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THE LIFE OF
MUHAMMAD

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MUHAMMAD

A TRANSLATION OF ISHAQ'S
SIRAT RASUL ALLAH

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY
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INTRODUCTION

THE AUTHOR

Muhammad, son of Ishāq, son of Yaṣār, was born in Medina about A.H. 85 and died in Baghdad in 151. His grandfather Yaṣār fell into the hands of Khalid b. al-Walid when he captured ‘Aynu’l-Tamr in A.H. 12, having been held there as a prisoner by the Persian king. Khalid sent him with a number of prisoners to Abū Bakr at Medina. There he was handed over to Qays b. Makhrama b. Muqallib b. ‘Abd Manāf as a slave, and was manumitted when he accepted Islam. His family adopted the family name of their patrons. His son Ishāq was born about the year 50, his mother being the daughter of another freedman. He and his brother Mūsā were well-known traditionists, so that our author’s path in life was prepared before he reached manhood. He associated with the second generation of traditionists, notably al-Zuhri, ‘Āşim b. ‘Umar b. Qatāda, and ‘Abdullah b. Abū Bakr. He must have devoted himself to the study of apostolic tradition from his youth, for at the age of thirty he went to Egypt to attend the lectures of Yazid b. Abū Ḥabīb. There he was regarded as an authority, for this same Yazid afterwards related traditions on Ibn Ishāq’s authority. On his return to Medina he went on with the collection and arrangement of the material he had collected. Al-Zuhri, who was in Medina in 123, is reported to have said that Medina would never lack ‘ilm as long as Ibn Ishāq was there, and he eagerly gathered from him the details of the prophet’s wars. Unfortunately Ibn Ishāq excited the enmity of Mālik b. Anas, for whose work he showed contempt, and it was not long before his own writings and his orthodoxy were called in question. Probably it was our author’s lost book of Saman which excited Mālik’s ire, for it would have been in the field of law based on the practice of the prophet that differences would be most keenly felt. He was accused of being a Qadari and a Shi‘i. Another man attacked his veracity: he often quoted Fāṭima, the wife of Hishām b. ‘Urwa, as the authority for some of his traditions. The husband was annoyed and denied that he had ever met his wife; but as she was nearly forty years Ibn Ishāq’s senior it is easily credible that they often met without occasioning gossip. It is not known whether Ibn Ishāq was compelled to leave Medina or whether he went away voluntarily. Obviously he could not have the same standing in a place that housed his chief

1 I.S., vii, ii, p. 67.
2 On Mūsā and Ishāq see J. Fück, Muhammad ibn Ishāq, Frankfurt a. M. 1925, p. 28.
3 See Biographien von Gewahrsmännern des Ibn Ishāq . . . , ed. Fischer, Leiden, 1800. With all those whose death-rates ranged from A.H. 27 to 153 he was in contact personally or at second hand.
4 Wüstenfeld, ii, vii, from I. al-Najār and Fück, 30.
5 Hajj Khalifa, ii, 1008.
informants as he would hold elsewhere, and so he left for the east, stopping in Kufa, al-Jazira on the Tigris, and Ray, finally settling in Baghdad. While Mansur was at Hashimiyah he attached himself to his following and presented him with a copy of his work doubtless in the hope of a grant from the caliph. Thence he moved to Ray and then to the new capital of the empire. He died in 150 (or perhaps 151) and was buried in the cemetery of Hayzurin.

**THE SIRA**

Its precursors

It is certain that Ibn Ishaq's biography of the prophet had no serious rival; but it was preceded by several maghzûz books. We do not know when they were first written, though we have the names of several first-century worthies who had written notes and passed on their knowledge to the rising generation. The first of these was Abân the son of the caliph 'Uthmân. He was born in c. 20 and took part in the campaign of Ta'b and Zubayr against his father's slayers. He died about 100. The language used by al-Waqidi in reference to Ibn al-Mughira, 'he had nothing written down about hadith except the prophet's maghzûz which he had acquired from Abân', certainly implies, though it does not demand, that Ibn al-Mughira wrote down what Abân told him. It is strange that neither Ibn Ishaq nor al-Waqidi should have cited this man who must have had inside knowledge of many matters that were not known to the public; possibly as a follower of Ali he preferred to ignore the son of the man the Ahîads regarded as a usurper. However, his name appears often in the inadûs of the canonical collections of hadith. (The name in Ta'b. 2340 and I.S. iv. 39 is Abân b. 'Uthmân al-Ba'jali who seems to have written a book on maghzûz.)

A man of much greater importance was 'Urwâ b. al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwâm (23-94), a cousin of the prophet. 'Urwâ's mother was Abû Bakr's daughter 'Aamî. He and his brother 'Abdallah were in close contact with the prophet's widow 'A'isha. He was a recognized authority on the early history of Islam, and the Umayyad caliph 'Abdullâh-Malik applied to him when he needed information on that subject. Again, it is uncertain whether he wrote a book, but many traditions that are handed down in his name by I.I. and other writers justify the assertion that he was the founder of Islamic history. Though he is the earliest writer whose notes have come down to us, I have not translated the passages from Ta'b. which reproduce them because they do not seem to add anything of importance to the Sira. They form part of a letter which 'Urwâ wrote to 'Abdullâh-Malik who wanted to have accurate knowledge about the prophet's career. Much of his material rests on the statements of his aunt 'A'isha.

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1. E. Sachau, I.S. ii. xxiii. f.
2. Pluck, s. n. 27; and see J. Horovitz in *Islamic Culture*, 1927, 538.
3. I.S., Ta'b. and Bu. are heavily indebted to him.
4. See T. i. 1180, 1224, 1234, 1284, 1634, 1654, 1670, 1770; iii. 4458. Cf. I.H. 754.

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**Introduction**

Like I.I. he was given to inserting poetry in his traditions and justified the habit by the example of 'A'isha who uttered verses on every subject that presented itself. He was a friend of the erotic poet 'Umar b. Rabî'a, but thought very little of the prophet's poet Hassan b. Thâbit.

Of Shurahbi b. Sa'd, a freedman, presumably of South Arabian origin, little is known beyond the fact that he wrote a maghzûz book. I.I. would have none of him, and he is seldom quoted by other writers. He died in 233, and as he is said to have known Ali he must have died a centenarian. He reported traditions from some of the prophet's companions, and Musa b. 'Ubâda records that he wrote lists of the names of the emigrants and the combatants at Badr and Uhud. In his old age he was discredited because he blackmailed his visitors: if they did not give him anything he would say that their fathers were not present at Badr! Poverty and extreme age made him cantankerous. The victims of his spleen doubted his veracity, though those best qualified to judge regarded him as an authority.

Another important Tâbi' was Wâbah b. Munabbih (34-110), a Yamanite of Persian origin. His father probably was a Jew. He is notorious for his interest in, and knowledge of, Jewish and Christian scriptures and traditions; and though much that was invented later was fathered on him, his K. al-Mubtada lies behind the Muslim version of the lives of the prophets and other biblical stories. With his books on the legendary history of the Yaman, on aphorisms, on free will, and other matters preserved in part in I.H.'s K. al-Tijân we are not concerned; but the statement of Hajji Khalifa that he collected the maghzûz is now confirmed by the discovery of a lost work on papyri written in 228. Unfortunately this fragment tells us little that is new; nevertheless, its importance is great because it proves that at the end of the first century, or some years before A.H. 100, the main facts about the prophet's life were written down much as we have them in the later works. Further it shows that, like the other early traditionists, he had little or no use for inadûs. Miss Gertrud Melamed has compared the account of the meeting at 'Aqaba (cf. i. H. 288, 293, 299) with the literature on the subject and her criticism, literary and historical, leads her to some important conclusions which do not concern us here. An interesting detail is that Muhammad speaking to 'Abbâs calls Aus and Khaizr 'my and your maternal uncles', 'Abbâs throughout runs with the hare and hunts with the hounds.

A little later comes 'Ašîm b. 'Umar b. Qatâda al-Ansâri (d. c. 120). He lectured in Damascus on the campaigns of the prophet and the exploits of his companions and seems to have committed his lectures to writing. He too is quite inconsistent in naming his authorities: sometimes he gives an inad, more often he does not. He returned to Medina to continue his work, and I.I. attended his lectures there. Occasionally he inserted verses in his narrative, and sometimes gave his own opinion.

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2. Horovitz, op. cit. 251.
lists of those who went to Abyssinia and fought at Badr. The latter Mālik regarded as authoritative. He generally gives an īsmād, though it is not always clear whether he is relying on a written or an oral source. Once at least he refers to a mass of records left by Ibn `Abbās (I.S. v. 216). Occasionally he quotes poems.

Apart from the fragment of Wahb b. Munabbih’s maghāṣī the Berlin MS., if it is authentic, is the oldest piece of historical literature in Arabic in existence, and if only for that reason deserves more than a passing notice here. It is of importance also because it carries back some of the traditions in Buhārī (d. 256) more than a century.

Other maghāṣī works were produced in Iraq, Syria, and the Yaman during the second century, but none of them is likely to have influenced I.I. and they can safely be disregarded. 1 What is of significance is the great interest in the life of the prophet that was shown everywhere during this century. But no book known to the Arabs or to us can compare in comprehensiveness, arrangement, or systematic treatment, with I.I.’s work which will now be discussed.

The Sira

The titles The Book of Campaigns or The Book of Campaigns and (the prophet’s) Biography or The Book of the Biography and the Beginning and the Campaigns 2 are all to be met with in the citations of Arabic authors. Al-Bakrī, a pupil of I.I., made two copies of the whole book, one of which must have reached I.I. (d. 218) whose text, abbreviated, annotated, and sometimes altered, is the main source of our knowledge of the original work. A good deal more of it can be recovered from other sources. 3 The principles underlying I.I.’s revision are set out in his Introduction. Sachau 4 suggests that the copy used by T. was made when I.I. was in Ray by Salama b. Fadl al-Abrah al-Anṣāri, because T. quotes I.I. according to I. Fadl’s ricwīya. A third copy was made by Yūnus b. Bukayr in Ray. This was used by I. al-Atīr in his Usdul-Ghāba. A copy of part of this recension exists in the Qurāwīn mosque at Fes. The text, which contains some additional passages to the received text, I hope to publish shortly. A fourth copy was that of the Syrian Hārūn b. Abū-Iṣā. These last two copies were used by I. Sa’d. 5 Lastly the Fihrist mentions the edition of al-Nufaylī (d. 234).

It must not be supposed that the book ever existed in three separate parts: ancient legends, Muhammad’s early life and mission, and these parts. These are simply sections of the book which contained I.I.’s lectures.

For the Mutaba’ā (Mabda’) we must go to T.’s Tafsīr and History. The first quotation from it in the latter 6 runs thus: ‘I. Ḥamid said, Salama b. al-Fadl told us that I.I. said: “The first thing that God created was light

1 Fück, 11.
2 S.B.B.A. xi.
3 ibid., where some doubts about the authenticity of some of them are raised.
4 Goldzfather, M.S. ii. 207, shows that it was in circulation as late as the end of the 9th century A.D.
5 Fück, 12.
and darkness. Then He separated them and made the darkness night, black exceeding dark; and He made the light day, bright and luminous.  

From this it is clear that 'Genesis' is the meaning of the title of the first section of the book. I.H. skipped all the intervening pages and began with Abraham, the presumed ancestor of Muhammad. Al-Azraqi quotes some passages from the missing section in his Akhbār Mecca and a few extracts are given by al-Muţahhar b. Tahir.  

The Mubātā in so far as it lies outside I.H.'s recession is not our concern, though it is to be hoped that one day a scholar will collect and publish a text of it from the sources that survive so that I.I.'s work can be read in its entirety as its importance warrants. In this section I.I. relied on Jewish and Christian informants and on the book of Abū 'Abdallah Wahb b. Munabbih (341-110 or 114) known as K. al-Mubātā and also al-Islām-ī'īyāt of which the original title was Ḥisāl-ī Anbāyā. To him he owed the history of the past from Adam to Jesus and also the South Arabian legends, some of which I.H. has retained. This man also wrote a maghāzī book, and a fragment of it has survived. I.I. cites him by name only once. It is natural that a book about Muhammad, 'the seal of the prophets', should give an account of the history of the early prophets, but the history, or legends, of South Arabia demand another explanation. As Goldziher showed long ago, it was in the second half of the first century that the antagonism of north and south, i.e. Quraysh and the Ansār of Medina, first showed itself in literature. The Ansār, proud of their southern origin and of their support of the prophet when the Quraysh rejected him, smarted under the injustice of their rulers and the northerners' claim to superiority. One of the ways in which their resentment manifested itself was in the glorification of Ḥimyar's great past. I.I. as a loyal son of Medina shared the feelings of his patrons and recounted the achievements of their forefathers, and I.H., himself of southern descent, retained in the Sīra as much of the original work as he thought desirable. To this accident that I.H. was a Ḥimyarī we owe the extracts from stories of the old South Arabian kings. I.H. devoted a separate book to the subject, the K. al-Tīhān li-mā'rifatī mabāri kawnīn (fi akhbār Qabātan).  

The second section of the book which is often called al-Mab'ath begins with the birth of the prophet and ends when the first fighting from his base in Medina takes place. The impression one gets from this section is of hazy memories; the stories have lost their freshness and have nothing of that vivid and sometimes dramatic detail which make the maghāzī stories—especially in al-Waqīfī—so full of interest and excitement. Thus while the Medina period is well documented, and events there are chronologically arranged, no such accuracy, indeed no such attempt at it, can be claimed for the Meccan period. We do not know Muhammad's age when he first came forth publicly as a religious reformer; some say he was forty, others say forty-five; we do not know his precise relation to the Banu Najjar; the poverty of his childhood ill fits the assertion that he belonged to the principal family in Mecca. The story of those years is filled out with legends and stories of miraculous events which inevitably undermine the modern reader's confidence in the history of this period as a whole. In this section particularly, though not exclusively, I.I. writes historical introductions to its paragraphs. A good example is his foreword to the account of the persecution the prophet endured at the hands of the Meccans: 'When the Quraysh became distressed by the trouble caused by the enmity between them and the apostle and those of their people who accepted his teaching, they stirred up against him foolish fellows who called him a liar, insulted him, and accused him of being a poet, a sorcerer, a diviner, and of being possessed. However the apostle continued to proclaim what God had ordered him to proclaim, concealing nothing, and exciting their dislike by contemning their religion, forsaking their idols, and leaving them to their unbelief. This is not a statement resting on tradition, but a concise summary of the circumstances that are plainly indicated by certain passages of the Qur'an which deal with this period.  

Of the Maghāzī history little need be said. For the most part the stories rest on the account of eyewitnesses and have every right to be regarded as trustworthy.

Characteristics  

The opinions of Muslim critics on I.I.'s trustworthiness deserve a special paragraph; but here something may be said of the author's caution and his fairness. A word that very frequently precedes a statement is sa'uma or sa'amū, 'he (they) alleged'. It carries with it more than a hint that the statement may not be true, though on the other hand it may be sound. Thus there are fourteen or more occurrences of the caveat from p. 87 to 148 alone, besides a frequent note that only God knows whether a particular statement is true or not. Another indication of reserve if not scepticism underlies the expression fi mā dhikāra it, as in the story of the jinn who listened to Muhammad as he prayed; Muhammad's order to 'Umar to kill Suwayd; one of Gabriel's visits to Muhammad; the reward of two martyrs to the man killed by a woman. An expression of similar import is fi mā balaghān.  

Very seldom does I.I. make any comment of his own on the traditions he reports apart from the mental reservation implied in these terms. Therefore when he does express an opinion it is the more significant. In his account of the night journey to Jerusalem and the ascent into heaven

2 A summary of the contents is given in T. i.  
3 p. 20.  
4 See E.I.  
5 M.S. i. 89–98.  
6 Haydarabad, 1344.

1 p. 83; see also a187, 230 et passim.  
2 pp. 281, 356, 357, 358.  
3 pp. 252, 253, 130 et passim. Extreme caution introduces the legends of the light at the   
4 prophet's birth, 162.
he allows us to see the working of his mind. The story is everywhere hedged with reservations and terms suggesting caution to the reader. He begins with a tale which he says has reached him (balaghani) from several narrators and he has pieced them together from the stories these people heard (dhikira). The whole subject is a searching test of men's faith in which those endowed with intelligence are specially concerned. It was certainly an act of God, but exactly what happened we do not know. This opinion of his is most delicately and skilfully expressed in the words kaufa shâ' a 'how God wished to show him'. I. Mas'ud's words are prefaced by fi mî balaghânî 'anî û. There is nothing in the story to indicate that it is a vision. Al-Hasan's version is much more definite, for he asserts that when Muhammad returned to Mecca he told the Quraysh that he had been to Jerusalem and back during the night and that so strained the credulity of some of the Muslims that they gave up their faith in his revelations although he was able to give an accurate description of Jerusalem. It is therefore most surprising that al-Hasan should end his story by quoting Sûra 13, 62 'We made the vision which we showed thee only for a test to men' in this context. The whole point of al-Hasan's story is thereby undermined, for if the experience was visionary, then there was nothing at all incredible about it. Then follows 'A'isha's statement, reported by one of her father's family, that it was only the apostle's spirit that was transported; his body remained where it was in Mecca. Another tradition by Mu'awiyah b. Abû Sufyân bears the same meaning. The fact that he had been asked whether it was a physical or a dream journey shows that the subject was debated before I.I.'s day. Here I.I. makes a profound observation which in effect means that it was immaterial whether the experience was real or visionary because it came from God; and just as Abraham made every preparation to slay his son Isaac in consequence of what he had seen in a dream because he recognized no difference between a divine command given at night during sleep and an order given by day when he was awake, so the apostle's vision was just as real as if it had been an actual physical experience. Only God knows what happened, but the apostle did see what he said he saw and whether he was awake or asleep the result is the same.

The description of Abraham, Moses, and Jesus which purports to quote Muhammad's words is prefaced by zâmat h-Zuhâr, not, as often, by the ordinary term haddathaâni. Now as al-Zuhâr and I.I. knew each other well and must have met quite often, we must undoubtedly infer from the fact that I.I. deliberately substituted the verb of suspicion for the ordinary term used in traditional matters that he means us to take this tradition with a grain of salt.

It is a pity that the excellent impression that one gets of the author's intelligence and religious perception should be marred by the concluding paragraph on this subject of the ascent into heaven which incidentally has had far-reaching results on European literature through the Divine

\[\text{p. 267.}\]

Comedy. It rules out absolutely any but a physical experience and ought to have been recorded with its cautionary note before I.I. made his own observations. Possibly the reason for its being out of place is that it is an excerpt from his lecture notes; but whatever the explanation, it mars the effect of his statement of the evidence.

The phrase 'God knows best' speaks for itself and needs no comment. It is sometimes used when the author records two conflicting traditions and is unable to say which is correct. Another indication of the author's scrupulousness is the phrase 'God preserve me from attributing to the apostle words which he did not use'. His report of Muhammad's first public address at Medina and his order to each of his companions to adopt another as a brother are prefixed by these words and hedged by fi mî balaghânî.

The author does not often give us rival versions of traditions from Medina and Mecca; thus the account of 'Umar's conversion is interesting. It illustrates the thoroughness of our author in his search for information about the early days of the prophet's ministry. The first account he says is based on what the traditionists of Medina said: 'Umar was brutal to his sister and brother-in-law who had accepted Islam, but feeling some remorse when he saw blood on her face from the violent blow he had dealt her, and impressed by her constancy, he demanded the leaf of the Quran that she was reading. Having read it he at once accepted it as inspired and went to the prophet to proclaim his allegiance.'

The Meccan, 'Abdullah b. Abû Najîh, on the authority of two named companions or an anonymous narrator, gives another version in 'Umar's own words to the effect that his conversion was due to his hearing the prophet recite the Quran while praying at the Ka'ba one night. In both narratives it was the Quran which caused his conversion. In the first version 'Umar was affected by the bearing of his sister and secured a part of the Quran to read himself; in the second he was affected by the private devotions of the prophet. The first story is prefixed by fi mî balaghânî, but this is cancelled as it were by the express statement that it was the current belief of the people of Medina. I.I. concludes by saying that only God knows what really happened.

A rather difficult problem in literary and historical criticism is posed by the rival traditions collected by the indefatigable T. from two of I.I.'s pupils, Yûnis b. Bukayr and Salama b. al-Fadîl, the latter supported by another pupil of I.I.'s named Ali b. Mujâhid. The first had attended his lectures in Kûfah; the other two his lectures at Ray. All three claim that they transmit what I.I. told them on the authority of a certain 'Affî. I do not know of a parallel in I.I.'s work to a contradiction resting on the authority of the same original narrator. Different traditions from different râwîs from different sources are to be expected in any history; but here the same

\[\text{See M. Asin, La ecología musulmana.}\]

\[\text{Can it be that I.I. has tampered with the text here?}\]

\[\text{pp. 340 and 344.}\]

\[\text{pp. 224-9.}\]

\[\text{T. i. 1162. 8-1163. 2.}\]
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man is introduced as the authority for conflicting traditions such as are to be found in the later collections of hadith.

The first tradition is suspect because it requires us to believe that from the earliest days of his ministry before he had any following apart from a wife and a young nephew Muhammad prophesied the Arab conquest of the Byzantine and Persian empires in the Near East. Nothing in his life gives the slightest support to this claim, though it was to be made good soon after his death.

The second contains no reference to later conquests and may be trustworthy. It definitely fixes the scene at Minā, which is about three miles distant from Mecca. The first account suggests, though it does not assert, that the prophet was in Mecca, as he turned to face the Ka'ba when he prayed. Would he have done this had he been in Minā? Would he not rather have turned in the direction of Jerusalem, his first qibla? I.I. expressly affirms elsewhere1 that while he was in Mecca Muhammad when praying turned his face towards Syria. The second account says nothing about the direction of his prayer. On the whole, then, the second tradition as transmitted by Salama must be given the preference.

It is quite easy to see why I.H. a century later omitted both traditions; they were offensive to the ruling house of 'Abbās as they drew attention to an unhappy past which the rulers, now champions of orthodoxy, would fain have forgotten. But why did I.I. report them both, if in fact he did? On the whole it seems most reasonable to suppose that he first dictated the tradition which Yūnus heard in Kifā, notorious for its attachment to the Shī'a party, and that he afterwards dropped it and substituted the second version which Salama heard in Ray some years later before he went on to Baghdad. Ṭ. with his usual thoroughness reported both traditions. The only alternative is to suppose that the reference to the conquests is an interpolation.

There is a subtle difference between these two variants which ought not to be overlooked. At first sight it would seem to be a mere detail that in the first tradition 'Affi wished that he had been the third to pray the Muslim prayer. Now there were already three—Muhammad, Khadija, and Ali. In the second tradition he wished that he had been the fourth. If this latter is the original form of the tradition it means simply that he wished that he had been the first man outside the prophet's family circle to accept Islam. But the first tradition means more than this: by eliminating, as it were, Muhammad himself from the trio it means that Ali was the second human being and the first male to accept Islam and to stand with Khadija at the head of all Muslims in the order of priority. This has always been the claim of the Shī'a and to this day the priority of Ali in this respect is hotly disputed.2

1 p. 190.

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Intrinsically as we have argued, the second tradition has the better claim to authenticity. If that is admitted it follows that either I.I. or his rāfiʿi adapted it in the interest of the Shī'a cause. In view of the accusation of partiality towards the Shī'a which was levelled against I.I.1 it seems probable that he himself gave a subtle twist to the tradition that had come down to him from 'Affī, and afterwards played for safety.

As one would expect of a book which was written in the eighth century about a great religious reformer, miracles are accepted as a matter of course. It does not matter if a person's alleged power to work miracles makes his early sufferings and failures unintelligible, nor does it matter if the person concerned expressly disclaimed all such powers apart from the recitation of the Quran itself.2 The Near East has produced an enormous number of books on the miracles of saints and holy men and it would be strange indeed if Islam had not followed in the footsteps of its predecessors in glorifying the achievements of its great leader at the expense of his human greatness. Here we are concerned simply with the literary form of such stories, the authorities that are quoted for them, and the way in which our author deals with them. To mention a few:3 the prophet summoned a tree to him and it stood before him. He told it to go back again and back it went. It is interesting to notice that the person for whose benefit this miracle was wrought regarded it as sorcery. The author's father, Ishāq b. Yaṣīr, is responsible for the tale. Another tradition from 'Amr b. 'Ubayd, who claimed to have had it from 'Abd b. 'Abdullāh via al-Ḥasan, is merely a midrash composed to explain Sūrā 5. 14 where it is said that God kept the hands of Muhammad's enemies from doing him violence. The story of the throne of God shaking when the doors of heaven were opened to receive Sād shows how these stories grew in the telling. Mu'ādh b. Riḍā' al-Zurāqī reported on the authority of 'anyone you like among my clan' that when Sād died Gabriel visited the prophet and asked him who it was that had caused such commotion in heaven, whereupon Muhammad, knowing that it must be Sād, hurried off at once to find that he had died. However, more was said on the subject: 'Abdullāh b. Abī Bakr from 'Amra d. 'Abdul-Ḥamīm reported that 'Abdullāh met Sād's cousin outside Mecca and asked him why he did not show more grief for one whose arrival had shaken the very throne of God. An anonymous informant claimed to have heard from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī that the pull-bearers found the corpse of this fat, heavy man unexpectedly light, and the prophet told them that there were other unseen bearers taking the weight with them; and again it is repeated that the throne shook. Suhayl has a fairly long passage on the tradition which goes to show that serious minded men did not like this story at all. Some scholars tried to whistle away the meaning by suggesting that the shaking of the throne was a metaphor for the joy

1 v.d.
2 Sūrā 17, 95 'Am I anything but a human messenger' and cf. 19. 49.
3 pp. 258, 663, 686. J. Hovavitsa, Der Islam, v. 1944, pp. 21-53, has collected and discussed their origins and antecedents in the hadithology of the East.
in heaven at Sa'd's arrival; others claimed that the angelic bearers of the throne were meant. But Suhayli will have none of this. The throne is a created object and so it can move. Therefore none has the right to depart from the plain meaning of the words. Moreover, the tradition is authentic while traditions like that of al-Barzālī to the effect that it was Sa'd's bed that shook are rightly ignored by the learned. He goes on to point out that al-Bukhārī accepted the tradition not only on the authority of Jabir but also on the report of a number of other companions of the prophet—a further indication of the snowball growth of the legend. S. finds it most surprising that Mālik rejected the hadith and he adds naively from the point of view of later generations that Mālik would not have it mentioned despite the soundness of its transmission and the multitude of narrators, and he adds that it may be that Mālik did not regard the tradition as sound! The passage is instructive in that it shows how far I.I. could go in the face of one of the most learned of his contemporaries in Medina. Positivity has sided with I.I. on this matter, but Mālik clearly had many on his side at the time, men who would not take at its face value a story which they could not reject out of hand, as he did, with the weight of contemporary opinion behind it.

Another feature that stands out clearly from time to time is the insertion of popular stories on the Goldilocks model. For the sake of the reader I have rendered these stories in accord with modern usage, as the repetition of the same words and the same answer again and again is intolerable to the modern adult. Such stories are the stock-in-trade of the Arabian gāzās and the storyteller all the world over and invariably lead up to the climax which it is the speaker's intention to withhold until he has his audience on tippytoe. A good example of such stories is the narrative of Muhammad's arrival in Medina and the invitation of one clan after another, always declined with the same words.1

After giving due weight to the pressure of hagiology on the writer and his leaning towards the Shi'a one must, I think, affirm that the life of Muhammad is recorded with honesty and truthfulness and, too, an impartiality which is rare in such writings. Who can read the story of al-Zahhrā,2 who was given his life, family, and belongings but did not want to live when the best men of his people had been slain, without admitting that here we have a true account of what actually happened? Similarly who but an impartial historian would have included verses in which the noble generous character of the Jews of the Hijaz was lauded and lamented? The scepticism of earlier writers seems to me excessive and unjustified. We have only to compare later Lives of Muhammad to see the difference between the historical and the ideal Muhammad.3

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1 335 f.  
2 p. 691.  
3 Nöldeke, Islam, v, 1914, has drawn attention to many incidents and characteristics of the Sīra which could not have been invented and which show intimate knowledge of the facts.
society would require us to look for such effusions. As Horovitz pointed out, in pre-Islamic poetry these poetical contests are frequent, and it might be added that in early Hebrew history verses are frequently inserted in the narratives and often put into the mouths of the heroes of the hour. Thus, apart from those poems which undoubtedly were called forth by the events they commemorated, poetry was an integral part of a racial convention which no writer of history could afford to ignore. Probably if all the poetry which I.I. included in the Sira had reached that standard of excellence which his readers were accustomed to expect, none of these charges would have been levelled against him. But when he included verses which were palpably banal, and were at the same time untrue to circumstance, uninspired and trivial, as many undoubtedly are, the developed aesthetic sense of the Arabs which is most delicate where poetry is concerned rejected what he wrote. As al-Jumâhî said, he brought poetry itself into disrepute by the bolder, dandier he admitted into his otherwise excellent work. And it did not improve matters that much that was good was mingled with more that was bad. It is more than likely that I.I. himself was conscious that all was not well with this poetry, for the general practice of writers is to put the verse into the narrative at the crucial moment (as I.I. at times does), whereas after the prose account of Badr and Uhud he lumps together a whole collection of verse by various 'poets'. It is as though he were silently saying 'This is what has been handed on to me. I know nothing about poetry and you must make your own anthology.' Even so, whatever his shortcomings were, it is only fair to bear in mind that I.H. often inserts a note to the effect that the text before him contains lines or words which have not I.I.'s authority.

The subject is one that calls for detailed and careful literary criticism. The history of the clichés, similes, and metaphors needs investigation by a scholar thoroughly grounded in the poetry of the pre-Islamic and Umayyad eras. Until this preliminary work has been successfully accomplished it would be premature to pass judgment on the poetry of the Sira as a whole. Ancient poetry has suffered greatly at the hands of forgers, plagiarists, and philologists, and the divans of later poets have not escaped the dishonest râðî. Hassân b. Thalîb, the prophet's own poet, has many poems to his name which he would be astounded to hear, and there are comparatively few poets of whom it could be said that the divans bearing their names contained nothing for which they were not responsible. \(^1\)

1 And this was precisely his attitude if al-Jumâhî is to be believed.

2 I should hardly care to go so far as to assert that the fifth-century poet 'Amr b. Qâma'a has exercised a direct influence on the poetry of the Sira; but the fact remains that there is a great similarity. It is inevitable that the themes of Arab verse should recur constantly. Beduin life varied little from generation to generation. Their horizon was bounded by deserts, and consequently camels and horses, war and its weapons, hospitality and tribal pride were constantly mentioned in song. 'To trace these themes back to their first singers would be a task that would leave little leisure for more profitable studies; but nevertheless it is worth noting that the following themes recur in 'Amr and the Sira: the generous man who slaughters camels for the hungry guest in winter when famine deprivés even the rich of

Introduction

Since these words were written two theses have been written in the University of London: the first by Dr. M. A. 'Azzam deals with the style, language, and authenticity of the poetry contained in the Sira; the second by Dr. W. 'Arafat with the Diesis of Hassân b. Thalîb. A brief summary of their findings will not be out of place here.

Between the period covered by the Sira and the editing of the book itself loom the two tragedies of Kabbâl,' when al-Husayn and his followers were slain in 61, and the sack of Medina in A.H. 63 when some ten thousand of the Anshâr including no less than eighty of the prophet's companions are said to have been put to death. Much of the poetry of the Sira was meant to be read against the background of those tragedies. Its aim is to set forth the claims of the Anshâr to primogeniture in Islam not only as men who supported the prophet when the Quraysh opposed him, but as men descended from kings. The prophet was the grandson of 'Abdul-'Muttalib, who was the son of Hâshim and a woman of the B. al-Najjar, and so of Yamani stock. 'Your mother was of the pure stock of Khuzâ.' . . . 'To the heroes of Sabâ' her line goes back,' says the poet in his elegy on 'Abdul-'Muttalib. \(^3\)

Apart from their great service to the prophet in giving him a home when Quraysh cast him out, the Anshâr long before had been partners with Quraysh, for was it not Rifâ', the half-brother of Qusayy, who came to the aid of the ancestors of Quraysh from the Yamam? Had it not been for the Anshâr there would have been no Islam: had it not been for their ancestors, the poet implies, Quraysh would not have been established in Mecca.

On p. 18 there is thinly disguised Anshâr-Shâ' propaganda: 'The one you killed was the best of us. The one who lived is lord over us and all of you are lords' would be recognized by many as a reference to the killing of al-Husayn and the 'lords' would be the Umayyads. The account of the Tuba'a's march against Mecca and his great respect for its sanctity stands in clear contrast with the treatment it received from the Umayyads when al-Hajjâj bombarded it.

\(^3\) p. 117.
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After a careful study of the language and style of this verse Dr. 'Azzam comes to the conclusion that comparatively little of it dates from the time of the prophet.

Dr. 'Arafat comes to much the same conclusion with regard to the verse attributed to Ḥassān. A few of the outstanding arguments will be given here. He finds that the etymology on the Anṣār (p. 895) which is attributed to Ka'b b. Zuhayr is in the same rhyme and metre as the poem of al-Akhṭal which was written at the instigation of Yazīd. There we find the words ‘Basenės is under the turban of the Anṣār’. A careful comparison of the relevant passages in the two poems shows that the one in the Sīra is the answer to the one in the Ḳaḥīl. Abdullah b. Abū Bakr is reported to have said: ‘The Anṣār were respected and feared until the battle of Ḥarra; afterwards people were emboldened to attack them and they occupied a lowly place.’ It is in these circumstances, not those of the prophet’s companions daily increasing in power and prestige, that we must look for the background of ‘You will find that none ill uses or abuses us but a base fellow who has gone astray’ (p. 626).

On p. 474 a poem which I.H. attributes to Ḥassān’s son, ‘Abdul-l-Rahmān, obviously dates from a later generation: ‘My people are those who sheltered the prophet and believed in him when the people of the land were unbelievers except for choice souls who were forerunners of righteous men and who were helpers with the helpers.’ What can this mean but that someone is speaking of the past services of his people to the prophet? Further, it is strange language to impute to Ḥassān. It was he who called the new-comers vagrants jallābīb and regarded them as an unmitigated nuisance. He did not house any of the mahājīrin, nor was he a ‘brother’ to one of them. A still clearer reference to a former generation is to be found on p. 927 (again I.H. attributed it to Abdul-l-Rahmān) which says: ‘Those people were the prophet’s helpers and they are my people; to them I come when I relate my descent.’

Dr. 'Arafat notes that in the Sīra there are seventy-eight poems attributed to Ḥassān; the authenticity of fifteen of them is questioned or denied outright. The text of the poem on p. 738 in its rival forms illustrates the way in which verses attributed to Ḥassān were interpolated and additional verses fabricated. Here Ṭ, gives only the first five verses; the Diwān interpolates two verses after the first line and adds two at the end. On the other hand, the last three verses in the Sīra are not to be found in either of the other authorities. In the Aghānī the poem is still longer and according to the rīsāla of Muṣṭafā but without al-Zuhri’s authority. The facts which emerge from a study of the circumstances which surround this poem are:

1. Ḥassān resented the growing numbers and influence of the Muslim refugees.

2. After the attack on R. al-Muṣṭaliq a quarrel arose between the Meccans and Medina about the use of a well. ‘Abdullah b. Ubayy said: ‘They rival our numbers kāthīra;’ he called them jallābīb and threatened that when they got back to Medina the stronger a’za would drive out the weaker. The words italicized are the very words used by Ḥassān in this poem. From this it is clear that Ḥassān is expressing not only his own opinion about the Muslims but that of ‘Abdullah b. Ubayy and his party.

3. It was during this journey that the scandal about ‘Ā’isha arose.

4. Šamwān struck Ḥassān with his sword. According to the introduction to the poem in the Diwān Šamwān attacked Ḥassān because he had accused him of spending the night with ‘Ā’isha. But in the Aghānī Šamwān wounded Ḥassān at the instigation of the prophet because his house was the centre of disaffection against the Muslims. The other explanation of the attack on Ḥassān is added in al-Aghānī as an afterthought. However, there is no reason why both versions should not be correct. Ḥassān’s most dangerous offence was his complaint against the Muslim intruders; but when he slandered ‘Ā’isha he provided the prophet with an admirable reason for punishing him severely for an offence which would not engage the sympathies of the Anṣārīs. Whether loyal or disaffected, they could hardly support their comrade in such a matter.

With the further ramifications of the story we are not concerned; sufficient has been said to show that the poem so far as verses 5 is genuine and is directed solely against the Muslim refugees whose presence had become a nuisance to Ḥassān. In this poem he says nothing at all about Šamwān. The last three lines have doubtless been added to whitewash Ḥassān. As poetry they will not bear comparison with the genuine verses and Ṭ was thoroughly justified in discarding them.

Another specimen of the spurious poetry fathered on Ḥassān is to be found on p. 936 which belongs to a later generation. Here it is not the poet who is praised but his ‘house’: ‘How noble are the people (gum) whose party (sh’a) is the prophet! . . . They are the best of all living creatures.’ When we remember the resentment with which the Anṣār in general and Ḥassān in particular felt when they got no share in the booty of Hunayn, the line ‘Take from them what comes when they are angry and set not your hearts on what they withhold’ is singularly inept.

Another point which militates against the authenticity of poems attributed to Ḥassān is the prominence which is often given to the Aus. It cannot be supposed that a Khazrajite would ignore the achievements of his own tribe or put them in the second place as on p. 455 when we remember that the hostility between the two tribes persisted long after Islam was established. A plain example of a later Anṣārī’s work is given on p. 711, where the poem begins: ‘O my people is there any defence against fate and
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can the good old days return? an impossible attitude for a Muslim to take during the prophet's lifetime.

Again, when Hassān is reported to have said 'The best of the believers have followed one another to death' (p. 799), it is sufficient to remember that practically all the prophet's principal companions survived Uhud. But when this careless forger wrote all the best Muslims had long been dead. However, we have not got to his main point which is to glorify the house of Ḥāshim: 'They are God's near ones. He sent down His wisdom upon them and among them is the purified bringer of the book.' Here the Ālids are the 'friends' or 'saints' of God and Muhammad is little more than a member of their family. Divine wisdom is given to them.

These two studies lay bare the wretched language in which many of these poems are written and incidentally bring out the difficulties which a translator has to cope with when the rules of Arabic syntax and the morphology of the language are treated with scant respect. In fine it may be said that their well-documented conclusions made it abundantly clear that the judgement of the ancient critics—particularly al-Jumaṭi—is justified up to the hilt.1

The partial restoration of the lost original

Once the original text of I.I. existed in at least fifteen rīwāyas:2

1. Ibrāhīm b. Sa'd, 110–84 Medina
2. Ziyād b. 'Abdullāh al-Bakrā', d. 183 Kūfa
3. 'Abdullāh b. Idrīs al-Aufi, 115–92 "
4. Yūnus b. Bukayr, d. 199 "
5. 'Abda b. Sulaymān, d. 187/8 "
6. 'Abdullāh b. Numayr, 115–99 "
7. Yāhya b. Sa'd al-Umawī, 114–94 Baghdad
8. Jarir b. Ḥāzin, 85–170 Baṣra
9. Hārūn b. Abī Iṣā Baṣra?
10. Salama b. al-Faḍl al-Abrash, d. 191 Ray
11. Ali b. Mūjāhid, d. c. 180 "
12. Ibrāhīm b. al-Mukhtār "
13. Sa'd b. Bāzī "
14. 'Uthmān b. Sa'd "
15. Muhammad b. Salama al-Ḥarrānī, d. 191

It has been my aim to restore so far as is now possible the text of I.I. as it left his pen or as he dictated it to his hearers, from excerpts in later texts, disregarding the Mabda' section as I.H. did and for at least one of his reasons. At first I was tempted to think that a great deal of the original had been lost—and it may well be that it has been lost—for it is clear that the scurrilous attacks on the prophet which I.H. mentions in his Introduction are not to be found anywhere. But on the whole I think it is likely that we have the greater part of what I.I. wrote. Doubtless more was said for Ali and against 'Abbās, but it is unlikely that such material would add much to our knowledge of the history of the period. Possibly to us the most interesting excisions would be paragraphs containing information which I.I. gathered from Jews and Christians; but in all probability the Mabda' contained most of such passages. Still, it is unlikely that these passages which have been allowed to remain would have excited the annoyance that some of his early critics express on this score. Ibn'l-Kalbī's K. al-Aṣnām gives a warning against exaggerated hopes. Yāqūt had made copious extracts from it in his Geographical Dictionary, so interesting and so important for our knowledge of the old Arabian heathenism that the great Nöldeke expressed the hope that he would live to see the text of the lost original discovered. He did; but a collation of the original work with the excerpts made by Yāqūt shows that practically everything of value had been used and nothing of real significance was to be learned from the discovery of the mother text. However, in a text of the nature of the Sīra it is just possible that a twist may be given to the narrative by an editor such as I.H.

The writers from whom some of the original can be recovered are:

1. Muhammad b. 'Umar al-Waqīḍī, d. 207
2. Abū'l-Walid Muhammad b. 'Abdullāh al-Azraqī from his grandfather (d. c. 220)
3. Muhammad b. Sa'd, d. 230
4. Abū 'Abdullāh Muhammad b. Muslim b. Qutaya, d. 270 or 276
5. Ahmad b. Yahyā al-Balādhuri, d. 279
6. Abū Jā'far Muhammad b. Jā'far b. Ṭabarī, d. 310
7. Abū Sa'id al-Hasan b. 'Abdullāh al-Sīrāfī, d. 368.
8. Abū'l-Hasan 'Alī b. Muhammad b. Ḥabīb al-Māwardī, d. 450
9. Abū'l-Hasan 'Alī b. al-Athīr, d. 630
10. Yūsuf b. Yahyā al-Tādālī known as I. al-Zayyāt, d. 627
11. Ismā'īl b. 'Umar b. Kathīr, d. 774

For our purpose none of these has the importance of T., whose text rests on the rīwāya of Salama and Yūnus b. Bukayr. Besides the important textual variants which will have to be traced in the translation from time to time, he is who reports from I.I. the prophet's temporary concession to polytheism at Mecca (1190 f.) and the capture of 'Abbās at Badr (1441).

1. al-Waqīḍī. Only the Maghāṣī has survived from the very large number of his writings. A third of it was published by von Kremer in 1856 from a poor manuscript, and until the work has been edited its value

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1 See further A. Guillaume, 'The Biography of the Prophet in Recent Research', Islamic Quarterly Review, 1954.
2 I have adopted the list given by Fück in his admirable monograph, p. 44, where full biographical details are to be found. The towns are those at which the individuals named heard I.I.'s lectures.
cannot be accurately assessed.1 The abridged translation by Wellhausen2 gives the reader all the salient facts, but his method of epitomizing enabled him to avoid difficulties in the text which call for explanation. Waqidi makes no mention of I.I. among his authorities. The reason for this doubtless is that he did not want to refer to a man who already enjoyed a great reputation as an authority on maghāzī and so let it seem that his own book was a mere amplification of his predecessor's. It is by no means certain that he made use of I.I.'s book, or traditional lore, for he quoted his authorities, e.g. al-Zuhri, Ma'mar, and others, directly. On the other hand, he did not belittle I.I. of whom he spoke warmly as a chronicler, genealogist, and traditionist, who transmitted poetry and was an indefatigable seeker of tradition, a man to be trusted.3

It follows that strictly Waqidi is not a writer from whom in the present state of our knowledge we can reconstruct the original of the Sūra; but as his narrative often runs parallel with I.I.'s work, sometimes abridging, sometimes expanding, his stories it is a valuable if uncontrolled supporter thereof. Not until his maghāzī has been published and studied as it deserves to be can a satisfactory comparison of the two books be made. One thing is abundantly clear, namely that Waqidi often includes stories which obviously come from eyewitnesses and often throw valuable light on events which are obscure in I.I. Indeed it ought to be said that the Sūra is incomplete without Waqidi.4

2. Al-Azraqi's Akhbār Makkah is of great value in matters archaeological. His authority is 'Uthmān b. Ṣādi.5

3. I. Sa'd's Akhbār l-Nabi is more or less as he communicated it to his pupils. This was afterwards combined with his Tabaqāt in 300 by I. Ma'rūf. Volumes la, b and IIa, b in the Berlin edition deal with the former, prophets, Muhammad's childhood, his mission, the hijra, and his campaigns, ending with his death, burial, and elegies thereon. I.S. has much more to say on some matters than I.I., e.g. letters and embassies, and the prophet's last illness, while he shows no interest in pre-Islamic Arabia. For the maghāzī Waqidi is his main authority. The Tabaqāt deals with the prophet's companions and the traditionists of the transmitter, including the tābi'īn.6

4. I. Qutayba's K. al-Ma'ārif contain a few short and inexact citations.

5. Al-Baladhurī's Futūḥāt-Buldān adds very little to our knowledge. De Goeje's index gives twelve references. The first two7 which De Goeje, followed by Nöldeke, notes as not being in the Sūra would never

1 An edition from two MSS. in the B.M. is being prepared by my colleague Mr. J. M. B. Jones.

2 Muhammad in Medina, Berlin, 1882.

3 T. iii. 3512.

4 Reluctantly in these difficult days I have given up my original intention to publish a translation of the two works side by side. I have every hope that it will be carried to a successful conclusion by the scholar mentioned above.


6 p. 10.

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have found a place there as they obviously belong to I.I.'s last book on fisāq. They deal with the question of how much water a man may retain on his land before he lets it flow down to his neighbour's ground. The last five citations belong to the age of the caliphs and need not concern us. The remainder have a slight value for textual criticism. Sometimes they lend support to T.'s version, and once at least a citation proves that the tradition was not preserved orally because the variant readings could only have come about through a transfer of a dot from the first to the second letter with the consequent misreading of the third. The citations are brief and concise: they tell all the truth that the writer needed for his purpose but not the whole truth, which would have been irrelevant.

6. Tabārī. A list of the additions to I.I.'s recension has been given by Nöldeke8 and enough has been said about his value as a witness to the original text of the Sūra. No attempt has been made to recover the lost part of the Mabda'ab his Tafsīr. Where his variants are merely stylistic and do not affect the sense of the passage I have ignored them. Practically all of them will be found in the footnotes to the Leyden edition. He was familiar with four of the recensions, numbers 4, 7, 9, and 10 on the list given above, much the most frequently cited being Yūnis b. Bukayr. On one occasion (1074. 12) he remarks that I.I.'s account is 'more satisfactory than that of Hisbān b. Muhammad' [al-Kalbi d. 204 or 206]. I.I. he ignores altogether and he omits a good deal of the poetry now in the Sūra. Whether his selection was governed by taste, whether he thought some of it irrelevant, or whether he regarded it as spurious I cannot find any indication. He often gives the simūd which is lacking in I.I. (cf. 1794. 12). On one occasion at least (cf. W. 422 with T. 1272) it looks as if the narrative has been deliberately recast. T. frequently omits the taliyya and tardiyya as ancient writers did.9 I.I. omits Ka'b's poem and the mention of its provoking a killing, cf. 651 with T. 1445.

7. Al-Sfrā'ī contributes an interesting addition to W. 882.

8. Al-Mawardi has nothing of importance to add.

9. I. al-Athīr in his Kāmil is prone to throw his authorities together and produce a smooth running account from the sum of what they all said, dropping all subordinate details. However, he quotes I.I. ten times.10

10. I. al-Zayyāt, see on p. 640 (W.).

11. I. Kathīr sometimes agrees with I.I. verbatim. Sometimes he quotes Ibn Bukayr where he offers what is in effect the same stories in different words. I propose to devote a special study to this rīwa'iyya.

12. Ibn Hajjār. Again little of importance.4

1 G.Q. ii. 139 f.

2 Cf. the autograph MS. of al-Shāfi'i's secretary. The occurrence of the taliyya written out in full ten times or more on a single page of a modern edition makes of scrivener than reverence, and is an innovation; a useful criterion for dating a MS., but a sore trial to the reader of a modern printed text.

3 Professor Kreis added in a letter that the Masdarātak of al-Hikmat al-Nawafsī contains extracts from I.I. via Yūnis b. Bukayr, but as this enormous work is not indexed I.

4 G.Q. ii. 143.

5 G.Q. ii. 139.
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between the opposing ranks, but the inestimable services of his two senior contemporaries are never thrust into the background.

In the history of tradition in the technical sense, that is to say in the corpus of hadith elaborated by Sunnī everywhere, I.I. takes a minor position in spite of his great and obvious merits as an honest, straightforward collector of all the information that was known about Muhammad. There are several reasons for this: the principal reason is that he had no information to give on all the everyday matters which fill the canonical books of tradition, or when he had he put them in his Sunan. If he reported Muhammad’s words it was in reference to a particular event in the narrative he recorded; they were evoked naturally by the circumstances. Thus al-Bukhārī, though he often mentions I.I. in the headings of his chapters, hardly ever cites him for the matter of a tradition, unless that tradition is supported by another isnād. Muslim, who classifies traditions as genuine, good, and weak, puts I.I. in the second category. To anyone with an historical sense this was a monstrous injustice, but it must be remembered that by the middle of the third century the form of a hadith mattered more than its substance, and provided that the chain of guarantors was exceptional anything could be included.

The best and most comprehensive summary of Muslim opinion of I.I. is that of I. Suyyudī’s Nāsīs in his ‘Uṣūl al-Aḥār fī funuṭi’il-magḥāṣi wa l-shamā’il wa l-siyyār. He collected all the references to our author that he could find, both favourable and unfavourable, and then answered the attacks that had been made on him. The relevant passage will be found in W. with a translation in German. The following is a short summary of this account:

(a) Those favourable to I.I. were: ‘The best informed man about the magḥāṣi is I.I. al-Zuhri: Knowledge will remain in Medina as long as I.I. lives.’

Shu’ba, 85-160: Truthful in tradition, the amīr of traditionists because of his memory.

Sufyān b. ‘Uyayna, 107-98: I sat with him some seventy years and none of the Medinans suspected him or spoke disparagingly of him.

Abū Zarr’s, d. 281: Older scholars drew from him and professional traditionists tested him and found him truthful. When he reminded Dhuṭaym of Mālik’s distrust of I.I. he denied that it referred to his veracity as a traditionist, but to his qadari heresy.

Abū Ḥātim: His traditions are copied down (by others).

I. al-Madisi: Apostolic tradition originally lay with 6 men; then it became the property of 12, of whom I.I. is one.

al-Shāfi’i: He who wants to study the magḥāṣi deeply must consult I.I.

‘Āṣim b. ‘Umar b. Qatāda: Knowledge will remain among men as long as I.I. lives.

have not been able to collate the passages with the text of the Sīra. See also what has been said about excerpts in Suyyudī’s al-Rauhī’s Umm under I.I.

1 Istanbul, 1946, ii. 108.

2 In xi. 88.

3 In xii. 88.
Abū Mu'āwiyah: A great memory: others confided their traditions to his memory for safe keeping.
al-Bukhārī: Al-Zuhri used to get his knowledge of the maghāzī from I.I. 'Abdullah b. Idris al-Audī: was amazed at his learning and often cited him.
Muṣ'ab: He was attacked for reasons which had nothing to do with tradition.
Yazīd b. Hārūn: Were there a supreme relator of tradition it would be I.I.
Ali b. al-Madīnī: His hadith are sound. He had a great reputation in Medina. Hishām b. 'Urwa's objection to him is no argument against him. He may indeed have talked to the latter's wife when he was a young man. His veracity in hadith is self-evident. I know only of two that are rejected as unsupported1 which no other writer reported.
al-'Ijī: Trustworthy.
Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal: Excellent in tradition.

(b) The writer then goes on to state all that has been said against I.I. Omitting details of little significance we are left with the following charges which I. Sayyidu'l-Nās goes on to discuss and refute. Muhammad b. 'Abdullāh b. Numayr said that when I.I. reported what he had heard from well-known persons his traditions were good and true, but he sometimes reported worthless sayings from unknown people. Yahya b. al-Qattān would never quote him. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal quoted him with approval, and when it was remarked how excellent the stories (qīṣā) were he smiled in surprise. His son admitted that Aḥmad incorporated many of I.I.'s traditions in his Musnad, but he never paid heed to them. When he was asked if his father regarded him as an authority on what a Muslim must or must not do he replied that he did not. He himself would not accept a tradition which only I.I. reported. He used to relate a tradition which he gathered from a number of people without indicating who had contributed its separate parts. I. al-Madīnī said that at times he was 'fairly good'. Aḥmad b. Maymūn reported that I. Ma'in 156–213 said he was 'weak', but others denied that he said so. Al-Dārāqūnī said he was trustworthy but not to be used as an authority in fiqh, like Mālik and others. Al-Nāṣirī said that he was not strong. Al-Dāraraquī said that a tradition from I.I. on the authority of his father was no legal proof: it could be used only to confirm what was already held to be binding. Yahya b. Sa'id said that though he knew I.I. in Kūfah he abandoned him intentionally and never wrote down traditions on his authority. Abū Dā'ud al-Tayyilī (132–203) reported that Ḥambad b. Salima said that unless necessity demanded it he would not hand on a tradition from I.I. When Mālik b. Anas mentioned him he said, 'He is one of the antichrists.' When Ḥishām b. 'Urwa was told that I.I. reported something from Fāṭīma he said, 'the rascal lies; when did he see my wife?'

1 These probably belong to the Sunan.

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When Abdullah b. Aḥmad told his father of this he said that this was not to be held against I.I.; he thought that he might well have received permission to interview her, but he did not know. He added that Mālik was a liar. I. Idris said that he talked to Mālik about the Maghāzī and how I.I. had said that he was their surgeon and he said, 'We drove him from Medina'. Mālik b. Ibrāhīm said that he attended lectures of his; he used to dye his hair. When he mentioned traditions about the divine attributes he left him and never went back. On another occasion he said that when he left him he had attended twelve lectures of his in Bay.

Al-Mufaḍḍal b. Ghassān said that he was present when Yazīd b. Hārūn was relating traditions in al-Baqī' when a number of Medinans were listening. When he mentioned I.I. they withdrew saying: 'Don't tell us anything that he said. We know better than he.' Yazīd went among them, but they would not listen and so he withdrew.

Abū Dā'ud said that he heard Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal say that I.I. was a man with a love of tradition, so that he took other men's writings and incorporated them in his own. Abū 'Abdullāh said that he preferred I.I. to Mūsā b. 'Ubayd b. Rababāh. Aḥmad said that he used to relate traditions as though from a companion without intermediaries, while in Ibrāhīm b. Sa'd's book when there is a tradition he said 'A told me' and when that was not so he said 'A said'.

Abū 'Abdullāh said that I.I. came to Baghdad and paid no attention to those who related hadith from al-Kalbī and others saying that he was no authority. Al-Fallās (d. 249) said that after being with Wāḥib b. Jarīr reading before him the Maghāzī book which his father2 had got from I.I. we met Yahya b. Qātān who said that we had brought a pack of lies from him.

Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal said that in maghāzī and such matters what I.I. said could be written down; but in legal matters further confirmation was necessary. In spite of the large number of traditions without a proper tināa he thought highly of him as long as he said 'A told us', 'B informed me', and 'I heard'. I. Ma'in did not like to use him as an authority in legal matters. Abū Hārūn said that he was weak in tradition yet preferable to Aḥfāl b. Sa'id and his traditions could be written down. Sulaymān al-Tayyī called him a liar and Yahyā b. Qātān said that he could only abandon his hadith to God; he was a liar. When Yahyā asked Wāḥib b. Khalīd what made him think that I.I. was a liar he said that Mālik swore that he was and he gave as his reason Ḥishām b. 'Urwa's oath to that effect. The later's reason was that he reported traditions from his wife Fāṭima.

Abū Bakr al-Khayja said that some authorities accepted his traditions as providing proof for legal precedent while others did not. Among the reasons for rejecting his authority was that he was a Shi'i, that he was said to hold the view that man had free will, and that his tināas were defective. As for his truthfulness, it could not be denied.

2 See No. 8.
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Al-Bukhārī quoted him as an authority and Muslim cited him often. Abū l-Hasan b. al-Qaṭṭān relegated him to the class ‘good’ (ḥasan) because people disputed about him. As to the tradition from Fāṭima, al-Khaṭīb gave us an isnād running back through I. I. and Fāṭima ḥāʾir aṣmāʾ d. Abū Bakr: ‘I heard a woman questioning the prophet and saying, “I have a rival wife and I pretend to be satisfied with what my husband has not in fact given me in order to anger her”. He answered, “He who affects to be satisfied with what he has not been given is like one who dons two false garments”’. Abū l-Hasan said that this was the tradition from Fāṭima which injured I.’s reputation, so that her husband Ḥishām called him a liar. Mālik followed him and others imitated them. However, there are other traditions on her authority.

One cannot but admire the way in which I. Ṣayyidu’l-Nās discusses these attacks on the credibility of our author. He goes at once to the root of the matter and shows what little substance there is in them. Though, like the speakers he criticizes, he tacitly assumes that early writers ought to have furnished their traditions with isnāds which would have met the rigorous demands of later generations who were familiar with a whole sea of spurious traditions fathered on the prophet and his companions, his common sense and fairness would not let him acquiesce in the charge of taddlīs which, by omitting a link in the chain or by citing the original narrator without further ado, automatically invalidated a hadith in later days. Thus he said in effect that though I.’s traditions at times lack complete documentation there is no question of his truthfulness in the subject-matter he reports; and as to the charge of shīrīm and qadarīte leanings, they are valid in another field altogether and have nothing to do with the Sīra. Again, what if Makki b. Ibrāhīm did abandon his lectures when he heard him relate traditions about the divine attributes? Many of the ancients failed to go the whole way when such problems were discussed, so what he says is of little significance.

Yazīd’s story that the Madīnans would not listen to traditions on I.’s authority does not amount to much because he does not tell us why, and so we can resort only to conjecture; and we have no right to impugn a true tradition because of what we think is a defect. We have already explained why Yahyā al-Qaṭṭān would have none of him and called him liar on the authority of Wuhayb from Mālik, and it is not improbable that he was the cause of the Madīnans’ attitude in the foregoing account. Abū b. Ḥanbal and I. al-Madīnī have adequately replied to Ḥishām’s accusation.

As to Nāmirī’s accusation that he related false hadith on the authority of unknown persons, even if his trustworthiness and honesty were not a matter of tradition, suspicion would be divided between him and his informants; but as we know that he is trustworthy the charge lies against the persons unknown, not against him. Similar attacks have been made upon Syūfīn al-Thaurī and others whose hadith differ greatly in this way what they base on unknown informants is to be rejected while that coming from known people is accepted. Syūfīn b. ’Uyya’na gave up Jarīr al-Ju’fī after he had heard more than a thousand traditions from him, and yet he narrated traditions on his authority. Shu’bā related many traditions from him and others who were stigmatized as ‘weak’.

As to Ḥāmīd’s complaint that he recorded composite traditions without assigning the matter of them to the several contributors, their words agreed however many they were; and even if they did not yet the meaning was identical. There is a tradition that Wāḥīl b. al-Asqā’ said: ‘If I give you the meaning of a tradition (not in the precise words that were used) that is sufficient for you.’ Moreover, Muhammad b. Sirīn said that he used to hear traditions from ten different people in ten different words with the same meaning. Ḥāmīd’s complaint that I. took other men’s writings and incorporated them in his own account cannot be regarded as serious until it can be proved that he had no licence to repeat them. One must look at the method of transmission: if the words do not plainly necessitate an oral communication, then the accusation of taddlīs lies. But we ought not to accept such a charge unless the words plainly imply that. If he expressly says that he heard people say something when in fact he did not, that is a downright lie and pure invention. It is quite wrong to say such a thing of I. unless the words leave no other choice.2 When Ḥāmīd’s son quoted his father as saying that I. was not to be regarded as an authority in legal matters though he saw how tolerant he was to non-legal matters which make up the greater part of the Maghāzī and the prophetic biography, he applied this adverse judgement on untrained to other matters. Such an extension is excluded by his truthful reputation.

As to Ṣayyidu’l-Nās’s saying that he was trustworthy but not authoritative in legal matters, it is sufficient for us that he is pronounced trustworthy. If only men like al-’Umarī and Mālik were acceptable there would be precious few acceptable authorities! Yahyā b. Sa’īd probably blindly followed Mālik because he heard from him what Ḥishām had said about I. His refusal to accept him as an authority in legal matters has already been dealt with under Ḥāmīd. Yahyā made no distinction between them and other traditions in the way of complete acceptance or downright rejection.

Other attacks on his reputation rest on points that are not explained and for the most part the agents are unfair. Even in legal matters Abū ʿĪsā al-Tirmīdī and Abū Ḥātim b. Ḥibbān (d. 354) accepted him as an authority.

The refutation of his opponents would not have been undertaken were it not for the favourable verdict and praise that the learned gave him. But for that a few of the charges would have sufficed to undermine his

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1 The meaning of this technical term is clear from the context. Wir’s falsche Namen unterscheiden is not strictly correct.
2 The discussion of I.’s dislike of al-Kalbī’s traditions is unimportant and is therefore omitted here.
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stories, since but a few attacks on a man's good faith, explicit or not, are enough to destroy the reputation of one whose former circumstances are not known when an impartial critic has not done him justice.

In his book about trustworthy narrators Abū Ḥātim said that the two men who attacked I.I. were Hīshām and Mālik. The former denied that he had heard traditions from Fātimah. But what he said does not impugn men's veracity in hadith, for 'followers' like al-Aswad and 'Alqama heard 'Aisha's voice without seeing her. Similarly I.I. used to hear Fātimah when the curtain was let down between them. As for Mālik, what he said was momentary and afterwards he did him justice. Nobody in the Hijra knew more about genealogies and wars than I.I., and he used to say that Mālik was a freed slave of Dhū Asbah while Mālik alleged that he was a full member of the tribe so that there was bad feeling between them; and when Mālik compiled the Miwattā I.I. said, 'Bring it to me for I am its veterinary surgeon.' Hearing of this Mālik said: 'He is an antichrist; he reports traditions on the authority of the Jews.' The quarrel lasted until I.I. decided to go to Iraq. Then they were reconciled and Mālik gave him 50 dinars and half the date crop as a parting gift. Mālik did not intend to bring him into ill favour as a traditionalist: all that he disliked was his following the Jews who had become Muslims and learning the story of Khaybar and Qurayṣa and al-Nadhir and similar (otherwise) unattested happenings from their fathers. In his Maghāzī I.I. used to learn from them but without necessarily asserting that their report was the truth. Mālik himself only relied on trustworthy truthful men.

The author ends by remarking that I.I. was not the originator of the challenge to Mālik's Arab ancestry because al-Zuhri and others had said the same thing.

The Translation

I have endeavoured to follow the text as closely as possible without sacrificing English idiom. In rendering poetry I have tried to give the sense without making any attempt at versifying, the only exceptions being doggerel and *ṣaj*. In these cases it seemed that it was fair to reproduce doggerel by doggerel and to try to put poor rhymes into rhymes that could not be worse. Inevitably some exactness is lost, but the general sense and tone are more faithfully reproduced in that way.

The book is very long and I have made a few cuts where no loss can result; e.g. I.H.'s recurring formula 'This verse occurs in an ode of his' I have excluded because it is obvious that the line, which is generally one of his *ṣawāḥiḥ*, cannot have stood by itself. Again I have shortened dialogues in *oratio recta* into indirect speech in accordance with English practice unless the *ipsissima verba* of the speaker seemed called for naturally.

1 For further discussion and exhaustive references to these and later writers see Fück, ch. 2.

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or are in themselves important. Lastly I have omitted genealogical formulae after the first mention of the people concerned.

My predecessors in translating the *Sīra* have made many mistakes and I cannot hope to have escaped all the pitfalls. Of Weil's translation, now nearly a century old, it may be remembered, Nöldeke wrote: 'Die Übersetzung von G. Weil, Stuttgart, 1864 ist stetl und unbeholfen, und auch philologisch nicht mehr genügend. Die grosse Wichtigkeit des Werkes würde eine neue Übertragung rechtfertigen; while Wellhausen's translation of al-Wāqī Qībū the difficulties of the text by silence. The poetry of the *Sīra*, as Nöldeke said long ago of the poetry on Bād, 'is not easy to translate because of its many synonyms; the superficial commentary of Abū Dharr is no help at all'.

The Text

I have followed the pagination of the excellent textus receptus of Wüstenfeld's edition 1858-60; but the text I have actually used is the Cairo edition of 1355/1937 produced in four parts by Muṣṭafā al-Saqqā, Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī, and 'Abdul-'Haṣīf Shālahī which prints at the bottom of the page most of the notes from Abū Dharr and Suhaylī that W. relegated to the second volume of his altogether admirable edition. For this reason it is much easier to use and its fine bold type is kind to one's eyes. When I have had occasion to refer to differences between the texts they are marked C. and W.

THE EDITOR IBN HĪSHĀM

'Abdul-Malik b. Hīshām was born in Basra and died at Fustat in Egypt in 218 or 213. Krenkow, however, thinks that he must have died some years later. Besides editing the present work he made use of I.H.'s learning in his *K. al-Tijān* which derives from Wāḥib b. Munabbih. The principles which guided him in his impertinent meddling with his predecessor's work he has outlined in his Introduction, and they need not be repeated here. He was a philologist of some repute, and he was able to use his knowledge in the *ṣawāḥiḥ* he produces to illustrate the meaning of unusual words. These lines, divorced as they are from their context, form some of the most difficult of all the difficulties of the *Sīra* and are of course for the most part unnecessary now that the Arabs have produced lexicons of their language. Occasionally he is helpful with his genealogical notes; more rarely he has something useful to say about the interpretation of a line in I.H.'s work.

Suhaylī gives some traditions which I.H. omitted or knew nothing of, e.g. W. 183 = Suhayli 183; W. 327 = S. ii. 2 f. He also (i. 278 = W. 824) draws attention to a mistake in one of I.H.'s notes saying that the fault is either his or al-Bakṭā's because Yūnus has the right reading.

1 G.Q. 130. 2 Z.A. xxvii. 161. 3 Is. Cult. ii. 231.
Probably the fault lay with I.H., for he was in touch with Yûnûs as he says "fit mà akhbaratì Yûnûs" on p. 387.

Another error of his is the statement that I.I. said nothing about the mission of Abu b. Umayya whom the prophet sent to kill Abû Sufyân b. Harb and how he took down the corpse of Khubayyf from the cross to which he was tied (p. 393). T. records I.I.'s version of this story which is far superior to the garbled version of I.H., who is obviously composing a story from more than one source, passing clumsily from the first to the third person. According to him 'Amr threw the cross (presumably with the body on it) into a ravine. The cross (khashaba, a sturdy trunk of a tree capable of bearing a man's body) could hardly have been moved by one man more than a few yards with guards standing by, and I.I.'s own account is much more convincing. 'Amr released the body from the tree, carried it some forty paces—a graphic detail—heard the guards coming after him, dropped the body with a thud, and made off as fast as he could.

There is an interesting note in S. ii. 363 which shows that I.H.'s error was perceived in early days. He writes that at this point the story of the Mulsam of Abu Shayba to the effect that when they untied him from the cross the earth swallowed him up. One might well suppose that I.H.'s story lies midway between the actual facts and this incredible fiction. The unfortunate man's body which 'Amr had made a gallant but unavailing attempt to retrieve was dumped unceremoniously on the ground; the next step was to give it the semblance of burial in a natural hole in the wall of the wadi; the last step was to provide for proper burial by a miracle.1

What remains to be explained is why I.H. should assert that I.I. had said nothing about the abortive attempt to assassinate Abû Sufyân and the equally unsuccessful effort to recover Khubayyf's body. If I.I. said nothing at all about either matter, how came it that I.H. dealt with them? Since we know that I.I. reported what had happened from traditions that were transmitted by 'Amr's own family and that they existed in oral and written form for centuries afterwards, we cannot but suspect that I.H. has tampered with the evidence.

Perhaps his greatest service is his critical observations on the authenticity of the poetry of the Sîra, not only when he records that all, or some, authorities reject certain poems altogether but also when he corrects I.I., and assigns verses to their true author.2 Suyûtî thought highly of him. He reported that Abu Dharr had said that I.H. produced one of the four compendia which were better than their sources.3

Suhaylî states that I.H. wrote a treatise explaining the difficult words in the poetry of the Sîra. Suhaylî's words indicate that he had not himself seen the book. Were it ever found it might well tell us what I.I.'s generation really thought about these poems.

A FRAGMENT OF THE LOST BOOK OF MÛSĀ B. ÚQBA

This fragment consists of twenty extracts complete with their insāds, some being the sayings of the prophet on a given occasion, others being stories from his life. The collector expressly asserts that the original work existed in ten parts, so that the inference that the book once contained a complete account of the Sîra seems fairly safe. The last item is spurious.4 There is an ijtâ' reaching from Mûsâ (141) to the epitomizer Abu Hurayra b. Muhammad b. al-Naqqâsh (782).

1. I. Shihâb from Sâlim b. 'Abdullah from 'Abdullah b. 'Umar: I heard the Apostle say, 'While I was asleep I dreamed that I was going round the Ka'bah when lo a man with lank hair between the two men, his head dripping with water. When I asked who it was they said 'Isâ b. Maryam. Then I turned away when lo a red man, heavy, with curly hair, one eyed; it seemed as though his eye was a grape swimming (in water). When I asked who it was they said 'The Antichrist. The man most like him is Ibn Qâtan al-Khuza'î.'

This tradition is similarly reported in Bukhârî ii. 368. 19–369. 4. It should be compared with I.I. 269, also from al-Zuhîr, where the prophet is said to have seen Isâ during his miraj, with moles or freckles on his face appearing like drops of water. The reference here to the 'two men' presumably refers to the two thieves on the cross.

2. Ibn Shihâb: The first to hold Friday prayers for the Muslims in Medina before the apostle was Muṣ'ab b. 'Umayr. I. Shihâb tells us another tradition from Surâqa contradicting this. The first statement agrees with I.S. iii. 1. 83. 25; the second apparently with I.I. 390. 5 and I.S. iii. 1. 84.

3. 'Abdu'l-Raḥmân b. Mâlik b. Ju'shum al-Mudlîjî from his father Mâlik from his brother Surâqa b. Ju'shum: When the apostle went out from Mecca migrating to Medina Quraysh offered a reward of 100 camels to anyone who would bring him back, &c., down to 'my arms to the apostle'.

This passage is in all essential respects the same as I.I. 331–2, though there are many verbal differences. Obviously the version in I.I. has been touched up and Mûsâ gives the tradition in its simplest form. Cf. Bukhârî iii. 39. 41 and Wâqîdî (Wellh. 374).

1 See Sachau, 461 f.
4. I. Shihāb alleged that 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr said that al-Zubayr met the apostle with a caravan of Muslims who were returning to Mecca from a trading journey to Syria. They bartered some goods with the apostle and al-Zubayr gave him and Abū Bakr some white garments.

So Bukh. iii. 42. Different names in I.S. iii. i. 153-19.

5. Nāfi' from 'Abdullah b. 'Umar: Some of the apostle's companions said to him, 'Are you speaking to dead men?' He answered, 'You cannot hear what I say better than they.'

So Bukh. iii. 70. 17, 18, and cf. I.L., pp. 453 f., where the words of 'Ā'isha are quoted to refute the statement that the dead hear: they know but they do not hear.

6. I. Shihāb from Anas b. Mālik: Some Anṣār asked the apostle's permission to remit to their sister's son 'Abbās his ransom, and he replied, 'No, by Allah, you shall not let him off a single farthing!'

So Bukh. iii. 69. 1, 2 and cf. T. 1341, I.Qut. Ma'ārif, 77. Sachau in finding strange the claim to relationship between 'Abbās and the Anṣār seems to have forgotten that the grandmother of 'Abbās was Salma d. 'Amm al-Khażrajj. Cf. Bukh. ii. 368. 18 f. for the same claim.

7. I. Shihāb from 'Abdu'l-Raḥmān b. Ka'b b. Mālik al-Sulaimān and other traditionists: 'Āmir b. Mālik b. Ja'far, who was called 'the player with the spears', came to the apostle when he was a polytheist and the apostle explained Islam to him and he refused to accept it. He gave the apostle a present, but he refused it saying that he would not accept a present from a polytheist, 'Āmir said: 'O apostle, send me with those of your messengers you wish and I will be sure for them.' So the apostle sent a number among whom were al-Mundhir b. 'Amr al-Sa'di, of whom it was said 'he hastened to his death', as a spy among the Najd folk. When 'Āmir b. Tufayl heard about them he tried to call out B. 'Āmir against them, but they refused to obey him in violating the promise of security given by 'Āmir b. Mālik. Then he appealed to B. Sulaym and they joined him and killed them in B.'īr Ma'ūna except 'Amr b. Umayya al-Dāmrī whom 'Āmir b. al-Tufayl captured and afterwards released. When he came to the apostle the latter said to him, 'Are you the sole survivor?'

This is a much briefer account than that given in I.H. 648 f. Cf. T. 1443 f.; Waq. (Well) 337 f.

8. Ismā'il b. Ibrāhīm b. Uqba from Sālim b. 'Abdullah from 'Abdullah b. 'Umar: Some men contested the leadership of Usāma, and the apostle rose and said: 'If you contest the leadership of Usāma you used to contest the leadership of his father before him. By Allah he was worthy to be leader. He was one of the dearest of all men to me, and this man (his son)

1 As I.L. has al-Mu'nīq Bāyāmat I think that Sachau's diniq itamāt, following the MS., must be read dinaq itamāt. Cf. I. al-Athūr's Nihāya (quoted by Sachau).

9. Sālim b. 'Abdullah from 'Abdullah b. 'Umar: The apostle used not to make an exception for Fāṭima.

Sachau explains this from Bukh. ii. 441 and iii. 145 where Muhammad says that if Fāṭima were to steal he would cut her hand off.

10. 'Abdullah b. Faḍl from Anas b. Mālik: I grieved over my people who were killed in the Ḥarām. Then Zayd b. Arqa'm (d. 68) wrote to me when he heard of my great grief to say that he had heard the apostle say 'O God forgive the Anṣār and their sons and we implore Thy grace on their grandsons'.


11. 'Abdullah b. Faḍl: Some men who were with him (Anas) asked him about Zayd b. Arqa'm and he said, 'It is he of whom the apostle said, 'This is he on whom Allah has bestowed much through his ear'.'

He had been an informer, cf. I.H. 726. In place of 'aʃfa'llāhu lahu bi-udhmīhi I.H. 727. 17 has 'aʃfa mīlaṭa bi-udhmīhi. It seems much more likely that the variant is due to misreading than to oral tradition. Waq. (B.M. MS. 1617, p. 95c) has 'aʃfa udmikwa ... wa-ṣaadqa lahu hadithak.

12. I. Shihāb from Sa'id b. al-Musayyib from 'Abdullah b. Ka'b b. Mālik: The apostle said that day to Bilāl, 'Get up and announce that only a believer will enter paradise, and that God will not support His religion by an evil man.' This happened when the man whom the apostle said was one of the inhabitants of hell was mentioned.

13. From Nāfi' b. 'Abdullah b. 'Umar: After the conquest of Khaybar the Jews asked the apostle to let them stay there on condition that they worked the land for half the date crop. He said: 'We will allow you to do so on that condition so long as we wish, and they remained there thus until 'Umar expelled them. [Here six or seven words are missing] saying 'The apostle laid down three things in his last disposition, viz. that the Ruhāwīn, Dārīyūn, Sabā'yūn, and Ash'ārīyūn should have land which produced a hundred loads; that the mission of Usāma b. Zayd should be carried through; and that two different religions should not be allowed to remain in the peninsula of the Arabs.'

Practically the same words are used in I.H. 776 except that the Sabā'yūn are not mentioned.

14. Ismā'il as above: 'Umar used not to let Jews, Christians, and Magians remain more than three days in Medina to do their business, and he used to say 'Two religions cannot subsist together' and he exiled Jews and Christians from the peninsula of the Arabs.

15. I. Shihāb from 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr from Marwān b. al-Hakam and...
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al-Miswar b. Makhrama: When the apostle gave men permission to free the Hawazin captives he said, 'I do not know who has or has not given you permission, so go back until your leaders bring us a report of your affairs.' So the men returned and their leaders instructed them and they returned to the apostle and told him that the men (Muhammad's companions) had treated them kindly and given them permission (to recover their captive people).

For the context see I.H. 877.

16. I. Shihāb from Sa‘d b. al-Musayyib and ‘Urwa b. al-Zubayr: The captives of Hawazin whom the apostle returned were 6,000 men, women, and children. He gave some women who had fallen to some men of Quraysh—among whom were ‘Abdu‘l-Rahmān b. ‘Auf and ‘Affān b. Umayya who had appropriated two women as concubines—the choice (of returning or remaining) and they elected to go back to their own people.

Cf. Wāq. (W.) 375.

17. Ismā‘īl b. Ibrāhīm b. ‘Uqba from his uncle Mūsā b. ‘Uqba from I. Shihāb: The apostle made the pilgrimage of completion in A.H. 10. He showed the men the rites and addressed them in ‘Arafah sitting on his camel al-Jad‘ā’.

Cf. I.H. 968 and Wāq. 430.

18. I. Shihāb from ‘Urwa b. al-Zubayr from al-Miswar b. Makhrama from ‘Amr b. ‘Auf, an ally of B. ‘Āmir b. Lu‘ayy who had been at Bād‘r with the apostle: The apostle sent Abū‘l-Ubayda b. al-Jarrāḥ to bring the poll tax. He had made peace with the people of al-Bahrān and set over them al-‘Ala‘ b. al-Haḍrami. When Abū‘l-Ubayda came from al-Bahrān with the money the Anṣār heard of his coming which coincided with the apostle’s morning prayer. When they saw him they stood in his way. Seeing them he smiled and said: 'I think you have heard of the coming of Abū ‘Ubayda and that he has brought something.' When they agreed he added: ‘Rejoice and hope for what will gladden you. By Allah it is not poverty that I fear on your account. I fear that you will become too comfortable and will be led astray like those before you.'

So Buḥk. iii. 68. 18 f.

19. Sa‘d b. Ibrāhīm from Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abdu‘l-Rahmān b. ‘Auf: ‘Abdu‘l-Rahmān b. ‘Auf was with ‘Umar one day and he (the former) broke al-Zubayr’s sword. But God knows best who broke it. Then Abū Bakr got up and addressed the people excusing himself and saying, ‘Never for a moment was I eager for authority (imāra) nor did I want it or pray to God for it secretly or publicly. But I was afraid of disorder. I take no pleasure in authority. I have been invested with a grave matter for which I have not the strength and can only cope with it if God gives me the strength. I would that he who has the most strength for it were in my place.’ The emigrants accepted his excuse and Ali al-Zubayr b.

al-Awwām said: ‘We were angry only because we were not admitted to the council and we think that Abū Bakr is the most worthy of supreme authority now that the apostle is dead. He was the one with the apostle in the cave and we recognize his dignity and seniority; and the apostle put him in charge of the prayers while he was still with us.’

A few comments on this brief anthology will not be out of place here. No. 12 clearly deals with the vexed question of the future state of the wicked Muslim, while No. 18 is a post eventum prophecy. Inevitably they arouse doubt in the mind of the reader.

From this selection as a whole we can see where the sympathies of the collector lay. Thus, al-Zubayr’s generosity to Muhammad and Abū Bakr are recorded in No. 4. The claims of the Alids to special consideration are brushed aside in No. 9; while No. 19 states that ‘Ali explicitly accepted Abū Bakr as Muhammad’s successor. No. 6 shows that al-‘Abbās had to pay his ransom in full even when the Anṣār pleaded for his exemption. No. 10 mourns the victims of the Umayyads at al-Harrā and records that the prophet implored God’s blessing on them and their grandchildren.

Clearly Mūsā’s sympathies lay with the family of al-Zubayr and the Anṣār. They alone emerge with credit. The Alids, on the other hand, are no better than anyone else; the Umayyads are implicitly condemned for the slaughter at al-Harra; and al-‘Abbās is shown to have been a rebel against the prophet who was forced to pay for his opposition to him to the uttermost farthing.

Mūsā b. ‘Uqba has said pretty much the same on the subject of the Anṣār and al-‘Abbās as I.I. said before his editor I.H. pruned his work, though he took a different view of the Alids.1

1 v.l.