

# GOLDEN ROADS

MIGRATION, PILGRIMAGE  
AND TRAVEL IN MEDIAEVAL  
AND MODERN ISLAM

EDITED BY

IAN RICHARD  
NETTON

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Migration, Pilgrimage and Travel in  
Mediaeval and Modern Islam

Edited by  
*Ian Richard Netton*



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Sweet to ride forth at evening from the wells  
When shadows pass gigantic on the sand,  
And softly through the silence beat the bells  
Along the Golden Road to Samarkand.

James Elroy Flecker  
*The Golden Journey to Samarkand*

## OTHER BOOKS BY IAN RICHARD NETTON

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Arabia and the Gulf: From Traditional Society to Modern States (editor)

Middle East Materials in United Kingdom and Irish Libraries: A Directory

Muslim Neoplatonists: An Introduction to the Thought of the Brethren of Purity

A Popular Dictionary of Islam

*Dedication*

For my wife Sue with much love

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*Fanny Colonna*

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## PREFACE

The triple themes of this book—migration, pilgrimage and travel in Islam—are as old as the religion itself. The Prophet **Muhammad** made his famous archetypal *Hijra* (Migration) from Mecca to Medina in AD 622, a year which became Year 1 of the Muslim lunar calendar; the *Hajj* (Pilgrimage) of Farewell enacted by the Prophet in AD 632 provided the paradigm for all future pilgrimages to the sacred *Ka'ba* in Mecca; while a much quoted *ḥadīth* portrays the Founder of Islam counselling his followers that they should seek knowledge even as far as China. The concept of *Rihla* (Travel) in search of knowledge thus became a primary motif in the lives of many mediaeval—and modern-Muslim scholars, jurists, collectors of tradition and, indeed, ordinary people.

The three themes of this book, then, have profoundly Prophetic antecedents. And while each article develops its own chosen theme in a different way, reflecting often a broader aspect of the archetypal theme, they are each linked by the possession of two key factors: *firstly*, they articulate and survey in one way or another, what Ross E.Dunn, one of the contributors to this volume, has characterised as ‘the development of a cosmopolitan Islamic social order that embraced a large part of the Afro-Eurasian land mass’. That development, as reflected in these articles, may be latent, potential, actual or militantly present. But it is a development which reflects an infinitely varied Islam, one of oecumenical tolerance and profound respect for the Christians and Jews who constituted in the main, the People of the Book (*Ahl al-Kitāb*), *as well as* one which sometimes proscribed or limited the actions of those same religionists as happened, for example, during the rule of that strange but fascinating **al-Ḥākim** (reg. AD 996–1021). The articles reflect, in other words, a vibrant, dynamic, fluid and, above all, un-monolithic Islam, uncircumscribed by the rigid caesuralism or the *epistemes* of a Michel Foucault. The three themes of migration, pilgrimage and travel, which constitute the basic structure and fabric of this book, are themselves by no means monolithic or rigidly presented. **Ibn Battūta** the subject of Ross E.Dunn’s article, combines within his life elements of all three: he makes a *hijra* from his native North Africa, undertakes the *hajj* several times to Mecca and encapsulates the two in the broader third theme of *rihla* (travel) which becomes the dominant feature of his entire career.

The *first* factor, then, which links all the articles in this book is ‘the development of a cosmopolitan Islamic social order’. The *second* is that each, in one way or another, has a vital epistemological dimension, reflecting that early Prophetic call to seek *knowledge*. The latter comes in many shapes and packages and the articles of this volume reflect the wide yearning for, and diversity of, knowledge in mediaeval and modern Islam.

The two factors which thus provide a substrate for the articles which follow are universal ones. Underlying as they do the basic structure of the volume composed of migration, pilgrimage and travel, they not only serve as a link between these three themes (and, indeed, all the articles), but emphasise that Islam did not develop in a hermetically sealed vacuum but was—and is—part of a *world* order with universal aspirations, rather than a narrow Middle Eastern product of limited thought and range. Most, but not all of the articles, were first presented at the Fourth International Colloquium of the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Exeter, held at this University between Tuesday 19th September 1989 and Friday 22nd September 1989 on the subject of *Hijra*, *Ḥajj* and *Rihla*. The Colloquium brought together in a most happy fashion a large number of distinguished scholars, many of whose names are well-known for their writings on one or more of the three themes of this book. As can be seen, they chose to articulate those themes within a variety of different fields including the sociological, political, historical, theological, anthropological, penal and literary.

The section on *Migration* begins with the article by *A.M.Nasr* who first surveys aspects of the structure of society in Pre-Islamic Arabia and then presents a brief traditional account of the impact which the *Hijra* of the Prophet **Muḥammad** had on his society. In this article we see the very beginnings of the development of an Islamic social order and the raw data for an early Islamic sociology; it is compounded by the desire of the Prophet **Muḥammad** himself to spread knowledge, in this case knowledge about Islam, and this desire constitutes one of the primary motors of the famous *Hijra*. *Roger Webster* pursues these last two ideas as they were formulated well over one thousand years later. Arabian society of the period with which he deals is still relatively unformed but it witnesses under the Wahhābīs an attempt this time to impose a fairly monolithic and ‘fundamentalist’ social order. Once again the epistemological impulse is articulated in terms of religion, but this time in terms of the Wahhābī interpretation of that religion.

*G.R.Hawting’s* article discusses some aspects of the political role of the *ḥajj* a major Islamic ritual which may be said to have had a profound part to play throughout history in ‘the development of a cosmopolitan Islamic social order’. As the second edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* puts it: The social, cultural and economic effects of the Pilgrimage in medieval Islam are of immense importance. Every year, great numbers of Muslims from all parts of the Islamic world, from many races and from different social strata, left their homes and travelled, often over vast distances, to take part in a common act of worship... the

experience of the pilgrimage gives rise to a rich literature of travel, bringing information about distant places, *and a heightened awareness of belonging to a larger whole*. (My italics; EI<sup>2</sup>, vol. III, s.v. ‘**Hadjdj**’ p. 37)

Pilgrimage is not only a search for knowledge of one’s God but a search within oneself as well. On both counts the symbols and rituals used are of particular significance and Hawting pays attention to both at a particularly difficult time early in the development of the Islamic social order, that of the Second Civil War. *Urvoy*, by contrast, looks at the Pilgrimage through a different set of spectacles, and from the perspective of al-Andalus. He agrees that there is ‘une convergence émotionnelle de ces trois termes [*Hijra*, **Hajj** and **Rihla**] comme valeur symbolique générale d’un monde centré sur les lieux saints’. The Islamic social and political order established in Spain functioned as a kind of ‘rival’ to that based on the great central cities of Damascus, Cairo and, above all, ‘Abbāsīd Baghdad, but that Spanish Islamic order necessarily interacted with the other centres of power in one form or another. *Urvoy* analyses the impact of politics, and particularly the rise of Almoravid and Almohad power, on the numbers of people who travelled from Spain to the East for a variety of purposes, one of which was, of course, the search for knowledge and suitable places for study.

*Ian Netton’s* article on the traveller Ibn Jubayr pursues the twin themes of **Hajj** and **Rihla** in the Andalusian person of Ibn Jubayr. He portrays a highly developed Islamic cosmopolitan social order, rent by the wars of the Crusades and a traveller, Ibn Jubayr, who ‘himself sailed in Christian ships while being perfectly aware of the anomalous situation created by Christian and Muslim travellers such as himself, and especially merchants, moving freely in each other’s lands while their respective armies fought each other’. *Netton* focuses on the traveller’s ambivalent feelings towards Christianity and the signs, and consequent feelings within himself, of alienation characteristic of that confused milieu in which he found himself. There is sometimes both a fascination with, and a distaste for, the knowledge born of his travel experiences.

In *Ross E. Dunn’s* article we celebrate another slightly later traveller, **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** who moves within an Islamic world which is

not a monolithic empire but a civilisation in the making, an Islam that stretched out simultaneously toward the Far East and toward Europe. This was an Islam with a finished, mature, fully coherent civilisation, displaying a coherent identity over a vast geographical range... The *oikumene* seemed to be hedged about on all sides by Islam, which occupied a central position because it was the only one of its worldwide partners in constant contact with all the others. (Hichem Djaït, *Europe and Islam*, trans. Peter Heinegg, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), pp. 110–111).

And not only does **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** provide a sublime example of one who travels within and through a highly developed and mature cosmopolitan Islamic social order, but he is the supreme example himself of one who combines pilgrimage, wanderlust, and the desire to know (see my article ‘Arabia and the Pilgrim Paradigm of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**: A Braudelian Approach’ in Ian Richard Netton (ed.), *Arabia and the Gulf: From Traditional Society to Modern States*, (London: Croom Helm, 1986), pp. 29–42.)

There are, however, dangers in the *Rihla* form, such as those produced by Ibn Jubayr, **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** and others. To what extent may we move from considering the *Rihla* as an art form to using it as a reliable historical source? These are the kind of questions which underlie C.F. Beckingham’s article. While it is clear that both the above-mentioned travellers provide a sustained picture of the Islamic social order of their day, it must be noted that **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**’s narrative in particular is interlaced with elements of pure fiction. Beckingham focuses on what he calls ‘the ring of truth’ and warns that this ‘should always be treated with caution in works of this kind’. Examining both **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**’s *Rihla* and the writings of the seventeenth century Ottoman Turk Evliyā Chelebī in the light of this concept, as well as two mediaeval European examples, Beckingham concludes ‘In the West, as in the *Dār al-Islām*, the *rihla* is sometimes, as Dr Netton has said, “perhaps best regarded as an art form rather than a formal geography”’. We have all heard of scholars who have falsified their data. Here, in the *rihla* tradition, it is clear that in both East and West the search for knowledge via the experience of travel, sometimes drove the traveller to exaggeration and even outright invention.

With *Fanny Colonna*’s article we move into the late nineteenth and very early twentieth century. Here our themes are examined through penal spectacles and the focus is specifically on those ‘détenus arabes’ who inhabited the prison of Calvi. Their imprisonment may be conceived of in terms of a ‘*Rihla forcée*’ or a *Hijra*, the latter being the preferred analogy of the poet Mohamed Belkheir who was imprisoned at Calvi in AD 1888. Colonna asks: ‘Quel type d’acculturation ce long séjour outre-mer pouvait-il produire? Doit-on pour le comprendre, le rapprocher de la *Rihla* or de la *Hijra*, ou bien d’autre modes d’acculturation forcée comme la *conscription* et peut-être même plus tard, *l’émigration industrielle*?’ Here indeed is a different kind of social order for the Muslims and a different kind of search, for knowledge centred inevitably on the theme of communication with the outside world, and for money.

By way of complete contrast, though still remaining within the nineteenth century, *Larry Conrad*, in a lengthy and wide-ranging article draws together the three major threads of this book—*Hijra*, *Hajj* and *Rihla*—by an analysis of the career of the great Orientalist Ignaz Goldziher in terms of these three themes. For Conrad, Goldziher’s study tour to the Near East between AD 1873–1874 may be viewed equally in terms of migration, pilgrimage and travel. That Goldziher travelled in search of knowledge to the East is in no doubt. Conrad stresses, however, that ‘his scholarly writings were decisively shaped by this journey, not

just at the time he was abroad or in the immediate aftermath, but for all the rest of his life’.

The final two articles, concentrating as they do on a single theme, the novel entitled *Rihlat Ibn Faṭṭūma* (1983) by the Egyptian Nobel Prize winning novelist **Najīb Maḥfūz**, neatly complement each other. The novel itself is a conscious literary ‘parody’ of the famous *Rihla* of **Ibn Baṭṭūta** and a brilliant *tour de force* in the **Maḥfūzian** corpus. The authors of our last two articles, *R.El-Enany* and *Fatma Moussa-Mahmoud* each highlight a different aspect of **Maḥfūz’s** novel: R.El-Enany in his critique stresses the theme of the search for the Ideal State; while Moussa-Mahmoud sees the whole work as a Muslim *Pilgrim’s Progress*. Both articles portray **Maḥfūz** examining a variety of social orders and the ideologies that lie behind them. At the same time, the novel is shot through with the ultimate epistemological quest, the search for that ultimate knowledge to be found presumably in the elusive *Dār al-Jabal* towards which his traveller voyages. For in *Dār al-Jabal* ‘through reason and hidden powers’ one may ‘discover facts’. But we are never told by **Maḥfūz** whether his hero *Ibn Faṭṭūma* actually arrives at *Dār al-Jabal*. El-Enany stresses that this is a natural end to the novel: ‘For since the book is a journey through historical time from the dawn of human society to the Communist state, it is only fitting that it should stop at the present and leave a question mark on the future’.

Such a comment is perhaps a useful one with which to close this brief survey of the articles contained in this book. The words ‘Migration’, ‘Pilgrimage’ and *Rihla* all betoken journeys. As the articles show, they are journeys through a particular Islamic cultural milieu and social order, impressions of which are frequently recorded by the voyager. But there is a very real inner journey as well and it is this which gives an *epistemological*—indeed, *theological*—dimension and coherence to the articles in this volume. The migrant, pilgrim and traveller ineluctably seek knowledge as they proceed and this naturally increases as a result of each experience and encounter. But on every *hijra*, *ḥajj* and *rihla* they travel *within themselves* as well and this is perhaps best exemplified in the narrative of *Ibn Faṭṭūma*. All the articles brought together in this volume under the headings of *migration*, *pilgrimage* and *travel* exhibit the double quality implicit in every major voyage: an *external* social dimension and an often deeper, *internal* spiritual aspect which is a yearning for knowledge—and, for the devout Muslim, a yearning for the *Source* of that knowledge as well.

Ian Richard Netton

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# ABBREVIATIONS

BAH	<i>Bibliotheca Arabico-Hispana</i>
CNRS	Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (Paris)
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
EI <sup>1</sup>	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , 1st edn
EI <sup>2</sup>	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , 2nd edn
ENAL	Entreprise Nationale du Livre
IFAN	L'Institut Français d'Afrique Noir
JSAI	<i>Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam</i>
PUF	Presses Universitaires de France
PUM	Presses Universitaires du Mirail
REI	<i>Revue des Études Islamiques</i>
RMM	<i>Revue du Monde Musulman</i>
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies (University of London)
SPC	Syrian Protestant College
UAE	United Arab Emirates

# SECTION ONE

## *Migration (Hijra)*

# THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIETY IN PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE IMPACT OF THE *HIJRA*: A TRADITIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY

A.M.Nasr

## ARAB SOCIETY IN THE PRE-ISLAMIC ERA

The Arabs did not have a state of their own, as we understand a modern state, in the period immediately preceding the emergence of Islam. The state, as a political entity, with its people, definitive boundaries, independence and sovereignty, with a sultan or a ruler governing the people, emerged later; even then, the question of boundaries continued to vex.

For the Arabs the 'state' meant the group or the tribe they belonged to and to which they owed their allegiance. This group or tribe was the natural and basic social entity among the Arabs; it was highly developed and called in Arabic a *qabīla*. In it the chief of the tribe looked after the welfare of the people and their affairs.<sup>1</sup>

Towns and cities as we understand them now did not exist either. The town was not a political unit as it was with the Greeks. Instead, the *qabīla* was a unit by itself, like the Quraysh in Mecca and the Thaqīf in **Ṭā'if**. By tradition the people were related to their tribes rather than to the 'towns'. In fact, any urban relationship was unknown until the second century of the *Hijra*.<sup>2</sup>

By tribal system we refer to that style of life where a nation is divided into independent groups of people, whose members are related to each other by kinship, whether real or imaginary. This was the type of system prevalent in most of the nations in their early primitive stages. The tribe represented the first stage or the basic unit of social and political organisation. Later on, as society and the nation as a whole stepped up its pace towards development and progress, the tribal system started receding until it vanished almost completely in the developed nations. However, it is still in existence and very much active in certain areas and states, particularly in primitive areas, like some African and other Third World countries, where it is most suitable for the way of life of the people of those areas.

Arabs knew and practised this kind of tribal system from very early times and in most cases have continued it till today—many Arab societies are purely tribal.

It was the most suitable system for their region known for its dry climate and desert land.<sup>3</sup>

In the pre-Islamic era, the tribe was the political unit for the Arabs. This was because the tribe is a group of people or society which has a common ancestry. They are united by the family, the group and the clan. Tribalism gave them a feeling of unity, solidarity and strength because all of them were related to each other by blood bonds. This feeling of oneness was the source of the political and defensive power of the tribe. This unity is equivalent to the sense of national feeling or patriotism among citizens of a country nowadays.<sup>4</sup>

But the tribal system was stronger than patriotism because blood bonds are stronger. It was stronger because tribalism encourages the support or allegiance of the individual to his tribe, even when he is oppressed or is himself the oppressor. Tribalism depends on kinship and therefore the strength or the unity of the tribe depends on the strength of this relationship.<sup>5</sup>

Allegiance or the sense of belonging in Arabs may be divided into two categories: *blood allegiance* which depends on the kinship among the people of the same house and the strong relationship that exists among its members as belonging to the same family; and *tribal allegiance* where they are related to each other by the father or the grandfather or an ancestor of the same group, from whom the tribe or the related tribes have been formed.<sup>6</sup>

Thus the tribal system is a reflection of that primitive social organisation which suits the environment they live in. People belonging to one tribe used to, and still, live in one contiguous area because they need each other's help for protection and sustenance. The tribe became bigger or smaller according to the branches or clans that formed part of it.

The layers of the tribe have been described in seven steps or grades, which are given here in descending order: *al-Jidhm*, the main stock from which the tribes are derived; *al-ʿImāra*; the smaller tribe; *al-Fakhidh*, the tribal sub-division; *al-ʿAshīra*, the clan; the squad; and lastly the band which represents the man and his family. Some people have viewed this classification, with its inclusion of such terms as *fakhidh* and as being derived from the description of the she-camel and this is typical of the Arabic way of life.<sup>7</sup>

The individual had a strong fanatical feeling or allegiance to his tribe wherever he lived, be it in the countryside or in the town. Similarly, the tribe had the same concern and care for its members who were related to each other—at least theoretically—by blood bonds. However, in spite of the Arabs' pride in their kinship and the efforts of each tribe to keep its race pure, an ethnic mixture could not be completely prevented at the individual or the tribal level due to various reasons. Some of the reasons were inter-tribal or inter-clan marriages, confederacy with other tribes, or the protection given to a person from some other tribe or clan, who was escaping from his tribe for a crime committed or for any other reason. In the case of a refugee, although at first he was treated as an intruder and an outsider, he could later on be taken as a servant or follower as the

years passed by; the fact that he was an outsider was forgotten and he could eventually become a member of the tribe.<sup>8</sup>

The tribe was a small state by itself, fulfilling the conditions of the modern day state, except that it did not have a defined *permanent* territory to call its own. This was because of the nomadic nature of the tribe's life: it continually travelled in search of water and food for itself and its livestock. In this type of life it required mutual support for protection from attacks by other tribes and for its day-to-day life; this in turn produced in its members a fierce allegiance to and solidarity with the tribe. These members identified themselves with their tribe. The hard realities of the life around them strengthened this allegiance. It is because of these tribal instincts that they were able to defend their existence and secure sources of sustenance like food and water. The life of the tribes was a constant struggle—either to defend themselves or to beat off the intruders from their present territories. In this task of defence and attack, smaller tribes had to seek the help of bigger and stronger tribes or enter into what can be termed a 'confederacy' with those tribes. The law of the desert was similar to the jungle law where 'right is always with power and those with the sharper and stronger swords are the right ones'.<sup>9</sup>

The word 'tribe' in its primitive meaning originally meant the group of people who were all related to each other by a shared grandfather or great-grandfather and it was a blood relationship that bound them together. Accordingly, this group should live in complete isolation from neighbouring groups of people. But in the Arab environment as found in the Arabian Peninsula, this type of isolation was not possible because their constant and continuous movement from one place to another brought them face to face with the people of other tribes; they had to live side by side with other tribes, there were invasions or wars by stronger tribes and to ward off these dangers they had to enter into treaties or confederations with others. Thus, as time went by, the tribe was not, and could not be, limited to pure kinship, but also came to include servants, slaves and intruders.<sup>10</sup>

It has been suggested that as long as the tribes maintained their bedouin lifestyle and their ferocity, they retained their power to beat off attacks or intrusions from others because tribal allegiance was the source of their power. But as they became more modernised or civilised they lost their toughness. The reasons that gave rise to such situations are many: they could include marriage to a person outside the tribe, moving from one tribe to another, or acquiring a slave who came along with a bride from another tribe. Confederacy was a further factor that resulted in the weakening of the tribe. Confederacy gave added protection. It could also give rise to a situation in which a weaker tribe gradually lost its identity and slowly integrated itself with a stronger one, finally bringing to an end its own identity.<sup>11</sup>

If we now turn to the political system as it existed in the pre-Islamic era, we can best describe it as a basic one with a chieftain at the head of a group or a clan, who depended on the people of the group or clan for his power or authority. This power base consisted of all the members of the tribe or the tribal gathering. In the

case of a confederation it included the people of the other tribes also. In a way this system had analogies with a modern democratic system.<sup>12</sup>

The members of the tribe appointed the leading, or an elderly, person of the tribe as the chief, and he was known as the head or the lord of the tribe. He was not a dictator or a tyrant; he had to consult the leaders of the other sub-groups in the tribe, and the wise men in the tribe, in his work and in his duties as the chief of the tribe. By tradition, the sons of the chief were chosen as successors to the father. However, there was also a custom of electing the chief from among the members. The characteristics the people sought in their leader included nobility, age, mild-temper, eloquence, wisdom, generosity and courage in word and deed. Above all, the chief was expected to devote himself entirely to the service and defence of the tribe.<sup>13</sup> He was required to preserve the group's unity, and for that reason he was called Master, Chief, Shaykh or *Amīr*. He was also chosen for his strong personality, experience, and sometimes even for his wealth, especially if there were no other person wealthier than himself.

The chief's tent was generally of a red colour, and surrounded by a fire; located in a high place and guarded by dogs, it could thus be easily recognised by the people of the tribe or by others who came to visit him. The chiefs were also called upon to decide or give judgement in the disputes which might arise among the people of the tribe.<sup>14</sup>

The Shaykh or chief had an obligation to help the weaker sections of society, open his house to guests and help the poor in their needs. His decision in any dispute was binding and had to be accepted by the parties to the dispute. He also had several rights as the leader of the tribe. Among them were the right to a quarter of any booty; the right to choose whatever he wanted before the distribution of the booty; control over the soldiers; a claim on money gathered before the war, and money that could not be distributed from the booty. It was rare that the Shaykh of the tribe was high-handed in his behaviour or management of the affairs of the tribe because he had to consult and be guided by the wise men in the tribe.<sup>15</sup>

As explained before, the selection of the chief of the tribe was not necessarily ruled by inheritance. It could also take the form of an election, in which the heads of the families and fellow tribesmen would give their opinion and preference. The keenness of the Arabs in preserving the purity of their race came into play in this kind of election. If the son of the previous ruler or chief had all the characteristics the people looked for in their chief, he usually won the election. Thus both the elective and hereditary principles had a place in tribal life.

It is of great importance here to note that the leadership of a tribe was not the monopoly of men alone. The history of the Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula and other areas in the pre-Islamic era reveals a number of women who were the leaders of tribal Arab societies, and bore the title of 'queens'.<sup>16</sup>

## THE BASIS OF THE NEW UMMA IN MEDINA

The *Hijra* from Mecca to Medina, as is well-known, took place in AD 622. As more and more people belonging to different tribes and clans began to accept Islam, the Prophet **Muhammad** became the chief and the leader of a heterogeneous band and he united them by the bonds of brotherhood and religion. When he migrated to Medina, there were already Muslims belonging to the Aws and Khazraj tribes who were known to the followers of the Prophet. There were also polytheists and the Jews.<sup>17</sup> Then there were several people from other areas. Most of the followers of the Prophet were merchants, so when people from other areas came to Medina, the Prophet asked the **Anṣār** to help these people. **Muhammad** placed considerable trust in the sincerity of the Muslims of Medina and the **Anṣār** heeded their Prophet's call and gave new arrivals much help in the way of money and jobs. They were allowed to work on farms belonging to the **Anṣār** and thus enabled to make a living, even though jobs were scarce.<sup>18</sup>

The establishment of the new *Umma* took place in several stages: one of the first tasks the Prophet **Muhammad** undertook in Medina was the building of a centre where religious ceremonies could be held. This also served as a place for social gatherings, where the **Anṣār** gathered to discuss public affairs and the solution to their problems. This centre was the mosque which was to become a prime symbol of the Islamic religion. It was here that Arab groups coming to Medina were received. New arrivals would rest their camels in its halls and meet the Prophet in the roofed gallery. It was also in this gallery that the Muslim leaders of expeditions were given the flags which they would carry with them. In addition, the mosque was considered to be a teaching and cultural centre; it was here that the companions of the Prophet taught the Holy Qur'ān and the Sunna to new arrivals in Medina. (Later on, the mosque also became a school where students acquired knowledge, as well as a social centre; it was usually built in residential areas.) The Prophet and his companions used to meet here to discuss problems, to recite verses from the Qur'ān and for other activities.<sup>19</sup>

Although the Aws and Khazraj tribes were hostile towards each other for a long time, they both chose the Prophet to be their leader. The latter tried to make peace between them by removing the hatred and hostility that existed between them and uniting them under the name of the **Anṣār** since they were supporters of Islam. The Prophet later concentrated on uniting the Muhājirūn and the **Anṣār** by the bonds of brotherhood and religion. (The bond of brotherhood in pre-Islamic times known as confederation had often had serious consequences.<sup>20</sup>)

Before the end of the first year after the *Hijra*, the Prophet issued a document that welded into a single Umma the Muhājirūn and the Medinan **Anṣār**. The document also organised relationships between Muslims in general, and the people of Medina from the Jewish groups. In order properly to understand and appreciate the Prophet's arrangements and organisation of affairs in Medina we need to be aware of the characteristics of Medinan society at that time, and remember it was a period when there was absolutely no administration and

governance of the type which we find in a modern state.<sup>21</sup> The document that the Prophet produced became known as *The Constitution of Medina*. Its most significant feature, among many striking points, was the stress at the beginning on the concept of *Umma* or *community*. The *Hijra* had produced its first major change: *unity based on religious community rather than the tribe*.

## CONCLUSION

When one contrasts the state of Arab society before the *Hijra* with what developed after that seminal event, it is small wonder that Muslim historians and sociologists have considered the migration of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina as one of the greatest events in the history of Islam as a religion, and the history of Arab society when examined from a sociological point of view. It changed the direction and pace of life in Medina in such a fashion that its impact was felt in all spheres of Medinan life. But it did not end there.

The Arabian Peninsula was the first and major recipient of the benefits of this upheaval. The Prophet's migration was the harbinger of changes that transformed Arabian society from one of considerable incoherence, hatred, in-fighting and indiscipline into one which embraced the ideals of discipline, justice, love and brotherhood. In time it brought some unity and solidarity to Arabian society and from a timid, hand to mouth existence, it provided the basis for a strong, powerful *Umma* which could later embark on the conquests and overthrow the Byzantine and Sāsānian empires in the Middle East. The *Hijra* gave life, new ideals and goals to strive for, that years later were to show their fruits by giving Islamic society its honoured place in the history of the modern world.

## NOTES

- 1 **Aḥmad** Ibrāhīm al-Sharīf, *Makka wa 'l-Madīna fī 'l-Jāhiliyya wa 'Ahd al-Rasūl*, (Cairo: Dār al-Fikr al-'Arabī, 1965), p. 34.
- 2 *Ibid.*, p. 35.
- 3 **al-'Aṣabiyya** *al-Qabaliyya wa Atharuhā fī 'l-Shi'r al-Umawī*, (Beirut: al-'Arabiyya li 'l-Ta'līf wa 'l-Tarjama wa 'l-Nashr, 1963), p. 53.
- 4 Jawād 'Alī, **al-Mufaṣṣal** *Tārīkh al-'Arab qabl al-Islām*, 2nd edn., (Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm li 'l-Malāyīn, 1978), vol. 1, p. 365.
- 5 Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, (Beirut: Mu'assasa Jamāl li '**l-Ṭibā'a** wa 'l-Nashr, 1979), vol. 2, p. 424.
- 6 'Abd al-'Azīz Sālim, *Tārīkh al-'Arab fī 'Aṣr al-Jāhiliyya*, (Beirut: Dār **al-Nahḍa** al-'Arabiyya li '**l-Ṭibā'a** wa 'l-Nashr, 1971), p. 412.
- 7 Sa'd Zaghūl 'Abd Fī *Tārīkh al-'Arab qabl al-Islām*, (Beirut: Dār **al-Nahḍa** al-'Arabiyya li '**l-Ṭibā'a** wa 'l-Nashr, 1976), p. 304.
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 305; see also al-Qalqashandī, *Nihāyat al-'Arab fī Ma'rifat Ansāb al-'Arab*, ed. by Ibrāhīm al-Ibyārī, (Cairo: al-Sharika al-'Arabiyya li '**l-Ṭibā'a** wa 'l-Nashr, 1959), p. 21.

- 9 ‘Alī, *al-Mufaṣṣal*, vol. 4, p. 214.
- 10 *al-‘Aṣabiyya al-Qabaliyya*, p. 57.
- 11 ‘Umar Farrūkh, *Tārīkh al-Jāhiliyya*, (Beirut: Dār al-‘Ilm li ‘l-Malāyīn, 1964), p. 150.
- 12 ‘Abd al-Wahhāb **Yahyā** *al-‘Arab fi ‘l-‘Uṣūr* (Beirut: Dār **al-Nahḍa** al-‘Arabiyya li **‘l-Ṭibā‘a** wa ‘l-Nashr, 1978), p. 336.
- 13 *Fī Tārīkh al-‘Arab qabl al-Islām*, p. 307.
- 14 ‘Abd al-Mun‘im Mājid, *al-Tārīkh al-Siyāsī li ‘l-Dawla al-‘Arabiyya*, 5th edn., (Cairo: Maktabat al-Anglū **al-Miṣriyya** 1975), Pt. 1, p. 50.
- 15 Sālim, *Tārīkh al-‘Arab fi al-Jāhiliyya*, p. 415.
- 16 **Yahyā** *Al-‘Arab fi ‘l-‘Uṣūr* al-Qadīma, p. 336.
- 17 **Muḥammad** Jamāl al-Dīn Surūr, *Qiyām al-Dawla al-‘Arabiyya al-Islāmiyya*, (Cairo: Dār al-Fikr al-‘Arabī, 1952), p. 81.
- 18 Al-Sharīf, *Makka wa ‘l-Madīna*, p. 407.
- 19 ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Sālim, *Tārīkh al-Dawla al-‘Arabiyya*, (Alexandria: Mu‘assasa Shabāb al-Jāmi‘a, 1988), p. 81.
- 20 *Dirāsāt Tārīkh al-‘Arab: Mundhu ma qabl al-Islām al-Umawiyīn*, (Alexandria: Mu‘assasa Shabāb al-Jāmi‘a, 1983), pp. 91–92.
- 21 *Ibid.*, p. 92.

## HIJRA AND THE DISSEMINATION OF WAHHĀBĪ DOCTRINE IN SAUDI ARABIA

Roger Webster

In Islam the *Hijra* par excellence is the flight of **Muḥammad** from Mecca to Medina in AD 622. As the Qur'ān repeatedly asserts, the fate of the prophet of God in this world is to meet persecution from those he seeks to help. To escape persecution **Muḥammad** took refuge in Yathrib where, with the help of its citizens and allies, he founded the prototype of the ideal Islamic community. At the heart of this ideal community is the city, Madīnat al-Nabī, regulated in all its affairs by divinely revealed law. The realisation of such a community is miraculous proof of divine omnipotence and divine intervention in human affairs. Corrupt, worldly communities with their false prophets, oppressive rulers and family cliques crumble in the face of manifest perfection. Actualisation of perfection at the centre through *hijra* is followed by explosive expansion by means of *da'wa* and *jihād* in accordance with the universalism of the monotheist message. In addition to the literal sense of 'emigration', *hijra* also implies insistence on a decisive repudiation of unbelief, and is associated with attempts to create an ideal Islamic polity modelled on that of Medina. For these reasons *hijra* has been employed by a number of fundamentalist movements, including the Wahhābīs of Najd, the Wahhābī-inspired Nigerian reformers led by Uthman Dan Fodio, and the splinter group of the Muslim Brothers known to their detractors as the 'Takfīr wa 'l-Hijra'.

*Hijra* also carries the connotation of a *place* of emigration or refuge. The related form *hajar* appears in several ancient and modern place names in Arabia, such as Hajar **al-Bahrayn** and Hajar Najrān.<sup>1</sup> Yāqūt relates that in the speech of the southern Arabs *hajar* meant a settlement (*qarya*). He suggests that this is derived from *hijra*, meaning 'a bedouin's leaving the desert and settling in the towns'. The element common to all these usages is the sense of refuge, whether from the dangers of the desert or the dangers of unbelief.<sup>2</sup> For urban man the desert is a place of both physical and spiritual danger for it is a place without forms. The anarchy of the desert tribes, an absence of stable political forms, is dangerous to urban governments. The Qur'ān itself brands desert dwellers as faithless, while urban Muslims travelling temporarily through the desert are permitted to relax many forms of ritual, including even the direction of prayer if praying on the move.

In Najd in the early twentieth century a number of communities known as *hijra* (plural *hujar*) came into being in the space of a few years, starting with **al-Artāwiyya** in 1912, soon followed by **al-Ghaṭghaṭ** and numbering about two hundred by 1930.<sup>3</sup> These were communities of a very specific type, formed by bedouin converts to the Wahhābī doctrine that was then undergoing a revival under the leadership of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Su‘ūd. Wahhābism already had its urban capital at Riyadh, the exemplary community housing the authoritative interpreters and executors of divine law, the al-Shaykh and Āl Su‘ūd. The new bedouin converts, styled Ikhwān, acknowledged the authority of Ibn Su‘ūd as *Imām* and differed from the urban adherents of the creed only by their extreme adherence to its fundamentals and their equally extreme ignorance of all else. The converts severed themselves from their fellow tribesmen who did not embrace the new movement, regarding them as living in a state of unreformed *jāhiliyya* as they themselves had lived prior to their conversion. They also renounced nomadism as a way of life and many among the early settlers sold off their livestock upon joining the movement. They were however unable, as former bedouin, to reconcile themselves to a sedentary life in existing towns whose inhabitants they now suspected of religious hypocrisy much as before they had held them in contempt as weak and flabby sophisticates. Rather than emigrate to the towns, they established their own exclusive colonies, the *hujar*, within their desert homelands.

#### IBN ‘ABD AL-WAHHĀB’S DOCTRINE OF

**Muḥammad** ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb drew a distinction between what he termed *tawḥīd al-rubūbiyya* and *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya*.<sup>4</sup> The former denotes affirmation of God as the sole creator and sustainer of the universe, the latter of God as the sole object of worship. Since even Christians, Jews and some infidels admit the former, it is affirmation of *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya* that decisively distinguishes the Muslim from the *kāfir*. Seeking the intercession of prophets or saints living or dead, visiting their tombs and asking their aid or making sacrifices to them, the use of amulets and similar popular superstitious practices all constitute a denial of *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya* and are classed as *tāghūt*. Philosophical rationalism (*kalām*) is equally *tāghūt* since knowledge should be derived from God alone, through revelation and the *Sunna*, rather than from observation of created phenomena. Those who make the Islamic profession of faith and observe all the rites of Islam while also participating to the slightest degree in any of these *tawāghūt* are not Muslims but infidels; they are hypocrites whose place in hell will be even lower than that of the Jews and Christians. These would include *sūfis* rationalists, the Shī‘a and in fact most ordinary Muslims. Failure to denounce the hypocrites, to combat them by every means, or even to doubt their *shirk*, constitutes *shirk* in itself. The practical outcome of the Shaykh’s teaching was therefore a violent assault on other Muslim scholars, their works, adherents and sympathisers.

Insistence on a rigorous split between true believers and the rest paves the way for *hijra*, but the idea of *hijra* as such is not given much prominence in the writings of Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb. His doctrinal tracts consist of little more than multiple reiterations of his basic tenets, which include in addition to his strict insistence on *tawhīd* a literal belief in the divine names and attributes, the angels, the throne, and acceptance of fate (*qadar*). These are threaded together with verses of scripture and of which he accepted only the well supported ones while rejecting the weak, as ‘proofs’. His treatise *Thalāthat al-Uṣūl*<sup>5</sup> (The Three Principles) sets out a description of the true faith in terms of answers to the questions that will be asked of every soul by the two angels in the grave. These three principles are knowledge of God, knowledge of the religion of Islam, and knowledge of the Prophet **Muḥammad**. Knowledge of the Prophet includes knowledge of his *Sunna*, in which *hijra* is explained thus:

*Hijra* means moving from the land of *shirk* to the land of Islam, and *hijra* from the land of *shirk* to the land of Islam is a duty for this community that remains until the final hour.<sup>6</sup>

and

The proof that *hijra* is part of the *Sunna* is the saying of the Prophet, upon whom be peace: ‘*Hijra* will not cease until repentance ceases, and repentance will not cease until the sun rises in the west’.<sup>7</sup>

The doctrinal treatises and the works of *fiqh* are couched in ahistorical and generalised terms, their schematised context being that of seventh century Mecca and Medina. The letters of the Shaykh are more helpful in providing clues to the actual circumstances of eighteenth century Najd. He is critical of the scholars of **Başra**, **Ḥasā** and the **Hijāz** who have absorbed the abominable doctrines of Ibn al‘Arabī and Ibn **al-Fāriḍ** and of the preachers of Najd who follow them. He makes repeated attacks on the visiting of tombs and the erection of domes over them in Iraq, **Ḥasā** and the **Hijāz** and reverence of living shaykhs and sayyids by their disciples. The district of Kharj, he says, was well known for its superstitious beliefs and practices. While the scholars and townspeople were led astray by false doctrines, the bedouin were barely touched by Islam at all:

You know well that the bedouin disbelieve in the scripture in its entirety, and are quite devoid of the true faith, and they mock the settled people for believing in the Resurrection. They prefer the rule of *tāghūt* to that of the *sharī‘a* of God which they mock despite their admission that **Muḥammad** is the Prophet of God and that the settlers have the Book of God, yet they lie and disbelieve and obstinately pour scorn. Yet despite this you object to our calling them infidels.<sup>8</sup>

## THE RISE OF THE IKHWĀN MOVEMENT

The manner in which the first Ikhwān *hijra* was established at **al-Arṭāwiyya** remains obscure. The settlement only came to the attention of foreign observers such as Dickson, Philby and Glubb after it had expanded and gained notoriety. Their retrospective accounts were coloured by these later developments and by faulty information.<sup>9</sup> Najdī historians and the traditions of the modern inhabitants of **al-Arṭāwiyya** agree that the first settlers were a mixed band of converted tribesmen from the ‘Utayba and **Muṭayr** tribes who had first attempted to settle at **Ḥarma** in al-Sudayr but moved on from there after their fanaticism provoked the indignation of the townsmen. They were accompanied by members of the *ḥaḍar* community from the Banū Tamīm who helped them with the unfamiliar tasks of setting up farms, wells and houses, and by a Wahhābī divine, **Ḥasan Āl al-Shaykh**, as their religious mentor. The previously uninhabited site of **al-Arṭāwiyya** lies on the inner, western edge of the Dahnā’ sand belt, astride one of the principal routes from Najd to Kuwait and Iraq and within the *dīra* of the **Muṭayr** a large bedouin tribe at that time almost wholly nomadic. Within two years of the establishment of the *hijra* the **Muṭayr** chief **Fayṣal al-Dawīsh** had settled there and assumed leadership of the community which expanded rapidly to include at least 10,000 persons, nearly all of them from the **Muṭayr**

It is scarcely conceivable that the settlement could have been founded without the approval of **Fayṣal al-Dawīsh**, but it is not clear whether Ibn Su‘ūd had any direct hand in it. Whatever the case, there is no doubt that Ibn Su‘ūd recognised from a very early stage the advantages of the movement to himself and began to manipulate it in his capacity as *Imām*. In 1916 he purged the *mutawwi* corps of its most extreme elements who had begun to doubt his legitimacy and replaced them with preachers more loyal to himself,<sup>10</sup> and by 1920 he boasted to Colonel Dickson: ‘I am the Ikhwān, no-one else’.<sup>11</sup>

The procedure of detachment from the tribal milieu under the guidance of religious instructors, followed by the formation of an exclusive community under the patronage of a powerful chieftain, follows closely the precedent of **Muḥammad** ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb himself and his eighteenth century followers. **Muḥammad** ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb had used the term *ikhwān* in his letters to his followers among the common people of central Najd who were wholly committed to supporting him by the sword against their fellow Najdīs. These letters are written in semi-vernacular language, using simple terms and avoiding complex theological arguments. A similar style was employed in his treatise *Talqīn al-‘Aqīda li ‘l-‘Āmma*.<sup>12</sup> One such letter, addressed to ‘All of the Brothers who receive it’, bears the injunction that copies should be made and kept by all people of the (loyal) villages, and further copies should be sent to the (uncommitted) settlements of **Ḥarma**, al-Majma’a, **al-Ghāt** and al-Zilfī. The content of the letter is an admonition that zeal in commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong should be tempered if it risks splitting the community of the faithful, and it was written following an incident that had taken place in al-

Sudayr. Another letter alludes to the Qur'ānic verses that are the probable origin of the name of the movement:

Hold fast to the rope of God all together, and do not separate, and remember God's favour towards you, for you were enemies and He reconciled your hearts and you became, by His favour, *Ikhwān* (brothers).<sup>13</sup>

The letters indicate that the Wahhābī movement contained from an early stage a select body of militant activists drawn from the unsophisticated people of Najd. The people of the al-Sudayr district were among this core of Brothers in the eighteenth century as in the twentieth, and it may be that there was a direct historical link between the earlier and later *Ikhwān*.

The second *hijra* was founded at **al-Ghaṭḡhaṭ** within a few months of the first, mainly by members of the 'Utayba but with smaller contingents *also* of One year later the 'Utaybī amīr **Sultān** b. Bijād ibn **Ibn Ḥumayd** established himself there as leader of the community. Although the first converts and **Muḥammad** ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb himself, in his writings, deplored tribalism as a detraction from the absolute answerability of the individual to God, the *Ikhwān* movement retained at least the social forms of tribalism, just as it promulgated an exclusively bedouin brand of Wahhābism as a counterpart to the Wahhābism already entrenched in the towns of Najd. Within the space of three or four years all of the dozen or so large bedouin tribes of Najd had subscribed to the movement, or rather certain of their branches had done so, and had established their own *hujar* inhabited exclusively or overwhelmingly by their own tribal units under sectional chiefs. Settlement in the *hujar* brought many immediate benefits: the colonies were extensively subsidised from the *bayt al-māl* with gifts of food, clothing and seed with which to begin farming. In addition the settlers had privileged access to the royal court where they were able to voice demands for further support and to influence broader policies. Tribal leaders suspected of less than perfect loyalty were summoned to Riyadh and detained there, while more compliant individuals were appointed to head the *hujar*. Land grants for the establishment of further colonies were issued by Ibn Su'ūd to these *amīrs* personally, who then distributed plots to their kinsmen and followers. The fanatical militancy of the *Ikhwān* was harnessed by Ibn Su'ūd for the conquest of 'Asīr, Jabal Shammar, and the **Hijāz**. Their usefulness as a paramilitary force led Ibn Su'ūd to tolerate, for a time, the excesses for which they became feared and hated by the townsmen and nomads who resisted joining the movement.

#### TRIBAL *IMĀRA* AND THE WAHHĀBĪ *IMĀMATE*

**Muḥammad** ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb did not elaborate any detailed political philosophy. Strict adherence to *tawḥīd* necessitates a continual vigilance by the believer over his conscience and acts. In the political sphere, obedience to one

who rules by *tāghūt* rather than by the *sharī'a* alone, is *shirk*, but obedience to a ruler who follows the *sharī'a* is enjoined. The faithful, and especially the '*ulamā*', have a duty to advise the ruler if he deviates from the straight path, but dissent is to be avoided for the preservation of the common good. Thus for the Wahhābīs militant iconoclasm was tempered by acceptance of the tribal *status quo*; dynastic clan rule was sanctioned *faute de mieux*.<sup>14</sup>

At the same time, tribal institutions were profoundly transformed by the unique prominence of the Āl Su'ūd. Segmentary tribal society is often described as a form of ordered anarchy. The anarchy arises from the fragmentation of social groupings into ever smaller units and the lack of a stable central authority. Order arises from the need of these small groups to co-operate in some regularised manner for the exploitation of commonly held resources and their defence from outside competitors. Among Arabian bedouin tribes, the smallest operative unit is the nuclear family that dwells in one tent and manages its own herd. Relations between the tent households of a tribe are conceived in terms of brotherhood, implying structural parity, community of interest and co-operation, but containing also the seeds of a divergence. Brotherhood is thus the ideal relationship on which others are modelled. The herding life requires very little co-operation between households that are often scattered over enormous stretches of territory. Such cooperation as exists is most often between small clusters of households between whom actual relations of brotherhood exist, whereas the ties between the numerous such agnatic lineages forming a tribe may not be known in detail but are construed as being or amounting to brotherhood since all are believed to have sprung from one *ancestor*, *jadd*. Outsiders can be made temporary 'brothers' either on equal terms (as a *khawī*, *rafīq*, or *rabī'*), or on tributary terms through the payment of a tax (*khuwwa*) guaranteeing freedom from molestation. The kinship paradigm represents the tribal structure as the product of a temporal process: brotherhood implies the existence of a past ancestor as originator of the present sets of brothers. Equally brotherhood can be projected into the future through the ideal of cousin marriage (father's brother's daughter) through which the sets of brothers are replicated.

Tribal organisation in Arabia can equally be viewed in spatial and ecological terms. From this perspective a bedouin tribe is a federation of herding groups with a common interest in the resources of a defined territory. The possibilities of effective defensive and aggressive action on a large scale are limited by the spatial dispersal of the herding groups, just as the genealogical relationships of the temporal model are partially obscured by the passage of time. Military co-operation is therefore effected through the mediation of leaders whose unifying role is equivalent to that of the ancestors in the temporal perspective. Tribesmen are (potential) followers of certain powerful chiefs, just as they are (putative) descendants of certain semi-mythical ancestors. Chiefdoms may be renewed or extended spatially through the contraction of alliances as the descent group is preserved and extended through the contraction of marriages. Leadership in the Arabian tribes is in part a question of individual merit, according to the ideal of

brotherly equality, but in practice it is invested in certain clans as a hereditary office. The active incumbent is usually designated impersonally by the clan name, Ibn Fulān, a title that connotes both the temporal depth and spatial breadth of the authority of the clan (set of brothers) as rulers over a defined territory, essentially the tribal *dīra* but incorporating also client and tributary subjects.

The Wahnābī movement had been tied since its inception to one such clan chiefdom, that of Ibn Su‘ūd, whose tribal credentials rested on a somewhat tenuous link with the ‘Aniza and whose territorial base was the district of in central Najd. The scriptural authority claimed by **Muḥammad** ibn ‘Abd al-Wahnābī for his doctrine was tied to the temporal authority of the Āl Su‘ūd, and its universality limited by the extent of Ibn Su‘ūd’s domains. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Su‘ūd described the legitimate extent of these domains either in terms of ‘the territories formerly ruled by my ancestors’ (the tribal-ancestral perspective) or as coextensive with the Arabian bedouin world (the tribal-territorial perspective):

...from the days of Abraham, my great-grandparent, the territories of Najd and the Badawin world have extended as far north as Aleppo and the river Orontes in north Syria, and included the whole country on the right bank of the Euphrates from there down to Basra on the Persian Gulf.<sup>15</sup>

Ibn Su‘ūd’s perception of his position in relation to those of other regional and tribal chieftains is reflected in his choice of titles. The title *amīr* was held by tribal and provincial leaders of varying stature, whether allies, rivals or appointed agents of the central power without distinction. The title *imām* distinguished the Āl Su‘ūd from other *amīrs* as those charged with the social and political implementation of Wahnābī doctrine, the doctrines themselves resting in the custodianship of the Āl al-Shaykh, the descendants of **Muḥammad** ibn ‘Abd al-Wahnābī. While the titles of *amīr* and *imām* often coincided in the same man, there were periods when the *Imāra* was in abeyance, such as the time of civil war between Su‘ūd and ‘Abdullāh in the 1870s, and others when the two offices were held separately by a senior member of the family known for his piety and a younger member who was more politically active. The unique position of the Āl Su‘ūd *vis-à-vis* other *amīrs* was therefore contingent upon the reality of their *Imāma*, whose fortunes fluctuated. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz eradicated this element of contingency and asserted the enduring superiority of his clan by assuming further distinctive titles: **Sulṭān** of Najd, King of the **Hijāz** King of the **Hijāz** and Najd and its Dependencies in 1926, and then King of Saudi Arabia in 1932. The later titles, imported from the Turkish and British dominated borders of the Peninsula, are foreign to the tribal milieu of central Arabia and to this day the bedouin are loathe to articulate them.

The Ikhwān, in true tribal fashion, saw themselves not as subjects of Ibn Su‘ūd but as his partners or brothers. Payments from the *hujar* to the treasury in the form of *zakāt* and booty were reciprocated and often exceeded in subsidies from the treasury to the *hujar*. Raiding and proselytising were undertaken without

reference to Ibn Su‘ūd and often against his wishes. Having instituted very strict puritanical codes of public behaviour in their own *hujar*, the Ikhwān took it upon themselves to compel the populace of other towns they visited to follow the same. As the Kingdom began to take shape with the annexation of the **Hijāz** the Ikhwān continued to address ‘Abd al-‘Azīz as *Imām* and to regard his authority as contingent upon his uncompromising pursuit of Wahhābī ideals as these were narrowly understood by them, to include the enforcement of the puritan code and its ceaseless export to the unconverted periphery. The inevitable conflict between Ibn Su‘ūd and the Ikhwān was precipitated by the collision of the expanding Najdī state with the governments of Jordan and Iraq, under British mandate. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s willingness to negotiate with these powers, to set limits to his expansion and to adopt certain of their bureaucratic methods and technical devices all aroused accusations of hypocrisy and led to the rebellion of the Ikhwān extremists in 1928. In the heat of conflict the rebel faction itself underwent in the space of a few months the transformation from theocratic idealism to political pragmatism through which the Saudi state had evolved more gradually. The three rebel chieftains **Ibn Ḥumayd** (‘Uṭayba), Ibn Dawīsh **Muṭayr** and **ibn Ḥithlayn** (‘Ujmān) set out, or so it was widely believed, to establish themselves in place of Ibn Su‘ūd as rulers of three independent Emirates in western, central and eastern Arabia respectively, according to the dispositions of their tribal power bases.<sup>16</sup> When failure loomed they sought in vain for a negotiated accommodation with the infidel mandate governments, one of the very charges they had levelled against Ibn Su‘ūd.

As rivals to Ibn Su‘ūd the three Emirates were pathetically inadequate and soon eradicated. Their leaders were imprisoned in Riyadh where they died in captivity. The unifying and enabling features of tribalism that had historically been mobilised in the foundation of Arabian tributary Emirates—a territorial base whose resources were held in common, tribal and a vigorous leadership—had by this stage all been captured by the centre, leaving the other clans and regions weakened by the divisive social forms of tribalism. Not only were tribes split between those sections loyal to Ibn Su‘ūd and those sympathetic to the rebels, with no doubt a large number remaining uncommitted until the likely outcome could be foreseen, but the rebels themselves were also divided. The ‘Ujmān did not throw their considerable weight behind the rebellion until the murder of one of their chiefs, b.Fahhād **ibn Ḥithlayn**, by Fahd b.‘Abdullāh b.Jalwī galvanised them into action, by which time **Ibn Ḥumayd** and Ibn Dawīsh had already suffered a defeat. The proliferation of the *hujar* was itself a result of tribal atomism as much, or more, than being the product of any strategic plan from the centre. Each tribal fraction sought to secure for itself the advantages enjoyed by its fellows and to set up its own petty chieftain as an equal of the more influential *amīrs* through acceptance of royal patronage.

## TRIBAL ANARCHY AND RELIGIOUS PURITANISM

The brief rise and downfall of the Ikhwān marks the end of the power of the Arabian tribes as such. Certainly tribalism lingers on as a major criterion of social identity and status and plays a role in the alignment of pressure groups within Saudi Arabia, but it is no longer conceivable that any overtly tribally articulated group could pose a serious challenge to the present order. The episode marks a turning point in the tide of relations between tribal nomads and sedentaries whose ebb and flow was first noted systematically by Ibn Khaldūn. Ibn Khaldūn's analysis can now be seen to have been coloured by his experience of mediaeval North Africa rather than having the universal significance he ascribed to it. A number of more recent scholars have tested and adapted his ideas, often with reference to the Arabian Peninsula where nomads remained a conspicuous component of power relations until modern times.<sup>17</sup> Among the most original and perceptive re-examinations of ethnographic literature on the Arabian bedouin is Meeker's *Literature and Violence in North Arabia*.<sup>18</sup> Meeker proposes that the spread of mounted camel-herding nomadism in Arabia in about BC 1000 exposed all communities of the region, settled and nomadic, to the actual or potential threat of political anarchy, and that the need to formulate a political and moral response to this threat was a unifying force in Near Eastern political and cultural development. The threat of tribal anarchy and the responses adopted for averting it constituted a particular variant on the theme of peril and refuge, guiding not only the process of political development but also the emergence of writing, scripturalism and monotheism and, it might be added, the idea of *hijra*:

As a life of political adventurism developed among the North Arabian Bedouins, they devised political procedures and resources in reaction to the threat of this political adventurism. And as the forms of a strategic response to protect and support human life were routinized and systematized, a severe conception of a monotheistic God crystallized.<sup>19</sup>

The intensely politicised life of the nomads gave birth to 'a religion based upon worldly political performances', whereas the settlers, unable decisively to remove the threat of anarchy by political action, took refuge in a domestic morality that could be kept apart from the anarchic exterior:

The insistence of the townsmen and villagers upon the efficacy of communal conventions as the basis of personal health and public prosperity is therefore an attitude inspired by a situation in which a response to concrete political problems was limited to the fervent invocation of a moral code. As a result, the problem of political adventurism in the desert and steppe, an absence of morality, often became the very reverse problem in the settlements, a fanatical excess of morality.<sup>20</sup>

These insights help to explain why the combination of tribal nomadism and urban scripturalist puritanism produces such an explosive mix, and

how King ‘Abd al-‘Azīz was able to direct the force of the explosion into a series of territorial conquests at a time when he had little real power beyond his personal and family prestige, no money, and few friends outside Najd. They help to explain also why scripturalist revivalism that has been a feature of the post-colonial Arab World, from the reforms of al-Afghānī and **Muḥammad** ‘Abduh to the present day fundamentalist movements, was foreshadowed in eighteenth century Najd, one of the most ‘backward’ and illiterate corners of the region. Despite their differences, both settled and nomadic communities of Najd were intensely concerned with the problems of political security and moral authority. While the two groups were driven apart in their quest for solutions by their different circumstances of life, yet they were constantly drawn back together by their proximity, mutual dependence and shared political experience. The resurgence of Wahhābism in the early twentieth century and its promulgation among the bedouin triggered a short circuit in this polarised system: semi-settled, semi-literate bedouin became embroiled in a fanatical excess of morality that brought the country to the brink of anarchy, while also leading them to become unwitting accomplices in their own political neutralisation.

#### THE WAHHĀBĪ STATE IN EVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVE

The polarisation between *badw* and *ḥaḍar* has been a constant factor in the process of state formation in Arabia. The Wahhābī state, beginning in the eighteenth century and brought to perfection in the early twentieth with the short-circuiting of the polarity, represents an evolutionary step in this process, building on the experience of earlier models and adding novel features of its own. Three stages can be identified in the process. They do not represent a uniform succession but rather a lurching progress in which advance is followed by regression, and earlier forms often persist alongside later ones. Nevertheless the three represent a cumulative evolution through successive phases:

##### 1.

##### *Early City States*

These were based on an urban capital of a comparatively flourishing agrarian hinterland. The surplus generated by agriculture supports urban crafts and administration and a dependent nomadic or seminomadic periphery. The *ideological basis* of the state is that of the geographically circumscribed alliance of city, countryside and nomadic periphery, typically expressed as the local cult with its central shrine. Its *political expression* is kingship, associated with protection of the cult centre. Kings and priests preside over a stratified society in which each sector has its place according to notions of innate superiority and

inferiority. *Legitimacy* rests on service of the cult and the support of its priests. *Limiting factors* are those of demography and technology (production, transport, warfare) by virtue of which the city state remains limited in geographical extent and in relatively self-sufficient isolation but vulnerable to assault from outside forces who do not subscribe to the cult. Examples are the Christian Kingdom of Yamāma (the seat of Musaylima), and in later times the Ismā‘īlī Makramid state of Najrān. Southern Arabia furnishes numerous further instances up until the recent colonial period.

## 2.

*Trading and Tributary States*

Centred upon a city state of the first type, these were less dependent upon and restricted to an agricultural hinterland but extended their influence outwards over trade routes to embrace lesser caravan cities as more or less dependent tributary partners. The possibility of long distance trade followed the spread of camel domestication, and in some instances marine navigation, which was accompanied by the development of nomadism in central and northern Arabia. The *ideological basis* of such states rests on the balancing of interests between the cities who are the main producers and consumers of trade goods, and the nomads who control trade routes. Its *political expression* is the tribal clan, resident in the cities but having influence also among the nomads through ties of kinship, alliance and intermarriage. Egalitarianism, natural justice and the honouring of contracts characterise the ideal relationships between rulers and ruled. *Legitimacy* rests on the ability to maintain security and keep all parties satisfied. *Limiting factors* are the difficulty of sustaining this balance, failure resulting in either tribal disaffection and the looting of caravans, or isolation of the ruler from his urban supporters and increasing recourse to tyranny, often effected through a mercenary or slave army. Pre-Islamic Mecca is an early example. Examples in Islamic times outside Arabia are numerous; this is the type of state regarded by Ibn Khaldūn as the norm. Within Arabia the **Qarāmiṭa** of Bahrain, the Rashīdī state of **Ḥā’il** and the first Saudi state at al-Dir’iyya follow this pattern.

## 3.

*The Islamic State and its Wahhābī Variant*

The reforms of **Muḥammad** can be seen as an effort to correct the deficiencies of the earlier city and trade and tribute states. The most easily identifiable threat is that coming from outside the system altogether. This is condemned absolutely as polytheism and is to be combatted by every possible means. More insidious are the internal threats arising from moral weakness by which equality turns to oppression, justice to tyranny, contractual agreement to exploitation, community to clannishness. If these moral defects could be removed from individuals and from society, then justice and prosperity would follow. **Muḥammad** ibn ‘Abd al-

Wahhāb similarly directed his attacks at local cults, which spread corruption from within, and *at fitna* which he regarded as the special vice of the bedouin. The *ideological basis* is the honouring of the binding contract between man and the transcendent God which requires devotion and moral rectitude on the part of man in return for rewards in this world and the next. Its *political expression* is the oath of allegiance, but the form that this should take has been in dispute since the death of the Prophet. For Sunnī Islam the ideal has been the *khilāfa*, but forms of imāmate, sultanate and kingship are not necessarily incompatible provided certain conditions are met. *Legitimacy* of the ruler depends ultimately on his moral rectitude and practical ability, but the balance of these is likewise in dispute between those who hold individual moral rectitude to be an absolute requirement and those who accept *de facto* power as the decisive qualification. In Arabia, the of Oman have followed the first path and the Wahhābīs the second. *Limiting factors* are those that affect any attempt to build a utopian society on the shaky foundations of fallible human nature. More particularly, the pious conviction that material prosperity is contingent upon, and consequent to, moral rectitude left Islamic rulers in severe difficulties when it came to raising revenues from their subjects. In Arabia, and to varying extents in other Arab lands, all forms of taxation are popularly viewed as unjustifiable extortion with the exception of *zakāt* for which there is a clear scriptural basis. Rulers of the pre-oil era were driven to adopt local and foreign inspired secular means of taxation which made them easy targets for puritan dissent.<sup>21</sup>

The early Wahhābī Su‘ūdī state inherited the problems and prospects of other trade and tribute states and their Islamic variants. There are striking similarities in accounts of the **Qarāmiṭa** of Bahrain and the amirate of al-Dir‘iyya, despite the doctrinal gulf that separates them. Both made strenuous efforts to ‘capture’ the annual *hajj* traffic, the glittering prize among trading activities in the Peninsula. The **Qarāmiṭa** issued an edict that all *hajj* caravans, including those of Iraq and Syria as well as those from Oman and the east, should travel by way of their capital at Hajar, a considerable detour in the case of the northernmost and largest of the contingents. This being unsuccessful, they obtained exclusive rights to escort the caravans and to exact dues from them. The seizure of the black stone and its removal to Hajar has been interpreted in much the same light.<sup>22</sup> The second Wahhābī *Imām*, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn **Muḥammad**, issued a similar order compelling the *hajj* to travel via alDir‘iyya.<sup>23</sup> In each case the economic advantages that would have accrued were to be channelled especially into subsidising the bedouin, so bringing them further within the grasp of the central governments by inducing them to rely on state assistance rather than on the tolls that they otherwise exacted directly from the pilgrims. The orders were also made for propaganda purposes. Both the and Wahhābī states were exercises in utopianism. The realisation of the ideal society, peaceful, prosperous, just and secure, was miraculous vindication of the truth of their doctrinal foundations and a poke in the eye of their detractors. By compelling travellers from distant

corners of Islam to visit their remote desert capitals, the rulers were able to broadcast their message far beyond the Peninsula.

The progress of the successive *Imāms* of al-Dir'iyya as described by the *Lam'al-Shihāb*, which may loosely be translated as *Shedding Light*, follows the trajectory predicted by Ibn Khaldūn. The simple tastes and martial vigour of the earliest *Imāms*, **Muḥammad** and 'Abd al-'Azīz, gave way to the epicurianism and extravagance of Su'ūd and 'Abdullāh. The palace was much extended by the former to make room for his prodigious harem with its retinue of servants, while the latter added fortifications. The Āl al-Shaykh developed only slightly less immodest habits, the third incumbent, 'Alī ibn **Muḥammad**, being reported to have married fifty or sixty times in the space of three years. Having overextended itself in the quest for more booty on the fringes of the empire, the state fell prey to conquering Egyptians and Ottomans, in concert with disaffected bedouin and local tribal dynasties of the Banū Khālid and Āl Rashīd, in AD 1819 and again in 1830.

However, the Saudi Wahnābī state contained within its constitution a formula to counteract these very dangers, and it was this that was mobilised by 'Abd al-'Azīz to reinstate the dynasty and eventually to break the cycle. This formula was stated in the agreement made between **Muḥammad** ibn 'Abd al-Wahnāb and the *amīr* **Muḥammad** ibn Su'ūd as it is recorded by Ibn Ghannām.<sup>24</sup> **Muḥammad** ibn Su'ūd expressed two reservations about entering into the alliance: the first was his fear that if the venture proved successful, **Muḥammad** ibn 'Abd al-Wahnāb might be tempted to desert him in favour of some other princely patron. The second concerned the loss of revenues that might result from strict islamisation of his fiscal arrangements, for he exacted a customary tax (*qānūn*) on the date harvest of his citizens in return for his protection of them, a traditional Arabian and tribal arrangement without Islamic sanction. The Shaykh assured him on the first point that the pact would endure through thick and thin ('*al-dam bi 'l-dam wa 'l-hadm bi 'l-hadm*'), while on the second point he hoped that God would provide conquests and booty in excess of any un-Islamic revenues that the Prince might have to forfeit. With these assurances the *amīr* 'stretched out his hand and pledged himself to the Shaykh to uphold the religion of God and His apostle and to conduct jihād for His sake, and to institute the ordinances of Islam, and to order what is right and forbid wrong-doing'. The problems of legitimacy and succession were resolved by an explicit sanctioning of the dynastic rule of the Āl Su'ūd, and that of economic stability by the sanctioning of plunder of the non-subscribing exterior to make good, and thus to obscure, any practical deficiencies in the idealised interior.

The Shaykh and his descendants remained true to their word. The sanctioning of plunder under the guise of *jihād* did not substantially differentiate the Wahnābī state from preceding tribal polities, except in making explicit the political implications of *zakāt* as a recognition of dependency equivalent to the pagan *khuwwa*. In the border negotiations of the 1950s regarding the extent of Saudi dominions in south eastern Arabia, records of *zakāt* payments by the tribes of the

disputed area were a cornerstone of the Saudi argument. The closure of the northern borders to raiding precipitated the Ikhwān rebellion and brought the Kingdom to the brink of a financial crisis from which it was rescued by the discovery of oil. Oil wealth thus appeared as further providential fulfilment of the pious assurance of **Muḥammad** ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb. The affluence of modern Saudi Arabia is proof of its moral integrity to traditionally-minded Najdīs, even if it has the reverse connotation for some critics of the regime.

The delineation of geographical borders accompanied the suppression of *hijra and jihād*, the processes of contraction and expansion which were for the Ikhwān the only legitimate means of defining the spatial extent of Wahhābism. Within these fixed limits, strict conformity to the political will and cultural norms of the central power, backed by the ‘*ulamā*’, is imposed, so that modern Saudi Arabia reassumes many of the attributes of the early city state referred to above. The preferred form of address of the present monarch has undergone a further transformation from King of Saudi Arabia to .

#### NOTES

- 1 Yāqūt, *Mu’jam al-Buldān*, ed. M. Amīn al-Khanjī, (Cairo: Sa‘āda, 1906), vol. 8, p. 445, s.v. *Hajar*.
- 2 John Gulick in *The Middle East: an Anthropological Perspective*, (Pacific Palisades, Calif.: Goodyear, 1976, pp. 30ff) suggests that the ideas of peril and refuge are a recurrent motif in the social and cultural patterns of the Middle East.
- 3 John S. Habib, *Ibn Sa’ud’s Warriors of Islam: the Ikhwan of Najd and their Role in the Creation of the Sa’udi Kingdom, 1910–1930*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1978). The fortunes of the *hujar* after 1930 have been studied by Ahmed Shamekh, *Spatial Patterns of Bedouin Settlement in Al-Qasim Region, Saudi Arabia*, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Kentucky, 1975.
- 4 *Tafsīr Kalimat in al-‘Aqīda wa ‘l-Adāb al-Islāmiyya*, eds. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Rūmī, **Muḥammad** Biltājī and Sayyid Mu‘allafāt al-Shaykh al-Imām **Muḥammad** ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, vol. 1, (Riyadh: Imām **Muḥammad** ibn Su‘ūd Islamic University, n.d.), pp. 363–369.
- 5 *Ibid.*, pp. 183–196.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 193.
- 7 *Ibid.*
- 8 *Al-Rasā‘il Mu‘allafāt al-Shaykh al-Imām Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb*, vol. V, (Riyadh: Imām **Muḥammad** ibn Su‘ūd Islamic University, n.d.), p. 209. The information in the paragraph before this quotation is drawn from *ibid.*, pp. 166, 188, 189, 203.
- 9 The principal accessible source for the history of the Ikhwān movement is Habib, *Ibn Sa’ud’s Warriors of Islam*. Further details are given in H.R.P. Dickson, *Kuwait and her Neighbours*, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1956), and Hafiz Wahba, *Arabian Days*, (London: Barker, 1964). The various retrospective accounts referred to are summarised and compared by Habib.
- 10 Wahba, *Arabian Days*, p. 127.

- 11 Dickson, *Kuwait and her Neighbours*, p. 248.
- 12 *Mu'allafāt*, vol. 1, pp. 370–373.
- 13 *Sūra* 3:103 (trans. by the author of this article).
- 14 See Aziz al-Azmeh, 'Wahhabite Polity' in Ian Richard Netton (ed.), *Arabia and the Gulf: From Traditional Society to Modern States*, London: Croom Helm, 1986), pp. 75–90.
- 15 Dickson, *Kuwait and her Neighbours*, p. 272. The remarks occurred in the course of opening boundary negotiations with Iraq at the 'Uqayr Conference of 1922.
- 16 Habib, *Ibn Sa'ud's Warriors of Islam*, p. 128.
- 17 For example, Henry Rosenfeld, 'The Social Composition of the Military in the Process of State Formation in the Arabian Desert', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, vol. 95 (1965), pp. 75–86; Talal Asad, 'The Bedouin as a Military Force: Notes on Some Aspects of Power Relations between Nomads and Sedentaries in Historical Perspective', in Cynthia Nelson (ed.), *The Desert and the Sown: Nomads in the Wider Society*, (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1973), pp. 61–73; P.Von Sivers, 'Back to Nature: The Agrarian Foundations of Society according to Ibn Khaldūn', *Arabica*, vol. 27 (1980), pp. 68–91; Hugh Kennedy, 'The Desert and the Sown in Eastern Arabian History', in Netton (ed.), *Arabia and the Gulf*, pp. 18–28.
- 18 Michael E.Meeker, *Literature and Violence in North Arabia*, Cambridge Studies in Cultural Systems, no. 3, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 100.
- 20 *Ibid.*, p. 96.
- 21 Wahba, *Arabian Days*, p. 66. With the fall in oil revenues in recent years the problem has resurfaced, for example in the aborted attempt to impose income tax on foreign residents in Saudi Arabia, and in the riots accompanying the raising of petrol prices in the UAE.
- 22 Kennedy, 'The Desert and the Sown', pp. 25ff.
- 23 (ed.), *Lam 'al-Shihāb fī Sīrat Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb*, (Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfa, 1967), p. 52.
- 24 al-Dīn al-Asad (ed.), *Tārīkh Najd*, (London: Shorouk International, 1985), p. 87. This is an edited re-write of Ḥusayn, ibn Ghannām's *al-Afkār wa 'l-Afhām li-Murtād al-Imām wa Ta'dād Ghazawāt Dhawi 'l-Islām*.

## SECTION TWO

### *Pilgrimage* (Hajj)

THE *HAJJ* IN THE SECOND CIVIL WAR

G.R.Hawting

This article discusses aspects of the political role of the *hajj*. Although there has been some discussion of the Muslim pilgrimage from the point of view of its political significance, so far as I am aware such discussion has treated the *hajj* in a general way and has not concerned itself with the possible symbolic or functional role of its individual rituals and ceremonies. In my discussion I shall be concerned especially with the wuqūf ‘Arafāt and the subsequent *ifāda* (sometimes referred to as *difār*‘ or *nafr*). As is well known, the former ritual takes place on and around the hill of ‘Arafāt (known as about twelve miles east of Mecca, on the 9th of Dhū ‘l-*Hijja*). There the pilgrims ‘stand’ in prayer and listen to sermons of admonition until sunset. This is then followed by the *ifāda* a rather disorganised procession in which the pilgrims ‘disperse’ to Muzdalifa, about four miles back along the road to Mecca, where the night is then passed in preparation for the ceremonies of the 10th of Dhū ‘l-*Hijja*. The *wuqūf* is considered an absolutely indispensable part of the *hajj*, to the extent that the latter is not valid without it. In the words of tradition, the *hajj* is ‘Arafāt.<sup>1</sup>

What I have to say here arose out of a consideration of the *hajj* in the Second Civil War period. It is difficult to assign precise dates to the period of division and turmoil within Islam which is commonly referred to as the Second Civil War, but we are concerned mainly here with the attempt of ‘Abdullāh b.al-Zubayr to establish himself as Caliph. It may be said, therefore, that the period begins with his refusal to give the *bay’a* to the Umayyad Yazīd b.Mu‘āwiya and his consequent flight from Medina to Mecca in 60/680. It ends with his death in battle at Mecca against the forces of the Umayyad ‘Abd al-Malik in 73/692.<sup>2</sup>

That the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca has had, and continues to have, a great political significance hardly needs to be illustrated, and, considering the tendency in Islam to see political questions as matters of religious importance, is hardly surprising. At least two aspects of this theme suggest themselves. One is the opportunity, provided by the annual gathering of thousands of Muslims from different regions, and with different political and religious ideas, for the spread and absorption of these ideas and their transmission to various corners of the Islamic world. History provides numerous examples of such interaction and diffusion, for example the transmission of Ismā‘īlī and then ‘reformist’ ideas to

the Maghrib in the 10th to 12th centuries AD and the influence of 'reformist' ideas on Shah Walīullāh who carried them to India in the 18th century. Sometimes a more conscious, even conspiratorial, element seems to exist, as when, for example, the *hajj* is said to have been used as a 'cover' to enable the 'Abbāsīd *Imām* and Abū Muslim to meet in the furtherance of their movement against the Umayyads. It may be suspected that to some extent we are faced here with a literary topos, but there seems no reason to deny that the pilgrimage and the sanctuary have fulfilled this role.<sup>3</sup>

The second aspect is the way in which control of the sanctuary and the pilgrimage contribute to the prestige and even legitimacy of the ruler who exercises it. Most obviously there is the use of titles indicating authority over (expressed as service or guardianship of) the holy places by, for example, the Ottomans in the 19th century and the modern Saudi rulers. Even rulers not exercising such a direct authority in the **Hijāz** sometimes seem to try to cash in on the sanctuary and the *hajj* as a way of bolstering their prestige and authority. For example, the 'Abbāsīds in the late 12th and the 13th century AD frequently sent ornamental keys to the Ka'ba, thereby, presumably, attempting to associate themselves with the ancient office of the and increase their prestige in the eyes of the Muslims, whereas the earlier 'Abbāsīds had been associated with the office of the *siqāya*.<sup>4</sup> The which came to Mecca from various parts, especially Egypt, together with the various regional groups of pilgrims, were also a way in which the rulers of those parts tried to bathe in the glory of the *hajj*.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps one should mention too the way in which the sanctuary was utilised to give a special sanction to documents, the most notable being the succession arrangements made by Hārūn al-Rashīd.<sup>6</sup>

However, alongside these political-religious connotations of the pilgrimage and the sanctuary, which give them a potential for the creation of division and particularism in Islam, we also find both *hajj* and *bayt* as powerful expressions and symbols of Muslim unity and universality. The feeling of Muslim brotherhood and equality experienced by participants in the *hajj* is a common theme in the literature, frequently associated with the way in which the *ihrām* is said to obliterate social divisions among the pilgrims.<sup>7</sup> We are also familiar with the idea of the sanctuary and Mecca as the centre of things, not only of the Muslim world but of the cosmos as a whole. The idea of the navel of the earth might not be consciously held by many nowadays but it runs through much of the classical literature of Islam and most of the pilgrims must hold the idea that they are returning to the centre of Islam, both in the sense that Mecca was the birthplace of the Prophet and starting point for his mission, and in the sense that earlier prophets, notably Abraham, were strongly associated with it.<sup>8</sup> In this sense Mircea Eliade's concepts of sacred space and sacred time, distinct from worldly or profane space and time, can appropriately be applied to the Muslim pilgrimage and sanctuary.<sup>9</sup>

It may seem, then, that there is a tension between the profane role of the *hajj* and the sanctuary, as elements in the political life of Islam, and their potentiality

to overcome the particularisms and divisions which affect Islam like any other religion or social group. Whether this tension really exists, however, given the religious valuation of political events which Islam makes, may be doubted. One can certainly think of occasions when charges of manipulating or corrupting the holy places and the pilgrimage have been made by one party against another, or by pious individuals with apparently no political aim of their own,<sup>10</sup> but, speaking generally, it seems to be accepted that *hajj* and *bayt* exist in a world where they will form part of everyday political life. It could be argued that this is a further example of the way in which religious ideas and institutions frequently seem to be potentially ambiguous—different aspects of one and the same idea or institution being capable of emphasis according to circumstances.

If one considers the form and content of the *hajj* ceremonies, one's first impression is that generally they seem independent of political or sectarian religious interpretation. By participating in them a Muslim does not necessarily accept the political claims or the religious position of whoever controls the holy places at a particular time. There is no one *Imām* or Director of the *hajj*<sup>11</sup> who symbolises the ruling political authority and submission to whom might be thought to indicate the pilgrim's recognition of that authority. There are a number of variations in practice between the different *madhhabs* and sects, and the pilgrimage is not organised according to any one rite and the exclusion of others. Generally, pilgrims operate in groups with their own *dalīls*, *imāms*, etc. In this way the *hajj* can be participated in by Muslims of different religious and political persuasions although the controlling power might, of course, ban, or limit the numbers of, pilgrims from a particular group or region.<sup>12</sup> This suggests a contrast with the daily *ṣalāt* which, although it may be open in theory, in practice tends to be performed in communal groups behind an *imām* of the required persuasion. It may be significant that two of the differences in ritual which have become symbolic of the Sunnī-Shī'ī division, the differences regarding the *adhān* and the *'ala 'l-khuffayn*, are associated with *ṣalāt* while none of those associated with *hajj* have acquired this symbolic importance (unless *mut'a* marriage is to be associated with it).

There is, however, one point at least in the *hajj* where sectarian differences do seem to come more to the surface and where the hand of the political authority controlling the holy places is made more manifest. Although the sermon delivered at 'Arafāt does not, I think, contain the politico-religious benedictions customary in the Friday sermon in the mosque, the *imām* who delivers the *khutba* at the wuqūf and gives the 'permission' (*ijāza*) for the *ifāda* is appointed by the ruling political power. The role has often been filled by the *Qāḍī* of Mecca.<sup>13</sup> Given the large numbers of pilgrims usually present and the vast extent of the 'plain' (the flat area in front of the hill) of 'Arafāt, it often happens that the *khutba* is inaudible and some are not even aware of its delivery, but nevertheless it seems that it is treated as a required part of the ritual.<sup>14</sup>

Not unexpectedly, it is here that we find the Shī'a (and perhaps others?) apparently dissociating themselves from what is taking place. H.Kazem Zadeh,

who gave an account of the *hajj* he made in 1910–11, tells us that ‘Les Chiïtes ne montent pas sur cette montagne, leur religion racommandant de s’abstenir d’y faire la prière sur elle. De preference, ils prient debout, au pied de la montagne, et s’installent a droite de celle-ci, les Sunnites étant a gauche...’ He goes on to say that the ‘Persians’ (i.e. the Ithnā ‘Ashariyya) have their own manner of praying for their families and friends who cannot be present: they draw a little circle on the ground in the name of the person who cannot be there. Some even draw a circle for themselves in the hope of thus acquiring the blessings of another *hajj*. Sometimes, we are informed, the date of the day of ‘Arafāt differs for the ‘Persians’ and the Sunnīs, and then the former go to the holy place a day later than the latter. In such a case the (Ottoman Turkish) authorities send soldiers to protect the Shī‘īs during their rites.<sup>15</sup>

The account of Gaudefroy-Demombynes differs slightly from that of Kazem Zadeh but agrees in its essentials. He tells us that the *khutba* on ‘Arafāt is without any significance for the Shī‘ites and that they spend their time at the *wuqūf* making their own prayers. He too mentions possible differences in the calendar, the Shī‘īs not being content to accept the decision of the *Qāḍī* of Mecca, and insisting on their own observation of the new moon. If there was a lack of correspondence, the Shī‘īs would remain at ‘Arafāt for an extra day. It also seems, from Gaudefroy-Demombynes’ account, that the Shī‘īs might be rather more rigorous about the importance of the *wuqūf* than the Sunnīs: if one enters *ihrām* and then for some reason misses the *wuqūf* at ‘Arafāt, one must remain in the sacral state until the *hajj* season of the following year. Citing al-Batanūnī, he tells us that in 1143/1731 the Shī‘ite caravan to Mecca missed the *wuqūf* and all the pilgrims returned to Mecca to await there the *hajj* of the following year. Not surprisingly, there was a certain amount of friction between them and the locals, and we are told that the *Sharīf* of Mecca chased them out and they were obliged to wait in *Tā’if* and Jedda instead.<sup>16</sup>

The law book of Najm al-Dīn supports these accounts to the extent that it recommends that the *wuqūf* should be performed to the left of the hill, the time should be spent in prayer for the *ahl al-bayt* and one’s own family, and that it should be made on the flat ground, not the hill itself.<sup>17</sup>

At this point, therefore, the pilgrimage ceremonies seem to give some scope for political and sectarian divisions. Why should this be a feature of the *wuqūf* at ‘Arafāt, rather than of the rites at the Ka’ba in Mecca, which we are accustomed to thinking of as the centre of the Muslim pilgrimage? This question takes us back to the early history of the *hajj* and particularly, so far as this article is concerned, to the Second Civil War period.

As might be expected, given that the *Hijāz* was the centre of ‘Abdullāh b. al-Zubayr’s power and the place where he was situated, the sanctuary and to a lesser extent the pilgrimage (*hajj* and *‘umra*) figure prominently in the sources. Even a contemporary Syriac source written near Nisibis in Mesopotamia knows that Ibn al-Zubayr came ‘out of zeal for the House of God’ and established himself ‘in the south where their sanctuary (*bēth segdethā*) was’.<sup>18</sup> According to

the Muslim sources, Ibn al-Zubayr, on his arrival from Medina, is said to have proclaimed himself as 'he who seeks refuge at the sanctuary' (*al- 'a 'idh bi'l-bayt* or, variantly, <sup>19</sup> and, following the withdrawal of the army sent against him by the Umayyad Caliph Yazīd I in 64/683–4, he is reported to have demolished the Ka'ba and rebuilt it in a different form.<sup>20</sup> When **al-Ḥajjāj** defeated and killed Ibn al-Zubayr, he, we are told, restored the Ka'ba to the form it had had before Ibn al-Zubayr's rebuilding.<sup>21</sup> Various groups who are recounted as coming to offer support for Ibn al-Zubayr did so, according to the reports, out of a desire to defend the bayt or *ḥaram* the They did not necessarily support Ibn al-Zubayr as a candidate for the Caliphate.<sup>22</sup> According to some reports, as is well known, 'Abd al-Malik prevented the Syrians from making the *ḥajj* out of a fear that Ibn al-Zubayr would obtain the *bay'a* from them, and he built the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem in order to provide a focus for pilgrimage there.<sup>23</sup> Others accept that the Syrians continued to make the *ḥajj* but say that 'Abd al-Malik made them give him the *bay'a* before their departure.<sup>24</sup> In addition to these major references our sources are scattered with passing mentions of the Ka'ba, the *ḥaram* and associated sacred places, there are frequent references to *ḥajj 'umra*, *ṭawāf*, *ifāda*, etc., and individuals, by word or deed, often convey their respect for Mecca, the *bayt* and other features of the sanctuary complex.

Rich though the material is in relevant incident and references, however, one is left feeling somewhat dissatisfied with the way in which no real explanation is provided for what is going on. Fundamentally, all we are told is that Ibn al-Zubayr disputed the Caliphate with the Umayyads and set himself up in Mecca where he rebuilt the Ka'ba following the damage it suffered during the siege in AH 64. This does not seem sufficient. One has the impression that it is not just that the conflict took place in the area where the holy places lay, but rather that ideas about the pilgrimage and the sanctuary were involved in the conflict, even though it is difficult for us to see exactly how. In particular the reasons for the rebuilding of the Ka'ba, and the significance of the changes made to it, seem inadequate, and one feels that ideas about the sanctuary were a more important ingredient in the conflict between Ibn al-Zubayr and the Umayyads than is readily apparent from our sources.

It should not be necessary to remind the reader that our Muslim sources date, in the form in which we have them, from the 3rd century AH at the earliest. Although it is evident that they contain material from earlier periods, some probably from the time of the Second Civil War itself, the problem we face is that we cannot usually tell how much that material has been reworked, consciously or subconsciously, in the course of its transmission in order to make it accord with how things 'must have been'. A notable phenomenon, for instance, is when a source like **al-Ṭabarī** who gives different traditions about the same event, gives one version replete with *ḥajj* and sanctuary references while another has few or none. For example, one of the traditions about a meeting between al-Farazdaq and **al-Ḥusayn** as the latter was leaving Mecca for Iraq makes no mention at all of pilgrimage or sanctuary. The immediately following one, on the other hand, tells

us that the meeting took place while the poet was making a *hajj* with his mother and they met **al-Ḥusayn** as they were entering the *ḥaram*.<sup>25</sup> It seems at least a possibility that mention of Mecca triggers off a response in the mind of the traditionist which leads to the introduction of references to *hajj*, *bayt*, and suchlike.

Al-Ya'qūbī has a suggestive report regarding a *hajj* which the Caliph Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik is supposed to have made in 97/716. When he came to Mecca he was met by a group of the *leadmg fuqahā'* (among them al-Qāsim b. **Muḥammad** b. Abī Bakr, Sālim b. 'Abdullāh, 'Abdullāh b. 'Umar, Khārija b. Zayd, and and he proceeded to ask them about how the *hajj* should be made (*sa'alahum 'an amr al-hajj*). When they all disagreed among themselves Sulaymān asked how 'Abd al-Malik had acted, and, on being told that he had done such-and-such, he said, 'I will act as he acted and will take no notice of your disagreements (*ikhtilāf*).'<sup>26</sup> Whether or not this is to be taken at face value, it indicates the probability that the *hajj* and other rituals took some time to evolve into their classical form. Sulaymān apparently did not know the detailed accounts of the and neither did the *fuqahā'*. Such relatively explicit indications are, though, rare and for the most part the details about the sanctuary and the *hajj* in our sources contain little which would make obvious to us that ideas and institutions were still in the process of formation when Ibn al-Zubayr and 'Abd al-Malik were both involved in the demolition and construction of sanctuaries.

There are certain features of the traditional material pertaining to the Second Civil War period which seem worthy of comment, however, precisely because the conception of the *hajj* and sanctuary which is involved seems distinct from that which we know from a later time. Two aspects of the reports in particular seem worthy of remark here, bearing in mind what has been said about the place of the *wuqūf* and *ifāda* in the pilgrimage as we know it today. First, references to *hajj* seem to focus predominantly on the *wuqūf* and the *ifāda* with only few and questionable references to Mecca and the *bayt*, and, secondly, the ceremonies at 'Arafāt seem to have a distinct political and religious significance, in the sense that they are associated with allegiance to a particular *Imām*.

The focus on the ceremonies at 'Arafāt can easily be illustrated. When Ibn al-Zubayr came to Mecca from Medina to escape the pressure being applied by the Umayyad governor, we are told, he refused to join in 'their' *ṣalāt* or *ifāda* (i.e. that led by the representative of the Umayyads), and he and his companions made the *wuqūf* to one side and then performed the *ifāda* and *ṣalāt* separately.<sup>27</sup> In the year AH 62, al-Walīd b. 'Utba (the Umayyad governor of Medina) made the *ifāda* from al-Mu'arrāf (i.e. 'Arafāt) and the majority of those present joined him; Ibn al-Zubayr made the *wuqūf* with his men, and Najda b. (the Khārijite leader) made it with his men; then each of them made the *ifāda* with their own men 'and neither of them joined in the *ifāda* of the other',<sup>28</sup> It should be stressed that these details are not presented with others about the ceremonies in Mecca—they stand alone so that, if one had no presuppositions and were trying to get some idea of what the *hajj* consisted of, using the accounts of the Second Civil

War as the only source, it would certainly seem that *wuqūf* and *ifāda* were the central elements, and there would be little reason to think that it had anything to do with Mecca itself.

Another notable example is given by **al-Ṭabari** in the year AH 68 (AD 688, when Zubayrid control over the **Hijāz** and the East is said to have been extensive). At that time there were four separate banners at ‘Arafāt—those of **Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya**, Ibn al-Zubayr, Najda b. and the Umayyads, and we are told of the uneasy truce which existed between the different parties. The adherents of each (we are not told who led the Umayyad party), it is reported, made the *wuqūf* and *ifāda* independently.<sup>29</sup>

A further case concerns **al-Ḥajjāj** at the time of his attack on Ibn al-Zubayr. The Umayyad general had been sent by ‘Abd al-Malik to attack Ibn al-Zubayr in Mecca with orders, so we are told, to be careful about the *bayt* and to avoid the *ḥaram* instructions which, if authentic, are difficult to reconcile with the purpose of his expedition and with the tradition that he had been put in charge of it because of a dream in which he had seen himself flaying the rebel Caliph. However, we are told that **al-Ḥajjāj** did not go to Mecca at first but to **Ṭā’if**, whence he sent expeditions to ‘Arafāt where skirmishes took place with Ibn al-Zubayr’s men. Having received reinforcements from ‘Abd al-Malik, and permission to attack Ibn al-Zubayr, he ordered his men to prepare for a *ḥajj* (it now being the army advanced, set up mangonels on Abū Qubays, and then went down to Minā.<sup>30</sup> There is no suggestion at this point that they tried to go to Mecca—it seems as if the *ḥajj* could be completed outside. In another report we are told that Ibn al-Zubayr and his men sacrificed at al-Marwa because they could not go to Minā and ‘Arafāt,<sup>31</sup> but we are not informed that **al-Ḥajjāj** and his men found it necessary to adopt similar substitute measures.

It is certainly true that references to the *bayt* and to Mecca are not lacking in the material generally, but there seems little to associate them with the idea of *ḥajj*. We are told, for example, that **al-Ḥajjāj** asked Ibn al-Zubayr for permission to make the *tawāf* of the *bayt* but was refused.<sup>32</sup> A similar report is given concerning **al-Ḥusayn b. Numayr**, the leader of the first Umayyad attack on the rebel Caliph, that sent by Yazīd, although in this case some say that permission was given, others that it was refused.<sup>33</sup> What is not clear, however, is the nature of the link, if any, between the ceremonies at the *bayt* and the *ḥajj*. In the case of **al-Ḥajjāj** there does not seem to be any suggestion that failure to accomplish them invalidated the *ḥajj* and the focus is predominantly on ‘Arafāt. In the case of Ibn Numayr, there does not seem to be any question of the request to make the *tawāf* being connected with the *ḥajj*—there is no suggestion that **al-Ḥusayn** and his men were attempting to perform the *ḥajj*. On the other hand, there is some association elsewhere of the *bayt* and *tawāf* with the concept of ‘umra.<sup>34</sup>

The doctrine that the *wuqūf* at ‘Arafāt is an indispensable element in the *ḥajj* has already been mentioned. Without the *wuqūf* there is no *ḥajj*, Wellhausen seems to have been the first to stress the centrality of the ceremonies at ‘Arafāt and to suggest that the link between those ceremonies and the Ka’ba in Mecca

was consciously made in early Islam. He argued that the Muslim *hajj* was an amalgam of various ceremonies performed at sacred places which were originally independent of one another. According to him, this amalgamation was made in order to elevate the status of the Meccan sanctuary by linking it with the holy places outside Mecca. In the Jāhiliyya these holy places had alone been associated with the *hajj*, which did not involve ceremonies in Mecca. The references to the *hajj* in the Second Civil War period seem to be consistent with Wellhausen's view and do not positively indicate that the association of the *hajj* with Mecca had yet been established.<sup>35</sup>

But it also seems inherent in the reports referred to above that the ceremonies at 'Arafāt had a direct association with politico-religious leadership and adherence. Far from all Muslims taking part together, the various groups in the Civil War are shown as making the *hajj* with their own *Imāms* and refusing to follow one whose authority they did not recognise. It could, of course, be argued that the circumstances were rather unusual, but it is not only during the Second Civil War that this idea exists. Thus, under Mu'āwiya and Yazīd leadership of the *hajj* seems always to have been confined to a very small circle—the Caliph himself, the *Walī 'l-'ahd*, or the governor of Medina (who was a member of the Umayyad family). It was not given to the governor of Mecca, who ranked below that of Medina in the hierarchy.<sup>36</sup>

I have not made a systematic check, but the annual reports in *al-Ṭabari* regarding the leadership of the *hajj* point to the persistence of the idea that it was considered a prerogative of the *Caliph/Imām* down until the end of the 3rd century AH at least. Apart from those times when the *Hijāz* was beyond the control of the caliphal dynasty, leadership of the *hajj* always seems to be entrusted to a member of the ruling family or, occasionally, to a high ranking governor who is clearly the Caliph's representative. Furthermore, there are notable cases where rebels refuse to take part in a *hajj* organised by a government they opposed. In 129/747, the Khārijite Abū Hamza made an agreement with the Umayyad governor for a separate *wuqūf* and *ifāda* reminiscent of the reports about what happened in the Second Civil War.<sup>37</sup> In 251/866 the Yūsuf prevented the pilgrims from making a *wuqūf* at 'Arafāt but led his own followers in it there.<sup>38</sup>

Eventually, as we know, control and leadership of the sanctuary comes to be independent of the Caliphate/Imāmate. The power controlling the *Hijāz* has some role in the organisation of things, but does not seek to use its control to assert its spiritual and political authority over all the pilgrims. Only the power of appointing the *Imām* at 'Arafāt seems to survive from a time when the *Caliph/Imām* himself or his representative actually led the *hajj* (this seems to be how we should understand expressions such as *kāna fulān 'alā 'l-mawsim* or *hajja fulān bi 'l-nās*). When and how did this weakening of the link between Imāmate and *hajj* occur? Presumably in part it was a consequence of the breakup of the Caliphate and the rise of local independent political powers, but the process must have begun even earlier with the establishment of a physical separation between

the Caliphs and the holy places. When the Caliph was in Damascus he could not lead the *hajj* in person on a regular basis. The appointment of members of their family to lead the pilgrimage by the ‘Abbāsid Caliphs, and their claims to the office of the *siqāya* (not very strongly expressed so far as I can see), already may be viewed as a dilution of the link. In the Second Civil War Ibn al-Zubayr had been in a position to restore and strengthen it, and his defeat was probably an important development for the emergence of the *hajj* as something in which Muslims of different sects and schools can participate together. He may also have been important for the integration of the Meccan sanctuary into the *hajj*, but that is another question.

## NOTES

- 1 E.g., al-Nasāʾī, *Sunan*: **al-hajj Bāb**: al-wuquf bi-‘Arafā, no. 1: al- **al-hajj** ‘Arafatu fa-man adraka laylat ‘Arafata...fa-qad tamma ‘**l-hajj** Mālik, **al-Muwaṭṭaʾ**: **Hajj**, **Bāb**: Wuqūf man fātahu ‘**l-hajj** bi‘Arafata: man lam yaqif bi-‘Arafata...fa-qad fātahu ‘**l-hajj** etc.
- 2 For a detailed treatment of the period, see Gernot Rotter, *Die Umayyaden und der zweite Bürgerkrieg (680–692)*. (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1982).
- 3 See A.J.Wensinck, J.Jomier, B.Lewis, art. ‘**Hadjdj**’, *EP* vol. III, pp. 31–38 which contains a section on the political, social and economic role of the *hajj* by B.Lewis supplementary to the text of the first edition article; David Long, *The Hajj Today: A Survey of the Contemporary Pilgrimage to Makkah*, (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1979), pp. 91–93, 104–112; a monograph on the political, social and economic role of the *hajj* in history remains to be written.
- 4 J.Sourdel-Thomine, ‘Clefs et serrures de la Ka’ba’, *REI*, vol. 39 (1971), pp. 29–86; for remarks on the association between the ‘Abbāsids and the *siqāya*, see G.R.Hawting, ‘The “Sacred Offices” of Mecca from Jāhiliyya to Islam’, *JSAI*, vol. 13 (1990), pp. 62–84.
- 5 J.Jomier, *Le Mahmal et la Caravane des Pèlerins de la Mecque*, (Cairo: Imprimerie de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale, 1953), esp. chap. 3.
- 6 See, e.g. *al-Azraqī, Akhbār Makka*, (Beirut: Dār al-Andalus, 1969), vol. 1, p. 227, *Nushka alladhī fī jawf al-Ka’ba* and the following chapters.
- 7 E.g., al-Batanūnī, **Al-Rihla al-Hijāziyya**, 2nd edn., (Cairo, 1911), pp. 24, 26, cited by G.E.von Grunebaum, *Muhammadan Festivals*, (New York: Schuman, 1951, repr. London: Curzon Press, 1976), pp. 41–42.
- 8 A.J.Wensinck, ‘The Navel of the Earth’, in *Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen te Amsterdam*, Afdeeling Letterkunde, Nieuwe Reeks, Deel xvii (1916), no. 1.
- 9 Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, (London: Sheed and Ward, 1958), especially chapters 10 and 11.
- 10 In the Second Civil War Ibn al-Zubayr and the Umayyads each charged one another with making the *haram* *halāl*, and the most common charge made against Ibn al-Zubayr was that he was a in Mecca or the *haram*

- 11 This seems to be in contradistinction to the early Muslim period when, it seems likely, the man who was 'alā 'l-mawsim or who **ḥaḍar** bi 'l-nās actually physically led the **ḥajj** (see below for more on this).
- 12 Following the major disturbances in 1987, the Saudis placed a limit on the numbers they were willing to accept from Iran.
- 13 Von Grunebaum, *Festivals*, p. 32.
- 14 The English traveller A.J.B.Wavell, *A Modern Pilgrim in Mecca and a Siege in Sanaa*, (London: Constable, 1913), p. 198 was unable to tell that a **khutba** was preached. Cf. M.Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *Le Pèlerinage à la Mekke*, Annales du Musée Guimet, Bibliothèque d'Études, no. 33, (Paris: Geuthner, 1923), p. 250.
- 15 H.Kazem Zadeh, 'Relation d'un Pèlerinage a la Mecque en 1910–1911', *RMM*, vol. 19 (1912), pp. 214–216.
- 16 Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *Pèlerinage*, pp. 248, 252.
- 17 Ja'far b.Sa'id Najm al-Dīn *Sharā'i 'al-Islām* (4 vols., Najaf: 1969), vol. 1, pp. 252–254.
- 18 S.P.Brock, 'North Mesopotamia in the Late Seventh Century: Book XV of John Bar Penkāyē's *Rīš Mellē*', *JSAI*, vol. 9 (1987), p. 64.
- 19 E.g., **al-Ṭabarī** *Tārīkh*, (13 vols. in 3 parts, Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1879–1901), part 2, p. 222 (*innamā anā 'ā'idh*), part 2, p. 396 (*yuzhiru Ibn alZuhayr annahu 'ā'idh bi 'l-bayt*), part 2, p. 437 (*ad'ūkwn ilā 'l-'ā'idh bi* part 2, p. 524 (*innamā anā 'ā'idh bi-rabb hādhihi 'l-baniyya*).
- 20 *Ibid.*, part 2, pp. 592–593. Wensinck et al., *Concordance et Indices de la Tradition Musulmane*, (8 vols., Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1936–1988), s.v. *kufr*, *asās*.
- 21 **Al-Ṭabarī** *Tārīkh*, part 2, p. 854; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashraf*, ed. S.D. Goitein, (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Press, 1936), vol. 5, p. 373.
- 22 **Al-Ṭabarī** *Tārīkh*, part 2, pp. 513ff. (the Khārijites); al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, vol. 4B, p. 25 (men from **Ṭā'if**, pp. 58–59
- 23 Al-Ya'qūbī, *Tārīkh*, (Beirut: 1970), vol. 2, p. 261 (*wa-mana'a 'Abd al-Malik ahl al-Sha'm min al-ḥajj...wa-qāla lahum...masjid Bayt al-Maqdis wa-huwa yaqūmu lakum maqām almasjid al-ḥarām* Sa'id b.Batrīq (Eutychius), *Eutychii Patriarchae Alexandrini Annales*, eds. L.Cheikho, B.Carra de Vaux and H.Zayyat, *CSCO, Scriptores Arabici*, 3rd sér., tom. vi, vii, (Paris: Carolus Poussielgue, Bibliopola 1906–7), vol. VII, p. 39.
- 24 S.D.Goitein, 'The Sanctity of Jerusalem and Palestine in Early Islam', in his *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions*, (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1966), **chapter 7**, citing the *Tārīkh al-Khamīs*.
- 25 **Al-Ṭabarī** *Tārīkh*, part 2, p. 278.
- 26 Al-Ya'qūbī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 2, p. 298.
- 27 **Al-Ṭabarī** *Tārīkh*, part 2, p. 222, cf. p. 233 (=al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, ed. Max Schloessinger (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Press, 1938), vol. 4B, p. 133) where the focus switches from **ifāda** to Ka'ba: 'He refused to join in their **ṣalāt** but clung to the side of the Ka'ba where he made **ṣalāt** and **tawāf** for most of the day'.
- 28 **Al-Ṭabarī** *Tārīkh*, part 2, pp. 401–402; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, vol. 4B, p. 29.
- 29 **Al-Ṭabarī** *Tārīkh*, part 2, pp. 781–783.
- 30 Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, vol. 5, p. 358.
- 31 *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 360.
- 32 *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

- 33 Ibid., vol. 4B, pp. 51–52; **al-Ṭabarī** *Tārīkh*, part 2, p. 430.
- 34 E.g., **al-Ṭabarī** *Tārīkh*, part 2, pp. 232–233.
- 35 J. Wellhausen, *Reste arabischen Heidentums*, 3rd edn., (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1927), pp. 81–84.
- 36 Note the report in **al-Ṭabarī** *Tārīkh*, part 2, p. 167 that when Mu‘āwiya wished to appoint a member of his family to a governorship he would first appoint him to **Ṭā’if**, then add Mecca to the area over which he had authority, and finally extend it to Medina as well. When the man was given Mecca, people would say *huwa ‘l-Qur‘ān!*
- 37 Ibid., part 2, p. 1982.
- 38 Ibid., part 3, p. 1644.

## EFFETS PERVERS DU *ḤAJJ*, D'APRÈS LE CAS D'AL-ANDALUS

Dominique Urvoy

Le thème de ce livre, '*Hijra*, *Ḥajj* et *Rihla*' pose la question de la validité d'une vision centripète du *Dār al-Islām*. *Hijra* appelle le retour au lieu d'où l'on a émigré, et notamment le point de départ de l'émigration par excellence, la Mecque; par ailleurs, de la même façon que le *Ḥajj* peut se prolonger en voyages d'étude et/ou de commerce, la *Rihla* est le plus souvent le récit de l'amplification d'un voyage aux lieux saints, amplification dans laquelle l'importance quantitative des autres lieux éventuellement visités ne remet pas en question l'importance qualitative du centre du monde musulman.

Il y a donc une convergence émotionnelle de ces trois termes comme valeur symbolique générale d'un monde centré sur les lieux saints. Mais y a-t-il une portée *pratique* de cette vision symbolique? Autrement dit, ces trois termes agissent-ils comme critères d'action individuelle ou collective? Et alors, comment s'articulent-ils entre eux?

Le cas d'al-Andalus, zone marginale géographiquement, et en même temps un des pôles culturels du monde musulman, peut nous permettre d'approfondir cette question.

L'épopée de 'Abd **al-Rahmān** b.Mu'āwiya, échappant au massacre des Umayyades par les 'Abbāssides, et s'enfuyant en Afrique du Nord d'abord, puis en Espagne, n'a jamais été comparée à la fuite du Prophète face aux perséussions de son clan. Bien au contraire même, sa politique d'appel de sa famille, après son intronisation à Cordoue, a abouti à l'instauration d'une aristocratie de sang royal que les chroniqueurs andalous ont qualifié d'emblée de 'qurayshite',<sup>1</sup> et qui se distingue non pas par ses services, mais au contraire par ses privilèges. À ce titre, la sécession de l'Espagne par rapport au Califat apparaît comme une anti-hégire et s'accorde à l'image que les chroniqueurs au service des 'Abbāssides veulent donner de la réalité: le monde umayyade comme restauration de la Jāhiliyya, face au monde 'abbāsside défenseur de l'Islam. Pour les partisans des Umayyades, il y a au contraire un télescopage de l'histoire qui restaure un ordre immuable, ce que le temps avait étalé diachroniquement (l'existence d'une aristocratie qurayshite, puis l'autorité remise entre les mains de l'un d'entre elle) étant désormais rassemblé synchroniquement, de façon hiérarchisée.

Ceci nous indique qu'il s'établit un lien entre la marginalisation géographique (à la fois éloignement physique, et sécession du reste du monde soumis au Califat 'abbâsside) et une forme fixiste de la perception de l'histoire. La question implicitement posée est la suivante: l'éloignement permet-il d'arrêter le cours commun de l'histoire et de prendre un nouveau cours?

En effet, à partir de ce moment, l'Espagne musulmane va vivre sur deux représentations différentes et parallèles: l'une est celle de tout le monde de l'Islam, qui vit orienté rituellement vers la Mecque; l'autre est celle des Umayyades qui, après un nouveau départ 'a zéro' puisque les adversaires ont anéanti tout ce qui les rattachait à la Syrie, ne cherchent plus leur légitimité en dehors d'eux-mêmes. Elle culmine dans le légitimisme forcené en faveur du Califat andalou après même son effondrement, alors que la tendance générale est alors de se rattacher à celui des 'Abbâssides. Et il n'est pas étonnant de voir cette attitude resurgir un siècle plus tard, quand le mouvement du Mahdī almohade a, de nouveau, introduit une scission avec Bagdād.

Ce n'est donc pas par hasard non seulement affiche un patriotisme andalou bien connu, mais se garde de quitter l'Espagne, tout en s'y déplaçant beaucoup et y menant parfois une vie de proscrit. Et, bien qu'avec moins de virulence, son attitude se retrouve chez d'autres représentants notoires de l'intelligentsia andalouse, comme l'ont souligné les arabisants espagnols: E.García Gómez, pour **Ibn Ḥazm** lui-même, parle de 'nationalisme';<sup>2</sup> M.Cruz Hernández, dans ses études d'histoire de la philosophie arabe, consacre plusieurs pages à l' 'andalousisme' d'Ibn Rushd<sup>3</sup>... Mais il est flagrant, également, que beaucoup d'autres grands noms andalous n'ont jamais quitté le Maghreb, voire l'Espagne.

Et même parmi ceux qui se sont formés en Orient, ou qui y ont terminé leur vie, le 'réflexe andalou' joue à plein: c'est dans sa **Rihla** elle-même que le cadī de Séville Abū Bakr b.al-'Arabī (m. AD 1148) souligne avec orgueil la spécificité du *cursus* éducatif de son pays, où l'on n'aborde pas directement le Coran mais où l'on passe d'abord par la poésie;<sup>4</sup> **al-Ḥumaydī** (m. AD 1095) rédige de mémoire, à Bagdād où il s'est fixé, un catalogue des maîtres de son pays d'origine,<sup>5</sup> et le célèbre mystique Ibn al-'Arabī, un siècle et demi plus tard, se complait à décrire dans sa *Risālat al-Quds* les 'Saints d'Andalousie'<sup>6</sup> qu'il a connus.

Parfois même, il ne s'agit pas seulement de montrer que l'Espagne a fait aussi bien que l'Orient; l'auteur veut montrer qu'elle a fait mieux. C'est ce qui ressort de la célèbre anthologie poétique d'Ibn Bassām (m. AD 1147), *Dhakhīra fī Ahl al-Jazīra*,<sup>7</sup> consacrée au onzième siècle, qui est effectivement le plus brillant sur le plan littéraire.

Mais inversement on retrouve dans l'activité intellectuelle des Andalous la marque de la vision du monde centrée sur la Péninsule arabique, telle qu'elle est rappelée par le rituel de la prière, par les souvenirs de l'histoire, par les genealogies hostensiblement remémorées, etc. De nombreux exemples pourraient être cités, mais le plus extrême semble être celui d'al-Bakrī (m. AD 1094), qui n'a pourtant jamais quitté son pays, et qui rédige un des premiers dictionnaires

toponymiques arabes, consacré presque exclusivement à la Péninsule arabe et constituée sur la seule base des données des œuvres littéraires, lexicographiques et de traditions.<sup>8</sup> Or al-Bakrī est un des principaux géographes andalous, non seulement par sa renommée mais par l'orientation de bilan de l'héritage des Musulmans d'Espagne qu'il donne à sa discipline.<sup>9</sup>

Il y a plus: si al-Bakrī vit ainsi un dédoublement quasi-schizophrénique en développant parallèlement les deux perspectives, centripète et centrifuge, sur le monde musulman, il existe des exemples de récupération d'un aspect au profit de l'autre. C'est ce que l'on voit en comparant les activités respectives de deux historiens-juristes: le cadī **'Iyād** (AD 1083–1149) et (AD 1110–1188). Le premier, oeuvrant au temps des Almoravides, est le parfait modèle du rattachement aux sources orientales avec une biographie du Prophète qui eut beaucoup de succès, et des ouvrages d'histoire ancienne et de généalogie des Arabes. En même temps, comme al-Bakrī, il développe parallèlement une activité proprement 'maghrébine' avec une histoire des Cordouans, des sources de l'histoire de Ceuta, et des classes des Mālikites. Tandis travaillant sous les Almohades, écrit des ouvrages exactement comparables sur le plan religieux mais avec une perspective historique radicalement différente comme le montre son ouvrage de commande, le *Kitāb al-Ghazawāt*,<sup>10</sup> destiné à établir un parallèle entre les expéditions des premiers califes et celles de la nouvelle dynastie.

Enfin, les développements d'une discipline peuvent complètement bouleverser son point de départ. On sait que le genre **Rihla**, dont les modèles anciens, surtout irakiens, étaient d'ordre avant tout rhétorique, prend avec le cadī Abū Bakr b.al-'Arabī une forme toute nouvelle où le vécu l'emporte sur les modèles, et la description sur les répartitions a priori. Ce genre, qui va trouver aux treizième-quatorzième siècles son épanouissement, repoussant la géographie au second plan, avec le Valencien Ibn Jubayr et les Maghrébins al-'Abdarī et **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**, prend son orientation nouvelle de façon toute fortuite, lorsque Ibn al-'Arabī, accusé par ses pairs de Séville de n'avoir pas réellement étudié en Orient comme il le prétendait, est obligé de raconter son voyage pour démontrer sa visite aux divers maîtres dont il se réclame.

Ainsi, la description de la production littéraire nous conduit-elle à une vision 'éclatée' des choses. Non seulement une vision officielle andalouse s'oppose à la vision officielle musulmane comme telle, mais elles se combinent, se ramifient. Tout cela nous rappelle qu'une grande civilisation n'est jamais monolithique mais repose sur la diversité, voire l'antagonisme de ses aspects.

Est-il possible maintenant d'aller plus loin que ces indications, et notamment d'apprécier le poids respectif de chacune de ces tendances? Pour esquisser la recherche je m'en tiendrai ici à l'analyse statistique des voyages en Orient. Qu'est ce que les chiffres nous suggèrent sur les arrière-plans, sur les mobiles, sur les conséquences...?

Les deux sources biographiques principales, et en même temps les plus homogènes, le *Kitāb al-Šīla Tārīkh A'immat al-Andalus* d'Ibn Bashkuwāl et le *Kitāb Takmilat al-Šīla* d'Ibn al-Abbār,<sup>11</sup> qui couvrent la période allant de la crise

du Califat (fin dixième siècle) à la fin de la période almohade (début treizième siècle), nous permettent de dresser l'estimation suivante (voir Table 1):

On voit qu'il y a un net contraste entre la période califale et la suite. En l'espace de deux générations, le nombre global de sujets étant sortis de la sphère Espagne-Maghreb chute d'environ la moitié, proportion qui reste relativement stable par la suite. La crise correspondant à l'installation du pouvoir almoravide entraîne un retrait vite compensé, les deux tranches 500–520 et 520–540 s'équilibrant en une moyenne globale de 52, comparable à ce qui les entoure.

Du point de vue quantitatif, il n'y a donc aucune incidence marquante des sécessions de l'Occident musulman: c'est sous le Califat umayyade qu'il y a le plus de contacts avec l'Orient, et la proportion reste la même sous les Almoravides qui reconnaissent l'autorité de Bagdād et sous les Almohades qui ont fait scission.

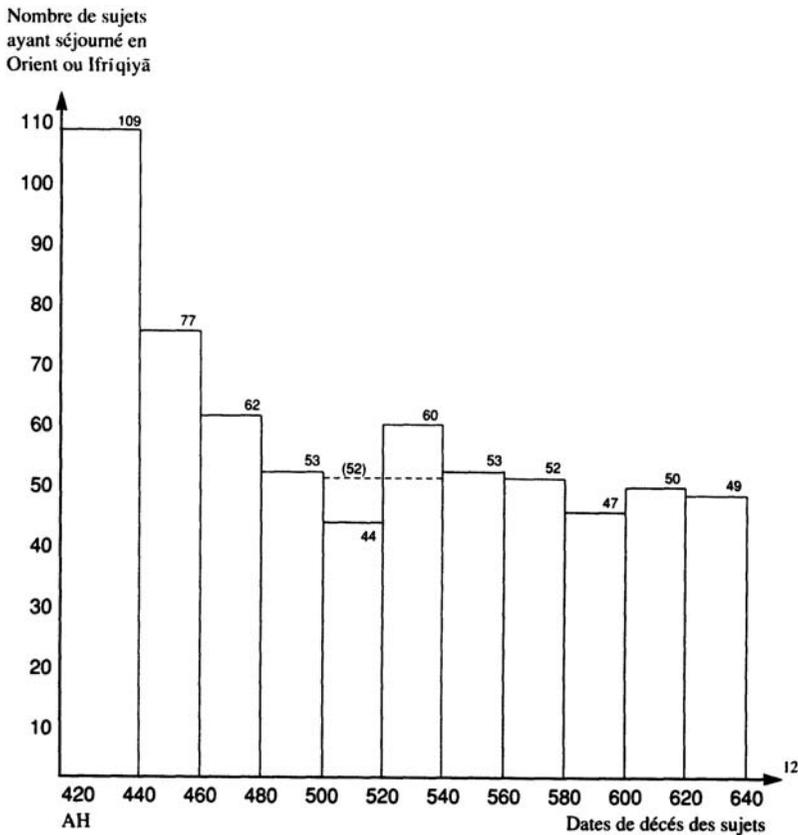
Mais les choses doivent être nuancées car, s'il y a peu de sujets qui s'arrêtent en Ifrīqiyā et ne poussent pas plus loin, il est remarquable que les biographes emploient le plus souvent l'expression vague *ilā 'l-Mashriq*, et ne précisent que rarement si le sujet a fait également le Pèlerinage. Il est certain que le voyage pour étude a souvent compris implicitement le passage par la Mecque. Par exemple, du traditionniste al-Khawḷānī (m. av. AH 440) il n'est pas dit qu'il fit le **Hajj**, mais simplement qu'il étudia en Ifrīqiyā, en Égypte et à la Mecque.<sup>13</sup> Mais cet écart dans les mentions ne peut pas être imputé totalement à la faiblesse de la mémoire collective transmettant les indications biographiques, et il semble en partie significatif. Nous trouvons en effet des individus pour lesquels 'voyage en Orient' et 'Pèlerinage' sont clairement distingués. Par exemple Khalaf al-Bakrī part pour faire des études en AH 423 et ne fait le Pèlerinage qu'en AH 452, vers la fin de sa vie.<sup>14</sup> Nos sources ne permettent pas d'approfondir la question, mais elles rappellent la prudence nécessaire au maniement des chiffres!

En second lieu, il faut éviter ce que les sociologues nomment 'paradoxe écologique', car une valeur à peu près constante pour l'ensemble d'al-Andalus, se révèle comme distribuée différemment si on fait intervenir la variable supplémentaire de la répartition régionale. À titre d'indication, voici cette répartition pour la seule période almohade, et pour les régions périphériques:

Table 2: Les visites pendant la période almohade

Gens de... allés en Orient	Décédés entre AH 545 et 565	565–585	585–605	605–625
Marche occidentale (Badajoz)	4	1	0	0
Levant (Valence)	13	15	9	11
Murcie	4	4	2	5
Almeria	0	1	5	3
Malaga	1	2	5	2
Grenade	4	4	5	1

Table 1: Les séjourners en Orient et Ifri qiyā



Sans entrer dans le détail des facteurs locaux, que j'ai étudiés ailleurs,<sup>15</sup> on peut voir une nette disparité, tandis que s'effectuent des regroupements par 'grandes régions' évoluant parallèlement (LevantMurcie, Almeria-Malaga). Ceci montre que l'apparente stabilité du premier tableau recouvre en fait des phénomènes contradictoires selon les régions et qui peuvent se compenser mutuellement, créant ainsi un trompe-l'oeil. Peu nombreux sont les ulémas andalous qui ont vécu à l'échelle de la totalité de leur pays. La plupart vivaient à l'échelle d'une ou de quelques régions seulement. C'est à ce niveau-là qu'il faut placer la question du rapport *fard kifāya* et *fard 'ayn*, et la stabilité que les statistiques globales nous donnent *rétrospectivement* n'a pu intervenir dans leur appréciation de la réalité et par suite dans leurs mobiles d'action.

Le paradoxe écologique est également levé par l'introduction d'une seconde variable-test: le type de départ (tôt ou tardif dans le cours de la vie; momentané

ou définitif...). Celui-ci n'est expressément donné que pour une proportion variant entre la moitié et le quart des personnes, ce qui reste néanmoins pertinent; il y a toutefois une exception pour la période-déjà notée plus haut—des sujets morts entre AH 500 et 540, où la représentativité est très faible, et ce de façon assez inexplicable. En tenant compte de cette réserve, la répartition reste très instructive (voir [Table 3](#)):

On voit que les sujets ont vécu la crise du Califat comme un appel: un plus grand nombre est alors allé dès sa jeunesse se ressourcer en Orient. Mais par la suite c'est plutôt à titre complémentaire, une fois que la formation est déjà faite pour l'essentiel, voire (de façon assez inexplicable) vers la fin de sa vie au milieu du douzième siècle. Mais ce qui est le plus remarquable c'est la comparaison des courbes de la première ligne et de la quatrième (voir [Figure 1](#)):

On peut constater que ces deux courbes s'inversent très significativement à deux reprises: 1) pour les sujets qui vivent dans leur jeunesse ou leur maturité la crise du Califat: celle-ci est alors vécue comme un défi, et il n'y a que peu de désertion; 2) à la fin de la période almohade, face à la pression des royaumes espagnols chrétiens, mais avant même les succès décisifs de ceux-ci: la lassitude est alors très perceptible.

On peut remarquer, en outre, que sur ce graphique apparaît une troisième opposition (colonne 560–580 [Fig. 1](#)), correspondant à la chute de la Marche Supérieure (Saragosse) dès le début du douzième siècle. Cette région réagit à l'avance comme le reste de la Péninsule, avec le départ direct de plusieurs réfugiés vers l'Orient,<sup>16</sup> comme si le reste d'al-Andalus ou même le Maghreb n'apparaissaient plus comme sûrs.

Il se peut aussi que des liens antérieurement noués aient joué un rôle, certains sujets s'étant établis en Orient dès le temps de paix.<sup>17</sup> Mais il faut constater aussi que la région du Levant (Valence), refuge naturel pour les habitants de la vallée de l'Èbre, et qui par ailleurs apparaît comme une des plus solides et structurées sur le plan religieux, donne en même temps des signes d'inquiétude puisque, dans une région déjà anciennement tournée au moins autant vers le Mashreq que vers la capitale Cordoue, plusieurs sujets partent s'installer définitivement en Orient avant même d'être directement menacés.<sup>18</sup>

Ces quelques rapides indications nous montrent que les diverses orientations intellectuelles et spirituelles dont témoigne le tableau de la production littéraire d'al-Andalus peuvent s'expliquer par des tensions inégalement sensibles selon l'espace et le temps. La confrontation du plus grand nombre possible de facteurs permet non seulement de nuancer des impressions générales, mais même de montrer des distorsions et des contradictions, et de faire sentir que celles-ci ont été vécues collectivement, alors que la lecture des oeuvres littéraires pourrait donner l'idée de phénomènes individuels et isolés.

A ce titre, l'exemple du lien avec l'Orient apparaît comme significatif puisqu'il se montre, suivant les cas, fonctionnel par renforcement de la

Table 3: Sujets allés en Orient: les types de départ

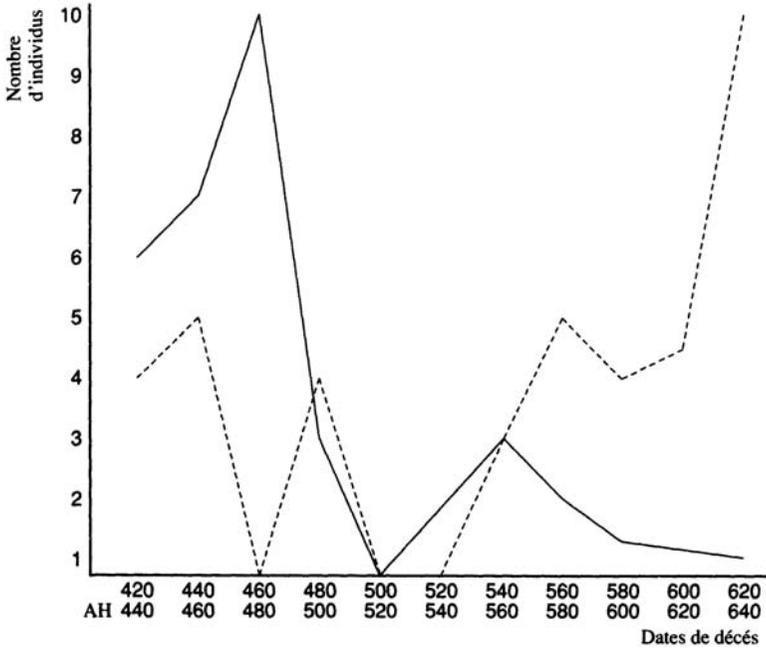
Dates de décès											
Sujets allés en Orient	420	440	460	480	500	520	540	560	580	600	620
AH	440	460	480	500	520	540	560	580	600	620	640
en début de vie active pour étude vers le milieu de la vie active à la fin de sa vie parti s'inst aller en Orient	6	7	10	3	0	2	3	2	1	1	1
Total	29	22	20	14	5	5	18	23	16	17	22
Représentative	1/3. 8	1/3. 5	1/3. 1	1/3. 8	1/9	1/12	1/3	1/2. 3	1/3	1/3	1/2. 2

conscience islamique, et disfonctionnel en tant qu'il favorise la démission devant la pression extérieure.

## NOTES

- 1 E.Lévi-Provençal, *Histoire de l'Espagne Musulmane*, (Paris: Maisonneuve/Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1950), vol. 1, p. 106.
- 2 **Hazm**, *El Collar de la Paloma, version de Emilio García Gómez*, (1st edn: Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1952; 3rd edn: Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1971), pp. 52–57.
- 3 E.g. *La Filosofía Árabe* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1963), pp. 263–266.

Figure 1: Courbe comparée du voyage en Orient en début de vie active pour étude et du départ définitif pour l'Orient



- 4 Cité par Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddima*, éd. (Le Caire: **Maṭba'a** Lajnat al-Bayān al-'Arabī, 1382/1962), vol. 4, p. 1242.
- 5 *Jadhwat al-Muqtabis fī Dhikr Wulāt al-Andalus*, éd. b.Tawīt al Min Turāth al-Andalus, no. 1, (Le Caire: Maktaba Nashr al-Thaqāfa al-Islāmiyya, 1953).
- 6 Trad. française récente sous ce titre (Paris: Sindbad, 1985). Voir aussi R.W.J.Austin, *Sufis of Andalusia*, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1971).
- 7 (Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfa, [1975?]).
- 8 *Kitāb Mu'jam mā 'sta'jam*, éd. F.Wüstenfeld in *Das Geographische Wörterbuch des Abū 'Obeid el-Bekrī*, (Göttingen: Deuerlich'sche Buchhandlung, 1876–1877; ré-éd. Le Caire: **Maṭba'a** Lajnat al-Ta'lif wa'l-Tarjama wa 'l-Nashr, 1945).
- 9 Cf. D.Urvoy, *Pensers d'al-Andalus: La Vie Intellectuelle à Cordoue et Séville au Temps des Empires Berbères*. Fin. XI<sup>e</sup>-début XIII<sup>e</sup>s, (Toulouse: CNRS-PUM, 1990): ch. 1, §1: 'Le monde vu depuis Cordoue'.
- 10 *Kitāb al-Ghazawāt al-Jāmi'a alKā 'ina fī Ayyām al-Khulafā' al-Ūlā al-Thalātha*, (analyse détaillée dans W. Ahlwardt, *Verzeichnis der Arabischen Handschriften der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, (10 vols., Berlin: A.W.Schade's Buchdr. (L. Schade), 1887–1899), vol. 9, p. 221, no. 9689).
- 11 Nous utilisons, pour le premier, l'édition F.Codera, *Bibliotheca ArabicoHispana*, vols. I–II, (Madrid: Maestre, 1883), (abréviation: B); et pour le second: (1) l'édition F.Codera, *BAH.*, vols. V–VI, (Madrid: Maestre, 1887–1889) (abrév.: A), (2)

l'édition du début de l'ouvrage, de alif a jīm, manquant chez Codera, par A. Bel et M. Ben Cheneb, (Alger: Jourdan, 1920). (abrég.: Abc), (3) le Supplément et variantes, édité par M. Alarcón et A. González-Palencia dans *Miscelanea de Estudios y Textos Arabes*, (Madrid: Maestre, 1915), pp. 147–690 (abrég.: Aag). Sur ces ouvrages et leur utilisation statistique, cf Urvoy: *Le Monde des Ulémas Andalous du VI<sup>e</sup> XI<sup>e</sup> au VII<sup>e</sup>/XIII<sup>e</sup> Siècle*, Hautes Études Islamiques et Orientales d'Histoire Comparée, no. 8, (Genève: Droz, 1978).

- 12 La *Takmila* a été commencée en 631/1233, et complétée et retouchée durant vingt ans.
- 13 B, biographie no. 768.
- 14 B, no. 384.
- 15 Cf *Le Monde des Ulémas*. Les tableaux ici représentés ne sont pas exactement semblables car les tranches temporelles ont été homogénéisées pour les besoins de la question.
- 16 Cf. A, no. 816, et 1834, et Abc no. 218.
- 17 Cf. B, no. 448 et surtout B, no. 1153 (le célèbre m. AH 520).
- 18 Cf. e.g. B, no. 1114 et 1122.

## SECTION THREE

*Travel* (Rihla)

# BASIC STRUCTURES AND SIGNS OF ALIENATION IN THE *RIHLA* OF IBN JUBAYR

I.R.Netton

In a previous article I have identified in the *Rihla* of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** (AD 1304–1368/9 or 1377) what I termed his ‘pilgrim paradigm’.<sup>1</sup> Using insights garnered from the three-tier approach to history devised by the great French scholar Fernand Braudel (1902–85), doyen supreme of the French *Annales* school of history, I maintained that this paradigm comprised ‘a series of four searches: for the shrine and/or its circumambient religious geography; for knowledge; for recognition and/or power; and for the satisfaction of a basic wanderlust’.<sup>2</sup> Now it is frequently—and rightly—claimed that the *Rihla* of Ibn Jubayr (AD 1145–1217) constituted a prototype for several others of the genre including that of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**.<sup>3</sup> Indeed the debt of the former to other authors like Ibn Jubayr and al-‘Abdarī<sup>4</sup> becomes ever more apparent, as recent scholarship continues to show.<sup>5</sup> To what extent then, it may be asked, may a similar (prototype) pilgrim paradigm be identified in the *Rihla* of Ibn Jubayr? As an aid to answering this question, it is proposed first in this article to analyse this *Rihla* in terms of (1) its basic structures, and (2) some of its relevant semiotics.

The concept of *ṭalab al-‘ilm* is a noteworthy factor in the *rihlatayn* of Ibn Jubayr and **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**,<sup>6</sup> but it is one which should be handled with care. We see, for example, that Lenker has stressed the general relationship between pilgrimage and study: he notes that in certain Andalusian works after the middle of the eighth century ‘both the pilgrimage and study are two essential components of each biographical entry’;<sup>7</sup> and, he goes so far as to maintain that ‘as a motive for travel, [*ṭalab al-‘ilm*] surpassed in significance all other incentives including the pilgrimage itself’.<sup>8</sup> While this statement may well have been true, however, ultimately of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** with his unquenchable wanderlust,<sup>9</sup> it must be something of an exaggeration if applied *unreservedly* to Ibn Jubayr, despite his advice to the youth of the Maghrib [*I.J.* p. 258; see further in this article]: Ibn Jubayr’s *Rihla* was undertaken for a specific religious purpose which had the pilgrimage to Mecca as its heart and goal. Indeed, his *Rihla* was a pilgrimage undertaken to make expiation (*kaffāra*) for the specific fault of wine-drinking: even though he had been forced to drink the wine by the Almohad governor of Grenada, Abū Sa‘īd ‘Uthmān b. ‘Abd al-Mu‘min, to whom he was secretary, his delicate conscience bade him to make amends.<sup>10</sup> This

motive of *kaffāra*, rather than pure *ṭalab al-‘ilm*, must have been the driving force on his journey, and omnipresent to him, though it is indeed strange that Ibn Jubayr nowhere refers directly in his *Rihla* to the real reasons for his journey. The details must be gleaned from other sources such as the seventeenth century of al-Maqqarī.<sup>11</sup>

Despite however, the basic difference in motivation behind each of the *riḥlatayn* under discussion, there is no doubting the exuberant delight which ‘ilm, and the experiences deriving from the search for ‘ilm, produced in both Ibn Jubayr and **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**. The energetic visiting by both of mosque, tomb, shrine, college, saint and scholar bears ample witness to that.

Apart from their respective motivations, perhaps the other major essential difference between the works of Ibn Jubayr and **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** lies in their basic structures. Ibn Jubayr’s *Rihla* encompasses a much shorter timescale from the point of view of actual travel recorded (between AD 1183–1185), and consequently, far fewer cities and countries are visited than, for example, in the more wide-ranging *Rihla* of his successor, **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**. Ibn Jubayr’s work is much less a frame story like the latter’s (which was designed for the propagation of myths which might enhance a returning traveller’s reputation and massage an already large ego,<sup>12</sup>) and much more ‘a simple narrative of a voyage undertaken and experienced’.<sup>13</sup> Mattock has divided the content of Ibn Jubayr’s work into two basic categories of description and narrative.<sup>14</sup> Having observed that ‘[the *Rihla*] is a straightforward, non-technical work, written in a simple style’,<sup>15</sup> Mattock remarks:

Ibn Jubayr’s descriptive writing seems to me to be good but unremarkable. It is interesting, simply written and well detailed; it does very well what it is intended to do: describe the places that he visits, so that their main features are clear to his audience.<sup>16</sup>

The *structure* of Ibn Jubayr’s *Rihla* may, therefore, also be conceived in a simpler fashion than the more elaborate frame of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** and I propose to do so here by concentrating upon three very simple elements which seem to me to be the quintessential blocks upon which Ibn Jubayr’s work is structured and founded. These elements are, respectively, a trinity of time, place and purpose as expressed in (a) the author’s precise, almost neurotic, use of the Islamic calendar, (b) the travel or *Rihla* impulse and associated ‘sense of place’ which imbues the entire narrative, and (c) the primary orientation towards, or focus on, Mecca, goal of the Islamic pilgrimage.

It is useful, in any examination of Ibn Jubayr’s usage, to examine first the later practice of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**, as far as dating is concerned. The latter author certainly deploys some dates in his text but what he provides certainly do not constitute a kind of textual punctuation or frame as happens in the earlier *Rihla* of Ibn Jubayr. Indeed Gibb has noted, succinctly, of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**’s practice, which may, in any case have been that of his scribe and editor Ibn Juzayy: ‘Many of the dates

give the impression of having been inserted more or less at haphazard, possibly at the editor's request, but the examination and correction of them offers a task so great that it has not been attempted in this selection'.<sup>17</sup> Dunn confirms this observation: 'In composing the book, **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** (and Ibn Juzayy, the literary scholar who collaborated with him) took far less care with details of itinerary, dates, and the sequence of events than the modern "scientific" mind would consider acceptable practice for a travel writer'.<sup>18</sup> And while we *do* find formal dates at, for example, the beginning of the entire **Rihla** [*I.B.*<sup>19</sup> p. 14] and scattered infrequently elsewhere in the text [e.g. *I.B.* pp. 53, 110, 172, 339, 393, 529], we find that **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's** more usual narrative punctuation consists of such phrases as 'I went next to...' <sup>20</sup> (*thumma tawajjahtu ilā...*) [*I.B.* p. 31], 'I travelled next through...' <sup>21</sup> (*thumma sāfartu fī ...*) [*I.B.* p. 33] and 'We come to...' <sup>22</sup> [*I.B.* p. 277].

By acute contrast, Ibn Jubayr uses his precise dating, in a surely conscious fashion, as a method of punctuating and dividing up his text. The entire **Rihla** is laid out, *month by month*, according to the Islamic lunar calendar, [e.g. *I.J.*<sup>23</sup> pp. 13, 122, 190 and *passim*]. Each section, thus precisely, carefully and, apparently accurately,<sup>24</sup> introduced by date then at once contains a statement or description of the traveller's exact present location and often a description of, or reference to, his next projected destination(s), and the journeying involved. Ibn Jubayr's convention in his dating is to refer to the rising of the new moon, and also to provide Christian calendar equivalents; thus two typical diary entries, encapsulating all the above, read:

*The Month of Rabī al-Awwal of the Year [5]80, may God acquaint us with His blessing*

Its new moon rose (*istahalla hilāluhu*) on the night of Tuesday, corresponding to the 12th June, while we were in the previously mentioned village. Then we set out from there at dawn on that Tuesday and arrived at before midday of the same day [*I.J.* p. 214]

[and]

*The Month of Jumāda al-Ūlā, may God acquaint us with His blessing.*

Its new moon rose on the night of Friday, corresponding to the 10th August in foreign dating.

A Descriptive Survey of Conditions in the City [of Damascus], may God make it thrive in Islam. [*I.J.* p. 254]

The formula occasionally varies as where Ibn Jubayr refers to the new moon being obscured (*ghumma hilāluhu 'alaynā*) [*I.J.* pp. 286, 318]. It is clear, furthermore, that the provision by the traveller of dating equivalents from the Christian calendar reflects the eclectic milieu in which he travelled, often, as is well known, using Christian ships [e.g. *I.J.* pp. 8, 317]. It was a strange age of real intercultural *travel and trading*, produced by centuries of co-operation, on the

one hand, coexisting beside very real intercultural *military* strife produced by the Crusades, on the other, an apparent paradox upon which Ibn Jubayr himself felt moved to comment and rank among the *'ajā'ib* of his narrative [*I.J.* p. 260, see also pp. 271–3].

There is no doubt that, from a literary point of view, Ibn Jubayr's passion for dating can seriously slow down his narrative, making his text appear sometimes more ponderous and monotonous than that of **Ibn Baṭṭūta** which is less obviously subject to formal considerations of strict chronology, though also less fluid in other respects. Nonetheless, the precision of the former can also have distinct advantages: it is clear that, while **Ibn Baṭṭūta** claims to have lost some of his very few notes [*I.B.* p. 369],<sup>25</sup> Ibn Jubayr must have been a frequent, careful and punctilious diarist (or had an extraordinary memory). Furthermore the chronological problems encountered in any study of the *Rihla* of **Ibn Baṭṭūta**<sup>26</sup> are mercifully absent in that of Ibn Jubayr though, in fairness to the later traveller, it may be stressed that this is due as much to his predecessor's comparative shortness of voyage as the methodical nature of Ibn Jubayr's notetaking.

If attention to precise dating constitutes an obvious initial foundation for the *Rihla* of Ibn Jubayr, then a 'sense of place',<sup>27</sup> and the travel impulse ineluctably associated with that sense, constitutes a second. Here Ibn Jubayr is much more in harmony with **Ibn Baṭṭūta**. The former, like the latter, visited many of the great cities of Islam. And where **Ibn Baṭṭūta** expressed a wish to avoid, if at all possible, travelling over the same route twice [*I.B.* p. 191] Ibn Jubayr's own, admittedly smaller, *raḥḥāla* impulse is concretely expressed in his advice to the youth of the Maghrib to travel East to such great cities as Damascus, in search of success and knowledge (*if talab al-'ilm*) [*I.J.* p. 258]. Though there is, from a quantitative point of view, less anecdotal and fantastic material in Ibn Jubayr's *Rihla* than that of **Ibn Baṭṭūta**,<sup>28</sup> nonetheless, there is sufficient to identify some genuine examples or aspects of such broad literary genres as *'ajā'ib*<sup>29</sup> or *nawādir*.<sup>30</sup> [It will be recalled that the full title of **Ibn Baṭṭūta's** own *Rihla* was *fi Gharā'ib wa 'Ajā'ib al-Asfār*.]<sup>31</sup> But the genuine in Ibn Jubayr are mixed in with much unnecessary rhetoric.

A few examples of what appears really to interest and intrigue Ibn Jubayr, not necessarily to be classified under either *'ajā'ib*, or *nawādir*, may be provided here: he is amazed (lit: *shāhadnā 'ajaban*) at the bitumen well on the Tigris whose bitumen is dried out so that it congeals and can then be removed [*I.J.* p. 209]; he is enchanted by the sight of a Christian wedding in Tyre attended by both Christians and Muslims [*I.J.* pp. 278–279]; and he *is* fascinated by the strange story of an allegedly royal youth at the court of King William of Sicily. [*I.J.* pp. 310–311]. But Ibn Jubayr's is basically a tourist vocabulary which becomes rapidly debased in its addictive use of superlatives. John Mattock has already commented elsewhere on Ibn Jubayr's prose style: '...it employs a certain amount of unnecessary rhetoric... This verbal flatulence and empty praise after a while fails in its effect. It is irritating to the reader, and eventually turns

him from his admiration for the author's ingenuity to consideration of his choice of words, and consequently to doubt of the sincerity of his description'.<sup>32</sup> His point may be briefly underlined and reiterated here: the almost 'baroque' and overblown nature of much of Ibn Jubayr's prose style sometimes makes the distinction between genuine elements of the *'ajā'ib* and *nawādir* genres on the one hand, and mere rhetoric, on the other, somewhat blurred, at least at first sight.<sup>33</sup>

His effusive style particularly invades his sense of place, producing false echoes of that early time when the *'ajā'ib* 'were correctly situated in geographical space'.<sup>34</sup> Indeed, Ibn Jubayr may be likened in intention to a prototype Roberts (AD 1796–1864) or even Delacroix (AD 1798–1863), trying to put into words what those Orientalist painters later produced so much more successfully on canvas.<sup>35</sup> Of the latter artist's work it has been observed: 'His vision of a living, sublime Antiquity in these countries [of North Africa] enabled him to strike a balance between the romantic and classical elements in his work'.<sup>36</sup> What Ibn Jubayr's prose style often lacks is a sense of *linguistic* or *stylistic* balance.

Thus the City of Damascus is described as 'the Paradise of the East' (*Jannat al-Mashriq*) [*I.J.* p. 234]; its hospitals and colleges are ranked among 'the great glories of Islam' (*mafkhār 'azīm min mafākhīr allislām*) [*I.J.* p. 256]; and Ibn Jubayr enthusiastically informs his reader that 'one of the greatest and most amazing sights in the world' (*lit: wa min a'zam mā shāhadnāhu min manāzīr al-dunyā al-gharīb al-sha'n*), which is held to be indescribable, is that to be gained after the ascent to the top of the Lead Dome which crowned the Cathedral Mosque in Damascus [*I.J.* p. 264].

His immediate and insistent *tourist* delight in the *places* which he visits, however, does not preclude an interest in the diverse *people* of those places. In this, too, Ibn Jubayr resembles **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**. Like the latter he is interested, though to a less passionate degree, in the ascetics of Islam<sup>37</sup> [e.g. *I.J.* pp. 220, 256–257]; and Ibn Jubayr also manifests a particular interest in, or veneration for, *imāms* and notables, for example of the Shāfi'ī *madhhab* whom he mentions frequently [e.g. *I.J.* pp. 22, 122–123, 177, 195, 224].

The third and final foundation upon which the **Rihla** of Ibn Jubayr rests is its literal, as well as spiritual, orientation towards Mecca. Though, as we have previously noted, the purpose of the **Rihla** is nowhere in the text precisely articulated in expiatory terms, it should never be forgotten by the reader of the **Rihla** that its primary motor is the expiation of the 'sin' forced upon him in Grenada. Whether this desire for penitence and expiation unconsciously informs the occasional virulence of his writing about sectarian Islam, or Christianity, in an excess of zeal, remains a matter for speculation. It must surely be responsible, however, in part at least, for the extended narrative about, and description of, the Cities of Mecca and Medina: by laying such conscious stress on their physical description and the pilgrimage ceremonies, Ibn Jubayr, at least unconsciously, manifests to all, including the Almohad governor of Grenada, that his purpose is

accomplished, expiation is made and forgiveness from Allāh surely achieved. [See *I.J.* pp. 58–160, 167–181]

The semiotics of the *Rihla* of Ibn Jubayr may next be considered. It is a truism that everything signifies,<sup>38</sup> the Qurʾān itself identifies an entire world, apparent and hidden, conceived of in terms of signs: ‘We shall show them Our signs in the horizons and in themselves...’ (*Sanurīhim āyātīnā fī ‘l-āfāq wa fī anfusihim*).<sup>39</sup> So it would be perfectly valid to say here that the *Rihla* of Ibn Jubayr is also a world of signs, whose examination would be sufficient to fill a major thesis in itself. Our analysis will, therefore, be restricted to an identification of some of those signs which contribute, in some way, towards illuminating or assessing the primary question posed at the beginning of this article: to what extent, if any, may a pilgrim paradigm, prototype to that identified in the *Rihla* of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, be identified in the *Rihla* of Ibn Jubayr?

In the first place, his *Rihla* is interesting for what is *not* signified: while Ibn Jubayr, like Ibn Baṭṭūṭa [*I.B.* p. 14], at the beginning of his work, makes a formal expression of intent to perform the pilgrimage (*lit.* *li-‘l-niyya al-Hijāziyya, al-mubāraka, I.J.* p. 7), the intention *behind* the pilgrimage intention, as we have emphasised, remains hidden. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa’s *Rihla* unfolds at length as the ultimate satisfaction of a primary and insistent wanderlust which takes *that* traveller far beyond the cities of Mecca and Medina. Ibn Jubayr’s *Rihla* once the Holy Cities are visited, is the narrative of a much briefer, return voyage to Spain, mission accomplished. Ibn Jubayr’s work, then, signifies a search ‘for the shrine’ and wallows in the ‘circumambient religious geography’.<sup>40</sup> But it provides little evidence that Ibn Jubayr’s wanderlust, such as it was, approached in any way the magnitude of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa’s.

What Ibn Jubayr’s text *does* signify, most clearly, throughout, is an Islamic world already divided upon itself by religious faction and suspicion. A deeply riven sectarian milieu in the whole of *Dār al-Islām* is apparent from Ibn Jubayr’s view of and comments upon the state of Islam in Arabia, whose entire Peninsula might be said to constitute a species of ‘religious geography’<sup>41</sup> for the Holy City of Mecca. This City, one of the profoundest symbols of the Islamic faith, and its theoretical and yearned-for unity, is thus, paradoxically, for Ibn Jubayr the focus of a voyage which sometimes instructs that traveller in a variety of aspects of Islam at its most *disunited*. His disillusionment and rage are only exacerbated and compounded by the strife of the Crusades and the conflicting and ambivalent attitudes which those wars generate about Christianity and Christians within his heart.<sup>42</sup> Broadhurst, writing of the age and milieu of Ibn Jubayr, observes: ‘The eastern Muslim world was now one; the Frankish kingdom was enveloped, and its death-knell had sounded. If the opponents of the Cross were at last united, all within the Christian realm

was anarchy and alarm. King Baldwin IV was a dying leper...,<sup>43</sup> Broadhurst's rhetorical intention is clearly to contrast **Ṣalāh** al-Dīn with such Christian figures as Baldwin. For Broadhurst, 'it was the role and achievement of Saladin to unite Islam'.<sup>44</sup> But this translator of Ibn Jubayr's **Rihla** into English only provides an exaggerated and partial picture, drawing primarily upon the *politics* of the age: Ibn Jubayr himself, in what is a lengthy, and clearly deeply-felt passage, articulates his disgust at the 'events'<sup>45</sup> which have currently become associated with the eternal 'religious geography' of Arabia and Mecca. He writes:

The lands of God which most deserve to be cleansed by the sword and have their filth (*lit: arjāsahā*) and uncleanness purged in blood shed in Holy War are these lands of the **Hijāz**. This is because they have untied the bonds of Islam and regarded as fair game both the wealth and the blood of the pilgrim [to Mecca]. Those among the jurists of al-Andalus who believe that [people] should be released from this religious obligation [of pilgrimage] are correct in their belief for this reason and because of the way in which the pilgrim is handled, which displeases God Almighty. He who travels this path exposes himself to danger and certain hazard. God intended His franchise in that place to be bestowed in quite another manner. So how is it that the House of God is now in the hands of people who seek a forbidden subsistence from it and make it a way to plunder wealth and unlawfully lay claim to [that wealth] and seize pilgrims because of it: in consequence the latter are humiliated and brought to dire poverty. May God soon remedy this in a cleansing which will remove these ruinous heresies from the Muslims with the swords of the Almohads, who are the Followers of the Faith, the Party of God, the People of Truth and Sincerity, Defenders of the Sanctuary of God Almighty, solicitous for His taboos, making every effort to exalt His name, manifest His mission and support His religion. God can do what He wishes. He is indeed a wonderful Lord and Ally. Let there be absolutely no shadow of doubt about the fact that there is no Islam except in the lands of the Maghrib... [*I.J* p. 55]

While this stream of biased invective from Ibn Jubayr is clearly provoked, in the first instance, by his outrage at the treatment of pilgrims in Arabia, there is little doubt that it also reflects much more: it signifies a real deep-seated religious malaise and division within the Islamic world and reflects genuine sectarian squabbles, rather than simply the righteous anger expressed in a somewhat overblown fashion by one irate pilgrim at the cruel treatment of his fellows, and the unfair exactions levied against them, and himself.

This is confirmed by Ibn Jubayr in a typically exaggerated comment which appears in the text of the **Rihla** shortly before the lines quoted above and which deserves to be cited here:

Most of [the people of] these regions and other areas are sectarians (lit. *firaq*) and Shi'ites who have no religion (*lā dīn lahum*) and have split into diverse schools of thought (*madhāhib*). [*I.J.* p. 54]

We may safely conclude that Ibn Jubayr's *Rihla* betokens a certain lack of enjoyment, in Arabia especially, as he strove, finally successfully, to reach his goal of Mecca and all that this City held for the pious pilgrim in terms of shrine and ritual.<sup>46</sup>

If the first *major* set of signals thrown up by the text reveals a divided Islamic world which itself inhibits or, at the very least, intrudes upon the search 'for the shrine',<sup>47</sup> then a second, which provides a significant contrast, is that which betokens the intrusive Christian presence in the Middle East. The signs and symbols of Christianity, embedded in many parts of the text, would have reminded Ibn Jubayr's reader of the contemporary crusading wars between Muslim and Christian, and also served as overt indicators to that reader of the author's Almohad 'orthodoxy' [see *I.J.* pp. 55–56] which he felt constrained to champion and proclaim. This was particularly the case when such signs and symbols of the Christian faith were linked to dirt and filth and some examples of this will be cited shortly. A semiotic examination of all this highlights Ibn Jubayr's occasionally ambivalent attitude to Christianity in a particularly vivid way. Such an examination also reveals a semiotics of cultural-religious alienation in which, paradoxically, the exotic (represented for Ibn Jubayr by certain aspects of Christianity), plays some role.<sup>48</sup>

We may identify in the *Rihla* at least five basic 'signs' of alienation for Ibn Jubayr: several are tinged by aspects either of the 'exoticism' or the ambivalence referred to above. These signs recur to a greater or lesser degree in the text and may be enumerated briefly as follows: (i) *the Christian cross*, (ii) *the Christian ship*, (iii) *Christian regal power*, (iv) *Christian taxation*, and (v) perhaps most oddly and paradoxically, *Christian chivalry, courtesy and mores*. Each will be surveyed here.

(i) *The Christian cross* for Ibn Jubayr is not so much a sign or message of folly<sup>49</sup> as a sign of oppression, a sign of what impedes the search for the shrine. It is the arch-symbol of an invader who has stolen away some of the most precious sites of the Muslim peoples like, for example, Acre [see *I.J.* pp. 276–277]. Of the latter City Ibn Jubayr writes: 'The Franks wrested it from the hands of the Muslims... Islam wept grievously (*lit: mil'a jufūnih*) for it. It was one of [Islam's] griefs' [*I.J.* p. 276]. Little wonder, then, that the cross in Ibn Jubayr's text is linked with dirt and filth, or deliberately devalued in an equally derogatory association: Acre 'burns with unbelief and tyranny, boiling over with pigs and crosses. [The City is] filthy and squalid and all of it is filled with dirt and shit.' [*I.J.* p. 276]; the City of Messina is 'overcast through unbelief; no Muslim resides there. It is laden with cross worshippers ...[and] is full of stench and dirt' [*I.J.* p. 296]. Elsewhere 'the cross worshippers' are described (somewhat resentfully?) as living a life of comfort and ease on the island of Sicily and though Muslims *do*

share to a degree in this comfort, it is subject to a tax levied by the Christians twice a year [*I.J.* p. 297]; by severe contrast, the Muslim populace is said to suffer painfully under ‘the cross worshippers’ in the Sicilian town of Trapani [*I.J.* p. 313]. The cross is an exotic sign of prosperity and wealth among the Christians of Palermo where Ibn Jubayr remarks upon the numerous churches with gold and silver crosses [*I.J.* p. 305]; and a symbol of apostasy *par excellence* when it is trampled by a Christian convert to Islam [*I.J.* p. 312]. All these examples demonstrate the multivalent symbolism of the cross in Ibn Jubayr’s text and the derogatory associations with which it is endowed.

It is tempting to try to tease out the semiotic connotations of the *hilāl* to which Ibn Jubayr always refers in his dating at the beginning of each chapter, and contrast it as an Islamic symbol with the semiotics of the Christian cross elaborated above. But such a superficially promising and attractive idea seems doomed to failure: Ibn Jubayr’s own usage of the word *hilāl* is purely for dating purposes, rather than any latent or overt Islamic religious symbolism. In any case, recent research seems to conclude that, in mediaeval times, and later,

there cannot have been a strong religious association with the *hilāl* in the Muslim world, as the emblem occurs also on secular buildings...and on military flags and textiles as well... There are also many renditions of mosques and other buildings dating from the 10th/16th century to the 12th/18th century which lack the crescent finial, and the motif plays no role on prayer rugs or on tiles applied to the walls of mosques... This indicates that in Muslim eyes, and in particular during the Ottoman period, the *hilāl* was not of great importance. It certainly does not seem to have had a major religious significance and was apparently applied mostly for decorative purposes.<sup>50</sup>

The most that we can say then is that, while the *hilāl* certainly had *some* cultural and religious symbolism in the Islamic Middle Ages,<sup>51</sup> it was by no means as dominant a motif in purely symbolic religious terms as the cross: this difference in emphasis, at least in mediaeval times, is reflected in Ibn Jubayr’s own text. Where, of course, the *hilāl* did have real significance in Islam, from a religious point of view, in mediaeval times as in modern, was in the area of religious law because of the need to date the pilgrimage and the start and finish of<sup>52</sup> Ibn Jubayr himself, not surprisingly, took an interest in the new moon from this point of view and, on at least two occasions in his text, he draws particular attention to the vital necessity of using the new moon to date such important events in the Islamic religious calendar [see *I.J.* pp. 117–121, 146–147] and how rumour, falsehood, eclipse or cloud could confuse the reckoning.

(ii) It might be thought at first sight that the *Christian ship* as well as being a symbol of wanderlust *par excellence*, would be a symbol or sign of unity, harmony and friendship, traversing as it did the boundaries of and *Dār al-Islām* and bearing, as it did, a mixed cargo of Christians and Muslims. And, as we have

already seen, Ibn Jubayr himself sailed in Christian ships [e.g. see *I.J.* pp. 8, 317] while being perfectly aware of the anomalous situation created by Christian and Muslim travellers such as himself, and especially merchants, moving freely in each other's lands while their respective armies fought each other [*I.J.* p. 260]. Ibn Jubayr certainly appreciated the travel facilities thus extended to him by ships from Christendom but there is a clear ambivalence in his attitude and a latent prejudice and resentment never seem to be far from the surface: he admires the nautical skill of a Genoese Christian sea captain [*I.J.* p. 285] but clearly dislikes the fact that that captain inherits the possessions of both the Christian and Muslim pilgrims who die on the voyage [*I.J.* p. 287]. On this large boat from Acre Ibn Jubayr notes how the Muslims secure berths separate from the Christians and his obvious approval of this is mixed with considerable resentment at the later boarding of more than two thousand Christian pilgrims from Jerusalem, from whose company Ibn Jubayr uncharitably prays to be speedily delivered! [*I. J.* p. 283] During his description of the events which lead up to the shipwreck off Messina, Ibn Jubayr unfavourably contrasts the griefstricken behaviour of the Christians with the more pietistic and fatalistic attitude of the Muslim passengers [*I.J.* p. 294]. Yet the salvation from the wreck of many impecunious Muslim passengers, unable to pay their rescuers' fee, is freely attributed to the generosity of the Christian King of Sicily, William II [*reg.* AD 1166–1189], [*I.J.* p. 295]. Indeed, Ibn Jubayr goes so far as to state, in a manner that has some significance for the semiotics of the ambivalent Muslim-Christian relations of the age, that the (almost miraculous) presence of the Christian King at this shipwreck was an example of God's kindness towards the Muslim passengers. [*I.J.* p. 295]

The previous examples of Ibn Jubayr's description of his dealings with Christian ships, and the Christian section of the passengers and crew who sailed in them, constitute a microcosm of the broader frame of Muslim-Christian relations. Elements of trust, gratitude, appreciation and indeed, occasional admiration, mingle with disapproval, deepseated hostility, suspicion and fear.

(iii) There are few areas in the *Rihla* of Ibn Jubayr where the author's frequent bias against Christianity is more pronounced and manifest than in his succinct characterisation of those who hold *Christian regal power*. For example, Baldwin IV [*reg.* AD 1174–1185], King of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem and 'Lord of Acre' is bluntly characterised by Ibn Jubayr as 'this pig' (*hādhā al-khinzīr*) [*I.J.* p. 282; see also p. 274]; his mother, Agnes of Courtenay, is called a 'sow' [*I.J.* p. 274]; William II of Sicily, despite the good things said about him, and noted above, in connection with the shipwreck—and despite also the existence of a treaty or truce between him and the Almohad ruler Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf b. 'Abd al-Mu'min [*reg.* AD 1163–1184]<sup>53</sup>—is still brusquely deemed to be 'this polytheist' (*hādhā almushrik*) [*I.J.* p. 299], capable of considerable harshness towards the Muslims of Sicily, including forced conversion [*I.J.* p. 313]. Of him, Ibn Jubayr further notes: 'He is about thirty years old. May God save the Muslims from his misdeed[s] and his extension [of power]'. [*I.J.* p.

298]. Count Raymond of Tripoli [AD 1152–1187] is described as ‘a man of great importance among the cursed Franks’. He is ‘the cursed Count, Lord of Tripoli and Tiberias’. [*I.J.* p. 282]

Of course, the ideal paradigm of the just ruler, and ‘Mirror’ for all others princes, Muslim as well as Christian, in the view of Ibn Jubayr was the redoubtable **Ṣalāḥ** al-Dīn. Not only was he a renowned Muslim champion in the Crusading wars [see *I.J.* p. 270] but he was a model of rectitude as well: Ibn Jubayr states that the confusion and dishonesty of the Egyptian customs would certainly have been sorted out by **Ṣalāḥ** al-Dīn, had he known about it [*I.J.* pp. 13–14]; indeed, Ibn Jubayr states that **Ṣalāḥ** al-Dīn abolished several iniquitous taxes levied in Egypt, including a pilgrim tax and one on drinking Nile water! [*I.J.* pp. 30–31]. The theme of **Ṣalāḥ** al-Dīn’s justice is a constant one throughout the *Rihla* [See, for example, *I.J.* pp. 14, 30, 55–56, 270–271.] It is small wonder that, by contrast, the Christian rulers surveyed above receive little but opprobrium from Ibn Jubayr’s pen.

(iv) Taxation by one’s own government is an obvious irritant and an often alienating feature in most societies! It is not surprising, then, that in the milieu in which Ibn Jubayr travelled, he should have found the imposition of *Christian taxation* a source of some annoyance. This annoyance would have been clearly exacerbated in his mind by the generosity and justice perceived from his great hero, **Ṣalāḥ** al-Dīn. We have just noted above the abolition by the latter of several taxes in Egypt and other examples are admiringly recorded in the *Rihla* of **Ṣalāḥ** al-Dīn’s generosity as far as taxation was concerned [e.g. *I.J.* p. 16]. All this contrasts with examples cited in the text of taxes imposed by Christians: some, because of the element of reciprocity involved, are clearly not too irksome: ‘The Christians levy a tax on the Muslims in their country which guarantees the Muslims full protection; in a similar fashion Christian merchants pay a tax on their goods in Muslim countries’. [*I.J.* p. 260]. Others, however, rouse Ibn Jubayr’s resentment to a greater degree: in Sicily the Muslim populace is subjected to a twice-yearly tax by the Christians which thus bars them from a full exploitation and enjoyment of the land. [*I.J.* p. 297]. Ibn Jubayr prays for a full restoration of their rights. At the fortress of Tibnīn it is the itinerant Maghribīs who are subject to taxation as punishment for a previous attack. Ibn Jubayr notes: ‘When the Maghribīs pay this tax, they are happily reminded of how they annoyed the enemy: this makes it easier for them and softens their hardship for them’. [*I.J.* p. 274]. In the light of all this, Ibn Jubayr’s acute embarrassment—which shines through the text—may be imagined when he discovers on the road from Tibnīn that there are Muslims living under Frankish occupation who are taxed and threatened far *less* harshly than some Muslims living under Muslim rule. [*I.J.* pp. 274–275]. As Ibn Jubayr wryly remarks: Muslims complain of the tyranny of their own kind and praise the conduct of their Frankish enemy. [*I.J.* p. 275].

(v) Basically, for Ibn Jubayr, Christianity, with all that entails of *Christian chivalry, courtesy and mores*, is a snare and an exotic delusion from which Ibn

Jubayr is perpetually praying to be delivered, the more he gains in knowledge about that faith. He has a natural curiosity about Christianity, especially what he perceives to be its 'exotic' elements; but he also seems to sense a seduction, and the potential for a fall from the true faith of Islam, behind every Christian smile and courtesy. Certainly, as we have seen, he is grateful to King William of Sicily for his help and generosity towards distressed Muslim passengers. This is freely acknowledged by the author. Credit is given elsewhere in the text to Christians where it is due. But, when all is said and done, Ibn Jubayr fervently prays for Muslims to be delivered from King William's 'enticement' or 'temptation' (*fitna*) [I.J. p. 298]. He is extremely wary of the courteous Christians whom he meets in Sicily: 'We perceived in their conduct and gentle demeanour towards the Muslims something which might cause temptation (*fitna*) in the souls of ignorant people' [I.J. p. 302; see also p. 304]. He prays that the people of **Muhammad** may be protected from such a *fitna*. The exotic beauty of some of the decoration in the Christian Church of the Antiochian in Palermo creates temptation (*fitna*) in the souls from which the priggish Ibn Jubayr prays to be delivered, [I.J. p. 306]. The author is similarly enchanted *and* disturbed by the exotic spectacle of the Christian wedding which he witnesses in Tyre. He admits to its being a spectacular sight, admires the finery of the bride and yet prays to be preserved from any temptation (*fitna*) arising out of the sight, a prayer which is repeated again, with the use of the same *word fitna* at the end of his description of the wedding. [I.J. pp. 278–279, compare p. 307]

Ibn Jubayr's insistent usage of the word *fitna* is interesting. As is well-known, the Arabic word can mean 'civil strife' as well as 'temptation'. We can only speculate about the degree to which Ibn Jubayr surveyed a world divided upon itself religiously and politically and linked the two meanings in his own mind. What we can say is that Ibn Jubayr's usage of the word *fitna* often signals, or reinforces, a certain sense of the strange, the alien or the exotic which may deviate, or cause others to deviate, from the as he knows it and, in consequence, lead the soul to perdition.

Taken altogether, this fivefold semiotic survey of the principal elements of cultural-religious alienation in the *Rihla* of Ibn Jubayr, imbued as they are with a certain authorial ambivalence on the one hand and aspects of the exotic which can both please and frighten on the other, lead inexorably to one conclusion which comes as no surprise. We may identify in the person of Ibn Jubayr a basic gut reaction: this is that Ibn Jubayr did not really like Christians or Christianity. It is true that he may, on occasion, admire individual Christian people or their actions, but the Crusading milieu and his own religious upbringing and environment prove too strong to disguise Ibn Jubayr's fundamental attitude: Christianity is intrinsically the enemy from every point of view, whether it be moral, spiritual or physical.

We are now in a position to attempt an answer to the question posed at the beginning of this article: to what extent may a prototype pilgrim

paradigm, similar to that identified in the *Rihla* of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**, be identified in the work of Ibn Jubayr? The answer must be that a *partial* paradigmatic prototype *does* exist which is in neat accordance with the idea of Ibn Jubayr's *Rihla* being a general prototype for much else in the *rihla* genre: thus, Ibn Jubayr *does* undertake a search for the shrine and traverse its religious geography; he *does* seek knowledge from people and places where he can find it, being directly familiar with the concept of *ṭalab al-'ilm* [see *I.J.* p. 258]; he *is* interested in the exercise of power though usually by others, e.g. **Ṣalāh** al-Dīn, William of Sicily, rather than himself: in this respect, at least, he is a rather humbler figure than that of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**. There remains, then, the question of a basic wanderlust: here, as we have noted, there *is* some divergence between Ibn Jubayr and **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**. This is not to say that Ibn Jubayr is *totally* devoid of the travel urge but simply to note that his illustrious successor was beset by that urge to a sublime degree.

In conclusion, then, it is the contention of this article that, in the matter of a pilgrim paradigm, as in so many other areas, Ibn Jubayr's *Rihla* foreshadows, or acts as a precursor to, the *Rihla* of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**, and acts as a worthy forebear of that later work.

#### NOTES

[This article appeared first in the *Journal of Arabic Literature*, vol. XXII: 1 (March 1991), pp. 21–37. I am grateful to the editors for allowing it to be reprinted here.]

- 1 See my 'Arabia and the Pilgrim Paradigm of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**: A Braudelian Approach' in Ian Richard Netton (ed.), *Arabia and the Gulf: From Traditional Society to Modern States*, (London: Croom Helm, 1986), pp. 29–42
- 2 *Ibid.*, pp. 37–38.
- 3 See, e.g. Ch. Pellat, art. 'Ibn Djubayr', *EP*<sup>2</sup>, vol. III, p. 755; and Michael Karl Lenker, The Importance of the *Rihla* for the Islamization of Spain', unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1982, p. 34.
- 4 **Muḥammad** b. **Muḥammad** al-'Abdarī was the author of a notable *Rihla* entitled *al-Rihla al-Maghribiyya*. His birth and death dates are unknown but he commenced the travels which he describes in December 1289. His *Rihla* has been edited twice in recent times in 1965 and 1968: Algiers/ Constantine, 1965, ed. by **Aḥmad** b. Jadū; and Rabat: Jāmi'a **Muḥammad** al-Khāmis, 1968, ed. by **Muḥammad** al-Fāsī. See Muh. Ben Cheneb-W. Hoenerbach, art. 'Al-'Abdarī', *EP*<sup>2</sup>, vol. I, p. 96 and Amikan Elad, 'The Description of the Travels of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** in Palestine: Is it Original?', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, (1987, no. 2), esp. pp. 259, 269 nn. 27, 28.
- 5 See the latest article to appear on the subject, dealing with the Palestinian material in the works of al-'Abdarī and **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** by Elad entitled The Description of the Travels of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** in Palestine: Is it Original?', pp. 256–272; see also Muh.

- Ben Cheneb-W.Hoenerbach, art. 'Al-'Abdarī', p. 96. See my remarks on **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's** plagiarism of Ibn Jubayr in my article 'Myth, Miracle and Magic in the **Rihla** of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**, *Journal of Semitic Studies*, vol. XXIX: 1 (1984), p. 132 esp. n. 6; and also Pellat, art. 'Ibn Djubayr', p. 755; J.N.Mattock, 'The Travel Writings of Ibn Jubayr and **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**', *Glasgow Oriental Society Transactions*, vol. XXI (1965–6), pp. 35–46 esp. pp. 38–39; idem, '**Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**' use of Ibn Jubayr's **Rihla**', in Rudolph Peters (ed.), *Proceedings of the Ninth Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants (Amsterdam 1st-7th September 1978)*, Publications of the Netherlands Institute of Archaeology and Arabic Studies in Cairo, no. 4, (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1981), pp. 209–218.
- 6 See Lenker, 'The Importance of the **Rihla**', pp. 189–191 for more on this concept.
  - 7 *Ibid.*, p. 103.
  - 8 *Ibid.*, p. 189.
  - 9 See my 'Arabia and the Pilgrim Paradigm of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**', p. 37.
  - 10 See my article 'Ibn Jubayr: Penitent Pilgrim and Observant Traveller', *UR*, 2 (1985), pp. 14–17.
  - 11 ed. 'Abbās, (Beirut: **Dār Ṣādir** 1968), vol. 2, p. 385.
  - 12 See my 'Myth, Miracle and Magic', *passim*.
  - 13 Netton, 'Arabia and the Pilgrim Paradigm of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**', p. 40.
  - 14 The Travel Writings of Ibn Jubayr and **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**', p. 36.
  - 15 *Ibid.*, p. 35.
  - 16 *Ibid.*, p. 36.
  - 17 H.A.R.Gibb (trans.), *Ibn Battūta: Travels in Asia and Africa, 1325–1354*, The Broadway Travellers, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1929), pp. 12–13.
  - 18 Ross E.Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveller of the 14th Century*, (London: Croom Helm, 1986), p. x, see also p. 313.
  - 19 *I.B.*: The Arabic text of the **Rihla** of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** as contained in the edition edited by Karam al-Bustānī: **Rihlat Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**, (Beirut: **Dār Ṣādir** 1964).
  - 20 Trans. by H.A.R.Gibb, *The Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa A.D. 1325–1354*, (Cambridge: Pub. for the Hakluyt Society at the University Press, 1958), vol. I, p. 34.
  - 21 *Ibid.*, p. 36.
  - 22 Trans. by H.A.R.Gibb, *The Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa A.D. 1325–1354*, (Cambridge: Pub. for the Hakluyt Society at the University Press, 1962), vol. 2, p. 405.
  - 23 *I.J.*: The Arabic text of the **Rihla** of Ibn Jubayr in the following edition: **Rihlat Ibn Jubayr**, (Beirut: **Dār Ṣādir** 1964).
  - 24 William Wright, in his early edition of the **Rihla** (*The Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, ed. from a MS. in the University Library of Leyden by William Wright, 2nd edn. rev. by M.J.de Goeje, [Leiden: E.J.Brill/London: Luzac, 1907; repr. New York: AMS, 1973]), has the following comments in his 'Preface': 'The dates are, I believe, with the alterations I have made, everywhere correct, though perfect uniformity with calculations according to the method laid down in the *Art de vérifier les dates* is not to be expected' (p. 16). See the important comments on Ibn Jubayr's prose style and his fetich for dating by John Mattock, 'The Travel Writings of Ibn Jubayr and **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**' p. 43.
  - 25 What he lost were details which he had copied down from scholars' tombs in Bukhārā. Whether he made any *other* notes is highly debatable: see Gibb, **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa: Travels in Asia and Africa, 1325–1354**, p. 10; Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta*, pp. 312–313. John Mattock does seem to believe that some notes

- were made by **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**: see his ‘**Ibn Baṭṭūṭa’s** Use of Ibn Jubayr’s *Rihla*, p. 217 and idem. The Travel Writings of Ibn Jubair and **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**’, p. 42.
- 26 See my ‘Myth, Miracle and Magic’, p. 133, n. 12, and Ivan Hrbek, The Chronology of Ibn **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa’s** Travels’, *Archiv Orientalní*, vol. XXX (1962), pp. 409–86.
- 27 A phrase used here by me to designate specifically both the delight in, and curiosity about, *new* places visited by a *raḥḥāla*.
- 28 See my ‘Myth, Miracle and Magic’, p. 134.
- 29 See C.E.Dubler, art. ‘*Adjā’ib*’, *EP*<sup>2</sup>, vol. I, pp. 203–204 for a description of the genre. The author notes the degeneration of the concept of ‘*ajā’ib* from early times when they ‘were correctly situated in geographical space’ to a later type which ‘transport us from tangible reality to the realm of fancy constituted by the oriental tales’ (p. 204). Both types are apparent in Ibn Jubayr’s work. See **Ibn al-Khaṭīb** also ed. **Muḥammad** ‘Abdullāh ‘Inān, (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1974), vol. 2, p. 232.
- 30 For a lengthy example of this genre, see M.T.Magūz, ‘A Critical Edition of the 14th Part of *Kitāb an-Nawādir wa az-Ziyādāt* by Ibn Abī Zayd alQayrawānī 310 A.H.–386 A.H.’, unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Exeter, 1989.
- 31 See Karam al-Bustānī’s ‘Preface’ (p. 6) to the 1964 Beirut edition of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa’s** *Rihla* cited above at n. 19; see also my ‘Myth, Miracle and Magic’, p. 132 n. 4.
- 32 Mattock, The Travel Writings of Ibn Jubair and **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**’ p. 36; see also Pellat (‘Ibn Djubayr’, p. 755) who writes: ‘[Ibn Jubayr’s] style, though in certain narrative passages lively and vivid in a way which recalls the manner of modern reporters, is over-florid...’
- 33 This may, of course, have been a deliberate consequence of the magpie instinct with which many an author collected and reiterated phenomena in terms such as ‘*ajā’ib* and *nawādir*. However, Rosenthal’s remarks on another ‘minor branch of Muslim literature with affinities to *Adab*, historical and theological literature’, namely the *awā’il* literature, are, in general, equally true of the ‘*ajā’ib* and *nawādir* genres: they ‘are brilliant expressions of the cultural outlook and historical sense of their authors, and they are full of valuable material and interesting insights’. (F.Rosenthal, art. ‘*Awā’il*’, *EP*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 1, p. 758). This is not, of course, always the case in Ibn Jubayr’s *Rihla*, as we can see. However, for a specimen of writing in Ibn Jubayr’s text which may genuinely, and usefully, be classified under the ‘*ajā’ib* genre, and where the fantastic nature of the marvel cited is confirmed by others, see his enthusiastic description of the temple architecture at Ikhmīm in Upper Egypt. [*I.J.* pp. 35–38]. See S.Sauneron, ‘Le Temple d’Akhmīm Décrit par Ibn Jobair’, *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale*, vol. 51 (1952), pp. 123–135, esp. p. 125. For Ibn Jubayr the temple which he describes at Ikhmīm is one of ‘the wonders of the world’ (‘*ajā’ib al-dunyā*) [*I.J.* p. 37].
- 34 See above n. 29.
- 35 See Mary Anne Stevens, (ed.), *The Orientalists: Delacroix to Matisse: European Painters in North Africa and the Near East*, (London: Royal Academy of Arts/Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1984), esp. pp. 42–45, 52–55, 122–128, 223–225.
- 36 *Ibid.*, p. 122.
- 37 See my article ‘Myth, Miracle and Magic’, for **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** references. See also **Ibn al-Khaṭīb**, vol. 2, pp. 232–233.
- 38 See Umberto Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics*, Advances in Semiotics, (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1976), pp. 6–7.

- 39 Q.XLI:53, trans. by A.J.Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted*, (London: Allen & Unwin/ New York: Macmillan 1971), vol. 2, p. 191.
- 40 See my 'Arabia and the Pilgrim Paradigm of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**, p. 37.
- 41 For the term 'religious geography', see my article 'Arabia and the Pilgrim Paradigm of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**', esp. p. 36.
- 42 Ibn Jubayr's attitudes to Christians and Christianity are surveyed at a later stage in this article. He was not the only one to wrestle with the problems generated by the presence of Christianity and the Crusades in the Middle East. For the attitudes of some of the Muslim jurists, for example, towards those Muslim pilgrims etc who travelled in Christian ships, see A.Gateau, 'Quelques Observations sur l'Intérêt du Voyage d'Ibn Jubayr', *Hespéris*, vol. XXXVI: 3–4 (1949), pp. 293–295.
- 43 R.J.C.Broadhurst, (trans.), *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1952), p. 18.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- 45 See my 'Arabia and the Pilgrim Paradigm of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** p. 36.
- 46 See *ibid.*
- 47 See *ibid.*, pp. 36–37.
- 48 For a reverse picture in which elements of Islam were perceived as exotic by Europeans, see my article 'The Mysteries of Islam', in G.S.Rousseau and R.Porter (eds.), *Exoticism in the Enlightenment*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), pp. 23–45.
- 49 See 1 Corinthians 1:18, 23.
- 50 J.Schacht/R.Ettinghausen, art. 'Hilāl', *EI*<sup>2</sup>, vol. III, p. 383.
- 51 See *ibid.* where Ettinghausen notes: 'The *hilāl* was also used in religious settings. W.Barthold states after N.Marr that when in the 5th/11th century the Cathedral of Ani was converted into a mosque the cross on its dome was replaced by a silver crescent, which could imply a symbolical value or at least a cultural identification for this emblem'. The same author notes the usage of the crescent on Arab-Sāsānian coinage 'including one probably struck for 'Abd al-Malik in Damascus in 75/695' (*ibid.*, p. 381); and, in connection with the mosaics of the Qubbat in Jerusalem, Ettinghausen believes that the Sāsānian-type crowns, to which the crescent constitutes 'the customary finial', and the Byzantine-type crowns from which the *hilāl* is suspended, are reflective 'of a pre-Islamic usage now introduced into a Muslim context' (*ibid.*, p. 381).
- 52 See *ibid.*, p. 379.
- 53 See Broadhurst, *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, p. 387 n. 171; Helene Wieruszowski, 'The Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Crusades' in Robert Lee Wolff and Harry W.Hazard, (eds.), *A History of the Crusades: Volume II: The Later Crusades, 1189–1311*, 2nd edn, (Madison, Milwaukee & London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), pp. 32–33; A.Huici Miranda, art. 'Abd al-Mu'min', *EI*<sup>2</sup>, vol. I, pp. 160–162.

# INTERNATIONAL MIGRATIONS OF LITERATE MUSLIMS IN THE LATER MIDDLE PERIOD: THE CASE OF IBN

**BAṬṬŪṬA**

Ross E.Dunn

Scholars of mediaeval Islam have been celebrating **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** for more than a century and a half as the traveller of travellers, the globe-trotter of the fourteenth century AD, or, in the slightly arrogant terms of the Europocentrist, the ‘Marco Polo of Islam’. **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa’s *Rihla***, or *Book of Travels*, has been translated into numerous languages, and it has been cited, quoted, and analysed in hundreds of scholarly books and articles. All this recognition is of course a tribute to the incalculable value of the *Rihla* as a documentary record of Islamic life in the fourteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

Most of the scholarly writing on **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**, aside from translations of the *Rihla*, has been concerned with the interpretation of the book as a record of an individual’s witness to fourteenth century society and culture. **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** as a text, rather than **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** the man, has been the main subject of critical study. Yet the *Rihla* is not only a collection of observations. It is also a record of private experience, an autobiographical account of a man pursuing an adventure and a career. A few writers have addressed this autobiographical dimension of the work. Some have done so to attempt to fix as accurately as possible the itinerary and chronology of part or all of the travels, data that must be brought to bear on any consideration of the text as a historical document. Other writers have been more broadly interested in **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa’s** personality, his social origins and status, and his reasons for undertaking such an ambitious tour of the Eastern Hemisphere.<sup>2</sup>

These scholars present **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** as a recognisable social type of the fourteenth century: a literate gentleman of a North African city (Tangier), a scholar (*‘ālim*) of the Mālikī school (*madhhab*) of Islamic law, and a casual follower of popular **Ṣūfism**. They also recognise, however, that **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** is known to us in the West today because of the attention his book began to receive in the mid-nineteenth century, not because he was internationally famous as a jurist or traveller *in his own time*, which he was not. (This is not to deny that he became, and still is, well-known in the Muslim world.)

By locating **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** in the Islamic social order of the fourteenth century, his motives for taking the road in AD 1325 may reasonably be explained in the context of three patterns of travel common among learned Muslims in that age. First, he travelled as a pilgrim to Mecca, going there and leaving again at least

four times in his three decade career. Second, he travelled as a scholar of the law, making a study tour of the great college cities of Islam, as hopeful young lawyers often did. Third, he travelled as an irregular devotee of **Şūfism** seeking the blessing of Muslim saints in whatever urban lodge or mountain cave he might find them, though never giving himself fully to the rigours of the mystical life.

As pilgrim, scholar, and 'lay' *şūfī*, **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** travelled from Morocco to Mecca and trekked among cities of Egypt, Greater Syria, Iraq, and Persia between AD 1325 and 1327. In assuming simultaneously these three social roles to journey from North Africa to the Islamic heartland, the pattern of his career offers nothing particularly extraordinary in comparison with the documented movements of other educated Maghribīs of his time.<sup>3</sup>

These roles do not, however, explain quite well enough his trips to the further lands of Islam, that is, to East Africa, Anatolia, Central Asia, India, Southeast Asia, China, and West Africa.<sup>4</sup> suggest that **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** played a fourth social role in his travels, the role of what might be called the literate frontiersman. Moreover, his journeys to the peripheries of the Islamic world present a case study of an important phenomenon in Middle Period Islam, the circulation and indeed migration of significant numbers of such skilled or educated 'pioneers', as it were, from the Arabo-Persian central lands out to the African and Eurasian frontiers.

Marshall Hodgson had a great deal to say in the second volume of *The Venture of Islam* about the relationship between the expansion of Islam in the Middle Periods (AD 1000–1500) and the development of a cosmopolitan Islamic social order that embraced a large part of the Afro-Eurasian land mass.<sup>5</sup> Echoing Hodgson, the Tunisian historian Hichem Djaït writes:

[The Islamic world of AD 1300 was] not a monolithic empire but a civilization in the making, an Islam that stretched out simultaneously toward the Far East and toward Europe. This was an Islam with a finished, mature, fully coherent civilization, displaying a coherent identity over a vast geographical range... the *oikumene* seemed to be hedged about on all sides by Islam, which occupied a central position because it was the only one of its worldwide partners in constant contact with all the others.<sup>6</sup>

The blooming of Islam in the Middle Periods as a trans-hemispheric civilisation, as contrasted to Islam conceived essentially as Arab civilisation in the Middle East, was a social process whose implications for world history have only recently been introduced into textbooks and classrooms.<sup>7</sup> The expansion of Islam was important, not only because religious and cultural conversion took place involving millions of people from Senegal to Indonesia, but also because it involved the erecting of a system of social and cultural communication that embraced much of Eurasia and Africa and their neighbouring seas. The historical interplay between this phenomenon and the development of a trans-Eurasian

network of market relations; the movement of inventions, techniques, and ideas from one society to another; and indeed the entry of Europeans into the wider hemispheric scene has only begun to be explored.<sup>8</sup> The spread of Islam did more than cast lines of influence between one civilised region and another. It was also one of those events that, as Hodgson writes, ‘converged in (its) effects to alter the general disposition of the Hemisphere’.<sup>9</sup> It is a problem in world history that far transcends the issue of religious conversion or cultural adaptation in discrete parts of Africa or Eurasia.

Turkish migrant-conquerors and long-distance merchants have conventionally been identified as the two primary agents of Islam’s expansionary drive beyond the lands of the ‘Abbāsīd Caliphate. Yet wherever a group of Muslims settled in an alien place, they aimed to conform their collective lives to the requirements of the sacred law (*sharī‘a*) as best they could under the political circumstances they found. Islamic institutions of worship, law, and education had to be set up, and this required the presence of literate religious and intellectual cadres. It was these specialists who laid the foundations of Islamic civilisation in a new area.<sup>10</sup> Where Muslims seized political power, a development that might occur in a variety of ways, the demand became even greater for literate personnel to run mosques, schools, courts, and ministries of state, as well as for people with practical skills and refined taste to build and decorate public buildings, write florid diplomatic epistles, and recite praise poems to the new Muslim ruler.

Some of these cadres had initially to be recruited from the older, metropolitan centres of Islam whose colleges and craft shops turned out educated and skilled people in surplus numbers. More than that, the princes of newly established Muslim courts in places like Anatolia, India, and West and East Africa knew the political value of attracting jurists, scribes, divines, poets, and descendants of the Prophet from the central lands. These rulers, often coming to power as rude horse soldiers or newly converted chieftains, had to exercise power among populations that were in the majority non-Muslim. The sheer distance between their states and the Islamic heartland threatened to keep their non-Muslim subjects ignorant of the universalist ideals and prestige of Islam unless exponents of those ideals could be brought in to populate the court.

Moreover, frontier *sultāns* and amīrs may generally have suffered from social and psychological insecurities brought on by their limited cultural *savoir faire* and by public doubts about the political legitimacy of the new Islamic order. They needed urgently to establish their religious and cultural standing among both their Muslim and non-Muslim subjects. Therefore, they took action to position themselves amid a cluster of theologians, doctors of the law, refined courtiers, descendants of the Prophet (*shurafā’*), and anyone else who would ratify their status as proper Muslim princes and perhaps teach them metropolitan standards of taste and ceremony.

**Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** richly documents, for example, the eager efforts of **Muḥammad** ibn Tughluq, the Turkish **Sultān** of Delhi (AD 1325– 1351), to attract to his court and administration large numbers of Persian or Arab lawyers and divines.

Sceptical of the loyalty of Indo-Muslims and suffering, the record of his career suggests, from deep self-doubts about his own political mission, he surrounded himself with educated foreigners. 'He prefers them', **Ibn Baṭṭūta** declares, 'to the people of India, singles them out for favour, showers his benefits upon them,... appoints them to high offices of state, and confers upon them magnificent gifts.'<sup>11</sup>

In another direction of Islamic expansion between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, Muslim rulers of towns along the East African coast sought to attract *shurafā'* and *sayyids* (descendants of **Ḥusayn**, the son of 'Alī) from South Arabia and the **Hijāz** to enhance the theocratic righteousness of their governments and to provide their daughters with husbands of venerable lineage.<sup>12</sup> In the West African kingdom of Mali, the royal court, as well as towns dominated by Muslim merchants, attracted savants and *shurafā'* from the Maghrib, Egypt, and the **Hijāz**. Some of these individuals made important contributions to literacy and the development of the religious sciences in the Sudan.<sup>13</sup>

*ṣūfi*, practitioners were also conspicuous in the outlying lands of Islam. Indeed, Nehemia Levtzion argues that Islamic frontiers 'were extended not through the work of the learned urban *'ulamā'*, but by the efforts of the rural rustic divines, many of whom were mystics and often also members of the institutionalised *ṣūfi*, orders'.<sup>14</sup> Without questioning the importance of *ṣūfi*, preachers, whether peaceful or militant, in introducing Islam to villagers and herding folk in places like Central India, Anatolia, and West Africa, I think Levtzion's generalisation can be questioned on two points. One is that it makes too categorical a distinction between the *ṣūfi*, and the *'ālim* in belief and action. (**Ibn Baṭṭūta** was certainly both a *ṣūfi*, affiliate and an urban scholar.) Second, if wandering mystics represented in many parts of the frontier the cutting edge of an Islam prepared to adapt to local culture, the founding of religious and other public institutions in newly Islamised commercial towns and capitals required the presence of personnel other than 'rural rustic divines'. Muslims who travelled to the further lands by no means lost sight of their mission to recreate, as best they could, societies founded on holy scripture and metropolitan cultural values. As Hodgson writes,

Whatever the Sufi role, the defence of Shar'i norms was stimulated by a steady struggle with local customs, especially as those customs deviated from Irano-Semitic custom long since accommodated. Conscientious Muslims were readily reminded how much the integrity of the Ummah community depended on the Shar'i law alone.<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, the role on the frontier of reasonably literate, urbane, and cosmopolitan individuals, men like **Ibn Baṭṭūta** who represented the values of scripturalist Islam, should not be underplayed.<sup>16</sup>

Whatever the relative contributions of dervishes and doctors, I think the study of Islamic expansion has perhaps focused too much on the abstract process of cultural conversion, as if Muslims travelled to the frontiers merely to play out assigned historical roles as agents of Islamisation. The expansion of Islam was a cultural process, but it was also a social movement, a complex migration of people who were driven to seek new experiences from all sorts of personal and public motives. That is, it is important to see the link between the expansion of Islam as a cultural phenomenon and the collective efforts of individuals of ambition and creative will to build new societies. When Hodgson writes of ‘adventurers’ moving to the frontiers, he is referring not only to merchants or mounted conquerors but to all Muslims who ‘were attracted by a freshly unsettled situation’.<sup>17</sup>

Though the evidence is impressionistic, it would seem likely that when new Muslim towns or states arose beyond the central lands, the word literally went around the mosques, colleges, and bazaars of the Middle East that jobs, honours, and maybe even fortunes were to be had building the new Islamic order on one sector of the frontier or another. Thus, there occurred throughout the Middle Periods at least an intermittent movement of Muslims with skills, prestigious credentials, or simply wits, out to the new realms of conquest and trade.

This is not to argue that the Islamisation of those areas in the Middle Periods was predominantly the work of Arabic-or Persian-speaking immigrants. Classes of indigenous ‘*ulamā*’ emerged early in the Islamic history of, for example, North India, Southeast Asia, and the West African Sudan. Yet the movements of Middle Eastern or Maghribī scholars beyond their homelands cannot merely be cast into the category of mercantile, educational, and diplomatic circulation, which was indeed prominent in Islam in those centuries. Long-distance travel was at least in part, a dynamic, purposive migration of people seeking adventure, opportunity, and perhaps even personal freedom in one form or another in some America of further Islam. Just as Europeans emigrated to new regions of settlement between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, so Muslims travelled to tropics and steppes not only to raid, conquer, and trade but also to take part in recreating Muslim society in ways that might benefit themselves. As Muslim merchants sailed the Indian Ocean or crossed the Sahara to make money from changing market conditions, so Muslims with other sorts of specialties left home with high hopes of profiting from changing social and cultural circumstances that favoured their particular abilities or reputations.

Here we come back to **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**, the literate frontiersman. One can reasonably infer from the *Rihla* that he entertained the idea quite early in his career of travelling to India, one of the most dynamic borderlands of Islam, to seek employment in the government of **Muḥammad** ibn Tughluq. **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** seems to have been aware of the **Sulṭān’s** policy of hiring foreign Muslims to staff his ministries and pious institutions at least three years before he arrived in Delhi.<sup>18</sup> He also mentions a number of scholars and divines from Persia, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and the Arab lands who came to India as he did to work for the

regime, to serve as exemplars of lettered and metropolitan standards of culture, and to eat at the royal trough.<sup>19</sup>

**Muḥammad** ibn Tughluq had a special interest in welcoming Arabic-speaking immigrants because learned men of ‘the Prophet’s race’ lent an aura of special prestige to his regime.<sup>20</sup> **Ibn Baṭṭūta** was of North African Berber origin, but he was an Arab in his language and culture and no doubt knew what opportunities might be spun out of his status by going to India. When he arrived there in AD 1333, he quickly joined **Muḥammad** ibn Tughluq’s administration. He served for about six years as a *qāḍī* of Delhi, a job that must be characterised as a sinecure, since he was a Mālikī scholar in a **Hanafi**, country, and he knew very little Persian, the language of the state bureaucracy. Later, he served as administrator of one of the royal tomb complexes. In the years he held those jobs, he enriched himself handsomely, at the same time indulging in the sort of reckless deficit spending that was expected of officers of state in the Delhi Sultanate.

In AD 1341, **Muḥammad** ibn Tughluq appointed him envoy to the Mongol emperor of China and instructed him to act as ‘chaplain’ to the Yüan court, travelling by sea. When this expedition ended in a disastrous storm off the South Indian coast, **Ibn Baṭṭūta** precipitately left the **Sultān**’s service and travelled to the Maldive Islands, where he spent several months.

This remote land of farmers and fisherman had converted to Islam from Buddhism two centuries earlier, and, as the *Rihla* amply shows, it welcomed lettered men of the city who might lend expertise and prestige to its diminutive royal government. Indeed, when the Grand *Wazīr* discovered that **Ibn Baṭṭūta** had served as a judge in Delhi, he literally forced his prestigious visitor to take the post of chief *Qāḍī*. **Ibn Baṭṭūta** quickly warmed to the job and moved zealously to enforce the sacred law among the islanders. He was in fact at least modestly qualified for the position because at that time the Maldivians followed the Mālikī school of law that also pertained throughout North Africa. Quite beyond the boundaries of his judgeship, however, he also played the part of frontier adventurer as he did at no other time in his career. For he became one of the conspirators in a brief, abortive plot to overthrow the reigning queen and install himself and others as new rulers of the Kingdom.<sup>21</sup>

In connection with his travels to regions besides India or the Maldives, **Ibn Baṭṭūta** does not report that he sought permanent employment. But he visited numerous frontier Sultanates and Shaykhdoms where ex-Turkish war captains and other princes hungering for cosmopolitan credentials welcomed him warmly as a pious scholar and gentleman. He entertained at court with stories of his wanderings and sometimes offered the ruler useful intelligence about other Muslim states. In return, his host plied him with robes, money, horses, and slave girls. Indeed, it was on the tumultuous Anatolian military frontier between Islam and Byzantium that **Ibn Baṭṭūta** first struck it rich, visiting some sixteen Turkish amirates and coming away with a baggage train of gifts, gold, and concubines.

His travels from one petty state to another suggest that many other footloose men of his class were doing the same, sampling the job climate here and there

and interviewing, as it were, for the best situations. A notable fact of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's** own career is that it did indeed end back in the land of his birth. Some educated Muslims from North Africa and the Middle East migrated permanently, as the *Rihla* shows, to India, Malaysia, West Africa, or other places where Islamic society was abuilding. Indeed, the **Sultān** of Delhi demanded that learned immigrants agree to remain in his service indefinitely. When **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** entered India, he signed a contract committing himself to stay permanently.<sup>22</sup> Some years later he received the **Sultān's** permission to make the pilgrimage to Mecca (a common strategy in Muslim states when an official wished to leave the ruler's service). In fact, he departed as 'chaplain' to the **Sultān's** diplomatic mission to China.

**Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** might also be typical of the literate frontiersman in respect of the quality of his learning. Even though some writers have projected his twentieth century fame back to his own time and mistakenly characterised him as a brilliant and eminent leqist or even 'theologian', the weight of evidence suggests that he was in fact a man of pedestrian scholarship. He acquired a certain advanced education before he left Tangier, and he manifested the refined manners, dress, and vocabulary of a learned gentleman. Throughout his travels he was received publicly as a member of the learned class, the '*ulamā*' constituting a rather vaguely defined but distinguishable social group. Yet there is no evidence that he ever undertook the long periods, indeed years, of study required to master the corpus of Mālikī law books or other texts of the religious sciences. Indeed **Ibn Ḥajar**, in his fifteenth century biographical notice on **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**, cites the celebrated Andalusian scholar **Ibn al-Khaṭīb** in reporting that the traveller had only 'a modest share of the sciences'.<sup>23</sup> Or in a franker rendering of the phrase, **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** did not have 'too much of what it takes'.<sup>24</sup>

The Moroccan journeyer, then, was almost certainly an indifferent scholar who could never have secured a prestigious civil or religious post in a city like Cairo, Damascus, or even Fez. Schoolmen of this type, culturally sophisticated, adept at displaying the outward symbols of their class in dress, speech, and comportment, making up in wits and charm what they lacked in erudition, and above all, ambitious and opportunistic, may have accounted for a large proportion of literate individuals who gravitated out to the frontiers. The foreign-born '*ulamā*' who served the Delhi Sultanate, for example, were as a group undistinguished in legal or theological scholarship and most notable for their sycophancy, worldliness, and intellectual mediocrity.<sup>25</sup>

Systematic, comparative study of the social character of the literate people who carried Islamic civilisation to further Eurasia and Africa is probably precluded owing to lack of sufficient biographical data. Yet the expansion of Islam was a patterned social movement as well as a cultural phenomenon. A richer portrait of the background and motives of Islamic pioneers who were travelling simultaneously to Anatolia and Mali, Sumatra and the Swahili coast would at least be an interesting exercise in social history.

If **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** was an extraordinary historical figure owing to the sheer energy of his travels and to the book he wrote about them, the shape of his career does not appear to have been unique, perhaps not even particularly remarkable. As an educated frontier migrant, he fits what was probably a common social type in the fourteenth century among the *'ulamā'* class all across the Islamic world. Moreover, any investigation of the travels of literate job-seekers in the Middle Periods might well start with the hemispheric view that Hodgson urged us to take. At some level, Islamic civilisation worked as an eminently international system of social links and cultural communication. We might ask, for example, to what extent Muslim commercial diasporas, *ṣūfi*, brotherhoods, and perhaps even 'old boy networks' of urban scholars and craftsmen linked Islamic frontier lands not only with the metropolitan centres but with one another. (As he travelled around the hemisphere, **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** was, after all, constantly bumping into people he knew.) To what extent did literate and well-travelled Muslims possess a consciousness of the whole of the *Dār al-Islām* as a dynamic social reality?

If Islam really did succeed before AD 1500 in erecting a cosmopolitan social and cultural system that spanned the hemisphere, is not this an achievement of profound importance for world history, especially in juxtaposition against modern society, where the ideology of nationalism, unknown to the likes of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**, constantly impedes the search for common standards of human value and conduct? Indeed the attachment of the study of Islamic history to national frames of analysis and to the 'area studies' tradition has seriously obscured this world-scale perspective. Yet in so far as we recognise the growth of Islamic civilisation in the Middle Periods as an event of critical importance to our understanding of the genesis of the modern world, we will be obliged to break out of scholarly specialties rigidly defined in space and take the trans-hemispheric view.

## NOTES

- 1 This article develops a theme that I introduced only briefly in my book *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveller of the Fourteenth Century*, (London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1986).
- 2 See especially C.F.Beckingham, 'In Search of Ibn Battuta', *Asian Affairs*, vol. 8 (1977), pp. 263–277; H.A.R.Gibb, (trans. and ed.), *Ibn Battūta: Travels in Asia and Africa 1325–1354*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1929, reprint edn., 1983); Ivan Hrbek, 'The Chronology of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's** Travels', *Archiv Orientalní*, vol. 30 (1962), pp. 409–486; Herman F. Janssens, *Ibn Batouta, 'Le Voyageur de l'Islam' (1304–1369)*, (Brussels: Office de Publicité, 1948); André Miquel, '**Baṭṭūṭa**, Trente Années de Voyages de Pékin au Niger', *Les Africains*, vol. 1 (1977), pp. 117–140; and Vincent Monteil, 'Introduction aux Voyages (1325–1353)', *Bulletin de l'IFAN*, sér. B, vol. 30 (1968), pp. 444–462.

- 3 North African scholars who journeyed to the Middle East in the fourteenth century and whose careers are well documented include Abū **Muḥammad** al-'Abdarī, **Muḥammad** ibn Marzūq, and of course, Ibn Khaldūn. A. Cherbonneau, 'Notice et Extraits du Voyage d'El-Abdary travers l'Afrique Septentrionale, au VII<sup>e</sup> siècle de l'Hegire, *Journal Asiatique*, 5th sér., vol. 4 (1854), pp. 144–176; E.Lévi-Provençal, 'Un Nouvel Text d'Histoire Mérinide: Hésperis, vol. 5 (1925), pp. 1–82; Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, 2nd edn., trans. F.Rosenthal, (3 vols., London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967), vol. 1, pp. xxix-lxvii.
- 4 The authenticity of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's** trip to China is problematical. I have taken the position that he may well have visited the southern coast but is not likely to have travelled further in China. Dunn, *Adventures of Ibn Battuta*, pp. 252–253.
- 5 Marshall G.S.Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, (3 vols., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974). See especially vol. 2, pp. 8–11 and pp. 532–570.
- 6 Hichem Djaït, *Europe and Islam*, trans. Peter Heinegg, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), pp. 110–111.
- 7 This broader view of the development of Islam as a world cultural and social system is recently exemplified in Ira M.Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). I have discussed the issue in relation to the university world history survey course in 'The Challenge of Hemispheric History', *The History Teacher*, vol. 18 (1985), pp. 329–338.
- 8 See, for example, William H.McNeill, *The Pursuit of Power: Technology, Armed Force, and Society since A.D. 1000*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1982), pp. 24–62; and Philip D.Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History*, Studies in Comparative World History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 109–135.
- 9 Hodgson, 'Hemispheric Inter-regional History as an Approach to World History', *Journal of World History*, vol. 1 (1954), p. 717.
- 10 See Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, vol. 2, pp. 540–541.
- 11 Gibb (trans. and ed.), *The Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, A.D. 1325–1354*, (3 vols., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1958, 1962, 1971), vol. 3, p. 671.
- 12 See B.G.Martin, 'Arab Migration to East Africa in Medieval Times', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, vol. 7 (1974), pp. 367–390; Gibb, *Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, vol. 2, pp. 380–381.
- 13 See Nehemia Levtzion, *Ancient Ghana and Mali*, Studies in African History, no. 7, (London: Methuen, 1973), pp. 191, 200–208.
- 14 Idem., (ed.), *Conversion to Islam*, (London: Holmes & Meier, 1979), p. 17.
- 15 Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, vol. 2, p. 569.
- 16 Regarding the establishment of Islam in Southeast Asia, A.H.Johns, while recognising the importance of **ṣūfī**, proselytising, points to the needs of Muslim town merchants for 'ulamā' to establish schools and teach writing: 'From Coastal Settlement to Islamic School and City: Islamization in Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula and Java', *Hamdard Islamicus*, vol. 4 (1981), pp. 3–28.
- 17 Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, vol. 2, p. 541.
- 18 **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** writes that he intended in AD 1330 (or 1332), when he was in Mecca, to go to India. He arrived there three years later after travelling to Anatolia, Central Asia, and other regions. Gibb, *Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, vol. 2, p. 413.
- 19 Gibb, *Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, vol. 3, pp. 582–686 *passim*.

- 20 The Sultan had a great affection for the Arabs and used to show them special favour and speak highly of their virtues'. Gibb, *Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, vol. 3, p. 686.
- 21 On the Maldive episode of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's** career see Dunn, *Adventures of Ibn Battuta*, pp. 229–237.
- 22 Gibb, *Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, vol. 3, p. 607.
- 23 This is Gibb's translation of 'kāna mushārikan fī shay 'in yasīrin'. *Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, vol. 1, p. ix. See **Ibn Hajar** al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, (4 vols., Hyderabad: Osmania Oriental Publications Bureau, 1930–31), vol. 3, pp. 480–481.
- 24 Said Hamdun and Noel King, *Ibn Battuta in Black Africa*, (London: Rex Collings, 1975), p. 5.
- 25 Mohammad Ashraf [K.M.], *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan*, 2nd edn., (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1970), pp. 91– 101; Mohammad Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims*, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1967), pp. 73–80. The question of the quality of learned credentials of literate Muslims who travelled beyond the heartland of Islam might be formulated negatively. If the frontier regions attracted less distinguished men, the more capable and better-educated type of 'ālim would likely choose to make his career in one of the Middle Eastern capitals or centres of learning. Carl Petry has demonstrated that in the fifteenth century AD statistically very few professional notables of Egypt and Syria who figure in prosopographical collections travelled outside the Mamlūk Sultanate, though the trips of a few who did are documented. It may also be true, however, that international travel by scholars generally declined from the fourteenth to the fifteenth centuries owing to the breakup of the great Mongol states, the recurrences of plague in Eurasia and North Africa following the Black Death, and the widespread economic troubles that appear to have progressively gripped the Middle East. See Carl F. Petry, 'Travel Patterns of Medieval Notables in the Near East', *Studia Islamica*, vol. 62 (1985), pp. 53–87.

THE *RIḤLA*: FACT OR FICTION?

C.F.Beckingham

A historian trying to establish the reliability of travel narratives and geographical descriptions written in classical Islamic times often encounters stories of miraculous phenomena and events, *'ajā'ib*, which are plainly impossible and which he can dismiss without qualms, except for the suspicion they may arouse concerning more plausible parts of the work with which he is concerned. In this article I should like to consider a more difficult problem. There are a number of narratives that contain nothing that is physically impossible, which are nevertheless suspect because they cannot be reconciled with what we know from other sources, but which contain details seeming to validate them because it is hard to imagine why they should have been included if the story were not true. There are well-known instances of this in the *Rihla* of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**, which will be familiar to many readers. To cite two examples: he claims to have accompanied a Byzantine princess, one of the wives of Özbek Khān of the Golden Horde, on a visit to Constantinople that had been arranged so that she could give birth to the child she was expecting in the palace of her father, the Emperor Andronicus III. This is by no means impossible; indeed, we know that a daughter of the Emperor was married to Özbek. But when we are told that the Pope visited Constantinople every year, that the Emperor went to receive him when he was four nights' journey from the city, walked in front of him when he entered, and came to salute him every morning and evening during his stay, we are bound to wonder whether the whole visit has not been fabricated. Suspicion is enhanced when he describes how he met the deposed Emperor Andronicus II, who must have been dead at the time. On this incident Dr Ross Dunn comments that 'his encounter with *someone* in the streets of the city has the ring of truth about it' and 'we may fairly suppose that the palace guide failed to clarify the identity of the mysterious cleric or, worse yet, was having a bit of fun with his credulous Arab guest'.<sup>1</sup> I think 'the ring of truth' should always be treated with caution in works of this kind.

**Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's** alleged travels in China provide another instance. One difficulty is that he claims to have accompanied an embassy sent by **Muḥammad** ibn Tughluq, **Sultān** of Delhi, in response to one sent to him by the Chinese emperor. So far as I can discover no reference to these missions can be traced in the Yüan dynastic history. Moreover, he describes in some detail the funeral of

the emperor. In essentials what he says accords with what is known of Mongol funerary rites. However, the Emperor Toghon Temür was still alive and reigning in Mongolia when **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** himself died in Morocco in AD 1368/9.

There are those who have doubted whether he really went either to Constantinople or to China. On this I wholeheartedly agree with what Dr Ross Dunn has written:

No one...has made a completely convincing case that Ibn Battuta did *not* go to East Asia, at least as far as the ports of South China. The riddle of the journey probably defies solution since the *Rihla*, we must remind ourselves, is a work of literature, a survey of the Muslim world of the fourteenth century in narrative form, not a travel diary composed along the road. We have no way of knowing the precise relationship between Ibn Battuta's real life experience and the account of it contained in the fragile manuscripts that have come down to us from his time.<sup>2</sup>

We can be certain that some statements in the narrative are incorrect; we can suppose that some of these are attributable to lapses of memory, or to adjustments of the facts to conform with the conventions of *adab*, of *belles lettres*, or to errors committed by other writers from whom descriptions of places or customs had been borrowed.

The 'ring of truth' is to be found in the dubious parts of the *Rihla*. The Byzantine heir apparent is said to have come to greet his sister on her way to Constantinople, but **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** admits to having forgotten the name of the town where they met, and he cannot describe how they behaved to each other because they retired into a silk tent. Such details have convinced many scholars of the authenticity of this episode. The same is true of the visit to China. He alleges that in Ch'uan-chou (Quanzhou) he met a merchant who had lent him money in Delhi. At a place he calls Qanjanfū he claims to have met one Qiwām al-Dīn al-Sibṭī al-Bushrī, a native of Cueta whom he had known in Delhi and who had settled in China. It has been argued that he would not have ventured to fabricate this incident when there must have been in Morocco relations of the man he was supposed to have met in China, who might easily discover the imposture. This contention seems to me to imply a frequency and efficiency of postal communication between China and Morocco that is unlikely to have obtained at the time.

When considering this problem it is instructive to examine the writings of another Muslim traveller, the one who perhaps offers the closest parallel to **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**, the seventeenth century Ottoman Turk Evliyā Chelebī. He too travelled, or purported to have travelled, over a vast area. Whereas the Moroccan claimed to have traversed virtually the whole *Dār al-Islām*, the Turk claimed to have visited almost every part of the Ottoman Empire, which attained its greatest territorial extent in his time. Both men claimed to have made excursions beyond even these extensive bounds, the one to Constantinople, Southeast Asia and

China, the other to Austria, Germany, Holland, Sweden and Somalia. Both were devout, though Evliyā was not a *faqīh*, merely a Qur‘ān reader of high repute. Both were preoccupied with holy men, after whom the Turk took his pen name, **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa** primarily in visiting them and thereby acquiring *baraka*, Evliyā giving more attention to their tombs, though he too was initiated into at least one *ṣūfi*, order. The *Seyāhatnāme* is, however, very much longer than the *Rihla*. The Turkish text alone fills ten volumes compared with the four smaller volumes of Arabic text and French translation in the standard edition of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**. Even so, Evliyā’s book is incomplete; there are gaps in the manuscript which have been left blank so as to be filled in later. What we have is obviously unrevised. Some sentences are evidently out of place, when Evliyā has remembered something he should have included in a previous passage. In one instance which is relevant to the topic under discussion, what I suspect are two differing versions of the same episode are given consecutively. It is unfortunate that there is no satisfactory edition of this huge work. The first six volumes were printed in the reign of **Abdül Ḥamīd** II and were subject to drastic, arbitrary and sometimes eccentric censorship; the ninth and tenth were printed in the modern Turkish alphabet, so that the text is almost useless for the identification of many toponyms or ethnic names. Only relatively small parts have had the benefit of critical editing or adequate annotation. The passage with which I am concerned is not one of them.<sup>3</sup>

The *Seyāhatnāme*, like the *Rihla*, contains much that is of value, though, doubtless because there is no critical edition or translation of so much of the work, it has been less often utilised by historians. The episode which I intend to discuss is of interest because, unlike **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**’s journeys to Constantinople and China, it cannot possibly have taken place. I know of no detailed study of it and I do not propose to undertake one here; it would be beyond my competence. The story was printed in Volume VI of the comprehensive edition and was therefore subjected to censorship to an extent that cannot be judged without reference to the manuscript. There are only two or three editorial notes and they are of little value. Any identifications I suggest must of necessity be extremely tentative.

Evliyā alleges that he accompanied a raiding party of 40,000 Tatars<sup>4</sup> who set out from UYWĀR (Ursek Ujvar, Neuhaüsel) in Hungary and penetrated Germany, Holland and Sweden, burning Amsterdam and taking many thousands of prisoners. Needless to say the history of these countries in the mid-seventeenth century is recorded in sufficient detail for us to be sure that if a Tatar band had so much as threatened Amsterdam or Cologne or had crossed the Swedish frontier, we should know of it from more than one European source. With all proper diffidence I would suggest as a possibility that the story may have some connection with a proposal which the Crimean Khān made to Gustaf Adolf in AD 1630. He offered to send 40,000 Tatars to attack either Poland or the Habsburg dominions, whichever the King would prefer. Having recently concluded a truce with the Poles, Gustaf Adolf opted for the Habsburgs and selected a

representative to accompany the envoys on their return to Baghchesaray. Early in AD 1632 another Crimean embassy arrived in Stockholm explaining that the Khān had been required by the Ottoman **Sultān** to send 30,000 men against the Persians, but that he could still send 30,000 against the Habsburgs provided that they could be guaranteed free passage through Transylvania. By the time these envoys arrived in Sweden they were so dishevelled in appearance that they were at first suspected of being impostors. By this time the King was campaigning in Germany. The Tatars were supplied with new clothes and sent in pursuit. They never caught up with Gustaf Adolf and, after waiting for a while at Erfurt, were politely dismissed with the explanation that the Swedes could not guarantee passage through Transylvania.<sup>5</sup>

Whether or not this *démarche* was the inspiration for Evliyā's supposititious expedition, his narrative is remarkably confused, as well as incredible. The expedition starts from Ursek Ujvar and proceeds to Nitra, now in Slovakia. Once it leaves Ottoman territory, though some place names are easily recognised, the geography becomes impossible. The raiders enter the country of the (?Deutsch) who are Lutherans and whose language resembles Polish. To the north of them is the land of the Czechs; to the west is Austria. The Tatars capture 10,000 prisoners and then mount a raid on Holland. The northern side of this country is under the King of the Poles whose port of DĀNSQH (Danzig, Gdansk) is on the shore of the Ocean. The Tatars had been there with Islām Giray Khān. (The most recent Khān of the name had ruled from AD 1584–88, before Evliyā was born.) The western side of Holland is subject to the King of the Czechs, from west to south under the King of the Swedes. On the south is the German Sea (*Ālmān deryāsī*), which is a big inlet of the Ocean, on the shore of which is Amsterdam, capital of the King of the Flemings. They burn the city, and take many prisoners and enormous booty, vast quantities being destroyed because they could not carry it away.

From Amsterdam they go northwards, avoiding causing damage to Polish territory, and reach the QWRWL, who speak Polish and Russian. (I venture a hesitant guess that Courland may be meant.) Their country has the Ocean to the north, the Czechs on the west, and the Poles, to whom it used to belong, on the east.

They next come to a town called SHWH QWRWN, which the editors identified as 's Gravenhage, The Hague. In the harbour were ships of India, Flanders, England and Portugal. They next arrive at HYWĀR, a very big city with 20,000 gardens, which they capture by shooting burning arrows into it; they take 20,000 prisoners and carry away hundreds of thousands of precious objects. They proceed to the country of the Czechs, which has Austria on the south, the Swedes on the west and the Ocean to the north. It had once been ruled by one of the seven kings subordinate to the Caesar of Austria, *Nemse Chāsāī*, but had been subject to the King of the Swedes since the time of Süleymān. Here there is evidently an allusion to the status of the King of Bohemia as one of the seven

Electors of the Holy Roman Empire, but Bohemia was never conquered by Gustaf Adolf, let alone by any Swedish contemporary of Süleymān.

The King of the Czechs, whose mother was a daughter of the King of the Swedes, was a young man called Joachim, whose portrait appeared on a silver coin called a thaler. The King of Bohemia was, of course, the Habsburg emperor, but Evliyā may have been referring to Frederick V, the Elector Palatine, who reigned briefly after the Defenestration of Prague, though he had died in AD 1632 and his mother was Dutch, not Swedish. The Joachim who figured on the thalers was not a secular prince, but St Joachim. The silver came from Joachimsthal, now Jáchymov.

The raiders pass from Czech to Swedish country, where the people are Lutherans and the King has under him seven tributary dukes. (At one time there had been a few powerful Swedish dukedoms belonging to members of the royal family, but Evliyā's remark may reflect the seven Electors of the Empire.) There were 800,000 nomadic Tatars who were subject to the Swedes. Many of them were made prisoners, but they proved to speak not Tatar but Italian. (The only nomads under Swedish rule were, of course, Lapps.)

Leaving the land of the Swedes, where they are not said to have captured, or even attacked, any towns, they arrive in one day at QLHWYN or QLWWYN on the river WW, identified by the editors as Cleves on the Waal. There are indications that the name of the city represents Cologne, which appears as QLWNYH on the next page. Moreover, Cleves is nearer to, though not 'on', the undivided Rhine than the Waal. Besides Evliyā asserts that the river rises on the mountains of DĀNSQH and divides the country of the Swedes from that of the seven kings. In fact the identification of towns mentioned in this narrative is not a meaningful exercise. A few genuine names, such as Amsterdam, Danzig and Brandenburg, do occur, but there is little or nothing to relate them to topographical reality.

They next come to PRĀNDH BWRGH (Brandenburg), where the people are either Czechs or Swedes. Here they decide to return home and free 10,000 of their 70–80,000 prisoners. They turn south and in one day arrive at a big city in Flemish country called FRYSH, subject to the King of the Flemings, who has 3,000 ships. In the harbour are vessels bound for India, the New World and China. The inhabitants are Christians; like the English they have translated the Gospel into their own language. Evliyā describes in detail how the city was taken, burning arrows being fired and a party of Tatars being guided into it through a ruin on the shore. The 10,000 captives were few in comparison with the size of the place, but the population fled, taking refuge in boats and in the jungle-covered mountains where the Tatars could not follow. Vast numbers were, however, secured in the plains and snow-clad plateaux to the east where the Tatars felt at home. It is evident that there is no port, either in the Friesland which was a constituent part of the United Provinces or in the wider region which includes East Friesland, to which these particulars are applicable.

Galloping south for two days they then reach Amsterdam, again stated to be the Flemish capital. The second mention of this place, and soon afterwards of Brandenburg, suggests that Evliyā wrote two accounts of the supposed expedition but did not have time or inclination to reduce them to one coherent narrative. The castle of Amsterdam looks like Alexander's wall; the towers and bastions recall the Alburz mountains. It seems that on this occasion they did not storm the city but merely pillaged the villages in the surrounding plain. They next proceed to Brandenburg, which they reach on the third day. It lies at the foot of a big, snow-covered plateau. The climate is extreme; for six months the rain is so violent that people cannot open their eyes. They have built strong castles because they are afraid of the Swedes. Raiding was impossible and they make their way to the German frontier in one day, coming to a wild forest in the territory of the Caesar of Austria. His people are Papists (*mezhebleri papishtedir*) and they have translated the Gospel into their own language. The Tatars return to Hungary by way of 'SYZYYH, the Austrian capital.'<sup>6</sup>

This selective and inadequate summary must be treated with caution, being based as it is on a very unsatisfactory text. It is obvious that the narrative is a farrago of historical mistakes and geographical absurdities with a few genuine toponyms and occasional correct statements interspersed. What is relevant for the present topic is that the author has inserted into this preposterous recital details which can have no purpose but to give it 'the ring of truth', as in his account of the capture of FRYSH. When recording the number of prisoners taken when a town is stormed he specifies his own share of the booty. When Amsterdam was burnt he received a girl, a boy and seven horses. At HY WĀR he won three QWRWL boys, some virgin girls and many gold and silver vessels. In Czech country his portion was three boys, three girls, some swift horses and many embroidered garments. At Brandenburg he came away with three boys and seven girls, and he remarks that male Brandenburgers are sour-faced but the girls are well-spoken and very charming. Perhaps he is most convincing when he expresses his annoyance that at Cologne he acquired no boys or girls himself although there were beautiful specimens among the captives. These seemingly precise details cannot possibly be true because the entire episode is undoubtedly a fabrication.

The late Professor Bombaci examined another journey on the fringes of the Ottoman Empire which Evliyā claims to have made, to Suakin, Massawa, Zeila and Mogadishu.<sup>7</sup> He concluded that, while Evliyā's notions about Africa as a whole were derived from the classical Islamic geographers, his topography of Eritrea and Somalia owed little or nothing either to written sources or to his own observations. It is more likely to represent information collected orally, perhaps in the Sudan. In the same way Evliyā's geography of Northern Europe is not indebted to al-Idrīsī. He would appear to have acted as 'Our Own Correspondent' has been known to do, to have recorded sensational gossip, to have conflated it into a personal narrative, and to have invented particulars calculated to give it verisimilitude.

It would be wrong to assume that this mingling of the true and the fictitious, sometimes the blatantly fictitious, is peculiar to the Islamic literary tradition. I shall refer to two mediaeval European examples, one very well-known, the other rather less so. There is a widespread popular belief that ‘Sir John Mandeville’ recorded little except unbelievable marvels. This delusion may owe something to the deserved success of the woodcuts which illustrated one of the early printed editions and which have so often been reproduced. The sciapods and the ‘men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders’ lend themselves to memorable illustration. In reality about two-thirds of the book is at least based on reasonably reliable sources. It is almost wholly concerned with three regions, Egypt and the Holy Land, (i.e. the Christian pilgrim circuit), Cathay, and India. It is only in the third, the domain of Prester John, that ‘*ajā’ib* predominate. As Mandeville’s editor, M.C.Seymour, has written: ‘Any critic who ignores the essential accuracy of the book betrays a naïveté more than medieval’.<sup>8</sup>

The second European example I wish to mention is the *Reisefahrt* of Arnold von Harff, who travelled in the closing years of the fifteenth century. Unlike Mandeville, whose own person was only a part of the apparatus of verisimilitude, von Harff did exist. There is no reason to doubt that he travelled in Europe, Egypt and Palestine. He certainly makes mistakes, but they are mistakes which any other traveller of his time might have made. However, having been to Sinai, he purports to have joined a caravan to Mecca, to have proceeded to Aden, and then sailed to Socotra, Ceylon, India and Madagascar. He returned to Cairo by climbing the Mountains of the Moon and following the Nile from its source. His learned translator and editor, the late Dr Malcolm Letts, was willing to accept that he did travel in Arabia and go to Socotra, but regarded what follows as mere fabrication.<sup>9</sup>

I think myself that the journey to Mecca, Aden and Socotra is no less suspect than his ascent of the Mountains of the Moon. The description of Mecca which he offers is in fact a confused account of Medina, to which he refers as Trippa, one of the ancient versions of the name Yathrib. Can we believe that anyone visiting it at the end of the fifteenth century would have called it by that name? Again, he calls Aden Madach, a name that comes from Ptolemy, not from anyone he would have met in Arabia. He says, correctly, that the Socotrans were Christians and had a language of their own; as is his custom he reproduces their alphabet. There was no Socotran alphabet. He took it from Breydenbach who calls it Ethiopic, to which it has only occasional resemblances. His illustration of Socotran costume is absurd. From his departure from Sinai to his return to Cairo his narrative is as truthful as Evliyā’s story of the Tatar incursion into Northern Europe. In the West, as in the *Dār al-Islām*, the *rihla* is sometimes, as Dr Netton has said, ‘perhaps best regarded as an art form rather than a formal geography’.<sup>10</sup>

## NOTES

- 1 Ross E.Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta*, (London & Sydney: Croom Helm, 1986), p. 172.
- 2 Idem., p. 253.
- 3 *Evliyā Chelebī* (Istanbul: Iqdām Matbaasi H.1318), vol. VI, pp. 364–76. However, the late R.F.Kreutel published an annotated German translation of Evliyā's description of his visit to Vienna with an Ottoman embassy in AD 1665, *Im Reiche des Goldenen Apfels*, (Graz, Wien & Köln: Verlag Styria, 1957).
- 4 The text gives the number both in figures and in words, but the article on Evliyā in *EL<sup>2</sup>* has 10,000, though *EL<sup>1</sup>* had 40,000.
- 5 During the seventeenth century the Crimean Khān entertained intermittent diplomatic relations with Sweden and Denmark. Relevant Tatar documents have been edited or summarised by K.V.Zetterstéen, *Türkische, tatarische und persische Urkunden im schwedischen Reichsarchiv*, (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells, 1948), and Josef Matuz, *Krimitatarische Urkunden im Reichsarchiv zu Kopenhagen*, (Freiburg i.B.: K.Schwarz, 1976). I have to thank Dr Colin Heywood for drawing my attention to these works. However, their documents are all too late to provide any information about the embassies to Gustaf Adolf. For these I have relied on Michael Roberts, *Gustavus Adolphus: A History of Sweden, 1611–1632*, (London: Longmans, Green, 1958), vol. 2, pp. 571, 572, as some of the sources he cites, all of which are European, are not accessible to me.
- 6 Ottoman writers generally use the Hungarian name for Vienna, Bécs. Kreutel, *Im Reiche*, p. 209, suggests that 'SYZYH might represent Schlesien (Silesia). Dr Heywood remarks that, with some adjustment of the dots, it could well be intended for some variant of Austria.
- 7 A.Bombaci, 'Il Viaggio in Abissinia di Evliyā Čelebī (1763)'. *Annali dell' Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli*, n.s. vol. II (Roma, 1943), pp. 199–275.
- 8 *Mandeville's Travels*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p. xvi.
- 9 *The Pilgrimage of Arnold von Harff*, (London: Hakluyt Society, 1946), pp. xxvi–xxviii.
- 10 I.R.Netton, 'Myth, Miracle and Magic in the *Rihla* of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa', *Journal of Semitic Studies*, vol. XXIX:1 (1984), p. 131.

8  
LES ‘DÉTENUS ARABES’ DE CALVI,  
1871–1903  
Fanny Colonna

En mai AD 1880, un personnage aurasien auquel je me suis intéressée pendant longtemps, Si Lhachemi U Durdur, des U.Abdi, est condamné ainsi que trois de ses proches, a la réclusion au bagne de Calvi pour une affaire obscure que j’ai décrite ailleurs,<sup>1</sup> et qui repose en fait sur une dénonciation... Il ne reviendra qu’en AD 1890, déjà âgé de 60 ans, et l’un de ses compagnons, Amar Ben Yucef, est mort à Calvi. Un peu par hasard, j’ai découvert qu’à peu près au même moment, Mohamed Belkheir, un grand poète de la région de Geryville, avait été exilé à Calvi aussi en AD 1888, ayant été fortement impliqué dans l’insurrection des U.Sidi Cheikh en AD 1881, et je me suis souvent demandé depuis ce que ces deux hommes, si différents mais à peu près de la même génération, l’un montagnard, berbèrophone et clerc, l’autre, saharien et grand ‘poète de cour’, amateur de chevaux et de femmes, avait bien pu se dire dans leur solitude; et aussi quels effets ces dialogues avaient bien pu avoir sur leurs vies, ainsi que, plus tard, sur celle de leurs tribus. C’est en partie pour répondre à cette question que je me suis mise à la recherche des archives de ce ‘bagne’, dont on va voir qu’il n’en était pas vraiment un.

Entre AD 1850 et 1870, grand voyageur, Si Lhachemi avait vécu 20 ans en Tunisie et au Moyen-Orient, et il m’avait paru normal de m’interroger sur les effets de ce long déplacement. Au contraire, j’avais dans un premier temps pensé les années qu’il avait passées au bagne comme un temps mort, comme une parenthèse.

A la réflexion cependant j’ai voulu savoir de cette *Rihla* forcée si elle devait vraiment être comptée pour rien. De son côté c’est clairement à la *Hijra* que Belkheir lui, compare son exil, quand il écrit:

Dieu qui sauve du désert l’égaré  
et ramène l’exilé au pays  
délivre moi d’entre lion et rempart

...

Sauve moi comme le Prophète dans la grotte  
caché par la colombe et la toile d’araignée<sup>2</sup>

Au-delà de cet intérêt on l'a vu, un peu accidentel, je me suis posé plusieurs questions relatives à l'existence de ces pénitenciers du dix-neuvième siècle dont Calvi n'est qu'un exemple, le moins dur sans doute:

—Sur quel modèle, par analogie avec quelle autre type de contraintes par corps, cet exil était-il *pensé* par ceux qui le subissaient?

—Qu'est-ce qui s'échangeait là entre les détenus, en fait d'idées mais peut-être aussi d'autres choses, et entre la communauté des détenus et la société environnante? En particulier quel type d'acculturation ce long séjour outre-mer pouvait-il produire? Doit-on pour le comprendre, le rapprocher de la *Rihla* ou de la *Hijra*, ou bien d'autres modes d'acculturation forcée comme la *conscription*, et peut-être même plus tard, *l'émigration industrielle*?

—Enfin et cette question est directement liée à la première, existe-il un langage pour parler de cette expérience? Et comment en retrouver des traces dans la société algérienne? Comment rendre compte d'une expérience pareille dans sa communauté ou devant une audience plus large?

Il faut que je dise d'entrée de jeu que je présente ici un état naissant du travail, une première lecture assez frustrante des archives, dont je pense qu'on peut tirer bien plus par une analyse plus sophistiquée, par exemple en suivant les mêmes individus pendant toute leur 'déportation', en reconstituant des histoires et des manières *différentes* de vivre cette épreuve.

Par ailleurs je crois aussi que Calvi ne peut 'parler' que replacé dans la succession et la diversité des différentes formes de *réclusion en enceinte fortifiée en France*, dont on sait qu'à partir de AD 1840 elles se multiplient. C'est donc dans le cadre élargi d'une investigation plurielle qui semble en route qu'on pourra évaluer plus finement la singularité de ces expériences très propres au dix-neuvième siècle.

## LA FORME DE CAPTIVITÉ

Les Algériens, sujets ottomans avant la conquête française, connaissaient l'existence de la contrainte par corps et des travaux forcés: les Turcs entretenaient une grande variété de bagnes destinés aux autochtones en Afrique du Nord, qu'ils désignaient de termes divers (*zandala*, *karrata*).<sup>3</sup> Par ailleurs dans les tribus berbérophones, les *qānūn* comportaient parmi les peines, le *bannissement*, dont les cités ibadites par exemple faisaient grand usage: on était condamné à 'aller voir la mer' pour une durée de plusieurs années. Enfin on connaissait aussi les galères chrétiennes, françaises ou italiennes<sup>4</sup> mais nous n'avons pas sur ces dernières l'équivalent des célèbres témoignages (Haedo, Cervantes) qui décrivent en détails leurs homologues dans les ports de la Sublime Porte.

Si c'est sans doute sur ce modèle (être prisonnier chez les chrétiens) que les 'détenus arabes' en Corse durant le dernier tiers du dix-neuvième siècle pensaient ce qui leur arrivait au moins au départ, si par ailleurs le terme utilisé par ceux qui restaient était celui qui désigne le bannissement (*al-naḡy*), même dans le cas de Cayenne d'ailleurs, la réalité comme on va le voir, était tout autre: bannissement

au-delà de la mer certes, mais en même temps liberté de mouvement très restreinte. *Contrainte par corps* en un sens, mais sans travail forcé ni violence. Peine hybride, celle qu'on infligeait à Calvi était probablement, quant à l'intégrité de la personne, très difficile à supporter (on va voir qu'elle pouvait être très longue) en tant qu' *'expérience d'acculturation forcée*, et de ce fait très *malaisée à symboliser*.

a)

#### *Effectifs et Durée de Peine*

Entre AD 1871 et 1903, date de la suppression du dépôt, environ 500 détenus se sont succédé à Calvi: une vague massive en 1871—plus de 200 en même temps, tous des Kabyles—une vague lente, tout à fait composite quant à son origine tribale qui amènera un peu plus de 200 détenus (221 exactement) au total à Calvi entre l'automne AD 1872 et juin 1903, mais sans jamais dépasser 70 à 80 hommes à la fois. Il ne s'agit *donc pas d'un phénomène démographique important* (en un peu moins d'un siècle, la Guyane a reçu plus de 50,000 'transportés' sans compter les relégués et les déportés politiques<sup>5</sup> mais on peut supposer que son importance sociale est ailleurs, et en particulier, tient au fait que les hommes envoyés là le sont toujours pour des raisons 'politiques' et que ce sont souvent des individualités de premiers plan dans leur tribu.

Sauf cas particulier, *avant AD 1884*, les sources ne permettent pas de connaître la durée effective de peine de chaque exilé, mais on sait que certains, arrivés avant cette date, séjournent 15 ans à Calvi. Encore un certain nombre d'entre eux arrivaient-ils là en remission de peine, après un séjour en Nouvelle Calédonie ou à l'Île Sainte Marguerite. Parmi les arrivés entre AD 1884–1886, on relève quelques peines effectives de 15–16 ans. Cependant, à partir de AD 1886, la durée moyenne des séjours tend vers 3 ans, avec quelques exceptions rares.

b)

#### *La Vie en 'Enceinte Fortifiée'*

Il existe un règlement de AD 1859 élaboré au Ministère de la Guerre à Paris, dont les rapports nous confirment qu'il constitue bien la règle de vie à Calvi: les détenus vivent en commun, soit au Fort Torrera, une ancienne tour génoise située dans les terres en haut de la basse ville, soit pendant une courte période 'privilegiée' (de septembre AD 1872 à décembre 1883) dans une partie de la citadelle habitée également par des civils. Dans tous les cas le gîte est un casernement plus ou moins salubre, les hommes dont l'effectif varie d'une année à l'autre entre 17 et 77 mais se tient le plus souvent entre 30 et 40 *sont organisés en brigades* de 5 à 7 individus et la place manque. Il arrive en effet qu'ils dorment à 28 dans une chambre. *Entre 7h du matin et 7h du soir*, ils vaquent où ils veulent, dans des limites fixées par le règlement. Comme des soldats plutôt que comme des prisonniers, *ils perçoivent une solde* (1 franc par jour et par

homme: a titre de référence une journée de manoeuvre ordinaire est payée 2, 25 fr par jour en AD 1872 a Calvi), avec laquelle ils doivent se nourrir, payer leur médicaments et les menus objets nécessaires a la vie quotidienne.

Ils sont *autorisés à travailler en ville*, et dans certains cas—une dizaine—a y loger, deux d’entre eux tenant même un ‘café maure’ qui sert de lieu de rencontre au groupe, tandis qu’un troisième gère un petit commerce pour lequel il paie patente (1883). Rien de très surprenant là, sans même faire la part du régime particulier qu’est celui-ci: on sait que sous l’Ancien Regime, les galériens durant leur période de repos à terre, entretenaient commerces et relations maritales a Marseille et a Toulon.<sup>6</sup> La différence est que l’institution (en l’occurrence un capitaine en retraite et un sous-officier) ne dispose guère de moyens de coercition réels sur les détenus et d’ailleurs s’en plaint souvent.

Séjours en salle de police et retenues sur la solde sont les seules sanctions possibles, que d’ailleurs les détenus vont jusqu’à refuser (1886) laissant l’administration démunie. Fait remarquable, on ne note aucune ‘prise en main’ par le travail ou par l’alphabétisation forcée, comme dans le pénitencier ‘modèle’ voisin et contemporain de Chiavari.<sup>7</sup> Tout ce passe comme si il n’existait aucun projet de transformation ou d’amendement sur ces hommes qui sont laissés a leur singularité. En témoigne en outre le fait qu’ils ont obligation de porter en permanence ‘le cestume arabe’, i.e. le burnous, la chéchia, dont on les pourvoit en cas d’usure (AD 1887–1888), et qu’ils sont sanctionnés sévèrement dans le cas contraire.

## LES MODES DE REFUS

Face a cette forme en apparence supportable, mais sans doute très dérangeante et étrange de contrainte, les détenus semblent avoir réagi principalement par une énorme *passivité*. On en trouve un indice dans leurs refus par exemple de contribuer matériellement a l’entretien de leur casernement. Bien entendu il faut voir là surtout l’attitude d’hommes qui pour un très grand nombre d’entre eux avait *un rôle de premier plan dans leur tribu: un chef ne travaille pas. Il ne demande pas non plus sa grâce*: il est remarquable que parmi les signataires des innombrables recours en réduction de peine qui sont adressés au Ministère de l’Intérieur ou au Gouverneur Général de l’Algérie, ou parfois même au Ministère de la Justice, on ne trouve presque jamais le nom de personnages connus pour leur importance sociale. En réalité c’est un petit nombre de détenus, toujours les mêmes et évidemment les plus anciens, qui déploient cette activité désespérée. Au rang des formes de la protestation, il faut sûrement porter *la maladie*. Il serait difficile d’en établir la statistique, mais les cahiers annuels de ‘main courante’ sont pour ainsi dire remplis de la liste des médicaments qui sont achetés aux frais des détenus, des journées d’hôpital et des visites de dentistes. Comme être alité ou hospitalisé ne dispensait d’aucune corvée, puisqu’il n’y en avait pas, on ne peut manquer d’entendre une plainte stridente dans cette amplification soudaine du langage du corps chez des hommes qui, dans leur vie antérieure, non

seulement n'avaient jamais dû connaître le médecin, mais que leur système de valeur tout entier encourageait à l'endurance et à l'oubli de soi.<sup>8</sup>

A l'extrême opposé, pourrait-on dire, s'entend le langage de la *délinquance*. En 30 ans, une vingtaine de détenus au moins (soit 1/ 10ème) ont été écroués à la maison d'arrêt de la ville, compte non tenu des peines de salle de police liées à la violation de la discipline du dépôt. Sauf exception, les délits sont le vol et les coups et blessures volontaires, le plus souvent entre détenus si on en juge par la légèreté des peines (quelques jours à un mois de prison). Pourtant, au cours de la dernière décennie, on peut relever des peines très lourdes (de 2 ans à 10 ans de réclusion en maison d'arrêt). Celles-ci indiquent que désormais, les victimes de ces délits ne sont plus des détenus, mais *des citoyens ordinaires de la ville*. Par ailleurs le profil aussi des fautifs change, et signale une évolution que j'analyserai par ailleurs: il semble qu'on envoie de plus en plus à Calvi 'des aventuriers' ou 'des bandits', i.e. des 'coupables individuels' et non plus collectifs. Les deux tiers des inculpés ordinaires ont 30 ans ou moins, comme on pouvait s'y attendre: il faut encore pas mal de santé pour escalader une maison la nuit, même s'il agit seulement de braver son destin.

Aux autres, à ceux qui sont las d'attendre le bateau du retour, il reste enfin *la mort*. Au moins 24 détenus sur les 228 connus, sont, selon l'état civil de la ville, morts à Calvi entre 1874 et 1903, soit là encore, plus d'un sur dix. L'enregistrement du décès n'en comprend pour ainsi dire jamais la cause mais comme on pouvait s'y attendre, la quasi totalité des morts a 40 ans ou plus. Bien que le certificat de décès d'un détenu porte comme celui de n'importe quel citoyen, mention du fait qu'il devait 'être inhumé dans les 24h, dans le cimetière de la ville', le cimetière de Calvi ne comporte aucune tombe musulmane, ni aucune sépulture qui pourrait être celle de ces détenus; on en est donc réduit à penser à un 'carré militaire' quelque part au pied de la citadelle ou au Fort Torrera. Dans l'un des poèmes qui évoquent sa détention Mohamed Belkheir écrit:

Dans cette prison d'infidèles, je crains la mort  
sans tolba, ni sourates, ni prières, ni chahada.

Et c'est sans doute le moment d'avouer la plus grande surprise peut-être, que procure la lecture de ces archives: *à aucun moment il n'y est question de religion*. A aucun moment ne sont évoquées des dispositions spéciales qu'aurait prises l'administration carcérale pour tenir compte du fait que ces gens sont Musulmans, ni plus surprenant encore, des difficultés ou des réclamations venant des détenus dans ce sens, par exemple pendant le mois de Ramadhan, ou à l'occasion de l'une des grandes fêtes.

Il faut entendre alors autrement que comme un stéréotype, ce vers de Belkheir, encore, adressé à son saint:

Maître ne me délaisse pas.  
 Sois ému par l'exilé aux cheveux blancs.  
 Protège moi, *garde moi arabe*.

### LES LIENS AVEC LE PAYS D'ORIGINE

Les archives dont nous disposons témoignent de liens épistolaires, et *d'une sorte de proximité mentale* avec la société d'origine, sans commune mesure avec ce qu'il pouvait sans doute en être depuis la Guyane ou la Nouvelle Calédonie, en tout cas du point de vue des détenus, mais on va voir qu'il n'en était sans doute pas de même du point de vue de 'ceux qui restaient', décalage explicable si on admet que pour leurs familles, ces gens-là étaient 'au bain', i.e. perdus à jamais. Et ce décalage constituait peut-être une des formes aiguës de la peine.

On observe d'abord un échange assez dense de correspondances dans les deux sens, dont il subsiste quelques spécimens, puisqu' évidemment ces lettres étaient soumises à la censure. *Densité qui au passage s'inscrit en faux contre l'idée d'une société tribale analphabète* et réglant ses conflits dans l'oralité. Même si on voit bien que l'écriture est ici, comme en général à la même époque, le fait de quelques acteurs spécialisés, on voit aussi à l'évidence qu'elle *est une technique de médiation des conflits et des recours* parfaitement maîtrisée. Il y a donc dans ces liasses, des lettres adressées aux familles et venant d'elles, mais plus souvent, en tout cas dans ce qui est conservé, des plaintes aux autorités locales en Algérie dont les thèmes se résument à trois, par ordre de fréquence:

- Les épouses et plus rarement les femmes sous tutelle.
- L'argent.
- Les biens, terres et immeubles, spoliés.

Concernant *l'argent et les biens* (règlement de dettes, vente de bestiaux laissés en souffrance au moment de l'arrestation), la surprise est que ces prisonniers se comportent depuis Calvi comme ils se comporteraient au cours d'un long séjour à Alexandrie ou à Istanbul, c'est à dire en *rihla* Eloignés, ils n'en perdent pas de vue des intérêts la plupart du temps mineurs (30 fr de créance, un mulet ou un chameau), et l'administration aussi bien carcérale que locale, semble prendre grand soin de ces requêtes. Mais c'est évidemment *le chapitre des femmes* qui étonne le plus: chaque année, plusieurs détenus protestent contre le fait d'avoir été divorcés en bonne et due forme devant le Cadi par leurs Spouses, souvent avec l'accord de la propre famille du mari. D'autres accusent tel ou tel de la tribu de lui avoir 'voté sa femme'. D'autres plus rares parlent d'enfants dispersés et lésés. On sait que la Chari'a autorise l'épouse dont le mari est absent depuis plus de 4 ans à demander sa liberté et à se remarier, surtout en cas de pauvreté. On sait aussi que cette licence n'existe pas pour les *qānūn* (la coutume berbère). Cette disparité se voit aussitôt dans notre population: tous les cas de divorce se

situent en zone arabophone et d'ailleurs dans la steppe ou au sud (Frenda, Marghnia, Geryville), sauf un. On peut penser que ce n'est pas la loi seule, mais aussi la plus ou moins grande cohésion sociale qui est source de cet écart: jamais dans l'Aurès, la femme d'un absent ne sera laissée complètement dans le besoin.

En dehors des lettres et des requêtes, *il circule beaucoup d'argent* dans les deux sens, entre Calvi et l'Algérie. Les détenus *reçoivent* et parfois réclament de l'argent à leurs familles (plus rarement des vêtements), qui arrive par mandat de 20 à 70 fr. On peut imaginer que ce sont les plus privilégiés par l'origine sociale. D'autre, le plus grand nombre, *envoient* de l'argent (plus rarement des biens rares, comme du tissu ou du miel) et *ce flux est environ dix fois supérieur au précédent*. L'exil est donc rémunérateur, que l'épargne soit prélevée sur la solde, gagnée en travaillant, ou dans des transactions obscures (la malle d'un détenu mozabite semble avoir, en AD 1891, contenu environ 10.000 fr!): jeux d'argent et probablement prêts avec usure. À leur mort, les détenus laissent toujours un pécule, entre 100 fr et 200 fr, sur lequel l'administration prélève de sordides retenues à des titres divers (dont 18 fr pour les funérailles!) avant de renvoyer soigneusement le reliquat aux héritiers.

On peut penser que ces flux d'argent en particulier depuis les détenus vers leurs familles, étaient les meilleurs garants de leurs proximités, et du fait qu'ils n'étaient pas perdus à tout jamais, comme on pouvait l'être à Cayenne. Inversement, à un détenu kabyle qui demandait à recevoir son enfant et sa femme, celle-ci faisait répondre qu'elle n'avait pas l'intention de venir à Calvi, ni d'y laisser partir cet enfant né précisément au moment du soulèvement de AD 1871, et dont elle avait avec tant de difficultés pris soin depuis lors *absolument seule*. En faisant la part de la relation singulière qui unissait ces époux particuliers, on peut penser qu'on a là la preuve du décalage dont je parlais plus haut, entre les détenus et leur société, à cette dernière la différence entre Calvi et Cayenne n'est pas visible, sauf si elle est démentie par des manifestations concrètes.

## LES RELATIONS DES DÉTENUS ENTRE EUX

Voilà bien la grande inconnue des sources, en même temps que ce que nous souhaiterions le plus savoir: parmi les expériences de ces longues années d'exil, la vie partagée avec d'autre 'Algériens', (bien que le concept soit sans doute anachronique) n'était-elle pas la plus déterminante, en tout cas pour l'avenir immédiat?

Contrairement à ce que j'avais espéré, les archives ne livrent directement pas grand chose de cette 'vie partagée', sans doute parce que, par chance pour eux, les détenus sont relativement livrés à eux-mêmes. Mais on peut faire quelques déductions, dans un premier temps, des données objectives.

Jusqu'en AD 1888 les détenus arrivent par vagues successives, impliquées chacune dans une même affaire—les Kabyles d'abord en AD 1871—ils sont plus de 200, tous originaires de trois cercles seulement (Bejaïa, Bordj bou Arreirij,

Takitout). Ensuite les gens de l'insurrection d'El Amri, en AD 1876, au S.E. de l'Aurès. Ils sont 34; puis des Aurasiens, en AD 1879 et 1880, impliqués dans l'affaire de Si Lhachemi u. Derdur (4 personnes+1) et dans le soulèvement de AD 1879.<sup>9</sup> A partir de AD 1881 arrivent un groupe de 11 Mozabites impliqués dans l'affaire de l'assassinat de l'Amin de Bérane, puis plusieurs vagues de gens du sud, liés au soulèvement des U.Sidi Cheikh et celui de Bou Amama.<sup>10</sup> Aussi, à partir de AD 1880 sans doute, les hommes du sud-ouest sont-ils dominants. Mais vers AD 1887, la population du dépôt change: on y voit de plus en plus fréquemment des individus isolés, venus de toutes les régions de l'Algérie, accusés d'incendies, de brigandage ou d'attentats individuels contre des colons ou des caïds. A l'ère des insurrections semble avoir succédé une ère de révoltes isolées, ce qui est confirmé par les travaux sur le brigandage au début du vingtième siècle.<sup>11</sup>

L'âge des détenus varie de 20 à 80 ans, mais *le nombre relativement important des sujets âgés*, confirme l'hypothèse de personnalités influentes qu'on veut écarter de leurs tribus. Certaines d'ailleurs de ces personnalités sont connues: le propre fils du Cheikh Bel Haddad, et son cousin, pour la Kabylie; Si Lhachemi u Derbur, et 3 de ses proches pour l'Aurès; Cheikh Ben Douina et Belkheir pour les U.Sidi Cheikh; un grand nombre de nom propre désignent par leur morphologie, de grandes familles. Enfin, certains détenus sont désignés comme de dangereux propagandistes, Qādirī(s) ou Darqāwī(s). Pourtant, *on n'entend jamais, ou presque, dans les sources, parler de ces personnages de premier plan*. Je l'ai dit, ils ne commettent pas de délits, ne demandent pas leur grâce. On n'a pas l'écho non plus, et ceci est plus surprenant, *d'un ascendant quelconque* que les uns ou les autres pourraient avoir sur leurs compagnons, ni non plus qu'ils seraient chargés par ceux-ci de parler en leur nom. *Pas trace enfin, de la moindre vie religieuse* dans laquelle certains seraient tout à fait à même de jouer un rôle.

Inversement ceux qui sont désignés comme des meneurs, 'hommes fourbes' dit un rapport, sont ceux qui ont commis des délits, demandent sans cesse leur grâce, se plaignent de leurs parents restés au pays, et ce sont souvent ceux qui reviennent de la Nouvelle Calédonie ou de Ste Marguerite, comme s'il y avait dans cette hyperactivité une sorte de désespoir.

En fait, à considérer attentivement les registres de main courante, *beaucoup de violence quotidienne* semble circuler entre les détenus: rixes, coups et blessures, vols. Indépendamment des incidents qui sont réglés à l'intérieur du dépôt, au besoin par l'intervention de la troupe, il semble que la plupart des délits qui mènent à la maison d'arrêt soient des délits commis par des détenus envers d'autre détenus. Et de fait, la fréquence de ces derniers montre bien que *l'on n'a pas affaire à une société irénique* régie par le pur amour du prochain non plus *qu'à une organisation autonome anxieuse d'arbitrer et de régler les relations humaines à l'intérieur du dépôt en évitant l'immixtion des géoliers*. En réalité, l'attente de quelque chose de ce type est probablement anachronique, elle suppose une maturité politique qui ne viendra que bien plus tard. Cette micro-

société ressemble bien plutôt à une société carcérale ‘classique’ dans laquelle, en dehors de la violence, il semble que l’argent ait été un élément très important entre détenus: certains d’entre eux se faisant spécialistes soit d’en prêter, soit de vendre à credit a leurs camarades.

D’une manière générale on est frappé par *l’importance et la maîtrise de la monnaie* chez des hommes venant des tribus, un univers que l’on se représente plutôt régi par une économie d’échange. A la lumière de ces faits, le degré de monétarisation de la société tribale doit peut-être être réévalué. *De même que son taux de scripturalité, avec lequel d’ailleurs il n’est pas sans rapport.*

### VIVRE PARMİ LES CORSES

On le voit, ce curieux système de détention aura donc exposé durant un quart de siècle un demi-millier d’Algériens et quelques Marocains et Tunisiens a partager avec d’importantes restrictions certes, la vie d’une commune corse de 2000 habitants.

Loin d’être un village *Calvi est une petite cité génoise*, capitale de la Balagne, la plus prospère des régions de l’île. Ceci crée une différence supplémentaire et fondamentale avec la situation de Cayenne ou de la Nouvelle Calédonie, où les détenus constituaient un pourcentage important d’une population blanche ‘citoyenne’ récente et artificielle (50,000 habitants dans la première moitié de ce siècle-ci pour la Guyane).<sup>12</sup>

Une vieille mais prégnante histoire de conquête et de piraterie lie la Balagne aux Arabes—*Moros ou Turchis*—depuis le huitième siècle; les Arabes furent là d’abord en conquérants. Chassés par Ugo Colonna en AD 811, ils revinrent souvent raser les côtes et même les villages de l’intérieur, pratiquement jusqu’au dix-septième siècle.<sup>13</sup> C’est contre leurs incursions qu’ont été édifiées les tours génoises de la côte ouest, dont la citadelle de Calvi est un des plus beaux exemples. Mais cette histoire est ambiguë, comme en témoigne la légende a base historique de la ‘marine de Davia’ du nom d’une captive balagnaise devenue ‘impératrice du Maroc’ au dix-huitième siècle.

A ces Maghrébins du dix-neuvième siècle la vie corse devait rappeler celle de leur pays jusqu’au vertige: non seulement même climat, même relief, même luminosité et même végétation—les lauriers roses!—mais aussi même société et même culture: villages défensifs accrochés à mi-pente, horticulture de pente et élevage, relégation des femmes, austérité des moeurs, code de l’honneur primant sur les règles de la vie municipale. Si le Maure n’est pas neutre à Calvi, *les détenus de leur côté se trouvaient en quelque sorte en face d’une version chrétienne de la Kabylie*. Pourtant, entre ces deux ‘communautés’, l’entente semble avoir fluctué dans le temps, mais être allé plutôt vers une détérioration: un rapport de mars AD 1872 décrit tout les habitants rassemblés pour dire adieu aux 240 Arabes envoyés en Algérie, mais une lettre du maire de la ville en AD 1886 se plaint de l’attitude des détenus envers les femmes et du fait qu’ils volent fréquemment du bois. Entre ces deux dates que s’est-il passé?

Le groupe des détenus, une trentaine d'hommes en moyenne, plus quelques familles logées en ville, circule donc librement (toujours distingué par son costume), commerce intensément avec la population, et travaille a quelques tâches, toujours agricoles semble-t-il; hors le commerce et le travail des jardins, il ne semble pas qu'ils aient manifesté aucun autre savoir-faire: le commandant du fort est obligé de faire appel a une mains-d'oeuvre rémunérée (sur leur solde) pour l'entretien de leur casernement et même pour scier leur bois. Certains détenus ont pu louer un jardin et l'exploiter pour leur compte, d'autre ont fait venir leur famille.

Quelques indices semblent signaler des relations assez intenses avec les citadins: beaucoup de courrier transite, dans les deux sens, par des personnes 'étrangères a l'administration', ce qui est formellement interdit et donne lieu a des punitions. Les suppliques que ces détenus adressent a l'administration, au Ministère ou au Gouverneur de l'Algérie, trouvent manifestement des 'secrétaires' dotés d'une bonne syntaxe et d'une belle écriture. Si la plupart de ces prestations peuvent être supposées avoir été rémunérées, rien n'exclue que quelques bonnes âmes de la ville, parmi les plus instruites, aient contribué a leur rédaction.

A l'inverse on trouve ça et là indices d'un 'racisme ordinaire' parmi la population civile: jets de pierres, agressions et insultes venant, la chose est significative, de *bergers* et non de citadins. La tension prend des proportions importantes en AD 1886: tandis que 8 nouveaux détenus demandent et recoivent l'autorisation de travailler en ville, une série d'escarmouches et de rixes opposent 'les Arabes' a la population, des enfants d'abord puis des adultes. L'administration prend nettement le parti des détenus, mais ceux-ci sont vraiment 'otages' de la population et aucun dispositif n'est prévu pour les préserver, ni d'ailleurs pour les empêcher de nuire.

Une question évidemment vient a l'esprit, celle de savoir jusqu'à quel point les détenus, certains d'entre eux au moins, hommes de savoir et de responsabilité, étaient a même de réfléchir sur l'exemple corse, sur cette sorte de domination dans l'intégration qui devait caractériser la puissance française sur l'île a la fin du dix-neuvième siècle? Et si c'était le cas, quel type de résolutions politiques cette réflexion leur inspirait-elle? Mais c'est une question a laquelle pour l'instant je n'ai pas de reponse, sinon très indirect: dans l'Aurès les descendants de Si Lhachemi ne sont pas devenus partisans de l'intégration; ils sont devenus islahistes et opposés a la présence française. Inversement il semble que le fils du fils du Cheikh Bel Haddad, installé a Constantine a son retour de Corse soit devenu instituteur, et que le fils de ce dernier, ait été un célèbre et très anticonformiste écrivain de langue française.

#### LE BANNISSEMENT, 'UNE ÉPREUVE INDICIBLE'

Nous ne possédons aucun témoignage référentiel, aucun récit, sur le dépôt de Calvi, en dehors des poèmes de Belkheir, sur lequel je reviendrai plus loin et dont

il me semble que la découverte de ce gisement d'archives permet de revoir la traduction, au moins le sens de certaines allusions. Contrairement à Cayenne et à la Nouvelle Calédonie qui sont passés dans la légende et le langage commun, Calvi n'a pas laissé de traces en Algérie, alors qu'il existe maintenant de nombreux poèmes, et même un film, fait à partir d'eux, sur les 'véritables' bagnes. La première question à élucider serait celle de l'importance numérique respective des condamnés dans chacun de ces pénitenciers, mais je ne crois pas que ce facteur statistique soit déterminant. Dans l'Aurès, par exemple, il n'y a aucune mention spéciale concernant ces 10 années passées par 4 hommes d'un même village (Haïdous) en Corse. Pourtant au vu des archives, j'ai la conviction que ces montagnards, tout comme ceux des 228 détenus qui en revenus, n'ont pu qu'être rendus complètement différents par cette expérience en terre chrétienne. Il faut donc expliquer ce silence.

Mon hypothèse est qu'il est le produit du caractère *inclassable* et donc *impossible à symboliser* de cette expérience. Il s'agit bien d'une *captivité*, humiliante en tant que telle, souvent terriblement longue, mais elle se présente point par point comme le contraire du bagne: pas de fers, pas de coups, surtout pas de travail forcé ni même de stigmates physiques: pas de barbe rasée, de marques dans la chair, de vêtements infamants ou au contraire de nudité obligatoire, cet ensemble de violences que décrivent les forçats.<sup>14</sup> En un sens, et jusqu'à un certain point, *les détenus s'appartiennent et sont donc responsable d'eux-mêmes et de leur conduite*. De même toute l'organisation les incite à une sorte de 'vie normale'. Ainsi par certains côtés, la vie à Calvi a-t-elle quelque chose de déjà vu, si on considère le compagnonage avec d'autres Musulmans, le contact avec une culture exotique, le fait surtout de pouvoir travailler et commercer, de gagner de l'argent, une dimension essentielle de la *Rihla*.

Enfin il faut se souvenir, pour éviter l'anachronisme, que le bannissement, ou le transfert de populations, qui était bien connu des tribus avant et après la colonisation, ne pouvait être vécu que comme l'issue négative d'une épreuve de force, le plus souvent collective, de la tribu contre le Beylik. C'est pourquoi en dehors d'un affrontement entre Chrétiens et Musulmans, vainqueurs et vaincus, il ne faut pas chercher là, encore, *ni des leaders politiques, ni la production d'un discours contre l'ordre*, comme on en verra avec l'émergence du mouvement national, les emprisonnements et les assignations à résidence des militants à partir de AD 1940. Mais ce qui reste tout de même très surprenant, et mérite d'être souligné, est l'absence de réactions et d'organisation de type *religieux*. Peut-on penser que le moment historique, i.e. la République triomphante, rend la question sans objet, ou du moins quelle est sans objet pour l'administration pénitentiaire?

Je voudrais pour finir en revenir à Belkheir, dans les poèmes de qui cette absence de l'Islam est constamment présente, *comme une peur, et comme un remord*. J'ai déjà cité ce vers, 'garde moi arabe' il y en a d'autres:

O tourments, comment à l'Aïd diront-ils la prière?  
Maître sois avec moi.

Et ce même poème chanté adressé au saint se termine par 5 vers dont les premiers, obscurs, parlent de 'femmes, de pipe et de vin', et les derniers disent:

N'ont-ils pas porté l'habit du roumi  
les renégats jusqu'au coup enfoncé?

Lus a la lumière des archives, des rapports ordinaires comme des faits divers qu'elles contiennent, ces vers parlent d'une autre peine que celle du bagne. Ils parlent de *tentations* et de *compromissions*: non seulement le vin et les femmes, qui ne sont sans doute pas absents de la *Rihla*, mais le travail salarié chez les Chrétiens, le partage de leur vie et jusqu'au port du costume européen. Sans doute cela concernait-il seulement une minorité, ceux que Belkheir appelle 'les égarés emportés par la crue', qui 'sont marchandise: bon et mauvais mêlés', mais le seul fait que la possibilité en existât constituait sans doute le plus grand péril.

Tout ceci est à rapprocher de ce qui sera plus tard *al-ghurba* (l'émigration ouvrière)—un terme que Belkheir emploie déjà—ce mode de vie ambiguë, qui a trouvé lentement sa forme poétique (Sliman Azzem, Dahmani el Harrachi), dont la convention même est que c'est une forme menteuse, parce que l'émigration est aussi et précisément pour des raisons voisines, une épreuve indicible.<sup>15</sup>

## NOTES

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- 15 M. Pollak, 'La Gestion de l'Indicible', *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales*, vol. 62–63 (Juin 1986), pp. 30–53.

Je remercie Monsieur Lamotte, conservateur des Archives de Corse du Sud (Ajaccio), et Christian Mariani, des Archives également, de leur accueil et de leur patience. Je dois l'idée *d'al-ghurba* comme une expérience culpabilisante et indicible à une discussion avec Mouhoub A; qu'il en soit remercié. Dans le même sens, voir Tahar Djaout, *L'Invention du Desert* (Paris: Seuil, 1987).

### SOURCES D'ARCHIVES

Ce travail est le produit *d'un premier dépouillement sommaire* des séries suivantes, aux Archives Départementales de Corse du Sud (Ajaccio).

–9R12 Affaires Militaires Prisonniers de Guerre Ennemis, détenus arabes à Calvi 1871–1896.

–9R13 Détenus arabes à Corté.

–2Z (non encore répertorié) Archives des sous-préfectures de Calvi, arabes internés 1872–1898. De plus, j'ai consulté aux Archives Départementales de Haute Corse, à Bastia, les séries:

–2Y3/4 et 3/5 (Février 1881 à Août 1919) soient les registres d'écrou de la maison d'arrêt de Calvi, sur lesquels on retrouve un certain nombre de détenus arabes, pour des délits commis pendant leur détention.

Enfin j'ai dépouillé les registres d'État civil de la commune de Calvi, de 1875 à 1899 exhaustivement pour les décès, sommairement pour les naissances, et pas du tout, faute de temps, pour les mariages.

THE PILGRIM FROM PEST:  
GOLDZIHER'S STUDY TOUR TO THE  
NEAR EAST (1873–1874)

Lawrence I. Conrad

On the morning of 15th September 1873 the Danube embankment at Pest witnessed what must have been a familiar sight for the times: a tall, rather awkward-looking young man with seven battered suitcases in tow bidding his tearful farewells to family and friends. But to the nascent European discipline of Oriental studies this particular leave-taking was one of great importance, for the young man the steamer *Albrecht* carried away as it disappeared downstream was none other than Ignaz Goldziher (AD 1850–1921), eventually to be acclaimed the founder of the modern discipline of Arab-Islamic studies in the West, but then a 23-year-old Privatdozent at the University of Pest.<sup>1</sup> Charged by the Ministry of Religion and Education with the task of learning the colloquial Arabic dialects of Egypt and the Levant and the formal diplomatic usage of the consulates, and by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences with the purchase of Arabic books for its library, he was setting out on the first leg of a journey that was to give him six months of personal experience in the Arab world.

That Goldziher made such a study tour is common knowledge, and the journey routinely figures in biographical and other notices on him.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, however, these accounts tend to reduce the tour to the fact that in AD 1874 Goldziher became the first Western scholar to be admitted to study at al-Azhar; and the importance of these six months, if considered at all, is customarily envisaged in very vague terms. These considerations alone would be sufficient to justify a new assessment, but there are additional factors which call for a reevaluation of this episode in Goldziher's personal life and professional career.

First, it must be borne in mind that the intellectual *persona* that Goldziher presented to his Orientalist colleagues in Europe generally was very different from that displayed to his countrymen in Hungary, and that he deliberately created and maintained this disparity simply by shifting between German and Hungarian in his writing. The former language was of course the paramount vehicle for Orientalist scholarship at the time, as well as the language in which Goldziher had received most of his education, and it was in German that he wrote to address his Orientalist colleagues. Certain subjects, however, he reserved either largely or entirely for discussion in Hungarian. These included not only popular topics and those for which a predominantly (or exclusively) Hungarian audience might have been anticipated, but also essays and

monographs on such themes as Jewish reform, comparative religion, current affairs in the Arab world, and in general, anything in which he planned to express his personal opinions on the priorities of his field, its shortcomings and potentials, and its relevance to the concerns of the modern world.<sup>3</sup> Hungarian, however, was known to none of Goldziher's foreign colleagues, and writing in this language on a particular issue effectively guaranteed his anonymity on such matters everywhere else in Europe. As Theodor Nöldeke (AD 1836–1930) once wrote to him concerning an invitation Goldziher had just received to take up a chair at Prague:

I would be very glad if you go to Prague, if the terms are acceptable. And as for the fact that you would not be able to write in Hungarian—so much the better! You are not a popular teacher, and what is the point of writing in a language that nobody does, or will, understand outside Hungary?<sup>4</sup>

We shall return to this tactic later; for present concerns it will suffice to note that the image promoted by Goldziher's German works—that of a staid disengaged historian of mediaeval Islam—disintegrates when his Hungarian scholarship is also taken into account, and that it is largely through this latter work that the true significance of his study tour emerges to view.

Secondly, Goldziher was a committed diarist and dedicated correspondent,<sup>5</sup> and over the years, especially in the past two decades, much important material relevant to his study tour has been published. The diary he kept on the journey, *Keleti Naplóm (My Oriental Diary)*, has recently been published in English translation by Raphael Patai;<sup>6</sup> his *Tagebuch*, begun in AD 1890, opens with his memoirs of the first forty years of his life, including much important information on his journey;<sup>7</sup> and his experiences at al-Azhar are discussed in detail in two studies based on his *Arabisches Notizbuch*, a now-lost notebook in which he kept notes and data not amenable to presentation in a diary.<sup>8</sup> While away he sent reports on various subjects back to Europe,<sup>9</sup> and upon his return he submitted a final report to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.<sup>10</sup> Viewed as a whole, this material offers a very clear picture of Goldziher's study tour—where he went, what he saw and did, the people he met. But in addition, it offers some crucial insights into his early career and the factors that influenced his intellectual formation as a Hungarian Jewish intellectual and a European Orientalist. Viewed in terms of this book, it illustrates quite clearly the decisive role that this journey played in determining the form and direction of scholarship so important that even today it remains extremely influential in the field of Arab-Islamic studies.

### GOLDZIHHER'S TOUR AS *RIHLA*

In the present context we may well ask: should Goldziher's study tour be regarded as a *hijra*, *hajj* or *rihla*? The answer is that it was all three, and we may most appropriately begin with its dimensions as an enterprise in foreign

travel, a *rihla*. It is worth bearing in mind that although Goldziher was sent by the Ministry of Religion and Education to learn Arabic dialects and collect books, he in fact had other priorities in mind. Scoffing at what he regarded as the Ministry's aspirations to turn him into a 'Parliermaschine' like his teacher Arminius Vámbéry (AD 1832–1913),<sup>11</sup> he regarded his journey as a great quest which he was undertaking so as to become 'a member of the Republic of the Muslim scholars' (*ein Glied der Muhammedanischen Gelehrten-republik*). The choice of words here is significant, as we shall see; but for the moment it may be noted that Goldziher was not setting out as a mere tourist, adventurer, or collector of antiquarian curiosities, but rather as a scholar committed to other more significant goals. His itinerary thus assumes a particular importance, for it was determined not by matters of convenience or chance, but rather by considerations of whether taking a particular route, or staying somewhere for a longer or shorter period, would serve the aims he had in mind. Consideration of his itinerary and how he spent his time thus serves to illuminate these goals.

The first stages of Goldziher's journey were difficult. Seeking to minimise the hardships of a longer journey and the inevitable quarantine when he entered Ottoman territory, he avoided the busy route directly down the Danube by leaving the *Albrecht* at Giurgievo (now Giurgiu, on the north bank of the Danube in present-day Rumania) and taking a train to the Bulgarian Black Sea port of Varna. He then booked passage on the steamer *Vulcan* for the 300-kilometre voyage to Istanbul, where he was quarantined for fourteen days. Desperately lonely, and bedevilled by the insufferable German engineer with whom he shared a room, Goldziher consoled himself by beginning his *Oriental Diary* and by seeking out other company. A group of Polish Jews were housed close by, but rather than fraternise with his co-religionists Goldziher joined a group of forty Rumelian *hājjs* and spent most of his quarantine period in their company, discussing Islamic religious, historical, and literary subjects with them in Turkish.<sup>12</sup>

Once released from quarantine (29th September), Goldziher took to exploring Istanbul, shunning the areas 'overflowing with Europeans' and instead seeking out the 'capital City of the Caliphate', the mosques and bazaars of which greatly impressed him. He also found many ways in which Jewish and Turkish social and religious customs were similar. But overall Istanbul was a disappointment. From the vantage point of the Galata Tower he discovered that the city was in fact a 'pigsty'; a performance of whirling dervishes he dismissed as a disgusting exhibit of 'miserable God-swindle to the curious public'; the commercial bustle of the capital he saw primarily in terms of grasping depersonalising materialism; and for scholarly company he could find nothing better than 'a cattle merchant who, as the acme of learning, knows something of veterinary medicine'. Worst of all, he was twice openly mocked by other Jews when, attending Yom Kippur services in two different synagogues, his loneliness and yearning for home caused him to break down and weep.<sup>13</sup>

By 2nd October Goldziher had had enough of the Ottoman capital and left on the ship *Juno* for Syria. The Orientalists Eduard Sachau (AD 1845–1930) and Leopold von Schröder (AD 1851–1920) were headed for the ruins of Troy (discovered by Schliemann only three years earlier) and provided company down the Dardanelles. Much refreshed by his first opportunity in three weeks to discuss matters in his field, Goldziher continued on to Smyrna, where he played the tourist and raced about the City and its environs on a hired donkey.<sup>14</sup> Though his loneliness had not entirely faded (he at times caught himself whistling the ‘Szózat’, one of the two Hungarian national anthems),<sup>15</sup> he observes:

I was now alone, and yet not alone, for ever since I could expect, by the grace of chance, some kind of company, either pleasant or unpleasant, my thoughts have risen to a higher grade of intensity, so that even without a book I am proceeding in the company of this one thought, which I think through from all angles without feeling even a shadow of boredom. And my thoughts now find so many points of contact with formation and development. Still, it does not seem that I shall remain alone.<sup>16</sup>

His premonition proved to be correct. On the one hand, the *Juno*'s passengers included an Ottoman on his way to take up his new post in Damascus; once this official learned of the presence on board of a European knowledgeable in Islamic subjects and able to speak Arabic and Turkish, he immediately sought to associate Goldziher with his entourage. On the other hand, a number of the pilgrims with whom he had been quarantined at Istanbul also turned up as passengers. The young Hungarian's reaction to all this is illustrative. The Ottoman *pāshā* and his retinue impressed him as the frivolous and stupid exponents of a superficial and hypocritical gentility devoid of any moral foundation: ‘for them Islam does not exist’. The *hājjs*, on the other hand, welcomed him with sincere joy and shouts of welcome when Goldziher wandered down to the lower deck; and of them he notes: ‘I value and love these noble ignorant people’. Observing more generally, he writes: ‘I can see that scholarship alone does not make a man noble’.<sup>17</sup>

After a brief sojourn in Cyprus, the *Juno* landed at Beirut on 9th October. Beirut had been expanding by leaps and bounds since the 1840s, and by AD 1873 it had grown from a relatively unimportant small town to become, after Istanbul and Smyrna, the third-largest city in the Ottoman Empire. Its commercial prosperity had also encouraged growth in other spheres; and the emergence of a sophisticated social élite, coupled with the founding in AD 1866 of the Syrian Protestant College (the SPC, later renamed the American University of Beirut), made the Beirut of AD 1873 a thriving centre of cultural and intellectual life.<sup>18</sup>

H.L.Fleischer (AD 1801–1888), who had been Goldziher's teacher in Leipzig, had already written to Beirut on his student's behalf, and Goldziher was warmly received by Cornelius van Dyck (AD 1818–1895), the leading American scholar

at the SPC and an Orientalist with a formidable command of Arabic. The two men spoke in classical Arabic for over an hour, and the much-impressed Van Dyck hastened to ensure that Goldziher met such leading intellectuals as al-Bustānī (AD 1819–1883) and Ibrāhīm al-Yāzījī (AD 1847–1906). Goldziher was enormously satisfied with the fact that ‘when I landed in Beirut I made the surprising discovery that I could speak Arabic with complete fluency’. And of the Beirutis themselves he felt a certain fondness for the poet and journalist Khalīl al-Khūrī (AD 1836–1907), who ‘in his *Dīwān* sang of an English lady in the style of Imru’ l-Qays’ and edited the ‘native official newspaper’.<sup>19</sup> He also took time for a few excursions, and went to see the ancient inscriptions and rock carvings at the Nahr al-Kalb (the ancient Lycus), about fifteen kilometres north of the City.<sup>20</sup>

Overall, however, the Paris of the Orient was not to the Hungarian’s liking. Beirut was too Europeanised, and Goldziher disliked the way in which the local intelligentsia—a ‘pietistic rabble’, he says—imitated European customs. In particular, he loathed American and European missionary activity and fulminated at the Christian evangelism he saw, especially at the SPC. Lured to a Sunday service at the American church, he notes with approval that some of the congregation escaped the ‘nonsense’—and what was worse, the bad Arabic of the sermon—by drifting into a ‘healthy sleep’. Reflecting in his *Tagebuch* (i.e. seventeen years later) on his brief stay in Beirut, he was to concede that it was ‘a good preparation for Damascus’. But at the time he despaired of ever learning much Arabic among people so fluent in French, Italian, and English. He thus stayed only five days in the City, and on 14th October booked a passage on a coach (the ‘Diligence’, as the service was called) for the journey over the mountains to ‘the old noble Damascus’.<sup>21</sup>

Here, his reaction was one of rapture and exultation. In ‘the loveliest of all cities’, as he calls it, he spent seven weeks making and developing contacts with local Syrian intellectuals, exploring the City, steeping himself in its traditional culture and way of life, visiting his new friends in their homes, and making excursions to such historical sites as Baalbek.<sup>22</sup> Word quickly spread of the young Hungarian who spoke beautiful classical Arabic, who could stand up in a group and spontaneously recite ancient Arabic odes in their entirety, and who knew as much about rhetoric and *fiqh* as the Damascene scholars themselves. Goldziher was forever marching back and forth from one engagement to another, and in all this he revelled.<sup>23</sup>

Two activities and circles of colleagues in particular occupied his time. Even in Budapest he had come to hear of the Madrasa al-**Zāhiriyya**, and as soon as he arrived in Damascus he sought to make contact with the Muslim scholars there. This quickly brought him into the circle of **Tāhir al-Jazā’irī**, on whom more will be said later, and Goldziher henceforth spent much time at the Madrasa and with al-Jazā’irī and his colleagues. His other primary diversion was prowling about the Old City in the company of two other friends. One was **Muḥammad** al-Dhahabī, a Damascene trader and a fellow traveller on the *Juno* whom the Rumelian

pilgrims had introduced to Goldziher during the voyage to Beirut. The other was **Muṣṭafā** a wealthy property owner and bibliophile. With al-Dhahabī in particular he was on very close terms—he liked to remind his Damascene friend that they were ‘Namensgenossen’—and the latter’s shop in the Sūq al-Buzūriyyīn became Goldziher’s primary headquarters for forays to the bazaar stalls and bookshops.<sup>24</sup>

Damascus did, however, pose certain problems that disturbed Goldziher. Here he again encountered the ‘American religious swindlers, with medical additions’. Ecclesiastical figures were anxious to receive and entertain the Magyar prodigy about whom so much was being said in the streets and shops; but their pious posturing offended Goldziher, as did the frequent dropping of anti-Muslim comments (churchmen, of course, assumed him to be a Christian).<sup>25</sup> He was also distressed by the impoverished and isolated condition of the Jewish community. But in the main, Damascus was a high point of the tour: ‘Such fine days as I knew there would never return’.<sup>26</sup>

Returning to Beirut by coach on 24th November, he rested for several days and then, on 27th November, set out by sea for Jaffa. Landing there the next day, he proceeded on horseback to al-Ramla, where he stopped for the night and taught an Arabic version of the old hymn ‘Long, Long Ago’ to a fellow traveller, ‘a German disseminator of evangelical truths’. The next day he went on to Jerusalem. As we shall see, Jerusalem was an experience that evoked mixed and extreme emotions in the young Goldziher. But in his activities he seems to have behaved like most other Europeans. He visited the various Holy Places, went for horseback trips to Abū Dīs, Bethlehem, Jericho, and Moab, and of course attended the service held at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of the accession of Franz Josef I (*reg.* AD 1848–1916) to the Habsburg throne. He also spent time out in the Palestinian countryside, and seems to have been enormously pleased at the opportunity to meet and talk to peasant folk and bedouin. On 5th December, however, after only five days in Jerusalem, he left for al-Ramla, then Jaffa, another sea voyage to Port Said, and then Ismailia and Cairo.<sup>27</sup>

In the Egyptian capital Goldziher was at first profoundly unhappy. Financial difficulties kept him in uncomfortable lodgings, and he reacted angrily to the impact of European (especially French) exploitation of the City and to what he saw as its transformation into a ‘spoiled botched-up copy’ of a western city. And unlike the Damascene booksellers with whom he had formed valued friendships, those of Cairo were arrogant bores.<sup>28</sup>

On 4th January 1874, however, all this changed. On this day Goldziher was presented to **Riyād** Pāshā, the Egyptian Minister of Culture, and the Minister was so impressed with the young Hungarian’s command of Arabic and Islamic culture that he offered him a position in the Ministry. When Goldziher declined, pleading that his family needed him back home, **Riyād** asked if there was anything else he could do for him. Goldziher thereupon replied that he wished to study at al-Azhar; and when **Riyād** Pāshā explained that he could not order the Rector to accept him, Goldziher asked for a letter of recommendation and said

that he would present his request himself. Armed with his references, he proceeded that same day to the palace of the Rector, Shaykh **Muḥammad** al-‘Abbāsī (AD 1827–1897). After an audience in which he convinced al-‘Abbāsī and the other senior shaykhs that his interests were sincere and that he was not, for example, planning to write an adventure or travel book or to trumpet the curiosities of al-Azhar in the European press, he was admitted. From then on his time was completely overwhelmed: mornings with classes at al-Azhar, afternoons with book-hunting, excursions in and around Cairo, and social engagements.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, only ten days after his admission, he stopped making entries in his *Oriental Diary*, apparently too busy with his studies and friends to keep the record up to date.<sup>30</sup>

All these activities, building upon his experiences in Damascus, drew Goldziher into ever deeper appreciation of Islam and its culture, and personal involvement in the interests and concerns of his Muslim friends:

My formal way of thinking was through and through oriented toward Islam; subjectively, my emotional empathy also drew me hither. I called my monotheism Islam, and I did not lie when I said that I believed in the prophecies of **Muḥammad**. My copy of the Qur’ān can bear witness to how I was inwardly inclined to Islam. My teachers earnestly awaited the moment of my open profession of faith.<sup>31</sup>

In order to become ‘a member of the Republic of the Muslim scholars’, however, he sought a more direct involvement with his colleagues:

Because I was not a Muslim they did not admit me to the Friday divine service; but I wished to bend my knee before God with the believing thousands and, calling out my ‘Allāhu akbar’, to sink with them in the dust before God the One, the Almighty. I was determined to participate actively in the Friday divine service, and on the Friday before the day of ‘Āshūrā<sup>32</sup> proceeded, in Arab guise, to the proper fulfilment of this intention. A Syrian colleague, ‘Abdullāh al-Shāmī, surmised my wish and helped me to fulfill it. A special chapter of my diary relates the details of this adventure,<sup>33</sup> how I gave proof of my genuine belief by visiting the tomb of the Imām al-Shāfi’ī in the Qarāfa (Cemetery),<sup>34</sup> and from there, in turban and kaftan, rode through the streets directly to the mosque to listen to the prayer and sermon. My friend was full of anxiety, but the daring enterprise was successful. Among the thousands of the pious, I rubbed my forehead on the floor of the mosque. Never in my life was I more devout, more truly devout, than on that exalted Friday.<sup>35</sup>

Only two days later, however, news arrived from Hungary of his father’s serious illness. Goldziher cut short his tour, caught a steamer from Alexandria to Trieste, and hurried back to Pest, arriving just shortly before his father’s death. On one

occasion later in his life (February AD 1896) he did return for a brief visit to Egypt.<sup>36</sup> But he never again saw his beloved Damascus, and though friends made on his journey did from time to time visit him in Hungary or correspond with him, he was never again to have further opportunities to experience for himself the culture and way of life of the Arab East.

From the remove of sixteen years, Goldziher in AD 1890 could still look back on his study tour as the most memorable year of his life. In the *Tagebuch* he says that a profound melancholy swept over him as he ‘saw the minarets of Alexandria ever so slowly disappear from view’, thus marking ‘my leavetaking from the finest part of my life’.<sup>37</sup> Opportunities later in his life to refresh the memories of his journey were joyous occasions for him;<sup>38</sup> and in the difficult days to follow, he could never forget ‘that year full of honours, full of luster, full of light’.<sup>39</sup>

### GOLDZIHHER’S TOUR AS *HAJJ*

Goldziher’s accounts of his travels and experiences in the Arab East make it clear that, as he himself admits, he had not set out just for the sake of learning Arabic dialects and collecting books. It would also seem, however, that the details in his diaries do not find immediate and unambiguous explanation in the alternative aim he states as his true goal—his desire to become ‘a member of the Republic of the Muslim scholars’. This does not, for example, account for the virulent attacks on both Christianity and formal rabbinic Judaism that pepper his diaries, his bitter criticisms of European influence and domination, or his repeated affirmations of his commitment to an agenda of reform and revival that has at least as much to do with Judaism in Hungary as with Islam in the Arab East. Beirut and Jerusalem were not devoid of Islamic culture and intellectual life in the 1870s, and the latter city Goldziher specifically identifies as ‘the objective of my journey’;<sup>40</sup> yet in neither place does he tarry for longer than five days. And on numerous occasions he depicts his experiences as moments of enduring significance and lasting inspiration. Overall, the study tour bears many signs that Goldziher conceived of it in terms very much like those of pilgrimage.

The factors behind this may be sought, in the first instance, in two interrelated developments. In Hungary generally, the half-century following the Congress of Vienna in AD 1815 saw important transformations at all levels. A country that had been almost entirely agricultural gradually developed a more sophisticated economy: with the abolition of the *robot* (the ‘labour rent’, a veritable serfdom) in AD 1848 and the introduction of tax and other economic reforms, capital investment shifted drastically and the period was marked by growth in a variety of industries—mining, iron foundries, textiles, sugar refineries, distilleries and breweries, flour milling, and agricultural machinery. New roads were built, railroads were laid down, and a steamer service speeded traffic up and down the Danube.

All this had profound consequences. Before AD 1848, Hungarian cities had been small—the largest three had a combined population of only 150,000 at the time of the March revolt—and in character they were cultural ‘islands’, foci of German language and culture in the midst of agrarian hinterlands dominated by Hungary’s numerous nationalities: Magyars, Slovaks, Croats, Rumanians, and so forth. But when peasants were no longer tied to the land by the *robot*, urban opportunities encouraged large-scale immigration from the countryside, especially to Buda and Pest, and the cities accordingly burgeoned into large-scale urban centres and, at the same time, began to reflect more markedly the character of the surrounding countryside. Specifically, as new elites challenged the hegemony of the old, languages began to emerge as the bases for more sharply defined national identities. The most prominent of these was that of the Magyars, for though not comprising a majority of the population, the Magyars included almost all of the propertied and educated inhabitants of the country and thus organised more quickly and more effectively than other groups. Throughout the country, then, and especially in Buda and Pest, this trend was represented by the emergence of Magyarisation and Magyar nationalism as heated social and political issues. In the political arena, efforts led by the powerful Baron József Eötvös (AD 1813– 1871) to resolve the nationalities problems of the Habsburg Empire culminated in the Compromise of AD 1867, which granted broad-ranging internal autonomy to Hungary and was welcomed by the Magyars as a major gain for themselves.<sup>41</sup>

The Jews of Hungary were much affected by these developments. The Jewish population of the country tripled between AD 1785 and the 1840s, largely due to eastward immigration, and a traditional pattern of small Jewish communities scattered in the countryside shifted to one of large prosperous congregations in urban centres. The Jewish population of Buda and Pest rose from 17, 618 in AD 1850, the year of Goldziher’s birth, to 44,890 in 1869, and the leading Jewish families there were in the vast majority of cases active in finance, commerce, and industrial management. Elsewhere such opportunities were more limited, but even outside of Buda and Pest 80 per cent of the noble Jewish families nonetheless earned their livelihood as professional businessmen. The fact that these urban communities contained many immigrants and to a large extent pursued vocations in commerce and retail trade served to break down insularity at the local level (there were no Jewish ghettos in Hungary), and also facilitated the penetration of influences and trends from abroad, especially, as one might expect, from Germany.<sup>42</sup> In the early nineteenth century, one of the most important of these external influences was the Haskala.

The Haskala, or Jewish Enlightenment, arose in Germany in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Usually associated with the name of Moses Mendelssohn (AD 1729–1786), it marked an effort by liberal Jewish intellectuals, much influenced by the thought of Immanuel Kant (AD 1724–1804), to make their faith more responsive to the challenges of the modern world. Ideologically, this meant stressing the rational character of Judaism and its universal elements; in

terms of praxis, Haskala advocates sought the introduction of such reforms as the abolition of ancient customs now deemed odious or irrelevant (e.g. covering the head, spitting at the mention of Gentiles), the use of choirs, organ music, and vernacular languages in the services, and the preparation of new prayer books and orders of service.<sup>43</sup>

The movement expanded rapidly in Germany, spread eastward to Vienna, and in 1827 established itself in Hungary when a German Reform congregation was founded in Pest and began to attract young upwardly mobile Jews to its ranks. Trade fairs brought the new temple and rite to the attention of similarly minded Jews from elsewhere in the country, and the movement, though always a primarily Budapest phenomenon, thus had its effects on other Hungarian cities. The result, however, was a serious split in the community, for the Orthodox rabbinic leadership was well established and conservatism enjoyed wide-ranging and powerful support. As the Haskala reformers gained influence, this provoked a countering expansion in conservative ranks, among which it was feared that the reform agenda threatened the unique and distinct identity of both Jews and their faith. Such tensions were exacerbated by developments on other fronts, and the close connection between the political and spiritual arenas was clearly demonstrated by the Compromise of AD 1867, which, under the influence of Eötvös (now the Hungarian Minister of Religion and Education), provided for the complete emancipation of the Jews. This was enthusiastically welcomed by Magyar leaders: Magyars comprised slightly less than a majority of the population of Hungary (only 46.1 per cent as late as AD 1880), and if the Jews were citizens and were counted as Magyars, then the resulting clear and absolute majority would justify Magyar claims to hegemony over other national groupings in the country. This alliance of interests also suited the Reform community, for which the Compromise's implications of co-operation and integration promised changes favourable not only in economic and political terms, but also in terms of the social and religious agenda of the Haskala itself. Reform advocates, for example, urged that rabbis preach in Hungarian and espouse Magyar nationalism in their sermons, as a means of promoting the assimilation of Jews into Hungarian society; to the Magyars, on the other hand, all this was seen as a welcome extension of Magyarisation. But on precisely the same grounds, this new development, as many others, was opposed by the Orthodox as sinful and contrary to messianic hopes for the future, thus deepening the split between liberal and conservative Jewry in the country.<sup>44</sup>

The Hungary of Goldziher's formative years was thus a land in which it was common for upwardly mobile Jews with commercial backgrounds or vocations to gravitate to the cities (especially Pest), integrate to Hungarian society, identify with liberal trends in both religion and politics, display enthusiastic nationalist sentiments, and regard with suspicion and resentment the traditional programmes and policies of the old entrenched elites. It is precisely from such a background that Goldziher emerged. His ancestors first appear as refugees from Spain who arrived in Hamburg in the seventeenth century, and over the next hundred years

moved through Berlin and Vienna and then established themselves in Hungary, first at Köpcsény (Kittsee), and later, in AD 1842, at Székesfehérvár (Stuhlweissenburg). Goldziher's father, Adolf Goldziher, was the son of a merchant and made his living as a dealer in leather.<sup>45</sup> Though there were occasional financial crises, the family was sufficiently well off for young Ignaz to obtain books: building on a core collection of Judaica handed down from his grandfather, he already owned 600 volumes by the age of fifteen.<sup>46</sup> Learning was obviously held in high regard, and Goldziher describes how his father kept him to his studies with unrelenting determination.<sup>47</sup>

That the family was in sympathy with the Haskala is certain, for at the age of eleven Goldziher was placed by his father in the charge of a private tutor named Moses Wolf Freudenberg, a formidable scholar of Hebrew and Biblical studies, but also a man whom 'the fanatics', as Goldziher calls them, considered a tainted rationalist. Over the next four years the young student came to hold this teacher in the highest esteem: 'He gave my thoughts the loftiest objectives, my soul the noblest aspirations'.<sup>48</sup> A naturally gifted student—he was called 'das Wunderkind' at school—inspired and encouraged by a beloved father and a revered teacher, Goldziher was reading difficult mediaeval texts in Jewish philosophy in AD 1862, at the age of twelve. It was at this time that he published a nineteen-page pamphlet in which he discussed questions of prayer in Judaism.<sup>49</sup> This extremely rare work has repeatedly been mentioned in discussions of Goldziher's career, but in fact it seems to be known only from the notes of Bernát Heller (AD 1871–1943), one of his favourite students and a close family friend.<sup>50</sup> These are sufficient, however, to demonstrate Goldziher's commitment to a radical reformist agenda, his impatience with conservative and Orthodox 'fanatics', and his already broad familiarity with the content and concerns of mediaeval Jewish philosophy. Freudenberg approved of Goldziher's essay, but the Jewish leaders of his hometown were incensed:

During the holidays in 1862 I spent several weeks with my relatives in Pest; with me I took a manuscript entitled 'Sichath Jizchak, Abhandlungen über die Gebete', which I (at the age of twelve) had printed at the firm of Johann Herz so as to return home with the finished printed work. This opus was the first foundation stone of my bad reputation as a 'freethinker'. The Jews of [Stuhl]weissenburg were infuriated and called me a 'Spinozist'; my F[reudenberg] welcomed the work with spirited curiosity and on the following day told me: 'In ten years you will blush at the sight of this fruit of your ambition, but in 1887 do not forget to celebrate the 25th anniversary of your career as an author; by then, God willing, you will have achieved great accomplishments in Israel'.<sup>51</sup>

This stage in Goldziher's life—the studies of an immature boy following the leads of father and tutor—soon came to an end, however. Beset by financial difficulties, Adolf Goldziher moved with his family to Budapest in AD 1865.

At this point, the young Hungarian's studies diverged into two parallel courses that ultimately were to reunite in his study tour. At the formal level, he enrolled at the University of Pest as an 'ausserordent-licher Hörer' (illness had prevented him from sitting for his high school examinations) and became the first student of Arminius Vámbéry, who fostered and encouraged his interest in Oriental studies. Within two years his phenomenal abilities led his teachers to bring him to the attention of Eötvös, who, in the wake of the Compromise, had decided to establish a chair of Semitic philology at the University of Pest and was willing to provide scholarships to gifted students so they could study abroad and gain the training they would need to prepare them for university posts. An interview left Eötvös much impressed and, over the vehement objections of Alois Roder (AD 1812–1878), the Catholic Rector of the University, he awarded Goldziher a studentship and sent him to Germany to study.<sup>52</sup> Stopping first in Berlin, Goldziher took up programmes in Biblical, Arabic, and Syriac studies with Friedrich Dieterici (AD 1821–1903), Theodor Haarbrücker (d. AD 1880), Emil Rödiger (AD 1801–1874), and J.G.Wetzstein (AD 1815–1905). From there he moved on to a new circle of teachers in Leipzig and quickly gravitated to H.L.Fleischer (AD 1801–1888), whom he revered as a teacher and with whom he prepared his inaugural dissertation (in AD 1870) on a mediaeval Arabic commentary on the Bible.<sup>53</sup> There followed eighteen months of travel to various Orientalist centres, primarily Leiden and Vienna, to read Arabic manuscripts and study with other scholars, and in February 1872 he returned to Pest.<sup>54</sup>

Throughout this period of his formal Oriental studies, however, Goldziher was developing equally important interests in another direction. There were of course numerous sources of intellectual influence upon him during these years, many of them acknowledged and discussed by Goldziher himself in the *Tagebuch*. But overarching all of these was a source of inspiration that not only gave him a firm intellectual grounding for his work, but also served to fuse and bring to full fruition his dual interests in, on the one hand, the future of his own community in Hungary, and on the other, the culture and history of Islam. This source of inspiration was the Haskala, and in particular the thought of Abraham Geiger (AD 1810–1874), a leading rabbi in Germany, a formidable scholar of Biblical and Oriental studies, and without a doubt the most important and most vocal exponent of the Haskala in the mid-nineteenth century, this to such an extent that he is now considered the founding father of Reform Judaism.<sup>55</sup>

The current forms of rabbinic Judaism, Geiger argued, comprised a moribund and irrelevant system that, while demanding conformity to a vast array of rituals and observances, did not, at the same time, instill the faithful with any sense of individual spiritual fulfilment. Jews were thus easily tempted to convert to Christianity, or simply to cast religion aside. Geiger further argued that the revitalisation of Judaism demanded by this grave state of affairs could only be achieved through a process of radical reconstruction on pristine spiritual foundations. The individual's primary concern should not be to adhere blindly to the received dogma and formal rituals of Judaism, but rather to focus his

attention on the great universal and timeless truths that comprised the pristine core of the faith. These truths could be identified, and guidance from them derived, through critical and strictly rational analysis of the sources embodying the genuine spirit of the faith and marking the course of its evolution. All religious texts, including the Bible, he insisted, were *human* creations that reflected the views and norms of the various periods in which they originated. By examining these texts with this relativism in view, one would see that the universal message of Judaism was that espoused by the Prophets: faith in a benevolent and caring God, a sharply focussed sense of social responsibility, concern for the fate of all humanity, and contempt for rituals and observances demanded only for their own sake and unrelated to any principle of social morality.

Critique of religious texts along strictly rationalist lines promised, of course, to be very destructive so far as the traditional view of things was concerned. David Friedrich Strauss (AD 1808–1874), a major influence on Geiger, had in AD 1835 published a renowned but extremely controversial study in which he rejected the Gospels as historical truth and instead viewed them as myths which, while imposing a false harmony between the Old and New Testaments by casting the latter so as to make it appear that prophecies in the former referred to Jesus, nevertheless embodied a developing complex of universal moral and spiritual values that were also worth studying.<sup>56</sup> More generally, the Tübingen School led by Ferdinand Christian Baur (AD 1792–1860), the logical continuation of Strauss' work, was already applying to Biblical texts the principle that the supernatural and the miraculous had no place in the course of history, and hence that such elements in religious texts are ahistorical and reveal the thinking of the authors of these works; that is, texts record history within a complex matrix of motivating presuppositions, ideas, and arguments, from which it may or may not be possible to recover 'what actually happened'.<sup>57</sup> The work of these critics was not entirely acceptable to Geiger, since he regarded some of its conclusions as compromised by anti-Jewish prejudice and a deficient knowledge of rabbinic literature; but in terms of methodology he was much impressed. In AD 1857, he pursued these latter contributions of the Tübingen School in his famous *Urschrift und Uebersetzungen der Bibel*, in which he argued for the mythic character of Old Testament texts.<sup>58</sup> Though he did not dare to challenge the pre-exilic books, his view that the Old Testament reflected the perceptions and thinking of peoples in the different eras when the various books emerged amounted to a critique for Judaism that was hardly less devastating than that of Strauss had been for Christianity. In both cases, the repudiation of the Bible as literal truth clearly implied the utter ruin of the foundations for the traditional faith, this, in Geiger's view, to be replaced by a restored system of universal values: religious texts were not the truths themselves, but were the sources from which such truths could be extracted through careful study. And as this investigation was to be a strictly rationalist one, the system of values that emerged was necessarily in complete accord with reason and science. In sum, what mattered in religion was

its universal content: a spirit that engendered values and ideals shared with other religions and in harmony with reason.

If this was so, then other religions were relevant to the study of Judaism, and the way they faced the task of confronting modern challenges was also meaningful and edifying for Jews. Geiger did not miss this point, and in fact, a prize essay of his, written in Latin under Gustav Flügel (AD 1788–1861) in 1832 and now better known in its German translation, dealt with the question of how **Muhammad** had borrowed ideas from the Jews.<sup>59</sup> Moritz Steinschneider (AD 1816–1907), another leading Jewish liberal scholar in Berlin, was at the same time engaged in other cross-cultural studies on how mediaeval Europe, the Islamic world, and the Jews related to other cultures through translations, polemics, and apologetic literature.<sup>60</sup>

Geiger was already the leading personality in the Haskala in Germany when, in Budapest in AD 1865, Goldziher first encountered his works and those of other liberal thinkers in the library of a new teacher, Samuel Löw Brill (AD 1814–1897). Although Goldziher felt that Freudenberg's tutoring had prepared him for such advanced reading, at this stage he did not make much of Geiger: Brill was of the old Orthodox school in his doctrine and praxis, and though he did not adopt a gratuitously sneering attitude toward opposing views, he was of a sceptical and sarcastic disposition.<sup>61</sup> In Germany, however, Goldziher read the works of Strauss and Baur and familiarised himself with the thought of the Tübingen theologians: 'I first began to comprehend Geiger correctly,' he says, 'after I became acquainted with Strauss and Baur'.<sup>62</sup> It is also significant that the cities where Goldziher chose to study, Berlin and Leipzig, were important centres for the Haskala in Germany. Leipzig, for example, was the site of the Synod of AD 1869, in which Geiger was one of the main organisers and leaders.<sup>63</sup> It is likely that Goldziher met him in one of these two cities, although the evidence for this is inconclusive and circumstantial. Overall, however, it is certainly clear that Goldziher's experiences in Berlin and Leipzig did as much to refine and develop his already emerging commitments to the agenda of the Haskala as they did to promote his Oriental studies.

The results of this influence soon became apparent in Goldziher's works, for his early studies, mostly in Hungarian and hence aimed at a local audience, repeatedly argue for the critical assessment of various Near Eastern cultural and religious traditions for insights on broader issues relevant to the Haskala ideal of a universal faith. In one essay written while he was still in Leipzig, aspects of bedouin life are used to cast light on books of the Old Testament.<sup>64</sup> In two others, written during the interval between his return to Pest in February 1872 and his departure on his study tour in September 1873, **Muhammad** is portrayed as the bearer of a universal religious message that seeks to transcend ethnic particularism and tribal rivalries. After the Prophet's time, however, Arab particularism reasserted itself, not only causing rifts in Arab ranks, but also provoking the counter-attack of the Shu'ūbiyya.<sup>65</sup> In other words, once the faithful lose sight of the universal ideals that had united them and given them an

identity as a spiritual community, much is lost in quarrels over secondary and ephemeral issues.

Goldziher returned to Pest with expectations of receiving the professorship promised by Eötvös, but at this point unexpected difficulties arose. Eötvös had died on 2nd February 1871, and without his support the only way Goldziher was likely to make progress against the obstacles that anti-Semitism and petty factional jealousies placed in the path of his career among the scholarly circles of Budapest and Hungary was to convert to Christianity, something he vehemently refused to do.<sup>66</sup> His situation was further complicated by his association with Arminius Vámbéry, his first teacher in Oriental studies. Vámbéry was essentially a grasping opportunist who, upon returning from a celebrated journey through Central Asia disguised as a dervish, had managed in AD 1865 to parley his aura of publicity into a post at the University.<sup>67</sup> Intellectually, however, he had no qualifications other than a knack for languages. Goldziher, a 15-year-old boy at the time, was at first taken in by the renown of *Vámbéry*: ‘In my eyes there was no greater man; I made up my mind to sit at the feet of this Colossus’,<sup>68</sup> He soon discovered, however, that in fact Vámbéry was woefully unqualified, and that his lectures, teeming with mistakes, could be corrected even on the basis of a knowledge of older travel books. Vámbéry was also insufferably vain. As Goldziher recalled:

The singing of his own praises, bombast, and presumptuous over-estimation of his own achievements were in attendance from the very beginning of each laboured lesson. Daily I heard that the dervish trip was the most magnificent accomplishment of scholarly travel, that my teacher was the foremost Orientalist in all the world.<sup>69</sup>

Despite his renown, the ex-dervish was unable to attract students: in AD 1865–1866 he had two students, one of them Goldziher, and in the following year he had none.<sup>70</sup> In order to promote an image of himself as a nurturer of genius, he accordingly lavished his time and attention on his prize pupil. Already, however, Vámbéry was being vilified by scholars and University administrators as a swindler, liar, and boaster,<sup>71</sup> accusations which Goldziher considered to be true. And what was worse, the controversy surrounding Vámbéry began to taint Goldziher as well:

Vámbéry’s enemies, among whom he reckoned a multitude of serious Hungarian philologists (Hunfalvy, Budenz, and others), transferred their antagonism to me; I was the favourite<sup>72</sup> student of the great ‘swindler’, as many of the professors regarded him, and hence a candidate of swindle and unscientific waffle.<sup>73</sup>

Though the situation is somewhat unclear in Goldziher’s diaries, our only sources on the question, it seems that when Eötvös’s successor, Ágoston Trefort

(AD 1817–1888), awarded Goldziher a stipend for the study tour, the intent was, in the first instance, temporarily to rid the Ministry of an embarrassing problem: its inability, at a time when liberal Jewish support was both needed and sought, to appoint an eminently qualified Jew to a University position in the face of petty jealousies, academic antagonism to Vámbéry, anti-Semitic prejudice, and conservative Christian opposition to a non-Christian holding a post in which he might influence the attitudes of students in matters of religion. On the other hand, it is surely unlikely that Trefort's purpose amounted to nothing more than ridding himself of Goldziher for the time being: that the young scholar was tremendously gifted was not in doubt, and there was therefore every reason to wonder if he might return from his journey, as Vámbéry had done nine years earlier, to tumultuous acclaim at home and abroad, thereby bringing even more pressure to bear in favour of his appointment. It is thus probable that Trefort was fully prepared for such an eventuality. Should Goldziher's tour prove to be a resounding success, an appointment could be presented as bowing to the inevitable; meanwhile, the pressure would be off and a less controversial candidate could be sought for the position most suited to a scholar with Goldziher's training and abilities.<sup>74</sup>

Goldziher's study tour thus began with intense motivations against a complex background of interrelated factors which, as mentioned above, served to draw together his two main spheres of interest. In terms of his academic studies, the tour was a tremendous opportunity to travel, gain experience in the Arab East, refine language skills, collect books, and so forth, not to mention to make enough of the journey to secure his appointment. But ultimately it was his interest in the universalist agenda of liberal religious reform that seems to have been the more important concern.

While his diaries offer many details on Goldziher as a scholar of Islam, more prominent by far is the image of a man of passionate religious idealism and a stubborn sense of purpose. As the young traveller argues, religion calls upon the believer to put into practice the tenets of his faith and challenges him to find the true path by resorting to his God-given spirit and intellect, questioning and querying 'with all the moral freedom of which the noble thought is capable'. True religion, then, is an ennobling and fulfilling experience. Goldziher's archetype is the 'universal religion of the Prophets', not the ideological justifications for 'the cynical raw stuff which is called Synagogue or Church', or 'the hazy cult of genius'.<sup>75</sup> To the extent that religion encourages progress toward individual spiritual fulfilment and promotes genuinely universal values, Goldziher approves; but if it simply befogs man with petty formal rites and rituals demanded and performed only for their own sake, offers him 'idiocy', and evokes from him only 'miserable blind faith', then Goldziher's own response is a damning accusation of 'swindle' (the most prominent pejorative in the diaries) and the Voltairian cry of *écrasez l'infâme*.<sup>76</sup>

In all this the influence of Geiger is obvious, but Goldziher goes even further and, following the Tübingen School, he aims particular criticism at the formal

rabbinic establishment, something even the fiery Geiger had never done. For Goldziher, formal rabbinic Judaism obstructs the path to the New Jerusalem. As one who has gone through ‘a sobering up along the scientific road’, he sees his destiny in taking up the challenge, among his own people, to ‘fight this Amalek of Mankind’. He must ‘fight for the religion of ideals, for the liberation from the dust, from the chains of the flesh!’ It was as if ‘the old figures of Abraham, Lot, and Jacob...had waited for their rescuer and had found him in me at last’.<sup>77</sup>

A journey undertaken with such intense commitment should be expected to have profound effects with respect both to Goldziher’s academic thinking and to his broader intellectual concerns. There were, in fact, both negative and positive aspects of these repercussions, and on numerous issues. The study tour first of all served to consecrate Goldziher’s intellectual and personal commitment to the *Haskala*, as well as his hostility to rabbinic Judaism and Jewish particularism. In the three decades prior to Goldziher’s study tour, both individual representatives and formal conferences of the Reform movement (in Hungary as well as elsewhere on the Continent) had specifically repudiated the notion of an ingathered Jewry in Palestine under Jewish nationalist auspices,<sup>78</sup> and Geiger in particular had argued that the future of the Jews lay in their pursuit of a pristine Prophetic faith universal in its message and in their assimilation to modern European culture within the framework of the existing European national states. He opposed Jewish nationalism as misguided yearning for the Holy Land that promised only to substitute a great national ghetto for those already existing in Europe.<sup>79</sup> Goldziher held similar views. Though his family had Hungarian roots no deeper than a generation, as observed above, Goldziher behaved on his study tour as if his ancestors had been Magyars for centuries. He frequently thought longingly of Hungary, hummed and whistled Hungarian nationalist and popular tunes, noted down Hungarian poetry in his diary, and displayed the typical Magyar disdain for other Hungarian nationalities, especially the Wallachians and Bulgarians.<sup>80</sup> When he went to visit the Austrian imperial consul in Cairo, he wore his *atilla*, the traditional Hungarian braided jacket, and gleefully wondered if it ‘contrasted too strongly with his (i.e. the consul’s) black-and-yellow eyes’.<sup>81</sup> As was typical of assimilated Hungarian Jews in this period, Goldziher had no use for Jewish national aspirations. As Heller once wrote, in response to speculations about his teacher’s attitude towards Zionism:

In fact, he was far from Zionism... His profound religion was not mixed with any kind of nationalist element. On this point he made a fundamental statement in his letter to Joseph Bánóczi in 1889: ‘Jewry is a religion, and not an ethnographical concept. As far as my nationality is concerned, I am a Trans-Danubian Hungarian, and for my religion I am a Jew... On leaving Jerusalem for Hungary I said that I was returning home... Man is a result of historical circumstances, and his character is determined by these circumstances, and not by his skull index’.<sup>82</sup>

Goldziher was later to have a variety of other reasons for this position,<sup>83</sup> but he finds justification for it already during his study tour. In Istanbul and Damascus he finds the Jews not participating in the stimulating and inspiring efforts to deal with the challenges of modernity, but rather isolated and marginalised as a persecuted minority, its people living lives devoid of any genuinely spiritual content, and instead occupying themselves with ‘snorting away’ at Bible stories, ‘sniffing some *mishnayot*’ and poring over ‘soul-killing’ prayer books, and attending services tainted with ‘the most cunning power of idol worship’.<sup>84</sup> In Istanbul, when Goldziher expresses genuine emotion and feeling at a Yom Kippur service, he is ridiculed and flees from the synagogue.<sup>85</sup> Does the bond uniting Jews from Syria to England, he asks, amount to nothing more than ‘this eternal decay and inner hollowness’?<sup>86</sup> Such problems he, to a large extent, blames on the rabbinic establishment, as we have already seen, and in Damascus he finds confirmation for these views. Here he dismisses the rabbis as a mean and shameless ‘religious rabble’ accursed of God, for it is they who betray their charge in the formal rites and services, ‘in which the true kernel of the religion should be mirrored and come to life’.<sup>87</sup>

Even more outspoken are Goldziher’s views on Christianity, which Geiger, in his later years, declared the enemy of modern civilisation and a sterile faith devoid of any worth so far as the spiritual future of mankind was concerned.<sup>88</sup> In his diaries Goldziher goes even further, and this largely due to his experiences in Beirut and Damascus. In the former City, he regards the SPC as an institution of ‘true evangelical hypocrisy’, permeated by an ‘evil spirit of false unctuousness’. The problem, so far as he is concerned, is that the American and European missionary-scholars are not seeking to spread enlightenment for the sake of the betterment of their fellow men; they simply offer religion as a candy-like palliative, their aim no more than to lure the Maronites to Protestantism.<sup>89</sup> By serving up to the Arabs an Anglo-Saxon concoction of the teachings of Luther that is entirely foreign to their ancient heritage, the missionaries seek to amalgamate the noble Arab spirit with a contrived Germanic consciousness—i.e. to kill the old original spirit that had inspired the Arabs in ages past, and which (as a Haskala reformer would see it) comprised the key to their future. Worst of all, the work of the Americans and other Westeraers engenders a grasping opportunism among the Arab scholars and, again, in Goldziher’s words, ‘the worst degree of fanaticism’. Al-Bustānī, Goldziher dryly observes, is a ‘veritable Voltairian who, however, finds his expectations with the Protestant swindle’, and the Protestants and Maronites are forever exulting in slandering each other and spreading malicious tittle-tattle. When Goldziher decides to leave Beirut, he thus regards his departure as an ‘escape’.<sup>90</sup>

In Damascus the problem with Christianity involves not interdenominational squabbling, but the aftermath and continuing repercussions of the anti-Semitism underlying the so-called ‘Damascus Affair’. On 5th February 1840 an Italian friar named Thomas, who had a history of unsavoury companions and questionable trade dealings, disappeared in the Syrian capital. The Capuchin

order, to which Thomas had belonged, immediately began to spread the blood libel rumour that he had been killed by the Jews so they could use his blood for Passover. The result was a wave of official persecution and mob violence that saw many Jews tortured, killed, or imprisoned until the Powers stepped in to put a stop to the trouble some six months later.<sup>91</sup> Goldziher held the Christians of Damascus, and especially their ecclesiastical leaders, directly responsible for this incident,<sup>92</sup> and it was against this background that he arrived in Damascus, where he not only saw the spiritual malaise of the Jewish community, but also, because he was automatically presumed to be a Christian, experienced the bigotry and affected piety of the Christians. An audience with the Greek Orthodox Archbishop was a particularly trying experience. As the two men sat beneath icons inscribed 'Mother of God' and 'Son of God', heathen blasphemy so far as Goldziher was concerned, the Archbishop artlessly suggested to the young Hungarian that he really should be taking quarters among his fellow Christians, rather than among 'those Muslims'. More such deliverances must have followed, for Goldziher confides to his *Tagebuch* that 'it was as much in the reception hall of the Archbishop, as among the Muslims themselves, that my heart was won for Islam'.<sup>93</sup>

The views of Christianity evoked by the study tour were certainly harsh ones. For Goldziher, Jesus was a sincere religious teacher bearing a message of redemption to mankind. But the faith that arose in his name adopted doctrines that were either 'heathen' and 'blasphemy' (the Trinity) or simply 'nonsense' (the Resurrection), and represents a whorish 'abomination' that systematically promotes hatred among men and engenders 'the worst degree of fanaticism'. Far from aspiring to lift man up to realise the potential of his ideals, Christianity, with consummate insolence, seeks simply to gain converts.<sup>94</sup> In the Near East, nothing inflames the young Goldziher more quickly than for others to suppose that he is a Christian missionary.<sup>95</sup>

His views on formal religion in general, and Christianity in particular, were decisively shaped by his experiences in Jerusalem. As mentioned above, this was a very mixed experience for him. Jerusalem was the City of the Prophets, and as the walls of the Old City and the monuments of the Temple Mount came into view he was struck by a tremor of 'sacred awe':

In that moment, when I saw Zion the first time in my life with my own eyes, there awoke in me something entirely different from the deep contempt with which I relate to Pharisaism. I did not think of the priests and Levites who carried on their absurd formalism in the high and mighty butcher's stall of Jerusalem, nor of the petty Jew-dealers of the outer courts, nor of the scribes who laid down in the halls the foundations for those religious fabrications whose evil spirit continued to haunt the Middle Ages—I thought of the calumniated, persecuted prophetism of the Hebrew past, of the prophetism of the future, of the new Jerusalem that, 'liberated' and rebuilt by spirit and thought, will become the place of pilgrimage of all

those who, with a free mind, erect a new Zion for the Jehova of freedom that embraces the whole of mankind.<sup>96</sup>

Such is the inspiration of Jerusalem, the potential he sees within it. But as this also shows, the present reality is otherwise, for both the Jews and the Christians have betrayed the ideal that Jerusalem represents. Its inhabitants are ‘disgusting people’, nothing but ‘idlers’ and ‘religious swindlers’,<sup>97</sup> He can hardly contain his disgust at how the Christians and Muslims dispute whether Jeremiah slept in the pit for 70 or 200 years: ‘I, of course, cannot be the arbiter in this learned difference of opinion’.<sup>98</sup> The world of the stupid tourist, however, is even more superstitious than that of Jerusalem’s inhabitants: the City has become such that ‘one cannot take two steps without running into a so-called sacred site to which the legend ties its swindle’.<sup>99</sup> In a lament for the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, he asks:

O Church of the Resurrection, what is it that has rendered you so remote from being a place frequented by the adherents of monotheism, and brought you so close to being a place frequented by the worshipers of idols? Your people kiss stones and prostrate themselves before them and before the places which they allege mark where human feet passed. May you be kept safe from them and from their actions, for God has nothing to do with what they, in their ignorance, do.<sup>100</sup>

Goldziher rages at the way pilgrims and tourists rush from one holy site to another, and sees before himself ‘not the liberated Jerusalem, but the one enslaved by the poverty of the spirit and the bottomless lack of ideas and torn to pieces by denominational swindle’.<sup>101</sup> This situation is not helped by the activities of foreign archaeologists. While they have rendered important services to scholarship, they are obsessed (especially in the case of the English) with the desire to identify Biblical sites and ‘discover everything’. They cling to the deluded notion that they can recover the entire corpus of Biblical toponyms from the soil of Palestine, and hence ‘prove’ the literal truth of the Bible simply by—for example—‘discovering’ the minutest topographical details of the adventures of Samson.<sup>102</sup> Goldziher’s overall judgment could hardly be more harsh: If one wants to be sobered up in matters of religion, let him but come to Jerusalem; he will see how much of monotheism has been left over, and how the Greek, the noble and beautiful, paganism has been abrogated to be replaced by a more cunning but unbeautiful one.<sup>103</sup>

In all this we have to do with formulations heavily influenced by the Haskala reformers and particularly by the thought of Geiger: first, the postulation of a pristine Prophetic ideal allowed to lapse over time, but now championed anew by the Reform movement; and second, the rejection of the messianic doctrine of the

Return as a vain hope devoid of genuinely redeeming worth and obstructive to the desired assimilation of Jews into modern European society.

On another level, we might note that the Haskala reformers, in line with arguments repeatedly advanced in Kant's writings on ethics and religion, placed great stress on social morality. Religion had not only to be rational, it had also to promote a sense of individual and collective responsibility for the welfare of one's fellow men.<sup>104</sup> This principle was probably one factor behind Goldziher's sharp denunciation of the West's attitude toward the Islamic world. Material on this theme is scattered throughout his *oeuvre*, in which some of his most passionate rhetoric is aimed at what he sees as the exploitation of the Arab East, the futile aping of European customs and traditions, and the way Westerners manipulate and distort their portrayals of Islam and Muslims to serve their own partisan agendas and the imperial interests of their countries.<sup>105</sup>

Such matters inevitably arise during his study tour, but it is interesting to note that in this respect Goldziher has little criticism for the highly Europeanised City of Beirut. Instead, his critique focuses on Egypt, where Khedive Ismā'īl (*reg.* AD 1863–1879) had in recent years embarked on a programme to model Cairo after the pattern of Paris, creating lush gardens, spacious boulevards, and palatial buildings.<sup>106</sup> There were almost 100,000 Europeans settled in Egypt by the time Goldziher arrived, and these had taken full advantage of their opportunities to gain control of the economic infrastructure of the country.<sup>107</sup> Contemplating the results of this process shortly after his arrival in Cairo, Goldziher writes that his travels thus far have demonstrated to him that Europeans in the Arab East are 'the worst kind of rascals', escapees from the gallows in their own countries who nonetheless behave with insufferable arrogance and live in luxury while the local population suffers horrific deprivation and poverty and benefits from the European presence only through begging and providing cheap manual labour.<sup>108</sup>

The French are the subject of particular abuse. The Egyptians, essentially good and decent people, have been dazzled by the 'unscrupulous French' with the 'vain luster of insipid external things'. For the sake of these things, 'the good old kernel' of Arab-Islamic culture and ideals is allowed to perish in Egypt, with the result that a people that for three-and-a-half millennia had won the admiration of all the world may never again yield such fruits.<sup>109</sup> And against these grievous losses nothing has been gained. Cairo has become a ruined gaslit copy of a European city in which 'Europe has spoiled everything healthy'. Unscrupulous French shrewd foxes lead the Pharaoh with their leash'; the Pharaoh (i.e. Khedive Ismā'īl) showers money on wasteful ephemera; men sink before his feet like prostitutes, eager for gain; and all the while people' are besmeared 'with the finest new boot wax' for the greater glory of France.<sup>110</sup>

Of European educational activities he is also highly critical. In AD 1873—before his study tour—he had already published a stern critique of the Egyptian educational reforms of Victor Edouard Dor (Dor Bey, Ismā'īl's Swiss Inspector-General of Schools),<sup>111</sup> which Goldziher blasted as irrelevant and injurious to the indigenous values and traditions of the Egyptian people.<sup>112</sup> If modernisation—in

education as in everything else—did not take into account the indigenous values and culture of the people, reform was doomed to failure. In the case of the Arab East, what particularly upset him was the spectre of Arab parents, noticing the inferior and irrelevant modern schools offered by the local government, deciding to send their children to the no less destructive schools of the Christian missionaries,<sup>113</sup> a trend which he probably had already observed in Damascus.<sup>114</sup>

These views did not represent mere raging in the safe solitude of a diary. While in Cairo, Goldziher participated in demonstrations against the privileged position of Europeans in Egypt, suggested ways of promoting a new indigenous Muslim culture to confront the ‘plague of European domination’, and when invited to attend festive events with the Europeans, refused to do so unless the shaykhs of al-Azhar were also invited. Eight years later, he was to view the movement of ‘Urābī with distinct approval.<sup>115</sup>

Such, then, were the negative aspects of Goldziher’s intellectual encounter with the Arab East. But there was also a profoundly positive side to this, and it can hardly be doubted that it is here that his primary motives for undertaking the tour are to be sought, and here that one will find the main reasons why he found the journey so inspiring and fulfilling.

Change and modernisation were already well underway in the region by Goldziher’s time; but the Near East of the late 1860s and early 1870s, when he was pursuing his studies both in Hungary and then in Germany, was just beginning to enter a stage characterised by, to borrow Hourani’s apt assessment of the situation, ‘a new self awareness and, linked with it, a new and more active interest in the political process, a new concern to take part in the movement of change and determine its direction’.<sup>116</sup> That is, the area produced a number of signs that there were in Muslim ranks advocates of reform who sought changes in some ways similar to what Goldziher himself strove for in Hungarian Judaism. Goldziher was not ignorant of this. It was thus with great excitement that he set out on his journey, and his mounting anticipation and increasingly fervent sense of purpose are directly attested in numerous passages in the *Oriental Diary* as he makes his way from Pest to the heart of the Arab-Islamic world. He speaks of his ‘noblest plans’ for his homeland, of ‘the noble spirit which held sway and dwelt in me’ as he recalled his Bar Mitzvah sermon back in Székesfehérvár, of how his thoughts ‘have risen to a higher grade of intensity’,<sup>117</sup> all of which indicate a clear connection between his attitudes toward the situation back home and his current journey to the Arab East. In Istanbul, Beirut, and Jerusalem he encounters, as we have seen, the grasping materialism, Christian proselytising, and ossified formal religious ‘swindle’ already anathema to him, and so reacts accordingly. It is in Damascus and Cairo, on the other hand, that he finds personalities who are in certain respects his Muslim counterparts, and of these, two individuals were of particular interest to him.

**Ṭāhir al-Jazā’irī**, (AD 1851–1920) was one of the greatest intellectuals and educators to emerge in the of the late nineteenth century, and had just taken up a

position teaching at the Madrasa al-**Zāhiriyya**, when he and Goldziher, only a year older than al-Jazā'irī, met in Damascus in October AD 1873. Alarmed by the suffocating effects of Ottoman policies in the Arab provinces of the Empire, alJazā'irī called for Arabs to uphold and promote their own language, culture, and values and to embark on a comprehensive programme of Islamic reform. The essential values of Islam were to be maintained, but in a restored form arrived at through reasoning independent of the old methods and undistracted by ancient and irrelevant controversies. The faith was not incompatible with modern science and had nothing to fear from rational speculations and free expression. Indeed, for alJazā'irī the future of the Arabs in the modern world could be assured only through comprehensive modern education that allowed for learning from any useful source, including philosophy and the rational sciences associated with the West. To these ends his activities centred on creating and expanding libraries to preserve works of the traditional Arabic heritage (including, in AD 1879, the great Dār al-Kutub al-**Zāhiriyya**, in Damascus), founding modern schools, writing textbooks, and editing and publicising mediaeval texts and historical events that continued to offer guidance for modern times.<sup>118</sup>

Al-Jazā'irī was still very young when Goldziher met him, and much of the thought outlined above is of course attested in detail only later in his life. But in AD 1873 he was already teaching in a boys' primary school which was part of a system of state schools that had been founded in AD 1845–1846,<sup>119</sup> and the *Oriental Diary* demonstrates that in AD 1873 al-Jazā'irī was already the central figure in a circle of young '*ulamā*' concerned about Arab revival, Islamic reform, and the influence of the West. Goldziher could hardly have failed to see the similarities between his own thinking and that of al-Jazā'irī.<sup>120</sup> For example, the view that current moves toward educational reform 'are but so many endeavours to arouse, strengthen, and apply in practice, among the Muhammadan peoples, the conviction that their religion does not prohibit them from rising to the demands of a progressive civilisation, or pursuing the intellectual life', comes from the pen of Goldziher,<sup>121</sup> but it could as easily have been said by al-Jazā'irī. Goldziher thus rapidly drew close to this group, and there is no doubt that in his Damascene comrade the young Hungarian found a kindred spirit. The two spent much time together and became close friends: alJazā'irī enjoyed accompanying Goldziher in his roamings around the city, and Goldziher, who describes his Damascene colleague as 'a lovely fellow', often visited the **Zāhiriyya**.<sup>122</sup> Though a conservative Mālikī himself, al-Jazā'irī was 'unselfish enough to direct me to these pleasures in which he himself... does not take part.'<sup>123</sup> When Goldziher, after a month's stay, boarded a middle-of-the-night coach for Jerusalem, al-Jazā'irī came in the pouring rain to see him off in a tearful farewell that produced one of the most touching passages in the *Oriental Diary*.<sup>124</sup> The sentiment was a mutual one, for al-Jazā'irī was always to regard Goldziher with deep affection and respect. When A.S. Yahuda (AD 1877–1951) visited Damascus in 1912, he met alJazā'irī and discovered that the latter was full of fond memories of, and feelings for, Goldziher, and that he and the other

Damascenes had bestowed upon their Hungarian visitor the nickname of *al-Shaykh alZarawī*, ‘Shaykh Golden’, a pun on his name that also indicated their esteem for him.<sup>125</sup> Al-Jazā’irī’s sentiments are also recalled by his student, **Muḥammad** Kurd ‘Alī (AD 1876–1953).<sup>126</sup>

In Cairo Goldziher spent much time discussing modernisation and religious reform with Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (AD 1839–1897),<sup>127</sup> but his attention was primarily directed not to an individual, but to the institution of al-Azhar, which was not only a powerful indigenous spiritual centre steeped in the values of the faith, but also an influential educational institution currently undergoing modernisation and reform. Several reform programmes had been under discussion since AD 1867, and the specific points under review included strict merit conditions for teaching appointments and instruction, graduation examinations, regularisation of the administration, and elimination of favouritism, factional jealousies, and other abuses.<sup>128</sup> In this image of a centre of religious ideals coming to terms with the challenges of the modern world, the most prominent personality was Shaykh **Muḥammad** al‘Abbāsī, also a man of great youthful achievement. Born in Alexandria in a third-generation Muslim family,<sup>129</sup> al‘Abbāsī was an Azhar product himself and by AD 1848, at the age of only 21, had established such an imposing reputation that he was appointed *Muftī* of Egypt. In AD 1870 he was named to the rectorship (*mashyakha*) of al-Azhar as well. Though he was not the author of the Azhar reform programme, it certainly had his powerful backing; and in AD 1873–74 Goldziher would have encountered a figure acting, on the one hand, as a *muftī* dispensing traditional Islamic judgments, and on the other, as a modern reformer clearly inspired by the *Code Napoléon*.<sup>130</sup> By the time of Goldziher’s arrival there were probably already signs that the reforms were destined not to amount to much at this early stage, but the fact that such matters were at least under discussion was already a momentous gain, and marked the interplay of faith and reason, founded on the dedicated study of historical roots, that he deemed essential to the progress of reform. Though he admired and esteemed the newly founded Khedivial Library as a treasure house of precious manuscripts,<sup>131</sup> he quickly transferred his energies to al-Azhar once a choice presented itself. The spectacle of woefully underpaid and largely unappreciated scholars, ‘hard-working and noble-minded men’, striving to resolve the grave problems confronting Islam in Egypt, had profound effects upon him;<sup>132</sup> even years later, back in Europe, he prided himself in being ‘Ignaz Goldziher, the Magyar Azharī’.<sup>133</sup> And as he had found in Damascus with al-Jazā’irī, A.S.Yahuda discovered that at al-Azhar too the aged shaykhs he met in AD 1912 recalled Goldziher in the fondest terms and referred to him as ‘Shaykh Golden’.<sup>134</sup>

This is not to say that Goldziher found nothing to criticise in Muslims or in Islam. On the contrary, he does not hesitate to point out such shortcomings when and where he finds them. For example, occurred while he was in Damascus, and he dismisses the Islamic requirement of fasting during this month for the same reasons that he attacks many Jewish rituals and observances: the fast is kept only

for its own sake and is adhered to mechanically, because tradition demands that one must fast—no element of spiritual fulfilment is associated with it.<sup>135</sup> And among Muslims he does not fail to note, when he encounters it, the same sort of bigotry and empty posturing that he finds among Jews and Christians.<sup>136</sup>

His enthusiasm for Islam and especially for Muslim intellectuals must therefore spring not from the extent to which lofty goals have been realised within Islamic circles, but rather from the potential for such progress that Goldziher considers to be inherent, or at least possible, within an Islamic framework. This point is clarified in his diaries. Christianity is beyond the pale for Goldziher for the simple reason that it does not make study a religious duty. Laymen thus remain ignorant, and the general populace therefore has no moderating influence on the clergy and priesthood. Indeed, those who dare to speak up are broken on the rack for their trouble. Rather than face its own problems, the Church prefers to divert attention elsewhere, e.g. by pursuing the blood libel against the Jews, fanning the flames of fanaticism, and seeking and exulting in new converts (a ‘proof’ of spiritual preeminence).<sup>137</sup> Judaism and Islam, however, *do* make study a task of religious responsibility and merit. Thus, however much one might object to the current state of affairs, avenues remain open for scholars and intellectuals to take up the challenge and to address the difficulties confronting them as Jews or Muslims.<sup>138</sup> In this sense, Goldziher (the Hungarian intellectual in Budapest), al-Jazā’irī (the Syrian educator in Damascus), and al-‘Abbāsī (the Rector of al-Azhar in Cairo), shared an enormously important common ground.

It is this common ground—shared difficulties, shared challenges, shared opportunities—that inspired Goldziher, and it is in his spiritually motivated quest for inspiration from and contacts with Muslims confronting similar problems that the study tour may be seen as an act of pilgrimage. This is not to say that his career as a scholar of Islamic studies turned on the question of the field’s relevance to the situation of Jews in Hungary: it can hardly be doubted that Goldziher regarded Islam as a cultural order requiring no external justification for its serious study. But there can likewise be little doubt that Islam afforded him no small measure of inspiration in the implications of universality highlighted by its relevance to the concerns of his own community. As he states in his *Tagebuch*, with reference to Islam:

My aim was to raise Judaism to a similarly rational level. As my experience taught me, Islam was the only religion in which superstition and rudiments of paganism were proscribed not through rationalism, but through the orthodox doctrine.<sup>139</sup>

As *hajj* then, Goldziher’s study tour comprised not a mere search for ammunition for the Haskala, but rather a quest for inspiration and enlightenment among colleagues who were the practising exponents of a faith he deemed of universal worth and relevance.

It was in this sense, then, that Goldziher speaks of his desire to become ‘a member of the Republic of the Muslim scholars’, an aim which, in light of the foregoing, must surely be viewed within a Platonic framework. In making his way to the Arab East, he intended to seek out the Islam which manifested itself in the activities of Muslims committed, as he saw it, to the identification and realisation of ideals and values which not only comprised the essence of their own faith (and hence the focus of their attentions), but also represented a complex of universal spiritual ideals, Goldziher’s ‘New Jerusalem’.<sup>140</sup> In this connection there immediately comes to mind the Allegory of the Cave, the conceptual framework of which stands in striking harmony with Goldziher’s thinking not only with respect to himself, but also regarding his counterparts in Damascus and Cairo. It is perhaps in this sense, then, more so than in any other, that the study tour stands in sharpest relief as an act of pilgrimage, a metaphor of which, I think, Goldziher himself would have approved.

#### GOLDZIHHER’S TOUR AS *HIJRA*

Such, then, was Goldziher’s year ‘full of luster, full of light’. But while the study tour thus emerges as an event of considerable importance to Goldziher emotionally, the question yet remains: was it of any enduring significance in other respects? This touches upon an issue of considerable importance, for if no further impact is to be found, then Goldziher’s reaction to his journey may be written off, as has been done by Patai, to his ‘youthful infatuation with Islam’, his ‘enchantment with the Arabs and their religion’, or more generally, to ‘rapture’ or the mesmerising ‘spell of Muslim public worship’.<sup>141</sup>

In reality, the enduring impact of the experience was enormous. This is clear not only from Goldziher’s own assessment of his tour, but also from the fact that his scholarly writings were decisively shaped by this journey, not just at the time he was abroad or in the immediate aftermath, but for all the rest of his life. In this sense, that the tour confirmed and broadened in Goldziher a commitment to his career that assumed a definite and enduring intellectual texture, one from which he never seems to have diverged, his journey can be seen as a *hijra*,

If we look at the Goldziher manifest in the *Oriental Diary*, we find a solidly trained scholar firmly grounded in the traditional philological agenda of nineteenth-century Orientalism. He is forever worrying over fine points of grammar, agonising over how a verse he composed violates the metre at one point, and seeking out discussions on rhetoric and, more generally, the minutiae of practically any subject in the traditional Arabic and Islamic fields of scholarship.<sup>142</sup> But while his interests in Arabic literature and philology were to remain strong—as witnessed, for example, in his edition of the *Dīwān* of <sup>143</sup>—his greatest contributions were to be in fields in which he could pursue his exploration of Islam as a spiritual community and culture seeking to make its way in the world on the basis of its confrontation with and assessment of its own past, and the enduring relevance of that past.

For Goldziher, this exploration followed two complementary paths. First, he sought to assess genres of Islamic literature. Many examples of this could be pursued to great profit, but here a few representative cases will suffice to illustrate the points of greatest interest to present concerns. Of particular importance in this regard is Goldziher's examination *ḥadīth*,<sup>144</sup> of a subject on which he explicitly concedes the importance of Geiger's approach to religious texts, and in which he simply transferred to Islam the modes of investigation applied by Geiger to the Old Testament.<sup>145</sup> These days it is very much in vogue to observe that in his *Muhammedanische Studien* Goldziher proved that most, if not all, of the traditions ascribed to the Prophet **Muḥammad** could not have been said by him and were forgeries from later times. But for Goldziher himself this could hardly have been a point of more than secondary importance, since to argue that the *ḥadīth* were mostly later creations was to belabour the obvious: what mattered was that the *ḥadīth* consisted not of a static body of quotations from a single man, but rather comprised a living tradition of scholarship, one that changed and developed over time, in accord with the changes and evolution of Islam as a spiritual, cultural, and social entity. Though this distinction is often missed, it is crucial to any understanding of Goldziher's approach to this subject and is explicitly set forth at the beginning of his study:

The *ḥadīth* will not serve as a document for the history of the infancy of Islam, but rather as a reflection of the tendencies which appeared in the community during the maturer stages of its development. It contains invaluable evidence for the evolution of Islam during the years when it was forming itself into an organised whole from powerful mutually opposed forces. This makes the proper appreciation and study of the *ḥadīth* so important for an understanding of Islam, in the evolution of which the most notable phases are accompanied by successive stages in the creation of the *ḥadīth*.<sup>146</sup>

In this light, the *ḥadīth* is not a corpus of fabrications, but a rich source for the intellectual history of early Islam and a record of how Muslims sought to establish their sense of self-identity as individuals and as a community of faith.

Less widely recognised is the fact that he proceeded in exactly the same way in several of the essays in his monumental *Abhandlungen zur arabischen Philologie*. In 'Ueber die Vorgeschichte' he argued that while the specific contents of early Arabic poetry might be forged to a large extent, it was still possible to skirt around this problem by examining categories of poetic discourse. These, he further argued, proved not to be distinctly poetic categories, but rather social ones that reflected much about the perceptions and organisation of pre-Islamic society. Again, the observation of literal non-authenticity is not a conclusion, but simply a stage from which one continues on to more important concerns.<sup>147</sup> Similarly, in the formidable introduction to his edition of an essay almost as long as the Arabic text itself, the point of the work is not to give 111 examples of cases in

which Muslims were prepared to believe that someone could live for hundreds of years. For Goldziher the *mu'ammār*, or 'long-lived person', is a metaphor, the various manifestations of which can be examined for the ideas held and the perceptions conveyed by those who had made use of such symbolism. And as the topos of the very aged man is of course of frequent occurrence in the Bible, such an investigation is of relevance to issues far beyond those of mediaeval Islamic history.<sup>148</sup>

In addition to literary genres, Goldziher also took up the study of religious movements in Islam, in particular those that seem to have or claimed to be of a reformist or revivalist character. There are numerous examples of this: **Muḥammad**, of course, the Shu'ūbiyya, the the Shī'a, the the , Ibn Tūmart and the and **Sūfism**. For present purposes, two particular examples are very revealing. The first is the case of the Mu'tazila. In Goldziher's day, this movement had been seized upon by European scholars as one of 'rationists' and 'freethinkers'. The rationalist programme of the movement was applauded in numerous essays and monographs, and its ultimate suppression was lamented as a factor in the ultimate 'failure' of Islam to realise its true potential.<sup>149</sup> As the movement did indeed have an important rationalist dimension to it, Goldziher, had he been simply a liberal apologist, might have been expected to pursue and elaborate upon the interpretations already advanced by his predecessors. Instead, however, he rejects the Mu'tazila as a liberal movement. In his *Az Iszlám*, in his 'Die Religion des Islams' contribution for Hinneberg's *Die Kultur der Gegenwart*, and finally in his *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, he argues that the emergence of the Mu'tazila was prompted by the same sort of religious motives as had produced other trends of thought, that the Mu'tazila were just as dogmatic and intolerant as others, and that much of the movement's early thought is difficult to explain in rational terms and, in any case, 'does not indicate an upsurge of liberated thinking'.<sup>150</sup> His summation on the Mu'tazila is particularly revealing, not only about the Mu'tazila, but also about Goldziher: All that we have learned so far about the nature of the Mu'tazilite movement confers on these religious philosophers the right to lay claim to the name of rationalists. I shall not dispute their right to the name. It is their merit to have raised reason to a source of religious knowledge for the first time in Islam, and furthermore, to have candidly admitted the usefulness of doubt as the first impulse to knowledge. But is that enough for calling them liberal? That title we must certainly refuse them. They are in fact, with the formulas they directed against orthodox conceptions, the very founders of theological dogmatism in Islam. Those who wished to be saved must, in the Mu'tazilite view, put their faith in these, and no other, rigid formulas. With their definitions, it is true, they meant to bring reason and religion into harmony. But to a conservative traditionalism unencumbered with definitions they opposed rigid and narrow formulas, and engaged in endless disputations to maintain them. Moreover, they were intolerant in the extreme... This was no doubt an extremely vigorous rationalism. But those whose teachings were the starting point and seedbed of such fanaticism cannot be celebrated as men of liberal and tolerant views...

Authors of sophistic fantasies about hypothetical developments in Islam at times draw pictures of how salutary it would have been to the evolution of Islam if the Mu'tazilites had successfully risen to spiritual dominance. In view of the foregoing, it is difficult to credit such suggestions.<sup>151</sup>

In this example, it is not only a movement usually upheld as a liberal and rationalist one that is found wanting by Goldziher: his critique clearly extends to all such movements, regardless of their place in time or confessional identity.

Another illustrative case is al-Ghazālī, whom Goldziher considered in detail in several studies. In al-Ghazālī's day, Goldziher writes, the genuine ideals of the faith had come to be smothered by legal casuistry and scholasticism: the religious spirit of the community had been laid waste by the diversion of energies and attention away from the exalted goal of spiritual fulfilment for the individual believer, to the formulation of, and arguments over, matters irrelevant to this aim—complex points of philosophy and theology and the minutest trivia of ritual and formal observances. In seeking to address this problem, al-Ghazālī argued for a return to the old pristine doctrine which corruption had obscured, and emphasised the immediacy and primacy of the individual's personal relationship to and awareness of God. Those who stood in the way of this endeavour al-Ghazālī subjected to devastating and merciless critique. The philosophers stood accused of squandering their energies on cumbersome arguments which, for all their complexity, were often heavily flawed, and promised nothing but confusion if propagated in the community at large. The jurists were blamed for exulting in discussions and arguments which, for all the jurists' posturing and pretensions of religious dignity, were vain and mundane pursuits; to those who looked to them for guidance, the jurists became sources of corruption whose speculations only served to assuage their own egos and promote their worldly ambitions. And special attention al-Ghazālī saved for the Ismā'īlīs, who demanded that individuals acquiesce in the authority of *an imām*. This doctrine specifically denied the individual any right of doubt or inquiry, thus turning the faith into an extremely intolerant 'cult of authority'. What was needed was a comprehensive revival at the individual level, and it was in this sense that al-Ghazālī saw the rich potential of **Şūfism** it held forth the means to restore the God-man relationship, and also imbued a sense of tolerance crucial for the survival of a religious community in which many variations in doctrine and practice prevailed. What mattered most was that Muslims be aware of and accept the fact that despite these differences, the fundamentals of faith which they shared were great universal truths that united them as a community. Al-Ghazālī's 'greatest merit in the history of Islam is that he put his co-religionists once again in mind of this old doctrine, took it seriously, and gained a following for it'.<sup>152</sup>

The parallels between this assessment of al-Ghazālī and Goldziher's own personal views are striking. Both address the task of confronting the spiritual malaise of their day; each sees his role not as an advocate of a new order, but as a restorer of an old pristine ideal. Just as his Hungarian counterpart was to do, al-Ghazālī's critique involved a stern rejection of petty quibbling and legal nit-

picking and so fell with particular weight on the religious establishment of his faith. Each stresses the great universal truths which must be the primary focus of the community's attention, and beside which other concerns are vain and banal. But again, Goldziher is not engaging in apologetics: he shares al-Ghazālī's hostility toward the *Ismā'īlīs*, for example, but parts ways with him on the critique of philosophy. It is also worth noting here that while Goldziher's approach to mediaeval Islamic history could be, as we have seen, extremely illuminating, it could also have its distorting effects: it is erroneous to suppose that a fruitful approach is necessarily a universally valid or flawless one.<sup>153</sup> On al-Ghazālī and the *Ismā'īlīs*, for example, Goldziher seems to merge his own views with those of al-Ghazālī, and so tends to participate in the latter's polemic against the *Ismā'īlīs* rather than assess the evidence from a disengaged historical perspective.<sup>154</sup> It is perhaps significant—and certainly worthy of further study—that Goldziher wrote this work, which raised important questions of authority and the use of polemic, in the shadow of the First World War, by which Goldziher was deeply shocked for its shattering effects on the solidarity of the community of scholars, a principle very important to him.<sup>155</sup>

A final indication of the importance of Goldziher's study tour as a vehicle for confirming and broadening ideas he had taken up from Geiger is the fact that it is in precisely this thought that Goldziher differed from so many of his Orientalist colleagues. In this connection the critique of Orientalism by Edward Said bears some comment. Said has argued that Orientalist scholarship in Europe was basically derived from the thinking of Silvestre de Sacy (AD 1758–1838) and was dominated by scholars in France and England: French and British involvement in the Orient, both quantitatively and qualitatively, was far greater than that of every other European and Atlantic power, and 'to speak of Orientalism therefore is to speak mainly, although not exclusively, of a British and French cultural enterprise'.<sup>156</sup> In this enterprise, the key role was played by Ernest Renan (AD 1823–1892), and in particular by his Aryan/Semitic theory of dichotomy, which argued that determining factors of language shaped the ways in which 'Aryan' and 'Semitic' peoples did and could think, the 'Aryan genius' being endowed with a vigorous imagination and spirit of inquiry and so culminating in philosophy and mythology, with practically unlimited scope for further progress and development, while the 'Semitic genius', more given to submission and habit, reaches its apogee in religion and theology and there becomes 'arrested', unable to proceed further. It was Renan's task, in pursuing and refining the formulations of Sacy, 'to solidify the official discourse of Orientalism, to systematise its insights, and to establish its intellectual and worldly institutions'. Once this had been achieved, Orientalism remained 'unchanged as teachable wisdom (in academies, books, congresses, universities, foreign-service institutes) from the period of Ernest Renan in the 1840s until the present in the United States...' That is, Orientalism became a static system of ideas which, after Renan, generated no new ways of conceptualising the subject of its study and analysis. All subsequent work—specifically, that of the German

Orientalists—simply ‘refined and elaborated techniques whose application was to texts, myths, ideas, and languages almost literally gathered from the Orient by imperial Britain and France’.<sup>157</sup>

Many readers familiar with the prominent role played by German scholarship in traditional Orientalism will be—and indeed, have been—taken aback by this characterisation, not least of all because it is merely asserted rather than demonstrated, and because Said freely concedes, in the midst of this discussion, the important and influential role of central Europe in Orientalist scholarship.<sup>158</sup> Challenged on another occasion (by Edward Mortimer of *The Times*) with the suggestion that it was in fact the French and English who followed the lead of the Germans, and not the other way around, Said seeks to clarify his position:

All the great German Orientalists who did, as you say, important work, essentially did their work after the major discoveries made mainly by the French. That is to say, all of the great Orientalists from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards were students of Sacy one way or another. This isn't to say that they didn't do important work, but their work was made possible by the French. What they tended to do—I think this is the core of my argument—was that they refined upon the vision, you might say, of the argument that was propagated initially by the French and the British. In other words, if you look at the Austro-Gennan School of Orientalism, there is nothing there that fundamentally contradicts the general view of the Orient. Indeed, if you read people like Becker and others who wrote at the end of the nineteenth century, you find exactly that large theories of the Orient itself come from the Church and the French. It's not something which they in any way dispute. It's simply taken for granted.<sup>159</sup>

There are, of course, many problems with this: to trace the academic *silsila* of a group of scholars to a common ‘forefather’ indicates nothing about the extent to which these scholars did or did not conceive of new ways of conceptualising their field; all intellectual endeavour is ‘made possible’ by its current context and historical antecedents; there was no ‘Austro-German School of Orientalism’; ‘the Church’ had no ‘theory of the Orient’; etc. But for present purposes the point of particular interest is how Goldziher fits into this picture.

As a student of Fleischer, Goldziher too may be traced back to Silvestre de Sacy, Fleischer's teacher. But as we have already seen, his key sources of intellectual influence and inspiration are to be traced not through Fleischer to Silvestre de Sacy, but rather through Geiger to Baur, Strauss, the Tübingen School, and in general, Enlightenment thought in Germany. This is amply attested not only through assessment of Goldziher's works and background, but also from his own acknowledgements to this effect. If any further proof of this need be adduced, it may be found in the fact that Goldziher himself repeatedly sought to refute various theories of Renan, the figure after whom, for Said,

Orientalism produced no new way of conceptualising the subject of its study. We have already seen that Goldziher spent many evenings in Cairo with Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī. This Muslim intellectual was a bitter critic of Renan and entered into a famous exchange with him in AD 1883,<sup>160</sup> and similar matters surely arose in conversations between al-Afghānī and Goldziher already in AD 1874.<sup>161</sup> In any case, it is clear that the young Hungarian was already pursuing research meant to call Renan's theories into question. Renan's work on the origins of the Semites provoked a sceptical reassessment from Goldziher already in AD 1875,<sup>162</sup> and both prior to and during his study tour he was already working on his *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern*.<sup>163</sup> In this, his first major monograph, he specifically seeks to disprove Renan's thesis that the Semitic mind, or spirit, lacks the intellectual capacity or imagination to formulate its values and ideals as myths, as the Greeks had done.<sup>164</sup> For Goldziher, mythology is the precursor (*Einleitung*) of religion and may be found among all peoples. It is a mode for perceiving and making sense of the physical world, and its formulations live on into later stages of cultural development, when such myths are reorganised and reinterpreted, some into history, and others into religion—first polytheism, and then monotheism.<sup>165</sup> Goldziher also rejected Renan's paradigm of ethnic 'geniuses', not because Goldziher denied the validity of ethnic categories (he did not), but rather because he did not see these as the determining factors in the progress of thought or culture. In Arab-Islamic history, for example, neither Arabic grammar, nor Islamic law nor dogma, nor Arabic historical writing, were the products of 'le génie arabe', as Renan thought: in all cases, the formative processes were more complicated and involved the interplay of various competing tendencies and trends.<sup>166</sup> This ongoing critique of Renan did not disallow for admiration of other aspects of his work. After the latter's death in AD 1892, Goldziher, in his *Renan mint orientalista*, a memorial lecture delivered at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, managed to fill 100 printed pages with a brilliant mix of appreciation and criticism, conceding enduring contributions while at the same time engaging in diplomatic but devastating criticism of areas where he felt Renan had been wrong.<sup>167</sup> And if one may venture to generalise an overall worldview from what we have seen so far in Goldziher's writing, this worldview would surely include, though not exclusively consist of, a prominent conviction—incompatible with the thought of Renan—that all cultural and religious systems develop in response to historical circumstances, and that insofar as they contain ideals of enduring and fulfilling worth, these tend to be universal elements which, if not found in other cultures and religions in exactly the same form, are at least relevant to these other systems.

If much of this sounds very atypical of the Orientalist scholarship of the day, it must be said that Goldziher was not the only Orientalist researcher on Islam to take note of Geiger's work and to appreciate its importance and ramifications for the study of Islam. Julius Wellhausen (AD 1844–1918) made full use of Geiger's approach to religious texts and specifically acknowledged his debt to him.<sup>168</sup> R.P.A.Dozy (AD 1820–1883) was exceedingly enthusiastic about Geiger's

work, and wrote to him to proclaim that 'I am a Geigerian'.<sup>169</sup> Nöldeke was a frequent correspondent of Geiger's and favourably reviewed his work.<sup>170</sup> As these and other cases indicate, the field of 'Oriental studies' in the nineteenth century was very closely bound up with that of Biblical studies, so much so that it is a major error to suppose that the former can be assessed in isolation from the latter.<sup>171</sup>

Goldziher did, however, pursue Geiger's work with both a keen historical insight and a fundamental objectivity that often made for marked differences between his work and that of his colleagues. He himself was profoundly uncomfortable about this. His *Tagebuch* reveals that he was very anxious about how his works would be received, and that he sometimes wondered if his research was brilliant, as he hoped, or irretrievably wrong-headed, as he feared. He therefore elaborated many of his ideas first in Hungarian, to test the water, as it were. And even then it was often difficult for his close friends to convince him to publish his seminal studies in an accessible language. A good example of this was *Muhammedanische Studien*, which was essentially a revised and more extensively documented version of the first three chapters of his *Az Iszlám*, and went to press only after repeated entreaties and pressure by his friends and colleagues.<sup>172</sup> And even while correcting the proofs for the first volume Goldziher felt very ill at ease:

I saw naught but the most hideous disgrace. In my imagination I heard the disdainful laughter of Nöldeke, saw De Goeje shrugging his shoulders and D.H.[Müller] turning up his nose; the friends, the 'coercers', I saw disappointed in their expectations, withdrawing their support.<sup>173</sup>

A similar situation arose in the case of the *Abhandlungen zur arabischen Philologie*, and then again with his *Vorlesungen über den Islam*. Although in this last case Goldziher was at least pleased with his work and confident of its reception,<sup>174</sup> the final text still went to press only after considerable pestering by friends and colleagues.<sup>175</sup>

It is also worth noting that while Goldziher's perspectives and conclusions may appear rather conventional today, in his own time they marked such a departure from the norm that while he was widely esteemed for an almost limitless range of details, his broader agenda was not easily comprehended by his colleagues in Europe. In reviewing Volume Two of *Muhammedanische Studien*, for example, Nöldeke frankly admitted that he would not have undertaken the task had he not felt that others were equally at a loss as to what to make of this book.<sup>176</sup> In less astute circles Goldziher was simply glossed as, to cite one case, 'favorable à l'Islam'.<sup>177</sup>

It is perhaps here that one might see yet a final effect of Goldziher's study tour. From the many references he makes to this journey over the years, it would seem that the treasured memories of what he experienced and learned in the Arab East were a major factor sustaining him through many difficult years in which he

was ignored and belittled in Hungary, and at the same time, applauded and cited but not really fully understood among his Orientalist colleagues. Ironically enough, those who ‘felt’ the field the way he did were probably limited to those whom he was not to see again after AD 1874—colleagues like al-Jazā’irī and the others—but who continued to inspire in memory and from afar. Such a state of affairs may bear a familiar ring today: does one not look in the same direction that Goldziher did if one wishes to seek out those who see in such studies not only potential for important historical research, but also inspiration for their own countrymen and co-religionists, for the peoples of the Arab world, and ultimately for all mankind?

## NOTES

- 1 The best introduction to Goldziher and his work is Róbert Simon, *Ignác Goldziher: His Life and Scholarship as Reflected in his Works and Correspondence*, (Leiden: E.J.Brill/Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1986), pp. 13–76. See also Johann Fück, *Die arabischen Studien in Europa bis in den Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts*, (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1955), pp. 226–231; Jean-Jacques Waardenburg, *L’Islam dans le Miroir de l’Occident*, 3rd rev. edn., (Paris & The Hague: Mouton, 1962), index; Lawrence I. Conrad, ‘The Dervish’s Disciple: on the Personality and Intellectual Milieu of the Young Ignaz Goldziher’, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, no. 2 (1990), pp. 225–266.
- 2 Many such notices and appreciations were published after Goldziher’s death. The most informative are Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, ‘Ignaz Goldziher’, *De Gids*, vol. 4 (1921), pp. 489–499=Snouck’s *Verspreide Geschriften*, ed. A.J.Wensinck, (Bonn & Leipzig: Kurt Schroeder, 1923–26/Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1927), vol. VI, pp. 453–464; C.H.Becker, ‘Ignaz Goldziher’, *Der Islam*, vol. 12 (1922), pp. 214–222=Becker’s *Islam-studien*, (Leipzig: Verlag Quelle und Meyer, 1924–32), vol. H, pp. 499–514; A.S.Yahuda, ‘Die Bedeutung der Goldziher’schen Bibliothek für die zukünftige Hebräische Universität’, *Der Jude*, vol. 8 (1924), pp. 575–592; Bernát Heller, ‘Goldziher Ignác, in *Emlékkönyv a Ferenc József Orsz. Rabbiképző Intézet ötven éves jubileumára*, in *Magyar Zsidó Szemle*, vol. 44 (1927), pp. 261–274; Julius Németh, ‘Goldziher’s Jugend’, *Acta Orientalia*, vol. 1 (1950–51), pp. 7–25; Joseph de Somogyi, ‘My Reminiscences of Ignace Goldziher’, *Muslim World*, vol. 51 (1961), pp. 5–17.
- 3 For a bibliography of Goldziher’s writings, see Beraard Heller, *Bibliographie des Oeuvres de Ignace Goldziher*, (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1927), listing 592 items. Alexander Scheiber published several supplementary lists adding items missed by Heller, as well as new printings, editions, and translations of Goldziher’s works (for a total of 807 items): See Scheiber’s ‘A Supplementary Bibliography of the Literary Work of Ignace Goldziher’, in Samuel Löwinger and Joseph de Somogyi, (eds.), *Ignace Goldziher Memorial Volume*, (Budapest: Globus, 1948), vol. 1, pp. 419–429; ‘Addenda to the Bibliography of Goldziher’, in Joseph de Somogyi, (ed.), *Ignace Goldziher Memorial Volume*, (Jerusalem: Rubin Mass, 1958), vol. 2, pp. 209–214; also additions in an appendix to his edition of Goldziher’s *Tagebuch* (n. 7 below), pp. 331–334.

- 4 Nöldeke to Goldziher, Strassbourg, 30th November 1885; quoted in Simon, *Ignác Goldziher*, pp. 57–58. It is to be noted that in his edition of Goldziher's *Gesammelte Schriften*, (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1967–73), Joseph de Somogyi excluded all of his teacher's Hungarian studies. Such factors have encouraged the erroneous assumption that works written by Goldziher in Hungarian are either already translated or not worth reading.
- 5 See Somogyi, 'Reminiscences', p. 9, where he recalls Goldziher advising him of two things he must do 'if you want to prosper in life': give lectures at the Orientalists' congresses, and 'answer every letter or card you receive, even if your answer be negative'. Goldziher kept his own correspondence in an elaborate filing system organised by country and then subdivided according to individuals. By the time of his death the corpus included over 13,000 letters and cards from over 1600 individuals. This collection is now preserved in the Archives of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.
- 6 Raphael Patai, *Ignaz Goldziher and His Oriental Diary: A Translation and Psychological Portrait*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987). The original manuscript of the diary is held at the Jewish Theological Seminary (New York), Small Collections, Box 1; I am grateful to Dr Jerry Schwarzbard, Reference Librarian in charge of Special Collections, for facilitating my work on this manuscript in April 1988 and March 1989. Patai's translation is generally good, but his introduction, 'psychological portrait', and many of his notes are to be regarded with extreme caution. See Lawrence I. Conrad, 'The Near East Study Tour Diary of Ignaz Goldziher', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, no. 1 (1990), pp. 105–126; idem., 'The Dervish's Disciple', pp. 225–266.
- 7 Ignaz Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, ed. Alexander Scheiber, (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1978), pp. 55–74.
- 8 See his 'Universitäts-Moschee el-Azhar', in Georg Ebers, *Aegypten in Bild und Wort*, (Stuttgart & Leipzig: Eduard Hallberger, 1879–80), vol. II, pp. 71–88; *Az Iszlám. Tanulmányok a muhammedán vallás története köréből*, (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Könyvtára, 1881), pp. 299–340. On the relationships among the Goldziher diaries, see Conrad, 'Study Tour Diary', pp. 108–113; idem., *The Dervish's Disciple*, pp. 228–233.
- 9 For these essays and letters, see Conrad, 'The Dervish's Disciple', p. 226, n. 6.
- 10 *Jelentés a M.T.Akadémia Könyvtára Számára keletrol hozott könyvekről tekintettel a nyomdaviszonyokra keleten*, (Budapest: Hoffman és Molnár, 1874). His purpose here was to report on his purchases of books for the Academy, but he also discusses other matters of interest.
- 11 *Tagebuch*, p. 56. On Vámbéry, renowned for the many languages he knew, see Lory Alder and Richard Dalby, *The Dervish of Windsor Castle: The Life of Arminius Vambery*, (London: Bachman and Turner, 1979); Conrad, 'The Dervish's Disciple', pp. 243–264.
- 12 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 84–95; *Tagebuch*, pp. 55–56; 'Quarantine', *Pester Lloyd*, no. 234 (3rd December 1873), the 'Feuilleton' column.
- 13 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 95–101; *Tagebuch*, p. 56.
- 14 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 101–103; *Tagebuch*, p. 56.
- 15 See, for example, *Oriental Diary*, pp. 83–84, 91, 95, 103, 117, 121, 137. Cf. also Conrad, 'Study Tour Diary', pp. 109–110.
- 16 *Oriental Diary*, p. 103.

- 17 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 103–108.
- 18 See Dominique Chevallier, *La Société du Mont Liban à l'Époque de la Révolution Industrielle en Europe*, (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1971), pp. 182–184; Charles Issawi, 'British Trade and the Rise of Beirut, 1830–1860', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 8 (1977), pp. 92–93; Roger Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy, 1800–1914*, (London, Methuen, 1981), pp. 165–167; Leila Tarazi Fawaz, *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983); Marwan R. Buheiry, *The Formation and Perception of the Modern Arab World*, ed. Lawrence I. Conrad, (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1989), pp. 483–487, 538–539.
- 19 It is to this poet that Goldziher alludes in his *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern und seine geschichtliche Entwicklung. Untersuchungen zur Mythologie und Religionswissenschaft*, (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1876), p. 102. On the verse of Khalīf al-Khūrī, see Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī, *Al-A'lām*, 3rd edn., (Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm li 'l-Malāyīn, 1979), vol. II, pp. 325–326. The newspaper founded in AD 1858, was in fact only a semi-official organ. See al-'*Arabiyya*, (Beirut: American Press, 1933), vol. I, p. 102.
- 20 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 108–111; *Tagebuch*, p. 56; *Jelentés*, p. 8; 'Journalistik im Orient', *Pester Lloyd*, no. 175 (2nd August 1874). See also the corrections and clarifications to the *Oriental Diary* text in Conrad, 'Study Tour Diary', pp. 115–116.
- 21 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 109–111; *Tagebuch*, p. 56.
- 22 'Kirándulás Heliopolis felé', *Pesti Napló*, nos. 281–282 (5th–7th December 1873), written in Damascus on 14th November.
- 23 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 112–128; *Tagebuch*, pp. 56–64. On Goldziher's knowledge of Arabic poetry, see the correction in Conrad, 'Study Tour Diary', p. 118.
- 24 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 114, 114–116, 117, 118, 120, 126; *Tagebuch*, pp. 57, 58, 60; *Jelentés*, p. 4; 'Der Buchhändler in Damaskus', *Pester Lloyd*, nos. 111–112 (1874); 'Aus einem Briefe des Dr I. Goldziher von Kairo 7. Februar', *Berliner's Magazin für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*, vol. 1 (1874), p. 28.
- 25 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 113–114, 117–118, 120–121, 126; *Tagebuch*, pp. 60, 61.
- 26 *Tagebuch*, p. 64.
- 27 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 128–144 (cf. Conrad, 'Study Tour Diary', pp. 119–120, for some major corrections); *Tagebuch*, pp. 64–65.
- 28 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 141–142, 144, 147–149; *Tagebuch*, pp. 65, 66–67, 71–72.
- 29 Of greatest importance are his detailed accounts of his experiences at al-Azhar: 'Universitäts-Moschee el-Azhar', pp. 71–88; *Az Iszlám*, pp. 299–340; *Tagebuch*, pp. 68–72; and to a lesser extent, 'Aus einem Briefe von Kairo', p. 28. For other aspects of his stay in Cairo, see *Oriental Diary*, pp. 150–153.
- 30 See Conrad, 'Study Tour Diary', pp. 111–112.
- 31 *Tagebuch*, p. 71.
- 32 That is, on 21st February 1874.
- 33 Referring to the *Arabisches Notizbuch*, which seems to have been an appendix to the *Oriental Diary*. See Conrad, 'Study Tour Diary', pp. 111–112.
- 34 The point here would apparently be that at the tomb of al-Shāfi'ī he recited the *shahāda*, or profession of faith in the unity of God and the prophethood of **Muḥammad**.
- 35 *Tagebuch*, p. 72.

- 36 Ibid., pp. 198–200. On this trip he served as interpreter and administrative officer for a study tour by a group of Hungarian secondary school teachers, and gathered material for an article on Islam in Egypt which he published in the (otherwise very defective) volume of essays written by participants on the tour. See his ‘Az egyiptomi Iszlám’ in *Egyiptom*, ed. László Körösi (Budapest: Pátria, 1899), pp. 253–273.
- 37 *Tagebuch*, p. 73.
- 38 Ibid., p. 282, for example, on a visit by **Muhammad** Kurd ‘Alī (AD 1876– 1953), a student of **Ṭāhir al-Jazā’iri**, to Budapest in February 1914.
- 39 Ibid., p. 55.
- 40 Ibid., p. 64.
- 41 See A.J.P.Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy, 1809–1918*, 2nd edn., (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1948), pp. 22–155; Robert A.Kann, *The Multinational Empire: Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1848–1918*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), vol. I, pp. 3–47, 109–141; idem., *A History of the Habsburg Empire, 1526–1918*, (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 243–366; John Lukacs, *Budapest 1900: A Historical Portrait of a City and its Culture*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1989); on Eötvös, see Johann Weber, *Eötvös und die ungarische Nationalitätenfrage*, (Munich: R.Oldenbourg, 1966); Paul Body, *Joseph Eötvös and the Modernization of Hungary, 1840–1870*, (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1972).
- 42 See William O.McCagg, Jr., *Jewish Nobles and Geniuses in Modern Hungary*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), pp. 25–26, 62, 114, 119; Istvan Deak, *The Lawful Revolution: Louis Kossuth and the Hungarians, 1848–1849*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), p. 51; Michael A.Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 157–158. For an interesting parallel situation in Germany, see Steven M. Lowenstein, ‘The Rural Community and the Urbanization of German Jewry’, *Central European History*, vol. 13 (1980), pp. 218–236.
- 43 See David Philipson, *The Reform Movement in Judaism*, (London: Macmillan, 1907), pp. 3–379; Max Wiener, *Jüdische Religion im Zeitalter der Emanzipation*, (Berlin: Philo Verlag, 1933); Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, pp. 3–212.
- 44 On these trends, see Philipson, *Reform Movement*, pp. 379–397; Robert A. Kann, ‘Hungarian Jewry during Austria-Hungary’s Constitutional Period (1867–1918)’, *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. 7 (1945), pp. 357–386; McCagg, *Jewish Nobles and Geniuses in Modern Hungary*, pp. 25–166, 223–228; Wolfgang Häusler, ‘Assimilation und Emanzipation des ungarischen Judentums um die Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts’, *Studia Judaica Austriaca*, vol. 3 (1976), pp. 33–79; Deak, *The Lawful Revolution*, pp. 113–120; Michael Silber, ‘The Historical Experience of German Jewry and its Impact on Haskalah and Reform in Hungary’, in Jacob Katz (ed.), *Toward Modernity: The European Jewish Model*, (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1987), pp. 117–157; Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, pp. 157–163, 193–196; William O.McCagg Jr., *A History of Habsburg Jews, 1670– 1918*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), pp. 47–158.
- 45 *Tagebuch*, pp. 15–17; Yahuda, ‘Bedeutung der Goldziherschen Bibliothek’, pp. 585–586; Heller, ‘Goldziher Ignác’, pp. 261–262; Ágoston Büchler, ‘A Goldziherék családfájáról’, *Múlt és Jövő*, vol. 28 (1938), pp. 18–20, 51–52, 82–83, 113–114, 152–153, 184–185.

- 46 *Tagebuch*, pp. 16, 24.
- 47 *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19, 20–21.
- 48 *Ibid.*, pp. 19–20. Cf. Yahuda, ‘Bedeutung der Goldziher’schen Bibliothek’, p. 586.
- 49 *Sichat-Yiczchak. Abhandlung über Ursprung, Eintheilung und Zeit der Gebete*, (Pest: Johann Herz, 1862).
- 50 See Heller, *Bibliographie*, pp. 17–18. Only one copy of the work seems to have survived; in AD 1927 it was in the possession of the Goldziher family in Budapest.
- 51 *Tagebuch*, p. 22.
- 52 *Tagebuch*, pp. 24–36; Heller, ‘Goldziher Ignác, p. 261, on documentation from the side of Eötvös.
- 53 *Studien über Tanchūm Jerūschalmi*, (Leipzig: List und Franke, 1870).
- 54 *Tagebuch*, pp. 36–52.
- 55 On Geiger, see Ludwig Geiger, (ed.), *Abraham Geiger. Leben und Lebenswerk*, (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1910); Wiener, *Jüdische Religion*, pp. 48–56, 81–83, 105–111, 194–202, 239–255; Jacob J. Petuchowski, (ed.), *New Perspectives on Abraham Geiger*, (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1975); Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, pp. 89–99. For Geiger’s writings, see his *Nachgelassene Schriften*, ed. Ludwig Geiger, (Berlin: Louis Gerschel Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1875–1878); also the anthology *Abraham Geiger and Liberal Judaism: The Challenge of the Twentieth Century*, ed. and trans. Max Wiener & Ernst J. Schochauer, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1962).
- 56 David Friedrich Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu*, (Tübingen: C.F. Osiander, 1835–1836). On Strauss and his *Life of Jesus*, see Horton Harris, *David Friedrich Strauss and his Theology*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), pp. 41–57.
- 57 See Horton Harris, *The Tübingen School*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), and on Baur in particular (with whom Strauss had discussed the *Life of Jesus* while the work was in preparation), pp. 11–54. The correspondence between Strauss and Baur has been collected and published in Ernst Barnikol, ‘Der Briefwechsel zwischen Strauss und Baur’, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, vol. 73 (1962), pp. 74–125.
- 58 Abraham Geiger, *Urschrift und Uebersetzungen der Bibel in ihrer Abhängigkeit von der innern Entwicklung des Judenthums*, (Breslau: Julius Hainauer, 1857). On this work, see Felix Perles, ‘Lebenswerk. Der Gelehrte’, in *Abraham Geiger*, pp. 316–327; Wiener, *Jüdische Religion*, pp. 251–253.
- 59 Abraham Geiger, *Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen*, (Bonn: F. Baaden, 1833). On this work, see Ludwig Geiger, ‘Biographie’, in *Abraham Geiger*, pp. 17–18.
- 60 See, for example, his *Polemische und apologetische Literatur in arabischer Sprache zwischen Muslimen, Christen und Juden*, (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1877; AKM 6.3); *Die arabischen Übersetzungen aus dem Griechischen*, (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1889–1893); ‘Die griechischen Ärzte in arabischen Übersetzungen’, *Virchow’s Archiv für pathologische Anatomie und Physiologie und für klinische Medizin*, vol. 124 (1891), pp. 115–136, 268–288, 449–487; *Die europäischen Übersetzungen aus dem Arabischen bis Mitte des 17. Jahrhunderts*, (Vienna: C. Gerold’s Sohn, 1904–1905). On Steinschneider as a scholar, see Wiener, *Jüdische Religion*, pp. 203–209; and as an advocate of Jewish reform, see Ismar Schorsch, ‘Moritz Steinschneider on Liturgical Reform’, *Hebrew Union College Annual*, vol. 53 (1982), pp. 241–264; Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, p. 76.
- 61 *Tagebuch*, pp. 28–29, 33.

62. *Ibid.*, p. 39. Cf. also *Tagebuch*, p. 153; and for an extended discussion of Biblical criticism, ‘Renan mint orientalista’, *Emlékbeszédek a M.T. Akadémia elhunyt tagjai fölérté*, vol. 8.2 (1894), pp. 90–117 (=pp. 54–81 in the offprint).
- 63 See Philipson, *Reform Movement*, pp. 398–432.
- 64 ‘Mit nyerhetünk a beduin élet ismerete által az ó-Testamentom megértésére nézve?’ *Protestáns tudományos szemle*, vol. 1 (1869), pp. 73–76.
- 65 ‘A nemzetiségi kérdés az araboknál’, *Értekezések a nyelv és széptudományok köréből*, vol. 3.8 (1873), pp. 1–64; ‘Mahammed és az arab nemzeti hiúság’, *Athenaeum* (Pest), vol. 1 (1873), pp. 148–157.
- 66 *Tagebuch*, p. 46; cf. also *Oriental Diary*, p. 126: ‘I kiss no cross!’ On the pressure brought to bear on Jewish scholars at this time to ‘settle their religious status’, see Simon, *Ignác Goldziher*, pp. 49–50.
- 67 See Alder & Darby, *Dervish of Windsor Castle*, pp. 235–244; Conrad, ‘The Dervish’s Disciple’, pp. 255–256.
- 68 *Tagebuch*, p. 25.
- 69 *Ibid.*, p. 26. Cf. also Conrad, ‘The Dervish’s Disciple’, pp. 253–255.
- 70 Alder & Dalby, *Dervish of Windsor Castle*, p. 245.
- 71 See Vámbéry’s account of this in his *The Story of my Struggles: The Memoirs of Arminius Vámbéry*, (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1904), vol. II, pp. 263–264, 270. In this account the hostility shown toward him is attributed to anti-Semitism.
- 72 In my ‘Dervish’s Disciple’, p. 261 n. 158, I suggested that the German text here should read ‘Liebschüler’ rather than ‘Leibschüler’. As Professor Heribert Busse points out to me, however, the latter reading is correct and bears the meaning given in my translation (cf. such familiar parallels as ‘Leibbuch’, ‘Leibspeise’).
- 73 *Tagebuch*, p. 27.
- 74 In the end, an ‘acceptable’ candidate for the professorship in Semitic philology was found in the clergyman and ex-missionary Péter Hatala (AD 1832–1918). Goldziher read of Hatala’s appointment in the *Pesti Napló* while he was in Cairo (*Tagebuch*, p. 72). On these developments, see Simon, *Ignác Goldziher*, pp. 49–52. Goldziher was not to receive his professorship in the University of Pest until Hatala’s retirement in AD 1905.
- 75 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 99, 101; *Tagebuch*, p. 87.
- 76 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 99, 127, 132, 136.
- 77 *Ibid.*, pp. 99, 100–101, 101.
- 78 See Philipson, *Reform Movement*, pp. 7–8, 30, 113–115, 163, 168, 369–370, 389–390; Ludwig Geiger, ‘Biographie’, in *Abraham Geiger*, p. 122; Wiener, *Jüdische Religion*, pp. 87–90, 96–99; Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, pp. 29–30, 122, 128, 137, 159, 170, 186, 192, 193, 195.
- 79 There is a considerable corpus of material on this issue that has so far not been investigated. See, for example, Geiger’s ‘Zur Würdigung des wissenschaftlichen Standpunktes in Palästina vom 7. bis zum 10. Jahrhundert’, *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift für jüdische Theologie*, vol. 6 (1847), pp. 19–30; *Urschrift und Uebersetzungen*, p. 350; ‘Die Schulen im Orient’, *Jüdische Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Leben*, vol. 3 (1864), pp. 143–149; *Das Judentum und seine Geschichte*, (Breslau: H. Skutsch, 1865–1871), vol. I, pp. 37–42, 65–76; ‘Die Kolonisation Palästinas und die Juden’, *Jüdische Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Leben*, vol. 7 (1869), pp. 209–210; *Nachgelassene Schriften*, vol. V, pp. 189–190.

- 80 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 83, 85–87, 88, 91, 94, 95, 97, 103, 114, 117, 121, 127, 137, 139, 147.
- 81 *Ibid.*, p. 144. Black and yellow were the Habsburg imperial colours.
- 82 See Somogyi, ‘Reminiscences’, p. 15.
- 83 See Conrad, ‘The Dervish’s Disciple’, pp. 262–264.
- 84 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 96, 99, 100–101, 113; *Tagebuch*, pp. 60–61, 62–63.
- 85 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 99–100.
- 86 *Ibid.*, p. 113.
- 87 *Ibid.*, p. 127.
- 88 See Geiger, *Nachgelassene Schriften*, vol. I, pp. 277–282; vol. II, pp. 36, 38; vol. V, pp. 291–292, 309–310, 320. Cf. also the detailed discussion in Heynemann Vogelstein, ‘Systematische Theologie’, in *Abraham Geiger*, pp. 253–259.
- 89 On American missionary activities in Syria and Palestine in this period, see A.L. Tibawi, *American Interests in Syria, 1800–1901: A Study of Educational, Literary and Religious Work*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), pp. 166–232.
- 90 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 109, 110, 111; *Tagebuch*, p. 56.
- 91 See David Salomons, *An Account of the Recent Persecution of the Jews at Damascus*, (London: Longmans, Orme, Brown, Greene, & Longmans, 1840); Louis Loewe, *The Damascus Affair: Diary of Dr Louis Loewe, July–November 1840*, (Ramsgate: Montefiore Theological College, 1940).
- 92 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 118, 120–121; *Tagebuch*, p. 61. The subject also arose at least once in conversation with a Muslim (*Oriental Diary*, p. 125).
- 93 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 117–118; *Tagebuch*, p. 60. On the condition of Christians and Jews in Damascus just prior to Goldziher’s arrival, see Moshe Ma’oz, ‘The Impact of Modernization on Syrian Politics and Society during the Early Tanzimat Period’, in William R. Polk and Richard L. Chambers (eds.), *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: The Nineteenth Century*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), pp. 347–349; Max L. Gross, *Ottoman Rule in the Province of Damascus, 1860–1909*, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Georgetown, 1979, pp. 20–51.
- 94 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 110, 111; *Tagebuch*, pp. 61, 65.
- 95 *Oriental Diary*, p. 138; *Tagebuch*, p. 61.
- 96 *Oriental Diary*, p. 132.
- 97 *Ibid.*, pp. 133, 135; *Tagebuch*, p. 65.
- 98 *Oriental Diary*, p. 135. (The incident in question is described in Jeremiah 38:1–13).
- 99 *Ibid.*, pp. 135, 136.
- 100 This is given in Arabic in the *Keleti Naplóm* Ms. and has been badly misread by Patai (*Oriental Diary*, p. 134). See the corrections and translation in Conrad, ‘Study Tour Diary’, pp. 119–120.
- 101 *Oriental Diary*, p. 132.
- 102 ‘Palesztina ismeretének haladása az utolsó három évtizedben’, *Értekezések a nyelv és széptudományok köréből*, vol. 13.3 (1886), pp. 43–49. The choice of example is significant. Research by Heymann Steinthal (AD 1823–1899) on the Samson stories as Hebrew sun-god myths was a major influence on Goldziher’s attitude toward the literal reading of religious texts. See *Mythos bei den Hebräern*, pp. xxii, 25–26; also *Tagebuch*, pp. 87, 138; Simon, *Ignác Goldziher*, pp. 34–35, 135–136.
- 103 *Ibid.*, p. 134.

- 104 See, for example, Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, pp. 29, 65.
- 105 See, for example, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. I, pp. 370–376; ‘Universitäts-Moschee el-Azhar’, p. 88; *Az Iszlám*, pp. 272–276, 341–382; ‘Az arab nyelvjárások legujabb irodalma’, *Nyelvtudományi közlemények*, vol. 25 (1895), pp. 90–96; ‘L’Avenir de l’Islam’, *Questions Diplomatiques et Coloniales*, vol. 11 (January–June, 1901), pp. 600–602; *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1910), pp. 14–20; = *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law*, trans. Andras and Ruth Hamori, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 15–20.
- 106 On the growth of Cairo in this period, see Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Cairo: 1001 Years of the City Victorious*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), pp. 103–113.
- 107 See, for example, David S. Landes, *Bankers and Pashas: International Finance and Economic Imperialism in Egypt*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), pp. 87–88.
- 108 *Oriental Diary*, p. 141.
- 109 Years later, Goldziher expressed the view that Egypt was quite beyond revival. See his letter to S.A. Poznanski (AD 1864–1921) in S.D. Goitein, ‘Goldziher as Seen Through His Letters’, in *Ignace Goldziher Memorial Volume*, vol. I, p. 22 (Hebrew section, with extracts from the letters in the original German).
- 110 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 142, 144, 147–149; *Tagebuch*, pp. 65, 66–67, 68, 71–72.
- 111 See Dor’s *L’Instruction Publique en Egypte*, (Paris: A. Lacroix, 1872), which was the focus of Goldziher’s criticism.
- 112 ‘Tanügyi reformok Egyiptomban’, *Magyar Tanügy*, vol. 2 (1873), pp. 129–137, 201–208. On the government-supported educational projects in Egypt in this period, see **Ahmad** ‘Izzat ‘Abd al-Karim, *Tarikh al-Ta’lim fi 1848–1882* (Cairo: 1945), vol. H, esp. pp. 3–164; Fritz Steppat, ‘National Education Projects in Egypt before the British Occupation’, in Polk & Chambers (eds.), *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East*, pp. 281–297.
- 113 ‘Muslim Education’, in James Hastings, (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, (Edinburgh: T. Clark, 1908–1926), vol. V, p. 206. It is worth noting that when Goldziher was in Egypt the vast majority of the modern schools were run by non-Muslims and Westerners, including many missionaries. See Steppat, ‘National Education Projects in Egypt’, pp. 283, 293.
- 114 See *Al-Idāra al-‘Uthmāniyya fī Wilāya Sūriyya, 1864–1914*, (Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1969), pp. 254–263; Gross, *Ottoman Rule in the Province of Damascus*, pp. 98–99, 353–359.
- 115 *Tagebuch*, pp. 71–72; ‘A Muhammedán Közvéleményről’, *Budapesti Szemle*, vol. 30 (1882), pp. 234–265, with repeated references to the revolt of ‘Urābī, the situation in Egypt and public opinion in the country.
- 116 Albert Hourani, ‘Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables’, in Polk & Chambers (eds.), *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East*, p. 43.
- 117 See *Oriental Diary*, pp. 88, 89, 103.
- 118 See *Al-Shaykh Ṭāhīr al-Jazā’irī, Rā’id al-Nahḍa al-‘Ilmiyya fī Bilād al-Shām*, (Cairo: League of Arab States, Institute for Advanced Arab Studies, 1971); Hisham Sharabi, *Arab Intellectuals and the West: The Formative Years, 1875–1914*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), pp. 24–26; Joseph H. Escovitz, ‘He was the ‘**Muḥammad** Abduh of Syria: a Study of **Ṭāhīr al-Jazā’irī**, and His Influence’, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 18 (1986), pp. 293–310; A.A. Duri, *The Historical Formation of the Arab Nation: A Study in Identity*

- and Consciousness*, trans. Lawrence I. Conrad, (London: Croom Helm, 1987), pp. 166, 219–220, 221; David Dean Cummins, *Islamic Reform: Politics and Social Change in Late Ottoman Syria*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 41–42, 89–98.
- 119 See *Al-Idāra al-‘Uthmāniyya*, pp. 260–261; Gross, *Ottoman Rule*, pp. 19–20, 123, 139.
- 120 There were, of course, some fundamental differences, most obviously where the nature of religious texts was concerned. While Goldziher pointedly argued that the Bible consisted of ancient myths, al-Jazā’irī would never have conceded the same of the Qur’ān, nor would Goldziher have expected radicalism of this extent from him. And while Goldziher’s reform agenda directly opposed the existing socio-political structures of his faith, al-Jazā’irī’s *salafī* neo-Orthodoxy remained squarely within those of Islam.
- 121 ‘Muslim Education’, p. 207.
- 122 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 119, 123, 124; *Tagebuch*, p. 282.
- 123 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 119–120.
- 124 *Ibid.*, pp. 128, 129.
- 125 See Yahuda, ‘Bedeutung der Goldziher’schen Bibliothek’, pp. 582–583.
- 126 See Kurd ed., (Damascus: 1401/1980), pp. 132–136; *idem.*, Kunūz al-Ajdād, 2nd edn., (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1404/1984), p. 18.
- 127 *Tagebuch*, p. 68, where he calls him ‘der Afghane Abd-al-Dschakāl’. That al-Afghānī is meant, however, is confirmed by Goldziher’s description of this ‘Abd-al-Dschakāl’ as ‘an anti-English agitator, exile, journalist, and polemicist against Renan’. More will be said below concerning the criticism of Renan by both al-Afghānī and Goldziher.
- 128 On al-Azhar in this period, the source of central importance is the detailed account by ‘Alī Mubārak (AD 1824–1893)—the Egyptian Minister of Awqāf, Minister of Education, founder of the Khedivial Library, and a friend of Goldziher’s—in his *al-Tawfiqīyya al-Jadīda*, (Būlāq: al-Kubrā al-Amīriyya, AH 1304–1306), vol. IV, pp. 10–44. See also Karl Vollers, art. ‘Al-Azhar’, *EI2*, vol. I, pp. 532–539; ‘Abd al-Rahmān ‘*Aṣr Ismā‘īl*’ (Cairo: 1351/1932), vol. I, pp. 214–215; J. Heyworth-Dunne, *Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt*, (London: Luzac, 1938), pp. 398–402; Afaf Lutfī al-Sayyid Marsot, ‘The Beginnings of Modernization among the Rectors of al-Azhar, 1798–1879’, in Polk & Chambers, (eds.), *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East*, pp. 267–280; Sa’id Isma’īl ‘Alī, *Al-bayna al-Tarbiya wa’l-siyāsa*, (Cairo: Dār al-Thaqāfa, 1974), pp. 175–177, 209–210.
- 129 Goldziher consistently says that al-‘Abbāsī was the son of a converted rabbi; see his ‘Universitäts-Moschee el-Azhar’, p. 85; *Az Iszlām*, p. 313; *Tagebuch*, p. 69. This cannot possibly be correct. The Rector’s origins are clearly attested in contemporary sources as far back as the late eighteenth century, and the story asserting that his family had only recently converted from Judaism was probably an invention set into circulation by the enemies of reform within al-Azhar. See Conrad, ‘Study Tour Diary’, pp. 122–123.
- 130 On al-‘Abbāsī, see Goldziher’s *Az Iszlām*, pp. 313–314; also Mubārak, vol. XVII, pp. 12–13; Tarājim A ‘yān al-Qarn al-Thālith ‘*Aṣhar wa-Awā’il al-Rābi*’ ‘*Aṣhar*, (Cairo: ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Aḥmad Ḥanafī, n.d.), pp. 67–80; Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Khāliq, ‘Al-Shaykh Muḥammad al-‘Abbāsī al-Mahdī’, in Jurjī Zaydān, *Tarājim*

*Mashāhīr al-Sharq fī 'l-Qarn al-Tāsi'* 'Aṣhar, 2nd edn., (Cairo: 1910–11), vol. II, pp. 210–215; Yūsuf Ilyān Sarkīs, 'at al-'Arabiyya wa'l-mu'arraba, (Cairo: **Maṭba'a** 1346/1928), p. 181; al-Rāfi'ī, '**Aṣr Ismā'īl**' pp. 294–295; Geschichte der arabischen literatur, S.II, p. 740; Heyworth-Dunne, *Education in Modern Egypt*, pp. 399–402; Marsot, 'Rectors of al-Azhar', pp. 279–280; al-Ziriklī, *Al-A'lām*, vol. VII, pp. 53–54; 'Alī *Al-Azhar*. pp. 175–177. Al-'Abbāsī's legal pronouncements as *Muḥīṭ al-Diyār al-Miṣriyya* are collected in seven volumes and published as *Al-Fatāwī al-Mahdiyya fī'l-Waqā'i al-Miṣriyya* (Cairo: AH 1301–1304).

- 131 'Aus einem Briefe von Kairo', p. 28; *Oriental Diary*, pp. 145, 146, 147.
- 132 'Universitäts-Moschee el-Azhar', pp. 85–87; *Az Iszlām*, p. 315.
- 133 See Kurd 'Alī, p. 132.
- 134 Yahuda, 'Bedeutung der Goldziherschen Bibliothek', pp. 581–582.
- 135 See *Oriental Diary*, pp. 119, 124, 128.
- 136 Cf. Conrad, 'The Dervish's Disciple', p. 240.
- 137 *Oriental Diary*, p. 105; *Tagebuch*, p. 61.
- 138 *Oriental Diary*, p. 105.
- 139 *Tagebuch*, p. 59. By this he means that whereas superstitious and pagan elements had penetrated the doctrine and praxis of Judaism, and so could now only be eliminated through rationalist reform arising from sources external to the structures responsible for upholding that doctrine and praxis, Islam has from the first limited and defined the ways in which pagan elements are accommodated, so that when they have entered the faith, they have done so in an 'Islamised' form rather than as 'raw' intrusions potentially destructive to the essence and spirit of Islam. Whether or not this formulation accurately describes the syncretic dynamic at issue is, of course, an entirely different matter.
- 140 See *Oriental Diary*, p. 132.
- 141 See *Oriental Diary*, pp. 21, 27, 62, of Patai's Introduction; cf. also the critique of this line of reasoning in Conrad, 'Study Tour Diary', pp. 233–234.
- 142 *Oriental Diary*, pp. 106, 108, 109, 110, 115–116, 118, 122, 125, 145.
- 143 'Der Dīwān des b.Aus Zeitschrift der Deutschen *Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, vol. 46 (1892), pp. 1–53, 173–225, 471–527.
- 144 'Ueber die Entwicklung des **Ḥadīth**' in Muhammedanische Studien, (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1889–1890), vol. II, pp. 1–274;='On the Development of the **Ḥadīth**', in *Muslim Studies*, ed. and trans. S.M.Stern and C.R.Barber, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1967–71), vol. II, pp. 15–251. Cf. also the discussion in Simon, *Ignác Goldziher*, pp. 96–104.
- 145 *Tagebuch*, pp. 122–123.
- 146 'Ueber die Entwicklung des **Ḥadīth**' p. 5;='On the Development of the **Ḥadīth**', p. 19.
- 147 'Ueber die Vorgeschichte der Poesie', in *Abhandlungen zur arabischen Philologie*, (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1896–1899), vol. I, pp. 1–121. For an assessment of this work, see Simon, *Ignác Goldziher*, pp. 105–125.
- 148 'Einleitung' to 'Das Kitāb al-Mu'ammaṛīn des in *Abhandlungen*, vol. II, pp. ix–xcii.
- 149 Two studies that Goldziher had in mind were Heinrich Steiner, *Die Mu 'taziliten; oder, die Freidenker im Islām. Ein Beitrag zur allgemeinen Culturgeschichte*, (Leipzig: S.Hirzel, 1865); and Henry Galland, *Essai sur les Mo'tazélites: les Rationalistes de l'Islām*, (Paris: E.Guilmo, 1906).

- 150 *Az Iszlám*, pp. 257–259; ‘Die Religion des Islams’, in Paul Hinneberg, (ed.), *Die Kultur der Gegenwart. Ihre Entwicklung und ihre Ziele*, vol. 13.1: *Die orientalischen Religionen*, (Leipzig: B.G.Teubner, 1908), pp. 116–118; *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, pp. 99–119; =*Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law*, pp. 85–103.
- 151 *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, pp. 117, 119; =*Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law*, pp. 100–101, 103.
- 152 ‘Die Religion des Islams’, pp. 114–115; *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, pp. 176–181, 184–185, 253–254; =Introduction to and *Law*, pp. 158–162, 165–166, 224–225; *Streitschrift des Gazālī gegen die* (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1916).
- 153 As in Simon, *Ignác Goldziher*, p. 14: ‘Goldziher’s opinions are almost always right’.
- 154 This problem has been noticed by several scholars. See the discussion in Carole Hillenbrand, ‘Islamic Orthodoxy or Realpolitik? Al-Ghazālī’s Views on Government’, *Iran*, vol. 26 (1988), p. 82.
- 155 See *Tagebuch*, pp. 284–311; ‘A háború és a tudósok szolidaritása’, *Magyar Figyelő*, vol. 4 (1914), pp. 250–254; also the correspondence with Nöldeke in Simon, *Ignác Goldziher*, pp. 371–389.
- 156 Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), pp. 1, 3–4, 123–130.
- 157 *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 17–18, 19, 105, 130–148, 197.
- 158 *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- 159 See the discussion of Said’s speech at the 1979 International Press Seminar on *The Arab Image in Western Mass Media*, (London: Outline Books, 1980), pp. 110–111.
- 160 See Nikkie Keddie, *Sayyid Jamāl ad-Dīn ‘al-Afghānī’: A Political Biography*, (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972), pp. 81–92, on his sojourn in Cairo (AD 1871–1879), and pp. 189–199, concerning his famous 1883 exchange with Renan.
- 161 See *Tagebuch*, p. 68. It is possible, however, that Goldziher’s reference to al-Afghānī as a ‘polemicist against Renan’ refers not to personal discussions with him in 1874, but to the 1883 exchange with Renan, of which Goldziher, writing his memoirs in 1890, would certainly have been aware.
- 162 ‘A sémi faj őshazájáról és vándorlásáról’, *Nyelvtudományi Közlemények*, vol. 12 (1875), pp. 285–340.
- 163 See *Tagebuch*, p. 74, where he states that several chapters of this book had been written before and during his study tour, Chapter IV, for example, having been written in the Hotel Damas in Jerusalem. See also *Oriental Diary*, pp. 101, 121, where work on the book is alluded to.
- 164 *Mythos bei den Hebräern*, pp. 4–19, 288–290. The entire work, of course, is an implicit critique of Renan.
- 165 See *Mythos bei den Hebräern*, pp. 4–13, 15–19, 49–50, 263–267, 301–320.
- 166 ‘A nyelvtudomány történetéről az araboknál’, *Nyelvtudományi közlemények*, vol. 14 (1878), pp. 309–375; ‘A muhamedán jogtudomány eredetéről’, *Értekezések a nyelv és széptudományok köréből*, vol. 11.9 (1884), pp. 1–23; *A történetírás az arab irodalomban*, (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1895).
- 167 See, for example, *Renan mint orientalista*, pp. 39–46, where Renan’s analysis of Ibn Rushd and al-Ghazālī is disposed of not only on the basis of an alternative

analysis proposed by Goldziher, but also founded upon Goldziher's familiarity with unpublished sources which had been unknown to Renan.

- 168 See Ludwig Geiger, 'Biographie', in *Abraham Geiger*, pp. 154, 325; Harris, *The Tübingen School*, p. 250.
- 169 For the letter (19th February 1863), see Geiger's *Nachgelassene Schriften*, vol. V, pp. 289–290; cf. also Ludwig Geiger's 'Biographie', p. 18.
- 170 See Ludwig Geiger, 'Biographie', pp. 153, 228, 324, 410–411; also Nöldeke in *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, vol. 20 (1866), p. 457.
- 171 As Said does; see *Orientalism*, pp. 17, 18, where this course of action is defended.
- 172 See *Muhammedanische Studien*, vol. I, p. ix.
- 173 *Tagebuch*, p. 115.
- 174 *Ibid.*, pp. 257, 262–263, 268.
- 175 See Goitein, 'Goldziher as Seen Through His Letters', pp. 9–12.
- 176 *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, vol. 5 (1891), p. 43.
- 177 *Questions Diplomatiques et Coloniales*, vol. 11 (January–June, 1901), p. 600.

## NAJĪB MAḤFŪZ IN SEARCH OF THE IDEAL STATE: A CRITIQUE OF HIS

### *RIḤLAT IBN FAṬṬŪMA*

R.El-Enany

Published in 1983, *Riḥlat Ibn Faṭṭūma* is one of **Najīb Maḥfūz's** more recent works. One hesitates to call it a novel, though one will have to for the lack of a better term. Unlike the novels of **Maḥfūz's** three recognised stages of development (i.e. historical, realistic and modernist), *Riḥlat Ibn Faṭṭūma* does not conform to the norms of the Western novel. Nor does it stand by itself among his work published since the mid-seventies. Indeed, together with works like *(Tales of our Quarter)* (1975), *(The Epic of the Riff-Raff)* (1977) and *Layālī Alf Layla (Nights of The Thousand and One Nights)* (1982), *Riḥlat Ibn Faṭṭūma* can be regarded as representing a fourth and new stage in **Maḥfūz's** development as a novelist. The novels of this stage are characterised by a lack of interest in upholding the traditional norms of fiction as developed in the West in the last three hundred years or so. Instead they tend to hark back to old indigenous forms of storytelling in Arabic, such as *Alf Layla wa Layla*, the *Maqāmāt* and, in the case of the present work, the *Riḥla* literature. The novels of this phase lack the traditional Aristotelian plot, have little or no character development apart from the central figure, are episodic in structure and seem to draw their sense of unity mainly from theme, a linear plot, if one may say so, and, sometimes, a central figure.

The use of the journey to a foreign culture as a medium in fiction for developing character and exploring theme, particularly the theme of comparing and contrasting different civilisations, goes back to the very early attempts at writing fiction in modern Arabic. One can find an early example of it in 'Isā Ibn Hishām written at the turn of the century. Since that time, the journey medium has been used time and again in the fictional work of such masters as **Ḥusayn**, Yūsuf Idrīs, Suhayl Idrīs, Mīkhā'il Nu'ayma, and others. This then is the tradition of modern Arabic fiction to which *Riḥlat Ibn Faṭṭūma* belongs. It is however, distinguished from this tradition by dint of its being the only work based on the format of a traditional mediaeval *Riḥla*, particularly that of **Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**, and being itself set in mediaeval times.

**Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's** name is one that every Arab school-leaver would be familiar with, while *Ibn Faṭṭūma* is a pet name for common among the lower classes in Egypt and not without a funny ring to it outside this environment. It would thus appear that by giving his novel the title *Riḥlat Ibn Faṭṭūma*, aimed at making the

immediate association in the mind of the reader between his novel and the historical book, *Ibn Faṭṭūma* and *Ibn Baṭṭūṭa* being of the same consonant-vowel pattern. It would also appear that the modern title is somewhat deliberately irreverent about the classical work it invokes. From the title page then, we are in a frame of mind to conceive *Rihlat Ibn Faṭṭūma* as a parody of *Rihlat Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*.

The novel is given a further pretence of historical verisimilitude by a prefatory note saying that the text is 'reproduced from the manuscript written by the hand of Qindīl **Muḥammad** al-ʿAnnābī, known as *Ibn Faṭṭūma*. It is divided into seven chapters covering six journeys, the first chapter being devoted to or the homeland from which the journey begins. We know that *al-Waṭan* is part of *Dār al-Islām* but we do not know which part. Similarly all the other six countries are given fictitious names, though we can tell from the context what they stand for. There is no specific reference to time either, though the context and the means of travel etc. suggest that it is mediaeval times. Thus it appears that time and place are intentionally defaced; a well-tried artistic technique to underline the universality of the theme.

But what is the theme of the book? It is one of search; the search for the ideal human society and the political/economic system capable of achieving it. Readers and scholars of Mr **Mahfūz** will know that this is an age-old and central preoccupation of his writing. The novel under discussion is yet another manifestation of this concern of his and indeed, one might add, of his nation in its attempt to strike a path for itself in the modern world. *Rihlat Ibn Faṭṭūma* is thus a journey in the mind despite its spatial apparel; it is a bewildered itinerary among different socio-political systems rather than countries and peoples.

**Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's** original motive when he left Tangier in AD 1326 at the age of 21 was to perform the religious duty of the *ḥajj*.<sup>1</sup> In the event he went round most of the known world of his day and returned some twenty-five years later. His fictitious descendant however, knew his mind better and had his journey planned out to the minutest detail before he set out. Nothing though was farther from his mind than *ḥajj*. He is a man of an inquisitive mind, a perturbed soul and a sociopolitical awareness. Though himself well-to-do by inheritance, he is dissatisfied with *Dār al-Islām* because it is full of 'injustice, poverty and ignorance',<sup>2</sup> and because there 'every action whether beautiful or ugly is initiated in the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful'. (p. 5) He thus curses *Dār al-Islām* as an 'abode of falsity' (p. 18) and is determined to travel in order 'to learn and bring back to my sick country the healing remedy'. (p. 19) Having a more ambitious goal for his *riḥla* than his historic progenitor, *Ibn Faṭṭūma* meets with less success. He never returns to his homeland and the novel ends with the quest as yet unfinished. Within the allegorical framework of the book with its very contemporary message, this ending is perhaps the only conceivable one. Apart from this political motive, **Mahfūz** gives his traveller a personal motive as well to get away from his homeland (betrayal by his beloved and his widowed mother who consented to marry again (p. 18)), but this is negligible

because it is obviously there only for cosmetic reasons and is barely picked up again beyond the first chapter.

**Ibn Faṭṭūma's** first journey is to *Dār al-Mashriq*. He adopts a pattern here to which he will adhere in all subsequent journeys. On arrival he rents a room in the city's inn for ten days, gathers some elementary information about the place from the innkeeper, then wanders on his own in the city and finally seeks a meeting with the city's *ḥakīm* or sage. This is obviously meant to parallel **Ibn Baṭṭūta's** famous eagerness to meet mystics and holy men in all the places he visited. But whereas **Ibn Baṭṭūta** revered his holy men and believed their wisdom and alleged miracles without question,<sup>3</sup> **Ibn Faṭṭūma's** attitude to his sages is, by contrast, inquisitive and critical.

*Dār al-Mashriq* is a pagan land where the moon is worshipped. Its people are simple, poor and naked. They are a matriarchal society without sexual inhibitions. Their religion is simple, natural, pleasure-seeking and devoid of both a moral code and belief in after-life. As for the political and economic system of this land, it is summarised thus to **Ibn Faṭṭūma** by the innkeeper: '*Dār al-Mashriq* consists of a capital and four cities. Each city has a "lord" who owns it with its pastures, animals and herdsmen...and the palace you have seen is that of the lord of the capital. He is the strongest and richest of the lords, but has no power over any of them....' (pp. 32–33). From this it becomes apparent that *Dār al-Mashriq* stands for a very early stage of the development of human society; a pre-agricultural, tribal, material society with a natural religion. All the time **Ibn Faṭṭūma** has *Dār al-Islām* at the back of his mind and it pains him to see that his country is morally no superior to this pagan land. (pp. 29, 33, 47).

Deflected from his lofty goal by sexual attraction, **Ibn Faṭṭūma** spends five years in *Dār al-Mashriq* during which he marries and fathers children until he is separated from his family and expelled from the country on the charge of trying to bring up his children as Muslims. Thus he finds himself embarking on his second journey which takes him to *Dār al-Ḥayra*. There, he finds that the people worship a god-King who owns all the land and apportions it to regional lords who run it in his name and share the revenue with him. (pp. 61, 68) By now it must be clear that **Ibn Faṭṭūma's** journey is more of a journey in time than in space. For here we are obviously a few steps advanced into the history of human society where feudal lords reign over their serfs and owe allegiance to a central king who has a divine right to rule. As before, our traveller's thoughts are with his homeland, *Dār al-Islām*. He surmises wistfully that there is no evil that he encounters in his journey which fails to remind him of his sad country, and when he sees the impaled heads of so-called rebels, he is certain that their owners died for justice and freedom as happens in his country. (pp. 64–65).

In *Dār al-Ḥayra* he spends twenty years in prison on a false charge. When he is released he embarks on his third journey, to *Dār al-Ḥalba*. From the first moment it captures his imagination and he seems nearer his dream of finding the ideal state than ever before. *Dār al-Ḥalba* is the land of freedom, wealth and sophisticated civilisation. There he feels that for the first time he has met people

‘who took pride in themselves’. (p. 91) He comes across a protest demonstration and is surprised to see it protected (rather than coerced) by the police, and is even more surprised when he learns that the demonstration was about demanding the legalisation of homosexual relations. He is also surprised to learn that the State has no official religion and that equal rights are accorded worshippers of different faiths, that the head of government is elected for a certain period of time after which he has to leave office and that the economy is free and mostly in the hands of individuals. Finally when he meets their sage he learns from him that their religion is reason ‘which should preclude the need for all else’. (p. 104) We are obviously here in the heartland of modern industrial, capitalist Europe. But the European capitalist model, after initial fascination, proves far from perfect too. For *Ibn Faṭṭūma* observes that *Dār al-Ḥalba* houses poverty and crime too and when he faces their sage with this fact, the latter replies: ‘Freedom is a responsibility that only the capable can shoulder... There is no place among us for the weak.’ He also refuses to accept ‘compassion’ as a human value comparable to freedom. (pp. 106–107). *Ibn Faṭṭūma* ends up with the rejection of the (i.e. capitalist) system as lacking a ‘moral basis’, but he admits that *Dār al-Islām* with its despotic rulers, hypocritical men of religion and hunger-subdued people is equally without a moral basis. (p. 118).

Having despaired of finding his first wife, *Ibn Faṭṭūma* settles in *Dār al-Ḥalba*, marries again, and starts a successful business. Eventually the old dream of finding the ideal state and taking the cure back home lures him again and he sets out on his fourth journey, this time to *Dār al-Amān*. On arriving at the gates of *Dār al-Amān*, city officials welcome the caravan to ‘the land of comprehensive justice’. (p. 124). *Ibn Faṭṭūma* is appointed a compulsory escort to show him around the city and to watch over his every movement even in his hotel room and in the bathroom. By now we have got enough clues to suspect that our traveller must have arrived in what used to be the Soviet Union, particularly the pre-Gorbachovian Soviet Union. What follows confirms the reader’s suspicion. In the morning, *Ibn Faṭṭūma* wakes up to an elegant but deserted city. This is because every person, man or woman, is working; nobody is unemployed. The escort explains to his captive traveller, ‘Every individual is brought up to do a certain job, and every individual is suitably rewarded. We are the only country which knows neither rich nor poor. Here is justice which no other nation could achieve if even in part.’ (pp. 128–129). *Ibn Faṭṭūma* is temporarily impressed, but at the end of the day when the people come out of work onto the streets, he notices that their faces are grim, tired, lifeless and without a trace of merriment. He is concerned and perplexed. (pp. 132–133). At the end of a political rally, he sees severed human heads impaled on spears and is told that their crime was to criticise the regime. He is very dejected to realise that ‘individual freedom was punishable by death’. (pp. 140–141). His final judgement on *Dār al-Amān* is a mixed one: ‘It is an amazing country. It aroused both my admiration and disgust in the extreme.’ (p. 137). This is the only country

where **Ibn Faṭṭūma** does not exceed the ten-day standard period of stay; he was too bored to want to, nor were visitors welcome to overstay the prescribed period.

With the communist ideal rejected as well, **Ibn Faṭṭūma's rihla** through the history of the development of human society and its systems of government seems to have taken him as far as the present day and yet to have left him with his ideal unattained: no perfect society and no tried cure for the social and political evil to take back home to *Dār al-Islām*. Have **Ibn Faṭṭūma** and his author reached a deadend? Not quite, there is yet *Dār al-Jabal* *Dār al-Jabal* is a place steeped in mystery, or perhaps it is no place at all; only an ideal in the mind. **Ibn Faṭṭūma** first hears of it from his tutor in *Dār al-Islām* (himself once a traveller) before he sets out on his journeys. What the tutor (who had himself failed to reach *Dār al-Jabal* in his past travels) tells him about it fires his imagination and gives him the determination to reach it as the ultimate goal of his travels. 'It is the miracle of nations, unsurpassable perfection', his tutor tells him and laments that he had never come upon anyone who had visited it, nor seen a book or manuscript about it. (p. 10). This mystifying account is maintained throughout the book. In every city where **Ibn Faṭṭūma** arrives he enquires about *Dār al-Jabal*, but nothing is ever added to his scant knowledge about it; he even meets those who doubt its very existence; not to mention those who believe that their own cities are the very *Dār al-Jabal* (i.e. the Ideal State). He himself however, never wavers in his faith in *Dār al-Jabal* or his determination to reach it.

Thus when **Ibn Faṭṭūma** leaves *Dār al-Amān*, he heads in the direction of *Dār al-Jabal*, but first he must visit *Dār al-Ghurūb*. This is now the fifth leg of his marathon journey. *Dār al-Ghurūb* is described as a land of peace, beauty and plenty. There he meets a guru of tremendous spiritual power who tells him that all the people he sees there are emigrants from all over the world, come to prepare themselves for the journey to *Dār al-Jabal*. (p. 150). He trains them by singing, but he tells **Ibn Faṭṭūma**, 'they must bring out of themselves the powers latent therein'. (p. 151). **Ibn Faṭṭūma** decides to stay on in *Dār al-Ghurūb* and receive the spiritual training necessary for the final journey to *Dār al-Jabal*. The guru's first lesson to his disciples is, 'Love work irrespective of result or recompense!' (p. 154); a moral integral to **Mahfūz's** vision of social salvation, as his readers will recognise. He also tells them:

There, in *Dār al-Jabal*, through reason and hidden powers, they discover facts, cultivate lands, build factories and achieve justice, freedom and total purity. (p. 155).

The guru's words looked at closely are nothing but **Mahfūz's** own, long-familiar social creed. Reason means loosening the grip of the supernatural over the political, economic and social organisation of society, while 'the hidden powers' simply means 'science'; another integral part to **Mahfūz's** vision of social progress.<sup>4</sup> It is also worth noting that his vision of *Dār al-Jabal* (i.e. the Ideal State)

seems to combine the two main achievements of each of *Dār al-Ḥalba* and *Dār al-Amān* (i.e. Capitalism and Communism), namely individual freedom and social justice. As for ‘total purity’, it is perhaps a pinch of spiritual spice which **Mahfūz** adds to his social recipe, and which is automatically attainable on the accomplishment of perfect social harmony. Another typical **Mahfūzian** moral was also soon to be learnt, namely that however reclusive or ascetic you become; however much the individual seeks to extricate himself from the cobweb of the real world, the real world will finally reimpose itself on him and force him to face up to reality. This is a lesson which was central to the earlier novel (*The Beggar*) (1965) and is repeated here when the spiritual bliss of the inhabitants of *Dār al-Ghurūb* is ravished by the country being invaded by the neighbouring *Dār al-Amān*. (p. 157). They are thus forced to proceed to *Dār al-Jabal* in a state of unreadiness as their training was still uncompleted.

The final chapter of the novel deals with the progress to *Dār al-Jabal* and is significantly titled ‘*al-Bidāya*’ (‘The Beginning’). The journey proves long and arduous. They have to cross a desert, climb a mountain and descend on the other side, cross another vast desert and then climb yet another mountain at whose top stands the promised jewel of human endeavour. The novel ends with the travellers standing at the foot of the second mountain and looking up to the top, soaring in the clouds. Will they reach the top? Will they gain entry to the heaven on earth? We will never know because here stops the manuscript on which we have been told the novel was based. This in fact is a very natural ending to the novel. For since the book is a journey through historical time from the dawn of human society to the communist state, it is only fitting that it should stop at the present and leave a question mark on the future.

For **Mahfūz** however, there is no question about the nature of *Dār al-Jabal* and what it should be based on. The question is about whether and when human society will be able to achieve the craved-for ideal. This then is no new vision of **Mahfūz**. Indeed the stance of the pilgrims at the foot of the lofty mountain is very much reminiscent of the crowd at the end of (*Children of Gebelawi*) searching in a rubbish tip for the magician’s lost notebook, supposed to contain the secret of human progress. Endowed with no new vision as it is, *Rihlat Ibn Fattūma* has both its strength and weakness in its attempt at fusing the entire social experience of humanity in so short a space. Over-simplification is the almost inevitable result of such ambition. However, the novel is still interesting if only for the new experiment in form that it is and its successful parody of *Rihlat Ibn Battūta*, a parody which consists in two elements as I hope I have shown: first, that the novel is a *rihla* in historical time rather than geographical space, and second, that *Dār al-Islām* which is idealised in *Rihlat Ibn Battūta*, contrary to historical evidence,<sup>5</sup> is harshly criticised and shown to be in need of radical reform in *Rihlat Ibn Fattūma*.<sup>6</sup>

## NOTES

- 1 *Rihlat Ibn Battūta*, (Beirut: Dār Šādir 1964), p. 4.
- 2 Najīb Maḥfūz, *Rihlat Ibn Faṭṭūma* (Cairo: Maktaba Miṣr 1983), p. 11. All subsequent references will be given in the text.
- 3 See Ḥusayn, Mu'nis, *Ibn Battūta wa Rihlatuh* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1980), p. 26.
- 4 For a full discussion of this issue see the present writer's article 'Religion in the Novels of Naguib Mahfouz', *British Society for Middle Eastern Studies Bulletin*, Vol. 15:1-2 (1988), pp. 21-27.
- 5 See Ḥusayn, Mu'nis, *Ibn Battūta wa Rihlatuh* pp. 24-25, 30. See also H.A.R.Gibb, (trans. & ed.), *Ibn Battūta: Travels in Asia and Africa 1325- 1354*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1929), p. 4.
- 6 For a translation of the novel, see D.Johnson-Davies (trans.), *The Journey of Ibn Fattuma*, (London: Doubleday, 1992).

## A MUSLIM PILGRIM'S PROGRESS:

Fatma Moussa-Mahmoud

The *rihla* under discussion in this article is one of pure fiction; the writer is the great Arab novelist, **Najīb Maḥfūz** (AD 1911-). **Maḥfūz** was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988 for an impressive mass of novels and short stories, published over the span of more than fifty years. Critics may vary in their appreciation of different segments of his work, for he has experimented with most forms of narrative, but his fiction is uniform in its deep humanist interest. Throughout his long career as a novelist, his preoccupations have been mainly socio-political.<sup>1</sup> His world, whether it is modern Cairo or seaside Alexandria or the timeless is peopled with a multitude of characters striving not for glory, but for a decent place under the sun and a fair share of their 'inheritance'. These themes were woven artistically with infinite variety in the novels of the different 'phases' of his work: the realistic, the experimental and the epic. The national catastrophe of the 1967 defeat resulted in a complete breakdown of form in his work and a recourse to the nightmarish, the absurd and the fantastic. The Eighties marked a deeper disillusionment with political institutions and so-called revolutionary ideologies. Two works he published in 1983 treat the subject of the inequities of governments and the responsibilities of rulers and leaders in a direct though fictional form. *Amāma 'l-'Arsh (Before the Throne)* (1983) summons successive rulers of Egypt before the Bar of Osiris in the other world. From Ramses to Nasser and Sadat, they have to give an account of themselves and what they have done for Egypt; all apologise for the misdeeds of their deputies and for the ruthless machinery of government. The Pharaohs boast of their victories in war, their vast empire and their glorious monuments; the modern leaders boast of their national revolutions and their war of independence. Some representatives of the common people, peasants and craftsmen, all little men, are called before the Bar of Osiris too and they all complain bitterly of the oppression of governments; there is no marked difference between the Pharaohs, the Romans or the Islamic *wālīs*. The *Rihla of Ibn Faṭṭūma* published the same year (1983)<sup>2</sup> is the twin of *Before the Throne*, showing the same preoccupation with the different systems of government and the relation between individuals and institutions, political, social and religious. It is a much more satisfying work artistically, a *Rihla* of the imagination by a fictitious but living character, exploring mythical lands that are nevertheless easily recognised by the reader.

**Mahfūz's** traveller is a Muslim Pilgrim who sets out in quest of the Perfect State, just as the seventeenth century pilgrim of John Bunyan set out in quest of the Celestial City. The motives for the two journeys are opposed however. Bunyan's Christian Pilgrim knows the end of his quest is there; and that is where he wants to live eternally. **Mahfūz's** traveller has only hearsay to depend on. He hears of *Dār al-Jabal* (the Mountain) as the Perfect State. He wants to visit it, study it and bring home 'a cure' for the 'sickness' of his native land. It is national rather than personal salvation that he seeks. It is more pertinent to compare **Mahfūz's** work with *Gulliver's Travels*; the *rihla* is simply a framework for intellectual exercise, a merciless probing of the deepest prejudices of men and their tacit acquiescence in prevarication and deceit. His disgust at the degeneracy, the stupidity and the sheer vanity of the greater portion of humanity, equals that of Jonathan Swift, except that **Mahfūz** is no cynic. He retains his sympathy for the underdog to the end. He too presents his vision of humanity through six rather than four journeys to different states, but there the resemblance to *Gulliver's Travels* stops; **Mahfūz's Rihla** is realistic at least in externals and it derives mainly from the tradition of Arabic Islamic literature.

In 1982 **Mahfūz** had turned to the *Arabian Nights* for one of his best works published in the Eighties. His *Layālī Alf Layla* (1982) brought Shahrazād back to life together with numerous characters in imitation of the old *Nights*, but the fiction is modern in spirit, lighted by the artist's 'own candles', a searching bright beam that shows up corruption, greed and lust running rampant in the sick land of Shahryār, a tyrant and a psychopath whom Shahrazād has to tame with art and philosophy. The setting, the costume and the actions of the *Rihla of Ibn Fattūma* could belong to the same time and place of the *Arabian Nights*, but it has deeper affinity with the narratives of Muslim travellers in the Middle Ages, more particularly the extensive *rihla* of the fourteenth century native of Tangier, **Ibn Baṭṭūta**. The name **Ibn Baṭṭūta** in Egyptian usage stands for extraordinary feats of travel. It is often used ironically in every day conversation, 'a new **Ibn Baṭṭūta**!' or 'a latter day **Ibn Baṭṭūta**!' meaning 'yet another traveller narrator of tall tales!' Obviously **Mahfūz** had this in mind when he called his traveller **Ibn Fattūma**; (type setters and sales assistants in book shops sometimes make the mistake of calling his book '**Ibn Baṭṭūta**!'). On the other hand 'son of **Ibn Fattūma**' is a derisive name and would be recognised as such by all Arab readers; calling a man after his mother rather than his father is tantamount to calling him a bastard, and hinting at his being of low origin. This fictitious traveller who undertakes an extensive *Rihla* to distant lands, all in the realm of the imagination, is evoked in concrete details. His character comes over from the start alive and convincing, as convincing as the matter-of-fact Sinbad, telling his story to the guests at his rich table. **Mahfūz** tells a very good story, his novelist's technique keeping a strong hold on the reader's imagination to the end. The traveller, the narrator of the fictitious manuscript supposedly entrusted to the care of the courier at the end of the itinerary is Qindīl **Muḥammad** al-'Annābī *alias Ibn Fattūma*. The story starts with his birth, the last son of a rich corn and seed

merchant, born of the last flicker of the life-force in the heart and loins of the eighty year old man, father of seven prosperous merchants. He falls in love at a chance encounter with the pretty face of a girl of seventeen, *Ibn Faṭṭūma*, the daughter of a butcher, who certainly welcomes the alliance with the great merchant. The sons try to stop the marriage, but the old man is in full control of his powers and wealth and nothing can stop him. When he is blessed with the birth of a son, he calls him Qindīl, for it is a light shining in the darkness of his old age. As happens in similar situations described in other **Mahfūz** novels, the father dies when the baby is too young to remember him, leaving his widow and child independent and well-provided for. Qindīl is educated at home like a prince, for his mother is afraid of his brothers' hatred. The little boy grows up in the knowledge that 'there is no end to man's greed'. He is fortunate in his tutor, a handsome, intelligent shaykh of forty, who teaches him the 'knowledge' or sciences of the age: the Qur'ān, tradition, reading, writing and arithmetic, literature, travels. He encourages the boy to question and discuss everything and inspires him with a zeal for reform and a love for stories of other nations. The nations of Islam according to the shaykh are more or less similar. It is in the southern desert that alien peoples live, whose religious customs and manners of government should provide novelty and interest. Qindīl's mother, who listens to the shaykh's lessons behind a screen, is not touched in the same way as her son; she believes in complete submission to God's will, in being content and thankful for God's bounty. When the young man is urged by his tutor to take up some work as he is now a full grown man, she suggests commerce as the most honourable and suited to his wealth and position. The young man's destiny is determined at this point by his falling in love. Love *hits* a number of characters in the novels of **Mahfūz** as a '*coup de foudre*'. Since the setting is often Cairo, its mediaeval Islamic quarters preserving many of their features down to the early twentieth century, its young men fall in love at the chance vision of the unveiled face of a beautiful young female, or with a girl of a lower class who has to earn her living in the market place. In the case of **Halima** Qindīl's sweetheart, he sees her leading her father, the blind Qur'ān reader to and from his engagements. The imagery and symbolism used by **Mahfūz** in describing the effect on the young man is often borrowed from the weather, storms, lightning, rain and shocks of electricity in the air. Qindīl is bent on marrying the girl and his mother has to submit to his will, but shortly before he carries his betrothed to his big house, he is struck by the heavy hand of oppression. The third *hājib* of the *wālī* wishes to add **Halima** to his *ḥarīm*, a fourth wife; the little blind Qur'ān reader cannot refuse and breaks the engagement with Qindīl. The sweetheart of the young protagonist having to marry a man older and more rich than the Werther or Romeo-like figure of the hero, is a complication familiar in romantic Arabic novels, films and short stories; **Mahfūz** gives it particular social and political significance when this power is exercised by the mafioso strong man (*al-futuwwa*), or someone in the machinery of government, however removed from the centre. Qindīl's attempt at building a love nest and a

home ends in frustration and shock. He loses his love and also loses his mother. His tutor asks to marry his mother, still a handsome widow in her thirties. Though admitting the 'rationality' of the situation, he is shocked at the realisation that *his* mother too is a female, whose love and company can be sought and enjoyed by another man. He is not yet twenty when he cries, 'Religion has betrayed me', for he has long been convinced that religion is confined to the mosque and does not walk the streets of his city. He decides to go on his travels, to see and learn and if possible bring back 'the cure' for his sick homeland. He will visit *Dār al-Jabal*, the City of the Mountain, the Utopia of which all travellers dream on hearsay, for no one is known to have returned from a visit there, nor anyone read a first hand account of the place, that miracle of time, the Perfect State as he will often hear.

### THE *RIHLA*

The opening paragraphs of the manuscript evoke a 'distilled' version of 'home' that could stand in the majority of **Mahfūz's** novels:

The memory of the loved ones will fade as shades that cannot stand the winds of time, leaving behind only the names, but the place remains familiar, however far I go, evoking memories that cannot be forgotten... as long as I live I shall love the smell wafting from the spice shops, the minarets and the domes, the beautiful face lighting the alleyway, the mules of government and the coarse bare feet, the songs of 'the sent' and the tunes of the lyre, the dancing horses and the ivy plants, the moaning pigeons and the cooing doves.

The *Rihla* falls into six parts and stops short of *Dār al-Jabal* when the caravan returns and leaves those travellers who want to proceed to their own resources and that is where, understandably, the manuscript stops, for **Mahfūz's** did not set out to write a Utopia, but a quest for the Perfect State. The six 'crossings' the traveller makes are all in the desert; he is no Sinbad, all are safe journeys in the protection of a caravan. The dangers and calamities that befall the traveller arise not from the desert but from the city, from oppressive governments and from wars. The parts of the *Rihla* when Qindīl is crossing the desert are the most peaceful, always starting at dawn, often associated with rosy dreams and hopes of healing and rejuvenation. The desert journey is concrete enough with stops at water holes for refreshments and prayers, but the description is pruned of all unnecessary details, so that the final impression is of a vast desert, a blue sky and rhythmic, almost monotonous motion. The word 'caravan' (*qāfila*) is used, as is 'bags' but no particular beasts are mentioned or described; it could have been a column of slow jeeps. As **Mahfūz** is no traveller himself there is no attempt at verisimilitude. Only when we come to the last leg of the journey, the crossing to

*Dār al-Jabal*, do we get a detailed description of the landscape and only at the foot of the mountain when the travellers are to be left to fend for themselves are camels and she-camels mentioned at all!

The narrative gives us his vision of the different social systems that have, in the language of eighteenth century writers, 'obtained in the history of mankind' together with Man's aspirations for a Perfect State. In previous work, **Mahfūz** has depicted Man's progress from a primitive state of simple faith and sheer superstition, to a more leisured age of reason and contemplation, a modern age of scientific computerised statistical probabilities of fifty-fifty, with no absolute certainties.<sup>3</sup> In the *Rihla of Ibn Faṭṭūma* the vision is set down in more detail. The first city he visits is *Dār al-Mashriq* which I suppose stands for the dawn of civilisation. It is a kind of primitive matriarchal society; the people are dark and tall and live almost naked in little hovels. They worship the moon; every full moon they celebrate with singing, dancing, drinking and making love in abandon. The innkeeper and the priest boast that they are the happiest nation on earth, for they follow nature and understand well the lesson taught by the changing moon. No condition is stable; everything changes and passes on to nothingness. The people have a master; there are five lords in the whole country who live in big houses, with hospitals and schools for their children. Their clerks run the country and hired mercenaries defend it against invaders. The priest states categorically, 'there are different species in our country, plants, animals, slaves and masters'. As a foreigner, the traveller is outside this social framework. It need not touch him, but it does on two heads. First he tries to reason with the exponent of the philosophy of each state he visits, arguing from an Islamic point of view, believing in the superiority and humanity of his own faith. He is time and again shamed by his opponents, pointing out that the practice of Islamic societies is far removed from the teachings of Islam. On the other hand he is fatally drawn into the affairs of *Dār al-Mashriq* when he falls in love. As it was his frustrated love for **Halīma** that drove him out of his homeland, his love, this time for the naked savage 'Arūsa diverts him from his course and keeps him an alien resident in *Dār al-Mashriq* for some years. On his very first day in the new city, Qindīl, moved by the nakedness surrounding him, is overpowered by the memory of **Halīma**, her image spreading all around him with the heat and the rays of the sun. He is puzzled for a moment but sees a girl running away from the inn and guesses that she has provoked this rising wave of emotion. He calls her the **Halīma** of the *Mashriq* and is sure he will meet her again. He does; he sees her in the market sitting at the back of her father's mean shop feeding a pigeon. The old toothless date vendor invites him into the shop and asks the girl if she likes the young stranger. The girl likes him enough and takes him behind a curtain at the back of the shop. The confused young man cannot believe what is happening to him; the old man just asks him to buy them dinner, but he wants to marry the girl, to make her his own. 'Arūsa is depicted by **Mahfūz** as the quintessence of womanhood, beautiful in proud simplicity, but pliant and compliant in many ways. She has no objection to marrying him since she loves him, but refuses to

cover her body at his request and snaps back at him, ‘Don’t make me a laughing stock!’ In order to marry her, the traveller has to buy her from the master. The master’s book-keeper refuses to sell the girl; there has been a moratorium on the sale of slaves because of the threat of war. Qindīl is in despair but the girl’s father finds a temporary solution; he hires the girl out to him on a monthly lease, which lies in his power.

This ‘marriage’ lasts for almost five years, to the surprise of all acquaintances, who had expected the lovers to tire of each other at most after a year. Qindīl is contented with ‘Arūsa and the children she bears him, though he cannot take them home, for the children belong to her, and she is the property of the master. Qindīl’s Muslim conscience is in conflict with the law of the land. He tries to bring up his eldest son as a Muslim, in secret. ‘Arūsa warns him of the danger he incurs, and finally the authorities hear of it. He is arrested, tried and expelled from *Dār al-Mashriq* without being allowed to see his wife or his children. He is put on the next caravan to *Dār al-Ḥayra*. *Ibn Faṭṭūma* is back on his pilgrimage broken and disappointed, but some five years older. He returns to his notes and observations.

*Dār al-Ḥayra* represents a higher stage of civilisation, but it is as jealous of alien religions as any other state. God here is the King and His worship is the law of the land. *Dār al-Ḥayra* is a prosperous warlike state, reminding the reader of Ancient Egypt: ‘...it was a city like many in my own country, with squares and parks, streets and narrow alleyways, big buildings, houses, schools and hospitals, full of people with a policeman at every corner. There were halls enough for dancing and singing and a big market full of shops selling goods from *al-Ḥayra* as well as from other countries’. The traveller is busy wandering about the place and taking notes, always noting the thick presence of policemen. War is declared on *Dār al-Mashriq*, ostensibly to liberate its slave people from the oppression of the overlords, but as the *Mashriqīs* themselves know and as dissidents in *al-Ḥayra* whisper, it is really to annex the rich lands with much untapped wealth. Waiting for the outcome of the war in the hope of going back one day to *Dār al-Mashriq* to join his wife and children, the traveller has a chance to observe the social scene and find out about the system of government in *Dār al-Ḥayra*. The innkeeper boasts that *Dār al-Ḥayra* is *Dār al-Jabal*, the Perfect State. The traveller cannot forget, however, a scene he saw in the vicinity of the great palace of the God-King: ‘...a whole field of high columns, surrounded with a fence of iron... I drew near and saw human heads severed from the bodies hanging from the tops of those columns. I shuddered at the horror though I could not deny that I had seen a smaller model of the same in my own country; the heads are displayed as a lesson and a warning’. Enquiring politely as to the crime of the culprits, he hears the guard snap at him: ‘rebellion against the God-King’. The traveller ‘thanked him and went away, sure they were martyrs for justice and freedom as happens even in “Lands of the Message”’. Carrying his questions to the sage *ḥakīm* Dīzinj, he is shocked at the prevarication and sheer self-deception in the man’s boasting:

They have told you I am the sage in this land but the truth is, I am only a disciple, a student. Our Lord is the Sage; *he* is the God, the source of all wisdom and good. *He* sits on the throne, then shuts himself up in hallowed quarters, fasting, until *he is* all light. Then *he* knows that God has entered him and that *he* is now God. Then *he* goes to work; *he* sees everything with the eye of God and we receive from *him* eternal Wisdom on all heads. All that is required of us is faith and submission.

The horrified Muslim has to ask God's forgiveness *sotto voce* on hearing such words. The sage continues:

*He* sets up the army and chooses the Generals and lo! It is victorious! *He* appoints the governors from among members of *his* sacred family. Out of the elite *he* chooses the work leaders in agriculture and industry. The rest of the people have no sacred attributes and no talents. They do the mean work and are guaranteed subsistence. After them come the beasts, the plants and finally *jamād* (inanimate matter), a perfect well-organised system that sets each individual in his place, achieving perfect justice. We teach more than one philosophy, in the elite we nurture strength, conquest and growth by means of education and good. We help the common to strengthen their talents for submission, obedience and modesty. We help them find the spiritual treasure buried in the depths of each one of them, which with patient watching will give them peace. This dual philosophy guarantees happiness for all, to each according to his aptitudes and what he has been trained for.

'We are the happiest people on earth', boasts the sage. As to the severed heads on the plain, it is simply a sign of what is evil and delinquent in human nature, and they are a minority after all. Here too, Qindīl need not be touched by the system *al-Hayra* but his Achilles' heel lies in the bonds that tie him to his wife and children. Watching by the roadside with the jubilant citizens cheering the victorious army on its return from *Dār al-Mashriq*, he watches with beating heart the crowds of enslaved women, dragging their feet in the rear. He examines the features of the miserable naked prisoners in search for the face of his wife 'Arūsa. The loud beating of his heart tells him that she is there, his woman **Halīma** and 'Arūsa in one. It is 'Arūsa with her tall figure, her beautiful face dazed in despair, lost. He calls her until he is hoarse with shouting, but she cannot hear him. The next morning he hurries to the market place where the female victims of 'the war of liberation' are to be sold by auction. He sees her in a green dress for the first time in her life, and bids for her, as she sits there shocked and oblivious to what is going on around her. Other bidders fall back except for one, an agent it is whispered, for the sage Dīzinj. She is knocked down to Qindīl for thirty dinars. From her, he later learns of the carnage and slaughter wreaked by the army of liberation on the people of *al-Mashriq* even after they had surrendered. 'Arūsa's father was killed, her children were lost. The worst of it was that it was a full

moon; the Deity was there seeing and hearing but doing nothing. Qindīl still hopes to take his wife and go back to look for their children, for ‘why should they kill innocent children’, he tells her. The sage would not let well alone; his messengers try to negotiate the purchase of ‘Arūsa but Qindīl tells them she is not for sale. He hopes to leave the country in a few days with the first caravan. Four days before the date of departure, he is arrested and tried on a charge of mocking the religion of his kind hosts. He pleads innocence but five witnesses are produced, including the friendly innkeeper. He is sentenced to life imprisonment and the confiscation of his wealth and all his possessions. He spends twenty years in an underground dungeon in a burning desert. This is indeed the pit of despair where the prisoner survives by forgetting all about life, and reducing the activity of body and mind to the minimum. The other prisoners are mostly political dissidents and the name of *Dār al-Jabal* floats occasionally in the conversation, but Qindīl has given up: ‘I was tired of words, of frustrations, of the lies of hope. There is no world but this eternal prison’, he told himself. The rationalism of his tutor at home was no use in his prison but his mother’s simple faith gave him comfort in despair. It was specially suited to life imprisonment: ‘God’s will be done! All that befalls us is from him’. This long stretch of despair ends with the introduction of a new prisoner whose face looks vaguely familiar. It is the sage Dīzinj, whose downfall is part of the fall of one regime and the rise of another. The God-King has been assassinated by his General who is now declared God-King. The sage tried to run away to *Dār al-Ḥalba*, accompanied by his woman, but was arrested at the border and thrown into prison. ‘Arūsa was allowed to proceed on her way. It is all understandable; the wheel of fortune never stops in one place; the fool of a sage is now biting the dust to which he has trampled others. The prisoners expect that they will be freed by the new regime and the traveller painfully comes back to life. His ordeal has lasted for twenty years! He is set free and with the apologies of the new authorities his wealth is restored to him, but the woman has gone. At the public bath they wash off the dirt from his body and rub him with special oil to kill the vermin. They shave off his hair and beard and he sees himself in the glass for the first time in twenty years: ‘I met Qindīl, a man in his middle age, resurrected from the grave after twenty years, with shaved head and chin, thin and dry with sunken eyes, sallow skin, a dead look and sharp cheekbones!’ He stays in *Dār al-Ḥayra* to recuperate, wondering if he should cut his losses and return home, but he will not look back: ‘I started as a pilgrim and will continue the pilgrimage even to *Dār al-Jabal*’. Then there is the hope of again meeting ‘Arūsa.

The two states he visits in the following part of his *Rihla* are the two most advanced in technology, as well as in social organisation. They are both secular states that do not exact worship of any particular type. One stands for freedom and the other for security and peace. There are obvious hints at the two superpowers that we knew. *Dār al-Ḥalba* (the Arena) where the traveller goes after his resurrection is full of surprises. He hears the word ‘freedom’ from an official for the first time: ‘Welcome to the Land of Freedom’, the customs officer

cries, but the innkeeper says laughing, 'It is the Land of Freedom, but it is safer for a stranger to be on his guard'. He soon realises that prices too enjoy the freedom of rising at will. He is greatly impressed by the opulence of the hotel, the houses, the markets, the whole scene. He casually reports two incidents that come his way on his first day of wandering through the city. He sees policemen questioning people in a park because of the murder of a woman, whose body was found there, and he meets an orderly march, guarded by the police calling for legal rights for homosexuals! How far can you stretch the frontiers of freedom, and when and where do 'law and order' have to step in? The greatest surprise ***Dār al-Ḥalba*** has for him is his coming upon a mosque by chance and hearing the call *Allāhu Akbar!*: 'My heart made a violent leap, my senses were set on fire. My God, it is the call to prayer... I followed the sound and found a mosque at the top of a road. It had been twenty-five years since I'd been in a mosque. I'm born anew as if discovering Allāh for the first time. I went into the mosque, washed, and stood in line and performed the midday prayer with joy, my tears falling and my chest light with hope'. The *Imām* of the mosque responds kindly and cheerfully to the stranger's rapture. It is this *Imām* who explains to ***Ibn Fattūma*** the social and political system of ***Dār al-Ḥalba*** this is the land of freedom, all religions are represented; there are Muslims, Jews, Christians and Buddhists. There are even pagans and atheists...the state has nothing to do with religion... treating all sects on equal footing. This *Imām*, **Shaykh Ḥamāda** al-Subkī, is well informed about *Dār al-Islām* and can put the traveller right whenever he starts a comparison. He is proud of the achievements of free enterprise, with the state subsidising defence and security as well as national projects. He believes in self-help and thinks his countrymen have achieved the best under the threat of war with ***Dār al-Ḥayra*** and *Dār al-Jabal*. When Qindīl is introduced to the family of **Shaykh Ḥamāda Maḥfūz** has the chance to bring in the 'New Woman' for the first time in this narrative. It was in the third part of the *Trilogy*, *al-Sukkariyya* (1957), that **Maḥfūz** first introduced his version of the 'New Woman', an attractive but simple working girl with principles, who can speak out for her convictions, who is also well-suited to the role of wife and mother. The encounter with Sāmiya, the *Imām's* daughter, is part of a completely new experience:

I found new and, to me, strange manners that would be considered un-Islamic at home. I was welcomed by the wife of the *Imām* and his daughter, together with his two sons. We ate at the same table and were even served with glasses of wine. It is a new world and a new Islam. I was confused in the company of the woman and her daughter. I had never sat down to eat with a woman since I became a man, not even my mother...his daughter was a pediatrician in a large hospital... I was more shocked at the mother and daughter speaking out for themselves than at the nakedness in *al-Mashriq*. They spoke simply and frankly on the same footing as the men. Sāmiya asked me about life in *Dār al-Islām* and the role of women there. When I told her the facts, she was very critical and spoke of the role

of women at the time of the Prophet. ‘Islam is decaying in your hands and you just watch!’ she concluded. I was greatly impressed with her youth and beauty.

Qindīl’s visit to a thinker of the state who would explain to him the philosophy of government and society is interrupted by news of war. The philosopher who believes in freedom coupled with power and self-help does not object to the war. He believes that going to war with ***Dār al-Ḥayra*** and with the rival state ***Dār al-Amān*** will guarantee the happiness of their people! There is obviously no place for compassion or charity in the purely secular philosophy of freedom and self-help ... Freedom is a responsibility that can be carried only by the capable. Not everyone that belongs to ***al-Ḥalba*** is worthy of this affiliation. There is no place for weakness in their midst...‘Is there no value for compassion as well as freedom?’ He is asked heatedly... The impatient reply is contemptuous...‘This is what all those religions repeat. It is they who encourage weakness. I find words like compassion, mercy, justice, absolutely meaningless. We have to agree first as to who deserves compassion and who deserves justice’.

War is declared on ***al-Ḥayra*** and a pact of peace is concluded with ***Dār al-Amān*** which will probably be broken when the war ends on *one* front. The pilgrim lingers on, attracted by the general atmosphere of this New Country and by his growing intimacy with the family of **Shaykh Ḥamāda** He marries Sāmiya and starts a business, since he has money and cannot return home because of the war. Qindīl is constantly surprised at life in his new country and at himself and how changed he can be. His wife is pregnant but will not stay at home: ‘Work in our country is sacred for both men and women on equal terms. From now on you have to think as one of us’, she says. She argues about religion and the importance of reason, but he is mainly attracted to her as a sweet, loving woman; ‘...her character was too strong and too sincere to dissolve in the sweetness of a ripe female; I was face to face with bright wit, enlightened opinion and a very good physician. I was convinced she was superior to me in many ways, a thing I did not like, I, who had never looked for anything in a woman but a man’s pleasure. I loved her but had to keep my ground, and soon had to adapt myself to my new condition’. He cannot accept, however, the absolute brainwashing of even reasonable people like his in-laws. Though dissident voices whisper the state spends freely of the blood of its young, not on a war of liberation but on a war of greed, the Shaykh believes the propaganda of the high thinker Marham **al-Ḥanafī** namely that ethical and moral considerations are nothing to the main theme, liberating the nations of the world. His wife seems to accept that the world *is* a jungle and his father-in-law points out what is happening in ***Dār al-Islām***, when the pilgrim insists that there should be a moral basis for the actions of governments as well as individuals: ‘... Look, Qindīl, in your own country ***Dār al-Islām***! What do you find? A dictator ruling at will, so where is that moral foundation you speak of? A clergy wielding religion to serve *his* ends and a people who can think of nothing but earning a miserable living, so

where *is* that moral foundation?’ The pilgrim stays on year after year but finally makes his projected move to the fourth state of his pilgrimage, *Dār al-Amān*, where the motto of the state is equality and social security. It is a mighty state indeed and society is greatly developed. There is work for everyone; there are fine parks and avenues, apartment blocks and recreation grounds. Both children and old age citizens are well taken care of, with pleasant grounds and fine facilities at their disposal, but the traveller does not see many signs of happiness on the faces of multitudes coming home from work or going out on holiday at weekends. The people look depressed and the traveller can hardly make contact with anyone with the guard-guide at his elbow. His steps are dogged from the start by the guide Falūka whom the authorities have forced on him, who shares his bedroom and even accompanies him to the toilet. Qindīl is far from happy in *Dār al-Amān*. The welfare state is well enough, but the glum faces of the people and the constant talk of threatening war urge him to push on to the next state. He cannot even meet a sage or a philosopher as he had done on previous journeys; his guide is supposed to answer any queries set by travellers. He attends a great national political festival and is greatly impressed by all he sees, especially the waves of acclaim which greet the President when he speaks of the victories of the nation over their enemies old and new. His sympathy with the cheering crowds and their proud leaders is soon shocked at the sight of horsemen filing in parade with severed human heads stuck at the points of their spears. ‘Rebels, traitors!’ his guide answers curtly. Qindīl leaves *Dār al-Amān* on his way to *Dār al-Ghurūb*, the Land of the Setting Sun.

The four countries described by the traveller so far have been evoked with realistic concrete details. They are states with governments and people, soldiers and policemen, all living in real houses. The traveller has lived in inns, sleeping on beds and feeding on real food, from the simple fare of *Dār al-Mashriq* to the elaborate dishes and wine of *Dār al-Ḥalba*. *Dār al-Ghurūb* is a land in another world; there are no walls or guards. ‘I waited impatiently for the sun to rise...it was probably the most beautiful sun I had ever seen, light but no heat...ushered by a soft breeze and a sweet scent. A large wood extended before me but I could see no buildings, no huts, houses or palaces and I could not see any people’. When he explores the place, he finds meadows with palms and fruit trees, water springs and lakes of fresh water! There are apparently no people, but he soon finds an elderly human with white hair and a long beard sitting under a palm tree, silent, sleeping or in a trance, alone with no mate or companion. He does not reply to the questions Qindīl asks him and soon Qindīl finds a few like him, men and women each on his own. ‘A Paradise without people’,<sup>4</sup> Qindīl murmurs as he picks up fruit to eat, and so do the merchants who fill their sacks with fruit at no expense. The weather is always fair summer in this paradise with plenty of *khayrāt* for everyone. Qindīl is directed to a shaykh in the heart of the wood, who may help him with his enquiries about *Dār al-Jabal*. This shaykh is reminiscent of other shaykhs described in previous works of **Maḥfūz** particularly al-Junayd in *wa ‘l-Kilāb (The Thief and the Dogs)* (1960): ‘I saw a shaykh naked, except for

a brief loin cloth, a halo of light surrounding his bright face and attractive eyes'. He sat with men and women round him in a semicircle singing. This was the lesson: the shaykh trained men and women in singing but it was they who had to bring out forces latent in themselves. Qindīl's encounter with the shaykh gives him deep satisfaction; he feels that the long pilgrimage is not in vain. This shaykh, like al-Junayd, seems to know the man before him without being told: 'You left your home for learning, but repeatedly swerved from your goal and wasted precious time in the dark. Your heart is torn between a woman you have left behind and a woman you are looking for', for Qindīl is still looking for 'Arūsa. The cryptic oracle-like pronouncements of the shaykh, the hints of the training in self-discipline and self-knowledge the disciples have to undergo, and the setting of fair weather, grassy land and fruit trees make the crossing to *Dār al-Ghurūb* a completely different experience from the previous crossings. Only someone as deeply interested in the study of mysticism as **Mahfūz** could venture to give an adequate interpretation of this brief account of *Dār al-Ghurūb*. Is it the experience of the mystic who casts off the shackles of the senses and aspires to sustained states of contemplation and communion with a higher self? The *Rihla of Ibn Faṭṭūma* which has explored social and political systems has arrived at a completely different level, where previous interests and problems have no relevance.

The training for self-knowledge for inducing the latent powers within the self is interrupted by an invasion from *Dār al-Amān*, the materialist welfare state. The trainees are ordered to proceed to *Dār al-Jabal* or conform to the ethic and government of *Dār al-Amān* and go to work. Qindīl, with many others, sets out for *Dār al-Jabal* though the shaykh warns mournfully that they will find it difficult as they are not fully prepared. This last crossing is described in concrete detail: after travelling for a month over a flat desert with numerous water springs, the travellers come upon the Green Mountain, spreading across the horizon from right to left. This is a mountain they have to cross *en route to The Mountain*. They find a path going up and down and it takes them three weeks to get to the top, climbing during the day and sleeping at night. The top is a broad plateau covered with thick grass; *Dār al-Jabal*, the ultimate goal of **Ibn Faṭṭūma's Rihla** of thirty years, stands proudly on another high mountain. It is pointed out by the shaykh and the traveller vainly imagines arriving there and being greeted by customs officials as he has been greeted in other cities, but will he ever get there? From his position at the top of the first mountain it seems within reach: 'We have only to descend this side of the mountain, cross that short desert, then climb the other mountain and we'll be there!'; but the descent takes two weeks and the desert lying between the two mountains grows wider and more difficult to cross as they proceed. After what seems ages of travelling they come to the foot of the Mountain of their dreams but will they attain the Celestial City at the top? There is no chance of our knowing for it is at this point that the pilgrim is left on his own, depending on his own physical strength and inner resources. The caravan returns, bringing back the traveller's manuscript.

Whether he completes the ascent or perishes on the way we never know. **Maḥfūz** is too wise to the ways of the world and too well versed in history, philosophy and mysticism, and also too great an artist to try and describe the undescrivable and the unattainable. The quest for the Perfect State has led his traveller over difficult tracts of personal experience. The prime of his life has been spent in the dungeon of despond, a little life vegetating in despair. His arrival at the earthly paradise of the **ṣūfi**, is achieved after crossing and rejecting the two mighty secular states, the land of so-called freedom and the land of so-called equality. There is no counting the time spent in the grassy meadows of the setting sun and liberated soul. We may argue about the interpretation of the words of the shaykh that baffle the understanding of the traveller on arrival, but one thing is clear. There is no returning from *Dār al-Jabal* if the pilgrim proves worthy.

#### NOTES

- 1 For a brief account of the life and work of **Maḥfūz**, see my article 'Depth of Vision: the fiction of Naguib Mahfouz', *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 11:2 (April, 1989), pp. 154–166.
- 2 All references to the works of **Maḥfūz** are to the standard original editions published in Cairo by Maktaba **Miṣr**, **Maḥfūz's** publisher since 1939. They reprint his novels several times, but there are no 'new editions', and there is no indication on the title pages of any specific dates. The *Rihla of Ibn Faṭṭūma* has recently been translated into English; however, all quotations from **Maḥfūz's** text are my translation.
- 3 See an interesting **Maḥfūz** short story, which was first published in *al-Ahrām* (26. 12.1969). See also detailed analysis in my book on the contemporary Arabic novel, *Fī 'l-Riwāya al-'Arabiyya* (Cairo: Anglo-Egyptian Bookshop, 1972), pp. 130–140.
- 4 An Arabic saying goes: *Ganna min ghayr nās mā tindās*: 'A Paradise without people is no place to go'.

## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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C.F.Beckingham was Professor of Islamic Studies at Manchester University from 1958–1965, and at London University from 1965– 1981. He is now Emeritus Professor. He was President of the Royal Asiatic Society twice, from 1967–1970 and again from 1976–1979. He was also President of the Hakluyt Society from 1969–1972. Since 1986 he has been International Director of the *Fontes Historiae Africanae* Project. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1983 and was awarded the Sir Percy Sykes Memorial Medal by the Royal Society for Asian Affairs in 1987. His numerous publications include *Between Islam and Christendom* (1983) and several volumes for the Hakluyt Society, including the fourth volume of the translation of the **Rihla** of **Ibn Battūta** (forthcoming).

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Dr Colonna is director of research at the Paris based CNRS and pursues much of her research in Algeria where she is a member of the Institute of *Amazigh* (Berber) Language and Culture of Tizi-Ouzou. She has published several works on culture and religion in Algeria including *Instituteurs Algériens, 1883–1939* (1975) and *Savants Paysans, Éléments d'Histoire Sociale sur la Société Rurale Algérienne* (1987). She has also worked on the republication of important 19th and 20th century work, notably Emile Masqueray's *Formation des Cités chez les Populations Sédentaires de l'Algérie* (1886), and a collection of ethnographic photographs, taken in the 1930s by Thérèse Rivière, from the Musée de l'Homme. Dr Colonna is currently finishing a book on the religious history of the Aurès between 1850 and 1940.

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