected to in Mecca. His fear was that they would be seduced from their religion ... 'Uqbah b. Abī Mu'ayt came up while the Messenger of God was by the Ka'bah, twisted his robe round his neck, and throttled him violently. Abū Bakr stood behind him, put his hand on his shoulder, and pushed him away from the Messenger of God. Then he said, "People, would you kill a man because he says, 'My Lord is God?""... One day the companions of the Messenger of God were assembled together and said, "By God, Quraysh have never heard this Qur'an recited out loud to them. Who will let them hear it?" 'Abdallah b. Mas'ūd said, "I will" . . . The next day, 'Abdallāh b. Mas'ūd went to the Maqām in the late morning when the Quraysh were gathered in their groups ... he said "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful." . . . He turned towards them as he recited, and they took notice of him and began to say, "What is this son of a slave's mother saying?" Then they said, "He is reciting some of what Muhammad has brought," and rose up and began to hit him in the face....

Quraysh gathered together to confer and decided to draw up a document in which they undertook not to marry women from the Banū Hāshim and the Banū Muṭṭalib,¹² or to give them women in marriage, or to sell anything to them or buy anything from them.... When Quraysh did this, the Banū Hāshim and the Banū al-Muṭṭalib joined with Abū Ṭālib, went with him to his valley and gathered round him there.... This state of affairs continued until the two clans were exhausted, since nothing reached any of them except what was sent secretly...Al-Walīd b. al-Mughīrah,¹³ al-'Āṣ b. Wā'il, al-Aswad b. al-Muṭṭalib, and

¹¹A more detailed account of this is given in Ibn Hishām's recension of the *Sīrah* of Ibn Isḥāq: "The Quraysh showed their enmity to all those who followed the apostle; every clan which contained Muslims attacked them, imprisoning them and beating them, allowing them no food or drink, and exposing them to the burning sun of Mecca, so as to seduce them from their religion"; Guillaume, *Life of Muhammad*, 143.

¹²The two clans of the Prophet.

¹³ One of the Unbelievers who are remembered in the Satanic verses narratives as performing a partial prostration; see **Riwāyahs 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 15,** and **28.**

Umayyah b. Khalaf met the Messenger of God and said, "Muḥammad, come and let us worship that which you worship, and your worship that which we worship, and we shall make you a partner in all our undertakings. If what you have brought is better than what we already have, we will be partners with you in it and take our share of it, and if what we have is better than what you have, you shall be partner with us in what we have, and you shall take your share of it." Then God revealed: "Say: O disbelievers¹⁴ [I worship not that which you worship! Nor do you worship that which I worship. Nor will I worship that which you worship! Nor will you worship that which I worship! To you: your religion! And, to me: my religion!]"¹⁵... The Messenger of God was concerned for the welfare of his people [kāna harīşan 'alā şalāh qawmi-hi], and very much wished to bring them together [muhibban muqārabata-hum] by whatever means he could find [bi-mā wajada ilay-hi al-sabīl]. It has been mentioned that he desired a way to bring them together [tamannā al-sabīl ilā muqārabati-him], and his state in this regard was ... [here follows the narrative of the Satanic verses incident].¹⁶

The events leading up to the Satanic verses incident are thus dominated by three themes: Quraysh's displeasure at the rejection of their gods, and their consequent negotiations with and persecution of the Prophet and his followers in a sustained attempt to reach a compromise on this fundamental issue. Quraysh offer a theological compromise; and initially, the Prophet refuses, telling them if only they will follow him, they will rule the world. Quraysh intensify the persecution, and the situation of the Prophet and of the Muslims deteriorates steadily, most of the Muslims flee the country, and those who remain-including the Prophet-are subject to abuse, assault, and social and economic boycott. Quraysh make another offer, but God sends down the uncompromising Sūrat al-Kāfirūn. In this abject circumstance, the moment of his and his followers' greatest weakness, Muhammad wants to be reconciled with Quraysh "by whatever means he could find." It is in this state that Satan manages to induce the Prophet to make the one concession that his tribe wants

¹⁴ Until this point, the translation is that of Watt and McDonald, *History of al-Ṭabarī Vol. VI*, 92–108. After this point, the translation is mine.

¹⁵ Qur'ān 109 al-Kāfirūn. See **Riwāyah 29**, where these verses are revealed pursuant to the same conversation, but immediately in the wake of the Prophet reciting the Satanic verses.

¹⁶Al-Țabarī, *Tārīkh*, 2:337.

of him: acknowledgment of their gods. His tribe rejoices and the persecution is halted. But, as the audience of the *sīrah* knows only too well, this moment of relief from bitter suffering is, in fact, the most dangerous moment of all: by this concession to falsehood, the fate and salvation of the community who, by God's guidance, will come to rule the Arabs and the non-Arabs hang perilously in the balance. Everything—this world and the next—stands to be lost. But God does not allow this to pass, and sends guidance to the Prophet, who, in turn, possesses not only the honesty to accept his error but also the courage to face the harsh consequences of recanting it.

This is high drama, indeed. Now it is clear, once and for all, that there can be no compromise with polytheism, come what may. At this moment, the die is cast. In many ways, the Satanic verses incident has a place in the epic biography of the Prophet similar to that of the Battle of Uḥud, the shocking military defeat of the Muslims by Quraysh that, rather than destroying the Muslims, serves to fortify them with greater clarity and moral purpose. These are the great trials to be overcome on the road to victory and salvation. In other words, it is not merely that the Satanic verses incident is *not* problematic in the context of the epic biography of the Prophet: rather, it *embodies* the function of *sīrah-maghāzī*; it *exemplifies* what *sīrah-maghāzī* was for and what it was all about. The community has passed through the fire of persecution and the jaws of Satan, and will emerge triumphant by the will of God and the faithfulness of his Prophet.

This much for the place of the Satanic verses incident in $s\bar{r}rah$ magh $\bar{a}z\bar{i}$, but what of tafs $\bar{i}r$? Scholars undertaking tafs $\bar{i}r$ of the Qur'ān were endeavoring to interpret the highly allusive text of the Divine Revelation that had been proclaimed piecemeal from God by Muḥammad over the course of twenty-three years, and whose contextualizing points of reference—namely, the historical events and cultural environment of the Prophet's life—were rarely stated in the Revelation itself. The peculiar configuration of a text that addressed itself to and through a context unstated, but alluded to, presented a complex hermeneutical challenge. On the one hand, the corpus of meaning with which the mufassir $\bar{u}n$ were concerned was determined both by the subject matter and by the specific formulation of the words of the Qur'ān. On the other hand, the meaning of the Qur'ān was governed by and contingent upon the memory of the events and environment external to itself: the Qur'anic text needed that external context in order to mean. Thus, while the Satanic verses incident is related to the Revelation of Qur'an 53:19 al-Najm, Qur'an 22:52-55 al-Hajj, Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā', Qur'ān 109 al-Kāfirūn, and Qur'ān 39:43-45 al-Zumar, the *mufassirūn* were dependent on sources external to the Qur'an for any sense of chronological location and historical context—not only for the incident itself but also for the Qur'anic passages to which the incident is related, and upon which it is contingent.¹⁷ It is this allusive quality of the text that resulted in what, in Chapter 1, we identified as the defining characteristic of the early tafsir project: its uncertain and exploratory nature. The tafsir project required the first- and second-century exegete to venture forth from the template of the text into the diffuse and variegated landscape of the external context in an expeditionary and reclamatory search for historical, literary, and philological information through which to flesh out the Qur'anic text-an enterprise that often produced diverse and contradictory trajectories and configurations of meaning. These different meanings were regularly juxtaposed in literary presentation as equally legitimate potential claimants to truth (as exemplified in the contradictory interpretations attributed to the leading authority of early tafsir, Ibn 'Abbās).18

¹⁷For an interesting example of what can happen to the received chronology and contextualization when the Qur'anic text itself is made the primary criteria by which to assess its reported external context, see Josef van Ess, "Vision and Ascension: Surat al-Najm and Its Relationship with Muhammad's mi'raj," Journal of Qur'anic Studies 1 (1999), 47-62, at 57-58: "The beginning of sūrat al-Najm, however, would then be nothing else but a solemn start, the introduction of a speech, a sermon perhaps, held by the Prophet when, as is suggested by the reports we find in Tabarī, those who had emigrated to Ethiopia came back, people who had heard what had happened in Mecca only through rumours and who were eager to know what the Prophet really thought about the subject. The greatest possible authority and persuasion would have been needed in order to invalidate the inculpations; in order to reach this goal the Prophet could have referred to his encounters with the heavenly power, the 'numinous' as we say today. 'Your comrade is not astray, neither errs, nor speaks he out of caprice. This is naught but a revelation revealed, taught him by one terrible in power, very strong." Here, rather than the Satanic intervention taking place subsequent to and despite the Divine statement at the outset of Sūrat al-Najm, "Your comrade is not astray, neither errs, nor speaks he out of caprice," as is the case in the longer reports on the incident, this Divine affirmation becomes part of the Prophet's public self-dissociation from the Satanic verses. See also Mehmet Akıf Koç, "53 / Necm Suresinin Tefsirinde Bazı Tarihî Sorunlar Üzerine," İslamiyât 6.1 (2003), 165-171.

¹⁸Noted in Chapter 2.

This exploratory nature of the culture of the early tafsir project set it, and its practitioners, at odds with the prescriptive and authorita*tive* nature of the Hadīth project and its practitioners. While the perceived need for a fully articulated religious program set the agenda for the Hadith project and thus for its image of the Prophet, and while the dramatic imperative of the epic set the agenda for the *sīrah-maghāzī* project and thus for its image of the Prophet, it was effectively Godor, to be precise, God's speech—that set the agenda of the *tafsīr* project and thus for its image of Muhammad. The Muhammad of the Qur'an is an elusive figure composed of dozens of disconnected bodies of text of different, sizes, tones, and registers, like the scattered and possibly incomplete pieces of a jigsaw. The Muhammad of the Qur'an is variously inspired, rebuked, and comforted by God. He is someone who is mocked by his human audience and yet for whom God and the angels pray, someone who experiences ecstatic visions and extreme despair, someone to whom obedience is owed and yet is no more than a "warner," someone who journeys to the heavens and yet walks in the marketplace, someone who is an orphan and yet stands in a long line of Prophets going back to Adam, someone who is the conduit of the Divine Word and yet is no more than "a human being like you."¹⁹ All of these were separate and true images of Muhammad that the practitioners of the *tafsīr* project had to expound, collate, and reconcile.²⁰ This they did through forays from the world of the Divine text into the world of the human context in search for the units of language and history that, when harnessed to the Divine text, would generate Divine meaning. In attempting to understand the phenomenon of Muhammad's Prophethood as projected by the Qur'an, the mufassirūn had to address themselves also to several Qur'ānic verses that alluded to Prophetic vulnerability to Satan, and to Prophetic trial, error/transgression/sin, and repentance-whether on the part of Muhammad

¹⁹ basharun mithlu-kum; Qur'ān 18:110 al-Kahf.

²⁰Many of the Qur'ānic verses about Muḥammad are conveniently collected in Alford T. Welch, "Muhamad's Understanding of Himself: The Koranic Data," in Richard G. Hovannisian and Speros Vryonis Jr. (eds.), *Islam's Understanding of Itself* (Malibu: Undena, 1983), 15–52, where Welch observes of the verses that "the answers they give are radically different from some of the views presented by the Sīra and Ḥadīth literature"; at 16. The fullest attempt at understanding the Qur'ānic Muḥammad is Kenneth Cragg, *Muhammad in the Qur'an: The Task and the Text* (London: Melisende, 2001).

or on the part of the earlier Prophets who "are expressly intended to be understood as typological *prefigurements* or *pre-presentations* of which the person and career of Muḥammad, Prophet and Messenger of God, provide the corresponding *recapitulation* and *fulfillment*."²¹ These included, in regard to Ādam, "Satan whispered to him, saying: 'O, Ādam! Shall I lead you to the tree of eternal life, and to a kingdom that will never decay?' . . . And Ādam disobeyed his Lord, and went astray."²² And in regard to Ibrāhīm:

When night darkened around him, he saw a star, and he said "This is my Lord!," but when it set, he said, "I love not the things that set.": And when he saw the moon emerge, he said, "This is my Lord!," but when it set, he said, "If my Lord does not guide me, I will surely become one the people gone astray!": And when he saw the sun emerge, he said, "This is my Lord, this is yet greater!," but when it set, he said, "Oh people, I am innocent of your associating other deities with God [*shirk*]!"²³

And in regard to Yūsuf's encounter with Zulaykhah: "She desired him, and he desired her—were it not that he saw the guidance of his Lord! Thus, We steered away from him misconduct and immorality."²⁴ And in regard to Ayyūb: "And remember Our servant, Ayyūb, when he cried out to his Lord: 'Satan has afflicted me with exhaustion and suffering!"²⁵ And in regard to Mūsā:

- ²¹"These messenger-prophets of old are presented within the Qur'ān as precursors of Muḥammad, or more precisely, adumbrations of his persona, deeds, and situation"; see the superb article of Michael Zwettler, "A Mantic Manifesto: The Sūra of 'The Poets' and the Qur'ānic Foundations of Prophetic Authority," in *Prophecy: The Beginnings of a Literary Tradition*, ed. James L. Kugel (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990, 75–119, at 97–98.
- ²² Qur'ãn 20:120–121 Ţāhā; fa-waswasa ilay-hi al-shayțān qāla yā ādamu hal adullu-ka 'alā shajarat al-khuld wa-mulkin lā yablā...wa-'aşā ādam rabba-hu fa-ghawā. On Adam's sin, see Cornelia Schöck, Adam im Islam: Ein Beitrag zur Ideengeschichte der Sunna (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 1993), 89–132.
- ²³ Qur'ãn 6:76-79 al-An'ām; fa-lammā janna 'alay-hi al-laylu ra'ā kawkaban qāla hādhā rabb-ī fa-lammā afala qāla lā uhibbu al-āfilīn: fa-lammā ra'ā al-qamara bāzighan qāla hādhā rabb-ī fa-lammā afala qāla la-in lam yahdi-nī rabb-ī laakūnanna min al-qawm al-dāllīn: fa-lammā rā'a al-shamsa bāzighatan qāla hādha rabb-ī hādhā akbaru fa-lammā afalat qāla yā qawm-i innī barī'un mimmā tushrikūn.
- ²⁴Qur'ān 12:24 Yūsuf; wa-laqad hammat bi-hi wa-hamma bi-hā law lā an ra'ā burhāna rabbi-hi ka-dhālika li-naṣrifa 'an-hu al-sū' wa-al-faḥshā'.
- ²⁵ Qur'ān 38:41 Ṣād; wa-udhkur 'abda-nā Ayyūb idh nādā rabba-hu annī massa-nī alshayţānu bi-nuṣbin wa-'adhāb.

There, he came upon two men fighting each other, the one from among his own people, and the other from among his enemies. And the one from among his own people called out to him for help against the one from among his enemies, whereupon Mūsā struck him with his fist and killed him. He said, "This is the work of Satan; indeed, he is a clear enemy who leads astray!": He said, "My Lord, I have wronged myself: forgive me!" So He forgave him—indeed, He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.²⁶

And in regard to Dā'ūd:

And Dā'ūd perceived that, in actuality, We had tried him; and he asked forgiveness of his Lord, and fell to his knees in prostration and repented ... "O, Dā'ūd! We have made you a deputy [*khalīfah*]²⁷ upon the earth, so judge between the people with Truth, and do not follow your desires [*hawā*] for they will lead you astray from the way of God!"²⁸

And in regard to Sulaymān: "We tried Sulaymān by casting a body upon his throne; then he repented: He said: 'My Lord, forgive me...!'"²⁹ And in regard to Yūnus (Dhū al-Nūn) inside the belly of the fish that had swallowed him: "And Dhū al-Nūn, when he went away angry, thinking We would have no power over him; so he cried in the darkness: 'There is no God but you, may you be glorified; indeed, I am from among the wrongdoers!'"³⁰ In those instances where the Qur'ān did no more than allude to the errors/transgressions/sins of a given pre-Islamic Prophet, the early *mufassirūn* were propelled by and from the Word of God into the world of historical memory to

²⁸ Qur'ān 38:24–26 Şād; wa-zanna Dā'ūdu anna-mā fatannā-hu fa-istaghfara rabba-hu wa-kharra rāki'an wa-anāba . . . yā Dā'ūdu in-nā ja'alnā-ka khalīfatan fī al-ard fa-uhkum bayna al-nās bi-al-haqq wa-lā tattabi' al-hawā fa-yudilla-ka 'an sabīl Allāh.

- ²⁹ Qur'ān 38:34–35 Ṣād; wa-la-qad fatannā Sulaymān wa-alqaynā 'alā kursiyyi-hi jasadan thummā anāba: qāla rabb-i ighfir l-ī.
- ³⁰ Qur'ān 21:87 al-Anbiyā'; wa-Dhā al-Nūn idh dhahaba mughādiban fa-zanna an lan naqdira 'alay-hi fa-nādā fī al-zulumāt an lā ilāha illā anta subhāna-ka innī kuntu min al-zālimīn. The Qur'ān calls Yūnus "Dhū al-Nūn"—"the companion of al-Nūn"—after the eponymous fish.

²⁶Qur'ãn 28:15 al-Qaşaş; fa-wajada fī-hā rajulayni yaqtatilāni hādhā min shī 'ati-hi wa-hādhā min 'aduwwi-hi fa-istaghātha-hu alladhī min shī 'ati-hi 'alā alladhī min 'aduwwi-hi fa-wakaza-hu Mūsā fa-qadā 'alay-hi qāla hādhā min 'amal al-shayțān inna-hu 'aduwwun mudillun mubīn.

²⁷ On the difficulty of translating the Qur'ānic usage of *khalīfah*, see Wadād al-Qāḍī, "The Term 'Khalīfa' in Early Exegetical Literature," *Die Welt des Islams* 28 (1988), 392-411.

locate the information that could be harnessed to the task of fleshing out the allusions in the passage and, thereby, to giving it meaning. In the case of the pre-Islamic Prophets, the historical memory that the early *tafsīr* project sought to harness to the Qur'ānic text was the Jewish and Christian literary traditions. Thus, in the absence of any Qur'ānic specification of the sin of Dā'ūd/David, the early *mufassirūn* took that sin to be what the historical memory tradition of the tribe of Banū Isrā'īl—that is, the Torah of the Jews—said it was: namely, David's murder of Uriah in desire for his wife.³¹ Similarly, the Qur'ānic *allusion* to Yūnus's/Jonah's anger was explained by the early *mufassirūn* as what the sacred tribal history of the Banū Isrā'īl said it was: namely, his anger at God for what he believed to be God's failure to fulfill His promise to punish the unrepentant people of Nineveh.³²

When God said to Muhammad, "Indeed, we have granted you a manifest victory: that God may forgive you your former and latter sins"³³ and "Know that there is no God but God, and ask forgiveness for your sins, and for the Believing men and Believing women,"³⁴ the early mufassirūn would have viewed the notion of Muhammad sinning first and foremost in the light of the Qur'anic verses that mentioned the sins of the earlier Qur'anic Prophets to whom he was heir. And when God addressed Muhammad in words that explicitly link Muhammad's experience to that of previous Prophets-"We have not sent before you a Messenger or a Prophet but that when he tamannā, Satan cast something into his umniyyah; then God removes that which Satan casts and establishes His Signs clearly"-the mufassirūn now were propelled by and from the Word of God into the world of the historical memory of the early Muslim community to locate the context by which to create meaning. In the frank account of Prophetic error and correction in the transmission of Divine Revelation that is the Satanic verses incident—"I have fabricated against God and have said on God's behalf that which He did not say!";35 "I have

³¹See the reports in al-Ţabarī, Jāmi'al-bayān, 23:146-148.

³² See the reports in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿal-bayān*, 11:170–173 (the commentary on Surat 10:98 Yūnus).

³³ Qur'ān 48:1–2 al-Fath; in-nā fatahnā la-ka fathan mubīnan: li-yaghfira la-ka Allāh mā taqaddama min dhanbi-ka wa-mā ta'akhkhara.

³⁴ Qur'ān 47:19 Muḥammad; fa-i'lam anna-hu lā ilāha illā Allāhu wa-istaghfir li-dhanbi-ka wa-li-al-mu'minīna wa-al-mu'mināt.

³⁵ Riwāyah 2.

obeyed Satan, and spoken his words, and he has become a partner in God's matter with me";³⁶ "You have recited to the people that which I did not bring to you from God, and you have said that which He did not say to you!"37-the practitioners of the *tafsīr* project found what they deemed to be a true and coherent exposition of Qur'ān 22:52–55 al-Hajj, which they viewed as consistent with the other Qur'anic allusions to the vulnerability of Prophets to Satan, and to their moments of trial, error, and repentance, as expounded by historical memory. Indeed, given that God returns to the themes of vulnerability to Satan, trial, error, and repentance when mentioning almost all his Prophets, the early mufassirūn would likely have seen such experiences as defining components in God's own account of the constitution of Prophethood. This might explain why the scholars of *tafsir* accepted the Satanic verses incident in full knowledge of the simultaneous presence in the Qur'an of verses that assert the idea of God's protection of the integrity of Divine Revelation. These include God's statement about Himself, the angels, and the Qur'an: "Indeed, it is We who have sent down upon you the Remembrance; and We, indeed, are its Guardians";³⁸ about the Qur'an and His Prophet Muhammad: "Falsehood does not come to it, neither from between his hands, nor from behind him",³⁹ and about Satan: "You have no power over my servants—save among those misguided ones who follow you."40

The opening passage of Sūrat al-Najm, the *sūrah* that the Prophet was reciting when deceived by Satan, itself reads:

By the Star when it sets, Your Companion has not gone astray, nor is he misguided, Nor does he speak from his own desire, Indeed, it is nothing other than an inspiration, inspired!⁴¹

³⁶ Riwāyah 8.

³⁷ Riwāyah 1.

³⁸ in-nā nahnu nazzalnā al-dhikra wa-in-nā la-hu la-hāfizūn, Qur'ān 15:9 al-Ḥijr.

- ³⁹ *lā ya'tī-hi al-bāțilu min bayni yaday-hi wa-lā min khalfi-hi*, Qur'ān 41:42 Fuṣṣilat. The pronouns in the phrase "neither from between his hands, nor from behind him" are often read as referring figuratively to the Qur'ān.
- ⁴⁰ inna 'ibādī laysa la-ka 'alay-him şulţān illā man ittaba'aka min al-ghāwīna; Qur'ān 15:42 al-Ḥijr.
- ⁴¹wa-al-najmi idhā hawā: mā dalla sāhibu-kum wa-mā ghawā: wa-mā yanțiqu 'an alhawā: in huwa illā wahyun yūhā; Qur'an 53:1-4 al-Najm.

It makes no sense to suppose that the early *mufassirūn* accepted the Satanic verses incident *despite* these Qur'ānic verses—that is, while believing these verses to *contradict* the idea that the Prophet was deceived by Satan in the transmission of Divine Revelation; rather, they must have accepted the Satanic verses incident *because* of these Qur'ānic verses—that is, while believing the verses to *conform* to the idea that the Prophet was deceived by Satan in the transmission of Divine Revelation.⁴² The early *mufassirūn* read the Qur'ān and historical memory texts at face value and, first and foremost, in light of each other, unaffected by the external consideration of the Ḥadīth movement's prescriptive idea of an infallible Prophet for pious mimesis. In other words, the early *mufassirūn* read the Qur'ān and historical memory texts *in their own way* to mean that Prophets apparently did err and did fall victim to Satan—even in the transmission of Divine Revelation.⁴³

It is telling that the early *tafsīr* literature offers no other historical occasion of revelation for Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥājj save for the Satanic verses incident.

It may be worth emphasizing here that the discourses of $s\bar{s}rah$ magh $\bar{a}z\bar{s}$ and $tafs\bar{s}r$ —and thus the reports of the Satanic verses incident—were in wide social circulation. We have noted how Muḥamad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī, Muḥammad b. Qays, Mujāhid b. Jabr, and Qatādah b. Di'āmah were expressly remembered as $quṣṣ\bar{a}s$ —that is, as persons who expounded the meaning of Qur'ān in public (and how al-Suddī was remembered as doing "the $tafs\bar{s}r$ of the people"). In other words, their $tafs\bar{s}r$ corpuses, including the Satanic verses incident, existed precisely for wider dissemination in the early Muslim community. We have, similarly, noted the respective relationships of the $s\bar{s}rah$ -magh $\bar{a}z\bar{s}$ compilers, Muḥammad b. Isḥāq, Abū Ma'shar, and al-Wāqidī, to the caliphal court (and Ibn Sa'd was, of course,

⁴²There is no indication that any of the first- and second-century *mufassirūn* regarded Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj as having been abrogated by the last set of quoted <u>verses.</u>

⁴³ For a list of Qur'ānic verses historically used as proofs that the following categories of acts are possible (*jā'iz*) for Prophets, see the remarkable book of Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Rāzī (*fl.* 630), *Kitāb hujaj al-Qur'ān*, ed. Ahmad 'Umar al-Mahmaṣānī al-Azharī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1986), 69–74: "Unbelief (*kufr*)," "wrongdoing (*zulm*)," "disobeying God's commands (*ma'āṣī*)," "following Satanic influence (*sabīl al-shayṭān*)," "fearing other than God (*al-khawfmin ghayr Allāh*)," "being murdered (*qatl*)," "any act possible for other people (*mā yajūz 'alā ghayri-him*)."

al-Wāqidī's scribe). Their *sīrah-maghāzī* works were compiled precisely for the edification (and entertainment) of those social circles that spread out from and were influenced by the model of the caliphal court. Further, the various *isnāds* that we have examined document precisely the activity of *transmission of knowledge*: they represent the teaching of the Satanic verses narratives in social settings populated by Muslims eager to learn about the life of the Prophet Muḥammad and the meaning of the revelation sent down upon him by God. The Satanic verses incident was, in other words, a historical memory that was in wide circulation in the early Muslim community, and was generally accepted as true.

Muhammad's Struggle to Understand His Prophethood

The acceptance of the Satanic verses as an *integral* part of the early sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr literature is thus directly related to the distinctive and defining qualities of the respective projects. The Satanic verses reports illustrate several notions related to Muhammad's Prophethood that recur in both the early sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr literature, and are absent from the Hadīth literature. The first is the broad idea of Muhammad's fallibility as a Prophet. Modern scholarship has long recognized that the early Muslim historical memory material reflects the fact that the early Muslims perceived Muhammad as human and fallible, and that it was only with the later development and spread of the doctrine of 'ismat al-anbiya' that a superhuman image emerged of Muhammad being immune to sin and error.⁴⁴ That the Satanic verses incident is illustrative of this early concept of Prophetic fallibility has been noted;45 but no meaningful attempt has been made to understand any further the place of the Satanic verses incident in the early Muslims' concept of Prophethood. As such, a highly significant, indeed, defining dimension of the early Muslim

⁴⁴ This was recognized a century ago by Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, 2:255–262; and in the remarkable work of Tor Andrae, *Die Person Muhammeds in Lehre und Glauben seiner Gemeinde* (Stockholm: P. A. Nordstedt, 1918), especially the chapter entitled "Die unfehlbarkeit (*'isma*) des propheten," 124–174. See also Madelung, "'Işma," *EI2*.

⁴⁵ This has been noted by Schimmel, *Muhammad Is His Messenger*, 58; and Rubin, *Eye of the Beholder*, 257.

concept of Muhammad's Prophethood has remained unappreciated: namely, the idea that Muhammad was not inherently aware of what it meant to be a Prophet, but came to understand his Prophetic mission only gradually. It is during the course of his struggle to grasp the meaning of his Prophetic mission that Muhammad continued to make mistakes in carrying out his Prophetic function. The difficulty of clearly perceiving and holding fast to the Prophetic purpose was further exacerbated by the harsh circumstances of his early mission (although, as we shall see, error resulting from Muhammad's imperfect understanding of his role was not remembered by the early Muslims as being restricted to the period of persecution by Quraysh). Thus, there are several reports that narrate how, when Muhammad first receives Revelations, he is confused and fearful and even contemplates suicide.⁴⁶The idea that Muhammad came to understand his mission only gradually is linked in the *tafsīr* literature to the numerous Qur'anic verses addressed to him that expressly and repeatedly explain to him his purpose and function as a Prophet. These range from the repeated reminder to Muhammad that he has been sent only as a "warner"—"If they turn away, know that We have not sent you to be their keeper: you are not bound to do more than deliver the message"47—to technical instructions as to the mechanics of the Revelatory process, such as, "Do not move your tongue with it (the Revelation) to hurry it: bringing it together and reciting it is Our task; so when We recite it, follow its recitation!"48 and "Do not be in haste with the Qur'an before its Revelation has been determined for you!"49

There are some thirty-five such verses in the Qur'ān, which gives the strong impression that Muḥammad needed constant reminding about the nature of his mission.⁵⁰ The Prophet's gradual comprehension of his purpose takes place in the context of his endeavor to

⁴⁶On these reports, see Rubin, *Eye of the Beholder*, 107–108, 113–115.

⁴⁷ fa-in a'radu fa-mā arsalnā-ka 'alay-him hafīzan in 'alay-ka illā al-balāgh; Qur'ān 42:48 al-Shūrā.

⁴⁸ lā tuḥarrik bi-hi lisāna-ka li-ta'jala bi-hi: inna 'alay-nā jam'a-hu wa-qur'āna-hu: faidhā qara'nā-hu fa-ittabi' qur'āna-hu; Qur'ān 75:16-17 al-Qiyāmah.

⁴⁹ wa-lā ta'jal bi-al-qur'ān min qabli an yuqdā ilay-ka wahyu-hu; Qur'ān 20:114 Ṭāhā. ⁵⁰ See Faruq Sharif, A Guide to the Contents of the Qur'ān (Reading: Garnet, 1995),

^{43-45.} Rubin has rightly identified the theme of "God's guidance" as a component of the early Muslim image of Muhammad's Prophethood; see *Eye of the Beholder*, 76-99.

convince Quraysh of his Prophethood; but even as he begins to fully grasp his Prophetic mission, he struggles to hold fast to it in the context of the hostility of Quraysh's response. A recurrent theme in the *riwāyahs* relating to the Meccan phase of Muhammad's career is that of the mistakes he makes: on the one hand, as a result of his imperfect understanding of the nature and purpose of his Prophetic mission, and on the other hand, as a result of the difficulty he experiences in trying to retain a clear grasp of that purpose when struggling to convert Quraysh. An explicit acknowledgment of the effect of the pressures of Muhammad's circumstances on his transmission of Divine Revelation is Qur'ān 11:12 Hūd: "It may be that you are leaving out a part of what is revealed to you, and that your heart is troubled by it when they say: Why does no treasure come down to him, or angel accompany him."⁵¹ Kenneth Cragg makes the sensitive observation that this verse is "suggesting that some temptation to compromise the message was present for Muhammad in the stress caused him by the taunts of his adversaries ... there could be no clearer evidence of how embroiled inside his personhood—his sadr-the entire mission was."52

When the Prophet errs in these circumstances, he is corrected by God through a category of Divine Revelations that came to be called the $\bar{a}y\bar{a}t~al$ -' $it\bar{a}b$ (verses of rebuke).⁵³ Thus, we have the accounts of how the Prophet, engrossed in trying to convince the leaders of Quraysh of Islam, ignored the blind man Ibn Umm Maktūm and was rebuked for it by God in the verses, "He frowned and turned away when the blind man came to him."⁵⁴ In this famous incident, the

⁵¹fa-la'alla-ka tārikun ba'da mā yūḥā ilay-ka wa-dā'iqun bi-hi ṣadru-ka an yaqūlū law lā unzila 'alay-hi kanzun aw jā'a ma'a-hu malak.

⁵²Cragg, Muhammad in the Qur'an, 65.

⁵³For studies of the *āyāt al-'itāb* (which do not refer the Satanic verses incident to this category of verses) see 'Uwayd b. 'Iyāḍ b. 'Āyiḍ al-Maṭrafī, *Āyāt 'itāb rasūl Allāh fī ḍaw' al-'iṣmah wa-al-ijtihād* (Cairo: Dār al-Fikr al-'Arabī, 1982); and Abdülbaki Turan, "Kur'an-1 Kerim'deki İtâb Âyetleri," *Selçuk Üniversitesi İlâhiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 3 (1990), 57–75. For a study of the relationship between Divine Revelation and the pressures exerted on the Prophet by Quraysh, see Richard Paul Bode, "The Qur'anic Response to the Request that Muhammad Perform Signs," PhD dissertation, Concordia Seminary, 1977, in which the Satanic verses incident is discussed at 122–124. For an excellent analysis of the relationship between Prophethood and Revelation in the Qur'ān, see Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes*, 80–105.

⁵⁴ 'abasa wa-tawallā: an jā'a-hu al-a'mā; Qur'ān 80:1–9 'Abasa. See the accounts of the incident in al-Ṭabarī, Jāmi' al-bayān, 30:50–52.

Prophet is portrayed by the Qur'ān as being overconcerned to win over Quraysh to Islam—in other words, he is portrayed as confused as to the exact purpose and nature of his mission—for which he is reprimanded and corrected by Divine intervention.

Another such account, several elements of which parallel those in the Satanic verses incident, is the following report carried by the isnād Yūnus b. Bukayr ← Abū Ma'shar ← Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī:⁵⁵

Quraysh spoke to the Messenger of God and said: "Muḥammad! You tell us that Mūsā had a stick with which he struck the rock so that there sprang from it twelve springs; and you tell us that 'Īsā revived the dead; and you tell us that Thamūd had a camel. So perform for us some of these miraculous signs (of Prophethood) so that we believe in you [*fa*-*i'ti-nā bi-ba'di tilka al-āyāt ḥattā nuṣaddiqa-ka*]." So the Messenger of God said, "What do you want me to perform for you?" They said, "That you make the rocks gold for us." He said, "If I do that, you will believe me [*tuṣaddiqū-nī*]?" They said, "Yes, by God, if you do that we will all follow you."

So the Messenger of God began to pray $[q\bar{a}ma \ yad'\bar{u}]$. And Jibrīl came and said to him: "What do you want $[m\bar{a} \ shi'ta]$? If you want, turn (yourself) into gold $[a \ shih \ dhahaban]$! However, I have not sent a Sign $[l\bar{a}kin \ lam \ ursil \ \bar{a}yatan]$; and they will not believe (you) at that, not unless you chastise them $[wa-lam \ yu \ saddiq \ u \ inda \ dh \ alika \ ill \ adhdhab-ta-hum]$. So, if you will, leave them until they repent!" So the Messenger of God said, "I will leave them until they repent."

And God sent down: "And they swear by God with their most solemn oaths that if a miracle were shown to them they would believe it . . ." to his words "they would still not believe unless God so willed it."⁵⁶

The thematic similarities between this report and the Satanic verses incident are very striking. As in the Satanic verses incident, the Prophet wants to win over Quraysh and, specifically, wants Divine Revelation / intervention to be the instrument that will effect this. He clearly desires that God send down upon him something that will satisfy Quraysh and, as in many of the Satanic verses accounts,

⁵⁵ See Yūnus b. Bukayr/Hamidullah, *Sīrat Ibn Ishāq*, 255; Yūnus b. Bukayr/Zakkār,

Kitāb al-siyar wa-al-maghāzī, 274; al-Ṭabarī, Jāmi'al-bayān 7:311–312.

⁵⁶ Qur'ān 6:109–111 al-An'ām.

is unaware that he is acting in a manner inappropriate to his Prophetic mission until he is corrected by Jibrīl. The tone in which Jibrīl speaks to the Prophet is particularly striking. Essentially what Jibrīl is saying to the Prophet here is: "Look here, if you want to do things off your own bat, then go ahead! But this is not what Revelation and your mission are about." In other words, Jibrīl is both correcting the Prophet and explaining to him how Prophethood functions, which is also what happens in the Satanic verses incident.⁵⁷

Another incident with striking similarities to that of the Satanic verses is given in explanation of Qur'ān 17:73 al-Isrā' in the *Tafsīr* of Muqātil b. Sulaymān (d. 150).⁵⁸

"And they strove to tempt you [wa-in kādū la-yaftinūna-ka]"; meaning, Thaqīf. He (God) says that they strove to tempt you; meaning, they endeavoured to turn you away [hammū an yaṣuddū-ka] "from that with which We have inspired you ['an alladhī awḥaynā ilay-ka]." (This is) like His words in Sūrat al-Mā'idah:⁵⁹ "Beware lest they tempt you [waiḥdhar-hum an yaftinū-ka]"—meaning, turn you away—"from a part of what God has sent down to you ['an ba'ḍi mā anzala Allāhu ilay-ka]."

This was (sent down) because Thaqīf came to the Prophet and said, "We are your brothers, your kinsmen through marriage and your neighbours. We are the best of the people of Najd with whom for you to be at peace [naḥnu khayr ahl Najd la-ka silman], and the most dangerous of them with whom for you to be at war. If we accept Islam [in nuslim], all of Najd will accept Islam, and if we fight you, our allies [man warā'a-nā] will fight you; so give us what we want!" The Prophet said, "What do you want?" They said, "We will accept Islam on condition that we are not pressed or rushed [lā nujashshu wa-lā nuʿashshu] and that we do not bow [lā naḥnī]." They said, "(We will accept Islam) on condition that we do not pray [lā nuṣallī], and that we do not break our idols with our own hands. All interest [ribā] that is owed to us by people will still be owed to us, but all interest that we owe to people will be forgiven us. Who-

⁵⁷It is noteworthy that the above report is, like **Riwāyahs 1** and **2**, also transmitted from Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī. For another account of this incident transmitted from Ibn 'Abbās, see 'Abd b. Humayd, *Musnad 'Abd b. Humayd*, MS Hyderabad, Āşafiyah, Hadīth 862, f. 117a; and 'Abd b. Humayd, *al-Muntakhab min Musnad 'Abd b. Humayd*, ed. by Ṣubhī al-Badrī al-Sāmarrā'ī and Maḥmūd Muḥammad Khalīl al-Şa'īdī (Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1985), 232.

⁵⁸Muqātil, *Tafsīr*, 2:542–544; see also M. J. Kister, "Some Reports concerning al-Ţā'if," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 1 (1979), 1–18, at 6.

⁵⁹Qur'ān 4:49 al-Nisā'.

ever we find cutting down a tree in the Wādī Wajj, we will strip him of his clothes and beat him back and front; the sanctity of Wādī Wajj [*hurmatu-hu*] will be like the sanctity of Mecca, similarly its game and fowl and trees . . . (We will accept Islam on condition that) you grant us pleasure of al-Lāt and al-'Uzzā for a year [*an tumatti'a-nā bi-al-Lāt waal-'Uzzā sanatan*]. Aside from worshipping them (for a year), we will not break them with our own hands; so that the people know that you hold us in honour, and that we have precedence over them."

The Messenger of God said to them, "As for what you say about not being pressed or rushed, and about the interest, it is yours. As for what you say about not bowing, there is no good in a religion without bowing [*rukū*'] and prostration [*sujūd*]." They said, "We will do it, even though it is demeaning for us." (The Prophet said), "As for what you say about not breaking the idols with your own hands, we will determine who other than you will break them." Then the Prophet fell silent, and they said, "Grant us pleasure of al-Lāt for a year! [*tumatti*'-*nā bi-al-Lāt sanatan*]." He turned away from them, and was loathe to say, "No!," lest they reject Islam [*ja'ala yakrah an yaqūla lā fa-ya'būna al-islām*]. Thaqīf said to the Prophet, "If you are concerned that the Arabs will rebuke you for breaking their idols while leaving our idols, say to them: 'My Lord has ordered me to continue al-Lāt in their territory for a year' [*amara-nī rabb-ī an uqirra al-Lāt fī-arḍi-him sanatan*]."

At this point, 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb said, "You have burnt the Prophet's heart by mentioning al-Lāt; may God scorch your livers! No... God does not allow the worship of other deities [*la yada'u Allāh al-shirk*] in a land where He is worshipped. So either you accept Islam in the way that the people have accepted Islam, or you stick to your territory."

So God sent down, "And they strove to tempt you [*wa-in kadū la-yaftinūna-ka*]." He says: they strove to turn you away "from that with which We have inspired you, that you may fabricate against Us something other than it [*'an alladhī awḥaynā ilay-ka li-taftariya 'alay-nā ghayra-hu*]." He, the Exalted, says: that you may say on our behalf something other than it, (meaning) something We have not said. (This is) on account of their saying to the Prophet: "Say: 'My Lord has ordered me to continue her (al-Lāt).""

... "And had we not fortified you [*wa-law lā an thabbatnā-ka*]"—O, Muḥammad!—with silence, you would have ordered the deities not to be broken,⁶⁰ and you would have inclined thereby to sinful disobedi-

⁶⁰ The text here reads: "you would have ordered the deities to be broken [*fa-amarta bi-kasr al-ālihah*]"; but this makes no sense in the context, and the editor, 'Abd Allāh Shiḥātah, correctly suggests *bi-'adam kasr*; Muqātil, *Tafsīr*, 2:544, footnote 4.

ence [*idhan rakanta ilā al-ma'ṣiyah*]. "You would have inclined [*la-qad kidta tarkanu*]"; He says: you were, for a moment, considering [*ham-mamta suway'ah*] inclining "to them a little [*ilay-him shay'an qalīlan*]."

In the above incident, the Prophet is remembered as consciously considering a temporary compromise with polytheism. He contemplates allowing Thaqif to continue worshipping al-Lat and al-'Uzza for a year as part of the terms of a negotiated agreement through which they will ultimately accept Islam. Thaqīf suggest to him that he make Divine Revelation the instrument by which to justify his concession. In this story Muhammad is saved from error not by Jibrīl but by his Companion 'Umar b. al-Khattāb, who intervenes forcefully to make clear a point on which the Prophet is apparently wavering: "God does not allow the worship of other deities [*shirk*] in a land where He is worshipped." God then indicates that were it not for Divine intervention, the Prophet would indeed have compromised his mission—and that too on the fundamental point of Divine Unicity. In the Satanic verses incident, of course, Divine intervention comes after the fact of the Prophet's erroneous concession to the worshippers of al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt, and not before. The parallel between the two incidents suggested itself also to the twelfth-/ eighteenth-century Damascene scholar Hāmid al-'Imādī (d. 1171), who prepared a work specifically on those Qur'anic verses revealed in accordance with or in response to the interventions of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Abū Bakr, and 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. Al-'Imādī follows his citation of the above report with the account of the Satanic verses in Riwāyah 5 from the Durr of al-Suyūțī. Given that 'Umar does not intervene in the case of the Satanic verses, al-'Imādī's juxtaposition of the two incidents is gratuitous to his immediate subject, and would seem thus strongly to indicate that he viewed the two accounts as linked in that they both involve Prophetic error and concession to the cult of the pre-Islamic goddesses.⁶¹

⁶¹ Hāmid al-'Imādī, al-Durr al-mustațāb fī muwāfaqāt 'Umar ibn al-Khațţāb wa-Abī Bakr wa-'Alī Abī Turāb, ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1996), 111–112; on al-'Imādī, Hanafī muftī of Ottoman Damascus, see Muḥammad Khalīl al-Murādī, Silk al-durar fī a'yān al-qarn al-thānī 'ashar, Bulaq: al-Maţba'ah al-'Āmirah, 1874, 3:11–19; and Ismā'īl Pāshā al-Baghdādī, Hadiyyat al-'ārifīn asmā' al-mu'allifīn wa-āthār al-muşannifīn (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1951), 261. On the relationship of 'Umar to the revelation of the Qur'ān, see Avraham Hakim, "Context:

It is unclear at what point in the Prophet's career the above incident is supposed to have taken place; however, Sūrat al-Isrā' is generally taken to date to the last year before the Hijrah.⁶² The category of Prophetic acts described in the preceding reports—namely, errors arising from Muḥammad's own misconception about what is and what is not consonant with his Message—continues even into the Medinese period. One of these is in relation to the Revelation of Qur'ān 4:34 al-Nisā', where the Prophet, on his own initiative, simply makes the wrong legal ruling and is corrected by Divine Revelation. The following is from the *Tafsīr* of Mujāhid b. Jabr:

A man slapped his wife, so she went to the Prophet. He said to her husband: "(She is owed) Retaliation, retaliation [*al-qiṣāṣ al-qiṣāṣ*]!"

Then Revelation [*al-waḥy*] descended on the Prophet. "Men are *qawwāmūn* over women [*al-rijālu qawwāmūna 'alā al-nisā'*]," came down to him. The Messenger of God recited it to them, and said: "We wanted something, and God wanted something else; and what God wants is better [*aradnā amran wa-arāda Allāh amran wa-alladhī arāda Allāhu khayrun*]."⁶³

In another account of this incident, the Prophet is remembered as saying, "I wanted something, but God *refused* [*fa-abā Allāh*]!"⁶⁴ In this report, as in the Satanic verses, the Prophet makes a statement that is the direct *opposite* of what God wants from him, and Revelation serves to correct the Prophet and bring him into the Divine line. Indeed, in some narratives, it is precisely after this latter rush to judgment by the Prophet that the revelation takes place of the aforementioned Qur'ān 20:114 Ṭāhā and of Qur'ān 75:16–17 al-Qiyāmah: "Do not be in haste with the Qur'ān before its Revelation has been determined for you!" and "Do not move your tongue with it (the Revelation) to hurry it: bringing it together and reciting it is Our task; so when We

^{&#}x27;Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb," in Andrew Rippin (ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to the Qur'ān* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 205–220.

⁶²The incident has effectively disappeared from the later Muslim tradition; it appears in later *tafsīr* works in truncated form, without the most problematic narrative elements, and in *sīrah-maghāzī* works not at all.

⁶³ *Tafsīr Imām Mujāhid b. Jabr*, 274; See also the account in Muqātil b. Sulaymān, *Tafsīr Muqātil* 1:370.

⁶⁴ Al-Wāḥidī, Asbāb al-nuzūl, 183.

recite it, follow its recitation!"⁶⁵ The most famous such incident from the Medinese period is, of course, that of the Prophet's marriage to Zaynab bt. Jaḥsh, where the Prophet was rebuked by God for concealing his desire to marry Zaynab, the wife of his adopted son, Zayd b. Ḥārithah, for fear of what people would think: "You concealed within yourself that which God brought to light, and you feared the people when God is more deserving of fear."⁶⁶ Here, as with Qur'ān 11:12 Hūd (above), the emphasis is on the Prophet's sense of what God wants from him being affected by public pressure: "You feared the people when God is more deserving of fear."

The Satanic verses incident fits well into the pattern of incidents cited above: all are instances of Prophetic error arising from an imperfect understanding of Prophethood combined with temporal pressures. There is a further incident containing similar elements to the Satanic verses narratives, that of the Prophet's scribe, 'Abd Allāh Ibn Abī Sarḥ, which is transmitted by an *isnād* all of whose members are transmitters of the Satanic verses incident.

al-Qāsim b. al-Ḥasan al-Baghdādī (d. 272) \leftarrow al-Ḥusayn b. Dā'ūd, Sunayd al-Miṣṣīṣī (d. 226) \leftarrow Ḥajjāj b. Muḥammad al-Miṣṣīṣī (d. 206) \leftarrow 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Jurayj al-Makkī (d. 150) \leftarrow 'Ikrimah al-Barbarī al-Baṣrī, *mawlā* of Ibn 'Abbās (d. 105/123):

"And he who says 'I will also send down in the way that God sends down' [*wa-man qāla sa-unzilu mithla mā anzala Allāhu*]?" [Qur'ān 6:93 al-An'ām].

This was sent down in regard to 'Abd Allāh b. Sa'd Ibn Abī Sarḥ, the brother of the Banī 'Amir b. Lu'ayy, who used to write for the Prophet. His dictation included the words, "Powerful, Wise ['azīzun ḥakīm]," upon which he wrote, "Forgiving, Merciful [ghafūrun raḥīm]"—he changed it! Then he read it back to him in the way that he had changed it. He (the Prophet said): "Yes, it is the same [na'am huwa siwā']!" He retracted from Islam and attached himself to Quraysh, saying to them: "'Powerful, Wise!' would be sent down on him, and I would change it

65 Al-Suyūțūī, *Durr*, 5:602.

⁶⁶ wa-tukhfī fī nafsi-ka mā Allāhu mubdī-hi wa-takhshā al-nāsa wa-Allahu aḥaqqu an takhshā-hu; Qur'ān 33:37 al-Aḥzāb. On this incident, see the study by Ze'ev Maghen, Virtues of the Flesh: Passion and Purity in Early Islamic Jurisprudence (Leiden: Brill, 2005), at 75-100 (Chapter 3, entitled "Zayd and Zaynab Revisited: Bowdlerizing the 'Uswa Ḥasana").

and read back to him what I had written, and he would say, "Yes, it is the same!"⁶⁷

There are also evident parallels between this narrative and the Satanic verses incident: the Prophet is deceived in the process of transmission of Divine Revelation, and is unable to distinguish what is revealed to him by God from what is not. Here, however, there is no indication of the Prophetic error resulting from any sort of external pressure, nor is there any mention of Divine correction.

The crucial difference between all these other incidents and the Satanic verses incident is, of course, that the Prophet does not, in these other narratives, fall victim to Satan. The Satanic verses incident thus represents a greater error: one that takes place in extraordinarily difficult circumstances, at the very height of Quraysh's persecution and at the very moment of the Prophet's greatest weakness. As in the other instances of Prophetic error, Divine Revelation serves here to correct the Prophet, and to clarify for him the nature of his mission. However, in the Satanic verses incident, the Revelation of Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj serves, perhaps, less as a reprimand to the Prophet than as an explanation of what has happened. It is for this reason that several *riwāyahs* explicitly characterize the Revelation of Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj as God's *comforting* of the Prophet;⁶⁸

⁶⁷The various accounts of this incident warrant more complete study. The present version is cited in al-Tabarī, Jāmi' al-bayān, 7273. The verse under commentary is Qur'ān 6:93 al-An'ām: "Who is the greater wrongdoer than he who fabricates falsehoods against God, or who says 'I have been Inspired' when he has not been Inspired at all, and he who says 'I will also send down in the way that God sends down'? [wa-man azlamu mim-man iftarā 'alā Allāhi kadhiban aw qāla ūķiya ilay-ya wa-lam yūḥa ilay-hi shay'un wa-man qāla sa-unzilu mithla mā anzala Allāhu]." For discussions of this incident, see Abū Ja'far Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Ţahāwī (d. 321), Tuhfat al-akhyār bi-tartīb Sharh mushkil al-āthār, ed. rearranged by Abū al-Hasan Khālid Mahmūd al-Rabāt (Riyadh: Dār Balansiyah, 1999), 8:168-172; and Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Anṣārī (d. 783/1381), al-Miṣbāḥ al-mudī' fī kuttāb al-nabī al-ummī wa-rusuli-hi ilā mulūk al-ard min 'arabī wa-'ajamī, (Beirut: Dār al-Nadwah al-Jadīdah, 1986), 1:113-114 (also 1:123-124, where the same action is ascribed as well to one 'Abd al-'Uzzā b. Khatal). 'Abd Allāh Ibn Sarh's name was on the list of those slated for execution when the Prophet conquered Mecca, but he was spared on the intervention of his milk-brother 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, who, when he later became caliph, appointed 'Abd Allāh Ibn Abī Sarh governor of Egypt. This appointment was one of the misdeeds cited against 'Uthmān in relation to his assassination.

68 See Riwāyahs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 22, and 48.

even though the Prophet's error is a great one, God explains to him that what has happened is a perfectly normal part of the career of a Prophet: "We have not sent, before you, a Messenger or Prophet but that when he *tamannā*, Satan cast something into his *umniyyah*." The image of Muḥammad preserved in the early Muslim historical memory literature is thus one of a man whose Prophetic consciousness developed only gradually, who was affected by the pressures of his temporal circumstances, and who was ultimately susceptible to error even in the execution of his Divine mission. It is this concept that is reflected in the Satanic verses incident.

It is striking that the early narratives of the Satanic verses incident do not make any attempt to explain how it is that the Prophet could be vulnerable to Satanic suggestion. In other words, there is no attempt to rebut any counterposition that might hold that the incident did not take place-whether on the basis of 'ismah or isnād methodology or anything else-which, we will see, later scholars who accepted the incident felt obliged to do.⁶⁹ The reason why no attempt is made in the formulation of narratives to justify or rebut an argument for the rejection of the incident must simply be that no significant or meaningful counterposition existed at the time that the narratives became a standard element in the historical memory of the early Muslim community. Even if some were opposed to the incident in the first and second centuries, as we have seen in Riwāyahs 9, 10, 11, and 49, that opposition simply did not matter *enough* for it to warrant a response from the sīrah-maghāzī and tafsīr scholars it did not register in or impinge upon their discursive domain. The early Muslim community accepted the Satanic verses incident because, for them, there was simply nothing anomalous or problematical about it. It was entirely consonant with a number of other narratives, some of which are cited above, which they took as explaining passages of the Qur'an that also appear to allude to Prophetic error. Evidently, Divine Revelation was understood by the early Muslims

⁶⁹The only thing that we have seen in the narratives that could be construed as the acknowledgment of a counterposition is in **Riwāyah 1**: "the Believers trusted their Prophet in regard to that which he brought them from their Lord, and did not suspect him of an error [*khața*'] or delusion [*wahm*] or lapse [*zalal*]." As noted in Chapter 2, the later debate over the concept of *'ismah* addressed itself to the categories of acts from which the Prophet was protected, specifically including *khața', wahm*, and *zalal*.

as a process refracted intimately through the person of the Prophet, and as affected by and vulnerable to Muḥammad's personal circumstances. It was a process in which God had regularly to intervene to ensure that His Messages were correctly communicated.

Divine Inspiration and Satanic Inspiration

The fact that the early reports of the Satanic verses incident do not make any attempt to explain how it is that the Prophet could confuse Satanic inspiration for Divine Revelation suggests that the narrators of the incident felt no need to offer such an explanation to their early Muslim audiences. The reason for this can be only that the early Muslims did not need such an explanation: they were already culturally disposed-that is, conceptually and cognitively disposed-to accept this idea. The early Muslim concept that Divine Revelation was susceptible to Satanic intervention likely arose from other external factors that are related to the narratives of the Satanic verses-most crucially the content and wording of the Qur'an, and the received pre-Islamic understanding of revelation and inspiration. The Qur'an is at pains to deny that the source of Muhammad's inspiration is a *shavțān*—"Indeed, it is the word of a noble messenger: endowed with strength, secured with He of the Throne. . . . It is not the speech of an accursed *shaytān*"⁷⁰—doubtless because, as far as Muhammad's immediate audience was concerned, there were two well-known categories of "inspired" individuals in society, the poet (*shā'ir*) and the soothsayer (*kāhin*),⁷¹ both figures with prominent social roles, the source of whose inspiration was precisely a companion (qarīn)⁷² shavtān or (the almost synonymous) jinnī.⁷³ It is

⁷⁰ Qur'ān 81:19–20, 25 al-Takwīr. See also Qur'ān 26:210 al-Shu'arā', in reference to the Qur'ān, "The satans have not brought it down [mā tanazzalat bi-hi al-shayāțīn]."

⁷¹ "In simplest terms, the *kāhin* was a consultant on the occult, a soothsayer or or acle whose short, cryptic, rhymed, jinn-inspired pronouncements on such matters as lost camels, launching of raids, determination of paternity, and especially dream interpretation and other kinds of auguries were seldom volunteered but were besought and usually compensated"; Zwettler, "A Mantic Manifesto," 77–78.
⁷² See D. B. MacDonald, "Karīn," *EI2*.

⁷³The standard classical source on inspiration by *shayāţīn* and *jānn* is Ibn Shuhayd (d. 426/1035), *al-Tawābi' wa-al-zawābi'*, ed. Buţrus al-Būstānī (Beirut: Dār Şādir, 1967); see also 'Abd Allāh Sālim al-Mi'ţānī, "Qaḍiyyat shayāţīn al-shu'arā' also important to note that "a *jinni* is not necessarily an evil spirit, and even the word 'devil' seems in contexts of this order to have had fairly good overtones."⁷⁴

The term *shayāțīn* (sing. *shayţān*) was used synonymously with *jinnī*, apparently with special reference to poetical inspiration. Qur'ānic usage, however, while by no means unambiguous, progressively lent to the term *shayāţīn* the connotation of a *jinn* of an evil, irreligious, or unbelieving nature, adding to it the older monotheistic senses of "devils" or "demons" par excellence and (in its defined singular form *ashshayţān*) "THE Devil" or "Satan."⁷⁵

Not only was Muḥammad understood by Quraysh as being a poet and/or a $k\bar{a}hin$, but also it is reported that when Muḥammad received his first Revelation, he was himself unable to understand what was happening to him *other than in terms of the received pre-Islamic cultural concepts*: he seems himself to have thought, despairingly, that he had, in fact, become a $k\bar{a}hin$. "Exhort! For by thy Sustainer's grace," God assured Muḥammad and his audience, "You are neither a $k\bar{a}hin$ nor one possessed of a *jinn*."⁷⁶ In this moment, Muḥammad "brought into the open an intrinsic kinship between himself and the diviners; the same is true for his position vis-à-vis the poets. The trait these three groups have in common with regard to lore is inspiration, and, with regard to form, rhyme."⁷⁷

We have seen in the discussion of **Riwāyah 34**, above, how the early Muslims viewed the mechanics of Revelation as not dissimilar to the process of composition of poetry. Further (as already noted in Chapter 2), the literary form of much of the Qur'ān was frankly acknowledged by the Islamic scholarly tradition as being *saj*⁴—that is, the same form as that used by the *kuhhān*.⁷⁸ In other words, as far

wa-atharu-hā fī al-naqd al-'arabī," *Fuṣūl* 10.1–2 (1991), 13–23. Zwettler, "A Mantic Manifesto," 77.

⁷⁴ Fritz Meier, "Some Aspects of Inspiration by Demons in Islam," in G. E. von Grunebaum and Roger Caillois (eds.), *The Dream and Human Societies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 421–429, at 424.

⁷⁵ Zwettler, "A Mantic Manifesto," 77.

⁷⁶ fa-mā anta bi-ni'mati rabbi-ka bi-kāhinin wa-lā majnūn; Qur'ān 52: 29 al-Ṭūr.

⁷⁷Meier, "Some Aspects of Inspiration," 423; see also Zwettler, "A Mantic Manifesto," 81.

⁷⁸ Stewart, "Saj' in the Qur'ān."

as the early Muslims were concerned, while Muḥammad was certainly neither a $k\bar{a}hin$ nor a $sh\bar{a}$ 'ir, but was undoubtedly a Prophet, his Prophethood—that is, his defining quality of receiving verbal inspiration—was understood as being something "between seer and poet."⁷⁹ Most revealing is the remark made by a woman who met Muḥammad during the period when he had stopped receiving Revelations: "I see that your *shayṭān* has abandoned you."⁸⁰ As Toufic Fahd has stated, "From prophetic and divinatory inspiration, thus conceived, to poetic inspiration, there is but a step to be taken, only the name of the intermediary changes. The angel of the prophet and the *jinn* of the *kāhin* give way to the demon (*shayṭān*) of the poet."⁸¹

The Qur'ān also characterizes the *shayāṭīn* as constantly trying to "steal a hearing [*istaraqa al-sam'a*]" of the heavens, and having to be driven away by God (whose weapon of choice is *al-shihāb*, the shooting star).⁸² This image was parlayed into the interpretation of Qur'ān 26:221–223 al-Shu'arā': "Have I told you about those upon whom the *shayāṭīn* descend? They descend upon every sinful liar: they cast a hearing [*yulqūna al-sam'a*] and most of them are liars":⁸³

'Ā'ishah said:

I said, "Messenger of God! The *kāhins* would tell us about something—and it would be true!" He said, "That is a word stolen from the Truth by a *jinnī*, [*tilka al-kalimah min al-ḥaqq yakhṭifu-hā al-jinnī*], who then throws it [*yaqdhifu-hā*] into the ear of his follower." He went on to say: "And he (the *jinnī*) adds to it more than a hundred untruths."⁸⁴

⁷⁹The phrase is from Angelika Neuwirth, "Der historische Muhammad im Spiegel des Koran—Prophetentypus zwischen Seher und Dichter?" in *iblische Welten: Festschrift für Martin Metzger zu seinem 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Wolfgang Zwickel (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupert, 1993), 83–108. See the treatment of this theme by Zwettler, "A Mantic Manifesto," especially at 76–91.

⁸⁰ mā arā shayţāna-ka illā qad taraka-ka; al-Suyūţī, Itqān, 1:89. In another version, "I hope that your shayţān has not abandoned you"; al-Bukharī, Şaḥīḥ, 4950.

⁸¹Fahd, *Divination arabe*, 73. See also Fahd's excellent entry, "Shayṭān 1. In Pre-Islamic Arabia," *EI2*.

⁸²See Qur'ān 15:18 al-Ḥijr.

⁸³ hal unabbi'u-kum 'alā man tanazzalu al-shayāţīn: tanazzalu 'alā kulli affākin athīm: yulqūna al-sam'a wa-aktharu-hum kādhibūn.

⁸⁴ 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Şan'āni, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 2:78. See also the reports in al-Ţabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 19:125-126.

Again, the parallel with the Satanic verses incident is most striking.⁸⁵ The *shayāțīn/jinn* are very much in the business of stealing bits of the Truth from the heavens, mixing it with untruth and casting it—the same verb, *alqā*, is used in Qur'ān 26:223 al-Shu'arā' as in Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj—into the ears of their followers. In the Satanic verses incident, the victim of this standard operation is not a *kāhin* but the Prophet.⁸⁶

The similarity between the respective processes of Satanic suggestion and Divine Revelation is further underlined by the fact that the Qur'ān uses the same verb to describe Satan's intervention in Qur'ān 22:52 al-Ḥajj (and in Qur'ān 26:223 al-Shu'arā')— $alq\bar{a}$, "to cast"—as it uses elsewhere to characterize the act of Divine inspiration: <u>yulqī</u> al-rūḥa min amri-hi 'alā man yashā' ("He <u>casts</u> the Spirit by His command upon whom He wills");⁸⁷ and sa-<u>nulqī</u> 'alay-ka qawlan thaqīlan ("We will <u>cast</u> upon you a weighty word").⁸⁸

Even more striking, the same term, *wahy*, is used by the Qur'ān to characterize both Divine inspiration and Satanic inspiration in the following highly suggestive passage:

And in this way we have created as enemies for every Prophet satans $[shay\bar{a}t\bar{i}n]$ from among humans and jinn, who inspire $[y\bar{u}h\bar{i}]$ each other with varnished speech aimed to deceive. If your Lord so willed, they could not do this; so shun them and their deceptions.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ See the study of Gerald Hawting, "Eavesdropping on the Heavenly Assembly and the Protection of the Revelation from Demonic Corruption," in *Self-Referentiality in the Qur'ān*, ed. Stefan Wild (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), 25–37, at 25–29, where these Qur'ānic verses and their exegetical reports are expressly linked to the Satanic verses incident.

⁸⁶ Those accounts of the Satanic verses incident that state that Satan cast the verses into the ears of the Mushrikūn—**Riwāyahs 8, 9,** and **11**—follow directly the operational concept in this report.

⁸⁷Qur'ān 40:15 Ghāfir.

⁸⁸ Qur'ãn 73:5 al-Muzzammil; see also Qur'ãn 28:86 al-Qaşaş: wa-mā kunta tarjū an <u>yulqā</u> ilay-ka al-kitābu illā raḥmatan min rabbi-ka ("You did not imagine that the Book would be <u>cast</u> upon you, but it was as a Grace from your Lord").

⁸⁹Qur'ān 6:112 al-An'ām; see also Qur'ān 6:121 al-An'ām; "Indeed <u>the satans in-spire [yūhūna al-shayātīn]</u> their followers to dispute with you, and if you were to follow them, you would become Mushrikūn." See also Uri Rubin, "Prophets and Prophethood," in *Blackwell Companion to the Qur'ān*, ed. A. Rippin, 234–247, at 238–239. The term most associated with Satanic suggestion, *waswasa*, is, of course, never used for Divine Revelation.

Thus, both Divine Revelation and Satanic inspiration were, according to the Qur'an, forms of the genus wahy, and both involved the act of *ilqā*'. We encountered in **Riwāyahs 37** and **38** the figure of al-Abyad, a shaytan whose job description was precisely to deceive the Prophets in the Revelatory process; it is striking to note that al-Abyad was designated by the second-century mufassir Muqātil b. Sulaymān as the "Companion of the Prophets [sāhib al-anbiyā']"that is to say, he is their companion *shaytān*—and that al-Abyad's attempt to deceive the Prophet is described as an attempt "to inspire him (*li-yūhiya ilay-hi*)." The defining difference in *process* was that the agent of Divine Revelation was not an "accursed shaytan" but a reliable angel. In sum, in the cultural, cognitive, and conceptual matrix of early Islamic society, the respective processes of Divine Revelation and Satanic suggestion were understood to be not dissimilar in nature. The crucial thing, then, was for the recipient of the Divine Revelation to distinguish between the two. From the foregoing, one can now readily appreciate why it appeared entirely plausible to the early Muslim community that a Prophet new to his mission and subject to severe stress might just, on the single occasion, mistake the one process for the other.

Conclusions

The first- and second-century scholars of the distinct historical memory projects of $s\bar{i}rah$ -magh $\bar{a}z\bar{i}$ and $tafs\bar{i}r$ accepted the Satanic verses incident as true because they viewed the incident as entirely consonant with their understanding of Muḥammad's Prophethood. The Prophet of the $s\bar{i}rah$ -magh $\bar{a}z\bar{i}$, the foundational narrative of the community, was an epic hero who overcame suffering and setback on the road to triumph and salvation. In this epic, the Satanic verses incident represented a definitive moment of grave moral and historical peril to which the hero first succumbs, but from which he is succored to emerge resolute and fortified. The Prophet of the $tafs\bar{i}r$ was the Prophet of the text of God's allusions, and thus the heir to a long line of Prophets to whose histories of trial, sin, and repentance God also alluded. The mufassirun accepted the Satanic verses incident as another in this series of Divine citations of Prophet-defining mo-

ments. Further, the Satanic verses incident was seen as illustrative of Muḥammad's ongoing struggle to comprehend the enormity of his Prophetic mission, and to retain a clear sense of its nature—as well to *enact* that mission with clarity in the face of complex and difficult circumstances. For the early community at large, the process and experience of Divine Revelation were understood as being perilously similar to that of Satanic (and satanic) inspiration.

In accepting the Satanic verses incident, early tafsir and sirahmaghāzī literature was directly expressive of the concept of Prophethood that was dominant among the early Muslims. In rejecting the Satanic verses incident, the Hadīth project-emerging with increasing force and definition from the mid-second century onward—was disapprovingly at odds with the early understanding of Muhammad's Prophethood. The logic of the Hadīth project required an infallible Prophet whose words and deeds would lay down legal, praxial, and creedal norms for pious mimesis, as a definitive method by which to establish the veracity and authority of those prescribed norms. It is that logic, and that notion of Prophethood, that would later establish itself as Islamic orthodoxy. That later orthodoxy was perfectly aware of which scholarly projects were responsible for narrating the Satanic verses incident in early Islam is summed up in the statement of one of the most influential opponents of the incident, al-Qādī 'Iyād al-Yahsubī (d. 544/1149):

This report was not transmitted by any of the people of truth [*ahl al-siḥḥaḥ*: meaning, the compilers of the canonical Ḥadīth collections]; rather it is the Qur'ān commentators [*al-mufassirūn*] and the historians [*al-mu'arrikhūn*] who have been obsessed with it [*ūli'a bi-hi*] and its like.⁹⁰

The early *mufassirūn* and *ahl al-sīrah* / *maghāzī* were clearly untroubled by the fact that the Satanic verses narratives that they transmitted presented the Prophet as (momentarily) unable to distinguish between Satanic suggestion and Divine Revelation, and thus as erring in the transmission of Divine Revelation to the point

⁹⁰ al-Qādī 'Iyād al-Yaḥşubī, *al-Shifā bi-ta'rīf ḥuqūq al-muṣṭafā* (edited by Muḥammad Amīn Qurrat 'Alī, Usāmah al-Rifā'ī, Jamāl al-Sayrawān, Nūr al-Dīn Qurrat 'Alī, and 'Abd al-Fattāḥ al-Sayyid), Damascus: Dār al-Wafā', 1972, 289.

of compromising the Absolute Unicity of the Divine. They were, in other words, unaffected by the notion of Prophetic 'ismah on the basis of which epistemological principle later orthodoxy would categorically reject the Satanic verses incident. Further, they were clearly untroubled by the fact that they were transmitting the Satanic verses incident by weak isnāds that—like the isnāds by which the overwhelming majority of tafsir and sirah-maghāzi reports were transmitted—were either incomplete or contained unreliable transmitters, or both. They were, in other words, unaffected by the notion espoused by the Hadīth scholars that, for a report to be true, it must be transmitted by a complete chain of reliable transmitters, on the basis of which epistemological principle later orthodoxy would categorically reject the Satanic verses incident. Neither of these two orthodox principles exercised epistemological authority in the two earliest discourses in which the person and Prophethood of Muhammad were remembered and transmitted in the Muslim community of the first two centuries of Islam.

We may conclude this work with two observations on the question that has most concerned Orientalist and Muslim scholars about the Satanic verses incident—which is precisely the question that we have not set out to answer: did the incident actually take place? In light of the fact that the Muslim community of the first two centuries of Islam overwhelmingly accepted the historicity of the Satanic verses incident, it is hard to see how it could have been fabricated and introduced into Muslim discourse by early enemies of Islam, as Islamic orthodoxy has argued. Orientalists have insisted that Muslims could not possibly have invented such an inauspicious story. We have seen, however, that early Muslim discourse did not view the Satanic verses incident as objectionable—or even as merely unobjectionable—but rather that the incident is illustrative of the standard understanding of Muḥammad's Prophethood among early Muslims. There is presumably no reason, therefore, why they could not have made it up.

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Acknowledgments

Following are acknowledgments Shahab Ahmed drafted in 2011 for the book he would one day complete on the Satanic verses and the formation of Islamic orthodoxy. As draft prelude to an unfinished project, his sentiments are characteristically both extensive and incomplete. I am especially grateful to Noah Feldman, Mohsen Goudarzi, and Kathleen McDermott for their hard work in seeing this book through the publication process after Shahab's death. NORA LESSERSOHN

It has taken me far too long to write this book. This project began as a term paper, written in the winter of 1993–94 in my first year as a PhD candidate in the Department of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University. It then came to be imagined as my doctoral dissertation, but simply grew too large in the research and writing, with the result that a revised and extended version of that dissertation now constitutes only the first part of a larger work.

While a doctoral student supported by a University Fellowship in the Department of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University between 1993 and 1998, it was my good fortune to receive two summer research grants from the Sternberg Family Fund administered by the Center for International Studies, and one from the University Council on the Humanities, and, in my final year, to be awarded an Honorary Fellowship in the Humanities from the Mrs. Giles F. Whiting Foundation. During my subsequent incarnation as Assistant Professor of Classical Arabic Literature at the American University in Cairo, I was similarly glad to be granted a Faculty Summer Research Grant (for the ultimate award of which, against collegial opposition, I am especially indebted to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences

at AUC, the late Cynthia Nelson), and a couple of Faculty mini-grants (for knowledge of the existence of which I am grateful to Ferial J. Ghazoul). The research for this project would, however, simply have not been possible had it not been for the exceptional circumstances afforded me by my election as a Junior Fellow of the Society of Fellows of Harvard University for the period 2000–2003. I am especially grateful to the indomitable administrator of the Society of Fellows, Diana Morse, for her Alexander-like approach to whatever red tape threatened to knot my progress. I cannot overstate the importance of the role of two substantial grants, one from the William F. Milton Fund at Harvard Medical School, and the other a National Endowment for the Humanities Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship awarded by the American Research Institute in Turkey, in enabling me to undertake three months of manuscript research in Turkey between December 2001 and February 2002. Even so, that research in Turkey might not have taken place at all had it not been for the timely intercessions of Nur Yalman and of M. Şükrü Hanioğlu. I would also like to thank Anthony Greenwood of the Istanbul Center of the American Research Institute in Turkey for his prompt help in ironing out a potentially recalcitrant bureaucratic rumple. Two further short periods of research in Turkey in 2006 and 2008 were facilitated by gracious invitations from Şarık Tara.

The bulk of the research for this book was done in two great libraries: Princeton University's Firestone Library (where I have been the unworthy recipient of a history of kindness from Azar Ashraf), and Harvard University's Widener Library (where I have given much trouble to Michael Hopper, David Zmijewski, Michael Grossman, and, above all, Sunil Sharma). I have also worked extensively in Columbia University's Butler Library, the library of the American University in Cairo, the library of the Institute of Islamic Studies of McGill University (I record my thanks to Stephen Millier and Adam Gacek), the Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah Library of the Islamic Research Institute, Islamabad (where I am grateful for the warm Pathan hospitality of Sher Nowroz Khan). I also have made occasional valuable forays into the Asian and Middle Eastern Division of the New York City Public Library. I also express my thanks to the librarians of the various collections around the world where I did manuscript research—in the USA: the Rare Books Division at Firestone Library, the library of the Medieval Institute at the University of Notre Dame, which houses microfilms of the Arabic manuscripts from the Ambrosiana Library of Milan (I thank Marina Smyth for the uncommon good sense with which she facilitated my access), and Houghton Library of Harvard University; in the United Kingdom: the Oriental and India Office Collections of the British Library, the Bodleian Library of Oxford University, and Cambridge University Library; in Egypt: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, Maktabat al-Azhar (where I am especially grateful to Hamid Bakhit), and the Arab League Manuscript Institute, all in Cairo, as well as the library of the al-Azhar Institute in Tanta, which, at the time, housed a part of the manuscript collection of the Mosque of Sīdī Ahmad al-Badawī; in Syria: the Asad National Library, Damascus; in India: the Sālārjung Museum, and the Arabic, Persian, and Urdu Manuscripts Section of the Andhra Pradesh State Archives at Osmania University, which houses the former manuscript collection of the Āsafiyyah library, both in Hyderabad, Deccan (regrettably, some the materials obtained from the A. P. State Archives, such as a copy of some folios from a unique copy of the Tafsīr al-tanzīl of Bābā Qādirī Haydarābādī, were lost in transit); in Jordan: the Markaz al-Wathā'iq wa al-Makhţūţāt in the library of Jordan University, which houses microfilms of manuscripts obtained from various collections, including a complete set of the Arabic language manuscripts of the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (I should also like to thank the cataloguers working on the al-Fihris al-shāmil li-al-turāth al-'arabī al-islāmī al-makhtūt project at the Al al-Bayt Foundation, Amman, for generously allowing me to consult their superb collection of manuscript catalogues); and in Turkey, the incomparable manuscript libraries of Istanbul: the Süleymaniye (where I have had the privilege of the patronage of two directors, Nevzat Kaya and Emir Sen, and of the good humor of the staff who shivered with me through the Siberian winter of 2001–2002), Topkapı Sarayı, Köprülü, Nuruosmaniye, Atıf Efendi, Bayazıt, and Istanbul University (I am further grateful to the staff of the İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi library in Üsküdar, who kindly allowed me to consult the research files of the Türk Divanet Vakfi İslam Ansiklopedesi project).

I should also like to take this opportunity to thank the various officials responsible for manuscript collections who took the trouble to answer my correspondence and send me materials by mail: Hartmut-Ortwin Feistel and Hars Kurio of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, who responded with the proverbial Germanic efficiency to a series of odd requests; Jan Just Witkam of Leiden University Library; Kamel al-Khalidi of the Khālidiyyah Library, Occupied Jerusalem; Imtiaz Ahmad and Mohammed Ziauddin Ansari of the Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, Patna; W. H. Siddiqi of the Raza Library, Rampur; Mehdi Khajeh Piri of the Noor Microfilm Institute, New Delhi; Ghassān al-Laḥḥām of the Asad National Library, Damascus; Doris Nicholson of the Bodleian Library, Oxford; Patricia Boyd of Edinburgh University Library; Danielle Shields of the John Rylands Library of the University of Manchester; Ernst Gamillscheg of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna; and Yūsuf 'Abd-Allāh, President of the General Organization for Antiquities, Manuscripts, and Museums, San'ā.

I am grateful also to colleagues, some of whom I have never met, who graciously shared with me copies of manuscripts and rare books in their possession: Sa'd Āl Ḥumayyid, Abdel Qader Harun, John Hunwick, Scott Kugle, Wilferd Madelung, Richard P. McGregor, Maurice Pomerantz, and Walid Saleh; as well as to those who generously allowed me to read their unpublished research: Humayun Abbas, Meir M. Bar-Asher, Gottfried

Hagen, Maher Jarrar, Şükrü Özen, Michael E. Pregill, and Ṣāḥibzādah Sājid-ur-Raḥmān.

I should like to thank those (some of whom, again, I have never met) who in one way or another helped me to access ideas, information, or source material that might otherwise have remained less accessible or entirely unavailable to me: Ulil Abshar Abdalla, Marwa Abdel Samei, Diana Abouali, Muhammed Abu Samra, Muhammad Ahmad, Neil Krishan Aggarwal, Tanveer Ahmed, Safir Akhtar, Hafnaoui Ammayriyya, Kamran Asdar Ali, Sinan Antoon, Talal Asad, Mohsen Ashtiany, Samir Awad, S. M. I. Azami, Karen Bauer, Sahar Bazzaz, the late Omar Benmira, Rosemarie Bernard, Abdülhamit Birişık, L. Carl Brown, Tufan Buzpinar, Francisco Vidal Castro, Rowena Chin, Paul Cobb, Shaye J. D. Cohen, David D. Commins, Lawrence I. Conrad, Michael Cook, Vincent J. Cornell, Frederick De Jong, Carl W. Ernst, I. H. Azad Farooqui, Emine Fetvacı, Nenad Filipovic, Yohanan Friedmann, Bruce Fudge, Anna Gade, Donny George, Hadi Ghaemi, Pascale Ghazaleh, Ferial J. Ghazoul, Luis Giron-Negron, Alan Godlas, Susan Gunasti, the late Muhammad Hākim, Hasan Hanafī, M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, Abdelmajid Hannoum, Marcia Hermansen, Engseng Ho, Nebil Hussen, Muhammad Islām, Shamil Jeppie, Cemal Kafadar, Mehmet Karabela, Yassine Karamti, Irfan Moeen Khan, Amer Latif, Tamer El-Leithy, Hasher Ahmed Majoka, Mohamed El Mansour, Richard C. Martin, Joseph A. Massad, Laurence Michalak, Hossein Modarressi, Roy P. Mottahedeh, David Morgan, Shady Nasser, Khalafalla Nejmeddine, Angelika Neuwirth, Jacob Olidort, Amr Osman, Aida Othman, Şükrü Özen, Mehmet Sait Özervarlı, Judith Pfeiffer, Christine Philliou, David S. Powers, Intisar Rabb, Yossef Rapoport, Clemens Reichel, Amalia Zomeño Rodriguez, Khaled el-Rouayheb, Noha Sadek, Omid Safi, Wael al-Sajdi, Şāhibzādah Sājid-ur-Rahmān, Hamdi el-Sakkout, Ihab el-Sakkout, Shehzad Saleem, Srikanth Sastry, Asma Sayeed, Ayman Fu'ād al-Sayyid, Uli Schamiloglu, Barbara R. von Schlegel, Mark Sedgwick, Mohammed Serag, Aram A. Shahin, Emad Shahin, Sunil Sharma, M. Rahim Shayegan, Samira Sheikh, William Shepard, Abdol Karim Soroush, Justin K. Stearns, Charles Stewart, Jack Tannous, Himmet Taşkomür, Baki Tezcan, T. Robert Travers, Abraham L. Udovitch, Lale Üner, Nada Unus, Daniel Varisco, Knut Vikør, Sameh Wahba, Yudian Wahyudi, Mohammed Waked, Christopher Woods, Robert Wisnovsky, Muhammad Qasim Zaman, and Aron Zysow.

I am especially grateful to colleagues who translated for me from languages of which I have either no knowledge or only sufficient knowledge to assuredly get things wrong: Ulil Abshar Abdalla (Javanese), Luis Giron-Negron (medieval Spanish), Khaled El-Rouayheb (Norwegian and Swedish), and Zhang Zhan (Chinese).

I am particularly indebted to four of the above: Amr Osman, for all imaginable variety of help, but especially for pursuing various of my inquiries through Egyptian channels inaccessible to me; Mohamed El Mansour, who with extraordinary generosity and courtesy toward an unknown colleague helped me on more than one occasion to obtain manuscripts from libraries in Morocco; Baki Tezcan, without whose many kindnesses my first period of research in Istanbul would have been infinitely more difficult and inestimably less productive; and Nenad Filipović, for unfailingly allowing me to exploit his peerless erudition in matters Ottoman and irregular, and for unstinting sohbet ve rehberi during my second and third stints of research in Istanbul. I am very grateful to my two superb research assistants at Harvard University, not only for the unaccountable enthusiasm with which they undertook their respective tasks, but for almost saintly displays of forbearance which went beyond not only the call but the very concept of duty: Rehan Julian Ali prepared, with imperturbable serenity and diligence, a bibliography of many of the secondary sources cited in this work, and Elias Muhanna, with intimidating efficiency and resourcefulness, tracked down in scores of biographical dictionaries additional data on a large number of the hundreds of pre-modern scholars cited herein. That Elias, more than anyone else, came to understand the particular stresses attendant upon researching this book is reflected in the text of an email he sent me toward the end of his labors, which read: "I don't know if I'm actually learning something from this project, or just slowly going mad." I would also like to thank Gola Javadi, Bariza Umar, Lispeth Nutt, and Rebecca Linder for the fortitude and good humor with which they subjected themselves to a greater intimacy with the working of a copying machine than they might otherwise have ever imagined possible, Sarah Eltantawi for volunteering her services for a bout of emergency scanning, and Andrea Kupski-Keane of the Harvard Humanities Faculty Services, who went so far as to teach herself the Arabic numerals so as to more effectively fulfill the requests of her most persistent customer. I should also like to express my appreciation for the sober and learned assistance at the Islamic Research Institute in Islamabad of Muhammad Islām.

For their gracious hospitality, I wish to thank: in Princeton, Alexandra Costa and Carlo Campos, Manhua Leng and Hadi Ghaemi, Esma Pašić and Nenad Filipović, and Roxani Eleni Margariti; in New York City, Huda Amouri and Samir Awad, Lale Üner and Moeen Lashari, and Shahnaz Rouse; in Chicago: Nabil al-Tikriti; in Cambridge, Massachusetts: Shiva Falsafi and M. Rahim Shayegan; in London: Shahla Ahmed and Richard Tilling, Sheila Cheeroth, and Ilham Khuri-Makdisi; in Oxford, Linda Herrera and Asef Bayat; in Istanbul, Baki Tezcan and Nenad Filipovic; in Amman, Amal al-Jardaneh and Wael al-Sajdi; in Cairo, Helga Zöllner, Shahira Abou Hussein, and Ralph Ernest Tork; in Hyderabad, Deccan: the late lamented Tayyami—and the late lamented Mohammed Fasihuddin Ahmed, and Jauhar Jabeen Ahmed and Mohammed Naseemuddin Ahmed; in Islamabad, Hamra Abbas and Irfan Moeen Khan; and in Lahore, Syeda Najma Hasan and Muhammad Sami.

Some of the arguments in this book have been presented variously, and at different stages of evolution, in talks given between 1996 and 2011 to the Graduate Students' Colloquium of the Department of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University, the Institute of Isma'ili Studies, the Department of Religion at Middlebury College, Society of Fellows at Harvard University, the Department of Anthropology at the University of Rochester, the Medieval Institute of the University of Notre Dame, the Istanbul Center of the American Research Institute in Turkey, the Department of Middle East Studies at New York University, the Department of History and the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the Department of Religion at Stanford University, the Department of History and the Department of Religion at the University of California at Davis, the Department of History at Princeton University, the Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, the College of Letters and Sciences of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University, the College of Arts and Sciences of Koç University, the Committee on the Study of Religion and the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University, the Religious Studies Program and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Texas at Austin, the Working Group on Islam and Modernity at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, the Senior Common Room of Eliot House at Harvard University, the Department of Philosophy and Religion at Colgate University, the Muslim Students' Association of Emory University, the Department of Sociology at Boğazici University, the Department of Religion at Bowdoin College, the Carolina Center for the Study of the Middle East and Muslim Civilizations at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Islamic Studies Center at Duke University, the Program in Medieval Studies at Brown University, the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Georgetown University, as well as in papers read at the annual meetings of the Middle East Studies Association of North America in 1995 (in Washington, DC), 1997 (in San Francisco), and 1999 (in Washington, DC), and at a conference on "Qur'ānic Tafsīr: Interpretations and Reinterpretations" held at Princeton University in 2005. The interrogation to which I was subjected by the audience on each of the above occasions benefited me greatly, and the opportunity for cumulative oral rehearsal of my ideas has facilitated a process of distillation that I hope has translated itself into the text of this book. Of the many interventions from the floor, two proved especially consequential: I would like to thank William Chester Jordan for asking me at Princeton in 2003 what exactly it was that I meant by my casual invocation of the term "Islamic modernity," and Baki Tezcan for hinting sotto voce in Istanbul in 2002 that since I claimed my project to be an inquiry into the question, "What is the historical process by which an orthodoxy forms?," I had best either make at least some attempt to answer the question—or not bother to ask.

An ancient recension of this book was read, as my PhD dissertation, by Michael Cook, Ahmad Dallal, Andras Hamori, and Abraham Udovitch, to each of whom I am grateful for valuable observations, and it was awarded the Bayard and Cleveland Dodge Memorial Dissertation Prize by the Department of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University, as well as a Malcolm H. Kerr Dissertation Award by the Middle East Studies Association of North America. Several points in the dissertation were discussed with Harry Bone, and especially with the late Omar Benmira.

Encouragement at various moments of self-doubt over the course of several years came from my friends and brothers-in-Islam: Khaled Abou El Fadl, Kamran Asdar Ali, Samir Awad, Ali al-Shaykh Hasan Belail, Nenad Filipović, Hadi Ghaemi, Shamil Jeppie, Irfan Moeen Khan, Moeen Lashari, Hasher Ahmed Majoka, Omid Safi, Ihab el-Sakkout, Ralph Ernest Tork, and Mohammed Waked.

It is a source of particular pleasure for me that a portion of this book should have been written not only in my *vațan*, but—in continuance of a long Islamic scholarly tradition—in a room off the courtyard of a mosque. I am grateful to Zafar Ishaq Ansari for inviting me to spend 2007-2008 as a Higher Education Commission of Pakistan Visiting Scholar at the Islamic Research Institute of the International Islamic University, Islamabad, and for his affectionate *mehmān-nawāzī* during my stay.

To my teacher, Michael Cook, I owe a debt well beyond that which commonly burdens a student. His support of and enthusiasm for this project has never flagged, although I suspect his faith in its eventual manifestation has suffered severe pangs of agnosticism over the course of the last decade. I am especially indebted to him for an invitation to spend the academic year 2004–2005 at Princeton, where an important portion of the research for the book was accomplished.

Some utterly primitive notion of this book was first imagined in Dana Sajdi's New York City room with a view of the ice floes on the Hudson River in the winter of 1993–94, and has insistently dogged her existence ever since. I am sure that ...

The debt one owes to one's parents is inexpressible. Above all I am grateful to Syeda Razia Hasan and Mohammed Mumtazuddin Ahmed for the traditions they have sought to impart to me of justice, learning, honor, charity, and the ready embrace of humanity in all its hues that is their Islam.

The chronological scale of this study as well the number of authors and range of discourses it attempts to address have required me to say things about subjects that are not mine. Indeed, I fear that, like the poets of the Quran, I have wandered "confused in every valley." Each of those valleys is the rightful domain of a company of my colleagues, and I can only ask their forgiveness both of my trespass and for the errors I have committed in the course of my various sojourns. A book of this size cannot be free of mistakes, for which I can only crave the indulgence of my betters. As the poet has said:

in kuntu asa'tu fī hawā-kum adab-ī fa-al-'iṣmatu lā takūnu illā li-nabī

If, in my passion for you, I have transgressed my virtue: Protection therefrom is the preserve of a Prophet.

Of all the many human and textual encounters I have had over the long years of researching, discussing, and writing this book, perhaps none made a more profound impression on me than the response, in Lahore in 2008, of Sohail Hashmi, who, after listening to me attempt to explain the project, fell uncharacteristically silent for some moments before expostulating furiously in his inimitable (and untranslatable) fashion: $\bar{oe} bachcheh yeh kis ch\bar{z} s\bar{e} pangg\bar{a} liy\bar{e} baith\bar{e} h\bar{o} tum?$ (Approximately: "You: child! What is this creature with which you have chosen to pick your fight?") Too right, but too late!

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