

---

**title :** The Revolt of the Zanj SUNY Series in Near Eastern Studies  
**author :** Tabari.; Waines, David.  
**publisher :** State University of New York Press  
**isbn10 | asin :** 0791407632  
**print isbn13 :** 9780791407639  
**ebook isbn13 :** 9780585084589  
**language :** English  
**subject** Iraq--History--Zanj Rebellion, 868-883, Islamic Empire--History--750-1258.  
**publication date :** 1992  
**lcc :** DS38.2.T313 1985eb  
**ddc :** 956.7/02  
**subject :** Iraq--History--Zanj Rebellion, 868-883, Islamic Empire--History--750-1258.

The History of Al-Tabari  
An Annotated Translation

VOLUME XXXVI

The Revolt of the Zanj  
A.D. 869/870/A.H. 255/256

The History of Al-Tabari

*Editorial Board*

Ihsan Abbas, University of Jordan, Amman

C. E. Bosworth, The University of Manchester

Franz Rosenthal, Yale University

Everett K. Rows on, The University of Pennsylvania

Ehsan Yar-Shater, Columbia University (*General Editor*)

Estelle Whelan, *Editorial Coordinator*

Center for Iranian Studies Columbia University

SUNY

SERIES IN NEAR EASTERN STUDIES

Said Amir Arjomand, Editor

*The preparation of this volume was made possible in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities,  
an independent federal agency.*

Bibliotheca Persica

Edited by Ehsan Yar-Shater

The History of al-Tabari  
(Ta'rikh al-rusul wa'l-muluk)

Volume XXXVI

The Revolt of the Zanj

translated and annotated  
by  
David Waines

Lancaster University

State University of New York Press

**Disclaimer:**

This book contains characters with diacritics. When the characters can be represented using the ISO 8859-1 character set (<http://www.w3.org/TR/images/latin1.gif>), netLibrary will represent them as they appear in the original text, and most computers will be able to show the full characters correctly. In order to keep the text searchable and readable on most computers, characters with diacritics that are not part of the ISO 8859-1 list will be represented without their diacritical marks.

**Published by**

State University of New York Press, Albany

© 1992 State University of New York

All rights reserved

Printed in the United States of America

No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews.

For information, address State University of New York

Press, State University Plaza, Albany, N.Y. 12246

**Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data**

Tabari, 838?-923.

[Ta'rikh al-rusul wa-al-muluk. English. Selections]

The revolt of the Zanj: A.D. 869-879 / A.H. 255-265 / translated and annotated by David Waines.

p. cm. (Bibliotheca Persica) (The history al-Tabari = Ta'rikh al-rusul wa'l-muluk; v. 36) (SUNY series in Near Eastern studies)

Translation of extracts from: Ta'rikh al-rusul wa-al-muluk.

Includes bibliography: (p. ) and index.

ISBN 0-7914-0763-2 (acid-free). ISBN 0-7914-0764-0 (pb : acid free)

I. IraqHistoryZanj Rebellion, 868-883. 2. Islamic Empire

History750- 1258. I. Waines, David. II. Title. III. Series.

838? - 923. Ta'rikh al-rusul wa-al-muluk. English; v. 36.

DS38.2.T313 1985 vol. 36

[DS76.4]

956.7'02dc20

90-10324

CIP

## PREFACE

The History of Prophets and Kings (*Ta'rikh al-rusul wa'l-mu-luk*) by Abu Ja`far Muhammad b. Jarir al-Tabari (839 - 923), here rendered as *The History of al-Tabari*, is by common consent the most important universal history produced in the world of Islam. It has been translated here in its entirety for the first time for the benefit of non-Arabists, with historical and philological notes for those interested in the particulars of the text.

Al-Tabari's monumental work explores the history of the ancient nations, with special emphasis on biblical peoples and prophets, the legendary and factual history of ancient Iran, and, in great detail, the rise of Islam, the life of the Prophet Muhammad, and the history of the Islamic world down to the year 915. The first volume of this translation contains a biography of al-Tabari and a discussion of the method, scope, and value of his work. It also provides information on some of the technical considerations that have guided the work of the translators.

The *History* has been divided here into 39 volumes, each of which covers about two hundred pages of the original Arabic text in the Leiden edition. An attempt has been made to draw the dividing lines between the individual volumes in such a way that each is to some degree independent and can be read as such. The page numbers of the Leiden edition appear on the margins of the translated volumes.

Al-Tabari very often quotes his sources verbatim and traces the chain of transmission (*isnad*) to an original source. The chains of transmitters are, for the sake of brevity, rendered by only a dash ( )

between the individual links in the chain. Thus, "According to Ibn HumaydSalamahIbn Ishaq" means that al-Tabari received the report from Ibn Humayd, who said that he was told by Salamah, who said that he was told by Ibn Ishaq, and so on. The numerous subtle and important differences in the original Arabic wording have been disregarded.

The table of contents at the beginning of each volume gives a brief survey of the topics dealt with in that particular volume. It also includes the headings and subheadings as they appear in al-Tabari's text, as well as those occasionally introduced by the translator.

Well-known place names, such as, for instance, Mecca, Baghdad, Jerusalem, Damascus, and the Yemen, are given in their English spellings. Less common place names, which are the vast majority, are transliterated. Biblical figures appear in the accepted English spelling. Iranian names are usually transcribed according to their Arabic forms, and the presumed Iranian forms are often discussed in the footnotes.

Technical terms have been translated wherever possible, but some, such as dirham and imam, have been retained in Arabic forms. Others that cannot be translated with sufficient precision have been retained and italicized, as well as footnoted.

The annotation aims chiefly at clarifying difficult passages, identifying individuals and place names, and discussing textual difficulties. Much leeway has been left to the translators to include in the footnotes whatever they consider necessary and helpful.

The bibliographies list all the sources mentioned in the annotation.

The index in each volume contains all the names of persons and places referred to in the text, as well as those mentioned in the notes as far as they refer to the medieval period. It does not include the names of modern scholars. A general index, it is hoped, will appear after all the volumes have been published.

For further details concerning the series and acknowledgments, see Preface to Volume I.

EHSAN YAR-SHATER

*To Martin Hinds,  
in memory of  
a long  
and  
valued  
friendship*



## CONTENTS

Preface	v
Abbreviations	xiii
Translator's Foreword	xv
Map I. The Lower Part of Southern Iraq in the Third/Ninth Century	xix
The Caliphate of Ibn al-Wathiq: A1-Muhtadi bi-Allah	
The Events of the Year 255 (cont'd) (868/869)	1
An Account of the Causes and Consequences of [the] Disturbances [in Baghdad]	3
An Account of [the] Deaths of [Ahmad b. Isra'il and Abu Nuh]	10
An Account of [the] Events [of Ramadan 255]	13
An Account of Musa's Departure	25
The First `Alawite Rebellion in al-Basrah	29
An Account of [ `Ali b. Muhammad b. `Abd al-Rahim's] Expedition and What Determined Him to Revolt There	30
An Account of the Zanj Leader's Advance upon al-Basrah with His Army	59

The Events of the Year 256 (869/870)	68
An Account of Salih's Discovery in Hiding and His Death	72
An Account of [al-Muhtadi's] Removal and Death	91
Other Accounts of al-Muhtadi's Death	95
News of [the] Encounter [between Ju`lan and the Zanj]	108
An Account of the Zanj Occupation of al-Ubullah	110
The Account of [the Zanj Leader's] Summons for [the] Surrender [of the Inhabitants of `Abbadan]	111
An Account of [the Occupation of al-Ahwaz]	111
The Caliphate of al-Muctamid `ala-Allah	
The Events of the Year 256 (cont'd) (869/870)	115
The Events of the Year 257 (870/871)	119
An Account of the Battle [between Sa`id al-Hajib and the Zanj]	121
An Account of the Battle [between Manstir b. Ja`far and the Zanj]	122
The Death of Shahin b. Bistam and the Flight of Ibrahim b. Sima	123
The Events that Led up to [the] Entry of al-Basrah [by the Zanj] and What Transpired Thereafter	125
An Account of al-Muwallad's Expedition	134
The Events of the Year 258 (871/872)	136
An Account of [Manstir b. Ja`far's] Death	137

An Account of [Muflih's] Death	139
An Account of [Yahya b. Muhammad's] Capture and Death	142
An Account of [Abu Ahmad's] Withdrawal to Wasit	146
The Events of the Year 259 (872/873)	150
An Account of [Kanjur's] Death	150
An Account of [the] Battle [at Suq al-Ahwaz] and How the Army Commander of the Central Authorities Was Killed	152

An Account of How [Musa b. Bugha's Commanders] Fared against the Zanj	153
An Account of [Ya`qub b. al-Layth's Entry into Naysabur]	156
The Events of the Year 260 (873/874)	158
An Account of [the] Battle [in Tabaristan]	158
An Account of [al-Azdi's] Death	161
The Events of the Year 261 (874/875)	163
An Account of [the] Battle [of Ramhurmuz]	164
The Events of the Year 262 (875/876)	168
An Account of [the Zanj Attack on the Salt Flats]	174
An Account of the Battle and Capture of al-Su`luk	181
The Events of the Year 263 (876/877)	185
An Account of [the] Battle [at `Askar Mukram]	186
An Account of [Ya`qub] al-Saffar's Activities This Year	187
The Events of the Year 264 (877/878)	189
An Account of [the] Capture [of `Abdallah b. Rashid]	190
An Account of [the] Battle [at Wasit]	190
An Account of How the Abominable One Prepared His Zanj to Occupy Wasit (and Other Events of the Year 264)	193
The Events of the Year 265 (878/879)	200

An Account of [the] Battle [of Junbula']	200
An Account of Takin's Arrival in al-Ahwaz	205
Bibliography of Cited Works	209
Index	213

<a href="#">&lt; previous page</a>	<a href="#">page_xi</a>	<a href="#">next page &gt;</a>
------------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

## ABBREVIATIONS

*EI1:*     *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, first edition. 4 volumes and supplement. Leiden: 1913-42.

*EI2:*     *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new edition. Leiden and London, 1960-.

## TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD

The present volume of Tabari's voluminous history covers the years 255-65/869-79. It deals with some of the most dramatic events, if not of the entire *History*, certainly of the lifetime of the historian himself. Tabari was already a mature scholar of about thirty when al-Muhtadi became caliph in 255/868 and the leader of the Zanj commenced his uprising in the very heartland of the `Abbasid domains, southern Iraq. These events marked a most severe test for the caliphate and were part of a prolonged internal crisis, not only political in nature, but economic and social as well, a crisis from which the `Abbasids never fully recovered.<sup>1</sup>

The seat of the caliphate was still at Samarra, where the Caliph al-Mu`tasim had transferred affairs of state from Baghdad in 221/ 836. The move was occasioned by the desire to settle his new Turkish elite military forces and thus avoid tensions between them and the older established political and commercial sections of Baghdad's population. However, the concentration of Turks in Samarra helped foster rivalries among them, as well as struggles between them and their masters, the caliphs. The assassination of al-Mutawakkil (247/861) ushered in a period of anarchy that came to an end only with the death of al-Muhtadi (255/868), when the Turkish leaders felt more secure of their position within the state apparatus. The new caliph, al-Mu`tamid (with the invaluable support of his brother Abu Ahmad al-Muwaffaq), remained on the caliphal throne in Samarra for more than twenty years and died a natural death, in con-

1. See D. Waines, "The Crisis of the `Abbasid Third Century."

trast to the violent deaths of the five previous caliphs in the space of a decade.

But, although a period of relative tranquillity began in the capital, danger signals were flashing in territories adjacent to the imperial heartlands. The situation in Samarra, which had paralyzed central government, had allowed provincial dissent to emerge into the open. Tabari deals here with one such expression of dissent in the career of Ya`qub b. al-Layth, a coppersmith (al-Saffar) who, having become master of the province of Sistan, next moved to challenge the Tahirids of Khurasan, long-standing supporters of the `Abbasids both in the east and in Baghdad. The central government attempted to win Ya`qub's support by granting him the governorship of several eastern regions, but a greater danger then arose when he marched westward toward al-Ahwaz and advanced upon Baghdad itself. Ultimately this particular danger was averted but not before it had seemed possible that Ya`qub might join forces with `Ali b. Muhammad and his army of the Zanj in the southern marshlands (*bata'ih*) of Iraq.

The Zanj revolt occupies the bulk of the narrative in the present volume, from its tentative beginnings in 255/869 through the traumatic capture of al-Basrah in 257/871 to the sacking of Wasit in 264/878. The period covered here, in fact, marks what Alexandre Popovic has correctly called the first distinct phase of the revolt.<sup>2</sup> The movement was crushed only when the Zanj capital, Mukhtarah, fell to al-Muwaffaq's forces in 269/882 and the Zanj leader died the following year. In all, the revolt had occupied the central government's attention for fifteen years.

Tabari's account of these events is of primary importance, "tant par la qualité que par la quantité de ses informations," as Popovic acknowledges? Tabari's skills as a historian are apparent from the manner in which he has constructed his account around reports from those who participated in or witnessed the events recorded. He also displays the storyteller's touch in his inclusion of certain selected anecdotes that bring the narrative to life. My favorite is the picture of a fleeing Zanj soldier who attempts to halt the advance of his pursuer first by tossing his armor at him and finally by trying to stop him with a metal field-oven that he had been carrying. More-

2. A. Popovic, *La révolte des esclaves en Iraq au III/IX siècle*, 83.

3. Popovic, 13.

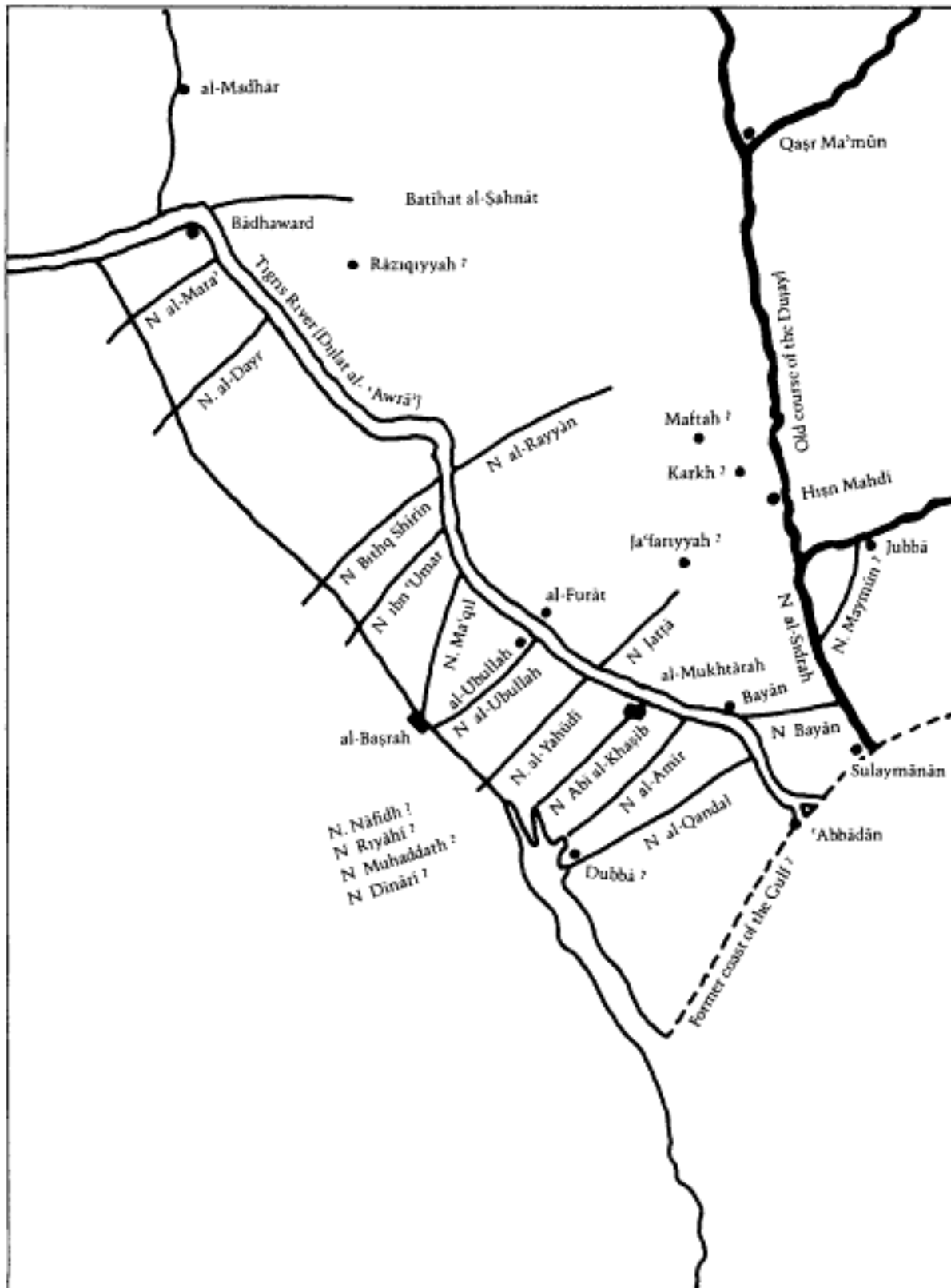


over, Tabari seems to have been living in Baghdad through at least some of the period of the revolt, as is attested in his brief account of the serial murderer of women who was captured and executed, and whose corpse was publicly displayed in the city, and more particularly in his mention of having been present at the departure of al-Muwaffaq's large and well-equipped army to engage the Zanj in the south. Tabari, for the most part, avoids making judgments on the persons and events he is dealing with, yet he cannot restrain himself entirely from expression of feeling on such momentous events. For example, until the infamous incident of the "Day of the Barges" outside al-Basrah, he refers to `Ali b. Muhammad as the Zanj leader; thereafter, however, `Ali is designated "the enemy of God," "the cursed one," and, most frequently, simply *al-khabith* "the abominable one."

A brief comment on the annotation is apposite here. The primary importance of Tabari's account, as already noted, lies in the mass of detail unique to him. Some personal names and place names, especially in the account of developments within the Zanj camp, occur only here and often only once, which makes complete identification virtually impossible. As far as possible, I have cited the works of Le Strange for the identification of place names, as readers of this translation may wish to pursue certain points in a language accessible to them. Tribal names have generally been left unannotated. References to earlier passages in the *History* are confined to providing a fuller context for events at the beginning of this translation, linking them with earlier or alternative accounts of the same incidents or with immediate antecedent events. The labor of this translation would have been much greater but for the exhaustive study of the revolt by Popovic; my indebtedness to him will be evident from the footnotes.

It remains for me to thank those who have kindly responded to pleas for assistance on points of obscurity and difficulty in the text. To Professor C. E. Bosworth, Basim Musallam, Nasser Tuwaim, and Goudah al-Batanuni I offer gratitude. A more special thanks is owed to the editor, Ehsan Yar-Shater, for reviewing the text and to Everett Rowson for his painstaking scrutiny of the translation, his corrections, and numerous helpful suggestions. And finally, a word of appreciation to Estelle Whelan for her unfailing good humor at moments of mutual vexation.

DAVID WAINES



Map 1.  
The Lower Part of Southern Iraq in the Third/Ninth Century

THE CALIPHATE OF IBN AL-WATHIQ: AL-MUHTADI BI-ALLAH

The Events Of The Year 255 (cont'd) [1712]  
(December 20, 868-December 8, 869)

On Wednesday, the last day of Rajab<sup>1</sup> of this year 255 (July 14, 869), Muhammad the son of al-Wathiq was rendered the oath of allegiance as caliph. He was called al-Muhtadi bi-Allah.<sup>2</sup> His agnomen was Abu `Abdallah. His mother, a Byzantine, was called Qurb.

It was reported on the authority of an eyewitness that Muhammad b. al-Wathiq refused to accept the oath of allegiance from anyone until al-Mu`tazz came before him and submitted his abdication, confirming his inability to administer matters entrusted to him and, moreover, expressing his desire to relinquish these matters into the care of Ibn al-Wathiq.<sup>3</sup>

Extending his hand, al-Mu`tazz acknowledged his allegiance to Muhammad b. al-Wathiq, and only then was the new caliph given the honorific title of al-Muhtadi. Thereupon al-Mu`tazz withdrew,

1. The last day of the month was, in fact, Thursday.

2. See *El*,1 s.v. "al-Muhtadi"; Mas`udi, *Muruj al-dhahab wa-ma`adin al-jawhar*, VIII, 1-41.

3. Al-Mu`tazz had become caliph in al-Muharram 252 (January 866), achieving the rank through the forced abdication of his predecessor, al-Musta`in. See *El*,1 s.v. "al-Mu`tazz."

and the inner circle of clients (*mawali*)<sup>4</sup> rendered their own oaths of allegiance.

The text of the statement concerning al-Mu`tazz's abdication is as follows:

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. The following is what the witnesses, named in this document below, were called upon to testify. They witnessed that Abu `Abdallah, the son of the Commander of the Faithful al-Mu-tawakkil `ala-Allah (while calling upon them to attest that he was of sound mind and that he lawfully performed this act of his own free will and without compulsion) acknowledged that he had reflected carefully upon matters concerning his title to the caliphate and the administration of the Muslims' affairs. He had reached the conclusion that he no longer felt suited to the task, as he was unable to fulfill his duties. He was unequal to the responsibilities he had to shoulder. Thus he voluntarily withdrew from office, declaring himself free of the burden, removing it by means of abdication. He released from their oaths those of his entourage who had sworn allegiance to him. Likewise anyone else who had sworn before him an oath of allegiance, or covenants and compacts, or oaths of divorce, of the emancipation of slaves, the voluntary payment of alms (*sadaqah*) or of pilgrimage, indeed every manner of oath, he redeemed these from them.

[1713]

After it had become clear to al-Mu`tazz that the best course both for himself and for all Muslims was to give up the caliphal office and to abdicate, he set free all those with obligations to him.

He called to witness for him, regarding everything that was cited and described in this document, all the witnesses named below and all those present after the document had been carefully read aloud to him and he had acknowledged freely and without compulsion his full awareness of its contents.

4. The word *mawla*, pl. *mawali*, in the `Abbasid period refers mainly to military personnel employed by the caliphs and who were mainly, if not exclusively, of central Asian origin. See E Crone, *Slaves on Horses*.

This occurred on Monday, the 27th day of Rajab in the year 255 (July 11, 869).<sup>5</sup>

In his own hand al-Mu`azz signed his consent to its contents with the words, "I Abu `Abdallah acknowledge all that is contained in this document." It was dated Monday, the 27th day of Rajab, 255 (July 11, 869), and witnessed by the following persons: al-Hasan b. Muhammad, Muhammad b. Yahya, Ahmad b. Janab, Yahya b. Zakariya' b. Abi Ya`qub al-Isbahani, `Abdallah b. Muhammad al-`Amiri, Ahmad b. al-Fadl b. Yahya, Hammad b. Ishaq, `Abdallah b. Muhammad, and Ibrahim b. Muhammad.<sup>6</sup> [1714]

In Baghdad at the end of Rajab of this year there were disturbances and riots among the populace against Sulayman b. `Abdallah b. Tahir.<sup>7</sup>

#### An Account of the Causes and Consequences of [the] Disturbances [in Baghdad]

One Thursday, toward the end of Rajab,<sup>8</sup> Sulayman, who was in Baghdad, received a despatch from Muhammad b. al-Wathiq in-

5. The document, which is less a formal declaration of abdication than a report on the event itself, seems to end here. See Tabari, III, 1709-12 for details of the deposition. Al-Mu`azz's death was announced in public shortly afterward, on the 2nd of Sha`ban (July 16, 869).

6. Only the first name in this list has been identified. Al-Hasan b. Muhammad b. Abi al-Shawarib had been appointed chief judge in 252/866 (see Tabari, III, 1684; his arrest is noted in Dhu al-Qa'dah 255 [October 11-November 9, 869], 1787; see also D. Sourdel, *Le vizirat `abbaside*, 1, 307), and his presence would have been deemed necessary to give the abdication/deposition at least the appearance of legitimacy. He did not, however, draw up the actual abdication document, which was undertaken by another of the company mentioned, Yahya b. Zakariya' al-Isbahani. Ibn Abi al-Shawarib confirmed orally that the sister, son, and mother of al-Mu`azz would be provided with safe-conduct. See Tabari, III, 1710-11.

7. A scion of the famous Tahirid family from Khurasan, which had long supported the caliphs from the days of al-Ma'mun (d. 218/833). As well as supplying governors of the eastern provinces, which led to the founding of an autonomous dynasty with its capital at Naysabur, the family was deeply involved in the affairs of Baghdad. Sulayman had been governor of Tabaristan in 250/864-865 and, earlier in the present year, on the 6th of Rabi' al-Thani II (March 25, 869), he had been appointed chief of security in Baghdad and the districts of the *sawad* (see Tabari, III, 1706). See *EI*, I s.v. "Tahirids"; also C. E. Bosworth, "The Tahirids and Saffarids."

8. The expression *salkh*, meaning "in the last stage of," is used when the precise date of an event is not known but only its approximate occurrence in a phase or stage of the lunar month. See M. Ocaña Jiménez, *Nuevas tablas de conversión de datas islámicas a cristianas y viceversa*, 45.

forming him of the people's oath of allegiance to him as caliph. At the time Abu Ahmad, a son of al-Mutawakkil, was also in Baghdad.<sup>9</sup> His brother al-Mu`tazz had banished Abu Ahmad to al-Basrah when he quarreled with his brother<sup>10</sup> al-Mu'ayyad. Later, when factionalism erupted in al-Basrah, al-Mu`tazz had him brought back to Baghdad, where he continued to reside.<sup>11</sup> Sulayman b. `Abdallah b. Tahir, who was at the time in charge of the office of security in Baghdad, sent for Abu Ahmad and had him brought to his palace. The troops stationed in Baghdad and the mob (*al-ghawgha'*)<sup>12</sup> heard of the matter concerning the abdication of al-Mu`tazz and Ibn al-Wathiq's accession to the caliphate. They gathered in front of Sulayman's palace, creating a great uproar, but broke up somewhat later when they were informed that there was no confirmation of the report of what had happened. On the following day, Friday, there were again disturbances, and once again people were told the same thing as on the previous day. Prayers were performed in the two main mosques of the city and invocations offered in the name of al-Mu`tazz. Then, on the Saturday morning, troops attacked Sulayman's palace, calling out in the name of Abu Ahmad (b. al-Mutawakkil) and demanding that he be rendered the oath of allegiance. Confronting Sulayman in his palace, they asked him to produce Abu Ahmad b. al-Mutawakkil. He brought him before them, and he promised to meet their wishes if there was delay in their fulfillment. The crowd departed, having been reassured of his guarantee.

[1715]

Yarjukh<sup>13</sup> arrived and camped at al-Baradan.<sup>14</sup> He was transporting thirty thousand dinars for the pay of the troops (*al-jund*) of Madinat al-Salam.<sup>15</sup> He then advanced to al-Shammasiyyah<sup>16</sup> and the

9. He was later known by the honorific title al-Muwaffaq.

10. *Akhi min ummihi*. Tabari notes that Abu Ahmad and al-Mu'ayyad were brothers by the same mother.

11. Abu Ahmad had been banished first to Wasit, thence to al-Basrah in 253/867. See Tabari, III, 1693.

12. See n. 17, below.

13. Tabari first mentions this Turkish officer during the course of events of this year in an engagement with the rebel Musawir, who defeated him, forcing his flight to Samarra. See Tabari, III, 1706.

14. A town lying on the east bank of the Tigris just to the north of Baghdad. The road from it passed through the Baradan Gate on Baghdad's eastern side. See Le Strange, *Baghdad during the Abbasid Caliphate*, 174.

15. At this time Madinat al-Salam was synonymous with Baghdad, and the expression has been retained here wherever it occurs.

16. One of the northern quarters of eastern Baghdad, Shammasiyyah has the mean-

(Footnote continued on next page)

following morning entered Baghdad. When word of this got around, the troops (*al-nas*) created an uproar as they rushed out to meet him. Yarjukh was informed of their approach, and he returned to al-Baradan to remain there. Despatches were exchanged between him and the central authorities until he finally sent money to the troops (*ahl*)<sup>17</sup> of Baghdad, with which they were content. Al-Muhtadi was rendered the oath of allegiance by the inner circle [of clients]<sup>18</sup> in Baghdad on Thursday, the 7th of Sha`ban (July 21, 869). Prayers were offered for him on Friday, the 8th of Sha`ban, following an outbreak of violence (*fitnah*)<sup>19</sup> in Baghdad, during which some people were killed, others were drowned in the Tigris, while yet others suffered various injuries. This violence occurred because Sulayman had his palace guarded with a group of armed Tabariyyah,<sup>20</sup> against whom the troops of Baghdad waged a pitched battle in Tigris Street and at the Bridge.<sup>21</sup> Thereafter order and peace were restored.

In the month of Ramadan of this year (August 13 -September 9,

(Footnote continued from previous page)

ing "deaconry," as the place had originally been occupied by several monasteries. See Le Strange, *Baghdad*, 202.

17. Tabari at the beginning of the paragraph employs the common word for a military force, troops, or soldiers, *al-jund*, and then resorts to the more euphemistic terms *al-nas* and *ahl*, which literally mean "people" in general. However, a few lines earlier (see n. 12, above) Tabari uses another term in association with *al-jund*, namely *al-ghawgha'*, which normally has no military connotation. Thus, despite Tabari's rather loose style, he nevertheless conveys the picture of disorder caused by both military and civilian elements in the city. This is underlined by his use of the word *al-`ammah* "the populace" in introducing the account of these events. See Tabari, III, 1714.

18. The word *al-khassah* alone is taken here to mean those close to the court and the Caliph's person, as in the phrase *khassat al-mawali*, used by Tabari, III, 1712.

19. Tabari's use of the word *fitnah* here suggests the rising tempo of violence in Baghdad, which had moved from demonstrations of anger to open violence leading to deaths. Sulayman's deployment of a "foreign" contingent of soldiers around his palace was seen as highly provocative by troops based in Baghdad.

20. A contingent of soldiers from the province of Tabaristan. These troops may have been brought by Sulayman b. `Abdallah on his journey from Khurasan to Samarra. See Tabari, III, 1706.

21. *Al-jisr*. There were three pontoon bridges (pl. *al-jusur*) across the Tigris, joining western and eastern Baghdad. See Le Strange, *Baghdad*, 177-86, for a description of them. J. Lassner, *The Shaping of 'Abbasid Rule*, 299 n. 109 (and 294 n. 63) says that *al-jisr* signifies the Main Bridge joining the quarter of the Khuld on the western side with the Bab al-Taqa on the east. Of the various scholarly views concerning the precise location of these bridges, Lassner follows Le Strange. See Lassner, *The Topography of Baghdad in the Early Middle Ages*, 173 -76, 280 n. 1, 281 n. 6. Another problem about which there can be no certainty is when, whether in Tabari's time or later, the term *al-jisr* became applied specifically to the Main Bridge.



869) Qabihah<sup>22</sup> went to the Turks and revealed to them the location of some of her possessions, including a hoard of treasures and jewels. That reportedly occurred because she had planned to assassinate Salih (b. Wasif)<sup>23</sup> and plotted to do so with a number of secretaries whom Salih had already maltreated.<sup>24</sup> When Salih [again] submitted them to torture and Qabihah learned that they had withheld no information from Salih, owing to the punishment he meted out to them, she became convinced her own life was in danger. She undertook to save herself and thus removed the contents of her treasure stores from inside the Jawsaq palace,<sup>25</sup> which included money, jewels, and other precious goods; she deposited them for safekeeping along with other goods of the same kind she had previously deposited.

[1716]

Qabihah was unsure of being able to act swiftly in the event of such circumstances as eventually overwhelmed her and her son, so she devised a strategem for her escape. A tunnel was excavated leading from one of her private chambers inside the palace to a place that would not be detected. When she learned of the circumstances [surrounding her son's abdication] she hastened to the tunnel without a second thought and escaped from the palace confines. When those who had rebelled against her son had succeeded [in imposing the situation] they wanted, they then set out in search of Qabihah, confident of her capture. But they found the palace empty. She had vanished without a trace, leaving them no clue where to search. Finally, however, they stumbled across the tunnel. Realizing this must have

22. The mother of al-Mu`tazz.

23. Salih was a prominent military leader, whose father had been murdered two years earlier by his Turkish rivals. He was now attempting to restore the power of his own faction and bore grievances against both the deposed Caliph, al-Mu`tazz, and some of his government officials. Qabihah clearly felt Salih would not honor his pledge of securing her safety. See Sourdél, *Vizirat*, I, 297-98.

24. Prominent among those who were subjected to Salih's interrogation methods were Abu Ja`far Ahmad b. Isra'il al-Anbari, al-Mu`tazz's vizier, who, together with Abu Nuh `Isa b. Ibrahim and Hasan b. Makhlad, were the major pillars of the Caliph's administration. In addition, Hasan was also secretary to Qabihah. As such they became the target of Salih b. Wasif's ambitions in his bid for power. See Tabari, III, 1706-9; Sourdél, *Vizirat*, I, 295-98, for details of relevant parallel sources.

25. This palace, built by the Caliph al-Mu`tasim, was located on the eastern side of the Tigris at Samarra. See Le Strange, *The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate*, 55. It should not be confused with the palace al-Jawsaq al-Muhdath situated in Baghdad. See Le Strange, *Baghdad*, 257. The architectural details of the palace are discussed in K. A. C. Creswell, *A Short Account of Early Muslim Architecture*, 259-60.

been her escape route, they followed it as far as the secret exit and became certain of her successful escape. They surmised that she would have sought a safe and secure refuge, and what better way than to seek shelter with Habib, the wife of Musa b. Bugha,<sup>26</sup> whom he had married from among the concubines of al-Mutawakkil? They set out for this quarter of the city, but being loath to expose themselves to any of her supporters, they organized a surveillance team to watch her. A threat was publicly announced against anyone with information of her whereabouts who then did not inform them of it. Thus matters stood until, in the month of Ramadan, she suddenly appeared and went to Salih. b. Wasif. A female apothecary in whom she had trust acted as her intermediary with Salih. Qabihah had wealth in Baghdad, and so she sent written instructions for some of it to be brought to Samarra.

[1717]

On Tuesday, the 11th of Ramadan in this year (August 23, 869), it was reported, a sum of five hundred thousand dinars arrived in Samarra. The money had been raised for Qabihah from the treasure she had in Baghdad and despatched according to her instructions. The central authorities profited greatly from this source, while in Baghdad itself the non-Arab troops (*al-jund*) and the Shakiriyyah<sup>27</sup> who received regular stipends were assigned considerable sums from it as well. The sale of these hoards continued to raise money in Baghdad and Samarra for several months until, at last, they were depleted. Qabihah remained in Samarra until people departed for Mecca on that year's pilgrimage. She was sent in the company of Raja' al-Rababi and Wahash, a *mawla* of al-Muhtadi. It was reported that someone heard her along the way imploring God in a loud voice

26. Musa was the son of the army commander the elder Bugha. See *EI*2 s.v. "Bugha al-Kabir."

27. A name variously applied to a group or groups of soldiers who became rivals of troops commanded by the Turkish commanders in Samarra. See Mas`udi, *Muruj*, VII, 276; also R. Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam*, 418, states the word is derived from the Persian *chakir* "servant or apprentice" and that, as a contingent, they were distinct from the *jund*, or regular soldiers. A more precise distinction may be found in the organization of military administration during the earlier reign of al-Mutawakkil (d. 248/861), when there existed a branch of the department of the army called the *Diwan al-jund wa-al-Shakiriyyah*; *jund* referred to non-Arab troops while Shakiriyyah meant mercenaries. See Sourdél, *Vizirat*, II, 596; *EI*2 s.v. "Djund." Thus, in instances where Tabari uses these two terms in conjunction, the word *jund* will be rendered as "non-Arab troops"; otherwise it will be rendered variously as "soldiers," "troops," "army," and the like.

against Salih. b. Wasif, saying: "Oh God, humiliate Salih b. Wasif just as he has dishonored me, murdered my son, seized my property, squandered my goods, banished me from my home, and behaved obscenely toward me." When the pilgrims set out on their return journey, Qabihah was detained in prison in Mecca. [1718]

It was reported that, when the Turks became agitated and roused against al-Mu`tazz, they demanded fifty thousand dinars from him, promising in return to kill Salih b. Wasif and then become pacific. Al-Mu`tazz sent word to his mother of the Turks' grievances against him and of his fear for his life. She replied, "I have no liquid resources. We have received some promissory notes,<sup>28</sup> and, if the Turks can wait until they are redeemed, we could then pay them."<sup>29</sup>

When al-Mu`tazz had been killed, Salih made contact with a jeweler, who recounted the following story: "I went to Salih Ahmad b. Khaqan<sup>30</sup> was present with him at the time. Ahmad said to me, 'Woe upon you! This is it. Do you see what a fix I'm in?' Salih had been alarmed by the Turks, who had demanded money of him that he did not have. He said to me, pointing out one of the company present, 'I have been informed that Qabihah has treasure hidden in a place to which this man can guide you. Go, and take Ahmad b. Khaqan with you. Should you uncover anything, make a record of it, hand it over to him, and come with him to me.'

When I had performed my prayers<sup>31</sup> in the congregational mosque, this man took us to a tidy dwelling, which we entered and searched from top to bottom without finding anything. The man began to abuse Ahmad b. Khaqan, who in turn menaced, threatened, and abused him and accused him of making an error. The man fetched an ax and commenced piercing the walls with it, searching for a place where the money might be hidden. He continued exploring in this fashion until the ax struck a spot in the wall that, by the sound it made, indicated that something was concealed there. By demolishing the wall, a door was revealed behind it. We opened it and entered. It led to a tunnel, and we found ourselves in a chamber built [1719]

28. *Safatij*.

29. See Tabari, III, 1709, for slightly different details of these events.

30. This is Ahmad b. Khaqan al-Wathiqi, a freedman of the Caliph al-Wathiq, who appears briefly later; p. 73, below.

31. *Ila al-sufuf*, the reading favored by the editor of the Leiden text. Although each of the recensions has a different reading, none of them is satisfactory.

beneath the dwelling we had entered above, identical in structure and floor plan. There, stored in baskets placed upon shelves, we located the money, amounting to something in the order of a million dinars. Ahmad and his companion removed three hundred thousand dinars. Then we discovered three baskets; one contained a *makkuk*<sup>32</sup> of emeralds, but of a kind that I could imagine neither al-Mutawakkil nor indeed anyone else possessing. Another smaller basket contained half a *makkuk* of large beads which, by God, I had never dreamed al-Mutawakkil or anyone else could possess. The third yet smaller basket contained a *kaylajah* of rubies, the likes of which I had never before seen or even imagined existing anywhere in the world. Estimating the market value of it all, it came to two million dinars. We removed the entire treasure and took it to Salih. When he heard of its value, he could scarcely believe it and remained unconvinced until he was shown the actual goods. He then remarked, 'May God do such-and-such to her! Al-Mu`tazz's mother condemned her son to death for want of the miserable sum of fifty thousand dinars, when she actually had in only one of her treasuries such wealth as this!'" [1720]

The mother<sup>33</sup> of Mu`tazz b. al-Wathiq (al-Muhtadi) died before the oath of allegiance had been rendered to him. She had been one of al-Musta`in's wives, and when he was slain al-Mu`tazz transferred her to the palace of al-Rusafah,<sup>34</sup> where he kept his harem. After al-Muhtadi became caliph he one day said to a company of his *mawlas*, "I now [unlike al-Mu`tazz] have no mother who requires the sum of ten million dinars every year as expenses for her maids and servants and hangers-on; as for myself and my children, I want only sufficient food and nothing extra, except for my brothers, as they have fallen upon hard times."

Ahmad b. Isra`il and Abu Nuh were killed on the 27th of Ramadan of this year (September 8, 869).

32. Measures like this and *kaylajah*, below, were subject to regional variation. A *makkuk* in Baghdad and al-Kufah weighed 5.625 kg., while in al-Basrah and Wasit it weighed 6 kg. In Iraq a *kaylajah* was one-third of a *makkuk*. See W. Hinz, *Islamische Masse und Gewichte*, 40, 44.

33. This was Qurb, the Byzantine woman mentioned above, p. 1.

34. Located in the northeastern quarter of Baghdad, the palace was originally built by the Caliph al-Mahdi and probably restored or enlarged by Harun al-Rashid. See Le Strange, *Baghdad*, 189; Lassner, *Topography*, index, q.v.

An Account of [the] Deaths [of Ahmad B. Isra'il] and Abu Nuh]

We have already mentioned the cause that led them to their deaths.<sup>35</sup> As for the nature of their deaths, it is reported that, when Salih b. Wasif had seized all their property and that of al-Hasan b. Makhlad as well, he did so by torturing them with beatings and chains and placing braziers of red-hot coals next to them, while depriving them of any respite the whole time they were in his custody. They were accused of grave crimes of treason, of intending to degrade the central authorities, and of attempting to prolong civil disorder by plotting dissent among Muslims. Al-Muhtadi did nothing to interfere with Salih in these matters, though he disapproved of and did not accept his violent behavior toward them. Then, in the month of Ramadan (August 13 -September 11, 869), Salih ordered al-Hasan b. Sulayman al-Dushabi<sup>36</sup> to supervise the extraction of any remaining property that they had concealed from him.

[1721]

Al-Hasan b. Sulayman related that, when Ahmad b. Isra'il had been brought to him, he abused him, saying "You wretch, do you think that God will give you respite and that the Commander of the Faithful will not sanction your death, though you are the cause of discord, an accomplice in murder and treason, and a corrupter of purpose and character? For the very least of these crimes you deserve to be made an example of, just as those before you have deserved such treatment. Death in this life and torment and ignominy in the life hereafter are your lot if you do not receive God's pardon and mercy, and your Imam's pardon and forgiveness. Protect yourself from incurring the punishment you deserve by being truthful concerning your wealth; if you do so and your truthfulness is confirmed, you can save yourself."

Ahmad replied that he had nothing left, nor had anyone until then left him property or estates.

Al-Hasan said, "I then called for whips to be brought out and ordered that Ahmad be stood outside in the sun. I assailed him with ferocity, though triumph could have slipped through my hands if he had shown a little courage and fortitude. Finally, however, he con-

[1722]

35. See Tabari, III, 1706-9.

36. No further information on this man has been found.

ceded to an amount of nineteen thousand dinars, and I accepted his bond on it."

Al-Hasan continued, "Thereafter I had Abu Nuh `Isa b. Ibrahim brought to me and told him the same as I had to Ahmad, or words to the same effect, elaborating somewhat upon them. "Withal, you remain a Christian, violating Muslim women while proclaiming yourself free from Islam and its followers. What better indicates this than the fact that you remain a Christian in private among your family and children? God has permitted such persons to be lawfully killed. But Abu Nuh gave no reply to any of this, weak and miserable man that he was."<sup>37</sup>

Al-Hasan continued: "As for al-Hasan b. Makhlad, I had him brought to me next, but when I addressed him I was speaking to someone already weak and humiliated. I chided him for appearing this way. I said, 'Someone who has grooms to accompany him on his *shihri* steed, who judges matters as you do, and desires what you do, should never appear humbled or impotent.' I kept up the pressure on him in this manner until he signed his bond for a jewel the value of which was some thirty thousand dinars. After this I departed, and they were then all returned to their places." Al-Hasan b. Sulayman al-Dushabi's examination of these men was the last involving them. According to the information that has reached me, no similar examination was held during the remaining days of al-Muhtadi.

On Thursday, the 27th of Ramadan (September 8, 869), Ahmad b. Isra'il and Abu Nuh `Isa b. Ibrahim were brought to the Public Gate. [1723] Salih b. Wasif, who presided in the public audience hall, ordered Hammad b. Muhammad b. Hammad b. Danqash<sup>38</sup> to beat them. Ahmad b. Isra'il was prepared, and Ibn Danqash cried out "Scourge him!" Each flogger lashed him twice, then stepped aside for the next one until Ahmad had received five hundred strokes. They next prepared Abu Nuh and administered five hundred severe lashes on him as well. The two wretches were then placed face down upon the backs of donkeys of water sellers, their heads toward the rear of the animals, so that their lacerated backs were plain for all to see. When

37. At this time there were in the administration several scribes of Nestorian origin, some of whom had been recently converted. To this general group belonged Ahmad b. Isma'il, al-Hasan b. Makhlad, and Abu Nuh `Isa b. Ibrahim. See Sourdél, *Vizirat*, I, 304

38. No further information on this person has been found.



the procession reached Khashabat Babak,<sup>39</sup> Ahmad died and Abu Nuh died when the procession came to an end. Ahmad was buried between the walls [of the city] and, according to another account, Abu Nuh died the same day in the prison of al-Sarakhsi, who was the deputy of Talmajur,<sup>40</sup> in charge of the special police. For his part, al-Hasan b. Makhlad remained in prison.

Someone who had been present at these proceedings reportedly said, "I heard Hammad b. Muhammad b. Hammad b. Danqash berate the floggers saying, 'Exert yourselves, you sons of harlots, may you never be addressed in respectful terms!<sup>41</sup> Punish them! Change the whips and replace the teams of torturers with others!' Ahmad b. Isra'il and `Isa (b. Ibrahim) cried out for mercy."

When news of this reached al-Muhtadi, he said, "Is there no choice of punishment other than either the whip or death? Is there nothing better? Is imprisonment not enough? We are God's, and to Him we shall return."<sup>42</sup> He repeated this last phrase over and over again.

Al-Hasan b. Makhlad is reported to have said that their whole affair involving Salih would have come to naught had `Abdallah b. Muhammad b. Yazdad<sup>43</sup> not been present and in such a ruthless mood. He urged upon Salih to "beat and torture them; indeed it would be best to go beyond that and kill them. If they escape, you will never be sure their injustices will not visit you in the end, let alone what those seeking to avenge them might do." He then mentioned what vile things that he had heard concerning them, which delighted Salih. [1724]

Ibn Makhlad continued: "Da'ud b. al-`Abbas al-Tusi<sup>44</sup> used to

39. For Babak, the leader of the Kurramite sect, and the place in Samarra that carries his name, see *EL*, 2 s.v. "Babak." For the quarter of Khashabat Babak, see Ya`qubi, *Kitab al-Buldan*, 259. The quarter in these years was the site of public executions. See Tabari, III, 1658.

40. The name is uncertain, other variants being given as Talmahun and Talhur.

41. That is, they would not be addressed by their patronymics. See *EL* 2 s.v. "Kunya," on the honorific nature of this form of address.

42. A phrase that occurs in the Qur'an several times.

43. Abu Salih `Abdallah b. Muhammad b. Yazdad al-Marwazi was the son of the Caliph al-Ma'mun's last secretary; `Abdallah himself was briefly vizier under al-Musta'in and was last encountered being summoned by al-Mu'tazz to be appointed vizier during the events here recounted. See Tabari, III, 1707; Sourdel, *Vizirat*, I, 292.

44. His name is otherwise given as Da'ud b. Muhammad b. Abi al-`Abbas al-Tusi. See Tabari, index, s.v. "Da'ud b. al-`Abbas." No other information about him is available, but see n. 45, below.

bring us to Salih, saying, 'May God give you strength, what are these people that they should have caused you such anger?' We thought he might influence Salih to treat us leniently until he said, 'But by God, I know that if they were set free they would perpetrate immense evil and corruption throughout the domain of Islam.' Before he departed Da'ud provided a legal opinion (*fatwa*)<sup>45</sup> justifying our execution and advised Salih to have us put to death. This legal opinion and the other things he said about us increased Salih's anger and his willingness to do us harm."

Someone who had some firsthand knowledge of these developments was once asked how al-Hasan b. Makhlad was spared the fate of his two companions. The reply was twofold. First, al-Hasan had at once truthfully revealed to Salih the information he required, also providing proof that what he said was true. Salih had promised to pardon al-Hasan if he told the truth and swore an oath to that effect. The second reason was that the Commander of the Faithful had mentioned his case to Salih, telling him of the esteem he had for his family and hinting that he desired to have al-Hasan rehabilitated. He thereby restrained him from doing anything too reprehensible to him. The informant also thought that, if Salih had held al-Hasan longer in custody, he would have released him in any case and treated him well. But in the matter of government secretaries, Salih was not content to sequester their wealth and that of their children. He went so far as to threaten their relatives and other near relations with sequestration of their wealth and extended his influence even over their hangers-on.

[1725]

On the 13th of Ramadan of this year 255 (August 25, 869) the prison in Baghdad was breached. The Shakiriyyah and reserve soldiers (*al-nd'ibah*) in the city attacked Muhammad b. Aws al-Balkhi.

An Account of [the] Events [of Ramadan 255]

The cause of these developments was the arrival in Baghdad of Muhammad b. AWS,<sup>46</sup> who was accompanying Sulayman b. `Abdallah

45. This phrase would suggest that Da'ud b. al-`Abbas al-Tusi was a *mufti* a canon lawyer, competent to render such an opinion. See *EI2* s.v. "Fatwa."

46. In his account of events of the year 250/864-65 Tabari notes that Muhammad b. Aws had virtually wrested Tabaristan from the control of its governor, Sulayman b. `Abdallah, by placing his own offspring in key positions of power. Their brutality

(Footnote continued on next page)



b. Tahir.<sup>47</sup> Muhammad was in charge of the army coming with Sulayman from Khurasan, in addition to the riffraff<sup>48</sup> whom Sulayman had assembled while in al-Rayy but whose names were not recorded in the *diwan* of the central authorities in Iraq.<sup>49</sup> Sulayman had been given no instructions concerning them. The prevailing practice for such recruits, however, was to pay those who accompanied him from Khurasan a rate of pay in Iraq equivalent to that paid to their like in Khurasan, to be drawn from the revenues of the [Iraqi] estates<sup>50</sup> of heirs of the Tahirid family.<sup>51</sup> Instructions were then sent to Khurasan concerning the matter, to arrange that the heirs there were compensated from the public treasury [in Khurasan] for what was paid out from their property in Iraq. When Sulayman b. `Abdallah arrived in Iraq, however, he discovered that the treasury of the heirs' property was depleted. Once this information was confirmed, `Ubaydallah b. `Abdallah b. Tahir<sup>52</sup> had undertaken to transfer to his brother, Sulayman [responsibility for] the task<sup>53</sup> to which he had been assigned. `Ubaydallah secured the amount accumulated in the coffers of the heirs of his father and grandfather while demanding payment

[1726]

(Footnote continued from previous page)

and arrogance had created much ill feeling against them among the population of the province. See Tabari, III, 1524-25.

47. Sulayman b. `Abdallah had been appointed by al-Mu`tazz as chief of security in Baghdad and the Sawad on the 6th of Rajab II (March 24, 869). After receiving robes of honor from the Caliph, he departed for Baghdad. See Tabari, III, 1706. His arrival there was the cause for the disturbances recounted on pp. 3-5, above.

48. *Sa`alik*, pl. of *su`luk*. The word means a poor or needy person and, by extension, a thief and robber. In the present context they may be understood as a group of untrained conscripts; in any event, they appear to have been quartered together as a group, as will appear in the subsequent narrative. See n. 81, below, and p. 164, where one Abu Da'ud al-Sa`luk was engaged in warlike activities.

49. On the organization of the army in `Abbasid times, see *EI*2 s.v. "Djaysh"; Bosworth, "Recruitment, Muster and Review in medieval Islamic Armies."

50. *Diya` warathah dhi al-yaminayn*. The Tahirids were acting as bankers for the army.

51. The text reads *dhu al-yaminayn*. The epithet, meaning ambidextrous, was given to the founder of the Tahirid dynasty, Tahir b. al-Husayn, owing to his ability to use a sword in battle with either hand. See Bosworth, "Tahirids," 90-5; H. Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphs*, 150-52; *EI*,1 s.v. "Tahir b. al-Husayn."

52. Muhammad b. `Abdallah, the brother of `Ubaydallah, had deputized him in his will to assume his duties in the event of his death. When Muhammad died in Dhu al-Qa`dah 253 (November 867) al-Mu`tazz gave `Ubaydallah robes of honor and a document signifying that he was the governor of Baghdad; Tabari, III, 1691-92. In the next year, 254/868, `Ubaydallah was in Baghdad, tracking down the sons of the Turkish commander Bugha the Younger, murdered at the instigation of the Caliph, III, 1696.

53. That is, the governorship of Baghdad.

of taxes in advance on immature crops. Payments<sup>54</sup> from tax collectors were brought forward to a time when they were not yet due. Nevertheless, he managed to gather the entire amount required.

Thereafter `Ubaydallah set out and established camp in al-Juwayth,<sup>55</sup> which was situated on the eastern side of the Tigris. Later he crossed over to the western side. Thus Sulayman found himself in dire straits as the Shakiriyyah and the non-Arab soldiers<sup>56</sup> agitated for payment of their allotments. Sulayman corresponded with Abu `Abdallah al-Mu`tazz on the matter, estimating the amount of revenue required for these payments. He added an estimate as well for those who had accompanied him from Khurasan. He instructed his secretary, Muhammad b. `Isa b. `Abd al-Rahman al-Katib al-Khurasani, to deal with the matter. After some negotiations Sulayman received a reply that funds under the control of the tax agents of the Sawad would be assigned to him,<sup>57</sup> on condition of his assuming responsibility for their repayment. The funds would be for the pay of [troops] in Madinat al-Salam and the garrisons of the Sawad; they were not to meet needs of [Sulayman's] reserves or the troops accompanying them. Sulayman was not able to get access to any of the funds. Ibn Aws, the riffraff, and his troops arrived, but the revenue was insufficient for his needs and the needs of those reserves who had anticipated receiving it. They thus found out about this situation and its harmful consequences to them. [1727]

The riffraff and others who had arrived in Baghdad with Sulayman began to disturb the peace of the local neighborhoods, openly displaying foul behavior and attacking women, slaves (*al-`abid*),<sup>58</sup> and servants (*al-ghilman*).<sup>59</sup> They were able to assault these classes be-

54. *Amwal nujum*. *Najm* signifies the time when a payment falls due, hence also an installment.

55. The reading is uncertain, the name in manuscripts B and C being unpointed.

56. Tabari again employs the term *al-jund* here. See n. 27, above. It is, however, unclear whether he is referring to troops already stationed in Baghdad or to soldiers who accompanied Sulayman.

57. *Subbiba Iahu*. *Tasbib* was a form of direct payment made to soldiers either as a salary or as an assignment on a specific source of taxation. See Tabari, *Glossarium*; CCLXXXIV see also Bosworth, "Recruitment," 75; Bosworth, "Abu `Abdallah al-Khwarazmi on the Technical Terms of the Secretary's Art," 139-40.

58. On this term, pl. of *`abd*, see, *EI2* s.v. "`Abd."

59. On the complex of meanings of this term, pl. of *ghulam*, see *EI2* s.v. "Ghulam." In the urban contexts of Samarra and Baghdad the term may be rendered as "attendant, guard, servant, and page." See also *EI2* s.v. "Djaysh," especially at 507, for the

(Footnote continued on next page)

cause of their standing with the central authorities, and such behavior aroused against them the anger and fury of the people.

Now it happened that Sulayman b. `Abdallah had developed a deep resentment against al-Husayn b. Isma`il b. Ibrahim b. Mus`ab b. Ruzayq<sup>60</sup> because of the position granted him by `Ubaydallah b. `Abdallah, as well as the support and maintenance `Ubaydallah provided him. Sulayman also resented al-Husayn's separation from himself and his supporters. After al-Husayn b. Isma`il had returned to Baghdad at the end of his appointment in charge of the non-Arab troops and the Shakiriyyah on behalf of `Ubaydallah, Sulayman imprisoned al-Husayn's secretary in al-Matbaq<sup>61</sup> and his chamberlain in the prison by the Syrian Gate.<sup>62</sup> He also placed troops to guard the residence of al-Husayn b. Isma`il under the command of Ibrahim b. Ishaq b. Ibrahim. Sulayman had put this Ibrahim in charge of the double bridge<sup>63</sup> of Baghdad and the administrative districts (sg. *tassuj*) of Qatrabbul, Maskin, and al-Anbar.<sup>64</sup> These were the very same duties that al-Husayn b. Isma`il, on `Ubaydallah's behalf, had been responsible for previously.

Events transpired as they did in the wake of al-Muhtadi's accession to the caliphate with the revolt of the troops and the Shakiriyyah in Madinat al-Salam and the outbreak of general unrest. During this period, Muhammad b. Aws severely maltreated an inhabitant from Mary who was a partisan of the Shi`ah. In Sulay-

(Footnote continued from previous page)

term "young soldier," which might at times also apply in these same contexts. For a contrasting usage, see n. 139, below.

60. One of the military commanders who had been in the service of Muhammad b. `Abdallah b. Tahir in Baghdad; he then served as one of `Ubaydallah's commanders. See Tabari, III, 1664-68.

61. Built by the Caliph al-Mansur, this prison is located by Le Strange in the southern part of the Round City at the intersection of roads leading to the al-Basrah and al-Kufah Gates. Le Strange, *Baghdad*, 27.

62. This prison, also built by al-Mansur, was located by the Syrian Gate of the Round City. Le Strange, *Baghdad*, 130.

63. *Jisrayn*. From the use of this expression and from an earlier context (see Tabari, III, 1663-64), it is possible to suggest that there existed a double pontoon bridge in Baghdad, even before the one known to have been erected in the mid-eleventh century. See Lassner, *Topography*, 173-76, 281 n. 6; and note 72, below.

64. These districts formed part of a larger suburban area to the north and west of Baghdad, extending as far as the Euphrates river. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 51; Le Strange, *Baghdad*, 50-51; Lassner, *Topography*, index, q.vv. On the *tassuj*, see Bosworth, "Abu `Abdallah," 140; E Løkkegaard, *Islamic Taxation, in the Classic Period*, 164-65.

man's palace, Muhammad administered to him three hundred brutal lashes and then imprisoned him at the Syrian Gate. It happened that the man was among al-Husayn b. Isma'il's inner circle. So when this [unrest] occurred, there was need of al-Husayn b. Isma'il, because of his fortitude and courage. The troops placed in charge of guarding his palace were removed, and he came out. His own troops, after having been distributed among the contingents of other army commanders, a large number of them being attached to the commander Muhammad b. Abi Awn,<sup>65</sup> returned to him without orders.

[1728]

It was reported that, when those who had been thus assigned to Ibn Abi Awn arrived at [al-Husayn's] palace, he dispensed among them from his own resources ten dirhams for each foot soldier and a dinar for each horseman. After they thus returned to al-Husayn, Ibn Abi Awn lodged a complaint regarding that, but no appointment [returning the soldiers to him] or order regarding that was forthcoming.

The position remained the same, and the non-Arab soldiers and the Shakiriyyah clamored for the payment due to them upon the accession of the new caliph<sup>66</sup> and for the remainder of their advance allotments. Arrangements for the distribution of their pay and their receipt [of it] had now passed again into the hands of al-Husayn, along the same lines as in the days of `Ubaydallah b. `Abdallah b. Tahir. Al-Husayn was continuously haranguing them about Muhammad b. Abi Awn's behavior and that of those who had come with Sulayman, how these were trying to get their hands on the troops' money and keep it from them, until their hearts were filled [with resentment].

On Friday the 13th of Ramadan (August 25, 869) a contingent of non-Arab troops and the Shakiriyyah assembled together with a crowd of the local populace. Under the cover of night they proceeded to the prison at the Syrian Gate, broke down its doors, and released most of the inmates, leaving behind only those criminals who were either too weak or sick or were loaded with fetters. Among those who managed to escape that night were a number belonging to the

[1729]

65. He had formerly been one of Muhammad b. `Abdallah b. Tahir's commanders, and had been appointed by al-Mu'tazz in 252/866 to govern al-Basrah, Yamamah, and al-Bahrayn. See Tabari, III, 1658.

66. *Mal al-bay`ah*. See *EI*,2 s.v. "Mal al-bay`a."

family of Musawir b. `Abd al-Hamid the Kharijite.<sup>67</sup> The man from Marv who had been maltreated by Muhammad b. Aws was also set free. So too was a group of those to whom the central authorities had sent some fifty million<sup>68</sup> before being captured.<sup>69</sup>

When people went out on Friday morning, they found the prison gates opened. [The inmates] who could walk away did so; for those who were unable to walk riding animals were hired. They milled about without let or hindrance. This was one of the most significant events that caused both the privileged and the common people to lose any fear they had of Sulayman b. `Abdallah. Finally, the doors of the prison at the Syrian Gate were sealed with bricks and clay. No indication was known of any action whatsoever taken that night on the part of Ibrahim b. Ishaq<sup>70</sup> or any of his associates. It was rumored among the people that the person suspected of planning the assault on the prison was someone acting on behalf of, and in order to release, the man from Marv whom Ibn Aws had badly beaten.

Scarcely five days had elapsed after these events when Ibn Aws quarreled with al-Husayn b. Isma`il over the matter of paying the reserve forces. Ibn Aws wanted the money for his own troops, but al-Husayn would have none of it. Foul words were exchanged between them, and Muhammad (Ibn Aws) departed livid with anger. The next morning he set out for Sulayman's palace; al-Husayn b. Isma`il and al-Shah b. Mikal, a *mawla* of Tahir,<sup>71</sup> did likewise. Among the [1730]

67. Musawir was one of the *dihqans* of al-Bawazij, a town in the eastern part of the Jazirah area, on the bank of the Lesser Zab river (see Le Strange, *Lands*, 91 ). Tabari calls him a Kharijite (*muhakkim*, meaning "one who asserts there is no judgment, *hukm*, but God's," a known Kharijite principle) where he notes the commencement of his rebellion in Rajab 253 (July 7-August 5, 876), III, 1688-94. Here, as in all later references, Tabari refers to him as al-Shari, literally, "seller," a Kharijite term meaning "one who sells his soul for the cause of God," echoing Qur'an 2:203.

68. *Khamsin alf alf*. The text does not mention to what the figure refers; indeed, the copyist may have inadvertently repeated the *alf* (thousand) and the figure intended may have been fifty thousand.

69. The translation of this last sentence is tentative; the entire passage is quite obscure.

70. This incident appears to have been the sequel to an earlier clash in Baghdad between the mob and the clients of Ishaq b. Ibrahim, who sided with Tahir b. Muhammad b. `Abdallah against Muhammad's brother `Ubaydallah in what was a petty interfamily squabble. See Tabari, III, 1691-92.

71. Al-Shah b. Mikal had been one of Muhammad b. `Abdallah b. Tahir's loyal commanders in Baghdad. He had a brother Muhammad who was a commander in the service of another member of the Tahirid family and who was killed in 250/864- 65.

(Footnote continued on next page)

crowd gathered in front of Sulayman's residence some of Ibn Aws's troops were engaged in loud, heated discussion with the reserves. Then the troops of Ibn Aws and the newcomers [from Khurasan] hastened across to the island,<sup>72</sup> followed by Ibn Aws himself and his sons. Men summoned one another to arms. Al-Husayn b. Isma`il, al-Shah b. Mikal, and al-Muzaffar b. Saysal<sup>73</sup> departed with their own troops, and the men called to the mob, "Join us, those who want to plunder!" It is said that during the day some hundred thousand of the populace crossed over the double bridge (*al-jisrayn*) of boats.<sup>74</sup> The non-Arab troops and the Shakiriyyah arrived at the island armed, followed by the vanguard of the populace. Suddenly a man from Sarakhs attacked the eldest son of Muhammad b. Aws and stabbed him, knocking him from the *shihri* horse he was riding. He received sword wounds while his supporters fled without raising a finger. Lying there injured, he was stripped clean and then dumped into a boat and carried across the river to the palace of Sulayman b. `Abdallah b. Tahir, where he was left.

Someone who was present with Sulayman at the time reported that, when Sulayman saw the wounded man, his eyes filled with tears. A bed was prepared for him, and he was attended by physicians. Ibn Aws left immediately for his residence in a palace belonging to the family of Ahmad b. Salih b. Shirzad.<sup>75</sup> This was situated in the quarter of al-Dur,<sup>76</sup> adjacent to the palace of Ja`far b. Yahya b.

[1731]

(Footnote continued from previous page)

See Tabari, III, 1532. Al-Shah b. Mikal appears again, charged with putting down an `Alid revolt in al-Kufah, on p. 115, below.

72. The topography in this passage is obscure. There is a reference by Tabari, III, 1616, to "an island opposite the palace of Muhammad b. `Abdallah (b. Tahir)," where a crowd of Banu Hashim gathered demanding their stipends in 251/865-66. The island in the present passage could be the same, if Sulayman occupied Muhammad's palace after his brother's death or else had his own palace adjacent to it. The double bridge (*al-jisrayn*) mentioned in the passage, therefore, could be the one noted by Le Strange, *Baghdad*, 179, which was known as the Zandaward Bridge. If this identification is correct, then the bridge that, according to Le Strange, had been "temporarily" established by al-Amin, was still in existence many years later. See also Lassner, *Topography*, 281, n. 6.

73. A former commander of Muhammad b. `Abdallah b. Tahir. See Tabari, III, 1590, 1623.

74. See n. 72, above.

75. Ahmad b. Salih b. Shirzad had been secretary to the Turkish commander Wasif. See Tabari, III, 1542.

76. The quarter lay along the road leading out of east Baghdad near the Shamma-siyyah Gate where a number of palaces (*al-dur*) of the Barmak family were located. See Le Strange, *Baghdad*, 200.



Khalid b. Barmak.<sup>77</sup> The troops<sup>78</sup> of Baghdad searched everywhere for them, along with the military commanders, until at last they were found. Fighting broke out between the two sides in al-Dur, which lasted from about two in the afternoon until seven in the evening. Each side fired arrows at the other, tossed spears, and attacked with their swords. Ibn Aws was supported by his neighbors from the Qatuta market<sup>79</sup> and boatmen from among the skiffs of al-Dur. Fighting intensified until the Baghdadi troops sent for some naphtha throwers<sup>80</sup> from Sulayman's palace; but, when his chamberlain informed him of this, he forbade their use. Ibn Aws himself fought tenaciously until he was overcome by wounds from arrows and spear thrusts, at which point he and his troops were defeated. He had managed to evacuate his family from the palace, but the troops followed them until they were expelled beyond the Shammasiyyah Gate. Ibn Aws's residence was then ransacked of all its contents. It was reported that the value of its goods amounted to two million dirhams, or at least one million fifty thousand dirhams. The plunder included a hundred pantaloons lined with sable, beside those lined with camel or goat hair, which resembled the others. Furnishings of Tabaristan silk, together with brocade material and rich vestments to the value of a million dirhams, were also taken. The crowd then left, as the regular soldiers began to throng the palace of Sulayman, bringing with them their booty and creating a great clamor. No one restrained or checked their passage.

[1732]

Meanwhile, Ibn Aws remained that night in the Shammasiyyah quarter with those of his troops who had stuck by him. The Baghdadi troops next took to attacking the dwellings where the riffraff<sup>81</sup> [from al-Rayy] were quartered. They plundered their dwellings and dealt harshly with any of the inhabitants who happened to linger be-

77. On the Barmakids, the famous family of viziers who dominated the political scene during the first decade of the rule of the Caliph Harun al-Rashid (170-80/786-96), see *EI*, 2 s.v. "Barmakids"; and Sourdel, *Vizirat*, I, 127-81. When the family suddenly fell from favor, Ja`far, who had been Harun's closest companion, was murdered. See *EI* 2 s.v. "Dja`far b. Yahya."

78. *Ahl Baghdad*. Here and several times in the following lines the expression is used; it literally means "people" or "populace," and Tabari could be using it deliberately in a somewhat pejorative sense.

79. See Lassner, *Topography*, 105.

80. *Al-naффatin*. See Levy, *Social Structure*, 439.

81. *Sa`alikh*. See n. 48, above.

hind. Having been suddenly forced to flee, not one of them appeared openly in Baghdad the following day.

It was reported that during the same evening Sulayman sent clothing, furnishings, and food to Ibn Aws. There is, however, disagreement as to whether he accepted them or sent them back.

The next morning al-Husayn b. Isma`il and al-Muzaffar b. Saysal went to the palace of al-Shah b. Mikal, where they were joined by some of the leading Shakiriyyah, the reserves (*al-na'ibah*), and others. They remained there, avoiding contact with Sulayman b. `Abdallah b. Tahir. Indeed, his palace was practically deserted; only a handful of persons were present. Sulayman sent word to them with Muhammad b. Nasr b. Hamzah b. Malik al-Khuza'i,<sup>82</sup> who was unaware of what agreement they had come to. This Muhammad was to let them know that their behavior toward Muhammad b. Aws was shameful and to instruct them in what was due him because of his honor and reputation. If they would apprise Muhammad of what it was about Ibn Aws that they rejected, then progress could be made to rectify the situation in a manner satisfactory to them all.

At this the Shakiriyyah who were present in the palace of al-Shah b. Mikal raised a great hue and cry. They said, "We refuse to accept any clientship<sup>83</sup> with Ibn Aws or with any of his men or with the riffraff who have been assigned to him." Moreover, if anyone were to attempt to force them to do so against their will, they would conclude their own agreement, forsaking Ibn Aws and repudiating anyone who demanded their compliance to him. Al-Shah b. Mikal, al-Husayn b. Isma`il, and al-Muzaffar b. Saysal reluctantly supported them. The messenger returned to Sulayman with this information. Sulayman sent him back on another matter and assured them that he was confident of their word and guarantee, without requiring oaths or formal pledges. Thereafter he retired in a dignified fashion. Nevertheless, Sulayman continued to regard Muhammad b. Aws, the riffraff, and others of his crowd of hangers-on as an unwelcome nuisance. He was well aware of their covetousness and corrupt behavior and the fact that Muhammad b. Aws prized himself so highly, in addition to his passion for meddling in anything that might insti-

[1733]

82. He had been in the employ of Muhammad b. `Abdallah b. Tahir Tabari, III, 1668.

83. *Mujawirah*. See E. W. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v. "j-w-r."



gate dissension and division. Sulayman's musing upon these concerns led him to exaggerate greatly their import, to the point where he confessed that in his prayers he had been driven to plead for respite from Muhammad b. Aws. Finally, he turned to Muhammad b. `Ali b. Tahir<sup>84</sup> and ordered him to go to Muhammad b. Aws and present him with the decision that he must return to Khurasan. He was to inform him as well that there was no way for him to return to Madinat al-Salam or to handle the affairs that he had been entrusted with on Sulayman's behalf.

[1734]

When the news reached Muhammad b. Aws, he left al-Shamma-siyyah for Raqqat al-Baradan,<sup>85</sup> situated on the Tigris. For some days he remained there while he reassembled those of his troops who had become dispersed. From Raqqat al-Baradan he moved to al-Nahrawan,<sup>86</sup> where he established his camp and settled. He had written to Bayakbak<sup>87</sup> and Salih b. Wasif, submitting his grievances to them at the way he had been treated. But he found no satisfaction from them.

Muhammad b. `Isa b. `Abd al-Rahman (al-Katib al-Khurasani) had stayed behind in Samarra to carry out Sulayman's orders. Muhammad loathed Ibn Aws and completely avoided him, while Ibn Aws, for his part, was greatly disturbed by the hostile presence of the secretary Muhammad b. `Isa. So, when Ibn Aws and his troops were deprived of material support, they began to prey upon villagers and travelers, the attacks and plundering becoming more frequent until Ibn Aws settled in al-Nahrawan.

It was reported from someone whom Ibn Aws's troops had gone off to plunder and who had reminded them of the afterlife and tried to instill in them a fear of God that they had replied to him, "If plunder and murder are acceptable in Madinat al-Salam, the shrine of Islam, and the renowned seat of the caliph, why should anyone disapprove of such things in the countryside and deserts?" After leaving the

84. Another of the Tahirid clan, he was last mentioned by Tabari, III, 1533, as unsuccessfully engaged in suppressing a Shi`ite revolt in al-Rayy in 250/864-65.

85. A town located to the north of Baghdad. *Raqqah* is the term for the swampy terrain beside a river that is subject to periodic inundation. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 59, 101.

86. This town was the first stage eastward out of Baghdad along the great Khurasan Road.

87. Bayakbak had been one of the military chiefs and special bodyguard of the Turkish commander Bugha, from whom he later (in 254/868) became estranged. Tabari, III, 1694-95.

marks of his rapacious behavior on the district, Ibn Aws departed from al-Nahrawan. He relieved the populace of money and food, which he had transported by boat from al-Nahrawan to Iskaf Bani Junayd<sup>88</sup> to sell there. [1735]

Muhammad b. al-Muzaffar b. Saysal was in al-Mada'in<sup>89</sup> at the time he heard of Ibn Aws's arrival in al-Nahrawan. Fearing for his own safety because of his father's presence and role in the battle [against Ibn Aws], Muhammad made for his residence in al-Nu'maniyyah in the district of the Zabs.<sup>90</sup>

Muhammad b. Nasr b. Mansur b. Bassam, whose estate was in 'Abarta,<sup>91</sup> reported that his agent had fled the place after having given Ibn Aws, under duress and from fear of death, nearly fifteen hundred dinars. Ibn Aws remained in the district, coming and going, behaving in turns with closed fist and open hand, alternating severity with lenience. His campaign of intimidation lasted until he received a communication from Bayakbak granting him, on his behalf, control of the Khurasan Road. The lapse of time between Ibn Aws's departure from Madinat al-Salam and the arrival of this letter of appointment was two months and fifteen days.

One of the sons of 'Asim b. Yunus al-'Ijli reported that his father had been made steward of the estates belonging to al-Nushuri<sup>92</sup> in the district of the Khurasan Road. He wrote to al-Nushuri, mentioning what he had been able to learn of the strength of Ibn Aws's forces and the apparent state of their matériel. He advised that this information should be passed on to Bayakbak, describing as well the absence along the Khurasan Road of any of the central authority's forces to control it and protect the people. Moreover, the army [of Ibn Aws] was already encamped in the district with infantry, equipment, and supplies.

88. Also known simply as Iskaf, this location was east of Baghdad on the Nahrawan canal. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 59-60.

89. Located on the Tigris to the south of Baghdad, al-Mada'in had been known as Ctesiphon under the Sasanian emperors. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 25, 32-35.

90. Situated on the western bank of the Tigris, al-Nu'maniyyah was about halfway between Baghdad and Wasit and thus farther to the south, away from the threat of Ibn Aws in al-Nahrawan. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 37.

91. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 59. The name means "crossing place" marked by a bridge of boats.

92. He was one of Salih b. Wasif's commanders (see p. 71, below) and was also married to his sister (see p. 90, below).

Al-Nushuri mentioned these matters to Bayakbak, advising him to appoint Ibn Aws over the Khurasan Road, thus reducing the burden upon the central government. Bayakbak accepted this advice and ordered Ibn Aws to be contacted by letter regarding it. He was entrusted with the Khurasan Road in Dhu al-Qa`dah of the year 255 (October 11-November 9, 869). [1736]

Musa, the deputy of the Khairijite Musawir b. `Abd al-Hamid, was stationed in al-Daskarah<sup>93</sup> and its environs with around three hundred men. Musawir had placed him in charge of the area from Bab Hulwan up to al-Sus<sup>94</sup> on the Khurasan Road and Batn Jukha,<sup>95</sup> together with the nearby administrative districts of the Sawad.

During the course of this year al-Muhtadi banished the male and female singers<sup>96</sup> from Samarra. He exiled them to Baghdad after an order to this effect had been submitted from Qabihah. This was before misfortune had befallen her son. Al-Muhtadi had also ordered that the lions that were kept in the caliphal palace be killed, that the dogs be cast out, and that all frivolous entertainments cease. He re-introduced the court of appeals (*mazalim*),<sup>97</sup> and he himself sat and heard the cases of the commoners. During his reign all the domains of Islam were beset by faction and fighting.

Musa b. Bugha,<sup>98</sup> his *mawlas*, and troops of the central authorities set out from al-Rayy, while Muflih<sup>99</sup> departed from Tabaristan after his arrival there. This Muflih vanquished al-Hasan b. Zayd<sup>100</sup> and drove him from Tabaristan into the land of al-Daylam.

93. Also Daskarat al-Malik; it was the next station after al-Nahrawan on the Khurasan Road, northeast of Baghdad. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 62.

94. A stage on the road between Wasit and Ahwaz in the province of Khuzistan. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 82.

95. Located in the district of Wasit. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 42.

96. For a contemporary description of this profession, to which the Caliph objected, see Jahiz, *The Epistle on Singing Girls*.

97. A form of justice of last resort, derived from the absolute authority of the sovereign and from his fundamental competence to deal with all litigation and to right all wrongs. See Sourdell, *Vizirat*, II, 640-49, for details of its functioning in this period. More generally, see Emile Tyan "Judicial Organization," 109-17.

98. The son of the famous Turkish army commander Bugha al-Sharabi. Musa was also the brother-in-law of Salih b. Wasif. See Tabari, III, 1694.

99. Muflih was one of Musa b. Bugha's commanders. See Tabari, III, 1687.

100. In the account of events at the beginning of this year, 255/868-69, Tabari narrates Muflih's defeat of the Shi`ah rebel al-Hasan b. Zayd in Tabaristan, thus driving him into an alliance with the Daylamites. Muflih also destroyed al-Hasan's residences in Amul and then set out against him in Daylain. See Tabari, III, 1688.

## An Account of Musa's Departure

It is reported that, when Qabihah, the mother of al-Mu`tazz, became aware of the Turks' unrest and was incensed by their behavior, she communicated with Musa b. Bugha, asking him to come and support her. She had hoped that he would arrive before events took the course they did, involving herself and her son, al-Mu`tazz. Musa resolved to set out to help her. Qabihah's letter had arrived while Muflih was in Tabaristan, and Musa wrote to him ordering him to join him in al-Rayy.

[1737]

One of our acquaintances from Tabaristan informed me that Muflih had received Musa's letter when he had already set out for the region of al-Daylam to hunt down al-Hasan b. Zayd al-Talibi. When Muflih received the letter, he returned to his point of departure, much to the distress of a group of notables from Tabaristan. They were fleeing from al-Hasan b. Zayd before Muflih. came to their aid. They thus expected Muflih's arrival would settle the problem of al-Hasan b. Zayd and enable them to return to their towns and homes. Muflih had indeed promised to pursue al-Hasan b. Zayd wherever he was, until he either defeated him or was himself vanquished. According to the account I heard, Muflih had boasted to them that, if he tossed his cap down anywhere in al-Daylam, none of Ibn Zayd's followers would have the courage to come near it. But when the notables of Tabaristan saw him returning from his expedition without any of al-Hasan's [captured] army, indeed not even a single Daylamite, they demanded to know the reason for his failure to fulfill his promise to pursue Ibn Zayd. According to what I was told, they went on speaking to him, while he seemed confused and perplexed and failed to answer their queries. When they persisted, Muflih said, "I have received a despatch from the commander, Musa, insisting that his instructions be carried out and for me to join him at once. Although I am concerned to settle matters uppermost in your minds, there is no way of disobeying the commander."

[1738]

Musa had not completed his preparations to leave al-Rayy for Samarra when he received a despatch concerning the death of al-Mu`tazz and the establishment of al-Muhtadi as caliph. Because he could not now attain what he had hoped for from al-Mu`tazz, Musa's resolve to leave for Samarra was dampened. When he received the news that al-Muhtadi had been rendered the oath of allegiance, his

own troops at first prevented him from submitting his. Eventually they conceded, and their [own] oath of allegiance arrived in Samarra on the 13th of Ramadan of this year (August 25, 869).

Later, the *mawlas* in Musa's army learned of Salih b. Wasif's extraction of money from the secretaries and supporters of al-Mu`tazz and al-Mutawakkil. They begrudged the enjoyment of this money by the troops stationed in Samarra, and they urged Musa to depart with them for the city. Muflih then joined Musa at al-Rayy, having left Tabaristan to al-Hasan b. Zayd.

Al-Qashani reported that his cousin wrote to him from al-Rayy, mentioning that he had met Muflih there and had enquired of him his reasons for departing from al-Daylam. Muflih said that the *mawlas* had refused to stay and that, when they left, he was unable to manage without them.

On Sunday, at the time of the new moon in Ramadan 255 (August 13-September 11, 869), Musa demanded the collection of the tax (*khardj*)<sup>101</sup> for the year 256 (December 9, 869-November 29, 870). According to reports, he raised that day five hundred thousand dirhams.

The inhabitants of al-Rayy assembled and said to him: "May God honor the commander! You claim that the *mawlas* wish to return to Samarra because they have the prospect of greater pay there, while you and your troops here are better off than the troops there. If you desire to [continue] manning this frontier post<sup>102</sup> and expect your reward to come from its people, and impose on us as taxes on our private property whatever you think we can bear from which to pay your followers, then you should do so." But Musa did not comply with their requests. However, they persisted; "May God guide the commander. If he has decided to leave us, what is the sense of extracting the taxes (*kharaj*) for an agricultural year in which we have not even begun cultivation? Moreover the bulk of the crop of this current year upon which the commander has levied taxes is situated in open areas (*sahara*), to which we would not have access after he had departed from us." But Musa paid no attention to any of their arguments or requests. [1739]

101. See *EI*,2 s.v. "Kharadj," for details on the perception of this tax and the method of collecting it; cf. Levy, *Social Structure*, 309-16.

102. This is, at al-Rayy.

Now, when al-Muhtadi received word of Musa's [imminent] departure, he sent several letters to him which made no impression. When he heard that Musa was actually on his way from al-Rayy, without al-Muhtadi's despatches having had any effect, the caliph sent two men of the Banu Hashim<sup>103</sup> bearing a message for Musa and for those *mawlas* attached to his army. They were to state frankly to the arrivals the true situation in the capital, the lack of resources there, and the general apprehension that what they left behind would be lost and that Talibis<sup>104</sup> would take control of it and their influence spread to the territory of al-Jabal.<sup>105</sup> One of these Hashimites was called `Abd al-Samad b. Musa, and the second was Abu `Isa Yahya b. Ishaq b. Musa b. eisa b. `Ali b. `Abdallah b. `Abbas. The two men, with a number of *mamas*, set out to fulfill their commission, as Musa and those accompanying him approached. Meanwhile Salih b. Wasif made much of Musa's departure with al-Muhtadi, attempting to ascribe to him dissent and rebellion. Indeed, he imputed far worse than this to him and declared before God his own innocence of anything Musa did. [1740]

A despatch from the master of the post (*sahib al-barid*)<sup>106</sup> in Hamadhan concerning Musa's departure from there reportedly reached al-Muhtadi. Al-Muhtadi raised his hands to the sky and, after expressing his thanks to God and extolling Him, he exclaimed, "O God! Before You I am free of any guilt for the actions of Musa b. Bugha and his neglect of the defense of the frontier and his leaving it open to the enemy. I am absolved of any bonds between us. O God! Remove the artifice of [this] deceiver of Muslims. O God! Make the armies of Muslims victorious wherever they may be. O God! Wherever Muslims are afflicted, I shall freely venture forth with a firm resolve and give them support and defend them. O God! Reward my

103. The Banu Hashim were kinsmen of the Prophet Muhammad by common descent from Hashim, his great-grandfather. During the `Abbasid period they enjoyed certain privileges, such as pensions paid by the state, exemption from payment of the alms tax, and having a special magistrate appointed by the caliph to attend their affairs. See *EI*,2 s.v. "Hashimids."

104. That is, the Shi`ite rebels led by al-Hasan b. Zayd.

105. Literally, "the mountains," referring to the mountainous region stretching from the Mesopotamian plain on the west to the large desert region of Persia on the east. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 185.

106. The master of the post also fulfilled the function of intelligence officer, gathering, and sending information to his superiors. See *EI*,2 s.v. "Barid."



intention since I am deprived of effective supporters." He then broke into tears, weeping.

Someone who was present at al-Muhtadi's assemblies reported what he had said on this particular occasion. Sulayman b. Wahb<sup>107</sup> was also present and he asked, "Is the Commander of the Faithful ordering me to write to Musa what I have heard?" Al-Muhtadi replied that this was so, saying, "If you could engrave my words in stone, then [I would tell you to] do so!" [1741]

The two Hashimite messengers met with Musa on the road [to Samarra], but without achieving anything. The *mamas* began to clamor and nearly set upon the envoys. Musa replied to the caliph's comminiqué, presenting as his excuse that his troops would fail to pay any attention to what he said to them before reaching the Commander of the Faithful's court. Were he to try to go against them, he would not feel safe from them, and he adduced in his defense what the envoys themselves had witnessed. The messengers arrived with the reply, Musa having sent with them a delegation from his army. They reached Samarra on the 4th of al-Muharram, 256 (December 12, 869).

In this same year Kanjur<sup>108</sup> left `Ali b. al-Husayn b. Quraysh.<sup>109</sup> In the days of al-Mu`tazz he had been banished to Fats, where `Ali b. al-Husayn was placed in charge of him and imprisoned him. After `Ali had decided to wage war against Ya`qub b. al-Layth,<sup>110</sup> he released Kanjur from prison and gave him command of cavalry and infantry. When `Ali b. al-Husayn's supporters were defeated, Kanjur escaped

107. Sulayman, one of a number of "Nestorian scribes" in the administration, was descended from a Christian family in Wasit. Formerly secretary to the military commander Musa b. Bugha, he was briefly vizier under al-Muhtadi and again for brief intervals during 263-65/877-79 under al-Mu`tamid. See Sourdel, *Vizirat* I, 300-303, 310-13; *EI* s.v. "Sulayman b. Wahb."

108. Kanjur was the chamberlain (*hajib*) of al-Mu`tazz's brother Ibrahim al-Mu'ayyad at the time the Caliph imprisoned the two of them in the Jawsaq palace in 252/866. Later Kanjur was sent in chains to Baghdad and was finally imprisoned in al-Yamamah. See Tabari, III, 1668-69.

109. The battle in which `Ali b. al-Husayn, another contemporary Shi`ite rebel, was defeated occurred near Shiraz, and he was taken prisoner by Ya`qub b. al-Layth. See Tabari, III, 1702-3.

110. Born in Sistan, Ya`qub b. al-Layth was a coppersmith (*al-saffar*) by trade, but his military ambitions took him from membership in a band of marauders to control of Sistan province in 247/861. His influence spread into eastern Afghanistan before he turned against the caliphal authorities in Iraq and the Tahirids in Khurasan. See Bosworth, "Tahirids," 109-17; cf. Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kamil fi al-ta'rikh*, VII, 191-94.

to the district of al-Ahwaz, where he made a considerable impact on Ramhurmuz. He then joined Ibn Abi Dulaf<sup>111</sup> in Hamadhan, but he treated Wasif's<sup>112</sup> dependents badly, as well as his estates and agents in the district. Next he joined the army of Musa (b. Bugha). When Musa approached Samarra with the troops who had joined him, word of this reached Salih. On the authority of al-Muhtadi he sent instructions that Kanjur be brought to the caliph's palace bound in chains, but the *mawlas* refused to do this. [1742]

Communiqués on this matter continued to go back and forth until Musa's army reached and encamped in al-Qatul.<sup>113</sup> It soon became apparent that Salih was nursing a deep dislike of Musa and that Musa had set out for Samarra determined to avoid Salih and those who sympathized with him. Musa stayed in al-Qatul for two days, during which time Bayakbak joined his forces. Al-Muhtadi sent his brother on his mother's side, Ibrahim, to tell Musa that the *mawlas* in Samarra had unanimously refused to allow Kanjur to enter the city. The Caliph ordered Musa to place him in chains and take him to Madinat al-Salam, but things did not turn out as Salih had anticipated. Musa's reply was that, when they entered Samarra, they would obey whatever the Commander of the Faithful ordered regarding Kanjur or anyone else.

#### The First `Alawite Rebellion in al-Basrah<sup>114</sup>

In the middle of Shawwal of the year 255 (September 10-October 8, 869) a man who claimed to be `Ali b. Muhammad b. Abmad b. `Ali b. `Isa b. Zayd b. `Ali b. al-Husayn b. `Ali b. Abi Talib<sup>115</sup> appeared in Furat al-Basrah.<sup>116</sup> He assembled his forces from among the Zanj,<sup>117</sup>

111. See Tabari, III, 1605.

112. The Turkish commander, killed in 253/867; he was the father of Salih. See Tabari, III, 1687.

113. In the vicinity of Samarra. See Yaqut, *Mu`jam al-buldan*, III, 174; Ya`qubi, *Kitab al-buldan*, 256.

114. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 83-93; Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 205-14.

115. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 71-81; *EI*, 2 s.v. "'Ali b. Muhammad al-Zandji." See also Mas`udi, *Muruj*, VIII, 31-33.

116. See Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, III, 861-62; *EI*, 2 s.v. "al-Furat."

117. The word is not Arabic, and, although its plural is *zunuj*, the expression is used here in its collective sense to refer to a class of people. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 54-56, for a discussion of the origin of the word. The generally accepted view of the origin of the Zanj is that they were blacks imported from East Africa at a time that

(Footnote continued on next page)



who labored in removing the nitrous topsoil (*sibakh*)<sup>118</sup> of the marshland districts. Thereafter he crossed over the Tigris river and established himself in al-Dinari.<sup>119</sup>

An Account of [ʿAli b. Muhammad b. ʿAbd Al-Rahim's] Expedition and What Determined Him to Revolt There

According to reports, his name and his origin were ʿAli b. Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Rahim,<sup>120</sup> and he was descended from the ʿAbd al-Qays. His mother's name was Qurrah, a daughter of ʿAli b. Rahib b. Muhammad b. Hakim of the Banu Asad b. Khuzaymah, who were inhabitants of a village in the vicinity of al-Rayy called Warzanin, where ʿAli was born and grew up. [1743]

ʿAli himself was reported to have said: "My ancestor Muhammad b. Hakim of al-Kufah was one of those who took part in a rebellion against [the Caliph] Hisham b. ʿAbd al-Malik with Zayd b. ʿAli b. al-Husayn.<sup>121</sup> But, when Zayd was slain, Muhammad fled to al-Rayy, and finding refuge in Warzanin, he remained there." ʿAli's paternal grandfather, ʿAbd al-Rahim, who was of the ʿAbd al-Qays, was born in al-Talīqan.<sup>122</sup> He went to Iraq and took up residence there and bought himself a concubine from Sind. She gave birth in Iraq to a son, Muhammad, who was the father of our ʿAli.<sup>123</sup>

(Footnote continued from previous page)

cannot be determined. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 56-62; C. Pellat, *Le Milieu basrien et la formation de Gahiz*, 41.

118. See *EI*,<sup>1</sup> s.v. "Zandj"; Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *s-b-kh*.

119. The name of one of the canals in the environs of al-Basrah where the Zanj gathered to launch their first major attack on the city. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 90.

120. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 71- 73, 187-90, for a discussion of his name(s) and genealogy.

121. The ʿAlid Zayd, known as Abu al-Hasan, led a revolt against the Umayyad Caliph Hisham in 112/730-31, and he was killed in the same year.

122. Talīqan (or Talaqan) was reputed to be one of the foremost towns of Upper Tukharistan a district east of Balkh stretching along the southern side of the Oxus river. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 423.

123. There is another account of ʿAli's origins that differs in many details from that of Tabari's. In *al-Wafī bi-al-Wafayat*, al-Safadi (d. 764/1363) recounts a tale told by ʿAli's mother, Qurrah. While on pilgrimage to Mecca, her father would spend time in Medina with the family of a *shaykh* descended from ʿAli b. Abi Talib, the Prophet Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law. The *shaykh* had a son called Muhammad, who, after the death of his immediate family, was taken to Warzanin by Qurrah's father. Qurrah and Muhammad later married, and she bore him two daughters and a son,

(Footnote continued on next page)

[Earlier in Samarra] `Ali was associated with a group attached to the family of the Caliph al-Muntasir, among them Ghanim al-Shitranji (the Chessplayer), Sa`id the Younger, and Yusr the Eunuch.<sup>124</sup> `Ali derived his livelihood from them and from some of the Caliph's entourage and secretaries, seeking their favor by praising them in poetry.<sup>125</sup>

In the year 249/863-64, he reportedly left Samarra for al-Bahrayn. There he claimed that his genealogy was as follows: `Ali b. Muhammad b. al-Fadl b. Hasan b. `Ubaydallah b. al-`Abbas b. `Ali b. Abi Talib.<sup>126</sup> At Hajar he summoned people to obey him, and a large number did so. However, others refused to do so. As a result, violent partisanship between them led to a number in each camp being killed. In the wake of these events `Ali left Hajar and moved to al-Ahsa'.<sup>127</sup> There he took refuge with a section of the Banu Tamim, a branch of the Banu Sa`d<sup>128</sup> called the Banu al-Shammas, among whom he made his residence. The people of Bahrayn had regarded him as a prophet, so much so indeed that, according to report, taxes were collected in his name. He exercised judicial authority over them, and on his behalf they fought against the supporters of the central authorities. A substantial number, on the other hand, were afraid and, becoming embittered against him, caused him to withdraw into the desert. Even then, many in Bahrayn joined him. Among them was a man from al-Ahsa', a grain weigher (*kayyal*) called Yahya b. Muhammad al-Azraq, but known simply as al-Bahrani, who was a *mawla* of the Banu Darim.<sup>129</sup> Another was Yahya b. Abi Tha`lab, a merchant from Hajar. There was also a black *mawla*<sup>130</sup> of the Banu

[1744]

(Footnote continued from previous page)

`Ali. See MS. British Museum Or. 6587, ff. 140b-43b. The passage is translated in Popovic, *Révolte*, 73. See also Popovic's article, "Quelques renseignements inédits concernant le maître de Zanj, `Ali b. Muhammad," *Arabica*, XII/2, 1965, 175-87.

124. These three figures remain unidentified.

125. Popovic notes in *Révolte*, 74, that a later source, Ibn Abi al-Hadid (d. 655/1257), in *Sharh nahj al-baldghah*, adds that `Ali also earned his living teaching children the arts of writing, grammar, and astronomy.

126. See reference n. 123, above.

127. See *EL*, 2 s.v. "al-Hasa."

128. The Tamimite tribe of Sa`d resided in the Bahrayni villages of al-Zahran and Lahsa, according to al-Mas`udi, *Kitab al-tanbih wa-al-ishraf*, 396-97.

129. These were descendants of Darim b. Malik b. Hanzalah, a segment of the Banu Tamim.

130. *Mawla aswad*. See n. 4, above.

Hanzalah named Sulayman b. Jami`. This latter was a commander of `Ali's army. Thus `Ali moved about in the desert, from one tribe to another.

It was reported that `Ali used to say: "In the course of this period I received signs of my leadership as imam, which were manifest to the people." According to his own account, among such signs was this one: "I received surahs of the Qur'an, which I had not learned by heart, and yet I was able to recite them in a flash. They included Subhan, al-Kahf, and Sad."<sup>131</sup> He continued: "A further example was the time I was lying down, musing about the place I should be heading for to set up residence. The thought of the desert and its recalcitrant inhabitants dejected me, but then a cloud cast a shadow upon me; thunder crackled and lightning flashed. A thunderclap resounded in my ears, and a voice addressed me saying, 'Head for al-Basrah.' I said to my companions who were assisting me, 'A voice from the thunder has commanded me to go to al-Basrah.'" [1745]

According to report, when `Ali had gone into the desert he caused people to believe that he was Abu al-Husayn Yahya b. `Umar, who had been slain in the neighborhood of al-Kufah.<sup>132</sup> There he deceived some of them, and, as a consequence, a great many joined his ranks. He then made his way with them toward a place in al-Bahrayn called al-Radm.<sup>133</sup> A major battle broke out among them, which swung against `Ali and his troops, and many were swiftly killed. The Arab tribesmen abandoned him in disgust and renounced any association with him. Once the tribesmen had left, `Ali found the desert wearisome, and he next set out for al-Basrah and settled among the Banu Dubay`ah. A group of them joined him there, among them `Ali b. Aban, known by the epithet of al-Muhallabi; included, too, were his brothers Muhammad and al-Khalil and others. `Ali arrived in al-Basrah in the year 254/868 at the time when Muhammad b. Raja' al-Hidari was the Caliph's governor there. His arrival also coincided with the civil disturbances between the two rival Basran factions of al-Sa`diyyah and al-Bilaliyyah.<sup>134</sup> `Ali's ambition was to secure the

131. Surahs 18, 38, and 17(?), respectively.

132. This apparently occurred during the reign of the Caliph al-Musta`in. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 75.

133. See Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, II, 774.

134. Precise identification of these two factions, who appear at a number of points in the story of the Zanj operations in al-Basrah, has proven elusive.

support of one of the factions. Thus he commissioned four of his associates, with whom he had been in league in al-Bahrayn and who had campaigned on his behalf. Their names were Muhammad b. Salm al-Qassab al-Hajari, Buraysh al-Quray`i, `Ali al-Darrab, and al-Husayn al-Saydanani; they proclaimed their revolt in the `Abbad mosque.<sup>135</sup> No one, however, responded to the appeal. Indeed, some soldiers chanced upon them, and they were forced to disperse without having won anyone over. `Ali fled al-Basrah, with Ibn Raja' in search of him, albeit in vain. Ibn Raja' was informed of a number of Basrans who sympathized with Ali, and he had them arrested and imprisoned.

[1746]

Among those jailed were Yahya b. Abi Tha`lab, Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-Iyadi, and the eldest son of the Zanj leader himself, `Ali b. Muhammad al-Akbar, together with his wife, the mother of their son, and another daughter of his and a pregnant servant girl. `Ali, however, set out for Baghdad, accompanied by his associates Muhammad b. Salm, Yahya b. Muhammad, Sulayman b. Jami', and Buraysh al-Quray`i.

When they had reached the marshlands (*al-batihah*)<sup>136</sup> one of the *mawlas* of the Bahilis,<sup>137</sup> who administered the area, was on the lookout for them. His name was `Umayr b. `Ammar. He arrested them and conveyed them to the governor of Wasit, Muhammad b. Abi `Awn. `Ali employed all his cunning and persuasion with Ibn Abi `Awn until at last he and his companions were released. From there `Ali traveled to Madinat al-Salam, where he remained for a year. While in Baghdad he claimed to be related to Ahmad b. `Isa b. Zayd.<sup>138</sup> He alleged that during his sojourn in the city signs appeared to him, allowing him insight into the minds of his companions and what each of them was doing. He besought his Lord for some token

135. See H. Halm, *Die Traditionen über den Aufstand `Ali Ibn Muhammads, des "Herrn der Zang,"* 44-49, where he notes that, apart from the Shi`ite character of the revolt, the Zanj leader's following was comprised almost exclusively of *mawlas*.

136. See *EI*,2 s.v. "al-Batiha." The word, which frequently occurs in the plural, *ba-ta'ih*, applied to a very extensive area of swampland located on the lower course of the Tigris and Euphrates between al-Kufah and Wasit in the north and al-Basrah, in the south. See also the articles in *EI*,2 s.vv. "al-Furat," "Didjla"; Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description of Mesopotamia and Baghdad," 297-99.

137. On this anxient Arabian tribe, see *EL*,2 s.v. "Bahila."

138. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 208, lengthens the Zaydite connection, adding Muhammad before Ahmad.

revealing the true state of his own situation, and he saw on a wall a message being written to him by an invisible hand.

One of his followers reported that, during his stay in Madinat al-Salam, `Ali won over to his side a number of persons. Among them were Ja`far b. Muhammad al-Suhani, who was a descendant of Zayd b. Suhan, Muhammad b. al-Qasim, and two servants<sup>139</sup> of Yahya b. `Abd al-Rahman b. Khaqan,<sup>140</sup> who were named Mushriq and Rafiq. He renamed Mushriq Hamzah and gave him his agnomen Abu Ahmad. Rafiq he renamed Ja`far, his agnomen becoming Abu al-Fadl.

[1747]

During `Ali's stay this year in Madinat al-Salam Muhammad b. Raja' was removed from his post in al-Basrah. When he left the leaders of the Bilaliyyah and Sa`diyyah factions responsible for the civil disorder attacked and opened the prisons, releasing all the inmates. When the news reached `Ali that his family was among those freed, he departed for al-Basrah, returning there in the month of Ramadan 255 (August 11-September 9, 869). Accompanying him was `Ali b. Aban, who had joined up with him in Baghdad. Also with him were Yahya b. Muhammad, Muhammad b. Salm, Sulayman b. Jami`, and the two servants (*ghulams*) of Yahya b. `Abd al-Rahman, Mushriq, and Rafiq. A soldier called Abu Ya`qub, who later adopted the sobriquet Jurban, met with the other six, and they all set off together. Finally arriving at a place called Barankhal,<sup>141</sup> they settled there in a castle called al-Qurashi,<sup>142</sup> which was located on a canal called `Amud ibn al-Munajjim, as it was the Banu Musa b. al-Munajjim who had excavated it. Now `Ali gave out that he was acting as an agent on behalf of one of [the Caliph] al-Wathiq's sons, handling the sale of *sibakh*; he thus ordered his companions to treat him as such, and there he remained.

139. On the various meanings of the word *ghulam* (plural *ghilman*) see *EI*,2 s.v. "Ghulam." The present narrative on the Zanj treats of a different context from that of the ruling circles in Baghdad or Samarra; thus the renderings "attendant," "guard," "servant," and "page" are not always appropriate where the Zanj are concerned. See also *EI*,2 s.v. "Djaysh," especially p. 507, for the term "young soldier." In what follows relating to affairs of the Zanj, unless otherwise noted, the word *ghulam* is translated loosely as "slave." See n. 59, above.

140. Yahya, a cousin of the Caliph al-Mutawakkil's vizier `Ubaydallah b. Yahya b. Khaqan, in 245/860 held a post in the public treasury, owing to `Ubaydallah's influence. See Tabari, III, 1446.

141. The reading is uncertain. Halm, *Traditionen*, 76, adopts the reading Branhal.

142. Following Mas`udi, *Muruj*, VIII, 32, Popovic, *Révolte*, 78, locates al-Qurashi at a place called Bi'r Nakhl.

it was reported from Rayhan b. Salih, one of the slaves (*ghilman*) of the Shurajiyyin,<sup>143</sup> who was the first of their number to join `Ali, that he said: "I was in charge of my master's slaves (*ghilman*), transporting flour from al-Basrah to the Shurajiyyin and distributing it among them. I had conveyed a cargo to them as usual and on the way passed by the place where `Ali was staying, that is, at Barankhal in the castle al-Qurashi, when his supporters seized me and took me to him. I was ordered to greet him as *amir*, which I did. He asked me where I had come from, and I told him that I had come from al-Basrah. He asked whether I had heard any news about them in al-Basrah, and I replied that I had not. He then asked me if there was any news of al-Zaynabi,<sup>144</sup> and I told him I knew nothing about him. Then he said: 'Tell me of the activities of the Bilaliyyah and Sa`diyyah factions.' I replied that I had no information on them either. Finally, he inquired whether I knew anything of the slaves of the Shurajiyyin and what each was doing in the business of transporting flour, *sa-wiq*,<sup>145</sup> and dates and also about those among both the freedmen (*al-ahrar*) and slaves (*al-`abid*)<sup>146</sup> who worked in the salt steppe (*shurajj*). I told him what I knew of these matters. He appealed to me to join him, to which I agreed. He then said to me, 'Induce as many slaves as you can to join, and bring them to me.' He promised to extend various benefits to me and make me their commander. He also made me solemnly vow that I would not disclose his whereabouts to anyone and that I would return to him. He then allowed me to proceed on my way. I delivered the flour that I was carrying to its intended destination. I was away for the whole of that day and returned to Ali's camp the next morning."

[1748]

When I arrived Rafiq, the servant of Yahya b. `Abd al-Rahman, had also arrived at the camp. He had been sent to al-Basrah with

143. Tabari, *Glossarium*, s.vv. *shuraji*, *k-s-h*. The Shurajiyyin were blacks engaged in the removal of the nitrous topsoil (*sibakh*) in the marshland. Although it is admittedly impossible to determine whether this group was comprised exclusively of freedmen or slaves, I have adopted the view that both were to be found in their ranks, though with the exception of certain explicit contexts (for example, see nn.146 and 156, below) I have preferred for the purposes of this translation to indicate their status as servile.

144. His full name was Abu Mansur `Abdallah b. Muhammad b. Sulayman al-Zaynabi, who will be noted on p. 752, below, leading a force of Basrans against the Zanj.

145. A prepared dish of parched barley meal often carried by travelers, as it can be reconstituted from its dried form by adding water or milk.

146. See n. 143, above.



some of his business goods. He arrived with Shibl b. Salim, one of the slaves of the al-Dabbasin,<sup>147</sup> who had with him a piece of silk material, which `Ali had commissioned him to purchase to have it made into a banner (*liwa*).<sup>148</sup> Written upon it in red and green characters were the following words: "God has purchased the souls of believers and their property, for they have attained to paradise fighting in the way of God," to the end of the verse.<sup>149</sup> `Ali's name and that of his father were also inscribed upon it, and the banner was fastened to the top of a barge pole.

[1749]

In the early morning of Saturday, the 28th of Ramadan (September 9, 869), `Ali set out from [the castle al-Qurashi]. When he had reached the farthest end of the castle precinct, some slaves of one of the Shurajiyyin known as al-`Attar met him as they were setting about their business. `Ali ordered them to be seized, along with their agent, who was placed in fetters. They numbered in all some fifty slaves. `Ali next proceeded to a place where al-Sana'i worked, and there around five hundred slaves were seized, among them one who was known as Abu Hudayd. Their agent was likewise bound with fetters and taken along as well. The place where this occurred was called Nahr al-Mukathir. `Ali proceeded next to a place belonging to al-Sirafi and captured there another one hundred fifty slaves, among them an individual called Zurayq and another known as Abu al-Khanjar. Then, at a place belonging to Ibn `Ata, Tariq, Subayh al-A`sar, Rashid al-Maghribi, and Rashid al-Qarmati were captured along with eighty more slaves. The next place was that of Isma`il, who was known as a slave of Sahl al-Tahhan. `Ali continued to operate in this fashion all day until he had amassed a large number of the Shurajiyyin slaves.

Assembling them together, `Ali rose and addressed them, raising their spirits by promising to lead and command them and to give them possession of property. He swore a solemn oath to them that he would neither deceive nor betray them and that they would experience only kind treatment from him. `Ali then summoned their

[1750]

147. Sellers of *dibs*, the juice pressed from fresh dates.

148. On the uses of banners and flags, see *EI*,2 s.v. "`Alam."

149. Qur'an 9:111. Although the symbolism of the Zanj revolt was `Alid, this verse has associations with the early Kharijite rebels, who may have referred to themselves as al-Shurat (pl. of Shari) "vendors," i.e., those who have sold their souls for the cause of God. See *EI*,2 s.v. "Kharidjites."

masters and said to them: "I wanted to behead you all for the way you have treated these slaves, with arrogance and coercion and, indeed, in ways that Allah has forbidden, driving them beyond endurance. But my companions have spoken to me about you, and now I have decided to set you free."

They replied that the slaves were merely habitual runaways, who would flee from `Ali [at the first opportunity], and then both he and they would be the losers. They said, "Turn them over to us, and let us pay you compensation for them." But `Ali ordered their slaves to bring whips of palm branches and, while their masters and agents were prostrated on the ground, each one was given five hundred lashes. `Ali extracted a vow from them, on penalty of having to repudiate their wives,<sup>150</sup> that they would neither divulge his whereabouts to anyone nor reveal the size of his following. They were then released and sent on their way to al-Basrah.

One of their number, a man named `Abdallah and known as Karikha,<sup>151</sup> crossed over the Dujayl<sup>152</sup> and warned the Shurajjiyyin to guard their slaves carefully. There were some fifteen thousand there at the time.

After performing the afternoon prayer `Ali ventured forth again, and upon reaching the bank of the Dujayl he found there boats laden with compost of dung and ashes (*samad*) entering port on the rising tide. Together with his partisans he traversed the river in them and then went on to the Nahr Maymun.<sup>153</sup> He established his quarters in the mosque situated in the middle of the market that stretched along the Nahr Maymun. He continued efforts to gather blacks (*al-sudan*)<sup>154</sup> to his camp right up to the time of the prayer breaking the fast of Ramadan (*salat al-fitr*).<sup>155</sup> On the day of the celebration of the feast he summoned his followers to assemble for prayer. When they

150. On the gravity of this oath, see *EI*,1 s.v. "Talak."

151. Or, in an alternative reading, Karankha.

152. Literally, "Little Tigris," but here referring to the river Dujayl in al-Ahwaz, in order to distinguish it from the Dujayl canal of the Tigris to the north of Baghdad. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 232.

153. Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, IV, 719. The Arabic word *nahr* can mean both "river" and "canal," and it is not always possible to distinguish them, given the nature of the primary sources; here, however, the term means canal.

154. See *EI*,2 s.v. "`Abd." Although it is not entirely clear from Tabari's usage, the term *sudan* (pl. of *aswad*) may be intended by him as synonym for the Zanj.



had done so, the pole flying his banner was set into the ground. `Ali prayed with them, and in a sermon (*khutbah*) he recalled the wretched state from which, through him, God had rescued them. [1751] `Ali said that he wanted to improve their condition, giving them slaves (*al-`abid*), money, and homes to possess for themselves, and that by them they could achieve the greatest things.<sup>156</sup> He then swore a solemn oath, and when his prayer and sermon were complete he ordered those who had followed his words to instruct those non-Arabic speakers among them who had not understood, in order [also] to raise their spirits. That was done, and `Ali entered the castle.

A day later he set out for Nahr Bur, where a detachment of his troops encountered a detachment of the [commander] al-Himyari and drove them off into the desert. The Zanj leader, accompanied by some more troops, joined forces with the others and defeated al-Himyari and his troops, driving them back as far as the Tigris flats. One of the superintendents of the blacks, called Abu Salih and known as "the Short," sought protection for himself and three hundred Zanj. `Ali graciously granted this and promised them good fortune. When the numbers of Zanj who had been thus gathered together increased significantly, he appointed leaders for them and said that, for each of them who brought another Zanj, he would be attached to him.

It is also said that `Ali did not appoint his commanders until after the battle of slaves (*al-khawal*)<sup>157</sup> in Bayan<sup>158</sup> and his move to Sabkhat al-Qandal.<sup>159</sup>

155. *EI*,2 s.v. "`Id al-Fitr."

156. M. A. Shaban, *Islamic History*, II, 101, argues that `Ali b. Muhammad's movement was not a slave revolt but rather an ethnic Zanj or black revolt. He notes that some of the first to fight against `Ali were themselves employed in working the salt marshes (see, e.g., n. 163, below). In his view there were only a few runaway slaves, the vast majority of rebels being Arabs, with the support of free East Africans who had made their homes in the region. Certainly the interpretation of these events rests upon one's understanding of such highly ambiguous words as *ghulam*, *sudan*, *`abid*, and *khawal*. Indeed Tabari himself is far from consistent in his use of the word *ghulam*. In the present context `Ali's words and actions clearly suggest that those he was dealing with at this stage of his movement were of a relatively depressed, if not entirely servile, condition. Popovic in his detailed study of the revolt is unable to commit himself firmly on the question, and the truth most likely lies somewhere between Shaban's interpretation and the earlier view represented by T. Nöldeke in "A Servile War in the East."

157. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *kh-w-l*; n. 156, above.

158. A village situated on a canal of the same name was located on the eastern side

(Footnote continued on next page)

Ibn Abi `Awn was transferred from the governorship of Wasit to that of al-Ubullah and the districts of the Tigris. On the day that [ʿAli b. Muhammad] appointed his commanders news-reportedly reached him that al-Himyari and `Aqil, along with Ibn Abi `Awn's deputy, who had been stationed in al-Ubullah, had advanced toward him and were encamped at Nahr Tin. `Ali ordered his troops to move to al-Raziqiyyah, which was located at the far side of al-Ba-dhaward.<sup>160</sup> He reached there at the time of the midday prayer, which they performed and then prepared for battle. At the time where were only three swords in `Ali's so-called "army" namely, his own, that of `Ali b. Aban, and that of Muhammad b. Salm. Between the time of the midday and afternoon prayers, `Ali departed [from al-Raziqiyyah] with his troops and hastened back toward al-Muhammadiyyah,<sup>161</sup> placing `Ali b. Aban in their rear with orders to report on anyone following them. He himself proceeded at the head of the company [of blacks] until they reached al-Muhammadiyyah. He sat by the water's edge and ordered the company to quench their thirst. When the troops arrived, `Ali b. Aban said to him that they had seen swords glistening and heard the sounds of people moving behind them but that they could not tell whether they were moving away or heading toward them. He was still speaking when the enemy arrived. The Zanj called one another to arms and Abu Salih Mufarraj al-Nubi hastened forth with Rayhan b. Salih and Fath al-Hajjam. Fath had been eating [at the time], and so he went into the fray holding his plate. As his companions advanced, one of the Shurajiyin called Bulbul encountered Fath, who attacked him with his plate and beat him with it, causing Bulbul to drop his weapon, turn, and flee. He and four thousand other men were put to flight, some being killed and others dying of thirst on the way. A number, too, were

[1752]

*(Footnote continued from previous page)*

of the Tigris estuary, on the way to al-Ahwaz. See Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 307-9.

159. The salt flat (*sabkhah*) situated by the Nahr al-Qandal (or al-Qandil), one of the nine major canals flowing into the estuary at al-Basrah. See Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 304.

160. A town located between Wasit and al-Basrah. Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, I, 318, vocalizes the word Badhaward.

161. Ibn Serapion speaks of a great lagoon (*hawr*) called al-Muhammadiyyah, the largest one of four in the swampland (*bata'ih*) near al-Basrah. See Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 297, 299.

taken captive and brought to the leader of the Zanj who ordered them beheaded. Their heads were stacked on the backs of mules seized from the Shurajiyin, who had used them for transporting the nitrous topsoil (*shuraj*). The procession set out and reached al-Qadisiyyah<sup>162</sup> by the time of the evening prayer. [1751]

A *mawla* of the Hashimites<sup>163</sup> attacked `Ali's company outside the village and killed one of the blacks. The news was brought to `Ali and his companions asked him for permission to sack the village and search for the culprit who had killed their comrade. He replied saying, "That would be impossible without our knowing what the villagers intended and whether the killer acted with their consent. We will ask them to deliver him to us. If they do so, fine, but, if not, then it would be lawful for us to slay them."

`Ali urged them to prepare quickly for departure, and they returned to Nahr Maymun, where he established himself in the same mosque that he had initially used. He ordered the heads [of the Shurajiyin] to be brought as well and publicly displayed. He instructed Abu Salih al-Nubi to make the call to prayer. This he did, saluting `Ali as the *amir*. Then `Ali prayed the late evening prayer with his companions and spent the night there. The following morning `Ali set out again, first passing by the [village] of al-Karkh, before arriving at a village called Jubba.<sup>164</sup> It was the time of the midday prayer. He crossed over the Dujayl (al-Ahwaz) by way of a ford he had been shown, but rather than entering the village he camped outside it. He sent a message to the inhabitants. Their elders, along with those of al-Karkh, came to meet him. He ordered them to provide hospitality for himself and his companions, which was done as he wished, and he spent that night among them.

The next day one of the inhabitants of Jubba offered `Ali a bay horse,<sup>165</sup> but he could find neither bridle nor saddle for it; thus he had to make do with a rope and a cinch of palm fibers.<sup>166</sup> He set out and

162. A village in the marshlands (*bata'ih*), not to be confused with a location of the same name north of Baghdad. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 50.

163. See nn. 139 and 156, above.

164. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 243. Situated to the east of the Dujayl, it was noted for its sugarcane.

165. *Faras kumayt*. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *k-m-t*.

166. Halm, *Traditionen*, 30-32, considers that this description conveys an eschatological sensereferring to the horse without saddle and bridle belonging to the Mahdi.

finally reached a place called al-`Abbasi al-`Atiq, where he secured the services of a guide as far as al-Sib,<sup>167</sup> a canal upon which was situated the village of al-Ja`fariyyah. The villagers were alerted to his arrival and fled. `Ali entered and settled in the house of Ja`far b. Sulayman,<sup>168</sup> which was located in the market, while his companions scattered throughout the village. They brought to him a villager they had discovered, and `Ali asked him the whereabouts of the Hashimites' agents. The man said they were in the thickets [outside the village]. `Ali sent the one nicknamed<sup>169</sup> Jurban to fetch their headman, Yahya b. Yahya al-Zubayri<sup>170</sup> a *mawla* of the Ziyadiyyin. He was asked whether he had any money, and the man replied that he did not. So `Ali ordered him beheaded. Fearing now for his life, the man confessed to having hidden some money away; he sent for it and brought to `Ali the amount of two hundred fifty dinars and one thousand dirhams, the first such booty he had gained. `Ali next asked the headman about the animals owned by the agents of the Hashimites, and he pointed out three pack animals, one a bay, one chestnut, and one gray. One was given to Ibn Salm, another to Yahya b. Muhammad, while the third was given to Mushriq the servant of Yahya b. `Abd al-Rahman. Rafiq rode upon a donkey, loaded with baggage. Some of the blacks discovered a cache of arms in a house belonging to one of the Banu Hashim; they were seized. Al-Nubi the Younger brought a sword, which the Zanj leader then gave to Yahya b. Muhammad. In this way there fell into the hands of the Zanj swords, spears, daggers, and shields.

[1754]

That evening `Ali spent in al-Sib, and in the morning he was given news of the arrival there of Rumays, al-Himyari, and `Aqil al-Ubulli. He despatched Yayah b. Muhammad with five hundred men, among them Sulayman, Rayhan b. Salih, and Abu Salih al-Nubi the Younger. They engaged the enemy and routed them, seizing a galley<sup>171</sup> and arms in the process. After everyone had fled Yahya b.

[1755]

167. Yaqut *Mu`jam*, III, 209; Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 271, 274. The canal, which flowed through land (*al-jawamid*, pl. of *jamidah* "drained lands") reclaimed from the swamps, itself finally disappeared into the great swamp, al-Ba-ta'ih.

168. This refers to Ja`far b. Sulayman b. `All al-Hashimi; see Tabari, III, 304-6.

169. See *EL*, 2 s.v. "Lakab," on the meanings and application of sobriquets.

170. The reading of the *nisbah* is uncertain.

171. *Sumayriyyah*. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *s-m-r*.

Muhammad returned to `Ali and told him the news. Remaining in al-Sib that day, he set out the following morning for al-Madhar,<sup>172</sup> after reaching a pact with the inhabitants of al-Ja`fariyyah that they would not engage in hostilities against him or aid or protect any of his enemies.

`Ali then traversed the [canal] al-Sib and made for a village known as al-Yahud, which lay along the Tigris. There he again encountered Rumays with a contingent of troops. Fighting between them continued throughout the day. A number of Rumays's troops were captured, while many others received arrow wounds. A servant belonging to Muhammad b. Abo `Awn who had been with Rumays was killed. A galley with an oarsman aboard capsized; the man was seized and beheaded. Leaving the field of battle, `Ali continued toward al-Madhar. He reached the canal called Bamdad<sup>173</sup> and crossed over it and into an open plain, where he saw an orchard and a small hill, known as Devils' Mountain.<sup>174</sup> He headed for the hill, positioned himself on the top, and settled his troops in the plain below while preparing for himself a scouting party.

Shibl b. Salim reported that he had acted as scout for `Ali along the Tigris. "I sent word to him," he said, "that Rumays was on the bank of the Tigris, looking for someone to convey a message for him." So `Ali sent off `Ali b. Aban, Muhammad b. Salm, and Sulayman b. Jami`, and when they reached Rumays he said to them, "Convey greetings to your master, and tell him that he shall have safe-conduct to go anywhere without hindrance from anyone." In exchange, he should return the slaves (*al-`abid*) to their owners (*al-mawalihim*),<sup>175</sup> for which he would be paid five dinars per head. `Ali's men returned to him with Rumays's offer. `Ali became incensed at this and swore that he would come, rip open the belly of Rumays's wife, raze his home to the ground, and cause blood to flow everywhere. This response was duly delivered to Rumays, who then set off to station himself on the Tigris opposite `Ali's own camp. [1756]

That same day Ibrahim b. Ja`far al-Hamdani<sup>176</sup> arrived to meet

172. The Nahr al-Madhar was the last reach of the easternmost course of the Tigris before it ran into the sea. The exact location of the town of al-Madhar is unknown; its surrounding district was called Jukha. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 42.

173. The reading is uncertain, an alternative being Basdad.

174. Jabal al-Shayatin.

175. See n. 156, above.

176. One of `Ali's future commanders.

`Ali with correspondence for him to read.<sup>177</sup> It was only at that moment that he joined `Ali's side. Following the last evening prayer, Ibrahim told `Ali that he did not think he should head for al-Madhar. When asked what he should do then, Ibrahim said that, as the inhabitants of `Abbadan, Mayan Rudhan, and Sulaymanan<sup>178</sup> had rendered allegiance to him, he should return there. And he added, "You have also left behind a group of the Bilaliyyah at the mouth of the Qandal and at Abrasan<sup>179</sup> waiting for you."

Now when the blacks heard of Ibrahim's advice, along with what Rumays had proposed to `Ali that day, they feared that `Ali would betray them and hand them over to their masters. Thus some of them fled, while the rest became very disturbed. Muhammad b. Salm reported their distress to `Ali and the fact that some had taken off. So that very night `Ali ordered them to be assembled together. Separating the Zanj of the Euphrates [from the others],<sup>180</sup> he summoned an interpreter to announce that none of them would be returned to his owner. `Ali swore a most solemn oath on this, adding, "Some of your number should watch me closely, and, if they sense any treachery on my part, they could kill me." Then `Ali assembled the remainder of the Zanj together, namely, the Furatiyyah, the Qarmatiyyun, the Nubah, and others who understood Arabic and made the same solemn oath to them as well, which he personally pledged and confirmed. Moreover, he said that he had not revolted to achieve earthly goods and glory, but only for the wrath of God and against the corruption and decay of the faith that he saw among the people. He concluded saying, "I shall share personally in every battle with you and assume the same risks as you." The Zanj were pleased by these words and wished him well.

[1757]

At dawn the next day `Ali commanded one of the slaves of the Shurajjiyyin named Abu Manarah to blow the horn, as a signal for the

177. Ibrahim appears here for the first time in Tabari's account without an indication of who he is (an agent?) or even a comment on the nature of the correspondence he carries.

178. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 44. The abrupt nature of the information in this paragraph, without prior reference to it, suggests that Tabari's work as we have it may have been abridged from a longer text. See n. 217, below.

179. The reading is very uncertain, Abusan, Antishar being among other possibilities.

180. The text of the Leiden edition has al-Furatiyyah, but the critical apparatus notes the uncertain status of the reading; other manuscript copies provide al-Qawaniyyah, al-Magharibah, and al-Fazzaniyyah as alternatives.



Zanj to assemble. He then set out again for al-Sib, where he found al-Himyari, Rumays, and the associate of Ibn Abi `Awn. `Ali sent a secret message to them with Mushriq, who later returned with their reply. The leader of the Zanj reached the canal, and the associate of Muhammad b. Abi `Awn approached, greeted [ `Ali], and said, "It is no fit reward for our master from you that you cause his administrative district to be despoiled, given what you know he did for you in Wasit."<sup>181</sup> `Ali replied, "I have not come here to fight you, so tell your troops to make way for me so that I may pass by you."

`Ali departed from the canal [al-Sib] and made for the Tigris. [1758] Shortly thereafter soldiers arrived accompanied by the inhabitants of al-Ja`fariyyah, all fully armed. Abu Ya`qub, who was known as Jurban, approached them and said, "People of al-Ja`fariyyah! You are well aware that you have given us your solemn oath that you would neither fight against us nor provide assistance to anyone against us; indeed, you swore to assist any one of us if he came to you." They raised a great clamor and din, shouting as they fired stones and arrows at Jurban.

There was a place nearby where there were some three hundred *zarnuqs*,<sup>182</sup> which Jutban ordered dismantled and tied together like rafts.<sup>183</sup> They were launched onto the water, each with a single fighter astride it, and in this way battle with the enemy was joined.

Someone said that before the rafts were constructed, `Ali b. Aban swam across the canal. When the rafts had been made, the Zanj crossed the canal. They moved away from the bank of the canal and engaged the enemy with swords, killing a great number of them. Prisoners were first threatened, then released. One of the slaves of the Shyrajyyin called Salim al-Zaghawi was sent to bring back the troops who had entered the village of al-Ja`fariyyah. He called out to them, "Anyone caught stealing anything from this village or taking any captives will have to answer for his actions and will be subject

181. That is, the governor of Wasit, Muhammad b. Abi `Awn, had been persuaded to release `Ali and his companions from custody. See p. 33, above.

182. Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *z-r-n-q*, describes them thus: two pillarlike structures constructed by the head of a well, across which is placed a piece of wood, from which the pulley for drawing water is suspended. The plural is *zaraniq*. See also Tabari, *Glossarium*, CCLXXVII; and S. Fraenkel, *Die aramaischen Fremdwörter im Arabischen*, 134, who calls it a *Wasseraufzug*.

183. *Al-shashat*, although the vocalization is uncertain. From the context "raft" seems a likely approximation.

to a painful punishment." `Ali b. Aban then recrossed the [al-Sib] canal from the west to the east bank. After regrouping his troops under their chiefs, he had just passed beyond the village by the distance of a bowshot when he heard a great uproar coming from the direction of the canal. Carefully, the Zanj made their way back. [1759]

When Rumays, al-Himyari, and the associate of Ibn Abi `Awn, who, having heard of the situation at al-Ja`fariyyah, had arrived on the scene, the blacks attacked them and seized four galleys, together with their crews and fighters. The personnel were disembarked and `Ali b. Muhammad summoned the fighters for interrogation. They informed him that Rumays and Ibn Abi `Awn's associate had not let them go before compelling them to march on him and that the villagers had urged on Rumays, promising the two men large sums of money. The Shurajiyyin guaranteed to pay the associate in return for their slaves the sum of five dinars each. `Ali then inquired about a certain slave called al-Numayri and another called al-Hajjam. They replied that al-Numayri was being held as their prisoner, while the local people said that al-Hajjam had taken to robbing and murdering throughout their district, although eventually he had been [caught] and beheaded, his body having been strung up publicly on the Abu al-Asad canal.<sup>184</sup> After `Ali had gleaned this information, he ordered the prisoners beheaded, all that is save one called Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-Baghdadi, who swore that he had come with a safe-conduct, unarmed, and without hostile intent; he was set free. The severed heads and flags were borne away upon mules, while the ships were ordered destroyed by fire. `Ali then set out for Nahr Farid, finally arriving at a canal named after al-Hasan b. Muhammad al-Qadi, across which stretched a dam lying between al-Ja`fariyyah and the cultivated area (*rustaq*)<sup>185</sup> of al-Qufs.<sup>186</sup>

Villagers from the Bane `Ijl welcomed `Ali b. Muhammad, offering him their lives and extending generously to him whatever they possessed. `Ali returned their kindness, ordering them to keep what they had offered.

184. One of the major canals flowing into the estuary (*fayd*) of al-Basrah. See Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 303.

135. Spelled also as *ruzdaq*, *ruztaq*, and *rusdaq*, the word signifies a rural district consisting of cultivated lands with towns and villages. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *r-z-d-q*.

186. A town between Baghdad and `Ukbara', but nearer the former, famous for its places of pleasure and entertainment, including fine wines. Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, IV, 150.



He next proceeded to Nahr Baqtha<sup>187</sup> and camped outside the village, which was on the canal itself and stretched along the bank of the Dujayl. The inhabitants of al-Karkh came to him, greeted him, prayed for his good fortune, and extended to him all the hospitality he required. A Jew from Khaybar called Mandawayh came to `Ali, kissed his hand, bowed before him, and then professed his gratitude for seeing him. Then he asked `Ali a number of questions, which he answered. The Jew claimed that he had found a description of him in the Torah and that he had foreseen fighting alongside him. He also queried `Ali about certain marks on his body, which he stated he knew about. The two men spent the evening discussing matters.

[1760]

When `Ali set up his camp he [always] withdrew from his army with his six comrades. At that time wine<sup>188</sup> was not forbidden in his army. He had placed Muhammad b. Salm in charge of watching carefully over the troops. Late that night one of the villagers of al-Karkh came and informed `Ali that Rumays, [leading] the inhabitants of al-Maftah.<sup>189</sup> and the adjoining villages, and `Aqil [accompanied by] the people of al-Ubullah, had arrived with fully armed Dabila.<sup>190</sup> Al-Himyari had also arrived that night with a group of Euphrates villagers at the Nahr Maymun bridge, which they had destroyed to prevent `Ali's crossing. The following morning `Ali ordered it to be proclaimed to the Zanj to cross over the Dujayl. Then from the outskirts of al-Karkh he went to the Nahr Maymun, where he found the bridge cut, with the enemy on the eastern side of the canal and galleys containing the Dabila in the middle, while the villagers sailed in fiat-bottomed vessels (*jaribiyyat*) and reed boats (*mujawnihat*).<sup>191</sup>

[1761]

187. The reading is conjectural.

188. *Nabidh*. The word is a general term for various kinds of intoxicating beverages, which could be made from dates, raisins, barley, honey, or spelt. *Nabidh* was considered synonymous with *khamr*, which is forbidden in the Qur'an (2:219, 16:67, and 5:90, where it is described as the work of Satan). See *EI*, I s.v. "Nabidh"; *EI* 2 s.v. "Khamr."

189. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 48; Le Strange, "Ibn Serapoon's Description," 299, 303; it was a village in the province of al-Basrah, lying between the city of al-Basrah and Wasit.

190. The critical apparatus of the Leiden edition notes, without supporting sources, that this was a group of Indian origin living in al-Basrah. See also Tabari, *Glossarium*, CCXXXVI. The reference is probably to people from the Indian coastal trading port Daibul, located east of Mihran, who had extensive commercial links abroad. See Ibn Hawqal, *Configuration de la Terre*, II, 316.

191. On these types of rivercraft, see Tabari, *Glossarium*, CLXII, CLXXII.

`Ali ordered his troops not to engage the enemy but to withdraw from the canal to protect themselves from arrows. `Ali retreated to a distance of about one hundred meters from the village. When the enemy saw that no one was about to attack them, a detachment left to make a reconnaissance. Now `Ali had commanded a group of his men to slip into the village and conceal themselves in ambush. When they spotted the enemy detachment, they attacked, and twenty-two prisoners were taken, while the remainder were pursued and a number of them were killed along the canal bank. They returned to `Ali with heads and prisoners and, after interrogating them, he had them beheaded as well. He ordered them to be guarded carefully, and for half the day their cries could be heard. A tribesman of the desert arrived seeking protection, and `Ali asked him about the depth of the river. The man told him he knew of a place that could be forded and informed him that the people were solidly against him and prepared to fight him. `Ali went with the man to the ford, about a mile<sup>192</sup> distant from al-Muhammadiyah, and he traversed the river with the rest of the company following behind him. Nasih, known as al-Ramli, supported `Ali, and he crossed over with the animals. Once on the eastern bank, `Ali turned again toward the Maymun canal. Establishing himself there in the mosque, he gave orders for the heads [of the prisoners] to be planted on stakes. He remained there the whole day while Rumays's entire army traveled along the Dujayl and camped at a spot called Aqsha, opposite the Bard al-Khiyar canal.

`Ali b. Muhammad sent out a scout, who returned with news of Rumays's location. Immediately, he despatched a thousand men to encamp on the salt marsh at the mouth of the [Bard al-Khiyar] canal, telling them to inform him if the enemy had not approached them by the time of the sunset prayer. He wrote to `Aqil, reminding him that he had formerly rendered him allegiance, along with a group of inhabitants from al-Ubullah. He wrote also to Rumays, reminding him of the pact that they had concluded at al-Sib: that they would not fight each other and that he would send news of the central authorities to him. He entrusted these two letters to a peasant, after first exacting an oath from him to deliver them. [1762]

`Ali next moved from Nahr Maymun and set out for the salt

192. One Arabic *mil* equals two km., three *mil* making six km., or one *farsakh*. See Hinz, *Islamische Masse*, 63.

marsh, where he had prepared a scouting party. Upon reaching the villages of al-Qadisiyyah and al-Shifiya, he heard a great commotion and saw shooting taking place; his practice when on the march was to give villages a wide berth. He commanded Muhammad b. Salm to lead a party of men to al-Shifiya and ask the inhabitants to deliver to him the man who had murdered one of his troops as he was passing through. Muhammad returned to inform `Ali that the villagers claimed they had no power to surrender the man, owing to his clientship with the Hashimites and their protection of him. `Ali thus ordered his slaves to plunder the two villages, from which a great deal of currency in gold and silver, jewelry, ornaments, and gold and silver vessels were seized. On the same occasion slaves and women were captured, this being the first booty of its kind that they took. Muhammad b. Salm's party happened upon a house in which there were fourteen Shurajiyin slaves.<sup>193</sup> Their exit was blocked, and they were captured. The Hashimites' *mawla* who had murdered the Zanj soldier was brought, and Muhammad b. Salm ordered him beheaded. The execution was carried out.

[1763]

At the time of the afternoon prayer Muhammad left the two villages and set up camp by the salt marsh called Bard al-Khiyar. One of `Ali b. Muhammad's six companions came to him at the sunset prayer time and told him that his soldiers were indulging in inebriating drink,<sup>194</sup> which they had discovered in al-Qadisiyyah. Accompanied by Muhammad b. Salm and Yahya b. Muhammad, `Ali went to inform the troops that intoxicants were not permitted, and from that day he declared wine (*nabidh*) illegal. He addressed them saying, "You will be engaging armies in battle, so cease this indulgence in drink!" And they assented to his demand.

The following day one of the slaves of the blacks<sup>195</sup> named Qaquwayh came and told `All that Rumays's troops had set out for the eastern side of the Dujayl and proceeded toward the riverbank. The leader of the Zanj summoned `All b. Aban to advance with the Zanj and attack Rumays. `Ali b. Muhammad then summoned

193. *Ghilman min ghilman al-Shuraj*. See nn. 139, 146, 156, above.

194. The text refers to *khamr* and *nabidh*, both of which could loosely be rendered by wine. See n. 188, above. The context here clearly intends intoxicating drink, although *nabidh* (and likely *khamr* as well) could be prepared in both alcoholic and nonintoxicating versions. See Ibn Sayyar, *Kitab al-tabikh*, 309-10.

195. The expression is *ghulam min al-sudan*.

Mushriq to bring him an astrolabe,<sup>196</sup> with which he took a reading of the sun, in order to determine the precise time. Then he, followed by his troops, crossed over the bridge<sup>197</sup> spanning the Bard al-Khiyar canal. When they had arrived on the eastern side, they overtook `Ali b. Aban and found that the forces of Rumays and `Aqil were on the river bank, while the Dabila were aboard boats from which they could shoot their arrows. The Zanj forces attacked and killed a great number of the enemy. Then a gust of wind from the western shore carried the boats to the nearest bank, and the blacks fell upon them, slaying all they found aboard.

[1764]

Rumays and those with him retreated to Nahr al-Dayr<sup>198</sup> on the Aqsha road. He abandoned his boats without moving them, leaving the impression that he was staying there. `Aqil and Ibn Abi `Awn's associate left in haste for the Tigris without paying heed to anything. The Zanj leader ordered that the contents be removed from the boats that carried the Dabila; they were joined one to another. Qaquwayh went down to inspect them and found one of the Dabila. He tried to force him out, but the man resisted. Then he rushed the man with a trumpet (*surmay*)<sup>199</sup> he was carrying and struck him a blow on the shoulder, severing one of the veins. A second blow cut a tendon in his leg. Then Qaquwayh grabbed the man and struck him on the crown of the head, and he collapsed. Seizing the man's hair, Qaquwayh cut off his head and took it to the Zanj leader, who ordered that he be given a dinar.<sup>200</sup> Then he commanded Yahya b. Muhammad to make Qaquwayh commander of one hundred blacks.

Thereafter the Zanj leader headed for the village of al-Muhallabi,<sup>201</sup> which lay opposite Qayyaran. The blacks, who had meanwhile been pursuing `Aqil and Ibn Abi `Awn's deputy, returned. They had captured a galley with two oarsmen still aboard. `Ali b.

196. See *EI*,2 s.v. "Asturlab," on the uses of this instrument.

197. *Qantarrah*. This type of bridge was an arched or vaulted structure built with baked bricks or stones. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *q-n-t-r*.

198. Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, II, 660, IV, 839, states that a monastery called Dayr al-Dihdar had stood here from the days before Islam. The canal was one of the major waterways emptying into the estuary of al-Basrah. See Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 303.

199. The reading is uncertain, but the meaning could be rendered either trumpet or bugle. See R. Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes*, I, 831, *surmay*.

200. The expression is *dinar khafif*. See *EI*,2 s.v. "Dinar."

201. Written thus, the name does not appear in the *Index* and is otherwise unidentifiable. See n. 202, below.

Muhammad asked the blacks for a report about it. They told him that, while [they were] chasing the galley, most of the crew had thrown themselves into the river and abandoned the craft, which they were then able to retrieve. `Ali then interrogated the oarsmen, who informed him that `Aqil had coerced them into joining him, as he held their wives prisoner until they did so; he had used the same tactic with all the oarsmen. On the question of the arrival of the Dabila, the oarsmen said that `Aqil had promised them money, and so they followed him. Concerning the boats stationed at Aqsha, `Ali was informed that they belonged to Rumays, who had abandoned them, fleeing at the first light of day.

[1765]

`Ali b. Muhammad then returned to a position opposite the boats [at Aqsha], and the blacks were ordered to bring them to him across the canal. The boats were then plundered and set on fire.

The Zanj next proceeded to the village of al-Muhallabiyyah, also called T.n.gh.t.<sup>202</sup> `Ali camped nearby and gave the order for the place to be plundered and razed, which was done. As he moved along the Madiyan canal, he found quantities of dates, which he also had burned.

After these events the Zanj leader and his followers perpetrated outrages in this region, which we have not mentioned since none was especially atrocious, considering that every act he committed was atrocious.<sup>203</sup>

Among the momentous encounters that he later had with the forces of the central authorities<sup>204</sup> was one against the Turk Abu Hilal in Suq al-Rayyan.<sup>205</sup> One of the Zanj commanders called Rayban reported that this Turk had arrived in Suq al-Rayyan at the head of a force of some four thousand men or more. They were preceded by a group of people wearing bright clothes and sporting flags and drums. The blacks led a ferocious attack against the Turk. One of the

202. Popovic, *Révolte*, 88, locates this village on Nahr al-Madiyan (not found in the *Index*); it is not to be confused with the similar place name mentioned in n. 201, above. The reading *t.n.gh.t* as an alternative designation is entirely conjectural.

203. By highlighting in his succeeding account only the major crimes and depredations of the Zanj, Tabari is perhaps also pointing to a shift in their leader's policy toward plunder and destruction, rather than recruitment of forces.

204. The expression is *ashab al-sultan*, and Popovic, *Révolte*, 88 n. 3, observes that this almost certainly refers to a force of the local garrison and not to troops sent from Baghdad.

205. A large town on Nahr al-Rayyan in the region of al-Ahwaz.

blacks fell upon the people's standard-bearer, felling him with blows from the two cudgels he was carrying. The crowd fled, while the blacks pursued their onslaught on Abu Hilal's troops, slaying nearly one thousand five hundred of them. One of the blacks chased after Abu Hilal, who managed to save himself by escaping on a horse bareback. Then the darkness of night descended between the blacks and those who had escaped. In the morning the pursuit resumed, and the blacks returned with heads and prisoners, all of whom were then killed. [1766]

Following this engagement there occurred another involving the Zanj against the troops of the central authorities, in which `Ali b. Muhammad was also victorious. According to what one of the Zanj leader's commanders<sup>206</sup> reported, the affair commenced as follows. The commander, whose name was Rayhan,<sup>207</sup> said, "One night during the course of the year," (which we have mentioned was one in which his rebellion commenced) " `Ali b. Muhammad heard the sound of a dog barking at the gates [of a dwelling owned by] `Amr b. Mas`adah.<sup>208</sup> He ordered an inquiry into the source of the barking and sent one of his followers to investigate. He later returned with the news that he had seen nothing at all, and then the barking resumed."

Rayhan continued: " `Ali then called for me to go to the source of the barking, for it seemed as though the dog barked only at someone it could see. So I set out and suddenly came upon the dog, standing on a breakwater (*al-musannah*),<sup>209</sup> although I could see nothing else. And then I spied a man sitting on some steps. I spoke to him, and, when he heard me addressing him in Arabic, he replied, introducing himself as Sayran b. `Afwiallah. He said he had brought letters for `Ali b. Muhammad from his partisans in al-Basrah; he had been one of his associates during `Ali's sojourn in al-Basrah. So I took him to `Ali, who read the correspondence he was carrying. `Ali asked

206. *Qd'id li-sahib al-zanj min al-sudan*. Tabari here seems to make a distinction between the Zanj as an ethnic/racial term and blacks (*al-sudan*) other than the Zanj.

207. Although it is not immediately apparent from the context here, this is the same Rayhan b. Salih who has already appeared on p. 35, above, as one of the slaves of the Shurajiyin.

208. Tabari's editors identify this individual as `Amr b. Mas`adah al-Katib al-Rawi, about whom nothing else is known; see *Index*.

209. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *s-n-w(y)*.



Sayran about al-Zaynabi and the numbers of men he had. He said that al-Zaynabi was mustering a large force of slaves, volunteers, and the factions of the Bilaliyyah and the Sa`diyyah, which was going to be despatched against `Ali at Bayan. `Ali told Sayran to lower his voice lest the slaves be frightened by his news. He then inquired who was to lead this army and was told that one Abu Mansur, a Hashimite *mawla*, had been selected for the post. Asked whether he had seen this force, Sayran replied that he had and added that they were also equipped with ropes to bind the hands of any blacks they captured. `Ali then told Sayran to return to the place where he was staying, and he wandered off to `Ali b. Aban, Muhammad b. Salm, and Yahya b. Muhammad and engaged in discussing matters with them until the dawn broke." [1767]

The Zanj leader then set out to spy upon this new force. When he reached the far side of Tursa, Barsuna, and Sandadan Bayan,<sup>210</sup> a detachment came out to do battle with him. `Ali b. Aban was ordered to engage the enemy, and he routed them, capturing from among them one hundred blacks.

Rayban resumed: "I heard 'Ali b. Muhammad say to his followers that what they had witnessed was one of the signs of perfection of their mission—that is, the arrival of the detachment with their slaves, who were surrendered into their hands, God increasing thereby the numbers of his own forces. Then the Zanj proceeded until they reached Bayan."

Rayban continued: " `Ali b. Muhammad sent me, accompanied by a contingent of his troops to al-Hajar in search of transport boats (*al-kdrawan*)<sup>211</sup> and [the rest of] their army in the palm belt on the western side of the [Nahr] Bayan.<sup>212</sup> We reached the designated spot and there found one thousand nine hundred boats, protected by a detachment of volunteers. When they saw us they abandoned the boats and crossed over the Sulban without their arms, heading toward Jubak. We boarded the vessels and sailed them back to `Ali's camp. Also aboard these craft were a number of pilgrims who had intended to [1768]

210. Although the location of these places cannot be identified, the action of the narrative is moving toward the environs of al-Basrah.

211. Arabized from the Persian *karaban*. See Tabari, *Glossarium*, CDXLII, s.v. *qayrawan*.

212. A broad artificial channel that joined the estuary of the Tigris with the Dujayl. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 44, 48.

follow the road to al-Basrah. When we arrived with the boats `Ali had a carpet laid out on a rise of ground, and, seated upon it, he examined the pilgrims for the rest of the day until sunset, by which time they had begun to believe all that he told them. They said that, if they had had any spare resources, they would remain with him; with that he sent them back to their boats. In the morning `Ali fetched them from the boats and made them swear not to reveal to anyone the size of his forces; indeed they should, if asked, make as little of his circumstances as possible. The pilgrims presented `Ali with one of their carpets, and he reciprocated, giving them one of his own. `Ali also asked them to swear that they were carrying neither money nor commercial goods for the central authorities. However, they indicated that one man was a government agent, carrying dried fruits to al-Basrah. The master of the boat in which the man was found swore to `Ali that he was engaged only in ordinary commerce, and so he was released. The pilgrims were also free to leave."

The inhabitants of Sulaymanan appeared on the eastern bank of the Bayan opposite the Zanj, who were conversing with them. Husayn al-Saydanani was among the inhabitants. He had been a close associate of `Ali b. Muhammad in al-Basrah and one of the four persons who had declared their revolt in the `Abbad mosque. On this day Husayn rejoined `Ali<sup>213</sup>

[1769]

`Ali asked Husayn what had caused him to be absent for so long. He replied that he had been in hiding and that, when this army had left [al-Basrah], he had joined in with the masses of troops. `Ali then inquired about the army, its composition and numbers. Husayn said that he had seen the army depart and tht it comprised one thousand two hundred slave fighters,<sup>214</sup> a thousand of al-Zaynabi's own troops, about two thousand from the Bilaliyyah and Sa`diyyah factions, and two hundred cavalry. However, when this force had reached al-Ubullah a dispute had broken out between the army and the town's inhabitants, and each side had begun cursing and abusing the other. The slave troops had even vilified Muhammad b. Abi `Awn. Husayn continued, "I left them behind at Shati' `Uthman, and I reckoned that they should arrive in the morning." `Ali asked what they intended to do upon arriving. Husayn replied that they

213. Seep. 33, above.

214. *Khawal*. See n. 156, above.



were intending to send the cavalry into Sandadan Bayan, while their infantry would approach from both banks of the canal.

The following morning `Ali sent out a scout to gather intelligence. He chose an old, feeble man, in order that attention would not be drawn to him. But the scout did not return. When he had been away a long time `Ali despatched Fath. al-Hajjam with three hundred men and Yahya b. Muhammad to Sandadan. He ordered Yahya b. Muhammad to pass through the market of Bayan. Fath al-Hajjam reported to `Ali that the enemy was approaching en masse along both sides of the canal. `Ali inquired about the tide and was told that it had not yet come in. `Ali then observed that the enemy's cavalry could not have arrived as yet. He ordered Muhammad b. Salm and `Ali b. Aban to lie in wait for them among the palm trees, while he occupied a higher vantage point on a hilltop overlooking them. Presently the [enemy] banners and foot soldiers came into view as they approached the territory of Abu al-`Ala' al-Balkhi, situated on a bend of the Dubayran canal.<sup>215</sup>

[1770]

The Zanj raised the battle cry "Allahu Akbar" and then launched their attack on the enemy, confronting them at Dubayran. The enemy's slave contingent attacked under the leadership of Abu al-`Abbas b. Ayman, who was otherwise known as Abu al-Kubash and Basher al-Qaysi; the Zanj were forced to retreat to the hill where `Ali b. Muhammad was stationed. The Zanj then counterattacked and this time held their position firm. Abu al-Kubash assaulted Fath al-Hajjam and killed him. He also surprised one of the black slaves called Dinar and delivered him several blows. Next the blacks charged the enemy facing them on the shore to the Bayan and were engulfed in sword fighting.

Ravhan resumed: "I encountered Muhammad b. Salm when he struck Abu al-Kubash a blow, causing him to fall into the mud, where one of the Zanj came across him and severed his head, `Ali b. Aban, however, claimed Abu al-Kubash's death for himself, as well as that of Bashir al-Waysi. Chatting about that day, `Ali (b. Aban) said, `Bashir al-Qaysi was the first person I encountered, and we struck each other blows. His blow landed on my shield, whereas mine caught him squarely in the chest and abdomen. I had pierced his ribs and slit open his stomach. He collapsed, and I slashed off his

215. The reading is conjectural.

head. Then I faced Abu al-Kubash, who gave me his full attention. One of the blacks came up behind him and struck his legs with a club, breaking them both. He fell and offered no resistance to my finishing him off and beheading him. I brought both heads to the leader of the Zanj.' "

Muhammad b. al-Hasan b. Sahl said, "I heard the Zanj leader stating that `Ali had brought him the head of Abu al-Kubash and that of Bashir al-Qaysi" Muhammad added that he knew neither of them. Moreover, `Ali had told him that both men had been in the vanguard of their forces and, when he slew them, the troops had fled at the sight of their fallen leaders.

[1771]

Rayhan continued, according to what was reported from him, that the enemy fled using every avenue of escape while pursued by the blacks up to the Nahr Bayan. The water level in the canal had dropped, and, as the enemy attempted to cross, they sank in the mud, and most perished.

Some blacks passed by their comrade Dinar, whom Abu al-Kubash had struck down. He was lying there wounded. The blacks mistook him for one of the enemy's slaves (*al-khawal*), and so they commenced to beat him with sickles, leaving him severely wounded. A passerby who recognized Dinar carried him to the Zanj leader, who ordered his wounds attended to.

Rayban continued: "When the enemy had reached the mouth of the Nahr Bayan, they had lost many drowned and their boats with the animals aboard had been seized. Someone signaled us from a boat, and when we reached him he told us to enter the Nahr Sharikan, where the enemy had set up an ambush. Yahya b. Muhammad and `Ali b. Aban set out along the canal, Yahya taking the western and `Ali the eastern side, when they came across about a thousand Magharibah<sup>216</sup> troops lying in wait. Husayn al-Saydanani was being held their prisoner.

When the enemy saw us, they fell upon Husayn and cut him to pieces. They then advanced upon the Zanj with their spears extended, and fighting ensued until the time of the noon prayer. The blacks in their turn threw themselves upon the enemy, slaying them all and seizing their weapons. The blacks returned to camp and found their leader sitting on the bank of the Bayan. Some thirty-odd

216. Government troops of North African origin.

flags and about a thousand heads had been brought to him. among them heads of the brave and courageous slaves (*al-khawal*). That same day Zuhayr was brought to him as well."<sup>217</sup>

Rayhan continued: "I did not know him, but Yahya, who arrived while Zuhayr was standing before the leader of the Zanj, recognized him and said to me, 'This is Zuhayr the slave (*al-khawal*); why should you spare him?' And the order was given for Zuhayr to be beheaded." [1772]

The Zanj leader remained in his camp that day and night. The following morning he sent a scout to reconnoiter the Tigris shore. The scout returned to inform him that there were two abrges<sup>218</sup> moored to the island, which was then located at the mouth of the al-Qandal canal. When the afternoon [prayer] was finished the scout set out again for the Tigris, to ascertain developments. At sunset Abu al-`Abbas came to `Ali b. Muhammad; he was his wife's brother and was accompanied by a soldier called `Umran, who was married to the mother of this same Abu al-`Abbas. `Ali placed his troops on parade for them and requested that they [review them]. `Umran handed him a communication from Ibn Abi `Awn, demanding that he cross over the Bayan and leave the district of his jurisdiction. For his part, Ibn Abi `Awn informed `Ali that he had removed the barges blockading the way out. `Ali gave the command to take the boats from Jubba, which could traverse the Bayan. His troops went to al-Hajar<sup>219</sup> and found in Sulban two hundred boats loaded with flour. The boats were commandeered; clothing, some *barr.kanat*,<sup>220</sup> and ten Zanj were discovered on board. The troops were ordered to embark upon the boats and, when the tide came in at sunset, he crossed over [the Bayan] with them opposite the mouth of the Oandal canal. One of the boats carrying flour, which was in the charge of Abu Dulaf, was blown off course by a strong wind. He arrived the next morning and reported to the Zanj leader that the wind had carried him as far as [1773]

217. The sudden introduction into the account of this individual, as if the reader were already familiar with him, suggests that the text we possess may contain lacunae or has been abridged. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 89; n. 178, above.

218. *Shadhah*, also *shadhawah*, a kind of war boat. See Tabari, *Glossarium*, CCVIII; Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *sh-dh-w*.

219. A location near al-Basrah.

220. Like Popovic, *Révolte*, 89 n. 5, I have been unable to identify this word, which is unvocalized in manuscripts B and O.

Hasak `Imran. There the villagers had shown an inordinate interest in him and the boat's cargo, and he had had to fend them off.

Fifty blacks joined `Ali's side, and, with their arrival and the acquisition of the boats, he entered the Qandal canal [district] and ventured as far as a village belonging to al-Mu`alla b. Ayyub, where he set up camp. He spread out his troops up to Dubba,<sup>221</sup> where they discovered three hundred Zanj, whom they brought back to `Ali. They also found an agent of al-Mu`alla b. Ayyub, and, when they demanded money of him, he replied, "Let me cross over to Bursan, and I will bring you money." So he was released, and he went. He failed, however, to return, and when his absence became prolonged `Ali gave the order to plunder the village. And this was done.

Rayhan continued this report: "On that day I saw the leader of the Zanj taking part in plundering with the rest of us. My hand and his fell at the same time upon a quilted woolen jacket; we each had hold of a part of it, tugging it toward us, when I finally let him have it."

Later `Ali b. Muhammad set out for al-Zaynabi's garrison, situated on the western bank of the Qandal canal. The defenders were defiant, and, although they believed they could resist, they actually did not possess sufficient strength to do so, and all, some two hundred persons, were killed, to the last man. `Ali b. Muhammad remained in the castle that night and set out on the morning tide for the salt fiat of al-Qandal. His troops proceeded along both sides of the canal and, arriving at the village of Mundhiran, they entered and plundered it. A number of Zanj were found in the village, and `Ali had them apportioned among his commanders. From there `Ali reached the far end of the Qandal [canal] and directed his boats into a canal called al-Hasani, which opened onto another canal called al-Salihi, which led directly to Dubba. He camped there on the fiats.

[1774]

One of his followers reportedly said that it was there that `Ali b. Muhammad named his commanders, and he denied his having done so previously.

`Ali b. Muhammad dispersed his troops among the canals until they converged upon the main square of Dubba. They found there a man belonging to the harbor dwellers in al-Basrah who sold dried dates. His name was Muhammad b. Ja`far al-Muraydi. He was

121. The name of one of the subdistricts of al-Basrah, through which ran many canals. Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, II, 544.

brought to `Ali who, recognizing Muhammad, greeted him. He asked him about the Bilaliyyah faction [in al-Basrah]. The man replied, "I was bringing you a message from them when the blacks met me and brought me to you. The Bilaliyyah are seeking certain conditions from you; if you grant them, they will follow and obey you." `Ali consented to the conditions. He also authorized the man to be responsible for them until they were able to reach him. `Ali then let Muhammad go and sent with him an escort that would take him as far as al-Fayyad<sup>222</sup> and then return. For four days the Zanj leader waited in vain for Muhammad's return. On the fifth day `Ali disbanded the boats he had with him on the canal and proceeded by land between the canal called al-Dawardani and the Nahr al-Hasani and the Nahr al-Salihi. He had scarcely moved from one canal to the next, when he saw about six hundred horsemen approaching from the direction of the Nahr al-Amir.<sup>223</sup> His troops hastened along the Dawardani, with the horsemen proceeding upon the western bank. A lengthy discussion took place, and it transpired that the horsemen were Arab tribesmen, among whom were `Antarah b. Hajana and Thumal.

[1775]

`Ali sent Muhammad b. Salm to talk to `Antarah and Thumal, and they in turn inquired who the Zanj leader was. Muhammad pointed out `Ali, and the two Arabs said they wished to talk with him. Muhammad returned to report to `Ali what they had said. He added, "If you would speak to them ...," but `Ali interrupted him abruptly and said, "This is a trap." He ordered the blacks to attack the tribesmen. When the blacks crossed the canal, the tribesmen turned away from them and raised the black flag.<sup>224</sup> Then there appeared in their midst Sulayman, the brother of al-Zaynabi, who had been with them all the time. The Zanj troops returned, while the tribesmen withdrew. `Ali said to Muhammad b. Salm, "Did I not tell you that they had set a trap for us?"

The Zanj arrived in Dubba, and `Ali scattered his troops among the palm groves. They had found sheep and cattle, which they pro-

222. Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, III, 926, describes this as an ancient, broad canal in al-Basrah, with villages and cultivated fields along its banks.

223. A canal in al-Basrah (not to be confused with another of the same name in Wasit) dug by order of the `Abbasid Caliph al-Mansur and thus originally known as Nahr Amir al-Mu'minin. See Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, IV, 835.

224. Indicating their support for the government.

to slaughter and gorge themselves on, spending the entire night there. The following morning they reached the narrow waterway (*al-arkhanj*)<sup>225</sup> called al-Mutahhiri, which joined the Nahr al-Amir opposite al-Fayyad from both sides. There they encountered Shihab b. al-`Ala' al-`Anbari with a detachment of slaves (*al-khawal*). In the ensuing action Shihab escaped with a small troop, but many of his forces were slain. Shihab was pursued into the center of al-Fayyad. There the Zanj came across six hundred slaves of the Shurajiyin; they captured them and brought them to `Ali's camp, while their agents were killed. `Ali advanced as far as a castle called al-Jawhari, situated on the salt flats of the Baramikah, and spent the night there. In the morning he reached the flats that began at the Dinari canal and the farthest reaches of which extended to the Nahr al-Muhdath. `Ali reunited his troops and ordered them not to press on toward al-Basrah until the signal was given. Thereafter they were set loose to plunder the countryside, while `Ali spent the night there.

[1776]

#### An Account of the Zanj Leader's Advance Upon al-Basrah with His Army

After the Zanj leader had mustered his troops, they reportedly set out for al-Basrah from the salt flats stretching beside the Dinari canal, the farthest reaches of which extended to the Nahr al-Muhdath. When they had arrived opposite the Nahr al-Riyahi, a party of blacks arrived and informed him that they had seen armed men in the al-Riyahi area itself. Moments later the Zanj assembled at a call to arms, and the Zanj leader ordered `Ali b. Aban to cross the canal against the foe, who were on the eastern side of the Dinari canal. `Ali b. Aban took about three thousand men with him while the Zanj leader collected together his remaining troops, telling 'Ali [at the same time] that, if he required reinforcements, he need only ask for them. After `Ali b. Aban had left, the Zanj called for their weapons, for they had spotted another movement [of troops] from a direction different from the one `Ali had taken. The Zanj leader inquired about the troop movement and was told that they were coming from the direction of the village of al-Ja`fariyyah, which lay be-

[1777]

225. See Tabari, *Glossarium*, CXI.

side the Nahr Harb. So he despatched Muhammad b. Salm in that direction.

It was reported from Rayban (b. Salih), one of `Ali b. Muhammad's followers, that he said, "I was among those accompanying Muhammad (b. Salm) when we set out at the time of the noon prayer. We confronted the enemy in al-Ja`fariyyah, and a fierce battle developed between us, which lasted until the late afternoon." The blacks next led a ferocious assault, forcing the enemy to turn heel and flee. Around five hundred persons were killed from among the soldiers, the Arab tribesmen, and the Basran factions of the Bilaliyyah and the Sa`diyyah. Among the enemy that day was one Fath, a slave of Abu Shith, and he too fled, with Fayruz the Elder in pursuit. When Fath realized that Fayruz could not be shaken off, he flung his metal helmet at him, albeit in vain. He next threw his shield at Fayruz, but this also did not cause him to retreat. Finally, he heaved a metal oven<sup>226</sup> he had been carrying at Fayruz, again without the desired effect. They reached the Nahr Harb, and Fath jumped into the canal and escaped, leaving Fayruz to return to the Zanj leader bearing the weapons that Fath had discarded.

Muhammad b. al-HasanShibl said, "It was related to us that Fath had leaped across the Nahr Harb that day." Shibl continued, "I related this tale to al-Fadl b. `Adi al-Darimi, and he said that he had been with the Sa`diyyah that day and that Fath had not been carrying a metal oven<sup>227</sup> with him. In fact, he was wearing only a yellow-silk tunic. He fought until there remained no one else in the battle, and then he made his way to the Nahr Harb and leaped across it to the western bank." He seems not to have known Rayhan's story about Fayruz.

Rayhan said, "I met Fayruz before he had returned to the Zanj leader, and he told me the story of his encounter with Fath and showed me the weapons. The Zanj had resorted to recovering spoils as I made my way along the Nahr al-Dinari. Suddenly I came across

[1778]

226. The expression is *tannur hadid*, which suggests an implement designed for battlefield conditions or a journey, as the common domestic *tannur* was constructed of baked earth or clay. If the implement was shaped like the Beduin metal cooking implement, the *Saj*, round and concave as a shield, it could have easily been carried. This interpretation seems confirmed by another occurrence of the term, at n. 374, below.

227. See n. 226, above.



a man sitting under a palm tree. He was wearing a silk hat (*al-qa-lansuwah*), red shoes, and a woolen tunic (*al-durra`ah*). I seized him, and he showed me letters he was carrying, which he said were from a group of people in al-Basrah who had sent them with him. I threw a turban (*al-`amamah*) around his neck and led him to the Zanj leader and reported the man's news. `Ali b. Muhammad asked the man's name, and he replied, 'I am Abu al-Layth Muhammad b. `Abdallah from Isfahan, and I have only come to you from a strong desire to be in your company.' `Ali accepted him."

Moments later the cry "God is greatest" was heard, and `Ali b. Aban appeared in possession of the head of one of the Bilaliyyah called Abu al-Layth al-Qawariri (Muhammad b. al-Hasan Shibl said that Wasif al-Zuhri was the person who killed Abu al-Layth al-Qawariri, one of the celebrated members of the Bilaliyyah) and [in possession of] the head of another Bilaliyyah member named `Abdan al-Kasibi who had a voice among them, as well as the heads of a number of others from them. `Ali b. Muhammad queried `Ali b. Aban about the incident, and he told him that no one had fought him more tenaciously than these two men, meaning Abu al-Layth and `Abdan. `Ali b. Aban forced them to flee and finally drove them into the Nahr Nafidh, where they had a barge, which he capsized.

Muhammad b. Salm later arrived with a prisoner from the Bilaliyyah whom Shibl had captured. His name was Muhammad al-Azraq al-Qawariri. Muhammad was also carrying a number of heads. `Ali b. Muhammad called the prisoner over and asked him about the commanders of these two armies. The man replied that those in al-Riyahi were commanded by Abu Mansur al-Zaynabi and the others along the Nahr Harb were commanded by Sulayman, the brother of al-Zaynabi, who stationed himself on their rear flank in the outlying areas. To a query about their numbers, he replied that he did not know the figures, only that they were a considerable force. `Ali then had Muhammad al-Qawariri released and attached to Shibl's group.

[1779]

`Ali and the Zanj next made for the salt flats of al-Ja`fariyyah. He remained there that night among the slain. The following morning he gathered together his troops and cautioned them [again] against their entering al-Basrah. Regardless, some of them, including Ankawayh, Zurayq, Abu al-Khanjar who had not yet been made a commander, Salem and, Wasif al-Kufi hastened on ahead. When



they reached the Nahr al-Shadhani, a number of Basrans came out to meet them, the number swelling quickly into a multitude. `Ali b. Muhammad received news of this and sent off Muhammad b. Salm, `Ali b. Aban, and Mushriq, Yahya's slave, with a large contingent. He went along with them, accompanying the boats that were loaded with pack animals and the wives of the slaves. He established camp at the bridge on the Nahr Kathir.<sup>228</sup>

Rayhan continued: "I joined `Ali b. Muhammad, having received a wound on my leg from a rock. He asked about developments and I told him that the battle was well underway. He then ordered my return and accompanied me until I reached the high ground overlooking the Nahr al-Sababijah. He said to me, 'Go to our troops and tell them to disengage and fall back.' I told him that he should get as far away from the place as possible, for I was unsure of his safety from the enemy's slave troops. So he withdrew.

[1780]

I myself went and informed the commanders of his orders, and they retreated. The Basrans pressed the Zanj hard, and a complete rout was the result. That happened in the late afternoon. Many fell into the Kathir and Shaytan<sup>229</sup> canals. `Ali b. Muhammad called to his followers to come back, but they could not return. A number of them drowned in the Nahr Kathir and many were slain on the canal bank as well as on the Shadhani. Among the commanders who drowned that day were Abu al-Jawn, Mubarak al-Bahrani, `Ata' al-Barbari, and Salam al-Shami. The slave of Abu Shith,<sup>230</sup> Harith al-Qaysi, and Suhayl caught up with `Ali b. Muhammad, and together they mounted the arched bridge (*qantarah*) over the Nahr Kathir. `Ali then turned back to [challenge] them, and they retreated before him until they were back on the ground.<sup>231</sup> On this day `Ali was wearing a woolen tunic, a turban, sandals, and a sword, and he carried a shield. When he had left the bridge, the Basrans mounted it again in pursuit. `Ali turned back and killed a man on the fifth step of the bridge. He called out to his men to alert them to his position,

228. A canal in al-Basrah named after Kathir b. `Abdallah al-Salmi, who, as governor of the city, had it dug during the last years of the Umayyad period. See Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, IV, 843-44.

229. A canal in al-Basrah named after a client of Ziyad b. Abihi, the Umayyad governor of Iraq. See Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, IV, 840.

230. Named Fath; see p. 60, above.

231. That is, off the bridge.

but none of them remained in that spot save for Abu al-Shawk, Muslih, and Rafiq, Yahya's slave."

Rayhah said, "I was with `Ali b. Muhammad at the time. He fell back to al-Mu`alla<sup>232</sup> and camped on the western side of the Shaytan canal."

Muhammad b. al-Hasan said that he had heard the leader of the Zanj himself relate the following: "That day I had found myself at one point completely out of touch with my troops and they with me. Only Muslih. and Rafiq remained with me. I was wearing a pair of Sindi sandals and a turban, a twist of which had become unraveled and trailed along the ground. I was in too much of a hurry to pick it up, as I was carrying a sword and shield. Muslih and Rafiq hurried ahead on foot, and as I lagged behind they disappeared from sight. I spotted two Basrans behind me, one carrying a sword, the other with a rock in his hand. They saw me and recognized me and redoubled their efforts to catch me, so I turned upon them and they backed off. I finally made it back to the spot where my troops were gathered. They had become perturbed at my loss, and seeing me again calmed them down." [1781]

Rayhan continued: "`Ali b. Muhammad returned to al-Mu`alla on the western side of the Nahr Shaytan and camped there. He discovered upon inquiry that many of the men had fled and, after an inspection, he found there were a total of only five hundred men left. A horn was blown, the sound of which used to be the signal for the slaves to assemble, but no one returned. `Ali b. Muhammad spent the night there, in the course of which Jurban arrived. He had escaped in the general flight, taking with him thirty slaves. `Ali asked him where he had vanished to, and he replied that he had made a reconnaissance of al-Zawariqah."

Rayhan continued: "`Ali b. Muhammad sent me to find out for him who was still at the Nahr Harb bridge. I found no one around. The Basrans had plundered the boats that `Ali had brought there, removing the pack animals and taking possession of his other goods, his letters and astrolabes. The following morning, when `Ali b. Muhammad inspected the troops again, he discovered that a thousand men had made their way back during the night." [1782]

232. Probably the same village as that belonging to Mu`alla b. Ayyub. See p. 57, above.

Rayhan said that Shibl was among those who had fled, but Nasih. al-Ramli denied that.

Rayhan continued: "Shibl returned [to camp] in the morning with ten slaves. `Ali b. Muhammad rebuked him harshly. He demanded to know what had happened to a slave called Abu Na`jah Nadir and another, `Anbar al-Barbari. Shibl reported that they had both fled with the others. The leader of the Zanj remained stationed where he was and gave the order for Muhammad b. Salm to venture to the arched bridge of the Nahr Kathir and there preach to the people, informing them of the reasons for his revolt. Muhammad set out, accompanied by Sulayman b. Jami` and Yahya b. Muhammad; they stopped [by the river] while Muhammad crossed over and made his way into the midst of the troops of al-Basrah.<sup>233</sup> As he commenced to address them, they caught him off guard, fell on him, and killed him."

Al-Fadl b. `Adi said that when Muhammad b. Salm crossed the river to preach to the Basrans, they were assembled at a spot called al-Fadl b. Maymun. Fath., the slave of Abu Shith, was the first person suddenly to confront and strike him down with a sword; then Ibn al-Tumani al-Sa`di severed his head. Sulayman and Yahya returned to report to `Ali b. Muhammad, who ordered them to say nothing to the Zanj until he had a chance to do so himself. Following the afternoon prayers, he announced the death of Muhammad b. Salm to those troops who had not heard the news. He said to them, "Tomorrow you shall slay ten thousand Basrans to avenge him." He sent Zurayq and his slave Saqlabtuya<sup>234</sup> with orders to prevent anyone from crossing the river. That was on Sunday, the 13th of Dhu al-Qa`dah in the year 255(October 23, 869). [1783]

Muhammad b. al-Hasan Muharemad b. Sim`an al-Katib: On Monday, the 14th of Dhu al-Qa`dah (October 24, 869), the people of al-Basrah<sup>235</sup> assembled together and went forth in the wake of what they regarded as a triumph over the Zanj the previous day. The man

233. The expression is *ahl al-Basrah*, which could signify either the populace or troops; the latter seems preferable here. See n. 235, below. Clearly this incident did not take place in al-Basrah itself but rather on the outskirts of the city. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 92.

234. The reading is conjectural.

235. The expression once again is *ahl al-Basrah*. See n. 233, above. Here, however, Tabari indicates a much broader participation in the expedition against the Zanj than just military personnel.

selected to lead the expedition was a Basran by the name of Hammad al-Saji, a sailor experienced in operating and fighting from barges. The force comprised volunteers, archers, people from the main mosque, those from the Bilaliyyah and Sa`diyyah factions prepared to follow Hammad, and onlookers from the Hashimites, Qurayshites, and other sections of the populace. Three barges were loaded with archers who crowded on board, eager to get to the scene of battle. A mob proceeded on foot, some bearing arms while others were mere spectators without weapons. The barges and boats entered the Umm Habib canal on the tide after sunset that same day. The procession of foot soldiers and spectators along the canal bank was so dense and numerous that they blocked from view everything in front of them. The Zanj leader had stationed himself on the canal known as al-Shaytan.

Muhammad b. al-Hasan said the Zanj leader told him that, when his scouts had arrived and he knew of the approaching crowd, he sent off Zurayq and Abu al-Layth al-Isbahani with a detachment of troops along the east bank of the [Shaytan] canal, and Shibl and Husayn al-Hammami with another detachment along the western bank. Both parties were to set up ambushes. `Ali b. Aban was ordered to take the remainder of his troops to intercept the enemy. They should, however, crouch down facing the enemy, guarding themselves with their shields, allowing no one to attack until the adversaries were close enough to brandish swords at them. When the situation had developed in this way, the Zanj attacked the enemy. The Zanj leader gave orders to the two ambuscades that when the throng [on the banks] were abreast of them and they heard their own troops on the attack, they should emerge on both sides of the canal shouting at the enemy. The Zanj women were ordered to gather bricks and keep the men supplied with them.

[1784]

Muhammad b. al-Hasan said that after this incident the leader of the Zanj told his followers, "That day, as I beheld the mob approaching, I was gripped by a terrible fear, such an overwhelming terror that I appealed [to God] for help. I was accompanied by only a few troops, among them Muslih., and there was not one among us who did not imagine that he was going to meet his doom. Muslih marveled at the size of the multitude and I motioned to him to contain himself. As the enemy neared, I cried out, 'Oh God, this is the hour of trial, so come to my aid!' I had scarcely finished saying this when I saw white

birds sweep down upon the enemy, and one of the galleys overturned, and all on board were drowned.<sup>236</sup> The barges met the same fate. My troops then fell upon the enemy they were heading for, shouting at them." The ambushers emerged from their hiding places on the canal banks behind the boats and the foot soldiers, clubbing those among them and onlookers on shore who tried to flee. A group here was drowned, a group there was killed, while others who fled toward the canal seeking rescue were overtaken by the sword. Those who resisted were slain, while those who ventured into the water were drowned. The foot soldiers on the canal's edge who sought escape in the water were either killed or drowned until most of the enemy forces had been annihilated. None but the odd fugitive was saved. The numbers of Basrans missing soared as their wives raised a chorus of lament.

[1785]

People spoke of this day as the Day of the Barges (*yawm al-shadha*).<sup>237</sup> They were horrified by the number killed that day. Among the innumerable host killed were a number of sons of the Hashimite Ja`far b. Sulayman and forty famous archers.

The abominable one<sup>238</sup> had the heads [of the slain] collected. He displayed them so that relatives of the deceased who came to him could claim those they recognized. For the rest, which no one claimed, he put aboard a fiat-bottomed boat (*jaribiyyah*), filling it up. The boat was released on the falling tide from the Umm Habib canal, where it drifted toward al-Basrah, stopping at Mashra`ah<sup>239</sup> al-Qayyar. People came and recovered the heads of those they recognized.

[1786]

After this day the enemy of God became ever more powerful as fear of him gripped the Basrans' hearts. They abstained from further battle with him, but the central authorities were informed of his escapades, and Ju`lan al-Turki was sent with reinforcements to the

236. On this incident, see Halm, *Traditionen*, 26.

237. *Shadhah* being the name of the type of vessel employed by the Basrans.

238. Tabari suddenly changes his tone toward the Zanj leader, employing the epithet *al-khabith* here for the first time. On the following page he calls him "enemy of God." Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *kh-b-th*, gives a rich variety of words to choose from, among them "base, corrupt, artful, cunning, and wicked"; "abominable one" has been used here consistently to render *khabith*.

239. *Mashra`ah*, as part of the place name, signifies a place to which people come to drink or draw water, and where animals are also watered. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *sh-r-`*.

Basrans. Ju`lan ordered Abu al-Ahwas al-Bahili to proceed to al-Ubullah as governor, sending as support a Turk called Jurayh.

The abominable one alleged that his followers had boasted to him in the wake of this [recent] battle that they had slaughtered the entire fighting force of al-Basrah save for the weak and incapacitated. "Give us permission to storm the city," they demanded. `Ali b. Muhammad berated them and decried their request. "On the contrary," he scolded, "get as far away from al-Basrah as possible; we have instilled fear and terror in them, and now you are safe. The thing to do now is forsake war with them until they come looking for you." Then he withdrew his forces to a salt flat at the farthest edge of the network of canals and then went on to the al-Hajir canal.

Shibl said that this place was the salt flats of Abu Qurrah, which lay between the Nahr Abu Qurrah and the Nahr al-Hajir. `Ali b. Muhammad stationed himself there and gave the command to his troops to construct huts from the reeds (*akwdkh*).<sup>240</sup> These salt flats were surrounded by palm groves, villages, and cultivated fields. The Zanj soldiers spread out right and left, raiding the villages, murdering the farmers, stealing their property, and leading their livestock away.

[1787]

Such was the news of `Ali b. Muhammad and of the people who were affected by his rebellion this year.

Al-Hasan b. Muhammad b. Abi Shawarib al-Qadi<sup>241</sup> was imprisoned on the 28th of Dhu al-Qa`dah (November 7, 869), and `Abd al-Rahman b. Na'il al-Basri was appointed to the judgeship of Samarra in Dhu al-Hijjah (November 10-December 8, 869) of this year.

Leading the pilgrimage this year was `Ali b. al-Hasan b. Isma`il b. al-`Abbas b. Muhammad b. `Ali.<sup>242</sup>

240. See G. Young, *A Reed Shaken by the Wind*, for a modern account of life among the marsh Arabs.

241. See n. 6, above.

242. He had led the pilgrimage the previous year as well.

The Events of the Year 256  
(December 9, 869-November 28, 870)

Among the significant events of the year was the arrival in Samarra of Musa b. Bugha. Salih. b. Wasif was driven into hiding, while some of Musa's military commanders transferred al-Muhtadi under escort from the Jawsaq palace to the palace of Yajur.<sup>243</sup>

It was reported that Musa b. Bugha entered Samarra with those accompanying him on Monday the 11th of al-Muharram of this year (December 19, 869). Upon his arrival, Musa commenced a review of his troops, the left and right wings and the central sector presented together with their arms, which took place in al-Hayr, and continued up to the point where they reached the Gate of al-Hayr adjacent to the Jawsaq palace and the Qasr al-Ahmar. This was on the very day that al-Muhtadi was holding a session of the court of appeal (*mazalim*). Ahmad b. al-Mutawakkil b. Fityan<sup>244</sup> was among those summoned to attend that day, because of the court. He was still there at [1788]

243. The copyist of manuscript C reads for Yajur the name of another Turkish commander, Yarjukh.

244. The future Caliph al-Mu`tamid; see p. 115, below, for his accession date. His patronymic was Abu al-`Abbas, though he was also known by his mother's name, Fityan, or, according to Ibn al-Athir (*Kamil*, VII, 235 ), Qityan or Qinin.



the palace when the *mawlas* (of Musa b. Bugha) entered and took al-Muhtadi off to the palace of Yajur. Ahmad b. al-Mutawakkil followed and continued the court of appeal session, deputizing for al-Muhtadi, in the tent of Muflih, until the business with al-Muhtadi was cleared up and he had been returned to al-Jawsaq and released.

Bayakbak had been in charge of affairs in the caliphal palace and had been replaced a few days previous by Satikin. This was owing, people thought, to al-Muhtadi's confidence in him, which meant Satikin would also control both the palace and the Caliph's person at the moment of Musa (b. Bugha's) arrival. On that day Satikin remained in his own quarters, leaving the palace vacant. Musa arrived at the palace while al-Muhtadi was in session of the court of appeal; he was informed of Muhtadi's arrival but delayed giving him permission to enter for a while. When he and his company were finally allowed an audience, there first occurred a discussion like that on the day that [Musa's] delegation and messengers had arrived.<sup>245</sup> However, when such discussion became prolonged, the Turks began to mutter impatiently among themselves in their own tongue. Al-Muhtadi was then forced to leave the assembly and he was borne away on one of the animals of the Shakiriyyah, while the Turks plundered what was available in the Jawsaq palace in the way of riding beasts belonging to the elite. They then headed for al-Karkh<sup>246</sup> and upon reaching the Gate of al-Hayr in the fiefs attached to the palace of Yajur, they brought him into the palace itself.

One of the *mawlas* who was present that day recounted the reason for their seizure of al-Muhtadi. One *mawla* had remarked to another that the delays [created by al-Muhtadi] were merely a device to allow Salih b. Wasif to take them by surprise with his forces. This prospect frightened them and caused them to remove al-Muhtadi to another spot. [1789]

245. As described p. 28, above.

246. This is the Karkh of Samarra, also known as Karkh Firuz, to distinguish it from the southern quarter of Baghdad of the same name. It lay ten miles north of Samarra. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 52; also Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, III, 17. The Caliph al-Mu`tasim constructed al-Karkh beyond the built-up area of Samarra, where the Turkish military personnel held lands (*qata'i*'), in order to keep them separated from the ordinary population of the city and from certain other contingents of the army that were housed there. See D. Ayalon, "Preliminary Remarks on the Mamluk Military Institution in Islam," especially 55, quoting al-Ya`qubi.



Someone reported that he had heard al-Muhtadi say to Musa, "What do you wish? Mercy on you! Honor God, and fear Him, for it is a momentous matter that you undertake." Musa replied, "We desire nothing but good. I swear by the grave of al-Mutawakkil, absolutely no harm will befall you from our part." The one who had overheard this remark was prompted to say to himself that, had Musa really sought only [the Caliph's] good, he would have better sworn on the grave of either al-Mu`tasim or al-Wathiq.<sup>247</sup>

When al-Muhtadi had been transferred to Yajur's palace, the *mawlas* extracted vows and promises from him that he would not side with Salih against them and that he would not harbor toward them ulterior intentions different from the way he treated them openly. Al-Muhtadi agreed, and the *mawlas* renewed their oath of allegiance to him on Tuesday the 12th of al-Muharram (December 20, 869). Later the same morning they sent for Salih to come to them for discussions, and Salih promised to appear.

One of the chiefs of the Faraghinah<sup>248</sup> reported that, when he was asked what they were demanding of Salih b. Wasif, he replied, "The blood of the government secretaries and their property and the blood of al-Mu`tazz and his entourage and property."<sup>249</sup>

The commanders accepted after pondering these matters, while their troops remained outside by the Gate of al-Hayr next to the palace of Yajur. Then, on the Tuesday evening, Salih went into hiding.<sup>250</sup>

Talmajur recounted the following. "On the evening of Tuesday we assembled together with Salih. After he had ordered the distribution of periodic payments (*arzaq*) to those assigned to guard duty (*ashab al-nawbah*), he ordered one of the company present to review<sup>251</sup> the [1790]

247. Both al-Mu`tasim and al-Wathiq had died of natural causes while al-Mutawakkil had been murdered by Musa's father in league with Wasif, the father of Salih. For brief accounts of these events, see Kennedy, *Age*, 171 -75; Sourdél, *Vizirat*, I, 271-86.

248. A regiment of soldiers from the province of Farghanah, a large area lying on the north and south sides of the upper Jaxartes river. The region first supplied soldiers as guards for the Caliph al-Mu`tasim (d. 227/842). See Le Strange, *Lands*, 476-80, *EI*, 2 s.v. "Farghana."

249. Tabari here means that the chief was seeking recompense for the blood of those mentioned, that is, vengeance. The Caliph al-Mu`tazz had been killed some five months previously.

250 That is, within a day of Musa b. Bugha's arrival in Samarra.

251. On the formal procedures of the military review, see Bosworth, "Recruitment," especially 70-77.

number of troops at hand. That morning their number had been some five thousand. Returning to Salih, the man said that there were now only eight hundred men, most of whom were his freedmen (*ghilman* and *mawlas*).<sup>252</sup> For a while Salih was silent, then he rose and left us without any further instructions. This was his last act."

It was reported from someone who had overheard that Bukhtishu` (b. Jibril)<sup>253</sup> said, alluding to Salih before Musa's arrival, "First we roused this unruly force and incited them; then, when finally they did come to us, we were preoccupied with drinking and playing backgammon. It was as if we were here one moment, then just vanished when he (Musa) reached al-Qatul."

In the early hours of Wednesday morning, Tughta<sup>254</sup> arrived at the door of Yajur's palace, where Muflih confronted him and delivered him a blow with his battle-ax, striking him on the right temple. Those who remained with Salih the night he went into hiding included, from among the senior army commanders, the said Tughta b. al-Sayghun, Talmajur who was al-Mu'ayyad's associate, Muhammad b. Turksh, Khamush, and al-Nushuri, while from among the ranking secretaries there were Abu Salih `Abdallah b. Muhammad b. Yazdad, `Abdallah b. Mansur, and Abu al-Faraj.<sup>255</sup>

On the Wednesday morning, which was the 13th of al-Muharram (December 21, 869), Salih had already gone into hiding, while Abu Salih made for the palace of Yajur. `Abdallah b. Mansur arrived there too with Sulayman b. Wabh,<sup>256</sup> who disclosed to those present that he had drafts for five thousand dinars, which Salih had wanted him to handle. He refused to do so until the whole affair [concerning Sa-

[1791]

252. On the interchangeability of these terms, see the discussion by Ayalon, "Preliminary Remarks," especially 51.

253. Bukhtishu` was the name of a famous Christian family, originally from Jundaysabur, which supplied a number of physicians to the caliphs throughout the third/ninth century. Bukhtishu` b. Jibril died in exile in Bahrayn in the year 256/870. His connection with Salih's forces is, however, unclear. On the family, see *EI*,<sup>2</sup> s.v. "Bukhtishu`."

254. The reading is conjectural.

255. Abu al-Faraj was the son of Najah b. Salamah, who had been in charge of the government department of the seal (*tawqi`*), with control as well over the fiscal prefects during the reign of al-Mutawakkil. In 245/858 both father and son were arrested and Najah put to death; the property of both men was confiscated. See Tabard, III, 1440-43; Sourdél, *Vizirat*, I, 262-63, II, 733-34.

256. See Sourdél, *Vizirat*, II, 300-2. A former secretary of Musa b. Bugha, he was at this time al-Muhtadi's vizier.

lih and Musa] was settled. On this same day, Kanjur was given a robe of honor<sup>257</sup> and entrusted with searching Salih's palace. Yajur, Musa's associate, brought al-Hasan b. Makhlad from the palace of Salih, where he had been imprisoned.

On the same day of the month, Sulayman b. `Abdallah b. Tahir was made governor of Madinat al-Salam and the Sawad. Robes of honor were sent to him, more indeed than had been bestowed upon `Ubaydallah b. `Abdallah b. Tahir.<sup>258</sup>

This same day as well al-Muhtadi was returned to al-Jawsaq, while `Abdallah b. Muhammad b. Yazdad was sent to al-Hasan b. Makhlad.<sup>259</sup>

A public proclamation was issued against Salih b. Wasif, and on the 22nd of Safar (January 29, 870) he was killed.

#### An Account of Salih's Discovery in Hiding and His Death

The cause of this was as follows. On Wednesday, the 27th of al-Muharram of the year 256 (January 4, 870), al-Muhtadi publicly disclosed the contents of a letter. He said that Sima al-Sharabi claimed a woman had brought it from somewhere near al-Qasr al-Ahmar and given it to Kafur, a eunuch (*khadim*)<sup>260</sup> in charge of the harem. She had told him that it contained some valuable information and mentioned also where she lived, should anyone wish to make contact with her. The letter was then delivered to al-Muhtadi. When in fact it became expedient to question the woman about the letter, she was not to be found at the address she had given, and no one had any news about her.

[1792]

It was reported that al-Muhtadi himself had discovered the letter but did not know who was responsible for delivering it.

Al-Muhtadi then summoned Sulayman b. Wahb to attend him,

257. *Khil`ah*. This was generally not a single item of clothing but a variety of fine garments; see n. 447, below. See also *EI*,2 s.v. "Khil`a."

258. See p. 14 and n. 52, above. Here Sulayman is officially awarded the position his brother had passed on to him.

259. Although Tabari does not say so, the implicit sense here is that Ibn Yazdad was given permission to deal with al-Hasan b. Makhlad as he wished.

260. On this class of servant, see D. Ayalon, "On the Eunuchs in Islam," also *EI*,2 s.vv. "Khadim," "Khasi."

along with a group of the *mawlas*, among whom were Musa b. Bugha, Muflih, Bayakbak, Yajur, Bakalaba, and others. He showed the letter to Sulayman and asked him if he recognized the handwriting. Sulayman replied that it was the hand of Salih b. Wasif, whereupon al-Muhtadi ordered Sulayman to read the letter to the assembled company.

Salih stated in it that he had gone to ground in Samarra. He had done so preferring safety for himself but also to spare the *mawlas* and in fear that skirmishes between them might erupt into full-scale hostilities. His intention was that everyone should sleep on the matter, so that whatever happened would be after reflection upon what he had set out in his letter. Salih went on to detail what he had seized of the secretaries' property. He said that al-Hasan b. Makhlad had that information, and he was one of the secretaries still in their custody. Next he noted who had delivered money to him and to whom he had entrusted its distribution. He remarked upon the affair of Qabihah and indicated that information on that was possessed by Abu Salih b. Yazdad and Salih al-`Attar. Among other matters that he touched upon Salih attempted to justify his behavior for certain actions, while apologizing for others. In any event, his words expressed the strength of his feelings.

When Sulayman had finished reading the letter, al-Muhtadi followed by urging upon the company reconciliation, harmony, and agreement, as he sought to stimulate an aversion for dissension, mutual hatred, and destruction. This only caused them to suspect that al-Muhtadi knew of Salih's whereabouts and that he might deliver them into [Salih's] hands. This suspicion created much discussion among them and lengthy examination of the matter. On Thursday morning, the 28th of al-Muharram 256 (January 5th, 870), the Turkish commanders went together to the residence of Musa b. Bugha inside the Jawsaq compound, muttering and discussing matters among themselves. News of this reached al-Muhtadi.

[1793]

Ahmad b. Khaqan al-Wathiqi reported that he had been the one to bring this news to al-Muhtadi's attention. He said that he had heard someone present at the meeting of commanders say, "The troops are unanimous in their decision to depose this man." Ahmad continued: "I went to his brother Ibrahim (al-Muwaffaq) and informed him of developments, and he in turn passed on the information from me

to al-Muhtadi. I nevertheless feared that the Commander of the Faithful might hasten to inform the Turks about me; but God granted me security."

Ahmad reported further that the brother of Bayakbak addressed the assembly<sup>261</sup> once they had disclosed to him the course of action they had decided upon. He said: "You have slain the son of al-Mutawakkil, who was handsome, generous, and kind, and now you want to murder this man, who is a good Muslim who fasts, does not drink forbidden wine (*nabidh*), and had done no wrong. By God, if you do kill him, then I shall take off for Khurasan and spread notice of this whole affair of yours far and wide."

When news of this meeting reached al-Muhtadi, he entered his audience chamber girt with sword, dressed in clean robes, and perfumed. He then summoned the Turks into his presence, but for a while they refused. When finally they stood before him he said to them, "I have heard what you intend to do with me. I am not like my predecessors, such as Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Musta'in, or even like the son of Qabihah. By God, I have not come to confront you without being prepared to die. I have already entrusted my brother with my son to succeed me. This is my sword, and by God I shall fight with it so long as I can hold onto it. And by God, if one hair of my head is touched, the lot of you shall surely perish. Have you no religion? Have you no shame? Have you no piety? How long will this dissension against the caliphs, this boldness and effrontery against God, go on? It is all the same to you whether one wants to spare you or, hearing such a tale as this about you, calls for gallons of drink to celebrate joyously your misfortune and rejoices in your ruin! Tell me from what you yourselves know: Are you aware of any of this wealth of yours that has reached me? You, O Bayakbak, don't you realize that just one of your company is more fortunate than all of my own family? If you really want to know, just take a look! Will you see in any of their residences furniture, servants, and slaves or whether they possess estates and revenues (*ghallat*)?<sup>262</sup> Fie on you! And now

[1794]

261. This meeting, according to Ibn al-Athir (*Kamil*, VII, 219), took place in the apartment of Musa b. Bugha, which was located in the Jawsaq palace. Ibn al-Athir, however, puts the words into the mouth of Babakiyal, rather than Bayakbak's brother.

262. The word *ghallah* (pl. *ghallat*) means the produce, revenue, or income from a wide variety of sources: produce of the land or income from its rent, rental of a house, or hire of a slave. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. "*gh-l-l*."

you come and say that I know what Salih is up to! Is he not just another *mawla* like yourselves? How then would I put up with him, if you all think ill of him? If you should choose to make peace, that is what I heartily desire for all of you. But, if you persist in pursuing this course, that is your business.<sup>263</sup> Seek out Salih, and satisfy your blood lust! But, as for myself, I have no knowledge of his whereabouts."

They demanded that he swear an oath upon that, to which al-Muhtadi replied, "I will give you my right hand on it, but I shall postpone doing so until tomorrow when I perform the Friday prayers in the presence of the Hashimites, religious judges, conciliators, and other men of rank."

The Turks seemed to relent a little at this. A1-Muhtadi sent for the Hashimites, and they arrived in the evening. When al-Muhtadi gave them permission to enter and greetings were exchanged, he made no mention to them of these matters and simply ordered them to be at the palace for the Friday prayers, and they departed. The next morning, Friday, they (the Turks) had made no move. A1-Muhtadi performed his prayers; everyone was calm and departed in peace.

[1795]

Someone who had overheard the quarrel on Wednesday reportedly said that, when Salih had been denounced as a traitor, al-Muhtadi had observed that Bayakbak had also been around when Salih was embroiled in the affair of the secretaries and the wealth of Qabihah's son (al-Mu`tazz). Thus, if Salih had gained anything from the business, Bayakbak must have profited as well. This remark infuriated Bayakbak.

Someone else who had heard this remark reported that al-Muhtadi had also observed that Muhammad b. Bugha, too, had been around and was fully cognizant of what had happened and indeed had participated in the whole affair. This gibe provoked Abu Nasr (Muhammad b. Bugha's) anger.

It has been said that for a long time<sup>264</sup> the Turkish commanders held their counsel about the insult implicit [in al-Muhtadi's words] but that in their hearts they harbored rancor against him, though they were prevented from doing anything from fear of disorder and the lack of financial resources. When, however, the revenue arrived

263. That is, "I won't try to stop you."

264. Literally, from the time of the age of Moses.

from Fars and al-Ahwaz on Wednesday, the 27th of al-Muharram (January 4, 870), they were roused to action. The total amount of these revenues was 17.5 million dirhams.

On Saturday, news spread among the populace that the army was about to depose and murder al-Muhtadi, an end they sought by provoking him to anger. They had leaflets written and distributed in the congregation mosque and in the streets. Someone who claimed to have read one said it contained, in part, the following words:

In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful. O community of Muslims! Pray to God for your Caliph, the just, the favored, the second `Umar b. al-Khattab. Pray that God grant him victory over his enemies, that He spare him the trouble of [enduring] his oppressor, and that He fill him and this community with bounty by extending his life. The *mawlas* have been urging al-Muhtadi to abdicate, and for some days he has been submitted to torture. Those conducting this campaign are Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Thawab and al-Hasan b. Makhlad. May God show mercy upon those with pure intentions and pray for Muhammad (may the peace and blessings of God be upon him).

[1796]

On Wednesday, the 4th of Safar of this year (January 11, 870), the *mawlas* in al-Karkh and al-Dur<sup>265</sup> became agitated. They despatched a spokesman, `Isa, to tell al-Muhtadi that they needed to discuss certain matters with him. They requested that the Commander of the Faithful send one of his brothers to them. So al-Muhtadi sent his oldest brother, Abu al-Qasim `Abdallah, along with Muhammad b. Mubashir al-Karkhi, and they set out to inquire what was troubling the *mawlas*. First, the *mawlas* professed their obedience and loyalty to the Commander of the Faithful. They had heard that Musa b. Bugha, Bayakbak, and a number of their commanders were seeking to depose al-Muhtadi. While they would freely sacrifice their lives, they would not do so for that.

The *mawlas* continued, saying that they had read the leaflets distributed in the main mosque and in the streets. In this regard they complained of their straitened circumstances, the delay [in the pay-

265. Another settlement for the Turkish soldiery, lying farther to the north of al-Karkh. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 52.



ment of their] allotments, and the damage done to estates and the land tax as a result of the commanders' acquisition of fiefs (*iqta'*).<sup>266</sup> Moreover, most of the revenue from the land tax had been swallowed up by their chiefs and their bonuses and extras from previously established practices, as well as allotments for women and other interlopers.<sup>267</sup> They talked at length in this vein. Abu al-Qasim `Abdallah b. al-Wathiq finally said to them, "Write all this down in a letter to the Commander of the Faithful, and I will ensure that it is delivered to him on your behalf." So a letter was drafted. The secretary responsible for writing it was Muhammad b. Thaqif al-Aswad, who acted as a secretary for `Isa, on occasion master of al-Karkh.

[1797]

Abu al-Qasim and Muhammad b. Mubashir left and delivered the letter of al-Muhtadi, who replied in his own hand, sealing the letter with his own seal. On the following morning Abu al-Qasim went to al-Karkh, where he met the *mawlas*. They went together to the palace of Ushnas, which had been turned into a congregational mosque for them. In the public square they halted, the assembled *mawlas* comprising some one hundred fifty cavalry and about five hundred infantry. Abu al-Qasim read out Muhtadi's greetings to them, saying, "The Commander of the Faithful says that this is his personal letter to you, written and sealed by himself, so listen to it, and weigh carefully what it says." Abu al-Qasim then handed the epistle to their secretary, who read it out:

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.  
Praised be God, and His manifold blessings be upon Muhammad the Prophet and his family. May God guide us and you rightly, and be to us and to you both friend and protector. I have taken note of your message and rejoice in your expression of loyalty and obedience. May God reward you and protect you well. It distresses me greatly to hear of your misery and your needs. By God, would that I could arrange for your welfare by eating and feeding my children and household only the necessary minimum amount of food and clothing my children only in what suffices to hide their modesty. But

266. See *EI*,2 s.v. "Iqta`."

267. The system of military payments was open to abuse by the commanders' inclusion in the registers of persons not entitled to such stipends. The formal military reviews were occasions intended to weed out such interlopers (*al-dukhala*), although this did not always work in practice. See Bosworth, "Recruitment," especially 71.



no, by God! May He protect you! Since I accepted rule over you, I have had only fifteen thousand dinars for my own needs and those of my household, children, servants, and retinue. You have access to what [amounts] have arrived and shall arrive, and everything has been disbursed to you with nothing held back. As for what you mention hearing and reading about in the leaflets distributed in the mosques and streets and about your unstinting service, this is indeed worthy of you. So why apologize for bringing the matter up? We and you are as one. May God compensate you well for your pledges and your fidelity. But the situation is not as you have heard; knowing this, act accordingly, God willing. As for what you mention about fiefs, bonuses, and other matters, I shall examine these questions and, God willing, shall earn your affection in doing so. Peace be upon you. May God rightly guide us and you, and be protector to us both. Praised be God, Lord of the worlds. Manifold blessings be upon Muhammad the Prophet and his family.

[1798]

When the man who was reading the letter reached the point where al-Muhtadi had said that he had only received a sum of fifteen thousand dinars, Abu al-Qasim motioned to the man, and he stopped. And then he (Abu al-Qasim) said, "What is this [paltry sum]? During his reign, the Commander of the Faithful has deserved more than this amount for a shorter period for [expenditure] on his allotments, provisions, and assistance. Surely you know what previous caliphs have spent on gifts for effeminates, singers, musicians, building villas and such like! So pray to God for the Commander of the Faithful!"

The man resumed reading the letter, and when he had finished there was much discussion. Then the *mawlas* made a statement of their own. Abu al-Qasim replied, advising them to express their views in a letter, commencing it in the customary manner of correspondence to caliphs and addressing it from "the commanders, their deputies, and chiefs<sup>268</sup> in al-Karkh, al-Dur and Samarra."

They did so, first praying to God for the Commander of the Faithful. Then they requested the following: that all matters pertaining

268. *Al-quwwad wa-khulafa`ihim wa-al-`urafa'*. For the use of these ranks, see p. 79, below.

to rank, both high and low, be referred back to the Commander of the Faithful without interference from anyone else; that arrangements of military administration revert to what they had been in the days of al-Musta'in, namely, that every nine men be under a chief,<sup>269</sup> every fifty men under a deputy (*khalifah*), and every hundred men under a commander (*qa'id*); that women, extras, and bonuses be excised from the register; that a *mawla* not be included as part of a *qabalah* contract<sup>270</sup> or any other; that they be paid regularly every two months; that the practice of granting the fiefs be discontinued; and, finally, that the Commander of the Faithful be able to increase [the pay] of whomsoever he wished and promote whom he liked. [1799]

The *mawlas* added that immediately following their letter they were going to proceed to the residence of the Commander of the Faithful and remain there until their needs were met. Moreover, if they heard of anyone interfering with him concerning these matters, they would have his head. If anyone touched a hair of the Commander of the Faithful's head, they would kill Musa b. Bugha, Bayakbak, Muflih, Yajur, Bakalaba, and others. And with that they prayed to God for the Commander of the Faithful.

They gave the letter to Abu al-Qasim and he departed and delivered it. In Samarra the *mawlas* became unsettled and the commanders very disturbed. A1-Muhtadi had already taken his seat in the court of appeal, and the jurists and judges were allowed to enter and take theirs. The commanders stood according to their ranks while Abu al-Qasim entered ahead of the plaintiffs. A1-Muhtadi read the letter and withdrew with Musa b. Bugha. The caliph next ordered Sulayman b. Wahb to endorse their copy of the letter, approving what they had requested. When Sulayman had done this in a paragraph or two, Abu al-Qasim said, "O Commander of the Faithful,

269. `Arif. As a term applied to certain military and civilian offices, see *EI*,2 s.v. "Arif."

270. On the nature of the juridical term "guarantee" as used in the practice of fiscal contracts, see *EI*,2 s.v. ".Kabala"; Sourdél, *Vizirat*, II, 585-86. Military commanders sought such contracts in anticipation of benefits accruing from speculation on the differential between the sum contracted by a guarantor with the central treasury and the amount the guarantor was actually able to collect from taxes levied on the harvest. Here the intention seems to be a limitation of the abuse of the system by exclusion of *mawlas* as guarantors. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 222, however, has *la yudkhal mawla fi malihi*, which suggests that *mawlas* were not to be included as part of their commanders' property. Neither reading provides an entirely satisfactory understanding of the passage.

only your endorsement in your own hand will satisfy them." So al-Muhtadi took the paper and struck out what Sulayman had written, endorsing each article of their requests with his approval, stating that each would be fulfilled. He then composed a separate communication in his own hand, sealing it himself, and gave it to Abu al-Qasim. The latter spoke to Musa, Bayakbak, and Muhammad b. Bugha, "Send messengers accompanying me to them, to plead your excuses before them concerning what has reached them about you." So each of them appointed a man to go along with Abu al-Qasim. He found the *mawlas* assembled in their usual places, numbering around a thousand cavalry and three thousand infantry. The time was noon on Thursday, the 5th of Safar (January 12, 870) of this year.

[1800]

He read to them greetings from the Commander of the Faithful, saying, "The Commander of the Faithful has responded to everything you have asked for. So pray to God for him." He handed the letter over to their secretary who first read out al-Muhtadi's endorsements, then read them the second letter from the caliph. It went as follows:

In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful.  
Praised be God, He alone. God's blessings and peace be upon Muhammad the Prophet and his family. May God guide you aright and protect you. May He give you plenty and restore your circumstances and through you and by means of you those of Muslims as well. I have taken note of your despatch and I also read it to your chiefs. They reported the same things as you have and have asked for the same things as you have. I have already consented to everything that you requested, out of love for your welfare and friendship, and to rally your support. I have ordered your allotments to be so stipulated that they will accrue to you on a regular basis; thus, there is no need for you to be unsettled. Be of good heart. Peace! and may God guide you aright and protect you; may He provide you with plenty and restore your circumstances and, through you and by means of you, those of Muslims as well.

When the man reading the letter had finished, Abu al-Qasim said to them, "These men are messengers from your chiefs who have

come to plead their excuses before you for what you may have heard about them. They say that you are all brothers and belong to each other." Then the messengers spoke along the same lines. The *mawlas* themselves engaged in lengthy discussion and at the end of it drafted a [further] communication to the Commander of the Faithful, setting forth in it the same kind of justification as they had in their first letter. They dissociated themselves from what they had asserted in the previous communication. Now, they would be satisfied with nothing less than the Caliph's endorsement of five points. These were to reduce the increases; the restoration of fiefs to their former conditions [of tenure]; the demotion of *mawlas* who were gatekeepers from the status of the "elite" to that of the lower-ranking palace guards (*barraniyyin*);<sup>271</sup> reversion to the military administrative practices of the days of al-Musta'in; and, finally, restoration of *talaji* properties,<sup>272</sup> so they could be placed in control of someone to whom were attached fifty men from the troops of al-Dur and fifty from Samarra, all of which could be successfully carried out by the *diwans*. In addition, the Commander of the Faithful should turn over the army to one of his brothers, or someone else [of his choice] who could act as intermediary between them in their affairs; but this person should not be from among the ranks of the *mawlas*. *Salih b. Was. if* and *Musa b. Bugha* should each be held responsible for his wealth. Thus, nothing would content them short of having all the requests in their communications dealt with; this, as well as having their pay (*al-`ata'*) expedited, their regular pay (*arzaq*)<sup>273</sup> being made every two months. The *mawlas* also informed the Caliph that they had written to the troops of Samarra and the Magharibah troops to join them, and that they would be going to the res-

[1801]

271. Tabari, *Glossarium*, CXXX.

272. Dozy, *Supplement*, II, 524. These properties referred to ownership of land ceded to another person, who undertook to protect the original owner's right to work the land; see also Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *l-j-*, for a variant meaning.

273. The difference between the two terms for pay or stipend, as explained by Lane, seems to be founded upon the time between payments; whereas, for example, the *`ata'* could be an allowance paid once a year, the *rizq* (pl. *arzaq*) was paid more frequently, the period stipulated being two months. In both instances payment appears to have been made both in money and in provisions and equipment. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *-t-w*. The word *`ata'*, which means "gift," was originally applied to pensions paid to Muslims and then became the term for troops' pay, where it could also be an ad hoc payment. See *EI*, 2 s.vv. "*Ata'*," "*Djaysh*."

idence of the Commander of the Faithful to seek fulfillment of their demands.

Their letter of demands was given to Abu al-Qasim, the Caliph's brother. Meanwhile they wrote another to Musa b. Bugha, Bayakbak, Muhammad b. Bugha, Muflih, Yajur, Bakalaba, and the other commanders, reporting their communication with the Caliph, and its contents.

They noted, moreover, that the Commander of the Faithful had accepted their request so long as the commanders did not interfere with his decisions; were the commanders in fact to do so and oppose the *mawlas*, then no agreement could be arranged with them on anything. The letter added that, if the Commander of the Faithful were wounded or if a hair of his head was disturbed, they the *mawlas* would have the heads of all of them. They would now only be satisfied with the reappearance of Salih b. Wasif who would, together with Musa b. Bugha, examine the matter of the whereabouts of the [disputed] wealth; for before he vanished Salih had promised to pay them their allotments (*arzaq*) for six months. [1802]

This letter was given to Musa's messenger, while the *mawlas* despatched several of their colleagues with Abu al-Qasim to deliver the other letter to the Commander of the Faithful and to await his response.

When Abu al-Qasim returned, Musa sent some five hundred horsemen to stand by the al-Hayr Gate situated between al-Jawsaq and al-Karkh. Abu al-Qasim turned aside to them along with the soldiers' messengers and those of Musa's forces. Musa's messenger gave him the *mawlas*' letter intended for himself and his associates. Among this group were Sulayman b. Wahb and his son, Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Thawabah, and some other secretaries. When Musa had read the letter to them, Abu al-Qasim said that he bore another letter from the *mawlas*, this one of the Commander of the Faithful; he did not, however, disclose it to them. They then all rode off together to al-Muhtadi whom they found seated on a carpet in the sun, having just finished his prayers. In the palace he had destroyed every musical instrument and gadget of pleasure and amusement. Once the letters were delivered, he was left alone for a while. Later, he instructed Sulayman b. Wahb to compose replies to the matters raised by the *mawlas* in five brief notes. Al-Muhtadi passed these on, enclosing them in a letter of his own, and gave [the roll] to his brother.

The commanders also composed a reply to the *mawlas* and gave it to Musa's associate. By sunset Abu al-Qasim had returned to the Turks with al-Muhtadi's greetings and he read out to them the Caliph's letter:

[1803]

In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful. May God find us worthy to obey and please Him. I have noted your letter, May God protect you. I have sent to you the five endorsements meeting the terms that you stipulated. So now delegate agents to those in the government bureaus who will successfully execute the promises, God willing. As for your request to turn your affairs over to one of my brothers so that your news may be brought to my attention and your needs conveyed to me, by God I would have been content to review these matters personally, and observe every matter that concerns your welfare. However, I shall, God willing, select for you one of my brothers or someone else suitable, as you have asked for. But do keep me informed as to your needs and also what you deem appropriate for yourselves, and I shall do what I can to meet your wishes. God willing. May God find us worthy to obey and please Him.

Then Musa's messenger delivered the epistle from Musa and his colleagues. In it he said:

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. May God preserve and keep you, and perfect His bounty upon you. We have noted your letter. You are brothers to us and our cousins, and we are set upon meeting what you desire. The Commander of the Faithful, may God strengthen him, has ordered your wishes in all that you seek to be dealt with, and he has sent the endorsements concerning them to you. As for the matter you mention concerning Salih, the *mawla* of the Commander of the Faithful, and our change of attitude toward him, [be assured that he is to us] as a brother and cousin, and we did not seek anything on this matter that you would find objectionable. If he had promised you six months payment of allotments, then [know] that we have raised the matter in messages to the Commander of the

[1804]

Faithful seeking the very terms that you have requested. As for what you have stated regarding not obstructing the Commander of the Faithful, leaving him with full authority to govern, we ourselves are obedient and loyal to the Commander of the Faithful. Sovereign power is God's alone; He is our Master and we His slaves, and we are in no way recalcitrant toward Him in the governance of affairs. You state that we wish the Commander of the Faithful misfortune. May God surround whoever wishes that with a ring of misfortune and humiliate him in both this world and the hereafter. May God preserve and keep you and perfect his bounty upon you.

When Abu al-Qasim had read these letters to the Turks, they said to him that, as it was evening, they would consider their situation during the night and return to him in the morning with their decision. At which point they split up and Abu al-Qasim returned to the Commander of the Faithful.

The following day was Friday. Musa b. Bugha rode out in the early morning from the palace of the Commander of the Faithful accompanied by one thousand five hundred troops. He camped outside the al-Hayr Gate, which was adjacent to the fiefs of al-Jawsaq and al-Karkh. Al-Muhtadi's brother, Abu al-Qasim left with al-Karkhi,<sup>274</sup> reaching the assembled Turks, who numbered around five hundred horsemen and three thousand foot soldiers.

Now when Abu al-Qasim had gone the previous night to address the Turks, he had with him the Caliph's endorsements. Upon arriving, he extracted a message from al-Muhtadi, the copy of which resembled the letter containing the endorsements rolled inside it. So when Abu al-Qasim read the message, his audience went into an uproar of conflicting views. The crowd increased with numbers of *mawla* infantry from around the district of Samarra joining them in al-Hayr.

Abu al-Qasim kept waiting, expecting to go off with a response that he could write up and then convey to the Commander of the Faithful. Nothing had happened, however, by four o'clock. They then broke up. One group said they wished that God would

[1805]

274. This is Muhammad b. Mubashir al-Karkhi, mentioned p. 76, above.



strengthen the resolve of the Commander of the Faithful to provide the full amount of the allotments owed them, as they had suffered great hardship because of the delays. Another faction stated that they would not be content until the Commander of the Faithful appointed his brothers over them, one in al-Karkh, another in al-Dur, and a third in Samarra; they did not want any of the *mawlas* to govern them. A third party stated that they wanted Salih b. Wasif to reappear. They were the smallest party of the three.

As the debate dragged on, Abu al-Qasim left for al-Muhtadi with all the news, first picking up Musa where he had camped and setting off with him. After completing his Friday prayer, al-Muhtadi transferred the army to Muhammad b. Bugha, with orders to go with his brother Abu al-Qasim to the *mawlas*; they rode out with about five hundred cavalry. Musa meanwhile returned to the camp he had set up that morning. Abu al-Qasim and Muhammad b. Bugha reached the *mawlas* and mingled with them in their midst. Abu al-Qasim spoke to them, saying that the Commander of the Faithful had issued documents endorsing everything they had asked for. There now remained none of their requests that the Commander of the Faithful had not gone all out to fulfill. In addition, a safe-conduct was issued for Salih b. Wasif to come out of hiding. Abu al-Qasim then announced the safe-conduct for Salih, which Musa and Bayakbak had sought from the Commander of the Faithful, who had responded to them with his firmest assurances.

[1806]

Abu al-Qasim then asked, "What are you agreed upon?" Discussion intensified and when Abu al-Qasim departed, the agreed-upon demands were stated by them as follows: Musa should hold the same rank of Bugha the elder; Salih should hold the rank that Wasif (his father) had held in the days of Bugha (the Elder); and Bayakbak should be restored to his previous rank. Moreover, the army should remain in its present hands until Salih b. Wasif emerged from hiding. And finally, an allowance (*`ata'*) should be assigned to them, as well as their periodic allotments (*arzaq*)<sup>275</sup> expedited according to the Caliph's agreement. To these points they all assented. The *mawlas* departed but had scarcely gone a hundred fifty cubits' distance before they were quarreling again, some saying they were satisfied, others claiming they were not. Al-Muhtadi's messengers de-

275. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 224, mentions only the allowance (*al-`ata'*).



parted to him, as the soldiers had split up and were about to depart [for Samarra]. Musa at that point returned as well, and the troops dispersed to their usual places in al-Karkh, al-Dur, and Samarra.

The next morning was Saturday. The Wasif clan along with a group of their freedmen (*mawlas* and *ghilman*) rode forth calling out, "Arms!" Foot soldiers belonging to Salih b. Wasif's troops stole pack animals of the public infantry and proceeded to camp in Samarra at the edge of the river valley of Ishaq b. Ibrahim beside the mosque of Lujayn, the mother of al-Mutawakkil's children. Abu al-Qasim had set out at the same time heading for al-Muhtadi's palace. On his way to al-Muhtadi's palace he passed Salih's forces; they joined him, his accompanying retinue, and pages and asked Abu al-Qasim if he would take a message from them to the Commander of the Faithful. He told them to state their message but their response was such a confused babble that all he understood was that they wanted Salih [to return]. And so this was what he passed on to the Commander of the Faithful as well as to Musa in the presence of a group of commanders.

It was reported from someone present at this assembly that Musa b. Bugha said, "They demand that I give up Salih as though he were with me and I were the one who had hidden him away! If they have him, they should bring him forth!" [1807]

News of the gathering of the Wasif clan was confirmed and also that [Musa and his troops] broke out from the palace of the Commander of the Faithful and rode fully armed into the quarter of al-Hayr, assembling finally in the area between al-Dakka and the rear of the main mosque. News [of this] reached the Turks and those who had taken refuge with them, and they ran helter-skelter, horseman, foot soldier, young, and old, none waiting for the other, until they reached the narrow streets and alleyways and the safety of their homes. Musa and his troops marched forward in a body toward the Caliph's palace, every commander in Samarra riding with him. Proceeding steadily through the quarter, they left where the two city walls adjoined it. Muflih and Wajin<sup>276</sup> and those attached to them went along Baghdad street until they reached the sheep market; they then turned into Abu Ahmad street, where they met up with Musa's army. Musa and the commanders accompanying him, including Ya-

276. The reading is uncertain.

jur, Satikin, Yarjukh, and `Isa al-Karkhi, headed along Abu Ahmad street as far as the river and then made their way toward the Jawsaq palace. The estimated size of Musa's army that day, which was Saturday, was four thousand horsemen armed with bows at the ready, breastplates,<sup>277</sup> spears, and battle-axes<sup>278</sup>. Most of the commanders who in al-Karkh had demanded Salih were now with Musa's army, prepared to take on anyone else who demanded him.

Someone who had inquired into these events reported that most of those riding with Musa were sympathetic toward Salih. There was no commotion that day among the troops of al-Karkh or al-Dur. The first thing the troops did upon arriving at the Jawsaq palace was to issue a proclamation to the following effect: Anyone on the following morning, which was Sunday, from among all of Salih's commanders, his family, servants, and supporters who had not presented himself at the palace of the Commander of the Faithful would have his name dropped from the payroll and his house destroyed; and he would be flogged and led in chains to the Matbaq [prison].<sup>279</sup> Whoever emerged after having been in hiding after three days would be liable to the same punishment. Whoever stole an animal from a civilian or molested such a one in the public way would likewise be liable to a painful punishment. Musa and his company spent Sunday night, the 8th of Safar (January 15, 870) still pursuing this matter. [1808]

On Monday morning al-Muhtadi received intelligence that the rebel Musawir had been committing murder in and setting fire to Balad.<sup>280</sup> In his council meeting, al-Muhtadi proclaimed a call to arms and ordered Musa, Muflih, and Bayakbak to leave [for Balad]. Musa evacuated his camp, but on Wednesday, the 11th of Safar (January 18, 870), the order to Musa, Muhammad b. Bugha, and Muflih, was canceled. They said, "We should all stay until our business and Salih's is settled." On that they were all agreed, fearing that Salih would cause them mischief in their absence.

277. *Al-lawashin* (sg. *jawshan*). See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *j-w-sh-n*.

278. *Al-tabarzindt*, an Arabized word from the Persian *tabarzad*. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *t-b-r-z-d/1-n*.

279. The *Index* does not list a place by this name in Samarra, though the context clearly indicates that this city is intended. The duplication of Baghdad place names in Samarra was perhaps not uncommon (e.g., al-Karkh).

280. A town on the road from Mosul to Nasibin, some seven leagues from the former. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 99.

One of the *mawlas* reportedly said, "I saw one of the Wasif clan who had got together soldiers who were playing polo<sup>281</sup> with Musa and Bayakbak in the hippodrome of Bugha the Younger, on Wednesday the 11th of Safar [January 18, 870]."

The search for Salih b. Wasif was intensified and for this reason raids were made upon many of those who had formerly been connected with him or else were suspected of giving him refuge. Among these were Ibrahim b. Sa`dan al-Nahwi, Ibrahim al-Talibi, Harun b. `Abd al-Rahman b. al-Azhar al-Shi`i, Abu al-Ahwas b. Ahmad b. Sa`id b. Salm b. Qutaybah, Abu Bakr, an in-law of Abu Harmalah al-Hajjam, Shariyah the singer, al-Sarakhsi, chief of the special security police, and many others.

[1809]

Ibrahim b. Muhammad b. Ibrahim b. Mus`ab b. Zurayq reported that the owner of the Rab` al-Qubbah, which was opposite the palace of Salih b. Wasif, had related to him, saying, "On Sunday while we were sitting around, a slave boy suddenly emerged from a small alleyway and I could see that he was very frightened. We did not know him and wanted to ask him what the matter was, but he vanished. Moments later a *mawla* of Salih b. Was. if arrived, a ruffian (*ayyar*)<sup>282</sup> called Ruzbah; he was with three or four others whom we also did not know, and they disappeared into the alleyway. Shortly after, they reemerged with Salih b. Was. if and we then asked what was going on. It seems that the slave boy had gone into a house in the alleyway wanting a drink of water, when he heard someone say in Persian, 'O commander, hide quickly, for a slave boy has come asking for a drink of water.' Now the lad had heard these words and, as he was acquainted with this ruffian (Ruzbah), he went and told him what had happened. The ruffian rounded up three other men and they captured Salih."

This same ruffian who had led the attack on Salih reportedly said, "This slave lad told me what he had heard, and when I arrived at the house with these three men, there was Salih with mirror and comb

281. The text reads *sawalijah*, which is the plural of *sawlajah*, Arabized from the Persian *chawgan*. Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *s-w-l-j*, describes the *sawlajah* as a kind of golf stick, with which a ball is struck by men on horseback, an accurate enough description of the game of polo.

282. See *EI*, 2 s.v. "Ayyar"; cf. the lengthy study by C. Cahen, "Mouvements populaires et autonomisme urbain dans l'Asie musulmane du Moyen Âge," especially 25-56, 233-65.

in his hands attending to his beard. When he saw me, he ran into the house, and I was afraid he might be going for his sword or some weapon, and I held back. Then I cautiously spied upon him and discovered that he was huddled in a corner, so I approached and brought him out, and he did no more than implore me. When he did, I told him there was no way I could let him go; but I would take him past the residences of his family, his companions, his commanders, and hirelings, and if two of them were to meet me I would turn him over to them. However, I met no one on the way who was not eager to help me to abuse him."

[1810]

It was reported that the two of them had gone a distance of some two miles accompanied by fewer than five government soldiers.

It was further reported that, when Salih was captured, he was wearing a shirt, a half-silk lined garment,<sup>283</sup> and drawers; his head was bare, and he walked barefoot.

Salih was borne away upon a mustard-colored pack animal, the crowd running behind him, while five special security men tried to prevent their attacking him. Having arrived with Salih at the palace of Musa b. Bugha, Bayakbak, Muflih, Yajur, Satikin, and other commanders joined them there. Salih was then taken, riding a saddled mule, through the Hayr Gate, which was next to the *qiblah*<sup>284</sup> side of the main mosque as they made their way to the Jawsaq palace. Just as they reached the edge of the minaret,<sup>285</sup> one of Muflih's soldiers struck Salih a blow to the shoulder from behind, which nearly killed him. His head was then severed and the corpse left behind. At length they came to al-Muhtadi's palace a little before sunset. Salih's head, wrapped in a garment of one of Muflih's pages, was dripping with blood. Al-Muhtadi was at that moment at prayer, and he did not see them bring in the head, which was then taken away to be cleaned up. After al-Muhtadi had finished his prayers, he was informed that they had killed Salih and brought his head to him. His only reaction was to say "Cover it up," and he began to repeat "Praise the Lord!"<sup>286</sup> The

[1811]

283. *Mubattanah mulham*. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *b-t-n*.

284. The *qiblah* is the direction the Muslim faces when performing the prayer, i.e., the direction of Mecca. See *EI*,<sup>2</sup> s.v. "Masdjid."

285. This could be the minaret (*al-minarah*) of the mosque, which Yaqut says could be seen from the countryside for miles around. See *Mu`jam*, III, 17.

286. *Tasbih*. The word also signifies the act of praying. Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *s-b-h*, notes that it meant to perform the supererogatory morning prayer.

news reached Salih's residence, at which a wailing lament was raised and continued throughout the night. On Monday the 22nd of Safar (January 29, 870), the head of Salih b. Wasif was carried around town upon a lance, while proclamation was made: "This is the recompense for slaying one's master." It was hung up at the Public Gate for an hour and then removed, a practice followed for three successive days. The head of Bugha the Younger was removed at the same time as Salih's head was publicly displayed on the Monday.<sup>287</sup> Then it was given to Salih's family, and they buried it.

One of the *mawlas* reportedly said that he saw Muflih crying when he had looked at Bugha's head, saying, "May God slay me if I do not avenge his death." On Thursday the 25th of Safar (February 1, 870), Musa sent Salih's head to his sister Umm al-Fadl, al-Nushuri's wife, who had previously been married to Salamah b. Khaqan. One of the Hashimites reportedly said, "I congratulated Musa b. Bugha for killing Salih, and he said, 'He was an enemy of the Commander of the Faithful and deserved to die.'" He also congratulated Bayakbak, who retorted, "I had nothing to do with this. Salih was my brother!"

Al-Saluli recited these lines to Musa after Salih b. Wasif had been killed:

You have avenged yourself on the Pharaoh when he acted tyrannically.  
And you have come when you did, O Musa, as ordained.<sup>288</sup>

Three; each of them is an oppressor, a brother of envy, [1812]  
accusing you of oppression and aggression out of hate.

Wasif is in Karkh, of whom an example was made, and Bugha  
is at the bridge, burning in the embers and flames.

And Salih, son of Wasif, his body lies tossed in the dust  
in al-Hayr, and his soul is in hell.

On the 1st of Jumada I of this year (Thursday, April 6, 870), Musa b. Bugha and Bayakbak set out against the Kharijite Musawir. Muhammad b. al-Wathiq bade them farewell.

Also in this same month of Jumada I (April 6-May 5, 870), Musawir b. `Abd al-Hamid and the Kharijite `Ubaydah al-`Umrusi met

287. Bugha's death had been reported by Tabari earlier, in the year 254/868, and his head was publicly displayed first in Samarra and then in Baghdad. See III, 1694-95.

288. Reference to Qur'an 20: 40.

in battle at al-Kuhayl. They each held opposing views.<sup>289</sup> In his victory Musawir killed `Ubaydah.

In this month of Jumada I Musawir and Muflih met each other in battle. I was told that Musawir returned from al-Kuhayl after he had killed al-`Umrusi, with many of his men wounded, whose injuries had not yet healed. Indeed the battle [against al-`Umrusi] had left them exhausted by the time they reached Musa's army and those who had joined him. As Musawir attacked, Musa was in a defensive position. Their encounter took place at Jabal Zayni,<sup>290</sup> and, when the victory Musawir sought did not occur, he and his troops held fast to the mountain side and made their way to the top. There they lit fires and stuck their spears into the ground. Musa was camped farther down on the lower slopes of the mountain. Later Musawir escaped by leading his troops down the far side of the mountain away from Musa's position and left them thinking that he was still on top.

[1813]

On the 14th of Rajab of this year (June 17, 870), al-Muhtadi was deposed, and he died on the 18th (June 21, 870).

#### An Account of [Al-Muhtadi's] Removal and Death

It was reported that on the 2nd of Rajab (June 5, 870) the dwellers of al-Karkh, Samarra, and al-Dur were aroused to demand their allotments. Al-Muhtadi sent their chief Tabayaghu<sup>291</sup> and his own brother `Abdallah to talk to them, but they were not well received; instead they insisted on talking directly to the Commander of the Faithful himself.

Abu Nasr (Muhammad) b. Bugha left that night for his brother's army camp, which was at al-Sinn in the vicinity of the Kharijite (Musawir). Meanwhile, a group of soldiers went to the Jawsaq palace on Wednesday and al-Muhtadi spoke to them for some time. Their allowance was not forthcoming on Wednesday and Thursday, but they were prepared to refrain from any action until they knew what Musa b. Bugha was prepared to do. Now Musa had paid the allowance to his army for a month since his troops had been patient while

289. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 226, explains that the feud was over whether or not a sinner's repentance can be accepted; Musawir argued that it should be, while `Ubaydah claimed it could not.

290. Ibn Hawqal, *Kitab al-masalik wa-al-mamalik*, 110.

291. The reading is conjectural.

he was engaged in fighting (Musawir) the Kharijite. But then disagreements broke out and Musa set off for the Khurasan Road.

Explanations differed as to why these disagreements occurred, why Musa left for the Khurasan Road, and why al-Muhtadi had openly confronted certain Turks (*al-atrak*) engaged in battle against him.

[1814]

Some said that Musa had withdrawn from the conflict with the Kharijite (Musawir) and had headed for the Khurasan Road because al-Muhtadi was well disposed toward Bayakbak, who was still with Musa's army confronting Musawir. The Caliph wrote to Bayakbak, ordering him to take command over Musa's army and either to dispose of Musa b. Bugha and Muflih or else to bring them back in chains. When this despatch reached Bayakbak he took it to Musa b. Bugha and said, "I am not at all happy with this, as it appears to be only a plot against the lot of us. If you are treated this way today, then tomorrow I could be treated in the same manner. What do you think?" Musa replied, "In my view you should return to Samarra and tell the Caliph that you will loyally assist him against Muflih and myself. In this way he will feel at ease about you, and then we can plan to kill him." After returning from battle against the rebel they made for their homes, while Bayakbak went to see al-Muhtadi. Confronting him angrily, al-Muhtadi said, "I ordered you to kill Musa and Muflih, so how could you leave the army and treat this matter so lightly?" Bayakbak asked how he could have dealt with them and managed to kill them when they had superior forces and were more powerful than he. Moreover, he said, "Once something or other happened between Muflih and myself, and I did not avenge myself then; but I have in any case brought my army, companions, and those obedient to me to assist and reinforce your rule, and this has left Musa with fewer supporters." Al-Muhtadi said to him, "Lay down your weapons," and he ordered him brought into the palace. Bayakbak replied, "O Commander of the Faithful, this is no way to treat me, as I have come to you in good faith; I must first return home and leave instructions for my companions and family." Al-Muhtadi refused to allow that, as it was essential to check Bayakbak's story. And so Bayakbak was relieved of his weapons.

[1815]

When Bayakbak's companions had not heard from him for a while, his chamberlain Ahmad b. Khaqan quickly urged them to search for their leader before something happened to him. Seething



with anger, the Turks surrounded the Jawsaq palace. At the time al-Muhtadi was with Salih b. `Ali b. Ya`qub b. Abi Ja`far al-Mansur.<sup>292</sup> When he perceived these developments, al-Muhtadi asked him for advice on what he should do. Salih replied, "O Commander of the Faithful, none of your ancestors could match you for courage and daring. Abu Muslim's<sup>293</sup> hold over the Khurasanis was far more powerful than this Turk's position<sup>294</sup> among his followers. But no sooner had [Abu Muslim's] head been thrown to them than they quieted down, even though some of them worshiped him and regarded him as their lord. So if you were to do that, they would [similarly] be appeased; for you are much bolder and stouthearted than al-Mansur."

So al-Muhtadi summoned Muhammad b. Mubashir al-Karkhi, a blacksmith who had made tent pegs and poles in al-Karkh and then had become very devoted to al-Muhtadi in Baghdad, and the Caliph trusted him. Now he ordered him to kill Bayakbak, which deed was done while the Turks were lined up armed in the Jawsaq palace demanding to see Bayakbak. Al-Muhtadi gave the order to the commander `Attab b. `Attab to throw them Bayakbak's head. He did so and, after a brief delay, the Turks broke into a rage, and one of them attacked and killed `Attab. Al-Muhtadi then sent for contingents of the Faraghinah, the Magharibah, the Ukashiyyah,<sup>295</sup> the Ushrusaniyyah,<sup>296</sup> and Turks who had rendered allegiance to him for the sum of two dirhems and some barley meal (*sawiq*). After they arrived, many among their ranks were killed, about which people have had many [different] things to say. It was said that some four thousand Turks who took part in the fighting were killed; others put the number at two thousand, while others said only a thousand. That was Saturday, the 13th of Rajab (June 16, 870). [1816]

On Sunday the numbers of Turks gathered together had swollen to some ten thousand men united by their common cause. The brother

292. A descendant of the second `Abbasid Caliph, al-Mansur.

293. One of the leading commanders of the `Abbasid revolt against the Umayyads in Khurasan; his rising power was perceived as a threat to the new dynasty, and he was murdered by the Caliph al-Mansur. On his role and significance, see Shaban, *The `Abbasid Revolution*, 153 - 68; *EI*,<sup>2</sup> s.v. "Abu Muslim."

294. That is, Bayakbak.

295. The reading is uncertain, a variant being al-Ubkasiyyah.

296. Troops drawn from the province of Ushrusanah, which lay to the east of Samarqand between the rivers of Sughd and the Jaxartes. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 474-76.

of Bayakbak, Taghutya,<sup>297</sup> and Ahmad b. Khaqan, Bayakbak's chamberlain, had arrived with around five hundred men, plus the Turks and Persians brought by Taghutya. Al-Muhtadi went out with Salih b. `Ali, who was wearing a Qur'an tied around his neck; he pleaded with people to come to the aid of their Caliph. But the final straw was when the Turks accompanying al-Muhtadi sided with their fellows who supported Bayakbak's brother. Al-Muhtadi was left with the Faraghinah and the Maghribah and some of the populace, who were of little use to him. Thirsting for vengeance, Taghutya, Kayakbak's brother, launched a bitter attack, broke up their battle order, and routed them. Large numbers were killed while the rest turned and fled. Al-Muhtadi, sword in hand, fled from the scene, crying out, "O you people, come to your Caliph's assistance!" He finally managed to reach the place of Abu Salih `Abdallah b. Muhammad b. Yazdad, which was located next to Khashabat Babak. Ahmad b. Jumayl, the commandant of police, was there. Al-Muhtadi entered and, setting aside his weapon, he donned a [plain] white garment, in order to slip from the roof of one palace to another and make his escape. A search for him failed.

[1817]

Then Ahmad b. Khaqan arrived with thirty horsemen, making inquiries of al-Muhtadi's whereabouts and learned news of him at the palace of Ibn Jumayl. Ahmad promptly rushed his men to the rooftops and al-Muhtadi was struck at last by an arrow and wounded by a sword. Ahmad b. Khaqan had him carried on a pack horse, or mule, with a groom riding behind until they returned to the [Jawsaq] palace. His enemies gathered and began cuffing him and spitting in his face. They sought information as to the value of goods and furnishings he had sold, and al-Muhtadi confessed to a sum of six hundred thousand [dinars], which al-Karkhi had deposited for him with various people in Baghdad. They took his written pledge for that amount and then handed him over to someone who [tortured him] by kicking him in the testicles until he died.<sup>298</sup>

297. The reading is conjectural.

298. *Fa wutiya' `ala khusyatihi hatta qatalahu*. Ibn al-Athir adds that he was also struck by sword blows and that afterward his executioners bore witness that he had died without a mark on him. He was buried in the tomb of the Caliph al-Muntasir. *Kamil*, VII, 230. See also Tabari's account, p. 99, below.

## Other Accounts of al-Muhtadi's Death

Someone else said that the beginning of the whole dispute occurred when the sons of the Turks met together and stated that they were not content to allow anyone to be their chief except the Commander of the Faithful. They wrote to Musa b. Bugha and Bayakbak to that effect, while the two were still engaged with the Kharijite (Musa-wir). On Friday Musa arrived with his men at a bridge in the district of al-Waziriyyah. Al-Muhtadi was camped with his army in al-Hayr; he approached them but then turned away and proceeded armed to the Jawsaq palace. On Saturday, the 13th of Rajab (June 16, 870), Bayakbak came [to al-Muhtadi] as an obedient subject, while Musa headed for the district of the Khurasan Road with about two thousand men. One of the *mawlas* came to tell al-Muhtadi that Bayakbak had promised Musa he would assassinate him in the Jawsaq palace. Al-Muhtadi had Bayakbak disarmed and imprisoned. This was on Saturday, about the time of the afternoon prayer. Later the inhabitants of al-Karkh and al-Dur went out in search of Bayakbak. The search was resumed the following morning, and everyone joined in either walking or riding, each one carrying a weapon. Al-Muhtadi had just finished the noon prayer when the crowd reached the Jawsaq palace. He confronted them with the Faraghinah and Magharibah, but the Turks forced them back and then mounted a full attack upon them. Pursuing al-Muhtadi's forces, the Turks had laid a trap for them and many of the Faraghinah and Magharibah were slain. Al-Muhtadi himself fled and as he passed the residence of Abu al-Wazir, one of his servants shouted out, "O you people, here is your Caliph!"

[1818]

With the Turks in hot pursuit behind him, al-Muhtadi managed to reach the palace of Ahmad b. Jumayl and, by scaling the walls, he moved from one residence to another. The Turks spread throughout the entire district and finally trapped him in the house of a servant belonging to `Abdallah b. `Umar al-Bazyar. Wearing only a shirt and drawers and wounded in the side, he was taken away on an emaciated pack animal. The residences of [Muhammad b. Mubashir] al-Karkhi, the Banu Thawabah, and a number of others were sacked. On Monday Ahmad b. al-Mutawakkil, who was known as Ibn Fit-yan, was brought to the palace of Yarjukh, while the Turks circulated the streets praising the populace for not having opposed them.

Others said that the cause of these events was quite different. On Monday, the 2nd of Rajab (June 5, 870), the troops of Dur Samarra and al-Karkh became agitated and began to congregate in al-Karkh and the area beyond it. Al-Muhtadi despatched to them Kayghalagh, Tabayaghu b. Sul Artakin and his own brother `Abdallah, who remained with them until the crowd calmed down, whereupon the men returned to the [Jawsaq] palace. Word reached Abu Nasr Muhammad b. Bugha the Elder that al-Muhtadi had been speaking to the *mawlas* about him and Musa, telling them that the [Bugha] brothers possessed money. This stirred fear in Abu Nasr, and he fled on Tuesday night, the 3rd of Rajab (June 6, 870). Al-Muhtadi sent four letters to Abu Nasr granting him safe conduct for himself and those with him. Two letters arrived while he was in al-Muhammadiyah<sup>299</sup> with Artakin b. B.r.n.m. katakin<sup>300</sup> and the others while he was with Faraj the Younger. Abu Nasr put his trust in the safe-conduct and returned to the [Jawsaq] palace, together with his other brother, Habshun, and Bakalaba. They were imprisoned along with Kayghalagh, Abu Nasr being isolated from the others. Money was demanded of him and fifteen thousand dinars was received from his agent. On Tuesday, the 3rd of Rajab (June 6, 870), Abu Nasr was put to death and his body tossed into a well of the underground canal system (*al-qanat*). The corpse was removed on Monday, the 16th of Rajab (June 19, 870), and taken to his house. It reeked of decay. Three hundred *mithqals*<sup>301</sup> of must and six hundred of camphor were purchased to apply to the body, but the odor could not be checked. Al-Hasan b. al-Ma'mun said the funeral prayer over him.

[1819]

Al-Muhtadi had corresponded with Musa b. Bugha at the time of Abu Nasr's imprisonment and ordered Musa to surrender the army to Bayakbak and to bring his *mawlas* to Samarra. He also wrote Bayakbak about delivering the army into his command and ordering him to continue the fight against the Kharijite [Musawir]. Bayakbak took the letter to Musa; he read it, and they then agreed to return to Samarra. Word reached al-Muhtadi that they had disobeyed him. He

[1820]

299. The place of that name in the marshlands (*bata'ih*) seems intended here.

300. The first part of the name is unpointed in the text, and therefore the first three consonants are conjectural.

301. For details of the variations in the use of this term of measurement, see Hinz, *Islamische Masse*, 1-2.

called the *mawlas* together, exhorting them to obedience, urging them to attend him in the palace and leave off neglecting him. For each of the Turks and those of similar status al-Muhtadi arranged a stipend of two dirhems per day to be paid, and a dirhem for each of the Magharibah. From these two groups and their friends he rounded up some fifteen thousand men in the Jawsaq palace and other apartments. Among the Turks was a man called al-Kamili. In charge of administration of the palace after Kayghalagh had been imprisoned was Masrur al-Balkhi; the chief commander was Tabayaghu, and `Abdallah b. Takin was put in charge of prisoners.

Musa, Muflih, and Bayakbak learned of the incarceration of Abu Nasr, Habshun, and the others and were hence on their guard. On Thursday messengers and despatches flowed between them and al-Muhtadi. The same day, which was the 11th of Rajab (June 14, 870), al-Muhtadi ventured forth with his force to await the arrival of the enemy. No one, however, appeared. On the Friday, the 12th of Rajab (June 15, 870), news was confirmed that al-Muhtadi and Muflih had turned off the Samarra road toward the district of al-Jabal and halted there. On Saturday Bayakbak, Yarjukh, Asatakin, `Ali b. Baris, Sima the Tall, and Khutarish presented themselves at the Jawsaq palace. Bayakbak and his deputy Ahmad b. Khaqan were imprisoned, while the rest were dismissed. Bayakbak's followers and some of the other Turks met together and asked themselves why their commander had been imprisoned and why Abu Nasr had been killed. Al-Muhtadi confronted them on Saturday, but, as no conflict occurred, he returned [once again] to the palace. On Sunday the two sides met again, al-Muhtadi with his force of Magharibah, Turks of the lower-ranking guards,<sup>302</sup> and the Faraghinah. He placed Masrur al-Balkhi on the right flank and Yarjukh on the left, with himself, Asatakin, Tabayaghu, and some other commanders occupying the heart of the battle line.

[1821]

As the day grew hotter, the combatants approached each other, and battle ensued. The men demanded Bayakbak, and al-Muhtadi threw his severed head into their midst. `Attab b. `Attab had pulled it out of his tunic. When they saw it, Bayakbak's brother Taghutya and a group of his elite soldiers intensified the attack against al-Muhtadi's forces. The right flank turned, followed by the left, while the re-

302. *Al-atrak al-barraniyin*. See n. 271, above.

mainder of the army fled from al-Muhtadi. There were many slain on the two sides.

Habshun b. Bugha reportedly said that seven hundred eighty men had been killed. The fighters dispersed and al-Muhtadi returned to the palace, locking behind him the gates through which he had entered and making his exit from the al-Masaff Gate, eventually through the Itakh Gate into the little market of Masrur and along al-Wathiq street until he finally reached the Public Gate. There he cried out, "O you people, I am the Commander of the Faithful. Fight to defend your Caliph!" But none of the people heeded him. As he passed thus, crying out in the street but seeing no one prepared to help him, he reached the prison gate and ordered the release of all the inmates, thinking that they would come to his aid. Instead, they all fled. Not one responded to him.

After this al-Muhtadi made his way to the palace of Abu Salih `Abdallah b. Muhammad b. Yazdad, where the commandant of police, Ahmad b. Jumayl, was staying. They broke in on him, and he was taken out by way of the Bureau of Estates and taken to al-Jaw-saq, where he was imprisoned along with Ahmad b. Khaqan. Ibn Jumayl's palace was then plundered.<sup>303</sup>

[1822]

Among the commanders of the Magharibah who were killed during the battle was Nasr b. Ahmad al-Zubayri, and of the commanders of the Shakiriyyah `Attab b. `Attab was killed bringing back Bayakbak's head. According to some al-Muhtadi killed a considerable number with his own hands in the course of the fighting.

Later, after al-Muhtadi was imprisoned, strong words were exchanged between him and his captors. They wanted him to abdicate but he refused, surrendering himself instead to death. They said that he had, in his own hand, made a written agreement with Musa b. Bugha, Bayakbak, and a number of the other commanders that he would neither deceive, harass, nor murder any of them, or even think of doing so, and, [if] he actually treated them in this manner, either collectively or individually, and they found out, they would be free to break their oath of allegiance to him, take charge of affairs, and depose whomsoever they pleased. On this basis they felt free to break their compact.

303. Which presumably explains why he was staying elsewhere at the time of al-Muhtadi's final hours.

After the rout of the Caliph's forces, Yarjukh had gone to the [Jawsaq] palace and taken some of al-Mutawakkil's sons back to his own palace. There, on Tuesday<sup>304</sup> the 13th of Rajab (June 16, 870), the oath of allegiance was rendered to Ahmad b. al-Mutawakkil, known as Ibn Fityan, who took the regnal name of al-Mu`tamid `ala Allah. On Thursday,<sup>305</sup> the 18th of Rajab (June 21, 870), the death of Muhammad b. al-Wathiq al-Muhtadi was witnessed. The only marks on his body were the two wounds he had received on the Sunday during the fighting; one of these was an arrow wound, the other was sustained by a sword blow. Ja`far b. `Abd al-Wahid and a number of the Caliph's brothers recited prayers at his funeral. He was buried in the tomb of al-Muntasir. Musa b. Bugha and Muflih entered Samarra on Saturday, the 20th of Rajab (June 23, 870); Musa saluted al-Mu`tamid, who granted him a robe of honor. Musa returned to his residence, and calm settled upon the populace.

[1823]

Someone who reportedly had witnessed these events said that on Saturday evening, the 1st of Rajab (June 4, 870), the whole population of al-Karkh and al-Dur was stirred up and began to congregate. Whenever the people became agitated, al-Muhtadi would send his brother `Abdallah to them, just as he did on this occasion. When `Abdallah got there, he found them making their way to the Jawsaq palace. He addressed them and guaranteed them action to meet their needs. They, however, refused [this promise], insisting instead on returning with him to the Commander of the Faithful to plead their case with him directly. Now when `Abdallah returned, there were present in the palace at that time Abu Nasr Muhammad b. Bugha, Habshun, Kayghalagh, Masrur al-Balkhi, and others. `Abdallah conveyed to al-Muhtadi what had transpired between him and the crowd, and he was ordered to go back and bring some of them to the palace. Encountering the crowd now quite near the Jawsaq palace, he directed them to stay where they were and send some of their number to accompany him. This they also rejected.

When the news of the crowd's approach reached Abu Nasr and the others in the palace, they all left by way of the al-Nazalah Gate. No one was left in the palace except Masrur al-Balkhi and Altun, the

[1824]

deputy of Kayghalagh, and among the secretaries only `Isa b. Far-

304. Actually, a Friday.

305. Wednesday, in fact.



rukhangshah. The *mawlas* entered the palace near the gate of the Qasr al-Ahmar, filling it with about four thousand men. They reached al-Muhtadi and complained to him of their situation. Chiefly, they were counting on the removal of their amirs from responsibility for them, so that their affairs could be handled by the Commander of the Faithful's own brothers. Moreover, they wanted the amirs and secretaries admonished for extorting sums from the central treasuries, the amount mentioned running to one hundred fifty million.<sup>306</sup> Al-Muhtadi promised to examine the matter and respond to their requests. So they remained in the palace for the rest of the day and al-Muhtadi sent Muhammad b. Mubashir al-Karkhi to purchase quantities of barley meal for them to eat.

At that, Abu Nasr b. Bugha moved promptly to set up camp in al-Hayr a short distance from the racecourse. Around five hundred men joined him there, but during the night most slipped away, leaving behind fewer than a hundred. So Abu Nasr decamped and moved to al-Muhammadiyah.<sup>307</sup>

On Thursday morning the *mawlas* resumed their original demands. They were told that what they wanted was difficult to achieve. Dislodging power from the hands of the amirs would not be smooth sailing for them; all the more difficult when combined with attempts to seize their money. "Consider your own positions. If you think that you have the patience to see this affair through to its end, then the Commander of the Faithful has responded positively. But if it be otherwise, the Commander of the Faithful will do his best for you." They refused, however, to accept anything other than what they had sought in the first place. So they were invited to take oaths of allegiance and obedience that they would stand by their word and not go back on it, that they would fight against anyone who attacked them, and that they would be loyal to the Commander of the Faithful and protect him. To all these conditions they consented. Solemn oaths were administered and about one thousand men swore to them that day.

[1825]

ʿIsa b. Farrukhangshah,<sup>308</sup> who was in charge of affairs, assuming

306. It is not specified whether the sum mentioned is in dirhams or dinars.

307. This location is clearly the one in close proximity to Samarra. In the *Index* it is mistakenly placed in the marshlands of the south.

308. See Sourdél, *Vizirat*, I, 303-4; ʿIsa did not actually hold the title of vizier.

the responsibilities of vizier, wrote to Abu Nasr on behalf of the *mawlas*, mentioning their objection to his leaving the palace without cause and also that they had come to the Commander of the Faithful only to plead their needs and that when they found the palace empty they remained. Were he to return, they would restore his position, having had no wish to provoke him.

ʿIsa also wrote in the same vein to Abu Nasr on behalf of the Caliph. Between late afternoon and early evening Abu Nasr approached from al-Muhammadiyah and entered the [Jawsaq] palace with his brother Habshun, Kayghalagh, Bakalaba, and a group of other commanders. The *mawlas* stood before them, armed. Abu Nasr and the others joined al-Muhtadi where he was seated. Saluting him, Abu Nasr drew near and kissed his hand, his feet, and the carpet. He then backed up, and al-Muhtadi addressed him, saying, "O Muhammad, what do you think about what the *mawlas* are saying?" "What are they saying?" asked Abu Nasr. Al-Muhtadi said, "They report that you all have expropriated wealth and usurped posts and that you give no thought to their affairs or to what could restore their welfare." Abu Nasr Muhammad replied, "O Commander of the Faithful, what have I to do with finances? I was not secretary of a bureau nor did administrative districts fall into, my hands." Al-Muhtadi asked him, "So where is all the wealth if it is not in your possession and your brother's or in the possession of your secretaries and your companions?"

[1826]

The *mawlas* now came closer. ʿAbdallah b. Taken and a group of them stepped forward and, seizing Abu Nasr by the hand, cried out, "Here is the enemy of the Commander of the Faithful, standing before him armed with a sword." They relieved him of his sword. One of Abu Nasr's pages named Thital, who was then present, drew his sword and made a move to prevent them from harming Abu Nasr. As Thital had moved next to the Caliph, ʿAbdallah b. Taken reacted instinctively and struck him a blow on the head with his sword. No one in the room was without his sword drawn. Al-Muhtadi rose and entered a nearby apartment. Muhammad b. Bugha was taken away and placed in a compartment in the palace, while the rest of his companions were imprisoned. The *mawlas* wanted to kill Abu Nasr's page, but al-Muhtadi restrained them, saying he would handle the matter in his own way. He ordered the page given a [clean] shirt from

the wardrobe and his head cleansed of blood; then he should be put in prison.

By Thursday morning the numbers of *mawlas* had increased and oaths of loyalty and obedience sworn. Later on `Abdallah b. al-Wathiq gave the order for a thousand men of the Shakiriyyah, Faraghinah, and others to depart for al-Rafif. Among the Khurasanian commanders instructed to go with them were the following: Muhammad b. Yahya al-Wathiqi, `Attab b. `Attab, Harun b. `Abd al-Rahman b. al-Azhar, Ibrahim the brother of Abu `Awn, Yahya b. Muhammad b. Da'ud, a son of Nasr b. Shabath, `Abd al-Rahman b. Dinar, Ahmad b. Faridun, as well as others.

Afterward `Abdallah b. al-Wathiq learned that these commanders were saying to each other how improper it was to send them to the district [of al-Rafif], so he abandoned the venture. They had a mind to correspond with Musa and Muflih about leaving [for Samarra] and handing the army over to one of the other commanders. Finally, they agreed to write Musa and Muflih about the matter, and word was also sent to some of the commanders concerning their assumption of the army management in place of the two. Notes were sent as well to lower-ranking officers about what their troops in Samarra had asked and what [positive] responses they received. Copies were made [for them] of the letters that had been sent to the commanders, and they were told to wait and see. If Musa and Muflih swiftly did as they had been ordered, coming with their freedmen to the Caliph's palace and handing over the army to whomever had been charged with the task, well and good. Otherwise they were to shackle the two of them, taking them by force to the Caliph. These letters were despatched by means of thirty men, who left Samarra on the night of Friday, the 5th of Rajab (June 8, 870). [1827]

Meanwhile in the palace each one who swore an oath of obedience was paid the sum of two dirhems per day. `Abdallah b. Takin was the person in charge of distributing the money to the oath takers; he was Kanjur's brother-in-law. When Musa and his companions learned of this, Musa, who was then in al-Sinn, became alarmed about Kanjur and had him beaten and imprisoned. Bayakbak heard the news while he was in al-Hadithah and he went to al-Sinn<sup>309</sup> and had Kanjur re-

309. Two locations on the Tigris south of Mosul, al-Hadithah lying at the junction with the Upper zab river, al-Sinn near the junction with the Lower Zab river. For both, see Le Strange, *Lands*, 90, 91.

moved from prison. The messengers arrived in al-Sinn with the commander's despatches while the army was assembled there. One of the despatches was read out to the troops. They responded by swearing an oath of support and departing for the bridge at al-Rafif, where they established camp. This was Thursday, the 11th of Rajab (June 14, 870).

[1828]

The same day al-Muhtadi set out for al-Hayr. He reviewed the troops, marched around a bit, and then returned [to the Jawsaq palace], giving the order to have tents and pavilions<sup>310</sup> pitched for them in al-Hayr. On Friday morning around a thousand men from Musa's army had left [deserting him]. Among them were Kutakin and Khushanaj.<sup>311</sup> Once again al-Muhtadi made for al-Hayr. He placed Kutakin in charge of the right flank of his forces and Khushanaj in charge of the left, while he himself took the middle sector. Next the messengers began again to shuttle between the two armies. What Musa b. Bugha wanted was to be made governor of some district and allowed to proceed to it, while what the men wanted Musa to do was to come with his freedmen in order to negotiate with them. Nothing, however, was settled that day.

On Friday evening those who wanted to leave Musa had done so and Musa together with Muflih had turned again toward the Khurasan Road with about one thousand men. The same night Bayakbak and a group of his commanders joined elsa al-Karkhi and spent the night with him. The following morning, Saturday, Bayakbak and his company came to the Jawsaq palace, where he, Yarjukh, Asatakin, Ahmad b. Khaqan, Khatarimush, and others were relieved of their swords. They appeared together before al-Muhtadi and saluted him. All were ordered to withdraw save Bayakbak who was commanded to remain standing before al-Muhtadi while he enumerated his many transgressions against Muslims and Islam. After this the *mawlas* abused him and locked him up in one of the palace chambers. Just five hours later, at sunset on Saturday, he was killed. Thus was the matter settled. There was no unrest and only a few who disapproved of Bayakbak's treatment bothered to talk about it, and even they did not seem especially concerned.

[1829]

On Sunday the Turks expressed their objection to the Faraghinah

310. *Al-khiyam wa-al-madarib*.

311. The Arabized form of the Persian Khushank.

being treated as their equals in the palace, their admission to it altogether, [for] it became clear to them that the plot to murder the Turks' own leaders was designed to give the Faraghinah and the Magharibah the upper hand. The Turks then abandoned the palace entirely to them. Protestations at that were voiced from al-Karkh and also included a demand for Bayakbak, as his troops had joined with theirs. A1-Muhtadi instructed a group of the Faraghinah to attend upon him, and he informed them of the Turks' objections. He said to them, "If you are sure you are up to taking care of the Turks, the Commander of the Faithful would not be displeased to have you by his side. If you feel yourselves unable to cope with them, we will be willing to do what they wish before things come to a head." The Faraghinah said they could cope and that, if they were combined with the Magharibah, they could overcome them (the Turks); and they listed a number of reasons for their priority over the Turks. The Faraghinah sought to induce al-Muhtadi to go after the Turks and discussion about this continued until noon. Finally, when al-Muhtadi marched forth, most of his cavalry was comprised of Faraghinah and most of his infantry of Magharibah. The Turks, who numbered around ten thousand men, were located between al-Karkh and the district of the fiefs. A1-Muhtadi and his forces numbered only six thousand, fewer than a thousand of whom were Turks, these being the troops of Salih. b. Wasif and a contingent accompanying Yarjukh.

As the two sides advanced toward each other, Yarjukh and his contingent broke off, while the troops of Salih. b. Wasif fled in retreat to their homes. Tashtimur emerged from behind al-Dakkah, where his troops had been waiting in ambush, and against stiff resistance hand-to-hand fighting raged for a time during the day until al-Muhtadi's forces were beaten. A1-Muhtadi held on trying to rally his troops around him; he continued fighting until he despaired of their return and then rode off in a hasty retreat. He carried an embossed sword<sup>312</sup> and was wearing a breastplate covered by a garment of patterned white-silk material.<sup>313</sup> He reached Khashabat Babak, all the while urging people to help him and stand against the enemy. However, only a party of riffraff (*al-`ayyarun*)<sup>314</sup> decided to follow him.

[1830]

312. *Sayf mushattab*. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *sh-t-b*.

313. *Harir abyad mu`ayyan*. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *`-y-n*.

314. See references in note 282, above.

When they got as far as the prison, they seized his horse's bridle and demanded he release the prison inmates. He turned his face from them, but they did not leave him until he had given the command to open the prison; then they abandoned him and busied themselves at the prison gate. A1-Muhtadi was left entirely alone.

He found his way to the palace of Abu Salih. b. Yazdad where Ahmad b. Jumayl was staying. Upon entering he had the doors locked behind him and shed his clothes and weapons. He had received a hip wound, and requested a [clean] shirt and pantaloons, which Ahmad b. Jumayl gave him. After cleaning the wound, he drank some water and then said his prayers. A party of around thirty Turks led by Yarjukh approached the palace of Abu Salih and beat upon the door until they were admitted. A1-Muhtadi heard them and, grabbing his sword, he made his way as quickly as possible up a flight of steps to the palace roof. One of the Turks wanted to go up after al-Muhtadi and, lunging at him with his sword, he missed and tumbled down the stairs. The Turks fired arrows at him, one of which struck his chest. It was only a slight wound but al-Muhtadi nevertheless knew he was finished. So he surrendered and descended, throwing away his sword. Seizing al-Muhtadi the Turks put him on a pack animal, with one of them in charge, and made their way back along the road he had come from to Yarjukh's palace in the district of the fiefs. [1831]

The Jawsaq palace was plundered by the Turks who stripped it clean. Ahmad, known as Ibn Fityan, b. al-Mutawakkil, imprisoned at the time in al-Jawsaq, was released by the Turks. They wrote to Musa b. Bugha asking him to come to [Samarra]. A1-Muhtadi remained in their care, but no one did anything more to him. On Tuesday, in the district of the fiefs, they rendered the oath of allegiance to Ahmad, the son of al-Mutawakkil, taking him on Wednesday to the Jawsaq palace, where the Hashimites and the court elite also rendered their allegiance.

During these days, attempts to persuade al-Muhtadi to abdicate were made, but he refused and would not consent. He died on Wednesday. The following day, Thursday, his body was produced for the Hashimites and the court elite; then his face was uncovered and his body washed. Ja`far b. `Abd al-Wahid recited the funeral prayers over him on Thursday, the 18th of Rajab 256 (June 21, 870).

On Saturday, the 20th of Rajab (June 23, 870), Musa b. Bugha arrived [in Samarra], and Ahmad Ibn Fityan rode to the Public Audi-

ence Hall<sup>315</sup> on Monday, the 22nd of Rajab (June 25, 870); the public oath of allegiance was rendered there.

Muhammad b. `Isa al-Qurashi reportedly said that, when al-Muhtadi fell into the hands of the Turks, he refused to abdicate. So they removed his fingers and toes, causing the palms of his hands and his feet to become swollen. After that they did several other things to him, until he died.<sup>316</sup>

Muhammad b. `Isa also<sup>317</sup> reported, on the cause of the death of Abu Nasr Muhammad b. Bugha, that he had set out from Samarra to meet his brother Musa. A1-Muhtadi sent his brother `Abdallah after Abu Nasr with a contingent of the Magharibah and Faraghinah, who caught up with him in al-Rafif and brought him back to be imprisoned. [1832]

Once, before the conflict with al-Muhtadi, Abu Nasr had visited the Caliph, greeting him. A1-Muhtadi said to him, "O Muhammad, your brother Musa came [to Samarra] with his army and slaves (*ʿabid*) only to slay Salih b. Wasif and leave again." Abu Nasr replied, "O Commander of the Faithful, may God protect you from thinking that! Musa is your loyal servant, engaged in fighting a vile enemy." A1-Muhtadi said, "Salih was more useful to us than Musa, and his policies better suited the empire. Now this `Alawi<sup>318</sup> has returned to al-Rayy." Abu Nasr replied, "O Commander of the Faithful, what can he [Musa] do? He had defeated him and slain his companions and scattered his forces in every direction. But, whenever he goes away, he [al-Hasan] always returns. My God, he [al-Hasan] will do so again unless you order him [Musa] to remain in al-Rayy forever." The Caliph said, "Enough of that! Your brother has accomplished nothing more than stealing and expropriating property for himself."

315. *Dar al-`ammah*. Bosworth, "Recruitment," 63, notes that this term indicated the outer sections and annexes of the Caliph's palace, where troops other than palace guards were quartered and workshops, storehouses, and stables were located. Bosworth is, however, referring to Baghdad during the Caliph al-Mu`tadid's reign (279-89/892-902); in Samarra, Public Audience Hall seems an appropriate designation for the Arabic phrase.

316. The critical apparatus notes an additional phrase taken from *Uyun al-akhbar* Al-Dulabi related that the brother of Bayakbak arrived with Khanjar and drank from the [Caliph's] blood.

317. Tabari does not mention the name of the transmitter, but it seems plausible to assume that it is a continuation of Muhammad b. `Isa's account.

318. That is, the rebel al-Hasan b. Zayd.



At this Abu Nasr replied rudely, "Let what he and his family have acquired since you became Caliph be assessed and restored to their owners, and then do the same for what you and your brothers have acquired!" A1-Muhtadi ordered him arrested, beaten, and imprisoned; his palace was plundered along with that of Ibn Thawabah. A bounty was put on the heads of al-Hasan b. Makhlad, Ibn Thawabah, and Muflih's secretary, Sulayman b. Wahb al-Qattan, who fled in consequence; their palaces were also stripped bare.

Following this, al-Muhtadi brought together the various groups of Faraghinah, the Ushrusaniyyah, the Tabariyyah, the Daylamites, the Ishtakhaniyyah, and the remnants of the Turks of al-Karkh and the clan of Wasif and sought their support against Musa and Muflih. He argued that they had expropriated much wealth and monopolized the tax revenue, and moreover that he was afraid they were plotting to kill him. "If you help me," he said, "I shall pay all that is owing to you and increase the level of your allotments." At this they agreed to assist him against Musa and his forces. As they remained in the Jaw-saq palace, they renewed their oath of allegiance to him. A1-Muhtadi ordered barley meal and sugar to be purchased for them and each man was paid a daily rate of two dirhams, and given a frequent ration of bread and meat. The army command was entrusted to Ahmad b. Wasif and `Abdallah b. Bugha al-Sharabi.

[1833]

The Banu Hashim rallied to them, and together with al-Muhtadi they set out riding through the markets appealing to people for help saying, "These godless ones who slay caliphs and maltreat their own *mawlas* are the same who have appropriated the tax revenue for themselves; so support and aid the Commander of the Faithful." Salih. b. `Ali b. Ya`qub b. al-Mansur and other members of the Banu Hashim spoke to people in a similar fashion. A1-Muhtadi later wrote to Bayakbak with orders to take over as commander of the whole army and to arrest Musa and Muflih.

After al-Muhtadi's death, people searched for Abu Nasr [Muhammad] b. Bugha, thinking he was still alive. When they were at last led to the spot where he was buried and he was disinterred, his body was found to have been butchered. The remains were taken to his family for Bayakbak's body was also taken and buried. The Turks broke a thousand swords over Muhammad b. Bugha's grave in accordance with their custom when a chief died.

It was said that when al-Muhtadi refused to abdicate, his testicles were ordered crushed until he died.

It was also said that, when al-Muhtadi faced his executioners, he uttered these words:

"Were I able, I would be determined,  
but there was an obstacle between intent and execution of the  
act."<sup>319</sup>

The day that Muhammad b. Bugha was imprisoned nothing [else] [1834]  
was done to him. Restitution was demanded and he paid nearly  
twenty thousand dinars. After ripping open his belly and wringing  
his neck, they put him to death. His body was thrown into a well of  
the underground canal system, remaining there until the day after  
they took al-Muhtadi into custody when the *mawlas* extracted it for  
burial.

Al-Muhtadi's caliphate, to the very end of his reign, lasted exactly  
eleven months and twenty-five days.<sup>320</sup> He was then thirty-eight  
years old. He was a man of wide and elegant forehead, and austere  
gray-blue eyes, short and rotund, broad-shouldered, and with a long  
beard. He was born in al-Qatul.<sup>321</sup>

In this year Ju`lan arrived in al-Basrah to take on the leader of the  
Zanj.<sup>322</sup>

News of [the] Encounter [Between Ju`Lan and the Zanj]

Following his arrival in al-Basrah, Ju`lan reportedly advanced with  
his army from the city until he was just a *farsakh*<sup>323</sup> distant from the  
Zanj army. There he had a trench excavated to enclose his forces  
where he remained for six months. Al-Zaynabi, Burayh, the Banu  
Hashim, and other Basrans who were prepared to fight the abomi-  
nable one were sent forth on the day that Ju`lan promised them he  
would attack the Zanj. But, when the two sides met, they only threw

319. Literally "a barrier between the wild ass and escape."

320. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 233, has fifteen days.

321. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 57.

322. Popovic, *Révolte*, 93. Popovic observes that at this point, with the Caliph's  
despatch of a Turkish officer commanding government troops, the Zanj revolt had  
lost its local character and had become "an affair of state."

323. About 6 km.

stones and shot arrows at each other, and Ju`lan found he could not proceed owing to the dense stand of palm trees and undergrowth, which allowed no room for the horses upon which most of his troops were mounted.

Muhammad b. al-Hasan reported that after Ju`lan had spent some time thus entrenched, the Zanj leader said he had decided to conceal some of his troops along the approach roads to the trench and then launch a night attack upon him. The result of the attack was that a number of Ju`lan's men were killed and the rest were gripped with such terror that Ju`lan left the camp to return to al-Basrah. Now prior to the abominable one's nocturnal attacks against Ju`lan, al-Zaynabi had collected fighters from the Bilaliyyah and Sa`diyyah factions and despatched them to Ju`lan from the districts of the Nahr Nafidh and Hazardar, so as to confront the Zanj from two sides. However, they offered no resistance when they encountered the Zanj whose victory left many of them dead while the rest fled in disarray. Ju`lan escaped to al-Basrah and remained there, which made his weakness apparent to the central authorities. [1835]

Thus, Ju`lan was removed from responsibility for fighting the abominable one, and Sa`id al-Hajib was ordered to proceed to undertake the task.

In this year the Zanj leader transferred [his headquarters] from the salt flats where he had established himself on the western side of the Nahr Abi al-Khasib.<sup>324</sup>

In this year as well the Zanj leader reportedly seized fourteen sea-craft, which had formed part of a convoy heading for al-Basrah. When news of the Zanj raids on the waterways reached the boats' owners, they proposed binding their boats one to the other so as to form a kind of island linking the first craft to the last, which they could then sail along the Tigris. The abominable one got wind of this and detailed some of his troops to capture the flotilla, encouraging them by saying it was easy prey.

Abu al-Hasan said that he has heard the Zanj leader comment, "When news of the approaching boats reached me, I went to say my prayers. I had begun my humble petition for God's assistance when [1836]

324. See Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 304. It was at this place around this time that the Zanj leader built his capital, al-Mukhtarah. The canal takes its name from a freedman of the Caliph al-Mansur who was granted lands here in fief. According to the *Index*, it was also known as Nahr al-Atrak.

a voice addressed me, saying that I had been granted a great victory. Scarcely a moment later, I turned round and caught sight of the boats and my troops heading toward them in fiat-bottomed craft. They quickly overwhelmed the boats, killed the fighters on board, captured slaves, and plundered vast treasure, the extent of which could not be counted or even estimated." For three days the Zanj were allowed to carry on in this fashion, after which their leader ordered anything left to be delivered to him.

On the 25th of Rajab (June 28, 870) of this year the Zanj occupied al-Ubullah, killing many of the inhabitants and burning the city.

#### An Account of the Zanj Occupation of al-Ubullah<sup>325</sup>

At the time Ju`lan had withdrawn from the trench he had constructed in Shati' `Uthman and returned to al-Basrah, the Zanj leader reportedly harassed the inhabitants of al-Ubullah with several brigades of troops, attacking them with infantry from the direction of Shati' `Uthman and from the commandeered boats from the Tigris. His troops then turned toward the Nahr Ma`qil.<sup>326</sup>

The Zanj leader reportedly said that he hesitated whether to head for `Abbadan<sup>327</sup> or al-Ubullah but decided in favor of the former. He entrusted the task to some of his men but was then told that the nearest enemy with regard to abode and the most fitting one to concentrate on to the exclusion of anything else were the inhabitants of al-Ubullah. "Therefore," he said, "the army that I had despatched against `Abbadan I recalled and redirected to al-Ubullah."

The Zanj continued fighting the populace of al-Ubullah until Wednesday evening, the 25th of Rajab (June 28, 870). That night the Zanj stormed the city from the Tigris side and the Nahr al-Ubullah. [1837] Abu al-Ahwas and his son were killed in the fighting, while the city was put to the torch. As the buildings were constructed of teakwood and built close together, the fire swept through the city, causing a violent wind, while the sparks of the conflagration spread as far as

325. Popovic, *Révolte*, 94-96; Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 236-37.

326. The chief waterway of the nine canals lying on the western side of the Tigris estuary and the one through which ships reached al-Basrah from the north. It was named after a Companion of the Prophet. See Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 303, 305.

327. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 43, 44.

Shati' `Uthman and engulfed it. Many were slain and many others drowned. Much booty was secured but more goods perished in the flames than were plundered. That evening `Abdallah b. Humayd al-Tusi and one of his sons, who were aboard a barge on the Nahr Ma`qil with Abu Hamzah Nusayr, were killed.

This year the inhabitants of `Abbadan also surrendered to the Zanj leader and yielded their citadel to him.

The Account of [the Zanj Leader's] Summons for [the] Surrender [of the Inhabitants of `Abbadan]

The reason for this was that when the Zanj had dealt with the inhabitants of al-Ubullah in the manner they had, the `Abbadanians' resolve weakened, and they feared for their lives and their families. Therefore they gave themselves over to the Zanj and surrendered their city to the abominable one. His troops occupied it and seized the slaves (*al-`abid*) and weapons they found there; the abominable one distributed among his troops the weapons that they brought to him.

In this year as well the Zanj occupied al-Ahwaz and captured Ibrahim b. al-Mudabbir.<sup>328</sup>

An Account of [the Occupation of Al-Ahwaz]

The reason for this was that following the actions of the Zanj in al-Ubullah and the surrender of the inhabitants of `Abbadan to the abominable one,<sup>329</sup> he next set his ambitions on al-Ahwaz. He had attached the `Abbadanians' slaves (*mamalik*) to his own Zanj troops, while distributing among them as well the weapons that had been seized from the city.

The Zanj troops eagerly set off for Jubba. The population offered no resistance and fled from the Zanj, who entered the town, killing, [1838]

328. Ibrahim b. al-Mudabbir was the brother of the celebrated Ahmad b. al-Mudabbir, financial administrator under the Tulunids in Egypt. See *EI*,2 s.v. "Ibn al-Mudabbir."

329. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 237, who has consistently referred to `Ali b. Muhammad as "the Zanj leader," avoiding the pejorative epithets used by Tabari, calls him here al-`Alawi al-Basri, the Basran `Alid, as though conferring an honorific title of conqueror upon him.

burning, and pillaging. They also laid waste the environs of Jubba, arriving at last before al-Ahwaz. The governor there at the time was Sa`id b. Yaksin, who was also in charge of defense matters; Ibrahim b. Muhammad b. al-Mudabbir was in charge of the bureaus of taxes and estates. The population of al-Ahwaz also fled from the Zanj, and almost no one offered resistance. Sa`id b. Yaksin withdrew with his soldiers, but Ibrahim b. al-Mudabbir remained behind with his pages and servants. The Zanj entered and occupied the city. Ibrahim b. Muhammad, who had received a blow to the head, was captured and all his possessions, including money, furnishings, and slaves (*raqiq*), were seized. This was on Monday the 12th of Ramadan in the year 256 (August 13, 870).

Following these events in al-Ubullah and al-Ahwaz the Basrans were in such a state of dread that many evacuated the city for various other places, as disquieting rumors spread among the common people.

In Dhu al-Hijjah (October 30-November 28, 870) of this year the Zanj leader sent an army commanded by Yahya b. Muhammad al-Bahrani to fight Shahin b. Bistam.<sup>330</sup> But, as Yahya failed to achieve his objective, he returned from the campaign.

In Rajab (June 4-July 3, 870) of this year Sa`id b. Salih al-Hajib arrived in al-Basrah to wage war against the Zanj on behalf of the central authorities.

In this year as well there occurred a battle between the troops of Musa b. Bugha who had gone with him to the district of al-Jabal in revolt against Muhammad b. al-Wathiq and Musawir b. `Abd al-Hamid the Kharijite. The battle took place in Khaniqin.<sup>331</sup> Musawir greatly outnumbered Musa and his two hundred men, yet they were able to rout Musawir and slay a large number of his troops. [1839]

330. He was the secretary attached to Ibrahim b. Sima who had replaced Sa`id b. Yaksin in his post in al-Ahwaz. For the account of Shahin's death, see pp. 123-25, below.

331. A city on the road to Hulwan, to the northeast of Baghdad. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 62-63.

THE CALIPHATE OF AL-MU`TAMID `ALA-ALLAH



The Events of the Year 256 (cont'd)  
(December 9, 869-November 28, 870)

In this year the oath of allegiance was rendered to Ahmad b. Abi Ja`-far, who was known as Ibn Fityan. He was given the regnal title al-Mu`tamid `ala-Allah. The ceremony took place on Tuesday, the 16th of Rajab (June 19, 870).

In the same year news was despatched to Musa b. Bugha, who was then in Khaniqin, about the death of Muhammad b. al-Wathiq and also that the oath of allegiance had been given to al-Mu`tamid as Caliph. Musa arrived in Samarra on the 20th of Rajab (June 23, 870).

On the 2nd of Sha`ban (July 5, 870) `Ubaydallah b. Yahya b. Khaqan was appointed vizier.<sup>332</sup>

In the same year `Ali b. Zayd al-Talibi<sup>333</sup> appeared in al-Kufah. Al-Shah b. Mikal was sent with a large army to fight him, and `Ali and his troops met and routed him, killing a great many of his troops. Al-Shah, however, managed to escape.

332. See Sourdel, *Vizirat*, I, 305-9. The text has `Abdallah; the correct name is found in Manuscript C.

333. A descendant of al-Hasan b. `Ali b. Abi Talib, he is first reported raising a rebellion in al-Kufah in Rajab 255 (June 869); Tabari III, 1709. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 238-39, mentions another `Alid revolt that occurred at this time, this one in Upper Egypt, which caused the governor, Ibn Tulun, to send a force to quell it.

Again in this same year, Muhammad b. Wasil b. Ibrahim al-Tamimi,<sup>334</sup> an inhabitant of Fars, together with a Kurd called Ahmad b. al-Layth, who was from the same region, attacked al-Harith b. Sima al-Sharabi, the governor of Fars. In the ensuing battle al-Harith was killed, and this allowed Muhammad b. Wasil to conquer Fars. Muflih was sent into battle against Musawir the Kharijite in this year as well.<sup>335</sup> Kanjur was also despatched to fight `Ali b. Zayd al-Talibi in al-Kufah.<sup>336</sup> [1840]

The army of al-Hasan b. Zayd al-Talibi conquered al-Rayy in the month of Ramadan (August 2 to 31, 870) of this year.

On the 11th of Shawwal of this year (September 11, 870), Musa b. Bugha departed from Samarra for al-Rayy with al-Mu`tamid publicly bidding him farewell.

In this year a battle occurred between Amajur and one of the sons of `Isa b. al-Shaykh<sup>337</sup> at the gate of Damascus. I heard a report from someone attending Amajur that, on the day the skirmish took place, he had prepared an expeditionary force for himself and departed from the city of Damascus. At the same moment the son of `Isa b. al-Shaykh and one of his commanders called Abu al-Sahba' were with their own forces in the vicinity of Damascus. They received intelligence of Amajur's departure with a small contingent of troops. Spoiling for a fight, they advanced toward Amajur, who was unaware of their approach until they were upon him. The two sides engaged in fierce hand-to-hand combat and Abu al-Sahba' was killed. The rest of his troops and those of Ibn `Isa were put to flight. I heard it

334. For these developments, see Bosworth, "Tahirids," 112-13, where the name is given as Muhammad b. Wasil al-Hanzali.

335. The battle, according to Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 240, occurred in the Khaniqin district. Muflih, facing greater numbers of the enemy, nevertheless managed to slay many of the Kharijite forces.

336. Kanjur succeeded in driving the `Alid from al-Kufah and pursued him as far as Junbula, where he defeated the rebel and captured many of his men, in Dhu al-Hijjah 256 (October 30-November 28, 870). See Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 239-40, where the account of Kanjur is complete. Tabari mentions the circumstances of his death later under events of 259/872-73, p. 150, below.

337. Ibn al-Athir's account, *Kamil*, VII, 238, is clearer than Tabari's, although differing slightly in some details. `Isa b. al-Shaykh had been appointed over Damascus; he appropriated a sum of 700,000 dinars, which had been sent from Egypt en route to Baghdad and then claimed to have distributed it to his troops. The Caliph al-Mu`tamid sent Amajur to Damascus as governor with a thousand troops. As Amajur approached the city, he encountered the greater force of Mansur, `Isa's son who was defeated and killed. `Isa himself escaped toward Armenia, and Amajur took control of Damascus.

mentioned that on that day the forces of Ibn `Isa and Abu al-Sahba' combined were about twenty thousand men, whereas Amajur had only some two to four hundred men.

On Wednesday, the 13th of Dhu al-Hijjah (November 11, 870), Abu Ahmad (al-Muwaffaq), the son of al-Mutawakkil, set out from Mecca for Samarra.

In the same year Abu Nasr Isma`il b. `Abdallah al-Marwazi, the [1841] judge Muhammad b. `Ubaydallah al-Kurayzi and al-Husayn the eunuch, otherwise known as `Araq al-Mawt,<sup>338</sup> were sent to `Isa b. al-Shaykh in order to offer him the governorship of Armenia,<sup>339</sup> on condition that he leave Syria, he being given a pledge of safe-conduct to do so. `Isa accepted and set out from Syria for Armenia.<sup>340</sup>

Leading the pilgrimage in this year was Muhammad b. Ahmad b. `Isa b. Abi Ja`far al-Mansur.<sup>341</sup>

338. "[Smelling of the] sweat of death" is an approximation to the meaning of the man's name.

339. See *EI*,2 s.v. "Arminiya."

340. The details in the paragraphs here are not recounted by Ibn al-Athir. See n. 335, above.

341. Great-grandson of the Caliph al-Mansur; he was known as Ka`b al-Baqar. This appears to have been the first pilgrimage he led. His father had performed the same office in 252/865.

The Events of the Year 257  
(November 29, 870-November 18, 871)

Among the significant events of this year was the arrival in Fars of Ya`qub b. al-Layth. In Sha`ban of this year (June 24-July 22, 871) al-Mu`tamid sent to him a delegation comprising Tughta and Isma`il b. Ishaq and Abu Sa`id al-Ansari. Abu Ahmad b. al-Mutawakkil also despatched to him confirmation of the governorship of Balkh and Tukharistan including adjacent areas in Kirman, Sijistan, Sind, and elsewhere, together with the stipulation of the annual amount of his revenue. Ya`qub accepted these arrangements and departed.

In Rabi` II (February 26-March 26, 871) of this year, one of Ya`qub's messengers arrived [in Samarra] with idols he had reportedly seized from Kabul.

On the 12th of Safar (January 9, 871) al-Mu`tamid conferred upon his brother Abu Ahmad<sup>342</sup> the overall control of al-Kufah, the Mecca

342. Known by the honorific title of al-Muwaffaq; he was unlike many of the `Abbasid family in that he seems to have embarked upon a military career from an early age. He retained close links with the Turkish commander Musa b. Bugha, with whose help he rebuilt the army's strength in order to conduct the campaign against the Zanj. He was appointed commander-in-chief of the army in Safar 257 (December 29, 870-January 26, 871). See Popovic, *Révolte*, 104; Sourdél, *Vizirat*, I, 307-25.

Road, the Haramayn,<sup>343</sup> and the Yemen. Later, on the 7th of Ramadan (July 29, 871), Baghdad, the Sawad, Wasit, the districts of the Tigris, al-Basrah, al-Ahwaz, and Fats were added to the others. The Caliph ordered that the governor of Baghdad take administrative charge of Abu Ahmad's districts. He also conferred upon Yarjukh control of al-Basrah, the Tigris districts, al-Yamamah and al-Bahrayn in place of Sated b. Salih. Yarjukh then appointed Mansur b. Ja`far b. Dinar as administrator of al-Basrah and the Tigris districts and other areas adjacent to al-Ahwaz. [1842]

Also in the same year, Bughraj was commissioned to press Sa`id (b. Salih) al-Hajib to proceed to the Tigris and station himself opposite the army camp of the Zanj leader.<sup>344</sup> Bughraj did so and Sa`id carried out this task in the month of Rajab (May 25-June 23, 871) of this year. It was reported that when Sated reached the Nahr Ma`qil he found the forces of the Zanj leader there at a canal called the Murghab,<sup>345</sup> one of the tributaries of the Nahr Ma`qil, Sa`id engaged the Zanj in battle and routed them; he also managed to free women who had been held prisoner among them, as well as seizing booty. During the encounter Sa`id received some wounds, one of them in the mouth. Afterward he departed for a spot known as the army camp of Abu Ja`far al-Mansur<sup>346</sup> and remained there one night. Next he moved on and camped at a place called Hatmah<sup>347</sup> in the Euphrates valley. He remained there for some days, inspecting his troops and preparing them for a further encounter with the Zanj leader. During his sojourn in Hatmah, word reached Sa`id that an army of the Zanj leader was in the Euphrates area. So with a contingent of his own troops, he headed for the Zanj and succeeded in routing them. Among the defeated was `Imran, who was married to the grandmother of Ankalay, son of the Zanj leader. This `Imran sought a pledge of safe-conduct from Bughraj, after which the sides dispersed.

343. That is, the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina. See *EI2* s.v. "al-Haramayn."

344. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 97.

345. Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, IV, 499.

346. Named after the former `Abbasid Caliph.

347. Manuscript C has Hamtah; Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 242, calls it Hattah and places it on the eastern side of the Tigris. The location cannot be identified, and, as this instance illustrates, many of the locations (and their correct names) that appear in connection with the Zanj uprising in the vast southern Iraqi swamplands were unfamiliar, even to a contemporary writer like Tabari.

Muhammad b. al-Hasan said: "Once I saw a woman from among the inhabitants of the Euphrates valley who discovered one of the Zanj concealed in some dense underbrush. She seized him and brought him without resistance to Sa'id's camp." Later Sated set out again to fight the abominable one. He crossed over to the western side of the Tigris and engaged him in several skirmishes over a period of days. Sated then returned to his camp in Hatmah and from there pursued the struggle against the abominable one throughout the remainder of Rajab and most of Sa'id (from early June through mid-July 871).

[1843]

In the same year Ibrahim b. Muhammad b. al-Mudabbir<sup>348</sup> escaped from prison where he had been detained by the abominable one. The reason for this was that he had reportedly been confined to one room in the residence of Yahya b. Muhammad al-Bahrani. As al-Bahrani felt cramped in these quarters, Ibrahim was moved to an apartment in his palace and locked up there. Two men who lived in an adjacent building to that in which Ibrahim was held were put in charge of him. Ibrahim went to considerable lengths to excite the mens' cupidity. They ran a tunnel from their own quarters to the place where Ibrahim was confined, and both he and his nephew called Abu Ghalib made their escape along with a man from the Banu Hashim who had been imprisoned with them.

During the course of the year the abominable one's forces fought against those of Sated, who himself was killed along with many of his followers.

#### An Account of the Battle [Between Sa'id al-Hajib and the Zanj]

It was reported that the abominable one sent orders to Yahya b. Muhammad al-Bahrani, who at the time was stationed on the Nahr Ma`qil with a large army, for him to proceed by night with a thousand of his troops toward Sa'id's army. The force was to be commanded by Sulayman b. Jami` and Abu al-Layth al-Isbahani. They were instructed to attack Sated at the break of dawn. Sulayman and Abu al-Layth set out for Sa'id's army to execute their orders and happened to encounter him quite unprepared. In the ensuing battle a large

348. See n. 328, above; Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 242.

number of Sa`id's troops were slain, the Zanj on that occasion burning Sa`id's camp to the ground and thereby gravely weakening his position. [1844]

Owing to the night attacks the Zanj launched against them, Sa`id's camp was thrown into a state of confusion. A complicating factor was the withholding of the soldiers' allotments, which had been assigned<sup>349</sup> to them from the revenue of al-Ahwaz. Mansur b. Ja`far al-Khayyat, who was then in charge of military affairs in al-Ahwaz as well as having a hand in matters of taxes, had delayed the payment of the soldiers' allotments. When the position of Sa`id b. Salih had deteriorated to such an extent, he was ordered to depart for the court in [Samarra]<sup>350</sup> and surrender both the army and his administrative duties to Mansur b. Ja`far. Sa`id eventually carried out these instructions, although he had been unable to move following the night attacks of the Zanj and their burning his camp, until he was relieved of his duties.

In this same year there occurred a battle between Mansur b. Ja`far al-Khayyat and the Zanj leader, during which many of Mansur's troops were slain.

#### An Account of the Battle [Between Mansur B. Ja`Far and the Zanj]

It was reported that when Sa`id al-Hajib had been removed from his post in al-Basrah, Bughraj remained behind to protect its inhabitants. Mansur began to organize the supply ships, having them escorted by barge as far as al-Basrah. As a result, the Zanj were low on provisions. Then Mansur mustered his troops and added to the barges he had the Jannabi<sup>351</sup> barges and other boats. He headed in the direction of the Zanj leader's army camp, scaled the walls of a castle located beside the Tigris, and burned it to the ground and everything around it. Approaching from the same side he entered the Zanj encampment. The Zanj lay in ambush for them and attacked and killed

349. *Subbibat lahum*. See Tabari, *Glossarium*, CCLXXXIV, and n. 57 above.

350. The text reads *Bab al-Sultan*, headquarters of the central authorities.

351. The reading is uncertain; the word in manuscript B is unpointed, while C reads al-Han(n)aniyyat. *Jannabi* barges would have been made in the city of Jannaba, located on the coast of the province of Fats. See Tabard, *Glossarium*, CLXXI; Le Strange, *Lands*, 259.



a large number of [Mansur's] troops while the rest sought escape in the waters of the Tigris where many more were drowned. On that occasion about five hundred heads were reportedly borne away to the camp of Yahya b. Muhammad al-Bahrani on the Nahr Ma`qil, where he ordered them publicly displayed.

[1845]

In the same year, at a place called Birkat Zalzal, a strangler from Baghdad was apprehended. He had murdered a number of women and buried them in the house where he was living. He was brought to al-Mu`tamid, and I learned that he had ordered the prisoner whipped. He was given two thousand lashes and four hundred strokes with a bastinado, yet he continued to live. Only when the executioners beat his testicles with two wooden flogging posts (*uqabayn*)<sup>352</sup> did he finally expire. His body was then returned to Baghdad, where it was strung up in the public view; the corpse was later burned.<sup>353</sup>

In this year Shahin b. Bistam was killed and Ibrahim b. Sima put to flight.<sup>354</sup>

#### The Death of Shahin B. Bistam and the Flight of Ibrahim B. Sima

Al-Bahrani had reportedly written to the abominable one advising the despatch of an army to accupy al-Ahwaz and arousing his interest in such a plan. He suggested the operation commence with the destruction of the Arbuk bridge (*qantarah*)<sup>355</sup> to prevent the [enemy's] cavalry<sup>356</sup> from reaching his army. The abominable one sent `Ali b. Aban to destroy the bridge. `Ali was met by Ibrahim b. Sima, who was returning from Fars where he had been with al-Harith b. Sima<sup>357</sup> in a tract of desert known as the Dast Arbuk, which was situated between al-Ahwaz and the aforementioned bridge.

352. Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *`-q-b*. *Al-`uqaban* are two pieces of wood stuck in the ground, between which a man is extended to be flogged.

353. This tale seems curiously out of place amid the narrative of events of greater import to the state; it was one that evidently caught Tabari's personal interest.

354. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 96-98; Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 243-44.

355. This was the only bridge crossing the Dujayl. See Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, I, 185.

356. *Al-Khayl*. A feminine singular noun with the collective meaning "horses" and in a metonymous sense "mounted troops." See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *kh-y-l*; and *EL*, 2 s.v. "Khayl." The verb in the sentence should be emended to *tasil*.

357. The governor of Fars, as mentioned p. 116, above.

When `Ali b. Aban reached the bridge he and his troops established a camp hidden from view. However, when Ibrahim's cavalry had crossed this desert tract they were able to attack `Ali from several sides and as a result a great number of the Zanj were slain. `Ali himself was forced to flee. Ibrahim's cavalry pursued him as far as al-Fandam<sup>358</sup> but a foot wound prevented `Ali from proceeding farther toward al-Ahwaz. Therefore he backtracked and headed for Jubba.<sup>359</sup>

[1846]

Sa`id b. Yaksin was removed from his post and Ibrahim b. Sima was appointed [to combat the Zanj].<sup>360</sup> His secretary was Shahin. The two men set out at the same time, Ibrahim b. Sima taking the Euphrates Road and heading for the mouth of the Nahr Jubba.<sup>361</sup> `Ali b. Aban was at this moment in al-Khayzuraniyyah.<sup>362</sup> For his part, Shahin b. Bistam set out along the Nahr Musa road, judging that he would meet up with Ibrahim at a spot they had previously agreed upon. They had also made prior arrangements to attack `Ali b. Aban, and Shahin arrived at the spot first. Now an inhabitant of the Nahr Musa district came to `Ali b. Aban and informed him of Shahin's approach. `Ali advanced toward Shahin, and the two sides met in the afternoon at the Abu al-`Abbas canal, situated between the Nahr Musa and the Nahr Jubba. Battle broke out between the two sides. At first Shahin's troops held fast and fought fiercely. But then, recovering, the Zanj dealt their opponents a crushing blow, causing them to turn heel and flee. In fact the first to fall mortally wounded that day were Shahin himself and a cousin of his named Hayyan; this was because he had been in the vanguard of the troops. A great many of his men were slain as well.

Another informant came to `Ali b. Aban and told him of Ibrahim b. Sima's arrival. This was after `Ali's battle with Shahin was over. Without delay `Ali departed for the Nahr Jubba, where Ibrahim b. Sima's army was camped. As yet Ibrahim had heard no word of Shahin's fate. At the time of the last evening prayer, `Ali drew in

358. Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, IV, 278, places this in [the district] of al-Ahwaz and adds, "But I don't know what it is."

359. A town lying on a canal of the same name, east of the Dujayl and below al-Ahwaz in an area occupied by many villages. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 243.

360. Ibrahim was appointed to replace Sa`id as military governor of al-Ahwaz.

361. The text of Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 243, has incorrectly, Nahr Jayy.

362. A town on the eastern side of the Tigris above Fam al-Silh, in the district of Wasit See Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 301.

close upon Ibrahim's position and then attacked ferociously, slaying his troops in droves. Thus in the brief span of time between the afternoon and evening prayers, Shahin had been killed and Ibrahim routed.

Muhammad b. al-Hasan said that he had once heard `Ali b. Aban talking of these events. He said, "That day, as it happened, I had come down with one of the bouts of fever to which I was subject. When my troops had achieved their victory over Shahin, they dispersed so that there were only about fifty left with me when I set out for Ibrahim b. Sima's army camp. When I reached it, I got close enough to hear the commotion of the soldiers and even some of their conversations. When the place fell quiet, I went onto the attack." [1847]

`Ali b. Aban left Jubba when Shahin had been killed and Ibrahim b. Sima routed, after a despatch arrived for him from the abominable one with orders to proceed to al-Basrah and wage war against its inhabitants.

In this year the troops of the abominable one entered al-Basrah.

The Events that Led up to [the] Entry of al-Basrah  
[by the Zanj] and What Transpired Thereafter<sup>363</sup>

It was reported that, when Sa`id b. Salih (al-Hajib) left al-Basrah, the central authorities handed over his duties to Mansur b. Ja`far al-Khayyat. The events concerning Mansur and the troops of the abominable one we have dealt with already: They told of Mansur's enfeebled position, his inability to engage the abominable one in battle, contenting himself with providing protection for the supply ships<sup>364</sup> sufficient to relieve the inhabitants of al-Basrah of the harm caused when the flow of these supplies was interrupted. Word of this reached the abominable one, who was then frustrated by the news that the Basrans had been relieved. This caused him to send `Ali b. Aban to the districts of Jubba, where he established camp in al-Khayzuraniyyah. This distracted Mansur b. Ja`far from the protection of the supply boats to al-Basrah, so once again the Basrans experienced straitened circumstances. [1848]

The abominable one's troops harassed the inhabitants of al-Bas-

363. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 98-104; Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 244-46.

364. *Al-Qayrawanat*. See n. 211, above.

rah day and night with attacks. Then, in the month of Shawwal (August 22-September 19, 871) of this year, the abominable one determined to rally his forces together for a concerted assault on the Basrans and a serious [attempt to] destroy it. The decision was taken because he was aware of their weakness, their disunity, and the damaging effects upon them of the blockade and the destruction of surrounding villages. Moreover, the abominable one had consulted the astrological charts and discovered that there would be a lunar eclipse on Tuesday evening, the 14th of the month (September 4, 871).

Muhammad b. al-Hasan b. Sahl reported that he had heard the abominable one say, "I earnestly prayed to God for help against the people of al-Basrah and humbly beseeched Him to hasten its destruction. A voice addressed me saying that al-Basrah was but a loaf of bread, which one could nibble around the edges; when half the loaf had been devoured, al-Basrah would be destroyed. I took this to mean that devouring half a loaf indicated the eclipse of the moon, which was expected at this time, so it was entirely plausible that the fate of al-Basrah would occur soon afterward."

Muhammad continued: "The abominable one continued speaking in this vein to such an extent that he overwhelmed his followers with the story, repeating it among them ad nauseam. Then he deputized Muhammad b. Yazid al-Darimi, one of his adherents in al-Bahrayn, to go among the Arab tribesmen, many of whom were successfully won over to the Zanj cause. They camped at a place called al-Qandal, and the abominable one sent Sulayman b. Musa al-Sha`rani to join them, and then ordered the whole force to head for al-Basrah and attack it. He forwarded instructions to Sulayman b. Musa to drill the tribesmen in the execution of such an operation.

When the lunar eclipse occurred, the Zanj leader sent `Ali b. Aban with a detachment of Arab tribesmen, ordering him to approach al-Basrah by way of the territory of the Banu Sa`d. Likewise Yahya b. Muhammad al-Bahrani, who was then blockading the Basrans, was instructed to approach the city via the Nahr `Adi with the remainder of the tribesmen who were attached to him."

[1849]

Muhammad b. al-Hasan said that Shibl (b. Salim) had observed that the first attack on the Basrans was led by `Ali b. Aban. This was at the time when Bughraj was present in the city with a detachment of soldiers. For two days the battle raged between the two sides, the

people in general supporting Bughraj. Yahya (b. Muhammad al-Bahrani) approached with his troops by way of Qasr Anas, making their way to the bridge. `Ali b. Aban al-Muhallabi entered the city at the time of the Friday congregational prayers on the 17th of Shawwal (September 7, 871). Killing and burning continued through the day and into the evening and throughout all of Saturday as well. Yahya approached al-Basrah early on Sunday morning. Bughraj and Burayh with a force of troops blocked his way and drove him back. Yahya returned and held his ground for the rest of the day. On Monday morning he (Yahya) made a further attempt, but, when he finally secured entry into the city, the defenders had scattered, Burayh had fled, and Bughraj had withdrawn with his troops, leaving no opposition. Ibrahim b. Yahya al-Muhallabi met Yahya and sought a promise of protection from him on behalf of the inhabitants and this was granted.

Ibrahim b. Yahya's town crier proclaimed the protection to anyone who sought it; he had only to present himself at Ibrahim's palace. The inhabitants of al-Basrah responded without exception, thronging the city squares. When he saw<sup>365</sup> the great gathering, he seized the opportunity to blockade every street, roadway, and alley, thus preventing anyone from escaping. Behaving in this treacherous manner, he then gave the order for his troops to kill, and, with rare exceptions, everyone present was slain. The perpetrator of this act departed the same day to stay in Qasr `Isa b. Ja`far in al-Khuraybah.

[1850]

Muhammad continued: Al-Fadl b. `Adi al-Darimi recounted to me the following: "At the time the traitor<sup>366</sup> was warring against the people of al-Basrah, I was in the district, staying among the Banu Sa`d." Al-Fadl continued, saying that someone had arrived one night and mentioned that he had seen some passing cavalry heading for Qasr `Isa in al-Khuraybah. [Al-Fadl said], "My companions said to me, 'Go and gather some information for us about this troop.' I did so, and, when I came upon a part of the Banu Tamara and the Banu Asad, I inquired what they were doing. They claimed to be supporters of the `Alawite and attached to `Ali b. Aban, who was supposed

365. The subject of the verb here is unclear. Grammatical requirements point to Ibrahim b. Yahya as the perpetrator of the ensuing massacre, but it was certainly the work of Yahya b. Muhammad al-Bahrani. See p. 131, below, for another account.

366. Tabari uses the word *kha'in* for the Zanj leader, a change from the monotonous *khabith*, "abominable one."

to reach al-Basrah the following morning, his destination being the quarter of the Banu Sa`d. Yahya b. Muhammad was also with another contingent, heading for the quarter of the Al al-Muhallab. They said to me, "Tell your companions from the Banu Sa`d, "If you wish to protect your women and children, then make haste to evacuate them before the army surrounds you.""

Al-Fadl said, "I returned to my companions and gave them the news from the Arab tribesmen." Having made their preparations, they sent someone to Burayh to inform him, too, of the situation. He came to them at dawn with the remaining chattels and a contingent of soldiers. They then marched out until they eventually reached a trench called Banu Himman. Some Banu Tamim and fighters of the Sa`diyyah met up with them, but it was not long before `Ali b. Aban overtook them with a contingent of Zanj and Arab tribesmen on horseback. Burayh became alarmed before even encountering this crowd and so he returned to his residence [in al-Basrah]. This was as good as admitting defeat. The Banu Tamim who had gathered now dispersed and `Ali was able to approach the city unopposed, and he made his way to the quarter of al-Mirbad.<sup>367</sup> Burayh sent word to the Banu Tamim requesting assistance, and a group of them responded. Fighting broke out in al-Mirbad in front of Burayh's palace. Thereupon Burayh fled, and his supporters scattered. The Zanj burned his palace to the ground, having plundered all its contents. The killing continued, the Basrans' position having been gravely weakened, while that of the Zanj grew stronger. The sides battled on until the end of the day, when `Ali reached the congregational mosque and ordered it burned down. Fath, the servant of Abu Shith, together with a group of Basrans, took `Ali by surprise, and he had to retreat with his men, some of the Zanj being killed. call thereupon turned back and established his army camp at a place called the graveyard of the Banu Shayban.

[1851]

People sought for someone in authority with whom they could join in battle, but none was found. When they looked for Burayh, they discovered that he had fled. On Saturday the Basrans realized that `Ali b. Aban had not returned, but early on Sunday morning he

367. Located at the western gate of al-Basrah, it was the quarter where caravans halted and hence was one of the busiest in the city. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 45; *El*,2 s.v. "al-Basrah."

did so, without encountering any opposition, and took al-Basrah in triumph.

Muhammad b. al-Hasan related as follows from Muhammad b. Sim'an: "At the time the Zanj entered al-Basrah, I was living in the city. I used to attend the assembly held by Ibrahim b. Muhammad b. Isma'il, who was known as Burayh. On Friday, the 10th of Shawwal 257 (August 31, 871), I was there, and Shihab b. al-'Ala' al-'Anbari was present as well. I heard Shihab telling Ibrahim that the traitor had sent money and supplies into the desert in order to raise a force from among the Arab tribesmen; that he had in fact managed to muster a large toop of horsemen, and with them and his own Zanj infantry he intended to infiltrate al-Basrah. At the time al-Basrah was defended by only some fifty cavalry of the government forces under Bughraj. Burayh told Shihab that the Arab tribesmen would not venture to act with hostility toward him [because] he was obeyed and respected by the Arabs." [1852]

Ibn Simian continued: "I left Burayh's assembly and came across the secretary, Ahmad b. Ayyub, whom I overheard talking about Harun b. 'Abd al-Rahim al-Shi'i, who at the time was in charge of the postal service (*barid*) in al-Basrah. Harun confirmed that the traitor, on the 3rd of Shawwal (August 24, 871), had performed the congregational prayer<sup>368</sup> with nine persons, while al-Basrah's leading commanders and its resident governor remained in total ignorance about what the traitor was up to, as I have described."

The blockade had driven the populace to hunger, and disease was on the increase. Conflict erupted in the city between the two factions of the Bilaliyyah and the Sa'diyyah. Then on Friday morning, the 16th of Shawwal (September 6, 871) of this year, the traitor's cavalry attacked al-Basrah on three fronts, the Banu Sa'd district, al-Mirbad, and al-Khuraybah. 'Ali b. Aban led the army, which was despatched against al-Mirbad. He had divided his troops into two contingents: One was in the charge of Rafiq, the servant of Yahya b. 'Abd al-Rahman b. Khaqan, who was ordered to march into the Banu Sa'd district, and the other, with whom he himself remained,

368. The expression is *jamma'a fi tis'a anfus*. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *j-m-'*. Although the date was actually a Saturday, the meaning seems to be that 'Ali b. Muhammad had the temerity to pray with nine persons (with nine of his companions or with only nine other persons?) in the congregational mosque in al-Basrah prior to the final assault and under the noses of the authorities.



set out for al-Mirbad. Yahya b. Muhammad al-Azraq al-Bahrani led the cavalry, which was sent to al-Khuraybah, having assembled his troops together on one front. Those Basrans of little circumstance who could, despite being exhausted by hunger and the blockade, went out to face each of these divisions. The cavalry accompanying Bughraj split up into two groups, one of which made for the district of al-Mirbad and the other for al-Khuraybah. Those [of `Ali's forces] who reached the Banu Sa`d district engaged in battle a contingent of the Sa`diyyah fighters, along with Fath, the slave of Abu Shith and his companions, but a few Basrans were no match for the assembled forces of the abominable one, whose troops attacked on horse and on foot.

[1853]

Ibn Simian said: "On that day I was present in the congregational mosque when flames engulfed three areas, Zahran, al-Mirbad, and Banu Himman, at the same time, as if they had been set by arsonists at an agreed moment. That was at the beginning of the day, on Friday. The calamity worsened, and Basrans were convinced that they were doomed. Those in the main mosque strove to reach their homes as swiftly as possible. I was hastening toward my own house, which was on the Mirbad Road. On the way, fleeing Basrans passed me retreating to the great mosque. Al-Qasim b. Ja`far b. Sulayman al-Hashimi brought up their rear, seated upon a donkey and girt with a sword. He cried out to the crowd, 'Woe upon you! Will you surrender your city and your families? This is your enemy who has just entered your city!' But none paid heed to him or listened to his plea, and he went upon his way. Then the Mirbad Road cleared of people, and between those in flight and the Zanj there was empty space as far as the eye could see."

Muhammad<sup>369</sup> said, "When I saw what was happening, I entered my house and locked the door. From the upper floor of the house I looked down and saw the cavalry of the Arab tribesmen and the Zanj foot soldiers led by a man riding a chestnut horse and carrying a spear bearing a yellow lappet.<sup>370</sup> Sometime later, after I had been taken to the traitor's city, I inquired about the man's identity. `Ali b. Aban claimed that he had been the one I had seen with the yellow streamer."

369. That is, Muhammad b. Sim`an.

370. *`Adhabah*. Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *`-dh-b*, describes this as a strip of linen or the like that is bound to the head of a spear.

The [Zanj] troops entered the city and disappeared down the Mirbad Road, proceeding to the `Uthman Gate. By then it was late in the day. Then they left. The ignorant young clods of the city imagined that they were off to attend the Friday prayer, but what had really frightened them off was possible attack from bands of the Bilaliyyah and Sa`diyyah who might attack them from the square,<sup>371</sup> for they feared ambushes there. So they left.

[1854]

Those [Zanj] who were in the quarters of Zahran and Banu Hisn also departed after they had burned, pillaged, and overwhelmed the city, for they knew no one could stop them. They let Saturday and Sunday go by. Then they came again on Monday, and found no one defending the city. The population<sup>372</sup> was collected before the palace of Ibrahim b. Yahya al-Muhallabi and promised their security.

Muhammad b. Simian recounted the following from al-Hasan b. `Uthman al-Muhallabi, who was nicknamed Mundaliqah<sup>373</sup> and was one of Yahya b. Muhammad's companions. That morning Yahya had ordered him to go to the graveyard of the Banu Yashkur and bring back as many ovens<sup>374</sup> as he could fetch. "I did so," said al-Hasan, "and brought back some twenty ovens carried on porters' heads. I took them to the palace of Ibrahim b. Yahya, and people thought they were for the purpose of preparing food for them, as they suffered from hunger resulting from the harsh blockade and the strain of events. A crowd developed in front of Ibrahim b. Yahya's palace, people coming and going and increasing in number through the night until sunrise."

Ibn Sim`an continued. "At this time I had moved residence from the Mirbad Road to the palace belonging to my mother's grandfather Hisham, who was called al-Daff. It was located in the district of the Banu Tamim; [I did this] because the Banu Tamim were rumored among the populace to have accepted the traitor's peace. I was there when some informants brought news of the battle in front of the palace of Ibrahim b. Yahya. They said that Yahya b. Muhammad al-Bahrani had ordered the Zanj to surround the crowd. He allowed any of the Muhallabi family to enter Ibrahim b. Yahya's palace. A small

[1855]

371. *Al-Murabba`ah*. The reading is uncertain, though some location seems indicated by the context. Manuscript B has *al-mu`arabah* and C *al-muri`ah*.

372. *Al-nas*. The word is typically ambiguous and could also mean the Basran troops.

373. The reading is conjectural; manuscript B is unpointed, while C reads *s-da-l-`-h*.

374. See n. 226, above.

number did so, and the gates were then shut. Finally, the Zanj were given the word to massacre the rest of the crowd, which they proceeded to do, to the very last person."

Muhammad b. `Abdallah, known as Abu al-Layth al-Isbahani, was the one who had given the signal<sup>375</sup> to the Zanj, which they recognized as the order to commence the slaughter. The sword did the rest.

Al-Hasan b. `Uthman said, "I could hear their uproar, crying out 'There is no God but Allah' as they were put to the sword. Their voices rang out with the cry of 'There is no God but Allah' so loudly that they could be heard far away, in al-Tafawah." After the crowd had been massacred, as we have described, the Zanj proceeded to slay anyone [else] they encountered. That day `Ali b. Aban burned down the congregational mosque; he also burned the harbor from the cable (*habl*)<sup>376</sup> to the bridge, the fire destroying all before it, including people, animals, goods, and merchandise. Throughout the morning and afternoon the Zanj harassed anyone they found, driving everybody to Yahya b. Muhammad (al-Bahrani), who was then residing in Sayhan; anyone with some money was tortured to extract it and then killed, but anyone who was poor was killed straightaway.

Shibl reportedly said that Yahya entered al-Basrah early on Tuesday, following the massacre of the crowd in front of Ibrahim b. Yahya's palace. An offer of safety and security was publicly proclaimed, to try to lure people into the open, but no one appeared. The news reached the abominable one, and he removed `Ali b. Aban from al-Basrah, assigning Yahya b. Muhammad to the city on his own, sanctioning and approving the massacre, and expressing his affection for him. The abominable one judged `Ali b. Aban al-Muhallabi's performance lacking in regard to his restraint from seizing booty in the Banu Sa'd district. `Ali b. Aban had deputed a party of the Banu Sa'd to go to the abominable one, but, as they gained no benefit from him, they departed for `Abbadan. [1856]

Yahya b. Muhammad remained in al-Basrah. The abominable one sent him a despatch ordering the public announcement of Shibl as his deputy in al-Basrah in order to calm the fears of the populace and so that those in hiding would begin to reemerge and those who were

375. The signal was a verbal one, which, in the text, reads *kilu*, an imperative meaning "measure!" or "weigh!"

376. See Tabard, *Glossarium*, CLXXIX.

known to be wealthy. When these reappeared, they were to be forced to reveal the money they had buried and hidden. Yahya carried out this order. Not a day passed when a group of affluent persons was not stripped of their possessions and then put to death. Others of no evident substance were summarily put to death; none who appeared before Yahya survived and many fled as best they could. Finally the abominable one withdrew his army from al-Basrah.

Muhammad b. al-Hasan said, "When the traitor had completed the destruction of al-Basrah and word had reached him of the enormities perpetrated by his troops, I heard him comment that he had invoked Allah's [judgment] upon the populace of al-Basrah the day his troops entered the city. He said: 'I prayed earnestly and prostrated myself, praying all the while, and behold ! was given a vision of al-Basrah. I could see the city and my troops fighting there. I had the vision of a man standing in thin air between earth and the sky in the image of Ja`far b. Ma`luf,<sup>377</sup> who was formerly put in charge of the registry of land taxes in Samarra. He was standing with his left hand lowered and his right hand raised, about to overturn al-Basrah and its inhabitants. I knew then that the angels alone had been charged with the destruction of the city, and not my troops, for had they been responsible for that, the destruction would not have reached the vast proportions people speak about. The angels brought victory and supported me in my battle and kept my troops from being fainthearted.'" [1857]

Muhammad b. al-Hasan continued: "It was following the destruction of al-Basrah that the abominable one claimed his descent from Yahya b. Zayd b. `Ali,<sup>378</sup> because a large number of `Alawites who had been in al-Basrah joined his ranks. Among them were `Ali b. Ahmad b. `Isa b. Zayd and `Abdallah b. `Ali,<sup>379</sup> together with their womenfolk and families. When they joined him, he abandoned his

377. He was involved in the torture and execution of the secretary Najah. b. Salamah in 245/857. See Tabard, III, 1442, 1444, 1446, and n. 255, above.

378. Zayd b. `Ali, a descendant of the fourth Caliph, `Ali b. Abi Talib, had raised a revolt in al-Kufah against the Umayyad dynasty in 122/740, in which he was killed. His son, Yahya, who participated in the rebellion, escaped to Khurasan. The Zanj leader here is professing to be the great-grandson of this Yahya. Although by this time his line was extinct, there were descendants from Yahya's half-brothers, whose mother had been a slave. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 101, and annexes 1 and 2; *EI*, I s.v. "Zaid b. `Ali."

379. That is, `Abdallah was the son of `Ali b. Ahmad b. `Isa b. Zayd. When they joined the Zanj, the Zanj leader `Ali b. Muhammad switched his claim of descent

*(Footnote continued on next page)*

claim to be descended from Ahmad b. `Isa, alleging instead to belong to the line of Yahya b. Zayd.

Muhammad b. al-Hasan continued: "When a group of Nawfa-liyyun were with him, I heard al-Qasim b. al-Hasan al-Nawfali say that they had heard that he was a descendant of Ahmad b. `Isa b. Zayd, but the abominable one replied, 'I am not a descendant of `Isa, but of Yahya b. Zayd.' He lied about that; it is generally accepted about Yahya that he had no offspring but a daughter who died in infancy."<sup>380</sup>

In the same year the central government despatched Muhammad<sup>381</sup> al-Muwallad to al-Basrah in order to fight the Zanj leader. He left Samarra on Friday, the 1st of Dhu al-Qa`dah (September 20, 871).

#### An Account of al-Muwallad's Expedition

Muhammad al-Muwallad reached the area and was quartered in al-Ubullah.<sup>382</sup> Burayh arrived and established himself in al-Basrah. A large number of Basrans who had previously fled the city gathered around Burayh. When Yahya (b. Muhammad) withdrew from the city, he set up camp on the Nahr al-Ghutha. [1858]

Muhammad b. al-Hasan, reporting from Shibl, said that, when Muhammad al-Muwallad arrived, the abominable one sent Yahya instructions to proceed to the Nahr Awwa. He arrived there with his army and set about engaging al-Muwallad in battle for ten days. Al-Muwallad had selected a place of residence and settled himself in but had devoted less attention to pursuing hostilities. The abominable one ordered Yahya to launch a night attack against him and sent him barges with Abu al-Layth al-Isbahani. Yahya launched the night attack and al-Muwallad ventured forth with his troops. The two sides fought until morning and well into the next afternoon. Then he turned and withdrew while the Zanj entered his camp and

(Footnote continued from previous page)

from Ahmad b. `Isa b. Zayd to that of Yahya b. Zayd. Tabari is, in fact, saying that the claim was fabricated. Thus the Zanj leader's reason for altering his claim would have been to make it more difficult for opponents and skeptics to challenge its truth, especially if descent from Yahya meant from one of his several half-brothers.

380. This is probably a reference to Yahya's daughter by a woman of the Azd tribe, whom he married in al-Kufah. See *EI* s.v. "Zaid b. `Ali."

381. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 246, refers to him as Ahmad al-Muwallad.

382. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 103 n. 2, on the nature of Muhammad's forces.

plundered it. Yahya sent word of this to the abominable one, who sent further instructions that Yahya should pursue al-Muwallad. Yahya chased after al-Muwallad as far as al-Hawanit<sup>383</sup> before making his way back. He then passed by al-Jamidah,<sup>384</sup> attacked its inhabitants, and plundered all the neighboring villages, spilling as much blood as he could in the course of the operation. Next he set up his army camp in al-Jalah and remained there a while before returning to the Nahr Ma`qil.

In the same year Muhammad al-Muwallad captured Sa`id b. Ahmad b. Sated b. Salm al-Bahili, who, with the aid of his Bahilite troops, had gained control over the swamp region and made the land routes very insecure.

In this year as well Muhammad b. Wasil violated his allegiance to the central authorities by conquering the province of Fars.

Leading the pilgrimage this year was al-Fadl b. Ishaq b. al-Hasan b. Isma`il b. al-`Abbas b. Muhammad b. `Ali b. `Abdallah b. ab-`Abbas.

In this year Basil,<sup>385</sup> one of the ruling household, who was known as al-Saqlabi because his mother was a Saqlabi,<sup>386</sup> attacked and killed Michael, the son of Tawfil, the king of Byzantium. Michael had ruled alone for twenty-four years, and after him the Saqlabi became ruler of Byzantium. [1859]

383. The name means "toll booths," and the place lay on the eastern bank of the Tigris, just north of the great swamp region. See Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 33, 46.

384. A large village in the Wasit district. See Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 274. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 137, notes that Yahya pursued al-Muwallad to al-Jamidah; he does not mention al-Hawanit.

385. Basil I, founder of the Macedonian dynasty, ruled from 867 to 886. He had his co-emperor, Michael III, murdered in his bed, enabling himself to become sole ruler of the Byzantine empire. See Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 233ff.

386. See *EI* s.v "Sakaliba," a term meaning "Slav," widely applied to peoples of various origins who lived in territory lying between Constantinople and the lands of the Bulgars.

The Events of the Year 258  
(November 18, 871-November 6, 872)

Among the important events of this year was the arrival of Sated b. Ahmad b. Sa`id b. Salm al-Bahili before the central authorities, who ordered that he be punished with seven hundred lashes. This was in the month of Rabi` II (February 15-March 14, 872). Sa`id died, and his body was placed on public display.<sup>387</sup>

In the same year also one of the religious judges of the Zanj leader, who had represented him in `Abbadan, was beheaded. Fourteen other Zanj, who had been captured in the district of al-Basrah, were beheaded at the Public Gate in Samarra.

Muflih fought with some Arab tribesmen in Takrit.<sup>388</sup> It was reported that they were sympathetic to Musawir the Kharijite.

Masrur al-Balkhi engaged in battle the Kurds of the Ya`qubiyyah, routing them and inflicting casualties among them.

387. Sa`id and the activities of the Bahilah in the marshland areas have already been mentioned, p. 135, above. The capture and death of the Bahilah chief, Sated, caused the tribe to go over to the cause of the Zanj. See *EI*,2 s.v. "Bahila."

388. At this time Takrit, located 30 miles north of Samarra on the west bank of the Tigris, was regarded by the early Arab geographers as situated on the frontier between the province of Iraq and the Jazirah but within the former. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 25, 57.



Muhammad b. Wasil submitted obediently to the central authorities and delivered the taxes (*kharaj*) and the revenue of the estates in Fars to Muhammad b. al-Husayn b. al-Fayyad.

The Caliph al-Mu`tamid put his brother Abu Ahmad in charge of the districts of Diyar Mudar,<sup>389</sup> Qinnasrin,<sup>390</sup> and al-`Awasim.<sup>391</sup> This occurred on Monday, the 20th of Rabi` I (February 4, 872). On Thursday, at the commencement of the new moon of Rabi` II (around February 29, 872), the Caliph in assembly bestowed robes of honor upon both his brother and Muflih. The two of them set out for al-Basrah, riding in a public procession, with al-Mu`tamid accompanying Abu Ahmad as far as Bazkuwar,<sup>392</sup> whence he returned to Samarra. [1860]

Mansur b. Ja`far b. Dinar al-Khayyat was killed in the course of this year.<sup>393</sup>

#### An Account of [Mansur B. Ja`Far's] Death

It was reported that, following the carnage wrought by his troops in al-Basrah, the abominable one ordered `Ali b. Aban al-Muhallabi to march toward Jubba to wage war against Mansur b. Ja`far, who at the time was in Al-Ahwaz. `Ali camped opposite `Ali's army, which was then stationed in al-Khayzuraniyyah, Mansur employing at this moment small contingents of infantry. The abominable one then sent twelve barges to `Ali b. Aban, manned with the toughest of his troops, and placed in their charge Abu al-Layth al-Isbahani.<sup>394</sup> He ordered Abu al-Layth to obey `Ali's commands, but this he failed to do to the extent of imposing his own views upon `Ali. As Mansur was approaching with his own barges to make one of his regular at-

389. Lying along the banks of the Euphrates, one of the three districts constituting the province of the Jazirah; it was named after the tribe of Mudar. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 86.

390. The ancient Chalcis in northern Syria.

391. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 101-2; *El*, 2 s.v. "al-`Awasim." This was part of the frontier zone between Byzantium and the `Abbasid domains in the north and north-east of Syria. Abu Ahmad's responsibilities in these districts were nominal; his real task was to conduct the campaign against the Zanj, as the remainder of the paragraph makes clear.

392. A town on the Tigris near al-Qadisiyyah, variously referred to as Barkuwara, Balkuwara (see Le Strange, *Lands*, 52), or Barkuwan, as in manuscript C.

393. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 251-52.

394. Abu al-Layth appears to have been the chief, if not the only, commander, or "admiral," of the Zanj flotilla.

tacks on the enemy, Abu al-Layth suddenly set out to meet him without first having consulted `Ali about this. Mansur seized Abu al-Layth's barges and killed a large number of both whites and Zanj who were aboard them. Abu al-Layth himself managed to escape and found his way back to the abominable one. `Ali b. Aban turned back as well with all his forces and remained in camp for a whole month. Then with his infantry troops he set out again to fight Mansur. After establishing his new camp, he sent out scouts to gather information concerning Mansur and his soldiers.

Now Mansur had a prefect stationed at Karnaba.<sup>395</sup> `Ali b. Aban [1861] launched a night attack against this commander, killing him along with most of those based there. `Ali looted the camp, took some horses, and burned the place to the ground. He returned during the course of the same night, and arrived at the mouth of the Nahr Jubba. News of this reached Mansur, who ventured forth, finally approaching [ `Ali's base] in al-Khayzuraniyyah. `Ali went out to challenge him with a small band of troops, and the battle between them lasted that day from mid-morning until noon. Mansur was forced to flee, and his own troops scattered, abandoning him. A party of Zanj caught up with Mansur and tracked him as far as the canal owned by `Umar b. Mihran. Mansur repeatedly turned to attack his pursuers until at last his spears were all broken and his supply of arrows depleted, leaving him completely defenseless. He then made his way to the edge of the canal, intending to cross over. He shouted encouragement to his horse and it leaped, but failed to reach the other bank, and he plunged into the water.

Shibl said that the reason why the horse was unable to make the crossing successfully was because one of the Zanj had seen Mansur head for the canal bank, intending to cross over. Hurriedly throwing himself into the water, he swam across ahead of Mansur. When Mansur's horse jumped, the black confronted it, causing the horse to shy away, tumbling both itself and its rider into the water. Mansur's head bobbed to the surface, and a slave from among the blacks of Muslih's lieutenants called Abrun struck him a mortal blow and then commenced to rob him. A large number of those with Mansur were killed, including his brother Khalaf b. Ja`far. Yarjukh then placed [a

395. The reading is uncertain.

Turk named] Asghajun<sup>396</sup> in charge of Mansur's administrative duties.

On Tuesday, the 18th of Jumada I (April 1, 872), Muflih was killed [1862] by an untipped arrow, which struck him in the temple. He died the following morning; his body was borne to Samarra, and he was buried there.

#### An Account of [Muflih's] Death<sup>397</sup>

I have already recounted how Abu Ahmad [al-Muwaffaq] b. al-Mutawakkil departed from Samarra and headed for al-Basrah to do battle with the cursed one.<sup>398</sup> I myself witnessed<sup>399</sup> in Baghdad the army with which Abu Ahmad and Muflih had set out. This was after the news had reached Abu Ahmad and al-Mu`tamid concerning the atrocities endured by Muslims in al-Basrah and adjacent territories. The army passed by the Bab al-Taq,<sup>400</sup> the quarter where I was then staying, and I happened to hear a group of the elders of Baghdad saying that they had seen many armies of the caliphs but none that appeared larger and better equipped or prepared than this one. A large enthusiastic crowd of Baghdad's citizenry accompanied the army on its way through the city.

Muhammad b. al-Hasan recounted that Yahya b. Muhammad al-Bahrani was camped on the Nahr Ma`qil before Abu Ahmad's arrival in the locality of the abominable one. Yahya sought permission of the Zanj leader to march on to the Nahr al-`Abbas, but this was strongly rejected out of fear that the central authorities' forces would arrive while his own troops were scattered in various places. Yahya persisted, however, until he secured permission, and he departed, followed by the greater part of the abominable one's forces.

396. Thus in manuscript B; C, however, gives such alternative readings as Asfahur and Asfajur.

397. See Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 252-53.

398. This is the fourth epithet (*al-la`in*) Tabari employs for the Zanj leader, the others being "abominable one," "traitor," and "enemy of God."

399. A rare personal comment by Tabari on an event at which he himself was present.

400. This was the great arched gate at the eastern end of the Main Bridge in Baghdad, which opened directly onto the major market street of the eastern quarter of the city. See Le Strange, *Baghdad*, 178; Lassner, *Topography*, 173-76.

`Ali b. Aban was stationed in Jubba with a large number of the Zanj. Al-Basrah had already been plundered by his troops and they were busy moving back and forth transporting the goods they had seized from it. And so, at that time there were not many troops available to man the abominable one's own camp. His situation remained thus when Abu Ahmad arrived with Muflih and his army, a formidable and mighty force such as had never before been sent against the abominable one.

[1863]

When this war machine reached the Nahr Ma`qil, those of the Zanj leader's troops who were stationed there fled, terrified, to join him. The abominable one was alarmed by this development, and he summoned two of his army chiefs who had been present at the Nahr Ma`qil and asked them why they had abandoned their position. They told him of the might of the approaching army they had seen, its equipment, and its high state of preparedness. There was no way their own forces were sufficient to stop it. The abominable one inquired whether they knew the identity of the army commander. They did not; although efforts had been made to discover who he was, they had failed, owing to the lack of a trustworthy informant. So the abominable one despatched scouts in skiffs to attempt to glean this intelligence. His messengers returned with information concerning the imposing might of the army, but none had been able to find out who the commander-in-chief or the other leaders were. This lack of information only served to increase his apprehension and dismay. So [the Zanj leader] sent urgent word to `Ali b. Aban informing him of the approaching danger and ordering him to bring to him such troops as he had available. The government's army arrived and established camp in front of the Zanj position. On the day of the battle, which was a Wednesday, the abominable one ventured forth on foot, making the rounds of his army to examine carefully the state of affairs on his own side, as well as those confronting him.

That day a light rain had fallen. The ground was wet, making it slippery underfoot. The Zanj leader had made an early morning reconnaissance and after his return he called for ink and paper to despatch a message to `Ali b. Aban. He informed him of what he had observed of the government forces and ordered him to send whatever number of infantry he could spare.

[1864]

While [the Zanj leader] was thus engaged, someone called Abu Dulaf, who was one of the commanders of the blacks, came to him

and said, "The enemy has advanced and the Zanj have fled from them; they had no leader among them to check their flight until they reached the fourth *habl*."401 The Zanj leader berated him loudly, saying, "Get out of my sight, you liar! You don't know what you're talking about. You have only been alarmed by the numbers of troops you have seen."

Abu Dulaf left him, and the abominable one then turned to his secretary, who had ordered Ja`far b. Ibrahim al-Sajjan402 to summon the Zanj to move into the battlefield. Al-Sajjan informed the Zanj leader that he had despatched them and that his troops had seized two skiffs. Al-Sajjan was next commanded to get the infantry ready. It was only a short while after this that Muflih was struck by an arrow from a concealed archer. Thereafter defeat was unavoidable, as the Zanj overwhelmed their enemy and engulfed them in a blood-bath. The Zanj brought to the abominable one heads of the enemy, holding them by their teeth, and tossed them at his feet; that day the heads of the enemy filled every corner. The Zanj even began to apportion the flesh of their victims among themselves and to exchange it as gifts. A prisoner from Faraghinah was brought before the traitor, who asked him who the commander of the army was, and he told him of the whereabouts of Abu Ahmad and Muflih. The Zanj leader was alarmed at the mention of Abu Ahmad's name. Whenever he became alarmed by something, he would deny its truth. He said, "There is no leader in the army other than Muflih, for I have heard mention of none save him. If the one this prisoner mentioned were in the army, he would be of such importance that Muflih would only be his subordinate and adjutant to his associates."

[1865]

When Abu Ahmad's troops attacked the abominable one's camp, the noncombatants were filled with such fear that they fled from their dwellings and sought refuge by the Nahr Abi al-Khasib. At this time there were no bridges spanning the water, and as a consequence

401. See Tabari, *Glossarium*, CLXXIX, where the suggested meaning is one attested in Lane, *Lexicon*, as "'the station of the horses collected for a race before they are let go,' which was probably marked by an extended rope and was for that reason thus called." More likely, however, *habl* means here a measure of distance, indicated by some marker. Le Strange, *Baghdad*, 326 n. 1, notes that al-Khatib al-Baghdadi used the term *habl* for a length equivalent to the side of a *jarib*. See also Hinz, *Islamische Masse*, 62.

402. As his name suggests, he was a jailer.

a great number of women and children drowned in the attempt to cross it.

The abominable one had not long to wait after the battle before `Ali b. Aban arrived with a number of his troops, although by then there was little need of them. Shortly after Muflih's death, Abu Ahmad withdrew to al-Ubullah to reassemble his shattered forces and renew his preparations for war. Finally, he set out for Nahr Abi al-Asad and set up his camp there.

Muhammad b. al-Hasan reported that the abominable one did not know how Muflih had been killed.<sup>403</sup> But, when he heard that he had been hit by a stray arrow that no one claimed, he boasted that he had himself shot it. Muhammad continued: "I heard him say that an arrow had fallen near him and his servant Wah<sup>404</sup> picked it up and brought it to him. He then shot it and killed Muflih. I know that he lied about that, because I was present and witnessed the whole thing; he did not get off his horse until the battle was over and the news arrived of the enemy's defeat and the heads were brought."

In this year an epidemic struck the population of the Tigris districts, and many people died in Madinat al-Salam, Samarra, Wasit, and elsewhere.

In this year as well Khuraskharis<sup>405</sup> was killed, along with a number of his troops in Byzantine territory.

Yahya b. Muhammad al-Bahrani, the close associate of the Zanj leader, was captured in this year and killed. [1866]

An Account of [Yahya B. Muhammad's]  
Capture and Death<sup>406</sup>

Muhammad b. Sim`an the secretary reportedly said that when Yahya b. Muhammad reached the Nahr al-`Abbas he encountered at the mouth of the canal three hundred seventy horsemen from the forces of Asghajun, who was in those days the financial administrator of al-Ahwaz; the horsemen were recruited from the same area. Upon seeing them, Yahya underestimated their number and imagined

403. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 105 and n. 3.

404. Thus in Manuscript B; C is unpointed and could be read *bah/nah*, etc.

405. The reading is uncertain.

406. See Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 254.

that he had nothing to fear, given the size of his own force. So, without anything to protect them from danger, his troops attacked, and Asghajun's soldiers rained arrows down upon them, injuring many. Yahya then despatched one hundred twenty of his own horsemen across the canal, together with a large number of foot soldiers. Asghajun's troops withdrew, allowing al-Bahrani's force to enter the canal. This was at a time of low water and the transport boats were stranded in the mud. The men on the boats saw the approaching Zanj and decided to abandon them, whereupon they were seized and an immense amount of valuable goods were plundered from them. The Zanj then headed for the marsh area known as the Batihah al-Sahnah, carrying their spoils, but they left the well-traveled road, owing to the mutual envy that existed between al-Bahrani and `Ali b. Aban al-Muhallabi. Yahya's companions advised him not to take the road frequented by `Ali's army. Yahya accepted their advice, and they set out for and finally entered the marshland, showing him the road we have just mentioned. There Yahya granted leave to the cavalry and ordered Abu al-Layth al-Isbahani to march them to the encampment of the Zanj commander.

[1867]

The abominable one had sent word to Yahya alerting him of the approaching army that he had encountered and urging him to be on his guard on his return lest he also run into the enemy. Al-Bahrani sent out some scouting parties to the Tigris and they left just as Abi Ahmad's army was setting off from al-Ubullah for the Nahr Abi al-Asad.

The reason for the departure of the government's forces to the Nahr Abu al-Asad was that Rafi` b. Bistam and others from the neighborhood of Nahr al-`Abbas and the Batihah al-Sahnah had communicated with Abu Ahmad informing him of al-Bahrani and the size of his forces and, moreover, that he was planning to leave Nahr al-`Abbas for the Tigris. They thus advised Abu Ahmad to advance to the Nahr Abu al-Asad and establish his army camp there in order to interrupt the flow of supplies to al-Bahrani and preventing anyone coming to or going from his camp. Yahya's scouts returned with the news of Abu Ahmad's army, causing him increasingly to fear an encounter. He therefore turned back along the road he had come from, both he and his troops experiencing great hardship. They succumbed to a sickness owing to their constant exposure in the swamp and many of their number fell ill. As they neared the



Nahr al-`Abbas, Yahya b. Muhammad placed Sulayman b. Jami` in charge of the vanguard of the Zanj who were engaged in towing their boats out of the Nahr al-`Abbas. The government forces, however, had barges and skiffs provided by Asghajun guarding the mouth of the canal, along with contingents of cavalry and infantry. This situation caused considerable concern to Yahya and his soldiers. The Zanj then abandoned their boats and took themselves off to the west of the Nahr al-`Abbas making for the al-Zaydan road and the encampment of the abominable one.

[1868]

Yahya was totally in the dark about what had happened to this group [of Zanj]. No news reached him in the central sector of his army, which had just reached the Quraj al-`Abbas Bridge (*qantarah*), at a narrow spot where the water flowed very swiftly in the channel. From there he could oversee his Zanj troops as they towed their boats, some of which sank while others were rescued.

Muhammad b. Sim`an reported that while he was standing there by the bridge, Yahya came up to him and was clearly astonished by the violent force of the water and the great difficulty experienced by his men in towing their boats. He said, "What do you imagine would happen if the enemy attacked us now; what situation could be worse the ours?" He was interrupted by the arrival of Tashtimur al-Turki with the army that Abu Ahmad had despatched upon his return from al-Ubullah to the Nahr Abi al-Asad. Great consternation broke out among Yahya's troops.

Muhammad (b. Siman) continued: "I jumped up to take a look and saw red flags appear on the western side of the Nahr al-`Abbas where Yahya was located. The Zanj spotted them and, throwing themselves into the canal, they crossed over to the eastern side. Yahya's location became deserted, and only a few dozen men remained with him. At that Yahya took up his shield and sword and wrapped a cloth around his waist. He met the approaching enemy with his small band and Tashtimur's troops showered arrows upon them, swiftly causing many wounds. Al-Bahrani himself was wounded in three places, both his arms and his left leg. When his companions saw him injured, they scattered. However, as he was not recognized and no one made to finish him off, he retraced his way to one of the boats and crossed over [as well] to the eastern side of the canal. The time was about midmorning."

[1869]

The wounds that Yahya had sustained sapped his strength. His

condition caused the Zanj's fear to increase and their resolve to weaken. They abandoned the battle, their only concern now being to save their own skins. The government troops plundered the boats situated on the western bank of the canal. When they had finished, they boarded one of the boats with fire-throwing machines and crossed over to the opposite bank where they proceeded to burn the craft the Zanj had abandoned there. The Zanj themselves had scattered, leaving Yahya on his own. For the remainder of the day, those who could do so slipped away, leaving many dead and captured behind them, finally escaping under the protective cover of darkness. Seeing the total collapse of his forces, Yahya boarded a galley that one of the white fighters was in charge of. He brought with him a practitioner of the medical arts called Abu Jaysh `Abbad, because of the injuries he was suffering from. His only desire was to make good his escape to the camp of the abominable one. As they approached the mouth of the canal, the sailors in the galley saw ahead of them barges and gallies [of the government forces] blockading the canal. They feared to approach too near, certain as they were to be apprehended. They then crossed over to the western bank and put Yahya and those with him on shore at a small plantation. Yahya made some distance on foot moving with difficulty until, too exhausted to go further, he dropped and spent the night where he was. The next morning the physician `Abbad, who was still with him, set out on foot carefully on the lookout for anyone. When he came across some of the government's troops, he signaled to them, told them where Yahya was hiding, and then showed them the way, so that he fell into their hands. Some claim, however, that it had been another group of people who, in passing by Yahya, saw him and gave his position away so that he was captured. The news of Yahya's fate reached the abominable one, leader of the Zanj, which greatly increased his unease and heightened his sense of sorrow at the loss.

[1870]

Yahya b. Muhammad al-Azraq al-Bahrani was taken to Abu Ahmad who transported him to al-Mu`tamid in Samarra. A platform was ordered constructed at al-Hayr by the racecourse; Yahya was then elevated before the crowd so they could witness him being publicly flogged. It is reported that he entered Samarra on Wednesday, the 9th of Rajab (May 21, 872), seated upon a camel. Al-Mu`tamid held an assembly on the following morning, which was Thursday, and Yahya was given two hundred strokes of a whip end in the Ca-

liph's presence. Next his hands and legs were severed from opposite sides.<sup>407</sup> Then he was beaten severely with swords, drawn and quartered, and finally his body was burned.

Muhammad b. al-Hasan related that, when Yahya al-Bahrani was executed and the news of this reached the leader of the Zanj, he said, "Yahya's death was deeply distressing to me and my anxiety was intense, when a voice addressed me saying that his death was a blessing for me, as he was a greedy person." Sometime later he approached a group of people I was standing with and said that an example of Yahya's cupidity was the following story: "Once we had acquired a great deal of booty from one of the towns we took, and there came into his possession two necklaces of which the larger and more precious he concealed from me, showing me only the less valuable one, requesting that I give it to him as a gift. This I did. But I was then informed of the one he had hidden, and, summoning him, I said, 'Give me the necklace that you have concealed.' However, he produced only the one I had already presented to him, denying that he had taken any other. But, when I began to describe the necklace that had been reported to me, watching him, he became pale and speechless. He left and later brought me the second necklace and beseeched me to give it to him as a gift also. I did so and ordered him to seek God's forgiveness for his deed."

Muhammad b. al-Hasan Muhammad b. Sim'an reported that one day the Zanj leader said to him that he had been offered prophethood but that he had refused. Ibn Sim'an asked why and received the reply that prophethood involved burdens<sup>408</sup> he feared he had not the strength to bear.

[1871]

In this same year Abu Ahmad b. al-Mutawakkil withdrew from his position in the neighborhood of the Zanj leader and made for Wasit.

#### An Account of [Abu Ahmad's] Withdrawal to Wasit<sup>409</sup>

After Abu Ahmad had gone to the Nahr Abu al-Asad and camped there, illness and disease spread among his soldiers and others ac-

407. A punishment prescribed in Qur'an 5:33 (al-Ma'idah).

408. Popovic, *Révolte*, 107, reads this word as *`aba*, "robe" (of prophethood), rather than *a`ba'an*, a plural in the accusative, as in the text; the emendation does not seem justified. See Halm, *Traditionen*, 215.

409. See Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 255-56.

companying him. A number died, but he could not move until those who survived had managed to recover. Abu Ahmad then set out to return to Badhaward,<sup>410</sup> where he camped. He ordered the renewal of the army's equipment and the distribution to the troops of their allotments. He also refurbished the barges, galleys, and ferries and placed them under the command of men from among his freedmen.<sup>411</sup>

Setting out in pursuit of the abominable one's army, Abu Ahmad ordered a group of his commanders to make for certain spots that he listed, including the Nahr Abi al-Khasib and other places. Other commanders he ordered to stay with him to fight at the spot he himself would select. When the battle resumed between the two sides, most of his forces moved toward the Nahr Abi al-Khasib, while Abu Ahmad remained with only a handful of his troops. He held his position for fear that the Zanj might be tempted to attack him and other groups of his forces exposed to them while they were in the salt flats of Nahr Manka. The Zanj observed the dispersal of Abu Ahmad's troops and found out his [precarious] position, so they concentrated on it. Battle flared up furiously with many dead and injured on both sides. Abu Ahmad's troops burned many of the fortified places and dwellings of the Zanj and rescued a large number of female [captives]. The Zanj then directed all their efforts toward the place where Abu Ahmad was stationed. (Abu Ahmad) al-Muwaffaq appeared on a barge and plunged into the middle of the battle, urging on his troops, until there arrived a crowd of Zanj whom he knew he could not combat, given the small number of his own followers. Realizing that the better part of valor would be to disengage from battle, he commanded his own troops to retreat to their boats in deliberate and orderly fashion. Abu Ahmad then reboarded his barge after ensuring that most of his men were safely aboard their boats. A detachment remained behind, and they sought refuge in the heavy thickets and narrow waterways. They were completely cut off from their comrades. The Zanj ambushed them and picked them off one by one. These men defended themselves and in the hand-to-hand combat many Zanj met their fate. Nevertheless, some one hundred ten heads of Abu Ahmad's soldiers were sent to the leader of the Zanj, which only served to increase his arrogance.

[1872]

410. Located between al-Basrah and Wasit. See Yahya, *Mu`jam*, I, 462.

411. The phrase is *min mawalihi wa-ghilmanihi*.

Abu Ahmad finally managed to make it back with his army to al-Badhaward, where he stayed, mustering his troops for another round against the Zanj. A fire broke out at one end of the camp during a period of violent wind storms and the camp burned down. Then, in Sha`ban of this year (June. 12-July 10, 872), Abu Ahmad made the return journey to Wasit and, after his arrival, the bulk of his troops dispersed.

On the 10th of Sha`ban (June 21, 872) a dreadful, thunderous earthquake<sup>412</sup> occurred in al-Saymarah.<sup>413</sup> Then the following morning, which was Sunday, an even greater crash than the first was heard, and as a result most of the city was destroyed. Everywhere walls of buildings collapsed, and, according to what was said, some twenty thousand persons were killed. [1873]

A man known as Abu Faq`as was roundly beaten at the Public Gate in Samarra, one thousand twenty strokes being administered. The charge against him was abusing the pious ancestors (*salaf*). He died on Thursday, the 7th of Ramadan (July 15, 872).

On Friday, the 8th of Ramadan (July 16, 872), Yarjukh died. Abu `Isa b. al-Mutawakkil recited the funerary prayers for him, with Ja`-far b. al-Mu`tamid present.

In this year as well there occurred a battle between Musa b. Bugha and the troops of al-Hasan b. Zayd, who were routed.

Masrur al-Balkhi returned to Samarra after his campaign against the Kharijite Musawir. He brought back Kharijite prisoners and left Ju`lan behind as deputy of his army in al-Hadithah.<sup>414</sup> Later Masrur himself set out for the district of al-Bawazij,<sup>415</sup> where he encountered Musawir again. In the ensuing battle a number of Musawir's troops were captured. Before the end of Dhu al-Hijjah (October 8 to November 6, 872) Masrur set out on the return journey.

412. The word is *haddah*, which Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *h-d-d*, states is a violent sound occasioned by a falling wall or part of a mountain; an earthquake certainly seems to have been the cause of the destruction.

413. The chief town in the district of Mihrajanqudhaq, on the frontier of Iraq. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 201-2.

414. This is Hadithat al-Nurah (Hadithah of the Chalk Pit), which is on the Tigris and must be distinguished from the city al-Hadithah on the Euphrates. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 64. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 257, calls the location Hadithat al-Mawsil, which would refer to the same place, that is, Hadithah in the district of al-Mawsil.

415. The town of Bawazij lay on the bank of the Lower Zab river, east of Sinn on the Tigris. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 91.

In the same year a malady overcame people in Baghdad. It was called *quffa`*.<sup>416</sup>

In this year most of the Hajj pilgrims returned from al-Qar`a<sup>417</sup> out of a fear of thirst. But those who went on to Mecca arrived safely. The leader of the pilgrimage this year was al-Fadl b. Ishaq b. al-Hasan.<sup>418</sup>

416. A person described as *aqfa`* is one whose toes are misshapen. See A. de Biberstein Kazimirski, *Dictionnaire arabe-français*, s.v. *q-f`*.

417. Literally, "bare," so named, according to Yahya, *Mu`jam*, IV, 325, because of its lack of vegetation. It was a stage on the route from al-Kufah to Mecca.

418. This was the second year in succession that he had led the pilgrimage. See p. 135, above.

The Events of the Year 259<sup>419</sup>  
(November 7, 872-October 26, 873)

Among the events of this year was the return of Abu Ahmad b. al-Mutawakkil from Wasit to Samarra. He arrived on Friday, the 26th of Rabi` I (January 30, 873). He appointed Muhammad al-Muwallad to be responsible for Wasit and for pursuing the war against the abominable one in the area.<sup>420</sup>

The death of Kanjur<sup>421</sup> occurred in this year.

#### An Account of [Kanjur's] Death

At the time he was governor of al-Kufah, Kanjur left it without official sanction for Samarra. He refused an order to return to al-Kufah and so, according to what has been reported, money was transported

419. Popovic, *Révolte*, 109, notes the disproportionate amount of detail that Tabari provides on the Zanj revolt. The years 255-58/868-72 cover more than twice the space given to the succeeding period, 259-65/873-79. In this latter period, Tabari highlights only the important developments in the revolt.

420. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 108ff.

421. See n. 336, above.



to him to be distributed among his troops for their allotments. This failed to mollify Kanjur, and he continued as far as `Ukbara'<sup>422</sup> in the month of Rabi` I (January 5-February 3, 873). In response, a number of army commanders were sent from Samarra to deal with him, among them Satikin, Takin, `Abd al-Rahman b. Muflih, Musa b. Utamish, and others. They butchered him and sent his head to Samarra. This was on the 29th of Rabi` I (February 2, 873). Some forty thousand dinars were seized from him at the same time. Kanjur's Christian secretary was forced to surrender more money. Then in the following month, Rabi` II (February 4 to March 4, 873), this secretary was punished by being given one thousand lashes at the Public Gate [in Samarra], from which he died.

In this year Sharkab al-Jammal conquered Marv and its adjacent territories and plundered them.

Ya`qub b. al-Layth returned from Balkh in this year and resided in Quhistan.<sup>423</sup> He appointed financial prefects over Herat, Bushanj, and Badghis, and then he departed for Sijistan.<sup>424</sup> [1875]

In this year as well `Abdallah al-Sijzi<sup>425</sup> abandoned Ya`qub ibn al-Layth, breaking his bond of loyalty to him, and blockaded Naysabur.<sup>426</sup> Then Muhammad b. Tahir sent messengers and legists to sort out matters, and they went back and forth between them [conducting negotiations], and finally `Abdallah was appointed governor of al-Tabasayn and Quhistan.<sup>427</sup>

422. A town lying on the east bank of the Tigris, about halfway between Baghdad and Samarra. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 50, 51; Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 33, 38-39.

423. The province of Quhistan was generally regarded by Arab geographers as a dependency of Khurasan. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 352ff. The movements of Ya`qub b. al-Layth mentioned in this paragraph reflect the expansion of his power in the eastern provinces of the `Abbasid domains. See Bosworth, "Tahirids," 115ff.

424. The province situated on the southern border of Khurasan; it was also called Sistan. Le Strange, *Lands*, 334-53, 431.

425. That is, a native of the province of Sijistan. See also Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 261-62.

426. One of the four major cities of the province of Khurasan, the others being Marv, Herat, and Balkh. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 382-88.

427. There were two places in Quhistan called Tabas; Tabas al-Tamr and Tabas al-`Unnab, which are often referred to in the dual form Tabasayn. This province of Quhistan, which means "mountain land," is not to be confused with the Persian equivalent of the district known in Arabic as al-Jibal. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 359.

On the 6th of Rajab (May 8, 873) of this year (ʿAli b. Aban) al-Muhallabi and Yahya b. Khalaf al-Nahrabatti overran Suq al-Ahwaz and killed a great many inhabitants, including the chief of security.

An Account of [the] Battle [at Suq al-Ahwaz] and  
How the Army Commander<sup>428</sup> of the  
Central Authorities Was Killed

The burning of Abu Ahmad's military camp in al-Badhaward was reported to have been kept from the leader of the Zanj. He discovered what had happened only three days later, when two men from ʿAbbadan visited him and gave him the news.

At this the Zanj leader returned to plundering, as supplies of food were cut off from him. He sent off ʿAli b. Aban al-Muhallabi with most of the army accompanied by Sulayman b. Jamiʿ, who had taken charge of the forces formerly under Yahya b. Muhammad al-Bahrani and Sulayman b. Musa al-Shaʿrani. Sulayman was also placed in charge of the cavalry while the rest of the troops were with ʿAli b. Aban al-Muhallabi.

At the time the governor of al-Ahwaz was someone called Asghajun; stationed there with him were Nayzak and a number of other commanders. ʿAli b. Aban approached al-Ahwaz with his Zanj forces, and when Asghajun was alerted to this he advanced toward ʿAli with his own troops, the two sides meeting in the desert wastes of Dastimaran. That day fate was against Asghajun, who was drowned, while Nayzak and many of his troops were slain. Al-Hasan b. Harthamah al-Shar and al-Hasan b. Jaʿfar Zawashar were both taken prisoner the same day.

[1876]

Muhammad b. al-Hasanal-Hasan b. (al-Harthamah) al-Shar said, "That day we left al-Ahwaz with Asghajun to meet the Zanj, but our troops were unable to stand their ground, and they fled; Nayzak was killed, and Asghajun went missing. When I became aware of this, I dismounted from my own crop-tailed horse.<sup>429</sup> By leading another horse I had with me into the river and seizing hold of its tail, I planned to make good my escape. But my servant beat me to it, making his escape and leaving me behind. I then tried to join Musa

428. *Sahib al-harb*.

429. *Faras mahdhuf*. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *h-dh-f*.

b. Ja`far so the two of us could get away together, but he had boarded a rivercraft and departed without waiting for me. I caught sight of another boat, which I managed to board, but a crowd gathered round demanding to be taken on board as well, and, with so many clinging to the craft, they caused it to capsize. I scrambled onto the overturned hull and the crowd departed just as the Zanj arrived. They began shooting arrows at me and, as I felt my end was near, I cried out to them, 'Stop shooting and toss me something that I can grab myself and reach you.' So they extended a spear, which I grabbed with my hand, and they pulled me out. As for al-Hasan b. Ja`far, his brother put him on a horse and set him up to act as a messenger between him and the commander of the army. But, in the wake of defeat and in his haste to find safety, his horse stumbled, and he was captured."

[1877]

`Ali b. Aban relayed the news of the battle to the abominable one and sent him many enemy heads and banners as well. Al-Hasan b. al-Shar, al-Hasan b. Ja`far, and Ahmad b. Ruh, along with other captives, were ordered imprisoned. Meanwhile `Ali b. Aban entered al-Ahwaz and systematically pillaged it, forcing the central authorities to assign Musa b. Bugha to the task of waging war against the abominable one.

Musa b. Bugha left Samarra for this purpose on the 17th of Dhu al-Qa`dah (September 14, 873). Al-Mu`tamid accompanied him in public procession as far as the city walls and there bestowed robes of honor upon him.

This same year `Abd al-Rahman b. Muflih arrived in al-Ahwaz, Ishaq b. Kundaj<sup>430</sup> in al-Basrah, and Ibrahim b. Sima in Badhawad, all acting on authority of Musa b. Bugha in preparation for waging war against the Zanj leader.

An Account of How [Musa B. Bugha's Commanders]  
Fared Against the Zanj<sup>431</sup>

Following Ibn Muflih's arrival in al-Ahwaz, he reportedly encamped for ten days at the Arbuk Bridge and then set out against (`Ali b. Aban) al-Muhallabi. Ibn Muflih was defeated in the encounter by al-

430. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 260, calls him Ishaq b. Kandajiq.

431. See Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 259-60.

Muhallabi and forced to withdraw to regroup his forces. Ibn Muflih returned to do battle again. In the violent fighting the Zanj were dealt a devastating blow in numbers killed and taken captive. `Ali b. Aban was routed, yet managed to escape with some followers to Bayan. The abominable one tried to induce them to return to battle but, owing to the fear that gripped their hearts, they could not. When he saw the situation as it was, he allowed them to enter his camp; they did so and settled for a time in his city.

`Abd al-Rahman (b. Muflih) arrived in Hisn al-Mahdi<sup>432</sup> to establish his army there. The abominable one sent `Ali b. Aban to fight him but, as `Ali was unable to overcome Ibn Muflih, he headed for a place called al-Dakar. At this time Ibrahim b. Sima was in al-Badhadward, and in one engagement he defeated `Ali, who, when he returned to the attack, was beaten again. During the night `Ali left and, accompanied by some guides who led him through the dense thickets and copses, he reached Nahr Yahya. `Abd al-Rahman received news of `Ali's [movements] and despatched Tashtimur against him with a contingent of *mawlas*. However, owing to the inaccessibility of `Ali's position and the impenetrable barrier of reeds and grasses, Tashtimur failed to reach him. So he forced them out by setting fire to the vegetation. A number of Zanj were captured, and Tashtimur brought them and [news of] the victory to `Abd al-Rahman b. Muflih while `Ali b. Aban made his way to Nasukha<sup>433</sup> and set up camp there with the remainder of his forces. News of `Ali's move reached `Abd al-Rahman b. Muflih, and he immediately shifted his own camp to al-`Amud. [1878]

Meanwhile, `Ali b. Aban had gone toward Nahr al-Sidrah,<sup>434</sup> where he wrote to the abominable one seeking his reinforcements and barges. Thirteen barges were sent containing several contingents of Zanj troops. With these `Ali set out to meet `Abd al-Rahman b. Muflih, who had also made his way toward an encounter. However, no fighting occurred and the two armies stood arrayed against each other for the whole day. After nightfall, `Ali hand-picked a number of his troops, in whose courage and fortitude he had

432. A fortress situated at the head of the estuary of the Dujayl. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 238, 243; Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 313. [1879]

433. The reading is conjectural.

434. The broad reach of the Dujayl below al-Ahwaz was known as Nahr al-Sidrah, the Lotus canal. See Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, II, 258.

complete trust. Leaving the rest of his army behind in order to conceal his real intentions, `Ali set out with these select few accompanied by Sulayman b. Musa al-Sha`rani. Taking up a position in the rear of `Abd al-Rahman, `Ali launched a surprise night attack on the camp and inflicted serious losses on him and his troops, forcing `Abd al-Rahman to retreat and abandon four of his own fleet of barges; `Ali recovered these and departed. `Abd al-Rahman proceeded as far as al-Dulab,<sup>435</sup> where he reestablished his camp. Placing Tashtimur in command of some of his infantry troops, he sent them into another campaign against `Ali b. Aban. Tashtimur and `Ali met each other in the environs of Bayan Azar.<sup>436</sup> In the fighting `Ali was forced to flee to Nahr al-Sidrah. When Tashtimur sent word of `Ali's defeat to `Abd al-Rahman, he set out with his army to reach al-`Amud, where he set up camp and prepared his troops for battle. The barges, over which Tashtimur was given command, were put in order and with them he ventured forth to the mouth of Nahr al-Sidrah, where he engaged `Ali b. Aban in a major battle. `Ali was again routed, losing ten of his barges and being forced to return in defeat to the abominable one. `Abd al-Rahman immediately set up his army camp in Bayan, from which both he and Ibrahim b. Sima advanced and attacked by turns the abominable one's position, stirring great fear among those in his camp.

Ishaq b. Kundaj, who at the time was stationed in al-Basrah, had cut off the flow of supplies to the army of the abominable one. On the day that he feared that `Abd al-Rahman and Ibrahim b. Sima would come out against him, the abominable one would gather together his forces until the battle was over and then send a detachment of them to the outskirts of al-Basrah, where Ishaq b. Kundaj would attack them. For over ten months they remained deadlocked in this fashion, until Musa b. Bugha was replaced by Masrur al-Balkhi as the one in charge of conducting the campaign against the abominable one. News of this change reached the abominable one.

[1880]

In this same year al-Hasan b. Zayd conquered Qumis,<sup>437</sup> and his troops occupied the city.

435. Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, II, 622, where it is written as al-Dawlab.

436. Emended from the text: Bayab Azar. The critical apparatus suggests Bayan is a possible reading in Manuscript B, which is supported also in C. The reading Bayan would also seem to be supported by its mention a few lines later, though in both B and C it is unpointed.

437. This small province stretched along the foot of the chain of the Alburz moun-

*(Footnote continued on next page)*

In this year as well a battle occurred between Muhammad b. al-Fadl b. Sinan al-Qazwini and Wahsudhan b. Justan al-Daylami,<sup>438</sup> who was routed by Muhammad.

Musa b. Bugha appointed al-Salabi<sup>439</sup> this year as governor of al-Rayy, at the time when Kayghalagh attacked Takin<sup>440</sup> and killed him. Al-Salabi went to take up his post.

The Byzantine emperor<sup>441</sup> conquered Sumaysat<sup>442</sup> in this year and also attacked Malatyah<sup>443</sup> and besieged its inhabitants, who fought back and succeeded in driving him off. Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Qabus killed Nasr al-Iqritashi, the supreme commander.<sup>444</sup>

This year, too, a group of Zanj prisoners was sent to Samarra from al-Ahwaz. The Samarran mob attacked and killed many of them and stripped their bodies.

Ya`qub b. al-Layth entered Naysabur this year.

An Account of [Ya`Qub B. al-Layth's [1881]  
Entry in to Naysabur]<sup>445</sup>

Ya`qub b. al-Layth had reportedly gone to Herat and then headed for Naysabur. As he approached the city, intending to enter it, Muhammad b. Tahir sent word to him requesting that Ya`qub receive him, but he refused to comply. So Muhammad had some of his kinsmen intercede on his behalf with Ya`qub, after which, in the evening of the 4th of Shawwal (August 3, 873), Ya`qub entered the city and encamped in one of the suburbs called Da'udabadh. Muhammad b. Tahir rode out to meet Ya`qub in his pavilion, where he was closely

(Footnote continued from previous page)

tains. The capital town was al-Damghan, which the Arabs often called (Madinat) Qumis. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 364-65.

438. One of the chiefs of the Daylamites who, in 250/864, had sworn allegiance to the `Alid al-Hasan b. Zayd in a collaborative campaign against the Tahirid Sulayman b. `Abdallah. See Tabari, III, 1527-28.

439. Unidentified.

440. The reading is uncertain, and therefore it is not clear that this is the same person as the army commander mentioned on p. 151, above, who was despatched with others to deal with Kanjur. There is no evidence that the latter Takin held the governorship of al-Rayy, which is what the context suggests.

441. See n. 385, above.

442. A town on the Euphrates in the district of Diyar Mudar, which bordered on the province of the Jazirah. Le Strange, *Lands*, 87.

443. Called by the Greeks Melitene; it was an important fortress on the frontier between Muslim and Byzantine territory. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 120.

444. *Bitriq al-Batariqah*, commander of ten thousand men.

445. See also Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 261-62.





questioned. Ya`qub then began to upbraid and rebuke Muhammad for neglecting his duties, after which he appointed `Uzayz b. al-Sari as his agent and replaced Muhammad b. Tahir with him as governor of Naysabur. Muhammad b. Tahir and his kinsmen were imprisoned, and, when news of this reached the central authorities, they despatched Hatim b. Zayrak b. Salam to Ya`qub at once. On the 20th of Dhu al-Qa`dah (September 17, 873) the central authorities received Ya`qub's communications. According to report, Ja`far b. al-Mu`tamid and Abu Ahmad b. al-Mutawakkil held an audience in the main hall of the Jawsaq palace, attended by the army commanders. Permission was granted Ya`qub's messengers to address them, and they related details that had come to Ya`qub's attention concerning the state of affairs among the population of Khurasan, where Kharijites and brigands had overrun the place, gravely weakening Muhammad b. Tahir's position. This had caused people to correspond with Ya`qub, imploring him to come to their assistance, to which request he responded. When Ya`qub was still ten *farsakhs*<sup>446</sup> from Naysabur, people from the city met him and surrendered it, allowing him to enter.

Abu Ahmad (b. al-Mutawakkil) and `Ubaydallah b. Yahya then spoke to the messengers, saying that the Commander of the Faithful could not condone what Ya`qub had done. He was therefore ordering Ya`qub to return to the duties in his own province. As he had no justification for doing what he had done without orders, he must return [to his province]. If he returned, he would be behaving as a governor should; if not, then he would be treated as a rebel. Ya`qub's messengers were sent back. [Before they left] they were each presented with a three-piece robe of honor.<sup>447</sup> They had brought with them a head stuck upon a lance with a message on it, which read: "This is the head of God's enemy `Abd al-Rahman the Kharijite, who for thirty years falsely professed himself caliph in Herat. He was slain by Ya`qub b. al-Layth."

[1882]

Leading the pilgrimage this year was Ibrahim b. Muhammad b. Isma`il b. Ja`far b. Sulayman b. `Ali b. `Abdallah b. `Abbas, who was known as Burayh.<sup>448</sup>

446. About 60 km.

447. *Khil`ah fiha thalathah athwab*. See n. 257, above.

448. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 272, identifies him as governor (*al-`amil*) and *amir* of Mecca.

The Events of the Year 260  
(October 27, 873-October 15, 874)

Among the events taking place this year was the death of Muhammad b. Harun b. al-Mu`ammar,<sup>449</sup> who was slain by one of the Kurds of Musawir the Kharijite. Discovered aboard a boat heading for Samarra, Muhammad was killed, and his severed head sent to Musawir. In Jumada II (March 24, 874-April 21, 874) [the tribe of] Rabi`ah sought to avenge Muhammad's death, and so Masrur al-Balkhi and a number of the other commanders were ordered to go after Musawir.

In this year as well the leader of the Zanj killed `Ali b. Zayd al-<sup>[1883]</sup>  
`Alawi,<sup>450</sup> the master of al-Kufah.

Ya`qub b. al-Layth in this same year fought and routed al-Hasan b. Zayd al-Talibi and then entered Tabaristan.

An Account of [the] Battle [in Tabaristan]<sup>451</sup>

Well-informed sources related to me that in the struggle for dominance of Sijistan between Ya`qub and `Abdallah al-Sijzi, Ya`qub got

449. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 273, calls him Ibn al-Ma`mar.

450. His full name was `Ali b. Zayd b. al-Husayn b. `Isa b. Zayd b. `Ali b. al-Husayn b. `Ali b. Abi Talib. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 110, for details.

451. See Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 268-69.

the upper hand, while `Abdallah managed to escape from him and join Muhammad b. Tahir in Naysabur. When Ya`qub reached Naysabur, `Abdallah fled and joined up with al-Hasan b. Zayd,<sup>452</sup> following which Ya`qub set out in pursuit of him, after what went on between him and Muhammad b. Tahir, as I have already mentioned before.

On his way into Tabaristan he passed Asfara'im<sup>453</sup> and its territories. A man lived there whom I used to know, called Badil al-Kashshi. He was a collector of prophetic traditions and [was known for] practicing supererogatory works and commanding the good. He had been well received by the common people of this district. When Ya`qub stayed there he sent word to Badil, informing him that they were alike in their performance of supererogatory works. Ya`qub continued to treat him with courtesy until Badil ventured to come to visit him. Once in his power, however, Ya`qub placed Badil in fetters and took him along to Tabaristan, where, as he approached Sariyah,<sup>454</sup> he was met by al-Hasan b. Zayd.

I was also told that Ya`qub sent word to al-Hasan b. Zayd, requesting that he deliver `Abdallah al-Sijzi to him, after which he would depart, as he had come to Tabaristan only for the sake of `Abdallah, not to pick a fight with al-Hasan. However, al-Hasan b. Zayd refused to hand over `Abdallah. Ya`qub then informed al-Hasan of his intention to attack. The two armies met with neither side at first gaining the upper hand, though al-Hasan was finally forced to flee and head for al-Shirriz<sup>455</sup> and the country of Daylam. Ya`qub occupied Sariyah and then proceeded toward Amul,<sup>456</sup> collecting from its inhabitants a year's taxes. From Amul he left for al-Shirriz in pursuit of al-Hasan b. Zayd. Upon reaching the mountains of Tabaristan, he encountered a period of uninterrupted rainfall which, according to my reports, lasted for some forty days. Only with extreme difficulty was he able to advance. As I was told, he had managed to ascend a moun-

[1884]

452. Tabari reported his last whereabouts in Qumis, which he captured in 259. See p. 155, above. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 268, reports that at this time he was in Tabaristan, where `Abdallah joined him.

453. Also written as Asfarayn, for which, see Le Strange, *Lands*, 393. It was a prosperous city in Khurasan, located in a large plain of the same name.

454. At this time Sariyah, rather than Amul, was the seat of the Tahirid governor in Tabaristan. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 370.

455. The reading is uncertain.

456. Le Strange, *Lands*, 370, 381.

tain, but the descent was possible only by his being borne upon the shoulders of his men, as most of the pack animals had perished. Thereafter he resumed his pursuit of al-Hasan b. Zayd to al-Shirriz.

Someone from that district informed me that Ya`qub finally reached the road he had sought to join and there he paused with his troops. He advanced in front of them, carefully inspecting the way before finally rejoining his troops and ordering them to turn back. He said to his men, "If there is no other road than this, then there is no way of overtaking al-Hasan b. Zayd." The same person who had mentioned this to me also informed me that the women of this district said to their men, "Let him come, for, if Ya`qub ventures upon this road, we will take care of him for you. We will be responsible for seizing and imprisoning him for you."

When Ya`qub returned from the border area of Tabaristan, he reviewed his troops and discovered, as I was told, that he had lost forty thousand men along with the greater part of his horses, camels, and baggage, which were also lost.

It is said that he wrote to the central authorities about his expedition against al-Hasan b. Zayd and of his departure from Jurjan to Tamis,<sup>457</sup> which he conquered. He then noted his passage to Sariyah where al-Hasan b. Zayd had destroyed the bridges and removed the ferries, thus preventing any advance along that road. Al-Hasan b. Zayd was camped before the gate of Sariyah, naturally protected by the surrounding great river valleys. Khurshad b. Jilaw, the chief of Daylam, had come to al-Hasan's aid, providing a powerful force composed of troops gathered from Tabaristan, Daylam, Khurasan, Qumm, al-Jabal, al-Sham, and al-Jazirah. Ya`qub said, "I routed al-Hasan and slew a greater number of the enemy than I've ever seen before, capturing as well seventy of the Talibiyyin." That took place in Rajab (April 22-May 21, 874). Al-Hasan b. Zayd returned to al-Shirriz, taking the Daylamites with him.

[1885]

In this year in many of the Islamic lands prices shot up. According to one report, those who were living in Mecca for religious reasons

457. Le Strange, *Lands*, 375, notes that Tamis (or Tamisah) lay on the eastern frontier of Tabaristan, three marches distant from Sariyah; it stood "on the great causeway across the marches which had been built to carry the high road by King Anushirwan the Just." See also Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, III, 503-4. This description helps clarify Hasan b. Zayd's moves to prevent passage along the road.

abandoned it for Medina and other places because price rises were particularly severe [in Mecca]. The financial administrator, [Ibrahim b. Muhammad] Burayh, who had been living in Mecca, also left the city. In Baghdad, too, prices rose, a *kurr*<sup>458</sup> of barley reaching one hundred twenty dinars, while wheat<sup>459</sup> reached one hundred fifty dinars a *kurr*. The situation remained this way for several months.<sup>460</sup>

Arab tribesmen this year killed Manjur the governor of Hims. Baktimur (b. Tashtimur) was made governor in his place.

Ya`qub b. al-Layth left Tabaristan this year for the district of al-Rayy. According to a report I received, the reason for this was the fact that, after Ya`qub's defeat of al-Hasan b. Zayd, `Abdallah al-Sijzi had sought protection from Ya`qub with al-Salabi, offering him the choice of either delivering `Abdallah al-Sijzi to him, enabling him to return and leave al-Salabi's jurisdiction, or else engaging in battle. According to what I was told, al-Salabi chose to hand over `Abdallah. This done, Ya`qub killed `Abdallah and then departed al-Salabi's territory. [1886]

In this year al-`Ala' b. Ahmad al-Azdi was slain.

#### An Account of [al-Azdi's] Death

It was reported that al-`Ala' b. Ahmad suffered a stroke and became gravely incapacitated as a result. The central authorities sent to Abu al-Rudayni `Umar b. `Ali b. Murr, confirming him in the governorship of Adharbayjan, a position held by al-`Ala' b. Ahmad. Abu al-Rudayni set out to take possession of the province from al-`Ala'. In Ramadan (June 20-July 19, 874) al-`Ala', borne upon a litter, went forth to confront in battle Abu al-Rudayni, who was accompanied by a crowd of Kharijites and others. Al-`Ala' was killed. It is also reported that al-Rudayni sent a number of his men to seize al-`Ala' 's possessions, which he had left behind; goods valued at two million

458. A measure of wheat, etc., consisting of six assloads. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *k-r-r*. See also Hinz, *Islamische Masse*, 64.

459. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 272, mentions only the price of wheat, which rose to one hundred twenty dinars.

460. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 273, adds in a separate note that price increases were also severe in Ifriqiyah, the Maghrib, al-Andalus, and other places, which resulted in many deaths from epidemics and plague.

seven hundred thousand dirhams were removed from his fortress.

In this year the Byzantines captured Lu'lu'ah<sup>461</sup> from the Muslims.

Leading the pilgrimage this year was Ibrahim b. Muhammad b. Isma'il b. Ja'far b. Sulayman b. `Ali, known as Burayh.

461. See Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, IV, 371, who identifies Lu'lu'ah as a fortress near Tarsus. At this time it seemed to change hands regularly; Tabari notes at the end of the year 263 (877) that the fortress was (again?) surrendered by the Muslims to their enemies.

The Events of the Year 261  
(October 16, 874-October 5, 875)

Among the events occurring this year was the departure of al-Hasan b. Zayd from the land of Daylam for Tabaristan. He destroyed Shalus<sup>462</sup> by fire [in revenge] for the assistance its people had given to Ya`qub. He also converted their estates into fiefs for the Daylamites.

Also this year the central authorities ordered `Ubaydallah b. `Abdallah b. Tahir to round up the pilgrims present in Baghdad from Khurasan, al-Rayy, Tabaristan, and Jurjan. This he did in Safar (November 15-December 13, 874) and read to them a declaration in which they were informed by the central authorities that Ya`qub b. al-Layth had not been commissioned as governor of Khurasan. They were, furthermore, ordered to disavow him, because the Caliph disapproved his entry into Khurasan and his capture of Muhammad b. Tahir. [1887]

`Abdallah b. al-Wathiq died this year in the army camp of Ya`qub al-Saffar.

462. A city two days march west of Amul, with a large stone castle and adjoining congregational mosque. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 373.



In this year as well, during the month of Jumada II (February 11 - March 12, 875), Musawir the Kharijite killed Yahya b. Hafs, who administered the Khurasan Road, in Karkh Juddan.<sup>463</sup> Masrur al-Balkhi went out in pursuit of Musawir, and he was followed by Abu Ahmad b. al-Mutawakkil. Musawir withdrew and was not overtaken by his pursuers.

In Jumada I (February 1 -March 1, 876) of this year Abu Hashim Da'ud b. Sulayman al-Ja`fari was slain.

A battle took place in Ramhurmuz this year between Muhammad b. Wasil and `Abd al-Rahman b. Muflih., who was with Tashtimur. Ibn Wasil killed Tashtimur and captured Ibn Muflih.

#### An Account of [the] Battle [of Ramhurmuz]<sup>464</sup>

According to reports I have received, the cause was because Ibn Wasil had killed al-Harith b. Sima, the agent of the central government in Fars, which had now fallen to Ibn Wasil. Fars, along with al-Ahwaz, al-Basrah, al-Bahrayn, and al-Yamamah, was now assigned to Musa b. Bugha, in addition to the east, which he already controlled. Musa b. Bugha despatched `Abd al-Rahman b. Muflih to al-Ahwaz to govern it and Fars, giving him the assistance of Tashtimur. Ibn Wasil got word of Musa's decision and also that Ibn Muflih was headed for Fars in pursuit of him, having previously been stationed in al-Ahwaz, where he had conducted a campaign against the Kharijite in al-Basrah. [1888]

Ibn Wasil marched toward Ibn Muflih, and the two sides met in Ramhurmuz, where Abu Da'ud al-Sa`luk<sup>465</sup> joined forces with Ibn Wasil as support against Ibn Muflih. In his triumph Ibn Wasil captured Ibn Muflih, while destroying his army and slaying Tashtimur. Ibn Muflih remained captive until he was killed, although the central authorities had sent to Ibn Wasil Isma`il b. Ishaq [the judge]<sup>466</sup> to negotiate his release, but without securing any response from Ibn Wasil. Once Ibn Wasil was rid of Ibn Muflih, he openly declared his intention of making for Wasit to fight Musa b. Bugha. He progressed

463. Located close to the border between Iraq and Iran. See Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, IV, 449.

464. See Ibn al-Athir, *Kdmil*, VII, 275.

465. See n. 48, above.

466. He had been a member of the delegation sent by al-Mu`tamid to Ya`qub b. al-Layth in Fars. See p. 119, above.

as far as al-Ahwaz, where Ibrahim b. Sima was stationed with a large force. Musa b. Bugha, realizing the seriousness of matters, with the rising wave of rebels in the eastern districts and with resources insufficient to check them, requested to be relieved of his duties over these provinces. This was granted, and his territories were added to those of Abu Ahmad b. al-Mutawakkil, who was made governor over them all. Musa b. Bugha meanwhile retired from Wasit to the central authorities [in Samarra], along with his administrative prefects from the eastern districts.

In this year Abu al-Saj<sup>467</sup> was made governor of al-Ahwaz and given responsibility for the conduct of the campaign against the Zanj leader. Abu al-Saj made for al-Ahwaz after `Abd al-Rahman b. Muflih. had left for Fars.

In this year as well a battle occurred between `Abd al-Rahman [who was related by marriage to Abu al-Saj] and `Ali b. Aban in the district of al-Dulab. `Abd al-Rahman was slain, and Abu al-Saj departed for `Askar Mukram. The Zanj occupied al-Ahwaz and put some of its inhabitants to the sword, taking others captive and plundering and burning the houses. Thereafter Abu al-Saj was removed from his duties in al-Ahwaz and his responsibilities for fighting the Zanj, being replaced as governor by Ibrahim b. Sima. He remained in charge, leaving al-Ahwaz only at the time when Musa b. Bugha was relieved of control of the eastern districts. [1889]

During this year Muhammad b. Aws al-Balkhi was made governor of the Khurasan Road.

When Abu Ahmad took over control of the eastern provinces he appointed Masrur al-Balkhi governor of al-Ahwaz, al-Basrah, the Tigris districts, al-Yamamah, and al-Bahrayn in Sha`ban (May 11-June 8, 875) of this year. He was also given the task of campaigning against the leader of the Zanj.

In Ramadan (June 9-July 8, 875) Nasr b. Ahmad b. Asad al-Samani<sup>468</sup> was appointed governor of the land beyond the river of Balkh<sup>469</sup>; he received a letter of appointment to this post.

467. His full name was Abu al-Saj Diwdad b. Diwdast. He had previously held a post in al-Kufah, with responsibility for repairing the Meccan road in 252 (866-67). See Tabari, III, 1682-85; Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 276; *EI* s.v. "Sadjites."

468. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 279-82, provides more details on these developments; see also R. N. Frye, "The Samamds."

469. This was the territory known as *Ma wara' al-nahr*, "what was beyond the

(Footnote continued on next page)

In Shawwal (July 9-August 6, 875) Ya`qub b. al-Layth marched toward Fars. Ibn Wasil was still encamped in al-Ahwaz, and from there he set out for Fars; in Dhu al-Qa`dah (August 7-September 5, 875) he clashed with Ya`qub b. al-Layth, who routed him and destroyed his army. Ya`qub sent off men to Khurramah to strip clean Ibn Wasil's fortress,<sup>470</sup> the contents of which reportedly reached a value of forty million dirhams. He also took prisoner Mirdas, Ibn Wasil's maternal uncle.

During the year the troops of Ya`qub b. al-Layth assaulted the inhabitants of Zamm<sup>471</sup> Musa b. Mihran al-Kurdi for the assistance they had rendered to Muhammad b. Wasil. The troops killed them, forcing Musa b. Mihran to flee. [1890]

On the 12th of Shawwal (July 20, 875) of this year al-Mu`tamid held an assembly in the Public Audience Hall (*dar al-`ammah*), at which he appointed his son Ja`far his heir, giving him the honorific title al-Mufawwad ila-Allah. He also made him governor of the western regions, attaching Musa b. Bugha to him as governor of Ifriqiyah, Egypt, Syria, al-Jazirah, Mosul, Armenia, the Khurasan Road, Mihrajanqadhaq, and Hulwan. A1-Mu`tamid also appointed his brother Abu Ahmad<sup>472</sup> heir after Ja`far, making him governor of the eastern regions. Masrur al-Balkhi was attached to him as governor of Baghdad, the Sawad, al-Kufah, the Mecca Road, Medina, the Yemen, Kaskar, the Tigris districts, al-Ahwaz, Fars, Isfahan, Qumm, al-Karaj, al-Dinawar, al-Rayy, Zanjan, Qazwin, Khurasan, Tabaristan, Jurjan, Kirman, Sijistan, and Sind. A1-Mu`tamid also bestowed upon each of his heirs two standards, one black, the other white. He stipulated that, in the event of his death, if Ja`far could not fulfill the duties of the caliphate,<sup>473</sup> it would pass first to Abu Ahmad and then to Ja`far. On these terms the oath of allegiance was rendered by the people, and copies of the succession decree were dis-

(Footnote continued from previous page)

river," the river understood as the Oxus, the frontier between the Persian-speaking region of Khurasan and Turkish Transoxania. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 433ff.

470. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 278. This was located some 80 kin. from Shiraz, on the road to Kirman; see also Istakhri, *Kitab al-masalik wa-al-mamalik*, 102.

471. Known also as Zamm al-Bazanjan. See Tabari, *Index*; also Istakhri, *Masalik*, 145.

472. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 278, notes that at this ceremony Abu Ahmad received his honorific title, al-Nasir li-Din Allah al-Muwaffaq.

473. That is, because Ja`far would not have reached the age of maturity, when he could assume these responsibilities.

seminated. One such copy was despatched with al-Hasan b. Muhammad b. Abi al-Shawarib to affix to the Ka`bah [in Mecca]. In Shawwal (July 9-August 6, 875) Ja`far al-Mufawwad made Musa b. Bugha his deputy over the western regions and sent Muhammad al-Muwallad to him with an agreement to this effect.

Muhammad b. Zaydawayh deserted Ya`qub b. al-Layth this year, withdrawing thousands of his troops from Ya`qub's army and going over to Abu al-Saj, who welcomed him. Muhammad stayed with him in al-Ahwaz and received a robe of honor from Samarra. Ibn Zaydawayh then requested of the central authorities that al-Husayn b. Tahir b. `Abdallah be sent with him to Khurasan. [1891]

On the 7th of Dhu al-Hijjah (September 12, 875) Masrur al-Balkhi set out from Samarra as Abu Ahmad's vanguard. According to report, robes of honor were bestowed upon him and thirty-four of his commanders. The two heirs publicly escorted him, and al-Muwaffaq followed him from Samarra on the 21st of Dhu al-Hijjah (September 26, 875).

Leading the pilgrimage this year was al-Fadl b. Ishaq b. al-Hasan b. Isma`il b. al-`Abbas b. Muhammad b. `Ali b. `Abdallah b. `Abbas.

Al-Hasan b. Muhammad b. Abi al-Shawarib died this year after he had performed the pilgrimage.

The Events of the Year 262  
(October 6, 875-September 23, 876)

Among the events taking place this year were the arrival of Ya`qub b. al-Layth in Ramhurmuz in the month of al-Muharram (October 6 -November 4, 875) and the despatch of Isma`il b. Ishaq and Bughraj to him by the central authorities.<sup>474</sup> The central authorities also released from prison Ya`qub b. al-Layth's supporters. At the time of the dispute between Ya`qub and Muhammad b. Tahir, the authorities had imprisoned Ya`qub's servant Wasif and other supporters who had stood by him. They were released from prison following Ya`qub's arrival in Ramhurmuz on the 5th of Rabi` I (November 9,875). [1892]

Thereafter Isma`il b. Ishaq left Ya`qub for Samarra bearing a message from him. Meanwhile, Abu Ahmad (al-Muwaffaq) held an audience in Baghdad, to which he summoned a group of merchants, informing them that the Commander of the Faithful had appointed Ya`qub b. al-Layth governor of Khurasan, Tabaristan, Jutjan, al-Rayy, and Fats and head of security in Madinat al-Salam. One of Ya`-

474. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*. VII, 290, commences his account of this year by stating that Ya`qub journeyed from Fats to al-Ahwaz in the month of al-Muharram; Ramhurmuz was only a three-day march east of al-Ahwaz.

qub's companions, Dirham b. Nasr, was present at the audience. Al-Mu`tamid had sent this Dirham from Samarra to Ya`qub [with a message] granting the latter what he had requested.<sup>475</sup> Dirham went to Ya`qub accompanied by `Umar b. Sima and Muhammad b. Tar-kashah.

Messengers of Ibn Zaydawayh arrived in Baghdad during the month of Rabi` I (December 14, 875-January 12, 876) this year to deliver a communication from him. A robe of honor was bestowed upon him by Abu Ahmad (al-Muwaffaq).

Later this same year those who had been sent by Ya`qub b. al-Layth returned to the Caliph and informed him that Ya`qub was not satisfied with merely corresponding with the Caliph, but he rather preferred to come in person to the caliphal palace. Ya`qub left `Askar Mukram,<sup>476</sup> while Abu al-Saj went to meet him, and was received honorably and given presents. After the messengers had returned with Ya`qub's reply, al-Mu`tamid, on Saturday the 3rd of Jumada II (March 15, 876), assembled his troops in al-Qa'im, in Samarra, leaving his son Ja`far in charge of Samarra with the assistance of Muhammad al-Muwallad. Departing from the city on Tuesday the 6th of Jumada II (March 18, 876), al-Mu`tamid reached Baghdad on Wednesday the 14th of the month (March 26, 876). He passed straight through the metropolis, however, and proceeded to al-Za`-faraniyyah, where he set up camp. From al-Za`faraniyyah he sent ahead his brother Abu Ahmad as vanguard, while Ya`qub proceeded with his army from `Askar Mukram, arriving within a *farsakh's*<sup>477</sup> distance of Wasit. There he encountered flooded terrain created by Masrur al-Balkhi, who had breached the dike on the Tigris in order to hinder Ya`qub's passage. Ya`qub remained there and managed to repair the breach, which allowed him to cross over the Tigris on the 24th of Jumada II (March 23, 876) and advance toward Badhibin.<sup>478</sup> The next stage was the arrival of Muhammad b. Kathir, on behalf of Ya`qub, opposite the camp of Masrur al-Balkhi, who then proceeded with his army to al-Nu`maniyyah.<sup>479</sup>

[1893]

475. That is, the governorships to which he had been appointed.

476. An important town on the Masruqan canal, which irrigated some of the richest land in Khuzistan. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 236.

477. About 6 km.

478. Located east of Wasit, on the road to al-Ahwaz, Le Strange, *Lands*, 82, vocalizes the name Badhbin.

479. The halfway stage between Baghdad and Wasit. See Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, IV, 796.

Meanwhile, Ya`qub had reached Wasit and entered it on the 24th of Jumada II (March 23, 876). On Thursday, the last day of the month (March 29, 876), al-Mu`tamid left al-Za`faraniyyah and advanced as far as Sib Bani Kuma,<sup>480</sup> where he was joined by Masrur al-Balkhi who had traveled along the western bank of the Tigris before crossing over to the side where the Caliph's forces were located. Al-Mu`tamid remained in Sib Bani Kuma for a few days in order that his various troops and regiments could assemble together. For his part, Ya`qub advanced by stages from Wasit to Dayr al-`Aql<sup>481</sup> and from there toward the government forces. Al-Mu`tamid remained camped in Sib, along with `Ubaydallah b. Yahya, while he sent his brother Abu Ahmad to engage Ya`qub in battle. Abu Ahmad stationed Musa b. Bugha on his right flank and Masrur al-Balkhi on his left, while he himself, with his elite cavalry and the pick of his infantry, held the center. The two sides met on Sunday, at the beginning of Rajab (April 1, 876), at a place called Idtarbad,<sup>482</sup> which was between Sib Bani Kuma and Dayr al-`Aql. Ya`qub's right wing attacked Abu Ahmad's left flank, driving it back in disorder. A large number were slain, including some of the government's commanders, like Ibrahim b. Sima al-Turki, Tabaghu al-Turki, Muhammad Tughta al-Turki, and one known as al-Mubaraqah al-Maghribi, among others. Then those [on the left flank] who had been driven back regrouped, while the rest of Abu Ahmad's forces stood their ground and launched a counterattack against Ya`qub's forces. They stood their ground and engaged the foe with courage and determination. Many of Ya`qub's valiant warriors were killed, among them al-Hasan al-Dirhami and Muhammad b. Kathir, who had been in charge of Ya`qub's vanguard, and one known as Lubbadah. Ya`qub himself was struck by three arrows in his neck and hands. According to what was said, the two sides continued fighting until the time the afternoon prayer had passed. Later, al-Dayrani and Muhammad b. Aws reached Abu Ahmad, completing the assembly of all of Abu

[1894]

480. Situated on the east bank of the Tigris between Dayr al-`Aql and al-Mada'm, this small town was called Sib of the Banu Kuma to distinguish it from the Sib farther south. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 36, 41; Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 41.

481. This was a monastery located on the east bank of the Tigris, south of al-Mada'in. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 35; Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 41; Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, II, 676.

482. The word is unvocalized in Manuscripts B and C.



Ahmad's troops. It had become apparent that many on Ya`qub's side had developed an aversion to fighting with him when they saw the Caliph appear on the battlefield, and [the assembled government troops] now attacked Ya`qub and those who still stood firmly by him. Ya`qub's regular troops were routed, leaving him to stand fast with the elite of his forces until they managed to withdraw from the field of battle.

More than ten thousand pack animals and mules were reportedly captured from Ya`qub's army along with a great many containers of musk and such an amount of dinars and dirhams that it wore out its bearers.

Muhammad b. Tahir b. `Abdallah, who had been shackled in irons, was set free by the one who was in charge of guarding him. He was then presented to the Caliph, who bestowed upon him a robe of honor to accord with his rank. A statement was read out in public, in which it was said: [1895]

The accursed renegade called Ya`qub b. al-Layth had always professed loyalty [to the central authorities] until he committed such foul acts as marching upon the governor of Khurasan and overthrowing him; acting as leader of the public prayers there and committing other misdeeds; marching repeatedly into Fats and seizing its revenues; advancing upon the seat of the Commander of the Faithful, on the pretext of requesting powers of which the Commander of the Faithful had already given him more than he deserved, in an attempt to appease him and avoid [direct contact] by taking a better way. Ya`qub had been given authority over Khurasan, al-Rayy, Fars, Qazwin, Zanjan, and the security forces in Madinat al-Salam. He was ordered to be humble in his correspondence. He had been granted valuable estates as fiefs; but that had only made him more unjust and oppressive. The Caliph then ordered him to turn back [from his march on Baghdad], but he refused. When the accursed one was on the road between Madinat al-Salam and Wasit, flying flags, some of which bore the sign of the cross, the Commander of the Faithful set out to repel him.

The Commander of the Faithful despatched his brother Abu Ahmad al-Muwaffaq bi-Allah, the Muslims' future

ruler, in the center of his army, with Abu `Imran Musa b. Bugha on the right flank and Ibrahim b. Sima on its outer wing. Abu Hashim Masrur al-Balkhi occupied the left flank and al-Dayrani its outer wing. Ya`qub and his supporters rushed into battle, and he fought until he was severely wounded and Abu `Abdallah Muhammad b. Tahir was safely rescued from the enemy's hands. Ya`qub's forces retreated in full flight, broken and plundered, while the accursed one was forced to surrender all his accumulated fortune.

This statement was dated Tuesday, the 11th of Rajab (April 10, 876).

A1-Mu`tamid then returned to his army camp and wrote to Ibn Wasil, granting him the governorship of Fats. Ibn Wasil had already gone there to gather together some forces. A1-Mu`tamid returned to al-Mada'in, while Abu Ahmad, along with Masrur and Satikin and a number of the commanders, proceeded to confiscate the property of Abu al-Saj in the form of estates and buildings, which were then granted to Masrur al-Balkhi as fiefs. On Monday, the 16th of Rajab (April 15, 876) Muhammad b. Tahir b. `Abdallah came to Baghdad, his post having been restored, and a robe of honor was bestowed upon him in al-Rusafah. He settled in the palace of `Abdallah b. Tahir; he removed no one and appointed no one, but was ordered to receive five hundred thousand dirhams.

[1896]

The day of the battle between the central authorities and [Ya`qub] al-Saffar was Palm Sunday (*yawm al-Sha`anin*).

Muhammad b. `Ali b. Fayd al-Ta'i praised Abu Ahmad in a poem in which the business with al-Saffar was alluded to.

The raven crowed would that I could end his crowing  
and my heart inclined to remembrance of beloved ones.

The raven proclaimed their departure,  
and my eyes responded to the departure of their saddles with a  
flood of tears.

They vanished, gentle ladies, like painted dolls,  
gentle friends;<sup>483</sup> like doe-eyed creatures, slender-waisted, full-  
bosomed.

483. *Atrab*. For this expression, see Qur'an 38:52, 56:37.

These fair ladies of yours made me adore them by their  
locks, figures, and brows.

The Muslims' heir apparent has many honorable [1897]  
qualities, the light from which has shone out in many offices

And ranks the summit of which cannot be scaled.  
How noble are these peaks and ranks!

Al-Saffar had arrived with impressive battle machines but  
suffered a terrible calamity,

Fate having dealt him a swift end  
in obedient execution of providence.

The accursed devil, Iblis, had seduced him with his plot  
and lured him with a false promise

Until, when they became allies and al-Saffar imagined  
he was mighty among armies and regiments,

Fortunate troops advanced toward him, and  
they met, pushing forward with victorious banner,

In a huge, clamoring army in which heroes were seen  
bearing shields, spears, and arrows.

The Imam appeared with triumphant flag  
for Muhammad's keen-honed sword.

The Muslims' heir apparent is Blessed  
Of God, swifter than a shooting star,

Appearing among the people as a full shining moon, [1898]  
rejoicing in light, among the stars.

When they met with Mashrafi swords and spears, piercing and  
thrusting in combat hand to hand,

The dust swirled round, above it a cloud  
scattering a rain [of arrows].

He routed the multitude with the decisiveness of a piercing opinion,  
separating comrades one from another.

God's blessing upon he who is with him, who is blessed (*muwaffaq*)  
and joyous,  
steadfast and persistent in battle.

O horsemen of the Arabs, [there is] no other the likes of whom  
can be found, who is equal to disasters

That might come from evil times or from facing  
an army that is treacherous, treasonous, and violent.

484. The regnal name of Mu`tamid's brother Abu Ahmad, al-Muwaffaq `ala-Allah means "Blessed of God."

[< previous page](#)

page\_173

[next page >](#)

In this year the Zanj leader despatched his forces to the territory of the salt flats and Dastumisan.<sup>485</sup>

An Account of [the Zanj Attack on the Salt Flats]<sup>486</sup>

The cause for this reportedly was that, when al-Mu`tamid removed Musa b. Bugha from his responsibilities for the eastern provinces and their adjoining districts, he included them instead with his brother Abu Ahmad's duties. Abu Ahmad himself added the Tigris districts to the duties of Masrur al-Balkhi. Thus, as the districts of the Tigris had been left without any government protection except for al-Mada'in and regions lying to the north,<sup>487</sup> Ya`qub b. al-Layth commenced his advance toward Abu Ahmad and reached Wasit. [1899] Just prior to this Masrur had sent Ju`lan al-Turki to al-Badhaward in place of Musa b. Utamish. Now opposing MEsa b. Utamish on the Zanj side was Sulayman b. Jami`. Before Ibn Utamish was removed from al-Badhaward, Sulayman had already inflicted some damage on his army. Following his removal and replacement by Ju`lan, despatched a Bahrayni called Tha`lab b. Hafs to attack Ju`lan. Tha`lab succeeded in inflicting casualties on both his cavalry and men. For his part the Zanj leader sent Ahmad b. Mahdi, a man from Jubba,<sup>488</sup> in command of galleys with marksmen on board and with orders to proceed to Nahr al-Ma`ah.<sup>489</sup> According to report, this man, al-Jubba'i, commenced plundering the villages in the neighborhood of al-Madhar, laying them waste before returning to Nahr al-Mar`ah, where he stationed himself. He communicated with the Zanj leader informing him that the salt flats were void of government troops, owing to the removal of Masrur and his troops when Ya`qub b. Layth arrived in Wasit. The Zanj leader then ordered Sulayman b. Jami` and a number of his commanders to march to al-Hawanit. He also gave orders to one of the Bahilis, `Umayr b. `Ammar,<sup>490</sup> who knew

485. The word is vocahzed thus in the Leiden edition, though it is also written Dast Maysan.

486. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 112-15; Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 290-92.

487. That is, between al-Mada'in and Baghdad.

488. A town on the estuary of the Dujayl below al-Ahwaz. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 243.

489. This canal was the northernmost of nine lying to the west of the Tigris estuary. See Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 303, 305; Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, IV, 844.

490. On the Bahilah tribe, see Popovic, *Révolte*, 112 n. 3.

well the roads and byways through the salt flats to accompany al-Jubba'i and establish camp in al-Hawanit.<sup>491</sup>

Muhammad b. al-Hasan reported that Muhammad b. `Uthman al-`Abbadani said that, following the Zanj leader's decision to despatch his armies to the salt flats and Dastumisan, he commanded Sulayman b. Jami` to set up camp in al-Muttawwi`ah and Sulayman b. Musa was to establish his quarters at the head of Nahr al-Yahudi;<sup>492</sup> these orders were carried out. They each remained in their camps until receiving word to advance: Sulayman b. Musa proceeded to the village of al-Qadisiyyah and Sulayman b. Jami` to al-Hawanit, while al-Jubba'i was stationed with his galleys in front of this latter Sulayman's army. Meanwhile, Abba al-Turki<sup>493</sup> sailed along the Tigris with thirty barges heading for the camp of the Zanj leader. Passing the village, which had made peace with the abominable one, he destroyed and burned it. The abominable one<sup>494</sup> contacted Sulayman b. Musa by despatch to prevent his returning and Sulayman blocked Abba al-Turki's way by engaging him in battle for a whole month until he managed to reach the region of the salt flats. [1900]

Muhammad b. `Uthman reported that Jabbash the eunuch (*al-khadim*) claimed it was not Abba al-Turki who had ventured along the Tigris at this time but rather Nusayr Abu Hamzah.

When Sulayman b. Jami` reportedly set out for al-Hawanit, he reached a place called Nahr al-`Atiq, while al-Jubba'i, who had gone along the al-Madiyan Road,<sup>495</sup> encountered Rumays, whom he engaged in battle and defeated. Al-Jubba'i captured twenty-four galleys and some thirty-odd larger craft (*salghah*). Rumays escaped and took refuge in the woods. A group of the Jukhaniyyin<sup>496</sup> came upon [1901]

491. The word means "booths." Al-Hawanit was situated on the eastern bank of the Tigris. Near there bamers, supervised by government officials, were moored across the river. See Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 46.

492. One of the canals of al-Basrah on its western side; it lay between Nahr al-Ubullah and Nahr Abi al-Khasib. See Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 304, 306.

493. The copyists of Manuscripts B and C wrote his name with *tashdid*, thus Abba. Popovic *Révolte*, 112 n. 4, misreads this name as Abu al-Turki and incorrectly identifies the patronymic as belonging to Masrur al-Balkhi, whose *kunyah* was Abu Hashim. The context of the passage on p. 178, below, makes this identification impossible. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 293, calls him Ibn al-Turki.

494. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 293, who follows Tabari closely here, lapses for the first time into calling `Ali b. Muhammad "the abominable one" (*al-khabith*).

495. The reading is conjectural.

496. See Tabari, *Glossarium*, CLXXIV.

him and carried him off, but he managed to escape again. In their flight, Rumays's troops ran straight into Sulayman (b. Jami`), who was just then emerging from Nahr al-`Atiq. In the ensuing battle, Rumays's forces were decimated while Rumays himself made his way to a place called Bart Musawir. A number of the Bilaliyyah were reported to have joined up with Sulayman with some one hundred fifty galleys. He interrogated them concerning what lay before him. They replied that neither government authority nor agents were present in the region between him and Wasit. Placing complete trust in this intelligence, Sulayman was thrown off his guard and as he reached a spot called al-Jazirah, he was met by one Abu Mu`adh al-Qurashi, who fought and routed Sulayman, killing a number of his troops and capturing one of the Zanj commanders, Riyah al-Qandali. Sulayman returned to his base camp, where two of the Bilaliyyah came and told him that there was no one in Wasit to defend it other than Abu Mu`adh with the five barges with which he had previously met him. So Sulayman made his preparations, gathered his forces together, and sent word to the abominable one with some of the Bilaliyyah who had sought his protection, keeping a small select group to remain behind with him with ten galleys. However, the two who had informed him of the situation in Wasit he kept under close guard as he set out for Nahr Aban. Abu Mu`adh blocked his way and this sparked off fighting between the two sides. A strong wind blew up, causing Abu Mu`adh's barges to flounder and giving Sulayman and his men the chance to overpower him. Abu Mu`adh, nevertheless, managed to make good his escape while Sulayman proceeded toward the Nahr Aban, where he swiftly burned and plundered [villages], taking women and children into captivity. News of this reached some of Abu Ahmad's agents who were staying on one of his estates on the Nahr Sindad. They set out against Sulayman with a detachment of troops, and in the battle that followed a large number of the Zanj were slain. Sulayman and Ahmad b. Mahdi and their followers fled back to their camp.

[1902]

Muhammad b. al-Hasan Muhammad b. `Uthman said that when Sulayman b. Jami` had installed himself in al-Hawanit and set up a temporary camp on the Nahr Ya`qub b. al-Nadr, he sent out someone to collect intelligence on Wasit and the disposition of government forces there. This was after the departure of Masrur and his troops, owing to the arrival of Ya`qub (b. al-Layth). The spy returned



to Sulayman and reported Ya`qub's advance toward the government forces. Masrur, before vacating Wasit for al-Sib, had sent a man called Wasif al-Rahhal with barges against Sulayman. He fought and killed him, also seizing seven of the boats and killing the prisoners, dumping the dead in al-Hawanit in order to instill fear in the hearts of government supporters who might happen by.<sup>497</sup>

After Sulayman had received news of Masrur's departure from Wasit, he summoned his deputy, `Umayr b. `Ammar, and one of the Bahili chiefs named Ahmad b. Sharik. He consulted them concerning withdrawal from the position, which could be reached by horses and boats, searching carefully instead for a spot joining a road that could be used as an escape route should he wish to make for the camp of the abominable one. The two men advised him to head for `Aqr Mawar and entrench himself in Tahitha<sup>498</sup> and its dense thickets.

[1903]

The departure of Sulayman b. Jani` greatly annoyed the Bahilites since, having become involved with him, they feared the retribution of the central authorities against them. Sulayman set out with his troops to Tahitha via Nahr al-Barur, having despatched al-Jubba'i to Nahr al-`Atiq with galleys. He ordered al-Jubba'i to make haste in bringing him intelligence on the strength of the government's forces in men and barges. He left behind a detachment of blacks to sent on any of his troops who had lagged behind. He headed for `Aqr Mawar, setting up camp in the village of Qaryat Marwan, located on an island on the eastern side of Nahr Tahitha. There he gathered the Bahilite chiefs and the men of al-Tufuf<sup>499</sup> and wrote to the abominable one, informing him of his movements. The abominable one replied, approving his plans and ordered him to transfer to him food supplies and animals that he had acquired. This was duly done. Meanwhile, Masrur had proceeded to the spot of Sulayman's previous camp. He found nothing there but that the enemy had already transferred their entire camp.

497. Popovic, *Révolte*, 113, takes this possibly to mean that the bodies were thrown into the Tigris at al-Hawanit.

498. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 113 n. 1, where he states that the camp was located on the Tahitha canal. The reading Tahitha is uncertain. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 293, writes it *t-h-th-a* and reverses the relationship between it and `Aqr Mawar; that is, Sulayman was advised to entrench himself in the latter position.

499. *Ahl al-Tufuf*. The *Index* does not cite this as a place name, and it cannot be otherwise identified. It might also be loosely rendered "local inhabitants," that is, those living in cultivated areas along the canal banks. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *t-f-f*.

Abba al-Turki descended toward the marshlands in pursuit of Sulayman, who himself thought that [Abba al-Turki] had left the district altogether and gone away, heading in the direction of the abominable one's camp. He found no trace of Sulayman. On his return, however, he discovered that Sulayman had moved an army to al-Hawanit in order to surprise any stragglers who might become separated from Masrur's army. Abba al-Turki avoided the road that he feared might lead him to Sulayman's army and instead took another way, which finally brought him to Masrur, whom he informed that he had no news of Sulayman's [exact] whereabouts.<sup>500</sup>

[1904]

Sulayman's army set out for [the abominable one] with the required provisions. Sulayman remained behind. He despatched al-Jubba'i with the barges to take care of the food and supply depots and arrange their transport. Al-Jubba'i, however, burned such food supplies as he found wherever he went. This greatly displeased Sulayman, who forbade him from such action but al-Jubba'i paid no attention, justifying himself on the grounds that the supplies would benefit their enemies and that it was wrong to leave anything behind. At this Sulayman wrote to the abominable one complaining about al-Jubba'i's behavior. The abominable one in turn instructed al-Jubba'i to obey Sulayman and accept whatever he commanded.

News reached Sulayman that Aghartimish and Khushaysh<sup>501</sup> were heading his way, leading cavalry and infantry troops with barges and galleys intending to engage him in battle. Sulayman was much troubled by these developments and sent off al-Jubba'i to glean information about them. He commenced his preparations to meet them. Al-Jubba'i returned shortly thereafter in flight and informed Sulayman that Aghartimish and Khushaysh had reached Bab Tanj, which was only half a *farsakh*<sup>502</sup> from Sulayman's forces. Sulayman ordered al-Jubba'i to return and block their army's way, diverting it from advancing directly toward his camp until Sulayman could join forces with him. When al-Jubba'i had departed to execute these orders, Sulayman ascended a rooftop, from which he observed the advancing army. Then, hastily descending, he crossed over Nahr Tahitha and proceeded on foot, followed by a number of the command-

[1905]

500. See n. 493, above.

501. The vocalization of the names of these two `Abbasid officers is conjectural. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 293, refers to the second as Hashish.

502. About 3 km.

ers of the blacks and their troops, finally arriving at Bab Tanj. Aghartimish realized that he had arrived too late and left his troops to struggle back to his camp.

Sulayman had ordered the deputy commander of his army not to allow any of the blacks to appear in view of any of Aghartimish's army, concealing themselves as best they could and letting the enemy penetrate along the waterway. Then, when they heard the sound of the drum roll, they should emerge and attack Aghartimish. Aghartimish approached with his army until there was no more than the Jarurah Bani Marwan canal, which flowed from Tahitha, between him and Sulayman's force. A1-Jubba'i fled in the galleys and reached Tahitha, and then leaving them there he retraced his way on foot to Sulayman's army. This caused fear to deepen among Sulayman's soldiers, and they scattered to the four winds.<sup>503</sup> A small group of men, however, among them one of the commanders of the blacks called Abu al-Nida', took heart and attacked the enemy, preventing their entry into the camp, while Sulayman pressed them from behind; then the Zanj beat their drums and throwing themselves into the water, crossed over the canal to join them. At this Aghartimish's troops were routed; the blacks who were in Tahitha fell upon them and put them to the sword. Khushaysh set out, riding upon a gray horse, intending to return to his soldiers, but he was met by blacks, who felled him with their swords and slew him. His head was taken to Sulayman. Before being killed, as he was dragged away, he had said to them, "I am Khushaysh; you cannot kill me. Take me to your leader!" but they paid him no heed.

[1906]

Aghartimish fled at the rear of his forces until he collapsed on the ground; he then proceeded on horseback, tracked by the Zanj until they reached their camp. The Zanj obtained their necessities from it, and seized Khushaysh's barges, while those who pursued the retreating army captured [more] barges that were with Aghartimish, containing much wealth. When news of this reached Aghartimish, he returned and managed to recover the boats from the Zanj.

Meanwhile, Sulayman returned to his troops. He had succeeded in capturing booty and animals and sent word of the result of the battle to the Zanj commander, together with Khushaysh's head and

503. The phrase is *fa tafarraqu ayadiya saba*; see H. Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, s.v. *s-b-*.

ring seal, and added the barges that he had seized to his own forces. When the abominable one received Sulayman's communication and Khushaysh's head, he ordered the later circulated throughout the camp and then displayed for a day on a pole. The head was later sent to `Ali b. Aban, who at the time was in the districts of al-Ahwaz, and he was ordered to display it in public there as well. Sulayman, al-Jubba'i, and a group of commanders of the blacks left for the district of al-Hawanit, skirting its border. There they came across thirteen barges with Abu Tamim, the brother of Abu `Awn, associate of Wasif al-Turki. They attacked. Abu Tamim was killed and thrown into the water. Eleven of his barges were confiscated.

Muhammad b. al-Hasan said that this was the account of Muhammad b. `Uthman al-`Abbadani. As for Jabbash the eunuch, he claimed that Abu Tamim had only eight barges. Two of these, which had arrived late on the scene, managed to slip away safely with all on board. Sulayman captured arms and spoils as well as most of the troops on the barges. Sulayman returned to his camp and sent word to the abominable one of developments involving the slaying of Abu Tamim and his companions and his confiscation of the barges in his camp. [1907]

In this year Ibn Zaydawayh took al-Tib504 by surprise and plundered it.

`Ali b. Muhammad b. Abi al-Shawarib was appointed to the office of religious judge this year.505

A1-Husayn b. Tahir b. `Abdallah b. Tahir left Baghdad during the last days of [the month]506 for al-Jabal.

A1-Salabi507 died this year, and Kayghalagh was appointed governor of al-Rayy.

Salih. b. `Ali b. Ya`qub b. (Abu al-Ja`far) al-Mansur died in Rabi` II (January 3 - 31, 876) of this year. Isma`il b. Ishaq was appointed re-

504. Le Strange, *Lands*, 64, 82. Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, III, 566, says that in his day (the seven/thirteenth century) the inhabitants of this southeastern Iraqi town were Nabatean and still spoke a dialect of Aramaic.

505. That is, the brother of al-Hasan, who had been appointed chief religious judge in 252/866 and had died in 261/874-75. See p. 167 and n. 6 above; Sourdél, *Vizirat*, II, 654.

506. Tabari does not mention the actual month, but Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 304, places this event in Safar (November 5-December 3, 875).

507. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 305, here confirms that he had been governor of al-Rayy.

ligious judge of the east side of Baghdad, thus holding the judgeship of both sides of the city.

Muhammad b. `Attab b. `Attab was killed this year. He had been appointed governor of the two Sibs and had departed for the place, when he was killed by Arab tribesmen.

In the middle of Ramadan (June 12, 876) this year Musa b. Bugha arrived at al-Anbar on his way to al-Raqqah.

In this year al-Qattan, associate of Muflih, was also slain. He was in charge of the administration of the taxes (*kharaj*) of Mosul. He was killed on the way back from it.

Kaftimur `Ali b. al-Husayn b. Da'ud, secretary of Ahmad b. Sahl al-Lutfi, was made leader of the Mecca Road in Ramadan (May 29-June 27, 876) of this year. [1908]

In Mecca the corn merchants (*al-hannatin*)<sup>508</sup> and butchers fought each other on the day before *yawm al-Tarwiyah*,<sup>509</sup> so that people feared the pilgrimage would be canceled. Then the two sides made peace so that people could perform the pilgrimage rites. Seventeen persons had been killed.

Ya`qub b. al-Layth conquered Fats this year, and Ibn Wasil fled from it.

A battle occurred this year between the Zanj and Ahmad b. Laythawayh, in which many Zanj were killed. Abu Da'ud al-Su`luk, who had been with the Zanj, was captured.

#### An Account of the Battle and Capture of al-Su`Luk<sup>510</sup>

Masrur al-Balkhi reportedly sent Ahmad b. Laythawayh to the region of the districts of al-Ahwaz. When he arrived in the region he settled at al-Sus.<sup>511</sup> (Abu Layth) al-Saffar had appointed Muhammad b. `Uaydallah b. Azarmard al-Kurdi governor of the districts of al-Ahwaz. Muhammad b. `Ubaydallah corresponded with the Zanj leader,

508. The editor of the Leiden text has preferred this reading, though Manuscript B is unpointed and C has the possible reading *khayyatin* "tailors," which is also the reading of Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 306.

509. This day, when pilgrims provided themselves with water for the afterlife, was the 8th of Dhu al-Hijjah (September 2, 876), the day before that of `Arafat. See *EI*, 2 s.v. "Hadjdj."

510. Popovic, *Révolte*, 114- 15.

511. The ancient Susa, situated on the banks of the Karkhah river in Khuzistan. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 240.

holding forth the prospect that he was ready to go over to his side; indeed, he had been corresponding with him from the beginning of the Zanj leader's revolt. Muhammad gave the impression that he would govern the districts of al-Ahwaz for him, although he would pretend to be loyal to (Abu Layth) al-Saffar until he<sup>512</sup> had firm control of the district. The abominable one agreed to this, on condition that his governor in the region be `Ali b. Aban and that Muhammad b. `Ubaydallah be only his deputy, an offer that he accepted.

[1909]

`Ali b. Aban despatched his brother al-Khalil with a large number of blacks and others, while Muhammad b. `Ubaydallah, together with Abu Da'ud al-Su`luk, bolstered these forces, and they all made for al-Sus. They did not, however, get that far, as Ibn Laythawayh and the troops of the central authorities accompanying him forced `Ali's troops to withdraw in full flight, losing a great many killed and others captured. Pushing forward, Ahmad b. Laythawayh reached Junday Sabur.<sup>513</sup>

Meanwhile, `Ali b. Aban left al-Ahwaz to lend Muhammad b. `Ubaydallah assistance against Ahmad b. Laythawayh. Muhammad, with a troop of Kurds and a ragtag collection of others (*sa`alik*), met up with `Ali, and, as Muhammad approached each side proceeded along opposite banks of the Masruqan canal.<sup>514</sup> Muhammad sent one of his aides with three hundred horsemen to join `Ali b. Aban. Both men arrived finally at `Askar Mukram. Muhammad went alone to `Ali b. Aban, the two men meeting [for awhile] to discuss matters. Upon returning to his camp, Muhammad sent to `Ali al-Qasim b. `Ali and one of the Kurdish chiefs named Hazim and a shaykh called al-Talaqani from among the associates of [Abu Layth] al-Saffar; they arrived and greeted `Ali. Muhammad and `Ali remained amicable until `Ali reached the Fars bridge (*qantarah*) and Muhammad b. `Ubaydallah entered Tustar. It reached Ahmad b. Laythawayh's attention that `Ali b. Aban and Muhammad b. `Ubaydallah planned to assist each other in fighting him, and so he departed from Junday Sabur and made for al-Sus.

Now `Ali reached the Fars bridge on Friday. Muhammad b. `Ubay-

512. It is not clear whether the pronoun refers to Muhammad or to the Zan) leader.

513. Written thus in the text but also found as Jundi Sabur. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 238.

[1910]

514. A canal that left the Dujayl river and rejoined it at a point near the city of `Askar Mukram. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 236-37.

dallah had promised him to have the preacher make a sermon<sup>515</sup> that day and invoke blessings upon the leader of the Zanj and `Ali from the *minbar*<sup>516</sup> of the mosque in Tustar. `Ali remained [at the Fars bridge], expecting such to happen, and he sent Bahbudh b. `Abd al-Wahhab to attend the Friday prayer and bring him news of it. When the prayer session commenced, the preacher rose and invoked blessings upon al-Mu`tamid, [Abu Layth] al-Saffar, and Muhammad b. `Ubaydallah. Bahbudh returned to `Ali with this news. Immediately `Ali set out upon his horse and ordered his troops to leave for al-Ahwaz, sending them on in front of him with his nephew Muhammad b. Salih, Muhammad b. Yahya al-Kirmani his deputy, and his secretary. `Ali stayed behind until his troops had crossed over the bridge, and then he destroyed it so that he could not be followed by horses.

Muhammad b. al-Hasan said: "I was among those of `Ali's troops who had been sent on ahead. The army traveled swiftly all that night, reaching `Askar Mukram by sunrise. `Askar Mukram had negotiated a peace with the abominable one, but now his soldiers broke the pact, attacking and pillaging the city. `Ali b. Aban arrived in the wake of what the troops had done, found out what they had done, but was unable to change it, and proceeded directly to al-Ahwaz. When word of `Ali's withdrawal reached Ahmad b. Laythawayh, he retraced his way toward Tustar. There he clashed with Muhammad b. `Ubaydallah and his followers. Muhammad escaped, but the one called Abu Da'ud al-Su`luk fell into Ahmad's hands, and he was transported to the court of the al-Mu`tamid. Ahmad himself remained in Tustar."

Muhammad b. al-Hasanal-Fadl b. `Adi al-Darimi, one of the associates of the Zanj leader who had been attached to Muhammad b. Aban, `Ali's brother, recounted as follows: After Ahmad b. Laythawayh had settled himself in Tustar, `Ali b. Aban set out with his army toward him. He stopped at a village called Baranjan, and arranged for scouts to bring him information about Ahmad. They re-

[1911]

515. The sermon (*al-khutbah*) has a fixed place in the Friday service in the mosque. It was customary for the preacher to mention the name of the sovereign in the prayer on behalf of the faithful, thus indicating the preacher's political opinion or loyalty. See *EI*,2 s.v. "Khutba."

516. The "pulpit" of a mosque, from which the Friday prayer is given. See *EI*,2 s.v. "Masjid."



turned to tell him that Ibn Laythawayh was already on his way, his forward cavalry having reached a village called al-Bahiliyyin. `Ali advanced toward Ahmad, spreading good cheer among his troops, promising them victory, and recounting to them [the exploits] of the abominable one.

When `Ali reached al-Bahiliyyin, Ibn Laythawayh met him with his cavalry of around four hundred horsemen; they were quickly joined by reinforcements. As the government's cavalry forces were overwhelming in numbers, a group of Arab tribesmen who were on the side of `Ali b. Aban sought safe-conduct to join Ibn Laythawayh. The remainder of `Ali's cavalry was routed with only a small detachment of foot soldiers standing firm, most of them too having scattered. The fighting intensified between the two sides and `Ali b. Aban dismounted and joined the battle by himself on foot with one of his slave soldiers called Fath, who was known as the slave of Abu al-Hadid, joining him in the fray. Abu Nasr Salhab and Badr al-Rumi al-Sha`rani, who knew `Ali by sight, spotted him and shouted a warning to the troops. `Ali fled seeking the safety of the Masruqan canal. He threw himself into the water, followed by Fath who threw himself into the water, followed by Fath who threw himself in after `Ali, but he drowned. `Ali b. Aban reached Nasr al-Rumi, who pulled him out of the water and put him aboard a galley, `Ali having received a wound in the leg from an arrow. Utterly defeated, he escaped. A large number of Zanj soldiers and their brave ones had been slain.

In this year al-Fadl b. Ishaq b. al-Hasan b. al-`Abbas b. Muhammad led the pilgrimage.<sup>517</sup> [1912]

517. The same person who led the pilgrimage in the previous year.

The Events of the Year 263  
(September 24, 876-September 12, 877)

Among the events taking place this year was the victory of `Uzayz b. al-Sari, the associate of Ya`qub b. al-Layth, over Muhammad b. Wasil, who was taken prisoner.

In this year as well there occurred a battle between Musa Daljuwayh<sup>518</sup> and Arab tribesmen in the district of al-Anbar. They defeated and routed him. Abu Ahmad sent his son Ahmad with a group of his commanders to seek out the tribesmen responsible for Musa Daljuwayh's defeat.

This year, too, [Abu Ahmad] al-Dayrani attacked [Muhammad] b. Aws. He launched the assault during the night, dispersing his personnel and plundering his camp. Ibn Aws escaped and made his way to Wasit.

One of the Faraghinah appeared along the Mosul Road this year indulging in highway robbery. He was finally captured and killed.

Ya`qub b. al-Layth advanced from Fars this year and, when he reached al-Nubandajan,<sup>519</sup> Ahmad b. Laythawayh departed from

518. The reading is uncertain.

519. A city in the district of Anburan, in Fars province. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 262-65.

Tustar. Then Ya`qub this year headed for al-Ahwaz. Before his departure from Tustar, Ahmad had engaged in a battle against the brother of `Ali b. Aban, who was defeated; many of his Zanj troops were taken.<sup>520</sup>

An Account of [the] Battle [at `Askar Mukram]<sup>521</sup>

Following Ibn Laythawayh's defeat of `Ali b. Aban with the Bahiliyyin in which he had been wounded, `Ali reportedly reached al-Ahwaz but, without remaining there, made his way to the camp<sup>522</sup> of his master, the Zanj leader. There he was treated for his wounds until he completely recovered. [1913]

`All then set out again for al-Ahwaz, despatching at the same time his brother al-Khalil b. Aban and his nephew Abu Sahl Muhammad b. Salih with a huge army against Ibn Laythawayh, who at the time was stationed in `Askar Mukram. The two men advanced with their forces and were met by Ibn Laythawayh, who was heading toward them about a *farsakh* from `Askar Mukram. The two sides drew upon each other and Ibn Laythawayh, who had prepared an ambush, fell back when fighting flared up. In their zeal to get him, the Zanj pursued him, passing by the ambush Ibn Laythawayh had set up. The ambushers emerged behind the Zanj, who were routed and scattered. Ibn Laythawayh then turned back to attack them and finished the job, while the Zanj returned to base in full flight. Ibn Laythawayh set off for Tustar, taking with him enemy heads. `All b. Aban sent off to the Masruqan canal against Ahmad b. Laythawayh another army detachment led by Ankluwayh. Ibn Laythawayh despatched thirty of his best cavalry to engage Ankluwayh and, when al-Khalil b. Aban heard of their mission, he laid an ambush for them. They reached his position and he attacked; not one of them escaped, slain to the last man. Their heads were taken to `All b. Aban in al-Ahwaz and he forwarded them to the abominable one.

Then (Ya`qub) al-Saffar arrived in al-Ahwaz, while Ibn Laythawayh fled from it.

520. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 307-8, adds the detail that Ya`qub b. al-Layth established himself in Junday Saber before setting off for al-Ahwaz. Tabari's account is disjointed, and he mentions this point farther on, at p. 187, below.

521. Popovic, *Révolte*, 115.

522. This would be a reference to `All b. Muhammad's capital, al-Mukhtarrah.

An Account of [Ya`qub] al-Saffar's [1914]  
Activities This Year<sup>523</sup>

When Ya`qub b. al-Layth reached Junday Sabur and established himself there, all who were in the service of the central authorities had reportedly moved out of this district. Ya`qub sent to al-Ahwaz on his behalf a man called al-Hisn b. al-`Anbar.<sup>524</sup> As he approached the city, `Ali b. Aban, the associate of the Zanj leader, left and set up camp at the Nahr al-Sidrah.<sup>525</sup> Hisn<sup>526</sup> entered al-Ahwaz and established his quarters there. His troops and those of `Ali b. Aban began to make forays against each other, and both sides suffered losses. This continued until `Ali b. Aban was prepared to set out for al-Ahwaz where he clashed with al-Hisn and his troops in a vicious encounter in which a large number of Ya`qub's troops were killed, cavalry horses captured, and a great deal of booty seized. Al-Hisn and his followers fled to `Askar Mukram, while `Ali remained in al-Ahwaz confiscating what was left in it. He then returned to the Nahr al-Sidrah and instructed Bahbudh to attack a Kurdish associate of [Ya`qub] al-Saffar stationed in Dawraq.<sup>527</sup> Bahbudh did as he was ordered and slew a number of his men, taking the Kurd prisoner. However, he acted generously toward the man and released him. After this, `Ali was expecting Ya`qub to set out against him, but he did not; instead he sent as support to al-Hisn b. al-`Anbar his brother al-Fadl b. al-`Anbar and ordered them to refrain from confronting the abominable one's troops in battle and to restrict themselves to al-Ahwaz. Ya`qub wrote to `Ali b. Aban seeking to conclude a truce with him so that he might leave his troops in al-Ahwaz. `Ali rejected this proposal, unless he could transfer food supplies from the city. (Ya`qub) al-Saffar withdrew, allowing him to move the food supplies while `Ali in turn withdrew, so Ya`qub could remove the animal forage in al-Ahwaz. So `Ali had the food supplies moved and left the forage and the two sides, both `Ali's and Ya`qub's troops, refrained from interfering with each other. [1915]

In this year, the Kharijite Musawir b. `Abd al-Hamid died.<sup>528</sup>

523. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 115- 17.

524. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 308, calls him al-Khidr b. al-`Anbar.

525. Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, II, 258.

526. Here without the article.

527. A town in Khuzistan. See Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, II, 618-19.

528. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 309, supplies a few more details.

On Friday, the 10th of Dhu al-Qa`dah of this year (August 24, 877) `Ubaydallah b. Yahya b. Khaqan died, having fallen from his horse in the main square in a collision with his eunuch, Rashiq. With blood flowing from his nose and ears, he died three hours after his fall. Abu Ahmad b. al-Mutawwakil performed the obsequies and accompanied the funeral procession.

The following day he appointed al-Hasan b. Makhlad as vizier.<sup>529</sup> Then, on the 27th of Dhu al-Qa`dah (August 11, 877), Musa b. Bugha arrived in Samarra, and al-Hasan b. Makhlad fled to Baghdad. In his place Sulayman b. Wahb was appointed vizier, on the 6th of Dhu al-Hijjah (August 20, 877). `Ubaydallah b. Sulayman was appointed secretary of al-Mufawwad and al-Muwaffaq, in addition to his role of secretary to Musa b. Bugha. The palace of `Ubaydallah b. Yahya was presented to Kayghalagh.

In this year the brother of Sharkab drove al-Husayn b. Tahir out of Naysabur and occupied it. He forced its inhabitants to surrender to him a third of their wealth. Al-Husayn went to Marv, where the brother of the Khwarazm Shah<sup>530</sup> appealed to Muhammad b. Tahir. In this year the Slavs surrendered Lu'lu'ah to the tyrant.<sup>531</sup> In this year al-Fadl b. Ishaq b. al-Hasan b. Isma`il led the pilgrimage.<sup>532</sup>

529. On these developments, see Sourdél, *Vizirat*, I, 309ff.

530. See *EI*,<sup>2</sup> s.v. "Khwarazm-Shahs." Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 310, says it was the son, rather than the brother, who was in Mary.

531. See n. 461, above. "The tyrant" is Tabari's epithet for the Byzantine emperor. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 308-9, gives more detail, revealing that the fortress was surrendered voluntarily by its garrison because payment of their allotments and supplies were long overdue.

532. This is the same person who led the pilgrimage in the two previous years; his full name is given on p. 167, above.

The Events Of The Year 264  
(September 13, 877-September 2, 878)

The events taking place this year included the despatch of an army by Ya`qub al-Saffar to al-Saymarah. Ya`qub marched at the head of the army toward al-Saymarah. Sayghun was arrested and brought to Ya`qub, and he died while being held his prisoner.<sup>533</sup>

On the 11th of al-Muharram (September 23, 877) Abu Ahmad, together with Musa b. Bugha assembled the army in al-Qa'im (in Samarra), and it was escorted in public procession by al-Mu`tamid. Then the two men departed from Samarra on the 2nd of Safar (October 14, 877). After they had reached Baghdad, Musa b. Bugha died, and he was transported back to Samarra for burial.

In the month of Rabi` I (November 11-December 10, 877) Qabi-hah, the mother of al-Mu`tazz, died.

In this year Ibn al-Dayrani went to al-Dinawar,<sup>534</sup> where Ibn `Iyad

<sup>533</sup>. Manuscript C adds that he died on the 11th of al-Muharram (September 23, 877), though the copyist may have confused it with the line immediately following, on the mustering of the army by Abu Ahmad, which (by coincidence?) occurred on the same day.

<sup>534</sup>. A city in the province of Jibal, between Hulwan and Hamadhan. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 188, 189.

and Dulaf b. `Abd al-`Aziz b. Abi Dulaf united against him, forcing him to flee, after which they seized his property and estates. Ibn al-Dayrani returned to Hulwan in defeat.

In this year as well, the Byzantines captured `Abdallah b. Rashid b. Kawus.<sup>535</sup>

#### An Account of [the] Capture [of `Abdalldh B. Rashid]

The reason for this was that `Abdallah had entered Byzantine territory with four thousand troops of the Syrian frontier districts (*thughur*).<sup>536</sup> He ventured to Hisnayn and al-Maskanin.<sup>537</sup> The Muslims seized booty and then set off on the return journey. They had just left al-Badandun<sup>538</sup> when they were surrounded by the army commanders (*bitriq*)<sup>539</sup> of Saluqiyah<sup>540</sup> Qadhaydhiyah, Qurrah, Kawkab, and Kharshanah. The Muslims dismounted and hocked their animals, and in the fighting all of them were slain, save for five or six hundred who laid on the whips to their riding beasts and escaped. The Byzantines killed many and captured `Abdallah b. Rashid, who was struck down by numerous blows; he was taken to Lu'lu'ah and then on to the tyrant,<sup>541</sup> along the post road. [1917]

Muhammad al-Muwallad was made governor of Wasit this year. Sulayman b. Jami`, who gathered the taxes of areas adjacent to Wasit on behalf of the Zanj leader, engaged Muhammad in battle, defeated him and, after driving him from Wasit, occupied it.

#### An Account of [the] Battle [at Wasit]<sup>542</sup>

Sulayman b. Jami` had been sent by the leader of the Zanj to the districts of al-Hawanit and the marshlands. Following his defeat of Ju`-

535. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 312.

536. See *EI*, 2 s.v. "al-`Awasim"; Le Strange, *Lands*, 128ff.

537. The force led by `Abdallah took one of the most common routes through the Taurus mountains into Byzantine-controlled territory, the Darb al-Salamah, or Safety Pass, which went through the famous Cilician Gates. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 134.

538. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 133, where he transliterates it Badhandun. This was the place, near Tarsus, where the Caliph al-Ma'mun died.

539. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *b-t-r-q*; he equates the Byzantine term *bitriq* with *qa'id* "commander" in Muslim military ranks.

540. The ancient Seleucia, southwest of Tarsus. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 133.

541. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 312, uses the more polite expression "king of Rum."

542. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 116ff. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 312- 15.



Ian al-Turki, the central authorities' tax collector, and his battle against Aghartimish, whose army he routed, and his killing Khushaysh, whose camp he plundered, Sulayman wrote to the Zanj leader, seeking permission to come and renew his bond with him and put in order various of his own domestic affairs.

After he had sent the letter, Ahmad b. Mahdi al-Jubba'i advised Sulayman to attack the forces of [Takin] al-Bukhari, who at the time was stationed in Barduda.<sup>543</sup> Sulayman agreed and set out for Barduda. He arrived at a spot called Akramahr, which was about five *farsakhs*<sup>544</sup> from Takin's army camp. [1918]

When he reached the place, al-Jubba'i<sup>545</sup> said to Sulayman that in his opinion Sulayman should remain [in Akramahr] while he would proceed in the boats to attract the enemy toward him, causing them considerable trouble and effort on the way. He said, "By the time they reach you, they will be exhausted, and you can deal with them as you wish." Sulayman followed this advice and mustered his cavalry and foot soldiers on the spot, while Ahmad b. Mahdi set out early in the morning in the galleys. He reached Takin's camp and fighting broke out for a while as Takin prepared his own cavalry and infantry. Al-Jubba'i fell back from him and despatched a young man to inform Sulayman that Takin's troops were approaching him with their cavalry. The messenger found that Sulayman had already begun to follow after al-Jubba'i when news was slow in reaching him. The messenger sent him back to his camp, while another messenger from al-Jubba'i arrived with the same information. After Sulayman returned to his troops, he sent off Tha'lab b. Hafsa al-Bahrani and one of the Zanj commanders called Manina with a detachment of Zanj. They were to set up an ambush in the countryside along the route that Takin's cavalry would have to take, and Sulayman ordered them to attack from the rear once they had passed by. When al-Jubba'i learned that Sulayman had strengthened their position with his horsemen and ordered the setting up of an ambush, in a voice loud

543. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 41; Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 271. The Barduda was a canal issuing from the Tigris and flowing into the great swampland (*al-batihah*). The reference here could be to the canal or to a place of the same name located on it.

544. About 30 km.

545. Throughout the passage describing these events, Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 313, refers to him as al-Hayati.

enough to allow Takin's troops to hear, he addressed his own troops saying, "You have deceived me! Destroyed me! I ordered you not to enter this canal,<sup>546</sup> but you insisted. Now you have put us in this position from which I can see no escape." When Takin's troops heard al-Jubba'i's remarks, they eagerly renewed the pursuit, shouting that they had "a bird<sup>547</sup> in a cage."

Al-Jubba'i hastened off, with Takin's troops following and raining arrows down upon them. They passed by the spot where the ambush was set, approaching Sulayman's camp where he himself was concealed behind a wall with his horsemen and soldiers. Sulayman then advanced to meet the enemy army as the ambush emerged behind the cavalry and al-Jubba'i turned the fronts of his galleys around [to face] those [of the enemy] who were on the canal. Victory over the enemy was achieved on all fronts. The Zanj pursued them, killing and plundering, for a distance of some three *farsakhs*.<sup>548</sup> Then Sulayman stopped and said to al-Jubba'i, "Let's turn back. We have won easily and are in good shape. Security is preferable to anything else." To which al-Jubba'i replied, "On the contrary! Our trick worked well on them and we have made their hearts faint. The best thing now is to take them again by surprise this very night. Perhaps we could drive them out of their camp and scatter them." Sulayman put al-Jubba'i's advice into action and marched toward Takin's camp, reaching it at sunset. He attacked, and Takin and his followers responded as a ferocious battle developed. Then Sulayman and his troops finally withdrew from the fighting. He halted to restore order to his troops and then despatched Shibl with a detachment of horsemen, together with some foot soldiers, into the countryside. He ordered al-Jubba'i to sail his galleys along the canal. Sulayman set off with his cavalry and infantry, leading them himself, and he reached Takin without obstacle. They, however, withdrew entirely, abandoning their camp. Sulayman seized as booty all that could be found and then burned the camp. Upon returning to his own camp with all the booty that had been gathered, he found a letter awaiting him from the abominable one granting him permission to return home. Sulayman left al-Jubba'i behind in charge. He took with him the banners found in Takin's camp, the barges seized from Abu Tamim, Khu-

[1919]

[1920]

546. Literally "entrance" or "mouth," here clearly meaning a canal.

547. Literally *bulbul*, a nightingale.

548. About 18 km.

shaysh, and Takin as well and journeyed to the abominable one's base, arriving there in Jumada I in the year 264 (January 9-February 7, 878).<sup>549</sup>

An Account of How the Abominable One Prepared  
His Zanj to Occupy Wasit<sup>550</sup>  
(and Other Events of the Year 264)<sup>551</sup>

Yahya b. Khalaf<sup>552</sup> al-Jubba'i left for Mazrawan in the galleys and with the troops over which Sulayman had given him charge. This was reportedly after Sulayman b. Jami` had departed from his camp following the battle with Takin and gone to the leader of the Zanj. Al-Jubba'i headed there in search of supplies, together with a group of blacks, but Ju`lan's troops challenged him and seized the boats accompanying him; they routed him and he returned in defeat to Tahitha. There he received letters from villagers<sup>553</sup> informing him that when Manjur, a *mawla* of the Commander of the Faithful, and Muhammad b. `Ali b. Habib al-Yashkuri learned of Sulayman b. Jami`'s absence from Tahitha, they joined forces, assembled their soldiers and set upon the village, killing and burning, and then departed. Those who escaped from the village went to another called al-Hajja-jjyyah and remained there.

[1921]

Al-Jubba'i wrote to Sulayman with the information contained in the villagers' communication and also mentioned his encounter with Ju`lan's troops. The Zanj leader bade Sulayman to hasten back to Tahitha. He arrived there and gave it about that he intended to go into battle against Ju`lan and mustered his army in preparation. Al-Jubba'i was sent in advance of Sulayman with the galleys containing horses and men and with orders to reach Mazrawan and station himself opposite Ju`lan's army. He was instructed to let the horses be exposed to graze where Ju`lan's troops could see them; but (al-Jubba'i) was not to attack them.

549. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 314, says this event occurred in the year 263.

550. Popovic, *Révolte*, 118-22.

551. This subheading is not in the form usually employed by Tabari.

552. Manuscripts B and C have this reading, albeit a corrupt one, for al-Jubba'i's name was Ahmad b. Mahdi.

553. These may have been from the village of Marwan, which, as noted on p. 177, above, was near Tahitha.

Sulayman, for his part, rode out with his entire army, except for a handful that he left behind in his camp, and entered the region of the Ahwar.<sup>554</sup> He at last came upon two such stretches of open water called al-Rabbah and al-`Amraqah. Sulayman then headed for Muhammad b. `Ali b. Habib, who was at that time at a spot called Tall-fakhkhar.<sup>555</sup> When he reached him, a major battle broke out. Many were slain and Sulayman was able to seize a large number of horses and abundant booty. He killed a brother of Muhammad b. `Ali, though Muhammad himself escaped. Sulayman set out on return journey and when he was in the open countryside between al-Bazzaq and the village,<sup>556</sup> horsemen of the Banu Shayban appeared. Now Sulayman had struck down one of the chiefs of the Banu Shayban in Tallfakhkhar, killing him, taking one of his young sons prisoner, and confiscating the mare he was riding. News of this had reached the tribe, and so now they confronted Sulayman in the open with four hundred horsemen. At the time Sulayman had marched against Ibn Habib, he had sent for his deputy in al-Taff,<sup>557</sup> `Umayr b. `Ammar, to act as guide owing to his knowledge of the roads. When Sulayman spotted the horsemen of the Banu Shayban, he sent off all his troops leaving `Umayr b. `Ammar on his own. The Banu Shayban fought and killed him, carrying off his head when they left. The abominable one was greatly distressed at the news of `Umayr's death. Sulayman had transported to the abominable one all that had been acquired in the territory of Muhammad b. `Ali b. Habib, this occurring at the end of Rajah (March 9-April 7, 878) of this year.

[1922]

In Sha`ban (April 8-May 6, 878) Sulayman took a detachment of his troops to Qaryat Hassan,<sup>558</sup> where, at the time, one of the central authorities' commanders called Jaysh b. Hamartakin was stationed. Sulayman attacked the village, causing Jaysh to flee in fear and allowing Sulayman to capture, plunder, and burn it. He took with him horses [as booty] and returned to his own camp.

Next, on the 10th of Sha`ban (April 17, 878), Sulayman left for the

554. Ibn Serapion describes a *hawr* (pl. *ahwar*) as a great sheet of clear water in which no reeds grow. See Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 297-98; *El*.1 s.v. "Maisan."

555. The reading is uncertain.

556. The name of the place is not specified, but it may refer to the village of Marwan, as earlier in this passage.

557. A certain area in the district of al-Kufah. See Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, IV, 36.

558. A village between Dayr al-`Aqul and Wasit. See Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, II, 266.

region of al-Hawanit<sup>559</sup> and sent al-Jubba'i upstream in the galleys toward Bar(r) Musawir.<sup>560</sup> There he found a number of large boats, which Ju`lan had wanted to use to reach the Nahr Aban; they contained his horses, with which he used to go out hunting. Al-Jubba'i attacked the vessels, killed the crews, and seized the horses, of which there were twelve, and then returned to Tahitha.

On the 26th of Sha`ban (May 3, 878) Sulayman attacked Tall Rumana. The inhabitants evacuated the place, and Sulayman gathered all he could in booty and returned to his camp. Next, on the 10th of Ramadan (May 16, 878), he went to al-Jazirah, where Abba<sup>561</sup> was at the time, while Ju`lan was in Mazrawan. Sulayman had written to the abominable one, asking that he send him barges; he provided ten with a man from `Abbadan in charge called al-Saqr b. al-Husayn. When al-Saqr reached Sulayman with the barges, he pretended to be planning to attack Ju`lan. The news that Sulayman intended to advance on him soon reached Ju`lan's ears, and thus his main concern was to protect his own camp. But, as Sulayman approached Abba's location, he turned aside to Abba and attacked him, thus taking him by surprise, when he was not expecting him. Sulayman succeeded in achieving his goal and in acquiring six barges. [1923]

Muhammad b. al-Hasan said Jabbash the eunuch said that Sulayman actually found eight barges in [Abba's] camp, and two of them, which were on the shore, he burned. He seized horses, weapons, and other booty and returned to his own camp.

Sulayman next made it known that he intended attacking Takin al-Bukhari. To this end he equipped some boats with [the assistance of] al-Jubba'i and Ja`far b. Ahmad, a maternal uncle of Ankalay,<sup>562</sup> son of the accursed abominable one. But, when the boats neared Ju`lan's camp, Ju`lan pursued, attacked, and seized possession of them. Sulayman then launched an assault on Ju`lan from the landward side and drove him to flight toward al-Rusafah.<sup>563</sup> He recovered

559. See Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 46.

560. The reading is very uncertain. See p. 176, above.

561. Popovic, *Révolte*, 117, queries whether this person might be one of Ju`lan's officers. It is possible, too, that he is same Abba al-Turki, who has already been reported as operating in this area. See p. 178, above.

562. Halm, *Traditionen*, 55, notes that Ankalay is a Persian name, which supports the view that the Zanj leader, `Ali b. Muhammad, was of Persian origin.

563. A town lying on the east bank of the Tigris below Wasit. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 40; Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, II, 782.

the boats, as well as twenty-seven horses, two foals of Ju`lan's, and three mules, to say nothing of considerable quantities of other booty and weapons. Once again Sulayman returned to Tahitha.

Muhammad (b. al-Hasan) said that Jabbash denied any mention of Takin in this context; nor did he know anything concerning him from the evidence of [al-Saqr b. al-Husayn] al-`Abbadani but claimed that Sulayman's only objective was against Ju`lan.<sup>564</sup> In fact, Sulayman's troops had no information of him until it was rumored that he and al-Jubba'i had both been killed, which caused great anxiety among his followers.<sup>565</sup> Then hard news emerged of developments in the fighting against Ju`lan. They calmed down and waited quietly until Sulayman came to them. Sulayman wrote to the abominable one of his exploits and sent him banners and weapons.

In Dhu al-Qa`dah (July 5-August 3, 878) Sulayman went to al-Rusafah and attacked Matar b. Jami`, who was stationed there. He seized much booty, burned and plundered al-Rusafah, and sent banners to the abominable one. On the 5th of Dhu al-Hijjah 264 (August 8, 878) Sulayman arrived at the abominable one's city.<sup>566</sup> He stayed to celebrate the feast<sup>567</sup> and remain at home. Matar b. Jami` went and attacked the village of al-Hajjajiyyah, taking a number of its inhabitants captive. One of these was Sulayman's religious judge called Sa`id b. al-Sayyid al-`Adawi, who was captured and sent to Wasit along with Tha`lab b. Hafis (al-Bahrani) and four commanders who were with him. They had gone to al-Harjaliyyah, about two and a half *farsakhs* from Tahitha, when al-Jubba'i set out with horses and men to thwart Matar. Al-Jubba'i arrived in the district, however, after Mat. at had already committed his acts there, and so al-Jubba'i retired and sent the news to Sulayman, who arrived on Tuesday, the 28th of Dhu al-Hijjah of this year (August 31, 878). [1924]

564. There appears to be some confusion or misunderstanding among the sources Tabari is using here. There is a parallel, however, between Sulayman's two campaigns against Abba and Ju`lan, each of which was preceded by the spread of "disinformation" on his real intention. Jabbash seems not to have known about the first attack against Abba, when Sulayman had pretended to be campaigning against Ju`lan.

565. Apparently Sulayman had left his main army and was using only the boats and the troops on them in his forays against Abba and al-Jubba'i.

566. That is, al-Mukhtarrah.

567. That is, the feast of the sacrifice, the major celebration of the pilgrimage. See *EI*,2 s.vv. "Hadjdj," "Id al-Adha'."

Ju`lan was removed from his post, and Ahmad b. Laythawayh arrived and stationed himself in al-Shadidiyyah.<sup>568</sup>

Sulayman ventured to the Nahr Aban where he discovered one of Ibn Laythawayh's commanders called Turnaj,<sup>569</sup> whom he attacked and killed.

Muhammad (b. al-Hasan)Jabbash said that the one killed at that place was Binak; and, as for Turnaj, he was slain in Mazrawan.

Next Sulayman reached al-Rusafah, where the army of Matar b. Jami` was then located. Sulayman attacked and plundered his camp, capturing from it seven barges, two of which he burned. That was in the month of Rabi` II (December 11, 877-January 8,878) of the year 264.<sup>570</sup>

[1925]

MuhammadJabbash said that six barges were seized and that this conflict was at al-Shadidiyyah.

Following this, Sulayman ventured forth with five barges aboard which he had arrayed the very finest of his commanders and troops. Takin al-Bukhari engaged him in battle in al-Shadidiyyah, as Ibn Laythawayh had by then already proceeded to the district of al-Kufah and Junbula'. Takin vanquished Sulayman, seizing his barges with their war machines, weapons, and fighters. In this encounter the most experienced of Sulayman's commanders were slain. Ibn Laythawayh afterward marched to al-Shadidiyyah and administered these districts until Abu Ahmad appointed Muhammad al-Muwal-lad governor of Wasit.<sup>571</sup>

MuhammadJabbash said that, when Ibn Laythawayh arrived in al-Shadidiyyah, Sulayman marched upon him and for two days they fought against each other. Finally, on the third day Sulayman fell back and Ibn Laythawayh and his followers rushed to pursue him. Then Sulayman returned to the attack and threw Ibn Laythawayh into the mouth of the Barduda canal; he saved himself after nearly drowning. Sulayman captured seventeen of his riding animals.

568. Ju`lan had been prefect of Wasit and was replaced by Ahmad b. Laythawayh.

569. The reading is uncertain.

570. Unless Sulayman attacked al-Rusafah twice in the same year, this account is out of place in the chronological ordering of events. Tabari has already reported, p. 196, above, Sulayman's defeat of Matar b. Jami` in al-Rusafah in Dhu al-Qa`dah, toward the end of the year.

571. That is, replacing Ahmad Ibn Laythawayh, who had held the post. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 117.



[Muhammad] continued, saying that Sulayman communicated with the abominable one requesting reinforcements. The Zanj leader despatched al-Khalil b. Aban and al-Mudhawwab<sup>572</sup> to him with about fifteen hundred horsemen. Upon the arrival of these reinforcements, Sulayman straightaway went to engage Muhammad al-Muwallad in battle. In the course of it Muhammad fled and the Zanj occupied Wasit. A large number of persons were killed and the city was pillaged and burned. Kanjur al-Bukhari was in Wasit at the time and he held on, putting up a defense throughout that day until the afternoon, when he was killed. The ones who led the horsemen in Sulayman's army that day were al-Khalil b. Aban and `Abdallah, who was known as al-Mudhawwab. Al-Jubba'i was in charge of the galleys; al-Zanji b. Mihran was in charge of the barges. Sulayman b. Jami` led his black commanders and their infantry; Sulayman b. Musa al-Sha`rani and his two brothers led his horses and foot soldiers along with Sulayman b. Jami`. The entire force performed to perfection.<sup>573</sup>

[1926]

Sulayman b. Jami` later left Wasit and with his entire army headed for Junbula', causing depopulation and destruction. Discord broke out between him and al-Khalil b. Aban who wrote to his brother `Ali about it. `Ali b. Aban begged the Zanj leader to relieve al-Khalil of his duties with Sulayman, and permission was given for al-Khalil to return to the abominable one's city with `Ali b. Aban's associates and slaves. Al-Mudhawwab remained behind with Sulayman in charge of the Arab tribesmen. Sulayman stayed in his camp for some days and then moved to the Nahr al-Amir where he reestablished his camp. He despatched al-Jubba'i and al-Mudhawwab to Junbula', where they remained for ninety days while Sulayman was encamped at the Nahr al-Amir.

MuhammadJabbash said that Sulayman's camp was in al-Sha-didiyyah.

In this year Sulayman b. Wahb departed from Baghdad for Samarra. He was accompanied by al-Hasan b. Wahb, while Ahmad b. al-Muwaffaq, Masrur al-Balkhi, and the army commanders escorted them in public procession. When Sulayman reached Samarra, al-Mu`tamid grew angry with him and imprisoned him, bound in fet-

572. Tabari enlightens us a few lines below. This man's name was `Abdallah, his nickname al-Mudhawwab, literally "melted (fat)."

573. Literally "as one hand."

ters. His palace and those of his sons Wahb and Ibrahim were confiscated.

Al-Hasan b. Makhlad was made vizier on the 27th of Dhu al-Qa`dah (July 31, 878).<sup>574</sup> [1927]

[Abu Ahmad] al-Muwaffaq left Baghdad with `Abdallah b. Sulayman.<sup>575</sup> As he approached Samarra, al-Mu`tamid transferred to the west bank [of the Tigris] and assembled his camp there, while Abu Ahmad and his entourage settled on the island of al-Mu'ayyad. Messengers went back and forth<sup>576</sup> between the two. A few days after the beginning of Dhu al-Hijjah al-Mu`tamid boarded a fire boat<sup>577</sup> on the Tigris, as his brother Abu Ahmad headed toward him in a light rivercraft. Then the Caliph bestowed robes of honor upon Abu Ahmad, Masrur al-Balkhi, Kayghalagh, and Ahmad b. Musa b. Bugha. On Tuesday, the 8th of Dhu al-Hijjah, which was *yawm al-tarwiyah*<sup>578</sup> (August 11, 878), Abu Ahmad's troops crossed over the river to al-Mu`tamid's camp.

Sulayman b. Wahb was released from prison, and al-Mu`tamid returned to the Jawsaq palace. Al-Hasan b. Makhlad fled with Ahmad b. Salih b. Shirzad, and instructions were given for the confiscation of their property and that of their supporters.<sup>579</sup> Ahmad b. Abi al-Asbagh was imprisoned. The army commanders stationed in Samarra fled to Takrit.<sup>580</sup> Abu Musa b. al-Mutawakkil went into hiding but reappeared thereafter. Those commanders who had gone to Takrit went farther on, to Mosul, and began to help themselves to the tax revenues.

This year the pilgrimage was led by Harun b. Muhammad b. Ishaq b. Musa b. `Isa al-Hashimi al-Kufi.

574. See Sourdél, *Vizirat*, I, 315-26, for details.

575. Manuscript C and Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 316, both have `Ubaydallah b. Sulayman b. Wahb.

576. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 316, reproduces this passage from Tabari almost verbatim, though with certain shifts in the order of sentences. He glosses this sentence, stating that al-Mu`tamid was angry with al-Muwaffaq, and then an agreement was reached.

577. *Harrdqah*. See Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. *h-r-q*.

578. Literally "day of providing oneself with water" the 8th of Dhu al-Hijjah, during the annual pilgrimage ceremonies. See *El*, 2 s.v. "Hadjdj."

579. Al-Hasan b. Makhlad and Sulayman b. Wahb were bitter rivals. See Sourdél, *Vizirat*, I, 309-15.

580. See Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 316, where he explains that the commanders fled in fear of al-Muwaffaq.

The Events of the Year 265  
(September 3, 878-August 22, 879)

Among the events taking place during this year was a battle in the district of Junbula'<sup>581</sup> between Ahmad b. Laythawayh and Sulayman b. Jami`, the Zanj master's commander.

An Account of [the] Battle [of Junbula']<sup>582</sup>

Sulayman b. Jami` had reportedly written to the Zanj leader, informing him of the situation on Nahr al-Zuhayri. He requested permission for expenses to dig a canal from it into the Sawad al-Kufah and the plain.<sup>583</sup> Sulayman informed him the distance was not great and that once the canal was dug it would be easy for the Zanj leader [to arrange] shipments of food supplies from the districts of Junbula' and the Sawad al-Kufah. The abominable one sent him a man called Muhammad b. Yazid al-Basri to help in carrying out the task. He [1928]

<sup>581</sup>A hamlet between Wasit and al-Kufah. See Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, II, 126.

<sup>582</sup>. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 118; Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 322.

<sup>583</sup>. Reading *al-baraz*, according to Tabari, *Addenda et Emendanda*, DCCXCII, rather than *al-barar*, as in the text.

wrote to Sulayman to supply all his needs in terms of expenses and lodging with him and his army until the task for which he had been sent was completed. Sulayman moved his entire force to stay in al-Sharitiyyah<sup>584</sup> for almost a month and set the laborers to work on the canal. During this time Sulayman did not touch [the provisions] at hand belonging to the villagers from nearby Khusru Sabur.<sup>585</sup> Rather, supplies reached him from the district of al-Sin<sup>586</sup> and adjacent areas, until the moment when Ibn Laythawayh, Abu Ahmad's financial administrator over Junbula', attacked Sulayman and killed fourteen<sup>587</sup> of his commanders.

Muhammad b. al-Hasan said that forty-seven commanders had been killed and untold numbers of others. Sulayman's camp was pillaged and his boats, which were moored in this canal that he was engaged in digging, were burned. Sulayman withdrew in utter defeat to Tahitha, where he remained. Al-Jubba'i arrived in the wake of the defeat and later went back upstream to stay in Barratimurta,<sup>588</sup> leaving a boat master called al-Zanji b. Mihran in charge of the barges.

The central authorities had sent [Abu Hamzah] Nusayr to have Shamraj<sup>589</sup> sent in bonds to the court and appointed him to Shamraj's duties. After this, Nusayr came upon al-Zanji b. Mihran on the Barratimurta canal and seized nine of his barges, six of which al-Zanji was able to recover. [1929]

Muhammad b. al-Hasan said that Jabbash denied that al-Zanji b. Mihran had recovered any of the barges, claiming that Nusayr got away with them all.

Al-Zanji headed for Tahitha, forwarding a letter to Sulayman before he arrived. Sulayman stayed in Tahitha until news reached him that al-Muwaffaq was coming his way.

In al-Muharram of this year (September 3-October 2, 878) Ahmad b. Tulun<sup>590</sup> fought against Sima the Tall in Antioch,<sup>591</sup> besieging him until he conquered the city and killed Sima.

584. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 322, calls the place al-Sharitah.

585. Well-known village near Wasit. See Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, II, 96.

586. A location in the region of al-Kufah. See Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, III, 440.

587. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 322, has forty.

588. The reading is uncertain.

589. This person remains unidentified.

590. Tabari, III, 1697, notes that in the year 254/868 Bayakbak appointed him governor of Egypt. See *EI*, 2 s.v. "Ahmad b. Tulun."

591. Le Strange, *Lands*, 152n. 2, calls attention to the confusion, in the early Ara-

(Footnote continued on next page)

Al-Qasim b. Mimah<sup>592</sup> assaulted Dulaf b. `Abd al-`Aziz b. Abi Dulaf<sup>593</sup> in Isfahan and killed him. Later a group of Dulaf's companions killed al-Qasim in revenge and declared Ahmad b. `Abd al-`Aziz their chief.

In al-Muharram of this year (September 3 -October 3, 878) Muhammad al-Muwallad joined Ya`qub b. al-Layth. The central authorities ordered the confiscation of his money and lands.

In Jumada I of this year (December 30, 878-January 28, 879) Arab tribesmen killed Ju`lan the ruffian (*al-`ayyar*) in Dimimma.<sup>594</sup> He had been providing protection for a caravan when he was killed. The central authorities despatched a group of *mawlas* to seek out the perpetrators of the crime, but they fled. The searchers got as far as `Ayn al-Tamr<sup>595</sup> and then returned to Baghdad, a number of them having died of the gripping cold that lasted for some days, with snow even falling in Baghdad. [1930]

Abu Ahmad ordered the imprisonment in his palace of Sulayman and his son `Ubaydallah,<sup>596</sup> along with a number of their relations. The palaces of some of these latter were plundered, but a guard was ordered to protect the palaces of Sulayman and his son. Their estates and wealth, along with the wealth and estates of their relatives, with the exception of Ahmad b. Sulayman, were confiscated. A settlement was later arranged with Sulayman and his son `Abdallah for the sum of nine hundred thousand dinars, and they were moved to a location where anyone they wished could come to visit.

This same year as well witnessed the assembly of troops of Musa b. Utamish, Ishaq b. Kundajiq, Yanghajur b. Urkhuz, and al-Fadl b. Musa b. Bugha at the Shammasiyyah Gate. They crossed over the [main] Baghdad bridge<sup>597</sup> and ventured to al-Safinatayn, followed by

(Footnote continued from previous page)

bic chronicles between Antioch in Syria and other places of the same name in Asia Minore.g., Antioch of Pisidia. Here the locale intended is Antioch in Syria, the ancient Antiocheia; this is confirmed on p. 204, below, and by the report in Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 324, that, when Ibn Tulun left Egypt for Syria in this year he appointed his son `Abbas his deputy. See *EL*,2 s.v. "Antakiya."

592. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 327, calls him al-Qasim b. Mahah.

593. In 254/868 his father had sent him to Junday Sabur and Tustar to collect taxes. See Tabari, III, 1697.

594. A village on the Euphrates just below al-Anbar. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 66; Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 69.

595. The district of `Ayn al-Tamr lay west of the Euphrates; the fortified town itself was situated just south of Hit. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 65, 81.

596. The text has incorrect `Abdallah; see Sourdel, *Vizirat*, I, 311.

597. See n. 21, above.

Ahmad b. al-Muwaffaq.<sup>598</sup> They did not return but encamped at Sarsat.<sup>599</sup>

On the 17th of Jumada II (February 14, 879) Abu Ahmad appointed Sa'id b. Makhlad as his secretary. After having bestowed upon him a robe of honor, Sa'id traveled to the commanders in Sarsar. Abu Ahmad next sent his son Ahmad to them. He discussed matters with them, and they returned together, after which robes of honor were bestowed upon them.

According to report, five of the Byzantine commanders, with thirty thousand troops, marched toward Adhanah.<sup>600</sup> Having reached the oratory,<sup>601</sup> they captured Urkhuz, who had been the governor of the frontier districts, then removed from his post, but had stayed on as part of the frontier guard. Some four hundred men were captured with him, and the Byzantines killed some fourteen hundred men who had rallied to them. The Byzantines withdrew after four days; this was in Jumada I (January 2, 879) of this year. [1931]

In Rajab (February 27-March 28, 879) of this year Musa b. Utamish, Ishaq b. Kundajiq, and Yanghajur b. Urkhuz assembled troops on Nahr Dayala.<sup>602</sup>

In this same year Ahmad b. `Abdallah al-Khujastani conquered Naysabur. Al-Husayn b. Tahir, Muhammad b. Tahir's prefect, went to Marv and settled there. The brother of Sharkab al-Jammal was between al-Husayn and al-Khujastani.

Tus was devastated this year.

Isma'il b. Bulbul was appointed vizier.<sup>603</sup>

Ya`qub b. al-Layth died this year<sup>604</sup> in al-Ahwaz and was succeeded by his brother `Amr b. al-Layth, who wrote to the central authorities to his obedience and loyalty. Ahmad b. Abi al-Asbagh was

598. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 326, who reproduces this passage with glosses, says that al-Muwaffaq prevented the return of the soldiers.

599. A town on the Sarsar canal, reached by way of the southern road leading to al-Kufah from Baghdad. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 32.

600. The modern Adana. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 128, 130-31. It was one of the line of fortresses (*al-thughur*) protecting Syria and was situated near the northern coast of the bay of Alexandretta; *EI*, 2 s.vv. "Adana," "al-`Awasim."

601. *Al-musalla*.

602. Having moved from their camp in Sarsar (see p. 174, above) to the eastern bank of the Tigris, to the canal that irrigated the gardens of east Baghdad. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 59 (vocalized Diyala).

603. See Sourdél, *Vizirat*, 315-16.

604. See Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 325, for additional details.

despatched to him in Dhu al-Qa`dah (June 25-July 24, 879) of this year.

A group of tribesmen of the Banu Asad this year killed `Ali b. Masrur al-Balkhi on the Mecca Road before he arrived at al-Mughithah. Abu Ahmad had appointed Muhammad b. Masrur al-Balkhi governor of the Mecca Road, and it was he who appointed his brother `Ali b. Masrur to the post.

The Byzantine emperor sent `Abdallah b. Rashid b. Kawus, the tax collector of the frontier districts who had been captured by him, to Ahmad b. Tulun, along with many other Muslim prisoners. The emperor also sent him a number of manuscripts as a gift.

A detachment of Zanj went to Jabbul605 in thirty galleys, seized four boats containing foodstuffs, and then returned. [1932]

Al-`Abbas b. Ahmad b. Tulun and his followers took themselves off to Barqah,606 in defiance of his father, Ahmad who, according to report, had left him in charge of his administrative duties in Egypt when he departed for Syria. Upon Ahmad's return from Syria to Egypt, Al-`Abbas took what money there was in the Egyptian treasury, as well as furnishings and other things belonging to his father, and left for Barqah.607 Ahmad despatched a force against him, which captured and brought al-`Abbas back. Ahmad imprisoned him in his own quarters. Because of this action of al-`Abbas, a group of men who had joined up with him in this venture were killed.608

The Zanj this year occupied al-Nu`maniyyah,609 burned its market and most of the inhabitants' dwellings, and took prisoners. They next moved to Jarjaraya,610 causing people of the Sawad region to enter Baghdad.611

605. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 38. It lay on the eastern bank of the Tigris, about 50 km. below Jarjaraya; Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, II, 23; Popovic, *Révolte*, 119

606. For further details, see Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 324-25; *El*, 2 s.v. "Barka." The town and region attached to it were the classical Cyrenaica.

607. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 324, gives the date of his arrival in the month of Rabi` I, 265 (January 11-30, 878).

608. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 325, where it is stated that al-`Abbas was still in prison in the year 268/881-82.

609. A town on the western bank of the Tigris about halfway between Baghdad and Wasit. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 37; Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 322.

610. A town below Dayr al-`Aqul, which lay on both banks of the Tigris. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 37; Yaqut, *Mu`jam*, II, 54.

611. This marked the northernmost point of the Zanj expansion, the closest to Baghdad that their campaigns brought them.



During the course of this year Abu Ahmad made `Amr b. al-Layth governor of Khurasan, Fars, Isfahan, Sijistan, Kirman, and al-Sind,<sup>612</sup> and had the formal investiture declared in the presence of witnesses. Ahmad b. Abi al-Asbagh was sent to `Amr with the document of his investiture, together with a contract and robe of honor

In Dhu al-Hijjah (July 25-August 22, 879) of this year Masrur al-Balkhi marched on al-Nil,<sup>613</sup> and `Abdallah b. Laythawayh withdrew from it with his brother's troops. `Abdallah had been in open conflict with the central authorities and had gone with his followers to Ahmadabadh. He was pursued by Masrur al-Balkhi, who intended to engage him in battle. Then `Abdallah b. Laythawayh and his followers unexpectedly came to Masrur on foot and yielded to him in obedience and loyalty. `Abdallah b. Laythawayh, with his sword and girdle hung about his neck, proffered his apologies to Masrur and swore an oath that he had been incited to do what he did. His apology was accepted, and robes of honor were ordered bestowed upon him and several of his commanders. [1933]

Takin al-Bukhari ventured forth to al-Ahwaz as vanguard for Masrur al-Balkhi.

#### An Account of Takin's Arrival in al-Ahwaz<sup>614</sup>

According to Muhammad b. al-Hasan, Masrur al-Balkhi appointed Takin al-Bukhari governor of the districts of al-Ahwaz at the time Abu Ahmad had appointed Masrur over them.<sup>615</sup> Takin set out and arrived at al-Ahwaz. `Ali b. Aban had already reached there and was on his way to Tustar, which he surrounded with a large force of his Zanj troops and others. The populace was terrified at the development and was about to surrender the city when, in this situation, Takin arrived. He had not even had time to change from his travel attire when he went into battle against `Ali b. Aban and his troops. Defeat was the lot of the Zanj, as they were slain, routed, and scat-

612. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 326, adds to these posts that of commandant of police in Baghdad.

613. A town on Nahr al-Nil, which was a continuation, of the Great Sarat canal west of the town; it flowed from the Euphrates to the Tigris below Baghdad. See Le Strange, *Lands*, 73; Le Strange, "Ibn Serapion's Description," 261.

614. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 323.

615. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 119.

tered. `Ali was forced to retreat with the remnants of his shattered forces. This was the famous battle of Bab Kudak<sup>616</sup> [at Tustar], after which Taken al-Bukhari returned and settled in the city. Many freebooters (*sa`alik*) and others swelled his forces. `Ali b. Aban also set out for Tustar with a sizable collection of his troops and encamped on the eastern side of the Masruqan canal. He placed his brother on the western side, together with a troop of horse and Zanj infantry. He sent on ahead a number of the Zanj commanders, among them Ankluwayh and Husayn al-Hammami and others, and ordered them to station themselves at the Fars bridge (*qantarrah*). Information about `Ali b. Aban's arrangements reached Takin by means of a slave called Wasif al-Rumi, who was a fugitive from `Ali b. Aban's army. He reported on the enemy's position at the Fars bridge, on their indulgence in wine drinking, and on the dispersal of their troops to gather food. So during the night Takin made his way toward them with a detachment of troops and attacked, killing from among their commanders Ankalwayh, Husayn al-Hammami, Abu Salih Mufarraj, and Andarun. The rest fled and caught up with al-Khalil b. Aban, telling him what had happened to them. Takin then ventured along the eastern side of the Masruqan and eventually found `Ali b. Aban with a detachment of troops. But `Ali did not pause to fight and withdrew, although a slave called Ja`farawayh from `Ali's cavalry was taken captive. `Ali and al-Khalil returned with their detachments to al-Ahwaz, while Taken went back to Tustar. `Ali wrote to Takin to request he refrain from killing Ja`farawayh, and so he was imprisoned. There then occurred an exchange of messages and courtesies between `Ali and Taken, news of which reached Masrur, who thoroughly disapproved. Masrur even heard that Takin had besmirched his loyalty by going over to `Ali b. Aban.

[1934]

Muhammad b. al-Hasan Muhammad b. Dinar Muhammad b. `Abdallah b. al-Hasan b. `Ali al-Ma'muni al-Badhghisi, who was one of the associates of Taken al-Bukhari, said that when Masrur heard the news of Takin's audacious behavior against him, he paused until he learned the true state of affairs and then set out toward the districts of al-Ahwaz, making a show of his pleasure with and approval of Takin. He took the road to Shabarzan<sup>617</sup> and

[1935]

616. The reading is very uncertain, Manuscript B having *k-d-d*, *C m-r-dh-k*, and Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, VII, 323, Kurak.

617. The reading is uncertain.

thence to al-Sus. Takin already knew what Masrur had heard about him, and this distressed him very much, as well as the group of his commanders who had followed in Masrur's company. Messages went back and forth between Masrur and Takin until Takin felt safe and secure. Masrur went to Wadi Tustar, where he sent for Takin, who crossed over to greet Masrur. Masrur ordered that his sword be removed and that he be placed in custody. When Takin's army saw that, they immediately dispersed, a section of them making for the territory of the Zanj leader, another section joining the Kurd Muhammad b. `Ubaydallah. When Masrur heard of this [reaction], he extended a safe-conduct to all who remained of Takin's army, and they joined him.

Muhammad b. `Abdallah b. al-Hasan al-Ma'muni said, "I was among those who went to Masrur's camp when he handed Takin over to Ibrahim b. Ju`lan. Takin remained in his custody until his appointed time arrived and he died." Some of the affair of Masrur and Takin that we have mentioned occurred in the year 265 (878-79) and some in the year 266 (879-80).

The pilgrimage this year was led by Harun b. Muhammad b. Ishaq b. Musa b. `Isa al-Hashimi.

In this year as well, a detachment of Zanj under Abu al-Mughirah b. `Isa b. Muhammad al-Makhzumi attacked Mecca.<sup>618</sup> [1936]

618. See Popovic, *Révolte*, 120, who queries whether Tabari intends "attack," rather than "conquer," which is what the Arabic word *mutaghalliban* suggests.

## Bibliography of Cited Works

I.  
Primary Sources

al-Dinawari, Abu Hanifah Ahmad b. Da'ud. *Kitab al-akhbar al-tiwal*. 2 vols. Ed. W. Guirgass and I. Kratchkovsky. Leiden: 1888-1912.

*Fragmenta Historicorum Arabicorum*. Ed. M. J. de Goeje. 2 vols. Leiden: 1869.

Ibn al-Athir, `Izz al-Din Abu al-Hasan `Ali b. Muhammad. *al-Kamil fi alta'rikh*. 13 vols. Beirut: 1385-87/1965-67.

Ibn Hawqal, Abu al-Qasim b. `Ali al-Nasibi. *Kitab al-masalik wa-al-ma-malik*. Ed. M. J. de Goeje. Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum II. Leiden: 1873.

. *Configuration de la terre (Kitab surat al-ard)*. Tr. J. H. Kramers and G. Wiet. 2vols. Paris: 1964.

Ibn al-Jawzi, `Abd al-Rahman b. `Ali. *al-Muntazam fi ta'rikh al-muluk wa-al-umam*. Ed. E Krenkow. Hyderabad: 1357-59/1938-40.

Ibn Kathir, Isma`il b. `Umar. *al-Bidayah wa-al-nihayah*. 14 vols. Cairo: 1351-58/1932-40.

Ibn Manzur, Jamal al-Din Abu al-Fadl Muhammad b. Mukarram al-Ansari, *Lisan al-`Arab*. 5 vols. Cairo: 1979.

Ibn Sayyar al-Warraq. *Kitab al-tabikh*. Ed. K. Ohrnberg and S. Mroueh. Helsinki: 1987.

Ibn al-Tiqtaqa, Safi al-Din Muhammad b. `Ali. *al-Fakhri*. Tr. C. E. J. Whit-ting as *Al-Fakhri: On the System of Government and the Moslem Dynasties*. London: 1947.

al-Istakhri, Ibrahim b. Muhammad. *Kitab al-masalik wa-al-mamalik*. Ed. M. J. de Goeje. Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum I. Leiden: 1870.

al-Jahiz., Abu `Uthman `Amr al-Fuqaymi al-Basri. *Kitab al-qiyan*. Ed. and tr. A. E L. Beeston as *The Epistle on Singing Girls*. Warminster, Eng.: 1980.

al-Mas`udi, Abu al-Hasan `Ali b. al-Husayn. *Kitab al-tanbih wa-al-ishraf*. Ed. M. J. de Goeje. Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum VIII. Leiden: 1894.

. *Muruj al-dhahab wa-ma`adin al-jawhar*. Ed. and tr. C. Barbier de Meynard and Pavet de Courteille as *Les prairies d'or*. 9 vols. Paris: 1861-77.

al-Shabushti, Abu al-Hasan `Ali b. Muhammad. *Kitab al-diyarat*. Ed. G. `Awwad. Baghdad: 1370/1951.

al-Tabari, Abu Ja`far Muhammad b. Jarir. *Ta'rikh al-rusul wa-al-muluk*. Ed. M. J. de Goeje et al. 13 vols. plus *Introductio. Glossarium. Addenda et Emendanda* and *Index*. Leiden: 1879-1901.

al-Ya`qubi, Abu al-`Abbas Ahmad b. Ishaq, called Ibn Wadih. *Kitab al-buldan*. Ed. M. J. de Goeje. Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum VII. Leiden: 1892.

. *Ta'rikh*. Ed. M. T Houtsma. Leiden: 1883.

Yaqut, Abu `Abdallah Ya`qub b. `Abdallah al-Hamawi al-Rumi. *Mu`jam al-buldan*. Ed. F. Wüstenfeld. 6 vols. Leipzig: 1866-73.

## II.

### Secondary Sources And Reference Works

Artúr, A.-P. U. *Tablas teóricas de equivalencia diaria entre los calendarios islámico y cristiano*. 2 vols. Zaragoza: 1984.

Ayalon, D. "On the Eunuchs in Islam." *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, VI (1979): 67-124.

. "Preliminary Remarks on the Mamluk Military Institution in Islam." In *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East*. Ed. V. J. Parry and M. E. Yapp. London: 1975. Pp. 44-58.

Biberstein Kazimirski, A. de *Dictionnaire arabe-français*. Paris: 1860.

Bosworth, C. E. "Abu `Abdallah al-Khwarazmi on the Technical Terms of the Secretary's Art: A Contribution to the Administrative History of Medieval Islam." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, XX (1969): 113-64.

. *The Islamic Dynasties*. Rev. ed. Edinburgh: 1980.

. "Recruitment, Muster and Review in Medieval Islamic Armies." In *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East*. Ed. V. J. Parry and M. E. Yapp. London: 1975. Pp. 59-77.

. "The Tahirids and Saffarids." In *The Cambridge History of Iran*. IV. Cambridge: 1975. Pp. 90-135.

Cahen, C. "Mouvements populaires et autonomisme urbain dans l'Asie musulmane du Moyen Age." *Arabica*, V (1958): 225-40; VI (1959): 25-56, 233-65.

Creswell, K. A. C. *A Short Account of Early Muslim Architecture*. London: 1958.

Crone, P. *Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity*. Cambridge, 1980.

Dozy, R. *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes*. 2 vols. Leiden: 1881.

Forstner, M. *Al-Mu`tazz billah (252/866-255/869): Die Krise des abba-sidischen Kalifats in 3./9. Jahrhundert: Ein Beitrag zur politischen Geschichte der sogenannten Periode der Anarchie von Samarra*. Germersheim, W. Ger.: 1976.

Fraenkel, S. *Die aramäischen Fremdwörter im Arabischen*. Leiden: 1886.

Frye, R. N. "The Samanids." In *The Cambridge History of Iran*. IV. Cambridge: 1975. Pp. 136-61.

de Goeje, M. J. *Mémoire sur les Carmathes du Bahrain et les Fatimides*. Leiden: 1886.

. "Tabari." In *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, XXIII. London: 1898. Pp. 2-5.

Halm, H. *Die Traditionen über den Aufstand `Ali Ibn Muhammads, des "Herrn der Zany": Eine quellenkritische Untersuchung*. Bonn: 1967.

Hinz, W. *Islamische Masse und Gewichte*. Leiden: 1955.

Hoenerbach, W. "Zur Heeresverwaltung der Abbasiden: Studie über Abufarag \* Qudama: Diwan al-gais\*." *Der Islam*, XXIX (1950): 257-90.

Ismail, O. "The Founding of a New Capital: Samarra." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, XXXI (1968): 315-26.

Kennedy, H. *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphs*. London: 1986.

Lane, E. W. *An Arabic-English Lexicon*. 2 vols. London: 1863-93. Repr. 8 vols. Beirut: 1984.

Lassnet, J. *The Shaping of `Abbasid Rule*. Princeton: 1980.

. *The Topography of Baghdad in the Early Middle Ages*. Detroit: 1970.

Le Strange, G. *Baghdad during the Abbasid Caliphate*. Oxford: 1900.

. "Ibn Serapion's Description of Mesopotamia and Baghdad." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1895): 1-76, 255-315.

. *The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate*. London: 1905. Repr. London: 1966.

Levy, R. *A Baghdad Chronicle*. Cambridge: 1929. Repr. Cambridge: 1977.

. *The Social Structure of Islam*. Cambridge: 1965.

Løkkegaard, E. *Islamic Taxation in the Classic Period with Special Reference to Circumstances in Iraq*. Copenhagen: 1950.

Mez, A. *The Renaissance of Islam*. Tr. S. Khuda Bakhsh. Patna: 1937.

Morony, M. *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest*. Princeton: 1984.

Mottahedeh, R. "The `Abbasid Caliphate in Iran." In *The Cambridge History of Iran*, IV. Cambridge: 1975. Pp. 57-89.

Nöldeke, T. "A Servile War in the East." In *Sketches from Eastern History*. Tr. J. S. Black. London: 1892. Pp. 146-75.





Ocaña Jiménez, M. *Nuevas tablas de conversión de datas islámicas a cristianas y viceversa*. Madrid: 1981.

Ostrogorsky, G. *History of the Byzantine State*. Oxford: 1968.

Pellat, C. *Le milieu basrien et la formation de Gahiz.*. Paris: 1953.

Popovic, A. "Quelques renseignements inédits concernant le maître de Zanj, `Ali b. Muhammad." *Arabica*, XII/2 (1965): 175-87.

. *La révolte des esclaves en Iraq au III/IX siècle*. Paris: 1976.

Shaban, M. A. *The `Abbasid Revolution*. Cambridge: 1970.

. *Islamic History: A New Interpretation*, II. Cambridge: 1976.

Shir, S. A. *A Dictionary of Persian Loan-Words in the Arabic Language*. Beirut: 1980.

Sourdel, D. *Le vizirat `abbaside de 749 à 936 (132 à 324 de l'Hégire)*. 2 vols. Damascus: 1959.

Thesiger, W. *The Marsh Arabs*. London: 1964.

Tyan, E. "Judicial Organization." In *Law in the Middle East*. Ed. M. Khadduri and H. Liebesny. Washington, D.C.: 1955. Pp. 123-45.

Vasiliev, A. A. *History of the Byzantine Empire*. I. Madison: 1970.

Waines, D. "The Crisis of the Abbasid Third Century." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, XX (1977): 339-48.

Wehr, H. *A Dictionary of Modern Writing Arabic*. Wiesbaden: 1971.

Wiet, G. *Baghdad: metropolis of the `Abbasid Caliphate*. Norman, Okla.: 1971.

Wright, W. *A Grammar of the Arabic Language*. 2 vols. London and Edinburgh: 1874-75.

Young, G. *A Reed Shaken by the Wind*. London: 1983.

## INDEX

*The index contains all proper names of persons, places, and tribal and other groups, as well as topographical data and most transliterated technical terms that occur in the Translator's Foreword, the text, and the footnotes, except that only names belonging to the medieval and earlier periods are listed for the footnotes. When a name occurs in both the text and the footnotes on the same page, only the page number is given. The definite article, the abbreviation b. (for ibn "son") and bt. (for bint "daughter"), and everything in parentheses have been disregarded for the purposes of alphabetization.*

## A

`Abarta 23

Abba al-Turki 175, 178, 195, 196 n

`Abbad mosque 33, 53

`Abbadan xix, 43, 110, 111, 132, 136, 152, 195

al-`Abbas b. Ahmad b. Tulun 204

al-`Abbasi al-`Atiq 41

`Abbasid(s), Hashimite(s) xvi, 19 n. 72, 27, 28, 40, 41, 48, 65, 75, 90, 93 nn. 292-93, 105, 107, 108, 121, 137 n. 391

`Abd al-Qays 30

`Abd al-Rahman b. Dinar 102

`Abd al-Rahman al-Khariji 157

`Abd al-Rahman b. Muflih. 151-55, 164, 165

`Abd al-Rahman b. Na'il al-Basri 67

`Abd al-Samad b. Musa 27

`Abdallah b. `Ali 133

`Abdallah b. Bugha al-Sharabi 107

`Abdallah b. Humayd al-Tusi 111

`Abdallah Karikha 37

`Abdallah b. Mansur 71

`Abdallah al-Mudhawwab 198

`Abdallah b. Muhammad 3

`Abdallah b. Muhammad al-`Amiri 3

`Abdallah b. Muhammad b. Sulayman al-Zaynabi, Abu Mansur 35, 52, 53, 57, 61, 108, 109

`Abdallah b. Muhammad b. Yazdad al-Marwazi, Abu Salih 12, 71, 72, 73, 94, 98, 105

`Abdallah b. Rashid b. Kawus 190, 204

`Abdallah al-Sijzi 151, 158, 159, 161

`Abdallah b. Sulayman 202

`Abdallah b. Sulayman b. Wahb 199

[< previous page](#)

page\_213

[next page >](#)

`Abdallah b. Tahir 172

`Abdallah b. Takin 97, 101, 102

`Abdallah b. `Umar al-Bazyar 95

`Abdallah b. al-Wathiq, Abu al-Qasim 76-80, 82-86, 91, 96, 99, 102, 106, 163

`Abdan al-Kasibi 61

*al-`abid* 15, 35, 38, 42, 106, 111

abominable one. *See* `Ali b. Muhammad

Abrasan 43

Abrun 138

Abu al-`Abbas b. Ayman (Abu al-Kubash) 54-56

Abu `Abdallah b. al-Mutawakkil `ala-Allah 2

Abu Ahmad b. al-Mutawakkil `ala-Allah. *See* al-Muwaffaq

Abu Ahmad street 86, 87

Abu al-Ahwas b. Ahmad b. Sa`id b. Salm b. Qutaybah al-Bahili 67, 88, 110

Abu al-`Ala' al-Balkhi 54

Abu `Awn 180

Abu Bakr 88

Abu Da'ud al-Su`luk 14 n. 48, 164, 181-83

Abu Dulaf 56, 140, 141

Abu Faq`as 148

Abu al-Faraj 71

Abu Ghalib 121

Abu Harmalah al-Hajjam 88

Abu al-Hasan 109

Abu Hilal 50, 51

Abu Hudayd 36

Abu `Isa b. al-Mutawakkil 148

Abu al-Jawn 62

Abu Jaysh `Abbad 145

Abu al-Khanjar 36, 61

Abu al-Layth al-Qawariri 61

Abu Manarah 43

Abu Mansur 52

Abu Mu`adh al-Qurashi 176

Abu al-Mughirah b. `Isa b. Muhammad al-Makhzumi 207

Abu Musa b. al-Mutawakkil 199

Abu Muslim 93

Abu al-Nida' 179

Abu al-Sahba' 116, 117

Abu Sa`id al-Ansari 119

Abu Salih the Short 38

Abu al-Shawk 63

Abu Tamim 180 192

Abu al-Wazir 95

Adhanah 203

Adharbayjan 161

Aghartimish 178, 179, 191

*ahl* 5, 20 n. 78

*ahl al-Basrah* 64 n. 233

Ahmad b. `Abd al-`Aziz 202

Ahmad b. `Abdallah al-Khujastani 203

Ahmad b. Abi al-Asbagh 199, 203, 205

Ahmad b. Ayyub 129

Ahmad b. al-Fadl b. Yahya 3

Ahmad b. Faridun 102

Ahmad b. `Isa b. Zayd 33, 134

Ahmad b. Isra'il al-Anbari, Abu Ja`far, 6 n. 24, 9, 10-12

Ahmad b. Janab 3

Ahmad b. Jumayl 94, 95, 98, 105

Ahmad b. Khaqan al-Wathiqi 8, 9, 73, 74, 92, 94, 97, 98, 103

Ahmad b. al-Layth 116

Ahmad b. Laythawayh 181-86, 197, 200, 201, 205

Ahmad b. Mahdi al-Jubba'i 174-76, 177-80, 191, 192, 193 n. 552, 195, 196, 198, 201

Ahmad b. al-Mudabbir 111 n. 328

Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Qabus 156

Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Thawabah 76, 82, 107

Ahmad b. Musa b. Bugha 199

Ahmad b. al-Mutawakkil b. Fityan 68, 69, 95, 99, 105, 115; *see also* al-Mu`tamid

Ahmad b. al-Muwaffaq 185, 198, 203; *see also* al-Mu`tadid

Ahmad b. Ruh 153

Ahmad b. Sahl al-Lutfi 181

[< previous page](#)

page\_214

[next page >](#)

Ahmad b. Salih b. Shirzad 19, 199

Ahmad b. Sharik 177

Ahmad b. Sulayman 202

Ahmad b. Tulun 201, 204

Ahmad b. Wasif 107

Ahmadabadh 205

*al-ahrar* 35

al-Ahsa' 31

al-Ahwaz xvi, 24 n. 94, 29, 37 n. 152, 38-39 n. 158, 50 n. 205, 76, 111, 112, 120, 122-24, 137, 142, 152, 153, 154 n. 434, 156, 164-66, 168, 180-83, 187, 203, 205, 206

Akramahr 191

Al al-Muhallab 128, 131

al-`Ala' b. Ahmad al-Azdi 161

Alburz mountains 155 n. 437

`Ali b. Aban al-Muhallabi 32, 34, 39, 42, 44, 45, 48, 49, 52, 54, 55, 59, 61, 62, 65, 123-30, 132, 137, 138, 140, 142, 143, 152, 153, 165, 180, 182-84, 186, 187, 198, 205, 206

`Ali b. Abi Talib 30 n. 123, 133 n. 378

`Ali b. Ahmad b. `Isa b. Zayd 133

`Ali b. Baris 97

`Ali al-Darrab 33

`Ali b. al-Hasan b. Isma`il b. al-`Abbas b. Muhammad b. `Ali 67

`All b. Masrur al-Balkhi 204

'Ali b. Muhammad (leader of the Zanj) xv, xvi, xvii, 29-67, 108-12, 120-35, 137-49, 152-56, 158-67, 174-81, 186, 187, 190-207

`Ali b. Muhammad b. Abi al-Shawarib 180

`Ali b. Muhammad al-Akbar 33

`Ali b. al-Husayn b. Quraysh 28

`Ali al-Qasim b. `Ali 182

`Ali b. Rahib b. Muhammad b. Hakim 30



`Ali b. Zayd b. al-Husayn b. `Isa b. Zayd b. `Ali b. al-Husayn b. `Ali b. Abi Talib al-`Alawi al-Talibi 115, 116, 158

Altun 99

Amajur 116, 117

*al-`amamah* 61

al-Amin 19 n. 72

*amir* 35, 40

`Amr b. al-Layth 203, 205

`Amr b. Mas`adah al-Katib al-Rawi 51

al-`Amud 154, 155

Amul 24 n. 100, 159, 163 n. 462

*amwal nujum* 15 n. 54

al-Anbar 16, 181, 202 n. 594

`Anbar al-Barbari 64

Anburan 185 n. 519

al-Andalus 161 n. 460

Andarun 206

Ankalay 120, 195

Ankalwayh 61, 186, 206

`Antarah b. Hajana 58

Antioch 201, 201-2 n. 591

Anushirwan 160 n. 457

`Aqil al-Ubuli 39, 41, 46, 47, 49, 50

`Aqr Mawar 177

Aqsha 47, 49, 50

`Arafat 181 n. 509

Arbuk bridge 123, 153

*`arif* 79 n. 269

*al-arkhanj* 59

Arkhanj al-Mutahhiri 59

Armenia 116 n. 337, 117, 166

Artakin b. B.r.n.m. kitakin 96

*arzaq* 70, 81, 82, 85

Asatakin 97, 103

Asfara'im 159

Asghajun 139, 142-44, 152

*ashab al-nawbah* 70

*ashab al-sultan* 50 n. 204

`Asim b. Yunus al-`Ijli 23

`Askar Mukram 165, 169, 182, 183, 186

`ata' 81, 85

`Ata' al-Barbari 62

`Attab b. `Attab 93, 97, 98, 102

al-`Attar 36

al-`Awasim 137

`Ayn al-Tamr 202

`ayyar 88, 104, 202

[< previous page](#)

page\_215

[next page >](#)

B

Bab Hulwan 24

Bab Kudak 206

Bab al-Sultan 122 n. 350

Bab Tanj 179

Bab al-Taq 5 n. 21, 139

Babak 12 n. 39

al-Badandun 190

Badhaward xix, 39, 147, 148, 151-54, 174

Badhghis 151

Badil al-Kashshi 159

Badr al-Rumi al-Sha`rani 184

Baghdad xv, xvi, xvii, 3- 5, 7, 9 nn. 32 and 34, 13, 14 nn. 47 and 51-53, 15, 16, 18 nn. 70-71, 19 nn. 71 and 76, 20-23, 28 n. 108, 29, 33, 34, 37 n. 152, 40 n. 162, 45 n. 186, 50 n. 72, 90 n. 93, 94, 106 n. 112, 120, 123, 139, 142, 149, 151 n. 162, 161, 163, 166, 168, 169, 171, 172, 174 n. 487, 180, 181, 188, 189, 198, 199, 202, 203 nn. 599 and 602, 204, 205 nn. 612-13

Baghdad street 86

Bahbudh b. `Abd al-Wahhab 183, 187

Bahilis 33

al-Bahrayn 17 n. 65, 31-33, 120, 126, 164, 165

Bakalaba 73, 79, 82, 96, 101

Baktimur b. Tashtimur 161

Balad 87

Balkh 30 n. 122, 119, 151

Balkh river 165

Banu Asad 127, 204

Banu Asad b. Khuzaymah 30

Banu Darim 31

Banu Dubay`ah 32

Banu Hanzalah 31

Banu Hashim. *See* `Abbasid(s)

Banu Himmam 128, 130

Banu Hisn 131

Banu `Ijl 45

Banu Musa b. al-Munajjim 34

Banu Rabi`ah. *See* Rabi`ah

Banu Sa`d 31, 126-30, 132

Banu al-Shammas 31

Banu Shayban 128, 194

Banu Tamim 31, 127, 128, 131

Banu Thawabah 95

Banu Yashkur 131

al-Baradan 4, 5

Baramikah 59

Baranjan 183

Barankhal 34, 35

Barduda 191

*barid* 129

Barmakids 19 n. 76, 20 n. 77

Barqah 204

Barr Musawir 176, 195

*barraniyyun* 81, 97 n. 302

Barratimurtz 201

Barsuna 52

Bashir al-Qaysi 54, 55

Basil al-Saqlabi (Basil I) 135, 156, 188, 204

al-Basrah xvi, xvii, xix, 9 n. 31, 17 n. 65, 29, 30 n. 119, 32-35, 37, 39 nn. 159-61, 45 n. 184, 46 nn. 189-90, 49 n. 198, 51, 52 n. 210, 53, 56 n. 219, 57-59, 61, 62 nn. 228-29, 64, 66, 67, 108, 109, 110, 112, 120, 122, 125-29, 132-34, 136, 137, 140, 147 n. 410, 153, 155, 164, 165, 175 n. 492

al-Basrah Gate (Baghdad) 16 n. 61

*bata'ih* (sg. *batihah*) xvi, 33, 39 n. 161, 96 n. 300, 191 n. 543

Batihah al-Sahnah xix, 143

Batn Jukha 24

al-Bawazij 18 n. 67, 148

Bayakbak 22-24, 29, 69, 73-76, 79, 80, 82, 85, 87-90, 92-98, 102-4, 107, 201 n. 590

Bayan xix, 38, 52, 54, 154, 155

Bayan Azar 155

Bazkuwar 137

al-Bazzaq 194

al-Bilaliyyah 32, 34, 35, 43, 52, 58, 60, 61, 65, 109, 129, 131, 176

Binak 197

[< previous page](#)

page\_216

[next page >](#)

Birkat Zalzal 123

*bitriq* 190

Bugha al-Kabir 7 n. 26, 22 n. 87, 85

Bugha the Younger (al-Sharabi) 14 n. 52, 24 n. 98, 88, 90

Bughraj 120, 122, 126, 127, 130, 168

Bukhtishu` b. Jibril 71

Bulbul 39

Burayh. *See* Ibrahim b. Muhammad b. Isma`il

Buraysh al-Quray`i 33

Bursan 57

Bushanj 151

Byzantium 135, 137 n. 391, 142, 162, 203

## C

canal. *See nahr*

Chalcis 137 n. 390

Cilician Gates 190 n. 537

Ctesiphon 23 n. 89

## D

al-Dabbasun 36

Dabila 46, 49, 50

al-Dakar 154

al-Dakka 86, 104

Damascus 116

al-Damghan 155-56 n. 437

*dar al-`ammah* 106 n. 315, 166

Darb al-Salamah 190 n. 537

Darim b. Malik b. Hanzalah 31 n. 129

al-Daskarah 24

Dast Arbuk 123

Dastimaran 152

Dastumisan 175

Da'ud b. al-`Abbas al-Tusi 12

Da'ud b. Sulayman al-Ja`fari, Abu Hashim 164

Da'udabadh 156

Dawraq 187

al-Daylam 24-26, 159, 160, 163

Daylamites 107, 163

Dayr al-`Aqul 170, 194, 204 n. 610

Dayr al-Dihdar 49 n. 198

al-Dayrani, Abu Ahmad 170, 172, 185

*dhu al-yaminayn* 14 n. 50

*dihqan* 18 n. 67

Dimimma 202

Dinar 54, 55

*dinar khafif* 49 n. 200

al-Dinari 30

Dinawar 166, 189

Dirham b. Nasr 169

*diwan* 14, 81

*diwan al-jund wa-al-Shakiriyyah* 7 n. 27

Diwdad b. Diwdast, Abu al-Sij 165, 167, 169, 172

Diyar Mudar 137, 156 n. 442

Dubba xix, 57, 58



Dujayl xix, 37, 40, 46-48, 52 n. 212, 123 n. 355, 124 n. 359, 154 nn. 432 and 434, 182

*al-dukhala* 77 n. 267

al-Dulab 155, 165

Dulaf b. `Abd al-`Aziz b. Abi Dulaf 29, 190, 202

al-Dur 19, 20, 76, 78, 81, 84, 86, 87, 91, 95, 96, 99

*al-durra`ah* 61

## E

Egypt 111 n. 328, 166, 201-2 nn. 590-91, 204

Euphrates 16 n. 64, 33 n. 136, 43, 120, 121, 137 n. 389, 148 n. 414, 156 n. 442, 202 nn. 594-95, 205 n. 613

Euphrates road 124

## F

al-Fadl b. `Adi al-Darimi 60, 64, 127, 128, 183

al-Fadl b. al-`Anbar 187

[< previous page](#)

page\_217

[next page >](#)

al-Fadl b. Ishaq b. al-Hasan b. Isma`il b. al-`Abbas b. Muhammad b. `Ali b. `Abdallah b. al-`Abbas 135, 149, 167, 184, 188

al-Fadl b. Maymum 64

al-Fadl b. Musa b. Bugha 202

Fam al-Silh 124 n. 362

al-Fandam 124

Faraghinah 70, 93-95, 97, 102-4, 106, 107, 141, 185

Faraj the younger 96

Fars 28, 76, 116, 119, 120, 122 n. 351, 123, 135, 137, 164-66, 168, 170, 172, 181, 185, 205

Fars bridge 182, 183, 206

*farsakh* 47 n. 192, 108, 157, 169, 178, 186, 191, 192, 196

Fath (slave of Abu al-Hadid) 184

Fath (slave of Abu Shith) 60, 62, 64, 128, 130

Fath al-Hajjam 39, 54

*fatwa* 13

*fayd* 45 n. 184

Fayruz the Elder 60

*fitnah* 5

al-Furat (al-Basrah) xix, 29

al-Furatiyyah 43

## G

*ghallah* 74 n. 262

Ghanim al-Shitranji 31

*al-ghawgha'* 4, 5 n. 17

*ghulam* (pl. *ghilman*) 15, 34, 35, 38 n. 156, 48 n. 193, 70, 86

H

Habib 7

*habl* 132, 141

Habshun b. Bugha 96-99, 101

al-Hadithah 102, 148

Hajar 31

al-Hajar 56

*hajib* 28 n. 108

al-Hajjajiyyah 193, 196

al-Hajjam 45

Hamadhan 27, 29, 189 n. 534

Hammad b. Ishaq 3

Hammad b. Muhammad b. Hammad b. Danqash 11, 12

Hammad al-Saji 65

*al-hanndtun* 181

Haramayn 120

Harith al-Qaysi 62

al-Harith b. Sima al-Sharabi 116, 123, 164

al-Harjaliyyah 196

*harraqah* 199 n. 577

Harun b. `Abd al-Rahman b. al-Azhar al-Shi`i 88, 102, 129

Harun b. Muhammad b. Ishaq b. Musa b. `Isa al-Hashimi al-Kufi, 199, 207

Harun al-Rashid 9 n. 34, 20 n. 77

Hasak `Imran 57

al-Hasan b. `Ali b. Abi Talib 115 n. 333

al-Hasan al-Dirhami 170

al-Hasan b. Harthama al-Shar 152, 153

al-Hasan b. Ja`far Zawashar 152, 153

al-Hasan b. Makhlad 6 n. 24, 10-13, 72, 73, 76, 107, 188, 199

al-Hasan b. al-Ma'mun 96

al-Hasan b. Muhammad b. Abi al-Shawarib al-Qadi 3, 67, 167

al-Hasan b. Sulayman al-Dushabi 10, 11

al-Hasan b. `Uthman al-Muhallabi, Mundaliqah 131, 132

al-Hasan b. Wahb 198

al-Hasan b. Zayd al-Talibi 24-26, 27 n. 104, 106, 116, 148, 155, 156 n. 438, 158-61, 163

Hatim b. Zayrak b. Salam 157

Hatmah 120

al-Hawanit 135, 174-77, 178, 180, 190, 195

*hawr* (pl. *ahwar*) 39 n. 161, 194 n. 554

al-Hayr 68-70, 82, 84, 86, 89, 95, 100, 103, 145

Hayyan 124

[< previous page](#)

page\_218

[next page >](#)

Hazardar 109

Hazim 182

Herat 151, 156, 157

Hims 161

al-Himyari 38, 39, 41, 44-46

Hisham b. `Abd al-Malik 30

Hisham al-Daff 131

Hisn b. al-`Anbar 187

Hisn Mahdi, xix, 154

Hisnayn 190

Hulwan 112 n. 331, 166, 189 n. 534, 190

Husayn the eunuch (ʿAraq al-Mawt) 117

Husayn al-Hammami 65, 206

al-Husayn b. Isma`il b. Ibrahim b. Mus`ab b. Ruzayq 16-19, 21

al-Husayn al-Saydanani 33, 53, 55

al-Husayn b. Tahir b. `Abdallah b. Tahir 167, 180, 188, 203

I

Ibn `Ata' 36

Ibn al-Dayrani 189, 190

Ibn `Isa 117

Ibn `Iyad 189

Ibn Tulun 115 n. 333, 201

Ibn Tumani al-Sa`di 64

Ibrahim (al-Muhtadi's brother) 29

Ibrahim b. Ishaq b. Ibrahim 16, 18

Ibrahim b. Ja`far al-Hamdani 42, 43

Ibrahim b. Ju`lan 207

Ibrahim al-Mu'ayyad 28 n. 108

Ibrahim b. Muhammad 3

Ibrahim b. Muhammad b. Ibrahim b. Mus`ab b. Zurayq 88

Ibrahim b. Muhammad b. Isma`il b. Ja`far b. Sulayman b. `Ali b. `Abdallah b. `Abbas, Burayh 108, 127-29, 134, 157, 161, 162

Ibrahim b. Muhammad b. al-Mudabbir 111, 112, 121

Ibrahim b. Sa`dan al-Nahwi 88

Ibrahim b. Sima al-Turki 112 n. 330, 123-25, 153-55, 165, 170, 172

Ibrahim b. Sulayman b. Wahb 199

Ibrahim al-Talibi 88

Ibrahim b. Yahya al-Muhallabi 127, 131, 132

Idtarbad 170

Ifriqiyah 161 n. 460, 166

`Imran 120

*iqta` 77*

Iraq xv, xvi, 9 n. 32, 14, 30

`Isa b. Farrukhanshah 99-101

`Isa b. Ibrahim, Abu Nuh. 6 n. 24, 9, 11, 12

`Isa al-Karkhi 76, 77, 87, 103

`Isa b. al-Shaykh 116, 117

Isfahan 166, 202, 205

Ishaq b. Ibrahim 86

Ishaq b. Kundaj (Kundajiq) 153, 155, 202, 203

Ishtakhaniyyah 107

Iskaf Bani Junayd 23

Isma`il 36

Isma`il b. `Abdallah al-Marwazi, Abu n asr 117

Isma`il b. Bulbul 203

Isma`il b. Ishaq al-Qadi 119, 164, 168, 180

Itakh Gate 98

## J

al-Jabal (al-Jibal) 27, 97, 112, 151 n. 427, 160, 180, 189 n. 534

Jabal Zayni 91

Jabbash 175, 180, 195-98, 201

Jabbul 204

Ja`far b. `Abd al-Wahid 99, 105

Ja`far b. Ahmad 195

Ja`far b. Ibrahim al-Sajjan 141

Ja`far b. Ma`luf 133

Ja`far b. Muhammad al-Suhani 34

Ja`far b. al-Mu`tamid al-Mufawwad ila-Allah 148, 157, 166, 167, 169, 188

Ja`far b. Sulayman b. `Ali al-Hashimi 41, 66

Ja`far b. Yahya b. Khalid b. Barmak 19

[< previous page](#)

page\_219

[next page >](#)

Ja`farawayh 206

Ja`fariyyah xix, 41, 42, 44, 45, 59-61

al-Jalah 135

al-Jamidah 135

Jannaba 122 n. 351

*jaribiyyat* 46, 66

Jarjaraya 204

al-Jawhari 59

al-Jawsaq al-Muhdath (Baghdad) 6 n. 25

Jawsaq palace (Samarra) 6, 28 n. 108, 68, 69, 72, 73, 74 n. 261, 82, 84, 87, 91, 93-99, 101, 103, 105, 107, 157, 199

Jaxartes 70 n. 248, 93 n. 296

Jaysh b. Hamartakin 194

al-Jazirah 18 n. 67, 136 n. 388, 137n. 389, 156 n. 442, 160, 166, 176, 195

*jisr* (pl. *jusur*) 5 n. 21

*jisrayn* 19

Jubak 52

Jubba xix, 40, 56, 111, 112, 124, 125, 137, 140, 174

Jukhaniyyun 175

Ju`lan *al-`ayyar* 202

Ju`lan al-Turki 66, 67, 108-10, 148, 174, 190, 193, 195-97

Junbula 116 n. 336, 197, 198, 200, 201

*al-jund* 4, 5 n. 17, 7, 15 n. 56

Junday Sabur 182, 187, 202 n. 593

Jurayh 67

Jurban, Abu Ya`qub 34, 41, 44

Jurjan 160, 163, 166, 168

al-Juwayth 15



## K

Ka`bah 167

Kabul 119

Kaftimur `Ali b. al-Husayn b. Da'ud 181

Kafur 72

al-Kamili 97

Kanjur al-Bukhari 28, 29, 72, 102, 116, 150, 151, 156 n. 440, 198

al-Karaj 166

*al-karawan* 52

al-Karkh (*bata'ih*) xix, 40, 46

al-Karkh (Samarra) 69, 76-78, 82, 84-87, 91, 93, 95, 96, 99, 104, 107

Karkh Firuz 69 n. 246

Karkh Juddan 164

Karkhah river 181 n. 511

Karnaba 138

Kaskar 166

Kathir b. `Abdallah al-Salmi 62 n. 228

Kawkab 190

Kayakbak 94

Kayghalagh 96, 97, 99, 101, 156, 180, 188, 199

*kaylajah* 9

*kayyal* 31

*al-khabith*. *See* `Ali b. Muhammad

*khadim* 72, 175

*kha'in*. *See* `Ali b. Muhammad

Khalaf b. Ja`far 138

*khalifah* 79

al-Khalil b. Aban 32, 182, 186, 198, 206

*khamr* 46 n. 188

Khamush 71

Khaniqin 112, 115, 116 n. 335

*kharaj* 26, 137, 181

Kharijites 161

Kharshanah 190

Khashabat Babak 12, 94, 104

*al-khassah* 5 n. 18

Khatarimush 103

*al-khawal* 38, 55, 56, 59

Khaybar 46

al-Khayzuraniyyah 124, 125, 137, 138

*khil`ah* 72 n. 257, 157 n. 447

Khuld 5 n. 21

Khurasan 3 n. 7, 5 n. 20, 14, 15, 19, 22, 28 n. 110, 74, 133 n. 378, 151 nn. 423-24 and 426, 157, 159 n. 453, 160, 163, 166-68, 171, 205

Khurasan Road 23, 24, 92, 95, 103, 164-66

Khuraskharis 142

al-Khuraybah 127, 129, 130

Khurramah 166

Khurshad b. Jilaw 160

Khushanaj 103

Khushaysh 178-80, 190, 192

Khusru Sabur 201

Khutarish 97

*khutbah* 38, 183

Khuzistan 24 n. 94, 169 n. 476, 181 n. 511, 187 n. 527

Khwarazm Shah 188

Kirman 119, 166, 205

al-Kufah 9 n. 32, 19, 30, 32, 33 n. 136, 115, 116, 149 n. 417, 150, 158, 165, 166, 194 n. 557, 197, 200, 203 n. 599

al-Kufah Gate (Baghdad) 16

al-Kuhayl 91

Kurds 136

*kurr* 161

Kurtamites 12 n. 39

Kutakin 103

## L

Lahsa 31 n. 128

*al-la'in*. *See* `Ali b. Muhammad

*liwa'* 36

Lubbadah 170

Lujayn mosque 86

Lu'lu'ah 162, 188, 190

## M

al-Mada'in 23, 170 nn. 480-81, 172, 174

al-Madhar xix, 42, 43, 174

Madinat al-Salam. *See* Baghdad

al-Madiyan road 175

Maftah. xix, 46

Maghiribah 55, 81, 93-95, 97, 98, 104, 106

Maghrib 161 n. 460

al-Mahdi 9 n. 34

Main Bridge (Baghdad) 5, 139 n. 400, 202

*makkuk* 9

*mal al-bay`ah* 17 n. 66

Malatyah 156

*mamalik* 111

al-Ma'mun 3 n. 7, 190 n. 538

Mandawayh 46

Manina 191

Manjur 161, 193

al-Mansur 16 nn. 61-62, 58 n. 223, 93, 109 n. 324, 117 n. 341

Mansur camp 120

Mansur b. Ja`far b. Dinar al-Khayyat 120, 122, 123, 125, 137, 138

Marv 16, 18, 151, 188, 203

al-Masaff Gate 98

Mashra`ah al-Qayyar 66

al-Maskanin 190

Maskin 16

Masrur al-Balkhi, Abu Hashim 97, 99, 136, 148, 155, 158, 164-67, 169, 170, 172, 174, 176-78, 181, 198, 199, 205-7

Masrur market 98

Matar b. Jami` 196, 197

al-Matbaq (Baghdad) 16

al-Matbaq (Samarra) 87

*mawla* (pl. *mawali*) 2, 7, 9, 18, 24, 26-29, 31, 33, 40-42, 48, 52, 69-71, 73, 75-86, 88, 90, 95-97, 100-3, 107, 108, 154, 193, 202

Mayan Rudhan 43

*mazalim* 24, 68

Mazrawan 193, 195, 197

Mecca 8, 117, 120 n. 343, 149 n. 417, 157n. 448, 160, 161, 181, 207

Mecca Road 119-20, 165 n. 467, 166, 181, 204

Medina 120, 161, 166

Melitene 156 n. 443

Michael b. Tawfil (Michael III) 135

Mihrajanqadhaq 166

*mil* 47 n. 192

*manbar* 183

al-Mirbad 128, 130

Mirbad Road 130, 131

Mirdis 166

*mithqal* 96

Mosul 87 n. 280, 102 n. 309, 166, 181 199

Mosul road 185

al-Mu`alla b. Ayyub 57, 63

al-Mu'ayyad 4, 71

[< previous page](#)

page\_221

[next page >](#)

al-Mu'ayyad (island) 199

Mubarak al-Bahrani 62

al-Mubaraqa` al-Maghribi 170

Mufarraj al-Nubi the Younger, Abu Salih 39, 40, 41, 206

Muflib. 24-26, 69, 71, 73, 79, 81, 86, 87, 89, 90-92, 97, 99, 102, 103, 107, 116, 136, 137, 139-42, 181

*mufti* 13 n. 45

al-Mughithah 204

*muhakkim* 18 n. 67

al-Muhallabi 49

al-Muhallabiyyah 50

Muhammad (the Prophet) 27 n. 103, 30 n. 123, 77, 78, 80

Muhammad b. Aban 32, 183

Muhammad b. `Abdallah b. Hasan b. `Ali al-Ma'muni al-Badhghisi 206, 207

Muhammad b. `Abdallah al-Isbahani, Abu al-Layth 61, 65, 121, 132, 134, 137, 138, 143

Muhammad b. `Abdallah b. Tahir 14 n. 51, 16 n. 60, 17 n. 65, 18 n. 71, 19 nn. 71-73, 21 n. 82

Muhammad b. Abi `Awn 17, 33, 39, 42, 44, 45, 49, 53, 56

Muhammad b. Ahmad b. `Isa b. Abi Ja`far al-Mansur 117

Muhammad b. `Ali b. Fayd al-Ta'i 172

Muhammad b. `Ali b. Habib al-Yashkuri 193, 194

Muhammad b. `Ali b. Tahir 22

Muhammad b. `Attab b. `Attab 181

Muhammad b. Aws al-Balkhi 13, 25, 16, 18-24, 165, 170, 185

Muhammad al-Azraq al-Qawariri 61

Muhammad b. Bugha, Abu Nasr 75, 80, 81, 85, 87, 91, 96, 97, 99, 100, 101, 106-8

Muhammad b. Dinar 206

Muhammad b. al-Fadl b. Sinan al-Qazwini 156

Muhammad b. Hakim 30

Muhammad b. Harun b. al-Mu`ammar 158

Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-Baghdadi 45

Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-Iyadi 33

Muhammad b. al-Hasan b. Sahl 55, 60, 61, 64, 65, 109, 121, 125-27, 129, 133, 134, 139, 142, 146, 151, 175, 176, 180, 183, 195-98, 201, 205, 206

Muhammad b. al-Husayn b. al-Fayyad 137

Muhammad b. `Isa b. `Abd al-Rahman al-Katib al-Khurasani 15, 22

Muhammad b. `Isa al-Qurashi 106

Muhammad b. Ja`far al-Muraydi 57, 58

Muhammad b. Kathir 169, 170

Muhammad b. Masrur al-Balkhi 204

Muhammad b. Mubashir al-Karkhi 76, 77, 84, 93-95, 100

Muhammad al-Muwallad 134, 135, 150, 167, 169, 190, 197, 198, 202

Muhammad b. al-Muzaffar b. Saysal 23

Muhammad b. Nasr b. Hamzah b. Malik al-Khuza`i 21

Muhammad b. Nasr b. Mansur b. Bassam 13

Muhammad b. al-Qasim 34

Muhammad b. Raja' al-Hidari 32-34

Muhammad b. Salih, Abu Sahl 183, 186

Muhammad b. Salm al-Qassab al-Hajari 33, 34, 39, 41-43, 46, 48, 52, 54, 58, 60-62, 64

Muhammad b. Sam`an al-Katib 64, 129, 130, 131, 142, 144, 146

Muhammad b. Tahir b. `Abdallah, Abu `Abdallah 151, 156, 157, 159, 163, 168, 171, 172, 188, 203

Muhammad b. Tarkashah 169

Muhammad b. Thaqif al-Aswad 77

Muhammad Tughta al-Turki 170

Muhammad b. Turksh 71

Muhammad b. `Ubaydallah b. Azarmard al-Kurdi 181-83, 207

Muhammad b. `Ubaydallah al-Kurayzi 117

Muhammad b. `Uthman al-`Abbadani 175, 176, 180

Muhammad b. Wasil b. Ibrahim al-Tamimi 116, 135, 137, 164, 166, 172, 181, 185





Muhammad b. al-Wathiq 3, 4, 90, 112, 115

Muhammad b. Yahya 3

Muhammad b. Yahya al-Kirmani 183

Muhammad b. Yahya al-Wathiqi 102

Muhammad b. Yazid al-Basri 200

Muhammad b. Yazid al-Darimi 126

Muhammad b. Zaydawayh 167, 169, 180

al-Muhammadiyah 39, 47, 96, 100, 101

al-Muhtadi (hi-Allah), Abu `Abalallah Muhammad b. al-Wathiq xv, 1, 5, 7, 10-12, 16, 24, 25, 27-29, 68-70, 72-80, 82-87, 89, 91-99, 100, 101, 104-8

al-Muhtadi, mother of. *See* Qurb

*mujawirah* 21 n. 83

*mujawnihat* 46

al-Mukhtarah xvi, xix, 109 n. 324, 186 n. 522, 196 n. 566

Mundhiran 57

al-Muntasir 31, 94 n. 298, 99

Musa 24

Musa b. Bugha, Abu `Imran 7, 24-29, 68-73, 74 n. 261, 76, 79-88, 90-92, 95-99, 102, 103, 105-7, 112, 115, 116, 119 n. 342, 148, 153, 155, 156, 164-67, 170, 172, 174, 181, 188, 189

Musa Dalijuwayh 185

Musa b. Ja`far 152.

Musa b. Mihran al-Kurdi 166

Musa b. Utamish 151, 174, 202, 203

*al-musalla* 203 n. 601

*al-musannah* 51

Musawir b. `Abd al-Hamid 4 n. 13, 18, 24, 87, 90-92, 95, 96, 112, 116, 136, 148, 158, 164, 187

Mushrlq (Hamzah), Abu Ahmad 34, 41, 44, 49, 62

Muslih 63, 65, 138

al-Musta`in 1 n. 3, 9, 12n. 43, 32 n. 132, 74, 79, 80

al-Mu`tadid 106 n. 315

al-Mu`tamid xv, 28 n. 107, 68 n. 244, 115, 116, 119, 123, 137, 139, 145, 153, 164 n. 466, 166, 169, 170, 172, 174, 183, 189, 198, 199

al-Mu`tasim xv, 6 n. 25, 69 n. 246, 70

al-Mutawakkil xv, 7, 9, 26, 34 n. 140, 70, 71 n. 255, 74, 86, 99

al-Mu`tazz 1-4, 6 nn. 22-23, 8, 12 n. 43, 14 nn. 47 and 52, 15, 17, n. 65, 25, 26, 28, 70, 75, 189

al-Muttawwi`ah 175

al-Muwaffaq, Abu Ahmad (b. al-Mutawakkil) xv, xvi, xvii, 4, 73, 117, 119, 120, 137, 139, 140-48, 150, 152, 157, 164-74, 176, 185, 187, 189, 197, 199-205

al-Muzaffar b. Saysal 19, 21

## N

*nabidh* 46 n. 188, 48, 74

Nadir, Abu Na`jah 64

*al-naffatin* 20 n. 80

*nahr* 37 n. 153

Nahr Aban 176, 195, 197

Nahr al-`Abbas 139, 142-44

Nahr Abi al-`Abbas 124

Nahr Abi al-Asad 45, 142, 143, 144, 146

Nahr Abi al-Khasib xix, 109, 141, 147, 175 n. 492.

Nahr Abi Qurrah 67

Nahr `Adi 126

Nahr Amir al-Mu'minin xix, 58, 59, 198

Nahr `Amud ibn al-Munajjim 34

Nahr al-`Atiq 175-77

Nahr al-Atrak 109 n. 324

Nahr Awwa 134

Nahr Bamdad 42

Nahr Baqtha 46

Nahr Bard al-Khiyar 47-49

Nahr Barduda 197

Nahr Barratimurta 201

Nahr al-Barur 177

Nahr Bayan xix, 51, 53, 55, 56

Nahr Bithq Shirin  
xix

Nahr Bar 38

Nahr al-Dawardani 58

[< previous page](#)

page\_223

[next page >](#)

Nahr Dayala 203

Nahr al-Dayr xix, 49

Nahr Dinari xix, 59, 60

Nahr Dubayran 54

Nahr Farid 45

Nahr al-Fayyad 58, 59

Nahr al-Ghutha 134

Nahr al-Hajir 67

Nahr Harb 60, 61, 63

Nahr al-Hasan b. Muhammad al-Qadi 45

Nahr al-Hasani 57, 58

Nahr Ibn `Umar xix

Nahr Jarurah Bani Marwan 179

Nahr Jatta xix

Nahr Jubba 124, 138

Nahr Kathir 62, 64

Nahr al-Madiyan 50 n. 202

Nahr Manka 147

Nahr Ma`qil xix, 110, 111, 120, 121, 123, 135, 139

Nahr al-Mara' xix, 174

Nahr Masruqan 169 n. 476, 182, 184, 186, 206

Nahr Maymun xix, 37, 40, 46, 47

Nahr Muhaddath xix

Nahr al-Muhdath 59

Nahr al-Mukathir 36

Nahr Murghab 120

Nahr Musa 124

Nahr Nafidh xix, 61, 109

Nahr al-Nil 205 n. 613

Nahr al-Qandal xix, 43, 56, 57

Nahr al-Rayyan xix, 50 n. 205

Nahr Riyahi xix, 59

Nahr al-Savabijah 62

Nahr al-Salihi 57, 58

Nahr al-Sarat 205 n. 613

Nahr al-Shadhani 62

Nahr Sharikan 55

Nahr Shaytan 62, 63, 65

Nahr al-Sib 41, 42, 44, 45, 47

Nahr al-Sidrah xix, 154, 155, 187

Nahr Sindad 176

Nahr Tahitha 178

Nahr Tin 39

Nahr al-Ubullah xix, 110, 175 n. 492

Nahr Umm Habib 65, 66

Nahr al-Yahudi xix, 175

Nahr Yahya 154

Nahr Ya`qub b. al-Nadr 176

Nahr al-Zuhayri 200

al-Nahrawan 22, 23, 24 n. 93

*al-na'ibah* 21

Najah b. Salamah 71 n. 255

*al-nas* 5, 131 n. 372

Nazibin 87 n. 280

Nasih al-Ramli 47, 64

Nasr b. Ahmad b. Asad al-Samani 145

Nasr b. Ahmad al-Zubayri 98

Nasr al-Iqritashi 156

Nasr al-Rumi 184

Nasr b. Shabath 102

Nasukha 154

Nawfaliyyun 134

Naysabur 3 n. 7, 151, 156, 157, 159, 188, 203

Nayzak 152

al-Nazalah Gate 99

al-Nil 205

Nilbah 43

al-Nfibandajan 185

al-Nu`maniyyah 23, 169, 204

al-Numayri 45

Nusayr, Abu Hamzah 111, 175, 201

al-Nushuri 23, 24, 71, 90

## O

Oxus river 30 n. 122, 165-66 n. 469

## P

Public Audience Hall 105, 166

Public Gate (Samarra) 11, 90, 98, 136, 148, 151

## Q

*qabalah* 79

Qabihah 6-8, 24, 25, 73-75, 189



Qadhaydhiyah 190

al-Qadisiyyah 40, 48, 137 n. 392, 175

*qa'id* 79, 190 n. 539

al-Qa'im (Samarra) 169, 189

*al-qalansuwah* 61

*al-qanat* 96

al-Qandal 126

*qantarah* 49 n. 197, 62, 123, 144, 182, 206

Qaquwayh 48, 49

al-Qar`a' 149

Qarmatiyyun 43

Qaryat Hassan 194

Qaryat Marwan 177, 192 n. 556

al-Qashani 26

al-Qasim b. al-Hasan al-Nawfali 134

al-Qasim b. Ja`far b. Sulayman al-Hashimi 130

al-Qasim b. Mimah 202

Qasr al-Ahmar 68, 100

Qasr Anas 127

Qasr `Isa b. Ja`far 127

Qasr Ma'mun xix

*qata'i* 69 n. 246

Qatrabbul 16

al-Qattan 181

al-Qatul 29, 71, 108

Qatuta 20

Qayyaran 49



Qazwin 166, 171

*qiblah* 89

Qinnasrin 137

al-Qufs 45

Quhistan 151

Qumis 155

Qumm 160, 166

Quraj al-`Abbas bridge 144

al-Qurashi 34-36

Qurayshites 65

Qurb 1, 9

Qurrah 30, 190

## R

Rab` al-Qubbah 88

(Banu) Rabi`ah 158

al-Radm 32

Rafi` b. Bistam 143

al-Rafif 102, 103, 106

Rafiq (Ja`far), Abu al-Fadl 34, 35, 41, 63, 129

Raja' al-Rababi 7

Ramhurmuz 29, 164, 168

*raqiq* 112

al-Raqqah 181

Raqqat al-Baradan 22

Rashid al-Maghribi 36

Rashid al-Qarmati 36

Rashiq 188

Rayhan b. Salih 35, 39, 41, 52-52, 54, 55, 57, 60, 62-64

al-Rayy 14, 22 n. 84, 24-27, 30, 106, 116, 156, 161, 163, 166, 168, 171, 180

Raziqiyyah xix, 39

Riyah al-Qandali 176

al-Riyahi 61

Rumays 41-45, 47-50, 175, 176

al-Rusafah 9, 172, 195-97

*rustaq* 45

Ruzbah 88

## S

Sabkhat al-Qandal 138, 39 n. 159

*sadaqah* 2

al-Sa`diyyah 32, 34, 35, 52, 60, 65, 109, 128-31

*safatij* 8 n. 28

al-Safinatayn 202

*sahara* 26

*sahib al-barid* 27

*sahib al-harb* 152 n. 428

Sahl al-Tahhan 36

Sa`id b. Ahmad b. Sa`id b. Salm al-Bahili 135, 136

Sa`id b. Makhlad 203

Sa`id b. Salih al-Hajib 109, 112, 120-22, 125

Sa`id b. al-Sayyid al-`Adawi 196

Sa`id b. Yaksin 112, 124

Sa`id the Younger 31

al-Salabi 156, 161, 180

*salaf* 148

Salam al-Shami 62

Salamah b. Khaqan 90

*salat al-fitr* 37

*salghah* 175

Salhab, Abu Nasr 184

Salih b. `Ali b. Ya`qub b. Abi Ja`far al-Mansur 93, 94, 107, 180

Salih al-`Attar 73

Salih b. Wasif 6-13, 22, 23 n. 92, 24 n. 98, 26, 27, 29, 68-73, 75, 81-83, 85-88, 89, 90, 194, 106

Salim 61

Salim al-Zaghawi 44

*salkh* 3 n. 8

al-Saluli 90

Saluqiyah 190

*samad* 37

Samarqand 93 n. 296

Samarra xv, xvi, 4 n. 13, 6 n. 25, 7, 12 n. 39, 15 n. 59, 22, 24-29, 31, 67, 68, 69 n. 246, 73, 78, 79, 81, 84-86, 90 n. 287, 91, 92, 96, 97, 99, 100 n. 307, 102, 105, 106, 115-117, 119, 122, 133, 134, 137, 139, 142, 145, 148, 150, 151, 153, 156, 158, 165, 167, 168, 169, 188, 198, 199

al-Sana'i 36

Sandadan Bayan 52, 54

Saqlabtuya 64

al-Saqr b. al-Husayn al-`Abbadani 195, 196

Sarakhs 19

al-Sarakhsi 12, 88

Sariyah 159, 160

Sarsar 203 n. 599

Sasanians 23 n. 89

Satikin 69, 87, 89, 151, 172

Sawad 14 n. 47, 15, 24, 72, 120, 166

Sawad al-Kufah 200

*sawalijah* 88 n. 281

*sawiq* 35, 93

Sayghun 189

Sayhan 132

al-Saymarah 148, 189

Sayran b. `Afwiallah 51, 52

Seleucia 190 n. 540

Shabarzan 206

*shadhah* 56 n. 218

al-Shadidiyyah 197, 198

al-Shah b. Mikal 18, 19, 21, 115

Shahin b. Bistam 112, 123, 124, 125

Shakiriyyah 7, 13, 15-17, 21, 69, 98, 102.

Shaklus 163

al-Sham 160

al-Shammasiyyah 4, 20, 22

Shammasiyyah Gate (Baghdad) 19 n. 76, 20, 202

Shamraj 201

al-Sharitiyyah 201

Shariyah 88

Sharkab al-Jammal 151, 188, 203

Shati' `Uthman 53, 110, 111

Shi`ah 16, 22 n. 84, 24 n. 100, 27 n. 104

Shibl b. Salim 36, 42, 60, 61, 64, 65, 67, 126, 132, 134, 138, 192

al-Shifiya 48

Shihab b. al-`Ala' al-`Anbari 59, 129

*shihri* 11, 19

Shiraz 28 n. 109, 166 n. 470

al-Shirriz 159, 160

Shurajiyyun 35-37, 39, 40, 43-45, 48, 51 n. 207, 59

al-Sib 177, 181

Sib Bani Kuma 170

*sibakh* 30, 34, 35 n. 143

Sijistan 119, 151, 158, 166, 205

Sima al-Sharabi 72

Sima the Tall 97, 201

al-Sin 201

Sind 30, 119, 166, 205

al-Sinn 91, 102, 103, 148 n. 415

Sistan xvi, 28 n. 110

Subayh. al-A`sar 36

*al-sudan* 37, 38 n. 156, 48 n. 195, 51 n. 206

Sughd 93 n. 296

Suhayl 62

Sulayman b. `Abdallah b. Tahir 3-5, 13-22, 32, 72, 156 n. 438

Sulayman b. Jami` 33, 34, 41, 42, 64, 121, 144, 152, 174-80, 190-201, 202

[< previous page](#)

page\_226

[next page >](#)

Sulayman b. Muhammad b. Sulayman 58, 61

Sulayman b. Musa al-Sha`rani 126, 152, 155, 175, 198

Sulayman b. Wahb 28, 71-73, 79, 80, 82, 188, 198, 199

Sulayman b. Wahb al-Qattan 107

Sulaymanan xix, 43, 53

Sulban 52, 56

*su`luk* (pl. *sa`alik*) 14 n. 48, 20 n. 81, 182, 206

*sumayriyyah* 41 n. 171

Sumaysat 156

Suq al-Ahwaz 152

Suq al-Rayyan 50

*surmay* 49

al-Sus 24, 181, 182, 207

Susa 181 n. 511

Syria 117, 137 nn. 390-91, 166, 204; *see also* al-Sham

Syrian Gate (Baghdad) 16-18

## T

Tabaghu al-Turki 170

al-Tabari, Abu Ja`far Muhammad b. Jarir xv-xvii

Tabaristan 3 n. 7, 13 n. 46, 20, 24-26, 158, 159, 160, 161, 163, 166, 168

Tabariyyah 5, 107

al-Tabasayn 151

Tabayaghu b. Sul Artakin 91, 96, 97

Tafawah 132

al-Taff 194

Taghutya 94, 97

Tahir b. al-Husayn 14 n. 51

Tahir b. Muhammad b. `Abdallah 18 n. 70

Tahirids xvi, 14, 22 n. 84, 28 n. 110

Tahitha 177, 179, 193, 195, 196, 201

Takin al-Bukhari 151, 156, 191-93, 195-97, 205-6

Takrit 136, 199

*talaji* 81

al-Talaqani 182

al-Taliqan 30

Tall Rumana 195

Tallfakhkhar 194

Talmajur 12, 70, 71

Tamis 160

*tannur hadid* 60

Tariq 36

Tarsus 162

*tasbib* 15 n. 57

Tashtimur al-Turki 104, 144, 154, 155

*tassuj* 16

Taurus mountains 190

*tawqi`* 71 n. 255

Tha`lab b. Hafs al-Bahrani 174, 191, 196

Thital 101

*thughur* 190

Thumal 58

al-Tib 180

Tigris xix, 15, 22, 23 nn. 89-90, 30, 33 n. 36, 37 n. 152, 38, 39, 42, 44, 49, 52 n. 212, 56, 102 n. 309, 109, 110, 120, 121, 123, 124 n. 362, 137 n. 392, 142, 143, 148 nn. 414-15, 151 n. 422, 165, 169, 170, 174, 175, 191 n. 543, 199, 203 n. 602, 204 nn. 605 and 609-10, 205 n. 613

Tigris Street (Baghdad) 5

al-Tufuf 177

Tughta b. al-Sayghun 71, 119

Tukharistan 30 n. 122, 119

Tulunids 111 n. 328

Turks 6, 8, 25, 69, 74, 75, 83, 84, 86, 92, 93, 95, 97, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107

Turnaj 197

Tursa 52

Tus 203

Tustar 182, 183, 186, 202 n. 593, 205, 206

## U

`Ubaydah al-`Umrusi 90, 91

`Ubaydallah b. `Abdallah b. Tahir 14-17, 72, 163

`Ubaydallah b. Sulayman 188, 202

`Ubaydallah b. Yahya b. Khaqan 34 n. 140, 115, 157, 170, 188

[< previous page](#)

page\_227

[next page >](#)



al-Ubullah xix, 39, 46, 47, 53, 67, 110-12, 134, 142-44

Ukashiyyah 93

`Ukbara' 45 n. 186, 151

`Umar b. `Ali b. Murr, Abu al-Rudayni 161

`Umar b. al-Khattab 76

`Umar b. Mihran 138

`Umar b. Sima 169

`Umayr b. `Ammar al-Bahili 33, 174, 177, 194

Umayyads 62 nn. 228-29, 93 n. 293

Umm al-Fadl 90

`Umran 56

`*uqaban* 123

Urkhez 203

Ushnas palace 77

Ushrusaniyyah 93, 107

`Uthman Gate 131

`Uzayz b. al-Sari 157, 185

## W

Wadi Tustar 207

Wah 142

Wahash 7

Wahb b. Sulayman b. Wahb 199

Wahsudhan b. Justan al-Daylami 156

Wajin 86

Warzanin 30

Wasif 168

Wasif (clan) 86, 88, 107

Wasif (al-Turki) 29, 85, 180

Wasif al-Kufi 61

Wasif al-Rahhal 177

Wasif al-Rumi 205

Wasit xvi, 4 n. 11, 9 n. 32, 23 n. 90, 24 nn. 94-95, 28 n. 107, 33, 39, 44, 58 n. 223, 120, 135 n. 384, 142, 146, 147 n. 410, 148, 150, 165, 169, 170, 174, 176, 177, 185, 190, 194, 196-98, 200, 204 n. 609

al-Wathiq 8 n. 30, 34, 70

Wathiq street 98

al-Waziriyyah 95

Y

al-Yahud 42

Yahya b. `Abd al-Rahman b. Khaqan 34, 35, 41, 129

Yahya b. Abi Tha`lab 31, 33

Yahya b. Hafs 164

Yahya b. Ishaq b. Musa b. `Isa b. `Ali b. `Abdallah b. `Abbas, Abu `Isa 27

Yahya b. Khalaf al-Nahrabatti 152

Yahya b. Muhammad al-Azraq (al-Bahrani) 31, 33, 34, 41, 48, 49, 52, 54, 56, 64, 112, 121, 123, 126-28, 130-35, 139, 142-46, 152

Yahya b. Muhammad b. Da'ud 102

Yahya b. `Umar, Abu al-Husayn 32

Yahya b. Yahya al-Zubayri 41

Yahya b. Zakariya' b. Abi Ya`qub al-Isbahani 3

Yahya b. Zayd b. `Ali 133, 134

Yajur 68-73, 79, 82, 86, 89

al-Yamamah 17 n. 65, 28 n. 108, 120, 164, 165

Yanghajur b. Urkhuz 202, 203

Ya`qub b. al-Layth al-Saffar xvi, 28, 119, 151, 156-61, 163, 164 n. 466, 166-70, 171, 173, 174, 176, 177, 181-83, 185-87, 189, 202, 203

Ya`qubiyyah 136

Yarjukh 4, 5, 87, 95, 97, 99, 103-5, 120, 138, 148

*yawm al-Sha`anin* 172

*yawm al-Shadha* 66

*yawm al-Tarwiyah* 181, 199

Yemen 120, 166

Yusr the Eunuch 31

## Z

Zab(s) 23, 102 n. 309, 148 n. 415

al-Za`faraniyyah 169, 170

Zahran 130, 131

al-Zahran 31 n. 128

Zamm 166

Zandaward Bridge 19 n. 72

[< previous page](#)

page\_228

[next page >](#)

Zanj xvi, xvii, 29, 30 n. 119, 34 n. 139, 35, 36 n. 149, 37 n. 154, 38, 39, 43-46, 49-51, 53, 54, 108 n. 322, 110-12, 119 n. 342, 122, 124, 126, 130, 131, 132, 134, 138, 140, 141, 143-45, 147, 148, 153, 154, 165, 179, 181, 186, 192, 198, 204-7

Zanj, leader of. *See* `Ali b. Muhammad

Zanjan 166, 171

al-Zanji b. Mihran 198, 201 *zarnuq* (pl. *zardniq*) 44

al-Zawariqah 63

Zayd b. `Ali b. al-Husayn, Abu al-Hasan 30, 133 n. 378

Zayd b. Suhan 34

al-Zaydan road 144

al-Zaynabi. *See* `Abdallah b. Muhammad b. Sulayman

Ziyrad b. Abihi 62 n. 229

Ziyadiyyun 41

Zuhayr 56

Zurayq 36, 61, 64, 65