

Khabbāb b. al-Aratt, Abū ʿAbd Allāh or Abū Yaḥyā or Abū Muḥammad or Abū ʿAbd Rabbihi, a Companion of the Prophet. Tradition is not unanimous about his origin. Some reports state that his father was captured in a raid launched by the Rabīʿa in the Sawād, sent to Mecca and sold as a slave to Sibāʿ b. ʿAbd al-ʿUzzā al-Khuzāʿī, a confederate (*ḥalīf*) of the Banū Zuhra; Sibāʿ (who was later killed by Ḥamza in the battle of Uḥud) gave him as a gift to his daughter Umm Anmār who freed him. In a tradition attributed to ʿAlī he is said to have been the first of the *Nabaṭ* to embrace Islam. Other traditions claim that the mother of Khabbāb, a professional circumciser, also gave birth to Sibāʿ; it is for this reason that Ḥamza when killing Sibāʿ, shouted to him “O son of the woman cutting the clitoris”. By virtue of this kinship, Khabbāb claimed to be a confederate of the Zuhra in Mecca. Some reports say that his father was from Kaskar or from the vicinity of al-Kūfa. A quite different tradition states that al-Aratt was a Tamīmī, of the Banū Saʿd, who was captured in a raid and sold in Mecca to Umm Anmār al-Khuzāʿīyya who freed him. This version, adopted by his descendants, gives his pedigree as follows: Khabbāb b. al-Aratt b. Djandala b. Saʿd b. Khuzayma b. Kaʿb b. Saʿd from Tamīm. Another account records that Khabbāb was a freed slave (*mawlā*) of Thābit b. Umm Anmār; Thābit, these sources claim, was a *mawlā* of al-Akhnas b. Sharīḳ Thaḳafī, who in his turn was a confederate of the Zuhra. These contradictory traditions do not help to establish exactly his origin and his position in Mecca, but he must have been of a very low status, as he was doubly dependent, being a *mawlā* of a family which was in turn in a relation of dependence as confederates of the tribal group of Zuhra. Khabbāb himself was a blacksmith, a profession regarded as base in Mecca and in the Arab peninsula in general. The tradition of his Sawādī origin seems preferable because of his father's incorrect Arabic speech, which is indicated by his nickname *al-Aratt*; this would seem to point to Arabic not being his native language, and he probably spoke Nabataean, sc. neo-Aramaic. Although a *mawlā*, Khabbāb

apparently acquired some influence in the Khuzāʿī family of his master. It was he who promoted the plan that the family of Sibāʿ should join the Zuhri ʿAwf b. ʿAbd ʿAwf (the family of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAwf) as confederates and he indeed succeeded in carrying out his plan.

Khabbāb was one of the earliest converts to Islam. He is usually mentioned as the sixth or the seventh man who embraced Islam. A unique tradition granting him an usually high position in Islam says that he was the first man who embraced Islam.

Khabbāb is recorded as one of “the weak ones” in Mecca. Lacking any protection (*manaʿa*), he was exposed to persecution and cruel torture. The noble Qurashīs and leaders of tribes used to mock the Prophet when they saw him in the company of Khabbāb and other poor men, and some verses in the Qurʾān were revealed to the Prophet in this connection. It is said that Khabbāb was attached to the Prophet and heard some chapters of the Qurʾān from his mouth, and that he witnessed the conversion of ʿUmar to Islam when present in the house of ʿUmar's sister, reading chapters from the Qurʾān.

Having left Mecca as a *muhājir*, Khabbāb dwelt in Medina together with al-Miḥdād b. ʿAmr in the house of Kulthūm b. Hidm; after the death of the latter they moved into the house of Saʿd b. ʿUbāda. In some sources, Khabbāb is included in the list of the *Aṣḥāb al-Ṣuffa*. The Prophet set up the relation of brotherhood between Khabbāb and Djabr b. ʿAtīk. Khabbāb participated in the battle of Badr and was entrusted with the division of the spoils. Tradition usually adds that he took part in all the other battles of the Prophet: he is, however, not mentioned in the list of warriors recorded in the stories of the battles.

No details are available about the vicissitudes of his life during the caliphates of Abū Bakr and ʿUmar. ʿUthmān granted him possession of Ṣaʿnabā or Istīniyā in the vicinity of al-Kūfa and he settled in al-Kūfa. Shīʿī traditions claim that he took part in the battle of Ṣiffīn and Nahrawān; some Shīʿī sources mention that he signed the document of arbitration at Ṣiffīn.

Khabbāb died in 37 AH (or 39) at the age of 63 (or 73) as a rich man, leaving about 40,000 dirham in cash. He regretted before his death that he had accumulated wealth; he was afraid lest he might have forfeited his reward in the next world, as he had received it already in this world. Khabbāb gave orders that he should be buried outside al-Kūfa, thus initiating a change in the then custom of burying the dead in their own houses. ʿAlī is said to have prayed over his grave when he returned from the battle of Ṣiffīn. He transmitted 32 utterances of the Prophet, some of which were recorded in the canonical collections of *ḥadīth*, and some traditions of the Prophet were transmitted by his daughter. A son, ʿAbd Allāh, was cruelly killed by the Khawāridj.

(M. J. Kister)

Bibliography

Ibn Hishām, *Sīra al-nabawiyya*, Cairo 1355/1936, i, 271, 368-370, 383, ii, 337

Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt*, Beirut 1377/1957, iii, 164-7, v, 245

al-Wāqidi, *al-Maghāzī*, ed. M. Jones, London 1966, i, 100, 155

al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥamīdullāh, Cairo 1959, i, index

idem, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, Beirut 1377/1958, 381-2

al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, index

- idem, *al-Muntakhab min kitāb dhayl al-mudhaysal*, Cairo 1358/1939, 57
- Khalīfa b. Khayyāt, *al-Ṭabaḳāt*, ed. Akram Ḍiyā' al-ʿUmarī, Baghdad 1387/1967, 17, 126
- idem, *Ta'rikh*, ed. Akram Ḍiyā' al-Dīn al-ʿUmarī, Baghdad 1386/1967, index
- Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb, *al-Munammaḳ*, ed. Kh. A. Fāriḳ, Hyderabad 1384/1964, 294/295
- idem, *al-Muḥabbar*, ed. Lichtenstaedter, Hyderabad 1361/1942, 288
- al-Minḳarī, *Waḳ'at Ṣiffīn*, Cairo 1382, 506, 530
- Ibn Ḳutayba, *al-Ma'ārif*, ed. al-Ṣāwī, repr. Beirut 1390/1970, 138
- ʿAbd Allah b. al-Mubārak, *Kitāb al-zuhd wa'l-raḳā'ik*, ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-A'zamī, Malegaon 1385/1966, 183-4
- Ṭayālīsī, *al-Musnad*, Hyderabad 1321, 141-2
- Muḳātil, *Tafsīr*, Ms. Top Kapu Saray, Ahmet III, 74, ii, fols. 43b, 165b, 224b
- al-Wāḥidī, *Asbāb al-nuzūl*, Cairo 1388/1968, 146, 251
- al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, Hyderabad 1342, 381/383
- al-Mas'ūdī, *al-Tanbīh wa'l-ishrāf*, ed. al-Ṣāwī, Cairo 1357/1938, 199 (quoted by Mughultāy, *al-Zabr al-bāsim*, Ms. Leiden Or. 370, fol. 118a)
- Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣfahānī, *Ḥilyat al-awliyā'*, Cairo 1351/1932, i, 143-7, 359-60
- al-Kalā'ī, *al-Iktifā'*, Cairo 1387/1968, i, 336
- Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *al-Istī'āb*, Cairo 1380/1960, 437-9, no. 628

- Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, *ʿUyūn al-at̤har*, Cairo 1356, i, 272
- Ibn Ḥazm, *Djawāmiʿ al-sīra*, ed. I. ʿAbbās, N. Asad, Shākir, Cairo, n.d., index
- Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya waʿl-nibāya*, Beirut – al-Riyāḍ 1966, vii, 288
- idem, *Sīra al-nabawiyya*, Cairo 1384/1964, i, 496-7
- idem, *Shamāʿil al-rasūl*, Cairo 1386/1967, 358
- al-Bayhaḳī, *Dalāʿil al-nubuwwa*, Medina 1389/1969, i, 425, ii, 57
- Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Bayhaḳī, *al-Maḥāsin waʿl-masāwī*, Cairo 1380/1961, i, 109-11
- al-Haythamī, *Madjmaʿ al-zawāʿid*, Beirut 1967, ix, 298-9
- al-Māwardī, *Aʿlām al-nubuwwa*, Cairo 1319, 77
- Ibn Abī ʿl-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ nahḍj al-balāgha*, Cairo 1964, xviii, 171-2
- Muḥammad b. Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Dimashḳī, *Djāmiʿ al-āthār*, Ms. Cambridge Or. 913, fol. 339a
- al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, Cairo 1957, ii, 234-5
- idem, *Taʿrīkh al-islām*, Cairo 1367, ii, 175-6
- al-Kāzarūnī, *al-Sīra al-nabawiyya*, Ms. Br. Mus. Add. 18499, fol. 106a
- Ibn Ḥadjar, *Tahdhīb al-tahdhīb*, Hyderabad 1325, iii, 133-4, no. 254
- idem, *al-Iṣāba*, Cairo 1325/1907, ii, 101, no. 2206
- al-Fāsī, *al-Ṭḳd al-t̤hamīn*, Cairo 1384/1965, iv, 300-3, No. 1119

al-Suyūṭī, *al-Khaṣā'is al-kubrā*, Cairo 1386/1967, ii, 262

ʿAlī b. Burhān Dīn, *al-Sīra al-ḥalabiyya*, Cairo 1351/1932, i, 355

Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi, *al-Ṭiqd al-farīd*, ed. Aḥmad Amīn *et alii*, Cairo 1368/1949, iii, 238

al-Muttaḳī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿummāl*, Hyderabad 1388/1968, xv, 343, no. 941

al-Maḍjīsī, *Bihār al-anwār*, Tehran 1270, viii, 728

al-Nabulūsī, *Dhakhā'ir al-mawāriṭh*, Cairo 1352/1934, i, 200-2, nos. 1811-20

al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾriḫ*, Nadjaf 1384/1964, ii, 22

Ibn Bābūya al-Ḳummī, *Kitāb al-khiṣāl*, Tehran 1389, 312

Yāḳūt, *Muʿdjam al-buldān*, s.v. *Ṣaʿnabā* and *Istīniyā*

W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, Oxford 1953, index.

[Print Version: Volume IV, page 896, column 2]

Citation:

Kister, M. J. "Khabbāb b. al-Aratt, Abū ʿAbd Allāh or Abū Yahyā or Abū Muḥammad or Abū ʿAbd Rabbihi." *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*. Edited by: P. Bearman; Th. Bianquis; C. E. Bosworth; E. van Donzel; and W. P. Heinrichs.