THE CROWNS OF THIS COMMUNITY... SOME NOTES ON THE TURBAN IN THE MUSLIM TRADITION

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I

The tradition recorded in Nabia Abbot's Studies in Arabic Papyri II was only conjecturally read by the author: balaghāna anna rasūla llāhi šallā llāhu 'ala'yhi wa-sallama qāla: tijānu hādhīhi l-ummati l-`amalu [ ] yaqūluhā fī l-`idāyni wa-yauma l-jum`ātī.

Professor Abbot described the papyrus as a document written in the late second century of the hijra; she assumed that the author of the papyrus was Qutayba b. Sa`id al-Balkhī (d. 240/854).

This partly deciphered statement, attributed to the Prophet and transmitted in various versions in the compendia of hadith, is often coupled with two or three additional statements ascribed to the Prophet. The first phrase of the combined statement, often quoted separately, and provided with explanations and comments, was transmitted in a concise form: al-`amā`imu tijānu l-`arabi, "The turbans are the crowns of the Arabs." This seems to be with all probability the correct reading of...
the short phrase of the tradition, as given in the papyrus: *tiyānu hādhihi l-ummati l-ʿamāʿimu,* “The crowns of this people are the turbans.”

This statement is attributed in several early sources to ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. It is recorded in Mughultāy’s *al-Zahr al-bāsim* and is attributed to ʿAli b. Abī Ṭālīb, though Mughultāy mentions that it was attributed to the Prophet as well.

This notion of equating turbans with crowns was rooted in the society of the Arab peninsula in the period of the Jahiliyya. Wearing a turban implied strength and honour, symbolized the authority of a clan or tribal group and reflected high military position and leadership. *Muʿammam* or *muʿaṣṣab,* “dressed in a turban,” referred to a man appointed as chief of his people. It corresponds to the expressions *tuwwija,* “he was crowned,” or *suwwida,* “he was granted the control of a tribal group,” which are used regarding the non-Arabs. The expression *al-muʿammam* also entailed the responsibility of the appointed chief: every offense committed by a member of the tribe was figuratively fastened to his turban; he was responsible for the evil deeds of the members of his clan or tribe. Before the advent of Islam, only the Arabs (i.e., the tribal society of the Arab peninsula-k) wore turbans, the crowns of the Arabs. The Bedouin provenance of the above statement—“The Crowns of the Arabs” is clearly reflected in ʿAli b. ʿĀmīd al-ʿAzīzī’s explanation of the tradition: “The turbans are like the crowns for the kings of the Arabs, because the majority of the Arabs (i.e., the Bedouins-k) and bareheaded and turbans are scarce among them.”

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9 ʿAbb b. Ṭahmāb al-ʿĀzīzī, *al-Sirāj al-munīrūn,* sharīḥ ʿalā l-jāmīʾ l-ṣaghīr fī ʾaḥādīthī
According to tradition, several eminent persons in Mecca, such as the leaders of tribal clans, attained a conspicuous privilege: when the leader wore a turban of a certain colour, no one else in Mecca had the right to wear one of the same colour. For instance, in the late period of the Jihilliyya, Sa‘id b. al-‘Aṣ b. Umayya who received the sobriquet dhū l-‘imāma was granted such a privilege. According to a verse recorded in Ḥamza al-Īsfahānī’s al-Durra al-fākhirah, a poet praised Sa‘id b. al-‘Aṣ, saying: “When Abū-Uḥayyāḥ, (i.e., Sa‘id b. al-‘Aṣ -k), puts the turban on his head (in his characteristic way -k), any man who imitates him will be beaten, even if he is a man of wealth and [has a] large number” (scil. of relatives and allies).

A tradition recorded by al-Ābī12 provides a vivid description of the rivalry between Sa‘id b. al-‘Aṣ and the renowned warrior who distinguished himself in the battle of al-Fījār, al-Zubayr b. ʿAbd al-Muttalib. Al-Zubayr was the leader of the Ḥāshimī branch of Quraysh in the war of Fījār. He initiated the confederation of the hilf al-fudūl, and was appointed by his father as his heir and trustee and became a mediator in the complicated problems of conflicts and peace making. He was the uncle of the Prophet and was highly respected in Mecca.13 According

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13 For more on him, see: Abū Hilāl al-Ḥasan b. ‘Abdallāh al-‘Askārī, al-Awā’il
to the story recorded by al-Âbi, al-Zubayr b. 'Abd al-Muţţalib returned from a journey in Syria and went to his dwelling. When he lay down, putting his head on the bosom of his maid-servant who combed his hair, he was surprised by her question: "Are you not frightened by the story?" She told him that Sa'îd b. al-'Âs forbade any distinguished Qurashi (al-abţahî -k) to wear a turban (similar to his own -k) on the same day that he wore it. Al-Zubayr, shocked by the news, seized the lock of his hair from the hand of the servant, ordered her to bring him his turban ("the long one"), jumped hastily on the saddled horse and hurriedly traversed the wâdî in order to apprehend Sa'îd b. al-'Âs. When Sa'îd received the news concerning al-Zubayr b. 'Abd al-Muţţalib, he fled in haste to al-Ṭâ'îf.

Since the 'imâma was a symbol of strength and power, apostles, saints and prophets are said to have been granted the privilege of wearing the 'imâma among their insignia. "I was ordered to wear the 'imâma, the sandals, and the seal," said the Prophet.14 According to a tradition recorded by al-Zurqânî, one of the titles of the Prophet mentioned in the Gospel (injîl) was şâhibu l-tâj, which is glossed by the author şâhibu l-'imâma.15

In the traditions concerning the 'imâma, there is an evident tendency to praise the value of Bedouin dress, customs and weapons. The story of the appointment of 'Alî as the head of the expedition against some Arab tribes, reported by Abû 'Ubayda al-Ḫimṣî, contains a peculiar passage concerning the Prophet’s attitude towards the Bedouins. The Prophet dressed 'Alî b. Abî Ṭâlîb in a black 'imâma; he put the (fringes -k) of the 'imâma on his back (or on his shoulder -k) and said: "You should use the Arab spears (i.e., the Bedouin ones -k) and Arab bows (al-qisîyy al-'arabîyya). By the means of these (weapons -k) God will grant victory to your faith (yanâṣurû l-lâhu diyyûna) and will aid you in conquering the lands (wa-yâṣafûu l-lâhu dînâkum)" and will aid you in conquering the lands (wa-yâṣafûu l-lâhu dînâkum).16

(Seventeenth: 1407/1987), 37-38: ... wa-qâla l-zubayru, wa-kâna şâhiba hâdâh l-hîlî ... Ibn Sa'd, al-Ţabagât al-kubrâ (Beirut, 1380/1960), vol. 1, p. 85 inf.: ... wa-qâla 'Abdu l-Muţţalibi fi dâhilâka:

sa-aṣî Žubayrûn in tawâfat manîyyatisa
bi-imâsa kâ ba-yânu wa-bayna bâni 'amri
wa-an yahfaṣi l-hîlî fî lladhî sanna shaykhuha:
wa-lá yulhîdan fihi bi-zulmina wa-lâ ighredi


14 Al-Zurqânî, Sharh 'âlî l-mawâdishi l-laduniyya ii-l-Qaṭṭalînî (Cairo, 1326), vol. 3, p. 135, l. 4.

15 Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalânî, al-Iṣâba fi tamyîsi l-ṣahîba, 'Alî Muḥammad al-Bijâwî,
The debate over the quality of Arab weapons is repeated some seven centuries after the death of the Prophet. According to this report, the people of Khurasan claimed that it is useless to fight with the Arab bow; the most useful and efficient weapon being the Persian bow. People in the border areas of the Muslim empire found the Persian bow incomparable to any other weapon because of its fine quality. A hadith of the Prophet was quoted in order to refute the erroneous opinion as to the preference of the Persian bow; it is, in fact, the hadith quoted in the preceding story with some minor changes.17

The importance of caring for the Bedouins’ welfare is emphasized in the will of ‘Umar, who named the Bedouins “the root of the Arabs and their mainstay.”18 In another letter of ‘Umar, which he sent to the Muslim warriors in Adharbayjan, he summoned them to follow the ways of their ancestor Ismā‘il, to wear the izār, the ridā‘ and the sandals, etc. (Cairo, 1971), vol. 4, p. 25; and see another version, ibid.: The Prophet dressed ‘Alī in an ‘imāma on the day of GhadIr Khumm. See also al-Maqārī, Imlā‘u l-asrā‘ bi-mā li-l-rasūl minā l-anbā‘; wa-l-amwāli wa-l-ḥafadatī wa-l-matā‘, Mahmūd Muḥammad Shākir, ed. (Cairo, 1941), vol. 1, p. 502: The Prophet sent ‘Alī at the head of a troop to Yemen; he took a turban (‘imāma), rolled it two or four times, placed it on a spear and handed it over to ‘Alī as a flag. He then dressed ‘Alī in a black turban, and wound it three times around his head, letting (the fringe of the imāma -k) hang one cubit in front of him and a certain distance (shibr) from behind him. The Prophet then said: “This is the proper way of winding the ‘imāma” (hakadha l-‘imamatu). And see the version recorded in Dhahabī’s Mizān al-‘itīdāl, ‘Alī Muḥammad al-Bījāwī, ed. (Cairo, 1382/1963), vol. 2, pp. 396-7. The Prophet stated that the angels sent by God to aid him on the day of Ḥunayn and on the day of Badr were clad in turbans wound in this fashion. He further remarked that the turbans distinguish between the Muslims and the unbelievers. Glancing at the attending people, the Prophet noticed a man with an Arab bow, and another with a Persian bow. The Prophet recommended the Arab bow and the Arab spears; by these God will aid the believers on Earth. See another version of the story of ‘Alī who was sent by the Prophet on the day of Bi‘r Khumm (the correct name of the place is evidently “GhadIr Khumm” -k) with a group of warriors. The Prophet noticed a man with a Persian bow and another with an Arab bow among the warriors. The Prophet addressed the man with the Persian bow saying: “Throw away this bow, as it is a cursed bow and cursed is the man who carries it. You have to carry the Arab bow.” The Prophet enjoined the use of Arab bows and Arab spears; by these weapons God will strengthen the faith (of Islam -k) and make your grip on the land firm (wa-biha yumakkinu llahu l-bilad), in Abū Dawūd Ṣu‘aymān b. al-Asḥ‘āth al-Sijistānī, al-Ma‘āṣī, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ‘Izzu l-Dīn al-Sayrawānī, ed. (Beirut, 1406/1986), p. 182, no. 28; and see Ibn Abī Hātim, ‘Ilal al-ḥadīth (Cairo, 1343), vol. 1, p. 486, no. 1457.

17 Ibn Taymiyya, Iqtīdā‘u l-sirāṭī l-mustaqīm mukhālafatū ašhā‘ī l-jāhīm, Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fiqī, ed. (Cairo, 1369/1950), p. 140. Note the expression, rimāḥ al-qanā‘ in this version; and see the interesting remark of the editor concerning the need to improve the weapons of the Muslims. Cf. the tradition in al-Bayhaqī’s al-Sunān al-kubrā (Hyderabad, 1355), vol. 10, p. 14-15.

to throw away the trousers (al-sarūwīlāt) and the boots (al-khīfāf), to enjoy (the warmth of) the sun as that of a bath, and to stay away from alien fashions (ziyy al-'ajam) and luxuries (tana‘um). He advised them to live frugally, to gallop on horses and to engage in target practice with arrows.\textsuperscript{19}

The pious among the Umayyad governors demanded justice for the Bedouins. The famous ascetic, ‘Aṭā‘ b. Abī Rabāḥ, a black slave in Mecca, was one of the great scholars widely respected for his knowledge of hadīth and fiqh as well as his integrity. According to a report recorded in the Tadhkira of Ibn Ḥamdūn, ‘Aṭā‘ entered the court of Sulaymān b. ‘Abd al-Malik; when asked about his wishes, he bade the ruler to act according to the will of the Prophet. He asked to give the sons of the Muhājirūn and the sons of the Ānṣār their pay, and to care for the welfare of the desert dwellers (al-bādi‘a), since they are the mainstay (māddatun) of the Arabs. He also requested that Sulaymān alleviate the kharāj tax levied on the dhimmīs, since they help defend the ruler from the Muslim community’s enemies as well as their own. In addition, he asked to extend help to the people of the frontiers (ahl al-thughr), because they serve by defending the community (fa-innahu yudfa‘u bihim an ḥādihi l-‘umma).\textsuperscript{20}

The Prophet is said to have predicted that after his death there will ensue vehement civil wars (fitan) in which the dwellers of the deserts (ahl b-bawādī) will not be wet by the blood of the people nor by the seizing of their possessions.\textsuperscript{21}

The ‘imāma remained a symbol of strength, power, dignity, and honour. “The turban denotes the dignity of the believer and the strength of the Arabs; if they remove their turbans, they will lose their strength.”\textsuperscript{22}

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{19} Al-Bayhaqī, al-Sunan al-kubrā, vol. 10, p. 14 inf.; and see the explanation of some of the expressions in the letter of ‘Umar: al-Sararīnī, Ghīdā‘u l-albāb il-shāri‘ī manṣūmati l-‘ādāb (Cairo, 1326), vol. 2, pp. 280-82; and see another version of this letter in Ibn al-Jauzī, Manāqib amīrī l-mu‘āminīna ‘umara bni l-khaṭṭābī, Zaynab Ibrāhīm al-Qārūt, ed. (Beirut, 1402/1982), 127 inf.-128 sup.


\textsuperscript{22} See al-Māṣwārī, al-Amthāl wa-l-ḥikam, Fu‘ād ‘Abd al-Munīm ʿAḥmad, ed. (al-Dauḥa, 1403/1983), p. 133, no. 554 (197): i‘tammū tazdādū ʿilmān. And see Anonymous, Maḥāsin al-masā‘ī fi manāqib al-Auza‘īr p. 54. (The saying is attributed to al-Auza‘ī). Cf. al-Rāghib al-Isfahānī, Muḥādarât al-udābā‘, vol. 3-4, p. 371 (attributed to the Prophet); al-Nasawi, al-Muṣannaf, I, p. 70 (attributed to the Prophet); another version, ‘ilmān is also recorded). This tradition was considered as “a weak one” by al-Bukhārī, but was considered sound by al-Ḥākim; see the discussion in Zurqānī’s Sharḥ al-mawāhib, vol. 5, p. 14 ll. 8-9. The tradition which claims that believers who
The Bedouin customs were considered worthy of imitation. The Prophet himself is said to have approved of them. Al-Sharīf al-Raḍī quotes the prophetic statements concerning the crowns of the Arabs, coupled with the saying about the fashion of sitting peculiar to the Arabs (scil. the Bedouins -k): *al-iḥtiḥābāʾ ḥiṭān al-ʿarab*. In this style of sitting, the Bedouin places the palms of his hands, or a part of his garment which is fastened to his shoulders, under his thighs while sitting on his heels. This manner of sitting, called *iḥtiḥābāʾ*, corresponds to the way the sedentary people sit, leaning their backs against a wall. A tradition recorded in al-Tirmidhī’s *Aṣāf al-nabi* says that the Prophet used to sit in the mosque in the *iḥtiḥābāʾ* manner.

A widely circulated saying describes the *ʿarab* in the following way: “God distinguished the Bedouins by four (favourable -k) features: the turbans are their crowns, their customary way of sitting (*iḥtiḥābāʾ*) does not require walls, their swords are their clothing (*ṣijānuha*), and poetry is their *dīwān*.” The meaning of the statement *al-suṣyūfuṣ siyānuha* can be gauged from a response given by one of the Shiʿī *imāms*: if a man has no garment (*ṭaḥāb*), but is in the possession of a sword, he is permitted to gird himself with the sword and pray. The same meaning is indicated in a statement of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭalīb: “The sword has the status of a cloth; the prayer of the believer is permitted if he is (merely -k) girded with a sword, except if he finds blood on it.”


23 Al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, *al-Majāzāt al-nabawīyya*, Muḥmūd Muṣṭafā, ed. (Cairo, 1356/1937), pp. 152-3, no. 156; and see Ibn Qutayba, *ʿUyunul akhbār* (Cairo, 1964), vol. 1, p. 300; and see the detailed explanation of this manner of sitting in Lane’s Dictionary, s.v. *Qbh.*

24 Al-Tirmidhī, *Aṣāf al-nabī* (ṣ), Samīḥ ʿAbbās, ed. (Beirut-Cairo, 1405/1985), p. 128, no. 122; and see the description of the *iḥtiḥābāʾ* manner of sitting supplied by the editor.

25 Al-Zamakhsharī, *Rabīʿul l-ābrār*, MS. Br. Mus. 6511, fol. 106b; on *ṣiyān* see Abū ʿUmar Yusuf al-Qurṭubī, *Bahjat al-majālīs wa-unṣu l-mujālīs*, Muḥammad Mursī al-Khūlī and ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Qīṭī, ed. (Cairo, 1969), vol. 2, pp. 59-60; and see a slightly different version: “People used to say: the Arabs were singled out from among the other peoples by four features: the turbans are their crowns, the coats of mail (al-⁺⁺⁺"durā"⁺⁺⁺) are their walls, the swords are their clothing (al-suṣyūfuṣ siyānuha) and the poetry is their *dīwān*,” in al-Thāʿalibi, *Thīmārul qulūb*, p. 159, no. 222.


safiha mu‘tamim qaṭṭu). In accordance with this perception, al-Sharīf al-Radī explains the verse of al-Farazdaq:

*idhā mālikun alqāl l‘imāmata fa-ḥdarū:
bawādira kaffay mālikin ḥīna yaghḍabu*

“When Malik discards the ‘imāma, beware of the fits of passion of his hands when he becomes angry.” Al-Sharīf al-Radī explains convincingly that when the man is dressed in a turban his behaviour is quiet, without any fits of violence. In the same way he explains the famous verse:

*anā bnu jalā wa-ṭallā‘u l-thanāyā:
matā aḍa‘i l‘imāmata ta‘rifūnī.*

The verse implies a threat of violence when the man removes the ‘imāma.28

II

A substantial change in the significance of the ‘imāma took place with the advent of Islam. When the Prophet brought the clothes of the ṣadaqa and divided them among the Companions, he ordered them to wear the ‘amā‘im, in order to distinguish themselves from the people who preceded them.29 This prophetic injunction clearly implies that the ‘imāma is the headgear of the believers: the unbelievers of old did not wear ‘amā‘im.

Another tradition with an obvious Muslim tendency contains the dictum about the ‘amā‘im as crowns of the Arabs and the statement about the ihtibā‘; the third phrase of the tradition says: the sitting of the believer in the mosque is his ribāt (i.e., his military station in which he expects to receive the order to fight the unbelievers -k).30 This segment of the tradition is indeed innovative and surprising. The ancient

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customs of Bedouin society are mentioned in this tradition jointly with a Muslim virtue.

A tradition recorded by al-Tirmidhi states that the 'imāma forms a sign which separates the Muslims from the unbelievers; Muslims wear turbans, unbelievers do not.\(^{31}\) A more detailed tradition says that what marks the difference between the believers and the unbelievers are the turbans placed on the caps of the believers.\(^{32}\)

Since turbans are exclusively worn by believers, the privilege of wearing them should not be granted to the unbelievers. This is exemplified by the tradition meted out by 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz to the delegation of the Christian Banū Taghlib. They entered the court of 'Umar wearing turbans like those of the (Muslim -k) Arabs. They asked the Caliph to attach them to the heads of the Arabs (al-ḥiqnā bi-l-‘arabi). The Caliph asked: “So who are you?” They answered: “We are the Banū Taghlib.” Then 'Umar inquired: “Are you not from among the noble Arabs?” (a-wa-lastum min awāsiht l-‘arabi?) They replied succinctly: “We are Christians.” Then 'Umar ordered to bring him shears (al-‘alam); he cut a part of their forelocks, removed their turbans and cut a part (shibr) of their dress (ridi‘). He enjoined them to refrain from riding on saddles (al-suri‘); and ordered them to put both their legs on one side of the riding beast.\(^{33}\)

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\(^{33}\) Ibn Taṃmīyya, Iqtīdā‘u l-ṣīratī l-mustaqīm, Muhammad Ḥāmid al-Faqīḥ, ed.
The change in the significance of the turban and its practical benefits, usually related in the books of *adab*, is evident in a tradition transmitted by Mālik b. Anas. Mālik recommends that the believers wear the turban and the striped garment (like that worn by the Prophet) on the two feasts (*fi l-ʾīdāymin*) and on Friday, because the Prophet used to wear such clothes on these days. Mālik quotes the saying of the Prophet: “God strengthened Islam by the turbans and the flags.”

He himself urged the people to wear turbans; he began to wear the ʾimāma when he was very young and he did not have even one hair on his face. He reported on the authority of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. al-Muṭṭalib that he had been severely admonished by his father when he entered the mosque without an ʾimāma. Mālik relates that in the court of Rabiʾa b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān he saw more than thirty people wearing turbans. In the mosque of the Prophet (in Medina), he met seventy men wearing turbans fastened under their chins (*sabāfīna muḥannakan*). All were righteous people: if one of them were to be put in charge of the treasury, he would be trustworthy (*amīn*). Mālik did not begin to issue *fatwas* before he was granted the permission (*ijāza*) of forty men wearing turbans fastened under their chins. He reiterated his support for the fastening of the turban under the chin when he was asked about a believer who failed to fasten his turban in this manner. He disapproved of this act, stating that this is the fashion of the Nabateans.

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34 See e.g., Ibn Qutayba, *ʿUyiīn l-akhbār* (Cairo, 1383/1963), I, 300: A Bedouin was asked why he frequently (*tukthiru*) wears the turban; he answered: a bone containing (the organs of—k) hearing and seeing indeed deserves to be guarded from heat and cold. When the turban was mentioned in Abu I-Aswad al-Duʿail’s presence, he stated: “The turban is a form of protection in war. It insulates both in cases of heat and cold, it raises one’s stature (*ziyādatun jīli-l-qāma*) and is indeed a habit of the Arabs (*āddatun min ʾadātī l-ʾarab*).


38 See on him Ibn Saʿd, al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā, al-qismu l-mutannimmīn, p. 320 (and see the abundant references of the editor).


and not the fashion of the people (i.e., the believers -k). Only when the turban is a small one, and its fringes do not reach the chin, or in the case of illness, is the believer permitted to refrain from fastening them under his chin and to remain at home. When Mālik was asked about letting down the fringes of the 'imāma behind the back of the believer, he stated that he knew only one man from among his contemporaries (mimman adraktuḥu), who wore the turban in this way, namely ʿĀmir b. ʿAbdallah b. al-Zubayr.41 “This fashion of wearing the turban is not forbidden (laysa dhiilika bi-ḥarām), but (it is preferable -k) to let the fringes down on the front (bayna yadayhi).”

Shīʿ tradition asserts that a prayer recited by a believer wearing a turban not fastened under his chin is disliked.43 The Shīʿi imāms urged their followers to observe the custom of fastening the turban under their chin. The Prophet is said to have stated: “The distinction between the Muslims and the unbelievers is the fastening of the turbans under their chin.”44 Another tradition attributed to the Prophet says that he enjoined the fastening of the turban under the chin and prohibited the wearing of the turban otherwise (wa-qad nuqilā ʿanhu (ṣalʿam) an-nahu amara bi-l-talāḥī wa-nahā ʿanī l-iqtīāḏ).45 A very early statement transmitted by ʿAbd al-Razzāq on the authority of Maʿmar-Layth-Ṭāwūs says that a believer who does not fasten the turban under his chin wears it in a satanic fashion (ḥādhihi ʿimmatu l-shayṭān).46 There is indeed a description of Satan fitting the description given in the utterance of Ṭāwūs: when Iblis was sent down from Heaven, he wore a turban not fastened under his chin, he was one eyed (aʿwar), and wore a sandal (naʿl) on one of his legs.47

A turban worn by a believer who did not fasten it under his chin is called al-ʿimāma al-muqāṭa (or muqtaʿiṭa). This manner of wearing the turban is said to have been common among the people of Lūṭ and

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46 Abd al-Razzāq b. Hammām al-Ṣanʿānī, al-Muṣannaf, Ḥabibu l-Raḥmān al-ʿAṣāmī, ed. (Beirut, 1392/1972), vol. 11, p. 80, no. 19978; and see Ibn Qutayba, Taʿwīl mukhtalifī l-ḥadīthī, p. 422.
was forbidden by the Prophet.48 A Shi'i statement, recorded on the authority of the imām al-Sādiq says: “He who wore the ‘imāma and did not fasten it under his chin, let him not blame anyone except himself if he is inflicted with a pain for which there is no remedy.”49

The opinions of the scholars who urged the fastening of the ‘imāma under the chin are contradicted by Shāfi'ī scholars who did not consider the fastening of the ‘imāma under the chin as sunna.50 Some reservations concerning the fastening of the ‘imāma’s fringe under the chin can be discerned in the formulation of the ḥadīth attributed to the Prophet, which states that the fastening of the fringe of the ‘imāma under the chin marks the difference between the believers and the unbelievers.51

The peculiar additional phrase in this ḥadīth indicates the possibility of change in the future: “This ḥadīth was uttered at the beginning of Islam and in its first period.”52 It is this phrase which becomes problematic for the scholars of ḥadīth, since they are confronted by traditions urging believers to wear the ‘imāma with the ends hanging loose on their backs or on their chests.53 The tahannuk is “nowadays” practiced only by the descendants of al-Ḥusayn in Bahrayn; it is a practice inherited from their ancestors.54

The superiority of Islam over other religious communities, and the injunctions which claim that the Muslims differ in their lifestyle from others, was the main reason for the restrictions imposed on the ahl al-dhimma in their dress, including the wearing of the ‘imāma. The utterance according to which “contempt and humiliation became the lot of those who disobey my order” is said to refer to ahl al-dhimma; they surpass other people in their disobedience of God’s orders and in their insubordination. Therefore they ought to be singled out by a humiliating sign in their dress (al-ghiyār). On the other hand, God singled out the believers by dress which emphasizes their obedience to God and to His messenger. In accordance with the statement of the Prophet: “He who

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50 Al-Sayyid al-Bakrī, l-‘anat al-talibīn ‘alā ḥallī al-faṭḥī l-mu‘īn, n.d., vol. 2, p. 82 infra; ... wa-lā yusnān tāhniku l-‘imāmati ‘inda l-shāfi‘iyyati ....
51 See above, note 47.
52 Al-Bahrānī, al-Ḥadā‘īqu l-nāḏīra, vol. 7, p. 126, l. 15: ... wa-dhālika fi awwālī l-islāmi wa-btīdā‘īhi.
assimilates himself to a people becomes one of them" (man tashabbaha bi-
qaumin fa-huwa minhum);55 believers ought to dress like believers, and
the disobedient ahl al-dhimma must also dress in a distinctive fashion.56

According to some traditions, the Prophet stated: “Disagree with the
Jews and do not wear turbans that are not fastened under the chin, or
with their fringes not let down (on their backs -k), as this fashion of
wearing the turban (tasnîm) is the fashion of the Jews."57

Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyya forbade the ahl al-dhimma to wear the tur-
bans in the fashion of the Prophet and the Companions. His prohibition
is based on historical facts: the turbans were the crowns of the Arabs
and their glory (‘izzuḥa). By wearing them they surpassed other peoples.
The Prophet and the Companions wore this headdress; the turbans were
thus the dress of the Arabs in the “old time” (qadîman) and became
the headdress of the Muslims. Turbans were not worn by Banû Isrā‘îl,
they were the headdress of the Arabs. Ibn Qayyim quotes the opinion
of Abû l-Qâsim al-Ṭabarâni, who stated that a dhimmî is not allowed to
wear the turban because he has no honour (lā ‘izzu lubu) in the abode of
Islam, and this headdress is not (a part -k) of his dress.58 Ibn Qayyim
further traces the opinions of later scholars who were prepared to allow
the ahl al-dhimma to wear turbans on the condition that they be marked
by special pieces of cloth, clearly indicating that they are not Muslims.59

If ahl al-dhimma are allowed to wear the turban, they are forbidden to
fasten it under their chin (al-talâ‘i), or to let its fringes hang loosely
behind their backs (lā yursilîna aţrâfa l-‘imamati khalfâ zhu‘ûrîm).60

A particular version of fashion restrictions imposed on ahl al-dhimma

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55 See e.g., al-Munawwî, Faydû l-qadîrû, vol. 6, p. 104, no. 8593 and the thorough
explanation of the statement by Munawwî; Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyya, Aḥkâm ahli l-
56 See e.g., Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyya, Aḥkâm ahli l-dhimma, 739-40.
57 Al-Sawarînî, Ghidhâ‘u l-albâb li-sharî manzûmati l-‘adâb (Cairo, 1325), vol. 2,
p. 207, penult.: khâlifû l-yahûd wa-lâ tusammîmû fa-inna tasnîmû l-‘amâ’îmi min
ziyyi ahli l-ki‘bat; and another tradition: a‘uđhû bi-li‘âhi min ‘imâmatin šammâ;
p. 100, no. 47 (and see the explanation of the word šammâ’, glossed on page 190,
58 Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyya, Aḥkâm ahli-l-dhimma, 739-40.
59 Ibn Qayyim, Aḥkâm ahli l-dhimma, 740-45.
60 Ibn Qayyim, Aḥkâm ahli l-dhimma, 745-46. And see the thorough discussion on
the subject of fastening the fringes of the ‘imâma under the chin, or letting them
down on the believer’s back. It is noteworthy that there is another way of combining
the fastening of the fringes of the ‘imâma under the chin, while letting the other end
hang down on the back, which was a perfectly acceptable way of wearing the ‘imâma.
However, this manner of wearing the ‘imâma became obsolete and is disapproved of
is concerned with the cap (al-qalansuwa). They took upon themselves to refrain from wearing caps similar to those worn by the Prophet and his Companions. In later times the cap was worn by distinguished scholars, judges, lawyers (fuqahā'ī), nobles (al-ashrāf) and preachers. This fashion of wearing the cap was continued until the end of Salāḥ al-Dīn’s dynasty. The difference between the appearance of the believers and the unbelievers is the shape of the turbans worn over their caps. It was thus essential to order the ahl al-dhimma to change the fashion or the colour of their caps.

The first person who wore the turban was Ādām after he was expelled from Paradise and descended to dwell on Earth. Jibril descended from Heaven and dressed him in an ‘īmāma. Likewise Dhī l-Qarnayn wore an ‘īmāma; he was compelled to wear it in an attempt to conceal the horns on his head. According to a tradition of the Prophet, transmitted by ‘Ā‘ishah, the majority of the angels whom the Prophet saw in Paradise also wore turbans.

The traditions concerning the colour of the turbans worn by the angels sent by God to support the Muslim forces on the day of Badr are not unanimous. Some of the early scholars reported that the angels wore white turbans; the fringe of their turbans hung down on their backs (qad arsalūhā fi zuhūrīhim); others reported that on the day of Hunayn the angels wore red turbans. The tradition of the white turbans conforms to the widely circulated statement of the Prophet, in which he recommended the living wear white clothes and to bury the dead in white. A peculiar tradition says that Jibril descended on the day of Badr wearing a yellow turban; this headdress was in the style of

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61 Ibn Qayyim, Ahkām ahlī l-dhimma, pp. 737-8.
63 See e.g., İbrahim b. ‘Alī b. Yusuf al-Fayruzābādī al-Shāfī‘ī, al-Muhaddīb fi qīqī l-‘īmāmi l-Shāfī‘ī, Beirut, 1379/1959 (repr.) vol. 2, p. 355 sup., where some special features of dress which should be imposed on ahl al-dhimma are suggested.
64 Al-Kinānī, al-Dī‘āma fi ʾāhkāmi sunnati l-‘īmāma, 5 sup.; in Paradise Ādām wore a crown on his head.
65 Al-Kinānī, op. cit., p. 5.
66 Al-Suyūṭī, Jam’u l-jawāmī‘ (Cairo, 1978), vol. 1, p. 531.
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al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwām, who wore a yellow turban on this day. According to another tradition, all the angels who were ordered to attend the battle of Badr wore yellow turbans following the fashion of al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwām. It is not surprising that the tradition was transmitted by 'Abdallah b. al-Zubayr. A harmonizing tradition, traced back to 'Abbād b. 'Abdallah b. al-Zubayr, claims that the angels attending the battle of Badr descended as white birds, wearing yellow turbans, like that of Abū 'Abbādah. The Prophet affirmed the tradition. On the day of Badr he himself wore a yellow turban. Yellow seems to have implied beauty and emphasized the high position of the person who wore it. In some cases it symbolized the believer's hope that his prayers would be fulfilled. This notion is implied in the tradition attributed to Ibn 'Abbas: “He who wears a yellow sandal (na'il), his prayer will be granted and his needs will be fulfilled.” The author of the tafsir hesitates as to the valid-

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69 Al-Tabarani, al-Mu'jam al-kabir, vol. 1, p. 120, no. 230.
72 See e.g., the article “zbrq” in L.'A.
ity of this statement, but mentions the opinion of some commentators, who claim that God satisfied the needs of the Banū Isrā‘îl because of the commandment of the yellow cow (‘alā baqaratin șafrah’). The angels clad in yellow turbans let their fringes hang down between their shoulders.73

Waqiqi records an anonymous tradition claiming that on the day of Badr, the fighters’ turbans were green, yellow (șufr) and red.74 A single tradition, transmitted on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbas, says that on the day of Uhud the angels wore red turbans; on the day of Badr they wore black turbans.75

Wearing black garments carried pejorative connotations. Al-Safarînî records the opinion of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, who states that black was the colour of the people of the sultan and of the wrong-doers (zalama). Some scholars were of the opinion that the black clothes of the deceased had to be burnt after the burial. Black clothes were worn for the first time in the period of the Abbadids; the first person who wore them was ‘Abdallah b. ‘Alî b. ‘Abdallah b. ‘Abbâs. Black was worn as a sign of mourning, as a symbol of grief and disaster. The Abbadids began to wear black after the murder of the Abbadid imâm Ibrâhîm.76 It may be mentioned that on the day of Uthmân’s murder the Companions delivered their eulogies wearing black turbans.77 Although ‘Alî b. Abî Ta‘lîb wore black on that day, he generally advised to refrain from wearing black clothes, because they are the dress of Fir‘âun.78 But Jibrîl, who participated in the drowning of Fir‘aun, was also clad in a black ‘imâma on that day.79

A rare tradition concerning the fate of the Abbadid dynasty was transmitted by a rather unreliable muḥîddîn, Shâh b. Shîr Mâniyân.80 Jibrîl came to the Prophet clad in a black gown with full sleeves (al-qabā‘), and informed him about the descendants of ‘Abbâs: they will be leaders of the people and will be followed by the people of Khurâsân. They will rule the world (yamlik wa-l-madar wa-l-modâr

77 Al-Munawwî, Sharî‘a l-jam‘i l-wasa‘iîl fi sharî‘i l-shamâ‘îl (Cairo, 1318), vol. 1, p. 165; al-Suyûtî, al-Ḥawî ʿit-l-fatâwî, Muhîrî l-Dîn ʿAbd al-Ḥamîd, ed. (Cairo, 1378/1959), vol. 1, l. 119: on the day of Uthmân’s murder ʿAlî wore a black ‘imâma.
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wa-l-sarīr wa-l-minbar) until the day of resurrection.\footnote{Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, \textit{Liṣān al-miẓān}, Hyderabad, 1330, (second edition Beirut, 1390/1971), vol. 3, p. 136, no. 472.} A version of this tradition recorded by ʿAlī al-Qārī contains a passage which emphasizes its pro-Abbasid tendency. When the Prophet asked Jibrīl about his unusual dress, Jibrīl answered that it is the dress of the descendants of ʿAbbās, the kings.\footnote{See this prediction in Abīl Nuʿaym al-Īsfahānī, \textit{Ḥīyat al-auliyyāʾ} (Beirut, 1387/1967), vol. 1, p. 316 sup.} The Prophet inquired whether they would be righteous and Jibrīl affirmed that they would. The Prophet then asked to forgive them their sins.\footnote{\textit{Al-Ṭabarānī}, \textit{al-aṣbāḥ wa-l-khaṭāʾ}, vol. 4, p. 416.} According to reports of some Abbasid caliphs (the sons of al-Muʿtaṣīm) the Prophet granted al-ʿAbbās an \textit{imāma} and this is indeed the \textit{imāma} with which the chosen caliphs were crowned. This \textit{imāma} is currently in possession of the caliphs’ descendants in Egypt.\footnote{\textit{Al-Suyūṭī}, \textit{al-ṣaḥīḥ}, vol. 1, p. 118 inC.; al-Shaukānī, \textit{Nayl al-aṭār bi-sharḥi al-muṣṭaqq al-ṣāḥīḥ}, (Cairo, 1312/1953), vol. 2, p. 121 (the end of the \textit{imāma} hung down behind his back, or on his left shoulder); and see ibid.: a \textit{maula} of ʿAlī reporting that he saw ʿAlī wearing a black \textit{imāma}, and he let the ends hang down in front of him (i.e., on his chest -k) and on his back.} The tradition of the black \textit{imāma}, which the Prophet put on the head of ʿAlī when he sent him with the mission of conquering Khaybar,\footnote{Abū Jaʿfar Muhammad b. al-Iḥwāz al-Tīlīfī, \textit{al-Niḥlīya wa-l-fatāwī}, Aghā Buzurg al-Tahrānī, ed. (Beirut, 1390/1970), 97; Ibn Bābūyāh al-Qumnī, \textit{Kitāb al-khiṣāf}, ʿAlī Akbar al-Ghaffārī, ed. (Tehran, 1389), 148, no. 179; al-Baḥrānī, al-Ḥaddāʾiq l-nādira, vol. 7, p. 116; al-Safārīnī, \textit{Ghīdāhī l-aḥbāb}, vol. 2, p. 146; al-Majīlī, \textit{Bīhār al-anwār}, vol. 83, p. 249.} and other reports on the black \textit{imāma} of ʿAlī, caused a new series of stories concerning Shīʿī scholars also permitted praying in black turbans and in black boots.\footnote{Al-Safārīnī, \textit{Ghīdāhī l-aḥbāb}, vol. 2, p. 205; al-ʿAynī, \textit{Umādat al-qrār}, vol. 21, pp. 307-8; Nur al-Dīn al-Haythamī, \textit{Majmaʿ al-zawā'id}, vol. 5, p. 120, penult.} A noteworthy tradition concerning the details of the turban is recorded on the authority of the Companion of the Prophet, Abū Umāma: The Prophet did not appoint a governor (\textit{kāna lā yuwallī ʿalīyan}) without dressing him in an \textit{imāma}, letting down its fringes, the \textit{aḍḥāba}, on the back of the appointed governor on his right side in the direction of his (right) ear (\textit{wa-yurkū laḥā ʿaḍḥābatan min al-jānib l-ayman nāḥwa l-udhun}).\footnote{Al-Safārīnī, \textit{Ghīdāhī l-albāb}, vol. 2, p. 116.} The tradition implies that the Prophet invested the appointed governor (or the military leader) with authority by dressing him in the turban, letting down its fringe (or fringes), the \textit{aḍḥaba}. The custom of dressing an appointed governor in a turban, practiced by the Prophet, is in fact a continuation of the customs of the Persian rulers, who invested their provincial governors with authority in this way in the Arab peninsula. The \textit{imāma} was a headdress of the aristocratic leaders
of the Meccan community, and later of the commanders of the troops sent by the Prophet to raid the forces of the rebellious tribes and to conquer enemy territory.

During the following generations, the ‘imāma became the dress of the pious successors (tābi‘ūn), the distinguished scholars of the Muslim community, the judges, scribes and clerks in the offices of the rulers and governors. The scholars and judges wore fringes of the ‘imāma let down between the shoulders on their backs, or on their chests (bayna yadayhi wa-min khalfihi). The letting down of the ‘adhaba was included in the injunction of the Prophet concerning the wearing of the ‘imāma: “You shall wear the turbans, as they are the characteristic features (simā) of the angels, and let down their ends on your backs.” The Prophet is said to have referred to the graces granted to him by Allāh, and mentioned among them the ‘adhaba of the ‘imāma. The letting down of the ‘adhaba became a part of the prophetic sunna.

Al-Suyūṭī marks the ‘adhaba as one of the exclusive features (khaṣāṣ) granted the Prophet (and his community -k); this is in fact one of the features (of the dress -k) of the angels. According to a tradition recorded by Ibn Taymiyya, the Prophet saw God in his dream. God asked him: “O Muḥammad, what is the subject debated by the angels in Heaven?” (fī mā yakhḍasimu l-ma‘ālu l-a‘lā?). When the Prophet responded that he does not know the answer, Allāh put His hand between the shoulders of the Prophet and apprised him of everything between heaven and earth. On that day the Prophet adopted the dress of the ‘adhaba (in the text: the shu‘āba -k) hanging down between his

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90 ‘Alī b. Burḥān al-Dīn al-Ḥalabī, Inṣānu l-walā‘īn fi sīrat l-amīn al-ma‘āmūn (al-Sīra al-ḥalabiyya), (Cairo, 1382/1962), vol. 3, p. 343: ... wa-u‘ṭīfu l-‘adhabata fi l-‘imāma ...
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shoulders. The prophetic injunction on letting down the fringes of the 'imāma seems to have been considered by some scholars only as a recommendation: it was up to the believer to observe this practice or to refrain from it. Neither was considered a bid'a. (wa-laysa tarku l-‘adhabati bid’atan, bal lahu fi’ilahu wa-tarkuhu).

A case of investing a military leader with authority by granting him a turban can be seen in the story of 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Auf. He was a faithful Companion and was ordered to march against Dumat al-Jandal. According to the plan of the raid, 'Abd al-Rahmān was instructed to leave Medina at night with a force of some 700 warriors. He put a black 'imāma made of cotton on his head (wa-qad i’tiималь min) and intended to set out in the direction of Dumat al-Jandal. When he came to see the Prophet the next morning, he explained that he had ordered his force to set out and wait for him in al-Juruf. He came to say farewell to the Prophet dressed in military attire. The Prophet removed the turban from his head and dressed him in a black (or, according to another version, in a white -k) turban, the fringes of which he let hang down between his shoulders. "That is the way to wear the 'imāma," remarked the Prophet.

The investiture of 'Abd al-

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93 Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyya, Zād al-ma‘ād fi hadiyi khayri l-‘ibād (Beirut, repr., n.d.), vol. 1, pp. 34-35; this dream was transmitted by al-Tirmidhī; see also the story in 'Ali al-Qārī, Jam‘u l-waṣṣū il fī sharḥī l-shamāḥī, vol. 1, pp. 167-68 (and see al-Munāwī’s notes on the story on the margin. Some scholars denounced the story as forged because of its anthropomorphic implications); see also the same story in al-Zurqānī’s Sharḥī l-muwāhahī l-laduniyya li-l-Qastallānī (Cairo, 1326), vol. 5, p. 11 inf.-12.

94 Al-Nawawī, al-Manthūrat, ed. 'Abd al-Qādir Ahmad Ṭaṣṣ, ed., pp. 44, no. 70.

95 See on Juruf: al-Bakrī, Mu‘jam mā ’ista’jama min asma‘ī l-bilādī wa-l-muwādī, Muṣṭafā l-Saqqa, ed. (Cairo, 1364/1945), vol. 2, p. 377; and see the important note: wa-hunaka kana l-muslimuna yu’ASKIRIina idhā arRādī l-phazawa.

Rahmān b. 'Auf was an impressive ceremony: the Prophet performed the prayer standing behind 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Auf and solemnly said: "A Prophet never died without praying behind a righteous believer." This statement clearly indicates the high position granted to 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Auf by the Prophet.

'Abd al-Rahmān was urged by the Prophet to fight the unbelievers for the cause of Islam, while observing the rules enunciated by Islam. The Prophet also told him to marry the daughter of the ruler of Dumat al-Jandal; the Prophet meant al-Asbagh b. 'Amr b. 'Abd al-Rahmān indeed succeeded to convince the Christian chief of Dumat al-Jandal, al-Asbagh b. 'Amr b. 'Abd al-Rahmān, to embrace Islam; and al-Asbagh consented to give him his daughter, Tumādir bint al-Asbagh in marriage. She bore 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Auf several of his children. It was Tumādir who advised 'Uthman to marry one of her relatives, Nā'ila bint al-Furāfiṣa. It was a happy marriage. Nā'ila remained faithful to the memory of 'Uthman; following his death, she refused to marry Mu'awiya.

The black turban became a popular headdress as early as the first Islamic century. The hadith describes some Companions of the Prophet as wearing black turbans.


100 Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd Rabbīhi, al-'Īqād al-farrīḍ, Aḥmad Amin, Ibrāhīm al-Aḥyānī, Ibn Muhammad al-Salām Harūn, ed. (Cairo, 1368/1949), vol. 6, p. 91.

101 See 'Abū l-Ṭabarānī, al-Muṣāmāt al-kabīrī vol. 1, p. 240 no. 665 (rahaytu Anasa bna Mālik ... wa-'imāmatuha saūdā' laḥā dh'ābatun min khilāfī ...); Ibn Sa'd, al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā, vol. 7, p. 208 Abū Naḍra wore a black 'imāma; vol. 6, p. 210 (worn by Abū 'Ubaydā b. 'Abdallāh b. Maṣūfī); Ibn Sa'd, al-Muṣāmāt al-kabīrī, vol. 7, p. 179 (worn by al-Ḥasan b. Abī l-Ḥasan); vol. 7, p. 23; Anas b. Mālik wore an 'imāma of silk; it was a black
minbar clad in a black 'imāma, with its two fringes hanging down between his shoulders. Jibrīl descended to the Prophet wearing a black 'imāma. The most instructive report concerning the black 'imāma is recorded in Abū Yūsuf's Kitāb al-āthār: it is transmitted by Abū Ḥanīfa on the authority of one of his Companions and states that Jibrīl, dressed in a black 'imāma, came to the Prophet. He dressed the Prophet in a black 'imāma and let its fringes hang down behind his back. The date of Abū Yūsuf's death (182 A. H.), indicates that the hadith is a very early one. It also implies that Jibrīl accomplished his mission to dress the Prophet in a black 'imāma. The black 'imāma was thus a symbol of prophetic authority granted to Muḥammad by God. The Caliphs followed the path of the Prophet and used to dress their governors and officials in black turbans.

Some pious believers seem to have been used to wearing black turbans. The black 'imāma indicated piety and sincerity of belief. This can be deduced from the harsh words with which 'Umar b. 'Abd al-ʿAzīz rebuked 'Adī b. Arṭāt: "...you deceived me by your black 'imāma, your keeping company with the qurra’, your letting down the fringe of the 'imāma on your back ...." Some Ṣūfī believers disliked wearing black turbans. In some Shi‘ī leading circles black clothing was considered the dress of the Shi‘a’s enemies. As the black turbans б

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102 See e.g., al-Suyūṭī, al-Ḥāwī, vol. 1, p. 118: ...‘an Jābir qāla: kāna li-l-nābiyyī (q) 'imāmatun sauda’u yalbasuha fi l’idāyin wa-yurkhā khalfahu: Ibn Qayyīm al-Jauziyya, Zādu l-ma‘ād fi hadīyī khāṣṣī l-sībād (Beirut, n.d.), vol. 1, p. 34 inf.: ...‘Amr b. Ḥurayth qāla: ra’aytu rasūla ilāhi (q) ‘alā l-minbar wa-l-ayhī ‘imāmatun sauda’u qad arkhā ṣarafayhā baṣna katīfayhī; al-Shaukānī, Nayl al-aʿrāf, vol. 2, p. 120: ...wa-l-ayhī ‘imāmatun sauda’u qad arkhā ṣarafayhā baṣna katīfayhī, the verb sadala is glossed by arkhā in some of the quoted hadīths.


105 'Abd al-Razzaq, al-Muṣannaf, Ḥābibu l-Raḥmān al-ʿAzāmī, ed. (Johannesburg, 1390/1970.)

came popular in the Muslim community, a statement widely circulated and attributed to the Prophet (or to a Shi‘i imām -k) established three exceptions where wearing black was permitted for the believers: black boots, black turbans and black woolen garments (kisā').

A peculiar hadīth attributed to the Prophet concerning the colour black recommends that elderly men dye their beards black: it is preferable at times of war because it frightens the enemy, and it is preferable in times of peace, since young women find it more attractive.

III

According to some widely circulated hadīths, the Prophet entered Mecca on the day of the conquest wearing a black 'imāma. A contradictory hadīth says that he entered Mecca on the day of its conquest wearing a helmet (mighfar). In several traditions the report about the helmet on the Prophet’s head is coupled with the report of his wearing a turban. Al-Munāwī records a version in which the black turban, al-'imāma al-

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[5] Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyya, Zād al-ma‘ād, vol. 1, p. 34: ... wa-qad yuqālu annahu dakhala makka wa-‘alayhi uθthatu l-qitālī wa-l-mighfar ‘alā ra‘sihi ... ; Ibn Kathīr, al-Ṣūra al-nabawīyya, vol. 3, p. 554: ... an Anasīn anna rasūla llāhī (ṣ) dakhala makka wa-‘alā ra‘sihi l-mighfar; Ibn ‘Abī Shayba, al-Muṣannaf, vol. 14, p. 492, no. 18760; Abū Ḥātim Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Tamīm al-Bustī, al-Ṣūra al-nabawīyya wa-‘akhbāru l-khulafā‘, al-Sayyid ‘Āṣī Bek and a group of scholars, eds. (Beirut, 1407/1987), 333: ... wa-dakhala rasūla llāhī min adhākhirihā makka ‘alā ra‘sihi mighfar min hadīd ‘alayhi ‘imāmatun saudā‘u ... ; and see al-Bakrī, Muʿjam māṣṭa‘ṣam, Muṣafā l-Saqqaq, ed. (Cairo, 1364/1945), vol. 1, pp. 128-9, s.v. adhākhīr. And see the two contradictory opinions regarding the Prophet’s actions on the day of the conquest of Mecca: Ibn Kathīr, al-Ṣūra, vol. 3, p. 577 inf.: the majority of the scholars were of the opinion that Mecca was conquered by force; al-Shāfi‘ī, however, believed that Mecca was conquered by a peaceful agreement. For more on the discussion whether Mecca was conquered by force or by a peaceful agreement, see Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyya, Zād al-ma‘ād, vol. 2, p. 172.
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saudā, is glossed by al-ḥārqāniyya, a tint of colour as if burnt by fire.\(^{112}\) In some traditions the fact that the Prophet entered Mecca without a ritual consecration as a pilgrim (iḥrām) is particularly noted.\(^{113}\) The entrance of the Prophet without iḥrām indicates that he was not enjoined to perform the obligatory duties of the ḥajj on that occasion.

Another report says that the Prophet entered Mecca on that day wearing a piece of a red striped garment on his head.\(^{114}\) Al-Fāsī also records other details about the entrance of the Prophet into Mecca: he entered it wearing a black turban. Al-Fāsī tries to reconcile between the two reports: the Prophet put the helmet on his head, and might have placed the black turban or the piece of red cloth upon the helmet.\(^{115}\)

The tradition concerning the helmet worn by the Prophet on the day of the conquest of Mecca (fath) was usually confronted with the tradition that he wore a black or blackish turban. Al-Ṭañāwī (d. 321 H) tackles the complicated problem in which capacity the Prophet entered Mecca on the day of the conquest: did he enter the haram as a combatant (muḥārib) or as one whose safety is guaranteed (āmin) visiting the sanctuary. Al-Ṭañāwī assumes that the Prophet entered the haram as a combatant, not as a protected pilgrim; this is indicated by his wearing a helmet.\(^{116}\) Both versions, that of the helmet and the turban, are recorded

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\(^{116}\) Abū Ja‘far Ṭahām b. Muḥammad b. Ṣalāma al-Azdi al-Ṭañāwī, Sharḥ ma‘ānī l-āthār, Muḥammad Zuhūr al-Najāj, ed. (Cairo, 1388/1968), vol. 3, p. 329: ... thumma qad kāna dukhulūhū iyyāhā (sal‘ām) dukhula muḥāribīn, lā dukhula a‘jībiyan, li-analmu dakhala wa-‘alā ra’isi l-mīghfara ... ; and see al-Zurqānī, Sharḥu l-mawāhibī l- 1-laduniyya, vol. 2, p. 323: it was an exceptional case that the Prophet entered Mecca without performing the iḥrām. Al-Zurqānī records the opinion of Ibn Daqīq al-Īd, assuming that the Prophet might have performed the iḥrām. According to Shāfi‘ī the iḥrām is obligatory. Entering without performing the iḥrām should therefore be considered as a special concession granted to the Prophet; ibid., penult. wa-dukhulūhū bi-lī ṭarafīn min khāṣṣi‘īthī. And see al-Fākīḥī, Akhbarū makkaṭa fi qadīmi l-dahrī wa-ḥadīthīhi, ‘Abd al-Malik b. ʿAbdallāh b. Duhaysh, ed. (Makkā al-mukarrama,
in Ibn Sa'd's Tabaqât.117 In one of his reports in which some clashes between the forces of the Prophet and groups of his enemies are described, the conclusion is quite explicit: Mecca was conquered by force.118 The story of the conquest of Mecca by force is indeed supplemented by an appropriate saying of the Prophet in his speech after the conquest of the city. He named the Meccans al-tulaqâ', "the freed" (an expression referring to captured people magnanimously released by the conquerors -k).119 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb carefully observed the stipulations concerning the tulaqâ': he did not pay the people of Mecca the 'atî', he did not dispatch them to fight the enemy in the military expeditions on the grounds that they were tulaqâ'.120 Some scholars of Islamic law (al-fuqahâ') were, however, of the opinion that Mecca embraced Islam by a peaceful agreement and received the document of safety and security (amân); this amân was considered by these law scholars as a pact, or agreement (al-amân ka-l-ṣâlîh). Since Mecca and its people were given the agreement of security and safety and embraced Islam peacefully, they were given the full right to their possessions and their property, and were granted the right to let their houses or to sell them. But the majority of the fuqahâ' were of the opinion that Mecca was conquered by force ('anwatan).121


117 Ibn Sa'd, al-Ṭabaqât al-kubrâ (Beirut, 1376/1957), vol. 2, p. 139-40: ...dakhala rasûlî llâhi qâllâ llâhu 'alâya wa-sâliym makkata 'ûma l-fâthî wa-'alâ ra'sîhi l-mighfar ..., and p. 140: ...dakhala yauma l-fâthî makkata wa-‘alayhi ‘îmâmatun saûdâ’ ....


119 See e.g., al-Ṣâlîḥî, Subûl l-hudâ (al-Sîra al-Shâmiyya) vol. 5, p. 364: ...idhhabû fa-antum al-tulaqâ', fa-ḥarajû ka-annamâ nushirû mina l-qubûrî fa-dakhali fi l-iṣlāmî ..., and see al-Fâsî, Tuhfatu l-kirām fi akhbârî l-baladî l-ḥarâm, MS. Leiden no. 2654, fol. 151b, l. 4: ...idhhabû fa-antumu l-tulaqâ'; al-Sînrî, Manâthî r-r-karam bi-akhbârî makkata wa-l-ḥarâm, MS. Leiden Or. 7018, fol. 73a: ...ya ma’shara quraysh, mà tarauna annî fâ’ilun fûkûm? qâla: khayran, akhun karîm wa-bnu akhîn karîm, qâla: idhhabî fa-antum muṭlaqâ (correct reading: al-tulaqâ’ -k); and see the explanation of al-tulaqâ’ in al-Zurqâni’s Sharîhu l-mawâhihib l-laduniyya vol. 2, p. 318 inf.


121 See the lengthy discussion on whether Mecca was conquered by force ('anwatan) or by an assurance of safety (amân; and see the explanation: wa-l-amân ka-l-ṣâlîh) in Ibn Sa’ûd al-Nâs, ‘Ujûnu l-athari fi junûnî l-maghaṣî wa-l-shamâ’îlî wa-l-siyar (Cairo, 1356), vol. 2, pp. 170-1; see e.g., p. 171 sup.: ...wa-liḥâdāh qâla jamâ’atun min ahi l-tîlîmi, minhun al-imâmu l-Shâfi‘î (râhimahu llâhu) inna makkata mu’ammana wa-layyat ‘anwatan, wa-l-amân ka-l-ṣâlîhî; wa-ra‘a anna
In connection to the different reports concerning the ‘imāma of the Prophet, it may be useful to enumerate the various versions concerning his headdress. Some reports say that he wore a black turban when he entered Mecca on the day of the conquest; another version states that he wore a helmet (mighfār); a third version says that he wore a piece of a red striped garment on his head. According to a report transmitted by al-Wāqidi, the Prophet was asked by his staunch enemy, Sāfwan b. Umayya, who fled Mecca after its conquest by the Muslim forces, to give his messenger, ‘Umayr b. Wahb, the turban of the Prophet as a token of immunity from punishment and as a sign of amān. The Prophet agreed and gave ‘Umayr b. Wahb a piece of the red striped garment, which served as his turban. Sāfwan was convinced of the sincerity of the Prophet’s promise to pardon him and he returned to Mecca.

The black colour of the turban may be explained as follows: there is an interpretation of the expression al-‘imāma al-saudā’ which suggests that the “blackish colour” of the ‘imāma is caused by dirt and stains (wa-kānat muttaṣikhatan mutalawwīthatan); this ‘imāma was described as al-dasma’, “an oily turban;” it was put under the helmet in order to protect the head from the rust which formed on the iron helmet. Some other reasons for the blackish colour of the ‘imāma worn by the Prophet on the day of the conquest of Mecca are adduced by ‘Ali b. Sulṭān Muḥammad al-Qārī. There is a possibility that the ‘imāma got its blackish colour from the helmet, because it was put upon the helmet; it is possible, however, that the ‘imāma was put under the helmet and became stained from the oiliness (dusūma) of the hair. Some scholars drew the conclusion from this story that wearing a black ‘imāma was a sunna; others maintained that wearing black clothes was permissible, but white clothing was preferable.
The ‘imāma became a widely worn headdress in the Muslim community. It was a well known feature of the Prophet’s dress; as mentioned above, the Prophet urged the believers to wear the ‘imāma, he dressed the governors in turbans and let their fringes hang loosely on their backs. Some of the Companions received their turbans from the Prophet as gifts. ‘Abdallah b. Khāzim al-Sulamī was granted a black ‘imāma made from silk (khazz) by the Prophet; he used to wear this turban during the Friday prayers, on the two feasts al-‘īdān and on military expeditions. In cases of victory he would also wear this ‘imāma.

Wearing the ‘imāma was a sunna of the Prophet. It was a style of headdress which differentiated the Muslim’s dress from the dress of the former peoples. The statement of the Prophet was explicit: “i’tammū khālīfū l-umama qablakum,” “wear the turban, as this dress contrasts (the dress -k) of the former peoples.” This tradition is similar to the tradition reported by Rukānā: “The difference between us and the unbelievers are the turbans on the caps (scil. on the heads -k)” (farqū mā baynānā wa-baynā l-mushrikīn l-‘amā’im ‘alā qalānīs).

As the ‘imāma became compatible with the sunna of the Prophet and came to be considered a privilege granted exclusively to the Muslim community, numerous favourable traditions concerning the qualities of the ‘imāma were created. Wearing an ‘imāma during religious observance was perceived as extremely valuable. One tradition maintains that bowing down twice (rak‘a) wearing an ‘imāma is better than performing seventy bows without an ‘imāma” (rak‘atān bi-‘imāmatin khayrun min sab‘īna rak‘atan bi-lā ‘imāmatin).

And see, ‘Alī al-Qārī, Risāla ḥāwiya, fol. 20a.


128 See al-Munawwī, Fayḍū l-qadrīr, vol. 1, p. 556, no. 1144 (there is however a quite different interpretation of this statement, which reads the verb: a’timū instead of i’tammū; according to the reading a’timū the statement has to be translated: “delay the evening prayer until darkness as this contrasts the ways of the preceding peoples.”


turban wearers during Friday (prayers -k) (inna llâha wa-malâ’ikatahu yusallûna ‘alâ așhâbî l-’amâ’imi yauma l-jumu’a). Praying once with an ‘imâma has the value of twenty-five prayers without it. Reciting the Friday prayers wearing the ‘imâma has the value of seventy prayers on Friday (without the ‘imâma). A believer wearing a wound turban (literally: šalâtun ‘alâ kauri l-’imâma -k) has the status of one who goes out in the morning to fight for the cause of God. The angels ask God on Friday to forgive the sins of the believers who wear white ’amâ’im. Similar versions are recorded in the compendia of the faḍâ’il.

As mentioned above, the Prophet is said to have urged the believers to wear turbans (’amâ’im) since turbans are the characteristic marks (ṣîmâ) of the angels. This statement is affirmed by a tradition which claims that when the Prophet ascended to Heaven he saw the majority of the angels wearing turbans.


138 Al-Kamâl Muhammad b. Abî Sharîf, Ša’ubu l-ghamâma fi irsâlî ṭarâfî l-’imâma, MS. Markaz al-Urdu, Jerusalem (Jâmî’at al-quds, no. 48) fol. 40b: lamâma ša’idûtu ila l-samâ’i ra’aytu akthara l-malâ’ikatî mu’tâmmîna; the source of the statement is mentioned: the Aṣâf of al-Ṭabarî. An edition of the riṣāla of al-Kamâl Muhammad b. Abî Sharîf, Ša’ubu l-ghamâma, with abundant references and
Scholars are not unanimous regarding the different ways of wearing the imāma and its various uses. The practice of wiping one’s hands on the imāma (masīh ‘alā l-imāma) was discussed in many compendia of ḥadīth. Serious differences arose between the scholars concerning fastening the fringes of the imāma under the chin; the Shāfīʿis denied the validity of the obligatory character of this practice. It was a courageous statement of some scholars who denied the obligatory character of letting down of the hadhaba on the back of the believer, the new fashion of wearing the imāma which had already gained the approval of the scholars and complied with some miraculous stories in the realm of ḥadīth.

At the beginning of this paper we started to read the tradition recorded in the papyrus of Qutayba b. Saʿīd al-Balkhī and assumed that the correct reading of the first phrase of this tradition is tījānū ḥādhīhi l-ummātī l-‘iīmāmīmu. Then followed a lacuna and a phrase read by the late Professor Abbot: yaqūlūhā fi ‘i‘daynī wa-yāuma l-jum‘āti. The lacuna should evidently be filled by a sentence: [wa-kāna li-rasūli llāhī ‘imāmatun sa‘dā’u] yālbasūhā fi l-‘i‘daynī wa-yāuma l-jum‘ātī.


141 Al-Sayyid al-Bakrī, l-‘anātu l-ţālibīn, vol. 2, p. 82, inf, l. 9 from the bottom: qāla l-shaykhīnī: man ta’ammama fā-lahu fi’l-‘adhabatī wa-ṭarkuhā, wa-lā kārāhata fī wāḥidin minhumā; zāda l-nawawī: li-annahu lam yaqīhi fī l-nahyī ‘a‘u tarkī l-‘adhabatī shayūn; intahā. The text of Fathū l-mu‘īn quoted above continues, however, stating that there are some fairly trustworthy ḥadīths (qād warada fīl-‘adhaba aḥdātīthu saḥḥatun wa-hasanatun, wa-ḥadār ṣarrā‘ī bi-anwa aslahā sunnatun), claiming that these ḥadīths are sound and are originally a sunna.

Finally we may be allowed to to state that every ideological conflict—between Muslims and infidels, Sunna and Shi'a, Umayyads and Abbasids, Muslims and the ahl al-dhimma—all these are reflected in the contradictory traditions about the turbans.