Muslims, Jews & Pagans

Studies on Early Islamic Medina

by

Michael Lecker

E.J. Brill
Muslims, Jews and Pagans examines in much detail the available source material on the 'Aliya area south of Medina on the eve of Islam and at the time of the Prophet Muhammad. It provides part of the necessary background for the study of the Prophet's history by utilizing in addition to the Prophet's biographies, various texts about the history, geography and inhabitants of this area.

The topics include the landscape, especially the fortifications, the delayed conversion to Islam of part of the Aws tribe, the Qubā' village and the incident of Masjid al-Dirar in 9 AH. The three appendices deal with historical apologetics, pointing to the social context in which the Prophet's biography emerged during the first Islamic century.

Michael Lecker, Ph.D. (1983) in Arabic, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, is Senior Lecturer at the Department of Arabic of the Hebrew University. He has published extensively on the Prophet Muhammad's biography and the Arabian Jewry in early Islam.
MUSLIMS, JEWS
AND PAGANS
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This study is an analysis of the evidence on Upper Medina (al-‘Āliya in Arabic) and its inhabitants on the eve of the Islamic era and during the early days of Islam. The conclusions reached in it should be considered part of the preparatory work which I believe ought to precede the writing of a comprehensive narrative life of the Prophet Muḥammad. Because of the present state of our knowledge of the Prophet’s history and the immense difficulty of interpreting the Arabic sources in their correct context, the extant biographies of Muhammad are quite inadequate and often include uncritical and arbitrary statements.

The book is dedicated with deep gratitude to Prof. M.J. Kister on the occasion of his 80th birthday.

I am also indebted to Prof. Michael Cook for his encouragement and careful reading of the full draft, and to Prof. Uri Rubin for commenting on the first chapter. Prof. Frank Stewart read the first three chapters and made many suggestions, much improving the final product.

In addition, my thanks are due to the Mutual Fund of the Hebrew University for providing me with a research grant; also to Mr. Shmuel Shemesh of the Hebrew University and to Mr. Abe Alper of the Friends of the Hebrew University (New York) for their help. I wish to thank the Turkish Government and the Süleymaniye Library, and in particular its director, Mr. Muammer Ülker, for permission to work there. I am also grateful to Prof. William Brinner and Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Röllig for their help in Berkeley and Tübingen, respectively. The librarians at the Oriental Reading Room of the National and University Library at Givat Ram, Jerusalem, made my work there both pleasant and efficient. I am indebted to Ms. Roza I.M. El-Eini for polishing my English style and to Mr. D. Lensky for producing the camera-ready copy. The preparation of this book for publication was supported by a grant from Yad Avi Ha-Yishuv. I thank them all warmly.
A note on conventions: I have used the name Medina even when referring to the pre-Islamic period (during which it was called Yathrib). The word “Banū” (“the sons of”) preceding the name of a tribe is either contracted to “B.” or omitted.
INTRODUCTION

Scholars of Islam have in recent years grown accustomed to a constant flow of Arabic texts which were hitherto only available in manuscript form. For example, Ibn al-Kalbî’s *Jamharat al-nasab*, which until lately had been available solely in manuscript form, appeared almost simultaneously in three different editions (one being incomplete). Of great importance is the recent publication of a facsimile of Ibn ‘Asākir’s *Ta’rīkh madinat Dimashq* and of the extant parts of Ibn al-‘Adîm’s *Bughyat al-talab fi ta’rīkh Halab*. These books preserve many records copied from earlier compilations, now lost, which can no doubt change the form of scholarship in a number of key areas, above all in those of Umayyad history and the history of Palestine under the Muslims. Mention should be made of the recent publication in Cairo of Muqāṭīl b. Sulaymān’s *Tafsîr*. Some of Muqāṭīl’s unique texts

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4 Ed. ‘Abdallāh Maḥmūd Shihāta, al-Hay’a al-Miṣriyya al-‘Āmma li-l-Kitāb, 1980–87. The edition was quickly withdrawn from the shelves of Cairo
are used further on in this monograph. Finally, 'Umar b. Shabba’s Ta’rikh al-Madina al-munawwara only recently became available. In short, thanks to this new wave of publications we are now better equipped than ever before to study the early Islamic period.

The fresh crop of texts includes much which is unknown to us on the life of the Prophet Muhammad, as indeed on many other aspects of early Islamic history.

Besides the reconstruction and interpretation of texts, this monograph includes aspects of historical-geography, prosopography and several observations concerning the literary properties of the historical tradition. The results take us some way towards a better understanding of Medina and its society on the eve of the Hijra and during the early Islamic period.

At the heart of the monograph’s four chapters is the constant of the elevated area south of Medina, which in the early Islamic period was called al-‘Āliya or al-‘Awālī. Focusing on the area

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5Edited by Fahim Shaltūt (Mecca 1399/1979) from a (partial) unique MS in a private library in Medina; see Fahim Shaltūt, “Ta’rikh al-Madīna al-munawwara ta’līf ‘Umar b. Shabba al-Numayrī”, in Abdelgadir M. Abbadlla, Sami Al-Sakkar and Richard T. Mortel (eds.), Studies in the History of Arabia, Proceedings of the First International Symposium on Studies in the History of Arabia, Riyadh 1399/1979, II, 3–8; Ḥamad al-Jāsir, “Mu’allafat fi ta’rikh al-Madīna”, no. 3, 328f (where al-Jāsir draws attention to the curious fact that Rushdī Malḥas described the MS and correctly identified its author as early as in February 1934 in an article which appeared in the newspaper Umm al-Qurā). For the quality of the edition see the many corrections to the edited text made by al-Jāsir in various issues of his journal, Majallat al-‘Arab. The book was made available commercially only recently and until then it was distributed on a private basis. (I take this opportunity to thank Dr. Lawrence Conrad for providing me with a copy of Ibn Shabba’s book when supply was still scarce.)

6In a foreword to a new English edition of his Muḥammad (translated by Anne Carter, New York 1980, ix), M. Rodinson writes: “My book does not propose to bring out new facts about the subject. None have been discovered for a long time, and it is unlikely that any will be”. Rodinson’s pessimism is totally unwarranted.

7Not to be confused with western Najd which is also called ʿĀliya; see Lecker, The Banū Sulaym, 1, 89, 90n. Cf. F.M. Donner, The Early Islamic Conquests, Princeton 1981, 310, n. 140.
rather than on events and reading the texts in conjunction with the map of Medina helps clarify a number of obscure points. The major events in the life of the Prophet, such as the Hijra and the main battles, always remain in the background. Yet, it should be emphasized that this is by no means a history; rather, it is an introductory study investigating in depth certain aspects of the Prophet's Medinan period and the Islamic literature dealing with it.

Some assumptions underlying my work

A few assumptions, which to some extent overlap, underlie my work on the Prophet Muhammad in this monograph and elsewhere.\(^8\)

THE IMPORTANCE OF NON-ṣīra SOURCES

On the whole, the ṣīra (i.e., ṣīra compilations and ṣīra material in other sources) is unsatisfactory as the sole source of information on the Prophet and his time. While its outline of major events may perhaps remain unchallenged in the future, other sources must be consulted. To demonstrate the importance of non-ṣīra material we may refer to the events leading up to the Hudaybiyya Treaty between the Prophet and the Quraysh (end of 6 A.H.): it is only in a later legal work that we find a precious report on a treaty between the Jews of Khaybar and the Meccans which was abrogated by the Hudaybiyya Treaty. In order to secure himself from a Meccan attack from behind during his imminent charge on Khaybar, the Prophet was willing to grant the Meccans important concessions in return for a truce. This truce contradicted the Khaybar–Mecca Treaty and in effect abolished it. The report helps make the whole affair, and the Prophet's concessions in

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\(^8\) They are often relevant, I believe, to other chapters of early Islamic historiography as well. Classification of the early historical material along chronological lines (Ṣīra, Ridda, Futūḥ, Rāshidūn, Umayyads) may serve a practical purpose, but is often superficial and unhelpful; the first two Islamic centuries are best studied as a whole. In addition, classification according to "genres" (History, Adab, Qur'ān exegesis) often obscures the simple fact that different "genres" use identical material which they draw from the huge repository of Islamic tradition.
particular, intelligible to us as Khaybar was conquered shortly afterwards.9

THE IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT MEDINA

Our best source is certainly Samhūdī (d. 911/1506), the most important historian of Medina.10 Much of the evidence in the present monograph comes from Samhūdī who quotes extensively from Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan, known as Ibn Zabāla,11 ‘Umar b. Shabba12 and other historians who wrote about Medina. Samhūdī is an outstanding scholar; he not only quotes his predecessors, but often also adds his own illuminating observations and critical remarks. Occasionally we lament that Samhūdī, who is, incidentally, always careful to separate his predecessors’ words from his own, does not have more extensive extracts from their works;13 but then, we have to bear in mind that his book,

9 M. Lecker, “The Ḥudaybiyya-treaty and the expedition against Khaybar”, in JSAI 5 (1984), 1–11. Cf. Watt, “The expedition of al-Ḥudaybiyya reconsidered”, in Hamdard Islamicus 8 (1985), 3–6, where the writer undertakes the peculiar task of defending the Prophet against an accusation made by a young Muslim scholar that “whatever the motivation, the Prophet’s action at al-Ḥudaybiyya fell short of the standards of honor, valor, and adherence to principles that one would expect from a Prophet of God imbued with a divine mission”. Watt comments on this: “With all this I strongly disagree. In the actions of the Prophet there was nothing dishonourable or cowardly and no neglect of principles”. The tension between the Prophet as an ideal figure and the Prophet as the leader of a political entity is obvious; credit should be given to Muhammad Ḥamdūlāh who, many years ago, drew attention to the report which reveals the crux of the matter; see Lecker, op. cit.


12 Above, x.

13 Most unfortunate is his decision not to include in his book information from Ibn Zabāla on fortresses belonging to the Jews whose locations were no longer known in his own time: wa-qad dhakara Ibn Zabāla asmāʾa kathīrin minhā (i.e., the fortresses) ḥadḥafnāhu li-ʿadam maʿrifatihī fī zamāninā;
the *Wafāʾ al-wafā*, is only an abridgement of the original work which was destroyed during his lifetime by a fire in the Prophet’s Mosque.

The geographical evidence is particularly important; the Medina of the first and second Islamic centuries (and later too), knew a great deal about their town and were intensely interested in its pre-Islamic history. A better knowledge about the still largely unexplored Medinan society and topography is indispensable for a real understanding of the Prophet’s Medinan time, and is possible to gain simply because we have abundant information, most of which comes from outside the *sira*. This “stepping outside the *sira*” can help us achieve a better vantage point from which to view the historical accounts. In certain vital areas (not in all, of course) stepping outside the narrative of the *sira* leaves us safely within the realm of the very large and generous, though often problematic, historical tradition of Islam. We can sometimes find, as will be seen later, a reliable or even irrefutable testimony on Medinan society in the transition period from Jāhiliyya to Islam. While ethnological studies and the literatures of the conquered people can provide confirmation of certain details, the backbone of future research will remain the Islamic literature, for which there is no real alternative.

Obviously, the history of pre-Islamic Medina is always relevant to the history of the Prophet and it merits serious study before we are caught in the whirlwind of events of the Prophet’s

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Samh., I, 165:3.

14 Ibn Zabala, for example, quotes *masiyakha min ahl al-Madīna* for the story of the settlement of the Aws and Khazraj in Medina; Samh., I, 178:1.

15 For the opposite view see the review by G. Hawting of Lecker, *The Banū Sulaym*, in *BSOAS* 54 (1991), 359 f. Future studies by specialists (i.e., scholars interested in tribes and in the geography of medieval and modern Saudi Arabia) will further enlighten us concerning the preservation of place-names from the early Islamic period down to our time.

16 Contrast this approach with P. Crone’s more radical approach of stepping outside the Islamic sources altogether for the study of Islam’s origins; *Slaves on Horses*, 15 f.

17 Crone, *Slaves on Horses*, 16.
INTRODUCTION

time. There is a clear sense of continuity often reflected in the genealogical literature.

THE IMPORTANCE OF GEOGRAPHICAL AND GENEALOGICAL EVIDENCE

The sources abound in records of fortresses, clan quarters, markets, orchards, fields and irrigation systems. These are vital for the study of the Prophet’s biography and are far more useful and reliable as a historical source than, say, dialogues or speeches. The genealogical information makes it possible to identify clans that played no role or were insignificant in events during the Prophet’s time. The science of genealogy provides us with the necessary and convenient framework within which the history of Medina should be studied.

This monograph and further detailed research on the geographical-history of Medina and its inhabitants will put us on firmer ground when we approach the narrative of the sīra. Naturally, such research demands a jigsaw-puzzle approach to the sources; in other words, collecting small pieces of information and organizing them so as to form a picture. The collection of dispersed data is rather time-consuming and there is the danger of losing sight of the forest for the trees. But this approach pays off. One often finds unexpected links between seemingly unrelated and remote

18 That J. Wellhausen was well aware of the importance of pre-Islamic Medina is evident from his Medina vor dem Islam (Skizzen und Vorarbeiten IV).

19 For example, the Battle of Bu‘āth a few years before the Hijra is in the background of the unique story of al-Zabīr b. Bāṭa al-Qurazī: he was able to escape the fate of his fellow tribesmen, the Qurayṣa, and save his family and property because he spared a man of the Khazraj in Bu‘āth. The son of Mukhallad b. al-Ṣāmit al-Sā‘īdī who was killed in Bu‘āth was the governor of Egypt at the time of Mu‘āwiya; Ibn Ḥazm, Anṣāb, 366. One of the battles, known collectively as the ayyām al-anṣār, viz., the War of Ḥāṭib, was caused by Ḥāṭib b. al-Ḥarīth whose two sons were killed in the Battle of Uḥud; Ibn Qudāma, Iṣṭibṣār, 303.

20 Goldziher’s sharp and no doubt justified criticism of the genealogists, and of Ibn al-Kalbī in particular (Muslim Studies, I, 172 f), is more relevant to the ancient history of the Arabs than it is to the generations immediately preceding the advent of Islam. At any rate, his harsh verdict should not discourage us from using and studying tribal genealogies and this was certainly not his intention. For Medina the richness of the evidence assures us that the picture we have of its tribal genealogies is basically sound.
facts. A sense of real life is frequently created as the individuals, clans and places come to form a single whole.

THE EXISTENCE OF ILLUMINATING INDIVIDUAL REPORTS

On reading the vast and often repetitive historical tradition of Islam one may not be alert to the possibility of finding something really new or significant; yet there are records, sometimes quite small and hardly recognizable in the mass of material, of outstanding importance, like hidden pearls.\(^{21}\)

LACUNAE IN THE EVIDENCE

That there are large lacunae in our evidence was realized many years ago by Th. Nöldeke. He remarked that we have to take into consideration that not every letter of the Prophet and not every expedition are reported. There were, he said, negotiations with tribes of which we know nothing. Only this, he continued, can account for the fact that many tribes that had fought against the Prophet became his allies shortly afterwards, for example, the Fazāra.\(^{22}\)

\(^{21}\) The identification of such reports is a prominent feature in M.J. Kister's work. See for example Samhūdi's report on the Prophet's market in Kister's “The market of the Prophet”, in *JESHO* 8 (1965), 272–76 and Muqāṭil b. Sulaymān's report on the negotiations between the Prophet and the Thaqīf in his “Some reports concerning al-Ṭā'īf”, in *JSAI* 1 (1979), 1–18. Also Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī's report on the background to the attack on the Muslims at Bi'r Ma'ūna in his “The expedition of Bi'r Ma'ūna”, in G. Maqdisi (ed.), *Arabic and Islamic Studies in Honor of H.A.R. Gibb*, Leiden 1965, 337–57, at 352. Curiously, Ḥamād al-Jāsir, independently of Kister, recognized the significance of the last-mentioned report; see Lecker, *The Banū Sulaym*, 137, n. 147. Some studies by the present writer (e.g., “Muḥammad at Medina") are similarly based on reports of outstanding importance. Cf. Crone's pessimistic remarks about “the point of diminishing returns” which one reaches in going through the huge corpus of Islamic tradition; *Slaves on Horses*, 11. A text of outstanding historical importance is studied by A. Noth, “Eine Standortbestimmung der Expansion (Futūḥ) unter den ersten Kalifen (Analyse von Ṭabarī I, 2854–2856)”, in *Asiatische Studien* 43 (1989), 120–36, who (at 120) gives further examples of such texts.

Finally, rather than covering a large area at the expense of depth, I have preferred to take "soundings". At the present stage of research, to extract from the sources what they can offer, the correct questions must often be asked from a practical point of view, i.e., those questions likely to receive answers. The sources are quite unpredictable. The seemingly complex questions of: "What were the names of the fortresses in Qubā' and to whom did they belong?" are answered in generous detail (below, Chs. 3 and 4). However, the replies to apparently simple queries such as: "How long did the Prophet stay in Qubā' after the Hijra and with whom did he stay?" leave one totally perplexed.

Map 1: North-Western Arabia
Map 2: Medina and its surroundings
To begin with, we have to acquaint ourselves with the area of
the study. Upper Medina was called in Arabic al-‘Āliya or, in
its plural form, al-‘Awāli,¹ and Lower Medina was called Sāfila.
Upper Medina is the area south of Medina starting a mile or a
little more from the Mosque of the Prophet.² The differences in
altitude are small: most of the built-up area of modern Medina
lies at a height of 600 to 605m, rising to about 620m in the south
and falling to 598m in the north.³

The ‘Āliya area now includes from west to east the villages
of Qubā’, Qurban and ‘Awāli.⁴ Qurban and ‘Awāli are modern
place-names (although, as mentioned, ‘Awāli is attested to as the
name of the whole area and not just part of it). In terms of
agricultural potential, little has changed since pre-Islamic times.

¹ Also ‘ulwaw, which is far less common; see Masālik al-abṣār, 123; also
Sūra Shāmnyya, III, 378 (the Prophet’s stay in ‘ulwaw al-Madīna, [more specif-
ically,] in Qubā’). Qays b. al-Khāṭim calls the area al-zawāhir; Diwān, 205,
n. 1.
² See s.v. ‘Āliya in Samh., II, 1260–62; Khulāsat al-wafā, 580; Maghānim,
s.v. al-ʿĀliya, 243–45 and s.v. al-ʿAwāli, 286–87.
³ Makki, Medina, 4. On climatic differences between Upper and Lower Medina
see op. cit., 32. I shall henceforth refer to Upper and Lower Medina
by their Arabic names, ‘Āliya and Sāfila, respectively.
⁴ The Qubā’ and ‘Awāli villages are separated by Qurban; “Wasf al-
Madīna”, 19, 31. Philby, A Pilgrim in Arabia, 76 writes (not very accurately)
that the Qurayza tribe, “whose name … survives to this day in the Harrat
al Quraiza, appears to have occupied the southern extremity of the district,
where the ruins of its villages may be seen at ‘Awali, Qurban and Quba”. He
further remarks (p. 77): “The thirteen centuries that have passed over the
scene since those days have been sufficient to obliterate all superficial trace of
the Jewish occupation; and the Arabs of to-day do not encourage enthusiasm
for the study of the Jewish stratum of Madina history. It will be long before
ever the spade sets to work to reveal those buried mysteries, and the visitor
to Sidi Hamza seldom realizes that he is almost within a stone’s throw of the
old Jewish capital” (i.e., Yathrib in north-western Medina, the site which is
described by Philby on p. 76).
The area has heavy soil containing clay. The soil also has some salt but is easy to reclaim. In the valleys where there are pieces of volcanic lava, as in the Qubā' area from the south of the Mosque of Qubā' to the Buṭḥān Valley, the land is fertile and suitable for farming as it contains clay and silt and is fine-grained. The ʿĀliya offers excellent opportunities for cultivation. That this was true in pre-Islamic times is shown by the (apocryphal) pledge made by ʿAmr b. al-Nuʿmān al-Bayāḍī on the eve of the Battle of Buʿāth to his clan, the Bayāḍa (a subdivision of the Khazraj) in which he said:

ʿĀmir [the ancestor of the brother-clans B. Bayāḍa and B. Zurayq] made you stay in a poor place [i.e., in the Sāfīla of Medina], between salt-land and desert. By God, I shall not have intercourse with a woman [literally: I shall not wash my head] until I make you settle in the quarters of the Qurayza and Naḍīr, where sweet water and excellent palm-trees are to be found.

ʿAmr's words reflect the underprivileged status of the Khazraj with regard to the agricultural potential of their lands. (Ironically, even the successes of the Prophet against the Jews did not gain the Khazraj a foothold in the ʿĀliya: the Prophet and the

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5 Makki, Medina, 16, 17. The upper section of Buṭḥān is nowadays called Umm ʿAshara, its middle section Qurbān and its lowest section, after it enters Medina, Abū Jīda; ʿĀtiq b. Ghayth al-Bilādī, ʿAlā tariq al-hijra (riḥalāt fī qalb al-Hijāz), Mecca [1398/1978], 137. The fertility of the Medina region in general is reflected in God's promise, before it was inhabited, to bring to it every kind of fruit (wa-sāʾiqun ilaykum min kullī l-thamarāt); Sīra Shāmiyya, III, 406. In the modern ʿAwālī village the land is fertile, the texture of the soil being a friable clay loam of volcanic origin. There is an abundant supply of water; Makki, Medina, 135. For a description of the ʿĀliya area see Bilādī, ʿAlā tariq al-hijra, 137 f.

6 As well as at the time of Firūzābādī (d. 817/1415); see his enthusiastic description in Magḥānim, 286.

Muhājrūn received the lands of the Naḍīr and Qurayṣa.8)

In the 1960s, the modern village of ‘Awālī south-east of Medina still had the largest cultivated area in the Medina region, the second largest was Qubā’ and the fourth (after al-‘Uyūn area north of Medina which had been developed in the Islamic period) was Qurbān. Combined together, (modern) ‘Awālī, Qubā’ and Qurbān accounted for over half of the cultivated land in the Medina area.9 All this demonstrates the above-mentioned important agricultural potential of the ‘Āliya, a situation which remained unchanged from pre-Islamic days to our time.10

In the early Islamic period, the ‘Āliya and Sāfīla were regarded as two separate areas. This was justified not only by the geographical position, but also by the social and economic peculiarities of the ‘Āliya. For example, the ‘Āliya figures as a separate area in connection with the distribution of the annual stipends by Zayd b. Thābit, at the time of ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. This was allegedly done in the following manner: Zayd began with the people of the ‘Awālī, (more specifically) the ‘Abd al-Ashhal (a subdivision of the Nabīt),11 then went on to the (rest of the) Aws, because of the remoteness of their houses, then the Khazraj. Zayd himself


9 Compared to other areas in Medina, the land in the ‘Awālī village is less partitioned nowadays and is owned by fewer owners simply because many of its groves are waqf lands; Makkī, Medina, 133–36, esp. Fig. 23 on p. 136. The average size of a farm in Qubā’ is even slightly bigger.


11 In other words, according to this report, their territory was considered part of the ‘Awālī.
was the last to receive his share since his clan, the Mālik b. al-
Najjār (of the Khazraj), lived around the Prophet’s Mosque.12
We also hear of the ‘Āliya/Sāfila dichotomy in connection with
the Muslim victory at Badr. Two messengers were sent by the
Prophet to announce the victory: Zayd b. Ḥāritha went to Med-
ina (viz., to the Sāfila), while ‘Abdallāh b. Rawāha went to the
‘Āliya. The latter place is referred to in the report as including
Qubā’,13 Khaṭma, Wā’il, Wāqīf, Umayya b. Zayd, Qurayṣa and
Naḍīr.14 Being a place-name and not a tribal name, Qubā’ is
of course the odd one out. The main group inhabiting Qubā’
was the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf (see below, Ch. 3). Another definition of
the ‘Āliya found elsewhere states that it comprised the ‘Amr b.
‘Awf, Khaṭma, Wā’il and Umayya b. Zayd.15 We also find ‘Awāli
versus balad (i.e., the Sāfila) in the following: to stress that the
death of the above-mentioned Zayd b. Thābit was a major event,
one report tells us that the women of the ‘Awāli came down (viz.,
to the Sāfila) that day and that the balad women also mourned
him, not heeding those prohibiting them to do so;16 the people of
the ‘Awāli went down to Abū Hurayra’s funeral.17 Obviously, de-
scending from the ‘Āliya to the Sāfila on the occasion of a funeral
was not a common practice, certainly not for women. Zuhrī says
that on Friday the Prophet gathered the people of the ‘Awāli
in his mosque and that Muslims in the ‘Aqīq Valley and other
places at a similar distance from the Prophet’s Mosque (wa-nahw
dhalika) would also go to the Friday-prayer.18 In question here is
the distance travelled to attend the Friday-prayer in the central,
jamā’ā mosque. Zuhrī, in line with Umayyad policy, wished to
establish that even the inhabitants of the relatively remote ‘Āliya

12 Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, Cairo n. d., 49.
13 Cf. less accurately Wellhausen, Skizzen IV, 4, n. 3.
14 Ibn Sa’d, II, 19. See also below, 125.
15 Waq., I, 114–15 (... wa-l-‘Āliya B. ‘Amr b. ‘Awf wa-Khaṭma wa-Wā’il,
manāziluhum biha). See Ibn Sa’d, III, 526: “T he ‘Āliya is B. ‘Amr b. ‘Awf,
Khaṭma and Wā’il”. It is reported that when the Prophet set out to Badr,
he left ‘Asim b. ‘Adī, according to one version, in charge of Qubā’ and the
people of the ‘Āliya; see below, 139.
16 TMD, Tahdh., V, 453:17; TMD MS, VI, 577 (s.v. Zayd b. Thābit).
17 TMD MS, XIX, 253:17.
18 Abū Dāwūd Sulaymān b. al-Ash’ath, al-Murāsīl, Cairo 1310/1892, 8.
The 'Aliya: Orchards and Fortresses

al-Azd

'Amr Muzayqiyā'

Tha'labab

Hāritha

al-Aws

al-Khazraj

Mālik

Imru'u l-Qays

Jusham

Murra

'Awf

'Amr=al-Nabīt

al-Salm

Mālik=Wāqif 'Abdallāh=Khaṭma

Sa'id/Sa'd=Ahl Rātīj 'Āmir/'Āmira

Qays

Zayd

'Ātiyya

Wā'il

Umayya

The Aws
and ‘Aqīq had to attend. The people of the ‘Awālī were not frequent visitors to the Prophet’s Mosque. We definitely find them there on a very special occasion, namely the election of ‘Uthmān as caliph, when there was great congestion.19

The border between the Āliya and the Sāfila was not clearly demarcated. Thus tribal territories located between the Āliya and the Sāfila, such as that of the Jewish B. Qaynuqā‘ or the B. al-Ḥārīth b. al-Khayraj, are sometimes defined as parts of the Āliya.20 Some say that already the place called al-Sūnḥ which belonged to the B. al-Ḥārīth and was one mile from the Mosque of the Prophet, was in the Āliya.21 For the historian of Medina, Ibn Zabāla the territory of the Ḥārīth was in the Āliya/‘Awālī; he wrote that the Ĥārīth settled in the court named after them in the ‘Awālī. (Samḥūdī explains: i.e., east of Wadi Buṭḥān and Turbat Ṣu‘ayb, in the place “today” called al-Ḥārīth, without “Banū”.)

The Ḥārīth built there, Ibn Zabāla continues, a fortress which belonged to the Imru’u l-Qays b. Mālik (al-Aḥārr b. Tha’labā). Then the twin brothers, Zayd and Jushām, separated from the main body of the clan and settled in (what later became known as) al-Sūnḥ. They built a fortress called al-Sūnḥ, after which the area was called.22

20 See also Lecker, “Idol worship in pre-Islamic Medina (Yathrib)”, n. 40.
21 Indeed, al-Sūnḥ was conceived of as being “out-of-town”: Abū Bakr’s move from al-Sunḥ, where he lived since his Hijra, to the Sāfila, is considered moving to Medina (fu-lammā tahlawwala Abū Bakr lī ṣīl l-Madīna, etc.); see Ibn Sa’d, III, 213. Incidentally, if Abū Bakr lived after the Hijra in al-Sunḥ, we can decide between two versions concerning the identity of his Medinan host: one version mentions Khubayb b. Yisāf, while the other refers to Khārija b. Zayd whose daughter Abū Bakr married. (Abū Bakr stayed among the Ḥārīth b. al-Khayraj in al-Sunḥ until the Prophet’s death; see Ibn Sa’d, III, 174.) Now Khārija, whose daughter Abū Bakr married, did not live in al-Sunḥ, while Khubayb did; see Ibn Sa’d, III, 524 and 534, respectively. Hence, it can be said that the Khubayb version is supported by external evidence. (At the time of the Hijra, Khubayb was still a pagan; he professed Islam shortly before the Battle of Badr.)
22 Samh., I, 198. Ibn Sa’d, III, 534 says that the Jushām and Zayd were the owners of the mosque in al-Sunḥ (viz., the fortress was converted into a mosque?) and they in particular were the owners of al-Sunḥ (wa-hum aṣhābu l-Sunḥi khāṣṣatan).
The Khazraj
As we have just seen, there were those who considered the territory of the Ťārīth b. al-Khazraj part of the ‘Āliya. The same is true for the territory of the Jewish B. Qaynuqā’. Let us look at some of the evidence concerning the Prophet’s Coptic slave-girl Māriya (Umm Ibrāhīm). Ibrāhīm, the son she bore the Prophet, died in infancy. After Māriya, who was brought to the Prophet in 7 A.H., had stayed for some time in the Sāfila, the Prophet transferred her to an orchard he owned in the ‘Āliya; it was (according to this report) one of the orchards of the Naḍīr, who had been expelled from Medina a few years earlier. Māriya stayed on the orchard during the summers and “in the dates season”, and the Prophet would visit her there. This orchard is specifically said to have been in the ‘Āliya: the Prophet reportedly put Māriya in the ‘Āliya, in the orchard “today” called, Mashraba Umm Ibrāhīm. The Mashraba can be located approximately. The mosque later built in the Mashraba (presumably after the time of the Prophet) was north of “the Mosque of the Qurayṣa” (i.e., the mosque, or “the place of prayer”, located in the former territory of the Qurayṣa), near the eastern Ḥarra (or lava-field). So the Mashraba was near the eastern Ḥarra, also known as Ḥarrat Wāqīm and Ḥarrat B. Qurayṣa, north of Qurayṣa’s territory. Another, slightly different version of the report just quoted is

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23 TMD, Tahdh., I, 311; TMD MS, I, 461–62. In the summer the ‘Āliya is cooler and healthier than the Sāfila because it is higher. In the winter, and particularly when it rains, the ‘Āliya has insalubrious pastures and many people are inflicted by fever; see “Waṣf al-Madīna”, 32. The reference to the Naḍīr could result from confusion: one expects to find in this context a reference to the Qaynuqā’ alone (see below).

24 Ibn Sa‘d, VIII, 212. A mashraba is either an orchard (Samḥ., III, 825: wa-l-mashraba l-bustān) or “an upper chamber” (ghurfa, ‘ulliyya); see Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon, s.v. Due to the Islamization of the place-name, its former name disappeared. This is a common phenomenon in reports about Medina, though many old place-names were also preserved.


26 Ḥamād al-Jāṣīr, Muqtafalāt min rihlat al-‘Ayyāshī (mā’ al-mawa‘id), Riyād 1404/1984, 136. The Qurayṣa were one day’s journey (marḥala) from Medina, east of Qubā’; Samḥ., I, 150.

27 The eastern Ḥarra, unlike the western Ḥarra, includes arable lands; Kahhāla, Jughrafiyyāt, 174.
more informative because it includes a pre-Islamic place-name: the Prophet lodged Māriya in the ‘Āliya, (more precisely) in al-Quuff, in the orchard “today” called Mashrabit Umm Ibrāhīm. Each evening, the report goes on, Māriya and her son, Ibrāhīm, received fresh milk from the Prophet’s sheep grazing in al-Quuff and his milch-camels grazing in Dhū l-Jadr (in the vicinity of Qubā’).28 The place-name al-Quuff helps us link the Mashraba with the former territory of the Qaynuqā’: al-Quuff was the village of the Qaynuqā’. They lived in the northern part of the ‘Āliya since their territory was near the end of the bridge of Wadi Būthān on the side of the ‘Āliya.29 Different, less precise versions associate the Mashraba with the territory of other Jewish tribes. As mentioned, according to one report, Māriya’s orchard formerly belonged to the exiled Naḍīr. In another report we are told that Māriya lived in the Prophet’s charitable endowment (ṣadaqa) in the (former) territory of the Qurayṣa.30 But the place-name al-Quuff clearly supports the association with the former territory of the Qaynuqā’.

In short, there was some fluctuation in the boundaries of the ‘Āliya. Hence, the quarters of the Ḥārith b. al-Khazraj and Qaynuqā’, located between the ‘Āliya and the Sāfīla of Medina, were sometimes thought to be in the ‘Āliya.

The list of tribes inhabiting the ‘Āliya included the Jewish Naḍīr and Qurayṣa and Arab clans belonging to the Aws. There were also some members of the Khazraj, or more precisely of the Zu-rayq.31 In addition, there was a large client population of the Ball tribe (see Chs. 3 and 4). The composition of the ‘Āliya clans is crucial to understanding the politics of the Prophet’s era. There can be no doubt that when the Prophet arrived at Medina, the Jewish Naḍīr and Qurayṣa were the dominant element in the ‘Āliya and in Medina generally: according to Wāqidī, the Jews,

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30 Lecker, “Muḥammad at Medina”, 35.
31 They were clients of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf; see below, 50.
viz., especially the two main tribes of Nadīr and Qurayṣa, were the owners \textit{par excellence} of fortresses and weapons in Medina and the allies of the Aws and Khazraj.\textsuperscript{32}

THE SPECIAL FORTIFICATIONS

The Jews were called "the owners of weapons and fortresses" (\textit{ahl al-ḥalqa wa-l-ḥusūn}).\textsuperscript{33} These \textit{ḥusūn} were different from the common tower-houses of Medina, the \textit{ʿatām} or \textit{ājām}. In addition to tower-houses, the Nadīr and Qurayṣa, as well as some Arab clans living in the ʿʿAliya, had fortifications of a kind not found elsewhere in Medina. The details about them come from Samhūdī's description of the courts belonging to the Jewish and Arab ʿʿAliya clans (taken from earlier histories of Medina).

First, the weapons. That the Jews owned large numbers of weapons is confirmed by the evidence about the defeat of the main Jewish tribes of the Nadīr and Qurayṣa, in which the spoils are described in detail. Large numbers of swords, coats of mail, spears and shields were taken as booty from the storehouses of the Qurayṣa. These large quantities, when compared to the number of fighting men from the Qurayṣa executed by the Prophet, prompted Kister to suggest that the Qurayṣa used to sell (or lend) some of those weapons.\textsuperscript{34} As to the Nadīr, their weapons

\textsuperscript{32}See M. Lecker, "Wāqidi's account on the status of the Jews of Medina: a study of a combined report".

\textsuperscript{33}For example, in a report purporting to relate to the period after the Battle of Badr, in Suyūṭī, \textit{Durr}, VI, 198:3. The Qurashīs instigated the Jews to fight against the Prophet, threatening them with war. They wrote to them, "You are the owners of weapons and fortresses. You ought to fight against our friend ["friend" is used here ironically] or else we will fight against you [literally: we will indeed do such and such deeds] and nothing will interpose between us and the anklets of your women". When their message reached the Jews, the Nadīr unanimously agreed to a betrayal (i.e., of the Muslims). See also Hamīdullāh, \textit{Wathāʾiq}, 66, no. 2a–b. Cf. a reference to Qaynuqā', Nadīr and Qurayṣa as the owners of fortresses (\textit{ḥusūn}) in Waq., II, 563 (read: \textit{inna amīra Muḥammad qad amira}, instead of: \textit{... amīna}; cf. Waq., II, 821:11: \textit{la-qad amīra amīru B. ʿAdī ba-da wa-llāhi qilla wa-dhilla}; Qurṭūbī, \textit{al-Ǧāmiʿ li-ḥakkām al-qurʾān}, X, 233–34).

\textsuperscript{34}Kister, "The massacre of the Banū Qurayṣa", 94. For the weapons of the Jews see also F. Altheim and R. Stiehl, \textit{Die Araber in der alten Welt}, vol. V,
were specifically excluded from the movables they were allowed to carry with them when sent into exile.  

Second, the ḥuṣūn. Samḥūṭī tells us of the transformation of two qaṣrs into ḥiṣnūs by Muʿāwiya. Muʿāwiya ordered the (re)building of Qaṣr Khall as a ḥiṣn (li-yakūna ḥiṣnan) for the people of Medina (i.e., for the Umayyā living in Medina). Qaṣr Bānī Ḥudayla (a subdivision of the Mālik b. al-Najjār) was also constructed by Muʿāwiya li-yakūna ḥiṣnan. Aware of the hatred by the Medinans, many of whom must have regarded the

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35 Waq., I, 374:1. The quantities of weapons taken from the Nadīr are considerably smaller than those taken from the Qurayṣa; some said that they managed to hide part of the weapons and take it with them; see op. cit., 377.

36 A thorough study of Medinan fortifications may change the prevailing assumptions concerning the place of pre-Islamic Arabia in the development of Islamic architecture. The total neglect by Creswell of pre-Islamic Arabia is certainly unwarranted; cf. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture, Oxford 1969, I, 10–11 (“Arabia, at the rise of Islam, does not appear to have possessed anything worthy of the name architecture”). Creswell begins his “Fortification in Islam before A.D. 1250. Aspects of art lecture, Henriette Hertz Trust, British Academy”, in Proceedings of the British Academy 38 (1952), 89–125, with the following statement: “At the rise of Islam fortification was practically unknown in Arabia and only one town—Tāʿīf—possessed a wall .... According to Masʿūdī, Madīna was not surrounded by a wall until 63 H. (682/3)”. Creswell wonders: “When and where did the early Muslims first learn about fortification?” See also R. Ettinghausen and O. Grabar, The Art and Architecture of Islam: 650–1250, Penguin Books 1987, 17–18: “Although textual information about pre-Islamic Arabia is not very secure and a serious exploration of the area has barely begun, it is fairly certain, that, at least in the period immediately preceding the Muslim conquest, the Arabs of Arabia had very few indigenous traditions of any significance”. G.R.D. King, “Creswell’s appreciation of Arabian architecture”, in Muqarnas 8 (1991) 94–102, at 100a, correctly criticizes Creswell’s approach: “...Creswell chose an inappropriate measure of Arabia’s architectural skill by stressing the absence of town walls everywhere in the Hijaz but Taʿīf. Their absence was a reflection of the lack of political cohesion in pre-Islamic Arabia, rather than a lack of building ability”. King mentions utum al-Dahyān (99a) and the Mosque of Qubā’ (100b). On the former building see also G.R.D. King, “Building methods and materials in western Saudi Arabia”, in Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies 19 (1989), 71–78, at 75.
Umayyads as foreign conquerors, Mu‘awiya warned that in an emergency the Umayya would be unable to reach Qasr Khali, located in the Ḥarra, some distance from Medina. So, Qasr Banī Ḥudayla was built for them in the heart of Medina. Converting a qasr into a hisn presumably involved improving its fortifications and gate and making it independent in its water supply. Mu‘awiya must have learned his lesson from the siege of the Caliph ‘Uthmān.

The terms commonly used in connection with fortifications in Medina are hisn and utum. However, they are interchanged and used inconsistently. In themselves they cannot be relied upon for discerning separate types of fortifications.

Two different kinds of fortifications can be perceived. First, the ordinary fortress or tower-house, the famous utum. This was not a purely military building because it was also used as a residence. However, although Asma‘ī and others defined the ātām as “houses with flat roofs” (al-dār al-muṣāṭṭahatu l-suqūf), and yet others as “any square house with a flat roof” (kullu bayt murabba‘ musaṭṭah), an utum in Medina was certainly not an

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37 See Samh., s.vv. Qasr Khall; Bi‘r Ḥa‘, 961f; Kister, “The battle of the Ḥarra”, 42, n. 48. The caliph, Sulaymān b. ‘Abd al-Malik, was born in the court (dār) of his father, ‘Abd al-Malik in Medina, in (the territory of) the Ḥudayla; Khalīfa, Ta‘rikh, I, 426. This court contained the above-mentioned Qasr Banī Ḥudayla. (Hudayla is often corrupted to Jadila; for the correct name see Ibn Mākulā, II, 59.)


39 The poet Aws b. Maghra‘ (a mukhadram who died in the time of Mu‘awiya; Isāba, I, 218; GAS, II, 381-82) mentions the ātām of Najrān; in Ṣan‘ā‘ there was an utum called after al-ʾAḍba‘ b. Quray‘ of the Tamīm who reportedly built it following a raid on the people of Ṣan‘ā‘; Yaq., s.v. Uṭum al-ʾAḍba‘; Ibn Qutayba, al-Shī‘r wa-l-shu‘ara‘, ed. Ahmad Muḥammad Shākir, Cairo 1386/1966, I, 382 (having raided the Ḥārīth b. Ka‘b, al-ʾAḍba‘ put up [i.e., in Ṣan‘ā‘] an utum, and the kings built around that utum the town of Ṣan‘ā‘).

40 Wellhausen, Skizzen IV, 19 wrongly says that the ātām (= “feste Häuser”) are “für gewöhnlich unbewohnt”.

41 Mas‘ūdī, Tanbih, 206:18.

42 Lisān al-ʿarab, s.v. ’ṭ.m., 19b. Reference to a man standing on the roof of an utum is common in the sources; see, e.g., Suyūṭī, Khaṣā‘īs, I, 64:8.
ordinary house (*manzil*); being stronger or higher, or both, it gave its inhabitants better security and therefore had a military role, as we learn from numerous reports on Medina before Islam and at the time of the Prophet.\(^{43}\) The Naḍīr, for example, had both ḍāṭām and *manāzīl* in their territory in the ‘Āliya.\(^{44}\) They also had special fortifications (see below).

The ḍāṭām of Medina, a unique and prominent feature of the Medinan landscape, had a symbolic importance for the people of Medina and were still remembered many years after they had been demolished or fallen into decay. Mas‘ūdī, for example, reports that the ḍāṭām of Medina were pulled down in the days of ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān but their traces remained to his own time.\(^{45}\) The records of these fondly remembered fortresses are the nucleus around which Ibn Zabālā (fl. in the second half of the second century A.H.) built his chapter on the quarters of the clans. One of the grievances against Caliph ‘Uthmān was due to his order to demolish the ḍāṭām of Medina. The accusation that the Caliph gave the order seems doubtful. ‘Uthmān may have ordered the demolition of some fortresses in order to enlarge the market or make available a tract of land for cultivation, but he would not have had all of them pulled down. It is not unlikely that in having some of the fortresses destroyed, ‘Uthmān was also motivated by military considerations, and the Anṣār’s bitterness (note their overwhelming support for ‘Alī) may not have been based solely on environmental and aesthetic considerations.\(^{46}\) The ḍāṭām were symbols of Anṣārī tribal autonomy and an important component in the prestige of their tribal leaders.

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\(^{43}\) Serjeant, “Meccan trade”, 483a remarks versus P. Crone that *ultm* (the form *uṭum* seems to be more common) was not a “turret”, as she translates it, but “an ordinary Arab tower house”.

\(^{44}\) Samh., I, 161: *wa-btanawi l-āṭāma wa-l-manāzila*.

\(^{45}\) Tanbih, 206.

Second, the special strongholds of the ‘Āliya. In the ‘Āliya we find a special type of fortification: a purely military construction, or fortress, which could shelter the whole tribe in time of war. The other fortified houses in Medina, which were of humble dimensions and used also as residences, were found in the Sāfila and in the ‘Āliya, but the special strongholds were found only in the ‘Āliya. Of the four such fortresses mentioned in the sources, two belonged to the Jewish Naḍīr and Qurayṣa and the other two to Arab clans closely allied with the Jews. These fortresses must have been larger than the residential fortresses and possibly included storerooms and an independent source of water. On the basis of the following data we may assume that the owners of such fortresses were better prepared for sieges than those of residential fortresses.

1. Naḍīr: Two place-names, Fādiya and Jīfāf, are associated with the fortress of the Naḍīr. The Naḍīr as a whole had, we are told, a fortress in the orchard called Fādiya (the location is presumably given in terms of Islamic Medina). Fādiya was still known to Samhūdī (d. 911/1505), who defined it as an orchard in the Jīfāf area in which an utūm of the Naḍīr belonging to the whole tribe was located (Fādiya: māl bi-l-‘Āliya ma‘rūf al-yawm, bi-nāḥiyati Jīfāf, kāna bihi utūm l-B. l-Naḍīr ‘ammatan).

47 The existence of these two types of fortifications was noticed by ‘Abd al-Qaddūs al-Anṣārī, Aṭhār al-Madīna al-munawwara, Damascus 1353/1953, 42; H.Z. Hirschberg, Yisraʾel be-ʼArav, Tel-Aviv 1946, 185 [in Hebrew]; and Ubayd al-Madani; cf. al-Madani’s “Uṭūm al-Madīna l-munawwara”, 214, 216–17. Cf. about the ʿāṭām Qays b. al-Khaṭṭīm, Diwān, ed. T. Kowalski, XV–XX; on p. XV it is inaccurately stated (following Wellhausen, see above, 12n) that they were “für gewöhnlich unbewohnt”. This is only true of the special fortifications in the ‘Āliya.

48 Samh., II, s.v. Fādiya; 1, 163; Magḥānim, s.v. Jīfāf, 89 (the definition in the latter source, mawdī’ amāna l-‘Awālī, seems to relate to the [later] ‘Awālī village). Yaq., s.v. Fādiya, wrongly says that Fādiya was a name of an utūm of Naḍīr in Medina, and Fīrūzābādī (Magḥānim, s.v., 310) corrects this to: it is an orchard in Medina containing a fortress belonging to the Naḍīr as a whole. In Fīrūzābādī’s time (he died in 817/1415) it lay in ruins and in its place there was a date-palm-grove called al-Fādiya (sic, with an article), in al-Jīfāf (again, with an article), “behind” (warā’a) the ‘Awālī (= the later ‘Awālī village). The people of Medina identify Jīfāf with Qurbān between Qubā’ and the ‘Awālī village; see Khulāṣat al-wafā’, 533n.; Magḥānim, 454.
THE ‘ĀLIYA: ORCHARDS AND FORTRESSES

in itself is of course not indicative of the type of fortification we have here since it usually designates an ordinary fortress or tower-house found everywhere in the Medina area.

A late non-Medinan source uses the term qal‘a to designate the fortresses of the Naḍīr and Qurayṣa, and Sam‘ānī (d. 562/1167) conceives of the Naḍīr and Qurayṣa as inhabiting two fortresses near Medina. Qurayṣa, he says, was a man whose children (or descendants) settled in a fortified stronghold (qal‘a ḥasīna) near Medina which was named after them. The same details are provided about Naḍīr: he was a man whose children (or descendants) settled in a qal‘a near Medina. Al-Madānī notes the spaciousness of the Naḍīr fortress. In this context he rightly refers to Ibn Ubayy’s suggestion (whether or not it is historical is beside the point) that he enter the Naḍīr’s fortress with two thousand men of his own clan and “other Arabs”.

2. Qurayṣa: While the name of the Naḍīr’s fortress is still unknown, that of the central fortification of the Qurayṣa is known to be al-Mu‘rid. The fortress, we are told, was not used as a dwelling, but the Qurayṣa sought shelter in it in times of fear (uṭum B. Qurayṣa llaḏī kānū yalja‘ūna ilayhi idhā faẓi‘ū). It was located between “the great tree with spreading branches” (al-dawḥa) in the Baq‘ of Qurayṣa (baq‘ is “a spacious piece of land with trees”), and “the date-orchard from which the torrent (sayl) issues”.


50 See s.v. al-Naḍīrī in Sam‘ānī and s.v. al-Naḍīrī in Ibn al-Athīr, Lubāb. The latter source uses ḥisn in both cases instead of qal‘a.


52 See, e.g., Sīra Shāmiyya, IV, 456: fa-inna ma‘i al-faymi min qawmī wa-ghayrihim mina l-‘arabī yaddhulūna ma‘akum ḥisnakum.

53 It may have been identical with one of the fortresses, the names of which are known to us, e.g., al-Buwaylay, Samh., I, 163; or Manwar, Samh., II, s.v.

54 Samh., s.v. al-Mu‘rid. Note that there were a few other Baq‘īs in Medina, one of which was the famous cemetery Baq‘ al-Gharqad. Note also that this fortress had a namesake in the Sā’īda, a fortress of the Sā’īda. See Maghānim, s.v. Mu‘rid, 386. On the stronghold of the Qurayṣa cf. Kister, “The massacre of the Banū Qurayṣa”, 87, 90, 92.
Two Arab clans in the 'Aliya had similar fortifications and both were part of the Aws subdivision called Aws Alläh.

3. Khatma: Their court was adjacent to that of the Nadir. We know this from an interchange of two place-names: when the Prophet besieged the Nadir, he prayed the afternoon prayer in the Nadir's open space (fadā'). Elsewhere we are told that he prayed in the court (dār) of the Khatma. In addition, "the small mosque of the Khatma" was later built on the site of the Prophet's tent during the siege on the Nadir. Also, the heads of several Jews of the Nadir, killed while raiding the Muslims, were reportedly thrown into one of the Khatma's wells.55

The fortress of the Khatma, utum Da' Dhar', did not have dwelling-places in it since they built it as a ḥiṣn to shelter them in times of war (layṣa bihi buyūt, ja'aluhu ka-l-ḥiṣn iladhī yataḥassā-nūna fihi li-l-qitāl). It also belonged to the Khatma as a whole. The fortress was near "the hollowed stone from which one performs the ablution" (mihrās) of the Khatma and was named Da' Dhar' because it was near the Khatma well called Dhar'.56

In a few instances pre-Islamic fortresses were transformed into tribal mosques or rebuilt as such mosques. In the case of the Khatma, the problem of the fortress/mosque is very complicated and, while their mosque was certainly close to their central fortification, it is not clear whether the two were identical. Both their fortress and mosque are linked with their well: the fortress Da'

55 Waq., I, 370:–3, 371:8, 372:11. Ibn Sa'd, II, 57 reports that the houses of the Nadir were in the al-Ghars area (east of Qubā') which "today" corresponds to the cemetery of the Khatma. Cf. Maghānim, s.v. Bi'r Ghars, 46 and Samh., II, 978 (Samhūdi corrects the Maghānim's reading "ハウスala" to "Khatma"). The well called Bi'r Ghars is half a mile east of the Mosque of Qubā' in the Qurbān village, in an orchard carrying the well's name. Al-'Ayyāshī locates it half a mile north-east of the Qubā' Mosque; al-Jasir, Muqtatafāt min riḥlat al-'Ayyāshī, 145 (vocalized: Ghurs; perhaps the pronunciation underwent changes).

56 Samh., I, 197; s.v. Da' Dhar' in Maghānim, 231; utum ... shibhu l-ḥiṣn is Firūzābādi's variation of Ibn Zabāla's ja'aluhu ka-l-ḥiṣn; Samh., 1257; Khulāṣat al-wafā, 577. On Bi'r Dhar' see Samh., II, 966–67. Concerning the name Da', cf. perhaps the noun ḏw' in Sabaic which means "alarm, state of emergency"; A.F.L. Beeston, M.A. Ghūl, W.W. Müller and J. Ryckmans, Sabaic Dictionary, Louvain-la-Neuve 1982, 42.
Dhar was named, as already mentioned, after their well, Dhar, which was near it, whilst the well, which was still known at the time of Samhūdī, was in the mosque’s courtyard (fīnā’). But this circumstantial evidence is insufficient to establish that the two structures were in fact one and the same.

The following passage in Samhūdī (quoted from Ibn Zabālā) does not help in resolving the problem but is nevertheless relevant for us here and is certainly unique:

The Khaṭmā were dispersed in their fortresses and none of them lived in the heart of their court (perhaps: in its fortified stronghold, qasabat dārīhim). When Islam came, they built their mosque. One of them built a house near the mosque in which he lived and they would inquire about him every morning for fear that the wild beasts had attacked him [i.e., the mosque was in an isolated area]. Then they multiplied in the court [i.e., in the formerly uninhabited area near their mosque] until it was called [literally: until they were called] “Gaza”, i.e., it was likened to the Gaza of Palestine because of its many inhabitants.

The formerly isolated area of the qasaba was some distance from the fortresses of the Khaṭmā. This area became important in Islamic times after the Khaṭmā’s mosque was built there. Perhaps the mosque was on the site of their fortress, or part of the fortress was transformed into a mosque.

4. Wāqif: Along with other fortresses, the Wāqif, who were also a clan of the Aws Allāh, built a fortress called Raydān which belonged to the whole clan (kāna lahum ‘āmmatan). It was to the

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58 EI², s.v. Kašaba (A. Miquel).
south of “the Mosque of Date Wine” (*masjid al-fadîkh*), otherwise known as “the Mosque of the Sun”, and east of Qubâ’.  

We come across four constructions of a special type in the ‘Āliya not found elsewhere in Medina: fortresses built strictly for military purposes which belonged to the whole clan. The clans owning them were prepared to withstand a prolonged siege. Two of the fortresses belonged to the main Jewish tribes and the other two to Arab clans of the Aws Allâh group. All four fortresses were in the eastern part of the ‘Āliya, presumably within a short distance of each other. No similar fortification was to be found in the western part of the ‘Āliya, namely in Qubâ’ and al-‘Aṣaba. This made the eastern ‘Āliya the most fortified area in Medina then,  

61 which is a conclusion of major importance to understanding Medinan politics at the time of the Prophet.

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60 In Samh., I, 195–96 it is erroneously called: al-Zaydân, but Raydân (without the article) is the correct name; Samh., II, s.v. Raydân, 1226 and in *Khulâṣat al-wafâ*, s.v., 560. Samhûdî saw the ruins of the dwellings of the Wâqîf to the south of “the Mosque of Date Wine”. They included āṭām, a village and a huge fortress (*hiṣn ʾazîm*); see Samh., I, 196. *Masjid al-fadîkh* is east of the Mosque of Qubâ’ and north-east of the ‘Awâlî village, roughly three kilometres from the Mosque of the Prophet; *Maghânim*, 458. For another mosque called *Masjid al-shams* between Hilla and Karbalâ’, see Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, II, 301; *EI*2, s.v. Masjd, 650a (J. Pedersen).

61 Cf. Watt, *Medina*, 165, who describes the Aws Allâh as “a heterogeneous collection of old groups whose strength was declining. They lacked both genealogical and geographical unity .... They carried little weight in the Medina that Muḥammad found”.
CHAPTER TWO

THE AWS ALLĀH CLANS

THE CONVERSION OF THE AWS ALLĀH TO ISLAM

Our focus shifts now to the clans of the Aws Allāh group which lived in the eastern part of the ‘Āliya. This chapter concentrates on their role at the time of the Prophet, and particularly on their relatively late conversion to Islam. It will be shown that sīra literature provides reliable information on this sensitive issue.

Our point of departure are the several fundamentally significant reports that the Aws Allāh embraced Islam only after the Battle of the Ditch, that is, not earlier than 5 A.H. Hence, of all

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2 See, e.g., Ibn Ḥazm, Anṣāb, 345; Rubin, “Hanifiyya”, 89. Watt (EI², s.v. al-Madīna, 994) explains the late conversion to Islam as follows: “It is probable that before the arrival of any Jews there were some Arabs at Medina, doubtless the ancestors of those found subordinate to the Jews at the time of the settlement of al-Aws and al-Khazradj. It was probable [sic] because
the Arab clans of Medina, the Aws Allāh were the last to embrace Islam. Their close proximity to the Jewish tribes of the ‘Āliya no doubt played a major role here. It becomes clear that for at least five of his ten years of activity in Medina the Prophet had no access at all to the eastern ‘Āliya which was inhabited by the Nadīr, the Qurayzā and the clans of the Aws Allāh.3

We begin with Ibn Ishaq’s account as quoted by Ibn Hishām. At the end of a report on the mission of Muṣ’ab b. ‘Umayr, whom the Prophet sent from Mecca to Medina before the Hijra, a clear distinction is made between early and late converts to Islam. Together with his Medinan aide and host, As‘ad b. Zurāra, Muṣ’ab was active propagating Islam among the ‘Abd al-Ashhal and Zafar clans of the Nabīt group (Aws). The report clearly shows that the clans making up the Aws Allāh group, which also belonged to the Aws, were late to embrace Islam. Ibn Ishaq’s sources are ‘Ubaydallah b. al-Mughīra b. Mu‘ayqīb and ‘Abdallāh b. Abī Bakr b. Muḥammad b. ‘Amr b. Ḥazm.4 Hence, Ibn Ishaq received the same report from both informants. The following

of this close relation to the Jews that certain small Arab clans (Khatma, Wā’il, Wākif, Umayya b. Zayd, sections of ‘Amr b. ‘Awf) did not at first accept Muḥammad as prophet”. It should be remarked that while we do not know whether these groups were large or small, the available genealogical information presents them as part of the Aws, not of the old population of Medina.

3 Contrast Watt, Medina, 178 who estimates that what he terms “the pagan opposition” was never “of prime importance in the affairs of Medina” (on p. 179 he speaks of “the bankruptcy of paganism”). The term “pagan” is infelicitous (besides being incongruous to some extent with Watt’s correct remarks about the close links between the Aws Allāh and the Jews as the backdrop to their opposition to the Prophet). Watt says: “Those who remained pagans were bitter about the advance of Islam”; but ‘Āsmā’ bint Marwān of the Aws Allāh was Jewish (below, 38), and the same is true of Abū ‘Afak of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf (below, 52). Cf. N.A. Stillman, The Jews of Arab Lands, Philadelphia 1979, 13 (“Two pagan poets, one an old man, the other a woman with an infant at her breast, were assassinated for having written satirical verses about him” [= the Prophet]). Also see Watt, “Muḥammad”, in P.M. Holt, A.K. Lamton and B. Lewis (eds.), Cambridge History of Islam, I, 46; Watt, Medina, 328 (in the context of “the alleged moral failures” of the Prophet): “the individuals who were assassinated had forfeited any claim to friendly treatment by Muḥammad through their propaganda against him”.

passage is introduced by the verb qala, which again indicates that it too reached Ibn Ishāq from these two sources.

By God, by the evening every man and woman in the court of the ‘Abd al-Ashhal embraced Islam. As’ad and Mus‘ab returned to the house of As‘ad b. Zurāra and he [the former] stayed with him, calling upon the people to embrace Islam, until no court of the Anṣār was without Muslim men and women in it. The only exceptions were the courts of the Umayya b. Zayd, Khaṭma, Wa‘il and Wāqif, i.e., the Aws Allāh, who are part of the Aws b. Ḥāritha. The reason was that among them was Abū Qays b. al-Aslat [al-Aslat, “one whose nose has been cut off"], whose name was Ṣayfī. He was one of their poets and a leader whose orders they would hear and obey. He prevented them from embracing Islam and they remained like this until the Messenger of God (ṣ) emigrated to Medina and the battles of Badr, Uhud and the Ditch had taken place.5

In this passage, the ‘Abd al-Ashhal are singled out for their quick and total conversion to Islam. The Sīra Shāmiyya contains a fuller version of Ibn Ishāq’s report with an important addition which relates to a member of a Jewish clan called B. Za‘ūrā:

5Cf. Rahman, “The conflicts between the Prophet and the opposition in Madīna”, 264f, where she deals with the “Arab Opposition” to the Prophet without once referring to Abū Qays b. al-Aslat. Also, read Iyās instead of Ayās on p. 267. Sa‘d b. Mu‘ādh and Usayd b. Ḥuḍayr were not “the young leaders of the Aws and Khazraj” (p. 268): they both belonged to the Aws (more precisely, to the ‘Abd al-Ashhal). Read Kulthūm b. al-Hidm instead of Kulthūm b. al-Hadam; read Sa‘d b. Khaythama instead of Sa‘d b. Khutaym; and Abū Ayyūb instead of Abū Ayūb (269); read al-Mujadhḍhar b. Dhiyād instead of al-Mundhir b. Dhiyād (272); read ‘Amr b. Umayya instead of ‘Amir b. Umayya (283, 284); read Fazāra instead of Fīzāra (285). The correct names should first be established.

As we have seen, Abū Qays’ name was Ṣayfī. The Līsān al-‘arab, end of s.v. ṣ.f.y., says that the name of Abū Qays b. al-Aslat al-Sulāmu (?) was Ṣafī. This seems to be an error, although the mysterious relative adjective, al-Sulāmu, may be an attestation to uniqueness and genuineness. Other versions concerning his name are ‘Abdallāh, al-Ḥārith (TMD MS, VIII, 392:2,11; Istī’āb, II, 734; IV, 1734) and Sīrma (Īṣāba, VII, 334). On Abū Qays see GAS, II, 287.
By God, by the evening every man and woman in the court of the 'Abd al-Ashhal became Muslim, except al-Uṣayrim ["the poor little man with a numerous family"], i.e., 'Amr b. Thābit b. Waqsh. His conversion to Islam was delayed until the Day of Uhud. Then he embraced Islam and was killed in the Way of God without prostrating himself before God in prayer even once. And the Messenger of God (s) said that he was of the people of Paradise.

The information given about al-Uṣayrim/'Amr's tribal affiliation shows that he was a member of the Zaʿūrāʾ, a Jewish clan incorporated into the 'Abd al-Ashhal. His affiliation to the Zaʿūrāʾ of course provides a new context for his refusal to convert to Islam when the rest of the 'Abd al-Ashhal did so. Obviously, a Medinan audience, which was familiar with these individuals and clans, knew that al-Uṣayrim was a Jew, and so the fact that he only converted at a late date did not tarnish the reputation of the 'Abd al-Ashhal. His status among the 'Abd al-Ashhal can be deduced from that of his brother, al-Ḥārith, who was a client (ḥālīf) of the Anṣār (i.e., of the 'Abd al-Ashhal); the same should have been true for him.

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6 This is probably a pejorative nickname. He is Uṣayrim B. 'Abd al-Ashhal; Ibn al-Kalbi, Jamhara, 636. There is a lacuna in the text (it also exists in the manuscript of the Jamhara) which can be filled with the help of Ibn al-Kalbi, Nasab Maʻadd, I, 378: 'Amr (b. Thābit) was not the brother of Salama b. Salāma b. Waqsh, but of Salama b. Thābit b. Waqsh; in the last-mentioned source read Waqsh instead of Qays, and Zaghaiba instead of Zaghaiba; see Isāba, III, 144 (quoting Ibn al-Kalbi); Ibn Durayd, Ishtiqāq, 444 f (read 'Amr instead of 'Umar).

7 His grandfather is sometimes called Wuqaysh or Uqaysh.


10 Under "Amr b. Uqaysh" (omitting the father's name in pedigrees was not uncommon) we find this apologetic explanation of his delayed conversion to Islam: in the Jahiliyya he was owed money with interest and did not like to embrace Islam before collecting it; Ibn Qudāma, Istībṣār, 232 (< Abū
Having discussed these more marginal matters we now return to the Aws Allah. The lateness of their conversion to Islam is mentioned in different contexts. Some of the reports to be quoted below may admittedly be variations of one and the same report rather than independent pieces of evidence. But then the historical reliability of these reports is confirmed by other evidence to be discussed later in this chapter.

One of the accounts tells us about Medina during the first year or so after the Prophet’s arrival:

And the Messenger of God (ṣ) stayed in Medina from the time of his arrival in the month of Rabī’ al-Awwal to Ṣafar of the following year, until his mosque and houses had been built for him and the conversion to Islam of the Anṣār had been accomplished. There was no court of the Anṣār whose people did not embrace Islam, except Khaṭma, Wāqif, Wā’il and Umayya; and these are the Aws Allah, a group of the Aws, who remained pagan.\footnote{Dāwūd). This is followed in the \textit{Istibṣār} by an entry on al-Ḥarīth b. Uqaysh, who was obviously ‘Amr’s brother, wrongly said to have been of the ‘Ukl or the ‘Awf(!) and a ḥalīf of the Anṣār. (The \textit{Usd al-ghāba}, I, 315 explains that ‘Uklī and ‘Awfī are the same thing.) Ibn Sa’d, VII, 67 mentions al-Ḥarīth among the Companions of the Prophet who settled in Baṣra; \textit{Istī‘āb}, I, 282. Like ‘Amr himself, his brother was of course of the Za‘ūr a. The ‘Awf/’Ukl version presumably originates from the confusion caused by the occurrence of “Uqaysh” in the name of the B. Zuhayr b. Uqaysh of the ‘Ukl; see Ibn Mākulā, I, 105.


\footnote{Fa-aqāma rasūlu llāhi (ṣ) bi-l-Madīna idh qadimahā shahra rabī’i l-awwalī lā ṣafar mina l-sanati l-dākhila hattā buniya lahu fihā masjiduhu wa-masakinuhu wa-stajmahā lahu islamu hādhā l-ḥayyi mina l-ansār. Fa-lam yahq (sic, one expects taḥq) dār min dārī l-ansār illā aslama aḥluhā, illā mā kāna min Khaṭma wa-Wāqif wa-Wā’il wa-Umāyya, wa-tīla Aws Allāh, wa-hum ḥayy mina l-Aws, fa-înnahum aqāmū ‘alā shirkihim; Ibn Hishām, II, 146.}
Waqidî, in a combined report from four different accounts, again singles out the Aws Allâh clans for not embracing Islam, together with the Khazraj and the rest of the Aws (i.e., the clans belonging to the Nabiţ and the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf). For this, Abû Qays b. al-Aslat is blamed:

By the time the Messenger of God came to Medina, the Khazraj and groups of the Aws had already converted to Islam. [They were the following:] All of the ‘Abd al-Ashhal, Zafar, Hâritha, Mu‘awiya [these four clans were subdivisions of the Nabiţ\(^{12}\)], and ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. In contrast, the clans of the Aws Allâh, i.e., Wâ’il, Khatma, Wâqif and Umayya b. Zayd, were with Abû Qays b. al-Aslat. He was their leader as well as a poet and an orator and he used to lead them in war. And he nearly embraced Islam.\(^{13}\)

Finally, in his genealogical work, Ibn Ḥazm makes a somewhat obscure reference to the conversion of the Aws Allâh. This is found in the section about certain clans of the Aws Allâh group, namely the Murra b. Mâlik b. al-Aws. The Murra included the clans of Umayya, Wâ’il and ‘Aṭiyya. The text is not very smooth and may include an inaccurate gloss printed below in italics:

And from the descendants of Wâ’il: Sayfî, the poet, who was [also known as] Abû Qays b. al-Aslat. His conversion to Islam was delayed until the Battle of the Ditch had taken place. And the same was the case with the conversion to Islam of all the Khaṭma, i.e., the Jusham b. Mâlik b. al-Aws, all the Wâqif, i.e., the Imru’u l-Qays b. Mâlik b. al-Aws, and the Aws Allâh [in general], who were these clans of the descendants of

\(^{12}\) The Mu‘awiya were originally of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf; Lecker, “Muhâammad at Medina”, 44.

\(^{13}\) Ibn Sa‘d, IV, 384: fa-lammâ qadima rasûlu llâhi (s) l-Madîna wa-qad aslâmâti l-Khazraj wa-tawâ’ifu mina l-Aws: B. ‘Abd al-Ashhal kulluhâ wa-Zafar wa-Hâritha wa-Mu‘awiya wa-‘Amr b. ‘Awf, illâ mâ kâna min Aws Allâh, wahhum Wâ’il wa-B. Khaṭma wa-Wâqif wa-Umayya b. Zayd, mâ’a Abî Qays b. al-Aslat, wa-kâna ra’sahâ wa-shâ’irahâ wa-khaṭîbâhâ wa-kâna yaqûduhum fî l-harb wa-kâna qad kâda an yuslima. On this claim see Appendix C.
Murra b. Malik b. al-Aws.\textsuperscript{14} The Salm b. Imri’i l-Qays were, however, clients of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf b. Malik b. al-Aws and all of them embraced Islam together with their “brothers”, the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf b. Malik b. al-Aws, before the Hijra and at the early stages (literally: the beginning) of the Hijra.\textsuperscript{15}

When Ibn Ḥazm says that Abū Qays embraced Islam after the Battle of the Ditch (how long after that battle we do not know), we should infer from it that the same is true for the Aws Allāh in general. The role ascribed to Abū Qays b. al-Aslat seems to have been exaggerated. A tribal leader in Medina was no tyrant and the town’s conversion to Islam was often a matter of challenging the old, established leadership.\textsuperscript{16}

There is evidence of military cooperation before Islam between the Aws Allāh under Abū Qays and the Jewish tribes. In the pre-Islamic War of Sumayr, the Aws Allāh clans (Khaṭma, Wāqif, Wā’il and Umayya), having entered into an alliance with the Jewish Naḍir and Qurayża, fought under the command of Abū Qays. The Jews (i.e., other Jewish clans), we are told, entered into alliances with the clans of the Aws and Khazraj. However,

\textsuperscript{14}This is inaccurate; as we have seen, the descendants of Murra were only part of the Aws Allāh. Elsewhere Ibn Iṣḥāq states, in two separate reports, that Abū Qays was a member of the Wāqif and of the Khaṭma, respectively. Both statements seem to be wrong and Ibn Hishām’s claim (I, 302; cf. Wellhausen, Skizzen IV, 25 n. 1), that the Arabs sometimes related a man to his ancestor’s brother if the brother was better known, is an unconvincing attempt to harmonize the conflicting evidence.


\textsuperscript{16}On Abū Qays see also Appendices B and C. Cf. Lecker, “Idol worship in pre-Islamic Medina (Yathrib)”, 336f, 343.
the Qurayza and Naḍīr had not made alliances with any of the
Aws or Khazraj prior to that battle. Both the Aws and Khazraj
sought the aid of the Qurayza and Naḍīr who chose to join the
Aws. Those Aws who formed an alliance with the Qurayza and
Naḍīr were the Aws Allāh, viz., Khaṭma, Wāqif, Umayya and
Wā’il.¹⁷

On the late conversion to Islam, a rather dubious report by
Ibn al-Qaddāh, which is on the whole favourable to Abū Qays,
deviates only slightly from the above details. He says: “Badr and
Uḥud had taken place and none of the Aws Allāh had embraced
Islam except four of the Khaṭma.¹⁸ All of them participated in
the Battle of Uḥud and in the later battles and because of this
[i.e., because the Aws Allāh were absent from Badr], the Khazraj
were more numerous among the participants in the battle” (fa-
lī-dḥālika dhahabati l-Khazraj bi-l-‘idda fīman shahida Badran).¹⁹

Now, even if we assume that these Khaṭmīs participated in the
Battle of Uḥud, this would not change the historical picture.²⁰

¹⁷ Wa-kānat yahūdī qad ḥālafat qabā‘ila l-Aws wa-l-Khazraj illā B. Qurayza
wa-bānī l-Naḍīr fa-innahum lam yuḥālīfū aḥādan minhum ḥattā kāna hādhā l-jam‘ . . . wa-lillāh ḥālafat Qurayza wa-l-Naḍīr mina l-Aws: Aws Allāh, wa-
hiya Khaṭma wa-Wāqif wa-Umayya wa-Wā’il, fa-hādhīhi qabā‘il Aws Allāh;
Aghānī, II, 169; Wellhausen, Skizzen IV, 38-39. See also Horovitz, “Judaeo-
Arabic relations in pre-Islamic times”, 178 n. 3 (where the reference is
wrong), 179.

¹⁸ They were Khuzayma b. Thābit b. al-Fākīh (written: al-Fātīma), ‘Umayr
b. ‘Adī b. Kharasha, Ḥabīb b. Ḥubāsha and 肼mayda (written: Khamiṣa)
b. Ruqaym.

¹⁹ TMD MS, VIII, 392; TMD, Tahdīh., VI, 456 (who repeats the mistakes
in the names). One wonders whether the mention of these Khaṭmīs as par-
ticipants in Uḥud should be credited to the mawla of the Khaṭma, Abī Sa’d
Shurahbīl b. Sa’d, an early authority on the Maghāzī (d. 123/741); about him
see J. Horovitz, “The earliest biographies of the Prophet and their authors”,
in Islamic Culture, 1 (1927), 535–59; 2 (1928), 22–50, 164–82, 495–526, at
1, 552; also GAS, I, 279 (instead of Shurahbīl b. Sa’īd, read: Shurahbīl
b. Sa’d).

²⁰ The above passage contains the only mention of 肼mayda b. Ruqaym;
it is quoted from Ibn al-Qaddāh in Usd al-ghāba, II, 55 and Isbā’a, II, 130
(he is called al-Qaddāh in the latter source) and al-‘Adawī (the compiler of
Nasab al-ansār; Isbā’a, IV, 446), who obviously have the same text. Unlike
the other three, 肼mayda is not mentioned in the section about the Khaṭma
in Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhara, 642 f and Ibn Hazm, Ansāb, 343 f. The three are
not said by the two genealogists to have participated in Uḥud, while ‘Umayr’s
A fifth member of the Aws Allâh said to have participated in the Battle Uhud was none other than Abû Qays’ eldest son,
Qays.\(^{21}\) But this assertion merits no more confidence than the others.

We may safely assume that many Khazrajīs had already committed themselves to the cause of Islam before the Hijra. There were Muslims among the Aws from the Nabīt and the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf.

**Early converts to Islam among the Aws Allāh**

Not all the Aws Allāh converted to Islam after the Battle of the Ditch. There were two tribal groups of the Aws Allāh that had converted at an earlier date. But these groups do not weaken the reliability of the statements on the delayed conversion of the other Aws Allāh groups. On the contrary, both groups no longer lived in the territory of the Aws Allāh, and it is this fact which explains their different attitude to the Prophet.

**The case of the Salīm**

As we have just seen, Ibn Ḥazm wrote that the B. al-Salm b. Imrī’i l-Qays were clients of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf and that all of them embraced Islam with their “brothers”, the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf, before the Hijra and at the early stages of the Hijra. The Salm’s move from the territory of the Aws Allāh in the eastern ‘Āliya to Qubā in the western ‘Āliya led them to become clients of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. The shift was reportedly a result of a breach between the two brother-clans, Wāqif and al-Salm, following a quarrel between their two eponyms. It is reported that al-Salm and Wāqif shared the same court. They then quarrelled, and the younger brother al-Salm settled among the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf (i.e., in Qubā), amongst whom his children remained.\(^{22}\)

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\(^{21}\) *TMD* MS, VIII, 392:3.

The Salm reached Qubā’ long enough before the Hijra to build a fortress there since Ibn Zabala reports that the Salm had a ḥisn to the east of the Mosque of Qubā’.

As might be expected, the Salm married into the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf: some ten years before the Hijra Sa’d b. Khaythama married into what was probably the most important family in Qubā’. Sa’d’s wife Jamila was the daughter of Abū ‘Āmir al-Rāhib of the B. Ḍubay’a and she bore him a son, ‘Abdallāh, who participated in the expeditions of Hudaybiyya and Khaybar (at the end of 6 and the beginning of 7 A.H., respectively).

When the Prophet came to Qubā’, the Salm were there; we have been told that their conversion to Islam occurred “before the Hijra and at the beginning of the Hijra”. Sa’d b. Khaythama of al-Salm, for example, was in Qubā’. Sa’d was an important figure. He was one of the five members of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf who participated in the great ‘Aqaba meeting where he is said to have been a naqīb.

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23 Samh., I, 196.
25 Whose mother was of the Aws Allāh clan B. Khaṭma; Ibn Sa’d, VIII, 354.
26 See, e.g., Ibn Hishām, II, 122.
27 The list of ‘Aqabā in Ibn Hishām, II, 99 mentions among the naqībs both Sa’d b. Khaythama of the Salm and Rifi’a b. ‘Abd al-Mundhir of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf subdivision named Umayya b. Zayd, implying that they were both in charge of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. This may well be the result of Ibn Ishāq’s harmonization of contradictory claims made by the two respective families (or clans). Cf. Ibn Sa’d, VIII, 354: Sa’d was the naqīb (by implication: the only naqīb) of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. The claim that Sa’d was a naqīb comes unambiguously from his family: al-Mughīra b. Ḥakīm (al-Ṣan‘ānī al-Abnāwī; Tahdh., X, 258) asked ‘Abdallāh b. Sa’d b. Khaythama whether he had participated in Badr. ‘Abdallāh replied: “Yes, and in the ‘Aqaba as well. I rode behind my father on the back of his camel, and he was a naqīb”; Isāba, III, 55. But cf. Isāba, IV, 108 (where Badr is replaced by Uhud). On Badr see also Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbār, 403.
On the whole, the evidence shows that the Salm preserved their original Aws Allah genealogy even after they were separated from the Aws Allah and settled in Quba'. In their genealogical works, Ibn al-Kalbi and Ibn Ḥazm list the Salm as members of the Aws Allah.\(^{28}\) The list of Awsi women who pledged their allegiance to the Prophet is concluded with the names of women of the Aws Allah, the very last being from among al-Salm b. Imrī’ī l-Qays b. Murra (!) b. Mālik b. al-Aws.\(^{29}\)

\(^{28}\) Ibn Ḥazm, Ansāb, 345; Ibn al-Kalbi, Jamhara, 644.

\(^{29}\) Ibn Sa’d, VIII, 358. It is true that in Ibn Ishāq’s list of ṃuqabā’ in the ‘Aqaba meeting, Sa’d b. Khaythama is given a pedigree (unfortunately, it is partial) going back to ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. (In Ibn Ishāq’s list of the Muslims killed at Badr, Sa’d b. Khaythama is a member of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf; Ibn Ḥishām, II, 364.) Ibn Ḥishām gives Sa’d the old Aws Allah pedigree (…b. Ghanm b. al-Salm b. Imrī’ī l-Qays). He rejects the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf pedigree given by Ibn Ishāq, remarking that Sa’d was in fact of the Ghanm b. al-Salm. Ibn Ḥishām’s argumentation is convincing. He explains that often when a man was included in the fighting unit of a certain clan (literally: when his battle-cry was “within” a certain clan) and he lived in its court, he was (wrongly) considered one of them; Ibn Ḥishām, II, 99: wa-nasabahu bnu Ishāq fi B. ‘Amr b. ‘Awf, wa-huwa min B. Ghanm b. al-Salm, liannahu rubbamd kdnat da’watu l-rajuli fi l-qawm wa-yakūnu fihim fa-yunsabu ilayhim. For entries on Sa’d see the following Companion dictionaries: Ḥsāba, III, 55; Ḫsd al-ghāba, II, 275; Ḥṣṭaḥ, II, 588. The last two refer to the dispute over his pedigree. And see the fragments recorded in Ṭabarānī, Kabīr, VI, 29f (the entry on Sa’d): the list of ‘Aqaba participants going back to Zuhrī (via Mūṣa b. ‘Uqba) mentions Sa’d as a naqīb of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. Another report in Ṭabarānī, having the same isnād, again going back to Mūṣa b. ‘Uqba < Zuhrī, is a fragment from the list of Badris. We are told here that Sa’d was of the ‘Amr b. al-Salm b. Mālik b. al-Aws (this genealogy is enigmatic). Of special interest are two fragments from the list of Badris going back to ‘Urwa b. al-Zubayr via Ibn Lahi‘a. (Also the rest of their isnād is identical.) These fragments make contradictory claims concerning Sa’d’s pedigree: in one he is a member of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf, while in the other he belongs to the Ghanm b. al-Salm b. Mālik b. al-Aws b. Ḥarīthah (printed: Jāriya). Assuming that ‘Urwa was really the source of the two conflicting reports, we may conclude that Sa’d’s genealogy was already disputed towards the end of the first century A.H.

Cf. the pedigree of a female Companion from this very clan showing her to be a member of the Aws Allah: Khayra bint Abī Umayya of al-Salm b. Imrī’ī l-Qays (or of al-Ghanm b. al-Salm); Ḥsāba, VII, 629; Ibn Sa’d, VIII, 358. The same is true of the Companion al-Mundhir b. Qudāma b. ‘Arfa‘a; Ḥsāba, VI, 218; Ḥṣṭaḥ, IV, 1451; Ḫsd al-ghāba, IV, 419 (of the Ghanm b. al-Salm, etc.).
Because by the time of the Hijra the Salm had long ceased to be part of the Aws Allāh, who remained indifferent if not hostile to the Prophet, the former took part in the major events of the nascent Islamic community. They sheltered some of the Muhājirūn in Qubā', and participated in battles and in the *mu‘ākhat*, or “brothering”, between the Muhājirūn and the Ānsār. Five of the Salm took part in Badr, including Sa‘d b. Khaythama who was killed in the battle. They appear in the list of participants with their Aws Allāh pedigree (B. Ghanm b. al-Salm b. Imri‘i l-Qays b. Mālik b. al-Aws) between two subdivisions of ‘Amr b. ‘Awf.30 The rest of the Aws Allāh (with the exception of the group discussed below) had no role in the ‘Aqaba or any other Islamic activity during the first half of the Prophet’s Medinan period.

The Salm steadily declined and the last of them perished at the time of Ḥārūn al-Rashīd31 or, more precisely, in the year 200 A.H.32

**THE CASE OF THE SA‘ID B. MURRA**

The other Aws Allāh group which took part in the major events prior to the Battle of the Ditch was the Sa‘īd b. Murra b. Mālik b. al-Aws. As in the case of the Salm this shift away from the policies of the Aws Allāh towards the Prophet can be explained with reference to the fact that at some stage before the Hijra, the Sa‘īd stopped being part of the Aws Allāh.

Three brothers from among the Sa‘īd b. Murra participated in the Battle of Uḥud. Ḥajib, Ḥubāb and Ḥabīb, the sons of Zayd b. Taym b. Umayya b. Bāyāḍa b. Khufāf b. Sa‘īd b. Murra, took part in the Battle of Uḥud and Ḥabīb was killed there.33

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30 Waq., I, 161; Ibn Hishām, II, 347. Similarly, the lists of Bādrīs by Wāqīdī, ‘Abdallāh b. Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Ānsārī (Ibn al-Qaddāh, GAS, I, 268) and Ibn al-Kalbī provide the Aws Allāh pedigree; Musa b. ‘Uqba and Ibn Ishāq, while listing the participants of the Ghanm b. al-Salm (= the Salm), do not go beyond their fathers; see Ibn Sa‘d, III, 481.

31 Ibn Ḥazm, Anṣāb, 345.

32 Ibn Sa‘d, III, 481.

33 Ibn Qudāmā, Istībṣār, 275. Ḥubāb was killed in the Battle of Yamāma during the *ridda* wars. Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhara, 548 only mentions Ḥubāb killed in Yamāma, but a MS of the Jamhara (Br. Lib. Add. 22346, 56b) also refers to
The participation of three members of the Sa‘īd b. Murra in the Battle of Uhud, and presumably their conversion and the conversion of others of the Sa‘īd to Islam, indicate that they allied themselves with the Prophet when the rest of the Aws Allāh were still hostile (or at least indifferent) to him. This does not contradict the report that the Aws Allāh as a whole converted only after the Battle of the Ditch. The conversion of the Sa‘īd b. Murra, probably one of the smallest and least important clans in Medina, should be explained with reference to the geography of Medina and the genealogy of the Aws, and more specifically the divisions within the Murra b. Mālik b. al-Aws. The information on the Murra includes two prominent elements: the place-name “Rātij”, and the tribal appellative “al-Ja‘ādir(a)”. Ibn al-Kalbī says:

And Murra b. Mālik b. al-Aws bore ‘Āmira and Sa‘īd, and they [i.e., the descendants of Sa‘īd] are the people of Rātij, a fortress in Medina (wa-walada Murra b. Mālik b. al-Aws ‘Āmira wa-Sa‘īd wa-hum ahl Rātij, uṯum bi-l-Madīna).

Hūbāb’s brother Ḥabīb who was killed in Uhud. The Companion dictionaries report, in the entries on the above-mentioned Ḥājib, about his participation in Uhud (< Ṭabarī); see Isāba, I, 561 which quotes, besides Ṭabarī, also Ibn Shāhīn (who correctly calls Ḥājib “al-Awsī”, adding: thumma al-Bayāḍī, as if he were a member of the Khazrajī B. Bayāḍa [!]); Usd al-ghaba, I, 315 (who wrongly calls him al-Khazrajī al-Bayāḍī); Istī‘āb, I, 281. In the entries on Ḥābīb it is mentioned that he was killed in Uhud; see Isāba, II, 19, quoting Ibn Shāhīn; Usd al-ghaba, I, 370; Istī‘āb, I, 319 (in all three entries, instead of Tamīn read: Taym; instead of Usayd read: Umayya; also, contrary to what we are told in the entries, Ḥabīb was not of the Bayāḍa). For entries on al-Ḥubāb see Isāba, II, 8 (Ibn Shāhīn: he participated in Uhud and was killed in Yamāma; but Ibn Ḥajar objects to this, saying that Ibn al-Kalbī does not report that he was killed in Yamāma [!]); Usd al-ghaba, I, 363 (both the Isāba and Usd al-ghaba have a full pedigree going back to Sa‘īd b. Murra/ Sa‘īd b. Murra, respectively); Istī‘āb, I, 317.

34 See a discussion on this clan in Lecker, “Muhammad at Medina”, 47–48. The following conclusions are slightly different from those of the above-noted article.

35 In Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhara, 646, 648 and Ibn al-Kalbī, Nasab Ma‘add, I, 387, 389 the name is vocalized Su‘ayd.
He goes on:

And ʿĀmira bore Qays, and Qays bore Zayd, a ḥaṭṭ [i.e., a small and autonomous tribal group] and Zayd bore Wāʿil, a ḥaṭṭ. Wāʿil b. Zayd bore Jusham, and Jusham bore ʿĀmir, nicknamed al-Aslat. And [Zayd also bore] Umayya, a ḥaṭṭ, and ʿAṭiyya, another ḥaṭṭ. And they are the Jaʿādir. [He also bore] Sālim, who died childless (daraja). One of the Wāʿil was the poet Abū Qays Ṣayfī b. al-Aslat/ʿĀmir b. Jusham who had a brother called Waḥwah.

Ibn al-Kalbī’s wording indicates that the Jaʿādir(a) were the descendants of Zayd b. Qays b. ʿĀmira b. Murra and his three sons, Wāʿil, Umayya and ʿAṭiyya. In other words, they were the subdivisions (butūn) of the ʿĀmira branch, not the Saʿīd branch, of the Murra. A passage in a compilation by the genealogist of the Ḍinār, Ibn al-Qaddāh (ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥammad b. ʿUmāra) who died towards the end of the second Islamic century, points in the same direction. He wrote that Murra b. Malik had three sons, ʿĀmira, Saʿīd and Māzin. ʿĀmira bore Qays and Qays had Zayd, about whom Ibn al-Qaddāh says: wa-kāna yuqalu lahu Jaʿdar. This is not mentioned elsewhere. Ibn al-Qaddāh continues: Zayd had Wāʿil, Umayya and ʿAṭiyya. This we already know from the other sources, but what follows concerns us

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36 Ibn Zābala’s information on the tribal territories in Medina is arranged according to tribal subgroups which he calls butūn; see, e.g., Samh., I, 207: wa-amma B. ʿAdhāra b. Malik b. Ghaḍb b. Jusham, ja-kānū aqallā butūn B. Malik b. Ghaḍb adadan ...fa-qatalū qatilān min baʿd butūn B. Malik b. Ghaḍb .... Note the association between ḥaṭṭ and masjid with regard to the butūn of Kinda that settled in Kūf. M. Lecker, “Kinda on the eve of Islam and during the ridda”, in JRAS 1994 (forthcoming), section 2.4.

37 The MS has “b. Ṣayfī”, but the “b.” is superfluous.

38 A few other members of this family are mentioned; Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhara, 646f. The MS of Ibn al-Kalbī’s Jamhara (which I employed when I wrote “Muḥammad at Medina”, Br. Lib. Add. 22346, 56a-b) is almost identical, with ʿĀmir and Saʿīda instead of ʿĀmira and Saʿīd, and al-Jaʿādira instead of al-Jaʿādir (this is simply a variant).

39 Above, 31n.

40 The diacritical points are missing; Māzin is of interest because he is not mentioned in the other sources.
more: \textit{wa-hā'ulā'i l-thalātha humu l-Ja'ādira}.\textsuperscript{41} Elsewhere, we find confirmation that the Wā'il and the Umayya were part of the Ja'ādir(a).\textsuperscript{42} But then we are also told, in contrast to the evidence just adduced, that the Murra as a whole, \textit{including} the Sa'īd b. Murra, were called al-Ja'ādir(a).\textsuperscript{43} It seems that the question of whether the tribal appellative, al-Ja'ādir(a), applied to all of the Murra or only to part of them must be left open for the time being.

The key to the problem of the Sa'īd b. Murra's dissent from the policies of the Aws Allāh is the place-name Rātij. I previously wrote that: “All of the Banū Murra, the descendants of both ‘Āmir$^{44}$ and Sa'd,$^{45}$ inhabited Rātij”.\textsuperscript{46} I now realize that

\textsuperscript{41} TMD MS, VIII, 392. Ibn Ḥazm inaccurately says (	extit{Ansāb}, 345) that the Murra b. Mālik were the Ja'ādira; cf. the text, which is not smooth, in Ibn al-Kalbī, 	extit{Nasab Ma'add}, I, 364: \textit{wa-Murra, wa-hum ahlu l-Ja'ādir, laqab, kāna yulaqqabu Ja'daran}. In fact, as we have seen the Ja'ādir(a) were only the descendants of ‘Āmir/Āmira.

\textsuperscript{42} Each of the following reports relates to family links between the Ja'ādir(a) and the Ḥanash, a subdivision of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. a woman of the Wā'il b. Zayd (who married a Ḥanashi) is said to have been of the Ja'ādir(a); Ibn Sā’d, VIII, 352; the mother of Sahl b. Ḥunayf of the Ḥanash was of the Umayya b. Zayd, of the Ja'ādir(a). (The last-mentioned woman was also married in the Ḏubay'a of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf: she was the mother of ‘Abdallāh and al-‘Ummān, the sons of Abū Ḥabība b. al-Az'ar b. Zayd b. al-‘Attāf b. Ḏubay’a; Ibn Sā’d, III, 471. Cf. the links between the Ḥanash and the Ḏubay’a in connection with the Dirār Mosque; below, Ch. 4.)

\textsuperscript{43} “Muḥammad at Medina”, 47. Also Ibn Qudāma, \textit{Istibsār}, 204 says that the Murra are the same as Ja'ādira. Cf. Caskel, \textit{Gamharat an-Nasab}, II, 248 (the Ja'ādir[a] are the ‘Āmira b. Murra but the name is often used to indicate the Murra as a whole). Wüstenfeld, \textit{Medina}, 32 wrongly renders a passage from Samhūdī (I, 176), giving the impression that the Aws Allāh were in fact the Aws as a whole. Samhūdī: \textit{fa-walada l-Aws Mālikan wa-min Mālik qabā‘ilu l-Aws kulluhā, fa-wulida bi-Mālik ‘Amr wa-'Awf wa-Murra, wa-yuqā‘lu lahum Aws Allāh, wa-humul l-Ja'ādira, summū bi-dhālika l-qisār fihim}; translated: “el-Aus hatte nur einen Sohn Mālik, dieser aber vier Söhne ‘Amr, ‘Awf, Murra und Ḏuscham [who is not mentioned in my edition of Samhūdī; a fifth son of Mālik, Imru’u l-Qays, should also be added], welche zusammen Ausallah genannt werden; sie heissen auch el-’Aṣādira d.i. die kleinen, weil sie meist von kleiner Statur werden”. Cf. Ibn al-Kalbī, \textit{Jamhara}, 621 (\textit{wa-Ja'ādir sūd qisār}).

\textsuperscript{44} Or ‘Āmira.

\textsuperscript{45} Or Sa'īd or Su'ayd or Sa'īda.

\textsuperscript{46} Lecker, “Muḥammad at Medina”, 47.
the statement of the ‘Āmir (or ‘Āmira) having lived in Rāṭij is mistaken. What Ibn al-Kalbī probably meant (wa-walada Murra b. Mālik b. al-Aws ‘Āmira wa-Saʿīd wa-hum ahl Rāṭij), was that the descendants of Saʿīd, but not those of ‘Āmira, were “the people of Rāṭij” (in fact they were one of the components in the population of Rāṭij). Rāṭij was in the Sāfila; in other words, the branch of the Murra which sent three warriors to Uhud did not live with the rest of the Murra and the other Aws Allāh clans in the ʿĀliya. Being close to the “territorial basis” of the Prophet and surrounded by his supporters, the Saʿīd converted to Islam earlier than the rest of the Aws Allāh. In short, there is no conflict between the case of the Saʿīd and the belated conversion to Islam of the rest of the Aws Allāh. Like other groups living in Rāṭij, the Saʿīd were “adopted” by the nearby ʿAbd al-Ashhal, and this was done by giving them an ʿAbd al-Ashhal genealogy.

The case of the Saʿīd shows that an acquaintance with the geography of Medina and the genealogy of its clans can take us beyond the sīra accounts.

The late conversion to Islam of the Aws Allāh was a major factor in the politics of Medina during the first five years of the decade the Prophet spent there. When we look at the map of Medina we immediately realize that a significant part of the town was in those years beyond the Prophet’s reach. It seems plausible that were it not for the Naḍīr and Qurayẓa, the Aws Allāh would have been unable to withstand the pressure to convert to Islam. It is no accident that the Battle of the Ditch (and, it may be added, the fall of the Qurayẓa immediately after the battle), is given as the last major event before the Aws Allāh’s conversion to Islam.

THE AWS ALLĀH CLANS AND THE PROPHET

The literature on the Prophet’s life focuses on clans and individuals who supported him, and on his enemies however great

48 For marriage links between the Saʿīd b. Murra and the Salima (who also lived in the Sāfila) see Ibn Saʿd, VIII, 358.
49 Lecker, “Muḥammad at Medina”, 47.
or small. Between these groups was a third category which we should be aware of, although it is hardly mentioned: the many non-participants, those who waited on the sidelines to see how things would develop. Perhaps they were a silent majority. They did not stand to gain much if Islam succeeded, and would be little hurt in case of failure. The uneven coverage of Medina in the *sīra* means that no judgement concerning the relative size and strength of its clans can be based on the *sīra* reports.

As we saw above, the Salm participated in the important events of the nascent Islamic community and some of the Saʿīd fought in Uḥud. The rest of the Aws Allāh are simply not mentioned in connection with these events. This strongly supports the account of their belated conversion to Islam. That the Aws Allāh were absent from these events during the first few years of the Islamic era can be seen from the third volume of Ibn Saʿd, which includes entries on the warriors of Badr. It has valuable data on the Muhājirūn’s stay after their Hijra with various Anṣār. These data, which are sometimes contradictory, do not relate to the Aws Allāh. With the exceptions noted above, none of them fought on the Prophet’s side in any battle (though some fought against him), and none of them is known to have been part of the *muʿākhāt*, or “brothering”, between the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār during the first year after the Hijra. No marriage links could be found between the Aws Allāh and the Muhājirūn. Finally, the Aws Allāh did not share in the spoils from the Qurayṣa immediately after the Battle of the Ditch.

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51 Cf. Watt, *Medina*, 175, who correctly remarks: “The second or great meeting of al-ʿAqabah was attended by men from all the clans of the Aws and Khazraj with the exception of Aws Manāt” (= Aws Allāh; Wellhausen, *Skizzen IV*, 24, 51).

52 Other groups of the Aws received their share: one portion went to the ‘Abd al-Ashhal, Zafar, Ḥāritha and Muʿāwiya of the Nabīt group. Another went to the ‘Amr b. ʿAwf “and those who remained of the Aws” (it would seem far-fetched to suggest that this ambiguous formulation refers to the Aws Allāh); Waq., II, 521.
In view of all this, one expects to find many of the Aws Allah in the lists of munafiqūn, yet they include only one. But then nīfāq was often (though not invariably) a rather mild form of opposition. Moreover, a munafiq is one who declares himself to be Muslim. This was not the case with the alienated Aws Allah. The single member of the Aws Allah in the lists of munafiqūn is Qays b. Rifa‘a of the Wāqif while most of the munafiqūn among the Aws belonged to the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf and several to the Nabīt.\(^5^4\) Nīfāq may have been an indication of internal differences within the clan itself over the attitude to be adopted towards the new religion. It did not occur when the whole clan refrained from embracing Islam. Nīfāq was widespread in Qubā‘ in the western ‘Āliya, which was the only part of the ‘Āliya not controlled by the Aws Allah or the Jewish Naḍīr and Qurayṣa. There the Prophet gained a foothold at an early stage, but the internal strife went on for years. The obscure Dirār Mosque incident (below, Ch. 4) shows that even as late as 9 A.H. the struggle for Qubā‘ was not over yet (or, to use the language of the traditional sources, “the munafiqūn there were still numerous”). While it is no doubt true that some of the munafiqūn were simply converted (or outwardly converted) Jews and that the Naḍīr and Qurayṣa had supported the opposition until they were expelled or killed, the continued opposition to the Prophet’s authority in Qubā‘ must have been motivated by factors deeper than sympathy for the vanquished Jewish allies.

As has already been observed, the role given to Abū Qays b. al-Aslat seems exaggerated. It cannot of course be denied that he was the most prominent leader among the Aws Allah. Reasons for resisting change in the existing order are never in

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\(^5^3\) M.J. Kister recently emphasized the economic aspect in the attitude of the munafiqūn, whom he defined as “a group of Medinans who had outwardly converted to Islam, but who had remained loyal to their former allies, faithful to their Jahili ideals and their tribal relations”; Kister, “The massacre of the Banū Qurayṣa”, 88 (their former allies were the Jews).

\(^5^4\) On Qays b. Rifa‘a (there are other versions concerning his name) see GAS, II, 296–97; Muhammad b. ‘Imrān al-Marzubānī, Mu‘jam al-shu‘arā‘, ed. F. Krenkow, Cairo 1354/1935 (bound together with al-Āmidī, al-Mu’talif wa-l-mukhtalif), 322. See the lists in Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 467–70; Ibn Hishām, II, 166–74; Balādh., Ansāb, I, 275–83.
short supply. Besides, the established tribal leaders of Medina realized that the power accumulated by the Prophet minimized their own role in Medinan politics and enabled him to create new leaderships by providing opportunities to people from outside the leading families to gain prestige and influence, either through their unconditional support and loyalty or through valour on the battlefield.

Besides his association with the Jews, Abū Qays b. al-Aslat had close ties with Mecca. Mecca was, for some time at least, his second home. He had a Qurashi wife, Arnab bint Asad b. ‘Abd al-‘Uzza, and he would stay with his wife in Mecca for years on end.55

VERSES REFLECTING A DIVIDED MEDINA AFTER THE HIJRA

The Jewish poetess ‘Ašmā’ bint Marwān (presumably an Arab proselyte), was assassinated shortly after the Battle of Badr, in the nineteenth month after the Hijra.56 The bitter and somewhat obscene poetical exchange between her and Ḥassān b. Thābit reflects a Medina split over its attitude to the Prophet.57

‘Ašmā’ belonged to the Umayya b. Zayd. There were two clans of this name in the ‘Aliya, one in Quba’ among the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf, and the other in the eastern ‘Aliya among the Aws

55 Ibn Qudāma, Istībṣār, 271: wa-kāna yuḥibbu Qurayshān, wa-kāna lahum šhāran, kānat ‘indahu Arnab bint Asad b. ‘Abd al-‘Uzza, wa-kāna yuqīnū ‘indahumū l-sīniḥa bi-mra’atihī. See also Rubin, “Ḥanīfiyya”, 93. Note that her pedigree is not in order (it is too short). Cf. the list of Asad b. ‘Abd al-‘Uzza’s children in Ibn Ḥazm, Ansāb, 117; Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhara, 68–69.

56 Zurqānī, I, 453:17; Balādh., Ansāb, 1, 373:4. Contrast the Prophet’s “firm but gentle handling of the [Muslim] opposition” (i.e., of the Munāfiqūn) in Watt, Medina, 183 with his “stern attitude towards the Jews when they rejected his appeals” in Watt, op. cit., 204. Watt explains that it “was not simply pique at this rejection, but the reaction of a man in danger to those whose ill will is causing this danger”.

Allāh.\textsuperscript{58} One source explicitly states that she belonged to the 'Amr b. 'Awf,\textsuperscript{59} but in fact 'Āšmā' was of the lesser-known Umayya b. Zayd who were part of the Aws Allāh: first, they were presumably then more hostile to the Prophet; second, she was married to a man of an Aws Allāh clan; and third, Ḥassān b. Thābit responds to her verses by attacking the Aws Allāh clans. Her husband was a member of the Ḥaṭma and his name was Yazīd b. Zayd b. Ḥiṣn al-Khaṭmī.\textsuperscript{60} Her assassin was also a Ḥaṭmī.\textsuperscript{61} ‘Āšmā’\textquoteright s hijā verses are purely political and the names of clans they contain reflect the political division of Medina around the time of Badr (2 A.H.). ‘Āšmā’ attacks the B. Mālik, al-Nabīt, ‘Awf and B. al-Khazraj. Ḥassān responds by assailing the B. Wā’il, B. Wāqīf and Ḥaṭma, in other words, he attacks the Aws Allāh group. (True, the presumed clan of the poetess herself, the Umayya b. Zayd, is missing; but this is verse, not genealogical evidence.)

The identification of the clans attacked by ‘Āšmā’ as supporters of the Prophet is less straightforward. She mentions the Khazraj (as a whole) and three other groups. The Nabīt are the well-known Aws group whose main component is the ‘Abd al-Ashhal. The ‘Awf are the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf of Quba’. In other words, between them the verses account for all five branches of the Aws: the Nabīt and the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf are with the Prophet, whilst the three branches of the Aws Allāh oppose him (Murra = “Wā’il” in Ḥassān’s verses, Imru’l-Qays = “Wāqīf” and Jusham = “Ḥaṭmā”).\textsuperscript{62}

\textsuperscript{58} As already noticed by Wellhausen, Skizzen IV, 48, n. 1; 61, n. 4; 63, n. 3.  
\textsuperscript{60} Ibn Sa’d, II, 27; Waq., I, 172; Ibn Hishām, IV, 285:14. For another marriage link between these Umayya b. Zayd and the Ḥaṭma see Ibn Sa’d, IV, 374. (For a marriage link between the Umayya b. Zayd and the Wāqīf see Ibn Sa’d, III, 460.)  
\textsuperscript{61} Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhara, 642; Ibn al-Kalbī, Nasab Ma’add, I, 384 (where the fact that she was Jewish is not mentioned); Ibn Durayd, Ishtiqāq, 447. The assassin’s name in the last source, Ghishmīr b. Ḥarasha, could be a lectio difficilior for ‘Umayr [b. ‘Adī] b. Ḥarasha; but no support for this could be found and Ibn Ḥajar (Iṣāba, V, 345) argues strongly that Ibn Durayd is wrong.  
\textsuperscript{62} Waq., I, 172–74; Ḥassān, Diwān, I, 449. The ‘Amr b. ‘Awf were also
There remains the problem of the B. Malik mentioned by the poetess. The Malik seem to be superfluous because even without them the clans referred to by the two poets correspond to the subdivisions of the Aws and Khazraj. Malik is Malik b. al-Aws, the father of all the branches of Aws. In other words, the Malik correspond to the Aws as a whole. In a famous verse in a military context, the Aws Allah leader, Abū Qays b. al-Aslat, boasts of his managing the affairs of the main part of the Malik (i.e., the Aws):

\[\text{as'ā 'alā julli Banī Malikin kullu mri'in fī sha'nihi sā'i} \]

"I labour on behalf of the main part of the Children of Malik every man labours for the cause that is his".63

The poem in question relates to the Battle of Bu'āth in which, as Ibn al-Kalbī informs us, the Aws "rested upon Abū Qays their affair" (qad asnadū amrahum ... ilā Abī Qays b. al-Aslat al-Wā'ili).64 Elsewhere Ibn al-Kalbī interprets the B. Malik of the above verse as the B. Malik b. al-Aws.65 Of course ‘Aṣmā’


64 Aghānī, XV, 161:9. According to another version, the poem relates to the War of Ḥāṭhib which preceded Bu'āth; Mufaddaliyyāt (Lyall), II, 225.

65 Ibn al-Kalbī, Nasab Ma’add, I, 364 f (julli was corrupted to jaddi and sa‘ī became shākī; n. 5 on p. 364 shows that the editor misunderstood the text; al-Salm is the son of Imru’u l-Qays and the brother of Wāqif, not the son of Malik b. al-Aws). See also Mufaddaliyyāt (Lyall), II, 227: “Malik is the name of the patriarch of the tribe called al-Aus, of which Abū Qais was the leader”. See the verse, e.g., in Lisān al-‘arab. s.v. s’.y., 386b; al-Mufaddal al-Ḍabbī, al-Mufaddaliyyāt, ed. Aḥmad Muhammad Shākir ‘Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Ḥarūn, Cairo 1383/1963 (reprint Beirut), no. 75,5; Jumaḥī, I, 227:2 (the editor correctly identifies the Malik as Malik b. al-Aws); al-Qurashī, Jamharat ash’ār al-‘arab, ed. al-Bijāwī, Cairo 1387/1967, II, 653. Malik in the sense of “Aws” can also be found in Qays b. al-Khaṭīm, Diwān, 62 (wa-salū šarīha l-kāhinayni wa-Mālikan, possibly a reference to the alliance between the Nadir and Qurayya and the Aws) and in a verse by the same poet on the War of Ḥāṭhib, again referring to the kāhināni and Malik, 82: atat ‘usabun mi l-kāhinayni wa-Mālikin.
does not target the Aws as a whole: she immediately specifies that of the Malik b. al-Aws she only meant to attack the ['Amr b.] 'Awf and the Nabīt.

The verses exchanged between 'Aṣmā' bint Marwān and Ḥassān b. Thābit confirm Aws Allāh's hostile attitude to the Prophet shortly after the Hijra and the split in Medinan society caused by the advent of the Prophet. A split in Medinan society was of course no novelty. But unlike the old one between the Aws and Khazraj, the division this time was not along tribal lines since on the Prophet's side we find not only the Khazraj, but also two out of the five Aws branches, namely the Nabīt and the 'Amr b. 'Awf.

THE JEWS OF THE AWS ALLĀH

The widespread idol worship on the eve of Islam, in Medina in general and in the 'Āliya among the Aws Allāh in particular,⁶⁶ should not discourage us from looking for Jewish proselytes among the Aws Allāh; after all, no Arab group in Medina was closer than them geographically and politically to the strongest Jewish tribes, the Naḍīr and Qurayza. However, evidence of proselytes is meagre, possibly as a result of suppression.

Qays b. Rifa‘a of the Wāqīf (above, 37) was a Jewish proselyte.⁶⁷ He is satirized by Islamic tradition: among the munāfiqūn who belonged to the Aws, Baladhurī mentions the poet Qays b. Rifa‘a of the Wāqīf and al-Ḍahḥāk b. Khalīfa of the ‘Abd al-Ashhal, both of whom used to frequent the synagogue (presumably an indirect way of telling us that they were Jews). Qays, the report cheerfully continues, was hit by a candle in the synagogue and lost his eye.⁶⁸ This is of course an edifying story. Synagogues should be avoided for fear of being hit by flying candles. We are unlikely to find corroborative evidence for the eye injury (it may ⁶⁶Lecker, “Idol worship in pre-Islamic Medina (Yathrib)”, section 2.2 (where two idols of the Khattma are mentioned).
⁶⁷For mention of the idols of the Wāqīf see Lecker, “Idol worship”, 335.
⁶⁸Baladh., Ansāb, 1, 277 (printed: al-Ḍahḥāk b. Ḫunayf); Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 469:3; see the entry on Qays in Isāba, V, 468.
well be historical!), but we are assured that Qays was a Jew, and again, it may be observed that where there is one proselyte we should expect to find more.69

THE ‘ÂTIYYA AND THE JEWS

The B. ‘Âtiyya b. Zayd were the brothers of the B. Wâ’il b. Zayd and the B. Umayya b. Zayd. A curious genealogical and geographical link existed between the ‘Âtiyya and the Jewish Qaynuqâ’.

The Qaynuqâ’ (or part of them) and the ‘Âtiyya lived in the same area. We know this from the reports concerning their courts as both inhabited a place called Ṣafina or Ṣafna between Qubâ’ and the territory of the Ḥublā or Sālim subdivisions of the ‘Awf (Khazraj).70 This geographical detail would be of little significance without the following genealogical detail: Shās (rather, Sha’s) b. Qays of the ‘Âtiyya71 is identical with Shās b. Qays in the list of the Prophet’s adversaries who were of the Qaynuqâ’72.

All this can now be taken a little further with evidence from Ibn al-Kalbî’s Jamharat al-nasab. In the paragraph about the ‘Âtiyya we read:

Shās b. Qays b. ‘Ubāda b. Zuhayr b. ‘Âtiyya b. Zayd was one of the eminent persons of the Aws in the Jâhiliyya. He converted to Judaism and was one of their leaders (min ashrafi l-Aws fi l-jâhiliyya wa-kâna qad tahawwada wa-kâna ra’san fîhim).73

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69 Qays’ father was presumably Abû Qays b. Rifâ’a whom al-Jumâhî lists in his Ṭabaqât fuhul al-shu’ârâ among the Jewish poets; Jumâhî, I, 288.

70 Cf. Wellhausen, Skizzen IV, 41, n. 1 (where al-Ṣufayna should be replaced by al-Ṣafna/Ṣafna); Maghânîm, 220, n. 1. Ṣafna was along the route of the supplies reportedly sent by the Qurayṣa to the Qurashî army besieging Medina during the Battle of the Ditch. The supply caravan was at Ṣafna on its way to the ‘Aqîq Valley, when it was intercepted by troops of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf who were on their way home, i.e., to Qubâ’; Sîra Shâmiyya, IV, 539–40.

71 He appears once as the owner of a fortress of the ‘Âtiyya called (after him) Shâs; Samh., I, 198.


The fact that Shās converted to Judaism indicates that the 'Atiyya are not identical with the Jewish Qaynuqā'. It seems plausible that the 'Atiyya were the clients of their neighbours, the Qaynuqā'.

We also have evidence associating the 'Atiyya with the Naḍīr. In connection with the Battle of the Ditch we are told that the Naḍīr and some of their Arab allies incited Quraysh and certain Bedouin tribes to besiege Medina. The details of the Arab allies are of interest to us here because they relate to Jewish proselytes among the Wā'il b. Zayd and, more to the point, their brother clan, the 'Atiyya b. Zayd. Ibn Ishaq writes that a group of Jews, including Sallām b. Abī l-Ḥuqayq, Ḥuyayy b. Akḥṭab and Kināna b. Abī l-Ḥuqayq of the Naḍīr, as well as Ḥawdha b. Qays and Abū 'Ammār, both of the Wā'il, together with some of the Naḍīr and Wā'il, set out to Mecca to incite the Quraysh against the Prophet. Another source concludes the above list with the remark: wa-hum kulluhum yahūd. Yet another report mentions from among the Naḍīr the following: Ḥuyayy, Abū...
CHAPTER TWO

Rafī‘ Sallām76 b. Abī l-Ḥuqayq and al-Rabī‘ b. al-Rabī‘ b. Abī l-Ḥuqayq, and of the Wā’il: Abū ‘Ammār, Wahwāḥ b. ‘Āmir and Hawḍha b. Qays.77 Wahwāḥ b. ‘Āmir (i.e., Wahwāḥ b. al-Aslat; al-Aslat was his father’s nickname) was Abū Qays b. al-Aslat’s brother.78

The Arab allies of the Naḍīr belonged to the Aws Allāh. The statement, wa-hum kulluhum yahūd, is of fundamental importance for ‘Āliya politics after the Hijra. With Wahwāḥ b. al-Aslat/b. ‘Āmir we may stand on firm ground: if he was a Jewish proselyte (or a descendant of one), it seems probable that the same is true for his brother, the Aws Allāh leader, Abū Qays b. al-Aslat. This brings to mind the combination of Jewish faith and tribal leadership in the case of Shās b. Qays of the ‘Āṭiyya. Perhaps this combination was typical to the ‘Āliya where the Jews were the dominant power. In other cases, maybe even in most cases, tribal leadership in pre-Islamic Medina was associated with idol worship.79

We now turn to Hawḍha b. Qays about whom we have contradictory evidence: he was either of the Wā’il or of the Khatma. But his most detailed, and hence, I believe most reliable pedigree shows him to be a member of the ‘Āṭiyya. We arrive at his pedigree through that of his son, Ma‘bad:


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78 ‘Abdallāḥ b. Muḥammad b. ‘Umāra (= Ibn al-Qaddāḥ), quoted in Ḩisāba, VI, 601, says that he was a Companon and participated in the Battle of the Ditch and later battles. On the apostasy and departure to Mecca of Wahwāḥ, Abū ‘Āmir al-Rāhib (sic) and others see Ṭabarī, Taḥṣīr, III, 242:17 (commentary on Qur’ān 3,86).
79 Lecker, “Idol worship in pre-Islamic Medina (Yathrib)”, 342–43 (Conclusions).
80 Ḩisāba, VI, 170; see also Usd al-ghāba, IV, 394; Istī‘āb, IV, 1428. Also
Preferring the detailed pedigree to the general and contradictory statements concerning him, we may conclude that Hawdha b. Qays, just like Shās b. Qays, was a Jewish proselyte of the ‘Ātiyya. Moreover, Hawdha and Shās were brothers. As we saw, Ibn al-Kalbī gave the following pedigree for Shās:


In this pedigree, the name Zuhayr replaces that of Duhaym in the preceding pedigree. The two names are very similar in the Arabic script; Duhaym is preferable because it is a lectio difficilior.

Assuming that Arab leaders of the Aws Allāh, or more precisely of the brother clans Wā‘il and ‘Ātiyya, participated in inciting the Prophet’s enemies before the Battle of the Ditch, one wonders whether some Arab allies of the Jewish Naḍīr had been expelled together with the Naḍīr. The assumption that they were not at all far-fetched — after all, some Arabs, presumably Jewish proselytes living among the Qurayṣa, were executed together with the Qurayṣa. In addition, when Khaybar was attacked by the Prophet, Hawdha b. Qays was there.  

THE JUDAISED MURṬĪD OF THE BALĪ

Among the Aws Allāh there lived at least one Judaised clan belonging to the Balī (a tribe of the Quḍā‘a), namely the Murṭīd (or Murayd). Like the other clans of the Balī that inhabited various

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82 For Hawdha's role in the defence of Khaybar when it was attacked by the Prophet see Waq., II, 640 (Kīnānā b. Abī l-Huqayq and Hawdha b. Qays enlist the Ghatafan allies of the Jews, promising them the date produce of Khaybar for one year).
83 The two forms of the name appear to have existed side by side. For Murayd see Ḥamad al-Jāsir, “Jawla fi al-maghrib al-‘arabī”, no. 6 (“Fi madīnat Tūnis”), in Majallat al-‘arab 7,xii (July 1973), 881–97, at 889–90, where the author quotes a passage from al-Rushāṭī (d. 542/1147), Iqtibās al-anwār wa-‘timās al-azhār fi ansāb al-ṣaḥāba wa-ruwāt al-āthār: al-Muraydi fi Balī. Qāla Abū Muḥammad [= al-Rushāṭī]:  lam ajid hadhdhā l-nasab fi kitābi bni l-kalbī wa-lā fi ghayrīhi wa-layya 'indī fihi siwā ma ḥakāhu Abū 'Alī l-Hajari, qāla: Murayd qabilah min Balī, wa-ḥakā bn Hishām qāla: qāla bn Ishāq: qālati
parts of Medina, the Murūd were there before the arrival of the Aws and Khazraj. They appear in two independent (though to some extent overlapping) lists of clans. One list is of Arab clans who were clients of the Jews before the arrival of the Aws and Khazraj. The other is a list of the Jewish clans that remained in Medina after the Aws and Khazraj had settled there (wa-kāna mimman baqiya mina l-yahūd ḥīna nazalat ‘alayhimi l-Aws wa-l-Khazraj . . .). The Murūd lived “in [the territory of] the Khaṭma and Nāʿīmat Ibrāhīm b. Hishām”, and they had a fortress (uṭum) with a well in it; the fortress was called after them (“the fortress of the Murūd”). The Murūd were not, however, the clients of the Khaṭma, but of another Aws Allah clan, the Umayya b. Zayd.

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mra’ā mina l-muslimīna min B. Murayd, baṭr min Bālī, kānū ḥulafā’ B. Umayya b. Zayd etc. (see below). Cf. E.M. López and J.B. Vilá, Al-Andalus en el kitāb iqtibās al-‘anwār y en el ijtīḥād iqtibās al-‘anwār, Madrid 1990 (Fuentes Árabe-Hispanas 7).

84 Aghānī, XIX, 95:14 (printed Marthad); Samh., I, 162:16. Wüstenfeld, Medina, 29 has: “Muzayd” (= Muzayd) remarking that elsewhere their name is Marthad or Yaʿīd.

85 The wording seems to suggest that some clans went into exile following the settlement of the Aws and Khazraj. See already Lecker, The Banū Sulaym, 102. I wish to correct here an erroneous English usage in the monograph just mentioned. I now realize that the term “clients” is more appropriate than the term “confederates” which I used; when a small, alien, group attaches itself to a bigger, settled, group (on which, we may assume, it depends for its protection), we should speak of clientage, not confederation. Cf. below, 103.

86 Samh., I, 163:–2,–1. This is the Murūd fortress said elsewhere to have belonged to the Khaṭma (i.e., the masters of the Murūd); Yaq., s.v. Murayd [sic]; Ḥāzinī, Amākin, MS Laleli 2140, fol. 175 has: Murūd. Cf. the Muʿāwiyah who were “in” (ḥā’) the Umayya b. Zayd; Lecker, The Banū Sulaym, 102, n. 15.

87 Ibn Hishām, III, 57:2 Murayd, baṭr min Bālī, kānū ḥulafāʾa fi B. Umayya b. Zayd. Ibn Hishām seems to suggest that the Murūd were identical with the Jaʿādir(a). See Isāba, VIII, 132; Ibn Qudāma, Iṣṭīḥār, 283: the poetess Maymūna bint Abdallāh was of the Murayd (sic), a baṭr of the Bālī who were called the Jaʿādira and were the clients (ḥulafāʾ) of the Umayya b. Zayd of the Anṣār. But this seems to be wrong and is incompatible with the definitions of the appellative Jaʿādir(a) discussed above. The text in Ibn Hishām is not smooth and is presumably misleading: the Umayya, not the Balawa, are meant here; cf. Lecker, “Muḥammad at Medina”, 47–48. Note that Ibn Qudāma includes the entry on Maymūna in the section on the Umayya b. Zayd who were a subdivision of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf; however, there is little doubt that he is wrong and that she was associated with the Umayya b. Zayd who were a subdivision of the Aws Allāh.
This apparent discrepancy may have been caused by changing circumstances: before Islam and in its early days, the Murid lived in an area known as the court of the Umayya b. Zayd. Later in the Islamic period the area came to be named after the Khaṭma. This assumption is corroborated by the mention of the orchard called Nā‘imatt Ibrāhīm b. Hishām. Ibrāhīm b. Hishām was the governor of Medina under Hishām b. ‘Abd al-Malik. He was the Caliph’s maternal uncle and belonged to the Quraysh clan of Makhzūm. The place-name, “Nā‘imatt Ibrāhīm b. Hishām”, is a mixture of new and old. Al-Nā‘ima, a luxuriant orchard in the ‘Āliya, had belonged to the Naḍīr. There was another orchard near it, al-Nuway’ima (“the small Nā‘ima”). Hence the name al-Nawā‘im (plural), designating the place (al-mawdi‘). “Al-Nawā‘im” appears in a description of Naḍīr’s territory. Again, it is a mixture of new and old perfectly intelligible for an inhabitant of Medina in the second Islamic century with some knowledge of his hometown. The description contains a reference to the qaṣr of Ibrāhīm b. Hishām and the territory of the Umayya b. Zayd of the Aws Allāh, who were the masters of our Murid:

The Naḍīr inhabited al-Nawā‘im and one of their fortresses, the one belonging to ‘Amr b. Jahhāsh, was in the Zuqāq [= lane of] al-Ḥārith, at the back (dubra) of qaṣr [Ibrāhīm] Ibn Hishām, behind (dūna) the B. Umayya b. Zayd.

A few words concerning ‘Amr b. Jahhāsh may be in place here. We know ‘Amr b. Jahhāsh b. Ka‘b from the story of Naḍīr’s alleged plot to assassinate the Prophet: ‘Amr was the one who volunteered to carry this out. His ownership of a fortress and

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89 Samh., s.v. al-Nā‘ima.
the Prophet’s instruction to assassinate him, allegedly for his role in the plot, seem to indicate that ‘Amr was a prominent figure among the Naḍīr.

The man chosen by the Prophet for the job was Ibn Yāmīn, ‘Amr’s cousin (ibn ‘amm) and brother-in-law: Ibn Yāmīn’s sister, al-Ruwā bint ‘Umayr, was ‘Amr’s wife. Ibn Yāmīn himself was not directly involved in the assassination; he hired a man of the Qays (i.e., Qays ‘Aylān) to carry out the deed. From the sister’s name we learn that Ibn Yāmīn’s father was in fact named ‘Umayr (Ibn Yāmīn/Yāmīn being an Arabized form of the common Hebrew name Binyamin). That his father’s name was ‘Umayr is confirmed by the report about the two members of the Naḍīr who converted to Islam on the eve of the Naḍīr’s surrender. The two were Yāmīn b. ‘Umayr and Abū Sa’d b. Wahb.

It is doubtful whether the Murīd, the Judaised clients of the Balī who lived in the middle of the ‘Āliya and were dependent on the Aws Allah, could adopt an independent policy towards the Prophet. Yet there are some indications that they did so. Verses by Umāma al-Murīdiyya, which are perhaps authentic, support the assassination in 2 A.H. of Abū ‘Afak, an old Jewish poet of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf (see below, 52). Another poetess of the Murīd, Maymūna bint ‘Abdallah, answers Kaʿb b. al-Ashraf’s verses which lamented the Qurašīs killed at Badr.
In the above chapter the focus fell on the Aws Allāh who lived in the eastern ʿĀliya near the Naḍîr and Qurayṣa. Concentrating on the clans and their territories, rather than on events (without, however, losing sight of the historical context) is a useful way of making progress in the study of the Prophet’s biography.

With few well-accounted for exceptions, the Aws Allāh embraced Islam only after the Battle of the Ditch. Our sources can be trusted on this point; the Aws Allāh were absent from the events which amalgamated the small community of devout Muslims surrounding the Prophet during the earliest and most difficult phases of his struggle for power. A correlation has been found between the general statement about their delayed conversion and the detailed information. We have seen that the readiness of our sources to provide detailed accounts of the opposition to the Prophet is a remarkable feature of the sīra literature.

The historical conclusions arrived at in this chapter inspire guarded confidence in the source material. The amount and quality of our data do facilitate sound and serious work on the Prophet’s biography. It would be absurd to argue that the fine, detailed information we have on certain aspects of early Islamic Medina is unusable or entirely the outcome of later inventions. Students of Islam are often perplexed by contradictory evidence and there is clearly an appalling amount of forged material. Certainly many questions will never be answered. Yet, in time a solid foundation of facts may be established whilst we simultaneously improve our analytical tools for this difficult, but by no means inaccessible literature.
CHAPTER THREE

QUBĀ': MUSLIMS, JEWS AND PAGANS

There were two villages on the western side of the ‘Āliya, Qubā’ and the much smaller al-‘Aṣaba. A comparison between the information available to us about each of the two sides of the ‘Āliya could lead to the conclusion that the western side was more populous than the eastern side; but this impression may be wrong since, quite understandably, the Prophet’s supporters, who were far more numerous in the western ‘Āliya, received more attention in the Islamic literature than those who opposed him.

The ‘Amr b. ‘Awf of the Aws were referred to as “the people of Qubā’”, but this only signifies that they were the dominant group there, though not the only one. While some evidence exists of Naḍīrī presence in Qubā’, during the Prophet’s time, clans of the Balī (Quḍā’a) were an important component of the Qubā’ population and, as we shall see in the following chapter, they had a role to play in the Dirār incident. The Balī, both those who lived in Qubā’ and in other places in the Medina area, arrived at Medina before the Aws and Khazraj immigrated there. The Balawīs then became the clients of the Aws and Khazraj, a state of affairs which continued to the Islamic era. (Before they became clients of the Aws and Khazraj they may well have been the clients of the Jews.)

Besides the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf and the Balī, there were in Qubā’ clans from the Salm of the Aws Allāh (above, 25) who settled in Qubā’ before Islam. There were also Khazrajīs (of the Zurayq).  

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1 Regarding the three fortresses owned by a Jew (said to have been of the Naḍīr) in the heart of Qubā’, see below, 133.

2 See Samh., I, 207 about the shift of the ‘Adhāra b. Mālik b. Ḥaḍb b. Jusham b. al-Khazraj (above, 33n) to Qubā’ which involved client status and marriage links: fa-kharajū ... ḥattā nazalū Qubā’a ‘alā B. ‘Amr b. ‘Awf fa-ḥālasūhum wa-ṣāharūhum. The ‘Adhāra are identical with the Ka’b b. Mālik b. Ḥaḍb b. Jusham said to have been ḥulafā’ B. ‘Amr b. ‘Awf; Ibn Ḥazm, Ansāb, 356. The ‘Adhāra remained among the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf to
The ‘Amr b. ‘Awf

It should be added that some of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf, for example the Mu‘awiya, left Qubā’ before the Islamic era and when the Prophet arrived were living outside Qubā’.

Much of what we know about the fortresses of pre-Islamic Medina comes from Ibn Zabāla, the author of a history of Medina entitled Akhbār al-Madīna. In this book, which survived only as extracts found in Samhūdī and other sources, there was a chapter on the settlement of the Aws and Khazraj. Ibn Zabāla presented the data about the different clans using this unchanged pattern: “The B. so-and-so settled in such-and-such place and built the fortress called so-and-so”. While our knowledge of Qubā’ and its inhabitants may not be complete, we do have a fair amount of

160/777. When the Caliph al-Mahdī assigned a portion in the register of soldiers or pensioners to the Ansār, the ‘Adhāra moved their register to the Bayāda (i.e., they returned to their Khazrajī relatives); Samh., I, 208 (fu-lam yazālū ka-dhālika ḫattā faraḍa l-Mahdī li-l-ansār sanata sitiṇa wa-mi‘a fa-‘ntaqalū bi-diwānihim ilā B. Bayāda). See already Wellhausen, Skizzen IV, 24, who wrongly calls them Ghudāra, following Wüstenfeld, Medina, 45, 46. Caskel, Gamharat an-Nasab, I, no. 192 and II, 275, calls them Ghirāra.

Ya‘qūbī’s statement (Buldān, ed. M.J. de Goeje, Leiden 1892, 313:11) that before Islam the houses of the Aws and Khazraj were located in Qubā’ is problematic; the text is possibly not in order (wa-mina l-Madīna ilā Qubā’ sittatu anyāl wa-bihā kānāt manāzīlu l-Aws wa-l-Khazraj qablā l-islām).
detailed information of fundamental importance, as will become clear from the following discussion.\textsuperscript{3}

\textbf{Converts to Judaism among the 'Amr b. 'Awf}

There appear to have been more Jewish converts among the 'Amr b. 'Awf than among the Aws Allah (above, 41). In any case, the numbers are small. The results are based on casual evidence and may not be indicative of the actual state of affairs.\textsuperscript{4}

The following converts were found:

1. Ibn Hishām's list of the Jewish adversaries of the Prophet includes Qardam b. 'Amr of "Yahūd B. 'Amr b. 'Awf".\textsuperscript{5}

2. The poet Abū 'Afak, assassinated after the Battle of Badr, was a Jewish proselyte belonging to the 'Amr b. 'Awf,\textsuperscript{6} or more precisely, to the 'Ubayd b. Zayd.\textsuperscript{7}

3. Before the Islamic era, a Quraysh man married a woman from amongst the \textit{yahūd al-ansār}. She belonged to the 'Amr b. 'Awf but it is not clear to which subdivision. According to one source, she was of the Jaḥjabā subdivision, while another, more detailed and thus probably more trustworthy pedigree presents her as one of the Đubay'a.\textsuperscript{8}

\textsuperscript{3}Several fortresses of the 'Amr b. 'Awf clans are mentioned in the following chapter in connection with the Dirār Mosque.

\textsuperscript{4}For idol worship among the 'Amr b. 'Awf, see Lecker, "Idol worship in pre-Islamic Medina (Yathrib)", 332, 334.

\textsuperscript{5}The interpretation of this difficult phrase is a key issue in the 'Ahd al-Umma (the so-called "Constitution of Medina"). Qardam was either of the 'Amr b. 'Awf or their client (in the latter case he does not belong here).

\textsuperscript{6}Ibn Sa'd, II, 28; Balādh., 	extit{Ansāb}, I, 373; Zurqānī, I, 455–4; Gil, "The origin of the Jews of Yathrib", 211. According to an extraordinary report, 'Āli killed him; Balādh., 	extit{Ansāb}, I, 374:1. The Jewish poetess, 'Asmā', who was also assassinated after Badr, was not of the 'Amr b. 'Awf but of the Aws Allah; above, 38.

\textsuperscript{7}In Ibn Hishām, IV, 284–85 read 'Ubayd instead of 'Ubayda. "Abū 'Afak", "father of stupidity", was certainly not his kunya or his name (it may, however, be a mutilated form of his name).

\textsuperscript{8}Lecker, "A note on early marriage links", 26 = Ibn al-Kalbī, 	extit{Jamhara}, 69. Mālik b. Ama b. Đubay'a, etc. can be traced in the genealogy of the Đubay'a; see \textit{op. cit.}, 622.
4. Al-Jumāḥí concludes the section on the Jewish poets in his Ṭabaqāt fuhūl al-shu‘arāʾ with a mention of Dirham b. Zayd; while some call him al-Awsī, Ibn al-Kalbī is more specific as he includes him in the section on the Ḍubayʿa. Ibn al-Kalbī calls him Dirham b. Zayd b. Ḍubayʿa, remarking that he was a jāḥilī. Dirham’s pedigree as quoted above is too short and several ancestors are presumably missing between him and his clan’s eponym, Ḍubayʿa, who could not have been Dirham’s grandfather.

Incidentally, Rubin, op. cit., 109, n. 111 says: “Christians as well may have venerated the Kaʿba, towards which some of them reportedly used to pray”. He refers to Suyūṭī, Durr, I, 143: …ṣallat al-Naṣārā nahwa l-Kaʿba hawlayni qabla qudūm l-nabiyyī (ṣ). But this must be a misprint: one expects here “al-Anṣār”, not “al-Naṣārā”, because qudūm al-nabiyyī can only be a reference to the Hijra. On the link between Abraham and the Kaʿba cf. Kister, E1², s.v. Makām Ibrāhīm.

Dirham’s brother Sumayr gave the Sumayr War its name (it was also called Yawm Sumayḥa). He started it by killing a client of Malik b. al-ʿAjlaḥ; Aghānī, II, 167f. This dates the brother’s lifetime roughly three generations before the Prophet’s time. The eponym Ḍubayʿa lived roughly five generations before the Prophet’s time; see the pedigrees in Ibn Hazm, Ansāb, 333. The pedigree of ʿĀṣim b. Thābit b. Abī l-Aqlāḥ has seven generations, but in Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhara, 622–23 there are only six. In the story of the above-mentioned war (Hassān, Dīwān, II, 36:4, 40:8,12) Sumayr is called Sumayr b. Zayd b. Malik. (Cf. Jumahī, loc. cit., n. 3.) His grandfather, Malik, was possibly identical with Ḍubayʿa’s grandson Malik who appears in the pedigree of Abū ʿĀmir al-Rāhib: Abū ʿĀmir b. Ṣayfī b. al-Nuʿmān b. Malik b. Umayya.
5. Abū ‘Āmir al-Rāhib of the same subdivision, Dubayʿa, was probably the most important leader in Qubā’. In a report on the Dirār Mosque (below, 88) the early Qurʾān commentary by Muqātil calls him Abū ‘Āmir al-Yahūdī. He was referred to as al-rāhib (“the God-fearing”), Muqātil says, because he applied himself to acts of devotion and sought (religious) knowledge. The epithet “al-Yahūdī” with regard to Abū ‘Āmir is rare and was not found elsewhere. As we saw in the preceding chapter, there were people of note who were Jewish proselytes among the Aws Allāh in the eastern part of the ‘Āliya. If accurate, this detail about Abū ‘Āmir’s faith would be another example of a link between Jewish faith and tribal leadership in pre-Islamic Medina.

It is interesting to note in this context that in later times some conceived of Abū ‘Āmir’s threat to nascent Islam (on which see below, Ch. 4) as being a continuation of the threat posed by the Jewish Qurayṣa. This is reflected in the story that the Prophet lamented the untimely death of Saʿd b. Muʿādh, the Anṣārī who gave the verdict on the Qurayṣa, which occurred before he could take care of “the calf which was to be set up in the heart of Islam, similar to the calf of the people of Moses”. The Prophet anticipated the whole incident and foretold that it would only achieve partial success (wa-yastamirruna bi-baʿdi tadbīrihim, thumma llāhu yubtiluhu).12

6. There was a Jewish convert among the ‘Azīz b. Mālik subdivision of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf: before the Islamic era, the Meccan dignitary, al-Walīd b. ‘Utba b. Rābī’a b. ‘Abd Shams, married a Jewish woman from among the ‘Azīz. It is noteworthy in this context that al-Walīd’s brother, Abū Ḥudhayfa, was married to a woman of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf, or more accurately of the ‘Ubayd b. Zayd (but she is not said to have been Jewish).13 This pre-Islamic marriage, as well as similar marriages (see above, no. 3),

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b. Dubayʿa.

11 It cannot be rendered “the monk” in this context; see below.

12 Biḥār al-anwār, XXI, 257. H. Busse, “The Arab conquest in revelation and politics”, in Israel Oriental Studies 10 (1980), 14–20, at 17, mentions that “numerous elements taken from the biography of Moses have been transferred to the biography of Muḥammad”.

reveal an important aspect of the relations between Mecca and Medina before Islam.

THE JAHJABA MOVE FROM QUBA' TO AL-'AŠABA

The population of early Islamic Qubā' was to some extent patterned by an event of two or three generations before the Hijra, namely the shift of the 'Amr b. 'Awf subdivision called Jahjabā from Qubā' to the nearby al-'Ašaba to its west. The number of fortresses involved in this event makes it a major occurrence in the history of Qubā'. It was reportedly connected to the payment of blood-wit to another subdivision of the 'Amr b. 'Awf, the Umayya b. Zayd.14 The Jahjabā, we are told, had to leave Qubā' and settle in al-'Ašaba because one of them killed a member of the Umayya b. Zayd named Rifā‘a b. Zanbar.15 The following friendly conversation allegedly took place between two members of the clans involved:

Sa'd b. 'Amr al-Jahjabā said to Bishr b. al-Sā‘ib:16

"Do you know why we settled in al-'Ašaba"?

Bishr: "No".

Sa'd: "Because we killed one of you in the Jahiliyya".

Bishr: "By God, I wish you killed another of us and settled behind 'Ayr", i.e., [= a gloss] the mountain to the west of al-'Ašaba.17

Elsewhere, in a more detailed account of the incident, two slain men are mentioned (which is of course incongruous with the above conversation):

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14 Cf. above, 38. For a dispute between the Jahjabā and the Zayd see Wellhausen, Skizzen IV, 37. Considering the scale of this shift, one expects some fighting between the two clans to have occurred; cf. the siege and expulsion of the Hāritha; Lecker, The Banū Sulaym, 104.


16 Instead of Bishr, presumably read Bashir; the alleged conversation should be dated to the second half of the first century A.H.: Bashir b. al-Sā‘ib was the grandson of the famous Abū Lubāba of the Umayya b. Zayd; see below, 117.

17 Samh., I, 193–94; Wellhausen, Skizzen IV, 25, n. 5 (where the place-name is vocalized al-‘Ašba, as elsewhere in Wellhausen’s book).
CHAPTER THREE

The Jahjaba came from Qubā' after they killed Rifa‘a b. Zanbar and Ghanm who were of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. They settled in al-‘Uṣba [= al-‘Aṣaba] and Uhayha b. al-Julāḥ built a fortress in it called al-Ḍahyān.

Uhayha b. al-Julāḥ lived three generations before the Prophet’s time. He was the great-grandfather of the Companion al-Mundhir b. Muḥammad b. ‘Uqba b. Uḥayha. Uhayha was also the great-grandfather of another Companion, ‘Iyāḍ b. ‘Amr b. Bulayl b. Uḥayha, and of ‘Amr b. Bulayl b. Bilāl b. Uḥayha. This conforms with the fact that Uḥayha lived during the lifetime of the Prophet’s great-grandfather, Ḥāshim b. ‘Abd Manāf: the mother of the Prophet’s grandfather, Salmā, had been married to Uḥayha before she married Ḥāshim. Roughly the same chronology is suggested by the pedigrees of the Companion Abū Lubāba and his brothers: the slain man (or one of the two slain men), Rifa‘a b. Zanbar, was their grandfather.

The following fortresses in Qubā’ are linked to this event:

1. Wāqim had belonged to Uḥayha b. al-Julāḥ and became the property of the B. ‘Abd al-Mundhir b. Rifa‘a as blood-wit for

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18 Other forms of this place-name are al-‘Usaba, al-Mu’assab and the above-mentioned al-‘Aṣaba.
21 Usd al-ghāba, IV, 164 (where “Mulayk” is a misprint of “Bulayl”); Isāba, IV, 756. In Ibn Qudāma, Istibsār, 315 Bulayl is missing.
24 See, e.g., Ibn Qudāma, Istibsār, 278. About one of Rifā‘a b. Zanbar’s daughters, see Ibn Sa’d, VIII, 316. See also op. cit., 343.
their grandfather, Rifā‘a b. Zanbar.25 The Wāqim fortress remained in the hands of the same family for generations and we know that it was owned by the descendants (Āl) of Abū Lubāba.26

2. Al-Mustażill near the Ghars well once belonged to Uḥayḥa before it became the property of the B. ‘Abd al-Mundhir.27

3. Kans Ḥuṣayn, near the ablutions washstand (mīhrās) in Qubā’, belonged to Ḥuṣayn b. Wādaqā al-Julāḥ (Uḥayḥa b. al-Julāḥ’s nephew) before it became the property of the B. ‘Abd al-Mundhir as blood-wit for their grandfather, Rifā‘a b. Zanbar.28

4. Also, al-Khāṣī near the Mosque of Qubā’ presumably belongs here.29

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25 Samh., I, 193. For the payment of blood-wit in the form of landed property cf. an incident between two Jews in pre-Islamic Medina: a man whose hand had been cut off demanded an orchard as compensation; Samh., I, 164. For land given by the Zūrayq (Khazraj) as blood-wit (al-nāḥiyā ilaṭī wadat B. Zūrayq) see Samh., I, 207:1.

26 Magḥānim, s.v., 425. There was later a court called Wāqim on the site of this fortress; Samh., s.v. Wāqim, II, 1329. Also ‘Uwaym b. Sā‘ida’s father owned a fortress in Qubā’ called Wāqim (below, 67n). Samḥūdi (s.v. Wāqim) suggests that there were two fortresses in Qubā’ called Wāqim, one, in al-Maskaba, belonged to ‘Uwaym b. Sā‘ida’s father, and another, “in the place of the court called Wāqim which had belonged to Uḥayḥa before he shifted to al-‘Aṣaba”. But there was probably only one Wāqim in Qubā’ as we are dealing in both cases with the territory of the Umayya b. Zayd: ‘Uwaym was a client (halif) of the Umayya and his mother was from among them; see below, 65n.

27 Samh., I, 193; Samh., s.v.

28 Magḥānim and Samh., s.v. Kans Ḥuṣayn. Abū ‘Ubayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām, Gharīb al-ḥadīth, Hyderabad 1384/1964–1387/1967, IV, 185 interprets mīhrās as ḥajar manqūr mustaṭīl ‘azīm ka-l-ḥawd yatawaḍqa’u mínhu l-nās lā yaqdiru aḥad ‘alā tahrikihi. See also Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon, s.v.: “A stone hollowed out, oblong, and heavy ... in which one bruises, brays, or pounds, and from which one performs the ablution called wudu’; a hollowed stone, of oblong shape ... consisting of a bulky stone, which several men cannot lift nor move because of its weight, capable of holding much water”.

29 It was not the only ‘Amr b. ‘Awf fortress mentioned in connection with the Mosque of Qubā’: the minaret of the Qubā’ Mosque was built in the place of the Ghurra fortress; Samh., s.v. Ghurra, II, 1278. Also Magḥānim, s.v., 303: utum bi-l-madīna li-B. ‘Amr b. ‘Awf buniya (sic) makānahu manāratu masjid Qubā’. There is some uncertainty about the fortress’ name. According to Samḥūdi (loc. cit.), it appears that the name was also pronounced with an ‘ayn (i.e., instead of a ghayn) because, Samḥūdi continues, al-Majd (= Majd
Al-Khaṣī was built by the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf (more specifically, it seems, by the Jahjaḇā) near the Wāqīm fortress. It had once belonged to the Jahjaḇā or, we are told, the Salm b. Imrī’ī l-Qays b. Mālik b. al-Aws, and later became the property of the B. ‘Abd al-Mundhir as part of the blood-wit they received for their grandfather. The Salm seem to be irrelevant here: al-Khaṣī was built by the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf while the Salm (above, 28) were of the Aws Allāh. This fortress was presumably part of the blood-wit settlement.

Al-‘Aṣaba

When the Jahjaḇā left Qubā’, they went to al-‘Aṣaba west of Qubā’. Al-‘Aṣaba was the site of al-Ṣafasif, one of the four markets of pre-Islamic Medina. There was an easy access to al-‘Aṣaba from the ‘Aqiq Valley, and those coming from Mecca did not have to cross Medina first. When the Prophet in his famous

al-Dīn al-Firuzabadī) mentions the fortress in both places. Indeed, in the Maghānim we find another entry, obviously relating to the same fortress: “Azza is a fortress put up by the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf which was located on the site of the (later) minaret of the Qubā’ mosque. It belonged to the Ḥabīb b. ‘Amr b. ‘Awf, the clan (raḥt) of Suwayd b. al-Ṣāmit”; Maghānim, 262. The words of an unspecified scholar quoted elsewhere in the same book (Maghānim, 328) are clearer about the replacement of the fortress by the minaret: “One of the scholars mentioned that at the place where the minaret of the Qubā’ Mosque was built there had been a fortress of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf called ‘Azza. It had been destroyed and the minaret of the mosque was built in its place”. It is unlikely that the fortress was called both ‘Azza and Ghorra. Perhaps the less common ‘Azza was the correct name, the more so since like the names of many fortresses in Medina it connotes strength. On the Ḥabīb see Ibn Ḥāzm, Ansāb, 337–38; Ibn al-Kalbī, Nasab Ma’add, I, 374 f; Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhara, 632–33. In the early days of Islam this group existed more in Anṣārī genealogical theory than in reality: the member of the Ḥabīb executed at the Prophet’s time in retaliation for the murder of a Muslim was “the last of them”, and prior to that the group numbered two or three; Ibn al-Kalbī, op. cit., 633.

30 Also called Waqār(‘?), yuqālu lahu Waqār); variant in ‘Umdat al-akhbār, 274:3: Warqā. According to al-Zubayr b. Bakkār, al-Khaṣī is east of the Mosque of Qubā’; one of the mosque’s columns (he gives precise details of its location) was placed on Bi’r al-Khaṣī (i.e., the well of this fortress); Maghānim, Samḥ. and ‘Umdat al-akhbār, s.v. al-Khaṣī.

Hijra came to the 'Aqīq (more specifically, in al-Jathjātha, south of Ḥamrā' al-Asad), he asked to be shown a way that could bring him to the 'Amr b. 'Awf without approaching Medina. Both the Muhājirūn (i.e., those who had arrived at Medina before the Prophet) and the Anšār, we are told, used to wait for him on Ḥarrat al-`Āṣaba, or the lava-field of al-`Āṣaba. The same route was taken by 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb and ‘Ayyāsh b. Abī Rabī‘a when they arrived at Medina: from the ‘Aqīq they went straight to Qubā' via al-`Āṣaba.

The distance between al-`Āṣaba and Qubā' was so small that al-`Āṣaba was sometimes considered part of Qubā'. In a report on the arrival of the first Muhājirūn to al-`Āṣaba it is said to be "a place in Qubā'". The distinction between the two places which existed in early Islam disappeared in later periods. Having studied the reports on the vicinity of Qubā', Samhūdī concludes that al-`Āṣaba and the well called Ghars were in fact part of Qubā' and formed its western and eastern boundaries, respectively. (He could find no record concerning the northern boundary of Qubā', but only details on the distance between Qubā' and Medina.)

That the distinction between Qubā' and al-`Āṣaba was lost can also be demonstrated by what we know about the Unayf (see below). They were clients of the Jahjaba and lived between Qubā' and al-`Āṣaba. However, Samhūdī remarks that their dwellings at Bi'r 'Adhq and its environs were in fact in Qubā'.

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32 Ibn Sa'd, I, 233. The Prophet's alleged wish not to approach Medina smacks of polemics and should probably be associated with the dispute between the 'Amr b. 'Awf (Aws) and the Khazraj about the Prophet's stay in Qubā'.
34 Samh., s.v. al-`Usba; Bakri, s.v. al-Mu‘āṣab, IV, 1244.
35 Samh., s.v. Qubā', II, 1284. For more on the problem of the northern boundary of the 'Āliya in general see above, 6. For Wadi Rānīnā which flowed in al-`Āṣaba see Lecker, "On the markets of Medina", 136.
36 Samh., I, 194, and see 162–63; II, 875. Al-Zubayr (b. Bakkār) says that the Bāli clans al-`Ajlān, Unayf and Ghuṣayna were clients of the 'Amr b. 'Awf. (This information is accurate only with regard to the first two groups: the
We now follow the Jahjabā into al-ʿAṣaba. As is common in our information on tribal territories in pre-Islamic Medina, the central theme is fortress-building. The dominant figure among the Jahjabā was Uḥayḥa b. al-Julāh. He would have been called today an agricultural entrepreneur. He is portrayed as a niggardly landowner who sold his products for postponed payment at interest. He controlled almost all the estates of the Medinans and employed ninety-nine camels when irrigating his land. He had a palm-grove in al-Jurf (three miles north of Medina) and used to go out and check it almost daily. In addition, he owned a village in the territory of the Sulaym called Ḥanadh. This is a slightly exaggerated description of a successful businessman who lived in Medina a few decades before the Islamic era.

Uḥayḥa built the Dahyān fortress (cf. above, 56) in al-ʿAṣaba, and one assumes that he built it after the Jahjabā had left Qubā’. It is possible though that Uḥayḥa simultaneously owned three

Ghuṣayna were clients of the ‘Awf b. al-Khazraj; see Ibn Mākūlā, I, 184–85: ... B. Ghuṣayna ... wa-hifuhum āt B. ‘Awf b. al-Khazraj.) Al-Zubayr adds (or perhaps it was Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr) that these were whole clans of the Baḥāli among the Anṣār (wa-hiyya qabā’il bi-asriḥā min Baḥi fi l-Anṣār). Later in the same passage, the statement that they were clients is refuted, probably by Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr: wa-lam yakun ‘asḥā’ir hā’ulā’i ḥulafā’; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr al-Namārī, al-Inbāḥ ‘alā qabā’il al-ruwdāt, in Majmūʿat al-rasa’il al-kamālīyya fi l-ansāb, Tā’if: Maktabat al-Ma‘ārīf, n. d., no. 2, 49–122, at 120. This refutation by the 5th/11th century Andalusian scholar is reminiscent of the remark made by his Andalusian contemporary Ibn Ḥazm with regard to the client status of Abū l-Haytham b. al-Tayyihān, one of the nuqabā’ at the ‘Aqaba meeting: “It was said that the two [i.e., Abū l-Haytham and his brother] were clients of the Anṣār from Qudā’a. This is no doubt wrong, because none of the nuqabā’ was a client. On the contrary, the nuqabā’ were the most excellent of their people, men of pure genealogy” (mina l-ṣaḥīḥi l-ṣarih); Ibn Ḥazm, Ansāb, 340. See also Lecker, “Muḥammad at Medina”, 52, n. 152 (where “confederate” [ḥalīf] should be replaced by “client”; above, 46n). Since there were Balawṣ in al-Andalus (Ibn Ḥazm, Ansāb, 443) it stands to reason that problems relating to their prestige and image, rather than lack of accurate genealogical and historical information, are behind the refutations of client status.

37 Aghānī, XIII, 123: wa-kāna rajulan šanī’an li-l-māl shahīḥan ‘alayhi yabi’u (printed: yatbi’u; and see Khizāna, III, 358) ba’yā l-ribā bi-l-Madīnā ḥattā kāda yuḥīṭu bi-amwālthim. Wa-kāna lahu tis’un(!) wa-tis’āna ba’īran (Khizāna: bi’ran[!]) kulluhā yandahu ‘alayhā.

38 Lecker, The Banū Sulaym, 105.
fortresses: al-Mustazill and Wāqim in Qubā’ (above, 56 f), and al-Daḥyān in al-‘Aṣaba (i.e., that he had a fortress in al-‘Aṣaba even before he left Qubā’). Al-Mustazill and Wāqim were presumably in the court of the Jaḥjabā clan, while al-Daḥyān was in Uḥayḥa’s own estate outside the clan’s court.39 Indeed, one verse (or, rather, one version of a verse) suggests that al-Daḥyān (here called: Daḥīn) was built on Uḥayḥa’s estate in al-‘Aṣaba.40

The name al-Daḥyān, “the one exposed to the sun”, is of course the negative of the name of al-Mustazill, “the one shaded from the sun”. These names may be indicative of the topography. Al-Daḥyān was located in an elevated place (possibly for better defensibility), since we know that it could be seen from a great distance. Al-Daḥyān is defined as “the black fortress of al-‘Aṣaba” (the definition is clearly aimed at Medinans familiar with the fortresses of their town). It was a square fortress with a width almost the same as its length, and built twice; the first time being when Uḥayḥa constructed it from “the white stones of the lava flows”, but it crumbled.41

39 The estate in question is called “al-Ghaba”, which is probably a lectio facilior; Aḥānī, XIII, 123–24. Other versions concerning this place-name are al-Qubāba (Yaq., s.v. Daḥyān; Yaq., s.v. al-Qubāba and Magḥānim, s.v., 331–32 say only that it was one of the fortresses of Medina); also Qanān/ Qīnān (Samh., s.v. Daḥyān, quoting Yāqūt); probably also al-Qunāba (Yaq., s.v., defines it as a fortress [!] belonging to Uḥayḥa b. al-Jūläḥ). Bakrī, s.v. al-Qunāba, says: utum min atāma l-Madīna. Wellhausen, Skizzen IV, 43 has wrongly: al-‘Ibāba (his source, the above-mentioned passage from the Aḥānī, has al-Ghaba).

40 “I built, after Mustazill, Dāhīn I built it in ‘Uṣba with my money”; Aḥānī, XIII, 123–24: wa-kāna lahu utumānī, utum jī qaawihi yuqālu lahu l-Mustazill ... wa-utumuhu al-Daḥyān jī ardīhi ilātī yuqālu lahā l-Ghaba (sic) ... banaytu ba’da Mustazillīn Daḥiyā banaytuhu bi-‘Uṣbatin min māliyā. Uḥayḥa reportedly took shelter in al-Mustazill when he fought Tubba‘ Aṣ‘ad Abū Karīb al-Himyari. But elsewhere we are told that when he fought against Tubba‘, he was in al-Daḥyān; Aḥānī, XIII, 120; Khīzāna, III, 355, 356–57. The Dār al-Kutub edition of the Aḥānī similarly has al-Ghaba (variant: al-‘nāya, al-‘nāna, al-‘bāya, al-‘Āliya); Aḥānī, XV, ed. ‘Abd al-Salām Ḥarūn, Cairo 1379/1959, 47–48.

41 Samh., I, 104 (banāhū awwalan min b-thr bāydā‘ fa-saqata, ya’ni min hijāratī l-ḥirārī l-bīd, wa-kāna yūrā mina l-makānī l-ba‘īd). See Līsān al-arab, s.v. b.thr.: al-bathru, ard hijāratuhā ka-hijāratī l-ḥarrā illā annahā bīd; Magḥānim, s.v. Daḥyān. According to the Aḥānī, XIII, 124:2, the black
CHAPTER THREE

The Jahjaba (together with a group called Majda‘a) built al-Hujaym fortress in al-‘Ašaba “near the mosque in which the Prophet prayed”. The well of al-Hujaym was named after the fortress. The mosque mentioned is Masjid al-tawba (“the Mosque of Repentance”). Samhūdī did not know why it was given this name.

Finally, another fortress in al-‘Ašaba was between al-Ṣafāsif (where the above-mentioned market was located) and the Wadi (i.e., probably Wadi Rānūnā). During the Islamic period, it was given the name of ‘Udayna after a woman who lived in it.

Thus, when the Prophet and the Muhājirūn came to Medina, the Jahjaba had already been in al-‘Ašaba for two or three generations.

THE BALĪ IN THE QUBĀ’ AREA

There was a strong Balawī element in Qubā’ where the Balī clans were clients of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf.

Building had two white additions (perhaps later ones): banāhu bi-hijāra sūd wa-banā ‘alayhi nabra baydā‘ mithla l-fīlṭa thunma ja‘ala ‘alayhā mithlahā, yarāhā l-rāki b min masīratī yawm aw nahwī.

According to a contemporary source (quoted in Maghanīm, 457), the ruins of al-Ḍahyān can now be seen west of Bi‘r Shumayla and north of al-‘Ašaba. Madañī, “Uṯūm al-Madīna l-muṣaw̱ūra”, 218–219 reports that the remaining walls of al-Ḍahyān are almost fourteen metres high and on the western side the fortress is about ten metres wide. The area surrounding the fortress appears to have included houses. About forty metres south-west of the fortress there is an old and desolate well said to have been that of the fortress. It is assumed, Madañī adds, that it was originally inside the fortress. (He gives some further details.) See also above, 11n.

42 Samh., I, 194; Samh., s.v. Bi‘r al-Hujaym (variant: Hajam). Qaṣr Ibn Māḥ was “beneath” (asfāl mīn) Bi‘r Hujaym; see Samh., s.v. Qaṣr Ibn Māḥ. Ibn Shabba mentions among the wells of Medina one called al-Hujayr, with a rā’ instead of mīm and says that it was in the Īrār above Qaṣr Ibn Māḥ; see Samh., s.v. Bi‘r al-Hujaym.

43 Samh., II, 876–77. The famous repentance of Abū Lubāba is usually linked with Qubā’, not with al-‘Ašaba. On mosques built where the Prophet had prayed cf. Goldziher, Muslim Studies, II, 279; below, 69n.

44 Samh., s.v.; Maghanīm, s.v., 249.

45 The ‘Ajālān of Balī will be discussed in detail in the following chapter in connection with their role in the Dirār incident.
We begin with the Hishna who were probably among the smallest and least significant groups in Medina. That one of them, the Companion 'Uwaym b. Sā'ida, had a role in the development of Islamic law gained them what little prominence they have in Islamic history. 'Uwaym is also a case-study in double genealogy, as some said that he was a member of the Balī while according to others he was an Anşārī.

'Uwaym is given as the source of a report which interprets Qur‘ān 9.108: “A mosque that was founded upon god-fearing from the first day is worthier for thee to stand in; therein are men who love to cleanse themselves; and God loves those who cleanse themselves” (trans. Arberry). The report somewhat bluntly portrays the Prophet in the role of a mere medium since he received the revelation from God but did not know what it meant, and had therefore to ask about it the people in the Mosque of Qubā’. In other words, the report takes for granted something which is not unanimously accepted: that the unnamed mosque which “was founded upon god-fearing from the first day” was that of Qubā’. It is therefore intrinsically polemical without resorting to the language of polemics.46

So the Prophet asked the people in the Qubā’ Mosque about the cleanliness for which God praised them in the above verse. They replied (in marked humility): “By God, O Messenger of God, we know nothing, but we had Jewish neighbours and they used to wash their posteriors from the excrement, and we washed the way they did”.47

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46 Sa‘id b. Jubayr favoured this interpretation; see below, 78.
47 Wa‘llahi yā rasūla llahi la‘ na‘lamu shay‘an illā annahu kāna lanā jīrān mina l-yahūd fa-kānu yaghṣilūna adbārahum mina l-ghā‘iṭ fa-ghasalān kānā ghasalū; Kister (M.J. and Menahem), “On the Jews of Arabia—Some Notes”, 237 = ‘Ali b. Abī Bakr al-Haythamī, Majma‘ al-zawa‘id wa-manba‘ al-fawa‘id, Beirut 1967, f, 212; and see Tabarānī, Kabīr, XVII, 140; Tābarī, Tafsīr, XI, 22–24. The washing, we are told, followed the basic cleaning using stones (wa-kānu ‘aḥdātihā alba‘āl l-ḥiyārata bi-l-mā‘); Līsān al-‘arab, s.v. t.h.r., 505a. One source quotes the Prophet as saying that ‘Uwaym was one of those meant by the Qur‘ān verse. The same source continues, “and ‘Uwaym was the first [i.e., the first Muslim] who washed his posteriors with water, according to what became known to us, and God knows best”; Ibn
Similar reports go back to a son (called Muḥammad) and a grandson (called Muḥammad b. Yūsuf) of the famous Jewish convert, ‘Abdallāh b. Salām. M.J. and Menahem Kister suggest that washing or wiping after defecating (istinja‘), a requirement in Islamic law, was derived from Jewish practice according to its adoption by the Anṣār. They conclude (240):

This is one of the few cases in which we find explicit testimony of the way a Jewish practice became Muslim law. Should this exceptional case teach us about the common situation, this should instruct us to be cautious in evaluating the amount of the direct influence of Judaism on the emergence of early Islamic Law. It seems that sometimes, as in this case, Islam drew more from pre-Islamic local practices, especially from the Anṣār, Muḥammad’s supporters in Medina.

It is this assumed Anṣārī medium which mainly concerns us here. In what follows I argue that this case is, after all, one of direct influence from Judaism: ‘Uwaym b. Sā‘īda was a descendant of a Jewish proselyte.

‘Uwaym b. Sā‘īda is usually said to have been a member of the Umayyā b. Zayd subdivision of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. His pedigree is given as follows: ‘Uwaym b. Sā‘īda b. ‘Ā’ish b. Qays b. Zayd b. Umayyā. However, Ibn al-Kalbī, who provides an alterna-

Sa‘d, III, 459–60. For a recent survey of “the Jewish/Christian contribution to Islam” see Lewis, The Jews of Islam, 68 f.


49 The authors remark that we do not usually find explicit testimony of the Jewish origin.

50 See more recently Menahem Kister’s Appendix to M.J. Kister’s “‘Do not assimilate yourselves . . .’”, 354 f, esp. 355, n. 4.

51 The mention of a son and grandson of the Jewish convert to Islam, ‘Abdallāh b. Salām, points in this direction.
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tive pedigree, says that 'Uwaym belonged to the Balî. The Balawî pedigree is supported by Ibn Ishâq who calls him 'Uwaym b. Sâ‘ida b. Sa‘laja, adding that he was a member of the Balî and a client (halîf) of the Umayya b. Zayd.

Now I assume that whenever we find a clash between Balawî and Anşârî pedigrees, the former is correct and the latter fake. We even sometimes find the "fingerprint" of family members on the false claim. There is a simple reason for this. Balawî descent equaled client status, an intolerably inferior position in the eyes of later generations as well. Indeed, it was perhaps found to be even more humiliating later in the Islamic period, following the influx of non-Arab mawâli. In order to assert their superior status, Arab clients or their descendants claimed Anşârî pedigrees and repudiated the Balawî ones. Such efforts would not mislead impartial genealogists, but a sympathetic genealogist could occasionally report a family's claim. However, the diversity of the sources usually denies such claims any exclusivity and the Balawî origin finally emerges. Descendants of Balawî Companions were in some cases later assimilated into the Anşâr by adopting a respectable Anşârî pedigree; but, when an Anşârî pedigree is claimed with regard to the time of the Prophet, it is false.

The conflicting pedigrees of Balawîs are a case of beneficial contradictory evidence since they reveal that early Islamic society was indeed preoccupied with genealogy. We also get a glimpse of "real life" through the tension between genealogy specialists and family members or descendants of the people who are "genealo-


\[53\] Ibn Sa‘d remarks: we did not find Sa‘laja in the genealogical literature.

gized”. We find expressions such as wa-ahlahu (often wa-ahluhā in cases of descent from a slave-girl which was also a sensitive matter) yaqūlūna or wa-qawmuhu yaz‘umūna as indications that the specialist knows about the contradictory claim and does not accept it.\footnote{This does not mean that we are always able to separate “family materials” from “specialist materials”. The two types are often mingled beyond recognition.}

‘Uwaym’s affiliation to the Balī is confirmed by the long report on the dispersion of the Quḍā‘a tribes, including the Balī, which Bakrī quotes from Ibn Shabba:

Clans (qabā’il) of the Balī settled in an area called Shaghb wa-Badā\footnote{On these places see M. Lecker, “Biographical notes on Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri”, in JSS (forthcoming, 1996), the section entitled: “Zuhri’s estate in the region of Shaghb wa-Badā”} between Taymā‘ and Medina. They had remained there until war broke out between the Ḥishna b. ‘Ukārima b. ‘Awf b. Jusham b. Wadm b. Humaym b. Dhuhl b. Hanī b. Balī and the B. al-Rabā‘a b. Mū’tamm b. Wadm — this is what Ibn Shabba said. But in fact the al-Rabā‘a are the descendants of Sa‘d b. Humaym b. Dhuhl b. Hanī b. Balī. They [the Ḥishna] killed some of the Raba‘a and then sought shelter in Taymā‘ (laḥiqū bi-Taymā‘). But the Jews refused to let them into their fortress as long as they adhered to a different faith, so they converted to Judaism, and they let them enter. They [= the Ḥishna] were with them [= the Jews] for some time, then a group of them set out to Medina. When God made Islam victorious, some of their children were still there. Among them were ‘Uwaym b. Sā‘ida, whose offspring adopted an ‘Amr b. ‘Awf b. Mālik b. al-Aws pedigree (wa-qadi ntasaba waladuhu ilā ‘Amr b. ‘Awf b. Mālik b. al-Aws) and Ka‘b b. ‘Ujra, who held to his Balawī pedigree (kāna muqīman fī nasabīhi min Balī) and later adopted the pedigree of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf of the Anṣār. The groups (butūn) of the Ḥishna
b. 'Ukārima remained in Taymā until God inflicted upon the Jews of the Ḥijāz his severe punishment and affliction (min ba’sihi wa-niqmatihi). [I.e., then they no longer remained there. In other words, this text implies that the Jews of Taymā were expelled together with the Ḥishna proselytes who were their clients.]57

In short, 'Uwaym, a prominent figure in connection with the origin of the practice of washing after carrying out one of the body's natural functions, was Jewish before he converted to Islam; this is a case of direct borrowing from the Jews.

The Ḥishna are not in the list of Arab clans that stayed with the Jews in Medina before the settlement of the Aws and Khazraj58 because they were so few,59 and more importantly, because they came after the Aws and Khazraj had settled.

Ḥishna’s quarters were east of the Mosque of Qubā, in an area called al-Maskaba,60 and a fortress there called Wāqim belonged to ‘Uwaym’s father, Sā‘īda b. ‘A’ish.61

57Bakrī, I, 29-30. See already Th. Nöldeke’s review of J. Wellhausen’s Reste arabischen Heidentums, in ZDMG 41 (1887), 707-26, at 720, later referred to by Wellhausen, Skizzen IV, 13, n. 2; Nöldeke, Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Poesie der alten Araber, Hannover 1864, 55; Horovitz, “Judaeo-Arabic relations in pre-Islamic times”, 177, 187; Gil, “The origin of the Jews of Yathrib”, 210-11. The text in Bakrī is followed by verses by Abū al-Dhayyal al-Yahūdī of the Ḥishna lamenting the expulsion of the Jews of Taymā; see also Jumāhī, I, 29 f; Nöldeke, op. cit., 79. On Abū al-Dhayyal see GAS, II, 297. And see the entries on the place-names mentioned in these verses: Yaq., s.v. Za’bal (“a place near Medina”); Bakrī, s.v. al-Kibs (“a place in Taymā”). Also Ḥamād al-Jāsir, Fi shīmāl gharb al-jazīra (nuṣūs, mushāhadāt, inšībā‘īl), Riyāḍ, 2nd. printing, 1401/1981, 389, 536, 586 (where “Ra’bal” is a missprint of “Za’bal”). (The uncommon name Za’bal appears as the name of a bātīn belonging to the Ḥārit b. Ka’h; Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihī, al-Iqd al-farīd, ed. Aḥmad Amin et al., Cairo 1384/1965, III, 396:2. For Za’bal as a proper name see Ibn Mākūla, IV, 79.)

58Samḥ., I, 162 f; Ibn Rusta, 61–62.

59Bakrī, I, 29 uses the word naftar (“a number of men, from three to ten”) to refer to the Ḥishna who came from Taymā to Medina.

60On al-Maskaba cf. Samḥ., I, 193; above, 57n.

61Misprinted: ‘Abīs; Samḥ., s.v. Wāqim; Samḥ., s.v. al-Maskaba. ‘Uwaym had four sons: ‘Uṭba, Suwayd, Qaraḍa and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān. The last-
CHAPTER THREE

The Unayf

The Unayf of the Ball (according to some, they descended from the Amalekites) were probably the largest Balawi clan in Qubā', as indicated by the abundant information on their territory. They also had a majlis of their own (below, 69). The Unayf who settled in Qubā' are included in Ibn Zabāla's list of "the Arabs who were with the Jews" (i.e., who were the Jews' clients) before the (arrival of the) Anṣār.

Samhūdī remarks that Ibn Zabāla did not mention the Unayf's territory in the chapter of his book dealing with the fortresses of the 'Amr b. 'Awf in Qubā', providing the convincing explanation that these Balawis were the clients of the Jews in Qubā' (in other words, as such, they were discussed in the chapter dealing with the Jews' clients). They were, Samhūdī continues, not from the Aws themselves as some argue, but were clients of the Aws (i.e., at a later stage, when they had ceased to be the clients of the Jews), or more precisely of the Jahjaba, as can be seen from Ibn Ishaq's list of the participants in the Battle of Badr.

Their territory is clearly defined as being between the 'Amr b. 'Awf (viz., Qubā') and al-'Asaba. The 'Adhq well and al-Qā'im orchard (both in Unayf's quarter) were still known in Qubā' at the time of Samhūdī.

So, by the beginning of the Islamic era the Unayf had become the clients of the Jahjaba. One such client was, for example, 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Abdallāh Abū 'Aqīl. The definitions of his status vary: he was 1. a halīf (client) of the Jahjabā; 2. or fiʿīdād

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62 Bakrī, I, 28.
63 A poet of the Unayf boasted that if Qubā' could talk, it would have said that they had settled there before the time of 'Ād and Tubba'; Samh., I, 162–1: wa-law nataqat yawman Qubā'u la-khabbarat bi-annā nazalnā qabla 'Ādīn wa-Tubba'i.
64 Samh., I, 194. See Ibn Ishaq's words in Ibn Hishām, II, 347. See also Waq., I, 161.
Jahjabā; 3. or sāḥib Jahjabā', but the conclusion remains the same.

There are rich details on the fortresses and orchards of the Unayf. The al-Mi'a orchard belonged to one of them. Another orchard, al-Qā'im, was south-west of the Mosque of Qubā'. The Unayf owned the fortress of al-Ajashsh near the Lāwa well, two fortresses between the al-Mi'a and al-Qā'im orchards and other fortresses near the ‘Adhq well and elsewhere. Two Unayf fortresses called al-Nawwāhani were close to their majlis. The

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65 No. 1: Ḳāṣība, IV, 325; no. 2: Ibn Ḥazm, Ḳāṣīb, 442; no. 3: Ibn al-Kalbī, Nasāb Ma‘add, II, 708. Incidentally, ‘Aḥbāl al-Rāhmān appears to have been a name given to Abū ‘Aqīl by the Prophet, since in Ṭabarī, Tafsīr, X, 135:18 his name is Ḥabḥāb while in Ḳāṣība, IV, 325 his former name is ‘Aḥbāl al-‘Uzza.

66 See Samh. and Magḥānim, s.v.

67 Fi qiblati [add.: masjid] Ḳubā' mina l-maghrīb: Samh. and Magḥānim, s.v. Also Samh., II, 875: the court of the Unayf is in Qubā' near the orchard (māl) known today as al-Qā'im, south-west of the Mosque of Qubā' and near the ‘Adhq well. On the mosque of the Unayf see Samh., II, 875. The mosque was one of those in which the Prophet prayed. It was near the ‘Adhq well, west of the Mosque of Qubā', in their court (dār; read: māl?) known as al-Qā'im; Ahmad b. Ahmad al-Qalīyūbī, al-Nubdha al-latifa fi bayan maqasid al-Hijaz wa-ma‘alimihi al-sharifa, MS Nuruosmaniye Kütüphanesi 2935/3442, 29b. At the time of the Prophet there was no mosque there and they later built it where the Prophet had prayed. The elders of the Unayf reported that the Prophet had prayed near their fortress when he visited his ill Companions Ṭalḥa b. al-Bara'; Samh., loc. cit. On Ṭalḥa see Ḳāṣība, III, 524-26.

68 Samh., I, 162; A[qhān]ī, XIX, 95:14 (written: Nayf; Wellhausen, Skizzen IV, 12); Ibn Rusta, 62:1; Ibn Ḥazm, Ḳāṣīb, 442:4. According to a contemporary source (quoted in Magḥānim, 456), Bīr ‘Adhq in Qubā', called now Bīr al-Ribāt, was joined to al-‘Ayn al-Zarqā’. On al-Ajashsh see also Samh. and Magḥānim, s.v. For al-Ajashsh as a proper name of a man of the Quḍā'a see Ibn Sa‘d, VIII, 374. There is a variant reading of the name ‘Adhq: Nāṣr, A[mkīna], 107a has: Bīr Ghadaq. He says that it is near al-Qā’ fortress of the Balawis. Nāṣr's words are quoted by Yaq. in s.vv. Bīr Ghadaq and Ghadaq (but Nāṣr is not mentioned). Cf. Samh. and Magḥānim, s.v. Bīr Ghadaq. Note that there was another ‘Adhq in the ‘Āliya, a fortress belonging to the Umayya b. Zayd of the Aws Allāh, not to the Umayya b. Zayd who lived in Qubā' and were a subdivision of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf.

69 Magḥānim, 366; Samh., s.v. al-Nawwāhani. (Another case of twin fortresses was that of al-Shaykhāni in al-Wālij village between Medina and Uḥud; Samh., s.vv. Shaykhāni, al-Wālij.) For another maglis in Qubā' see below, 105n (Maglis Bani l-Mawālī). For a maglis in Medina in which a tribal idol was placed see Lecker, "Idol worship in pre-Islamic Medina (Yathrib)", 340. See also Suhaylī, al-Rawd al-unuf, III, 15 (where a fortress called al-I.m.y.m,
Unayf owned the fortress of al-Qā', appropriately known as utum al-Balawiyyina, near the 'Adhq well.70 In one source, the Unayfi Companion, Sahl b. Rāfi', is said to have been šāhib al-Qā'.71 But al-šā', not al-Qā', is presumably the correct reading here.72

New information is found in a chapter of Fīruzābādī's al-Magḥānim al-muṭāba fi maʿālim tāba which was not included in Ḥamad al-Jāsir's partial edition of this book. Al-Jāsir's edition contains the fifth and longest chapter of the Magḥānim which deals with place-names. Fortunately, al-Jāsir provides the following details in a footnote; Fīruzābādī writes, quoting al-Zubayr b. Bakkār,73 that the afore-mentioned fortress of al-Ajashsh belonged to Bayjān (wrongly printed: Tayḥān)74 b. 'Āmir b. Mālik (possibly belonging to the Unayf, is mentioned). For further details about the fortresses of the Unayf see Magḥānim, 366n (from al-Zubayr b. Bakkār); see also 'Umdat al-akhbār, 22.

70 Magḥānim, Yaq. and Samh., s.v.
71 Ibn al-Kalbī, Nasab Ma'add, II, 708 (šāhib al-qā'; the editor refers to the wrong Qā's).
72 The man who donated one of his two šā's (a šā is a measure used for measuring grain, etc.) of dates for the cause of Islam was a poor man, not the owner of a fortress. He was one of "those who find nothing but their endeavour" referred to in Qurān 9,79 (see below). Ibn Ḥājar, in his entry on Sahl b. Rāfi', quotes Ibn al-Kalbī's Jamhara (i.e., from the part of the Jamhara that is still missing): "He is the owner of the šā of whom the munāfiqūn spoke ill" (hwā šāhib al-šā'i lladhi lamazahu l-munāfiqūna, a reference to the above-mentioned verse: "Those who find fault with the believers who volunteer their free will offerings, and those who find nothing but their endeavour they deride"); Isāba, III, 199. See also Istī'āb, II, 663; also Ṭabarānī, Kabīr, VI, 107 (šāhib al-šā' aynī lladhi lamazahu l-munāfiqūn); cf. Usd al-ghāba, II, 365.
73 The text is certainly from the latter's Akhbār al-Madīna.
74 The reading Bayjān is confirmed by the pedigrees of some Unayfi Companions; Ibn al-Kalbī, Nasab Ma'add, II, 708 (printed: Bayjān, Bayḥān); Ibn Ḥazm, Ansāb, 442; Isāba, s.v. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Abdallāh al-Balawi (better known as Abū 'Aqīl šāhib al-šā'), IV, 325; VII, 279–80 (another competitor for the title of šāhib al-šā', Sahl b. Rāfi' of the Unayf, was mentioned above, 70n); the Isāba, III, 198–99 wrongly attaches this claim to Sahl b. Rāfi' of the Najjār. Waq., I, 161 has: Bayjān. The Istī'āb, IV, 1717–18 has three entries dedicated to Abū 'Aqīl, entitled Abū 'Aqīl šāhib al-šā' and Abū 'Aqīl al-Balawi al-Anṣārī (twice). In one of the latter entries he is said to have been a client of the Tha'laba b. 'Amr b. 'Awf and in the other, of the Jaḥjabā. The same person is obviously meant. Another member of the Unayf, 'Abdallāh b. Shayfi b. Wabara, was a cousin of the above-mentioned Ṭalḥa b. al-Barā'
b. 'Āmir b. Unayf who lived three generations before the Islamic era.\textsuperscript{75}

By the time of the Prophet, the Unayf had become the clients of the Jaḥjaba after having been clients of the Jews, and they lived between Qubā' and al-'Asaba, the latter being the territory of their masters, the Jaḥjaba.

This impressive amount of information on the Unayf and their territory indicates the existence of a silent majority (above, 36) in the Prophet's Medina. Nothing in the evidence on the insignificant role of the Unayf during the Prophet's time suggests massive Unayf presence in the vicinity of Qubā'. Ibn al-Kalbī mentions only six Companions of this group and a few more can perhaps be added from other sources.\textsuperscript{76} This imbalance demonstrates that we cannot rely on the \textit{sīra} and the sources related to it (such as the Companion dictionaries) for a full or even satisfactory picture of Medinan society during the Prophet's time.\textsuperscript{77}

The \textit{Quṣays}

Very little is known about the B. al-Qusays who lived in Qubā', and the texts relating to them are in a poor condition. They belonged to "the Jewish groups which remained in Medina after the settlement of the Aws and Khazraj". Samhūdi's abridged

\textsuperscript{75} Maghānīm, Introduction, section 3; 366n. Also Caskel, \textit{Gamharat an-\textit{Nasab}}, II, 542 has Tayhān (and Bayhān as a variant). On al-Zubayr b. Bakkār see GAS, I, 317f.

\textsuperscript{76} Ibn al-Kalbī, \textit{Nasab Ma'add}, II, 708.

\textsuperscript{77} Contrast Watt, \textit{Medina}, passim. E.g., his remarks on p. 170 (introducing a table of the first Muslims, divided by clans). Having noted that the figures refer to Muslims, he adds: "But, except where a clan had a special reason for tending to accept or to reject Islam, we may, in default of better evidence, take these figures as a rough guide to the relative strength of the clans". In my opinion, the figures should not be relied on for a description of Medinan society because they merely reflect the amount of support given to the Prophet by the Medinan clans and, to some extent, the tendentious contributions of tribal historians to the \textit{sīra}. Considering the attitude of the Aws Allāh to the Prophet (above, Ch. 2), it is not surprising that the only reference to them in Watt's table is through the biographies of twelve women of the Khaṭma who pledged their allegiance to the Prophet.
quotation from Ibn Zabâla does not make it clear where they lived and suggests perhaps that they, like the Nâghișa (about whom see below) were the clients of the Unayf.\textsuperscript{78}

The Nâghișa

The Nâghișa\textsuperscript{79} were also from among the Jewish groups that remained in Medina when the Aws and Khazraj settled there, and they were “with the Unayf in Qubâ”;\textsuperscript{80} i.e., they were their clients. In other words, the Unayf, who were themselves clients, had clients of their own. No fortress belonging to the Nâghișa could be found. Moreover, the report on their location is probably wrong because it is incongruous with the fact that they were in Qubâ: some said that they were a clan (ḥayy) from the Yemen and lived in the Shīb (“the road”, or “the watercourse”) of the Ḥarâm, until ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭâb transferred them from the territory of the Ḥarâm to Masjid al-fath, where their āḥār (i.e., the ruins of their houses) could be seen in later times.\textsuperscript{81} The Ḥarâm are a subdivision of the Salîma (Khazraj) and lived in the Sâfîla. Masjid al-fath was also in the Sâfîla, not far from their territory.

\textsuperscript{78} Wa-kâna mimman baqiya mina l-yahud hîna nazalat ‘alayhimi l-Aws wa-l-Khazraj jamâ’āt, minhâ B. al-Qusays wa-B. Nâghișa, kânû ma’a B. Unayf bi-Qubâ”; Samh., I, 163. In the Aghâni, XIX, 95:11 they are called B. al-Fuṣays, while Ibn Rusta, 62:9 has al-Qusays. See also ‘Umdat al-akhbâr, 341:8, quoting al-Zubayr b. Bakkar: kâna bi-Qubâ B. al-Q.s.s. wa-kâna lahumu l-utummu lladhi fi sharqiyyi mirbad (sic). The text is truncated at this point so we turn to the Maghânim, 331: “In Qubâ’ there were the B. al-Qusays who owned the fortress east of the mirbad of Muslim b. Sa’îd b. al-Mawlâ”. The owner of the mirbad, Muslim b. Sa’îd, could not be identified. In ‘Umdat al-akhbâr this is followed by details on the fortress of a Jew named al-Muṭarîd b. al-Ashwas (see below, 133), then by what appears to be further details on fortresses in Qubâ’ owned by the B. al-Q.s.s. In addition to the one east of the mirbad they owned one called al-A’naq in al-Bardâ’a orchard (mâl), and another, H.s.y.y.h., in al-Samna orchard. All three fortresses became the property of Salama b. Umayya of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf; ‘Umdat al-akhbâr, 341. The sentence which then follows (wa-kânat manâzîshuhum fi shi’b B. Ḥarâm ħattâ naqalahu’m ‘Unmar b. al-Khaṭṭâb [r] ilā masjidî l-fath, wa-āḥār aluhum hunâka) does not belong here and relates to the Nâghișa (see below).

\textsuperscript{79} Elsewhere they are called B. Bâ’iša/Bâ’ida.

\textsuperscript{80} Samh., I, 163.

\textsuperscript{81} Maghânim, 331; Samh., I, 163.
The few clans of the Ball discussed above, then, did not play an important role in the history of Islam, and other clans justifiably received the limelights. Yet they were an important and often overlooked section of Qubā’s population. It is possible that the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf, while being the dominant element in Qubā in the Prophet’s time, were outnumbered by their Balli clients.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE Dirār MOSQUE (9 A.H.)

Qubā’ was the scene of the obscure incident of the Dirār Mosque in 9 A.H. On his return from Tabūk, the Prophet ordered the destruction of a mosque usually called Masjid al-dirār in reference to a Qur’ān verse related to this incident. Less common names of this mosque are Masjid al-shiqāq and Masjid al-nifāq. It was built by members of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf, some of whom were prominent figures. The reports on the incident shed further light on Qubā’ and its inhabitants and led to some observations about the sīra literature in general.1

The verse in question, which includes a reference to dirār, is Qur’ān 9,107:

\[
\text{wa-’lladhīna ttakhadhu masjidān dirārān wa-kufrān wa-tafrīqān baynā l-mu’minīn wa-irṣā‘ān li-ma n ḥārāba llāha wa-rasūlihu min qablu wa-la-yaḥli‘unna in aradnā illā l-ḥusnā wa-’llāhu yashhadu innahum la-kadhibūna.}
\]

And those who have taken a mosque in opposition (dirārān) and unbelief, and to divide the believers, and as a place of ambush for those who fought God and His Messenger aforetime — they will swear ‘We desired nothing but good’; and God testifies they are truly liars (trans. Arberry).

The reports on this incident often refer to this verse (and to the one that follows it). While some marginal details in the evidence may have had an exegetical origin, the incident is no doubt historical.

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1 Part of this chapter was presented in May 1991 at a seminar in Princeton organized by Prof. Avrom Udovitch and Prof. Michael Cook. I wish to thank them both and the participants, above all Mr. Khaled Abou el-Fadl, for their thoughtful critique of my work. Throughout this chapter I often refer to (and at times disagree with) the conclusions reached by Prof. Moshe Gil in his article “The Medinan opposition to the Prophet”.
The Dirar story exists in a number of independent versions, all relating to the same event, which sometimes overlap. At other times they differ. The differences are important because they define the sovereignty of the single version. We cannot tell exactly when each version was created, but they probably originated more or less simultaneously and independently of each other.

Accounts of the incident agree on the outline of events but reveal significant differences, both agreements and disagreements being equally important. The agreed outline (the building of the mosque by individuals mentioned by name; the Prophet's initial approval to the building and his later objection following a Qur'ān revelation; and the destruction of the mosque on the Prophet's orders), represent the common denominator and have a strong claim for historicity. But we should concern ourselves more with the disunity and diversity revealed by the following accounts because they faithfully reflect the earliest, formative stages of the sīra literature. As we shall see, there are widely divergent interpretations of the builders' motives. On this, our sources voice the different interpretations expressed, which ranged from the benign to the dangerous. Unlike the basic undisputed facts, the motives ascribed to the builders show the biased ingenuity of these accounts' creators. From the researcher's point of view, the dispute is as helpful as the accepted historical framework because through it he gains a fine viewpoint on the emergence of the sīra during the first Islamic century.

The Dirār incident is a purely Anṣārī, and more specifically, an Awsī problem, and even more specifically, an 'Amr b. 'Awf problem. Of these three points of specificity, the first seems to be the most relevant to the way in which the story was told by different Islamic authorities. A benign account is "friendly" to the builders of the mosque and hence pro-Anṣārī, whilst an "unfriendly" one is anti-Anṣārī. Obviously, the name given to the mosque, dirār, is Qur'ānic, which means that from the inception of Islamic historiography the story of the mosque was associated with a particular Qur'ān verse. This did not make life easier for a pro-Anṣārī tribal historian. The authorities quoted below
(Sa‘īd b. Jubayr, ‘Urwa b. al-Zubayr and Ibn ‘Abbās/Ibn ‘Umar) are either the actual or the alleged creators of the accounts; the former possibility should not be ruled out a priori. For this discussion it suffices that we define them as historians of the first century. They represent the earliest stages of Islamic historiography. This point is of fundamental importance because we realize that from the beginning the accounts had a distinct tribal or sectarian colouring.2

**Sa‘īd b. Jubayr: “The envy of the brother-clan”**

In the report by Sa‘īd b. Jubayr (d. 95/7143), which is a *sabab nuzul* or “occasion of revelation” of Qur’an 9,107,4 the whole story is rather benignly presented. He blames the building of the Dirār Mosque on a group called the B. Ghanm b. ‘Awf, who were the “nephews” of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf (i.e., Ghanm and ‘Awf, according to him, were brothers):

The ‘Amr b. ‘Awf built a mosque and their nephews (*banū ikhwātihim*), the Ghanm b. ‘Awf, envied them. They said: “We too built a mosque and invited the Messenger of God to lead our prayer in it5 as he did in the mosque of our companions. *Perhaps* Abū ‘Āmir will pass by us when he comes from Syria and lead our prayer in it”. When the Prophet was about to set

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2 Cf. in this context H. Motzki, “The *Musannaf* of ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-San‘ānī as a source of authentic *ahādith* of the first century A.H.”, in *JNES* 50 (1991), 1–21. His balanced and careful reasoning brings us back to the first Islamic century as the formative period of Islam’s legal tradition. For example, he observes about ‘Atā’ b. Abī Rabāh, on the basis of the reports which ‘Abd al-Razzāq quotes from him via Ibn Jurayj: “In my opinion, his work can be considered a historically reliable source for the state of legal development at Mecca in the first decade of the second century A.H.” (p. 12). Also his conclusion (p. 14) that some of “‘Atā”’s traditions about ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb can be dated “with certainty” before 80 or 70 A.H.

3 *GAS*, I, 28.

4 See below, 84.

5 Printed: *fa-sallā*, etc., “and he led our prayer in it”; read: *yuṣallī*. 

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out to go to them, he had the revelation [prohibiting him to go].

A better and fuller version of Sa‘īd’s report tells us that the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf built a mosque and invited the Messenger of God to pray in it, and he went to them and did so. Then their brothers, the Ghanm b. ‘Awf, said: “Shall we not build a mosque and invite the Prophet to pray in it as he did in the mosque of our brothers? And perhaps Abū ‘Amir will pray in it” — he was in Syria at that time. So they built a mosque and sent to the Prophet (inviting him) to pray. He stood up in order to go to them, but a number of Qur’ān verses were revealed.

Baladhurī, Ibn Shabba and Samhūdī (who quotes Ibn Shabba) all have a report going back to Sa‘īd b. Jubayr. Of these, only Baladhurī mentions nephews of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf, i.e., the Ghanm b. ‘Awf. Ibn Shabba says: their brothers, the B. Fulān (= so-and-so) b. ‘Awf and Samhūdī has: B. Fulān b. ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. But since the fragments in Ṭabarī (above, n. 7) mention “B. Ghanm b. ‘Awf” and “B. Ghanm” as the builders, respectively, it seems certain that the Ghanm b. ‘Awf belong to Sa‘īd b. Jubayr’s original report.

6 Baladh., Ansāb, I, 282. Cf. Masālik al-ābār, I, 129 (“their brothers, the Ghanm b. ‘Awf, envied them”). More importantly, this source confirms the amendment suggested above: wa-qālū: nabnī masjidan wa-nursilu ʿilā rasūli l-lāhi (ṣ) yuṣallī fīhi wa-yuṣallī fīhi Abū ‘Āmir al-Rāhib idhā qadīma mina l-Ṣalām li-yuṭḥbita lahumu l-fadl wa-l-ziyāda ‘alā ikhwatihim, za’amū. Wāḥīdī, 149 has: their brothers, the ‘Amr (!), envied them. The infallibility (‘ishma) of the Prophet is clearly involved here; cf. Sīra Shāmiyya, V, 675:10: fa-ʾaṣama llāhu tabāraka wa-taʿalā rasūlahu (ṣ) mina l-ṣalāt fīhi. According to Mūsā b. Ja’far (in Bihār al-anwār, XXI, 259f; Mūsā al-Kāẓim b. Ja’far, d. 183/799, was the 7th Imām of the Imāmiyya; GAS, I, 534f), God had informed the Prophet of the real intentions of the munāfīqūn before they invited him to pray in their mosque. The Prophet and his Companions intended to go there (or so they pretended), but were hindered by supernatural phenomena.

7 See Ibn Shabba, Medina, I, 52–54; Samh., II, 815; Suyūṭī, Durr, III, 276:24; Baladh., Futūḥ (Ṭabba’), 8–9. Fragments of Sa‘īd’s report are also found in Ṭabarī, Tafsir, XI, 19:27, 30.

8 They were called “nephews” earlier on, but the difference is immaterial.

9 Adding: yashukku, i.e., one of the transmitters was uncertain about their name.
This conclusion creates a serious difficulty: for all the detailed genealogical information we have on Medina, no group called the B. Ghanm b. ‘Awf (or Ghanm b. ‘Amr b. ‘Awf) could be found.\textsuperscript{10}

Sa‘īd’s account is the “friendliest” from the builders’ point of view and should be classified as “pro-Anṣārī”, “pro-Aws”, or “pro-‘Amr b. ‘Awf”. At the same time, it is an ‘Irāqī account.\textsuperscript{11} Like its rival accounts it goes beyond the basic facts in offering an insight into the builders’ motives. They were driven, we are told, by envy of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf in whose mosque the Prophet had prayed. This “pious envy” is human and even commendable. The Qur’ān, it is true, taught us that the builders had erred, but this was beyond their control because they built the mosque in good faith and, one could add \textit{al-a‘māl bi-l-niyyāt}, “deeds are rewarded according to the intentions”, as a well-known Islamic adage goes. In this context even their wish to see the Prophet’s arch-enemy, Abū ‘Āmir, attend the mosque does not signal hostile intentions towards the Prophet or Islam.\textsuperscript{12}

Sa‘īd’s account of the Dirār incident completely plays it down. Since the facts of the matter were presumably too well established in connection with the exegesis of the Dirār verse, an interpretation of the builders’ intentions remained the only available possibility to create an account which was as harmless as possible.

In the context of Sa‘īd’s report, it is noteworthy that Sa‘īd takes up an “anti-Khazrajī” position in the dispute between the Aws and Khazraj over the identity of “the mosque founded upon god-fearing” (Qur’ān 9,108). He supported the claim that it was the Mosque of Qubā’ (above, 63n). The alternative claim names the Mosque of the Prophet which was on Khazrajī soil in the Sāfila of Medina. No wonder that among those who supported the latter claim we find the Khazrajīs Sahl b. Sa‘d of the Sā’ida,\textsuperscript{10}\textsuperscript{11}\textsuperscript{12}
Ubayy b. Ka'b and Khārija b. Zayd b. Thābit, both of the Najjār and Abū Sa'id al-Khudrī of the Ḥārith b. al-Khazraj (as well as the Qurashīs Ibn ‘Umar and Sa'id b. al-Musayyab). The identity of the mosque mentioned in Qur'ān 9,108 was disputed by the Aws and Khazraj, or perhaps more specifically, the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf and the Najjār.

Some comparative material regarding Anṣārī rivalries is linked to the dispute between the Aws (specifically the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf) and the Khazraj (i.e., the Najjār) about the earliest prayers conducted in Medina after the beginning of the Anṣār’s conversion to Islam. The ‘Amr b. ‘Awf’s claim is connected with the beginnings (or alleged beginnings) of the Hijra to Qubā:

The first Muhājirūn (al-mutaqaddimūna fi l-hijra) of the Companions of the Messenger of God and their Anṣārī hosts had built a mosque in Qubā' and prayed in it in the direction of Jerusalem for one year. When the Messenger of God emigrated and arrived at Qubā', he led them in prayer in it. And the people of Qubā' say: “This is the mosque ‘founded on the fear of God from the first day’” (Qur'ān 9,108).

The Aws/‘Amr b. ‘Awf claim which speaks of prayer in general is associated with the early Hijra of Abū Salama al-Makhzumī. The rival claim of the Khazraj/Najjār refers specifically to the Friday-prayer. It is supposedly inconvenient: As'ad b. Zurara is said to have led the Anṣār in the Friday-prayer before the Prophet’s Hijra. In other words, we are told that this Islamic institution was introduced not by the Prophet but by an Anṣārī before the Prophet’s arrival. However, seen against the competing Aws/‘Amr b. ‘Awf claim, this Khazraj/Najjār contention

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13 Baladh., Futūḥ (Tabbā'), 10–11. According to Rāzī, Taṣfīr, XVI, 195, the majority of the people hold that the Mosque of the Prophet is meant.
14 Umdat al-akhbār, 139:5 (from Ahmad b. Jābir, i.e., al-Baladhuri).
becomes somewhat polemical. It is as if the Najjār, eager to dispute a rival claim and establish their own Islamic “firstness”, paid no heed to the wider implications of the claim concerning the origin of an Islamic ritual.

‘Urwa b. al-Zubayr: “Contempt and ridicule”

The account of ‘Urwa b. al-Zubayr (d. between 91/711 and 101/720\(^{17}\)) is totally independent of the other reports discussed here, and this is meant as a cautionary note: the common practice of interpreting a vague point in one report by referring to another which is more clearly formulated, should here be applied with great care. It is true that in the Islamic historiography it is not always possible to tell when one report ends and another begins; editorial practices, above all the practice of forming “combined reports”, are to blame. These reports blurred the particular contours of the autonomous, and often contradictory, reports.\(^{18}\) But, whenever possible, the autonomy of the single report must be respected; the inevitable outcome is divergence and disunity, a rather unwelcome consequence for the modern historian of Islam but a true reflection of Islamic historiography in its incipient, formative stages.

‘Urwa offers us his own alternative version of the incident. Sa’d b. Khaythama built a mosque. The site once belonged to Libba (\textit{sic}; the parallel texts have: Līna and Liyya\(^ {19}\)), who tethered her donkey there.\(^{20}\) So the people of \textit{Masjid al-shiqaq} (“the mosque of disunion, disunity, dissension”; the parallel texts have: \textit{Masjid al-dirār}), said: “Shall we prostrate ourselves (parallel texts: pray) where Libba’s donkey used to be tethered? No,

\textit{This gives Suyūṭī (Hujaj mubīna, 52) an idea for a riddle: \textit{wa-‘alā hādhā yulghazu fa-yuqālu: ‘ibāda faradahā lāhu ta’alā ‘alā rasūlahī fa-ta’akkhārahā fi’lhu hu lahā wa-fa’alāhā qablahu ‘iddatu jamā’āthin(?) min aškhābihī. The answer is of course the Friday-prayer. Suyūṭī was fond of riddles; for another riddle see \textit{op. cit.}, 26f.}}

\(^{17}\) For the different dates given see al-Mīḍdī, \textit{Tahdhib al-kamāl}, XX, 23–25.


\(^{19}\) Wüstenfeld, \textit{Medina}, 131 has: Layya.

\(^{20}\) For Līna as a proper name of a female cf. \textit{Isāba}, VIII, 109; perhaps also Tab. Index, s.v. ‘Iyāḍ b. Abī Līna al-Kindī.
we shall build a mosque in order to pray in it until Abū 'Āmir comes and leads us in prayer there” (i.e., functions as our imām). He also relates that Abū ‘Āmir “fled from God and His Messenger” to the people of Mecca,\(^\text{21}\) then went to Syria and became a Christian. And God revealed: “And those who have taken a mosque in opposition and unbelief, and to divide the believers, and as an ambush place for those who fought God and His Messenger aforetime” (Qur’ān 9,104), that is to say (the report adds) Abū ‘Āmir. Only Baladhurī (but not the parallel texts) follows this with a note (which is introduced by qālū, “they said”), according to which on the revelation of this verse the Prophet sent (people) to destroy the mosque.

WHEN WAS THE DIRĀR MOSQUE BUILT?

According to the common mainstream version, the Dirār Mosque only stood for a few days. Ibn Jurayj, for example, says that it was completed on Friday, and its people prayed in it on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, then it was destroyed on Monday.\(^\text{22}\)

But there are good reasons for doubting this chronology. ‘Urwa’s account makes an important point in this context: since the Dirār Mosque was built as a reaction to the building of a mosque by Sa’d b. Khaythama (i.e., the Mosque of Qūbā’; see below), and since Sa’d was killed at Badr, one could expect the Dirār Mosque to have been erected before Badr, that means, several

\(^{21}\) Cf. Sīra Shāmīyya: barī’ā mina ilāhi wa-rasūlihi, “he cleared himself of God and His Messenger”.

\(^{22}\) Ğabarī, Tafsīr, XI, 25:6; Rāzī, Tafsīr, XVI, 195. Also Qurţubī, al-Jāmi‘ li-akhām al-qur’ān, VIII, 253: when the Prophet returned from Tabūk, they came to him, having finished building the mosque and having prayed in it on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The Prophet asked for his long shirt (qamīṣ) in order to dress himself and go to them, when Qur’ān verses were revealed to him concerning the Dirār Mosque, so he ordered it burnt down. On the expedition of Tabūk see Buhl, Leben, 322 f. For an explicit statement that the mosque was built just before the expedition of Tabūk see also the report of Mūsā b. Ja‘far in Bihār al-anwār, XXI, 259: “When it was evident that the Prophet was determined to travel to Tabūk, those munafiqūn built a mosque outside Medina which was the Mosque of Dirār, wishing to meet in it and pretending that it was meant for praying”. But this massive building (“it was large, had high walls .... Its construction was sound”; below, 134) could not have been accomplished in a short time.
years before its destruction in 9 A.H. In this case it appears
that the rare, and from the Islamic point of view, problematic
reports have a better claim to historicity. There are three fur­
ther testimonies attesting to an early date of construction. The
most straightforward one comes from the early Qur'ān commen­
tator, al-Daḥḥāk (b. Muzāḥim),23 who says that people of the
Anṣār built a mosque near the Mosque of Qubā', “and it became
known to us that it was the first mosque built in Islam”.24 Then
we are told that when he was on his way to Badr (2 A.H.), the
Prophet sent a member of the Baḥi to the Dirār Mosque “because
of something [i.e., a plot] which had become known to him about
them” (below, 138). Finally, according to ‘Abd al-Jabbār (be­
low, 145n), Abū Ṭāmir al-Rāhib had built a mosque in order to
spread his propaganda against the Prophet in it. This mosque,
which must have been built before the Battle of Uḥud (in which
Abū Ṭāmir already fought against the Prophet), could have been
identical with the Dirār Mosque, or perhaps it was a more humble
predecessor of the same mosque.

According to ‘Urwa, Sa'd b. Khaythama built the Mosque of
Qubā'. That this was his claim is confirmed by a text in which
the corrupt al-adrār (below, 84) is replaced by “Qubā'”:
{kāna
Sa'd b. Khaythama banā masjida Qubā'}, etc.25 While some of
the parallel texts are somewhat vague about the claim that Sa'd
built the mosque where a donkey had been tethered, the Iṣāba
is clear on it (admittedly, this may be so thanks to a benevolent
scribe).26

24 Suyūtī, Durr, III, 277:8 who quotes al-Ḍaḥḥāk via Ibn Abī Ḥātim's
Tafsīr: hum nās mina l-Anṣār blanaw masjidān qarīban min maṣjid Qubā',
balaghānā annahu awwalu maṣjid bunīya fī l-islām.
26 Iṣāba: kāna mawḍi' maṣjid Qubā' li-'mra'a yuqālū laḥā Līna kānat tarbiṭu
himāran laḥā, fa-ʾbtanā fīhi Sa'd b. Khaythama maṣjidān. Ibn Shabba and
Šamḥ. locate the preposition fīhu differently: kānat tarbiṭu himāran laḥā fīhu,
fa-ʾbtanā, etc. See Ibn Shabba, Medina, I, 54–55; Šamḥ., II, 815 and Iṣāba,
VIII, 109 (both quoting Ibn Shabba). In the Sira Shāmīyya, V, 676, instead of
wa-rawā Ibn Abī Shayba wa-ʾbn Hishām 'an 'Urwa 'an abīhi, read: wa-rawā
Ibn Shabba 'an Hishām b. 'Urwa 'an abīhi.
The claim that Sa'd built the Mosque of Qubā' is not the only existing one. The rival claim mentions no other than the Prophet himself (assisted by the Angel Gabriel). This illustrious alternative clearly enhances the importance of the mosque and may be suspected of being an invention of the 'Amr b. 'Awf. The Sa'd claim, on the other hand, has a certain appeal: his clan, the B. al-Salm, came to Qubā' in the western 'Aliya from the territory of the Aws Allāh in the eastern 'Aliya and became the clients of the 'Amr b. 'Awf. If Sa'd were to be identified as the builder, this would have suggested that a recent and marginal element in the population of Qubā' was the most enthusiastic one in accepting Islam.

'Urwa's account implies what Sa'id's version explicitly states, namely that the dissenters were related to the B. 'Amr b. 'Awf as they were supposed to have prayed in the mosque of the 'Amr b. 'Awf. Their initiative is, therefore, considered dirār/shiqāq. There is no trace of the "pious envy" of Sa'id's account. For 'Urwa, these arrogant people (whom he quotes in the first person) ridiculed the mosque of the 'Amr b. 'Awf because a donkey had previously been tethered there. 'Urwa in fact says: Did they not know (a rhetorical question; of course they knew) that once consecrated, a mosque removes the previous filth associated with its site? Was not the Prophet's Mosque built on the site of a former pagan cemetery? They were, of course, punished for their arrogance. This is 'Urwa's account of the background to the building of the Dirār Mosque. Abū 'Amir, he adds, was at that time in Syria and they intended to pray there until his return.

27 It should be linked to the statement (in Muqātil, see below) that the Mosque of Qubā' was among the Salīm (read: [al-]Salm). Sa'd was of the B. al-Salm; above, 29. Read Salm instead of Salīm also in Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhara, 645.

28 The Prophet founded the Mosque of Qubā' when he stayed there after his Hijra; see, e.g., Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya fi l-ta'rikh, Beirut 1974, III, 196 (Zuhār < 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr), 209. Elsewhere we are told that the Prophet, who lived outside Qubā', came there to build a mosque; also, the first three caliphs play a role here; Ṭabarānī, Kabīr, II, 339f. On Gabriel see below, 90.

29 Cf. Abū 'Amir's reference to the Mosque of Qubā' as a mirbad; below, 93.

30 EI², s.v. Masdjid, 645–46 (J. Pedersen).
Sa‘īd, we should remember, was somewhat uncertain about this point: *wa-la‘alla Abā ‘Āmir yuṣallī fihi.*

That the Sa‘īd and ‘Urwa reports were independently written, speaks against Prof. Gil’s implied working assumption that the former elucidates the latter. He states:

According to Baladhurī [= the ‘Urwa account], what aroused the envy of the Ghanm [the Ghanm appear only in Sa‘īd’s account; ‘Urwa does not specify the identity of the builders, though he mentions Abū ‘Ā-mir; ‘Urwa does not refer to any envy] was a mosque called *masjid al-adrar* [] built by Sa‘d b. Khaythama on the spot where a certain Libba (versions: Li’a; apparently a woman, perhaps Jewish; perhaps the name of a sub-clan) used to tether her (or its) donkey(s). This the Ghanm thought was disgraceful.31

The common practice of using one account to interpret another is unacceptable here for reasons already mentioned.

The report in Baladhurī going back to Hishām b. ‘Urwa (the parallel texts add: from his father, ‘Urwa) is, like Sa‘īd’s report, an interpretation, or rather a *sabab nuzul,* of Qur’ān 9,107. Some further notes on Gil’s analysis of this passage will be in place here. He seems to imply that *masjid al-idrar* (see below) built by Sa‘d b. Khaythama is identical with our Dirar Mosque. He notes (p. 73) that Sa‘d was of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf, participated in the ‘Aqaba meeting where he was one of the *nuqabā,* and was killed in the Battle of Badr. Gil adds: “Thus we have before us a very important personage in the earliest Islamic period. On the other hand, [i.e., although he was positive in any other respect] he had a strong family relation with some of the main dissenters, a fact which makes the unique information in Baladhurī about his building the *masjid al-adrar* [sic] quite significant and worthy of being regarded as not a mere error”.

But Sa‘d b. Khaythama was not from among the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf; he was a member of the Salm, the Aws Allāh clan which

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31 Gil, “The Medinan opposition”, 72 = Baladh., Ansāb, I, 283 (*tarbiṭu fihi himārahā*).
migrated to Qubā’. Moreover, implicating him in the Dirār incident (9 A.H.) is impossible; his martyr’s death at Badr (2 A.H.) is a perfect alibi.

As is often the case with Islamic texts, Baladhurī’s version of ‘Urwa’s account is corrupt. The parallel text in Ibn Shabba makes it clear that the word *al-īdār* is either superfluous or corrupt. Ibn Shabba has: *fa‘ībtanā Sa‘d b. Khaythama masjid-dan, fa-qāla ahl masjid al-īdār, etc.* Hence, it is far from being certain that ‘Urwa’s report included any epithet regarding the mosque built by Sa‘d. Alternatively, perhaps *Masjid al-ridwān* (cf. Qur’ān 9,109), which is another name for the Mosque of Qubā, should be read instead of *Masjid al-īdār*: after all, in this report Sa‘d is said to have built the Mosque of Qubā, not the Dirār Mosque. This had to have happened before his death in the Battle of Badr.


The account ascribed to Ibn ‘Umar (‘Abdallāh b. Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, d. 73/692–9335) or (‘Abdallāh) Ibn ‘Abbās (d. 68/687–8836) is also a *sabab nuzul* of the Dirār verse. Unspecified Ansār built a mosque. Abū ‘Āmir told them:37 “Build your mosque and ask for as much enforcement as you can in warriors and weapons,38 because I am going to Qayṣar, the king of the Byzantinion.

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32 Also in Samhūdi and the *Isāba*, both quoting Ibn Shabba.
33 The Baladhurī MS has: al-Dirār. *Idrār* could have been a variant of *dirār*; see *TMD* MS Br. Lib. Or. 8045, I, 20a: ... *qāla ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz: inna l-Hajjāj innamā banā Wāṣiṭan ʾīdārān bi-l-miṣrāyi nā l-Baṣra wa-l-Kūfā.*
36 EI², s.v. ‘Abd Allāh b. al-‘Abbās (L. Veccia Vaglieri). Others mention the years 69/688–89 and 70/689–90; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhib al-kamāl*, XV, 162.
37 *I.e.*, when he was still in Medina. The combined report in the Sīra Shāmiyya, V, 675:5 is more specific about it: “And Abū ‘Āmir al-Fāṣiq (“the sinful, immoral”) had told them before he went out to Syria”, etc. See also Zurqānī, III, 81:13. And *Masālik al-abṣār*, I, 129 (Abū ‘Āmir was fighting the Prophet until the Battle of Hunayn took place, and when the Hawāzin were defeated, he fled to Syria).
38 *Wa‘īstamiddū mā* (variant in Ṭabarī: *wa‘īsta‘iddū bi-mā;* the former seems to be a *lectio difficilior*) *staṭa‘tum min quwwa wa-min silāh*. This
tines, in order to bring an army from the Byzantines and drive Muhammad and his friends out". When they completed their mosque, they invited the Prophet to pray in it and invoke God's blessing for them, but God revealed: "Stand there never", etc. (Qur'an 9.108).39 In other words, Abū ‘Āmir instructed them to build the mosque ("build your mosque") and provided a goal: creating a stronghold for a Byzantine expedition force. This mosque, or rather hostile stronghold, was a component in a dangerous plot to expel the Prophet and the Qurashi Muhājirūn. Against this background, their seemingly bona fide invitation to the Prophet to pray in the mosque sounds sinister indeed.40

These three accounts on the Dirar incident date back to the earliest stages of Islamic historiography, and differ considerably, is probably a reference to their allies in Medina (the Jews) and outside (the Bedouin).


40 In the Shi‘ite Tafsir of Tabrisī (X, 143) the "hostile stronghold" story is concluded by the remark that the munāfiqūn were anticipating the arrival of Abū ‘Āmir, but he died before reaching the king of the Byzantines.

It is in a Shi‘ite source that the "hostility-version" is taken much further (without, however, reference to the Dirār Mosque): after Sa‘d b. Mu‘ādh's death (cf. above, 54) and the Prophet's departure to Tabūk, the munāfiqūn made Abū ‘Āmir their leader and commander (amīran wa-ra‘īsan) and pledged their allegiance to him. They plotted to plunder Medina and take captive the children of the Messenger of God, and the rest of his family, and Companions, and planned a surprise night attack on Muhammad in order to kill him on the way to Tabūk; Bihar al-anwār, XXI, 257 (from Mūsā b. Ja‘far, on whom see above, 77n). The Bihar report is also unique in other respects and merits further discussion. For example, it tells that Abū ‘Āmir left Medina, no doubt shortly before the attempt on the Prophet's life, so as not to be implicated in it. We are also told about an exchange of letters between the munāfiqūn (who are here depicted as a fifth column) and U kaydir of Dūmat al-Jandal. This takes us beyond the mere chronological link between the Tabūk expedition and the Dirār incident established by the Sunni sources. In this context it is interesting to note that according to W. Caskel, the Prophet was worried to his very death about a possible Byzantine attack which did not materialize because of the war with the Persians. Caskel disputes W.M. Watt's assumption that the Prophet took a strategic offensive against Byzantium already before Mu‘ātta; see Caskel's review of Watt, Muhammad Medina, in Deutsche Literaturzeitung 80 (1959), 1066–72, at 1069.
especially on the builders’ motives. The accounts are strongly biased and form independent variations on the subject, something which must be considered when we try to employ one of them to interpret another. It would be wrong in this case to look for an “official” or “standard” version because variance, not unity, is common in the source-material. The earliest records of the Prophet’s time are marked by dissension and disunity, not by unanimity and agreement.

It does not necessarily follow, however, that no meaningful study of the Dirār incident may be made. On the contrary, as we shall see, our sources abound with reliable information. While in some areas good results can be achieved, in others, given the nature and limitations of the sources, only broad outlines can be drawn, at least for the time being. True, certain questions may never be answered. But arguing that because of this no question can be answered seems to me counter-productive and wrong.

*Muqātil b. Sulaymān’s account*

The commentary by Muqātil b. Sulaymān (d. 150/76741) on the Dirār verse is remarkable in more ways than one. In what follows, the Qur’ān verses are put between curly brackets; points of special interest are in italics (as are the Arabic quotations):42

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\{\text{And those who have taken a mosque in opposition}\} \\
\text{[Qur’ān 9,107]}, \text{ i.e., the mosque of the munāfiqūn,} \\
\{\text{and unbelief}\} \text{ in their hearts, meaning the nīfāq,} \\
\{\text{and to divide the believers}\}. \text{ It was revealed concerning twelve men of the munāfiqūn. All of them are of}
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41 GAS, I, 36–37.

They said: "We shall build a mosque in order to converse in it and be on our own (nataḥaddathu fihi wa-nakhli fihi)44. When Abū 'Āmir al-Yahūdī, i.e., the father of Ḥanzala [the latter being] 'the one washed by the angels', returns from Syria, we shall say to him: 'We built it for you so that you would be our imām in it'". This is meant by His saying {and as a place of ambush for those who fought God and His Messenger aforetime}, i.e., Abū 'Āmir who was called al-Rahib [the God-fearing, the ascetic] because he applied himself to acts of devotion and was in search of divine knowledge (kāna yata'abbadu wa-yaltamisu l-ʿilm). He died as a non-believer in Qinnasrīn because of the Prophet’s curse.45

They came to the Prophet and said: "Walking to the prayer46 is difficult for us, please allow us" [i.e., allow us to build a mosque in our own territory]. He allowed them to build a mosque and they finished the building on a Friday. They asked the Prophet who their imām should be and he said: "A man of them" [sic; one expects here: from you], and ordered Muḥammād b. Ḥarīya to be their imām. Then this verse

43 Seven names are listed: H. r. ḥ. (read presumably: Bahzaj) b. Kh. sh.f. (note that the other sources quoted below do not mention the name of Bahzaj’s father), Ḥarīya b. ‘Āmir (written: Ḥarītha b. ‘Umar) and his son, Zayd b. Ḥarīya, Ṣubtal b. al-Ḥārith, Wadi‘a b. Thābit, Khidham (written: Ḥizām) b. Khālid and Muḥammād b. Ḥarīya (written: Ḥarītha).

44 Cf. the negative connotation of khalaw ilā shayātīnihīm (Qur’ān 2,14), "they were alone with their devils".

45 The "searchers of divine knowledge" or "of the true religion" are part of the pre-Islamic history of certain tribes (and at times matters of intertribal disputes). The search, in itself legitimate, could lead them astray. Cf., e.g., Abū Kabsha of the Khuzā‘a who in his "search for the true religion" worshipped Sirius; El2, s.v. Khuzā‘a, 77b (M.J. Kister). Note the dispute (loc. cit.) over the identity of the person who introduced the cult of Hubal: some attributed it to ‘Āmir b. Luḥayy of the Khuzā‘a and others to Khuzayma b. Mudrika, an ancestor of Quraysh.

was revealed. Mujammi' swore that in building this mosque they only meant to do good, so God revealed concerning Mujammi': {They will swear, 'We desired nothing but good'; and God testifies that they are truly liars} in what they swear about. {Stand there never} i.e., [do not stand] for prayer in the mosque of the munāfiqūn. So [from that moment onwards] he would not pray in it nor pass by it and he would take another road. He used to pray in it before. Then He said: {A mosque}, i.e., the Mosque of Qubā' which is the first mosque built in Medina {that was founded} i.e., built {upon god-fearing from the first day}, i.e., from the first time {is worthier for thee to stand in} for prayer, because it was built before (min qabli) the mosque of the munāfiqūn ....

Then Mujammi' b. Jāriya became a good Muslim (ḥasuna islāmuḥu), and 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb sent him to Kūfa to teach them [i.e., the Kūfans] the Qur'ān. He taught 'Abdallāh b. Mas'ūd and dictated the Qur'ān to him (laqqanahu l-qur'āna). {Why, is he better who founded his building}, i.e., the Mosque of Qubā', {upon the fear of God and His good pleasure}, i.e., with the good and God's pleasure that were desired in it {or he who founded his building}, the base of his building, {upon the brink of a crumbling bank that has tumbled with him into the fire of Gehenna?}, i.e., the building has fallen into the fire of Gehenna. {And God guides not the people of the evildoers}.

When the people finished building the mosque, they asked the Prophet's permission to stand [in prayer] (sta'dhanū ... fi l-qiyām) in that mosque. The people of the Mosque of Qubā' came and said: "Messenger of God, we wish you to come to our mosque and pray in it so that we shall follow your example".

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47 Cf. Appendix A.
48 What follows shows that they wanted the Prophet to pray in their mosque.
CHAPTER FOUR

[i.e., learn the way you pray]. And the Messenger of
God walked with a group of his Companions heading
to the Mosque of Qubā’. This became known to the
munāfiqūn and they went out to receive them.49 When
he [the Prophet] was in the middle of the way [be-
tween the Sāfīla and Qubā’;50 i.e., having decided to
accept the invitation of the munāfiqūn, or having not
yet decided in which of the two nearby rival mosques
he should pray?], Gabriel descended with this verse:
{Why, is he better who founded his building upon the
fear of God and His good pleasure}, i.e., the people of
the Mosque of Qubā’, {or he who founded his build-
ing upon the brink of a crumbling bank} and when he
said {bank}, the Prophet watched the mosque crum-
bling down to the seventh earth (naẓara l-nabī [ṣ] ilā
l-masjid ḥattā tahawwara fi l-sābiʿa).51 The Prophet
nearly fainted and hurried back to his place. After-
wards, the munāfiqūn came to apologize. He accepted
their outward [words], putting his confidence with God
concerning their inward [intentions].52 And God said:

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49 Presumably in an attempt to convince him to come to their mosque.
50 Al-mansif; cf. Lecker, The Banū Sulaym, 105, n. 30 (“border point”).
51 “Crumbling” is used figuratively here, since, as we shall see, the mosque
was reportedly burnt down; but perhaps agreement should not be imposed
where there is variance; above, 87. Cf. Samh., II, 818: wa-ruwiya anna rasūla
llāhi (ṣ) ra’āhu ḥinna nhāra ḥattā balaghā l-arḍa l-sābiʿa. Fa-faziʿa li-dhālika
rasūlu llāhi (ṣ).
52 Fa-qabila ‘alāniyatalahun wa-wakala sarāʿirahum ilā llāhi ‘azza wa-
jalla. Cf. the words of Kaʿb b. Mālik on the apologies of those who
stayed behind (al-mukhallaṭūna) after the Prophet’s return from Tabūk:
fa-qabila ... ‘alāniyatalahun wa-aqmānahum wa-yakīlu sarāʿirahum ilā llāhi
taʿālā; Waq., III, 1049. The account on Dirār and the one on those who
stayed behind in the Tabūk expedition also have the place-name Dhū Awwān
in common: it was both the site in which the Dirār verses were revealed
and where those who stayed behind wished to meet the Prophet and apol-
ogize to him; Waq., III, 1049. Naṣr, Amkina, 16b reports that Wadi Dhū
Awwān is also called Dhūt Awwān. (Gil, “The Medinan opposition”, renders
mukhallaṭūna or khawālíf: “challengers” [p. 67] and “dissenters” [p. 68, n. 3],
referring to “the bulk of tradition concerning what happened at the time of
the Tabūk expedition”. This rendering is somewhat removed from the origi-
nal meaning.) J. Pedersen wrongly says (EI², 647a) that, according to some
{The buildings they have built will not cease to be a matter of disquiet (rība) within their hearts}, i.e., sorrow and grief in their hearts, because they regretted having built it, {unless it be that their hearts are cut into pieces}, i.e., until death. {God is All-knowing, All-wise}.

The Prophet sent 'Ammār b. Yāsir and Wāḥshī, the mawlā of al-Muṭ‘im b. ‘Adī, to burn it down and it was swallowed up by the fire of Gehenna.53 He [the Prophet] ordered that it be made a place of sweepings (kunāsa) and that carcasses be thrown in it. The Mosque of Qubā’ was in the [territory of the] B. Sālim [read: (al-)Salm] and was built a few days after the Prophet’s Hijra.54

Muqāṭīl’s account, while sharing the outline of the story with the rest of the versions, adds considerably to their testimony. The relatively large proportion of new material in Muqāṭīl’s Tafsīr demonstrates that a voluntary restriction in the scope of sources for the study of the Prophet’s biography deprives one of important source material. Tafsīr books in general, and Muqāṭīl’s Tafsīr in particular, are indeed indispensable. Because the sources

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53 Wāḥshī is mentioned in this context in other sources, but ‘Ammār b. Yāsir is not.
54 Muqāṭīl, Tafsīr, I, 159b–161b.
are not made of a repetitive mass of unchanging components, the study of the Prophet's history cannot be solely based on Ibn Hishām, Ibn Sa’d and Ţabarī.

Uniqueness, though, does not equal historicity. Absence of a certain detail from mainstream Islamic literature may well reflect sifting through a critical mechanism applied by compilers who rejected evidence they considered fabricated and unreliable. A unique piece of information has a claim to historicity where there is reason to suspect self-imposed censorship, aiming at protecting the prestige or reputation of a clan or individual, including the Prophet himself. For example, the unique and potentially embarrassing statement that the Prophet actually prayed in the Dirār Mosque seems to me historical. The statement, which could not be found elsewhere, that the Prophet appointed Mujammi’ b. Jariya as the imām could also be historical, though it may also be a fada’il tradition invented by Mujammi’s family, or an attempt to “clear his name” (cf. Appendix A). The sabab nuzūl given here (Gabriel appearing to him when he was halfway between the Sāfila and the ‘Āliya) is an alternative to the Dhū Awān story, which for some unknown reason prevails elsewhere.

In Muqātil’s report, Abū Ṭāmir is again in the background: the twelve Anṣār who built the Dirār Mosque were anticipating the return from Syria of “Abū Ṭāmir al-Yahūdī”.

The builders of the Dirār Mosque wanted a mosque where they could “converse and be on their own” (nataḥaddathu fihi wa-nakhlu fihi). The same purpose is mentioned in an autobiographical report of ‘Āṣim b. ‘Adī al-‘Ajlānī (on whom, see below).

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55 The appointment of imāms by the Prophet was a normal practice. A mosque is an Islamic stronghold and the imām is a religious and a political representative of the Prophet among clan members.

56 Gabriel’s warning is of course incongruous with the statement found earlier in Muqātil, that the Prophet actually prayed in the Dirār Mosque. The source of this incongruity is presumably Muqātil’s reliance on different earlier exegetes without synchronizing their reports.

57 Gil suggests that “Ibn Qutayba is apparently the oldest source having preserved the tradition which connects the building of the mosque with the person of Abū Ṭāmir”; Gil, “The Medinan opposition”, 72 = Ibn Qutayba, Ma’ārif, 343. This should be amended: Ibn Qutayba died in 276/889, while Muqātil (cf. Tafsīr, I, 159b) died in 150/767.
Having told the story of the Dirār Mosque, Āsim was asked: “But why did they want to build it?”58 He replied:

They would gather in our mosque. However, they would whisper in each other’s ear and turn to one another, and the Muslims would look sideways at them. They were distressed by this and wanted a mosque for themselves [literally: a mosque in which they would stay] that would be frequented only by people they wanted, of those who were of the same view. Abū Āmir used to say: “I cannot enter this mirbad of yours because Muḥammad’s companions look sideways at me and mistreat me”. They said: “We shall build a mosque in which we shall talk, in our court” (nahnu nabnī masjidan nataḥaddathu fihi ‘īndanā).59

Abū Āmir calls the Quba’ Mosque mirbad and the context suggests that he means this pejoratively. It will be remembered that the same mosque was referred to (above, 80) as the place where Liyya’s donkey was tethered. This could suggest that mirbad here should be understood as “an enclosure for domestic animals” rather than “a place in which dates are put to dry in the sun”, but it does not seem to have been the case. Elsewhere, the mirbad is said to have belonged to Kulthūm b. al-Hidm who reportedly gave it to the Prophet.60 Now the mirbad, which Kulthūm gave the Prophet, is specifically said to have been al-mawḍī’u liladḥī yubsātu fihi l-tamr li-yajīfa, “the place in which the dates are

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58 Note the narrator’s technique of “recording” the interaction between Āsim, an eyewitness, and his audience who wished to know more about a specific detail of the story.
59 Waq., III, 1048–49. Similarly, a rather virulent report purports to convey the intentions of Mujammi’ b. Jāriya, the future inām of the Dirār Mosque, as he was building it: it was to become a place “for our secret actions and conversations; nobody will push us in it and we shall say what we want while giving Muḥammad’s companions the impression that we only want to do good” (li-sirrinā wa-naqwjānā wa-lā yuzāhīmūnā fīhī ahad fa-nadābū mā shi’īnā wa-nuḥāyyūnā ilā aṣḥāb Muḥammad innamā nūridu l-ḥṣāna; cf. al-ḥusnā in Qur’ān 9,107); Bayhaqī, Dalā’il, V, 259.
60 Samh., I, 250 (from Ibn Zābāla and others); II, 808. Cf. also the Ḥadīth on the Prophet’s istisqa’; e.g., Usd al-ghāba, I, 196: inna l-tamr fi l-mirbad.
spread to dry”, which appears to rule out its interpretation as "an enclosure for domestic animals".

The builders of the Dirār Mosque justified their initiative by reference to the hardships involved in reaching the mosque where they used to pray. This, I argue, was the Mosque of Qubā'. As the common sīra story goes, they invited the Prophet to pray in their mosque when he was preparing to go to Tabūk. They said: "Messenger of God, we have built a mosque for the ill and needy, for the rainy and stormy night". They did not intend it to be a shelter for the weaker elements in society. One may interpret their words as follows: the weak among them, and all of them in bad

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61 Sīra Shāmiyya, III, 380. The dates interpretation was chosen by J. Pedersen, *EI*², s.v. Masjid, 647a—inconsistently, it should be remarked, with his interpretation of another mirbad, mentioned in connection with the Prophet’s Mosque, which Pedersen described as “a place for keeping camels (and smaller domestic animals)”; op. cit., 645–46 (Pedersen refers to Bukhārī, *wuḍū’, Bāb 66: kāna l-nabi [ṣ] yuṣallī qabla an yuḥāna l-masjid fī marābiḍi l-ghanam, “...at the nightly lodging-places of sheep”). Pedersen notes (654a), regarding the increase in the sanctity of mosques, the refusal of Baybars to build a mosque on a site for tethering camels while the Prophet’s Mosque was built in exactly such a place. However, it appears that also in the case of the Prophet’s Mosque, the dates interpretation is the correct one. In Samh., I, 324:1 we find a clear statement that the mirbad which was to become the Prophet’s Mosque had been “a place in which dates were put to dry in the sun”: wa-kāna mirbadan li-l-tamri; see also op. cit., 326:2. A pejorative reference to the Prophet’s Mosque as a former mirbad can be added here. A munāfiq expelled from this mosque complained of having been thrown out of the mirbad of the B. Tha’labā; *EI*², s.v. Masjid, 646b = Ibn Hishām, II, 175 [ed. Wüstenfeld, Göttingen 1858–60, 362:10]. On this munāfiq, ‘Amr b. Qays, see Lecker, “Idol worship in pre-Islamic Medina (Yathrib)”, 335, n. 25. These Tha’labā were the Tha’labā b. Ghānim b. Mālik b. al-Najjār; see, e.g., Ibn Hazm, *Ansāb*, 349:5; Ibn Qudāma, *Istibsār*, 64.

We saw above how these two mosques, the Mosque of Qubā’ and the Prophet’s Mosque, competed for “firstness”. Now we realize that both were former mirbads. The Mosque of Qubā’ and the Prophet’s Mosque also have in common a divinely-guided she-camel (*ma’mūra*). The theme which is well-known in connection with the Prophet’s Mosque appears in a Shi‘ite tradition about the Mosque of Qubā’; Samh., I, 251 = Ţabarānī, *Kabīr*, II, 246. (Pedersen remarked concerning the Prophet’s Mosque that “the choice of the site was left to the whim of his mount”; *EI*², 645b.)

weather, could not come to the Prophet’s Mosque to attend the Friday-prayer.63 Put differently: according to this interpretation, they stated that after a rainy night the wadi between Qubā’ and the Sāfīla would flow, preventing them from descending to the Friday-prayer. Indeed, one commentary claims that the building of the Dirar Mosque was aimed as an act against the Mosque of the Prophet.64 But there are good reasons to assume that this was not so and that it was a matter of two rival mosques in Qubā’. Two of the three accounts quoted above, Sā‘īd b. Jubayr’s “pious envy” account and ‘Urwa b. al-Zubayr’s “contempt and ridicule” account, leave no doubt that we have here a case of local competition between two mosques in Qubā’. We are also told that the twelve munāfiqūn built this mosque in an attempt to harm the Mosque of Qubā’ (yuḍārrūna bihi masjid Qubā’).65

In addition, involving the Prophet’s Mosque fails to relate to the builders’ problem as stated elsewhere, namely that of justifying the building of a mosque not far from the existing Mosque of Qubā’ where they were supposed to pray.

This interpretation, which relates to a rivalry between two adjacent mosques, should be upheld, although the available evidence concerning comparable cases in Medina lends it only partial support. One case is that of the mosque built by the imām of the ‘Awf b. al-Khazraj (whose territory was not far from Qubā’). The imām, the blind (or extremely short-sighted) ‘Itbān b. Mālik, complained to the Prophet that the torrents (suyūl) were an obstacle interposed between him and the mosque of his clan. He asked, therefore, that the Prophet go to him and pray in a certain

63 Cf. EI2, s.v. Masjid, 647a.
64 See, e.g., the combined report compiled by Ibn Ishaq from several sources, in Tabarī, Tafsīr, XI, 18:20: fa-tawīlū l-kalām: wa-iladhīna bītanw masjidan dirāran li-masjid rasūli llāhi (s).
65 Rāzī, Tafsīr, XVI, 193. Some Shi‘ite Qur’ān interpretations are undetermined and include both possibilities, with the Qur’ānic dirāran explained as: ay muḍāra [Tabrīsī adds: ay li-l-ḍarar] bi-ahl masjid Qubā’ aw masjidī l-rasūl (s wa-alihi) li-yaqīlla l-jam‘u fāhi; Bihār al-anwār, XXI, 253 = Tabrīsī, Tafsīr, X, 143. Mūsā b. Ja‘far (in Bihār al-anwār, XXI, 259) puts in the mouth of the munāfiqūn a clear reference to the Mosque of the Prophet, which was too far from them: inna buyūṭanā qāṣiya ‘an masjidika wa-īnā nakrahū l-ṣalāta fi ghayr jamā‘a wa-yaṣ’ubu ‘alaynā l-hudūr.
place in his house (in order to consecrate it), so that he would turn it into a mosque. This points to the need to justify the creation of a mosque not far from another. But a variant version suggests that the Prophet’s Mosque is meant: ‘Itbān, having lost his sight, complained to the Prophet that he could not pray with him in his mosque (fi masjidika, i.e., in the Prophet’s Mosque).

The Prophet’s Mosque is again referred to by the Salima, a subdivision of the Khazraj residing to the west of Medina. The Salima complained about the distance between their houses and the mosque (i.e., the Prophet’s Mosque), or about the fact that a wadi, or torrent (sayl), was interposed between them and the Friday-prayer in the Prophet’s Mosque. The report on the Salima, and one of the reports concerning ‘Itbān, clearly reflect the topography of Medina: the flowing waters in the ‘Aqīq Valley could prevent the Salima from going to the Prophet’s Mosque as the waters of the Buṭḥan Valley could prevent ‘Itbān from going there too. But the Prophet’s Mosque is irrelevant for us here since in the case of the Dirār Mosque, the rival Mosque of Qubā’ is meant. The complaint of its builders is comparable with one version of the report about ‘Itbān’s complaint, that is to say, the one relating to his clan’s mosque.

In Muqāṭil’s report, the builders of the Dirār Mosque asked for permission, in advance, to build their mosque because “walking to the prayer was difficult for them”. Considering the small distance between their mosque and the Mosque of Qubā’, their claim must have seemed ridiculous. Elsewhere we are told that in the

67 Tabarānī, Kāhir, XVIII, 27.
68 An erroneous version has: the Salima and the Ḥarām; but the Ḥarām were a subdivision of the Salima.
70 The Dirār Mosque was “on the side” of the Mosque of Qubā’; Diyarbakrī, Khamīs, II, 130:24 says: fa-bana aw masjidan ilā janb masjid Qubā’; Wāḥidi,
beginning "all of them" (i.e., all of the 'Amr b. 'Awf) prayed in the Mosque of Qubā'. Then people of the munāfīqūn built the Dirār Mosque for Abu 'Amir, dividing their group (yufarriqūna baynā jama'atihim), since all of them had previously prayed in the Mosque of Qubā'. They told the Prophet: "Messenger of God, the torrent (sayl) often comes and cuts us off from the wadi (yaqtacu baynana wa-baynā l-wādi), interposing itself between us and the people (al-qawm), [i.e., the rest of the 'Amr b. 'Awf]. Shall we pray in our mosque, and then, when the torrent is gone, pray with them?"  

The verbs used to designate the competition between the mosques of Qubā' and Dirār are 'āraḍa ("vied, competed, contended for superiority"); also "emulated, imitated"), and ḍāhā ("imitated"). Qatāda, the early Qur'ān commentator, reports that the Prophet built a mosque in Qubā', fa-āraḍahu l-munāfīqūna bi-ākhara. They then invited him to pray in it but God revealed their plot to him. Qatāda is also quoted elsewhere, but the wording now is different: "Some of the munāfīqūn built a mosque in Qubā' in order to imitate the Prophet's Mosque

150: ... wa-huwa qarib minhu. J.B. Philby, *A Pilgrim in Arabia*, 86–87, writes: "About half a mile along the road leading through the village from the mosque [of Qubā'] to the edge of the lava-field stand the ruins of a small mosque, without roof, which was identified by Turkish experts sent down at the time of the construction of the Hijaz Railway as the Masjid al Dhirar (or Al Musabbih), vaguely connected with some incident of the Prophet's time which involved his followers in damage or disaster. This identification of so problematical a site is doubtful, and the scene in which the building stands is as dreary as can well be imagined. On one side lie the tumbled ruins, partly inhabited, of the village, on the other a ten-foot wall of lava fragments dividing the furthermost fringe of the palm-groves from the lava-field beyond, extending to the limit of sight. The mosque building is only ten paces by seven in area, with a prayer-niche in the long south wall and the entrance opposite it. It has neither cupola, nor minaret, nor roof, and may have been an open-air place of prayer for the villagers". See also below, 129.  

72 Suyūṭī, *Durr*, III, 276–7. For a similar use of 'āraḍa see al-Qāsim b. Sallām, *al-Khuṭab wa-l-mawā'īz*, ed. Ramaḑān 'Abd al-Tawwāb, Cairo 1406/1986, 148: David had been instructed by God to build the Temple (bayt al-maqdis) but was later forbidden to do this because he "imitated it in another edifice of his" (fa-āraḍahu bi-binā'īn lahu).
(li-yuḍāḥū bihi masjīda rasūlī llāhi [ṣ]). They then invited the Prophet to pray in it”.73 “The Prophet’s Mosque” here means “the Mosque of Qubā” (built, according to some, by the Prophet), and not his famous mosque in the Sāfīla. The historian of Medina, Ibn al-Najjār, correctly says that the munāfiqūn built the Dirār Mosque as an imitation (muḍāḥāt) of the Mosque of Qubā’. They would gather in it, denounce the Prophet and ridicule him.74 The word dirār conveys the idea of harm and injury and, on a secondary level, dissent and rivalry.75

74 See Ibn al-Najjār (Muhammad b. Mahmūd, d. 643/1245; GAL S, I, 613), Durra, 382; also quoted in Samh., II, 816. The verb dāḥā has an immediate connotation to Jerusalem: in an often-quoted report ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb accuses Ka‘b al-Aḥbār: dāḥayta wa-l‘llāhi l-yahūdīyyata yā Ka‘b; Tab., III, 611 [I, 2408]; Lewis, The Jews of Islam, 71 (“you are following after Judaism”). Cf. Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon, s.v. dāḥāhu: “He resembled, or conformed with, him, or it”, and “he imitated him”. Obviously, Ka‘b’s Jewish origins are in the background of this story.
75 Cf. Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon, s.v. dārāhu: “He harmed him, injured him, or hurt him, in return, or in requital”. Also: “He disagreed with, or differed from, him; dissented from him; was contrary, opposed, or repugnant, to him; or he acted contrarily, contrarily, adversely, or in opposition, to him”. The man who wanted “to harm” (an yuḍārra) ‘Ubaydallāh b. ‘Abbās invited to ‘Ubaydallāh’s house, without the latter’s knowledge, the notables of Quraysh for dinner; al-Tanukhī, al-Mustajzād min fa‘lāt al-ajwād, ed. Muhammad Kurd ‘Alī, Damascus 1365/1946, 16. See also Ya‘qūb b. Suffān al-Aswātī, al-Ma‘rīfā wa-l-tarīkh, ed. Akram Diyya’ al-‘Umārī, Beirut 1401/1981, I, 360: Abūn b. ‘Uthmān married the daughter of ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Uthmān dirārān li-bnati ‘Abdillāh b. Ja‘far, etc. Cf. Naqā‘id Jarīr wa-l-Farazdaq, ed. A.A. Bevan, Cambridge 1905, glossary, s.v. (“marriage with two or more wives”, “marriage with a husband who has another wife or other wives”). Cf. the expression qismat al-dirār in Isābā, VI, 430.

Watt, Medina, 190 calls the Dirār Mosque: “mosque of dissension”; Gil similarly calls it “the mosque of dissension” and correctly remarks that dirār might also be interpreted as “harm” or “competition”; Gil, “The Medinan opposition”, 70-71; Pedersen, El2, s.v. Masjid, 647a calls this mosque an “opposition mosque”. Buhl, Leben, 205, 329 calls it “Moschee der Rivalität”, “Rivalitätsmoschee”. Buhl draws attention to this mosque in connection with Caetani’s assumption that the Prophet’s Mosque did not yet exist in his own time; Buhl, Leben, 204 f. He concludes (205-206) that towards the end of the Prophet’s life there was a mosque ( “oder mehrere?”, Buhl wonders), so the one built (pace Caetani, after the Prophet’s death) over Muḥammad’s grave was not the first Islamic building of this type in Medina. Indeed, there were other mosques: for tribal mosques in Medina at the time of the Prophet see
When Dirār is given the sense of something that brings one no benefit while harming one's neighbour, it may be suspected that rather than the general meaning of the word, we have here a commentary tailored to the circumstances of this particular case, which was one of rivalry between two adjacent mosques. But while the influence of the Qur’anic usage cannot be denied, the following example may well represent a living usage regarding a land dispute in Medina. A ḥalīf of the Anṣār owned part of a palm-grove, most of which belonged to an Anṣārī. He refused to sell it or exchange it for a similar property elsewhere, or give it to the Anṣārī as a present (probably in return for its equivalent in Paradise), and the Prophet told him: anta muḍārruḥu. He also permitted the Anṣārī to uproot the ḥalīf’s palms. Yet another case, from the Umayyad period is when Yazīd b. ‘Abd al-Malik did not succeed in buying a certain court in Medina, and so he built rooms in order to block its front. They were called abyāt al-ḍirār.

Qur’anic influence is evident in yet other cases of association between the dirār and mosques. Dirār occurs when two mosques face each other, or when the prosperity of one means the demise of the other. Shaqiq (presumably Shaqiq b. Salama al-Asadī al-Kūfī) once arrived late for prayer at the B. ‘Āmir’s mosque where

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he used to pray. However, he refused to pray in another nearby
mosque, saying: \textit{lā uḥibbu an uṣalliya fihi fa-innahu buniya ‘alā dirār}.\textsuperscript{80}

The Prophet's Mosque was, of course, a \textit{jamā‘a} mosque. However, the mosques discussed above belong to the category of tribal
mosques. It is reported that during the first year after the Hijra,
the Prophet ordered the building of mosques in the tribal courts
\textit{(bi-an tubnā l-masājid fi l-dūr}; these courts, unlike the ones belonging
to individuals, were in fact small villages). One of these
courts was Qubā', "the village of the ‘Awf" (or the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf). The Prophet's Mosque, while belonging to another category, was
built in the small village of the Mālik b. al-Najjār.\textsuperscript{81}

The Prophet approved of the tribal mosques, including that
of Qubā’.\textsuperscript{82} It is reported that Medina had nine (tribal) mosques,
but the Friday-prayer was held with the Prophet (i.e., in his
mosque).\textsuperscript{83} One must not, though, put together these two pieces
of evidence and draw the conclusion that the people of Qubā'
held the Friday-prayer in the Prophet's Mosque. The Mosque of
Qubā' is not one of the above-mentioned nine mosques: the nine
(tribal) mosques, we are told, relied on Bilāl b. Rabāh’s call to
prayer \textit{(kulluhum yuṣallūna bi-adhān Bilāl)}. All of the mosques
listed were in the Safila and the same must have been true for the
other, unlisted, mosques.\textsuperscript{84} Obviously, Bilāl’s call to prayer could
not have been heard in Qubā'. The people of Qubā' were not
expected to go to the Prophet’s Mosque every Friday and only
did so on special occasions.\textsuperscript{85}

\textsuperscript{80}Tabarī, \textit{Tafsīr}, XI, 20:23; \textit{Masālik al-abṣār}, I, 130.
\textsuperscript{81}Dhahabī, \textit{Maghāzī}, 13.
\textsuperscript{82}Pedersen (\textit{EI}², s.v. Masджid, 647b) correctly observes that “there were
already at the time of the Prophet several Muslim mosques which had a
markedly religious character and were recognized by the Prophet”.
\textsuperscript{83}Baladh., \textit{Ansāb}, I, 273; Muṣṭahhar b. Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī, \textit{al-Bad' wa-l-
\textsuperscript{84}Suhaylī, \textit{al-Rawd al-unuf}, IV, 198, quoting Abū Dāwūd’s \textit{Marāṣīl} and
al-Dāraqqūṭī’s \textit{Sunan}.
\textsuperscript{85}For the dichotomy ‘Awāli-balad cf. above, 4.
The individuals and clans involved

Tracing the individuals involved in the Dirār incident places us on firm ground. One list (Ibn Ishaq’s) names twelve builders, while another, unspecified, source names eleven. All the participants, some of whom were prominent figures, were of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. One expects the number of actual sympathisers among the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf to have been much higher.


The Duḥay‘a b. Zayd were by far the dominant group, accounting for eight out of the twelve names listed by Ibn Ishaq: Mu‘attib b. Qushayr, Abū Ḥabība b. al-Az‘ar, Jāriya b. ‘Āmir and his sons, Mujammī‘ and Zayd, Nabtal b. al-Ḥārith, Bahzaj (who was in fact a client of the Duḥay‘a90) and Bijād b. ‘Uthmān.91

One of the builders, Khidhām b. Khalid, in whose court the mosque was put up, belonged to the ‘Ubayd b. Zayd. Two were of the Umayya b. Zayd: Thā‘labā b. Ḥāṭib and Wadī‘a b. Thābit. The odd one out among the builders was ‘Abbād b. Ḥunayf who was “of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf” (but not of the Zayd subdivision). He originally belonged to the Ḥanash b. ‘Awf b. ‘Amr b. ‘Awf.92

There are some differences between this list and that of eleven mentioned above. A third brother of Zayd and Mujammī‘, Yazīd, is added, together with a son of Khidhām b. Khalid, Wadī‘a (see below); while three, all of whom belonged to the Duḥay‘a, are

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missing: Mu‘attib b. Qushayr, Nibtal b. al-Ḥārith and Bāhjaj.\(^{90}\)

Gil seems unaware that the Zayd b. Mālik were a subdivision of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf.\(^{91}\)

All the builders of the Dirār Mosque then were of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. Muqāṭil b. Sulaymān (above, 88) explicitly says so, and almost all of them belonged to the three clans making up the subdivision of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf called Zayd b. Mālik.

### The Zayd b. Mālik

The unity revealed by the B. Zayd b. Mālik in the Dirār incident is also reflected in various aspects. Let us begin with genealogy. We are told that each of the three eponyms of the clans making up the Zayd had a son called Zayd (i.e., they were given their grandfather’s name). The last Tubba’, as the story goes, was met by the noblemen of Medina, among them being the three Zayds (al-Azyād), who were cousins: Zayd b. Umayya b. Zayd, Zayd b. Ḥubay‘a b. Zayd and Zayd b. ‘Ubayd b. Zayd. Tubba’ revenged his son’s murder by killing the three Zayds while a fourth nobleman, Uḥayḥa b. al-Julāḥ, escaped.\(^{92}\)

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\(^{90}\) Ibn Qudāma, *Istibsār*, 322.

\(^{91}\) He remarks that except for ‘Abbād b. Ḥunayf, who was of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf, the rest of the builders were of clans belonging to the Zayd b. Mālik, namely the ‘Ubayd b. Zayd, Umayya b. Zayd and Ḥubay‘a b. Zayd; Gil, “The Medinan opposition”, 71. Note Gil’s remark on p. 74: “As to [the fortress] al-Shunayf, there is a tradition saying that it belonged to the B. Ḥubay‘a, not to the B. ‘Amru b. ‘Awf ... there must have been envy on the part of the B. Ḥubay‘a against the B. ‘Amr b. ‘Awf”. But the Ḥubay‘a were part of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf and there is no contradiction between the two statements concerning the fortress! (A. Sprenger, *Das Leben und die Lehre des Mohammad*, Berlin 1869, III, 33, n. 2 correctly says that the builders were of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf.) Incidentally, Gil vocalizes ʿilm, read: ʿilm, and the correct rendering is “fortress” or “tower-house”, rather than “building”. In his discussion on the builders’ motives, Gil (p. 72) says that the builders wished “to compensate themselves for the fact that the Prophet had prayed in the Mosque of Qubā’, built by the B. ‘Amru b. ‘Awf. Thus, it was the envy on the part of the B. Ghamm b. ‘Awf that motivated them to build the mosque”. He goes on to point out an inconsistency: one of the builders was himself of the B. ‘Amr b. ‘Awf.

The Zayd functioned as one body in the legal sense: we deduce this from the fact that they, probably as a collective body, had clients: the 'Ajlān of the Balī were the clients of Zayd b. Mālik b. 'Awf.93

Much of what we know about the Zayd concerns their quarters in Qubā'. As was always the case in pre-Islamic Medina, the fortresses were the most prominent element both in the landscape and in the literary evidence. The Zayd's fortresses were very near each other: Samhūdī says that the fourteen fortresses in Qubā' called al-Ṣāyaṣī94 were close enough for their inhabitants to

624–26, 626.

93 Ibn Sa'd, III, 465: ..."the B. al-'Ajlān b. Ḥāritha of Balī Qudā'a, all of whom are the clients of the B. Zayd b. Mālik b. 'Awf", or "...the clients of all of the B. Zayd ..."; the former possibility seems to be supported by Ibn 'Abd al-Barr's comment in the Istī'āb, III, 924: wa-B. l-'Ajlān l-Balawīyyīna kulluhum ḥulafa' B. 'Amr b. 'Awf; also, by this passage in Ibn al-Kalbī, Nasab Ma'add, II, 711: fa-walada Ḥāritha: al-'Ajlān, bātīn, ḥālīfān li-B. Zayd b. Mālik ... But then there is evidence of an 'Ajlānī who was a ḥalīf of another 'Amr b. 'Awf subdivision, namely, of the Jahjabā (Jaz) b. 'Abbās; Ibn Qudāma, Istībṣār, 317) and of 'Ajlānīs who were clients of another Aws subdivision: 'Abdā b. Mughīth of the 'Ajlān was the client of the Za'far (Nabīt); Isāba, IV, 391 (printed Mu'attib instead of Mughīth). Cf. Waq., I, 158–59 (Balawī clients of the Za'far who participated in Badr).

On the settlement of the 'Ajlān and other Balawī clans in Medina see Bakrī, I, 28. The entry in the Isāba, II, 454 on Ribī'ī b. Abī Ribī'ī (= Ribī'ī b. Rāfi') b. Yazīd [rather: Zayd, as in the other Companion dictionaries] b. Ḥāritha b. al-Jadd b. al-'Ajlān, (etc.), of the 'Ajlān mentions that "they [i.e., the B. al-'Ajlān] are the clients of the Zayd b. Mālik b. 'Awf b. Mālik b. al-Aws; cf. Istī'āb, II, 505; Usd al-ghāba, II, 162. When we are told that Murra b. al-Ḥārith b. 'Adī b. al-Jadd b. al-'Ajlān was the client of 'Al Amr b. 'Awf (Īsāba, VI, 77), and that Murra b. al-Ḥubāb b. 'Adī b. al-Jadd b. al-'Ajlān was the client of the 'Amr b. 'Awf (Istī'āb, III, 1382), we have to assume that, in fact, the Zayd b. Mālik subdivision of the 'Amr b. 'Awf are meant, and not the 'Amr b. 'Awf in general. See also Istī'āb, III, 923 f ('Abbālāh b. Salīma al-'Ajlānī, a client of the 'Amr b. 'Awf); Ibn Sa'd, IV, 377 (Judayy b. Murra b. Surāqa b. al-Ḥubāb b. 'Adī b. al-Jadd b. al-'Ajlān of the Balī, the clients of the 'Amr b. 'Awf). B. al-'Ajlān, presumably our 'Ajlān, were the intendants (sadana) of the idol al-Saʿīda which was located in Uḥud and was worshipped by the Qudā'a, with the exception of the Wabara, and by the Azd; Ibn Ḥabīb, Muhabbār, 316 f; Ibn Ḥazm, Ansāb, 493; Yaq., s.v. al-Saʿīda.

94 Plural of šīsa, "horn" of a bull or a cow; such horns were sometimes fixed on spears instead of iron heads; cf. Ibn al-Kalbī, Nasab Ma'add, II, 545 (the first who replaced the heads made of bulls' horns with iron heads; cf. al-Ḥasan
“borrow fire” from one another. These fourteen fortresses were located in the open area (rahba), appropriately called Raḥbat B. Zayd. To judge from the number of fortresses, the B. Zayd may well have been the strongest element in Qubā'.

Some of these fourteen Sayāṣī are known to us by name. Naturally, the historians of Medina address an Islamic audience of the first and second Islamic centuries when they mention the old sites with reference to their new functions or owners. The information, therefore, is at times a mixture of old and new.

Several of the fortresses belonged to the Ḥubay'a:

1. When the 'Āmr b. 'Awf settled in Qubā', they built al-Shunayf fortress near the court of Abū Sufyān b. al-Ḥārith (of the Ḥubay'a) between Aḥjār al-Mīrā' (“the stones of contention”) and "a fortress”. The name al-ṣayāṣī presumably relates to the shape of these fortresses.

b. Ḥamād al-Ḥamdānī, al-Ilkūl, II, ed. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Ākwā', Beirut 1407/1986, 236; it also means “anything with which one defends himself” and "a fortress". The name al-ṣayāṣī presumably relates to the shape of these fortresses.

Yata'a athāl āblūhā l-nīrān baγnāhum min qurbihā; Ṣamḥ., s.v. al-Sayasī, II, 1256; Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon, s.v. Concerning the “borrowing of fire” cf. A. Oppenheimer, in collaboration with B. Isaac and M. Lecker, Babylonia Judaica in the Talmudic Period, Wiesbaden 1983, s.v. Apamea, 29. Cf. also the description of the population density in Saba’ before the disaster of Ma‘rib happened, in ‘Alī b. al-Ḥasan al-Khazrajī, al-‘Uqūd al-lu‘liyya fi ta’rikh al-dawla al-rasuliyya, ed. Muḥammad Bāṣyun T ‘Asal, IV, Leiden-London 1913, 8 (wa-kānā yata’a athawma l-nīrān fima baγnāhum masīrāta shahrayni fi shahrayni wa-qīla masīrāta sittati asḥūr fi mīthlīhā, wa’l-ḥālu a’lāmu). Fire and distance are related to each other in the alleged saying of the Prophet that Muslims and pagans should be far enough from one another “for their fires not to be able to see each other”; Ṭabarānī, Kābir, II, 303; Ibn al-Athir, al-Nihayya fi gharīb al-ḥadīth wa-l-athar, ed. Ṭāhir Ahmad al-Zāwī and Mahmūd Muḥammad al-Ṭanālī, Cairo 1385/1965, s.v. r.’y., II, 177 (lā tarā‘āl nīrāhumā). Al-Ṣīṣa was also the name of a specific fortress in Qubā’ (below, 134). For the likening of fitan to ṣayāṣī l-baqar see, e.g., TMD (‘Abdallāh b. Jābīr), 217f; I. Goldziher, “Neue Materialien zur Literatur des Überlieferungswesens bei den Muhammedanern”, in ZDMG 50 (1896), 465–506, at 493. The peculiar ṣayāṣī in Qur'ān 33,26 (“And He brought down those of the People of the Book who supported them from their fortresses”, etc.) are said by the commentators to refer to the fortresses (ḥusūn, kusūr, also quṣūr) of the Jewish Qurayza (which were not, however, located in Qubā’); see, e.g., Ṭabarānī, Tafsīr, XXI, 95, 98. The reference to Qurayza is puzzling; elsewhere only the fortresses of the Zayd are called Ṣayāṣī.

96 Ṣamḥ., I, 193.
Majlis Banī l-Mawālī (an Islamic place-name, and hence anachronistic in the context of the settlement of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf).97

2. Al-Marāwīḥ fortress belonged to Thābit b. Abī al-Aqlāh (of the Ḍubay’yā) who was of the generation before the time of the Prophet: his son ‘Āṣim was a Companion.98

Other fortresses belonged to the ‘Ubayd:

3. The Bu‘bu‘ fortress was located in the (later) court of Abū Wadī’a b. Khidhām and belonged to the ‘Ubayd b. Zayd.99


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97Samh., I, 193; Samh., s.v. II, 1246; Maghānim, s.v. 209. Cf. Wüstenfeld, Medina, 38 who has ahqār el-marā, translated as “Spiegelsteinen” (!). The site called Ahjār al-Mirā was the meeting-place of the Prophet and Gabriel; Mujāhid said that “they are Qubā’” (i.e., they are in Qubā’)?; Samh., s.v., II, 1123. Mecca had a place of its own called Ahjār al-Mirā’. Cf. perhaps the story on the blind Ibn ‘Abbās asking to be taken to majlis al-mirā in Mecca, located between two of the Ka’ba gates, where people used to discuss questions of jibr and qadar; Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Janāḍī al-Kindī, al-Sulāk fi tabaqāt al-ulamā’ wa-l-mulūk, ed. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Ka’wa’ al-Ḥiwwī, I, [Ṣan’ā’] 1403/1983, I, 110. Ṣufiyy al-Sībāb in Mecca was also called Ahjār al-Mirā’; Bakrī, s.v. Ṣufiyy al-Sībāb, 838 (kānat Quraysh tatamārā ’indaḥā wa-hwaa l-mawād’i l-ma’rūf bi-ahjārī l-mirā’).


99Samh., s.v. II, 1150; Maghānim, s.v. (printed: wa-kāna mawād’uḥu fi dār Abī Wadī’a b. Ḥidhām; read: Khidhām); ‘Umdat al-akhbār, 241. Khidhām (b. Khālid) was one of the builders of the .Dirār Mosque. He had a son called Wadī’a (below, 113) and probably another called Abī Wadī’a.

100Samh., I, 193. The passage refers to Kulthūm as one of the B. ‘Ubayd b. Zayd b. Āqlām, the brother of the B. ‘Ubayd b. Zayd b. Mālik. This valuable remark may well preserve the name of a small tribal group incorporated into the ‘Ubayd b. Zayd. On ‘Abdallāh b. Abī Ḥāmīd, see Ibn Sa’d, V, 62. In his report on the Prophet’s stay after his Hijra with Kulthūm...
One also expects to find fortresses in the Raḥbat B. Zayd belonging to the third component of the B. Zayd, the Umayya b. Zayd. However, evidence of this is still missing.\textsuperscript{101}

**Biographical details about the builders**

The details on the builders collected in the following pages amount to a small sample of prosopographical evidence on early Islamic Medina.\textsuperscript{102} The sources, and especially the biographical dictionaries, practically abound with solid information, often providing insights into family and other links between individuals.

**The Ɗubay’a**

The major role in the Dirār incident was played by the Ɗubay’a b. Zayd.\textsuperscript{103}

1. Abū ʾĀmir ʿAbd ʿAmr\textsuperscript{104} b. Ṣayfī b. al-Nuʿmān and his son Abū Ṣayfī (or Ṣayfī): Abū ʾĀmir al-Rāḥib belonged to the Ɗubay’a. He is always present in the background of the Dirār incident although he was not in Medina at the time of the incident itself. Abū ʾĀmir’s court touched upon the Dirār Mosque (see below, 130).

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\textsuperscript{101} Presumably the fortresses which the Umayya received from the Jahjābā as blood-wit (above, 55f) were not located in the Raḥba.

\textsuperscript{102} Cf. Crone, *Slaves on Horses*, 16.

\textsuperscript{103} As Gil realized. But Gil also tried to trace the Ɗubay’a in later periods (“The Medinan opposition”, 86, 92), in my opinion with less than spectacular success (the fact that different groups have the same name is a constant source of confusion): all of the Ɗubay’a mentioned by him as active in Baṣra in the Umayyad and Abbasid periods are of another Ɗubay’a, i.e., a branch of the Bakr b. Wā’il tribe (Ɗubay’a b. Qays b. Tha’labā b. ʿUkāba b. Ṣaʿb b. ʿAlī b. Bakr b. Wā’il); see Ibn al-Alṭīr, *Lubāb*, s.v. al-Ɗubāʾī, II, 260; Ibn Ḥazm, *Ansāb*, 320–21.

\textsuperscript{104} For Companions of the Prophet named ʿAbd ʿAmr see *Isāba*, Index. ʿAbd ʿAmr b. Qunay of the Bakr b. Wā’il was renamed by the Prophet ʿAbdallāh; Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, 537.
We know of two marriage links of Abū 'Amir al-Rāhib, both to women of the Aws. The mother of his daughter, al-Shamus, was 'Amīq bint al-Ḥarīth of the Wāqīf (Aws Allāh). Another wife, Salmā bint ‘Amīr of the Jahjaba (‘Amr b. ‘Awf), bore him a daughter, Ḥabība.\(^{105}\)

A son of Abū ‘Amīr whom some call Ṣayfī\(^{106}\) while others call Abū Šayfī is mentioned in connection with the Dirār incident and Abū ‘Amīr’s exile. An interpretation of Qur’ān 7,175\(^{107}\) quotes the Ansār as saying that the verse refers to “the son of the God-fearing, or the ascetic” (ibn al-rāhib) for whom (= the rāhib) the Masjid al-shiqāq was built.\(^{108}\) The Qur’ān commentator, Ibn Zayd (above, 97n), explicitly states that Abū ‘Amīr had a son called Ṣayfī: Abū ‘Amīr, he says, fathered Ḥanẓala, who was “the one washed by the angels”, Ṣayfī, and his brother.\(^{109}\) These three sons, the commentator continues, were (viz., unlike their father) among the best Muslims.\(^{110}\)

\(^{105}\) Ibn Sa’d VIII, 345.

\(^{106}\) Abū ‘Amīr’s father was also called Ṣayfī; Aghānī, XV, 163:21.

\(^{107}\) “And recite to them the tidings of him to whom We gave Our signs, but he cast them off, and Satan followed after him, and he became one of the perverts”.

\(^{108}\) The word ibn could, however, be superfluous; see Ibn Shabba, Medina, I, 55 where the word ibn is missing (...Ibn ‘Abbās: huwa l-rāhibu ‘lladhi bana [!] masjidā l-shiqāq); cf. Suyūṭī, Durr, III, 146:19 (huwa bru l-rāhibi ‘lladhī buniya lahu masjidu l-shiqāq). Another version of Ibn ‘Abbās’ interpretation has: Ṣayfī b. al-Rāhib; Durr, loc. cit. Sa’d b. al-Musayyab has: Abū ‘Amīr b. Ṣayfī (i.e., Abū ‘Amīr himself), which is followed by the story of Abū ‘Amīr’s dispute with the Prophet over the true hanifiyya; Qurṭubī, al-Jāmi’ li-ahkām al-qur’ān, VII, 320.

\(^{109}\) Wa-akhihi, while one expects here: wa-akhihim; read: wa-Zayd? We know that Abū ‘Amīr had a son called Zayd: Hind bint Zayd b. Abī ‘Amīr al-Rāhib married ‘Abd al-Rāḥmān b. Sa’d b. Zurāra; Ibn Sa’d, Qism mutammīm, 286 (the printed pedigree is wrong, “b. 'Abdallāh b. ‘Abd al-Rāḥmān” is superfluous). This was a marriage between the granddaughter of one munāfiq and the son of another; on Sa’d b. Zurāra see Waq., III, 1009; Ibn Qudāma, Istībṣār, 59 (fi islāmihi shak). The unnamed brother could also be ‘Amīr (Abū ‘Amīr’s first-born). On ‘Amīr b. Abī ‘Amīr al-Rāhib see Ibn Sa’d, VIII, 346. Ṣayfī b. al-Rāhib is also mentioned by Muqāṭīl; below, 108.

\(^{110}\) Quoted in Ṭabārī, Tafsīr, XI, 20:10. A cautionary note would be in place here. Ṣayfī was not only the name of Abū ‘Amīr’s father, but also that of another of the Prophet’s leading adversaries, Abū Qays Ṣayfī b. al-Aslat of the Aws Allāh. To complicate matters even further, the name of Abū
Muqāṭīl b. Ḥayyān has a report about “Abū Ṣayfī al-Rāhib” (read probably: Abū Ṣayfī [b.] al-Rāhib) who left Medina and went to Mecca:

Su‘ayda, whose pedigree was not reported, the wife of Abū Ṣayfī al-Rāhib. She was of the Anṣār. Abū Ṣayfī left Medina, having broken off from her family in enmity (mughādiban li-ahlīhā) when they embraced Islam. He stayed in Mecca [i.e., with his wife] for a while (hīnān), then his wife Su‘ayda set out for Medina in a Hijra [she was in fact returning there] during the truce (hudna) [i.e., the truce of Ḥudaybiyya]. They [the Meccans] asked the Messenger of God (ṣ) to return her to them, since they stipulated [at Hudaybiyya] that he would give them back those of them who would go to him. But he said: “The stipulation referred to men, not to women”. And God revealed the āyat al-imtīḥān. This was mentioned by Muqāṭīl b. Ḥayyān in his Tafsīr.¹¹¹

Su‘ayda reportedly belonged to the Umayya b. Zayd (a brother-clan of the Ḥubay‘a).¹¹²

Qays’ father (“al-Aslat” or “one whose nose was cut off”, was a nickname), was ‘Āmir. Confusion and contamination of these names, Abū Qays Ṣayfī b. al-Aslat/b. ‘Amir and Abū ‘Āmir ‘Abd ‘Amr b. Ṣayfī, was possible.

¹¹¹ Īṣābā, VII, 700 (commentary on Qur’ān 60,10, āyat al-imtīḥān or “the verse of testing”). See also Usd al-ghāba, V, 475 (where Abū Ṣayfī is described as mushrīk muqīm bi-Makka). On Muqāṭīl (d. ca. 150/767) see GAS, I, 36.

¹¹² Su‘ayda bint Bashīr/Bushayr b. ‘Ubayd b. ‘Amr b. ‘Ubayd b. Umayya b. Zayd; she is said to have pledged her allegiance to the Prophet; Ibn Sa’d, VIII, 349. Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbār, 418 has this pedigree: Su‘ayda bint Rifā‘a b. ‘Amr b. ‘Ubayd b. Umayya. Cf. M. Lecker, “The Ḥaṣārī wives of ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb and his brother, Zayd” (forthcoming). Muqatil b. Sulaymān identifies the woman who went to the Prophet during the truce (muwāda’a) as Subay‘a bint al-Ḥārith al-Aslamiyya and says that she was married to Ṣayfī b. al-Rāhib, one of the pagans of Mecca (!). Her husband came to divorce her and demanded that she be returned; Muqatil, Tafsīr, II, 193b. The identity of the man who was Subay‘a’s husband after her flight from Mecca is disputed; see Ibn Sa’d, III, 408; VIII, 287; Ibn al-Ṭallā‘, Aqīyat rasūli lāhī, ed. Muḥammad Diya‘ al-Rāhmān al-Aẓamī, Cairo-Beirut, 1398/1978, 667 f (Sa’d b. Khawla, a Muhājir who was a client [ḥalif] or mawlā of Abū Ruhm
The report probably deals with a son of Abū 'Āmir al-Rāhib called Abū Ṣayfi [b.] al-Rāhib. It is not certain that the son's name was Abū Ṣayfī because elsewhere, the “Abū” is missing. One report calls him Ṣayfī b. al-Rāhib, while another account, a reference to the commentary by Muqātil b. Ḥayyān quoted above, has only Ṣayfī (without mention of his father). Yet Abū Ṣayfī may still be preferable to Ṣayfī as the son's name because it is supported by an independent testimony according to which Abū 'Āmir had a son called Abū Ṣayfī. The biography of Abū 'Āmir's grandson, ‘Abdallāh b. Ḥanẓala b. Abī ‘Āmir, contains details about ‘Abdallāh's children. ‘Abdallāh's cousin, Asmā' bint Abī Ṣayfī b. Abī ‘Āmir b. Ṣayfī, gave birth to two of them. Now that we know Abū ‘Āmir had a son called Abū Ṣayfī we may assume that this son is referred to in the report just quoted on Su'ayda and Abū Ṣayfī [b.] al-Rāhib. Not only did Abū ‘Āmir leave Medina and go to Mecca, but a son of his did the same accompanied by his wife.

The report on Abū Ṣayfī and his wife should be read in conjunction with other reports on one of the tactics employed by the Prophet in his struggle to convert Medina, and indeed the whole of Arabia, namely the prohibition of intermarriages between Muslims and non-Muslims. The cause of the dispute between Abū ‘Āmir's son and his wife's family was presumably this: when they embraced Islam, they were urged by the Prophet to demand a divorce. Divorce (and the consequent control of the
children by the Muslim parent) was an effective weapon resorted to by the Prophet more than once.

In the context of Abū ‘Āmir’s association with the Meccans mention should be made of Abū ‘Āmir’s mawlā, Mīnā, who presumably left Medina and went to Mecca with his master. In order to gain information on this little-known figure, Ibn Sa’d, who included in his biographical dictionary an entry on Mīnā’s son al-Ḥakam, had to rely on his own fieldwork. Ibn Sa’d quoted in this entry Mīnā’s descendants who lived in his own time. They said that Abū ‘Āmir had given Mīnā to Abū Sufyān b. Ḥarb, who in turn sold him to the Prophet’s uncle, ‘Abbās. Later ‘Abbās manumitted him and his offspring consequently called themselves the mawāli of ‘Abbās (wa-lahu baqiqya l-yawma yantamūna ilā walā’ī l-‘Abbās).\(^{118}\)

Abū ‘Āmir’s son, Ḥanṣāla, was a righteous Muslim.\(^{119}\) He was not the only young Medinan who rebelled against the authority of his father at the time. Ḥanṣāla was killed in the Battle of Uhud fighting on the Prophet’s side, while his father fought against the Prophet.\(^{120}\) Ḥanṣāla’s widow was ‘Abdallāh b. Uabayy’s daughter,

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\(^{117}\) Ibn Sa’d, V, 311. Al-Ḥakam was a traditionist; see also Usd al-ghāba, II, 38–39; Ibn Qudāma, Istibsār, 290; Tahdh., II, 440, no. 767.

\(^{118}\) This walā’-claim looks suspicious: it could have emerged after the Abbasids came to power, when such status had obvious benefits. Mīnā’s descendants provided their ancestor with a military record, reporting that he participated in the Tabūk expedition; Isāba, II, 110, quoting Ibn Sa’d, has it that Abū Sufyān gave him to ‘Abbās. However, this does not conform with the text in Ibn Sa’d’s Tabaqāt where we find that Abū Sufyān sold him to ‘Abbās. But then, perhaps we have independent evidence to corroborate the walā’-claim: Mīnā mawlā ‘Abbās is one of the many said to have built the pulpit in the Prophet’s Mosque; Isāba, VI, 242. For other versions concerning the identity of ‘Abbās’ mawlā, or slave, who made the pulpit, see Samh, II, 393, 395–96.

\(^{119}\) In Ibn Ḥabīb, Muhabbār, 238 Ḥanṣāla is listed among “those who prohibited the drinking of wine, intoxication and prostitution” (… wa-l-azlām, “divining arrows”, read: wa-l-zinā). But the text may be garbled (Ḥanṣāla al-raḥib [[] b. Abī ‘Āmir al-qāsīl, qasīlū l-malāʾika).

\(^{120}\) Waq., I, 237. The corpses of the Muslims killed in Uhud were mutilated by the pagans but for Ḥanṣāla’s; his father was then with Abū Sufyān; Istīʾāb, I, 272–73. Abū ‘Āmir’s fighting against the Prophet in Uhud is also mentioned in Ibn Qudāma, Istībsār, 289; Rubin, “Hanifīyya”, 86.
The widow gave birth to 'Abdallāh b. Ḥanẓala who was killed in the Battle of the Ḥarra (63/683; among those killed was also a son of Jamīla from another marriage).

2-5. Jāriya b. 'Āmir b. Mujammī b. al-'Aṭṭāf b. Ḍubay'a b. Zayd and his sons, Mujammī (who was the imām), Zayd and Yaẓīd.

"THE PIECES OF GOLD"

'Āmir b. Mujammī b. al-'Aṭṭāf b. Ḍubay'a was killed by the Khāṭma and his death caused a war "between them" (presumably between the 'Amr b. 'Awf and the Khāṭma).

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121 This intermarriage between the Aws and Khazraj was at the same time a link between two leading families of the Ansār; Usd al-ghāba, V, 418; cf. Wellhausen, Skizzen IV, 62, n. 2.

122 Ibn Sa'd, V, 65-68, 81; VIII, 382-83; Ibn Qudāma, Istībṣār, 289-90: wa-kānati l-Ansār bāyā'athu yawma'idhin. Note, however, that there is no unanimity about 'Abdallāh's command. Elsewhere, the commander of the Ansār at the Battle of the Ḥarra is said to have been Muḥammad b. 'Amr b. Ḥazm of the Najjar who was also killed there; Tahdh., IX, 370. Ibn Ḥajār, aware of this difference, suggests that Muḥammad led the Khazraj while 'Abdallāh led the Aws. In any case, five decades after the Prophet's death, the Ansār, or some of them, were led in battle by the grandson of both Abū 'Āmir al-Rāhib and 'Abdallāh b. Ubayy. See also EI², s.v. 'Abd Allāh b. Ḥanẓala (Zetterstēen-Pellat).

123 Waq., III, 1047; Balādh., Ansāb, I, 276:15; Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbār, 468 (Jāriya's father was not 'Amr but 'Āmir). The list of builders in Tab., III, 111 [I, 1705] includes only two of Jāriya's sons, Mujammī and Zayd. Jāriya and his three sons, Zayd, Yaẓīd and Mujammī, pledged their allegiance to the Prophet; Ibn al-Kalbī, Nasab Ma'add, I, 366; Jamhara, 624 (huwa wa-banāhu Zayd wa-Yaẓīd wa-Mujammī). Dāraqūtnī says (see Ibn Mākulā, II, 4:11), having mentioned Jāriya [b. 'Āmir] b. Mujammī, that his two sons, Mujammī and Yaẓīd, were righteous Companions of the Prophet (lahumā suḥba wa-'stiqāma ma'a l-nabī [sf]). We also find it claimed (op. cit., 5) that Zayd b. Jāriya set out to fight in the Battle of Uhud but the Prophet found him to be too young. The source for the last-mentioned report is no other than Zayd himself and the report was transmitted by his descendants. Ibn Ishāq includes Jāriya and his two sons, Zayd and Mujammī, in the list of munāfīqūn under "B. Tha'lab b. 'Amr b. 'Awf"; see Ibn Hishām, II, 169. Gil, "The Medinan opposition", 73, n. 15 quotes Ibn Hazm, Jawāmi', 75 for this puzzling pedigree. On the Kūfān Mujammī b. Yahyā b. Yaẓīd b. Jāriya see Ibn Sa'd, VI, 368.

son, Jāriya, and the latter's three sons have been mentioned in connection with the Dirār incident.\(^{125}\)

The descendants of ‘Āmir b. Mujammī form a special genealogical group within the Ḍubay‘a. Wāqīdī “and others” said that the B. ‘Āmir (i.e., the descendants of ‘Āmir b. Mujammī) were called “the pieces of gold” (kisar al-dhahab) in the Jahiliyya because of their status of nobility in their clan (li-sharafihim fi qawmihim).\(^{126}\)

There are indications, though, that the group called “pieces of gold” also included the rest of the Ḍubay‘a or even the B. Zayd b. Mālik as a whole. The story of the Battle of Uḥud contains a scene involving a woman of the Umayya b. Zayd, Sulāfā bint Sa‘d b. Shuhayd, who was married to a Meccan.\(^{127}\) Several sons of hers as well as her Meccan husband were killed in the Battle of Uḥud fighting against the Prophet. The man who killed one (or more) of her sons was ‘Āsim b. Thābit b. Abī l-Aqlāḥ al-Anṣārī of the Ḍubay‘a (cf. above, 53n). As he was dealing the deadly blow to one of Sulāfā’s sons, ‘Āsim identified himself in the old Arabian manner as Abī l-Aqlāḥ. The fatally wounded son who conveyed this information to his mother was an unwitting witness: having been born in Mecca he had little knowledge of Anṣārī genealogies. However, the mother, whose alleged reaction we are interested in here, immediately recognized the enemy as a fellow tribesman. She remarked, Aqlāhī wa-‘llāhi (the name of the slayer’s grandfather was Abū l-Aqlāḥ), which is glossed: min raḥṭī, “from my own people”. In another version, ‘Āsim identified himself as ibn kisrā, which is followed by this gloss: kānū (sic) yuqālu lahūm fī l-jahiliyya banū kisar al-dhahab. Sulāfā’s reaction, according to this version, was: iḥdā wa-‘llāhī kisarī,

\(^{125}\) For a fourth son of Jāriya called Bukayr see Ibn Sa‘d, Qism mutammīm, 468; Ibn Sa‘d, V, 85.

\(^{126}\) Ibn Sa‘d, IV, 372; Ibn Qudāma, Istibsār, 291. For gold mentioned in a similar context cf. the phrase fa-nahnu sulālatu baytī l-dhahab (in an alleged elegy by Mu‘āwiya’s mother Hind bint ‘Utba on her father); TMD (Tarajīm al-nisā‘), ed. Sukayna al-Shihābī, Damascus n. d., 444-4.

\(^{127}\) Read “Shuhayd” instead of “Sahl” in Lecker, The Banū Sulaym, 76. Sulāfā’s affiliation to the Umayya b. Zayd is inferred from the pedigree of her brother, ‘Umayr, who was a Companion; on him, see Iṣāba, IV, 718-19; Usd al-ghāba, IV, 143-44; Istī‘āb, III, 1215-17; Ibn Sa‘d, IV, 374-75.
“By God, [he is] one of my kisar”.128 That day, the report goes on, Sulāfa vowed to drink wine from ʿĀṣim b. Thābit’s skull and promised a reward of one hundred camels for it.129

Now, it will be remembered that the slayer and the mother belonged to different clans of the Zayd b. Mālik: ʿĀṣim was of the ʿDubayʿa b. Zayd, though he was not a descendant of ʿĀmir b. Mūjammi, while Sulāfa belonged to the Umayya b. Zayd. The mother’s declaration that the slayer was “one of her ‘pieces of gold’” invites a definition of the “pieces” group which includes both the ʿDubayʿa and the Umayya. Indeed, one such definition comes from Samhūdī: they were the Umayya, ʿUbayd and ʿDubayʿa sons of Zayd b. Mālik b. ʿAwf.130 In other words, the “pieces of gold” were the Zayd b. Mālik as a whole.

6. Bijād b. ʿUthmān b. ʿĀmir b. Mūjammi b. al-ʿAṭṭāf.131 His pedigree shows that he was a nephew of the above-mentioned Jāriya b. ʿĀmir (and a cousin of Jāriya’s sons). There was a marriage link between his family and that of another builder, as Bijād’s daughter, Umāma, married Wādiʿa, the son of Khidhām b. Khālid (of the ʿUbayd b. Zayd) and bore him a son, Thābit.132

7. Abū Ḥabība al-Adraʿ b. al-ʿAzʿar b. Zayd b. al-ʿAṭṭāf: his son, ʿAbdallāh, was a Companion of the Prophet and participated in the Ḥudaybiyya expedition.133 It is ironical, in view of the Dirār

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129 She nearly fulfilled her vow; Waq., I, 356.
130 Samh., I, 197.
133 Abū Ḥabība’s uncle, Abū Mūayl b. al-ʿAzʿar, a Badrī, was the one who said during the Battle of the Ditch: “Verily our houses are open and exposed” (Qurʾān 33:13); Ibn al-Kalbī, Nasab Maʿadd, I, 366; Jamhara, 623f (for another version found in the same source, see below); Iṣāba, VII, 386 (quoting Ibn al-Kalbī; but note the difference: Ibn Ḥajār’s phrasing annahum mimman qāla, etc. has no support in the two sources quoted above, which
incident, that this 'Abdallāh reports on a practice of the Prophet in the Mosque of Qubā’. Asked about what he “attained” from the Prophet (ma' adrakta min rasūli llāhi), he answered: “I saw him pray in the Mosque of Qubā’ with his shoes on”.134 After the time of the Prophet, a granddaughter of Abū Ḥabība married Mujammī' b. Yazīd b. Jāriya.135

8. Nabtal b. al-Ḥārith b. Qays b. Zayd b. Ḍbay'ā or his son, 'Abdallāh b. Nabtal: according to some, it was his son 'Abdallāh who took part in the incident.136 Nabtal b. al-Ḥārith was a munāfiq.137

have wa-huwa iladhī qāla, and wa-huwa l-qā‘il, respectively). Elsewhere, it was Mu'attib b. Qushayr who said it; Ibn Durayd, Isḥtiqāq, 438. The common interpretations of this verse mention the Ḥāritha of the Aws and the Salīma of the Khazraj as the culprits; see, e.g., Muqṭīl, Tafsīr, II, 88b (Ḥāritha, Salīma); Taabarī, Tafsīr, XXI, 86 (Ḥāritha); Suyūṭī, Durr, V, 188 (Ḥāritha); Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhara, 638 (qāla Hishām [i.e., Ibn al-Kalbī]: fisih nifāq wa-humū iladhīna qālu, inna buyūtānā 'awra; this presumably relates to the Ḥāritha as a whole).

134 Ibn Sa'd, I, 480; Iṣāba, IV, 53-54 (Abū Ḥabība's name, or perhaps his nickname, was al-Adra', “one whose father is free, or an Arab, and whose mother is a slave”; see Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon, s.v.). The report is transmitted by the fellow Ḍbay'īs Mujammī‘ b. Ya'qūb b. Jāriya < Muḥammād b. Ismā‘īl b. Mujammī‘ who was 'Abdallāh’s grandson on the mother’s side. The Ḥadīth, equipped as it is with an unmistakable family-Isnād, may have come into being in order to support 'Abdallāh’s claim to Companion status. On praying in one’s shoes see M.J. Kister, “‘Do not assimilate yourselves . . . ’”, 335-49 and the Appendix to the article written by Menahem Kister, 356-68. Cf. the Ḥadīth of Mujammī‘ b. Jāriya on the dajjāl; Ahmād, IV, 390 (musnad al-Kūfīyyīn).


136 Ibn Qudāma, Istiḥsār, 292.

137 Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhara, 624. In Ibn al-Kalbī, Nasab Ma‘add, I, 367 he is called Nabtal b. Qays (his father’s name having been omitted); cf. Iṣāba, VI, 418. There is some difficulty regarding his identity. A Nabtal b. al-Ḥārith of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf was killed in the Battle of Bu‘āth shortly before Islam at the hands of As‘ad b. Zurāra; Samh., I, 249. We also find in the list of munāfiqūn belonging to the Lawdhān (a subdivision of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf) a Nabtal b. al-Ḥārith; Ibn Hishām, II, 168. (On the Lawdhān see Ibn Ḥazm, Ansāb, 337; Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhara, 622; Samh., I, 195.) The assumption that there were three Nabtal b. al-Ḥārith among the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf seems
The following humorous anecdote indicates that ‘Abdallāh b. Nabtal (not his father) was one of the builders of the Dirar Mosque. It is yet another insight into the environment in which the sīra emerged during the first Islamic century. It shows that the history of the individuals whom the Islamic literature calls munāfīqūn continued to be an acute problem for their descendants. For those whose fathers were on the wrong side and opposed the Prophet, this history was not a remote field of scholarship but a blot on the family’s reputation. Islamic apologetics reflect the tension between the image of the ideal Companion and the embarrassing attitude of some fathers at the time of the Prophet.

In the humorous anecdote, the actors are a grandson of ‘Abdallāh b. Nabtal whose name is not specified; Khārijā, the son of the Companion Zayd b. Thabit; and a Persian mawla, ‘Abdallāh al-Qarrāz who makes a living by selling qarāz-leaves used for tanning hides. The place is Medina and the time a few decades after the time of the Prophet. Khārijā uses to give (or sell) the people cool water mixed with honey. ‘Abdallāh al-Qarrāz uses to visit him. He is a Persian taken captive in the days of ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. When the Persian mawla comes one day, he finds there a descendant of ‘Abdallāh b. Nabtal who begins mocking him. The Persian is ugly, he has a big head and long ears. The following dialogue takes place:

Persian: “Who are you, young man?”
Young man: “A man of the Anṣār”.
Persian: “Welcome to the Anṣār; exactly of what clan?”
Persian: “But your grandfather was not one of the Anṣār [or “helpers”; ammā jadduka fa-lam yansūr]. Do you know the Qurʾān verse revealed concerning him? Don’t you know what it [i.e., the verse] did to far-fetched because the name Nabtal is rare.
him? Do you think it disgraced him? By God, it did disgrace him".138

In this fine literary piece the harassed ugly Persian mawla exchanges roles with the nasty Anšārī. The mawla's impressive command of Anšārī genealogy and asbāb al-nuzūl stands in sharp contrast to his appearance.139 Perhaps this encounter never occurred. But, whoever may have fabricated it, took for granted as his starting point, that the grandson of ʿAbdallāh b. Nablāt could have been embarrassed by a reference to his grandfather's attitude at the Prophet's time.140

To end this discussion on Nablāt and his son, yet another case of a family link between the builders of the Dirār Mosque should be added. A while after the time of the Prophet, ʿAbdallāh's daughter, Lubnā, married 'Ubaydallāh b. Mujammī b. Jāriya who was later killed in the Battle of the Ḥarra.141

The ʿUbayd

9. Khidham b. Khalīd:142 the Dirār Mosque was located in Khidham's court (see below). Some wrongly called him Khidham b. Wadī'a. The confusion was probably caused by the fact that Khidham had a son named Wadī'a.143

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138 Baladh., Ansāb, I, 275–76 (the last sentence is not smooth: a-mā ṭadrī mā sanaʿat—printed sanaʿta—bihi tarāḥu [sic] faḍḥāthu, wa-ʾllāhi wa-hiya l-fāḍhiha). Sura 9 is called al-fāḍhiha; see, e.g., Suyūṭī, Durr, III, 208:24. The Persian refers to Qurʿān 9,61. On ḤāmīDisclaimer: The content provided is not the complete, accurate, or legal translation of the original text, and should be used for informational purposes only. For any legal or academic research, consult a qualified expert.


140 See the scene where ‘Abdallāh is mending a pipe on the roof of the Dirār Mosque; below, 142.

141 Ibn Saʿd, V, 260 (another son of Mujammī, Yaḥyā, was also killed in the same battle).

142 Ibn Qudāma, Istibsār, 321:–3.

Again, we have here a marriage link between the families involved in the Dirār incident. Sometime after the Battle of Uhud, and against his will, Khidām b. Khālid became the father-in-law of Abū Lubāba (on whom, see below). Khidām’s daughter, Khansā’, had been married to Anas (or Unays) b. Qatāda of the ‘Ubayd b. Zayd (i.e., a member of her own clan), who was later killed in the Battle of Uhud. Her father then married her off to a man of the Muzayna whom she disliked. So she went to the Prophet who abrogated the marriage and gave her away in marriage to Abū Lubāba. She bore the latter a son, al-Sā‘ib. The scandal happened among the Zayd b. Mālik: the woman rebelled against her father, placing herself under the Prophet’s guardianship.

The Umayya

10. Abū Lubāba: although his name is not on the list of builders, he nevertheless merits a mention. An apologetic tone is evident in the following vague remark on Abū Lubāba’s role in the Dirār

Medinan opposition”, 78 mentions that while Khidām is usually said to have been of the ‘Ubayd b. Zayd, some versions relate him to the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. But there is no contradiction here: the ‘Ubayd were a subdivision of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. See the pedigree of Khidām in Ibn Sa’d, V, 260: Khidām b. Khālid b. Tha’labā b. Zayd b. ‘Ubayd b. Zayd, etc.

144 Gil, “The Medinan opposition”, 78–79 and the sources quoted there; Isāba, I, 137–38, and VII, 611–12; Usd al-ghāba, I, 113, 126, 135 (his wife is wrongly called here Khansā’ al-Asadiyya, which misled Watt, see his Medina, 385; Watt observed that “personal matters about which we are not informed were also involved”); Ibn Sa’d, III, 464; Istī‘āb, IV, 1826 (who rejects, presumably correctly, the claim that she was then a virgin); also see Ibn Qudāma, Istībšār, 330–31. According to one version, her future husband was to be of the ‘Awf (b. al-Khazraj?); Ibn Sa’d, III, 464; Ibn Qudāma, Istībšār, 294; Ibn Sa’d, III, 457 (who calls the woman in question Zaynab bint Khidām b. Khālid). For a report on the Qurayṣa going back to Abū Lubāba > his son, al-Sā‘ib, see Waq., II, 506:7. Gil suggests that Abū Lubāba was a close relative of her former husband Unays b. Qatāda, since she refers to him as ‘amm waladī; see, e.g., Ibn Sa’d, VIII, 457. However, this is doubtful: Unays was of the ‘Ubayd b. Zayd, while Abū Lubāba was of their brother-clan, the Umayya b. Zayd. The expression ‘amm waladī should be interpreted as a statement that he, unlike the husband chosen for her by her father, was a fellow member of the Zayd b. Mālik.
incident. Our source goes out of his way to emphasize that he was not a munāfiq but an innocent helper:

Abū Lubāba b. ‘Abd al-Mundhir helped them in it with timber. He was not accused of nifāq (wa-kāna ghayra maghmūṣin ‘alayhi fī l-nifāq) but used to do things that caused dissatisfaction (wa-lakinnahu qad kāna yaf‘alu umūran tukrahu lahu). [The Prophet is not specifically mentioned, but it is no doubt his dissatisfaction that our source has in mind.] When the mosque was destroyed, Abū Lubāba took that timber which was his and built with it a house. The house he built was on its side [i.e., on the side of the destroyed mosque].

The apologetic comments (“he was not accused of nifāq”, etc.) do not seem to belong in this report; perhaps they were added in the margin of the original account and later incorporated into the text by a scribe. The comments were made by someone friendly to Abū Lubāba who was concerned about the possible damage to his reputation. This source, therefore, took special pains to explain that his misdemeanours fell short of making him a full-fledged munāfiq.

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145 Waq., III, 1047; Gil, “The Medinan opposition”, 71–72. Watt adopts the apologetic formulation (Medina, 190): “Abū Lubābah had made a gift for the mosque but was clear of the intrigues”. Note that in this report the mosque was destroyed (fa-lamma hudima), not burnt down. Cf. a similar apologetic remark made concerning Ka‘b b. Mālik’s refusal to set out to Tabūk: he was rajul ṣidq ghayr maṭ‘ūn ‘alayhi. The reason Ka‘b stayed behind, we are told, was weariness; Ṭabarisi, Tafsīr, X, 136. One who was accused in connection with his faith was al-Ḥārith b. Hishām of the Makhzūm, about whom it is said: wa-kāna maghmūṣan ‘alayhi fī islāmihi; Baladh., Ansāb, I, 363. Elsewhere we are told that he became a good Muslim when Mecca was conquered (thumma ḥasuna islāmuḥu; Isāba, I, 607). This should come as no surprise because one expects his family members or other Makhzūmīs to say kind things about him.

146 Cf. the elusive language used concerning a munāfiq of the Najjār (Khazraj), Qays b. Qahd: wa-lam yakun Qays bi-l-maḥmūd fī aṣḥābi l-nabi (s); Usd al-ghāba, IV, 224:5.
The Ḥanash

11. ‘Abbad b. Ḥunayf: his role in Islamic history was completely different to that of his two brothers, Sahl and ‘Uthmān, who were both governors in the early Islamic state.\(^\text{147}\)

Being of the Ḥanash, ‘Abbad, and probably Bahzaj as well (see below), are the odd ones out in the list of builders. The Ḥanash, while belonging to the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf, were not of the Zayd b. Mālik (whose eponym, Zayd, was Ḥanash’s nephew). However, the evidence linking the Ḥanash, or part of them, to the Zayd suffices to account for ‘Abbad’s role in the Dirār incident.

The B. Ḥanash were “of the people of the mosque, i.e., the Mosque of Qubā” (\(\text{wa-hum min ahli l-masjid, ya’ni masjid Qu-bā}\)).\(^\text{148}\) This obscure statement, which is not made in reference to other subdivisions of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf, appears in Ibn Sa’d’s Ṭabaqāt at the beginning of the entry on ‘Abbad b. Ḥunayf’s brother, Sahl. Its context is presumably the internal divisions of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. Part of them, that is to say, the B. Zayd b. Mālik, were “of the people of the mosque” by virtue of its location: simply, it was in their territory. The Ḥanash were “of the people of the mosque” because of their incorporation into a

\(^{147}\) ‘Abbad and his brothers should not be linked with the munāfīq Sa’ād b. Ḥunayf. One source (Balādh., \(\text{Ansāb, I, 284}\)) lists Sa’ād among the Naḍīr and remarks that he “sought shelter in Islam” (i.e., converted outwardly, as a munāfīq) while other sources (Ibn Hīshām, II, 161; Waq., III, 1059) say that he was of the Qaynuqa’. For an explicit statement that Sahl, ‘Uthmān and ‘Abbad were brothers, see Ibn al-Kalbī, \(\text{Nasab Ma’add, I, 372f. Cf. Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhara, 630. For a marriage of ‘Abbad’s granddaughter, Mandūs bint Ḥakīm, to ‘Uthmān’s grandson, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Uthmān, see Ibn Sa’ād, Qism mutammim, 467 (instead of Bahraj, read: Bahzaj); their great-grandson was called al-Ḥunayfī (after the ancestor Ḥunayf). Ibn Mākūlā, II, 559 remarks about ‘Abbad that “he is said to be the brother of Sahl and ‘Uthmān”. This comment reveals a certain awkwardness concerning the family relationship between the two righteous brothers and ‘Abbad, the family’s black sheep. Ibn Mākūlā mentions two grandsons of ‘Abbad, ‘Uthmān and Ḥakīm, sons of Ḥakīm b. ‘Abbad b. Ḥunayf. Ibn Sa’ād, Qism mutammim, 298f has entries on both. Two sons and one grandson of ‘Uthmān, and a son of ‘Abbad, were killed in the Battle of the Ḥarra; Khalīfa, \(\text{Tū’uk, I, 304.}\)

\(^{148}\) Ibn Sa’ād, III, 471.
subdivision of the Zayd, i.e., the Ḍubay‘a. At an unknown date, presumably before Islam, the Ḥanash “entered” the Ḍubay‘a (i.e., became their clients, perhaps moving into their quarters; no adaptation of their genealogy is mentioned).\footnote{Ibn Ḥazm, \textit{Ansāb}, 332–2: \textit{dakhala B. Ḥanash fi B. Ḏubay‘a b. Zayd}. Ibn al-Kalbī, \textit{Jamhara}, 622 says that the Ḥanash were tribal groups incorporated into the Ḏubay‘a (\textit{buṭūn fi B. Ḏubay‘a b. Zayd}). This incorporation may be the reason for Sahl b. Ḥunayf’s inclusion among the Ḏubay‘a in the list of Badris; \textit{Waq.}, I, 159.}

The richness of genealogical detail allows us to investigate even further the link between the Ḥanash and the Zayd. The mother of Sahl b. Ḥunayf (and presumably of his brothers, ʿUthmān and ʿAbbād; in the context of the Dirār Mosque we are mainly concerned with ʿAbbād), was of the Aws Allāh.\footnote{She was of the Jaʿādira and, more precisely, of the Umayya b. Zayd b. Qays b. ʿĀmira b. Murra.} After having been married to Sahl’s father, who was of course of the Ḥanash, she divorced him and married no other than Abū Ḥabība b. al-Azʿar, who has just been mentioned as one of the builders (above, 113). As a result, Sahl (and presumably his brothers as well) had half-brothers belonging to the Ḏubayʿa, namely ʿAbdallāh and al-Nuʿmān, the sons of Abū Ḥabība b. al-Azʿar.\footnote{Ibn Saʿd, III, 471. (For another marriage link between the Ḥanash and the Jaʿādira, or more precisely, the Wāʾil b. Zayd, see Ibn Saʿd, VIII, 352.)}

Having noted the marriage of Sahl’s mother to Abū Ḥabība, we can now turn to the following curious coincidence: when Asʿad b. Zurāra, the \textit{naqīb} of the Najjār (Khazraj) died, the Prophet declared himself the \textit{naqīb} of the Najjār. He also became the guardian of Asʿad’s daughters.\footnote{Ibn Hishām, II, 154; Ibn Qudāma, \textit{Istībšār}, 58–2.} Finding a suitable match for the girls was naturally a major concern for the guardian and the Prophet gave one daughter, Ḥabība, to Sahl b. Ḥunayf.\footnote{She bore him Abū Umāma Asʿad b. Sahl; \textit{Baladh.}, \textit{Ansāb}, I, 243:14; Ibn Saʿd, III, 471. Sahl’s marriage to the daughter of the late \textit{naqīb} of the Najjār may have paved his way to positions of authority in the early Islamic state (below, 123); see Ibn Saʿd, VIII, 439–40.} He gave another daughter of Asʿad, Kabsha, to no other than Sahl’s half-brother, ʿAbdallāh b. Abī Ḥabība.\footnote{Ibn Saʿd, III, 440.}
So, considering Hanash’s incorporation into the Dubay’a, ‘Abbad’s inclusion in the list of builders is accounted for.

12. Bahzaj. He is a mysterious figure. Some biographical details on him are found in the following report (by Ibn ‘Abbās):

When the Messenger of God (ﷺ) built the Mosque of Qubā’, people of the Anṣār, among them Bahzaj, the grandfather [or ancestor] of ‘Abdallāh b. Ḥunayf, together with Wādī’a b. Khidhām and Mujammi’ b. Jāriya al-Anṣārī, went out and built Masjid al-nifāq. The Messenger of God said to Bahzaj: “Woe unto thee, Bahzaj, what did you wish to gain by what I see?” [waylaka yā Yakhdaj(!) mā aradta ilā mā arā; the alleged scolding took place at the site of the accursed mosque, while the Prophet was looking at it]. Bahzaj replied: "By God, I only meant to do good" (mā aradtu ilīa l-husnā).

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155 This is a nickname. The Lisān al-‘arab, s.v., quotes this interpretation, striking a note of skepticism (wa-‘llāhu a’lamu, “and God knows best”): said about a man, it means “short with a large belly”. A big belly gave another eponym of a Medinan clan his nickname: al-Ḥublā, “the pregnant woman”; Ibn Hazm, Ansāb, 354:3 (lugušba bi-dhalika bi-‘izam baṭnihi).

156 Printed: Bakhdaj!

157 This remark was made by the two commentators mentioned below (or by a scribe), not by Ibn ‘Abbās.

158 Printed: Ḥizām!

159 Gil, “The Medinan opposition”, 79 = Suyūṭī, Durr, III, 276:18, quoting the commentaries of Ibn Abī Hātim and Ibn Mardawayh; see GAS, I, 179 and 225, respectively. Also Tabarī, Tafsīr, XI, 19:10. Gil says that according to Suyūṭī, Bahzaj’s father is ‘Uthmān. But I could not find this in the Durr (which seems to be the source referred to by Gil). Gil’s summary of this dialogue is inaccurate. He says: “He once was asked by the Prophet what he thought about his views; he answered treacherously that he fully agreed with them”. Cf. a similar expression in Tab., V, 168 [I, 12]: mā aradta ilā mā šanā’ta. Gil (loc. cit., n. 30) refers to Ibn al-Najjār (Durra, 382), saying that this source calls him Makhdaj b. ‘Uthmān, “which means that he was Bījād’s brother”. In fact, Ibn al-Najjār includes in the participants’ list Maḥdaj (read: Bahzaj; his father’s name is not mentioned!) and Bījād b. ‘Uthmān. (True, the Sīra Shāmiyya, V, 676, quoting Ibn Ishaq, lists Bahzaj b. ‘Uthmān of the Dubay’a among the builders of the Dirār Mosque.)
There are a few indications that Bahzaj was of the Hanash. His name on the builders’ list is followed by this remark: *wa-huwa ilā B. Ḏubayʿa*, i.e., he was a client of the Ḏubayʿa.\(^{160}\) As we have seen, the Hanash were incorporated into the Ḏubayʿa as clients. This explains why in Ibn Ishāq’s list of *munāfiqūn*, towards the end of the names of those who belonged to the Ḏubayʿa, was ‘Abbād b. Ḥunayf (of the Ḥanash), followed immediately by our Bahzaj.\(^{161}\) That Bahzaj is a Ḥanāshī can also be deduced from the occurrence of this rare name in the pedigree of the Ḥanash.\(^{162}\) In short, there were two Ḥanāshīs involved in the Ḏirār incident.\(^{163}\)

The Hanash conclude this short prosopographical discussion on the builders of the Ḏirār Mosque. The final notes of this section concern the client status of the Hanash with regard to the position held by some of them in the nascent Islamic state. This presumably small and insignificant client group rose to considerable prominence under the Prophet and the early caliphs. There can be no doubt that on the eve of Islam their masters, the Ḏubayʿa,

\(^{160}\)E.g., *Tab.*, III, 111 [I, 1705].

\(^{161}\)Ibn Hishām, II, 169.

\(^{162}\)Gil, "The Medinan opposition", 79 suggests to replace “Bahzaj/‘Amr, son of Ḥanash”, by “Bahzaj b. Khansā bint Khidhām b. Khālid” in order to get as a result “Bahzaj/‘Amr, son of Khansā” and grandson of Khidhām b. Khālid”. He says: “We have just seen [the italics are mine — M.L.] that his real (or additional) name was ‘Amru, and that he was the grandson of Khidhām b. Khālid and the son of Khansā”. This reconstruction seems to me impossible. Our Bahzaj could not have been identical with Bahzaj/‘Amr b. Ḥanash who was the son of Ḥanash’s eponym, because Bahzaj/‘Amr lived seven generations before the Prophet’s time; Ibn Hazm, *Ansāb*, 336. Incidentally, it is not certain that Bahzaj’s name was ‘Amr; the pedigree of a woman belonging to the Ḥanash (al-Furayʿa, or Qurayba, bint Qays; Ibn Saʿd, VIII, 352) ends with “... b. ‘Amr b. Jusham, who was the one called Bahzaj, b. Ḥanash”; in other words, another name, Jusham/Bahzaj, appears between ‘Amr and Ḥanash. On the name cf. M. Marín, “Le nom Ḥanas dans l’onomastique arabe”, in *Cahiers d’onomastique arabe* 1982–1984, 51–55, at 52, no. 7.

\(^{163}\)“Bahraj”, as a name of a fortress in Qubā’ (above, 105n), should perhaps be read “Bahzaj”, but this is not certain: it belonged to the ‘Azīz b. Mālik subdivision of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf, while our Bahzaj was of the Ḥanash. (However, it could have become the property of the ‘Azīz after the presumed shift of the Ḥanash to the quarters of the Ḏubayʿa.)
were stronger and more prestigious; yet the Ḥanashīs, Sahl b. Ḥunayf and his brother ʿUthmān were given offices of authority. Sahl, who took part in the Battle of Badr,\textsuperscript{164} and his brother, ʿUthmān (but not their brother, ʿAbbād, who was a munāfiq and hence lacked Islamic credentials), were high officials in the Islamic state. As we have seen, Sahl received in marriage from the Prophet the daughter of the deceased naqīb of the Khazraj, Asʿad b. Zurāra. There are further reliable indications that the Prophet favoured him. He also gave him in marriage Umayma bint Bishr of the Umayya b. Zayd. She had been married to Thābit b. al-Daḥdāḥ and “fled from him to the Prophet” (i.e., making him her guardian), when her husband was still a pagan. She bore Sahl a son, ʿAbdallāh.\textsuperscript{165} Only two Anṣār, one of whom was Sahl, were among those who received a share in the estates of the expelled Naḍīr, the rest being of the Muhājirūn. “The two were poor” (kānā faqirayni/muḥtājayni), our source explains.\textsuperscript{166}

The leading families of the Anṣār preserved their power and prestige among the Anṣār (cf. above, 111n). Yet the new social and political order established by Islam created opportunities for qualified, less prestigious members of Medinan society to rise to prominence. They had to acquire the necessary Islamic credentials in the battlefield, display unwavering loyalty to the Prophet and, at a later period, convince the Qurashi sovereigns that they did not challenge their superiority (i.e., that they were not “subversive elements”). The Caliph ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb put ʿUthmān b. Ḥunayf in charge of the measurement of land in the recently-conquered Sawād of Iraq and the collection of land and poll taxes (mīṣāḥata l-ʿardīna wa-jibāyatahā wa-ḍarba l-kharāji wa-l-jizyati ʿalā ahliha).\textsuperscript{167} Both he and his brother, Sahl, served in ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib’s administration: ʿUthmān was ʿAlī’s governor in


\textsuperscript{165} Ibn Qudāma, \textit{Istibsār}, 282–83. Note that the list of Sahl’s children in Ibn Saʿd, III, 471 does not include ʿAbdallāh; however, one of the versions concerning Sahl’s kunya is Abū ʿAbdallāh.

\textsuperscript{166} Ibn Saʿd, III, 472; Waq., I, 379–80. The orchard of Sahl and the other Anṣārī, Abū Dujāna, was called \textit{māl} Ibn Kharasha (Kharasha being Abū Dujāna’s father or grandfather; \textit{Iṣāba}, VII, 119).

\textsuperscript{167} Ibn Qudāma, \textit{Istibsār}, 321.
Basra, while Sahl was 'Ali's governor in Medina, and later in Fārs.

When the Caliph 'Uthmān was prevented from leading the prayer, Sahl's son, Abū Umāma As'ad b. Sahl b. Ḥunayf, was chosen to lead the prayer (in the Prophet's Mosque).

The position of Sahl and 'Uthmān at the time of the "righteous caliphs" is noteworthy when we consider the client status of the Ḥanash. Their legal inferiority (cf. below, 137) may have made them more willing to support the new religion and, more significantly, rendered them less threatening and hence more appealing in the eyes of the Prophet and the later Qurashi rulers.

The enigma of Ghanm b. 'Awf and Sālim b. 'Awf

Having looked at the lists of participants in the Dirār incident we are now in a position to investigate the enigma of two groups referred to in connection with this event. Saʿīd b. Jubayr (above, 76) mentions the Ghanm b. 'Awf as the builders. These Ghanm, together with a seeming brother-clan called Sālim b. 'Awf, appear in a report from an unspecified source relating that people of the Ghanm b. 'Awf and the Sālim b. 'Awf "among whom there was nifāq" envied their fellow-tribesmen (qawmahum), the 'Amr b. 'Awf. Abū 'Āmir al-Rāhib, whom the Prophet called al-fāsiq ("the sinful, immoral"), was one of them.
To be sure, the names Ghanm, ‘Awf and Salim are rather common in Ansārī genealogies; but a plausible identification must be suggested within the lines already drawn above on the basis of the available evidence. There can be no doubt that our investigation must be limited to the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf because all the builders came from their ranks. The possibility that the mosque was put up by a group not living in Qubā’ should be ruled out: everything we have learnt about so far, and will learn of later in this chapter, suggests that the Ğirār incident was a local matter, involving the inhabitants of Qubā’.

It concerned a specific area of Qubā’ where both rival mosques, the Mosque of Qubā’ and the Mosque of Ğirār, were located. The assumption put forward by F. Buhl, and more recently M. Gil, that the builders of the Ğirār Mosque were of the Khazraj, cannot be accepted.\footnote{See Buhl, Leben, 329: the B. Salim b. ‘Awf who built the Ğirār Mosque were of the Khazraj. See esp. Gil, “The Medinan opposition”, 72, 87; idem, “The creed of Abū ‘Amir”, 45. Incidentally, the nickname Qāwqāl(a) does not mean “hospitalable people” (Gil refers to Tabari, II, 355 [I, 1212], but there is no interpretation of Qāwqāl[a] there). It conveys, as can be seen from some of the interpretations adduced by Gil himself, the concept of unlimited protection: a strong and prestigious clan grants protection beyond the confines of its own court; see, e.g., Waq., I, 167: in manā summiyya Qawqalā biannahu kānā idhā stajārā bihi rajulun qāla lahu: qawqīl bi-a’tā Yathrib wa-ṣafalhā fa-anīr āmnīn, fa-summiyya l-Qawqal; Ibn Sa’īd, III, 548: wa-kānā Qawqal lahu ʾizz, wa-kānā yaqālū li-l-khāʾif idhā jāʾahu: qawqīl ḥaythu shīʾta fa-innaka āmnīn; Ibn al-Kalbī, Nasab Maʾadd, I, 414: summiyya Qawqal biannā l-rayl kānā idhā nazala l-Madīna qīla lahu: qawqīl ḥaythu shīʾta, maʾnāhu nīl ḥaythu shīʾta; also Samh., I, 200:1: summi bi-dhālika li-annahum kānū idhā ajārū jāran qālū [printed: qālū!] lahu: qawqīl ḥaythu shīʾta. See correctly in Serjeant, “Meccan trade”, 483b: “when a man took protection (istajāra) with them they gave him an arrow and said: ‘Move about in Yathrib where you wish!’” (Ibn Hishām, II, 74: kānū idhā stajārā bihirī l-rayl dafāʾ ālā saḥman wa-qālū lahu: qawqīl bihi bi-Yathrib ḥaythu shīʾta; Ibn Hishām adds: al-qawqala dārb mina l-mashy). Cf. Fraenkel, “Das Schutzrecht der Araber”, 294–96. Cf. a similar background of the tribal appellative al-Jāʾdir(a) (cf. above, 34): when they granted someone protection they said: “jaʾdir, i.e., go, wherever you want, there is no fear for you” (jaʾdir ḥaythu shīʾta, ayyī dhhab ḥaythu shīʾta fa-lā baʾsa ʿalayka); Samh., I, 197.}

court (dār) belonging to the B. Sālim and B. Ghanm b. ‘Awf (below, 126n). But the mention of Abū ‘Amir and the builders' identity discussed above rule out the Khazraj option. The Sālim mentioned by Muqāṭil in connection with the Ğirār are in fact the B. al-Salm; above, 91.
While no satisfactory solution concerning the identity of these enigmatic groups can be reached, further discussion of previous research is in place here. Part of Gil’s evidence is irrelevant to the Dirar incident. As is well-known, tribal genealogies in general are often treacherous and misleading. Gil admits (p. 87) that “no names of specific persons of the Khazraj clans have been preserved to show us what their role was in the building of the mosque”. Yet he concludes (p. 91) that in the year 630 there was an “internal struggle” in which “the chief rivals were groups whose cores were two larger clans, the Zayd of Aws and the ‘Awf of Khazraj. A special position in the outstanding events of the period was held by the two sub-clans, apparently among the most noble and prestigious in Medina, the Ḍubay‘a and the Qawāqila”. Again, the assumed involvement of the Khazraj cannot be upheld because it contradicts all the available evidence on the identity of the participants in the Dirar incident.

It is true that “Ghanm b. ‘Awf” and “Ṣālim b. ‘Awf” can be found among the ‘Awf b. al-Khazraj whose court was close to Qubā’. No other subdivision of the Khazraj lived in such a close proximity to the Prophet’s Mosque and the Dirar Mosque.

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175 Gil, 87, n. 53 refers to Ibn Sa’d, III, 422: the Ghanm live near the masjid (wa-hum jirān al-maṣjid). However, these Ghanm, while being of the Khazraj, are not those whom Gil has in mind; they were not of the ‘Awf b. al-Khazraj but of the Najjar. Hence the mosque near which they lived was the Prophet’s Mosque. Quite remarkably, Gil quotes Mas‘ūdi, Tanbih, 272:11 who says that the Dirar Mosque was located in the court of the Sālim: “Salm!” b. ‘Awf mina l-Aws (through what must have been a printing error, the last two words are missing from Gil’s note).

176 However, he refers in this context to Abū Khaythama, one of those who stayed behind when the expedition of Tabūk set out, who was of the Sālim. But his name and clan’s name are much disputed and he is not linked to the Dirar incident but to the expedition of Tabūk.

177 See also Watt’s suggestions (Medina, 167) concerning three people called “Ṣālim”. They seem to me unfounded: Wāqif was known as Mālik, not as Sālim, though he indeed had a brother called al-Salm (not Sālim); Ibn Ḥazm, Ansāb, 344; Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhara, 644.

178 Lecker, “On the markets of Medina”, 135f. The court (dār) of the B. Sālim and B. Ghanm b. ‘Awf b. ‘Amr b. ‘Awf b. al-Khazraj (between Qubā and Medina) included a fortress called utum al-Qawāqil near al-‘Aṣaba, which belonged to the Sālim b. ‘Awf (i.e., to one of the two groups inhabiting the above-mentioned court); Samh., I, 199–200; cf. Wellhausen, Skizzen IV, 37, n. 1. It is also true that some Khazrajīs (of the Zurayq) who were the
propinquity to Qubā' and the nearby village of al-‘Aṣaba.\textsuperscript{179} It may also be added that a man who according to some belonged to these Sālim b. ‘Awf, Malik b. al-Dukhshum, allegedly scurried (together with a client of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf) from his own house to the Dirar Mosque, carrying a burning palm-branch (which suggests that the two places were at the most a few hundred meters apart).\textsuperscript{180} But this is not decisive and we still have no real evidence of Khazrajī involvement in the building of the Dirar Mosque. Some five centuries ago, the outstanding critical and penetrating historian of Medina, Samhūdī, well aware of this difficulty, noted that Abū 'Āmir was of the Dubay‘a, of the Aws, while the Ghanm b. ‘Awf and the Sālim b. ‘Awf were of the Khazraj, and were not in Qubā’. This, he cautiously reasoned, should be examined.\textsuperscript{181} So the conclusion remains that the Dirar incident was strictly a Qubā’ affair and involved the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf and their clients.

At this point, some comments about the destruction of the mosque are called for. To begin with, we shall deal with the man who scurried with a burning palm-branch. The common version concerning his origin makes him a member of the ‘Awf of the Khazraj:

\textsuperscript{179} The inhabitants of al-‘Aṣaba, the Jahjabā, once ambushed a Najjārī married to a woman of the Sālim b. ‘Awf. He was rescued by the Qawāqil; Aghānī, XIII, 123:20; Wellhausen, \textit{Skizzen} IV, 42–43. The mothers of Uḥayha b. al-Julāh (Jahjabā) and Malik b. al-‘Ajlān (Qawāqila) were sisters; Watt, \textit{Medina}, 156 (I could not find the source of this statement). Cf. Hassān, \textit{Diwān}, II, 37, 41: Malik’s mother was of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf.

\textsuperscript{180} A Shi‘ite \textit{tafsīr} specifically mentions the court of the Sālim (read: al-Salm?) as the site of the mosque proposed by the \textit{munaṣṣīqūn}; al-Qummī (3rd/9th–4th/10th century), \textit{Tafsīr}, ed. Ṭayyib al-Mūsawī al-Jazā‘īrī, Najaf 1386/1966, I, 305: yā rasūla llāhi, a-ta‘dhanu lanā an nabniya masjidan fī B. Sālim li-l-‘alāil wa-l-laylati l-maṭīra wa-l-shaykhī l-fānī? Also \textit{Bihār al-anwār}, XXI, 255 (quoting al-Qummī). The same source tells how the above-mentioned Malik b. al-Dukhshum asked his partner (here called ‘Āmir b. ‘Adi, read: ‘Āsim b. ‘Adi) to wait for him until he fetched a torch from his house: \textit{intazīrīn ḥattā ukhrīja nāran min manzilī fa-dakhala fa-ja‘a bi-nār wa-ash‘ala fī sa‘afi l-nakhb thumma ash‘alahu fī l-masjid fa-tafarraqū; Qummī, loc. cit.}

\textsuperscript{181} See Samh., II, 817.
he was Malik b. al-Dukhshum or b. al-Dukhayshin of the ‘Awf b. al-Khazraj. But according to others he was of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. Yet others said that he was of the Khuzá‘a.

As a front-line warrior of Islam, Malik is quite a dubious character. He was accused by a member of his clan, in the latter’s house, of being a munāfiq. Malik, we are told, was a munāfiq, even a prominent one, who did not love God and His Messenger. His marriage at some stage to Jamila, the daughter of the Prophet’s adversary ‘Abdallāh b. Ubayy, could not have contributed to his reputation. Considering all this, Malik’s role in the Dirār incident, if at all historical, could be an act of expiation. But it seems more likely that the report on his part in the incident is “literary expiation”, in other words, it belongs to the realm of apologetics. If this is correct, then the report had to originate with one of his descendants or fellow tribesmen.

The above discussion admittedly leaves us with no satisfactory identification of the Ghanm and Sālim whom some mention as the builders of the Dirār Mosque. There are two possibilities. Either our information on the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf genealogy is incomplete, or these groups were invented in a clumsy ploy to divert the blame from the real builders. The first possibility is un-

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182 Ţabrīzī, Taṣfīr, X, 143–5; Bihār al-anwār, XXI, 254. Similarly, Zurqānī, III, 80:14 calls him al-Awwāl. Also the Isāba, V, 721 calls him al-Awwāl, adding that his pedigree was disputed. The report on his exploit (which is a fragment of a longer report) exists in two versions: Malik with another man, and Malik with others; see, e.g., Samh., II, 816. At first glance, it seems that the text in Waq., III, 1046 suggests that the mosque which was burnt down was that of the Sālim who were, according to some, Malik’s clan. But the word masjid is clearly a dittography; cf. Ibn Hishām, IV, 174.

183 Qummī, Taṣfīr, I, 305 (printed Malik b. al-Dj.sh.m.).

184 See, e.g., Usd al-ghāba, IV, 278.

185 Pāṭh al-bārī, I, 435:22; Taḥārānī, Kabīr, XVIII, 25 f (see, e.g., p. 26: kahfa l-munāfiqīna wa-ma‘wahum); Ibn Qudāma, Istibṣār, 192.

186 Ibn Sa‘d, III, 549. He was her third husband (she had four); Ibn Sa‘d, VIII, 382–83. Their daughter, al-Furay‘a, married Hilāl b. Umayya of the Waqīf; Ibn Sa‘d, VIII, 380. (Hilāl was also married to Mulayka bint ‘Abdallāh b. Ubayy; Ibn Sa‘d, VIII, 383.)

187 Cf. the curious claim made by some that Waḥshī, who slew the Prophet’s uncle, Ḥamza, in the Battle of Uḥud, was one of those who killed Musaylima in the Battle of Yamāma; Isāba, VI, 601.
satisfactory. There are certainly lacunae in our data on Ansārī genealogies, but having studied the list of builders in much detail, it may be confidently put that their precise tribal affiliation was not to a group called Ghanm b. ʿAwf or another called Sālim b. ʿAwf. This leaves us with the admittedly inconvenient latter alternative, namely that the groups were invented.188

The location of the Dirār Mosque

We now shift the focus from the individuals and clans to the geographical evidence. In view of the list of participants, there can be no doubt that the Dirār Mosque was in the territory of the Zayd b. Mālik. But the evidence permits us to go beyond this general statement.

Concerning the court in which the Dirār Mosque was located, there are two versions, both relating to members of the Zayd:

1. According to one version (Ibn Isḥāq, as well as one of the reports in Wāqidī), it was in the court of Khidhām b. Khālid (of the ʿUbayd b. Zayd): wa-ukhrija min dār Khidhām b. Khālid, i.e., he donated the land to build it.189

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188 Note that the Ghanm b. ʿAwf appear in the “friendliest” account as far as the culprits are concerned, i.e., Saʿīd b. Jubbayr’s. Ignorance of Ansārī genealogies on Saʿīd’s part must be ruled out: Saʿīd, a mawālī of the Asad (who rebelled with Ibn al-Ashʿath and was executed by al-Ḥajjāj in 95/714) lived in Kūfā and had access to many Ansārī informants. On him see Tahdīḥ, IV, 11–14; Dhahabi, Nubalāʾ, IV, 321–43; Ibn Saʿd, IV, 256–67. Ayyūb who transmits from Saʿīd is Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī. Saʿīd’s Shiʿite sympathies are possibly alluded to in his remark that since the murder of Husayn he would read the whole of the Qurʿān every other night unless he was on a journey or sick; Ibn Saʿd, VI, 259–60. Note in this context that one of the builders of the Dirār Mosque, Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā b. Jāriya, and the grandson of another builder, Thābit b. Wādīʾa b. Khidhām (b. Khālid), settled in Kūfā; Ibn Saʿd, VI, 52. On Thābit’s son, Yazīd, see Ibn Saʿd, V, 260.

189 The same phrase is also used in another context. Ibn al-Kalbī, Nasab Maʿadd, 144 reports that Tālq b. ʿAmr b. Hammām b. Murra of the Kinda built the mosque of B. Murra (viz., for the descendants of his great-grandfather Murra) in his court: wa-huwa lladhi banā masjid B. Murra wa-akhrājuhu min dārihi.
2. As mentioned in another version (Waqidi), it was in the court of Wadi’a b. Thabit (of the Umayya b. Zayd).\(^{190}\) The existence of two versions is confirmed by another source who says, while listing the munāfiqūn of the Aws: *wa-Khidham b. Khalid, wa-huwa lladhi ukhrija masjidu l-dirār min dārihi, wa-yuqālu innā lladhi akhrajahu min dārihi Wadi’a b. Thabit.*\(^{191}\) Gil commented: “According to Ibn Hishām the mosque was built as an addition to the house of Khidham b. Khalid, whereas Waqidī says it was part of the house of Wadi’a b. Thabit, adjacent to that of Abū ‘Amir”.\(^{192}\) Before discussing these statements in some detail, it should be noted that it is better to render *dār* as “court”.\(^{193}\)

In fact, Waqidī (pp. 1047, 1048) refers to the location of the Dirār Mosque three times:

1. In the somewhat vague expression *wa-kāna min dāri Wadi’a b. Thabit, wa-dārū Abī‘ Amir ilā janbihimā, fa-ahraqūhumā ma`ahu.* I.e., the court of Wadi’a in which the Dirār Mosque was located, and the adjacent court of Abū ‘Amir were burnt down, together with the Dirār Mosque.\(^{194}\)

2. In the list of builders, the expression *wa-min dārihi ukhrija* follows the name of Khidham b. Khalid. But the insertion of the

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\(^{190}\) Ibn Hishām, IV, 174; Waq., III, 1047. The editor’s addition of “Khidham b. Khalid” between square brackets is unwarranted since the text should read: *wa-Wadi’a b. Thabit, wa-min dārihi ukhrija.*

\(^{191}\) Baladh., Ansāb, I, 277.

\(^{192}\) “The Medinan opposition”, 71.

\(^{193}\) See Kister, “The massacre of the Banū Qurayza”, 74, n. 39. Also Wellhausen, Skizzen IV, 17–18: “Die kleinste politische Einheit war die Dār. Das Wort wird öfters sehr irreführend mit Haus wiedergegeben, es bedeutet stets einen Komplex zusammengehöriger Wohnungen. Es ist Gehöft und Sippe zugleich”. For *dār* as the smallest unit of the *khitta* in the garrison cities (“in the case of prominent individuals often a sizable estate [usually known as *katīra*], otherwise a modest plot of land occupied by one or several families”), see *El*\(^2\), s.v. *Khitta*, 23a (P. Crone).

\(^{194}\) The alternative reading, *wa-kāna min dāri ... wa-dārī ...*, *ilā janbihimā*, while possible (“and it was near the court of ... and the court of ..., on their side”); for *min* denoting distance cf. W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language*, Cambridge 1955, II, 132), is less likely because we already know that according to one version, the mosque was in Wadi’a’s court.
name by the editor in this place is inappropriate (above, 130n) as it should come after Wadī’a’s name.

3. ‘Āṣim b. ‘Adī’s report about the works on the roof of the mosque (below, 142) includes this expression: \(\text{wa-ukhrija min dār Khidham b. Khālid}\) (followed immediately by: \(\text{wa-Wadī’a b. Thābit fi hā’ulā’i l-nafar}\)). In sum, Wāqīḍī has both versions concerning the court in which the_DIRAR MOSQUE was located.

The account on the burning down of the_DIRAR MOSQUE, though possibly apocryphal, shows in any case that the courts of Wadī’a (Umayya b. Zayd) and, more significantly of Abū ‘Āmir al-Rāhib (Dubay’a b. Zayd), were close to this mosque.\(^{195}\)

It is rather tempting to prefer one of the versions about the location of the_DIRAR MOSQUE, i.e., the Khidham version \(\text{(wa-ukhrija min dār Khidham b. Khālid)}\) because of two further pieces of information: first, Abū Lubāba’s above-mentioned marriage to Khidham’s daughter; and second, the fact that Abū Lubāba’s house was built near the site of the_DIRAR MOSQUE.\(^{196}\) Interpretations may vary, but the mere juxtaposition of these details demonstrates how the evidence can be put to work.

We follow the lead of the evidence concerning Abū Lubāba and his descendants to find out about the Jewish presence in Qubā’, probably in the very area where the_DIRAR MOSQUE was built. It is not clear exactly how this evidence should be associated with the incident — it will be remembered that Muqāṭīl b. Sulaymān called Abū ‘Āmir al-Rāhib: \(\text{al-yahūdi}\) (above, 88); but it is important nevertheless.

\(^{195}\) Gil, “The Medinan opposition”, 78 wrongly identifies Wadī’a b. Khidham b. Khālid with Wadī’a b. Thābit: the former was of the ‘Ubayd b. Zayd and the latter of the Umayya b. Zayd. Wāqīḍī (III, 1047, 1048) does not say, as Gil believes, that the_DIRAR MOSQUE “was made from the house of Wadī’a b. Thābit”, he merely lists Wadī’a b. Thābit as one of the builders. Referring to Ibn Hishām, III, 200 and Tab., II, 554 [I, 1452], Gil says that Wadī’a b. Khidham was a supporter and friend of the Jewish Naḍīr. But the Wadī’a in that report was of the ‘Awf b. al-Khazraj and could not have been identical with our Wadī’a b. Khidham, who was of the Aws.

\(^{196}\) Waq., III, 1047:7 (if I understand the text correctly). Perhaps the Prophet, who gave Khidham’s daughter in marriage to Abū Lubāba, also turned over to him part of his father-in-law’s court.
The clue is provided by records concerning Abū Lubāba and his descendants. We have just seen that after the destruction of the Dirār Mosque, Abū Lubāba (a member of the Umayya b. Zayd) built a house near it. Skipping three generations, we find a court owned by Abū Lubāba’s great-grandson (and before him presumably by Abū Lubāba’s son and grandson) which must have had Abū Lubāba’s property as its nucleus. We now take a closer look at the evidence concerning Abū Lubāba’s offspring. Abū Lubāba’s son, al-Sā’ib (who was the grandson of Khidhām b. Khālid), had a wife from among the Quda’a whose father was a client (ḥalīf) of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. She bore al-Sā’ib a son, Ḥusayn, and a daughter, Mulayka. Ḥusayn’s son, Tawba, who was Abū Lubāba’s great-grandson owned a spacious court in Qubā’ on the site of the former fortress of Thābit b. Abī al-Aqlah of the Ḍubay’ā, that is, al-Marawih fortress. By Tawba’s time the fortress was presumably in ruins, and it is in fact reported that the ruins were located in Tawba’s court. Obviously, the people of Medina remembered the fortresses and their locations long after the structures’ disappearance from the landscape.

But we are concerned here with the ruins of another fortress included in Tawba’s court. Ibn Zabāla, to whom we owe much of what we know on the Jews of Medina, reports:

In Qubā’ there was a Jew who had a fortress called ‘Āṣim (“the defender”) which was located in [what

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197 She must have been of the ‘Ajlān of Baḥī (on whom, see below), since ‘Ajlān appears in her pedigree.
198 Ibn Sa’d, V, 78. “Bishr b. al-Sā’ib” in Samh., I, 194:2 is presumably a misprint; read: Bashīr b. al-Sā’ib. Note that according to some, Abū Lubāba’s name was Bashīr (while others have the diminutive form, Bushayr); see Lecker, “The Anṣārī wives of ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb and his brother, Zayd” (forthcoming). For entries on Ḥusayn b. al-Sā’ib see Usd al-qhaba, II, 17; Isābā, II, 211.
199 Maghānim, s.v., 374 (where the text is corrupt, as was noticed by the editor himself); ‘Umdat al-akhbār, 357–58; Samh., s.v. al-Marāwīḥ, II, 1303; above, 105. Cf. the Wāqīm fortress, which belonged to the descendants (Āl) of Abū Lubāba, above, 57. Tawba’s brother, al-Ḥajjāj, is mentioned by Ibn Ḥazm, Ansāb, 334:3.
later became] the court of Tawba b. Husayn b. al-Sā'īb b. Ābī Lubāba. In it [i.e., in the fortress] the well called Qubā’ was located.

Samhūdī complements Ibn Zabāla’s words with a passage from Zayn al-Dīn al-Marāghī (d. 816/1413), the author of a history of Medina entitled Tahqiq al-nuṣra fi talkhīṣ maʿālim dār al-hijrā.200 Samhūdī suggests that the copy of Ibn Zabāla’s book which he himself used is defective:

Qubā’ was given its name after a well located in it, called Qubār.201 But they considered the well’s name a bad omen (fa-tatayyarū minha) [i.e., because of its association with qabr, “grave”] and called it Qubā’, as was reported by Ibn Zabāla.202

The Jewish owner of the ‘Āşim fortress was al-Muʿtariḍ b. al-Ashwas, said to have been of the Naḍīr.203 The same al-Muʿtariḍ

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200 GAL, I, 360.

201 Printed: H.bār. However, we know from Samhūdī’s comment later on the same page that al-Marāghī has: Q.ṭār, which Samhūdī amends to Qubār, relying on another source which quotes Ibn Zabāla. See also al-Marāghī, Tahqiq al-nuṣra, MS Br. Lib. Or. 3615, 18a (where the reading appears to be: Q.ṭār). Q.ṭār does have some claim to authenticity because of the bad omen associated with it: qatara, said of subsistence, means: “it was barely sufficient” (Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon, s.v.). Qitrā and Ābū Qitrā are nicknames of the devil; Lisan al-ʿarab, the end of s.v. Elsewhere there is yet another variant concerning the former name of Qubā’. Gil, “The creed of Ābū ʿĀmir”, 29 prefers the reading Qubādh (= Ābū Ḥātim al-Sijistānī, al-Muʿammarrāṇa, ed. ʿAbd al-Munʿim ʿĀmir, Cairo 1961 [bound with al-Waṣṣāyā by the same author], 91, quoting Ibn al-Kalbî). Interestingly, the al-Muʿammarrāṇa report explicitly refers to the former name of Qubā’ as one used by the Jews, and to the latter, Qubā’, as one used by the Anṣār (kānati l-yahūd tusammī Qubā’: Qubādh, bi-l-dhāl, fa-sammathā l-Anṣār Qubā’). The name “Qubādh” could be referred to as evidence of Sassanian influence in pre-Islamic Medina, but the bad omen associated with the name according to Ibn Zabāla (see below) supports the reading Qubār.


203 Samh., I, 163:3; Magḥānim, 331 quoting al-Zubayr (i.e., al-Zubayr b. Bakkār’s Akhbār al-Madīna, GAS, I, 318); ʿUmdat al-akhbār, 341; Ibn Rusta, 61 (who quotes a report from Tawba b. al-Ḥasan [read: al-Ḥusayn] b. al-Sāʿīb b. Ābī Lubāba). In Wüstenfeld, Medina, 29 the name Tawba is
owned two more fortresses mentioned by Fīrūzābādī: al-A‘naq, located in the orchard (mal) called al-Barda‘a, and Śīṣa, in the orchard of al-Samna (the reading of the last place-name, as is always the case with rare place-names, is uncertain). The three (probably adjacent) fortresses later became the property of one Salama b. Umayya of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. The name Śīṣa clearly points to the Zayd b. Mālik who owned the fourteen fortresses called al-Ṣayāṣī in Raḥbat B. Zayd (above, 104).

In the 7th/13th century, Ibn al-Najjār wrote that the Ḍirār Mosque was close to that of Qubā‘. It was large, had high walls and its stones were taken (i.e., to be used as building material). Its construction was sound. But in the 8th/14th century, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Maṭarī looked for the Ḍirār Mosque and found no trace of it around the Mosque of Qubā‘ or in any other place. Samhūdī (d. 911/1505) says that this is true for al-Maṭarī’s time and for his own time. The description of the mosque by Ibn al-Najjār shows, Samhūdī adds, that it existed in this form in Ibn al-Najjār’s time.

Garbled (“Buweima”). This ‘Āṣim fortress in Qubā‘ should not be confused with another fortress called ‘Āṣim located in the Sāfīla; Ḍaghānim and Samh., s.v. ‘Āṣim.

Maghānim, 331. We were earlier told that the ‘Āṣim fortress was in Tawba’s court; but there is no difficulty here since Salama presumably lived during a much later period (and might have been a descendant of Tawba).

Samh., II, 818; Ibn al-Najjār (above, 98n), Durra, 382: wa-hādhā l-masjid qarīb min masjid Qubā‘ wa-huwa kabīr wa-ḥiṭānahu ‘āliya wa-tu’khadhu minhu l-ḥijāra wa-qaḍ kāna binā’ahu maṭīnan (Samh. has: maṭīhan!). Cf. the alleged instructions which Aḥū ʿĀmir sent from Syria to the munāfiqūn of his clan: they should build a mosque in opposition to the Mosque of Qubā‘ and in order to humble it (muqāwamatan li-masjid Qubā‘ wa-tahqīran lahu), because he would arrive with an army to drive Muhammad and his companions out of Medina. They built it and said: “Aḥū ʿĀmir will come and pray in it, and we shall [meanwhile] make it a place of worship”; Samh., II, 817 (this is an ingenious attempt at bridging the gap between the stronghold and mosque themes).


As for the claim made by al-Maṭarī, that Ibn al-Najjār was wrong, Samhūdī quotes Majd al-Dīn al-Fīrūzābādī who says that from its existence at the time of Ibn al-Najjār it does not follow that it still stood (viz., that it could be located and identified—M.L.) in later times, and Ibn al-Najjār either quoted an earlier authority or saw it himself. As a possible source of Ibn
Besides the 'Amr b. 'Awf, Qubā' was inhabited by clients of other Ansārī clans and, more significantly, by a large population of clients belonging to the Balī (a branch of the big tribal coalition of Quḍā'ā). Many, if not all of the Balawīs, converted to Judaism at some stage. Of the Balawī clans, only the 'Ajlān concern us in connection with the Dirār incident. They were the clients of the Zayd b. Mālik and it is not surprising that they were involved in the incident. None of the 'Ajlānīs participated in the building of the Dirār Mosque, but one of them helped to destroy it, while another later received the site on which it had been erected in order to put up a house for himself.

The sīra lists of participants in major battles and other events have not yet been subjected to detailed study. Such a study will have to gauge the differences between the early Islamic historians and show us whether, and to what extent, we can speak of a common list agreed upon by these historians. In any case, even in the present state of our knowledge we certainly cannot discard the testimony of the lists as sources of historical information.208 The investigation of the Aws Allāh previously in this book (Ch. 2) has shown that they were absent from the major events of early Islam; hence, the lists which do not record them as participants do reflect historical fact. So, until further detailed research shows this approach to be wrong, the list of Badrīs should be considered as a general indicator of a clan’s attitude to the Prophet in 2 A.H.

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In the present context we are mainly concerned with a comparison between the Zayd b. Mālik and their clients of the ‘Ajlān. Wāqīdī, for example, lists a total of fifteen warriors of the three subdivisions of the Zayd: nine of the Umayya b. Zayd, five of the Ḍubay‘a b. Zayd and one of the ‘Ubayd b. Zayd. This is followed by seven warriors belonging to their clients (wa-min ḥulafā‘ihi). With the exception of one (Sālim, mawla Thubayta bint Ya‘ār), these clients were of the ‘Ajlān. In sum, in Badr we find fifteen warriors of the Zayd and six of their clients, the ‘Ajlān.209

We owe our knowledge of the ‘Ajlānīs in Badr to a member of the ‘Ajlān themselves: Wāqīdī concludes the list of Badrīs with an ʿisnād going back to the ‘Ajlānī Abū l-Baddāḥ who was the son of the Companion ‘Āṣim b. ‘Adī (see below, 138). Abū l-Baddāḥ is certainly the source of the list of clients who fought in Badr (most of whom were of his own clan), but he might also have been the source of the list of the Zayd.210 Abū l-Baddāḥ was a tribal informant who collected and transmitted (or “specialized in”) reports on the history of his clan.211

The number of ‘Ajlānīs in Badr is impressive and seems to show that already in 2 A.H. the Prophet had a considerable following among them. It can be compared to the contribution of the Jahjābā of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf who sent only one warrior to Badr, together with another warrior who belonged to their Balawī

209 Ibn Qudāma, ʿIstibṣār, 297 says that Ma‘n b. ‘Adī al-Balawī was a ʿhalif of the ‘Ubayd. He is presumably misled by the list of Badrīs which creates this impression by listing the ‘Ajlān immediately after the ‘Ubayd (see, e.g., Ibn Hishām, II, 345); in fact, the ‘Ajlān were the clients of the Zayd b. Mālik as a whole; see above, 103.

210 The list in Ibn Hishām, II, 345–46 is almost identical with Wāqīdī’s (Ṣālim is not mentioned). Ibn Sa‘d, III, 465–68 concludes with the ‘Ajlānī Badrīs the section on the Zayd who participated in Badr. For the genealogy of the ‘Ajlān, see Ibn Ḥazm, ʿAnsāb, 443.5; Ibn al-Kalbī, ʿNasāb Ma‘add, II, 711.

211 Another tribal informant among the ‘Ajlān was a descendant of ʿAbdallāh b. Salīma, a Companion who participated in Badr and was killed in Uhud: Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAjlānī “had stories which he related on the affairs of the people” (wa-kānat ‘indaḥu ṣāḥīḥa yaʿrwīhā min umūrī l-nās). Ibn al-Kalbī and others met him and transmitted from him; Ibn Sa‘d, III, 468. Another ‘Ajlānī, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Amr (Muḥammad’s father?) is Ibn Zabala’s source for a report on the origin of the name Qubā‘; see Samh., II, 1285. On Qubā‘/Qubār cf. above, 133.
clients, the Unayf. The testimony of the lists of munāfiqūn is rather telling: we find in them many of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf but none of the ‘Ajlān or indeed any other Balawī clan inhabiting Qubā’.

ON THE STATUS OF CLIENTS

Before discussing the role of the ‘Ajlān in the Dirār incident, a comment should be made on the status of clients in the tribal society of Medina. In most aspects of daily life one could not tell a client from a clan member. Economically, the clients of the Balī could have been as prosperous as the Aws and Khazraj or even more; after all, they had been in Medina before the Aws and Khazraj arrived. We even find a marriage with a leading family of the Ansār, which indicates that socially they were not held to be inferior.

A client could play an influential role in the politics of pre-Islamic Medina. We have evidence relating to ‘Āşim b. ‘Adī, the leader (sayyid) of the ‘Ajlān who was a client of the Zayd b. Mālik. His name is linked to a poorly-documented expulsion of sections of the Aws from Medina in the pre-Islamic period since he was instrumental in the conclusion of a treaty between the expelled Aws and the Muzayna. The details of this event are found in the interpretation of a place-name reportedly called after ‘Āşim:

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213 See, e.g., Ibn Hishām, II, 166–70; Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 467–69.
214 Ábu al-Dāhdāh, a client of the Ansār (probably of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf: Ábū Lubāba was his nephew [ibn ukhtīḥis]; Ibn Qudāma, Istibsār, 339) owned two groves, one in the ‘Āliya and the other in the Sāfiya; one of these groves included six hundred palm-trees; Qurṭūbī, al-Jam‘i ‘l-ahkām al-qur‘ān, III, 238:7.
215 The Aws Allāh leader, Ábū Qays b. al-Aslat, married Kabsha or Kubaysha bint Ma‘n b. ‘Āşim al-Ansāriyya; Isāba, VIII, 92. She was his wife until he died and a son of Ábū Qays (from another woman) wished to marry her; Ibn Qudāma, Istibsār, 332 (she is called here Kabsha bint ‘Āşim al-Awsiyya; the ambiguity concerning her name is a result of a confusion between the two brothers Ma‘n b. ‘Adī and ‘Āşim b. ‘Adī). Cf. W. Robertson Smith, Kinship & Marriage in Early Arabia 2, London 1907, 109n.
216 Isāba, III, 572.
217 See his pedigree in Usd al-ghāba, III, 75.
Dhū ‘Āṣim is one of the wadis of al-‘Aqīq [south-west of Medina]. It was given this name because when the Aws were expelled from Medina and stayed in the Naqīr [i.e., the upper, southern part of the ‘Aqīq Valley], they concluded a treaty with the Muzayna. The man who concluded the treaty between the two parties [viz., mediated between them] was ‘Āṣim b. ‘Adī b. al-‘Ajlān, and the branch of the valley (shu‘ba) where the treaty was concluded was called Shu‘bat ‘Āṣim after him.\textsuperscript{218}

Yet, in one crucial aspect, the pre-Islamic Balawī client was inferior to the fully-accredited member of the clan: he could not grant security which was binding for the fully-accredited members.\textsuperscript{219} This serious legal restriction placed the client in an underprivileged position. The tribal society was sensitive to such differences and did not allow this clearly defined distinction between fully-accredited members and clients to be blurred. The most telling testimony that the distinction was preserved, and became a burden, is derived from the genealogical literature, namely from the evidence of the attempts by some Balawīs to fake an Anṣārī pedigree for themselves or their ancestors (above, 65).

As we have seen, ‘Āṣim b. ‘Adī was an important figure in Medinan society already before Islam. He preserved this status, and possibly became more prosperous, at the time of the Prophet. He is not said to have fought in Badr: there were obviously limits, so to speak, as to what his son, Abū l-Baddāḥ, a specialist in the history of the clan, could do for his father’s Islamic reputation. Yet something could be done: we are told that when the Prophet was on his way to Badr, he sent ‘Āṣim (i.e., the text implies that ‘Āṣim was with him on the way to Badr) back to Medina to the (people of the) Dirār Mosque (!) “because of something [i.e., something suspicious, a plot] which had become known to

\textsuperscript{218}Samh., s.v. ‘Āṣim, II, 1260–61.

\textsuperscript{219}Cf. Fraenkel, “Das Schutzrecht der Araber”, 296: “Ein Einzelner kann durch seine Schutzgewährung den ganzen Stamm binden; doch hat der Beisasse (Halif) im Gegensatze zu dem mächtigeren Hauptstamme dazu kein Recht”. 
THE DIRĀR MOSQUE

him about them".220 Another source replaces the Ḍirār Mosque with a less problematic expression: when the Prophet wanted to set out for Badr, he put ‘Āṣim in charge of Qubā’ and the people of the ‘Āliya “because of something that became known to him about them” (khallafa ‘Āṣim b. ‘Adī ‘alā Qubā’ wa-ahli l-‘Āliya li-shay’ balaghahu ‘anhum). ‘Āṣim reportedly received his share in the spoils of Badr221 (this is a way of saying that the Prophet recognized him as a Badrī with full rights, although he had not been on the battlefield). Both versions have no historical value. Returning from the way to the battlefield, or staying behind under the Prophet’s instructions, are common themes or topoi in the sīra, sometimes combined with the mention of spoils.222 Thus, ‘Āṣim could claim the status of Badrī without having to be listed as a warrior; he wanted to fight but had to remain behind to carry out an important task.

A more detailed report names three persons who were on duty in Medina at that time: Abū Lubāba (of the Umayya b. Zayd) was in charge of Medina, ‘Āṣim b. ‘Adī was in charge of Qubā’ and the people of the ‘Āliya, and al-Ḥārith b. Ḥāṭib (yet another member of the Umayya b. Zayd) was given an unspecified job in connection with the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf (amarahu bi-amrihi fi B. ‘Amr b. ‘Awf).223 This report, which reveals an evident ambiguity and overlapping in their alleged areas of authority, is not historical. It is a secondary product, created by the combination of three independent and unsynchronized reports of tribal historiography. Nonetheless, it is valuable for what it teaches us on the creative ways of tribal historiography.

Unsurprisingly, the appointment of ‘Āṣim in charge of Qubā’ and the people of the ‘Āliya was reported by ‘Āṣim’s son, Abū

221 Ibn Sa’d, III, 466. Ibn Qudāma, Istibṣār, 298 has both versions. Cf. Watt, Medina, 236 (“During the Badr expedition there was another deputy in the suburb of Qubā’, perhaps because this district was still mainly non-Muslim”).
222 For example, it was claimed that on the way to Badr, Khawwāt b. Jubayr of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf suffered from a leg injury and had to be sent back; Ṭṣāba, II, 346.
223 Waq., I, 101; Ibn Sa’d, III, 457, 461.
Baddāḥ, who in his turn quoted ‘Āsim himself.224 This spurious report conveys the notion that ‘Āsim could be relied on even when his loyalty to the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf, whose client he was, conflicted with his loyalty to the Prophet; or, indeed, this was so especially when such a conflict arose. Seen in this light, the reference to the Dirār Mosque in connection with ‘Āsim’s obscure assignment at the time of Badr (anachronistic or not) is meaningful: in the Dirār incident, as we shall see, the ‘Ajlān supported the Prophet against the most influential families of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf.

After the conquest of Khaybar, ‘Āsim was in charge of a share of its produce allotted to one hundred warriors.225 His pregnant wife was among the Muslim women who attended that expedition and in Khaybar she reportedly gave birth to a daughter named Sahla.226 ‘Āsim is said to have helped in supplying food for the warriors in the expedition of Tabūk (providing seventy, ninety or a hundred camel-loads of dates).227 ‘Āsim, then, seems to have offered the Prophet unconditional support and the same would have been true of his brother, Ma‘n. Ma‘n’s role in the early Islamic period was less prominent than his brother’s. Ma‘n participated in the great ‘Aqaba meeting and in the main battles of the Prophet, and was killed fighting against Musaylima in Yamāma.228

We return now to the role of the ‘Ajlān in the Dirār incident. Wāqidī mentions ‘Āsim b. ‘Adī and Mālik b. al-Dukhshum

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224 Isāba, III, 572–73 (printed: Qaddāḥ!); Ibn Sa‘d, III, 466. On Abū l-Baddāḥ see, e.g., Waq., III, 1110 (his Hadīth was transmitted by Abū Bakr [b. Muḥammad b. ‘Amr] b. Hazm); Isāba, III, 573; Dhahabī, Nubalā’, I, 321; Ibn Sa‘d, V, 261 (he died in 117/735 aged 84). Some claimed that Abū l-Baddāḥ was a Companion, but Ibn Hajar refutes this claim with convincing arguments; Isāba, VII, 48–49; Ibn Qudāma, Istībšār, 299; also Ibn Sa‘d, III, 461.


226 Waq., II, 685. ‘Āsim was considered a desirable match. His daughter, Sahla, married, presumably around 20 A.H., ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. ‘Awf, for whom she bore four children; Ibn Sa‘d, III, 127; Isāba, III, 573. Sahla reported that the Prophet gave her a share in the spoils of Khaybar; Ibn Qudāma, Istībšār, 299.

227 Waq., III, 991; Ibn Hishām, III, 196; Suyūṭī, Durr, III, 264:2 (commentary on Qur'ān 9,79).

228 Isāba, VI, 191.
as those who carried out the Prophet’s order to destroy the Dirar Mosque. Ibn Ishāq has: Malik b. al-Dukhshum and Ma‘n b. ‘Adī or his brother, ‘Āṣim.229

The identity of those who reportedly set the mosque ablaze is uncertain.230 The site had been offered by the Prophet to ‘Āṣim b. ‘Adī as a court. But the pious ‘Āṣim said that he would not take as a court a mosque about which those Qur’ān verses were revealed, so he suggested that the Prophet grant it to a fellow ‘Ajlānī, Thābit b. Aqram, who had no house (hence he could not afford to be too selective), and the Prophet consented.231

229Note that Ibn Ishāq’s Maghāzī had: Malik (b. al-Dukhshum) and Ma‘n b. ‘Adī; see Fath al-baḥrī, I, 435–6. Qurṭubī, al-Jāmi‘ li-akhkām al-qur’ān, VIII, 253–4, probably accumulating names from two or more reports, lists Mālik b. al-Dukhshum, Ma‘n b. ‘Adī, ‘Āmir b. al-Sakan and Wāhsī. Elsewhere we find yet another name: Suwayd b. ‘Ayyāsh al-Anṣārī was one of those sent to destroy the Dirar Mosque; Iṣāba, III, 227.

230Neither is it certain that it was burnt down at all. On the timber rescued from it see above, 118.

231Waq., III, 1047; Ibn Qudāma, Istibṣār, 300. The grant could be a reward for the ‘Ajlāns’ role in the incident. The people of Qubā’ considered the place haunted: no child (or: no child of Thābit b. Aqram) was born in that house, no pigeon ever stopped there and no chicken ever hatched its eggs in it; Sīra Shāmiyya, V, 677; Waq., III, 1047. The former source shows that the house of Thābit, not the house of Abū Lubāba, is meant here: fa-lam yulad [Waq. adds: lahu] fi dhārika l-bayt mawli‘d qaṭṭu wa-lam yan‘aq [Waq.'s wa-lam yaqif is better, albeit looking like a lectio facilior, because na‘aqa is said of a raven, not a pigeon] fīhi ḥamām qaṭṭu wa-lam taḥdun fīhi da‘ajāqa qaṭṭu. Wāqīḍī rather indiscriminately interpolates into a text dealing with Thābit b. Aqram’s court another text, dealing with Abū Lubāba. How this can happen is not clear to me (it could be the work of a scribe). This practice of Wāqīḍī misled Gil, “The Medinan opposition”, 71–72 to believe, that the house of Abū Lubāba is meant: “but there was a curse upon that house [= Abū Lubāba’s house — M.L.] so that, e.g., there was never a child born in it”. I estimate that there are practically hundreds of such problems with the present edition of Wāqīḍī. A new edition, based on parallel texts, will be a major contribution to Islamic scholarship.

The persistent curse is further evidence of the evil deeds of the munāfiqūn. The Sīra Shāmiyya, V, 677 quotes from Sa‘īd b. Jubayr via Ibn al-Mundhir (d. ca. 318/930; probably from his Tafsīr; see GAS, I, 495–96), and from others, what might be a fragment of Sa‘īd’s account on the Dirar incident (above, 76): a hole was dug in the Dirar Mosque and smoke came out of it. (Smoke issuing from the mosque is also mentioned by Jābir b. ‘Abdallāh; Bihār al-anwār, XXI, 254.) The place was a dunghill in the Abbasid period;
On the basis of the available information (some vital details may still be missing) it would seem that this grant of land was of symbolic importance: the place of worship of some of the strongest people in Qubā' was given to their homeless client. The humiliation of the munāfiqūn was complete.

An autobiographical report by ‘Āṣīm describing how he set the mosque ablaze is remarkably jocular and light-hearted:

I do not forget their gazes directed at us (mā ansā tasharrufahum ila'yāna) as if their ears were wolves' ears. We burnt it down until it was reduced to ashes. The one of them who remained in it was Zayd b. Jāriya b. ‘Āmir [who persisted] until his buttocks were scorched. We destroyed it until we reduced it to rubble and they [i.e., the worshippers] dispersed.²³²

In what appears to be another fragment of the same autobiographical report (wa-kāna ‘Āṣīm b. ‘Adī yukhbiru yaqūlu), ‘Āṣīm b. ‘Adī describes in first person a scene in Medina just before the expedition to Tabūk. The actors are ‘Āṣīm himself and two men, ‘Abdallāh b. Natabl²³³ and Tha’labā b. Ḥāṭib who have just finished mending a pipe (a gutter) on the roof of the Dirār Mosque (wa-huμā yuṣlīḥāni mīzāban, qad faraghā minhu).

The two workers shouted from the roof to ‘Āṣīm, who was standing near the mosque: “‘Āṣīm, the Messenger of God has promised us to pray in it when he comes back”. ‘Āṣīm does not

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²³² Waq., Ill, 1046, 1047.
²³³ Above, 114. ‘Abdallāh was one of “those who remained behind”, viz., refused to participate in the Tabūk expedition; Ṭabarī, Tafsīr, X, 102:10 (quoting Mujāhid, commentary on Qur’ān 9,47); 104:5 (Ibn Ishāq, commentary on 9,48).
tell us what he said to the builders, but shares with us what he said to himself:

I said to myself: “By God, everyone of those who built this mosque is a munāfiq known as such. It was erected by Abū Ḥabība b. al-Az‘ar, and was built in the court of Khidhām b. Khalīd, and Wādī‘a b. Thābit was among those people. Whereas the mosque that was built by the Prophet with his own hand, while he was laying its foundation (?), Gabriel directed him towards the Ka‘ba” [i.e., to show him the precise qibla].

‘Āsim concludes his autobiographical story saying: “By God, by the time we returned from our journey [i.e., from the Tabūk expedition], Qur’ān verses had been revealed condemning it [= the Dirār Mosque] and its people who collected donations for building it and helped in it”.

‘Āsim’s report is a crude product (perhaps intentionally so); the style shows it to be an unedited and unrefined account. The

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234 Waq., III, 1048: wa-l-masjidu ʾlladhī banā rasūlu ʾllāhi (s) bi-yadihi yu’assisuha Jibril ‘alayhi l-salām ya’ummu bihi l-bayta; the text is not smooth but the purport is clear and can also be drawn from other sources. See Suyūṭī, Ḥujaj mubīna, 53 < al-Zubayr b. Bakkār’s Akhbār al-Madīna < Muhammad b. al-Ḥasan (= Ibn Ṣabāla) < Sulaymān b. Dāwūd b. Qays < his father. Dāwūd (= probably al-Farrā‘, a mawla of Quraysh who died in Medina at the time of al-Manṣūr; Ibn Sa‘d, Qism mutammim, 404) said annahu balaghahu anna l-nabiyya (s) waḍa‘a’asāsa l-masjid ʾhiṇa waḍa‘a’ahu wa-Jibrīlū qa‘im yanzuru ilā l-Ka‘ba qad kushifa ma baynahu wa-baynahā. (Cf. Jibrīl “showing” the Prophet the pre-Islamic battle of Dhū Qār; Suyūṭī, Ḫaṣa‘īs, I, 454.) However, the Ḥadīth just quoted from Suyūṭī deals with the Prophet’s Mosque. More to the point is a similar Ḥadīth relating to the Mosque of Qubā’. Its source is a member of a family often mentioned in this chapter: al-Shāmuṣ bint al-Nu‘mān b. ‘Amīr b. Mujammī al-ʾAnṣāriyya. The Ḥadīth exists in two slightly different versions. The concluding phrases are, respectively: wa-Jibrīl (s) [sic!] ya’ummu bihi l-Ka‘ba; and the Prophet’s statement inna Jibrīl ‘alayhi l-salām huwa ya’ummu l-Ka‘ba, followed by al-Shāmuṣ’ remark: fa-kāna yuqālu innahu aquamu masjidin qiblata; Ṭabarānī, Kaeb, XXIV, 317f; Suyūṭī, Ḥujaj mubīna, 61 (quoting Ṭabarānī); cf. Ḫṣāba, VII, 731f (note Ibn Ḥajār’s wrestling with the mention of the Ka‘ba as qibla where one expects to find Jerusalem).
contents are somewhat unorthodox, too: ‘Āṣim claims an advantage over the Prophet (!) in having prior knowledge of the true nature of the Dirār Mosque. The revealed verses only confirmed what had already been known to him. Finally, it should be observed that this lively scene was addressed to an audience appreciative of the satirical treatment given to the Prophet’s enemies.\(^{235}\)

In the context of the role played by the ‘Ajlān we should concern ourselves with the sense of confrontation evident in ‘Āṣim’s presentation,\(^{236}\) between this rich and prestigious client and his masters, the Zayd b. Mālik. The same is conveyed by his alleged assignment at the time of Badr (as already mentioned, he was put in charge of Qubā’ and the people of the ‘Aliya). I base the following preliminary and tentative historical reconstruction on this element of confrontation and the meagre evidence adduced above.

In Qubā’ we meet a large client population, including the ‘Ajlān. With the advent of Islam they did not stop being clients, but those of them who were loyal to the Prophet could expect to be rewarded. The ‘Ajlān, several of whom fought in Badr and among whom there were no munāfiqūn, were more loyal to the Prophet than were their masters, the Zayd b. Mālik. This at least seems true in the case of the builders of the Dirār Mosque. In other words, the Prophet could rely on their support even when he acted against their masters.

The builders, who included some men of note, were of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf, mainly of the Zayd b. Mālik subdivision called Dubay’a. They were inspired by their leader Abū ʿĀmir al-Rāhib, who lived in exile in Syria. Even Saʿīd b. Jubayr’s account, which is the “friendliest” from the builders’ point of view, gives Abū ʿĀmir a background role.

\(^{235}\) We also encounter the combination of fire and satire in the story of the munāfiq al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Khalīfa, who broke a leg while jumping from the roof of a house which had been set ablaze; Ibn Hishām, IV, 160.

\(^{236}\) I do not assume that the scene described above took place. However, with or without a proper isnād (isnāds were not that important in this type of report), I see no reason to assume that it was invented by anyone other than ‘Āṣim or his son.
Prior to his departure, Abū ‘Āmir, a military and spiritual leader, had been one of the strongest men in Medina and probably the most influential and revered leader in Qubā’. 237 After his departure to Mecca, Abū ‘Āmir fought against the Prophet in the Battle of Uḥud. In one scene during this battle we find him with fifty men of his people (qawm) who fought under his command. 238

Thus, in 9 A.H., many in Qubā’ who had embraced Islam were still opposed to the political authority of the Prophet. Members of the most important families of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf and others perhaps entertained the hope that their exiled leader, Abū ‘Āmir, might return and regain his authority. 239

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238 Wāq., I, 223. Cf. Ibn Hīšām, III, 71 (he left Medina with fifty young men of the Aws, or, according to some, with fifteen men). The Prophet’s knees were injured when he fell into one of the trenches dug by Abū ‘Āmir to make the Muslims stumble; Wāq., I, 244. And see op. cit., 252:-3. In another report, Abū ‘Āmir and Abū Sufyān survey the battlefield of Uḥud; Wāq., I, 236-37. Wellhausen, Skizzen IV, 16, 17 wrongly assumed that Abū ‘Āmir was of the Aws Allāh. In fact, he was of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf. See also J. Fück, “The originality of the Arabian prophet”, in M. Swartz (trans. and ed.), Studies on Islam, New York-Oxford 1981, 86-98, at 91, and n. 11 on p. 98 (= “Die Originalität des arabischen Propheten”, in ZDMG 90 [1936], 509-25, at 516) and Buhl, Leben, 206 (both follow Wellhausen).

239 A very important text is found in ‘Abd al-Jabbār’s Tathbit dalā‘īl al-nubuwawa, ed. ‘Abd al-Karīm Uthmān, Beirut 1966-68, II, 474-75 (referring to Qur‘ān 9,107-110). Fragments of it can be found in other sources but the details here about Abū ‘Āmir’s propaganda against the Prophet are unique. According to this report, it was Abū ‘Āmir himself who built the Dirār Mosque before his departure to Mecca, he and the munāfiqūn were encouraged in their opposition to the Prophet by the Jews: ... thumma [i.e., after his dispute with the Prophet over the hānīfīyya] aqbalu Abū ‘Āmir ‘alā qawmihī yanhāhūm ‘ani tṣibā‘i rasūlī llāhī (ṣ) wa‘an tā‘atīhi wa-yajjahida, wa-a‘lām rasūlī llāhī (ṣ) latāzāyaddu wa-taṣddhu wa-yakthuru abā‘u ‘u min qawm Abī ‘Āmir fa-yazdadu ghayyān wa‘ittakhadh māṣjidān yajmā‘u ilayhi l-nāsa fa-yuḥādithuhum fa-yanḥūhum min tṣība‘i rasūlī llāhī (ṣ) wa-yaz‘unu annahu ‘alā l-hanīfīyya wa-anna dinahu sa-yazhuru wa-yasīrī fi jāmā‘a wa-‘izz, fa-kāna yajjahidu ilayhi qawm mina l-munāfiqīn wa-yajlisu ilayhimī l-yahūd wa-yuqawwānā minhumu l-khilāfa ‘alā rasūlī llāhī (ṣ) ... . After the Battle of Uḥud, Abū ‘Āmir travelled to Byzantium and insti-
The mosque known in Islamic sources as the Dirār Mosque was not only a gathering place for the supporters of Abū ʿĀmir, but also a symbol of their tribal autonomy and independence away from the Prophet’s territorial basis in the Sāfila where his control was far stronger. By acting resolutely and at a propitious moment against this edifice, the Prophet, without any bloodshed, humiliated and reduced the prestige of some of the most important families in Qubā’ whose members were associated with the erection of the Dirār Mosque.

gated the Emperor to fight against the Prophet: *thumma ẓāra Abū ʿĀmir ilā l-Rūm wa-laqiya Qaysar malika l-Rūm bi-l-Shām fa-daʿāhu ilā qītal rasūli llāhi (s) wa-l-muslimīna wa-ḥarradahu ‘alā dhālika wa-hawwana amrahūm ‘indahu bi-duʿfihim wa-faqrihim wa-qillati ʿadadihim wa-kathrati ʿaduwwihim wa-khawwafahu l-ʿawāqib in huwa lam yafʿal dhālika bi-mā lā yaʿmanahu min quwwatī l-islām. Thumma inna Abā ʿĀmir māla bi-l-Shām ẓarīdan gharīban waḥīdan kamā daʿā rasūlu llāhi (s), wa-hādhā aydān min aʾlāmīhi fī ijābatī daʿawathi.*
CONCLUDING REMARKS

Scholars studying the history of Islam can now benefit from a growing repository of Arabic texts which have never been employed in historical research. Both the development of modern scholarship in Islamic countries and the progress achieved in printing technologies assure us of a constant flow of Arabic texts for years to come.

This monograph contains a detailed examination of the available source material about the ‘Āliya or Upper Medina on the eve of Islam and at the time of the Prophet. The advantage of the new source material is evident throughout. We are now better equipped than ever before to conduct detailed studies on Medina (and the same is true for Mecca). This monograph, together with further research to be conducted on other areas of Medina, above all the Sāfīla or Lower Medina, will provide us with some of the necessary background material for the study of the Prophet’s biography.

It was found that the much quoted sources for the history of the Prophet, such as Ibn Hishām, Wāqīḍī, Ibn Sa’d and Tabarî, offer only a limited amount of evidence both on the topography, that is, the fortresses, groves and mosques, and on the inhabitants, those tribal groups living in the ‘Āliya. Above all, one has to turn to the famous history of Medina written by Samhūdī and to a variety of other sources, mainly geographical and genealogical, in order to discover the available evidence. Geographical evidence has a clear advantage over historical information in that it is not so susceptible to dispute. Thus, when we read that the Banū so-and-so had a fortress called such-and-such, we may assume that we are on fairly firm ground. To a somewhat lesser extent, this is also true of the genealogical evidence which accurately reflects the structure and main divisions of Medinan tribal society in the early period of Islam. Inevitable obscurities which sometimes emerge concerning the genealogy of individuals or clans do
not effect the general picture for which we have comprehensive evidence.

Two historical questions regarding the Prophet's biography (both of course relating to the 'Āliya) are discussed in this monograph. First, the delayed conversion to Islam of a large tribal group, the Aws Allāh, inhabiting the 'Āliya. It was ascertained that the report of their delayed conversion is certainly historical. I believe that this finding supports the attitude of those who assume that the general outline or basic framework of the Prophet's history as recorded in the sources is trustworthy. As for the details, research has not yet advanced far beyond the starting point.

Second, the far more complicated Dirār incident. It was demonstrated that the sources offer a large amount of evidence on the men and the sites involved in the incident, but do not explain the Prophet's real motives for acting against the mosque and its owners. It would be unrealistic to expect that all the ambiguities surrounding this incident will be removed, but at least we can achieve some order in the available evidence.

The formative period of early Islamic historiography was the first Islamic century and it should not be studied outside its social context, that is, Islamic society during that century. Historical apologetics (see below, Appendices) are a prominent feature of this social context and they demonstrate that the descendants of certain Companions were embarrassed by their fathers' and grandfathers' role during the time of the Prophet and tried to influence the way in which these ancestors went down in history.

The critical study of the Prophet Muḥammad's biography, and of early Islamic historiography in general, is a relatively young field of research. The difficulties are immense, but now that important new information is becoming available in ever increas-

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ing quantities the prospects for genuine progress look favourable indeed.
Some Medinans had no cause to be proud of their role in the Prophet’s time. We have reason to suspect that several of them were given a chance to “correct” their behaviour, and others to “explain” their actions in terms favourable to themselves. These historical apologetics refer to the motives or deeds of individuals and are of course unreliable as a source of historical information. But they form an important category in Islamic historiography and give the sīra a specific social context.

While the family was presumably the dominant factor in the correction of tarnished images, other elements also may have been at work, e.g., local or even sectarian rivalries. Thus, it was the Kūfans who reported that Mujammi‘ “collected” (i.e., memorized) the Qur‘ān at the time of the Prophet, except one or two Suras. According to the Kūfan Sha‘bī (who also transmits the former report), Mujammi‘ memorized the whole Qur‘ān except two or three Suras. Ibn Mas‘ūd learnt from the Prophet himself more than ninety (or more than seventy) Suras and the rest he learnt from Muajmmi‘. This high esteem for Mujammis’s command of the Qur‘ān may not have been shared by the Basrans or the Syrians, for example.

1 Ibn Sa‘d, VI, 52; Dhahabī, Nubalā‘, II, 339. Also see R. Paret’s review of A. Guillaume, The Life of Muhammad, in Der Islam, 32 (1957), 334–42, at 336–2, where he refers to Guillaume 244:2, “who had collected most of the Quran”, qad jama‘a mina l-qur‘ān aktharahu: “Gemeint ist, daß er das meiste vom Koran auswendig konnte”.

2 Ibn Sa‘d, II, 339 (ninety); Dhahabī, Nubalā‘, II, 340 (seventy). Muqāṭil reports (above, 89) that Mujammī‘ b. Jāriya became a good Muslim and ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb sent him to teach Qur‘ān in Kūfā; he taught Ibn Mas‘ūd and dictated the Qur‘ān to him (laqqanahu l-qur‘āna).

3 For possible sectarian interests, cf. the fact that Zayd b. Jāriya’s grandson, Mu‘āwiya b. Iṣḥaqq, was killed fighting with Zayd b. ‘Alī and was crucified with him at the Kunās (of Kūfā); Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhara, 624; Abū l-Faraj al-İsfahânī, Maqāṭil al-şālibiyīna, ed. Ahmad Şaqır, Cairo 1368/1949, Index;
Mujammi b. Jāriya, who was the imām of the Dirār Mosque, later became the imām of the Qubā’ Mosque (what irony!). In the following generation, we find yet another imām belonging to the same family: ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. Yazīd b. Jāriya, a nephew of Mujammi who transmitted Ḥadīth from his uncle and was the imām “of his people” (i.e., the ‘Amr b. ‘Awf). ‘Abd al-Rahmān also officiated as the qādī of ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-Azīz (i.e., when the latter was the governor of Medina in the late eighties and early nineties of the first century A.H.).

The family’s fingerprints can presumably be seen on the claim (found in Muqātil) that the Prophet himself appointed Mujammi as the imām of the Dirār Mosque (above, 88). They can also be noticed in Balādhuri’s list of munāfīqūn from among the Aws which includes Jāriya b. ‘Āmir and his sons Yazīd, Zayd and Mujammi. Having remarked that they were among the builders of the Dirār Mosque, Balādhuri says that Mujammi read the Qurān and led them in prayer in this mosque; some said, he adds, that Mujammi was not a munāfiq, while others said that he was and that later his Islam became sound. Elsewhere, his mention as one of the munāfīqūn is accompanied by this remark: “It was said that Mujammi was not really a munāfiq. He was

Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbār, 483.


5 Abu Zur‘a, Ta‘rīkh, ed. Shukr Allāh al-Qūjānī, Damascus 1400/1980, I, 563 says of ‘Abd al-Rahmān that he was an early transmitter (qadīm), that he prayed behind Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān and that he was the imām of his people. Since ‘Abd al-Rahmān died in 98 A.H. (Khalīfa, Ṭabāqāt, 82), the statement that he prayed behind Abū Bakr (and ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān) seems to be exaggerated; indeed, it is based on ‘Abd al-Rahmān’s own testimony (Abū Zur‘a, 564; quoted in TMD MS, XVI, 264:23, s.v. Mujammi b. Yahyā b. Yazīd b. Jāriya).

listed as one because his clan made him the imām of the Dirār Mosque". In other words, this was not a voluntary action on his part.

Two unique reports give Mujammi' the chance to justify his behaviour in public. His constructive self-criticism (he refers to his own juvenile recklessness) paves his way back to respectability. In the first report we are told that Mujammi' replaced the former imām of the Mosque of Qubā', Sa'd b. 'Ubayd al-Qārī', who was killed at Qādisiyya. The 'Amr b. 'Awf contended for this post among themselves and referred the matter to Caliph 'Umar's arbitration. Finally, however, they unanimously agreed to nominate Mujammi'. He was blamed and despised for having been the imām of the Dirār Mosque. 'Umar only gave his consent after he heard Mujammi' s arguments.

Mujammi': "I was young and fast [strong] in speech (wa-kānati l-qālatu li sari'a). Today, however, I have realized what I am in and have understood the matters".

'Umar inquired about him and heard there was no fault in him and that he had memorized all of the Qur'ān except for a few Suras (wa-la-qad jama'a l-qur'ān wa-mā baqīya 'alayhi illā suwar yasīra). The apologetic ingenuity reaches its peak in creating a fine literary scene with 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb as its protagonist. The grim 'Umar publicly "forgave" Mujammi' and "rehabilitated" him. The occasion was Mujammi' s candidacy for the office of imām in the Mosque of Qubā'. The 'Amr b. 'Awf, who built the Mosque of Qubā', asked 'Umar during his caliphate, to permit

7 Dhahabī, Maghāzī, 21.
9 Ibn Sa'd, IV, 372-73, quoting Wāqidī. Ibn Sa'd's concluding remark, wa-lā na'lamu (printed: y.'l.m.) masjidan yutanāfasu fi imāmihī mithla masjid B. 'Amr b. 'Awf, presumably means that there was much controversy about the identity of the imāms of that mosque. Al-Zubayr b. Bakkār, Akhbār al-Madīna (quoted in Isāba, III, 68), reports on Sa'd's replacement by Mujammi' quoting 'Utba b. 'Uwaym b. Sā'īda; on 'Uwaym see above, 63.
Mujammi’ to become the *imām* of their mosque. The following conversation followed:

‘Umar [frowning, as the name sounded familiar]: “Is he not the *imām* of the Dirār Mosque”?

Mujammi’ [who, as we suddenly find out, was present at the meeting, interjects without invitation; his incoherent speech reveals a state of great excitement; he will explain everything]: “Do not be rash with me. By God, I prayed in it not knowing what they concealed in their hearts. Had I known, I would not have prayed in it with them. I was then a young lad, a reader of the Qur’ān, and they were old men concealing their disbelief (*qad ghashshaw nifāqahum*), who were not reading any of the Qur’ān. So I prayed [i.e., I was their *imām*] not approving of anything they did except their [seeming] approach to God and I did not know what was in their hearts”.

‘Umar, the report goes on, forgave and believed him, ordering him to pray (viz., function as the *imām*) in the Mosque of Qubā’.¹⁰

No *isnād* is given, but one may safely guess that it is the creation of Mujammi’’s descendants. There was no point in denying that he had a role in the Dirār incident; yet some of the damage done to the family’s reputation could be amended.

¹⁰Diyār bakrī, *Khamīs*, II, 131:5. See also Ibn Hishām, II, 169–70 (Ibn Ishāq concludes by saying: “And they claimed that ‘Umar had let him pray as the *imām* of his people”; Ibn Ishāq seems to have suspected this claim). On Mujammi’ see also Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr*, XIX, 443 f. Cf. ‘Umar’s dismissal of a governor or tax-collector, having found out that he had been a *munāfiq*; *Usd al-ghāba*, I, 391:3.
APPENDIX B

THE IMAGE PROBLEM OF ABŪ QAYS B. AL-ASLAT

Considering the role given to Abū Qays in withholding the conversion to Islam of the Aws Allāh until a while after the Battle of the Ditch (5 A.H.), it is surprising to find in some reports that he died in the first or second year after the Hijra. The conflicting dates again point in the direction of apologetics which played an important role in the formation of the sīra. This was, so to speak, a case of “premature literary death” and it was a component of an apologetic story, certainly created by Abū Qays’ descendants or fellow tribesmen in order to present him in a relatively favourable light. The claim that Abū Qays was one of the pre-Islamic ḥanīfīs was, I suspect, yet another component of the same story (see Appendix C).

Differences over chronology are common in Islamic historiography and are usually difficult to account for. In this case the discrepancy must be explained. If Abū Qays did indeed die a few years before the Battle of the Ditch, he could not have prevented the Aws Allāh from adopting Islam until the battle had ended.

I submit that Abū Qays was still alive after the Battle of the Ditch and that his alleged earlier death was invented by a friendly informant with the aim of negating the report about his hostile role in preventing the conversion to Islam of the Aws

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1 He died in Dhū l-Hijja, ten months after the Hijra; Ibn Sa’d, IV, 385; Baladh., Ansāb, I, 274; Isāba, VII, 335. He died at the end of Ramadān, 2 A.H.; Ibn Hibbān, Thiqāt, Hyderabad 1393/1973, I, p. 208. Cf. Watt, Medina, 165: “When he died, less than a year after the Hijrah”, etc.; 178: “Abū Qays is said to have thought of becoming a Muslim, but to have died before he put his thought into effect; such thoughts without actions, however, make one suspect an attempt to save the face of the clan, for the one solid fact which is not denied is that Abū Qays did not become a Muslim”. Actually, this “solid fact” is denied, see below, 157n (some claimed that Abū Qays embraced Islam on his deathbed). Rubin, “Ḥanīfiyya”, 89 f did not reconcile the two contradictory dates given for his death.
Allāh. This is suggested by the context in which the earlier date is found: it is part of a report which is favourable to Abū Qays and presents him as someone who nearly embraced Islam: had it not been for his premature death (and some scornful comments made by another arch-enemy of the Prophet, Ibn Ubayy; see below), he would have become a Muslim. In other words, the alleged earlier death belongs to the realm of apologetics. The apologetics were associated with the opposition to the Prophet and point to some distress among certain Anṣār over the role of their ancestors during the Prophet’s lifetime.

This “rewriting of history” had only a limited effect in the long run because in the diversified Islamic tradition no single version is granted exclusivity; in other words, we often have the benefit of comparing these family claims with other material, originating with various informants. The story of Abū Qays’ early death demonstrates that the sīra was not an academic project created in a void; “image-correcting” reports such as the one discussed here belong to the earliest stratum of Islamic historiography since at a later period they were no longer relevant.
APPENDIX C

ABU QAYS NEARLY EMBRACES ISLAM

The resourcefulness of the apologetic tribal tradition is beautifully demonstrated by the fabricated scene claiming to describe the exact circumstances in which Abū Qays was discouraged from embracing Islam. The blame is suddenly diverted, and we find out that the real villain was not Abū Qays, who was willing to convert, but no other than Ibn Ubayy.¹

The scene with Ibn Ubayy is preceded by a short report not at all unfriendly towards Abū Qays: he was compared, we are told, to Qays b. al-Khaṭīm in his valour and poetic talent. Mughalṭay adds: “He used to apply himself to acts of devotion and claimed to have been a follower of the hanifiyya (wa-kāna ... yata‘allahu wa-yadda‘ī l-hanifiyya); he also urged Quraysh and his own tribe, the Aws, to follow Muḥammad.”²

Then comes the scene with Ibn Ubayy. The introductory remarks can be traced back to ‘Abdallāh b. Muḥammad b. ‘Umāra b. al-Qaddāḥ (d. around 200/815).³ Ibn al-Qaddāḥ says that the meeting with Ibn Ubayy took place after Abū Qays had met the Prophet and heard his words.⁴

Ibn Ishāq reports that Abū Qays and his brother, Wahwah, went (one version has: “fled”) to Mecca with Quraysh (possibly after the Battle of the Ditch), and embraced Islam when Mecca

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¹ Rubin, “Hanifiyya”, 90 accepts the scene as historical: “The circumstances which hindered Abū Qays from embracing Islam are elucidated in a report recorded by Mughalṭay”. (Besides Mughalṭay, Rubin refers to the Ibn Sa‘d, IV, 385; Balādh, Ansāb, I, 274; and Isāba, VII, 334.)


³ His book Nasab al-anṣār was one of Ibn Sa‘d’s main sources for Ansārī history. On Ibn al-Qaddāḥ see GAS, I, 268, 300.

⁴ Isāba, VII, 334.
was conquered. Al-Zubayr b. Bakkār supported this claim (or at least quoted it).  

Abū 'Ubayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām's claim (no doubt basing himself on the descendants of Abū Qays) that Abū Qays and his son, 'Uqba, were Companions of the Prophet is in the same vain. Hence, Ibn al-Qaddāh and Abū 'Ubayd preserve a dubious Anṣārī "image-correcting" tradition which coexists alongside the historical tradition without explicitly clashing with it.

The apologetic trend is again at its best in the following report (a combined one composed by Wāqīdī), in the middle of which there is a dialogue between Abū Qays and Ibn Ubayy. We are concerned here with what this combined report has to say about Abū Qays after the Hijra:

When the Messenger of God came to Medina, it was said to him [= Abū Qays]: "O Abū Qays, this is your friend whom you used to describe". He said: "Certainly, he was sent with the truth". And he came to the Prophet and said: "What are you calling to"? The Messenger of God said: "To the testimony that

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5 *Istiʿāb*, II, 734; IV, 1734. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr disputes the claim that Abū Qays became a Muslim: *wa-fimā dhakara al-Zubayr wa-'bn Iṣhāq naṣar*. The text in *Istiʿāb*, II, 734, which has *lam yuslim*, must be garbled. Partial confirmation that it is garbled can be had from a comparison with another text. Al-Zubayr b. Bakkār's text includes the statement that Abū Qays' name was in fact al-Hārith, or, as some said, 'Abdallāh. The Hārith/'Abdallāh passage shows that this is in fact the report of Ibn al-Qaddāh which was quoted by al-Zubayr b. Bakkār's uncle, Muṣ'ab b. 'Abdallāh (*TMD* MS, VIII, 392:8), and probably by al-Zubayr as well. Now Ibn al-Qaddāh's report includes the claim that Abū Qays embraced Islam on his deathbed; see op. cit., 392:22. A fragment of Ibn al-Qaddāh's report is found in *Isāba*, VII, 334:5.

6 *Iṣāba*, VII, 334. Ibn Hāajar quotes an entry on 'Uqba b. Abī Qays from a compilation by Abū 'Ubayd, probably the latter's *Kitāb al-nasab*; for a quotation from this book see *Iṣāba*, VI, 418.

7 The fullest account is in Ibn Saʿd, IV, 385; *TMD* MS, VIII, 393–94; see also Baladh., *Ansāb*, I, 274; Tab., II, 406 [I, 1270]; *Usd al-ghāba*, V, 2781 (who quotes the *Istiʿāb* and the Companion dictionary of Abū Mūsā al-Mādīnī [d. 581/1185]; on him see *GAL* S, I, 604); *Iṣāba*, VII, 335. The report in the *Iṣāba* is quoted by Ibn Hāajar from the *Istiʿāb*, but he must have used a manuscript different to the ones on which the printed edition of the *Istiʿāb* was based (about which see the editor's introduction and vol. IV, 1985).
there is no god but God and that I am the Messenger of God”. And he mentioned the laws of Islam. Abū Qays said to him: “How good and lovely this is! I shall look into my affairs and then return to you”. And he nearly embraced Islam (wa-kāda yus-limu). [But] Ibn Ubayy met him [and the following dialogue took place]:

Ibn Ubayy: “Where [do you come] from?”
Abū Qays: “From Muḥammad. He proposed to me things that are so good! He is the one we used to know and the one the doctors of the Jews used to inform us about”.

Ibn Ubayy: “By God, you are tired of [literally: you hated] fighting the Khazraj”.

Abū Qays, angrily (fa-ghadiba): “By God, I shall not embrace Islam for one year”.

Then he went home and did not return to the Messenger of God until he [= Abū Qays] died before a year passed, in Dhū l-Ḥijja, ten months after the Hijra.

There is an appendix to this combined report from one of the four sources (or isnāds) used in its preparation, namely Ibn Abī Ḥabība < Dāwud b. al-Ḥuṣayn,11 ‘an ashyākhīhim: “They said, ‘As he was dying he was heard uttering the testimony that there is no god but God’”. The fact that this addition is located at the end of the combined report does not mean that the matter was insignificant; on the contrary, the question of Abū Qays’ conversion to Islam was crucial. But Wāqidī could not incorporate it into the combined report because it was not supported by his other sources (who were more restrained and did not go that far).12

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8 The text in the Isāba is garbled at this point. This is a statement made by Abū Qays, not Ibn Ubayy’s question.
9 Jumahī, I, 227 has this variant: khifta wa-ʾllāhi suyūfa l-Khazraj, “By God, you are afraid of the swords of the Khazraj”.
11 On Dāwud b. al-Ḥuṣayn al-Umawī (a mawlā of the Umayya, d. 135/752) see GAS, I, 285.
12 Wāqidī here uses the usual formula: fa-kullun qad haddathānī min ḥadīth
One may venture a guess that the elders ("ashyākh") quoted by Dāwud b. al-Ḥuṣayn who gave such a favourable account of Abū Qays' last minutes belonged to Abū Qays' clan, the Wā'il, or to another subdivision of the Aws Allāh.

The key words in the dialogue quoted above are Ibn Ubayy's: "By God, you are tired of [literally: you hated] fighting the Khazraj" (karihta ḥarba l-Khazraj). In other words, Abū Qays' intended conversion to Islam equals pacifying the old enemy, the Khazraj (among whom the Prophet enjoyed overwhelming support). But there is another possible interpretation of Ibn Ubayy's utterance: Ibn Ubayy, a Khazrajī, accuses Abū Qays of preferring to form an alliance with Muḥammad against the Khazraj, rather than continuing his war against them (on his own). This admittedly less probable interpretation is in fact supported by another report, quite similar to the one just quoted (see below). Remarkably, the latter interpretation presents Medina of that time as consisting of three major blocks: the Aws, the Khazraj, and the Muslims under the Prophet.

The dialogue quoted above is apologetic. It claims that Abū Qays was disposed to embrace Islam and would have done so had it not been for Ibn Ubayy's remark and Abū Qays' death less than two months before the latest date set for his conversion to Islam. The alleged date, like the rest of this report, is useless as far as historical fact is concerned, but is illuminating on the ways of Anṣārī historical apologetics.\textsuperscript{13}

The same pattern is followed in another report which similarly refers to Abū Qays' war against the Khazraj. Again, there is a dialogue with Ibn Ubayy contained in a longer report by Ibn al-Qaddāh (probably made of earlier, independent texts), which is most favourable to Abū Qays and, to some extent, the Aws Allāh in general. The background is Abū Qays' call to the Aws Allāh

\textsuperscript{13} Cf. Gil, "The creed of Abū 'Āmir", 12: "Abū Qays ... died nine months after the hijra".
(which should obviously be dated after the Hijra) to embrace Islam: “He stood up [to preach] among the Aws Allâh and said: ‘Hasten to this man, because I have never seen a good thing without its beginnings being its best part, and I have never seen a bad thing without its beginnings being the least evil’.” It is implied here that Abû Qays intended to become a Muslim himself. This became known to Ibn Ubayy, who met him, and the following dialogue took place:

Ibn Ubayy: “You have taken every possible route in your war against us: once you seek to be allied with Quraysh, and once you follow Muḥammad”! (la-qad lūdh ta min ḥarbinâ kullâ malādhīn, marra taṭlūbu l-ḥilfa ilâ Quraysh wa-marra bi-ʾttībā Muḥammad). Abû Qays, angrily (fa-ghādība): “Verily, I shall be the last person to follow him” (lā jārama, wa-ʾlākhī lā ttadāʾtuhu illā ākhīra l-nūs).14

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14 Ibn al-Qaddāh, quoted in TMD MS, VIII, 392:19; TMD, Tahdib., VI, 456. Also Mughaltay, al-Zahr al-bāsim, 32b (... l-ḥilfa fi Quraysh ...); Iṣāba, VII, 334. The last-mentioned source wrongly has min ḥizbinâ instead of min ḥarbinâ (see below). A comparison between the Iṣāba and the TMD leads to the suspicion that Ibn Ḥajar fragments Ibn al-Qaddāh’s report (1. lines 5–8; 2. line 4 from below to the end). Unlike Ibn ‘Asākir, Ibn Ḥajar seems to have cared little for the integrity of his source: he felt free to fragment it and place the fragments as he pleased. U. Rubin, who relies on the above-mentioned garbled text, with ḥizb instead of ḥarb, translates: “You have abandoned our party” which makes little sense and does not combine well with the mention of an attempted alliance. The apocryphal conversation is supposed to have taken place in the first year after the Hijra and Ibn Ubayy obviously refers to a pre-Islamic event. The TMD speaks of an attempted alliance with Quraysh: marra taṭlūbu l-ḥilfa ilâ Quraysh, while the Iṣāba, presumably less accurately, speaks of a concluded alliance: tāratan tuḥālifu Qurayshan. Rubin (“Ḥanifiyya”, 90) sums up the report with a straightforward historical conclusion: “This report indicates that Abû Qays was wavering between attraction to Muḥammad and loyalty to Quraysh”. But the more one becomes aware of the apologetical orientation of these materials, the less one is likely to use them as historical evidence.

There are reports on a pre-Islamic attempt by the Nabît, a subdivision of the Aws, to make an alliance with Quraysh against the Khazraj: cf. M.J. Kister, “On strangers and allies in Mecca”, in JSAI 13 (1990), 113–154, at 142–43; Lecker, “The emigration of ‘Utba b. Abî Waqqâṣ from Mecca to Medina” (forthcoming), n. 3.
The pre-Islamic enmity between the Aws and Khazraj is in the background of this dialogue. Its aim is to provide Abū Qays with an alibi: indeed, he did not hasten to embrace Islam, but it was not his fault. He was prepared to do so and even enthusiastically preached to the Aws Allāh that they should do the same. But then came the cruel remark by Ibn Ubayy hinting that Abū Qays’ motives for embracing Islam were less than honourable, i.e., that Abū Qays wanted to embrace Islam (and be allied with the Prophet) in order to fight against the Khazraj. His anger aroused, Abū Qays said that he would be the last person to follow Muḥammad. The mention of anger is vital: had Abū Qays been balanced and calm, he would not have reacted so rashly. But, since a man of honour is supposed to stand by his word (even when uttered in anger), he could not immediately accomplish his plan to become a Muslim. The case for Abū Qays is built up in a short dialogue. His good intentions did not materialize only because of a fateful accidental exchange between the two leaders. Ibn Ubayy is also the culprit in the other report where Abū Qays promised the Prophet to “look into his affairs and then return to him” (above, 158).

Other sections of Ibn al-Qaddāh’s report, including the alleged ḥanīfī inclinations of Abū Qays, further indicate its apologetical intention; there can be little doubt that it originated with clan members or even the descendants of Abū Qays.

Ibn al-Qaddāh continues: “They alleged (fa-za’amū) that when Abū Qays was on his deathbed, the Prophet sent him this message: ‘If you say the words lā ilāha illā llāh, through them I shall intercede for you on the Day of Resurrection’ and he was heard uttering it”.15

We finally arrive at the ḥanīfiyya of Abū Qays. Ibn al-Qaddāh says: “He is the one who stood up [to preach] among the Aws Allāh, inciting them to embrace Islam (wa-huwa lladhi waqafa

15 TMD MS, VIII, 392:22; TMD, Tahdh., VI, 456; cf. Isāba, VII, 334. A similar apologetic claim comes from the clan (or family) of Suwayd b. al-Ṣāmit of the ‘Amr b. ‘Awp, who allegedly forfeited the chance to become the first Muslim in Medina when he failed to embrace Islam. Suwayd was killed by the Khazraj before the Battle of Bu’ath, wa-za’amā qawm Suwayd b. al-Ṣāmit annahu māta musliman; Ibn Qudāma, Istibsār, 328:4.
bi-Awsi llāhi yahudduhum ‘alā l-islām). Before the arrival of the Prophet, he applied himself to acts of devotion and claimed to have been a ḥanīf (wa-qad kāna ... yata’llahu wa-yadda‘ī l-ḥanīfiyya),16 and incited Quraysh to follow the Prophet”.17

Now, was Abū Qays really a ḥanīf?18 I submit that he was not. The ḥanīfiyya theme is part of a major effort to rehabilitate Abū Qays who, as the charismatic leader of the Aws Allah, kept his fellow tribesmen from converting to Islam for years after the Hijra. Unlike the ḥanīfiyya of Abū ‘Amir al-Rāhib (which seems to have been genuine), Abū Qays’ ḥanīfiyya did not clash with that of the Prophet. On the contrary, it allegedly prepared him to accept Muḥammad as a true prophet.

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17 Ibn al-Qaddāḥ supports this with two verses from a long qaṣīda with which Abū Qays addressed Quraysh.
18 Fück accepted this as historical: “That he was a ḥanīf is shown by verses in Ibn Hishām even if they are probably not genuine, for no Muslim could have had an interest in characterizing this opponent of the Prophet as one of the ḥanīfs”; see Fück, “The originality of the Arabian Prophet”, in M. Swartz (trans. and ed.), Studies on Islam 98, n. 11. Fück was following Wellhausen, Skizzen IV, 16, n. 2, who, having quoted the afore-mentioned verses by Abū Qays, remarked: “Sind die Verse unecht, so reichen sie doch hin zu beweisen, daß Abū Qais für einen Hanif galt”. (Wellhausen added, however: “Die hanifische Religion könnte allerdings hier die heidnische Religion bedeuten”.) Rubin argues that those described as ḥanīfs included “some bitter opponents of Muḥammad” and, “as already noted by Fück, no Muslim could have had any interest in characterizing these opponents of the Prophet as ḥunāfā”; Rubin, “Ḥanīfiyya”, 85f; A. Rippin, “Rhmnn and the Ḥanīfs”, in Wael B. Hallaq and Donald P. Little (eds.), Islamic Studies Presented to Charles J. Adams, Leiden 1991, 153–68, at 162. A similar point was made many years ago by Ch.J. Lyall. In his correct criticism of D.S. Margoliouth’s theory linking muslim with Musaylima and ḥanīf with the Ḥanīfa tribe, Lyall (“The words Ḥanīf and Muslim”, in JRAS 1903, 771–84) argued (at 774) that “Islamic tradition would hardly have been likely to invent texts ascribing doctrines agreeing with Islam to an enemy of Muḥammad’s” (i.e., in this case, Umayya b. Abī l-Salt).

Buhl, Leben, 69–70 (also 99, n. 275) suspected, correctly I believe, the authenticity of the ḥanīfī verses ascribed to Abū Qays and his listing among the ḥanīfs based on the verses. (The verse concerning the pilgrimage comes, Buhl thinks, from a follower of Muḥammad “der Abrahams Religion mit der Wallfahrt als Mittelpunkt verherrlicht”.)
The crucial question is, of course, whether or not he embraced Islam, and at this point even the most devoted apologists faced obvious difficulties. Abū Qays "nearly embraced Islam", or died prematurely, or, as the most extreme version claims, was heard pronouncing the *shahāda* on his deathbed. This was certainly not too late because the Prophet had promised to intercede for him on the Day of Resurrection.

In this context, the *hanīfiyya* claim is merely one component of an "image-correcting" effort by a later generation, possibly modelled on the genuine *hanīfiyya* of Abū ʿĀmir. This becomes even clearer in a combined report compiled by Wāqīdī from several sources and quoted by Ibn Saʿd.19

In this combined report, the *hanīfiyya* theme is further elaborated. It begins by telling us that "no one of the Aws and Khazraj was more involved in describing the *hanīfiyya*, or more insistent in looking for it, than Abū Qays b. al-Aslat". He asked the Jews of Yathrib about religious matters and they called on him to become Jewish; he then went to Syria and asked the monks and the (Christian) doctors, who called on him to join their religion. Then a monk told him that the *hanīfiyya*, the *din* of Abraham, is where he came from; so Abū Qays returned to the Hijāz after having declared that this was indeed his belief and that he would cling to it to his death (*anā ʿalā din Ibrāhīm wa-anā adīnu bihi ḥattā amūta ʿalaḥti*). During an 'umra he met (the *hanif*) Zayd b. ʿAmr b. Nufayl who told him about his own search for the true religion in Syria, Mesopotamia and Yathrib, which ended with the same result, viz., the conclusion that the true religion was that of Abraham. Here follows Abū Qays' comment (which is probably polemical and directed against the better known *hanif*,

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19 Ibn ʿAsākir quotes it from the *Taʾrīkh Baghdad*. It is essential to use the complete version of the report which reveals its composite nature. ʿAbd al-Qādir Badrān's *Tahdhib* of Ibn ʿAsākir creates the wrong impression that the report is from Ibn Saʿd < Muhammad b. ʿAmr b. Hazm. In fact, Muhammad figures at the end of one of the four sources (or *insād*) used by Wāqīdī in the preparation of this combined report. One fragment of the report, i.e., the conversation between Abū Qays and Ibn Ubayy (karihta ḥarba l-Khazraj) has already been discussed above, 159; Ibn Saʿd, IV, 383 f; *TMD* MS, VIII, 392–93; *TMD*, Tahdh., VI, 457; cf. *Iṣāba*, VII, 335.
Abū ‘Āmir al-Rāhib), that nobody adhered to the ḍīn of Abraham except him and Zayd b. ‘Amr.

The claim that Abū Qays was a ḥanīf merits no more trust than the claims that he died shortly after the Hijra and that he embraced Islam. Abū Qays’ clan members or descendants created apologetic (tendentious and biased) reports on his role at the time of the Prophet.
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