

An illustration of this is the relationship of the Almohads with the Zanātah. The Zanātah were deeply rooted in the desert and more savage than the Maṣmūdah, but the Maṣmūdah had the religious call to follow the Mahdī. They took on (his religious) coloring. As a result, the strength of their group feeling increased many times over. Therefore, they were at first able to overpower the Zanātah and to make them their followers, even though (the Zanātah) were more strongly rooted in the desert and had a stronger group feeling than they. But (later on) when the Maṣmūdah lost their religious coloring, the Zanātah rose up against them from every side and took their power away from them. "God has the power to execute His commands." 22

7.0
Introductory statement

7. Mon Oct 9 The conquests

- Txt: Lewis, ch. 3
7.1 Extracts on the conquests
7.2 The end of the Sasanian Empire
7.3 'Umar sets up the pay system

This and the next seminar are concerned with the period from the death of the Prophet in 632 to the assassination of the Caliph 'Ali in 661. This seminar is concerned mainly with the expansion of the Islamic state through conquest, the next with its internal order—and disorder. The chapter from the textbook assigned for this seminar covers both themes.

Reading 7.1 gives you a chronology of the conquests. The extracts that follow should set you thinking about the fact that conquests, though commonplace in human history, can be of very different kinds, and can have very different outcomes.

Reading 7.2 is Tabari's account of the last stages of the conquest of the Sasanian Empire. Yazdajird was king from 632 to 651; the narrative begins at the point at which he has lost Iraq and retreats to the Iranian plateau. Does it give you any indication why Persian resistance to the Arabs was so ineffective? And while you're at it, consider the question how reliable Tabari's account of these events is likely to be.

Reading 7.3 is about how the central government of the Islamic state handled the resources made available to the Arabs through the conquests. In principle you might imagine the spoils being divided among the conquering Arabs in a free-for-all over which the state exercised no control, and from which it drew no benefit. Or you might imagine the state asserting total central control over all resources. But what would you say is actually happening according to Tabari's account, and why? Also, is there anything about what Tabari tells us that looks like the retrojection of the concerns of a later period?

7.1
Extracts on the conquests

(1) Outline chronology

I. ARABIA:

Hijazi oases:
 628 Khaybar and Fadak ?
 630 Mecca
 631 Ta'if
 Hijazi nomads:
 630 X Hunayn
 beyond the Hijaz:
 630 expedition to Tabuk ?
 630-2 "delegations"
 633 X 'Aqraba' ?

II. PERSIAN EMPIRE etc.:

Iraq:
 633-4 raids
 634-7 overrunning
 637 X Qadisiyya ?
 Iran:
 642 X Nihawand ?
 650 Marw
 further east:
 706-15 Transoxania
 710-13 Sind

III. BYZANTINE EMPIRE etc.:

Syria:
 633-4 raids
 634-6 overrunning (southern Syria)
 636 X Yarmuk ?
 Anatolia and Constantinople (non-conquest):
 640? first Arab incursion
 644 invaders reach Amorium
 649 Arabs build fleet
 655 X the Masts
 663 Arabs first winter in Anatolia
 674-8 siege of Constantinople
 717-18 siege of Constantinople
 further west:
 639-42 Egypt (and Cyrenaica)
 647 first incursion into Ifriqiya
 670 conquest of Ifriqiya
 681 incursion to Atlantic
 706? Algeria and Morocco submit
 711-12 conquest of Spain

(2) Extracts

A. Religious conquest: the Israelite conception

1. [God addresses Abraham:] "And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."
(Genesis 17:8)
2. "And the Lord spake unto Moses... saying: ... and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession."
(Deuteronomy 32:48f)
3. "When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it. And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace... that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee. And if it will make no peace with thee... thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword: but the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city,... shalt thou take unto thyself...."
(Deuteronomy 20:10-15)
4. "But in the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God doth give thee for thine inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth. But thou shalt utterly destroy them: namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites...."
(Deuteronomy 20:16f)
5. "And thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the Lord thy God hath given thee."
(Deuteronomy 20:14)

B. An Armenian source on the conquest of Palestine (written 660s)

"As the command came from on high, they all united under the authority of a single man, under a single law, and, abandoning vain cults, returned to the living God who had revealed himself to their father Abraham.... Mahmet [said to them]: 'God has promised this land to Abraham and his posterity after him forever; He acted according to His promise while he loved Israel. Now you, you are the sons of Abraham and God fulfills in you the promise made to Abraham and his posterity. Only love the God of Abraham, go and take possession of your country which God gave to your father Abraham, and none will be able to resist you in the struggle, for God is with you.' Then they sent an embassy to the emperor of the Greeks, saying: 'God has given this land as a heritage to our father Abraham and his posterity after him;

we are the children of Abraham; you have held our country long enough; give it up peacefully, and we will not invade your territory; otherwise we will retake with interest what you have taken.'" (Sebeos 94-6)

C. Muslim attitudes to the conquests

1. "Shu'ba related to us from Waqid ibn Muhammad who said: I have heard my father relate from Ibn 'Umar that the Messenger of God said: 'I have been commanded to fight against people until they testify that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is the Messenger of God, perform the prayer, and pay the alms-tax. When they do this, they render their blood and their property inviolate to me except as prescribed by Islam....'" (Bukhari, iman 24 = 1:29)

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2. "Fight those who believe not in God and the Last Day and do not forbid what God and His Messenger have forbidden—such men as practise not the religion of truth, being of those who have been given the Book—until they pay tribute (jizya) out of hand and have been humbled." (Koran 9:29)
3. "Yahya ibn Sa'id related to me from Ja'far ibn Muhammad from his father who said: 'Umar said: 'I don't know what to do with the Zoroastrians, since they're not people of the Book.' 'Abd al-Rahman ibn 'Awf told him: 'I heard the Messenger of God say: "Treat them the same way as the people of the Book."'" (Abu 'Ubayd, Amwal, no. 78)
4. [Instructions of the first Caliph Abu Bakr:] "Do not betray, or misappropriate any part of the booty; do not practice treachery or mutilation. Do not kill a young child, an old man, or a woman. Do not uproot or burn palms or cut down fruitful trees. Do not slaughter a sheep or a cow or a camel, except for food." (Tabari I/1850 in Lewis, Islam, 1:213)
5. "Abu 'Ubayd says: We find that the traditions from the Messenger of God and the Caliphs after him deal with the conquest of [new] lands under three headings:
 - [1] Land in return for [continued possession of] which the people [living] on it converted to Islam: this is their absolute property....
 - [2] Land conquered under a peace [agreement specifying] a fixed tribute: this [continues to be regulated] by the terms of the peace....

[3] Land taken by force: this is the category about which the Muslims have disagreed. [a] Some say: it is to be treated in the same way as booty—one fifth is given [to the Caliph] and the other four fifths are divided up among the particular people who conquered it. [b] Others say: it is for the Caliph to consider and decide what should be done with it. If he wants to declare it booty... as the Messenger of God did with Khaybar, he has the right to do this. If he prefers to declare it the common property... of the Muslims at large as long as they last, as 'Umar did with the Sawad [of Iraq], he does so."

(Abu 'Ubayd, Amwal, 57)

6. "Ibn 'Uyayna informed us from Zuhri from Sa'id ibn al-Musayyab from Abu Hurayra that the Prophet said: 'When Khusraw dies, there will be no Khusraw after him; when Caesar dies, there will be no Caesar after him. By Him who holds my soul in his hand, you will expend their treasures in the way of God!'"

(Bayhaqi, Sunan, 9:177.5)



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(*Ta'riḫ al-rusul wa'l-mulūk*)

VOLUME XIV

The Conquest of Iran

translated and annotated
by

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Yazdajird's Journey to Khurāsān and the Reason for It

Historians [*ahl al-siyar*] differ in the reason [they give] for this and how the whole affair happened. There is ~~Sayf's~~ account of this on the authority of his [previous] authorities. Al-Sayfī wrote to me on the matter—Shu'ayb—Sayf—Muḥammad, Talḥah, al-Muḥallab and 'Amr: Yazdajird b. Shahrivar b. Kisrā, who was at that time ruler of Persia, made for al-Rayy when the forces at Jalūlā²⁴⁶ were defeated. A single litter that could fit on to the back of his camel was provided for him, so as the journey progressed, he could sleep and he did not [need to] camp with his army. While he was asleep in his litter, they brought him to a ford. They woke him up so that he might be aware [of what was happening] and not be afraid when the camel forded over, [as he would be] if he were awakened from sleep. But he

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²⁴⁶. A town about 70 miles east of Sāmarrā, on the route from Baghdad to Hulwān. See Yaqūt, *Mu'jam*, II, 156; Le Strange, *Lands*, 62 and Map II, opposite 25. The defeat here referred to is that of the Persians at the hands of the Muslim forces under Sa'd b. Abi Waqqāṣ in 16/637. See Balādhuri, *Futūḥ*, 264ff.; Tabari, 245ff. [Translation, XIII, 36ff.]; Zarrinkūb, "Conquest," 13.

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reached (his men), saying, "You were wrong to do this! If you had left me alone, I would have found out how long this [Islamic] community will last. I saw in a dream Muhammad and myself speaking together alone in the presence of God. (God) told (Muhammad) that he would give them 100 years' power. He asked for more and (God) made it 110 years. (Again Muhammad) asked for more and (God) made it 120 years. (Again Muhammad) asked for more and (God) granted it, but then you woke me up. If you had left me alone, I would have found out how long this community will last!"

When he finally reached al-Rayy, where Ābān Jādhawayh was governor, (the latter) seized him and took him prisoner. (Yazdajird) accused him of acting treacherously toward him. He replied, "No, rather you have abandoned your empire, and it has fallen into the hands of someone else. I [only] want to record everything that is mine and nothing more." He took Yazdajird's seal, produced some parchment and made some written statements and records of every thing he wanted. Then he placed the seal on them and returned it. Later he approached Sa'd, and (the latter) returned to him everything [listed] in his document. When Ābān Jādhawayh treated Yazdajird in this way, the latter left al-Rayy for Isfahan, expressing a hatred for Ābān Jādhawayh as he fled from him and not trusting him. He decided to go to Kirmān, taking his fire²⁴⁷ and intending to install it there. Later he decided to make for Khurāsān. He arrived in Marw²⁴⁸ and settled there, having also brought his fire, for which he erected a building. He set up a cultivated area and built a passage 2 parasangs long from Marw. It was exactly 2 parasangs. He felt secure within himself and secure from approach. From Marw he corresponded with those Persians remaining in those areas not conquered by the Muslims. They expressed their obedience to him, and finally he induced the people of Fars and followers of

247. Arabic simply reads *nār*, fire. I take this to be some kind of sacred flame used in his practice of Zoroastrianism.

248. A famous town about 240 miles due north of Herat, one of the capitals of the Khurāsān province and standing on the River Murghāb. See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, Marw al-Shāhijān, V, 112ff.; Le Strange, *Lands*, 398ff.; *Et'*, s.v. [Bosworth].

al-Hurmuzān to rebel against the Muslims, and the people of al-Jibal and the followers of al-Fayruzān did likewise. This it was that induced Umar to permit the Muslims to penetrate farther. The armies of al-Baṣṭah and al-Kūfah pushed on farther with the result that they decisively conquered the whole area.

Al-Aḥnaf left for Khurāsān, took Mihrajānqadhaq, then left for Isfahān, while the Kufans were besieging Jayy. He entered Khurāsān from al-Ṭabasayn²⁴⁹ and took Herat²⁵⁰ by force. He appointed as his deputy there Ṣuhār b. Fulān al-'Abdī,²⁵¹ then marched on Marw al-Shāhijān. He dispatched to Naysābūr, there being no intervening battle, Mutarrif b. 'Abdallāh b. al-Shikkhīr,²⁵² and to Sarakhs²⁵³ al-Hārith b. Ḥassān.²⁵⁴ When al-Aḥnaf drew near to Marw al-Shāhijān, Yazdajird left it for Marw al-Rūdh²⁵⁵ and remained there, while al-Aḥnaf remained

249. For the conquest of Khurāsān, see Balādhuri, *Futūḥ*, 403ff. Al-Aḥnaf was approaching from the southwest. The dual form, al-Ṭabasayn, is not infrequently used for one of the two towns called Tabas, Tabas al-Tamr and Tabas al-Ummāb. The two are about 200 miles apart, al-Tamr in the west, al-Ummāb in the southwest of Qhūstān. Assuming he could march through the Great Desert, more or less as the crow flies, al-Aḥnaf would have passed through Tabas al-Tamr on his way from Isfahān to Herat. See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, IV, 20, Le Strange, *Lands*, 359ff. and Map 8, opposite 335.

250. The famous town in present-day Afghanistan. The town sits on the River Herat in the southwest of the province of Khurāsān and was chief town of one of its quarters. See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, V, 396-97, Le Strange, *Lands*, 407-9, 429-31, *Et'*, s.v. [Frye].

251. That is, from 'Abd al-Qays. Perhaps his father's name was Sakhr, see the Leiden *apparatus criticus*, Tabari, I, 268a, note o. He figures as a narrator under the year 17, Tabari, I, 2537, and later *sub anno* 23, I, 2707, delivering the fiftis to the caliph from Makran. There is brief mention of Ṣuhār b. Ṣakhr in Ibn Hajar, *Iṣṣabah*, V, 126.

252. In the west of Khurāsān and a chief town of one of its quarters. See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, V, 331-33; Le Strange, *Lands*, 382ff. and Map VIII, opposite 335.

253. Al-Harāshī. If this is the Basran jurist who died ca. 86/708, he must have been very young at this time. See Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, X, 173-74; Ibn Hazm, *Jamharatāh*, 288.

254. A town on the River Herat in Khurāsān, situated about 100 miles east of Naysābūr. See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, III, 208-9; Le Strange, *Lands*, 395ff. and Map 8, opposite 335.

255. Al-Dhubhī. A Muslim leader who is reported as assuming various military tasks during the conquests. See Tabari, I, 2475, 2477 etc.; Ibn al-Athir, *Usā*, I, 323-25; Ibn Hajar, *Iṣṣabah*, II, 152-53; *Tahdhīb*, 139.

256. About 150 miles south of Marw on the River Murghāb in Khurāsān. See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, V, 112; Le Strange, *Lands*, 397ff. and Map VIII, opposite 335.

in Marw al-Shāhijān. While he was in Marw al-Rūdh, Yazdajird wrote to the ruler of the Turks (*khāqān*)²⁵⁷ asking for reinforcements and to the ruler of Soghdia²⁵⁸ for the same reason. His two envoys to ruler of the Turks and the ruler of Soghdia departed, and he wrote also to the ruler of China asking for assistance. Al-Aḥnaf, when Kufan reinforcements had joined him under the command of four commanders, 'Alqamah b. al-Nadr al-Nadri, Ribī b. 'Āmir al-Tamimi, 'Abdallāh b. Abī 'Uqayl al-Thaqafi, and Ibn Umm Ghazāl al-Hamdāni,²⁵⁹ departed from Marw al-Shāhijān, leaving Hātim b. al-Nu'mān al-Bāhilī²⁶⁰ as his deputy there. He marched on Marw al-Rūdh. However, when Yazdajird heard of this, he left for Balkh.²⁶¹ Al-Aḥnaf stayed in Marw al-Rūdh, sending the Kufans on to Balkh. Al-Aḥnaf followed on after them; and the Kufans and Yazdajird met in battle in Balkh, and God defeated the latter, who made for the river at the head of his Persian army and crossed it. Al-Aḥnaf joined up with the Kufans, when God had already given them victory. So Balkh was one of the victories of the Kufans.

The combatants of Khurāsān between Naysābūr and Tukhārīstān,²⁶² in what used to be the territory of the Persian emperor, followed one after the other to make peace, those who had fled and those who had made fortified positions. Al-Aḥnaf returned to Marw al-Rūdh where he remained, having made Ribī b. 'Āmir his deputy in charge of Tukhārīstān. It is he

²⁵⁷. For the title *khāqān*, see *EI*², s.v. [Boyle].

²⁵⁸. May be taken in the wider sense to cover the area between the rivers Oxus and Jaxartes, of which Bukhāra and Samarqand were the chief towns, or more narrowly the district around Samarqand. See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, III, 409-10; Le Strange, *Lands*, 460ff. and Map IX, opposite 433.

²⁵⁹. Four Muslims leaders sent in 17/638 by 'Umar to reinforce al-Aḥnaf on the eastern front. See Tabarī, I, 2569.

²⁶⁰. A Muslim leader who appears in various military roles later in the text. See Tabarī, I, 2886-88 etc.

²⁶¹. Chief town of the fourth quarter of Khurāsān. See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, I, 479-80; Le Strange, *Lands*, 420ff. and Map VIII, opposite 335.

²⁶². A large district of Khurāsān stretching to the east of Balkh on the south side of the River Oxus. Cf. Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, IV, 23; Le Strange, *Lands*, 426-27 and Map 8, opposite 335.

about whom al-Najāshī recited the following, linking his name with his mother who was a noble Arab:²⁶³

Oh, many's the one who is called a young brave who is not really so!

Oh, Ribī b. Ka's is a real young brave!²⁶⁴

[Standing] tall [above them], when those sitting in the yard of his house

have taken their fill of what is left in his bowl, he gives them to drink.

Al-Aḥnaf wrote to 'Umar of the conquest of Khurāsān and ('Umar) said, "I wish I had not sent an army there. I wish there were a sea of fire between us."²⁶⁵ 'Ali asked him why and he replied, "The people [of Khurāsān] will burst forth from it on three occasions and they will be destroyed on the third. I prefer that this should happen to its own people rather than to the Muslims!"

According to al-Sarī—Shu'ayb—Sayf—Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Fazārī—Abū al-Janūb al-Yashkurī²⁶⁶—'Alī b. Abi Tālib: When 'Umar heard of the conquest of Khurāsān, he said, "I wish there were a sea of fire between us." 'Ali asked him why he was so distressed by its conquest, when it was a joyful occasion. 'Umar said, "Yes, but I..." and so on until the end of the [preceding] account.

According to al-Sarī—Shu'ayb—Sayf—'Isā b. al-Mughīrah²⁶⁷ and a member of Bakr b. Wā'il called al-Wāzi' b. Zayd b. Khulaydah:²⁶⁸ When 'Umar heard of al-Aḥnaf's conquest of the

²⁶³. Al-Najāshī is Qays b. 'Amr; see Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, XII, 73, 76. The meter is *awfī*.

²⁶⁴. Ka's is not only the name of Ribī's mother, but, because it means "cup" or "goblet," a pun is intended; he is generous in entertaining his guests with drink.

²⁶⁵. Perhaps a reference to the Zoroastrian religion and its fire worship practiced in pre-Islamic Iran.

²⁶⁶. Two narrators mentioned only here in the text. Abū al-Janūb 'Uqbah b. 'Alqamah al-Yashkurī has a brief notice in Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, VII, 247.

²⁶⁷. A narrator mentioned only here in the text and who has only a brief notice in Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, VIII, 231-32.

²⁶⁸. A narrator mentioned only here in the text. Bakr b. Wā'il is a large tribal confederation of 'Adnān, the northern Arabs. See Ibn Hāzīm, *Jamharah*, 307ff., 469; Kabbālah, *Mu'jam*, I, 93ff.; *EI*², s.v. [Caskel].

two Marws and Balkh, he said: "He is al-Ahnaḥ! He is the lord of the people of the east called by something other than his name!"²⁶⁹ Umar wrote to al-Ahnaḥ as follows, "To continue. On no account go beyond the river,²⁷⁰ keep to this side. You know how you made an entry into Khurāsān, so keep to this method and victory will continue to be yours. Beware of crossing over and dispersing."

When the envoys of Yazdajird reached the ruler of the Turks and Ghūrak,²⁷¹ it was not a straightforward matter to give him assistance until he had actually crossed over the river in defeat to meet them. Then it became so, and the ruler of the Turks gave him assistance—for rulers see it as an obligation to assist one another. He came forward at the head of the Turks, assembled the army of Farghānah²⁷² and Soghdiā, and marched them out. Yazdajird returned to Khurāsān and crossed over to Balkh, the ruler of the Turks crossing with him. The Kufan army mustered at Marw al-Rūdh under al-Ahnaḥ, and the polytheists left Balkh and fell upon him there. When al-Ahnaḥ heard that the ruler of the Turks had crossed the River Balkh with the Soghdiāns to attack him, he went out at night among his troops to see if he could pick up any useful ideas. As he passed by two men who were cleaning fodder, either straw or barley, one of them was saying to the other, "If only the commander would send us up into this mountain, with the river forming a ditch between us and the enemy, the mountain at our backs to prevent our being approached from behind and the fighting thus being on one front, I would hope that God would give us victory!" So (al-Ahnaḥ) returned, content at (what he had heard). This was one dark night. In the morning he assembled the army and said, "You are few, whereas your enemy are many. Let them not strike terror into you. How often a company that is few in number has overcome a company that is many by God's leave;

²⁶⁹. Al-Ahnaḥ's name was Sakhr. See note 45, above.

²⁷⁰. That is, the River Oxus.

²⁷¹. The text reads Ghūzak, but see Barthold, *Turkestan*, 96 etc., "the *ikhshid* of Soghdi."

²⁷². The province of Farghānah stretched for more than 200 miles along the upper stream of the River Jaxartes. See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, IV, 253; Le Strange, *Lands*, 476-77 and Map IX, opposite 433.

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God is with those who show patience.²⁷³ Go from here and up this mountain. Place it at your backs; place the river between you and your enemy, and fight them on one front." They did all this, preparing everything that would give them an advantage, (al-Ahnaḥ) being at the head of 10,000 *Rasras*, while there was a similar number of *Kufans*. The Turks advanced, together with those whom they had collected together, and fell upon (the Muslim forces), attacking them morning and evening and withdrawing at night; this went on for some time while al-Ahnaḥ sought intelligence of their nocturnal position. After he had discovered this, he went out one night, acting as a scout for his men until he came close to the camp of the ruler of the Turks and halted. At the first light of dawn a Turkish cavalryman came forth, wearing his horsetail and beating his drum. Then he positioned himself where someone of his rank positions himself in relation to the troops. Al-Ahnaḥ attacked him and the two exchanged spear thrusts. Al-Ahnaḥ pierced him and killed him, as he recited the following in the *rajaz* meter:

Every chief has a duty to

dye his spear [with blood] or [to fight until] it break;

We have a leader here who was made to face up to

the sword of Abū Ḥaḥṣ²⁷⁴ that remains [intact].

Then he stood where the Turk had stood and took his horsetail. Another Turk came out, did exactly as his colleague had done, then stood near him. Al-Ahnaḥ attacked him and they exchanged spear thrusts. Al-Ahnaḥ pierced him and killed him, as he recited the following in the *rajaz* meter:

The chief takes a high, lofty position,

keeping away herdsmen if they let [their beasts] pasture.²⁷⁵

Then he stood where the second Turk had stood and took his horsetail. A third Turk came out, did exactly the same as the other two had done, then stood near [where] the second [had

²⁷³. Qur'ān, II: 250.

²⁷⁴. Abū Ḥaḥṣ is the *kunyah* of 'Umar b. al-Khattāb.

²⁷⁵. *Khūlā'*, herdsmen, is the plural of *khālīn*; see *Glossarium*, CCXXXII. The hemistich reads, *wa-yamna'u l-khūlā'a immā arba'u*. Perhaps "let [their beasts] come to water"?

been]. Al-Aḥnaf attacked him and they exchanged spear thrusts. Al-Aḥnaf pierced him and killed him, as he recited the following in *raji'az* meter:

[He ran forward] like al-Shamūs, ready to respond to anything, running at full speed, bad tempered.²⁷⁶

Then al-Aḥnaf went off back to camp. Not one of [his troops] knew anything about this until he returned there and prepared himself [for war].

It was in the nature of the Turks that they did not go out [for battle] until three of their cavalrmen had come forward like these, each one beating his drum. Then, after the third one, they would [all] go out [to do battle]. So on that night the Turks went out after the third horseman had done so, and they came across [all three of] them slaughtered. So the ruler of the Turks found this a bad omen and said, "We have been [here] too long and these men have been killed in a situation such as no one has ever been killed before. There can be no good for us in fighting these men. Let us all retire." So their leaders withdrew. When day broke, the Muslims could see nothing, and news came to them that the ruler of the Turks had retired to Balkh. Yazdajird b. Shahrīyār b. Kisrā had originally left the ruler of the Turks in Marw al-Rūdh and departed for Marw al-Shāhījan. Ḥatīm b. al-Nu'mān and his followers fortified their positions against [Yazdajird], but he besieged them, removing his treasures from where they were kept, while the ruler of the Turks was in Balkh waiting for him. The Muslims suggested to al-Aḥnaf that they should pursue them, but he told them to remain in their position and leave them alone. When Yazdajird had collected together those of his possessions left in Marw, he did not have enough time to collect them all. He intended to make himself the sole possessor [of the treasures], because they were a large

276. Al-Shamūs is the name of the horse of 'Abdallāh b. 'Amīr al-Qurashī. Of an animal the word means "recalcitrant." See Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān*, VI, 113-14; Firuzābādī, *Qāmūs*, II, 232; Zabīdī, *Tāj*, XVI, 175; Lane, *Lexicon*, VIII, 2770. The expression *nāji'uz bi-nāji'iz* originates in the commercial word meaning "ready [merchandise] for ready [money]". I translate "ready to respond to anything." For the meaning of *mushāriz*, "bad tempered," "hostile," "quarrelsome," see Firuzābādī, *Qāmūs*, II, 185; Zabīdī, *Tāj*, V, 361.

al-Shamūs -
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part of [all] the treasures of the Persians. He also intended to join the ruler of the Turks, and the Persians asked him what he intended to do. He replied that he wanted to join the ruler of the Turks and remain with him or go to China. They told him to tread warily, for this was a bad idea, going to a people in their own country, while abandoning his own land and people. [They told him] he should take them back to [the Muslims], so that they could make peace with them. [The Muslims] were completely faithful, men of religion and in control of [the Persians'] land. An enemy ruling over Persians in their own land was a better political arrangement than an enemy ruling over them in his own land, who moreover had no religion, nor would they know how faithful [his people] would be. But he refused [to accept their argument] and they refused [to give in to him]. They told him to leave their treasures alone and they would return them to their own territory and to its ruler. He should not remove them from their land. He [again] refused [to accept their argument]. They told him they would not let him go. They drew on one side and left him alone with his followers. They did battle together and they put him to flight, taking the treasures and assuming complete control over them, abandoning him completely. The [Persian] polytheists wrote to al-Aḥnaf, giving him the news, so the Muslims intercepted them, while the polytheists were in Marw resisting [Yazdajird]. They fought [Yazdajird] and caught up with him at the rear of the army, rushing him away from his treasures [athqāl]. He went off to seek refuge, crossed the river to Farghānah and the Turks. [Yazdajird] remained throughout the time of 'Umar corresponding with [the Persians], and they with him, or at least some of them. So the people of Khurasan rebelled during the time of 'Uthman[']s caliphate].

The Persians came to al-Aḥnaf and made peace with him, exchanging agreements with him and handing over the treasures and monies [mentioned above]. They gradually returned to their lands and wealth in as good a state as they had been at the time of the Sasanian emperors. It was as if they were [still] under their rule except for the fact that the Muslims were more worthy of their confidence and acted more justly toward them. So they rejoiced in their condition and were the object of envy. [The

share of the booty that] came to the cavalryman in the battle against Yazdajird was like that of the cavalryman at the battle of al-Qādisiyyah.²⁷⁷

When the Khurāsānis threw off their allegiance in the time of 'Uthmān, Yazdajird went and settled in Marw. When he, together with his followers, and the Khurāsānis fell into disagreement, he took refuge in a mill. [The Khurāsānis] found him eating from a field around the mill and killed him, throwing him into the river.

When Yazdajird was killed in Marw—he was on that day in hiding in a mill seeking to reach Kirmān—the Muslims and polytheists took possession of his immovable booty. Al-Aḥnaf got to hear of this and left immediately at the head of his army for Balkh, making for the ruler of the Turks and arranging for the dependents and family of Yazdajird to follow with both Muslims and non-Muslims of the Persians, while the ruler of the Turks and the Turks [remained] in Balkh. When [the ruler of the Turks] heard of what had happened to Yazdajird and of the Muslims' departure from Marw al-Rūdh with al-Aḥnaf in his direction, he left Balkh and crossed the river. Al-Aḥnaf arrived and remained in Balkh and the Kufans also settled in the four regions [of Khurāsān].²⁷⁸ Then he returned to Marw al-Rūdh and remained there, writing to 'Umar of the defeat of the ruler of the Turks and Yazdajird. He also sent the fifth to him, and the [official] delegations [from Khurāsān] reached him.

[The same sources] reported as follows. When the ruler of the Turks, together with the dependents of the family of the Persian emperor or those of them who had made their way with Yazdajird to Balkh, had crossed over the river, they met the messenger of Yazdajird, whom he had sent to the ruler of China

²⁷⁷. The famous battle that took place in 16/637 and a decisive victory for the Muslim forces over the Persians.

²⁷⁸. I here take the Arabic *kuwar* to indicate the four divisions of Khurāsān. It is true that they were officially known as *arba'*, the plural of *rub'*, and that these quarters were a later development. My explanation would be that suggesting there were such quarters at this early date is an anachronism and that all that is really meant is that the Kufans settled throughout Khurāsān. For the four quarters of Khurāsān and their chief towns of Balkh, Naysābūr, Marw, and Herat, see Le Strange, *Lands*, 382-83.

and with whom he had sent gifts and who was bringing back a reply to his letter from the ruler of China. They asked him what had happened to him. He replied that, when he delivered the letter and the gifts to [the ruler], he had presented him in return with what they could see—and he showed them the present he [was carrying]. [The ruler of China] responded to Yazdajird by writing him the following letter, [but only] after he had addressed [the messenger] as follows. "I know that in truth rulers must give aid to [other] rulers against those who overcome them. So describe these people who drove you out of your land to me. I notice that you mention they are few and you are many. Such a small number will not affect you in this way with your great numbers. They can do this only if they are good and you evil." [The messenger] suggested that he ask him whatever he wanted. So he asked him if they kept to their agreement and he replied that they did. [The ruler] asked what they said to them before they made war on them. [The messenger] replied that they called upon us to choose one of three things: [to accept] their faith—and if we do, they treat us as themselves—or [to pay] tribute and [enter] their protection or to be subjected to open warfare. [The ruler] asked about how obedient they were to their leaders. [The messenger] replied that no one was more obedient to him leading them. [The ruler] asked what they permitted and what they forbade, and [the messenger] told him. He asked if they ever forbade what was permitted to them or permitted what was forbidden them. [When] [the messenger] replied that they did not, [the ruler] remarked that they would never perish until they permitted what was forbidden and forbade what was permitted to them. He then asked about their clothes, and [the messenger] told him. [He asked] about their riding animals, and [the messenger] mentioned their pure Arabian horses and described them [to him]. "What fine horses they are!" exclaimed [the ruler]. [The messenger then] described camels to him, how they kneel down and go forth to carry [loads]. [The ruler's response was that this was the description of long-necked beasts!] [The ruler of China] sent a letter to Yazdajird with [the messenger] as follows. "I am not prevented from dispatching an army to you stretching from Marw to China by my not knowing what is proper for me. But if these people described to me by

your messenger were to try, they could demolish mountains; if nothing were to stand in their way, they would wipe me out, as long as they are as described! Make your peace with them therefore and accept some *modus vivendi* with them. Do not stir them up, as long as they do not stir you up." Yazdajird and the royal family remained in Fargānah in [formal] agreement with the ruler of the Turks.

When the messenger brought to 'Umar b. al-Khattāb [news of] the conquest and the delegation [other] news, carrying the booty with them on behalf of al-Aḥnaf, ('Umar) assembled the people and addressed them. He also ordered the conquest document to be read out to them. In his own address, he spoke as follows:

God, ever blessed and almighty, has mentioned His Apostle and the guidance He sent with him. He promised, for anyone following Him, immediate and future reward [comprising] the goodness of this world and the next. He said, "He it is who sent His Apostle with the guidance and the true religion that He might make it prevail over any [other] religion, even though the polytheists were averse."²⁷⁹ Praise be to God who has fulfilled His promise and granted His army victory. Yes, indeed, God has destroyed the rule of the Magians and disunited them. They do not possess one single span of their territory that can bring harm to a Muslim. Yes indeed, God "has made you heirs to their land, houses, wealth and sons" "in order to see how they behave."²⁸⁰ Yes indeed, the distance between the garrison towns [of al-Kūfah and al-Baṣrah] and the border areas [of Persia] is now the same as [that between] you and the two towns in the past, now that [our armies] have penetrated into the land. "God brings His command to pass"²⁸¹ fulfill His promise right through to the last. So apply yourselves and He will carry out His agreement with you in full and fulfill His promise to you. Do not rebel, lest

279. Qur'ān, IX:33 and LXI:9.

280. Qur'ān, X:14 and XXX:27.

281. Qur'ān, LXV:3.

God substitute others for you. My only fear for this community is that it will be put in danger by you.

Abū Ja'far [al-Ṭabarī] reported [as follows]. Then the Khurāsānīs from far and near came out in opposition in the time of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, two years into his caliphate. We shall mention the remainder of the news of their break-away movement in its [proper] place, God willing, together with the killing of Yazdajird.²⁸²

'Umar b. al-Khattāb led the people on pilgrimage in this year. His governors of the garrison towns then were the same as those in the year 21 [December 10, 641–November 30, 642] except for al-Kūfah and al-Baṣrah. His governor of al-Kūfah and [official] in charge of the police was al-Mughīrah b. Shu'bah and his governor of al-Baṣrah was Abū Mūsā al-Ash'ari.

282. See Ṭabarī, I, 2872ff.; Translation, XV, 78ff.



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(*Ta'rikh al-rusul wa'l-mulūk*)

VOLUME XII

The Battle of al-Qādisiyyah and the Conquest of Syria and Palestine

translated and annotated

by

Yohanan Friedmann

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

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The Introduction of the Pay System (ʿaṭā)⁷⁴⁷
and of the Military Register (diwān)⁷⁴⁸

In this year ʿUmar assigned payments to the Muslims and established the [military] registers. He determined the payments accord-

treasures can be found in the chapters of Muslim tradition dealing with the miraculous events expected to occur immediately before the Day of Judgment: "Earth will throw up oblong pieces of gold and silver, having the size of a column" (*ḥaṣṣu ʿal-ard ʿafādhā kabidihā amthāl al-ustuwān min al-dhahab wa al-ḥādih*). See Muslim, *Sahih*, II, 701 (*Kitāb al-zakāt, bāb 18:62*); Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, IV, 362 (*Kitāb al-ḥijāb, bāb 3:6:2209*). See also Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, s.v. *ih-q-i*, where *ʿafādh kabidihā* is glossed by *kunūz*. Although one should not read too much into this similarity, it is an indication of the tremendous impression that the newly acquired wealth made on the early Muslims.

741. For this meaning of *maʿkal*, pl. *maʿākil*, see Jawhārī, *Taj al-lughah*, III, 1365, who glosses *maʿkal* by *kaṣb*.

742. I am translating according to de Goeje's suggestion in *Glossary*, s.v. *qarmal-thabathā* instead of *banathā*.

743. The translation of this verse is tentative and uncertain.

744. Probably meaning letters that bear the news of victory.

745. While de Goeje's suggestion in *Glossary* [s.v. *sh-b-k*], on which my translation is based, is not very convincing, I am at present not able to provide a better one.

746. This is ʿUmar's kunyah; cf. Ibn al-Jawzī, *Manāqih*, 9.

747. See *EP*, s.v. "ʿAṭā" [Cl. Cahen].

748. See *EP*, s.v. "Diwān i" [A. A. Duri].

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ing to seniority [in Islam].⁷⁴⁹ He gave to Saḳwān b. Umayyah,⁷⁵⁰ al-Ḥārith b. Hishām,⁷⁵¹ and Suhayl b. 'Amr⁷⁵² with the people of the conquest (*ahl al-fatḥ*)⁷⁵³ less than what those who had preceded them received. They refused to accept it, saying: "We do not acknowledge that anybody is more noble than we are." 'Umar replied: "I have given to you according to your seniority in Islam, not according to your ancestral nobility." They said: "It is all right, then," and they accepted the payment. Al-Ḥārith and Suhayl left for Syria with their families and continued to wage *jihād* until they were killed in one of the frontier points there; but according to another tradition, they died in the plague of 'Amwās.⁷⁵⁴

749. Meaning that the payments were determined according to the date on which the person in question embraced the new religion: Those who joined Islam at the earliest date received the largest amount.

750. Saḳwān b. Umayyah was a prominent member of Quraysh. His father was killed in the battle of Badr, fighting on the side of the Meccans. Saḳwān also fought in skirmishes against the Muslims and embraced Islam only after the conquest of Mecca. He was given a share in the spoils of the battle of Hunayn and became one of the *mu'allafah qulūbuhum* "those whose hearts have been reconciled" (i.e., to Islam, by means of gifts). According to some traditions, Saḳwān participated in the battle of Yarmūk; according to others, there is no evidence that he ever took part in any battle on the side of the Muslims. He died in Shawwāl 36/March–April 657 [or in 41/661–62, or 42/662–63]. See Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqāt*, V, 332; and index; [1] Ibn al-Athir, *Uṣd*, III, 22–23; Ibn Hajar, *Isābah*, III, 432–34; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, IV, 424–25.

751. Al-Ḥārith b. Hishām was a prominent member of the Qurashi clan of Makhzūm. He fought against the Muslims in the battles of Badr and Uhūd. He embraced Islam after the conquest of Mecca, participated in the battle of Hunayn, and received a share in the spoils. Later he took part in the battles of Fihl and Ainādāyn against the Byzantines. According to some traditions, he was killed in the battle of Yarmūk; according to others, he died in the plague of 'Amwās in 18/639–40. See Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqāt*, V, 329; VII/ii, 126; [1] Ibn al-Athir, *Uṣd*, I, 351–52; Ibn Hajar, *Isābah*, I, 605–8 no. 1506; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, II, 161–62.

752. Suhayl b. 'Amr was a leading member of Quraysh. He fought against the Muslims in the battle of Badr, was taken prisoner, and was ransomed by his tribe. He was the person who negotiated the treaty of Hudaibiyyah with the Prophet. After the conquest of Mecca he switched sides; he took part in the battle of Hunayn on the side of the Prophet, though he was still a polytheist. He embraced Islam after this battle and became one of the *mu'allafah qulūbuhum*. After the Prophet's death he urged Quraysh to embrace Islam. Despite his late conversion, he became a pious and devout Muslim; he fought against the Byzantines in Syria and died in the plague of 'Amwās (or in the battle of Yarmūk). See Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqāt*, V, 335 and index; [1] Ibn al-Athir, *Uṣd*, II, 371–73; Ibn Hajar, *Isābah*, III, 212–15 no. 3575; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, IV, 264–5.

753. Those who embraced Islam only after the conquest of Mecca in 8/630 and did not join the Prophet in the earliest and most difficult period of his activity.

754. A notorious plague that struck Syria and Palestine in the year 18/639–40. See *Ep*, s.v. "'Amwās" (J. Sourdel-Thomine); Balādihuri, *Futūḥ*, 139; Donner, *Conquests*, 152.

When 'Umar intended to establish the military register, 'Ali and 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Awf⁷⁵⁵ said to him: "Begin with yourself!" He said: "No, I shall rather begin with the uncle of the messenger of God, then the next and the next."⁷⁵⁶ First he determined the share of al-'Abbās. Then he allotted to the participants in the battle of Badr⁷⁵⁷ five thousand [dirhams] each. Then he allotted to those [who embraced Islam] after the battle of Badr and till al-Hudaybiyyah⁷⁵⁸ four thousand each. Then he allotted to those [who embraced Islam] after al-Hudaybiyyah and up to the time when Abū Bakr finished the war with the people of apostasy (*ahl al-riḍāh*) three thousand each. Among them were those who participated in the conquest of Mecca, those who fought for Abū Bakr, and those who participated in the battles [of Iraq and Syria] before al-Qādisiyyah. All these received three thousand each. Then he allotted to the people of al-Qādisiyyah and to those who fought in Syria [after the battle of al-Qādisiyyah] two thousand each. To the people of outstanding bravery from among them he allotted two thousand and five hundred each. It was said to him: "Would you make the people of al-Qādisiyyah equal to those who had fought in the previous battles?"⁷⁵⁹ He replied: "I am not in a position to make them equal with those whose rank they had not attained." It was also said to him: "But you have already made those who live far [from the battlefield] equal to those who live close and fought in defense of their homes." He replied: "Those who live close deserve more because they provided assistance in pursuit and constituted an obstruction for the enemy. And did the Emigrants not say the same when we made them equal with the Helpers? The assistance provided by the Helpers was near their homes, and the Emigrants came to them from far away."

'Umar allotted to those [who embraced Islam and joined the Muslim army] after al-Qādisiyyah and al-Yarmūk⁷⁶⁰ one thousand [dirhams] each. Then he allotted to the second group of latecomers⁷⁶¹

755. See note 4, above.

756. In kinship with the Prophet.

757. The first and victorious battle of the Prophet against the Meccans in 2/634. See *Ep*, s.v. "Badr" [W. Montgomery Watt].

758. A famous treaty that the Prophet concluded with the Meccans in 6/628. See *Ep*, s.v. "al-Hudaybiyya" [W. Montgomery Watt].

759. See p. 2343, above.

760. For the battle of Yarmūk, see Donner, *Conquests*, 129ff.

761. *Rawādīf*, sg. *rādīfah*. For a discussion of this concept, see Donner, *Conquests*, 231ff.

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five hundred each; and to the third group⁷⁶³ three hundred each. Members of each group received equal payment, whether they were strong or weak, Arabs or non-Arabs. To the fourth group he allotted two hundred and fifty dirhams. He allotted to those who came after them, i.e., the people of Hajar⁷⁶⁴ and the Christians of al-Hīrah (al-'Ibād).⁷⁶⁵ He made four persons who had not participated in the battle of Badr equal to the participants: al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn,⁷⁶⁶ Abū Dharr,⁷⁶⁶ and Saīman. He allotted to al-'Abās twenty-five thousand dirhams, but according to another tradition, twelve thousand.

He gave to the wives of the Prophet ten thousand dirhams each, except those who were slave girls.⁷⁶⁷ The Prophet's wives said: "The Prophet did not prefer us to them in the division of his time; make us all equal!"⁷⁶⁸ 'Umar agreed. He gave 'Ā'ishah two thousand dirhams more than to the others because the Prophet loved her,⁷⁶⁹ but she did not accept that. He allotted to the wives of the participants in the battle of Badr five hundred dirhams each, to the wives of those who came after them, till al-Ḥudaybiyyah, four hundred each; to the wives of those who came after them, till the battles of Iraq and Syria,

762. Omitting *ba'dahum* "who came after them."

763. Hajar was a town in Bahrain, in eastern Arabia. See *EP*, s.v. "Hajar" (Fr. Buhl); *EP*, s.v. "al-Ḥasā" (Fr. S. Vidal). For the emigration from Hajar to Iraq, see *EP*, s.v. "Abd al-Kays" (W. Caskell; Morony, *Iraq*, 241).

764. Presumably after they embraced Islam. For another interpretation of *al-'ibād*, see Donner, *Conquests*, 233 n. 65.

765. Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn were the sons of Fāṭimah and 'Alī b. Abī Tālib and grandsons of the Prophet.

766. Abū Dharr al-Chifārī was a Companion of the Prophet and is considered in the tradition to be one of the first believers. See *EP*, s.v. "Abū Dharr" (J. Robson).

767. *Man jarā 'alayhā al-milk* has to be understood in light of Qur'an 4:4: "Marry such women as seem good to you, two, three, four—but, if you fear you will not be equitable, then only one or what your right hand owns" (*aw man malakat aymanukum*). This phrase is normally understood as a reference to slave girls taken captive in war. Balādhurī (*Furūḥ*, 455) records a tradition according to which 'Umar allotted to luwayriyyah (bt. al-Hārith) and Safiyyah bt. Ḥuyayy b. Akhtab only 6,000 dirhams (as against 12,000 for the free wives) because they were "part of the booty that God had restored to His prophet" (*mimmā a'ā'a Allāh 'alā rasūlihī*). Cf. Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, VIII, 83 l. 22, 153 l. 14, 158 l. 3, where these and other slave girls whom the Prophet married are described in similar terms.

768. The question of how the Prophet divided his time among his wives is discussed in Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, VIII, 121–24.

769. Cf. Balādhurī, *Furūḥ*, 454; on the Prophet's relationship with 'Ā'ishah, see Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, VIII, 39ff.

The Events of the Year 15

three hundred each; to the wives of the people of al-Qādisiyyah two hundred each. He made the women after that equal, and he allotted to the boys one hundred dirhams each, equally.⁷⁷⁰ Then he gathered sixty poor people and gave them bread to eat; they calculated what they ate and found that it was more than two *jarības*.⁷⁷¹ 'Umar allotted to each of them and to his family two *jarības* per month. 'Umar said before his death: "I planned to make the payments four thousand dirhams each: a man would give one thousand to his family; one thousand he would take with him [while traveling]; for one thousand he would equip himself;⁷⁷² and for one thousand he would equip his home (*yataraffaqu bihā*)."⁷⁷³ But 'Umar died before he could implement this.

Abū Ja'far al-Ṭabarī has said: According to al-Sarī — Shu'ayb — Sayf — Muḥammad, Ṭalḥah, al-Muhallab, Ziyād, Mujālid, and 'Amr — al-Sha'bī; and Ismā'īl — al-Ḥasan and Abū Damrah — 'Abdallāh b. al-Mustawrid — Muḥammad b. Sirin and Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd — Sa'īd b. al-Musayyab and al-Mustanir b. Yazīd — Ibrāhīm and Zuhrah — Abū Salamah: When 'Umar allotted the payments, he allotted them to the people entitled to share in the immovable booty (*ahl al-ḥay'*) to whom God had restored it. These were the people of al-Madā'in who moved to al-Kūfah, al-Baṣrah, Damascus, Hims, Jordan, Palestine, and Egypt. He said: "The booty belongs to the people of the newly established garrison towns (*amṣār*) and to those who joined them, gave them assistance and stayed with them. It was not allotted to others. Is it not true that the cities and the villages were populated by them, that the peace treaties were administered by them, the poll tax was paid to them, that they made the frontier safe and that they subdued the enemy?" Then 'Umar wrote a letter instructing that the payments be given to those who were entitled to them in one sum, in the year 15/636–37. Somebody said: "O Commander of the Faithful, would you leave in the treasury provisions for some [unexpected] eventuality?" 'Umar said: "This is a sentence which Satan

770. Probably meaning that the allotment for the boys was determined without regard to the time when their fathers had embraced Islam and joined the Muslim army.

771. See Hinz, *Masse*, 38.

772. Presumably with military equipment.

773. Cf. Balādhurī, *Furūḥ*, 451, where the 4,000 dirhams are divided as follows: for traveling, for weapons, for the family, and for the horse and the shoes.

\$5000
al-Hajar = \$25,000

Qādisiyyah seems to be a waterless summit.

203

[2414]

1318
hand
land

al-Kays is from Hajar but came here as a name for Badr

Muslim & women

threw into your mouth. May God protect me from its wickedness! It would be a temptation to those who will come after me. Nay, I shall prepare for them"⁷⁷⁴ what God and His Messenger have commanded us [to prepare]: obedience to God and to His Messenger. These are our provisions, and by virtue of these we attained to what you see. If this money is the price of your religion, you will perish."⁷⁷⁵

According to al-Sarī — Shu'ayb — Sayf — Muḥammad, al-Muḥalab, Talḥah, 'Amr, and Sa'īd: When God granted victory to the Muslims, Rustam was killed, and the news of the victory in Syria reached 'Umar, he assembled the Muslims and said: "How much of this property can the leader legally keep?" All of them said:

As for his private needs, his livelihood, and the livelihood of his family, neither more nor less; their garments and his garments for the winter and the summer; two riding beasts for his *jihād*, for attending to his needs, and for carrying him to his pilgrimage (*ḥajj*) and to his *'umrah*. Equitable distribution means giving to the valiant people according to their bravery. He will put the people's affairs right, and he will take care of the people at the time of misfortunes and calamities, until these are over. He will deal with those entitled to the immovable booty"⁷⁷⁶ first.

According to al-Sarī — Shu'ayb — Sayf — Muḥammad — 'Ubaydalāh b. 'Umar: When 'Umar received the news about the conquest of al-Qādisiyyah and Damascus, he assembled the people in Medina and said: "I was formerly a merchant, and God provided sufficiently for my family by means of my commerce. Now you have made me preoccupied with your affair. What do you think, how much of this property can I legally keep?" The people suggested a large amount, while 'Alī (b. Abī Ṭālib) remained silent. 'Umar said: "What do you say, O 'Alī?", and 'Alī replied, "[You can have] what will keep you and your family in a moderately good condition,"⁷⁷⁷ but you have no right to this property beyond that." The people said: "The [right] words are the words of Ibn Abī Ṭālib."

774. Meaning his successors in the leadership of the community.

775. If your religion is so weak that it depends on leaving this money in the treasury, you will perish.

776. *al-ḥalāl al-ḥayr*, meaning the warriors who seized enemy property in battle.

777. Cf. Tabarī, I, 2142-43, where Abū Bakr's income is discussed in similar terms.

According to al-Sarī — Shu'ayb — Sayf — Muḥammad — 'Ubaydalāh — Nāfi' — Aslam: A man approached 'Umar b. al-Khattāb and said: "How much of this property can you legally keep?" 'Umar replied: "What will keep me in a moderately good condition: a garment for the summer and a garment for the winter, a riding beast to take 'Umar for his pilgrimage and the *'umrah*, and a riding beast for his needs and his *jihād*."⁷⁷⁸

According to al-Sarī — Shu'ayb — Sayf — Mubashshir b. al-Fudayl — Sālim b. 'Abdallāh: When 'Umar assumed power, he was receiving the living allowance which had been allotted to Abū Bakr. He lived in this condition, but his needs kept increasing. A group of Emigrants, which included 'Uthmān, 'Alī, Talḥah, and al-Zubayr got together, and al-Zubayr said: "We should speak to 'Umar about increasing his income." 'Alī said: "We have wanted to do it before. Let us go." 'Uthmān said: "This is 'Umar."⁷⁷⁹ Let us try hard to find out what he really thinks. Let us go to Ḥafṣah⁷⁸⁰ and ask her in confidence." They entered into her presence and ordered her to inform 'Umar [of the proposal] in the name of the group, but not to identify anyone of them to 'Umar until he should agree. Then they left the house. Ḥafṣah met 'Umar concerning this matter and discerned anger in his face. He said: "Who are they?" She said: "You have no way to know it before I know what you think." 'Umar said: "If I knew who they were, I would harm them. You stand between me and them. I implore you by God, what was the best garment which the Messenger of God acquired for himself in your house?" Ḥafṣah said: "Two dyed garments in which he used to meet delegations"⁷⁸¹ and deliver sermons to the assembled people." 'Umar said: "And what was the most sumptuous food which he received in your house?" She said: "We baked barley bread. While it was hot, we poured over it [the contents of] the humblest skin,⁷⁸² and we made it soft and

778. The tradition shifts from direct speech by 'Umar to wording in which 'Umar is referred to in the third person.

779. Meaning, probably, that, in view of 'Umar's austere way of life, one cannot speak to him directly about the proposed increase.

780. Ḥafṣah was the daughter of 'Umar and one of the wives of the Prophet. See Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, VIII, 56-60.

781. The reference is to delegations of tribal groups that came to meet the Prophet and embrace Islam, especially in the year 9/630-31, which came to be known as 'year of the delegations', *sanat al-wafūd*.

782. *Ukkah ṣa-ṣa-ṣa*, skin used to hold clarified butter or honey. See Ibn Mianzūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, s.v. 'k-k.

fatty. He tasted it and found it good." 'Umar said: "And what blanket which he used to spread in your house was the softest?" Ḥafṣah said: "We had a coarse cover which we used to spread in the summer and put under us. When winter came, we spread half of it, and covered ourselves with the other half." 'Umar said:

O Ḥafṣah, tell them on my behalf that the Messenger of God was frugal, put the surplus in its proper place, and contented himself with the bare necessities. By God, I am (also) frugal; I shall put the surplus in its proper place and shall content myself with the bare necessities. I and my two companions⁷⁸³ are like three men who traveled on a road. The first one set out, took his provisions, and reached his destination. The second one followed him, traveled the same road, and reached him. Then the third one went in his footsteps. If he sticks to their road and is content with their provisions, he will reach them and be in their company; but if he travels another road, he will not [be able to] join them.

According to al-Sarī — Shu'ayb — Sayf — 'Atiyah — his companions and al-Daḥḥāk — Ibn 'Abbās: When al-Qāḍisiyyah was conquered and certain people of the sawād entered into peace agreements, and when Damascus was conquered and the people of Damascus entered into peace agreements, 'Umar said to the Muslims: "Assemble and let me know your views on the spoils which God has restored to those who fought in al-Qāḍisiyyah and in Syria." 'Umar and 'Alī agreed to follow the Qur'an and said: "'Whatever God has given to His Messenger from the people of the cities' (meaning the fifth) 'belongs to God and His Messenger' ... *li-Allāhi wa-li-al-rasūli* means *ilā Allāhi wa-ilā al-rasūli*; this means that God commands and the messenger is obliged to divide [the spoils] ... and to the near kinsman, the orphans, the needy [and the traveler, so that it may not be a thing taken in turns among the rich of you ...]'"⁷⁸⁴ Then they interpreted this in the light of the verse that follows: "It is for the poor Emigrants [who were expelled from their habitations and their possessions, seeking bounty from God and good pleasure]."⁷⁸⁵ They took the four-fifths [and divided them] in

783. Meaning the Prophet and Abū Bakr, the first caliph.

784. Qur'an 59:7.

785. For interpretations of these verses, see Tabarī, *Ta'sir*, XXVIII, 25.

Handwritten notes in Arabic script: "بعض ما كان في بيتهم من الثياب والبطون..."

[2418]

the same way as the fifth had been divided among those who received it in the first three divisions. The four-fifths belong to those to whom God gave the spoils. They found proof of this in the verse "Know that, whatever booty you take, the fifth of it is God's and the messenger's."⁷⁸⁶ The [four] fifths were divided according to this. 'Umar and 'Alī agreed upon this and the Muslims after them implemented it [as well]. 'Umar began with the Emigrants, then with the Helpers, then with those who followed them, and with those who participated with them in battles and helped them.

'Umar then allotted the stipends from the poll tax which was imposed on those who entered [willingly] into peace agreements or were called upon to do so. The poll tax was restored to the Muslims in moderate sums. The poll tax is not to be divided into fifths. It belongs to those who protect the *ahī al-ahimmah*, fulfill the obligations toward them, and to those who join them and assist them, unless they willingly share the surplus [of the poll tax] with others who were not eligible to receive from it what they themselves had received.

Al-Tabarī has said: In this year, meaning the year 15/636 — 37, there were battles according to the report of Sayf b. 'Umar. According to the report of Ibn Ishāq, this was in the year 16. We have already mentioned the account of this on his authority. The report of al-Wāqidi is the same.

786. Qur'an 8:42.

Handwritten note: "movable spoils are divided among all according to certain rules."

Handwritten note: "Poll-tax goes to those who protect the frontiers) who"

Handwritten note: "protected the Dhimmī; also, an allocation - of immovable spoils goes to them."

8.0
Introductory statement

8. Wed Oct 11 The early Caliphate and the first civil war
- 8.1 Extracts on the early Caliphate
 - 8.2 The contestants abandon the Hijaz
 - 8.3 The Battle of the Camel
 - 8.4 The appeal to scripture
 - 8.5 Romance and assassination

For the outline of events, you can go back to the last part of Lewis, chapter 3. Reading 8.1 gives you an outline chronology, followed by extracts bearing on the character of the Islamic state prior to the first civil war, and a couple which invite you to compare the Arabs and the Germans as conquerors of the world of late antiquity (the Arabs in the east, the Germans in the west).

The rest of the readings are concerned entirely with the first civil war. All are taken from Tabari. They give you close-ups of some of the key trends and events of the period as recorded in later Arabic historical writing. The first thing you need to do is to locate each extract in terms of the story as outlined by Lewis (for Reading 8.2, see Lewis p. 61; for Reading 8.3, see Lewis, pp. 61-2; for Reading 8.4, see Lewis, p. 63; for Reading 8.5, see Lewis, p. 64). Your task is then to pick out the significant historical points from these often engaging and poignant narratives. And again, consider what, if anything, looks like it might not be true.

8.1
Extracts on the early Caliphate

(1) Outline chronology

I. Broad chronology

632-56	political unity
656-61	first civil war
661-	restored political unity

II. The reigns of the Orthodox (or Patriarchal) Caliphs

632-4	Abu Bakr
634-44	'Umar
644-56	'Uthman
656-61	'Ali

III. The first civil war

656	killing of 'Uthman by Egyptians
656	succession dispute in Hijaz ('Ali vs Talha etc.)
656	X Camel ('Ali defeats Talha etc.)
657	X Siffin ('Ali doesn't defeat Mu'awiya)
658	X Nahrawan ('Ali defeats the Kharijites)
661	killing of 'Ali by a Kharijite

(2) Extracts

A. The character of the central government in Medina

1. "O believers, raise not your voices above the Prophet's voice, and be not loud in your speech to him, as you are loud to one another."

(Koran 49:2)

2. [The Caliph Abu Bakr:] "Obey me as long as I obey God among you, and when I disobey, don't obey me. You have no duty of obedience to me in anything I command you which entails disobedience [to God]."

(Maliki, Riyad, 395.1) | ?

3. "Mutarrif transmitted from Malik that he said: There was no prison and no guards in the time of the Messenger of God, nor in that of Abu Bakr and 'Umar; the first to establish them was Mu'awiya."

('Abd al-Malik ibn Habib, Ta'rikh, no. 343) | *

4. "Then 'Uthman enlarged and expanded the mosque [in Medina]. Some people sold him [the extra land], but others refused and shouted at him. He ordered them to be sent to prison, saying 'Umar used to do this to you and you didn't make this fuss.'"

(ibid., no. 317)

B. The introduction of the Hijri calendar

1. "Waqidi said: In this year [15 A.H. = A.D. 636] 'Umar started recording the year, after he had ruled for two-and-a-half years. This was because previously the Arabs had not recorded the years according to any particular system. They would date things with reference to a drought or some such event. Then came the incident of the elephant, and they would date from that, then came the building of the Ka'ba; so the Arabs continued in this way till the time of 'Umar, who conquered the lands of the non-Arabs, established registers, collected taxes, and allocated stipends."

(ibid., no. 290)

2. "Umayya ibn Khalid al-Azdi related to us that Qurra al-Dawsi related from Muhammad ibn Sirin, who said: A man came up to 'Umar ibn al-Khattab and said: 'You should date things'. 'Umar replied: 'How do you mean "date"?' The man said: 'It's something the non-Arabs do—they write "month this of year that".' 'Umar answered: 'That sounds good. Do it.' Then he said: 'What year shall we start from?' Some said 'from the calling of the Prophet'; others said: 'from his death'. Then they settled on the hijra."

(ibid., no. 291)

C. The central government and provincial taxation

1. "The people of Medina should not take stipends, for this wealth [of Egypt] is for those who fought for it and for these old men from among the Companions of the Messenger of God."
- * | (Hinds, "Murder", 457)
2. "When Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr was killed in Egypt, 'Amr ibn al-'As seized control of it and Mu'awiya's cause prevailed. But 'Amr sent nothing from Egypt to Mu'awiya. Mu'awiya's people used to ask him to write to 'Amr about the gifts of Egypt, and he used to answer, 'Amr is a willful, greedy, grasping man; therefore excuse me from writing to him. You can write to him'—and they used to write to him, and he did not send them anything."

(Lewis, Islam, 2:22)

3. "When 'Umar conquered the Sawad and Ahwaz, the Muslims advised him to divide up the Sawad, and the people of Ahwaz, and the cities which had been conquered. 'Umar then replied, "What will remain then for those Muslims who are yet to come?" And so he left the land with its inhabitants, and imposed the jizya upon them, and took the kharaaj from the land."

(Abu Yusuf, Kharaaj, 28, in Bonner handout)

D. A comparison: the Germans

1. "On matters of minor importance only the chiefs debate; on major affairs, the whole community... Except in case of accident or emergency, they assemble on certain particular days.... It is a drawback of their independent spirit that they do not take a summons as a command: instead of coming to a meeting all together, they waste two or three days by their unpunctuality. When the assembled crowd thinks fit, they take their seats fully armed. Silence is then commanded by the priests, who on such occasions have power to enforce obedience. Then such hearing is given to the king or state-chief as his age, rank, military distinction or eloquence can secure—more because his advice carries weight than because he has the power to command. If a proposal displeases them, the people shout their dissent; if they approve, they clash their spears.

(Tacitus (writing A.D. 98), Germania, §11)

2. "For I have myself, while at the town of Bethlehem in Palestine, heard a certain man of Narbo [Narbonne in southern France], who had served with distinction under Theodosius and who also was a pious, sensible and serious person, tell the blessed priest Jerome that he himself had been a very intimate friend of Athaulf [Visigothic ruler 410-15] at Narbo, and that he had often heard what the latter, when in good spirits, health and temper, was accustomed to answer in reply to questions. It seems that at first he ardently desired to blot out the Roman name and to make all the Roman territory a Gothic empire in fact as well as in name, so that, to use the popular expressions, Gothia should take the place of Romania, and he, Athaulf, should become all that Caesar Augustus had once been. Having discovered from long experience that the Goths, because of their unbridled barbarism, were utterly incapable of obeying laws, and yet believing that the state ought not to be deprived of laws without which a state is not a state, he chose to seek for himself at least the glory of restoring and increasing the renown of the Roman name by the power of the Goths, wishing to be looked upon by posterity as the restorer of the Roman Empire, since he could not be its transformer. On this account he strove to refrain from war and to promote peace.

He was helped especially by his wife, Placidia [captive sister of the Roman emperor], who was a woman of the keenest intelligence and of exceptional piety; by her persuasion and advice he was guided in all measures leading to good government."

(Orosius, History against the pagans, trans. Raymond, 396)





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The History of al-Ṭabarī

(*Tārīkh al-rusul wa'l-mulūk*)

VOLUME XVI

The Community Divided

translated and annotated
 by

Adrian Brockett

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'Ali Leaves for al-Rabadhah³²¹ on His Way to al-Baṣrah

According to al-Sarī—Shu'ayb—Sayf—Sahl b. Yūsuf—al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad: News about Talḥah and al-Zubayr and the Mother of the Believers reached 'Alī, so he appointed 'ammām b. al-'Abbās³²² over Medina and sent Qutham b. al-'Abbās to Mecca. He then set out, hoping to intercept them on the road and intending to block their path. At al-Rabadhah, however, it became clear to him from news brought by 'Atā' b. Ri'āb, *mawlā* of al-Ḥarith b. Ḥaẓn,³²³ that they had passed by ahead of him.

According to al-Sarī—Shu'ayb—Sayf—Muḥammad and Talḥah: 'Alī was in Medina when he heard the news of their decision to leave [Mecca] for al-Baṣrah and of what Talḥah, al-Zubayr, 'A'ishah, and their followers had all decided upon. On hearing about 'A'ishah's speech,³²⁴ 'Alī set out against them in haste with the troops he had been mustering to go to Syria.³²⁵ He was also joined by those Kūfāns and Baṣrans who were active and quickly equipped, totaling 700. 'Alī's plan was to catch up with them and stop them leaving. Just then 'Abdallāh b. Salām³²⁶ met him and took hold of his reins, warning: "Don't leave Medina,³²⁷ Commander of the Faithful! By Allāh! If you do, neither you nor rule over the Muslims will ever return here again." Those there began swearing at him, but 'Alī said: "Leave him alone! He's a good man and a Companion of Muḥammad." 'Alī nevertheless set off, but on reaching al-Rabadhah he heard that they had passed through ahead of him, so he ordered a halt at al-Rabadhah to confer.

321. Within three days of Medina on the road to Mecca [Yāqūt, III, 24]; it was the burial place of Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī.

322. Caskel and Strenziok, I, 6, II, 544.

323. Ibn Bujayr al-'Amirī [Caskel and Strenziok, I, 110, II, 107].

324. To the pilgrims in Mecca.

325. To confront Mu'āwiyah.

326. Following Ibrāhīm and Addanda, DCXXXI. He was the famous Jewish convert to Islam. The text has Sa'llām.

327. See Addanda, DCXXXI on p. 33, above.

Handwritten notes in the left margin:

Handwritten notes in the right margin:

According to al-Sarī—Shu'ayb—Sayf—Khālid b. Mihrān al-Bajālī—Marwān b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥumaysī³²⁸—Tāriq b. Shihāb.³²⁹ We had left al-Kūfah on the 'umrah pilgrimage when we heard of the killing of 'Uthmān. When we got to al-Rabadhah in the early dawn we encountered troops, some of them urging³³⁰ each other on. "What's going on?" I asked. "It's the Commander of the Faithful," they replied. "What's happened to him?" Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr have got the better of him, so he has come out to block their way and force them back. But he now hears that they have gone on ahead of him, so he wants to pursue them farther. "We belong to Allāh, and to Him we return,"³³¹ I replied. "Either I join 'Alī and fight these two men and the Mother of the Faithful, or else I disobey him. What a sorry state of affairs!" So I went and joined him. The prayer was performed before dawn, with 'Alī praying out front. Then, when he had completed it, his son al-Ḥasan came up to him, sat down, and said, "I gave you orders, but you disobeyed me, so tomorrow you will be killed in a place of destruction³³² with no one to help you." So 'Alī said to him: "You do go on whimpering like a little girl!³³³ What orders did you give me that I disobeyed?" "When 'Uthmān was besieged," he replied, "I commanded you to leave Medina so that when he was killed you wouldn't be present. Then the day he got killed I commanded you not to take on the allegiance until the delegations from the garrison cities and the Arab tribesmen and every area's allegiance had come to you. Then, when these two men³³⁴ did what they did, I commanded you to stay at home until they had got their settlement.³³⁵ If things then went badly wrong, it would clearly

328. Ibrāhīm has al-Khumaysī.

329. Ibn 'Abd Shams of Bajilāh (Caskel and Strenziok, I, 223, II, 557).

330. Following Ibrāhīm's *yaḥdū* for the text's *yaḥdū*.

331. Qur'ān 2:151. Said when faced with a catastrophe, like the choice here.

332. I.e. in battle. Reading *bi-madī'a* with Ibrāhīm. Addenda DCXXXII, and Wellhausen, 159. This could also mean "a desolate place," which might fit the following phrase better. The text has *bi-masba'ah* "in arrogance." IA, 222 n. 1. has *bi-mā'siya* "in disobedience/sin," which is extremely derogatory, but it fits al-Ḥasan's *amartuk la-akaytani*. Cf. note 349, below; for other instances of these words used of subordinates to their superiors, see p. 194, below.333. *Tabinn hanin al-jāriyah*. Ibrāhīm follows IA and has *takhinn khanin* . . .

"sniveling." The same applies to p. 51, below.

334. Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr.

335. *Hattā yastaliḥu*. They had been calling for *islāh*.

have been others' doing. But you disobeyed me in all this." 'Alī replied, "All right, dear boy, as for your words, 'If only you had left Medina when 'Uthmān was besieged,' by Allāh! We were under siege no less than he! Then, as for your words 'Do not take on the allegiance until allegiance from the garrison cities comes,' the choice of ruler belonged to the people of Medina, and we didn't want to destroy that tradition. Then, as for your words when Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr left,' the whole Muslim community was facing weakness. By Allāh! Since I became caliph things have continually gone against me and diminished me, and I never attain anything I should. Then, as for your words 'Sit at home,' how then could I fulfill my responsibilities? What do you want me to be? Do you want me to be like the hycna that gets surrounded and calls *dabābi dabābi*³³⁶ until its hocks are untied³³⁷ and it is forced to come out? This is no situation for me to be in. If I don't look after my responsibilities and concerns in this question, then who will? So that's enough, dear boy."

The Buying of the Camel for 'A'ishah and the Report about the Dogs of al-Ḥaw'ab³³⁸

According to Ismā'il b. Mūsā al-Fazārī—'Alī b. 'Abis al-Azraq—Abū al-Khaṭṭāb al-Hajārī—Ṣafwān b. Qabiṣah al-Aḥmasī—al-'Urani, the owner of the Camel.³³⁹ I was traveling on my camel one day when a rider appeared in front of me. "Owner of the camel," he asked, "will you sell your camel?" "Yes," I replied. "For how much?" "A thousand dirhams."³⁴⁰ "You must be mad," he said. "Can a camel cost a thousand dirhams?" "Yes, this Camel of mine." "How so?" "I've never gone after anyone on him," I replied, "without catching up with him, and no one has ever³⁴¹

336. Said to be the sound by which a hyena is enticed from its lair; see *Glossarium*, CCLXXV, as also for a dismissal of the view that it should rather be *zabābi zabābi*, as in *Addenda*, DCXXXII. See also lane, 1208b

337. After capture.

338. A watering place of Abū Bakr b. Kilāb on the Hijāz-Rasrah road [Yāqūt, II, 314].

339. IA, 210, 222.

340. In 20/641 the top annual stipends for various grades of Muḥaurin and Ansār were only 3,000 to 5,000 dirhams (Hinds, "Kufan Alignments," 149).

341. Ibrāhīm omits *qatt*.

come after me when I was on him without my escaping them." "If you knew whom we wanted him for," he replied, "you'd give us a better deal." "So whom do you need him for?" I asked. "For your mother." "But I left my mother sitting in her tent, not wanting to go anywhere." "I want it for the Mother of the Faithful, 'Ā'ishah, that's who." "He's yours, then. Take him for nothing!" "No, no! Come back with us to where we're camped," he replied, "and we'll give you a Mahriyyah she-camel!³⁴² and some dirhams as well."

So I went back, and they gave me a Mahriyyah she-camel of hers and 400—or was it 600?—dirhams as well. He then asked me, "Brother of 'Uraynah, can you guide the way?"³⁴³ "Certainly! Better than most," I replied. "Come with us then!" So I went with them. Every time I passed by a valley or a watering place they questioned me about it, until we came late one evening to the water of al-Haw'ab and the dogs there barked at us. "What water is this?" they asked. "The water of al-Haw'ab," I replied. At this 'Ā'ishah shrieked at the top of her voice and hit the upper foreleg of her camel to make it kneel down. "By Allāh!" she said. "I'm the one the dogs of al-Haw'ab have barked at night at!³⁴⁴ Take me back!" She said this three times. She then made her camel kneel, and so did everyone else around her; they remained like this with her, refusing to move for a full twenty-four hours. Ibn al-Zubayr then came up to her and said: "Escape! Escape! 'Ali b. Abi Tālib is upon you, by Allāh!" So they saddled up and insulted me.³⁴⁵ So I went a different way.

I had not gone far before I came upon 'Ali and about 300 riders with him. "Rider!" 'Ali called out to me, so I went up to him. "Where did you come upon the howdah?" he asked. "In such and such a place," I replied, "and this is her she-camel. I sold them my male." "She rode him then, did she?"³⁴⁶ "She did," I replied, "and I accompanied them until we got to the water of al-Haw'ab,

342. I.e., from Mahra in 'Umān. Mahriyyah camels were famous for their speed and intelligence (Lane, 2740b).

343. *De'ilālah* is not just knowledge of a route—but also of its tribal agreements.

344. See p. 68, below; Abbott, *A'ishah*, 143–44.

345. Implying that al-'Urayn had told them a lie; see p. 68, below, where Ibn al-Zubayr makes it explicit.

346. Indicating that she was on the warpath (Abbott, "Women").

whereupon the dogs there barked at her and she said these words. So when I saw their confusion, I turned and left, and they moved off. "Can you guide us to Dhū Qār?" asked 'Ali. "I could be the best guide around." "Come with us then!" said 'Ali. So we traveled until we stopped at Dhū Qār. 'Ali b. Abi Tālib asked for two saddlebags; they were joined together, and a camel saddle was brought and put on top of them. He then walked up, got up on it, and let both his legs down on one side. He then praised and magnified Allāh and prayed for blessings upon Muḥammad and said to those present, "You have seen what these people and this woman have done!" Just then al-Ḥasan³⁴⁷ came up in front of him, crying. "Here you come whimpering³⁴⁸ like a little girl!" 'Ali said to him. "Yes indeed!" replied al-Ḥasan. "I gave you orders, but you disobeyed me, so today you will be killed in a place of destruction³⁴⁹ with no one to help you." "Tell the men what you commanded me to do!" said 'Ali. "When the people went to 'Uthmān I commanded you not to receive allegiance until the Arabs had amassed,³⁵⁰ for they would never make a major decision without you. But you didn't obey me. Then, when this woman set off and her followers did what they did, I commanded you to stay in Medina and to send for those of your followers who would comply with you." "By Allāh! Yes, he did say all that! But my little son! I'm not one to be like the hyena listening for the sound of a falling stone.³⁵¹ The Prophet died, and I saw no one more fit for the command than I, but the people gave allegiance to Abū Bakr, so I followed suit. Then Abū Bakr passed away, and I saw no one more fit for the command than I. But the people gave allegiance to 'Umar b. al-Khattāb, so I followed suit. Then 'Umar passed away, and I saw no one more fit for the command than I. But they made me just one of six votes, and the people gave allegiance to 'Uthmān. Again, I followed suit. The people then came to 'Uthman and killed him. Then they came to me and gave

347. His son.

348. See p. 48, above.

349. I.e., in battle. Reading *bi-madī'a* with Ibrāhīm for the text's *bi-maṣṣha'ah*, "in arrogance," see note 332, above.

350. Cf. p. 45, above.

351. "I'm not going to be duped"; see Ibn Manẓūr, XVI, f. 17; Ibn Abi al-Hādīd, I, 223–25; Guillaume, 732, n. 301; p. 49, above.

52 The Caliphate of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭalīb

me allegiance obediently and voluntarily. I will therefore fight whoever opposes me with those who follow me "until Allāh judges between me and them. He is the best judge."³⁵²



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The History of al-Ṭabarī
(Ṭā'rikh al-rusul wa'l-mulūk)

VOLUME XVI

The Community Divided

translated and annotated
 by

Adrian Brockett

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they got up, unnoticed by those nearby, and slipped out on their mission in the dark. Their Mudar went to⁸⁰⁵ their Mudar, their Rabī'ah to their Rabī'ah, their Yamaniyyah to their Yamaniyyah and began using their weapons [against them]. So the Basrans rose up, and so did each fighting group against those of their fellows who had launched a surprise attack against them.⁸⁰⁶

Al-Zubayr and Talḥah then came out with the chiefs of Mudar and sent 'Abd al-Rahmān b. al-Hārith b. Hishām⁸⁰⁷ to lead the right flank [who were Rabī'ah] and sent 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Atrāb b. Asīd⁸⁰⁸ to the left flank, themselves remaining in the center, and asked,⁸⁰⁹ "What is all this?" "The Kūfāns came upon us at night" was the reply. At this they said, "We knew that 'Ali wouldn't stop until he had spilled blood and desecrated what is sacred and that he would never come to an agreement with us." The two of them then returned with the Basrans, who repelled those Kūfāns⁸¹⁰ [who had launched the surprise attack] and forced them back to their camp. 'Ali and the Kūfāns heard the noise. A man had been placed⁸¹¹ near 'Ali to tell him what they wanted him to hear. So when he asked, "What's going on?" this man replied: "A force of theirs made a surprise attack on us at night, but we sent them back to where they came from. We then found them ready for battle, and they began attacking, so everyone rose up to fight." 'Ali then said to the commander of the right wing of his army, "Engage the right flank!" and to the commander of the left wing: "Engage the left flank! I knew⁸¹² that Talḥah and al-Zubayr wouldn't stop until they had spilled blood and desecrated what is sacred and that they would never come to an agreement with us and that the Saba'iyyah would not cease causing trou-

805. Caetani, IX, 178.

806. *Bahatūhum*, mistranslated by Lau (108), as "had lied to them."

807. From Quraysh; see Caskel and Strenziok, I, 23, II, 129.

808. From Quraysh; killed in the Battle of the Camel; see Caskel and Strenziok, I, 8, II, 128.

809. *Qāḍī*: Ibrāhīm's *qāla* is a misprint.

810. Following IA, 232.

811. By the attackers. According to IA, 232, by the Saba'iyyah, and to Caetani, IX, 179, by 'Uthmān's murderers. That the troublemakers were the Saba'iyyah is not specified in this report from Sayf until 'Ali's remark, which looks like an interpolation; see note 813.

812. Following the text's *'alimtu* for Ibrāhīm's *'alimta*.

✠ The Battle

According to al-Saḍī (in writing)—Shu'ayb—Sayf—Muḥammad and Talḥah: At dusk 'Ali sent 'Abdallāh b. 'Abbās to Talḥah and al-Zubayr, and at the same time they sent Muḥammad b. Talḥah to 'Ali with the advice that each side should talk with its followers, and they agreed. So that evening—in Jumādā II—Talḥah and al-Zubayr sent a message to the chiefs of their followers, and 'Ali did so to his, apart from those who had rebelled against 'Uthmān. So when they retired to bed there was peace. They slept that night as they never had before, because they were free from what they were on the point of and because they had withdrawn from the demands and plans that some of them had been making.⁸⁰³

But those who had stirred up the question of 'Uthmān spent the worst night of their lives, for they were on the verge of destruction.⁸⁰⁴ All night they were busy in discussion until they decided secretly to open hostilities. They kept it secret for fear that their evil machinations would be found out. Before dawn the next day

801. Cf. Conrad.

802. Ibrāhīm has *man* for the text's *min*.

803. Lau, 108.

804. Peace would lead to their being brought to justice.

blic.⁸¹³ 'Alī then shouted out to the people: "Hold back! It's nothing!"

Now it had been their unanimous decision regarding this *fiṭnah* not to be the first aggressor. In that way, they could produce proof and demand rights against the others. [They agreed that] they would not kill anyone running away, nor would they finish off any wounded, nor would they pursue. This was some of what the two sides decided upon and then proclaimed publicly.⁸¹⁴

According to Al-Saī' (in writing)—Shu'ayb—Sayf—Muḥammad and Talḥah and Abū 'Amr: Ka'b b. Šūr came up to 'Ā'ishah and said: "Do something [to save the situation], for the troops are intent on fighting! May Allāh give you success in restoring peace!" So she mounted, and they covered her howdah with protective armor; then they sent her camel named ʿAskar forward. Ya'la b. Umayyah, who had bought it for 200 dinars,⁸¹⁵ had lifted her up on it. When she emerged from the houses she could hear a commotion, so she halted and soon heard an even louder commotion. "What is it?" she asked, and they replied, "It is the clamor of the army." "For good or for bad?" she asked. "For bad." "Whichever of the parties this clamor comes from," she said, "they will be defeated." By Allāh! She was still standing when defeat surprised her. Al-Zubayr headed off in the direction he happened to be facing and took the road to Wādī al-Sibā'. As for Talḥah, an arrow from an unknown archer⁸¹⁶ pinned his knee to the side of his horse. When his boot filled with blood and he became drowsy,⁸¹⁷ he said to his *ghulam*: "Get up behind me on the horse. Hold on to me tightly, and find me a place where I can get off." So they went to al-Basrah, and he represented his and al-Zubayr's case in the following poem:

Events have hit and killed me [with their arrow],
while I, on shooting my arrow, have missed them.

813. This last phrase appears to have been tagged on [a little awkwardly] to 'Alī's criticism of Talḥah and al-Zubayr, or perhaps it means "so long as the Saba'iyyah keep causing trouble."

814. Cactani, IX, 179.

815. Caskel and Strenziok, I, 67, ff. 590.

816. See pp. 127, 150, below.

817. Lane, 343c.

I was lost when I pursued a share⁸¹⁸

out of a foolishness I committed, having lost my good sense.

I was like al-Kusa'⁸¹⁹ in my regret when,
against my better judgment, I bought the approval of Banū
Sahm.⁸²⁰

I obeyed them by separating from Al-Layl⁸²¹
who then threw my meat and blood to the wild animals.



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translated and annotated

by

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*The Raising of the Maṣāḥif
and the Call for Arbitration*

According to Abū Mikhnaḥ—'Abd al-Rahmān b. Iundab al-Azdī—his father: 'Ali said: "Servants of God, carry on fighting your enemies, for you have truth and right on your side. Mu'āwiyah, 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ, Ibn Abī Mu'āwī, Ḥabīb b. Maslamah, Ibn Abī Sarh, and al-Dahhāk b. Qays are men without religion and without *qur'ān*;³²⁰ I know them better than you, for I was with them both as children and as men, and they were the worst of children and the worst of men. Alas for you! They have not exalted them (the *maṣāḥif*), and they do not exalt them and do not know what it is that they contain. They have raised them up to you only to deceive you, to outwit you, and to trick you."³²¹ They answered him, "If we are called to the Book of God, we are bound to respond." 'Ali said to them, "The only reason I have fought against them was so that they should adhere to the authority of this Book (*li-yadīnū bi-ḥukmi ḥādhanā al-kitāb*), for they have disobeyed God in what He has commanded and they have forgotten His covenant and rejected His Book."

Mis'ar b. Fadakī al-Tamīmī and Zayd b. Ḥuṣayn al-Tā'ī, al-Sirbisī,³²² who were with a band of the *qurā'* who afterward became Khawārij, said to him: "'Ali, respond to the Book of God when you are called to it. Otherwise we shall indeed deliver you up entirely to the enemy or do what we did with Ibn 'Affān. It is our duty to act in accordance with what is in the Book of God. We have accepted it and, by God, if you do not do what we tell you, we will do what we say." 'Ali said: "Do not forget that I forbade you to do this, and remember your words to me. As for me, if you are obedient to me, fight, and, if disobedient, then do whatever seems best to you." They answered, "At least send for al-Ashtar, and let him come to you."

320. *Qur'ān* parallels "religion" (*dīn*), both of which are grammatically undefined.
321. *Innahum mā rafa'ūhā thumma lā yarfa'ūnahā wa-lā ya'lamūna bimā fihā wa-mā rafa'ūhā lakum illā...* WS, 489, has *innahum wa-Allāhi mā rafa'ūhā anhum ya'rifunahā wa-ya'mālanā* [changed from the first edition's *ya'lamūna*] *bihā wa-lākinnahā*. . . "They have not raised them up because they recognize them and act according to them; [they have raised them] only. . .". There seems to be some punning involving *rafa'ā* in the two senses of "to lift up" and "to exalt" and playing on the words *rafa'ā* *al-'arafa* and *'alīma/ʿamala*.

322. See Ibn al-Kalbi II, index, sv. Zaid b. Ḥisn; he was of the Banū Simbis b. Mu'āwiyah of the Tayyī.

[Resuming the account of Abū Mikhnaḥ:] When 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ saw that the position of the Iraqis had strengthened and was afraid that it would lead to destruction, he said to Mu'āwiyah, "What if I put something to you that can only increase our unity and their division?" "All right," said Mu'āwiyah. 'Amr said, "We will raise the *maṣāḥif*,"³¹⁸ and say, 'their contents are to be authoritative in our dispute [*mā fihā ḥukm baynāna wa-baynakum*]'! Even if some of them refuse to accept it, you will find that some of them will say, 'Indeed, yes, we must accept', and there will be a division between them. If, on the other hand, they say, 'Yes, indeed, we accept what is in it', then we will have disburdened ourselves of this fighting and this warfare until an appointed time or a later occasion." So they raised the *maṣāḥif* on lances and said: "This is the Book of God between us and you. Who will protect the frontier districts of the Syrians if they all perish, and who those of the Iraqis if they all perish?" When the men saw that the *maṣāḥif* had been raised, they said, "We respond to the Book of God, and we turn in repentance to it."

318. *Al-ashqar*, a sorrel camel or horse; if the latter, then one of the best sort. [Lane, *Lexicon*, sv.]. Ibn al-Athir has a pun here: In response to 'Amr's question, Wardān says, "With al-Ashtar?" 'Amr answers, "No, with *al-ashqar*. . ."

319. *Al-mushaf* [of which *al-maṣāḥif* is the plural] may refer simply to a volume or a book but, used without further specification, usually refers to the Qur'ān or a copy of it. Many scholars, traditional and modern, have been happy to accept that 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ's famous plan was for the raising of copies of the Qur'ān on the ends of the Syrian lances. Some, however, have seen problems in that interpretation: Most obviously, according to the tradition, this would have been relatively soon after the promulgation of the text by 'Uthmān [who is said to have had all variant copies destroyed], and it is hard to see that many manuscript copies could have been made as yet. Various theories have been proposed to get around this difficulty [see, e.g., Hinds, "Siffin Arbitration Agreement"]. To allow for the possibility that, at the time of the Fīṭnah, *al-mushaf* [or expressions such as *the Book of God* or *the Book*] did not yet designate the Qur'ān as we understand it and to avoid imposing an interpretation, the terminology of the text has been maintained in the following.

According to Abū Mikhnaḥ—Fuḍayl b. Khadij al-Kindi—a man of the Banū al-Nakha: The informant saw Ibrāhīm b. al-Ashtar visit Muṣ'ab b. al-Zubayr³²³ and Ibrāhīm said: I was with 'Alī when the people compelled him to accept the arbitration (*al-ḥukūmah*), and they said, "Send for al-Ashtar and let him come to you."

(Abū Mikhnaḥ, continuing the narrative from Jundab al-Azdi:) So 'Alī sent Yazīd b. Hānī al-Sabī³²⁴ to al-Ashtar to tell him to come. Yazīd went to al-Ashtar and gave him the message, but al-Ashtar said that he should tell 'Alī: "Now is not the time for you to move me from my post. I am expecting success in battle; do not rush me." Yazīd b. Hānī returned to 'Alī and told him the answer, but he had scarcely reached us when there was a cloud of dust and raised voices from the direction of al-Ashtar. The men said to 'Alī, "By God, we think you must have ordered him to give battle," but he replied: "What makes you think that? Do you think I spoke secretly with him? Did I not speak to him [the messenger] openly in your hearing?" They answered him: "Send for him and have him come to you. Otherwise, by God, we will withdraw [*i'tazala*] from you." 'Alī, therefore, said to Yazīd [the messenger]: "Alas for you, Yazīd! Tell him, 'Come to me, for the *ḥirāh* has come.'" Yazīd told al-Ashtar that, and the latter asked, "Is it because of the raising of the *maṣāḥif*?" "Yes," he answered. Al-Ashtar said: "By God, indeed when they were raised I thought that they would cause division and disunity. It was the counsel of the son of the harlot. Do you not see what God has done for us? Do I have to leave the enemy and go away from them?"

I (Yazīd b. Hānī) said: I asked him, "Would you like to be victorious here while the Commander of the Faithful is driven from the place where he is or is made to submit there?" "No, by God," he replied; "Glory be to God." Yazīd said, "They have told 'Alī, 'Send to al-Ashtar and have him come to you, or we will kill you as we killed Ibn 'Affān.'"

So al-Ashtar came to them and addressed them: "Men of Iraq! Men of baseness and feebleness! [Will you abandon the battle] when you have won the upper hand over the enemy and they think that

323. That is, at the time when Muṣ'ab was governor of Iraq, after his defeat of al-Mukhtar, and Ibrāhīm was one of his leading commanders.

324. Al-Sabī b. Sabī' of the Banū Hamdān.

you are defeating them?³²⁵ They have raised the *maṣāḥif*, calling you to what is in them but, by God, they have abandoned what God commanded in them and the example [*sunnah*] of him to whom they were sent down. Do not respond to those people. Just grant me the respite of a time between two milkings, for I sense success in battle." They answered, "No." He then said, "Just grant me the respite of a time of the running of a horse, for I am sure of victory."³²⁶ They replied, "In that case we would be partaking of your sin [*khata'ah*]."

Al-Ashtar said: "Tell me, now that the best of you have been killed and only the base ones remain, when were you in the right? Was it when you were fighting and the best of you were killed? In that case, since you have now withdrawn from the fighting, you are in the wrong. Or are you now in the right? In that case, those of you who have been killed, whose merits you do not deny and were better than you, are in hell!" They answered: "Leave us alone, Ashtar! We fought them in God's cause, and we will now leave off fighting them for His sake. We will not obey you or your master. Get away from us." Al-Ashtar said: "By God, you have been cheated and allowed yourselves to be duped. You have been invited to leave aside war and you have assented. Oh you of the dark foreheads,³²⁷ we used to think your prayers were a renunciation of this world and a longing to join God. But now I see that you merely flee to this world from death. Shame on you, you who are like the aged she-camel who seeks after filth to eat. After this you will never see glory again. May you perish just as those evil people perished."³²⁸

They reviled al-Ashtar and he them, and they struck the face of his mount with their whips while he moved forward, striking the faces of theirs with his. 'Alī called to them, and they desisted, and he said to the men, "We have agreed to make the Qur'ān an authority [*ḥukm*] between us and them."

325. WŚ, 491, agrees with the reading *a-ḥina* given in *Add. et emend.*

326. From "Just grant me . . ." to this point the translation includes material from the editor's footnote, which suggests that text has been omitted in the ms.

327. Ann. understands this term as a reference to their cowardice.

328. Possibly a reference to the Qur'ānic theme of the *umam kulliyah*, those communities that had been destroyed by God because they rejected the prophets He had sent to them (e.g., Qur'ān 11:94-95).

Al-Ash'ath b. Qays came to 'Ali and said to him: "The men all seem satisfied and pleased to respond to the enemy's summons regarding the authority of the Qur'an. If you like, I will go to Mu'awiyah and ask him what he wants, and you will see what he asks." 'Ali said, "Go to him if you want and ask him."

[3333]

Al-Ash'ath went to him and said, "Mu'awiyah, why have you raised these *mas'alih*?" He answered: "So that you and we together turn to what God commanded in His book. You will send a man from among you whom you find acceptable, and we will send a man from among us, and we will impose upon them that they act according to what is in the Book of God, not opposing it. Then we will follow what they agree upon." Al-Ash'ath b. Qays said to him, "This is just," and then he went back to 'Ali and told him what Mu'awiyah had said.

Our men said, "We are pleased and accept." The Syrians said, "We have chosen 'Amr b. al-'As," and al-Ash'ath and those who became Khawārij afterward said, "We are content with Abū Mūsā al-Ash'ath." 'Ali said: "You disobeyed me in the start of this business; do not disobey me now. I do not think I should grant power to Abū Mūsā." But al-Ash'ath, Zayd b. Husayn al-Tā'i, and Mis'ar b. Fadakī insisted, "We do not find anyone else acceptable: What he warned us against we have fallen into."³²⁹ 'Ali said: "I do not consider him trustworthy. He separated from me and caused the people to abandon me. Then he fled from me until I granted him security after some months. But here is Ibn 'Abbās; we will give him power in that matter." They replied, "It would not make any difference for us whether it was you or Ibn 'Abbās. We insist on someone who is equally distant from you and Mu'awiyah, no closer to one of you than he is to the other." 'Ali said, "I will appoint al-Ashtar."

According to Abū Mikhnaf—Abū Janāb al-Kalbī: Al-Ash'ath said, "Was it anybody but al-Ashtar who caused this conflagration in the land?"

According to Abū Mikhnaf—'Abd al-Rahmān b. Jundab—his father: Al-Ash'ath said, "Are we not already under the authority [*ḥukm*] of al-Ashtar?" 'Ali said, "What is that?" and al-Ash'ath answered, "That we should strike one another with swords until what you and he want comes to pass." 'Ali said, "Do you then refuse

329. That is, *fitnah*.

to accept anybody but ~~Abū Mūsā~~" and the men replied, "Yes." 'Ali said, "Then do what you want."

They sent to Abū Mūsā, who had withdrawn apart [*i'tazala*] from the fighting and was in 'Urd.³³⁰ A *mawlā* of his came to him and said, "The people have made a peace." He replied, "Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds." The *mawlā* then said, "They have made you an arbitrator [*ḥakam*]," and Abū Mūsā said, "We belong to God and to Him we return."³³¹

Abū Mūsā came and entered the army camp. Al-Ashtar went to 'Ali and said, "Assign me to 'Amr b. al-'As and, by God other than Whom there is no god, if I lay eyes on him, I will kill him." And al-Ahnaḥf came and said: "Commander of the Faithful, you have been assaulted by a crafty and cunning man³³² and by one who made war against God and His Messenger at the beginning of Islam. I have tested this man (Abū Mūsā) and tried him out in varying circumstances³³³ and I have found him dull-witted and shallow in intellect.³³⁴ Only somebody who can get so close to the enemy as to be in the palms of their hands, and be so far from them as the Pleiades, will avail us in dealing with them. If you refuse to make me an arbitrator on the question, at least make me a second or a third (delegate). [Then] I shall untie any knot that he shall fasten, and he shall not undo any knot that I tie, unless I have (already) tied for you another more binding [*ahkama*]." But the people insisted on (the choice of) Abū Mūsā and acceptance of (the call to refer to) the Book. Al-Ahnaḥf said, "If you insist on Abū Mūsā, then make sure someone is watching him."³³⁵

330. See Yaḥyā, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, III, 644, for this place, said to be between Palmyra and Rusāfah.

331. Qur'an 2:136. This is a standard formula of resignation to God's will, often uttered on receipt of bad news, especially news of someone's death.

332. *Rurāḥa bi-hajar al-'ard*. *Gloss.*, sv. *hajar*, refers to Freytag, *Arabum proverbiorum*, I, 520, for the similar *ramayra al-'amra bi-hajar*; for the translation adopted here, see Lane, *Lexicon*, sv. *hajar*. The reference is to 'Amr's initial opposition to the Prophet and his acceptance of Islam only when it had become clear that it would be victorious.333. *Halabtu ashturahu*. Lane, *Lexicon*, sv. *shatr*, has the idiom.334. *Kalīlu al-sha'iratu qarība al-qa'r*; literally, "blunt of blade and lacking in depth." Lane, *Lexicon*, sv. *qa'r*, has *ba'ḍu al-qa'r* as meaning "of deep intellect."

335. Literally, "keep his back warm with the men"; perhaps, "give him some men to back him up."



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(*Ta'rikh al-rusul wa'l-mulūk*)

VOLUME XVII

THE FIRST CIVIL WAR

translated and annotated

by

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The Circumstances of the Murder and Death of 'Alī

According to Mūsā b. 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Masrūqī—'Abd al-Rahmān al-Harrānī Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān—Ism'īl b. Rāshid:⁸³⁸ In the story about Ibn Muljam and his companions it is told that Ibn Muljam, al-Burak b. 'Abdallāh, and 'Amr b. Bakr al-Tamīmī⁸⁴⁰ met and discussed the way things were. They decried their governors and talked about the people killed at the canal, asking for God's mercy upon them. They said, "We have achieved nothing by surviving them, our brethren who were summoners of the people to the worship of their Lord and who did 'not fear, for the cause of God, the reproach of anyone."⁸⁴¹ What if we 'sell our souls'⁸⁴² and go to the imāms of error, seek to kill them, deliver the land from them, and thus achieve vengeance for our brethren?"

[3457]

838. The days of the weeks and the dates given do not tally. In the year A.H. 40, the 15th of Rāmādān should have been a Friday, 17 Rāmādān 40 = Sunday 24 January 661. Rabi' II 40 = August–September 660. For the following section, see *EF*, s.v. Ibn Muljam, where extensive references to further sources are provided.

839. For Mūsā b. 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Masrūqī (d. 258/87–72), see al-Mizzi, *Tahdhīb*, XXIX, 98–100. The Cairo edition calls him Mūsā b. 'Uthmān b. 'Abd al-Rahmān.

840. For variants in the *ism* and *nisbah* of Ibn Muljam, see Ibn al-Kathīr, II, index, s.v. 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Muljam; for the Banū Murād b. Mūlik of Madhhi, see *ibid.*, s.v.; al-Burak is said to have belonged to the Banū Šuraym of Tamīm, 'Amr to the Banū Sa'd of Tamīm.

841. See Qur'an 5:54.

842. *Fa-law sharaynā anfusannā*. It is said that the early Khawārij called themselves *shurāt* because of their willingness to "sell" their souls for the cause of God. See Qur'an 9:111: "God has bought [ishtarā] from the Believers their souls and their wealth."

Ibn Muġjam, who was one of the men of Egypt, said, "I will take care of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib for you!" Al-Burak b. 'Abdallāh said, "I will take care of Mu'āwiyah b. Abī Sufyān." And 'Amr b. Bakr said, "I will take care of 'Amr b. al-'Aṣ." They made a joint covenant and agreement by God, "No man of us shall turn away from the one against whom he has been sent until he kills him or himself dies first." They took their swords and put poison on them and agreed that when seventeen days had elapsed of Ramadān, each of them would make an attempt on the man against whom he had been sent.

Each of them went to the town in which was the one whom he sought. Ibn Muġjam al-Murādi, who was counted to Kindah,⁸⁴³ joined his clansmen in al-Kūfah, but kept his business from them, being wary lest they reveal anything of it. One day he saw several men of Taym al-Rībāb,⁸⁴⁴ ten of whom 'Alī had killed at the canal, and they were remembering their slain. On the same day he met a woman of Taym al-Rībāb called Qatāmi bint al-Shujānah, whose father and brother 'Alī had killed at the canal. She was of surpassing beauty and when he saw her she confused his mind and he forgot what he was about. He asked to marry her but she said, "I will not marry you until you give me what I want."⁸⁴⁵ He asked, "What will satisfy you?" and she answered, "Three thousand dirhams, a slave, a singing girl, and the killing of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib."

He said, "That is a fitting dowry for you, but as for the killing of 'Alī, I would not have thought that you would mention it to me, while wanting me."⁸⁴⁶ She said, "Indeed yes. Look out for when he is off his guard and if you get him you will have satisfied yourself and myself, and life with me will be good for you. If you are killed, then what is with God is better than this world and its adornments and those of its people."⁸⁴⁷ He replied, "By God, it was the very

843. Ibn Sa'd III/1, 23, says that he was a *halif* of the Banū Jabalah of Kindah (for Jabalah b. 'Adī of Kindah, see Ibn al-Kalbi, II, index, sv).

844. Rībāb was a confederation that included the Banū Taym b. 'Abd Manāt (hence known as Taym al-Rībāb) and various others, allied with the Banū Sa'd of Tamim (see Ibn al-Kalbi, II, index, sv, Rībāb).

845. *Hattā tashīya li*; for *shāfa* in the sense of "to satisfy", see Gloss., sv.

846. *Lā arāki (urāki) dhakarathi li wa-anti turidni*; see Wright, *Grammar*, II, 34b, for *wa* with following subjunctive.

847. See Qur'an 28:60.

killing of 'Alī that brought me to this town. What you ask for is yours." She said, "I will seek out for you someone who will aid you and support you in your task." She sent to a man of her tribe of Taym al-Rībāb who was called Wādān and spoke with him, and he agreed.

Ibn Muġjam went to a man of the Banū Ashja'⁸⁴⁸ called Shabīb b. Bajarah and asked him, "Would you like honor in this world and the next?" He replied, "How?" and Ibn Muġjam said, "The killing of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib." "May your mother be bereaved of you!"⁸⁴⁹ he answered, "Then you would have done something grave."⁸⁵⁰ How will you be able to get to him?" Ibn Muġjam said, "I shall lay in wait for him in the mosque and when he comes out for the morning prayer we shall attack him and kill him. If we escape, we shall have satisfied ourselves and attained our revenge. If we are killed, then what is with God is better than this world and what is in it."⁸⁵¹ Shabīb said, "Woe to you! If it were anyone other than 'Alī, it would be a matter of less importance to me. But you know how much he has been tested in Islam and his precedence in following the Prophet. I do not think I could find it in me to be happy at his killing." Ibn Muġjam said, "Do you not know that he killed the people of the canal, the righteous servants of God!" "Indeed yes," he replied. "Then let us kill him for those of our brethren whom he killed!" And Shabīb assented.

They went to Qatāmi who was in the great mosque practising "withdrawal."⁸⁵² They said to her, "We have agreed to kill 'Alī," and she said, "When you want to do that, come to me." Then Ibn Muġjam went back to her on the night before the Friday in the morning of which 'Alī was killed in the year 40, and he said to her, "This is the night when I promised my two companions that each one of us would kill his man." She called for silk to be brought to

848. The Banū Ashja' b. Rayth of Chabāfān.

849. *Thakālatka ummuka*; the expression is understood not as an insult, but as an expression of surprise or concern (see Lane, *Lexicon*, sv. *umm*).

850. See Qur'an 19:89.

851. See Qur'an 28:60.

852. *Mu'takifah*, a term that would usually indicate the religious practice of *ṭiḳāf*, a sort of retreat (usually in a mosque) associated especially with Ramadān (see EIT, sv. *ṭiḳāf*).

them and bound it around them⁸⁵³ and they took their swords and sat before the door out of which 'Ali would come. When he appeared, Shabīb struck at him with his sword but it hit the door post or the arch; Ibn Muġjam struck him on the top of his head with his sword. *فمن ما جهم؟* *نزل*
 Wārdān fled and went into his house, where one of his half-brothers came in upon him. Wārdān was unwinding the silk from his breast and the visitor asked about it and the sword. Wārdān told him what had happened. The visitor went away, and then came back with his sword and set about Wārdān and killed him.

Shabīb set off toward the gates of Kindah⁸⁵⁴ while it was still dark just before dawn, but the cry went up and a man of Ḥadramawt called 'Uwaymir⁸⁵⁵ came upon him. Shabīb had his sword in his hand but 'Uwaymir seized it from him and attacked him. When he saw that the people had come seeking Shabīb whose sword he had in his own hand, however, 'Uwaymir was afraid for his own life and let Shabīb go. He escaped in the confusion.

They fell on Ibn Muġjam and seized him, but not before a man of the Banū Hamdān with the *kunyah* of Abū Admā' had taken his sword, struck at his leg, and felled him.

'Ali remained where he had fallen⁸⁵⁶ and had Ja'dah b. Hubayrah b. Abī Wāḥb⁸⁵⁷ stand up behind him and lead the morning prayer. Then 'Ali said, "Bring him to me," and Ibn Muġjam was brought in. 'Ali said, "Enemy of God, did I not do good to you?" "Yes, indeed," he answered. "Then what led you to do this?" "I sharpened my sword for forty mornings and I asked God to kill the worst of His creatures

853. The significance of this ritual is not evident.

854. Referred to in the singular (*bāb Kindah*) in a report about the entry of the Qurāmitah into al-Kūfah [see Tabarī, III, 226; (= vol. XXXVIII, 163, of this translation)].

855. Ḥadramawt here indicates tribal rather than geographical origin. According to the Muslim genealogical system, Ḥadramawt [possibly to be identified with the Hazarmaveth of Genesis, 10:26], after whom the region of southwest Arabia is named, was one of the earliest ancestors of the southern descent group. Ḥadramawt are related to, but distinct from, Ḥimyar and Kindah [Ibn al-Kalbi has no entry for Ḥadramawt].

856. *Ta' akhkhara*.

857. See p. 99 and n. 401, above.

with it," he said. "Ali replied, "But I think that you must be slain with it, for you must be one of the worst of His creatures."

They say that, before he struck 'Ali, while he was sitting among Bakr b. Wā'il, Ibn Muġjam saw the bier of Abjar b. Jabir al-'Jli, father of Ḥajjār, passing⁸⁵⁸ Abjar was a Christian and there were a number of Christians round about it and some Muslims⁸⁵⁹ walking at one side with Ḥajjār because of his status among them. Among them was Shaḡiq b. Thawr.⁸⁶⁰ Ibn Muġjam asked who they were and was told, and he began to compose:

If Ḥajjār b. Abjar is (really) a Muslim,

the bier of Abjar would have been kept away from him;

But if Ḥajjār b. Abjar is an infidel,

then this sort of infidelity is not inappropriate.⁸⁶¹

Do you accept this—that a priest⁸⁶² and a Muslim are together before a bier? Shameful spectacle!

If it were not for what I intend to do, I would scatter their company with a sword polished, burnished, shining, and drawn from its scabbard.

But my intention with that (sword) is as an instrument of access to God or this man ('Ali). Take that or leave it.

858. See Ibn al-Kalbi, s.v. Abjar b. Ḥabir and Ḥajjār b. Abjar for these two leaders of the Banū 'Jil of Bakr b. Wā'il. The Christian father was active in pre-Islamic times and the son, in events in al-Kūfah down to the fall of Muṣ'ab b. al-Zubayr. The following verses seem to imply that the son has accepted Islam by this time, for Ibn Muġjam's objection is to the presence of a Muslim at the funeral of (i.e., in the presence of the corpse of) a non-Muslim. The reasons for this objection are not made clear in general and in practice Muslims are respectful toward, and may participate in, the funerals of non-Muslims [see *Et*, s.v. *Dianāza*; T. P. Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, s.v. *Bunāl*]. In *hadith*, however, it may be possible to see traces of a difference of opinion on this issue. It is usually held that, in contrast with Judaism, Islam does not regard the presence of a corpse as polluting (Wensinck, "Die Entstehung," 63), but there seems to be uneasiness about the performance of prayer at tombs or in graveyards. It may be significant that the *hadith* usually cited to justify the view that the human corpse is not destructive of ritual purity in Islam in fact says that the Muslim (sometimes Mu'min) does not pollute, whether alive or dead [see Wensinck, *Concordances*, s.v. *najisa*].

859. *Unās*, here indicating Muslims rather than simply "people."

860. See p. 59 and n. 247, above.

861. Leiden has *kufār* (infidelity), Cairo *kafār* (infidel).

862. Following *Ann.*, A.H. 40 §32, in reading *qass* for *qays*.