

# THE STRUGGLE AGAINST MUSAYLIMA AND THE CONQUEST OF YAMĀMA

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The study of the life of Musaylima, the "false prophet," his relations with the Prophet Muḥammad and his efforts to gain Muḥammad's approval for his prophetic mission are dealt with extensively in the Islamic sources. We find numerous reports about Musaylima in the Qur'ānic commentaries, in the literature of *ḥadīth*, in the books of *adab* and in the historiography of Islam. In these sources we find not only material about Musaylima's life and activities; we are also able to gain insight into the the Prophet's attitude toward Musaylima and into his tactics in the struggle against him. Furthermore, we can glean from this material information about Muḥammad's efforts to spread Islam in territories adjacent to Medina and to establish Muslim communities in the eastern regions of the Arabian peninsula.

It was the Prophet's policy to allow people from the various regions of the peninsula to enter Medina. Thus, the people of Yamāma who were exposed to the speeches of Musaylima, could also become acquainted with the teachings of Muḥammad and were given the opportunity to study the Qur'ān. The missionary efforts of the Prophet and of his companions were often crowned with success: many inhabitants of Yamāma embraced Islam, returned to their homeland and engaged in spreading Islam. Furthermore, the Prophet thoughtfully sent emissaries to the small Muslim communities in Yamāma in order to teach the new believers the principles of Islam, to strengthen their ties with Medina and to collect the *zakāt*. These communities later helped Abū Bakr to fight the *ridda* and became part and parcel of the Medina body politic.

Simultaneously, the Prophet did not neglect to prepare a military force to defend these communities. Small garrisons were placed on the borders of Yamāma in order to defend them in case of an attack. If a considerable part of the population of a region decided to embrace Islam, the Prophet was informed and sent to them an emissary who was competent to guide the local leader in his decisions. The new converts were granted full rights of Muslims. The Jews, the Christians and the Zoroastrians were given the status of *dhimmīs*, in return for paying the *jizya*. The *zakāt* of the Muslims and the *jizya* of the *dhimmīs* were sent to the Medina authorities.

In contradistinction to the carefully planned spread of Islam in the various regions of the Arabian peninsula, we find Musaylima's prophetic

vision essentially confined to Yamāma. He claimed to have been sent by Allah to the Banū Ḥanīfa only and wanted the Prophet Muḥammad to acquiesce in this. He wanted Muḥammad to be the prophet of Mecca and Medina, on a par with him, the prophet of Yamāma. He envisaged the peninsula to be divided between the two prophets who co-existed with each other and guided their respective people in Allah's path. Both territories were to be considered God's land and the income from it was to be equally divided between the two prophets.

The aim of the Prophet Muḥammad was totally different. He strove to extend his authority and his *dīn* all over the world. According to his conception, there would never exist a religion equal to Islam: there is only one God, one Prophet and one religion. Therefore, whoever pretended to have a share in Muḥammad's prophethood must be considered an impostor. No compromise was possible between these two conceptions of prophetic authority.

# I

Musaylima b. Thumāma, or Musaylima b. Ḥabīb<sup>1</sup>, was the "false prophet" who emerged in Yamāma during the Prophet Muḥammad's activity in the Arabian peninsula. The early historian Hishām b. Muḥammad b. al-Sā'ib al-Kalbī (d. 146 A.H./763 A.D.) recorded the genealogical chain of Musaylima as follows: Musaylima *al-kadhdhāb* b. Thumāma b. Kabīr b. Ḥabīb b. al-Ḥārith b. 'Abd al-Ḥārith.<sup>2</sup> Ibn Ḥazm gives his pedigree as Musaylima b. Thumāma b. Kathīr b. Ḥabīb and records his *kunya* as Abū Thumāma.<sup>3</sup> Al-Zurqānī rejects this tradition, stating that Musaylima was the nickname (*laqab*) of the "false prophet" and that his name was Thumāma. Thus, his *kunya* could not have been Abū Thumāma.<sup>4</sup>

Later sources record different details regarding Musaylima's name: his *laqab* was Musaylima and his *kunya* was Abū Thumāma and his

<sup>1</sup> See the different versions of his name in Mughaltay b. Qilī's *al-Zahr al-bāsim fī sirat abī l-qāsim*, MS. Leiden Or. 370, fol. 335a. Musaylima b. Thumāma is recorded in Suhaylī's *al-Rauḍu l-unuf*; Ibn Ishāq has his name as Musaylima b. Ḥabīb. This name appears also in the compilations of al-Ṭabarī, Abū 'Ubayda, Ibn Durayd and others. See both the traditions in Salama b. Muslim al-'Autabī al-Ṣuḥārī, *al-Ansāb*, vol. 1, p. 157; cf. al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā'u l-asmā'*, Maḥmūd Muḥammad Shākīr, ed. Cairo, 1941, vol. 1, p. 506.

<sup>2</sup> *Jamharat al-nasab*, p. 543.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansābi l-'arab*, p. 310. Ibn al Athīr, *al-Muraṣṣa'*, p. 113: "Abū Thumāma was the *kunya* of Musaylima the liar, who claimed that he was granted prophethood. Abū Thumāma is the *kunya* of the wolf; it is the *kunya* of the hoopoe (*hudhud*) as well."

<sup>4</sup> Al-Zurqānī, *Sharḥ 'alā l-mawāhibi l-laduniya li-l-Qaṣṣallānī*, vol. 7, p. 180.

name was Hārūn.<sup>5</sup> This name is recorded also by al-Khafājī.<sup>6</sup> Another tradition regarding his *kunya* is given by Ibn 'Abd al-Barr: his name was Musaylima b. Ḥabīb and his *kunya* was Abū Hārūn.<sup>7</sup> Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Qurtubī records in his *al-Ta'rif fi l-ansāb* the name of al-Maḥabba, a brother of Musaylima.<sup>8</sup>

The name Musaylima itself is a diminutive from Maslama and its meaning was in the beginning not necessarily derisive. We find in fact a verse of 'Umāra b. 'Aqīl in which he mentions Maslama *al-kadhdhāb* saying that the Banū Ḥanīfa would not gain glory until they enrage Muḍar (by fighting them).<sup>9</sup> As to the nickname *al-kadhdhāb*, the Prophet himself "invoked the (huge -k) amounts of dust on earth to attest that Musaylima was a liar."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Al-Diyārbakrī, *Ta'rikh al-khamīs*, vol. 2, p. 157.

<sup>6</sup> Al-Khafājī, *Nasīmu l-riyād fi sharḥi l-shifā li-l-qādī 'Iyād*, vol. 2, p. 486.

<sup>7</sup> Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Durar fi ikhtisāri l-maghāzī wa-l-siyar*, p. 270.

<sup>8</sup> Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Qurtubī, *al-Ta'rif fi l-ansāb*, p. 114: ... *wa-min banī ḥanīfata: musaylimatu l-kadhdhāb wa-akhūhu l-maḥabbatu bnā Thumāmata bni qaysi bni kathbīr (?) bni ḥabībī bni 'abdi l-ḥārithi bni tha'labata bni l-dūli bni ḥanīfata.*

<sup>9</sup> Al-Mubarrad, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 3, p. 26: *wa-qāla 'Umāratu bnu 'Aqīlin:*

*bal ayyuhā l-rākibu l-māḍī li-ṭiyyatihi: balligh ḥanīfata wa-nshur fihimu l-khabarā a-kāna maslamatu l-kadhdhābu qāla lakum: lan tudrikū l-majda ḥattā tughdībū muḍarā.*

<sup>10</sup> Al-Munāwī, *Fayḍu l-qadīr*, vol. 3, p. 20, n. 2648; on Wabar b. Mushir al-Ḥanafī the transmitter of the ḥadīth see, al-Bukhārī, *al-Ta'rikh al-kabīr*, vol. 8, p. 183, n. 2649; Ibn al-Athīr, *Usdu l-ghāba*, vol. 5, pp. 82-83; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī'āb*, vol. 4, p. 1551; al-Bustī, *Kitāb al-thiqāt*, vol. 3, p. 329. He was a companion of Musaylima and was sent by him to the Prophet; eventually he embraced Islam.

This oath, referring to huge quantities of dust or pebbles, was used in contradistinction to an oath referring to a specific number of pebbles. The latter oath was considered a *bid'a*. This *bid'a* is recorded in the *Musnad* of Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ. The author of this *Musnad*, Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm al-Dawraqī (d. 246 A. H.), 'Āmir Ḥasan Ṣabī, ed. Beirut 1407/1987, p. 150, no. 88. The daughter of Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ reports that her father entered the abode of a woman who sat in front of a heap of stone dates or of pebbles. She performed the *tasbīḥ* counting the date stones or the pebbles; then she threw them away. The Prophet advised her to perform the *tasbīḥ* in an easier way: "Glory be to Allāh according to what he created in heaven, glory be to Allāh according to what he created on earth, and glory be to Allāh according to what he created between them (*subḥāna Allāh 'adada mā bayna dhālika*)." See this tradition also in al-Haythamī, *Mawārid a-ḡam'ān*, p. 579 nos. 2330 and 2331.

A similar tradition is recorded in Abū Ya'lā al-Mawṣilī, *Musnad*, vol. 2, p. 66-67, no. 710. Another tradition recorded in al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, vol. 1, p. 547. See also *ibidem*, p. 548 for the tradition on the authority of 'Ā'isha bint Sa'd, traced back to Ṣafīyya bint Ḥuyayy who declared that in front of her there are 4000 stone dates by which she praises God. The Prophet advised her to use a comprehensive formula. The "comprehensive formula" was the answer to the *bid'as* of the *quṣṣās* who tried to introduce the *tasbīḥ* in which they counted the praises of God uttered by the people in the mosque. The pious leaders of the people in the mosques frowned upon these practices and forbade the people to count God's praises in this way. See also Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm al-Dawraqī, *Musnad Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ*, p. 150, no. 88; Abū Ya'lā al-Mawṣilī, *Musnad*, vol. 2, pp. 66-67, no. 710; and see the copious references of the editor; Al-Haythamī, *Mawārid al-ḡam'ān* p. 579, nos. 2313

Musaylima was born in al-Haddār, a place in Yamāma. He grew up there and there he started his prophetic activity. When the Banū Ḥanīfa heard about him, they invited him to Ḥajr, the chief city of the Yamāma. When Khālīd b. al-Walīd conquered Yamāma and killed Musaylima, the people of the villages (*qurā*) of al-Haddār were captured and expelled; in their place Khālīd settled people of the al-Ḥārith b. Ka'b of the Sa'd b. Zayd Manāt of Tamīm.<sup>11</sup>

Musaylima succeeded in gaining the support of many tribal groups in Yamāma as well as the confidence of the population in many districts. He made efforts to convince the people to believe in his mission as a prophet who receives revelation directly from "God the Merciful" (*al-raḥmān*); the revelation is transmitted to him through the angel Jibrīl. Musaylima himself came to be known as Raḥmān al-Yamāma. Muḥammad was accused by his enemies in Mecca of learning the basis of prophecy from a man in Yamāma named al-Raḥmān. The Meccans decided to send a delegation to the Jews in Medina to ask them about the truth of Muḥammad's prophethood, assuming that the Jews were knowledgeable about such matters, being schooled in the Holy Scriptures. The Jews advised the Meccans to question the Prophet on three issues: Dhū l-Qarnayn, *al-rūḥ* and *aṣḥāb al-kahf*; in addition they advised them to verify whether he was given the "Seal of Prophethood" (*khātam al-nubuwwa*). The Meccans indeed verified the existence of his *khātam al-nubuwwa* and asked the three additional questions. The Prophet asked Jibrīl and the angel answered the question about *aṣḥāb al-kahf* and Dhū l-Qarnayn; but concerning *al-rūḥ*, the angel merely said: *al-rūḥ min amri rabbī, lā 'ilma lī bihi*. The Meccans remarked sarcastically "Two sorcerers helped each other" (*sāḥirāni tazāharā*), hereby referring to the Torah and to the Furqān (i.e., the Qur'ān -k).<sup>12</sup>

The tradition about the Meccans' inquiry concerning the word al-Raḥmān and the position of Raḥmān al-Yamāma seems to be of some importance. The tradition indicates that the debate about the meaning of al-Raḥmān took place during Muḥammad's stay in Mecca. This is the period of discussions between the Meccans and the Prophet and it indicates that Musaylima had already started his prophetic activity at that time.

The report according to which the name Raḥmān al-Yamāma was discussed before the *hijra* finds support in a passage adduced by al-Tha'alībī in his *Thimār al-qulūb fī l-muḍāf wa-l-mansūb*. "Musaylima

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and no. 2330; Muḥammad b. Waḍḍāḥ al-Qurṭubī, *Kitāb al-bida'* II (Arabic text), pp. 160-70, no. 1-44.

<sup>11</sup> On the birthplace of Musaylima see Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, vol. 5, p. 394; *Lisān al-'Arab*, s.v. al-Haddār; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya fī gharībī l-ḥadīth*, vol. 5, p. 251.

<sup>12</sup> Ibn al-Jauzī, *al-Wafā bi-aḥwālī l-muṣṭafā*, p. 58.

falsely claimed prophethood while the Prophet was in Mecca before the *hijra*.”<sup>13</sup> When the Prophet came to Medina, he found the people mentioning Musaylima, quoting his sayings and referring to the opinions of Banū Ḥanīfa about him. The Prophet then delivered a speech in which he included Musaylima among the thirty liars who will arise before the coming of the false Messiah (*al-dajjāl*). Consequently, the Muslims started to revile Musaylima and vilify his name.<sup>14</sup>

The name al-Raḥmān is often mentioned in the Qur’ān. It became a subject of a heated discussion between the Muslims and the unbelievers, in connection with the meaning of the word in Qur’ān 17:110, where al-Raḥmān is another name of Allāh: “Say: Call upon Allāh or call upon al-Raḥmān: by whichever name you call on Him, His are the most beautiful names.” Here again the enemies of the Prophet claimed that at a certain stage the Qur’ān enjoined to worship two different deities instead of one God, Whom it had enjoined to worship earlier.

Al-Kalbī gives a lengthy explanation of the origin of the verse and the quotation of the word al-Raḥmān in the headings of the Sūras. In the beginning of Muḥammad’s revelation, the word al-Raḥmān was rarely used in the Qur’ān. But when many Jews embraced Islam and asked the Prophet about the numerous cases in which the word al-Raḥmān was recorded in the *Taurāt*, Qur’ān 17:110 was revealed.<sup>15</sup> A far-fetched tradition states that Musaylima adopted the name of Raḥmān before the

<sup>13</sup> ‘Abd al-Malik b. Muḥammad al-Tha’alibī, *Thimāru l-qulūb*, p. 146, no. 207.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem.*, p. 147.

<sup>15</sup> Al-Samarqandī, *Baḥr al-‘ulūm* (= *tafsīr al-Samarqandī*) vol. 2, pp. 192–193; cf. Qur’ān 13:30: *wa-hum yakfurūna bi-l-raḥmān. qul huwa rabbī*. It was ‘Abdallah b. Umayya l-Makhzūmī and his friends (see on him Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *al-Iṣāba*, vol. 4, pp. 11–14, no. 4546; Ibn al-Athīr, *Usdu l-ghāba*, vol. 3, pp. 118–119) who stated: “We do not know any Raḥmān except Musaylima the Liar.” *qul huwa rabbī*: it was the order of God given to Muḥammad. See also the comments on Qur’ān 17:110, in *Usd al-ghāba*, vol. 2, pp. 286–87. According to al-Ṭabarī (on Qur’ān 13:30), the order of Allāh to state that al-Raḥmān is God was intended to deny the claims of the unbelievers that al-Raḥmān is not the name of God. In the al-Ḥudaybiyya agreement, the infidels of Quraysh refused to sign the document in which the expression *rasūlu llāhi* as the title of the Prophet appeared, and in which the expression *bi-smi llāhi l-raḥmān al-raḥīm* was used as the document heading. The Prophet gave way and his title was eliminated. He was mentioned merely as “Muḥammad b. ‘Abdallah” and the preamble of the document was replaced by the Jāhilī formula, *bi-smika llāhumma*. See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, vol. 16, pp. 445–46, nos. 20397–98 (on Qur’ān 17:110); al-Tha’alibī, *al-Kashf wa-l-bayān*, MS. Aḥmad III 76/4, fol. 51a-b. See also al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, vol. 15, p. 121, where Ibn ‘Abbās reports that the Prophet was once overheard by an infidel when he invoked God, saying: *yā raḥmān, yā raḥīm*. The infidel in question notified his coreligionists who accused the Prophet of invoking two deities. Then Allāh revealed the verse in which God stated that Allah and al-Raḥmān are identical. See also al-Naysābūrī (*Gharā’ibu l-Qur’ān wa-raghā’ibu l-furqān*, vol. 15, pp. 92–3), according to whom the man who overheard the Prophet invoking *yā llāh, yā raḥmān* was Abū Jahl. Another reason for revealing the verses identifying Allāh with al-Raḥmān was the claim of the People of the Book that the mention of al-Raḥmān in the Qur’ān was very rare, while he was mentioned in the

birth of Muḥammad's father, 'Abdallah.<sup>16</sup> The very early date of this event recorded in the sources can probably be explained by the tradition that Musaylima was a man granted longevity (*mu'ammār*), killed in the battle of 'Aqrabā' in 12 A.H. at the age of 150 (or 140).<sup>17</sup>

Musaylima's epithet Raḥmān al-Yamāma seems to have been well known in Mecca. Umayya b. Khalaf refrained from addressing 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Auf, the famous companion of the Prophet, by his name; he rather addressed him by his Jāhili name, 'Abd 'Amr, which was changed by the Prophet to 'Abd al-Raḥmān. Umayya b. Khalaf called him by his Jāhili name in order to avoid calling him 'Abd al-Raḥmān, which could indicate that he was the servant of Raḥmān al-Yamāma, "the false prophet."<sup>18</sup>

The first person to use *bismi llāhi l-raḥmāni l-raḥīm* was the Prophet. The well known *muḥaddith* Abū 'Ā'isha<sup>19</sup> recorded on the authority of his father the changes in the headings of the Qur'ānic Sūras according to the time in which they were revealed. Quraysh asked to put in the headings of their documents and letters the expression *bi-smika llāhumma*. The Prophet used this heading as well. Then God revealed to him Sūrat Hūd in which the phrase *bi-smi llāhi majrāhā wa-marsāha* (verse 41) appeared. The Prophet then ordered to put the heading *bi-smi llāhi* at the beginning of each Sūra. Later Qur'ān 17 was sent down, including the phrase *qul: ud'ū llāha au ud'ū l-raḥmāna*. The Prophet then ordered to use the heading: *bi-smi llāhi l-raḥmāni*. Then Qur'ān 27 was revealed, with the sentence *innahu min sulaymāna wa-innahu bi-smi llāhi al-raḥmāni l-raḥīm* (verse 30); the Prophet ordered to use this sentence as a heading. After some time he reconsidered his decision: the *bi-smi llāhi* in this verse is preceded with the words: *innahu min sulaymāna*. "My brother Sulaymān," said the Prophet, "started the verse with his name, but I shall start with the name of God." He therefore established as a headline in letters and Qur'ānic Sūras the formula: *bi-smi llāhi l-raḥmāni l-raḥīm*. So runs the headline in all the Sūras, except Sūra 9. The *dār al-khilāfa* also used this headline in its correspondence.<sup>20</sup>

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*Taurāt* frequently; therefore, the verse identifying Allāh with Raḥmān was revealed. The story of the Prophet's invocation, overheard by Abū Jahl, appears also in al-Wāḥidī's *al-Wasiṭ*, vol. 3, p. 11, vol. 3, p. 133 (commenting on Qur'ān 17:110).

<sup>16</sup> Mughulṭāy, *al-Zahr al-bāsim*, MS. Leiden, Or. 370, fol. 141a.

<sup>17</sup> See al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'riḫh*, vol. 2, p. 120, al-Suyūṭī, *Ta'riḫh al-khulafā'*, p. 76.

<sup>18</sup> Al-Wāqidi, *al-Maghāzī*, vol. 1, p. 82 inf.

<sup>19</sup> See on him Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb l-tahdhīb*, vol. 7, p. 45, no. 83.

<sup>20</sup> See Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, vol. 1, pp. 263-64; al-Qāshānī, *Ra's māli l-nadīm*, p. 146.

## II

According to a tradition mentioned above, Musaylima started his prophetic mission before the Prophet's *hijra* to Medina.<sup>21</sup> The people of Yamāma were divided in their attitudes towards Musaylima: some of them respected him while others mocked him. He claimed that he shared the prophetic mission with Muḥammad; Jibrīl descends to Muḥammad in the same way as he descends to him. A certain al-Raḥḥāl (or al-Rajjāl), a faithful supporter of Musaylima, used to confirm the veracity of Musaylima's utterances and helped him to circulate his revelations.

In some of his speeches, Musaylima tried to convince his audience that he was as suitable for the prophetic mission as Muḥammad, also comparing the qualities of Quraysh with those of the Banū Ḥanīfa and the qualities of Mecca with those of Yamāma. "What made Quraysh more deserving of prophethood than you? They are not greater in number than you; your land is wider than theirs. Jibrīl descends from Heaven to me, like he descends to Muḥammad."<sup>22</sup>

Yamāma seems to have been a prime agricultural area. Its inhabitants boasted of the quality of their dates, which were sold for the highest prices. The people of Yamāma used to say: "We surpass the people of the Earth in East and West by five features: by the beauty of our women (*innahunna durriyyātu l-alwān*), by the high quality of our wheat (named *bayḍā'u l-yamāma*), by the sweetness of our dates, by the flavor of our meats (because of the quality of the Yamāmī pastures) and by the freshness of our water, which cleans the chest of phlegm."<sup>23</sup> The fertile soil of Yamāma could supply Mecca with the grain necessary for its population.

Skilled workers of Yamāma used to frequent Medina searching for employment. The Prophet praised the skilled artisans of the Banū Ḥanīfa; he employed them in the preparation of clay, when he ordered to build the mosque in Medina and his opinion of the Ḥanafī artisans was very favorable.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Al-Tha'ālibī, *Thimāru l-qulūb*, p. 146, no. 207.

<sup>22</sup> Ibn Hajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Kāfi l-shāf fī takhrīji aḥādīthi l-kashshāf*, p. 56; al-Tha'ālibī, *Thimāru l-qulūb*, pp. 146 inf.-47 sup.; and see al-Naysābūrī, *Gharāʾibu l-qurʾān*, vol. 7, p. 161, commenting on Qurʾān 6:93: ... *wa-man aẓlamu... aw qāla: ūḥiya ilayya wa-lam yūḥa ilayhi shayʾ: kāna musaylima yaqūlu: muḥammadun ṣallā llāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama rasūlu llāhi fī banī qurayshin wa-anā rasūlu llāhi fī banī ḥanīfa* ... and see al-Wāhidī, *Asbāb al-nuzūl*, p. 148; Ibn Shabba, *Taʾriḫ al-madīna al-munawwara*, vol. 2, pp. 572-74; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-qurʾāni l-ʿaẓīm*, vol. 3, p. 65 att.-66; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, vol. 11, pp. 535-6, nos. 63557-59; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ li-aḥkāmī l-qurʾān*, vol. 7, p. 39, cf. al-Ṭabrisī, *Majmaʿ al-bayān*, vol. 7, p. 132; al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr*, vol. 13, pp. 83-84.

<sup>23</sup> Ibn al-Faḥḥ, *Kitābu l-buldān, mukhtaṣar*, pp. 28-30.

<sup>24</sup> See al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Muʿjam al-kabīr*, vol. 8, p. 4021, no. 8254 (... *ḍaʿū l-ḥanafīyya wa-l-ḥina fa-innahū aḍbaṭukum li-l-ḥini*; and *ibid.*, p. 399, no. 8242: ... *Ṭalq*

Thus, Yamāma was a region whose economy was based on agriculture. This is reflected in the poetry of Jarīr who mocks its inhabitants for being peasants lacking in military prowess.

"Shame on the Banū Ḥanīfa," says Jarīr. "Bring the days of battles which cover their faces with blackness (*ḥumam*) which cannot be wiped out. On those days they do not take captives, but are led into captivity; and they are killed by their enemies if they do not pay poll-tax (*kharāj*). They are owners of palm trees and palm groves and of sown land; their swords are from wood and they carry shovels. Digging channels for irrigation (*dibār*; but there is another explanation of this word: patches of land for sowing -k) and grafting of palm trees are their customary occupations since ancient times."

In the following verse, Jarīr denies that any glory pertains to the Banū Ḥanīfa: when their praiseworthy deeds were counted, the Banū Ḥanīfa became aware that their presumed glory was worth nothing. Referring to the lack of horses in the habitat of the Banū Ḥanīfa, Jarīr scornfully says: "If you ask where the necks of the horses are, they would not know and would say about their tails: 'These are their necks.' " Jarīr emphasizes the ignorance of the Banū Ḥanīfa regarding horses by saying that they would burst into tears rather than saddle a horse even if this could save them from fatal fever. Jarīr concludes his vilification recalling the defeat of the army of the Banū Ḥanīfa:

"When they saw Khālīd (Ibn al-Walīd) annihilate their forces in al-ʿIrd,

and the words of their tyrant (i. e., Musaylima) surrendered them (to their enemy)

they capitulated and stretched out their hand for peace in humiliation,

when the Sword of God (i.e., Khālīd) was about to exterminate them."

*lammā raʿat Khālīdan bi-ʿl-ird ahlakahā  
qāṭlan wa aslamahā mā qāla ṭāghihā  
dānat wa aʿṭat yadan li-ʿl-silm ṣāghiratan  
min baʿdi mā kāda sayfu ʿllāhi yufnihā.*"<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *an abīhi qāla: banaytu maʿa rasūli llāhi (ṣalʿam) masjida l-madīnati, fa-kāna yaqūlu: makkīnū l-yamāmī minā l-ṭīni min aḥsanikum lahu massan . . . ; and see ibid., vol. 8, p. 398, no. 8239 and no. 8238; the Prophet's opinion about Ṭalq; see Ibn Ṣaʿd, al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā, vol. 5, p. 552: inna hādihā l-ḥanafīyya la-ṣāḥibu l-ṭīn.*

<sup>25</sup> Jarīr, *Dīwān*, p. 600.



## III

The territory of Yamāma was important not only because of its own value, but also because the Muslims had to pass through it on their way to propagate Islam in the eastern part of the peninsula. The story of Thumāma b. Uthāl, one of the leaders of the Banū Ḥanīfa, is therefore highly significant. Thumāma had intended to kill an emissary of the Prophet who trespassed upon the border of his region; but was prevented by his uncle from carrying out his plan.<sup>26</sup> When the Prophet heard about the thwarting of his messengers by Thumāma b. Uthāl, he invoked God to enable him to take hold of Thumāma, when he had no letter guaranteeing his safety.<sup>27</sup> Allāh responded to the invocation of the Prophet and when the Prophet seized him he had no letter of security; the Prophet could therefore freely decide his fate. Thumāma was imprisoned in the mosque of the Prophet, fastened to one of its pillars. After three days he was released. Thumāma washed in order to purify himself before embracing Islam; he uttered the *shahāda* and became a Muslim. He explained that he converted to Islam because the Prophet addressed him by his *kunya*, Abū Umāma.<sup>28</sup> This was the honorable way of addressing a free man.

It is significant to note that the man who had been detained by Thumāma before his journey to Mecca (i.e., before he was caught by the emissaries of the Prophet –k) was al-‘Alā’ b. al-Ḥaḍramī who was sent by the Prophet to Baḥrayn and succeeded to persuade al-Mundhir b. Sāwā to convert to Islam.<sup>29</sup> It was al-‘Alā’ b. al-Ḥaḍramī who sent the *kharāj* of al-Baḥrayn to the Prophet; the sum mentioned in the sources was 100,000 dirhams.<sup>30</sup> When al-‘Alā’ b. al-Ḥaḍramī was on his way back to Medina, he was detained by Thumāma b. Uthāl; he was released only after Thumāma embraced Islam.<sup>31</sup>

It was, of course, essential for the Prophet and for the nascent Muslim communities in Baḥrayn to obtain a free and secure passage for the emissaries of the Prophet who passed through Yamāma to the adjacent regions. The emissaries of the Prophet tried to create kernels of Muslim communities there. The small communities of converts were instructed by the Prophet’s messengers; small military formations were dispatched

<sup>26</sup> Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *al-Iṣāba fī tamyīzi l-ṣaḥāba*, vol. 3, p. 581, no. 4393, cf. al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā’u l-asmā’*, vol. 14, p. 257.

<sup>27</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā’u l-asmā’*, vol. 14, p. 257; cf. Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, vol. 5, p. 550.

<sup>28</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā’u l-asmā’*, vol. 14, p. 258. Cf. Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. 1, p. 267.

<sup>29</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā’u l-asmā’*, vol. 14, p. 258, l. 11 from bottom.

<sup>30</sup> Al-Zurqānī, *Sharḥ al-mawāhib al-laduniyya*, vol. 4, pp. 300–301. The messenger of al-‘Alā’ b. al-Ḥaḍramī who brought the *zakāt* and the *jizya* to Medina was al-‘Alā’ b. Jāriya l-Thaqafī; see on him Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba*, vol. 4, p. 540, no. 5645.

<sup>31</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā’u l-asmā’*, vol. 14, p. 258, l. 10 from bottom.

from Medina under the command of one of the *ṣahāba* in order to provide security for the Muslims, to extend their activities and to strive for the conversion of additional tribal units. The emissaries of the Prophet assisted the tribes faithful to the Medinan authority to pay their *zakāt* and to establish the superiority of Islam in relation to their Jewish and Christian neighbors. The result of the Muslim efforts in Baḥrayn can serve as an example: al-Mundhir b. Sāwā, acting under the guidance of al-‘Alā’ b. al-Ḥaḍramī, provided for the full application of Islamic law concerning the Jews, the Christians and the Zoroastrians. Significantly, this served as a precedent; the taxation of the Zoroastrians became the established law.<sup>32</sup>

#### IV

The conversion of Thumāma b. Uthāl to Islam initiated a new phase in the struggle against Musaylima’s authority in Yamāma. It ensured the growth of a safe Muslim community in Baḥrayn, facilitated the formation of a Yamāma garrison controlled by Thumāma b. Uthāl, and paved the way for the final battle against Musaylima. When Thumāma b. Uthāl was released by the Prophet and converted to Islam, he was advised by him to continue his journey to Mecca in order to perform his *‘umra*. When Thumāma arrived in Mecca, he was offended by a provocative question directed at him by the Meccan unbelievers: “Have you reneged on your religion?” (*a-ṣabauta*) (referring to his conversion to Islam –k). As a result, he decided to stop the supply of wheat from Yamāma to Mecca and refrain from sending even one grain unless permitted by the Prophet. He carried out his threat and the people of Mecca were afflicted by hunger. The unbelieving Meccans complained to the Prophet that they suffered the pangs of hunger and had to eat a mixture of blood and fine hair (*‘ilhiz*) and dog meat. Moved by their sufferings, the Prophet permitted Thumāma to resume the wheat supplies to Mecca.<sup>33</sup>

Before he returned to Medina in the year of his last pilgrimage (*hajjat*

<sup>32</sup> See “al-Mundhir b. Sāwā,” *EI*<sup>2</sup>, s.v. (M. J. Kister); “Madjūs,” *EI*<sup>2</sup>, s.v. (M. Morony).

<sup>33</sup> Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī‘āb*, vol. 1, pp. 213–16; al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā‘u l-asmā‘*, vol. 14, pp. 258–59; al-Kalā‘ī, *al-Iktifā*, vol. 2, p. 435. Many commentators of the Qur’ān record the story of Thumāma’s boycott against Mecca while explaining Qur’ān 23:76: “We did seize them with punishment, but they humbled not themselves to their Lord.” Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi‘ li-aḥkāmī l-qur’ān*, vol. 12, p. 143; al-Wāhidī, *Asbābu l-nuzūl*, 210 inf.–211; al-Naysābūrī, *Gharā’ibu l-qur’ān wa-raghā’ibu l-furqān*, vol. 18, p. 32; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr*, vol. 5, p. 13 inf.; al-Shaukānī, *Fathu l-qadīr*, vol. 3, p. 495; Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī al-Jayyānī, *al-Baḥru l-muḥīṭ*, vol. 6, p. 415 inf.; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, ed. Būlāq 1328 AH, vol. 18, pp. 34–35. Cf. Fred M. Donner; “Mecca’s Food Supplies and Muḥammad’s Boycott,” *JESHO* 20(1977): 249–66.

*al-wadā'*), the Prophet appointed Thumāma b. Uthāl as "governor of Yamāma."<sup>34</sup> However, Thumāma controlled only one part of the region, while the rest of it was under the sway of Musaylima. In order to strengthen Thumāma in his struggle against Musaylima, the Prophet decided to send Nahār al-Rahhāl to Yamāma after his return from his last pilgrimage.<sup>35</sup> This turned out to be a detrimental decision, because al-Nahār — who had stayed a long time in Medina, had become a student of the Qur'ān and studied it with the best scholars in Medina, publicly embraced Islam and had become a faithful Muslim — became a traitor who attested that Musaylima shared prophethood with Muḥammad and, like him, also received divine revelation. He became a close collaborator of Musaylima and even taught him Sūras of the Qur'ān, which he had learned in Medina.<sup>36</sup>

Nahār's defection weakened Thumāma's position. Consequently, the Prophet decided to dispatch a special messenger to Thumāma b. Uthāl to discuss with him the struggle against Musaylima and the possibility of killing him. The messenger was Furāt b. Ḥayyān.<sup>37</sup>

The scanty information which can be derived from Maqrīzī's *Imtā' al-asmā'* implies that the Prophet wrote to Thumāma b. Uthāl advising him to seek help from Qaysī and Tamīmī converts to Islam. Thumāma marched out with his followers to Washm and placed the auxiliary troops of Tamīm and Qays at his rearguard. He was helped by al-Zibriqān b. Badr.<sup>38</sup> A volunteer who came to assist Thumāma b. Uthāl was

<sup>34</sup> See al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā'u l-asmā'*, vol. 14, p. 536, l. 1; *raja'a l-nabiyyu ilā l-madīna 'āma ḥajjati l-wadā' wa-'āmiluhu 'alā l-yamāma Thumāma b. Uthāl*.

<sup>35</sup> See al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā'u l-asmā'*, vol. 14, p. 536, ll. 1-2: ... *thumma ba'atha Nahāran ba'da mā balaghahu khurūju musaylimata mu'laman*.

<sup>36</sup> See on Rahhāl (or Rajjāl) b. 'Unfuwa: al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā'u l-asmā'*, vol. 14, pp. 229-31, 536 (the text is corrupt here); Ibn Ḥubaysh, *al-Ghazawāt*, vol. 1, p. 52; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, vol. 5, p. 51; Ibn Junghul, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 85a, has the attestation of al-Rahhāl that Musaylima shared in the revelation of the Prophet, with the remark of Ibn Junghul about al-Rahhāl: *wa-kāna hādihā l-mal'ūn min akbari man aḍalla ahla l-yamāma ḥattā ittaba'u musaylimata* ... See also *ibidem*, fol. 85a, inf. ... *fa-lammā kāna zamanu l-ridda ba'athahu abū bakrin ilā ahli l-yamāma yad'ūhum ilā llāhi ta'ālā wa-yuthabbituhun 'alā l-islām fa-rtadda ma'a musaylimata wa-shahida lahu bi-l-nubuwwa*. Cf. Abū 'Ubayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām, *Kitābu l-amwāl*, p. 280, no. 691. The deputation of the Banū Ḥanīfa, including al-Mujjā'a b. Murāra, al-Rahhāl b. 'Unfuwa and Muḥakkim b. al-Ṭufayl (= Muḥakkim al-Yamāma), embraced Islam.

<sup>37</sup> Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī'āb*, vol. 3, p. 1258, no. 2070 and vol. 1, p. 21b, no. 278: ... *wa-ba'atha rasūlu llāhi (ṣal'am) furāta bna ḥayyān ilā thumāma bni uthāl fī qitāli musaylima wa-qatlihi*. See also Ibn al-Athīr's *Uṣd al-ghāba*, vol. 4, p. 175 penult.; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-Iṣāba*, vol. 5, pp. 357-58, no. 6969; al-Marzubānī, *Mu'jam al-shu'arā'*, p. 317.

<sup>38</sup> See on him Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-Iṣāba*, vol. 2, p. 550, no. 2784. Names of other fighters who joined Thumāma do not reveal their tribal affiliation: Qays, Ṣafwān and Wakī'.

‘Amr b. Ḥazn al-Namirī.<sup>39</sup> The valuable note recorded in the *Iṣāba* says: “He came to help Thumāma b. Uthāl in the fight against the people of Yamāma after the death of the Prophet.” This was the first military action of a Muslim force in Yamāma, led by Thumāma b. Uthāl of the Banū Ḥanīfa, who was aided by his Muslim allies from Tamīm and Qays. The battle took place in the territory of Yamāma and ended with a remarkable victory of the Muslims. The Prophet was informed of the victory.<sup>40</sup>

## V

It is now necessary to study the different stages of the contacts between Musaylima and the Prophet, Musaylima’s demands, the Prophet’s answers, the Prophet’s meetings with tribal leaders, and with converts to Islam.

According to reports recorded in early sources, the Prophet used to frequent the markets of Arabia in order to meet the tribal leaders, ask them to renounce their Jāhili beliefs, and invite them to embrace Islam. He used to teach them the Islamic tenets and read them various Qur’ānic verses. The leaders of the tribes summoned by the Prophet to convert used to listen to the Prophet, but did not hasten to respond positively. Even if they intended to convert, they had some conditions which had to be fulfilled beforehand. An instructive case is the story of the Prophet’s negotiations with the tribe of ‘Āmir b. Ṣaṣa’a. The Prophet approached the leader of this tribe, asking him to support his effort to spread Islam and to grant him protection against his adversaries. The leader of the tribe was aware that he could extend the authority of his tribe by granting protection to “the young man of Quraysh (*fatā Quraysh*).” But he asked the Prophet to cede his authority before his death to the head of the ‘Āmir b. Ṣaṣa’a. The answer of the Prophet was unequivocal. He quoted Qur’ān 7:128: “Verily the earth is Allāh’s. He gives it as heritage to whomsoever He pleases of His servants and the end is for the God-fearing,” implying that it is not within Muḥammad’s power to cede Allāh’s earth to anyone. The reaction of the tribal leader was formulated in the form of a question: “Are we going to expose our chests (to the spears of the Arabs –k) for your cause, and if Allāh grants you victory – the authority would be granted by you to somebody else? We do not need to struggle for your cause.” (*lā ḥājata lanā fī amrika*).<sup>41</sup> Some twenty years later (i.e., a year before the death of the Prophet –k),

<sup>39</sup> Maqrīzī (*Imtā’u l-asmā’*, vol. 14, p. 536, ll. 7–8 from bottom) has ‘Amr b. Ḥazn Annairī. Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *al-Iṣāba*, vol. 4, p. 621, no. 5815 has the correct ‘Amr b. Ḥazn al-Namirī.

<sup>40</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā’u l-asmā’*, vol. 14, p. 537, l. 4 from bottom.

<sup>41</sup> Al-Suhaylī, *al-Rauḍu l-unuf*, vol. 4, p. 38 inf.–39.

another leader of the 'Āmir b. Ṣa'sa'a, 'Āmir b. al-Ṭufayl, came to the Prophet and stated that he would be prepared to embrace Islam if he would be granted prophethood after Muḥammad's death, given the right to collect the *mirbā'* (i.e., the fourth part of the spoils -k) and granted the authority to rule the Bedouin population, while the Prophet would be given authority over the sedentary population. One of the believers present said to him "(Even) if you ask the Prophet (only for) an unripe date (*sayāba*) of the dates of Medina, the Prophet would refuse your request."<sup>42</sup>

The leaders of the Banū Ḥanīfa met the Prophet at the beginning of his prophetic mission. The Prophet summoned them to convert to Islam, but their answer was the harshest he received from any Arab tribe.<sup>43</sup> The Prophet's opinion of the Banū Ḥanīfa was similarly harsh: "The most detestable tribal group in the opinion of the Prophet are the Banū Ḥanīfa."<sup>44</sup> The Prophet considered Musaylima as one of the three false prophets whom he mentioned by name as those expected to appear before the Day of Judgement (the other two being al-Aswad al-'Ansī and al-Mukhtār). He is also reported to have said: "The worst tribes are the Banū Ḥanīfa, the Banū Umayya and the Thaḳīf."<sup>45</sup>

It may be stressed here that Musaylima never denied Muḥammad's prophethood but merely claimed that he was granted a share (*ushriktu*) in prophethood. Sometimes he announced that the revelation was brought to him directly from Heaven by the angel Jibrīl. Muslim tradition states that the *ridda* of Musaylima and of al-Aswad al-'Ansī was different from the *ridda* of the Arab idolaters who had converted to Islam, but later apostatized and returned to polytheism. Musaylima and al-Aswad al-'Ansī remained believers in one God, but made false claims concerning their prophetic mission.<sup>46</sup> In the exchange of letters between Musaylima and the Prophet, Musaylima addresses the Prophet: *rasūlu*

<sup>42</sup> Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Qaṣhānī ibn Bābah, *Ra's māl al-nadīm*, p. 147; and see a comprehensive description of this event in Diyārbakrīs' *Ta'riḫ al-khamīs*, vol. 2, pp. 192-94; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Sīra al-nabawiyya*, vol. 4, pp. 109-16.

<sup>43</sup> Al-Suhaylī, *al-Raḍu l-unuf*, vol. 4, p. 38: Ka'b b. Mālik: *inna rasūla llāhi (ṣ) atā banī ḥanīfata fī manāzilihim fa-da'āhum ilā llāhi wa-'araḍa 'alayhim nafsahu, fa-lam yakun aḥadun min al-'arabi aqbaḥa 'alayhi raddan minhum*.

<sup>44</sup> Al-Bukhārī, *Ta'riḫ*, vol. 5, p. no. 1004: *abghaḍu l-aḥyā'i ilā l-nabiyyi, ṣal'am, banū ḥanīfa*.

<sup>45</sup> Al-Ḥakīm al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, vol. 4, pp. 480-81; Ibn Kathīr, *Shamā'ilu l-rasūl*, p. 457.

<sup>46</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya fī gharībi l-ḥadīth*, vol. 4, p. 187: ... *wa-fī ḥadīthi l-ridda: wa-kafara man kafara mina l-'arab. aṣḥābu l-ridda kānū ṣinfayni: ṣinfun irtaddū 'ani l-dīni wa-kānū ṭā'ifatayni: iḥdāhumā aṣḥābu musaylimata wa-l-aswadi l-'ansī l-ladhīna āmanū bi-nubuwwatihimā wa-l-ukhrā ṭā'ifatun irtaddū 'ani l-islāmi wa-'ādū ilā mā kānū 'alayhi fī l-jāhiliyyati, wa-ha'ulā'i ittafaqat al-ṣaḥābatu 'alā qitālihim wa-sabyihim ... thumma lam yanqariḍ 'aṣru l-ṣaḥābati ḥattā ajma'ū 'alā anna l-murtadda lā yusbā*.

*llāhi*. The Prophet addresses Musaylima: *musaylima al-kadhdhāb*.<sup>47</sup> The phrases in the letter of Musaylima which form a clear declaration that the earth (i.e., by which term the territories of Yamāma and the Muslim territory with the capital city of Medina are meant –k) forms an entity, half of which was allotted to Quraysh, while the other half was given to the Banū Ḥanīfa, “but Quraysh are a people who exceed their bounds.” (*fa-innā lanā niṣfu l-arḍi wa-li-qurayshin niṣfuhā wa-lakinnahum ya’tadūna*). The Prophet vehemently rejected the idea of dividing the territories in question with Musaylima: by quoting Qur’ān 7:128 again (see above, note 42), he made it clear that any agreement with Musaylima was out of the question.

Some sources date the exchange of the letters to a very late period of the life of the Prophet. According to the report of al-Ya’qūbī, Musaylima embraced Islam but changed his attitude and started his prophetic career claiming that he was Muḥammad’s partner in prophethood. At that time he wrote to the Prophet the letter quoted above and received the Prophet’s response. It is evident that this report recorded by al-Ya’qūbī and others is unreliable. Also misleading is al-Ya’qūbī’s report saying that Musaylima was killed at the age of 150 years.<sup>48</sup>

A prelude to the Prophet’s negotiations with Musaylima was the exchange of letters between the Prophet and Hawdha b. ‘Alī, the leader of the Arab tribes in Yamāma. The Prophet’s efforts to convince Hawdha to embrace Islam were unsuccessful. The influential and respected leader was appointed by the Persian emperor in order to secure the passage of

<sup>47</sup> See al-Khāzin, *Lubābu l-ta’wīl*, vol. 2, p. 53: *min musaylimata rasūli llāhi ilā muḥammadin rasūli llāhi*. The answer of the Prophet: *min muḥammadin rasūli llāhi ilā musaylimata l-kadhdhābi*. And see al-Baghawī, *Ma’ālim al-tanzīl*, on the margin of *Lubābu l-ta’wīl*, for the same address and the same answers. The letter of Musaylima in Ibn Kathīr’s *al-Sīra al-nabawiyya* vol. 4, p. 98 sup. reads: *min musaylimata rasūli llāhi ilā muḥammadin rasūli llāhi, salāmun ‘alaynā; ammā ba’du fa-innī qad ushriktu fi l-amri ma’aka, fa-inna lanā niṣfa l-amri wa-li-qurayshin niṣfa l-amri wa-lakinna qurayshan qaumun ya’tadūna*. The text recorded in al-Tha’alibī’s *Thimāru l-qulūb*, p. 148 differs in one phrase: *wa-inna lanā niṣfa l-arḍi wa-li-qurayshin niṣfahā*. See also Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Bayhaqī, *al-Maḥāsīn wa-l-masāwī*, vol. 1, p. 49; Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyya, *Zād al-ma’ād*, vol. 3, p. 31 inf.; Shihābu l-Dīn al-Khafājī, *Nasīmu l-riyāq*, vol. 3, p. 170, vol. 2, p. 486; Ibn Kathīr, *Shamā’ilu l-rasūl*, p. 387 inf.; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, vol. 5, p. 51, vol. 6, p. 341; al-Anṣārī, *al-Miṣbāḥ al-muḍī*, vol. 2, pp. 290–92; al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā’u l-asmā’*, vol. 1, pp. 508–09 ed. Shākīr; al-Maqdisī, *Kitāb al-ba’d’i wa-l-ta’rikkh*, vol. 5, p. 161; ‘Umar b. Shabba al-Numayrī, *Ta’rikkh al-madīna al-nunawwara*, vol. 2, p. 572; al-Bayhaqī, *Dalā’ilu l-nubuwwa*, vol. 5, p. 330; al-Rāghib al-Isfahānī, *Muḥāḍarāt al-udabā’*, vol. 4, p. 431, l. 3 from bottom; al-Ṣāliḥī, *Subulu l-hudā wa-l-rashād*, vol. 6, p. 497; Ibn Junghul, *Ta’rikkh*, vol. 2, fol. 54b inf.–55a sup.; Ibn Sa’d, *al-Tabaqāt al-kubrā*, vol. 1, p. 273 (the messenger of the Prophet was ‘Amr b. Umayya al-Ḍamrī); al-Ḥalabī, *Insānu l-uyūn*, vol. 3, p. 253 inf.; al-Ya’qūbī, *Ta’rikkh*, vol. 2, p. 120.

<sup>48</sup> Al-Ya’qūbī, *Ta’rikkh*, vol. 2, p. 120. It is likely that the letter was written in 9 A. H., according to the report by the early scholar ‘Abd Allah b. Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī. See his *al-Jamī’*, p. 295.

Persian caravans from Yamāma to Najrān. He was respected by the tribes to such an extent that it was enough to put the name "Hawdha" on the flags of the caravans in order to ensure their safe passage. Our sources indicate that Hawdha possessed the qualities necessary for a tribal leader in the Arabian peninsula: he was described as being the poet of his people, their orator and an awe-inspiring person (*anā shā'iru qaumī wa khaṭībuhum wa-l-'arabu tahābu maqāmī*).<sup>49</sup> Hawdha was given by the Persian ruler a cap (*qalansuwa*) worn under the turban (*'imāma*) as a reward for his faithful service to the Persian sovereign; the cap embedded with jewels was worth 30,000 dirhams.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, to call him "the king of the Arabs" was an exaggeration.<sup>51</sup>

The Prophet sent his emissary Salīḥ b. 'Amr to Hawdha, who entertained him in a friendly manner and granted him valuable gifts before his departure. Hawdha's answer to the Prophet's letter was kind: he praised the gentle words of the Prophet, and remarked that if the Prophet granted him a part of his authority before his death, he (i.e., Hawdha) would embrace Islam and would come to his aid.

The Prophet considered his answer unsatisfactory; he rejected his stipulation of inheriting his authority and invoked God to free him from Hawdha. Hawdha died a short time after the conquest of Mecca by the Prophet.<sup>52</sup>

Al-Wāqidī mentions a conversation between Hawdha and a chief (*urkūn*) from Damascus. The *urkūn* blamed Hawdha for not answering a letter from the Prophet; the Prophet is mentioned in the Injīl and is described in this book as "the prophet of the Arabs." Hawdha's conversion to Islam could have strengthened his position as governor of Yamāma.<sup>53</sup>

Some reports say that the Prophet sent Salīḥ b. 'Amr to Hawdha and to Thumāma b. Uthāl, "the two heads of Yamāma" (*ra'īsā l-yamāma*). He sent him on this mission in the year 6 or 7 A.H.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt al-kubrā*, vol. 1, p. 262.

<sup>50</sup> See al-Kalbī, *Nasab ma'add*, vol. 1, p. 63; idem, *Jamharat al-nasab*, p. 539; Ibn Durayd, *al-Ishtiqāq*, p. 348 sup.; *Lisān al-'arab*, s.v. hwdh.

<sup>51</sup> See the critical observations of al-Hillī in his *al-Manāqibu 'l-mazyadiyya*, pp. 53–5: ... *innamā kānat kharazātun lahu ta'ammama 'alayhā fā-mudiḥa bi-dhālīka 'alā mad-habi l-shu'arā' fī l-tawassu'i fī l-qauli wa-tajawwuzihim fī l-madhi wa-l-ṣifati wa-l-hijā'i wa-l-tashbihi* .... See also M. J. Kister, "The Crowns of This Community," *JSAI* 24(2000): 217–45.

<sup>52</sup> Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, *'Uyūnu l-athar*, vol. 2, pp. 269–70; al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥu l-buldān*, pp. 118–19.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.; and see about the letter of the Prophet to Hawdha: Ibn Sa'd al-Andalusī, *Nashwat al-ṭarab*, vol. 2, p. 631; al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā'u l-asmā'*, vol. 1, p. 309.

<sup>54</sup> Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-Iṣāba*, vol. 3, p. 162, no. 3424; al-Mawṣilī, *al-Wasīla*, vol. 4, p. 2, 115; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī'āb*, vol. 2, p. 645, no. 1040; al-'Awtabī, *al-Ansāb*, vol. 1, p. 157; and see Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Aḥmad b. Ḥudayda al-Anṣārī, *al-Miṣbāḥ al-muḍiyy*, vol. 1, p. 214.

According to Watt, Hawdha was apparently a Christian. He began negotiations with Muḥammad, but had not become a Muslim by the time of his death in 630 A.D.<sup>55</sup> According to a report recorded by Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Mun'im al-Himyārī, Hawdha died as a Christian in 8 A.H.<sup>56</sup>

## VI

The Prophet's meetings with Musaylima took place in Medina. One of the earliest meetings took place in a grove of palm trees. According to an early tradition transmitted on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās, Musaylima arrived in Medina with a great military force (*qadima fī jayshin* 'azīm) and alighted in a plantation of palm trees belonging to the daughter of al-Hārith (*nazala fī nakhli ibnati l-hārith*).<sup>57</sup>

When the Prophet heard the news about the arrival of Musaylima with his convoy and his alighting in the "court of the daughter of al-Hārith"<sup>58</sup> he went out with Thābit b. Qays b. Shammās<sup>59</sup> to meet him. It should be stressed that the Prophet went out to meet Musaylima because he was eager to convince him and his people to embrace Islam.<sup>60</sup> When Musaylima asked the Prophet to grant him a share in prophethood, the Prophet flatly refused.

Musaylima's attempt to thwart the prophetic mission of Muḥammad was referred to in a dream seen by Muḥammad. Thābit b. Qays b. Shammās was left with Musaylima in order to explain to him the content of the dream and its meaning: the Prophet only remarked that one of the persons whom he saw in the dream was Musaylima. Thābit b. Qays explained to Musaylima that the Prophet saw in his dream two golden bracelets pressing on his arms. Allāh revealed to him that the two golden bracelets symbolised the efforts of the two false prophets, al-Aswad al-'Ansī and Musaylima, to curb his activities. The Prophet was ordered

<sup>55</sup> See *EI*<sup>2</sup>, s.v. Ḥanīfa b. Ludjaym (W. Montgomery Watt).

<sup>56</sup> Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Mun'im al-Himyārī, *Kitāb al-rawḍi l-mi'tār fī khabari l-aqtār*, p. 412.

<sup>57</sup> In some sources this text is corrupt and reads *nazala fī nakhli abihi al-Hārithi*. See al-Mu'ammil b. Ihāb, *Juz'*, fol. 5a, penult.: ... *anna musaylimata qadima fī jayshin* 'azimin ḥattā *nazala fī nakhli abihi l-hārithi bi-nāḥiyati l-madinati* ...; and so in the printed edition of *Juz'* al-Mu'ammil b. Ihāb, p. 125 l. 3, no. 38. This reading is erroneous: the name of Musaylima's father was not al-Hārith; his father had no plantations of palm trees in Medina, nor had Musaylima any plantations there.

<sup>58</sup> See Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-madīna al-munawwara*, vol. 2, p. 527, notes 4–5. The grove belonged to a woman of the Anṣār. See the correction of this error by the editors of *al-Sira al-nabawiyya li-bni hishām*, vol. 3, p. 251, note 2; Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, *Uyūnu l-athar*, vol. 2, p. 235.

<sup>59</sup> See on him al-Maqdisī, *al-Istibṣār*, pp. 117–19.

<sup>60</sup> See e.g., al-Zurqānī, *Sharḥ al-mawāhib al-laduniyya*, vol. 4, p. 22 inf.; ... *fa-aqbala ḡallā llāhu 'alayhi wa-sallam ta'līfan lahu wa-li-qaumihi rajā'a islāmihim wa-li-yublighahu mā unzila ilayhi*.



to destroy the two bracelets; when he destroyed them, he was no longer under their pressure. Before his death, the Prophet told his daughter Fāṭima about this dream and its interpretation.<sup>61</sup>

The next meeting of the Prophet with Musaylima took place in connection with the arrival of the delegation of the Banū Ḥanīfa in Medina. The delegation came with Musaylima, who was veiled, clad in clothes which concealed him and entered the room of the Prophet. This kind of attire indicates the respect in which Musaylima was held: spiritual leaders of a tribe (*kāhins*), soothsayers and "holy persons"<sup>62</sup> were clothed in this fashion.

ʿAlī b. Burhān al-Dīn al-Ḥalabī, the author of the *Sīra ḥalabiyya*, assumes that Musaylima came to Medina twice to meet the Prophet. When he came for the first time, he was accompanied by a large number of men who came with him to protect him, because he was a "follower" (*tābiʿ*), in need of protection. But when he came the second time, he was in a position of leadership (*kāna matbūʿan*). His people covered him with clothes as a status symbol (... *wa-hādhā, ay satruhu bi-l-thiyābi, huwa l-munāsibu li-kaunihi matbūʿan*).<sup>63</sup> The difference between these two meetings is stressed by al-ʿAynī in his '*Umdat al-qārī*'.<sup>64</sup> Musaylima took care of the luggage of the delegation of the Banū Ḥanīfa and, out of pride and insolence, refused to enter the room in which the Prophet entertained its members. The Prophet acted with magnanimity: he stated that Musaylima, the luggage keeper of the delegation was not the worst of them, and ordered to grant him five ounces of silver, the same gift given to other members of the delegation.<sup>65</sup> These actions of the

<sup>61</sup> On this dream, see Ibn Junghul, *Taʾriḫ*, vol. 2, p. fol. 54b, sup.; Ibn Shabba, *Taʾriḫ al-madīna al-munawwara*, vol. 2, pp. 572-3, 575; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Khaṣāʾiṣu l-kubrā*, vol. 2, p. 147; al-Zurqānī, *Sharḥu l-mawāhibi l-laduniyya*, vol. 4, pp. 22-3, vol. 7, p. 179 inf.-181; Ibn Kathīr, *Shamāʾilu l-rasūl*, p. 387; Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīra al-nabawiyya*, vol. 4, p. 246; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, vol. 8, p. 72 inf.; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, Shākir, ed., vol. 11, pp. 535-6; Abū l-Mahāsīn, *al-Muʿtaṣar*, vol. 1, pp. 224-25; al-Diyārbakrī, *Taʾriḫ al-khamīs*, vol. 2, p. 157; al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 5, p. 216; Burhān al-Dīn al-Ḥalabī, *al-Sīra al-ḥalabiyya*, vol. 3, p. 253; al-Thaʿālibī, *Thimāru l-qulūb*, pp. 147-148; Ibn Ḥubaysh, *Ghazawāt*, vol. 1, p. 51; Ibn al-Jauzī, *al-Wafā bi-aḥwālī l-muṣṭafā*, p. 764; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Sīra al-nabawiyya*, vol. 4, p. 93 inf.-95; al-Khāzin, *Lubābu l-taʾwīl*, vol. 2, p. 132; al-Baghawī, *Maʿālimu l-tanzīl*, vol. 2, p. 132; al-ʿAynī, '*Umdat al-qārī*', vol. 18, p. 24; Ibn al-Athīr al-Jazarī, *Jāmiʿ al-uṣūl*, vol. 12, p. 375, no. 9480. al-Maqrīzī, *Imtāʿu l-asmāʾ*, vol. 14, pp. 229, 524-5, 532-3; Ismāʿīl b. Muḥammad al-Isfahānī, *Kitāb dalāʾili l-nubuwwati*, pp. 97-98, no. 93.

<sup>62</sup> See, e.g., U. Rubin, "The Shrouded Messenger. On the interpretation of *al-muzzammil* and *al-muddaththir*," *JSAI* 16(1993): 96-107.

<sup>63</sup> Al-Ḥalabī, *Insān al-ʿuyūn*, vol. 3, p. 253.

<sup>64</sup> Al-ʿAynī, '*Umdat al-qārī*', vol. 18, p. 23 l. 5 from bottom.

<sup>65</sup> al-Ḥalabī, *Insān al-ʿuyūn*, vol. 3, p. 252, inf.; al-ʿAynī, '*Umdat al-qārī*', vol. 18, p. 23; cf. Ibn Kathīr, *al-Sīra al-nabawiyya*, vol. 4, p. 99 inf.; al-Diyārbakrī, *Taʾriḫ al-khamīs*, vol. 2, p. 194;

Prophet enabled Musaylima to deduce falsely that Muḥammad declared that he considered him as his partner in prophethood ("he is not the worst among you").

According to another version, the Prophet did speak with the "veiled" Musaylima and heard his requests; the Prophet stated that even if he asked only for a splinter of the palm tree branch which he held in his hand, he would refuse his request.<sup>66</sup> The delegation of the Banū Ḥanifa reverted to the faith of Musaylima.<sup>67</sup>

It may be mentioned that the Prophet used to meet the emissaries of Musaylima who came to Medina in the presence of his Companions. When these emissaries declared both Muḥammad and Musaylima prophets sent by God to their respective peoples, the Muslim believers tried to attack them. The Prophet restrained the believers, stating that messengers are to be protected against any act of violence.<sup>68</sup> Some commentators of the Qur'ān state that this statement of the Prophet is based on Qur'ān 9:6: "...and if anyone of the idolaters ask protection of thee, grant him protection so that he may hear the word of Allāh; then convey him to his place of security. That is because they are a people who have no knowledge."<sup>69</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, *Uyūnu l-athar*, vol. 2, p. 235.

<sup>67</sup> See al-Zurqānī, *Sharḥ al-mawāhibi l-laduniyya*, vol. 4, p. 24, inf.: ... *wa-ṣarraḥa bi-ḥaḍratī qaumihi annahu lau sa'alahu l-qiṭ'ata mina l-jarīdi mā a'ṭāhu ... wa-yuḥtamalu an yakūna musaylimatu qadima marratayni, al-ūlā kāna tābi'an wa-kāna ra'sa banī ḥanīfata ghayruhu wa-li-hādhā aqāma fī ḥifzi riḥālihim wa-marratan matbū'an wa-fihā khāṭabahu l-nabiyyu ṣallā llāhu 'alayhi wa-sallam*. However, al-Zurqānī doubts whether this description of Musaylima's visits to Medīna and about his status (*al-tābi'* and *al-matbū'*) is sound. *Wa-hādhā ba'idun jiddan*, says al-Zurqānī: *fa-qad qāla huwa, a'nī l-ḥāfiẓa, wa-hādhā ya'nī ḥadītha bni isḥāqa ma'a shudhūdhihi ḍa'ifu l-sanadi li-inqitā'ihi; wa-amru musaylimata kāna 'inda qaumihi akbara min dhālika fa-qad kāna yuqālu lahu raḥmānu l-yamāma li-'izami qadrihi fihim. fa-man yakūnu maqāmuhu 'inda qaumihi akbara min da'wā l-nubuwwati yab'udu kulla l-bu'di an yakūna tābi'an; fa-l-awlā qauluhu "aw al-qisṣatu wāḥidatun" li-annahu l-aṣlu "wa-kānat iqāmatuhu fī riḥālihim bi-'khtiyārihi anafatan minhu wa-'stikbāran an yaḥḍura majlisa l-nabiyyi ṣallā llāhu 'alayhi wa-sallama wa-'āmalahu 'alayhi l-ṣalātu wa-l-salāmu mu'āmalata l-karami 'alā 'ādātihi fī l-isti'lāfi, fa-qāla li-qaumihi, laysa bi-sharrikum ay makānan li-kaunihi kāna yaḥḥaḍu riḥālahum wa-arāda isti'lāfahu bi-l-iḥsāni bi-l-qauli (l-madkhūri) wa-l-fī'li, ḥaythu a'ṭāhu mithla ma a'ṭā qaumahu, fa-lammā lam yufid fī musaylimata tawajjaha bi-nafsihi ilayhi ...*

<sup>68</sup> See, e. g., Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmi'u l-uṣūl*, vol. 12, p. 377, no. 4981: when the Prophet read the letter of Musaylima handed to him by his two messengers, he stated, "By God, were it not that the messengers should not be killed, I would strike your necks" (*amā wa-llāhi lau anna l-rusula lā tuqtalu la-ḍarabtu a'nāqakumā*).

<sup>69</sup> See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, vol. 3, pp. 366-7. The Prophet uttered this statement in connection with the emissaries of Quraysh who came to the Prophet to arrange the pact of Ḥudaybiyya, which Quraysh are said to have violated after a short time. The Prophet uttered this statement again when the messengers of Musaylima arrived in Medina. One of them, Ibn al-Nawwāḥa, attested in the Prophet's presence that Musaylima was a Messenger of Allāh. The Prophet did not punish him, but when

The story about the sectarian group of Ibn al-Nawwāḥa, the former emissary of Musaylima, who refused to acknowledge the exclusive prophethood of Muḥammad and insisted that Musaylima was also a prophet is a test case for the Muslim attitude towards the emissaries of unbelievers. When Ibn al-Nawwāḥa and Ibn Uthāl, the messengers of Musaylima, were asked by the Prophet whether they attest to his prophethood, they asked him in turn whether he attested to the prophethood of Musaylima. The Prophet released the two messengers of Musaylima because of their immunity.<sup>70</sup> ‘Abdallah b. Mas‘ūd asked Ibn al-Nawwāḥa: “Is there a book added to the Book of God and a messenger after the Messenger of God?”<sup>71</sup>

The execution of Ibn al-Nawwāḥa, while other adherents of Musaylima were pardoned and later accepted into the Muslim community, is explained by al-Jaṣṣāṣ as follows: most believers of Musaylima repented and became faithful Muslims, while Ibn al-Nawwāḥa admitted that he merely feigned belief in order to save his life (... *ayna mā kunta tuḥziru mina l-islāmi? qāla: kuntu attaḥiqum bihi*). Scholars who assume that the repentance of a *zindīq* has to be rejected, quote the case of Ibn al-Nawwāḥa, who kept his unbelief secret and pretended to be a believer, by way of *taḥiyya*. Ibn Nawwāḥa’s execution took place in the presence of some of the Prophet’s Companions. ‘Abdallah b. Mas‘ūd informed the Caliph ‘Uthmān about the capture of Musaylima’s followers; the Caliph ordered him to call them to Islam and to pronounce the *shahāda*. Those who fulfilled the order were to be pardoned; those who remained loyal to

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Ibn al-Nawwāḥa persisted in his disbelief after the death of the Prophet, circulating the tenets of Musaylima’s faith, he was caught in Kūfa by Ibn Mas‘ūd who did not hesitate to decapitate him. Cf. Abū l-Maḥāsin, *al-Mu’taṣar mina l-mukhtaṣar*, vol. 1, p. 225 inf.-225 sup.; and see Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, vol. 5, p. 52; al-Bayhaqī, *Dalā’ilu l-nubuwwa*, vol. 5, p. 332 (see *ibid.* the remark of ‘Abdallah b. Mas‘ūd: *fa-maḍat sunnatun anna l-rusula lā-tuqṭalu*); al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān* vol. 14, pp. 138-40; al-Ṣāliḥī, *Subul al-hudā*, vol. 6, p. 497; al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam al-kabīr*, vol. 9, pp. 218-20, nos. 8956-60: a mosque in which the followers of Musaylima used to perform their prayers was destroyed in Kūfa during ‘Abdallah b. Mas‘ūd’s governorship of the city. The followers of Musaylima praying in this mosque were heard to read verses included in Musaylima’s Qur’ān: *al-tāḥināti taḥnan*, *al-‘ajināti ‘ajnan*, *al-khābizāti khubzan*, *al-lāqimāti laqman* ... Ibn Mas‘ūd ordered to decapitate Ibn al-Nawwāḥa in the market of Kūfa. The rest of the congregation of Musaylima (some seventy persons) were sent to Syria in the hope that they would repent or perish in a plague. In one of the reports, Ibn Mas‘ūd ordered to throw the head of Ibn Nawwāḥa into the bosom of his mother (no. 8960); cf. this report in al-Shāshī, *al-Musnad*, vol. 2, p. 181, no. 746; al-Haythamī, *Majma‘ al-zawā‘id*, vol. 6, pp. 262-62.

<sup>70</sup> See al-Shāshī, *al-Musnad*, vol. 2, p. 182, no. 748; and see the report in al-Ṭahāwī, *Sharḥ ma‘ānī l-āthār*, vol. 3, p. 213; Cf. al-Ṭahāwī, *Mushkil al-āthār*, Hyderābād 1333, repr. Beirut, vol. 4, pp. 61-62; al-Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, vol. 8, p. 206.

<sup>71</sup> Al-Shāshī, *al-Musnad*, vol. 2, pp. 181-2, no. 747. [The question *a-kitābun ba‘da kitābi llāhi?* is often asked in connection with some compendia of *ḥadīth*.]

the tenets of Musaylima were to be executed.<sup>72</sup> 'Uthmān's letter is preserved in 'Abdallah b. Wahb's *Juz'*, excerpted from his *Muwatta'*: "Some of the people accepted the terms and renounced belief in Musaylima, while others persevered in it, and were executed."<sup>73</sup>

The Prophet adhered to the *sunna* established by him as an interpretation of Qur'ān 9:6. Medina became a center for persons eager to understand the tenets of the new religion and to join the Muslim community. Some of them returned to Yamāma, remained there as crypto-Muslims, clandestinely disseminating Islamic beliefs. Among these proselytes were some former adherents of Musaylima sent to Medina in order to deepen their knowledge of the Qur'ān. They were then expected to return to Musaylima, informing him about divine revelations and the *sunan* which the Prophet practiced. Thus Musaylima got trustworthy information about the utterances of the Prophet concerning Musaylima's prophethood and his claims of sharing prophethood with Muḥammad.

Muḥammad honored his obligation not to harm the messengers of the unbelievers, in spite of the fact that Musaylima ordered to kill some of the Prophet's messengers.<sup>74</sup> In some instances, this policy caused him bitter disappointment. Such was the case of al-Raḥḥāl (or al-Rajjāl -k) b. 'Unfuwa. He came to Medina as a member of the delegation of the Banū Ḥanīfa. This delegation also included Mujjā'a b. Murāra, and Muḥakkim b. al-Ṭufayl.<sup>75</sup> Al-Raḥḥāl became a keen student of the Qur'ān. After some time, the Prophet saw him in the company of some veteran Companions, Abū Hurayra and Furāt b. Ḥayyān. He said: "A molar tooth of one of you in Hell will be as big as the mountain of Uhūd." Abū Hurayra became sad; he was concerned about the identity of the person referred to in this utterance. Later, al-Raḥḥāl disappeared from Medina. When the news about his apostasy and his activity in support of Musaylima and about his attestation that the Prophet granted Musaylima a part (*ashrakahu*) of prophethood came to be known, Abū Hurayra sighed with relief. He realized that the tradition referred to al-Raḥḥāl. Abū Hurayra and Furāt b. Ḥayyān were thus free from the fear

<sup>72</sup> Al-Jaṣṣāṣ, *Aḥkām al-qur'ān*, vol. 2, pp. 287-288.

<sup>73</sup> 'Abdallah b. Wahb, *al-Muwatta'*, *Juz'*, MS. Chester Beatty 3497, fol. 56b.

<sup>74</sup> See e.g., on Ḥabīb b. Zayd b. 'Āsim: Khalifa b. Khayyāt, *Ta'rikh*, p. 63 (the text reads Khabīb b. Zayd). See a report recorded by Wathīma in his *Kitāb al-ridda*: Ḥabīb b. 'Abdallah al-Anṣārī was sent by Abū Bakr to Musaylima and to the Banū Ḥanīfa summoning them to return to Islam; he read the letter of Abū Bakr and admonished them in an eloquent (*balīgh*) way and was killed by Musaylima. See the report in Ibn Ḥajar's *al-Iṣāba*, vol. 2, p. 21, no. 1590, but the author assumes that the report may refer to Ḥabīb b. Zayd b. 'Āsim, as recorded *ibid.*, p. 19, no. 1586. Cf. al-Maqdisī, *al-Istibṣār*, pp. 81-82, where Ḥabīb b. Zayd is mentioned as the messenger killed by Musaylima.

<sup>75</sup> Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, vol. 5, p. 51; and see Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Isti'āb*, pp. 551-2; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba*, vol. 2, pp. 539-40, no. 2763.

of hell.<sup>76</sup> Al-Raḥḥāl not only stated that the Prophet granted Musaylima a share in prophethood, but also transmitted to him those parts of the Qurʾān which he kept in memory. Musaylima memorized the passages, claimed falsely that they were revealed to him and recited them as a part of his own revelation.<sup>77</sup>

## VII

During the last years before the Prophet's death, Musaylima made great efforts to establish a socio-religious order, based on the cooperation of the different groups of the people of Yamāma with tribes who immigrated to Yamāma and settled there. Musaylima decided to build a *ḥaram* in which certain settlements of these immigrants were included. They were settled in small rural communities, named "hamlets of the allies" (*qurā al-aḥālīf*). These hamlets were populated by the Banū Usayyid, a small branch of Tamīm. Small units of the Banū Usayyid were incorporated in the *ḥaram* (*fa-waqa'a fī dhālika l-ḥarami qurā l-aḥālīf, afkhādh min banī usayyid kānat dāruhum bi-l-yamāma, fa-ṣāra makānu dārihim fī l-ḥarami*).<sup>78</sup> The newly established *ḥaram* of Yamāma cannot be compared with the *ḥaram* of Mecca. The tribes chosen by Quraysh as keepers and guardians of the Meccan *ḥaram* were selected in order to choose the best of them for intermarriage with the population of Mecca, the Quraysh. The independent tribal formations (*laqāḥ*) did not serve the kings of the Arabian peninsula. The merchants of Mecca who traded in Syria used to conduct transactions with the heads of the tribal leaders on their way, granting them a certain share in their profits. Furthermore, Mecca ceded the right to provide certain services during the *ḥajj* to the traditional leaders of the tribal divisions. The nobles of Mecca meted out justice to the pilgrims of the city and to merchants who came to Mecca to ply their trade. Theft of gifts brought for the Ka'ba was rare and was severely punished. Injustice and fraud towards pilgrims and merchants were publicly denounced in Mecca.

According to Muslim descriptions, the *ḥaram* of Musaylima did not fulfill its desired goal of eradicating iniquity and extending help to the weak and the oppressed. "Musaylima tried to gain the sympathy of all his followers, agreed with their views and did not care if someone noticed

<sup>76</sup> Shākir al-Faḥḥām, *Qif'atun fī akhbāri l-ridda li-mu'allifin majhūl*, pp. 149-225, esp. pp. 195-225; p. 197, no. 48 and p. 198 no. 50. See also Ibn Junghul, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 2, p. fol. 85a; and Ibn Hubaysh, *Ghazawāt*, vol. 1, pp. 52-3, where the verses of Ibn 'Umayr al-Yashkurī about al-Raḥḥāl and Muḥakkim b. Ṭufayl are quoted. Cf. Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, vol. 1, pp. 316-17.

<sup>77</sup> Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, vol. 5, p. 51.

<sup>78</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 3, p. 288.

any of his vices.”<sup>79</sup> The Meccans did their best to curb the transgressors, the thieves and those who cheated pilgrims and merchants; they acted according to the injunctions of the *dār al-nadwa* elders. In contradistinction, the people of Yamāma were helpless in their complaints against the guardians of the *ḥaram*, the Banū Usayyid, who used to plunder the peasants’ crops and then would find refuge in the *ḥaram*. Sometimes the farmers were warned and tried to apprehend the culprits, but they managed to escape into the *ḥaram*, where they could remain in safety. The people complained to Musaylima who promised “to get an answer from Heaven” concerning their case. Musaylima indeed received an answer and read it loudly, probably as a verse of his Qur’ān: “I swear by the darkness of the night and by the black wolf, the Usayyid did not violate (the sanctity of -k) the *ḥaram*.” The people complained again and Musaylima again asked for a heavenly ruling. The verdict was read loudly once more by Musaylima: “I swear by the dark night, by the wolf who treads softly the ground, Usayyid did not cut neither fresh nor dry.”<sup>80</sup> The people wronged by the attack of the Usayyid on their palm trees could only remark with bitterness: “The Usayyid did cut the fresh fruit of the palms and broke down the dry fences.” Musaylima answered harshly: “Go away and come back, you are not right.”<sup>81</sup>

A verse of Musaylima’s Qur’ān, read before the people of Yamāma, is indicative of his views: “Go! The Banū Tamīm are a pure and independent people (*laqāḥ*), no affliction should meet them, nor should they be put under taxation; we shall live in their neighborhood, acting with kindness, we shall defend them against every person; at our death their fate (*amruhum*) will be determined by God.”<sup>82</sup>

This declaration of Musaylima reflects of his attitude towards the Usayyid, the Tamīmī keepers of the Yamāma *ḥaram*. It also serves as an attempt to establish friendly relations with the tribal groups of Tamīm, who dwelled near Yamāma.

## VIII

The death of the Prophet in 632 A.D. raised many hopes in the community of Musaylima who now considered himself the sole prophet receiving

<sup>79</sup> Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyatu l-arab*, vol. 19, p. 86: *wa-kāna musaylimatu yuṣāni‘ kulla aḥadin mimman ittaba’ahu, wa-yutābi’uhu ‘alā ra’yihī wa-lā yubālī an yaṭṭali’a l-nāsu minhu ‘alā qabihin*.

<sup>80</sup> Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, vol. 19, pp. 86–87; al-Bāqillānī, *I’jāzu l-qur’ān*, pp. 156–157.

<sup>81</sup> Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, vol. 19, p. 87; cf. Ṭabarī, *Ta’riḫh*, vol. 3, p. 287.

<sup>82</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta’riḫh* vol. 3, pp. 283–284. ... *wa-kāna fīmā yaqra’u lahum fihim: inna banī tamīmīn qawmun ṭuhrun laqāḥun lā makrūha ‘alayhim wa-lā itāwatun, nuḡāwiruhum mā ḥayinā bi-iḥsān, namna’uhum min kullī insān fa-idhā mutnā fa-amruhum ilā l-raḥmān*.

divine revelation. In a verse attributed to him, Musaylima is reported to have said:

O you, take the tambourine and play, and proclaim the merits  
of this prophet.

Passed away the prophet of the Banū Hāshim, and rose up  
the prophet of the Banū Yaʿrub.

*khudhī l-duffa, yā hādhihi, wa-lʿabī*

*wa-buththī mahāsina hādha l-nabī*

*tawallā nabiyyu banī hāshimīn*

*wa-qāma nabiyyu banī yaʿrubī*.<sup>83</sup>

Musaylima's adherents increased and his prestige and authority grew.<sup>84</sup> The quiet situation in Yamāma after the Prophet's death, Musaylima's claim to prophethood which now became exclusive, his ambitious plan to set up a huge *ḥaram* defended by special guards of the *laqāḥ* (which indeed succeeded for a short period) – all this inspired a feeling of self-confidence and security and generated hopes of long-lasting tranquility and peace.

However, Musaylima's confidence was shaken by the information that Abū Bakr was preparing to attack Yamāma and sent a Muslim force under the command of ʿIkrima b. Abī Jahl to support Thumāma b. Uthāl, Musaylima's enemy.

Another dangerous event, unexpected by Musaylima, was the activity of Sajāḥ bint Aus b. Ḥiqq b. Usāma.<sup>85</sup> Sajāḥ was a former sooth-sayer, who claimed to have received revelation from Heaven as a prophetess of the Banū Yarbūʿ who were part of Tamīm. She and her family dwelt in Mesopotamia (*al-jazīra*); her father was a Tamīmī, and her mother belonged to the Christian tribe of Taghlib. Sajāḥ is said to have been well-versed in the tenets of Christianity. Presenting her words as a divine revelation, she addressed her adherents saying: "O you God-fearing believers, half of the Earth belongs to us. The other half belongs to Quraysh, but Quraysh are transgressors."<sup>86</sup> The reader will recall that Musaylima claimed to have received a revelation containing the idea of dividing territory between Banū Ḥanifa and Quraysh, but the

<sup>83</sup> See Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, vol. 6, p. 341 inf. Musaylima claimed that the verses were revealed to him from Heaven.

<sup>84</sup> See al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, vol. 19, p. 86: ...*wa-qubīda rasūlu llāhi (ṣalʿam) wa-l-amru ʿalā dhālika, fa-qawiyat shaukatu musaylimata wa-ʿshtadda amruhu wa-kathurat jumūʿuhu*.

<sup>85</sup> So recorded in Ibn al-Kalbī's *Jamharat al-nasab*, p. 221; al-Maqrīzī, *Imtāʿu l-asmāʿ*, vol. 14, p. 241: Sajāḥ bint al-Ḥārith b. Suwayd b. ʿUqfān; Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām, *Kitāb al-nasab*, p. 236: Sajāḥ bint Aus. Al-Thaʿalibī, *Thimāru l-qulūb*, p. 315, no. 474: Sajāḥ bint ʿUqfān.

<sup>86</sup> Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, vol. 18, pp. 166, ll. 1–2.

Prophet had firmly rejected any such offer. In his negotiations with Sajāḥ, Musaylima made a similar offer: half of the Earth belongs to the Banū Ḥanifa; the other half would have belonged to Quraysh, if they had acted justly; now God granted to Sajāḥ that half of the Earth which Quraysh had to return because of their unjust behavior (... *fa-qāla musaylimatu lanā niṣfu l-ardī, wa-kāna li-qurayshin niṣfuhā lau 'adalat, wa-qad radda llāhu 'alayki l-niṣfa lladhī raddat quraysh.*)<sup>87</sup>

In order to strengthen her position, Sajāḥ stated that God never bestowed prophecy on Rabī'a (i.e., the Banū Ḥanifa -k), but only on Muḍar<sup>88</sup> to which she belonged.<sup>89</sup> It is therefore plausible that God granted her revelation and entrusted her with a prophetic mission. Her first step was to ask Mālik b. Nuwayra, whom the Prophet nominated as head ('*amīd*) of the Banū Yarbū' (a subsection of Tamīm) to establish peaceful relations with her. Mālik b. Nuwayra agreed and asked her to refrain from raiding tribal groups of Tamīm. Sajāḥ's raids on other tribal groups in the Arabian peninsula continued unabated. On this occasion, Sajāḥ clearly defined her position as a woman (and probably also as a prophetess -k): "I am merely a woman from the Banū Yarbū'; if there will be authority (and possessions -k), it will be your authority and possession (*fa-innī innama anā 'mra'atun min banī yarbū' wa-in kāna mulk fa-l-mulku mulkukum*)."<sup>90</sup>

Several leaders of Tamīmī tribal sections joined her and assisted her in her plans. The famous leader of Tamīm, Qays b. 'Āsim, the sagacious Tamīmī chief al-Aḥnaf b. Qays and the Ghudānī fighter Ḥāritha b. Badr<sup>91</sup> were her followers; Shabath b. Rib'i<sup>92</sup> was her *mu'adhdhin*. The force of Sajāḥ, strengthened by new supporters, was ordered to attack certain tribal groups linked with Tamīmī sections, but was defeated. Following this failure, she decided to march against Yamāma. Her decision was accompanied by the rousing battle cry:

'*alaykum bi-l-yamāma,*  
*ruffū [ilayhā] rafīfa l-ḥamāma,*  
*fa-innahā ghazwatun ṣarāma,*  
*lā talḥaqukum ba'dahā malāma*"<sup>93</sup>

<sup>87</sup> See al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā'u l-asmā'*, vol. 14, p. 241inf.

<sup>88</sup> Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *al-Aghānī*, vol. 18, p. 166 ll. 5-6: ... *inna llāha lam yaj'al hādhā l-amra fī rabī'ata, innamā ja'alahu fī muḍar.*

<sup>89</sup> The tribe of Tamīm to which Sajāḥ belonged is part of Muḍar.

<sup>90</sup> Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *al-Aghānī*, vol. 18, p. 166 inf; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'riḫ* vol. 3, p. 269.

<sup>91</sup> See on him Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba*, vol. 2, p. 161, no. 1939.

<sup>92</sup> See on him Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba*, vol. 3, p. 376, no. 3959.

<sup>93</sup> For other versions of the "call of Sajāḥ," see Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī* vol. 18, p. 166: *yā ma'shara tamīmīn: iqṣidū l-yamāma, fa-dribū fihā kulla hāma, ḥatta tatrukūhā saudā'a ka-l-ḥamāma.* Cf. the faulty text in al-Maqrīzī's *Imtā'u l-asmā'* vol. 14, p. 241 inf. See also Ibn Junghul, *Ta'riḫ*, vol. 2, fol. 83a,



During the speedy advance of her forces in the direction of Yamāma, Sajāh received the surprising news of Musaylima's offer to give her a share in the "God's Earth" and to recognize her prophethood. On the face of it, the offer was exceedingly generous and it can be understood only if we take Musaylima's military situation at that time into consideration. His situation is well described by Ibn Junghul. When Musaylima heard the news about the march of Sajāh's force, he feared for his country because he was busy fighting Thumāma b. Uthāl whose force was supported by a detachment of Muslim soldiers under the command of 'Ikrima b. Abī Jahl. His garrison was in the territory of Thumāma. The Muslim soldiers commanded by 'Ikrima expected the arrival of the huge force commanded by Khālīd b. al-Wālīd.<sup>94</sup> Even in this situation, Musaylima fostered the hope that the united forces of Ḥanīfa and Tamīm would jointly be able to "devour" the Arab tribes.<sup>95</sup>

Having learned about Musaylima's offer, Sajāh hastened to meet him. When she arrived, they entered a tent prepared for them (and probably for a group of their supporters -k). Musaylima delivered a sermon in which he invoked God "to hear (the prayers) of those who obey (Him) and to enable those who strive to attain their (lofty -k) aspirations and ... May your Lord watch you and bless you and free you from gloom. On the Day of Resurrection, may He save you and resurrect you. We must perform the prayers of the righteous, not of the wretched and not of the wrongdoers, (but of those who) are awake during the nights and fast during the days for the sake of their great God, the God of the clouds and of the rain."<sup>96</sup>

The pact concluded between Musaylima and Sajāh during their meeting gave Sajāh the crops of Yamāma for one year. But she could get only half of the crops immediately; the other part had to be sent to her later by her representatives in Yamāma.<sup>97</sup>

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II. 10-12.

<sup>94</sup> See Ibn Junghul, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 2, p. fol. 83a: ... *fa-lammā sami'a bi-sayrihā ilayhi khāfahā 'alā bilādihi, wa-dhālika annahu mashghūlun bi-qitāli thumāma b. uthāl, wa-qad sādahu 'ikrima b. abī jahl bi-junūdi l-muslimīna wa-hum nāzilūna bi-ba'di bilādihi yantazirūna qudūma khālīd*. See al-Sharīshī, *Sharḥ maqamāt al-ḥarīrī*, vol. 4, p. 36, 22-15-16: ... *wa-balagha musaylimata khabaruhā bihā wa khāfa in huwa shughila bihā ghalabahu thumāmatu bnu uthālīn wa-shuraḥbīlu 'alā ḥajri l-yamāmati idh humā min qibali abī bakrīn (raḍiya llāhu 'anhu) fa-arsala ilayhā yasta'minuhā 'alā nafsīhi* ....

<sup>95</sup> Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, vol. 18, p. 166: ... *fa-man 'arafa l-ḥaqqa tabi'ahu, wa-'jtama'nā fa-akalnā l-'araba aklan bi-qaumī wa-qaumiki, fa-ba'athat ilayhi: af'alu*.

<sup>96</sup> Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 3, p. 272; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, vol. 19, p. 78; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, vol. 6, p. 320; Ibn Junghul, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 2, fol. 83a, inf.

<sup>97</sup> See, e.g., al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, vol. 19, p. 80, II. 8-10.

The solemn speech of Musaylima while concluding the agreement with Sajāh is followed by a short *saj'* passage in which Musaylima praised the virtues of his community, emphasizing that they do not engage in sexual relations, nor do they drink wine. They fast one day and are burdened (with practicing religious duties –k) on the other. "Glory be to God; when resurrection comes, how will you live and how will you go up to the kingdom of Heaven? On every grain of mustard, there will be a witness who knows the secrets of the hearts. Indeed, most people will perish."<sup>98</sup> The rigid prescriptions concerning the tenets of the religion of Musaylima seem to have been observed by his supporters. It is thus of some interest that certain pious supporters of Musaylima complained of his opportunism in his relations with the Bedouins who embraced his belief. According to a report recorded in al-Qāshānī's *Ra's māl al-nadīm*, the Bedouins haughtily rejected the bending and prostration during prayers.<sup>99</sup> Musaylima, says a report in al-Ṭabarī's *Ta'rikh*, used to tempt anyone and to bribe him in order to gain his sympathy (*wa-kāna musaylimatu yuṣānī'u kulla aḥadin*), not paying any attention to the fact that people may censure this behavior as improper and reproachable.<sup>100</sup> The commentator of *Qaṣīdat Nashwān b. Sa'īd al-Ḥimyarī* mentions that Musaylima used to say when leading Bedouins in prayer, "What is the will of Allah by raising your buttocks and by your prostration on your foreheads? Pray standing upright, in a noble posture. Allah is great."<sup>101</sup>

Some medieval Muslim scholars attributed the censure of prostration and bending to Ṭulayḥa b. Khuwaylid, also considered a false prophet by Muslim tradition. Ṭulayḥa is reported to have said: "What is it to God that you make your cheeks dusty and that you spread your buttocks? Pronounce God's name in a modest posture, standing upright. Allah is great." (*mā yaf'alu Allāh bi-ta'firi khudūdikum wa-faṭhi adbārikum? udhkurū Allāh a'iffatan qiyāman*). Al-Hārūnī who records this speech of Ṭulayḥa mentions some Qur'ānic expressions borrowed by Ṭulayḥa in this speech.<sup>102</sup>

An additional injunction of Musaylima refers to the marital life of his believers: the husband was instructed to have sexual relations with his wife only until a male child was born; once this happened, he was obliged to desist from any sexual activity. Only in the case of the male child's

<sup>98</sup> Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 3, p. 272 infra.

<sup>99</sup> P. 147, l. 17: *wa-kānat al-'arabu ta'nafu min al-rukū'i wa-tusammīhi al-taḥniya*.

<sup>100</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 3, p. 282, inf.

<sup>101</sup> Nashwān b. Sa'īd al-Ḥimyarī, *Mulūk ḥimyar wa-aqyālu l-yaman, wa sharḥuhā, Khulāṣatu l-ḡurati l-jāmi'a li-'ajā'ibi akhbāri l-mulūki l-tabābi'a*, eds., 'Alī b. Ismā'il al-Mu'ayyad and Ismā'il b. Aḥmad al-Jarāfī, Cairo 1378 A. H., p. 176.

<sup>102</sup> Al-Hārūnī, *Ithbāt nubuwwati l-nabi*, pp. 39–40. And see Shākir al-Faḥḥām, *Qif'atun fi akhbāri l-ridda li-mu'allifin majhūl*, p. 167, no. 15. See also "Ṭulayḥa b. Khuwaylid," *ET*<sup>2</sup>, s. v. (Ella Landau-Tasseron).

death, the father was allowed to resume his conjugal activity until the birth of a new male child.<sup>103</sup> In contradistinction to the injunctions of the Prophet who forbade celibacy (*rahbāniyya*) and ordered the Muslims to lead full marital lives,<sup>104</sup> Musaylima encouraged extreme asceticism. The reports about the behavior of his followers, the ascetic trends in their society, the rigorous injunctions concerning marital life, the stories about people who refrained from drinking wine, the stories about people who fasted frequently – all these accounts seem to be reliable. On the other hand, the obscene verses attributed to Musaylima and enthusiastically received by Sajāḥ, the vulgar anecdotes about Sajāḥ – these seem to have been forged by the enemies of Musaylima and Sajāḥ with the intention of slandering them. Some Muslim sources refrained from quoting this material.<sup>105</sup>

## IX

The idea of Islamic expansion started to mature when the Prophet migrated to Medina. The principle of the superiority of Islam over any other belief and the superiority of Islamic authority became cardinal principles of the new faith. The existence of any belief or practice in Islam is said to have been accepted only on condition of the Prophet's approval. The Prophet gradually became the fully acknowledged and revered leader of the nascent Muslim community. The Muslim community grew and the borders of the Muslim state gradually expanded. Mecca and Medina became cities in which only Muslims were allowed to dwell. Idolaters

<sup>103</sup> Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 3, p. 272 ult.

<sup>104</sup> See, e. g., al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Fā'iḳ fī gharībī l-ḥadīth*, vol. 2, p. 122: ...*lā zimāma wa-lā khizāma wa-lā rahbāniyyata wa-lā tabaṭṭula wa-lā siyāḥata fī l-islāmi*. See also the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet (*ibid.*), in which he censures the conduct of an unmarried man: ...*a-laka 'mra'atun? qāla: lā. qāla: fa-anta idhan min ikhwāni l-shayātīn; in kunta min ruhḥāni l-naṣārā fa-'lḥaq bihim, wa-in kunta minnā fa-min sunnatinā l-nikāḥ*. See al-Munāwī, *Fayḍu l-qadīr*, vol. 6, p. 302, no. 9320: *nahā rasūlu llāhi (ṣal'am) 'ani l-ikhtisā'*, "The Prophet prohibited the (self-) castration of the believers" in order to free themselves from sexual lust.

<sup>105</sup> Al-Maqdisī, *Kitāb al-baḍ' wa-l-ta'rikh*, vol. 5, p. 164 (her kunya was Umm Sādir, her husband was Abū Kuḥayla, the *kāhin* of the Yamāma; she was a false prophetess). The obscene phrase of Musaylima's Qur'ān is recorded and his sexual proposal is quoted. A revelation received by Sajāḥ (*ibid.*, p. 165) allowed a woman to marry two husbands. This was unheard of in the Jāhiliyya. See also the story of Sajāḥ's meeting with Musaylima and the remark of Ibn Ḥubaysh, *Ghazawāt*, vol. 1, p. 57, ll. 1-2: ...*fa-qālat sajāḥ: qad anṣafta, fa-'dhkur. wa-ba'da ḥādhā min qawlihi wa-fi'lihā mā a'raḍnā 'an dhikrihi*. The obscene verses also appear in al-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-arab*, vol. 19, p. 76; al-Sharishī, *Sharḥ maqāmāt al-ḥarīrī*, vol. 4, pp. 35-6; Ibn Junghul, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 2, p. fol. 83b; al-Maydānī, *Majma' al-amthāl*, vol. 1, pp. 326-7, no. 1758 (under the heading: *aznā min sajāḥ*); Ḥamza al-Isfahānī, *al-Durra al-fākhira*, vol. 1, p. 214, no. 290 (under the heading: *aznā min sajāḥ*) and vol. 1, p. 325, no. 515 (under the heading: *aghلام min sajāḥ*).

(*mushrikūn*) were forbidden to enter Medina; Jews and Christians were granted the concession to enter the city for three days only in order to sell their merchandise.<sup>106</sup> In Islam there is only one God, one Prophet and one community of believers. This community is chosen by Allah, and only this community may dwell in the holy places of Islam: "Two religious beliefs (*dīnāni*) will not exist in the Arabian peninsula" (or in the Hijāz).<sup>107</sup>

Islam spread in the peninsula in numerous ways. Delegations of various tribes reached Medina, were influenced by the Prophet and impressed by Muslim tenets and teachings. Some embraced Islam and when they returned to their homes, they enthusiastically transmitted the Call of the Prophet. They established small Muslim communities among their idolatrous neighbors. These small communities had close contacts with the Medinan body-politic and were under the control and guidance of Medina during the last years of the Prophet's life. They were active in spreading Islam and made a substantial contribution to the conquest of the Arabian peninsula.

A case of such a community was the nucleus of believers set up in Juwāthā in Baḥrayn. The community started its activity very early: all the sources relate that the first Friday prayer (after the Friday prayer performed in Medina—k) was the Friday prayer performed in Juwāthā.<sup>108</sup> This was the first time that a small Muslim community in a foreign territory, besieged by unbelievers who endangered their lives, appealed to the community in Medina, asking for help. Help was sent and the beleaguered Muslims were saved. The military unit sent by Abū Bakr was headed by al-ʿAlāʾ b. al-Ḥaḍramī. It is noteworthy that when the military unit sent by Abū Bakr reached the borders of Baḥrayn, it was joined by a large gathering of people led by Thumāma b. Uthāl, appointed by the Prophet to govern a certain region of Yamāma. Furthermore, the chiefs (*umarāʾ*) of this region joined the unit of al-ʿAlāʾ and defeated their enemy.<sup>109</sup>

The utterance of the Prophet who instructed the Muslims to live close to each other if they dwell in a non-Muslim environment may belong to this early period. "I renounce responsibility (*anā barīʿun*) for any

<sup>106</sup> See ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *al-Muṣannaf*, vol. 6, pp. 51–2, nos. 9977, 9970.

<sup>107</sup> ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *al-Muṣannaf*, vol. 6, p. 54, no. 9985 (only Jews and Christians are mentioned); and no. 9990: ... *lā yajtamiʿu bi-arḍi l-ʿarabi dīnāni, au qāla: bi-arḍi l-ḥijāzi dīnāni*.

<sup>108</sup> See Abū ʿUbayd al-Bakrī, *Muʿjam mā ʿstaʿjam* vol. 2, pp. 401–2; Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, vol. 2, p. 174; al-Ḥimyarī, *al-Rauḍu l-miʿfār*, p. 181; and see Shākir al-Faḥḥām, *Qifʿatun fī akhbārī l-ridda li-muʿallifin majhūl*, p. 162, l. 2 from bottom: *lammā qubiḍa rasūlu llāhi ṣallā llāhu ʿalayhi ʿrtadda l-nāsu ʿani l-islāmi illā thalāthata masājid: ahlu l-madīna wa-ahlu makkata, wa-ahlu juwāthā*. The word *masjid* is used here to denote the center of a Muslim town.

<sup>109</sup> See Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, vol. 6, pp. 327–29.

believer who dwells among unbelievers," said the Prophet. When asked about the reason for this, he answered that the believer living among unbelievers is not able to watch the fires of his believing companions."<sup>110</sup> The believers must live close to each other and not mix with their non-Muslim neighbors.

The idea of the war against the *ridda* was extended and contained the obligation of the believers to take up arms against people who refused to pay the taxes (*zakāt*) prescribed by the Prophet. This was formulated by Abū Bakr who is reported to have said: "If they refused to give me (even) a ewe which they used to give to the Prophet . . . , I would fight them because of their refusal" (*wa-llāhi lau mana'ūnī 'anāqan kānū yu'addūnahā ilā rasūli llāhi ṣallā llāhu 'alayhi wa-sallam la-qātaltuhum 'alā man'ihā*). It was especially stressed that the "believers in the prophetic mission of Musaylima, the people of Yamāma," are included in the category of unbelievers (*kuffār*) who have to be fought until they repent and embrace Islam.<sup>111</sup> Abū Bakr strove to place the nascent Muslim communities established throughout the peninsula under the sway of the Muslim polity in Medina. Muslim law and Muslim ritual had to be introduced in all these communities. The Arab idolaters had to be crushed with the help of the Muslim forces of Medina.

A letter of Abū Bakr to 'Ikrima b. Abī Jahl may give us an insight into the activities planned by the caliph to protect the communities recently established in the eastern region of the peninsula. When Abū Bakr sent military units (*sarāyā*) against the tribes who rebelled against the authority of Medina, 'Ikrima b. Abī Jahl and Shuraḥbīl b. Ḥasana were sent against Musaylima with a military force (*fī 'askarin*). 'Ikrima acted in haste and started the attacks against the Banū Ḥanīfa, but was defeated and informed Abū Bakr of his defeat. Abū Bakr's answer indicates that the goal of 'Ikrima's mission was to support the nascent Muslim communities in Yamāma. Abū Bakr wrote: "Do not return (to Medina), as you will weaken the spirits of the people. I do not want to see you nor do I want you to see me. But go out to Ḥudhayfa and 'Arfaja and fight the people of 'Umān and Mahra. Then march out with your military force until you meet Muhājir b. Abī Umayya in Yemen and Ḥaḍramawt." Abū Bakr also instructed Shuraḥbīl to stay in Yamāma until Khālīd arrived with his army. "When they will finish the battle with Musaylima, join 'Amr b. al-'Aṣ in order to help him to fight Quḍā'a."<sup>112</sup>

This material indicates that the Prophet showed great concern for the

<sup>110</sup> Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-Kāfī al-shāf fī takhrījī aḥādīthi l-kashshāf*, p. 55, sup., no. 457, and see its explanation in al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Fā'iḳ*, vol. 2, p. 21; cf. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v. *ra'ā*.

<sup>111</sup> See e.g., al-Qaṣṭallānī, *Irshād al-sārī*, vol. 3, pp. 6-7; on the followers of Musaylima see p. 6, ll. 7-8.

<sup>112</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā'u l-asmā'*, vol. 14, p. 528.

Muslim communities outside Medina and made sustained efforts to expand the Muslim territory. The sources contain impressive descriptions of the Prophet's efforts to help the newly founded Muslim settlements, his efficient reactions to cases of apostasy in distant districts and his judicious decisions to resolve disputes between Muslims and their adversaries. Exhortation was not always sufficient to achieve the desired expansion. For instance, Sayf b. 'Umar says that the letters of the Prophet to al-Aswad al-'Ansī and Musaylima did not convince them and the emissary of the Prophet tried in vain to persuade them to embrace Islam. The Prophet decided to write to the ethnic Persians living in Yemen (*al-abnā'*)<sup>113</sup> asking them to try to "do away" with al-Aswad al-'Ansī (*an tuḥāwilū l-aswada*) and asked them to engage men from Ḥimyar and Ḥamadhān to achieve this purpose. He also wrote to Thumāma b. Uthāl and his followers asking them to try to "do away" with Musaylima. He made a similar request to some men from Tamīm and they acted accordingly. "The ways of the *murtadda* became indeed blocked," says the report.<sup>114</sup>

Many changes in the formation of tribal units and the conclusion of tribal alliances were connected with the division of the tribal territorial possessions. The case of the partition of the vast territory of Dahnā' is instructive.<sup>115</sup> The report about the partition of Dahnā' is transmitted by Sayf b. 'Umar on the authority of al-Ḥārith b. Ḥassān al-'Āmirī (in some sources: al-Bakrī -k), who came to visit the Prophet in connection with a dispute between his tribe (Bakr -k) and the Banū Tamīm. The dispute was about an event which happened in Baḥrayn and in which the chiefs of Bakr raised their objections against al-'Alā' b. al-Ḥaḍramī, in whose home the discussion was held. At that time a man from the Banū Tamīm sent to the Prophet a message (*khavar*), informing him that the tribe of Rabī'a (including Bakr -k) reverted to unbelief (*qad kafarat*) and prevented (by force -k) the collection of *zakāt*. The information about this incident and about the *khavar* reached Rabī'a and they sent al-Ḥārith b. Ḥassān al-'Āmirī (or al-Bakrī -k) in order to inform the Prophet that they (i.e., Rabī'a -k) remain obedient to him. On his way to the Prophet, he met in Rabadha<sup>116</sup> a poor woman, Qayla bint Makrama al-'Anbariyya (of the tribe of Tamīm -k) and agreed to take her to the Prophet.<sup>117</sup> It was al-Ḥārith b. Ḥassān al-Bakrī who repre-

<sup>113</sup> See on them *EI*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 1, p. 102, s.v. "Abnā'", Section II. (K.V. Zetterstéen).

<sup>114</sup> Al-Maqrizī, *Imtā'u l-asmā'*, vol. 14, p. 525.

<sup>115</sup> See the description of Dahnā' in Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, vol. 2, pp. 493-4.

<sup>116</sup> So in Maqrizī, *Imtā'u l-asmā'*, vol. 14, p. 312, l. 3; al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu'jam al-kabīr*, vol. 3, p. 254, no. 3325, l. 10.

<sup>117</sup> See the lengthy description of the journey of Qayla and the story of the protection granted her by al-Ḥārith b. Ḥassān al-Bakrī, when he journeyed with her from Rabadha to Medina to meet the Prophet in al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu'jam al-kabīr*, vol. 25, pp. 7-12; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-Iṣāba*, vol. 8, pp. 83-87, no. 11654; Ibn al-Athīr,

sented Bakr b. Wā'il (of Rabī'a).<sup>118</sup> The representative of the Tamīmī tribal groups in Baḥrayn who sent the message about the apostasy of Rabī'a (or Bakr -k) reached the Prophet before the arrival of the Bakrī al-Ḥārith b. Ḥassān, and brought the story of al-ʿAlā (b. al-Ḥaḍramī); then the Prophet ordered ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀs to march out and entrusted him with a flag. The Prophet went up to the *minbar* and urged the believers to join the raid against Rabī'a in Baḥrayn.<sup>119</sup> He informed the Muslims that al-ʿAlā (b. al-Ḥaḍramī) and al-Mundhir (b. Sāwā) reported to him that Rabī'a apostatized (*kafarat*) and refused to pay the *zakāt*.<sup>120</sup> The Prophet then asked: "Who will volunteer (to march out) with ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀs?"<sup>121</sup> At this fateful moment, al-Ḥārith b. Ḥassān proclaimed loudly the allegiance of Rabī'a to the Prophet; he himself gave the oath of allegiance to Islam and converted.<sup>122</sup> Further, al-Ḥārith b. Ḥassān asked the Prophet to affirm in a letter that Dahnā' belongs to Rabī'a and to set up the border line between Rabī'a and Tamīm in that district. The Prophet called Bilāl and ordered him to bring a piece of parchment and an inkpot (*dawāt*).<sup>123</sup> But when the scribe started to write the document in which the Prophet intended to affirm the right of Rabī'a on the territory of Dahnā', Qayla, the poor Tamīmī woman, began to shout asserting that the territory between Dahnā' and Baḥrayn had belonged in the period of the Jāhiliyya to Tamīm and on that basis Tamīm converted to Islam. The Prophet immediately changed the letter, affirming that Dahnā' belonged to Tamīm.<sup>124</sup>

The Prophet's decision was significant. The borders of the territory granted to Tamīm in Dahnā' enabled them to launch a successful raid against the Bakr b. Wā'il (i.e., Rabī'a -k). The information about Nibāj, where the battle took place, enables us to assume that the march of the forces led by the leader of Sa'd (Tamīm -k), Qays b. ʿAṣim was a long and exhausting one. When Qays b. ʿAṣim reached Nibāj and Thaytal (two neighboring localities) and watered the riding beasts (*khayl*), he cut the water bags open and let the water flow out. He then summoned the warriors to fight, saying: "The desert is behind you, death is in front of you." The Tamīmī troops fought valiantly and defeated the forces of

*Uṣd al-ghāba*, vol. 5, pp. 535-36.

<sup>118</sup> See about the subdivisions of Bakr b. Wā'il and their mutual relations in Yamāma in "Bakr b. Wā'il," *EI*<sup>2</sup>, s.v. (W. Caskel).

<sup>119</sup> The text has *shāl*, which is a mistake.

<sup>120</sup> The text has *waḍaʿat al-sakāt*; read correctly *manaʿat al-zakāt*.

<sup>121</sup> Maqrīzī, *Imtāʿu l-asmāʿ*, vol. 14, p. 312.

<sup>122</sup> Cf. Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Iṣāba*, vol. 8, p. 86, l. 10.

<sup>123</sup> The text has *idāwat*, which is a mistake.

<sup>124</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Imtāʿu l-asmāʿ*, vol. 14, p. 313: *inna mā bayna l-dahnāʾ wa-l-baḥrayni li-banī tamīmīn fī l-jāhiliyyati, wa-aslamū ʿalayhā, fa-ayna taḍīqu, ya-muḥammadu, ʿalā muḍarika?*

the Bakr b. Wā'il, the Lahāzim.<sup>125</sup>

Some details about Nibāj deserve to be mentioned: there are two places called Nibāj: the one is Nibāj Ibn 'Āmir (in the neighborhood of Baṣra); the other is Nibāj near Thaytal, adjacent to al-Baḥrayn.<sup>126</sup>

The information recorded by Abū 'Ubayd al-Bakrī indicates the reasons for Qays b. 'Āṣim's raids: at that time he embraced Islam and it was meritorious for him to march out against the non-Muslim Bakr b. Wā'il. Al-'Alā' b. al-Ḥaḍramī and al-Mundhir b. Sāwā stated clearly that Bakr b. Wā'il apostatized. A proper military action of the allies of the Muslim body politic in Medina against Bakr b. Wā'il was badly needed. Qays b. 'Āṣim was successful in his raid against the Bakr b. Wā'il apostates.

Qays b. 'Āṣim is highly praised in connection with his raids in Nibāj and Thaytal. But one of the verses mentions a third locality in which Qays b. 'Āṣim excelled in a military raid: it was Juwāthā in Baḥrayn. Qays b. 'Āṣim attacked Juwāthā, which was under the control of the tribe of 'Abd al-Qays, and took considerable booty.<sup>127</sup>

The Muslim warriors who defeated their enemies and forced them to convert to Islam gained great merit: the Prophet saw these captives led in his dream into Paradise in shackles.<sup>128</sup>

It is noteworthy that some of these warriors were relatives of inveterate enemies of the Prophet. The two relatives of Abū Jahl – his son 'Ikrima and his brother al-Ḥārith b. Hishām – are cases in point. 'Ikrima became a devout Muslim and was killed during the wars of conquest.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>125</sup> Al-Bakrī, *Mu'jam mā 'sta'jam*, vol. 1, pp. 351–52; and see the verse of Qurra b. Qays b. 'Āṣim: "I am the son of the man who cut the water bags when he saw the troops of the Lahāzim ready to fight (*anā 'bnu lladhī shaqqa l-mazāda wa-qad ra'a / bi-thaytala aḥyā' a 'llahāzimi ḥuḍḍarā*)."

<sup>126</sup> Al-Bakrī, *Mu'jam mā 'sta'jam*, vol. 4, p. 1292, l. 2: *wa-l-nibāj nibājānī: nibāj thaytal wa-nibāj 'bni 'āmirin bi-l-baṣra. wa-qāla l-aṣma'ī: al-nibāj wa-thaytal mā'āni li-banī sa'di bni zaydi manātin, mimma yalī l-baḥraynī. Yāqūt provides additional details about the two Nibājs: the one is on the way of Baṣra and is called "Nibāj banī 'Āmir" and faces Fayd; the other Nibāj is the Nibāj of the Banī Sa'd. Another definition says that the Nibāj between Mecca and Baṣra belongs to the Banū Kurayz, the other Nibāj is located between Baṣra and Yamāma. See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, vol. 5, pp. 255–56.*

<sup>127</sup> ... *wa-aghāra qaysu bnu 'āsim bi-banī sa'din 'alā 'abdi l-qays bi-juwāthā fa-aṣābū mā arādū fimā yaz'umu banū minqar. fa-qāla sawwār b. ḥayyān:*

*wa-mā laka min ayyāmi ṣidqin ta'udduhā:*

*ka-yāumi juwāthā wa-l-nibāji wa-thaytalā.*

See al-Balādhurī's *Ansāb al-ashraf*, part 7, vol. 1, Ramzī Ba'labakkī, ed., p. 45 (Beirut, 1417/1997).

<sup>128</sup> See *Lisān al-'Arab*, s.v., s-l-s-l: *'ajiba rabbunā min qaumin yuqādūna ilā l-jannati fī-l-salāsil*; and see al-Munāwī, *Fayḍu l-qadīr*, vol. 4, p. 302, no. 5383.

<sup>129</sup> Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-Iṣāba*, vol. 4, pp. 538–9, no. 5642; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Isti'āb*, vol. 3, p. 1082, no. 1838. See also the tradition about the march of 'Ikrima b. Abī Jahl with 500 fighters against the Prophet in order to prevent him from the entrance to Mecca; his attacks were thrice thwarted by a force of Khālīd b. al-Walīd who protected the Prophet and his Companions. See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīru l-qur'ānī*



Al-Ḥārith b. Hishām also embraced Islam, took part in the battle of Yamāma and died in the plague of ‘Amwās.<sup>130</sup>

## X

The struggle against Musaylima was an important part of the *ridda* wars. Abū Bakr was aware of the strength of Musaylima’s forces. He understood that sending small units of Muslims against the well organized force of Musaylima was doomed to fail. Yamāma had to be conquered in order to pave the way for the establishment of additional Islamic communities in the area of Baḥrayn, ‘Umān, and in Yamāma itself. A strong army was necessary for the conquest of Yamāma. Khālīd b. al-Walīd, the famous hero nicknamed “the sword of Islam” (*sayf al-islām*), was chosen to lead the expedition. He was at that time the head of a military force sent against various tribal formations who decided to remain faithful to Islam, but refused to pay *zakāt*. The rebellious tribes who refused to pay *zakāt* were branded apostates (*ahl al-ridda*). They were ruthlessly subdued: some were captured, some were executed; some hastened to pay the *zakāt*, repented and were forgiven.

Having completed the suppression of some big tribal formations who participated in the *ridda*, Khālīd b. al-Walīd was ready to embark on another important mission. Leading a huge army, he set out in the direction of Yamāma. Abū Bakr wrote Khālīd a letter in which he stressed the stalwart strength of the forces of the Banū Ḥanīfa: “You have never met a people (*qaum*) like the Banū Ḥanīfa: they will fight against you all together” (*kulluhum ‘alayka*).<sup>131</sup> Abū Bakr also advised Khālīd how to delegate authority to the tribal leaders and section commanders and how to solicit the opinion of the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār taking part in the expedition. The last part of the letter is of special interest: Abū Bakr recommends to prepare scrupulously the details of the first clash with the enemy: “A spear against a spear, an arrow against an arrow, a sword against a sword. And when you reach the phase of the battle in which the fight is of swords against swords, you reach the time when mothers become bereft of their sons. And if Allāh grants you the victory,” continues Abū Bakr, “and you get hold of the enemy warriors, beware of being merciful towards them: give the *coup de grâce* to their wounded, pursue their retreating fighters, kill their captive warriors by the sword, frighten them by killing and burn them by fire. Beware of

<sup>130</sup> *l-‘azīm*, vol. 6, p. 344. Ibn Kathīr objects the veracity of this tradition, arguing that at that time Khālīd b. al-Walīd was an unbeliever.

<sup>131</sup> See Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *al-Iṣāba*, vol. 1, pp. 605–8, no. 1506; Wāqidī, *Ridda*, p. 69.

<sup>131</sup> Ibn Ḥubaysh, *Ghazawāt*, vol. 1, p. 59 inf.

disobeying my orders. Peace be upon you.”<sup>132</sup>

Muslim tradition ascribed considerable importance to the campaign against Musaylima. This can be gauged from the fact that some early traditionists and commentators considered Qur’ān 48:16 (“Say to the Bedouins who were left behind: ‘You shall be called against a people possessed of great might, to fight them, or they surrender.’”) a reference to this campaign.<sup>133</sup>

Bakr b. Naṭṭāḥ, a poet who descended from the defeated Banū Ḥanīfa,<sup>134</sup> wrote in the ninth century A. D. verses praising the bravery of his tribe, which was – according to his understanding – mentioned in the Qur’ān:

And we were described in the revealed Book, unlike any  
(other) tribe, as possessing great courage.<sup>135</sup>

*wa-naḥnu wuṣifnā dūna kulli qabīlatin*

*bi-shiddati ba’sin fi l-kitābi l-munazzali*

## XI

During the years of the Prophet’s activity in the Arabian peninsula and his contacts with the Arab tribes, he was often asked by the tribal leaders about the ownership of land. The Prophet’s policy on this issue is relevant to the ways in which the Muslims expanded their land holdings throughout the Arabian peninsula, including Yamāma. When asked about these matters, the Prophet used to quote Qur’ān 7:127: “Verily the Earth is Allah’s; He gives it as a heritage to whomsoever He pleases of His servants and the end is for the God-fearing.” Indeed, when the Prophet arrived in Medina after the *hijra*, he was given every patch of uncultivated land, not irrigated by water; it was placed under his exclusive authority.<sup>136</sup> The injunctions of the Prophet concerning the uncultivated land became obligatory and continued to be in force during the time of the righteous Caliphs, and even later. There was only one

<sup>132</sup> Ibn Ḥubaysh, *Ghazawāt*, vol. 1, p. 59 inf–60; and see the letter of Abū Bakr to Khālid b. al-Walid in al-Wāqidī’s *Kitāb al-ridda*, pp. 62–3, no. 86.

<sup>133</sup> Al-Wāhidī, *al-Waṣīf fi tafsīri l-qur’ān*, vol. 4, p. 138. However, one must keep in mind that other commentators considered this verse as a reference to other military expeditions, such as those against Persia, Byzantium, the Hawāzin, the Thaqīf, and the Ghatafān. These views are beyond the scope of this study.

<sup>134</sup> See on him Brockelmann, *GAS*, vol. 2, p. 628 inf.

<sup>135</sup> Al-Ḥuṣrī al-Qayrawānī, *Zahr al-ādāb*, vol. 2, p. 966.

<sup>136</sup> See Ḥumayd b. Zanjawayhi, *Kitābu l-amwāl*, vol. 2, p. 629, no. 1035: ...‘ani l-kalbi ‘ani bni ṣāliḥin, ‘ani bni ‘abbāsīn anna rasūla llāhi, ṣallā llāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallama, lammā qadima l-madīna ja‘alū lahu kulla arḍin lā yablughuhā l-mā’u yaṣna‘u bihā mā shā’a. See also *ibid.*, note 4, and Abū ‘Ubayd, *Kitāb al-amwāl*,

stipulation concerning grants of land given by the Prophet (*iqṭā'*): the obligation to ameliorate the plot by digging a well or irrigating it by means of a canal. If the development of the uncultivated plot could not be performed in due time (i.e., three years -k), the plot had to be sold to a Muslim, who would be granted the permission of the Muslim authority to purchase the plot; without such permission the purchase had to be considered null and void. A patch of uncultivated land granted by the Prophet was sold in the time of 'Umar for a sum of 8000 dīnars, because the grantees were not able to perform their duty to improve the land. The sum received by the people who sold the plot was deposited with 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. They were surprised that the sum returned to them was less than that which they deposited. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib's answer was that he had paid the *zakāt* on the deposit.<sup>137</sup>

According to the Muslim tradition, it was the Prophet himself who granted plots of uncultivated land in Medina to Abū Bakr and 'Umar. A plot of land was granted by the Prophet to some Bedouins of Muzayna and Juhayna (as *iqṭā'*), but they did not improve it; a group of other people took hold of the plot and succeeded to ameliorate it. The Bedouins from whom the plot was taken came to 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb and complained that they had been driven out of the territory granted to them. 'Umar refused to return them to the land, arguing that the *qaṭī'a* was granted to them under certain conditions: "Whoever got land and failed to ameliorate it during three years, while others improved that soil, the people who neglected to improve the soil do not deserve to own it."<sup>138</sup>

The land put at the Prophet's disposal is defined in the *ḥadīth* in the following way: "The ancient land from the time of 'Ād<sup>139</sup> belongs to Allāh and to His prophet, then (it will pass -k) to you." (*'ādiyyu l-arḍi li-llāhi wa-rasūlihi, thumma hiya lakum*).<sup>140</sup> When asked about the meaning of "Then it will belong to you," the Prophet answered: "You will assign it (i.e., the land -k) to the people." A similar version reads: "The uncultivated land belongs to Allāh and to His messenger, and then, from me to you, O Muslims" (*mawatānu l-arḍi li-llāhi wa-rasūlihi, thumma hiya lakum minnā ayyuhā l-muslimūn*).<sup>141</sup> Thus, the ownership of an *iqṭā'* bequeathed by the Prophet to his community requires the approval of the *imām* or the ruling authority (*sulṭān*).

<sup>137</sup> Abū Yūsuf, *Kitābu l-kharāj*, p. 61 inf.

<sup>138</sup> Abū Yūsuf, *Kitābu l-kharāj*, p. 61.

<sup>139</sup> See on 'Ād: *EI*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 1, p. 169 (F. Buhl); and see the exhaustive explanation of '*ādiyy* in connection with *iqṭā'* in Abū Ubayd's *al-Amwāl*, p. 278, no. 690; see also the explanation of the saying of 'Umar: *lanā riqābu l-arḍi*.

<sup>140</sup> Abū 'Ubayd, *Kitābu l-amwāl*, p. 272, no. 674; Yahyā b. Ādam, *Kitābu l-kharāj*, p. 85, no. 269; p. 88, no. 277.

<sup>141</sup> See this version recorded by the editor of the *Kitābu l-amwāl* of Abū 'Ubayd, p. 272, on the margin, no. 2.

Every effort carried out by a Muslim on a plot of uncultivated land, like a well dug in a *qaṭī'a*, or a tree planted there, has to be considered null and void if not approved by the ruling authority (*sultān*). This is binding because Allāh is said to have bestowed upon the Prophet all uncultivated land. Therefore, the *qaṭī'a* has to be improved by irrigation and construction. The *imām* may assign it to a Muslim for this purpose, even without the consent of the former owner who failed to perform this duty.

It is, thus, the prevalent view of the Muslim tradition that all uncultivated land was granted to the Prophet by Allāh; only the *imāms*, the just and righteous people forming the Islamic authority, are allowed to approve the building up of a *qaṭī'a*. They are granted the Prophet's privilege to allot the uncultivated land to the Muslims.<sup>142</sup>

It is possible that the Prophet himself formulated his opinion concerning the division of the *mawāt* land. In a *ḥadīth* which seems to reflect this early period, the Prophet defined his mission modestly: "I am merely bringing the news of Allāh's revelation, but Allāh is guiding onto the right path; I am merely dividing (among you -k), but Allāh grants (what He pleases to grant -k)" (*innamā anā muballighun wa-llāhu yahdī, wa-innamā anā qāsimun wa-llāhu yu'tī*).<sup>143</sup>

The last action of the Prophet in the field of division of land (or granting of land -k) was the bestowal of land on some noble people of Yamāma who came to the Prophet announcing their desire to embrace Islam. The Prophet bestowed on this delegation some plots of uncultivated land after they embraced Islam (*fa-aqṭa'ahum min mawāt arḍihim ba'da an aslamū*). The document of the *iqṭā'* was written on the name of Mujjā'a b. Murāra.<sup>144</sup> According to a report recorded by al-Balādhurī, the delegation came after the Prophet sent a letter to the people of Yamāma (and to Hawdha) and asked them to embrace Islam (in 6 A.H.). It was Mujjā'a who asked the Prophet to grant him *mawāt*-land in Yamāma and the Prophet granted his request.<sup>145</sup>

A shrewd remark of Abū 'Ubayd in which he outlined the difference between the *iqṭā'* granted to Furāt b. Ḥayyān al-'Ijlī<sup>146</sup> and the land granted to Mujjā'a deserves to be mentioned. In contradistinction to the same grants of land in territories not yet conquered by Is-

<sup>142</sup> See the advice of Abū Yūsuf in his *Kitābu l-kharāj* pp. 63-64 defining the prerogatives of the *imāms* in this matter.

<sup>143</sup> Al-Munāwī, *Fayḍu l-qadīr*, vol. 2, p. 571, no. 2582.

<sup>144</sup> Abū 'Ubayd, *Kitābu l-amwāl*, pp. 279-81, nos. 691-92. Ḥumayd b. Zanjawayhi, *Kitābu l-amwāl*, vol. 2, p. 629, no. 1034.

<sup>145</sup> See al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥu l-buldān*, pp. 118inf-119: ... *fa-aqṭa'ahu* (i.e., Mujjā'a -k) *arḍan mawātān sa'alahu iyyāhā*; and cf. Ḥumayd b. Zanjawayhi, *Kitābu l-amwāl*, vol. 2, p. 629, l. 3.

<sup>146</sup> On Furāt b. Ḥayyān al-'Ijlī; see Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-Iṣāba*, vol. 5, pp. 357-8, no. 6969.

lam, the grants of land in Yamāma were given when a small Muslim community had already been in existence there. When the members of the Yamāma delegation decided to embrace Islam, the Prophet granted them the *mawāt*-land of Yamāma.<sup>147</sup> It is evident that by this grant the Prophet indicated that Yamāma was put under the sway of Islam, although the number of Yamāmīs who embraced Islam was very small. The guiding principle applied in Yamāma was that the conversion to Islam of even a small group under its leader was binding on the whole population of the district. The Muslim settlements in the different regions acted according to the instructions of the Medinan body politic. What the Medinan center demanded was the right of passage through the different regions in order to gain direct contact with the isolated Muslim communities. These small communities were decisive in the establishment of Muslim authority over the whole population; hence, the direct contacts of the Medinan center with these settlements became the conquest of the whole province in which these tiny Muslim communities existed. The conquest of Yamāma by Islam was in fact the key to the conquest of the adjacent territories in the Arabian peninsula.

## XII

The few passages of Musaylima's "Qur'ān," recorded in *adab* literature, in some Qur'ānic commentaries, in historical compendia and in biographies of the Prophet, were harshly criticized by Muslim scholars. Al-Jāhiz's opinion on these *saj'* passages is negative: he maintains that Musaylima lacked the gifts of a poet, an orator, a soothsayer (*kāhin*) or a genealogist.<sup>148</sup> Al-Jāhiz gives some details about the beginnings of Musaylima's career as the "false prophet" of Yamāma. He used to frequent the markets in Arab and Persian territories; he visited the markets of Ubulla, Baqqa, al-Anbār and al-Ḥīra. He learned in these places the tricks of the sorcerers and of the idol temples guardians. He indeed succeeded to insert an egg steeped in acid into a glass bottle with a very narrow opening, claiming this was the miracle which he carried out with the help of Allāh. A similar trick was carried out by Musaylima before an audience in which a Bedouin chief and his family were present; the chief was al-Mujjā'a (b. Murāra -k) al-Ḥanafī. Musaylima showed those present his miracle: the pigeons with their wings cut off (*al-ḥamāmu l-maqāṣīṣ*) were able to fly in a dark night. Like in the former case, he

<sup>147</sup> See Abū 'Ubayd, *al-Amwāl*, pp. 280-81: *wa-ammā iqtā'uhu furāta bna ḥayyānin l-'iḥliyya arḍan bi-l-yamāma fa-ghayru hādḥā; wa-dhālika anna l-yamāmata qad kāna biha islāmūn 'alā 'ahdi l-nabiyyi ṣallā llāhu 'alayhi wa-sallam . . .* p. 281: *... qāla abū 'ubayd: fa-kadhālika iqtā'uhu furāta bna ḥayyānin; wa-hā'ulā'i ashrafu l-yamāma, fa aqṭa'ahum mawāta arḍihim yata'allafuhum bi-dhālika.*

<sup>148</sup> Al-Jāhiz (d. 255 A. H.), *al-Bayān wa-l-tabyīn*, vol. 1, p. 359.

claimed that he was helped by Allāh and forbade on that occasion to keep the pigeons at home by cutting their wings. Mujjā'a was fascinated by the two miracles and embraced the faith of Musaylima.<sup>149</sup> Al-Jāhiz stressed the blind belief of the Bedouins in miracles and their ignorance of the frauds and impostures of jugglers and sorcerers.

Muslim scholars, examining the utterances of Musaylima and analyzing the verses of his "Qur'ān," stated that their composition is odd and ludicrous, formulated in poor *saj'*. The short utterance of Abū Bakr concerning passages of Musaylima's "Qur'ān" was often quoted and widely circulated. Abū Bakr said it when the people of the Banū Hanifa came to Medīna after the defeat of 'Aqrabā' and the killing of Musaylima; they used to quote some of his revelations and his injunctions. Their assessment of the material was: "These utterances are devoid of any virtuous idea" (*inna hādhā l-kalāma lam yakun min illin*).<sup>150</sup>

Muslim scholars emphasize the differences between the queer utterances of Musaylima, composed in odd *saj'*, and the clear utterances of Allāh revealed in the Qur'ān. The scholars stress that Musaylima borrowed a great deal of his utterances from the Qur'ān, using some expressions for quite different situations. In the words of Ibn Kathīr: "People of insight will find the deep difference between the feeble words of Musaylima, between his unworthy deeds, between his "Qur'ān" – with which he will remain in the fire of Hell until the Day of (his) Distress and Shame – and between the Revelation of Allāh;" "there is a great difference between the words of Allāh – may He be exalted: Allāh, there is no god except Allāh, the Living, the Everlasting, slumber seizes Him not, nor sleep" and the "revelation" of Musaylima, may God disfigure him and curse him: "O frog, the daughter of two frogs, croak as you may croak, you will not turn the water turbid, nor will you bar the drinking person (from drinking)."<sup>151</sup> Ibn Kathīr continues to quote "the feeble verses from Musaylima's "Qur'ān," accompanying every sentence with

<sup>149</sup> Al-Jāhiz, *Kitābu l-ḥayawān*, vol. 4, pp. 369–71; and see the mention of these miracles in the *Kitābu l-ḥayawān* vol. 6, p. 206.

<sup>150</sup> In some sources, *ill* is rendered by *allāh*; if this is correct, the meaning would be: "These utterances are not from Allāh." See al-Bāqillānī, *I'jāzu l-Qur'ān*, p. 158: *lam yakhruj 'an illin, ay 'an rubūbiyyatin, wa-man kāna lahu 'aqlun lam yushtabah 'alayhi sakhfu hādhā l-kalām*. See the explanation of *ill* in 'Ikrima's readings in the phrase *wa-lā yarqubūna fī mu'minin illan*; it is derived from *il*, i.e., *allāh*, which appears in the names of the angels: Jibrīl and Mikā'il. In Tha'alibī's *al-Kashf wa-l-bayān*, vol. 3, p. 76/2, fol. 133a inf.–133b *ill* is rendered by *al-mithāq*, *al-'ahd*, *al-ḥilf*. See also the quotation of Abū Bakr's saying in al-Tha'alibī, *Thimāru l-qulūb*, p. 174 inf; *Lisān al-'arab*, s.v. *all*; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, vol. 3, p. 368, 491; Mujāhid, *Tafsīr*, vol. 1, p. 273, note 3; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, vol. 14, pp. 145–50, (on Qur'ān 9:8). *Ill* is rendered by *allāh* (compared with *jibrīl*, *mikā'il*, *isrā'īl*), by ties of relationship. According to the interpretation of the Baṣrans, *ill* is identical to *'ahd*, *mithāq* or *yamin*.

<sup>151</sup> Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, vol. 3, p. 490.

a curse on Musaylima. Such was the utterance of Musaylima about the pregnant woman who brought forth a living being between the navel and the bowels.”<sup>152</sup> Another utterance of Musaylima, scornfully assessed by Ibn Kathīr, reads: “The Elephant, what is the elephant? And who shall tell you what is the elephant? He has a poor tail and a long trunk and is a trifling part of the creations of God.”<sup>153</sup>

Ibn Kathīr classifies the utterances of Musaylima as utterances of nonsense and dotage (*min al-khurāfāt wa-l-hadhayānāt*) which even youngsters abstain from telling except in the way of scoffing and sneering.<sup>154</sup>

A new and interesting approach concerning the “Qur’ān” of Musaylima is found in the book of the Zaydī *imām* al-Hārūnī, *Ithbāt nubuwwati l-nabiyyi*. Al-Hārūnī states that no composition opposing Islam was prevented from circulation in the Muslim community. Yazīd b. Mu’āwiya could freely circulate his verses in which he threatened that he would take revenge on the prophet Aḥmad (i.e., Muḥammad) because of his deeds; he expressed this threat when the head of Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī was brought to him.<sup>155</sup> The verses of al-Walīd b. Yazīd b. ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān who spoke insolently about the threats of Allāh against oppressors (*jabbārūn*) and tore the Qur’ān to pieces in answer to these threats, says addressing the Qur’ān: “When you come to your Lord on the Day of Resurrection, tell Him: ‘O my God, al-Walīd tore me (to pieces).’”<sup>156</sup>

Al-Hārūnī insists that no “Qur’ān” had been produced which could rival the Qur’ān sent down to the Prophet Muḥammad. “We needed not to publish the nonsensical and feeble passages of Musaylima in this book,” says al-Hārūnī. “We recorded these passages merely to make the astonished man wonder and to convince him that had there been a book really competing with the Qur’ān, it would have been transmitted (*lau kānat li-l-qur’āni mu’araḍatun fī l-ḥaqīqati la-nuqilat*).” Al-Hārūnī continues his argument concerning the impossibility that Musaylima could have intended to imitate (*yu’arīḍu*) the Qur’ān. “Though Musaylima was a liar and an insolent person, he was an Arab and (even) his ignorance would not have caused him to claim that he imitated the Qur’ān.

<sup>152</sup> Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, vol. 3, p. 491; and see al-Hārūnī, *Ithbāt nubuwwati l-nabiyyi* p. 39; R. Serjeant, Early Arabic Prose (chapter 3) in *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature to the End of Umayyad Period*, edited by A.F.L. Beeston et alii, Cambridge 1983, pp. 114 ff., 128 sup.

<sup>153</sup> The translation is by R. A. Nicholson, *A Literary History of the Arabs*, Cambridge 1956, p. 183.

<sup>154</sup> Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr* vol. 3, p. 491; and see there the story of Abū Bakr who asked the Muslims (from Yamāma –k) to tell him the utterances of Musaylima. They were unwilling, but later agreed and reported his utterances. Abū Bakr then asked: “How did he confuse you and led your minds astray: by God, that (i.e., the utterance of Musaylima –k) did not come out from a righteous source.”

<sup>155</sup> Al-Hārūnī, *Ithbāt*, p. 36; and see *ibid.* the verses of Yazīd b. Mu’āwiya.

<sup>156</sup> Al-Hārūnī, *Ithbāt*, p. 36 inf.

Had he acted in this way, he would have been shamed among his people (*lau fa'ala dhālika kāna yaftadiḥu bayna qaumihi*). Musaylima did not claim that he imitated the Qur'ān; he merely stated that the passages which he uttered (*innamā kāna yūriduhā*) were sent to him from Heaven. However, not everything which is said to have been sent by Allāh is an imitation of the Qur'ān. This is so because we do not say that the inimitability (*i'jāz*) of the Qur'ān is caused only by the fact it was sent down from Heaven. We say that for the *i'jāz* of a revealed book additional attributes are needed. Nobody doubts that the Torah, the Gospels and the Psalms were sent down by Allāh, but no inimitability had been established for these three books.<sup>157</sup> In fact, nobody can imitate the Qur'ān. But poets, writers and scholars did embellish their writings with some of its words or phrases. A verse adorned with such a word turns into a brilliant spot in the poem. That is a special feature of the Qur'ān and an indication that the words of the Qur'ān differ from human speech.<sup>158</sup>

Musaylima was aware of the role of Qur'ānic words embedded in a speech or in a *saj'* passage uttered by a religious leader. Al-Hārūnī's observations concerning the ways of quoting Qur'ānic words in passages included in Musaylima's "Qur'ān" deserve to be mentioned. Musaylima quotes some words from the Qur'ān in which the Prophet referred to certain phenomena or to some occurrences and uses them for a different context. Thus, the phrase: *a-lam tara kayfa fa'ala rabbuka bi-aṣḥābi l-fīl* ("Has thou not seen how thy Lord dealt with the people of the elephant?") of Qur'ān 105 – was placed in Musaylima's *Sūrat al-ḥublā*: *a-lam tara kayfa fa'ala rabbuka bi-l-ḥublā*, "Hast thou not seen how thy Lord dealt with the pregnant woman."

Another Qur'ānic phrase used by Musaylima was: *la-qad manna llāhu 'alā l-mu'minīna* (Qur'ān 3:164). This was put in the passage about the pregnant woman: *la-qad manna llāhu 'alā l-ḥublā*.<sup>159</sup> Al-Hārūnī states with satisfaction that due to Qur'ānic expressions embedded in Musaylima's passages, these became an ornament covered with gems.

It is quite plausible that the Qur'ānic phrases were included in Musaylima's *saj'* utterances. This seems to have been the reason why some people were impressed by Musaylima's "Qur'ān" and embraced his faith. The governor of 'Irāq succeeded, however, to convince some of these people to embrace Islam.<sup>160</sup> The Qur'ān was keenly studied by the emissaries of Musaylima in Medina who returned to Yamāma; Musaylima learned it by heart and quoted it in his speeches as if they were part of his "Qur'ān."

<sup>157</sup> Al-Hārūnī, *Ithbāt*, pp. 38–9.

<sup>158</sup> Al-Hārūnī, *Ithbāt*, p. 39 inf.

<sup>159</sup> Al-Hārūnī, *Ithbāt*, p. 39.

<sup>160</sup> Al-Tha'alibī, *Thimāru l-qulūb*, p. 147.



A glance at the descriptions of the sunrise, the morning, the evening and the night in the passages of Musaylima's "Qur'ān" may lead us to some conclusions regarding the influence of the Qur'ān on the ideas of Musaylima and on his political views. We read in Qur'ān 9:1-2: "By the night when it covers up! And by the day when it brightens up ..." In Qur'ān 9:1-4, we read: "By the sun and its growing brightness. And by the moon when it follows it (the sun). And by the day when it reveals its glory. And by the night when it draws a veil over it ..." Qur'ān 89:1-4 reads: "By the Dawn, And the Ten Nights, And the Even and the Odd, And the Night when it moves on (to its end.) ..." Impressive is the description of sunrise in Qur'ān, 78:14-15: "And We appointed a blazing lamp, and have sent down out of the rain clouds water cascading that we may bring forth thereby grain and plants and gardens luxuriant."

These quotations from the Qur'ān are comparable to some fragments of Musaylima. It is evident that in the descriptions of the dark night covering the light of the day, Musaylima's text bears similarity to the Qur'ān.

In spite of the climate of Mecca in which the Prophet dwelt, in spite of the barren soil of that city, the Prophet recorded in his revelation the graces granted the believers. We read in Qur'ān 6:99-100: "And it is He who sends down water from the cloud; and we bring forth therewith every kind of growth; then we bring forth with that green foliage wherefrom we produce clustered grain. And from the date palm, out of its sheath (come forth) bunches hanging low. And we produce therewith gardens of grapes and olive and the pomegranate - similar and dissimilar. Look of the fruit thereof when it bears fruit and the ripening thereof. Surely in this are signs for a people who believe."

A short passage of Musaylima's "Qur'ān" mentioning Allah's graces reads: "Remember the grace of Allah and thank Him, as He turned for you the sun into a shining lamp and turned the rain falling very thick (*thajjāj*); He brought forth for you the ram and the ewe and granted you silver and glass, gold and silk clothes (*dībāj*). And it is from His grace that he brought out from the earth pomegranates, grapes, royal basilicum (*rayḥān*), and bitter plants (*zu'wān*)."<sup>161</sup>

The two descriptions of God's grace have the same tendency: to enumerate the bounty of the fruits, grapes, olive trees and palms granted by Allah. It is evident that the short passage discloses the intention of Musaylima to show the superiority of Yamāma over other areas; especially Mecca and Medina. The mention of the silver and gold of Yamāma refers to an important detail regarding the riches of Yamāma: there were indeed several mines of silver and gold.<sup>162</sup> Al-Ṭabarī<sup>163</sup> and

<sup>161</sup> Al-Tha'libī, *Thimāru l-qulūb*, p. 147.

<sup>162</sup> Al-Hamadānī, *Kitāb al-Jawharatayn*, index (s.v. Yamāma).

<sup>163</sup> Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 3, p. 284.

al-Bāqillānī<sup>164</sup> record an additional passage containing the virtues of Yamāma: it is an injunction to defend the land of Yamāma, to oppose its oppressors and to help the humble and the poor. Al-Hārūnī follows this passage with sharp criticism: "These passages of Musaylima are too feeble-minded and poor to deserve inclusion in this book."<sup>165</sup>

Musaylima's verse and speeches bear substantial similarity with the Qur'ān.

### XIII

Serious rivalry ensued between the Prophet and Musaylima concerning one of the "proofs of prophethood," (*dalā'il l-nubuwwa*): the miraculous healing of the sick. Well known is the miracle when the Prophet healed 'Alī of an inflammation of the eye. The Prophet sent a messenger to 'Alī asking him to come to his court and head a raid against the enemy. When 'Alī appeared with inflamed eyes, the Prophet spat into his eyes and blessed him. He gave him a banner; 'Alī went out with the troops and was victorious in the raid.<sup>166</sup>

Many reports concerning cases in which the Prophet cured madness, toothache, belly ache, dumbness, or forgetfulness are recorded in the *Sīra*: as could be expected, the sources present the treatment of the Prophet as successful, while the treatment of Musaylima is always shown to be harmful. When the Prophet arrived in Medina, the people suffered from a plague of fever. The Prophet invoked God and the epidemic fever was removed from Medina to al-Juhfa.<sup>167</sup> A special treatment was given by the Prophet to a madman who was brought to the Prophet. The Prophet rubbed his back and invoked God to cure him. The madman recovered immediately and returned sane to his tribe.<sup>168</sup> Another treatment was used by the Prophet on a boy from the tribe of Khath'am. When the Prophet was on a journey with one of his Companions, he met a Khath'amī woman sitting with a boy. She addressed the Prophet imploring him to help her in her distress: the boy was plagued everyday by many fits of madness. The Prophet then asked to pass him the child. He spat into the child's mouth three times. He said: "In the name of Allah, I am the servant of Allah, go away, O enemy of Allah!" Then the Prophet passed the child to his mother and asked her to meet him after a year in the same place. When the Prophet met the woman after a year, he asked her about the activity of Satan (*al-khabīth*). She told

<sup>164</sup> Al-Bāqillānī, *I'jāzu l-Qur'ān*, p. 157.

<sup>165</sup> Al-Hārūnī, *Ithbāt*, p. 38.

<sup>166</sup> Al-Dauraqī, *Musnad Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ*, p. 51, no. 19; al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā'u l-asmā'*, vol. 11, pp. 284-5;

<sup>167</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā'u l-asmā'*, vol. 11, pp. 295-303;

<sup>168</sup> Al-Ḥalabī, *Insān al-'uyūn*, vol. 3, p. 252.

him that the Satan stopped his activity and they had not yet heard from him. The woman offered the Prophet three sheep. But the Prophet took only one sheep and returned the other two.<sup>169</sup>

Another case was reported about 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Zayd b. al-Khattāb. Abū Lubāba b. 'Abd al-Mundhir, the grandfather of the child from the mother's side brought the child to the Prophet; the child was born unusually small. The Prophet affirmed that he had not seen a child smaller than 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Zayd. He took the child and performed the treatment of *taḥnīk*: he rubbed his palate with the pulp of a date, he stroked the head of the child with his hand and blessed him. After this treatment the child grew up and became a very tall person and a perfect man.<sup>170</sup>

Another case of treating a Khath'amī child brought by his mother to the Prophet is recorded in al-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūni l-adab*. The mother complained that the child does not speak and asked for help. The Prophet ordered to bring him water; he gargled his throat with the water, he washed his hands with it and gave the water to the woman. He ordered her to give the water to the child to drink and to rub it into his body. The child was healed and grew up superior in intelligence.<sup>171</sup>

It is not surprising that in contradistinction to the miraculous successes of the healing of Muḥammad, the Muslim sources record the fatal results of Musaylima's treatments. Musaylima tried to imitate the Prophet in his miraculous healing. When he heard that the Prophet used to perform the *taḥnīk*, spreading pulp of dates on his finger and rubbing it on a child's palate, he did the same, but the boy in question became mute.<sup>172</sup> He heard that the Prophet used to stroke children on their heads; he used the same method, stroked the head of a boy brought to him, but the boy became bald.<sup>173</sup> When Musaylima heard that the Prophet used to spit into a well and turned its salty water sweet, he tried to imitate him and spat into a well blessing the water, but its sweet water turned salty.<sup>174</sup> A case of Musaylima's invocation which caused a tragedy is reported by Ibn Ḥubaysh. A man came to Musaylima and told him about the sorrow of his family: "I am a wealthy man, but no child born to me lived more than two years, except a boy who is with us; he is more than ten years old. Yesterday," continued the father, "a

<sup>169</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā'u l-asmā'*, vol. 11, pp. 320–21.

<sup>170</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā'u l-asmā'*, 312.

<sup>171</sup> Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, vol. 18, p. 331; and cf. al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā'u l-asmā'*, vol. 11, p. 319.

<sup>172</sup> Ibn Abī Dunyā, *al-Ishrāf*, p. 329.

<sup>173</sup> Ibn Abī Dunyā, *al-Ishrāf*, p. 329; 'Alī al-Qārī, *Sharḥ al-Shifā*, on the margin of *Nasīm al-riyāḍ* of al-Khafājī, vol. 2, p. 486, l. 3 from bottom): see also Ibn Ḥubaysh, *Kitāb al-ghazawāt*, vol. 1, p. 55 inf., (with an addition: every child born to him was born bald).

<sup>174</sup> Ibn Ḥubaysh, *Kitāb al-ghazawāt*, vol. 1, p. 56.

child was born to me, and I beg you to bless him and to invoke Allāh to prolong his life." Musaylima promised to do it, so that the newborn child would be granted forty years of life. The man returned to his house delighted, but found his elder son dead, after he fell into a well and drowned. The newborn child was lying down suffering the pangs of death; both children died in the evening. The mother of the children said sadly: "Abū Thumāma has not been granted the position by Allāh like that which was given to Muḥammad."<sup>175</sup>

#### XIV

After the death of the Prophet and the election of Abū Bakr, the main goal of the body-politic in Medina was to quell the vigorous opposition of the Arab tribes against the injunction to pay *zakāt* from their herds. Abū Bakr began to prepare his army against the rebellious Bedouin tribes (including the Banū Ḥanīfa). According to the tradition recorded in Ibn Ḥubaysh's *Ghazawāt* as transmitted from Ibn Ishāq's *sīra*, Abū Bakr planned to send an army against Yamāma and summoned Zayd b. al-Khaṭṭāb to appoint him the commander of the army. Zayd b. al-Khaṭṭāb refused the offer because of his resolve to become a martyr (*shahīd*) – an aspiration upon which the head of an expedition is not allowed to act. Then Abū Bakr wanted to appoint Abū Ḥudhayfa b. 'Utba b. Rabī'a (the brother of Hind bint 'Utba, the wife of Abū Sufyān) as commander of the force, but Abū Ḥudhayfa refused on the same grounds as Zayd.<sup>176</sup> Afterwards, Abū Bakr summoned Khālīd b. al-Walīd (al-Makhzūmī) and ordered him to march out with the Muslim force against the Bedouin tribes in order to subdue them. Khālīd b. al-Walīd marched out against the Asad, Ghaṭafān, Ṭayy and Hawāzin; using merciless methods of punishment, he succeeded to defeat them totally. After this victory in Buzākha, Khālīd decided to turn in the direction of al-Biṭāḥ, pursuing the famous Tamīmī leader Mālik b. Nuwayra. But the Anṣār, who took part in the march, refused to follow Khālīd's orders, arguing that they were waiting for a special letter from Abū Bakr and his clear orders concerning the continuation of their march, as they had been promised by him. Khālīd's answer was that he had received a different command from Abū Bakr and he had to continue the march. As Khālīd was the *amīr*, there was no need to wait for the orders of the Caliph because everything had to be decided by him. "But I am not going to act against

<sup>175</sup> 'Alī al-Qārī, *Sharḥ al-shifā* (on the margin of *Nasīm al-riyāḍ* vol. 2, p. 486, l. 3 from bottom: *kānat āyātuhu mankūsatan: fa-innahu kamā yuqālu tafila fī bi'ri qawmīn sa'alūhu dhālika tabarrukan, fa-maluḥa mā'uhā*. See also Ibn Sa'īd al-Andalusī, *Nashwat al-ṭarab*, vol. 2, p. 630 (with some variants).

<sup>176</sup> Ibn Ḥubaysh, *al-Ghazawāt* vol. 1, p. 63: ... *inna l-amīra lā yaqdiru 'alā l-shahāda*.

you by force," concluded Khālīd, and set out with the Muhājirūn. The Anṣār were perplexed and started to discuss the situation stating: "If the people (headed by Khālīd -k) gain booty (*khayr*), we shall be deprived of it; if a disaster afflicts them, the people will shun us." So the Anṣār decided to join Khālīd. They sent a messenger to him and asked to be permitted to join the army. Khālīd magnanimously agreed.<sup>177</sup>

Modern historians of Islām have not paid enough attention to the opposition of the Anṣār and their withdrawal from the army of Khālīd at a decisive stage. Khālīd intended to attack a strong section of Tamīm, who claimed that they embraced Islam and were only accused that they refused to pay the *zakāt* imposed by Abū Bakr. The withdrawal of the Anṣār seems to indicate that there was a real split in the Muslim army in connection with the unfaithfulness of the Bedouins.

After the victory of Khālīd b. al-Walīd in Buzākha, some of the Bedouins came to Abū Bakr asking to grant them letters of safety and to enable them to convert to Islam. Abū Bakr refused and advised them to join the army of Khālīd; those about whom Khālīd would report that they had stayed with him (in his army -k) in Yamāma would be granted safety. That was Abū Bakr's decision and the Bedouins were asked not to bother him anymore. An instructive report of al-Wāqidi (quoted on the authority of Abū 'Abdallāh b. Abī l-Jahm) says that the Bedouins who joined Khālīd b. al-Walīd caused the defeat of the Muslim force on the Day of Yamāma three times and were a disaster for the Muslims. As a result of this, the Anṣār demanded to wage battle alone.<sup>178</sup>

During the campaign against the Bedouin tribal formations Khālīd disarmed the Bedouin troops and handed over their weapons to the Muslim units. The weapons were registered and returned after the battles; Khālīd handed over the returned weapons to Abū Bakr.<sup>179</sup>

In contradistinction to the sharp criticism of the actions of the Bedouins during the battles, the reports of the Muslim sources abound in impressive descriptions of the heroic deeds of the Companions for the cause of Islam in obedience to the Prophet's orders. The veterans of the *ṣahāba* were admired for their resolve; 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb was highly praised because he killed every unbeliever captured in the battle. Among those killed was al-'Āṣ b. Hishām, his uncle on his mother's side (*al-khāl*). It was 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb who suggested killing the captured non-Muslims, or to extradite them to their relatives in order that they

<sup>177</sup> Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 3, pp. 276-77.

<sup>178</sup> Ibn Ḥubaysh, *al-Ghazawāt*, vol. 1, p. 59; cf. 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Tathbūt dalā'ilī l-nubuwwati*, vol. 2, p. 587: ... *fa-qālu: qad 'awwadanā l-a'rābu l-firār, mā hā-kadhā kunnā nuqātilu ma'a l-nabiyyi ṣallā llāhu 'alayhi wa-sallam. wa-qālū li-khālidi bni l-walīdi, wa-huwa amīruhum: "akhliṣnā bi-'aduwwinā," fa-akhlaṣahum.*

<sup>179</sup> Ibn Ḥubaysh, *al-Ghazawāt*, vol. 1, p. 46.

kill them.<sup>180</sup>

It is noteworthy that the religious fervour pervading the faithful Muslims caused them to engage in duels even with their unbelieving fathers in order to kill them. Such was the case of Abū Ḥudhayfa b. 'Utba b. Rabī'a who was prevented by the Prophet from fighting his father with the intention of killing him. The sarcastic poetry of his sister Hind bint 'Utba b. Rabī'a, the mother of Mu'āwiya, did not convince her brother to change his decision. She reminded him that the father was kind to him, brought him up until he became a young man and granted him a proper education, blaming him as a squinting, inauspicious and faithless person.<sup>181</sup> However, Abū Ḥudhayfa was convinced by the Prophet to refrain from killing his father: "Leave him," said the Prophet, "and let somebody else kill him." And, indeed, Abū Ḥudhayfa's father, his uncles, his brother, his nephew (*ibn akhihi*) and other relatives were killed by the Muslims. Abū Ḥudhayfa was glad and thanked Allāh for these fatal events in his family.<sup>182</sup>

The situation in Abū Bakr's family was not less complicated. One day Abū Bakr heard his father, Abū Quḥāfa, reviling the Prophet. Abū Bakr violently slapped his father so that he fell upon his face. He told the Prophet about the event; the Prophet asked him not to do it again. Abū Bakr nevertheless said: "Had I had a sword at hand, I would have killed him."<sup>183</sup> Additionally, Abū Bakr summoned one of his non-Muslim sons to a duel on the day of Badr.<sup>184</sup>

The first clash between the force of Khālid b. al-Walīd and the warriors of Musaylima ended with a defeat of the force of Khālid. In the following two clashes the force of Musaylima was also victorious. The Muslim fighters felt that they were threatened by strong warriors with superior arms and swords.<sup>185</sup>

The forces led by Khālid b. al-Walīd against the rebellious tribes and later against the Banū Ḥanīfa are reported in some sources to be enormous. These reports seem to be exaggerated. A concise tradition transmitted by Rāfi' b. Khadīj, a warrior in Khālid's force,<sup>186</sup> gives us some details about the number of warriors: "We went out of Medina about

<sup>180</sup> 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Tathbīt dalā'ili l-nubuwwa*, vol. 2, p. 584, inf.; for 'Umar's advice on this, see al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-ta'wīl*, vol. 3, p. 41.

<sup>181</sup> See Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī'āb*, p. 1631, no. 2914; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr remarks with sharp criticism: "He was the best man in his belief, but she was – writing these two lines of poetry – the worst person in belief." See also Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, vol. 3, pp. 84–5.

<sup>182</sup> 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Tathbīt dalā'ili l-nubuwwa*, vol. 2, p. 585.

<sup>183</sup> Al-Māwardī, *Tafsīr (al-Nukat wa-l-'uyūn)*, vol. 4, p. 205.

<sup>184</sup> Al-Khāzin, *Lubāb al-ta'wīl*, vol. 7, p. 46.

<sup>185</sup> See Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 3, p. 289; about the *hinduwāniyya* swords, see Friedrich Wilhelm Schwarzlose, *Die Waffen der alten Araber* (Leipzig, 1886), pp. 127–8.

<sup>186</sup> See Ibn Ḥubaysh, *Ghazawāt*, vol. 1, p. 72.

4000 men, the people from the Anṣār were about 400–500 men,” and “the Banū Ḥanīfa counted about the same number (4000 men).”<sup>187</sup> Ibn Khadīj continues his report saying that the Muslim force was defeated three times because of the Bedouins in their lines, who used to flee at every enemy attack, drawing with them people of conviction and sincerity (*fa-yastakhiffū ahla l-baṣā’iri wa-l-niyyāti*). Then Thābit b. Qays called Khālīd to give the Anṣār and Muhājirūn the exclusive prerogative to act against the enemy (*akhliṣnā li-‘aduwwinā*). Khālīd consented: “It is up to you (*dhālika ilayka*),” was his answer. Thābit b. Qays took the banner, cried “*yā la-l-anṣār!*” and gathered his men. Then Khālīd cried: “*yā-la-l-muhājirīn!*” and the Muhājirūn came and surrounded him. The Bedouins were stationed far behind the fighters.<sup>188</sup>

After the failure of the Muslim force to achieve victory in three assaults against the Banū Ḥanīfa, the Muslims decided to march out against them a fourth time. The Muslim force marched vigorously and put a part of the Banū Ḥanīfa to flight. In this attack, the Muslims succeeded in killing one of the commanders of the Ḥanafī force; it was ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr who killed him. Shocked by the killing of their commander, the Banū Ḥanīfa retreated to a large garden which came to be known as the Garden of Death. It was a place with a high wall closed by a gate. The Banū Ḥanīfa who retreated to this place considered it suitable for their last stand. The pursuing Muslim force reached the closed gate of the Garden, but did not fight the Banū Ḥanīfa. In their peculiar situation, al-Bara’a b. Mālīk, the hero of the attacking force, decided to perform a dangerous mission: he asked a group of Muslim fighters to throw him from above the fence into the Garden where the fighters of the Banū Ḥanīfa had the upper hand in the struggle. The Muslim fighters threw al-Bara’a b. Mālīk over the wall into the Garden and he succeeded to open the gate. The Muslim warriors poured through the open gate into the Garden and began to kill their enemies. Nearly everyone who was in the Garden was killed or wounded. Musaylima was killed along with many of his followers. Many famous Muslims vied with each other claiming that they participated, together with a black slave named Waḥshī, in Musaylima’s death. The Banū ‘Āmir claimed that Khidāsh b. Bashīr together with Waḥshī killed Musaylima.

After the killing of Musaylima, a woman looked from the window of her house in the Garden and saw Musaylima lying on the ground and shouted: “Alas, let us grieve for the commander of the faithful! He was killed by a black slave,” (*wā-amīra l-mu’minīn, qatalahu al-‘abd al-aswad*)!<sup>189</sup>

<sup>187</sup> See Ibn Ḥubaysh, *Ghazawāt*, vol. 1, p. 72 and seq.

<sup>188</sup> See Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba*, vol. 3, p. 16 no. 3054.

<sup>189</sup> See Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, p. 121 where Waḥshī says that he killed both

This exclamation reflects the feelings of Musaylima's supporters: they considered him as the head of their religious community while alive.<sup>190</sup>

Many Muslims were introduced into the fictitious lists of men who were credited with killing Musaylima. The most surprising tradition is that Mu'āwiya claimed to have killed Musaylima, although we have no evidence that he participated in the battle at all.<sup>191</sup> Balādhurī mentions a report according to which Musaylima was killed by 'Abdallah b. Zayd b. 'Aṣim of the Banū Najjār of the Anṣārī clan.<sup>192</sup> Some other people are also mentioned as taking part in the killing of Musaylima.<sup>193</sup>

After the end of the bloody battle of al-'Aqrabā', Khālīd b. Walīd sent al-Mujjā'a b. al-Murāra to evaluate the situation of the Banū Ḥanīfa in their nearby town and to assess their feelings and plans after their defeat. Mujjā'a returned to Khālīd and informed him that their dwellings were full of warriors and that they were ready to renew the war against the Muslims. Mujjā'a advised the Banū Ḥanīfa to clad the women and the youths in military clothing and to appear in this manner in the windows of their dwellings. Mujjā'a spoke about the weariness of the Muslim warriors and suggested to agree to a ceasefire. Khālīd agreed, although Abū Bakr ordered him to be harsh towards the Banū Ḥanīfa, to kill the wounded, to apprehend those who were in retreat, and to kill the prisoners.<sup>194</sup> The fatigue of the Muslim army forced Khālīd to be more considerate towards the Banū Ḥanīfa. The treaty stated that the Banū Ḥanīfa would convert to Islam and surrender their gold or silver, their weapons and coats of mail. Abū Bakr was enraged by this; nevertheless he decided to ratify the treaty. However, he did not forgive Khālīd his concessions. He publicly expressed his fears that the Banū Ḥanīfa would remain faithful in their belief to Musaylima until the Day of Resurrection.<sup>195</sup>

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"the best man," meaning Ḥamza (the Prophet's uncle) and "the worst man," meaning Musaylima.

<sup>190</sup> Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, vol. 1, p. 132; al-Zurqānī, *Sharḥ al-mawāhib al-laduniyya*, vol. 4, p. 24 sup.

<sup>191</sup> See al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, p. 121.

<sup>192</sup> See Ibn Qudāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Istibṣār*, pp. 81–2; al-Dhahabī: *Siyar a'lām al-nubulā'*, vol. 1, p. 132.

<sup>193</sup> The names mentioned are Abū Dujāna, Waḥshī and 'Abdallah b. Zayd. See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, vol. 1, p. 130, 132, vol. 2, p. 204, 271; Ibn Qutayba, *al-Ma'ārif*, p. 371. Many others who claimed to have taken part in the killing are mentioned in compendia of Sira and Ḥadīth.

<sup>194</sup> The Muslims' hatred towards the people of the *rida* is reflected in the extremely cruel treatment of the prisoners of war in the battle against Sulaym. Khālīd b. al-Walīd gathered a group of captives in enclosures and burned them. See Dhahabī, *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, vol. 1, p. 268. After the battle against the *rida* of 'Umān, Asad and Ghatafān, the Muslims burned the bodies of their fallen enemies. See 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Taḥbīt dala'il al-nubuwwa*, vol. 2, pp. 588 ult.–589 ll. 1–2.

<sup>195</sup> Ibn Ḥubaysh, *Ghazawāt*, vol. 1, p. 96.



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The conquest of Yamāma was one of the most important events in the history of early Islam. Though the defeat of the Banū Hanīfa took place during the reign of Abū Bakr, the negotiations with Bedouins who eventually became allied with Islam had been successfully completed while the Prophet was still alive. Before his death, he is said to have sent letters to the tribal leaders who embraced Islam and demanded that they act against Musaylima, in support of the secessionist leaders of Yamāma. These secessionists were Musaylima's opponents, backed by the body politic of Medina.

The conquest of Yamāma paved the way for Muslim expansion into other regions of the Arabian peninsula. It also revealed some serious problems plaguing the nascent Muslim state. For the first time, some of the Anṣārī warriors refused to obey their commander Khālīd b. al-Walīd and agreed to return to the army only after they became convinced that this course of action would safeguard their interests. Furthermore, the conflict with the Bedouin tribes became evident and was publicly expressed. The idea that only the Anṣār and the Muhājirūn should fight the enemy matured in an atmosphere of intense mistrust toward the Bedouins.

In contradistinction to the attitude of the Bedouins whose sole aim was to get a share of the booty without endangering their lives, the Muslim tradition extols the bravery and enthusiasm of the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār who were more than willing to enlist in the fighting force under Khālīd's command.<sup>196</sup> They are described as being ready to sacrifice their lives for the sake of Islam. In the bloody battles of the *ridda*, the idea of martyrdom for the sake of Islam (*shahāda*) came into being. The martyrs were promised eternal bliss in Paradise and the idea of martyrdom became at least as important as the military victory itself. This can be exemplified by a conversation between 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb and his son 'Abd Allah who survived a battle in which his brother Zayd b. al-Khaṭṭāb was killed. 'Umar said to his surviving son: "You have returned home safe and sound while your brother is dead. Why were you not slain before him? I wish I had not seen your face!" 'Abd Allah replied: "Father, Zayd asked for martyrdom and God granted his wish. I strove for the same, but it was not given to me."<sup>197</sup>

The Muslim sources extol those who were killed in battle. The tradition recounting the heroic deeds of the Muslims formed an essential part of the history of the *futūḥ* and the *maghāzī* literature.

<sup>196</sup> 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Taḥbīt dalā'ili l-nubuwwa* vol. 2, p. 584-589.

<sup>197</sup> See Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 3, p. 292.

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