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Selection from Classic

Introduction of *Sirat Ibn Ishaq* Translated by A. Guillaume (Part-I)

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INTRODUCTION

THE AUTHOR

MUHAMMAD, son of Isḥāq, son of Yasār, was born in Medina about A.H. 85 and died in Baghdad in 151.[1] His grandfather Yasār fell into the hands of Khālid b. al-Walīd when he captured ʿAynu'l-Tamr in A.H. 12, having been held there as a prisoner by the Persian king. Khālid sent him with a number of prisoners to Abū Bakr at Medina. There he was handed over to Qays b. Makhrama b. al-Muṭṭalib b. ʿAbdu Manāf as a slave, and was manumitted when he accepted Islam. His family adopted the family name of their patrons. His son Isḥāq was born about the year 50, his mother being the daughter of another freedman. He and his brother Mūsā were well-known traditionists, so that our author's path in life was prepared before he reached manhood.[2]

He associated with the second generation of traditionists, notably al-Zuhrī, ʿĀṣim b. ʿUmar b. Qatāda, and ʿAbdullah b. Abū Bakr. He must have devoted himself to the study of apostolic tradition from his youth, for at the age of thirty he went to Egypt to attend the lectures of Yazīd b. Abū Ḥabīb.[3] There he was regarded as an authority, for this same Yazīd afterwards related traditions on Ibn Isḥāq's authority.[4] On his return to Medina he went on with the collection and arrangement of the material he had collected. Al-Zuhrī, who was in Medina in 123, is reported to have said that Medina would never lack *ʿilm* as long as Ibn Isḥāq was there, and he eagerly gathered from him the details of the prophet's wars. Unfortunately Ibn Isḥāq excited the enmity of Mālik b. Anas, for whose work he showed his contempt, and it was not long before his own writings and his orthodoxy were called in question. Probably it was our author's lost book of *Sunan*[5] which excited Mālik's ire, for it would have been in the field of law based on the practice of the prophet that differences would be most keenly felt. He was accused of being a Qadarī and a Shīʿī. Another man attacked his veracity: he often quoted Fāṭima, the wife of Hishām b. ʿUrwa, as the authority for some of his traditions. The husband was annoyed and denied that he had ever met his wife; but as she was nearly forty years Ibn Isḥāq's senior it is easily credible that they often met without occasioning gossip. It is not known whether Ibn Isḥāq was compelled to leave Medina or whether he went away voluntarily. Obviously he could not have the same standing in a place that housed his chief

[1] I.S. VII. ii. p. 67.
[2] On Mūsā and Isḥāq see J. Fück, *Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq*, Frankfurt a. M. 1925, p. 28.
[3] See *Biographien von Gewahrsmännern des Ibn Ishaq . . .*, ed. Fischer, Leiden, 1890. With all those whose death-rates ranged from A.H. 27 to 152 he was in contact personally or at second hand.
[4] Wüstenfeld, II. vii, from I. al-Najjār and Fück, 30. [5] Ḥajjī Khalīfa, ii. 1008.

informants as he would hold elsewhere, and so he left for the east, stopping in Kūfa, al-Jazīra on the Tigris, and Ray, finally settling in Baghdad. While Manṣūr was at Hāshimīya he attached himself to his following and presented him with a copy of his work doubtless in the hope of a grant from the caliph. Thence he moved to Ray and then to the new capital of the empire. He died in 150 (or perhaps 151) and was buried in the cemetery of Ḥayzurān.

THE *SĪRA*

Its precursors

It is certain that Ibn Isḥāq's biography of the prophet had no serious rival; but it was preceded by several *maghāzī* books. We do not know when they were first written, though we have the names of several first-century worthies who had written notes and passed on their knowledge to the rising generation. The first of these was Abān the son of the caliph 'Uthmān.[1] He was born in *c.* 20 and took part in the campaign of Ṭalḥa and Zubayr against his father's slayers. He died about 100. The language used by al-Wāqidī in reference to Ibn al-Mughīra, 'he had nothing written down about hadith except the prophet's *maghāzīs* which he had acquired from Abān', certainly implies, though it does not demand, that Ibn al-Mughīra wrote down what Abān told him. It is strange that neither Ibn Isḥāq nor al-Wāqidī should have cited this man who must have had inside knowledge of many matters that were not known to the public; possibly as a follower of Ali he preferred to ignore the son of the man the Alids regarded as a usurper. However, his name often appears in the *isnāds* of the canonical collections of hadith. (The man named in Ṭab. 2340 and I.S. iv. 29 is Abān b. 'Uthmān al-Bajalī who seems to have written a book on *maghāzī*.[2])

A man of much greater importance was 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwām (23–94), a cousin of the prophet. 'Urwa's mother was Abū Bakr's daughter Asmā'. He and his brother 'Abdullah were in close contact with the prophet's widow 'Ā'isha. He was a recognized authority on the early history of Islam, and the Umayyad caliph 'Abdu'l-Malik applied to him when he needed information on that subject. Again, it is uncertain whether he wrote a book, but the many traditions that are handed down in his name by I.I. and other writers justify the assertion that he was the founder of Islamic history.[3] Though he is the earliest writer whose notes have come down to us, I have not translated the passages from Ṭab. which reproduce them because they do not seem to add anything of importance to the *Sīra*. They form part of a letter which 'Urwa wrote to 'Abdu l-Malik who wanted to have accurate knowledge about the prophet's career.[4] Much of his material rests on the statements of his aunt 'Ā'isha.

[1] E. Sachau, I.S. III. xxiii. f.
[2] Fück, 8, n. 27; and see J. Horovitz in *Islamic Culture*, 1927, 538.
[3] I.S., Tab., and Bu. are heavily indebted to him.
[4] See Ṭ. i. 1180, 1224, 1234, 1284, 1634, 1654, 1670, 1770; iii. 2458. Cf. I.H. 754.

Like I.I. he was given to inserting poetry in his traditions and justified the habit by the example of 'Ā'isha who uttered verses on every subject that presented itself.[1] He was a friend of the erotic poet 'Umar b. Rabī'a, but thought very little of the prophet's poet Ḥassān b. Thābit.[2]

Of Shuraḥbīl b. Sa'd, a freedman, presumably of South Arabian origin, little is known beyond the fact that he wrote a *maghāzī* book. I.I. would have none of him, and he is seldom quoted by other writers. He died in 123, and as he is said to have known Ali he must have died a centenarian. He reported traditions from some of the prophet's companions, and Mūsā b. 'Uqba[3] records that he wrote lists of the names of the emigrants and the combatants at Badr and Uḥud. In his old age he was discredited because he blackmailed his visitors: if they did not give him anything he would say that their fathers were not present at Badr! Poverty and extreme age made him cantankerous. The victims of his spleen doubted his veracity, though those best qualified to judge regarded him as an authority.

Another important Tābi' was Wahb b. Munabbih (34–110), a Yamanite of Persian origin. His father probably was a Jew. He is notorious for his interest in, and knowledge of, Jewish and Christian scriptures and traditions; and though much that was invented later was fathered on him, his *K. al-Mubtada'* lies behind the Muslim version of the lives of the prophets and other biblical stories. With his books on the legendary history of the Yaman, on aphorisms, on free will, and other matters preserved in part in I.H.'s *K. al-Tījān* we are not concerned; but the statement of Ḥajjī Khalīfa that he collected the *maghāzī* is now confirmed by the discovery of a fragment of the lost work on papyri written in 228. Unfortunately this fragment tells us little that is new; nevertheless, its importance is great because it proves that at the end of the first century, or some years before A.H. 100, the main facts about the prophet's life were written down much as we have them in the later works. Further it shows that, like the other early traditionists, he had little or no use for *isnāds*. Miss Gertrud Mélamède[4] has compared the account of the meeting at 'Aqaba (cf. i. H. 288, 293, 299) with the literature on the subject and her criticism, literary and historical, leads her to some important conclusions which do not concern us here. An interesting detail is that Muhammad speaking to 'Abbās calls Aus and Khazraj 'my and your maternal uncles'. 'Abbās throughout runs with the hare and hunts with the hounds.

A little later comes 'Āṣim b. 'Umar b. Qatāda al-Anṣārī (d. *c.* 120). He lectured in Damascus on the campaigns of the prophet and the exploits of his companions and seems to have committed his lectures to writing. He too is quite inconsistent in naming his authorities: sometimes he gives an *isnād*, more often he does not. He returned to Medina to continue his work, and I.I. attended his lectures there. Occasionally he inserted verses in his narrative, and sometimes gave his own opinion.

[1] Fischer, *Asānīd*, 46.
[2] Horovitz, op. cit. 251.
[3] I. Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, x. 361.
[4] *Le Monde Orientale*, xxviii. 1934, 17–58.

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Muhammad b. Muslim . . . b. Shihāb al-Zuhrī (51–124) was a member of a distinguished Meccan family. He attached himself to 'Abdu'l-Malik, Hishām, and Yazīd, and wrote down some traditions for his princely pupils. He was the forerunner of the later traditionists in that he took extraordinary pains to interrogate people, young and old of both sexes, who might possess knowledge of the past. He left a history of his own family and a book of *maghāzī*. Most of his traditional lore survived in the notes of his lectures that his pupils wrote down quoting his authority for the traditions they record. He spent some years in Medina as a young man. I.I. met him when he came south on pilgrimage and he is often named as an authority in the *Sīra*. He was the most important traditionist of his generation, and his influence is to be seen in all collections of canonical hadith. (See further J. Horovitz, *Islamic Culture*, ii. 33 ff.)

'Abdullah b. Abū Bakr b. Muhammad b. 'Amr b. Ḥazm (d. 130 or 135) was one of I.I.'s most important informants. His father had been ordered by 'Umar b. 'Abdu'l-'Azīz to write a collection of prophetic hadith, especially what 'Amra d. 'Abdu'l-Raḥmān said. This latter was a friend of 'Ā'isha and she was the aunt of this Abū Bakr. Already in the time of his son 'Abdullah these writings had been lost. Though we have no record of a book by 'Abdullah, its substance probably once existed in the *maghāzī* of his nephew 'Abdu'l-Malik. As one would expect, the *isnād* is a matter of indifference to 'Abdullah: he stood too near the events among many who knew of them to need to cite his authorities. Ṭab. (i. 1837) contains an interesting note on how I.I. got his information. 'Abdullah told his wife Fāṭima to tell him what he knew on 'Amra's authority.

Abū'l-Aswad Muhammad b. 'Abdu'l-Raḥmān b. Naufal (d. 131 or 137) left a *maghāzī* book which sticks closely to 'Urwa's tradition.[1]

Contemporary with our author in the third generation was Mūsā b. 'Uqba (*c.* 55–141), a freedman of the family of al-Zubayr. A fragment of his work has survived and was published by Sachau in 1904.[2] As it once rivalled I.I.'s work and is one of our earliest witnesses to the *Sīra* I have given a translation of the extant traditions.[3] Although Mālik b. Anas, al-Shāfi'ī, and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal—an impressive trio—asserted that his book was the most important and trustworthy of all, posterity evidently did not share their opinion or more of his work would have survived.[4] I.I. never mentions him. One cannot escape the conviction that petty professional jealousy was as rife in those days as now, and that scholars deliberately refrained from giving their predecessors credit for their achievements. Mūsā leaned heavily on al-Zuhrī. He seems to have carried farther the process of idealizing the prophet.[5] He is freely quoted by al-Wāqidī, I. Sa'd, al-Balādhurī, Ṭabarī, and I. Sayyidu'l-Nās. He gave

[1] See Fück, 11.
[2] *S.B.B.A.* xi.
[3] *v.i.* where some doubts about the authenticity of some of them are raised.
[4] Goldziher, *M.S.* ii. 207, shows that it was in circulation as late as the end of the 9th century A.H.
[5] Fück, 12.

lists of those who went to Abyssinia and fought at Badr. The latter Mālik regarded as authoritative. He generally gives an *isnād*, though it is not always clear whether he is relying on a written or an oral source. Once at least he refers to a mass of records left by Ibn ʿAbbās (I.S. v. 216). Occasionally he quotes poems.

Apart from the fragment of Wahb b. Munabbih's *maghāzī* the Berlin MS., if it is authentic, is the oldest piece of historical literature in Arabic in existence, and if only for that reason deserves more than a passing notice here. It is of importance also because it carries back some of the traditions in Bukhārī (d. 256) more than a century.

Other *maghāzī* works were produced in Iraq, Syria, and the Yaman during the second century, but none of them is likely to have influenced I.I. and they can safely be disregarded.[1] What is of significance is the great interest in the life of the prophet that was shown everywhere during this century. But no book known to the Arabs or to us can compare in comprehensiveness, arrangement, or systematic treatment, with I.I.'s work which will now be discussed.

The Sīra

The titles *The Book of Campaigns* or *The Book of Campaigns and* (*the prophet's*) *Biography* or *The Book of the Biography and the Beginning and the Campaigns*[2] are all to be met with in the citations of Arabic authors. Al-Bakkā'ī, a pupil of I.I., made two copies of the whole book, one of which must have reached I.H. (d. 218) whose text, abbreviated, annotated, and sometimes altered, is the main source of our knowledge of the original work. A good deal more of it can be recovered from other sources.[3] The principles underlying I.H.'s revision are set out in his Introduction. Sachau[4] suggests that the copy used by Ṭ. was made when I.I. was in Ray by Salama b. Faḍl al-Abrash al-Anṣārī, because Ṭ. quotes I.I. according to I. Fadl's *riwāya*. A third copy was made by Yūnus b. Bukayr in Ray. This was used by I. al-Athīr in his *Usdu'l-Ghāba*. A copy of part of this recension exists in the Qarawīyīn mosque at Fez. The text, which contains some important additions to the received text, I hope to publish shortly. A fourth copy was that of the Syrian Hārūn b. Abū'Īsā. These last two copies were used by I. Sa'd.[5] Lastly the *Fihrist* mentions the edition of al-Nufaylī (d. 234).

It must not be supposed that the book ever existed in three separate parts: ancient legends, Muhammad's early life and mission, and his wars. These are simply sections of the book which contained I.I.'s lectures.

For the *Mubtada'* (*Mabda'*) we must go to Ṭ's *Tafsīr* and *History*. The first quotation from it in the latter[6] runs thus: 'I. Ḥamīd said, Salama b. al-Faḍl told us that I.I. said: "The first thing that God created was light

[1] Fück, 12.
[2] See Nöldeke, *Gesch. Qor.* 129, 221.
[3] *v.i.*
[4] I.S. III. xxv.
[5] III. ii. 51, lines 17–19.
[6] p. 9.

and darkness. Then He separated them and made the darkness night, black exceeding dark; and He made the light day, bright and luminous."' From this it is clear that 'Genesis' is the meaning of the title of the first section of the book. I.H. skipped all the intervening pages and began with Abraham, the presumed ancestor of Muhammad. Al-Azraqī quotes some passages from the missing section in his *Akhbār Mecca* and a few extracts are given by al-Muṭahhar b. Ṭāhir.[1]

The *Mubtada'* in so far as it lies outside I.H.'s recension is not our concern, though it is to be hoped that one day a scholar will collect and publish a text of it from the sources that survive so that I.I.'s work can be read in its entirety as its importance warrants. In this section I.I. relied on Jewish and Christian informants and on the book of Abū 'Abdullah Wahb b. Munabbih (34–110 or 114) known as *K. al-Mubtada'* and also *al-Isrā'-īlīyāt* of which the original title was *Qiṣaṣu'l-Anbiyā'*. To him he owed the history of the past from Adam to Jesus[2] and also the South Arabian legends, some of which I.H. has retained. This man also wrote a *maghāzī* book, and a fragment of it has survived.[3] I.I. cites him by name only once.[4] It is natural that a book about Muhammad, 'the seal of the prophets', should give an account of the history of the early prophets, but the history, or legends, of South Arabia demand another explanation. As Goldziher showed long ago,[5] it was in the second half of the first century that the antagonism of north and south, i.e. Quraysh and the Anṣār of Medina, first showed itself in literature. The Anṣār, proud of their southern origin and of their support of the prophet when the Quraysh rejected him, smarted under the injustice of their rulers and the northerner's claim to superiority. One of the ways in which their resentment manifested itself was in the glorification of Ḥimyar's great past. I.I. as a loyal son of Medina shared the feelings of his patrons and recounted the achievements of their forefathers, and I.H., himself of southern descent, retained in the *Sīra* as much of the original work as he thought desirable. To this accident that I.H. was a Ḥimyarī we owe the extracts from stories of the old South Arabian kings. I.H. devoted a separate book to the subject, the *K. al-Tījān li-ma'rifati mulūki l-zamān* (*fi akhbāri Qaḥṭan*).[6]

The second section of the book which is often called *al-Mab'ath* begins with the birth of the prophet and ends when the first fighting from his base in Medina takes place. The impression one gets from this section is of hazy memories; the stories have lost their freshness and have nothing of that vivid and sometimes dramatic detail which make the *maghāzī* stories—especially in al-Wāqidī—so full of interest and excitement. Thus while the Medinan period is well documented, and events there are chronologically arranged, no such accuracy, indeed no such attempt at it, can be

[1] ed. and tr. Cl. Huart, *Publ. de l'école des lang. or. viv.*, s. iv, vol. xvi, i–vi, Paris, 1899–1919.
[2] A summary of the contents is given in Ṭ. i.
[3] See *E.I.*
[4] p. 20.
[5] *M.S.* i. 89–98.
[6] Haydarabad, 1342.

claimed for the Meccan period. We do not know Muhammad's age when he first came forth publicly as a religious reformer: some say he was forty, others say forty-five; we do not know his precise relation to the Banū Najjār; the poverty of his childhood ill fits the assertion that he belonged to the principal family in Mecca. The story of those years is filled out with legends and stories of miraculous events which inevitably undermine the modern reader's confidence in the history of this period as a whole. In this section particularly, though not exclusively, I.I. writes historical introductions to his paragraphs. A good example is his foreword to the account of the persecution the prophet endured at the hands of the Meccans: 'When the Quraysh became distressed by the trouble caused by the enmity between them and the apostle and those of their people who accepted his teaching, they stirred up against him foolish fellows who called him a liar, insulted him, and accused him of being a poet, a sorcerer, a diviner, and of being possessed. However the apostle continued to proclaim what God had ordered him to proclaim, concealing nothing, and exciting their dislike by contemning their religion, forsaking their idols, and leaving them to their unbelief'.[1] This is not a statement resting on tradition, but a concise summary of the circumstances that are plainly indicated by certain passages of the Quran which deal with this period.

Of the *Maghāzī* history little need be said. For the most part the stories rest on the account of eyewitnesses and have every right to be regarded as trustworthy.

Characteristics

The opinions of Muslim critics on I.I.'s trustworthiness deserve a special paragraph; but here something may be said of the author's caution and his fairness. A word that very frequently precedes a statement is *za'ama* or *za'amū*, 'he (they) alleged'. It carries with it more than a hint that the statement may not be true, though on the other hand it may be sound. Thus there are fourteen or more occurrences of the caveat from p. 87 to 148 alone, besides a frequent note that only God knows whether a particular statement is true or not. Another indication of reserve if not scepticism underlies the expression *fī mā dhukira lī*, as in the story of the jinn who listened to Muhammad as he prayed; Muhammad's order to 'Umar to kill Suwayd; one of Gabriel's visits to Muhammad; the reward of two martyrs to the man killed by a woman.[2] An expression of similar import is *fī mā balaghanī*.[3]

Very seldom does I.I. make any comment of his own on the traditions he records apart from the mental reservation implied in these terms. Therefore when he does express an opinion it is the more significant. In his account of the night journey to Jerusalem and the ascent into heaven

[1] p. 183; see also 187, 230 *et passim*.
[2] pp. 281, 356, 357, 308.
[3] pp. 232, 235 *et passim*. Extreme caution introduces the legends of the light at the prophet's birth, 102.

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he allows us to see the working of his mind. The story is everywhere hedged with reservations and terms suggesting caution to the reader. He begins with a tale which he says has reached him (*balaghanī*) from several narrators and he has pieced them together from the stories these people heard (*dhukira*). The whole subject is a searching test of men's faith in which those endowed with intelligence are specially concerned. It was certainly an act of God, but exactly what happened we do not know. This opinion of his is most delicately and skilfully expressed in the words *kayfa shā'a*, 'how God wished to show him'. I. Mas'ūd's words are prefaced by *fī mā balaghanī 'anhu*. There is nothing in the story to indicate that it is a vision. Al-Ḥasan's version is much more definite, for he asserts that when Muhammad returned to Mecca he told the Quraysh that he had been to Jerusalem and back during the night and that this so strained the credulity of some of the Muslims that they gave up their faith in his revelations although he was able to give an accurate description of Jerusalem. It is therefore most surprising that al-Ḥasan should end his story by quoting Sūra 13. 62 'We made the *vision* which we showed thee only for a test to men' in this context. The whole point of al-Ḥasan's story is thereby undermined, for if the experience was visionary, then there was nothing at all incredible about it. Then follows 'Ā'isha's statement, reported by one of her father's family, that it was only the apostle's spirit that was transported; his body remained where it was in Mecca. Another tradition by Mu'āwiya b. Abū Sufyān bears the same meaning. The fact that he had been asked whether it was a physical or a dream journey shows that the subject was debated before I.I.'s day. Here I.I. makes a profound observation which in effect means that it was immaterial whether the experience was real or visionary because it came from God; and just as Abraham made every preparation to slay his son Isaac in consequence of what he had seen in a dream[1] because he recognized no difference between a divine command given at night during sleep and an order given by day when he was awake, so the apostle's vision was just as real as if it had been an actual physical experience. Only God knows what happened, but the apostle did see what he said he saw and whether he was awake or asleep the result is the same.

The description of Abraham, Moses, and Jesus which purports to quote Muhammad's words is prefaced by *za'ama'l-Zuhrī*, not, as often, by the ordinary term *ḥaddathanī*. Now as al-Zuhrī and I.I. knew each other well and must have met quite often, we must undoubtedly infer from the fact that I.I. deliberately substituted the verb of suspicion for the ordinary term used in traditional matters that he means us to take this tradition with a grain of salt.

It is a pity that the excellent impression that one gets of the author's intelligence and religious perception should be marred by the concluding paragraph[2] on this subject of the ascent into heaven which incidentally has had far-reaching results on European literature through the Divine

[1] *manām*. [2] p. 267.

Comedy.[1] It rules out absolutely any but a physical experience and ought to have been recorded with its cautionary note before I.I. made his own observations. Possibly the reason for its being out of place is that it is an excerpt from his lecture notes; but whatever the explanation, it mars the effect of his statement of the evidence.[2]

The phrase 'God knows best' speaks for itself and needs no comment. It is sometimes used when the author records two conflicting traditions and is unable to say which is correct. Another indication of the author's scrupulousness is the phrase 'God preserve me from attributing to the apostle words which he did not use'. His report of Muhammad's first public address at Medina and his order to each of his companions to adopt another as a brother are prefixed by these words and hedged by *fī mā balaghanī*.[3]

The author does not often give us rival versions of traditions from Medina and Mecca; thus the account of 'Umar's conversion is interesting.[4] It illustrates the thoroughness of our author in his search for information about the early days of the prophet's ministry. The first account he says is based on what the traditionists of Medina said: 'Umar was brutal to his sister and brother-in-law who had accepted Islam, but feeling some remorse when he saw blood on her face from the violent blow he had dealt her, and impressed by her constancy, he demanded the leaf of the Quran that she was reading. Having read it he at once accepted it as inspired and went to the prophet to proclaim his allegiance.

The Meccan, 'Abdullah b. Abū Najīḥ, on the authority of two named companions or an anonymous narrator, gives another version in 'Umar's own words to the effect that his conversion was due to his hearing the prophet recite the Quran while praying at the Ka'ba one night. In both narratives it was the Quran which caused his conversion. In the first version 'Umar was affected by the bearing of his sister and secured a part of the Quran to read himself; in the second he was affected by the private devotions of the prophet. The first story is prefixed by *fī mā balaghanī*, but this is cancelled as it were by the express statement that it was the current belief of the people of Medina. I.I. concludes by saying that only God knows what really happened.

A rather difficult problem in literary and historical criticism is posed by the rival traditions[5] collected by the indefatigable Ṭ. from two of I.I.'s pupils, Yūnus b. Bukayr and Salama b. al-Faḍl, the latter supported by another pupil of I.I.'s named Ali b. Mujāhid. The first had attended his lectures in Kūfa; the other two his lectures at Ray. All three claim that they transmit what I.I. told them on the authority of a certain 'Afīf. I do not know of a parallel in I.I.'s work to a contradiction resting on the authority of the same original narrator. Different traditions from different *rāwīs* from different sources are to be expected in any history; but here the same

[1] See M. Asin, *La escatalogía musulmana*.
[2] Can it be that I.H. has tampered with the text here?
[3] pp. 340 and 344. [4] pp. 224–9. [5] Ṭ. i. 1162. 8–1163. 2.

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man is introduced as the authority for conflicting traditions such as are to be found in the later collections of hadith.

The first tradition is suspect because it requires us to believe that from the earliest days of his ministry before he had any following apart from a wife and a young nephew Muhammad prophesied the Arab conquest of the Byzantine and Persian empires in the Near East. Nothing in his life gives the slightest support to this claim, though it was to be made good soon after his death.

The second contains no reference to later conquests and may be trustworthy. It definitely fixes the scene at Minā, which is about three miles distant from Mecca. The first account suggests, though it does not assert, that the prophet was in Mecca, as he turned to face the Ka'ba when he prayed. Would he have done this had he been in Minā? Would he not rather have turned in the direction of Jerusalem, his first *qibla*? I.I. expressly affirms elsewhere[1] that while he was in Mecca Muhammad when praying turned his face towards Syria. The second account says nothing about the direction of his prayer. On the whole, then, the second tradition as transmitted by Salama must be given the preference.

It is quite easy to see why I.H. a century later omitted both traditions; they were offensive to the ruling house of 'Abbās as they drew attention to an unhappy past which the rulers, now champions of orthodoxy, would fain have forgotten. But why did I.I. report them both, if in fact he did? On the whole it seems most reasonable to suppose that he first dictated the tradition which Yūnus heard in Kūfa, notorious for its attachment to the Alid party, and that he afterwards dropped it and substituted the second version which Salama heard in Ray some years later before he went on to Baghdad. Ṭ. with his usual thoroughness reported both traditions. The only alternative is to suppose that the reference to the conquests is an interpolation.

There is a subtle difference between these two variants which ought not to be overlooked. At first sight it would seem to be a mere detail that in the first tradition 'Afīf wished that he had been the *third* to pray the Muslim prayer. Now there were already three—Muhammad, Khadīja, and Ali. In the second tradition he wished that he had been the *fourth*. If this latter is the original form of the tradition it means simply that he wished that he had been the first man outside the prophet's family circle to accept Islam. But the first tradition means more than this: by eliminating, as it were, Muhammad himself from the trio it means that Ali was the second human being and the first male to accept Islam and to stand with Khadīja at the head of all Muslims in the order of priority. This has always been the claims of the Shī'a and to this day the priority of Ali in this respect is hotly disputed.[2]

[1] p. 190.

[2] Ṭ. devotes a long section to the traditional claims of Ali, Abū Bakr, and Zayd b. Ḥāritha, 1159–68. Cf. I.H. 159.

Intrinsically as we have argued, the second tradition has the better claim to authenticity. If that is admitted it follows that either I.I. or his *rāwī* adapted it in the interest of the Alid cause. In view of the accusation of partiality towards the Shīʿa which was levelled against I.I.[1] it seems probable that he himself gave a subtle twist to the tradition that had come down to him from ʿAfīf, and afterwards played for safety.

As one would expect of a book which was written in the eighth century about a great religious reformer, miracles are accepted as a matter of course. It does not matter if a person's alleged power to work miracles makes his early sufferings and failures unintelligible, nor does it matter if the person concerned expressly disclaimed all such powers apart from the recitation of the Quran itself.[2] The Near East has produced an enormous number of books on the miracles of saints and holy men and it would be strange indeed if Islam had not followed in the footsteps of its predecessors in glorifying the achievements of its great leader at the expense of his human greatness. Here we are concerned simply with the literary form of such stories, the authorities that are quoted for them, and the way in which our author deals with them. To mention a few:[3] the prophet summoned a tree to him and it stood before him. He told it to go back again and back it went. It is interesting to notice that the person for whose benefit this miracle was wrought regarded it as sorcery. The author's father, Isḥāq b. Yasār, is responsible for the tale. Another tradition from ʿAmr b. ʿUbayd, who claimed to have had it from Jābir b. ʿAbdullah via al-Ḥasan, is merely a *midrash* composed to explain Sūra 5. 14 where it is said that God kept the hands of Muhammad's enemies from doing him violence. The story of the throne of God shaking when the doors of heaven were opened to receive Saʿd shows how these stories grew in the telling. Muʿādh b. Rifāʿa al-Zuraqī reported on the authority of 'anyone you like among my clan' that when Saʿd died Gabriel visited the prophet and asked him who it was that had caused such commotion in heaven, whereupon Muhammad, knowing that it must be Saʿd, hurried off at once to find that he had died. However, more was said on the subject: ʿAbdullah b. Abū Bakr from ʿAmra d. ʿAbdu'l-Raḥmān reported that ʿĀ'isha met Saʿd's cousin outside Mecca and asked him why he did not show more grief for one whose arrival had shaken the very throne of God. An anonymous informant claimed to have heard from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī that the pallbearers found the corpse of this fat, heavy man unexpectedly light, and the prophet told them that there were other unseen bearers taking the weight with them; and again it is repeated that the throne shook. Suhaylī has a fairly long passage on the tradition which goes to show that serious minded men did not like this story at all. Some scholars tried to whittle away the meaning by suggesting that the shaking of the throne was a metaphor for the joy

[1] *v.i.* [2] Sūra 17. 95 'Am I anything but a human messenger' and cf. 29. 49.
[3] pp. 258, 663, 698. J. Horovitz, *Der Islam*, v. 1914, pp. 41–53, has collected and discussed their origin and antecedents in the hagiology of the East.

in heaven at Sa'd's arrival; others claimed that the angelic bearers of the throne were meant. But Suhaylī will have none of this. The throne is a created object and so it can move. Therefore none has the right to depart from the plain meaning of the words. Moreover, the tradition is authentic while traditions like that of al-Barrā' to the effect that it was Sa'd's bed that shook are rightly ignored by the learned. He goes on to point out that al-Bukhārī accepted the tradition not only on the authority of Jābir but also on the report of a number of other companions of the prophet—a further indication of the snowball growth of the legend. S. finds it most surprising that Mālik rejected the hadith and he adds naïvely from the point of view of later generations that Mālik would not have it mentioned despite the soundness of its transmission and the multitude of narrators, and he adds that it may be that Mālik did not regard the tradition as sound! The passage is instructive in that it shows how far I.I. could go in the face of one of the most learned of his contemporaries in Medina. Posterity has sided with I.I. on this matter, but Mālik clearly had many on his side at the time, men who would not take at its face value a story which they could not reject out of hand, as he did, with the weight of contemporary opinion behind it.

Another feature that stands out clearly from time to time is the insertion of popular stories on the Goldilocks model. For the sake of the reader I have rendered these stories in accord with modern usage, as the repetition of the same words and the same answer again and again is intolerable to the modern adult. Such stories are the stock-in-trade of the Arabian *qāṣṣ* and the storyteller all the world over and invariably lead up to the climax which it is the speaker's intention to withhold until he has his audience on tiptoe. A good example of such stories is the narrative of Muhammad's arrival in Medina and the invitation of one clan after another, always declined with the same words.[1]

After giving due weight to the pressure of hagiology on the writer and his leaning towards the Shī'a one must, I think, affirm that the life of Muhammad is recorded with honesty and truthfulness and, too, an impartiality which is rare in such writings. Who can read the story of al-Zabīr,[2] who was given his life, family, and belongings but did not want to live when the best men of his people had been slain, without admitting that here we have a true account of what actually happened? Similarly who but an impartial historian would have included verses in which the noble generous character of the Jews of the Hijaz was lauded and lamented? The scepticism of earlier writers seems to me excessive and unjustified. We have only to compare later Lives of Muhammad to see the difference between the historical and the ideal Muhammad.[3]

[1] 335 f. [2] p. 691.

[3] Nöldeke, *Islam*, v, 1914, has drawn attention to many incidents and characteristics of the *Sīra* which could not have been invented and which show intimate knowledge of the facts.

The Poetry

Doubts and misgivings about the authenticity of the poems in the *Sīra* are expressed so often by I.H. that no reference to them need be given here. Nevertheless, one should be on one's guard against the tendency to condemn all the poetry out of hand. What I.H. says about the poetry of those who took part in the battle of Badr, whether or not it includes the verses of Hassān b. Thābit, namely 'These verses (of Abū Usāma) are the most authentic of those (attributed to) the men of Badr' (p. 534), casts grave doubt on the authenticity of a large section of the poetry of the *Sīra*. Nevertheless I.I. is not to be blamed for the inclusion of much that is undoubtedly spurious without a thorough investigation which has not yet been undertaken. The poems he cites on pp. 284 and 728 he got from 'Āṣim b. Qatāda, while those on pp. 590, 789, and 793 come from 'Abdullah b. Abū Bakr.[1] We know, too, that Mūsā b. 'Uqba cited verses.[2]

An early critic of poetry, al-Jumaḥī[3] (d. 231), though perhaps rather one-sided and ill balanced in his judgement on I.I., makes some observations which cannot fail to carry conviction. He says: 'Muhammad b. Isḥāq was one of those who did harm to poetry and corrupted it and passed on all sorts of rubbish. He was one of those learned in the biography of the prophet and people quoted poems on his authority. He used to excuse himself by saying that he knew nothing about poetry and that he merely passed on what was communicated to him. But that was no excuse, for he wrote down in the *Sīra* poems ascribed to men who had never uttered a line of verse and of women too. He even went to the length of including poems of 'Ād and Thamūd! Could he not have asked himself who had handed on these verses for thousands of years when God said: "He destroyed the first 'Ād and Thamūd and left none remaining"[4] while of 'Ād he said "Can you see anything remaining of them?"[5] and "Only God knows 'Ād and Thamūd and those who came after them." '[6] Some of these poems are quoted by Ṭ.[7]

I. al-Nadīm[8] goes farther by suggesting that I.I. was party to the fraud: the verses were composed for him, and when he was asked to include them in his book he did so and brought himself into ill repute with the rhapsodists. Occasionally I.I. says who the authority for the poetry was.[9]

Obviously at this date criticism of the poetry of the *Sīra* can be based only on historical and perhaps in a lesser degree on literary and stylistic grounds. Some of the poetry dealing with raids and skirmishes, tribal boasting, and elegies seems to come from contemporary sources, and no reasonable person would deny that poetic contests between Meccan and Medinan poets really took place: everything we know of ancient Arab

[1] Also pp. 950–1. Cf. the corresponding passages in Ṭ. 1732, 1735.
[2] Cf. I.S. iii. 241.
[3] *Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā'*, ed. J. Hell, Leiden, 1916, p. 4.
[4] Sūra 53. 51.
[5] Sūra 69. 8.
[6] Sūra 14. 9.
[7] Horovitz, op. cit., cites i. 236, 237, 241, 242.
[8] *Al-Fihrist*, Cairo, 136.
[9] p. 108.

society would require us to look for such effusions. As Horovitz pointed out, in pre-Islamic poetry these poetical contests are frequent, and it might be added that in early Hebrew history verses are frequently inserted in the narratives and often put into the mouths of the heroes of the hour. Thus, apart from those poems which undoubtedly were called forth by the events they commemorated, poetry was an integral part of a racial convention which no writer of history could afford to ignore. Probably if all the poetry which I.I. included in the *Sīra* had reached that standard of excellence which his readers were accustomed to expect, none of these charges would have been levelled against him. But when he included verses which were palpably banal, and were at the same time untrue to circumstance, uninspired and trivial, as many undoubtedly are, the developed aesthetic sense of the Arabs which is most delicate where poetry is concerned rejected what he wrote. As al-Jumaḥī said, he brought poetry itself into disrepute by the balderdash he admitted into his otherwise excellent work. And it did not improve matters that much that was good was mingled with more that was bad. It is more than likely that I.I. himself was conscious that all was not well with this poetry, for the general practice of writers is to put the verse into the narrative at the crucial moment (as I.I. at times does), whereas after the prose account of Badr and Uḥud he lumps together a whole collection of verse by various 'poets'. It is as though he were silently saying "This is what has been handed on to me. I know nothing about poetry and you must make your own anthology."[1] Even so, whatever his shortcomings were, it is only fair to bear in mind that I.H. often inserts a note to the effect that the text before him contains lines or words which have not I.I.'s authority.

The subject is one that calls for detailed and careful literary criticism. The history of the clichés, similes, and metaphors needs investigation by a scholar thorougnly grounded in the poetry of the pre-Islamic and Umayyad eras. Until this preliminary work has been successfully accomplished it would be premature to pass judgement on the poetry of the *Sīra* as a whole. Ancient poetry has suffered greatly at the hands of forgers, plagiarists, and philologists, and the diwans of later poets have not escaped the dishonest *rāwī*. Ḥassān b. Thābit, the prophet's own poet, has many poems to his name which he would be astounded to hear, and there are comparatively few poets of whom it could be said that the diwans bearing their names contained nothing for which they were not responsible.[2]

[1] And this was precisely his attitude if al-Jumaḥī is to be believed.

[2] I should hardly care to go so far as to assert that the fifth-century poet 'Amr b. Qamī'a has exercised a direct influence on the poetry of the *Sīra*; but the fact remains that there is a great similarity. It is inevitable that the themes of Arab verse should recur constantly. Beduin life varied little from generation to generation. Their horizon was bounded by deserts, and consequently camels and horses, war and its weapons, hospitality and tribal pride were constantly mentioned in song. To trace these themes back to their first singers would be a task that would leave little leisure for more profitable studies; but nevertheless it is worth noting that the following themes recur in 'Amr and the *Sīra*: the generous man who slaughters camels for the hungry guest in winter when famine deprives even the rich of

Since these words were written two theses have been written in the University of London: the first by Dr. M. A. ʿAzzam deals with the style, language, and authenticity of the poetry contained in the *Sīra*; the second by Dr. W. ʿArafat with the *Dīwān* of Ḥassān b. Thābit. A brief summary of their findings will not be out of place here.

Between the period covered by the *Sīra* and the editing of the book itself loom the two tragedies of Karbalā', when al-Husayn and his followers were slain in 61, and the sack of Medina in A.H. 63 when some ten thousand of the Anṣār including no less than eighty of the prophet's companions are said to have been put to death. Much of the poetry of the *Sīra* was meant to be read against the background of those tragedies. Its aim is to set forth the claims of the Anṣār to prominence in Islam not only as men who supported the prophet when the Quraysh opposed him, but as men descended from kings. The prophet was the grandson of ʿAbdu'l-Muṭṭalib, who was the son of Hāshim and a woman of the B. al-Najjār, and so of Yamanī stock. 'Your mother was of the pure stock of Khuzāʿa. . . . To the heroes of Sabā' her line goes back', says the poet in his elegy on 'Abdu'l-Muṭṭalib.[1]

Apart from their great service to the prophet in giving him a home when Quraysh cast him out, the Anṣār long before had been partners with Quraysh, for was it not Rizāḥ, the half-brother of Quṣayy, who came to the aid of the ancestors of Quraysh from the Yaman? Had it not been for the Anṣār there would have been no Islam: had it not been for their ancestors, the poet implies, Quraysh would not have been established in Mecca.

On p. 18 there is thinly disguised Anṣārī-Shīʿa propaganda: 'The one you killed was the best of us. The one who lived is lord over us and all of you are lords' would be recognized by many as a reference to the killing of al-Ḥusayn and the 'lords' would be the Umayyads. The account of the Tubbaʿs march against Mecca and his great respect for its sanctity stands in clear contrast with the treatment it received from the Umayyads when al-Ḥajjāj bombarded it.

wealth, when even kinsmen refuse their help; the man who entertains when the camels' udders are dry; the cauldron full of the hump and fat of the camel; those who devote the game of *maysir* to hospitality, distributing the charge among themselves as the arrows dictate; the milk of war; war a milch camel; war drawing blood like buckets from a well; a morning draught of the same; the sword blade polished by the armourer; journeys in noonday heat when even the locust rests; the horse that can outrun the wild ass; the flash of the sun on the helmets of the warriors; the chain armour shining like a rippling pool. However interesting this comparison might prove to be, the presence of these clichés and themes in other poets makes it hazardous to assert that ʿAmr had a predominating influence. Moreover, what we seek is a pseudo-poet of Umayyad times; and here a hint thrown out by a former colleague, Dr. Abdullah al-Tayyib, to the effect that the poetry of the *Sīra* and that in *Waqʿat Ṣiffīn* is very similar, if followed up would probably lead to some interesting discoveries. I.H.'s notes would be found interesting in this connexion. On p. 790 he points out that the words 'We have fought you about its interpretation as we fought you about its divine origin' were spoken by ʿAmmār b. Yāsir in reference to another battle [Ṣiffīn] and could not have been uttered by ʿAbdullah b. Rawāḥa at the conquest of Mecca, because the Meccans, being pagans, did not believe in the Quran, so that there was no question of a rival interpretation.

[1] p. 113.

After a careful study of the language and style of this verse Dr. 'Azzam comes to the conclusion that comparatively little of it dates from the time of the prophet.

Dr. 'Arafat comes to much the same conclusion with regard to the verse attributed to Ḥassān. A few of the outstanding arguments will be given here. He finds that the eulogy on the Anṣār (p. 893) which is attributed to Ka'b b. Zuhayr is in the same rhyme and metre as the poem of al-Akhṭal[1] which was written at the instigation of Yazīd. There we find the words 'Baseness is under the turbans of the Anṣār'. A careful comparison of the relevant passages in the two poems shows that the one in the *Sīra* is the answer to the one in the *Aghānī*.

Abdullah b. Abū Bakr is reported to have said: 'The Anṣār were respected and feared until the battle of Ḥarra; afterwards people were emboldened to attack them and they occupied a lowly place.' It is in these circumstances, not those of the prophet's companions daily increasing in power and prestige, that we must look for the background of 'You will find that none ill uses or abuses us but a base fellow who has gone astray' (p. 626).

On p. 474 a poem which I.H. attributes to Ḥassān's son, 'Abdu'l-Raḥmān, obviously dates from a later generation: 'My people are those who sheltered the prophet and believed in him when the people of the land were unbelievers except for choice souls who were forerunners of righteous men and who were helpers with the helpers.' What can this mean but that someone is speaking of the past services of his people to the prophet? Further, it is strange language to impute to Ḥassān. It was he who called the newcomers vagrants *jalābīb* and regarded them as an unmitigated nuisance. He did not house any of the *muhājirīn*, nor was he a 'brother' to one of them. A still clearer reference to a former generation is to be found on p. 927 (again I.H. attributed it to Abdu'l-Raḥmān) which says: 'Those people were the prophet's helpers and they are my people; to them I come when I relate my descent.'

Dr. 'Arafat notes that in the *Sīra* there are seventy-eight poems attributed to Ḥassān; the authenticity of fifteen of them is questioned or denied outright. The text of the poem on p. 738 in its rival forms illustrates the way in which verses attributed to Ḥassān were interpolated and additional verses fabricated. Here Ṭ. gives only the first five verses; the *Dīwān* interpolates two verses after the first line and adds two at the end. On the other hand, the last three verses in the *Sīra* are not to be found in either of the other authorities. In the *Aghānī*[2] the poem is still longer and according to the *riwāya* of Muṣ'ab but without al-Zuhrī's authority. The facts which emerge from a study of the circumstances which surround this poem are:

1. Ḥassān resented the growing numbers and influence of the Muslim refugees.

[1] *Agh.* xiii. 148, xiv. 122.
[2] Cairo, 1931, iv. 159. Cf. 157, where the shorter version of Ṭ. is given.

2. After the attack on B. al-Muṣṭaliq a quarrel arose between the Meccans and Medinans about the use of a well. ʿAbdullah b. Ubayy said: 'They rival our numbers *kāthara*;' he called them *jalābīb* and threatened that when they got back to Medina the stronger *aʿazz* would drive out the weaker. The words italicized are the very words used by Ḥassān in this poem. From this it is clear that Ḥassān is expressing not only his own opinion about the Muslims but that of ʿAbdullah b. Ubayy and his party.
3. It was during this journey that the scandal about ʿĀ'isha arose.
4. Ṣafwān struck Ḥassān with his sword. According to the introduction to the poem in the *Dīwān* Ṣafwān attacked Ḥassān because he had accused him of spending the night with ʿĀ'isha. But in the *Aghānī* Ṣafwān wounded Ḥassān at the instigation of the prophet because his house was the centre of disaffection against the Muslims. The other explanation of the attack on Ḥassān is added in *al-Aghānī* as an afterthought. However, there is no reason why both versions should not be correct. Ḥassān's most dangerous offence was his complaint against the Muslim intruders; but when he slandered ʿĀ'isha he provided the prophet with an admirable reason for punishing him severely for an offence which would not engage the sympathies of the Anṣārīs. Whether loyal or disaffected, they could hardly support their comrade in such a matter.

With the further ramifications of the story we are not concerned; sufficient has been said to show that the poem so far as verse 5 is genuine and is directed solely against the Muslim refugees whose presence had become a nuisance to Ḥassān. In this poem he says nothing at all about Ṣafwān. The last three lines have doubtless been added to whitewash Ḥassān. As poetry they will not bear comparison with the genuine verses and Ṭ. was thoroughly justified in discarding them.

Another specimen of the spurious poetry fathered on Ḥassān is to be found on p. 936 which belongs to a later generation. Here it is not the prophet who is praised but his 'house': 'How noble are the people (*qaum*) whose party (*shīʿa*) is the prophet! . . . They are the best of all living creatures.' When we remember the resentment with which the Anṣār in general and Ḥassān in particular felt when they got no share in the booty of Ḥunayn, the line 'Take from them what comes when they are angry and set not your hearts on what they withhold' is singularly inept.

Another point which militates against the authenticity of poems attributed to Ḥassān is the prominence which is often given to the Aus. It cannot be supposed that a Khazrajite would ignore the achievements of his own tribe or put them in the second place as on p. 455 when we remember that the hostility between the two tribes persisted long after Islam was established. A plain example of a later Anṣārī's work is given on p. 711, where the poem begins: 'O my people is there any defence against fate and

can the good old days return?' an impossible attitude for a Muslim to take during the prophet's lifetime.

Again, when Ḥassān is reported to have said 'The best of the believers have followed one another to death' (p. 799), it is sufficient to remember that practically all the prophet's principal companions survived Uḥud. But when this careless forger wrote all the best Muslims had long been dead. However, we have not got to his main point which is to glorify the house of Hāshim: 'They are God's near ones. He sent down His wisdom upon them and among them is the purified bringer of the book.' Here the Alids are the 'friends' or 'saints' of God and Muhammad is little more than a member of their family. Divine wisdom is given to them.

These two studies lay bare the wretched language in which many of these poems are written and incidentally bring out the difficulties which a translator has to cope with when the rules of Arabic syntax and the morphology of the language are treated with scant respect. In fine it may be said that their well-documented conclusions made it abundantly clear that the judgement of the ancient critics—particularly al-Jumaḥī—is justified up to the hilt.[1]

The partial restoration of the lost original

Once the original text of I.I. existed in at least fifteen *riwāyas*:[2]

1. Ibrāhīm b. Sa'd, 110–84	Medina
2. Ziyād b. 'Abdullah al-Bakkā'ī, d. 183	Kūfa
3. 'Abdullah b. Idrīs al-Audī, 115–92	,,
4. Yūnus b. Bukayr, d. 199	,,
5. 'Abda b. Sulaymān, d. 187/8	,,
6. 'Abdullah b. Numayr, 115–99	,,
7. Yaḥya b. Sa'īd al-Umawī, 114–94	Baghdad
8. Jarīr b. Ḥāzim, 85–170	Baṣra
9. Hārūn b. Abū'Īsā	Baṣra?
10. Salama b. al-Faḍl al-Abrash, d. 191	Ray
11. Ali b. Mujāhid, d. *c.* 180	,,
12. Ibrāhīm b. al-Mukhtār	,,
13. Sa'īd b. Bazī'	
14. 'Uthmān b. Sāj	
15. Muhammad b. Salama al-Ḥarrānī, d. 191	

It has been my aim to restore so far as is now possible the text of I.I. as it left his pen or as he dictated it to his hearers, from excerpts in later texts, disregarding the *Mabda'* section as I.H. did and for at least one of

[1] See further A. Guillaume, 'The Biography of the Prophet in Recent Research', *Islamic Quarterly Review*, 1954.

[2] I have adopted the list given by Fück in his admirable monograph, p. 44, where full biographical details are to be found. The towns are those at which the individuals named heard I.I.'s lectures.

his reasons. At first I was tempted to think that a great deal of the original had been lost—and it may well be that it has been lost—for it is clear that the scurrilous attacks on the prophet which I.H. mentions in his Introduction are not to be found anywhere. But on the whole I think it is likely that we have the greater part of what I.I. wrote. Doubtless more was said for Ali and against ʿAbbās, but it is unlikely that such material would add much to our knowledge of the history of the period. Possibly to us the most interesting excisions would be paragraphs containing information which I.I. gathered from Jews and Christians; but in all probability the *Mabdaʾ* contained most of such passages. Still, it is unlikely that those passages which have been allowed to remain would have excited the annoyance that some of his early critics express on this score. Ibnu'l-Kalbī's *K. al-Aṣnām* gives a warning against exaggerated hopes. Yāqūt had made copious extracts from it in his *Geographical Dictionary*, so interesting and so important for our knowledge of the old Arabian heathenism that the great Nöldeke expressed the hope that he would live to see the text of the lost original discovered. He did; but a collation of the original work with the excerpts made by Yāqūt shows that practically everything of value had been used and nothing of real significance was to be learned from the discovery of the mother text. However, in a text of the nature of the *Sīra* it is just possible that a twist may be given to the narrative by an editor such as I.H.

The writers from whom some of the original can be recovered are:

1. Muhammad b. ʿUmar al-Wāqidī, d. 207
2. Abū'l-Walīd Muhammad b. Abdullah al-Azraqī from his grandfather (d. *c.* 220)
3. Muhammad b. Saʿd, d. 230
4. Abū ʿAbdullah Muhammad b. Muslim b. Qutayba, d. 270 or 276
5. Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Balādhurī, d. 279
6. Abū Jaʿfar Muhammad b. Jārīr al-Ṭabarī, d. 310
7. Abū Saʿīd al-Ḥasan b. ʿAbdullah al-Sīrāfī, d. 368.
8. Abū'l-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Muhammad b. Ḥabīb al-Māwardī, d. 450
9. Abū'l-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. al-Athīr, d. 630
10. Yūsuf b. Yaḥyā al-Tādalī known as I. al-Zayyāt, d. 627
11. Ismāʿīl b. ʿUmar b. Kathīr, d. 774
12. Abū'l-Faḍl Aḥmad b. ʿAlī . . . b. Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, d. 852/1449.