INTERNECINE STRIFE AND POLITICAL STRUGGLE IN ARABIA'S AL-HIJAZ AT THE ADVENT OF ISLAM AND AL-KHULAFA' AL-RASHIDUN PERIOD (11-40 AH/ 632-661 AD)

Dr. Chang-Kuan Lin

林 長 寬*

摘　　要

阿拉伯人於西元七世紀初在其先知穆罕默德 (Muhammad) 的領導下創立一史無前例的阿拉伯—伊斯蘭帝國。初期之伊斯蘭史 (History of Islam) 實以阿拉伯史爲其核心。對於此段歷史西方之阿拉伯或伊斯蘭學者們 (Arabists and Islamicists) 早已研究並且頗具成果。然而在諸多研究中「阿拉伯部族意識」 ᶜAsabiyyah 在此段歷史發展過程中之重要性尚未完全爲現代學者所肯定，尤其是本位主義極重之傳統阿拉伯穆斯林學者更執意忽略之。本文之主旨在於就前人所提出而尚未被完全肯定的理論，借運用阿拉伯文原始資料加以探討並賦予肯定的詮釋證明。本文之探討主題可分爲兩大階段：其一爲伊斯蘭建立前之阿拉伯古萊氏族 (Qurayshites) 內之權力傾軋；其二爲伊斯蘭建立初穆罕默德歸眞後所產生之政治紛爭。在第一階段則就穆罕默德先人們的政治活動予以分析批評。此時期阿拉伯半島的政治主導者爲古萊氏族之領袖精英，而以先知穆罕默德所屬之哈須米族 (Hashimites) 爲翹楚。第二階段則著重於穆罕默德之諸繼承人對其所建立的伊斯蘭帝國繼位之爭奪戰，並就「部族意識」所扮演的角色加以探究。最後本文結論強調「部族意識」爲阿拉伯—伊斯蘭史上值得探討的主題之一。

Introduction

The Umayyad history, in particular the factors involved in its downfall, has been studied by numerous Islamicits and Western scholars. However each has interpreted the circumstances surrounding the factors differently according to his own points of view. The traditional accounts of the Umayyad period (42-132 AH/661-750 AD) are so mutilated and distorted, and even the known facts about it so deliberately misrepresented that, to the general readers, the Umayyads appear to be little more

Department of Arabic Language and Literature, National Chengchi Uniuersity
*作者爲本校阿語系客座副教授

than infidels. Most of the traditional Muslim writers such as Taqi al-Din al-Maqrizi, in the Medieval period, and Rashid Rida, a modern Salafi (Fundamentalist in Christian terminolgy), accuse the Umayyads of being Arabs by conviction and Muslims by policy. They ignored and vitiated Islam, changing the democract caliphate into hereditary rule, reviving the tribal jealousies of the Jahiliyyah, imposing the *Jizyah* (poll tax) on non-Arab converts to Islam, putting maintaining themselves on power above religion as well as bing tyrannical and unscruplous in all that they did. Because of these characteristics the Umayyads were overthrown by the ᶜAbbasid revolution which brought justice to all Muslims. The collapse of the Umayyad regime resulted in fact from the failure of its social, economic and political policies, which had its roots in the political struggle within the Umayyads, from inter-tribal contention for social and economic interests during the Umayyad period as well as the internecine strife among the Qurayshites at the advent of Islam and its continuance after the death of Prophet Muhammad. This essay, therefore, initially intends to shed some light on the tribal strife in the Jahiliyyah times and the very early caliphate period (11-40 AH/632-661 AD), and to serve as the prologue of our reseach on the downfall of the Umayyad dynasty.

Clannish Strife in the Jahiliyyah (Pre-Islamic) Times

The history of classical Islam can be regarded as a history of clannish strife among the Qurayshites, examplified by the struggle for power between the houses of Umayyah and Hashim. The clannish feud or internecine warfare between the two houses has long been neglected and rarely been studied either by Islamic Orientalists or traditional Muslim scholars. Husayn Mones has in 1960s brought to our attention one important work by the medieval Egyptian historian Taqi al-Din al-Maqrizi (766-845 AH/1346-1442 AD), *Kitab al-nizaᶜ wa al-takhasum fi ma bayna Bani Umayyah wa Bani Hashim.*[1] Professor C. E. Bosworth's translation of this work with annotation and commentary, provides easier access to this important source for the students of Islam.[2]

---

[1] H. Mones, "The Umayyads of the east and west: a study in the history of a great clan', *Der Orient in der forschung, Festschrift fur Otto Spies*, ed. W. Hoenerbach, Wiesbaden 1967, 471-98.

[2] C.E. Bosworth, trans., *Al-Maqrizi's "Book of contention and strife concerning the relation between the Banu Umayyad and Hashim"*, J. of Semitic Studies, mono. no.3, Manchester 1980.

Internecine Strife and Political Struggle in Arabia's Al-Hijaz at the Advent of
Islam and Al-Khulafa' Al-Rashidun Period (11-40 AH/632-661 AD)

In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the internecine strife of Qurayshites, it is essential to study the history of the Quraysh in the Jahiliyyah times. This because history of this period contains the seeds of the ^{C}Abbasid revolution which overthrew the Umayyad dynasty and brought to power the ^{C}Abbasids, a branch of the Hashimites. Al-Maqrizi gives a detailed picture of this strife from the Jahiliyyah to the end of Umayyad rule. We shall examine the events in the Jahiliyyah from other sources available to us, which were drawn upon by Al-Maqrizi in his work.

i. Qusayy ibn Kilab, the founder of the Quraysh

The unification of the Quraysh tribes, who were scattered on the outskirts of Mecca, was not achieved until when Qusayy came to Mecca. There through his marriage Qusayy was able to start his political career. According to Ibn Sa^{C}d's report,[3] the legend of Qusayy b. Kilab in the history of Mecca runs similarly to that of his great-grandson, ^{C}Abd al-Muttalib. Both of them came to Mecca as outsiders to play a significant role in the political history of the city. Qusayy was the son of Kilab b. Murr b. Ka^{C}b and Fatimah bint Sayl. Sayl is said to have been the first man to build the wall of Ka^{C}bah. He was of Azdi origin. Fatimah gave birth to two sons by Kilab, Zuhrah and Zayd (Qusayy), of whom Zuhrah was by many years the older. After the death of Kilab, Fatimah re-married to Rabi^{C}at b. Dinna al-^{C}Udhuri of the Quda^{C}i tribe. By that time Zuhrah had grown up, but Qusayy had only just been weaned, Rabi^{C}ah took Fatimah and Qusayy back with him to his homeland in Syria, and left Zuhrah in Mecca. When Qusayy grew up, he discovered his Meccan origin and asked his mother to let him go back to Mecca. Soon after his return to Mecca, he started his political activities, which turned a new page in the history of Mecca, to build up the Quraysh authority over the whole of mecca and its surroundings.

Qusayy's political ability is shown in the fact that he gained the control of Mecca from Banu Khuza^{C}ah and Banu Bakr; similar ability later appeared in his gradson, Hashim b. ^{C}Abd Manaf b. Qusayy. Al-Tabari's reports on the personality

---

[3] The report of the legend of Qusayy in other historical contexts is not very different from that of Ibn Sa^{C}d. We adopt Ibn Sa^{C}d's accounts because his work is much earlier than the others; also see G.L. Della Vida, *Encyl of Islam*², s.v. "Kusayy"; M.J. Kister, *Encyl of Islam*², s.v. "Khuza^{C}ah".

and charisma of Qusayy vary slightly from those of lbn Sa^{c}d; however they both suggest that, because of Qusayy's Meccan ancestry, Isma^{c}il, it was Qusayy's strong desire to recover Mecca from the Khuza^{c}is and the Bakris, and to promote the status of the Qurayshites. It would have seemed obvious to Qusayy that Mecca should be under the control of Isma^{c}il's descentants as it was the birthplace of lbrahim's religion.

There are two different historical accounts regarding the reasons for Qusayy's marriage to Hubba bint Hulayl b. Habashiyyah. Hulayl was the ruler of Mecca and the chieftain of the Khuza^{c}ah tribe. One suggests that it was a marriage of convience intended primarily to achieve his political ambitions; whilst the other implies that the marriage was a result of Hulayl's admiration for Qusayy, as he was a handsome and staunch man. Whichever the case may be, from the different accounts, we conclude that the marriage gave him an opportunity to enhance his political career.[4]

After the death of Hulayl, the Sidanah (custodianship of the Ka^{c}bah), passed to his daughter Hubba, leaving the key to the Ka^{c}bah in her hands. Historical accounts say that Hubba was sometimes unable to open the Ka^{c}bah and she would then asked Qusayy to open it for pilgrimage.However, some say that Qusayy used to ask Hubba for the Key. Later Hubba gave the key to al-Muhtarish Abu-Ghabshan, who was the son of Hulayl, her half brother. According to most historical traditions, al-Muhtarish had a weak personality, and was not able to subject his tribesmen; he could not even collect contributions or tax in order to provide provisions to the pilgrims in the pilgrimage seasons. His ambitious brother-in-law, Qusayy, thus bought the *Sidanah* from him with camels and some provisions, so that the key to the Ka^{c}bah fell into the hands of Qusayy, who thereafter assumed Hulayl's authority of custodianship.[5]

The Khuza^{c}ah tribesmen were irritated that their *Sidanah* should be in the hands of an outsider, especially one from neither a noble nor a dominant tribe, who had gained it with ease. The Khuza^{c}is thus gathered to fight Qusayy to regain their rights. Qusayy was prepared to defense[6] and sought help from his half-brother

---

[4] Ibn Sa^{c}d, *Al-Tabaqat*, ed I. ^{c}Abbas, vol.i, Beirut 1960, 67; Al-Baladhuri, *Ansab*, i, ed. M. Hamidullah, Cairo 1961, 49; Al-Tabari, *T'arikh*, ii, ed. M.A. Ibrahim, Cairo 1961, 225; Ibn Hisham, *Al-Sirah*, i, Cairo 1936, 123.

[5] Al-Tabari, op.cit., 257; Al-Baladhuri, op.cit., 49; Ibn Sa^{c}d, op.cit., 66-8.

[6] Qusayy also gathered his people who were sacttered on the fringe of Mecca, and later were named Quraysh. At that time Qusayy had four sons with their own clansmen. Qusayy's force was smaller than the Khuza^{c}is'.

Razah b. Rabi^{C}ah, who was at that time the chieftain of the Quda^{C}ah after his father's
death. With the help of Razah, Qusayy eventually defeated the Khuza^{C}is and secured
complete control of the Ka^{C}bah and Mecca.[7] From then on, the Quraysh became
the dominant tribe in Mecca, settling in the inner parts of Mecca from the fringe
area of the town.

As Qusayy gradually developed his authority, he centralized it in six offices:
al-Hijabah, al-Siqayah, al-Rifadah, al-Liwa' Dar al-Nadwah and *al-Qiyadah*.[8] *Al-
Hijabah* was the office of the custodianship of the Ka^{C}bah, which was to guard
the sanctuary and to keep its treasure as well as other sacred objects. It was the
custom in Arabia of the Jahiliyyah, to present the Ka^{C}bah with valuable objects
such as golden swords, cloth and perfumes, which were kept in a treasure chest
inside the Ka^{C}bah. The key to this treasure and that to the door of the sacred house
(Bayt) was entrused to the custodians.[9] According to the Jahiliyyah tradition, the
office of *al-Hijabah* furnished the tribe which held it with religious prestige and
tribal dominance. After the conquest of Mecca, the new Islamic elite, expecially
the Hashimites, desired to take over the Ka^{C}bah custodianship from the defeated
Meccan aristocracy. Al-^{C}Abbas, uncle of the Prophet, went to the latter, who at
that time, was probably holding the office of *al-Siqayah*, by claiming that both *al-
Hijabah* and *al-Siqayah* belonged to the Hashimites. However, the Prophet refused
and confirmed ^{C}Uthman b. Talha, a descendant of ^{C}Abd al-Dar, in possession of
the keys. He also instructed that the rights of this office should remain in ^{C}Abd
al-Dar family.[10] *Al-Hijabah* had the same meaning as *al-Sidanah*.[11]

Al-Siqayah was the office of providing pilgrims with drink during the pilgrimage
season. Some scholars suggest that it provided a kind of drink consisting of a number
of substances. The author of *Lisan al-^{C}Arab* says that Qurayshites used to

[7] An attribution was made by Ya^{C}m b. Awf b. Ka^{C}b who was a Meccan sharif. He judged
that Qusayy won power on the condition that the Khuza^{C}is could stay in Mecca. Al-
Tabari, ii, 256-8; Al-Azraqui, *Akhbar Makkah*, i, ed. F. Wuestenfeld, Leipzig 1858, 62-3.

[8] Al-Azraqi, op.cit., 64; The office *al-Qiyadah* is only mentioned by al-Azraqi; it was
held by Harb b. Umayyah.

[9] Al-Azraqi, op.cit., 151; M.I. Al-Shoush, *The nature of authority in Arabia at the advent
of Islam*, Ph.D. thesis, University of London 1959, 364.

[10] Al-Azraqi, op.cit., 186; cf. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *Mahomet*, 2nd. ed., Paris 1969,
481-2.

[11] Al-Zubayri, *Taj al-^{C}arus*, entry 'H.J.B.'; cf. C.E. Bosworth, "The terminology of the
history of the Arabs in the Jahiliyya according to Khawarazmi's "Keys of the sciences",
Medieval Arabic culture and administration, art. X, London 1982, 31-2.

delute *zabib* (a strong colorless liquor made of raisins) with water and provide it to pilgrims.[12]

It seems that the Banu ᶜAbd Manaf used to provide pilgrims with water. Qusayy is said to have dug a well near Ahab b. ᶜUthman's house, and Qusayy's grandson, Hashim also dug one or two wells. When ᶜAbd al-Muttalib b. Hashim became the chief of Banu Hashim, he discovered the old well of *Zamzam* and re-dug the well to provide more water. ᶜAbd al-Muttalib owned. many camels which provided a great quantity of milk, thus enabling him to provide pilgrims with a drink of milk and honey. He also made *nabidh* (wine or fermented grape juice) from the water of *Zamzam*, and offered this to pilgrims. When Al-ᶜAbdas b. ᶜAbd al-Muttalib succeeded to this office, he abandoned the provision of milk and honey. He imported *zabib* from Al-Ta'if, where had own business in vineyard. He was reproached for not providing milk and honey to pilgrims, because *nabidh* was cheaper than milk and honey. However, he made the excuse that the Prophet himself preferred nabidh to milk and honey, and had given permission to continue providing it. The Banu Hashim took over the exclusive right of *al-Siqayah*,[13] which carried immense religious prestige and financial benefit, but more importantly, they owned the well of *Zamzam*. The ownership of this sacred well, inherited by the Banu Hashim, made the office of *al-Siqayah* all the more pivotal. What had been begun by Qusayy, purely as measure to relieve the water shortage became an important religious function.[14]

Al-Rifadah was the office that gave food to pilgrims. It is reported that Qusayy imposed *al-Rifadah* and *al-Siqayah* upon his tribesmen. He demanded each member of the Quraysh to make contributions according to personal financial situation.[15] *Al-Rifadah* was not only bound to the provision of food to the pilgrims. It is reported that the Qurayshites contributed to pay for the covering of Kaᶜbah and its annual maintenance. There was dispute among the Quraysh clans over this annual tax, which was finally settled when Abu Rabiᶜah al-Makhzumi agreed to offer the cloth for

---

[12] Ibn Manzur, *Lisan al-ᶜarab*, entry "S.Q.Y."; Bosworth, op.cit., 33.

[13] Al-Azraqi, op.cit., 69-70; 295; 299.

[14] Cf. Bosworth, op.cit.; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, op.cit., 43.

[15] Ibn Saᶜd, i, 72-3; R.B. Serjeant suggests that Qusayy may have been the first mansab of the Kaᶜbah, who had the duty of providing food for the vistors to the Haram. In fact for Qusayy, *al-Rifadah* was not an innovation, since it had been practised by the Khuzaᶜis. Serjeant, "Haram and Hawtah", *Mélanges Taha Husain*, ed. A. Badawi, Cairo 1962, 53

the Ka^{c}bah. *Al-Rifadah* thus implied a religious tax paid by the Qurayshites annually to the Banu Hashim in order to fulfil their religious duties, one of them being to provide food for the poor pilgrims. This kind of practice could be found also in tribes other than the Quraysh.[16] This practice can be traced back to tribal religion, whose principal feature was a fest, of which all the members of the tribe partook and shared the expense. Ibn Sa^{c}d quotes a tradition attributed to Muhammad b. ^{c}Umar stating that the contribution made by the Qurayshites implies the *Zakat* existed after the establishment of Islam.[17]

Al-Li$_w$a' was the banner of the tribe. The *Liwa'* of the Quraysh was probably established by Qusayy. It was originally an emblem of the tribe. Only very limited information about the *Liwa'* can be found in the historical accounts. However, al-Baladhuri reports how the *Liwa'* of the Quraysh was destroyed by the Prophet after the defeat of the Qurayshites at the Battle of Badr.[18] From histroical accounts, the *Liwa'* does not seem to have implied any military authority. Nevertheless, it had a great spiritual significance for the tribe: during the Battle of Badr, the Qurayshites tried in vain to protect it with their lives. The significance of *al-Liwa'* to the Arabs in the Jahiliyyah is difficult to ascertain. In spite of the lack of peculiar information we may suggest that *al-Liwa'* may have had a spiritual significance serving as a divine symbol which accompanied the Arabs to battles and stimulated encouragement, as the divine symbol, representing the god (or goddess) of the tribe, would fight for his (her) own people. *Al-Liwa'* may also have had a religious implication, as it was entrusted to the Banu ^{c}Abd al-Dar, who at the same time held *al-Hijabah*, acting as custodian of the Ka^{c}bah. *Al-Liwa'* might have also had another political significance in the Jahiliyyah, which implied the leadership of the tribe, as only the tribal leader could hold it.

Qusayy is said to have built the *Dar al-Nadwah*, which was connected to the Ka^{c}bah. It was similar to the house of tribal assembly, where meetings of all sorts took place among the Qurayshites, from personal affairs such as quarrels and weddings, to tribal matters such as declaring war on non-Qurayshites. The *Dar al-Nadwah* was a centre of authority where Qusayy administered the affairs of his

---

[16] The tribe of ^{c}Abs used to collect taxes from its members, with which they provided food for their poor tribesmen. ^{c}Antarah of the ^{c}Abs in a poem once criticized his tribesmen for not contributing to *al-Rifadah*. See *Al-Aghani*, ix, Cairo 1936, 53-5.

[17] Ibn Sa^{t}d, op.cit., 73; cf. A. Guillaum, *The life of Muhammad*, London 1955, 55.

[18] Al-Baladhuri, i, 53-5

tribe.[19] Professor Bosworth suggests: "It was apparently a privately-owned building and not a municipal one, since in early Islamic times it was sold to Mu^{c}awiyah."[20] As we are informed when Mu^{c}awiyah bought the building, it was owned by the descendants of ^{c}Abd al-Dar.[21] Mu^{c}awiyah then changed it into the provincial headquarters of the Hijaz. Indeed it had no administrative function after Mecca was conquered until the time Mu^{c}awiyah came to power, since the owener of this building had no authority over Mecca. Although the *Dar al-Nadwah* was merely a building, it stood for tribal authority. AT the advent of Islam, it was used by Abu Sufyan to rally and assemble the Qurayshites in their struggle against the Prophet.[22]

Al-Qiyadah was the office of military leadership. It is not known from our historical accounts whether Qusayy exercised this authority during his lifetime, since it is not mentioned that he took part in any military activities after he gained control of Mecca. Al-Azraqi mentions that this office was held by the Banu ^{c}Abd Shams a few generations after the death of Qusayy, and they exercised it against the Prophet at the event of islam.[23]

ii. The struggle for power among the sons of Qusayy

Hubba bore four sons to Qusayy: ^{c}Abd al-Dar, the eldest, ^{c}Abd Manaf, ^{c}Abd al-^{c}Uzzah and ^{c}Abd b. Qusayy. In Qusayy's later years, when he was no longer able to administer the affairs of Mecca, he had to pass his authority to a successor. The natural choice was from among his sons. According to historical accounts, ^{c}Abd Manaf was the most capable and respected by the Qurayshites; ^{c}Abd al-Dar was the lest capable. However, Qusayy and his wife loved the latter the most. We are not informed why ^{c}Abd al-Dar was their favourite son; he was the eldest and so, perhaps the most obedient to them. ^{c}Abd Manaf, on the other hand, is mentioned

---

[19] Ibn Sa^{c}d, op.cit., 70; al-Baladhuri, i, 52; al-Tabari, ii, 257-9. Al-Tabari, quoting from Ibn Ishaq, says that Qusayy built it for himself. It was a private building, and could have been just an administrative office, since there is no information which shows whether Qusayy and his family lived or not.

[20] Bosworth, op.city., 33

[21] Ibn Qutaybah, Ma^{c}arif, Cairo 1960, 311.

[22] Bosworth, op.city., 34.

[23] Al-Azraqi, op.cit., 67; 71.

by al-Azraqi as having been even more respected and popular than his father.[24]
As a result, Qusayy may have become jealous of ᶜAbd Manaf. Hubba insisted
that Qusayy bequeath his authority to ᶜAbd al-Dar, thus making him more esteemed
and noble than his brother.[25] Al-Tabari, al-Baladhuri, and Ibn saᶜd all report
that Qusayy gave only *al-Siqayah, al-Rifadah, al-Hijabah, al-Liwa'* and *Dar al-
Nadwah* to ᶜAbd al-Dar. However, al-Azraqi states that Qusayy gave only *al-Hijabah,
al-Liwa'* and *Dar al-Nadwah* to ᶜAbd al-Dar, but gave *al-Siqayah, al-Qiyadah*
and *al-Rifadah* to ᶜAbd Manaf. Al-Baladhuri gives additional information that
al-Siqayah and *al-Rifadah* were carried out by ᶜAbd b. Qusayy during Qusayy's
lifetime, and were then transfered to ᶜAbd al-Dar by Qusayy.[26] Subsequent
historical events make al-Azraqi's report seem less likely, because later on, the
sons of ᶜAbd Manaf came out and fought for the two offices. However, we
may understand that al-Azraqi emphasises the functions of *al-Hijabah, al-Liwa'* and
Dar al-Nadwah, since they had more religious, tribal and political authority
than the others. Later, in Islamic times, these offices were mentioned frequently
by partisan hostorians who stress that these offices entitled the Hashimites to claim
for the caliphate.

We have limited information about ᶜAbd Manaf from the historical accounts.
Although ᶜAbd Manaf was not content with the way his father had favoured
his brother, he accepted it without question. Ibn saᶜd states that ᶜAbd Manaf
ran his father's business after Qusayy's death.[27] If this is true, then al-Azraqi's
report that the two offices were occupied by ᶜAbd Manaf is accurate. We may
thus conclude that ᶜAbd al-Dar was the spiritual leader of the Qurayshites and
his brother was the executive authority. Later, when the sons of ᶜAbd Manaf
grew up, resentment evolved stronger, and finally they openly challenged the authority
of ᶜAbd al-Dar.

ᶜAbd Manaf had six sons and six daughters. Four of his sons played an
important role in the history of the Quraysh. They are: ᶜAbd Shams, Hashim, al-
Muttalib (their mother was ᶜAtika al-Kubra bint Murrah), and Nawful whose mother
was Naqidah bint Abi-ᶜUdayy. The challenge of the Banu ᶜAbd Manaf for political
power can be regarded as the first split in the Quraysh. ᶜAbd Shams organised

---

[24] Ibid., 61. The historical account reflects the favouritism of Muslim writers towards the
family of the Prophet, as the Hashimites were descendants of ᶜAbd Manaf.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Al-Tabari, ii, 259; Ibn Saᶜd, op.cit., 73; al-Baladhuri, i, 53-5; al-Azraqi, op.cit., 66.

[27] Ibn Saᶜd, op.cit., 74.

a group called *al-Mutayyabun*[28] consisting of Banu Asad b. ^CAbd al-^CUzzah b. Qusayy, Banu Zuhrah b. Kilab, Banu Taym b. Murrah b. Ka^Cb and Banu al-Harith b. Fihr b. Malik b. al-Nadr.

Another group, called *al-Ahlaf*,[29] was formed by ^CAmir b. Hashim b. ^CAbd al-Dar, to defend its rights. This *al-Ahlaf* comprised Banu Makhzum b. Yaqzah b. Murrah, Banu Sahm b. ^CAnwar b. Ka^Cb, Banu Jama^C b. Husays b. Ka^Cb, and Banu ^CAdil b. Ka^Cb. Al-Baladhuri gives two different accounts of this event. One states that the two parties fought each other until a *sulh* (peace treaty) was concluded; according to this *sulh*, Banu ^CAbd Manaf gained the offices of *al-Siqayah* and *al-Rifadah*, or perhaps *al-Qiyadah*. The rest of the offices were retained by the Banu ^CAbd al-Dar. The second account states that the two parties did not fight, but were called to arbitration.[30] Al-Baladhuri considers that Banu Manaf gained the two most important offices, *al-Siqayah* and *al-Rifadah*. Although this contradicts al-Azraqi's report, W. M. Watt seems to agree with al-Baladhuri's suggestion.[31] It is also interesting to raise the question why these two offices are considered more important than the others by the Muslim historians.

Although ^CAbd Shams was the leader of *al-Mutayyabun*, he did not gain control of the two offices. They fell into the hands of Hashim. The historical accounts do not tell us the reasons, but we can obtain some information from al-Maqrizi's work,[32] which states that ^CAbd Shams frequently used to travel outside Mecca, and stayed in Mecca for short periods only; in addition, he was poorer than Hashim thanks to the heavy burden of many children. We do not know from what source al-Maqrizi obtained this information, and it may be a fabrication or personal judgement based on his pro-Hashimite attitude, since we do not find it in other historical accounts,[33] Alternatively it may be said that Hashim was more ambitious for power than ^CAbd Shams. Professor Bosworth suggests ^CAbd Shams and Hashim clashed over *al-Siqayah* and *al-Rifadah*. ^CAbd Shams lost this contest and went to Syria for a ten-year self-imposed exile. Therefore the

---

[28] *Al-Mutayyabun* means "The perfumed ones"; see Ibn Hisham, *The life of Muhammad*, trans., A. Guillaum, 56-7; al-Baladhuri, i, 55-6; Bosworth, op.cit.

[29] Al-Ahlaf means "The conferderated", see ibid.

[30] Al-Baladhuri, i, 56.

[31] Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 5; Bosworth op.cit., 34-5.

[32] Al-Maqrizi, *Kitab al-niza^C* . . ., trans., Bosworth, 48.

[33] As we have mentioned previously, al-Azraqi says that Hashim inherited the two offices from his father and ^CAbd Shams obtained *al-Qiyadah*, op.cit., 67.

two offices were held by Hashim.[34]

Later, after Hashim died, the two offices passed to his brother al-Muttalib according to *Wasiyyah* (will or recommendation), then in turn, to ^CAbbas al-Muttalib b. Hashim, al-Zubayr b. ^CAbd al-Muttalib and Abu Talib b. Al-^CAbbas al-Muttalib. Abu Talib was poor and in debt to his brother Al-^CAbbas b. ^CAbd al-Muttalib. As he was not able to pay his debt, al-^CAbbas asked to take over the two offices in return, and Abu Talib agreed. Since then the two offices pased through the descendants of al-^CAbbas until al-Mansur became the caliph, and were instituted as the offical duties of *Amir al-Mu'minin* (Commander of the Faithful i.e. the Caliph).[35]

Al-^CAbbas was a successful businessman. After he took over these offices, he made full use of them, and through them he expanded his business. We are not told by the historical accounts whether he gained his popularity and nobility over the other eminent Qurayshite figures by holding the tow offices. However, later when his progeny came to fight for the caliphate, they made use of the prestige of the two offices in their propaganda.

From the historical events in the Jahiliyyah times, we do not see how those who held these two offices could gain more popularity and nobility among their tribesmen. Hashim was well-respected and honoured even before he seized the offices, because of his wealth and personality. Claims to the caliphate based on ancestor's status of holding the two offices may be regarded as simply a fabrication by later historians or theologians with their sectarian prejudics.

From the sources available to us, we do not have much information about ^CAbd Shams, of whom it is said that he was mainly engaged in business. However, we are provided with more information concerning Hashim by historical traditions, because he was the ancestor of the Prophet of Islam. According to a tradition attributed to Ibn al-^CAbbas, Hashim was credited with *Sahib Ilaf* (organiser of pacts) of the Quraysh. He inaugurated two trade trips in summer and winter. The summer trip was to al-Sham (the Great syria), Ghazza or even Anqura. The winter one was to al-Yaman (Yemen) and al-Habashah (Abyssinia). He secured two *Ilaf* (pacts) from the king of al-Habashah, al-Najashi, and from the Emperor of Byzatium, Qaysar.[36] Concerning this, al-Tabari quotes a different tradition: the four sons of ^CAbd Manaf led the Qurayshites in different directions for trading. Hashim went

---

[34] Al-Maqrizi, op.cit., 24.

[35] Al-Baladhuri, i, 57.

[36] Ibn Sa^Cd, op.cit., 75.

to al-Sham, and gained a charter from its ruler; ^CAbd Shams went to al-Habashah, al-Muttalib to al-Yaman and Nawful to Iraq or Persia.[37] Al-Baladhuri gives a similar report to that of al-Tabari. He confirms that Hashim was the organiser of the bianual trade trips, the summer one led by Hashim himself to al-Sham, and the winter one led by his three brothers to al-Yaman, al-Habashah and Iraq.[38] Some modern scholars have studied this so-called *Ilaf Quraysh* (pacts of the Qurayshites), arguing over the historical facts connected with the Qur'anic chapter (surat Qraysh, chapt 106). Rubin, in his more intergrated study, suggests that the Qur'anic word *Ilaf* does not necessarily carry the implication given it in the historical accounts.[39] In fact, classical Muslim historians such as al-Baladhuri and al-Tabari must have drawn their information from the Qur'an, if the Qur'an is to be believed in providing the pre-Islamic history of Arabia. However, it is the case that the Quraysh conducted the trade journeys in both winter and summer to secure provisions for Mecca, no matter what interpretation is given to this *Ilaf*. However, the credit of *Sahib Ilaf* to Hashim must be an example of pro-Hashimite political bias on the part of ^CAbbasid historians.

Since Hashim held the offices of *al-Siqayah* and *al-Rifadah*, he imposed an obligation upon the Qurayshites as his grandfather, Qusayy, had done. He used the same excuse as Qusayy to address his people in order to obtain contributions.[40] As his business expanded, his wealth increased; this, together with the fact he was the holder of *al-Siqayah* and *al-Rifadah* , led to his gaining even more respect and popularity, as we are told by the traditional Muslim historians. Hashim's proper name was ^CAmr. It is said that he received his nickanme, "*Hashim*", by generously providing food to the Meccan people during the famines. The word "Hashim" derives from the Arabic root of the trisyllable *HaSHaMa*. "Hashim" is the *Ism al-Fa^Cil* (nomen agentis) which means "The one who crushes". Al-Tabari, quoting from Ibn al-Kalbi, states that Hashim was the first person who brought bread from

---

[37] Al-Tabari, ii, 252.

[38] Al-Baladhuri, i, 50; for more details see M.J. Kister, "Mecca and Tamim", *J. of Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 8(1965), 25; idem., *Encyl of Islam²*, s.v. "Ilaf".

[39] U. Rubin, "The Ilaf of Quraysh", *Arabica*, 31(1984), 166-72. For more detailed discussions on the interpretations see M. Hamidullah, "Al-Ilaf, ou les rapports économico-diplomatiques de la Meccque pre-islamique", *Mélanges Louis Massignon*, ii, Damascus 1957; R. Simon, "Hums, et Ilaf, ou commerce sans guerre", *Acta Orientalia* (Hungarica), 23(1970), 205-32.

[40] Al-Baladhuri, i, 50; Ibn Sa^Cd, op.cit., 57.

al-Sham, or al-Filastin (Palestine), during the famines. He crushed and crunbled
(*ThaRaDa*) bread and cooked it with meat, then provided it to the Meccans.
Thereafter this kind of food was called *"tharid"*. Ibn Sa^cd also mentions that
Hashim was the person who provided *al-tharid*.[41] Professor Bosworth, adopting
al-Jahiz's accounts, confirms that Hashim invented this food.[42] However, al-
Baladhuri suggests that Qusayy may have been the first to provide *al-tharid*.
Ibn al-Manzur also gives evidence that Qusayy made this kind of food available
to his people.[43]

iii. The first conflict between Banu Hashim and Banu ^cAbd Shams

Most historical accounts[44] state that the first rivalry or animosty between ^cAbd
Shams and Banu Hashim occurred during Hashim's lifetime. As was mentioned
previouly, ^cAbd Shams was poorer than Hashim, and the reason for this may be
that he was not the leader of the family of ^cAbd Manaf. When his son Umayyah
became wealthy, he tried to emulate Hashim by providing food to pilgrims, but
being unable to do so, the Qurayshites rejoiced at his failure and looked down on
him. Umayyah then became angry and attacked Hashim by challenging him to
Munafarah, a contest of capabilities. Hashim depised Umayyah, because of his fewer
years and lack of prestige, and did not want to compete with him; however, some
of the Qurayshites urged him to do it. Thus Hashim suggested that the loser should
contribute fifty she-camels with black pupils (supposed to be the best kind) to be
slaughtered in the centre of Mecca, and spend ten years in self-imposed exile from
Mecca. Umayyah agreed to this. They then appointed a *Kahin* (prognosticator) of
the Khuza'ah tribe, who was the grandfather of ^cAmr b. al-Hamq living in "Usfan,
as the judge. Umayyah was accompanied by Abu Hamhamah b. ^cAbd al-Uzzah al-
Fihri, who was his father-in-law and maternal uncle, and a leading member of the
Qraysh. the *Kahin* judged that Hashim was superior to Umayyah and referred to
Abu Hamhamah as witness. Hence Umayyah carried out his promise and went to
al-Sham for ten years.

Al-Maqrizi relates the same stc.y and criticizes Umayyah for his weakness

---

[41] Al-Tabari, ii, 251; Ibn Sa^cd, op.cit., 76.

[42] Al-Maqrizi, op.cit., 49; 120.

[43] Al-Baladhuri, i, 51; Ibn Manzur, op.city. entry "H.SH.M.".

[44] Ibn Sa^cd, op.cit. 76; al-Baladhuri, ii, 60-1; al-Tabari, ii, 253.

and lack of personality.[45] However, the story is probably biased in favour of Hashim in anticipation of later rivalries in Islam, as Profesor Bosworth suggests.[46] Al-Maqrizi's pro-Hashimite attitude is clearly seen in this comments. If we investigate the tradition attributed to Hisham b. Muhammad, we understand that the *Munafarah* was merely a competition of wealth, but not nobility, as it took place vey frequently in the Jahiliyyah times among the Arabs. This competition was carried out in front of only a certain group of Meccan people, who were supporters of Hashim, but not the whole Meccans. Hashim at that time was almost the leader of Mecca, and his popularity must have been considerably greater than that of Umayyah. Some other factors in Umayyah's failure must also be taken into consideration. Hashim held *al-Rifadah* and collected contributes from the Qurayshites. In addition to this, the accounts do not make clear whether the *Kahin* was for or against Banu 'Abd Shams. Moreover, since al-Azraqi reports that Umayyah inherited *al-Qiyadah* from his father, his status in Meccan society cannot have been very far below that of Hashim.

After the death of Hashim, his brother, al-Muttalib took over *al-Siqayah* and *al-Rifadah*. When he died later on a trip to al-Yaman, the two offices passed to 'Abd al-Muttalib b, Hashim, who thus becme the leader of Mecca.[47] However, Ibn Habib mentions that Harb b. Umayyah held the leadership after the death of al-Muttalib, and after Harb died, the leadership was distributed among the Banu Manaf. Ibn Habib also mentions that Harb was the military leader in the War of al-Fijar.[48]

There was another conflict between Banu Uamyyah and Banu Hashim. Ibn al-Athir gives a detailed report of this event.[49] Harb b. Umayyah and [C]Abd al-Muttalib were *nadiman* (drinking partners or intimate friends). [C]Abd al-Muttalib had a Jewish protegé, who was a rich merchant. For reasons unknow, the wealth of this Jew irritated Harb who decided to have the Jew murdered and his wealth taken away. Two young Qurayshites, [C]Amir b. [C]Abd Manaf b. [C]Abd al-Dar and Saghr b. [C]Amr b. Ka[C]b al-Taymi, who was the grandfather of Abu Bakr, were persuaded by

---

[45] Al-Maqrizi, op.city., 49-50.
[46] Ibid., 121.
[47] Al-Tabari, ii, 251, Ibn Sa[C]d, op.cit., 81; 83.
[48] Ibn Habib, *Al-Muhabbar*, ed. I. Lichtenstaedter, Hyderabad 1942, 165; 171. He mentions five offices in addition to *al-Riyasah* which may mean *al-Qiyadah* as al-Azraqi mentions.
[49] Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil fi al-ta'rikh*, ii, ed. A.W. al-Najjar, Beirut 1965-8, 15; al-Maqrizi, op.cit., 51.

Harb to Kill the Jew, which he did. ^CAbd al-Muttalib was not aware of this plot
and did not know at first who the murderers were. However, he kept searching
for them until he found out. In the meantime, the two murderers had taken refuge
with Harb. ^CAbd al-Muttalib came to Harb asked him to hand over the murderers.
But Harb concealed them and refused ^CAbd al-Muttalib's request. ^CAbd al-muttalib
reproached him, and they started to quarrel, which resulted in a *Munafarah*. They
asked al-Najashi, king of al-Habashah, to be the judge; however, he did not want
to become involved in the matter. They then asked Nufayl b. ^CAbd al-^CUzzah al-
^CAdawi, the grandfather of ^CUmer b. al-Khattab, who sided with ^CAbd al-Muttalib,
and goaded Harb with satirizing words, which, in fact, were praising ^CAbd
al-Muttalib.[50]

^CAbd al-Muttalib then broke his friendship with Harb. He took one hundred
camels from Harb, and gave them as compensation to the nephew of the murdered
Jew. He also returned all the Jew's money to his nephew. Later on ^CAbd al-Muttalib
sought *munadamah* (partnership) from ^CAbdallah b. Jud^Can al-Taymi.

There had been also a clash between Harb and al-Zubayr, son of ^CAbd al-
Muttalib. This event is recorded by Ibn Abi-al-Hadid on the authority of al-Waqidi.[51]
A Tamimi tribesman was proceeding to Mecca on business. While the Tamimi was
travelling, he encountered Harb and passed through al-^CAqabah with him. Harb became
angry and swore not to allow him to enter Mecca. Although we are not informed
of the reason for this, it may be that this Tamimi did not pay protection money
to Harb, or that some quarrel occurred between them. The Tamimi then went to
the house of ^CAbd al-Muttalib and asked for protection from al-Zubayr, which was
granted. The next day, al-Zubayr and his brother al-Ghaydaq accompanied the Tamimi
to the market. They came across Harb at the Ka'bah, and a quarrel occurred between
Harb and the sons of ^CAbd al-Muttalib, which almost led to bloodshed. Since Harb
had no weapons with which to defend himself, he fled to ^CAbd al-Muttalib and was
given his protection. If true, this event must have occurred before their friendship
ended. Ibn Abi-al-Hadid records this story simply to glorifty Banu Hashim, because
he put this episode in his essay "Fadl Bani Hashim ^Cala Bani ^CAbd Shams". The
event of the clash between Harb and al-Zubayr as well as ^CAbd al-Muttalib reflects
the fact that Harb did not have strong partisans or powerful family members to support
him, even though he held either *al-Qiyadah* or *al-Riyasah*.

---

[50] Ibn al-Athir, op.cit., 175.
[51] Ibn Abi-al-Hadid, *Sharh nahj al-balaghah*, ed. M. Ibrahim, xv, Cairo 1959-64, 229-31;
Kister, "Mecca and Tamim", 130-31.

iv. Clannish strife at the advent of Islam

After the defeat of Harb, the hostility between Banu Umayyah and Banu Hashim lessened before the Prophet Muhammad came to preach Islam. the Umayyads became more involved in business and in producing more offspring. The Hashimites' popularity appears to have declined. With it their power was losing ground, although ironically they still commanded the repect of the community. They were getting poorer and could hardly carry out the duties of al-Siqayah and al-Rifadah. Al-ᶜAbbas, however, was a successful merchant, who had business in Ta'if and even in al-Sham. It is said that he was the nadim (partner) of Abu Sufyan. This suggests that they may have traded in the same business.[52]

If one aspect of the Prophet Muhammad's mission was to bring about the unification of the Quraysh and other tribes, then the price of this unification was paid by a bloody struggle among the Qurayshites and other tribesmen. Muhammad's mission may be regarded in part as a religious revival and in part as a socio-political reform. In other words, Muhammad tried to recover the lost ground of his clan by unifying the poor and smaller clans[53] through religious activities. When he succeeded in his mission, he destroyed all the idols of Quraysh and of other tribes but retained the Mighty One-Allah. This may be interpreted as promoting his clan's status, or possibly regaining its political power by abolishing the worship of the other tribal idols. Idol worship was, in fact, politically rather than religiously oriented. Muhammad's mission has been studied by numberous orientalists. It has been well researched and discussed by W. M. Watt in his two outstanding works: *Muhammad at Mecca* and *Muhammad at Medina*. It is not our concern here to repeat the study of this mission in full. However, we should state some points concerning the strife between the Umayyads and the Hashimites.

During the Meccan period of Muhammad's preaching, most of the Hashimites, except his uncle Abu Lahab, sided with him. It is interesting to note why Abu Lahab was against Muhammad. When Muhammad started preaching Islam, he secured protection from another uncle, Abu Talib. Watt suggests that while most of the Qurayshites were against Muhammad, Abu Talib did not abandon his nephew, as the best best young man among the Banu Hashim, for other rival clans, who

---

[52] Ibn Habib, op.cit., 175.
[53] For details see W,M. Watt's list of statistics of Meccan Muslims and pagans in *Muhammad at Mecca*, excursus E.

were becoming more powerful than his own clan. This would have been a serious loss of strength for the Hashimites.[54] Moreover, it should be borne in mind that the *ᶜasabiyyah* (tribal solidarity) was strongly rooted at that time. The tie of kinship took precedence before material considerations. The opponents of Muhammad tried to bribe Abu Talib by offering a virtuous young girl and money in return for Muhammad's death; Abu Talib, however, refused the offer,[55] as he would never have betrayed his own kindred, since he had brought up Muhammad and treated him as his own child. Another factor may also be considered: Abu Talib may have been a *hanif* (the one who believed in one god) follower and thus was not against Muhammad's preaching the belief in the unity of God. It is also said that ᶜAbd al-Muttalib was *hanif*-oriented in his religious thinking, although he did not convert to Islam during his lifetime.

After the death of Abu Talib, the leadreship of the Hashimites fell to Abu Lahab. As a paternal uncle of Muhammad as well as the clan leader, he should have given Muhammad protection., which at first he did. Later, however, he turned against Muhammad. One reason for this is pointed out by Watt:[56] Abu Lahab became a victim of Qurayshites' economic sanctions. Another reason was perhaps due to Abu Lahab being influenced by his wife, Umm Jamil bint Harb b. Umayyah, who was the sister of Abu Sufyan.[57] Umm Jamil's hatred towards Muhammad must have been the result of clannish rivalry. Abu Lahab and his wife were later both cursed in the Qur'an. Modern scholars have studied the Quranic surah of 'Abu Lahab' with the connection of historical fact. Rubin concludes that the revelation of this surah resulted from Abu Lahab's opposition to the Prophet Muhammad, in defending his own economic and religious interests.[58] Furthermore, Watt suggests that when Muhammad was asked by Abu Lahab if his grandfather ᶜAbd al-Muttalib was damned in Hell or not, Muhammad replied "yes". This was a serious insult to the chief of a tribe as prescribed by tribal custom. It seems that Muhammad did not

---

[54] Idem., 120.

[55] Ibn Saᶜd, op.cit., 202.

[56] W.M. Watt, *Muhammad, prophet and statesman*, Oxford 1961, 78-9.

[57] Al-Maqrizi, trans., 128.

[58] U. Rubin, "Abu Lahab and sura cxi", *Bulletin of School of Oriental and African Studies*, 42(1978), 13-15; cf. J. Barth, *Encyl of Islam¹*, s.v. "Abu Lahab"; T. Lohman, "Abu Lahab", *Festschrift für Religions und Geistwelt Geschichte*, 18(1966), 326-48; R. Paret, *Der Kuran, Kommentar und Konkordanz*, Stuttgart 1971, 5-29. The Quranic verse says: "His wealth and what he has piled up have not profited him." It denounces Abu Lahab's greed for wealth, as he yielded to the economic sanctions.

esteem Abu Lahab as much as he did Abu Talib.[59] It is said that two daughters of Muhammad: Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthum were engaged to two sons of Abu Lahab, ᶜUtbah and ᶜUtaybah, but Muhammad cancelled the engagement later when he relised that Abu Lahab would not side with him; alternatively it is reputed that Abu Lahab ordered his sons to break their marriage.[60] Muhammad then experienced Abu Lahab's total hostility.

Another great opponent of Muhammad was Abu Jahl of the Makhzumi tribe. According to al-Baladhuri, Abu Jahl's reaction towards Muhammad was based purely on religious grounds. Muhammad, in fact, did not receive much violent opposition from Abu Jahl.[61] Watt concludes from al-Tabari's Ibn Sa'd's and Ibn Hisham's reports that the persecution of Muslims by the Qurayshites led by Abu Jahl was principally aimed at influencial people. There were three kinds of attacks: verbal assult, economic sanctions and physical violence. Different attacks were directed to various people depending in their social status.[62]

With the death of Abu Talib, Muhammad lost the protection of his guardian. This was the time of *al-Hijrah* (emigration) in Islamic history. Abu Jahl died at Battle of Badr, and Abu Lahab died soon after in Mecca. The leadership of Mecca thus fell into the hands of Abu Sufyan Saghr b. Harb b. Umayyah. The strife among the Qurayshites thereafter continued as the clannish fight between the Umayyads and the Hashimites. Historical accounts report that Abu Sufyan lost his merchandise and fortune at Badr. Therefore he decided to challenge Muhammad and the Muhajirun (the followers of Muhammad who migrated with him from Mecca to Medina) by organizing an armed force for revenge. However, it is necessary to discuss the real motives behind Abu Sufyan's opposition to Muhammad, which from the soucres available to us, is difficult to explain. According to Watt, Abu Sufan did not totally approve of the other Qurayshites' policy of oppression, despite his clansmen being killed by Muslims.[63] Since the Hegira (*al-Hijah*), most of the Hashimites had moved out of Mecca, leaving the Umayyads in control there. Abu Sufyan became the most important nobleman and the de facto leader, having no real rivals, and he was

---

[59] Al-Baladhuri, i, 130-31.

[60] M. Rodinson, *Muhammad*, London 1961, 111; Rubin, op,cit., 24; M. Lings, *Muhammad*, London 1983, 301. The marriage or engagement was arranged with political motives. (Lings, op.cit., 40)

[61] Al-Baladhuri, op.cit., 125-30.

[62] Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 117-8.

[63] Idem., *Muhammad at Medina*, Oxford 1956, 56-60; 62-6.

able to enjoy his prestige and social status. We may assume that Abu Sufyan's reaction towards Muhammad was to maximize trade profits and to retain absolute authority over Mecca.

Al-Baladhuri also comments that Abu Sufyan could not forget his prestige in the Jahiliyyah times, after his conversion to Islam. Moreover, it is not difficult to understand that Muhammad's mission was against aristocracy and for equality. One should also bear in mind the attitude of clannish superiority among the Arabs, which was one of the most important factors in encouraging the influential Qurayshites to fight back. To the Qurayshites, defence of their religion was a less important reason than socio-political and economic factors. Watt sugggests: " . . . some ten weeks after Badr, Abu Sufyan, in fulfilment of his vow, led a party of 200 or 400 men to raid Medina. His primary aims were doubtless to resotre the confidence among the Meccans to show the world that the day of Quraysh was not yet over."[64]

Before Mecca was conquered, Abu Sufyan, as skilful statesman, made his submission to Muhammad through al-CAbbas in order to secure his life and wealth. It is very interesting to note that Abu Sufyan was reluctant to make his submission, although al-CAbbas urged him to do so unless he did not care for his life.[65] This reflects that the conversion of Abu Sufyan to Islam was conditional, as he converted very late and was condemned as an opportunist.

The strife between the Umayyads and the Hashimites was put to a temporary end. It was a triumph for the Hashimities in regarding their authority over the Qurayshites. However, Abu Sufyan and his wife Hind, who also converted to Islam when Mecca was conquered, kept warning their descendants to recover their prestiges which were reduced by Muhammad.[66] This strife between the two houses would burst out again at the assassination of CUthman b. CAffan, and there was more tribal strife in the first civil war, and it continued through the Umayyad rule.

The Political Struggle during the Rashidun Caliphate Period

Islam put a temporary end to tribal and clannish strife, promoting the idea

---

[64] Ibid., 19-20.
[65] Al-Tabari, iii, 52-4.
[66] Al-Baladhuri, *Ansab*, iv, ed. Ihsan CAbbas, Wiesbaden-Beirut 1979, 8-11.

of equality among the members of the new *Ummah* (community extended to refer Islamic state), resulting in a peaceful period during the last years of the Prophet's lifetime. Immediately after his demise, a new line of succession emerged. The ruling elite of the new-born *Ummah* began to struggle for leadership, which involved not only the Muhajirun and the Ansar (the Helpers, those Medinans who helped Muhammad to establish the Islamic state) but also the Qurayshites. Although the Muhajirun believed that they had the legal right to claim the leadership after the Prophet, the Ansar were eager to gain control over the new *Ummah* or at least share power in it. Among the Meccan Qurayshites, the new aristocracy (non-Hashimites and non-Umayyads) tried their best to prevent the leadership from falling into the hands of the old Meccan aristocracy (the Hashimites and the Umayyads).

i The Saqifah event

After the Islamic *Ummah* was established by the Meccan Muhajirun and the Medinan Ansar the Quraysh was still the dominant and most influential tribe. They strongly believed they should continue to have the power which they enjoyed during the Prophet's rule. The tradition that "The Imam must belong to the Quraysh or the Muhajirun",[67] (as Abu Bakr, the first caliph of Islam, claimed at the Saqifah negotiation), illustrates the greedy political ambitions of the new Qurayshite aristocracy. The old Meccan ruling elite at the advent of Islam, the Umayyads, but not the Hashimites, were left without political influence at that time, although some of them were appointed to important posts in the Prophet's administration.[68] On the other hand, the Hashimites were waiting for their time to come. They considered themselves as the natural successors to the Prophet by virtue of their close kinship to him, as the later Muslim scholars of theocracy and historians suggested. The Hashimites were only one of the pillars of the new *Ummah*, whose members were from other clans of the Quraysh and non-Quraysh tribes, whereas, under Islam, the right of leadership after the Prophet was to be open equally to every member who showed his ability, as the Prophet had not laid down any instructions about it.

---

[67] For the information of sources see A.J. Wensinck, *A handbook of early Muhammadan tradition*, Leiden 1927, 109.
[68] Al-Baladhuri, op.cit., i, 520-30.

Abu Bakr's succession to the leadership after the Prophet has been studied
by numberous Islamicists. The event of Saqifah, which gave Abu Bakr access to
the leadership, is described by different historical traditions in a more or less similar
way, favourable either to Sunnism or Shi'ism. Abu Bakr himself thought his
succession was an unforeseen event, as the traditions suggest.[69] However, if we
investigate the historical sources, we may regard his succession as a clever plot
played by the Muhajirun. It was ^CUmar b. al-Khattab, the second caliph of Islam,
who masterminded this conspiracy. Before we proceed to the *Saqifah* event, we
should examine the background to the Ansar's Opposition to the Muhajirun in the
latter of the leadership after the Prophet.

It has been suggested that the Prophet seemed to favour the Meccan Muhajirun
and his kinsmen in his administration and in sharing the booty from raids. Moreover,
he appointed the Muhajirun rather than the Ansar to important posts, because,
according to the Muslim historical sources, the Meccan Muhajirun were more
experienced in administration and military affairs.[70] The Ansar were primarily
peasants, and inexperienced in these matters, as they were sedentary people who
were less mobil than the desert tribesmen. Under the Prophet's rule in Medina,
the Ansar were sometimes dissatisfied with his treatment, as they were not sufficiently
rewarded for their help to the Muhajirun. The Ansar were also annoyed by the
Prophet's arrangements for the peaceful surrender of Mecca, by which they lost
their chance to win booty from their wealthy Meccan enemies in battle. Moreover,
the Ansar were frustrated by the Prophet's deferential treatment of his newly-
converted compatriot: for example, the Ansar did not obtain their due share of the
booty from the victory of Hunaya, whereby the booty was distributed mainly among
the new Meccan converts.[71] However, the Prophet's intentions in this matter can
be regarded as simply a means of strengthening the adhesion of the new converts
to Islam. The Prophet's favouritism can also be regarded as a result of his being
imbued with typical Arab loyalty to his own kin. Appointing anyone outside his
clan would have been against clannish loyalty and against the principle of the holiness
of the Banu ^CAbd Manaf. In addition, the Muhajirun had suffered hardship with
the Prophet since the onset of his preaching period, and they probably felt greater
loyalty to the Prophet than any other people. The Prophet might also have

---

[69] Ibid., 584; 590-1.
[70] Ibid., 529-32; al-Jahshiyari, *Kitab al-wuzara''*, Cairo 1938, 12-4; al-Tabari, iii, 147; al-
Ya^Cqubi, *Ta'rikh*, ii, 70-2.
[71] Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 73-4.

thought that it was safer to appoint his clansmen to decisive posts, and although some Ansar were appointed by the Prophet to be tax collectors, they were somewhat neglected in political affairs. The Ansar resented the fact that they perceived their treatment as unfair, and this was directly responsible for the *Saqifah* event.[72]

The issue of succession after the Prophet must have been raised among the Muhajirun whilst the Prophet was suffering an agonizing death. It is reported that the Prophet intended to write down instructions on the affairs of the Ummah for use after his death. He demanded that an inkstand and parchment be brought to him for writing down instructions which would prevent his followers from going astray; however, his request was opposed by [C]Umar, who thought that pain had blurred the Prophet's mind and that he might write something in disagreement with the Qur'an.[73] There also exists another story concerning the Hashimites' eagerness for power. Al-[C]Abbas b. [C]Abd al-Muttalib, the Prophet's uncle, urged and advised [C]Ali b. Abi-Talib to take some action, suggesting that they go to the the Prophet and enquire as to who would be the Prophet's successor; if he did not intend to pass his authority to the Hashimites, they should demand that the Prophet should appoint them as the next leader. However, [C]Ali refused this suggestion for reasons explained by Ibn Sa[C]d.[74]

It is worth noting from these two stories that the struggle for power had started even before the death of the Prophet. At this point we wish to raise the following questions: (1) Was [C]Umar really afraid that the Prophet would write down something against the Qur'an? (2) Did [C]Ali not perhaps have any designs on the leadership? We may assume that both [C]Umar and [C]Ali understood the situation and preferred to leave the issue open, so that they could manipulate events to their own advantage. [C]Ali was not a fool, in fact, as H. Lammens suggests,[75] it was a clever manoeuvre on his part to remain silent, and not to ask the Prophet about this matter, thinking it safer to leave the dynastic principle to take its course, but he subsequently forfeited his chances because of his complacency in the affair.

We are inclined to believe the [C]Umar was quite active in retaining political

---

[72] It was also said that the Ansar did not get the same share of the plunder from each of the Prophet's raids. This implies that the Ansar did not receive equal economic treatment with the Muhajirun.

[73] Ibn Sa[C]d, *Tabaqat*, ii, 242-4.

[74] Ibid., 245-6.

[75] H. Lammens, *Fatima et les filles de Mohamet*, Rome 1912, 49.

power for the new aristocracy. In the *Saqifah* event, he was ready to take action
against the Ansar in order to keep the leadership in the hands of his people.[76] Later,
in the course of his caliphate, he tried not to appoint the Hashimites or the Umayyads
to important posts, unless they were of great ability such as Mu'awiyah b. Abi-
Sufyan. This illustrates his political ambition, in that he was partiotic to the new
Ummah, which was built mainly by the hands of the insignificant Quraysh clans,
and that he had to put down the old Meccan aristocracy, i.e. the Banu ^CAbd Manaf.
In other words, there was also clannish strife between the dominant clans and the
insignificant ones.

Lammens, with pro-Umayyad bias, regards ^CAli as a weak man, weak in
the diplomatic skills of political struggle.[77] However, when al-^CAbbas urged
^CAli to ask the Prophet about his successor, ^CAli's response to him was reasonable
in circumstances, since ^CAli was afraid that the Prophet might not pass the
leadreship to his own family members, thus causing the people to turn away
from the Hashimites.[78] Moreover, ^CAli also thought no one was qualified enough
to compete with the Hashimites.[79] Hence, if the Prophet did not leave any
instructions in this matter, the Hashimities would have a better chance of claiming
their rights according to the pre-Islamic tradition, the hereditary religio-political
authority which had been laid down by their ancestor Qusayy b. Kilab. However,
because of ^CAli's complacent attitude and optimistic view, he lost the leadership
to Abu Bakr.

As to the substance of the *Saqifah* event, although it is reported by the historical
traditions in various guise, the basic information provides us with a clear picture
of how the struggle for power ensued. Most historical traditions view it as a clash
between the Meccan Muhajirun and the Medinan Ansar. As soon as the news of
the Prophet's death spread, the Ansar gathered at Banu Sa^Cidah's *Saqifah* (assembly
hall) in Medina to nominate Sa^Cd b. ^CUbadah as the leader of the new Ummah.
Sa^Cd, who was on his sick-bed and resting at his house, could not come to the
Saqifah, but he gave a speech, which was delivered by his assistant to the Ansar
in order to strengthen their confidence. His speech stressed that the right

---

[76] S.H. Jafri, *The origins and early development of Shià Islam*, London 1979, 20.
[77] H. Lammens, *Encyl of Islam¹*, s.v. "Adhroh"; idem., "Etudes sur le règne de Moàwia
Ier", *Mèlanges de la Facultè Oriental de l'Universitè Saint-Joseph Beyrouth (Beirut)*,
ii (1973 reprint), 17-32.
[78] Ibn Sa^Cd, op.cit., 245.
[79] Ibid., 246.

of succession belonged to the Ansar, because Islam would not have been built without their efforts and that the Meccan Qurayshites were less eligible, because most of them had been conquered by the Ansar and the early Muhajirun.[80] Sa^{c}d's words seemed to give credence to the Ansar position against that of the whole of the Quraysh including the later converts. The Ansar asked Sa^{c}d what they should do in the event of the Muhajirun refusing the offer of leadership. Sa^{c}d consequently suggested: ''. . . one *Amir* (leader) from the Ansar and another from the Muhajirun (*Mina Amirun wa minkum Amirun*) should lead jointly . . .''[81]

When the news reached ^{c}Umar, he relayed the message to Abu Bakr and urged him to take action. At that moment, ^{c}Ali and al-^{c}Abbas were busy with the Prophet's funeral. According to certain traditions, ^{c}Umar and Abu Bakr on their way to the *Saqifah* and proceeded togather. A dispute then took place between the Ansar and the Muhajirun. First, Abu Bakr addressed the Ansar with an eloquent speech stressing the significant role of the Muhajirun over the Ansar in building up the Islamic state; however, he regconised the Ansar's efforts in this matter. Abu Bakr insisted that the Muhajirun lead the new *Ummah*, since the Prophet, who founded Islam, was himself a member of the Muhajirun and that the Ansar be the helpers (*Nahnu al-Umara'u wa Antum al-Wuzara'u*). Furthermore, he suggested that the two parties should co-operate with each other in state affairs.[82] Al-Hubab b. al-Mundhir b. al-Jumuh of the Ansar then stood up and urged against Abu Bakr, rejoicing his proposals. However, ^{c}Umar and Abu Bakr fought back vigorously. The Ansar seemed lacked confidence in defending their right in front of the three eloquent, dignified members of the triumvirate as Lammens suggests.[83]

Had the dispute continued, there might have been bloodshed or a *fitnah* (civil strife). As some traditions suggest, ^{c}Umar was ready to take violent action to stop the Ansar. At this critical moment, one of the Ansar's leading figures, Bashir b. Sa^{c}d stood up, and because he recognised the virtue and seniority of the Muhajirun in Islam, he tried to convince the Ansar to leave the leadership in the hands of the tribe of the Prophet.[84] It is worth noting why Bashir capitulated to the Muhajirun. Although he is praised by traditional Sunni scholars as the first person to pay homage (*bay^{c}ah*) to the first caliph in Islam, we are not informed by the historical

---

[80] Al-Tabari, iii, 218.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid., 220.
[83] H. Lammens, ''Le triumvirat, Abu Bakr . . .'', *M.F.O.B.*, iv (1973 reprint), 113-4.
[84] Al-Tabari, op.cit., 221.

accounts as to his motive for supporting the Muhajirun. Some modern scholars give
suggestions which will be discussed later.

The historical traditions state that Abu Bakr did not desire to gain the leadership.
During the *Saqifah* negotiation, he recommended that either ^cUmar or Abu ^cUbaydah
become the first caliph, but both ^cUmar and Abu ^cUbaydah would never accept
his recommendation as Abu Bakr, being their senior, was more eligible for the post.[85]
As we have mentioned previously, ^cUmar was an ambitious man who would never
have let the leadership fall into the hands of other groups of people. It is reported
that when the Prophet died, ^cUmar came to Abu ^cUbaydah and attempted to pay
homage to him, but Abu ^cUbaydah refused and suggested that Abu Bakr was the
proper candidate for the leadership to succeed the Prophet.[86] If this tradition is
reliable, then it can be said that ^cUmar's "Paying bay^cah" to Abu ^cUbaydah was
just a test of latter's loyalty. Abu Bakr, ^cUmar and Abu ^cUbaydah were the three
most influential and powerful figures after the Prophet. Since Abu ^cUbaydah would
support Abu Bakr, ^cUmar had no choice but to support Abu Bakr, though he may
have considered himself more capable in political affairs. In fact, ^cUmar demonstrated
his political talents in the course of his caliphate.

After Bashir paid his homage to Abu Bakr, followed by ^cUmar and Abu
^cUbaydah, the Ansar also paid their homage to Abu Bakr al-Siddiq. According
to al-Tabari,[87] when the Aws of the Ansar saw what Bashir of the Khazraj
had done, they rejoiced because they would not be subject to further political
pressure from the Khazraj, the two tribes having been rivals in Medina since
pre-Islamic times. Sa^cd b. ^cUbaydah never paid his homage to Abu Bakr, and
swore never to live under the rule of the Meccan Qurayshites. After he had
left for Syria, ^cUmar sent a man to force his homage; however he refused,
and was assassinated.[88]

After Abu Bakr was proclaimed caliph, ^cAli and his people were reluctant
to pay their homage to the caliph, who had to keep sending people to persuade
them. Eventually, ^cAli was convinced and gave up his resistance. Nevertheless, he
told Abu Bakr that the right of succession should belong to the house of the Prophet
and blamed Abu Bakr for usurping their right, while recognizing Abu Bakr's virtue
and contribution to Islam. From then on, ^cAli retired from the political stage

---

[85] Ibid.

[86] Al-Baladhuri, i, 579.

[87] al-Tabari, ibid.

[88] Al-Baladhuri, i, 589.

and devoted himself to the study of the Qur'an.[89] According to al-Ya^{c}qubi, some of the Ansar were ready to recognize ^{c}Ali as successor to the Prophet.[90] This may be considered as a later pro-^{c}Ali fabrication, since it is not recorded in other historical contexts. In view of the prevailing situation, it is hard to believe that the Ansar would have supported any old Meccan aristorcracy as their political rivals. However, it is the case that most of the Ansar took sides with ^{c}Ali against the central authority during ^{c}Uthman's caliphate. This can be explained by the fact that ^{c}Ali was the only influential person whom the Ansar could trust to look after their political interests, since ^{c}Ali had grown up in Medina after the Hegira. He was a Medinan in spirit, though he was a Meccan in origin. Furthermore, ^{c}Uthman's policy was both politically and economically against the interests of the Ansar, who thus had to side with ^{c}Ali, as ^{c}Ali had not cooperated with the caliph.

The old Meccan aristocracy was not willing to support the new caliph. Immediately after ^{c}Ali had paid homage to Abu Bakr, Abu Sufyan went angrily to ^{c}Ali and criticized him, enquiring how he could possibly pay homage to a person from a insignificant clan. He tried to persuade ^{c}Ali to fight for the leadership with the assistance of his own men and horses, but ^{c}Ali refused to fight.[91] Khalid b. Sa^{c}id b. al-^{c}As came to ^{c}Uthman and ^{c}Ali, on his return from al-Yaman, and asked them why they were intending to give Abu Bakr their homage. ^{c}Ali answered that it was a matter decided by Allah. However, Khalid told them that if ^{c}Umar was not against the Banu ^{c}Abd Manaf, Abu Bakr would never gain power.[92] His words implied the whole event was under the control of ^{c}Umar and that the people were deceived by his conspiracy. The historical traditions do not provide us with clear information of any opposition from the Banu ^{c}Abd Manaf. We may thus assume that most of the traditional historical sources were written in favour of the first two caliphs, as they set up the idea model for Islamic government.

Modern research has suggested that there are four explanations as to why Abu Bakr's election was possible. Firstly, the rivalry between the Aws and the Khazraj made the Ansar yield to the new Meccan ruling elite. This tribal feud

---

[89] Ibid., 582; 585; 587.
[90] Al-Ya^{c}qubi, op.cit., 137.
[91] Ibid., 126; al-Baladhuri, op.cit., 588-9.
[92] Al-Baladhuri, op.cit.

can be traced back to pre-Islamic times.[93] The Aws were more willing to support
Abu Bakr, because it was more advantageous for them. Had Sa^{c}d b. ^{c}Ubaydah
of the Khazraj been elected, the Aws would have been subject to more pressure
from their rivals, the Khazraj. According to al-Tabari, Usayd b. Hudayr of the
Aws spoke thus to his kinsmen: "By Allah, if the Khazraj ever become the rulers,
they will keep taking advantages over you, so never take sides with them, they
will never give you a share in their power, so stand up and pay the homage to
Abu Bakr!"[94]

Secondly, among the Muhajirun, there were other factions, such as the
Hashimites, the Umayyads and a group of lesser clans. ^{c}Ali was supported by the
Kinsmen of the Prophet. Although Abu Sufyan tried to offer help so that ^{c}Ali could
secure the leadership, his real motive was merely to benefit the old Meccan
aristocracy, since they had been put down by Islam, and the lesser clans were holding
power. The only way for them to regain power was to unite the Hashimites and
the Umayyads in their struggle for power so that they could have a better chance.
However, the old rivalry of the two clans had not yet been forgotten. ^{c}Ali's refusal
of Abu Sufyan's offer might have been the result of this rivalry or the fact that
he was aware of Abu Sufyan's help which was offered in the interests of the
Umayyads. Since it was impossible to unify the old Meccan aristocracy, both this
and clan rivalry gave Abu Bakr a good opportunity to became the candidate for
the leadership.

Thirdly, because of the Ansar's jealousy towards to newly-converted old Meccan
aristocracy, most of the Ansar did not want to see them seize power and rule over
them. The Ansar must have known of the existence of the conflict between the
old Meccan aristorcay and the new ruling elite. They were thus willing to support
Abu Bakr because he was prepared to support the Ansar in his own interest, by
siding with them instead of the old Meccan aristocracy; and therefore to get a better
chance of satisfying their own political interests. One tradition states[95] that because
the Ansar were afraid of revenge from the old Meccan aristrocracy, who had
suffered at the hands of the Ansar and the Muhajirun during several raids made
by the Prophet, they tried to elect their own leader. Although this may have been
one of the reasons why the Ansar fought for their rights, it is highly unlikely. As
a result of the Ansar losing the battle for political power, their resentment

---

93 Watt, op.cit., 151-90.
94 Al-Tabari, iii, 221.
95 W.M. Watt, *Islamic political thought*, Edinburhg 1968, 32.

developed into tribal rivalry between themselves and the Qurayshites. The Ansar later boasted of their southern background to counterbalance the Quraysh's claim of nobility and prestige.[96] This antagonism between the northern and southern Arab tribes gradually fermented, causing a rift between the two main stocks of Arab peoples, which has remained even up to modern times.

In addition, Abu Bakr's seniority in Islam, his staunch support of the Prophet, his kinship to the Prophet through his daughter, [c]A'ishah, his advanced age and knowledge of Arab genealogy, and the fact that he was entrusted by the Prophet with heading the pilgrimage in the year of 9 AH as well as leading the prayers during the Prophet's illness, are the qualities which caused the people to render homage to him.[97]

ii. The *Riddah* (Apostate) wars

According to al-Baladhuri, quoting a tradition attributed to Abu Hurayrah when Abu Sufyan learnt that Abu Bakr was proclaimed caliph, he responded: "I cannot envisage any rift being healed without blood."[98] If this statement is reliable, it might be interpreted as a prediction of the *Riddah* wars. During his two-year caliphate, Abu Bakr was occupied with the *Riddah* wars, through which he was able to consolidate the Islamic state's power in Arabia. In doing this, he completed the task left by the Prophet after his death.

Tribal dignity made Arab tribesmen unwilling to prostrate themselves to or admit their loyalty to men other than those they respected. The Arab tribes in Arabia during the Prophet's lifetime pledged allegiance to the authority of Medina. However, this was underwritten by diplomatic negotiations and by the armed power of the Prophet. The majority of the tribesmen did not accept the Prophet's authority whole-heartedly. As long as the Prophet was alive, they obeyed him, since he had proved his strength and represented the holiness of the clan of Mecca *Haram* (the sacred) Once his authority passed to another, especially to an insignificant tribe, they considered that the bond of allegiance to Medina had ceased to exist. Had the Prophet been succeeded by a man from his own clan, it would have been possible for the tribesmen to renew their allegiance to the new authority as long as it demonstrated

---

[96] Al-Baladhuri, i, 580.
[97] I. Goldziher, *Muslim studies*, i, trans. C.R. Barber & S.M. Stern, London 1967, 90-2.
[98] Al-Baladhuri, i, 589.

itself energetic and strong. The tribesmen felt that they had no obligation to obey
Abu Bakr's authority, this being reflected in some apostates' poems such as al-
Hutay^{C}ah's verse, recorded in *Kitab al-Aghani* (Book of Songs).[99]

The *Riddah* movement was by no means a pure religious rebellion as the
traditional views suggest.[100] In reality, the movement took two forms: in the first
place, some tribes rose to challenge the political control of Medina and the religious
claim of Islam. The leaders of these tribes claimed their prophecy after the death
of Muhammad (some claimed even before his death) for political independence. These
leaders, though of much less statue, adopted the same pattern as Muhammad had
done in consolidating the Islamic *Ummah's* power. These tribes were Banu Hanifah
led by Musaylima in al-Yamama, Banu Asad led by Talhah b. Khalid
in Najid. Banu Tamim and Banu Taghlib led by Sajah in northern Arabia and
Banu ^{C}Ans led by al-Aswad al-^{C}Ansi in al-Yaman. Their second form of rebellion
was to refuse paying tax, which for them was an obnoxious and humiliating
symbol of allegiance to a central authority. The desert Arab tribesmen considered
it to be shameful to be bound to an authority that was agaisnt the desert traditions
and tribal spirit. The tribesmen were usually unwilling to pay homage to an
absolutely centralized power, since they had been used to the sheikhdom system
in Arabia. The tribes of this type were Banu Rabi^{C}ah led by al-Hatam in
Bahrayn, Banu Azd in ^{C}Uman, Banu Kindah led by al-Ash^{C}ath b. Qays in al-
Yaman etc.

Abu Bakr understood well that the only way to maintain Islamic authority in
Medina was to subjugate the rebels, in which he succeeded, proving his vast
knowledge of tribal genealogy and indicating that he was a staunch leader. By this
defeat, the powerful and aggressive nomadic tribes returned under the control of
the Islamic authority. When the *Riddah* wars had ended, the Arabian society consisted
of three political strata:[101] above was the new Islamic ruling elite, mainly of
Meccan Qurayshites and partially of the Medinan Ansar. The middle stratum
comprised those non-elite tribesmen who had been fighting in the *Riddah* wars,
and who later played an important role on the military ventures of the early Islamic
conquests. Beneath were the reconquered tribesmen in the *Riddah* wars, who came
to compete with the middle class of tribesmen during the first stage in the Islamic

---

99 Al-Isfahani, *Al-Aghani*, ii, Cairo 1928, 157.
100 For details see E. Shoufani, *Al-Riddah and the Muslim cnquests of Arabia*, Toronto
1973.
101 F.Mc. Donner, *The early Islamic conquests*, Princeton 1981, 88-9.

conquests. The disturbances of the Islamic state were rooted in this division of social and political status. The second and the third classes could hardly reach the top and share in power. Although they had no political interests, their relationship with the upper ruling class as well as their stern tribalism caused difficulties in the affairs of the Islamic state. We shall returned to this subject again later.

iii. ^cUmar's caliphate

Abu Bakr died in 13 AH/643 AD. Before he died, he designated ^cUmar b. al-Khattab as his successor. This was an innovation in the Arab tradition, which formerly known as sheikhdom. In the traditional Sunni view, Abu Bakr's appointment of ^cUmar was a form of recommendation linked to the acceptance of the community.[102] ^cUmar was accepted as he had the best qualities, a fact he had demonstrated during Abu Bakr's caliphate. In fact, most of the traditions describe ^cUmar even more capable than ^cAbu Bakr in political affairs. Abu Bakr thus entrusted him with the significant tast of being the second caliph of the Islamic state.[103] However, Ibn Qutaybah has commented on the acceptance of ^cUmar as Abu Bakr's successor. He suggested that ^cUmar was accepted not only for reasons of his qualities but also as a consequence of the people's obedinece to Abu Bakr's will.[104]

From the Shi^ci point of view, ^cUmar's succession was almost entirely a matter of Abu Bakr's personal and arbitrary decision, which militated against the Hashimites' rights.[105] In Abu Bakr's nomination of ^cUmar, Abu Bakr consulted only two companians of the Prophet, ^cAbd al-Rahman b. ^cAwf of Banu Zuhrah and ^cUthman b. ^cAffan of the Umayyads. It is suggested that this might have been at the suggestion of ^cUmar who tried to avert any possible objection from the Hashimites.[106] However, it is not a very convincing argument, since ^cUmar was also against the Umayyads, except those who showed their loyalty to the central authority. It is reported that, after the victory at Badr, ^cUmar insisted on having the Meccan

---

[102] M.A. Sha'ban, *Islamic history*, i, Cambridge 1971, 28.
[103] Al-Tabari, iii, 428-31.
[104] Pseudo-Ibn Qutaybah, *Al-Imamt wa al-siyasah*, Cairo 1968, 26-7.
[105] Jafri, op.cit., 64-5.
[106] Ibid.

captives executed. However, the Prophet adopted Abu Bakr's advice, whereby he
sought an agreement to set free the captives for ransom. During the campaign against
Mecca, when Abu Sufyan arrived at the Muslim camp to negotiate with the Prophet
for a peaceful surrender of the town. ᶜUmar objected to the prophet's pardoning
of the Umayyad leader and wanted to have him executed. ᶜAbd al-Rahman was
brother-in-law to ᶜUthman, hence there was the possibility that they might unite
and act against their rival, ᶜAli. However, we are not informed that ᶜUthman, before
he became the third caliph, was in any way opposed to ᶜAli, who ramained silent
and did not abstain from paying homage to ᶜUmar. We may thus tentatively conclude
that ᶜAli realized ᶜUmar's superiority to him and raised no objections. Ibn Qutaybah
quotes a tradition, attributed to ᶜAli himself, about the virtues of Abu Bakr and
ᶜUmar.[107] One day, ᶜAli was sitting beside the Prophet, as Abu Bakr and 'Umar
were approaching them, the Prophet said to ᶜAli: "These two men are heads of
the people of paradise (al-Jannah), ranked only below the prophets and messengers
of Allah.'

According to contemporary theocratic practice, the Hashimites had the absolute
right to the leadership of the Muslim Ummah, and ᶜAli was the natural candidate
for it. There is a tradition related on the authority of Ibn al-ᶜAbbas.[108] The Prophet
once said to ᶜAli: "You are to me what Aaron was to Moses, except that you
are not a prophet, and it is necessary that, when I depart, I leave you as my
deputy." If this is true, it can only be suggested that the Prophet believed his
priesthood would remain in the hands of his relatives, since this principle of
hereditary sanctity had been held by the Hashimites as mentioned previously.

This may also be demonstrated by the tradition (Hadith) of Ghadir Khumm.
This tradition has been the subject of argument for many centuries between Sunni
and Shiᶜi scholars. Although the authenticity of this tradition is unquestionable,
because of political and sectarian bias, numerous interpretations have arisen. It is
clear in this tradition that the Prophet gave preference to his family in religious
matters. We may assume that the Prophet intended to secure the inheritance of
religious authority for his kinsmen, the Hashimites. At that time, ᶜAli was the only
proper candidate for the inheritance; thus the Prophet, confirmed ᶜAli's status in
words handed down by the tradition of Ghadir Khumm.[109] ᶜAli could have inherited

---

[107] Pseudo-Ibn Qutaybah, op.cit., 10.
[108] Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, i, Cairo 1949, 331.
[109] For detailed discussion see L.Veccia Vaglieri, *Encyl of Islam²*, s.v. "Ghadir Khumm";
and for further studies on this tradition, see the bibliography in Veccia Vagliieri's article.

the priesthood from the Prophet, without necessarily inheriting the caliphate, as there were others who were more experienced and qualified than he in the political affairs of the new *Ummah*. Moreover, the Prophet did not lay down any principle of succession, and according to the pre-Islamic tradition which was still prevailing at that time, the leadership might not necessarily go to ᶜAlli. Abu Bakr understood that, should the election be open to doubt, the unity of the Ummah would be endangered: hence he had to dissociate the caliphate from the priesthood of the *Haram* (the sanctuary of Mecca).

Later, in a conversation between ᶜUmar and Ibn al-ᶜAbbas conerning the caliphate,[110] ᶜUmar asked Ibn al-ᶜAbbas why ᶜAli had not cooperated with them (Abu Bakr and ᶜUmar) and the Qurayshites had not supported the Hashimites. Ibn al-ᶜAbbas replied that he did not know the reason. Then ᶜUmar told him that the people did not wish to allow the priesthood and the caliphate to be combined together in the Hashimmites, as it would make them arrogant and rejoice. During ᶜUmar's caliphate, ᶜAli held no office either political or military, except as the deputy of the caliph when ᶜUmar was on journeys to Syria and Palestine.[111] ᶜAli adopted the same passive attitude towards ᶜUmar as towards Abu Bakr. He is described by most traditional Muslim scholars as a valued confidant of the two caliphs. However, what ᶜAli was consulted on must have been religious matters, since the two caliphs were amazed by ᶜAli's rich knowledge of the Qur'an and *Sunnah* (saying and doing) of the Porphet. Only ᶜAli held an opposing view to ᶜUmar concerning the well Known *Diwan* (registry of treasury) system. ᶜAli disapproved of the way ᶜUmar had distributed the revenue while keeping something in reserve.[112]

The early Islamic conquests reached their peak under ᶜUmar's rule. As the territory of the Islamic state immensely expanded through the conquests, the organization of state affairs, especially those concerning economic and financial matters, became more complicated and difficult to deal with. ᶜUmar, adopting the Sassanian system, instituted the first *Diwan* in Islam, which organised pension and stipend payment in order to register the fighting force, and to set the treasury in order.[113] During the Prophet's rule, the tribal army was supported by rich booty and slender state revenues, which provided the stimuli on the

---

[110] Al-Tabari, iv, 222.
[111] Veccia Vaglieri, op.cit., s.v. "ᶜAli".
[112] Ibid.
[113] ᶜA. Duri, *Encyl of Islam²*, s.v. "Diwan".

tribesmen's raids. Abu Bakr distributed the state income among the soldiers, whereas,
under ^CUmar's *Diwan* the distribution of pensions and stipends was decided according
to criteria grading the individual's relationship to the Prophet, their *sabiqah* (seniority)
in Islam and their tribal ranks.

Each of the Prophet's widows received 12,000 dirham per year, However,
the Prophet's beloved, ^CA'ishah, received an extra bonus. After the Prophet's
wives came to the Muhajirun and the Ansar, i.e. mainly the Prophet's companions
who were alloted 4,000 or 5,000 dirham per year with a subsidy in accordance
with their precedence in Islam. Those Meccans who accepted Islam before the
conquest of the city received 3,000 dirham yearly, and those after the conquest
received 2.000 dirham per year.[114] The tribesmen who settled in the conquered
lands received an allowance according to their military service and precedence
during the conquests. The original conquerors would receive as their stipend
from 500 up to 1,555 dirham, while the majority of the late comers to the
conquered lands would be given an average of 3,000 dirham.[115] ^CUmar's
policy of *Diwan* highlights his tribal preference. According to al-Mawardi, ^CUmar
put the Hashimites (the close relatives of the Prophet) on the highest rank,
the Quraysh above other tribes, and the ^CAdnanids above the Qahtanids.[116]
The tribal preference in ^CUmar's *Diwan* indirectly stirred tribal tensions and
caused the subsequent tribal feud in the early history of Islam. ^CAli had his
reasons for disagreeing with ^CUmar's policy, and later, when he came to power,
he changed ^CUmar's policy, which however, caused more problems, since
those tribesmen who had enjoyed the benefits from ^CUmar's and ^CUthman's
policy would never willingly give up their economic interests. This is discussed
below.

The further the Islamic territory expanded, the more complicated the relationship
between the Medina government and the Arab tribes became. although this requires
considerable discussion, we shall merely pinpoint ^CUmar's policy towards the Arab
tribes. At the end of the *Riddah* wars, Islamic society in Arabia comprised three
political strata, as previously mentioned. In order to ensure the new Islamic state's
survival, the Medina government had to obtain effective control over all the Arab
tribes, especially the *Riddah* tribes. The policy adopted by Abu Bakr from the Prophet
was to appoint an ^C*Amil* (agent) from the Quraysh or the Ansar to watch over

[114] A. Ben Shemesh, *Taxation in Islam*, iii, Leiden 1969, 68-70.
[115] Al-Baladhuri, *Futuh al-buldan*, Beirut 1978, 436-44.
[116] Al-Mawardi, *Al-Ahkam al-sultaniyyah*, Cairo 1909, 180.

them. The *Riddah* tribesmen were not allowed to take part in military affairs at the very beginning of the conquests. However, as the conquests extended, the problem of recruitment occurred, thus ^CUmar had to alter Abu Bakr's previous policy, by sending the *Riddah* tribesmen for military duty in the armies of conquest. As the policy of the central power towards the Arab tribes changed, the middle class of Arab tribesmen increased in numbers. There was, therefore, the threat of disloyalty on part of the *Riddah* tribesmen to the ruling elite; the relationship between the original conquerors and the newly recuruited *Riddah* tribesmen was also at risk as well as the relations among the *Riddah* tribesmen themselves. Moreover, the settlement of the tribesmen raised the question of the stbility of the state. Consequently, the central government changed its policy concerning the control of the tribesmen. One striking feature in this change was to integrate the Arab tribes into the state and to intensify their loyalty and relationship to the ruling elite as well as among themselves.

^CUmar's institution of the *Diwan* system created a link between the tribesmen and the ruling elite. The stipend was graded in order to reflect the degree of personal adherence to the state. In fact, it discouraged the *Riddah* tribesmen who were to any extent opposed to the central government, since they would lose their stipend and would be excluded from the community. The result was that they were not given further chances to obtain booty from the conquests: in other words, they were not able to improve their financial position. However, ^CUmar's system of grading the stipends led to dissatifaction and tension among the tribesmen, a policy opposed by ^CAli. Although his reason is not mentioned in the sources, it could be argued that he felt that the policy might reasonably lead to a feud within the state and to public disloyalty to the government, or that it may have violated some principles laid down by the Prophet or the Qur'an. If we assume that this was ^CAli's argument, then events were later to prove him correct.

The central government also granted the conquered lands to tribesmen for settlement and exploitation. As the benefit from such land could only be enjoyed by the tribesmen on condition that they remained loyal to the Medina authority, this system became a politcal tool by means of which the central government gained control over the tribesmen. Later, it became a cause of tribal feud and disturbance to the ruling elite, as it affected the system of paying tax. The more land that was granted, the more problems occurred, since the problems grew more complicated as the conquests extended.

The organization of the army was a factor that weakened tribal ties and strengthened the bond bewteen the tribesmen and the ruling elite. ^CUmar tried

to break down the strong tribal ties which encouraged tribal solidarity and which made the tribesmen become disobedient to the central government from time to time. At the very lowest level, the army was organised according to various samll tribal units led by their own tribal leaders. The middle command posts were assigned to those tribeslmen who showed absloute loyalty to Medina. The upper level commands were given to the ruling elite of Qurayshites as whole, to some of the Ansar, and to some of the Thaqif of Ta'if, who had strong connections with the Meccan Qurayshites. This organization seems to have been designed to ensure the allegiance of the tribal leaders in order to have direct control over a small group of their people, their ability to mobilize men independently being checked by a preponderance of higher commands outside their control and possibly by army subdivisions that cut across tribal boundaries.[117] ᶜUmar understood the independent nature of the Arab tribesmen, hence he never appointed Riddah tribesmen to command posts.[118] By this military arrangement, the army came to be composed of different tribes. It was so organized that various tribesmen were tied together and kept under the command of men with loyalty to the Medina government and under the direct control of the new Islamic aristocracy. In this way, matched with the *Diwan* system, tribal leaders could rally a group of supporters around themselves to secede from the central power; and hence the ruling elite consolidated its control over the tribesmen to a considerable degree.

The policy adopted by the Medina government seemed practicable However, there still problems of how to strengthen the loyalty of tribesmen to local and central government. To gain the tribesmen's military service during the conquests, ᶜUmar and the ruling elite adopted various means of which one of the most striking was to grant extra booty from raids to those tribesmen who had rendered their services, as their interests were mainly for economic advantages. This was apparent in the case of Jarir b. ᶜAbdullah of the Banu Bajilah, who on the instructions of ᶜUmar to his governor in Iraq, Saᶜd b. Abi-Waqqas, was to be given extra booty from the campaigns there.[119] This policy was known as *"Ta'lif al-Qulub"* (conciliation of hearts)[120] which had previously been adopted by the Prophet and which Muᶜawiyah was to follow later.

Intermarriage was another effective means practised by the ruling elite to

[117] Al-Tabari, iii, 487-9.

[118] Ibid., 490-1.

[119] Donner, op.cit., 196-200.

[120] On the discusion see Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 348-53.

tie the influential tribal leaders to the central power.[121] In fact, this method had been practised both by the Prophet and by Abu Bakr. Abu Bakr married his sister Umm Farwah to al-^{C}Ash^{C}ath b. Qays of the Kindah, a *Riddah* leader. The tribesmen felt virtually obliged to pay their loyalty to the ruling elite, who were also able to bind important tribal leaders to the central authority by promoting their status: for example, by inviting them to attend the governor's audiences as an adviser in various affairs,[122] thus enhancing their position in the eyes of their tribesmen. These tribal leaders emerged from the conquest period as *ashraf* (tribal nobles) who for a long time showed themselves subservient to the central government and its interests.[123] In addition, the influential tribal leaders could also be bound to the central authority by granting them special gifts of land to be held as private property.

iv. The settlement of Arab tribesmen in Syria and Iraq

The early Islamic conquests reached their peak during ^{C}Umar's caliphate. Only a sketchy picture of the Arab tribes' emigration and settlement in Syria is available, the reason being, as Donner suggests,[124] that the historical accounts of the conquests in Syria are of Iraqi origin in later time. The historical sources give us more detailed information on the events in Iraq and the eastern parts of the Islamic state, viz. Iran. There were Arab tribes who had settled in the south of Syria in the pre-Islamic period, such as the great Quda^{C}ah tribe. The long-term commercial relationship, which had existed from pre-Islamic times between the Quraysh and the Syrian people, made the Quraysh ruling elite in Medina consider Syria as their special preserve.[125] The conquests of Syria were achieved by the efforts of the Qurayshites with the help of some of the Ansar whereas most of the Ansar and the Thaqafis were mostly sent to Iraqi conquests. As a result of this, Iraq's impact in political affairs complicated the domestic disturbances later. The predominance of the Qurayshites in Syria over other immigrants led to fewer tribal turmoil.

---

[121] Donner, op.cit., 261.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Ibid., 245.
[125] Ibid., 249.

The settlement of Arab tribesmen in Syria was different from that in Iraq. In Iraq, most of the tribesmen settled in the newly established garrison towns or military camps. However, in Syria, after the land had been conquered, the local people abandoned their towns and moved to rural areas while the Muslims took over the abandoned towns. Immediately after the conquests, the very few tribesmen who had emigrated to Syria settled down around the abandoned towns. As a result of the Medina government's policy of settlement in Syria, (which was well run by eminent Qurayshites such as Mu^{c}awiyah b. Abi-Sufyan), few tribal problems occurred until the Umayyad caliph Marwan b. al-Hakam came onto the political stage.

The circumstances of the Arab settlement in Iraq in the early conquests differed from those in Syria, since there were more tribes emigrating here. It is suggested that the foundation and development of the garrison towns in Iraq introduced the Arab town organized on a tribal basis to the conquered lands, as the Muslim army came from al-Hijaz, where they had been sedentary and urbanized.[126] The military camps established in central and southern Iraq were built for the purpose of further campagigns. The new settlements thus became the focus of the Muslims' military and political activities in Iraq from the time of ^{c}Uthman to the end of the Umayyad regime. In Syria, after the Muslim occupation, no new towns were built to settle Arab tribesmen new-commers. Unlike in Syria, the Medina government had to build up new towns in order to enable the mass of Arab tribesmen to settle and exploit the conquered land. The Arab tribesmen who emigrated to these new towns brought with them the mentality and attitudes of their desert background, thus sowing the seeds of later disturbances.

It is reported that Sa^{c}d b. Abi-Waqqas adopted the copnquered Sasanian town of al-Mada'in as his headquarters before Kufah was built. The contingents of tribesmen first occupied the houses of this town and settled there.[127] Kufah was founding in the year of 17 AH/636 AD by Sa^{c}d b. Abi-Waqqas after the victory of the Qadisiyyah. There were many reasons for founding this new centre; however, it is somewhat related to ^{c}Umar's policy. The climate of al-Mada'in was not suitable for the desert Arab tribesmen, and hence there was a need to seek places of settlement from the military and geo-political points of view, Kufah was the best strategic position for commanding the whole Iraqi cultivated land (al-sawad).

---

[126] M. Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim conquests*, Princeton 1984, 239.
[127] Al-Tabari, iv, 20-1.

[c]Umar, in his tribal policy, preferred the Arab tribesmen to be grouped together and segregated from the conquered people and their environment in order to prevent their being assimilated or losing their desert spirit.[128] [c]Umar ordered that the conquered Iraqi tribes of Taghlib who adopted Islam to associate with the Muslim army or the new settlement, and that those who did not convert to Islam to remain in their own original districts.[129] Moreover, it is suggested that the move to Kufah was dictated largely by the need for adequate fodder for the livestock which were brought by the bedouin from Arabia.[130]

The town-planning of Kufah was based on tribal units. "It was divided into separate tribal districts, each with its own mosque for daily worship and tribal assemblies, its own cemetery, and with gates to close off the streets going through each district. Within each district the tribesmen seem to have settled by clan along lanes or alleys adjacent to the main street of the district."[131] The town was divided into four quarters as follow:[132] (1) the north court was occupied by the Thaqif, Hamdan, Taym al-Lat and Taghlib; (2) the south court by Asad, Nakka', Kindah and Azd; (3) the east court by the Ansar, Muzaynah, Tamim, Muharib and [c]Amir; and (4) the west court by Bajalah, Bajilah, Juhaynah, Jadilah and some mixed groups. Among these tribes, the Bajilah was the largest and most powerful, and owing to its proud tribal spirit, [c]Umar had to treat it specially. The tribesmen of the Bajilah formed a quarter ofthe army of Qadisiyyah. [c]Umar allotted them one quarter of the *sawad* land and extra booty as well as paying a great amount of money to bring their leader, Jarir b. [c]Abdullah, to relinquish his claim, as we have mentioned previously.

We are informed that the army was divided from the very beginning into *a[c]shar* (tenths), whose implication is obscure. Later, when the number of new tribesmen immigrants in Kufa increased, an imbalace emerged and Sa[c]d asked [c]Umar for reorganization of the tribesmen. He re-arranged and equalized the unites into seven groups with the help of genealogists, on the basis of pre-Islamic tribal alliances. A leader called *Amir* or *Ra'is al-Sub[c]* was appointed to each group acting as an intermediary between his group and the governor.[133] The new arrangement is

---

128 H. Djait, *Encyl of Islam*[2], s.v. "Kufah".
129 Al-Tabari, iv, 44-5; Donner, op.cit., 228.
130 Donner, op.cit., 227.
131 Morony, op-.cit., 242.
132 Al-Tabari, iv, 44-5; Donner, op.cit., 228.
133 Ibn [c]Abd Rabbih, *Al-[c]Iqd al-farid*, iv, Cairo 1967, 162.

recorded by al-Tabari, who lists only six: (1) Kindah and its allies, along with
Jadilah; (2) Quda^{C}ah, Bajilah, Khath^{C}am, Hardamawt and Azd; (3) Madhhij, Himyar,
Hamdan, with their allies; (4) Tamim, Ribab and Hawazin; (5) Asd, Ghatafan,
Muharib, al-Namir, Dubay^{C}ah and Taghlib; (6) ^{C}Iyad, ^{C}Akk, ^{C}Abd al-Qays, Ahl
Hajar and al-Hamra'.[134] This tribal arrangement seems to have been changed at the
time of ^{C}Ali. He had to re-organize the tribesmen who took sides with him at the
Battles of the Camel and Siffin. In fact, at the Battle of the Camel, his army was
a mixture of Kufan, Hijazi and Basran forces.[135]

Apart from Kufah, Basrah was another centre of tribal settlement. Basrach was
founded by ^{C}Utbah b. Ghazwan on the orders of ^{C}Umar. Exceptionally, as most
of the companions of the Prophet went to settle in Kufah, ^{C}utbah came with some
of them to Basrah, which was built in the territory of the Tamim and Bakr tribes.
The situation in Basrah was different from that in Kufah, there being very limited
information about the tribal settlement here at the very beginning of the conquests.
The town-planning of Basrah was similar to that of Kufah. It was divided into five
tribal districts (*akhmas*). They were as follows:[136]

(1) Ahl al-^{C}Aliya (the people of the high land of Hijaz); this group included
the Quraysh, the Kinanah, the Bahilah and Khath^{C}am; the Qays ^{C}Aylan, Muzaynah
and Asad.

(2) The Bakr b. Wa'il. These tribes had come to Iraq even before the rise
of Islam. They considered to be among the founders of Basrah, as their leader,
Suwayd b. Qutbah, allied himself to ^{C}Utbah b. Ghazwan. They were the most
obedient to the Iraqi governor.

(3) The Tamim. These tribesmen were in predominant position. They had played
an important role in state affairs as they were greater in number and more influential.
In fact, they were the real founders of Basrah in terms of numbers. They comprised
the Banu Sa^{C}d, Banu ^{C}Amr and Banu Hazalah and were led by al-Ahnaf b. Qays.
The Banu Sa^{C}d were loyal to ^{C}Ali from the very beginning and fought with him
in the Battles of the Camel and Siffin.[137]

---

[134] Al-Tabari, iv, 48.
[135] Morony, op.cit., 243-4.
[136] Ch. Pellat, *Le milieu basrien et Gahiz*, Paris 1953, 23-4.
[137] Morony, op.cit., 247.

(5) The Azd. This tribe was the bitter rival of the Tamim in Basrah, Its members first arrived from ^CUman (Oman) under the leadership of ^CUthman b. Abi-al-^CAs, during the caliphate of ^CUmar. The hostility on the political life of the town. At the Battle of the Camel, the Azdites and some Yamanis took sides with Talha and Zubayr against ^CAli. This may have been because their rivals, the Tamimis, were the supporters of ^CAli. The anti-^CAlid attitude of the Azdites was transformed into al alliance with the Sufyanids at the time of Mu'awiyah.[139]

The Arab tribesmen constituted the military aristocracy of Basrah. They absorbed the indigenous local population and some southern non-Arab immigrants. Because of this, Basrah later became a problem centre under ^CUthman's caliphate.

v. The *shura* (electoral concil) and ^CUthman's caliphate

Under ^CUmar's ten-year caliphate, the Islamic state system gradually took shape. Unfortunately, in 23 AH/644 AD the sudden murder of ^CUmar at the hands of Abu Lu'lu', a Persian slave belonging to al-Mughirah b. Shu^Cbah, interrupted ^CUmar's political manoevres. The circumstances of this murder are vague, as the historical accounts do not provide detailed information. Before his death, ^CUmar appointed a special committee or council (*shura*) to elect his successor. ^CUmar nominated six eminent companions from among the Muhajirun. It is worth examining the *shura*, as it sowed the seeds of the breakdown of the Medina government, and generated another power struggle among the Qurayshites.

The six members of the *shura* were: ^CUthman, ^CAbd al-Rahman b. Awf, Sa^Cd b. Abi-Waqqas, ^CAli, al-Zubayr and Talhah; plus ^CAbdullah, son of ^CUmar, who had only the right to vote, but not to be nominated for leadership. The Ansar were excluded from the *shura*. ^CUmar's intention in doing so being that the Qurayshites should retain power, as the principle, "The lmam must belong to the Muhajirun or Quraysh", had been laid down by the Prophet. However, we may assume that ^CUmar might have been afraid that the Ansar would support ^CAli, as this might have brought the Hashimites back to power to dominate state affairs. M. A. Sha^Cban, in a more traditional and reserved view, suggests that the ex-Meccan Muhajirun were more competent that the Medinan Ansar in state affairs.[140]

---

[139] Ibid., 248.
[140] Sha'ban, op.cit., 63.

^cUmar's design for the *shura* was essentially based on the interests of the state:
he called the members of the *shura* and said to them: "I looked around and have
found that you are the leaders of the people and yet the caliphate can go only to
one of you; but I am afraid that dissension will arise among you and because of
that, the people will split among themselves."[141] The nomination of the six members
wer a special arrangement designed by ^cUmar. He laid down regulations governing
the *shura*, which was imposed upon the new caliph. This implied that the new caliph
had to run state affairs while standing in the shade of his predecessors. In other
words, ^cUmar tried to counterbalance the old Meccan aristocracy and the new
Islamic ruling elite. It is a rather doubtful conclusion, as the pro-Shi^ci scholars
suggest, that ^cUmar had a strong tention of keeping the Hashimites, but not
the Umayyads, from the caliphate. Amongst the six members, al-Zubayr and Talhah
were more ambitious for power as they rebelled against ^cAli, as did later al-
Zubayr's son against the Umayyad caliphate. Because of their ambition, al-Zubayr
and Talhah were nominated by ^cUmar as counterweights to the strong influence
of the old Meccan aristocracy. However, ^cUmar did not expect that the leadership
fall into the hands of ^cUthman, as he might have thought ^cUthman and ^cAli
would not be willing to follow obediently his and Abu Bakr's footsteps, thus
allowing the leadership to fall into the hands of the others and maintain their political
interests.

^cUthman was elected, as he promised to follow Abu Bakr and ^cUmar's policy.
It is doubtful whether ^cUthman was really willing to adopt his predecessor's policy,
as it can be seen that, during the second part of his caliphate, his policy was in
accordance with the interests of the old Meccan aristocracy. In other words, he
ran the state affairs as clannish business. ^cUthman's accession to the caliphate was
a significant triumph for the Umayyads,[142] which paved the way for the Umayyad
dynasty. During ^cUthman's reign, the Umayyads were promoted to higher politcal
positions, and their power was gradually consolidated.

As mentioned previously, ^cUmar's policy towards the Arab tribes was to prevent
the tribesmen being assimilated with the conquered people. This retained their desert
character, which included tribal loyalty and a strong spirit of independence,
unwilling to submit itself to any authority. The Arab tribesmen submitted themselves
to the Medina government because its policy corrsponded to their economic

---

[141] Ibn Sa^cd, iii, 344; al-Tabari, iv, 228-9. For English translation see Jafri, op.cit., 69.
[142] Al-Isfahani, *Al-Aghani*, vi, 334.

interests. After ^CUthman succeeded ^CUmar as caliph, his policy became gradually more favourable to the Umayyads and certain tribes. This change intensified the tribal feud and brought his assassination.

^CUthman was accused of nepotism by his enemies; however, he defended himself by responding: ". . . the Prophet used to bestow offices on his kinsmen, and I happen to belong to people who are poor. so I let my hands a bit loose on regard to that with which I had been entrusted by virtue of the care I take of it."[143] The accusation of nepotism resulted from his policy towards the tribesmen. In the course of developing his authority, it was essential to strengthen the central power. ^CUthman was of the ruling class of the dominant clan, the Umayyads. As a leader of a great clan, he wanted to show his political acumen, and revise the tradition of pre-Islamic times. This made him reverse Abu Bakr's and ^CUmar's policy. In addition, his reign coincided with a new wave of emigration to Iraq and Egypt. In order to keep these masses of immigrant tribesmen under the control of the Medina government, ^CUthman had eventually taken the initiative out of the hands of the tribesmen.[144] Thus the title of caliph no longer meant "the consult of the state". ^CUthman tried to exercise more authority upon the tribesmen by appointing his kinsmen as his governors in different provines. This can be interpreted as a despicable political manoevure of tribalism (^Casabiyyah). It was natural for him to appoint his kinsmen, since it was safer to exercise his authority in order to strengthen his relationship with his governors.

In Syria, Mu^Cawiyah, whose government was satisfactory without question, had been the governor since the time of ^CUmar. In Egypt, ^CAmr b. al-^CAs was dismissed, because of his independent mind, and was replaced by ^CUthamn's foster-brother, ^CAbdullah b. Abi-Sarh, who was one of ^CAmr's lieutenants and experienced in such matters.[145] In Iraq, two of ^CUthman's cousins were appointed: al-Walid b. ^CUqbah as governor of Kufah, later replaced by Sa^Cid b. al-^CAs. The governorship of Basrah was in the hands of ^CAbdullah b. ^CAmir. It is a matter of debate whether it was merely ^CUthman's nepotism which made the Umayyads dominate all the important positions and take advantage of them, because the Umayyads were competent in provincial affairs.[146] The critical propblem was that they were allowed enough

---

[143] Al-Tabari, iv, 345; Jafri, op.cit., 81.
[144] Sha'ban, op.cit., 63.
[145] Ibid., 66.
[146] Ibid.

latitude to exercise their powers dictatorially and unjustly for their own benefit and
for that of their kinsmen. This militated against the interests of the tribesmen and
incurred the dissatisfaction and hatred of other Muslims.

During the last few years of ᶜUthman's rule, the political power to keep the
state in order, the more antagonism arose from Egypt came to Medina in 35 AH/656
AD to demand justice for their former interests from the caliph. These tribesmen
were the Yamani origin. They were joined by pro-ᶜAlid Medinan Ansar and some
Muhajirun. After about fifty days of fruitless negotiations, ᶜUthman was
assassinated.[147]

ᶜUthman's assasination was not purely a struggle between the provincial
tribesmen and the central government on the issue of economic justice. However,
it can be regarded as political strife between the Umayyads and the other
Qurayshite clans as well as the Ansar. The Umayyads had gained more power
and wealth in the new ruling elite than other factions, who had become jealous
of their Umayyad rivals' greater power and influence. They were unhappy to
see the old Meccan aristocracy monopolized state affairs and revise the pre-
Islamic traditions. It is suggested that the powerful opposition from the new
ruling Islamic parvenus to the Umayyads grew side by side with ᶜAli's supporters.[148]
Talhah and al-Zubayr were conducting propaganda against ᶜUthman. Muhammad,
son of Abu Bakr, went to Egypt to provoke hostility against the caliph, and
even ᶜA'ishah denounced ᶜUthman's policy.[149] The murder of ᶜUthman was
basically an issue of political conflict for power between the old Meccan
aristocracy and the new Islamic parvenus. In this conflict, the tribesmen were
involved in securing the retention of their own interests. It can be regarded
as a continuation of the strife from the advent of Islam. M. Hinds clearly
states: "The subsequent conflict had two main aspects. It was a post-conquest
conflict between the increasing power of central authority and provincial early-
comer reaction of autonomy. At the same time, however, there was developing
conflict within the provinces between the remerging old-style tribal leaders, who
possessed political acumen and were capable of mobilizing tribal support and
early-comers of lesser tribal stature who were opposed to any diminution of
their independence or reduction of the Islamic privileges acquired by them at

---

[147] Ibid., 70-1.
[148] Jafri, op.cit., 86-7
[149] Ibid.

the time of conflict."[150] The murder of ^CUthman allowed the Umayyads a golden opportunity to wrest both power and their pre-Islamic privilege from the new Islamic aristocracy.

vi. ^CAli and the end of the Rashidun period

Although, after the death of ^CUthman, ^CAli was proclaimed caliph by his Medinan supporters, his caliphate, however, was not universally recognized. First, Mu^Cawiyah refused to pay his homage, then al-Zubayr and Talhah, joined by ^CA'ishah, took arms against him. The rebellion of the three from lesser clans was suppressed at the Battle of the Camel. It is interesting to note ^CA'ishah's motive for rebellion against ^CAli. Her hostility towards ^CAli can be traced bak to the lifetime of the Prophet and was the result for his sceptical attitude towards her loyalty to the Prophet. When she was suspected of an affair with Safwan b. al-Mu^Cttil al-Sulami, ^CAli advised the Prophet to question her slave girl.[151] Apart from that incident, ^CA'ishah's conflict with Fatimah, daughter of the Prophet and wife of ^CAli, as well as ^CAli's discontent at Abu Bakr's caliphate widened the rife btween the families of ^CAli and ^CA'ishah. In the Battle of the Camel, ^CA'ishah was, in fact, exploited because of her status in the Islamic state[152] as a means of averting a major clash so that the rebel armies might have gained victory. Talhah and al-Zubayr had been actively cooperating with ^CUmar to keep power in their hands. Their rebellion was a fight for their own ends, but not for the revenge of ^CUthman's murder. According to the circumstances of ^CUthman's murder, Talhah, al-Zubyr and even ^CA'ishah should have been held responsible for it, as they had tried to provoke hostility towards ^CUthman but failed to dissuade the murderers from killing ^CUthman or at least the caliph from those tribesmen.[153]

The Battle of the Camel was a struggle of political interests among the Qurayshites; in addition, a tribal feud was involved and used by ^CAli in the fighting. ^CAli selected a man from each of the Arab tribes to be the leader of his tribe so that the people could have one of their own blood to turn to.[154] According

---

[150] M. Hinds, "The murder of caliph ^CUthman", *International J. of Middle Eastern Studies*, 3(1972), 468-9.

[151] N. Abbot, *^CA'isha the beloved of Muhammad*, New York 1973, 32-3.

[152] Ibid., 158.

[153] Al-Tabari, iv, 459.

[154] Ibn A^Ctham, *Kitab al-futuh*, ii, Hyderabad 1919, 308.

to al-Dinawari, ^CAli divided his army into several tribal units. Each unit was led by a respected leader of those allied tribes.[155] During the battle, ^CAli exploited the tribal feud when deploying his army, making tribesmen fight against fellow tribesmen.[156]

In the course of ^CAli's caliphate, after the Battle of the Camel, the incident of Siffin marked the end of the Rashidun caliphate. The events of Siffin can be regarded as another struggle between the Umayyads and the Hashimites with the involvment of Arab tribesmen. Mu^cawiyah understood that not all the Iraqi tribesmen were in favour of ^CAli, and he himself had had firm and strong support from the *jund* (army) of Syria; meanwhile, the Medinan new ruling elite, Abu Bakr and ^CUmar's stock, were unable to fight back.

^CAli subsequently entered Basrah from Medina, and immediately changed ^CUthman's financial policy. He divided the money in the public treasury equally among his supporters,[157] giving equal value to the later Iraqi immigrants, which irritated the early immigrants, especially those Tamim and Bakr tribesmen who had benefited from ^CUthmans's policy. Consequently, some of them deviated from ^CAli's coaliation. At Siffin, ^CAli had to re-organise his formation into twenty-five clans or tribal groups, each with a leader appointed or confirmed by him,[158] whereby he tried to put every Iraqi tribe in his army fight against the corresponding group in Mu^cawiyah's Syrian army.[159]

There was third party in the event of Siffin. This was the *Qurra'* (the Qur'an reciters) who were among the first arrivals in Iraq. This group tried to act as arbitrators for their own advantage.[160] They insisted on ^CAli's acceptance of the arbitration for peace, since they failed to understand that Mu^cawiyah would have agreed to the peace call by which ^CAli would have been recognized as caliph by both Syrians and Iraqis. This meant that ^CAli would have returned to Medina and left the Syrians and the Iraqis alone to act on their behalf and look after their own affairs. By this, the tribesmen would have enjoyed their previous prestige and financial advantages again.[161]

---

[155] Al-Dinawari, *Al-Akhbar al-tiwal*, Cairo 1960, 155.
[156] Ibn A^ctham, op.cit., 299.
[157] Al-Tabari, iv, 541.
[158] Al-Minqari, *Waqa^cat Siffin*, Cairo 1382 AH, 205-6.
[159] Al-Tabari, v, 14.
[160] Sha'ban, op.cit., 76.
[161] M. Hinds, ''Kufan political alignment and their background in the mid-seventh century'', *I.J.M.E.S.*, 2(1971), 364.

The arbitration ended without result, and ^CAli's political coalition was broken (as the *Qurra'* abandoned his coalition and became the so-called Khawarijites), in which he failed to establish ^CUmar's principle of *sharaf* (nobility) and *sabiqah* (priority) over those tribesmen. Eventually, his support fell apart, and he was assassinated by the Khawarijites in Kufah in 40 AH/661 AD. The whole event of Siffin marked the returned of the old Meccan aristoracy, which had been defeated by Muhammad of the Hashimites, but was not yet totally crushed. The old Meccan aristocracy was able to survive because it was the mainstay of an old Arab tradition, and also by virtue of the political and economic groundwork which they themselves had laid in Syria by their preparations in the course of ^CUmthman's caliphate. After Mu^Cawiyah was proclaimed caliph, Arab tribalism was imposed, and followed by his successors. By means of this, the Arab tribal *ashraf* regained their privileges and rose to the top of the provincial hierarchy. However, they became the core of the problems in domestic political affairs throughout the Umayyads period. The Hashimites were completely defeated and they had to wait for almost a century until the ^CAbbasid came to fight back.

Conclusion

The assassination of ^CAli and the transference of political power from the House of Hashimites to that of Umayyads mark the end of a theocratic rule of Islam. The Islamic *Ummah* was initially built by the Prophet on the base of Arabian tribal coalition. Superficially these tribes seemed to cooperate with each other under Prophet Muhammad's authority; they in fact were not firmly unified. By the desert spirit and individualism the Arab tribesmen have hardly yielded to a particular authority. As the great medieval Arab historian Ibn Khaldun pointed out in his magnificent work *Al-Muqaddimah* (Introduction to the History). tribal solidality (^C*asabiyyah*), which had been the core of the Arabic culture and politcal ideology, played an important role in the classical and medieval history of the Arabs. Ibn Khaldun's theory has been proved by our examination of the political history of Arabs in the Jahiliyyah and early Islamic times. The tribal solidality did not die away with the disintergration of the Rashidun caliphate, it nevertheless, continued to exert its impact on the political strife during the Umayyad period, as the eminent German orientalist Julius Wellhausen suggested in the last century, and even throughout the golden age of the ^CAbbasid dynasty.