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 Muhammad 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 Qurʾānic 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 Muhammad and were given the opportunity to study the Qurʾān. 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 Ḥanifa only and wanted the Prophet Muhammad 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 Muhammad’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. Ḥābīb, was the “false prophet” who emerged in Yamāma during the Prophet Muḥammad’s activity in the Arabian peninsula. The early historian Ḥishām b. Muḥammad b. al-Sā‘īb al-Kalbī (d. 146 A.H./763 A.D.) recorded the genealogical chain of Musaylima as follows: Musaylima al-kadhīb b. Thumāma b. Kabīr b. Ḥābīb b. al-Ḥārīth b. ‘Abd al-Ḥārīth. Ibn Ḥazm gives his pedigree as Musaylima b. Thumāma b. Kāthīr b. Ḥābīb and records his kunya as Abū Thumāma. 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.

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

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1 See the different versions of his name in Mughaltay b. Qīlīj’s al-Zahr al-bāsim fi sirat abi l-qāsim, MS. Leiden Or. 370, fol. 335a. Musaylima b. Thumāma is recorded in Suhaylī’s al-Rauḍū l-unuf; Ibn Ḥishām has his name as Musaylima b. Ḥābīb. This name appears also in the compilations of al-Ṭabarī, Abū ‘Ubayda, Ibn Durayd and others. See both the traditions in Salāma b. Muslim al-`Autabī al-`Anthārī, al-Ansāb, vol. 1, p. 157; cf. al-Maqrīzī, Imtā‘u l-`asāmī, Maḥmūd Muḥammad Shākir, ed. Cairo, 1941, vol. 1, p. 506.

2 Jamharat al-nasab, p. 543.

3 Ibn Ḥazm, Jamharat ansābī l-`arab, p. 310. Ibn al-`Āthīr, 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 (kudhud) as well.”

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name was Hārūn. This name is recorded also by al-Khaṣṣājī. Another tradition regarding his kunya is given by Ibn 'Abd al-Barr: his name was Musaylima b. Ḥābib and his kunya was Abī Hārūn. Ahmad b. Muḥammad al-Qurtūbī records in his al-Ta'rīfī l-ansāb the name of al-Mahābbā, a brother of Musaylima.

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 `Umarā b. ʿAqīl in which he mentions Maslama al-kadhdhib saying that the Banū Ḥanīfa would not gain glory until they enrage Mudar (by fighting them). As to the nickname al-kadhdhib, the Prophet himself “invoked the (huge -k) amounts of dust on earth to attest that Musaylima was a liar.”

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7 Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, al-Durar fī ikhtisārī l-maghiżī wa-l-siyār, p. 270.
9 AI-Mubarrīd, al-Kīmil, vol. 3, p. 26:

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, Ahmad b. Ibrāhīm al-Dawraqī (d. 146 A. H.), ‘Amīr 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 Allah according to what he created in heaven, glory be to Allah according to what he created on earth, and glory be to Allah according to what he created between them (subḥāna Allāh ‘adadā ma bayna dhiilīka).” See this tradition also in al-Haythamī, Mawārid a-ẓamān, p. 579 nos. 2330 and 2331.

A similar tradition is recorded in Abū Ya’lā al-Mawsīlī, 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’a as of the qussās 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 Ahmad b. Ibrāhīm al-Dawraqī, Musnad Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāṣ, p. 150, no. 88; Abū Ya’lā al-Mawsīlī, Musnad, vol. 2, pp. 66-67, no. 710; and see the copious references of the editor; Al-Haythamī, Mawārid a-ẓamān 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 Ḥanifa heard about him, they invited him to Ḥajr, the chief city of the Yamāma. When Khalid b. al-Walid conquered Yamāma and killed Musaylima, the people of the villages (qurā) of al-Haddār were captured and expelled; in their place Khalid settled people of the al-Ḥārīth b. Ka'b of the Sa'd b. Zayd Manāt of Tamīm.\(^{11}\)

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 it 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 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: Dḥū l-Qarnayn, al-rūḥ and ašḥāb al-kahf; in addition they advised them to verify whether he was given the “Seal of Prophethood” (khiṭam al-nubuwwa). The Meccans indeed verified the existence of his kḥātām al-nubuwwa and asked the three additional questions. The Prophet asked Jibrīl and the angel answered the question about ašḥāb al-kahf and Dḥū l-Qarnayn; but concerning al-rūḥ, the angel merely said: al-rūḥ min amri rabbī, là ‘ilmā li bihi. The Meccans remarked sarcastically “Two sorcerers helped each other” (sāḥirānī tāzāhārā), hereby referring to the Torah and to the Fūrqān (i.e., the Qurān -k).\(^{12}\)

The tradition about the Meccans’ inquiry concerning the word 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-Thaʿālibī in his Thīmār al-qulūb fī l-muḍāf wa-l-mansūb. “Musaylima


\(^{12}\)Ibn al-Jauzī, al-Wāfā bi-ḥawālī l-muṣṭafā, p. 58.
falsely claimed prophethood while the Prophet was in Mecca before the *hijra*.

When the Prophet came to Medina, he found the people mentioning Musaylima, quoting his sayings and referring to the opinions of Banū Hanīfa 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.

The name al-Rahmān is often mentioned in the Qurʾān. It became a subject of a heated discussion between the Muslims and the unbelievers, in connection with the meaning of the word in Qurʾān 17:110, where al-Rahmān is another name of Allah: "Say: Call upon Allāh or call upon al-Rahmān: 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 Qurʾān 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-Rahmān in the headings of the Sūras. In the beginning of Muḥammad’s revelation, the word al-Rahmān was rarely used in the Qurʾān. But when many Jews embraced Islam and asked the Prophet about the numerous cases in which the word al-Rahmān was recorded in the Taurīt, Qurʾān 17:110 was revealed. A far-fetched tradition states that Musaylima adopted the name of Rahmān before the

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15 Al-Samarqandi, *Bāḥr al-ʿulūm* (= *tafsīr al-Samarqandī*) vol. 2, pp. 192–193; cf. Qurʾān 13:30: *wa-hum yakhfurūna bi-l-raḥmān, qul huwa rabbī*. It was ʿAbdallah b. Umayya l-Makhzūmī and his friends (see on him Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-ʿIṣāba*, vol. 4, pp. 11–14, no. 4546; Ibn al-Athīr, *Usdū l-ghāba*, vol. 3, pp. 118–119) who stated: "We do not know any Rahman except Musaylima the Liar." *qul huwa rabbī*: it was the order of God given to Muḥammad. See also the comments on Qurʾān 17:110, in *Usdū l-ghāba*, vol. 2, pp. 286–87. According to al-Ṭabarī (on Qurʾān 13:30), the order of Allāh to state that al-Rahmān is God was intended to deny the claims of the unbelievers that al-Rahmān 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 ʾllāhī* as the title of the Prophet appeared, and in which the expression *bi-smi llāḥī 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. ʿAbdallah" and the preamble of the document was replaced by the Jāḥili formula, *bi-smika ʾllāhumma*. See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmīʾ al-bayān*, vol. 16, pp. 445–46, nos. 20397–98 (on Qurʾān 17:110); al-Thāʿalībi, *al-Kashf wa-l-bayān*, MS. Ahmad III 76/4, fol. 51a-b. See also al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmīʾ al-bayān*, vol. 15, p. 121, where Ibn ʿAbbās reports that the Prophet was once overheard by an infidel when he invoked God, saying: *yā rāhmān, yā rāhim*. 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-Rahmān are identical. See also al-Naysābūrī (*Gharāʾibu l-Qurʾān wa-raghaʾibu l-furqān*., vol. 15, pp. 92–3), according to whom the man who overheard the Prophet invoking *yā ʾllāh, yā rāhmān* was Abū Jahl. Another reason for revealing the verses identifying Allāh with al-Rahmān was the claim of the People of the Book that the mention of al-Rahmān in the Qurʾān was very rare, while he was mentioned in the
The birth of Muhammad’s father, ‘Abdallah. 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'ammar), killed in the battle of ‘Aqrabā’ in 12 A.H. at the age of 150 (or 140).17

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.”18

The first person to use bismi lliihi l-rahmāni l-rahīm was the Prophet. The well known muḥaddith Abū ‘A’ishah19 recorded on the authority of his father the changes in the headings of the Qur’ānic Suras according to the time in which they were revealed. Quraysh asked to put in the headings of their documents and letters the expression bi-smiika llāhumma. The Prophet used this heading as well. Then God revealed to him Sūrat Hūd in which the phrase bi-smi llāhi majrāhā wa-marsāh (verse 41) appeared. The Prophet then ordered to put the heading bi-smi llāhi at the beginning of each Sūra. Later Qur’an 17 was sent down, including the phrase qul: udā llāha au udā l-rahmāna. The Prophet then ordered to use the heading: bi-smi llāhi l-rahmāni. Then Qur’an 27 was revealed, with the sentence innahu min sulaymāna wa-innahu bi-smi llāhi al-rahmāni l-rahīm (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 preceeded 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 Suras the formula: bi-smi llāhi l-rahmāni l-rahīm. So runs the headline in all the Sūras, except Sūra 9. The dār al-khīlāfā also used this headline in its correspondence.20

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16 Mughultāy, al-Zahr al-bāsim, MS. Leiden, Or. 370, fol. 141a.
17 See al-Ya’qūbī, Taʾrikh, vol. 2, p. 120, al-Suyūṭī, Taʾrikh al-khulajī, p. 76.
According to a tradition mentioned above, Musaylima started his prophetic mission before the Prophet’s hijra to Medina. The people of Yamâma 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 Muhammad; Jibril descends to Muhammad in the same way as he descends to him. A certain al-Rajjâl, 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 Muhammad, also comparing the qualities of Quraysh with those of the Banû Hanifa and the qualities of Mecca with those of Yamâma. “What made Quraysh more deserving of prophethood than you? They are not greater in number than you; your land is wider than theirs. Jibril descends from Heaven to me, like he descends to Muhammad.”

Yamâma 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 Yamâma used to say: “We surpass the people of the Earth in East and West by five features: by the beauty of our women, by the high quality of our wheat, by the sweetness of our dates, by the flavor of our meats (because of the quality of the Yamâmî pastures) and by the freshness of our water, which cleans the chest of phlegm.”

The fertile soil of Yamâma could supply Mecca with the grain necessary for its population.

Skilled workers of Yamâma used to frequent Medina searching for employment. The Prophet praised the skilled artisans of the Banû Hanifa; he employed them in the preparation of clay, when he ordered to build the mosque in Medina and his opinion of the Hanafi artisans was very favorable.

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21 Al-Tha’âlibi, Thimâru l-qulûb, p. 146, no. 207.
23 Ibn al-Faqih, Kitâbu l-buldiin, mukhtasâr, pp. 28–30.
Thus, Yamāna 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 Khalid ( Ibn al-Walid) annihilate their forces in al-‘Irād, 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., Khalid) was about to exterminate them.”

lammā ra‘at Khālidan bi-‘l-‘Irād ahlakahā qatlan wa aslamahā mā qāla ṭāghihā dānat wa a‘tāt yadan li-‘l-silm sāghiratan min ba‘dī mā kāda sayfu ‘Ilāhi yufrīnahā.”

25 Jarīr, Diwān, p. 600.
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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. Uthal, one of the leaders of the Banū Ḥanifa, 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.26 When the Prophet heard about the thwarting of his messengers by Thumāma b. Uthal, he invoked God to enable him to take hold of Thumāma, when he had no letter guaranteeing his safety.27 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 shahīda and became a Muslim. He explained that he converted to Islam because the Prophet addressed him by his kunya, Abū Umāma.28 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-ʿAlaʾ b. al-Ḥadrāmī who was sent by the Prophet to Bahrayn and succeeded to persuade al-Mundhir b. Sāwā to convert to Islam.29 It was al-ʿAlaʾ b. al-Ḥadrāmī who sent the kharāj of al-Bahrayn to the Prophet; the sum mentioned in the sources was 100,000 dirhams.30 When al-ʿAlaʾ b. al-Ḥadrāmī was on his way back to Medina, he was detained by Thumāma b. Uthal; he was released only after Thumāma embraced Islam.31

It was, of course, essential for the Prophet and for the nascent Muslim communities in Bahrayn 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

31 Al-Maqrīzī, Imtāʾu l-asmāʾ, vol. 14, p. 258, l. 10 from bottom.
from Medina under the command of one of the šaḥāba 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 Bahrayn can serve as an example: al-Mundhir b. Sāwā, acting under the guidance of al-‘Alā’ b. al-Ḥadramī, 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.32

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 Bahrayn, 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.33

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

32 See “al-Mundhir b. Sāwā,” EI2, s.v. (M. J. Kister); “Madjūs,” EI2, s.v. (M. Moronyi).
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al-wadā‘), the Prophet appointed Thumāma b. Uthāl as “governor of Yamāma.” 34 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-Rahāl to Yamāma after his return from his last pilgrimage. 35 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. 36

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 Fūrāt b. Ḥayyān. 37

The scanty information which can be derived from Maqrizi’s Imtā‘ al-asmā‘ implies that the Prophet wrote to Thumāma b. Uthāl advising him to seek help from Qaysi 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. 38 A volunteer who came to assist Thumāma b. Uthāl was

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The valuable note recorded in the Isāba says: "He came to help Thumāma b. Uṭāl 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. Uṭāl 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.40

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. Ṣa’ṣa’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. Ṣa’ṣa’a. The answer of the Prophet was unequivocal. He quoted Qur’ān 7:128: “Verily the earth is Allah’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 Muhammad’s power to cede Allah’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 Allah 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 fi amrika).41

Some twenty years later (i.e., a year before the death of the Prophet -k),

40 Maqrīzī (Imtā‘u l-asmā‘, vol. 14, p. 537, l. 4 from bottom) has ‘Amr b. Ḥazn Anmairī. Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, al-Iṣāba, vol. 4, p. 621, no. 5815 has the correct ‘Amr b. Ḥazn al-Namirī.
another leader of the 'Āmir b. Şaṣṣa'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." 42

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. 43 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." 44 '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-Mukhtar). He is also reported to have said: "The worst tribes are the Banū Ḥanīfa, the Banū Umayya and the Thaqīf." 45

It may be stressed here that Musaylima never denied Muhammad'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. 46 In the exchange of letters between Musaylima and the Prophet, Musaylima addresses the Prophet: rasūlu


llahi. The Prophet addresses Musaylima: musaylima al-kadhdbāb. The phrases in the letter of Musaylima which form a clear declaration that the earth (i.e., by which term the territories of Yamama 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 Ḥanifa, “but Quraysh are a people who exceed their bounds.” (fa-innā lanā nisfu l-arḍī wa-li-qurayshin nisfuḥā 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 Muhammad’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 record reported 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.46

A prelude to the Prophet’s negotiations with Musaylima was the exchange of letters between the Prophet and Hawdha b. ‘All, the leader of the Arab tribes in Yamama. 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

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48 Al-Ya‘qūbī, Ta‘rikh, 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-Jāmi‘, 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'īru qaumi wa katibuhum wa-l-'arabu tahābu maqāmī).49 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.50 Nevertheless, to call him “the king of the Arabs” was an exaggeration.51

The Prophet sent his emissary Salīt 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.52

Al-Wāqidi 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 Injil 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.53

Some reports say that the Prophet sent Salīt b. ‘Amr to Hawdha and to Thumāmā 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.54

50 See al-Kalbī, Nasab ma’add, vol. 1, p. 63; idem, Jamharat al-nasab, p. 539; Ibn Durayd, al-Ishtīqāq, p. 348 sup.; Lisan al-‘arab, s.v. hwdh.
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.55 According to a report recorded by Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Munʿīm al-Himyarī, Hawdha died as a Christian in 8 A.H.56

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 ‘Abbas, Musaylima arrived in Medina with a great military force (qadima fi jayshin ‘azīm) and alighted in a plantation of palm trees belonging to the daughter of al-Ḥārith (nazala fi nakhlī ibnati l-ḥārith).57

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-Ḥārith,”58 he went out with Thābit b. Qays b. Shammās59 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.60 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-Aswād al-‘Ānsī and Musaylima, to curb his activities. The Prophet was ordered

55 See E12, s.v. Ḥanīfa b. Ῥudaym (W. Montgomery Watt).
57 In some sources this text is corrupt and reads nazala fi nakhlī abīhi al-Ḥārithi. See al-Muʾammil b. Ihāb, Juz’, fol. 5a, penult.: ... anna musaylimata qadima fi jayshin ‘azīmin hattā nazala fi nakhlī abīhi l-ḥārithi bi-nāḥiyatī l-madīnati ...; and so in the printed edition of Juz’ al-Muʾāmmil b. Ihāb, p. 125 l. 3, no. 38. This reading is erroneous: the name of Musaylima’s father was not al-Ḥārith; his father had no plantations of palm trees in Medina, nor had Musaylima any plantations there.
60 See e.g., al-Zurqānī, Sharḥ al-mawāhib al-laduniyya, vol. 4, p. 22 inf.; ... fa-aqba la ṣallā ilāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallam taʾlifan lahu wa-li-qaumīhi rajāʾa islāmihi wa-li-yubīlghahu 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.61

The next meeting of the Prophet with Musaylima took place in connection with the arrival of the delegation of the Banū Ḥanifa 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”62 were clothed in this fashion.

'Ali b. Burhān al-Dīn al-Ḥalābī, 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” (tābi‘), in need of protection. But when he came the second time, he was in a position of leadership (kāna matbu‘-ān). His people covered him with clothes as a status symbol (wa-hādhā, aṣṭāruhu bi-l-thiyyābi, huwa l-munāsibu li-kaunihī matbu‘-ān).63 The difference between these two meetings is stressed by al-‘Aynī in his ‘Umdat al-qārī’.64 Musaylima took care of the luggage of the delegation of the Banū Ḥanifa 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.65 These actions of the

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64 Al-‘Aynī, ‘Umdat al-qārī, vol. 18, p. 23 l. 5 from bottom.

Prophet enabled Musaylima to deduce falsely that Muhammad 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. The delegation of the Banū Ḥanīfa reverted to the faith of Musaylima.

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 Muhammad 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. 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."
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 Uthal, 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. '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?”

The execution of Ibn al-Nawwāḥa, while other adherents of Musaylima were pardoned and later accepted into the Muslim community, is explained by al-Jassās 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 tuzhiru mina l-islāmi? qala: kuntu attāqikum bihi). Scholars who assume that the repentance of a zīndiq 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 taqiyya. 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 shahīda, those who fulfilled the order were to be pardoned; those who remained loyal to...
the tenets of Musaylima were to be executed. 72 'Uthmān's letter is preserved in 'Abdallah b. Wahb's Juz', excerpts from his Muwatta': "Some of the people accepted the terms and renounced belief in Musaylima, while others persevered in it, and were executed." 73

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 Yamamah, 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 sanān 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. 74 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 Muḥakām b. al-Ṭūfayl. 75 Al-Raḥḥāl became a keen student of the Qur'ān. After some time, the Prophet saw him in the company of some veteran Companions, Abu Hurayra and Furāt b. Ḥayyān. He said: "A molar tooth of one of you in Hell will be as big as the mountain of Uhud." Abu 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 (ashrākābū) of prophethood came to be known, Abu Hurayra sighed with relief. He realized that the tradition referred to al-Raḥḥāl. Abu Hurayra and Furāt b. Ḥayyān were thus free from the fear

73 'Abdallah b. Wahb, al-Muwatta', Juz', MS Chester Beatty 3497, fol. 56b.
74 See e.g., on Ḥabīb b. Zayd b. ʿĀsim: Khalīfa b. Khayyāt, Taʾriḵh, p. 63 (the text reads Ḥabīb b. Zayd). See a report recorded by Wathima in his Kitāb al-ridda: Ḥabīb b. 'Abdallah al-Anṣārī was sent by Abu Bakr to Musaylima and to the Banū Ḥanīfa summoning them to return to Islam; he read the letter of Abu Bakr and admonished them in an eloquent (baligh) way and was killed by Musaylima. See the report in Ibn Ḥajar's al-Isābā, vol. 2, p. 21, no. 1590, but the author assumes that the report may refer to Ḥabīb b. Zayd b. ʿĀsim, as recorded ibid., p. 19, no. 1586. Cf. al-Maqdisī, al-Isābār, pp. 81–82, where Ḥabīb b. Zayd is mentioned as the messenger killed by Musaylima.
of hell.\textsuperscript{76} Al-Rahhāl not only stated that the Prophet granted Musaylima a share in prophethood, but also transmitted to him those parts of the Qur'ān 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.\textsuperscript{77}

\addcontentsline{toc}{chapter}{VII}

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 haram 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 haram (fa-waqa’a fi dhālika l-harami qurā l-aḥālīf, .afkhdh min bani usayyid kānat dāruhum bi-l-yamāma, fa-sāra makānu dārihim fi l-harami).\textsuperscript{78} The newly established haram of Yamāma cannot be compared with the haram of Mecca. The tribes chosen by Quraysh as keepers and guardians of the Meccan haram 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 haram 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


\textsuperscript{77} Ibn Kathir, \textit{al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya}, vol. 5, p. 51.

\textsuperscript{78} "Tabarî, \textit{Ta'rikh}, vol. 3, p. 288.
any of his vices." 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 *dar al-nadwa* elders. In contradistinction, the people of Yamama were helpless in their complaints against the guardians of the *haram*, the Banū Usayyid, who used to plunder the peasants' crops and then would find refuge in the *haram*. Sometimes the farmers were warned and tried to apprehend the culprits, but they managed to escape into the *haram*, 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 *haram*." 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." 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." A verse of Musaylima's Qur'ān, read before the people of Yamama, is indicative of his views: "Go! The Banū Tamīm are a pure and independent people (laqa/h), 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." This declaration of Musaylima reflects of his attitude towards the Usayyid, the Tamīmī keepers of the Yamama *haram*. It also serves as an attempt to establish friendly relations with the tribal groups of Tamīm, who dwelled near Yamama.

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

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The Struggle Against Musaylima

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 Ya‘rub.

khudhī l-duffa, yā hādhīhi, wa-l-ʻabī

wa-buththī mahāsina hādhā l-nabī
tawallā nabiyyu banī hāshimin

wa-qāma nabiyyu banī ya‘rubī.83

Musaylima's adherents increased and his prestige and authority grew.84 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 ‘Ikrima b. Abī Jahl to support Thumāma b. Uthal, Musaylima's enemy.

Another dangerous event, unexpected by Musaylima, was the activity of Sajāh bint Aus b. Hiqq b. Usama.85 Sajāh was a former soothsayer, who claimed to have received revelation from Heaven as a prophetess of the Banū Yarbi‘ who were part of Tamīm. She and her family dwelt in Mesopotamia (al-jazīra); her father was a Tamīmi, and her mother belonged to the Christian tribe of Taghlib. Sajāh 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.”86 The reader will recall that Musaylima claimed to have received a revelation containing the idea of dividing territory between Banū Ḥanīfa and Quraysh, but the

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83 See Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya, vol. 6, p. 341 inf. Musaylima claimed that the verses were revealed to him from Heaven.
84 See al-Nuwayrī, Nihāyat al-ʻarab, vol. 19, p. 86: ...wa-qubida rasūlu lilāhi (ṣal‘am) wa-l-āmru ‘alā dhālika, fa-qawiyat shaukatu musaylimata wa-‘shtadda am-ruhu wa-kathurat jumū‘ahu.
M. J. Kister

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 Hanīfa; 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 nisfu l-ardī, wa-kāna li-qurayshīn nisfuhā lau ‘adālat, wa-qad radda llāhu ‘alayki l-nisfa lladhī raddat quraysh.).

In order to strengthen her position, Sajāḥ stated that God never bestowed prophecy on Rabi‘a (i.e., the Banū Hanīfa –k), but only on Muḍar88 to which she belonged.89 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-innā innama anā ‘mra‘atun min bani yarbū‘ wa-in kāna mulk fa-l-mulk mulkum).”

Several leaders of Tamīmī tribal sections joined her and assisted her in her plans. The famous leader of Tamīm, Qays b. ʿĀṣim, the sanguine Tamīmī chief al-Ahnāf b. Qays and the Ghudānī fighter Hāritha b. Badr91 were her followers; Shabath b. Rib‘ī92 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 Yamāmā. Her decision was accompanied by the rousing battle cry:

‘alaykum bi-l-yamāma,
ruffī fīlayhā rafīfa l-ḥamāma,
fa-innahā ghazwatan šarāma,
lā talṣaqakum ba‘dāhā malāma”93

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88 Abū l-Faraj al-Isfahānī, al-Aghānī, vol. 18, p. 166 ll. 5-6; ... inna ilāha lam yaj‘al ġadhā l-amra fī rabi‘ ata, innamā ja‘alahu fī muṯar.
89 The tribe of Tamīm to which Sajāḥ belonged is part of Muḍar.
During the speedy advance of her forces in the direction of Yamama, Sajah 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 Sajah’s force, he feared for his country because he was busy fighting Thumama b. Uthal whose force was supported by a detachment of Muslim soldiers under the command of ‘Ikrima b. Abi Jahl. His garrison was in the territory of Thumama. The Muslim soldiers commanded by ‘Ikrima expected the arrival of the huge force commanded by Khalid b. al-Walid.94 Even in this situation, Musaylima fostered the hope that the united forces of Hanifa and Tamim would jointly be able to “devour” the Arab tribes.95

Having learned about Musaylima’s offer, Sajah 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.”96

The pact concluded between Musaylima and Sajah during their meeting gave Sajah the crops of Yamama 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 Yamama.97

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97 See, e.g., al-Nuwayrī, Nihāyat al-ʿarab, vol. 19, p. 80, ll. 8-10.
The solemn speech of Musaylima while concluding the agreement with Sajāh is followed by a short sajī 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.”98 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.99 Musaylima, says a report in al-Ṭabarī’s Ta’rīkh, used to tempt anyone and to bribe him in order to gain his sympathy (wa-kāna musaylimatu yusāni’u kullu aḥadin), not paying any attention to the fact that people may censure this behavior as improper and reproachable.100 The commentator of Qaṣīdat Naswān b. Saʿīd 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.”

Some medieval Muslim scholars attributed the censure of prostration and bending to Tulayḥa b. Khuwaylid, also considered a false prophet by Muslim tradition. Tulayḥa 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 yafʿalu Allāh bi-taʿfīri khudūdikum wa-fαthi adbārikum? udhkurū Allāh aʿiffatān qiyāman). Al-Hārūnī who records this speech of Tulayḥa mentions some Qur’ānic expressions borrowed by Tulayḥa in this speech.102

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...
death, the father was allowed to resume his conjugal activity until the birth of a new male child.\(^{103}\) In contradistinction to the injunctions of the Prophet who forbade celibacy (\textit{rahbāniyya}) and ordered the Muslims to lead full marital lives,\(^ {104}\) 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 Sajāh, the vulgar anecdotes about Sajāh—these seem to have been forged by the enemies of Musaylima and Sajāh with the intention of slandering them. Some Muslim sources refrained from quoting this material.\(^ {105}\)

**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

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\(^{103}\) Al-Ṭabarī, \textit{Ta’rikh}, vol. 3, p. 272 ult.


\(^{105}\) Al-Maqdisi, \textit{Kitāb al-bad’ wa-ta’rikh}, vol. 5, p. 164 (her kunya was Umm Sādir, her husband was Abū Kuhayla, the kāhin of the Yamāma; she was a false prophetess). The obscene phrase of Musaylima’s Qurʾān is recorded and his sexual proposal is quoted. A revelation received by Sajāh (\textit{ibid.}, p. 165) allowed a woman to marry two husbands. This was unheard of in the Jahiliyya. See also the story of Sajāh’s meeting with Musaylima and the remark of Ibn Ḥubaysh, \textit{Ghazawāt}, vol. 1, p. 57, ll. 1–2: \ldots fa-qālāt sajāḥ: qad ḍaṣṣata, fa-‘dhkur. wa-ba’da ḍaḍhā min qaṭlwī wa-fīlīhā mā a’raḍnā ‘an dākhirī. The obscene verses also appear in al-Nuwayri’s \textit{Nihāyat al-ʿarab}, vol. 19, p. 76; al-Sharishi, \textit{Sharḥ maqāmāt al-ḥarīrī}, vol. 4, pp. 35–6; Ibn Junghul, \textit{Ta’rikh}, vol. 2, p. fol. 83b; al-Maydānī, \textit{Majma’ ʾal-amthāl}, vol. 1, pp. 326–7, no. 1758 (under the heading: \textit{aẓnā min sajāḥ}); Ḥamza al-ʾIsfahānī, \textit{al-Durr al-jaḥira}, vol. 1, p. 214, no. 290 (under the heading: \textit{aẓnā min sajāḥ}) and vol. 1, p. 325, no. 515 (under the heading: \textit{aḍīlām min sajāḥ}).
(mushrikin) 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.\textsuperscript{106} 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 (dimānt) will not exist in the Arabian peninsula” (or in the Hijāz).\textsuperscript{107}

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 Bahrayn. 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.\textsuperscript{108} 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-‘Alā’ b. al-Ḥadrāmī. It is noteworthy that when the military unit sent by Abū Bakr reached the borders of Bahrayn, 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 (umārā') of this region joined the unit of al-‘Alā’ and defeated their enemy.\textsuperscript{109}

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 (ana bari‘un) for any

\textsuperscript{106}See ‘Abd al-Razzāq, al-Muṣannaf, vol. 6, pp. 51–2, nos. 9977, 9970.

\textsuperscript{107}‘Abd al-Razzāq, al-Muṣannaf, vol. 6, p. 54, no. 9985 (only Jews and Christians are mentioned); and no. 9990: ... lā yaḏtami‘u bi-arābi dinānī, au qāla: bi-arābi l-hijāzi dinānī.

\textsuperscript{108}See Abu ‘Ubayd al-Bakrī, Muʿjam maṣṣa ʿlam jam vol. 2, pp. 401–2; Yāqūt, Muʿjam al-buldān, vol. 2, p. 174; al-Ḥimyarī, al-Raṣūl l-miṣfār, p. 181; and see Shākir al-Fahṭām, Qit‘atun fi akhbār l-ridā li-muʾallifin majhūl, p. 162, l. 2 from bottom: lamma qubīda rasūlu llāhi sallā llāhu ’alayhi ’rtaḍa l-nāṣu ‘ani l-islāmī illā thalāthata masjid: ahu l-madīna wa-ahu makkata, wa-ahu juwāthā. The word masjid is used here to denote the center of a Muslim town.

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.\(^{110}\) 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 (*zakiit*) 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* 'unī 'anāqan kānū *yu'* addūnahā *ilā rasūli *llāhi *sattā *llāhu *alayhi wa-*sallam* la-*qātal*thum *'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.\(^{111}\) 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. Abi 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 (*sarayā*) against the tribes who rebelled against the authority of Medina, ‘Ikrima b. Abi Jahl and Shurahbil b. Ḥasana were sent against Musaylima with a military force (fi ‘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 Ḥadramawt." Abū Bakr also instructed Shurahbil to stay in Yamāma until Khalid 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’ā.”\(^{112}\)

This material indicates that the Prophet showed great concern for the


\(^{111}\) See e.g., al-Qastallānī, *Irshād al-sārî*, vol. 3, pp. 6–7; on the followers of Musaylima see p. 6, ll. 7–8.

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’) asking them to try to “do away” with al-Aswad al-‘Ansī (an tuhāwilū l-aswada) and asked them to engage men from Himyar and Ḥamdān 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.

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 Dahna’ is instructive. The report about the partition of Dahna’ is transmitted by Sayf b. ‘Umar on the authority of al-Ḥārith b. Ḥassān al-Ṭāmirī (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 Bahrayn and in which the chiefs of Bakr raised their objections against al-‘Alā’ b. al-Ḥadrāmī, in whose home the discussion was held. At that time a man from the Banū Tamīm sent to the Prophet a message (khabar), informing him that the tribe of Rabī‘a (including Bakr -k) reverted to unbelief (qad kaffar) and prevented (by force -k) the collection of zakāt. The information about this incident and about the khabar reached Rabī‘a and they sent al-Ḥārith b. Ḥassān al-Ṭāmirī (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 Rabadhā116 a poor woman, Qayla bint Makrama al-‘Anbariyya (of the tribe of Tamīm -k) and agreed to take her to the Prophet.117 It was al-Ḥārith b. Ḥassān al-Bakrī who repre-

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113 See on them EI², vol. 1, p. 102, s.v. “Abnā’”, Section II. (K.V. Zetterstéen).
117 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 Rabadhā 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,
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sent Bakr b. Wā'il (of Rabi'a). The representative of the Tamīmī tribal groups in Bahrayn who sent the message about the apostasy of Rabi'a (or Bakr -k) reached the Prophet before the arrival of the Bakr al-Ḥārith b. Hassān, and brought the story of al-'Alā (b. al-Ḥadrami); then the Prophet ordered 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ 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 Rabi'a in Bahrayn. He informed the Muslims that al-'Alā (b. al-Ḥadrami) and al-Mundhir (b. Sāwā) reported to him that Rabi'a apostatized (ṣafīt) and refused to pay the zakāt. The Prophet then asked: “Who will volunteer (to march out) with 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ?” At this fateful moment, al-Ḥārith b. Hassān proclaimed loudly the allegiance of Rabi'a to the Prophet; he himself gave the oath of allegiance to Islam and converted. Further, al-Ḥārith b. Hassān asked the Prophet to affirm in a letter that Dahna' belongs to Rabi'a and to set up the border line between Rabi'a and Tamīm in that district. The Prophet called Bilāl and ordered him to bring a piece of parchment and an inkpot (dawāt). But when the scribe started to write the document in which the Prophet intended to affirm the right of Rabi'a on the territory of Dahna', Qayla, the poor Tamīmī woman, began to shout asserting that the territory between Dahna' and Bahrayn had belonged in the period of the Jahiliyya to Tamim and on that basis Tamīm converted to Islam. The Prophet immediately changed the letter, affirming that Dahna' belonged to Tamīm.

The Prophet's decision was significant. The borders of the territory granted to Tamīm in Dahna' enabled them to launch a successful raid against the Bakr b. Wā'il (i.e., Rabi'a -k). The information about Nibaj, 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. 'Āsim was a long and exhausting one. When Qays b. 'Āsim reached Nibaj 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

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118 See about the subdivisions of Bakr b. Wā'il and their mutual relations in Yamāma in “Bakr b. Wā'il,” El2, s.v. (W. Caskel).
119 The text has shāl, which is a mistake.
120 The text has wada'at al-sakāt; read correctly mana'at al-zakāt.
121 Maqrīzī, Imtā'u l-asma', vol. 14, p. 312.
123 The text has idāwāt, which is a mistake.
the Bakr b. Wā'il, the Lahāzīm.\textsuperscript{125}

Some details about Nibaj deserve to be mentioned: there are two places called Nibaj: the one is Nibaj Ibn 'A.\textsuperscript{mir} (in the neighborhood of Basra); the other is Nibaj near Thaytal, adjacent to al-Bahrayn.\textsuperscript{126}

The information recorded by Abū 'Ubayd al-Bakrī indicates the reasons for Qays b. 'A.\textsuperscript{mir}'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\textsuperscript{b} b. al-Ḥaḍrami 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. 'A.\textsuperscript{mir} was successful in his raid against the Bakr b. Wā'il apostates.

Qays b. 'A.\textsuperscript{mir} is highly praised in connection with his raids in Nibaj and Thaytal. But one of the verses mentions a third locality in which Qays b. 'A.\textsuperscript{mir} excelled in a military raid: it was Juwāthā in Bahrain. Qays b. 'A.\textsuperscript{mir} attacked Juwāthā, which was under the control of the tribe of 'Abd al-Qays, and took considerable booty.\textsuperscript{127}

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.\textsuperscript{128}

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-Hārith b. Hishām – are cases in point. 'Ikrima became a devout Muslim and was killed during the wars of conquest.\textsuperscript{129}

\textsuperscript{125} Al-Bakrī, Mu'jam ma 'sta'jam, vol. 1, pp. 351–52; and see the verse of Qurra b. Qays b. 'A.\textsuperscript{mir}: “I am the son of the man who cut the water bags when he saw the troops of the Lahāzīm ready to fight (anā 'bnu lldhī shaqa l-azăda wa-qad ra'ā / bi-thaytalā ah'yā'a ilāhāzīmi ḥud'ādir).”

\textsuperscript{126} Al-Bakrī, Mu'jam ma 'sta'jam, vol. 4, p. 1292, l. 2: wa-l-nibaj nibajānī: nibaj thaytal wa-nibaj bni 'amīrin bi-l-baṣra. wa-qāla l-asma': al-nibaj wa-thaytal mā'ānī li-banī sa'di bni zaydi manātin, mimmā yālī l-bahrayni. Yaqūt provides additional details about the two Nibajs: the one is on the way of Basra and is called “Nibaj bani 'Amīr” and faces Fayd; the other Nibaj is the Nibaj of the Banū Sa'd. Another definition says that the Nibaj between Mecca and Basra belongs to the Banū Kurayz, the other Nibaj is located between Basra and Yamāma. See Yaqūt, Mu'jam al-buldān, vol. 5, pp. 255–56.

\textsuperscript{127} wa-aqghāra qayyu bnu 'a.\textsuperscript{mir} bi-banī sa'dīn 'alā 'abdī l-qays bi-juwāthā fa-aṣābū mā arādū firmā yaz'umū banū mínqar. fa-qāla sawwār b. ḥayyān: wa-mā laka min ayyāmī šidqin ta'uddhūn: ka-yaumī juwāthā wa-l-nibajī wa-thaytalā.


\textsuperscript{128} See Lisān al-'Arab, s.v., s-i-s-l: ‘ajiba rabbunā min qaumīn yuqūdūna ilā l-jannati fī-l-salāsīl; and see al-Munāwī, Fayḍu l-qadīr, vol. 4, p. 302, no. 5383.

\textsuperscript{129} Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, al-Isāba, vol. 4, pp. 538–9, no. 5642; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, al-İst'i'àb, 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 thwarted by a force of Khālid b. al-Walid who protected the Prophet and his Companions. See Ibn Kathir, Tafsīru l-qur'ānī
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Al-Ḥarīth b. Ḥishām also embraced Islam, took part in the battle of Yamāma and died in the plague of ʿAmwās.130

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 Bahrayn, ʿUman, and in Yamāma itself. A strong army was necessary for the conquest of Yamāma. Khālid 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, Khālid 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 Khālid 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).131 Abū Bakr also advised Khālid how to delegate authority to the tribal leaders and section commanders and how to solicit the opinion of the Muhājrūn 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

disobeying my orders. Peace be upon you.” 132

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. 133

Bakr b. Naťāh, a poet who descended from the defeated Banū Ḥanīfa, 134 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. 135

wa-naḥnu wusīfna ḏūna kulli qabilatín
bi-shiddati ba’šin fī l-kitābī 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. 136 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

132 Ibn Ḥuṣayn, Ghazawāt, vol. 1, p. 59 inf-60; and see the letter of Abū Bakr to Khaļid b. al-Walīd in al-Waqqīḍī’s Kitāb al-ridda, pp. 62–3, no. 86.
133 Al-Waqqīdī, al-Wasṣīf fī talṣīrī 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 Hawāzīn, the Thaqīf, and the Ghatafān. These views are beyond the scope of this study.
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 dinars, 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 ‘Ali b. Abī Ṭalib. They were surprised that the sum returned to them was less than that which they deposited. ‘Ali b. Abī Ṭalib’s answer was that he had paid the zakāt on the deposit.137

According to the Muslim tradition, it was the Prophet himself who granted plots of uncultivated land in Medina to Abī 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 qatī‘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.”138

The land put at the Prophet’s disposal is defined in the hadith in the following way: “The ancient land from the time of ‘Ād139 belongs to Allāh and to His prophet, then (it will pass -k) to you.” (‘ādīyyu l-ardi li-llāhi wa-rasūlihi, thumma hiya lakum).140 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-ardi li-llāhi wa-rasūlihi, thumma hiya lakum minnā ayyūhā l-muslimūn).141 Thus, the ownership of an iqṭā‘ bequeathed by the Prophet to his community requires the approval of the imām or the ruling authority (sultān).

137 Abū Yūsuf, Kitābu l-khārāj, p. 61 infra.
138 Abū Yūsuf, Kitābu l-khārāj, p. 61.
139 See on ‘Ād: EI2, vol. 1, p. 169 (F. Buhl); and see the exhaustive explanation of ‘ādīyy in connection with iqṭā‘ in Abū Ubayd’s al-Amwāl, p. 278, no. 690; see also the explanation of the saying of ‘Umar: lānā riqābu l-arḍi.
140 Abū ‘Ubayd, Kitābu l-amwāl, p. 272, no. 674; Yahyā b. Ādam, Kitābu l-khārāj, p. 85, no. 269; p. 88, no. 277.
141 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 qaṭrʿa, or a tree planted there, has to be considered null and void if not approved by the ruling authority (sultan). This is binding because Allāh is said to have bestowed upon the Prophet all uncultivated land. Therefore, the qaṭrʿa 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 qaṭrʿa. They are granted the Prophet's privilege to allot the uncultivated land to the Muslims.142

It is possible that the Prophet himself formulated his opinion concerning the division of the mawāt land. In a hadīth 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 yuʿṭī).143

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-aqtaʿahum min mawāt arḍāhim baʿda an aslamū). The document of the iqtāʾ was written on the name of Mujjāʿa b. Murāra.144 According to a report recorded by al-Baladhuri, 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 Mujjāʿa who asked the Prophet to grant him mawāt-land in Yamāma and the Prophet granted his request.145

A shrewd remark of Abu ʿUbayd in which he outlined the difference between the iqtāʾ granted to Furāt b. Hayyān al-ʿIjlī and the land granted to Mujjāʿa deserves to be mentioned. In contradistinction to the same grants of land in territories not yet conquered by Is-

142 See the advice of Abū Yūsuf in his Kitābu l-kharāj pp. 63–64 defining the prerogatives of the imāms in this matter.
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.\textsuperscript{147} 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-Jaḥiẓ’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.\textsuperscript{148} Al-Jaḥiẓ 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-Hīra. 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 Allah. 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-maqāṣīs) were able to fly in a dark night. Like in the former case, he

\textsuperscript{147} See Abū ‘Ubayd, al-Amwāl, pp. 280–81: wa-amma iqṭa’uḥu furāta bna ḥaṣyānin l’uqīyya arbān bi-l-yamāma fa-ghayru hādḥa; wa-dhālikka anna l-yamāmata qad kāna huna islāmun ‘alā ādī l-nabīyyi ẓāli l-lāhu ‘alāyhi wa-sallam . . . . p. 281: . . . qāla abū ‘ubayd: fa-kadhālikka iqṭa’uḥu furāta bna ḥaṣyānin; wa-hā’ulā’i ashrāfu l-yamāma, fa iqṭa’ahum mawāta arbāhīm yata’allaḥuhum bi-dhālikka.

\textsuperscript{148} Al-Jaḥiẓ (d. 255 A. H.), al-Bayān wa-l-tabyīn, vol. 1, p. 359.
claimed that he was helped by Allâh and forbade on that occasion to keep the pigeons at home by cutting their wings. Mujjâ‘a was fascinated by the two miracles and embraced the faith of Musaylima.\textsuperscript{149} Al-Jâhiẓ 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’ân,” stated that their composition is odd and ludicrous, formulated in poor \textit{saj‘}. The short utterance of Abû Bakr concerning passages of Musaylima’s “Qur’ân” was often quoted and widely circulated. Abû Bakr said it when the people of the Banî Hanîfa came to Medina after the defeat of ‘Aqrâbî 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” (\textit{inna hâdhâ l-kâlama lam yakun min illin}).\textsuperscript{150}

Muslim scholars emphasize the differences between the queer utterances of Musaylima, composed in odd \textit{saj‘}, and the clear utterances of Allâh revealed in the Qur’ân. The scholars stress that Musaylima borrowed a great deal of his utterances from the Qur’ân, using some expressions for quite different situations. In the words of Ibn Kathîr: “People of insight will find the deep difference between the feeble words of Musaylima, between his unworthy deeds, between his “Qur’ân” – with which he will remain in the fire of Hell until the Day of (his) Distress and Shame – and between the Revelation of Allâh;” “there is a great difference between the words of Allâh – may He be exalted: Allâh, there is no god except Allâh, 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).”\textsuperscript{151} Ibn Kathîr continues to quote “the feeble verses from Musaylima’s “Qur’ân,” accompanying every sentence with

\textsuperscript{149} Al-Jâhiẓ, \textit{Kitâbu l-ḥayawân}, vol. 4, pp. 369–71; and see the mention of these miracles in the \textit{Kitâbu l-ḥayawân} vol. 6, p. 206.

\textsuperscript{150} In some sources, \textit{ill} is rendered by allâh; if this is correct, the meaning would be: “These utterances are not from Allâh.” See al-Baqillâni, \textit{I’jâzu l-Qur’ân}, p. 158: \textit{lâm yakhrûj ‘an illin, a’y ‘an rubûbiyyatin, wâ-man kâna lâhu ‘aqlun lam yushtabah ‘ala yhi sakhfu l-kâlama}. See the explanation of \textit{ill} in ‘Ikrima’s readings in the phrase \textit{wa-lâ yarqubûna fi mu’minin illan}; it is derived from \textit{il}, i.e., allâh, which appears in the names of the angels: Jibrîl and Mikâ‘îl. In \textit{Tha‘alibî’s al-Kashf wa-l-bayân}, vol. 3, p. 76/2, fol. 133a inf.–133b \textit{ill} is rendered by \textit{al-mithâq, al-‘ahd, al-hiff}. See also the quotation of Abû Bakr’s saying in \textit{al-Tha‘alibî, Thîmûru l-qulûb}, p. 174 inf.; \textit{Lisân al-‘arab}, s.v. \textit{all}; Ibn Kathîr, \textit{Tafsîr}, vol. 3, p. 368, 491; Mujâhid, \textit{Tafsîr}, vol. 1, p. 273, note 3; al-‘Tabarî, \textit{Jami‘ al-bayân}, vol. 14, pp. 145–50, (on Qur’ân 9:8). \textit{Ill} is rendered by allâh (compared with jibrîl, mîkâ‘îl, isrâ‘îl), by ties of relationship. According to the interpretation of the Basrans, \textit{ill} is identical to ‘ahd, mithâq or yamin.

\textsuperscript{151} Ibn Kathîr, \textit{Tafsîr}, vol. 3, p. 490.
The Struggle Against Musaylima

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. Another utterance of Musaylima, scornfully assessed by Ibn Kathîr, 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.”

Ibn Kathîr classifies the utterances of Musaylima as utterances of nonsense and dotage (min al-khurafât wa-l-hadhayânât) which even youngsters abstain from telling except in the way of scoffing and sneering.

A new and interesting approach concerning the “Qur’an” of Musaylima is found in the book of the Zaydi imâm al-Hârûnî, Ithbât nubuwâwati l-nabîyi. Al-Hârûnî states that no composition opposing Islam was prevented from circulation in the Muslim community. Yazîd b. Mu’âwiya could freely circulate his verses in which he threatened that he would take revenge on the prophet Ahmad (i.e., Muhammad) because of his deeds; he expressed this threat when the head of Husayn b. ‘Alî was brought to him. The verses of al-Walîd b. Yazîd b. ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwân who spoke insolently about the threats of Allâh against oppressors (jabbârûn) and tore the Qur’an to pieces in answer to these threats, says addressing the Qur’an: “When you come to your Lord on the Day of Resurrection, tell Him: ‘O my God, al-Walîd tore me (to pieces).”

Al-Hârûnî insists that no “Qur’an” had been produced which could rival the Qur’an sent down to the Prophet Muhammad. “We needed not to publish the nonsensical and feeble passages of Musaylima in this book,” says al-Hârûnî. “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’an, it would have been transmitted (lau kînât li-l-qur’âni mu’âradatun fi l-ḥaqîqatî la-nuqîlat).” Al-Hârûnî continues his argument concerning the impossibility that Musaylima could have intended to imitate (yu’irîlu) the Qur’an. “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’an.


154 Ibn Kathîr, Taﬁsîr vol. 3, p. 491; and see there the story of Abû Bakr who asked the Muslims (from Yamâmâ –k) to tell him the utterances of Musaylima. They were unwilling, but later agreed and reported his utterances. Abû 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.”

155 Al-Hârûnî, Ithbât, p. 36; and see ibid. the verses of Yazîd b. Mu’âwiya.

156 Al-Hârûnî, Ithbât, p. 36 inf.
Had he acted in this way, he would have been shamed among his people (lau fa’ala dhālīka kāna yastaḍīhu 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.¹⁵⁷ 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.¹⁵⁸

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-łam tara kayfa fa’ala rabbuka bi-ašḥābi 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-hublā: a-łam tara kayfa fa’ala rabbuka bi-l-hublá, “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’mininā (Qur’ān 3:164). This was put in the passage about the pregnant woman: la-qad manna llāhu ‘alā l-hublā.¹⁵⁹ 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.¹⁶⁰ 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.”

¹⁵⁷ Al-Hārūnī, Ithbāt, pp. 38–9.
¹⁵⁸ Al-Hārūnī, Ithbāt, p. 39 inf.
¹⁵⁹ Al-Hārūnī, Ithbāt, p. 39.
¹⁶⁰ Al-Tha‘alibī, Thīmaru 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 (dzbiij). And it is from His grace that He brought out from the earth pomegranates, grapes, royal basilicum (rayhān), and bitter plants (zu'wān)." 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."

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.162 Al-Ṭabarānī163 and 161 Al-Tha'ālibī, Thimāru l-qulāb, p. 147.
162 Al-Hamadānī, Kitāb al-Jauharatayn, index (s.v. Yamāma).
al-Bāqillānī\textsuperscript{164} 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.”\textsuperscript{165}

Musaylima’s verse and speeches bear substantial similarity with the Qurʾān.

XIII

Serious rivalry ensued between the Prophet and Musaylima concerning one of the “proofs of prophethood,” (\textit{dalā‘il u l-nubuwwa}): the miraculous healing of the sick. Well known is the miracle when the Prophet healed ‘Ali of an inflammation of the eye. The Prophet sent a messenger to ‘Ali asking him to come to his court and head a raid against the enemy. When ‘Ali appeared with inflamed eyes, the Prophet spat into his eyes and blessed him. He gave him a banner; ‘Ali went out with the troops and was victorious in the raid.\textsuperscript{166}

Many reports concerning cases in which the Prophet cured madness, toothache, belly ache, dumbness, or forgetfulness are recorded in the \textit{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.\textsuperscript{167} 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.\textsuperscript{168} Another treatment was used by the Prophet on a boy from the tribe of Khathām. When the Prophet was on a journey with one of his Companions, he met a Khathāmī 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 (\textit{al-khabīth}). She told

\textsuperscript{165} Al-Hārūnī, \textit{Iltihāb}, p. 38.
\textsuperscript{167} Al-Maqrīzī, \textit{Imtā‘u l-asmā‘}, vol. 11, pp. 295–303;
\textsuperscript{168} Al-Ḥalabī, \textit{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. 169

Another case was reported about 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Zayd b. al-Khaṭṭāb. 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 tahnik: 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. 170

Another case of treating a Khath’āmī child brought by his mother to the Prophet is recorded in al-Nuwayrī’s *Nihāyat al-ʿarab fī funūnī 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. 171

It is not surprising that in contradistinction to the miraculous successes of the healing of Muhammad, 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 tahnik, 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. 172 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. 173 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. 174 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

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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.¹⁷⁵

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 Isḥaq’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 Hudhayfa b. ‘Utbā b. Rabī’ (the brother of Hind bint ‘Utbā, the wife of Abū Šufyān) as commander of the force, but Abū Ḥudhayfa refused on the same grounds as Zayd.¹⁷⁶ Afterwards, Abū Bakr summoned Khālid b. al-Walīd (al-Makhzūm) and ordered him to march out with the Muslim force against the Bedouin tribes in order to subdue them. Khālid b. al-Walīd marched out against the Asad, Ghaṭafān, Ṭayy and Hawāzīn; using merciless methods of punishment, he succeeded to defeat them totally. After this victory in Buzākha, Khālid decided to turn in the direction of al-Bitāḥ, pursuing the famous Tamīmī leader Mālik b. Nuwayra. But the Ansār, who took part in the march, refused to follow Khālid’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. Khālid’s answer was that he had received a different command from Abū Bakr and he had to continue the march. As Khālid was the ṣamīr, 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


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

Modern historians of Islam have not paid enough attention to the opposition of the Ānṣār and their withdrawal from the army of Khālid at a decisive stage. Khālid 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 Ānṣār 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 Khālid b. al-Walid in Buzakha, 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 Khālid; those about whom Khālid 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-Wāqīḍī (quoted on the authority of Abū ‘Abdallah b. Abī l-Jahm) says that the Bedouins who joined Khālid b. al-Walid 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 Ānṣār demanded to wage battle alone.178

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

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 sahiiba 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-khiil). It was ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb who suggested killing the captured non-Muslims, or to extradite them to their relatives in order that they

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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 Hudhayfa 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‘āwiyah, 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. However, Abū Hudhayfa 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 Hudhayfa’s father, his uncles, his brother, his nephew (ibn akhZhi) and other relatives were killed by the Muslims. Abū Hudhayfa was glad and thanked Allāh for these fatal events in his family.

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.” Additionally, Abū Bakr summoned one of his non-Muslim sons to a duel on the day of Badr.

The first clash between the force of Khalid b. al-Walid 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.

The forces led by Khālid b. al-Walid against the rebellious tribes and later against the Banū Ḥanifa are reported in some sources to be enormous. These reports seem to be exaggerated. A concise tradition transmitted by Rafi‘ b. Khadīj, a warrior in Khālid’s force, gives us some details about the number of warriors: “We went out of Medina about...”

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181 See Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-ʾIṣṭi‘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-ʾṬabaqāt al-kubrā*, vol. 3, pp. 84–5.
4000 men, the people from the Ansār were about 400–500 men,” and “the Banū Ḥanīfa counted about the same number (4000 men).” Ibn Khadij 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-yastakhiffa ahla l-baṣira’i rī wa-l-niyyātī). Then Thābit b. Qays called Khālid to give the Ansār and Muhājirūn the exclusive prerogative to act against the enemy (akhlisnā bi-ṣaduwīnā). Khālid consented: “It is up to you (dhālika ilayka),” was his answer. Thābit b. Qays took the banner, cried “yā la-l-ansār!” and gathered his men. Then Khālid cried: “yā-la-l-muhājirīn!” and the Muhājirūn came and surrounded him. The Bedouins were stationed far behind the fighters.

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 Ḥanāfī 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-Barā’ī b. Mālik, 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-Barā’ī b. Mālik 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 ‘Amīr 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-aswād)!189

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189 See Baladhurī, 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.\textsuperscript{190}

Many Muslims were introduced into the fictitious lists of men who were credited with killing Musaylima. The most surprising tradition is that Mu‘awiya claimed to have killed Musaylima, although we have no evidence that he participated in the battle at all.\textsuperscript{191} Baladhuri mentions a report according to which Musaylima was killed by ‘Abdallah b. Zayd b. ‘Asim of the Banū Najjār of the Ansārī clan.\textsuperscript{192} Some other people are also mentioned as taking part in the killing of Musaylima.\textsuperscript{193}

After the end of the bloody battle of al-‘Aqrabā’, Khalid b. Walid sent al-Mujā‘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. Mujā‘a returned to Khalid and informed him that their dwellings were full of warriors and that they were ready to renew the war against the Muslims. Mujā‘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. Mujā‘a spoke about the weariness of the Muslim warriors and suggested to agree to a ceasefire. Khalid 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.\textsuperscript{194} The fatigue of the Muslim army forced Khalid 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 Khalid his concessions. He publicly expressed his fears that the Banū Ḥanīfa would remain faithful in their belief to Musaylima until the Day of Resurrection.\textsuperscript{195}

\textsuperscript{190} Al-Dhahabī, Siyār a‘lām al-nubalā‘, vol. 1, p. 132; al-Zurqānī, Sharḥ al-mawahib al-laduniyya, vol. 4, p. 24 sup.

\textsuperscript{191} See al-Baladhurī, Futūḥ al-buldān, p. 121.

\textsuperscript{192} See Ibn Qudāma al-Maqdisī, al-Istibṣār, pp. 81–2; al-Dhahabī: Siyār a‘lām al-nubalā‘, vol. 1, p. 132.

\textsuperscript{193} The names mentioned are Abū Dujāna, Waḥshī and ‘Abdallah b. Zayd. See al-Dhahabī, Siyār 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.

\textsuperscript{194} The Muslims’ hatred towards the people of the ridda is reflected in the extremely cruel treatment of the prisoners of war in the battle against Sulaym. Khalid b. al-Walid gathered a group of captives in enclosures and burned them. See Dhahabī, Siyār a‘lām al-nubalā‘, vol. 1, p. 268. After the battle against the ridda of ‘Umān, Asad and Ghaṭafān, the Muslims burned the bodies of their fallen enemies. See ‘Abd al-Jabbār, Tathḥīt dalā‘il al-nubuwā, vol. 2, pp. 588 ult.–589 ll. 1–2.

\textsuperscript{195} Ibn Ḥubaysh, Ghazawāt, vol. 1, p. 96.
The Struggle Against Musaylima

The conquest of Yamāma was one of the most important events in the history of early Islam. Though the defeat of the Banū Ḥanīfa 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 Khālid b. al-Walid 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 Khālid's command. 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 (shahidā) 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."197

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 futūh and the maghāzī literature.

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