

Wilferd Madelung



The succession to Muhammad
A study of the early Caliphate

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In a comprehensive and original study of the early history of Islam, Wilferd Madelung describes the conflict that developed after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, between his family, Hashim, and his tribe, Quraysh, for the leadership of the Muslim community. He pursues the history of this conflict through the reign of the four 'Rightly Guided' caliphs to its climax in the first Inter-Muslim War. The outcome of the war, which marked the demise of the reign of the Early Companions, led to the establishment of dynastic despotism under the Umayyad caliphate and to the lasting schism between Sunnite and Shi'ite Islam. In contrast to recent scholarly trends, Professor Madelung brings out 'All's early claim to legitimate succession, which gained support from the Shi'a, and offers a radical and convincing reinterpretation of early Islamic history after the death of Muhammad. This important and original study will make a major contribution to the scholarship of the period and rekindle the debate over the succession to Muhammad.

The succession to Muhammad

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A study of the early Caliphate **Wilferd Madelung**

University of Oxford

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UNIVERSITY PRESS
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PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne 3207, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

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First published 1997 Reprinted 1997, 2001, 2004

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data Madelung, Wilferd.

The succession to Muhammad: a study of the early Caliphate/WilferdMadelung. p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references (p.388) and index.

ISBN 0 521 56181 7

1. Islamic Empire - History - 622-661.1. Title.

DS38.1.M336 1996

909'.097671 -dc20 95-26105 CIP

ISBN 0 521 56181 7 hardback ISBN 0 521 64696 0 paperback

In memory of my mother

Emma Elisabeth Madelung, nee Messerschmitt (1907-1990)

who opened my eyes to history as it really is

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Preface

This book was at first planned as a monograph on the nature of the caliphate at its foundation and during its earliest phase, before the establishment of Umayyad dynastic rule, with only a minimal discussion of the events and persons determining its evolution. The extreme distrust of most western historians with regard to the Muslim literary sources for the early age of Islam seemed to suggest a restriction of the inquiry to a few salient events whose reality, if not their interpretation, is not seriously disputed. As the research progressed, it became evident that such an approach would not do justice to the subject. The question of the caliphate is too intricately tied to much of the internal history of the early Muslim community to be discussed without a solid understanding of that history based on more than abstract speculation. Work with the narrative sources, both those that have been available to historians for a long time and others which have been published recently, made it plain that their wholesale rejection as late fiction is unjustified and that with a judicious use of them a much more reliable and accurate portrait of the period can be drawn than has so far been realized.

The introduction of large narrative sections into the presentation has, apart from substantially expanding the volume, inevitably changed the character of the book and produced a certain dichotomy which may at times obscure its basic purpose. Especially the detailed description of the *fitna*, the Inter-Muslim War opening with the revolt against the third caliph and outlasting the reign of the fourth, may appear to have marginalized the discussion of the caliphate itself. Narrative history carries its own momentum and dictates its appropriate ways of presentation. Persons, their motivation, action and reaction move to the foreground and confine the interpretation of ideas and documentary texts. The book, especially its latter parts, can now be read as a partial history of the period. The reader should, however, be aware of its selective perspective. The Inter-Muslim War was the climax of the conflict about the caliphate and as such a proper understanding of its nature was vital.

Selective narration from the large pool of narrative source material

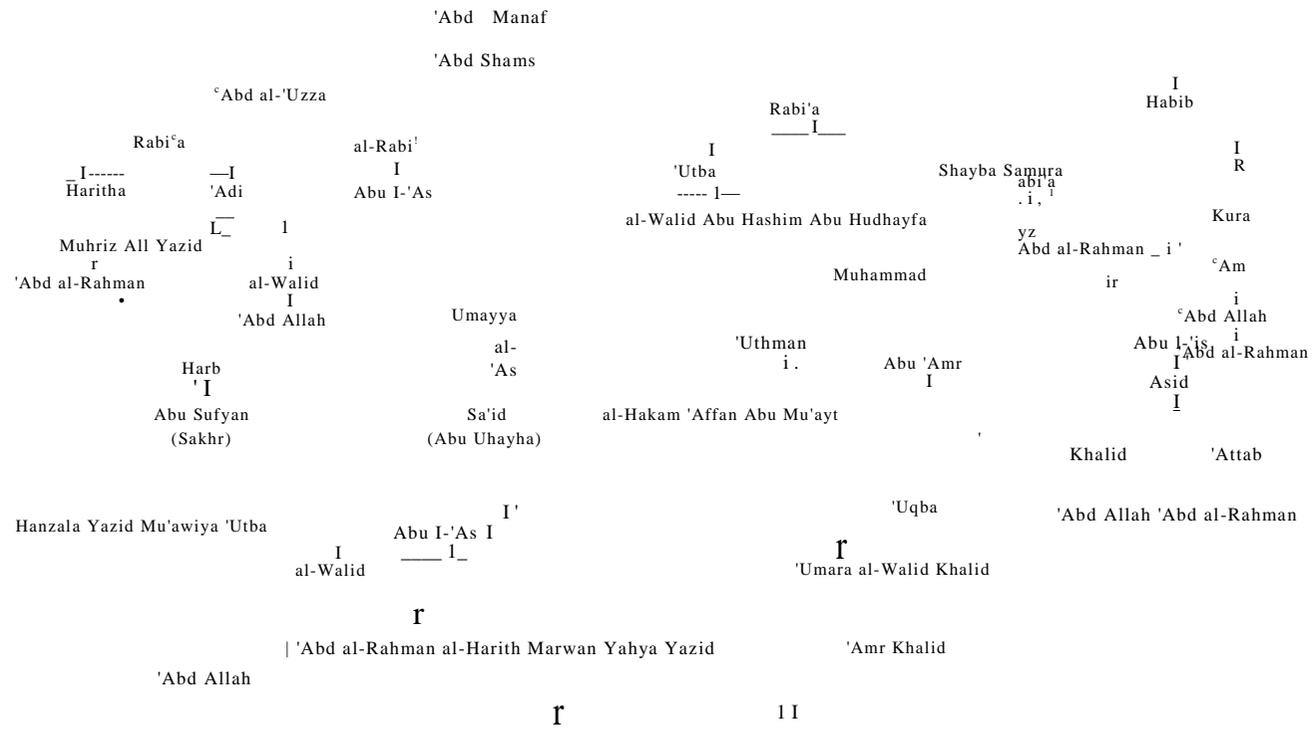
imposed compromises for the sake of readability. I have tried to strike a proper balance between abridgement and faithful rendering of reports and texts. Colourful detail which the early reporters thought worth recording, and their personal comments, may convey to the late observer living in a very different environment a sense of the times which the abstract factual data largely fail to convey. In general those reports that seemed most reliable were chosen for presentation. Significant divergent reports are often briefly summarized in the notes without full argumentation for my preference. In narrative reporting there is obviously a wide range of shades of reliability between outright fraudulent fiction and accurate factual testimony. It would have served no good purpose to weigh and assess every statement and expression of the narrators as might be appropriate in more narrowly focused studies.

The book stands in a scholarly tradition on which it builds and to which it reacts. Much of the basic western research on the history of the early succession to Muhammad was carried out and published by a few scholars in the early decades of this century. Later research has generally accepted the substance of their conclusions while modifying some detail. The revision proposed here is more radical. The discussion naturally puts the differences into sharp relief and brings out aspects passed over or distorted in the earlier studies more prominently than if the book had been written in a vacuum of scholarship. Severe criticism, however, should not obscure its indebtedness to the tradition.

My special thanks are due to my wife who patiently read and reread through an unfamiliar subject and made valuable suggestions to improve the presentation.

'Abd Shams	Nawfal	°Abd Manaf Hashim	al-Muttalib	
Hamza al-Harith	Abu ('Abd 'Uzza)	Lahab al-	'Abd al-Muttalib	Abu Talib
Abu Sufyan Mughira)	Nawfal	Rabi'a (al-	'Abd Allah	al-Fadl Qutham Ma'bad 'Ubayd Allah 'Abd Allah
			Muhammad	
	'Utayba	'Utba	'Aqil 'Ali	Ja'far
	al-'Abbas		'Abd Allah Muhammad	'Abd al-Rahman Qutham
°Abd Allah (Babba)		I	T	"I
'Abd Allah al-Harith		al-Hasan al-Husayn Muhammad 'Umar (b. al- Hanafiyya)		1

1 Banu Hashim



2 Banu 'Abd Shams

al-Mughira 'Amr Sa'id Aban 'Umar al-Walid

Chronological survey

615	Muslim emigration to Abyssinia
616-19	Boycott of Hashim by Quraysh
622	<i>Hijra</i> : emigration of Muhammad from Mekka to Medina
2/624	Badr: Muslim victory over Mekkans
3/625	Uhud: Muslim defeat by Mekkans
6/628	Al-Hudaybiyya: truce between Muhammad and Mekkans. Pledge (of loyalty) under the Tree 7 Muslim
conquest of Khaybar	
8/629	Expedition to Mu'ta
630	Muslim conquest of Mekka
	Hunayn: Muslim victory over Hawazin. Siege of al-Ta'if
11/632	13 RabI 1/8 June Death of Muhammad
	Election of Abu Bakr as successor at Saqlfat Ban! Sa'ida
12/633	Battle of al-Yamama at al-'Aqraba'
13/634	Beginning of Muslim invasion of Iraq and Palestine
	22 Jumada 11/23 August Death of Abu Bakr Succession of
'Umar 15/636	Battle on the Yarmuk: decisive Muslim victory in Syria
16	Battle of al-Qadisiyya: decisive Muslim victory in Iraq
17/638	Council of al-Jabiya: 'Umar establishes pension register (<i>idiwan</i>) and immobilizes conquered land as <i>fay</i> ' 18/639
	Plague of 'Amwas
	Invasion of Egypt 21/642 Battle of Nihawand:
decisive Muslim victory in Iran	
23/644	26 Dhu l-Hijja/3 November Murder of 'Umar
	<i>Shura</i> election of 'Uthman 25/645-6 Northern Syria
and Upper Mesopotamia included in	
	governorship of Mu'awiya
	'Abd Allah b. Sa'd b. Abi Sarh governor of Egypt Al-Walld
	b. 'Uqba governor of Kufa

27/647	Victorious campaign of Ibn Abi Sarh to IfrTqiya	
29/649-50	'Abd Allah b. 'Amir governor of Basra	
30/650-1	Said b. al-'As governor of Kufa	
32/652-3	Death of 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf	
34/654	Revolt in Kufa. Abu Musa al-Ash'ari appointed governor	
35/656	1 Dhu 1-Qa'da/1 May Egyptian rebels at Dhu Khushub. 'First siege'	
	1 Dhu 1-Hijja/31 May Egyptian rebels in Medina. 'Second siege'	
	18 Dhu 1-Hijja/17 June Murder of 'Uthman	
	19 Dhu 1-Hijja/18 June Pledge of allegiance to 'All	
36	Safar/August Qays b. Sa'd governor of Egypt	
	29 RabT' 11/25 October Departure of 'All from Medina	
	15 Jumada 1/8 December Battle of the Camel	
657	1 Ramadan/21 February Appointment of Muhammad b. AbT Bakr as governor of Egypt	
	Dhu 1-Hijja/May Departure of 'All from Kufa for Siffin	
37	8-11 Safar/26—29 July Main battle of Siffin	
	15 Safar/2 August Signing of arbitration agreement	
658	10 Shawwal/21 March Kharijites leave Kufa for al-Nahrawan	
	Shawwal-Dhu 1-Qa'da/March—April Meeting of arbitrators at Dumat al-Jandal. Recognition of Mu'awiya as caliph in Syria	
38	Dhu 1-Hijja/May Battle of al-Nahrawan	
	Safar/August Conquest of Egypt by 'Amr b. al-'As. Murder of Muhammad b. Abi Bakr	
659	Sha'ban/January Meeting of arbitrators at Adhruh 39/660	
	Dhu 1-Hijja/April-May Campaign of Yazid b. Shajara to Mekka 40/661	
		19 Ramadan/28 January
	Death of 'All	
	Succession of al-Hasan 41	RabI' II/August Surrender
	of al-Hasan	
	49-50/669—70 Death of al-Hasan 56/676	Nomination of Yazid as crown prince
60/680	Death of Mu'awiya. Succession of Yazid	
61	Death of al-Husayn at Karbala'	
61-73/680-92	Revolt and counter-caliphate of 'Abd Allah b. al- Zubayr	

63/683 Battle of al-Harra. Medina subdued by Syrians
64 Death of Yazld. Succession and death of Mu'awiya II
684 Succession of Marwan
 Battle of Marj Rahit 65/685 Death of Marwan.
Succession of 'Abd al-Malik

Chronological survey

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Abbreviations

<i>Agham</i>	Abu l-Faraj al-Isfahanf, <i>Kitab al-Aghani</i>
<i>Annali</i>	L. Caetani, <i>Annali dell' Islam</i>
<i>EI</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i>
<i>JSAI</i>	<i>Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam</i>
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
TabarT	al-Tabarī, <i>Ta'rikh al-rusul wa l-muluk</i>

Introduction

No event in history has divided Islam more profoundly and durably than the succession to Muhammad. The right to occupy the Prophet's place at the head of the Muslim community after his death became a question of great religious weight which has separated Sunnites and Shi'ites until the present. The issue of right and wrong in the matter has long since been settled in their minds. For Sunnites, the first caliph, Abu Bakr, was the only rightful successor since he was the most excellent of men after the Prophet. Although Muhammad had not explicitly appointed him as his successor, his preference for him was indicated by his order for Abu Bakr to lead the Muslims in the prayers during his final illness. The consensus reached by the Muslims in favour of Abu Bakr merely confirmed what was ultimately God's choice. For Shi'ites it was Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law 'Alī who, on account of his early merits in Islam as well as his close kinship, had been appointed by the Prophet as his successor. His rightful position was then usurped by Abu Bakr with the backing of the majority of Muhammad's Companions.

In spite of the fundamental importance of this conflict for the history of Islam, modern historians have devoted relatively little effort to the study of the background and circumstances surrounding the succession. This general lack of interest is evidently grounded in the view that the conflict between Sunna and Shi'a, although revolving around the question of the succession, in reality arose only in a later age. Such a view is well supported by early Sunnite tendentious historiography, represented most blatantly by Sayf b. 'Umar (d. 180/796). According to his account, 'Alī, on being informed of Abu Bakr's election, was in such a hurry to offer his pledge of allegiance that he arrived dressed merely in his shirt and had to send for his clothes.¹ Perfect concord then prevailed among the Muslims until 'Abd Allah b. Saba', a converted Jew from San'a', began to agitate against the third caliph, 'Uthman, and, after the murder

¹ Al-Tabarī, *Ta'rikh al-rusul wa l-muluk*, ed. M.J. de Goeje *et al.* (Leiden, 1879-1901; henceforth Tabarī), I, 1825.

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of the latter, spread extremist views about 'AIT having been the *wast*, the legatee or the executor of the will, of Muhammad.² Ibn Saba' thus became the founder of the Shl'a who retrospectively turned 'AIT into the legitimate successor of Muhammad.

While few if any modern historians would accept Sayf's legend of Ibn Saba', the underlying view that the succession of Abu Bakr to Muhammad was in itself - aside from the abortive attempt of the Medinan Ansar to seize the caliphate - unproblematic and that the conflict about it was artificially created by the Shl'a after the death of 'All and against his own lifelong attitude is widely taken for granted. It is fully reflected in the most recent discussions of the origins of the 'Alid and the 'Abbasid, or Hashimite, ShT'a by M. Sharon. According to Sharon, the very concept of the 'Family of the Prophet', later expressed in the terms of *ahl al-bayt*, Al Muhammad, *al al-nabt* and Banu Hashim, did not exist in the time of Muhammad and under the early caliphs. Although the term *bayt* had sometimes been used in pre-Islamic Arabia for the noble families of famous chiefs and prominent men, this was not the case with respect to Muhammad. In Islam the term *ahl al-bayt* first came to be applied to the families of the caliphs. The Shi'ite supporters of 'All, according to Sharon, then developed the idea of the *ahl al-bayt* of the Prophet and of Al Muhammad in order to establish hereditary rights of their man and his descendants to the caliphate. In the later Umayyad age the 'Abbasids appropriated the idea and still later, from the caliphate of al-Mahdl, propagated the concept of the Banu Hashim as the Family of the Prophet to bolster their own claim to legitimate succession.³ Yet 'All himself had still accepted the caliphate on the terms laid down by Abu Bakr and 'Umar without pretence to any special title based on his personal blood relationship with Muhammad.⁴

If concord prevailed among the Muslims until the caliphate of 'Uthman and the controversy between Sunna and ShT'a arose only after the caliphate of 'AIT, there is obviously not much incentive to study in depth the circumstances of the succession and the establishment of the caliphate. Abu Bakr's and 'Umar's success during their reigns was decisive and spectacular, and recent historical research has tended to concentrate mostly on their activity in suppressing the dangerous movement of the Apostasy (*ridda*) of the Arab tribes and initiating the great Muslim conquests outside Arabia.

² *Ibid.*, 2941-2.

³ M. Sharon, *Black Banners from the East* (Jerusalem, 1983), 75—85; M. Sharon, 'Ahl al-Bayt — People of the House', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 8 (1986), 169-84; M. Sharon, 'The Umayyads as Ahl al-Bayt', *JSAI*, 14 (1992), 115-52, esp. 134r-49.

⁴ M. Sharon, 'Notes on the Question of Legitimacy of Government in Islam', *Israel Oriental Studies*, 10 (1980), 116—23, at 121.

The few earlier studies dealing specifically with the succession as such, however, suggest that it was certainly not as unproblematic as implied in the prevalent view of the origins of the schism between Sunna and ShT'a. In 1910 H. Lammens published his article on the 'Triumvirate of Abu Bakr, 'Umar, and Abu 'Ubayda' in which he argued that it was the common purpose and close co-operation of these three men, initiated in the lifetime of Muhammad, that enabled them to found the successive caliphates of Abu Bakr and 'Umar. The latter would have appointed Abu 'Ubayda as his successor if Abu 'Ubayda had not died during his caliphate.⁵ Although Lammens did not speak of a conspiracy to seize the succession, his presentation of the activity of the triumvirate suggests this term. In particular through Abu Bakr's and 'Umar's daughters 'A'isha and Hafsa, who kept their fathers informed about every move and secret thought of their husband Muhammad, these two men came to exert great influence on the Prophet's actions and thus prepared the stage for their seizure of power. This conspirational aspect of Lammens' theory has probably provoked the common warnings of more recent western scholars that his study is unreliable.⁶ Lammens noted that the purpose of the triumvirate was to exclude the Hashimites, in particular 'AIT, as the kin of Muhammad from the succession, although 'AIT, in Lammens' view, was hardly a serious rival for them. Dull-witted, incapable, and married to the pitiful figure of the Prophet's daughter Fatima, who was easily outmanoeuvred by the clever and headstrong daughter of Abu Bakr in their competition for Muhammad's favour, 'AIT could not have been an attractive choice for Muhammad as his successor. Having experienced mostly disappointment in respect of his blood relations, the Prophet naturally turned away from them. His *ahl al-bayt*, Lammens affirmed with reference to Qur'an XXXIII 33, consisted exclusively of his wives.⁷ The only comprehensive and thorough investigation of the establishment, nature and development of the caliphate until 'Ali's reign has been offered by L. Caetani in his monumental *Annali dell' Islam*. In his initial discussion, Caetani noted the gravity of the conflict between Abu Bakr and the Banu Hashim following his surprise claim to the succession during the assembly of the Ansar in the Hall (*saqifa*) of the Banu Sa'ida

⁵ H. Lammens, 'Le triumvirat Abou Bakr, 'Omar et Abou 'Obaida', *Melanges de la Faculte Orientale de l'Universite St Joseph de Beyrouth*, 4 (1910), 113-44.

⁶ See, for instance, J. Sauvaget and C. Cahen, *Introduction to the History of the Muslim East: A Bibliographical Guide* (Berkeley, CA and London, 1965), 126.

⁷ H. Lammens, *Fatima et les Filles de Mahomet* (Rome, 1912), 99. Lammens' portrayal of Fatima was taken up by L. Caetani, who suggested that Muhammad married off Fatima to 'AIT because she, of suspect legitimacy and lacking any physical and moral attractions, was not desired by anyone, and the union was for him a means to liberate himself from the annoyance of a daughter for whom he did not feel any sympathy (*Annali dell'Islam* (Milan, 1905-25; henceforth *Annali*), X, 470).

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just hours after the death of Muhammad. The Banu Hashim refused to recognize Abu Bakr and buried their illustrious kinsman privately, depriving the new caliph and 'A'isha of the honour of attendance. Caetani indirectly acknowledged the potential seriousness of 'All's claim to the succession by rejecting the common accounts that Abu Bakr based his claim before the assembly of Ansar on the prior rights of Quraysh as Muhammad's tribe, since this argument would have strengthened the case of 'All as the closest relative of the Prophet.² Rather, Caetani suggested, Abu Bakr argued the need to elect a successor to Muhammad who would most closely follow in his footsteps, propagate his teachings and maintain the unity of the Muslim Community. He was chosen solely for his superior qualities as a statesman and his personal merits.⁹ In view of these merits, Caetani judged the opposition of the Hashimites and other Companions to Abu Bakr to be motivated merely by personal ambition and rancour.³ If Muhammad had been able to choose his successor, he would presumably have preferred Abu Bakr to anyone else.⁴ In a later volume of the *Annali*, however, Caetani opted for Lammens' theory of the triumvirate of Abu Bakr, 'Umar and Abu 'Ubayda¹² as the most likely explanation for the origins of the caliphate. The inspirer of their joint action had been 'Umar, 'the greatest statesman after the Prophet and in some respects even greater than the master himself'.⁵ 'Umar had the practical and political intelligence to foresee the demise of Muhammad and to prepare the agreements for resolving the problem of the succession with energy and in the best way possible, thus saving the Muslim Community from disaster.¹⁴ The true founder of the caliphate thus was 'Umar who merely put forward Abu Bakr as the first caliph in recognition of his righteousness and his high standing with the Prophet.

As a result of the reaction of later scholars against the conspiracy theory, Caetani's earlier view that Muhammad, had he made a choice, would most likely have preferred Abu Bakr as his successor and that, in any case, Abu Bakr was the natural choice for the Muslims on account of his merits in Islam has become the prevalent opinion among non-Muslim

² *Annali*, II/1,516. It is to be noted here that in Caetani's view Muhammad was not in fact a taken into the family of Abu Talib b. 'Abd al-Muttalib. The fake genealogy making him a descendant of Hashim and Qu'avy (Hashim's grandfather) was invented by 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas and Hisham b. al-Kalbi. (See in particular *Annali*, I, 58-75). On this basis Caetani referred to 'All as 'the (alleged) nephew of Muhammad' (*Annali*, VII, 15) and to al-'Abbas as 'the alleged uncle of the Prophet' (*Annali*, II/1, 407).

⁹ *Annali*, II/1, 523, 528. ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 542. ¹¹ *Ibid.*, 523.

⁵ *Ibid.*, III, 123. ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, *ibid.*, V, 477-81.

historians of Islam. It is expressed, for instance, by W. M. Watt in his standard biography of Muhammad in the words: 'Certainly before Muhammad left Mecca for Medina Abu Bakr had established himself as his chief lieutenant and adviser; and this position he maintained to Muhammad's death, so that he was the obvious choice for successor.'⁶ Yet the critical observer may well question here whether the choice was really so obvious. It is true that in modern life the choice of a chief lieutenant and adviser to succeed, for instance, the head of a corporation or the leader of a political party must seem reasonable enough. But the succession to a ruler or king in traditional society was normally based on dynastic kinship and inheritance, and the succession of a lieutenant and adviser, however close to the ruler, would have been considered highly irregular. It has, of course, often been argued that the succession to tribal leadership among the Arabs was not based on heredity, and Lammens went so far as to assert that hereditary power and the dynastic principle were among the concepts most repugnant to the Arab mind.⁷ This assertion has, however, rightly been challenged by E. Tyan, who pointed out that hereditary succession was not unknown among the Arab tribes, as was consistent with the importance of noble lineage, *nasab*, among them and that among the Quraysh in particular hereditary succession was the rule.⁸ It may be countered that the succession to Muhammad cannot be compared to that of a ruler or king and that the classical Sunnite theory of the caliphate indeed sharply distinguishes between it and kingship, *mulk*, which it condemns in part for its principle of hereditary succession. But the classical theory is obviously posterior to the succession and its opposition to *mulk* and the principle of heredity presumably reflects in part its essential purpose of justifying the early historical caliphate.

There is thus *prima facie* good reason to suspect that the common view of western scholars of Islam about the succession to Muhammad may not be entirely sound and to propose a fresh look at the sources for a proper reassessment. The starting point for establishing what Muhammad may have thought in general about his succession and what his contemporary

⁶ W.M. Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman* (Oxford, 1961), 35—6.

⁷ H. Lammens, *Le Berceau de l'Islam: l'Arabie occidentale a la veille de l'Hegire* (Rome, 1914), 314.

⁸ E. Tyan, *Institutions du droit public Musulman* (Paris, 1954-6), I, 97-9, 114-16. In his *Islamic Political Thought* (Edinburgh, 1968), W.M. Watt likewise affirms that it was Arab practice to select the chief of a tribe from a certain family. He suggests that, had Muhammad's adoptive son Zayd b. Haritha been alive at the time of the Prophet's death, he might have succeeded without difficulty (although Qur'an XXXIII 40 had expressly denied that Muhammad was a father in relation to Zayd). 'AIT, though extolled by the Shi'ites, must have been unacceptable to many Muslims (p. 31). Watt praises the restoration of dynastic rule by the Umayyads as an achievement in accordance with Arab tribal practice (p. 39).

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followers could have seen as basic guidelines after his death must certainly be a study of the Qur'an. The Qur'an, as is well known, does not make any provisions for, or even allude to, the succession of Muhammad, and for this reason non-Muslim historians have virtually ignored it in this regard. It contains, however, specific instructions about the maintenance of kinship ties and inheritance as well as stories and statements about the succession of the past prophets and their families, matters which could not be irrelevant to the succession to Muhammad.

The obligations of kinship and the families of the prophets in the Qur'an

The Qur'an places great emphasis on the duty of all Muslims to maintain the bonds of blood relationship. In numerous passages the faithful are enjoined to act kindly (*ihsan*) towards their close kin, to assist them, and to provide for their sustenance: 'Surely, God commands justice, doing of good, and providing for the close kin (*ita' dhi l-qurba*), and forbids the abominable, the reprehensible, and transgression' (XVI 90). Most often the relatives are mentioned in this context together with the orphans, the poor and the wayfarer (*ibn al-sabfl*) as those entitled to the generosity of the faithful. The fact, however, that they are regularly enumerated in the first place seems to indicate their primary right before any other beneficiaries: 'And give to the close kin his due, to the indigent, and the wayfarer. That is best for those who seek the Countenance of God and they will be the prosperous' (XVII 26). Righteousness (*birr*) consists, among other things, in giving money for the love of God to the kin (*dhawi l-qurba*), the orphans, the poor, the wayfarer, those begging, and for the manumission of slaves (II 177). When the faithful ask Muhammad what they should spend (in charity), he is charged to tell them: 'Whatever good you spend, it is for the parents (*walidayn*) and for the close relatives (*oqrabtm*), the orphans, the poor, and the wayfarer. Whatever good you do, God has knowledge of it' (II 215).

In a wider sense, it is obligatory to treat relatives kindly: 'And remember, We took the covenant of the Banu Isra'Il: Do not worship anyone but God, treat with kindness (*ihsan*) parents, kin, orphans, and the poor, speak gently to the people, perform the prayer, and give alms' (II 83). The Muslims are likewise ordered: 'Worship God and do not join partners with Him, treat with kindness parents, kin, orphans, the needy, the client who is a relative (*jar dhi l-qurba*), the client who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer, and your slaves' (IV 36). Relatives, orphans and the poor are also entitled to be provided for and to be received with kindness when they present themselves at the time of the

division of the inheritance of a deceased person (IV 7-8). It is evidently relatives without a right to a share of the inheritance who are meant here.

Kindness to relatives and material support of them are thus recognized as a cardinal religious obligation in the Qur'an. This obligation, however, is not unconditional. It applies only to kin who have become Muslims. In the Sura of Repentance the faithful are warned: 'O you who believe, do not take your fathers and your brothers as friends (*awliya*) if they prefer infidelity to the faith. Those of you who take them as friends, they are the wrongdoers. If your fathers, your sons, your spouses, your clan (*'ashira*), [if] riches you have acquired, or a trade whose decline you fear, and dwellings which please you, are dearer to you than God, His Messenger, and striving in His path, then wait until God will bring about His order. God does not guide the people who offend' (IX 23-4). It is not even permitted to pray for forgiveness for relatives who have failed to join Islam: 'It is not proper for the Prophet and for those who believe to pray for forgiveness for those who set up partners with God, even though they be of close kin, after it has become clear to them that they are inmates of the hell-fire. And Abraham prayed for his father's forgiveness only because of a promise he had made to him. But when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of God, he dissociated himself from him' (IX 113-14). Furthermore, the faithful must not deviate from honesty and fairness even if it were for the benefit of parents or close kin: 'O you who believe, stand firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even though it be against yourselves, your parents, or close kin, whether rich or poor, for God is closest to them both. Do not follow passion in place of justice' (IV 135). Quite in general the faithful are admonished: 'And whenever you speak, be just, even though it concern a close relative' (VI 152).

Within these limitations, however, the right of the kindred to kindness, care and material support is absolute and clearly takes precedence over any voluntary ties of friendship and alliance: 'Blood relations (*ulu l-arham*) have closer ties (*awla*) to each other in the Book of God than believers and Emigrants (*muhajirun*). You may, however, do kindness to your [unrelated] friends (*awliya'ikum*). That is recorded in the Book' (XXXIII 6). It is known that after their emigration to Medina many Muslims, in the 'brothering' (*mu'akhat*) arranged by Muhammad, established formal alliances with Medinan and other foreign Muslims in order to compensate for the absence of their blood relations who still remained polytheists. The Qur'an states in that regard: 'Surely, those who believed and have emigrated and have fought with their property and their persons in the path of God, and those who sheltered and aided [them], they are the allies (*awliyff*) of each other. As for those who believed but did not emigrate, you have no ties of alliance whatsoever

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with them until they emigrate; but if they ask for your aid in religion, it is your duty to aid them, except against a people with whom you have a compact. And God sees whatever you do. The infidels are allies of each other. Unless you do this [aid other Muslims], there would be temptation [to apostatize] on earth and much corruption. Those who believed and have emigrated and fought in the path of God and those who sheltered and aided [them], they are the faithful truly. For them, there will be forgiveness and generous sustenance' (VIII 72—4). These verses established a close solidarity among the Muslims, Mekkan Emigrants and Medinan Helpers (*ansar*) assembled in the Community at Medina. Yet verse 75, which follows the passage and was evidently added later, modified the meaning in favour of the blood relations even if they joined the Medinan Community at a later date: 'Those who believed afterwards and emigrated and fought together with you, they are of you. And blood relations have closer ties with each other in the Book of God.' The latter sentence, according to the commentators of the Qur'an, specifically restored the right of inheritance of the relatives in disregard of the alliances earlier concluded with strangers.⁹

The obligation to provide for the needy kin must not be suspended because of personal grudges: 'Let not those among you who are [materially] favoured and have ample means commit themselves by oath not to help their kin (*uli l-qurba*) and the needy and the Emigrants in the path of God. Let them forgive and overlook. Do you not desire that God shall forgive you? And God is forgiving, merciful' (XXIV 22). According to the commentators, this verse referred to Abu Bakr and his nephew Mistah. The latter had been among those who cast doubt on the fidelity of A'isha during the affair of her absence from the camp of the Muslims. Abu Bakr, deeply offended by the conduct of his nephew, vowed that he would no longer provide for him as he had done in the past, even after Mistah formally repented of his mistake. The Qur'an, however, commanded him not to neglect his duty towards his needy nephew and to pardon him.¹⁰

In the story of the past prophets, as it is related in the Qur'an, their families play a prominent role. The families generally provide vital

⁹ Al-Tabarī, *Jami' al-bayan fi tafsir al-Qur'an*, ed. Majmud Muhammad Shakir and Ahmad Muhammad Shakir (Cairo, 1373-88/1955-69), XIV, 89.

¹⁰ Al-Tabarī, *Jam' al-bayan fi tafsir al-Qur'an* (Cairo, 1321/1903), XVIII, 72-3. Mistah is 'Awf b. Uthatha b. 'Abbad b. al-Muttalib (Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, *al-Isaba fi tamyiz al-Sahaba* (Cairo, 1323—5/[1905—7]), VI, 88; al-Zubayri, *Kitab Nasab Quraysh*, ed. E. Levi-Provengal (Cairo, 1953), 95). As a Muttalibid he was also entitled to support from the Prophet's fifth of booty and *fay'*. He is mentioned among the recipients of the produce from Muhammad's share of Khaybar (see W. Madelung, 'The Hashimiyyat of al-Kumayt and Hashimī Shi'ism', *Studia Islamica*, 70 (1989), 5-26, at 12 and n. 36).

assistance to the prophets against the adversaries among their people. After the death of the prophets, their descendants become their spiritual and material heirs. The prophets ask God to grant them the help of members of their family and they pray for divine favour for their kin and their offspring. The prophets of the Banu IsraH were in fact all descendants of a single family from Adam and Noah down to Jesus: 'Truly, God chose Adam, Noah, the family of Abraham, and the family of 'Imran above all the worlds, as off-spring one of the other' (III 33-4). After narrating the story of Moses, Ishmael and Idris, the Qur'an adds: 'Those were the prophets on whom God bestowed his blessings of the off-spring of Adam and of those whom We carried [in the ark] with Noah, and of the off-spring of Abraham and Israel, of those whom We guided and chose' (XIX 58).

The chain of the prophets and their families is described with more detail in the following verses: 'And We gave him [Abraham] Isaac and Jacob, all of whom We guided. And before him We guided Noah, and of his off-spring, David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses, and Aaron. Thus We recompense those who do good. And Zachariah, and John, and Jesus, and Elias, all of them among the righteous, and Ishmael, and Elisha, Jonah, and Lot: Each of them We preferred above the worlds, and [some] of their fathers, their descendants, and their brothers: We chose them and We guided them to the straight path. That is the guidance of God with which He guides whomever He wishes of His worshippers. But if they had set up partners [with Him], whatever they have been doing would have been in vain for them. They are the ones to whom We have given the Book, the rule (*hukm*) and prophethood' (VI 84—9).

Noah was saved together with his family while the rest, or the great majority, of his people were drowned in the Flood because of their sins: 'And [remember] Noah when he implored [Us] in former time, and We responded to him and rescued him and his family from the great disaster. We aided him against the people who treated Our signs as lies. They were an evil people, so We drowned them all together' (XXI 76-7). 'We rescued him and his family from the great disaster and made his descendants the survivors' (XXXVII 76-7). God commanded Noah: 'Place in it [the ark] pairs of every [species] and your family (*ahl*) except for those of them against whom the sentence has already gone forth. Do not address Me concerning those who were unjust. They shall be drowned' (XXIII 27; see also XI 40). The wife and one of the sons of Noah were in fact excluded from the rescue, even though Noah pleaded for his son: 'And Noah called to his Lord and said: O my Lord, surely my son is of my family, and Your promise is the truth, and You are the justest of judges. [God] said: O Noah, he is not of your family. Surely, it is not

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righteous action. Do not ask of Me that of which you have no knowledge' (XI 45-6).

Likewise, the family of the prophet Lot was saved together with him while the remainder of the people of his town were annihilated: 'The people of Lot treated the warnings as lies. We sent against them a shower of stones, except for the family of Lot. We rescued them at dawn, as a favour from Us. Thus We recompense those who give thanks' (LIV 33-5). The family of Lot had acquired a state of purity which distinguished them from the ordinary people. When Lot reproached his people for having surrendered to turpitude, 'the only answer of his people was to say: Expel the family of Lot from your town. They are indeed people who purify themselves (*yataahharun*). But We saved him and his family, except his wife. We desired that she be of those who stayed behind' (XXVII 56-7). Lot's wife, like Noah's, was punished because of her betrayal of her husband. 'God has set as an example for the unbelievers the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot. They were married to two of Our righteous servants but betrayed them. Thus they were of no avail at all for them before God, and they were told: Enter the fire together with those who will enter it' (LXVI 10).

Abraham was the patriarch of the prophets of the Banu Isra'Il. All later prophets and transmitters of the scripture among them were of his descendants: 'And We sent Noah and Abraham and placed among their off-spring prophethood and the Book' (LVI126). The father of Abraham, however, was an obstinate idolater and a persecutor of the confessors of the unity of God. As mentioned above, Abraham at first prayed for him, on account of a promise made to him, but later dissociated himself from him. When God chose Abraham as imam for his people, Abraham prayed to his Lord that He grant this honour also to his descendants: 'And remember when Abraham was tried by his Lord with certain commandments which he fulfilled, [God] said: I shall make you an imam for the people. He said: And also of my off-spring? [God] said: My compact will not comprise the evil-doers' (II 124). God's compact thus covered the just among the descendants of Abraham. God gave him his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob who became prophets: 'When [Abraham] had turned away from them [the idolaters of his people] and from what they worshipped besides God, We granted him Isaac and Jacob, and each one We made a prophet. We bestowed of Our mercy on them, and We accorded them a high truthful repute' (XIX 49-50). 'And We gave him Isaac and Jacob and placed among his progeny prophethood and the Book. We gave him his reward in this world and surely he will be of the righteous in the hereafter' (XXIX 27).

When the angels announced to Abraham the imminence of the birth of

his son Isaac and, after him, of his grandson Jacob, his wife Sarah doubted the good news in view of their advanced age, but the angels reminded her of her elevated rank as the spouse of Abraham: 'And his [Abraham's] wife was standing, and she laughed. Then We gave her good tidings of Isaac and, after Isaac, Jacob. She said: Alas for me, shall I bear child, as I am an old woman and this my husband is an old man? This is indeed a wonderful thing. They said: Do you wonder at God's order? The mercy and the blessings of God are upon you [m. pi.], o people of the house (*ahl al-bayt*). He is indeed worthy of praise and full of glory' (XI 71-3). The 'people of the house' are here certainly the family of the prophet Abraham to whom Sarah belonged through marriage, not the adherents of the cult of the House, i.e. the Ka'ba, as has been suggested by R. Paret.¹¹ The miraculous birth of Isaac is justified by God's supreme favour for the family of his chosen prophet. Those distinguished by such favour of God must not be envied their elevated rank: 'Or do they envy the people for what God has given them of His favour? We had already given the family of Abraham the Book and wisdom (*hikma*), and bestowed upon them a mighty kingship (*mulky* (IV 54).

Isaac and Jacob are also described as imams who direct the people by the order of God: 'And We gave him Isaac and Jacob as an additional gift, and We made all of them righteous men. We made them imams who guide by Our command, and We inspired them to do good things, to perform the prayer, and to give alms. They constantly served Us' (XXI 72-3). But there were also renegades among the descendants of Abraham and Isaac: 'We blessed him [Abraham] and Isaac, but of their progeny there are some who do good and some who manifestly wrong themselves' (XXXVII 113; see also LVII 26).

In the face of the opposition of the Banu IsraH, Moses implored his Lord to grant him the help of his brother Aaron: 'Give me an assistant from my family, Aaron, my brother, increase my strength through him and make him share my task' (XX 29—32). God responded to his prayer: 'We indeed gave Moses the Book and appointed his brother Aaron with him as an assistant' (XXV 35; see also XX 36). Aaron thus was chosen as the associate of Moses in the revelation: 'Certainly We gave Moses and Aaron the salvation (*furqan*) and a light and a reminder for the pious who fear their Lord in the unseen and are frightened of the hour [of the Judgment]' (XXI 48-9). A mysterious relic (*baqiyya*) of the family of Moses and the family of Aaron became one of the signs of the divine investiture with the royalty of the Banu IsraH: 'Their prophet [Samuel]

¹¹ R. Paret, 'Der Plan einer neuen, leicht koramentierten Koraniibersetzung', in *Orientalis- tische Studien Enno Littmann zu seinem 60. Geburtstag*, ed. R. Paret (Leiden, 1935), 121-30, at 127-30.

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said to them: The sign of his [Saul's] rule is that the Ark of the Covenant shall come to you, carried by angels, containing a divine immanence (*.saktna*) from your Lord and a relic of what the family of Moses and the family of Aaron left. Truly, in that is a sign for you if you have faith' (II248).

To David, prophet and vicegerent (*khalifa*) on earth, God gave his son Solomon as his assistant and successor: 'We gave to David Solomon, how excellent a servant' (XXXVIII 30). Solomon inherited from David both his kingship and his prophetic wisdom and judgement: 'And Solomon became David's heir (*wa-waritha Sulaymanu Dawuda*) and said: O people, we have been taught the speech of the birds and have been given of every thing' (XXVII 16). Jointly David and Solomon gave judgment, witnessed by God, in a case of damage to the fields (XXI 78).

Zachariah, the father of John the Baptist, said in his prayer: 'Indeed, I fear the *mawall* after my death. My wife is barren, so grant me a descendant (*waliyyan*) from you who will inherit from me and inherit from the family of Jacob, and make him, o my Lord, pleasing [to You]' (XIX 5-6). The commentators generally take the term *mawali* to mean relatives.¹² As R. Blachere has observed, however, it seems that there is here rather an allusion to the hostility of the other priests towards Zachariah, who had no offspring, as narrated in the Gospel of Thomas.²² In any case, John became the heir of the family of Jacob.

In the story of the non-Israelite prophets, their families likewise play a vital part as their disciples and protectors. The sinful people of Madyan answered their prophet Shu'ayb: 'O Shu'ayb, we do not understand much of what you say, and surely we see you weak among us. If it were not for your clan (*raht*) we would certainly have stoned you, for you are not powerful over us' (XI91). A group of Thamud, the people of the prophet Salih, said to each other: 'Swear a mutual oath by God that we attack him and his family by night. Then we shall say to the one entitled to his vengeance: We did not witness the destruction of his family, and we are surely telling the truth' (XXVII 49). God prevented their plot and annihilated the guilty and all the people of Thamud.

The eminent position of the families and the descendants of the past prophets and the parallelism often observed between the history of the former prophets in the Qur'an and that of Muhammad must raise expectations of a distinguished place reserved for his family. The kin of Muhammad are mentioned in various contexts, sometimes probably in a wider sense than that of his family. This order is addressed to the Prophet: 'Warn your nearest clan (*'ashirataka l-aqrabiri*), and lower your wing to the faithful who follow you' (XXVI 214-15). The 'nearest clan'

¹² Tabarī, *Jami'*, XVI 32. ²² R. Blachere, *Le Coran* (Paris, 1957), 329, n. 5.

refers most likely to the Quraysh, although a narrower interpretation does not seem impossible.

Shi'ites frequently quote as evidence verse XLII23 where Muhammad is commanded to address the faithful: 'Say: I do not ask you for any recompense for this [the communication of the revelation] except the love for near kinship (*al-mawadda fi l-qurba*).' They interpret it as asking the Muslims to love the *ahl al-bayt*, the family of the Prophet. This interpretation, however, does not agree with the wording of the text. Al-Tabarī in his commentary on the verse²³ offers three interpretations and prefers the first one, according to which the demand is for love of the faithful for the Prophet to whom they are related by blood ties. This explanation would be the most plausible if the verse were Mekkan and addressed to the Quraysh. The verse is, however, usually considered Medinan, pronounced at a time when many Muslims were not related to Muhammad by blood ties. Preference might thus be given to the third interpretation of al-Tabarī (the second is rather improbable), that love towards relatives in general is meant. However, an interpretation close to that preferred by al-Tabarī seems to suggest itself by reference to another verse which affirms that Muhammad is nearer to all Muslims than they are to each other: 'The Prophet has closer ties (*awla*) to the faithful than they themselves have to each other, and his wives are their mothers' (XXXIII 6).

There are, in any case, other references to the kin of the Prophet which certainly refer to his family and blood relations. The Qur'an reserves a part of the fifth (*khums*) of booty (*ghamma*) and a part of the *fay* that is property of the infidels taken by the Muslims without combat, to the kin of Muhammad in association with himself: 'Know that whatever you capture as booty, the fifth of it belongs to God, to the Messenger, to the near kin (*dhi l-qurba*), the orphans, the poor, and the wayfarer, if you believe in God and in what He has sent down on His servant on the day of salvation, the day of the meeting of the two groups' (VIII41). 'What God has granted as *fay*' to His Messenger from the people of the towns belongs to God, the Messenger, the close kin, and the orphans, the poor, and the wayfarer, in order that it may not circulate among the rich among you' (LIX 7). The Sunnite and Shi'ite sources agree that by the 'near kin' in these verses were meant the descendants of Hashim b. 'Abd Manaf, the great-grandfather of Muhammad, and of Hashim's brother al-Muttalib,²⁴

²³ Tabarī, *Jami'*, XXV, 13-15. _

²⁴ According to a report of the 'Alid 'Isa b. 'Abd Allah, Muhammad also gave portions of the *khums* to the Banu 'Abd Yaghuth (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina al-munawwara*, ed. FahTm Muhammad Shaltut (Qumm, 1410/[1989/90]), 645). The descendants of Muhammad's maternal uncle 'Abd Yaghuth b. Wahb b. 'Abd Manaf of the clan of Zuhra are meant.

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to the exclusion of the descendants of the other two brothers of Hashim, *Abd Shams (the ancestor of the Umayyads) and Nawfal. The association of the Banu 1-Muttalib with the Banu Hashim dated from the pre-Islamic *hily al-fudul*, a pact grouping these two families and some other clans of Quraysh in an alliance opposed to the other two and their allies.²⁵ This alliance was confirmed at the time of the boycott of Muhammad by the Quraysh when the Banu 1-Muttalib joined the Hashim in extending protection to him.²⁶ Because of their association with the Banu Hashim, a number of the Banu 1-Muttalib received portions of the produce of Khaybar belonging to the Prophet.

The portion of the booty and *fay'* reserved to the kin of the Prophet was, according to numerous reports in the sources, a recompense for them for their exclusion from the alms (*sadaqa*, *zakat*). The relatives of Muhammad were, like himself, forbidden to receive any part of the alms. The reason usually given for this exclusion was that the alms accrued from the defilements (*awsakh*) of the people, alms-giving being considered an act of purification. On account of their state of purity, it was improper for the close kin of the Prophet to receive or to handle the alms. The schools of religious law, Sunnite and Shi'ite alike, have preserved this prohibition for the Banu Hashim to partake of the alms of the ordinary Muslims.²⁷

This state of purity, which distinguished the family of Muhammad from the common Muslims, agreed with the elevated rank of the families of the earlier prophets. As mentioned above, the Qur'an described the family of Lot as people who kept themselves pure (*yatahharun*). The same state of purity is evidently referred to in the verse addressed to the wives of the Prophet: 'Stay in your houses, and do not show yourselves in spectacular fashion like that of the former time of ignorance. Perform the prayer, give alms, and obey God and His Messenger. God desires only to remove defilement from you, o people of the house (*ahl al-bayt*), and to purify you (*yutahhirakum*) completely' (XXXIII 33). Who are the 'people of the house' here? The pronoun referring to them is in the masculine plural, while the preceding part of the verse is in the feminine plural. This change of gender has evidently contributed to the birth of

²⁵ W.M. Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca* (Oxford, 1953), 6-8.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 8, 120-1. In his *Muhammedanische Studien* (Halle, 1889—90), I. Goldziher suggested that the hadith of Jubayr b. Mut'im about the Prophet's preference of Hashim and al-Muttalib over 'Abd Shams and Nawfal was an 'Abbasid anti-Umayyad partisan invention. This judgement rests on a complete disregard of the facts of Muhammad's career and his conflict with his Mekkan opponents.

²⁷ See Madelung, 'The Hashimiyyat', 24-6. Caetani mistranslated the phrase (*ahl bayti*) *man hurrima l-sadaqa ba'dah* in the hadith about Ghadr Khumm attributed to Zayd b. Arqam as 'people of his house are those who are excluded from the obligation of paying the legal alms after the death of the Prophet' (*Annali*, X, 455). There was no such exclusion.

various accounts of a legendary character, attaching the latter part of the verse to the five People of the Mantle (*ahl al-kisa*): Muhammad, 'AIT, Fatima, Hasan and Husayn. In spite of the obvious Shi'ite significance, the great majority of the reports quoted by al-Tabari in his commentary on this verse support this interpretation.¹³

It seems quite unlikely, however, that this part of the verse could have been in effect a separate revelation which was later attached to the rest, as these reports imply. Just as in respect to the similar verse addressed to the wife of Abraham, R. Paret has argued that *ahl al-bayt* may here rather refer to the adherents of the cult of the Ka'ba.¹⁴ This interpretation, however, is incompatible with the clear aim of the verse to elevate the rank of the wives of the Prophet above all other Muslim women. The previous verse begins with the declaration: 'O women of the Prophet, you are not like any other women' (XXXIII 32). The women are addressed here as members of the purified family of the Prophet through marriage. It is known that Muhammad on other occasions addressed his wives individually as *ahl al-bayt*, evidently with the intention of honouring them.¹⁵ Here they are admonished in clearly critical terms to conform to their elevated state in their conduct. The *ahl al-bayt* of Muhammad meant, as was consistent with the general usage of the term at the time, primarily his blood relations, the same Banu Hashim who were forbidden to receive alms in order that their state of purity not be soiled and, in second place, the wives.

There is still the verse of the 'mutual imprecation (*mubahala*) whose religious significance is, in view of the uncertainty about the circumstances surrounding its revelation, difficult to evaluate.³¹ Muhammad is addressed:

¹³ Tabari, *Jami'*, XXII, 5-7. ²⁹ Paret, 'Der Plan', 127-30.

³⁰ Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad* ([Cairo] 1313/1895), III, 246. In his *Fatima et les filles de Mahomet*, 99, Lammens asserted that *ahl al-bayt*, as understood in Arabic, basically means a man's wives assembled under the same roof. Yet the references given by him in n. 4 as evidence for the use of the term with respect to families other than Muhammad's clearly show that the primary meaning was close kin, blood relations.

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'If anyone dispute with you in this matter [concerning Jesus] after the knowledge which has come to you, say: Come let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves, then let us swear an oath and place the curse of God on those who lie' (III 61). The commentators are agreed that the verse was occasioned by the visit of a delegation of Christians from Najran in the year 10/631-2 who did not accept the Islamic doctrine about Jesus. Modern scholars have critically noted a certain tendency of the commentators to relate many Qur'anic passages concerning Christians to this visit.¹⁶ Who is meant by 'our sons' and 'our women' on the part of Muhammad? The *mubahala*, according to the reports, did not take place, since the Christians excused themselves from it, and the majority of the Sunnite reports quoted by al-Tabarī do not identify the members of the family of Muhammad who were expected to participate. Other Sunnite reports mention Fatima, Hasan and Husayn, and some agree with the Shi'ite tradition that the *ahl al-kisa* including 'Alī, were assembled for the occasion. Irrespective of the circumstances, there does not seem to be a plausible alternative to the identification of the 'sons' in the verse with the two grandsons of Muhammad and, in that case, the inclusion of their parents, 'Alī and Fatima, would be reasonable. The term 'our women', in place of 'our wives', does not exclude the daughter of the Prophet. The participation of the family was perhaps traditional in the ritual of the *mubahala*. Yet the proposal itself of this ritual by the Prophet under circumstances of an intense religious significance and its sanction by the Qur'an could not have failed to raise the religious rank of his family.

The Qur'an thus accorded the *ahl al-bayt* of Muhammad an elevated position above the rest of the faithful, similar to the position of the families of the earlier prophets. God desired to purify them from all defilement. Certainly the renegades of the Prophet's family who opposed his mission were excluded from the divine grace, just like the renegades among the families of the past prophets. Abu Lahab, the uncle of Muhammad, and his wife were even singled out for divine curse in a Sura of the Qur'an. But such exceptions did not affect the divine favour for the *ahl al-bayt* in general.

Insofar as the Qur'an expresses the thoughts of Muhammad, it is evident that he could not have considered Abu Bakr his natural successor or have been pleased by his succession. The Qur'an certainly does not fully reflect Muhammad's views about the men and women surrounding him and his attitude towards them. Yet he could not have seen his succession essentially other than in the light of the narrations of the

¹⁶ T. Noldeke and F. Schwally, *Geschichte des Qorans* (Leipzig, 1909-38), I, 177, n. 2.

Qur'an about the succession of the earlier prophets, just as he saw his own mission as a prophet, the resistance of his people with which he met, and his ultimate success by divine grace in the light of the experience of the former prophets as related in the Qur'an. These earlier prophets considered it a supreme divine favour to be succeeded by their offspring or close kin for which they implored their Lord. Modern Sunnite apologists argue against this on the basis of Qur'an XXXIII 40 which describes Muhammad as the Seal of the Prophets. They maintain that, as the last of the prophets, Muhammad was not to be succeeded by any of his family according to God's design. In order to reveal this design, God also let all of Muhammad's sons die in infancy.¹⁷ For the same reason Muhammad did not appoint a successor, since he wished to leave the succession to be settled by the Muslim Community on the basis of the Qur'anic principle of consultation (*shura*).

The argument rests, however, on a fancifully wide interpretation of the term 'Seal of the Prophets'. For even if its meaning in the Qur'an is accepted to be the 'last of the prophets', which is itself not entirely certain,¹⁸ there is no reason why it should imply that Muhammad as the spiritual and worldly leader of the Muslim Community, aside from his prophethood, should not be succeeded by his family. In the Qur'an, the descendants and close kin of the prophets are their heirs also in respect to kingship (*mulk*), rule (*hukm*), wisdom (*hikma*), the book and the imamate. The Sunnite concept of the true caliphate itself defines it as a succession of the Prophet in every respect except his prophethood. Why should Muhammad not be succeeded in it by any of his family like the earlier prophets? If God really wanted to indicate that he should not be succeeded by any of them, why did He not let his grandsons and other kin die like his sons? There is thus good reason to doubt that Muhammad failed to appoint a successor because he realized that the divine design excluded hereditary succession of his family and that he wanted the Muslims to choose their head by *shura*. The Qur'an advises the faithful to settle some matters by consultation, but not the succession to prophets. That, according to the Qur'an, is settled by divine election, and God usually chooses their successors, whether they become prophets or not, from their own kin.

¹⁷ The argument has a basis in hadith. According to statements ascribed to several Companions, Muhammad's son Ibrahim did not survive because he would have become a prophet. See Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, II, 105—6; Y. Friedmann, 'Finality of Prophethood in Sunni Islam', *JSAI*, 7 (1986), 177-215, at 187-9.

¹⁸ Friedmann, 'Finality of Prophethood'; G. G. Stroumsa, 'Seal of the Prophets: The Nature of a Manichaeic Metaphor', *JSAI*, 7 (1986), 61-74; C. Colpe, 'Das Siegel der Propheten', *Orientalia Suecana*, 33-5 (1984—6), 71-83, revised version in C. Colpe, *Das Siegel der Propheten*, (Berlin, 1990), 227[^]13.

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Why then did Muhammad fail to make proper arrangements for his succession, even though he presumably hoped for a successor from his family? Any answer must remain speculative. A simple Islamic explanation would be that in an important decision of this nature he expected a Qur'anic revelation, but did not receive one. Non-Muslim historians may be more inclined to speculate that Muhammad hesitated because he was aware of the difficulties a Hashimite succession might face given the intense rivalry for leadership among the clans of Quraysh and the relative weakness of the Banu Hashim. In the year 10/631 Muhammad sent 'Alias his representative to the Yemen, where his conduct seems to have provoked some criticism. Upon his return, just three months before the Prophet's death, Muhammad found it necessary to make a strong public statement in support of his cousin.³⁵ It was evidently not a suitable occasion to appoint him successor. Muhammad might also have delayed a decision hoping to live long enough to be able to appoint one of his grandsons. His death was generally unexpected among his followers even during his mortal illness. He himself may also have been unaware of the approaching end until it was too late.

Two witnesses: 'A'isha and 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas

Among the extant reports about the succession and the early caliphate those attributed to Abu Bakr's daughter 'A'isha and to 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas, cousin of Muhammad and of 'AIT, are of primary importance. Both were in a position to observe closely the events in which they were emotionally deeply involved and in some of which they played a direct part, although in opposite camps. 'A'isha, as is well known, championed her father's right to the succession of Muhammad and backed the caliphate of his appointed successor, 'Umar. In the election of the *shura* after the murder of 'Umar, she clearly preferred 'Uthman to her personal enemy 'AIT. She soon became, however, a vocal critic of 'Uthman's conduct as caliph and her agitation against him contributed to the outbreak of open rebellion. When 'Uthman was murdered by the rebels and they raised 'AIT to the caliphate, she immediately turned against the latter, claiming revenge for the dead caliph. After the defeat of her alliance in the battle of the Camel, she withdrew from active politics. Her relations with the Umayyad Mu'awiya, under whose reign she died in 58/678, were cool.³⁶

'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas, born in 619, three years before the *hijra*,

³⁵ L. Veccia Vaglieri, 'Ghadir Khumm', *EI* (2nd edn) and below, 253.

³⁶ On the life of 'A'isha see especially N. Abbott, *Aishah the Beloved of Mohammad* (Chicago, 1942).

appeared first in public life under the caliph 'Umar. The latter seems to have tried to draw him into his company as a representative of the Banu Hashim, who mostly avoided him. During the siege of 'Uthman's residence in Medina by the rebels from Egypt and Kufa, he was among the group of sons of prominent Companions who protected the palace of the caliph. 'Uthman then appointed him leader of the pilgrimage to Mekka and entrusted him with an open letter to the pilgrims, from whom he hoped for relief. 'AIT initially relied extensively on his advice and appointed him governor of Basra. Ibn al-'Abbas, however, later defected temporarily and was evidently critical of some aspects of his cousin's reign. After 'All's murder he wrote a letter to his son al-Hasan encouraging him to continue his father's war against Mu'awiya and to fight for his rights. He did not back the revolt of al-Hasan's brother al-Husayn under the caliph Yazid. Together with 'All's other son Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya, he refused to recognize the caliphate of 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr, who imprisoned both of them. They were freed by Kufan horsemen sent by the Shi'ite rebel leader al-Mukhtar. Ibn al-'Abbas died soon afterwards in 68/687-8.¹⁹

Caetani considered the attribution of historical reports to these two Companions as mostly fictitious. He argued that the use of the chain of transmitters (*isnad*) became customary only long after their time and it was then often traced back to Companions in order to raise the authority of anonymous traditions.²⁰ 'A'isha in particular was chosen because it was assumed that she must have had first-hand knowledge of the events.²¹ Reports thus could be old and reliable except for their attribution. In practice, however, Caetani tended to reject these reports as apocryphal or to express serious reservations about them while preferring, wherever possible, accounts reported without *isnad* by the early compilers of history such as Ibn Ishaq. Somewhat inconsistently, he described Ibn al-'Abbas as an arch liar and fabricator on account of the fictitious biblical stories and cosmological myths which he spread in his exegesis of the Qur'an.⁴⁰ Yet if this exegesis can reliably be attributed to Ibn al-'Abbas, why should the attribution of historical reports to him be regularly fictitious? A further problem regarding Caetani's view is that many of the reports ascribed to 'A'isha and Ibn al-'Abbas quote them speaking in the first person. It is evident that these can never have been anonymous traditions and that only the formal *isnad* could be a later addition. If the attribution is rejected the reports themselves must be presumed to be later fabrications.

¹⁹ For a short summary of the career of 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas see L. Veccia Vaglieri, "Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas", *EI* (2nd edn).

²⁰ See in general his discussion in *Annali*, I, 38ff. ³⁹ *Ibid.*, II/1, 691-2.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, I, 47-51.

The date of the introduction of the formal *isnad* is thus of little relevance to the question of correct attribution. This must be judged largely on the basis of the mutual consistency of the reports attributed to the same witness and their consistency with what is known of his or her life and political attitudes. 'A'isha and Ibn al-'Abbas were, as noted, deeply involved in the events, though in opposite camps. Their testimony can be expected to be partisan in both what they reported and how they presented it, rather than neutral and disinterested. Since the tendentious aspect of the reports often agrees with later Sunnite or Shi'ite partisan positions, there has been a common tendency among western scholars to regard them as later fabrications, in particular those favouring Shi'ite views. Yet tendentiousness alone is no evidence for late origin. If some reports, because of particular circumstances, can be seen to be almost certainly correctly attributed, the burden of the proof with regard to similar ones, where matters are more ambiguous, is on those who wish to consider them as late forgeries.

The historical reports attributed to 'A'isha and Ibn al-'Abbas in the major sources such as Ibn Hisham, al-Tabari, Ibn Sa'd and al-Baladhuri fulfil this condition of consistency to a high degree. They reflect sharply defined personal views and political attitudes. There are variant versions in which some of their outspoken statements, which must have seemed objectionable to the later transmitters, appear toned down or are omitted. Only a few reports must be definitely rejected as at variance with their political attitudes.

'A'isha's reports are highly laudatory and apologetic for Abu Bakr, whom she presents as a kindly father figure full of the *hilm*, gentleness and prudence, valued so highly among the Arabs as a leadership quality, quite in contrast to the coarse and rude 'Umar who was feared by everybody in spite of his undeniable righteousness. At the beginning of his mortal illness, Muhammad told the assembled Muslims that he knew no man more excellent in his actions (*afjlal yadan*) among the Companions than Abu Bakr and ordered that all (private) doors leading to the mosque (and his living quarters) be blocked except for Abu Bakr's.²² He insisted, in

²² Tabari, I, 1808. As against the numerous reports of 'A'isha and others about the last public prayer led by Muhammad, according to which he primarily manifested his preference for Abu Bakr, 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas is quoted as having given a completely different account on the authority of his elder brother al-Fadl. According to this account, the Prophet did not mention, or allude to, Abu Bakr at all. He confessed his repentance for any offences he had committed against others and asked those present to confess their wrongdoings so that he could pray for them. When one of them acknowledged being a liar, hypocrite and guilty of every offence, 'Umar self-righteously told him: 'You have disgraced yourself.' But the Prophet said: 'The disgrace of this world is lighter than the disgrace of the hereafter. O God, grant him truthfulness and faith and bring his matters to a good end.' 'Umar insisted: 'Speak to him.' The Prophet laughed and said (to the man): 'Umar is with me and I am with 'Umar. After me, stick to 'Umar, wherever he shall be' (Tabari, I, 1801-3).

²² 'Abd al-Razzaq, *Musannaf*, V, 438-9; al-Bukhari, *Sahihi* (Cairo, 1312/[1894]), *Marda*, 17; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, II/2, 37-8; *Annali*, II/1, 508.

spite of 'A'isha's protests, that Abu Bakr, and no one else, should take his place in leading the prayers. It is evident that in 'A'isha's view her father was the rightful successor of Muhammad on the basis of the latter's implicit choice of him, not the events at the Saqlfat Ban! Sa'ida. Abu Bakr's greatest concern was to treat the family of his deceased friend kindly and fairly, a duty which he placed even higher than his obligation towards his own kin. 'A'isha spared no effort to portray her husband's kin in general, and 'All in particular, in the most negative light; their incompetence was matched only by their arrogance. Muhammad's uncle al-'Abbas greatly upset the ill Prophet when he, in the company of several pro-Hashimite women, infused medicine through the side of his mouth (*laddahu*) without his permission and then explained that they thought he had pleurisy (*dhat al-janb*), a suggestion angrily rejected by Muhammad, for God would not have afflicted him with 'this devil's disease'.⁴² Not even to the dead body of the Prophet would his kin have shown due respect had it not been for divine intervention. 'AIT, encouraged by his wife Fatima and al-'Abbas, who falsely pretended to the inheritance of Muhammad's worldly possessions, imagined that he was entitled to the caliphate as Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law. But as everybody deserted him after the death of Fatima, he was forced to offer Abu Bakr his allegiance. His condition for meeting him was that the rude 'Umar should not be present. After he recognized that Abu Bakr had been right all along, people began to speak to him again.

'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas presented the views of the Banu Hashim about their own right much more cautiously. He recognized that 'the people (*iqawrriy*, meaning Quraysh, had decided against what the former firmly considered as their legitimate claim as the Prophet's kin. His attitude to 'AIT was not without reservations. He mentioned having repeatedly

⁴² Ibn Hisham, *Sirat sayyidina Muhammad rasul Allah*, ed. F. Wiistenfeld as *Das Leben Muhammads nach Muhammad Ibn Ishak* (Göttingen, 1859-60), 1007; TabarT, I, 1809. The women named as present by 'A'isha were Umm Salama and Maymuna, wives of Muhammad, and Asma' bt 'Umays. All three were pro-Hashimite and therefore odious to 'A'isha. On Asma' see Abbott, *Aishah*, 113-15. 'A'isha added with satisfaction that Maymuna was given an infusion of medicine through her mouth while she was fasting because of the curse of the Prophet and as a punishment for what they did. In other versions 'A'isha is quoted as saying that she was also present (Tabari, I, 1808-9). In one of them, transmitted by her nephew al-Qasim b. Muhammad, she tells the assembled women not to give the medicine to the Prophet, but she is nevertheless also affected by his curse and forced to swallow medicine (Baladhuri, *Ansab al-ashraf*, vol. I, ed. Muhammad Hamld Allah (Cairo, 1959), 546). Other versions, not attributed to 'A'isha, mostly blame Asma', rather than al-'Abbas, for giving Muhammad the medicine (Tabari, I, 1810; Ibn Sa'd, *Kitab al-Tabaqat al-Kabir*, ed. E. Sachau *et al.* (Leiden, 1905-40), II/2, 31-2, where one version is attributed to 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas). Caetani misunderstood the tendency of 'A'isha's account as implying that Muljammad distrusted everybody except his uncle al-'Abbas (*Annali*, II/1, 499). The impression conveyed is rather that Muljammad was strict with the women but unduly lenient with his kinsman al-'Abbas, who was the main culprit.

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criticized his cousin's actions and warned him of their consequences. He rejected the belief of some of 'All's partisans that the Prophet actually made a will (*awsa*) in his favour. Yet this, he suggested, was probably only because 'A'isha and Hafsa prevented Muhammad from seeing him alone when he asked for him during his illness and they insisted on calling their fathers. When the ill Muhammad proposed to write a letter of guidance for his Companions, 'Umar intervened, asserting that he was raving. 'Abd Allah's father al-'Abbas recognized the approaching death in the face of Muhammad and tried to persuade 'All to approach him concerning the succession. He told 'AIT that the Prophet would either give the rule to them or, if not, would at least commend (*awsa*) them to the good care of 'the people'. 'AIT refused, however, expressing fear that if the Prophet denied them the succession, 'the people' would never give it to them.

The presentation of Ibn al-'Abbas, however, leaves no doubt that he considered 'AIT as entitled to the succession, although not formally appointed, and held that he was arbitrarily deprived by Abu Bakr with the connivance of 'the people'. The Banu Hashim expressed their distrust and then their disapproval of their conduct by excluding virtually all outsiders from the preparation of the funeral and the burial of the Prophet, thus depriving the new caliph of the honour of paying his final tribute to his predecessor. Abu Bakr denied them illegally their inheritance and the share of the *fay* to which they were entitled according to the Qur'an. 'Umar later tried to meet their grievance by offering them partial restitution, but this was rejected by the Banu Hashim as insufficient. 'Umar's views evidently interested Ibn al-'Abbas in particular. 'Umar admitted in public that the decision taken at the SaqTfat BanT Sa'ida constituted a *falta*, a precipitate and ill-considered deal. He nevertheless insisted that Abu Bakr's caliphate, in view of its manifest success, was determined by God's choice and legitimate. He expressed his regret to Ibn al-'Abbas that 'AIT continued to shun him and would not join him in a journey. Yet while he sought to treat 'AIT as a distinguished early Companion, he was greatly worried about the possibility of 'AIT's succession to the caliphate since he and his clan would turn it into a hereditary reign depriving 'the people' of their right to it. Privately he explained to Ibn al-'Abbas that 'the people' would not countenance the rule of the Banu Hashim out of jealousy, since these would then enjoy the monopoly of both prophethood and caliphate.

The authenticity of the reports attributed to 'A'isha and Ibn al-'Abbas is no guarantee of their reliability. It will be seen that both of them were prepared to invent stories to bolster their claims and to discredit their opponents. The temptation was obviously great. Their authority as the Prophet's favourite wife and as his cousin was beyond challenge and no one would question their veracity openly. They could say what others

could not, but what many wanted to hear. For their partisan distortions merely reflected the passions that were tearing the Muslim Community apart. Yet they were also generally better informed than others, and even distorted and dressed up reports may be expected to reflect their knowledge of the facts, in particular for events they personally witnessed. The later narrators relied heavily on their accounts in their own summaries of events. For the historian, their conflicting points of view and bias must be of as much interest as the facts they report.

Some of the narrations either of 'A'isha or of Ibn al-'Abbas were clearly intended to counter the stories of the other. 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Abd Allah b. 'Utba b. Mas'ud heard 'A'isha tell that the ill Prophet asked leave from his wives to be nursed in 'A'isha's apartment and that he walked there supported by two men of his family, one of them al-Fadl b. al-'Abbas and 'another man'. Later he presented the report to Ibn al-'Abbas, who asked him if he knew who the other man was and, on his reply in the negative, told him: "AIT b. AbT Talib, but she could not bring herself to mention anything good of him even if she would have been in a position to do so."⁴³ Ibn al-'Abbas could not have had first-hand knowledge of the event. Given 'A'isha's well-known hostility towards 'AIT, however, the assumption that he was the man whom she would not name was reasonable enough. Ibn al-'Abbas disputed 'A'isha's account that the Prophet died in her arms.⁴⁴ When Abu Ghatafan told him that he had heard 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr transmitting 'A'isha's claim, he countered: 'Are you in your right mind (*a-ta'qilu*)? By God, the Messenger of God died reclining on the chest of 'AIT. He was the one who washed him together with my brother al-Fadl b. al-'Abbas. My father refused to attend saying: The Messenger of God used to order us to stay behind a curtain [when he washed himself]. Thus he remained behind the curtain.'⁴⁵

Ibn al-'Abbas narrated that the Prophet before his death expressed the

⁴³ Tabari, I, 1800-1, quoting Ibn Ishaq; Ibn Hisham, *Sirat sayyidina*, 1005; 'Abd al-Razzaqal-San'anI, *al-Musannaf*, ed. Hablb al-Rahman al-A'zaml [Beirut, 1390-2/19702], V, 429-30 and Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, VI, 34 (Ma'mar 'an al-ZuhrT). Ibn Hisham suppressed the comment of Ibn al-'Abbas on 'A'isha's unwillingness to mention anything positive about 'All.

⁴⁴ For 'A'isha's account see Ibn Hisham, *Sirat sayyidina*, 1011; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, 11/2,50. There 'A'isha is quoted as stating that it happened during her turn for Muhammad's company and that she did not wrong anyone in relation to him. She apologizes that it was only due to her foolishness and extreme youth that the Prophet died in her arms. This is in conflict with her other reports that Muhammad had ceased to circulate among his wives, having taken leave to stay with her during his illness.

⁴⁵ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, 11/2, 51. The latter part of the report about the washing of Muljammad's body by 'All in the absence of al-'Abbas is paralleled by a report of 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Abd Allah b. 'Utba from Ibn al-'Abbas (*ibid.*, 62). That Muhammad died with his head in the lap of 'AIT and that his body was washed by 'AIT singly is also affirmed in a speech that the latter is reported to have addressed to his followers at ŠiffTn. Nasr b. Muzahim al-MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, ed. 'Abd al-Salam Muhammad Hartin (Cairo, 1382/[1962]), 224).

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wish to write a letter for those present 'after which you will not go astray'. 'Umar said: 'The Messenger of God is overcome by pain. You have the Qur'an, the Book of God is sufficient for us.' The people present started to quarrel, some demanding that the Prophet should be given the chance to write, others siding with 'Umar. As their noise pained Muhammad, he told them to leave him. Ibn al-'Abbas, according to the report, used to comment that the greatest calamity was thus caused by their disagreement and noise which prevented the Prophet from writing his will.⁴⁶ Although Ibn al-'Abbas refrained from suggesting what the Prophet wanted to write, it was assumed that he hinted at Muhammad's intention to name 'AIT his successor, and Shi'ites have always interpreted the report in this sense. 'A'isha countered the story with one of her own: 'The Messenger of God told me during his illness: Call your father Abu Bakr and your brother ['Abd al-Rahman] to me so that I may write a letter. For I fear that someone will have wishful fancies (*yatamanna mutamannin*) and someone will say: I am more worthy, but God and the faithful refuse anyone but Abu Bakr.'⁴⁷ No one could doubt that the wishful man was 'AIT.

As further illustration of the reporting of 'A'isha and Ibn al-'Abbas and their opposite bias, two examples relating to Muhammad's actions during his last illness and to his funeral may be briefly analysed here. The Kufan al-Arqam b. ShurahbTl al-AwdT, a companion of 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud,²³ asked Ibn al-'Abbas whether the Prophet had made a will (*awsa*). Ibn al-'Abbas denied this and explained that (during his last illness) Muhammad had demanded: 'Send for 'AIT.' 'A'isha, however, suggested: 'Would you send for Abu Bakr?', and Hafsa joined her, proposing: 'Would you send for 'Umar?' When all three men assembled, Muhammad dismissed them, saying that he would ask for them when he had a need. As the time of prayer came he said: 'Give order to Abu Bakr to pray with the people', but 'A'isha replied: 'Abu Bakr is frail (*raqiq*), so order 'Umar.' Muhammad gave order for 'Umar to lead the prayer, but 'Umar refused, saying: 'I would not precede when Abu Bakr is present.' Then Abu Bakr went forward. The Prophet, feeling a temporary recovery, went out after him, and when Abu Bakr heard his movement, he drew back. Muhammad dragged him forward by his clothes and stood him in his place. Then he himself sat down and recited the Qur'an from where Abu Bakr had left off.²⁴ Caetani considered this report to be apocryphal and invented by the Muslim traditionists in order to explain why Muhammad had not left a

²³ Ibn Hajar, *TahdhTb al-tahdhib* (Hyderabad, 1325-7/(1907-9)), I, 198-9.

²⁴ Tabari, I, 1810-11.

testament.⁵⁰ The attribution to Ibn al-'Abbas is, however, entirely reasonable. The Kufan Shi'ites had been claiming since the time of 'All's caliphate that the Prophet had made 'AIT the executor of his will. The question of the Kufan al-Arqam b. ShurahbTI thus had a motive. The position of Ibn al-'Abbas on the question is the same as in other reports attributed to him. Muhammad did not actually make a will in favour of 'AIT, but would probably have done so if he had not been prevented. The first part of the story was presumably invented by Ibn al-'Abbas who, in any case, could not have had first-hand knowledge. The second part is based on the account of 'A'isha quoted below. Muhammad gave the order for Abu Bakr to lead the prayer of the Muslims but 'A'isha objected that her father was too frail. Then Ibn al-'Abbas deviates. Muhammad gave order that 'Umar lead the prayer, and only when 'Umar refused to precede Abu Bakr, the latter went ahead. The message is clear: in the eyes of Muhammad the leadership of the prayer had no significance for the succession. He did not care whether Abu Bakr or 'Umar performed the task. When Abu Bakr still hesitated, the Prophet rudely grasped him by his clothes, pushing him into his place and then, apparently not quite satisfied with his performance, continued Abu Bakr's recitation of the Qur'an.

'A'isha reported the event as follows: when the prayer was called, the Prophet said: 'Order Abu Bakr to pray with the people.' 'A'isha countered: 'Abu Bakr is a frail man, and if he were to take your place, he could not bear it.' Muhammad repeated: 'Order Abu Bakr to pray with the people', and 'A'isha made the same objection. Now the Prophet grew angry and said: 'You [women] are consorts of Joseph (*sawahib Yusuf*).' A third time he commanded: 'Order Abu Bakr to pray with the people.' As he was led out into the mosque, Abu Bakr stood back. Muhammad made a sign to him to stand in his place. 'A'isha added: 'Abu Bakr thus followed the prayer of the Prophet, and the people followed the prayer of Abu Bakr.'⁵¹ Three times the Prophet had thus insisted that Abu Bakr, and only he, should lead the prayer of the Muslims in his place. This was shortly after he, according to 'A'isha, had told them that Abu Bakr was in his view the most excellent of his Companions and had ordered all private doors of the mosque to be closed except for Abu Bakr's. The message was equally clear: Muhammad wished to indicate that Abu Bakr was his choice for the succession.

⁵⁰ *Annali*, II/1, 506.

⁵¹ Tabari, I, 1811-12. According to the version related by al-Zuhri, 'A'isha explained that her objection to Muhammad's order was motivated by her fear that the people would not like anyone occupying the place of Muhammad and would blame him for any misfortune that occurred: Ibn Hisham, *Sirat sayyidina*, 1008; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, II/2, 18; Baladhuri, *Ansab*, I, 559.

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There is, however, a second account by 'A'isha which may have induced Ibn al-'Abbas to mention 'Umar. According to it, Muhammad, while ill in the apartment of his wife Maymuna, asked her nephew 'Abd Allah b. Zam'a to order the people to pray. 'Abd Allah met 'Umar and told him to lead the prayer. The Prophet recognized 'Umar's stentorian voice and asked: 'Is this not the voice of 'Umar?' Upon receiving confirmatory answer, he said: 'God refuses this as do the faithful. Order Abu Bakr, let him pray with the people.' It was now that 'A'isha entreated Muhammad twice to excuse Abu Bakr until he put an end to the argument by calling her and the women 'consorts of Joseph'.⁵² This may well be 'A'isha's initial version⁵³ which she then revised because of the unflattering part given in it to 'Umar. It would thus appear that 'Umar did lead the prayer at first during Muhammad's illness and that 'A'isha, in order to maintain that the appointment to the leadership of the prayer by Muhammad was meant to signify appointment to the succession, had to create the impression that 'Umar's leadership occurred against the will of Muhammad and was disapproved of by him.⁵⁴

About the washing of Muhammad's body for the funeral, al-Tabari relates, on the authority of Ibn Ishaq, an account that differs from the one quoted above.⁵⁵ Both Ibn Hisham and al-Baladhuri quote Ibn Ishaq's account without the attribution to Ibn al-'Abbas.⁵⁶ There could thus be some doubt about the correctness of the attribution. The reliability of al-Tabari in his quotations is generally high, however, and the attribution of the account to Ibn al-'Abbas is confirmed by Ahmad b. Hanbal.⁵⁷ Thus it seems likely that Ibn al-'Abbas gave two different accounts about the same event on different occasions. The account related by Ibn Ishaq is, in any case, distinctly pro-Hashimite and provoked 'A'isha to give a

⁵² Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, VI, 24.

⁵³ The report continues the narration of 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Abd Allah, al-Zuhri's main source for the events, about the beginning of Muhammad's illness. Ibn Ishaq and most later sources preferred the toned down version which al-Zuhri related on the authority of Hamza b. 'Abd Allah, grandson of the caliph 'Umar. 'A'isha may have hesitated to tell him the unflattering story about his grandfather. Al-Tabari's *isnad* is independent of al-Zuhri.

⁵⁴ 'Abd Allah b. Zam'a is himself quoted as narrating the story. According to his account, Abu Bakr was absent at the time and 'Umar led the complete prayer. 'Umar afterwards reproached him and insisted that he, 'Umar, had thought that the Prophet had actually named him and that otherwise he would not have led the prayer. 'Abd Allah b. Zam'a excused himself saying that, in the absence of Abu Bakr, he had considered 'Umar the most worthy of leading it: Ibn Hisham, *Sirat sayyidina*, 1008-9; Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, IV, 322. ⁵⁵ Tabari, I, 1830-1.

⁵⁶ Ibn Hisham, *Sirat sayyidina*, 1818-9; Baladhuri, *Ansab*, I, 569.

⁵⁷ Ibn Kathir, *al-Bidayawa l-nihaya* (Cairo, 1351/1932), V, 260-1. The *isnad* is Ibn Ishaq- Husayn b. 'Abd Allah - 'Ikrima - Ibn al-'Abbas. Caetani strangely asserted that this report of Ibn Ishaq was without *isnad* and thus was a genuine and authentic tradition of Ibn Ishaq. He considered it therefore as particularly authoritative (*Annali*, II/1, 519).

counter-report. Ibn al-'Abbas related that 'All, al-'Abbas and his sons al-Fadl and Qutham, Usama b. Zayd and Shuqran, both clients of Muhammad, undertook to wash his body. Aws b. KhawalT, a Medinan veteran of the battle of Badr, implored 'All to let him join for the sake of the stake of the Ansar in the Prophet and was let in by him. 'AIT drew the body to his chest, and al-'Abbas, al-Fadl and Qutham helped him to turn it. Usama and Shuqran proceeded to pour water on the dead body without removing his shirt. 'AIT washed him, rubbing the shirt from the outside without his hand touching the body. He said: 'You are dearer to me than my father and mother, how sweet you are alive and dead.' Nothing of the body of the Prophet thus was seen, contrary to the case with ordinary men.

The report stresses that only Muhammad's close kin and two of his clients were present. The women, including 'A'isha, in whose apartment Muhammad had died and was buried, were excluded. Only one of the Ansar, but none of the Mekkan Emigrants, was exceptionally admitted. Out of reverence for the Prophet, great care was taken, against the common practice, not to uncover his body.

'A'isha did not take her exclusion with good grace. She reported that when the men wanted to wash the Prophet, they disagreed, saying: 'By God, we do not know whether we should bare the Prophet of his clothes as we bare our dead or whether we should wash him with his clothes on.' As they were thus quarrelling, a slumber was cast upon them and every one of them fell asleep with his chin on his chest. Then a speaker, known to no one, addressed them from the direction of the house: 'Wash the Prophet with his clothes on.' Muhammad's kinsmen obeyed the command. The transmitter of the report added: 'A'isha used to say that with hindsight (*law istaqbaltu min amrima istadbartu*) she thought that only his wives should have washed him.⁵⁸ The listeners were thus left in no doubt that the wives, under 'A'isha's guidance, would not have needed a divine reprimand to stop them from committing an act of disrespect to the Prophet's body, unlike Muhammad's insensitive and quarrelsome kin.

⁵⁸ Tabari, 1,1831. Ibn Hisham, *Sirat sayyidina*, (1019) omitted the venomous comment of 'A'isha.

1 Abu Bakr: the Successor of the Messenger of God and the caliphate of Quraysh

The fundamental account about the assembly at the Saqlfat Banī Sa'ida, in which the succession of Abu Bakr to Muhammad was decided, goes back to 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas. All other reports make use of information drawn from it or are later elaborations of it.²⁵ Slightly variant versions with different chains of transmission are provided by Ibn Hisham, al-Tabari, 'Abd al-Razzaq b. Hammam, al-Bukhari and Ibn Hanbal. The *isnads* meet in al-Zuhri, who related the report of Ibn al-'Abbas on the authority of 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Abd Allah b. Utba b. Mas'ud.²⁶ The account clearly reflects the characteristic point of view of Ibn al-'Abbas, and there is no reason to doubt the reliability of the chain of transmitters.²⁷

Ibn al-'Abbas narrated that on the occasion of the last pilgrimage led by the caliph 'Umar, that is in Dhu l-Hijja 23/October 644, he, Ibn al-'Abbas, was visited at his campsite (*manzil*) at Mina by 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf,²⁸ whom he used to assist in the recitation of the Qur'an (*uqri'uhu l-Qur'an*). 'Abd al-Rahman reported that he had witnessed the caliph on that day being approached by a man who addressed him: 'What are you going to do about a man who says: By God, if 'Umar b. al-Khattab were to die, I would swear allegiance to so-and-so (*fulan*). By God, the oath of

²⁵ The account that Abu Mikhnaf received from the Khazrajite 'Abd Allah b. 'Abd al-Rahman b. Abi 'Amra, quoted at length by al-Tabari (I, 1837-44), has been briefly analysed by M. Muranyi ('Ein neuer Bericht fiber die Wahl des ersten Kalifen Abu Bakr', *Arabica*, 25 (1978), 233-60, at 233-4). It was composed in the late Umayyad age and reflects clear awareness of the account of 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas. The lengthy account discussed and partly edited by Muranyi (*ibid.*, 234-60) is later and filled with fictitious speeches and poetry.

²⁶ Ibn Hisham, *Sirat sayyidina*, 1013-16; Tabari, I, 1820-3; 'Abd al-Razzaq, *Musannaf*, V, 439-45; Bukhari, *Sahih, hudud*, 31; Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, I, 55-6. The transmitters from al-Zuhri are respectively: Ibn Is'laq, Ma'mar, Ma'mar, Salih b. Kaysan, Malik b. Anas.

²⁷ Caetani recognized the basic importance of the report. He ignored, however, the vital introductory section and considered the fact that the caliph 'Umar is quoted in direct speech to be 'suspicious' (*Annali*, II/1, 511-14).

²⁸ That 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf accompanied 'Umar during the pilgrimage in 23/644 is independently confirmed (Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 95; *Annali*, VII, 549).

allegiance for Abu Bakr was merely a precipitate deal which then was carried out (*ma kanat bay'at AbiBakr ilia falta fa-tammat*). 'Umar grew angry and said: 'God willing, I shall stand up tonight among the people and shall warn them about this clan who want to usurp the rule from the people (*fa-muhadhdhiruhum ha'ula'i l-rahta lladhinayuriduna anyaghsubu l-nasa amrahum*).' 'Umar's answer referring to the ambitions of 'this clan' leaves no room for doubt that the unidentified candidate for the caliphate was 'AIT. It was Ibn al-'Abbas' consistent contention that 'Umar was greatly worried about the Banu Hashim arrogating the reign to themselves and depriving 'the people', Quraysh, of their collective right to it.²⁹

'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf advised the caliph against speaking out immediately, since the pilgrimage season brought together the riff-raff and the rabble of the people who might misinterpret his words and cause serious trouble. 'Umar should wait until his return to Medina where he would be among the Companions of the Prophet, Muhajirun and Ansar, who could be trusted to understand his speech properly and to act accordingly. The caliph took the advice.

On the Friday after 'Umar's return to Medina, Ibn al-'Abbas hastened to the mosque and sat down next to the pulpit, eager to hear what the caliph would have to say. He confided to 'Umar's brother-in-law, Said b. Zayd b. 'Amr b. Nufayl,³⁰ who sat there already before him, that today the Commander of the Faithful would make a revelation he had never made before, a suggestion angrily brushed aside by the other. After stressing the special importance of his speech, the caliph first reminded the community that the punishment of stoning for adultery had been part of the Qur'an and was practised by the Prophet; let no one go astray therefore by neglecting a religious duty (*farfda*) and saying: 'We do not find stoning in the Book of God!' 'Umar went on: 'We also used to recite in the Book of God: Do not desire fathers other than your own, for it is

²⁹ That 'All was alluded to in the report of Ibn al-'Abbas was generally assumed. In a version quoted by al-Baladhuri (*Ansab*, I, 583) he is expressly named. According to Ibn Abi l-Hadld (*Shark nahj al-balagha*, ed. Muhammad Abu l-Fadl Ibrahim ([Cairo] 1959-64), II, 25), al-Jahiz identified the person making the statement as 'Ammar b. Yasir and the man intended as 'All. In another version quoted by al-Baladhuri (*Ansab*, I, 581), al-Zubayr is identified as the one who said: 'If 'Umar were to die, we would pledge allegiance to 'AIT.' According to Ibn Abi l-HadTd (*Sharh*, II, 25) some of the *ahl al-hadith* rather asserted that Talha was the unnamed candidate for the succession. If that were the case, however, Ibn al-'Abbas would hardly have suppressed his name, and Talha was not backed by a clan trying to deprive Quraysh of their collective right. 'AIT is also correctly identified by E. Shoufani, *Al-Riddah and the Muslim Conquest of Arabia* (Toronto, 1972), 57.

³⁰ Said b. Zayd, of the Qurayshite clan of 'AdI, is counted among the ten of whom Muhammad had testified that they would enter paradise. He was converted to Islam before 'Umar, whose grandfather, Nufayl, was his great-grandfather and to whose sister Fatima he was married. 'Umar's conversion took place in his house (Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, III, 96-7).

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infidelity for you.³¹ Surely the Messenger of God also said: Do not extol me [excessively] as Jesus, son of Mary, has been extolled, but say: the servant of God and His messenger.'

Then 'Umar turned to the main subject. 'It has reached me that one of you has said: By God, if Umar b. al-Khattab were to die, I would swear allegiance to so-and-so. Let no one be seduced to saying: The oath of allegiance for Abu Bakr was a *falta*, yet it succeeded. It was indeed so, but God has warded off its evil (*waqa sharraha*).³² Towards no one among you have necks been stretched out as for Abu Bakr. Whoever were to swear allegiance to any man without consultation (*mashwara*) among the Muslims, his oath of allegiance would be invalid and both of them would be subject to being killed.'

'Umar then gave an account of the events after the death of Muhammad. While the Ansar with their noble men (*ashraf*) assembled in the SaqTfat BanI Sa'ida, 'AIT, al-Zubayr and 'those with them' gathered in Fatima's house. 'The Muhajirun' joined Abu Bakr, and 'Umar suggested that they go to 'our brethren' the Ansar. On the way there they met two 'upright' men of them who told them about the plotting of the Ansar and advised them to turn back and settle their own affairs, but 'Umar insisted on proceeding.³³ They found the Ansar and in their midst Sa'd b. 'Ubada, distinguished Companion and chief of the Banu Sa'ida and of all of Khazraj, a sick man wrapped in a mantle. One of the Ansar stood up and addressed the Muhajirun: 'We are the Helpers and the legion (*katiba*) of Islam, and you, company of Quraysh, are the clan of our Prophet, and a group (*daffa*) of your people have made their way to us.' 'Umar realized that they intended 'to cut us off from our root [i.e. the Quraysh of Mekka] and to usurp the rule from us'. He wanted to give a speech which he had prepared in his mind, but Abu Bakr stopped him and spoke himself. He said what 'Umar had ready in his mind, only better than he could have done. Abu Bakr stated: 'O group of Ansar, every virtue you mention of yourselves you are worthy of, yet the Arabs will not recognize the rule of

³¹ See Noldeke and Schwally, *Geschichte des Qorans*, I, 248.

³² Umar's admission that the election of Abu Bakr at the SaqTfat BanT Sa'ida had been a *falta* was obviously hard to accept for Sunnite supporters of the caliphate. In the version of Ibn al-'Abbas' account reported by al-Baladhuri (*Ansab*, I, 584), Umar is quoted as saying: 'By God, the oath of allegiance for Abu Bakr was no *falta*. Rather, the Messenger of God set him up in his own place and chose him for his religion over anyone else stating: God and the believers refuse anyone but Abu Bakr.' This is quite remote from Umar's real views. Likewise in a report quoted by al-Baladhuri (*ibid.*, 581), the statement that the election of Abu Bakr was a *falta* is ascribed to al-Zubayr and is rejected by Umar as a lie.

³³ The later tradition rather suggests that the two men, 'Uwaym b. Sa'ida and Ma'n b. 'AdT, were opponents of Sa'd b. 'Ubada and friends of Abu Bakr. They went to urge Abu Bakr and 'Umar to take action, and Ma'n b. 'AdT led them to the SaqTfa. See Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Shark*, VI, 19.

anyone but this tribe of Quraysh. They are the most central [= noble] of the Arabs in lineage and abode. I am satisfied with either of these two men for you, so swear allegiance to whichever you want', and he took both 'Umar and Abu 'Ubayda b. al-Jarrah by the hand. 'Umar commented that this was the only matter in his speech that he found loathsome, since it was inconceivable for himself to command a people that included Abu Bakr.

Al-Hubab b. al-Mundhir of the Anṣar, a veteran of Badr, now proposed to settle the dispute fairly by agreeing that the Ansar and the Quraysh should each choose an amir. As tempers flared and voices were raised, 'Umar told Abu Bakr: 'Stretch out your hand', and gave him the handshake of the pledge of allegiance (*bay'a*). The Muhajirun and the Ansar followed suit. 'Then we jumped upon Sa'd until one of them called out: 'You have killed Sa'd b. 'Ubadah.' I said: 'May God kill Sa'd!'" 'Umar concluded: 'By God, we did not find any case stronger than for the oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr. We feared that if we left the people without a pledge of allegiance they might after our departure suddenly make a pledge. We would then have had either to follow them in [a choice] with which we were not pleased, or to oppose them, and evil (*fasad*) would have resulted.'

Several aspects of the report deserve closer attention. 'Umar accused the Ansar of plotting to seize the reign in succession to Muhammad and to deprive the Muhajirun of their right. Modern historians generally understand the initiative of the Ansar in the same sense. This interpretation must, however, be questioned. The idea of the caliphate, the succession of Muhammad in all but his prophetic mission, had not yet been born. It is difficult to see how the Ansar, meeting alone among themselves, could have aspired to it. Like so many of the Arab tribes involved in the *rida*, the Ansar, while firm in their Muslim faith, no doubt considered their allegiance to Muhammad as lapsing on his death. Expecting the political community founded by Muhammad to fall apart, they met to restore their control over their own city. This is why they met without consulting the Muhajirun. They assumed that these, having no longer any good reason to remain in Medina, would return home to Mekka. Those who might wish to remain in Medina would presumably accept the rule of the Ansar. The suggestion that the Ansar and the Muhajirun should each choose a leader for themselves was evidently meant as a fair compromise proposal rather than a devious ploy to split the Muslim community, as it was seen by later Muslim tradition. It was only Abu Bakr and 'Umar, if his claim of having intended to give much the same speech as the former can be trusted, who were thinking in terms of a succession to Muhammad entailing rule over all the Arabs. Such a succession, Abu Bakr argued,

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could be provided only by Quraysh since the Arab tribes would not submit to anyone else.

By those who assembled together with 'All and al-Zubayr in the house of Fatima, 'Umar evidently meant al-'Abbas and the Banu Hashim. Of other prominent Companions, only Talha is mentioned, probably erroneously, by Ibn Ishaq as having joined the Hashimites.¹⁰ That 'the Muhajirun' at that time joined Abu Bakr was, on the other hand, an apologetic obscuration on 'Umar's part. Aside from Abu Bakr, 'Umar and his friend Abu 'Ubayda certainly none of the prominent Mekkan Companions was present at the Saqifa meeting. It is reasonable to assume that the three men were accompanied by a few personal attendants, family members and clients. Yet not even a middle-ranking or lowly Mekkan Companion is recorded as having later claimed the honour of participating in this so crucial event for the future of Islam. Various later sources report the presence of Salim, the client (*mawla*) of Abu Hudhayfa, among the first who pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr at the Saqifa.¹¹ Although his attendance is not confirmed by any of the early standard sources, the reports may well be reliable. Salim, a Persian client first of a Medinan woman and then of her husband, the Mekkan Companion Abu Hudhayfa, who later adopted him, became himself a Companion at an early date. He was counted among both the Ansar and the Muhajirun and had close relations to both Abu 'Ubayda, with whom he was associated as a brother by the Prophet during the *mu'akhat*, and to 'Umar.¹² 'Umar is known to have held him in high esteem. Thus he could either have been present at the meeting as a member of the Ansar or have come along with Abu 'Ubayda and 'Umar as a close associate. The absence of the great majority of the Muhajirun, in any case, explains the lack of reports independent of 'Umar's own about the meeting and Ibn al-'Abbas' excited eagerness to hear it first hand. The Ansar present were evidently reluctant to report about an ignominious defeat in a cause that soon came to be considered as anti-Islamic even by most of them. After the early deaths of Abu Bakr,

¹⁰ Ibn Hisham, *Sirat sayyidina*, 1013. Ibn Ishaq's mention of Talha among those joining 'All is not corroborated by other sources. It may well be a case of mistaken association of Talha with al-Zubayr which is common in later sources because of their joint action in the Mekkan revolt against 'All.

¹¹ Al-Mufid, *al-Jamal wa l-nusra li-sayyid al-itra fi harb al-Basra*, ed. 'All Mir Sharif! (Qumm, 1413/(1993)), p.91; al-Mawardi, *al-Ahkam al-sultaniyya*, ed. R. Enger (Bonn, 1853), 6-7; Ibn Abi l-Hadid, *Shark*, VI, 18. According to al-Mufid, the Mu'tazilite Abu 'All al-Jubba'i held that Salim was among the five men whose initial pledge of allegiance to Abu Bakr was binding for the rest of the Community. Ibn Abi l-Hadid expresses his conviction (*thabata 'indi*) that Salim was the third man after 'Umar and Abu 'Ubayda to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr before any of the leaders of the Ansar. In this case, his master Abu Hudhayfa was presumably not present, for as a *mawla* and adoptive son Salim would hardly have preceded him.

¹² On Salim see especially Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 60-2.

Abu 'Ubayda and Salim, who was killed at al-'Aqraba' during the *ridda* war, there was only 'Umar left to tell the true story.

'Umar judged the outcome of the SaqTfa assembly to be a *falta* because of the absence of most of the prominent Muhajirun, including the Prophet's own family and clan, whose participation he considered vital for any legitimate consultation (*shiira, mashwara*). It was, he warned the community, to be no precedent for the future. Yet he also defended the outcome, claiming that the Muslims were longing for Abu Bakr as for no one else. He apologized, moreover, that the Muhajirun present were forced to press for an immediate oath of allegiance since the Ansar could not have been trusted to wait for a legitimate consultation and might have proceeded to elect one of their own after the departure of the Mekkans.

Another reason for 'Umar to censure the SaqTfa meeting as a *falta* was no doubt its turbulent and undignified end, as he and his followers jumped upon the sick Khazraj leader Sa'd b. 'Ubada in order to teach him a lesson, if not to kill him, for daring to challenge the sole right of Quraysh to rule. This violent break-up of the meeting indicates, moreover, that the Ansar cannot all have been swayed by the wisdom and eloquence of Abu Bakr's speech and have accepted him as the best choice for the succession, as suggested by Caetani.³⁴ There would have been no sense in beating up the Khazraj chief if everybody had come around to swearing allegiance to 'Umar's candidate. A substantial number of the Ansar, presumably of Khazraj in particular, must have refused to follow the lead of the Muhajirun.

The question must arise as to the identity of the supporters of Abu Bakr and 'Umar who enabled them to impose their will on the assembly by force, given that there was only a handful of Mekkan Muhajirun present and the Khazraj presumably made up the majority of the Ansar. Caetani accepted the statement of Ibn Ishaq that the Ansar Usayd b. Hudayr and his clan, the 'Abd al-Ashhal of Aws, had already joined Abu Bakr together with the Muhajirun before the meeting and suggested that in fact all of the Aws opposed the initiative of the Khazraj from the beginning.¹⁴ This is clearly at variance with 'Umar's account and quite unlikely. It would obviously not have been reasonable for the Khazraj, whatever their majority, to meet alone to decide the future government of the town. Usayd, however, appears to have decided soon after the arrival of the Muhajirun to back Abu Bakr, carrying with him the 'Abd al-Ashhal and perhaps the majority of the Aws. Among the Khazraj, Bashlr b. Sa'd, rival of Sa'd b. 'Ubada for the chieftainship, is said to have

³⁴ *Annali*, II/1, 528. " *Ibid.*, 510-11.

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been the first to break ranks with him and to support Abu Bakr.¹⁵ It is, however, most unlikely that he or the Aws, whatever their lack of enthusiasm for Sa'd, would have followed 'Umar in physically attacking him.

Decisive for the developments probably was, as duly noted by Caetani, the arrival, during the meeting, of the Banu Aslam. They came forward, according to a report, 'in full number such that the streets became narrow through them. They then swore allegiance to Abu Bakr, and 'Umar used to say: It was only when I saw the Aslam that I was certain of victory.'¹⁶ The Banu Aslam, a branch of Khuza'a, were known as enthusiastic supporters of Muhammad who had rewarded them for their loyalty by granting them the status of Muhajirun irrespective of whether they had performed the *hijra* to Medina or stayed in their own territory. A sizeable number of them had come to dwell near Medina, ever ready to back the Prophet. They were known to be enemies of the Ansar and thus could be counted upon to oppose Sa'd's aspiration to power.¹⁷ It was evidently they who, by their large number, provided momentum to the *bay'a* of Abu Bakr and who readily responded to the signal of 'Umar to give the recalcitrant Sa'd b. 'Ubada a mauling.

After the general pledge of allegiance, Abu Bakr sent to Sa'd b. 'Ubada demanding that he do homage. Sa'd answered defiantly: 'No, by God, I shall not pledge allegiance until I have shot every arrow in my quiver at you [pi.] and fought you with those of my people and tribe who will follow me.' Bashlr b. Sa'd advised Abu Bakr not to press him since all of Khazraj and Aws would stand in solidarity with him before he be killed. When 'Umar succeeded to the caliphate, he met Sa'd by chance and asked him whether he still held on to his position. His answer was: 'Yes, I do so, since 'this matter' [the reign]¹⁸ has devolved on you. Your companion, by God, was preferable in our eyes to you, and I have come to loathe your

¹⁵ Tabari, 1,1842-3. According to al-Zubayr b. Bakkar (quoted by Ibn Abi l-Hadld, *Sharh*, VI, 18), Ibn Ishaq reported that the Aws asserted that Bashlr b. Sa'd was the first of the Ansar to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr while the Khazraj claimed that it was Usayd b. Hudayr. Each side thus blamed the other for breaking ranks first. The later standard view was that Bashlr b. Sa'd was the first of the Ansar to back the supremacy of Quraysh and that he pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr even before 'Umar. See the account in the *Kitab al-Saqifa* of Abu Bakr al-Jawharl, a pupil of 'Umar b. Shabba (Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums* (Leiden, 1967—84), I, 322), in Ibn Abi l-Hadld, *Sharh*, VI, 9—10, 40; see also Mufld, *Jamal*, 91, 115.

¹⁶ Tabari, I, 1843; *Annali*, 11/1, 514. Did the Aslam appear on the scene entirely by chance or were they warned of the threatening conduct of the Ansar by Abu Bakr or 'Umar? There is no information to answer the question.

¹⁷ On the Banu Aslam see J. Wellhausen, *Muhammed in Medina: Das ist Vakiidis Kitab alMaghazi in verkürzter deutscher Wiedergabe* (Berlin, 1882), 373-4; al-Waqidl, *Kitab al-Maghazi*, ed. M. Jones (London, 1966), 939-40; *Annali*, II/1,94-5,180; M. J. Kister, 'Khuza'a', *El* (2nd edn).

¹⁸ The expression *hadha l-amr*, this matter, was often used in early texts in the meaning of the reign or the caliphate. When used in this sense, it will be placed in quotation marks.

neighbourhood.' Umar suggested that he leave, and Sa'd went to Syria, where he died in Hawran, probably in the year 15/636. His grandson 'Abd al-'Aziz b. Saïd reported that the jinn were heard chanting from a well that they had killed the lord of Khazraj.³⁵ 'Abd al-'AzTz did not speculate whether the jinn were acting at the behest of God or of 'Umar. Sa'd b. 'Ubada's son Qays was to become one of the most loyal supporters of 'All.

That many of the Ansar failed to pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr at the Saqlfa meeting is affirmed at the end of an account of it by the Kufan Ibrahim al-Nakha'T (d. 96/714-15). After mentioning that, following 'Umar's example, the people swore allegiance to Abu Bakr, he added: 'But the Ansar, or some of them, said: We will not swear allegiance to anyone but 'All.³⁶ Caetani dismissed this notice as 'of tendentious Shi'ite character'.³⁷ Ibrahim al-Nakha'i is, however, not known for Shi'ite sympathies, and the tenor of the whole account is distinctly Sunnite. Whether the Ansar raised the name of 'Ali during the Saqifa meeting in response to Abu Bakr's bid for power must remain uncertain, though it is not unlikely.³⁸ That they did so soon after Abu Bakr's succession is proven by some of the elegiac poetry of the Khazraji Ansari Hassan b. Thabit on the Prophet's death preserved by Ibn Ishaq.

In one of his elegies Hassan bitterly complained about the fate of the Ansar and of the Prophet's kin after his death:

**Woe to the Helpers (*ansar*) of the Prophet and his kin (*raht*) after his
absence in the midst of the grave.
The land has become narrow for the Ansar and their faces have turned
black like the colour of antimony.
We have given birth to him and among us is his tomb, we have not denied
the overflow of his bounty to us.
God has honoured us through him and through him has guided his Ansar
at every moment of witness.³⁹**

³⁵ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/2, 144-5; *Annali*, III, 623-4. ²⁰ TabarT, I, 1817-18.

²¹ *Annali*, II/1, 513.

²² Al-Zubayr b. Bakkar in his *al-Akhbar al-Muioaffaqiyyat* (ed. Saml MakkT al-'AnT (Baghdad, 1972)) quoted Ibrahim b. Sa'd b. Ibrahim (d. 183/799), great-grandson of 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf, as stating that many of the Ansar after the *bay'a* for Abu Bakr regretted their oath of allegiance. They blamed each other, mentioned 'AIT, and called out his name. This led to a renewed dispute with the Quraysh (Ibn Abi l-Hadld, *Shark*, VI, 18). Al-Zubayr b. Bakkar's detailed story about the conflict between the Ansar and Muhajirun (*ibid.*, 17-38) does not inspire confidence, however, and the poetry quoted in the context generally gives the impression of late fabrication. See further the discussion of the attitude of the Ansar during and after the meeting at the *saqifa* by I. Hasson, 'Contributions a l'etude des Aws et des Hazrag', *Arabica*, 36 (1989), 1-35, at 29-32. Hasson takes a more positive view with respect to the reliability of sources such as the *Muviaffaqiyyat* of al-Zubayr b. Bakkar and the *Kitab al-Saqifa* of al-Jawhari than is taken here.

³⁹ Ibn Hisham, *Sirat sayyidina*, 1025; A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of ! Ibn! Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah* (London, 1955), 797-8.

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The claim of the Ansar to have given birth to Muhammad was based on the fact that the wife of Hashim, mother of 'Abd al-Muttalib, was Salma bt 'Amr of the Banu l-Najjar of Khazraj. They viewed the Prophet and his kin, the Banu 'Abd al-Muttalib, as belonging to them as much as to Quraysh. They had provided shelter to Muhammad on that basis at a time when few of them had become Muslims and when they could not be considered under any other obligation to protect him. The other Qurayshite Muhajirun, who had no blood ties with them, were given shelter merely as followers of Muhammad. Yet now they claimed the right to rule their former protectors while pushing aside the Prophet's kin. It was only natural that the Ansar, in particular the Khazraj, should turn to 'AIT as soon as a succession to Muhammad was proposed. The faces of the Ansar and of the Prophet's kin were thus, in Hassan's view, blackened by the usurpation of their title to the succession.

In another elegy for Muhammad, Hassan attacked Abu Bakr and the Quraysh more openly:

Would that on the day they covered him in the grave, removed him and cast earth on him

God had not left a single one of us, and neither man nor woman had survived him.

The Banu l-Najjar altogether have been humiliated, but it was a matter ordained by God:

The booty (*fay'*) has been divided up to the exclusion of all the people and they have openly and wantonly squandered it among themselves.⁴⁰

The last line clearly alludes to Abu Bakr's deprivation of the Banu Hashim of the Prophet's inheritance and of the Prophet's and their Qur'anic shares of the *fay'*.⁴¹ Yet there was resignation in Hassan's caustic charge. The usurpation had been decreed by God. The resistance of the Ansar did not last long.

The Banu Hashim themselves did not remain silent. According to Ibn Ishaq, one of the descendants of Abu Lahab responded to the boasting of Abu Bakr's clan Taym b. Murra about the success of their kinsman with the following lines of poetry:

I did not think that 'this matter' would turn away from Hashim, and then among them from Abu Hasan ['All].

Is he not the first who prayed towards your *qibla* and the most learned of men about the Qur'an and the norms (*sunan*)?

The last of men in touch with the Prophet and the one whose helper was Gabriel in washing and shrouding him. Whatever is in them is in him, they have no doubts about him, but what there is of good in him is not in the people.

⁴⁰ Ibn Hisham, *Sirat sayyidina*, 1025; Guillaume, *Life of Muhammad*, 690.

⁴¹ Guillaume, *Life of Muhammad*, (690 n. 1) evidently did not understand the significance of the line when suggesting that its connection with the preceding was obscure.

What is it that has turned them away from him? Let us know! Surely, we have been cheated in the most monstrous way.

The poem is probably by al-'Abbas b. 'Utba b. AbT Lahab, who was married to Amina, daughter of al-'Abbas b. 'Abd al-Muttalib,⁴² and seems to have been a poet of no mean talent. Because of his close relationship to Muhammad's uncle cursed in the Qur'an, however, most of his poetry was forgotten, and what is left is attributed to others, in particular his son al-Fadl.⁴³ 'All sent to him and forbade him to recite this and similar poetry, commenting that the welfare of the faith was dearer to him than anything else.⁴⁴

'Umar's justification of the quick election of Abu Bakr, in what amounted to a *falta*, because of the danger that the Ansar might otherwise have sworn allegiance to someone with whom the Muhajirun would not have been pleased, thus raises another question. Was it perhaps not only the possibility that the Medinans would have elected one of their own, but also that they might have put forward 'AIT, that worried the Muhajirun present and induced them to act without proposing a broad *shura* of all concerned? If 'Umar's summary account can be trusted on this point, Abu Bakr in his speech did everything to avoid the case of 'AIT being raised. He based the right of Quraysh to rule solely on the claim that only they would be obeyed by all the Arabs, not on their relationship to Muhammad. In the later elaborations of the events at the SaqTfa, Abu Bakr is, in contrast, described as basing the case of Quraysh primarily on their being Muhammad's kin. Such an argument, however, would have been an invitation to raise the question of the right of the Banu Hashim as the closest kin of Muhammad, a line ever pursued by Shi'ite polemicists

⁴² ZubayrI, *Nasab*, 28; Baladhuri, *Ansab al-ashraf*, ed. Muhammad Baqir al-Mahmudi (Beirut, 1974), III, 22.

⁴³ The present lines were attributed by al-Ya'qubi (*Ta'rikh*, ed. M. T. Houtsma (Leiden, 1883), II, 138) to 'Utba b. Abi Lahab; by the Mu'tazilite Abu Ja'far al-Iskafi in his *Kitab al-Uthmaniyya* to the Umayyad Abu Sufyan b. Harb (Ibn Abi l-Hadid, *Sharif*, XIII, 232); by the Shaykh al-Mufid in his *al-Irshad* (ed. Kazim al-Musawi al-Miyamawi (Tehran, 1377/[1957—8])), 14-15, on the authority of the Basran Ibn 'A'isha, d. 228/843 to Khuzayma b. Thabit al-AnSari; in his *al-Jamal* (p. 118) to 'Abd Allah b. Abi Sufyan b. al-Iarib b. 'Abd al-Muttalib; and in his *al-Uyun wa l-mahasin* (see al-Murta'Ja, *al-Fusil al-mukhtara min al-'Uyün wa l-mahasin* (Najaf, 1365/[1964]), II, 61) to Rabl'a b. al-Harith b. 'Abd al-Muttalib; in the *Kitab al-Saqfa* (Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiyya, n.d.) ascribed to Sulaym b. Qays al-Hilal (p. 78) to al-'Abbas b. 'Abd al-Muttalib; and by Ibn al-Athlri (*Usd al-ghaba fimaWifaf al-šahaba* [Cairo, 1285-7/1869-71], IV, 40) to al-Fadl b. al-'Abbas b. 'Utba b. Abi Lahab (who can hardly have been born at this time). I am obliged to Prof. H. Modarressi for providing some of these references. Ibn Hajar's note on al-'Abbas b. 'Utba b. Abi Lahab (*Išdba*, IV, 30-1) is ambiguous as to whether he attributed the poetry to al-'Abbas b. 'Utba or to his son al-Fadl. For other examples of al-'Abbas b. 'Utba's poetry being attributed to his son al-Fadl see below, pp. 186, 221 with n.312.

⁴⁴ Ibn Abi l-Hadid, *Shark*, VI, 21, quoting the *Muwaffaqiyyat* of al-Zubayr b. Bakkar. See al-Zubayr, *Muwaffaqiyyat*, 581.

against the Sunnite doctrine that the caliphs must be of Quraysh, the Prophet's broader kin. It is thus likely that Abu Bakr avoided the argument of blood relationship.²⁹

Did the three Muhajirun at the SaqTfa meeting act spontaneously or according to a concerted plan? More specifically, had they discussed the question of the succession among themselves even before Muhammad's death and perhaps even agreed on putting forward Abu Bakr as the most reasonable choice, as Lammens' thesis of the 'triumvirate' seems to imply? Good arguments can be raised against such an assumption. An immediate one is provided by 'Umar's stand right after Muhammad's death in which he vigorously denied it and harangued the assembled Muslims with warnings against accepting the false rumours spread by some hypocrites. According to Abu Hurayra, 'Umar asserted that Muhammad had gone to his Lord as Moses had done, leaving his people for forty days and returning after he had been pronounced dead. Muhammad would do likewise and would cut off the hands and feet of those who claimed that he was dead.³⁰ If there had been previous agreement, it would have to be assumed that 'Umar's action was calculated and planned in order to gain time. Abu Bakr's immediate repudiation of 'Umar's position shows that this was not the case. It rather seems that 'Umar was partly sincere in his apology on the next day to the Muslims assembled for the general *bay'at* that he had believed the Prophet would 'manage our affairs until he would be the last one of us (*sa-yudabbiru amrana hatta yakuna akhiranaY*).³¹ Even later, during his caliphate, he confided to 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas that he had been misled by Sura II 143: 'Thus we have made them a community in the middle that you may be a witness about the people and the Messenger may be a witness about you' into thinking that the Prophet would remain among his community so that he would be the witness about their last acts.³² 'Umar, to be sure, can hardly have not thought at all of the possibility that Muhammad would die. It was a thought, however, that he, an impetuous and ardent champion of the cause of Islam, strove to keep off his mind. His reaction denying the Prophet's death was certainly spontaneous; he did not want to believe it.³³ 'Umar thus had scarcely envisaged the consequences of

Caetani went further to deny that Abu Bakr argued for the right of Quraysh at all. He held that Abu Bakr was not elected for his kinship, but solely for his moral qualities (*Annali*, II/1, 540). That the exclusive right of Quraysh to the caliphate was instituted by Abu Bakr is, however, hardly questionable.³⁰ Tabari, I, 1815-16.³¹ *Ibid.*, 1828.

³² *Ibid.*, 1829-30; Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, I, 568.

³³ Ibn Abi l-Hadld (*Shark*, II, 42-3) found it incredible that a man of 'Umar's rank could have failed to realize that the Prophet was dead and suggests that he tried to conceal it on his own initiative, fearing anarchy and rebellion and trying to calm the people. That 'Umar's public action was motivated by such fear and concern is obvious, but this does not mean that he personally must have been convinced that Muhammad was dead. If that

Muhammad's death, not to mention having agreed on plans for the succession.

Quite different was the case of Abu Bakr. Although he did not expect the death of Muhammad when it happened, as is evident from his being away in his family home in al-Sunh,³⁴ he cannot have had any doubts that Muhammad would some time die. As a consummate, coolly calculating Mekkan businessman and politician, closely involved in managing and planning the affairs of the Muslim community as the Prophet's trusted adviser, he must have carefully contemplated what would happen if the latter should die before him. Deeply committed to the commonwealth founded by Muhammad in the name of Islam, he was most eager to see it continue to grow and expand its authority over all the Arabs and, as far as possible, beyond. If it was not to fall apart, the Prophet must have a political successor, a *khalifa*. But who should he be? Abu Bakr had decided, no doubt well before Muhammad's death, that he was the man. He also recognized that, without a nomination by the Prophet, he would have to neutralize potentially strong opposition in order to realize his ambition. Most obviously Muhammad's own *ahl al-bayt*, who had been accorded a rank above the rest of the Muslims by the Qur'an, would have to be prevented from putting forward their claim.

The initiative of the Ansar gave Abu Bakr the opportunity for which he was looking. It was he who provoked the *falta* by proposing two candidates for election in a manoeuvre to have himself proposed. That his own proposal was not meant seriously was plain enough from his offering two nominations for the assembly to quarrel about. Abu Bakr was well aware that neither of the two candidates stood a chance of being accepted. Abu 'Ubayda, although a respected early Companion, did not have the prominence and stature to be seriously considered. He was present primarily as a close friend of 'Umar. 'Umar, although most closely associated with the Prophet, prominent in the community, and used to command, had just discredited himself by publicly denying the death of Muhammad. Abu Bakr was sure that 'Umar, shattered by the loss of the Prophet and having since twice allowed himself to be pushed around by

had been the case, there would have been no reason for him to conceal it afterwards and to admit that he had been mistaken. It is evident that his honest admission damaged his political standing, at least temporarily, whereas a claim that he had in fact been acting in the interest of the community would have raised it. For later Muslims, no longer aware of the intense religious feeling of the approaching end of the world and of the closeness of the Hour created by the Prophet's message, it was naturally difficult to believe that 'Umar had been so 'naive'.

³⁴ Abu Bakr's home in al-Sunh was located among the houses of the Banu 1-Harith of Khazraj (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 243; M. Lecker, *Muslims, Jews and Pagans: Studies in early Islamic Medina* (Leiden, 1995), 6). He had also an apartment opening into the Prophet's mosque where he could have stayed if he had expected Muhammad's death.

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Abu Bakr, would again defer to him. 'Umar took the hint and offered Abu Bakr the handshake of allegiance. Abu Bakr did not hesitate a moment to accept. He had what he wanted.

The precipitate move of the Ansar to choose a leader among themselves was thus a true stroke of luck for Abu Bakr. It gave him the chance to make himself the spokesman for the continued unity of the Muslim community under a single leader which was threatened by the action of the Ansar. Equally important from his point of view, it gave him the chance to secure an oath of allegiance to himself before there could be a general discussion about candidates for the succession. Abu Bakr was well aware that a *shura* of those most directly involved, Quraysh and the Ansar, would not have been in his interest. It would have almost inevitably led either to failure or to the choice of 'All as the closest relative of Muhammad. The great majority of the Ansar would have backed 'AIT, if he had been proposed as a candidate for the succession, since they considered him, like Muhammad, as partly belonging to them. Among Quraysh, the situation was evidently less clear cut. 'Umar's later assessment of it, as reported by Ibn al-'Abbas, that the Quraysh were not willing to countenance the hereditary reign of one clan which had already been privileged by having been divinely chosen for prophethood, carries some weight. There were certainly many who would not have liked the prospect of dynastic rule of the Prophet's family and who were flattered by Abu Bakr's initial claim that Quraysh was collectively entitled to the rule and that he was acting in their name. Once this claim had been made and Abu Bakr had secured the backing of a few dedicated men, it was apt to swing the majority support among Quraysh quickly behind him. But in a *shura* on the succession, the purely negative principle of avoiding dynastic rule and therefore excluding Muhammad's kin from consideration would have been difficult to promote. Once the name of 'AIT had come up, the 'Abd Shams, one of the two most powerful clans of Quraysh, would have been honour bound by the tribal code of ethics to back him. For although the conflict between the Banu Hashim and the Banu 'Abd Shams was older than Islam and the majority of the latter under Abu Sufyan had played a leading part in the opposition to Muhammad, the two clans were nevertheless closely related. So long as the 'Abd Shams could not hope to put forward a candidate of their own, it would have been shameful for Abu Sufyan, the chief of 'Abd Shams, not to back 'AIT, especially since the Prophet had treated him and his clan most generously after the conquest of Mekka.

There is indeed good evidence that Abu Sufyan, immediately after the election of Abu Bakr, offered 'AIT his support in order to counter the decision. In a letter 'AIT later reminded Mu'awiya of his father's offer,

explaining that he, *AII, had not accepted it because Abu Sufyan and his people had only recently been infidels and their involvement might have provoked division among the Muslims.⁴⁵ Western scholars have usually treated reports that Abu Sufyan in fact offered 'AIT support against Abu Bakr, but was dismissed by him as a mere troublemaker, as sheer anti-Umayyad fiction.³⁶ Yet even if such reports reflect a bias against the father of the founder of the Umayyad dynasty and regardless of whether he actually made such an offer under the circumstances of Abu Bakr's *fait accompli*, they clearly show what was generally considered as reasonable on Abu Sufyan's part. The refusal of the Umayyad Khalid b. Sa'Td b. al-'As, one of the earliest converts to Islam and a prominent Companion, to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr when he returned from the Yemen to Medina a month after the latter's succession and his insistence on the rights of the Banu 'Abd Manaf (including both Hashim and 'Abd Shams) are significant.⁴⁶ Khalid's brother Aban b. Sa'Td is also reported to have refused to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr in solidarity with the Banu Hashim and to have done so only when these decided to swear allegiance.³⁸ The joint backing of the Ansar and 'Abd Shams for 'AIT would no doubt have persuaded otherwise uncommitted clans and individuals to support his candidacy. The other powerful clan of Quraysh, Makhzum, although certainly opposed to hereditary rule by the Banu Hashim, would have found it extremely difficult to unite the opposition behind a counter-candidate.

The plain logic of dynastic succession would thus almost certainly have asserted itself in a general consultation. For the principle of heredity clearly provides the most natural, simple and uncontentious basis for

⁴⁵ Nasr b. Muzahim al-Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, ed. 'Abd al-Salam Muhammad Harun (Cairo, 1382/[1962]), 91; Baladhuri, *Ansdh al-ashraf*, ed. Muhammad Baqir al-Mahmudli (Beirut, 1974), II, 281. Concerning the question of the authenticity of the letter see below, p. 210 n. 280.

⁴⁶ Tabari, I, 2079-80; H. Loucel, 'Khalid b. Said', *El* (2nd edn) In the case of Khalid b. Said, too, Sunnite tradition presents 'All as a loyal supporter of Abu Bakr unable to understand how Khalid could have considered him as overpowered by Abu Bakr. He is quoted as stating: 'This is the order of God which He places wherever He wants' (Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, I, 588). Yet this was at a time when 'All himself still refused to swear

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succession to power. It is because of this that it has been so widely accepted throughout human history. The common argument of Sunnite Muslims and western scholars that 'All could not have been a serious candidate because of his youth and lack of experience compared to Companions such as Abu Bakr and 'Umar is quite beside the point. It would be valid only after an initial agreement to exclude the principle of hereditary succession. But such an agreement, as Abu Bakr well realized, would have been virtually impossible to reach in a *shura*.

Abu Bakr's clear determination to seek the succession and to prevent the election of 'AIT requires further explanation. Abu Bakr was at the time an old man who could not expect to enjoy his reign for long. He had apparently no sons or close relatives suited to succeed him.⁴⁷ Would it not have been more reasonable for him to back the succession of the Prophet's cousin and father of his grandsons in the expectation that 'AIT, lacking political experience, would have continued to rely on Abu Bakr's counsel as Muhammad had done? It was evidently the poor relationship, distrust and hostility between the two men that stood in the way of such a course. 'AIT's stand in the affair of 'A'isha's lost necklace and her unnoticed absence from the Muslim campsite, his advice to Muhammad to divorce her and his attempt to press a confession of guilt out of 'A'isha's maid had brought upon him the life-long hatred of the Prophet's favourite wife which she never made an effort to conceal. Abu Bakr must have shared much of her ill feeling, although he was too refined a politician ever to vent it in public. The disgrace of 'A'isha would not only have stained the honour of his family but would also most likely have affected his own position of trusted friend of the Prophet. Rightly or wrongly, he no doubt assumed that 'AIT was motivated by jealousy of his influence on Muhammad and was trying to undermine it by accusing his daughter. Abu Bakr thenceforth saw in him a rival and an enemy. He could expect nothing

⁴⁷ Neither of Abu Bakr's two grown-up sons joined him at the time of his *hijra* to Medina. 'Abd al-Rahman, the eldest son and full brother of 'A'isha, was present at the battle of Badr on the side of the Mekkans enemies of Islam. He is said to have become a Muslim shortly before the conquest of Mekka. It is possible that he stood by Abu Bakr's father Abu Quhafa, who did not accept Islam until after the conquest. 'Abd al-Rahman's relations with his father appear to have been strained, but he had later good relations with his sister. 'Abd Allah b. AbTBakr, borne by a different mother, is said to have supplied his father and the Prophet with provisions and news while they were hiding in a cave before their *hijra*. Still later he used to visit Medina secretly bringing information about the Mekkans and was concealed by 'A'isha. It is unknown when he definitely joined the Muslims. While fighting on the Muslim side at the siege of al-Ta'if, he was seriously wounded by an arrow. He died of the wound two years later at the beginning of his father's reign. Abu Bakr's third son, Muhammad, was borne by Asma' bt 'Umays, the widow of 'All's brother Ja'far, less than a year before Abu Bakr's accession. After Abu Bakr's death, Asma' married 'AIT. Muljammad b. Abi Bakr thus grew up in 'All's household and became an ardent partisan of his step-father.

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good for himself or for 'A'isha if the succession fell to 'AIT. 'AIT would presumably have relied rather on his uncle al-'Abbas for political advice and would have reduced the station of 'A'isha. Abu Bakr thus had sound reason for seeking to prevent 'AIT's succession, aside from his personal ambition. Whatever 'AIT's motivation, his youthful folly in trying to interfere in the Prophet's marital relations thus cost him dearly. Aided by the precipitate move of the Ansar, Abu Bakr could realize the designs which he must have been harbouring ever since the unfortunate affair.

In spite of 'Umar's claim that 'the necks of all Muslims were stretched out for Abu Bakr', the situation of the caliph was at first highly precarious, and not only because of the *ridda* of numerous tribes. In Medina 'Umar took charge of securing the pledge of allegiance of all residents. He dominated the streets with the help first of the Aslam and then the 'Abd al-Ashhal of Aws who, in contrast to the majority of Khazraj, quickly became vigorous champions of the new regime. The sources mention the actual use of force only with respect to the Companion al-Zubayr who had been together with some others of the Muhajirun in the house of Fatima. 'Umar threatened to set the house on fire unless they came out and swore allegiance to Abu Bakr. Al-Zubayr came out with his sword drawn, but stumbled and lost it, whereupon 'Umar's men jumped upon him and carried him off.⁴⁰ There is some evidence that the house of Fatima was searched (*futtisha*). 'All is reported to have later repeatedly said that had there been forty men with him he would have resisted.⁴¹ To what extent force was used in other cases must remain uncertain. In general the threat of it was probably sufficient to induce the reluctant to conform. Isolated reports about the use of force against 'All and the Banu Hashim⁴² who, according to al-Zuhri, unanimously refused to swear allegiance for six months,⁴³ are probably to be discounted. Abu Bakr no doubt was wise enough to restrain 'Umar from any violence against them, well realizing that this would inevitably provoke the sense of solidarity of the majority of 'Abd Manaf whose acquiescence he needed. His policy was rather to isolate the Banu Hashim as far as possible. 'A'isha's comment that the prominent people ceased to

⁴⁰ Or: seized his sword. See TabarT, I, 1818.

⁴¹ MinqarT, *Waq'at SiffTii*, 163. According to the *Kitab al-Safina* of Abu Bakr al-Jawhari, 'AIT was led by 'Umar before Abu Bakr. He refused to pledge allegiance to him, arguing that he had a better title to the rule. Abu 'Ubayda tried to persuade him to change his mind on the basis that Abu Bakr was older and more experienced than he and that, if 'AIT survived him, he would certainly be most worthy to succeed because of his close kinship with the Prophet and his early merits. 'AIT insisted, however, that the authority of Muhammad should not be removed from his house and did not pledge allegiance until after the death of Fatima (Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Shark*, VI, 11-12).

⁴² See, for instance, TabarT, I, 1819-20 where it is claimed that al-Zubayr and 'AIT were both forced by 'Umar to pledge allegiance.⁴³ *Ibid.*, 1825.

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speak to 'AIT until he acknowledged his mistake and pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr is significant. The Banu Hashim thus found themselves in a situation strangely reminiscent of the boycott that the pagan Mekkans organized against them in order to force them to withdraw their protection from Muhammad. This time, however, it was the Muslims putting pressure on them to abandon their support of 'AIT who, in contrast to Muhammad, gave in, surrendering his claim after the death of Fatima.

Crucial for Abu Bakr, however, was gaining the allegiance of the Mekkan Quraysh. With the loyalty of the Ansar in doubt and many of the Arab tribes deserting, only Mekka, the former enemy city which had submitted to Muhammad just two years before, could now save the Islamic commonwealth. In Mekka Abu Bakr could not rely on the use or threat of force. It was solely his diplomatic skills that counted. The Mekkans had since their surrender done very well under the rule of Islam. Muhammad had treated them most generously and had appointed a number of their leading men, even though they had been among his most vigorous opponents, to powerful and lucrative positions as army leaders, governors and alms-tax collectors. The Mekkans had thus little reason to question the continuation of Islamic government in principle or to long for their former state of independence.⁴⁸ But Abu Bakr had more to offer them than Muhammad could, or would, ever have done. The Islamic state was henceforth to be based on the rule of Quraysh over all Arabs. Their right to rule in the name of Islam derived from the claim that the Arabs would not obey anyone else. Abu Bakr had safeguarded their innate right by thwarting the ambitions of the Ansar. The Ansar, with whose backing Muhammad had been able to humiliate them, would be put in their proper place and become, like the rest of the Arabs, subjects of Quraysh. Without a family or clan who could seriously aspire

⁴⁸ Not much is known about the events in Mekka at this time. According to Mus'ab al-Zubayri, the Mekkans, when learning of the death of Muhammad, became agitated and were ready to apostatize from Islam. Then Suhayl b. 'Amr of the Banu 'Amir stood up and delivered among them 'the like of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq's speech in Medina, as if he had heard it'. The people calmed down and accepted his guidance. Their governor at the time was, according to al-Zubayri, 'Attab b. AsTd of 'Abd Shams (Zubayri, *Nasab*, 418). Suhayl b. 'Amr, well known as an orator, had been one of the most vigorous enemies of Muhammad and Islam until the Muslim conquest of Mekka. He may have persuaded the Mekkans that now, after Muhammad's death, Quraysh was destined to rule the Arabs in the name of Islam, just as Abu Bakr persuaded the Muslims in Medina. Suhayl and his family then joined the conquest of Syria where he and all of his sons were killed. The Banu 'Amir (b. Lu'ayy) of Quraysh were, it may be noted, traditionally closely allied to 'Abd Shams and opposed to Hashim. See further M.J. Kister, '*... ilia bi-haqqihi*, A Study of an Early *Hadith*', *JSAI*, 5 (1984), 33-52, at 34-5. Kister quotes reports to the effect that Suhayl urged the Mekkans to pay their *zakat* to their governor and promised to compensate them for any *zakat* payment if Abu Bakr's government were to collapse.

to hereditary rule, Abu Bakr was truly their man, the caliph of Quraysh.

Abu Bakr's heavy reliance on the old Mekkan aristocracy for the leadership of the Muslim armies in the suppression of the *ridda* and the beginning of the conquests outside Arabia has been duly noted by E. Shoufani⁴⁵ and F. Donner.⁴⁶ In particular the two most powerful clans of Quraysh, Makhzum and 'Abd Shams, were given preference. Among Abu Bakr's commanders in the *ridda* were 'Ikrima b. AbT Jahl of Makhzum and YazTd b. AbT Sufyan of Umayya, sons of the two former leaders of the Mekkan opposition to Muhammad. Of Makhzum were also Khalid b. al-Walid and al-Muhajir b. AbT Umayya; of 'Abd Shams, Khalid b. AsTd b. Abi l-'Ts, Khalid b. SaTd b. al-'As and, by clientage, al-'Ala' b. al-Hadraml. Most of these Mekkan leaders had, to be sure, already been employed by Muhammad in various functions. Yet their dominant position under Abu Bakr is put into proper relief by the complete exclusion of the Ansar from leadership and the greatly reduced role of the early Muhajirun. Among the Muslim army leaders during the *ridda* there was only one early Companion of Muhammad, ShurahbTl b. Hasana, a confederate of the Banu Zuhra of Quraysh of South Arabian (Kinda) origin.

When Abu Bakr later laid the plans for the conquest of Syria, he appointed as the first commander Khalid b. SaTd b. al-'As, who had previously refused to swear allegiance for some time. The reason for this choice was certainly not that he was one of the earliest Companions, but rather that he was an Umayyad. When he was dismissed because of strong representations by 'Umar against him, Abu Bakr replaced him by the Umayyad YazTd b. AbT Sufyan. It is evident that the caliph intended to give the 'Abd Shams a stake in the conquest of Syria. Abu Sufyan is known to have owned some land near Damascus before Islam.⁴⁷ The aim of gratifying the powerful Mekkan clan evidently outweighed in Abu Bakr's eyes the slight he had been dealt by Khalid b. SaTd. On the other hand, the role given to Abu 'Ubayda b. al-Jarrah, who, as one of the two prominent Companions backing Abu Bakr at the Saqifa assembly, could have expected a leading part, was quite limited. He was evidently not among the leaders of the three armies initially dispatched and in some accounts is not mentioned at all before the caliphate of 'Umar.⁴⁸ Most likely he was sent secondarily with some auxiliary troops to aid the first invading armies.⁴⁹ 'Umar later appointed him general commander in

⁴⁵ Shoufani, *al-Riddah*, 58-64.

⁴⁶ F. Donner, *The Early Islamic Conquests* (Princeton, 1981), 86-8.

⁴⁷ Al-Baladhuri, *Futuh al-buldan*, ed. M.J. de Goeje as *Liber expugnationis regionum* (Leiden, 1866), 129; Donner, 96.

⁴⁸ Shoufani, *al-Riddah*, 140-3; Donner, *Conquests*, 114-15.

⁴⁹ M.J. de Goeje, *Memoire sur la conquete de la Syrie* (Leiden, 1900), 25.

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Syria. In initially sending Khalid b. al-Walid to invade Iraq, Abu Bakr may have similarly had it in mind to give Makhzum a stake in the conquest of that country.

With the Muslim armies mostly under the command of members of the old Mekkan aristocracy, Medina was virtually at the mercy of Muhammad's recent enemies, especially during the *ridda*. If the leaders of Quraysh had chosen to conspire, they could have done away with the caliphate at a stroke. Abu Bakr's resolute rejection of 'Umar's demands for the dismissal, or at least censure, of Khalid b. al-Walid for his un-Islamic conduct may have been motivated by more than just the recognition of his superior qualities as a military leader. Yet Abu Bakr could also be generally confident that the Mekkan leaders would co-operate, realizing that they would profit more than anyone else from the Qurayshite caliphate in the name of Islam.

It was the declared intention of Abu Bakr to follow as caliph the policies and practices of Muhammad in every respect. He adopted the official title *khalifat rasul Allah*, Successor or Vicegerent of the Messenger of God.⁴⁹ In order to comply with the Prophet's wishes, he immediately ordered the planned campaign towards the Syrian border area to go ahead, although the absence of the army would expose the caliphate, before it had been firmly established, to considerable danger. He insisted on retaining Usama b. Zayd, son of Muhammad's freedman, as the commander despite the unpopularity of this choice because of Usama's youth and lack of experience. Breaking ranks with the Banu Hashim, Usama had evidently pledged allegiance to the caliph. Abu Bakr must have appreciated his stand at this time.

Abu Bakr also justified his immediate demand that all Arab tribes pay the Islamic alms-tax to him by his duty as Muhammad's successor to follow the Prophet's path. The obligation of Muslims to pay a regular annual tax, rather than giving voluntary alms, seems to have been initiated in the year 9/630.⁵⁰ Ibn Sa'd gives a list of the first tax collectors sent out by Muhammad in Muharram (April-May) to some tribes in the Hijaz and north-east of Medina. The impression is created that initially only a few loyal tribes were asked to pay the tax. A number of the tax

⁴⁹ The Muslim sources may be trusted in this respect; Abu Bakr wished to be seen as acting in the name of the Prophet. The assumption of P. Crone and M. Hinds (*God's Caliph: Religious authority in the First Centuries of Islam* (Cambridge, 1986), 19—22) that the title of *khalifa* meant from the beginning *khalifat Allah*, vicegerent of God, takes no account of the historical situation and the different circumstances that induced 'Uthman to adopt the title *khalifat Allah*.

⁵⁰ See for the following especially Shoufani, *al-Riddah*, 44-7. Shoufani's assumption that the first tax collectors were not sent out before the beginning of the year 10 H. and that no taxes were returned to Medina before Muhammad's death seems untenable.

collectors were members of the tribes to whom they were sent, and it is unclear to what extent the rates of taxation were fixed.⁵² During the pilgrimage season at the end of the year (February 631) the proclamation of the Sura of Renunciation (*al-Bara'a*) was made that polytheists in general would no longer be granted protection and would be subject to Muslim attack unless they repented. Excepted were, however, those who had concluded pacts with Muhammad and had kept them. These pacts were to be fulfilled until their expiration. While the pressure on the Arab pagans to submit to Islam and the Prophet was thus increased, the exception for treaty allies shows that Muhammad was not yet prepared simply to impose Islam on all of them. The enforcement of the alms-tax was probably also handled with caution and discretion on the part of Muhammad during the following, last, year of his life. There are no reports of any force used against tribes failing to pay, of which there must have been more than a few.

The significance of the alms-tax for the Arab tribes was indeed different from that of any other obligation previously imposed by Islam. Unlike the duty to pray, to fast, to join collectively in the *jihad* and to give voluntary alms as the Qur'an and Muhammad had demanded in the early days of Islam, the alms-tax potentially meant the surrender of tribal autonomy, the acceptance of tax officials with the right to inspect and assess private property, of governors with the right to force recalcitrant subjects. It meant the subjection of the tribes to a ruler or government, something the tribes had ever most vigorously resisted. Their fear of subjection no doubt contributed to the spread of opposition movements to Islam in the last year of Muhammad's life.

At the beginning of Muharram 11 /end of March 632, two months before his death, Muhammad again sent out tax collectors to the tribes for the new year. The tribes named in the report were mostly the same as in the year 9/630, those relatively close to Medina and to Mekka.⁵³ In the outlying regions, it was evidently the Muslim governors who were generally responsible for the collection of the tax, but payment was probably largely voluntary and patchy.⁵⁴ The latent resentment against the levy came out into the open on the Prophet's death, as many of the loyal tribes offered to recognize Abu Bakr as his successor but refused payment of the alms-tax. Despite his precarious position, Abu Bakr immediately took a hard line in the matter. 'Umar, Abu 'Ubayda and

⁵² There is evidence that the detailed rates of *zakat* stipulated by Islamic law were not introduced before Abu Bakr. See J. Schacht, 'Zakat' in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden, 1913-38).⁵¹ *Annali*, II/1, 575-6.

⁵⁴ For a list of the governors at the time of Muhammad's death according to Sayf b. 'Umar see *ibid.*, 569-70, where a separate tax official is mentioned for Najran. The alms-tax in these outlying regions may have been spent locally rather than being delivered to Medina.

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Salim, the client of Abu Hudhayfa, urged him to rescind the tax for the year and to treat the tribes loyal to Islam leniently in order to enlist their support for fighting those who had abandoned Islam.⁵¹ Abu Bakr rejected any compromise on the tax, making it the yardstick for the loyalty of the tribes to Islam itself. Going well beyond any precedent set by Muhammad, he insisted that those refusing payment of the tax were to be treated and fought as apostates, just like those who had abandoned Islam and those who had never accepted it. Abu Bakr's attitude was well summarized in the statement widely attributed to him in the sources: 'If they withheld only a hobbling-cord of what they gave the Prophet, I would fight them for it.'

Later Muslim scholars found it difficult to explain and justify Abu Bakr's conduct. 'Umar was quoted questioning the caliph as to his right to fight the tribes since the Prophet had said: 'I was ordered to fight people until they say that there is no god but God. If they say this, they safeguard themselves and their property from me.'⁵² Some speculated that Abu Bakr must have been acting on the basis of a hadith quoting Muhammad as telling a tax collector who had been sent back empty-handed to him by a bedouin: 'Return to him, and if he does not give you the tax, cut his head off!'⁵³ Others argued that the Companions were calling the withholders of the tax apostates merely metaphorically. In reality they were Muslim rebels and as such deserved to be fought. Yet while later lawyers such as al-Shafi'i might be prepared to consider peaceable Muslims refusing to fulfil a previously accepted religious obligation as rebels whose blood could legitimately be shed, such a notion of 'rebellion' had in reality no basis in the Qur'an⁵⁴ or the practice of the Prophet but arose out of the caliphate as conceived by Abu Bakr. Although the impact of Muhammad's authority on the lives of the Muslims had steadily widened, it had remained essentially a moral authority. The Qur'an frequently admonished them to obey God, the Prophet and those in command among them, and threatened the disobedient with severe divine punishment. The problem of nominal or lukewarm Muslims who resisted and contravened many of his orders and decisions was a serious one for Muhammad, as is evident from the numerous denunciations of hypocrites (*munaḥiqun*) in the Qur'an. Yet the Qur'an did not sanction the

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 572-3.

⁵² Shoufani, *al-Riddah*, 102. See further the detailed study of the dispute about Abu Bakr's conduct by Kister, . . . *ilia bi-haqqih*V. ⁵⁷ *Annali*, II/1, 572.

⁵⁴ The Qur'anic proof text for the treatment of Muslim rebels (*bughat*) was Sura XLIX 9: 'If two groups of the believers fight, conciliate (*aslihu*) between them, but if one of them transgresses (*bagha*) upon the other, fight the one which transgresses until it returns to the order of God. Then if it returns, conciliate between them with justice and act fairly.' It is evident that the verse could not be applied to the 'rebel' tribes.

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shedding of their blood or physical coercion of them. By Qur'anic standards, Abu Bakr might at most have castigated the tribes withholding the alms-tax as hypocrites. He could not make war on them either as apostates or as rebels.

Behind the front of merely claiming his due as the vicegerent of the Prophet, Abu Bakr thus brought about a radical change of policy. The full significance of his affirmation that the caliph must be of Quraysh because the Arabs would obey none but them now became apparent. The caliph was to be not so much the religious leader of the *umma*, the community of Islam, as Muhammad had been, but the ruler of all Arabs, commanding their obedience in the name of Islam. For this reason peaceable Muslims withholding the alms-tax from the caliph, genuine renegades and other Arabs who had never become Muslims were all to be classed as apostates and to be fought until they would submit to both Islam and the rule of the caliph of Quraysh.

Among the official titles of the later caliphs, *amir al-mu'minin*, Commander of the Faithful, was the preferred and most commonly employed one.⁵⁹ According to historical tradition, it was 'Umar who first adopted it. It reflected most closely the concept of the caliphate established by Abu Bakr. The caliph was primarily the ruler of the faithful. Quraysh provided the ruling class, his aides, and the other Arab tribes were to be his subjects. Abu Bakr set out with unbending determination to subdue them.

The early Companions including even 'Umar, a man deeply committed to the expansion of the authority of Islam by force, initially had misgivings, especially about the flagrant aggression against fellow Muslims. Had not the Qur'an admonished the Muslims that they were brothers and should strive to settle their conflicts by conciliation? Abu Bakr could again count on the backing of the Quraysh, who readily saw the benefits that the subjugation of the Arabs would bring for them. In order to secure their caravan trade, Quraysh had long relied on alliances with some Arab tribes. Yet such alliances with autonomous tribes were by nature unstable and often meant sharing of material benefits and the enmity of other tribes. The subjugation of all Arabs proposed by the caliph offered them safe and unimpeded trade relations and opened up new sources of material gain as leaders of Muslim armies and future governors and tax officials in the subjugated lands. Quraysh pursued the war against the 'apostates' with enthusiasm. The spirit with which it was waged is clearly reflected in the cold-blooded execution of Malik b. Nuwayra and others of the Banu Yarbu' after their surrender and confession of Islam and in

⁵⁹ Crone and Hinds, *God's Caliph*, 11.

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the appropriation of his wife by Khalid b. al-Walid. Earlier in the year Malik had been entrusted by Muhammad with the collection of the alms-tax among his tribe. When he learned of the Prophet's death he returned the camels gathered by him to his fellow tribesmen or, according to another report, raided and drove off the camels collected from various tribes as alms. According to both major accounts, Abu Bakr himself, infuriated by Malik's evident refusal to recognize him as the legitimate successor of Muhammad, instructed Khalid to kill him if he could lay his hands on him.⁵⁵

Abu Bakr's front of meticulously following the practice and precedents set by the Prophet in every respect was most difficult to maintain in his treatment of his predecessor's kin, the Banu Hashim. It was evident that the primary purpose of establishing caliphal rule on a sound basis was inconsistent with maintaining the privileged status of Muhammad's *ahl al-bayt*, of applying the Qur'anic rules of inheritance to them, and of continuing to pay their Qur'anic shares of the war booty and the *ay*. Abu Bakr's solution was both radical and ingenious. According to 'A'isha's account, he told Fatima and al-'Abbas when they came to claim their inheritance from Muhammad, and in particular his land in Fadak and his share of the land of Khaybar: 'As for me, I have heard the Messenger of God say: "We [the prophets] do not have heirs (*la nurith*). Whatever we leave is alms (*sadaqa*). The family of Muhammad (*al Muhammad*) can eat from that property." Surely, by God, I would not leave any matter undone which I have seen the Messenger of God do.'⁵⁶ Abu Bakr's reply solved the problem of the *ahl al-bayt* in one stroke without his losing face. Not only had Muhammad disinherited his family, he had also specifically affirmed that after his death his family should, if in need, accept alms which he had strictly forbidden them during his life because of their status of purity. As recipients of alms like ordinary Muslims, there was also no longer any justification for paying them their Qur'anic share of booty and *fay*'. All this the Prophet had confided to Abu Bakr, and no one else, thus confirming that he was his chosen successor charged with implementing his instructions. The daughter of the Prophet must have

⁵⁵ See E. Landau-Tasserion, 'Malik b. Nuwayra' *EI* (2nd edn). The account of the fiction writer Sayf b. 'Umar, according to which Malik backed the prophetess Sajah, can be discounted, in spite of Caetani's acceptance of it (*Annali*, II/1, 654). 'Umar and other Muslims would hardly have protested against Khalid's treatment of someone 'who had become a true apostate'.

⁵⁶ Tabari, I, 1825; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 196-7. The report transmitted by Ibn Lahl'a claiming that Abu Bakr granted Fatima the palm grove of al-A'waf out of the property of the Prophet in Medina (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 211) is certainly unreliable.

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been dumbfounded. Not even she could openly question the word of her father's chosen successor. According to 'A'isha, she henceforth kept away (*hajarat*) from Abu Bakr and did not speak to him again about the matter until she died six months later. 'All buried her at night and did not inform the caliph of her death.⁵⁷

While the Prophet's daughter and kin were thus disinherited and demoted from their rank of religious purity, his widows were treated comparatively better. They obviously also could not be given an inheritance from Muhammad's land in Fadak and Khaybar, which Abu Bakr claimed as public property. 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr reported, on the authority of 'A'isha, that the widows intended to send 'Uthman to Abu Bakr to ask for their share of inheritance from Fadak and Khaybar, but 'A'isha reproached them: 'Don't you fear God? Have you not heard the Messenger of God say: "We do not have heirs; whatever we leave is alms. This money is for the Family of Muhammad, [to provide] for them [in case of] misfortune and for their hospitality (*li-na'ibatihim wa-dayfihim*). When I die it will belong to the ruler (*wall l-amr*) after me." ' The women desisted.⁵⁸ They no doubt understood that they would fare better if they admitted having heard the Prophet say so. Abu Bakr decided that they could keep their dwellings. In order to protect him against a possible charge that he acted arbitrarily with what Muhammad had left for the public treasury, later tradition asserted that the Prophet had made a bequest of the houses to his wives.⁵⁹ Unlike the status of purity of the Prophet's kin, that of his wives was not to lapse after his death. No man was allowed to marry them. The highest respect was due to the 'Mothers of the Faithful'. They were now truly the only *ahl al-bayt* of Muhammad whose purification from all filth was guaranteed by Sura XXXIII 33. Abu Bakr recognized his obligation to provide generously for the widows.⁶⁰ To 'A'isha, as Muhammad's favourite wife and daughter of his chosen successor, belonged the first place. Abu Bakr granted her some lands in the 'Aliya quarters of Medina and in al-Bahrayn. The property in Medina was said to have been part of the land of the Banu l-Nadlr which Abu Bakr had been given by Muhammad.⁶¹

⁵⁷ TabarT, I, 1825; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 197.

⁵⁸ Baladhuri, *Futuh*, 30; Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, VI, 262.

⁵⁹ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III, 87, VIII, 120; *Annali*, II/1, 521.

" Abu Hurayra remembered that Muhammad, while leaving all his property as alms, had not completely forgotten his wives. He reported hearing the Prophet say: 'My heirs (*warathatt*) shall not divide up a single dinar or dirham among themselves. Whatever I leave, after sustenance (*nafaqa*) for my wives and provision for my agent [executor of my will, *mu'nat 'amilt*], shall be alms' (Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, II/2, 86).

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, III/1, 138; Abbott, *Aishah*, 85.

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From a political point of view, the confiscation of the Prophet's extensive land holdings, from which he himself had partly financed the Muslim military efforts, was certainly a necessity. The diplomatic skill with which Abu Bakr carried out the measure, asserting that the Prophet himself had left all his property to the public treasury, matched his clever political manoeuvre at the Saqlfa assembly. Hassan b. Thabit's protest against the usurpation of the Prophet's *fat*' quickly ceased and was forgotten. The prominent Companions would soon be vying with each other in attesting that they, too, had heard Muhammad say that prophets have no heirs and that, on their death, their belongings become alms. Abu Bakr's policy of isolating the Banu Hashim without the use of force proved a full success. After six months, by the time of Fatima's death, Abu Bakr's victory seemed complete. Yet the news of it and of her clandestine burial at night, in order to prevent the caliph's attendance, must have shocked him. Whatever his satisfaction about the humiliation of his personal enemy 'AIT, the realization of the deep offence that his political machinations and treachery had caused the daughter of the man whose best and most sincere friend he was acclaimed to be by the public, the awareness of her death in a state of embitterment, perhaps hastened by his conduct, could not easily be brushed off his conscience.⁶⁷

'A'isha reported: after Fatima's death, the few prominent men who had continued to see 'AIT while she was alive turned away from him. 'AIT humbly sued (*dara'a*) for reconciliation with Abu Bakr, sending him word: 'Come to us, but let no one be with you.' Knowing 'Umar's toughness (*shidda*), 'AIT did not want him to come along. 'Umar advised Abu Bakr not to go alone, but the latter insisted: 'By God, I shall go to them alone, what could they do to me?' The caliph thus came alone to 'AIT, who had assembled the Banu Hashim in his house. 'AIT rose and,

⁶⁷ The Kufan loyalist 'Amir al-Sha'bl, evidently stung by the Shi'ite contentions that the Prophet's daughter died in anger at Abu Bakr, countered with the following story, when Fatima fell ill Abu Bakr came to visit her and asked for permission to enter. 'AIT told Fatima: 'There is Abu Bakr at the door, will you not permit him to enter?' She answered: 'And you prefer this?' He said: 'Yes.' Abu Bakr entered, apologized to her, and talked with her. She was satisfied with him (Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, VIII, 17). Yet what was there to apologize for if he had simply said the truth? The same tendency is also apparent in another report of al-Sha'bl transmitted by 'Umar b. Shabba. Al-Sha'bl narrated that 'Umar and Khalid b. al-Walld, on Abu Bakr's order, went to Fatima's house in order to get al-Zubayr and 'All to pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr. 'Umar used force against both men, who were then led before Abu Bakr. Fatima loudly protested against the violence committed on the Family of the Messenger of God. After al-Zubayr and 'AIT pledged allegiance, Abu Bakr visited her and interceded on behalf of 'Umar. She accepted his apologies and expressed her satisfaction with 'Umar (Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Shark*, II, 57, VI, 48-9).

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after giving due praise to God, said: 'What has prevented us from pledging allegiance to you, Abu Bakr, was neither denial of your excellence, nor consideration of you as unworthy of any bounty which God has conveyed to you. Rather we held that we had a right in "this matter" which you [pi.] have arbitrarily seized (*istabdadtum*) from us.' 'All then mentioned his kinship (*qaraba*) with the Messenger of God and the right of kin and continued until Abu Bakr wept. When he finished, the caliph pronounced the confession of faith (*shahada*) and in turn gave due praise to God. Then he said: 'By God, my link to the kinship of the Messenger of God is dearer to me than my own kinship. Surely, I have not sought in these chattels which have come between me and you anything but the good. But I have heard the Messenger of God say: We have no heirs, whatever we leave is alms. The family of Muhammad may only eat from this money. I seek refuge with God lest I remember anything which Muhammad, the Messenger of God, did in respect to it, yet fail to do it.' 'AIT promised his public pledge of allegiance for the evening. When the afternoon prayer was over, Abu Bakr turned to the assembled people and offered some excuses for 'AIT. Then 'AIT rose and extolled the right of Abu Bakr, mentioning his excellence and prior merit (*sabiqa*). He went forward to the caliph and pledged allegiance to him. The people hastened towards 'AIT, congratulating him: 'You have hit the mark, well done.' 'A'isha added: 'The people thus drew near to 'AIT when he drew near to the truth and what is proper.'⁶²

'AIT's public act of submission put an end to the isolation of the Banu Hashim and, on the surface, closed the ranks of the Muslims in support of Abu Bakr. Yet reconciliation there was none and could not be. Each of the two men looked through the other's motives and thoughts all too well to believe his reassuring words and gestures. Under the circumstances, 'AIT could see nothing but hypocrisy in Abu Bakr's tears and protestations of his love for the Prophet's kin. He knew that the caliph would continue doing all he could to keep the Banu Hashim away from power and influence and above all to prevent him, 'AIT, from ever succeeding to the caliphate. Abu Bakr likewise understood the insincerity of the younger man's recognition of his prior title to the succession of Muhammad and knew that 'AIT, if ever given the opportunity, would disavow the legitimacy of his caliphate of Quraysh and establish his own based on the rights of Muhammad's *ahl al-bayt*. There could be no relationship of trust between them. 'AIT continued to keep away from

⁶² Tabari, I, 1826-7.

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the caliph, and the latter was hardly eager to draw him into his company.⁶⁹ While predominant Sunnite doctrine has come to affirm that the Prophet died without having named a successor and that Abu Bakr was elected by the Muslim community at the Saqlfa, a minority of prominent scholars, among them al-Hasan al-Basri, Ibn Hazm and Ibn Taymiyya, have always held that Abu Bakr was chosen as successor by Muhammad. There is strong evidence that the latter view was officially backed during Abu Bakr's caliphate and that it was 'Umar who insisted that the Prophet had died without naming a successor. This is clearly implied in a comment of Abu Bakr's grandson al-Qasim b. Muhammad on the hadith of his aunt 'A'isha, according to which the Prophet just before his death, when hearing 'Umar pronounce the *takbir* in the public prayer, had said: 'Where is Abu Bakr? God refuses this as do the Muslims.' Al-Qasim commented: 'If it were not for something 'Umar said at the time of his death, the Muslims would not doubt that the Messenger of God appointed Abu Bakr as his successor (*istakhlafa*). But he ['Umar] said at his death: If I appoint a successor, someone better than myself [Abu Bakr] has appointed a successor. And if I leave them [i.e. the Muslims to choose the successor], someone better than myself left them [to choose]. Thus the people knew that the Messenger of God did not appoint anyone his successor, and 'Umar cannot be accused [of bias] against Abu Bakr.'⁷⁰ Abu Rafi' al-Ta'T, who had been converted to Islam by Abu Bakr and accompanied him during the raid of Dhat al-Salasil in the year 8/629, is quoted as reporting that he asked Abu Bakr later about the *bay' a* for him at the SaqTfa. Abu Bakr told him that it was 'Umar's reminder to the people that the Prophet had ordered Abu Bakr to lead the prayer during his illness that swayed them to swear allegiance to him.⁷¹ The oath of allegiance thus merely confirmed Muhammed's previous choice. 'A'isha,

⁶⁹ Later Sunnite sources on Abu Bakr's caliphate, especially Sayf b. 'Umar, mention 'AIT on various occasions as giving advice to the caliph (see *Annali*, II/1, 584, 594-5, 597, 11/2, 1116, 1150, 1197). The unreliability of these reports is evident especially since most of the occasions mentioned were during the six months before 'Al's pledge of allegiance. 'AIT is thus described as, together with 'Umar, urging the caliph not to lead the Muslim army in person at Dhu l-Qassa (*ibid.*, II/1, 594-5) and as being put in charge, together with al-Zubayr, Talha and 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud, of the defences of Medina (*ibid.*, 597). The traditionalist Sunnite historian Ibn KathTr insisted on the basis of such reports that 'AIT swore allegiance to Abu Bakr immediately after the SaqTfa assembly and that his pledge of allegiance after Fatima's death was merely an act of confirmation (*bay'a mu'akkida*), necessitated by the disloyalty of Fatima whose anger at Abu Bakr Ibn KathTr found incomprehensible and inexcusable (*al-Bidaya*, V, 249-50, 286-7). But then, Ibn KathTr commented with an anti-Shi'ite edge, Fatima was merely a woman who could not hope for infallibility (*hiya imra'a min al-bashar laysat bi-rajiyat al-'isma*, V, 249). 'A'isha's account, however, is incompatible with such an interpretation.

⁷⁰ Ibn Hisham, *Sirat sayyidina*, 1010.

⁷¹ Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, I, 8. Abu Bakr added that he accepted out of fear that there might be discord (*fitna*) leading to apostasy.

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as has been seen, consistently maintained that Abu Bakr was chosen by Muhammad for the succession and apparently never mentioned the events at the SaqTfa. Only when asked pointedly whom the Prophet would have appointed if he had made an appointment she replied: 'Abu Bakr'; adding, upon further questioning: 'After him 'Umar and then Abu 'Ubayda b. al-Jarrah.' There she stopped.⁶³

Since Abu Bakr did not view the caliphate as an elective office, it was only natural that he appointed, without prior consultation, his successor, 'Umar b. al-Khattab. Only after he had made up his mind is he reported to have confidentially asked 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf and 'Uthman for their opinions. The former expressed some reservations on account of 'Umar's well-known harshness (*ghilza*). 'Uthman answered more diplomatically that 'Umar's inside was better than his outside and that, in any case, 'there is no one like him among us'.⁶⁴ Talha is reported, after the official announcement, to have protested at the ill caliph's bedside against the choice of 'Umar because of the latter's ill treatment of the people even during Abu Bakr's reign. Abu Bakr, however, angrily rejected this criticism, declaring 'Umar the best of God's people.⁶⁵

While some of the details may be unreliable, the tenor of these reports probably reflects the situation correctly, and the fact that Abu Bakr appointed his successor rather than leaving the choice to the Muslim community cannot seriously be doubted. In spite of the prominent part played by 'Umar in Abu Bakr's reign, he could not have simply taken over and been universally recognized as *de facto* caliph as suggested by Caetani and Levi della Vida.⁷⁵ For while the choice of 'Umar certainly must have appealed to many strict Muslims who appreciated his uncompromising loyalty to Islam and his vigorous insistence on enforcing its norms on everybody, he was far from popular. It was not only some of the early Companions, whom Caetani accused of petty jealousy, incompetence and unjustifiable personal ambition, who had misgivings about 'Umar. More importantly, the Qurayshite aristocracy, on whose support Abu Bakr had built the caliphate and who were now firmly in control of the Muslim armies, would hardly have accepted their old opponent 'Umar without formal appointment by Abu Bakr, whom they had come to respect. Khalid b. al-Walid, in particular, must have been aware that his days in powerful leadership would now be numbered.

Abu Bakr, on the other hand, realized that he could not afford to leave the succession open at a time when the Muslim armies were engaged in the decisive battles for the conquest of Syria. Despite the stunning

⁶³ Muslim, *Sahih, Fada'il al-sahdaba*, 9. ⁷³ Tabari, I, 2137; *Annali*, III, 88.

⁷⁴ TabarT, I, 2143-4; *Annali* III, 85.

⁷⁵ *Annali*, III, 128; G. Levi della Vida, 'Omar b. al-Khattab', *El*.

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success of his policies, the caliphate was, only two years after its foundation, far from being safely established and a divisive election for a successor might have been fatal. He recognized that above all he must prevent any discussion of the rights of the family of the Prophet just as he had done before. For while now, given the vested interest of all of Quraysh in the caliphate, an easy election of 'Alī was much less likely, his name could still have served as the rallying point of the opposition in the absence of an obvious candidate.

From Abu Bakr's point of view, the choice of 'Umar almost imposed itself, despite their substantial differences of opinion in political questions. Among the early Companions, only 'Umar was really closely associated with him and involved in the daily running of the government. Abu Bakr owed him a considerable debt. 'Umar had made the coup at the Saqīfa in his favour possible and had brought Medina firmly under control for him. Having backed Abu Bakr's concept of the caliphate of Quraysh from the outset with enthusiasm, he could be trusted not to jolt its foundations, whatever change of direction he might introduce. 'Umar continued to be in effective control of Medina and was presumably not the man to cede his power to any of the other early Companions. The only serious alternative would perhaps have been Khalid b. al-Walīd, now at the peak of his popularity after his recent victories. Khalid would have clearly been preferred by the Mekkan aristocracy and would have had the backing of the Muslim armies. 'Umar, his personal enemy, would have been unable to put up any resistance to him. Whether Abu Bakr ever seriously considered the alternative must remain a speculative question. When the time for the decision came, Khalid was in command in Syria and apparently indispensable for the war effort. The choice of 'Umar was the most reasonable.

2 'Umar: Commander of the Faithful, Islamic meritocracy, consultation, and Arab empire

The privileged position of ruling the Islamic state which Abu Bakr had allotted Quraysh had no foundation in the Qur'an. In the early Mekkan Sura (CVI) addressed to them, the Quraysh were pointedly admonished to serve the Lord of the Ka'ba in gratitude for the prosperity and safety He had granted them. During most of Muhammad's mission, the majority of Quraysh in Mekka were his staunchest opponents, the unbelievers (*kuffar*) and polytheists (*mushrikun*) unequivocally condemned by the Holy Book. The Muhajirun, those who left their homes to join Muhammad in Medina in support of the cause of Islam, were greatly praised in the Qur'an, given hope for God's mercy (II 218), and promised reward on earth and in the hereafter (XVI 41). By Muhajirun the Qur'an, however, meant not only the Mekkan, Qurayshite emigrants, but equally bedouin tribesmen and others who joined the Prophet from all over Arabia. Although more often mentioned in the Qur'an than the Ansar, the Muhajirun were put strictly on a par with them (VIII 72-4, IX 100, 117) and nowhere were they given a preferred rank above them. The poor of the Muhajirun were granted a share of the estates of the Banu l-Nadlr on the grounds that they had been expelled from their homes and property, not because they stood higher in merit than the Ansar (LIX 8-9). The Qur'an, however, clearly accorded a higher religious merit on the basis of early conversion to Islam, a principle favouring the early Mekkan, mostly Qurayshite, Companions of Muhammad. The Muslims joining Islam after the early Muhajirun and the Ansar, who had sheltered them, were lower in religious rank (VIII 74—5, LIX 8-10). 'Those who preceded [in faith] are the ones who precede (*wa l-sabiquna l-sabiqun*). They are the ones brought close [to God] in the Gardens of Bliss' (LVI 10-12).⁶⁶ Specifically were those who joined Islam only after the conquest of Mekka sharply reminded that they were not equal to those who had earlier spent of their property and fought for Islam, and who were thus

⁶⁶ The precedence was here widely understood in a temporal sense, although verses 13-14 could to some extent contradict this interpretation.

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greater in rank (*a'zam darajatan*, LVII 10). It was generally held that the duty of *hijra* ended with the conquest of Mekka, so that even those Muslims who still came to join Muhammad in Medina did not acquire the title and merit of Muhajirun.

'Umar b. al-Khattab, Abu Bakr's successor, had always stood for a rigorous, unconditional backing of the cause and principles of Islam. In the time of Muhammad, he had repeatedly, but unsuccessfully, opposed diplomatic overtures to the Mekkan enemies of the Muslims. Thus he had demanded that the Mekkan captives in the battle of Badr should be killed rather than freed for ransom. He had protested against the compromise agreement of al-Hudaybiyya and, at the time of the conquest of Mekka, objected to the amnesty granted to the Umayyad chief Abu Sufyan whom he wanted to have executed for his leading part in the opposition to Islam.⁶⁷ Under Abu Bakr he had objected to the war against the Muslim tribes withholding the *zakat* tax and to the leading position given to some members of the Mekkan aristocracy such as Khalid b. al-Walid, whose conduct he considered to be inconsistent with the ethics of Islam, and Khalid b. Sa'd, whose loyalty to Abu Bakr seemed doubtful. As caliph, 'Umar, while not questioning the exclusive right of Quraysh to rule established by his predecessor, undertook to strengthen the Islamic character of the state by implementing Qur'anic principles and to curb the excessive power of the pre-Islamic Mekkan aristocracy. He relied in particular on two Qur'anic principles, that of *sabiqa*, early merit in Islam, which, given the established prerogative of Quraysh, benefited primarily the early Qurayshite Companions of Muhammad, and that of *shura*, consultation in the government of the Muslim community.

'Umar's concept of *sabiqa* was reflected in his institution of the *dtwan*, the army register, for the distribution of the revenue from the conquered territories among the Muslims. Abu Bakr is reported to have given all Muslims equal shares of any sums of money delivered to Medina which, in any case, cannot have been very substantial. Against this practice, 'Umar is said to have insisted that he could not put those who had fought together with the Prophet on the same level as those who had fought against him.³ The highest stipends were thus awarded to the Muslims who had fought in the battle of Badr, and those who had joined, and fought for, Islam at later stages were given progressively smaller amounts. Exceptions were made for the Family of the Prophet. His widows received pensions more than double those of the veterans of Badr, and al-'Abbas, as the surviving heir of Muhammad, was granted the same amount as the widows. The share of Muhammad's grandsons al-Hasan

⁶⁷ Shoufani, *al-Riddah*, 55. ¹ *Annali*, IV, 385-6, 391.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 388—127; G. Puin, *Der Dtwan von 'Umar ibn al-Hattab: Ein Beitrag zur fröhislamischen Verwaltungsgeschichte* (Bonn, 1970). Caetani's rejection of the reports about the preference given on the basis of kinship to the Prophet as Shi'ite and 'Abbasid fabrications (pp. 376, 379-82, 388, 393) is baseless.

and al-Husayn was also raised, evidently in recognition of the rights of Fatima. They were allotted the same stipend as their father 'AIT, whose award was that of the other veterans of Badr.⁴

'Umar's reliance on consultation is well illustrated by a report of 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas on the caliph's voyage to Syria in the year 18/639.⁶⁸ As the caliph and his escort reached Sargh, they were met by the commanders of the Muslim armies in Syria who informed him of the seriousness of the plague there. 'Umar ordered Ibn al-'Abbas to assemble the early Emigrants (*al-muhajirin al-awwalim*) for consultation. When they disagreed among themselves as to whether to continue the voyage or to return to Medina, 'Umar ordered the Ansar to be assembled for consultation. They, too, were divided in their opinion, and the caliph finally had Ibn al-'Abbas gather the leaders of Quraysh converted after the conquest of Mekka. They unanimously recommended retreat to Medina, and the caliph followed their advice.⁶⁹

Usually 'Umar confined himself to consulting with the prominent early Mekkan Companions. Numerous reports describe him as seeking their opinion on important political and legal questions. Caetani was evidently right in suggesting that 'Umar retained them generally in Medina to assist and counsel him while he sent others of less standing in Islam to lead the military campaigns abroad.⁷⁰ His resolve to leave the election of his successor to an electoral conclave of early Companions after his death was an extension of his general procedure in reaching important decisions. It differed only insofar as the final word during his caliphate had always remained his.

Various reports suggest that 'Umar, immediately on his accession, moved to reduce the power of the old Mekkan aristocracy and to rectify some of the wrongs that, in his view, had been done to Muslims in the

⁶⁸ Tabari I 2511-3. Al-Tabari, relying on Ibn Ishaq and al-Waqidi, erroneously places the expedition under the year 17/638. See *Annali*, IV, 18.

⁶⁹ See also the similar procedure of 'Umar with regard to the introduction of the pension (*'ata'*) system as described by al-Zubayr b. Bakkar (*Jamharat nasab Quraysh wa-akhbariha*, ed. Mahmud Muhammad Shakir (Cairo, 1381/1961), I, 373).

⁷⁰ *Annali*, IV, 140, V, 43—1, 503. Caetani (*ibid.*, IV, 139) stresses that 'Umar kept the Companions in Medina for this reason, 'not so much out of suspicion and jealousy'. He contradicts this assessment, however, in other passages where he suggests that 'Umar suspected the prominent Companions of disloyalty and treachery and kept them under close surveillance while denying them any share in the government (V, 42-5). See also IV, 453 where he maintains that 'Umar consistently excluded the early Muhajirin from any share in the power, considering them his personal enemies and perhaps as men dangerous to the integrity of the Islamic state.

⁷⁰ 'Abd al-Razzaq, *Musannaf*, V, 483. " *Annali*, III, 131-3.

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ridda. They mention as the first act of the second caliph the dismissal of Khalid b. al-Walid and the appointment of Abu 'Ubayda as supreme commander of the Muslim armies in Syria. Khalid was certainly not deposed until much later, and there is uncertainty about the date of the appointment of Abu 'Ubayda to the high command. According to al-Zuhri, 'Umar's order giving Abu 'Ubayda the supreme command in place of Khalid arrived at the time of the battle on the Yarmuk. Abu 'Ubayda, however, did not inform Khalid for two months out of a feeling of shame towards him.⁸ Yet it seems likely that 'Umar from the beginning relied more on his personal friend Abu 'Ubayda. According to further reports he also ordered the immediate release of Arab prisoners made during the *ridda* wars and lifted the restriction on the participants in the *ridda* to join the Muslim armies of conquest.⁹

In the long run, 'Umar's efforts to curb the power of the Mekkan aristocracy in favour of the early Companions were only partially successful. Khalid b. al-Walid was reduced to insignificance in Syria and was not allowed to return to Iraq. There 'Umar first commissioned Abu 'Ubayd b. Mas'ud, a Thaqafite who could not aspire to build a personal power base in the territories he might conquer, with the general command. A year after Abu 'Ubayd was killed in battle, the caliph, planning a major offensive in Iraq, appointed the early Mekkan Companion Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas supreme commander. Under Sa'd, the decisive battle of al-Qadisiyya was won, Mesopotamia was completely subdued, Kufa was founded and Iran invaded. When Sa'd was recalled to Medina after six years, Muslim rule in Iraq was already solidly established. 'Umar's other governors of Kufa, Basra and al-Bahrayn and the leaders of the conquests in Iran were mostly of relatively humble, non-Qurayshite origin, such as 'Utba b. Ghazwan of Qays 'Aylan, early Companion and confederate (*ihalf*) of the Banu Nawfal of Quraysh, the Thaqafites al-Mughlra b. Shu'ba, 'Uthman b. Abi l-'As and his brother al-Hakam, the Yamanite Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, 'Ammar b. Yasir, son of a *mawla* of the Makhzumite Abu Hudhayfa, the Muzanite al-Nu'man b. 'Amr b. Muqarrin. The members of the Qurayshite aristocracy, so prominent in the leadership of the Muslim armies under Abu Bakr, were conspicuously absent.

In Syria 'Umar promoted the early Companion Abu 'Ubayda b. al-Jarrah to the high command chiefly with the aim of reducing the power of Khalid b. al-Walid, but also in the hope of keeping the Sufyanids under control. When Abu 'Ubayda, who resided in Hims, died in the plague of the year 18/639, the caliph appointed Yazid b. Abi Sufyan, who had been

in control of Damascus as deputy of Abu 'Ubayda since 16/637, governor of Damascus, al-Urdunn and Palestine and 'Iyad b. Ghanm governor of Hims, QinnasrTn and Upper Mesopotamia (al-JazTra).¹⁰ Shortly afterwards YazTd, too, fell victim to the plague, and 'Umar appointed his brother Mu'awiya b. Abi Sufyan successor and governor of Damascus. Caetani saw this appointment as proof for 'Umar's high esteem of the Umayyads, to whom he particularly wanted to give a leading part in the government of Islam.¹¹ This interpretation is, however, hardly reasonable in the light of 'Umar's deep-seated aversion towards the Mekkan aristocracy and former opponents of Muhammad. 'Umar probably did not have much of a choice at the time. The only serious rival to Mu'awiya for the leadership in Syria after the death of so many other commanders was probably, as noted by Caetani,¹² 'Amr b. al-'As. 'Amr, however, had probably already received 'Umar's approval for the invasion of Egypt. It was obviously not the time to send a Companion of high standing from Medina before it was certain that the plague had run its course.

Another consideration in 'Umar's choice of the Sufyanid Mu'awiya may have been the strength and high ambitions of the Yamanite, especially Himyarite, element among the Arab conquerors. These Yamanites had joined the Muslim army making no secret of their aspiration to establish a Himyarite kingdom under their leader Dhu l-Kala' Samayfa' b. Nakur, whom they called 'king of Himyar', in defiance of the claim of Quraysh to rule the empire of Islam. Dhu l-Kala' had hoped to gain control of Damascus, where he acquired much property, but he was instead forced to settle together with his followers in Hims, while the Umayyads entrenched themselves in Damascus.¹³ 'Umar probably realized that the Sufyanids, who in opposition to Himyar formed an alliance with the tribe of Kalb, were in the best position to thwart such Himyarite designs, which he must have viewed as a threat to Abu Bakr's and his own concept of the caliphate.

The invasion of Egypt was undertaken by 'Amr b. al-'As, who had old

¹⁰ According to al-Zuhrī, Abu 'Ubayda had appointed Khalid b. al-Walīd and his own cousin 'Iyad b. Ghanm as his successors. 'Umar confirmed only 'Iyad b. Ghanm. See 'Abd al-Razzaq, *Musannaf*, V, 455.

¹¹ *Annali*, IV, 30-1; V, 496. Caetani suggested that the plebeian Mekkan 'Umar might have favoured the Umayyads, Qurayshite aristocrats, out of snobbishness, but that he certainly recognized in them qualities that others did not have and found them useful for fortifying the Muslim community (*ibid.*, VII, 5). Less convinced of 'Umar's farsightedness, Lammens commented on this interpretation that 'Umar was probably forced to give the Umayyads some positions in order to secure the internal peace and to disarm the opposition. There might indeed have been a secret accord between 'Umar and Abu Sufyan which would explain why 'Umar never tried to depose Mu'awiya from his governorship (*Annali*, VII, *Corregioni ed aggiunte*, liii). ¹² *Annali*, V, 496. ¹³ See Madelung, 'Apocalyptic Prophecies in Him? in the Umayyad Age', *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 30 (1986), 141-85, at 141-2, 183-4.

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trading interests there, perhaps primarily on his own initiative. It is hardly conceivable, however, that he could have proceeded without permission from the caliph, as some sources suggest. Informed of Amr's successful advance, 'Umar expedited a strong auxiliary force under the early Companion al-Zubayr. His choice of a man of such high standing clearly reflected his intention to curb the independence of Amr.⁷¹ Later 'Umar confiscated part of the riches that 'Amr had amassed in the conquest in a manner humiliating to the conqueror of Egypt.⁷² He left him, however, as governor until the end of his caliphate. It was to be Mu'awiya, aided by 'Amr b. al-'As, who put a definite end to the reign of the early Companions, as conceived by 'Umar, and who established the dynastic rule of the old Mekkan aristocracy in its place.

Vital for 'Umar's design of a collective authority of the early Companions was at least a token participation by 'All. 'Umar made every effort to bring about a reconciliation with the Banu Hashim without compromising the essential right of all Quraysh to the caliphate. He thus treated 'AIT basically like the other early Companions. He displayed his favour for the Prophet's kin rather in courting al-'Abbas who now, after the death of Fatima, was the closest relative of Muhammad but posed no political threat since he did not belong to the early Companions and had no personal ambitions. 'Umar also drew 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas, who was too young to pose a political threat, near to himself. Ibn al-'Abbas was closely associated with 'Umar from the beginning to the end of his caliphate and has left the most revealing reports about the caliph's private thoughts.

With regard to the inheritance of Muhammad, 'Umar made a cautious concession to the Banu Hashim. According to 'A'isha, he turned Muhammad's estates in Medina over to al-'Abbas and 'AIT as endowment to be administered by them, while withholding the Prophet's portion of Khaybar and Fadak. He maintained that the latter two properties, evidently in contrast to the former, were merely assigned to the use of the Prophet for his personal needs and for emergencies and that they were after him at the disposal of the ruler of the time.¹⁶ 'AIT, according to 'A'isha, soon usurped the rights of al-'Abbas with regard to Muhammad's estates in Medina.¹⁷

Malik b. Aws b. Hadathan of the Banu Nasr of Hawazin reported about a session attended by himself in which the quarrel between al-'Abbas and 'AIT was brought before the caliph. At first the early Companions

⁷¹ *Annali*, IV, 105. ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 618-23.

¹⁶ BukharT, *Sahih Khums* 2; Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, I, 6-7. See also this volume, excursus 2.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 11-12. ²⁶ *Annali*, IV, 14-17, V, 123. ²⁷ See *ibid.*, III, 250, 253.

'Uthman, 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf, al-Zubayr and Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas¹⁸ were admitted, then al-'Abbas and 'AIT. Al-'Abbas asked the caliph to judge between him and his nephew in the dispute about the Prophet's property from the Banu l-Nadlr, and the two began to curse each other.¹⁹ Egged on by the group of early Companions to render judgment, 'Umar turned first to them asking whether they all knew that the Prophet had said: 'We do not have heirs, whatever we leave is alms', meaning by 'we' himself. Acknowledgement of Muhammad's statement denying his family the right of inheritance had evidently become a kind of loyalty oath to the caliphate, and all answered affirmatively. 'Umar now asked 'All and al-'Abbas the same question, and they also confessed that the Prophet had said so.

'Umar then quoted Sura LIX 6, pointing out that God had given the *fay*' of the Banu l-Nadlr to the Messenger alone, who had distributed its revenue at his discretion. He had provided his family with their annual expenditure and had used the remainder in the cause of God. Abu Bakr after his succession had retained the property and faithfully followed the conduct of the Prophet, and 'Umar had done likewise during the first two years of his reign. Then al-'Abbas and 'AIT had come to him, the former asking for his share of the inheritance of his nephew and the latter asking for his wife's share of the inheritance of her father. 'Umar had reminded them of the Prophet's word: 'We do not have heirs, whatever we leave is alms.'²⁰ Then, however, he consented to hand the estates over to them on the condition that they would manage them in exactly the same way as the Prophet, Abu Bakr and he himself had done. Now they were asking him for a different decision concerning them, but he would never agree to anything else. If they were unable to carry it out, they should return them to him.²¹

The report, portraying al-'Abbas and 'AIT in the most negative light, distinctly reflects the anti-Hashimite sentiments of Umayyad Sunnism and may not be entirely reliable in detail. In substance, however, it probably describes 'Umar's attitude correctly. The caliph recognized the danger of even partly disavowing the decision of Abu Bakr concerning Muhammad's inheritance and made sure that everybody 'knew' the

¹⁸ According to another version, Talha was also present. See Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-bari* (Cairo, 1319-29/[1901-II]), VI, 125.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* According to one version al-'Abbas called 'All 'this liar, sinner, traitor, and cheat (*hadha l-kadhib al-dhim al-ghadir al-kha'in*)'.

²⁰ In the version quoted by Muslim, 'Umar accused 'AIT and al-'Abbas of holding both Abu Bakr and 'Umar for their actions to be 'a liar, sinner, traitor, and cheat'. 'Umar insisted that Abu Bakr was in every respect the opposite of this description.

²¹ BukharT, *Sahih, Khums* 1; Muslim, *SahihTh, Jihad* 49; 'Abd al-Razzaq, *Musannaf*, V, 469-71. For further references see A. J. Wensinck, *Concordance et indices de la tradition musulmane* (Leiden, 1936-88), index s.v. Malik b. Aws.

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Prophet's word. His own decision about Muhammad's estates in Medina did not mean that he surrendered them to al-'Abbas and 'AIT as private property. Rather, they were to administer them for the benefit of the Muslim Community as Muhammad had done. In support of his position he quoted Sura LIX 6 which mentioned the Prophet as the sole recipient of the *fay* from the Banu l-NadTr. He did not quote the later verse LIX 7 concerning the *fay*' of the 'people of the towns (*ahl al-quraf*) which specified a portion for the kin of the Prophet. That portion, he evidently held, referred only to the yield of *the fay*' of Khaybar and Fadak while the land itself became state property after Muhammad's death.

About *the fay*' land of Khaybar, Jubayr b. Mut'im is quoted as reporting that Muhammad had distributed a portion of it (meaning of its yield) to the Banu Hashim and the Banu l-Muttalib to the exclusion of the Banu 'Abd Shams and the Banu Nawfal, to whom Jubayr himself belonged. Abu Bakr used to distribute the yield²² as the Prophet had done but did not give the kin of the Prophet a share. 'Umar and those after him, however, allotted them a portion.²³ Jubayr b. Mut'im evidently meant here the preference given to the Banu Hashim in the stipends of the army register (*diwan*). 'Umar constituted much of the land conquered during his reign as *fay*', now in the meaning of communal property, and used the revenue for paying the stipends and pensions of the Muslim warriors. Since the Banu Hashim were placed first in the *diwan*, they could be seen as being restored to their proper rank as kin of the Prophet entitled to a special portion of the *fay*'. In fact, however, only Muhammad's wives, al-'Abbas, the two grandsons of the Prophet and Usama, son of Muhammad's client and adoptive son Zayd b. Haritha,²⁴ were granted larger shares than they otherwise deserved. The *fay*' stipends were thus used to make up for the loss of the right of inheritance. 'AIT, not being considered a primary heir, received only the stipend to which he was entitled as a veteran of Badr, and the other Banu Hashim and Banu l-Muttalib were, no doubt, dealt with in the same way. While the supporters of the caliphate could thus feel, as suggested by the report of Jubayr b. Mut'im, that the kin of the Prophet had been fairly treated in accordance with their Qur'anic title to a portion of the *fay*', most of these still saw themselves deprived of the benefits they had enjoyed under Muhammad.

In respect to the fifth of movable war booty, 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas reported that the Qur'anic portion of the Prophet's kin was no longer

²² The term used throughout the report is *khums*. From the context it is evident that the yield of the *fay** land is meant.

²³ Abu Dawud₃ *Sunan* (Cairo, 1292/[1875]), XIX, 20; al-Maqrzi, *al-Nizd' wa l-takhasum fima bayn Bam Umayya wa-Bant Hashim* ed. G. Vos, *Die Kampfe und Streitigkeiten zwischen den Banu Umajja und den Banu Hasim* (Leiden, 1888), 22.

²⁴ See Abu Yusuf, *Kitdb al-Khardj* (Cairo, 1352/[1933]), 25.

distributed to them after the death of Muhammad. 'Umar then proposed to the Banu Hashim to pay for their marriages, debts and servants from the fifth. The Banu Hashim, however, rejected this proposal unless the full amount of their share was turned over to them. To this the caliph would not agree. In reply to a letter of the Kharijite leader Najda b. 'Amir, Ibn al-'Abbas left no doubt that he still held the Banu Hashim to be entitled to this portion of the fifth of booty.²⁵

By his overtures to the Banu Hashim 'Umar evidently hoped to reconcile them with the Muslim community and its new caliphal order without giving them excessive economic and political power. Courting the favour of al-'Abbas and his son 'Abd Allah, neither of whom could pose a serious political threat because of their relatively low standing in regard to *sabiqa*, seemed to serve this purpose well. Al-'Abbas was thus granted the largest pension aside from the wives of Muhammad. During the drought of the year 18/639 'Umar honoured him by putting him forward in the ritual prayer for rain (*istisqa'*), thus seeking God's favour through the blessing of the Prophet's uncle.²⁶ Al-'Abbas seems to have had the ear of the caliph as a counsellor, not among the early Companions, but among the leaders of Quraysh.⁷³ Sayf b. 'Umar's assessment that under 'Umar people wishing to discover the intentions of the caliph would first turn to 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf or 'Uthman and after them to al-'Abbas⁷⁴ may be correct. Al-'Abbas was in a position to protest against 'Umar's order to demolish several houses, including his own, against the will of their owners for the enlargement of the sanctuary of Mekka.²⁹ In Medina, he successfully resisted 'Umar's wish to include his house in the enlargement of the mosque, but then surrendered it voluntarily to the Muslim community.³⁰

Al-Mas'udT relates a report attributed to 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas according to which 'Umar once offered the latter the governorship of Hims after the death of the previous governor. The caliph expressed at the same time some uncertainty and apprehension as to the propriety of this appointment and asked Ibn al-'Abbas about his own views regarding such an office. As the latter demanded to be first informed about the nature of the caliph's reservations, 'Umar explained that he was afraid that people might protest to him that the office should be given to others than the kin of Muhammad since the latter had regularly chosen his officials among others and had avoided appointing his kin. 'Umar continued that he did not know whether Muhammad had done so because

²⁹ Ya'qubl, *Ta'rikh*, II, 170; *Annali*, III, 961-2.

³⁰ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, IV/1, 13-14; *Annali*, III, 966-7.

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he held them to be above holding office (*danna bi-kum 'an al-amal*) - and they, 'Umar added, were worthy of that esteem - or whether the Prophet feared that they might abuse their rank so that they would be subject to reproach, since reproach was inevitable (in public office). Upon this reply Ibn al-'Abbas declined to hold any office for 'Umar and advised him to employ someone 'who can trust you and whom you can trust (*tasta'mil sah.Th.an minka sahihan laka*)⁷⁵

Despite the literary formulation of the report, the substance may well be reliable and reflect 'Umar's ambiguous position correctly. 'Umar would have liked to integrate the Banu Hashim fully in the Muslim community, more particularly among Quraysh, the ruling class. In view of the continued reluctance of 'AIT, the appointment of 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas to a governorship could, in one respect, have been seen by 'Umar as a political success. For the same reason Ibn al-'Abbas may basically have been hesitant to accept in order to avoid breaking ranks with 'AIT and the Banu Hashim. Yet 'Umar's fear that there might be objections to the appointment of a Hashimite to high office may have been well founded. His mention of Muhammad's failure to appoint his kin to offices and his questioning the motives behind it may indicate that he in fact was hoping that Ibn al-'Abbas would decline.³²

'Umar's relations with 'AIT were more difficult. Ibn AbT Tahir Tayfur quoted in his *Ta'rTkh Baghdad* a report of 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas about a conversation he had with the caliph early in his reign. 'Umar asked him about his cousin and whether he was still harbouring ambitions for the caliphate. On Ibn al-'Abbas' affirmative answer, he asked whether he claimed that the Prophet had designated him (*nassa'alayh*). Ibn al-'Abbas replied yes, adding that he had asked his father about the truth of this claim, and al-'Abbas had confirmed it. 'Umar commented that there had been some words of the Prophet in respect to 'AIT which were not decisive evidence. The Prophet had deliberated (*yarba'u*) about this matter for some time, and during his illness he intended to name him expressly, but he, 'Umar, had restrained him out of concern for, and in order to protect, the cause of Islam. Quraysh would never have agreed to this arrangement. If 'AIT were to assume the caliphate, the Arabs everywhere would revolt against him. The Prophet, 'Umar added, had understood what his

⁷⁵ Al-Mas'udT, *Muruj al-dhahab*, ed. C. Pellat (Beirut, 1968-79), III, 65-6; *Amali*, V, 158.

motives were and had therefore kept silent. God had refused everything but His decree.⁷⁶

Although aware that 'AIT had not entirely renounced his ambitions to rule as the chief of Muhammad's kin, thus threatening the caliphate of Quraysh, 'Umar sought to draw the Prophet's cousin closer to himself within the council of early Companions. He regularly consulted him together with the other early Companions and insisted on marrying 'All's daughter Umm Kulthum, granddaughter of the Prophet. The latter, a mere child at the time, resisted, presumably aware of 'Umar's harsh treatment of women. 'AIT himself was reluctant, but eventually gave in after the caliph enlisted public support of the Emigrants and Helpers for his demand.⁷⁷ 'AIT did, however, turn to 'Umar to ask for a land concession at Yanbu' near Jabal Radwa. The caliph granted it to him,⁷⁸ and it later remained in the hands of the descendants of al-Hasan.³⁶

In spite of 'Umar's overtures, there remained a distance between the two men. 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas reported that 'Umar questioned him on one of his journeys as to why 'AIT would not join them.⁷⁹ When Ibn al-'Abbas pretended not to know, the caliph pursued: 'O Ibn al-'Abbas, your father is the paternal uncle of the Messenger of God, and you are his cousin. What has turned your people [*qawmakum*, i.e. Quraysh] away from you [pi.]?' Ibn al-'Abbas again denied knowing the answer. 'Umar then explained that Quraysh did not want Muhammad's kin to rule, since they were loath to see prophethood and caliphate combined in a single family, lest they become overbearing. 'Perhaps you [pi.] say that Abu Bakr fixed that. No, by God, Abu Bakr rather did the most prudent that was possible for him. If he had rendered the caliphate to you, it would have been of no avail to you in view of your closeness [to the Prophet].⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Ibn Abi l-Haddl, *Shark*, XII, 20-1. Ibn Abi l-Haddl does not quote the full *isndd* which, according to him, was provided by Ibn Abi Tahir.

⁷⁷ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, VIII, 339^0; *Annali*, III, 968-9.

¹⁵ Yahya b. Adam, *al-Kharaj*, ed. T. W. Juynboll, *Le livre de l'impôtancier de Yahya Ibn Adam* (Leiden, 1895), 57; BaladhurT, *Futuh*, 14.

⁷⁹ See also *Aghani*, IX, 146 (*Annali*, V, 142-3) where 'Umar is quoted as complaining to 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas about 'All's absence when he set out for al-Jabiya. Ibn al-'Abbas assured the caliph that the excuses offered by 'AIT were real.

⁸⁰ TabarT, I, 2768-9. The second account quoted by al-TabarT (*ibid.*, 2769-71), which is transmitted by Ibn Ishaq and describes Ibn al-'Abbas as a bold and boastful defender of the rights of his family in front of 'Umar, is probably based on the first. It hardly goes back to either Ibn al-'Abbas or 'Ikrima, who is named as the transmitter from him. (See also the report of Ibn al-'Abbas quoted by al-Jawharl, *Kitab al-Saqifa*, on the authority of 'Umar b. Shabba in Ibn Abi l-Haddl, *Sharh*, II, 57-8.)

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'Umar's words were obviously meant as a lesson for 'AIT as much as for Ibn al-'Abbas. 'AIT could not hope to gain the caliphate on the basis of his kinship with Muhammad since Quraysh would not countenance the accumulation of prophethood and caliphate in the same clan. It was not Abu Bakr's and 'Umar's coup at the SaqTfat Barn Sa'ida that had prevented 'AIT's succession, but the deep jealousy of Quraysh. The only chance for 'AIT to share in the rule of the Muslim community was to co-operate fully in the consultative assembly of early Qurayshite Companions which 'Umar had set up. On another occasion, Ibn al-'Abbas narrated, 'Umar remarked to him that his companion (*sahibuka*), 'AIT, was indeed the most worthy (*awla*) of the people to rule after the Messenger of God, 'but we feared him for two reasons'. When Ibn al-'Abbas asked him eagerly what the reasons were, he mentioned his youth and his love for the Banu 'Abd al-Muttalib.⁸¹

'Umar's hopes of being able to contain the aspirations of 'AIT and his supporters were, towards the end of his reign, rudely disappointed by the incident reported by Ibn al-'Abbas which led to the caliph's address about the events at the SaqTfat BanT Sa'ida. In the address he reaffirmed his faith in the principle of consultation as the basis for the succession to the caliphate and denounced any future attempt to settle it without *mashwara* among the Muslims. The caliphate belonged to all of Quraysh and could not be monopolized by any particular family. 'Umar was struck by his assassin less than two weeks later.

The caliph's resolve to leave the choice of his successor to a *shura* among the most eminent early Companions was no doubt firm long before he was mortally wounded by Abu Lu'lu'a, the Persian slave of al-MughTra b. Shu'ba, even if he, as commonly affirmed by the historical tradition, chose its members and defined their task only on his deathbed.⁸² Various reports quoting 'Umar as affirming that he would have appointed Abu 'Ubayda b. al-Jarrah, or Salim, the client of Abu Hudhayfa, or the Medinan Companion Mu'adh b. Jabal of Khazraj if one of them had been alive,⁸³ must be taken with caution. Even if he ever made statements to that effect, they were presumably no more than a hyperbolic homage to his dead friends. Abu 'Ubayda would certainly have been included in any *shura*. Salim, as noted by Caetani,⁸⁴ would not have been accepted by Quraysh since he was their client and was clearly excluded from the

⁸¹ Al-Jawharl, *Kitab al-Saqifa*, quoting 'Umar b. Shabba (Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, II, 57, VI, 50-1).

⁸² There are reports, however, that 'Umar named the electoral committee of six in a Friday sermon. See Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 242-3; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 889; *Annali*, V, 38; al-Baladhurl, *Ansab al-ashraf*, V, ed. S. D. F. Goitein (Jerusalem, 1936), 15-16, 18.

⁸³ *Annali*, IV, 134, V, 64, 80; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 881, 886-7.

⁸⁴ *Annali*, V, 86.

caliphate as conceived by Abu Bakr. Mu'adh b. Jabal would likewise have been unacceptable as a non-Qurayshite. 'Umar never considered any of his own kin for the succession. There are reports that he angrily rejected suggestions that he appoint his eldest son, 'Abd Allah, commenting that the latter was not even capable of divorcing his wife.⁸⁵

Caetani maintained that 'Umar did not appoint the famous *shura* at all, but that the electoral council rather constituted itself after the caliph's death, presumably on the basis of their earlier activity in advising him. Holding that several of its members, in particular 'AIT, al-Zubayr and Talha, were in fact the instigators of 'Umar's murder and that 'Umar most likely was aware of their complicity, he argued that the caliph could not have chosen them.⁸⁶ The fact that the assassination occurred so soon after 'Umar's warning against 'the clan who want to usurp the rule from the people' may strengthen the impression of a conspiracy in which 'AIT was involved.

Yet Caetani's hypothesis of a conspiracy among the early Companions to murder 'Umar has no sound basis in the sources. The blind acts of vengeance perpetrated by 'Umar's son 'Ubayd Allah, which were taken as evidence by Caetani, resembled those of a lunatic, not of someone with inside knowledge. That 'Ubayd Allah is said to have been encouraged by 'Umar's daughter Hafsa⁸⁷ does not lend credibility to the soundness of his motives. Abu Lu'lu'a having been killed, or committed suicide, immediately after his crime, 'Ubayd Allah murdered not only al-Hurmuzan, the Persian army leader who had converted to Islam and become a counsellor of 'Umar on Persian affairs, but also the Christian Jufayna⁴⁵ and the assassin's young daughter. The murder of Jufayna and al-Hurmuzan was provoked solely by a claim by either 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf or 'Abd al-Rahman b. AbT Bakr of having seen them together with the murder weapon in their possession. When 'Ubayd Allah was apprehended, he threatened to kill all foreign captives in Medina and some unnamed Emigrants and Helpers. That he had in mind 'AIT in particular is not unlikely, given 'Umar's recent warning against his and his clan's ambitions. In spite of the report about Abu Lu'lu'a's knife, however, 'Ubayd Allah's action was generally recognized as murder and was not defended as an act of legitimate revenge. He was granted clemency by the caliph 'Uthman on the basis that it would be undue harshness to spill his blood just after his father had been murdered. 'AIT, among others, strongly protested against this act of clemency and threatened that he would carry out the legal punishment of 'Ubayd Allah for murder if he were ever in a position to do so.

There is no evidence for any ties between Abu Lu'lu'a and the Companions

⁸⁵ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 248; Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 17; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 923; Tabari, I, 2777.

⁸⁶ *Annali*, V, 40-51. G. Levi della Vida, who in his *HI* article on 'Umar generally followed Caetani's interpretations closely, rejected his theory of a plot of the Muhajirun to murder the caliph. He inclined, however, to the belief that 'Umar did not appoint the electoral council for his succession and that he would have made his own choice if he had lived.

⁸⁷ *Annali*, V, 70.

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suspected by Caetani of having conspired to murder 'Umar. If there had been serious suspicions of any complicity on the part of 'AIT, later Umayyad propaganda would certainly have made use of them, just as it accused him of the murder of 'Uthman.⁴⁷ In addition to 'AIT, Talha and al-Zubayr, Caetani named Muhammad, the son of Abu Bakr, among the plotters and suggested that perhaps al-'Abbas and his son 'Abd Allah were also involved.⁴⁸ They were, he suggested, probably the same clique that was later behind the murder of 'Uthman.⁴⁹ The theory of a conspiracy of early Companions to murder both 'Umar and 'Uthman is in accord with Caetani's basic view that 'Umar, as the effective ruler ever since the death of Muhammad, had given free rein to the old Mekkan aristocracy and, as caliph, favoured the rise to power of the Umayyads whose political acumen he admired in contrast to the petty jealousy and sinister ambitions of most of the early Companions.

The accounts of the meetings and proceedings of the electoral council that elected 'Uthman are partly contradictory and legendary.⁵⁰ Some

⁴⁷ In one of his letters, al-Jahiz answered a man who had asked him about the accusations of some people that 'AIT had poisoned Abu Bakr, instigated the murder of 'Umar by Abu Lu'lu'a and openly spoken out against 'Uthman until he was killed. Al-Jahiz characteristically claimed that this was what the radical Shi'ites (*rawafid*) who praised 'AIT for this had reported and counted as one of his virtues (Ibn Bakr, Muhammad b. Yahya, *al-Tamhid wa l-bayan fi maqatal al-shahid 'Uthman*, ed. Mahmud Yusuf Zayid (Beirut, 1963), 179-81). This claim is probably mere anti-Shi'ite slander. The accusation against 'AIT must, however, have come from obscure pro-Umayyad circles and did not reflect the official Umayyad propaganda line.⁴⁸ *Annali*, V, 44.⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 42.⁵⁰ The main eyewitness report was that of al-Miswar b. Makhrama al-Zuhri, maternal nephew of 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf, who was involved in the proceedings through his uncle. His original report is not extant. Al-Tabarī (I, 2722-6, 2788-97) quotes the version of it transmitted by 'Abd al-'Aziz b. Abī Thābit (d. 179/795), a descendant of 'Abd al-Rahman, who is described as a specialist in genealogy and poetry, unreliable in hadith. According to 'Umar b. Shabba his books were burned, and he transmitted from memory (Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, VI, 350-1). This may account for some legendary elements and the literary air of the report. In substance, however, it seems sound.

The Kufan reports quoted by Ibn Ishaq which were edited by N. Abbott from a papyrus and described by her as unbiased (*Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri*, (Chicago, 1957), 1,80-99) have for good reason been judged to be anti-Umayyad fiction by H. A. R. Gibb (review, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 17 (1958), 214) and M. J. Kister ('Notes on an Account of the Shura appointed by 'Umar b. al-Khattab', *JSS*, 9 (1964), 320-6). According to these and related reports, 'Umar before his death expressed regret that he had appointed Mu'awiya governor and accused 'Amr b. al-'As of encouraging Mu'awiya's hopes to gain the caliphate to which he, as a freed captive at the time of the Muslim conquest of Mekka (*tallq*), could not aspire. While such reports were clearly invented with hindsight in the light of the later developments, the claim expressed in them that

aspects, however, can be established with reasonable certainty. The council consisted in fact of five members, 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf, Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas, 'Uthman, 'AIT and al-Zubayr. The sixth, Talha, returned to Medina only after the election of 'Uthman. Sa'd formally acted as his proxy. An important part in the decision in favour of 'Uthman fell to the latter's brother-in-law 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf.⁵¹ 'Abd al-Rahman had been the Companion closest to 'Umar after the death of Abu 'Ubayda, and the caliph often relied on his views.⁵² If a report of 'Umar's grandson Salim b. 'Abd Allah is reliable, 'Umar considered 'Abd al-Rahman, 'Uthman and 'AIT as serious candidates for the caliphate and warned each one of them in turn not to give free rein to his kin if elected.⁵³ By mentioning 'Abd al-Rahman as the one addressed first by 'Umar, the report may be meant to indicate that the caliph would have preferred him as his successor. It is indeed not unlikely that 'Umar trusted 'Abd al-Rahman the most among the three, and 'AIT the least. 'Abd al-Rahman, however, did not aspire to supreme power and took himself out of the competition in return for being recognized as the arbitrator between the candidates. Since al-Zubayr and Sa'd equally did not press their own or Talha's claim,⁵⁴ only 'Uthman and 'AIT were left. 'AIT pleaded his own case as the closest kin of the Prophet with consistent vigour, while 'Uthman maintained his candidacy passively. Besides interviewing each of the electors separately, 'Abd al-Rahman consulted with the leaders of Quraysh at night and received strong support for 'Uthman. With the latter a candidate, the Banu 'Abd Shams could no longer feel any obligation to back their more remote relative, 'AIT. Makhzum also backed 'Uthman against the Prophet's cousin. The Makhzumite leader 'Abd Allah b. AbT RabT'a, governor of al-Janad, warned 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf: 'If you pledge allegiance to 'AIT, we shall hear and disobey, but if you pledge allegiance to 'Uthman we shall hear and obey. So fear God, Ibn 'Awf.'⁵⁵

'Umar considered all former enemies of Islam including Mu'awiya and 'Amr b. al-'As as ineligible for the caliphate was nonetheless well founded in view of their complete exclusion from his electoral council.

⁵¹ 'Abd al-Rahman was married to 'Uthman's half-sister Umm Kulthum bt 'Uqba b. AbT Mu'ayt (BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, V, 19).

⁵² Caetani's assertion, on the basis of the report in al-Tabari, I, 2746 ll. 8-13, that 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf was one of the most bitter adversaries of 'Umar (*Annali*, V, 486; see also III, 702) is incomprehensible. The report rather indicates that the people sought 'Abd al-Rahman's intercession with the caliph because they knew that he had considerable influence on him.

⁵³ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 249-50; *Annali*, V, 65; 'Abd al-Razzaq, *Musannaf*, V, 480-1.

⁵⁴ Al-Zubayr does not seem to have withdrawn immediately, unlike Sa'd who followed the lead of 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf (Tabari, I, 2792).

⁵⁵ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 19; Tabari, I, 2785; Abbott, *Arabic Literary Papyri*, 1, 81, 85. 'Abd Allah b. AbT Rabi'a was governor of al-Janad under 'Umar and was reappointed by 'Uthman (*Aghani*, I, 32).

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In the electoral council 'AIT had virtually no support. 'Uthman and 'AIT are each said to have indicated a preference for the other if not elected. According to some reports 'AIT succeeded in persuading Sa'd to switch his backing from 'Uthman to himself. This was, however, soft support at best. More indicative of the strength of sentiment for 'Uthman was that al-Zubayr, maternal cousin of 'AIT, who had backed him after the death of Muhammad, now opted for 'Uthman. 'Abd al-Rahman thus had a convincing mandate for deciding in favour of the latter. He announced his decision, however, only during the public meeting in the mosque in the presence of the two candidates, thus putting heavy pressure on the loser, 'AIT, to pledge allegiance immediately. 'AIT complied reluctantly.

Although 'Umar must have been worried about the possibility of 'AIT becoming caliph, there is no evidence that he tried directly to influence the electoral process against him. His recent warning, in the presence of 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf, against the ambitions of the Banu Hashim to assert their sole right to the caliphate certainly contributed to 'AIT's overwhelming defeat. Although apparently not repeated in his public address, the warning no doubt became common knowledge and, together with the assassination of the caliph shortly afterwards, ruled out any compromise between the supporters of the caliphate of Quraysh and 'AIT, which might otherwise have been possible. 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf was fully aware of 'Umar's feelings. He may have withdrawn his own name in order to gain the decisive vote and thus be in a position to block 'AIT's ambitions. But this seems to have been his own spontaneous initiative, not a prearranged manoeuvre suggested by the caliph.⁸⁸

'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas narrated the story of a conversation he had with 'Umar in which the latter expressed his concern about a suitable succession. Ibn al-'Abbas questioned him about his views on each of the six men who were to become members of the electoral council, but the caliph expressed grave reservation with regard to each of them. The story is certainly a literary fiction and the answers ascribed to 'Umar reflect to some extent the hindsight of a later age. They nevertheless may not be far

⁸⁸ A substantially different account of the *shura* was provided by the early Kufan authority al-Sha'bi. According to him, 'Umar had no doubts that the election would be between 'AIT and 'Uthman. Before he died, he in fact excluded Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas, recommending that he be reappointed governor of Kufa. Talha was absent in Syria. Concerning the remaining four he ordered that if three of them agreed against one, their choice should be decisive. If the vote was hung, 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf's choice should prevail. 'AIT recognized this as a stratagem to keep him from the succession, since 'Abd al-Rahman would inevitably prefer his brother-in-law, 'Uthman (Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Shark*, IX, 29-54, quoting 'Awana's *Kitab al-shura zua-maqtal 'Uthman* and al-JawharT's *Kitab al-Saqifa*). Al-Sha'bT's account gives the distinct impression of a secondary reconstruction based on little first-hand information.

from 'Umar's personal views.⁵⁷ About 'All 'Umar said that he was worthy (*ahl*) of the caliphate but that there was some foolishness (*du'aba*) in him and that he, in 'Umar's opinion, 'would lead you on a path, in respect to what is right, which you know', an allusion perhaps to the likelihood that 'All would restrict the title to the caliphate to the Prophet's Family.⁵⁸ About 'Uthman he said that he would give the Banu AbT Mu'ayt⁵⁹ power over the people; the Arabs would certainly disobey him then and 'strike his neck' (i.e. cut off his head). The formulation reflects hindsight, yet may also express some of 'Umar's real worries with respect to the possible succession of 'Uthman. Talha, the caliph stated, was a vainglorious (*zahw*) man, and God would not allow him to rule the Muslim community in view of his well-known arrogance. Al-Zubayr was a battle hero, but occupied himself with haggling in the markets in Medina. How could he take charge of the affairs of the Muslims? Sa'd, too, was a valiant fighter on horseback, but inapt to command. 'Abd al-Rahman was an excellent man, but unsuitable because of his weakness. For this office, 'Umar continued, only someone strong without roughness was suited, someone flexible without weakness, thrifty without miserliness, generous without extravagance.

During the ten years of 'Umar's reign, the nature of the caliphate, the Muslim state, had been transformed. The great conquests outside Arabia had turned the mass of the Arabs, deprived of their former freedom and reduced to tax-paying subjects by Quraysh during the *rida*, into a military caste sustained by a numerically much larger non-Arab and non-Muslim subject population. It may be questioned whether the caliphate of Quraysh would have lasted very long without this imperial expansion. The memory of a free, though economically meagre and harsh, life was too recent not to have aroused widespread resentment and rebellion against the subjection to Quraysh. The successful diversion of all energy into vast military conquests, in the name of Islam, kept any longing for a restoration of the past at bay. Soon there remained only the sentimental literary attachment to the pre-Islamic poetry and tales of the Arab battle-days (*ayyam al-'Arab*). Quraysh remained, to be sure, the

⁵⁷ Al-Mawardi, *al-Ahkam*, 15-16, with the *isnad* Ibn Ishaq 'an al-Zuhri 'an 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas. A different version given by al-Ya'qubl, *Ta'rikh*, II, 181-3, without *isnad* appears to be revised with a Shi'ite bias. Some of the characterizations mentioned by Ibn al-'Abbas were ascribed to 'Umar also in other reports.

⁵⁸ . . . *hamalakum 'aid tariqa min al-haqq ta'rifunaha*. The phrase may be understood in a negative sense in contrast with the initial affirmation that 'All was worthy of the caliphate. In other versions of the statement the end appears unambiguously as '*ala (tariqat) al-haqq*, he would lead you on (the path of) what is right (see Tabari, I, 2777).

⁵⁹ Abu Mu'ayt b. AbT 'Amr b. Umayya was the grandfather of 'Uthman's uterine brother al-WalTd b. 'Uqba. 'Uqba b. Abi Mu'ayt, a stubborn enemy of Muhammad, was killed by the latter after the battle of Badr.

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ruling class. The Arab warriors (*muqatila*) were subjected to strict, sometimes brutal, military discipline. But in return they were provided with generous stipends and pensions apart from their share in the booty gained in battle. They thus had a stake in the imperial policies of Quraysh. The caliphate, still in a precarious state throughout Abu Bakr's reign, was now firmly established.

The task of organizing the government and administration of the conquered territories fell to 'Umar. He did this on the basis of largely identifying Islam and the Arabs. At this time Islam came close to becoming a national religion for the Arabs. Most of the remaining non-Muslim Arabs, also outside Arabia, quickly followed the summons to Islam, while the number of non-Arab converts was initially insignificant. The tolerance that the Qur'an offered to the 'People of the Book', mostly Christians and Jews, was extended to all other religious communities in the conquered territories. The Arabs of the tribe of Taghlib in northern Mesopotamia, who refused to give up their Christian faith, were nevertheless incorporated into the Muslim army and were given a special tax status under which they paid double the tithe (*Qushr*) imposed on Muslims as *zakat* but not the humiliating head tax (*jizya*) and land tax (*kharaj*) levied on other non-Muslim subjects.⁸⁹ 'Umar no doubt expected that they would soon become Muslims. When the Christian Arab tribe of Iyad sought refuge in Byzantine territory, 'Umar wrote to the emperor demanding that he expel them and threatened to drive non-Arab Christians into Byzantine lands. Under Byzantine pressure some 4,000 of the tribesmen returned to Muslim territory.⁹⁰ It is evident that the caliph regarded all Arabs, whether Muslims or Christians, as his primary subjects.

In contrast to the conquered territories, Arabia was to be, as far as feasible, purely Muslim and Arab. The relatively large Christian and Jewish communities in Najran and Khaybar were summarily expelled by 'Umar to the conquered territories.⁹¹ Non-Muslims were generally not to be allowed to settle in the Hijaz or to stay in any place there for more than three days.⁹² 'Umar was also anxious to keep most non-Arab Muslims out of Arabia, in particular Medina. There was a general restriction on

⁸⁹ *Annali*, IV, 226-32. ⁶¹ Tabari, I, 2508-9; *Annali*, IV, 58.

⁶² Caetani tried to shift the blame for the expulsion of both groups to the early Companions opposed to 'Umar whose economic interests, Caetani asserted, were at stake (*Annali*, IV, 350-60). 'In order to dampen the opposition and mute hostility of these powerful intriguers, he saw himself sometimes constrained to acts of weakness of which the expulsion of the Jews of Khaybar is the most dolorous and reprehensible example (*ibid.*, IV, 353).' Caetani had to admit, however, that these measures ultimately agreed with the 'exclusivist' political aims of 'Umar (*ibid.*, IV, 353-4, V, 506).

⁹² MawardI, *al-Ahkam*, 291; *Annali*, V, 506.

⁹² *Annali*, V, 57,103. According to al-Zuhri, 'Umar did not allow any non-Arabs (*'ajam*) to enter Medina. Al-Mughlra b. Shu'ba therefore had to seek special permission for his Persian slave Abu Lu'lu'a to live and work in the town ('Abd al-Razzaq, *Musannaf*, V, 494). Al-Zuhri's report of the story of Abu Lu'lu'a and the assassination of 'Umar is the source of al-Mas'udI's account (*Murij*, III, paras. 1559—60).

bringing captives (*saby*) to the capital.⁶⁴ This restriction was certainly not confined to non-Muslims, since captives in particular tended to convert to Islam. It was obviously more difficult, however, to keep Arabic-speaking Muslims out of Arabia. After having been struck by Abu Lu'lu'a, 'Umar is reported to have addressed the accusation to Ibn al-'Abbas that he and his father were eager to multiply the non-Arabs (*'uluj*) in Medina. Ibn al-'Abbas answered, assuring the caliph that al-'Abbas and he would do with them whatever the caliph wished. 'Umar then questioned how anything could be done now that these non-Arabs had learned to speak the language of their masters, prayed their prayers with them, and shared their acts of devotion.⁹³ In contrast, 'Umar ordered before his death that all Arab slaves held by the state be freed.⁶⁶ The strong bias against non-Arabs in 'Umar's policies evidently contributed to creating the atmosphere in which the Persian captive Abu Lu'lu'a Fayruz,⁹⁴ outraged by a perceived slight on the part of the caliph, was prepared to assassinate him in a suicidal attack and in which the caliph's son 'Ubayd Allah was equally prepared to murder any non-Arabs whom he could reach.

'Umar's deep commitment to Qurayshite and Arab solidarity was balanced by an even deeper commitment to Islam. He was fully aware that it was only Islam that had raised him to the top and was turning the Arabs into the masters of a vast empire. Like other men of great power he saw in his stupendous success a clear sign of divine favour which he could only attribute to Islam. He might be inclined at times to bend the rules of

⁹³ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, 111/1, 244; *Annali*, V, 55, 178. ⁶⁶ *Annali*, V, 63, 68.

saghira), who was murdered by 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar, is described as 'having pretended to being Muslim' (*tadda'i l-islam: ibid.*, V, 479; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 258, V, 8). According to 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas, 'Umar, on being informed of the identity of his assassin, expressed satisfaction that he was not killed by an Arab ('Abd al-Razzaq, *Mu'annaf*, V, 476; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, 111/1, 251). The assertions in other sources that Abu Lu'lu'a was a Christian are hardly reliable. They seem to go back to a report of al-Miswar b. Makhrama who did not mention Abu Lu'lu'a's Persian origin (Tabari, I, 2722). The legendary story reported by Sayf b. 'Umar on the authority of al-Sha'bi (Tabari, I, 2632; *Annali*, IV, 500) according to which Abu Lu'lu'a, originally from Nihawand, had been captured by the Greeks, converted to Christianity, and then was seized from them by the Muslims, is obviously invented to explain why he would have been a Christian convert. His master, al-Mughlra b. Shu'ba, was a prominent leader of the Arab army in the battle of Nihawand, and there can be little doubt that Abu Lu'lu'a became his slave then as part of the booty. This is expressly affirmed in a report quoted by Ibn Sa'd (*Tabaqat*, 111/1, 252).

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Islam, as in the case of the Christian Arabs of Taghlib; yet when he perceived a conflict between his Arab bias and his loyalty to Islamic principles, he did not hesitate to obey the latter. This is well illustrated by an anecdotal, but perhaps true, story reported by al-Azraqi. When Nafi' b. 'Abd al-Harith al-Khuzal, 'Umar's governor of Mekka, left the town to meet him, the caliph asked him whom he had appointed his deputy there. On being informed that it was his client 'Abd al-Rahman b. Abza, 'Umar flew into a rage and reproached Nafi': 'You have appointed one of the clients over the people of God.' Nafi' told him, however, that he had found Ibn Abza the one who knew best how to recite the Book of God and the one most informed about the Law of God. 'Umar calmed down and remembered a saying of the Prophet that God raises some in this religion and abases others.⁶⁸

Modern historians, both Muslim and western, have not been sparing in their admiration for the second successor of Muhammad. His caliphate is seen as embodying most perfectly the ideal of that institution. Modern Sunnite Muslims in particular have often viewed his application of the Qur'anic principle of *shura* and his efforts to base leadership in the community on religious merit and priority in serving the cause of Islam as an exemplary basis for restoring a proper democratic form of the caliphate or other Islamic government. Western scholars have commonly stressed the sheer power of his personality by which he succeeded in imposing his will on the Muslim community and in directing the Arab armies in their extensive conquests without the means of coercion and repression available to later despotic rulers. His great impact on the formation of Islam, seen as second only to that of Muhammad, has also been appreciated.⁶⁹

It is probably true that only a man such as 'Umar, with both a sincere and deep devotion to Islam and a strong sense of group solidarity, *'asabiyya* in Ibn Khaldun's terminology, with Quraysh and the Arabs, could safeguard the long-term unity of the Arab and Muslim commonwealth at this stage. The conquests, initiated under Abu Bakr, could certainly have been continued, and perhaps been better co-ordinated, under the leadership of a Khalid b. al-Walid. It may, however, be doubted that the unity of the conquered empire would have lasted. Most likely powerful factions within Quraysh would soon have established their

⁶⁸ Al-Azraqi, *Akhbar Makka*, ed. F. Wiistenfeld, in *Chroniken der Stadt Mekka*, I (Leipzig, 1858), 380; *Annali*, V, 162. 'Abd al-Rahman b. Abza, client of Nafi' b. 'Abd al-Harith, was considered a reliable transmitter from Muhammad and the early caliphs. He was later appointed governor of Khurasan by 'AIT (Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, VI, 132-3).

⁶⁹ See H. Lazarus-Yafeh, "Umar b. al-Khattab - Paul of Islam?" in *Some Religious Aspects of Islam* (Leiden, 1981), 1-16.

the caliphate firmly as the sole and undivided leadership of the Muslims must go to 'Umar.

Yet it was in reality the caliphate of Quraysh conceived and founded by Abu Bakr that, in spite of its lack of Qur'anic legitimization, now became an essential institution of Islam upheld by the Sunnite creed. 'Umar's attempt to Islamicize this institution by basing it on the Qur'anic principles of *shura* and *sabiqa* was doomed to failure almost immediately after his death. Not much later, dynastic succession came to prevail, a development dreaded by 'Umar. Whereas the condition that the caliphs must be descended from Quraysh became a firm legal requirement and retained wide support even after the actual disappearance of the Qurayshite caliphate, *shura* and *sabiqa* had at most sentimental appeal for those who looked back from the later caliphate of mere kingship to the ideal caliphate of the Rightly Guided patriarchs of Islam. Not until modern times have suggestions been made to institutionalize *shura*.

The reason for the failure of 'Umar's reform is easily discernible. The principle of merit in Islam was in latent conflict with the privileged status of Quraysh. This was concealed at the time when *sabiqa* could be identified with early conversion and backing of Muhammad in Mekka. The early Companions were now growing old. In order to institutionalize the principles of merit and *shura*, 'Umar would have had to repeal the supreme status of Quraysh, a step he was hardly in a position to take, even if he had ever contemplated it, and to open the ranks of the ruling elite to other Muslims. He would have had to set a clear precedent of choosing a non-Qurayshite for his consultative council or to encourage the council to co-opt non-Qurayshites.

The Arab empire that 'Umar established was to last longer, though modified since Mu'awiya's reign by Syrian Arab hegemony. The domination of Arabs over non-Arabs on an ethnic basis was also in essential conflict with the universal call of Islam. This, however, became patent only in the later Umayyad age when masses of non-Arabs converted to Islam and loudly demanded equality in its name. The caliphate of Quraysh was by that time so deeply rooted in Islam that it survived the decline and disappearance of the Arab military ruling class in the course of the 'Abbasid age.

3 'Uthman: the Vicegerent of God and the reign of (Abd Shams

'Uthman's rule ended after twelve years amid rebellion and with the violent death of the caliph. The grievances against his arbitrary acts were substantial by the standards of the time and widely felt. The historical sources contain lengthy accounts of the wrongdoings (*ahdath*) of which he was accused. Towards the end of his reign dissatisfaction and opposition to his conduct appear to have been almost universal except among his kin and close associates. It was only his violent death that, having been turned into a political tool, came to absolve him in Sunnite ideology from any *ahdath* and make him a martyr and the third Rightly Guided Caliph.

'Uthman's wrongdoings, it should be emphasized, must seem trivial from the perspective of later generations. Not a single Muslim was killed on his orders, except in punishment for murder or adultery. The arbitrary acts of violence of which he was accused were confined to beatings, imprisonment and deportations.⁹⁵ The sanctity of Muslim life enjoined by Muhammad was still respected. Abu Bakr had been forced to declare those refusing to pay the alms-tax to him apostates in order to make war on them. 'Umar had to call on God and rely on the help of the jinn to get rid of his political enemy Sa'd b. 'Ubada. 'Uthman, by nature averse to bloodshed, found it easy to comply with the Prophet's injunction.

As a wealthy member of the Qurayshite aristocracy, son of the Mekkan merchant 'Affan and grandson of Muhammad's aunt Umm Hakim bt 'Abd al-Muttalib,⁹⁶ 'Uthman had occupied a special place among the early

⁹⁵ Only Dabi' b. al-Harith al-Tamimi al-Burjumi is reported to have died in 'Uthman's prison. He was first imprisoned for lampooning the Banu Jarwal b. Nahshal, who had taken away from him a hunting dog which they had previously given him at his request. They complained to 'Uthman. When Dabi' was released he planned to attack and hurt the caliph in revenge, but was apprehended. This time he was left to die in prison. His son 'Umayr is said to have jumped upon 'Uthman's body in revenge when he was carried to his burial. Much later, in 85/704, the Umayyad governor al-Hajjaj killed 'Umayr in retaliation (Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, V, 84-5; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1024-7; Tabari, II, 869-72).

⁹⁶ Umm Hakim al-Bayda' was the twin sister of Muhammad's father 'Abd Allah and mother of 'Uthman's mother Arwa bt Kurayz (Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, V, 1).

Companions of the Prophet. Muhammad deeply appreciated his adherence to, and loyal support of, Islam at a time when the great majority of 'Abd Shams vigorously strove to eradicate the new religion, and treated him with a kind of politeness and deference not shown to any of the other Companions. He is described as covering his bare legs as soon as 'Uthman entered the room, which he did not do in the presence of Abu Bakr and 'Umar.³ At the time of 'Uthman's conversion to Islam Muhammad gave him his daughter Ruqayya in marriage, and she emigrated to Abyssinia with her husband. When she died in Medina after the battle of Badr, the Prophet married his other daughter, Umm Kulthum, to him. In terms of the prevailing standards of social equality (*kafa'a*), this placed 'Uthman distinctly above Abu Bakr and 'Umar, whose daughters Muhammad married but to whom he would not give any of his own daughters in marriage. 'Umar's demand, during his caliphate, to marry Muhammad's granddaughter Umm Kulthum, 'All's daughter, was an assertion of his having reached a social status he had not enjoyed during Muhammad's lifetime.⁴

Muhammad also humoured 'Uthman's glaring lack of military prowess. He excused him from participating in the battle of Badr in order to take care of Ruqayya in her illness, yet granted him a share in the booty. 'Uthman's flight at the battle of Uhud was said to be forgiven by a Qur'anic revelation. Whenever justifiable, the Prophet exempted him from fighting in battle and assigned other tasks to him. Prominent among the virtues (*fada'il*) credited to him were rather his acts of generous support of Muhammad and the Muslim community from his personal fortune.⁵ This liberality, however, hardly dented his great wealth, as is evident from his grand lifestyle in Medina and the royal dowries he was ready to pay for his marriages throughout his career.⁶ He carried on his caravan trade in Medina as he had done in Mekka and Abyssinia. For Muhammad he was also most useful as a diplomatic negotiator accepted by the Mekkan aristocracy, especially in the critical situation of al-Hudaybiyya.

³ *Annali*, VIII, 296; Ibn 'Asakir, *Ta'rikh Madinat Dimashq: 'Uthman b. 'Affan*, ed. Sukayna al-ShihabT (Damascus, 1984), 76-88; see also Abbott, *Aishah*, 103-4.

⁴ 'Umar had previously proposed to 'A'isha that he marry Abu Bakr's still minor daughter Umm Kulthum. In spite of 'A'isha's pleading on behalf of the Commander of the Faithful, Umm Kulthum resisted because of Umar's reputation for rudeness towards his wives. 'A'isha then enlisted the help of 'Amr b. al-'As, who pointed out to 'Umar that Umm Kulthum had been brought up under the mild regime of the Mother of the Faithful 'A'isha and that 'Umar might offend her by his harshness and thus fail in his duty of rendering due respect to his deceased predecessor. 'Amr then suggested that 'Umar marry 'All's daughter Umm Kulthum and thus establish ties with the Messenger of God (Tabari, I, 2732).⁵ Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 46-70.

⁶ It is certainly not the case that 'Uthman 'had given his whole fortune for Islam' as suggested by H. Djai't, *La Grande Discorde: religion et politique dans l'Islam des origines* (Paris, 1989), 227.

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While 'Uthman was a distinguished, highly successful merchant, he had at no time before his election displayed any qualities of public leadership. Among the six members of the electoral council, he was the only one who had never been entrusted by Muhammad or the first two caliphs with leading a raid or an army. Before the election he had no political ambitions and can hardly even have thought of himself as a potential candidate for the supreme reign. Yet he was not chosen by the electors for his weakness and insignificance which they hoped to manipulate, as Wellhausen suggested.⁷ Rather, he was put forward as the only strong counter-candidate to 'Ali. As an intimate and favourite of Muhammad, twice the Prophet's son-in-law, he could better rival 'Ali's close kinship ties with the latter than could the rest. More importantly, he could count on the solid backing of the Mekkan aristocracy. Against any of the other council members, none of whom belonged to 'Abd Manaf, 'Abd Shams would still have been honour bound to offer 'AIT their support. The opinion of the Ansar, excluded by Abu Bakr from the ruling class, no longer had any weight. 'Uthman was no doubt aware of the situation and of the massive backing of Quraysh for him. He remained entirely passive and made no plea on his own behalf. Quite unprepared for his office, he ascended the pulpit after his election and apologized: 'O people, we have not been orators (*khutaba* If we live, the oration will come to you in proper shape (*'aid wajhiha*), God willing.⁸

Muhammad's exceptional favour towards him and the overwhelming endorsement of his election by Quraysh fostered in 'Uthman a sense that his personal title to the reign in succession to Muhammad was more firmly grounded than that of either of his predecessors. Having been raised to the supreme position without any effort on his own part evidently strengthened his belief that he had been chosen and invested by God. Doing away with the cumbersome tradition that had made 'Umar the 'Vicegerent of the Vicegerent of the Messenger of God', he adopted the official title of 'Vicegerent of God' (*khalifat Allah*).⁹ The new title

⁷ J. Wellhausen, *Das arabische Reich und sein Sturz* (Berlin, 1902), 26.

⁸ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 24; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 43; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 957-8; *Annali*, VII, 14. Al-TabarT preferred to suppress the reports about this embarrassing occasion and quoted only the pious sermon ascribed to 'Uthman in Sayf b. 'Umar's account (TabarT, I, 2800-1). An equally fictitious inaugural sermon by 'Uthman which Sayf evidently reported elsewhere with a different *isnad* is quoted by al-TabarT, 1,3058-9.

⁹ See the documentation in Crone and Hinds, *God's Caliph*, 6, to which TabarT, 1,3044: . . . *an atabarra' min 'amal Allah wa-khilafatih* may be added. The change of titulature is reflected in the letters exchanged between Mu'awiya and 'Ali (BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 277-82; MinqarI, *Waq'at Siffin*, 86-91, where Abu Bakr appears as *al-khalifa min ba'd (rasul Allah)* and 'Umar as *khalifat khalifatih* (MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 87, in 'Ali's letter *al-khalifa* and *khalifat al-khalifa*). 'Uthman then is simply named *al-khalifa al-mazlum* by Mu'awiya while 'AIT abstains from giving him the title *khalifa*. Following the practice under 'Umar, 'Uthman was commonly addressed as Commander of the Faithful, a title hardly suitable for him.

became standard under the Umayyads.¹⁰ The caliph reigned now by the grace of God and as His representative on earth, no longer as a deputy of the Messenger of God. On this basis, there could be no question of 'Uthman resigning when he lost the trust of those who had backed his election.¹¹

The grievances against the caliph

'Uthman thus deemed it within his right to dispose freely of the powers and riches of the caliphate at his own discretion and deeply resented any criticism or interference in his conduct by anyone.¹² During the election, he had twice pledged without hesitation that he would follow the Book of God, the Sunna of His Prophet, and the practice (*fi*) of Abu Bakr and 'Umar, while 'AIT had cautiously stated that he would do so to the limit of his ability *Qalajuhdimin dhalik*.¹³ The unabashed favouritism towards his close kin that he showed from the beginning of his reign stood in marked contrast to this commitment. The impression of self-assured highhandedness on his part among the public is well reflected in the following anecdote. When the people criticized 'Uthman for making a gift of 100,000 dirhams to his nephew SaTd b. al-'Aš, the members of the *shura*, 'AIT, al-Zubayr, Talha, Sa'd and 'Abd al-Rahman, came to make representations to him. He told them that he had kin and maternal relations to take care of. When they asked: 'Did not Abu Bakr and 'Umar have kin and maternal relations?' he answered: 'Abu Bakr and 'Umar sought reward in the hereafter (*yahtasiban*) by withholding from their kin, and I seek reward by giving to my kin.' They said: 'By God, their guidance then is preferable to us to your guidance.' He merely replied: 'There is no power and strength but in God.'¹⁴ 'Uthman could perhaps appear motivated mostly by an almost childlike pleasure to be in a position to gratify his family and to rehabilitate those of them disgraced by Muhammad for their opposition to Islam. In fact, however, he acted, backed by his close kin, with great determination and the conviction that the house of Umayya, as the core clan of Quraysh, was uniquely qualified to rule in the name of Islam.

Al-ZuhrT explained that 'Uthman, in granting his cousin Marwan b. al-Hakam the *khums* (of the war booty) of Ifriqiya and giving his close relatives money (from the treasury), was interpreting the Qur'anic

¹⁰ Crone and Hinds, *God's Caliph*, 6-11. ¹¹ See Tabari, I, 3043-4.

¹² Caetani suggested that 'Uthman rightly considered himself the first caliph elected according to all the proper rules and with popular assent, in contrast to the quasi-coup (*falta*) by which Abu Bakr and 'Umar had attained power. 'Uthman's attitude to the powers of government differed therefore from that of his predecessors, and he acted arbitrarily in administering the public treasury, which he considered to be entirely at his disposal (*Annali*, VIII, 9). ¹³ Tabari, I, 2793-4. ¹⁴ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 28.

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injunctions to provide for relatives (*ta'awwala fi dhalika l-silata llatT amara lla.hu bih*). 'He took the sums of money and borrowed (*istaslafa*) money from the treasury saying: Abu Bakr and 'Umar left what belonged to them of this money, but I take it and distribute to my kin from it. The people criticized him for that.'⁹⁷ This implies that 'Uthman based his generosity to his family on the Qur'anic passages assigning a portion of the fifth of the booty and *fay'* to the kin of the Prophet. While Abu Bakr and 'Umar had denied the Banu Hashim their Qur'anic share after Muhammad's death, they had not used it for the benefit of their own kin but left it to the public treasury. Arrogating the integral rights of the Prophet to himself as his legitimate successor, 'Uthman held that he was entitled and obligated to give the Qur'anic shares to his own close kin. He also seems to have granted the oasis of Fadak and an estate in the Mahzur valley of Medina, which had belonged to Muhammad and had been treated by Abu Bakr and 'Umar as a *sadaqa*, an endowment for the benefit of the Muslim community, as land concessions to Marwan b. al-Hakam and Marwan's brother al-Harith respectively.⁹⁸

Even graver were the implications of 'Uthman's policy concerning the *sawafi*, the extensive former crown lands and domanial estates in the conquered territories. This land, left ownerless by the Muslim conquest and the death or flight of the Persian king and fief-holders, was, according to the rulings and practice of Muhammad, unquestionably subject to division among the conquering Muslim warriors with one-fifth to be retained for the imam. Under the caliph 'Umar, however, it had been decided, after some hesitation, to keep the land undivided and to constitute it, together with the conquered land whose owners or fief-holders had stayed, as permanent *fay'*, communal property for the benefit of the garrison towns in whose territories they were located. 'Uthman viewed this land in the old royal tradition as crown property to be used at the discretion of the Vicegerent of God. According to al-Awzal, Mu'awiya asked 'Uthman for control over the *sawafi* in Syria, complaining that he was unable to pay his soldiers adequately, and 'Uthman acceded to his request.¹⁷

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 25; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 44; *Annali*, VII, 420.

⁹⁸ Ibn Qutayba, *al-Ma'arif*, ed. Tharwat 'Ukasha (Cairo, 1960), 195. On Mahzur see Yaqut, *Buldan*, IV, 701, and M. Lecker, 'Muhammad at Medina: A Geographical Approach', *JSAI*, VI, (1985), 29-62, at 32 n. 32,36-7. The sources generally state that it was Mu'awiya who gave Fadak as a fief to Marwan (BaladhurT, *Futuh*, 29-33; Veccia-Vaglieri, 'Fadak', *EI* (2nd edn)). There was, however, not much love lost between Mu'awiya and Marwan. It seems unlikely that Mu'awiya would have given Marwan Fadak without the precedent set by 'Uthman.

⁹⁸ BaladhurT, *Futuh*, 273-4. 'Ammar b. Yasir is mentioned in one report [*ibid.*, 273] as the recipient of Ist'niya. In another report (*ibid.*, 274), however, Ist'niya is mentioned as an *iqta'* of Khabbab b. al-Aratt. The latter is also named as the recipient of Ist'niya in a report by al-Mada'in! (Yaqut, *Buldan*, I, 244-5).

In Iraq 'Uthman began to grant land concessions (*iqta'*) from the former domanial land of the Persian kings to prominent Companions of Muhammad. Most of the reports about these grants go back to Musa, son of the Companion Talha who was a major beneficiary of this policy. Musa emphasized that 'Uthman was the first to make such grants. Among the recipients named by him were 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud, Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas, Khabbab b. al-Aratt, Usama b. Zayd, who sold his land, al-Zubayr, Talha, and perhaps 'Ammar b. Yasir, besides tribal leaders who had distinguished themselves during the conquests.¹⁸

When this alienation of *fay'* land provoked protests in Kufa, 'Uthman sought to justify his policy, if a report of Sayf b. 'Umar⁹⁹ can be trusted, by allowing the exchange of privately owned land in Arabia for domanial land in Iraq. This manoeuvre allowed him to turn land in Arabia into crown property of which he could freely dispose without interference by the enraged tribal warriors in the garrison towns. Thus Talha is reported to have acquired his estate of al-Nashtastaj near Kufa for his land at Khaybar and elsewhere in Arabia,²⁰ while the Kufan chief of Kinda al-Ash'ath b. Qays bought his estate of Tzanabath from 'Uthman for his land in Hadramawt. Marwan b. al-Hakam bought his estate, later known as Nahr Marwan, from 'Uthman with money or property (*mal*, var. *mulk*) which the caliph had previously given him. Some of the land in Arabia was then, according to Sayf's report, granted to residents of Medina who had participated in the battles of al-Qadisiyya and al-Mada'in. By recognizing their claim as a claim to land rather than a share of revenue from the *fay'* 'Uthman thus undid 'Umar's immobilization of

⁹⁹ Tabari, I, 2854-5. A detailed analysis of this text has recently been presented by A. Noth ('Eine Standortbestimmung der Expansion (*Futuh*) unter den ersten Kalifen (Analyse von Tabari I, 2854-2846)', *Asiatische Studien*, 63 (1989), 120-35). Noth is inclined to accept this report as early and reliable on the grounds that it stands apart from the main tradition which he considers to be transformed by secondary distortion. Evidently failing to notice its pervasive 'Uthmanid bias, he states that he did not discover any motive for partisan forgery. Noth does not comment on the *isnads* which attribute the basic report to 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar b. Hafs al-'Umari, one of the 'seven jurists of Medina', who died in 147/764 (Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, VII, 38-40). If this attribution is reliable, the report was composed in the late Umayyad age and is unlikely to reflect views of the contemporaries around the year 650, as Noth suggests. As a jurist, rather than a mere transmitter, 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar would seem to be a prime suspect for that kind of secondary distortion that in Noth's view characterizes the main tradition.

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the/ay land and justified his own seizure of immobilized land as part of the legal share of the imam.²¹

'Uthman's alienation of the communal *fay'* and its reconversion into crown land aroused discontent in the garrison towns and provoked accusations that the caliph and his governors were misappropriating *mal al-muslimih*, money belonging to the Muslims collectively, as *mal Allah*, money at the discretionary disposal of the Vicegerent of God. In Syria the Early Companion Abu Dharr al-Ghifari made himself the mouthpiece of the discontent²² and criticized Mu'awiya's extravagant spending on his palace, al-Khadra', in Damascus.²³ At Mu'awiya's request 'Uthman ordered him to be sent back to Medina. As he continued his agitation, he was exiled to al-Rabadha in the desert, where he died in 31/652.²⁴

In Kufa the unguarded boast of 'Uthman's governor Sa'Id b. al-'As that the *sawad*, the fertile cultivated land of Iraq, was the garden of Quraysh provoked a riot among a group of Qur'an readers led by Malik al-Ashtar al-Nakhal. The governor complained to 'Uthman, who ordered the group to be deported first to Mu'awiya in Damascus and later to 'Abd al-Rahman b. Khalid b. al-Walid, governor of Hims. The discontent in the town did not subside, however, and open rebellion erupted in 34/654-5, when Sa'id was away in Medina. As the rebels, led by

²¹ Sayf b. 'Umar is obviously trying in his account to obfuscate the facts and to show 'Uthman acting quite legitimately in the face of the arrogance and rebelliousness of the Kufans. Caetani thus describes the account as 'singularly obscure' (*Annali*, VII, 361) and Noth stresses that he is far from certain to have understood and interpreted the text correctly in all its detail ('Eine Standortbestimmung', 120). Yet the fraud underlying 'Uthman's procedure is plain enough in Sayf's affirmation that Talha, Marwan and al-Ash'ath b. Qays were buying their estates from 'Uthman and from land that 'Uthman owned in Iraq. 'Uthman could not have owned any private land in Iraq nor could he even have claimed a personal share of the conquered domaniaal estates since he had not participated in the conquests. He was in fact giving away or selling communal land as crown property.

²² Sayf b. 'Umar describes him as being duped by the Shi'ite heretic 'Abd Allah b. Saba' with the argument about *mal al-muslimin* and *mal Allah* (TabarT, I, 2858-9). Abu Dharr had begun his agitation in Medina after 'Uthman had given 500,000 dirhams to Marwan b. al-Hakam, 300,000 to al-Harith b. al-Hakam and 100,000 to the Medinan Zayd b. Thabit from the *khums* of the booty seized in Ifriqiya in 27/647. He then quoted relevant Qur'anic passages threatening the holders of riches with hell-fire. Marwan complained to 'Uthman, who sent his servant Natil to warn Abu Dharr, but to no avail. 'Uthman displayed patience for some time until, in the presence of the caliph, Abu Dharr launched an angry verbal attack on Ka'b al-Ahbar, who had backed 'Uthman's free use of public money. 'Uthman now chided Abu Dharr and sent him to Damascus, where he had previously been registered on the public payroll (BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 52).

²³ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 53.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 52-6; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1033-41. Whereas the Kufan and Basran tradition mostly affirmed that Abu Dharr was exiled by 'Uthman against his will, the Medinan tradition was divided, orthodox Sunnite scholars such as Sa'Td b. al-Musayyab insisting that Abu Dharr went voluntarily into exile. The Shi'ite Sharif al-Murtada quoted in his *Kitab al-Shafi* traditions of al-WaqidT proving that Abu Dharr was exiled by 'Uthman against his will (Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Shark*, III, 55-8; further traditions of al-WaqidT concerning Abu Dharr are quoted in *ibid.*, VIII, 359-61).

al-Ashtar, prevented Saïd from re-entering Kufa, 'Uthman was forced to agree to their choice of Abu Musa al-Ash'arT as their governor.

Modern historians have often maintained that 'Uthman's policy with respect to the conquered land was essentially the same as 'Umar's. Wellhausen first argued that it was 'Umar who had provoked the conflict with the warriors of the conquests by withholding the seized land from division among them against the traditional Arab right of booty sanctioned by the Qur'an with little modification. The revolt erupted under 'Uthman merely because of his weakness in contrast to 'Umar's overpowering authority.²⁵ Caetani developed this interpretation further, suggesting that 'Uthman became the victim of 'Umar's administrative mistakes. 'Umar had not prohibited the acquisition of land by Muslims outside Arabia and had himself made grants from domanial land in Iraq.²⁶ This view was endorsed by G. Levi della Vida in his article on 'Uthman in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* and is upheld also in some recent studies.²⁷ In reality, there is no sound evidence that 'Umar granted concessions from domanial land under cultivation which would have been in breach of his declared policy of keeping such land undivided for the benefit of future generations.²⁸ 'Uthman's attempt to reconvert the communal land into crown property was a major step towards turning the caliphate into a traditional kingship. His aim was fully realized by Mu'awiya during his caliphate as he brought all *sawaf*t land throughout the empire under his direct control and discretionary disposal in granting and withdrawing fiefs.²⁹ The narrators critical of 'Uthman's conduct commonly divide his reign into two distinct periods. During the first six years his rule was said to have been unexceptionable, while in the latter six his offences mounted. Al-Zuhri elaborates that in the former period the people had nothing to hold against him, and he was better liked than 'Umar because of the latter's sternness and 'Uthman's mildness towards them. In the second period he began to neglect their affairs; he employed his kin and family and heaped money on them. The people now censured him for that.³⁰ Al-Zuhri further quotes al-Miswar b. Makhrama al-Zuhri, 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf's nephew and initially a friend of 'Uthman, as stating that 'Uthman followed the conduct of his two predecessors for six years

²⁵ J. Wellhausen, *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten* (Berlin, 1889) VI, 118 n. 3; Wellhausen, *Das arabische Reich*, 28-9, where he adds that Muhammad had already set certain precedents for 'Umar's fiscal practice.²⁶ See excursus 4: Domanial land in Iraq under 'Umar.

²⁷ E.g. W. Schmucker, *Untersuchungen zu einigen wichtigen bodenrechtlichen Konsequenzen der islamischen Eroberungsbewegung* (Bonn, 1972), esp. 134—51; D. jaï't, *La Grande Discorde*, 84.

²⁸ *Annali*, V, 304, VII, 376.

²⁹ Mu'awiya thus confiscated the estate called Zurara near Kufa from Zurara b. Yazid of the Banu Bakkar and claimed it as crown property (*usfiyat*). Zurara b. Yazid had been chief of the police (*shurfa*) under 'Uthman's governor Saïd b. al-'As (Yaquf, *Buldan*, II, 921) and as such had presumably been granted the estate. The older *iqta'* had generally been treated as permanent personal property.³⁰ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 25.

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without infraction, but then 'the old man grew soft and feeble, and came to be dominated [by his kin]'.³¹

In reality 'Uthman's policy of establishing members of his clan as governors throughout the empire was fully evident even during the early years of his reign. In 24/644—5, shortly after his accession, he appointed 'AIT b. 'AdI b. RabT'a of 'Abd Shams governor of Mekka.³² In the following year he deposed the sick 'Umayr b. Sa'd al-AnsarI, governor of Hims, Qinnasrin and Upper Mesopotamia, at his request,³³ and turned these provinces, which since the death of Abu 'Ubayda had been kept by 'Umar under separate governors independent of the Umayyad governors of Damascus, over to Mu'awiya. Given the great strength of the garrison of Hims at that time, this meant a substantial increase in Mu'awiya's power which enabled him later to challenge and defy the caliph 'All.³⁴ In the same year 'Uthman dismissed 'Amr b. al-'As as governor of Egypt and appointed his own foster-brother 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd b. AbT Sarh of 'Amir Quraysh in his place. Most likely also in 25/645-6³⁵ he replaced Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas, whom he had appointed the previous year, as governor of Kufa with the Umayyad al-WalTd b. 'Uqba b. AbT Mu'ayt,

³¹ 'Abd al-Razzaq, *Musannaf*, V, 478. ³² *Annali*, VII, 45.

³³ Trying to prove that all governors deposed by 'Uthman except his Umayyad kin were dishonest or incapable, Caetani mistranslated in Sayf b. 'Umar's account the expression *tu'ina fa-adna* (he was smitten and came close to death) as 'he was [the] object of severe criticism [on the part of his subjects]'. He went on to assert that the parallel report then quoted by Sayf (TabarT, I, 2867) tries to conceal 'Umayr's dishonesty by describing him as ill (*Annali*, VII, 67).

³⁴ Hims still had a separate governor during the later part of 'Uthman's reign. The Kufans exiled as troublemakers under Sa'Td b. al-'As were sent first to Mu'awiya in Damascus and then to 'Abd al-Rahman b. Khalid b. al-WalTd, governor of Hims (TabarT, I, 2913-14, 2921). 'Abd al-Rahman was, however, appointed by Mu'awiya (*ibid.*, 2913) and evidently his subordinate.

³⁵ This date seems preferable to the year 26/646-7 accepted by Wellhausen (*Skizzen*, VI, 115). Caetani left the question of the correct date open (*Annali*, VII, 64). Al-TabarT reports the appointment of al-WalTd under the year 26, following the account of al-WaqidT, while mentioning that Sayf b. 'Umar's account places it in the year 25 (TabarT, I, 2811 and 2801). Al-Baladhuri, however, quotes both Abu Mikhnaf and al-WaqidT, the latter on the authority of Ibn Sa'd, as stating that 'Uthman, in accordance with a recommendation of 'Umar, after his accession confirmed all governors for a year except for al-Mughlra b. Shu'ba whom he, following 'Umar's wish, replaced with Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas. After a year he dismissed Sa'd and appointed al-WalTd in his place (*AnsdB*, V, 29). Sayf's account (TabarT, I, 2901-2) agrees with this. The Kufan campaign to Armenia and Adharbayjan (*Annali*, VII, 98-103, 159-63), which took place at the beginning of al-WalTd's governorship, is more likely to date from the year 25 than 26. The governorship of al-WalTd moreover lasted, according to Kufan tradition (BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, V, 31; TabarT, I, 2813), five years. According to the more reliable reports he was deposed in the year 30 (*Annali*, VII, 256, 310-60). Caetani's argument that 'Umar could not have ordered his successor to nominate Sa'd governor of Kufa since he included him in the electoral council (*ibid.*, 26) is tenuous. The composition of the council had been established some time before 'Umar's murder. The recommendation would obviously not have excluded Sa'd from being elected. In this case he could have appointed some other governor.

his uterine brother.¹⁰⁰ In 29/649-50 he removed Abu Musa al-Ash'ar!¹⁰¹ from the governorship of Basra and gave it to his maternal cousin 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir b. Kurayz of 'Abd Shams, who was only twenty-five years old. He added substantially to Ibn 'Amir's power by joining the governorship of 'Uman and al-Bahrayn to that of Basra and putting their garrison (*jund*) under his command.¹⁰² Five years after his accession, all major governorships were thus solidly in the hands of the caliph's relatives. When al-Walld b. 'Uqba had to be deposed because of misconduct in the year 30/650-1, 'Uthman replaced him with another Umayyad, Said b. al-'As b. AbT Uhayha. He systematically strengthened his ties with these favourites by giving them his daughters in marriage.¹⁰³

There is thus no evidence for a fundamental break in 'Uthman's policies at mid-term in his caliphate. His nepotism was apparent from the beginning. It did not, however, provoke serious opposition during the first half of his reign. He was able to keep the prominent Companions and Quraysh well disposed by his general leniency, which contrasted sharply with 'Umar's roughness, and through his extravagant presents. He also permitted the Qurayshites to move freely in the conquered provinces, whereas 'Umar had forbidden them to leave the Hijaz except by special permission.¹⁰⁴ Some of them grew immensely wealthy under him.¹⁰⁵ It was from the year 30/650-1 on that dissatisfaction and resistance openly manifested themselves throughout most of the empire. 'Uthman's generosity was now restricted to his kin, who seemed to dominate him. The prominent Companions of the *shura* more and more lost their influence over him. At the same time his arrogant mistreatment of several of the earliest Companions of lowly origin, Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud and 'Ammar b. Yasir, provoked outrage among the

¹⁰⁰ Arguing that the nomination of al-Walld b. 'Uqba by 'Uthman was not an act of personal favouritism, Caetani interpreted the statement by Sayf b. 'Umar that al-Walld had been *'amil* of 'Umar over the RabT'a in al-jazira (Tabari, I, 2812) as meaning that 'Uthman merely transferred him from one governorship to another (*Annali*, VII, 154). In fact al-Walld had been appointed by 'Umar alms-tax collector among the Banu Taghlib (Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 31) and then had been deposed by him because of a line of poetry threatening Taghlib (*Aghani*, IV, 183).

¹⁰¹ Caetani argued, on the basis of a report of al-Mada'inl (Tabari, I, 2831-2) about a Basran delegation to 'Uthman asking for Abu Musa's replacement, that the latter was deposed because of administrative abuses and the accusation that he enriched himself at the expense of the treasury (*Annali*, VII, 238-9). The words of Ghaylan b. Kharasha al-Dabbl reported by al-Mada'inl do not imply, however, that Abu Musa improperly enriched himself. Ghaylan rather is described as successfully appealing to the caliph's Umayyad greed by suggesting that he give a dashing young Qurayshite the chance to enrich himself instead of the old man of lowly origin. Ghaylan b. Kharasha was a prominent supporter of the prophetess Sajah during the *rida* (Tabari, I, 1919). He was thus probably one of the disadvantaged latecomers to Basra. ³⁸ Tabari, I, 2833.

¹⁰³ See excursus 3: The marriages of 'Uthman.

¹⁰⁴ Tabari, I, 3025-6; M. Hinds, 'The Murder of the Caliph 'Uthman', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 3 (1972), 450-69, at 466. ⁴¹ See *Annali*, VIII, 69-71.

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pious, as well as among their tribes and the clans of Quraysh to whom they were affiliated and who were liable for their protection.

Driven by his unbounded family pride, 'Uthman must early on have sought a way to secure a hereditary succession to his caliphate. The principle of *shura* among the Early Companions, so vigorously upheld by 'Umar, stood in his way. There is evidence that 'Uthman attempted to get around it as early as the first year of his reign. According to a tradition quoted by al-Bukharī, Marwan b. al-Hakam, 'Uthman's first cousin and later caliph, reported that in the 'year of the nosebleed (*sanat al-ru'df*) that is in 24/644—5,¹⁰⁶ 'Uthman was afflicted by violent nosebleeding so that he was unable to perform the pilgrimage, and made his testament. An unidentified Qurayshite and Marwan's brother al-Harith¹⁰⁷ came successively to him, suggesting that he appoint a successor. 'Uthman asked each one of them whether the people had someone in mind, but both remained silent. Then he suggested that the people were mentioning al-Zubayr, and al-Harith confirmed this. 'Uthman commented that al-Zubayr was indeed the best man and the one dearest to the Prophet.¹⁰⁸

In his report, Marwan did not mention whether 'Uthman actually made a testament in favour of al-Zubayr, a matter which he could hardly have been interested in publicizing. The family of al-Zubayr, however, preserved a claim that 'Uthman had appointed their ancestor as his successor. Mus'ab al-Zubayr (d. 236/851) reported: "Uthman made a testament in favour of al-Zubayr until his son 'Amr would grow up (*awsa 'Uthman . . . ila l-Zubayr b. al-'Awwam hatta yakbur ibnuh 'Amr*).¹⁰⁹ Although no further information about the circumstances is provided, it seems most likely that the report refers to the same occasion. 'Amr b. 'Uthman, the caliph's eldest surviving son,⁴⁶ had been born during the caliphate of 'Umar.¹¹⁰ At the beginning of 'Uthman's reign he thus had not

¹⁰⁶ That the year 24/644-5 was known as *sanat* (or '*am*) *al-ru'af* is confirmed by al-Tabarī (I, 2799) and other sources. In his commentary on the Bukharī text, Ibn Hajar (*Fath al-bari*, VII, 58) identifies it as the year 31/651-2, referring to the *Kitab al-Madina* of 'Umar b. Shabba. The account of the latter seems entirely unreliable (see below, pp. 89-90). The year 24 was the only one before the siege of 'Uthman's residence in which he did not lead the pilgrimage in person during his reign but deputed 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf to lead it (Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 23—4; *Annali*, VII, 41).

¹⁰⁷ The al-Harith named in the tradition is certainly correctly identified as Marwan's brother by Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-bari*, VII, 58.

¹⁰⁸ Bukharī, *Ṣahih*, *Fada'il al-sahaba* 13; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1055; *Annali*, VII, 42. In another version of the tradition an unidentified man names al-Zubayr as the one mentioned by the people, and 'Uthman confirms that al-Zubayr was 'by three times the best of you' (*Annali*, VII, 42).

¹⁰⁹ Al-Zubayrī, *Nasab*, 106, quoted by al-Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 103.

¹¹⁰ Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, I, 261, quoting al-Zubayr b. Bakkar's *Kitab al-Nasab*. See further excursus 3.

yet reached maturity. It is unlikely that 'Uthman would have appointed al-Zubayr as his successor at any later stage. At the beginning of his reign he evidently felt particularly grateful to al-Zubayr for having backed him in the recent election against 'All in spite of his close blood relationship with the latter and was thus prepared to testify that he had been the Companion dearest to the Prophet.

'Uthman's testament appointing al-Zubayr as his successor to be followed by his son 'Amr was probably not published at the time. It would no doubt have been challenged and opposed by some of the other early Companions. Since 'Uthman soon recovered his health, it was best to forget the matter. Later during his caliphate, he and his kin viewed 'Amr as his heir apparent⁴⁸ although no formal appointment was made. Marwan still later, evidently before his own election as caliph, invited 'Amr to come to Syria in order that 'he be given the oath of allegiance'. This was at the time when Marwan needed to challenge the prerogative of the Sufyanids, the descendants of Mu'awiya, which was widely backed in Syria, and when he wanted to remind the Syrians that 'Uthman, not Mu'awiya, was the real founder of the Umayyad caliphate. 'Amr, no doubt wisely, declined, and died in Mina.⁴⁹

Reports that 'Uthman at some stage of his caliphate appointed 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf as his successor are unreliable. Ibn Shabba quoted an account transmitted by 'Abd Allah b. Lahl'a that 'Uthman, afflicted by nosebleeding, ordered his client Humran b. Aban to write a testament for the succession of 'Abd al-Rahman, but the latter prayed that God would let him die before 'Uthman. He died six months later.⁵⁰ From this story

⁴⁸ According to a report of the Umayyad Said b. 'Amr b. Said b. al-'A? related by 'Umar b. Shabba, al-Walld b. 'Uqba before his nomination as governor of Kufa expressed in a poem his hope that 'Uthman's sons 'Amr and Khalid would grow up quickly so that they could honour him as their uncle. Clearly implied is the expectation that they would succeed 'Uthman who, according to the poetry, was showing preference for his uncle al-Hakam over his half-brother al-Walid. 'Uthman was moved by al-Walld's complaint and appointed him governor (*Aghani*, IV, 177; *Annali*, VII, 156). If the occasion is reliably reported, al-Walld expected 'Uthman to be succeeded by one of his sons as early as the second year of his reign. According to Sayf b. 'Umar, there was persistent enmity between the houses of al-Walld b. 'Uqba and Sa'Td b. al-'As (Tabari, I, 2849).

⁴⁹ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, V, 106. According to al-Baladhuri, 'Amr had fought on the side of the Medinans against the Umayyad army at al-Harra and was therefore insulted and flogged by the Syrian commander Muslim b. 'Uqba. That he did not leave Medina before the battle together with the other Umayyads and was insulted and punished is also reported by 'Awana (TabarT, II, 421). According to Abu Mikhnaf, he did leave Medina with the Umayyads, but refused to give Muslim b. 'Uqba information about the situation in the town (*ibid.*, 410). In an anecdote quoted by Mus'ab al-Zubayri (*Nasab*, 109-10), Marwan is described as encouraging 'Amr b. 'Uthman to claim the caliphate during the reign of Mu'awiya.

⁵⁰ Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1028—9; al-Dhahabl, *Ta'rikh al-islam* (Cairo, 1367—9/ [1948—50]), 1,107. 'Uthman expelled Humran for his breach of trust. Another version of the story, going back to Ibn Lahl'a's pupil al-Layth b. Sa'd, specified that 'Uthman banished Humran to Iraq (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1029-30).

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Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani derived the date of the 'year of the nosebleed' as being in 31/651-2, since 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf died in 32/652-3.⁵¹ Freely embellishing the tale, al-Ya'qubl narrated that 'Uthman had Humran write the letter of appointment but added the name of 'Abd al-Rahman with his own hand. When he sent Humran to take the letter to Umm Hablba bt AbT Sufyan, Humran read it and informed 'Abd al-Rahman. The latter complained that he had sought 'Uthman's government openly, while the caliph now nominated him secretly. As the matter became public in Medina, the Umayyads were infuriated. 'Uthman punished Humran and sent him off to Basra.⁵² In reality 'Uthman had banished Humran b. Aban to Basra at an earlier date and for a different reason.⁵³

The dissatisfaction with 'Uthman's high-handed regime and with the governors appointed by him was not confined to the provinces outside Arabia. In Medina his cousin al-Harith b. al-Hakam, whom he put in charge of the market, provoked outrage and protest when he used his office to buy up imported goods and to sell them at a large profit, imposed fees on the stalls of small traders (*yajbi maqd'id al-mutasawwiqin*), and committed other reprehensible acts. 'Uthman refused popular demands for his dismissal⁵⁴ and further inflamed the feelings of the people by making al-Harith a gift of camels which had been collected as part of the alms-tax and brought to Medina.⁵⁵ The great majority of the Ansar turned openly against 'Uthman.

Among the Quraysh 'Amr b. al-'As of the clan of Sahn seems to have been the first to agitate in Medina against the caliph after his removal from the governorship of Egypt. He vented his anger and resentment by divorcing his wife Umm Kulthum, 'Uthman's uterine sister.⁵⁶ As he began to criticize the caliph openly, 'Uthman confronted him with insults, which he returned. Rivalry between their fathers, both leading

⁵¹ Ibn Hajar, *Fah al-bari*, VII, 58. ⁵² Va'qubT, *Ta'nikh*, II, 195-6; *Annals* VII, 42-3.

⁵³ According to al-Baladhuri (*Ansdh*, V, 57-8), 'Uthman had sent Humran to Kufa to investigate the truth about the complaints against al-Walld b. 'Uqba. Al-Walld bribed Humran, and when he returned to the caliph he lied about his conduct and praised him. Then he met Marwan who asked him about al-Walld, and he confessed to him that the matter was serious. Marwan informed 'Uthman, who was furious about Humran lying to him. He exiled him to Basra, assigning a house there in fief to him. A different version is given by Sayf b. 'Umar (Tabari, I, 2923).

⁵⁴ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, V, 47; Kister, Additional Notes to his article (IX) 'The Market of the Prophet', in *Studies in Jahiliyya and Early Islam* (Variorum Reprints; London, 1980). The policy of taxing the markets in Medina was later resumed by Mu'awiya (Kister, 'Market of the Prophet', 275). ⁵⁵ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 28.

⁵⁶ Tabari, I, 2968. Umm Kulthum was the full sister of al-Walld b. 'Uqba whom 'Uthman at the same time appointed governor of Kufa. If the report is reliable, she must have been divorced by 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf. This is not confirmed, however, by al-Zubayri (*Nasab*, 145). She had first been married to Zayd b. Haritha, who was killed at Mu'ta, then to al-Zubayr, who divorced her, and then to 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf. Her marriage to 'Amr b. al-'As was presumably brief.

merchants in Mekka before Islam, was involved in the exchange. 'Amr left, incensed, and began to incite 'AIT, al-Zubayr and Talha against 'Uthman, and stirred up trouble among the Mekka pilgrims, accusing the caliph of 'innovations'.⁵⁷ His agitation may well have contributed more to the rebellion in Egypt against 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd b. AbT Sarh than is explicitly stated in the sources.⁵⁸ When the Egyptian rebels were encamped at Dhu Khushub outside Medina before the siege of the caliph's palace and 'Uthman visited 'A'isha to seek her advice, she demanded that he reappoint 'Amr governor of Egypt since his soldiers (*jund*) there were satisfied with him. This was mentioned by 'Uthman in a letter to the Syrians (*ahl al-Sham*) written on 1 Dhu 1-Hijja 35/31 May 656 at the beginning of the final siege of his palace and in his largely identical message to the Mekka pilgrims read to them by 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas on 7 Dhu 1-Hijja/6 June. 'Uthman stated that he had agreed to the demand, but then 'Amr had offended him and had gone beyond what was right.⁵⁹ 'Amr's offensive act, to which 'Uthman probably referred, occurred shortly after the Egyptian rebels left Dhu Khushub, having been promised that the caliph would redress all their grievances.

⁵⁷ Tabari, I, 2966-7. The report goes back to information from al-Miswar b. Makhrama transmitted by his client Abu 'Awn.

⁵⁸ This has been suspected by Wellhausen (*Skizzen*, VI, 127). Al-WalTd b. 'Uqba in a poem accused 'Amr, together with 'Dulaym' ('Ammar b. Yasir) and the Egyptian rebel Sudan b. Humran al-Muradl, of causing trouble and encouraging others to revile 'Uthman (Ibn 'Asakir, *Uthman*, 306). This was at the time when 'Ammar was sent to Egypt by 'Uthman to investigate the complaints of the people and to pacify them, shortly before the Egyptian rebel group set out for Medina (see below, p. 117).

⁵⁹ Tabari, I, 3043; Ibn 'Asakir, *Uthman*, *ill.* In the letter to the Syrians it is not mentioned that the warriors in Egypt were satisfied with 'Amr. 'Uthman did not name 'A'isha personally in his letters but spoke of his visit to the Mothers of the Faithful (*ummahat al-mu'mintn*). This was partly out of politeness, partly because the letters inciting the Muslims in the provinces against 'Uthman were, as will be seen, sent in the name of the Mothers of the Faithful collectively. It is clear, however, that 'A'isha played the active part and this was generally recognized by the public. Of the other widows of Muhammad only Umm Salama is known to have been involved on a minor scale.

The two letters of 'Uthman are certainly authentic and were independently preserved. The letter to the Syrians, written by 'Uthman's secretary Unays b. AbT Fatima, was transmitted by IsmaTI b. 'Ubayd Allah b. Abi 1-Muhajir, client of Makhzum, who was a tutor of the sons of the caliph 'Abd al-Malik and governor of the Maghrib in the time of 'Umar II. He was born during the reign of Mu'awiya (Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, I, 317-18) and must have had access to the letter either from a copy kept in his family or from the palace archives. The message to the Mekka pilgrims was evidently preserved by Ibn al-'Abbas, who read it to them, and was transmitted by his disciple 'Ikrima (TabarT, I, 3040). It was also transmitted by Muhammad b. IsIjaq from the 'Alid 'AIT b. al-Husayn who presumably obtained the text from Ibn al-'Abbas (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madma*, 1162-6).

Unays b. AbT Fatima was most likely a brother of Mu'ayqTb b. AbT Fatima al-DawsT of Azd, confederate among the Banu 'Abd Shams (Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, IV/1, 86-7). Mu'ayqTb was in charge of the treasury (*bayt al-mal*) for some time under 'Umar and keeper of the seal of 'Uthman, during whose caliphate he died (Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, VI, 130). Unays presumably succeeded him in that position.

and 'Abd al-Rahman (b. al-Aswad, or b. 'Awf?) had distributed them among the people.⁶³

When 'Uthman during the pilgrimage of 29/650 performed four *rak'as* (bowings from the waist) in the ritual prayer at Mina instead of the traditional two, 'Abd al-Rahman performed only two with his companions and afterwards reproached 'Uthman privately. 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud, however, suggested to him that contravening the practice of the imam was worse than following him in an unsound one, and 'Abd al-Rahman decided to pray four *rak'as* in the future.⁶⁴ According to a report by his grandson Sa'd b. Ibrahim, 'Abd al-Rahman was deeply upset about the death of Abu Dharr in exile at al-Rabadha, which occurred not long before his own death. He defended himself against a charge by 'All that he bore responsibility for 'Uthman's conduct, stating that the latter had broken his commitments (made at the time of his election) to him, and offered to wield his own sword in solidarity with 'All.⁶⁵ Before his death he expressed a wish that 'Uthman should not pray over him, and al-Zubayr or Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas led the funeral prayer.⁶⁶

Another prominent Zuhrite who fell out with 'Uthman much earlier was 'Abd Allah b. Arqam b. 'Abd Yaghuth, a further grandson of Muhammad's uncle, and former secretary of the Prophet. 'Umar had put him in charge of the public treasury (*bayt al-mal*) and thought highly of him. According to Hafsa, her father had even thought of appointing him his successor.⁶⁷ Under 'Uthman he continued in his office until 'Abd Allah b. Khalid b. Asld, the caliph's nephew and brother-in-law,⁶⁸ arrived from Mekka with a group of men volunteering to fight for the faith (*ghuzatan*). 'Uthman ordered that 'Abd Allah be given 300,000 dirhams and each of the other men 100,000 and sent a draft on the public treasury to Ibn Arqam. The latter found the amount excessive and returned the draft. When the caliph reprimanded him, calling him 'treasurer for us', he answered that he had considered himself treasurer for the Muslims and resigned, suspending the treasury

⁶³ *Ibid.* ^M *Ibid.*, 2834-5.

⁶⁵ Baladhuri, *Ansb.*, V, 57.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* Caetani dismissed a report that 'Abd al-Rajman refused to see 'Uthman before his death as 'naturally untrustworthy' (*Annali*, VII, 556-7). He argued that the orthodox traditionists because of their pro-'Alid bias could not countenance the fact that 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf preferred 'Uthman. Yet the reports coming from his own family and the Banu Zuhra cannot leave any doubt that 'Abd al-Rahman broke with 'Uthman before his death. ⁶⁷ Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, IV, 32-3.

⁶⁸ See excursus 3 on the marriages of 'Uthman, pp. 365-6. This was presumably before 'Uthman gave 'Abd Allah b. Khalid his daughter Umm Sa'd in marriage (see there pp. 366-7).

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keys on the pulpit.⁶⁹ 'Uthman sent Zayd b. Thabit to him with a present of 300,000 dirhams, but he refused to accept it.⁷⁰

A further incident involving a Zuhrite occurred late during Saïd b. al-'As' governorship of Kufa, probably after 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf's death. At the end of the fasting month of Ramadan, Sa'ïd asked the Kufans if anybody had seen the new moon. All denied seeing it except Hashim b. 'Utba b. AbT Waqqas, nephew of Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas. The governor ridiculed him and referred to his being one-eyed. Hashim answered that he had lost his eye in the cause of God (he had been hit in the battle on the Yarmuk) and went on to break his fast. In punishment for his insubordination the governor ordered him to be beaten and his house burned. His sister Umm al-Hakam, one of the Muhajirat women, and his brother Nafi⁷¹ left for Medina and informed Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas of the incident. When Sa'd complained to 'Uthman, the caliph conceded the right of retaliation, telling him: 'SaTd belongs to you [pi.] for Hashim, beat him in return, and the house of SaTd belongs to you, burn it as he burned his.' Sa'd's son 'Umar, still a boy, went to SaTd's house in Medina and attempted to set fire to it. When the news reached 'A'isha⁷² she intervened with Sa'd, who stopped his son.⁷³ SaTd b. al-'As, overthrown shortly afterwards by the Kufans, was evidently also spared the humiliation of a beating. Hashim b. 'Utba became an active supporter of AIT in Kufa. Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas, the second Zuhrite⁷⁴ among the electors, maintained

⁶⁹ This happened before the dismissal of Abu Musa al-Ash'ari from the governorship of Basra. For 'Uthman gave 'Abd Allah b. Khalid b. AsTd the money despite Ibn Arqam's protest, and he was later accused of having made the gift from *fay'* money sent by al-Ash'ari (see the line of poetry of 'Abd al-Rahman b. Hanbal b. Mulayl quoted in *Aghani*, VI, 60). According to Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (*al-Istifab ft marifat al-ashab* (Hyderabad, 1336/1918)), I, 336, 'Abd Allah b. Arqam was treasurer for only two years under 'Uthman. Al-Zubayri (*Nasab*, 262) is evidently mistaken in claiming that he remained treasurer until the end (*akhir*) of 'Uthman's caliphate. According to most sources he died during 'Uthman's reign. 'Uthman now appointed Zayd b. Thabit treasurer (BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 58, 88; Ibn Abi 1-HadTd, *Sharh*, III, 36, quoting al-Waqidl), on whom he bestowed a gift of 100,000 dirhams in 27/648 from the *khums* of the campaign to IfrTqiya. The variant report (BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 58) that 'Uthman appointed Mu'ayqTb b. AbT Fajima treasurer is probably unreliable.

⁷⁰ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 58-9, 88; Ibn Abi 1-Hadid, *Sharh*, III, 36.

⁷¹ Nafi' b. Abi Waqqas can probably be identified as Nafi' b. 'Utba b. AbT Waqqas (see the annotation to the text in Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, V, 21).

¹² SaTd b. al-'As' house in Medina seems to have been close to the Prophet's mosque and 'A'isha's apartment. He had asked the caliph 'Umar for permission to enlarge it, and 'Umar had, somewhat grudgingly, agreed to a small extension which was considered insufficient by SaTd. 'Uthman had then satisfied his wishes (Ibn Sa'd, *Kutab*, V, 20-1).

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁷⁴ There were claims that the sons of Abu Waqqas were false pretenders to Qurayshite lineage and belonged rather to 'Udhra (Quda'a). Hassan b. Thabit is quoted as calling Sa'd's pagan brother 'Utba a slave of 'Udhra in a poem after he had broken one of Muhammad's teeth and wounded him in the face in the battle of Uhud (Ibn Abi 1-HadTd, *Sharh*, VI, 55-6). According to a gloss in one of the MSS of Hassan's *Diwan* (ed. W. N. 'Arafat (London, 1971), II, 137), the mother of Abu Waqqa' was a woman of 'Udhra.

a certain distance towards 'Uthman after he had deposed him from the governorship of Kufa. He does not seem to have joined or actively encouraged the opposition movement, but he also did little to back the embattled caliph. He severely rebuked 'Ammar b. Yasir, however, when the latter returned from Egypt after having incited the people there to rebellion against the caliph.¹¹¹ Sa'd was not among the delegates of Quraysh led by 'AIT who met the Egyptian rebels at Dhu Khushub to persuade them to return home.¹¹² At 'Uthman's request, however, he urged 'Ammar b. Yasir to join the delegation. 'Ammar was influential among the Egyptians, and the caliph probably hoped that his presence would help to calm down the hostility of the rebels. 'Ammar, however, categorically refused to join after discovering that 'Uthman had secretly sent one of his henchmen, Kathir b. al-Salt al-Kindi, to spy on him.¹¹³ When a handful of the rebels came to Medina, Sa'd and 'Ammar co-operated with them in the presentation of their grievances to the caliph. 'Uthman initially did not receive them, and it is uncertain whether Sa'd was still among them when the caliph did speak to them a few days later.¹¹⁴

When the main body of the rebels eventually entered Medina and approached Sa'd, asking that he speak for them to 'Uthman, he declined to intervene, as did Sa'd b. Zayd b. 'Amr b. Nufayl.⁷⁹ After seeing the leaders of the rebel groups from Kufa, Basra and Egypt, he is said to have commented that any cause led by these men could only be evil.¹¹⁵ Abu

¹¹¹ Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1122—4. ⁷⁶ Tabari, I, 2971.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 2969-70; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1125. Kathir b. al-ṣalt, a descendant of the kings of Kinda, was captured as a child during the *rida* and became a confederate (*haltf*) of the Banu Jumah of Quraysh. 'Uthman employed him as an arbiter in tribal conflicts (M. Lecker, 'Kinda on the Eve of Islam and during the *Ridda*', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1994), 333—56, at 354—5). He appears as a close attendant of 'Uthman during the siege of the palace (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1178, 1227) and was suspected by many of being the killer of Niyar b. 'Iyad al-Aslami and thus to have provoked the attack on the palace (Tabari, I, 3004). He is also known as a transmitter of hadith and became a secretary of the caliph 'Abd al-Malik (Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, VIII, 419-20; Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar Ta'rikh Madinat Dimashq li-Ibn 'Asakir*, ed. Ruhiyya al-Nahhas et al. (Damascus, 1984-90), XXI, 140-1).

¹¹⁴ Baladhuri, *Ansb*, V, 51-2, 95; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1101. The tenor of the report is 'Uthmanid and anti-'Alid. The transmitter, Husayn b. Numayr al-Wasiti, of Kufan origin, was known as a harsh critic of 'Ali (*yahmilu 'aid 'Ali*: Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, II, 291-2). His source, Juhaym al-Fihri, is otherwise unknown.

¹¹⁵ Baladhuri, *Ansb*, V, 97; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 50. The report goes back to Malik's staunchly 'Uthmanid grandfather Malik b. AbT 'Amir al-Asbahl, who is omitted in al-Baladhuri's *isnad*. 'Uthman gave him a pension (*farada lah*: Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, X, 19) and he was, or claimed to be, among the men who carried 'Uthman's corpse to his burial (Tabari, I, 1348-9; Baladhuri, *Ansb*, V, 96). Sa'd's visit to 'Uthman mentioned in Ibn Sa'd's version of the report may well be the same as the one described in Abu Habiba's account quoted below.

¹¹⁵ Tabari, I, 2998-9. Reports that Sa'd made 'Uthman an offer to fight for him and that he left Medina for Mekka before the murder in order to guard his faith (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1130-1, 1274-5) are 'Uthmanid legend.

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Hablba, a client of al-Zubayr, reported that he saw Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas visiting the caliph on the day that 'Uthman was killed. As he left the besieged palace, he expressed anxiety at the sight of the enemies in front of the gate. Marwan reprimanded him: 'Now you regret, before you denigrated him (*ash'artahii*).' Sa'd apologized that he had not thought the people would go so far in their boldness or would seek his blood. 'Uthman, he said, had just renewed his repentance. Marwan urged him to seek 'All who was hiding and was the one whose word would not be contravened (by the rebels). Sa'd found 'All in the mosque and pleaded with him that he help his kinsman 'Uthman once more. Then Muhammad b. Abi Bakr arrived and confided to 'All that 'Uthman had been killed.⁸¹ Caetani saw the revolt against 'Uthman as essentially driven by tribal resentment at the hegemony of Quraysh. The Early Companions 'AIT, Talha and al-Zubayr, although themselves of Quraysh, had insidiously encouraged these anti-Quraysh sentiments in the provinces out of their personal ambition. The interest of Quraysh, Caetani held, was virtually identical with the interest of the Banu Umayya.¹¹⁶ Yet while there was certainly some tribal resentment against the domination of Quraysh in general, the defection of the Banu Zuhra, a major clan of Quraysh, clearly shows that anti-Umayyad sentiment was spreading among the Quraysh themselves. None of the Zuhrite leaders was motivated by personal ambition. It was the conduct of 'Uthman that eventually cost him the support of the majority of Quraysh who had so solidly backed his election.

Ismail b. Yahya al-Tayml, a descendant of the caliph Abu Bakr who after 158/775 composed an account of the murder of 'Uthman,¹¹⁷ explained the widespread disaffection by pointing to 'Uthman's offences against Ibn Mas'ud, Abu Dharr and 'Ammar b. Yasir. Ibn Mas'ud's mistreatment provoked his tribe, Hudhayl, and the Banu Zuhra, whose client he was; Abu Dharr's grievance was shared by his tribe, Ghifar, and the Makhzum were incensed by the case of 'Ammar, their confederate (*halif*).¹¹⁸

'Ammar had joined a public protest by 'AIT in the mosque against 'Uthman's assertion of his right arbitrarily to appropriate *fiy* property. The caliph, unable to punish 'All, reviled 'Ammar and had him beaten until he lost consciousness. He was carried to Umm Salama, Makhzumite

¹¹⁶ See in particular *Annali*, VIII, 27—31. H. Djai't is certainly correct in rejecting the view of 'A. Duri, H. A. R. Gibb, and others that the motivation of the rebellion against 'Uthman was basically 'bedouin, Arab, nomadic', and in stressing its Islamic nature (*La Grande Discorde*, 88).

¹¹⁷ See excursus 5 on the sources for the crisis of the caliphate of 'Uthman, pp. 377-8.

¹¹⁸ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 26; Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 421.

widow of Muhammad. Her cousin Hisham b. al-Walid, brother of Khalid b. al-Walid, protested to 'Uthman about the mistreatment of 'our brother' and threatened to kill an Umayyad in retaliation if 'Ammar should die, but 'Uthman insulted him too, and ordered his removal. 'A'isha took up their case and made a scene in the mosque, infuriating 'Uthman.¹¹⁹ Makhzum thus also withdrew their support from him.

'Uthman's brother al-Walid b. 'Uqba later inflamed the ill feelings of Makhzum further when he, in addition to attacking 'Dulaym' ('Ammar) for his disloyal activity in Egypt, lampooned, apparently slanderously, the Makhzumite 'Umar b. Sufyan b. 'Abd al-Asad, asserting that he, encouraged by Dulaym, was faulting 'Uthman 'like a goat's fart in the desert plains of I dam'. The vulgar language was not out of character for a former governor remembered in history chiefly for having vomited in his drunkenness on the pulpit of Kufa. The Makhzumite answered in a more dignified manner, warning 'Abd Shams that al-Walid was sapping their rock with his slander.¹²⁰

While under siege in his palace, 'Uthman called 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas and gave him a message to be read to the pilgrims in Mekka. He told him that he had just appointed Khalid b. al-'As b. Hisham governor of Mekka. Khalid was a chief of Makhzum in Mekka and had been governor under 'Umar.¹²¹ The previous governor, still in power, was 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir al-Hadraml, an Umayyad confederate¹²² whose father had been killed as a pagan at Badr after having slain Mihja' al-'Akkl, a client of 'Umar and one of the earliest Companions.¹²³ 'Uthman evidently hoped to prop up his authority in Mekka by replacing the Umayyad confederate by a distinguished Makhzumite. He told Ibn al-'Abbas, however, that he was afraid that the people of Mekka, having learned of the rebellion in Medina, might resist Khalid, who might thus be impelled to fight them in the Sanctuary of God. Khalid, he suggested, would probably not agree to lead the pilgrimage. 'Uthman therefore appointed Ibn al-'Abbas as leader of the pilgrimage.¹²⁴ When Ibn al-'Abbas conveyed 'Uthman's instructions to Khalid, the latter, as expected, declined to act as leader of the pilgrimage and to read 'Uthman's message to the pilgrims. Pointing to the ominous hostility of the crowd towards the caliph, he urged Ibn

¹¹⁹ BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 48—9. See further below p. 101.

¹²⁰ Ibn 'Asakir, *Uthman*, 306-7. The text there has 'Amr instead of Umar. Sufyan b. 'Abd al-Asad, however, is not known to have had a son 'Amr. 'Umar b. Sufyan was an early Muslim who emigrated to Abyssinia (ZubayrT, *Nasab*, 338).

¹²¹ Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, II, 92-3.

¹²² His grandfather 'Abd Allah al-HadramThad been a confederate of Harb b. Umayya (*ibid.*, IV, 259). ⁸⁹ *Annali*, I, 510, 512.

¹²⁴ Tabari, I, 3039-40. The two reports of Ibn al-'Abbas quoted here differ slightly about 'Uthman's instructions to him but can be properly reconciled.

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al-'Abbas, as cousin of the man to whom the reign would probably fall, to act as the leader.¹²⁵ The account throws light on the total erosion of 'Uthman's authority among the Mekkan Quraysh. Discontent and unrest were not confined to a few of the conquered provinces, but pervaded the holy cities in Arabia.

Among the electors, the most active and outspoken in the opposition movement was Talha of the clan of Taym. A man of strong personal ambition, Talha, although formally a member of the electoral council, had not been present at the election of 'Uthman. When he arrived in Medina after the election, he made clear his displeasure. He is reported to have stayed in his house at first, stating that he was not someone whose opinion could legitimately be ignored (*mithlī la yuftatu 'alayh*). 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf went to see him and implored him for the sake of Islam not to break ranks.¹²⁶ When he went to see 'Uthman, he asked the caliph whether he would agree to have another election if he, Talha, rejected the result of the first one. 'Uthman assured him that he would agree, and Talha offered his pledge of allegiance.¹²⁷

'Uthman thenceforth made special efforts to secure Talha's backing by honouring him and making him extravagant presents. According to Talha's son Musa, 'Uthman during his caliphate bestowed gifts upon Talha to the amount of 200,000 dinars.¹²⁸ Yet Talha soon became a sharp critic of 'Uthman's conduct and is described as personally reproaching the caliph on various occasions.⁹⁵ According to Khalid, client of 'Uthman's son Aban, he intervened when Marwan used the name of the caliph to gain personal advantage on the market in buying date pits as fodder for his camels. When 'Uthman apologized that he had not ordered this, Talha blamed him even more, pointing to the stern scrupulosity of 'Umar on a similar occasion.⁹⁶

Talha wrote letters to the provinces inciting revolt and made common cause with the Egyptian rebels during the siege of 'Uthman's palace. When he later came to Basra calling for revenge for the blood of 'Uthman, 'Abd Allah b. Hakim al-Tamīmī of Mujashi' showed him his earlier letters to them, and he acknowledged having written them.⁹⁷ 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd b. Abi Sarh commented that, in spite of the caliph's generosity towards him, Talha was the one toughest against him during the siege.⁹⁸ This was equally the impression of later historians such as

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 3039.

¹²⁶ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 19-20. Talha and 'Uthman are reported to have quarrelled and exchanged insults even during 'Umar's reign (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 33-4.)

¹²⁷ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 19, 20. ⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 7. ⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 42, 44. ⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, II, 229-30. ⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, V, 20.

Abu Mikhnaf as well as Ibn STrin (d. 110/728) and 'Awf al-A'rabT, representing Kufan Shi'ite and Basran 'Uthmanid tradition respectively." Abu Mikhnaf reported that it was Talha who prevented the delivery of drinking water to the besieged caliph.¹²⁹ Looking down from his balcony 'Uthman greeted a group of the rebels among whom he saw Talha. As they failed to return the greeting, he addressed him: 'Talha, I did not think I would live to see the day when I should greet you and you do not return the greeting.'¹³⁰ According to a report by the Kufan 'Uthmanid Qays b. Abi Hazim al-BajalT, a man who visited Talha during the siege in order to ask him to prevent the death of 'Uthman was told by him: 'No, by God, not until the Banu Umayya surrender the right on their own accord.'¹³¹

The Medinan Companion and Qur'an collector Mujammi' b. Jariya al-AwsT, evidently one of the few Medinan supporters of 'Uthman, narrated that he passed by Talha, who asked him mockingly what his master was doing. When Mujammi' replied: 'I suspect that you [pi.] shall kill him', Talha commented: 'If he should be killed, he is neither an angel brought close [to God] nor a prophet sent [by Him]'.¹³² The Makhzumite Companion 'Abd Allah b. 'Ayyash b. AbT RabT'a reported that he visited 'Uthman during the siege and the caliph let him listen to the talk of those outside the door. He heard them debating whether they should attack or wait for the caliph to retract. Then Talha arrived and asked for Ibn 'Udays, the chief of the Egyptian rebels. He whispered something to Ibn 'Udays, who then ordered his companions not to let anyone enter or leave the palace. 'Uthman told Ibn 'Ayyash that it was Talha who gave this order and he prayed that God protect him from Talha and grant that Talha's blood be spilled. Talha, he affirmed, had committed illicit offence against him, and he quoted the Prophet's hadith that the shedding of a Muslim's blood was illicit except for apostasy, adultery and manslaughter. Ibn 'Ayyash wanted to depart, but was prevented by the rebels until Muhammad b. AbT Bakr passed by and ordered that he be allowed to leave.¹³³ 'Abd al-Rahman b. Abza later remembered seeing the Egyptian rebel leader Sudan b. Humran coming out of 'Uthman's palace on the day of the murder and hearing him say: 'Where is Talha b. 'Ubayd Allah? We have killed the son of 'Affan'.¹⁰⁵ Talha had no motive for hating 'Uthman, by whom he was treated with particular generosity, and acted out of personal ambition. He must have been confident that he would become his successor. 'Uthman presumably alluded to him in his message to the Mekka pilgrims conveyed by Ibn al-'Abbas in stating that 'some were seeking to take their right by unrightful means for whom my life has lasted excessively. Their hope for the reign (*intra*) has been delayed too long for them, so they have sought to hasten

¹²⁹ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 71. This is indirectly confirmed by the report of 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Aswad b. 'Abd Yaghuth (Tabari, I, 2979). ¹⁰¹ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 76.

¹³¹ Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 407. Qays b. Abi Hazim al-Bajall al-AhmasI (d. 84/703) was known to put 'Uthman above 'All. Kufan traditionists inclined to Shi'ism therefore shunned him (Ibn Ijar, *Tahdhib*, VIII, 386-7). ¹⁰³ BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, V, 74.

¹⁰⁴ Tabari, I, 3000.

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fate.¹⁰⁶ It was Abu Bakr's daughter 'A'isha who stood behind the ambitions of her kinsman Talha.

'A'isha apparently held a grudge against 'Uthman from the beginning of his reign because, if a report of al-Ya'qubl may be trusted, he had reduced her pension to the level of that of the other widows of the Prophet.¹⁰⁷ She was probably the first one to speak out against 'Uthman at the mosque of Medina. As a widow of Muhammad and daughter of the founder of the caliphate she was in the best position to do so. When the Early Companion 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud, accused by al-WalTd b. 'Uqba of fomenting trouble in Kufa, was deported to Medina and 'Uthman abused him from the pulpit, 'A'isha shouted: "Uthman, do you say this to the Companion of the Messenger of God?"¹⁰⁸ Shortly afterwards four witnesses arrived from Kufa to charge al-WalTd with drunkenness. When 'Uthman threatened them, they complained to 'A'isha, who exclaimed: "Uthman has obstructed the Qur'anic legal punishments (*hudud*) and threatened witnesses."¹⁰⁹ According to the account of al-Zuhri, 'Uthman heard the commotion in 'A'isha's room and angrily commented: 'Can the rebels and scoundrels of the people of Iraq find no other refuge than the home of 'A'isha?' Hearing this, 'A'isha raised one of Muhammad's sandals and shouted at him: 'You have forsaken the Sunna of the

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 3000-1. If the report is accepted as going back to him, it should be noted that 'Abd al-Rahman b. Abza is a pro-'Alid source. Al-Baladhuri quotes another report by him, with the same Kufan and Qumman *isnad*, in which he describes 'AIT' as being prevented by his son Muljammad b. al-Hanafiyya from going to protect 'Uthman (BaladhurT, *Ansd*, V, 94). Both reports must be viewed with reserve.

¹⁰⁶ TabarT, 1,3042. The 'Uthmanid 'Abd al-Rahman b. AbT Layla reported that Talha took over the command of the Egyptians during the siege of the palace. Muhammad b. Abi Bakr was with them, but when he left them in the evenings he, 'AIT' and 'Ammar assured the people that the Egyptian rebels were acting under the order of 'AIT (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1171). 'AIT is described in other 'Uthmanid accounts as greatly concerned that Talha was seizing control (see, for instance, *ibid.*, 1197-9).

¹⁰⁷ See Abbott, *Aishah*, 105. The report of al-Ya'qubl, generally not a reliable source for early Islamic history, was accepted by Wellhausen (*Skizzen*, VI, 126 n. 2). For 'A'isha's relations with 'Uthman see in general Abbott, *Aishah*, 100-31.

¹⁰⁸ BaladhurT, *Ansd*, V, 36. Ordering Ibn Mas'ud's deportation from Kufa, 'Uthman also deprived him of his pension for three years (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1049), presumably until his death.

¹⁰⁹ BaladhurT, *Ansd*, V, 34.

Messenger of God, the owner of this sandal.' The people heard of the incident and filled the mosque, where they quarrelled about the propriety of the interference of 'A'isha, as a woman, in the dispute. A group of Companions went to see 'Uthman, and he was forced to depose his brother.¹¹⁰

In the case of 'Ammar b. Yasir, 'A'isha, in solidarity with Umm Salama, created a similar scene in the mosque. She brought out a hair, a garment and a sandal of the Prophet and called out: 'How quickly have you [pi.] abandoned the Sunna of your Prophet when his hair, his dress, and his sandal have not yet decayed.' 'Uthman was left speechless with rage, while the crowd, egged on by 'Amr b. al-'As, burst into turmoil and exclamations of bewilderment.¹¹¹

'A'isha most likely also wrote letters to the provinces stirring up rebellion, although, after the murder of 'Uthman, she denied it. The letters were written in the name of the Mothers of the Faithful collectively, but it was generally assumed at the time that she was behind them. When she, at the time of the siege, told the Kufan rebel leader al-Ashtar with raised voice: 'God forbid that I would order the spilling of the blood of Muslims, the murder of their imam, the violating of their inviolability', he could point out to her: 'You [f. pi.] have written to us, but now when the war has been set ablaze by your action you forbid us.'¹¹² Masruq b. al-Ajda' al-Hamdani, a prominent disciple of Ibn Mas'ud, narrated that 'A'isha chided the people for slaughtering 'Uthman like a ram. Masruq told her: 'This is your work. You [sg.] wrote to the people ordering them to march against him.' She denied that she had ever written them a line. The Kufan traditionist al-A'mash commented that the letters were therefore generally held to have been written in her name.¹¹³ Letters of the Mothers of the Faithful were used by Muhammad b. AbTHudhayfa to incite the revolt in Egypt. The 'Uthmanid Egyptian 'Abd al-Karim b. al-Harith al-Hadraml (d. 136/753-4)¹¹⁴ asserted that these letters were

¹¹⁰ *Aghani*, IV, 180-1.

¹¹¹ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 48-9, 88-9. The report goes back to al-Zuhri. The incident concerning 'Ammar cannot be definitely dated. Abbott placed it before the incident concerning Ibn Mas'ud. It seems more likely, however, that it occurred somewhat later.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 102; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1224-5.

¹¹³ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 103; KhalTfa, *Ta'rikh*, ed. Akram Diva' al-'Umari (Damascus, 1977), 176. Masruq was among the Kufans who brought 'Uthman al-Ashtar's letter in which he demanded the dismissal of Sa'Td b. al-'As and the appointment of Abu Musa al-Ash'ari and Hudhayfa b. al-Yaman as governors of Kufa (Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 46). After the murder of 'Uthman, Masruq reproached al-Ashtar and 'Ammar for having killed a man who fasted and prayed constantly (*qatalumuhu sawwaman qawwaman*). The 'Uthmanid Kufan al-Sha'bT praised him, saying that the women of Hamdan had not given birth to the like of Masruq (Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 502-3). Masruq was known to have access to 'A'isha and transmitted hadith from her.

¹¹⁴ Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, VI, 371-2.

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forged by the rebel leader.¹³⁴ His testimony carries little weight, since such letters were also known in Kufa, and reflects the later Sunnite consensus that 'A'isha could not have written letters against the third Rightly Guided Caliph.

'A'isha's increasing hostility towards 'Uthman was certainly not solely personally motivated. As the revered Mother of the Faithful and daughter of the first caliph she also felt a responsibility for guarding the basic principles of the caliphate founded by her father. She could see that under 'Uthman the caliphate of Quraysh was quickly being turned into a hereditary kingship for the benefit of the Umayyad house. When 'Uthman came to see her and sought the advice of 'the Mothers of the Faithful' in the crisis, he was told, according to his letters to the Syrians and the Mekka pilgrims, that he must give governorships to 'Amr b. al-'As and 'Abd Allah b. Qays (Abu Musa al-Ash'arT) and retain Mu'awiya and ('Abd Allah b. 'Amir) b. Kurayz. Mu'awiya had been appointed by a ruler before 'Uthman, he was governing his territory well, and his soldiers were satisfied with him. 'Uthman should restore 'Amr to his governorship, for his soldiers were also satisfied with him, and he would govern his country well.¹³⁵

The mention of Mu'awiya here may seem surprising. It could indicate that there were suspicions, most likely unjustified, that 'Uthman might replace even Mu'awiya, with whom his relations were relatively cool, by one of his favourites. 'Uthman certainly also mentioned him and 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir in order to demonstrate that he was faithfully complying with 'A'isha's wishes as well as he could. Abu Musa al-Ash'arT, too, had been reappointed governor by him under pressure from the Kufans before his visit to 'A'isha. The thrust of her demands, however, was to break the Umayyad monopoly in the government of the conquered provinces, which could clearly be seen as ensuring and safeguarding an Umayyad succession to the caliphate. In particular the reappointment of a tenacious critic and formidable opponent of 'Uthman such as 'Amr b. al-'As would have acted as a powerful check to Umayyad aspirations.

During the final siege 'A'isha decided to leave, together with Umm Salama, for the pilgrimage. In the hope that her presence in Medina might hold back the rebels from violence, 'Uthman sent Marwan and

¹³⁴ Al-KindT, *Kitab al-Wulat wa-Kitab al-Qudat*, ed. R. Guest (London, 1912), 14. On the basis of this report Abbott inclined to the opinion that the letters attributed to 'A'isha were all forged (*A'ishah*, 124). Ibn Lah'l'a also transmitted a highly fictitious Egyptian report in which Ibn Abi Hudhayfa is accused of forging letters of the Mothers of the Faithful (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1153-4).

¹³⁵ Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 377; TabarT, 1,3043. 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir is mentioned only in the letter to the Syrians where it is he, rather than Mu'awiya, who is described as governing well and being popular among his soldiers.

another cousin, 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Attab b. Asld,¹¹⁷ to persuade her to stay for the sake of his safety. Having completed her preparations for the trip, she rejected all entreaties. When Marwan finally suggested, with a sarcastic poetical quote, that she was running away after having set the country ablaze, she told him angrily that she wished his man were in one of her travel sacks so she could take it along and cast him into the sea.¹¹⁸ As she reached al-Sulsul, 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas, sent by the caliph to deliver his message in Mekka, caught up with her. Worried about the impact it might make on the assembled pilgrims, she told him, according to 'Abd Allah's own report: 'Ibn 'Abbas, I beseech you by God, for you are endowed with an agile tongue, that you turn [the people] away from this man and stir up their misgivings. For their sights have become clear and acute, the light signals have been raised for them, and they have streamed together from all countries for a momentous matter. I have seen Talha b. 'Ubayd Allah take possession of the keys of the treasure houses and storerooms. If he takes over the rule, he will follow the conduct of his cousin Abu Bakr.' 'Abd Allah suggested: 'My Mother, if anything should happen to the man, the people would seek refuge only with our fellow.' 'A'isha drew back: 'Leave this, I do not wish to engage with you in a boasting match or dispute.'¹¹⁹ When the news of 'Uthman's miserable end, but not yet of 'Al's succession, arrived in Mekka, she ordered her pavilion to be pitched in the Sanctuary and announced: 'I believe that 'Uthman will bring ill luck upon his people [the Umayyads] just as Abu Sufyan brought ill luck on his people on the day of Badr.'¹²⁰ Talha, she fancied, would now put the clock back to the time of the Prophet.

The animosity of Talha and 'A'isha towards 'Uthman was not shared by al-Zubayr of the clan of Asad.¹²¹ Later sources tended to associate

¹¹⁷ According to the version of Ibn Sa'd (*Tabaqat*, V, 25), Zayd b. Thabit, treasurer and loyalist supporter of 'Uthman, was sent along with them. Ibn Abi l-HadTd (*Sharh*, III, 7) quotes a report from al-WaqidT's *Kitab at-Dar* according to which Marwan asked Zayd b. Thabit to accompany him. 'A'isha discredited Zayd by enumerating all the gifts of land and money he had received from 'Uthman, and he said no word in return.

¹¹⁸ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 75. For the various versions of the incident and 'A'isha's words see Abbott, *Aishah*, 124. According to one of them she included Marwan himself together with 'Uthman in her wish. Caetani expressed doubts about the authenticity of the story since he knew only the version of the Shi'ite al-Ya'qubl, but commented that 'with its cynical crudeness it is well invented, worthy of a woman of the Jahiliyya, which the terrible widow of the Prophet, implacable in her hatred, inflexible in her ambitious designs, had remained to a large extent' (*Annali*, VIII, 197).

¹¹⁹ Tabari, I, 3040. ¹²⁰ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 91 (Wahb b. Jarir).

¹²¹ With respect to al-Zubayr, too, there were claims that his lineage among Asad was false. Al-Haytham b. 'AdI stated in his *Kitab Mathalib al-'Arab* that al-Zubayr's grandfather Khuwaylid had visited Egypt and had come back with al-Zubayr's father, al-'Awwam, a Copt whom he adopted. As evidence he referred to a lampoon of the Al Khuwaylid by Hassan b. Thabit who mentioned their longing for the Copts and the adoption of al-'Awwam (Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh* XI 68; Hassan, *Diwan*, I, 374).

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al-Zubayr closely with Talha because of their joint stand, together with 'A'isha, in opposition to 'AIT and in the battle of the Camel. The Basran historian Wahb b. Jarir even mentioned al-Zubayr together with Talha as having been in control of matters during the siege of the palace.¹²² This is, however, far from the facts. During the election al-Zubayr had, as noted, broken his earlier alliance with 'AIT to back 'Uthman. The latter soon afterwards had shown his appreciation and gratitude by proposing al-Zubayr as regent until his son 'Amr should reach maturity. Although this arrangement soon became irrelevant as 'Amr grew up, al-Zubayr never broke completely with the caliph. He also had, however, close ties to 'A'isha whose elder sister, Asma', was his wife. 'Amr b. al-'As may to some extent have succeeded in inciting him against 'Uthman.¹²³ Al-Zubayr certainly joined the other Early Companions in collective action in putting pressure on the caliph to mend his ways and reduce the influence of his assertive kin. He refrained, however, from personal confrontation with the caliph,¹²⁴ and it is unlikely that he wrote letters to the provinces encouraging rebellion. 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud, disgraced by 'Uthman, appointed al-Zubayr executor of his will, recommending that the caliph should not lead his funeral prayer. After his death al-Zubayr was able to persuade 'Uthman to restore Ibn Mas'ud's pension rights, of which he had been deprived, to his children.¹²⁵ When Talha and al-Zubayr later came to Basra to seek revenge for the murder of 'Uthman, the Basrans reminded Talha that his letters had come to them with other contents. Al-Zubayr then asked them whether they had received from him any letter concerning 'Uthman.¹²⁶

It was probably early during the siege that al-Zubayr went to see 'Uthman and told him there was a group of men assembled in the Prophet's mosque who were ready to prevent violence against him and were seeking a just settlement. He urged him to go out and together with them submit the dispute to the widows of Muhammad. When 'Uthman

¹²² BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 90: *kana l-Zubayr wa-Talha qad istawlayd 'ala l-amr*. The lengthy narration of Wahb b. Jarir about the murder of 'Uthman (*ibid.*, 88-92) was attributed by him to al-Zuhri. While it does contain some material from al-Zuhri, it is largely Wahb's own composition.¹²³ TabarT, I, 2967, see above, p. 91.

¹²⁴ The unreliable Abu SaTd *mawla* AbT Usayd mentions an incident in which al-Zubayr beat some Umayyad clients who were breaking 'Uthman's prohibition on hoarding goods (*hukra*). 'Uthman scolded al-Zubayr, who apologized to the caliph and was forgiven (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1005-6).

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 1050; BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 37. Al-Zubayr's quotation of the line by 'AbTd b. al-Abras mentioned in this report as referring to 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud is mentioned in another report as referring to al-Miqdad b. al-Aswad ('Amr). 'Uthman is said to have led the funeral prayer and praised al-Miqdad after his death in 33/653-4 (Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 115-16). The report may imply that al-Miqdad's pension, too, was cancelled by 'Uthman because of his strong stand on behalf of 'AIT.

¹²⁶ TabarT, I, 3127; *Annali*, IX, 57.

went out with him the people rushed towards him with their arms. 'Uthman turned back and told al-Zubayr that he did not see anyone seeking justice or preventing violence.¹²⁷ Al-Zubayr's attempt to mediate was thus thwarted.

Later during the siege, al-Zubayr sent his client Abu HabTba to 'Uthman in order to inform him that the Banu 'Amr b. 'Awf, a major clan of Aws, had offered him their backing in whatever he would order them. It was a hot summer day, and Abu HabTba found the caliph with leather vessels (*marakin*) filled with water and napkins (*riyat*) spread out in front of him. Abu HabTba told him of the Banu 'Amr and that al-Zubayr's obedience to the caliph had not changed. If the latter wished, he would come immediately to join the defenders of the palace or he would wait for the Banu 'Amr to arrive and would protect him with their help. 'Uthman praised al-Zubayr for his loyalty and indicated that he would prefer him to wait for the Banu 'Amr to protect him, God willing, more effectively. The caliph was killed before the Banu 'Amr arrived.¹²⁸

Al-Zubayr's son 'Abd Allah had been honoured by 'Uthman for his outstanding part in the campaign of 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd to Ifriqiya in 27/647, where he had observed a weak spot in the array of the enemy army and killed the Greek prefect Gregory (JarjTr). The caliph exceptionally let him report his battle account from the pulpit in Medina.¹²⁹ Later 'Uthman made him a member of the commission entrusted with establishing the official recension of the Qur'an.¹³⁰ Probably influenced by his aunt 'A'isha, he harboured an intense dislike of 'AIT and tried to incite his father against him. According to his own report, he and his father met 'AIT at the time of the advance of the Egyptian rebels on Medina. 'AIT asked al-Zubayr for his opinion as to how he should react. Al-Zubayr suggested

¹²⁷ BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 76, quoting Abu Mikhnaf; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1193.

¹²⁸ See the two slightly variant versions of the report in Ibn 'Asakir, *Uthman*, 374-5. After 'Uthman's murder the poet Hanzala b. al-RabT' al-TamlmT, himself 'Uthmanid, praised the 'Amr b. 'Awf for keeping their commitment while lampooning the Banu l-Najjar for soiling themselves with treason (*ibid.*, 553-4). Muhammad b. al-Munkadir named two clans of Aws, the Banu 'Amr b. 'Awf and the Banu Haritha, as backing 'Uthman (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1280).

¹²⁹ 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr's battle account, preserved by Zubayrid family tradition, is quoted in *Aghdni*, VI, 59-60. Ibn al-Zubayr was asked by 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd to take the victory message to Medina with the words that no one merited more to convey them than he. Ibn al-Zubayr added that Marwan arrived later and laid claim to 500,000 dirhams which 'Uthman took out of the *khums* of the booty. The honour thus went to 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr and the spoils to Marwan, who does not seem to have distinguished himself in the campaign. That 'Uthman asked 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr to narrate his battle account from the pulpit was reported by 'Abd Allah's nephew Hisham b. 'Urwa (Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh Misr wa-akhbaruha*, ed. C. C. Torrey (New Haven, 1922), 185-6). There is no reason to suspect tendentious fiction by pro-Zubayrid Egyptian tradition, as suggested by Caetani (*Annali*, VII, 189-90).

¹³⁰ Noldeke and Schwally, *Geschichte des Qorans*, II, 48.

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that he confine himself to his house, neither trying to stop them nor guiding them. 'AIT commended this view and left. 'Abd Allah then commented to his father: 'By God, he surely will aid and guide them, and seek support against the Commander of the Faithful.'¹³¹

At the time of the siege Ibn al-Zubayr was, according to Zubayrid family tradition, given by 'Uthman the general command of the defenders of the palace.¹³² He is said to have been wounded in the fighting¹³³ and always remained an admirer of 'Uthman and a defender of his conduct.¹³⁴ At a late stage in the siege 'Uthman ordered him to read a letter to the besiegers in which the caliph promised full redress of all their grievances. 'Uthman would, the letter continued, obey whatever the wives of the Prophet and those of sound opinion among his critics agreed upon, but he would not 'take off a dress in which God had dressed him'. The besiegers tried to prevent Ibn al-Zubayr from reading the letter and shot arrows at him, but he read it in his strongest voice. Abu Mikhnaf added that according to some it was rather al-Zubayr himself who read the letter, but that the former account was sounder.¹³⁵ According to Salih b. Kaysan, al-Zubayr was among twelve men who buried 'Uthman.¹³⁶ This is not confirmed, however, by the other, more reliable reports quoted by al-WaqidT.¹³⁷

Caetani was firmly convinced that the main instigator of the revolt and chief culprit in the murder of the caliph was 'AIT. Since the Islamic historical tradition generally does not bear out this thesis, he accused the orthodox Sunnite sources of inveterate 'Alid, if not Shi'ite, bias and systematical anti-Umayyad distortion. 'AIT, he argued, could clearly be expected to be the prime beneficiary of the overthrow of 'Uthman. In fact, 'AIT, much younger than the caliph, would almost certainly have succeeded him on a legitimate basis if he had patiently awaited 'Uthman's natural death. Yet he was driven by his inordinate ambition, which was quite incommensurate with his actual lack of political responsibility and acumen. Thus he conspired for the quick removal of 'Uthman as he had conspired before for the murder of 'Umar. 'AIT, Caetani conceded, probably did not incite the masses to murder 'Uthman, but he secretly created numerous difficulties for him in order to make him unpopular and

¹³¹ Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1126-7. According to other versions 'Abd Allah, intervening before his father could answer, sternly told 'All that he ought to obey his imam. Al-Zubayr rebuked him for lack of respect towards his maternal uncle ('AIT) (*ibid.*, 1197). ¹³² BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 74.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 79, quoting Abu Mikhnaf; TabarT, I, 3005. ¹³⁴ See BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 9. ¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 66, quoting Abu Mikhnaf, and *ibid.*, 90, quoting Wahb b. JarTr; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1193-4. ¹³⁶ TabarT, I, 3047.

¹³⁷ The anecdote quoted by al-Mada'inT on the authority of Ibn Ju'duba according to which 'AIT heard a Sufyanid woman recite a poem accusing al-Zubayr and Talha in the murder of 'Uthman (BaladhurT, *Ansd*, V, 105) obviously lacks historical foundation.

to put himself in a favourable light, ultimately in order to force 'Uthman's abdication.¹³⁶

The premise of Caetani's argument was mistaken. The election of 'Uthman had demonstrated that Quraysh, as 'Umar had told Ibn al-'Abbas, would not consent to a caliphate of the Prophet's cousin. 'AIT had strongly pleaded his case and had been decisively rejected. Neither he nor his opponents could be under any illusion that the result might be different in another election. It was confidence that 'AIT was no longer a valid candidate that encouraged 'A'isha and Talha to undermine 'Uthman's reign. If 'AIT had been the prime mover in the rebellion and its prospective beneficiary, 'A'isha would have had no part in it. For whatever her dislike of 'Uthman's Umayyad arrogance, her hatred of 'AIT was seated more deeply. The same 'A'isha who just before the murder of 'Uthman told Marwan she would like to toss the caliph into the sea only weeks later was to assure the assembled Quraysh in Mekka that 'AIT had killed 'Uthman, and that a mere fingertip of 'Uthman was better than the whole of 'AIT.¹³⁷

'AIT, however, had not entirely given up his aspirations. Rejected by the ruling class of Quraysh, he became the natural focal point of tribal discontent in the provinces. In Kufa, in particular, anti-'Uthman agitation during the governorship of al-WalTd b. 'Uqba was leaning in favour of 'AIT. As early as the beginning of 'Uthman's reign, Jundab b. 'Abd Allah b. Dabb al-Azdl, who had been present in Medina during the election and had met 'AIT, began to extol his virtues in his home town Kufa, but at first met mostly opposition. According to his own account, he was denounced to the governor, al-WalTd, and imprisoned, but soon released upon the intercession of friends.¹³⁸ According to Abu Mikhnaf, 'Amr b. Zurara al-NakhaT and Kumayl b. Ziyad al-Nakha'T were the first to call in public for the removal of 'Uthman and for homage to 'AIT. Informed of 'Amr b. Zurara's activity, al-WalTd wanted to ride forth against him and his supporters, but he was warned that the people were assembled around 'Amr in strength. Malik al-Ashtar, also of the Banu 1-Nakha' of Madhhij, offered to intervene and to vouch for the good conduct of his tribesmen. When al-WalTd reported the situation to 'Uthman, the latter ordered that 'Amr, whom he described as a boorish bedouin (*a'rabi jilf*), be exiled to Damascus. Al-Ashtar, al-Aswad b. YazTd b. Qays and his uncle 'Alqama b. Qays

¹³⁶ *Annali*, VIII, 160.

¹³⁷ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 91, variant: a single night of 'Uthman was better than 'AIT the whole of eternity.

¹³⁸ Ibn Abi 1-HadTd, *Sharh*, IX, 56-8. In Medina Jundab made 'AIT an offer to invite the Kufans to his support, but 'AIT declined, stating that it was not the time for that.

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al-NakhaT accompanied him and then returned to Kufa.¹³⁹

Under the governorship of SaTd b. al-'As, al-Ashtar and several others were exiled from Kufa to Damascus. There they stayed initially in the house of 'Amr b. Zurara. These men, known as Kufan Qur'an readers *Oqurra* clearly inclined to 'AIT. Al-Ashtar led the uprising of the Kufans against the governor SaTd b. al-'As and the Kufan rebel force entering Medina at the time of the siege. During 'AIT's caliphate they were among his most steadfast supporters and some of those surviving, such as Kumayl b. Ziyad, remained important figures in the early ShT'a. This Kufan backing for 'AIT was probably spontaneous initially and remained loose until the murder of 'Uthman. There is no evidence that 'AIT entertained close relations with them at this time or directed their actions. But he was certainly aware of them.

'AIT clashed with 'Uthman in particular on questions of the religious law. As Muhammad's paternal cousin and foster-son, he evidently saw himself as responsible for the preservation and execution of the norms of the Qur'an and the Prophet's practice. At the beginning of 'Uthman's reign he protested against the pardon of 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar for the murder of al-Hurmuzan and threatened to carry out the legal punishment (*hadd*) when he could lay his hands on him.¹⁴² He insisted that the *hadd* punishment for wine-drinking be applied to al-WalTd b. 'Uqba, and when others hesitated to flog the caliph's half-brother, he either did so himself or had his nephew 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far carry out the flogging.¹⁴⁰ His stand in these two cases brought down upon him the lasting hatred of 'Ubayd Allah and al-WalTd. During the pilgrimage of 29/650 he, like 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf, confronted 'Uthman with reproaches for his change of the prayer ritual, which had provoked murmuring among the public.¹⁴⁴ He pointedly contravened 'Uthman's prohibition of performing the extra-seasonal pilgrimage (*umra*) during the season of the regular pilgrimage (*hajj*) or combining the two, insisting that he would not deviate from the Sunna of the Prophet.¹⁴¹ When 'Uthman defiantly declared in the mosque of Medina that he would take whatever he needed from the *fay* in spite of the grumbling of some people, 'AIT exclaimed that in that case the caliph would be prevented by force.¹⁴⁶ 'AIT expressed his disapproval of Umayyad largesse from *fay* money to the elite when SaTd b. al-'As sent him gifts

¹³⁹ BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, V, 30. Al-Aswad b. YazTd al-NakhaT was a disciple of Ibn Mas'ud and eventually turned against 'AIT in contrast to his (younger) uncle 'Alqama b. Qays (al-ThaqafT, Abu Ishaq Ibrahim, *al-Gharat*, ed. Jalal al-DTn al-Muhaddith (Tehran, 1395/[1975]), 559-65).

¹⁴⁰ BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, V, 33-5; *Annali*, VII, 335-55. Al-Hasan is said to have refused to

¹⁴¹ Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1043-4. ¹⁴⁶ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 48.

¹⁴¹ *Aghani*, XI, 31; *Annali*, VIII, 88-9. Said b. al-'A? is said to have written to 'AIT that he

from Kufa and vowed that he, if he were ever in a position to rule, would freely hand out 'the inheritance of Muhammad' to the people.¹⁴⁷ It was one of the grievances of the Kufans against Sa'Td b. al-'As that he had reduced the pensions of their women from 200 to 100 dirhams.¹⁴²

'AIT also endeavoured to protect men whom he considered meritorious Muslims from maltreatment by the caliph. Thus he intervened on behalf of the Companion Jundab b. Ka'b al-AzdT, who had killed a non-Muslim sorcerer protected by al-Walld b. 'Uqba. The governor, whom the sorcerer had been entertaining with his tricks, wanted to execute Jundab for murder, but his tribe, Azd, protected him. He escaped from prison and sought refuge in Medina. On 'AIT's intercession 'Uthman sent al-WalTd an order to refrain from action against Jundab, who returned to Kufa.¹⁴³ 'AIT also protested against 'Uthman's brutal treatment of Ibn Mas'ud, reminding the caliph of his early merits as a Companion of the Prophet, and took him to his own house for protection.¹⁴⁴ He stopped 'Uthman from punishing a Kufan messenger who refused to reveal the names of those who had written a letter severely criticizing the caliph.¹⁴⁵ When 'Uthman exiled Abu Dharr, 'AIT made a show of solidarity with the deportee by accompanying him with several members of his family and 'Ammar, although Marwan, on the order of 'Uthman, tried to prevent him. This led to an angry exchange with 'Uthman.¹⁵² After the death of Abu Dharr, he intervened to forestall the banishment of 'Ammar.¹⁴⁶

The relationship between 'AIT and 'Uthman was, however, not entirely antagonistic. Among the members of the electoral council, 'AIT was 'Uthman's closest kin. Common descent from 'Abd Manaf, the father of both 'Abd Shams and Hashim, still was seen as an effective bond *vis-a-vis* the rest of Quraysh. 'Uthman is reported to have honoured al-'Abbas b. 'Abd al-Muttalib on a par with the Umayyads Abu Sufyan b. Harb, al-Hakam b. Abi l-'As and al-WalTd b. 'Uqba by allowing each one to sit with him on his throne.¹⁵⁴ 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas narrated that 'Uthman had complained to his father not long before the latter's death in 32/652-3

was sending no one such generous gifts as to him. SaTd's grandson SaTd b. 'Amr described 'AIT rather as driven by personal greed. According to his account 'AIT accepted SaTd's gifts, charging that the Banu Umayya were merely giving him bits of the inheritance of Muhammad and affirming that if he lived he would surely stop them from that (Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, V, 21). In view of 'AIT's later conduct, this must be viewed as Umayyad misrepresentation.¹⁴⁸ *Aghani*, XI, 31.

¹⁴⁹ BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 21-2.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 36-7. According to al-Waqidl, 'AIT was also said to have protested against the flogging of the Kufan witnesses against al-WalTd on 'Uthman's order (*ibid.*, 34).

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 41-2.

¹⁴⁶ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 54-5. ¹⁵⁴ *Aghani*, IV, 177.

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about 'All, charging that he, 'AIT, had cut his kinship ties to him and was stirring up the people against him. When al-'Abbas suggested that mutual accommodation was required, 'Uthman requested him to act as a conciliator. After the meeting, however, 'Uthman, under the influence of Marwan, changed his mind and sent for al-'Abbas to ask him to defer any action. Al-'Abbas remarked to his son that 'Uthman was not master of his own affairs.¹⁴⁷ Perhaps referring to the same occasion, Suhayb, the client of al-'Abbas, reported that the latter had addressed 'Uthman, beseeching him to treat his kinsman 'AIT with consideration, for he had heard that 'Uthman intended to act against 'AIT and his associates (*ashab*). 'Uthman answered that he was ready to accept his intercession, and that if *AIT only wished it, no one would be above him in the caliph's consideration. Yet 'AIT had rejected all overtures and stuck to his own point of view. When al-'Abbas talked to 'AIT, the latter commented that if 'Uthman ordered him to leave his own house, he would do so, but he would not be coaxed into disregarding the injunctions of the Book of God.¹⁵⁶

According to a report of al-Sha'bT, 'Uthman's displeasure with 'AIT reached such a point that he complained about him to every Companion of the Prophet visiting him. Zayd b. Thabit then offered to see 'AIT and inform him of the caliph's anger. 'Uthman consented, and Zayd went together with 'Uthman's cousin al-MughTra b. al-Akhnas¹⁴⁸ and several others to visit 'AIT. Zayd told him that 'Uthman had two rightful claims on him, that of close kin and that of caliph, and that his complaint was that 'AIT was turning away from him and was throwing his orders back at him. 'AIT assured him that he did not wish to object or answer back to the caliph, but he could not keep silent when 'Uthman overturned a right that was God's due. He would, he promised, refrain from whatever he could. Al-MughTra now intervened, warning him: 'By God, you shall refrain

¹⁴⁷ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 13; in the *isnad* read Husayn b. 'Abd Allah b. 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Abbas for Husayn b. 'Abd Allah b. 'Abd Allah b. 'Abbas; 1. 19 *ibnuka* must be read '*alayya*' as in the edition of I. 'Abbas (al-Baladhuri, *Ansab al-ashraf*, 4/1, ed. Ihsan 'Abbas (Wiesbaden, 1979)), 498; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1045-7. For another report about an exchange of accusations between 'Uthman and 'All attributed to Ibn al-'Abbas and quoted by al-Waqidi in his *Kitab al-Shi'rd* see Ibn Abi l-Hadld, *Sharh*, IX, 15-17. Here 'AIT is described as telling 'Uthman, after defending his own conduct, that he must prevent 'the insolent (*sufaha*)' of the Banu Umayya' from harming the Muslims and dismiss corrupt officials. 'Uthman promised to follow his advice, but Marwan persuaded him to ignore it.

¹⁴⁸ Al-MughTra was the son of al-Akhnas (Ubayy) b. Shariq al-ThaqafT, confederate of the Banu Zuhra and one of the most vigorous opponents of Muhammad. His mother was 'Uthman's paternal aunt Khalda bt Abi l-'As (Zubayri, *Nasab*, 101).

from troubling him or you shall be made to refrain. Surely he has more power over you than you have over him. He sent these Muslim men only as a show of strength and in order to get their evidence against you.' "AIT angrily cursed him and alluded to his family's base origin and record of hostility to Islam. Zayd b. Thabit calmed him down, assuring him that they had not come as witnesses or to seek evidence against him, but to reconcile him and the caliph. Then he invoked God's blessings on him and 'Uthman, and left together with his companions.¹⁵⁸

His kinship ties made 'All a natural mediator between the opposition and 'Uthman. When the general discontent reached dangerous levels in the year 34/654-5, a group of Mekkan and other Companions asked 'All to speak to, and admonish, 'Uthman. 'AIT thus addressed him as spokesman of the people, but 'Uthman was not yet prepared to heed his warnings.¹⁵⁹ A year later, when the Egyptian rebels camped at Dhu Khushub, 'Uthman asked 'AIT to meet them at the head of a delegation of Muhajirun while also sending the Medinan Companion Muhammad b. Maslama at the head of a group of Ansar. 'AIT and Muhammad b. Maslama persuaded the rebels to turn back by promising them, in the name of the caliph, redress for all their grievances and agreeing to act as guarantors.¹⁶⁰

In his first sermon after their return, 'Uthman, pressed by Marwan, announced that the Egyptians had returned to their country realizing that the charges raised against their imam had been false. As this provoked a public outburst in the mosque, 'AIT impressed upon the caliph the need to own up in public to his past misdeeds and to show remorse. 'Uthman did so in a sermon in which he invited advice from the spokesmen of the people regarding his future conduct. The speech was well received, but Marwan soon succeeded in persuading the caliph that his show of humility was a political mistake. 'Uthman allowed him to insult and threaten the men assembled in front of the palace ready to offer their advice. 'AIT in a rage warned 'Uthman that Marwan was out to ruin him and that he, 'AIT, would not visit him henceforth. 'Uthman now visited him in person but failed to placate him. He left, charging that 'AIT had cut his kinship ties to him and deserted him, thus emboldening the people against him.¹⁶¹ Shortly afterwards, during 'Uthman's Friday sermon, public discontent vented itself in a volley of pebbles. 'Uthman fell from the pulpit and was carried unconscious to his palace. When 'AIT visited him and inquired about his condition, 'Uthman's kin blamed him for what had happened and defiantly warned

¹⁵⁸ Ibn Abi l-Hadid, *Sharh*, VIII, 302-3.

¹⁵⁹ Tabari, I, 2937-8; Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 60-1.

¹⁶⁰ TabarT, I, 2969-71; Baladhuri, *AnsdB*, V, 62. ¹⁶¹ Tabari, I, 2971-9.

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him of dire consequences if he should realize his ambitions; 'AIT left in anger.¹⁶²

He was to see 'Uthman once more as the Egyptian rebels returned to Medina, outraged by the official letter ordering the punishment of their leaders, which they had intercepted. 'AIT and Muhammad b. Maslama as guarantors of 'Uthman's promises to the Egyptians evidently felt obliged to intervene and came jointly to see 'Uthman. When 'AIT informed the caliph of the rebels' new grievance, 'Uthman swore that he had no knowledge of the letter. While Muhammad b. Maslama accepted his word, adding that this was the work of Marwan, 'AIT insisted that 'Uthman receive the Egyptians himself and put his excuse to them. Reminding him of his kinship ties, the caliph pleaded with him to go out to speak to them, but 'AIT declined. The Egyptians were admitted and stated their grievances. 'Uthman again denied any knowledge of the letter and both 'AIT and Muhammad b. Maslama attested that he was speaking the truth. The Egyptians now demanded that he resign if an official letter with his seal could be sent without his knowledge, but the caliph affirmed that he would not take off a garment with which God had clad him. As turmoil broke out, 'AIT stood up and left, followed by Muhammad b. Maslama. The Egyptians also left and continued their siege of the palace until they killed him.¹⁶³ 'AIT intervened only when informed by Jubayr b. Mut'im that the rebels were preventing the delivery of water to the besieged caliph. He talked to Talha and saw to it that water was delivered.¹⁶⁴ As

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 2979. According to the report of Abu Hudhayfa al-Qurashl, 'Uthman's Umayyad kin sent al-'Abbas b. al-Zibriqan b. Zayd, brother-in-law of al-Harith b. al-Hakam, after 'AIT as he left in anger to question him about his attitude towards his cousin. 'AIT reacted angrily, protesting that 'Uthman committed the offences he did, and that now he, 'AIT, was being questioned and accused with regard to him. Were it not for his, 'AIT's, position, 'Uthman's eye sockets would have been pulled out (MufTd, *Jamal*, 143-4, reading *la'jtarra* for *la-ajtazzu*).

¹⁶³ TabarT, I, 2992-5. Muhammad b. Maslama was of the Banu 1-Harith of Aws and a confederate of the Banu ('Abd) al-Ashhal. An early convert to Islam, he was highly trusted by Muhammad. 'Umar employed him to investigate 'sensitive matters' (*umur mu'dila*) in the provinces. He was thus commissioned by the caliph to confiscate part of the riches amassed by 'Amr b. al-'As in his governorship of Egypt and to destroy the gate of the palace built by Sa'd b. AbT Waqqa? in Kufa by means of which the governor hoped to keep the public away. Wellhausen characterized him as 'the old brave and honest AnsarT' (*Skizzen*, VI, 128). Caetani, in order to discredit his account, called him 'a friend of 'AIT' (*Annali*, VIII, 158). Yet Ibn Maslama was among the few Ansar who either refused to pledge allegiance to 'AIT or failed to back him in his campaign against 'A'isha, Talha and al-Zubayr; see below, pp. 145-6. He went to live in voluntary exile in al-Rabadha after the murder of 'Uthman, evidently in order to avoid harassment from the strongly pro-'Alid Ansar in Medina. The Umayyads, however, did not forgive him his withdrawal of support from 'Uthman caused by his despair over the caliph's refusal to remove Marwan, who had made his position as guarantor to the Egyptians impossible. Under Mu'awiya, in 45/666, a Syrian (*min ahl al-Sham*) from al-Urdunn broke into his house in Medina and murdered him (Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, VI, 63-4). There can be little doubt that this was a political revenge killing instigated by the Umayyads.

¹⁶⁴ TabarT, I, 2979; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 77.

noted, Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas on the final day of the siege urged 'AIT once more to intervene to protect his beleaguered kin, but it was too late.¹⁶⁵ 'AIT, so much is evident, was torn for a long time between two loyalties, his traditional obligation to a close kinsman and his commitment to his Islamic principles. Towards the end he seems to have broken with 'Uthman in despair over his own inability to break the disastrous influence of Marwan on the caliph. It can, of course, be argued that he would have been spared the painful decision and the lasting enmity of the Umayyads had he abandoned his political ambitions completely after the humiliating rejection by Quraysh he had suffered in the election. This would, however, hardly have saved 'Uthman from his calamitous end. Caetani's portrait of an incompetent and unscrupulous schemer who, driven by inordinate ambition and rancour, plotted to overthrow, if not to murder, a well-meaning but weak caliph is utterly incongruous.

Crisis and revolt

The chronological development of the crisis may be retraced approximately as follows. In the year 34/654—5 agitation against 'Uthman reached a peak as Companions wrote to each other calling for *jihad* against the caliph. The people in Medina openly reviled him while the Companions listened without defending him except for a few Medinans such as Zayd b. Thabit, Abu Usayd al-Sa'idT, Ka'b b. Malik and Hassan b. Thabit.¹⁶⁶ 'AIT was asked to speak to 'Uthman in the name of the people. He admonished the caliph, mainly criticizing the appointment of his kin as governors and his lack of control over their actions. 'Uthman rejected the criticism and told 'AIT that if he, 'AIT, were in his position he would not indulge in such reproaches. In his speech to the people in the mosque he chided his denigrators and faultfinders. He suggested that they blamed him for what they had accepted from 'Umar because of the toughness of the latter and his own gentleness; they should restrain their tongues from defaming him and their governors and appreciate that he had in fact shielded them from men against whom they would not dare speak out; he was materially providing for them as well as his predecessors had done; if there remained

¹⁶⁵ Tabari, I, 2998-9. There are other reports, some of them Kufan, that 'All was prevented by his son Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya or others from going to the palace to protect 'Uthman in the final stage of the siege. According to one of them Ibn al-Hanafiyya told 'All that Marwan and his kin wanted to use him as a hostage (Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, V, 94).

¹⁶⁶ Tabari, I, 2936-7. The Medinan Jabala b. 'Amr al-Sa'idl is variously described as the first one to use offensive language towards 'Uthman and to castigate him in public. The scenes described by al-Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, V, 47, 11. 7-17 and al-Tabari, I, 2980, 11. 13-2981, 1. 14 may have occurred about this time. The informant 'Uthman b. al-Sharid is perhaps the Makhzumite 'Uthman b. 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Harith b. Hisham. 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Harith was known as al-Sharid (Zubayri, *Nasab*, 303). He had a son 'Uthman (*ibid.*, 304).

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some surplus money, why should not he, as their imam, do with it whatever he wished? Marwan then stood up and challenged the troublemakers: 'If you want we shall, by God, make the sword judge between us', but 'Uthman silenced him.¹⁶⁷

The revolt in Kufa against the governor SaTd b. al-'As is placed by the sources in the year 34/654-5. There is no circumstantial evidence that would allow a closer dating. Most likely, however, it took place late in the year, presumably after 'All's futile intervention. Wellhausen assumed that the meeting of the provincial governors in Medina with 'Uthman, during which the revolt occurred, was connected with the annual pilgrimage.¹⁶⁸ This is not confirmed by the account of al-Baladhuri which states only that 'Uthman summoned his governors Mu'awiya, 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd, 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir and Sa'id b. al-'As because of the clamour and complaints of the people.¹⁶⁹ The assumption, however, is attractive since it would explain why SaTd b. al-'As stayed so long before setting out on his return. For the Kufans decided to revolt only when informed by one of their men, 'Ilba' b. al-Haytham al-Sadusi, that 'Uthman was sending SaTd back in spite of their complaints about him.¹⁷⁰

The revolt, as described by al-Baladhuri most likely on the basis of Abu Mikhnaf's account, was a major explosion. Al-Ashtar was called from Hims; he took control, had the deputy governor Thabit b. Qays b. al-Khatim al-Ansari¹⁷¹ expelled, and sent out troops in several directions in order to secure all access routes to the town. All this must obviously have taken a few weeks.¹⁷² Only then did the governor, SaTd b. al-'As, appear, and he was prevented from reaching the Euphrates by Malik b. SaTd al-ArhabT. Al-Ashtar had the governor's palace looted and asked Abu Musa al-Ash'arT to lead the prayers in the town and Hudhayfa b. al-Yaman to take charge of the *sawad* and the land tax. 'Uthman then sent Abu Bakr's son 'Abd al-Rahman and al-Miswar b. Makhrama to summon the rebels back to obedience.

¹⁶⁷ Tabari, I, 2937-9.

¹⁶⁸ Wellhausen, *Skizzen*, VI, 126; Wellhausen, *Das arabische Reich*, 29.

¹⁶⁹ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 43-4.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 44. In the account of al-Zuhri (*Aghant*, XI, 30-1) the name 'Ilba' is erroneously given as 'All. 'Ilba' b. al-Haytham of the Banu Tha'laba b. Sadus of RabT'a is described by Ibn al-Kalbi as a lord (*sayyid*) in Kufa and as the first one there to summon to the allegiance of 'All (Ibn Hazm, *Jamharat ansab al-'Arab*, ed. E. Levi-Provençal (Cairo, 1948), 299).

¹⁷¹ Sayf b. 'Umar erroneously speaks of 'Amr b. Hurayth as the deputy governor (Tabari, I, 2928).

¹⁷² This account stands in sharp contrast to the farcical report of Sayf b. 'Umar quoted by al-Tabari [*ibid.*, 2927-31; *Annali*, VIII, 81-4) which portrays the revolt as a coup by a handful of villains taking advantage of the absence of all responsible leaders in the Kufan provinces. Al-Zuhri's summary account (*Aghant*, XI, 30-1) also conceals the magnitude of the outburst.

Al-Ashtar's reply was couched in insolent language. He demanded that the deviant caliph recant, repent, and appoint Abu Musa and Hudhayfa. The letter was conveyed to Medina by several distinguished Kufan Qur'an readers (*qurriff*) and legal experts. 'Uthman immediately declared his repentance and confirmed Abu Musa and Hudhayfa.¹⁷³ Al-Ashtar was evidently in firm control, and the caliph gave way under duress.¹⁷⁴

The governors of the other three provinces at the same governors' meeting counselled tough repression. 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir sincerely advised 'Uthman in verse to 'put a grip on the people with exile which will divide their gathering and to meet them with the sword'. This was, he asserted, plainly right and what they deserved. Mu'awiya proudly promised 'Uthman to take care of his province for him and asked him to tell Ibn 'Amir and 'the lord of Egypt' to take care of theirs. The caliph's perdition at the hands of the rebels, he realized, would mean his own perdition. 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd admitted that he foresaw only worsening of the situation, but then he addressed the opponents, threatening to match them with the lances and swords of his clan, the Banu 'Amir of Quraysh, and to trample them in their country (Egypt).¹⁷⁵

According to Abu Mikhnaf, representatives of the discontent in Kufa, Basra and Egypt met in the mosque of Mekka during the pilgrimage season of 34/655 and decided to return, evidently in larger numbers, the following year to press their demands on 'Uthman. Whether this detail, given in an account that otherwise reflects a poor knowledge of the events

¹⁷³ BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, V, 44-7.

¹⁷⁴ 'Uthmanid historical tradition rather portrayed the caliph as pleased and eager to satisfy public opinion. Sayf thus describes Sa'Td b. al-'**AS as** ridiculing al-Ashtar and the Kufan rebels who met him in force and as telling them that it would have been sufficient for them to send a single man to the Commander of the Faithful or to him to achieve their purpose rather than bringing out a thousand men (TabarT, I, 2950). The 'Uthmanid Juhaym al-Fihri claimed that he was present when 'Uthman made the provincial delegates the offer of choosing their own governors. Only the Kufans stood up and asked that he depose Sa'Td b. al-'**AS** and appoint Abu Musa. 'Uthman complied immediately (*Aghani*, XI, 31). In another version of his report, the Egyptians, too, asked that he depose their governor, 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd, and appoint 'Amr b. al-'**AS**. 'Uthman did so, but the Egyptian rebels Abu 'Amr b. Budayl, [al-BajawT] and al-TanukhT (*sic*, perhaps for [Ibn 'Udays] al-BalawT and [Kinana b. Bishr] al-TujTbT) came and murdered him nonetheless (Ibn 'Asakir, *Uthman*, 403-4).

¹⁷⁵ Ibn 'Asakir, *Uthman*, 308-9. Later, when the Egyptian rebels set out for Medina, 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd's prognosis was much more gloomy. See the lines of poetry relating to that time quoted by Ibn Bakr, *Tamhid*, 195, evidently a revised version of his earlier lines. The details of the governors' meeting with 'Uthman given by Abu Mikhnaf (?), BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, V, 43-4), Sayf b. 'Umar (TabarT, I, 2944-6; Ibn 'Asakir, *Uthman*, 303-5; *Annali*, VIII, 11-12), and Ja'far al-Muhammadi (Tabari, I, 2932-4; *Annali*, VIII, 105-7) are legendary, especially the part ascribed to 'Amr b. al-'**AS**.

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in Medina, is reliable, must be left open.¹⁷⁶ The Egyptians, in any case, were the first to move. In Egypt two Qurayshites, Muhammad b. Abi Hudhayfa and Muhammad b. Abi Bakr, had been agitating against 'Uthman and the governor 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd b. Abi Sarh for some time. The former was born a Muslim, son of the distinguished Early Companion Abu Hudhayfa b. 'Utba of 'Abd Shams. After his father was killed in the battle of al-'Aqraba', he was brought up by 'Uthman.¹⁷⁷ His grudge against his foster-father was most likely motivated by resentment of 'Uthman's preference over him, son of an Early Companion and martyr of Islam, for kinsmen who were either sons of enemies of the Prophet such as al-Hakam and 'Uqba b. Abi Mu'ayt or outlaws such as 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd.¹⁷⁸ Muhammad b. Abi Bakr, for unknown reasons, shared his sister's intense dislike of 'Uthman,¹⁷⁹ but not her hatred of 'All. He had been brought up in the household of 'All since his mother, Asma' bt 'Umays, married him after Abu Bakr's death.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ Baladhurī, *Ansab*, V, 59. The leaders of the Kufans and Basrans in 34/955 named by Abu Mikhnaf, Ka'b b. 'Abda (Dhi l-Habaka) al-Nahdī and al-Muthanna (b. Bashlī) b. Maljraba al-'Abdī, were not identical with their leaders in 35/956. This may speak for the accuracy of the report. Al-Ashtar, the leader of the Kufans in 35/956, was evidently occupied in Kufa in 34/955.

¹⁷⁷ Born in Abyssinia, Ibn AbT Hudhayfa must have been above ten years old when he joined 'Uthman's household.

¹⁷⁸ 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd had been a scribe of Muhammad at an early stage of his preaching. He changed the wording of some passages in the Qur'an and, when Muhammad failed to notice the changes immediately, apostatized and mockingly assured the Prophet's Qurayshite opponents that he himself was a recipient of divine revelation as much as was Muhammad. At the time of the conquest of Mekka, he was among those whom the Prophet would not pardon. 'Uthman, however, then persuaded Muhammad to forgive Ibn Sa'd, his foster brother. Muhammad b. AbT Hudhayfa in Egypt criticized 'Uthman for appointing a man whose blood the Prophet had declared licit and concerning whom Qur'an VI 93 had been revealed: 'And who is a greater wrongdoer than he who forges lies about God, or says: "I have received a [divine] revelation" when nothing has been revealed to him, and who says: "I shall send down the like of what God has sent down?"' (Baladhurī, *Ansab*, II, 387). The verse was held by some early Sunnite commentators to have referred to 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd. Others maintained that it referred to the false prophet Musaylima (Tabari, *Jami'*, VII, 165-7).

Vague charges that Ibn AbT Hudhayfa had a grudge against 'Uthman because he had been flogged for drinking wine (Baladhurī, *Ansab*, II, 387, V, 50; Ibn al-Athlī, *al-Kamil fi l-ta'rikh*, ed. C.J. Tornberg (Leiden, 1851-76), III, 219) are presumably 'Uthmanid. Ibn al-Athlī adds that Ibn AbT Hudhayfa now became an ascetic engaging in worship and asked 'Uthman to appoint him to a governorship. 'Uthman answered that he would do so if Ibn Abi Hudhayfa were worthy of it. Ibn Abi Hudhayfa then asked to be sent on a sea raid, and was sent to Egypt.

¹⁷⁹ Just as in the case of Ibn AbT Hudhayfa, 'Uthmanid tradition represented by Sayf b. 'Umar tried to explain his hatred of 'Uthman by a legal punishment which 'Uthman inflicted on him without mercy (Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 302). The story is certainly fiction.

¹⁸⁰ Muhammad was only three years of age then. See further the article by G. Hawting on him in *EI* (2nd edn).

'Abd Allah b. Sa'd had complained to 'Uthman about the two men, but the caliph wrote that he was not to touch them since Muhammad b. AbT Bakr was the brother of 'A'isha, Mother of the Faithful, and Muhammad b. AbT Hudhayfa was his kin and foster-son, the 'fledgling of Quraysh'.¹⁴⁹ 'Uthman tried to appease Ibn AbT Hudhayfa with a present of 30,000 dirhams and a litter covered with a precious cloth. Ibn AbT Hudhayfa exhibited the gift in the mosque of al-Fustat, inviting the people to see for themselves how 'Uthman tried to bribe him and to coax him to betray his religion. 'Uthman now called 'Ammar b. Yasir, apologized to him for what he had done before, and sent him to Egypt to investigate the activity of Ibn AbT Hudhayfa and to defend the conduct of the caliph while guaranteeing redress of grievances to those who would come to him. Once in Egypt, however, 'Ammar backed Ibn AbT Hudhayfa, calling for the removal of 'Uthman and a march to Medina. From a poem by al-WalTd b. 'Uqba¹⁵⁰ it appears that 'Uthman at the same time sent agents to the other provincial towns to investigate the activity of 'the traitors'. All of them, according to al-WalTd, carried out their task with fear of God and nobility except for Dulaym ('Ammar). 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd reported to 'Uthman asking for permission to punish 'Ammar, but the caliph rejected his advice and ordered him to send 'Ammar generously equipped back to Medina. Others, according to al-BaladhurT, reported that 'Ammar was deported by force (*suyyira*) and that Ibn AbT Hudhayfa now succeeded in persuading his followers to march to Medina.¹⁵¹

In Shawwal 35/April 656, between 400 and 700 Egyptians set out for Medina,¹⁸⁴ ostensibly to perform an extra-seasonal pilgrimage (*umra*). They were led by four men, 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Udays al-BalawT,¹⁵² who had the overall command, Sudan (STdan) b. Humran al-MuradT, 'Amr b.

¹⁴⁹ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 50, II, 388. ¹⁸² Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 306.

¹⁸³ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 51; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1122—3.

¹⁸⁴ The date given by Muhammad b. 'Umar b. 'AIT, Rajab 35/Jan. 656 (TabarT, I, 2968;

¹⁵² 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Udays was a Companion of rank, one of those who had given the Pledge under the Tree at al-Hudaybiyya, and was among the first conquerors of Egypt (Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, IV, 171-2). He is said to have occupied the land (*ikhata*) of the White Palace (*al-dar al-bayda*), located in front of the mosque and the palace of 'Amr b. al-'As, after the conquest. Others claimed, according to Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, that the space of the White Palace was empty and used as a place for the horses of the Muslims before Marwan b. al-Hakam built it when he visited al-Fustat as caliph in 65/684—5. Marwan said at the time that it was not proper for the caliph to be in a town where he did not have a palace. The White Palace was then built for him in two months (Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh Misr*, 107). Most likely he confiscated the property of his old enemy.

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al-Hamiq al-KhuzaT and 'Urwa b. Shiyaym b. al-Niba' al-Kinani al-LaythT.¹⁵³ The presence of 'Amr b. al-Hamiq among the leaders of the Egyptians deserves special attention. He had been one of the Kufan *qurra'* who wrote the letter to 'Uthman protesting against the oppressive government of Sa'Td b. al-'As.¹⁵⁴ Perhaps for this reason he was exiled by 'Uthman to Damascus.¹⁵⁵ Then he went to Egypt, and after the murder of 'Uthman became a close associate of 'All in Kufa. He must have played a major part in spreading Kufan revolutionary sentiment in Egypt.¹⁵⁶

Muhammad b. AbT Bakr had gone to Medina before the rebels, and Ibn AbT Hudhayfa accompanied them as far as 'Ajrud before returning to al-Fustat.¹⁵⁷ The rebels arrived at Dhu Khushub, a night's journey north of Medina, the night before 1 Dhu 1-Qa'da/l May.¹⁵⁸ In the sources that count the beginning of the 'siege' from that day, it lasted forty-nine days, until the murder of 'Uthman.¹⁵⁹ Other sources speak of two sieges, or two 'arrivals (*qadma*), interrupted by the temporary departure of the rebels. Only during the second stay was the palace of 'Uthman under siege. The first 'siege', the stay at Dhu Khushub, lasted, according to Ibn al-'Abbas, twelve days.¹⁶⁰

After their arrival at Dhu Khushub, the rebels sent a few men to Medina in order to size up the situation and to consult the prominent Companions on how to proceed. One of them, 'Amr b. ('Abd Allah) al-Asamm, reported later that the Companions urged them to enter

¹⁵³ These are the four leaders named in the account of Muhammad b. Maslama (Tabari, I, 2991). Abu Mikhnaf named, instead of Sudan and 'Amr b. al-Hamiq, Abu 'Amr b. Budayl b. Warqa' al-KhuzaT and Kinana b. Bishr al-Tujlbi. The latter was, according to Abu Mikhnaf, also the leader of the Egyptians in 23/655 (Baladhuri, *Ansdb*, V, 59). Bishr b. Kinana is often mentioned as the murderer of 'Uthman. Abu 'Amr b. Budayl was a Companion and son of a Companion of rank. He is also said to have struck 'Uthman (*ibid.*, 98). Their prominence in the final act may be the reason why they are sometimes included among the leaders of the Egyptians. It is possible that they joined the rebels in a second group.¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 41.¹⁵⁸ Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, XIX, 201.

¹⁵⁶ On 'Amr b. al-Hamiq see Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, IV, 294. He performed the *hijra* after al-Hudaybiyya and was counted among the Companions of Muhammad. After the conquests he stayed first in Syria and then in Kufa. In Egypt he related a hadith in which the Prophet had mentioned a time of tribulation (*fitna*) when the soundest or best people would be the western garrison (*al-jund al-gharbi*). For this reason, Ibn al-Hamiq said, he had come to Egypt (Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh Misr*, 305).¹⁹⁰ TabarT, I, 2968.

¹⁵⁸ Khalifa, *Ta'rikh*, 168. The weekday given there, Wednesday, is incorrect.

¹⁵⁹ So the early Egyptian report of Abu l-Khayr (= Marthad b. 'Abd Allah al-Yazanl, *mufti* of Egypt, d. 90/708-9; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, X, 83) in Tabari, I, 2999-3000.

¹⁶⁰ Tabari, I, 3088. Wellhausen erroneously assumed that the Medinans besieged 'Uthman's palace for some time before the second arrival of the Egyptians and that the first siege of twelve days referred to this (*Skizzen*, VI, 128-9). The report in al-TabarI, I, 2975 quoted by him as evidence does not say that the crowds assembled in front of the palace 'would not listen to any demands that they disperse', but rather that they left after being threatened and intimidated by Marwan.

Medina, except for 'AIT, whom they asked last. He warned them of evil consequences if they should advance; they should rather send a delegation to 'Uthman to ask him to mend his ways.¹⁶¹ This tallies with the account of 'AIT's grandson Muhammad b. 'Umar according to whom a messenger from the rebels came at night to see 'AIT, Talha and 'Ammar b. Yasir. The latter two may safely be assumed to have encouraged the rebels to proceed to Medina. To 'AIT the messenger delivered a letter from Muhammad b. AbT Hudhayfa, but 'AIT refused to take cognizance of its contents.¹⁶²

'Uthman, who had been informed of the intentions of the rebels by a speedy courier sent by 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd and had first reacted with forebodings of doom,¹⁶³ now went to see 'AIT and asked him to meet the rebels and to induce them to turn back since he, 'Uthman, did not want to receive them as this might encourage others to similar boldness. He gave 'AIT a free hand to negotiate, committing himself to act henceforth in accordance with 'AIT's advice. When 'AIT reminded him that he had previously talked to him but 'Uthman had preferred to obey Marwan and his Umayyad kin, the caliph affirmed that he would now disobey them and obey him. 'Uthman then ordered other Muhajirun and Ansar to ride out with 'AIT.¹⁶⁷ He wanted 'Ammar in particular to join the delegation, but 'Ammar declined.¹⁶⁴

According to the contemporary Medinan Mahmud b. LabTd b. 'Uqba al-AwsT,¹⁹⁹ the group of Muhajirun included - aside from 'AIT - SaTd b. Zayd, Abu Jahm al-'AdawT, Jubayr b. Mut'im, HakTm b. Hizam and the Umayyads Marwan b. al-Hakam, SaTd b. al-'As and 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Attab b. AsTd. The Ansar, led by Muhammad b. Maslama, included Abu Usayd al-Sa'idT, Abu Humayd al-Sa'idT, Zayd b. Thabit and Ka'b b. Malik. With them were the Arabs Niyar b. Mikraz (or Mukram) of Aslam and others, in all some thirty men.²⁰⁰

The composition of this high-powered delegation reveals the dire straits in which 'Uthman found himself. The four non-Umayyad Muhajirun named, SaTd b. Zayd b. 'Amr b. Nufayl, Abu Jahm b. Hudhayfa (or Hudhafa) al-'AdawT, both of 'AdT and closely associated with 'Umar,

¹⁶¹ Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1126: The 'Amr b. 'Abd Allah named in the second report is evidently the same as 'Amr b. al-A^amm in the first; Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 71; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 45.¹⁵ Tabari, I, 2969.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 2968-9. According to the Egyptian Abu I-Khayr, 'Uthman, after receiving 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd's warning, spoke (in public) and sent warnings to Mekka about the rebels who were claiming to perform the 'umra but had been denigrating their imam (*ibid.*, 2999).

¹⁹⁹ He died in 96/714-15 or 99/717-18 and is considered a highly reliable transmitter from

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Jubayr b. Mut'im of Nawfal b. 'Abd Manaf, the clan traditionally associated with 'Abd Shams as were the Muttalib with Hashim, and Hakim b. Hizam of Asad, were firm supporters of 'Uthman, although Said b. Zayd deserted him in the end.²⁰¹ The latter three were among the few who buried 'Uthman, as was Niyar b. Mikraz al-Aslaml. The four Ansar, aside from Muhammad b. Maslama, were among the few Medinan loyalist supporters of the caliph.²⁰² All these men, closely associated with 'Uthman and his regime, could not have cut much ice with the rebels. In the absence of any other surviving member of the electoral council, 'Uthman needed 'AIT to speak to the rebels and needed 'Ammar, if he could persuade him to go along. He needed Muhammad b. Maslama, a highly respected Companion with a politically independent stance, as spokesman for the Ansar. The double delegation clearly reflected the political situation. The Muhajirun, Quraysh, were the ruling class, but the Ansar, as the majority in Medina, were for the moment militarily more important for the fate of the caliph.²⁰³

²⁰¹ On Sa'Id b. Zayd see above, p. 29 n. 6 and below, p. 125. Abu l-Jahm b. Hudhayfa converted to Islam at the time of the conquest of Mekka (Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, VII, 345). He had married, before Islam, the mother of Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar when 'Umar divorced her (Tabari, I, 1554; Ibn Hisham, *Sirat sayyidina*, 755). Hakim b. Hizam, nephew of Muhammad's first wife Khadija, was an early friend of Muhammad but did not convert to Islam before the conquest of Mekka. At that time the Prophet promised safety to all those seeking refuge in Hakim's house.

²⁰² Concerning Abu Usayd, Zayd b. Thabit and Kab b. Malik see above, p. 113. Zayd b. Thabit is in various reports described as urging the Anṣār to defend 'Uthman against the rebels. He was chided, however, that he did so merely because of 'Uthman's munificence to him. Abu Humayd al-Sa'idī is quoted as stating after 'Uthman's murder: 'By God, we did not think that he would be killed', and as vowing to abstain from some unspecified act and from laughing until his own death (Baladhurī, *Ansab*, V, 100; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 56).

²⁰³ Wellhausen suggested that it was Muhammad b. Maslama whom 'Uthman sent to negotiate with the rebels and that 'All was tendentiously associated with him, or was substituted in his place, by the historical tradition with the evident aim of demonstrating that he had done everything he could to avert the disaster (*Skizzen*, VI, 128 n. 2). Caetani further developed this thesis, turning it finally upside down with the argument that 'All was not mentioned in some accounts in order to remove him even further from any suspicion of responsibility (*Annali*, VIII, 158 n. 1). In reality there is no inconsistency in the accounts assembled by al-Waqidī. The 'Alid Muhammad b. 'Umar was naturally interested primarily in the part played by his grandfather 'All, while the Medinan Jabir b. 'Abd Allah, who was personally among the delegation of Ansar (Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 62, 66; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, 111 /1, 44; Jabir was evidently not yet prominent enough to be named by Mahmud b. Labīd) and the Hijazī Arab Sufyan b. Abi l-'Awja' al-Sulamī (Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb*, IV, 117) describe the part of Muhammad b. Maslama, giving the number of Ansar riding out with him as fifty (Tabarī, I, 2995; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1134). From the accounts of Maljūm b. Labīd and Muhammad b. Maslama himself it is evident, however, that the two, 'AIT and Ibn Maslama, met the rebels separately as leaders of the Muhajirun and Anṣār respectively.

Muhammad b. Maslama, who is now quoted directly by Mahmud b. LabTd, was thus probably right in describing his own words to Ibn 'Udays that the imam 'has promised us to turn back and retract (*yarji' wa-yanz?*)' as decisive in inducing the Egyptian rebel leader to order his men to retreat.²⁰⁴ This happened, if Ibn al-'Abbas' dating of the 'first siege' is correct, about 12 Dhu l-Qa'da/12 May. The negotiations presumably lasted some days. In Medina 'Uthman had in the meantime, against his own wishes, agreed to speak to a few of the rebels after first deferring their visit.²⁰⁵ 'Ammar, who put pressure on the caliph to see them by staying in front of the palace gate although told to leave, was once more manhandled by a servant, but 'Uthman was able to satisfy the rebels that he had not ordered this.²⁰⁶ Most likely 'Uthman's visit to the Mothers of the Faithful, when 'A'isha told him that he must restore 'Amr b. al-'Aṣ to the governorship of Egypt because the army there was satisfied with him, also took place at this time.

The 'second siege' began, after the return of the rebels, on 1 Dhu l-Hijja/31 May.²⁰⁷ There was thus a span of about eighteen days when the immediate threat to 'Uthman seemed lifted. The sources report about three appearances and sermons by 'Uthman in the mosque during this period, under very different circumstances. After 'All and Muhammad b. Maslama returned from their mission, each of them warned 'Uthman of the seriousness of the situation,²⁰⁸ no doubt impressing on him the need to redress the grievances of the Egyptians in particular. Marwan, worried that any concession would be understood as a sign of weakness and would encourage further mutiny in the provinces, advised the caliph to state in his sermon that the Egyptians had left convinced that the accusations against him were baseless. According to al-Zuhri he insinuated that 'AIT was behind the rebellion, was controlling the actions of the Egyptians and others and, finding their number insufficient, had sent them back, telling them to prepare while he would send for an army from Iraq to put an end to the oppressive regime of Marwan and his kin. 'Uthman was persuaded by

²⁰⁴ Tabari, I, 2971. ²⁰⁵ See above p. 95. ²⁰⁶ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 51—2, 95.

²⁰⁷ Tabari, I, 3060. Caetani preferred another report according to which the siege had begun before the return of the Egyptians who arrived on a Friday and killed 'Uthman on the next Friday (*Annali*, VIII, 141). The report, although going back to the grandson of al-Mughlra b. al-Akhnas who was killed together with 'Uthman, is certainly unreliable. 'Uthman was under siege by the Egyptian rebels when 'A'isha and 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas left for the pilgrimage early in Dhu l-Hijja. It is possible, however, that some more radical Egyptian elements joined the main body a week before the murder. Kinana b. Bishr, the murderer of 'Uthman, may have been among them.

²⁰⁸ Tabari, I, 2971-2, 2991.

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him¹⁶⁵ and, after some delay, followed his advice in his sermon. This was the occasion when 'Amr b. al-'As, frustrated in his hope that 'Uthman would reappoint him governor of Egypt as demanded by 'A'isha, made his memorable call for repentance from 'the ride over abysses'. The caliph mocked him, but after another call made a first gesture of repentance.¹⁶⁶

While 'Amr left Medina in anger, 'AIT now urged 'Uthman to make a clear public statement of retraction and repentance which would convince the people of his change of heart. In his next sermon 'Uthman confessed his wrong-doing, declared his repentance to God, and invited the noble (*ashraf*) among the people to visit him and present their views. Swallowing his arrogance, he stated that if God were to turn him back into a slave, he would humbly follow the path of a slave who is patient when owned and gives thanks when freed. According to the report of 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Aswad, he specifically promised to remove Marwan and his kin.¹⁶⁷ The people were touched and wept, and SaTd b. Zayd went up to the caliph, assuring him that everyone was with him and encouraging him to carry out what he had promised.²¹²

Caetani introduced his rendering of the report about 'Uthman's public speech of repentance with this comment:

¹⁶⁵ BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 62, 89. While al-Zuhri recognized Marwan's accusation of 'AIT as malicious slander, other representatives of the Medinan orthodox Sunnite establishment accepted it as fact. Muhammad b. al-Munkadir of Taym Quraysh, a leading Medinan scholar of the later Umayyad age, reported that 'Uthman sent a 'man of the Muhajirun' — he preferred not to name 'All - to meet the Egyptians at Dhu Khushub and to concede to them whatever they demanded. Then a man of Makhzum asked the caliph to allow him to follow his envoy, since he did not trust him. 'Uthman gave him permission, and the spy heard the envoy tell the rebels that they had come in a poor state and would not be a match for 'Uthman's men. The spy informed 'Uthman, who commented that this man (*AIT), 'may God not bless him', was driven by greed in pursuit of his hopes, but that he, 'Uthman, had heard the Prophet say that he would never obtain it (the caliphate). 'Abd Allah b. al-Fadl al-Hashiml, a Medinan contemporary of al-Zuhri (Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, V, 357-8), similarly narrated that 'AIT told the Egyptians that they had come to him insufficiently prepared to meet 'Uthman's defenders. They should turn back, seek additional strength, and then return (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1128).

¹⁶⁶ The account of Muhammad b. 'Umar b. 'AIT (TabarT, I, 2972) is substantially confirmed by that of Abu HabTba, the client of al-Zubayr (*ibid.*, 2982).

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 2977.

There is no need to insist on the absurd tenor of 'Uthman's speech, an inconceivable speech, equivalent to the basest renunciation of the duties of a caliph, and in open contrast with the stern and almost intractable attitude with which 'Uthman resisted all demands for his abdication. Al-Waqidi wants to make the caliph appear as a dotard in the vest of an ascetic, a hater of the world. The picture is entirely false. False is the portrait of 'Uthman, a man of refined tastes, zestful, and a lover of young women although above seventy years of age. False is, moreover, that he had no will of his own, no firmness. His dignified death is an indication of a proud character which has nothing to do with the Waqidian literary fiction of the following speech.¹⁶⁸

Did he think the penance of Henry IV, emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, before Pope Gregory VII at Canossa was fiction?

Marwan, Said b. al-'As and other Umayyads boycotted the sermon and waited for the caliph as he returned to the palace. When allowed to speak, Marwan told him that his speech would have been agreeable, and he, Marwan, would be the first to be pleased with it, if 'Uthman were in a safe and impregnable position; yet at this time, as the flood water was overflowing the hilltops, a humble speech was nothing but a sign of weakness: 'By God, to persist in wrongdoing for which you can ask God's forgiveness is preferable to penitence to which you are compelled by fear. If you so wished, you could curry favour with repentance without confessing to any wrongdoing, when crowds like mountains are gathered in front of your gate.'¹⁶⁹

According to 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Aswad, 'Uthman for three days was too ashamed to go out and meet the people²¹⁵ who were coming to offer their advice. Finally he asked Marwan to go out and talk to them, since he was ashamed to do so. Marwan went out and shouted: 'What is the matter with you that you assemble as if you came for plunder? May your faces be disfigured! . . . You have come coveting to wrest our property (*mulk*) from our hands. Be off from us. By God, if that is what you want, something from us will fall upon you which will not please you, and you will not praise the outcome of your fancy. Go back to your houses, for, by God, we shall not be overwhelmed and deprived of what we have in our hands.' The people left.²¹⁶ 'AIT now broke with 'Uthman, telling him that he would not visit him again.²¹⁷

'Uthman's third sermon mentioned in the sources, his last, was interrupted, according to the report of Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas' grandson Isma'Il b. Muhammad, three times by angry shouts of 'Act in accordance with the Book of God', and ended with the caliph being carried

¹⁶⁸ *Annali*, VIII, 155. ²¹⁴ Tabari, I, 2985. ²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 2977. ²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 2975.

²¹⁷ See above, p. 111.

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unconscious to his palace.²¹⁸ In other accounts the chief troublemaker is identified as Jahjah b. Sa'Td al-Ghifari, a veteran warrior of Islam and one of those who had given the Pledge under the Tree.²¹⁹ The Ghifar had evidently not forgiven 'Uthman for his deportation of their kinsman Abu Dharr. Jahjah is described by the eyewitness Abu HabTba as shouting: 'Look, we have brought this decrepit she-camel (*sharif*) with a striped woollen cloak and an iron collar on it. Get down [from the pulpit], so that we can wrap you with the cloak, throw the collar on you, carry you on the camel, and then dump you on the Mount of Smoke (*jabal al-dukhari*).²²⁰ Muhammad b. Maslama, according to his own account, had been upset by 'Uthman's public declaration that the Egyptians had left satisfied that their charges against 'Uthman were mistaken and had intended to reproach him, but then had kept silent. Next he learned that the Egyptians were back at al-Suwayda', two night journeys north of Medina.²²¹ 'Uthman sent for him as the rebels reached Dhu Khushub and asked him what he thought about their intentions. Ibn Maslama answered that he did not know them, but he did not think they were returning for anything good. 'Uthman asked him to meet them again and turn them back. Ibn Maslama refused, however, stating that he had guaranteed to them 'Uthman's retraction in a number of matters, but the caliph had failed to retract a single letter of them. The Egyptians now alighted in al-Aswaf in the sacred district (*haram*) of Medina²²² and laid siege to 'Uthman's palace.²²³

'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Uday and the other three leaders of the rebels

²¹⁸ Tabari, I, 2979. This occasion and the volley of pebbles thrown by the crowd were also mentioned by al-Hasan al IasrT, who evidently was present. His age at the time was, as stated by him, fourteen or fifteen years. As an 'Uthmanid, al-Hasan called the men asking 'Uthman for the rule of the Book of God 'reprobates (*fasaqa*)' (Baladhuri, *AnsdB*, V, 71, 92; Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, IX, 17-18).²¹⁹ Ibn Hajar, *Isdba*, I, 265. ²²⁰ Tabari, I, 2982; Baladhuri, *AnsdB*, V, 47; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1110-12, 1218-19. Jabal al-Dukhan was said to have been the place to which another deportee, Ka'b b. 'Abda al-Nahdl, was exiled by 'Uthman (Baladhuri, *AnsdB*, V, 42). It is mentioned by al-Hamdanl (*Sifat Jazirat al-'Arab*, ed. D. H. Miiller (Leiden, 1884-91), 52) as a mountain near 'Adan in the Yemen, but may here be simply an allusion to hell. Similar threats to fetter and deport 'Uthman, this time to hell-fire, are ascribed to Jabala b. 'Amr al-Sa'idT. ²²¹ Yaqt, *Buldan*, III, 197. ²²² *Ibid.*, 269.

²²³ Wellhausen accepted a report that the prominent Medinan 'Amr b. Hazm of the Banu l-Najjar of Khazraj went to meet the rebels at Dhu Khushub and led them to Medina (*Skizzen*, VI, 129; TabarT, I, 2989). This is not unreasonable. The whole account from which this detail is taken, however, is highly unreliable. It is ascribed to Muhammad b. Ishaq and related by Ja'far al-Muhammdl. The family of 'Amr b. Hazm, neighbours of 'Uthman, were evidently strongly opposed to 'Uthman. Muhammad b. 'Amr b. Hazm is described as opening a passage-way (*khazvkh*) from their house to the side of 'Uthman's palace for the rebels on the battle day and is named, together with Ibn AbT Bakr and Ibn AbT Hudhayfa, as one of the three Muhammads who were particularly tough against 'Uthman (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1278, 1307). In pro-'Uthman poetry of al-Ahwas the 'HazmT' is mentioned as doing great harm (*ibid.*, 1279).

next went to see Ibn Maslama, reminding him of his guarantee. They then produced a small sheet which they said they had found with a slave (*ghulam*) of 'Uthman riding on a camel from the alms-tax.²²⁴ The sheet contained instructions to the governor of Egypt to punish the four rebel leaders immediately upon their arrival with a hundred lashes, shaving their heads and beards, and imprisoning them until further instruction.²²⁵ When Ibn Maslama put their presumption in doubt that 'Uthman had written this letter, the rebel leaders answered: 'Then Marwan is able to decide this for 'Uthman without consulting him. This is worse, he excludes himself from "this matter."' They asked Ibn Maslama to accompany them to the caliph, informing him that 'All had already promised to come, while Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas and SaTd b. Zayd had declined. The latter was evidently appalled by 'Uthman's apparent turn-about after his public penance. Ibn Maslama and 'AIT, as related above, then came to 'Uthman and asked him to admit the Egyptians waiting at the gate. Marwan was sitting with the caliph and asked leave to speak to them. This time 'Uthman brushed him off and sent him away. Eventually allowed to enter, the Egyptians omitted the caliph's title in their greeting, and Ibn Maslama recognized that evil was in the offing. They put forward Ibn 'Udays as their spokesman, who mentioned first the conduct of Abd Allah b. Sa'd in Egypt, his maltreatment (*tahamul*) of Muslims and protected people (*ahl al-dhimma*) and his arbitrary arrogation in regard to the war booty of the Muslims. Whenever his actions were questioned, he would say: 'Here is the letter of the Commander of the Faithful to me.' Then he mentioned²²⁶ reprehensible innovations which the caliph had made in Medina, contravening the acts of his two predecessors. He continued: 'Thus we travelled from Egypt to seek either your blood or that you recant. Then 'AIT and Muhammad b. Maslama turned us back, and Muhammad guaranteed to us your retraction in everything about which we complained.' They turned to Ibn Maslama,

²²⁴ The camel had the brand mark (*mitsam*) with which camels gathered as alms-tax were marked (BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 67).

²²⁵ TabarT, I, 2991-2. The general reliability of Ibn Maslama's account is underlined by this description of the contents of the letter. In most other accounts 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd is ordered to put the rebel leaders to death. The execution of rebels was not yet accepted practice of government.

Attempting to discredit Ibn Maslama's account, Caetani asserted that al-WaqidT, in composing it, put together two mutually contradictory versions. While the former presented the return of the Egyptians as the result of 'Uthman's renegeing on his concessions to them, the latter contained 'the old story' about the false letter (*Annali*, VIII, 177). In reality Ibn Maslama's account nowhere suggested that the Egyptians returned because 'Uthman renegeed on his promises. Ibn Maslama rather told the caliph that he did not know why they were returning. He himself blamed 'Uthman for renegeing and thus undermining his position as the guarantor.

²²⁶ Reading *dhakara* for *dhakaru*'. TabarT, I, 2994.

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and he confirmed what they had said. Now they recounted their interception of the official letter ordering their punishment as they had described it to Ibn Maslama.¹⁷⁰

The story of the official letter intercepted by the Egyptian rebels has intrigued and puzzled modern historians. Wellhausen cautiously wrote: 'They claimed to have intercepted a letter of the caliph', without noting the accusations against Marwan in the sources.¹⁷¹ This non-committal attitude to the question has generally prevailed among modern authors. H. Djaï't describes the whole episode as highly doubtful and questions whether the letter itself existed. If it did exist, it could have been produced by the most virulent of the Egyptians in order to create a pretext for their attack on the caliph. Alternatively 'Uthman and his Umayyad entourage might have had a change of heart in relation to the rebels. 'Uthman, in any case, was not a mere plaything in the hands of Marwan.¹⁷² Caetani argued at length that the whole story of the letter must be late fiction since 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd, to whom it was addressed, was not in Egypt at the time. In the end, however, he was convinced that he had found the solution: 'The deception was not by the Umayyads to the detriment of the Egyptians, but rather by the friends of 'AIT to the detriment of the caliph!'²³⁰ G. Levi della Vida,¹⁷³ although less sure about the facts, thought that he had found evidence supporting Caetani's intuition in a report of the 'Uthmanid Juhaym al-Fihri quoted by al-Baladhuri. According to Juhaym, 'Uthman, in Juhaym's presence, told 'AIT when the latter questioned him about whom he suspected in regard to the letter: 'I suspect my secretary, and I suspect you, 'AIT, because you are obeyed among the people [the Egyptian rebels] and you do not turn them back from me.'²³²

Whether 'Uthman really made such a sarcastic remark to 'AIT at this time when he must have been aware of his dependence on 'AIT's good will may be open to doubt. He could, however, have been carried away momentarily by anger at being pressed about the part of Marwan who, as he well knew, was suspected by 'AIT and everybody else. The report is obviously no evidence for any actual involvement of 'AIT. The theory that 'AIT could have conspired with the personal secretary of the caliph right under the nose of a suspicious Marwan stretches the imagination.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 2993-4; see further above, p. 112.

¹⁷¹ *Skizzen*, VI, 129; slightly different *Das arabische Reich*, 31.

¹⁷² *La Grande Discorde*, 147. ²³⁰ *Annali*, VIII, 159. ²³¹ 'Othman b. 'Aflan', *EI*.
some secondary versions containing 'Uthman's accusation of 'AIT (1154—5, 1168, 1206).

In reality it is plain that Marwan, as suspected by the tradition, was behind the letter. Marwan believed all along that the rebellion must be met head on. After the agreement with the rebels at Dhu Khushub, he put about the rumour that 'AIT had conspired with them, advising them to go back to Egypt in order to gather reinforcements. It was, from his point of view, entirely logical to order 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd to prevent this by punishing and imprisoning the leaders. Whether he believed his own conspiracy theory is immaterial. He had at least to play the game and sent the letter as soon as he had returned from Dhu Khushub to Medina.

'Abd Allah b. Sa'd, it is true, probably had just left Egypt or was about to depart. According to the early Egyptian authority Abu l-Khayr, he had been given leave to go to Medina at his own request.²³³ Marwan need not have known whether he was still in Egypt. The courier would, in any case, have met him, and 'Abd Allah could have passed the order on to his deputy. As it happened, 'Abd Allah on reaching Ay la learned that the rebels were moving back to Medina. He now turned back to Egypt in order, no doubt, to forestall trouble there, but it was too late. Muhammad b. AbT Hudhayfa, also having learned that his men were returning to Medina, had taken control of Egypt.²³⁴ 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd sought refuge in Palestine.²³⁵

One may perhaps question, with Djait, whether 'Uthman was in fact unaware of the letter being sent in his name. It has ever been a much-cherished privilege of rulers to plead ignorance of the actions of their underlings when matters go awry. 'Uthman's failure to punish his young cousin may be seen to point to his own complicity. Yet 'AIT and Muhammad b. Maslama seem to have been sincerely convinced of his innocence. His wavering between public penance and arrogant intractability seems to reveal a deeply troubled man no longer in command of his proper judgement.

The siege of the palace was maintained by the Egyptians, who had the

²¹³ TabarT, I, 2999. Caetani's argument that 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd had left Egypt much earlier, because the testimony of al-KindT as an Egyptian must be considered more authoritative than al-WaqidI's (*Annali*, VIII, 159), is mistaken. Al-WaqidT preserved the earlier Egyptian tradition with the excellent *ismad* ShurahbTl b. AbT 'Awn - YazTd b. AbT HabTb - Abu l-Khayr. It is quite out of the question that 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd could have been absent from Egypt before the rebels left.

²¹⁴ Ibn AbT Hudhayfa was, no doubt, quickly informed, and perhaps consulted, by the rebels about the interception while they were still in Buwayb. This explains the relatively long span of time before they were back in Medina. According to a report of the Syrian Makhul, the rebels, after seizing the courier, wrote to the Egyptians, presumably Muhammad b. AbT Hudhayfa, informing them of what had happened and that they intended to return to Medina. At their suggestion the Egyptians expelled Ibn AbT Sarh to Palestine (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1152-3.)

²¹⁵ TabarT, I, 2999.

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most serious grievance against 'Uthman, although a few Medinan locals joined it at times. The exact date of the arrival of the Kufan and Basran rebel forces is uncertain. They were led by al-Ashtar and Hukaym b. Jabala al-'Abdl,²³⁶ and are said to have numbered about two hundred and one hundred men respectively.²³⁷ Their arrival was definitely later than the return of the delegations from Dhu Khushub, most likely about the same time as the second arrival of the Egyptians.²³⁸ They may have left their towns under the guise of Mekka pilgrims and then have stayed in Medina. In any case, they did not join the siege.²³⁹ Al-Ashtar evidently heeded 'A'isha's and 'All's opposition to the use of violence. According to his own report, he went to see Muhammad's Umayyad widow Umm HabTba bt AbT Sufyan and offered to carry 'Uthman safely out of the besieged palace in her litter (*hawdaj*). The Umayyads, however, rejected the offer, insisting that they would have nothing to do with him.²⁴⁰

²³⁶ The only local grievance in Basra mentioned by al-Baladhuri, quoting Abu Mikhnaf 'and others', was the deportation of 'Amir b. 'Abd Qays al-'Anbar! of TamTm, a worshipper and ascetic who had criticized 'Uthman's conduct. On the caliph's order, he was sent to Medina by 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir. As this provoked an outcry among the people, 'Uthman treated him kindly and sent him back to Basra (BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 57). Ibn Shabba quotes an early Basran report mentioning a clash between Hukaym b. Jabala and 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir, after which the governor seized some horses belonging to Hukaym in Fars. Hukaym vented his anger, blaming 'Uthman. The Basrans also complained to 'Uthman that 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir distributed grain spoiled by rain among them. When the caliph ignored their complaint, their attitude towards him changed and they reproached him for replacing Abu Musa al-Ash'ari with Ibn 'Amir (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1147-8).

²³⁷ BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 97. Abu Mikhnaf speaks of another fifty Basrans joining them later (*ibid.*, 59). In a piece of poetry evidently composed in the last stage of the crisis, al-WalTd b. 'Uqba names as the leaders of treason Hukaym, (al-)Ashtar, ('Amr) b. al-Hamiq and Haritha (Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 307). Haritha, most likely one of the Ansar making common cause with the rebels, cannot be identified with certainty. The name may refer to the Banu Haritha of Aws, to whom Muhammad b. Maslama belonged, even though they were described by the 'Uthmanid Muhammad b. al-Munkadir as backing 'Uthman (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1280). The meaning of Haritha today peddles the complaint (*yashri l-shakata*) could well apply to Muhammad b. Maslama, who now sided with the rebels in their complaint against 'Uthman. Less likely to be meant is Haritha b. al-Nu'man b. Nufay' of the Banu l-Najjar, a prominent Companion and veteran of Badr (Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, 1,312-13). The Banu l-Najjar, as noted, were accused of having betrayed 'Uthman. The Medinan 'Abd Allah b. Rabah al-Ansari reported in 'Uthmanid Basra that Haritha b. al-Nu'man offered 'Uthman 'our' support. This could be an attempt to clear him of accusations.

²³⁸ The account of Sufyan b. Abi l-'Awja' (TabarT, 1,2995) seems to imply that they were in Medina during the absence of the Egyptians. The details of this account, however, inspire no confidence in its reliability.

²³⁹ This is categorically stated by the Egyptian Abu l-Khayr (*ibid.*, 2999).

²⁴⁰ Al-QadT al-Nu'man, *Sharh al-akhbar fi fadd'il al-a'imma al-afhar*, ed. Muhammad al-HusaynT al-JalalT (Qumm, n. d.), I, 297; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1313. 'Uthmanid tradition, trying to incriminate al-Ashtar in the murder of 'Uthman, reported that he hit the mule of Muhammad's widow Safiyya bt Huyayy in the face with his whip in order to stop her when she wanted to persuade the rebels to raise the siege (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1311-12).

The 'siege' was initially peaceful. Visitors, official and unofficial, were allowed to enter and leave the palace freely. Even Marwan and 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Attab were able to go about their business in town and in the palace (perhaps by the use of a side door?). In his letters to the Syrians and the Mekka pilgrims written at the beginning of the siege, 'Uthman complained that his enemies¹⁷⁴ were preventing him from leading the prayer and from entering the mosque; they also had taken possession of whatever they could put their hands on.¹⁷⁵ The latter statement probably refers to the seizure of the treasury keys by Talha. The communal prayers were first led, on 'All's instructions, by the Medinan Abu Ayyub al-Ansarī, and then, from Friday and the Feast of Immolation on, by 'AIT himself.¹⁷⁶ 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Adī b. al-Khiyar of Nawfal b. 'Abd Manaf visited 'Uthman and told him he had scruples about praying behind an 'imam of sedition' (*imamfitna*). The caliph advised him to pray with the people since prayer was their best action, and to abstain from their evil acts.¹⁷⁷ The rebels were evidently still hoping that 'Uthman would capitulate. According to 'Uthman's letters, they had written to the Muslims that they were satisfied with the commitments the caliph had made to them.¹⁷⁸ 'Uthman obviously had no interest in revealing the real cause of their sudden return to Medina, the intercepted letter, and implied that they had returned to seek fulfilment of the caliph's promises.

'Uthman continued that he did not know of anything he had promised them which he had failed to keep. They had demanded the application of the Qur'an and the Qur'anic punishments and he had told them: 'Carry them out on anyone, close or remote, who has incurred one of them; apply them to anyone who has wronged you.' They had asked that the Book of God be recited and he had replied: 'Let any reciter recite it without adding anything which God has not sent down in it.' They had demanded that the exiled be returned to their homes, the deprived be provided sustenance, money be spent abundantly so that good practice (*sunna hasana*) be followed in it, that (the rules) regarding the *khums* and the alms-tax not be transgressed, that men of strength and integrity be appointed as governors, that grievances of the people be redressed. He

¹⁷⁴ 'Uthman speaks of 'my companions who pretend to leadership in this matter and are trying to hasten fate'. The major Early Companions, in particular Talha and 'All, are presumably meant.

¹⁷⁵ Tabarī, I, 3043; Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 377.

¹⁷⁶ Tabarī, I, 3059-60. Reports that the Ansarī Sahl b. Hunayf or his son Abu Umama, rather than Abu Ayyub, led the prayer before 'AIT (see also Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1217—19) seem less reliable. Sahl b. Hunayf later led the prayer as 'AIT's governor of Medina.²⁴⁴ Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1216-17.

¹⁷⁸ The text in Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 376, has *annahum gad radii bi' lladhi a'taytuhum*. This seems preferable to the text in al-Tabarī, I, 3042: *annahum raja'u bi' lladhia'taytuhum*. Minor textual differences between the two letters will not be noted in the following rendering of the contents.

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had been satisfied with all this and accepted it patiently (*istabartu lah*). "Uthman then mentioned his visit to the 'Mothers of the Faithful', asserting that he had fulfilled all their wishes, but that 'Amr b. al-'As then had transgressed.²⁴⁶

As he was writing, 'Uthman went on, his enemies were giving him three choices: either they would apply the *lex talionis* to the caliph for every man he had punished, rightly or wrongly, executing it to the letter without any remission;²⁴⁷ or he must ransom himself by surrendering his reign so that they would appoint someone else; or they would send to those who obeyed them in the provincial garrisons (*iajnad*) and in Medina and they would renounce their duty of 'hearing and obeying' imposed upon them by God. 'Uthman answered that the caliphs before him had punished rightly and wrongly, but no one had demanded retaliation against them; his enemies, he knew, were out to get him in person; as for abdication, that they would beat him²⁴⁸ was preferable to his renouncing the reign, the office (*Carnal*) and vicegerency of God.²⁴⁹ Their threat of calling on the garrisons and the people of Medina to renounce their obedience he dismissed haughtily. They had at first offered him their obedience voluntarily, seeking the pleasure of God and concord among themselves; he had not forced them. Those who were merely seeking worldly benefit would not obtain more of it than God had decreed; those, however, who sought only the face of God, the hereafter, the well-being of the community, the pleasure of God, the good Sunna which had been laid down by the Messenger of God and the two caliphs after him, would be rewarded by God for it. Their reward was not in 'Uthman's hands; even if he were to give them the whole world, it would be of no benefit to their religion and would avail them nothing.

'Uthman then warned the Muslims against a breach of their covenant,

²⁴⁶ Tabari, I, 2943; Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 377. The letters attempt to create the impression that 'Uthman had in fact reappointed 'Amr before his transgression. This is obviously quite out of the question. 'Amr would hardly have attacked 'Uthman in public if his hopes for the governorship had not been thwarted. Marwan, who wanted to see the Egyptian rebel leaders punished, must have blocked the appointment if 'Uthman seriously considered it.

²⁴⁷ This is evidently a misrepresentation of the demands of the rebels. They were not demanding retaliation for those rightfully punished, but they insisted that they, not the caliph, should decide who was rightly or wrongfully punished.

²⁴⁸ Tabari, I, 3044, reading *yalka'umiot yaklubuni* as suggested in the footnote. The text in Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 377 has *yaqtuluni*, 'that they would kill me'.

²⁴⁹ The sources describe 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar in particular as advising 'Uthman not to abdicate. The caliph's enemies, he told him, could not do more than kill him, and it would be wrong to establish a sunna in Islam that whenever some people were angry at their commander they could depose him. 'Uthman's cousin al-Mughlra b. al-Akhnas al-Thaqafi, who was killed together with him, is said to have advised him to resign since the rebels were threatening to kill him otherwise (Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 45; Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 76; Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 259).

affirming that neither he nor God would condone it; the choices offered by the rebels amounted to nothing but abdication (*naz'*) and choosing another commander (ta'wfr); in the face of this affront, he controlled himself and those with him for the sake of averting discord and bloodshed. The letters concluded with an appeal to justice and mutual support, a confession of repentance for everything the caliph had done, and a request for God's forgiveness for himself and the faithful.¹⁷⁹

The letters, surely approved by Marwan, made no mention of the rebels' grievance against him, the message he had sent in the caliph's name ordering their punishment. They were firm in tone, excluding the possibility of any further concessions, all reasonable demands already having been met. But they also stressed the caliph's commitment to peace and concord in the community. There was no call to arms to help subdue the troublemakers.¹⁸⁰ The crisis was to be resolved without violence. Any threat that the caliph and 'those with him' might perhaps lose their self-control in the face of the provocation was muted.

The numerous reports stressing 'Uthman's opposition to armed initiative and violence even in defence against the besiegers are basically reliable. Fully conscious and respectful of the still-recognized sanctity of the life of Muslims, he wished that no blood be shed in the resistance to the rebels, and that these should not be provoked to violence. Later Muslim tradition after the civil war, used to bloody government repression and violence among Muslims, offered stories that 'Uthman wrote to Mu'awiya and 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir requesting them to send troops to Medina and that they responded to his requests. Mu'awiya's great-grandson Harb b. Khalid b. YazTd was perhaps the first one to spread the claim that Mu'awiya sent HabTb b. Maslama al-FihrT with 4,000 Syrians to aid 'Uthman. The vanguard, 1,000 men under YazTd b. Asad al-BajalT, had reached Wadi 1-Qura or Dhu Khushub when they learned of the murder of 'Uthman and turned back. The story was taken up by the pro-Umayyad

¹⁷⁹ Tabari, I, 3043-5; Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 377-9. According to Salih b. Kaysan (quoted by the unreliable Ibn Da'b), 'Uthman also sent a brief note to the pilgrims which was read to them by Nafi' b. Zurayb of Nawfal Quraysh on the day of 'Arafa, presumably after Ibn al-'Abbas had read the main message. In it the caliph complained that, as he was writing, he was under siege and was eating only the minimum to sustain himself in fear that his provisions would run out. He was neither being asked to repent nor was any argument on his part listened to. He appealed to those hearing the letter to come to him and establish justice and prevent wrong-doing. Ibn al-'Abbas did not pay attention to Nafi's action (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1166).

¹⁸⁰ The letter to the Syrians, however, contained an appeal to turn back transgression (*Obaghy*) of anyone depriving the caliph of his right with a quotation of Qur'an XLIX 9: 'If two parties of the faithful fight, conciliate between them; but if one transgresses on the other, fight the one that transgresses until it returns to the order of God . . .' The message to the Mekka pilgrims was perhaps intentionally somewhat more conciliatory.

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Maslama b. Muharib in Basra and by al-Sha'bl in Kufa.²⁵² There were similar stories about 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir sending Mujashi' b. Mas'ud al-Sulami and Zufar b. al-Harith al-Kilab! with a Basran army.²⁵³ The 'Uthmanid, but anti-Umayyad, Basran Juwayriya b. Asma' (d. 173/789-90) reported that Mu'awiya dispatched YazTd b. Asad with firm instructions not to move beyond Dhu Khushub. When asked why Mu'awiya would give this order, Juwayriya explained that he wanted 'Uthman to be killed in order to claim the caliphate for himself.²⁵⁴ All such tales are fictitious. Even a report of the generally reliable contemporary Abu 'Awn, client of al-Miswar, that troops moving from the provinces provoked the rebels to attack, reflects at best rumours in Medina.²⁵⁵

The primary responsibility to defend 'Uthman and the palace fell, under tribal norms, on his Umayyad kin, their clients and confederates.

²⁵² Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1289. Yazld b. Asad was the grandfather of Khalid b. 'Abd Allah al-Qasri, governor of Iraq in the late Umayyad age.

Maslama b. Muharib, an informant of al-Mada'inl, was closely associated with the Umayyad regime, as is evident from his reports. E. L. Petersen has suggested that he may have been an Umayyad, specifically of the Sufyanid branch (*Ali and Mu'awiya in Early Arabic Tradition* (Copenhagen, 1964), 112,128). It seems more likely that he was a client or confederate of the Umayyad house.

²⁵³ TabarT, I, 2985-6 (Muhammad al-Kalbl) and Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 71-2. The detailed account in the latter (71, 1. 19 to 72, 1. 8) is most likely taken from Abu Mikhnaf (see BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, V, 87). Jubayr b. Mut'im, who is named there as 'Uthman's messenger to 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir, is known to have been in Medina during the siege and at the burial of 'Uthman.

²⁵⁴ Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1288-9. The same anti-Mu'awiya bias is reflected in an Egyptian report transmitted by the unreliable Ibn LahT'a according to which 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd b. AbT Sarh after his escape to 'Asqalan refused to pledge allegiance to the Umayyad, affirming that he would not do homage to someone who desired the murder of 'Uthman (*ibid.*, 1152). The report is also in other respects highly fictitious.

There is also a late fake report which tries to explain why Mu'awiya, in spite of 'Uthman's appeals, did not send troops. According to it, 'Uthman sent al-Miswar b. Makhrama during the first 'siege' to Mu'awiya, ordering him to dispatch an army speedily. Mu'awiya immediately rode in person, together with Mu'awiya b. Hodayj and Muslim b. 'Uqba, to Medina, where he arrived in the middle of the night. 'Uthman severely reprimanded him for failing to send an army, but Mu'awiya pointed out that had he done so and the rebels had heard about it they would have killed the caliph before its arrival. He invited 'Uthman to ride with him to Syria but the caliph declined. During the second siege 'Uthman again sent al-Miswar with the same order. This time Mu'awiya blamed first 'Uthman himself for his troubles and then al-Miswar and his friends for forsaking him. He confined al-Miswar in a room and released him only after the murder of 'Uthman (Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 379-80). The report is ascribed to Muhammad b. Sa'd on the authority of al-WaqidT with four good Waqidian *isnads* going back to contemporaries. It was not al-Waqidl's practice, however, to bundle his *isnads*, and none of the early works quoting al-WaqidT offer any parallel. The report is a forgery presumably posterior to Ibn Sa'd.

²⁵⁵ Tabari, I, 3023. According to the report, supporters of the Egyptian rebels arrived from Basra, Kufa and Syria and encouraged the besiegers to action with information about troops coming from Iraq and from 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd in Egypt. As the narrator notes, 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd had previously fled to Syria. The newcomers would thus have spread false rumours that he had regained control of Egypt.

The caliph, however, trying to avert bloodshed, was reluctant at this stage to rely heavily on them and thus to turn the conflict into a battle between Umayyads and their opponents. Rather, he sought the moral support of the Islamic elite and the widows of the Prophet whose prestige, he hoped, would restrain the rebels from attack. For this reason he did everything to persuade 'A'isha to cancel her pilgrimage. During the early stages of the siege, al-MughTra b. Shu'ba is said to have advised him to make a show of strength by ordering his clients and his kin to arm so as to intimidate the besiegers. 'Uthman did so, but then ordered them to depart without fighting. As they went away, the Egyptian rebel leader Sudan b. Humran followed them. Marwan turned around, and they exchanged blows with their swords without hurting each other. 'Uthman immediately sent his servant Natil to order Marwan to retreat with his companions into the palace.¹⁸¹

Qatan b. 'Abd Allah b. Husayn Dhi l-Ghussa, chief of the Banu l-Harith b. Ka'b in Kufa, is said to have made 'Uthman an offer to come with his men to the defence of the caliph. If the report is reliable, he would presumably have come to Medina in connection with the pilgrimage. 'Uthman sent him away, affirming that he did not wish to fight the rebels.¹⁸² 'Uthman b. Abi l-'As al-ThaqafT, former governor of al-Bahrayn, is also reported to have offered to fight for 'Uthman during the siege. ThaqTf had pre-Islamic ties with the Umayyad house. 'Uthman declined his offer and permitted him, at his request, to leave for Basra.¹⁸³

At the same time 'Uthman surrounded himself with members of the Islamic elite. He delegated command over the defenders gathered in the palace to 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr rather than to an Umayyad. Abu HabTba, visiting the besieged 'Uthman, found him with al-Hasan b. 'AIT, Abu Hurayra, 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar and 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr, besides the Umayyads Sa'Td b. al-'As and Marwan. Abu Hurayra boosted the morale of the besieged by narrating a hadith. The Prophet had predicted: 'There shall be trials and calamities after us.' Abu Hurayra had asked him: 'Where will be the escape from them?' He answered: 'To the AmTn [the Trustworthy] and his party', and Abu Hurayra pointed at 'Uthman.¹⁸⁴

That 'AIT's son al-Hasan was among the defenders is too well attested to

¹⁸¹ BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, V, 72-3. The poetry attributed there to al-WalTd b. 'Uqba is quoted widely and attributed also to al-MughTra b. al-Akhnas (Ibn Bakr, *TamhTd*, 215; Ibn 'Asakir, *Uthmdn*, 548 (Sayf b. 'Umar)), to Hassan b. Thabit (*Diwan*, I, 511), to Ka'b b. Malik (*Aghani*, XV, 30; Ibn 'Asakir, *Uthmdn*, 547 (al-Sha'bl)), or to an anonymous man of the Ansar (Ibn 'Asakir, *Uthmdn*, 547). Either of the last two attributions would seem to be the most reliable. Al-WalTd b. 'Uqba was hardly the man to praise his brother for his pacifist stand.²⁵⁷

¹⁸⁴ BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, V, 73.²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 74.
¹⁸⁴ Ibn 'Asakir, *Uthman*, 374-5; ZubayrT, *Nasab*, 103.

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be doubtful.²⁶⁰ He is described, in contrast to his brother Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya, as fond of 'Uthman and as later critical of his father for failing to defend him.²⁶¹ Al-Husayn b. 'AIT, according to the pro-'Alid Ibn Abza, also came to offer his backing to 'Uthman at the beginning of the siege. He was sent by 'AIT, for whom 'Uthman had asked. The caliph asked him if he thought he would be able to defend him against the rebels. When al-Husayn denied this, 'Uthman told him that he was absolved from his pledge of allegiance and that he should tell his father to come. Al-Husayn reported to 'AIT, but Ibn al-Hanafiyya stopped 'AIT from going to the palace.²⁶² Among the defenders of the palace was also 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir b. RabT'a al-'AnazT, a confederate of 'Umar's clan, 'AdT,²⁶³ probably as an associate of 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar. Even Talha's son Muhammad is mentioned in some late accounts,²⁶⁴ but these are untrustworthy.

The rebels on their part were, as 'Uthman's letters also indicated, not eager to shed blood. It is true that their demands now amounted simply to abdication and the appointment of another ruler. The alternative of strict retaliation for all the beatings, deportations and imprisonment for which they blamed 'Uthman was not a realistic one. They were not talking, it seems, about a possible compromise of removing the real source of the ill, Marwan, who held no formal office. Nor was the caliph, still protecting his cousin unconditionally, prepared to offer such compromise. He was equally adamant that he would not abdicate. Yet the last alternative proposed by the rebel leaders was merely a call for general renunciation of obedience. Their private talk about seeking the caliph's blood did not match their real intention, to force him out of office. Their number, moreover, for the time being, hardly exceeded the number of the defenders in the palace, given by Ibn STrin, perhaps with some exaggeration, as 700.²⁶⁵

With no compromise in sight, time was running out quickly. The

²⁶⁰ Caetani dismissed a relevant report of the later Basran Ibn STrin as invented to demonstrate the innocence of 'AIT 'who defended the caliph with a proper son of his'. He suggested that al-Hasan according to another report was not in Medina (*Annali*, VIII, 190-1). The al-Hasan mentioned in this other report (*ibid.*, 193) is al-Hasan al-Basri.

²⁶¹ See the report of the Basran 'Uthmanid Qatada, where al-Hasan is quoted as telling 'AIT: 'You have killed a man who used to perform the ablution fully for every prayer.' 'All is said to have answered: 'Your grief for 'Uthman is lasting long' (BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 81).

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 94. Abu Mikhnaf narrated that Marwan, seeing al-Husayn, said to him: 'Leave us, your father incites the people against us, and you are here with us.' 'Uthman then said: 'Leave, I do not want fighting and do not order it' (*ibid.*, 73).

²⁶³ Ibn 'Asakir, *Ullhman*, 402-3; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 73.

²⁶⁴ See BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, V, 69-70 (IsmaTl b. Yahya) where Talha is said to have reluctantly sent him to 'Uthman; TabarT, I, 3013 (Sayf b. 'Umar); Mas'udT, *Muritj*, III, paras. 1603, 1605. Al-Mas'udT's account is based on IsmaTl b. Yahya's concoction.

²⁶⁵ BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, V, 74.

behaviour of the frustrated rebels, perhaps incited by the arrival of more radical elements and rumours of loyalist armies closing in from the provinces, became nastier. They tried at times to cut the water supply to the palace and to hinder the free access of visitors. Even Umm Hablba, daughter of Abu Sufyan and one of the Mothers of the Faithful, had some difficulty in getting access to 'Uthman when she came bringing a leather bag with water (*idawa*).¹⁸⁵ The rebels shot arrows at 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr as he read 'Uthman's message which they thought would contain nothing new. Had they listened carefully they might have recognized a basis for genuine compromise. 'Uthman was offering to govern henceforth only on the basis of the advice of the Mothers of the Faithful and the men of sound opinion among them. This would have meant the end of Marwan's pernicious influence.

On Thursday, 17 Dhu l-Hijja/16 June, the peace was broken. The act of aggression, opening the civil war, came from the palace.¹⁸⁶ Among the rebels on that day was Niyar b. 'Iyad of the Banu Aslam, an aged Companion of Muhammad, who called for 'Uthman and, when the caliph looked down from his balcony, lectured him, demanding his abdication.¹⁸⁷ Abu Hafsa al-Yamanl, an Arab freedman of Marwan,¹⁸⁸ dropped a rock on him, killing him instantly. In his own account he boasted: 'I, by God, ignited the fighting between the people.' The rebels sent to 'Uthman demanding the surrender of the murderer. The caliph once more protected Marwan, asserting that he did not know the killer. The next day, Friday 18 Dhu l-Hijja/17 June, was the 'battle-day of the Palace (*yawm al-dar*)', and 'Uthman was slain.

Marwan had his way; it was he who wanted the war. The safety of his old cousin, to whom he owed everything, did not seriously concern him. He could see 'our property', the Umayyad reign, slip away from him if 'Uthman was to govern according to the advice of the Mothers of the Faithful and the 'people of sound opinion', 'Umar's Islamic meritocracy. He loathed and despised them, these Early Companions who stood in the way of his own ambitions. 'Uthman's hope that he might hold on to the caliphate while keeping his hands clean of Muslim blood was nothing but pious delusion. Marwan understood well that domination throughout human history could be established and maintained only by

¹⁸⁵ TabarT, I, 3010; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 77; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1312-13.

¹⁸⁶ This was properly recognized by Wellhausen (*Skizzen*, VI, 130, *Das arabische Reich*, 31), who failed to note, however, the vital fact that the murderer, Abu Hafsa, was a client of Marwan. Caetani judged the relevant reports to be unsafe (*Annali*, VIII, 140).

¹⁸⁷ So the account of Ja'far al-MuhammadT (TabarT, I, 3004).

²⁶ According to Abu Hafsa's own report, Marwan had bought him, his wife and offspring from a bedouin Arab and had manumitted them (*ibid.*, 3001; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1281).

¹⁸⁸ Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1280, where the name of Natil is omitted.

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terror, intimidation, violence, or the threat of it. Why should it be different in Islam?

While the murderer under the Umayyad reign would openly boast of his crime, his victim was nicknamed by 'Uthmanid tradition Niyar the Evil (Niyar al-sharr), in order to distinguish him from the other Niyar of Aslam, Niyar b. Mikraz, the loyalist who participated in the burial of 'Uthman and was therefore named Niyar the Good (Niyar al-khayr). In order to substantiate the charge of evil, Niyar b. 'Iyad was then accused of having been the first to cause 'Uthman to bleed by striking him in the face with a blade.²⁷⁰ For the moment, however, the rebels, outraged by the caliph's latest refusal to take responsibility for the offences of his servants, held the moral edge. During the night they assembled in strength, lighting fires around the palace. In the morning the attack began. Some came over the roof of the house of the Al 'Amr b. Hazm next to the palace. According to Abu Hafsa, Kinana b. Bishr was the first to arrive with a torch in his hand. Naphtha was poured on the flames, and the wood ceiling as well as the outside doors were quickly set on fire in spite of some resistance by the defenders on the roof.

'Uthman gave orders to everyone obeying him not to fight but to look after their own houses. He assured them that the rebels wanted only him and would leave them alone once they had laid hands on him.²⁷¹ Most of the defenders, including 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr,²⁷² respected his wish and laid down their arms. Abu Hurayra later narrated that he threw away his sword and did not know who took it.²⁷³ Marwan, Sa'Td b. al-'As and a handful of men disobeyed 'Uthman's order. They pushed the intruders out of the one gate that was not burning and attacked the rebels outside the palace. The first to be killed was, according to Abu Mikhnaf's account, al-MughTra b. al-

²⁷⁰ Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1308; Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 83. The accusation against Niyar was transmitted by the pro-Umayyad 'Awana on the authority of al-Sha'bl. The Banu Aslam, who had played such a vital part in the foundation of the caliphate of Quraysh, had evidently become divided over 'Uthman's reign. Muhammad b. al-Munkadir described Khuza'a and Aslam as hostile towards 'Uthman (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1280—1). When Mu'awiya later came to Medina on a pilgrimage and saw the houses of the quarter of Aslam leading to the market, he ordered: 'Darken their houses on them, may God darken their graves on them, for they are the killers of 'Uthman.' Niyar b. Mikraz (the Good) said to him: 'Are you going to darken my house on me when I am one out of four who carried and buried 'Uthman?' Mu'awiya recognized him and gave order not to wall up the front of his house (BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, V, 86; Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 540). ²⁷¹ TabarT, I, 3001-3.

²⁷² In a line of poetry ascribed to al-MughTra b. al-Akhnas, 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr is criticized for not fighting (Ibn Bakr, *Tamhid*, 195).

²⁷³ BaladhurI, *Ansdb*, V, 73; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1110.

Akhnas, slain by Rifa'a b. Rafi' al-Anṣarī of the Banu Zurayq of Khazraj, a veteran of Badr.²⁷⁴

Marwan went out, followed by his client Abu Hafsa, and shouted a challenge for anyone to duel with him. When he lifted the loose pendant of his helmet (*rafrāf*) to fasten it in his belt, the rebel leader Ibn al-Niba' ('Urwa b. Shiyaym), sent forward by 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Udays to deal with him, struck him on the neck, felling him. As he turned around on the ground, 'Ubayd, Rifa'a b. Rafi's son, went up to him to finish him off. But Fatima bt Aws, Marwan's wet-nurse, threw herself on him and told 'Ubayd: 'If you want to kill this man, he is dead, but if you want to play with his flesh, that would be abominable.' He left off, and Fatima, with the help of Abu Hafsa, carried the wounded Marwan to her house. 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwan was to reward her son Ibrahim b. 'Arabī al-Kinani with the governorship of al-Yamama.²⁷⁵ Sa'Td b. al-'As also went out, and fought until he received a severe head wound.²⁷⁶ According to Abu Mikhnaf's account, he was struck by 'Amir b. Bukayr al-Kinani, a veteran of Badr, and was rescued by 'Uthman's wife Na'ila.²⁷⁷

Three other Qurayshites were killed defending 'Uthman: 'Abd Allah b. Wabb b. Zam'a and al-Zubayr's nephew 'Abd Allah b. 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-'Awwam, both of Asad, and 'Abd Allah b. AbT Maysara b. 'Awf b. al-Sabbaq of 'Abd al-Dar. 'Abd Allah b. 'Abd al-Rahman, al-Zubayr's nephew, proposed to the opponents that they settle the conflict on the basis of the Book of God, but was nevertheless attacked and killed by 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Abd Allah al-Jumahl, a Qurayshite. The other two were attacked and killed by a group of men near the palace.²⁷⁸ Also killed

²⁷⁴ BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, V, 78-9. On Rifa'a b. Rafi' see Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, II, 209. According to another report, Abu Mikhnaf added, al-MughTra was killed by one of the common people (*urd al-nds*). Probably unreliable is the report of Ja'far al-MuhammadT that 'Abd Allah b. Budayl al-KhuzaT killed al-MughTra (TabarT, I, 3005). The Banu Zurayq collectively are accused of having shared in the murder of 'Uthman in a line of poetry by Marwan's brother 'Abd al-Rajman b. al-Hakam (BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, V, 105).

²⁷⁵ TabarT, I, 3003-4; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1281; BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, V, 79. For the correct family names of Fatima and Ibrahim see the notes to the BaladhurT text.

²⁷⁶ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, V, 23. ²⁷⁷ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 79-80.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 80; Ibn 'Asakir, *Uthman*, 532. In al-Baladhuri's report b. AbT Maysara is missing in the genealogy of the last-named. Al-Zubayri (*Nasab*, 256) gives b. Abi Masarra, but most other sources have b. AbT Maysara. 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Abd Allah al-Jumahl does not seem to be otherwise known. Ibn 'Asakir (*CUthman*, 554) quotes a few lines of poetry by 'Abd Allah b. Wabb b. Zam'a in which he vows that he will not swear allegiance to any other imam after 'Uthman and, defending him, will not leave 'the two gates'. Ibn al-Munkadir enumerates the three Qurayshites killed as supporters of 'Uthman. He names also 'Abd al-Rahman b. Hatib b. AbT Balta'a of Lakhm (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1280), whose father was a confederate of the family of al-Zubayr (on 'Abd al-Rahman b. Hatib see Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, VI, 158-9).

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was 'Uthman's client Natil.²⁷⁹ 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr, al-Hasan b. 'AIT and 'Abd Allah b. Hatib al-JumahT are said to have been wounded. If the relevant reports are reliable these wounds were most likely not received in fighting.¹⁸⁹

'Uthman thus was deserted by his Qurayshite defenders, including his Umayyad kin, at his own wish. His personal servants and guards presumably still protected the gates. But at the time of the afternoon prayer,¹⁹⁰ when the fate he expected struck, he was alone with his wife Na'ila in her room, reading the Qur'an. Had his cousin Marwan, after wantonly bringing down the catastrophe on him, been serious about preventing the enemy from reaching the old man, as he claimed in two lines of poetry,¹⁹¹ he would have been sitting with him, as 'Uthman had asked him to do,¹⁹² instead of engaging in vainglorious bragging outside the palace. 'Uthman's brother al-WalTd b. 'Uqba was not even in Medina, but received the news of the caliph's death in the safety of nearby al-Mirad, where he now sanctimoniously professed to the world that he wished he had perished before it arrived.¹⁹³ Nothing is known about the whereabouts of 'Uthman's grown-up sons.

According to the family tradition of the Al 'Amr b. Hazm, Muhammad b. AbT Bakr scaled the roof of 'Uthman's palace from that of their house together with Kinana b. Bishr, Sudan b. Humran and 'Amr b. al-Hamiq and burst into Na'ila's room. Muhammad grabbed the caliph by his beard and said: 'May God disgrace you, Na'thal.'¹⁹⁴ 'Uthman answered: 'I am not Na'thal, but the Servant of God ['Abd Allah] and Commander of the Faithful.' Muhammad: 'Mu'awiya, so-and-so, and so-and-so are of no avail to you now.' 'Uthman: 'Son of my brother, leave my beard. Your father would not have held what you are holding.' Muhammad: 'If

¹⁸⁹ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, V, 79, 80,95. In these reports the three men are vaguely described as fighting for 'Uthman. Against this stands the unambiguous testimony of other reports that they laid down their arms, obeying the order of 'Uthman. On 'Abd Allah b. Hatib, a Qurayshite of Jumah borne by a slave mother (*umm walad*), see ZubayrI, *Nasab*, 395.

¹⁹⁰ For the time see al-Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 85-6, 98.

¹⁹¹ TabarT, I, 3022; BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 81. ²⁸³ Tabari, I, 3002.

²⁸⁴ BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 102-3. Al-WalTd's brother Khalid b. 'Uqba was also absent at the time. According to Sayf b. 'Umar (?) he had the audacity to reproach in verse Azhar b. Sihan al-Muharibl, one of the defenders of the palace, for not fighting. Azhar answered him, appropriately pointing out that 'Khalid fled from him ['Uthman] in his armour' (Ibn Bakr, *Tamhid*, 214). According to Mus'ab al-Zubayri, however, the exchange of this poetry was rather between Khalid b. 'Uqba and 'Abd al-Rahman b. Artah b. Sihan al-Muharibl, confederate of the Banu Harb b. Umayya, on the occasion of the murder of 'Uthman's son Sa'Id by his Soghdian hostages (Zubayri, *Nasab*, 111, 141; BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 117-19). The latter version is no doubt more reliable. ²⁸⁵ Na'thal, besotted old man, was the nickname of 'Uthman.

¹⁹⁴ That Kinana was generally held to be 'Uthman's killer is well attested in contemporary poetry, especially by al-WalTd b. 'Uqba, where he is called by his tribal affiliation al-TujTbT (TabarT, I, 3064; BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 98).

my father had seen you do these acts he would have censured you for them. I want stronger medicine for you than holding your beard.' 'Uthman: 'I seek God's support and help against you.' Muhammad b. AbT Bakr now pierced his forehead with a blade. Kinana joined in with other blades, striking him behind the ear so that the points entered his throat. Then he killed him with his sword.²⁸⁶ A variant report by Abu 'Awn, the client of al-Miswar, has it that Kinana hit 'Uthman on the forehead with an iron rod, causing him to fall to the ground and that Sudan b. Humran killed him. In any case, 'Amr b. al-Hamiq is then described as sitting on the caliph's chest and piercing his body nine times.¹⁹⁵

The palace was now pillaged. Na'ila protected 'Uthman's body, but it was not possible to bury him before the following evening.¹⁹⁶ The rebels prevented his burial in the cemetery of BaqT' al-Gharqad, and he was interred nearby at Hashsh Kawkab, which was later incorporated into the cemetery. Present at his funeral were, according to Niyar al-AslamT (the Good), HakTm b. Hizam, Jubayr b. Mut'im, Abu Jahm b. Hudhayfa and himself. Jubayr led the prayer.²⁸⁹ From other reports it is certain that his wives Na'ila and Umm al-BanTn bt 'Uyayna were with them.¹⁹⁷ Others

¹⁹⁵ TabarT, I, 3021—2; BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 82-3; Ibn 'Asakir, ' *Uthmdn*, 413—14. An eyewitness account is transmitted from Rayta, client of Usama b. Zayd. She claimed to have been sent by her master to see 'Uthman and to have been present at his murder. In her account Muhammad b. AbT Bakr is described as pulling back from violence after seizing 'Uthman's beard, and trying vainly to stop the others (Ibn 'Asakir, ' *Uthman*, 411—12). The authenticity of the report is doubtful. The well-known story about Na'ila's finger being cut off while she defended 'Uthman is probably legend. It appears only in the Kufan accounts. Al-Sha'bT may have been the first to report it (*ibid.*, 412).

¹⁹⁶ This is suggested by most accounts. A report of 'Abd Allah b. Farrukh, a client of 'A'isha (Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, V, 356), seems to suggest that he was buried in the night after his death, since Talha is described as still being in control. According to it, 'Abd Allah b. Farrukh was in the presence of Talha in Medina at Hashsh Talha when the latter asked him and Talha's nephew 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Uthman to see what had become of 'Uthman. They found his body in the palace covered with a white cloth. When they informed Talha he instructed them to bury him. They dressed him in his clothes and took the body out of the palace. The Egyptian rebels tried to prevent the holding of funeral prayers for him, but Abu l-Jahm b. Hudhayfa rebuked them. 'Uthman had asked 'A'isha for a burial place next to the Prophet's tomb, and she had conceded it to him. The Egyptians, however, would not allow his burial there, protesting that he had not followed the conduct of the Prophet and the first two caliphs buried with him. 'Uthman was therefore buried at Hashsh Kawkab which he had bought as an extension to the cemetery of BaqT' al-Gharqad (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 114—15, 1306-7).

²⁰ See in particular the report of Muhammad b. Yusuf in Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, 111/1, 54-5; Ibn 'Asakir, ' *Uthmdn*, 541; ZubayrT, *Nasab*, 102.

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are mentioned elsewhere, but their presence is doubtful or unlikely.²⁹¹ None of 'Uthman's Umayyad kin were there. They had sought refuge with Umm Habiba bt AbT Sufyan, widow of Muhammad, who put most of them in a granary (*kandij*) and the rest in another place. Mu'awiya later seems to have joked about their indecorous shelter.²⁹²

Sunnite tradition and modern western textbooks remember 'Uthman chiefly as the pious old caliph who was killed while quietly reading the Qur'an. The picture does not entirely misrepresent him. To the very end he remained faithful to his religious commitment not to spill Muslim blood. In the morning of the Day of the Palace he once more affirmed to Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas his repentance of all his wrongdoings and ordered his defenders to lay down their weapons. Deserted by all but his wife, he faced the inevitable end at peace with himself. Yet he must have felt that he himself had to bear a large share of the blame for the disaster. The cancer in the body of the caliphate which he had nurtured and proved unable to excise because of his doting love for a corrupt and rapacious kin destroyed him. It was to continue to grow and to sweep away 'Umar's caliphate of the Islamic meritocracy. 'Uthman's successor, Mu'awiya, turned it, as predicted by a well-known prophecy ascribed to Muhammad, into traditional despotic kingship.

²⁹¹ The family tradition transmitted by Malik b. Anas, whose grandfather Malik b. Abi 'Amir claimed to have carried 'Uthman's body on a door, is definitely faulty in several points and must be considered generally unreliable. Malik speaks of twelve men taking part in the funeral, among them Huwayfib b. 'Abd al-'Uzza, 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr and 'Uthman's daughter 'A'isha (Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 542-3).

^{2.2} Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 80.

4 'Ah: the counter-caliphate of Hashim

Succession dispute and the battle of the Camel

The reign of 'AIT bore the marks of a counter-caliphate. By the norms of the early caliphate it lacked legitimacy. 'AIT was not chosen by a *shura* of the most eminent Early Companions which 'Umar had stipulated as a condition for valid succession. Nor had he the backing of the majority of Quraysh who under Abu Bakr's constitution had been recognized as the ruling class solely entitled to decide on the caliphate.

Yet 'AIT himself was firmly convinced of the legitimacy of his own claim based on his close kinship with the Prophet, his intimate association with, and knowledge of, Islam from the outset, and his merits in serving its cause. The criteria for legitimate rule laid down by Abu Bakr and 'Umar were irrelevant from his perspective. He had told Abu Bakr that his delay in pledging allegiance to him as successor to Muhammad was based on his belief in his own prior title. He had not changed his mind when he finally gave his pledge to Abu Bakr and then to 'Umar and to 'Uthman. He had done so for the sake of the unity of Islam when it was clear that the Muslims had turned away from him, the rightful successor of Muhammad. Whenever the Muslim community, or a substantial part of it, would turn to him, it was not only his legitimate right, but his duty, to take upon himself its leadership.

The murder of 'Uthman left the rebels and their Medinan allies in control of the capital with Talha and 'AIT as potential candidates for the succession. There seems to have been some support among the Egyptians for Talha, who had acted as their adviser and had the treasury keys in his possession. The Kufans and Basrans, however, who had heeded 'AIT's opposition to the use of violence, and most of the Ansar evidently inclined to the Prophet's cousin. They soon gained the upper hand, and the Kufan leader al-Ashtar in particular seems to have played a major part in securing the election for 'AIT.

The reports about the events and 'AIT's movements leading up to his public recognition as successor are partly confused and contradictory.

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The developments can thus be retraced only with a substantial margin of uncertainty. A report of 'Alqama b. Waqqas al-Laythl of Kinana,¹⁹⁸ a close adviser of Talha,¹⁹⁹ implies that there was an initial abortive attempt to convene a *shura* of prominent Qurayshites to discuss the succession. 'Alqama described a meeting in the house of Makhrama b. Nawfal, al-Miswar's father. Abu Jahm b. Hudhayfa demanded: 'Whoever we pledge allegiance to among you must not interfere with retaliation (*la yahulu bayna qisas*).' 'Ammar b. Yasir objected: 'In regard to the blood of 'Uthman, no.' Abu Jahm answered: 'Ibn Sumayya, do you ask for retaliation for some lashes you were given and deny retaliation for the blood of 'Uthman?' The meeting then broke up.²⁰⁰ None of the other participants are named. The presence of 'Alqama b. Waqqas may indicate that Talha was there, but it is unlikely that 'AIT was present. 'Ammar probably wanted to block the election of Talha, who now was evidently willing to allow retaliation for the death of 'Uthman in order to gain the caliphate after he had been the most active in inciting the rebels to action.

'AIT was, together with his son Muhammad (Ibn al-Hanafiyya), in the mosque when he received the news of 'Uthman's murder. He soon left for home where he was, according to Muhammad's report, pressed by Companions visiting him to accept the pledge of allegiance. At first he refused, and then insisted that any pledge should be made in public in the mosque.²⁰¹ The next morning, Saturday, 'AIT went to the mosque. 'Atiyya b. Sufyan al-Thaqafi,²⁰² who went with him, reported that he found a group of people gathered who were united in support of Talha. Abu Jahm b. Hudhayfa came up to 'AIT and said to him: 'The people have agreed on Talha while you were heedless.' 'AIT answered: 'Does my cousin get killed and I get deprived of his reign?' He went to the treasury and opened it. When the people heard this, they left Talha and turned to 'AIT.²⁰³ The latter part of the report is probably unreliable. It is unlikely that

¹⁹⁸ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, V, 43; Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, VII, 280.

¹⁹⁹ See Tabari, I, 3104 where Talha is described as preferring his advice to that of his own son Muhammad.

²⁰⁰ Ibn 'Asakir, *Ta'rikh Madinat Dimashq: Tarjamat al-imam 'Ali b. Abi Talib*, ed. Muhammad Baqir al-Mahmudl (Beirut, 1975), III, 96.

²⁰¹ Tabari, I, 3066, 3069; Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 209-10.

²⁰² Regarding him see Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, VII, 226-7.

²⁰³ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 214-15. Chronologically flawed and less reliable is the parallel report of al-Miswar b. Makhrama (*ibid.*, 210). According to this account 'AIT left the mosque after the arrival of the news of 'Uthman's murder because the people seemed to be leaning towards Talha. On his way home he met a man of Quraysh who mocked him: 'Look at a man whose cousin has been killed and who is being robbed of his reign.' 'AIT turned back and ascended the pulpit. The people immediately left Talha in order to join 'AIT and then pledged allegiance to him.

Abu Jahm b. Hudhayfa clearly favoured Talha and certainly did not wish 'AIT to stand against him.

'AIT opened the treasury at this time. Rather, he went to the market followed by his supporters who again urged him to accept the pledge of allegiance. Then he visited the house of Amr b. Mihsan al-Ansari of the Banu 'Amr b. Madhbul of al-Najjar where he received the first pledges. Kufan tradition maintained that al-Ashtar was the first one to give his.²⁰⁴ It is likely that Talha and al-Zubayr also gave their first reluctant pledges of allegiance at this stage as al-Mada'inT narrated on the authority of the Basran Abu l-Mallh b. Usama al-HudhalT.²⁰⁵ This is implied in a statement by al-Hasan al-BasrT that he remembered seeing al-Zubayr as he gave his pledge to 'AIT in a walled garden (*hashsh*) in Medina.²⁰⁶ Talha, too, is quoted as telling the Banu RabT'a in Basra that he gave his pledge in an enclosed garden with the sword raised over his head.²⁰⁷ 'AIT, according to the report of Zayd b. Aslam, then insisted again that the pledge should be given in public in the mosque.²⁰⁸ There, in any case, the official ceremony took place on Saturday, 19 Dhu l-Hijja 35/18 June 656.

According to the main general account of the *bay'a* going back to the Kufan moderate 'Uthmanid al-Sha'bT and transmitted by Abu Mikhnaf, Talha was the first of the prominent Companions to give his pledge. The homage of 'AIT's main rival was evidently crucial to lend his election credibility and to get it started. Talha did not come voluntarily. Al-Ashtar, according to al-Sha'bT, dragged him along roughly while he demanded: 'Leave me until I see what the people do.'¹² Later, as noted, Talha claimed that he had given his pledge with the sword over his head. Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas commented on the claim stating that he did not know about the sword, but that Talha certainly pledged allegiance against his

²⁰⁴ TabarT, I, 3075. Abu 'Amra (Bashlr) b. 'Amr b. Mihsan, a veteran of Badr, became a major supporter of 'All and was killed at SiffTn (Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, XII, 186). Abu 'Amra's grandson 'Abd Allah b. 'Abd al-Rahman b. AbT 'Amra was an important informant of Abu Mikhnaf (U. Sezgin, *Abu Mihnaf: ein Beitrag zur Historiographie der umayyadischen Zeir* (Leiden, 1971), 190). Some reports suggest that 'AIT's visit to the home of Amr b. Mihsan had taken place on Friday (see Ibn 'Asakir, *'Ali*, III, 97). This could also be implied by 'Umar b. Shabba's statement (TabarT, I, 3068) that it was on Saturday, 18 Dhu l-Hijja, which would mean Friday night. Since 'Uthman was killed on Friday afternoon, this would leave very little time for developments. The public pledge of allegiance took place, in any case, on Saturday. The report of the Medinan Salilj b. Kaysan according to which 'AIT visited the mosque of the Banu 'Amr b. Madhbul after the pledge of allegiance in the mosque of the Prophet and received the homage of the Anṣar there is probably unreliable (BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, II, 205).

²⁰⁵ TabarT, I, 3068. See also the report of Suhban *mawla* al-AslamiyyTn in BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, II, 215-16.

* TabarT, I, 3068. The statement may not be reliable, however, since al-Hasan was only fourteen years of age at the time, and there is the question of how he could have returned to Medina so quickly, as he was said to have been abroad when he heard of 'Uthman's death (Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 58; see above, p. 134 n.260).

²⁰⁷ Ibn AbT Shayba, *al-Musannaf*, ed. SaTd Muhammad al-Lahham (Beirut, 1409/1989), VIII, 709. ¹¹ MufTd, *Jamal*, 130. BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, II, 206.

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will (*karihan*).¹³ The mood of the public in the mosque was, no doubt, sufficiently intimidating for Talha to give his pledge without being openly threatened. 'AIT and his supporters could claim that he had done so voluntarily. 'AIT now sent someone to take the keys of the treasury from Talha. Al-Zubayr was brought by the leader of the Basran rebels, Hukaym b. Jabala al-'Abdī, and pledged allegiance. He later complained that he had been driven by 'one of the thieves (*liss min lusiis*) of 'Abd al-Qays' and had given his pledge under duress.¹⁴ Al-Zubayr cannot have been pleased to do homage to 'AIT. The two men had become deeply estranged since their common stand after the Prophet's death, and al-Zubayr could see himself with some justification as the Early Companion most entitled to claim the legacy of the murdered caliph. The Zubayrid family tradition transmitted a report by al-Zubayr's client Abu HabTba which asserted that al-Zubayr did not pledge allegiance at all. The story, however, has a legendary air and cannot invalidate the widespread reports about al-Zubayr's pledge.¹⁵

With Medina dominated by the rebels from the provinces and those Ansar who were still smarting from their humiliation by Abu Bakr and 'Umar, the Qurayshites present felt under severe pressure to accept their choice of 'AIT. 'Abd Allah b. Tha'laba b. Su'ayr al-'Udhri, a confederate of the Banu Zuhra present in Medina, claimed that the chief of the *bay'a* was al-Ashtar, who said: 'Whoever does not pledge allegiance, I will strike his neck', and that he was aided by Hukaym b. Jabala and his followers. What constraint, he commented, could be greater?¹⁶ This was no doubt a distortion. There is less evidence for actual use of violence than in Abu Bakr's *bay'a*. Yet there were evidently quite a few aside from Talha and al-Zubayr who later claimed that they had pledged allegiance

¹³ Tabari, I, 2082.

¹⁴ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, II, 207. Out of al-Zubayr's arrogant Qurayshite gibe Sayf b. 'Umar, or his source, spun a tale about the thief Hukaym b. Jabala (*wa-kana . . . rajulan lissan*) who regularly absented himself from the Muslim army in Fars, attacking the *ahl al-dhimma* and stealing whatever he could carry off, and then acted as host to the Shi'ite agitator 'Abd Allah b. Saba' in Basra (Tabari, I, 2922). In reality Hukaym was a highly respected chief of 'Abd al-Qays in BaSra. He was sent by 'Uthman to Sind to investigate the country for its suitability for conquest and returned with a negative report. Later he complained about the conduct of 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir (Khalifa, *Ta'rikh*, 180; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *Istfab*, I, 121-2). There is no sound evidence that 'Uthman ordered his imprisonment as narrated by Sayf.

¹⁵ Tabari, I, 3072-3. Abu HabTba reported that 'All came to see al-Zubayr after the people had sworn allegiance. When informed of his arrival, al-Zubayr hid his sword under his bed in such a way that it could be seen by his visitor. 'AIT entered and left without asking al-Zubayr to pledge allegiance. He then told the people that everything had been well between the two of them so that it was thought that al-Zubayr had pledged allegiance. If there was any visit of 'All to al-Zubayr it was presumably before the public ceremony when 'AIT would not have asked him for his pledge.

¹⁶ MufTd, *Jamal*, 111.

under duress. When Sa'id b. al-Musayyab asked Sa'id b. Zayd b. 'Amr b. Nufayl whether he gave his pledge to 'Alī, he answered: 'What could I have done? If I had not done so, al-Ashtar and his partisans would have killed me.'¹⁷ Hakim b. Hizam, another close associate of 'Uthman, also swore allegiance but apparently soon left for Mekka where he gave moral support to those seeking revenge for 'Uthman against 'AIT.

'AIT personally seems to have abstained from putting pressure upon anyone to do homage. When Sa'd b. Abī Waqqas was brought and asked to pledge allegiance, he answered that he would not do so before the people had given their pledge, but assured 'AIT that he had nothing to fear from him (*la 'alayka minni bo's*). 'AIT gave orders to let him go.¹⁸ Then 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar was brought. He also said that he would pledge allegiance to 'AIT only after the people were united behind him. 'AIT asked him to provide a guarantor that he would not abscond; Ibn 'Umar refused. Now al-Ashtar said to 'AIT: 'This man is safe from your whip and sword. Let me deal with him.' 'AIT answered: 'Leave him, I will be his guarantor. By God, I have never known him other than ill-natured, as a child and as an adult.' Ibn 'Umar's stand was, in contrast to Sa'd's, hostile towards 'AIT. After the election he came to him and told him: "AIT, fear God and do not jump upon the rule of the Community without a consultation (*mushawara*).'" Then he left for Mekka to join the opposition.¹⁹ Al-Sha'bī added in his account that 'AIT sent for Muhammad b. Maslama to pledge allegiance, but the latter excused himself, stating that the Prophet had ordered him, if there was conflict among the people, to break his sword and stay at home. 'AIT let him go. He did the same with an otherwise unknown Wahb b. Sayf al-Ansari, who gave a similar answer. 'AIT further invited Usama b. Zayd to pledge allegiance, but Usama, while assuring 'AIT that he was the dearest person to him, excused himself on grounds of the commitment he had made to the Prophet never to fight anyone confessing: 'There is no god but God.'²⁰

The arguments ascribed by al-Sha'bī to these men can hardly have been made at the time of the initial pledge of allegiance before it was evident that 'AIT would face armed opposition. They must have been put

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 111-12.

¹⁸ Tabari, I, 3068. Al-Sha'bī mentioned the refusal of 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar before that of Sa'd (Baladhuri, *Ansdb*, II, 207). His account is here evidently based on Sa'd's own report transmitted by his son Muhammad and grandson Isma'īl b. Muhammad (Mufīd, *Jamal*, 131).

¹⁹ Baladhuri, *Ansdb*, II, 208. Certainly unreliable is the report of Khalid b. Shumayr al-Sadusi, a Basran transmitter from 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar, according to whom 'AIT came to Ibn 'Umar the morning after 'Uthman's murder and asked him to go to Syria as governor to replace Mu'awiya; when Ibn 'Umar declined the offer, 'Alī threatened him; Ibn 'Umar therefore left for Mekka (*ibid.*, II, 208-9). The report reflects the general hostility of Ibn 'Umar and his followers to 'AIT. ²⁰ *Ibid.*, 207-8.

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forward when 'AIT mobilized for the war against 'A'isha and the Mekkan rebels. According to another report transmitted by Abu Mikhnaf and others, 'AIT at that time questioned Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas, Muhammad b. Maslama, Usama b. Zayd and 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar about their attitude. He told them that he would not force them to join his campaign, but asked whether they stood by their pledge of allegiance. They all answered him that they did so, but did not wish to fight against Muslims. Usama b. Zayd's answer on that occasion is quoted in the same terms as in al-Sha'bT's account of the *bay'a*.²⁰⁹ It is thus not unlikely that at least Usama and Ibn Maslama had initially pledged allegiance to 'AIT. Al-WaqidT's pupil Ibn Sa'd indeed counted Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas, Usama, Ibn Maslama and Zayd b. Thabit among those pledging allegiance.²¹⁰ That 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar also gave his pledge, as the report implies, may be discounted.²¹¹

'Abd Allah b. al-Hasan b. al-Hasan, 'AIT's great-grandson, enumerated several more prominent Ansar, describing them as 'Uthmaniyya who did not pledge allegiance: the poets Hassan b. Thabit and Ka'b b. Malik, 'Uthman's treasurer Zayd b. Thabit, Maslama b. Mukhallad of Khazraj, later governor of Egypt under Mu'awiya and YazTd,²¹² the close Companions Abu Sa'Td al-KhudrP²¹³ and al-Nu'man b. BashTr, both of Khazraj, Rafi' b. KhadTj of the Banu Haritha of Aws, Fadala b. 'Ubayd al-AwsT, probably *qadi* of Damascus at the time,²¹⁴ and Ka'b b. 'Ujra al-BalawT, confederate of the Ansar.²¹⁵ The great majority of the Ansar, however, eagerly pledged allegiance.²⁸

The irregular election of 'AIT, supported by the rebels from the provinces and the Ansar disfranchised by Abu Bakr, left the Community deeply divided into three factions. Besides the party supporting the

²⁰⁹ Mufid, *Jamal*, 95-6. ²² Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 20; *Annali*, IX, 50.

²³ The Shi'ite al-Muffd maintained that all of these Companions, including Ibn 'Umar, initially pledged allegiance (*Jamal*, 94-6). The gist of the tradition quoted by al-Mufid is also contained in the account of 'All's *bay'a* taken by 'Abd al-Jabbar, *al-Mughm*, XX/2, ed. 'Abd al-HalTm Mahmud and Sulayman Dunya (Cairo, n.d.), 65-8, from the *Kitab al-Maqamat* of Abu Ja'far al-Iskafi. That account clearly implied that Ibn 'Umar, Sa'd and Ibn Maslama (Usama is not mentioned) did not initially pledge allegiance. 'AIT is, however, described as asking them whether they were 'departing from my *bay'a*.' They denied this, but affirmed that they would not fight Muslims. According to Ibn Abi l-HadTd, the (later) Mu'tazila also affirmed in their books that the neutralist Companions at first all pledged allegiance to 'AIT and put forward their excuses only when he set out for the battle of the Camel (*Shark*, IV, 9-10). The same view is expressed by the orthodox Sunnite traditionist Abu Bakr b. al-'ArabT (d. 543/1148) in his *al-'Azvasim min al-qawasim fi tahqiq mawqif al-sahdba ba'd wafat al-nabx*, ed. Muhibb al-DTn al-KhatTb (Cairo, 1387/1968), 147.

²¹² Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, VI, 97-8. He was probably in Egypt at the time, not in Medina.

²¹³ Abu Sa'Td al-Khudri, it should be noted, later supported 'AIT.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 210. Mu'awiya appointed him *qadi* of Damascus after Abu l-Darda', who died around 32/652. It is thus unlikely that he was present in Medina.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, V, 304-5. ²⁸ TabarT, I, 3069-70.

caliphate of 'AIT, there were the Umayyads and their partisans who believed that the caliphate had through 'Uthman become 'their property', and the party of the majority of Quraysh who hoped to restore the caliphate of Quraysh on the principles laid down by Abu Bakr and 'Umar. As each party was prepared to fight for its presumed right, Islam became engulfed in a brutal internal war outlasting 'All's caliphate. The evil of *the falta* which, 'Umar thought, had been averted by God now erupted with a vengeance.

Mekka became the natural centre of the Qurayshite opposition. Here 'A'isha raised the flag of revenge for 'Uthman. According to the Medinans, she had left Mekka after her pilgrimage happy in the belief that Talha had succeeded 'Uthman. When she reached Sarif, six or twelve miles north of Mekka,²⁹ she met 'Ubayd b. Maslama al-Laythi, known as Ibn Umm Kilab, a supporter of 'AIT, who informed her of the succession of her cousin-in-law. She immediately turned back, curtained herself in the Sanctuary, and declared: 'We have reproached 'Uthman for some matters which we stated and pointed out to him. He recanted and asked his Lord for forgiveness. The Muslims accepted his repentance, as they had no other choice.' Then she accused 'AIT of jumping upon and murdering 'Uthman, a single finger of whom was better than the whole of 'AIT.³⁰

There was now an exodus of prominent Qurayshites from Medina to Mekka. Talha and al-Zubayr, seeing that others had successfully resisted pledging allegiance to 'AIT, quickly broke their own oaths and left without leave. 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas, who returned from Mekka to Medina and arrived five days after the murder, saw them on the way at al-Nawasif in the company of the Makhzumite Abu Sa'ad (b. 'Abd al-Rahman) b. al-Harith b. Hisham³¹ and a group of other Qurayshites.³² The Umayyads must also have quickly come out of their shelter in the granary of Umm

²⁹ Yaqut, *Bulddn*, III, 77-8.

³⁰ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 217-18, V, 91. Abu Yusuf al-Ansari, Abu Mikhnaf's source for the story, is Muhammad b. Thabit al-Ansari al-Khazraji, a major, otherwise unknown, informant of his (see Sezgin, *Abu Mihnaf*, 212-13). Abu Yusuf Muhammad b. Thabit is the same as Muhammad b. Yusuf (b. Thabit). In the indices of al-Tabari, Abu Yusuf al-Ansari is misidentified as Ya'qub b. Ibrahim al-Ansari al-Qadi.

³¹ Abu Sa'ad is enumerated among the sons of 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Harith b. Hisham by al-Zubayr! (*Nasab*, 306). The father, 'Abd al-Rahman, participated in the battle of the Camel on 'A'isha's side. See below, n. 153.

³² Tabari, I, 3080. Al-Zuhri's statements that Talha and al-Zubayr left Medina after four months and that they asked 'AIT for the governorships of Kufa and Basra but were disappointed (*ibid.*, 3068-9; Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 218-19) are unreliable. The two men certainly participated in the planning of the Mekkan campaign against 'AIT from the beginning rather than joining at the last moment. This is confirmed by a report of the Mother of the Faithful Umm Salama that Talha and al-Zubayr sent a messenger to her, while she was still in Mekka at the beginning of Muh. 36/July 656, urging her to participate together with 'A'isha in their campaign against 'Ali (MufTid, *Jamal*, 232-3, quoting al-Waqidi).

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HabTba, and soon Marwan and many others of them were assembled in Mekka. Al-WalTd b. 'Uqba, however, made his way to Syria to join Mu'awiya. The 'Uthmanid Ansar, Hassan b. Thabit, Ka'b b. Malik and al-Nu'man b. BashTr also preferred to go to Damascus.²¹⁶ Zayd b. Thabit and Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas stayed in Medina, while Muhammad b. Maslama went into voluntary exile in al-Rabadha. Whereas 'A'isha remained in Mekka, Umm Salama, Muhammad's Makhzumite widow who had performed the pilgrimage with her, after vainly warning her against joining the rebel campaign returned to Medina and gave 'AIT her backing.²¹⁷

When 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas arrived in Medina four days after 'AIT's accession and went to see him, he found, according to his own account, the Thaqafite al-MughTra b. Shu'ba,²¹⁸ renowned for his political cleverness, with 'AIT. After al-MughTra had left, he asked 'AIT what he had said. 'AIT told him that al-MughTra had visited him before and at that time had advised him to confirm 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir, Mu'awiya and other governors appointed by 'Uthman in their offices and to entrust them with receiving the pledge of allegiance for him in their provinces so as to calm the people. 'AIT had rejected that, maintaining that the likes of those men should not be appointed to any office. Now al-MughTra had come back and told him that he had changed his opinion and thought that 'AIT should depose these men who were no longer as powerful as before and should employ those whom he trusted. Ibn al-'Abbas commented that the first time al-MughTra had given him sincere advice, whereas now he was deceiving him. 'You know that Mu'awiya and his companions are people of this world. If you confirm them they will not care who is reigning, but if you depose them they will say: He has seized the rule without consultation (.shura) and has killed our companion, and they will stir up opposition against you. The people of Syria and Iraq will then mutiny against you, while I am not sure that Talha and al-Zubayr will not turn around to attack you.' 'AIT admitted that confirming 'Uthman's governors would without doubt be better in the short-term, worldly interest so as to restore

²¹⁶ The story about their discussion with 'All and reception by Mu'awiya in *Aghant*, XV, 29 is poorly attested and legendary. Al-Nu'man b. BashTr, in any case, was not appointed governor of Hims by Mu'awiya at that time, as asserted in the story. The two 'Uthmanid poets Hassan and Ka'b returned to Medina before the battle of the Camel but maintained their hostile attitude to 'AIT. Ka'b's daughter Kabsha reported of her father that he was deeply grieved about the murder of 'Uthman and was prevented from joining the revolt against 'AIT only by the loss of his eyesight. He did not pledge allegiance to 'All and kept away from him because of his loathing and disgust for him (MufTd, *Jamal*, 378).

¹⁴ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 91; TabarT, I, 3101; MufTd, *Jamal*, 232-3.

²¹⁸ According to al-Zuhri, al-MughTra b. Shu'ba was among those who did not pledge allegiance to 'AIT (TabarT, I, 3070). He seems to have left Medina soon after his second visit to 'AIT, presumably expecting the failure of 'All's caliphate.

order; he, 'AIT, was obliged, however, to act according to what was right and what he knew of these people; he would never appoint any of them; if they turned away, he would meet them with the sword.

Ibn al-'Abbas now urged him to leave for his estate in Yanbu' and lock his door. The Arabs would, he predicted, after much turbulence find no one to turn to but him; if he were to make a stand today with his present supporters, the people would certainly tomorrow saddle him with the guilt for the blood of 'Uthman. *AIT refused and suggested that Ibn al-'Abbas go to Syria as governor. Ibn al-'Abbas objected that this was not sound judgement. 'Mu'awiya is a man of the Banu Umayya, the cousin of 'Uthman, and his governor of Syria. I am not sure that he would not strike my neck in retaliation for 'Uthman. The least he would do would be to imprison me so as to rule arbitrarily over me.' In reply to 'AIT's question as to why he would do so, Ibn al-'Abbas said: 'Because of the kinship between me and you. Everything imputed to you will be imputed to me. Rather, write to Mu'awiya, appeal to his greed, and make promises to him.' 'AIT declared and swore: 'By God, this will never be.'²¹⁹ The account seems on the whole reliable. There may be some suspicion that it is influenced by hindsight with respect to Ibn al-'Abbas' claim to have counselled 'AIT to leave Medina and withdraw to Yanbu* in order to escape the accusation of having connived in the murder of 'Uthman. In a tradition presumably going back to Usama b. Zayd, the latter is reported to have given this very advice to 'AIT before the murder, and Ibn al-'Abbas is described as having rebuked Usama for suggesting that 'AIT withdraw after having been pushed aside by three men of Quraysh.²²⁰ The account, in any case, brings out well the different character of the two cousins: Ibn al-'Abbas, a keen observer of the political scene, experienced since his close association with 'Umar, looking through the motivations and opportunism of the powerful and ambitious, with no unrealistic aspirations of his own; 'AIT, deeply convinced of his right and his religious mission, unwilling to compromise his principles for the sake of political expediency, ready to fight against overwhelming odds.²²¹ 'AIT's political naivete, his lack of prudence and calculation, gave rise to the charge of 'foolishness (*du'dba*)' with which 'Umar is said to have characterized him. These qualities became patent at the beginning of his reign in acts such as

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 3083-5. The parallel account, *ibid.*, 3085-6, displays more literary dressing.

²²⁰ Baladhuri, *Ansb*, V, 77; the *isnad* is omitted. In the version quoted by Ibn Shabba (*Ta'rik h al-Madina*, 1211—12) on the authority of the Basran 'Awf al-'Arab, the intervention of Ibn al-'Abbas is not mentioned. Usama is then described as visiting 'Uthman and offering him the support of his people of Kalb to convey him safely to Syria. 'Uthman refused, however, to leave Medina.

²²¹ Djai't rightly characterizes 'AIT as essentially a fighter (*La Grande Discorde*, 397). Caetani's description of him as passive and indolent is entirely mistaken.

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his opening the treasury and handing out the money to the common people, as he had promised and as he was to continue doing throughout his caliphate, and in his insistence on deposing all of 'Uthman's governors except Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, who had been chosen by the Kufan rebels.

In his first sermon, as related by the Basran Abu 'Ubayda Ma'mar b. al-Muthanna, 'All bluntly rebuked the faithful, hinting at instances in which they had inclined against him since the Prophet's death. He said that God had laid down two cures for this community, the sword and the whip, and it was not for the imam to display clemency regarding them; he might, if he saw fit, ask God to forgive their past acts; two men had gone before, then a third one had stood up like a raven whose only care was his belly; it would have been better for him if his wings had been clipped and his head cut off; if after their failures matters were to revert for them (to their state during the Prophet's life), they would be fortunate, yet he feared that they were now in a time of religious slackness (*fatra*); all he and they could do was to strive together.

Abu 'Ubayda reported further that, according to 'All's descendant Ja'far (al-Sadiq) b. Muhammad, he had reminded the faithful in this sermon of the elevated rank of the virtuous of his kin who belonged to a family which partook of the knowledge of God and rendered judgment according to His judgment; if the faithful were to follow them, they would be rightly guided by their insight; but if they failed to do so, God would ruin them through their hands.³⁹

The exact wording and date of this sermon are open to question. The tenor and contents, however, clearly reflect the style of 'All's speeches and public statements throughout his reign. It is likely that he set the tone right from the beginning. Blunt rebukes and harsh charges of disloyalty, lack of sincere devotion, failure to respond to the summons to the evident just cause, and occasional warm praise for acts of loyalty, were characteristic of his pronouncements. They tended to alienate many of his lukewarm supporters, but also to arouse the enthusiastic backing and fervour of a minority of pious followers. He left them in no doubt that they could find true religious guidance only through him and the Family of the Prophet and reproached them for having turned away from them. While blaming the Community collectively, he refrained from criticizing the first two caliphs whose general conduct he at times

³⁹ Al-Jahiz, *al-Bayanwa l-tabym*, ed. 'Abd al-Salam Muhammad Harun (Cairo, 1367/1948), II, 50-2. According to al-Mufid, the sermon was quoted, aside from Abu 'Ubayda, also by al-Mada'inl in his books (*Jamal*, 125). A longer version of the sermon is quoted by Qadi al-Nu'man (*Shark al-akhbar*, I, 369—73) who states that it was delivered two days after the oath of allegiance. According to this version 'All declared all land concessions made by 'Uthman null and void. This is not confirmed by other sources.

praised highly. In particular he seems to have admired the austere and stern rule of 'Umar and sought generally not to contravene the precedents set by him. He adopted 'Umar's official designation, Commander of the Faithful, but spurned the title caliph which in his eyes had evidently been depreciated by 'Uthman's pretentious claim to be the Vicegerent of God rather than the deputy of the Prophet. Only under 'Uthman had it become patent that the Community had gone astray. 'AIT severely censured 'Uthman's deviation from the straight path of Islam. Generally he neither justified his violent death nor condemned his killers. 'Uthman had provoked the uprising of the people by his unjust acts and was killed in an act of war. Only when Talha and 'A'isha and their followers accused him directly of having been behind the murder did he turn the accusation back against them.

'All's desire for a radical break with 'Uthman's nepotist regime was reflected in his determination to replace all of his governors. Only in Kufa did he reappoint Abu Musa al-Ash'arT, apparently on al-Ashtar's recommendation, even though Abu Musa's attitude towards the new caliph appears to have been reserved.²²² When the news of 'AIT's accession first spread in Kufa, the governor counselled the people to wait for further developments. Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas' nephew Hashim b. 'Utba, who at the time eagerly proclaimed his allegiance to 'AIT in verse, stated defiantly that he did so without fearing his Ash'arite amir.²²³ Only when YazTd b. 'Asim al-MuharibT²²⁴ arrived with the order to receive the pledge of allegiance of the Kufans on behalf of 'AIT did Abu Musa, too, give his. 'Ammar b. Yasir is said to have predicted that he would certainly break it.²²⁵

For the government of Basra 'AIT appointed 'Uthman b. Hunayf al-AnsarT of the Banu Aws, a prominent Companion whom 'Umar had entrusted with the land survey of the *sawad*. When he arrived in the town, 'Uthman's governor 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir b. Kurayz had already departed for Mekka leaving 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir al-HadramT, confederate of the

²²² Salih b. Kaysan's statement to this effect (BaladhurT, *Ansd*, II, 230) seems reliable. Al-Ashtar had forced Abu Musa's appointment on 'Uthman and was generally pro-Yemenite. See also the report of Ibn AbT Layla (Tabari, I, 3172) according to which 'AIT told Hashim b. 'Utba that he had intended to depose Abu Musa but had been asked by al-Ashtar to confirm him.

²²³ Hashim b. 'Utba probably left soon afterwards for Medina to join 'All. He was with 'AIT when the latter set out to fight Talha and al-Zubayr in Basra.

²²⁴ Yazld b. 'Asim later became a leader of the Kharijites and was struck down with three of his brothers at al-Nahrawan (Tabari, I, 3361—2).

²²⁵ BaladhurT, *Ansd*, II, 213. Sayf b. 'Umar's story about 'All appointing 'Umar b. Shihab governor of Kufa, who then was prevented from entering the town (TabarT, I, 3087-8), is fiction.

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Banu 'Abd Shams, as his deputy. 'Uthman b. Hunayf arrested Ibn al-Hadraml without difficulty and took control of the town.²²⁶

For Egypt 'AIT chose Qays b. Sa'd b. 'Ubada, son of the unfortunate Khazraj leader with whom 'Umar had dealt so roughly at the Saqifa and whom he had later driven out of his home town of Medina. It was an act of reparation towards the Ansar and must have been seen by the Qurayshite opposition in Mekka as confirmation of their fear that 'AIT intended to abolish their privileged status as the ruling class in Islam. 'AIT ignored Muhammad b. AbT Hudhayfa, to whom the Egyptian rebels looked as their leader and who was now in control of al-Fustat. He evidently did not feel indebted to the Egyptian rebels, who had returned home, as he did to al-Ashtar and the Kufans, and wished to keep at a distance from them. He also ignored 'Amr b. al-'As, whose restoration had been demanded by 'A'isha on the grounds of his popularity among the army in Egypt. 'Amr's leading role in the agitation against 'Uthman, based on motives of self-interest rather than Islamic principles, could hardly have appealed to 'AIT. In general 'Amr represented the type of unscrupulous opportunist with whom 'AIT did not want to burden his reign.

According to Sahl b. Sa'd al-Sa'idT of Khazraj,²²⁷ 'AIT proposed to Qays b. Sa'd that he choose a military guard in Medina to accompany him, but Qays declined, stating that if he could enter Egypt only with a military escort he would rather never enter the country. He departed with only seven companions and reached al-Fustat without trouble.²²⁸ He had 'AIT's letter informing the Egyptian Muslims of his appointment read in the mosque. As in his sermon in Medina, the caliph mentioned that the Prophet had first been succeeded by two righteous amirs who had acted in accordance with the Book and the Sunna. After them a ruler had taken charge who introduced innovations (*ahdath*) such that the community had found occasion to protest and reproach him. Now the faithful had turned to him, 'AIT, and had pledged allegiance to him. There was no mention of 'Uthman's violent death and of the part played by the Egyptian rebels. 'AIT evidently did not wish to touch the divisive matter. The letter was written in Safar 36/August

²²⁶ BaladhurT, *Ansb*, II, 222. 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir (b.) al-HadramT was a maternal cousin of 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir b. Kurayz. His mother was Umm Talha Amal bt Kurayz (ZubayrT, *Nasab*, 147).

²²⁷ On Sahl b. Sa'd see Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, IV, 252. He died in 88/707 or 91/710 and was fifteen years old when Muhammad died. He may well have accompanied Qays to Egypt, where he is known to have lived for some time and to have transmitted hadith (see Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh Misr*, 275-6).

²²⁸ TabarT, I, 3235-6. Sayf's story about Qays' deceiving a Syrian horse troop at Ayla by posing as a refugee from Medina (*ibid.*, 3087) is probably fiction.

656, about two months after 'All's accession, by his secretary 'Ubayd Allah b. AbT Rafi', son of a client of Muhammad.⁴⁷ Qays then praised 'All as the best man after Muhammad and received the pledge of allegiance for him.

A group of partisans of 'Uthman who had seceded to the village of Kharbita near Alexandria after the revolt of Ibn Abi Hudhayfa held out against Qays b. Sa'd under their leader Yazid b. al-Harith al-Mudlij! of Kinana.⁴⁸ They informed Qays that they did not want to fight against him and would not interfere with his tax collectors, but they wished to wait and see how matters would develop. The governor agreed not to force them to pledge allegiance. Qays b. Sa'd's kinsman Maslama b. Mukhallad al-Sa'idl also rose, calling for retaliation for the blood of 'Uthman. Qays assured him that he would not wish to kill him under any circumstances, and Maslama committed himself not to oppose him so long as he remained governor of Egypt. With these agreements Qays was able to collect the land tax throughout Egypt.⁴⁹

Muhammad b. AbT Hudhayfa and the Egyptian rebels against 'Uthman are not mentioned in the account of Sahl b. Sa'd. According to the Egyptian al-Layth b. Sa'd, Ibn AbT Hudhayfa left Egypt for Medina in order to join 'AIT when Qays b. Sa'd was appointed governor. Mu'awiya, however, was informed of his departure and set up watches. He was apprehended and brought to Mu'awiya, who imprisoned him. Later he escaped from prison but was pursued and killed by a Yemenite.⁵⁰ Also according to al-Layth, he and 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Udays were killed in Dhu 1-Hijja 36/May-June 657.⁵¹

These are the most reasonable reports about the end of Ibn AbT Hudhayfa. He was accompanied by a group of rebels, among them certainly 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Udays, Abu Shamir b. Abraha b. al-Sabbah, and probably Abu 'Amr b. Budayl al-Khuza'T. They were kept by

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 3237. The date of the appointment proves that the anecdote narrated by Muhammad b. Yusuf al-Ansar! on the authority of 'Abbas, the son of Sahl b. Sa'd al-Sa'idl (on him see Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, V, 118-19), about 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd b. Abi Sarh's reaction to the appointment of Qays (Tabari, I, 3233-5) is anachronistic fiction.

⁴⁸ Nothing else is known about Yazid b. al-Harith. In the Egyptian sources Mu'awiya b. Hudayj, Busr b. AbT Artah and Maslama b. Mukhallad appear as the leaders of the seceders.

⁴⁹ Tabari, I, 3237-8. Maslama b. Mukhallad appears in the account as rising independently of the seceders at Kharbita. He may have joined them later.

⁵⁰ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 408. Nasr b. Muzahim identifies the killer of Muhammad b. Abi Hudhayfa as Malik b. Hubayra al-Kindl (al-Sakunl) (MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 44). He was a chief of Kinda in Hims under Mu'awiya and a prominent military leader during his caliphate (see the references in Tabari, indices s.v. Malik b. Hubayra al-Sakunl; Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, XXIV, 74-6).

⁵¹ Kind!, *Wulat*, 20. Al-Layth's mention here of Kinana b. Bishr among those killed at that time is erroneous.

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Mu'awiya at Jabal al-Jalll near Himš, escaped, and were killed.⁵² Only Abu Shamir, proud scion of the Himyarite royal house of Dhu Asbah, disdained breaking out of prison. Mu'awiya released him, and he went along with the Syrians to Siffin, where he soon joined 'All's army and was killed in the battle.⁵³ Egyptian 'Uthmanid tradition narrated on the authority of Ibn 'Udays this hadith of the Prophet: 'Some people will revolt straying from the faith as the arrow strays from the game animal. God will kill them in Mount Lebanon and al-Jalll.⁵⁴ Ibn 'Udays was thus made the transmitter of his own condemnation by the Prophet.

⁵² Yaqut, *Buldan*, II, 110; Kind!, *Wulat*, 18-20. In al-Kindl's otherwise highly unreliable report Ibn 'Udays, Kinana b. Bishr and Abu Shamir b. Abraha b. (Shurahbll b. Abraha b.) al-Sabbah 'and others' are named together with Ibn Abi Hudhayfa. Kinana b. Bishr was certainly not with them since he was killed later together with Muhammad b. Abi Bakr. On Abu Shamir see Ibn Hajar, *Isdba*, VII, 99; al-Hamdanl, *al-Iktil*, ed. Muhammad b. 'AIT al-Akwa' al-Hiwal! (Baghdad, 1980), II, 153-4; Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, XXIX, 12. Yaqut erroneously names Abu Shamir's brother Kurayb b. Abraha. Kurayb later made courtesy visits to Mu'awiya and 'Abd al-Malik, and died in 75/694-5 or 78/697-8 (Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, XXI, 166-8).

The Banu Abraha were, according to Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam (*Futuh Misr*, 113) four brothers: Kurayb, Abu Rishd'n, Abu Shamir, and Ma'dT Karib, who settled in al-GTza under 'Umar. A sister, Kurayba, was married to Dhul-Kala' Samayfa' b. Nakur, the chief of Himyar in Hims (HamdanT, *Iktil*, II, 158). There is no mention whether Abu Shamir personally participated in the expedition of the Egyptian rebels to Medina. It is, however, not unlikely. His house was next to that of Shiyaym al-Laythl, father of one of the four leaders of the rebels.

The presence of Abu 'Amr b. Budayl among those captured and killed is strongly suggested by the fact that his brother 'Abd Allah was calling for revenge for his brother 'Uthman (the *kunya* Abu 'Amr was frequently associated with the name 'Uthman) in the battle of Siffin (Minqarl, *Waq'at Siffin*, 245). Ibn Hajar (*Isdba*, IV, 40) quotes a report according to which 'Abd Allah b. Budayl went to see 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar when the latter came to Kufa and warned him not to shed his blood in this *fitna*. 'Ubayd Allah returned the warning, and Ibn Budayl answered: 'I seek revenge for the blood of my brother who was unjustly killed.' 'Ubayd Allah countered: 'And I seek revenge for the blood of the wronged caliph.' If this meeting indeed took place in Kufa, it would mean that Abu 'Amr b. Budayl was killed earlier than the others. It may, however, have rather occurred on the occasion of 'Ubayd Allah's visit to the camp of 'All before the battle of Siffin (Minqarl, *Waq'at SiffTn*, 186). The mention of Abu 'Amr by al-Kind! (*Wulat*, 27) as destroying the houses of the seceders on the order of Muhammad b. Abi Bakr is, in any case, anachronistic.

⁵³ See below, p. 232. According to a report of the Egyptian Harmala b. 'Imran quoted by al-Tabarl (II, 210-11), it was Abraha b. al-Sabbah who did not break out of Mu'awiya's prison. Abraha b. al-Sabbah b. Abraha seems to have been the cousin of Abu Shamir's father Abraha b. Shurahbll b. Abraha and the senior member of the Himyarite royal family emigrating from the Yemen (HamdanI, *Iktil*, II, 158-60). Abraha b. Shurahbll stayed in the Yemen in Wad! Dahr (*ibid.*, 154). The mother of their grandfather Abraha b. al-Sabbah was Rayhana, daughter of the Abyssinian ruler of the Yemen Abraha (al-Ashram), and he, Abraha b. al-Sabbah, ruled over Tihama, the coastal land of the Yemen. His grandson Abraha b. al-Sabbah is mentioned in connection with the conquest of al-Farama in Egypt (Tabari, I, 2586-7), but is otherwise not known to have settled in Egypt. It is thus unlikely, though not impossible, that he was imprisoned by Mu'awiya. He was in his army at Siffin (see below, p. 235).

⁵⁴ Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh Misr*, 304; Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, XIV, 305-6.

In the Yemen 'AIT appointed the Hashimite 'Ubayd Allah b. al-'Abbas governor of San'a' and Said b. Sa'd b. 'Ubada, the brother of Qays, governor of al-Janad.⁵⁵ 'Uthman's governors, Ya'la b. Umayya (Munya) al-Hanzall al-TamTml, confederate of the Banu Nawfal of Quraysh,⁵⁶ in San'a', and the Makhzumite 'Abd Allah b. AbT Rabl'a in al-Janad, had already left, some reports suggest, during the siege of 'Uthman's palace, with the intention of aiding the caliph. 'Abd Allah b. AbT RabT'a fell from his mount and broke his thigh before reaching Mekka.⁵⁷ Both men arrived there with much money, and Ya'la brought a large number of camels which he had gathered in the Yemen.⁵⁸ When Ibn AbT RabT'a arrived in Mekka he found 'A'isha summoning the people to revolt in order to seek revenge for the blood of 'Uthman. He ordered a seat to be placed for him in the mosque and proclaimed that he would equip whoever came forth to avenge the caliph's murder. Hearing of his call, Ya'la b. Munya, who had arrived earlier for the pilgrimage, joined him in the offer.⁵⁹

'AIT's attempt to gain control of Mekka failed. According to Salih b. Kaysan, he wrote to the Makhzumite Khalid b. al-'As, whom 'Uthman during the siege had vainly tried to appoint governor as a popular candidate, naming him governor and asking him to receive the pledge of allegiance for him. The Mekkans refused, however, to swear allegiance to 'AIT; a young Qurayshite, 'Abd Allah b. al-WalTd of 'Abd Shams, seized 'AIT's letter, chewed it up and threw it away. 'Abd Allah b. al-WalTd would be among the Qurayshites killed while fighting for 'A'isha in the battle of the Camel.⁶⁰

The town was now in open rebellion against Medina. 'A'isha having given the lead, the Mekkan Quraysh pinned the guilt for the murder of 'Uthman on 'AIT and called for revenge in fiery war poetry. Safwan b.

⁵⁵ Ibn Samura, *Tabaqat fuqaha' al-Yaman*, ed. Fu'ad Sayyid (Cairo, 1957), 42-3. For further references see A. M. M. al-Mad'aj, *The Yemen in Early Islam 9-233/630-847: A Political History* (London, 1988), 150 n. 2.

⁵⁶ He was also known as Ya'la b. Munya after his mother (Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, VI, 353).

⁵⁷ MufTd, *Jamal*, 231-2, quoting reports of al-WaqidT. It is to be noted that 'Abd Allah b. AbT RabT'a is here described as governor of San'a' and Ya'la b. Munya as governor of al-Janad. Ibn AbT RabT'a was riding on a mule outside Mekka when he met Safwan b. Umayya al-JumahT on a horse. The mule bolted, throwing Ibn AbT RabT'a off. Reports that Ibn AbT RabT'a died before reaching Mekka (Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, IV, 64-5) seem to be mistaken.⁵⁸ TabarT, I, 3102.

⁵⁹ MufTd, *Jamal*, 231-3. Ibn AbT RabT'a was prevented by his broken thigh from joining the campaign to Basra. Ya'la b. Munya participated, and fled when the battle was lost.⁶⁰ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 210-11. Salih b. Kaysan's further statement that 'All b. 'AdT of 'Abd Shams was at the time of 'Uthman's murder governor of Mekka is mistaken. 'Uthman's last governor of Mekka was 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir al-HadramT who, according to Sayf b. 'Umar, was still in control of the town (TabarT, I, 3098). He was, however, at this time called to Basra by his cousin 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir b. Kurayz to govern that town in his absence.

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Umayya b. Khalaf al-Jumahl, one of the grand old aristocrats of Quraysh and a leading enemy of Muhammad who had fled at the time of the conquest of Mekka rather than accept Islam and eventually had been given permission by Muhammad to stay in Mekka rather than move to Medina,²²⁹ addressed 'AIT:

**Surely your kinsmen, the 'Abd al-Muttalib, are the ones who killed 'Uthman in incontrovertible truth,
Out of wrongdoing and aggression, without a claim of blood revenge, and you are the most worthy of the people to be jumped upon, so jump.**²³⁰

Accusing all of Hashim, he evidently saw a chance of getting back at the old enemy allied with the Medinans who had humiliated Mekka in the time of Muhammad.

Marwan b. al-Hakam, the man who had intentionally provoked the calamity in Medina, accused 'AIT:

If you, 'AIT, have not struck the murdered man openly, you surely struck him in secret.

He went on to assert that 'Ammar, who had killed the old man, and Muhammad (b. AbT Bakr) had both confessed to the crime, which made retaliation incumbent upon the people.²³¹ 'AIT had therefore cut off his own nose and left behind great evil; they had killed the man closest to goodness in Medina and furthest from evil; if he himself, so Marwan threatened, or Mu'awiya were to live out the year, 'AIT would get to taste the bitterness of the crime they had committed.²³²

HakTm b. Hizam asked who could give him an excuse for 'Ali, who had turned his face away as 'Uthman lay dead, struck by numerous swords in turn while but few supported him from among all the tribes.⁶⁵ HakTm had, however, pledged allegiance to 'AIT in Medina and decided not to go to war against him. His son 'Abd Allah joined the rebel campaign and was killed in the battle of the Camel. When 'AIT found his body among the dead on the battlefield, he commented that he had deviated from his father's conduct. HakTm, who failed to support 'AIT but stayed at home after pledging allegiance, was not blameworthy.⁶⁶ Less convinced of

²²⁹ Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, III, 246-7. 'All is reported to have been particularly hurt by the hostility of some of Jumah and to have, after the battle of the Camel, expressed regret that they escaped just revenge (BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 261). One of the few non-Hashimite Qurayshites backing 'AIT, however, was Muhammad b. Hatib al-Jumahl (Ibn AbT Shayba, *Musannaf*, VIII, 705; BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 250), born in Abyssinia as the son of an Early Companion.

²³⁰ Ibn Bakr, *Tamhtd*, 181. Safwan b. Umayya b. Safwan is to be corrected to Safwan b. Umayya b. Khalaf; for *yutlab* read *tulib*.

²³¹ 'Ammar is not known to have participated in the killing of 'Uthman or in the fighting. His 'confession' may refer to his rejection of any claim of retaliation for 'Uthman.

²³² *Ibid.*, 180-1. ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 179. ⁶⁶ MufTd, *Jamal*, 393.

'All's complicity than the others was Sa'Id b. al-'As who spoke in his poetry only of three gangs (*raht*), evidently the Egyptians, Kufans and Basrans, who would get to drink the cup of colocyth for killing an imam in Medina in the state of ritual consecration (*muhrim*).²³³

To place the full responsibility for the murder of 'Uthman squarely on 'AIT, although he, in the words of Marwan, had 'not struck him openly', served the political ends of the Mekkan rebels best. For the real aim was not to avenge the death of the wronged caliph but to remove his successor from office and to exclude him from the *shura*. to be convened for the choice of the next caliph. Moreover, if 'AIT was the chief culprit, anyone backing him could, and should, be fought and punished as an accomplice in the offence which Caetani characteristically defined as 'the terrible crime of regicide'.

In the war council which was, according to al-Zuhri, held in 'A'isha's home, it was first suggested that they attack 'AIT in Medina. The proposal was quickly abandoned as it was realized that the Medinans were militarily more than their match. The idea of joining Mu'awiya in Syria was also discarded, mostly, no doubt, because Mu'awiya might have been able to impose his own will upon the projected *shura*. The decision to move to Basra and to mobilize Basran support for the claim of revenge was influenced by the argument of 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir that he could count on strong support there and by the material means he was willing to provide.²³⁴ Ya'la b. Munya contributed from the funds he had carried off from the Yemen. He is said to have given 400,000 dirhams and provided riding animals for seventy men of Quraysh. He paid eighty dinars for 'A'isha's famous camel after which the battle was to be called.²³⁵

Talha and al-Zubayr now appealed to 'A'isha to join the campaign. When she asked them whether they were ordering her to fight, they said: 'No, but you will inform the people that 'Uthman has been wrongfully killed and summon them to restore a *shura* among the Muslims so that they will be in the same state as 'Umar left them, and you will conciliate between them.'²³⁶ 'A'isha's presence was needed both because of her immense prestige as Mother of the Faithful and as a mediator between the two men who were rivals for the caliphate. 'A'isha had clearly favoured Talha before 'Uthman's death, but now she was presumably prepared to

²³³ Ibn Bakr, *Tamhid*, 180. Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 219, 221-2; TabarT, I, 3102.

⁶⁹ TabarT, I, 3102. According to Salih b. Kaysan, Ya'la provided 400 camels for the campaign (Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 222). The lengthy story attributed to a man of the Banu 'Urayna, who narrated how he sold the camel to a follower of 'A'isha and accompanied

first 'A'isha to al-Haw'ab and then 'AIT to Dhu Qar (TabarT, I, 3108-11), is entirely fictitious.

²³⁶ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 223. Al-Ashtar held that it was 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr who forced (*iakraha*) 'A'isha to go along to Basra (TabarT, I, 3200).

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back al-Zubayr if Talha, because of his involvement with the murderers, were to be excluded.

Probably late in Rabl' II 36/October 656 the Mekkan rebels set out, between six hundred⁷¹ and nine hundred men according to differing reports. On the way to Basra they were joined by others, increasing their number to three thousand. At Bi'r Maymun, Marwan, who was chosen to make the call to prayer, approached al-Zubayr and Talha and asked whom he should greet as amir. 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr and Muhammad b. Talha each named his own father. 'A'isha sent to Marwan: 'Are you trying to split our cause? Let my sister's son lead the prayer.' 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr led the prayers until their arrival in Basra.⁷²

While they were staying at Dhat 'Irq, serious discord occurred among the Umayyads present. According to 'Utba b. al-MughTra b. al-Akhnas,⁷³ Sa'Td b. al-'As went to see Marwan and his companions and questioned them as to where they were going. This had presumably been kept secret in order to keep 'AIT in the dark about their intentions. The ones subject to their revenge, Sa'Td said, were right here on the camels' backs. They ought to kill them and return home. Marwan and his companions suggested that they were going in the hope of killing all the murderers of 'Uthman. Sa'Td now questioned Talha and al-Zubayr as to whom they intended to give the rule if they were victorious. When they answered: 'To one of us, whoever will be chosen by the people', he objected: 'Rather give it to the sons of 'Uthman since you are going out to seek revenge for his blood.' But they answered: 'Shall we pass over the chiefs of the Emigrants and hand it to their sons?' Sa'id declared that he would not

⁷¹ This number is given by 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas (TabarT, 1,3105), who mentions among them 'Abd al-Rahman, son of Abu Bakr (read thus for Abu Bakra) and 'Abd Allah, son of Safwan b. Umayya al-JumahT. Safwan himself was evidently too old to join, and died shortly afterwards. His son 'Abd Allah later became a staunch supporter of 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr. Ibn Abi l-HadTd enumerates of the Banu Jumah participating in the battle of the Camel and surviving, aside from 'Abd Allah b. Safwan: his nephew Yahya b. HakTm b. Safwan, 'Amir b. Mas'ud b. Umayya b. Khalaf and Ayyub b. HabTb b. 'Alqama b. RabT'a (*Shark*, XI, 125). 'A'isha's brother 'Abd al-Rahman evidently went along for her sake, but did not play a prominent part. 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar did not participate. According to Abu Mikhnaf (*ibid.*, VI, 225) and Sayf b. 'Umar (TabarT, I, 3101) he also persuaded his sister Haf'a not to join 'A'isha as she had at first intended. Although politically opposed to 'AIT, Ibn 'Umar consistently defended him against accusations that he was behind the murder of 'Uthman (see e.g. BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 99).

⁷² TabarT, I, 3105-6, according to Ibn al-'Abbas. According to Salih b. Kaysan and Abu Mikhnaf, 'A'isha rather decided that al-Zubayr as the older man should lead the prayer (BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 225).

⁷³ 'Utba and his brother 'Abd Allah were present no doubt in order to avenge their father. 'Abd Allah was killed in the battle of the Camel (MufTd, *Jamal*, 393^1). Also killed was their nephew 'Abd Allah b. AbT 'Uthman (so the name in MufTd, *Irshad*, 122) b. al-Akhnas b. SharTq. 'AIT is said to have commented on his death that he had tried to save him as he saw him running away, but his order not to harm him was not heard (*ibid.* -, MufTd, *Jamal*, 394).

strive to take the reign away from the Banu 'Abd Manaf and turned back.⁷⁴ He had, as noted, not joined the chorus condemning 'AIT and evidently saw no good in depriving him of the caliphate in favour of either Talha or al-Zubayr. Together with SaTd b. al-'As there left 'Abd Allah b. Khalid b. Asld; al-MughTra b. Shu'ba, approving his view, invited the members of Thaqf present to turn back with him. The other Umayyads, among them 'Uthman's sons Aban and al-WalTd,⁷⁵ continued on together with Marwan, who was evidently concealing sinister intentions.⁷⁶

If 'Utha b. al-MughTra's report is reliable, there was after this setback a disagreement on where to turn and whose support they should seek. Al-Zubayr consulted his son 'Abd Allah who favoured going to Syria, while Talha consulted his intimate 'Alqama b. Waqqas al-Laythl who preferred Basra. They agreed, however, on Basra.⁷⁷

That al-Zubayr and his son would have liked to make common cause with Mu'awiya is not unlikely. Talha and 'A'isha were, no doubt, opposed to any such thought. Mu'awiya in fact seems to have made overtures to al-Zubayr. According to Abu Mikhnaf's father, Yahya b. SaTd b. Mikhnaf, he wrote to al-Zubayr, probably when the Mekkan rebels were already in Basra, inviting him to join him in Syria and promising him recognition as caliph by himself and his supporters. Al-Zubayr tried to keep the invitation secret, but Talha and 'A'isha learned about it and were seriously dismayed. 'A'isha talked to 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr, who then asked his father if he intended to go to Mu'awiya. Al-Zubayr at first confirmed that he wanted to do so since Talha was opposed to him. Then he changed his mind; but, having sworn an oath that he would defect, he liberated a slave as atonement for breaking it and summoned the army to battle.⁷⁸

When the rebel army approached Basra, 'AIT's governor 'Uthman b. Hunayf sent Abu Nujayd 'Imran b. Husayn al-KhuzaT⁹ and Abu l-Aswad al-Du'alT as envoys to enquire about their intentions. They met

⁷⁴ TabarT, I, 3103.

⁷⁵ 'Amr, 'Uthman's eldest son, is not mentioned. He does not seem to have participated in the battle of the Camel. SaTd b. 'Uthman, however, is known to have also been present (Mufld, *Jamal*, 382).

⁷⁶ In the parallel report of Ibn Sa'd (*Tabaqat* V, 23—4) SaTd b. al-'AS is described as addressing the assembled men in public and then returning to Mekka, where he remained during the battles of the Camel and Siffin. 'Abd Allah b. Khalid's cousin 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Attab b. AsTd was among those who proceeded to Basra. ⁷⁷ TabarT, I, 3104.

⁷⁸ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 257-8. Al-Zubayr is said to have been greatly upset when his son, backed by Talha, opposed his proposal to distribute the money in the treasury of Basra to the Basrans in order to gain their support and 'A'isha took their side reproaching him. He then threatened to join Mu'awiya (Mufld, *Jamal*, 287).

⁷⁹ A Companion joining Islam early or in the year of Khaybar, 'Imran b. Husayn had carried the banner of Khuza'a at the conquest of Mekka. 'Umar sent him to Basra to teach the people Islam (Ibn Hajar, *Isdba*, V, 26).

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'A'isha and her companions at Hafar Abi Musa, a watering station on the road from Mekka to Basra,²³⁷ and were told that they had come to claim revenge for the blood of 'Uthman and to see that an electoral council was set up to decide on the succession.²³⁸ Abu I-Aswad, known for his devotion to 'All, reported that he asked 'A'isha whether she had come on an instruction left by the Prophet or on her own opinion. She answered that she had made up her mind when 'Uthman was killed. 'We were angry at him for his beatings with the whip, his setting aside rain land enclosures (*mawqi' al-sahaba al-muhmai*), and appointing Sa'Id and al-Walld governors. But you assaulted him and desecrated three sacred rights, the sanctity of the town [Medina], the sanctity of the caliphate, and the sanctity of the holy month, after we had washed him as a vessel is washed and he had come clean.²³⁹ Thus you perpetrated this offence on him wrongfully. Should we get angry on your behalf at the whip of 'Uthman and not get angry on behalf of 'Uthman at your sword?' Abu I-Aswad rejoined: 'Why should you care about our sword and the whip of 'Uthman when you have been confined for protection (*habis*) by the Messenger of God? He ordered you to stay in your house, and now you come knocking the people against each other.' She said: 'Is there anyone then who would fight me or say anything different from this?' Abu I-Aswad and 'Imran answered: 'Yes.' 'A'isha: 'And who would do that, perhaps the bastard of the Banu 'Amir (*zanim Bam 'Amir*)?' She meant 'Ammar,²⁴⁰ who had gone on record opposing retaliation for 'Uthman. Evidently worried that she had perhaps gone too far, she asked: 'Will you inform on me, 'Imran?' 'Imran reassured her: 'No, I would not inform on you in either good or bad.' Abu I-Aswad challenged her: 'But I will inform about you, so let us hear whatever you wish.' She hit back with the curse: 'O God, kill Mudhammam [her brother Muhammad] in retaliation for 'Uthman, hit al-Ashtar with one of Your arrows which do

²³⁷ Yaqut, *Buldan*, II, 294.

²³⁸ Baladhuri, *AnsdB*, II, 225. According to the account of Abu Mikhnaf (quoting al-Kalbi), Talha and al-Zubayr wrote to 'Uthman b. Hunayf from Hafar Abi Musa demanding that he relinquish the governor's palace to them. Ibn Hunayf consulted al-Ahnaf b. Qays and Hukaym b. Jabala, who both advised him to call the Basrans to arms and to move against the rebels before they reached the town. The governor, however, wanted to avoid war and decided to send Abu I-Aswad and 'Imran b. Husayn to ascertain their motives. That Ibn Hunayf at this time received a letter from 'All warning him of the rebels, as the account claims, is unlikely (Ibn Abi I-HadTd, *Sharh*, IX, 311-13).

²³⁹ The three charges against 'Uthman and the three offences of his opponents mentioned here seem to have been 'A'isha's standard arguments. Musa b. Talha, according to al-WaqidT, reported that he witnessed her making the same argument 'in most eloquent language' just before the battle of the Camel when asked by the people about 'Uthman (MufTd, *Jamal*, 309—10; BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 239—40).

²⁴⁰ 'Ammar was a grandson of 'Amir b. Malik of the Banu 'Amir al-Akbar b. Yam b. 'Ans and client of the Banu AbT RabT'a of Makhzum.

²⁴⁰ According to Abu I-Yaqzan, the two armies merely faced each other (Khalifa, *Ta'rikh*, 183).

not miss, and confine 'Ammar in his pit for the sake of 'Uthman.⁸⁴

'A'isha's curse of al-Ashtar revealed most strikingly the fraudulence of her call to revenge for 'Uthman. For al-Ashtar, as noted, had heeded her and 'All's warning against violence and was on public record for having been opposed to the murder.⁸⁵ He was now anathema to 'A'isha because he had vigorously promoted 'All's election and had dragged her favourite against his will to swear allegiance to him. 'A'isha's fraudulent claim was next used to justify a flagrant aggression shattering the internal peace of Basra.

On returning to the town Abu I-Aswad advised 'Uthman b. Hunayf to resist the rebel army, and the governor agreed and called on the people to arm. 'Imran b. Husayn was evidently in favour of accommodating the Mother of the Faithful and stayed neutral in the battle of the Camel.⁸⁶ As the rebel army arrived at the Mirbad, the market place outside Basra, and stopped next to the quarter of the Banu Sulaym, the governor and the Basrans moved out to face them. Talha first addressed them, repeating the case made by 'A'isha that 'Uthman had committed some reprehensible acts, had been asked to recant, and had done so. 'Then a man assaulted him who has robbed this Community of its self-determination without any agreement or consultation and killed him.' Some men who were neither pious nor God-fearing had aided him. 'Therefore we summon you to seek revenge for his blood, for he is the wronged caliph.' Al-Zubayr spoke in a similar vein, and then 'A'isha joined in with a forceful voice, stressing the need for a *shura*.

The Basrans were left divided by this rhetoric, some saying that they were speaking the truth, others calling them liars. They began hitting each other with their sandals and then separated, one group joining 'A'isha. Hukaym b. Jabala, in charge of Ibn Hunayf's cavalry, gave the call to fight Quraysh, who would perish by their indulgence in comfort and frivolity. They were preparing to fight, but the night separated them.

⁸⁴ Jahiz, *Bayan*, II, 295–6. Mudhammam, blameworthy, was a pun on the name Muhammad, praiseworthy. Al-Sha'bi gave a toned-down version of Abu I-Aswad's report, suppressing 'A'isha's curses. According to him she asked Abu I-Aswad to tell 'Uthman b. Hunayf, whom she called the freedman (*taliq*) of Ibn Abi 'Amir, that she had heard he wanted to fight her (Mufid, *Jamal*, 273-4). Why 'Uthman b. Hunayf would be called *taliq* of Ibn Abi 'Amir is not evident.

⁸⁵ See Tabari, I, 3200, where 'Alqama is quoted as telling al-Ashtar: 'You disapproved of the killing of 'Uthman, what then made you go out to Basra [fighting for 'All]?' Similarly Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1313 and al-Nu'man, *Shark al-akhbar*, I, 397.

⁸⁶ 'Imran visited 'A'isha in Basra and criticized her for having left her home against the order of Qur'an XXXIII 33. 'A'isha apologized, suggesting that what had happened could not be undone, and asked him either to assist her or to hold his tongue. He affirmed that he would abstain from backing either her or 'AIT. She answered that she was satisfied with that from him (MufTd, *Jamal*, 310-11). 'Imran was, probably later, appointed *qadi* of Basra under 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir or Ziyad b. Ablh (Ibn Hajar, *Isdba*, V, 26-7).

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The intruders used the opportunity to move to a better location at al-Zabuqa, near the store-house for provisions (*dar al-rizq*).

Next morning the governor moved to attack them, and there was fierce, but inconclusive, fighting in which many were killed.⁸⁷ Then a truce was agreed until 'AIT should arrive. 'Uthman b. Hunayf was to retain the governor's palace, the treasury and control of the mosque, while the intruders were allowed to stay wherever they wished in the town and were to have free access to the markets and watering places.²⁴¹ 'A'isha, Talha and al-Zubayr now decided to stay among the Banu Tahiya of Azd.²⁴² The agreement to wait for 'AIT's arrival was clearly unfavourable to the rebels, and Talha persuaded al-Zubayr to break it and take Ibn Hunayf by surprise. On a windy and dark night they attacked and seized him as he was leading the evening prayer in the mosque.²⁴³ According to the Khazrajite Sahl b. Sa'd, they then sent Aban b. 'Uthman to 'A'isha to consult her on what to do. She first advised them to kill Ibn Hunayf, but a woman interceded, reminding her of Ibn Hunayf's companionship with the Prophet. She recalled Aban and told him: 'Imprison him, do not kill him.' Aban answered that had he known why she had recalled him, he would not have come back. Mujashi' b. Mas'ud, a Basran of the Banu Sulaym,²⁴⁴ now advised the captors: 'Beat him and pluck his beard.' So they gave him forty lashes, plucked out the hair on his head, his eyebrows and eyelashes, and put him in prison.²⁴⁵

On the next morning there was disagreement between Talha and al-Zubayr about who should now lead the prayer. Al-Zubayr as the older man was then given precedence, and thereafter the leadership was alternated between them day by day.²⁴⁶ At dawn on this morning, 'Abd

²⁴¹ Sayf's story about Ka'b b. Sur being sent to Medina at this time in order to enquire whether Talha and al-Zubayr were forced to pledge allegiance to 'Alī and his return confirming their claim (Tabari, I, 3124-5) is fiction designed to cover up the treacherous breach of the accord by Talha and al-Zubayr. There was, as noted by Caetani (*Annali*, IX, 85), hardly enough time for such a mission.

²⁴² Khalifa, *Ta'rikh*, 183; Ibn Abi Shayba, *Musannaf*, VIII, 719.

²⁴³ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 22-8. According to Abu Mikhnaf's account, it was rather the dawn prayer (Ibn Abi l-Hadid, *Sharh*, IX, 330).

²⁴⁴ Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, VI, 42; M. Lecker, *The Banu Sulaym: A Contribution to the Study of Early Islam* (Jerusalem, 1989), index s.v. Mujashi' was a Companion of the Prophet and played a prominent part in the early conquests in Iraq and Iran. The report quoted by Ibn Hajar, however, that he took part in a raid of Kabul and plucked a gem from the eye of an idol there is legend. Under 'Umar he was briefly deputy governor of Basra. In the accounts of Ja'far al-Muhammadī and Sayf b. 'Umar, he is described as leader of the Basran volunteer force moving as far as al-Rabadha to bring relief to the besieged caliph 'Uthman (Tabari, I, 2986, 3009).⁹² Tabari, I, 3126.

²⁴⁶ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 228. According to the report of Abu l-Mallh (Tabari, I, 3134-5), 'A'isha ordered 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr to lead the prayer. Al-Zubayr b. Bakkar reported in his *Ansab Quraysh* that 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr led the prayers on the order of Talha and al-Zubayr (Ibn Abi l-Hadid, *Sharh*, XX, 114).

Allah b. al-Zubayr with a group of men went to the treasury which was guarded by forty²⁴⁷ Sayabija, former slaves from Sind converted to Islam. Since these resisted, they cut them all down, including their leader, Abu Salama al-Zuttl, a pious man.²⁴⁸ 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr now wanted to provide for his men from the grain which was ready for distribution to the people in the square of the storage quarter (*madinat al-rizq*).⁹⁶ Hukaym b. Jabala, having heard of the ill treatment of Ibn Hunayf, also went there with a troop of 'Abd al-Qays and Bakr b. Wa'il.²⁴⁹ 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr asked Hukaym: 'What do you want, Hukaym?' Hukaym answered: 'We want provisions from this grain and that you set free 'Uthman [b. Hunayf] so that he can reside in the governor's palace as was agreed between [us and] you until 'AIT arrives. By God, if I found helpers against you with whom I could strike you, I would not be satisfied with this until I killed you for those you have killed. Your blood has become licit for us because of our brothers whom you have killed. Don't you fear God? What for do you consider the shedding of blood lawful?' Ibn al-Zubayr: 'For the blood of 'Uthman b. 'Affan.' Hukaym: 'Have then those killed by you killed 'Uthman? Don't you fear God's loathing?' Ibn al-Zubayr then told him: 'We will not let you take provisions from this grain and will not free 'Uthman b. Hunayf until he deposes 'All.' Hukaym: 'O my God, You are the just arbitrator, so be witness.' Then he told his companions: 'I am in no doubt about fighting these people. Whoever is in doubt, let him leave.' Fierce fighting ensued, and Hukaym's leg was cut off. He picked it up and hit his opponent fatally with it before being himself overcome. Seventy men of 'Abd al-Qays were killed, among them Hukaym's son al-Ashraf and his brother al-Ri'l.²⁵⁰ On the side of Ibn al-Zubayr, Mujashi' b. Mas'ud al-Sulam and his brother Mujalid were killed.⁹⁹

The Mekkan rebels were now in full control of the town. But the people were deeply divided, and Talha and al-Zubayr could not count on their loyal support. Al-Zubayr is reported to have appealed for a thousand horsemen to join him in ambushing or attacking 'AIT, evidently before he

²⁴⁷ The sources speak of 40 or 400 Sayabija. The latter number is no doubt greatly inflated.

²⁴⁸ BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 228; BaladhurI, *Futuh*, 376.

²⁴⁹ According to the general account of al-BaladhurT (*ibid.*) the battle was in al-Zabuqa, and Talha and al-Zubayr participated. Hukaym's men were about three hundred, among them seventy of 'Abd al-Qays. According to KhalTfa (*Ta'rikh*, 183), they were 700. According to Ibn AbT Sabra, the majority were 'Abd al-Qays. Abu Mikhnaf narrated that the rebels brought out 'A'isha on a camel and that the battle was known as 'the minor day of the Camel', distinguishing it from the battle with 'AIT (Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, IX, 322).

²⁵⁰ TabarT, 1,3135-6; KhalTfa, *Ta'rikh*, 183. Al-BaladhurT's main account (*AnsdB*, II, 228-9) describes al-Ashraf as a brother of Hukaym and speaks of three of his brothers being killed.

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could get Kufan support, but no one responded.²⁵¹ According to Abu l-MaTh, the rebels wanted at first, after the death of Hukaym b. Jabala, to kill 'Uthman b. Hunayf as well. He warned them, however, that his brother Sahl was governor of Medina and would avenge his death on their families. They released him, and he joined 'AIT in al-Rabadha.²⁵² Al-Zubayr proposed that they give the people of Basra their provisions and distribute the money in the treasury, but his son 'Abd Allah objected, arguing that the Basrans would then disperse (and fail to fight 'AIT). Agreement was reached to put 'Abd al-Rahman b. AbT Bakr in charge of the treasury.²⁵³ 'A'isha then wrote letters to Kufa seeking support there, but apparently with little success. Zayd b. Suhan al-'Abdl, one of the early Shi'ite *qurra* whom she asked either to join her cause or to keep the people away from 'AIT, addressing him as her devoted son, answered that he would be her devoted son if she returned to her home.²⁵⁴

'AIT had known of 'A'isha's revolt in Mekka from the beginning and must have observed the developments carefully. Yet he probably learned of the planned campaign to Iraq only at a late stage. Umm al-Fadl bt al-Harith, the widow of al-'Abbas, is said to have informed him from Mekka.²⁵⁵ He now summoned his supporters in Medina to arms. Al-Hajjaj (b. 'Amr) b. Ghaziyya, poet of the Banu l-Najjar,²⁵⁶ called for speedy action to catch up with Talha and al-Zubayr.²⁵⁷ Abu Qatada al-Nu'man (or al-Harith) b. RibT al-Khazraj, a prominent Companion,¹⁰⁷

²⁵¹ Tabari, I, 3136; Mufld, *Jamal*, 288. The reporter is Abu 'Amra, client of al-Zubayr. Strategically this was the most sensible plan. The Basrans were evidently unwilling to become the aggressors.

²⁵² The report of §alilj b. Kaysan that Talha and al-Zubayr released 'Uthman after receiving a threatening letter from Sahl b. Hunayf (Baladhuri, *Ansd*, II, 230) is probably unreliable. It seems that 'Uthman was quickly released after the takeover.

²⁵³ TabarT, I, 3135; MufTd, *Jamal*, 287. Sayf b. 'Umar describes the partisans of 'A'isha after they had taken control of Basra as seeking out in the quarters of the town all the participants in the rebel campaign to Medina and killing every one of them except for Hurqu' b. Zuhayr, who was concealed by the Sa'd Tamim (TabarT, I, 3131). All this is not corroborated by other sources and is no doubt fiction. 'A'isha, Talha and al-Zubayr were now seeking to gain Basran support against 'AIT. Killing the raiders of Medina would have antagonized their tribes whose backing they needed. The claim of revenge for 'Uthman had never been anything for them but a pretext justifying their war against 'AIT. To punish and kill all those connected with the rebellion against 'Uthman was later Umayyad policy down to al-Hajjaj.

²⁵⁴ Tabari, I, 3138. Zayd b. Suhan had belonged to the delegation of 'Abd al-Qays making their submission to the Prophet (Ibn Hajar, *Isdba*, III, 36). 'A'isha wrote to him presumably on that basis.

²⁵⁵ Baladhuri, *Ansd*, II, 222. The contention of Caetani that the report is tendentious (*Annali*, IX, 32) is baseless. The co-operation of the 'Abbasids with 'AIT was certainly close at this time. Umm al-Fadl is, however, reported to have died before al-'Abbas during the reign of 'Uthman (Ibn Hajar, *Ifaba*, VIII, 266-7).

²⁵⁶ Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, I, 328. ¹⁰⁶ Baladhuri, *Ansd*, II, 233.

¹⁰⁷ Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, VII, 155-6.

volunteered to fight against 'those wrongdoers who have never failed to deceive this Community' and offered to take a leading position. 'All gave him the command of foot-soldiers in the battle of the Camel.²⁵⁸ Umm Salama assured 'All that she would join his campaign if it were not an act of disobedience to God, and commended her son 'Umar b. AbT Salama al-MakhzumT²⁵⁹ to him. 'Umar fought for 'AIT in the battle of the Camel and was then appointed governor of al-Bahrayn.¹⁰ 'AIT left Medina with 700 men of the Ansar, according to 'Abd al-Rahman b. AbT Layla, on 29 RabT' II 36/25 October 656.²⁶⁰ He had appointed Sahl b. Hunayf governor in his absence.

'AIT stopped first at al-Rabadha, on the route from Mekka to Iraq. Most likely he knew that the Mekkans had already passed by there and chose al-Rabadha for its convenience. From al-Rabadha he sent Hashim b. 'Utba b. AbT Waqqas to Abu Musa, his governor of Kufa, with a letter ordering him to summon the Kufans to his support. Abu Musa consulted al-Sa'ib b. Malik al-Ash'arT who advised him to follow 'AIT's order. He refused, however, concealed the letter, and threatened Hashim with prison and death. Hashim now sent a letter with al-Muhill b. KhalTfa al-Ta'T, informing 'AIT of Abu Musa's hostile attitude. Al-Muhill assured 'AIT that the Kufans were ready to back him, but warned that Abu Musa would oppose him if he found supporters for that. 'AIT replied that Abu Musa was not trustworthy in his view and that he had intended to depose him, but al-Ashtar had interceded for him, claiming that the Kufans were satisfied with him. He now sent 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas and Muhammad b. AbT Bakr to Kufa with a coarse letter to Abu Musa in which he called him a weaver's son (*ibn al-ha'ik*) and deposed him. In his place he appointed the Ansari Qaraza b. Ka'b of Khazraj.²⁶¹

'AIT also learned in al-Rabadha of the takeover of Basra by the rebels and the death of Hukaym and his companions of 'Abd al-Qays and other RabT'a. The news was brought by al-Muthanna b. (BashTr b.) Mahraba al-'AbdT. In a piece of poetry 'AIT lamented and praised RabT'a, 'the obedient', who had preceded him in battle and had obtained a lofty station by it.¹¹³ Probably not much later 'Uthman b. Hunayf arrived in al-Rabadha, his head and beard shorn. 'AIT consoled him while cursing Talha and al-Zubayr for breaking their oath of allegiance.¹¹⁴

With Basra under the control of his opponents and Abu Musa in Kufa trying to keep the people neutral, 'All's situation in al-Rabadha must have looked quite precarious. As he was about to leave, his son al-Hasan is reported to have expressed his fear to him that 'AIT would be killed in a wasted effort. 'AIT sent

²⁵⁸ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 239. ¹⁰⁹ Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, IV, 280—1.

¹¹⁰ TabarT, I, 3101. When 'All was preparing for his second campaign against Mu'awiya at

²⁶⁰ TabarT, I, 3139.

²⁶¹ So the account of Abu Mikhnaf quoted by Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, IV, 9-10. According to al-Baladhuri's summary account (*Ansab*, II, 234), which is also based on Abu Mikhnaf, Hashim b. 'Utba himself returned to al-Rabadha. The account of Ibn Ishaq, on the authority of his uncle 'Abd al-Rahman b. Yasar, according to whom 'AIT first sent Muhammad b. Ja'far b. AbT Talib and Muljammad b. AbT Bakr to Kufa (Ibn Abi l-Hadld, *Sharh*, XIV, 8-9), is unreliable.

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him off, insisting that he had no choice but to fight the opponents if he was to be faithful to the message of Muhammad.¹¹⁵ 'AIT's next halt was at Fayd, about midway on the route from Mekka to Kufa, where a group of the Banu Tayyi' came to meet him. Their chief, Sa'Td b. 'Ubayd al-Ta'T, promised him whole-hearted backing, and was killed fighting for him at SiffTn.¹¹⁶ It was probably at Fayd that 'AIT learned that Abu Musa was still holding on to the governorship in Kufa, ordering the people to stay in their houses and warning them against participating in an inter-Muslim conflict (*fitna*),¹¹⁷ and that his two emissaries had made no headway in summoning the Kufans to his support. He now sent his son al-Hasan and 'Ammar b. Yasir to rally them.¹¹⁸ Al-Ashtar, who must have been embarrassed by the conduct of Abu Musa, whom he had first installed as governor and then had recommended to 'AIT, now told 'AIT that he, al-Ashtar, had already sent a man to Kufa who had accomplished nothing, and requested that 'AIT send him after al-Hasan and 'Ammar since the Kufans were most ready to obey him. Al-Ashtar entered Kufa, gathered his supporters from various

¹¹³ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, II, 233-4.

¹¹⁴ Tabari, I, 3143, reported by Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya.

¹¹⁵ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, II, 236; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1256-8. The narrator, the Kufan Tariq b. Shihab al-Bajallal-AhmasI (Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, III, 3-4) joined 'AIT in al-Rabadha coming from Iraq (see Ibn AbT Shayba, *Musannaf*, VIII, 138). Al-Hasan's appeal to 'AIT was also reported by Ibn al-'Abbas (Ibn 'Asakir, *All*, III, 138).

¹¹⁶ Tabari, I, 3140. The report, transmitted by Abu Mikhnaf, goes back to al-Sha'bl, who placed the meeting at al-Rabadha. In his general account Abu Mikhnaf placed it, probably correctly, at Fayd (BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, II, 234).

¹¹⁷ Abu Musa's position was clearly strict opposition to any fighting among Muslims, and came close to that of Ibn 'Umar and other neutrals in Mekka. He did not support 'A'isha and her party. The reports of the Kufan 'Uthmanid 'Abd al-Rahman b. AbT Layla and of Ibn Ishaq misrepresent his attitude in describing him as affirming that the *bay'a* of 'Uthman was still binding him and 'AIT and that he would not fight (for 'AIT) until every one of the murderers of 'Uthman was killed, wherever he was (TabarT, I, 3139; Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, XIV, 9). Abu Musa had, if reluctantly, given his *bay'a* to 'AIT and broke it only because of the Prophet's warning about *fitna*.

¹¹⁸ BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, II, 234. There were, according to Abu Mikhnaf's account, conflicting reports as to whether Ibn al-'Abbas and Ibn AbT Bakr left or stayed on when the new emissaries arrived. According to the account of Abu Mikhnaf quoted by Ibn Abi l-HadTd (*Sharh*, XIV, 10—11), 'AIT sent al-Hasan, 'Ammar, Zayd b. Suhan and Qays b. Sa'd b. 'Ubada from Dhu Qar. The mention of Qays b. Sa'd here is, as pointed out by al-Baladhuri (*Ansab*, II, 235), mistaken.

tribes, and seized the governor's palace by force while Abu Musa kept preaching in the mosque and al-Hasan and 'Ammar were arguing with him. When Abu Musa was informed by his men that they had been expelled from the palace, he himself tried to enter, but al-Ashtar ordered him out, calling him a hypocrite. The people tried to pillage Abu Musa's belongings but al-Ashtar stopped them.¹¹⁹

Al-Hasan now was able without difficulty to raise an army of between six thousand and seven thousand men.¹²⁰ They came from the whole range of tribes settled in Kufa and were grouped in seven contingents (*asba*). Al-Hasan led them to Dhu Qar, not far east of Kufa, where 'All had arrived in the meantime.

In Basra, there was more division along tribal lines. The presence of 'A'isha excited a powerful popular sense of obligation to stand up for, and protect, the 'Mother of the Faithful'.¹²¹ Some of the religious leaders were more inclined to neutrality and preached abstention in the face of *fitna*, as had Abu Musa in Kufa. Ka'b b. Sur of Azd, *qadi* of Basra appointed by 'Umar, went around among his tribe urging them to stay neutral, but they insulted him, calling him a Christian carrying a cane, and insisted that they would not abandon the Mother of the Faithful. He had been a Christian before Islam. As they refused to listen to him, he withdrew into his house, intending to leave Basra. 'A'isha, however, visited him personally and persuaded him to join her followers.¹²² 'Imran b. Husayn al-Khuzal sent Hujayr b. RabT¹²³ to his people, the Banu 'AdI,¹²⁴ to press them to abstain from fighting on either side. They answered contemptuously: 'Do you order us to sit back from [protecting]

* TabarT, I, 3153. In the *isnad* Nu'aym, misidentified in the indices to al-TabarT as Nu'aym b. Hammad, is Nu'aym b. HakTm al-Mada'inT (d. 148/765) (Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, X, 457).

¹²⁰ This figure given by the Kufan Shi'ite Salama b. Kuhayl (d. 121/739 or 122/740) (KhalTfa, *Ta'rikh*, 184) is confirmed by a statement of Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya who was in the best position to know the exact number. He said that 'AIT's party left Medina with 700 men who were later joined by 7,000 men from Kufa and by 2,000 others, mostly of Bakr b. Wa'il. Abu Mikhnaf and other sources speak of 10,000 to 12,000 Kufans (BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 234; TabarT, I, 3174).

¹²¹ There was, however, also some opposition to backing a cause led by a woman. Abu Bakra al-Thaqafi, uterine brother of Ziyad b. AbTh, was ready to join Talha and al-Zubayr, but when he found 'A'isha to be in command, he withdrew and stayed neutral, commenting that he had heard the Prophet say that a people whose affairs were run by a woman could not prosper (MufTd, *Jamal*, 297; Ibn Abi I-HadTd, *Sharh*, VI, 227, quoting al-Sha'bT; Abbott, *Aishah*, 175).¹²² BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 238.

¹²³ Hujayr b. RabT al-'AdawT transmitted hadith from 'Imran (Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, 11,215-16).

¹²⁴ The Banu 'AdT b. 'Abd Manat of the tribal federation of al-Ribab are meant. Wellhausen erroneously identified them as belonging to the Azd (*Skizzen*, VI, 139). Caetani thought the Banu 'AdT of Quraysh were meant and suggested that they were naturally devoted to 'A'isha because they remembered that 'Umar had fallen victim to the party of AIT now in power (*Annali*, IX, 108). In fact the Banu 'AdT of Quraysh failed to support 'A'isha and stayed neutral, although they had been prominent among the defenders of 'Uthman's palace.

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the treasure and inviolable consort of the Messenger of God? We will not do it.²⁶² Al-Ahnaf b. Qays, chief of the Banu Sa'd of TamTm, personally inclined to 'AIT and was not prepared to break his oath of allegiance to him. He told Talha and al-Zubayr that he would fight against neither the Mother of the Faithful nor the cousin of the Prophet and asked for leave to withdraw to Persia, Mekka, or somewhere outside Basra. Talha and al-Zubayr, after some consideration, decided that he should stay close by so that they could observe his actions. He withdrew to the open country (*jalha*) two parasangs from Basra together with four thousand or six thousand men.²⁶³ When 'AIT stopped at al-Zawiya near Basra, al-Ahnaf sent word to him offering either to join him with just two hundred men of his family,²⁶⁴ or to restrain four thousand swords from facing him. He evidently was ready to back 'AIT personally, but his tribesmen were inclining towards 'A'isha. 'AIT decided that he should try to keep as many as possible from joining his enemies.²⁶⁵ Of other Tamlm, the Banu 'Amr, the Hanzala except Yarbu', and the Banu Darim except some of Mujashi' fought for 'A'isha.²⁶⁶

As the two armies were facing each other and 'AIT appealed to the Basrans for concord, the Basran 'Abd al-Qays and Bakr b. Wa'il (RabT'a), who had been the victims of Mekkan aggression, went over to him. They were led by 'Amr b. Marjum al-'AbdT and ShaqTq b. Thawr al-SadusT respectively and numbered, according to Abu Mikhnaf, three thousand men. The Banu Qays b. Tha'laba of Bakr b. Wa'il, however, stayed with the opponents under their leader, Malik b. Misma' al-Shaybanl.²⁶⁷ These substantial defections evidently tipped the balance in favour of 'AIT.

The general command of the Basran army was given to al-Zubayr. 'A'isha insisted, however, that he should be acclaimed merely amir, not caliph. A decision on the caliphate would be made after the victory.²⁶⁸ As the Basran army advanced from al-Furda and the Kufan army from al-Zawiya, they met at the place where later the castle of Ziyad b. AbTh stood. They faced each other for three days, and a felt tent was pitched

²⁶² BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 238; TabarT, I, 3177.

²⁶³ TabarT, I, 3170—1; BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 232.

²⁶⁴ So the account in al-MufTd, *Jamal*, 295. The other reports state that al-Ahnaf offered to join 'AIT alone.

²⁶⁵ TabarT, I, 3174; BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 237. Al-MufTd's account (*Jamal*, 295) mentions a rivalry for the leadership of TamTm between al-Ahnaf and Hilal b. WakT' al-HanzalT, who insisted on backing the Mekkan rebels. Hilal was killed in the battle of the Camel.

²⁶⁶ Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, IX, 320, quoting Abu Mikhnaf.

²⁶⁷ TabarT, I, 3174; BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 237.

²⁶⁸ BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 229, 264. 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr is quoted as suggesting to his father that 'A'isha wanted to give him the hard task and her kinsman (Talha) the pleasant one (*ibid.*, 265-6). This quotation must be viewed with reserve since Ibn al-Zubayr is generally portrayed as an uncritical supporter of his aunt.

between them where 'AIT, al-Zubayr and Talha met. On the third day, after noon, 'All raised the side of the tent and gave order to get ready for battle.¹³²

In the exchanges before the battle, al-Zubayr's resolve seems to have been broken. The details of what happened, however, are obscure. 'All is said to have first sent Ibn al-'Abbas, instructing him to approach al-Zubayr, since Talha was more recalcitrant. Ibn al-'Abbas questioned al-Zubayr in the name of 'AIT as to why he recognized him in the Hijaz but opposed him in Iraq. Al-Zubayr adamantly affirmed, however, that there was an unbridgeable gulf between them.¹³³ According to several reports, 'AIT himself reminded al-Zubayr of an incident in their childhood when the Prophet predicted that al-Zubayr would unjustly fight 'AIT. Remembering the incident, al-Zubayr swore that he would never fight 'AIT. His son 'Abd Allah, however, accused him of cowardice. Al-Zubayr changed his mind again and, on 'Abd Allah's advice, manumitted a slave in atonement for his broken oath.¹³⁴ The story is evidently legendary, and the detail about the manumission of the slave a duplicate of the report about Mu'awiya's letter to al-Zubayr. It is not unlikely, however, that 'AIT's exhortations influenced al-Zubayr to reconsider his position. He may have recognized that he was merely being used as a pawn for the ambitions of 'A'isha and Talha, who were clearly much more guilty of inciting the rebellion against 'Uthman than was 'AIT. 'A'isha's insistence that he should be addressed only as amir may have brought home to him that she did not really favour his succession to the caliphate, to which he felt most entitled because of 'Uthman's early preference for him and his own loyal support just before his death. To fight a bloody battle against the Prophet's cousin, pitting Muslims against Muslims, under such circumstances must have seemed both foolish and immoral to him. His son 'Abd Allah, in contrast, stood much closer to his aunt 'A'isha and was determined to fight 'AIT in revenge for the blood of 'Uthman.

There was obviously no room for negotiation and compromise. 'A'isha and her partisans wanted the removal of 'AIT and a *shura*. 'AIT considered himself the legitimate caliph, regardless of the broad Qurayshite opposition. While they accused him of being morally responsible for the violent death of 'Uthman, he charged Talha and 'A'isha. Neither side was interested in an investigation of who had actually wielded the sword.¹³⁵ The battle took

¹³² Tabari, I, 3174—5; Ibn Abi Shayba, *Musannaf*, VIII, 709-10.

¹³³ Jahiz, *Bayan*, III, 221-2.

¹³⁴ Tabari, I, 3175-6; Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 254-5; Ibn AbT Shayba, *Musannaf*, VIII, 719.

¹³⁵ Sayf's story about successful negotiations and agreement on the punishment of the murderers, which was then thwarted by the Saba'iyya and Nuffar who were in fear of their lives and therefore provoked the battle (TabarT, I, 3155-8,1362-3,1381-3), is pure fiction not backed by any of the other sources.

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place on Thursday, 15 Jumada I 36/8 December 656²⁶⁹ and lasted from noon to sunset. 'All ordered a man of 'Abd al-Qays to raise a copy of the Qur'an between the battle lines and to appeal for adherence to its rules and for concord. When this man was hit by arrows and killed, 'AIT gave the order to advance and fight.²⁷⁰ This is widely reported with varying details, some legendary, and is in substance verisimilar. The Basrans had been talked into believing that they would fight the murderers of 'Uthman and used 'revenge for 'Uthman' as their battle cry. Their side were the aggressors, and 'AIT wanted them to be seen as such. The Kufans had before the battle not seriously thought that their Basran Muslim brethren would fight them.²⁷¹

The banner of 'AIT's army was carried by his son Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya. When the latter wavered in front of the wall of lances of the enemy, 'AIT took it out of his hands and led the assault.²⁷² Later he returned it to him. The fighting became fierce when al-Ashtar, leading the right wing of 'AIT's army, killed Hilal b. WakT* b. Bishr al-TamlmT of Darim, the leader of the left wing of the Basrans.²⁷³ Al-Zubayr left the battlefield quite early, apparently without having fought, and immediately set out on the route to the Hijaz. He is said to have been given protection by a man of Mujashi' (of Darim TamTm). According to a report of Qatada, al-Zubayr first went to the mosque of the Banu Mujashi' asking for 'Iyad b. Hammad, presumably to seek his protection. He was told that 'Iyad was in Wadi l-Siba', and he went there in search of him.¹⁴¹ Al-Ahnaf b. Qays was alerted by some of his men that al-Zubayr was passing by. He remarked that al-Zubayr had led the Muslims to fight each other with the sword and now he was running away home. Three men followed al-Zubayr, and 'Amr b. Jurmuz al-Mujashi'T killed him in the Wadi l-Siba'. When Ibn Jurmuz after the battle came to see 'AIT and announced himself as the slayer of al-Zubayr, 'AIT, according to some reports preferred by Sunnite tradition, refused to see him and exclaimed: 'Announce hell-fire to the murderer of the son of Safiyya.'²⁷⁴ According to more credible accounts, Ibn Jurmuz, sent by al-Ahnaf b. Qays with al-Zubayr's sword and head, was received by 'AIT, who questioned him about the circumstances under which he had killed him. 'AIT then unsheathed and looked at al-Zubayr's sword and commented that he

²⁶⁹ Thursday is given as the battle day by most sources. There is, however, a report by Qatada that the two armies met on Thursday and that the battle took place on Friday (Khalifa, *Ta'rikh*, 184—5). ¹³⁷ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, II, 240.

²⁷¹ The Basran Kulayb al-Jarml, who visited the army of 'All at Dhu Qar, describes the Kufans coming up to him laughing and expressing amazement, saying: 'Do you really think our Basran brethren will fight us?' (Ibn Abi Shayba, *Musannaf*, VIII, 705).

²⁷⁴ Al-Zubayr's mother was Safiyya, daughter of 'Abd al-Muttalib.

knew it well; al-Zubayr had many a time fought in front of the Messenger of God but had come to an evil end.²⁷⁵

The men fighting were evidently at a loss to explain the desertion of al-Zubayr. Jawn b. Qatada of Sa'd Tamlm, who was with al-Zubayr at the beginning of the battle, narrated that al-Zubayr became frightened when he learned that 'Ammar was participating on the side of 'All.²⁷⁶ Other reports describe 'Ammar as encountering al-Zubayr in the battle.²⁷⁷ 'Ammar was evidently introduced to explain al-Zubayr's conduct because of the hadith ascribed to Muhammad stating that 'Ammar was of the righteous and predicting that he would be killed by the rebel party. Al-Zubayr had obviously known before that 'Ammar would be fighting with 'AIT. A battle-experienced and brave man, he cannot have fled in fear at the very beginning of the fight. It was serious misgivings about the justice of 'A'isha's cause that must have induced him to abandon it. He probably intended to withdraw completely from the conflict and therefore turned towards the Hijaz. It is less likely that he still thought of taking up the offer of Mu'awiya. The Sa'd Tamlm, though formally neutral, were appalled by his desertion, as they considered him one of the main instigators of the conflict among the Muslims. They killed him as a man without honour rather than to please 'AIT.

Talha was mortally wounded probably not much later. In command of the horsemen, he is said to have fought valiantly at first.²⁷⁸ As the Kufans gained the upper hand, however, he turned back in a melee. Marwan hit him from behind with an arrow which pierced his sciatic vein (*nasa*) near the knee. The wound kept bleeding profusely while he and his companions tried at first to stanch and treat it. Continued attempts to stop the bleeding failed, and Talha died in a house of the Banu Sa'd TamTm or lying under a tree.²⁷⁹

The treacherous murder of Talha by Marwan evidently was no spontaneous act. Marwan had already hinted his intention of also taking revenge among 'A'isha's partisans to the Umayyads who had deserted her army at Dhat 'Irq. Yet he evidently waited until it was safe to predict that he would not be called to account by a victorious Mother of the Faithful. Having learned his lesson on the Day of the Palace, he stayed behind, biding his time without boastfully challenging the enemy. It was only

²⁷⁵ See the accounts of Marwan b. al-Jakam and the Medinan Muhammad b. Ibrahim b. al-Harith al-Tayml quoted by al-Mufld, *Jamal*, 387-90. Shi'ite tradition preferred these reports as proof that 'All did not forgive al-Zubayr.

²⁷⁶ TabarT, I, 3187-8; BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 256-7. In the version of Ibn Sa'd (*Tabaqat*, III/1, 77-8) 'Ammar is not mentioned.

²⁷⁷ TabarT, I, 3290; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 259. ¹⁴⁶ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 245. _

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 246; Mufld, *Jamal*, 383, 389. Marwan told 'All's grandson 'AIT Zayn al-'Abidln that he hit Talha with two arrows.

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after his deed that he was slightly wounded. He is said to have turned towards 'Uthman's son Aban and told him: 'We have taken care of one of the murderers of your father for you.'¹⁴⁸

With the two leaders killed, the defeat was sealed and the armed conflict could have been halted. The presence of 'A'isha in her camel litter spurred her army on to a supreme, though senseless, effort to defend her. Ferocious fighting centred now around her camel and litter, which were protected by armoured plate, and continued for many hours. The men holding the camel's halter were killed one after the other. The first was the pious Ka'b b. Sur, who had a Qur'an tied around his neck. Then a number of Qurayshites took over. The Umayyad 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Attab b. Asld, called lord (*ya'sub*) of the Arabs or of Quraysh, was killed by al-Ashtar. 'A'isha was particularly grieved by his death.¹⁴⁹ Talha's son Muhammad, known as a pious worshipper, is said to have taken the halter and been killed there.¹⁵⁰ Al-Aswad b. Abi I-Bakhtari of Asad Quraysh was brought down to the ground but escaped unhurt. 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr took over and was attacked by al-Ashtar. According to the common account, the two men grappled with each other; Ibn al-Zubayr was wounded, but then they were separated.¹⁵¹ According to al-Ashtar's own report, he rather struck Ibn al-Zubayr on the head with his sword and left him for dead.¹⁵² Al-Aswad found him lying on the ground, laid him on his own horse, and took him off the battlefield to the house of a man of the Banu I-Ghabra' of Azd.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁸ Khalifa, *Ta'rikh*, 185; Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 246.

¹⁴⁹ Tabari, I, 3227-8. Al-Tabari's identification of the Ya'sub al-'Arab as Muhammad b. Talha is, as noted by Levi della Vida (in *Annali*, IX, 149), mistaken.

¹⁵⁰ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 243. ¹⁵¹ Tabari, I, 3199—200.

¹⁵² Al-Nu'man, *Sharh al-akhbar*, I, 397. Al-Ashtar explained that he was eager to kill Ibn al-Zubayr because he held him responsible for bringing out his aunt 'A'isha in the campaign. The one whom he pulled to the ground and grappled with was, he said, 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Attab.

¹⁵³ So according to 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr's own report quoted by al-Mufid, *Jamal*, 362. On the way whenever al-Aswad passed by some follower of 'All, he put Ibn al-Zubayr off the horse. On one occasion he passed by a man who recognized Ibn al-Zubayr. He (the man?) attacked him, but missed. Another man wounded his horse. Al-Aswad delivered Ibn al-Zubayr safely to the house of the man of the Banu I-Ghabra' who had two wives, one of Tamim and one of Bakr. They washed his wound and dressed it with camphor. It oozed little blood and healed quickly.

'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Harith b. Hisham of Makhzum narrated that he, al-Aswad b. Abi I-Bakhtari and 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr had made a pact in Basra that they would either kill 'All in the battle or die. During the battle they were looking for their chance, but witnessed first the right wing and then the left wing of the enemy routing their opposites. 'Abd al-Rahman then saw 'All slay two men of Dabba successively. Eventually they were swept away in the general defeat. After the battle 'Abd al-Rahman successfully avoided the armed patrols of 'All (Mufid, *Jamal*, 375). 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr, who escaped separately, met him by chance (Mufid, *ibid.*, 363), and they evidently returned together to the Hijaz. According to a report of al-Waqidi, 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Harith pledged allegiance to 'All after the battle and then departed (*ibid.*, 413-14).

Thereafter common tribesmen took over. The Banu Dabba in particular took great pride in thus serving the Mother of the Faithful. Forty of their men are said to have been killed, one after the other, at the halter.²⁸⁰ The slaughter came to a sudden halt when 'AIT called for someone to hamstring the camel. According to one report, this was done by Bujayr b. Dulja, a Kufan of Dabba, who later said that he had been worried that none of his Basran kinsmen might survive.¹⁵⁵ Another report identifies the man as al-Musallim(P) b. Ma'dan of the Banu Shazan b. Nukra of 'Abd al-Qays.²⁸¹ As the animal dropped down with its load, 'AIT and his close companions were able to approach. 'A'isha's brother Muhammad, on 'AIT's order, cut the straps fastening the litter to the animal's body and, with some helpers, carried it off. Muhammad b. Hatib al-JumahT narrated: 'I went with 'AIT on the day of the Camel to the litter which looked like the spikes of a hedgehog from arrows. He banged at the litter and said: 'Surely, this Humayra' of Iram²⁸² wanted to kill me as she killed 'Uthman b. 'Affan.' Then her brother Muhammad asked her: 'Has anything hit you?' She said: 'An arrow in the upper arm.' He put his hand inside [the litter], drew her towards himself, and pulled it out.²⁸³

When 'AIT faced 'A'isha, he severely reproached her for the ruin she had brought on the Muslims. It was now her turn to sue humbly for peace. 'You have won the reign, Ibn AbT Talib, so pardon with goodness.'¹⁵⁹ 'AIT ordered her brother Muhammad to escort her to town, where she was then lodged in the house of Safiyya bt al-Harith b. Talha b. AbT Talha of 'Abd al-Dar.²⁸⁴ There she stayed for a few days. Al-Ashtar bought an expensive camel and sent it to her to replace the one killed in the battle, but she would not accept it from him.²⁸⁵

Then 'AIT sent 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas to order her to leave. According to his own account, Ibn al-'Abbas asked for permission to enter the house where she was staying but, being refused, entered without it. In the room, where 'A'isha was concealed behind a screen, he did not find anything to sit on. Then he discovered at the side a saddle covered by a saddle rug (*tanfasa*). He spread out the rug and sat down on it. 'A'isha asked him: 'Ibn 'Abbas, what is this? You come to me in my home without my

²⁸⁰ Tabari, I, 3198. ¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 3204. ¹⁵⁶ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 248.

enemies later used it as her nickname. Iram was the name of a legendary pre-Islamic Arabian tribe which had been destroyed. Pre-Islamic legend and poetry featured the male figure of the ill-omened Ahmar or Uhaymir of 'Ad (or Thamud), who brought misfortune and ruin down upon his own people. 'Humayra' of Iram' was meant to be a female equivalent. ¹⁵⁸ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 250.

²⁸⁴ Safiyya's husband was 'Abd Allah b. Khalaf al-Khuza'T, appointed secretary of the *dizvan* of Basra by 'Umar. He was killed fighting for 'A'isha in the battle (Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, VIII, 5-6, IV, 62).'

²⁸⁵ Ibn Abi Shayba, *Musannaf*, VIII, 705; Tabari, I, 3227-8.

²⁸⁵ Mu'adh b. 'Ubayd Allah al-Tamimi fought in the battle on the side of the Mekkan rebels. He may have gone over to 'Ali before the end; his reports about the battle express admiration for him (MufTd, *Jamal*, 364-5, 373-4).

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permission and you sit down on my belongings without my permission. You have contravened the Sunna.' Ibn al-'Abbas: 'We taught you and others the Sunna; we are more worthy of it than you. Your only home is the one where the Messenger of God left you and from which you departed wronging yourself, presumptuous against your Lord, and disobedient towards your Prophet. When you return to it, I shall not enter without your permission, nor shall I sit down except on your order.' She began to weep, and he told her: 'The Commander of the Faithful has sent me to you to command you to leave Basra and to return to your home.' She said: 'And who is the Commander of the Faithful? The Commander of the Faithful was 'Umar.' Ibn al-'Abbas told her: "Umar used to be called Commander of the Faithful, but this one, by God, is 'All, the Commander of the Faithful in truth, as the Messenger of God called him thus. He, by God, is closer in kinship to the Messenger of God, earlier in submission [to Islam], more abounding in knowledge, and more forbearing (*ahlamu hilman*) than your father and 'Umar.' As she protested, he assured her that her father's reign had been short in duration, but grave in outcome, of evident evil omen, and of clear misfortune. Yet she had taken advantage of it to reveal her hostility to the Prophet's kin. 'A'isha kept sobbing and declared defiantly: 'I shall, by God, leave you; there is no abode more loathsome to me than the one where you [pi.] are.' Ibn al-'Abbas questioned her: 'And why that? It is not because of any distress caused to you by us, nor any preference on our part over you and your father. We made you a Mother of the Faithful when you were the daughter of Umm Ruman, and we made your father a SiddTq when he was the son of Abu Quhafa.' 'A'isha: 'Do you claim to have benefited us through the Messenger of God?' Ibn al-'Abbas: 'And why should we not claim to have benefited you through someone who, if you had a single hair from him, you would claim to benefit through it and would boast by it. Yet we are of his flesh and blood, and you are merely one of nine stuffed beds which he left behind. Nor are you the one of them with the firmest root, the most verdant leaves, and the widest shade.' As he quoted some poetry illustrating his point, she fell silent and he left to inform 'AIT who expressed satisfaction with his conduct.¹⁶² 'A'isha then requested, and was granted, a delay, but after a few days 'AIT pressed her, and she left for Medina accompanied by a group of Basran women and some men of her choice.¹⁶³

Upon her arrival in Medina, first the 'Uthmanid AnsarT poet Ka'b b. Malik and then his daughter Kabsha in a group of women of the Ansar visited her to greet her. Kabsha related 'A'isha's own account of her

¹⁶² Al-Nu'man, *Sharh al-akhbar*, I, 390-2; al-Majlis!, *Bihar al-anwar* (Tehran/Tabriz, 1303—15/[1888—98]), VIII, 450-1. ¹⁶³ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 249.

experiences in the battle. She claimed now that just before the battle she had stood up among the people and summoned them to a truce, the Book of God, and the Sunna, but nobody would listen to a word of her speech as they hastened to start the fighting; first one or two of 'All's followers were killed, then the battle lines drew near each other; the people showed no other concern than about her camel; some arrows entered the armoured litter, wounding her. As she showed the women the wound in her upper arm, all wept. She then described how every man taking hold of the halter of her camel was killed and how she vainly tried to drive her nephew 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr away from it. The young men of Quraysh on their side, she commented, were inexperienced in war and thus became easy prey for slaughter by the enemy. After a short break in the fighting she saw the son of Abu Talib personally engaged in fighting and heard him shout: 'The camel, the camel.' She said to herself: 'He wants, by God, to kill me.' Then he approached together with her brother Muhammad, Mu'adh b. 'Ubayd Allah al-Tamim¹⁶⁴ and 'Ammar b. Yasir, and they cut the straps holding the litter on the camel's back and carried it off as the men on her side dispersed. Next she heard the herald of 'AIT calling out: 'No one turning his back shall be pursued, no one wounded shall be killed, whoever throws away his arms is safe.'

She then was taken to the house of 'Abd Allah b. Khalaf al-Khuzal who had been killed in the battle and whose family were weeping for him. Everyone who had been hostile to 'All (*nasaba lah*) and had fled in fear now came to her. When she asked about Talha and al-Zubayr, she was told that they had been killed. She was also told at first that her nephew 'Abd Allah had been killed, and fell into even deeper grief. For three days she would not eat or drink anything, although her hosts were most hospitable and there was plenty of bread. She closed her account, stressing her remorse for having incited the revolt against 'Uthman. The Muslims, she said, would never again have a caliph like him. He had been the greatest among them in gentleness (*hilm*), the most persevering in worship, the most generous in misfortune, and the one most protective of kinship ties.²⁸⁶

'A'isha's attitude towards 'All had evidently not changed much. When al-Nu'man b. Bashir came to see her some time later with a message from Mu'awiya, now in open conflict with 'AIT, she received him well. Then she confided to him that she had heard the Prophet, in the presence of 'Umar's daughter Hafsa, tell 'Uthman three times that God would clothe

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 378-80, quoting al-WaqidT.

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him in a garment which he should not take off when the hypocrites would want him to do so. Pleased but surprised, al-Nu'man asked her: 'Mother of the Faithful, where have you been in relation to this hadith?' She told him that she had forgotten it as if she had never heard it.¹⁶⁶

Her defeat in the battle of the Camel put an end to 'A'isha's political career and sealed the demise of the early patriarchal caliphate of Medina, which she had hoped to restore. After the death of Mu'awiya, her nephew 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr was to make another attempt to revive it, but failed. The memory of the horrible carnage taking place around her litter in which so many men close to her lost their lives and of her own part as Mother of the Faithful in driving Muslims to kill Muslims must have haunted her. The numerous reports about her remorse and wish not to have lived to see that day certainly reflect the truth. The mood is well caught in the story narrated by the Kufan Jundab b. 'Abd Allah al-AzdT: 'Amr b. al-Ashraf al-'Atakl of the Basran Azd took the halter of the camel, and no one could get close to him but that he would be struck down by his sword; then al-Harith b. Zuhayr of the Kufan Azd, a Companion of the Prophet, came up to him, reciting:

**O our Mother, the best mother we know, do you not see how many a brave man is
being smitten, and has his head and hand cut off?**

'Then they exchanged two strikes, and I saw them digging up the earth with their legs before they died. Later I paid 'A'isha a visit in Medina. She said: "Who are you?" I answered: "A man of the Azd. I live in Kufa." She asked: "Were you present with us on the Day of the Camel?" I said yes, and she asked: "For us or against us?" I answered: "Against you." She asked: "Do you know the one who said: O our mother, the best mother we know?" and I said: "Yes, that was my cousin." Then she wept so that I thought she would not calm down again.¹⁶⁷

The losses were substantial on both sides, though obviously more grievous in 'A'isha's camp. Quraysh, fighting for their caliphate and status as the sole ruling class, paid a heavy toll, affecting most of its clans. Among the dead¹⁶⁸ were of 'Abd Shams: 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Attab b. Asld; 'Abd Allah b. al-WalTd b. Yazid b. 'AdT b. RabT'a b. 'Abd al-'Uzza; Muhriz b. Haritha b. RabT'a b. 'Abd al-'Uzza; his cousin 'AIT b. 'AdT b. RabT'a, governor of Mekka under 'Uthman; and 'Abd al-Rahman, son of 'Uthman's governor of Basra 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir b. Kurayz;¹⁶⁹ of

¹⁶⁶ Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madma*, 1068-9. Hafsa confirmed 'A'isha's report (*ibid.*, 1069-70).

¹⁶⁷ TabarT, I, 3201. In Abu Mikhnaf's version of the story, 'the best mother' is replaced by 'the most uncaring (*a'aqq*) mother' (Ibn Abi I-HadTd, *Shark*, I, 264).

¹⁶⁸ For the following list see in general the necrology for the year 36 H. in *Annali*, IX and KhalTfa, *Ta'rikh*, 177-8, where some of the names and lineages need to be corrected.

¹⁶⁹ 'Abd al-Rahman was born when his father was only thirteen years old (Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, XII, 285). He was thus nineteen years old when he was killed.

Nawfal: Muslim b. Qaraza b. 'Abd 'Amr b. Nawfal, brother of Mu'awiya's wife Fakhita;²⁸⁷ of Asad: al-Zubayr and 'Abd Allah b. Hakim b. Hizam, who carried the banner of 'A'isha's army and was killed by 'AdT b. Hatim al-Ta'T and al-Ashtar;²⁸⁸ of 'Abd al-Dar: 'Abd Allah b. Musafi' b. Talha b. AbT Talha; of Zuhra: al-Aswad b. 'Awf, brother of 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf;²⁸⁹ of Makhzum: 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Sa'ib b. Abi l-Sa'ib b. 'A'idh; 'Abd al-Rahman b. AbT Burda b. Ma'bad b. Wahb b. 'Amr b. 'A'idh, Ma'bad b. al-Zuhayr b. AbT Umayya b. al-MughTra; of Taym: Talha; his son Muhammad; his brother 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Ubayd ('Abd) Allah b. 'Uthman; and 'Abd al-Rahman b. AbT Salama b. al-Harith;²⁹⁰ of Jumah: 'Abd Allah b. Ubayy b. Khalaf b. Wahb; 'Abd Allah b. RabT'a b. Darraj b. al-'Anbas;²⁹¹ 'Abd al-Rahman b. Wahb b. AsTd b. Khalaf; and Muslim b. 'Amir b. Humayl;²⁹² of Sahn: a son of Qays b. 'AdT b. Sa'd, the *'sayyid* of Quraysh in his time'; and of 'Amir: 'Abd al-Rahman and 'Amr, sons of Humayr b. 'Amr b. 'Abd Allah b. Abi Qays; Abu Sufyan b. Huwaytib b. 'Abd al-'Uzza b. AbT Qays;²⁹³ 'Ubayd Allah b. Anas b. Jabir b. 'Abada b. Wahb;²⁹⁴ and 'Abd Allah b. YazTd b. al-Asamm.²⁹⁵ The lowest figures of all the dead given are 2,500 for 'A'isha's army and 400 to 500 for 'AIT's.²⁹⁶ These figures seem realistic. The heaviest losses were taken by the Basran Dabba and Azd.

As one after the other of his tribesmen was slain, 'Amr b. YathribT al-DabbT spurred them on with Rajaz verses of encouragement for 'A'isha

²⁸⁷ Finding Muslim b. Qaraza's body among the dead on the battlefield, 'All sarcastically questioned whether it was perhaps kindness (*birr*) that had motivated this man to come forth against him. Muslim had, he explained, asked him to intervene with 'Uthman in a claim he had against him in Mekka. 'AIT had pressed 'Uthman until he conceded it to Muslim remarking: 'If it were not for you, I would not give it to him.' Now Muslim had met his death backing 'Uthman (MufTd, *Jamal*, 393).¹⁷¹ Tabari, I, 3202.

²⁸⁹ Among the enemy dead on the battlefield 'All also found Ma'bad, the son of al-Miqdad b. al-Aswad ('Amr), confederate of Zuhra. Al-Miqdad, one of the earliest converts to Islam, had been a strong supporter of 'All even at the time of 'Uthman's election, and Ma'bad's mother was a Hashimite. 'All expressed severe condemnation of Ma'bad's betrayal of his kinship ties while praising his father (Baladhurl, *Ansab*, II, 264–5; Mufld, *Jamal*, 392-3).

²⁹⁰ Mentioned only by KhalTfa (*Ta'rikh*, 186). He is not traceable elsewhere.

²⁹¹ Zubayri, *Nasab*, 396; Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, XI, 125. 'AIT commented on his dead body: 'This miserable one, it was not backing for 'Uthman which made him go out. By God, 'Uthman's view of him and of his father was not good' (MufTd, *Jamal*, 396).

²⁹² He is mentioned only by KhalTfa (*Ta'rikh*, 186) and is not traceable elsewhere.

²⁹³ According to a report of Saïd b. Abi Hind, 'AIT tried to save Abu Sufyan b. Huwaytib, who appeared frightened in the battle, by inviting him to go over to his side. Abu Sufyan tried to do so, but a Basran offensive against 'All's position caught up with him. A Kufan of Hamdan attacked and slew him, failing to comprehend in time 'All's order to leave him (MufTd, *Jamal*, 361). Abu Sufyan's father Huwaytib was, according to some reports, among those present at the burial of 'Uthman (Zubayri, *Nasab*, 426; see chapter 3, n. 291). His nephew Musahiqb. 'Abd Allah b. Makhramab. 'Abd al-'Uzza was among the survivors of the battle; he offered his apologies to 'AIT and was pardoned by him (MufTd, *Jamal*, 413, 416).¹⁷⁷ Zubayri, *Nasab*, 434. ¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 439.

²⁹⁶ Baladhurl, *Ansab*, II, 264; KhalTfa, *Ta'rikh*, 186; Tabari, I, 3232.

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not to worry. He killed three of 'All's men, 'Ilba' b. al-Haytham al-SadusT, Hind b. 'Amr al-Jamall and Zayd b. Suhan of 'Abd al-Qays. 'Ilba' and Zayd were known to have been early and vigorous supporters of 'All.²⁹⁷ The aged 'Ammar is said to have confronted Ibn YathribT. The latter attacked him with his sword, but it stuck in 'Ammar's leather shield, and the Kufans hit him with arrows. As he fell to the ground he recited:

**If you kill me, I am Ibn YathribT who killed 'Ilba' and Hind al-Jamall and then
Ibn Suhan, followers of the religion of 'AIT ('a/a *din* 'AIT).**

He was taken captive and led before 'AIT. Although he asked for his life, 'AIT ordered him to be killed, the only captive in the battle whom he did not pardon.²⁹⁸ When questioned about this, 'AIT is said to have explained that Ibn YathribT had killed three men who, he pretended, were followers of the 'religion ofAIT'. The religion ofAIT, the latter emphasized, was the religion of Muhammad.²⁹⁹ That 'AIT's refusal of pardon was at least partly motivated by Ibn YathribT's verse is not unlikely. He was ever sensitive to any suggestion that he did not observe and apply the Qur'an and Muhammad's precedent more faithfully than anyone else.³⁰⁰ It was a weakness that would later prompt him to his most grievous mistake.

Other reports confirm the existence of the concept of a 'religion of 'AIT' among the Basrans. Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya narrated that he attacked a man, but when he was about to stab him he said: 'I am a follower of the religion of 'AIT b. AbT Talib.' Ibn al-Hanafiyya understood what he meant and left him.³⁰¹ As the tide turned against the Basran Azd and they were forced to turn to flight they called out: 'We are followers of the religion of 'AIT b. AbT Talib', evidently in order to save their lives. A Kufan of the Banu Layth later lampooned them, condemning their disgraceful opinion.¹⁸⁵ He meant presumably both their dissimulation in claiming to be followers of 'AIT and their attribution of a special religion to him.

The conflict thus had also a religious dimension. *Din 'All* could at this

²⁹⁷ Zayd b. \$uhan's brother Sihan was also killed in the battle. The third brother, Sa'sa'a b. Suhan, was a prominent figure among 'All's followers and an eyewitness informant of al-Sha'bl for events during 'All's reign (Sezgin, *Abii Mihnaf*, 137; al-Najashl, *Rijal*, ed. Musa al-Shabm al-Zanjanl (Qumm, 1407/[1987]), 203). 'A'isha is reported to have used the formula 'may God have mercy on him' when she was informed of Zayd's death after the battle (Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, IX, 146).¹⁸¹ TabarT, I, 3198-9.

²⁹⁹ Ibn Durayd, *al-Ishtiqaq*, ed. 'Abd al-Salam Muhammad Harun (Baghdad, 1399/1979), 413.

³⁰⁰ Levi della Vida evidently misinterpreted the explanation by suggesting that it reflects the same tendency as reports about 'AIT's punishing 'Abd Allah b. Saba' and his extremist (*ghulat*) followers (in *Annali*, IX, 142). Here it is a question of imputing deviant doctrine to 'AIT, not of preaching extremist doctrine in his name.

³⁰¹ Ibn AbT Shayba, *Mufannaf*, VIII, 711. ¹⁸⁵ TabarT, I, 3189—90.

stage have only a limited meaning, most likely the claim that 'AIT was the best of men after Muhammad, his legatee (*wast*), and as such most entitled to lead the Community. This is probably implied in two lines which one of the Banu 'AdT recited as he was holding the halter of 'A'isha's camel:

We are 'AdT, we seek (*nabtaghi*) 'AIT, carrying lances and Mashraft swords, helmets, and twisted iron rings [of mail], we kill whoever opposes the legatee (*man yukhalifu l-wasiyya*).¹⁸⁶

As this was said by a shaykh of the Banu 'AdT backing 'A'isha, the legatee cannot be 'AIT.¹⁸⁷ It is equally unlikely that some pro-'AIT poetry slipped inadvertently into the story which was transmitted by Abu Na'ama 'Amr b. 'Isa b. Suwayd, a well-known scholar of the Banu 'AdT.¹⁸⁸ The legatee is here Abu Bakr whom 'AIT and his followers oppose in making war against his daughter. Abu Bakr was not normally, certainly in later times, considered the legatee of Muhammad. He is called so here to counter the claim of the opponents that 'AIT was the *wast*.¹⁸⁹

Fighting Muslim opponents in regular battle was a new experience in Islam. 'AIT could have treated his opponents on Abu Bakr's precedent as apostates and infidels and thus applied the common rules of warfare to them. Given the long-standing rank of his leading opponents in Islam, this was hardly a reasonable option. 'AIT ordered at the beginning of the battle that wounded or captured enemies should not be killed, those throwing away their arms should not be fought, and those fleeing from the battleground should not be pursued. Only captured weapons and animals were to be considered war booty. After the battle he ordered that no war prisoners, women or children were to be enslaved and that the property of slain enemies was to go to their legal Muslim heirs. As a compensation he paid 500 dirhams to each of his men out of the Basran treasury.¹⁹⁰ These rules were to become authoritative in Islam for the warfare against Muslim rebels (*bughdt*). While they were evidently accepted by most of his men without argument, a few radicals questioned his conduct. He is said to have told them that if they insisted on enslaving

¹⁸⁶ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 245-6.

¹⁸⁷ This was the interpretation of Levi della Vida, who translated the report without further comment ('Il califfato di 'All secondo il Kitab Ansab al-Asraf di al-BaladurT', *Rivista degli Studi Orientali*, 6 (1914—15), 427—507, at 444; *Annali*, IX, 155). The Shi'ite editor of Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, commented on the unexpected use of the term with a *sic* (*kadha*).

¹⁸⁸ Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, VIII, 87.

¹⁸⁹ The expression *nabtaghi'Aliyy an*, 'we seek, or desire, 'All', is in itself ambiguous. Here it evidently means we seek him to make him pay for the murder of Uthman. It is to be compared to the complaint of 'Amr b. Yathrib: 'I strike them, but I do not see Abu Hasan ['AIT], that is indeed a pity' (TabarT, I, 3199).

¹⁹⁰ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 261—2. Numerous relevant reports are quoted in Ibn AbT Shayba, *Musannaf*, VIII, 707-8, 710-11, 713, 718-21.

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their opponents, they would have to draw lots for the possession of 'A'isha. The Kharijites later made it a point of their accusations against him that he was breaking the norms of Islam by denying his warriors their legal share of war booty.

The prisoners of war were set free by 'AIT after they pledged allegiance. Still on the battle day, 'Uthman's sons Aban and Sa'Td were led as captives before 'AIT. One of those present suggested that he kill them, but 'AIT rebuked him, asking how he could kill these two men after having announced a general pardon. Turning towards the two captives he told them to abandon their delusion and to depart to wherever they wished. If they preferred they could stay with him, and he would honour their kinship ties. They answered that they would pledge allegiance and then depart. They evidently left for the Hijaz.¹⁹¹

Talha's son Musa recalled how the prisoners, gathered together in the evening after the battle, were saying: 'Musa b. Talha will be killed tomorrow.' The next morning, after he had prayed the first prayer, the prisoners were called. He was the first one to be led before 'AIT. The Commander of the Faithful asked him: 'Will you pledge allegiance? Will you join what the people have joined?' He answered: 'Yes.' After his pledge 'AIT told him to return to his family and property. When the others saw that he came out safely, they readily entered and pledged allegiance.¹⁹² Musa became one of the heirs of Talha's vast property.¹⁹³

Musahiq b. 'Abd Allah b. Makhrama al-'Amiri al-Qurashi recounted that he and a group of Qurayshites, among them Marwan b. al-Hakam, agreed to offer 'AIT their apologies for their revolt against him. They realized that he was the most noble and forbearing man in his conduct after the Prophet and that they had wronged him. 'AIT received them and questioned them in a speech as to whether he had not been the man closest to the Prophet and most entitled to rule the people after him. When they assented, he reminded them that they had turned away from him to pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr; not wishing to split the ranks of the Muslim Community, he had refrained from opposing their choice; he had done the same when Abu Bakr appointed 'Umar to succeed him, even

¹⁹¹ MufTd, *Jamal*, 382. Aban b. 'Uthman is described by al-Baladhuri as the first one to take flight in the battle of the Camel (*Ansb*, V, 120).

¹⁹² Ibn AbT Shayba, *Musannaf*, VIII, 716. There is a gap in the text of the report: Ibn Manzur, *Mukhta'ar*, XXV, 290-1.

¹⁹³ Al-Zubayri, however, describes 'Imran b. Talha as the one who visited 'AIT after the battle of the Camel and requested that he return his father's property at al-Nashtastaj to him. 'AIT treated him kindly, prayed for God's mercy for his father, and ordered that all the property with the crops which had been gathered from it be turned over to him (*Nasab*, 281-2). 'Imran was, unlike Musa, a full brother of Muhammad b. Talha and perhaps the eldest surviving son. He does not seem to have participated in the battle.

though he knew that he was most entitled to the position of the Messenger of God; when 'Umar appointed him one of six candidates for the succession, they had pledged allegiance to 'Uthman, but then criticized and killed him while he, 'AIT, remained sitting in his house. 'Then you came to me and pledged allegiance to me just as you pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr and 'Umar. Why then did you keep your pledge to them but not to me?' They begged him to act as Joseph had to his brothers and to pardon them, quoting Qur'an XII 92. 'AIT took their pledge of allegiance and let them go.¹⁹⁴

Some of 'AIT's enemies were able to avoid pledging allegiance. Concerning Marwan, there are conflicting reports. According to some, Marwan, having been pardoned, himself expressed eagerness to do homage and 'AIT accepted his pledge.¹⁹⁵ Abu Mikhnaf, in contrast, reported that Marwan, wounded in the battle, first found shelter among the 'Anaza. He then requested, and received, the protection of Malik b. Misma' al-ShaybanT, who obtained 'AIT's pardon for him. When the people of Basra all pledged allegiance, 'AIT proposed that he also do so. Marwan refused, however, reminding him that he had already pardoned him. He would pledge allegiance only if forced to do so by 'AIT. The latter told him to his face that he would not force him, since whatever pledge he would give he would not fail to betray it. Marwan left to join Mu'awiya in Syria.¹⁹⁶ Regardless of whether he actually swore allegiance or not, 'AIT obviously could be under no illusion as to the value of the oath of a man such as Marwan. That he simply let him go shows how little he was prepared to adopt the new rules of the game of politics which, as a result of the civil war, came to prevail now in Islam. Surely neither Mu'awiya nor Marwan himself would have hesitated to do away with so dangerous and vicious an enemy who had just revealed his hand by treacherously murdering one of the closest Companions of the Prophet after first threatening 'AIT with perdition.¹⁹⁷

'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr, also wounded, had, as noted, found refuge in the house of a man of the Azd. He sent to his aunt 'A'isha to inform her of his whereabouts. She asked her brother Muhammad to bring him to her. On the way the two men rebuked each other rudely concerning 'Uthman.

^{1,4} Mufld, *Jamal*, 413-14, 416-17; al-Nu'man, *Sharh al-akhbar*, I, 392[^]1.

¹⁹⁵ See in particular the report of Nafi' (Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, V, 26) which erroneously states that Marwan departed for Medina and stayed there until the accession of Mu'awiya. The report contains other errors and seems on the whole unreliable. According to a report of the Shi'ite imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, Marwan himself told his grandfather 'AIT b. al-Husayn that he willingly swore allegiance to 'AIT, who allowed him to go wherever he wished (BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 262-3). ¹⁹⁶ BaladhurT, *Ansd*, II, 263. ^{1,7} See excursus 6 on Musa b. Talha and the Umayyads.

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Mu'awiya's brother 'Utba b. AbT Sufyan, who first had been granted protection by 'Isma b. Ubayr of the Banu Taym of al-Ribab, also moved to stay with 'A'isha. Informed of this, 'AIT did not interfere.¹⁹⁸ Neither of them presumably pledged allegiance, and 'Utba soon found his way to his brother in Damascus. Whether 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir b. Kurayz swore allegiance is not known. Well acquainted with Basra and having friends there, he may have found it easy to hide and abscond. He, too, went off to Syria.¹⁹⁹

In his sermon to the Basrans, 'AIT chastized them for being the first subjects to break their oath of allegiance and split the ranks of the Community. He forgave them, however, and warned them against sedition (*fitna*). Then he received their renewed oath of allegiance. He wrote to Qaraza b. Ka'b, his governor of Kufa, announcing the victory and praising the Kufans.²⁰⁰ Preparing to set out for Kufa, he appointed 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas governor of Basra and attached Ziyad b. 'Ubayd (AbTh) to him as secretary.²⁰¹ It may have been at this same time that he appointed 'Umar b. AbT Salama governor of al-Bahrayn and Qutham b. al-'Abbas governor of Mekka. The latter, however, is not mentioned among those present at the battle of the Camel and may have been sent by 'AIT from Medina or al-Rabadha after the Qurayshite rebels had departed from Mekka. The appointment of 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas was resented by al-Ashtar, who had hoped to be rewarded with the governorship for

^{1,8} BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 263-4, quoting Abu Mikhnaf. According to 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr's own account, he sent the owner of the house in which he first stayed to 'A'isha to inform her about him, telling him to avoid being seen by Muhammad b. 'Abi Bakr. The man mentioned his concern to 'A'isha but she sent him to call her brother, whom she then asked to go and get their nephew. Ibn al-Zubayr was at first scared by the sight of Muhammad and began to curse him. Muhammad calmed him down, however, by informing him that he was sent by 'A'isha. It was at 'A'isha's house that he heard 'Uthman being cursed openly and decided that he would not stay in a town where this was done. He took a camel from his companion (presumably the man with whom he had stayed) and left Basra, keeping away from the armed guards. Then he observed a man who, like himself, was trying to avoid being seen. It was his friend 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Harith b. Hisham. Further on he saw a man with a horse, which he recognized as his father's. He wanted to kill him, but 'Abd al-Rahman told him not to be hasty since the man could not slip away from them. It turned out to be al-Zubayr's slave. When 'Abd Allah asked him where al-Zubayr was, he answered that he did not know. 'Abd Allah, according to his account, then knew that his father had been killed (Mufld, *Jamal*, 362-3).

¹⁹⁹ Ibn 'Asakir's eulogistic report describes 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir as appealing to al-Zubayr before the battle not to proceed and thus to save the Community of Muhammad. As al-Zubayr ignored his advice, Ibn 'Amir left for Syria, presumably without fighting (Ibn Man'ur, *Mukhtasar*, XII, 288). This is highly improbable. 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir would hardly have left his son to fight and die while running away himself. The same source also wrongly suggests that Ibn 'Amir was not present at Siffin.

²⁰⁰ BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 264. The text of the letter quoted by al-Mufld, *Jamal*, 403-4, is probably spurious. The date given, Rajab 36/Dec. 656-Jan. 657, cannot be correct.

²⁰¹ BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 271.

his decisive part in the battle,²⁰² and there was evidently some murmuring among those critical of the privileged position of Quraysh at the fact that three of 'All's Hashimite kin were now holding governorships. 'AIT assured al-Ashtar that he was needed to deal with the Syrians, among whom there were many of his kin.

Leaving Basra, 'AIT was accompanied by the dignitaries of the town as far as Mawqu'. Al-Ahnaf b. Qays and SharTk b. al-A'war al-Harithi of Dahy b. Ka'b continued on with him to Kufa, but there is disagreement as to how far they went.²⁰³ 'AIT entered Kufa, according to al-Sha'bT, at the beginning of Rajab 36/24 December 656,²⁰⁴ or, according to Abu l-Kanud, on Monday 12 Rajab/ 2 January 657,²⁰⁵ less than a month after the battle. He refused to reside in the governor's castle, calling it the castle of corruption (*qasr al-khabal*) and chose to stay with his nephew Ja'da b. Hubayra al-MakhzumT.²⁰⁶ In his first sermon he took to task those who had failed to join his army. Sa'Td b. Qays al-HamdanT and Sulayman b. Surad al-Khuza'T, two close supporters, were personally reprimanded by him for having stayed behind.²⁰⁷

²⁰² Tabari, I, 3162; see Ibn Abi Shayba, *Musannaf*, VIII, 706 for some differences in the report. Al-Ashtar is said to have commented: 'What for have we killed the old man in Medina?' and to have called for Madhhij, his tribesmen, to leave with him. That he intended to join Mu'awiya, as suggested by the reporter Kulayb al-JarmT, is not likely. 'All, according to Kulayb, put his own date of departure forward in order to prevent al-Ashtar from leaving alone with his men. ²⁰³ Baladhurl, *Ansd*, II, 271.

²⁰⁴ Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 80. Al-Sha'bl's statement that 'All stayed in Kufa for seventeen months exchanging letters with Mu'awiya and 'Amr b. al-'As must be understood as meaning that 'AIT continued to exchange letters with them until the end of the year 37/June 658 when he set out on his second campaign against them, not that he stayed in Kufa for the whole period.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 3; Christian date adjusted for Monday. The alternative date given by al-Baladhuri (*Ansab*, II, 273), Ramadan 36/Feb.-March 657, which apparently goes back to al-Zuhri (see *ibid.*, 293 n. 1), is far too late. The reports give the impression that 'AIT stayed in Basra a very brief time. The earlier date given by al-Sha'bT seems not unreasonable.

²⁰⁶ Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 3, 5. Ja'da's mother Umm Hani' was a sister of 'AIT (Zubayri, *Nasab*, 39; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 41). In Abu Mikhnaf's report on 'AIT's return to Kufa from Siffin he is described as entering the castle (TabarT, I, 3349). In al-Baladhuri's account of the murder of 'AIT based on al-WaqidT, Abu Mikhnaf and 'Awana, it is affirmed, however, that he did not reside in the castle but in some houses with wooden roofs (*akhfas*) at the plaza known as Rahbat 'AIT (BaladhurT, *Ansd*, II, 492). He may have used the palace only for ceremonial purposes.

²⁰⁷ BaladhurT, *Ansd*, II, 272-4; MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 4, 6-7. Sulayman b. Surad reported that he had complained to al-Hasan about the latter's failure to convey his excuses properly to his father. Al-Hasan told him that 'AIT was reproaching him, Sulayman, while 'All himself had expressed misgivings at the battle about being responsible for bringing together the two hostile camps. According to another report al-Hasan told Sulayman b. Surad that 'AIT during the battle expressed the wish that he himself had died twenty years before (BaladhurT, *Ansd*, II, 272-3; on 272, read *bi-mrtin* for *bi-amrin qad*). These reports reflect the opposition of al-Hasan to the fighting.

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Mu'awiya and Siffin

With the conflict with the Mekkan Quraysh settled in his favour, 'All now could turn his attention to Mu'awiya. Although seven months had passed since his accession, no relations had yet been established with the governor of Syria. To later viewers who saw his reign mainly in the light of his conflict with the Umayyad, this delay seemed entirely implausible and they invented various stories about early contacts. Sayf fabled that 'AIT sent Sahl b. Hunayf as his governor to Syria, but when the latter reached Tabuk he was turned back by the Syrian border guard since he had not been appointed by the legitimate caliph, 'Uthman.³⁰² Others made up stories designed to illustrate the cleverness of Mu'awiya, who met the overtures of 'AIT by sending back to him an empty sheet containing merely the address: 'From Mu'awiya b. AbT Sufyan to 'AIT b. AbT Talib.²⁰⁹ In fact 'AIT was, after his discussion with Ibn al-'Abbas, certainly aware that he could deal with Mu'awiya only from a position of strength. At the same time the threat to his caliphate from 'A'isha, Talha and al-Zubayr was evidently much more serious in his eyes. For Mu'awiya, a late convert without early merit in Islam, could hardly aspire to the caliphate at this stage and was in no position to act against him on his own.

Mu'awiya also initially saw that it was in his best interest to observe the developments and keep his options open. He had been joined, however, by 'Uthman's brother al-WalTd b. 'Uqba who was urging him to take quick revenge for the caliph's blood. After his humiliating punishment for wine-drinking, al-WalTd had defiantly addressed the Banu Umayya, declaring his bonds of kinship severed for their lack of solidarity.³⁰³ Was it for this reason that he forsook his brother in his hour of need? Now, in any case, he saw his chance to rally his Umayyad kin as their poetical spokesman and to get back at his many personal enemies. His first poetical admonition to Mu'awiya and the Syrians was probably the following:

**By God, Hind will not be your mother if the day passes without the avenger
taking revenge for 'Uthman.
Can the slave of the people kill the lord of his household
and you [pi.] do not kill him? Would your mother were barren!**

³⁰² TabarT, I, 3087.

³⁰³ ZubayrI, *Nasab*, 139; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 974.

³⁰³ Aghani, IV, 177.

Surely if we kill them no one can [legitimately] retaliate for them, the wheels of fortune have turned on you.²¹¹

The 'slave of the people' was 'Amr b. al-'As, and the others to be killed with him were the Egyptian rebels who, al-WalTd assumed, had been working on behalf of their former governor. Calling 'Amr the slave who killed his master was a suitable response to the boasting match between 'Amr and 'Uthman about the nobility of their fathers. 'Amr's mother, al-Nabigha, had indeed been a slave woman and prostitute. It was widely believed that 'Amr's real father was the Umayyad Abu Sufyan, who had claimed his paternity against the Sahml al-'As b. Wa'il. Al-Nabigha was said to have judged in favour of al-'As because of his generous support of her, while Abu Sufyan was known as a miser. In looks, however, 'Amr resembled Abu Sufyan most.³⁰⁴ The appeal to Mu'awiya as the son of Hind, the proud Umayyad mother of Mu'awiya, thus aimed at driving a wedge between him and his bastard half-brother, the mere slave of Umayya. Al-WalTd had a personal score to settle with 'Amr who had dared to divorce his sister in a show of anger at being deposed by 'Uthman. An exemplary punishment of 'Amr, who had withdrawn to his estate in Palestine, would also have been the most convenient course for Mu'awiya to demonstrate his right and will to retaliate for the murdered caliph.

At about the same time, al-WalTd addressed a poem to his brother 'Umara who was living in Kufa. Al-WalTd was evidently irked because his brother remained in the town from which he himself had been removed under ignominious circumstances, even after the Kufans had risen in rebellion against 'Uthman. He wanted to pressure him into joining the Umayyad coalition which he hoped to gather around Mu'awiya.

I have been given 'Amr in exchange for 'Uthman when I lost him, may God judge between a lord and the supporters of 'Amr! Surely the best of mankind after three is the one slain by the TujTbT who came from Egypt.

If my thought about my mother's son, 'Umara, does not deceive me, he will not seek blood-revenge and retaliation.

He will stay, when the duty of revenge for Ibn 'Affan is with him, his tent pitched between al-Khawarnaq and al-Qasr.³⁰⁵

³⁰⁴ See Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, VI, 284—5, where he quotes the *Kitab al-Ansab* of Abu 'Ubayda. Abu Sufyan's paternity of Amr b. al-'As had been publicized by Hassan b. Thabit in a lampoon in response to 'Amr's lampoon of the Prophet. The account quoted by Ibn Abi l-HadTd from al-Zamakhshari's *Rabi al-abrar* [*Sharh*, VI, 283; *RabT al-abrar*, ed. Sallm al-Nu'aymi (Baghdad, 1976), III, 548-50] that six men representing the major clans of Quraysh, including Abu Lahab, claimed the paternity is evidently a slanderous elaboration of the theme.

^{2,3} TabarT, I, 3064; Ibn Bakr, *TamhTd*, 209. The first line is missing in al-Tabari's version, and the response ascribed there to al-Fadl b. al-'Abbas thus appears unmotivated. In the first line as quoted by Ibn Bakr *nasiri* must be read *nasiri*. A further line of the poem is quoted in Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, XXVI, 247.

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Here, too, it is 'Amr b. al-'As who is seen as the man responsible for the murder of the caliph. 'Amr's Egyptian supporters, in particular the TujTbT Kinana b. Bishr, have killed him. Al-Walld's claim that 'Uthman was the most excellent of mankind after Muhammad, Abu Bakr and 'Umar drew forth a response from a different quarter. Al-Tabarl attributes it to al-Fadl b. 'Abbas, great-grandson of Muhammad's uncle Abu Lahab, but more likely it is by al-Fadl's father al-'Abbas b. 'Utba b. AbT Lahab. Al-'Abbas b. 'Utba, as noted, was married to Amina, daughter of al-'Abbas b. 'Abd al-Muttalib and seems to have acted as the poetical spokesman of the Banu Hashim at this time, just as al-WalTd b. 'Utba was the spokesman of the Banu Umayya. He answered al-WalTd:

**Do you claim a revenge of which you are not worthy, nor does
it belong to you?
Where does the son of Dhakwan, the [barbarian slave] from
Saffuriyya,²¹⁴ stand in relation to 'Amr?
Just like the daughter of the ass who attaches herself to her mother and
forgets her father when she vies for superiority with the glorious.
Surely, the best of mankind after Muhammad is the legatee (*wast*)
of the Prophet al-Mustafa among those who take note,
The first one who prayed and the brother of his Prophet,
the first to fell the misguided at Badr.
If the Helpers [Ansar] had seen that your [pi.] cousin was wronged
they would readily have helped him against being wronged.
Sufficient blemish it is that they should beckon to kill him and would
surrender him to the black hordes (*ahabish*) from Egypt.²¹⁵**

Mu'awiya, to be sure, was not tempted to follow the course urged upon him by his irate kinsman. He wanted at this stage above all to hold on to the rule of Syria. 'Uthman had meant little to him, he had done nothing to aid him, and felt no personal obligation to seek revenge. Yet he immediately sensed the political utility of a claim of revenge for the blood of the wronged caliph, as long as he, Mu'awiya, could decide on whom to pin the blame. He might well lock up Muhammad b. AbT Hudhayfa and

²¹⁴ Dhakwan al-Safuri. Dhakwan, al-Walld's grandfather, was said by some genealogists to have been a client of Umayya adopted by the latter as his son (Ibn al-Athlr, *Kamil*, II, 152). According to al-Kalbl, Dhakwan was the son of a Jewish slave girl of Lakhm in Saffuriyya (near Tabariyya in al-Urdunn) with whom Umayya had illicit intercourse. Umayya claimed him as his son and took him from his mother (Nu'man, *Sharh al-akhbar*, II, 119). Al-WalTd b. 'Uqba is thus called a barbarian (*Cilj*) from Saffuriyya in a boasting speech ascribed to al-Hasan b. 'AIT in the *Kitab al-Mufakharat* of al-Zubayr b. Bakkar (quoted by Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, VI, 293). In the poem al-SafurT presumably stands for al-Saffuri because of metrical necessity (*ibid.*, II, 116).

²¹⁵ Tabari, I, 3065.

the Egyptian rebels who were rash enough to pass through his territory, but 'Amr b. al-'As was a different matter. Mu'awiya was not convinced that nobody would claim blood-revenge for 'the slave who killed his master', as al-WalTd had put it. He was aware that 'A'isha had backed 'Amr against 'Uthman and certainly did not want to stir up a quarrel with the Mother of the Faithful. Besides, 'Amr was no threat to him now and might soon become useful. Some pressure on him, however, could only be beneficial. Mu'awiya left 'Amr alone on his estate in Palestine, but did not stop al-WalTd from pursuing his vendetta.

'Amr b. al-'As felt the heat. When he had first heard of the murder of 'Uthman he had, so it was reported, proudly taken some of the credit for it, boasting: 'I am Abu 'Abd Allah, surely, when I scratch a sore I scrape the scab before it heals (*idha hakaktu qarhatan naka'tuha*).²¹⁶ But he realized that to have a claim for blood-revenge pronounced against him by the spokesman of Umayya was not a matter to be taken lightly. 'Amr began to squirm and changed his tune. In a poem addressed to Mu'awiya he distanced himself from the Egyptian rebels who were suspected of having acted on his behalf. Grave matters, he said, have reached us whose heavy weight made the camels (of the messengers) limp; they had been perpetrated by men of the basest rabble; yet matters would only get worse if they were not decisively dealt with. He therefore was stating publicly that these people had committed against 'us' crimes whose flames could not be extinguished except by killing them all, or banishing²¹⁷ them to the desert. Mu'awiya must, he told him, publicize their offence in these two matters (the murder of 'Uthman and the takeover of Egypt).

**Mu'awiya, do not close your eyes, rise in the stirrup of the matter,
act equitably or resign, there is no third choice.**

**Will you undertake the grand matter and grasp the forelocks of
opportunity in these hideous times?²¹⁸**

The grand matter that 'Amr wanted Mu'awiya to undertake was the conquest of Egypt, in which he, 'Amr, no doubt expected to play his appropriate part.

In another piece of poetry meant for the world, in particular the Syrians, 'Amr again yammered about the grave matters that had reached him and which he fully accepted as true, having predicted them in advance. They were that al-Zubayr and Talha had flung a shot with which they demolished the prop of the people ('Uthman) and that 'AIT had been managing their affairs. Would 'AIT kill or hinder the killer? How

²¹⁶ BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 74.

²¹⁷ 'Amr may well have added this milder alternative in the expectation that Mu'awiya would be loath to put to death Muhammad b. AbT Hudhayfa, who was a maternal cousin of his wife Fakhita (Ibn al-Athlr, *Kamil*, III, 221). ²¹⁸ Ibn 'Asakir, *Uthmdn*, 308.

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could it be hoped that he would aid the slain victim when he had already deserted 'our 'Uthman'? He would, 'Amr predicted now, efface the traces of the crime for the murderers and walk barefoot or in sandals for them, whatever they wished.³⁰⁶

These lines are evidently early, before the rebellion of Talha and al-Zubayr in the suite of 'A'isha. 'Amr thus did not have to choose between them and 'All and could picture the three eminent Companions as colluding in the murder of 'our 'Uthman', with 'AIT now covering up their joint crime. His conversion to Islam having been motivated strictly by opportunism, 'Amr had never cared much for any of that lot, and the least that could be said about them now was that they were fools not to have looked for an alibi, as he had done with wise political foresight. Al-Zubayr, 'Amr realized, was more acceptable to the Umayyads than the other two, but had he not been sent by 'Umar to Egypt merely to deprive himself of the glory of being the sole conqueror and to keep an eye on his dealings? No, he would rather not see al-Zubayr succeed to the caliphate, and named him first among the murderers. Why should not he, 'Amr, and Mu'awiya share the spoils of the Muslim conquests between themselves rather than have to surrender the better part to some pious figurehead in Medina? 'Amr was confident that the argument was good and would appeal to Mu'awiya, though he might not yet be ready for it.

Mu'awiya was, no doubt, carefully listening, but he did not follow either of 'Amr's two pieces of advice. Nor did he, for the time being, invite the new partisan of 'our 'Uthman' to his court. The dead caliph's late warning that 'Amr's jubbah was full of lice ever since he had deposed him may still have been ringing in everybody's ears.

As the drama of the conflict between the great Companions in the Hijaz unfolded, al-WalTd b. 'Uqba saw the chance to cast the net of his vendetta wider. 'AIT was now vulnerable, and the Umayyad poet laureate was happy to join the Mekkan chorus condemning him as the chief culprit. He hated 'AIT, if anything, more than 'Amr, holding him responsible for the flogging he had received for drunkenness. Yet he was not yet ready to let 'Amr off the hook. In one of his poems he asked his audience to look at the division among the Ansar and Quraysh, which had been caused by a gang among whom the DhamTm and his companion were high up. The DhamTm was Muhammad b. AbT Bakr, and his companion, 'Amr b. al-'As. As will be seen, al-WalTd associated the two closely, thus suggesting that the son of Abu Bakr had been acting on behalf of 'Amr, stirring up the trouble in Egypt. Since 'A'isha was backing 'Amr in his conflict with 'Uthman, this suggestion may not be entirely unfounded.

³⁰⁶ Ibn Bakr, *Tamhid*, 180.

The third one high up among the gang, al-Walid continued, was

**The companion of 'Uthman who beckoned to killing him, while
his scorpions [= malicious calumnies] kept crawling to us every day. Don't
you see how 'AIP²⁰ today is showing off his excuses,
while inside him lies concealed the crime he perpetrated?
The ones who please me are Ka'b, Zayd b. Thabit, Talha, and
al-Nu'man, may his withers not be cut!
They restrained whoever of them blamed 'Uthman, and the most
blameworthy
among the sons of whatever mothers (*banu l-'allat*) is he who blames
him.³⁰⁷**

While thus turning 'AIT into the leader of the conspiracy, al-Walid also managed to sneak the name of Talha among the three long-standing Medinan 'Uthmanid loyalists Ka'b b. Malik, Zayd b. Thabit and al-Nu'man b. BashTr, who had joined Mu'awiya. Talha, 'Uthman's most vehement critic among the Early Companions, was now, after his volte-face, handed a clean record as having restrained the censurers of the caliph. Mu'awiya and the Syrians were thus given to understand that they ought to co-operate with Talha in his battle against 'AIT.

Again Mu'awiya was not inclined to follow the advice of his fiery kinsman. The fact that 'A'isha and Talha had put their bet on Ba\$ra rather than joining him made him suspicious. 'A'isha, it is true, had commended him to 'Uthman and insisted that he, appointed by 'Umar, stay governor of Damascus. But would Talha, a haughty and self-assured man, be content with a semi-independent Umayyad governor of this key province once he was in power? Mu'awiya might not in the end be better off with him than with 'AIT. He decided rather to write to al-Zubayr inviting him to Damascus, even though it meant splitting the anti-'Alid coalition.

In spite of Mu'awiya's apparent indifference to his admonitions, al-Walid was now confident that his vendetta was on course. In another poem composed about the same time he threatened:

**So tell³⁰⁸ 'Amr and the DhamTm you both have done wrong
by killing Ibn 'Affan in return for no one slain,
And by charging Abu 'Amr ['Uthman] with every grave misdeed
upon no basis but empty rumour;
Yet there you are - and God will surely attain his purpose - without having gained a
farthing from your censure.
For if you have cut off your noses through Ibn Arwa²²³
and have done a thing that was not kind,
Surely we shall - while you are a clique in distress,
sustaining a matter of hatred and blood revenge - Observe you
on every day and night with a glance that guides
to what is inside the hearts,
Until we see what delights the eye and what will quench the
burning thirst.**

³⁰⁷ Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 552-3; Ibn Bakr, *Tamhid*, 205-6.

³⁰⁸ Reading *fa-qla* for *quia*. The beginning of the piece is presumably missing.

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**They say 'All²²⁴ clung to the recesses of his house, yet what
he did was not kind;
For his place was no hidden matter, nor was he unaware of
what had passed.
If he had said: 'Desist from him', they would have sheathed
their swords and turned away with lasting grief in their breasts. But
he closed his eyes, his path was their path, and
iniquity is the most evil path.
So every one has a debt of guilt to us, which we shall count, and
'All's guilt for him is no small one.'²²⁵**

'All's victory at Basra spurred Mu'awiya to action. He had no illusion about 'All's determination to remove him from his governorship and was equally determined to hold on to what he, having succeeded his brother Yazid, considered Sufyanid hereditary property. 'All's presence in Iraq and Qays b. Sa'd's precarious control of Egypt exposed him to potential attack from two fronts. Mu'awiya stepped up his propaganda, charging 'AIT with the murder of 'Uthman and wrote the governor of Egypt a letter in the hope of drawing him, by threats and promises, to his side.²²⁶ He accused him of having been one of the instigators of the rebellion and demanded that he repent 'if repentance from killing a believer is of any avail'. As for his master, Mu'awiya had ascertained that he was the one

²²³ Arwa is 'Uthman's (and al-WalTd's) mother.

²²⁴ Here, too, and in the final line 'Dulaym' has been substituted for "AH", who is obviously intended.

²²⁵ Ibn Bakr, *Tamhid*, 206-7. A shorter version of this poem was quoted by al-Jahiz and attributed by him to Yahya b. al-Hakam, the younger brother of Marwan (*ibid.*, 179; for *Abu Marwan* read *Akhu Marwan*). In this version "All" is correctly retained in place of 'Dulaym', and "Amr" and 'al-Dhamlm' are, certainly erroneously, replaced by 'Talha' and 'al-Zubayr', which spoils the metre. The attribution to Yahya b. al-Hakam is no doubt mistaken. Yahya was at this time quite young, and his known poetry dates from a later period. He probably accompanied his brother Marwan to Basra and participated in the battle of the Camel (Tabari, I, 3219; report by Sayf, who also mentions 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Hakam as present). It is thus out of the question that he could have accused Talha and al-Zubayr. Being closely associated with his brother, it is equally unlikely that he would have denounced 'Amr b. al-'As and Muhammad b. AbT Bakr with whom Marwan had no serious quarrel since they, unlike 'AIT, were not in possession of 'our property'.

²²⁶ Sahl b. Sa'd states in his account that Mu'awiya wrote to Qays when 'AIT was in Kufa (TabarT, I, 3238). This is evidently too late to allow sufficient time for the developments before his replacement by Muhammad b. AbT Bakr.

who enticed the people to revolt against 'Uthman and induced them to kill him. None of the great of Qays' people were indeed innocent of 'Uthman's blood. If Qays, however, could get himself around to joining the demand for revenge for 'Uthman's blood and would follow Mu'awiya, the reign of the two Iraqs (*al-Traqayn*, Kufa and Basra) would be his when Mu'awiya won and as long as he lived, and the rule of the Hijaz would belong to one of his kinsmen of Qays' choice.

Qays b. Sa'd was not ready to provoke a Syrian attack on Egypt and answered Mu'awiya's deceit with his own. He politely distanced himself from having had any part in the murder of 'Uthman, denied having knowledge of his master's involvement, and claimed that his clan had been the first to stand up for the caliph. Mu'awiya's proposal that he follow him and the reward offered by him were a matter to be considered carefully. In the meantime he promised not to attack him or cause him trouble until further consideration.

Mu'awiya realized that Qays was stalling and resorted again to threat. The likes of himself, he wrote bluntly, could not be cajoled by deceit, since the superior number of men was with him and the reins of the horses in his hand. By now Mu'awiya was evidently under sufficient pressure from the east for Qays to answer equally bluntly. Was Mu'awiya deluded enough to think that he could buy him so that he would forsake the one most worthy to rule, the most truthful and soundest in guidance, and the closest to the Messenger of God, in order to obey the one furthest from legitimate rule, the most perfidious and errant, and the one most remote from God and His Messenger?

Mu'awiya gave up hope of winning over Qays b. Sa'd.³⁰⁹ He now forged a letter from Qays to himself in which 'AIT's governor declared his obedience to Mu'awiya and his whole-hearted support of the fight in revenge for the wronged imam of right guidance and publicized it among his commanders. 'AIT, informed by his spies, was upset and incredulous and summoned his sons and his nephew 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far for consultation. 'Abd Allah advised him to depose Qays, but 'AIT countered that he could not believe the story. Then a letter arrived from the governor explaining his practical arrangements with the 'Uthmaniyya rebels who were gathered in Kharbita. 'Abd Allah saw his suspicions confirmed and suggested that 'AIT order Qays to fight the rebels. When 'AIT did so, the governor wrote back pointing out the folly of attacking peaceful people who would then make common cause with the enemy. 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far now counselled 'AIT to dismiss Qays and to send in his place Muhammad b. AbT Bakr, 'Abd Allah's uterine brother, who would

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 3238—41; BaladhurT, *Ansd*b, II, 390-1.

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take care of these people. Qays, he had learned, was saying that any reign that required killing his kinsman Maslama b. Mukhallad was an evil one. 'All now deposed Qays and sent the son of Abu Bakr.²²⁸ The letter of appointment was written by 'Ubayd Allah b. AbT Rafi' on 1 Ramadan 36/21 February 65 7.²²⁹ It was to prove a poor decision.

Muhammad b. AbT Bakr seems to have had no trouble in reaching Egypt passing through territory of Mu'awiya. Qays questioned him as to whether someone had influenced the Commander of the Faithful against him, but Ibn AbT Bakr denied this and assured him that he was welcome to stay in Egypt.²³⁰ Qays was upset, however, and left for Medina. There Hassan b. Thabit came to see him. Hassan had earlier, as noted, joined Mu'awiya in Damascus together with Ka'b b. Malik and al-Nu'man b. BashTr, and the two Ansari poets had there composed their lengthy poems reproaching the Medinans for their failure to defend 'Uthman and threatening them with revenge. They had refused, however, to put any blame on 'AIT. As they came more and more under Syrian pressure to join the chorus condemning the Prophet's cousin, Hassan is reported to have added to one of his poems the line:

**Would that the birds informed me
what was the matter between 'AIT and Ibn 'Affan!²³¹**

It may have been this pressure that induced Hassan, who remained 'Uthmanid, to leave Mu'awiya and return to his home town. He insinuated to Qays b. Sa'd that 'AIT had ungratefully deposed him after he, Qays, had incurred permanent guilt by killing 'Uthman. Qays showed him the door in anger and joined 'AIT's governor Sahl b. Hunayf as he was setting out to join 'AIT for the battle of Siffin.²³² When Sahl left Medina, 'AIT entrusted Qutham b. al-'Abbas with the governorship of the town in addition to that of Mekka.²³³

²²⁸ Tabari, I, 3243—5. The parallel report of al-Zuhri (*ibid.*, 3241-2) is less reliable. Al-Zuhri erroneously describes 'AIT as first sending al-Ashtar to replace Qays. The mission of al-Ashtar was later, after the battle of Siffin. ²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 3247.

²³⁰ Qays b. Sa'd was married to Qurayba bt Abi Quhafa, paternal aunt of Muhammad b. Abi Bakr (Thaqafi, *Gharat*, 219-20).

²³¹ According to Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, quoted by Ibn al-Athl'r (*Kamil*, III, 151), the line was added by the Syrians. (Hassan, *Dirwan*, II, 92).

²³² TabarT, I, 3245; BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 392. Al-Zuhri, 'Awana and Salih b. Kaysan narrated that Qays was frightened into leaving Medina and joining 'AIT by threats to his life from Marwan and al-Aswad b. Abi I-Bakhtari and that Mu'awiya took Marwan and al-Aswad to task for strengthening the cause of 'AIT through such a formidable opponent (TabarT, I, 3245-6; BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 300-1). Caetani accepted this version and concluded that Medina, just a few months after 'All's departure, was in fact dominated by the partisans of 'Uthman and Mu'awiya (*Annali*, IX, 325-6). In reality Marwan was in Syria at the time. There is no reason to doubt that Medina was solidly behind 'AIT. ²³³ BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 300. Sahl b. Hunayf had written to 'AIT that some people were joining Mu'awiya, and asked him for permission to join him. 'AIT gave him permission. 'AIT's letter to him is quoted in *ibid.*, 157.

After his arrival in Kufa 'AIT had appointed al-Ashtar governor of Mossul, NasTbTn, Dara, Sinjar, HTt, 'Anat and whatever he would be able to conquer of Upper Mesopotamia (al-JazTra). The western towns of the province, Harran, al-Raqqā, Edessa and QarqTsiya were firmly under the control of Mu'awiya and were sheltering numerous 'Uthmanid refugees from Basra and Kufa. In al-Raqqā, where al-WalTd b. 'Uqba had chosen his residence, Simak b. Makhrama of the Banu 'Amr b. Asad, a refugee from Kufa backed by seven hundred of his tribesmen, was in charge.²³⁴ Mu'awiya first sent al-Dahhak b. Qays al-Fihrt to meet the threat of al-Ashtar. As the latter advanced on Harran, al-Dahhak joined forces with Simak, and they met al-Ashtar at Marj Marina between Harran and al-Raqqā. They fought until evening, and during the night al-Dahhak retreated to fortified Harran. Al-Ashtar pursued the Syrians, but they would not do battle with him. Mu'awiya now sent 'Abd al-Rahman b. Khalid b. al-WalTd with a cavalry troop. Al-Ashtar departed and, finding al-Raqqā and QarqTsiya also fortified, returned to his territory.²³⁵

Also soon after his arrival in Kufa, 'AIT asked JarTr b. 'Abd Allah al-BajalT and al-Ash'ath b. Qays al-KindT, 'Uthman's governors of Hamadan and Adharbayjan respectively, to pledge allegiance and recalled them. Both were distinguished leaders, and there was some uncertainty as to whether they would do homage to 'AIT. JarTr complied, however, immediately. Al-Ash'ath, whose daughter was married to 'Uthman's eldest son, 'Amr, resented 'AIT's demand for an accounting of the treasury of Adharbayjan and is said to have thought of joining Mu'awiya, but was persuaded by his people to stay in Kufa.²³⁶ Several Kufan clans of Kinda, however, were 'Uthmanid and left for Edessa (al-Ruha) after 'AIT came to Kufa.²³⁷

When 'AIT was looking for a suitable envoy to Mu'awiya, JarTr offered

²¹⁴ Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 146. Al-Baladhurt also mentions several 'Uthmanid refugees of Ju'fT (*Ansab*, II, 297-8).

²³⁵ Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 12-14. The poetry of Ayman b. Khuraym al-Asadl quoted there in which Mu'awiya is addressed as Amir al-Mu'minin dates evidently from at least a year later. It mentions repeated raids by al-Ashtar but seems to imply that he was still alive.

²³⁶ Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 21; Baladhurt, *Ansab*, II, 296. 'Uthman is said to have allowed al-Ash'ath b. Qays to take 100,000 dirhams annually from the land tax of Adharbayjan for his personal use (Tabari, I, 3440; see below, p. 276).

²³⁷ According to Ibn al-Kalbl (*Nasab Ma'add wa l-Yaman al-Kabir*, ed. NajT Hasan (Beirut, 1988), I, 149-50), the Banu l-Arqam b. al-Nu'man b. 'Amr b. Wahb, the Banu Khamar b. 'Amr b. Wahb, some of the Banu l-Harith b. 'Adl b. Rabl'a and the Banu l-Akhram of Hujr b. Wahb left Kufa when 'AIT arrived there, since they would not stay in a country where 'Uthman was being reviled. The Banu l-Arqam had backed al-Ash'ath b. Qays during the *rida* against the Muslims (see M. Lecker, 'Kinda on the Eve of Islam and during the *Ridda*', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1994), 333-56, at 345). Mu'awiya, according to Ibn al-Kalbl, settled these refugees in Mesopotamia, at first in Nasibln and then in Edessa, since he feared that they would corrupt the Syrians. They fought for him at Siffin.

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himself, since he had good personal relations with the Umayyad. He suggested that he would be able to obtain Mu'awiya's allegiance to 'AIT on the basis that Mu'awiya would be one of his governors and expressed the expectation that the Syrians, who mostly belonged to his people, would follow his call for obedience to 'AIT. Al-Ashtar warned 'AIT not to send JarTr to the Syrians since he inclined to their side. 'AIT decided, however, to send him with instructions to convey his letter to Mu'awiya and to ask him only for his oath of allegiance, while giving him to understand that 'AIT would not accept him as a governor.³¹⁰

In his letter 'AIT told Mu'awiya that the public pledge of allegiance in Medina was binding on him in Syria. It had been given to 'AIT by the same people who had pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthman, and when those present made a choice, it could not be rejected by those absent. The right of consultation (*shura*) belonged to the Muhajirun and Ansar. When they agreed on an imam, their choice was pleasing to God, and anyone opposing him could be fought to make him follow the path of the faithful. In attributing a right of consultation to the Ansar, 'AIT was in a way returning to the practice of Muhammad, who had treated the Muhajirun and the Ansar in Medina on a par.

'AIT went on to state that Talha and al-Zubayr had broken their pledge to him. This was equal to refusing it, and he had legitimately fought them. Mu'awiya must now join the Muslims and pledge allegiance, otherwise *AIT would fight him. He, Mu'awiya, had been talking a lot about the killers of 'Uthman. He should defer them to the judgment of 'AIT who would deal with him and them in accordance with the Book of God. In reality, 'AIT charged, Mu'awiya was playing a childish game of deceit. If he looked with his sound mind rather than his passion, he would find 'AIT the one most innocent of the blood of 'Uthman among Quraysh. 'AIT reminded the Umayyad that he was a *taliq*, one of those pardoned and set free by Muhammad at the time of the conquest of Mekka, not a Muhajir, and thus was excluded from any *shura*.³¹¹

JarTr handed 'AIT's letter to Mu'awiya and in a speech appealed to him and the Syrians to join the Muslims everywhere in pledging allegiance to 'AIT. He told Mu'awiya that it would not be proper for him to claim that

³¹⁰ Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 27-8.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, 29-30. The term *taliq*, freed captive, was generally applied to the Qurayshite former enemies of Islam who converted under duress at the time of the Muslim conquest of Mekka. They did not acquire the status of Muhajirun even if they emigrated to Medina, since Muhammad declared the gate of *hijra* closed after the conquest. Pro-Umayyad tradition tried to magnify Mu'awiya's association with Muhammad by describing him as one of the Prophet's scribes. His function as such was, however, hardly significant. No specific occasion on which he was called upon to write for Muhammad is recorded.

'Uthman had appointed him and had not deposed him, for God did not give a past ruler precedence over the present one.³¹²

Mu'awiya's response was dilatory: 'Let us consider, and I will explore the view of the people of Syria.' He was, no doubt, already determined to reject 'AIT's demand, but wanted to gain time to secure maximum support for his move and to mobilize his forces. At the next prayer in the mosque he addressed the people, appealing to their local Syrian patriotism. God had made the Holy Land the home of the prophets and His righteous worshippers; He had made the people of Syria dwell there because by His foreknowledge He knew their obedience and their sincerity to His vicegerents and executors of His commandment; He had made them a model of order for the Community, signposts on the path of everything good, through whom God restrained the disloyal and united the faithful. 'O God,' he prayed, 'support us against a people who awaken our sleepers, frighten those of us who feel safe, want to shed our blood, and to make our path insecure. God knows that we did not want to chastize them, nor to rip apart their screens, nor to make them tread on slippery ground. God, the Praiseworthy, has, however, dressed us in a cloth of nobility which we shall not take off voluntarily as long as an echo resounds, dew drops, and right guidance is recognized. Only rebelliousness and envy has induced them to oppose us, thus we ask God for help against them.' Then came the climax of his oration: 'You know that I am the vicegerent unto you of the Commander of the Faithful 'Umar b. al-Khattab, that I am the vicegerent of the Commander of the Faithful 'Uthman b. 'Affan, that I have never let anyone of you stand in a position of disgrace, and that I am the next-of-kin (*wall*) of 'Uthman, who has been killed wrongfully. Yet God says: "If anyone is killed wrongfully, We give his next-of-kin authority, but let him not be extravagant in killing, surely he is being helped" [Qur'an XVII 33]. I would like you to let me know what is in your hearts about the murder of 'Uthman.' The people of Syria, or rather those present, all rose and responded, calling for revenge for the blood of 'Uthman, and pledged allegiance to him on that basis.²⁴¹

Mu'awiya was satisfied for the moment. He was confident that if he continued whipping up their frenzy of patriotic self-righteousness, they would not pay much attention to God's commandment not to be extravagant in killing and would be ready to slaughter anyone charged with complicity by their commanders, whose most obedient servants, as he had assured them, they were. But he was not yet ready to hand JarTr his answer. There never could have been any doubt that his loyalist followers

³¹² *Ibid.*, 28-31. ²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 31-2.

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in Damascus would back him to the hilt.³¹³ To be reassured he needed broader support.

Mu'awiya immediately wrote to 'Amr b. al-'As. It was time to bury al-WalTd's silly private vendetta against someone who could be so useful for the Umayyad cause as the wily man of Quraysh, Mu'awiya's unacknowledged bastard brother. Matters of high politics were now at stake where the ends justify the means. Mu'awiya had just declared himself the next-of-kin of his somewhat remote cousin. 'Uthman's brother must now stand back and dance to his, Mu'awiya's, whistle. Mu'awiya wrote to 'Amr: 'You have heard what happened in the affair of 'All, Talha, and al-Zubayr. Now Marwan b. al-Hakam together with the rejectionists (*rafida*) of the people of Basra has joined us, and JarTr b. 'Abd Allah has arrived for the pledge of allegiance to 'AIT. I reserve myself for you until you arrive. Come here that I may discuss a matter with you.'³¹⁴ Amr was pleased to see that his versified advice had, as he expected, impressed Mu'awiya, and followed the invitation. He was sure that he could now strike a bargain which would satisfy his own wishes. It would be Egypt for life or no deal. Mu'awiya is said to have been somewhat reluctant, but his brother 'Utba, one of the rejectionists now with him, urged him to accept.³¹⁵ 'Amr swore allegiance to Mu'awiya on the basis that he would back the Umayyad in his fight against 'AIT, while Mu'awiya would help him regain Egypt and guarantee him lifetime possession. 'Amr made sure that the agreement was made public. He was too experienced not to know that the private promises of men such as his new master were worth no more than the paper on which they might or might not be written. Closer scrutiny of the agreement would reveal that Mu'awiya's gain was not so moderate as might appear at first sight. For Mu'awiya would not be able to keep his side of the bargain unless he not only kept Syria but was also in a position to dispose over Egypt. Implicitly 'Amr had committed himself to secure, in his own interest, the

³¹³ This is the impression created by most of the historical sources. There is, however, a report that, if Caetani's interpretation of it (*Annali*, X, 330) were correct, would imply that Mu'awiya was not so popular in Damascus at the time as is commonly assumed. According to Abu l-Faraj al-Isfahanl (*Aghani*, X, 151), Ziyad b. al-Ashhab al-Ja'dl, a noble chief of 'Amir b. Sa'sa'a settled in Damascus, visited 'All and sought to bring about a settlement of the conflict between the caliph and Mu'awiya on the basis that 'AIT appoint him governor of Syria. Caetani understood the ambiguous text to mean that Ziyad asked to be appointed governor of Syria. In order to make such a proposal, Ziyad would have to have been confident that he could muster enough support in Damascus to force the Umayyad out of office. Most likely, however, Ziyad rather proposed to bring about a reconciliation between 'AIT and Mu'awiya on the basis that 'AIT reappoint Mu'awiya governor of Syria. 'AIT, in any case, declined the offer.

³¹⁴ MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 34. Similarly BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 285 where the text has 'a group of the people of Basra of those who reject 'AIT and his cause'.

³¹⁵ MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 39-40; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 288.

³¹⁵ Of modern western historians, Wellhausen commented on the pact as follows: 'Die Rache für Uthman war der Titel, worauf Muavia sein Recht der Erbschaft gründete. In welchem Sinne er sie unternahm, erhellt daraus, dass er sich dazu mit Amr b. A? verbiindete, der am giftigsten gegen Uthman gehetzt hatte. Pietat war nicht sein Motiv' (*Das Arabische Reich*, 85).

caliphate for Mu'awiya. This was, however, not to be spelled out in the agreement. The time was not yet ripe to let the cat out of the bag, which might have frightened some of the pious neutrals into 'Al's camp.

The pact which turned the primary accused in the murder of the wronged caliph overnight into the official public prosecutor intrigued contemporary observers and early historians.²⁴⁵ They narrated lengthy stories about the circumstances; they described in detail, and supported with appropriate poetry, 'Amr's conversations first with his sons 'Abd Allah and Muhammad and then with Mu'awiya in which 'Amr confessed, or boasted, to be selling his religion for worldly gain. Much of this is evident fiction.³¹⁶ Yet 'Amr, so keen an observer of the foibles of others, was, no doubt, fully aware of the rot in his own guts. Al-Walld's accusation of blood guilt had given him a rude scare and a sense of himself 'riding over abysses'. Unlike 'Uthman he would not repent, however, but rather accept his role as the slave of Umayya which al-Walld had assigned to him. As such he now felt in the driver's seat again.

The alliance between Mu'awiya and 'Amr b. al-'As constituted a formidable political force. The Umayyad needed 'Amr for more than his expertise in affairs of Egypt and his backing among the military there. In the nearly two decades of his governorship of Syria, Mu'awiya had developed a taste for despotism of the Roman Byzantine type. While endowed with a natural instinct for power and domination, his judgement of human nature was, contrary to his reputation, limited and primitive. He had come to understand that in statecraft, whenever bribery or intimidation would not reduce an opponent, murder, open or secret, was

³¹⁶ Al-Mada'ini's informant for his lengthy account (Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 284—9) was Tsa b. Yazld al-Layth! al-KinanT, i.e. Ibn Da'b, a Medinan historian active at the 'Abbasid court in Baghdad who was widely accused of gross forgery (see on him al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, *Ta'rikh Baghdad* (Cairo, 1931), XI, 148-52). Quoting another lengthy report by him about an exchange of letters and poetry between 'Amr b. al-'As and Ibn al-'Abbas at Siffin, the Syrian authority Hisham b. 'Ammar al-Dimashqi! commented (to al-Baladhuri): 'This story belongs to what was forged by this Ibn Da'b of yours' (Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 307-10). Concerning the present account the same Hisham used to observe: 'This is a story with forged poetry which has come to us from the direction of Iraq.' Presumably he considered Ibn Da'b as the forger here also. The account on 'Amr's reaction to Mu'awiya's invitation which Nasr b. Muzahim assembled from his informants 'Umar b. Sa'd and Muhammad b. 'Ubayd Allah (MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 34—44) contains some of the same poetry and may, at least partly, also go back to Ibn Da'b. In substance, however, the Syrian historians' judgement of 'Amr's conduct was no less devastating than the Iraqis'. See the account transmitted by Hisham b. 'Ammar on the authority of al-Walld b. Muslim in Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 282-3.

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the most convenient and effective means. The adherence of the first caliphs to the early Islamic prohibition of shedding Muslim blood had so far prevented him from following his inclination. He was still gnashing his teeth at the thought of al-Ashtar and the other Kufan rebels whom 'Uthman had exiled to him in Damascus and then had not allowed him to deal with in the traditional Roman way of handling rebels. This, he trusted, would be different now that so much blood had been shed among Muslims in the internal war unleashed by his cousin Marwan.

'Amr b. al-'As, although hardly more troubled by scruples, was more resourceful and subtle in his means. With his incisive grasp of human motivation and foibles, his general contempt for men, it was a pleasure for him to bring out and expose by guile and trickery their defects, hypocrisy and folly. He was a master of planning, and playing on, political scenarios and manoeuvres and of clever manipulation of the public with specious arguments appealing to their hidden aspirations and greed. Mu'awiya needed him at a time when his grip on power was not yet secure. He needed him also, though not so keenly, for his practical battle experience and sure judgement of military strategy and tactics. Personally a coward and lacking military competence, Mu'awiya had an instinctive distrust of his own capable and popular military leaders who might pose a threat to his power. He knew he could trust 'Amr at this stage since 'AIT would never make a deal with him at Mu'awiya's expense.

Al-WalTd did not find it difficult to accept the compromise forced on him by Mu'awiya's alliance with 'Amr and to turn his vendetta now fully on 'AIT. In the end, it was 'AIT, not 'Amr, who had been responsible for his flogging, and why worry now about who was most responsible for the dead man's blood? Al-WalTd understood what Mu'awiya would want to hear now. He wrote to him:

**Mu'awiya, the withers of the reign have been cut off,
and you are today the lord of what is in your hand.
A letter has come to you from 'AIT in his handwriting;
this is the moment of decision, choose peace with him or make war on
him.
If you intend to give an answer to his letter,
ignominy to the one dictating and the one writing it!
But if you intend to reject his letter - for you will inevitably
take some course -
Then drop the Yemenite clan (*al-hayy al-Yamaru*) a word through
which you will obtain the matter you are seeking.
Tell them: 'The Commander of the Faithful has been struck by
some men who were backed by his kin,
Sorts of people, among them killer and instigator,
without offence committed, and another despoiling him.
I have been Commander of Syria before among you,**

sufficient for me and you is the duty that is obligatory!
So come, by the One who anchored Mount Thablr in its place, we shall
ward off a sea whose high waves cannot be turned back.'
Say little and much, there is today for the calamity no master but you, so
speak out clearly: 'I am not one you will dupe.'
Never let the reign go, the matter is moving forward and seek what looks
forbidding for you to reach.
For 'AIT will not wipe off [from your record] a swindle as long as drinkers
shall swallow water;
Nor will he accept what he does not want, and this
is a calamity for which one day women will stand wailing.
So fight with him, if you fight, the war of a free mother's son
and if not, then make a peace in which his scorpions will not be
crawling.²⁴⁷

Al-WalTd was urging Mu'awiya above all to hold on to Syria which, now that the sovereign caliph was removed, belonged to him as his property. Mu'awiya thus must reject 'All's demand for his pledge of allegiance and fight him with all his power. Just as an afterthought al-WalTd mentioned the possibility of a peace in which "AIT's scorpions would not come crawling'. He was alluding to a peace agreement giving Mu'awiya full independence without any right of 'AIT to interfere. But al-WalTd made clear that he did not expect 'AIT to agree to such a peace. In order to gain the backing of the people Mu'awiya must tell the Yemenites that 'Uthman had been murdered and despoiled by his kinsman 'AIT.

By the Yemenites al-WalTd probably did not mean the Syrian Kalb, who were not yet considered part of them. They were, in any case, safely allied to Mu'awiya through marriage ties and could be counted on to obey his orders. Al-WalTd was referring to the Yemenites in Hims and northern Syria, Sakun and Sakasik of Kinda, Himyar, and Hamdan, whose support was crucial but still uncertain. They had come under Mu'awiya's rule only under 'Uthman and were people proud of their Yemenite identity and their leading part in the conquest of Syria as well as in the campaigns to Anatolia against Byzantium. They had, moreover, close ties to their numerous tribal brothers in Kufa. There Yemenites of Kinda, Hamdan and Madhhij were the most vigorous supporters of 'AIT aside from RabT'a, who were not represented in Syria. The Northern Arabs, Mudar, had been mostly hostile towards 'AIT in Iraq or lukewarm, and Mu'awiya had no need to be concerned about those in Syria.

'Amr's advice to Mu'awiya now agreed with al-WalTd's. He counselled him to pin the blame for 'Uthman's murder on 'AIT and to seek, by whatever means, the backing of ShurahbTl b. al-Simt al-KindT, son of the

²⁴⁷ Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 552; Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 53-4, where the sequence of lines differs substantially. The version of Ibn 'Asakir has been followed in the translation here, but in some instances the readings of al-Minqari's text have been preferred.

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conqueror of Hims al-Simt b. al-Aswad. ShurahbTI was not only, in succession to his father, an influential notable in Hims, but also one of the pious ascetics (*nussak*) of the town. His father and he were the only men of his clan, the Banu Mu'awiya of Kinda, who had not renounced Islam and refused to pay the alms-tax to Abu Bakr during the *ridda*²⁴⁸ and he was widely respected in Syria also outside his home town.

There had been some incident between ShurahbTI and JarTr b. 'Abd Allah at the time of the conquest of Iraq under Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas. He would thus not easily be influenced by JarTr, especially if he were given to understand that 'AIT intended to appoint JarTr, if the latter were successful in his mission, his deputy in Hims. ShurahbTI was indeed, as he admitted to Mu'awiya, endowed with a big head but weak intelligence²⁴⁹ and 'Amr was confident that he could be duped. He suggested to Mu'awiya to put up a few of his confidants, including some Yemenites, who would impress on ShurahbTI their conviction that 'AIT had killed 'Uthman.

Mu'awiya thus wrote to ShurahbTI: 'JarTr b. 'Abd Allah has come to us from 'AIT with a horrific matter, so come.' ShurahbTI first consulted the Yemenites of Hims on how to respond and found them divided in their opinion. 'Abd al-Rahman b. Ghanm al-Ash'arl²⁵⁰, a Companion and close associate of Mu'adh b. Jabal,²⁵¹ advised him that the matter of 'Uthman had been presented to them with the charge that 'AIT had killed him. If 'AIT had indeed done so, still the Muhajirun and Ansar had pledged allegiance to him, and they were the judges over the people. But if 'AIT had not killed him, why should ShurahbTI take Mu'awiya's word for it and ruin himself and his people? If he did not want JarTr to benefit, ShurahbTI should himself go to 'AIT and pledge allegiance for Syria and his people. ShurahbTI, however, insisted on going to Mu'awiyad. 'Iyad al-Thumall, an ascetic, sent him a poem also urging him to ignore the deception of Mu'awiya, who hoped to set himself up as an imam and king over them and to expend the blood of the Banu Qahtan (Yemenites) for the benefit of Lu'ayy b. Ghalib (Quraysh); rather, he should pledge allegiance to 'AIT, the best man of Hashim, 'who had a covenant incumbent on the neck of the people like the covenant of Abu Hafs ('Umar) and Abu Bakr'.²⁵²

When ShurahbTI arrived in Damascus, he was given a splendid welcome and honoured. Then Mu'awiya received him and said: 'ShurahbTI,

²⁴⁸ Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, X, 286-7. ²⁴⁹ See the anecdote in *ibid.*, 288.

²⁵⁰ Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 45, erroneously has al-Azdl. On him see Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, XV, 7—10.

²⁵¹ Mu'adh b. Jabal of Khazraj was governor in Yemen under Muhammad and took a major part in the conquest of Syria. He was briefly governor of Him? after the death of Abu 'Ubayda and died in the plague of 'Amwas. ²⁵² MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 44-6.

JarTr b. 'Abd Allah summons us to swear allegiance to 'AIT, and 'AIT would be the best man if he had not killed 'Uthman b. 'Affan. I have reserved my opinion for you. I am merely a man of the people of Syria, I am pleased with whatever they are pleased with, and loathe whatever they loathe.' ShurahbTI answered: 'Let me go out and consider the matter.' As he went out, the men who had been set up to speak to him met him, and every one assured him that 'AIT had killed 'Uthman. He returned in anger to Mu'awiya and told him: 'Mu'awiya, the people will accept nothing but that 'AIT has killed 'Uthman. By God, if you pledge allegiance to him, we shall drive you out of Syria or kill you.' Mu'awiya did not mind the boastful threat and meekly repeated: 'I am merely one of the people of Syria.' ShurahbTI: 'Send this man back then to his master.'

ShurahbTI then went to see Husayn b. Numayr, chief of Sakun, and asked him to send for JarTr. When the latter arrived he took him to task for trying to pull the wool over their eyes and singing the praise of 'AIT who was the murderer of 'Uthman. JarTr defended himself and suggested that ShurahbTI had fallen victim to greed of worldly power and to a grudge he had held against him from the time of Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas. Mu'awiya learned of their meeting and sent for JarTr to restrain him from debating with his subjects in private. JarTr, however, tried once more to influence ShurahbTI by sending him a poem with an appeal to his good sense: the accusations against 'AIT were nothing but falsehood and slander; 'AIT was the sole legatee of the Messenger of God among his people and the knight closest to him about whom proverbs were coined.

JarTr's letter threw ShurahbTI into doubt, and Mu'awiya had to send his confidants once more with false testimony and fake documentary evidence to impress on him the monstrosity of 'AIT's crime. When they had brought him around and whetted his determination, one of the ascetics of Hims of Bariq, his sister's son, made a last desperate attempt to influence him. He lampooned him as a feeble-minded Yemenite duped and bribed by the son of Hind, whose arrow would certainly kill him in the end. ShurahbTI was convinced now that this man was the envoy of the devil and that God was trying his heart. He swore that he would drive out the author of this poetry by force unless he ran away from him in time. The man fled to Kufa from where he had originally come and pledged allegiance to 'AIT.

Mu'awiya realized that he must keep ShurahbTI occupied lest he begin reflecting again and asked him to tour the towns of Syria and tell the people the truth about 'AIT which he had ascertained. ShurahbTI started in Hims, where he preached: 'O people, surely 'AIT has killed 'Uthman b. 'Affan. Then some people rose up in anger on his behalf, but he killed them. He defeated all and overcame the land, so that only Syria is left.

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Now he is putting his sword on his shoulder, ready to wade with it through the floods of death until he will come to you, unless God intervenes with some event. We do not find anyone stronger to fight him than Mu'awiya, so strive and rise up.' The people responded to his summons, except for some pious ascetics who stood up and said: 'Our houses will be our tombs, and our mosques. You know best what you think.' As he continued to make his round through the towns of Syria and the people everywhere accepted his message, the poet al-Najashi, Qays b. 'Amr of the Banu l-Harith b. Ka'b, sent him a poem. Al-Najashi was an old friend of his and now a poetical spokesman for 'AIT'; later, some time after Siffin, 'All punished him for wine-drinking, the common vice of poets. Al-Najashi suggested to ShurahbTl once more that he had deviated not for religion's sake, but for hatred of JarTr and a rancour which had crept between Sa'd (b. AbT Waqqas) and JarTr; ShurahbTl had then been a poor helper when BajTla had reason to censure Quraysh; now he was misjudging another matter on the basis of hearsay which no one with a sound mind could accept. The poem came too late to change ShurahbTl's mind.³¹⁷

Soon after Jarir's arrival in Damascus Mu'awiya also received a poem by Ka'b b. Ju'ayl, a bard of Taghlib. The Banu Taghlib were mostly living in the northern Mesopotamian borderland of Syria and Iraq, and Mu'awiya was, no doubt, heartened by this backing, although it presumably did not represent the opinion of all of Taghlib. 'AIT had, in fact, strong backing at Siffin from part of Taghlib, probably from Bašra, who were fighting under the command of Kurduš b. Hani' al-Bakri.³¹⁸ Ibn Ju'ayl opened his poem thus:

**I see Syria loathing the reign of Iraq,
and the people of Iraq loathing her.
Each one hates his partner
and considers all that as religion.
When they throw blame at us we throw at them and we lend them the
like of what they lend us.
They said: 'All is an imam for us,
so we said: We are pleased with Ibn Hind, we are pleased.
They said: We think you should obey him,
but we said: Surely, we do not think we should obey.
Before we do that the tragacanth must be stripped of its leaves,**

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 46–51.

³¹⁸ See the poetry in *ibid.*, 486–7. Kurduš b. Hani' was the son of Hani' b. Qablja, the leader of all of RabT'a in the battle of Dhu Qar (see W. Caskel, *Gamharat an-nasab: Das genealogische Werk des Hisam ibn Muhammad al-Kalbi* (Leiden, 1966), II, indexes s.v. Hani' b. QabTsa). Evidently for this reason Kurduš was called by Khalid b. al-Mu'ammār al-Sadus! the son of the chief of Taghlib (*Kurduš ibn Sayyid Taghlib*) (MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 487.) The statement of H. Kindermann (*El* suppl. art. 'Taghlib') that Taghlib fought at Siffin for Mu'awiya must be modified.

**there will be strikes and thrusts to settle matters.
Each one is pleased with what he has,
seeing the lean thing in his hand as fat.**

Ibn Ju'ayl went on to lampoon 'All who, once blameless, was today sheltering the offenders and lifting the *lex talionis* from the murderers. When questioned about his involvement in the crime, he obfuscated his answer claiming that he was neither pleased nor angry; neither was he of those who forbade nor of those who ordered. Yet inevitably he must belong to one or the other side.³¹⁹

Although matters in Syria had clearly gone well for Mu'awiya, with the war-drum now being beaten throughout his land and cries of revenge for the wronged caliph resounding everywhere, he was not yet ready to send 'All's envoy home empty-handed. He went to see Jarir in his lodgings and told him that he had come upon an idea. His proposal was that 'All concede Syria and Egypt and their revenue to him and that he agree not to impose on him allegiance to anyone after 'All's death. On these conditions Mu'awiya was prepared to recognize his reign and to address him as caliph. Jarir agreed to convey Mu'awiya's message to 'AIT together with a letter of his own.³²⁰

Mu'awiya's personal visit to JarTr was motivated by the need to keep his initiative strictly secret. Had his offer to 'AIT become known to the public, the fraudulence of his claim of revenge for the murdered caliph would have become patent to all and the carefully staged mobilization campaign would have ground to a halt. The major historical accounts know nothing about Mu'awiya's excursion into secret diplomacy. It is confirmed, however, by a poem by al-WalTd b. 'Uqba who was evidently close enough to the top to get wind of what was going on.³²¹ Al-WalTd was clearly appalled. It was not so much that his own vendetta, which had already suffered the blow of the deal with 'Amr, was again to be sacrificed to some higher interests of state. He himself had hinted at an acceptable peace settlement under which 'AIT would have to recognize the complete independence of Umayyad Syria. Yet now Mu'awiya was conditionally offering to recognize 'AIT's overlordship. Al-Walld still saw 'AIT's scorpions creeping, but now he described them as snakes. He wrote:

**Mu'awiya, surely Syria is your Syria, so hold on to your
Syria, do not let the snakes come in to you,
And protect her with legions and lances,**

³¹⁹ Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 56—7; al-Mubarrad, *al-Kamil*, ed. W. Wright (Leipzig, 1974—92), I, 184-5, where the lines of reproach to 'AIT are omitted. In line five the version of al-Mubarrad seems clearly preferable and has been adopted.

³²⁰ Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 52; (pseudo-)Ibn Qutayba, *al-Imama wa l-siyasa*, ed. Muhammad Mahmud al-Rafi'T (Cairo, 1322/1904), I, 157.

³²¹ Al-WalTd b. 'Uqba is usually described as staying in al-Raqqqa before the battle of SiITn. It seems likely, however, that he spent at least much of the time at the court in Damascus.

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do not be faint with dried up forearms.
Surely, 'All is watching what you will answer him,
so present him with a war that will turn the forelocks hoary.
If not, make peace, certainly in peace there is repose for him who
does not desire war, so choose, Mu'awiya!
Surely, a letter which you, Ibn Harb, have written out of greed will drive
disasters towards you.
You have asked 'AIT in it what you will not obtain,
and if you obtained it, it would last only some nights.
You would face from him that after which
there is no survival, so do not fill yourself with hopes.
Will you strike the like of 'AIT with a ruse?
Sufficient is what you have tasted before.
Were his claws once to cling to you, he would
deal out to you, Ibn Hind, what you have been dealing out.³²²

Al-Walld's reaction suggests that the overture was not entirely a delaying tactic. As such Mu'awiya later no doubt would have liked it to be seen by posterity. His hopes that 'AIT would accept cannot have been high. Al-Walld's pointed reference to the greed out of which Mu'awiya's proposal was bom may hint at more than the obvious. Mu'awiya's demand for Egypt and its revenue was evidently not made in order to fulfil his commitment to 'Amr b. al-'As. If 'AIT were to hand over Egypt voluntarily to him and make peace, 'Amr's services would no longer be needed, and the slave could go. 'Amr thus can hardly have been behind the proposal, and, if aware of it, must have been keenly conscious of his impotence.

As al-WalTd expected, 'AIT rejected Mu'awiya's proposal. He wrote to JarTr that Mu'awiya was seeking independence and was playing for time in order to test the mood of the Syrians. Al-MughTra b. Shu'ba in Medina had suggested to him, 'AIT, that he appoint Mu'awiya over Syria, but he had refused to do so. God should not see him taking the deceivers for helpers. Either Mu'awiya would unconditionally pledge allegiance or JarTr should return home.³²³

JarTr still stayed on with Mu'awiya, and suspicions were spreading in Kufa that he was disloyal. 'AIT finally sent him word to insist on an immediate decision in the choice between war and peace. JarTr showed Mu'awiya 'AIT's letter, and the Umayyad promised his decision at the next council session (*majlis*). Having reassured himself of the support of the Syrians, he told JarTr in public session: 'Return to your master, JarTr', and handed him his declaration of war. He wrote:

³²² Minqarl, *Waq'at SiffTn*, 52-3. The last line is perhaps an addition. It is lacking in the version in Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, III, 84-5.

³²³ Minqarl, *Waq'at Siffin*, 52; (pseudo-)Ibn Qutayba, *Imama*, I, 157-8.

By my life, if the people were pledging allegiance to you and you were innocent of the blood of 'Uthman you would be like Abu Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthman, may God be pleased with them all. But you incited the Muhajirun against 'Uthman and induced the Ansar to desert him, so the ignorant obeyed you and the feeble became strong through you. The people of Syria accept nothing but to fight you until you surrender to them the killers of 'Uthman. If you do, there will be a *shura* among the Muslims. The people of Hijaz used to be the judges over the people holding the right in their hands, but since they abandoned it, the right is now in the hands of the people of Syria. By my life, your argument against me is not like your argument against Talha and al-Zubayr since they pledged allegiance to you and I have not pledged allegiance to you. Nor is your argument against the Syrians like your argument against the Basrans, since the Basrans [at first] obeyed you, and the Syrians did not. As for your nobility in Islam and your close kinship with the Messenger of God and your place among Quraysh, I do not deny them.

Mu'awiya then appended the poem of Ka'b b. Ju'ayl to his letter.³²⁴

Unlike Mu'awiya's secret letter, this one bore the handwriting of his adviser 'Amr. Aimed primarily at the ears of his Syrian followers, it was a masterpiece of war propaganda. It was they who insisted on fighting 'All; Mu'awiya was just one of them. Appealing to their sense of chauvinist patriotism, Mu'awiya assured them that only they among the Muslims were now left on the moral high ground, since all others, including the supporters of the Mother of the Faithful, had sullied their honour by pledging allegiance to the instigator of 'Uthman's murder; after their victory, there would be a *shura* about the caliphate, but it would be their *shura*, not that of the people of Hijaz with their guilty consciences. The Syrians, hearing themselves raised in their Islamic ranking above all the venerable old Companions of the Prophet, must have been almost stunned by the prospect.

Mu'awiya himself was convinced that he could live with such a *shura*. The result would be a foregone conclusion, and most likely it would not even be needed. For in general Mu'awiya was no friend of the principle of *shura* when one of his perceived vital interests was at stake. Later during his reign he would impose his dissolute son Yazid as the successor without even a notional Syrian *shura*. The letter made clear that Mu'awiya had now taken up 'Amr b. al-'As' earlier suggestion and, in pursuit of it, was already aspiring to the caliphate.³²⁵

'All answered Mu'awiya's letter, refuting his assertions point for point: with respect to Mu'awiya's claim that 'All's wrong-doing (*khati'a*)

324(Pseudo-)Ibn Qutayba, *Imama*, I, 166—7; Mubarrad, *Kdnil*, I, 184, where the crucial sentence about the Syrians now being entitled to the *shura*, instead of the people of Hijaz is missing (see MinqarT, *Waq'at SiffIn*, 56, n. 2). That it was part of Mu'awiya's letter is evident from 'All's answer.

³²⁵ Contrary to the view of Caetani and Levi della Vida (*Annali*, IX, 256).

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towards 'Uthman had spoiled Mu'awiya's pledge of allegiance for him, he affirmed that he was only one of the Muhajirun acting as they had done; he had not killed 'Uthman, so the *lex talionis* did not apply to him; Mu'awiya's raving lies about 'AIT in the matter of 'Uthman were based on neither eyewitness knowledge nor certain information; regarding Mu'awiya's claim that the Syrians were now the judges over the people of Hijaz, 'AIT challenged him to name a single member of Quraysh in Syria who could be accepted in a *shura* or was eligible for the caliphate - if he were to claim that, the Muhajirun and Ansar would call him a liar.

As for your statement: Hand over the killers of 'Uthman, what are you in relation to 'Uthman? You are merely a man of the Banu Umayya, and the sons of 'Uthman are more entitled to that than you. But if you claim that you are more powerful than they to seek retaliation for the blood of 'Uthman, enter under my obedience and then bring the people before me for judgment, and I shall put you and them on the road to justice. As for your distinction between Syria and Basra and between [you and] Talha and al-Zubayr, by my life, the matter there is in every way the same because it was a general pledge of allegiance in which neither a second view may be taken nor an option renewed.

Finally 'AIT suggested that if Mu'awiya had been able to deny 'AIT's excellence in Islam, his kinship with the Prophet, and his nobility among Quraysh, he would not have failed to do so.

'AIT then asked al-Najashl to respond to the poetry of Ka'b b. Ju'ayl, and al-Najashl produced, in accordance with convention, a poem in the same rhyme and metre. He warned Mu'awiya against false dreams about the future: 'All was coming to them with the people of Hijaz and of Iraq who had already defeated the host of al-Zubayr and Talha and the band of perjurers. Addressing the 'misguider from Wa'il', Ka'b b. Ju'ayl, he said: 'You have made 'AIT and his followers the equal of Ibn Hind, are you not ashamed?' and went on to eulogize 'AIT as the foremost of mankind after the Messenger.³²⁶

'All's sounder arguments could not conceal the fact that Jarlr's mission had been a failure. Mu'awiya had been able to detain him for weeks, if not months, secure the backing of northern Syria by duping Shurahbil b. al-Simt during his stay, and send him back with a splendid sample of specious war propaganda. Suspicion of Jarlr's loyalty was now widely expressed, and al-Ashtar, who had warned against sending him, accused him in front of 'All: 'By God, Commander of the Faithful, if you had sent me to Mu'awiya I would have done better for you than this one who loosened the noose around his neck and stayed with him until he [Mu'awiya] left no door unopened from which he hopes for ease and none

³²⁶ MinqarT, *Waq'at SiffTn*, 57-9.

unshut from which he fears grief.' Jarir defended himself: 'By God, if you had gone to them, they would have killed you, for they assert that you are one of the murderers of 'Uthman', and he attempted to scare him by mentioning 'Amr, Dhu 1-Kala' and Hawshab Dhu Zulaym. Al-Ashtar answered confidently: 'If I had gone to him, Jarir, I would, by God, not have lacked an answer for them, and their charge would not have weighed on me. I would have carried him on a course where he would have had no time to reflect.' Jarir: 'Then go to them.' Al-Ashtar: 'Now that you have spoiled them, and the evil has taken root among them?'²⁶³

Al-Ashtar was right; 'AIT had made a serious mistake in sending JarTr. He had earlier correctly judged that he could deal with Mu'awiya, if he did not wish to reappoint him, only from a position of strength. Yet when he was, after the victory in Basra, in a position of strength, he sent JarTr who considered himself a friend of Mu'awiya and believed he might cajole him into submission. Al-Ashtar, a *bete noire* for Mu'awiya ever since he had been exiled to Damascus by 'Uthman, would have been the right man to deal with him and force him with blunt threats to reply immediately. Mu'awiya could, at this time, not have killed or imprisoned him on a charge of complicity in the murder of 'Uthman as he probably would have done with Ibn al-'Abbas when 'AIT was still impotent in Medina. To touch al-Ashtar at this stage would have brought the fury of the Yemenites of Hims and northern Syria down on him and sealed his fate. Later on he could safely poison him and boast of it. But at this time, with his flank to the north not yet secured, matters looked different. It is a moot question whether he would have capitulated immediately or tried to resist with the backing of Damascus and Kalb. But his chances of survival in power would have looked poor.

According to the account of al-Sha'bT, al-Ashtar directly accused JarTr before 'AIT of hostility and cheating and suggested that 'Uthman had bought his faith with the governorship of Hamadan; the Commander of the Faithful should imprison him and his like until matters were settled with the wrongdoers.²⁶⁴ As an 'Uthmanid al-Sha'bT had no liking for al-Ashtar, and there may be some doubt regarding his reliability here. In the poem that al-Ashtar addressed to JarTr he made light of the threats of 'Amr, Mu'awiya, Dhu 1-Kala' and Hawshab Dhu Zulaym but did not threaten or accuse him. JarTr, however, felt let down and uncomfortable in Kufa now and left for QarqTsiya. He is said to have written to Mu'awiya who welcomed him,²⁶⁵ but he did not fight for him at SiffTn. Several members of his clan, Qasr of BajTla, joined him, and only nineteen men of Qasr fought for 'AIT at SiffTn, while of Ahmas of BajTla seven hundred

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 59-60; Tabari, I, 3255-6.

²⁶⁴ Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 60; BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, II, 277. ²⁶⁵ TabarT, I, 3205.

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participated in the battle. 'AIT in anger at the desertion wanted to burn JarTr's house, but JarTr's grandson told him that some of the property belonged to others. 'AIT then went to burn and destroy the house of Thuwayr b. 'Amir, a noble man who had joined JarTr.³²⁷

It was evidently an ugly quarrel at a time when solidarity was needed, and al-Zibriqan b. 'Abd Allah, a bard of Sakun of Kinda, expressed his concern about what he heard of JarTr and Malik (al-Ashtar). He suggested that 'Amr b. al-'As had been stirring up this enmity and that they were not acting like experienced men. Probably correctly, he judged that JarTr had been sincere to his imam, but this was said before he deserted.³²⁸ Having gained broad allegiance in Syria, Mu'awiya hoped to draw some of the religious aristocracy in the holy cities to his side by a campaign of letters. 'Amr is said to have advised him against it, but he persisted. 'AIT's taunt that there was in Syria not a single Qurayshite eligible for a *shura* and the caliphate must have irked him, and spurred him to try his luck. He wrote a general letter to the people of Medina and Mekka and individual letters to the most prominent neutrals 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar, Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas and Muhammad b. Maslama.³²⁹ If reliably reported, these letters consisted of clumsy intimidation and accusations of having failed to back the murdered caliph, and false promises, much in the general style of Mu'awiya's political epistles. He was particularly eager to win over 'Umar's son 'Abd Allah, whose favour would obviously have greatly strengthened his cause. He assured him that he would have preferred that the Community had agreed on him before any other Qurayshite after the murder of 'Uthman, but then had remembered his desertion of the caliph³³⁰ and his criticism of his supporters and had changed his mind. Ibn 'Umar's opposition to 'AIT had, however, eased his ill feelings against him, and Mu'awiya appealed to him to back the campaign on behalf of revenge for the wronged caliph, for he did not wish to reign (*imara*) over him but wanted the reign for him. Only if he declined would there be a *shura* among the Muslims.³³¹ It was widely rumoured that 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar would not accept the caliphate unless it were presented to him on a platter, and Mu'awiya evidently felt that he must lure him with more than just the promise of *shura* with which he tried to deceive the others. The answers of the three pacifist neutrals were indignant rejections. On behalf of the people of the holy cities al-Miswar

³²⁷ MinqarI, *Waq'at SiffIn*, 60-1; BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 277.

³²⁸ MinqarT, *Waq'at SiffIn*, 62.

³²⁹ *Ibid.* 62-4, 71-7; (pseudo-)Ibn Qutayba, *Imama*> I, 161-2.

³³⁰ Ibn 'Umar had in fact been among the defenders of the palace.

³³¹ MinqarT, *Waq'at SiffIn*> 71-2; (pseudo-)Ibn Qutayba, *Imama*, I, 163.

b. Makhrama wrote to him that he was looking in the wrong place for support; what had he, a *taliq* whose father had been the leader of the hostile Confederates (*al-ahzab*, Qur'an Sura XXXIII), to do with the caliphate?²⁷¹

Mu'awiya did, however, get the backing of a member of Umar's family without having to deceive him with false promises. Ubayd Allah b. Umar, the threefold murderer, had been, after his pardon, granted an estate near Kufa, later known as Kuwayfat Ibn Umar, by Uthman, who wanted him to be out of sight in Medina. When 'All came to Kufa, Ubayd Allah discreetly asked him for amnesty through some mediators, since 'All had previously opposed his pardon. 'All again refused, insisting that he was obliged to apply the *lex talionis* and kill him if he got hold of him. Al-Ashtar, one of the mediators, informed Ubayd Allah, who promptly fled to Mu'awiya.²⁷² Mu'awiya was evidently uplifted by his arrival and, according to a somewhat legendary report, tried to induce him to accuse and denigrate 'AIT in public, but Ubayd Allah would not do so.²⁷³

Ubayd Allah did, however, participate as one of the leaders of Mu'awiya's army in the battle of SiffTn. The Syrians were proud of his presence and shouted: 'With us is the good one, son of the good, son of Umar b. al-Khattab.' The followers of 'AIT answered back: 'With you is the abominable one, son of the good.'²⁷⁴ Mu'awiya asked him to lead his heavily armoured elite troop (*shahba*) against the RabT'a whom he saw as the staunchest supporters of 'AIT. According to the Syrian YazTd b. YazTd b. Jabir al-AzdT, Ubayd Allah was warned by a client that Mu'awiya was intentionally exposing him to mortal danger. If he were to win, Mu'awiya would get the rule, and if he were killed, he would be rid of him. His wife Bahriyya, daughter of the great leader of RabT'a at the battle of Dhu Qar, Hani' b. QabTsa, also told him that he would certainly be killed and that this was what Mu'awiya wanted. Ubayd Allah insisted on obeying his amir and was killed.²⁷⁵ At least four men claimed to have slain him. He had had with him the sword of Umar, named Dhu l-Wishah, which he had inherited.²⁷⁶ After the surrender of Iraq, Mu'awiya pressed the Bakr b. Wa'il in Kufa for it. They told him that one of their men in Basra, Muhriz b. al-Sahsah of the Banu 'A'ish b. Malik b. Taym al-Lat b. Tha'laba had killed him. He sent to Basra and took the sword away from him²⁷⁷ and sent it to 'Abd Allah b. Umar

²⁷¹ (Pseudo-)Ibn Qutayba, *Imama*, I, 162-3. In Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 62 the answer is, less plausibly, ascribed to 'Abd Allah b. Umar and is addressed to Mu'awiya and 'Amr jointly. ²⁷² BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 295-6. ²⁷³ Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 82-4.

²⁷⁴ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 305; Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 293.

²⁷⁵ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, V, 10-11. ²⁷⁶ Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, XV, 348.

²⁷⁷ Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 298; TabarT, I, 3314-15; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 325.

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in order to ingratiate himself with the harmless son of the illustrious caliph.²⁷⁸

As war hysteria, enflamed by public outcries for revenge for the wronged caliph, engulfed Syria, the Syrian Qur'an readers, who had so far opposed any idea of fighting Muslims, felt under increasing pressure to fall in line. A group of them, led by Abu Muslim al-Khawlani, went to see Mu'awiya and questioned him as to why he was making war on 'AIT when he lacked his rank as a Companion, Emigrant, and his close kinship with Muhammad and merits in Islam. Mu'awiya told them modestly that he was not claiming a rank in Islam similar to 'AIT's, but did they know that 'Uthman had been wrongfully killed? They answered: 'Certainly', and he continued: 'Then let him surrender to us his murderers so that we can kill them in revenge, and there will be no fight between us and him.' They asked him to write a letter to 'AIT which one of them would take to him. Abu Muslim al-Khawlani went with Mu'awiya's letter and addressed 'AIT, assuring him that he preferred him as a ruler to anyone else. 'Surely 'Uthman has been killed wrongfully as a Muslim whose blood is sacred. Hand his murderers to us, and you will be our amir.' 'AIT asked him to return on the next morning to receive his reply to the letter.

As the news of his mission spread in Kufa, 'AIT's followers (*shifa*) wore their weapons and filled the mosque, shouting: 'We all have killed 'Uthman.' The next day 'AIT handed over his answer for Mu'awiya. Abu Muslim said to him: 'I have seen a people over whom you have no command.' 'AIT: 'Why is that?' Abu Muslim: 'The people learned that you wanted to surrender to us the murderers of 'Uthman. So they started an uproar, gathered, and wore their armour claiming that they all had killed 'Uthman.' 'AIT: 'By God, I never for a moment intended to hand them to you. I have carefully looked at this matter head and tail; I do not see that I should hand them to you or anyone else.' Abu Muslim left with his letter, commenting: 'Now the fighting will be sweet.'²⁷⁹

Mu'awiya had commenced his letter to 'AIT²⁸⁰ with praise to God who

²⁷⁸ Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, XV, 351. According to the report of Nafi', Ibn 'Umar's client, Mu'awiya bought the sword from the slayer. This statement was presumably meant to absolve Ibn 'Umar from any charge of accepting extorted property and is certainly unreliable. Mu'awiya, never a chivalrous opponent, wanted to teach Rab'at a lesson not to challenge the Vicegerent of God on earth. He had vowed during the battle to enslave their women and kill their captive warriors (MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 294). Only the terms of the surrender prevented him four years later from following his vindictive instincts.

²⁷⁹ MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 85-6.

²⁸⁰ The text of the letters of Mu'awiya and 'AIT was given to Abu Rawq 'Atiyya b. al-Harith al-HamdanT, early Kufan Qur'an commentator and historian (see on him Sezgin, *Abu Mihnaf*, index s.v. 'Atiyya b. al-Harith) in the time of the governorship of al-Hajjaj by the son of 'Amr b. Salima (read thus instead of 'Umar b. Maslama in MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 85; see Sezgin, *Abu Mihnaf*, 200). 'Amr b. Salima al-ArhabT was a governor under 'AIT (BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 161), took part in the negotiations leading to the surrender of

had elected Muhammad as His messenger to creation and had chosen helpers for him through whom He supported him; these helpers were ranked with Him according to their merits in Islam; the most excellent in his practice of Islam, and the most sincere to God and His Messenger, was his *khalifa* after him, then the *khalifa* of his *khalifa*, and the third was the wronged *khalifa*, 'Uthman. Then he had addressed 'AIT:

Yet each one you envied, and against each one you revolted. We knew that from your looking askance, your offensive speech, your heavy sighing, and your holding back from the caliphs. To each one of them you had to be led as the male camel is led by the wood stick through its nose in order to give your pledge of allegiance while you were loath. Then you were consumed by envy towards no one more than towards your cousin 'Uthman, who was most entitled among them to your refraining from that because of his kinship and marriage ties with you. Yet you cut the bonds of kinship with him, denigrated his virtues, incited the people against him in secret and openly, until camels were urged on with bits and noble horses were led towards him, arms were borne against him in the sanctuary of the Messenger of God, and he was killed while you were with him in the same place, hearing the frightful screams. Yet you do not even try to deflect the suspicion and accusation in his respect from yourself by word or act. I swear truthfully that had you stood up in this affair of his even a single time restraining the people from him, the people with us would not have considered anyone equal to you, and it would have wiped out in their opinion everything they witnessed of your avoidance of 'Uthman and your rebellion against him. Another matter through which you are suspect in the eyes of the supporters of 'Uthman is your giving shelter to his murderers. They are your backbone, your helpers, your hand, and your entourage. It has been mentioned to me that you disavow blood guilt for him. If you are truthful, give us power over his murderers that we may kill them for him, and we shall be the quickest people to join you. If not, there is nothing for

al-Hasan b. 'All to Mu'awiya (Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, VI, 118-19; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, III, 40-2; TabarT, I, 2524-5), and was a major informant of Abu Rawq. Nothing is known about his son. Both 'Amr b. Salima and Abu Rawq belonged to the Yemenite tribal aristocracy in Kufa and were not sectarian Shi'ites. The letters are almost certainly authentic and, like 'Uthman's letters to the Mekka pilgrims and the Syrians, of capital interest for the history of the time. Caetani commented on the letter ascribed to Mu'awiya suggesting that it, though not written by Mu'awiya at that moment and in this form, certainly reflected the view of the Umayyad party hostile to 'AIT. He suspected exaggeration and literary retouching (*Annali*, IX, 254) - as if Mu'awiya and 'Amr had not been able to write articulate and persuasive Arabic. The letters were meant for public consumption. Neither Mu'awiya nor 'AIT were so naive as to believe that they could influence each other with this rhetoric. 'AIT's answer was in Caetani's rendering reduced to a few lines. Djai't commented that it seemed fabricated since it reflected later Shi'ite argumentation. The correspondence between 'AIT and Mu'awiya quoted in the *Waq'at Siffn* is, he asserted, in general certainly apocryphal. Abu Mikhnaf quoted nothing of it, while al-Baladhuri reproduced the most important letters in the same terms as Nasr b. Muzahim (*La Grande Discorde*, 243, n. 2). Yet al-Baladhuri received the letters from (Hisham) al-KalbT on the authority of Abu Mikhnaf from Abu Rawq al-HamdanT (BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 277). It was al-TabarT who suppressed this material in his quotations of Abu Mikhnaf because he found it unpalatable from his Sunnite perspective.

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you and your companions but the sword. By the One beside whom there is no god, we shall seek the murderers of 'Uthman on the mountains and in the deserts, on land and on sea, until God kills them, or our spirits join God.²⁸¹

It was a clever caricature, ridiculing 'All's claim to be the most meritorious Companion of Muhammad. The point about 'All's presence in Medina at the time of the murder reveals the hand of 'Amr, who had prudently sneaked away after bringing the kettle to a boil by his talk of 'Uthman riding over abysses.

'AIT began his answer by mentioning the 'brother of Khawlan' who had brought him Mu'awiya's letter in which he mentioned God's bounty upon Muhammad. Then he recalled the violent opposition of Muhammad's own people towards their prophet, their calling him a liar, their instigation of the Arabs to war against him until the cause of God had become victorious in spite of their rancour. His tribe (*usra*), the closest of his people, had been the most violent against him except for those whom God had protected; now Mu'awiya was coming and brazenly proposing to inform them about God's favour to His prophet and to them; Mu'awiya was in this like one carrying dates to Hajar or the trainee challenging his trainer to a duel.

You have mentioned that God chose for him helpers among the Muslims through whom He backed him, and that they were in their ranking with Him according to their merits in Islam. The most excellent, you asserted, in Islam and the most sincere to God and His Messenger were the *khalifa*, and the *khalifa* of the *khalifa*.²⁸² By my life, their station in Islam is indeed great, and the loss of them a grievous wound in it, may God have mercy on them and reward them with the best reward. You mentioned further that 'Uthman was third in excellence. If 'Uthman was indeed doing good, God will recompense him for it, and if he was doing evil, he will meet a Lord most merciful for whom no sin is too great to be forgiven. By God, I am full of hope, when God will reward mankind in accordance with their merits in Islam and their sincerity to God and His Messenger, that our share in that will be the most ample.²⁸³ Surely, when Muhammad called for faith in God and for proclamation of His unity we, the people of his house (*ahl al-bayt*), were the first to have faith in him and to hold true what he brought. We continued for lengthy years when no one in a living quarter of the Arabs worshipped God but us. Our people then wanted to kill our prophet and to destroy our base. They plotted against us and carried out deeds. They kept provisions from us, withheld drinking water, spread fear among us, set up guards and spies on us, forced us unto a rugged mountain, burned the fire of war against

²⁸¹ MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 86-7; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 278-9. The variants are insignificant.

²⁸² In the text of al-BaladhurT 'his [Muhammad's] *khalifa* and the *khalifa* of his *khalifa*' (*Ansab*, II, 279).

²⁸³ In the text of al-BaladhurT: 'our share will be the most ample of any family (*ahl bayt*) among the Muslims' (*ibid.*, 280).

us, and wrote a compact among themselves not to eat or drink with us, nor to intermarry or trade with us. We should not be safe among them until we surrendered the Prophet so that they would kill and torture him.

'AIT continued to describe the persecution of the Prophet's family by Quraysh, and noted:

As for those of Quraysh who accepted Islam thereafter, they were spared the trials we were in, for among them were the protected confederates, or the clansmen whose clan would defend them so that no one would transgress against them as the people had transgressed against us in order to destroy us. They were in a place of asylum and safety from being killed.³³² So that was as God wanted it. Then he ordered His messenger to emigrate and allowed him thereafter to fight the polytheists. Whenever matters got tough and the battle cry was sounded, he used to put the people of his house up in the front rank and protected his Companions from the heat of the lances and the sword. Thus 'Ubayda [b. al-Harith b. al-Muttalib] was killed at Badr, Hamza on the day of Uhud, Ja'far and Zayd [b. Haritha]³³³ on the day of Mu'ta. The one whose name I would mention, if I so wished, more than once sought for the sake of God the same martyrdom they sought, yet their terms were expedited, while his death was delayed. God is now the renderer of bounty to them, their benefactor for the good works which they performed before. For I have not heard of anyone, nor have I seen anyone among the people, who was more sincere to God in his obedience to His Messenger, or more submissive to His Messenger in obedience to his Lord, or more steadfast in hardship and distress, and at the time of stress, and in the places of adversity with the Prophet than these few whom I named to you, even though there was much good among the Emigrants which we recognize, may God reward them for their best of works.

Then came the passage for which al-Tabari presumably suppressed the correspondence:

You mentioned my envy of the caliphs, my holding back from them, and my rebellion against them. As regards rebellion, God forbid that there was. As for my holding back from them, and my being loath of their affair, I do not apologize for that to the people, because, when God took away His Prophet, Quraysh said: 'From us an amir', and the Ansar said: 'From us an amir.' Then Quraysh said: 'From us is Muhammad, so we are entitled to "this matter."' The Ansar recognized that and surrendered to them the reign and the authority. Yet if they deserved it through Muhammad to the exclusion of the Ansar, then the people closest to Muhammad are more entitled to it than they. If not, the Ansar surely have the greatest portion in it among the Arabs. Thus I do not know whether my companions feel blameless for either having taken my right, or having wronged

³³² 'All evidently had 'Uthman in particular in mind.

³³³ The mention of the Muttalibid 'Ubayda and Muhammad's freedman Zayd among the *ahl al-bayt* is quite incompatible with 'later Shi'ite argumentation'. For the later Shi'ites these men were not members of the Prophet's Family.

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the Ansar. I do not know that my right was taken, but I left it to them, may God pass over their doing.²⁸⁶

As for your mention of the affair of 'Uthman and my incitement against him, you have heard what 'Uthman did. The people then did with him what you have seen and know. I surely was in isolation from it, unless you want to incriminate me falsely; accuse me then as you see fit. In regard to those who killed 'Uthman, I have fully considered this matter head and tail, and I do not see that I should surrender them to you or to anyone else.²⁸⁷ By my life, if you will not pull back from your transgression and your dissent, you will get to know them shortly when they will seek you and will not impose on you to seek them on land or on sea, in mountain or plain.

Finally, 'All reminded Mu'awiya:

Your father came to me when the people put up Abu Bakr as their ruler and said: 'You are more entitled to "this matter" after Muhammad; I back you in this against whoever opposes you. Stretch out your hand that I pledge allegiance to you.' But I did not do it. You know that your father said this and desired it, and that then it was I who declined because the people were still close to infidelity and I feared division among the people of Islam. Thus your father was more ready to recognize my right than you. If you recognize my right which your father recognized, you will come to your good senses. But if you will not, God will let us dispense with you.²⁸⁸

'All's answer was resounding and set the record straight. Apart from some hyperbole and rhetorical embellishment, it stated the plain truth. It is true that Mu'awiya's letter forced him to bring into the open what he would have preferred not to touch upon at this time. He first praised the conduct of Abu Bakr and 'Umar unconditionally, but, when challenged to account for his slowness and reluctance in backing them, he realized that there was nothing to gain from hiding the facts. He sensed that the truth in history, as in personal life, sometimes hurts, but also liberates those willing to accept it; he had certainly been cheated out of his right at *the falta*, not just by the norms of the Book, but also by the traditional Arab tribal order; none other than Abu Sufyan, Mu'awiya's father, had attested it; now he was being accused by his son of envy, when it was his own people Quraysh, as 'Umar had told Ibn al-'Abbas, who could not

²⁸⁶ The section from 'Quraysh said' to here is not contained in al-Baladhuri's version (*ibid.*, 281). It could thus be a later Shi'ite addition. More likely, however, al-Baladhuri preferred to suppress it. He thus had to pull the argument about Abu Sufyan forward. The formulation of that argument suggests that it came at the end as the climax. The point that the Ansar, too, had been wronged at the SaqTfa was also very likely part of 'All's argumentation.

²⁸⁷ The text of the version of al-Baladhuri has here: 'I do not know any killer of him specifically. I have considered the matter head and tail, but I do not see that it would be possible for me to surrender to you those with me whom you have accused or placed under suspicion' (*ibid.*, 281-2).

²⁸⁸ MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 88-91; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 279-83.

bear that Hashim should have the imamate in addition to Prophethood; let the admirers of Abu Bakr and 'Umar be hurt by the truth; he had no quarrel any more with the two patriarchs and could sincerely lament their loss for Islam; if their old followers were now ready to back the impostor Mu'awiya, they would do so at their own risk.

The position on both sides had been fully set forth, and war was inevitable. 'AIT called a council of the Islamic ruling elite, which for him meant, as in the time of Muhammad, Muhajirun and Ansar on an equal footing. When he asked them for their advice, they all urged him to lead them to *jihad* against the deceivers. First Hashim b. 'Utba spoke, describing the enemies as wholly motivated by worldly greed. 'Ammar b. Yasir, who as a client of Quraysh had been excluded from the supreme advisory council under the early caliphs in spite of his early rank in Islam, advised speedy action before the fire of the offenders should be in full flame. Then Qays b. Sa'd spoke, assuring 'AIT that *jihad* against these people was dearer to him than against the Turks and Byzantines. He expressed great bitterness about their mistreatment of the faithful. In particular he took up the grievance of the Ansar, which Hassan had vented under Abu Bakr, that they had appropriated the *fay'* of the Ansar and treated them as their servants (*qatin*). Several senior Ansar, among them Khuzayma b. Thabit and Abu Ayyub al-Ansari, intervened, questioning Qays as to why he spoke out of turn before the shaykhs of his people. He apologized to them and recognized their excellence, adding that his blood had boiled over remembering the Confederates (*ahzab*) of the time of the Prophet. The Ansar then decided that Sahl b. Hunayf should speak for all of them. He assured 'AIT that they were with him equally in peace and war and advised him to appeal for the support of the people of Kufa which would be crucial for him.²⁸⁹

The Kufans were less united in their support of the war. Whatever they might think of Mu'awiya, they realized that, as ever in war with its chess-game ethics, they and their Syrian brethren would pay the price in blood long before their respective leaders. Some felt that in contrast to the Basrans, who had broken their oaths of allegiance, Mu'awiya and the Syrians, who had never given theirs, should not be attacked, even though Abu Bakr had set the precedent of treating non-recognition of the caliph as apostasy. Al-Ashtar himself was quoted as telling his clan, al-Nakha', confidentially that the war against the Syrians would be morally more delicate than Basra because there was no *bay'a* binding them.²⁹⁰ For those

²⁸⁹ Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 92-4.

²⁹⁰ Ibn AbT Shayba, *Musannaf*, VIII, 711. The report betrays its 'Uthmanid origins, however, in ascribing to al-Ashtar the confession that the Community had attacked and murdered its best man.

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still remembering their former freedom and tribal autonomy, it must have been an attractive argument.

As 'AIT appealed to the Kufans: 'March against the enemies of God, march against the remnants of the Confederates, the murderers of the Muhajirun and the Ansar', a man of the Banu Fazara, Arbad b. RabT'a, stood up and shouted: 'Do you want to make us march against our Syrian brothers to kill them for you, as you went with us to our Basran brothers and we killed them? By God, that we shall not do.' When al-Ashtar stood up and asked: 'Who will take care of this man, O people?', the Fazarf fled, pursued by a crowd. They caught up with him in the horse-market and beat and trampled him to death. 'AIT came and enquired who had killed him. They told him: 'Hamdan and a medley of people.' He decided that the man had been killed in factional strife (*qatil 'immiyya*) with the killer unknown and that the blood-money should be paid by the treasury. Abu 'Ilaqa al-TaymT of Taym RabT'a commented on his death in verse:

**I seek refuge with my Lord that my death should be as Arbad
died in the market of work horses.
The Hamdan took turns in beating him with their sandals,
when one hand was raised from him another hand came down.²⁹¹**

When the meeting resumed, al-Ashtar stood up and assured 'AIT of the loyalty of the Kufans, distancing himself from the words of 'this miserable traitor'. All the people, he said, were 'AIT's followers (*shia*) who wished him to lead them against his enemy. The situation was evidently saved, and 'AIT concluded with the conciliatory comment: 'The path is joined, and the people are equal in the truth. Whoever renders his opinion in sincere advice to the common people has done his duty.'²⁹²

Not all opponents of the war and doubters, however, were satisfied. 'Abd Allah b. al-Mu'tamm of 'Abs, a Companion and prominent leader of his tribe in the conquest of Iraq²⁹³ and Hanzala b. al-RabT' of TamTm, known as al-Katib because he was proficient in writing and had written a letter for the Prophet,²⁹⁴ came to see 'AIT together with a crowd of Ghatafan (to whom 'Abs belonged) and TamTm. Both offered their advice not to fight the Syrians since the outcome of the war was uncertain, but to write to Mu'awiya again; others agreed with them. 'AIT answered that those disobedient to God would inevitably be the losers whoever won in battle. He believed, he said, to be hearing the words of people who were not ready 'to back what is proper and to reject the reprehensible'. One of his loyalist supporters, Ma'qil b. Qays al-Yarbu'T al-RiyahT (Yarbu' belonging

^{2.1} Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 54—5. In al-Baladhuri's version of the two lines (*Ansdh*, II, 293) those beating Arbad are identified as 'our Qur'an readers' instead of the Hamdan.

^{2.2} Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 95. ^{2.3} See Ibn Hajar, *Isdba*, IV, 132; TabarT, indices, s.v. ^{2.4} Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, II, 43—4.

to TamTm), stood up and said: 'Commander of the Faithful, surely these men have not come to you with sincere advice, but with fraud. Beware of them, for they are closer to the enemy.' His police chief, Malik b. HabTb al-YarbuT, chimed in: 'Commander of the Faithful, I have learned that this man Hanzala keeps writing to Mu'awiya. Hand him over to us in order that we arrest him until the end of your campaign and your return.' Two men of 'Abs, 'Ayyash b. RabT'a and Qa'id b. Bukayr, also told 'AIT that they had heard that their tribesman 'Abd Allah b. al-Mu'tamm was writing to Mu'awiya, and asked for permission to arrest him till the end of the campaign. The two accused men protested: 'This is the recompense of those who consider carefully and advise you [pi.] about yourselves and your enemy.' 'AIT told them: 'Let God judge between me and you; I entrust you to Him and seek His help against you. Go wherever you want.'

Hanzala's attitude in particular evidently worried 'AIT because of the Prophet's reliance on him, and he sent for Hanzala again to ask him whether he was for or against him. Hanzala replied that he was neither for nor against. On 'AIT's question what he wanted to do now, he said: 'I shall go to Edessa [al-Ruha], for it is a place of escape [from both sides] and hold out there until the matter is over.' The elite of his clan, the Banu 'Amr of TamTm, were angry at this, but he told them: 'You will not seduce me from my faith. Leave me, I know better than you.' They threatened that they would not let his slave wife (*umm walad*) and his children go with him, or might even kill him. Others of his people came to his defence and drew their swords. He asked them to give him time and locked himself in his house; at night he fled to Mu'awiya. He was followed by twenty-three of his people. Ibn al-Mu'tamm also joined Mu'awiya, taking with him thirteen of his tribe. Both of them refrained from fighting for Mu'awiya, however, and stayed neutral between the two parties.

When Hanzala fled, 'AIT ordered his house to be destroyed; Bakr b. TamTm, the overseer (*'arif*) of TamTm, and Shabath b. RibT al-TamTmT did so. Hanzala complained bitterly in a poem about the two of them and in another incited Mu'awiya to kill and punish the Ansar whom he, as a good Mudarite, seems to have held particularly responsible for the discord in the Community.²⁹⁵

'AdT b. Hatim al-TaT, chief of Tayyi', also advised 'AIT to give letters and messengers another chance before marching. Zayd b. Hisn (or Husayn)²⁹⁶ al-TaT, one of the burnous-wearing legal experts (*min ashab*

^{2,5} MinqarT, *Waq'at SiffTn*, 95-8.

²⁹⁶ Both Hisn and Husayn occur frequently in the sources. The text of al-MinqarI has here Husayn. The manuscripts of al-Baladhuri's *Ansab al-ashraf*, however, consistently offer the reading Hisn. In his edition, al-MahmudT regularly changed it to Husayn (see his note, *AnsdB*, II, 364). Here the reading Hisn will be preferred throughout.

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al-baranis al-mujtahidin) and later a prominent Kharijite, contradicted him, affirming that if they were in any doubt about the justice of their war, it would not become proper through delay. No one could be in doubt, however, that the enemy was seeking blood unjustly. Another man of Tayyi' protested: 'Zayd b. Hisn, do you disparage the words of our chief 'AdT b. Hatim?' Zayd defended himself: 'You do not know the title of 'AdT better than I, but I will not stop saying the truth even if it irks the people.' 'AdT generously repeated 'AIT's words that whoever sincerely offered his considered opinion did his duty.²⁹⁷ Bahila, who were not numerous in Kufa but had many kinsmen in Syria, were not eager to fight the Syrians. 'AIT told them bluntly: 'I call God to witness, you loathe me and I loathe you. So take your stipends and go to fight the Daylamites.²⁹⁸

Others were urging 'AIT to speed up his campaign before the enemy was fully prepared. YazTd b. Qays al-ArhabT and Ziyad b. al-Nadr al-HarithT, both leaders of Yemenite tribes, may have been the first to report that their men and equipment were ready and to ask 'AIT that he order the men through heralds to move out to their army camp at al-Nukhayla, two miles from Kufa. 'The expert of war (*akhu l-harb*)', YazTd b. Qays²⁹⁹ told 'AIT, 'is not one who tarries in aversion or wastes time in sleeping, nor one who delays, or seeks advice when opportunity presents itself, nor one who postpones today's war to the morrow or after.' Ziyad b. al-Nadr joined in asking 'AIT to lead them against their enemy. On the same occasion 'Abd Allah b. Budayl b. Warqa' al-Khuza'T, representing Muhammad's Companions, warned 'AIT not to expect his enemies to change course since they were driven by old hatred and rancour against him. Turning to the people he asked: 'How could Mu'awiya pledge allegiance to 'AIT when 'AIT has killed his brother Hanzala, his maternal uncle al-WalTd, and his grandfather 'Utba in a single stand?³⁰⁰ These people, he suggested, could be straightened out only by the lances and swords. 'AIT now gave order to al-Harith b. 'Abd Allah al-Hamdant, known as al-Harith al-A'war, to summon the people to their war camp at al-Nukhayla.³⁰¹

Two of 'AIT's activist followers, Hujr b. 'AdT al-KindT and 'Amr b. al-Hamiq al-Khuza'T, went around the town cursing the Syrians and proclaiming their dissociation (*bard'a*) from them. 'AIT called them and asked them to stop. They were not to behave as execrators and vilifiers, but ought to describe the evil conduct of the enemy and pray to God that

²⁷ Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 99—100. ²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 116.

²⁹⁹ According to others, this was said by 'Abd Allah b. Budayl al-Khuzal.

³⁰⁰ Hanzala b. 'AbT Sufyan, al-WalTd b. 'Utba b. RabT'a, brother of Mu'awiya's mother Hind, and his father 'Utba b. RabT'a b. 'Abd Shams were all killed at Badr. The latter was, according to the common account, slain by the Muttalibid 'Ubayda b. al-Harith before he himself was killed.

³⁰¹ MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 102-3; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 294.

He would guide them to the right path and spare blood on both sides. They accepted his reprimand and promised to abide by his advice.³⁰²

The religious class, Qur'an reciters and others, were for the most part among 'All's most vigorous supporters. The disciples of 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud, however, were reserved. As 'AIT was ready to set out on his campaign, a group of them, among them 'Abda b. Qays al-Salmanl of Murad and his companions, told him that they would go along but remain a separate group and then judge which side were the transgressors, against whom they would fight. 'AIT praised their attitude as according with religion and good sense. Another group of them, some four hundred men led by RabT' b. Khuthaym al-Thawri, said they were in doubt about the Tightness of this war in spite of their recognition of 'AIT's excellence, and begged him to send them to some frontier town. He sent them to al-Rayy to face the Daylamites and tied a banner for them.³⁰³

There was also some trouble caused by tribal rivalry between the Yemenites and RabT'a in Kufa. 'AIT had removed al-Ash'ath b. Qays from the joint command of the Kufan Kinda and RabT'a and given it to Hassan b. Mahduj of Dhuhl. Several Yemenite chiefs, among them al-Ashtar, 'AdT b. Hatim al-TaT, Zahr b. Qays al-Ju'fT and Hani' b. 'Urwa al-MuradT, went to see 'AIT suggesting that the leadership of al-Ash'ath, scion of the chiefs of Kinda, could be given only to someone like him and that Hassan was not his peer. The RabT'a became incensed for their man Hassan, holding him no less noble than the Kinda chief. The poet al-NajashT, himself a Yemenite, took their side and expressed his satisfaction with whatever pleased 'AIT, the legatee of the Messenger of God. Sa'Td b. Qays al-HamdanT warned the Yemenites that they would do worse under Mu'awiya where they would face Mudar. The Yemenites, however, were not satisfied, and Hassan proposed that al-Ash'ath should have the flag of Kinda and he the flag of RabT'a. Al-Ash'ath declined, suggesting that whatever belonged to one of them equally belonged to the other.

Mu'awiya learned of the quarrel and consulted Malik b. Hubayra, the leader of Kinda in Syria and a friend of al-Ash'ath. They found a bard of Kinda who composed a poem putting the Kinda of Iraq to shame for accepting the disgrace of their chief and sent it to the Yemenites in 'AIT's army. Shurayh b. Hani' al-HarithT now warned them that their Syrian kinsman was merely trying to stir up trouble between them and RabT'a. Hassan planted the flag in the house of al-Ash'ath, and 'AIT offered to return the command to him. Again al-Ash'ath declined, protesting his loyalty, but accepted 'AIT's proposal that he take the command of his right wing.³⁰⁴

¹⁰² Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 103—4. ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 115. ¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 137^0.

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¹AIT had written to some of his governors to join him for the campaign. From Isfahan came Mikhnaf b. Sulaym al-Azdl, great-grandfather of the historian Abu Mikhnaf. He had appointed al-Harith b. al-Harith b. al-RabT' and Sa'Td b. Wahb, both of his people, as his deputies in Isfahan and Hamadan respectively.³³⁴ While 'AIT stayed at al-Nukhayla, 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas arrived with the Basrans. He had appointed Abu l-Aswad al-Du'alT to lead the prayers in his absence and put Ziyad b. AbTh in charge of the land tax. The Basrans were grouped in five contingents. Bakr b. Wa'il were led by Khalid b. al-Mu'ammār al-SadusT, 'Abd al-Qays by 'Amr b. Marjum (var. Marhum) al-'AbdT, Azd by Sabra b. Shayman, TamTm, Dabba and al-Ribab by al-Ahnaf b. Qays, and the Ahl al-'Aliya (the highlands of Hijaz) by SharTk b. al-A'war al-HarithT.³⁰⁶

In Syria the preparations for war also went ahead. After his return from Kufa, Abu Muslim al-KhawlanT took the bloody shirt of 'Uthman which Mu'awiya's sister Umm HabTba was said to have sent from Medina and toured the garrison towns in Syria with it, inciting the people to revenge. Ka'b b. 'Ujra al-Ansari, *qadt* of Damascus, is also described as having done his utmost to stir up popular sentiment.³³⁵

In spite of this war propaganda, enthusiasm for fighting their Iraqi brethren was certainly not universal among the Syrians. According to the Basran Abu Bakr al-HudhalT, 'Amr b. al-'As, in order to spur them on, belittled the strength of the enemy who, he asserted, were divided and weakened by the battle of the Camel, with the Basrans opposed to 'AIT. When Mu'awiya learned of the build-up of 'AIT's army, he was worried, delayed his own march, and began writing letters to all whom he thought to be opposed to 'AIT and upset by the murder of 'Uthman and appealed for their help. Al-WalTd b. 'Uqba became impatient and wrote to him:

Inform Mu'awiya b. Harb:

**You surely are blamed by a trustworthy brother.
You have spent the time like a confined camel stallion in
lust, braying in Damascus, but do not move.
Surely, you and your letter-writing to 'All
are like a woman tanner whose hide is worm-eaten.
Every mounted troop gives you hope for the caliphate as it
hits hard the ground towards the ruins of Iraq.
The fellow of blood-revenge is not one who hesitates,
rather the seeker of vengeance is the brute.
If you were the slain, and he were alive,
he would bare his sword, neither lax nor averse,
Nor shrinking from blood crimes, even**

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, 104-5.

³³⁵ BaladhurT, *Ansd*, II, 291.

**'Ah: the counter-caliphate of Hashim
 confessing them, nor tiring or sitting still.
 Your people have been destroyed in Medina,
 and are lying felled as if they were dry stalks.³³⁶**

When Mu'awiya five years later entered Kufa in triumph, he called on al-WalTd to ascend the pulpit which had once to be washed of his vomit and recite these lines to the humiliated enemy. He himself then quoted the line of Aws b. Hajar, the pre-Islamic bard of TamTm:

**Many a one wonders at what he sees of our deliberation,
 yet when war pushes him, he will not utter a word.³⁰⁹**

The brute was celebrating victory.

Once al-WalTd had publicly declared the caliphate the war prize, he could take up Marwan's old contention: The caliphate is the property of Umayya, they would fight for it. He remembered the weapons and communal camels (*ibl al-sadaqa*)^{M0} in 'Uthman's palace which 'AIT had seized. Speaking for Umayya, he addressed Hashim who were now collectively guilty:

**Banu Hashim, return the arms of your sister's son,
 do not loot them, his loot is not licit.
 Banu Hashim, do not hasten to invite retaliation,
 the same to us are his murderers and his plunderer.
 Banu Hashim, how could there be negotiation between us
 when his sword is with 'All and his noble horses.
 They killed him in order to be in his place
 just as once Chosroes was betrayed by his Marzpans.
 I surely shall travel to you in a boundless host whose noise
 and turmoil will deafen the ear.³¹¹**

Al-'Abbas b. 'Utba b. AbT Lahab answered for Hashim:

**Do not ask us for the arms, for they are lost;
 their owner threw them away in the battle's fright.
 You likened him to Chosroes, indeed he was like him,
 alike with Chosroes his manners and his hordes.³³⁷**

In order to concentrate his forces for the invasion of Iraq, Mu'awiya had to secure his borders to the north and west. He concluded a truce with the Byzantine emperor, making gifts and paying tribute. 'AIT, he could be sure, would not try to make common cause with the enemy of Islam against him. Egypt was now less of a worry since the capable Qays b. Sa'd had been replaced by Muhammad b. AbT Bakr. The latter, though deeply devoted to 'AIT, was a man of no political skill. A month after his arrival he wrote to the seceders in Kharbita with whom Qays had made peaceful arrangements and demanded that they either enter into obedience or leave the country. They refused, asking for time to consider the developments in the imminent battle between 'AIT and Mu'awiya, and took precautions for

³³⁶ TabarT, I, 3257-8. The poem is quoted with variants and different sequence of lines in BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 290—1; Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, XXVI, 347-8; and elsewhere. The version of al-TabarT has been translated here, but 'caliphate' (*khilafa*) has been substituted for 'amirate' (*imara*) with most other versions. Al-WalTd was certainly luring Mu'awiya with hopes for the caliphate. He was amir already.

^{3.2} *Agham*, IV, 177. Abu l-Faraj's alternative identification of the poet as al-Fadl b. al-'Abbas is, no doubt, mistaken.

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resistance. Ibn AbT Bakr did not attack them until after Siffin.³³⁸ But having been antagonized by him, they were now a thorn in his side.

The son of Abu Bakr also engaged, certainly before the battle of Siffin, in a public slanging match with Mu'awiya, the text of which was suppressed by al-Tabari because, he suggested, the common people (*Qamma*) would not bear hearing it.³¹⁴ It was, however, preserved by al-BaladhurT and other sources. Muhammad b. AbT Bakr addressed Mu'awiya as the Seducer (*ghawi*), son of Sakhr, and went on to compare him, the accursed son of the accursed, who had never failed to seek ruin for the religion of God and now was sheltering the remnants of the Confederates, with 'AIT, the first one to respond to the Prophet's summons to Islam, his brother and cousin, who was ever in the forefront of his followers, his legatee, and father of his offspring, who was now backed by the Ansar whom God had praised. Ibn AbT Bakr did not fail to mention 'Amr b. al-'As, Mu'awiya's partner in his game of fraud and deception. They would find out to whom the lofty outcome would belong; God was watching Mu'awiya.

Mu'awiya, no doubt assisted by 'Amr, answered in kind. He addressed his letter to the detractor from his own father: Muhammad, son of Abu Bakr. Having spotted the weak point in Muhammad's family record with respect to the legatee of the Prophet, he hammered away at it. In Muhammad's discourse, he said, there was rebuke of his father:

You mentioned the right of Ibn AbT Talib, his ancient merits, his close association with the Prophet of God, his support of him, and his consolation of him in every situation of fear and horror. Your argument against me is with another's excellence, not yours; so give praise to a God who diverted excellence from you and gave it to another. We, and your father with us, during the lifetime of the Prophet used to consider the right of Ibn AbT Talib binding upon us, and his excellence surpassing us. Yet when God chose for His Prophet what He had in

³³⁸ Tabari, I, 3248. ³¹⁴ *Ibid.*

store for him, after He had completed for him what He had promised him and had made manifest his summons and victorious his argument, He took him to Himself. Then your father and his Faruq ['Umar]³¹⁵ were the first to snatch it [the succession] (*ibtazzahu*) and to oppose him. On that the two of them agreed and cooperated. Then they summoned him to themselves, but he was slow, keeping away from them and tarrying in relation to them. At that time both had designs against him and intended great offence (*arada lahu l-'azim*), but he pledged allegiance and surrendered to them. They would not let him share in their reign, nor did they make him privy to their secret until they died and their rule passed away. Then their third one rose after them, 'Uthman b. 'Affan, following in their straight path, and acting in accordance with their conduct, but you and your master blamed him until the remotest of the sinful people would covet his life. You both concealed and displayed your hatred and your spite until you attained your desires in regard to him.

Mu'awiya went on to ridicule the son of Abu Bakr who would challenge a giant of political wisdom (*hilm*) such as himself, whose reign Muhammad's father, Abu Bakr, had facilitated, built and raised to lofty heights.

If what we are about is not sound, then your father was the first one to be about it. If it was injustice, then your father founded it, and we are his partners. We followed his guidance and imitated his action. If your father had not preceded us to it and considered him unsuitable for the rule,³¹⁶ we would not oppose Ibn AbT Talib and would submit to him. But since we saw your father do that, we follow his example and imitate his action. So blame your father as you see fit or quit.³¹⁷

Inadvertently the son of Abu Bakr had exposed himself to another brilliant sample of that facetious brainwash with which the potentates of this world like to entertain their credulous subjects and to lead them by their noses. Shooting for the caliphate now, what better way could Mu'awiya take than to posture as the true preserver and restorer of the building raised high by Abu Bakr and his Faruq? Had their stunning success not come from keeping that subversive mole 'AIT at bay and from allowing him no share in their government and secret planning? Mu'awiya was committed to following their wisdom and guidance to save the caliphate from Abu Bakr's deviant son and his master. 'Uthman, their unfortunate third man, was still needed to secure the apostolic succession,

³¹⁵ The formulation is noteworthy. Was it Abu Bakr who gave 'Umar his famous epithet? In the version of al-Baladhuri (*Ansdh*, II, 396) the pronoun of *Fariiquhu* refers to Muhammad. The text of what follows is clearly toned down and rhetorically weakened in al-Baladhuri's version in order to make it more acceptable from a Sunnite perspective. The text of al-Mas'udl corroborates that of al-MinqarI. For a discussion of various reports on the origins of 'Umar's epithet see S. Bashear, 'The Title <Faruq> and its Association with 'Umar I', *Studia Islamica*, 72 (1990), 47-70.

³¹⁶ The passage 'and considered him unsuitable for the rule' is taken from al-Baladhuri's version (*Ansdh*, II, 397).

³¹⁷ MinqarI, *Waq'at SiffTn*, 118-20; Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, II, 393-7; Mas'udI, *Murij*, III, 197-201, paras. 1790-1.

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which would now lead from the most faithful friend of the Prophet and his two illustrious Companions to their most loyal servant, if merely a reformed *taliq*, and eventually to his slightly debauched son and slaughterer of the Prophet's grandson. Once more the lice in 'Amr's jubbah must have tickled him as he pictured Ibn AbT Bakr and 'AIT as starting the campaign of vilifying 'Uthman that led to his sorry end.

For later Sunnites Mu'awiya's letter could not appear so amusing as it did to his contemporaries. Did Mu'awiya really mean it when he said that in the time of the Prophet they all had recognized 'AIT's superior merit and precedence or was he merely engaging in legitimate war guile? Al-TabarT had good reason to judge this letter as unsuitable for the ears of the common people. It was better to forget the testimony of the 'scribe of the Prophet' and to stick to that of 'Umar's son 'Abd Allah received in Ahmad b. Hanbal's *Musnad*: 'We used to count, when the Messenger of God was alive and his Companions plentiful: Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman, and then we were silent.'³¹⁸

With Muhammad b. AbT Bakr facing difficulty in Egypt, Mu'awiya could leave the protection of his western border to three minor local Palestinian commanders.³¹⁹ He had just been troubled by news that Natil b. Qays, chief of Judham, had overpowered Palestine and taken possession of the treasury. 'Amr advised him, however, to let Natil consume his loot and to congratulate him, since he was not fighting for a religious cause.³²⁰ Mu'awiya did so, and Natil commanded Lakhm and Judham for him at SiffTn.³²¹ When Mu'awiya learned that 'AIT was personally leading his army, he decided, on 'Amr's advice, to take the command of the Syrians.³²² 'AIT set out from al-Nukhayla probably early in Dhu 1-Hijja 36/late May 657.³²³ As governor of Kufa in his absence he appointed Abu Mas'ud 'Uqba b. 'Amr al-AnsarT of 'Awf b. al-Harith b. al-Khazraj, a veteran of Badr.³²⁴ This was a risk, since Abu Mas'ud, in contrast to Hudhayfa b. al-Yaman, had been strongly opposed to the Kufan revolt against 'Uthman's governor SaTd b. al-'As³²⁵ and evidently inclined to neutralism. 'AIT further ordered his police chief, Malik b. HabTb al-YarbuT, to round up anyone trying to stay behind.³²⁶ He moved via Muzlim Sabat to

¹¹⁸ Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, II, 14. See also W. Madelung, *Der Imam al-Qasim ibn Ibrahim und die Glaubenslehre der Zaiditen* (Berlin, 1965), 226.

³¹⁹ Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 128. Of the three named, only Sumayr (Samlr ?) b. Ka'b b. Abi l-Himyar! is otherwise known as a participant in the early conquests (TabarT, I, 2158 (Sayf b. 'Umar)).³²⁰ TabarT, II, 210-1.

¹²¹ Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, XXVI, 96. ³²² TabarT, I, 3256—7.

³²³ The date given by Abu l-Kanud, 5 Shaw./27 March (MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 131), is about two months too early. It could not have taken 'AIT two and a half months to reach SiffTn. ³²⁴ Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, IV, 252. ³²⁵ TabarT, I, 2934.

³²⁶ MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 121, 131. Malik is reported to have beheaded a man who stayed behind (*ibid.*, 140).

al-Mada'in, and from there to al-Anbar and along the eastern bank of the Euphrates to al-Raqqā. From al-Mada'in he sent Ma'qil b. Qays al-Riyahl at the head of three thousand men to take the northern route via Mossul, NasTbTn and Ra's al-'Ayn with instructions to rejoin him at al-Raqqā.³³⁹

On the way 'AIT was asked by some of his men to write Mu'awiya and his followers another letter inviting them to recognize him and give up their error. He addressed it to Mu'awiya and the Quraysh with him, reminded them of their duty as Muslims to accept the command of the most virtuous and meritorious among them, and called upon them to follow the Book of God, the Sunna of His Prophet, and to spare the blood of this Community. Mu'awiya answered with a quote of poetry implying that only the lance and sword could rule between them.³⁴⁰

Near QarqTsiya 'AIT's vanguard, under the command of Ziyad b. al-Nadr and Shurayh b. Hani', came up from behind. They had made their way from Kufa along the western bank of the Euphrates. When they reached 'Anat, they learned that 'AIT had taken the route on the eastern bank and that Mu'awiya was approaching from Damascus. As the people of 'Anat prevented them from crossing the river, they turned back and crossed it at HTt. They wanted to get back at the people of 'Anat, but these fortified their town, so they went on to join the main army.

In al-Raqqā Simak b. Makhrama closed the gates and fortified the town as 'AIT's army approached. 'AIT stayed outside and asked the hostile people to provide a boat bridge over the river for his army. When they refused, he turned towards Jisr Manbij upstream in order to cross there. Al-Ashtar, however, shouted some threats at the occupants of the fortress, and, aware that he was not inclined to joking, they decided to provide the bridge. The whole army now crossed the river.³⁴¹

As 'AIT moved from al-Raqqā westward towards SiffTn, he again dispatched his vanguard under Ziyad b. al-Nadr and Shurayh b. Hani'. They met Abu l-A'war Sufyan b. 'Amr al-SulamT³⁴² with a Syrian detachment at Sur al-Rum and, after failing to persuade him to submit, informed 'AIT. The latter sent al-Ashtar with horsemen to join them, with the order not to attack first. The Syrians attacked in the evening and then

³³⁹ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 296. ³²⁸ MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 151.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, 151-2; TabarT, I, 3259-60; BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, II, 297-8.

³³⁰ On Abu l-A'war al-SulamT see the article by H. Lammens in *EI*, reprinted in the second edition. Lammens says of him that he 'does not seem to have belonged to the closest circle of the Prophet'. In fact he was, as a confederate of Abu Sufyan, one of the most vigorous enemies of Muhammad (see M. J. Kister, 'O God, Tighten thy Grip on Mudar . . . : Some Socio-economic and Religious Aspects of an Early Hadith', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 24 (1981), 242-73, at 258-9). He is named among those cursed by Muhammad in his *qunut* (Ibn AbT Shayba, *Musannaf*, II, 215).

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withdrew. The next morning al-Ashtar attacked, and a well-known Syrian knight, 'Abd Allah b. al-Mundhir al-Tanukhl, was killed by a young man of TamTm, Zubyan b. 'Umira. Al-Ashtar sent to Abu l-A'war, challenging him to a duel. Abu l-A'war faulted al-Ashtar for having driven 'Uthman's governors out of Iraq and for having denigrated the caliph, and claimed that he was now sought for the murder of 'Uthman. He had, so he told the messenger, no need for duelling with al-Ashtar and sent him away without allowing him to set the record straight. Al-Ashtar commented: 'He was concerned about his life.' The two detachments remained the rest of the day facing each other. The following morning 'AIT arrived with the main army. The Syrians left under the cover of night.³³¹ This was, according to al-BaladhurT's account, in the second half (*.li-layalin baqina*) of Dhu l-Hijja 36/after 5 June 657.³³²

When 'AIT's army put up their camp, they found the watering place at the Euphrates occupied by Abu l-A'war and the Syrians, who prevented them from reaching the water. They looked for another watering place nearby but could not find one. As they complained to 'AIT, he sent Sa'sa'a b. Suhan to tell Mu'awiya that he and his men had come not wishing to fight him before proper warning, summons and argument; Mu'awiya's cavalry and foot soldiers had, however, started fighting them; now they were trying to prevent his men from obtaining water. He asked Mu'awiya to order his companions to give them access to the water until they had fully considered their conflict; if it pleased Mu'awiya, however, he could let them fight it out about the water rather than the matter for which they had come. Mu'awiya consulted his advisers, and al-WalTd b. 'Uqba urged him to deprive the enemy of water as they had done with 'Uthman whom, he claimed, they had kept without cold water and soft food for forty days. 'Amr b. al-'As, in contrast, advised him to let them get at the water, since they would certainly fight for it. Al-WalTd repeated his words, and 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd b. AbT Sarh joined him, suggesting that the enemy would be forced to retreat in disgrace. 'Keep them from the water, may God keep them from it on the Day of the Resurrection.' Sa'sa'a intervened: 'God, powerful and lofty, will keep it on the Day of the Resurrection from the sinful unbelievers and drinkers of wine like you and like this profligate', meaning al-WalTd. They exploded, vilifying and threatening him, but Mu'awiya restrained them, reminding them that he was an envoy. As he was about to leave, Sa'sa'a asked Mu'awiya for his answer, who said: 'My

³³¹ Minqarl, *Waq'at Siffin*, 152—6; Tabari, I, 3261-4.

³³² BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 299. Other sources, including Abu Mikhnaf, speak of the start of the fighting at Siffin at the beginning of Dhu l-Hijja/10 May. There is, however, little information about fighting before the interruption during the month of Muh/June-July. It seems unlikely that it could have continued for a whole month without any memorable events.

decision will come to you.' He ordered his cavalry to back up Abu l-A'war in preventing the enemy from reaching the water.³³³

It was, as 'Amr readily realized, a silly blunder. For nothing would more quickly turn these men, most of whom were hardly eager to fight their Syrian brethren, into furious lions than to deprive them of drinking water. As it happens with despots, Mu'awiya was carried away by his own propaganda that these were the murderers of 'Uthman who should be made to die of thirst. Mu'awiya got some versified support from a man of Sakun, al-Sall b. 'Amr.³³⁴ An ascetic of Hamdan, al-Mu'arra b. al-Aqbal, backed the view of 'Amr b. al-'As, his friend, and told Mu'awiya that this was the beginning of oppression (*jazvr*) since there were slaves, hired servants and weak innocent persons in the camp of the enemy. Mu'awiya vented his anger on 'Amr. The HamdanT now bid a scathing poetical farewell to Ibn Hind and, during the night, joined 'AIT.³³⁵

'AIT did not have to rouse his men into action. After they had been without water for a day and a night, al-Ash'ath b. Qays came to him asking for permission to attack and requesting that 'AIT order al-Ashtar to join with his horsemen. They would, he said, not turn back before they either had water or were dead; 'AIT consented.³³⁶ Twelve thousand men volunteered, and they swooped down on Abu l-A'war and his men. The presence of 'Amr b. al-'As with the Syrian cavalry did not stop them. The enemy were driven off and left to count their losses. Al-Ashtar had personally killed seven and al-Ash'ath five.³³⁷ The Day of the Euphrates remained one of the more pleasant memories for the Kufans and Basrans. At first they said they would not allow the Syrians to get water. 'AIT ordered them, however, to take their needful and return to their camp.³³⁸ He was still eager to try persuasion.

For two days the armies stayed facing each other. Then 'AIT called the Ansari Abu 'Amra BashTr b. 'Amr b. Mihsan, Sa'Td b. Qays of Hamdan and Shabath b. Rib'T of TamTm, instructing them to see Mu'awiya and to summon him to God, obedience and community. Shabath b. Rib'T asked him whether he would not tempt Mu'awiya by offering him a government and a position of prestige with him, but 'AIT told them to argue with Mu'awiya and discover his views. Abu 'Amra first gave Mu'awiya a sermon about the transitoriness of this world and the account which the Almighty would take of his work. He appealed to him not to split the unity of this Community and not to shed their blood in communal strife. Mu'awiya was not impressed and interrupted his discourse: 'Why don't you recommend that to your master?' Abu 'Amra replied: 'My master is

³³¹ Tabari, I, 3269-9; MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 160-2.

³³⁴ Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 162-3. ³³⁵ *Ibid.*, 163-4. ³³⁶ *Ibid.*, 166. ³³⁷ *Ibid.*, 174. ³³⁸ TabarT, I, 3269; MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 162.

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not like you. My master is the one most entitled among creation to 'this matter' by his excellence, religion, early merit in Islam, and close kinship with the Messenger of God.' Mu'awiya: 'What does he say then?' Abu 'Amra: 'He orders you to fear God and to respond to the summons of your cousin to what is right. That is soundest for you in your worldly affairs and best for your end.' Mu'awiya: 'Shall we allow 'Uthman's blood to be spilled for nothing? No, by God, I shall never do that.'

Now Sa'Td b. Qays went forward to speak, but Shabath b. Rib'T impatiently broke in: 'Mu'awiya, I have understood your answer to Ibn Mihsan. By God, what you intend and seek is not obscure to us. Surely, you found nothing with which to deceive the people, to attract their sympathy, and to win their sincere obedience but your assertion: Your imam has been killed wrongfully, so we seek revenge for his blood, and a bunch of simpletons responded to you. We know that you held back from aiding him, wishing him to be killed for the sake of this station which you now have come to seek. Yet many an aspirant and seeker of a matter is prevented by God with His power, or perhaps he may obtain his wish and beyond his wish. By God, there is no good for you in that in either case. If what you hope escapes you, you will truly be in the worst condition of all the Arabs. If you attain what you wish, you will not attain it without incurring the burning hell-fire from your Lord. So fear God, Mu'awiya, leave what you are set upon, and do not dispute the reign of those entitled to it.'

Mu'awiya now felt uncomfortable. He sensed that Shabath had, with but slight exaggeration, uncovered his true motivation and was worried about the impact such subversive talk might have on his own people. He must show himself to be that giant of political sagacity that 'Amr had recently depicted him to be, and serve up some of his Umayyad arrogance. After giving God due laud and praise, he said: 'Surely, the first thing by which I know your foolishness and the light weight of your judgement (*hilm*) is your cutting in on the discourse of this respected noble man, the lord of his people. Then afterwards you concerned yourself with what you have no knowledge of. You lied and spoke basely, you boorish, crude bedouin (*A'rdbijil'jaff*), in everything you mentioned and described. Go away [pi.] from me, there can be nothing between me and you but the sword.' Forgetting his own courtesy in his anger, he would not listen to what that 'respected noble lord of his people' might have to say; but then, what was that one compared to himself who was just growing into his new prospective role as God's Vicegerent on earth? As the envoys departed, Shabath, a daredevil not impressed by Mu'awiya's flight into the realm of lofty politics, had the last word: 'Do you think you

can frighten us with the sword? I swear by God that it will quickly be carried to you.³³⁹

There was now daily skirmishing until the end of Dhu 1-Hijja/18 June. 'AIT would send one of his noble chiefs with a small troop and Mu'awiya would match them. They were afraid of mass destruction should the two armies meet. One day al-Ashtar went forward with a group of Qur'an readers, and there was hard fighting. An unknown giant of a man came forward from the Syrians, challenging to a duel. No one dared meet him but al-Ashtar. They exchanged a few strokes, then al-Ashtar killed him. It turned out to be Sahn b. Abi l-'Ayyar of the Banu Zara of Azd. One of his men swore he would kill his killer or himself be killed. Al-Ashtar turned back to face him, but as the man was in front of his horse his companions rushed forward and saved him.³⁴⁰

At the beginning of Muharram 37/19 June 657 a truce was agreed for the month in the hope that a peaceful settlement might be reached. Again envoys went back and forth between the two camps. 'AIT sent 'AdT b. Hatim al-Ta'T, YazTd b. Qays al-ArhabT, Shabath b. Rib'T al-TamTmT and Ziyad b. Khasafa al-TaymT of Taym RabT'a. The discussion did not go any better than the previous time. Mu'awiya accused the Ta'T chief of having been one of the instigators of the revolt against 'Uthman and one of his murderers and told him that he hoped he would be one of those killed in revenge. Shabath and Ziyad b. Khasafa countered with the suggestion that he stop engaging in idle talk and respond to their proposals. YazTd b. Qays then praised the virtues and merits of their master and appealed to Mu'awiya to return to concord, community and obedience. Mu'awiya answered that the community to which they were summoning him was on his side. Obedience to their master he did not deem proper since their master had killed the caliph, had split the community, and was sheltering his murderers. 'Your master claims that he did not kill him, so we do not throw that back at him. Don't you see the murderers of our master, don't you know that they are companions of your master? Let him surrender them to us, so that we may kill them in revenge for him. Then we shall respond to your summons to obedience and community.' Shabath asked him incautiously: 'Would it please you, Mu'awiya, if you were given power over 'Ammar to kill him?' Mu'awiya saw his chance. He could now make another show of his Umayyad arrogance to the 'boorish bedouin'. 'What would prevent me from that? By God, if I had power over Ibn Sumayya, I would kill him not for 'Uthman; I

³³⁹ TabarT, I, 3270-2; MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 186—8.

³⁴⁰ TabarT, I, 3272-3; MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 195-6.

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would be his killer for Natil, the client of 'Uthman.' Shabath expressed astonishment and swore that Mu'awiya would not reach 'Ammar.

As they left, Mu'awiya called Ziyad b. Khasafa back. He was aware that RabT'a, so far the most loyal followers of 'AIT, might play a crucial part in the battle. As a good Umayyad merchant, he must try bribery. Addressing the 'brother of RabT'a' he said: 'Surely 'AIT has cut the bonds of kinship to us and sheltered the killers of our companion. I ask you for help against him with your family and your tribe. In that case you have the pact and covenant of God that I shall appoint you, when I win, over whichever of the two cities you prefer.' The brother of RabT'a answered quoting the Qur'an: 'Truly, I stand upon evidence from my Lord, for the bounty He has bestowed on me; I will not be a helper of the criminals' (VI 57, XXVIII 17) and stood up to leave. He could hear Mu'awiya commenting to 'Amr b. al-'As who was sitting next to him: 'One of us cannot say a word to anyone of them and get a good response. What is with them, may God cut off their hands and feet in evil. Their hearts are all like the heart of a single man.'³⁴³

Mu'awiya sent the Qurayshite HabTb b. Maslama al-Fihri, ShurahbTl b. al-Simt al-KindT and Ma'n b. YazTd b. al-Akhnas al-SulamT as his envoys to 'AIT. HabTb b. Maslama addressed the Prophet's cousin: "Uthman was a rightly-guided *imahdT*) caliph who acted in accordance with the Book of God and submitted to the commandment of God. Yet you [pi.] found his life annoying and his death too slow, so you assaulted and killed him. Hand over the murderers of 'Uthman to us if you claim that you did not kill him, in order that we kill them in retaliation for him. Then resign the reign of the people, so there will be a *shura* among them, and the people will appoint to the rule whomever they agree upon.' 'AIT told him to shut up since he was neither here nor there in respect to the right of deposing anyone. They exchanged some threats, and 'AIT sent him packing.

ShurahbTl told 'AIT that he would have the same speech for him as his companion, and asked whether he had a different answer for him. 'AIT answered that for him and his remaining companion he had another answer. He recounted to them the story of the caliphate, how the people had chosen Abu Bakr as caliph and he had chosen 'Umar as his successor, both of whom had followed good conduct and had acted justly in the Community. 'We were angry at them that they assumed the rule over us, as we are the Family of the Messenger of God, but we forgave them for that. Then 'Uthman assumed the reign and committed things for which the people reproached him. They went to him, killed him, and then came

³⁴³ TabarT, I, 3274-7; MinqarT, *Waq'at*

to me while I kept away from their affairs.' The people had then asked him to accept the pledge of allegiance; he had at first declined, but then accepted when they told him that the Community would not be satisfied with anyone but him; then he had been surprised by the desertion of two men who had first pledged allegiance to him. The opposition of Mu'awiya was rather of someone without previous merit in the faith, without previous sincerity in Islam, a *taliq*, son of a *taliq*, a confederate of the Confederates, who, together with his family, never ceased to be an enemy of God's Messenger and the Muslims until they entered Islam against their will. 'AIT summoned them now to the Book of God, the Sunna of His Prophet, to the extirpation of falsehood and the revival of the principles of the faith. The two men said: 'Testify that 'Uthman was wrongfully killed.' He answered: 'I do not say that he was wrongfully killed, nor do I say that he was killed as a wrong-doer.' They declared that they dissociated themselves from anyone who would not affirm that 'Uthman was killed wrongfully, and left. 'AIT quoted Qur'an Sura XXVII 80-1: 'You will not make the dead to hear, nor will you guide the blind out of their error. You will make to hear only him who believes in Our signs; they are the Muslims'; he told his men that those could not be more serious in their falsehood than they were in their truth and obedience to their Lord.³⁴²

As the sun set on the last day of Muharram/18 July 657, 'AIT ordered Marthad b. al-Harith al-JushamT to proclaim to the Syrians that they had failed to respond to his summons to the Book of God and had persisted in their falsehood. The time for battle had arrived.³⁴³ During the first seven days of Safar/19-25 July, from Wednesday to Tuesday, prominent leaders on both sides were dispatched to fight each day, with only a small retinue, as in a tournament. On the fourth day Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya met 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar, who challenged him to a duel. Muhammad accepted, but 'AIT, on being informed about the identity of the duellers, called his son back and offered to duel with 'Ubayd Allah himself. 'Umar's son answered that he had no need to duel with him, and turned back. Muhammad asked him why he had prevented him from duelling with 'Ubayd Allah. 'AIT answered: 'If you had duelled with him, I would have had hope that you would kill him, but I was not sure that he might not have killed you.' Muhammad said: 'Father, would you duel with this offender? By God, if his father had asked you to duel, I would not have wished you to accept.' 'AIT told him: 'My son, do not say anything but good about his father.' Then the opposing parties separated for the day.

On the fifth day 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas and al-WalTd b. 'Uqba met.

³⁴² TabarT, I, 3277-9; MinqarT, *Waq'at SiffTn*, 200-2.

³⁴¹ TabarT, I, 3281-2; MinqarT, *Waq'at SiffTn*, 203.

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There was heavy fighting, then Ibn al-'Abbas came close to al-WalTd. The latter began to curse the Banu 'Abd al-Muttalib and said to Ibn al-'Abbas, who had read 'Uthman's letter to the Mekka pilgrims on his behalf: 'Ibn 'Abbas, you [pi.] have cut the bonds of kinship and killed your imam. How do you view what God is doing with you? You have not been given what you sought; you have not obtained what you were hoping. God willing, He shall annihilate you and aid us against you.' Ibn al-'Abbas sent him a challenge to single combat, but al-WalTd, ever surer of his foul mouth than of his skill at arms, declined.³⁴⁴ Abu Shamir b. Abraha b. al-Sabbah, present in Mu'awiya's army, had heard and seen enough. He and a group of Syrian Qur'an readers joined 'All that day. Abu Shamir was later killed in the battle.³⁴⁵

The all-out battle of Siffin began on Wednesday, 8 Safar/26 July. According to al-Sha'bi, Abu Mikhnaf and al-Waqidl, representing the main historical tradition, it continued 'for three days and nights', until Friday at noon.³⁴⁶ There is a variant report, however, going back to 'Abd al-Rahman b. Abza, who fought on 'All's side, that it lasted four days, until Saturday morning.³⁴⁷ The sources offer a profusion of detail about the battle events, part of it legendary, reflecting the epic character of this crucial conflict in early Islamic history, but the major lines of development are difficult to disentangle. If the first day, Wednesday, passed without major events, as the traditional accounts affirm,³⁴⁸ it must seem likely that the battle continued until Saturday, since all the major developments as described in the sources can hardly be crowded into a single day. This is not the place, however, to pursue the question in detail.

On Thursday 'Abd Allah b. Budayl was in command of the right wing of 'All's army, facing HabTb b. Maslama on Mu'awiya's left wing. Ibn Budayl advanced well towards Mu'awiya's pavilion. Mu'awiya now ordered his elite troops to stand against him, and at the same time sent word to HabTb b. Maslama to attack with all his forces. 'AIT's right wing, consisting mainly of Yemenites, was pushed back, leaving Ibn Budayl with two hundred and fifty or three hundred Qur'an readers cut off, and then completely disintegrated. 'AIT sent Sahl b. Hunayf with the Ansar to back them up, but they, too, were pushed by the Syrians towards the centre. Mudar in the centre also gave way, and 'AIT was forced to move towards the left wing, which was composed mainly of RabT'a. They stood firm, and 'AIT now sent al-Ashtar to rally the retreating men on the right. Al-Ashtar, backed by Madhhij and Hamdan, succeeded in restoring the

³⁴⁴ TabarT, I, 3285-6; MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 221-2.

³⁴⁵ MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 222, 369. In both passages Shamir should be read Abu Shamir.

³⁴⁶ TabarT, I, 3327; MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 369; BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, II, 318, 323.

³⁴⁷ KhalTfa, *Ta'rikh*, 193-4.

³⁴⁸ TabarT, I, 3287—9; MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 230; BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, II, 305.

right wing and, driving back the Syrians, in the afternoon reached Ibn Budayl and his men, who were relieved to learn that 'AIT was alive. Against al-Ashtar's advice Ibn Budayl again pushed forward towards Mu'awiya, eager to take revenge for his brother Abu 'Amr. He was surrounded, however, and killed with several of his companions.³⁴⁹

The day had evidently gone well on the whole for Mu'awiya. He decided to concentrate his assault now on the RabT'a on 'AIT's left wing. If they gave way, Syrian victory would be close. He asked 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar to take the command of his heavily armed elite, the *shahba* and to lead the attack. 'Ubayd Allah seems to have been surprised that he was chosen for the task, presumably feeling that some member of the Umayyad family, who were the prime claimants of revenge, would have been more appropriate. He went ahead, however, in spite of warnings from his client and his wife, daughter of the distinguished leader of RabT'a Hani' b. QabTsa. Already facing RabT'a were the strong Himyar of Hims under their leader, Dhu l-Kala' Samayfa' b. Nakur, known as the king of Himyar. Under the impact of the first onslaught, the ranks of RabT'a were shaken. The Syrians drew back and then returned for a second assault. RabT'a stood firm, except for a few who turned to leave. Khalid b. al-Mu'ammār al-SadusT, the commander of RabT'a, followed them, but seeing the banners of RabT'a standing firm, exhorted the retreating men to return.³⁵⁰

Ziyad b. Khasafa, leader of the Kufan RabT'a, appealed to 'Abd al-Qays to join the fray, as otherwise no Bakr b. Wa'il would be left after this day. The 'Abd al-Qays followed his appeal, and soon Dhu l-Kala' and 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar were both killed.³⁵¹ The tide turned, and the Syrians were

³⁴⁹ TabarT, I, 3289—99; MinqarT, *Waq'at SiffTn*, 233—4, 245-7. According to Ibn al-Kalbl, 'Abd Allah b. Budayl's brother 'Abd al-Rahman was also killed in the battle (Ibn Hajar, *Isdba*, IV, 39—40). This is apparently confirmed by a line of poetry by the AnsarT al-Hajjaj b. Ghaziyya (BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 320). According to Abu Mikhnaf's account, however, he was killed at the beginning of the battle of the Camel (Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, IX, 111).

³⁵⁰ TabarT, I, 3312-3; MinqarT, *Waq'at SiffTn*, 291. The account portrays Khalid b. al-Mu'ammār clearly in an unfavourable light as being among those ready to flee first. Khalid is said to have defended himself, explaining that he merely wanted to hold the men back from fleeing. Like al-Ash'ath b. Qays, his loyalty to 'AIT is put in doubt by the main tradition, probably because both men were prominent among those in favour of accepting the Syrian truce offer. Khalid is reported to have been accused by some of his tribesmen, including ShaqTq b. Thawr al-SadusT, of writing secretly to Mu'awiya. 'AIT challenged him about the truth of these allegations but accepted his oaths that they were false (TabarT, I, 3310-11; MinqarT, *Waq'at SiffTn*, 287-8). Khalid is said to have been the first to submit to Mu'awiya in the name of RabT'a when al-Hasan b. 'AIT negotiated his peace agreement with the Umayyad (BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, III, 39).

³⁵¹ The apparent statement of Ibn Shabba (*Ta'rikh al-Madlna*, 654) that both 'Ubayd Allah and his full brother Zayd al-Asghar were killed at SiffTn rests on a faulty reading of the dual *qutila*. The text is taken from Ibn Sa'd (*Tabaqat*, III/1, 190) where the singular *qutila* is used. Zayd al-Asghar is nowhere mentioned as present at the battle.

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pushed back towards their camp. Mu'awiya fled from his pavilion and sheltered in one of the tents of his army.³⁴⁹ Elsewhere on the battlefield that day 'Ammar b. Yasir, said to have been above ninety years old, and Hashim b. 'Utba b. AbT Waqqas were killed fighting for 'AIT. In the evening, as the armies pulled back, Bahriyya, 'Ubayd Allah's wife, accompanied by some servants, rode on a mule to her people in 'AIT's camp. In true tribal spirit she congratulated them that God had not disgraced their faces, something she would not have wished to see. They welcomed the daughter of their great chief and let her take the body of her dead husband. She ordered her servants to dig a grave, buried him, and left, reciting two lines of an elegy by Ka'b b. Ju'ayl for him.³⁵⁰ The loss of 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar was a political, though no personal, blow for Mu'awiya, and it is unlikely that he wanted to get rid of him, as his family suspected. Although he had joined Mu'awiya merely because 'AIT would not uphold 'Uthman's pardon of his triple murder, he had been the single proof in the Umayyad's claim to represent the glorious early caliphate against the subversive mole 'AIT. Mu'awiya's men had proudly celebrated his presence, hailing him as 'the good one, son of the good'. His disappearance made it patent to everyone that Quraysh, after their defeat by 'AIT, were even less inclined to back Mu'awiya.³⁵¹

The death of Dhu l-Kala' was a different matter. Mu'awiya is reported to have told his confidants: 'I am happier about the killing of Dhu l-Kala' than I would be if I had conquered Egypt.' Dhu l-Kala', 'king of Himyar',

³⁴⁹ Minqarī, *Waq'at Siffin*, 306-7. He is said to have sent to Khalid b. al-Mu'ammār, promising him the government of Khurasan if he would not continue. Khalid therefore did not press on. This is, no doubt, part of the slander campaign against Khalid by his critics. That Mu'awiya fled at one point during the battle and then turned back is, however, well attested and was later admitted by him himself.

³⁵⁰ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, II, 326.

³⁵¹ Wellhausen created an entirely false impression about the character of the battle of Siffin by asserting that 'All's brother 'AqTl and sons of the caliphs Abu Bakr and 'Umar fought on the side of the Syrians (*Das arabische Reich*, 52). 'Aqll did not fight at Siffin (see below, p. 263-4). By son(s) of Abu Bakr Wellhausen probably meant 'Abd al-Rahman. The latter was not present at Siffin, but was later in 'Amr's army conquering Egypt. His sister 'A'isha had sent him, not to fight, but to protect the life of their brother Muhammad (see below, p. 268). 'Abd al-Rahman later remained a major opponent and critic of Mu'awiya's conduct, denounced the arbitration, refused to countenance Mu'awiya's recognition of Ziyad as his father's bastard son, and withheld his pledge of allegiance from Yazid despite Mu'awiya's attempt to bribe him (Abbott, *Aishah*, 178-9, 189, 194-6). The family of 'Umar (Al 'Umar) were widely recognized as neutral in the conflict between 'All and Mu'awiya. When al-Nu'man b. Bashir was sent by Mu'awiya with a message to 'A'isha and met two men on his way near Tabuk, he identified himself, according to his own account, as a client of 'Umar b. al-Khaftab as a precaution, until he discovered that they were partisans of 'Uthman (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1067-8). Even more telling for the lack of support for the *taliq* Mu'awiya from the religious establishment in Medina was the absence of the sons of the caliph 'Uthman at Siffin.

had taken a major part in the conquest of Syria and seems to have entertained hopes of restoring a Himyarite kingdom in Damascus under Islam. Mu'awiya disliked him because he used to 'contradict him and was obeyed by the people' in Hims.³⁵⁵ Dhu l-Kala' had, however, strongly backed Mu'awiya's war policy before Siffin both in his advisory council and in fiery public speeches. Mu'awiya might thus have expressed some appreciation. Yet loyalty is in the eyes of the despot a one-way street. The Himyar of Hims had lost, probably on the previous day, another one of their prominent figures, Hawshab Dhu Zulaym, chief of Alhan.³⁵⁶ The death of their two leaders marked the beginning of the long-term decline of their political prestige.³⁵⁷

The battle thus remained in the balance and the slaughter continued. It could have been settled in a moment by a duel between the two main contenders. This was variously proposed by 'All and by some of Mu'awiya's followers, but Mu'awiya, the chess king, would have none of it. Appalled by the massive losses of his people, Abraha b. al-Ṣabbah al-Himyarī, grandson of the last ruling Himyarite, proposed in a speech to them that the two leaders should fight it out and they would back whoever killed his opponent. When Mu'awiya heard this he withdrew behind the lines and told those with him: 'I think Abraha is afflicted in his mind.' The Syrians backed Abraha, however, affirming that he was among the best in religion, sound opinion and fortitude. As Mu'awiya continued to refuse single combat, 'Urwa b. Dawud al-Dimashqī of the Banu 'Amir offered to duel with 'AIT in his stead. 'AIT was told by his companions not to bother with this dog who was not his peer, but 'AIT countered that he was on this day no more enraged against Mu'awiya than against this man. He met him and cleft him in two. A cousin of 'Urwa who sought to avenge him did not fare much better.³⁵⁸

The princes of the house of Umayya also preferred to let others do the fighting in revenge for their kinsman. Mu'awiya seems to have seen the incongruity between their words and action, and vainly tried to persuade them to take a prominent part in the battle. He is said to have asked Marwan to lead a troop of horsemen of Kala' and Yahsub against

³⁵⁵ See Madelung, 'Apocalyptic Prophecies', 183—4; Minqari, *Waq'at Siffin*, 303. 356 f hat Hawshab was killed on the same day as 'Abd Allah b. Budayl seems evident from the account in Minqarī, *Waq'at Siffin*, 400-1. In the lines attributed to al-Ashtar in *ibid.*, 264, which imply that Dhu l-Kala' was killed before Hawshab, *qablahu* should perhaps be read *ba'dahu*.

³⁵⁷ Another prominent man of Hims killed in the battle of Siffin was 'Amr b. al-Hadramī, stabbed by SaTd b. Qays al-Hamdanī (KhalTfa, *Ta'rikh*, 194; Baladhurī, *Ansab*, II, 322). He was an early settler in Hims under Abu 'Ubayda and probably belonged to the prestigious family of clients of Harb b. Umayya (Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, V, 4-5). ³⁵⁸ Minqarī, *Waq'at Siffin*, 457-9. 'Urwa b. Dawud al-Dimashqī is enumerated by KhalTfa (*Ta'rikh*, 194) among the prominent Syrians killed at Siffin.

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al-Ashtar. Marwan advised him coldly to ask 'Amr b. al-'As, who was in his generous pay. If he wanted him, Marwan, to act he should first make him 'Amr's equal in pay or make 'Amr his equal in deprivation. 'Amr, he said, would have a splendid position if Mu'awiya won, and if he were defeated, flight would be easy for him.³⁵²

An appeal by Mu'awiya that one of his kinsmen seek a duel among the Quraysh of Iraq was also met with derision by al-WalTd b. 'Uqba and Marwan.³⁵³ Mu'awiya's brother 'Utba, however, proposed a duel with Ja'da b. Hubayra, and Mu'awiya approved, acknowledging that Ja'da, as a Makhzumite with a Hashimite mother, was a noble peer. 'Utba went out in the morning and called for Ja'da to come forward. 'AIT allowed Ja'da to meet him, and the people gathered to listen to their discourse. 'Utba challenged Ja'da, suggesting that he was fighting merely because of his love for his maternal uncle ('AIT) and his paternal uncle ('Umar) b. AbT Salama, governor of al-Bahrayn. 'We, by God, would not claim that Mu'awiya has a better right to the caliphate than 'AIT, were it not for his affair with 'Uthman. But Mu'awiya has a better right to Syria, because the people of Syria are pleased with him, so excuse us for her. For, by God, there is no man of any strength in Syria who is not more serious than Mu'awiya in fighting, nor is there in Iraq anyone more serious than 'AIT in war. We are more obedient to our master than you to yours. How abominable it is for 'AIT to be in the hearts of the Muslims the most worthy of people [to rule] over the people, but when he attains authority he annihilates the Arabs.'

Ja'da answered: 'As for my love for my maternal uncle, if you had one like him you would forget your father [Abu Sufyan]. As for Ibn AbT Salama, no greater one in rank could be found, and *jihad* is preferable to me to government. As for the superior excellence of 'AIT over Mu'awiya, no two men disagree about that. As for your satisfaction with Syria, you were satisfied with her yesterday, but we did not accept it. As for your statement that there is not a man in Syria more serious [in warfare] and no man in Iraq equal in seriousness to 'AIT, this is how it should be. For 'AIT is moved by his certitude, while Mu'awiya is held back by his doubting; and the resolution of the people of truth is better than the endeavour of the people of falsehood. As for your assertion: 'We are more obedient to

³⁵² Minqari, *Waq'at SiffTn*, 439.

³⁵³ Al-BaladhurT describes a meeting of 'Utba b. AbT Sufyan, al-WalTd b. 'Uqba 'and others' in the presence of Mu'awiya at Siffin in which 'Utba referred to the Umayyads killed by 'AIT at Badr. Mu'awiya suggested that they ought to thrust their spears at him, seeking revenge. Al-WalTd then rose and improvised a poem in which he made fun of Mu'awiya's proposition. He described 'AIT as a snake at the bottom of the valley for whose bite there was no physician and recalled that 'AIT called out for Mu'awiya in the battle but Mu'awiya, though made to hear, failed to respond (*Ansab*, 4/1, 117-18).

Mu'awiya than you to 'AH', by God, we do not ask him when he keeps silent, nor do we contradict him when he speaks. As for killing the Arabs, God has prescribed killing and fighting, and whoever is killed by the truth goes to God[is judgment].³⁵⁴ 'Utba was incensed now and hurled abuse at Ja'da, who did not answer and turned away. They were both ready to fight. 'Utba gathered all his men and horses and came forward with a retinue of Sakun, Azd and Sadif. Ja'da also prepared with every means at his disposal. They met, and for a while the men stood firm. Ja'da himself fought on that day, but 'Utba became frightened, abandoned his horsemen, and fled speedily to Mu'awiya. The Iraqi poets al-NajashT and al-A'war al-ShannT had a splendid opportunity to lampoon him and praise Ja'da.³⁵⁴

It remained for 'Amr b. al-'As, as commander of the Syrian cavalry, to supervise the overall Syrian battle conduct and occasionally to intervene in the fighting. He did so with due circumspection but not much personal distinction. When he took command of Himyar and Yahsub to lead them against al-Ashtar, the latter struck him in the face with his lance. Protected by his visor, he was not wounded, but feeling dazed by the impact, he turned back to the camp, holding his face. A youth of Yahsub sped up to him and took the banner from his hands, appealing to Himyar to stand firm. Al-Ashtar called his son Ibrahim: 'Take the banner from him, a boy for a boy.' The two young men met and fought for a while until the Yahsubl fell dead. The Yemenites blamed Mu'awiya for giving their command to someone who ran away from battle, and demanded that only one of their own should be appointed to lead them. Mu'awiya conceded this to them.³⁵⁵

After the crucial, but indecisive, day, the battle continued through the night which was remembered as the night of the rumble (*laylat al-harTr*). The fighting was now mostly by sword, and the number of dead mounted. Advancing for a time, 'AIT recovered many of the dead from his army.³⁵⁶ Unlike him, Mu'awiya did not allow the enemy to pick up their dead or to bury them.³⁵⁷ Nu'aym b. Suhayl b. al-'Ulayya al-BajalT, fighting on the Syrian side, found his cousin Nu'aym b. al-Harith b. al-'Ulayya among the Iraqi dead and asked Mu'awiya for permission to bury him. Mu'awiya answered that these people were not worthy of being buried since they had prevented a public burial for 'Uthman. When Nu'aym threatened to join the enemy, he angrily told him to do what he pleased. Nu'aym buried his cousin.³⁶⁵

³⁵⁴ MinqarT, *Waq'at Si'Ifn*, 462—6. ³⁶² *Ibid.*, 439—42. ³⁶³ *Ibid.*, 369.

³⁶⁴ There is, however, a report that 'Amr b. al-'As agreed to a proposal by 'AIT to interrupt the fighting so that each side could get its dead from the other side and bury them: BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 383. ³⁶⁵ TabarT, I, 3302—3.

³⁵⁷ TabarT, I, 3329; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 323.

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When morning came, the balance seemed to be slowly moving in 'All's favour. Towards noon some of the Syrians facing the centre of 'All's army raised copies of the Qur'an tied to the heads of their lances. The fighting stopped.

Arbitration, Kharijite revolt, and end

The raising of the Qur'an copies signified an appeal to settle the conflict on the basis of the Holy Book. The Syrians shouted at the same time: 'Let the Book of God judge between us and you. Who will protect the border towns of the people of Syria after they are all gone, and who will protect the border towns of the people of Iraq after they are all gone?'³⁶⁶ It could be seen as an offer of surrender. Mu'awiya had so far refused to submit to the Qur'an, at least on 'All's terms, and had insisted that only the sword could judge between them. He had promised his followers that he would lead them to Iraq and pursue the murderers of 'Uthman wherever they would seek to hide. When 'Amr b. al-'As realized that the Syrians could not win the battle and that the enemy was gradually gaining the upper hand, he advised Mu'awiya to adopt the stratagem. The latter agreed, no doubt, with some reluctance.

In 'All's army the stratagem, as 'Amr had hoped, immediately caused confusion and discord. 'AIT exhorted his men to continue fighting. Mu'awiya, 'Amr and their chief supporters were, he warned, not men of religion and the Qur'an but were raising it for deception and fraud. To many of the Qur'an readers, however, the appeal to the Scripture proved irresistible. Had they not marched against their Syrian brethren in order to teach them respect for the Qur'an? How could they now reject their offer to submit to the judgment of the Holy Book? Two leaders of a group of Qur'an readers who then became leading Kharijites, Mis'ar b. Fadak of Tamim and Zayd b. Hisn al-Ta'i, threatened 'AIT: "AIT, respond to the Book of God since you have been summoned to it. If not, we shall hand you over to these people or we shall do with you as we did with Ibn 'Affan. We are obliged to act in accordance with the Book of God, and we accept it." Facing open mutiny, 'AIT gave in to their demand that he recall al-Ashtar, who had advanced far towards the Syrian camp and sensed victory close at hand. Al-Ashtar refused at first to respond and had to be warned that the army would abandon him. His reproaches to the men that they were relinquishing the battle as he was hoping for victory and were allowing themselves to be duped for worldly motives were answered with curses. 'AIT had to restore order by affirming that he had accepted that the

Qur'an be made the judge between the two parties. Al-Ash'ath b. Qays came up to him and assured him that the men of the army were pleased to respond to the offer of the opponents and offered to meet Mu'awiya and enquire about the meaning of their appeal to the Qur'an. Mu'awiya proposed to him that each side choose a representative to arbitrate the conflict in accordance with the Book of God and that both parties agree to abide by their joint verdict. Al-Ash'ath welcomed the proposal without further question, and the majority of 'Alī's army immediately declared their acceptance.³⁶⁷

As the implications of Mu'awiya's proposal became evident, however, a substantial minority dissented. According to the account of al-Sha'bī, a group of about four thousand men of insight and pious worshippers objected to the principle of arbitration. They evidently realized that Mu'awiya was not sincerely submitting to the Qur'an but intended a game of political wheeling and dealing between two representatives of the opposing parties which would allow him to hold on to power. Another, smaller, group abstained from either backing or opposing the proposal. The group opposed to the arbitration came to 'Alī and demanded that he resume the war. 'Alī, according to al-Sha'bī, was in favour of this. Those in favour of arbitration, however, insisted that the proposal was only right, fair and just. Al-Ash'ath b. Qays and the Yemenites were most outspoken in their opposition to a return to war. 'Alī pointed out to the opponents of arbitration that they were in a minority and that the majority would be tougher against them if they resumed the war than the Syrians and would jointly with these wipe them out. He, 'Alī, was not pleased with what had happened, but he inclined to the majority in fear that they would suffer senseless loss of life. Then he recited the line of the pre-Islamic poet Durayd b. al-Simma:

**I am only one of Ghaziyya; when they go astray,
I go astray, and when they are rightly guided, I am guided.**

The opponents of arbitration went away in anger. Some of them left for Kufa before the agreement was signed. Others stayed on, saying: 'Perhaps he will repent and turn back.'³⁶⁸

Al-Ash'ath b. Qays, who was the most active and prominent advocate of truce and arbitration, evidently represented the strong peace sentiment of the majority of the Yemenites, especially Kinda. More crucial for 'Alī was probably the attitude of Rabī'a. They had borne the brunt of the battle, had thwarted Mu'awiya's hopes for victory, and had suffered, besides the Yemenites, the most substantial losses. When 'Alī consulted their chiefs, one of them, Hurayth b. Jabir al-Hanafī, spoke in favour of

³⁶⁷ Tabari, I, 3329-33. ³⁶⁸ Baladhurī, *Ansb*, II, 338-9.

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continuing the war. Kurduṣ b. Hanī' al-Bakrī and al-Hudayn b. al-Mundhir al-Raqashl al-Raba'T, the youngest one among them, expressed their unconditional support of 'Alī, with the former evidently inclining to the truce proposal, and the latter favouring resumption of the war. Khalīd b. al-Mu'ammār al-SadusT, who had held the general command of RabT'a, backed the truce and was supported by Shaqlq b. Thawr al-SadusT. They probably represented the majority sentiment. The Bakr b. Wa'il displayed hostility to al-Hudayn when his stand became known, and 'Alī had to intervene in order to conciliate between them.³⁶⁹ The chief of BajTla, Rifa'a b. Shaddad, also spoke in favour of the truce, arguing that the Syrians, after fighting and killing, were now accepting what they had been asked to accept. If they were to go back on their agreement, 'Alī's followers would be able to resume the war with renewed vigour.³⁷⁰ The number of BajTla present, however, was insignificant.

Among those opposed, to varying degrees, to the truce were, apart from al-Ashtar, 'AdT b. Hatīm, chief of Tayyi', 'Amr b. al-Hamiq, leader of Khuza'a,³⁷¹ and al-Ahnaf b. Qays of Sa'd TamTm. TamTm had not been prominent in most of the fighting at SiffTn, and their losses seem to have been lighter than those among the Yemen and RabT'a. Partly because of this they may have been more ready to continue the war in the hope of victory. Sa'Td b. Qays, chief of Hamdan, is said to have wavered between acceptance and rejection of the truce.³⁷²

The decision hung in the balance for some time while 'Alī consulted his commanders. The Syrians, who were evidently eager to have the truce which was, under the circumstances, clearly favourable to them, urged Mu'awiya to press the case for it. Mu'awiya asked 'Abd Allāh b. 'Amr b. al-'As, who had the reputation of a pious man, to address 'Alī's army. His appeal to the common interest of both sides in ending the conflict was answered, however, by Sa'Td b. Qays with a reminder that so far 'Alī's army had fought for the rule of the Qur'an to which the Syrians were now summoning.³⁷³ Mu'awiya also persuaded Masqala b. Hubayra of the Banu Shayban of RabT'a to try to influence all of RabT'a, by means of a poem, to accept the truce.³⁷⁴ In the Syrian army, only Busr b. AbT Artah is said to have objected strongly to the arbitration and threatened that he would join the Iraqis. Mu'awiya made light of his threat, however, well knowing that Busr was not a man to back 'Alī.³⁷⁵

Immediately after the fighting stopped, evidently before the agreement on arbitration, Mu'awiya made another attempt to reach a direct settlement with 'Alī, regardless of his public claim of retaliation for 'Uthman. He wrote to 'Alī that if both of them had known what extent the

MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 484-8. ³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 488. ³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 482. ³⁷² *Ibid.*, 484. ³⁷³ *Ibid.*, 483. ³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 486. ³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 504.

destruction caused by their war would reach, they would presumably not have inflicted it on each other; yet though they had been deprived of their sound minds in starting the war, it remained for them to repent of their past folly and to restore what was left. He reminded 'All that he had previously asked him for possession of Syria on the basis that he would not owe obedience to him, and appealed to him now for what he had appealed to him yesterday. 'All, he suggested, was hoping for survival just as he, Mu'awiya, was hoping for it, and must be fearing what Mu'awiya feared from the fighting; their armies had been weakened, and their men were gone, yet they were both of 'Abd Manaf, and neither of them had superior merit over the other by which a proud man could be humbled or a free man enslaved.

'All answered the letter point for point. If he were killed in the cause of God and brought to life seventy times, he would not falter in his strength on behalf of God and the *jihad* against the enemies of God; he, 'AIT, had not been deficient in his sound mind and did not repent of what he had done. As for Mu'awiya's demand for Syria, he would not give him today what he refused him yesterday; as for their equality in fear and hope, Mu'awiya was as deep in doubt as he, 'AIT, was in certitude - and the Syrians were not more eager in their pursuit of this world than the people of Iraq were in pursuit of the other world; they were indeed both descended from the same forefather, 'Abd Manaf, but Umayya was not like Hashim, Harb not like 'Abd al-Muttalib, Abu Sufyan not like Abu Talib, nor was a Muhajir like a *talig*, or a rightful claimant like a false pretender. 'In our hands is the superior merit of prophethood through which we have humbled the proud and given pride to the humble.'¹⁷⁶

In the face of the strong peace sentiments of the majority of his army, 'AIT decided to accept, against his own judgement, the arbitration proposal. His public display of reluctance merely strengthened the resolve of the peace party who, after initial victory, felt now in a position to dictate the terms. 'AIT evidently was convinced that the arbitration would fail, and put up little resistance. Two groups of Qur'an readers of both sides first met between the lines to discuss the procedure. They agreed to 'revive what the Qur'an revived and to deaden what the Qur'an deadened'. The Syrians then proposed 'Amr b. al-'As as their arbitrator. Al-Ash'ath and the Iraqi Qur'an readers led by Zayd b. Hisn al-Ta'T and Mis'ar b. FadakT proposed Abu Musa al-Ash'arT. When 'AIT objected that he did not wish to nominate Abu Musa, they countered that they would not be satisfied with anyone but him since he had warned them of what they had fallen into. The discussion thus turned into open criticism of

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 470-1; Mas'udT, *Murij*, III, 201-2, para. 1792-3; (pseudo-)Ibn Qutayba, *Imama*, I, 191-2.

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'All's previous war policy. 'All pointed out that he could not trust Abu Musa, who had opposed him, had encouraged the people to desert him, and then fled from him. Only after some months had 'AIT granted him a pardon. He proposed appointing 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas. They answered that there was no difference between himself and Ibn al-'Abbas; they wanted someone who was equally distant from both 'AIT and Mu'awiya. 'AIT now proposed al-Ashtar. Al-Ash'ath reacted strongly against his Yemenite rival: 'Is there anyone but al-Ashtar who has set the earth aflame?' It was al-Ashtar's judgement, he asserted, that had pitted the Muslims against each other with their swords in order to achieve 'All's and his own desires.

'AIT now gave in, and Abu Musa, who was living in retreat at 'Urd, between Tadmur and al-Rusafa in Syrian territory,³⁷⁷ was sent for. Abu Musa readily accepted his role as arbitrator. Both al-Ashtar and al-Ahnaf b. Qays vainly tried to persuade 'AIT to change his mind. Al-Ashtar suggested that he was the man to block 'Amr's designs and was prepared to kill him. Al-Ahnaf argued that Abu Musa was indecisive and superficial, no match for a wily opponent such as 'Amr. If 'AIT did not want to appoint him, al-Ahnaf, arbitrator, he should put him at least in second or third place so that he could untie the knots that 'Amr would try to tie, and that he would tie firmer knots for 'AIT.³⁷⁸ Yet the peace party wanted none but Abu Musa.

As the text of the arbitration agreement was drawn up, another problem arose. Mu'awiya objected to the title 'Commander of the Faithful' being attached to 'AIT's name, remarking that if he, Mu'awiya, recognized 'AIT to be Commander of the Faithful, he would not have fought him. 'Amr b. al-'As, who was visiting 'AIT's camp for the negotiations, proposed that only the name and the father's name be mentioned, since 'AIT was amir of his followers but not of the Syrians. Al-Ahnaf b. Qays advised 'AIT not to omit the title since he feared if he omitted it now he would never get it back. Rather than allowing that, the people should resume fighting. 'AIT thus at first on that day refused to remove the title. Then al-Ash'ath asked him to omit it since God would not want distress to be caused by it. 'AIT agreed, recalling the precedent set by Muhammad at al-Hudaybiyya when he allowed the title 'Messenger of God' to be omitted from the treaty on the demand of the polytheists. 'Amr pretended to be offended: 'Praise the Lord, in this example we are likened to the infidels, yet we are believers.' 'AIT told him: 'Ibn al-Nabigha, when were you ever anything but a friend to the reprobate and an enemy to the Muslim? Are you not just like your [slave] mother

³⁷⁷MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 500; Yaqut, *Buldan*, III, 644-5.

³⁷⁸TabarT, I, 3333-4; MinqarT, *Waq'at SiffTn*, 409-501.

who bore you?' 'Amr rose and said: 'No assembly room will ever bring me and you together again after this day.' 'AIT: 'Surely, I hope that God will cleanse my assembly room from you and the likes of you.'³⁷⁹ Some of 'AIT's followers had strong feelings about the matter. A group of them came with their swords on their shoulders and said: 'Commander of the Faithful, order us to do whatever you wish.' Sahl b. Hunayf calmed them down, repeating the story of Muhammad's precedent at al-Hudaybiyya.³⁸⁰ The arbitration agreement was written and signed in duplicate on Wednesday, 15 Safar 37/2 August 657, four days after the cessation of hostilities.³⁸¹ It reflected primarily the sentiments of the peace party. The two sides committed themselves to adhere to the Book of God. The two arbitrators, who were named, were to follow strictly the rules of the Qur'an. Whatever they could not find a rule for in the Qur'an, they were to apply 'the just, uniting and not dividing, sunna', evidently meaning good practice acceptable to both sides. What they were to judge was not specified. They were bound, however, to judge among the Community rightly so as not to throw them into division and war. This was obviously the primary concern of the peace party, who were otherwise prepared to give the arbitrators a free hand. They were to make their judgment by Ramadan, seven months after the agreement, but might either advance or defer the date.³⁸² They should meet at a place equidistant from Damascus and Kufa, but could meet elsewhere by mutual agreement. No one was allowed to attend their meeting except by their choice, and they were free to choose the witnesses who would sign their decision. The text quoted by al-MinqarT contained a clause, missing in other versions, that the two sides were absolved from any judgment not agreeing with God's revelation.³⁸³ If the clause was part of the original document, it was presumably added at 'AIT's instance. Even without it, it was clear, however, that any decision in conflict with the Qur'an would be *eo ipso* invalid.

There was plainly a deplorable lapse in 'AIT's leadership at this trying but crucial time. He permitted the majority of his army to impose their will on him as if he were a tribal shaykh, as implied in his quotation of Durayd b. al-Simma, rather than the Commander of the Faithful. It is

³⁷⁹ TabarT, I, 3334—5; MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 508-9. ³⁸⁰ MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 509.

³⁸¹ The date is given in both versions of the text quoted by al-MinqarT (*Waq'at Siffin*, 507-8, 511) and is confirmed by al-TabarT (I, 3340). Abu Mikhnaf, however, according to al-Baladhuri (*Ansb*, II, 337-8), gave the date as 'Friday in Safar'; and the Basran Abu 'Amr b. al-'Ala', quoted by Abu 'Ubayda, mentioned Friday, 17 Safar 37/4 Aug. 657. Of the two versions of the text given by al-MinqarT, the shorter one (*Waq'at Siffin*, 510-11; TabarT, I, 3339) is basically reliable as shown by M. Hinds, 'The SiffTn Arbitration Agreement', *JSS*, 17 (1972), 92-129, at 93-129.

³⁸² The text of the various versions disagrees on whether the date could only be advanced or only deferred or both. ³⁸³ MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 511.

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true that the raising of the Qur'an copies by the Syrians put him in a difficult position. He could not simply ignore the gesture and had to ascertain its significance. Yet once it became evident that Mu'awiya was not submitting to the Qur'an but was proposing to use it as a political football in order to hold on to power, 'AIT had to resume the battle. This was evidently harder now that the fighting had been stopped by false hopes for a peaceful settlement, but there were a sufficient number of prominent leaders such as al-Ashtar, al-Ahnaf b. Qays and 'AdT b. Hatim who were ready and eager to go on with the war to definite victory. It is quite unlikely that any substantial part of his men were, whatever the rhetoric, at this point prepared to desert to Mu'awiya. Al-Ash'ath b. Qays was no traitor, although he had been reluctant from the beginning to fight his own people on the Syrian side.³⁸⁴ It was 'AIT's own deference to the majority sentiment in his army, after having made clear his preference for resumption of the battle, that encouraged the peace party to make a show of their strength and to question openly 'AIT's judgement in starting the campaign itself. 'AIT's former experience of seeing the people 'turn away from him' seems to have haunted him and to have paralysed his resolve.

Later, when 'AIT approached Kufa, he enquired about the opinion of the judicious there about his conduct. He was told that they thought he had allowed the massive army gathered by him to disperse and had destroyed the firm fortress built by him; they were questioning when he might be able to assemble again the dispersed and to rebuild what he had destroyed. If indeed part of his army had disobeyed him, he should have fought on with those obeying him until victory or death. 'AIT countered that it was they, not he, who had dispersed and destroyed. He had thought of fighting on with the loyal minority, since he was not sparing with his own life; but looking at al-Hasan and al-Husayn, he had realized that if they perished the offspring of Muhammad would be cut off from the Community. He had also been concerned for the lives of his nephew 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far and his non-Fatimid son Muhammad who had come along only for his sake. If he were to meet the enemy again, these charges of his would not again be in his army.³⁸⁵

The latter point may be viewed with some sympathy. 'AIT was an exceptionally brave man, and his lack of resolve after the battle of SiffTn cannot be explained by either cowardice or plain defeatism. If he sincerely lost faith in the loyalty of the bulk of his army, concern for the only surviving grandsons of the Prophet and other members of his family was a reasonable motive not to resume a suicidal fight. The blame that may attach to his decision to retreat is minor. His acceptance of the

³⁸⁴ Hinds is mistaken, however, in suggesting that al-Ash'ath did not take part in the battle of SiffTn ('The SiffTn Arbitration Agreement', 93). ³⁸⁵ Tabari, I, 3346-7.

arbitration proposal, in contrast, was a serious and unjustifiable political blunder. He could have arranged a simple military truce with Mu'awiya. He could have withdrawn from the battlefield without any agreement. Arbitration on Mu'awiya's terms was the worst option.

'All realized fully that arbitration on the basis of the Qur'an with 'Amr b. al-'As as one of the arbitrators could only end in failure. Whatever the agreement voiced about the independence of the arbitrators and their sole obligation to judge in accordance with the Qur'an in the interest of peace for the whole Community, it was obvious that 'Amr was not a free agent but a stooge of Mu'awiya acting solely for his benefit. 'AIT thus foresaw that he would inevitably have to repudiate any agreement of the arbitrators if they were able to reach one. He acted out of spite in permitting al-Ash'ath and the peace party to set the terms of the agreement, thinking to teach them a lesson about their illusory hopes for an honourable settlement with Mu'awiya. It was not the case, as the defenders of 'AIT's conduct later claimed, that he acted under duress from his disloyal followers.³⁵⁸ For as soon as he had accepted their demands to end the war, they were in no position to dictate his relations with Mu'awiya. Even if a few had gone over to the enemy, it would have mattered little.

It was not so much the terms of the agreement dictated by the peace party, unfavourable as they were for 'AIT, as the principle of arbitration itself that was objectionable. How could 'AIT, after steadfastly refusing men such as Mu'awiya and 'Amr b. al-'As public office under his reign, now allow them to sit as judges over the Qur'an? The arbitration agreement both undermined the conviction among his own loyal followers that they had been fighting for a righteous cause and encouraged the Syrians to believe that the fraudulent claims of Mu'awiya had a credible basis in the Qur'an. It thus handed Mu'awiya a moral victory even before it caused the disastrous split in the ranks of 'AIT's men. On this basis Syrian propaganda could later celebrate Siffin as a victory for Mu'awiya although militarily it had been close to a defeat. Mu'awiya and 'Amr, to be sure, knew as well as 'AIT that the arbitration was bound to end in failure. But Mu'awiya gained time to consolidate his grip on Syria and would attempt to draw the maximum propagandistic benefit out of the negotiations.

When al-Ashtar was called to sign the agreement, he refused to do so, declaring that he was in no doubt that the enemy was misguided and that the peace party was merely caving in out of moral lassitude. Al-Ash'ath protested and demanded that he sign since he, al-Ashtar, could not

358 See, for instance, the argument of Ibn al-'Abbas, Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 337.

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dispense with the backing of the people. The latter angrily countered that he could certainly dispense with al-Ash'ath in this world and the hereafter. Al-Ash'ath, he added, was in his eyes no better, nor was his blood more sacred, than the men whose blood God had shed through his sword. Al-Ash'ath paled. Then al-Ashtar added that he was satisfied with what 'All had done and that he saw no guidance except in following him.³⁵⁹ Al-Ash'ath took the text of the agreement and read it out before each banner of the two armies. The Syrians were all satisfied. When he read it to the 'Anaza, who numbered four thousand men in 'All's army, two young brothers, Ma'dan and Ja'd, came forward with the call: 'No judgment except God's.' Attacking the Syrian battle line, they were killed. They were said to have been the first ones to raise the Kharijite battle cry. Among the Murad, Salih b. Shaqlq, one of their chiefs, voiced his disapproval. The Banu Rasib of Azd similarly objected to the arbitration of men in the religion of God. When al-Ash'ath read the agreement to the TamTm, 'Urwa b. Hudayr, known by his mother's name as 'Urwa b. Udayya, came forward exclaiming: 'Will you appoint men as arbitrators in the affairs of God? No judgment but God's. Where are our dead, Ash'ath?' Then he charged at al-Ash'ath with his sword and, missing him, hit the hind part of his horse with a light blow, causing it to bolt. 'Urwa's companions shouted: 'Control your hand', and he turned back. As al-Ash'ath's men and many Yemenites stood up in anger on his behalf, al-Ahnaf b. Qays, Jariya b. Qudama, Ma'qil b. Qays al-RiyahT, Mis'ar b. FadakT al-'Anbarf, Shabath b. Ribl and other chiefs of TamTm went to him to offer their apologies; he accepted them.³⁶⁰

After the battle, the remaining dead were buried. On the Syrian side Habis b. Sa'd al-TaT, a chief of the Banu Tayyi' in Hims, had been killed. His body was found by his Kufan nephew Zayd, son of 'AdT b. Hatim, who said to his father: 'This is, by God, my maternal uncle.' His father confirmed his identity and cursed Habis. Zayd repeatedly called out, asking who had killed him. Finally a man of Bakr b. Wa'il came forth and acknowledged having slain him. Zayd asked him about the circumstances and then pierced him with a lance, killing him. His own father attacked him, cursing him and his mother, and threatened to surrender him to the Bakr. Zayd rode off swiftly and joined Mu'awiya, who received him with open arms. There was some murmuring among 'AIT's followers against 'AdT b. Hatim, who had been one of his closest associates. 'AdT apologized to 'AIT for Zayd's offence; he affirmed that he would kill him if he found him, and 'AIT praised him for his loyalty.³⁸⁹

³⁵⁹ MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 511-12; TabarT, I, 3338.

³⁶⁰ MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 512-13; TabarT, I, 3338-9; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 336, 339.

The prisoners on both sides were released. 'Amr b. al-'As is said to have earlier advised Mu'awiya to kill his Iraqi prisoners of war. When 'AIT released his Syrian captives, however, Mu'awiya expressed relief that he had not done so and reciprocated.³⁹⁰ Two days after the conclusion of the agreement both sides departed from the battlefield.³⁹¹

'AIT took the route along the western bank of the Euphrates to HTt where he crossed the river. He stayed a night at \$andawda' and continued on to Kufa via al-Nukhayla. On the way the deep rift in his army became fully apparent as supporters and opponents of the arbitration agreement cursed and hit each other with whips. 'No judgment but God's' became the motto of the opponents, who accused the supporters of having acted dishonourably in the matter of God by appointing human arbitrators, while these condemned the opponents as deserters of their imam and their community. Witnessing the division among his men, 'AIT is said to have confessed in verse that he had made a slip (*'athra*) for which he need not apologize. He rather would act intelligently and continue firmly so as to mend the rift.³⁹² Yet the schism proved too serious. As he entered Kufa and dismissed his army in RabT¹ I 37/August-September 65 8,³⁹³ some twelve thousand men seceded and withdrew to Harura' outside the town in protest against the arbitration, fully prepared to fight for their cause. They chose Shabath b. Rib'T al-TamTmT as their military leader and 'Abd Allah b. al-Kawwa' al-YashkurT of Bakr b. Wa'il as leader of their prayers. Among them were evidently also many who had initially advocated the truce or accepted arbitration and now recognized their mistake. The choice of Shabath b. Rib'T may indicate that the presence of TamTm among 'the first Haruriyya' was substantial. According to Salih b. Kaysan even al-Ahnaf b. Qays was among them,³⁹⁴ but his reliability here is doubtful. Prominent among the seceders was also the Yemenite YazTd b. Qays al-ArhabT, 'All's former governor of al-Mada'in.³⁹⁵ No longer recognizing 'AIT as their imam, the rebels committed themselves to a *shura* after victory. In the meantime their oath of allegiance was to God on the basis of 'ordering what is proper and prohibiting what is reprehensible'.³⁹⁶

In Kufa 'AIT reprimanded his interim governor Abu Mas'ud al-AnsarT who, during his absence, had encouraged the deserters of 'AIT's army to come out by promising them safety and had in his sermons criticized the

³⁹⁰ Tabari, I, 3339^10; Minqari, *Waq'at Siffm*, 518-19. The note of al-Minqar! that 'AIT released his Syrian prisoners except those who had killed one of his men or had been captured for a second time, in which case they would be killed, evidently does not apply to the situation at SiffTn. It probably refers to the later Syrian raids.

"» BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 337. ³⁹² *Ibid.*, 342.

³⁹³ Muhammad b. al-Sa'ib al-KalbT gives as the date of 'All's return to Kufa 20 Rab. I 37/5

Sept. 657 (*ibid.*, 345-6). This seems rather late. ³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 342.

³⁹⁵ TabarT, I, 3352. ³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 3349; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 342.

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rebels against 'Uthman. 'AIT called him a chicken and an old man who had lost his sound mind, but Abu Mas'ud defended himself, reminding 'AIT that the Prophet had promised him paradise. He left for a pilgrimage and continued admonishing the people to hold on to the Community.³⁶¹

To mediate with the seceders, 'AIT first sent 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas, advising him to stall for time in replying to their questions and in arguing with them until he would join him. Ibn al-'Abbas was drawn, however, into debate by them, and he questioned them as to why they resented arbitration, since God stipulated the appointment of two arbitrators in the case of a serious conflict between husband and wife (Sura IV 35). The seceders answered that in this case, where God prescribed arbitration, it was licit for the people to judge, but in matters where God had stated His rule, such as the punishment of a hundred lashes for the fornicator and the cutting off of the hand for the thief, His rule was binding. Ibn al-'Abbas gave as another example the judgment of 'two men of integrity (*dhawa 'adl*)' stipulated by the Qur'an in the case of compensation for illicit killing of game by a pilgrim in the state of sanctity (Sura V 95). The seceders countered that these cases could not be compared to one involving the shedding of blood of Muslims; furthermore, did Ibn al-'Abbas consider 'Amr b. al-'As a 'man of integrity' after he had fought them and shed their blood? God had laid down His judgment concerning Mu'awiya and his party that they be killed unless they turned back; they had been summoned to the Book of God and had rejected it; a peace settlement of Muslims with non-Muslims was not licit after the revelation of the Sura of Renunciation except with Christians and Jews if they paid tribute (*jizya*).³⁶² The seceders thus unequivocally denounced Mu'awiya and the Syrians as infidels. They stood their ground, and the weak arguments of Ibn al-'Abbas evidently made little impact.³⁶³

'AIT had sent Ziyad b. al-Nadr to the camp of the seceders to investigate which of their leaders enjoyed the most prestige among them, and Ziyad reported that most of them assembled around YazTd b. Qays. 'AIT now went to visit YazTd in his pavilion and performed his ablution and prayer there. He apparently had no difficulty in regaining YazTd's allegiance and appointed him governor of Isfahan and Rayy. Then he went out to where Ibn al-'Abbas was debating with the seceders and interrupted his discourse. He addressed them, reminding them that they had wished to respond to the Syrian appeal to the Qur'an while he had warned against it. When they had persisted in their view, he had stipulated that the

³⁶¹ Ibn AbT Shayba, *Musannaf*, VIII, 728. ^{3,8} TabarT, I, 3351-2.

^{3,9} According to the main report, none of the seceders followed the appeal of Ibn al-'Abbas to return to Kufa. Other accounts reported that 2,000 or 4,000 men did so (BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 349).

arbitrators strictly follow the judgment of the Qur'an. If they failed to do so, their judgment would not be binding. When the seceders asked whether he considered the arbitration of men in cases of bloodshed licit, he suggested that he had not agreed to the arbitration of men but to the arbitration of the Qur'an. The Qur'an, however, was in writing and did not speak. It was thus for men to pronounce it. They asked him why he had agreed to a fixed term for the truce, and he answered that it was in the hope that God might restore peace in the Community during the truce. 'AIT then appealed to them to return to their town, and all of them did so.³⁶⁴ Abu Mikhnaf added to this account of 'Umara b. RaḥT'a and Jundab b. 'Abd Allah al-AzdT that the Kharijites themselves reported their answer to 'AIT. They told him that they had indeed done what he described, but this had been an act of infidelity on their part for which they repented before God. 'So repent as we have repented, and we shall pledge allegiance to you. If not we shall oppose you.' 'AIT had responded with a general declaration: 'I repent to God and ask His forgiveness from every sin.' They then pledged allegiance to him on the basis that he would resume the war after six months, while they would collect the land tax and fatten their riding animals.³⁶⁵

Full accord, however, was not restored. When the seceders returned to Kufa, there was antagonism between the more radical among them and those Kufans who championed the arbitration agreement. The radicals now claimed that 'AIT had repented and affirmed that the arbitration was an act of infidelity and a sinful error (*dalal*). They were, so they affirmed, only waiting for their animals to be fattened before they headed for Syria. 'AIT was forced to distance himself from this claim, stating that he had not gone back on the agreement and did not consider it a sinful error. While many of the 'first Haruriyya', including their chosen leaders Shabath b. RibT and 'Abd Allah b. al-Kawwa', accepted this, some of them resumed their public condemnation of the arbitration agreement.³⁶⁶ They interrupted 'AIT's sermons in the mosque with their battle cry 'No judgment but God's'. 'AIT commented on it, affirming that it was a word of truth by

³⁶⁴ TabarT, I, 3352-3. ^m *Ibid.*, 3353; BaladhurT, *Ansd*, II, 349.

⁴⁰² BaladhurT, *Ansd*, II, 356. Vecchia-Vaglieri's suggestion that 'AIT somehow went back on concessions he had made to the seceders ('Il conflitto 'AIT-Mu'awiya e la secessione Kharijita riesaminati alla luce di fonti ibadite', *Annali Istituto Orientale di Napoli* NS 4 (1952), 1-94, at 42-7; 'Harura' in *EL* (2nd edn) is not well founded. 'AIT had committed himself to resuming the war against Mu'awiya but obviously only if the arbitration, as he expected, would not lead to a sound judgment based on the Qur'an. This was evidently sufficient for the moderate seceders to return to obedience. He could not have promised to break the arbitration agreement, and this is not even claimed by the IbadT sources. The radicals, especially those who themselves had confessed their repentance of their initial support of the arbitration, now wanted to force a similar confession on him and the majority of the community.

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which they sought falsehood.⁴⁰³ They were effectively repudiating government (*intra*), yet an amir was indispensable in the conduct of religion.⁴⁰⁴ Basically agreeing with their position, however, he hesitated to let the tribes act against them. He ordered that they be neither excluded from the mosques nor deprived of their share of the *fay*' revenue. They should be fought only if they started fighting.⁴⁰⁵

Faced with this discord among the Kufans, 'AIT put off the preparations for the arbitration. Ramadan passed, and in early Shawwal/mid-March 658 an envoy from Mu'awiya, Ma'n b. YazTd b. al-Akhnas al-SulamT,⁴⁰⁶ arrived to complain about the delay. Mu'awiya, he reported, had fulfilled his obligations, and 'AIT must now fulfil his without letting himself be swayed by 'the bedouins (*a'arib*) of Bakr and TamTm'.⁴⁰⁷ 'AIT now gave orders to proceed with the arbitration. He sent four hundred men under the command of Shurayh b. Hani' al-HarithT as an escort for his arbitrator to Dumat al-Jandal. Since he had little trust in Abu Musa, he also sent 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas along as his personal representative. Ibn al-'Abbas was to lead the prayers of the Kufans and to manage their affairs. He also carried on the correspondence between 'AIT and his arbitrator. 'Amr b. al-'As arrived at Dumat al-Jandal with an escort of four hundred Syrians.

Among the Kufans there were evidently doubts whether Abu Musa al-Ash'arT would stand up to 'Amr b. al-'As and back the cause of 'AIT. Shurayh b. Hani' is said to have told Abu Musa that he would have to make up for his previous failure to support 'AIT, and Abu Musa commented that people who doubted his integrity should not be sending him to defend their case. Shurayh then changed his attitude and praised him in order to strengthen his prestige. The poet al-A'war al-ShannT, however, warned Shurayh in a poem that Abu Musa was a man without astuteness or incisive judgement, no match for the cunning 'Amr. If the two were to judge in accordance with right guidance they would be followed, but if they judged according to false inclination, they would end up in bitter conflict. Al-NajashT, who was a friend of Abu Musa, expressed his faith in him and encouraged him to crush 'Amr with his thunderbolts.⁴⁰⁸ Even while Abu Musa was in Dumat al-Jandal, al-A'war al-ShannT and al-Salatan sent poetry to him. The latter, a poet of 'Abd al-Qays, declared that he would never agree to depose 'AIT on the basis of a judgement by Abu Musa and 'Amr.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰¹ Tabari, I, 3361-2. ⁴⁰⁴ BaladhurT, *Ansd*, II, 352, 361, 377.

⁴⁰⁵ TabarT, I, 3362-3; BaladhurT, *Ansd*, II, 352.

⁴⁰⁶ He was a Companion and was killed at Marj Rahit fighting for al-Dahhak b. Qays (Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, XXV, 150-2).

⁴⁰⁷ TabarT, I, 3353; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 346—50. ⁴⁰⁸ MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 534—5. *Ibid.*, 537-8.

As soon as 'All's decision to send Abu Musa became known, two Kharijites, Zur'a b. al-Burj al-Ta'T and Hurqus b. Zuhayr al-Sa'di,⁴¹⁰ came to him protesting and urging him to forgo the arbitration and to lead them to fight against their enemies. 'AIT countered that he would have liked to do that but they had disobeyed him. A treaty had therefore been written and confirmed between the two parties, and they were bound by it in accordance with Qur'an Sura XVI 91. Hurqus stated that this was a sinful act for which 'AIT must repent. 'AIT denied that it was sinful, maintaining that it was merely an unsound opinion and weakness in action against which he had warned them. Zur'a b. al-Burj now intervened, declaring that if 'AIT would not abandon the arbitration of men concerning the Book of God, he would fight him, seeking the face and pleasure of God by that. Rebuking him, 'AIT foretold his death, but Zur'a answered that death would be pleasant to him. 'AIT told him that if he were fighting for something rightful, death in Tightness would be a consolation for this world. The devil had, however, deluded him. Both men should fear God since there was no good in their fighting for a portion of this world. The two left proclaiming 'No judgment but God's'.⁴¹¹

The radical opponents of the arbitration now met in the house of 'Abd Allah b. Wahb al-RasibT.⁴¹² They all agreed that they could no longer stay in this unjust city and must leave for a place where they could assemble to denounce and fight the misguided innovations of its people. They decided to choose a leader among themselves. Zayd b. Hisn al-Ta'T, Hurqus b. Zuhayr, Jamra⁴¹³ b. Sinan al-AsadT and Shurayh b. Awfa al-'AbsTall declined the leadership. 'Abd Allah b. Wahb al-RasibT, known as Dhu l-Thafinat because of the callosities on his forehead and hands from his many prostrations in worship, accepted it reluctantly. They pledged allegiance to him on lOShawwal 37/21 March 658.⁴¹⁴ Then, after Abu Musa's departure for the arbitration,⁴¹⁵ they met in the house of Shurayh b. Awfa, who proposed that they occupy al-Mada'in, expel the inhabitants, and invite their Basran brethren to join them. Zayd b. Hisn suggested that if they departed as a group they would be pursued; rather, they should leave individually and in secret. They were sure to be prevented from entering al-Mada'in and should rather go to Jisr

⁴⁰ So the report of Abu Mikhnaf on the authority of 'Awn b. AbT Juhayfa (Tabari, I, 3360). In two reports of al-Sha'bT, Shurayh b. Awfa al-'AbsT, Farwa b. Nawfal al-AshjaT, 'Abd Allah b. Shajara al-SulamT, Jamra b. Sinan al-AsadT, 'Abd Allah b. Wahb al-RasibT and Zayd b. Hisn al-Ta'T are named aside from these two (BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, II, 359, 361). ⁴¹¹ Tabari, I, 3360-1.

⁴² According to al-Sha'bT's account, they met in the house of either 'Abd Allah b. Wahb or Zayd b. Hisn (BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 359, see also 363).

⁴¹¹ Jamra is the name given by al-Baladhuri. In al-Tabari it appears as Hamza. ⁴¹⁴ Al-BaladhurT (*Ansdb*, II, 363) gives the date as Friday night, 20 Shawwal. This would be 22 March 658. ⁴⁵ BaladhurT, *Ansdb*, II, 363.

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al-Nahrawan, east of the Tigris, and invite the Basrans to meet them there. This proposal met with approval, and 'Abd Allah b. Wahb wrote to their Basran brethren informing them of their decision and urging them to join them. The Basrans responded positively to his letter.

The first to leave were Shurayh b. Awfa and Zayd b. Hisn. 'AdT b. Hatim's son Tarafa³⁶⁷ also intended to join the rebels. His father pursued him but was unable to catch up with him. When Tarafa reached al-Mada'in, he decided to return. On his way back he was met at Sabat by 'Abd Allah b. Wahb with twenty horsemen. 'Abd Allah wanted to kill him, but 'Amr b. Malik al-NabhanT and Bishr b. Zayd al-BawlanT³⁶⁸ prevented him. 'AdT b. Hatim sent to Sa'd b. Mas'ud, 'AIT's governor of al-Mada'in, warning him of the rebels' approach. Sa'd secured the gates of al-Mada'in and rode out to meet them. There was some fighting at al-Karkh, but during the night 'Abd Allah b. Wahb crossed the Tigris and reached al-Nahrawan safely.³⁶⁹ About two thousand men gradually assembled there.

Some of those attempting to join were caught and imprisoned by their people. Among them were al-Qa'qa' b. Qays al-Ta'T, uncle of the later Kharijite poet al-Tirimmah, 'Abd Allah b. HakTm al-BakkaT³⁷⁰ and Ka'b b. 'Umayra.³⁷¹ 'ItrTs b. 'Urqub al-ShaybanT, a companion of 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud, was pursued by \$ayfT b. Fushayl al-ShaybanT and some of his men but escaped.⁴²¹ 'AIT was informed that Salim b. RabT'a al-'AbsT intended to leave. He had him brought before him and persuaded him to stay.⁴²²

After the Kharijites left Kufa, 'AIT's followers offered him a renewed oath of allegiance on the basis that they would be friends of those he befriended and enemies of those he took as enemies. 'AIT stipulated adherence to the Sunna of the Prophet in the oath. When he asked RabT'a b. Shaddad al-Khath'amT, who had fought for him in the battles of the Camel and SiffTn and was the carrier of the banner of Khath'am, to pledge allegiance on the basis of the Book of God, the Sunna of the Messenger of God, RabT'a suggested: 'On the sunna of Abu Bakr and 'Umar.' 'AIT objected that if Abu Bakr and 'Umar had been acting on anything but the Book of God and the Sunna of his Messenger, they would have been remote from the truth. RabT'a pledged allegiance to him, but 'AIT told him

³⁶⁷ Al-Baladhuri is probably mistaken in insisting that it was 'AdI b. Hatim's son Zayd who joined the Kharijites (*Ansab*, II, 364). He argues that Tarafa was killed fighting for 'AIT at al-Nahrawan. According to Abu Mikhnaf's account, Tarafa was killed there fighting on the side of the Kharijites (*TabarT*, I, 3384). In either case he must be the one who initially tried to join the Kharijites. Zayd had earlier joined Mu'awiya.

^{4,7} Nabhan and Bawlan were clans of Tayyi'. ⁴¹⁸ *TabarT*, I, 3366-7.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 3367. Bakka' was a tribe of 'Amir b. Sa'sa'a. ⁴²⁰ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 364.

⁴²¹ *Ibid.*, 363. ⁴²² *TabarT*, I, 3367.

that he foresaw his death on the side of the rebels. RabT'a was in fact killed at al-Nahrawan among the Basran Kharijites.³⁷²

The conflict about the arbitration thus brought a wider dogmatic schism to the fore. The Kharijites objected to the personal allegiance to the imam expressed in the formula offered by the partisans of 'AIT that they would be friends of those he befriended and enemies of those he took as enemies. They accused them of emulating the Syrians in their infidelity when they pledged allegiance to Mu'awiya on the basis of their likes and dislikes.³⁷³ For the Kharijites allegiance was not bound to a person, but to adherence to the Book and the Sunna of the righteous, the Prophet, Abu Bakr and 'Umar. They were evidently critical of 'AIT's claim of his specific right to the imamate on the basis of his early merits and close kinship with Muhammad. Early merit could be lost at any time by an infraction of the divine law, as it was lost by 'Uthman, and kinship with the Prophet was irrelevant in their eyes. Against 'AIT's claims they stressed their own adherence to the sunna of Abu Bakr and 'Umar, overlooking that this sunna entailed the privileged status of Quraysh, which they as political egalitarians rejected.

The formula of the new oath of allegiance for 'AIT matched the invocation that Muhammad was reported to have made for him at GhadTr Khumm: 'O God, be a friend of whomever he ['AIT] befriends and an enemy of whomever he takes as an enemy.³⁷⁴ It was most likely about this time that 'AIT had the hadith of GhadTr Khumm proclaimed in public. The hadith is introduced in many of its versions by the statement that 'AIT one day appealed to the crowd assembled on the square (*irahaba*) in front of the mosque of Kufa, asking those who had heard the words of the Prophet at GhadTr Khumm to testify. Twelve or thirteen Companions came forward and witnessed that they had heard words in which Muhammad affirmed that 'AIT was the patron (*mawla*) of everyone whose patron Muhammad was and an invocation on behalf of his cousin. 'AIT thus unequivocally claimed a religious authority superior to that of Abu Bakr and 'Umar.

The Basran Kharijites, some five hundred men under the leadership of Mis'ar b. FadakT, departed as a group. They were pursued by Abu I-Aswad al-Du'alT,³⁷⁵ who caught up with them at al-Jisr al-Akbar. They

³⁷² *Ibid.* ⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*, 3350.

⁴²⁵ For versions of the hadith of GhadTr Khumm containing this invocation, see the references in Wensinck, *Concordance*, s.v. *wall*. The ambiguity of the pronouns in the invocation allows the interpretation of 'All either as the subject or the object of 'befriending and taking as an enemy'. The translation chosen here agrees with the formula of the oath offered to 'All by his partisans.

³⁷⁵ That Abu I-Aswad was sent after them by Ibn al-'Abbas, as Abu Mikhnaf's report has it (TabarT, I, 3367), is probably incorrect. Ibn al-'Abbas was at the time in Dumat al-Jandal for the arbitration. He presumably left Abu I-Aswad in charge of Basra.

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faced each other until nightfall, and Mis'ar escaped with his companions in the darkness. Then they continued on to al-Nahrawan. On their way there the Basran Kharijites are said to have started the practice of interrogating and killing people for their views.³⁷⁶ According to one report, they murdered 'Abd Allah b. Khabbab b. al-Aratt and others just before they reached al-Nahrawan.⁴²⁸ Most likely, however, these murders occurred some months later when 'All was ready to set out for Syria. Otherwise 'AIT could hardly have ignored their activity and asked them to join his army without taking account of the offences committed by them.

In the meantime the two arbitrators were meeting at Dumat al-Jandal. Since they reported to their respective patrons in Kufa and Damascus and received instructions from them, the negotiations must have lasted some weeks and probably extended to early Dhu l-Qa'da 37/mid-April 658. The Kufan escort was evidently most eager to learn immediately about the developments of the discussions and pressed Ibn al-'Abbas to inform them about the contents of 'AIT's letters when they were delivered by his messenger. Ibn al'Abbas reprimanded them and pointed out that the Syrians were self-disciplined and did not interfere with the messages exchanged between Mu'awiya and his arbitrator.⁴²⁹ The Syrians could obviously trust 'Amr not to betray the interests of Mu'awiya. In Kufa doubts about Abu Musa's loyalty to 'AIT grew in the course of the meetings, and al-'Abbas composed, as noted, his poem affirming that he would never depose 'AIT on the basis of a verdict by Abu Musa and 'Amr. As the tension among the Kufans grew, the two arbitrators agreed to keep their discussions strictly confidential.³⁷⁷

The story of the arbitration has been much discussed in light of the contradictory information provided by the sources about date, place, procedure and outcome. That there were actually two meetings, one at Dumat al-Jandal and the other at Adhruh, was suggested early on by Caetani³⁷⁸ and strongly backed by Veccia-Vaglieri. More recently Djait has again argued that there was only one meeting, at Adhruh, probably in Muharram 38/June-July 658.³⁷⁹ On closer examination of the early

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 3368. ⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*, 3374-5.

al-Jandal. The arbitration agreement suggested that the arbitrators would meet without the presence of their respective patrons. ⁴³⁰ MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 538.

³⁷⁸ *Annali*, X, 30-1.

³⁷⁹ *La Grande Discorde*, 276. Djait suggests that only the Syrian delegation came to Dumat al-Jandal in Ramadan 37, while 'AIT, occupied with the Kharijites, failed to send a delegation. This was also the view of H. Lammens (*Etudes sur le regne du Calife Omayyade Mo'awia ler* (Paris, 1908), 126—9).

reports it seems clear that there were two meetings between Abu Musa and 'Amr. However, only the first one, at Dumat al-Jandal, was an attempt to implement the arbitration agreement. As it failed, 'AIT considered the truce void and resumed hostilities. The second meeting, at Adhruh, was, as will be seen, convened solely on Mu'awiya's initiative. Since Abu Musa was at that time no longer the recognized representative of 'AIT, who ignored the meeting, the proceedings were not part of the arbitration. The Kufan historical tradition focused its attention on the meeting at Dumat al-Jandal, which was the only one relevant to 'AIT and the Kufans. Though largely ignoring the meeting at Adhruh, it incorporated some of the events there, especially the famous final scene, into its account of the earlier meeting. The Medinan tradition generally focused on the meeting at Adhruh, but also included details of the meeting at Dumat al-Jandal in its account.

Veccia-Vaglieri suggested that the question to be examined by the arbitrators at Dumat al-Jandal was whether 'Uthman had been killed wrongfully or not.⁴³³ They reached the verdict that he was killed wrongfully, but kept it secret. As it became known, however, 'AIT denounced it as contrary to the Qur'an, while the Syrians received it enthusiastically and pledged allegiance to Mu'awiya as caliph. This is only partly accurate. The task of the arbitrators according to the agreement of SiffTn was to settle the conflict among the Muslims comprehensively, not just to examine 'Uthman's innocence or guilt. That question was presumably put on the table first by 'Amr b. al-'As because he rightly expected that he could easily reach agreement with Abu Musa about it. A verdict that 'Uthman was killed wrongfully and that Mu'awiya was his next-of-kin who could legitimately claim revenge for his blood would cement Syrian support for the Umayyad and weaken the position of 'AIT. 'Amr no doubt realized that he could not get much more from Abu Musa and that the arbitration would inevitably fail.

Abu Musa was a neutralist sincerely concerned to restore peace in the Muslim Community. He saw the admission, in general terms, that 'Uthman had been killed wrongfully as a conciliatory gesture which, he hoped, would somehow be reciprocated by 'Amr in the vital question of the leadership of the Community. It was hardly his view that 'AIT should hand over men such as al-Ashtar, who had established and backed Abu Musa as governor of Kufa, to Mu'awiya for blood-revenge. He was also, at this time, not prepared to accuse 'AIT, or simply to depose him as caliph to make room for someone else. He would probably have been satisfied to let 'AIT stay on as caliph if he accepted Mu'awiya as governor of Syria and

⁴³¹ 'II conflitto', 26-31.

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Mu'awiya recognized him. Ideally he would have liked a *shura* composed of the religious aristocracy in which 'AIT might be included. His favourite candidate, however, was 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar. Abu Musa, himself an early Companion, was certainly not prepared to accept Mu'awiya, a *taliq*, as caliph. Mu'awiya could be allowed, however, to remain governor of Syria since he was well liked by his army.

The verdict that 'Uthman was killed wrongfully thus was a political deal, not based on a judicial investigation. Abu Musa presumably justified it in his mind with the argument already used by 'A'isha that 'Uthman had repented of any wrongdoing he had committed. A judicial examination, however, would first have had to establish whether Niyar 'the Evil' had been wrongfully killed; for 'Uthman's violent death had been precipitated by the murder of Niyar. It is true that either the murderer or his master Marwan would have been subject to the *lex talionis* rather than 'Uthman, who was probably opposed to the murder. In this sense it could be held that 'Uthman had not been rightfully killed. He had, however, prevented legal retaliation by refusing to investigate the murder, presumably aware or suspecting that his cousin Marwan was behind it. 'AIT's judgment that 'Uthman's violent death was neither wrongful nor rightful thus was substantially correct. Abu Musa should have been particularly wary of agreeing to a blank declaration of 'Uthman's innocence since the proposal came from 'Amr, the foremost agitator against 'Uthman and the first target of al-WalTd b. 'Uqba's vendetta. He was probably naive enough to believe that 'Amr now sincerely regretted his former conduct. The sentence, judicially a misjudgment, became political and, for Sunnites, religious dogma with disastrous long-term effects for Islam.

Once the initial agreement on 'Uthman's innocence had been reached, it was 'Amr's strategy to block any agreement on either 'AIT retaining the caliphate or on a *shura*. He probably did not press the case for a caliphate of Mu'awiya seriously at this point, since the latter had not yet put forward a formal claim. A *shura*, as favoured by Abu Musa, would have meant electing one of the neutrals. This might at this time still have been acceptable to Mu'awiya, but only if his permanent rule of Syria was guaranteed. Such a guarantee could obviously not be given by Abu Musa. It was thus best to let the negotiations collapse. The agreement that 'Uthman had been killed wrongfully would, 'Amr trusted, cause further division among 'AIT's followers and dissuade any of the pious neutrals from turning to his side.

The details of the discussions at Dumat al-Jandal are uncertain. Much of what is reported about them seems to refer rather to Adhruh since

Mu'awiya appears already as a serious candidate for the caliphate. That the caliphate itself was discussed, however, is evident from the poem of al-Salatan. It is certain that the meeting, contrary to Veccia-Vaglieri's assumption, broke up in disarray without agreement.⁴³⁴ As the failure of the negotiations, Abu Musa's concessions and 'Amr's intransigence became known, the Kufans present reacted with fury. Shurayh b. Hanī' attacked 'Amr b. al-'As with his whip. One of 'Amr's sons hit back at Shurayh before they were separated by the people. Shurayh later used to say that his only regret was not having used his sword instead of his whip.⁴³⁵ Abu Musa was disgraced and fled to Mekka. 'Amr and the Syrians, in contrast, departed triumphantly to Mu'awiya and greeted him as Commander of the Faithful.⁴³⁶ Before the end of Dhu l-Qa'da 37/April-May 658 Mu'awiya received the general pledge of allegiance of the Syrians as caliph.⁴³⁷

When Ibn al-'Abbas and Shurayh reported to 'All, he denounced the conduct of both arbitrators. Preaching to the Kufans, he reminded them of his warnings about both men and the arbitration; now these two arbitrators, whom they had chosen, had thrown the rule of the Qur'an behind their backs, had judged without sound argument or accepted precedent, and in the end had disagreed between themselves. He called on his followers to prepare to march to Syria and to assemble in their military camp on Monday.⁴³⁸ As it became known that Mu'awiya had accepted the oath of allegiance as caliph, 'AIT broke off all relations and correspondence with him. He introduced a curse on Mu'awiya, 'Amr, Abu l-A'war al-Sulamī, Habīb b. Maslama, 'Abd al-Rahman b. Khalid b. al-Walīd, al-Dahhak b. Qays and al-Walīd b. 'Uqba in the invocation of the morning prayer (*qunut*).⁴³⁹ This followed the practice of Muhammad

⁴¹⁴ Veccia-Vaglieri attributed undue significance to the agreement of the two arbitrators 'to say nothing' mentioned by al-Minqarī (*Waq'at Siffin*, 538). Read in context, it merely means that the two arbitrators, after hearing al-Salatan's poem, agreed to keep their proceedings secret. Once it was clear that they were unable to reach an agreement there was no longer any reason to maintain secrecy.

⁴¹⁵ Tabarī, I, 3359; Minqarī, *Waq'at Siffin*, 546. There had already been a clash between Shurayh and 'Amr at the beginning of the meetings when Shurayh conveyed a message from 'AIT appealing to 'Amr not to back the traitors and oppressors. 'Amr sarcastically queried whether he had ever accepted any advice from 'AIT. Shurayh countered that Abu Bakr and 'Umar, who were better than 'Amr, had consulted 'AIT and acted on his advice. 'Amr responded haughtily that the likes of himself would not talk to the likes of Shurayh. The latter belittled 'Amr's father and mother, and they parted in enmity (Tabarī, I, 3357—8; Minqarī, *Waq'at Siffin*, 542-3).

⁴³⁶ Tabarī, I, 3359; Minqarī, *Waq'at Siffin*, 546. ⁴³⁷ Tabarī, I, 3396, II, 199. ⁴³⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 3368; Baladhurī, *Ansab*, II, 365-6.

⁴³⁹ Tabarī, I, 3360. Al-Minqarī (*Waq'at Siffin*, 552) mentions Abu Musa al-Ash'arī in place of Abu l-A'war.

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of calling a curse upon some of his enemies in the *qunut*.³⁸⁰ Mu'awiya retaliated by introducing a curse on 'AIT, Ibn al-'Abbas, al-Ashtar, al-Hasan and al-Husayn.³⁸¹

After his call for resumption of the war with Mu'awiya, 'AIT wrote to the Kharijites assembled at al-Nahrawan, addressing his letter to Zayd b. Hisn and 'Abd Allah b. Wahb as their leaders. Again he denounced the two arbitrators who had failed to act in accordance with the sunna and to carry out the rule of the Qur'an. He invited them to join him and to fight their common enemy on the same basis as they had done before. The Kharijites answered that he was standing up not on behalf of God, but of himself. If he testified that he had committed an act of infidelity and repented, they would reconsider their relations with him; otherwise they would continue to oppose him. When 'AIT read their letter, he despaired of gaining their support. He decided, however, to leave them and to carry out his campaign to Syria.³⁸²

'AIT was evidently eager to set out on the campaign as quickly as possible, before Mu'awiya could gather all his forces. He instructed Ibn al-'Abbas to mobilize the Basrans. According to Abu Mikhnaf's account,³⁸³ only 1,500 men there joined al-Ahnaf b. Qays at first. After a second appeal by Ibn al-'Abbas, 1,700 Basrans were recruited by Jariya b. Qudama.³⁸⁴ In Kufa 'AIT is said to have ordered the tribal chiefs to register their warriors, the sons of warriors old enough to fight, slaves and clients, and thus to have assembled an army of 65,000.³⁸⁵ This figure is, no doubt, greatly inflated, and many must have ignored the new call to arms. In a speech 'AIT urged the Kufans to fight a people without merit in Islam who would rule them like Chosroes and Heraclius.⁴⁴⁶ He was informed that his men wished him first to subdue the Kharijites before moving against the Syrians. When he told them, however, that the war against 'a people who would be tyrants and kings and would take the worshippers of God for

³⁸⁰ See Wensinck, 'Kunut', §7; Kister, 'O God, Tighten Thy Grip on Mudar', 252-73. Kister's suggestion (271) that 'All's adherents probably disapproved of his invocation against Mu'awiya, considering it perhaps as *bid'a*, is based on a report (Ibn Abi Shayba, *Musannaf*, II, 209) of the 'Uthmanid al-Sha'bi, a servant of the Umayyad government (see F. Krenkow's article on him in *EI*) who cannot be presumed to be speaking for the followers of 'All. The historical accounts do not suggest that there was any opposition to the cursing in Kufa. While the majority of the Kufans were not eager to fight the Syrians, public opinion was at this time, after the failure of the arbitration, outraged by the conduct of 'Amr b. al-'Aṣ and strongly opposed to Mu'awiya.

³⁸¹ Tabarī I 3360. Al-Minqari, (*Waq'at Sijfm*, 552) names Qays b. Sa'd in place of al-Ashtar. Most likely Qays b. Sa'd was substituted for al-Ashtar after the latter's murder by Mu'awiya. ⁴⁴² Tabari, I, 3368-9; Baladhurī, *Ansdh*, II, 461, 467.

³⁸³ On the authority of Abu I-Waddak al-Hamdani.

³⁸⁴ Al-Baladhurī (*Ansab*, II, 367) speaks of 3,000 or 5,000 or more under the command of Jariya b. Qudama. ⁴⁴⁵ Tabari, I, 3370-2. ⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 3369-70.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 3572-3.

servants' was more important than the Kharijites, they all assured him of their obedience and loyalty.⁴⁴⁷

'All moved north via Shah! and Dabaha to the east bank of the Euphrates and al-Anbar. He had received disturbing news about the murder of 'Abd Allah b. Khabbab b. al-Aratt, his pregnant wife and Umm Sinan al-Saydawiyya by the Kharijites, and sent al-Harith b. Murra³⁸⁶ to investigate their conduct and to question them. Then he learned that they had met and killed his envoy. His men turned to him, pleading that they could not leave their families and property behind at the mercy of such people and urged him to fight them first. They were backed by al-Ash'ath b. Qays, who evidently preferred fighting the Kharijites rather than the Syrians since there were few, if any, Yemenites among them. While this was evidently the sentiment of the majority, there were, however, others who had been prepared to fight the Syrians but left when 'All decided to deal with the internal rebels first.³⁸⁷ 'AIT now sent Qays b. Sa'd b. 'Ubada ahead to al-Mada'in to join forces with his governor, Sa'd b. Mas'ud al-Thaqafi. As he caught up with them, 'AIT sent to the Kharijites demanding the surrender of the murderers. If they did so he would leave them alone until he had fought the Syrians in the hope that they would change their minds in the meantime and return to the course of right. They answered defiantly that all of them had killed these people and all considered the shedding of their and 'AIT's partisans' blood licit.

Then Qays b. Sa'd addressed them, impressing on them the magnitude of their crimes; but 'Abd Allah b. Shajara countered by stating that the truth had illuminated them and that they would not adhere to Qays' party unless their opponents brought them someone like 'Umar b. al-Khattab. Qays told them that he knew no one in his party like 'Umar except for their master *AIT and asked them whether they knew someone like him in their own ranks. He entreated them not to destroy their lives. Abu Ayyub al-Ansari also pleaded with them, suggesting that there was no cause for division between them now. Why would the Kharijites wish to fight 'AIT's supporters? They answered: 'If we were to swear allegiance to you today, you would agree to arbitration tomorrow.' He told them not to engage in a rebellion now in fear of what might happen tomorrow.

³⁸⁶ Abu Mikhnaf's account names al-Harith b. Murra al-'Abdi. This is, as al-Baladhuri points out (*Ansd*, II, 368), a mistake, since al-Harith b. Murra al-'Abdi was killed in Sind several years later. Al-Dhahiri gives his *nisba* as al-Faq'asT (*Annali*, I, 127, 240-1). This may, however, be merely a guess. ⁴⁴⁹ Baladhuri, *Ansd*, II, 485.

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'AIT addressed them once more and tried to justify his conduct in regard to the arbitration, which they had forced upon him. He asked them by what right they considered it licit for them to leave their community, to draw their swords against their own people, to investigate their views, and to spill their blood. The Kharijites called to each other not to speak to their opponents but to prepare to meet their Lord and go to paradise. Both sides drew up in battle order. 'AIT gave Abu Ayyub a banner of safe conduct for anyone wishing to surrender, and the latter shouted that anyone who came to this banner or departed for Kufa or al-Mada'in and had not committed a murder would be safe. 'We have no need to shed your blood after we strike the killers of our brethren.'⁴⁵⁰ Mis'ar b. FadakT with a thousand men sought refuge at Abu Ayyub's banner. Farwa b. Nawfal al-AshjaT declared that he did not know now why they should fight 'AIT and that he needed more time to reflect on his proper conduct. He left with five hundred horsemen for al-BandanTjajn and al-Daskara east of al-Nahrawan. Between one hundred and three hundred men went over to 'AIT. 'Abd Allah b. (Abi) I-Hawsa' al-Ta'T withdrew with three hundred men, Hawthara b. Wada' with another three hundred, and Abu Maryam al-Sa'dT with two hundred. Out of four thousand men only one thousand eight hundred or one thousand five hundred stayed with 'Abd Allah b. Wahb.⁴⁵¹

'AIT gave the order to let the Kharijites attack. They were greatly outnumbered by 'AIT's followers, said to have been fourteen thousand,⁴⁵² and fought desperately without hope of survival. The battle thus turned into a one-sided massacre. 'Abd Allah b. Wahb, Zayd b. Hisn, Jamra b. Sinan, 'Abd Allah b. Shajara and Shurayh b. Awfa were killed. Four hundred wounded were found among the dead on the battlefield. 'AIT ordered them to be handed over to their tribes for medical care. On 'AIT's side only seven or, according to another report,⁴⁵³ twelve or thirteen men were killed. 'AdT b. Hatim found his son Tarafa among the dead and buried him. As 'AIT heard that some of his men were burying their dead kin, he gave order to depart immediately. He showed no sympathy for those men who had once been his vigorous supporters and now had become his bitter enemies.

The date of the battle of al-Nahrawan is given by al-BaladhurT as 9 safar 38/17 July 658.⁴⁵⁴ Al-TabarT, following Abu Mikhnaf, reported it under the year 37 but argued that it occurred in 38, in which year most

⁴⁵⁰ Tabari, I, 2277-80.

⁴⁵¹ Baladhurl, *Ansd*, II, 371: reading *wa-yuqal* for *yuqdl*. The number of 1,800 for the Kharijite horsemen alone would be quite unreasonable since Jamra b. Sinan, the commander of their cavalry, is then described as commanding only 300 horsemen (Tabari, I, 3380—1). ⁴⁵² Baladhurl, *Ansd*, II, 371. ⁴⁵³ Khalifa, *Ta'rikh*, 197.

⁴⁵⁴ Baladhurl, *Ansd*, II, 362.

sources dated it.³⁸⁸ Modern historians have generally accepted the date given by al-Baladhuri and viewed the battle as contemporaneous with the conquest of Egypt by Mu'awiya and 'Amr, which according to al-Waqidi and al-Kindi took place in Safar 38. It is, however, quite unlikely, and incompatible with various reports, that Mu'awiya could have undertaken the invasion of Egypt at the very time when he expected the second incursion of 'Ali's army from the east. There is good evidence, as will be seen, that the battle of al-Nahrawan took place, in accordance with Abu Mikhnaf's account, in the year 37, most likely early in Dhu l-Hijja/mid-May 658.

The massacre of the Kharijites at al-Nahrawan was the most problematic event in 'Ali's reign. From the perspective of ordinary statecraft it was a reasonable, even necessary, act. These men were rebels, violators of their oath of allegiance, provocatively spurning the public order, openly threatening to shed the blood of any Muslim, including their own kin, who would not join them. 'Ali, eager to resume the battle with his real enemy Mu'awiya, would have preferred to ignore them for the time being and to deal with them after his campaign to Syria. They were too numerous, however, and he could not overlook the possibility that they might, in their reckless mood, be tempted to seize Kufa in the absence of the bulk of the army. With any temporary accommodation now precluded by the murder of his messenger, he saw himself compelled once more to give in to the demands of those most reluctant to fight the Syrians in his army and to move against the rebels first.

Yet these rebels were, like himself, sincere and uncompromising upholders of the rule of the Qur'an. Some of their leaders had backed him on that basis earlier during the scandalous reign of Uthman. They and he basically agreed in their view of the futility of arbitration in the conflict with Mu'awiya. Although some of them had initially pressed him to accept it, they had come to recognize their mistake and had repented it as an act of infidelity. They would have been among his most vigorous allies in the war against the distorters of the rule of the Qur'an. He ought to have made every effort to regain their allegiance even if it meant putting off the Syrian campaign. This was, it is true, not an easy task in view of their radicalism which precluded compromise. 'Ali could not agree to either of their demands, that he attest his own infidelity in accepting the arbitration, or that he treat Muslim opponents as infidels. He could not simply condone the murders that some of them had committed. Patient argument with them, however, might have gradually won over most, if not all, of them. His first task would have been to restore a consensus

³⁸⁸ Tabari, I, 3387-9.

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among the Qur'an readers, or at least the activists among them, who were his natural allies. It was the haste with which he sought to resume the war with Mu'awiya that forced him to resort to counterproductive threats and violence against his former followers. The battle of al-Nahrawan sealed the division between Shi'a and Kharijites.

The weakness of his support now became quickly apparent. 'AIT wanted to proceed immediately from al-Nahrawan to Syria. His men complained that their arrows were used up, their swords dulled, their spearheads had fallen off their lances, and urged him to return to Kufa so that they might restore their equipment and replenish their forces. Again al-Ash'ath b. Qays was their spokesman, and 'AIT gave in. When they reached al-Nukhayla, he ordered that they stay in their camp there to get ready for the war and only occasionally visit their wives and families. Within days his army melted away, leaving but a few of the leaders with him. 'AIT realized that he had lost control over them and entered Kufa, abandoning the campaign.⁴⁵⁶

The initiative now rested with Mu'awiya. Informed of 'AIT's war preparations after the failure of the arbitration, he had hastily assembled a Syrian army outside Damascus. HabTb b. Maslama is said to have advised him to take again his defensive position at SiffTn, while 'Amr proposed that he invade 'AIT's territories in northern Mesopotamia. While still hesitating, Mu'awiya learned that 'AIT had turned off his route to Syria in order to subdue the rebels in his own ranks. He was pleased and waited for further developments. Then information arrived that 'AIT had killed the rebels and that his army had compelled him to defer his campaign to Syria. A letter from 'Umara b. 'Uqba b. AbT Mu'ayt confirmed the disarray of 'AIT's army and the deep division and antagonism among the Kufans.

Mu'awiya now called al-Dahhak b. Qays and instructed him to attack the bedouin Arabs loyal to 'AIT in the desert west of Kufa, to fight minor troop detachments of the enemy army, but to avoid any major force sent against him. He gave him between three thousand and four thousand horsemen. Al-Dahhak crossed the desert, killing the bedouins he met and carrying off their property and reached al-Tha'labiyya⁴⁵⁷ on the pilgrimage route from Kufa to Mekka. There he attacked the pilgrims, presumably as they were returning from Mekka, and robbed them of their belongings. He turned north on the pilgrimage route and met 'Amr b. 'Umays b. Mas'ud al-DhuhIT, nephew of 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud, at al-Qutqutana. He

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 3385-6.

⁴⁵⁷ In his letter to his brother 'Aqil, 'All mentioned Waqisa and Sharaf, both on the pilgrimage route north of al-Tha'labiyya, as being passed through by al-Dahhak in his raid (ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 331-2). WaqiSa is also named in the accounts of al-Baladhuri (*Ansd*, II, 437) and al-Tabari (I, 3447).

murdered him and a number of his companions. 'All appealed to the Kufans to avenge the blood of 'Amr b. 'Umayy and their compatriots. At first they ignored him, but then Hujr b. 'AdT responded with four thousand horsemen, taking up the pursuit of the Syrians. In the desert of al-Samawa, in Kalbite territory, Imru' ul-Qays b. 'AdT al-KalbT, who had marriage ties with 'AIT and his sons, aided him, and his tribesmen acted as guides in the desert. He caught up with al-Dahhak near Tadmur. They fought for a while, and nineteen Syrians were killed as against two men of Hujr. In the cover of night the Syrians fled.⁴⁵⁸

This type of ordinary brigandage, highway robbery and murder now became a regular feature of the raids that Mu'awiya dispatched into 'AIT's territories, marking a new low in the character of inter-Muslim warfare. In a sermon al-Dahhak later, as governor of Kufa in 55/674-5, boasted of his murder of 'Amr b. 'Umayy as a heroic deed. The Kufan (Abu I-Kanud) 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Ubayd (al-AzdT) sarcastically commended him on his final brave stand outside Tadmur, which he had witnessed.⁴⁵⁹ Some time after al-Dahhak's raid, 'Alt received a letter from his elder brother 'AqTl in which he mentioned an extra-seasonal pilgrimage (*umra*) he had recently performed. On his way he had met 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd b. AbT Sarh with some forty young men, sons of *taliqs*, heading west from Qudayd.⁴⁶⁰ Perceiving evil intent in their faces, he asked them whether they were joining Mu'awiya out of their undisguisable old grudge against Islam, and there was an exchange of insults. When he arrived in Mekka, he heard the people talking about the raid of al-Dahhak on al-HTra and how he had carried off" whatever he wished of their property and returned safely to Syria. Upon hearing this, he imagined that 'AIT must have been deserted by his followers. He asked 'AIT if he intended to fight to the death and offered to join him with his sons and cousins to share his fate.

In his answer to 'AqTl, 'AIT made light of Ibn AbT Sarh, whom he described as a diehard enemy of Muhammad and the Qur'an, and he disparaged Quraysh, who had cut their kinship ties to him, connived to deprive him of his right, and handed it to one who was not equal to him in kinship to the Prophet and early merit in Islam. Against al-Dahhak, he assured his brother, he had sent a strong troop of Muslims who had⁴⁵⁸ ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 416-26; BaladhurT, *Ansd*, II, 437-8.

⁴⁵⁸ ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 336-8; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 438-9. The raid of al-Dahhak b. Qays is reported by al-Tabari (I, 3347) under the year 39, two years too late. Caetani followed his dating (*Annali*, X, 287-9). Al-BaladhurT confirms that this was the first of the raids ordered by Mu'awiya (*Ansd*, II, 437), and Ibn A'tham al-KufT (*al-Futuh* (Hyderabad, 1968-75), IV, 36-8), whose account is based on Abu Mikhnaf's, affirms that it took place immediately after the arbitration (at Dumat al-Jandal).

⁴⁶⁰ It is unknown where 'AqTl resided at this time. Ibn Abi I-HadTd argues in favour of Medina (*Sharh*, X, 250), but Syria seems also possible. Qudayd is near Mekka. 'Towards the west' evidently meant Syria.

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punished him in his flight. He declared his intention to pursue the *jihad* against the desecrators (*muhilliin*) until he met God. A multitude of backers could not increase his strength, nor their desertion his solitude, since he was in the right, and God was with the right. As for 'AqTl's offer to join him with his sons and cousins, he had no need of that and did not wish them to perish if he should perish. 'AqTl should not imagine that his mother's son, even if the people were to abandon him, would be so humbled as to implore for help or meekly submit to injustice.³⁸⁹

Lammens accepted 'AqTl's letter as authentic,³⁹⁰ yet described him as 'All's ' *ennemi acharne* ',³⁹¹ 'AqTl is reported to have visited 'All in Kufa and asked him for money. It is to be noted in this regard that 'AqTl had owned a house there which he sold to al-WalTd b. 'Uqba during the latter's governorship.³⁹² He had thus presumably been on the pension register of Kufa. 'AIT refused to give him money from the *fay*' revenue, but is said to have offered him money from his personal estate at Yanbu'. 'AqTl then left for Damascus, and was given a large sum of money by Mu'awiya. This was probably before the battle of SiffTn. It is not known whether Mu'awiya gave him this money because he now was on the pension register of Syria, or simply as a bribe. As noted by Lammens,⁴⁶⁵ one of 'AqTl's wives was Mu'awiya's aunt. The reports about his relations with Mu'awiya are anecdotal and describe him as treating the Umayyad and his prominent companions with exceeding disdain. There is no sound evidence that he ever backed Mu'awiya against his brother 'AIT. Veccia-Vaglieri's suggestion that 'the estrangement between the two brothers probably had political causes' is quite unfounded.⁴⁶⁶

Mu'awiya next turned his eyes on Egypt. Here the government of Muhammad b. AbT Bakr was in serious trouble. As noted, Muhammad had antagonized the 'Uthmanid seceders gathered at Kharbita with

³⁸⁹ ThaqafI, *Gharat*, 434-5; *Agham*, XV, 46; BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 74-5. The letters give the impression of being basically authentic. They must, in any case, be quite early. 'AqTl's letter was conveyed by (Abu l-Kanud) 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Ubayd al-AzdT, who had participated in IJujr's pursuit of al-Dahhak b. Qays and must have met 'AqTl in Mekka or visited him soon afterwards. 'AqTl was thus evidently well informed about the desertion of the Kufans and feigned out of courtesy that he merely imagined that 'AIT must have been left in the lurch by them. The transmitter of the letters in al-ThaqafT's account, the Kufan Abu Sulayman Zayd b. Wahb al-JuhanT (d. after 82/701 or in 96/714-5) collected a book of 'All's speeches (see ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 34 n. 5; Sezgin, *Abu Mihnaf*, 209-10) and presumably obtained the text of the letters from Abu l-Kanud. Abu Mikhnaf transmitted the letters on the authority of Sulayman b. AbT Rashid from Abu l-Kanud (*Aghani*, XV, 46; for *Ibn Abi l-Kanud* read *Abu l-Kanud*). It is evident from the letters that 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd b. AbT Sarh was still alive at this time and that his presence at the battle of SiffTn is probably not a fiction as suggested by C. H. Becker, ('Abd Allah b. Sa'd', *EI*).⁴⁶² *Mo'dwia*, 175. ⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, 112.

³⁹² *Agham*, IV, 182. ⁴⁶⁵ *Mo'awia*, 175. ⁴⁶⁶ See 'AKTl b. AbT Talib', *EI* (2nd edn).

whom his predecessor, Qays b. Sa'd, had arranged a working relationship. The successful resistance of the Syrians to 'AIT at SiffTn encouraged them to raise their heads in opposition to the governor. Muhammad sent an army under al-Harith b. Jumhan al-Ju'f! against the rebels, who were still being led by YazTd b. al-Harith al-KinanT. Al-Harith b. Jumhan was defeated and killed.⁴⁶⁷ A second army sent by the governor under the command of a Kalbite, Ibn Mudahim, fared no better. Ibn Mudahim was killed by the seceders.⁴⁶⁸

The leadership of the seceders was now taken over by a more renowned man, Mu'awiya b. Hodayj al-SakunT, who attracted others into the 'Uthmanid camp.⁴⁶⁹ Maslama b. Mukhallad also resumed his campaign for revenge for 'Uthman independently of the group at Kharbita. Both men had fought for Mu'awiya at SiffTn⁴⁷⁰ and now evidently returned to Egypt. The initially independent Egyptian 'Uthmanid movement became more pro-Mu'awiya. 'AIT was aware of the weakness of Muhammad b. AbT Bakr's position and thought of replacing him with either Qays b. Sa'd or al-Ashtar. He had, after returning from SiffTn, appointed Qays his police chief and promised him the governorship of Adharbayjan after the arbitration. Al-Ashtar had returned to his governorship of Upper Mesopotamia. Immediately after the arbitration 'AIT summoned him from NasTbTn⁴⁷¹ and sent him to Egypt to take over from Ibn AbT Bakr, whom he described to him as a young man inexperienced in war and political affairs. That he dispensed with al-Ashtar just as he was about to set out on his second campaign to Syria reflects the importance of Egypt in his planning.

Mu'awiya learned of al-Ashtar's appointment through his spies. He bribed a tax collector to attempt to murder him. Al-Ashtar sought to avoid Syrian territory, travelling by boat from the Hijaz to al-Qulzum on the Egyptian Red Sea coast.⁴⁷² There he was hospitably received by Mu'awiya's tax collector, who served him a poisoned honey drink, killing him.⁴⁷³ Mu'awiya boasted about the murder of his old enemy and 'Amr is

⁴⁶⁷ Al-Harith b. Jumhan al-Ju'fT had fought for 'AIT at Siffin (MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 154, 254-5). 'AIT presumably sent him to Egypt to aid Muhammad b. AbT Bakr. However, in the accounts of al-Baladhuri and al-Thaqafi, in contrast to al-Tabari's, his *nisba* is given as al-BalawT instead of al-Ju'fT. It is thus possible that he is not identical with 'AIT's supporter at Siffin.

⁴⁶⁸ Tabari, I, 3248; BaladhurT, *Ansb*, II, 398; ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 254-5.

⁴⁶⁹ According to al-Baladhuri's account (*Ansab*, II, 398), Mu'awiya b. Hodayj was persuaded to act as leader of the Egyptian 'Uthmaniyya by Mu'awiya b. AbT Sufyan. If the latter did so, it was in breach of his truce agreement with 'AIT.

⁴⁷⁰ See MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, index on both men.

⁴⁷¹ Al-Ashtar named Shablb b. 'Amir al-Azdl to replace him in Upper Mesopotamia (ThaqafI, *Gharat*, 25 8).⁴⁷² BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 399.

⁴⁷³ TabarT, I, 3392-3; ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 254-60. There are different reports on the murder of al-Ashtar (ThaqafI, *Gharat*, 262-3).

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quoted as commenting that God has armies in honey.⁴⁷⁴ It was probably Mu'awiya's first murder by poison, but certainly not his last. In public he congratulated his followers, assuring them: "All b. AbT Talib had two right hands. One of them was cut at Siffin", meaning 'Ammar b. Yasir, 'and the other today', meaning al-Ashtar.⁴⁷⁵

The loss of al-Ashtar, a most loyal and capable, if not always submissive, supporter, was a severe blow to 'AIT. He did not conceal his grief and expressed his highest praise for him to the shaykhs of his clan al-Nakha' who visited him.⁴⁷⁶ He wrote to Muhammad b. AbT Bakr, who had been disturbed by the mission of al-Ashtar, reassuring him that he had not acted out of impatience with his war effort or dissatisfaction with his seriousness. If he had removed him from his present authority, he would have appointed him to one that was lighter for him to bear and more pleasing. Then he praised the man whom he had appointed over Egypt as one sincere to him, severe against his enemies, who had met his death with 'AIT well pleased with him; he prayed that God would be pleased with him and double his reward. 'AIT asked Ibn AbT Bakr to be steadfast towards his enemy and ready for war. In his answer Muhammad b. AbT Bakr assured 'AIT of his firm loyalty.⁴⁷⁷

After the raid of al-Dahhak b. Qays, Mu'awiya consulted his senior commanders and 'Amr about his plans to seize Egypt. 'Amr b. al-'As, eager to obtain his promised prize, advised him to expedite a large army to Egypt immediately. The Egyptians agreeing with their views would then flock to them and aid them against their enemy. Mu'awiya preferred first to write both to their partisans in Egypt, encouraging them to stand firm with assurances of his aid, and to the opponents, trying to weaken their resolve by promises and intimidation. If necessary, they would still have the option to make war on them. 'Amr told him to do as he saw fit. He, 'Amr, was still convinced that matters would end up in fierce fighting.

Mu'awiya then wrote a letter to Maslama b. Mukhallad and Mu'awiya b. Hudayj jointly. He praised them for their noble stand in seeking revenge for the blood of the wronged caliph, promised them the early support of the friends of God on earth and from Mu'awiya's realm, and urged them to carry on their *jihād* and to summon those who were still ⁴⁷⁴ Kindl, *Wulat*, 23. ⁴⁷⁵ Tabari, I, 3394.

⁴⁷⁶ ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 264-5. The report that 'All was pleased to be rid of al-Ashtar, transmitted by the 'Uthmanid al-Sha'bi from 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far b. AbT Talib (KindT, *Wulat*, 23; Ibn al-AthTr, *Kamil*, III, 296), is tendentious. 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far, half-brother of Muhammad b. AbT Bakr, had recommended the removal of Qays b. Sa'd from the governorship and the appointment of Ibn AbT Bakr, which proved to be a serious mistake. He evidently had no liking for al-Ashtar who now had to be sent in a vain attempt to salvage the situation. That it was he who advised 'AIT in the first place to send al-Ashtar, as he claimed, is quite unlikely.

⁴⁷⁷ TabarT, I, 3315-16; ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 267-70; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 400.

keeping aloof from their guidance. The letter was taken by Mu'awiya's client Subay' b. Malik al-Hamdan! to Maslama. After reading it he handed it to the messenger and asked him to show it to Ibn Hudayj and then bring it back so that he could answer it for both of them. Ibn Hudayj was satisfied, and Maslama wrote to Mu'awiya that they were hoping for the reward of God in fighting those who had revolted against their imam. They had not set out on this course seeking material gain and had not expected his aid now offered to them. He asked Mu'awiya, however, to send his horses and men quickly to ensure victory.⁴⁷⁸ Although the 'Uthmaniyya in Egypt had gained strength after Siffin and the arbitration, they were evidently not ready to take the offensive against the governor on their own.

Mu'awiya received the letter in Palestine where he had moved in order to direct matters from nearby. He gave 'Amr the command of six thousand men⁴⁷⁹ to invade Egypt. As 'Amr was entering his former province, the Egyptian 'Uthmaniyya joined him. He halted and wrote a letter to Muhammad b. AbT Bakr, warning him to leave in order to save his life. The people of Egypt, he claimed, were united in repudiating his rule and regretted having followed him. 'Amr preferred not to mention to his former ally the murder of 'Uthman, to which he had incited him. He attached a letter from Mu'awiya, however, who accused Muhammad b. AbT Bakr of having been the most vicious rebel against 'Uthman and the shedder of his blood. Now he was pretending to the rule of a country, the bulk of whose people were supporters of Mu'awiya and his views. Mu'awiya was writing to him only, he added, because he was loath to mutilate and kill a Qurayshite. Yet God would never save Ibn AbT Bakr from retaliation wherever he would be.

Muhammad b. AbT Bakr sent the two letters to 'AIT with a note describing his dangerous situation, as his own followers were failing him. He asked 'AIT to supply him with auxiliaries and money if he cared to keep Egypt. 'AIT wrote to him to stand firm, to fortify his city and to dispatch Kinana b. Bishr, known for his loyalty and toughness, against the enemy. He, 'AIT, would send him a mounted army of support. He made light of the letters from Mu'awiya and 'Amr and instructed Ibn AbT Bakr to send them a suitable response. Ibn AbT Bakr answered Mu'awiya that he would not apologize to him in the matter of 'Uthman; Mu'awiya was just trying to intimidate him with his mention of mutilation, as if he were sincere and concerned for him; he held out hope that he could defeat the enemy; if not, God would punish them for their wrong-doing and killing of the faithful. To 'Amr he replied that his concern for his safety was a lie; those^{47X}

TabarT, I, 3396—400; Thaqafi, *Gharat*, 270-6.

⁴⁷⁹ According to al-Waqidl's account, 'Amr's army numbered 4,000 men (Tabari, I, 3406).

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Egyptians who were repudiating his rule and regretted having followed him were merely the followers of 'Amr and the devil; he would continue to put his trust in God.

Muhammad b. AbT Bakr took the offensive with an army of only two thousand men. He sent Kinana b. Bishr ahead with his vanguard. 'Amr dispatched one detachment after another against Kinana, drawing him ever closer, and then had him surrounded at al-Musannat by Mu'awiya b. Hudayj with the Egyptian 'Uthmaniyya, followed by the bulk of the Syrians. Completely outnumbered, Kinana and his men were killed. As the news reached Muhammad b. AbT Bakr, he was deserted by all his men. He went off to hide in a ruin while 'Amr occupied the capital, al-Fustat. Mu'awiya b. Hudayj searched for Ibn AbT Bakr and was directed by some peasants to his hiding place. They seized him, nearly dead of thirst, and intended to take him to al-Fustat. When the news of his capture reached 'Amr, Muhammad's brother 'Abd al-Rahman b. AbT Bakr, having been sent by 'A'isha to 'Amr's army on a mission to save their brother's life,⁴⁸⁰ intervened on his behalf. 'Amr gave orders to Mu'awiya b. Hudayj to bring the son of Abu Bakr alive to him. Ibn Hudayj was incensed that 'Amr would kill his kinsman Kinana b. Bishr, TujTb being a subtribe of Sakun, while demanding of him that he spare the life of the Qurayshite Ibn AbT Bakr. He refused his captive water, using as pretext the false accusation spread by Umayyad propaganda that the rebels had prevented 'Uthman from drinking water. After an angry exchange he killed the son of Abu Bakr, put him inside the carcass of a donkey, and burned him in it. When 'A'isha heard of her brother's miserable end, she was seized with violent grief, and she included a curse on Mu'awiya and 'Amr in the *qunut* of her prayers. She took charge of her brother's dependants and brought up his son al-Qasim, who became one of the leading religious scholars of Medina.⁴⁸¹ 'Amr reported to Mu'awiya about his victory and the death of Muhammad b. AbT Bakr and Kinana b. Bishr in a letter. Again he merely mentioned that the two had persisted in their error and said nothing about the revenge for 'Uthman.⁴⁸²

'AIT had, when receiving Ibn AbT Bakr's appeal for help, addressed the Kufans, calling for immediate action and asking for volunteers to gather at al-Jara'a between Kufa and al-HTra. He went there himself on the following day but was joined by fewer than a hundred men. Returning to Kufa, he sent for the tribal leaders and upbraided them for their inaction.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtaṣar*, XIV, 281; Abbott, *Aishah*, 179-80.

⁴⁸¹ Tabari, I, 3400-6; Thaqafl, *Gharat*, 276-85. According to al-Waqidi's account, Ibn Abi Bakr went into hiding in the house of Jabala b. Masruq. Mu'awiya b. Hudayj surrounded the house, and Ibn Abi Bakr was killed fighting (Tabari, I, 3406-7). On 'A'isha's taking charge of her brother's daughter Qurayba and son al-Qasim, see Abbott, *Aishah*, 209. ⁴⁸² Tabari, I, 3407; Thaqaft, *Ghadrat*, 288-9.

Malik b. Ka'b al-Arhab! came forward to back him, and AIT ordered his herald to summon the people to march to Egypt under his command. It still took a month³⁹³ before a small army of two thousand men had assembled outside Kufa and were sent off by 'AIT. Five days later 'AIT received the news, from both al-Hajjaj b. Ghaziyya al-Ansarī from Egypt and his spy 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Musayyab al-Fazari coming from Syria, that Muhammad b. AbT Bakr had been killed. He sent 'Abd al-Rahman b. Shurayh al-Yaml to recall Malik b. Ka'b.

The date of 'Amr's victory at al-Musannat is given by al-Waqidī as Safar 38/July-August 658.³⁹⁴ Al-Kindī mentions as the date of Ibn AbT Bakr's death 14 Safar 38/23 July 658,³⁹⁵ probably too early. 'Amr b. al-'As had camped in Egypt for a period of between one and two months before the battle. 'AIT is quoted as telling the Kufans that he had tried for more than fifty days to mobilize an army in support of their Egyptian brethren.⁴⁸⁶ The battle presumably took place no earlier than the end of Safar 38/early August 658. Al-Kindī dates the beginning of 'Amr's second governorship of Egypt from RabT I 38/August-September 658.³⁹⁶ 'AIT was deeply distressed by the loss of his foster-son Muhammad b. AbT Bakr as well as that of Egypt, and showed it in public. In a sermon he took credit for his own eagerness to face the enemy, while blaming the Kufans for their failure to obey him. In a letter informing 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas of the conquest of Egypt and the death of Ibn AbT Bakr he bitterly complained about the lack of support from his people; if it were not for his desire to die as a martyr, he would prefer not to stay on a single day with them. His cousin answered him, praying for God's support and suggesting that he treat his subjects kindly, since they might change their attitude in the future. 'AIT evidently now regretted having entrusted Ibn AbT Bakr with the governorship of Egypt, describing him again as an inexperienced young man (*ghulam hadath*). He revealed that he had thought of appointing Hashim b. 'Utba who, he suggested, would not have left the field open for 'Amr b. al-'As and his helpers and would not have died without his sword in his hand. This, he added, was not meant as a reproach of Muhammad b. AbT Bakr, who had sacrificed his life and fulfilled his duty.⁴⁸⁸ Questioned about his deep grief for the son of Abu Bakr, he explained that he had been his foster-son, a brother to his own sons. 'I was a father to him and considered him my child.'⁴⁸⁹

Frustrated by his loss of authority, 'AIT devoted his energies to teaching

³⁹³ Thaqafi, *Ghardi*, 294. ⁴⁸⁴ Tabari, I, 3407.

⁴⁸⁵ Kindī, *Wulat*, 31. Al-Kindī's statement that Ibn Abi Bakr's governorship lasted five months is completely mistaken. ⁴⁸⁶ Tabari, I, 3412; Thaqafi, *Gharat*, 297.

⁴⁸⁹ Thaqafi, *Gharat*, 301.

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those of his followers eager to listen to him. While still in a state of grief and depression about the conquest of Egypt, he was visited by five of his close followers, 'Amr b. al-Hamiq, Hujr b. 'AdT, Habba b. Juwayn al-'UranT al-BajalT, al-Harith al-A'war al-HamdanT and 'Abd Allah b. Saba' al-HamdanT, and was asked about his views concerning Abu Bakr and 'Umar. 'AIT reproached them: 'Is your mind free for that when Egypt has just been conquered and my followers (*shPati*) have been killed there? I shall issue a letter for you in which will be described what you have questioned me about. I ask you to safeguard my rights which you have squandered before. Therefore read it to my followers and be helpers unto the truth.'⁴⁹⁰

The contents of the letter agreed substantially with what he had written Mu'awiya about his relations with the first two caliphs. 'AIT described the mission of the Prophet, the disaster that struck both his close kin and the whole Community with his death, and the conflict over the reign after him. He affirmed that he had been surprised and greatly disturbed to see the people turning away from the Prophet's family and thronging to Abu Bakr to pledge allegiance to him; he had withheld his hand for a time, considering himself more entitled to the position of the Messenger of God among the people than anyone who might assume it; then the apostasy of some of the people had induced him to put the cause of Islam above his own interest; he pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr, assisted him in overcoming the apostates, and backed him with sincere advice; he had neither been convinced, nor had he been without hope, that Abu Bakr would eventually turn the rule over to him. Had it not been for the special bond between Abu Bakr and 'Umar, he would not have thought that Abu Bakr might divert the reign from him; just before his death, however, Abu Bakr sent for 'Umar and appointed him his successor; he, 'AIT, had obeyed and sincerely backed 'Umar, and 'Umar's conduct was pleasing and blessed with good success; when 'Umar was about to die, he had been confident that he would not divert the rule from him, but 'Umar made him one of six candidates, and they turned out to be most strongly opposed to his rule. This was because he had argued with Abu Bakr at the time of the Prophet's death, telling Quraysh: 'We, the Prophet's Family, have a better right to 'this matter' than you so long as there is among us one who recites the Qur'an, knows the Sunna, and adheres to the religion

⁴⁰ ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 302-3; Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 382-3. Al-Baladhuri states that 'AIT then gave them a letter to be read at all times to his followers for their benefit. Ibn Saba' had a copy of it but altered it. Al-Baladhuri omitted the text of the letter, commenting that it did 'All no good. The text is preserved by al-Thaqafi. In Ibn Abi l-HadT's quotation from al-ThaqafT's book the text is introduced as a speech by 'AIT given after the killing of Muhammad b. AbT Bakr (*Sharh*, VI, 94). The introductory statement may have been suppressed because of the mention of 'Abd Allah b. Saba' in it.

of the truth.' The people thus feared that if he were to rule them they would have no share in the reign for their lifetime, and they agreed unanimously to divert the reign to 'Uthman and to deprive him of it in the hope that they would have it in turn; they demanded that he pledge allegiance, or they would fight him, and he had done so under constraint. One of them had told him: 'Ibn Abi Talib, surely you are covetous of "this matter."' He had answered: 'You are more covetous, yet more remote. Am I the most covetous when I ask for my heritage and my right of which God and His Messenger have made me the most worthy, or you who strike my face to keep me from it?' They were dumbfounded.

'AIT then prayed for God's help against Quraysh who had cut their kinship ties to him, defrauded him of his right, lowered his high station, and colluded to dispute a right to which his title was prior to theirs; when he looked around, he could not see anyone prepared to assist or defend him except for his own family; he was wary of bringing ruin down on them and therefore suppressed his anger.

Next he reminded the faithful how they had become enraged against 'Uthman and had come to Medina and killed him; then they had approached him, 'AIT, in order to pledge allegiance to him; he had at first resisted, but in the end they had pressed him hard, assuring him that they would be satisfied with none but him, and he had accepted. Then 'AIT recounted the story of his reign, the rebellion of Talha and al-Zubayr, the refusal of the Syrians to respond to his summons, the mutiny of his army at SiffTn, the failure of the arbitrators to judge in accordance with the Qur'an and their disagreement, the rebellion of the Kharijites, and the desertion of most of the Kufans from his second campaign to Syria. Finally he appealed to them to do their duty in defence of Islam, as their enemies were seizing their cities, killing his followers, and raiding their lands.³⁹⁷

About this time, soon after the loss of Egypt, 'AIT became embroiled in an angry exchange with his cousin 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas. While preparing for his second campaign to Syria, he had appointed Ibn al-'Abbas leader of the pilgrimage to Mekka, as he had done the previous year at SiffTn.³⁹⁸ Evidently because of this mission 'Abd Allah was not present at the battle of al-Nahrawan. Leaving for Mekka, he put Abu l-Aswad al-Du'alT in charge of the congregational prayers in Basra and Ziyad b. Ablh in charge of the land tax. A quarrel erupted between the two during his absence, and Abu l-Aswad satirized Ziyad in a poem.

³⁹⁷ Thaqaft, *Gharat*, 303-22.

³⁹⁸ Al-Tabari (1,3390) states erroneously that 'Abd Allah's brother 'Ubayd Allah, governor of Yemen, was leader of the pilgrimage in the year 37. KhalTfa correctly names 'Abd Allah (*Ta'rikh*, 192).

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Ziyad answered with ugly insults, and Abu 1-Aswad composed a further lampoon. When 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas returned, Ziyad complained about Abu 1-Aswad. 'Abd Allah severely scolded the latter, comparing him to a camel, for improperly injuring the honour of free men, and sent him off.³⁹⁹

Abu 1-Aswad now wrote 'All a letter in which he praised him for his trustworthiness with regard to the/ay' of the Muslim Community, which he amply distributed to them, while abstaining from taking anything that belonged to them for himself. His cousin, in contrast, was partaking of the money under his control without 'All's knowledge. He, Abu 1-Aswad, was unable to conceal that from him and was therefore seeking his advice. In his reply 'AIT thanked him for his sincerity to his imam and informed him that he would write to Ibn al-'Abbas without mentioning Abu 1-Aswad's letter. He wrote to Ibn al-'Abbas that he had received news about him which, if true, implied that Ibn al-'Abbas had disgraced his trustworthiness, disobeyed his imam and cheated the Muslims. He asked him to provide an account for the public money under his control. Ibn al-'Abbas answered that the information that had reached him was false and that he was correctly administering and preserving whatever was under his control. 'AIT wrote back insisting on an exact account of his revenue from the non-Muslims (*jizya*), its sources and his expenditure. Ibn al-'Abbas was deeply hurt by this show of persistent distrust in him, who had backed 'All most loyally under trying circumstances. He replied that he recognized the extreme seriousness with which 'AIT viewed the report he had received about his embezzling the money of the Basrans. He swore that he preferred to meet God with all the gold found above and under the earth in his hands to having spilled the blood of the Community for the sake of gaining power and dominion. 'Send whomever you want to your province, I am leaving.' When 'AIT read the letter, he commented incredulously: 'Has Ibn 'Abbas perhaps not participated with me in shedding this blood?''⁴⁹⁴

Ibn al-'Abbas' allusion to spilled blood has been interpreted by Veccia-Vaglieri as a criticism of the massacre of the Kharijites at al-Nahrawan which, she suggested, was the prime cause of his defection.⁴⁹⁵ That Ibn al-'Abbas regretted al-Nahrawan, where he had not been

³⁹⁹ This background to the quarrel between Ibn al-'Abbas and Abu 1-Aswad is provided only by Ibn A'tham (*Futuh*, IV, 72-3). The report of Abu 1-Kanud, on whom the other accounts are based, begins with 'Abd Allah's scolding of Abu 1-Aswad with largely the same words. Ibn A'tham's further account (*ibid.*, 74—5) evidently condenses that of Abu 1-Kanud and describes Ibn al-'Abbas as merely retiring to his house in Basra. 'All then wrote to him reproaching him for his angry reaction and restored him to his office. This latter part is obviously not reliable in the light of Abu 1-Kanud's account.

present, is not unlikely. This is also implied in a chronologically flawed remark by al-Baladhuri⁴⁹⁶ that 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas, some time after the Syrian conquest of Egypt, disagreed with 'All at al-Nahrawan and left for Mekka. Ibn al-'Abbas was later, as noted by Veccia-Vaglieri,⁴⁹⁷ held in high esteem and consulted in legal matters by the Kharijites. Yet his angry remark in the letter was hardly prompted by al-Nahrawan. Rather he was reminding 'AIT that he, a man without personal ambition for government, had always backed him out of solidarity and even soiled his hands with Muslim blood in the battles of the Camel and Siffin for 'AIT's sake, with which he would have to face his Lord; did he deserve 'All's distrust of his word and his lending credence to some slanderous insinuations against him?

Ibn al-'Abbas now left for Mekka in an unambiguous protest demonstration. He secured the backing first of the Banu Hilal to whom he had kinship ties through his mother, Lubaba bt al-Harith. Al-Dahhak b. 'Abd Allah al-HilalT, whom he had appointed police chief, offered him personal protection (*ajarahu*), and 'Abd Allah b. RazTn b. AbT 'Amr, QabTsa b. 'Abd 'Awf and others came to back him. Hilal were soon joined by Hawazin, Sulaym and all other tribes of Qays. Ibn al-'Abbas was also accompanied by Sinan b. Salama b. al-Muhabbiq al-HudhalT, al-Husayn b. Abi l-Hurr al-'AnbarT and al-Rabl' b. Ziyad al-HarithT. He now took possession of the treasury, filled sacks with the money, said to have amounted to 6,000,000 dirhams, and took off, accompanied by his protectors. The other tribes set out after them in the desert high ground (*faff*). The Qays warned them that they would fight to defend Ibn al-'Abbas. There was evidently not much eagerness to start a quarrel about the money. First Sabra b. Shayman al-Huddan! of Azd explained to his people that Qays were their brethren in Islam and their neighbours in Basra, while their share in the money, if it were returned, was minimal. Then Bakr b. Wa'il and 'Abd al-Qays also decided to remain neutral. Only TamTm were ready to fight, but al-Ahnaf b. Qays told them that some of those refusing to fight were more remote in kinship to Qays than they, and abandoned them. TamTm now chose another chief to lead them and there were some blows exchanged that left a few wounded but no dead. The neutrals intervened, putting TamTm to shame by boasting that in leaving this money to the cousins of TamTm they were more generous than the latter. They all left, and Ibn al-'Abbas continued on to Mekka accompanied by a few men of Qays, among them al-Dahhak b. 'Abd Allah and 'Abd Allah b. RazTn. On the way Ibn al-'Abbas handed out money to the poor, whether they begged for it or not. In Mekka he bought three

^{4,6} BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 405. ^{4,7} 'II conflitto', 78.

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HijazT slave girls of mixed race from Habtar,⁴⁰⁰ the client of the Banu Ka'b, for 3,000 dinars.⁴⁰¹

The report, going back to Abu I-Kanud, describes the profligacy of Ibn al-'Abbas in drastic terms, and there may be reasonable doubts about some aspects of it. It seems hardly likely that all of Qays would have defended Ibn al-'Abbas if he had simply carried off the whole contents of the treasury of Basra, and even less likely that the rest of the Basran tribes would have so easily acquiesced to it. Sabra b. Shayman's argument that the share of Azd would be minimal if the money were returned indicates that either the treasury was exceptionally low at the time or only a small portion was carried off. The figure of 6,000,000 dirhams is probably fanciful. Ibn al-'Abbas himself later insisted in his letter to 'AIT that what he had taken was only part of his entitlement. The Basran historian Abu 'Ubayda maintained that he took the accumulated provisions (*arzaq*) to which he was entitled.⁵⁰⁰ It is plain, however, that he intended to make a show of defiance towards 'AIT.

'AIT was informed about Ibn al-'Abbas' action by the same Abu I-Kanud who narrated the whole story of the conflict between the two cousins of the Prophet. Abu I-Kanud describes himself at this point as an assistant (*min a'wan*) of Ibn al-'Abbas in Basra. 'AIT reacted by quoting Qur'an Sura VII 175: 'Recite to them the story of him to whom We gave Our signs, but he withdrew from them and Satan followed him, and he became one of the seduced.' Then he wrote to Ibn al-'Abbas, noting the trust he had placed in him; in no one of his family had he confided more deeply for his comfort, support and reliability than in Ibn al-'Abbas; yet when times had turned grim - the enemy raising his head, the Community becoming discordant and restive - Ibn al-'Abbas had turned his back on his cousin, deserted and cheated him in the most abominable manner; he had snatched the money of the people and run away with it to the Hijaz as if he had taken possession of his inheritance from his father and mother; now he was eating and drinking from forbidden money, buying slave women and marrying them - all with the property of orphans, widows and fighters for the cause of God. 'AIT demanded that Ibn al-'Abbas return the money to the people, otherwise he would have to punish him with all severity whenever he got hold of him; if his own sons al-Hasan or al-Husayn had committed anything like this, they would have found no clemency from him. Ibn al-'Abbas answered 'AIT, briefly acknowledging the receipt of his letter in which he had magnified Ibn al-'Abbas' breach

⁴⁰⁰ This, rather than HabTra (Baladhuri, *Ansd*, II, 174), is the reading of the better manuscripts. Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *al-'Iqd al-farid*, ed. MufTid Muhammad Qumayha and 'Abd al-Majld al-TarhTnT (Beirut, 1983), V, 105 gives the name as 'Ata' b. Jubayr.

⁴⁰¹ BaladhurT, *Ansd*, II, 171-4. ⁵⁰⁰ TabarT, I, 3454—5.

of trust regarding the money he had seized from the treasury of Basra. He assured 'AIT that his right in God's treasury (*bayt mal Allah*) was greater than the amount he had taken.

'AIT next wrote Ibn al-'Abbas an angry letter in which he expressed amazement at his belief that he had a right to a greater share in God's treasury than any other Muslim. In reality he was now living in sin. Again he mentioned what he had heard about Ibn al-'Abbas' buying slave girls from Medina and al-Ta'if, choosing them for himself yet paying with the money of others. 'AIT assured him that he would never have considered any of the money taken by Ibn al-'Abbas as licit for himself to leave as inheritance to his offspring. How could Ibn al-'Abbas then be pleased with it, since he was consuming forbidden property? Yet he would have to repent of his wrong-doing. Ibn al-'Abbas answered this time even more curtly: 'By God, if you will not spare me your fables, I shall carry it [the money] to Mu'awiya so that he can fight you with it.' 'AIT now left him alone.⁴⁰²

So far the account of Abu l-Kanud. From the exchange of letters it is evident that the conflict was about the share of the 'money of God', the *fay'*, to which Ibn al-'Abbas was entitled. The Kufan traditionist Abu Bakr b. AbT Shayba, evidently trying to excuse Ibn al-'Abbas, explained that he considered the *ay'* licit for himself on the basis of an 'interpretation' (*ta'wil*) of Qur'an Sura VIII 42 which gave the Prophet's kin a share in the fifth of the Muslim war booty. The explanation went in the right direction, yet Ibn al-'Abbas did not need to 'interpret' the Qur'anic text which is quite unambiguous as was the parallel verse Sura LIX 7 specifically concerning the *fay'*. Ibn al-'Abbas thus was in a strong position and could with good conscience tell 'AIT to keep his fables to himself. He justly maintained all his life that Abu Bakr and 'Umar had deprived the Prophet's kin of their Qur'anic right.

'AIT, in contrast, asserted that Ibn al-'Abbas and he himself were not entitled to a different share of *the fay'* than any other Muslim. He did so evidently on the precedent set by Abu Bakr, who treated the Qur'anic text as no longer valid after the Prophet's death. The same position had been taken by 'Umar, who had tried to make up partially for the loss suffered by the Prophet's kin by according them higher shares in the pension system. 'Uthman had revalidated the Qur'anic rule for the benefit of his own Umayyad kin as the house of the 'Vicegerent of God'. This was indeed interpretation of the Qur'an rather than acceptance of its rule, and it had raised a storm of public protest. 'AIT was bending backwards to follow the sunna of the two popular successors of the Prophet, which

⁴⁰² Baladhurī, *Ansdh*, II, 174-6; Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *Iqd*, V, 106-7.

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'Uthman, contrary to his commitment at the time of his election, had so flagrantly broken.⁴⁰³

Ibn al-'Abbas' protest action was thus not only motivated by his resentment of 'All's display of distrust in him, but by his dissatisfaction with 'All's policy of dealing out strictly equal shares from *the fay'* to those entitled. In his letter to al-Hasan after 'All's death he went so far as to state: 'You know that the people turned away from your father 'AIT and went over to Mu'awiya only because he equalized the share from *the fay'* amongst them and treated them all the same in regard to their stipends (*'ata.*'); this weighed heavily upon them.'⁴⁰⁴ 'AIT's refusal to make a payment from the *fay'* to his brother 'AqTl had, as noted, induced the latter to take money from Mu'awiya. Later Masqala b. Hubayra al-ShaybanT, a prominent chief of RabT'a and 'AIT's governor of ArdashTrkhourra, defected to Mu'awiya unable to pay the public treasury for debts incurred. He declared that if his debt had been owed to Mu'awiya or to 'Uthman, they would have waived it. 'Uthman had, he added, allowed al-Ash'ath b. Qays to pocket 100,000 dirhams annually from the land tax of Adharbayjan.⁵⁰⁴

'AIT's refusal to make financial concessions to the nobility and tribal chiefs evidently left them vulnerable to bribery by Mu'awiya. According to a Syrian report, Mu'awiya, after receiving the pledge of allegiance as caliph and hearing of the battle of al-Nahrawan, sent letters to the leading men in Kufa, among them al-Ash'ath b. Qays, making them promises and offers of money in order to induce them to incline to his side and to show themselves reluctant to follow 'AIT in his campaign against Syria. Mu'awiya later used to say that after SiffTn he made war on 'AIT without armies and without exertion.⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰³ This attitude of 'All was noted by his great-grandson Muhammad al-Baqir. He told Ibn Ishaq that 'All during his reign in Iraq followed the conduct of Abu Bakr and 'Umar in respect to the Qur'anic portion of the Prophet's kin. 'AIT did so, he explained, because he was loath to be accused of contravening the practice of the two caliphs (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 217).

⁴⁰⁴ Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, XVI, 23; Ibn A'tham, *Futuh*, IV, 149. Quite similar was the judgement of Fudayl b. al-Ja'd quoted by al-Mada'inT: The strongest reason for the Arabs' withdrawal of their support from 'AIT was that he did not give preference to anyone, however noble, in the distribution of money and failed to bribe the chiefs of the tribes as kings do (Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, II, 197). The pro-'Alid Mu'tazilite Abu Ja'far al-Iskaft asserted that 'AIT's distribution of the contents of the treasury in Medina immediately after his accession giving equal shares to everybody was the first cause of the opposition to him. Al-Iskaft supported this claim with a lengthy fictitious account of the developments after 'AIT's *bay'a* (Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, VII, 37-43).

⁵⁰⁵ BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, II, 383. Caetani's comment on this report that 'the tradition favourable to 'AIT naturally attributes every setback suffered by him to the malevolent stratagems of enemies and not to the shortcomings and weakness of the caliph' (*Annali*, X, 108) is quite out of place. The report is purely Syrian, pro-Umayyad, and probably reliable.

With the charge that 'All equalized the *fay*' shares among the Muslims, Ibn al-'Abbas was presumably referring to his handing out of the surplus in the treasury among those entitled on equal terms. He had done so on his accession in Medina and seems to have continued the practice throughout his caliphate.⁵⁰⁶ It is unlikely that he interfered with the inequality of the stipends and pensions set by 'Umar and paid out of the *fay*'. Since *the fay*' from the conquered land under 'Umar's settlement belonged to the conquerors rather than the government, 'All was evidently intent on spreading the benefits equally and exclusively to all those entitled. 'Umar had, however, regularly granted concessions of dead land in Arabia and other territories not part of *fay*' land to the Qurayshite nobility and tribal leaders. There is no evidence that 'All granted any such concessions, although he also did not interfere with the concessions made by his predecessors, including 'Uthman. He does not even seem to have touched the oasis of Fadak which 'Uthman had granted to Marwan.

Ibn al-'Abbas did not stay long in Mekka. When 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir al-Hadrami, sent by Mu'awiya, arrived in Basra to stir up trouble there, Ibn al-'Abbas was already in Kufa with 'AIT. Nothing is known as to how the reconciliation was brought about. 'AIT could evidently ill afford to lose the backing of his politically experienced cousin whose brothers Qutham and 'Ubayd Allah were his governors in the Hijaz and San'a'. 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas, on his part, fully appreciated and admired 'AIT's personal qualities and his deep devotion to Islam, in spite of his anger at the treatment he had met with and his disapproval of some aspects of his cousin's policies. 'AIT did not replace him as governor in Basra. Ziyad b. Ablh, whom Ibn al-'Abbas left in charge in preference to Abu l-Aswad al-Du'ali, continued to act as his deputy. Not even al-Dahhak b. 'Abd Allah al-Hilali, Ibn al-'Abbas' police chief who had aided him in his raid of the treasury, was dismissed or punished. Some time after the failure of Ibn al-Hadrami's mission, Ibn al-'Abbas returned to Basra and resumed the governorship. Only al-Ya'qubi reports that Ibn al-'Abbas, on 'AIT's insistence, restored all or a major part of the money he had taken from the treasury and later used to say that no exhortation ever made a greater impression on him than 'AIT's on this occasion.⁵⁰⁷ Although the report seems generally unreliable, it is possible that Ibn al-'Abbas returned some of the money to allow 'AIT to save face. He presumably obtained, however, some commitment from the caliph henceforth not to interfere in his administration of Basra.

⁵⁰⁶ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, II, 131-6; Ibn 'Asakir, *Alt*, III, 180-8; Ibn Abi l-Hadid, *Sharh*, II, 198-203. ⁵⁰⁷ Ya'qubi, *Ta'rikh*, II, 242.

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Abu l-Kanud's dramatic account of the quarrel between the two cousins of the Prophet and his failure to mention their reconciliation has led early historians to the assumption of a permanent defection of Ibn al-'Abbas from 'All. Aware that Ibn al-'Abbas was still governing Basra in the later years of 'All's reign, al-Mada'inl placed this defection shortly before 'All's murder. He assumed, on the basis of some early reports, that Ibn al-'Abbas was present in Kufa, in order to console 'AIT about the death of Muhammad b. AbT Bakr, at the time of Ibn al-Hadrami's activity in Basra.⁴⁰⁶ Al-Mada'inT's account was accepted by 'Umar b. Shabba, al-BaladhurT,⁴⁰⁷ and al-Tabari, who reported the defection of Ibn al-'Abbas under the year 40/660.⁴⁰⁸ The independent Basran historian Abu 'Ubayda, on the other hand, maintained that Ibn al-'Abbas did not leave Basra permanently before the death of 'AIT but departed only after al-Hasan's surrender of the caliphate to Mu'awiya. At that time he took some money from the treasury which he claimed as his salary.⁵¹¹ Among modern authors, Caetani⁵¹² and Veccia-Vaglieri recognized that the conflict reported by Abu l-Kanud must have occurred early in the year 38/late summer 658, before Ibn al-HadramT's mission. They tended to assume that Ibn al-'Abbas' defection at that time was final and that reports showing him later still governing Basra must be unreliable. Veccia-Vaglieri suggested that he later, some time after his break with 'AIT, returned to Basra and emptied the treasury.⁵¹³ All this is quite untenable.

Several months after his success in Egypt, Mu'awiya decided to send 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir al-HadramT, the Umayyad client, to Basra with the mission to subvert 'AIT's government and to draw the town to his own side. 'AIT's setbacks had strengthened the cause of the 'Uthmanid party everywhere, and the time seemed ripe to test the ground in the town that had so vigorously backed 'A'isha's revolt. Mu'awiya told Ibn al-HadramT that most of the people of Basra shared the Umayyad abhorrence of 'Uthman's murder. They were full of rancour against 'AIT because of the losses they had suffered at his hands and were yearning for someone who would summon and lead them in seeking revenge for 'Uthman's blood. He instructed him to alight among Mudar, to keep away from RabT'a, and to covet the friendship of the Azd who would all be with him except for a

⁴⁰⁶ Tabari, I, 3414; ThaqafT, *Ghadrat*, 387.

⁴⁰⁷ Baladhurl, *Ansdh*, II, 176. Al-BaladhurT held, however, that Ibn al-'Abbas was in Kufa at the time of Ibn al-HadramT's mission because of his quarrel with 'AIT, not because of the death of Muhammad b. AbT Bakr (*ibid.*, 426-7). ⁵¹⁰ TabarT, I, 3453-6.

few, and these would not oppose him.⁵¹⁴ Ibn al-Hadraml's departure was delayed because Mu'awiya was troubled by the astrological signs of the night before. Mu'awiya now wrote to 'Amr b. al-'As in Egypt seeking his advice. 'Amr endorsed the plan with enthusiasm. His usual political judgement failed him on this occasion.

Following Mu'awiya's instructions, Ibn al-HadramT alighted among the TamTm. The Banu Mujashi', who had before treacherously killed al-Zubayr, offered him protection.⁵¹⁵ When he addressed the chiefs of the Basrans and tried to incite them to revenge against 'AIT as the murderer of 'Uthman, al-Dahhak b. 'Abd Allah al-HilalT, the police chief of Ibn al-'Abbas, stood up and warned him against inciting the Basrans once more to fight each other so that Mu'awiya would become their amir and Ibn al-HadramT his assistant (*waztr*); a single day with 'AIT and the Prophet was better than affliction with Mu'awiya and the house of Mu'awiya on earth as long as the earth would last. Then 'Abd Allah b. Khazim of Sulaym rose and told al-Dahhak to keep silent since he was not entitled to speak for the common people (*'amma*). He assured Ibn al-HadramT that they were all his helpers and would do whatever he wished. Al-Dahhak b. 'Abd Allah ridiculed his self-importance, and they insulted each other.

Then a Qurayshite, 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Umayr b. 'Uthman of Abu Bakr's clan Taym, intervened, taking the side of Ibn al-HadramT, who, he said, was seeking to unite, rather than divide, them; he proposed that they read the letter from Mu'awiya which he had brought along. The letter was opened and read to them. Mu'awiya addressed them as the Commander of the Faithful. He described 'Uthman as a paragon of good conduct, justice, fairness to the oppressed and love for the weak, who had been killed as a Muslim, in the ritual state of a pilgrim, thirsty, and fasting, and summoned them to revenge. He did not mention 'AIT, but his aim was clear enough. In return for their righteous stand, he promised them that he would treat them in accordance with the Book, would give them their stipends doubly every year, and would not carry off any of their *fay*' from them. Many of the Basran chiefs were taken in by this rhetoric and called out: 'We hear and obey.' There was no unanimity, however, among those

⁵¹⁴ ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 375; Baladhurl, *Ansdab*, II, 423. The narrator in al-ThaqafT's account, 'Amr b. Mihsan, accompanied Ibn al-HadramT on his way to Basra but seems to have left him soon after his arrival there, perhaps returning to Mu'awiya. He is obviously not the An\$ari 'Amr b. Mih\$an b. 'Amr of al-Najjar whose son Abu 'Amra BashTr was a prominent supporter of 'AIT and was killed at Siffin. He may rather be 'Amr b. Mihsan b. Hurthan al-AsadT, brother of 'Ukkasha b. Mihsan, a confederate of 'Abd Shams (see Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, V, Hand IV, 256). He is also quoted by al-Thaqafi (*Gharat*, 510) reporting on the pilgrimage in Mekka in the year 39/660.

⁵¹⁵ See JarTr's lampoon of Mujashi' in TabarT, I, 3418.

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present, and al-Ahnaf b. Qays went off commenting: 'As for me, I will have no camel, female or male, in this.' 'Amr b. Marjum of 'Abd al-Qays warned them not to break their oath of allegiance lest a disaster strike and annihilate them.⁵¹⁶

In a further meeting Ibn al-HadramT appealed to the Basran chiefs for help against Ziyad b. 'Ubayd (Ablh), whom Ibn al-'Abbas had left in charge of the town as his deputy. Suhar b. 'Ayyash⁵¹⁷ al-'AbdT, who opposed his own tribe 'Abd al-Qays in their backing of 'All, eagerly offered their support with their swords and hands. He had, it was said, written to Mu'awiya before and invited him to take advantage of the situation in Basra as the governor Ibn al-'Abbas was absent, and Mu'awiya had answered him, promising prompt action. Al-Muthanna b. Mahraba al-'Abdi, however, countered Suhar's offer, telling Ibn al-HadramT that if he would not return to where he came from, they would get at him with their swords, hands, arrows and spear heads; would they abandon the cousin of their Prophet to obey a party tyrant? Ibn al-HadramT realized that it was time to seek, in accordance with Mu'awiya's instructions, the help of the Azd. He appealed to their chief, Sabra b. Shayman, reminding him of the stand of his people in seeking revenge for 'Uthman. Sabra answered cautiously: 'If you come and alight at my house, I shall back and protect you.' Ibn al-HadramT apologized: 'The Commander of the Faithful Mu'awiya has ordered me to alight among his people, the Mudar.' Sabra replied coolly: 'Do what he ordered you', and left him. Ibn al-HadramT had offended the Azd by choosing to stay with their rivals, the TamTm. They, the Azd, had borne the brunt of the losses in the battle of the Camel, while the TamTm partly remained neutral and partly fought half-heartedly. Now the would-be Commander of the Faithful showed his preference for 'his people Mudar'.

Ziyad was still residing in the governor's palace, but was getting frightened as Ibn al-HadramT's following increased. He sent for al-Hudayn b. al-Mundhir and Malik b. Misma', the chiefs of RabT'a, and asked them to grant him protection until he received the orders of the Commander of the Faithful. Al-Hudayn immediately promised him protection. Malik, who had previously failed to back 'AIT, pretended that he would first have to consult his men. Ziyad realized that he could not trust him and sent - it was said on the advice of Abu I-Aswad al-Du'alT - for Sabra b. Shayman. The latter readily offered to protect him and the public treasury if he would stay in his house. Ziyad moved at night to Sabra's house, taking

⁵¹⁶ Thaqafi, *Ghadrat*, 378-85; Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, II, 424-5.

⁵¹⁷ The reading 'Abbas' instead of 'Ayyash in some sources, including al-Thaqafi's *Gharat*, is probably mistaken. See Caskel, *Gamharat an-nasab*, index s.v. 'Aiyas.

along the treasury. Sabra insisted that he should not appear to be hiding; he provided a police force for him and set up a pulpit and ceremonial chair in the mosque of the Huddan for him to lead the Friday prayer. He justified his political turn to his people by explaining that on the day of the Camel they had said: 'We defend our city, obey our Mother, and support our wronged caliph.' They had stood firm when the other people fled, and the best of them had been killed; today Ziyad was their protected guest, and they did not have to fear from 'AIT what they feared from Mu'awiya.⁴⁰⁹ He evidently meant Mu'awiya's partiality towards Mudar.

Ziyad now wrote to Ibn al-'Abbas, who was still staying in Kufa, about what had happened and asked him to inform 'AIT and to seek his instructions. Ibn al-HadramT in the meantime was urged by his supporters of TamTm and Qays to occupy the governor's palace. As he was getting ready to move, the Azd rode out in force and warned his supporters that they would not permit anyone to occupy the palace with whom they were not pleased. Ibn al-HadramT's supporters, however, refused to give up their aim. Al-Ahnaf b. Qays intervened and lectured Ibn al-HadramT's friends that they had no better right to the governor's palace than their opponents nor the right to impose a governor on them whom they did not want. As they turned back, al-Ahnaf reassured the Azd that nothing would be done against their will, and they also departed.⁵¹⁹

Ibn al-HadramT began to act as a governor, collecting taxes in the area controlled by his followers. Much of his support, however, was lukewarm. The Banu TamTm, seeing that the Azd were vigorously defending Ziyad, sent to them proposing that they both expel their respective proteges and wait to see which of the two Commanders of the Faithful would prevail. The Azd replied, however, that this would have been acceptable before they had granted protection to their man; expelling him now would in their eyes be equal to allowing him to be killed; they had granted him protection only out of generosity. This was a hint that the TamTm had been backing Ibn al-HadramT in order to ingratiate themselves with Mu'awiya, the presumptive victor in the battle for the caliphate.

The rivalry between the Azd and TamTm in Basra had its repercussions also in Kufa. The Tamimite Shabath b. RibT urged 'AIT to send someone of TamTm to summon his Basran kinsmen back to obedience and not to give the Azd 'Uman, 'the remote [in kinship] and odious', authority over them. 'Surely,' he addressed 'AIT, 'a single one of your people is better for you than all others.' Mikhnaf b. Sulaym of Azd countered: 'Surely, the remote and odious are those who disobey God and oppose the Commander of the Faithful, and they are your people. The dear and close ones are

⁴⁰⁹ ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 393. ⁵¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 485—91; BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, II, 425—9.

⁴⁰⁹ Thaqafi, *Ghdrat*, 394-410; BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, II, 428-9.

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those who obey God and back the Commander of the Faithful, and they are my people. A single one of them is better for the Commander of the Faithful than ten of your people.' 'AIT had to hush them; he reminded them that Islam had come in order to curb mutual hatred and bickering. He took, however, the advice of Shabath and called A'yan b. Dubay'a al-Mujashi'T to question him about the conduct of his people in Basra who were assaulting his official together with Ibn al-HadramT. A'yan apologized for them and offered to take care of them. 'AIT sent him forthwith to Basra with a letter of instructions to Ziyad to let A'yan deal with his people and to fight them only if he failed to persuade them.

A'yan had no difficulty in drawing most of his people to his side, but there were some diehard supporters of Ibn al-HadramT. He moved with his converts to face them and tried all day to preach good sense into them, but they answered with affronts. As he left in the evening for his travel baggage, ten men, thought to be Kharijites, followed him and hit at him with their swords while he was in bed, not expecting trouble. He ran away naked, but they caught up with him and killed him. Ziyad was ready to attack Ibn al-HadramT in revenge together with the Azd and other supporters, but the TamTm now sent a message to the Azd, declaring that they had touched neither their guest to whom they had promised protection, nor his money, nor anyone who disagreed with them; why would the Azd want to make war on them and their protected guest? When the Azd received the message, they did not want to fight.⁵²⁰ A'yan, to be sure, belonged to TamTm.

Ziyad wrote to 'AIT, this time directly, informing him of what had happened and requesting that he send Jariya b. Qudama, who, he said, had a sharp mind, was obeyed among his tribe, and was tough on the enemies of the Commander of the Faithful. Jariya, himself a Basran Tamimite, had remained in Kufa after 'AIT's abortive campaign against the Syrians.⁴¹⁰ 'AIT now sent him to Basra with fifty men of TamTm and a tough letter to the Basrans, threatening those who persisted in their rebellion with perdition. When Jariya read the letter to them, the Azd and others were ready to fight. The next day they returned Ziyad to the governor's palace. Jariya was unable to persuade the hard core of Ibn

⁴¹⁰ The date of Ibn al-HadramT's subversive activity could be determined more accurately if it were known whether Jariya's mission to Basra occurred before or after his battle with the Kharijite leader Abu Maryam al-Sa'dT, which is dated in Ram. 38/Feb. 659 (BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, II, 485-6). On balance it seems more likely that the battle took place later, since the reports suggest that Mu'awiya sent Ibn al-Hadraml soon after his conquest of Egypt. Jariya seems to have stayed permanently in Kufa during the last years of 'AIT's reign. He was there at the beginning of Busr b. AbT Artah's raid of the Hijaz and Yemen.

al-HadramT's partisans to relinquish Mu'awiya's envoy and had to seek the help of the Azd. There was fighting, and Ibn al-HadramT and his followers were defeated and sought refuge in the fortified house of Sunbll al-Sa'dT, a pre-Islamic Persian castle. When Jariya ordered firewood to be piled up around the building, the Azd declared that they would have nothing to do with arson, and that those were his people. 'Ajla', the Ethiopian mother of 'Abd Allah b. Khazim al-SulamT, came to get her son, the chief of Ibn al-HadramT's cavalry. She called him from in front of the castle, baring her head and breasts, and threatened to undress. Ibn Khazim finally came out, and she took him away. Ibn al-HadramT and seventy of his followers were burned alive in the castle. Among them was the TaymT Qurayshite 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Umayr b. 'Uthman.

Ibn al-HadramT had vainly asked both Jariya and Ziyad, later recognized as Mu'awiya's half-brother, for a letter of safe conduct. Mu'awiya's emissary could hardly expect clemency after Mu'awiya had poisoned al-Ashtar and 'Amr b. al-'As had washed his hands of his former ally Muhammad b. AbT Bakr and allowed him to be burned. There is no word about Mu'awiya's reaction. It is unlikely that he felt much grief for the loyal Umayyad client. The chess-king knows which of his pawns are expendable. Jariya b. Qudama was thenceforth known as 'the Burner (*al-muharriq*),⁵²²

In Sha'ban 38/January 659, according to al-WaqidT,⁵²³ the meeting of the two arbitrators, Abu Musa al-Ash'arT and 'Amr b. al-'As, at Adhruh in northern Jordan took place. There is no circumstantial evidence either to confirm or to deny this dating. The Kufan tradition virtually ignored the event. For it, the arbitration had ended with the failure of the two men to agree at Dumat al-Jandal and with 'AIT's denunciation of their conduct and repudiation of his own arbitrator. 'AIT no longer considered Abu Musa his representative nor did he appoint anyone else to represent him. The Medinan tradition, in contrast, saw Adhruh as the main event in the arbitration. At Adhruh some of the major representatives of the Medinan religious aristocracy, who had not been invited to Dumat al-Jandal, were present with hopes of reaching agreement on the future of the caliphate.

Adhruh was a show of strength by Mu'awiya. The meeting was held on his territory and he attended it himself with his top Syrian advisers. He was already firmly acknowledged as caliph in Syria and obviously had no intention of relinquishing his claim to the universal rule of the faithful. Yet in order to attract the neutral religious aristocracy to attend the show, he and 'Amr must have made them concrete promises of a *shura*. At Dumat al-Jandal the two arbitrators had been unable to reach agreement

^{1,22} Thaqafi, *Gharat*, 401-12; Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 429-35. ⁵²³ Tabari, I, 3360.

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because 'Amr had adamantly refused to accept either the nomination of Abu Musa's favourite, 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar, or a *shura*. The quarrel between them had evidently not been serious enough to prevent 'Amr from persuading Abu Musa that this time he would negotiate in earnest and was prepared for compromise. Abu Musa foolishly allowed himself to be turned into a tool of Mu'awiya's imperial aspirations, although he no longer was legally representing 'AIT. The second-generation religious aristocracy, mostly sons of caliphs and of the most prominent Companions, were equally duped. 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar, 'Abd al-Rahman b. AbT Bakr, 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr, 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Aswad b. 'Abd Yaghuth of Zuhra, 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Harith b. Hisham of Makhzum, Abu I-Jahm b. Hudhayfa of 'AdT and al-MughTra b. Shu'ba all attended.⁴¹¹ Only Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas, member of Umar's electoral council, refused to join in spite of the strong urging of his son 'Umar. He evidently saw through the fraud.

Mu'awiya and 'Amr cannot seriously have expected that the Islamic aristocracy and Abu Musa would endorse Mu'awiya's claim to the caliphate. Mu'awiya, it is true, sent Abu Musa a handwritten note in which he pointed out to him that 'Amr had already recognized him as caliph on certain conditions and promised Abu Musa that, if he backed his caliphate on the same conditions, he would give his two sons the governorships of Kufa and Basra; for himself, Abu Musa, every door would be open and every request would be satisfied. Such attempts at bribery were, however, a matter of routine with Mu'awiya, and he was hardly surprised that Abu Musa rejected the offer indignantly. Mu'awiya indeed later showed his appreciation for the substantial services Abu Musa had unintentionally rendered him, even though Abu Musa consistently rejected his claim to the caliphate while an arbitrator.⁴¹² For Mu'awiya's and 'Amr's purposes it was sufficient that these men, Abu Musa and the prominent Medinan Islamic aristocracy, accepted their invitation to attend the meeting, thus implicitly recognizing that the future of the caliphate would depend on Mu'awiya and 'Amr rather than 'AIT. This was a considerable coup, especially since the Hijaz, their home base, was still nominally under the rule of 'AIT. The Holy Cities were, however, heavily dependent on Egypt for their provisions, and the

⁴¹¹ According to al-Zubayr b. Bakkar, Abu Musa and 'Amr b. al-'As agreed specifically to invite the following five men for consultation: 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr, 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar (reading thus instead of 'Amr), Abu I-Jahm b. Hudhayfa, Jubayr b. Mut'im and 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Harith b. Hisham (Ibn Abi I-HadTd, *Sharh*, XX, 113-14).

⁴¹² Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqdt*, IV/1, 82-3. Caetani's comment that the tradition insidiously insinuates that Abu Musa was bought by Mu'awiya, or secretly agreed with him (*Annali*, X, 54), is obviously baseless. There is no reason to doubt that the report goes back to Abu Musa's son Abu Burda.

conquest of that province by Mu'awiya had, in the eyes of the Hijazis, decisively shifted the balance of power in his favour. During the meetings 'Amr evidently pretended for some time to be open to a discussion of different candidates for the caliphate. He is reported to have countered Abu Musa's backing for 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar by proposing his own son 'Abd Allah, a man with a more credible record in Islam than himself. Abu Musa rejected him as a partisan in the conflict. 'Amr also brought up the name of Muhammad's maternal nephew 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Aswad al-Zuhri, who was known for his high standing with 'A'isha. Abu Musa countered, as 'Amr presumably expected, that neither 'Abd al-Rahman, nor his father al-Aswad, had the merit of *hijra*.⁴¹³ 'Amr even talked privately to 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar, evidently with the aim of eliciting from him a reaffirmation that he would accept only if there were unanimity in his favour. Mu'awiya, according to a dubious report, was seriously concerned and almost burst into the room where the two were conversing. The doorkeeper, however, reassured him that they failed to agree and that Ibn 'Umar declined to accept the caliphate.⁵²⁷

The famous final public scene of the arbitration, in which 'Amr played his crude trick of deception on Abu Musa - breaking his private commitment to depose Mu'awiya in favour of a *shura* and provoking a match of insults - was stage-managed from the beginning. The very insolence of 'Amr's conduct was intended as a slap in the face, not for 'AIT, who had already denounced the arbitration, but for 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar and the other Medinan dreamers of *shura*. Mu'awiya was triumphant. As Abu Musa returned to Mekka in indignation, the reconfirmed caliph invited his prominent guests in the evening for a farewell party together with his Syrian high command. He knew that this was the time to give free rein to his Umayyad arrogance, and addressed them: 'Whoever wants to speak about 'this matter', let him now display his horn against us.' It was the son of 'Umar b. al-Khattab whom he was challenging. He went on: 'Surely, we are more worthy of it than he and his father.' Who was the plebeian 'Umar b. al-Khattab to appoint him, Mu'awiya, to govern what was the property of the house of Abu Sufyan? And Syria, the Land of Emigration (*muhajar*) of Abraham, was clearly destined to rule the empire of Islam; the son of 'Umar and his sort were henceforth to stick to their business of arguing about the minutiae of the Prophet's Sunna and to leave high politics to the experts, such as himself and 'Amr b. al-'As.

⁴¹³ Zubayri, *Nasab*, 262. According to the less reliable Salih b. Kaysan, it was Abu Musa who proposed 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Aswad (Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, II, 344). 'Amr no doubt tried to have Abu Musa admit that a Companion without *hijra* was acceptable so that he would be in a better position to push the case of Mu'awiya.

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'Abd Allah b. 'Umar, according to his own account, loosened his garment in order to speak up and tell Mu'awiya that those who had fought his father Abu Sufyan on behalf of Islam were more worthy of 'this matter' than he. But then he kept silent, fearing that his words might divide the Community, cause bloodshed and be used to misrepresent his views. God's promise of paradise was dearer to him than that. After he left for his residence, Mu'awiya's counsellor HabTb b. Maslama visited him and asked him why he had not responded to Mu'awiya's challenge, and Ibn 'Umar told him the reason. Hablb commented: 'You have protected yourself.'⁴¹⁴

Ibn 'Umar's claim to have kept silent out of concern for the concord of the Community would have been more credible if he had remained in Medina. After he had accepted Mu'awiya's invitation and thus admitted his interest in the caliphate, his silence at the disparagement of his father's memory was a distinct display of cowardice. Where Mu'awiya's carrot had failed to work, his big stick did so. The son of the imposing Commander of the Faithful was intimidated. He made his case, if anything, worse, by hinting that he had gone to Syria only at the behest of his sister Hafsa. His father had evidently been right in judging him unfit for the caliphate on the grounds that he could not even divorce his wife.

Yet in Ibn 'Umar's defence it must be added that HabTb b. Maslama's allusion to his having saved his own life by keeping silent was realistic. Mu'awiya was now assured that Ibn 'Umar did not pose a threat to him and ceased to view him as a potential opponent. Not that otherwise Mu'awiya would have touched him at this time. But later, when he made arrangements for his son YazTd to succeed, he might well have murdered Ibn 'Umar as a precaution, as he murdered others who might stand in his son's way. His judgement was right; Ibn 'Umar quickly pledged allegiance to YazTd and pressed his sons to do so.⁴¹⁵ He realized that times had changed since the beginning of 'AIT's reign when he could with impunity insist on a *shurd* before he would do homage. At that time he had not been worried that his action might cause further division in the Community.

For Mu'awiya, Adhruh was a distinct success even though the Islamic aristocracy had failed to recognize his claim to the caliphate. He had demonstrated to his Syrian followers that this religious aristocracy was

⁴¹⁴ TabarT, I, 3343; Bukhari, *Sahih, Maghazt*, XXIX. Al-ZuhrT preferred to omit Mu'awiya's boastful claim to be more worthy of the caliphate than 'Umar and his son (TabarT, I, 3343). Caetani identified 'Umar's daughter and Mother of the Faithful Hafsa as 'AIT's wife and presumably on that basis tried to discredit the report as pro-'Alid (*Annali*, X, 423). There is nothing pro-'Alid in it, nor is there any reason to doubt that it goes back to Ibn 'Umar. Quite unrealistic is Caetani's suggestion that Ibn 'Umar could easily have won general backing if he had more actively intrigued on his own behalf.

⁴¹⁵ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqdt*, IV/1, 134.

politically impotent and irrelevant. In the future they would not even be consulted in important affairs of state any more. The Syrians were jubilant about his and 'Amr's conduct. Mu'awiya's court poet Ka'b b. Ju'ayl celebrated 'Amr's primitive stratagem as the victory of Luqman's proverbial wisdom over the trickery of Abu Musa who was trying to cheat Mu'awiya out of his inheritance from Muhammad.⁵³⁰

In the last two years of 'All's reign the Inter-Muslim War deteriorated into its final, most vicious stage. The initiative was now with the Umayyad. In spite of the serious disarray on 'All's side, Mu'awiya, while asserting that his opponent had been deposed and he had been recognized as the sole caliph in the arbitration, did not dare to mount an all-out offensive and anxiously avoided even minor engagements with the enemy army. In order to reinforce his claim to the universal rule of the Muslims, he rather relied on surprise attacks on the civilian population, killing those who would not recognize him as caliph, looting and ravaging. The purpose was to undermine 'All's reign by terrorizing and intimidating his subjects in concert with his campaign of bribery among the tribal chiefs in 'All's army. The early historians referred to these attacks collectively as 'the raids (*gharat*)'. Al-TabarT reported them, except for the last one, that of Busr b. AbT Artah in the Hijaz and Yemen, under the year 39/659-60.⁵³¹ Those that can be dated took place in fact either earlier or in the year 40/660-1. There seems to have been a relative lull in activity in 39/659—60, though some of the undatable events presumably occurred during that year.

The first of the raids, that of al-Dahhak b. Qays, had, as described, occurred at the end of the year 37/May-June 658. The second one was probably that of the AnsarT al-Nu'man b. BashTr.⁵³² Mu'awiya had earlier, even before SiffTn, sent him together with Abu Hurayra on a propaganda mission to 'AIT to ask for the surrender of the killers of 'Uthman. 'AIT had at that time confronted al-Nu'man and questioned him as to why he was one of the three or four Ansar breaking ranks with his people and opposing him. Al-Nu'man appears to have been embarrassed by this direct question and answered that he was merely hoping to bring about a peace between 'AIT and Mu'awiya and would, if 'AIT saw otherwise, stay with him. When Abu Hurayra returned empty-handed to Syria, al-Nu'man remained with 'AIT for a month⁵³³ pretending to be on his side, but then

⁵³⁰ MinqarT, *Waq'at Siffin*, 549. ⁵³¹ TabarT, I, 3444-8.

⁵³² Al-BaladhurT enumerates al-Nu'man's raid as the third one after that of Sufyan b.'Awf but states that according to some his raid occurred before Sufyan's (*Ansab*, II, 447).

⁵³³ The accounts of al-Thaqafi (*Gharat*, 447) and al-Baladhuri (*Ansab*, II, 445) speak of several months (*ashhuran*). This is not possible, since al-Nu'man was with the Syrians in the battle of SiffTn. Ibn Abi I-Haddl's parallel account (*Shark*, II, 302) gives one month (*shahran*).

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fled clandestinely. At 'Ayn al-Tamr he was seized, however, by the governor, Malik b. Ka'b al-Arhabl, who intended at first to seek instructions from 'AIT about what to do with him. As al-Nu'man implored him not to inform 'AIT, Malik consulted the Ansari Qaraza b. Ka'b who was collecting the land tax nearby for 'AIT. Qaraza suggested that he let him quietly escape. Malik now gave al-Nu'man two days to disappear and threatened to cut his head off if he found him thereafter.

When Mu'awiya, two or three months after the raid of al-Dahhak b. Qays,⁵³⁴ asked for a volunteer to attack along the bank of the Euphrates, al-Nu'man came forward, evidently eager to take revenge on Malik b. Ka'b. Mu'awiya gave him a detachment of two thousand men and instructed him to avoid the towns and large assemblies of men, not to attack any garrison (*maslaha*),⁵³⁵ to raid the people along the bank of the Euphrates and to return quickly. Al-Nu'man approached 'Ayn al-Tamr, where Malik b. Ka'b was in command of a garrison of a thousand men. Since most of these were on leave in Kufa, and only a hundred⁵³⁶ men remained with him, Malik asked Mikhnaf b. Sulaym al-AzdT, who was in charge of tax collection along the Euphrates up to the territory of Bakr b. Wa'il, for assistance. Mikhnaf sent his son 'Abd al-Rahman or 'Abd Allah with fifty men. They arrived in the evening as Malik and his men were barely holding back the Syrian attack on 'Ayn al-Tamr. The Syrians thought large enemy reinforcements were arriving and withdrew. Malik pursued them, and one of his men and three Syrians were killed. 'AIT is said to have sent 'AdT b. Hatim al-Ta'T to track down al-Nu'man; 'AdT almost reached QinnasrTn before turning back.⁵³⁷

At an unknown date Mu'awiya sent Zuhayr b. Makhul of the Banu 'Amir al-Ajdar of Kalb to the desert of al-Samawa west of the Euphrates to collect the alms-tax there. Most of the nomads in this region were of Kalb, and Mu'awiya, who had a marriage alliance with Kalb, evidently hoped to extend his sway over them. When 'AIT learned of this, he sent three men, Ja'far b. 'Abd Allah al-AshjaT, 'Urwa⁵³⁸ b. al-'Ushba of 'Abd Wadd of Kalb and al-Julas b. 'Umayr of the Banu 'AdT b. Janab of Kalb, acting as the scribe, to collect the alms-tax from the Kalb and Bakr b. Wa'il obeying him. They met Zuhayr in the territory of Kalb, fought with

⁵³⁴ Reading *ba'da dhalik* in the account of al-ThaqafT, *Gharat* 499, and Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, II, 303, for *qabla dhalik* which makes no sense. Alternatively *dhalik* would have to be understood as referring to al-Nu'man's actual raid rather than al-Dahhak's. If al-Nu'man's raid is to be dated two or three months after that of al-Dahhak, it occurred around Rab. I or Rab. II 38/Aug.-Sept. 658.

⁵³⁵ Thus the text in al-BaladhurT, *Ansb*, II, 447. According to the text of al-ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 449, Mu'awiya rather ordered him to attack only garrisons.

⁵³⁶ According to al-ThaqafT's account only thirty.

⁵³⁷ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 445-8; TabarT, I, 3444-5; ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 445-59.

⁵³⁸ In al-ThaqafT's account (*Ghardt*, 461-2) he is named 'Amr rather than 'Urwa.

him, and were defeated. Ja'far b. 'Abd Allah was killed and al-Julus escaped. Ibn al-'Ushba returned to 'AIT and was accused by him of cowardice and running away out of partisanship for his Kalbite tribesman Zuhayr; in his anger 'AIT hit him with his whip (*dirra*). Zuhayr had in fact put Ibn al-'Ushba on a horse after having defeated him. When Ibn al-'Ushba defected and joined Mu'awiya, 'AIT had his house destroyed. Al-Julus eventually returned to Kufa, having exchanged his silk jubbah for the woollen garment of a shepherd.⁵³⁹

This success among the Kalb of al-Samawa may have encouraged Mu'awiya to seek to bring the Kalb of Dumat al-Jandal under his rule also. These had so far abstained from pledging allegiance to either 'AIT or Mu'awiya. The latter now sent Muslim b. 'Uqba al-Murri to summon them to his obedience and to pay their alms-tax to him. They resisted, however, and Muslim laid siege to the oasis. 'AIT recalled Malik b. Ka'b from 'Ayn al-Tamr, ordering him to appoint a deputy commander of the garrison, and sent him with a thousand horsemen to Dumat al-Jandal. They took Muslim by surprise, and there was some inconclusive fighting. The next day the Syrians left. Malik b. Ka'b stayed for a few days, summoning the inhabitants to allegiance to 'AIT. They insisted, however, that they would not pledge allegiance until all the people agreed on an imam, and Malik departed without pressing them.⁵⁴⁰

The Syrian raids on Mesopotamia and Iraq having had little success, Mu'awiya decided to test the ground in the Hijaz. Probably in the year 39/659—60⁵⁴¹ he dispatched 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ada b. Hakama al-FazarT with one thousand seven hundred men to Tayma' with instructions to collect the alms-tax from the bedouin Arabs whom he passed, to take the pledge of allegiance for Mu'awiya from those who obeyed, and to put those who refused to the sword. From Tayma' he was to proceed to Medina and Mekka, doing the same and reporting every day on his actions and plans. A large number of his people of Fazara joined him. When 'AIT learned of this, he ordered al-Musayyab b. Najaba al-FazarT to pursue Ibn Mas'ada with a strong force. Al-Musayyab was also joined by a large number of his kinsmen of Fazara. He moved via al-Janab to Tayma' where he caught up with Ibn Mas'ada. They engaged in battle^{5W} BaladhurT,

Ansab, II, 465-6.

⁵⁴⁰ *ibid.*, 467; ThaqafT, *Ghardt*, 462-4. "All and his sons al-Hasan and al-Husayn had married daughters of Imru' ul-Qays b. 'AdT b. Aws al-KalbT during the caliphate of 'Umar (Baladhuri, *Ansdb*, II, 194-5; see also excursus 7). Imru' ul-Qays seems to have been the chief of the Kalb in Dumat al-Jandal at this time (see the editor's note in ThaqafT, *Ghdrat*, 815-7).

⁵⁴¹ Al-Tabari (I, 3446) gives the date as the year 39/659—60. It is, in any case, unlikely that Mu'awiya would have ordered a raid on Medina and Mekka before Adhruh. The raid, on the other hand, probably took place before the dispute about the leadership of the pilgrimage of the year 39/April 660.

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immediately, and fought until nightfall. Al-Musayyab struck Ibn Mas'ada three times, wounding him, but intentionally did not kill his tribal brother and encouraged him to escape. Ibn Mas'ada and some of his men sought shelter in the fortress of Tayma', while the rest of them fled headlong to Syria. The camels they had gathered as alms-tax were looted by bedouins. The men in the fortress were besieged for three days. Then firewood was piled up around the wall and kindled. Threatened by perdition, the besieged men of Fazara looked down on al-Musayyab, calling: 'Musayyab, your people!' Al-Musayyab ordered the fire to be extinguished and arranged for their escape during the night.⁴¹⁶ 'Abd al-Rahman b. ShabTb al-Fazarl suggested to al-Musayyab that they be pursued. When al-Musayyab refused, Ibn ShabTb accused him of having cheated the Commander of the Faithful in favour of the enemy.

'AIT, according to al-BaladhurT's account, confined al-Musayyab for some days and reproached him for unduly protecting his people.⁴¹⁷ Al-Musayyab apologized, and the Kufan nobles interceded on his behalf. 'AIT tied him, however, to a pillar in the mosque or, according to others, imprisoned him. Then he called and forgave him, and entrusted him jointly with 'Abd al-Rahman b. Muhammad al-Kindl with the collection of the alms-tax in Kufa. After a time he investigated their accounts and found nothing against them. He now praised both men highly.⁴¹⁸

After these failures of his attempts to expand his sway in Arabia, Mu'awiya hoped to use the pilgrimage at the end of the year 39/April-May 660 for gaining recognition as the legitimate caliph in Mekka. Mekka, the home town of Quraysh who had been the first to oppose 'AIT, would be, he

⁴¹⁶ According to the account of al-Baladhuri, 'Abd al-Rahman b. Asma' al-Fazari, who had valiantly fought the Syrians before, now let them escape through a breach in the wall and on to the road to Syria.

⁴¹⁷ 'All had presumably little sympathy for 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ada al-Fazari in particular. The latter had as a boy been among the captives of the Muslims from Fazara and had been given by Muhammad as a slave to Fatima. She had manumitted him, and he had been brought up by her and 'All. He joined Mu'awiya, however, fought for him at SiffTn, and is said to have become one of the most vigorous enemies of 'AIT (Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, XIV, 41).

⁴¹⁸ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 449-51; TabarT, I, 3446-7. Al-TabarT (I, 3447) quotes a further report of al-Waqidl and Abu Ma'shar on the authority of the Mekkan Ibn AbT Mulayka (d. 118/736), according to which Mu'awiya himself went forth, and reached the river Tigris in the year 39/659-60 before turning back. Caetani considered this report, in spite of its meagreness in detail, as of great importance in proving the new ardour and strength of Mu'awiya who could move across the whole of Mesopotamia without a blow being struck and the impotence of 'AIT whose dominion was confined to the environs of Kufa and *perhaps* Basra and Fars (*Annali*, X, 289-90). It is safe to assume that the report is false and reflects the ignorance of the HijazT tradition about Syria and Iraq in this period. The Kufan tradition knows nothing about such a move by Mu'awiya. Given his extreme caution with respect to his personal safety, it is hardly conceivable that he would suddenly have exposed himself to such danger.

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assumed, more inclined to co-operate with him than Medina and other parts of Arabia. He secretly summoned YazTd b. Shajara of Madhhij, one of his northern Syrian army leaders. YazTd was known as a pious worshipper and, firmly 'Uthmanid, had fought for Mu'awiya at SiffTn. Mu'awiya confided to him that he was sending him to the Sanctuary of God and to his own tribe, 'my protected homeland (*baydati*) which has split from me'. Its governor was, he asserted, 'one of those who killed 'Uthman and shed his blood' and in overthrowing him there would be 'satisfaction for me and you' and an act pleasing to God; YazTd should move to Mekka where he would find the people in the pilgrimage season. He should summon them to obedience to Mu'awiya; if they accepted, he should keep his hands off them, but if they refused, he should declare war on them (*nabidhhum*); he should not fight them, however, before making clear to them that he was acting on the orders of Mu'awiya, for Mu'awiya considered them as his own root and tribe and preferred their survival; then he should pray with the people and take charge of the pilgrimage season.⁴¹⁹

Qutham b. al-'Abbas, 'AIT's governor of Mekka, had had no more to do with the murder of 'Uthman than had his brothers 'Abd Allah and 'Ubayd Allah. The latter's infant sons were to be murdered by Busr b. AbT Artah under Mu'awiya's instructions soon thereafter. The official Umayyad propaganda line that the Banu Hashim were collectively guilty of the murder of 'Uthman was now paying dividends. Although duped by it, YazTd b. Shajara nevertheless had misgivings about the use of violence in the Sanctuary during the Holy Month of the pilgrimage. He told Mu'awiya that he was prepared to proceed only if he were given a free hand to act at his own discretion in bringing about a peaceful accord; if Mu'awiya would be satisfied with nothing but violence (*ghashm*), the use of the sword and terrorizing the innocent, he should look for someone else. Mu'awiya pulled back and assured him that he fully trusted his views and conduct. He gave him an army of three thousand men, who were not informed of the aim of their mission before leaving Syria. They moved via Wadi 1-Qura and al-Juhfa, bypassing hostile Medina, and reached Mekka on 10 Dhu 1-Hijja/27 April.

When Qutham b. al-'Abbas learned that the Syrians had reached al-Juhfa, he addressed the Mekkans, informing them of the threat and asking them to speak out openly whether they were prepared to resist them together with him. As no one spoke at first, he declared that they had made their intentions clear and descended from the pulpit, ready to leave the town. Then Shayba b. 'Uthman b. AbT Talha of 'Abd al-Dar, who was

⁴¹⁹ Thaqafi, *Ghardt*, 504—5.

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in charge of the office of Doorkeeper (*hijaba*) of the Ka'ba,⁵⁴⁵ stood up and assured him that the people were behind him and the caliph, his cousin, and would obey his orders. Qutham, however, had no faith in them and insisted that he would leave Mekka to hide in a ravine. Then the AnsarT Abu Said al-Khudri, a personal friend of Qutham, arrived from Medina and urged the governor not to leave, since he had learned from the pilgrims arriving in Medina from Iraq that the Kufans were expediting a detachment with Ma'qil b. Qays al-Riyahl to Mekka. Qutham showed Abu Sa'Td a letter from 'AIT in which he informed him that he had been notified by a spy that the enemy was sending a troop to Mekka to interfere with the pilgrimage. 'AIT was sending Ma'qil b. Qays in order to chase them out of the Hijaz and urged Qutham to remain steadfast in adversity until he arrived. When Abu Sa'Td had read the letter, Qutham told him that this letter was of no benefit to him since he had learned that the Syrian horse troops would precede Ma'qil, who would not be arriving before the pilgrimage was over. Abu Sa'Td nonetheless kept urging him to stay on and thus to earn the appreciation of his imam and the people. The enemy would certainly hesitate to assault the Sanctuary whose inviolability had ever been observed in the Jahiliyya and Islam. Qutham decided to stay.

When YazTd b. Shajara arrived in Mekka, he ordered a herald to proclaim to the people that all would be safe except those who attempted to interfere in 'our work and authority'. Quraysh, Ansar, Companions and pious people all hastened to bring about a peaceful accord between the two sides. Both were in fact gratified by their efforts - Qutham because he did not trust the Mekkans, and YazTd because he was a man inclined to ascetic worship who was loath to commit evil in the Sanctuary. YazTd addressed the Mekkans suggesting that he had been sent to pray with the people, order the proper and prohibit the reprehensible. He realized that the governor disliked what he had come for and was loath to pray with him, while he and his men hated to pray with the governor. If Qutham agreed both of them should forgo the leadership of the prayers and leave the choice of a prayer leader to the people of Mekka. If Qutham refused, however, he would refuse too, and, he added ominously, he was in a position to carry him off to Syria since there was no one to protect him. He asked Abu Sa'Td al-Khudri to act as a go-between, and Qutham readily agreed. The people chose Shayba b. 'Uthman as their imam, and he prayed with them; YazTd then speedily departed. Ma'qil's horsemen arrived after the pilgrimage was over, were informed of the departure of the Syrians, and pursued them. At Wadi 1-Qura they captured ten of them who had tarried while the others left. YazTd b. Shajara was informed

⁵⁴⁶ The Banu 'Abd al-Dar were traditionally in charge of the office of Doorkeeper of the Ka'ba while the Banu Hashim were in charge of providing the pilgrims with water (*siqaya*).

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but would not turn back to give battle. Ma'qil returned via Dumat al-Jandal to Kufa with his captives.⁵⁴⁷

Mu'awiya was now under pressure from his followers to seek the release of the ten prisoners. He instructed al-Harith b. Numayr al-T anukhT, who had been the commander of the vanguard of YazTd b. Shajara's army, to invade Upper Mesopotamia and to seize some of 'AIT's partisans. Al-Harith moved via SiffTn to the region of Dara; from there he carried off eight men of Taghlib loyal to 'AIT. Some men of Taghlib who had earlier defected from 'AIT's side to join Mu'awiya now asked for their release. When Mu'awiya refused, they renounced their obedience to him also. A chief of Taghlib loyal to 'AIT, 'Utba b. al-Wa'l, gathered his men and, crossing the Euphrates at Jisr Manbij, attacked Syrian territory, seizing much booty. He addressed a defiant poem to Mu'awiya, proudly proclaiming that he had raided just like the son of Sakhr had done. Mu'awiya sent to 'AIT proposing an exchange of their captives, and 'AIT agreed.⁵⁴⁸

After this exchange 'AIT thought that Mu'awiya would abstain from further raids. About a month later, however, Mu'awiya mounted a much more serious assault by sending Sufyan b. 'Awf b. al-Mughaffal al-AzdT al-GhamidT to al-Anbar.⁵⁴⁹ According to Sufyan's own account, Mu'awiya called him and told him that he was sending him with a strong army to raid along the bank of the Euphrates. Sufyan was to cross the river at HTt. If he found a garrison there, he should attack them. Otherwise he should move on to al-Anbar and, if he did not encounter enemy troops there, proceed to al-Mada'in and then turn back. He should not get close to Kufa. If he attacked al-Anbar and al-Mada'in, this would have the same effect as attacking Kufa and would instil fear in the hearts of the people of Iraq and embolden those inclining towards the Syrians. Mu'awiya instructed Sufyan to invite all those fearing attacks to join the Syrians, to destroy the villages he passed by, to kill all he met who did not agree with his opinion, and to loot property, for that was similar to killing and most painful to the heart.⁵⁵⁰

Sufyan found HTt, on the west bank of the Euphrates, deserted by its garrison and inhabitants, who had learned of his approach and had crossed over to the east bank. He passed by Sandawda' on the west bank, which was equally deserted, and moved on to al-Anbar on the east side. The people there had also been warned, and the commander of the

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 504-12; BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, 11,461-4; Ibn A'tham, *Futuh*, IV, 38[^]5; TabarT, 1,3448.

⁵⁴⁸ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 469—70; Ibn A'tham, *Futuh*, IV, 45—7; Ibn al-AthTr, *Kdmil*, III, 319. According to the account of Ibn A'tham, 'AIT, rather than Mu'awiya, took the initiative in seeking the exchange.

⁵⁴⁹ Ibn A'tham, *Futuh*, IV, 47. On the basis of this report the raid of Sufyan b. 'Awf is to be dated in summer of the year 40/660. ⁵⁵⁰ ThaqafT, *Ghdrat*, 464-7.

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garrison, Ashras b. Hassan al-Bakri, had moved out to meet him. Sufyan questioned some boys of the town about the strength of the garrison and learned that there were five hundred men, but that many of them were dispersed. He now ordered an attack on foot, to be followed immediately by cavalry. Aware of the superior enemy force, Ashras had given his remaining men the choice of joining him in a fight to death or leaving under cover of those choosing to resist. He was killed together with some thirty of his men. Sufyan had the town thoroughly looted, tearing anklets from women's legs and necklaces from their necks, and then speedily left for Syria without proceeding to al-Mada'in. In his own account he proudly stated that he had never carried out a cleaner (*aslam*) and more pleasing raid. Mu'awiya had praised him highly and assured him that he would appoint him to any office he desired. He concluded his account with the remark that it was not long before the people of Iraq came in droves fleeing to Syria.⁴²⁰

'All was, according to Abu Mikhnaf, informed about the raid on al-Anbar by a local peasant *Cilji*). He appealed from the pulpit to the Kufans to avenge the death of Ashras and drive the enemy out of Iraq. As there was no immediate response, he walked on foot to al-Nukhayla, followed by the people and a group of chiefs (*ashraf*). They promised him that they would take care of the enemy for him. Though not convinced of their sincerity, he returned to Kufa and ordered Saïd b. Qays al-Hamdani to pursue the Syrians with eight thousand men, having been given to understand that the enemy army was massive. The delay caused by assembling such a strong army may have aided Sufyan to escape untouched. Saïd b. Qays moved along the Euphrates and reached 'Anat. From there he dispatched Hani' b. al-Khattab al-Hamdani with a detachment. The latter tracked the enemy as far as the region of Qinnasrin but did not catch up with them. When Saïd b. Qays returned to Kufa without success, 'Ali was ill. He wrote an angry letter to be read to the Kufans in which he severely castigated them for their failure to respond to his call for *jihad*. This, he complained, exposed him to talk of Quraysh and others that 'Ali was a brave man but knew nothing about warfare.⁴²¹

The commander of the garrison of HT was Kumayl b. Ziyad al-Nakha'i, an early Shi'ite supporter of 'Ali. He had left his post at the time of Sufyan's raid with most of his men and gone in the direction of Qarqisiya because he had been informed that people had assembled there intending to attack HT, and he wanted to strike them first. When Sufyan approached HT, the inhabitants and remaining fifty men of the garrison, as noted,

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, 468. ⁵⁵² *Ibid.*, 464-82; Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 441-3; Tabari, I, 3445-6.
in Khurasan in the late Umayyad age (Baladhuri, *Ansab*, 11,469; Ibn A'tham, *Futuh*, IV,

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abandoned the town, crossing the river to the east bank. 'All wrote him a stern letter reprimanding him for dereliction of his duty and refused to accept his excuses. He left him, however, in his post. Not long afterwards Kumayl received a note from Shablb b. 'Amir al-Azdl⁴²² from NasTbn notifying him that, according to the information of a spy, Mu'awiya was sending 'Abd al-Rahman b. Qabath b. Ashyam al-KinanT⁴²³ in the direction of Upper Mesopotamia. ShabTb did not know whether the raid was directed towards Naslbn or the Euphrates region and HTt. Kumayl saw a chance to recover the favour of 'AIT and immediately set out with four hundred horsemen to meet the raiders, leaving his six hundred foot soldiers in HTt. He was advised to seek instructions from 'AIT but refused, in order to avoid delay. Ibn Qabath, he learned, had passed al-Raqqā in the direction of Ra's al-'Ayn and had reached Kafartutha. Kumayl rode speedily to Kafartutha where he hit upon Ibn Qabath and Ma'n b. YazTd al-SulamT with two thousand four hundred Syrians. He evidently took them by surprise and scattered their army killing a large number while losing two of his men. Afraid that they might reassemble for another attack, he forbade pursuing the enemy in order to keep his men together. When ShabTb b. 'Amir arrived from NasibTn with six hundred horsemen and foot soldiers, he found that Kumayl had already routed the raiders, and congratulated him.⁴²⁴ ShabTb went on to pursue the Syrians and to invade Syrian territory. He crossed the Euphrates at Jisr Manbij and sent his cavalry to attack the region of Ba'labakk. When Mu'awiya ordered HabTb b. Maslama to meet ShabTb, the latter withdrew and raided the region of al-Raqqā, where he looted cattle, horses and weapons. 'AIT sent letters to Kumayl and ShabTb, praising them and commending their action. He instructed ShabTb, however, not to loot cattle and personal property except for horses and weapons.⁴²⁵

In the year after al-Nahrawan, 'AIT was also faced with the hostile activity of a number of Kharijite splinter groups. Al-BaladhurT mentions five such rebel groups and gives the dates of their defeat. They were small bands which posed no serious military threat but were deeply determined to follow the example of their brethren killed at al-Nahrawan and to seek martyrdom for what they saw as their righteous cause. The first rebel group of two hundred men was led by Ashras b. 'Awf al-ShaybanT. He had evidently belonged to the Kharijites who withdrew just before the fighting at al-Nahrawan to al-Daskara. From there he now made an approach towards al-Anbar. 'All sent al-Abrash b. Hassan with three hundred men against him, and Ashras was killed in RabT' I 38/August- September 658.⁴²⁶

Next came the rebellion of Hilal b. 'Alqama and his brother Mujalid of Taym al-Ribab. They moved with over two hundred men east to Masa- badhan,

5°).

⁴²³ On 'Abd al-Rahman's father Qabath b. Ashyam see Caskel, *Gamharat an-nasab*, II, index s.v.

sss According to the account of Ibn A'tham (*Futuh*, IV, 50-2), ShabTb and Kumayl rather joined forces before the battle and then defeated the Syrians. ShabTb lost four of his men.

⁴²⁵ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 473-6.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*, 481. ⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 482. ⁵⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 483. ⁵⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 484.

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summoning others to their cause. Against them 'AIT sent Ma'qil b. Qays al-Riyahl, who killed all the rebels in Jumada 138/October 658.⁵⁵⁸ Then followed the rising of the Kufan al-Ashhab (or al-Ash'ath) b. BashTr al-QaranT of BajTla with a hundred and thirty (or a hundred and eighty) men. He retraced the tracks of Hilal b. 'Alqama, performed prayers for him on the battlefield where he had been killed, and buried the dead whom he still found. 'AIT dispatched Jariya b. Qudama or Hujr b. 'AdT after him. Al-Ashhab and his followers were killed at Jarjaraya in Jumada II 38/November 658.⁵⁵⁹ Sa'Td (or Sa'd) b. Qafal al-Tayml of Taym Allah b. Tha'laba b. 'Ukaba of RabT'a mounted an uprising in al-BandanTjayn with two hundred followers. As he moved towards al-Mada'in, 'AIT instructed his governor there, Sa'd b. Mas'ud al-ThaqafT, to take action against them. The governor met the rebels at Qantarat al-DarzTjan, and Ibn Qafal and his men were killed in Rajab 38/December 658.⁵⁶⁰

Abu Maryam al-Sa'dT of Sa'd TamTm had, as noted, left the Kharijite battle lines before the fighting at al-Nahrawan together with two hundred men. He made his way to Shahrazur where he stayed for several months, inciting his followers to revenge for the martyrs of al-Nahrawan and successfully summoning others to the Kharijite cause. Then he moved with a following of four hundred men to al-Mada'in and from there on towards Kufa. His followers were mostly clients and non-Arabs (*Qajam*). According to al-Mada'ini, the only Arabs among them, aside from himself, were five men of the Banu Sa'd. As they approached Kufa, 'AIT sent a message to him suggesting that he pledge allegiance to him, 'AIT, on the basis that he could enter Kufa and join those who would not fight either for or against him. Abu Maryam answered that there could be nothing between them but war. 'AIT now sent Shurayh b. Hani' with seven hundred men against the rebels. Shurayh repeated 'AIT's offer to Abu Maryam and received the reply: 'You enemies of God, shall we pledge allegiance to 'AIT and stay among you while your imam oppresses us? You have killed 'Abd Allah b. Wahb, Zayd b. Hisn, Hurqus b. Zuhayr, and our righteous brethren.' Then the rebels shouted their battle cry 'No judgment but God's' and attacked. Shurayh's army turned to

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flee, and he withdrew with two hundred men to a nearby village. Some of his other men rejoined him there, while the rest returned to Kufa where rumours spread that Shurayh had been killed. 'AIT now went forth himself. He sent Jariya b. Qudama with five hundred men as his vanguard and followed him with another two thousand. When Jariya came face to face with his tribesman Abu Maryam, he addressed him: 'Woe to you, are you pleased with exposing yourself to being killed with these slaves? By God, when they feel the pain of iron, they will abandon you.' Abu Maryam answered: 'We have heard a wondrous Qur'an which guides to the right path. We believe in it and shall not associate any partner with our Lord.' Then 'AIT arrived and invited them once more to pledge allegiance. They refused and attacked him, wounding a number of his men. Then they were killed, except for fifty of them who asked for a letter of safety and were granted it; another forty were found wounded. 'AIT ordered them to be taken to Kufa and to be treated there; then he allowed them to go to any country they wished. The battle took place in Ramadan 38/February 659.⁴²⁷ No further Kharijite revolts are recorded during 'AIT's reign.

The last months before 'AIT's assassination in Ramadan 40/January 661 were marked by a renewed intensification of the conflict with Mu'awiya. 'AIT was as intent as ever on undertaking another campaign against the Umayyad in Syria and seems to have found sufficient backing to plan it for the spring. Partly perhaps in order to forestall this attack by opening a second front, Mu'awiya expedited a major force under Busr b. AbT Artah to the Hijaz and Yemen.⁴²⁸

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*, 485-6.

⁴²⁸ Al-Tabari, in contrast, reported the conclusion of a truce between 'All and Mu'awiya, after a lengthy exchange of letters, in the year 40/660-1, according to which 'All was to keep Iraq and Mu'awiya Syria (Tabari, I, 3452-3). The report, attributed to the Kufan Abu Ishaq al-SabTT, is obviously untenable since 'All was killed when Busr was still raiding Arabia. Caetani, however, considered it 'absolutely secure' and argued that it proved how deeply the disgraced 'AIT had fallen, who now was forced to accept the 'good reasons' of Mu'awiya for not recognizing him as caliph. 'All's renunciation of his previous pretences, according to Caetani, thus constituted his moral suicide, making it reasonable that one of his followers, disgusted with the man, would have assassinated him (*Annali*, X, 329-30). It is difficult to see why the truce would have been less discreditable for Mu'awiya, who would have had to renounce his noble claim of revenge for the wronged caliph at a time when he, according to Caetani, could freely move across Iraq without meeting any resistance. According to Abu Ishaq's report, it was Mu'awiya who proposed the truce to 'AIT.

Wellhausen suggested that 'Abu Ishaq' in the *isnad* of the report should be read Ibn Ishaq and that the truce, concluded early in the year 40/660, was subsequently broken by 'AIT when Mu'awiya adopted the title caliph and received the pledge of allegiance of the Syrians in Jerusalem (*Das arabische Reich*, 64). In reality Mu'awiya had claimed the title caliph long before and had been acclaimed as such by the Syrians. 'AIT could hardly have taken the formal ceremony in Jerusalem as an issue over which to break the truce.

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The early Kufan historian Abu Rawq al-Hamdanl described the background of Busr b. AbT Artah's raid as follows: in the Yemen the partisans of 'Uthman (*shfat 'Uthman*) after his murder were at first leaderless and disorganized, and pledged allegiance to 'All. 'All's governor of San'a' was at that time 'Ubayd Allah b. al-'Abbas and his governor of al-Janad Sa'id b. Nimran al-Hamdan! al-Na'itl.⁵⁶³ As matters were turning against 'AIT - Muhammad b. AbT Bakr having been killed in Egypt and the Syrians carrying out regular raids on 'AIT's territories - the 'Uthmaniyya in the Yemen also raised their heads, demanding revenge for the blood of 'Uthman, and withheld their alms-tax. 'Ubayd Allah wrote to some of their leaders questioning them about their new conduct, but they answered defiantly that they had always disapproved of the murder of 'Uthman and wished to fight those who had revolted against him. When 'Ubayd Allah imprisoned them, they wrote to their companions in al-Janad who rose against SaTd b. Nimran and expelled him from the town. The 'Uthmaniyya from San'a' joined the rebels there, as did others who did not hold their views but wanted to withhold their alms-tax.

'Ubayd Allah now consulted with SaTd b. Nimran and the partisans of 'AIT. He argued that the opponents were close to them in strength so that they could not be sure to win if they fought them. On his suggestion, the two governors wrote to 'AIT apprising him of the situation and seeking his instructions. 'AIT was angered by their inaction and sent them a stern order to invite the rebels back to obedience and, if they refused, to fight them.

According to Ibn al-KalbT, 'AIT then addressed YazTd b. Qays al-ArhabT of Hamdan, telling him reproachfully: 'Don't you see what your people are doing?' YazTd assured him that in his opinion his people were basically loyal to the Commander of the Faithful and suggested that 'AIT either send him to the Yemen to bring them into line or that he write them a letter and wait for their response. 'AIT then wrote the rebels a personal letter urging them to return to obedience, in which case they would be treated justly; but if they failed to do so, he threatened to send an army of horsemen to crush the refractory. He sent the letter with a man of Hamdan. As the rebels failed to give an answer for some time, the messenger told them that when he departed from Kufa, the Commander of the Faithful had been ready to dispatch YazTd b. Qays with a massive army. 'AIT was restrained merely by the expectation of their reaction. The 'Uthmaniyya now protested: 'We shall hear and obey if he removes these two men, 'Ubayd Allah and SaTd, from us.' The messenger returned to 'AIT and informed him of this. As it turned out, the rebels had, on hearing

⁵⁶³ It is not known when 'AIT replaced SaTd b. Sa'd b. 'Ubada as governor of al-Janad with SaTd b. Nimran.

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that 'AIT was prepared to send YazTd b. Qays, addressed a poem to Mu'awiya urging him to send quick relief, otherwise they would pledge allegiance to 'AIT. Mu'awiya immediately ordered Busr b. AbT Artah to proceed towards the Yemen.⁴²⁹

From the Syrian side, 'Abd al-Rahman b. Mas'ada al-FazarT reported the following during the caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik: as the year 40/summer 660 began, the people of Syria were telling each other that 'AIT was trying to mobilize the people of Iraq, but they would not respond to his summons since their sympathies were divided and schism prevailed among them. He, Ibn Mas'ada, and a group of Syrians thus went to see al-WalTd b. 'Uqba and told him: 'The men do not doubt that the people of Iraq are in disagreement in regard to 'AIT. Go to your companion and press him to move with us against them before they reunite after their division or the corrupt state in which their master finds himself in relation to them is repaired.' Al-WalTd assured them that he had talked to Mu'awiya again and again and had admonished and reproached him in that regard until he had become annoyed with him and disgusted by the sight of him. He swore that he would not fail to convey to him what they had come for. When he informed Mu'awiya, the latter admitted them to his presence and asked them about their concern. They told him about the mood of the people, urged him to take advantage of the situation and attack the enemy before it might change, and to move against them before they moved against him. His opponent would certainly have attacked him already were it not for the division among his men. Mu'awiya answered them gruffly that he could dispense with their opinion and their advice; when he needed them he would call upon them. He was, he said, not so eager to annihilate the people they mentioned that he would put his army at risk not knowing which side would be struck by calamity. He warned them to beware of accusing him of slowness; he was pursuing the most effective means of destroying the enemy by sending continuous raids against them; as a result the nobles (*ashraf*) of Iraq, seeing God's favour for Mu'awiya, were arriving every day on their camels, increasing the strength of the Syrians and diminishing the power of the enemy. His visitors left satisfied with the excellence of his view. Mu'awiya immediately sent for Busr b. AbT Artah, ordering him to raid Medina and Mekka and to move on as far as San'a' and al-Janad where he had partisans (*shFa*) whose letter had just arrived. As Busr reviewed his troops at Dayr Murran outside Damascus, al-WalTd b. 'Uqba grumbled: 'We have made our view clear to Mu'awiya that he should move to Kufa, but he sends an army to Medina. We are with him like the one who said: "I point out [the

⁴²⁹ Thaqafij *Gharat*, 592-8.

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dim star] al-Suha to her, and she shows me the moon.'" When this reached Mu'awiya, he was furious and commented: 'By God, I am inclined to chastize this idiot (*ahmaq*) who is no good at sound planning and understands nothing about the proper management of affairs.' But then he refrained from punishing him.⁵⁶⁵

Mu'awiya's own understanding of the proper management of affairs was revealed by his choice of Busr b. AbT Artah to lead the new raid into Arabia. The previous campaign, under the command of the pious YazTd b. Shajara, had not borne the fruits that the Umayyad caliph was seeking. YazTd had insisted on being given discretion in his conduct in order to avoid bloodshed in the Holy City and ended up losing a few of his own men as captives. Busr, Mu'awiya was sure, would not be plagued by such scruples. If he had ordered him to herd all his opponents together and burn them in the Sanctuary, he would have been pleased to comply. Mu'awiya instructed Busr to chase and intimidate the people on his way to Medina, and to loot the property of all who would not enter into Umayyad obedience. When he entered Medina, he should frighten the inhabitants into panic, threatening that they would have no pardon nor excuse with him; then, when they expected that he would kill them, he should leave off; he should terrorize and expel the people between Medina and Mekka, but should not touch the Mekkans. In San'a' he should back Mu'awiya's partisans against 'AIT's officials and supporters; he should kill whoever abstained from pledging allegiance to Mu'awiya and seize whatever he could find of their property.⁵⁶⁶ As Busr's commission became known, Ma'n b. YazTd b. al-Akhnas al-SulamT (or his brother 'Amr) and Ziyad b. al-Ashhab al-Ja'dT intervened with Mu'awiya, asking him not to give his commander authority over Qays; otherwise Busr would, they suggested, kill Qays in revenge for the Banu Fihri (Quraysh) and Kinana killed by the Banu Sulaym when Muhammad entered Mekka. Mu'awiya realized that he could not afford to ignore the wishes of these influential men and told Busr that he had no rule over Qays.⁵⁶⁷

Busr departed for Dayr Murran where he reviewed his troops. He threw out four hundred men and continued on to Arabia with two thousand six hundred. Moving towards Medina, he stopped at every watering place to seize the camels belonging to the local tribes and had his men ride them while sparing their horses, which they led along. When they reached the next watering place, they would release the camels they had and seize the fresh ones available there.

As he approached Medina, 'AIT's governor, Abu Ayyub al-AnsarT, fled

⁵⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 598-601. ⁵⁶⁶ BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, II, 453-4; ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 600.

⁵⁶⁷ A. A. Bevan (ed.)s *The Naka'id of Jarir and al-Farazdak* (Leiden, 1905-12), 716—17; *Aghdni*, IV, 131—2.

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for Kufa. Busr entered the town without resistance and delivered a blistering sermon of vituperation and menaces to the Ansar, threatening to massacre them all. Finally his kinsman and stepfather, Huwaytib b. 'Abd al-'Uzza al-'Amiri, intervened by ascending the pulpit to him and implored him: 'These are your people and the Helpers of the Messenger of God, not the killers of 'Uthman.' Fortunately Busr remembered his master's voice and calmed down. He summoned the people to pledge allegiance to Mu'awiya and burned the houses of the fugitives Zurara b. Jarwal of the Banu 'Amr b. 'Awf, Rifa'a b. Rafi' al-Zuraql, 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd of 'Abd al-Ashhal and Abu Ayyub al-Ansari. When the Banu Salima came to offer their pledge, he questioned them about Jabir b. 'Abd Allah, who had gone into hiding, and threatened them with collective punishment if they failed to bring him along. Jabir, under pressure from his people, sought the advice of Umm Salama, the Mother of the Faithful favourably disposed to 'AIT. She urged him to pledge allegiance to save his own and his people's blood. She assured him that she had asked her own nephew⁴³⁰ to pledge allegiance even though she knew that it was a pledge of misguidance (*bay'at daldla*).⁵⁶⁹ When Busr left the Medinans a few days later, he told them that he had pardoned them although they were not worthy of it; he hoped that God would have no mercy on them in the hereafter. He appointed Abu Hurayra to rule them in his absence and warned them not to oppose him.

From Medina Busr moved on to Mekka, killing and looting on the way. This time 'All's governor of the Holy City, Qutham b. al-'Abbas, fled immediately, and there was a mass exodus of the inhabitants. Those remaining behind chose Shayba b. 'Uthman al-'Abdarl, who had been acceptable to Yazid b. Shajara, as their amir. A delegation of Qurayshites came out to meet Busr. He reviled them and assured them that if he were left to act in accordance with his own inclination, he would not leave a living soul of them walking on earth. They begged him to have mercy on his own people and tribe, and he said no more.

In Mekka Busr murdered several descendants of Abu Lahab.⁴³¹ He probably did not consider this a violation of Mu'awiya's instruction not to touch the Mekkans, since the caliph had evidently also ordered him to kill every Hashimite on whom he could lay his hands as they were collectively guilty of the murder of 'Uthman. The unfortunate descendants of Muhammad's uncle, cursed together with his wife in the Qur'an, after the victory of Islam had thrown in their lot with their clan Hashim without

⁴³⁰ So according to Jabir's own report (Thaqafi, *Ghadrat*, 606). According to "Awana's son-in-law 'Abd Allah b. Zam'a (b. al-Aswad of Asad Quraysh) to pledge allegiance (Tabari, I, 2451). ⁵⁶⁹ Thaqafi, *Ghadrat*, 603—6. ⁵⁷⁰ *Agham*, X, 45.

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being fully accepted by them; now they became the first victims, as the *taliqs*, their pre-Islamic allies, took over to rule in the name of Islam. The sources, reticent about the fate of this branch of Muhammad's kin, do not even identify them individually. Was the poet al-'Abbas b. 'Utba, who had so aptly answered al-WalTd b. 'Uqba's attack on 'Amr b. al-'As, among them?

In Mekka Abu Musa al-Ash'arT had gone into hiding, but was discovered and brought before Busr. He had written a letter to the Yemenites warning them that Mu'awiya was sending a cavalry troop that put to death anyone refusing 'to affirm [the result of] the arbitration (*man aba an yuqirra bi l-hukuma*). Remembering how well pleased Mu'awiya was with Abu Musa for having allowed himself to be fooled twice by 'Amr b. al-'As, Busr said, as he saw him unable to conceal his fear of being killed: 'I surely would not do that to the Companion of the Messenger of God', and let him go.⁴³²

After circumambulating the Ka'ba and praying two *rak'as*, Busr ascended the pulpit and in his sermon gave due praise to God who had 'humiliated through killings and expulsions our enemy, this son of Abu Talib, who is now in the region of Iraq in dire straits and distress. God has afflicted him for his offence and abandoned him for his crime, so that his companions have dispersed full of spite against him, and He has given the reign to Mu'awiya who is demanding vengeance for the blood of 'Uthman. So pledge allegiance to him and do not create a path [of vengeance] against yourselves.' The Mekkans meekly pledged allegiance. The Umayyad Sa'Td b. al-'As, however, absconded rather than doing homage to the new Vicegerent of God. Busr sought him but could not find him.⁵⁷² Sa'Td was still not convinced of the wisdom of pinning the guilt for the murder of 'Uthman on the Hashimite kinsmen of Umayya, descendants of their common ancestor 'Abd Manaf. His son 'Amr was to be the first victim when the Umayyads, under 'Abd al-Malik, began to murder each other for the succession to the throne.

Busr's next aim was al-Ta'if. Here al-MughTra b. Shu'ba was in control of his people, ThaqtTf. Ever a shrewd opportunist, al-MughTra had so far successfully kept out of the civil war but had attended the meeting of the arbitrators at Adhruh as an observer. Seeing the balance of power moving in favour of the Umayyad, he decided that it was time to climb on the bandwagon. He wrote Busr a letter congratulating him on his mission and praising his sound opinion in treating the subversives (*murib*) with severity and the people of intelligence (*iuli l-nuha*) with generosity. He encouraged him to proceed in his virtuous conduct, since God would only

⁴³² Tabari, I, 3451. ⁵⁷² ThaqaTf, *Gharat*, 608—9.

increase His goodness towards the people of good, and concluded with the prayer that God place both of them among those who command the proper, aim for the just, and remember God frequently. Then he came out to welcome Mu'awiya's general. Busr was aware that he had been denied authority over Thaqif, but he did not want to let them get off without a good scare. He told al-MughTra: 'MughTra, I want to investigate (*astarī<f>*) your people.' Al-MughTra pretended to be alarmed: 'I pray to God that he may guard you from this. Assuredly, it has reached me ever since you set forth, how severe you are against the enemies of the Commander of the Faithful 'Uthman, and your view in that is most praiseworthy. But if you treat your enemy and your friend alike you are sinning against your Lord and entice your enemy against you.' Busr was impressed by this argument and did not harm anyone in al-Ta'if.⁴³³

While in al-Ta'if Busr sent a detachment to Tabala with orders to kill the partisans of AIT there. According to an anecdote quoted by al-Thaqafi, they were miraculously saved by the selfless exertion of ManT' al-BahilT who was sent by the Syrian commander in Tabala to seek Busr's pardon for them. Busr delayed his pardon in the hope that the captives would be killed before it would reach Tabala. The messenger, however, continuously rode by day and night, and thus arrived just in time, before the execution. According to Ibn A'tham's account the captives were all killed.⁴³⁴

When Busr left al-Ta'if, al-MughTra b. Shu'ba accompanied him for a while before taking leave. As he passed through the territory of the Banu Kinana, Busr chanced upon the two minor sons of 'Ubayd Allah b. al-'Abbas, 'Abd al-Rahman and Qutham. Their mother was Umm HakTm Juwayriya, daughter of Qariz (or Qarit) b. Khalid of Kinana, a confederate of the Banu Zuhra of Quraysh. 'Ubayd Allah had therefore entrusted his two sons to a man of Kinana so that they would experience life in the desert in accordance with custom among the noble families of Quraysh. When Busr seized the two boys and threatened to kill them, their KinanT guardian took his sword and went out to face Busr. Mu'awiya's general angrily questioned him: 'We did not want to kill you, so why do you expose yourself to being killed?' The KinanT in true bedouin spirit answered: 'Yes, I shall be killed in protection of my guest (*iduma jart*). That will exonerate me better before God and the people.' Then he struck at the captors with his sword until he was killed. Busr had the two boys led before him and slaughtered them with a knife. A group of women of Kinana came, and one of them told the savage: 'You kill the

⁴³³ *Ibid.*, 609-10; Ibn A'tham, *Futuh*, IV, 62. The Thaqif are reported to have told Busr that he had no authority over them since they were the very core of Qays (Bevan (ed.), *NakcC14> 717; Aghdm*, IV, 132).

⁴³⁴ ThaqafT, *Ghdrat*, 610-11; Ibn A'tham, *Futuh*, IV, 62.

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men, but what for do you kill the children? By God, it was not the practice for them to be killed either in the Time of Ignorance (*jahiliyya*) or in Islam. By God, surely a regime which can find strength only by killing the meek, the humble, and the tottering old, by denying mercy and cutting the bonds of kinship is a regime of evil.' Busr, now fully furious, shouted: 'By God, I wish to put the sword among you [f. pi.]-' Though challenged by the woman to do so, he refrained, recalling that his master had declared Kinana off limits for him.⁴³⁵

Entering South Arabian territory, Busr was no longer confined by Mu'awiya's restrictions. In Tathlth he murdered the pious ascetic Ka'b b. 'Abda Dhi l-Habaka al-Nahdl, who had been whipped and exiled from Kufa to Rayy for his criticism of 'Uthman's conduct but later had been pardoned by him.⁴³⁶ In Najran he killed 'Abd Allah (al-Asghar) b. *Abd al-Madan al-Harith!, chief of the Banu l-Harith, his son Malik and his brother YazTd b. 'Abd al-Madan. 'Abd Allah, scion of one of the distinguished houses of the Arabs (*buyiitdt al-'Arab*), had led a delegation of his people to Muhammad to offer their submission and had been given by him the name 'Abd Allah to replace his pre-Islamic name 'Abd al-Hajar. After the Prophet's death he had tried to keep his people from joining the Apostasy. His daughter 'A'isha was married to 'Ubayd Allah b. al-'Abbas, whom he aided in the government of Yemen.⁴³⁷ Then after killing Malik, Busr gathered the people of Najran and addressed them: 'You bands of Christians and brethren of monkeys, by God, if I should get to hear from you what I dislike, I shall return to you with action that will cut off your offspring, devastate your fields, and ruin your houses. So be careful, careful.'⁴³⁸

In the Yemen Busr first attacked the Arhab of Hamdan and killed the partisans of 'AIT including Abu Karib, a noble chief of Hamdan.⁴³⁹ The Hamdan then fortified themselves on the mountain of Shibam. They defiantly shouted: 'Busr, we are Hamdan, and this is Shibam.' Busr pretended not to pay any attention to them and departed. When they returned to their villages he overpowered them, killed the men, and enslaved the women. They were said to have been the first Muslim women to be sold into slavery.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁵ ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 614-16. ⁵⁷⁶ BaladhurT, *Ansdab*, II, 455, V, 40.

⁵⁷⁷ Ibn Hajar, *Isdba*, IV, 98; Ibn al-KalbT, *Nasab Ma'add*, I, 271-2.

⁵⁷⁸ ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 616-17.

⁵⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 617-18; Ibn A'tham, *Futuh*, IV, 63. An Abu Karib of Hamdan is mentioned as an official of 'Uthman in charge of guarding the treasury shortly before the caliph's death (Tabari, I, 3020, 3046). It is uncertain whether he is identical with this partisan of 'AIT killed by Busr.

⁴⁴⁰ Bevan(ed.), *Naka'id\Aghani*, IV, 132; Ibn al-AthTr, *Usdal-ghaba*, 1,180; al-SafadT, *al-Wafi bi l-wafayat*, ed. H. Ritter et al. (Istanbul/Wiesbaden, 1931-), X, 130-1.

Of 'All's two governors of Yemen, only Sa'Td b. Nimran seems to have put up some, albeit ineffective, resistance to the invaders. Then both governors fled to Kufa.⁴⁴¹ 'Ubayd Allah b. al-'Abbas left as his deputy the Thaqafite 'Amr b. Araka who vainly tried to prevent Busr from entering San'a'. Mu'awiya's general killed him and many others in the town. Then a delegation from Ma'rib arrived to make their submission. Busr murdered all of them except one, who was allowed to bring his people the gruesome news. From San'a' Busr made an excursion to Jayshan where the partisans of 'All were strong. They came out to fight him, but were defeated and massacred. Those remaining fortified themselves against him, and he returned to San'a'. Altogether Busr is said, no doubt with some exaggeration, to have killed thirty thousand men in his raid of Arabia.⁴⁴²

Busr then received a letter from Wa'il b. Hujr, a noble lord (*qayl*) of Hadramawt, who assured him that half of Hadramawt was 'Uthmanid and invited him to come there, since there was no one to hinder him.⁴⁴³ Busr readily followed the invitation and was welcomed by Wa'il with a gift of money and cloth. When Wa'il asked him what he intended to do with the people of Hadramawt, he answered that he wanted to kill a quarter of them. Wa'il advised him, if he wished to do that, to start with 'Abd Allah b. Thawaba, who deemed himself safe from being killed. 'Abd Allah b. Thawaba was another great lord of Hadramawt and Wa'il's enemy. He lived in an impregnable fortress built by the Abyssinians when they first occupied South Arabia. Busr advanced to the foot of the castle and courteously invited the lord to come down to him. Unsuspectingly, Ibn Thawaba descended and was received with the command: 'Strike his neck.' He asked Busr: 'Do you want to kill me?' and Mu'awiya's general assured him: 'Yes.' On his request he was given permission to perform a prayer. Then he was led before Busr and beheaded. Busr confiscated his property and seized together with it the third that belonged to his sister. Mu'awiya later graciously returned the third to her.⁴⁴⁴

Busr's further plans to kill a quarter of the population of Hadramawt were cut short by reports of the approach of an enemy relief army under Jariya b. Qudama. 'AIT's reaction to Busr's invasion of Arabia had been

⁴⁴¹ ThaqafI, *Gharat*, 619-20. ⁵⁸² *Ibid.*, 640.

⁵⁸³ According to the account of Fudayl b. KhadTj, Wa'il had been with 'AIT in Kufa although he was secretly 'Uthmanid. He asked 'AIT for leave to visit his country in order to settle his property affairs there, promising to return quickly. 'AIT was unaware of his inclination and permitted him to go. When he learned of Wa'il's treason and collusion with Busr, he arrested his two sons (*ibid.*, 630-1). Wa'il b. Hujr had sided with the Muslims during the *ridda* and led the members of his tribe in the fight against the apostate Kinda chief al-Ash'ath b. Qays (Lecker, 'Kinda on the Eve of Islam', 344).

⁴⁴⁴ ThaqafI, *Gharat*, 629-31.

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slow. The Kufan sources, as usual, describe him as at first vainly trying to stir his followers to revenge before Jariya volunteered. It is likely, however, that 'All, at a time when he was building up his forces for a third campaign to Syria, was reluctant to divert some of them to a sideshow. He had reacted angrily to the lack of initiative of his governors in Yemen in countering the rebellion of the local 'Uthmaniyya and was evidently inclined to let them fend for themselves in warding off the Syrian attack. Reports of the brutal savagery of Mu'awiya's general now forced him to act. Jariya set out from Kufa with a thousand men and recruited another thousand in Basra, presumably mostly from his tribe, Sa'd TamTm. Afterwards 'AIT sent another two thousand men under Wahb b. Mas'ud al-Khath'amT from Kufa who joined Jariya b. Qudama in the Hijaz. Jariya was to have the general command. 'AIT gave him strict instructions not to harm Muslims or non-Muslims protected by treaty, not to confiscate property or riding animals even if their own mounts were worn out and they were forced to continue on foot, and to perform their prayers regularly.

Jariya moved quickly through the Hijaz to Yemen passing by the towns, the fortified places, and stopping nowhere. As he reached the Yemen, the 'Uthmanid partisans in power fled, seeking shelter in the mountains. They were now persecuted and killed by the partisans of 'AIT. Jariya left them to settle accounts, avoided the towns, and pressed on to Hadramawt in pursuit of Busr. On his approach the latter immediately fled like a thief, without giving battle.⁵⁸⁵ In this he followed, no doubt, Mu'awiya's instructions rather than his own preference. The purpose of Busr's raid was not to conquer and occupy any part of the country permanently, but to terrorize and intimidate by causing maximum damage to the populace with a minimum loss of Syrian soldiers. On his return Busr is said to have proudly announced to his master that he had led his army killing the caliph's enemy and looting without losing a single man.⁵⁸⁶

Afraid that he might get caught between an oncoming and a pursuing enemy army, Busr decided not to retreat through the Hijaz, and took an eastern route through the Jawf towards the territory of the TamTm. Learning of this, Jariya b. Qudama commented that he was heading for a people who knew how to defend themselves. Jariya stayed in Jurash for a month to allow his men a time for rest. It was there that he was informed of the assassination of 'AIT.⁵⁸⁷

As Jariya expected, Busr did not challenge the main body of TamTm even though they seized some of his loot.⁵⁸⁸ At al-Falaj, however, he hit

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 621-32. ⁵⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 639. ⁵⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 624, 633, 638, 640.

⁵⁸⁸ Ibn Abi l-Hadid, *Sharh*, II, 16.

upon a group of the Banu Sa'd (of TamTm) who had alighted there among the Banu Ja'da. He attacked them, killing some and carrying off others as captives.⁵⁸⁹ Then he moved on to al-Yamama. Here the people had remained neutral in the civil war under their amir, al-Qasim b. Wabara.⁵⁹⁰ Busr threatened to assault the Banu Hanlfa, but a son of their renowned former chief Mujja'a b. Murara offered to accompany him to Mu'awiya in order to make peace with him on behalf of his people. This was presumably after 'All's death, and the Banu HanTfa were prepared to pledge allegiance to the Umayyad caliph. Busr, however, wanted to punish them for their former neutrality and took the son of Mujja'a along as he returned through the desert of al-Samawa to Syria.⁵⁹¹ He advised Mu'awiya to kill him, but Mu'awiya was now in a mood for peace. He accepted his submission and confirmed him as the chief of his people.⁵⁹² The outrages committed by Busr in his raid of Arabia produced shock in Kufa and aided 'All in his efforts to mount a new offensive against Mu'awiya. The Kufans blamed each other for their past inaction, and a group of tribal nobles (*ashraf*) came to see 'AIT and urged him to appoint one of them as their commander to lead an army against this man. 'AIT reassured them that the man he had sent against Busr would not return without having expelled him or one or the other of them having been killed; they should stand up and get ready for his summons for the campaign to Syria. Sa'Td b. Qays al-Hamdant, Ziyad b. Khasafa and Wa'la b. Mahduj al-Dhuhl⁵⁹³ gave speeches declaring their unreserved loyalty to the Commander of the Faithful. Suwayd b. al-Harith al-Tayml of Taym al-Ribab urged him to order each of the chiefs of his *shPa* to gather his companions, to incite them to participation in the campaign by reading them the Qur'an and warning them of the consequences of treason and disobedience. Hujr b. 'AdT al-KindT now quickly assembled four thousand men, Ziyad b. Khasafa al-BakrT two thousand, Ma'qil b. Qays al-Riyahl also two thousand, and 'Abd Allah b. Wahb al-SabaT⁵⁹⁴ about a thousand. When 'AIT asked for a tough, reliable commander who

^{51W} Bevan (ed.), *Naka'id*, 717; *Agham*, IV, 132.

^{5.0} Al-Qasim b. Wabara seems otherwise unknown. ^{5.1} ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 639. ^{5.2} *Ibid.*, 643; Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, II, 16—17. The name of the son of Mujja'a b. Murara is not given. He may be identical with Mujja'a's son Siraj, a transmitter of hadith recognized as a Companion of the Prophet (Ibn Hajar, *Isdba*, III, 67). The report that Busr passed through Mekka on his way back before turning to al-Yamama (ThaqafT, *Ghdat*, 638) is evidently mistaken. After Busr's departure from Mekka on his way to the Yemen, Qutham b. al-'Abbas seems to have quickly regained control of the town (*ibid.*, 620-1).

⁵⁹³ The text of *ibid.*, 637, has Wa'la b. Makhdu'. For his identity see the editor's footnote 4 on that page.

^{5.4} Reading thus for al-S-m-nT (BaladhurT, *Ansab*, II, 478). He may be identical with Ibn Saba', later accused of having been the founder of extremist Shi'ism.

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would recruit the men dispersed in the *sawad* and bring them to Kufa for the campaign, Saïd b. Qays suggested Ma'qil b. Qays al-Riyahl, and Ma'qil was dispatched with this mission. As he arrived in al-Daskara, he learned that Kurds were raiding Shahrzur. He attacked them and pursued them into the mountains of Jibal. When he was finished with his recruitment and reached al-Mada'in on his way to Kufa, news of 'All's death reached him.

Ziyad b. Khasafa volunteered to raid Syrian territory along the banks of the Euphrates and then to return speedily to join the general campaign. The damage inflicted by him was presumably limited since 'All ordered him not to wrong anyone, to fight only those attacking him, and not to interfere with the bedouins (*a'rab*). Mu'awiya sent 'Abd al-Rahman b. Khalid b. al-Walld against him, but Ziyad eluded him, turning back. While he stayed in HTt waiting for 'AIT and his army, he learned of his assassination.⁴⁴⁵

In preparation for his campaign, 'AIT had written to Qays b. Sa'd b. 'Ubada, now governor of Adharbayjan, instructing him to appoint 'Ubayd Allah b. Shubayl al-AhmasTas his deputy and to proceed speedily to Kufa. A large mass of Muslims, he wrote, was assembled there now submitting to his command and ready to move against the desecrators (*.muhillun*); 'AIT was delaying departure merely in expectation of Qays' arrival. The date of the campaign had in fact been set for the end of winter 40/661.⁵⁹⁶

On Friday, 17 Ramadan 40/26 January 661, as he entered the mosque of Kufa to perform the morning prayer, 'AIT was met by his assassin with the words: 'The judgment belongs to God, 'AIT, not to you', and was struck on the head with a poisoned sword. The attacker was 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Amr b. Muljam al-MuradT, a Kharijite from Egypt, of Himyar by male descent but counted among Murad because of his maternal kinship, and a confederate of the Banu Jabala of Kinda. He had come to Kufa with the aim of killing 'AIT in revenge for the Kharijite leaders slain at al-Nahrawan and had found two local Kharijite accomplices, ShabTb b. Bujra of Ashja' and Wardan b. al-Mujalid of Taym al-Ribab. Shablb's sword thrust had missed 'AIT and hit the wooden frame of the door or the arch. He ran away but was caught near the gates of Kinda by a man from Hadramawt called 'Uwaymir. The HadramT seized ShabTb's sword and was pressing him to the ground when other pursuers approached, shouting to each other to seize the man with the sword. Fearing for his own life, he threw the sword away and ran off; ShabTb escaped in the crowd. Wardan fled to his home where he was killed by his

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 478—9; ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 637—8. ⁵⁹⁶ Baladhun, *Ansab*, II, 480.

kinsman 'Abd Allah b. Najaba b. 'Ubayd after confessing his involvement. Ibn Muljam was caught, it was said, by the Hashimite al-MughTra b. Nawfal b. al-Harith who hit him in the face with a coat (*qatifa*) and forced him to the ground. He was led before 'AIT, who ordered that, if he died from his wound, Ibn Muljam should be put to death in retaliation. If he survived, he would decide on how to treat him. Two days later, in the night before Sunday, 19 Ramadan/28 January 'AIT died. His body was washed by his sons al-Hasan, al-Husayn, Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya, and by his nephew 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far. The same men together with 'Ubayd Allah b. al-'Abbas buried him. Ibn Muljam was now killed in accordance with his instruction. ShabTb b. Bujra later revolted against Mu'awiya's governor al-MughTra b. Shu'ba and attacked people near Kufa. The governor sent a mounted troop against him, and he was killed.⁴⁴⁶

'AIT was assassinated at a time when his fortunes, after the lengthy crisis following SiffTn, the failed arbitration and al-Nahrawan, seemed on the ascendant. The mood in Kufa and Basra had changed in his favour as Mu'awiya's vicious conduct of the war, especially in Busr's Arabian campaign, had revealed the true nature of his reign. The Kufans and Basrans were now ready to fight the Syrians for their independence, if not for the glory of 'AIT. The outcome of a third Syrian campaign could not be seen as a foregone conclusion. The Syrians had certainly gained in confidence since SiffTn and now had their backs towards Egypt free. Yet experience had so far shown that, whenever Syrians and Iraqis met in battle on roughly equal terms, it was the Syrians who usually gave way first. The Iraqis, resuming the war with the bitter resolve of outwitted political underdogs, might well have triumphed militarily this time.

'AIT's rule, to be sure, had not gained popularity in Kufa during his lifetime. The loyalist following that he built up during the final years of his reign, consisting of men convinced that he was the best of Muslims after the Prophet and the only one entitled to rule them, remained a small minority. The town was deeply divided in its attitude towards him. What united the majority now was rather their distrust of, and opposition to, Mu'awiya and his Syrian cohorts.

Umayyad highhandedness, misrule and repression were gradually to turn the minority of 'AIT's admirers into a majority. In the memory of later generations 'AIT became the ideal Commander of the Faithful. In face of the fake Umayyad claim to legitimate sovereignty in Islam as God's Vicegerents on earth, and in view of Umayyad treachery, arbitrary and divisive government, and vindictive retribution, they came to appreciate his honesty, his unbending devotion to the reign of Islam, his

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, II, 487-96; Tabari, I, 3456-64.

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deep personal loyalties, his equal treatment of all his supporters, and his generosity in forgiving his defeated enemies. They were now prepared to forget the harsh edges of his rule and his at times grave errors of judgement, which had divided his followers, and rather blamed their ancestors for failing to support him unconditionally. The more radical among them extolled him, surrounding him with an aura of impeccability and supernatural qualities. Such views were far from his own mind. For although he, with some justification, had claimed to know the Prophet's message and practice better, and to be more sincerely devoted to Islam than anyone after Muhammad, he was well aware of, and admitted, some of his human failings and was concerned with making amends for them. It was, in the end, largely the same qualities that brought about both the failure of his reign and his elevation to a much-revered saintly hero in Islam. His *du'aba* noted by 'Umar, his 'foolishness' in refusing to engage in the new game of political treachery, unscrupulous manoeuvring and clever opportunism that was then taking root in the government of Islam, deprived him of success in his life, but also raised him in the eyes of his admirers into a paragon of the virtues of a pristine, uncorrupted Islam as well as of pre-Islamic Arab chivalry.

Conclusion

Restoration of the Community and despotic kingship

The death of 'All, in the midst of preparations for a fresh campaign to Syria, left the course of the civil war in suspense. The succession of his eldest son, al-Hasan, Muhammad's grandson, went ahead without dispute. Presumably following the precedent of the Prophet, 'All had declined to nominate a successor before his death. He had, however, on many occasions expressed his conviction that only the Prophet's *ahl al-bayt* were entitled to rule the Community; and al-Hasan, whom he had appointed his legatee,⁴⁴⁷ must have seemed the obvious choice. A speech defect which slowed his tongue evidently did not disqualify him.⁴⁴⁸ In fact, he was generally considered an effective orator.

In the congregational mosque of Kufa al-Hasan announced the death of his father whom he described as a man whose acts were unrivalled and would forever remain so, who had fought together with the Messenger of God, protecting him with his own life. Muhammad had sent him forward bearing his flag with Jibra'Il on his right side and Mika'Il on his left, and he had not turned back until God gave him victory. He had died this night, the same night in which Jesus, son of Mary, had been raised to heaven and in which Joshua, son of Nun, the legatee of Moses, had passed away. He had left no silver and no gold behind except for 700 dirhams of his stipend, with which he wanted to buy a servant for his family.

Then al-Hasan was choked by tears, and the people wept with him. He resumed: 'O people, whoever knows me, knows me, and whoever does not know me, I am al-Hasan, the son of Muhammad. I am the son of the bringer of good tidings, the son of the warner, the son of the summoner to God, powerful and exalted, with His permission; I am the shining lamp. I am of the Family of the Prophet from whom God has removed filth and

⁴⁴⁷ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 497, 504.

⁴⁴⁸ Abu I-Faraj al-Isfahani, *Maqatil al-Talibiyyin*, ed. Ahmad Saqr (Cairo, 1949), 49-50. Veccia-Vaglieri misunderstood the text as meaning that he inherited the defect from 'one of his uncles' (al-Hasan b. 'All', *EI*(2nd edn)). The 'uncle (*amm*)' is Moses.

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whom He has purified, whose love He has made obligatory in His Book when He said: 'Whosoever performs a good act, We shall increase the good in it' (XLII 23). Performing a good act is love for us, the Family of the Prophet.' Then 'Ubayd Allah b. al-'Abbas, the governor of San'a' who had fled to Kufa, stood up and summoned the people to pledge allegiance to al-Hasan. They did so, acknowledging that he was the one best entitled and dearest to them.⁴⁴⁹

This show of loyalty to the dead Commander of the Faithful and praise of *his jihad* on behalf of Islam concealed for the moment the deep discord prevailing between father and son. By nature pacifist and conciliatory, al-Hasan had for some time been uneasy and even openly critical with regard to 'All's militant pursuit of his cause, the basic justice of which, however, he did not doubt. He had felt a genuine sympathy, even admiration, for his uncle 'Uthman with his aristocratic bearing and aversion to bloodshed, and thought that his father should have done more to try to save him. 'All's defiant stand in face of the opposition of the old religious establishment and the majority of Quraysh had frightened him, and he had begged him to abandon his course of confrontation and conflict. The continuation and broadening of the brutal civil war after his father's surprise victory at Basra had filled him with horror. Mu'awiya, he realized, was nothing but a scoundrel. Yet could the attempt to remove him justify the massive bloodletting among Muslims which carried away friend and foe alike and led to ever-deepening hatred between kinsmen once united in tribal brotherhood?

The supreme leadership position into which his birth as the Prophet's grandson was now propelling him had no attraction for him. As for himself, he could just as well have walked away to a desert retreat, something he had earlier proposed that his father do. He understood, however, that it would have been unforgivable for him simply to abandon his father's followers to the vindictive instincts of Mu'awiya, who had just displayed his true colours in the utter brutality of Busr b. AbT Artah's raid. If he wanted to be remembered in history as the restorer of a semblance of concord and peace in the Community founded by his grandfather, he must at least seek an honourable peace with a general amnesty.

The pledge of allegiance to al-Hasan included, in addition to the usual backing for the Book of God and the Sunna of the Prophet, the commitment to make war on whomever al-Hasan declared war on and to keep the peace with whomever he made peace. This was, to be sure, merely the formula that 'AIT had demanded of his followers and which had been denounced by the Kharijites. It is said, however, to have immediately raised suspicions among the Kufans that al-Hasan did not intend to carry out the campaign to Syria prepared by his father.⁴ Given his record of opposition to fighting, such suspicion was not unreasonable. The prominent part now played by 'Ubayd Allah b. al-'Abbas, who had recently been reprimanded by 'AIT for his failure to put up any resistance to Busr as governor of San'a',⁵ may have contributed to the doubts.

probably more reliable.

For fifty days or two months after his accession, al-Hasan remained passive, not dispatching anyone against Mu'awiya nor even mentioning a campaign or war.⁶ The army mobilized by his father evidently became restive. Then a letter from 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas arrived from Basra, stirring him to action. Ibn al-'Abbas addressed him as the son of the Messenger of God and told him that the Muslims who had appointed him their leader after his father were now disapproving of his inaction towards Mu'awiya and his failure to demand his right.

Get ready for war, fight your enemy, coax your companions, appoint the men of distinguished houses and nobility to offices, for you buy their hearts with that. Follow the practice of the imams of justice (*a'immat al-'adl*) of conjoining hearts [*ta'lif al-qulub*, i.e. by paying bribes to influential men] and restoring concord among the people. And know that war is deceit (*khud'a*) and that you are at liberty with that while you are at war, so long as you do not deprive a Muslim of a right that belongs to him. You know that the people turned away from your father 'AIT' and went over to Mu'awiya only because he equalized among them in regard to the *fay*' and gave to all the same stipend. This weighed heavily upon them.

Ibn al-'Abbas went on to remind al-Hasan that his enemies were those who had made war on God and His Messenger before; when God had rendered His religion triumphant, they had outwardly professed the faith and recited the Qur'an while privately mocking its verses; they performed the duties of Islam while loathing them; when they saw that in this religion only the pious prophets and those virtuous in learning enjoyed prestige, they had stamped themselves outwardly with the characteristics of the righteous so that the Muslims would think well of them, while inwardly they were turning their backs on the Signs of God; al-Hasan was now afflicted with these people, their sons, and their likes, whose arrogant transgression had merely increased with time. Ibn al-'Abbas appealed to him to fight them and not to accept a foul compromise (*daniyya*) with them; his father had accepted the arbitration in respect of his right only under constraint and knowing that he would be found the most worthy of

⁴ Baladhurī, *Ansb*, III, 29; Tabarī, II, 1, 5. ⁵ Thaqaḥī, *Ghdrat*, 619-20. ⁶ Baladhuri, *Ansb*, III, 29; Ibn A'tham, *Futūḥ*, IV, 148.

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the reign if the arbitrators judged justly; when they judged according to their whim, he had gone back to his previous position and remained determined to fight these people until his term came and he passed on to his Lord. 'So consider, Abu Muhammad, may God have mercy on you, and never relinquish a right to which you are more entitled than anyone else, even if death should intervene.'⁴⁵⁰

Ibn A'tham's account describes al-Hasan's reaction to the letter as one of joy, as he now knew that Ibn al-'Abbas was pledging allegiance to him and commanding him to do his duty in respect to the right of God. This was no doubt far from al-Hasan's mind. If he was partly pleased by this token of moral support from his uncle, who surely had already pledged allegiance to him, he was by no means convinced by his argument for war. If he himself did not desire the death of others for the sake of his right to rule, why indeed should he be prepared to sacrifice his own life for it? He must seek an accommodation with Mu'awiya.

Al-Hasan now wrote a letter to the Umayyad, addressed thus: 'From the servant of God, Commander of the Faithful, al-Hasan to Mu'awiya b. Sakhr.' Muhammad, he wrote, had been sent by God as a sign of mercy to all the worlds, and as a warner to everyone alive; he had conveyed God's message, and God had manifested the truth through him, obliterated polytheism, buttressed the faithful, given glory to the Arabs, and honoured Quraysh in particular through him; when he died, the Arabs had contended with each other for his authority, but Quraysh had told them: 'We are his tribe, his family (*usra*), his close followers; it is not licit for you to dispute the authority of Muhammad over the people and his right with us.' The Arabs had recognized the soundness of their argument and surrendered the authority to them.

Then we argued with Quraysh as they had argued with the Arabs, but Quraysh did not treat us with justice as the Arabs treated them. . . . When we, the Family (*ahl al-bayt*) of Muhammad and his close followers, argued with them and sought fairness from them, they removed us and united in wronging and boycotting us. . . . We were then amazed by those who jumped on us in regard to our right and the authority of our Prophet, even though they were men of virtue and early merit in Islam. Yet we refrained from contending with them within Islam, fearing for the faith lest the hypocrites and the Confederates (*ahzab*) would find a breach through which to enter and work corruption as they wished. Today let men marvel, Mu'awiya, at your jumping on a right of which you are not worthy, neither by any known excellence in the faith, nor any praiseworthy deed in Islam. Rather you are the son of one of the Confederates, the son of the most hostile man of Quraysh towards the Messenger of God. Yet God has frustrated your hopes.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibn A'tham, *Futuh*, IV, 149-50; Ibn Abi l-Hadid, *Sharh*, XVI, 23—4; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, III, 29, 3 (Duri), 51.

After 'AIT had passed away, continued al-Hasan, the Muslims had appointed him to succeed, and he begged God not to increase His bounty to him in this passing world by decreasing His bounty to him in the hereafter; he was moved to writing to Mu'awiya merely by the wish of doing justice to him before God; there would, if Mu'awiya did as al-Hasan proposed, be immense fortune for him and benefit for the Muslims.

Give up persevering in falsehood and enter into my allegiance as the people have done, for you know that I am better entitled to 'this matter' than you before God and in the eyes of everyone who is ready to return to obedience and whoever has a repentant heart. Fear God, abandon rebellion, and spare the blood of the Muslims, for, by God, there is no good for you in meeting Him with more of their blood on your hands than you shall already meet Him with. Enter into peace and obedience, do not contest the rule of those entitled to it ... so that you may restore concord. But if you refuse all else and persist in your arrogant transgression, I shall rise up against you with the Muslims and ask God to judge between us, for He is the best of judges.⁸

The letter was delivered to Mu'awiya by Jundab b. 'Abd Allah al-Azdl, 'All's early follower, and al-Harith b. Suwayd al-Taymi of Taym al-Ribab.⁹

Mu'awiya was aware of al-Hasan's peaceful disposition and knew from his spies that he was not about to attack. As Mu'awiya equally wished to avoid another all-out confrontation with the Kufans and Basrans, there was no sense in trying to threaten and intimidate the grandson of the Prophet. His usual stratagem of pinning guilt for the blood of 'Uthman on his opponents, which he had employed so successfully, at least for Syrian home consumption, with respect to 'All, might now be hazardous, since even his countrymen presumably knew that al-Hasan had been among the defenders of the palace in Medina. The proper course would be to treat him with dignified condescension, to cajole and dupe him with false promises.

Mu'awiya reversed the salutation: 'From the servant of God, Commander of the Faithful, to al-Hasan b. 'AIL' Acknowledging his letter, he approved fully of al-Hasan's praise of Muhammad; mentioning the Prophet's death and the strife of the Muslims after him, al-Hasan had, however, explicitly accused the Siddiq Abu Bakr, the Faruq 'Umar, the AmTn Abu 'Ubayda, the Disciple (*hawarT*) of the Messenger (al-Zubayr), the righteous Emigrants and Helpers. 'I disliked that on your part, for surely you are in my eyes and those of the people not suspected, neither a wrongdoer nor base, and I would love sound speech and kindly mention on your part.'

⁸ Abu I-Faraj, *Maqatil*, 55-7; Ibn Abi I-HadTd, *Sharh*, XVI, 24—5.

* Ibn Abi I-HadTd, *Sharh*, XVI, 25; Ibn A'tham, *Futuh*, IV, 152.

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Mu'awiya then lectured al-Hasan that the Community, when they differed after their Prophet's death, did not ignore the excellence of his family, their early merit and kinship with him, their station in Islam and among its people; rather, the whole Community had recognized the closeness of Quraysh to the Prophet and had chosen Abu Bakr as the one who accepted Islam first, knew God best, was dearest to Him, and strongest in His cause; this had been the view of the men of intelligence, faith, excellence, and concern for the Community, who were unjustly accused by al-Hasan's kin; if the Muslims had found among these anyone of equal competence who could have taken his place and would have protected the sanctuary of the Muslims as he did, they would not have turned the right to rule away from them.

Mu'awiya's present position, he went on, in relation to al-Hasan was the same as that of Abu Bakr after the Prophet's death; if he knew that al-Hasan was more efficient than he in controlling and leading the subjects, more effective than he in collecting money, and more skilful in deceiving the enemy, Mu'awiya would readily respond to his summons since he saw him worthy of that; but he knew that he had been longer in office, was more experienced in the affairs of the Community, more skilled in statecraft, and older in age; it was therefore more appropriate that al-Hasan should acknowledge that the station for which he was asking recognition belonged to him, Mu'awiya; if he entered under his obedience, the reign would belong to him afterwards; whatever amount there was now in the treasury of Iraq, he could take away with him to wherever he wished; the land tax of any province of Iraq he desired would belong to him as a subsidy for his expenses; a man in his trust could collect it and deliver it to him every year; he would be protected from all harm - matters would not be decided without him, nor would he be disobeyed in any matter he was seeking in obedience to God.

Delivering Mu'awiya's letter to al-Hasan, Jundab b. 'Abd Allah warned his imam: 'This man is going to march against you. Take the initiative to move against him first so that you battle him on his homeground. Even so there is no way that he could touch you before witnessing a battle greater than the Day of SiffTn.' Al-Hasan answered that he would act according to his advice, but, Jundab added, 'then he abstained from consulting me and acted as if oblivious to my words.'⁴⁵¹ Al-Hasan in fact did not reply to Mu'awiya's letter. He realized that his extravagant promises were fraudulent and was, in any case, not interested

⁴⁵¹ Abu l-Faraj, *Maqdtl*, 57—9; BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, III, 31—2. The version of Mu'awiya's letter quoted by Ibn Abi l-HadTd on the authority of al-Mada'inl (*Sharh*, XVI, 25) contains a sharp attack on 'AlI accusing him of the murder of 'Uthman and of usurping power without a *shura*.

in them. Aware of the Umayyad's personal cowardice, he seems to have hoped that if he ignored Mu'awiya, the latter would also leave him alone. Mu'awiya now sent a more threatening letter. 'Be warned of placing your hopes in the hands of a rabble and despair of finding a weak spot in our armour. But if you turn away from your course and pledge allegiance to me, I shall keep what I have promised and fulfil what I stipulated to you . . . Then the caliphate will be yours after me, for you are the most worthy of it.' Al-Hasan's answer was feeble: 'Your letter has arrived in which you mention what you mention. I abstained from answering it lest I might commit a transgression (*abghi*) against you. I seek refuge with God to ward that off. So follow the right and you shall know that I am worthy of it. May guilt stick to me, if I should speak and lie.'¹¹

Mu'awiya was now convinced that he would be able to swallow Iraq without doing battle. Writing to his governors and commanders to mobilize, he gave praise to God who had taken care of their enemy and the killers of their caliph for them and, in His kindness and beneficent management, had granted 'AIT b. Abi Talib one of His servants, who by stealth had dealt him a mortal blow, killing him; now his companions were left divided and discordant, and letters from their nobles and commanders had been coming to him, asking pardon for themselves and their tribes. 'So make haste to come to me when this letter of mine reaches you, with your soldiers, your resolve, and your good equipment, for you shall, praise be to God, obtain your revenge and attain your hope, and God shall ruin the people of rebellion and aggression.'¹²

This time Mu'awiya did not need to be asked to take part in the campaign. When 'Amr b. al-'As saw his sudden determination to march himself, he observed mockingly: 'Mu'awiya knows, by God, that the lion 'AIT has perished, treacherously killed by male camel foals.'¹³ Leaving al-Dahhak b. Qays al-Fihri as his deputy in Damascus,¹⁴ he set out with his full army, said to have numbered sixty thousand men,¹⁵ and crossed the Euphrates at Jisr Manbij. Only now was al-Hasan stirred to react. He sent Hujr b. 'AdT to his local governors ordering them to get ready to march and addressed the Kufans with a lukewarm war speech: God had prescribed the *jihad* for his creation and called it a loathsome duty (*kurh*, Qur'an II 216); he had been informed that Mu'awiya, having learned that they intended to march against him, had now begun moving against

¹¹ Abu l-Faraj, *Maqatil*, 59-60.

¹² *Ibid.*, 60. According to al-Baladhuri's account (*Ansdh*, III, 30) Mu'awiya had his army assembled already before al-Hasan sent his first letter and made his gloating comment on "All's death in a speech. He further stated that Kufa was now governed by his son who was young, inexperienced and ignorant in warfare.

¹³ BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, III, 37: reading *suqub* for *sughub*. Young male camels were proverbial for their vileness. ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 36. ¹⁵ Ibn A'tham, *Futuh*, IV, 153.

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them; therefore he asked them to assemble in their war camp at al-Nukhayla where they would look into the matter.

At first there was no response. Some of the tribal chiefs, in the pay of Mu'awiya, were evidently not eager to move. 'AdT b. Hatim stood up and scolded them, asking whether they would not respond to their imam and the son of the Prophet's daughter? Turning to al-Hasan he assured him of their obedience, and immediately left for the war camp. Then other loyal supporters of his father, Qays b. Sa'd, Ma'qil b. Qays and Ziyad b. Khasafa, joined in reproaching and rousing the people to follow 'AdT's example. Al-Hasan praised them and later joined them at al-Nukhayla, where the men were assembling in large numbers. He appointed al-MughTra b. Nawfal b. al-Harith b. 'Abd al-Muttalib as his deputy in Kufa with instructions to incite the people to war and send any laggards on to join the army.

At Dayr 'Abd al-Rahman, al-Hasan halted for three nights to wait for more men to arrive. He summoned 'Ubayd Allah b. al-'Abbas and appointed him commander of his vanguard of twelve thousand men with orders to move along the Euphrates to Maskin. There he was to detain Mu'awiya until al-Hasan arrived with the main army. 'Ubayd Allah should not fight the enemy unless attacked and should consult with Qays b. Sa'd and Sa'Td b. Qays, who would be second and third in command if he were killed. 'Ubayd Allah moved via ShTnwar and ShahT along the west bank of the Euphrates and on to al-Falluja and Maskin.⁴⁵²

The choice of 'Ubayd Allah b. al-'Abbas over the warlike Qays b. Sa'd and Sa'id b. Qays reflected al-Hasan's continued reluctance to be drawn into a battle. He still was hoping to reach a peace settlement with Mu'awiya. 'Ubayd Allah, he knew, was fully aware of his feelings and would, as in his governorship in the Yemen, do everything to avoid fighting. Al-Hasan did not even ask 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas, who had urged him to pursue the war against Mu'awiya with vigour, to join his army with the Basrans.⁴⁵³

Meanwhile al-Hasan moved north via Hammam 'Umar and Dayr Ka'b to Sabat near al-Mada'in. There he gave a sermon during the morning prayer in which he avowed that he prayed to God to be the most sincere of His creation to His creation; he held no grudge nor hatred against any Muslim, nor did he desire evil and harm to anyone; whatever they hated in community was better than what they loved in schism. He was, so he assured them, looking after their best interest, better than they themselves;

⁴⁵² Abu l-Faraj, *Maqatil*, 62-3; Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, III, 32-3.

⁴⁵³ Wellhausen's assumption that 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas, rather than 'Ubayd Allah, was the confidant of al-Hasan who betrayed him first to make his peace with Mu'awiya (*Das arabische Reich*, 66-70) is mistaken.

and he appealed to them not to contravene whatever orders he gave them nor to answer back to him.¹⁸

His men looked at each other and concluded, probably rightly: 'He intends to seek a truce with Mu'awiya and to surrender the reign to him; he is weak and confounded.' A storm broke loose.¹⁹ They overran and looted his pavilion, seizing even the prayer rug from underneath him. Then 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Abd Allah b. Ja'al al-Azdi attacked him, pulling his tunic off his shoulders and leaving him undressed, clinging to his sword. Al-Hasan called for his horse and rode off surrounded by his servants and a few of his partisans who warded off those seeking to reach him, all the while reproaching him and calling him a weakling for what he had said. He asked his friends to summon RabT'a and Hamdan, the tribes most loyal to his father. They surrounded him and shoved the people away from him. Some others, however, were mingling among them; and as they were passing by Muzlim Sabat, al-Jarrah b. Sinan, a man of the Banu Nasr b. Qu'ayn of Asad b. Khuzayma with Kharijite leanings, grasped the reins of his mount, shouting: 'God is greatest, Hasan, you have associated partners with God as your father did before you.' Then he struck his thigh with a pick-axe and cleft it open. Al-Hasan hit at him with his sword while clasping him, and both fell to the ground. 'Abd Allah b. al-Hisl²⁰ jumped upon al-Jarrah, tearing the pick-axe out of his hands and hit his belly with it, while Zubyan b. 'Umara al-TamTmT threw himself on him and cut his nose off. Then others joined in, crushing his face and head with baked bricks until he was dead. Al-Hasan was carried on a stretcher to al-Mada'in where he stayed with the governor Sa'd b. Mas'ud al-ThaqafT to cure his wound.²¹

Mu'awiya had advanced from Jisr Manbij via al-Raqqā, NasTbTn, and Mossul to al-Akhnuuniyya (later Harba)²² near Maskin, everywhere calming the populace and granting amnesty. When 'Ubayd Allah also arrived there with the Kufan vanguard, Mu'awiya sent 'Abd al-Rahman

¹⁸ According to the version of al-Mada'inT quoted by Ibn Abi l-HadTd (*Sharh*, XVI, 26), al-Hasan quoted his father 'AIT as stating: 'Do not loathe the reign of Mu'awiya.' This is obviously quite incredible.

¹⁹ Kufan 'Uthmanid tradition, represented by al-Sha'bT and 'Awana, narrated that the mutiny was rather provoked by a false announcement that Qays b. Sa'd had been killed (al-DhahabT, *Siyar a'lam al-nubala'*, ed. Shu'ayb al-Arna'ut and Husayn Asad (Beirut, 1981-8), III, 263-4,269). The story is blatant anti-Shi'ite fiction. The Kufan supporters of the 'Alids are depicted as so fickle and undisciplined that, when receiving adverse news, they vented their frustration on their own imam, who had thus good reason to abandon them to Mu'awiya.

²⁰ Al-Mada'inT gives his name as 'Ubayd Allah al-TaT (Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, XVI, 26).

²¹ Abu l-Faraj, *Maqa'il*, 63—4; BaladhurT, *Ansd*, III, 34—6. The story quoted by al-Baladhuri and al-TabarT (II, 2) that Sa'd b. Mas'ud's young nephew al-Mukhtar b. AbT 'Ubayd advised him to fetter al-Hasan and buy his pardon from Mu'awiya through this treacherous act is certainly anti-Mukhtar slander. ²² See Yaqut, *Buldan*, I, 167.

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b. Samura b. HabTb b. 'Abd Shams to the Kufans to tell them that he had received letters from al-Hasan asking for a truce and that he had come for that purpose and had ordered his men to stay the fight. Mu'awiya asked the Kufans not to attack until he concluded his negotiations with al-Hasan. His claim was probably untrue, but he had good reason to believe that he could intimidate al-Hasan to surrender. The Kufans gave his envoy the lie and reviled him. Next Mu'awiya sent 'Abd al-Rahman to visit 'Ubayd Allah privately, and the envoy swore to him that al-Hasan had asked Mu'awiya for a truce. Mu'awiya was offering 'Ubayd Allah 1,000,000 dirhams, half of the amount to be paid immediately, the other half in Kufa, if he went over to him. Aware of al-Hasan's inclination to a peaceful settlement which would spare Muslim blood, 'Ubayd Allah accepted and deserted at night to Mu'awiya's camp. Mu'awiya was greatly pleased and kept his promise to him.⁴⁵⁴

While 'Ubayd Allah was thus received by Mu'awiya with open arms, he saw Busr b. AbT Artah in his presence. He asked Mu'awiya: 'Did you order this accursed one to kill my two sons?' The caliph answered: 'By God, I did not, and I loathed it.' This was less than a half-truth; for while Mu'awiya had probably not ordered the slaughter of the two boys, he certainly had instructed him to kill all Hashimites he could lay his hands on. It is inconceivable that Busr would have dared to kill any descendants of 'Abd Manaf, his master's kin, without such explicit authorization. Mu'awiya had not punished or reprimanded Busr for the act which he now claimed to have loathed, but rather had rewarded him for his atrocities by appointing him commander of his vanguard. Busr had thus reason to be furious at this display of hypocrisy at his expense. He threw his sword down before him, exclaiming: 'Take it from me. You have ordered me to knock the people with it and I obeyed your command. Now you tell this one what you just said when he was only yesterday your enemy and I your sincere helper and backer against him.' Mu'awiya told him: 'Take your sword back. Surely you are feeble-minded when you throw your sword in front of a man of the Banu Hashim whose sons you have killed.' This was empty flattery, for Mu'awiya knew well that 'Ubayd Allah b. al-'Abbas was not one to carry out blood-revenge for his sons. As Busr, humiliated, picked up his sword, 'Ubayd Allah bragged: 'By God, I was not going to kill Busr for one of my sons; he is too base, vile, and despicable for that. By God, I do not see that I would obtain revenge for the two of them except through YazTd and 'Abd Allah, the sons of Mu'awiya.' Mu'awiya merely laughed and commented: 'What is

⁴⁵⁴ BaladhurT, *Ansd*, III, 37-8; Abu 1-Faraj, *Maqatil*, 64-5.

the offence of YazTd and 'Abd Allah? By God, I did not order, know, or desire it.⁴⁵⁵

The Kufans waited next morning in vain for 'Ubayd Allah to come out and lead their morning prayer. Then Qays b. Sa'd took over and, in his sermon, harshly condemned him, his father and his brother, from whom nothing good had ever come; al-'Abbas had gone out to fight his nephew, the Prophet, at Badr, had been captured by the AnsarT Abu l-Yusr Ka'b b. 'Amr and been ransomed; 'Abd Allah, appointed governor of Basra by the Commander of the Faithful 'AIT, had stolen the money of God and the Muslims and bought slave girls with it, claiming that was legitimate for him; this one had run away as governor of Yemen from Busr b. AbT Artah leaving his two sons to be killed, and now he did the same here. The men shouted: 'Praise be to God that He has removed him from us; stand up with us against our enemy.' Qays was their man.⁴⁵⁶

Mu'awiya thought that the desertion of 'Ubayd Allah had broken the spirit of the enemy and sent Busr with troops to persuade them to surrender. Qays attacked and drove him back. The next day Busr attacked with larger forces but was again defeated. Mu'awiya now wrote to Qays offering bribes and extending him an invitation, but Qays answered that he would never meet him except with a lance between them. In his next letter Mu'awiya called him a Jew, son of a Jew, who courted being killed for a prize that would never be his. He suggested that if the party dear to Qays were victorious, he would be deposed and replaced, and if the party odious to him won he would be tortured and killed; his father had already shot arrows in a vain fight only to be deserted by his people and to perish in Hawran as an outcast. In reply Qays called Mu'awiya an idol (*wathan*), son of a Mekkan idol. 'You entered Islam under duress, stayed in it out of fear, and left it voluntarily without faith preceding or hypocrisy occurring as a novelty on your part.' Qays' father had fought an honest battle, hitting his target, but someone 'whose dust you cannot cleave⁴⁵⁷ and whose ankle you do not reach' had incited opposition to him; it was a cause shunned by many; Mu'awiya had called him a Jew, son of a Jew, 'but you and the people know that I and my father are of the Helpers of the religion which you have left and the enemies of the religion which you have joined.' Mu'awiya was reduced to silence. 'Amr b. al-'As suggested that he answer, but he confessed that he was

⁴⁵⁵ BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, II, 459-60, quoting the account of Hisham al-KalbT. The story appears in variant versions in many sources. See ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 661-3; *Aghant*, XV, 47.

⁴⁵⁶ Abu l-Faraj, *Maqatil*, 65.

⁴⁵⁷ 'To cleave someone's dust' was metaphorical for 'to contest with, to overtake'. Qays was reducing Mu'awiya, who had boasted of being superior to 'Umar, to his proper size.

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afraid that Qays' next reply might be worse than this one.²⁷ As the news of the mutiny against al-Hasan and of his having been wounded arrived, however, both sides refrained from fighting in order to await further developments.

Mu'awiya now sent 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir b. Kurayz and 'Abd al-Rahman b. Samura as his envoys to al-Hasan. Ibn 'Amir implored al-Hasan to spare the blood of the Community of Muhammad. Mu'awiya, he said, was obstinate, and he therefore appealed to al-Hasan to beware of obstinacy lest the people perish between the two of them; Mu'awiya would appoint him his successor and give him whatever he wished. 'Abd al-Rahman b. Samura spoke to him in the same vein. The argument about saving Muslim blood evidently met al-Hasan's own sentiments. He accepted the overture in principle and sent 'Amr b. Salima al-Hamdani al-Arhabi and his own brother-in-law Muhammad b. al-Ash'ath al-Kindi back to Mu'awiya as his negotiators, together with the envoys of the latter. Mu'awiya then wrote a letter addressing him humbly: 'To al-Hasan b. 'AIT from Mu'awiya b. AbT Sufyan.' He stated that he was making peace with him on the basis that the reign would belong to al-Hasan after him. He swore solemnly by God and the Messenger Muhammad that he would not commit any wrong against, or seek to harm him. He would give him 1,000,000 dirhams from the treasury (*bayt al-mal*) annually, and the land tax of Fasa and Darabjird would belong to him; al-Hasan was to send his own tax agents to collect it and could do with the two tax districts whatever he pleased. The letter was witnessed by the four envoys and dated in RabT II 41/August 661.

When al-Hasan read the letter he commented: 'He is trying to appeal to my greed for 'a matter' which, if I desired it, I would not surrender to him.' Then he sent 'Abd Allah b. al-Harith b. Nawfal b. al-Harith b. 'Abd al-Muttalib, whose mother Hind was Mu'awiya's sister, to the Umayyad, instructing him: 'Go to your uncle and tell him: If you grant safety to the people I shall pledge allegiance to you.' Mu'awiya now gave him a blank sheet with his seal at the bottom of it, inviting him to write on it whatever he wished. Al-Hasan wrote that he was making peace with Mu'awiya, surrendering the reign over the Muslims to him on the basis that he act in it according to the Book of God, the Sunna of His Prophet and the conduct of the righteous caliphs. He stipulated that Mu'awiya should not be entitled to appoint his successor but that there should be an electoral council (*shura*)-, the people would be safe, wherever they were, with respect to their person, their property and their offspring; Mu'awiya

²⁷ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, III, 39–40; Abu l-Faraj, *Maqatil*, 65-6. According to the version of Abu l-Faraj Mu'awiya wanted to answer the letter but 'Amr persuaded him not to do so.

would not seek any wrong against al-Hasan secretly or openly, and would not intimidate any of his companions. The letter was witnessed by 'Abd Allah b. al-Harith and 'Amr b. Salima and conveyed by them to Mu'awiya for him to take cognizance of its contents and to attest his acceptance.²⁸

Mu'awiya now moved with his army from Maskin to Kufa where he first camped between al-Nukhayla and the store-house for provisions. Al-Hasan and Qays b. Sa'd also returned with their men to al-Nukhayla. Before leaving al-Mada'in al-Hasan addressed his men with a sermon in which he quoted Qur'an IV 19: 'Perhaps you hate something, though God will put in it much good.' As he met Mu'awiya in Kufa, he and 'Amr b. Salima al-Hamdari pledged allegiance in public. Mu'awiya demanded: 'Get up and apologize.' At first al-Hasan declined, but Mu'awiya insisted. Al-Hasan reminded the people that he and his brother al-Husayn were the only grandsons of the Prophet; Mu'awiya had contested a right that belonged to al-Hasan who ceded it to him in the best interest of the Community and for the sake of sparing their blood. 'You have pledged allegiance to me on the basis that you make peace with whomever I make peace. I have deemed it right to make peace with him and have pledged allegiance to him, since I considered whatever spares blood as better than whatever causes it to be shed. I desired your best interest and what I did should be an argument against whoever covets the reign.'²⁹

In his own speech to the Kufans at al-Nukhayla, Mu'awiya laid out his vision of proper government. He told them that, after duly considering matters, he had recognized that people would behave well only under three conditions: they must meet their enemy in his country, for if they did not attack him there, he would attack them; the stipends and provisions must be distributed at the proper time; expeditions to nearby territories should last six months, those to remote areas a year. Then he reminded them that he had stipulated conditions, made promises to them, and raised their desires. He had done so merely wishing to extinguish the fire of insurrection, to cut short the war, to cajole the people and calm them. According to the more drastic versions of the speech he stated that his promises to al-Hasan and anyone else were but

²⁸ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, 111,40—2. Ibn A'tham gives a slightly longer version (*Futuh*, IV, 159—60).

²⁹ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, III, 42-3. Al-BaladhurT quotes other versions of al-Hasan's speech (*ibid.*, 43-4). Many of his men openly denounced him for his surrender to Mu'awiya. Sufyan b. AbT Layla al-Hamdant addressed him as the humiliator of the faithful (*mudhill al-mu'minm*). Hujr b. 'AdT told him: 'You have blackened the faces of the faithful.' He defended himself invariably with the argument that he was seeking to spare their blood (Abu I-Faraj, *Maqdtl*, 67-8; BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, III, 44-6).

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dirt under his feet which he would not keep.³⁰ Then he shouted: 'God's protection is dissolved from anyone who does not come forth and pledge allegiance. Surely, I have sought revenge for the blood of Uthman, may God kill his murderers, and have returned the reign to those to whom it belongs in spite of the rancour of some people. We grant respite of three nights. Whoever has not pledged allegiance by then will have no protection and no pardon.' The people hastily came from every direction to pledge allegiance.³¹

No keen observer of the game of politics could have been in doubt that Mu'awiya ever had had any intention of fulfilling his exorbitant promises made for the noble purpose of shortening the war. Yet it was not a newly discovered sense of honesty that induced him now to disavow them publicly as fraud. The presence of a massive Syrian army whose chauvinistic patriotism he had fanned to fever pitch with vows of revenge for the wronged caliph forced him to reveal his hand more quickly than he, generally inclined to caution, might otherwise have done. Yet since he would need them again, he could not afford to confess that his vows of vengeance, too, had been mere war fraud, and had to proceed with the game of make-believe.

According to Ibn A'tham's account, there were immediate protests and abuse, and Mu'awiya, fearing the outbreak of riots, regretted his words.³² This is not confirmed by the more reliable sources and is probably fiction. In the mosque of Kufa, shortly afterwards, Mu'awiya also boasted of his brutishness in order to please his kinsman al-Walid b. 'Uqba who had disgraced himself there. While still camping outside Kufa, however, Mu'awiya faced a Kharijite rebellion led by Farwa b. Nawfal al-Ashja'i. Farwa had been staying with five hundred Kharijites at Shahrazur while refraining from attacks on 'AIT and al-Hasan. He had no doubts now that it was legitimate to fight Mu'awiya and entered Kufa with his men. Mu'awiya sent a Syrian cavalry troop against them, but they were beaten back by the rebels. Al-Hasan had already left for Medina together with his brother al-Husayn and his cousin 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far, accompanied by Mu'awiya as far as Qanarat al-HTra. Ever eager to find others to fight his wars, Mu'awiya now sent after al-Hasan, ordering him to return and fight the Kharijites. Al-Hasan, who had reached al-Qadisiyya, wrote back: 'I have abandoned the fight against you, even though it was my legal right, for the sake of peace and

³⁰ Abu l-Faraj, *Maqatil*, 69; Ibn A'tham, *Futuh*, IV, 164; Baladhuri, *Ansab*, III, 44, 48. According to the account of Abu l-Faraj, the Kufan traditionist Abu Ishaq al-Sab'iti, who reported having himself heard Mu'awiya's words, added the comment: 'He was, by God, utterly perfidious (*wa-kana wa llahighaddaran*).' Abu Ishaq would have been eight years old at the time if, as he claimed, he was born in the year 33/653-4 (Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, VIII, 63). ³¹ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, III, 46-7. ³² Ibn A'tham, *Futuh*, IV, 164.

reconciliation of the Community. Do you think I shall fight together with you?'⁴⁵⁸

The caliph now turned to the Kufans, threatening that if they would not take care of their turbulent brethren, he would withdraw his pardon of them. He had, he told them, not fought them that they might pray, fast, perform the pilgrimage, and give alms, since they were doing that already. Rather, he had fought them in order to command them as their amir, and God had granted him that against their will.⁴⁵⁹ The Kharijites in turn asked the Kufans to leave them alone since they were fighting their enemy Mu'awiya. If they won, the Kufans would be rid of him, and if Mu'awiya won, they would be rid of the Kharijites. Blinded by their hatred of the Kharijites, the Kufans insisted on fighting them. The Kharijites commented: 'May God have mercy on our brethren of al-Nahrawan. They knew you best, people of Kufa.' As Farwa b. Nawfal was seized by his people Ashja', the Kharijites chose 'Abd Allah b. (Abi) l-Hawsa' al-Ta'T as their leader, and were killed together with him.⁴⁶⁰

When the Basrans heard of al-Hasan's surrender and of Mu'awiya's conduct in Kufa, they rioted and declared that they would not accept the rule of the new caliph. 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas is not mentioned; he must have left them immediately after al-Hasan's resignation. Humran b. Aban of the Banu l-Namir b. Qasit of RabT'a, 'Uthman's client whom he had banished to Basra, rose in revolt and seized control of the town. Mu'awiya at first intended to send a man of the Banu l-Qayn, who had a blood claim against the Basrans, to subdue them.⁴⁶¹ Either 'Ubayd Allah or 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas⁴⁶² advised him against this, however, and Mu'awiya decided to send Busr b. AbT Artah. Busr arrived in Basra in Rajab 41/November 661 and evidently had no difficulty in quelling the insurrection of Humran. He lived up to his reputation as child murderer by threatening to kill the sons of Ziyad b. AbTh who was still holding out in Istakhr against Mu'awiya's reign. In this instance, however, the show may have been staged, for Mu'awiya was convinced that he would be able

⁴⁵⁸ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, III, 46; Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, XVI, 14-15 (al-Mada'inl).

¹⁴ Ibn Abi l-Hadld, *Sharh*, XVI, 15; Abu l-Faraj, *Maqatil*, 70. ³⁵ Tabari, II, 9-10.

³⁶ At the beginning of al-Hasan's reign, Mu'awiya is said to have sent a man of Himyar to Kufa and a man of (al-)Qayn to Basra as spies. Both men were seized and killed. This was presumably the reason for Mu'awiya's choice. Both al-Hasan and 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas are said to have complained to Mu'awiya who rejected their charges (Abu l-Faraj, *Maqatil*, 52-4).

⁴⁶² Most of the sources name here 'Ubayd Allah b. al-'Abbas. In the Tabari edition (II, 11) 'Abd Allah was chosen by the editor against the MSS as in other passages. In the present case a confusion with 'Abd Allah seems not unlikely. 'Abd Allah could have been in the presence of Mu'awiya if he left Basra immediately after the surrender of al-Hasan. For him to give advice to Mu'awiya concerning Basra would obviously be more reasonable than for 'Ubayd Allah to do so.

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to buy Ziyad, his bastard brother, though for no small price. When Ziyad's uterine brother Abu Bakra intervened to save his nephews, Busr told him that he was acting under Mu'awiya's instructions, but allowed him to intercede with the Commander of the Faithful. Mu'awiya immediately ordered the release of Ziyad's sons. After prolonged haggling with Ziyad over the spoils of 'money of the Muslims' put aside in his governorship, he allowed him to swallow them up and then crowned his bribe with his formal recognition of Ziyad as his father's son. Ziyad was now ready to deliver his former allies, who proved less venal than he, to Mu'awiya's knife.

The year 41 of the *hijra* came to be known as ^K*am al-jatma a*, the year of the Community. *The fitna*, Inter-Muslim War, was over, and the unity of the Community under a single caliph was restored. Yet it was not the old Community that was resurrected. The universal brotherhood of Islam, the respect for the sanctity of Muslim blood legislated by the Prophet, would not return. The schisms torn open in the war would not heal, but rather deepened and hardened. Umayyad government, whose legitimacy was, as noted by Wellhausen, founded on the claim of revenge for the caliph 'Uthman, kept pitting Muslims against Muslims, inciting suspicion, mistrust, hatred and constant strife. Not until the caliphate of the pious 'Umar II was a short-lived attempt made to bring about a broad reconciliation between the factions rather than governing by provocation, repression and oppression.

The caliphate itself was transformed. Sunnite tradition recognized the profound change and attributed to the Prophet the prediction that the successorship to prophethood (*khilafat al-nubuwwa*) would last after him for thirty years to be followed by 'biting kingship' (*muluk ladud*). No longer was the principle of *sabiqa*, early merit and service in the cause of Islam, acknowledged as the criterion for the choice of the successor of the Prophet. Instead, swords and soldiers' boots, the natural prop of despotism, determined thenceforth the identity of the Vicegerent of God on earth. The true implications of 'Uthman's adopted title Vicegerent of God, of being above rather than subject to Islam - from which he personally had shied away in the end - were now fully realized by Mu'awiya and his successors. The caliph became counterpart and successor to the Roman-Byzantine emperor. He took over the old crown lands conquered by the Muslim armies as his divine right. He ruled Muslims as his subjects, absolute lord over their life and death, himself above the law and the *lex talionis*, killing at discretion whomever he saw as a potential threat to his power.

In a wider historical perspective, Islam was now taken over by the state. Just as three centuries earlier Roman-Byzantine despotism had

appropriated Christianity, strangled its pacifist religious core, and turned it into a tool of imperial domination and repression, so it now appropriated Islam, strangling its spirit of religious brotherhood and community and using it as an instrument of repressive social control, exploitation and military terrorization. The Roman emperor, in pagan times deified in order to exact worship from his subjects, had since Constantine become head of the Christian church, the Vicar of Christ on earth, a Christ transformed from a Saviour and brother of man into a grim Pantocrator and Judge. The Umayyad caliph, rival and successor of the Roman emperor in all but name, became the Vicegerent of God on earth, a God who now primarily commanded absolute obedience and unquestioning submission to His arbitrary Decree and Ordainment.

The Arabs had now what most of them had dreaded and vigorously resisted for so long. They had lost their freedom and tribal autonomy and become subjects of a state in the form of traditional kingship introduced through the back door of Islam. The first step had, as noted, already been taken when Abu Bakr turned the religious obligation of giving alms into an assessable and enforceable tax. The final step was taken under Mu'awiya, when the duty to obey the Commander of the Faithful was made enforceable under pain of death, rather than imprisonment and deportation as it had been under the early caliphs. They had now, as 'AIT had warned them, the rule of Caesar and Chosroes. Those still remembering their former freedom and their brotherhood and respect for Muslim life under the Prophet and the early caliphs might wonder what Umayyad state Islam had in common with the message preached by Muhammad. Seeing the odious little impostor posturing as the Vicegerent of God on earth, they could well believe that their Prophet had pronounced the hadith attributed to him: 'When you see Mu'awiya on my pulpit, kill him!'

It remains to take a brief look at the career and fate of some of the surviving actors in the story of the early caliphate under the new Umayyad kingdom. Muhammad's grandson al-Hasan retired permanently to Medina and tried to keep aloof from political involvement for or against Mu'awiya. In spite of his resignation, however, he was still considered the chief of the Prophet's house by the Banu Hashim and the partisans of 'AIT, who pinned their hopes on his eventual succession to the Umayyad. According to the general account of al-BaladhurT (qalu), al-Hasan, on the basis of his treaty with Mu'awiya, sent his tax collectors to Fasa and Darabjird. The caliph had, however, instructed 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir, now again governor of Basra, to incite the Basrans to protest that this money belonged to them by right of their conquest and that their stipends were being diminished. According to some they chased al-Hasan's tax collectors out of the two provinces. Mu'awiya thus confined himself to

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the payment of 1,000,000 or 2,000,000 dirhams (annually) which he took from the land tax of Isfahan and elsewhere.⁴⁶³ All this is surely fiction. Mu'awiya had stipulated the land tax of Fasa and Darabjird in his offer to al-Hasan in order to test the resolve of al-Hasan and the Basrans to continue to uphold 'Umar's ruling, vigorously supported by 'AIT, that the *fiay*' from the conquered lands belonged to the conquerors. His ulterior motive was to assert the sole right of government to tax and to restrict the garrison towns' right to receive payment of stipends arbitrarily set by the authorities. Al-Hasan was fully aware of this. He had rejected Mu'awiya's offer and in his own peace proposal had made no stipulation for any financial compensation. That he would now send tax collectors from Medina to Iran, after just having made plain that he would not join Mu'awiya in fighting the Kharijites, is entirely incredible.

Hardly more plausible is that Mu'awiya would, under the circumstances, send al-Hasan annually 1,000,000 or 2,000,000 dirhams, to which he was not even contractually obliged, since al-Hasan had not accepted his offer. Mu'awiya might have paid him a princely salary for a time if the grandson of the Prophet had joined him and propped up the legitimacy of his regime by unequivocal support as his crown prince. But as he observed al-Hasan's determination to retire to Medina and his consistent assertion that he had resigned only to spare Muslim blood, not in recognition of Mu'awiya's superior qualifications for the caliphate, he lost all interest in continuing to cajole him. Mu'awiya's Syrian propaganda machine now turned against him with insinuations that he was plotting to overthrow the government. This is reflected in the report of 'Abd al-Rahman b. Jubayr b. Nufayr al-Hadrami, an 'Uthmanid loyalist from Hims,⁴⁶⁴ that his father reproached al-Hasan: 'The people say that you want the caliphate.' Al-Hasan answered: 'The skulls of the Arabs were in my hand; they were ready to make peace with whomever I concluded peace and to make war on whomever I declared war, yet I abandoned it, seeking instead the face of God. Would I now want it through the people of the Hijaz?'⁴⁶⁵

Disappointed in his hopes that the Prophet's grandson would bolster the legitimacy of his regime by lending his moral support, Mu'awiya proposed strengthening his ties with Muhammad's Family by marrying his granddaughter Umama, 'AIT's widow. Umama was the daughter of Abu l-'As b. al-Rabi' of 'Abd Shams and Muhammad's eldest daughter, Zaynab.⁴⁶⁶ 'AIT had married her some time after Fatima's death, and she

⁴⁶³ Baladhuri, *Ansdb*, III, 47. ³⁹ See Madelung, 'Apocalyptic Prophecies', 145-7, 178.

⁴⁰ Baladhuri, *Ansdb*, III, 49, variant: through the goats (*atyas*) of the Hijaz.

⁴¹ Abu l-'A? b. al-Rabi' was Zaynab's maternal cousin. She bore him also a son, 'AIT, who died, however, as a boy.

had borne him a son, Muhammad al-Awsat. After 'All's death, her paternal cousin 'Abd al-Rahman b. Muhriz b. Haritha b. RabT'a had taken her to Medina. Mu'awiya now ordered his governor Marwan b. al-Hakam to convey his marriage proposal to her. Umama can hardly have been pleased by the offer from a ruler who continued the practice of public cursing of her murdered husband and father of her son. She gave the right to decide on her remarriage to the Hashimite al-MughTra b. Nawfal b. al-Harith b. 'Abd al-Muttalib, who had briefly been governor of Kufa under al-Hasan's reign. Having made sure that she was giving him a completely free hand, al-MughTra himself married her, with a dowry of 400 dinars. Marwan informed Mu'awiya, who instructed him to leave her alone since she was most entitled to decide about herself. The caliph, however, judged al-MughTra's conduct as sufficiently suspicious that he later exiled (*sayyara*) him from Medina to nearby Wadi l-Safra'. There both he and the Prophet's granddaughter died. They had a son, Yahya.⁴²

Mu'awiya's largesse among the Banu Hashim was mostly confined to al-Hasan's cousin 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far b. AbT Talib, who, after 'AIT's death and al-Hasan's abdication, had abandoned all political ambition. 'Abd Allah paid regular visits to Mu'awiya and was granted by him 1,000,000 dirhams annually, which he spent in entertaining and making lavish gifts to poets, singers and musicians in Medina.⁴³ Mu'awiya's motivation in voluntarily heaping these sums on a Hashimite to whom he owed nothing was similar, though in a cruder form, to 'Umar's motivation in courting and elevating al-'Abbas and his son 'Abd Allah, while keeping 'AIT, the recognized chief of Hashim, strictly on a par with the other senior Companions. 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far, who neither had a political following nor engaged in subversive religious teaching as did Ibn al-'Abbas, was no threat to the Umayyad regime. Rather, he conformed to the image of the Prophet's kin that Mu'awiya sought to portray for the public. At best, they were greedy profligates, bon vivants and philanderers, unsuited for the serious business of government, which required the management of the glorious dynasty.

Umayyad propaganda is thus reflected in the ill-informed account of al-Zuhri on the negotiations between al-Hasan and Mu'awiya, which was quoted by al-TabarT in preference to the Kufan reports. Al-ZuhrT described al-Hasan as eager to take all that he could get for himself from Mu'awiya and then 'to enter the Community'.⁴⁴ It was, according to his account, al-Hasan who first addressed Mu'awiya and enumerated the conditions on which he would obey him. Mu'awiya received his letter after he had sent al-Hasan a blank sheet with his seal under it for him to

⁴² Baladhurl, *Ansab*, I, 400. ⁴³ Madelung 'The Hashimiyat', 18-22.

⁴⁴ TabarT, II, 3.

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stipulate his conditions. The greedy al-Hasan now doubled his previous demands. Mu'awiya retained al-Hasan's original letter. When the two met they quarrelled about which of the two letters was valid and, in the end, having outwitted the double-crosser, Mu'awiya fulfilled none of the conditions.⁴⁶⁷ Al-Zuhrī's story is blatant defamation of Muhammad's grandson, while describing Mu'awiya, along the common Umayyad propaganda line, as the sly fox *idahiya*). It confirms, however, both the existence of two agreements and that Mu'awiya fulfilled the conditions of neither.

Tendentious reporting turned al-Hasan also into a voluptuous sensualist who spent his fortune and life in marrying and divorcing countless women and maintaining an immense harem. The fanciful and often hostile anecdotal material supporting this image deserves little credit. The number of his reliably recorded marriages is smaller than for the Umayyad 'Uthman.⁴⁶⁸ As heir to 'All's property, including the *sadaqat*, real estate, of the Prophet in Medina which 'Umar had turned over to al-'Abbas and 'AIT,⁴⁶⁹ al-Hasan was obviously a man of substantial wealth, although not comparable to the enormous riches of some of the prominent Companions such as Talha and al-Zubayr, now in the hands of their heirs, and of the Umayyad princes. Receiving also one of the highest stipends under 'Umar's pension system, he could easily afford the high lifestyle of the Qurayshite nobility in Medina without any princely subsidies from Mu'awiya. His pursuit of women was not more covetous than that of most of his class and less frivolous than that of many.

It is thus evident that the explanation that Lammens in his character assassination of al-Hasan⁴⁷⁰ offered for the joy manifested by Mu'awiya

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 5-6. Al-Zuhrī also reported, again reflecting Umayyad propaganda, that Qays b. Sa'd, not al-Hasan, stipulated amnesty for himself and the followers of 'AIT in his truce agreement without asking for any money. Mu'awiya generously agreed to his conditions (*ibid.*, 8).

⁴⁶⁸ See excursus 7 on the marriages and children of al-Hasan. In her article on al-Hasan in the *EI* (2nd edn) Veccia-Vaglieri states as a fact that after his move to Medina 'as before, he went from one marriage to another, so earning for himself the title of *al-Mittak*, 'the Divorcer.' He had 60 or 70 or 90 wives and 300 or 400 concubines. This life of sensual pleasures does not appear, however, to have aroused much censure.' These figures are entirely absurd. In a similar vein, H. Halm writes: 'Al-Hasan kehrte nach Madina zurück und lebte dort bis zu seinem Tode als reicher Grandseigneur. . . das einzig Bemerkenswerte, das die Quellen noch über ihn zu berichten wissen, sind seine zahlreichen Ehen und seine große Nachkommenschaft.' (*Der schiitische Islam: Von der Religion zur Revolution*, (Munich, 1994), 20). According to the best sources, al-Hasan's children amounted to seven or eight sons and six daughters. These numbers were by the standards of the Qurayshite nobility both before and in early Islam not unusually large and smaller than for 'Uthman or Marwan.

⁴⁶⁹ Among al-Hasan's sons, the eldest, Zayd b. al-Hasan, inherited the *sadaqat* of the Prophet, while the second, al-Hasan b. al-Hasan, inherited control of the *sadaqat* of 'AIT (MufTd, *Irshad*, 176, 178; ZubayrT, *Nasab*, 46). ⁴⁸ *Mo'azvia*, 147-54.

over the death of the Prophet's grandson in 49/669 or 50/670 - to wit that 'the prolongation of his days became onerous for the finances of the Umayyads'⁴⁹ - does not hold water. The cause of Mu'awiya's joy was that the death of al-Hasan removed a hurdle to his appointment of his son Yazid to the succession, which he was eagerly promoting at the time. For while it is true that al-Hasan was innocuous enough and hardly harboured any intentions of reclaiming the caliphate,⁵⁰ many of the disaffected, smarting under the divisive Umayyad despotism, had not forgotten Mu'awiya's recognition of al-Hasan as his legitimate successor and al-Hasan's stipulation of a *shura*. This situation also lends credibility to the reports that al-Hasan was poisoned by his wife Ja'da, daughter of al-Ash'ath b. Qays,⁵¹ at the instigation of Mu'awiya. These reports are not, as often suggested, accepted only by Shi'ite sources, but also by the major Sunni historians al-Waqidi, al-Mada'ini, Umar b. Shabba, al-Baladhuri and al-Haytham b. 'Adi.⁵² According to Abu Bakr b. Hafs, great-grandson of Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas and highly respected Medinan Sunni transmitter from Urwa b. al-Zubayr, it was generally believed at the time that Mu'awiya poisoned both al-Hasan and Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas, who died in the same year.⁵³ Al-Tabari suppressed these reports not, as

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 153. In order to make his argument more plausible, Lammens increased the sum demanded and received by al-Hasan under the treaty to over 5,000,000 dirhams in addition to the revenue of a district of Persia' (*ibid.*, 149). His source, al-Dinawari, does not mention any demand of 5,000,000 dirhams, only the revenue of al-Ahwaz. Mu'awiya, according to Lammens, kept word in everything he had promised. Al-Dinawari, in spite of his strong pro-Umayyad and anti-Shi'ite bias, states nothing of this sort. The passage to which Lammens (149 n. 3) refers describes Mu'awiya as vainly asking 'Amr b. al-'As for a contribution from the treasury of Egypt because of the exhaustion of his financial resources through gifts to his visitors from the Hijaz and Iraq.

⁵⁰ Contrariwise, the pro-Umayyad account of al-Dinawari suggests that al-Hasan regretted his surrender when Hujr b. 'Adi urged him in Medina to resume the war against Mu'awiya (al-Dinawari, *al-Akhhbar al-fiwal*, ed. V. Guirgass (Leiden, 1888-1912), 1,233-4).

⁵¹ According to al-Haytham b. 'Adi, it was rather the daughter of Suhayl b. 'Amr of 'Amir Quraysh who poisoned al-Hasan for a bribe of 100,000 dinars from Mu'awiya (Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, III, 59). Al-Waqidi, quoted by al-Dhahabi (*Siyar*, III, 274), reported that according to one of his informants a servant of al-Hasan offered him a poisoned drink at the instigation of Mu'awiya.

⁵² The generally pro-Umayyad 'Awana also seems to imply that Mu'awiya had a hand in al-Hasan's demise when he describes him as instructing Marwan, just before al-Hasan's death, to inform him as quickly as possible when it happened. Marwan did so, and Mu'awiya thus could surprise 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas with the news (Ibn Abi Usaybi'a, *'Uyun al-anba' fi tabaqat al-atibba'*, ed. A. Müller (Cairo, 1299/1882), I, 118-19). The report, however, erroneously suggests that Marwan was at that time governor of Medina. Lammens interpreted it as agreeing with reports that al-Hasan's mortal illness lasted two months (*Mo'awia*, 152-3). This interpretation is in conflict, however, with 'Awana's point that Mu'awiya wanted to surprise Ibn al-'Abbas with the news. Ibn al-'Abbas would have been among the first to know of a mortal illness afflicting al-Hasan.

⁵³ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, I, 404: *kanu yarawna annahii sammahuma*; Abu l-Faraj, *Maqatil*, 73. Abu Bakr b. Hafs is 'Abd Allah b. Hafs b. Umar b. Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas (Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, V, 188-9). He was thus a grandson of Umar b. Sa'd, the leader of the Kufan army which slaughtered al-Husayn and his entourage at Karbala'.

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suggested by Lammens, because he considered them insignificant,⁵⁴ but because he saw them as potentially dangerous for the faith of the common people (*'awamm*). For the same reason he suppressed the reports about Mu'awiya's recognition of Ziyad as his bastard brother.⁵⁵

The burial of al-Hasan in Medina nearly provoked fighting between the Hashimites and Umayyads. According to the account of 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr, al-Hasan instructed his family before his death to bury him with his grandfather Muhammad. If they feared evil, however, they should bury him with his mother Fatima. When they proposed interring him next to Muhammad, Marwan interfered, declaring: "Uthman will not be buried in Hashsh Kawkab and al-Hasan here."⁵⁶ The Banu Hashim and Banu Umayya assembled, each group with their supporters, brandishing their weapons. Abu Hurayra, this time taking the side of the Prophet's Family, asked Marwan: 'Will you prevent al-Hasan from being buried in this place when I have heard the Messenger of God say about him and his brother al-Husayn that they are the lords of the youth (*.saiyyida shabab*) of the inmates of Paradise?' Marwan told him: 'Leave us alone. The hadith of the Messenger of God would be lost if nobody but you and Abu Saïd al-Khudri had preserved it. You have become a Muslim only at the siege of Khaybar.' Abu Hurayra protested that he had indeed accepted Islam at Khaybar, but that he then stayed constantly with the Prophet and knew everyone whom he loved and whom he hated, for whom he prayed and whom he cursed. When 'A'isha saw the men and weapons, she feared evil would occur and said: 'The apartment is mine. I shall not permit anyone to be buried in it.' Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya suggested to his brother al-Husayn: 'If he had given testamentary instruction (*awsa*) to be buried here, we would so bury him, even facing death. But he has made it conditional saying 'unless you fear evil'. What evil could be greater than what you see?' Al-Hasan then was buried next to his mother in the cemetery of BaqT' al-Gharqad.⁵⁷ Marwan now joined

⁵⁴ Lammens, *Mo'awia*, 149.

⁵⁵ See Wellhausen, *Das arabische Reich*, 76. The adoption of Ziyad as his brother, in flagrant violation of the law of Islam, was generally considered by religious scholars as one of the most scandalous of Mu'awiya's acts.

⁵⁶ The Marwanids deeply resented that 'Uthman was not buried together with his predecessors next to the Prophet. 'Umar II recounted that the caliph al-WalTd inspected the mosque of Medina while he was governor. At the Prophet's tomb he inquired whether Abu Bakr and 'Umar were buried with him and then asked where the Commander of the Faithful 'Uthman was buried. The governor suspected that he intended to remove the remains of Abu Bakr and 'Umar, and explained that 'Uthman had been killed and was buried at a time of revolt. The caliph calmed down (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 113—14).

⁵⁷ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, III, 60-2; Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, XVI, 13-14. Since 'AlThad buried Fatima secretly at night, there was disagreement about the location of her tomb. According to some reports she was buried in her home which adjoined and was later

those carrying the bier and, when questioned, paid tribute to a man 'whose forbearance (*hilm*) weighed mountains.'⁵⁸ The Umayyad governor Sa'd b. al-'As led the funeral prayer.

Mu'awiya's joy about the death of the Prophet's grandson was slightly dampened by worries about who would now be recognized as the leader of the Banu Hashim. He thought that the politically experienced and astute 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas might take the place of the passive pacifist bothered him. According to one report, he commented to Ibn al-'Abbas when visiting Mekka: 'How amazing that al-Hasan drank a Ta'if honey drink with glue water (*ma' rima*) and died from it!' Ibn al-'Abbas answered: 'If al-Hasan perished, your term will not be deferred.' Mu'awiya: 'And you are today the lord of your people.' Ibn al-'Abbas realized that he was getting on dangerous ground and reassured the caliph: 'So long as Abu 'Abd Allah [al-Husayn] remains, surely not.'⁵⁹ According to other reports, Mu'awiya offered his condolences to Ibn al-'Abbas, adding: 'May God not cause you grief (*yasii'uka*).' Ibn al-'Abbas replied: 'God will not cause me grief, Commander of the Faithful, so long as He leaves you alive.' Mu'awiya ordered a gift of 100,000 dirhams for him.⁶⁰ This cousin of the Prophet had learned how to deal with 'the men of this world'. He preferred to continue his religious teaching.

Qays b. Sa'd b. 'Ubada pledged allegiance to Mu'awiya in the presence of al-Hasan. He asked the latter if he was absolved from his pledge to him, and al-Hasan said yes. A chair was pulled up for him, a massive figure, in front of Mu'awiya's throne. The caliph asked him: 'Will you pledge allegiance, Qays?' He answered yes and placed his hand on his thigh without stretching it towards Mu'awiya. The caliph bent down from his throne to touch his hand, which Qays would not raise.⁶¹ Qays withdrew to Medina where he lived in retirement and died towards the end of Mu'awiya's reign in 59/679 or 60/680.⁶² Mu'awiya had obviously no use for the incorruptible 'Jew, son of a Jew' who had governed Egypt for 'AIT with such wise restraint. A Ziyad, who could be bought to keep his subjects under control by ruthless exploitation of their divisions, as he had done before for 'AIT, suited him better. Yet Qays escaped the fate of

incorporated into the Prophet's mosque (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 106-8). According to another report al-Hasan had tried to arrange for his burial next to Muhammad some time before his death. Marwan informed Mu'awiya, who instructed him to prevent this by all means, just as 'Uthman's burial next to the Prophet had been prevented (Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 62). Another version asserted that 'A'isha incited the Umayyads to prevent the burial next to the Prophet (Abu l-Faraj, *Maqatil*, 75).

⁵⁸ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, III, 66-7; Abu l-Faraj, *Maqatil*, 75-6.

⁵⁹ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, III, 62-3. ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 63-4; Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, XVI, 11. " Baladhuri, *Ansab*, III, 50; Abu l-Faraj, *Maqatil*, 72.

⁶² Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, VI, 34-5; SafadT, *Wafi*, XXIV, 284.

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his equally incorruptible Medinan compatriot Muhammad b. Maslama, who fell victim to a Syrian murderer.

Having acquired the sole rule over the world of Islam, Mu'awiya carried on successfully bribing, cheating, extorting, intimidating and murdering his way through his reign in order to consolidate his grip on money and power and to secure the succession of his unattractive son. Lacking Islamic legitimacy, his regime required the claim of revenge for the wronged caliph as its permanent legitimizing seal. Regular public cursing of 'AIT in the congregational prayers thus remained a vital institution, which was not abolished until sixty years later by the pious 'Umar II. During the pilgrimage, it became sunna for the caliphs to vilify 'AIT on the day of 'Arafa. After the caliphate of 'Umar II, 'Abd Allah b. al-WalTd, grandson of 'Uthman, publicly reminded the caliph Hisham, as he stood on the pulpit at 'Arafa: 'Commander of the Faithful, this is the day on which the caliphs deemed it desirable to curse Abu Turab ['AIT].' Hisham told him that he had not come there to revile and curse anyone.⁶³ Marwan, the architect of Umayyad dynastic rule, clearly recognized the importance of the cursing as a tool of government. He told 'AIT's grandson 'AIT b. al-Husayn privately: 'No one [among the Islamic nobility] was more temperate (*akaff*) towards our master than your master.' The harmless son of al-Husayn asked him: 'Why do you curse him then from the pulpits?' He answered: 'Our reign would not be sound without that (*la yastaqlmu l-amru ilia bi-dhalik*)

Particularly useful for Mu'awiya's purposes was the public cursing of 'AIT in Kufa where, he hoped, it would bring out into the open the latent opposition to Umayyad rule, thus facilitating his measures of repression. When he appointed al-MughTra b. Shu'ba governor of Kufa in Jumada 41/September—October 661, he instructed him: 'Never desist from abusing and censuring 'AIT, from praying for God's mercy and forgiveness for 'Uthman, from disgracing the followers of 'AIT, from removing them and refusing to listen to them, and never cease praising the partisans of 'Uthman, may God be pleased with him, bringing them close to you, and listening to them.'⁶⁵ Al-MughTra punctiliously carried out these instructions, although he, an opportunist more inclined to political intrigue than confrontation, had little sympathy for Mu'awiya's policy of provoking violence. Hujr b. 'AdT acted as the spokesman for the partisans of 'AIT. Whenever he heard the governor abusing 'AIT and praying for 'Uthman in the mosque, he stood up, quoting Qur'an IV 135: 'Stand up in justice as witnesses unto God' and gave witness that the one whom they censured

⁶³ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 116.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 184-5; Ibn 'Asakir, *All*, III, 98-9; Ibn Abi l-Hadld, *Sharh*, XIII, 100.

⁶⁵ TabarT, II, 112.

and blamed was more worthy of excellence and the one whom they vindicated and extolled was more worthy of censure. Al-MughTra would warn him of the wrath of the ruler but then left him alone.

Al-MughTra's son Mutarrif is reported to have narrated how his father vainly attempted to persuade Mu'awiya to change his policy. He had pleaded that the Commander of the Faithful had now reached an advanced age. If he were to make a show of justice and spread goodness by displaying concern for his Hashimite kin and by strengthening his bonds with them, since he had no longer anything to fear from them, he would gain from that lasting fame and reward. Mu'awiya had answered: 'Far from it, would it were so. What fame can I hope for that would last? The brother of Taym [Abu Bakr] reigned, acted justly, and did what he did. Yet as soon as he perished, his fame perished, except for someone occasionally saying: Abu Bakr. Then the brother of 'AdT ['Umar] reigned, strove, and put his shoulder to the wheel for ten years, but as soon as he perished, his fame perished, except for someone occasionally mentioning: 'Umar. Yet Ibn AbT Kabsha [Muhammad's nickname among his Mekkan enemies]⁶⁶ is loudly advertised every day five times: "I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of God." What work could endure and what fame could last after that? No, by God, there is nothing but burying, burying.' Al-MughTra, who had before always praised the sharp mind of Mu'awiya to his son, now confessed to him that he was the most infidel and abominable of men.⁶⁷

Al-MughTra went on cursing 'AIT and extolling 'Uthman until the end of his governorship in the year 50/670 and ignored Hujr's protests, which were becoming more and more insolent. His entourage urged him to take action against the troublemaker and to restore his authority, warning him that his lenience would infuriate the caliph. He told them that Hujr would certainly be killed by his successor, whom he would treat with the same insolence; he, al-MughTra, did not wish to lose the other world by shedding the blood of the best men of this city for the sake of securing Mu'awiya's power in this world.⁶⁸

Al-MughTra's successor was Ziyad, now recognized as Mu'awiya's bastard brother, who had already held the governorship of Basra for some

⁶⁶ The Abu Kabsha, from whom the nickname was derived, was Wajz b. Ghalib of Khuza'a, father of Qayla, the paternal grandmother of Muhammad's mother Amina bt. Wahb b. 'Abd Manaf al-Zuhri. Abu Kabsha was said to have deviated from the religion of his people and to have worshipped the star Sirius (*al-shi'ra*) (Zubayri, *Nasab*, 261-2).

⁶⁷ Ibn Abi l-Hadld, *Sharh*, V, 129-30, quoting the *Muwaffaqiyyat* of al-Zubayr b. Bakkar. The story is in this form certainly fictitious. As Ibn Abi l-Hadld correctly observes, however, al-Zubayr b. Bakkar cannot be accused of Shi'ite or pro-'Alid views. His story rather reflects the image of Mu'awiya among early Sunnite Muslim historians before al-Tabari who, out of anti-Shi'ite sentiments, covered up some of the more scandalous aspects of his career. ⁶⁸ Tabari, II, 113-14.

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time. He was, as Mu'awiya expected, determined to restore law and order and ready to kill in order to make his point. He already had the blood of some Basran Kharijites on his hands. These executions could, however, be justified on the grounds that they had openly declared war on the Community and were a threat to the life of peaceful Muslims. The Kufan partisans of 'AIT with whom he wanted to deal now were, though loudly denouncing God's Vicegerent on earth, neither engaged in armed rebellion nor endangering the life of any Muslim. Ziyad thus had to provoke an incident to justify bloody repression. The occasion was provided by pebbles thrown at his deputy in the mosque. Ziyad came hurriedly from Basra and delivered a sermon threatening Hujr with exemplary punishment. Then he sent his police chief to summon him to the governor. Hujr was surrounded by his followers who answered for him that he would not respond to the summons. Ziyad next sent some men along with the police chief, but they received the same answer. The governor turned to the tribal chiefs, thundering that they were with him in body only, while their brothers, sons and tribes were with Hujr, and threatened to bring down outside forces on them. They hastened to assure him of their loyalty to him and the Commander of the Faithful and of their opposition to Hujr, and he charged them with bringing their tribes under control. Then he ordered the police chief with his men to tear out the poles (*'umud*) of the market booths and to attack the mutineers with them until they surrendered Hujr. Hujr's supporters were unarmed except for Abu l-'Amarrata and no one was killed, although 'Amr b. al-Hamiq was hit over the head with a pole and fell. Abu l-'Amarrata, himself hit with a pole, struck YazTd b. TarTf with his sword, bringing him to the ground.⁶⁹

Hujr b. 'AdT escaped and for a while found shelter moving from one tribal quarter to another. Then he surrendered voluntarily after he had obtained a guarantee of safety from Ziyad with the condition that he would send him to Mu'awiya for judgment. When he appeared before the governor, Ziyad told him that he could not expect pardon after God had placed him in his power. He imprisoned him and swore that he would have killed him immediately were it not for his guarantee.⁷⁰ Then he had Abu Musa al-Ash'arT's son Abu Burda, chief of one of the four quarters of Kufa, draw up a letter of accusation in which he testified: 'Hujr b. 'AdT has renounced obedience, departed from the Community, cursed the caliph, has incited to war and rebellion, gathered the masses to himself summoning them to break their oaths of allegiance and to overthrow the

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 114-20.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 126-7. According to 'Awana, Ziyad swore: 'By God, I shall be most eager to cut the thread of his neck.'

Commander of the Faithful Mu'awiya. He has committed a manifest act of infidelity towards God (*kafara bi llahi kafwatan sal'a*).⁴⁷¹ The harmless mutiny artificially provoked by the governor was thus presented as a dangerous armed rebellion and incitement to civil war and the denunciation of the caliph as apostasy from Islam, the only offence apart from murder and adultery for which the law allowed the death penalty.

The signature of the four government-appointed heads of quarters was not sufficient in the governor's eyes. He summoned the *ashraf*, Qurayshites and tribal chiefs, to do their duty and thus gathered seventy signatures. The witness of al-Sari b. Waqqas al-Harith was written down although he was absent in his tax district. Shurayh b. Hani' al-Harith, who did not testify, learned that his testimony had been recorded. He came forward denying it and denouncing the forgery. The *qadi* Shurayh b. al-Harith, whose testimony would evidently have been most useful for the governor, was asked by him about Hujr but testified that the accused had been most assiduously fasting and praying. Ziyad added his name anyway among the witnesses.⁴⁷¹ The *qadi* now wrote to Mu'awiya that his testimony recorded by Ziyad was false and that he testified that Hujr was of those who perform the prayer, give alms, frequent the pilgrimage and *'umra*, order what is proper and prohibit what is reprehensible, whose blood and property were inviolable. The caliph commented to Ziyad's two messengers, who had conveyed the indictment with a triumphant covering letter from the governor: 'This one, it seems to me, has removed himself from your testimony.'⁴⁷² Then he went back to business.

Hujr wrote to him from prison assuring him that he and his companions stood by their pledge of allegiance to him and that only their enemies had testified against them. The caliph ruled that the testimony of Ziyad - whose fraudulence had just been brought home to him - was more truthful. In the end, he released six of the fourteen accused because their Syrian kinsmen asked him for their pardon. He refused the request of Malik b. Hubayra al-Sakun of Kinda for the life of Hujr. The eight men were offered pardon if they would declare their dissociation from 'AIT and curse him; they refused, and six were executed. The remaining two now asked the executioners to send them to the Commander of the Faithful, promising to say about 'AIT whatever the caliph said. Led before

⁴⁷¹ Wellhausen, trying to picture Ziyad as the tough but correct governor who merely did 'was seines Amtes war' (*Die religiös-politischen Oppositionsparteien im alten Islam* (Berlin, 1901), 25, 60), summarizes these reports, stating (59) that some of the witnesses disavowed their signatures after at first eagerly giving them. In a footnote he concedes, without mentioning Ziyad, that the names of the witnesses, or at least some of them, were not written by these. This is a distinct misrepresentation of his source, Abu Mikhnaf, who rather portrays Ziyad as an unscrupulous and malicious forger.

⁴⁷² Tabari, I, 137.

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Mu'awiya, Karim b. 'Aftf al-Khath'amT appealed to him: 'Fear God, Mu'awiya, you will be transferred from this passing abode to the other, permanent abode and will then be asked what you desired by killing us and why you shed our blood.' Mu'awiya: 'What do you say about 'AIT?' He answered: 'I say about him what you say: I dissociate from the religion of 'AIT with which he professed obedience to God.' Mu'awiya did not want to keep his commitment, but now Shamir b. 'Abd Allah of the Banu Quhafa (of Khath'am) asked him for the life of his kinsman. Mu'awiya granted it to him, but insisted on keeping him in prison for a month. Every other day he sent a messenger to tell him that he held Iraq too precious to allow someone like him to stay there. Shamir b. 'Abd Allah, however, kept pressing him, and Mu'awiya released the prisoner on condition that he would not enter Kufa during his reign. Karim chose to live in Mossul, ever declaring that, should Mu'awiya die, he would return to the city. He died a month before Mu'awiya.

When the other surviving convict, 'Abd al-Rahman b. Hassan al-'AnazT, was led before the Commander of the Faithful, Mu'awiya asked him: 'Now, brother of RabT'a, what do you say about 'AIT?' He replied: 'Leave me and do not ask me, for that is better for you.' Mu'awiya: 'By God, I shall not leave you until you tell me about him.' He said: 'I witness that he was of those who make mention of God often, who command what is right, who act with justice, and forgive the people.' Mu'awiya: 'What do you say about 'Uthman?' He answered: 'He was the first one to open the gate of oppression and bolted the doors of the right.' Mu'awiya: 'You have killed yourself!' 'Abd al-Rahman: 'Rather I have killed you - yet there are no RabT'a in this valley.' He meant that there were no RabT'a among the Syrians who could ask for his life or avenge his blood. The Vicegerent of God now sent him to Ziyad and wrote to the governor: 'This 'AnazT is the worst one you have sent me . . . Kill him in the worst fashion.' Ziyad sent him to Quss al-Nazif, where he was buried alive.⁴⁷³ It was plain murder barely disguised under an absurd charge of apostasy from Islam. Abu Bakr had set a precedent in the War of the Apostasy, but he had rendered licit war on tribes refusing to recognize his succession to the Prophet and to pay the alms-tax to him, not judicial murder of men who recognized the caliph while denouncing his actions. Under the existing law and practice mutineers and rebels not guilty of

⁴⁷³ *Ibid.*, II, 141-3. Wellhausen summed up the latter part of Abu Mikhnaf's report as follows: Mu'awiya freed six of the accused on the intercession of his loyal supporters, but he refused the intercession of Malik b. Hubayra for Hujr. He even offered him and the other prisoners pardon if they dissociated from 'AIT. Two of them did so and saved their lives, even though they withdrew their dissociation afterwards. The other six were executed. On this basis Wellhausen judged that Mu'awiya dealt mildly with the accused (*Oppositionsparteien*, 58—9).

murder could be imprisoned and deported, their houses could be destroyed, but they could not be killed. When Mu'awiya had first consulted his Syrian advisers on what to do with the accused, YazTd b. Asad al-BajalT thus had suggested dispersing them in the towns of Syria where their bullies (*tawaghit*) would take care of them for him.⁴⁷⁴ For Mu'awiya, however, the principle that the ruler must have authority to kill and pardon his subjects at his own discretion without being subject to the *lex talionis* was a vital tool of government. He had been waiting long for an occasion to establish it. Roman state ideology and tyranny triumphed thus over Arab tribal law and Islam.

The shock was predictably profound. Mu'awiya found it again convenient to resort to the ruler's privilege of putting the blame on his underlings and subjects. Even 'A'isha who, after the disastrous miscarriage of her previous public ventures generally kept aloof of political involvement, felt that she could not remain silent in spite of her aversion to 'AIT and his partisans. She is said to have sent the noble Makhzumite 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Harith b. Hisham to Mu'awiya to intercede for Hujr and his companions, but he arrived only after the execution. He asked the Umayyad what had become of the forbearance (*hilm*) of Abu Sufyan. Mu'awiya told him that it had departed from him ever since the forbearing men of his people such as 'Abd al-Rahman shunned him, and the son of Sumayya (Ziyad) had induced him to act. According to another report Mu'awiya paid 'A'isha a visit during the pilgrimage. 'A'isha asked him: 'Do you feel secure that I am not sheltering someone to kill you?' He answered: 'I have entered a house of safety.' 'A'isha: 'Don't you fear God for the murder of Hujr and his companions?' Mu'awiya: 'It is not I who murdered him. Those who testified against him have killed him.'⁷⁵ The Basran 'Uthmanid al-Hasan al-Basri counted the killing of Hujr as one of the four pernicious crimes (*mubiqa*) committed by Mu'awiya.⁷⁶

Mu'awiya's murders were not confined, however, to opponents of his despotic regime. Out of jealousy, he also poisoned one of his own outstanding military leaders, 'Abd al-Rahman b. Khalid b. al-WalTd. 'Abd al-Rahman had participated with his father, who was widely recognized as the real conqueror of Syria, in the battle on the Yarmuk. Mu'awiya appointed him governor of Hims, presumably as a Qurayshite counter-balance to the powerful Himyarite presence there. He led several of the Syrian summer campaigns against the Byzantines and was prominent in Mu'awiya's war against 'AIT at SiffTn and elsewhere. His military excellence and popularity with the northern Syrian army worried Mu'awiya, however, and on one occasion he abruptly dismissed

⁴⁷⁴ TabarT, II, 137. ⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 145. ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 146.

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him as commander. This provoked an exchange in which 'Abd al-Rahman, a proud Makhzumite, suggested that had they been in Mekka, Mu'awiya would not have dared to treat him in this high-handed manner.⁷⁷

As Mu'awiya prepared to pave the way for the succession of his son YazTd, he is said to have addressed the Syrian leaders with the remark that the Commander of the Faithful was getting old and wished to appoint a successor over them. When he asked them whom they would consider suitable, they named 'Abd al-Rahman b. Khalid.⁷⁸ The caliph fell silent, and 'Abd al-Rahman's fate was sealed. After he returned from the regular summer campaign to Anatolia in 46/666, one of his slaves served him a poisoned drink prepared by Mu'awiya's Christian physician Ibn Uthal at the instigation of the caliph. Having thus easily disposed of the potential rival,⁷⁹ Mu'awiya commented some time later to his court poet Ka'b b. Ju'ayl who had glorified 'Abd al-Rahman in numerous panegyrics: 'Poets know no loyalty. 'Abd al-Rahman was a friend to you, but as soon as he died you forgot him.' Ka'b denied this and quoted some lines which he had said after 'Abd al-Rahman's death. In them he had praised the Sword of Islam, 'Abd al-Rahman's father, as the conqueror of Damascus, Ba'labakk and Hims and as the one who had established Mu'awiya b. Harb there.⁸⁰ Mu'awiya must have felt pleased with his own achievement.

'Abd al-Rahman's nephew Khalid b. al-Muhajir b. Khalid learned of the murder in Mekka where he was residing. His father, al-Muhajir, had fought at SiffTn on the side of 'AIT against Mu'awiya and his own brother 'Abd al-Rahman; Khalid thus had a poor opinion of his murdered uncle. After a time, however, 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr stirred him into seeking revenge against the Christian poison-mixer. He took his client Nafi', a tough man, along to Damascus where they ambushed and killed Ibn Uthal as he left Mu'awiya's palace. The caliph immediately guessed that Khalid b. al-Muhajir was behind the deed. When Khalid was apprehended and led before him, he accused him of having killed his physician. Khalid answered: 'I killed the one ordered, the one who ordered remains.' Mu'awiya: 'God's curse upon you. By God, if he had only once pronounced the confession of faith, I would kill you for him.' Since Ibn Uthal was a Christian, the *lex talionis* did not apply. Later Mu'awiya

⁷⁷ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, 4/1, 104.

⁷⁸ Lammens misrepresented Mu'awiya's loaded question as a debate among his followers and saw in it evidence for some form of parliamentary organization in which the Syrian Arabs under his reign discussed their common interests (*Mo'awia*, 6-7).

⁷⁹ Like his poisoning of al-Ashtar, Mu'awiya's sudden murder of 'Abd al-Rahman b. Khalid gave rise to a proverbial saying. According to Abu 'Ubayd al-Qasim b. Sallam, Mu'awiya observed to one of his slave girls: 'Slay instantly and be rid of whom you loathe (*aq'is'anka man takrahy* (Ibn AbTUjaybi'a, *Uyain*, I, 118). The proverb is missing in the edited version of Abu 'Ubayd's *Kitab al-Amthal* (ed. 'Abd al-Majld 'AbidTn and Ihsan 'Abbas (Khartoum, 1958)).⁸⁰ ZubayrT, *Nasab*, 325.

ordered a hundred lashes for Nafi' while merely imprisoning Khalid. He imposed blood money of 12,000 dirhams on the Banu Makhzum.⁸¹ They retaliated for the vile murder of their battle hero, the son of the Sword of Islam, by solidly backing the counter-caliph 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr against Mu'awiya's son.⁸²

While Mu'awiya thus appeared to be successfully scheming for the future reign of the Sufyanid house, there remained a weak link in his Machiavellian armour. For so long as the legitimacy of the dynasty was founded on succession to the rights of the wronged caliph, it was difficult to conceal that there were others with a better title to rule than 'Uthman's remote kinsman whom he had always kept at some distance. The Sufyanid had successfully tamed and satisfied 'Uthman's poet brother al-Walid b. 'Uqba, whose unrestrained demands for vendetta could at an early stage have easily spoiled his stratagems. He had, so he trusted, neutralized the murdered caliph's unambitious eldest son 'Amr by marrying his daughter Ramla to him. 'Uthman's cousin Marwan b. al-Hakam, the architect of the Umayyad kingdom, was a different matter. Mu'awiya vainly hoped to control his aspirations by appointing him governor of Medina. Marwan never made any secret of his determination to restore the Banu Abi l-'Asi to their rightful heritage in place of the Sufyanids. He really meant himself, as was plain from the fact that he himself had sacrificed his cousin 'Uthman when it became apparent that otherwise he, Marwan, would have to be sacrificed. Mu'awiya could not be in doubt that the rules of sound statecraft would have required him to do away with Marwan in the interest of the safety of the Sufyanid reign.

⁸¹ *Agham*, XV, 13. According to this account, Mu'awiya put half of the amount in the public treasury and pocketed the other half personally. This remained Umayyad practice with respect to blood-money for non-Muslims under treaty protection until 'Umar II abolished the ruler's taking a share for himself.

⁸² Lammens argued against any involvement of either Mu'awiya or Ibn Uthal in the murder of 'Abd al-Rahman (*Mo'azya*, 3-14). In order to defend Mu'awiya's record of tolerance towards his Christian subjects, he tried to identify the physician Ibn Uthal with the Christian bishop of Hims, who according to Theophanes was burned to death under Mu'awiya, and accepted from al-Tabarī's account, which he otherwise rejected, the detail that Mu'awiya appointed Ibn Uthal tax collector of Hims. The Makhzumite murderer of Ibn Uthal, according to Lammens' theory, merely took advantage of the anti-Christian sentiment of the Muslim masses in order to curry favour with them and to cause trouble for the tolerant Mu'awiya. Lammens conceded that Mu'awiya had good reason for concern about the popularity of 'Abd al-Rahman, which could have prompted him 'to forestall eventualities so menacing for the future of his dynasty'. He nevertheless rejected the two reports about Mu'awiya's responsibility for the murder as containing contradictory details. The basic reliability of the report about Khalid b. al-Muhajir, however, is not invalidated by al-Tabarī's report which mistakenly identifies 'Abd al-Rahman's son Khalid as the avenger of his father. Khalid b. al-Muhajir's part is confirmed by al-Zubayrī (*Nasab*, 327). That Khalid would have come from Mekka to Syria to murder Ibn Uthal merely in order to please the anti-Christian Muslims of Hims seems hardly plausible.

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Yet he was entirely helpless in dealing with this kinsman, whose evil genius and sheer calculated malice inspired him with a mixture of fascination, admiration and fear.

Marwan first tried to incite 'Amr b. 'Uthman to seek the reign. When 'Amr complained of an illness, Marwan visited him regularly and stayed on while all other visitors left. 'Amr's wife Ramla became suspicious and listened in on their conversation through a hole which she had pierced in the wall. She heard Marwan say: 'These people [meaning the Banu Harb b. Umayya] have seized the caliphate only in the name of your father. What prevents you from rising to claim your right? Surely we have more men than they.' Then he enumerated the male descendants of Abu l-'Asi, matching each one against a descendant of Harb. There were several more of the former. Ramla used the occasion of her husband's pilgrimage to visit her father in Syria and inform him. She said: 'He went on enumerating the surplus of men of Abu l-'Asi over the Banu Harb, even counting my two sons 'Uthman and Khalid from 'Amr. I wished they had died.' Mu'awiya wrote to Marwan with an appropriate quotation of poetry, adding: 'I testify, Marwan, that I have heard the Messenger of God say: "When the children of al-Hakam reach thirty men, they shall appropriate the money of God in turns, employ the religion of God for deceit, and take the worshippers of God as slaves." ' Marwan answered with delight: 'Mu'awiya, truly I am father of ten, brother of ten, and paternal uncle of ten.'⁴⁷⁵

Marwan cared less about the female offspring of Abu l-'Asi. At the suggestion of Mu'awiya, he readily got rid of his niece, a daughter of his brother Yahya. He invited her for a visit and had a well dug and covered over with mats. She fell into it on her way, and the well became her grave. She and another woman, Umm Said al-Aslamiyya, had spent much time in the disreputable company of the bisexual singer al-Dalal and are described as the most shameless of women. Particularly disgraceful was that they rode out together on horses and raced each other so that their anklets showed.⁴⁷⁶ When it came to public morality, the murderer of Talha wanted to be seen as a good Muslim.

Marwan was unable to stir 'Amr into claiming his title to the Umayyad caliphate. His arguments were more successful with 'Amr's half-brother Said b. 'Uthman. When Mu'awiya in the year 56/676 imposed the pledge of allegiance for his son Yazid, the Medinan Umayyads Marwan, Said b. al-'As and 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir complied reluctantly while expressing

⁴⁷⁵ ZubayrT, *Nasab*, 109-10; BaladhurT, *Ansb*, 4/1, 46, 58. The hadith is quoted by Ibn Hanbal (*Musnad*, III, 80) with Abu Sa'Td al-Khudri as the first transmitter. As a good Sunnite, Ibn Hanbal suppressed the name of al-Hakam and substituted *Abi Fulan* (for Abi l-'Asi?).⁸⁴ *Aghani*, IV, 64.

their disapproval.⁴⁷⁷ The Ansar of Medina, too, had no reason to be pleased with the crown prince, since he had encouraged the poet al-Akhtal to lampoon them. Soon a ditty in *urjiza* form made its rounds on the tongues of boys, slaves and women: 'By God, Yazld'll not get it, before the blade'll get his head. The amir after him will be Said.' Marwan, Mu'awiya's governor, presumably was not eager to stop the seditious rhymes from circulating. The caliph questioned Sa'Td b. 'Uthman about them when he visited him in Damascus for the purpose of seeking high office.⁴⁷⁸ Sa'Td proudly answered: 'What is there to be disapproved of in that? Surely, my father is more excellent than YazTd's father, my mother is more excellent than his mother, and I am better than he. We have put you in office and have not dismissed you. We have honoured our bonds of kinship with you and have not cut them. Thus our reign has come into your hands, yet you have debarred us from it altogether.' Mu'awiya could not fail to perceive Marwan's prompting. He told him: 'You have said the truth in stating that your father is better than I and that your mother is better than his, for your mother is of Quraysh,⁴⁷⁹ and his mother is a woman of Kalb. Yet sufficient it is for a woman to be of their decent women. As for your statement that you are better than he, by God, it would not please me to have a rope strung between me and Iraq with the likes of you.' Then he sent Sa'Td to 'Ubayd Allah b. Ziyad⁴⁸⁰ in Basra, ordering the latter to appoint the boastful rival of his son commander of the war in Khurasan. Mu'awiya may have hoped that he would be killed there. When Sa'Td instead conquered Samarqand, he deposed him in fear that he would claim the caliphate. Sa'Td returned to Medina with some fifty sons of Soghdian princes and chiefs who had been surrendered to him as hostages. He mistreated them by taking away their precious clothes, which he gave to his slaves, then dressing them in wool and forcing them to do hard labour. They conspired to kill him in a walled garden where they were working with shovels; then they killed themselves. Marwan came too late to rescue his nephew, as they had locked the entrance to the garden.⁴⁸¹ The caliph had one descendant of Abu l-'AsT less to worry about.

When Mu'awiya deposed Marwan from the governorship of Medina to appoint Sa'Td b. al-'As, probably in 49/669, Marwan decided it was time

⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, XVIII, 71.

⁴⁷⁸ According to al-TabarT's account (al-Mada'inT), Sa'Td asked Mu'awiya for the governorship of Khurasan (TabarT, II, 177). From al-Baladhuri's report it would appear that he rather expected a governorship in Iraq.

⁴⁷⁹ Sa'Td's mother was the Makhzumite Fatima bt al-WalTd. On this basis Sa'Td could also claim to be more noble than his elder brother 'Amr whose mother was Azdite.

⁴⁸⁰ The account (BaladhurT, *AnsdB*, V, 118) anachronistically names Ziyad. He had died three years before. ⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 117, 119; TabarT, II, 179.

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to teach his overbearing kinsman a lesson and set out, uninvited, for Damascus. His brother 'Abd al-Rahman, who was in Damascus, advised him to wait until he, 'Abd al-Rahman, could test the atmosphere. If Mu'awiya had dismissed him in anger, he should visit him alone; if not, he might visit him in company. 'Abd al-Rahman aroused the caliph's displeasure first by his boastful entry and then by uncautiously alluding to the line in which the pro-'Alid poet al-Najashi had lampooned Mu'awiya for his headlong flight at Siffin. Mu'awiya paid him back by alluding to 'Abd al-Rahman's nightly escapade of scaling the wall to pay a visit to Marwan's wife, 'Uthman's daughter Umm Aban. Thus put to shame, 'Abd al-Rahman inquired meekly: 'Commander of the Faithful, what has induced you to depose your cousin? Is it for an offence which necessitated indignation, or out of an opinion which you deemed suitable, or for a design through which you seek the best interest?' Mu'awiya affirmed it was the latter. 'Abd al-Rahman commented: 'There is nothing wrong with that,' and left.

When he informed his brother, Marwan flew into a rage and scolded him for being a weakling. 'Do you make allusions to the man which anger him, and when he takes revenge, you flinch from him?' Then he donned his robe of honour, mounted his horse, and girded on his sword - he knew how to impress his unwarlike kinsman - and made his entrance to Mu'awiya. When the caliph saw him and recognized the anger in his face, he addressed him obligingly: 'Welcome, Abu 'Abd al-Malik, you come to visit us just as we were longing for you.' Marwan: 'No, by God, I am not visiting you for that reason. I have never come to you but to find you disrespectful and aloof. By God, you do not treat us with justice and do not requite us properly. The early merit (*sabiqah*) among the Banu 'Abd Shams belonged to the family of Abu l-'Asi.' Marwan realized that it was the proper occasion to mention his grandfather rather than his father who had been outlawed by the Prophet. 'The marriage tie with the Messenger of God belonged to them, the caliphate was among them. They maintained their bonds with you, Banu Harb, and honoured you, set you up in high office and did not depose you or prefer others above you. Then, when you were established in office and the reign devolved on you, you displayed nothing but preference for others, evil treatment of us, and vicious cutting of kinship ties. But just you wait, the sons of al-Hakam and his sons' sons have already reached twenty and some, and before long they will have reached forty. At that time a man will come to know where he stands in relation to them, for they will lie in wait to requite good and evil.'

Mu'awiya was not yet quite softened up and started arguing: 'I have deposed you for three matters, any one of which would have made your

dismissal inevitable. The first one is that I gave you power over 'Abd Allah b.'Amir when there was between you [the enmity] which there is, yet you were unable to get satisfaction from him.⁴⁸² The second one is your loathing of the affair of Ziyad, and the third one is that my daughter Ramla asked for your help against her husband 'Amr, but you would not assist her.' Marwan answered him: 'As for Ibn 'Amir, I do not ask for assistance in my own jurisdiction, but when the footing is equal, he knows where he stands.⁴⁸³ As for my loathing the affair of Ziyad, the rest of the Banu Umayya loathed it, but then God placed much good in that which we hated [Qur'an IV 19]. As for Ramla's request for help against 'Amr, by God, a year and more may go by while the daughter of 'Uthman is staying with me, yet I would not lift a dress of hers.' He was hinting that the daughter of the Commander of the Faithful had merely been seeking his assistance to obtain sexual gratification from her husband.

Mu'awiya lost his temper: 'You son of a gecko, you are not yet there.' Marwan answered coldly: 'That is so now. But, by God, I am father of ten, brother of ten, and uncle of ten, and my sons are close to completing the number. When they reach it, you shall know where you stand in relation to me.' Mu'awiya was now reduced to quoting poetry by which he hinted at Marwan being a weak bird with numerous chicks and himself being a hawk with few offspring. By the time Marwan ended his discourse, the Commander of the Faithful was like clay in his hand and submissive. He bargained: 'You shall be content; I return you to your office.' Jumping up, Marwan easily trumped his mercenary deck: 'Not at

⁴⁸² In the version of al-Baladhuri this point reads: 'You came to me when 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir was in my hands and he had owned up that he owed me one million dirhams, but you snatched him away from me' (*Ansdh*, 4/1, 65). Mu'awiya evidently wanted to fleece 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir after his dismissal from the governorship of Basra in 44/664. According to the account of al-Tabarī (II, 69) the caliph demanded his property in 'Arafa and his houses in Mekka. He also wanted to stir up enmity among his Umayyad kin, and apparently vainly tried to get Marwan to put pressure on Ibn 'Amir. Mu'awiya's crude policy of *divide et impera* among his kinsmen seems to have had the effect of uniting them against him. Later he attempted to stir up trouble between Sa'id b. al-'As and Marwan who were at odds because Sa'id had earlier refused to back Marwan's war on 'AIT. Mu'awiya ordered Sa'id b. al-'As, while he was governor of Medina, to demolish the house of Marwan or, according to al-Waqidī's account, to confiscate his property and turn his estates, including Fadak, into domanial land (*safiya*). Sa'id failed to carry out the order even when Mu'awiya repeated it. Then Mu'awiya reappointed Marwan governor and ordered him to demolish the house of Sa'id. Marwan was prepared to carry out his instructions, but when Sa'id showed him Mu'awiya's earlier letters he refrained and admitted that Sa'id had acted more honourably than he. Sa'id, according to al-Waqidī, sent Mu'awiya a courteous note putting him to shame for trying to incite hatred between his kinsmen (Tabarī, II, 164-5; Baladhurī, *Ansdh*, 4/1, 33).

⁴⁸³ In the account of al-Baladhuri, Marwan's answer is quoted thus: 'As for Ibn 'Amir, his kinship to me and to you is equal, and I have no better right over him than you. If you would abandon voluntarily his debt to you, [it would be praiseworthy]. But if not, I shall guarantee for what he has owned up that he owed you' (*Ansdh*, 4/1, 65).

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all, by God and your life, you shall not see me return to it ever,' and walked out.⁴⁸⁴

'Abd al-Rahman b. SThān b. Artah al-Muharibi was a confederate of the Banu Harb living in Medina, a gifted poet and an excellent entertainer, full of unusual stories and anecdotes about the Arabs, their battle-days and their poetry. His panegyrics for his masters made him a valuable prop for the regime. His weak spot was the common vice of poets - wine, which he copiously consumed in the company of members of the ruling class, especially Umayyads. Sa'Td b. al-'As during his governorship of Medina questioned him about a line of poetry in which he described himself as swaying from intoxication. Ibn SThān protested his innocence of either drinking or describing wine in his poetry and pointedly quoted a piece in which he boasted of his confederation with Harb which led him to the peaks and summits of nobility. As he haughtily walked out, Sa'Td's son 'Amr remarked to his father: 'If you ordered this dog to be beaten two hundred lashes, it would be the best for him.' Sa'Td countered: 'My dear son, shall I beat him when he is a confederate of Harb b. Umayya and Mu'awiya is caliph in Syria? He would hardly be pleased about it.' When Mu'awiya met Sa'Td during his pilgrimage in Mina, he told him: 'Ah Sa'Td, your idiot ordered you to beat my confederate two hundred lashes? By God, if you gave him one lash, I would give you two.' Sa'Td: 'And why that? Have you not lashed your confederate 'Amr b. Jabala?' Mu'awiya: 'He is my flesh which I eat and do not give to eat.'⁴⁸⁵

Mu'awiya's unguarded and uncalled-for bragging gave Marwan a chance to teach him another lesson with a brilliant piece of mischief. It was many years later, after Mu'awiya, in Dhu l-Qa'da 58/September- October 678,⁴⁸⁶ had once again deposed Marwan and appointed his own nephew al-WalTd b. Utba b. AbT Sufyan governor of Medina. The new governor, fond of a good drink in his hours of privacy, discovered an agreeable boon companion in 'Abd al-Rahman b. SThān and regularly sent for him to join his carousing. Abu l-Zinad, a Medinan counted among the most reliable early traditionists,⁴⁸⁷ recounted the incident. Ibn

⁴⁸⁴ *Agham*, XII, 72-3. The account goes back to al-Haytham b. 'AdI on the authority of Salih b. IJassan (al-Nadri?) (Ibn IJajar, *TahdhTb*, IV, 384-5). A shorter, less colourful

version is presented by al-Baladhuri (*AnsdB*, 4/1, 65-6) quoting al-Mada'inI on the authority of Mu'awiya's great-grandson Harb b. Khalid b. Yazid. In this version Mu'awiya is described in the end as commending his daughter when she confessed that she wished her sons were 'in the sea' and suggesting that the Sufyanids were too badly afflicted with the opposition of Marwan for her to mend it by trying to behave like a man. The anecdote reflects Sufyanid resentment at being dislodged from the throne by the Marwanids.⁹³ *Aghani*, II, 87-8; Baladhuri, *AnsdB*, 4/1, 97-8, 133-4.

⁴⁸⁶ Tabari, II, 181.

⁴⁸⁷ Abu l-Zinad 'Abd Allah b. Dhakwan (d. 130/747-8) was a client of one of the daughters of Shayba b. Rabl'a b. 'Abd Shams or of the family of Uthman. His father was said to have been a brother of Abu Lu'lu'a, the assassin of 'Umar (Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, V, 203-4).

SIhan had some time in the past offended Marwan by insults, but more recently had eulogized him and received his obligatory reward. He did not expect that the treacherous man might still want to harm him; Marwan had in fact his eyes on bigger prey than the harmless poet. He hid his men in ambush for him in the mosque at night. When Ibn SIhan came out at dawn, thoroughly tipsy, from the adjoining governor's palace through the ruler's stall (*maqsura*) of the mosque, Marwan and his assistants jumped on him. The proper witnesses were at hand, Muhammad b. 'Amr and 'Abd Allah b. Hanzala, two pious Qur'an readers who used to pass their nights with vigils in the mosque. The unsuspecting victim was asked to recite the first Sura of the Qur'an but was too drunk to comply. He was then turned over to the chief of police,⁹⁶ who imprisoned him. When the governor awoke, he learned the news, which had spread through the town like wildfire. He realized that Marwan was after him and that he would not have bothered Ibn SIhan if he had departed drunk from anyone else. He decided that nothing would save him from potential disgrace in the eyes of the Medinans except inflicting the legal flogging on the offender. The chief of police carried out his order to flog him, and then the governor released him.

Ibn SThAn stayed at home for some time, ashamed to face the people. The Makhzumite 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Harith b. Hisham, with whom he used to sit, came to visit him together with his sons. He brought some fine clothes along for him and proposed that he go out and show himself in the mosque as if nothing had happened. Then he should go to the Commander of the Faithful, who would reward him and order his legal punishment to be rescinded. In the mosque he reclined together with the highly respected Makhzumite against a pillar, and some of the people now said: 'He was not beaten,' while others insisted: 'I have seen him being beaten,' or: 'He has been punished with lashes.' He remained a few days and then travelled to the caliph in Damascus. First he visited the crown prince YazId and drank with him. YazId talked to his father about him. He was summoned to the caliph and reported his story and what Marwan had done to him. Mu'awiya commented: 'May God disfigure al-Walld, how feeble-minded he is. Is he not ashamed to beat you for his own drinking? As for Marwan, I did not think he would go to such lengths of meanness towards you in spite of your good opinion and friendship towards him. He wanted to lower al-Walld in my esteem but he has not succeeded. Rather he has put himself in a rank we used to deem beneath him; he has become a policeman.' Then he dictated to his secretary a letter to al-Walld, reprimanding him for meting out a punishment to Ibn SThAn which had merely acquainted the people of Medina with his own

⁹⁶ Literally his chief of police (*Aghani*, II, 82). Perhaps Marwan's former chief of police is meant.

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consumption of forbidden drink. He ordered him to annul his punishment, to lead him around in the mosque and to inform the people that his chief of police had transgressed and wronged him and that the Commander of the Faithful had revoked his punishment. Had not Ibn SThān recited the following poetry? And Mu'awiya quoted at length a panegyric in praise of 'Abd Shams. Al-Walīd was to present Ibn SThān with 400 sheep and 30 milk camels of the kind raised in al-Sayyala. Mu'awiya personally gave the wronged poet 500 dinars, and Yazīd added 200. The governor faithfully carried out his instructions, but when he invited the poet to join him for a party, he received the reply: 'By God, I shall never taste a drink with you again.' Mu'awiya also wrote to Marwan, reproaching him for what he had done to Ibn SThān and for his ulterior motives.⁹⁷

Marwan presumably did not even bother to answer. Abu l-Zinād implied in his account that he, Marwan, wanted to get at the governor, al-Walīd, and that Mu'awiya, seeing through his game, thwarted him by merely reprimanding his nephew. In reality Marwan wanted to get at the caliph himself and at the Sufyanid regime. He achieved exactly what he intended. Not only did he make Mu'awiya swallow his boast that only he was allowed to touch his poet confederate, he also exposed the Commander of the Faithful to the Medinan public as the protector of his drunkard family members and clients against the obligatory punishment imposed by the religious law. The annulment of Ibn SThān's penalty by the caliph did not thwart Marwan, but rather disgraced a corrupt regime which charged an obedient chief of police with transgression and set aside the unimpeachable testimony of two highly respected Qur'an readers.

Mu'awiya's successor Yazīd was soon to reap the fruits. He was never able to shake off the image of a wine-bibber unworthy of his office in Medina. The open rebellion of the Medinans, not so much in favour of 'Abd Allāh b. al-Zubayr as against Yazīd, opened the second, critical phase of the second civil war. Marwan insidiously encouraged Ibn al-Zubayr to claim the caliphate against his Umayyad kinsman. He knew what he was doing. For his designs the paramount task was to overthrow the Sufyanid regime in Syria. He was sure that he would then be able to cope with Ibn al-Zubayr in Mekka. Thus he went on ostensibly backing the counter-caliph until the Syrians were ready to drop the Sufyanids. The scenario he had set for himself long ago in murdering Talha now was put on stage. As his propagandists presented him as the first avenger of the wronged caliph, the Syrians realized that they had found their man. He need not reveal to them that his careful planning of scenarios went

⁹⁷ *Aghani*, II, 82-3; Baladhuri, *Ansb*, 4/1, 135-6. The other reports, in which Marwan himself is described as ordering the beating of Ibn SThān and then being forced by Mu'awiya to annul the punishment (*Aghani*, 11,81-2,83—4j), are secondary and unreliable.

back further to when he threw his elderly cousin to the wolves in the interest of the Umayyad caliphate, which now finally became his caliphate. That had been truly high politics, to be appreciated only by the most refined connoisseurs of the art. The Syrians, crude soldiery that they were, might not have properly understood it.

To the distant observer Marwan's takeover of the throne could appear miraculous. Wellhausen quotes the anonymous author of the *Continuatio Byzantia Arabica* A. DCCXXI: 'Marvan (insidiose ab Almidina pulsus) post modica temporis intervalla aliquantis de exercitu consentientibus deo connivente provehitur ad regnum.'⁹⁸ To the insider with a keen mind there was nothing to marvel at. Had not Marwan told everyone who cared, including Mu'awiya, what would happen when 'the descendants of Abu l-'AsI reached forty men'? It was just a matter of time. Marwan was also as good as his word in treating the members of the deposed house of Abu Sufyan, who, as he painted it, had not properly honoured their kinship ties to the Banu Abi l-'AsT. As he stood at the tomb of the last Sufyanid caliph who had just been buried, he asked his Syrian entourage: 'Do you know whom you have buried?' They answered: 'Yes, Mu'awiya b. YazTd.' He countered: 'Rather you have buried Abu Layla.' Abu Layla, the dead caliph's agnomen (*kunya*), was also the nickname for a weakling. They loved it, and a bard of the Banu Fazara said:

**Do not be deceived, for 'the matter' has become disputed,
and the reign after Abu Layla belongs to the conqueror (*li-manghalaba*).**"

As soon as he had secured his succession, Marwan married Umm Khalid Fakhita, the widow of YazTd and mother of the latter's sons Mu'awiya, Khalid, 'Abd Allah al-Akbar and Abu Sufyan. It was, as Wellhausen observed, 'less an alliance than a seizure of an inheritance'.¹⁰⁰ Marwan succeeded where Mu'awiya had failed, as Na'ila, 'Uthman's proud widow, broke her front teeth rather than surrender to his demands. It took Marwan only months before he violated his agreements on the succession of his stepson Khalid and of 'Amr b. Sa'Td al-Ashdaq in order to appoint his own sons 'Abd al-Malik and 'Abd al-'AzTz. In this respect, it is true,

⁹⁸ *Das arabische Reich*, 114; T. Mommsen (ed.), *Chronica Minora Saec. IV. V. VI. VII.*, II (Berlin, 1894), 346. Wellhausen backed the miraculous nature of the event: 'Without his own achievement, without even having desired it himself, Marwan through his expulsion from Medina came unto the throne in Damascus.' An astounding misjudgement of a great historian. ⁹⁹ Baladhurl, *Ansdh*, 4/1, 356.

¹⁰⁰ *Das arabische Reich*, 114. Lammens contradicted Wellhausen, suggesting that Marwan aimed above all at strengthening his alliance with 'the senior branch of the Umayyad family' ('L'avenement des Marwanides', *Melanges de la Faculte Orientale de l'Universite St Joseph de Beyrouth*, 12 (1927), 43-147, at 67). In reality it was Marwan's lifelong contention that the Sufyanids were not the senior branch of the Umayyads but rather had usurped the primary rights of the Banu Abi l-'AsI.

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Mu'awiya had, at least partly, outdone him by declaring his agreements with al-Hasan invalid war fraud in a matter of days, though he had to wait well over a decade before he could appoint his son Yazid to the succession.

Marwan then systematically undertook to humiliate his stepson Khalid b. Yazid in public. It had been his practice to seat him together with himself on his throne until one day, when Khalid moved to take his usual place, he rebuked him: 'Get off, son of a . . .' Renowned for his foul language (*fallhash*),⁴⁸⁸ he used a drastic obscenity to describe Khalid's mother, the queen, as a whore: 'I have never found any sound mind in you.' The youthful Khalid, no great hero, walked off in anger and went to his mother. He reproached her: 'You have disgraced me and have lowered my head by marrying this man,' and he told her what had happened.

This time the chess-king had gone too far. The rules of the royal game allow the king to sacrifice his queen, to let her be butchered by the enemy to save his own skin, to replace her by a pawn or to double up on her whether she approves or not. Had not Yazid, Umm Khalid's former royal spouse, paired her off with Umm MiskTn, great-granddaughter of the caliph Umar as his second queen, just in order to vex her and then had rubbed her wounded pride with lines of poetry mocking her for bewailing her divinely ordained 'fate' (*qadar*)?¹⁰² Umm Khalid had learned the rules of the royal game the hard way. Yet which rule-book had ever allowed the king to revile his lady in the lowliest language of the street to please the vulgar taste of his pawns, knights, bishops and rooks? Had the chess-master overlooked the formidable weaponry with which the game equipped the queen for her thankless part? What if she, too, for once broke the rules and turned against her own husband instead of serving and humouring his every whim? Woe then to the chess-king, that useless drone. Fakhita had seen enough of the whole ilk.

She told her son calmly not to talk about the matter to anyone, to conceal from Marwan that he had informed her, and to keep visiting her as usual; she would take care of the matter for him. As a slight suspicion crept up in his mind, Marwan asked her whether Khalid had told her anything about him that day. She answered that he had not told her anything. Marwan insisted: 'Has he not complained to you about me and mentioned my belittling him and what I told him?' The queen: 'Commander of the Faithful, you are too lofty in the eyes of Khalid, and his veneration for you is too great for him to tell me anything about you or to be offended by anything you say. You are in the position of a father to him.' Marwan was reassured and believed that the lady had spoken the truth. It was his second, bigger, mistake. Inveterate despiser of women, he did not deem them capable of war guile, except perhaps for the benefit of a lover. Whom

⁴⁸⁸ See Lammens, 'L'avenement', 91. ¹⁰² Zubayn, *Nasab*, 155; *Aghani*, XVI, 88.

the gods want to destroy, they strike with blindness. Did he not see that the lady was of 'Abd Shams, if not of Umayya?⁴⁸⁹ Woe to the drone of Umayya from the lioness of 'Abd Shams.

When the time for a siesta came, Marwan made his third, fatal, misstep. He repaired to the queen's chamber which, unbeknown to him, had turned into a lions' den. As he fell peacefully asleep, the doors were shut. The lioness pounced on her prey. She put a pillow stuffed with feathers on his face and sat on top of it, placing that part of her body which he had so crudely defamed squarely on his nose and mouth. Her slave girls happily joined her, excited about the break in their tedious routine. The Commander of the Faithful had hardly time to reflect that not even his rival in Mekka, the master-wrestler 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr, could have cast off the solid weight of a furious queen and a dozen well-built royal slave girls before he suffocated.⁴⁹⁰ The game was over, check-mate by his own lady; *shah mat*, the shah is dead. To the end he had put into practice the counsel which he had, to no avail, preached to his pious cousin 'Uthman: 'To persist in wrongdoing for which you can ask God's forgiveness is better than repentance compelled by fear.' His Graeco-Roman gods, jealous of his stupendous success, begrudged him the time for repentance without fear before they shoved him off into the nether world of shadows.

This story of Marwan's end, although transmitted with prestigious chains of authority⁴⁹¹ and so widely attested that even al-Tabarī could not avoid quoting it, has found little favour among modern western scholars. Wellhausen, a historian with a sense of humour, summed it up in a sentence, adding: 'So according to al-Waqidi.⁴⁹² *Naqilu l-kufri laysa bi-kafir*: the reporter of unbelief is no unbeliever. Serious historians mostly either rebutted its credibility or simply ignored it.⁴⁹³ Lammens, doyen of modern Umayyad historiography, confessed: 'Mais avec Noldeke, j'hésite à admettre le rôle tragique que prête à cette femme la tradition.'⁴⁹⁴

⁴⁸⁹ Fakhita was the daughter of Abu Hashim b. 'Utba b. Rab'at b. 'Abd Shams (ZubayrI, *Nasab*, 155).

⁴⁹⁰ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, V, 29-30; Tabarī, II, 576-7; *Agham*, XVI, 90; Baladhurī, *Ansdh*, V, 145, 159.

⁴⁹¹ The version of Ibn Sa'd, on which the above presentation is mainly based, is introduced by the *isnad* Musa b. Isma'īl - Juwayriya b. Asma' - Nafi'.

⁴⁹² *Das arabische Reich*, 114.

⁴⁹³ Only R. Sellheim, *Der zweite Bürgerkrieg im Islam* (Wiesbaden, 1970), 104, admits the possibility that Marwan may have lost his life because of his treachery towards the Sufyanids, 'if the tradition is reliable'.

⁴⁹⁴ 'L'avenement', 91. In a footnote Lammens quoted, somewhat grudgingly, Noldeke's suggestion that the story was a fable planted by the Sufyanids. A plausible guess; the Sufyanids had reason to be angry at Marwan. It clashed, however, with Lammens' theory of an alliance between Marwan and 'the senior branch of the family'. Lammens added that the adversaries of the Umayyads were in a hurry to adopt the fable. There were obviously plenty of those, though Lammens probably had mainly wicked Shi'ites in mind.

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He continued: 'On ne voit pas 'Abd al-Malik, si impitoyable contre Asdaq, inquieter les auteurs et les complices prétendues du meurtre de son perc.'¹⁰⁹ Lammens then chose for Marwan from the modes of death offered on al-Mas'udT's palette that of the plague.¹¹⁰ Excellent choice; there is nothing dishonourable for a great king and war hero to succumb to the great reaper. It could also explain why the tradition has not preserved any of the obligatory royal deathbed scenes with wise recommendations to the successor and good counsel to the close ones. Who would expect such forward-looking thoughts from anyone, even a moral giant, grappling with the plague?

G. Rotter, re-examining matters more recently, was even more positive about the facts: the story of Umm Khalid's crime had been invented quite early. Yet even al-Mas'udi, who otherwise displayed a strong penchant for such anecdotes, felt obliged to honour the truth and to point out that several of the sources available to him accepted that Marwan died of the plague or by natural death. Death by plague was indeed the most probable version since the first wave of the scourge reached Syria in that spring. Were there any truth to the murder story, Rotter concluded, 'Abd al-Malik would surely not have allowed 'the murderess' to get away with it.¹¹¹

Faced with such a consensus and incisive reasoning of the serious historians, the defender of the pillow story may be prepared to capitulate. Why should not for once the semi-Shi'ite al-Mas'udi have the edge in veracity over the faithful Sunnite al-Tabari? Yet, on second thoughts, one may soon begin to wonder about the motivation behind that remarkable unanimity with which western critical historians, so intent on portraying the architect of the Umayyad reign as a great statesman and soldier, have either refuted or buried the story. Could not the same realization that the grotesque scene simply will not fit into the picture of an exemplary statesman, soldier and Umayyad *dahiya* have already plagued his successor, 'Abd al-Malik, and given rise to the other colours on al-Mas'udl's palette? Even murder by poisoning by his wife angry at the treatment of her son would be more palatable. The reader may forgive being dragged once more to the deathbed scene.

Her victory achieved, the queen stood up, ripped the neck opening of her dress, and ordered her slave girls and servants to tear their dresses. Then, as was the custom, the wailing cries of the women resounded

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 91. Al-Asdaq was 'Abd al-Malik's cousin 'Amr b. SaTd. 'Abd al-Malik slaughtered him with his own hands after 'Amr's revolt in which he claimed the throne as rightfully his under the agreement concluded by Marwan at the time of his accession.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 96. Al-Mas'udT offered the following choices from his sources: plague, natural death, suffocation by Fakhita, poisoned milk administered by her (*Muruji*, III, 288-9).

¹¹¹ G. Rotter, *Die Umayyaden und der zweite Bürgerkrieg (680-692)* (Wiesbaden, 1982), 162—3.

Conclusion

through the palace: 'The Commander of the Faithful has suddenly died.'⁴⁹⁵ The sources do not try to penetrate the mind of the deceased caliph's son 'Abd al-Malik as he heard, or was informed of, the commotion, and leave it to the imagination of the observer to read his thoughts. The first lightning to flash through his mind was no doubt that he had become God's Vicegerent on earth. The destiny of mankind rested now on his wise decision making. What did he make of the wailing of the women? It probably took him only moments to realize what had happened. His father had been fit and healthy a moment earlier, and heart attack was not much heard of in those hardier times. What should he do? Grip his sword and in righteous filial wrath avenge his father by cutting off the head of his treacherous stepmother? 'Abd al-Malik had gone through Marwan's schooling long enough to know that a nobleman, not to mention a king, must not soil his hands with the blood of a woman, like an ordinary soldier. He remembered that his father had had to build an ingenious trap to get rid of his misbehaved niece. He could, of course, have the offender dealt with in some other way, by his servants; the choices of the king to kill, torture or otherwise punish are infinite. But what then? Would not punishment bring out into public daylight what ought better remain forever concealed behind the walls of the queen's chamber? 'Abd al-Malik was well aware of what every ordinary politician and public official knows, that in the make-believe world of the Great Game appearances often count for more than facts. He shuddered thinking what might happen if the facts became public. A minor Khurasanian bard's immortal lines describing the end of the kingdom of Umayya - the dead body of Yazid lying in his pleasure palace at HawwarTh with a cup next to his pillow and a wine skin whose nose was still bleeding - came to his mind and their devastating effect as the governors everywhere withdrew their support.¹¹³ Had it not been for the resolute action of his father, the House of Umayya might indeed have collapsed. The lampoon poets would now have a feast picturing the ignominious end of the great avenger of the wronged founder under a pillow with the crushing weight of an angry queen and her slave girls. The enemies, the counter-caliph in Mekka, the Basrans and the Kufans, would triumph, the Syrians be demoralized. Even the most loyal of them might decide that it was time to change sides to Ibn al-Zubayr as many had done after Yazid's death. No, this was definitely the occasion for a cover-up. He must play the part offered him by the cunning murderess and pretend to believe that the caliph had died of a sudden fatal disease. 'Abd al-Malik realized that it would probably be impossible to prevent

⁴⁹⁵ Ibn Sa'd, *T&baqdt* V, 30. ¹¹³ Wellhausen, *Das arabische Reich*, 105.

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the spread of rumour; women are, after all, talkative. But then most people, those who count, would perhaps privately listen to, but not seriously believe, their gossip. People prefer to take the truth from their kings, at least so long as these know how to save face.

It began to dawn on the new Commander of the Faithful that the lioness had acted not just in blind fury, but in cold calculation. She was not so foolish as to risk her own life just to be rid of her unpleasant spouse. In fact, she was now safer from the king's retribution than any murderer hired by him would have been. He recognized that '*cette femme*' to whom the tradition attributed *7t> role tragique*' could not be an ordinary woman. 'Abd al-Malik looked again. The lioness, though short in size,¹¹⁴ was of 'Abd Shams';¹¹⁵ how could his father have ignored it? It was check-mate, no doubt about it. But then, that was his father's game which he had lost. His own game had only just begun, thanks to the pounce of the lioness. There was not much sentimentality about blood ties in 'Abd al-Malik - something he could scarcely have inherited from his father. Suddenly he sensed relief, even a touch of gratitude, insofar as gratitude is allowed to kings. As long as Marwan had been alive, treacherous schemer that he was, 'Abd al-Malik could never have been sure of his succession to the throne. Might his father not at any time have replaced him as crown prince by another of his 'ten sons'?¹¹⁶ 'Abd al-Malik appreciated now that letting the offender get away with murder may at times be more useful to the sovereign than exercising his privilege to kill and execute at discretion. Time to celebrate the accession. *Le roi est mort. Vive le roi!*

All fiction, the critical historians will judge, and rightly so. History, even if it were an exact science rather than a gamble on probabilities and plausibilities, would leave many gaps to be filled only by imagination, which enjoys the colourful. Others in the past, frustrated by our inability to penetrate the veil and to discover what really happened, have already filled its pages with a myriad of anecdotes. This may easily create the illusion in the mind of the critical historian that plain prosaic reports, be they in the news media or in their historical antecedents, are more likely

¹⁴ Her nickname was Habba because of her small stature (BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 159).

¹¹⁵ Wellhausen in a footnote (*Das arabische Reich*, 114) corrected the error of A. Miiller that Fakhita was 'a proud bedouin woman' and described her instead as 'a Qurayshite'. He underestimated her also in suggesting that she took revenge simply for Marwan's perfidious treatment of her son. Lammens similarly thought that Fakhita might have been furious on behalf of her son and concealed Marwan's insult to his queen ('L'avenement', 90—1). She was, no doubt, well aware that her action would not return the caliphate to the young Khalid and that her sensitive son was, in any case, not suited for the caliphate. Her disgust with Marwan, Umayyad royalty and its amusements most likely ran deeper than that.

¹¹⁶ Marwan, according to al-Zubayri, had in fact, not just in metaphor, ten sons and ten daughters (*Nasab*, 160-1).

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than anecdotes to be plain, not manipulated fact. The good anecdote tells what could, and, stripped of its literary dressing, may well have happened, just as the good plain report does. Plague or lioness? You may try to balance the probability of the evidence, and perhaps one or the other side will eventually preponderate. But will you be able to prove it to anyone but the convinced? In the end the choice may be a mere matter of taste. If you prefer the king's truth, enjoy stories about great heroes, Roman-style statesmen, tough soldiers and *dahiyas*, you will opt for the plague and perhaps, after much argument, you may convince yourself that you have found the real truth. If you are satisfied with poetical truth, conceding that it may at times be truer to life than the king's truth, and do not wish to go on forever weighing imponderables, choose the lioness and you may cut all further argument short with a sceptical yet confident

Se non e vero e ben trovato.

Excursuses

1 THE BURIAL OF MUHAMMAD

The traditional Sunnite account of the burial of Muhammad stresses that the preparations for the funeral were begun only after the general pledge of allegiance (*bay'a*) had been given to Abu Bakr on Tuesday, the day following the Prophet's death. This chronology is reflected in Ibn Ishaq's arrangement of the events in his *Sira*. After reporting Muhammad's death some time after the morning prayer on Monday, Ibn Ishaq narrates, on the authority of Abu Hurayra, that 'Umar addressed the Muslims assembled at the gate of the mosque, denying the death of Muhammad; he threatened 'the hypocrites' who claimed that the Prophet was dead with punishment after he returned from 'his temporary absence'. Later Abu Bakr arrived and, after having taken a look at Muhammad's body in 'A'isha's apartment, contradicted 'Umar and confirmed the Prophet's death. Ibn Ishaq next presents the story of the SaqTfat BanI Sa'ida. The Muhajirun, gathered around Abu Bakr, learned that the Ansar had assembled in the SaqTfa to decide on the succession. The Muhajirun joined them, and Abu Bakr was elected in a tumultuous scene.

Ibn Ishaq then reports, on the authority of Anas b. Malik, that the general *bay'a* took place the following day in the mosque. 'Umar spoke first, before Abu Bakr, apologizing to the people for his mistaken denial of Muhammad's death. He then introduced Abu Bakr and asked the people to pledge allegiance to him. After the general *bay'a* Abu Bakr gave a brief inaugural speech. Only then does Ibn Ishaq return to the dead Muhammad, stating: 'When the *bay'a* had been given to Abu Bakr, the people proceeded to prepare for the funeral (*jahaz*) of the Messenger of God on Tuesday.'⁴⁹⁶ Ibn Ishaq's arrangement of events was also adopted by al-Tabari and later authors such as Ibn KathTr.² The latter categorically affirms that the Companions were occupied with the *bay'a* of Abu Bakr for the remainder of Monday (after Muhammad's death) and part of

⁴⁹⁶356
Ibn Hisham, *Sirat sayyidina*, 1018. ² Ibn KathTr, *Bidaya*, V, 244ff.

Tuesday. Only when it was completed did they begin with the preparation of the funeral 'following the instructions of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq in everything which was problematical for them'.³

The motive behind the insistence on this chronology is evidently to avoid the impression that Abu Bakr's election was decided while the kin of the Prophet were busy with the funeral preparations and to show Abu Bakr in complete control of the arrangements for the burial. Al-Zuhri, representative of the Medinan school of Sunnite tradition, stated: 'Abu Bakr and the Companions of the Messenger of God gave leave (*khalla bayna*) to al-'Abbas, 'AIT, al-Fadl b. al-'Abbas and the rest of the family, and thus it was they who wrapped him in his grave cloths (*ajannihi*).'⁴ The question had evidently already become a point of Sunnite dogma, and Ibn Ishaq firmly supported the orthodox Medinan position.

Ibn Ishaq then quotes Ibn al-'Abbas' account of the washing of Muhammad's body together with 'A'isha's counter-report⁵ and a short notice attributed to the 'Alid 'AIT b. al-Husayn (Zayn al-'Abidin) on the three cloths in which he was wrapped. He continues with a report on the digging of the grave with the *isnd* Husayn b. 'Abd Allah (b. 'Ubayd Allah b. al-'Abbas) 'an 'Ikrima 'an Ibn 'Abbas. There were two gravediggers available, the Emigrant Abu 'Ubayda b. al-Jarrah, who followed the Mekkan practice, and the Helper Abu Talha Zayd b. Sahl, who dug according to the Medinan practice, making a niche (*yalhad*). Al-'Abbas called two men and sent one of them to Abu 'Ubayda and the other to Abu Talha while praying to God to make the choice for the Prophet. The one sent to Abu Talha found him, and thus Abu Talha dug the grave with the niche according to the Medinan practice.

Ibn Ishaq continues, again insisting that all this happened on Tuesday: 'When the preparations for the funeral of the Messenger of God were completed on Tuesday, he was laid on his bed (*sarir*) in his house.' The Muslims had been in disagreement concerning his burial, some suggesting that he be buried in his mosque, others wishing that he be buried with his Companions (in the Baq' cemetery). Abu Bakr settled the matter saying: 'I have heard the Messenger of God state: "No prophet has ever died but

³ *Ibid.*, 260. ⁴ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, I, 570.

⁵ See above, pp. 26-7. The Hashimite 'Abd Allah b. al-Harith b. Nawfal (Babba) described the washing as follows: when the Prophet had died, 'AIT locked the door of the room. Al-'Abbas came together with the Banu 'Abd al-Muttalib and stood at the door. 'AIT began to say: 'Dearer than my father and mother, your smell is sweet alive and dead', and a sweet odour rose, the like of which they had never experienced. Al-'Abbas said to 'AIT: 'Stop wailing like a woman and get on [pi.] with your fellow!' 'AIT asked that al-Fadl be sent in to him. The Ansar said: 'We implore you by our share in the Messenger of God', and they let in Aws b. KhawalT, who was carrying a jug in one of his hands. 'AIT washed the body, moving his hand under the shirt while al-Fadl held the garment on him and the AnsarT carried the water (Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, 11/2, 62-3).

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that he was buried where he died." The grave was thus dug under the bed of Muhammad. Then the people entered and performed their prayers. No one acted as imam during the prayers. The Prophet was buried in the night of (Tuesday to) Wednesday.⁴⁹⁷

This section clearly does not continue the report of Ibn al-'Abbas on the digging of the grave. The place of the grave must have been chosen before the gravediggers were sent for. Ibn al-'Abbas evidently did not report anything about this decision, and Ibn Ishaq therefore supplied the information from other accounts without mentioning an *isnad*. The omission of an *isnad* quickly resulted in the attribution of Ibn Ishaq's elaborations to Ibn al-'Abbas. Al-BaladhurT and Ibn Maja quoted Ibn Ishaq's account from the story of the two gravediggers to the end with his *isnad* going back to Ibn al-'Abbas.⁴⁹⁸ Ibn Hanbal was more judicious. He quoted Ibn Ishaq's report on the washing of the body together with the story of the gravediggers under his *isnad* to Ibn al-'Abbas, but without Ibn Ishaq's elaborations.⁴⁹⁹ Ibrahim b. Ismail b. AbT HabTb took the elaborations of Ibn Ishaq and claimed to have heard them from Dawud b. al-Husayn from 'Ikrima from Ibn al-'Abbas.⁵⁰⁰

The story of the disagreement about the place of burial and Abu Bakr's decision was widely reported, among others by 'A'isha,⁵⁰¹ so that Ibn Ishaq evidently considered mention of an *isnad* unnecessary. In contrast to the account of Ibn al-'Abbas, the majority of these reports also describe the Muslims or Abu Bakr, rather than al-'Abbas, as deciding to send for the two gravediggers after disagreement about the appropriate practice.⁵⁰² Ibn Ishaq then describes the burial. He quotes 'A'isha, who stated: 'We did not know that the Messenger of God was being buried until we heard the sound of the shovels in the middle of the night of [Tuesday to] Wednesday.'⁵⁰³ The next section, reported without *isnad*, is again based on Ibn al-'Abbas as is evident from the similarity with the report about the washing of the Prophet.⁵⁰⁴ 'AIT, al-Fadl b. al-'Abbas, Qutham b.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibn Hisham, *Sirat sayyidina*, 1019—20; Tabari, I, 1832.

⁴⁹⁸ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, I, 573—4; Ibn Maja, *Sunan*, ed. Muhammad Fu'ad 'Abd al-BaqI ([Cairo] 1395/1975), *Jana'iz*, bab 65, quoted by Ibn KathTr, *Biddya*, V, 266-7.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibn KathTr, *Biddya*, V, 260-1. Ibn KathTr, however, quotes the end of Ibn Ishaq's elaborations somewhat freely, following the story of the two gravediggers, all with his *isnad* going back to Ibn al-'Abbas (*ibid.*, 265).

⁵⁰⁰ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, II/2, 71. On Ibrahim b. Isma'Il(d. 165/781-2) see Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, I, 104-5. It is not impossible that Dawud b. al-Husayn (al-UmawI, d. 135/752-3, Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, III, 181-2) had already made the false claim. Both traditionists are specifically described as unreliable in their transmission from 'Ikrima from Ibn al-'Abbas.

⁵⁰¹ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, II/2, 71; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, I, 573-4; Ibn KathTr, *Biddya*, V, 266-8.

⁵⁰² Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, II/2, 72-5; Ibn KathTr, *Biddya*, V, 266, 268.

⁵⁰³ TabarT, I, 1832-3.

" The report is quoted by Ibn Maja with Ibn Ishaq's *isnad* going back to Ibn al-'Abbas (*Sunan*, *Jana'iz*, bdb 65).

al-'Abbas and Shuqran descended into the tomb. Aws b. KhawalT again begged 'All for permission to descend and was allowed to join them. Shuqran placed a blanket (*qatifa*) of the Prophet in the grave to be buried with him.⁵⁰⁵

There are other relevant reports of Ibn al-'Abbas which Ibn Ishaq ignored and which significantly change the chronology and the implications of his complete account. According to Ibn al-'Abbas it was his father al-'Abbas who first contradicted 'Umar when he denied Muhammad's death and claimed that his spirit had been temporarily raised to heaven like that of Moses. Al-'Abbas urged the people to proceed with burying the Prophet, since his body would begin to smell like any other corpse; if it were as they were saying (that Muhammad was not really dead), it would be easy for God to open his tomb and bring him out.⁵⁰⁶

Contrary to the chronology of the Medinan school, Ibn al-'Abbas also reported that the Prophet was lying in state on his bed from sunset (*hina zaġhat al-shams*) on Monday until sunset on Tuesday. The people prayed at the side of his bed which was standing next to the edge of his grave. When they were ready to bury him, the bed was inclined at the foot end and was lowered from there into the tomb. Al-'Abbas, al-Fadl, Qutham, 'AIT and Shuqran descended into the grave.⁵⁰⁷ The washing of the body and the digging of the grave thus took place on Monday, while Abu Bakr and 'Umar were busy at the SaqTfat BanT Sa'ida.

There can be little doubt that the chronology given by Ibn al-'Abbas is essentially correct. Regardless of whether al-'Abbas or Abu Bakr, or both, put an end to 'Umar's attempt to deny Muhammad's death, there was no reason to delay the preparations of the burial. For the close kin to take charge of the preparations was customary and no permission from Abu Bakr and the Companions was required. The decision to bury Muhammad in his house was not made by Abu Bakr, but by his kin. The reason for it was obviously the insecurity of the situation in Medina and the desire to keep control over the arrangements. Had Abu Bakr been in command, he would no doubt have wished the Prophet to be buried in al-BaqI' with his relatives and martyred Companions and would have led the funeral prayers as Muhammad had done for them. The hadith that Abu Bakr is reported to have quoted to justify the burial at the place of Muhammad's death is fiction. It may well belong to the early efforts, furthered by 'A'isha, to show Abu Bakr as the recipient of Muhammad's

⁵⁰⁵ Ibn Hisham, *Sirat sayyidina*, 1020; TabarT, I, 1833.

⁵⁰⁶ 'Abd al-Razzaq, *Musannaf*, V, 433-5; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, II/2,53-4; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, I, 567. The report was evidently not meant to counter the common account that it was Abu Bakr's intervention that silenced 'Umar. This account was also confirmed by Ibn al-'Abbas ('Abd al-Razzaq, *Musannaf*, V, 436-7).¹⁶ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, II/2, 70.

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instructions about what should be done after his death. After the general *bay'a* on the Tuesday morning, Abu Bakr evidently did not wish to force a showdown with the Prophet's kin, who refused to swear allegiance to him, and to change their arrangements. There is consensus that no one led the funeral prayers.¹⁷ It is doubtful whether Abu Bakr and 'Umar even went to pay their last respects to the Prophet. Only a late and patently fabricated report describes them as entering with the Emigrants and addressing a few words to the dead body.¹⁸

The mention of Aws b. Khawall and of the two gravediggers thus takes on a distinctly polemical aspect. While Muhammad's kin went to prepare his burial, the Mekkan Emigrants ran off busily engaging in their political machinations. Only the Ansar showed some concern, and Aws b. Khawall was allowed to join the kin. When al-'Abbas sent for the gravediggers, the Mekkan Emigrant Abu 'Ubayda could not be found, presumably because he was occupied with Abu Bakr and 'Umar scheming to seize power. The Ansari, Abu Talha, was available, and thus the Prophet was buried in a grave dug in conformity with Medinan practice. God's choice in response to the prayer of al-'Abbas thus could be understood as a reminder to the Ansar that Muhammad had been, through his great-grandmother Salma bt 'Amr, one of them.

the Qur'an: "Solomon became David's heir (XXVII 16) and Zachariah said [in his prayer: give me a next-of-kin] who will inherit from me and inherit from the family of Jacob (XIX 6)." Abu Bakr said: "This is so, and you, by God, know the same as I know." 'All replied: "This is the Book of God speaking." Then they stopped talking and departed.²⁰

A way to avoid controversy was to argue that by saying 'We' the Prophet did not mean the prophets in general but only himself. The hadith was thus transmitted from al-Zuhri with the comment: 'By that the Messenger of God meant himself (*yuridu bi-dhalika rasulu llahi nafsah*).²¹ In other versions of the hadith, however, Muhammad is quoted as expressly explaining 'We' as the prophets (*ma'shar al-anbiya'*). Sunnite apologists were thus challenged to find another explanation for the ostensible conflict between Qur'an and Abu Bakr's hadith.

The Sunnite traditionalist historian Ibn Kathir angrily rejects what he calls an argument of the Rafida (Shi'ites), one of whom in his ignorance tried to counter Abu Bakr's hadith with the two Qur'anic verses about Solomon and Zachariah. The verse about Solomon inheriting from David referred only to kingship (*mulk*) and prophethood, not to inheritance of property. David had, according to numerous exegetes, as many as a hundred children; if the verse referred to inheritance of property, it would not have been confined to mentioning Solomon. Likewise Zachariah prayed for a son who would inherit his prophethood and spiritual leadership of the Banu Isra'el. He could not have meant inheritance of property, since he was himself a poor carpenter living on the work of his own hands.²²

Another way to justify the confiscation of Muhammad's estates in Medina,

Khaybar and Fadak was to claim that they had not been his personal property, but rather belonged to the Muslim community and were merely assigned to his discretionary use for his lifetime. This concept is reflected in another hadith ascribed to Abu Bakr according to which he had heard Muhammad say: 'This [land] is merely a morsel (*tu'ma*) which God gave me to eat, and when I die it will belong to the Muslims (*kana bayna l-Muslimm*).'"

According to a report of 'A'isha, the caliph 'Umar made a distinction

²⁰ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, II/2, 86.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 85. The Companions who reported the hadith in this version are listed as 'Umar, 'Uthman, 'AIT, al-Zubayr, Sa'd and al-'Abbas. It is evidently based on the report about 'Umar demanding and receiving the assurance of the most prominent Companions, including 'AIT and al-'Abbas, that they all knew the statement of Muhammad (see above, pp. 62-3). ²² Ibn KathTr, *Bidayat*, V, 290.

²³ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, II/2, 86; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 210—11, where Fatima is quoted as having reported that Abu Bakr justified his withholding of Fadak with this hadith. She replied: 'You and the Messenger of God know best. I shall not ask you again after this session.'

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between private property of Muhammad and state property merely assigned to him for his use. He surrendered Muhammad's estates in Medina to 'AIT and al-'Abbas. The former quickly usurped the rights of the latter (*ghalabahu 'alayha*). 'Umar retained the estates of Khaybar and Fadak, however, maintaining that they had been assigned to the Prophet for his needs and emergencies and that they were now at the disposal of the ruler of the Muslims (*amruhuma ila man waliya l-amr*).²⁴ Muhammad's land property in Medina is usually described as consisting of seven gardens which the Jew MukhayrTq of the Banu 1-NadTr or the Banu Qaynuqa', who was killed in the battle of Uhud, left to him by will.²⁵ Al-WaqidT claimed that the Prophet constituted them as an endowment in the year 7 of the *hijra*.²⁶ 'Umar may have found it difficult to maintain that the land of the Banu 1-NadTr was communal property of the Muslims since Abu Bakr had made a gift from his share to his daughter 'A'isha.²⁷ There is mention of two other estates of Muhammad coming from the property of the Banu Qurayza located in 'Aliyat al-Madlna.²⁸ From 'A'isha's report it is evident that Abu Bakr's confiscation of Muhammad's possessions was not based on a claim that they had in fact been state property.

Caetani presented the question of Muhammad's inheritance thus: in deciding that all of Muhammad's possessions should become public property and that the income accruing from them should go entirely to the Muslims, Abu Bakr was interpreting the will of the Prophet expressed many times during his life.²⁹ In his later life Muhammad had made highly arbitrary use of the revenue of Fadak. When his widows and Fatima - the latter at the instigation of her husband 'AIT - laid claim to the inheritance of Fadak, the righteous spirit of Abu Bakr revolted against such pretence and he proffered a statement of Muhammad denying his daughter any right to the revenue of Fadak, which was rather to be dedicated to the common benefit of the Muslims.³⁰ Muhammad, according to Caetani, did not own any land in Medina except his domicile.³¹ On this basis Caetani held that in the time of Muhammad communist tendencies prevailed in land ownership.³² The Qur'an (LIX 6), however, stated clearly that the land taken from the Banu 1-NadTr belonged to the Prophet, to be used at

²⁴ Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, I, 6—7; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 207.

²⁵ Baladhuri, *Futuh*, 18; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 173-6; Wensinck, *Muhammad and the Jews of Medina*, trans. W. Behn (Freiburg, 1975), 26-7; *Annali*, II/1, 688. According to another report, the Prophet's estates in Medina came from the land of the Banu al-Nadlr, and he distributed the land left by Mukhayriq after the battle of Uhud among the Muslims (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 175).

²⁶ Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 175. ²⁷ See above, p. 51.

²⁸ Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 187. ²⁹ *Annali*, II/1, 521. ³⁰ *Ibid.*, II/1, 686. ³¹ *Ibid.*, II/1, 688. It is difficult to see how this 'clearly results from the whole question', as Caetani asserts. ³² *Ibid.*, V, 526.

his discretion, not to the Muslim community.

The disallowance of any inheritance from Muhammad by Abu Bakr evidently soon gave rise to the numerous traditions that the Prophet had died without any personal possessions. 'A'isha is quoted as reporting that when the Messenger of God died he did not leave a dinar, a dirham, a slave or slave girl, a sheep, or a camel. Ibn al-'Abbas is said to have added that Muhammad had left his armour as a pawn with a Jew for thirty measures (*sa'*) of barley.³³ In reality, no doubt, everyone, especially the widows, simply appropriated all they could.

3 THE MARRIAGES OF 'UTHMAN B. 'AFFAN*

'Uthman is said to have recounted to his son 'Amr that before Islam and his marriage with Muhammad's daughter Ruqayya, he was promiscuous with women (*kuntu mustahtiran bi l-nisa'*).³⁴ He was probably married, however, to Umm Hakim Asma', daughter of the Makhzumite chief Abu Jahl b. Hisham, Muhammad's leading enemy, and had a son, al-MughTra, by her. While Asma' is mentioned only by al-Baladhuri³⁵ among the wives of 'Uthman, al-Mughlra is enumerated among his sons also by other sources.³⁶ Al-Mughlra was presumably named after Abu Jahl's grandfather al-MughTra b. 'Abd Allah, the early chief of Makhzum. Asma' was divorced by 'Uthman, most likely at the time of his conversion to Islam. He would then have been under pressure from her father, and perhaps also from Muhammad, to separate from her. Asma' was then married to the Makhzumite al-WalTd b. 'Abd Shams b. al-MughTra, her father's cousin. 'Uthman's son al-MughTra was evidently still a child and thus was brought up by his mother and her kin. He may well be, as has been suggested,³⁷ the al-MughTra b. 'Uthman who is mentioned by al-Suddi among the pagan Mekkans attacked by the Muslims at al-Nakhla in the year 2/623, at which time he escaped.³⁸ Since there is no further mention of him, it is likely that he died as a pagan before the Muslim conquest of Mekka. That 'Uthman's marriage with Asma' must have been early in his life is also indicated by the fact that he married Umm

³³ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, II/2, 87; *Annali*, II/1, 521.

* In addition to the sources quoted by Caetani, *Annali*, VIII, 298-307, see in particular Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 11-13, 105-6 and ZubayrT, *Nasab*, 104-12.

³⁴ Ibn 'Asakir, *Uthman*, 20.

³⁵ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, V, 105. Mus'ab al-Zubayri does not mention Asma' among 'Uthman's wives nor al-Mughlra among his sons. In his notice on Asma' bt Abi Jahl he mentions only her marriage to the Makhzumite al-WalTd b. 'Abd Shams (*Nasab*, 312).

³⁶ Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'arif*, 198; Mas'udT, *Muruj*, III, 75, para. 1577.

³⁷ Pellat in Mas'udT, *Muruj*, VII, index s.v. al-MughTra b. 'Uthman.

³⁸ See TabarT, I, 1277 and TabarT, *Jami'*, II, 196. Al-MughTra b. 'Uthman is not mentioned in Ibn Ishaq's account of the raid of al-Nakhla. On the basis of the identity of the pagans named in the two accounts it is evident that the caravan was essentially Makhzumite.

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'Abd Allah Fatima, her daughter with al-Walid b. 'Abd Shams, during the caliphate of Umar. Al-Walid b. 'Abd Shams had been killed fighting under Khalid b. al-Walid in the battle of al-'Aqraba' in 12/633.⁵⁰⁸ The date of the death of Asma' bt AbT Jahl is not known.

According to 'Uthman's own account he had first, before knowing of Muhammad's prophetic mission, been moved by the beauty of Ruqayya and by his jealousy of 'Utba b. AbT Lahab, to whom Muhammad had given her in marriage, and for that reason sought a meeting with the Prophet.⁵⁰⁹ He became converted to Islam and immediately married her after she was divorced by 'Utba at his father's demand. She accompanied 'Uthman during his migrations to Abyssinia and to Medina. Because of Ruqayya's illness, Muhammad permitted 'Uthman to stay at home during the campaign to Badr in 2/624. Ruqayya died before Muhammad's return. After a miscarriage she had, probably in Abyssinia, borne 'Uthman a son, 'Abd Allah, known as the elder 'Abd Allah (al-Akbar). According to most sources he died, after a cock had pecked him in one of his eyes, at the age of six in Jumada I 4/October-November 625.⁵¹⁰

After his return from Abyssinia to Mekka 'Uthman married Ramla, daughter of Shayba b. RabT'a b. 'Abd Shams. Her father Shayba b. RabT'a was a prominent member of the pagan Qurayshite nobility and was killed together with his brother 'Utba in the battle of Badr. 'Uthman must have been proud to be able to marry her, presumably with the consent of her father. He paid a dowry of 30,000 or 40,000 dirhams for her.⁵¹¹ She migrated to Medina with 'Uthman and is counted among the Muhajirat. When her father was slain at Badr, Abu Sufyan's wife Hind bt 'Utba lampooned her for her betrayal of her kin. Most of the sources conceal the fact that she was married to 'Uthman at the same time as Ruqayya.⁵¹² Muhammad, it is known, after the conquest of Mekka intervened to prevent the marriage of 'AIT with Juwayriya, daughter of Abu Jahl, insisting that the daughter of the 'enemy of God' should not be conjoined with the Prophet's daughter Fatima. At the time of 'Uthman's marriage to Ramla, Muhammad was probably in no position to raise objections, if he had any.

'Uthman had three daughters with Ramla: Umm Aban, Umm 'Amr and 'A'isha. They were probably born during Muhammad's lifetime, and 'Uthman gave them in marriage early on in his caliphate. He married

⁵⁰⁸ ZubayrT, *Nasab*, 330. ⁴⁰ Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 20.

⁴¹ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 37; TabarT, I, 1453; *Annali*, I, 588. In his biography of Ruqayya, Ibn Sa'd (*Tabaqat*, VIII, 24) states that 'Abd Allah died at the age of one or two, years before Ruqayya's own death. ⁴² BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 13.

⁵¹² Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, as quoted by Ibn al-AthTr (*Usdal-ghaba*, V, 457), stated expressly that Ramla emigrated together with her husband 'Uthman b. 'Affan to Medina. In the edition of Ibn 'Abd al-Barr's *Istf ab* (II, 730), however, 'Uthman b. Maz'un is substituted. See also the discussion of Ibn Hajar, *Isaba*, VIII, 86.

Umm Aban to Marwan b. al-Hakam,⁵¹³ Umm 'Amr to Sa'Id b. al-'As,⁵¹⁴ and 'A'isha to al-Harith b. al-Hakam. 'A'isha was later married and divorced by 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr.⁵¹⁵ Ramla was still alive and married to 'Uthman when he was killed.

Shortly after Ruqayya's death 'Umar b. al-Khattab offered his daughter Hafsa, who had recently been widowed, to 'Uthman in marriage. The latter promised to consider the matter but after a few days rebuffed 'Umar with the excuse that he was not ready to marry at present. Muhammad now intervened to marry Hafsa himself while offering 'Uthman his own daughter Umm Kulthum.⁵¹⁶ 'Uthman married her in RabT I 3/August- September 624, five months after the battle of Badr. She had been married to 'Utayba b. AbT Lahab, but the marriage had not been consummated before he was forced by his father to divorce her. She died childless in Sha'ban 9/November-December 630.⁵¹⁷

In Medina, most likely while Muhammad was alive, 'Uthman married Fakhita bt Ghazwan. Her brother 'Utba b. Ghazwan b. Jabir of Mazin of Qays 'Aylan, a confederate of the Banu Nawfal, converted to Islam at an early date in Mekka and migrated to Abyssinia and Medina; later, under 'Umar, he became the founder and first governor of Basra.⁵¹⁸ Fakhita is not mentioned among the Muhajirat and may have come to Medina some time after her brother. 'Uthman presumably married her in order to support her. She bore him a son, 'Abd Allah, called the younger (al-Asghar).⁵¹⁹ He was presumably born after the death of Ruqayya's son and therefore given the same name. He also died young, before 'Uthman's accession to the caliphate. Fakhita survived 'Uthman as his wife and was later married to Abu Hurayra.⁵²⁰

After the conquest of Mekka in 8/630 'Uthman married a daughter of his second-degree cousin Khalid b. Asld b. Abi l-'Is b. Umayya, providing a dowry of 40,000 dirhams.⁵² Khalid b. Asld converted to Islam at the time of the conquest and was killed in the battle of al-'Aqraba' in 12/633.

⁵¹³ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, V, 106; Ibn Hablb, *al-Muhabbar*, ed. I. Lichtenstaedter (Hyderabad, 1942), 56. Marwan's brother 'Abd al-Rahman in a line of poetry aired his love for her (Zubayri, *Nasab*, 161). The marriage probably took place after Marwan's return from 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd's expedition to Ifriqiya in 27/647 when 'Uthman also gave him 500,000 dirhams of the *khums* of the booty (Ya'qubT, *Ta'rikh*, II, 191; *Annali*, VII, 193).

⁵¹⁴ Zubayri, *Nasab*, 112; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 106; Ibn Habib, *Muhabbar*, 55.

⁵¹⁵ BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 106; Zubayri, *Nasab*, 112 where the text *tazawwajat*. . . 'Uthmanb. al-Harith fa-waladat lah is corrupt and should be read *tazawwajat* . . . al-Harith b. al-Hakam fa-waladat lahu 'Uthman b. al-Harith. See ZubayrT, *Nasab*, 170. Ibn HabTb, *Muhabbar*, 55.

⁵¹⁶ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, VIII, 56-8. Reports that it was 'Uthman who proposed to marry Hafsa and that 'Umar declined his offer (Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 31-2) are obviously mistaken.

⁵¹⁷ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, VIII, 25. " *Ibid.*, III/1, 69, VII/1, 1-3.

⁵⁰ On Ibn Qutayba's list 'Abd Allah al-Akbar appears as the son of Fakhita, and 'Abd Allah al-Asghar as the son of Ruqayya (*Annali*, VIII, 301). This is certainly erroneous.

⁵²⁰ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, V, 100. ⁵² *Ibid.*, V, 13.

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'Uthman's aim in marrying her evidently was to strengthen his family ties with the most prominent Umayyads. Nothing further is known about Khalid b. Asid's daughter. Most likely she soon died childless.

Jundab b. 'Amr b. Humama of the Banu Daws of Azd came to Medina as a Muhajir. When he joined the campaign for the conquest of Syria he gave his daughter Umm 'Amr in custody to the caliph 'Umar with the instruction that, should anything happen to him, 'Umar should marry her to an equal. 'Umar used to call her 'my daughter', and she called him 'my father'. When Jundab was killed as a martyr, the caliph asked for someone to marry 'the beautiful corpulent one (*al-jamila al-jasima*Y,⁵²¹ 'Uthman married Umm 'Amr bt Jundab and later used to say that he found in her everything he loved in a woman.⁵²² She bore him four sons, 'Amr, Aban, Khalid and 'Umar, and a daughter, Maryam (al-Kubra). 'Amr, Aban and 'Umar survived 'Uthman and had offspring. Khalid was killed in an accident during his father's reign, but also left children.⁵²³ 'Uthman gave Maryam in marriage to 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Harith b. Hisham al-MakhzumT, nephew of Abu Jahl. Later, according to Mus'ab al-ZubayrT, she was married to 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwan.⁵²⁴ Umm 'Amr bt Jundab seems to have died before 'Uthman.

Probably not much later, during the caliphate of 'Umar, 'Uthman married Umm 'Abd Allah Fatima bt. al-WalTd b. 'Abd Shams b. al-MughTra al-MakhzumT with a dowry of 30,000 dirhams.⁵²⁵ She was, as noted, the daughter of his pre-Islamic wife Umm HakTm Asma' bt AbT Jahl, who had married al-WalTd. The latter accepted Islam at the conquest of Mekka and was killed in the battle of al-'Aqraba'. From Fatima bt al-WalTd, 'Uthman had two sons, al-WalTd and Sa'Td, and a daughter, Umm Sa'Td, called Umm 'Uthman by Mus'ab al-ZubayrT.⁵²⁶ Both al-WalTd and Sa'Td survived their father and al-WalTd had offspring. 'Uthman, while caliph, gave Umm Sa'Td, or Umm 'Uthman, in marriage

⁵²¹ So al-BaladhurT (*ibid.*) Abu l-Faraj al-I\$fahanT gives the reading 'the beautiful noble (*al-hasiba*) one' (*Aghani*, I, 153).

⁵²² BaladhurT, *Ansd*, V, 13; *Aghani*, I, 153-4, with further detail.

⁵²³ BaladhurT, *Ansd*, V, 116-17; ZubayrT, *Nasab*, 119. It was the caliph 'Uthman, according to al-ZubayrT, who took the initiative to offer his daughter to the Makhzumite.

⁵²⁴ ZubayrT, *Nasab*, 111-12, 308; Ibn HabTb, *Muhabbar*, 55. Al-BaladhurT states that Maryam al-Kubra was married to Sa'Td b. al-'As after the death of her sister Umm 'Amr and that only after his death did she marry 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Harith, and died before him (*Ansd*, V, 106). Sa'Td b. al-'As, however, did not die until the years 57-9/677-9, and it is uncertain whether 'Abd al-Rahman survived him. According to Mus'ab al-ZubayrT (*Nasab*, 180) and Ibn Sa'd (*Tabaqat*, V, 20), Sa'Td b. al-'A? rather married Maryam al-šughra, 'Uthman's daughter by Na'ila, after the death of her sister Umm 'Amr. This seems on balance more likely.

⁵²⁵ BaladhurT, *Ansd*, V, 13. That 'Uthman married Fatima after Umm 'Amr is to be inferred from the fact that her sons were younger than 'Uthman's eldest surviving son, 'Amr.

⁵²⁶ *Nasab*, 104, 112.

to the Umayyad 'Abd Allah b. Khalid b. Asld, brother of his above-mentioned wife, and paid for his debts.⁵²⁷ It is not known whether 'Uthman at that time was still married to 'Abd Allah's sister. Fatima bt al-Walld either died or, less likely, was divorced before 'Uthman's death.

After the death of the caliph 'Umar, 'Uthman proposed to marry his daughter Fatima bt 'Umar. The exceptionally high dowry of 100,000 dirhams which he offered may have been intended to placate her family for his earlier slight to 'Umar and Hafsa when he declined to marry her. 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar, full brother of Hafsa, insisted, however, on the prior right of Fatima's paternal cousin, and she was married to 'Abd al-Rahman b. Zayd b. al-Khattab.⁵²⁸ 'Uthman may have been particularly interested in this daughter of 'Umar since her mother was the Makhzumite Umm Hakim bt al-Harith b. Hisham, to whose brother 'Abd al-Rahman he then gave his own daughter Maryam. Fatima bt 'Umar cannot have been more than nine years old at this time, since 'Umar had only married her mother in 14/635 after her previous husband, Khalid b. Said b. al-'As, had been killed in the battle of Marj al-Suffar.⁵²⁹ It is possible that Fatima bt al-Walld had recently died and that 'Uthman was eager to renew once more his close ties with the family of Abu Jahl.

In the year 28/648-9, seven years before his death, 'Uthman married Na'ila, daughter of the Christian Kalbite chief al-Farafisa b. al-Ahwas.⁵³⁰ Said b. al-'As had married her sister Hind bt al-Farafisa. When 'Uthman learned of this, he wrote to Sa'Td instructing him that, if Hind had a sister, he convey 'Uthman's marriage proposal to her. Sa'Td sent to her father who asked her brother Dabb to accompany and present her to the caliph, since Dabb was a Muslim. 'Uthman gave her a dowry of 10,000 dirhams and Kaysan Abu Salim and his wife Rummana, a slave woman from Kirman, as presents.⁵³¹ Na'ila bore 'Uthman at least four daughters, Maryam (al-Sughra), Umm Khalid, Arwa, Umm Aban (al-Sughra), and perhaps a fifth one, Umm al-Banin. The mother of the latter was Na'ila according to al-WaqidT,⁵³² but according to Ibn Sa'd,⁵³³ a concubine (*umm walad*). An isolated report of Hisham al-Kalbi that 'Uthman also had a son, 'Anbasa, by Na'ila⁶⁶ is probably unreliable. Maryam (al-Sughra) was married to the Umayyad 'Amr b. al-WalTd b.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid.*, 112. ⁶⁰ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 13. ⁶¹ ZubayrT, *Nasab*, 303, 349-50.

⁶² TabarT, I, 2827; *Annali*, VII, 231-2.

⁶³ BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, 11-12; *Aghani*, XV, 70-1; *Annali*, VII, 303-4. Sa'Td b. al-'As was probably in charge of the alms-tax of Kalb at the time. The sources quoted by Caetani, *Annali*, VII, 232, mention al-WalTd b. 'Uqba as the one arranging the marriage of Na'ila with 'Uthman and put him in charge of the *sadaqat* of Kalb. Al-WalTd b. 'Uqba, however, was governor of Kufa then. In the account in *Aghani*, XV, 70-1, Sa'Td b. al-'As is erroneously described as governor of Kufa at this time. ⁶⁴ TabarT, I, 3056-7.

⁵³³ *Tabaqat*, III/1, 37; so also Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 953. ⁶⁶ Tabari, I, 3056.

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'Uqba b. AbT Mu'ayt. She is described as uncouth (*sayyi'at al-khuluq*) and as provoking the reproach of her husband.⁵³⁴ If the reports of Mus'ab al-ZubayrT and Ibn Sa'd that she was married to Sa'Td b. al-'As after the death of her sister Umm 'Amr⁵³⁵ are reliable, 'Amr b. al-WalTd, who outlived Sa'Td b. al-'As, must have divorced her. Umm Khalid was married by 'Abd Allah b. Khalid b. Asid after the death of her sister Umm Sa'Td (Umm 'Uthman).⁵³⁶ Arwa married Khalid b. al-WalTd b. 'Uqba b. AbT Mu'ayt,⁵³⁷ brother of 'Amr b. al-WalTd. Umm Aban (al-Sughra) did not marry.⁵³⁸ Umm al-BanTn, according to al-WaqidT⁵³⁹ and Ibn Sa'd,⁵⁴⁰ married the Sufyanid 'Abd Allah b. YazTd b. AbT Sufyan. According to al-BaladhurT⁷⁴ and Ibn Hazm,⁷⁵ however, YazTd b. AbT Sufyan had no offspring. According to Ibn HabTb, Umm al-BanTn was rather married to Abu Sufyan b. 'Abd Allah b. Khalid b. AsTd.⁷⁶ A son of 'Abd Allah b. Khalid b. Asid named Abu Sufyan does not seem to be known otherwise. Mus'ab al-ZubayrT is probably mistaken in stating that she did not marry.⁷⁷ Na'ila became famous among 'Uthman's wives for her courageous stand in trying to defend her husband against his murderers and for her letter inciting Mu'awiya to revenge. She refused a marriage proposal by Mu'awiya and tore out two of her front teeth in order to put an end to his importunity.⁷⁸

Certainly also during his caliphate 'Uthman married Umm al-BanTn Mulayka, daughter of 'Uyayna b. Hisn b. Hudhayfa b. Badr al-FazarT. Her father was the chief of Fazara, a rough and tough bedouin, grandson of Hudhayfa b. Badr, famous tribal leader and battle hero in the war of Dahis. 'Uyayna at first vigorously fought the Muslims, then joined them just before the conquest of Mekka, remaining a pagan at heart. In the delegation of Fazara that announced the formal conversion of the tribe to Muhammad in the year 9/630-1, 'Uyayna was conspicuously absent.⁷⁹ After Muhammad's death he participated in the *rida*, actively backing the false prophet Talha (Tulayha). He was caught and brought before Abu Bakr, who pardoned him. Immensely proud of his tribal nobility, it was evidently his ambition to marry his daughter Umm al-BanTn to the head of the Muslim community. According to an anecdote he had offered her first to Muhammad, thereby upsetting 'A'isha.⁸⁰ Later he seems to have tried to get her married off to 'Umar. When he once rudely scolded his son-in-law 'Uthman, the latter told him: 'If it had been 'Umar, you would not have this audacity.'⁸¹

⁵³⁴ BaladhurI, *Ansab*, V, 12, 106. ⁶⁸ See above, n. 56.

⁶⁹ ZubayrT, *Nasab*, 112; Ibn HabTb, *Muhabbar*, 55.

⁷⁰ ZubayrI, *Nasab*, 112; Ibn HabTb, *Muhabbar*, 55. ⁷¹ ZubayrT, *Nasab*, 112.

⁷² TabarT, I, 3036-7. ⁷³ *Tabaqat*, 111/1, 37. ⁷⁴ *Ansd*, 4/1,6.

⁷⁵ Ibn Hazm, *Jamhara*, 111. ⁷⁶ Ibn HabTb, *Muhabbar*, 55. ⁷⁷ *Nasab*, 112.

⁷⁸ BaladhurI, *Ansab*, V, 12-13; see above p. 349. ⁷⁹ *Annali*, II/I, 291.

⁸⁰ Ibn Hajar, *Isdba*, V, 55. ⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 56.

'Uthman, in any case, married Umm al-BanTn with a dowry of 500 dinars⁵⁴¹ and put up with her father's and her own bedouin mentality. 'Uyayna did not miss the opportunity to visit his daughter at night during Ramadan while she was with the caliph. 'Uthman invited him to the fast-breaking dinner, but 'Uyayna excused himself on the grounds that he was fasting. On 'Uthman's astonished question why anyone would fast at night, he explained that he considered day and night alike and found fasting at night less burdensome upon himself. The caliph smiled.⁵⁴² According to another story reported by al-Mada'inT,⁵⁴³ Salim (b. Musafi) b. Dara of the Banu 'Abd Allah b. Ghatafan was wounded by Zumayl b. Ubayr of Fazara after a quarrel and was carried to 'Uthman in Medina. The caliph ordered his physician to attend to his wound. When the latter proposed to treat it with medicine rather than by surgery, the daughter of 'Uyayna, in true tribal solidarity with Fazara, bribed him to sprinkle poison on the wound, killing Salim.

Umm al-BanTn bore 'Uthman a son, 'Abd al-Malik, who died in childhood.⁵⁴⁴ Hisham Ibn al-Kalbl mentioned a second son of 'Uthman by her, named 'Utba.⁵⁴⁵ According to some sources, 'Uthman repudiated Umm al-BanTn during the siege of his palace. Reporting this, al-Mada'inT commented that there was in her the same crudeness (*jafa'*) as in her father 'Uyayna. When the latter heard of the statement of the Prophet that the tribes of Muzayna, Juhayna, Aslam and Ghifar were more virtuous (*khayr*) than TamTm, Asad, 'Amir and Ghatafan (to whom Fazara belonged), he countered: 'To be with these in hell-fire is preferable to me than to be with those in paradise.' When this reached Umm al-BanTn, she exclaimed: 'By God, my father is not far from the truth (*ma ab'ada Abt*).⁵⁴⁶ Umm al-BanTn is mentioned prominently, however, among those who helped to bury the murdered caliph clandestinely. Mus'ab al-Zubayr! names her and Na'ila as the two wives who inherited from 'Uthman.⁵⁴⁷ Only Ibn Sa'd, as noted, mentions an anonymous concubine of 'Uthman, according to him the mother of Umm al-BanTn bt 'Uthman.

The pattern of marriages of 'Uthman and of his daughters clearly

⁵⁴¹ Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, V, 13. The sequence in which 'Uthman's payments of dowries to his wives are listed there appears to be chronological. The marriage with Umm al-BanTn is mentioned after 'Uthman's proposal to Fatima bt 'Umar after 'Umar's death. This seems to confirm that the marriage took place during 'Uthman's caliphate. Neither 'Uyayna nor 'Uthman could have had any interest in the marriage before his reign.

⁵⁴² BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 106; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1056-7.

⁵⁴³ BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 15. Further details about the feud are provided by Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1057-63.

⁵⁴⁴ This is stated by al-Mas'udT (*Muruj*, III, para. 1577) and implied by al-TabarI (I, 3056).

Mus'ab al-Zubayri is probably mistaken in stating that he died as an adult (*rajulan*) but childless (*Nasab*, 104).⁸⁶ TabarT, I, 3056.⁸⁷ BaladhurT, *Ansdh*, V, 100.

⁵⁴⁷ *Nasab*, 112.

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reflect his desire, especially when he was older, to strengthen his ties with the old-established Mekkan aristocracy. Aside from his own clan, 'Abd Shams, he courted Makhzum, in particular the family of Abu Jahl. He was evidently eager to restore the ties broken when he was forced to divorce Abu Jahl's daughter on his conversion to Islam. His overtures to Makhzum bore fruit at the time of the *shura* election when Makhzum strongly backed his candidacy against 'All's.⁵⁴⁸

'Uthman's kinship, through his grandmother, with the Banu Hashim did not mean much to him. His personal pride was presumably flattered by having been given two daughters of the Prophet. After both of them died, he made no effort to maintain marriage ties with Muhammad's clan. He lacked any sense of solidarity with the new Islamic nobility based on *sabiqa* and merit in religion which 'Umar had attempted to establish. With none of the families of prominent Muslim leaders, Abu Bakr, 'Umar, the five members of the *shura*, or any of the Ansar, did he forge marriage ties. His proposal to marry 'Umar's daughter Fatima presumably was, as noted, influenced primarily by her maternal Makhzumite nobility. The pious 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar may have acted partly out of an awareness of this motivation when he refused the proposal. Of the two tribal leaders whose daughters 'Uthman married during his caliphate, one was a Christian and the other a nominal convert, making light of Islamic ritual and faith.

With regard to 'Uthman's Umayyad kin, it is noteworthy that he did not establish marriage bonds with Mu'awiya. His relations with Abu Sufyan and his numerous descendants were clearly not as close as with the other branches of the clan, even if the obscure reports about a marriage of his daughter Umm al-BanTn to an 'Abd Allah b. YazTd b. AbT Sufyan should be reliable. It was Mu'awiya who later, as caliph, gave his daughter Ramla in marriage to 'Amr, 'Uthman's eldest surviving son and presumptive successor.⁵⁴⁹

The data about 'Uthman's marriages are also relevant to the question of 'Uthman's age. If he married Na'ila seven years before his death and had at least four daughters by her, it is hardly likely that he reached the age of eighty-two years given by most sources, not to mention eighty-six, eighty-eight, ninety or ninety-five years given by some. More reasonable would be the age of seventy-five years mentioned Abu Ma'shar. The age of sixty-three given by Sayf b. 'Umar is arbitrarily chosen to make 'Uthman and the other early caliphs all die miraculously at the same age as Muhammad.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁸ See above, p. 71. ⁹⁰ Zubayri, *Nasab*, 106.

⁹¹ For the information about the age of 'Uthman given in the various sources see *Annali*, VIII, 258-60.

4 DOMANIAL LAND IN IRAQ UNDER 'UMAR

All evidence adduced by Caetani for his assertion that 'Umar gave concessions from *fay'* land in Iraq⁵⁵¹ is unsound. The case of al-Rufayl or Ibn al-Rufayl,⁵⁵² a landed magnate (*dihqan*) who co-operated with the Muslim conquerors, does not concern ownerless domanial land. Al-Rufayl had stayed on his estate during the conquest. When he later converted to Islam, 'Umar allowed him to keep his land with the obligation of continuing to pay the land tax (*kharaj*). This did not affect the status of his land, since all those who had remained on their land at the time of the conquest had been recognized as its *de facto* owners in return for payment of *kharaj*.

The case of Saïd b. Zayd,⁵⁵³ 'Umar's brother-in-law, is highly doubtful. Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas is described as having, on 'Umar's order, granted land to him which turned out to belong to (Ibn) al-Rufayl. When the latter complained, 'Umar rescinded the land concession to SaTd. If the report is sound, this would have occurred during the time of the conquest, before 'Umar had decreed the general immobilization of agricultural land.

The case of 'Umar's land concession (*iqta'*) to 'AIT⁵⁵⁴ concerned land at Yanbu' in Arabia. It was evidently ownerless dead land. Such land grants of previously uncultivated land had been made by Muhammad. According to 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr, Abu Bakr conceded such land at al-Jurf three miles north of Medina to his father, al-Zubayr.⁵⁵⁵ 'Umar also owned land there⁵⁵⁶ which must have been granted by Abu Bakr or Muhammad. The case of Khuthaym al-QarT⁵⁵⁷ likewise concerns land in Arabia near (Dhu) l-Marwa. Contrary to Caetani's note, 'Umar declined to grant Khuthaym the land he requested.

The case of 'Umar's land grant to Abu 'Abd Allah Nafi' on the bank of the Tigris for the purpose of grazing his horses also concerned unused land. 'Umar sought an assurance that it was not taxable agricultural land (*ar4 al-jizya*) nor irrigated by water coming from agricultural land.⁵⁵⁸

The report of Musa b. Talha that 'Umar granted land to five Companions quoted by Yahya b. Adam⁵⁵⁹ rests on a faulty transmission. In the reliable parallel versions quoted by al-BaladhurT,¹⁰¹ Abu 'Ubayd,¹⁰²

⁵⁵¹ *Annali*, V, 404. ⁹³ Yahya, *Kharaj*, 42.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* ⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*-, BaladhurT, *Futuü*, 13,21. Abu Yusuf rather reports that al-Jurf was land belonging to the Banu l-Nadlr and was granted to al-Zubayr by Muhammad (Abu Yusuf, *Kitab al-Khardj*, (Cairo, 1352/[1933], 61). ⁹⁷ Yaqt, *Buldan*, II, 7.

⁹⁸ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, V, 343. ⁹⁹ Yahya, *Kharaj*, 11, 57-8. ¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 57.

¹⁰¹ *Futuü*, 273.

¹⁰² Abu 'Ubayd al-Qasim b. Sallam, *Kitdb al-Amwdl*, ed. Muhammad Harras (Cairo, 1968), 393.

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and Ibn Shabba,⁵⁶⁰ it is 'Uthman who made these land grants. Musa b. Talha categorically affirmed in several of his reports that 'Uthman was the first to grant *iqta'* s in the *sawad*. As a contemporary and son of one of the beneficiaries of 'Uthman's new policy, he must be considered a key witness in the question.

The later Muslim authors and jurists supportive of government interest generally favoured the view that the *sawafic* could be used freely at the caliph's discretion. Sayf b. 'Umar thus also asserts, on the basis of a lengthy report attributed by him to 'Amir al-Sha'b! (d. 103/721), another highly authoritative witness, that 'Umar granted *iqtd's* in the *sawad*.⁵⁶¹ Yet the same al-Sha'b! according to reliable reports stated that Muhammad, Abu Bakr and 'Umar did not grant *iqtd's* from (cultivated) land and that 'Uthman was the first one to grant and sell such land.⁵⁶² The examples quoted by Sayf on al-Sha'b!'s authority are no doubt fabricated. Talha's estate was granted by 'Uthman, as attested by his son Musa as well as by al-Sha'bi.⁵⁶³ JarTr b. 'Abd Allah, chief of BajTla, received his estate along the Euphrates from 'Uthman. When 'Umar withdrew the *iqta'* initially conferred on BajTla collectively, he is reported to have rewarded JarTr with 80 dinars.⁵⁶⁴ Sayf's story that 'Umar ordered 'Uthman b. Hunayf to give JarTr land for his sustenance is an invention not supported by any other source. Under the circumstances, the other names mentioned by Sayf, al-Ribb! b. 'Amr al-Asad!, Abu Mufazzir al-TamTml and Abu Musa al-Ash'ar!, cannot inspire confidence.

Harun al-Rash!d's chief judge Abu Yusuf states that in Iraq all land of the Persian king (Kisra), his nobles (*maraziba*), and his household was (suitable for) fiefs (*qata'!*);¹⁰⁸ the imam should grant *iqtd's* to whomever he wished and leave no land without owner and cultivation.¹⁰⁹ The only examples of land grants by 'Umar mentioned by Abu Yusuf concern Arabia.¹¹⁰ For Iraq he cites land grants by 'Uthman.¹¹¹ Abu 'Ubayd al-Qasim b. Sallam likewise does not mention any grants of agricultural land in Iraq by 'Umar. He justifies the land grants by 'Uthman as coming from ownerless land which 'Umar had set aside as *sawafi* (*asfaha*).¹¹²

Both Abu Yusuf and Abu 'Ubayd support their argument with a report by the Kufan 'Abd al-Malik b. Ab! Hurra al-Hanaf! on the authority of his father, according to which 'Umar had set aside (*asfa*) the land of the Persian king (*ard Kisra*), land whose owners had fled, and several other categories as *sawafi*, and their register (*diwan*) was burned by the people

⁵⁶⁰ Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1020-1.

⁵⁶¹ Tabari, I, 2376. ¹⁰⁵ Yahya, *Kharaj*, 58; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1019.

¹⁰⁶ Baladhur!, *Futuh*, 273. ¹⁰⁷ Yahya, *Kharaj*, 29, 30. ¹⁰⁸ Abu Yusuf, *Kharaj*, 57.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 58, 61. ¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 61-2. *Ibid.*, 62.

¹¹² Abu 'Ubayd, *Amwal*, 399-400.

at the time of the battle of (Dayr) al-Jamajim in 83/702.¹¹³ The report was certainly formulated at a late date and has no source value for the time of 'Umar.¹¹⁴ In reality 'Umar surveyed the *sawad* as a whole, set the rates of taxation, and placed the land under administration by the governor and garrison of Kufa. The setting aside and registration of the *sawafT* took place during the caliphate of Mu'awiya.

5 NOTES ON THE SOURCES FOR THE CRISIS OF THE CALIPHATE OF 'UTHMAN

The most reliable history of the crisis of 'Uthman's caliphate was provided by al-WaqidT. The sources quoted by him, many of them eyewitness or first-hand reports, span the whole range of political attitudes towards the events. Among them are the 'Alids 'Umar b. 'All b. AbT Talib, his sons, Muhammad and 'All, and the pro-'AIT 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas. There are the representatives of the originally pro-'Uthman, but later disillusioned, Qurayshite clan of Zuhra, al-Miswar b. Makhrama, his client Abu 'Awn,¹¹⁵ 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Aswad b. 'Abd Yaghuth,

^{1,3} Abu Yusuf, *Kharaj*, 57 ('Abd Allah b. AbT Hurra in the text should presumably be read 'Abd al-Malik b. AbT Hurra. In Abu Yusuf's version there is no separate mention of the father Abu Hurra); Abu 'Ubayd, *Amiual*, 399; BaladhurT, *Futuh*, 272-3. The report was partly translated and accepted as reliable by D. C. Dennett, *Conversion and Poll Tax in Early Islam* (Cambridge, 1950), 26.

¹¹⁴ Abu Hurra al-HanafT is described in one of the versions of the report quoted by al-Baladhuri (*Futuh*, 272) as 'the best informed man about this *sawadC*. 'Abd al-Malik b. AbT Hurra is otherwise known only as a transmitter of Shi'ite reports about the last period of 'AIT's reign to Abu Mikhnaf (TabarT, I, 3270, 3361, 3363, 3383; Sezgin, *Abu Mihnaf*, 192). His main source for these reports, which he narrates without *isnad*, was probably information received from his father who is mentioned as a messenger from 'AIT to the rebel Banu Najiya (TabarT, I, 3440, for Abu Jurra read Abu Hurra; ThaqafT, *Gharat*, 364). Abu Hurra must have been quite young then if he was still alive after the battle of Dayr al-Jamajim. The reports were no doubt formulated by 'Abd al-Malik, not by his father.

The transmitter of 'Abd al-Malik's report about the *sawad* was the Kufan 'Abd Allah b. al-WalTd b. 'Abd Allah b. Ma'qil al-MuzanT (Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, VI, 69), who handed it on in variant versions but regularly with the formula *asfa 'Umar*. He evidently had a specific interest in ascribing the later caliphal policy concerning the *satvafi* to 'Umar. Abu Yusuf quoted a similar report by him on the authority of an unnamed 'man of the Banu Asad', who, he said, was more knowledgeable about the *saioad* than anyone he had ever met (*Kharaj*, 57; al-MadanT should be read al-MuzanT). Abu Yusuf, himself equally interested in legitimizing 'Abbasid practice, added a further report about 'Umar's having set aside various categories of crown land, which he had heard from 'one of the old shaykhs of the people of Medina' (*ibid.*, 57-8).

¹¹⁵ Abu 'Awn *mawla* al-Miswar seems to be the same as Abu 'Awn, the father of ShurahbTl b. AbT 'Awn, although this cannot be definitely proven. ShurahbTl b. AbT 'Awn is not mentioned in the biographical dictionaries. While usually transmitting from his father, he is also al-WaqidT's informant for an important report of the Egyptian YazTd b. AbT HabTb on the authority of Abu l-Khayr (TabarT, I, 2999). He thus appears to have been a historian in his own right.

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and the family of Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas.⁵⁶⁵ The clan of Makhzum, similarly disillusioned, is also represented.⁵⁶⁶ The pro-'Uthman but anti-Marwanid family tradition of al-Zubayr is provided by Abu Hablba, client of al-Zubayr, and Musa b. 'Uqba, client of the Al al-Zubayr. On the part of the Ansar, there was the tradition of the distinguished Medinan family of 'Amr b. Hazm of the Banu l-Najjar, in the end distinctly anti-'Uthman, and the vital and highly reliable testimony of Muhammad b. Maslama of the Banu 'Amr b. 'Awf of Aws, a supporter of 'Uthman until shortly before the end and thereafter a neutral who either did not pledge allegiance to 'AIT or would not back him in war. 'Uthmanid also was the testimony of 'Uthman b. Muhammad al-Akhnas!,⁵⁶⁷ grandson of al-MughTra b. al-Akhnas al-Thaqafi, who was killed defending the palace of 'Uthman. Pro-Marwanid were Abu Hafsa, freedman of Marwan, who boasted that he started the civil war, and Talha's son Musa who, following his father's volte-face from giving active leadership to the rebels to persecuting them as murderers of the caliph, became an ideological supporter of the Umayyads.⁵⁶⁸ 'Uthmanid and pro-Umayyad was also Yusuf, the son of 'Abd Allah b. Salam al-Isra'ffi.⁵⁶⁹ Caetani's description of al-WaqidT as a tendentious pro-'Alid source⁵⁷⁰ is entirely baseless. It is unfortunate that al-TabarI suppressed much of al-WaqidT's history of the crisis because he found it repugnant.⁵⁷¹ Some of the suppressed material is to be recovered from al-BaladhurT's *Ansd b al-ashraf*. The value of al-Baladhuri's quotations is diminished, however, by his practice of condensing reports, sometimes radically,⁵⁷² and of omitting *isnads*.

Al-TabarT's other main source, Sayf b. 'Umar's account, is a late Kufan 'Uthmanid and anti-Shi'ite concoction without source value for the events. The *isnads* are largely fictitious. The contents and tendentiousness of his account have been briefly analysed by Wellhausen.⁵⁷³ Recent attempts to rehabilitate Sayf b. 'Umar⁵⁷⁴ have done little to invalidate the substance

⁵⁶⁵ Descendants of Sa'd b. Abi Waqqa? were Isma'il b. Muhammad b. Sa'd (*ibid.*, 2979) and 'Amir b. Sa'd (*ibid.*, 2981).

⁵⁶⁶ 'Abd Allah b. 'Ayyash b. Abi Rabl'a (*ibid.*, 3000) and his grandson 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Abd al-'AzIz (*ibid.*, 3021).¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 3022.

⁵⁶⁸ *Ibid.* On Musa b. Talha and his pro-Umayyad stance see further excursus 6.

⁵⁶⁹ Tabari, I, 3023. 'Abd Allah b. Salam is frequently quoted in Syrian sources extolling 'Uthman and lamenting his death.¹²¹ *Annali*, VIII, 147, 150 and throughout.

⁵⁷¹ TabarT, I, 2965, 2980.

⁵⁷² See, for instance, the report of 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Aswad which takes up two-and-a-half pages in al-T abarI (1,2977-9) but is reduced to five lines by al-Baladhuri (*Ansd b*, V, 65).

⁵⁷³ *Skizzen*, VI, 120-1, 124—5, 133-5. Parts of Sayf b. 'Umar's account not preserved by al-TabarI are quoted by Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, and Ibn Bakr, *Tamhid*.

⁵⁷⁴ See in particular A. Noth, 'Der Charakter der ersten grossen Sammlungen von Nachrichten zur friihen Kalifenzeit', *Der Islam*, 17 (1971), 168-88; A. Noth, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: A Source-critical Study*, (Princeton, 1994), 4—14; E. Landau-Tasseron, 'Sayf Ibn 'Umar in Medieval and Modern Scholarship', *Der Islam*, 67 (1990), 1-26.

of Wellhausen's judgement. Sayf preserved, however, some contemporary poetry by 'Uthman's uterine brother al-Walld b. 'Uqba and others, which is of considerable interest.¹²⁶

Al-Tabari's informant for another historical tradition repeatedly quoted by him, Ja'far b. 'Abd Allah al-MuhammadT, is to be identified as a descendant of Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya, Abu 'Abd Allah Ja'far b. 'Abd Allah Ra's al-Midhra b. Ja'far al-Thal b. 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far b. Muhammad.¹²⁷ He is an Imam! Shi'ite author considered highly reliable as a traditionist. Al-Tabari presumably heard traditions from him while he stayed in Kufa. His constant *isnad* is 'Amr b. Hammad b. Talha and 'AIT b. Husayn b. 'Tsa - Husayn b. 'Tsa - his father.¹²⁸ Of these, 'Amr b. Hammad al-Qannad (d. 222/837) is known as a Kufan Shi'ite (*rafidi*) counted reliable as a transmitter¹²⁹ and Husayn b. 'Tsa is perhaps al-Husayn b. 'Tsa b. Muslim al-Kufi, described by the Sunnite hadith critics as transmitting objectionable traditions (*munkar al-hadith*).¹³⁰ The source is thus solidly Kufan Shi'ite. 'Tsa occasionally gives his own account but more often quotes further sources. Twice his transmitter is Muhammad b. Ishaq, who is quoted by al-Tabari in another instance through a different *isnad*.¹³¹ These quotations show that Muhammad b. Ishaq's sources and his grasp of the events were far inferior to al-Waqidi's. Noteworthy is that Ibn Ishaq's uncle 'Abd al-Rahman b. Yasar considered the letter intercepted by the Egyptian rebels to be written by 'Uthman.¹³² The details of his report, however, do not inspire confidence. Completely muddled and unreliable is the report quoted by Ibn Ishaq with the *isnad* Yahya b. 'Abbad (b. 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr) - 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr - his father.¹³³ It certainly does not go back to 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr, who as a young man prominently involved in the events had a solid knowledge of them and would not have ascribed it to his father. Most likely his grandson Yahya b. 'Abbad made it up from some scraps of information from him. Probably more reliable is the third report of Ibn Ishaq going back to the Makhzumite Abu Bakr (b. 'Abd al-Rahman) b. al-Harith b. Hisham.¹³⁴ Altogether the transmission of Ja'far al-Muham- madl is of little source value.

The Syrian and Egyptian historical school traditions, to which Caetani gave some prominence in his discussion, contribute little sound information. The 'Syrian' report presented in the time of 'Umar II by Abu Hubaysh Sahm al-AzdT, who is described as the last eyewitness of the events,¹³⁵ is

¹²⁶ See Ibn 'Asakir, 'Uthmdn, 306—9,544-55. A good deal of this poetry is probably authentic.

¹²⁷ NajashT, *Rijal*, 120; Ibn 'Inaba, 'Umdat al-talib fi ansdb al Abi Talib, ed. Muhammad Hasan al-Taliqani (Najaf, 1380/1961), 354.

¹²⁸ The *isnad*, in Tabari, 1,2985, Ja'far - 'Amr - Muhammad b. Ishaq is obviously incomplete.

¹²⁹ Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, VIII, 22-3. ¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, II, 364.

TabarT, I, 3003.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 2983-4. ¹³³ *Ibid.*, 2986-9. ¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 3003-4.

¹³⁵ Ibn 'Asakir, 'Uthmdn, 422-5; *Annali*, VIII, 227-30.

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pro-Umayyad fiction. Characteristic for its Umayyad tendentiousness is that Talha, together with al-Zubayr, appears as one of the supporters of 'Uthman before his death. Highly valuable and authentic is, in contrast, 'Uthman's letter to the Syrians preserved by the Syrian school tradition, which was entirely misunderstood and misjudged by Caetani as a 'traditionist product of much later times'.¹³⁶

The lengthy comprehensive account which the Egyptian 'Abd Allah b. Lahl'a ascribed to YazTd b. AbT Hablb¹³⁷ reflects a far-reaching ignorance of the historical situation. Thus it describes al-WalTd b. 'Uqba as the governor of Kufa at the time of the rebellion. Its description of the murder of 'Uthman is partly based on the Syrian report of Abu Hubaysh al-AzdT. It is safe to assume that the whole account was made up by Ibn LahT'a, not by YazTd b. AbT Hablb, who had a sound grasp of the historical situation, as is evident from his report quoted by ShurahbTl b. AbT 'Awn.¹³⁸

Al-BaladhurT's *Ansab al-ashraf* and Ibn Shabba's *Ta'rikh al-Madina* provide some material from early sources ignored by al-TabarT. Ibn Shabba quotes numerous 'Uthmanid traditions missing in other sources and, in contrast to al-Baladhurl, avoids reports about 'Uthman's wrongdoings.¹³⁹ The reports of the pro-'Alid Kufan Abu Mikhnaf quoted by al-Baladhurl, in one passage jointly with 'Awana,¹⁴⁰ are vital for the events in Kufa. For events in Medina Abu Mikhnaf seems to have occasionally had the same reports as were available to al-WaqidT, so that al-Baladhurl could combine their narrations. A closer examination of their relationship, however, is hampered by al-Baladhuri's frequent omission of *isnads*. Abu Mikhnaf's main account of the action of the Egyptian rebels¹⁴¹ reveals the vagueness and faultiness of his knowledge of the developments in Medina. Thus he was not aware that the rebels during their first campaign did not enter Medina but stayed at Dhu Khushub. The letter from 'Uthman to the rebels quoted by Abu Mikhnaf in which the caliph promises them general redress of their grievances¹⁴² is a fake.

Reports by the Basran traditionist school represented by Abu Nadra al-'AbdT, al-Hasan al-Basri and Muhammad b. STrTn are 'Uthmanid anti-Kufan, but not anti-'Alid, in tendency and mostly hagiographical. There was little first-hand information available. Strongly 'Uthmanid and fictitious are the reports transmitted by Abu Nadra from Abu SaTd

¹³⁶ Annali, VIII, 240-1. See above, p. 91 with n. 59.

¹³⁷ Ibn 'Asakir, *'Uthman*, 425—32; *Annali*, VIII, 227—30. ¹³⁸ See above, n. 115.

¹³⁹ The characterization of Ibn Shabba as 'pro-'Alid' and 'with Shi'ite inclinations', put forward by E. L. Petersen (*AH and Mu'awiya*, 92 n. 45 and p. 151), is no longer sustainable after the publication of his *Ta'rikh al-Madina*.

¹⁴⁰ Baladhurl, *Ansab*, V, 36. ¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 62-6. ¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 64.

mawla AbT Usayd.⁵⁷⁵ The stories of 'Uthman's client Waththab transmitted by al-Hasan al-Basr! about an alleged meeting of 'Uthman with al-Ashtar and Waththab's presence at the murder of 'Uthman⁵⁷⁶ are probably unreliable. Al-BaladhurT quotes a lengthy account of the crisis and the murder of 'Uthman by the Basran historian Wahb b. JarTr b. Hazim, who attributed it with an *isnad* to the Medinan al-Zuhri.⁵⁷⁷ Much of the basic information probably goes back to al-Zuhri, but the composition is that of Wahb b. JarTr or perhaps of his father. It contains some serious misconceptions, e.g. that the Egyptian rebels arrived at Dhu Khushub at the beginning of the year 35/July 655 and that al-Zubayr and Talha jointly controlled the situation in Medina during the final siege.⁵⁷⁸

Both al-BaladhurT and Ibn Shabba cite a lengthy account of the crisis attributed to the early Medinan authority Sa'Td b. al-Musayyab.⁵⁷⁹ Its real author was Isma'Tl b. Yahya al-TaymT, a descendant of the caliph Abu Bakr and notorious as a forger of hadith.⁵⁸⁰ Isma'Tl b. Yahya gave his account the *isnad* Muhammad b. AbT Dhi'b - al-ZuhrT - Sa'Td b. al-Musayyab. This was presumably after the death of Ibn AbT Dhi'b in 158/775 or 159/776. Isma'Tl narrated it to the Damascene Muhammad b. 'Tsa (b. al-Qasim) b. Sumay' al-UmawT (d. 204/819—20 or 206/821-2), who passed it on suppressing the name of his informant, evidently because of his bad reputation as a transmitter. Al-BaladhurT, Ibn Shabba and Ibn 'Asakir,⁵⁸¹ who quote the account *in extenso*, thus report it with an *isnad* omitting Isma'Tl b. Yahya. The account, impressive in its apparent knowledge of detail, was quoted also in other works including Ibn 'Abd Rabbih's *al-Iqdal-farid*.⁵⁸² It was well known, however, that Isma'Tl b. Yahya was the author of the account and that Ibn Sumay' suppressed his name.⁵⁸³ Its authorship by a descendant of Abu Bakr explains the prominence of the part of Muhammad b. AbT Bakr in the account. He is described as having been appointed governor of Egypt by 'Uthman to replace 'Abd Allah b.

⁵⁷⁵ Abu Usayd is the Medinan Malik b. RabT'a al-Sa'idT, a veteran of the battle of Badr (Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, X, 15-16; Ibn Hajar, *Isdba*, VI, 13-14). Ibn al-Munkadir names him among the supporters of 'Uthman in the palace (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1280).

⁵⁷⁶ TabarT, I, 2989-91; BaladhurT, *Ansd*, V, 92-3; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, 111/1, 50.

⁵⁷⁷ BaladhurT, *Ansd*, V, 88-92. ¹⁴⁶ See above, p. 104.

¹⁴⁷ BaladhurT, *Ansd*, V, 25-6, 67-71; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1157-61, 1302-6.

¹⁴⁸ Al-DhahabT, *Mizdn al-i'idal* (Cairo, 1325/[1907]), I, 117-18; Ibn Hajar al-'AsqalanT, *Lisdn al-mizan* (Hyderabad, 1329—31/[1911—13]), I, 441-2. His full lineage is Isma'Tl b. Yahya b. 'Ubayd Allah b. Talha b. 'Abd Allah b. 'Abd al-Rahman b. AbT Bakr. The descendants of his great-grandfather Talha b. 'Abd Allah lived in the desert in a place called Hadhat al-Utum on the right side of the route from Medina to Mekka (ZubayrT, *Nasab*, 289). ¹⁴⁹ Ibn 'Asakir, *Uthman*, 421^4.

¹⁵⁰ See the references given in BaladhurT, *Ansab*, V, annotation to pp. 25 and 67. Caetani summarized the version of Ibn 'Asakir in *Annali*, VIII, 245-7.

⁵⁸³ Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, IX, 390-1.

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Sa'd on the demand of the Egyptian rebels. In the forged letter of 'Uthman to 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd intercepted by the rebels, the governor of Egypt was ordered to ignore the letter of appointment of Muhammad b. Abi Bakr and to kill him surreptitiously. This story was evidently meant to justify Muhammad b. AbT Bakr's hatred of 'Uthman. Ibn AbT Bakr is further described as having ordered the Egyptians to beat and kill the caliph. All this and many other details are fiction in conflict with the early reliable reports.

6 MUSAB. TALHA AND THE Umayyads

The title to vengeance for Marwan's murder of Talha would have primarily belonged to Talha's son Musa since the eldest son, Muhammad, had also been killed in the battle of the Camel. Musa b. Talha, a transmitter of hadith and pious enough later to be considered by some as the expected Mahdi, was not the man to take up the pre-Islamic duty, especially against so intimidating a clan as the Umayyads. He was clearly pleased to be granted his father's inheritance by 'AIT in exchange for his pledge of allegiance and does not seem to have joined Mu'awiya before 'AIT's death. When he visited the Umayyad later, Mu'awiya asked him politely whether he might cheer him with good tidings and then quoted what he had heard the Prophet say: 'Talha is among those who have fulfilled their vow (*man qada nahbah*).'¹⁵² The expression in Qur'an XXXIII 23 to which he alluded was said to refer to the Muslim martyrs killed in the battle of Uhud, in which Talha had greatly distinguished himself. Musa was evidently well pleased and responded in due time by narrating a story in which he pictured Mu'awiya as lecturing the Early Companions, including his own father Talha, in the presence of 'Uthman about their duty to back the latter and as putting 'All, the only one objecting to his wise counsel, in his proper place.¹⁵³ Musa and his brothers Ishaq and Isma'Il were the first Qurayshites to sign Ziyad's letter of indictment declaring Hujr b. 'AdT an infidel for rebellion against Mu'awiya.¹⁵⁴

Musa did not shun his father's murderer in Medina. On one occasion Marwan, ever mischievous, praised Talha in the presence of Musa and 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr, whereas he mentioned al-Zubayr without a good word about him. Ibn al-Zubayr took him up on this, remarking that Abu Muhammad (Talha) was certainly worthy of his praise but that he

¹⁵² Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 155-6.

¹⁵³ TabarT, I, 2948; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1090-1, where Musa b. Talha is missing in the *isnad*. Ibn Shabba quotes several secondary versions of Musa's story (1091-5).¹⁵⁴ TabarT, II, 132.

knew of someone about whom no good was ever mentioned. Marwan: 'And who is that?' Ibn al-Zubayr: 'Your father.' Marwan jumped towards him and the two exchanged blows until Musa intervened. Ibn al-Zubayr rebuked him: 'Let me strike out an eye of the son of the outcast of the Messenger of God.'⁵⁸⁴ Without Musa's intervention he might well have succeeded, for he was, in contrast to Marwan, a formidable wrestler.

Later, when challenging Ibn al-Zubayr's counter-caliphate, Marwan found it expedient to publicize his murder of Talha among the Syrians as proof that he, not Mu'awiya, had been the first one to avenge 'Uthman.⁵⁸⁵ The Syrians must have been surprised, since so far they had been told that Talha was a praiseworthy man who had defended 'Uthman against his critics⁵⁸⁶ and had fought 'AIT. They seem to have been impressed, however, by Marwan's credentials and preferred him to Ibn al-Zubayr who had just put forward his own claim to being the true avenger of the blood of the wronged caliph.⁵⁸⁷

Musa was evidently not much affected by this quarrel during the second *fitna*. Khalid b. Shumayr, Basran admirer of 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar, reported that Musa was among the Kufans who fled to Basra during the inter-Muslim conflict in order to escape the impostor (*kadhhab*) al-Mukhtar. Ibn Shumayr and other Basrans frequented his circle, as many people thought that he was the Mahdi. The subject of *fitna* was discussed, and Musa gave vent to his horror of inter-Muslim warfare. In the end he asked God to have mercy upon 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar who, he thought, was still steadfastly clinging to the commitment the Prophet had imposed on him. 'By God,' he concluded, 'the Quraysh were unable to provoke him [to fighting] in their first/uwa.' Ibn Shumayr felt that Musa was casting aspersion on the conduct of his own father, who at that time had allowed himself to be killed.¹⁵⁹

Marwan's son 'Abd al-Malik married Musa's daughter 'A'isha, who bore him his son Bakkar.¹⁶⁰ 'Abd al-Malik's brother Bishr b. Marwan, while governor of Kufa for his brother, found Musa a convenient go-between in dealing with the religious class. Bishr himself enjoyed drinking and preferred the company of poets. He sent Musa money for distribution among the Kufan Qur'an readers (*qurra'*) in order to keep them well disposed, but not all of them would accept the bribe.¹⁶¹ 'Abd al-Malik's uncouth other son, the caliph al-Walid, told Musa, who was by then an old man, to his face: 'Whenever you pay me a visit, I feel like

⁵⁸⁴ BaladhurT, *Ansb*, V, 203-4. ¹⁵⁶ See esp. *ibid.*, 134-5.

¹⁵⁷ See above, p. 189. ¹⁵⁸ BaladhurT, *Ansb*, V, 128.

¹⁵⁹ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, V, 120-1; Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, XXV, 290.

¹⁶⁰ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, V, 120; ZubayrT, *Nasab*, 286. ¹⁶¹ Baladhuri, *Ansb*, V, 170.

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killing you, were it not that my father informed me that Marwan killed Talha.' Nothing is reported about Musa's reaction.⁵⁸⁸

7 THE MARRIAGES AND CHILDREN OF AL-HASAN B. 'ALT

The first marriage of al-Hasan was probably with Salma, or Zaynab, daughter of the renowned Kalbite chief Imru' ul-Qays b.'AdT b. Aws b. Jabir b. Ka'b b. 'Ulaym. Imru' ul-Qays, a Christian, came from the Syrian desert to Medina in order to offer his conversion to Islam to the caliph 'Umar. 'Umar was so pleased with him that he immediately appointed him amir over all those of Quda'a (to whom Kalb belonged) who would accept Islam. As he departed, 'All together with his sons al-Hasan and al-Husayn came forth to meet him and proposed establishing marriage ties with him. Imru' ul-Qays consented and gave his daughters al-Muhayyah, Salma and al-Rabab in marriage to the three members of the Prophet's family respectively.⁵⁸⁹

This must have happened at the time of the Muslim conquest of Palestine at the beginning of 'Umar's reign. Al-Hasan and al-Husayn, born in the years 3/624—5 and 4/626 respectively, were evidently too young for the wedding to have taken place immediately. Nothing further is known about Salma. Al-Muhayyah is listed among 'All's wives and bore him a daughter, who died as a child.⁵⁹⁰ Al-Rabab bore al-Husayn his favourite daughter, Sukayna, and, after he was killed at Karbala', spent a year in grief at his grave; she refused to remarry. According to Sukayna, al-Hasan had made reproaches to al-Husayn with regard to her mother, but al-Husayn expressed his deep love for both his wife and daughter in two lines of poetry.⁵⁹¹ In the later years of 'All's reign, Imru' ul-Qays and his kin were referred to as the 'in-laws (*ashar*) of al-Husayn'.¹⁶⁶ Al-Hasan may never actually have married Salma, or may have divorced her before this time.

Probably soon after 'All's arrival in Kufa, al-Hasan married Ja'da, daughter of the Kinda chief al-Ash'ath b. Qays. 'AIT evidently was eager at this time to establish an alliance with the powerful Yemenite tribal coalition in Kufa. He proposed to SaTd b. Qays al-Hamdant that the latter give his daughter Umm 'Imran in marriage to al-Hasan. SaTd b. Qays consulted al-Ash'ath, who suggested that he marry his daughter to

⁵⁸⁸ Ibn Manzur, *Mukhtasar*, XXV, 289. 'Abd al-Malik is quoted as telling 'Abd al-Rahman b. Abi Layla: 'Were it not that my father told me on the day of Marj Rahit that he killed Talha, I would not leave a single one of the Banu Taym on the surface of the earth but would kill all of them' (Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1170).

⁵⁸⁹ Ibn Hajar, *Iṣāba*, I, 116-17; *Aghani*, XIV, 164; Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, II, 194-5, who gives the name Zaynab in place of Salma. ¹⁶⁴ *Annali*, X, 380. ¹⁶⁵ *Aghani*, XIV, 163.

¹⁶⁶ Thaqaḥi, *Gharat*, 426.

his own son Muhammad, who was her cousin. Sa'Td b. Qays did so, and al-Ash'ath invited al-Hasan for a meal. When al-Hasan asked for a drink of water, al-Ash'ath ordered his daughter Ja'da to serve him. Then he told al-Hasan that he had been served by a girl, his own daughter, who had never before served any man. Al-Hasan informed his father, who told him to marry her. According to another report, 'AIT had initially asked al-Ash'ath to mediate the marriage between Sa'Td b. Qays' daughter and al-Hasan. Al-Ash'ath, however, asked Sa'Td to marry her to his own son. When 'AIT accused him of treachery, al-Ash'ath told him that he would pair al-Hasan with 'one who is not below her' and gave him his own daughter Ja'da.¹⁶⁷ Ja'da is commonly accused of having poisoned al-Hasan at the instigation of Mu'awiya. Although childless, she evidently was not divorced by him. After his death she was married to Talha's son Ya'qub and bore him offspring.¹⁶⁸

Probably also soon after his arrival in Kufa, before the battle of SiffTn, al-Hasan married Umm BashTr (in some sources Umm Bishr), daughter of the AnsarT Abu Mas'ud 'Uqba b. 'Amr b. Tha'laba of Khazraj, one of those early Medinan Muslims who had pledged allegiance to Muhammad at al-'Aqaba before the *hijra*. Abu Mas'ud had settled in Kufa at an early stage and was among those opposed to the Kufan rebellion against 'Uthman. 'AIT evidently hoped to draw him to his side and presumably arranged the marriage of his daughter to al-Hasan. Then he appointed him governor of Kufa during his absence for the campaign to SiffTn. Abu Mas'ud, however, took a neutralist position and obstructed 'AIT's war effort. After his return to Kufa, 'AIT, as noted, chided him, and Abu Mas'ud left in anger for a pilgrimage.

Umm BashTr bore al-Hasan Zayd, probably his eldest son,¹⁶⁹ and a daughter, Umm al-Husayn.¹⁷⁰ According to al-MufTd, there was another daughter, Umm al-Hasan,¹⁷¹ but this seems erroneous. Umm al-Husayn was later married to 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr and had children. Umm BashTr was married also to 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Abd Allah b. AbT RabT'a al-MakhzumI and to Said b. Zayd b. 'Amr b. Nufayl and had with them a son and a daughter respectively.¹⁷² The sequential order of these marriages is uncertain.

After his abdication and return to Medina, al-Hasan married Khawla, daughter of the Fazara chief Manzur b. Zabban. Previously she had been married to Talha's pious son Muhammad, who was killed in the battle of

¹⁶⁷ Baladhuri, *Ansb*, III, 14-5.

¹⁶⁸ Abu I-Faraj, *Maqatil*, 73; Baladhuri, *Ansb*, III, 15. Al-Baladhuri's statement that she was later married to al-'Abbas and 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas is obviously anachronistic.

¹⁶⁹ It cannot be excluded that one of al-Hasan's sons by a slave mother was born before him. ¹⁷⁰ In some sources her name is given as Umm al-Hasan or Umm al-Khayr or Ramla.

Mufld, *Irshad*, 176. ¹⁷² Zubayri, *Nasab*, 47-50.

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the Camel, and had two sons and a daughter by him. She is said either to have been given in marriage to al-Hasan by 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr, who was married to her sister Tumadir, or to have herself given the choice to al-Hasan, who then married her. Upon hearing this, her father declared that he was not someone to be ignored with respect to his daughter. He came to Medina and planted a black flag in the mosque of the Prophet. All Qaysites (Fazara belonged to the large Northern Arab tribal association claiming descent from Qays 'Aylan) present in Medina assembled under it in solidarity with him. He was asked: 'Where are you going? She has been married by al-Hasan b. 'AIT, and there is no one like him', but he would not accept the *fait accompli*. Al-Hasan now surrendered her to him, and he took her away to Quba'. She reproached him, quoting the hadith: 'Al-Hasan b. 'AIT will be the lord of the youth among the inmates of paradise.' He told her: 'Wait here, if the man is in need of you, he will join us here.' Al-Hasan came to them accompanied by his brother al-Husayn, his cousin 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far and his uncle 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abbas and took her back, marrying her this time with the approval of her father.⁵⁹² Khawla bore al-Hasan his son al-Hasan. A report leaves it open whether she was still married to him or divorced when he died. She did not marry again and put off her veil.¹⁷⁴

In Medina al-Hasan married Hafsa, the daughter of 'Abd al-Rahman b. AbT Bakr. Al-Mundhir b. al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwam was in love with her, and spread a false rumour about her conduct. As a result, al-Hasan divorced her. The report characterizes him in this context as *mitlaq*, evidently meaning here: ready to divorce on insubstantial grounds. Next 'Asim, the son of Umar b. al-Khattab, married her. Al-Mundhir falsely accused her before him, and he also divorced her. Then al-Mundhir proposed marriage to her, but she refused, saying: 'He has tried to destroy my reputation.' He pursued her with further proposals, and she was advised to marry him so that it would become patent to everybody that he had falsely accused her. She did so, and the people realized that he had lied about her and what his motive had been. Al-Hasan now proposed to 'Asim that they visit her. They asked al-Mundhir for permission to see her. After consulting his brother 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr, al-Mundhir gave them permission to visit her in his presence. She paid more attention to 'Asim than to al-Hasan and spoke more freely with him. Al-Hasan told al-Mundhir to take her hand, and her two former husbands left. The report adds that al-Hasan loved her and had divorced her only because of al-Mundhir's slander. According to Hafsa's nephew 'Abd Allah b. Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Rahman (known as Ibn AbT 'AtTq), al-Hasan later

⁵⁹² Aghani, XI, 56-7. ¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 57.

repeatedly asked him to go along to al-'AqTq, where she lived, and would converse with her for a long time.¹⁷⁵

Al-Hasan married, also in Medina, Talha's daughter Umm Ishaq. She is described as extremely beautiful but of bad character. Thus she is said to have been pregnant and given birth without telling her husband.¹⁷⁶ Mu'awiya had asked her brother Ishaq b. Talha in Damascus to give her in marriage to his son YazTd. Ishaq told him that he was going to Medina; if Mu'awiya sent a messenger to him there, he would conclude the marriage contract. After Ishaq had left, his brother 'Isa b. Talha visited Mu'awiya. When the caliph told him about Ishaq's promise, 'Tsa offered to give Umm Ishaq immediately in marriage. He concluded the marriage contract with YazTd without consulting her. In the meantime Ishaq had arrived in Medina and contracted her marriage to al-Hasan. It was not exactly known which of the two contracts was earlier, and Mu'awiya advised his son to leave the matter. Her marriage with al-Hasan was now consummated, and she bore him his son Talha, who later died childless.¹⁷⁷ Even after his accession to the caliphate YazTd continued to harbour a grudge against Ishaq b. Talha for his betrayal and ordered his general Muslim b. 'Uqba, when he sent him to suppress the revolt in Medina, to kill him if he got hold of him. Ishaq escaped, however, and Muslim was only able to destroy his house.¹⁷⁸ In spite of her alleged bad character, al-Hasan at the time of his death expressed satisfaction with Umm Ishaq and recommended to his brother al-Husayn that he marry her. She bore al-Husayn's daughter Fatima.¹⁷⁹ Presumably still later she was married to Abu Bakr's great-grandson Ibn AbT 'AtTq 'Abd Allah, to whom she also bore a daughter, Amina.¹⁸⁰

Al-Hasan further married in Medina Hind, daughter of Suhayl b. 'Amr of 'Amir Quraysh. She had been married first to the Umayyad 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Attab b. AsTd, who was killed in the battle of the Camel, and then to 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir b. Kurayz. When the latter divorced her, Mu'awiya wrote to Abu Hurayra in Medina to contract her marriage with his son YazTd. On his way to meet her, Abu Hurayra met al-Hasan who inquired where he was going. When Abu Hurayra explained his mission, al-Hasan suggested that he mention him, al-Hasan, to her. Abu Hurayra did so, and Hind asked him to make the choice for her; Abu Hurayra chose al-Hasan. Some time later 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir came to Medina and complained to al-Hasan that his former wife had a deposit belonging to

¹⁷⁵ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, III, 22—3. On Ibn AbT'AtTq see the article by C. Pellat m./: 2nd edn).

¹⁷⁶ *Aghani*, XVIII, 203.

¹⁷⁷ According to al-Mufld (*Irshad*, 176), Umm Ishaq was also the mother of al-Hasan's son al-Husayn (al-Hasan) al-Athram and his daughter Fatima. According to al-Zubayri and al-Baladhuri, these two were borne by slave mothers. ¹⁷⁸ Zubayri, *Nasab*, 282-3.

¹⁷⁹ *Aghani*, XVIII, 203. ¹⁸⁰ Zubayri, *Nasab*, 50; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, III/1, 152.

him in her possession. Al-Hasan allowed him to see her in his presence. As Ibn 'Amir looked at her sitting in front of him, he softened up towards her, and al-Hasan suggested: 'Shall I relinquish her to you? I think you could not find a better husband to make remarriage licit (*muhallil*)¹⁸¹ for you than myself.' Ibn 'Amir insisted: 'My deposit.' She produced two boxes filled with jewels. Ibn 'Amir took a handful out of each one and left the rest to her. Later she used to comment about her three husbands: 'The lord (*sayyid*) of all of them was al-Hasan; the most generous of them was Ibn 'Amir; and the one dearest to me was 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Attab.'¹⁸² Doubts may perhaps arise about the reliability of the first part of the account, which is related by al-Mada'inl without *isnad* as a hearsay report (*balagham*), since it seems to duplicate the story about Mu'awiya's failed attempt to arrange for the marriage of his son Yazid with Umm Ishaq bt Talha. Basically the account is probably reliable. Al-Hasan had no children with Hind. Since she is accused by al-Haytham b. 'AdT of having murdered al-Hasan, she was presumably still married to him when he died.

Al-Hasan's other children were probably all borne by slave women. Some sources suggest that the mother of 'Amr b. al-Hasan was either a woman of ThaqTf or a slave.¹⁸³ 'Amr is described as a pious man and had two sons and a daughter. If his mother had been a freeborn woman of ThaqTf, her name and lineage would almost certainly have been remembered. Al-Hasan's other sons were, according to al-ZubayrT: al-Qasim and Abu Bakr, both childless and killed with their uncle al-Husayn at Karbala'; 'Abd al-Rahman, died childless; and al-Husayn al-Athram, who had offspring only through his daughters. Al-BaladhurT mentions a further son, 'Abd Allah.¹⁸⁴ According to Ibn 'Inaba, however, 'Abd Allah was the same as Abu Bakr.¹⁸⁵ Al-MufTd in fact mentions only 'Abd Allah, and al-ZubayrT only Abu Bakr. In Abu Mikhnaf's list of those killed at Karbala', however, 'Abd Allah is mentioned separately from Abu Bakr. Abu Mikhnaf lists three sons of al-Hasan as being killed with al-Husayn and gives the names of their killers.¹⁸⁶ Late sources add to the sons of al-Hasan three more names, Isma'Tl, Hamza and Ya'qub, none of whom is said to have had children.¹⁸⁷

Al-Hasan's daughters from various slave women were: Umm 'Abd Allah, who married her cousin 'AIT b. al-Husayn (Zayn al-'AbidTn) and bore him several sons including the Shi'ite imam Muhammad al-Baqir; Fatima, who is not known to have married; Umm Salama, who was

¹⁸¹ After a threefold divorce, the law required that the divorced wife must be married to another husband before the divorcer could remarry her.

¹⁸² BaladhurT, *Ansb*, III, 20-1.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 73. Both al-ZubayrT and al-MufTd state that 'Amr's mother was of slave origin (*umm walad*).

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.* ¹⁸⁵ Ibn 'Inaba, *Umdat al-talib*, 68.

¹⁸⁶ TabarT, II, 387. ¹⁸⁷ Ibn 'Inaba, *Umdat al-talib*, 68. '

married to 'Amr b. al-Mundhir b. al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwam, but had no children; and Ruqayya, who is not known to have married.⁵⁹³

In the reports about al-Hasan's marriages quoted above, al-Hasan comes across as endowed with both a concern for dignified propriety and a spirit of forbearing conciliatoriness, an important aspect of the *hilm* of the true *sayyid*. In no way does his readiness to divorce reflect an inordinate appetite for sexual diversion. He divorces the granddaughter of Abu Bakr, when she is falsely accused by al-Mundhir b. al-Zubayr, out of a sense of propriety even though he still loves her. When the slanderous nature of the accusation becomes patent after al-Mundhir's marriage with her, al-Hasan visits the couple, but quickly forgives his rival, recognizing that he had lied out of love for her. He shows his continued affection for her by paying her visits in the proper company of her nephew. His sense of propriety is presumably also involved in his reproaches to his younger brother al-Husayn, whose display of exuberant and indulgent love for the bedouin girl al-Rabab he must have considered improper for a grandson of the Prophet. Al-Hasan humours the furious anger of the Fazara chief Manzur b. Zabban at having been ignored in his daughter's marriage to him, although the father had evidently no longer any real rights as her guardian since she had been previously married. Having returned her to her father, al-Hasan demonstrates the seriousness of his wish to marry her and his respect for the father by bringing the leading members of the Prophet's house along to visit the proud bedouin shaykh. Al-Hasan readily offers to divorce the daughter of Suhayl b. 'Amr when he notices signs of renewed love for her in the behaviour of her former husband, 'Abd Allah b. 'Amir.

In striking contrast with these relatively realistic reports, there is a group of others which portray a rather different image of the Prophet's grandson. These reports and descriptions are for the most part vague, lacking in names, concrete specifics and verifiable detail; they appear to be spun out of the reputation of al-Hasan as a *mitlaq*, now interpreted as a habitual and prodigious divorcer, some clearly with a defamatory intent. Most of the early reports of this type were narrated by al-Mada'inT.

Al-Mada'inT thus reported: 'It has reached us that al-Hasan, whenever he wanted to divorce a woman, would sit down with her and say: "Would it please you if I gave you such and such?" She would answer: "Whatever you wish", or: "Yes." He would tell her: "It belongs to you." Then he would get up and send her the money which he had mentioned together

⁵⁹³ According to the Shi'ite genealogist al-'Umari, Umm Salama was married to 'Umar, son of 'All Zayn al-'Abidin, and Ruqayya was married to 'Amr b. al-Mundhir b. al-Zubayr (*ibid.*, 68, n. 2).

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with her divorce.¹⁸⁹ On the authority of the Basran Muhammad b. STrin, al-Mada'inT narrated that al-Hasan asked a man for the hand of his daughter. The man gave her in marriage to him and told him: 'I know that you are ill-tempered and a divorcer (*ghaliq tulaqa*), but you are the most excellent of mankind in lineage and the one with the most noble grandfather and house.'¹⁹⁰ According to another story, al-Hasan married a Yemenite woman and then sent her 10,000 dirhams together with her divorce. She commented with a quotation of poetry: 'Small chattel from a parting beloved.' Al-Hasan remarked: 'If I ever took any woman back, I would take this one back.'¹⁹¹ In another version of this story, reported by Suwayd b. Ghafala, the Yemenite woman is identified as a woman of Khath'am. When 'AIT was killed and al-Hasan succeeded him, she congratulated him: 'May the caliphate please you.' He answered: 'You have expressed malicious joy at the murder of 'AIT', and pronounced her thrice divorced. She swore that she had not intended that, and he sent her 20,000 dirhams. Then she quoted the poetry about the parting beloved.¹⁹² Al-Mada'inT narrated, on the authority of the AnsarT 'Abd Allah b. AbT Bakr b. Muhammad b. 'Amr,¹⁹³ that al-Hasan proposed to marry a woman of the Banu Shayban, but was told that she held the views of the Kharijites. He commented: 'I would hate to clasp a live coal of hell-fire to my chest.'¹⁹⁴ The report does not suggest that al-Hasan married the woman, but al-Mada'inT, in his enumeration of al-Hasan's spouses, counts his marriage with 'a woman of the Banu Shayban of the Al Hammam b. Murra', retelling the story and asserting that he divorced her.¹⁹⁵ Ibn Qutayba narrated in his book on poetry that the poet 'Amr b. al-Ahtam al-MinqarT had a daughter called Umm HabTb, who was married by al-Hasan on the assumption that she was as good-looking as her brother. When he found her to be ugly, he divorced her.¹⁹⁶ The story was also known to al-Mada'inT, who enumerates a daughter of 'Amr b. al-Ahtam among al-Hasan's spouses.¹⁹⁷ Al-DiyarbakrI, a late source, quotes Ibn STrln as describing the following fairy-tale wedding: 'Al-Hasan married a woman. He sent her a hundred slave girls and with each one of them a thousand dirhams.'¹⁹⁸

Muhammad al-KalbT seems to have been the first one to spread the claim that the number of al-Hasan's wives amounted to ninety. He reported on the authority of Abu Salih: 'Al-Hasan married [*ahsana*, lit.

¹⁸⁹ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, III, 20. ¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 18; Ibn Abi I-HadTd, *Sharh*, XVI, 21.

¹⁹¹ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, III, 25. ¹⁹² Dhahabi, *Siyar*, III, 262.

¹⁹³ On him see Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib*, V, 164-5. ¹⁹⁴ Baladhuri, *Ansab*, III, 14.

¹⁹⁵ Ibn Abi I-HadTd, *Sharh*, XVI, 21.

¹⁹⁶ Ibn Qutayba, *al-Shi'r wa l-shu'ara'*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1904), 402.

¹⁹⁷ Ibn Abi I-HadTd, *Sharh*, XVI, 21.

¹⁹⁸ Al-DiyarbakrT, *Ta'rikh al-khamis* (Cairo, 1302/[1984], II, 324).

protected] ninety women'. 'AIT said: 'Al-Hasan married and divorced so much that I feared he would bring the enmity of [many] tribes down on us.'¹⁹⁹ The theme of 'AIT's worry was further elaborated in the following report ascribed to the Shi'ite imam Ja'far al-Sadiq on the authority of his father. Afraid of arousing the enmity of the tribes, 'AIT addressed the Kufans: 'Oh people of Kufa, do not give your women in marriage to al-Hasan, for he is a habitual divorcer (*mitlaq*).' A man of Hamdan answered back: 'By God, we shall let him marry. Whomever he is pleased with, let him keep her; whomever he dislikes, let him divorce her.'²⁰⁰ The figure of ninety wives was picked up by al-Mada'inT. He enumerated all the women mentioned above, including the dubious cases of the daughter of 'Amr b. al-Ahtam, the woman of ThaqTf, mother of 'Amr, and the woman of Shayban, and then concluded: 'I have counted the spouses of al-Hasan b. 'All, and they were seventy women.' The number seventy in the text is probably to be read ninety, a common misreading in Arabic script.²⁰¹ It is safe to assume that al-Mada'inT was unable to name even a single wife of al-Hasan aside from the eleven whom he actually mentioned and five of whom must be considered as uncertain or highly doubtful. Al-DiyarbakrT quoted him as relating that al-Hasan married ninety women 'in the lifetime of his father' alone.²⁰²

The unreliability of all these tales and reports requires no detailed discussion. It may be noted that the three known marriages of al-Hasan concluded during his father's lifetime were arranged by the latter as the head of the house, as was the custom. They were evidently concluded by 'AIT as political alliances. 'AIT could thus have been critical of al-Hasan if he considered him responsible for the breakdown of the marriage with the Kalbite Salma. That he would have warned the Kufans in general against al-Hasan as a marriage partner is inconceivable. Al-Hasan presumably was in no position to choose his own marriage partners as long as his father was alive, just as 'AIT had been unable to choose his wives during the lifetime of Muhammad. Since al-Hasan had little sympathy for his father's political aspirations, he evidently also viewed these arranged marriages in a different light than 'AIT.

^m BaladhurT, *Ansab*, III, 25.

²⁰⁰ DhahabI, *Siyar*, III, 267, 262.

²⁰¹ Ibn Abi l-HadTd, *Sharh*, XVI, 21—2. The only woman in al-Mada'inT's list not mentioned elsewhere is a 'daughter' of 'Alqama b. Zurara (*imra'a min banat 'Alqama b. Zurara*). The latter was a chief of Darim TamTm killed in a tribal conflict long before Islam. Al-Hasan cannot have married one of his daughters. Presumably a descendant is meant and some anecdote is connected with her marriage to al-Hasan.

²⁰² DiyarbakrT, *Ta'rikh al-khamis*, II, 324. Al-Mada'inT's own assertion that al-Hasan married ninety women is also reported by al-DhahabT (*Siyar*, III, 267).

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⁴⁶ Jufayna was a Christian from al-HTra who had been brought to Medina by Sa'd b. AbT Waqqas to
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⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 71,81; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madina*, 1169. Ibn STRin said specifically that no one among the Companions of the Prophet was more severe against 'Uthman than Talha.

the beginning of the year 38/June 658 he recalled 'Umar b. AbT Salama from al-Bahrayn to participate in the war. He replaced him with al-Nu'man b. 'Ajlan al-Zuraql. See 'AIT's letter quoted by al-Baladhuri (*Ansdh*, II, 158-9). Al-Nu'man b. 'Ajlan was present at the battle of Şiffin. The second campaign against the Syrians must thus be meant in the letter.

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²²⁰ In the text Dulaym ('Ammar) has evidently been substituted, probably by Sayf b. 'Umar, for 'AIT. The same substitution was made, as will be seen, in the poem quoted next below. The sense in both cases requires 'AIT. 'Ammar certainly was least inclined to make excuses for the murder of 'Uthman. 'AIT rightly distanced himself from any involvement in it.

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³¹⁰ See *Aghani*, IV, 168.

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⁵⁵¹ ShabTb b. 'Amir was the ancestor of Juday' b. 'AIT al-KirmanT, the rival of Na\$rb. Sayyar

account, Umm Salama said that she ordered her own son 'Umar b. Abi Salama and her

¹ Abu l-Faraj, *Maqatil*, 51—2; Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, III, 28. The Medinan tradition generally describes Qays b. Sa'd b. 'Ubada as the one who proposed al-y asan for the succession and as the first to pledge allegiance (see Tabari, II, 1; Baladhuri, *Ansdh*, III, 28; Salih b. Kaysan). The Kufan tradition giving prominence to 'Ubayd Allah b. al-'Abbas is

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2 THE INHERITANCE OF MUHAMMAD

In its general formulation, the hadith ascribed by Abu Bakr to the Prophet that prophets do not have heirs was manifestly in conflict with the letter and spirit of the Qur'an.¹⁹ The Hashimite 'Abbas b. 'Abd Allah b. Ma'bad, great-grandson of al-'Abbas b. 'Abd al-Muttalib, reported about the meeting of Fatima and al-'Abbas with Abu Bakr on the authority of an unidentified Ja'far as follows: 'Fatima came to Abu Bakr demanding her inheritance and al-'Abbas came to demand his inheritance; with them came 'AIT. Abu Bakr said: "The Messenger of God has said: We do not have heirs, whatever we leave is alms. Whatever sustenance the Prophet provided, it is now my responsibility." 'AIT countered, quoting

⁷ The irregularity in the burial of Muhammad and the motivation of the Prophet's kin have been essentially correctly seen by Caetani (*Annali*, II/1, 519-20, 529-33). Later Caetani seems to have moved away from his view under the influence of Lammens, who held that the burial of Muhammad in the place where he died and without a funeral prayer was in conformity with the 'barbaric' practices of the time, these being abandoned only later in Islam under Christian influence (*ibid.*, III, 90—1). Lammens' view is untenable. Concerning the early Islamic burial practices see I. Grutter, 'Arabische Bestattungsbrauche in fruhislamischer Zeit', *Der Islam*, 31 (1954), 147-73, 32 (1955), 79-104, 168-94.

¹⁸ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, II/2, 69; BaladhurT, *Ansab*, I, 574—5.

¹⁹ The hadith is considered unauthentic by I. Hrbek, 'Muhammads Nachlass und die Aliden', *Archiv Orientalni*, 18 (1950), 143-9, at 146.

