THE PEOPLE OF AL-AYYÂM AND THEIR ROLES DURING THE EARLY ARAB CONQUEST OF IRAQ

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Introduction

This paper aimed at introducing the people of al-Ayyâm and their roles during the Arab conquest of Iraq in the mid-seventh century A.D. The situation in Iraq following the Arab conquest was dominated by the people of al-Ayyâm who considered the conquered land in Iraq their own property, and were very sensitive to any change in the system.

To begin with, who were the people of al-Ayyâm? The answer to the question must necessarily be sought in the early history of the Arab conquest of Iraq, in which this group was involved.

The conquest of Iraq and the emergence of abîl al-Ayyâm

The Arab conquest of Iraq began in 12/633, just after the ridda-War in 11/632, in which Ḥālid b. al-Walîd of Maḥzûm, one of the most powerful clans of Qurayš, became eminent among the Arab army commanders. Being a great and influential leader, Ḥālid fought the apostates with minimum instructions from the Caliph Abû Bakr. In this famous war Ḥālid succeeded in defeating ridda tribesmen of Asad, Tayy, Gaṭafân, Fazâra and Tamîm, most of whom were nomads (at-Ṭabari, Târîh 1, 1871, 1893, 1896, 1902, 1908, 1921, 1922-3, 1980; Shaban 1971: 24). The last and crucial campaign was against the settlement of the most powerful Central Arabian tribe of Ḥanîfa at al-Yamama under the leadership of the false prophet, Musaylima, one of the most powerful ridda tribesmen and a crucial challenge to Ḥālid’s leadership¹. This tribe had never been a party to the Madînan alliance and had its own so-called false prophet, Musaylima, whose aim was to establish his own power in the area centred in the populated and well cultivated area of al-Yamama whose main market had been Makka until the latter was brought under Prophet Muḥammad’s control². Under the leadership of Musaylima, the forces, reported to amount to 40,000 men, tried but failed to control the nomads in the surrounding territories, who obeyed only their leader’s or so-called false prophets, two of whom were Tulayha b. Huway-lid of Asad and Sağah of Tamîm. Tulayha was supported mainly by the clans of

¹ at-Ṭabari, ibid. 1930, 1946, 1962; where the tribesmen of Ḥanîfa are called abîl al-qurâ.
Asad in Samīra, Gaṭafān in Tība and Ṭayy in the area between Samīra and Tība, albeit some of them declared their support for Abū Bakr (at-Ṭabarī, Tāriḥ I, 1871, 1873, 1889, 1899, 1902, 1930-4; Einkelman 1967: 42). Sağāh, who belonged to Hanzala of Tamīm was related to the clan of Tağlib of Gazira on the mother's side. She arrived from Gazira at the head of a band of followers belonging to afnā' Rabīʿa, i.e. splinter clans of Rabīʿa, among whose leaders at this time were al-Ḥudayl b. Imrān of Tağlib, ʿAqqa b. Hilāl of Namir, and Abū ʿAdī b. Watad of ʿIyāḍ (at-Ṭabarī, Tāriḥ I, 1911-12; al-Balādurī, Futūḥ 99). In Arabia, she was followed by the clan of Hanzala of Tamīm, one of whose leaders, Šabāt b. Ribʿi b. Ḥusayn ar-Riyāḥi, joined in his campaign. It must be stressed, however, that some of Sağāh’s followers of Tamīm also went over to Abū Bakr’s side (at-Ṭabarī, Tāriḥ I, 1871, 1889, 1899, 1917-19, 1911-12, 1919-20, 1963, 1970; al-Balādurī, Futūḥ 51, 99; Ibn Ḥazm, Gahbarah 227; Einkelman 1967: 46). Although Sağāh was reported to have been allied to Musaylima and come over to al-Yamāma, her stay in the region was only for a short span of time, after which she returned to Gazira taking with her half of the revenue of al-Yamāma. The essential point here is that neither Tulayhā nor Sağāh appeared to be among Musaylima’s forces in the great battle of ‘Aqraba’. Hālid’s victory at ‘Aqraba’ was due in some measure to the nomads who, while declaring their support for Abū Bakr, were also actively involved in the former’s army.

The composition of Hālid’s army

It is crucial to have an understanding of the composition of Hālid’s army, for therein lies information about the people of al-Ayyām. Some of the nomads who declared their support for Abū Bakr were actively involved in the army of Hālid. Most of these nomads came mainly from the Arab clan of Gaṭafān, Fazāra, Ṭayy and Ḥawāzin as well as clans from Asad led by Dirar b. al-Azwar and Sinan, clans of Sulaym led by Maʾin b. Ḥāǧiz and Turayfah b. Ḥāǧiz, Hanzala of the Tamīm clan with 1000 from Ḥadīl and 500 from ʿAdī (at-Ṭabarī, Tāriḥ I, 1871, 1887, 1887, 1889, 1893, 1894, 1905, 1911, 1922; al-Balādurī, Futūḥ 91). It is interesting to note that different terms were used to denote these groups. If a whole clan joined in the war its members were called barara, i.e. those who proved true and obedient; however, if only a section, they were referred to as biyara, i.e. select or chosen (Shaban 1971: 23). Because of pressure and fear of being controlled by the powerful tribemen of Ḥanīfa these fragmented clans decided to throw in their lot with the Madīnan government against the powerful army of Musaylima. Together with these tribemen, the mubaḡirūn and ansār, and other Arab clans who did not fall into apostasy, Hālid was able to defeat the Ḥanafite forces at ‘Aqraba’.

An attempt to identify the people of al-Ayyām would necessarily call for looking at Hālid’s and his successors’ expedition in Iraq. During Abū Bakr’s time, al-Muṭannā b. Ḥāriṭa b. Salāma as-Šaybānī with his troops numbering 8000 men were fighting against the Sāsānians on their own initiative, particularly in the region of Ḥira
which was later known as Kūfa (al-Baladurī, Futūḥ 241, 340; at-Tabarī, Tāriḥ I, 2016, 2018). He was the first Arab to raid the Sasanian territories on this front (al-Askari, Awā’il 225; Ibn Hazm, Gamhara 325). It is reported that when Hālid reached Iraq, the Caliph Abū Bakr wrote to al-Muṭannā advising him to join forces with Hālid, who was at the time with his forces at Ubulla, the most important port in southern Iraq, in hope of gaining success against the Sasanians in Iraq (al-Baladurī, Futūḥ 241, 340; at-Tabarī, Tāriḥ I, 2016, 2018, 2021, 2025, 2029; al-ʿAlī 1953: 23.12).

Our sources do not particularly give the number of Hālid's Arab forces in Iraq. However, during the ridda-war several Arab clans were present and fought with Hālid with the maximum number from any one clan being 1,000, albeit many of them were killed during the campaign. It is possible that only a few hundred or less than a hundred of each clan remained with Hālid and it is almost certain that not all of these clans had followed him to Iraq. He was probably joined on the way by other tribesmen from different Arab clans from Fayd, in central Naḍī, and Taʿlabiyya, on the west bank of Euphrates, who were probably not involved either for or against Madīna in the ridda-war. In Iraq, Hālid was reinforced by a force, whose number was also unspecified, led by al-Qaʿqaʾ b. ʿAmr at-Tamīmī. Eventually, Hālid's forces exceeded 2,000 men, but was still small in comparison to that of al-Muṭannā's 8,000 men. However, all these forces were placed under the general leadership of Hālid.

A study of the formation of Hālid's forces in Iraq demonstrates that several Arab clans were involved, particularly those of Shaybān, Tamīm, Ġayy, Muzayna, Asad, Duhāl, Himyar and Aslam. Together with these clansmen, the majority of whom were from Shaybān, Hālid fought the Sasanians at Ubulla and succeeded in capturing them. He then proceeded to al-Mazār, leaving Maṣqīl b. Muqarrin al-Muzanī in Ubulla to look after the area. In the meantime, he sent al-Muṭannā b. Ḥarıṭa as-Shaybānī to Bahr al-Marʿa to pursue the enemy. In the raid of al-Mazār, Hālid was also able to subdue the region and defeat its population. The latter agreed to pay a tribute to the Arabs, and Suwayd b. Muqarrin al-Muzanī was put in charge of collecting it (at-Tabarī, Tāriḥ I, 2021, 2025, 2029).

From al-Mazār Hālid advanced to al-Walāğa and appointed Suwayd b. Muqarrin over Ḥafsir and Ḥīra. He then advanced to ʿUllays and then to Amghisiyya. Many other minor raids were made in the regions of Ḥīra, all of which ended with victory without any serious resistance from the Sasanians. Several Arab leaders were involved and became eminent in these raids, and they included al-Muṭannā b. Ḥarıṭa as-Shaybānī, al-Qaʿqaʾ b. ʿAmr at-Tamīmī, ʿAdī b. Ḥātim at-Tāʾi, Bīr b. ʿUbaydallāh b. al-Hasasiyya ad-Duhālī, Suwayd at-Tāʾi, Suwayd, an-Nuʿmān, Dirār, Maṣqīl, the sons of Muqarrin al-Muzanī, Ṣṭaybā b. Nahhās al-Iḍālī, Dirār b. al-Azwar al-Asādī, Hasaka al-Habatī, al-Husayn b. Abī l-Hūr, al-Haggāq b. Dī l-ʿUnuq, Busr b. Abī Ruhm, Hālid b. al-Wahīma (ibid. I, 2022), ʿAtta and Rabiʿa b. ʿIsā. Following the
success of these raids, the booty gained on the battlefield was distributed among the Arab fighting-men with only one-fifth of it sent to Abū Bakr in Madīna.

After a short period Ḥālid was transferred to the Syrian front, together with his military forces, to fight the Byzantine forces there. His departure for Syria took place in Rabī‘ at-țānī year 13/634. al-Balādūrī and at-Ṭabarī estimated Ḥālid’s forces to be 800 men only, while the Arab army in Iraq at that time numbered 10,000 men, made up of different unimportant Arab tribesmen of al-Ḥijdāz and Eastern Arabia, with a small number being muḥāgirūn and ansār. The authorities of Ibn Ishāq and Ya‘qūbī emphasised that the forces brought to the Syrian front were from abl al-quwawā while the rest were left with al-Muṭannā b. Hārita as-Saybānī in Iraq. Only a few from abl al-quwawā — after a special request by al-Muṭannā — were left in Iraq, including Furāt b. Ḥayyān al-‘Ijīlī, Bišr b. ‘Ubaydallāh and ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Awra al-Aslāmī. In the meantime, some of Ḥālid’s forces in Hīra led by al-Qa‘qā’ b. ‘Amr at-Tamīmī, Maṣ‘ūr b. ‘Adī al-‘Ijīlī, Dirār b. al-Ḥaṭṭāb al-Fihrī and Dirār b. al-Azwar al-Asadī, were taken to the Syrian front. It is clear from the foregoing survey that the Arab forces in Iraq at that time were divided into two categories, namely abl al-quwawā and non-abl al-quwawā. In order to distinguish between these two groups of people, it is important to examine every account which deals with this event. Ya‘qūbī’s account refers to the forces going to Syria as abl al-quwawā without describing the rest who were left in Iraq (al-Ya‘qūbī, Tārīkh II, 133). The accounts of al-Balādūrī and at-Ṭabarī do not describe either of these groups (al-Balādūrī, Futūḥ 110, 249; at-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh I, 2109). Sayf’s account divides them into saḥāba and non-saḥāba (abl al-qanā‘a), while Ibn Ishāq’s tradition makes a distinction on the basis of physical strength between the strong (abl al-quwawā) and the weak (da‘afat an-nās). From these various accounts one can easily conclude that the first group, abl al-quwawā, were the strong people (or according to Sayf, the companions of the Prophet), while the other, abl al-qanā‘a, were non-saḥāba, and da‘afat an-nās, weak Muslims, or tribesmen from unimportant Arab clans.

With the departure of Ḥālid, the raiding parties, made up of the weak, remained under the command of al-Muṭannā b. Hārita in Iraq. Not long after, al-Muṭannā unsuccessfully sought Abū Bakr’s permission to enlist ex-ridda tribesmen for his raids in Iraq. He then returned to Iraq to continue raiding with his forces. This incident clearly demonstrates Abū Bakr’s policy of prohibiting ex-ridda participation in Arab campaigns, and none of them was to be found in the earliest conquest (fa lam yuḥḍad

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3 Ibid. 2022, 2027, 2028; also 2037, where the amount of the booty received by the Arab fighting-men reached 1,500 dirhams; 2052, 2057-8.
Iraq during 'Umar b. al-Ḥattaḥ’s reign

‘Umar b. al-Ḥattaḥ was proclaimed Abū Bakr’s successor in Madīna. His first act was to reverse the latter’s policy by bringing together all elements, ridda and non-ridda, to campaign in Iraq. The Caliph ‘Umar took this decision for two reasons: firstly, he realised that a strong Arab force would be needed to defeat the numerous and strong army of the Sāsānians in Iraq. Secondly, he also realised that by not enlisting ex-ridda in these campaigns he was depriving the Islamic community not only of fighting-men but also of an important source of wealth.

Before the arrival of ex-ridda forces in Iraq, ‘Umar appointed Abū Ubayd of Taqīf as a new leader of the Arab forces on the Sāsānian front. Abū Ubayd began his campaign against the Sāsānians at Qarqas or Ġasr, the bridge, in Ramdān, 13/634, where the Arab forces were defeated. Abū Ubayd together with seven commanders of Taqīf, and his brother and son, were killed, while al-Muţannā b. Hārīta aš-Šaybānī was wounded but continued the campaign. During this time, many of the Madīnan forces and their families, abl al-Madīna, had returned to Madīna while the rest was scattered in the desert, leaving al-Muţannā with his own forces. The latter took his men to Ullays, then to al-Buwayb, where he was joined, for the first time, by ex-ridda tribesmen. The first ex-ridda forces to arrive in Iraq were led by Rib’ī b. Husayn and his son, Šabāt b. Rib’ī ar-Riyāḥī of Ḥanzala of Tamīm, Anas b. Hilāl of Namīr and Anas b. Fihri of Taqlib, all of whom had been with Sagāh’s army in the ridda-war against Abū Bakr (at-Ṭabarī, Tārīḫ I, 2188-9, 2190). In fact, followers of Sagāh were the weakest among ex-ridda forces and mainly belonged to splinter clans of Rib’ī’a, such as Namīr and Taqlib, among whom ‘Aqqā b. Hilāl, Anas’s brother, and al-Ḥudayl b. ʿIrān were prominent. Likewise Šabāt b. Rib’ī ar-Riyāḥī is reported to have been with Sagāh and became prominent among ex-ridda of Banū Tamīm (at-Ṭabarī, Tārīḫ 1918-9; Ibn Durayd, Ittiqāq 223; Ibn Ḥazm, Ḡambara 227; al-Iṣfahānī, Agānī XVIII, 165).

Besides ex-ridda, many non-ridda tribesmen were also invited by ‘Umar to join al-Muţannā in Iraq, the most important among whom was Šarīr b. Abdallāh al-Baḡālī who had with him 2,000 Baḡalis. It is reported that they agreed to join al-Muţannā provided that one-quarter of the booty would be assigned to them. Other clans which

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4 at-Ṭabarī, Tārīḫ I, 2021; for the prohibition of abl al-ridda from Arab campaign during the time of Abū Bakr, see ibid. I, 2014, 2046, 2081, 2225, 2458; al-Ya’qūbī, Tārīḫ II, 131.
joined al-Muṭannā were fragmented and of little importance, and their leaders included Ḥilāl b. Ṣullafat at-Taymī of Tamīm, Ṣafāqā b. Ḥartama al-Azdi and Abdal-lāh b. Dī s-Saḥmayn al-Ḥaṭāmī. All these Arab tribesmen, ex-ridda and non-ridda, were taken to al-Buwayb, where a battle was fought, in which the Sāsānians were defeated and their properties seized by the Arabs. The booty gained was distributed between the conquerors, with non-ridda tribesmen receiving proportionately bigger shares than ex-ridda, while a proportion was set aside for the children of non-ridda tribesmen who were left at Hīra during the campaign.

Having defeated the Sāsānians at al-Buwayb, al-Muṭannā continued the raid by sending troops to different directions. He sent Bīsīr b. ʿUbaydallāh ad-Duḥālī to Hīra, Ğarīr b. ʿAbdal-lāh al-Ǧaḡalī to Maysan and Ḥilāl b. Ṣullafat at-Taymī of Tamīm to Dast Maysan, while he himself went to Ulayas, a village in al-Anbār, and then to al-Ḥanafīs. After these expeditions the troops returned to Hīra to prepare for further raids (at-Ṭabarī, Ṭarihī I, 2202-8). Shortly afterwards, al-Muṭannā and his troops overran Dū Qar, Ğull, Ṣarah and Ğuda, where Ḥilāl’s brother, al-Mustawrid b. Ṣullafat at-Taymī of Tamīm was in charge of his clan ar-Ribāb. With him were three members of afnā Tamīm, i.e. splinter groups of Tamīm, Ḡazī b. Muḥāwiya as-Saḏī, al-Husayn b. Niyār al-ʿAmrī and al-Husayn b. Maʿbad al-Ḥanżālī.

During this time too the Caliph ʿUmar appointed Saʿd b. Abī Waqqās, the prominent companion, to lead the Arab campaign in Iraq. This appointment came about not because of his military skills, but rather because of his services to Islam and his readiness to co-operate in full measure with the ex-rebels (ahl ar-ridda).

There is some agreement about the strength of his forces which set out from Maḏīnā to Iraq, claiming that it was 6,000, while Sayf put it down to 4,000, made up of 600 from Ḥadramawt, 1,300 from Madḥīḡ, 1,000 from Qays ʿAylān and around 1,000 from other tribes. Of these only 2,000, including their wives and children, were taken to Iraq, most of whom belonged to the Arab clans of Madḥīḡ and Qays ʿAylān. Saʿd was later joined by other Arab tribesmen, including 2,000 from Yaman and 2,000 from Ḥatafān and Qays. When he reached the area of Zarūd/Taʿalīyya and Saraf, between Maḏīnā and Hīra, he was joined by 1,700 Yamanites led by al-ʿAṣrāf b. Qays al-Kindī, one of the prominent leaders of ex-ridda, who had been confined to Maḏīnā since his rebellion against the Madinan government.

When Saʿd reached Qadisiyya at the end of 15/636, he was joined by the people of al-ḥamra’, the local population who sympathised with the Arabs and had converted to Islam, as well as 12,000 of al-Muṭannā’s troops, all of whom were ahl al-ayyām, of whom 8,000 had been with him throughout his raids in Iraq. Before his death al-Muṭannā appointed Bīsīr b. ʿUbaydallāh, one of Prophet companions, to take charge of this army. This appointment, however, was rejected by the majority of al-Muṭannā’s forces who were from the clan of Ṣayfān, and the leadership passed on to al-Muṭannā’s brother, al-Muʿaʾnā b. Ḥarīṯa ʿṢaybānī, who then brought the army to Qadisiyya to form forces with Saʿd at Zarūd. al-Muʿaʾnā’s forces were later joined by
1,000 tribesmen led by Ḥāšim b. ʿUrba b. Abī Waqqāṣ (or according to Sayf led by al-Qaʿqāḥ b. ʿAmr at-Tamīmi). According to Yaʿqūbī, these tribesmen belonged to afnāʾ al-muslimin, i.e. Muslim splinter groups, while Sayf’s account claims they belonged to afnāʾ al-Yaman min ahl al-Ḥīqāz, i.e. splinter groups of the Yamanite tribe of Ḥīqāz. Elsewhere, Sayf refers to them as ahl al-ayyām, the earliest conquerors (Ibid 2305, 2367). However, these tribesmen had been actively involved in the earliest conquest of Iraq and 800 of them were reported to have been with Ḥālid’s forces in Ḥira (al-Balāḏurī, Futūḥ 110; at-Ṭabarī, Tārīḥ I, 2109), while the remaining 200 were not mentioned in the sources. It is, however, very probable that they were of al-ʿAṣṭar Mālik b. al-Ḥāriq an-Nahāši’s group. This is because al-ʿAṣṭar himself was a Yamanite and fought gallantly at Yarmūk before he was sent to Qādisiyah (Ibid. 2101; Ibn al-Kalbī, Nasab add. 23297, fol. 244B; Yaʿqūbī, Tārīḥ II, 142). However, al-Qaʿqāḥ b. ʿAmr, who was a Tamīmite, loomed large in Sayf’s account. He was also of Banū Tamīm, and was given the credit of leadership from the very beginning of the Arab conquest of Iraq.

The Arab fighting-men in the earliest campaign of Iraq were, with the exception of muḥā_regularizer{ārūn and ansār, made up of tribesmen of little tribal standing, who had fought against the apostates in the ridda-war, and against the Sasanians in Iraq before the arrival of Ḥālid. All of them took part in Ḥālid’s expeditions. It was to their participation in these expeditions that the term ahl al-ayyām was subsequently applied by way of distinguishing them from the people of Makka and Madīna (muḥā_regularizer{ārūn and ansār) (at-Ṭabarī, Tārīḥ I, 2021; Shaban 1971: 45). The people of al-ayyām mainly belonged to comparatively unimportant Arab clans, or splinter groups, afnāʾ, of Arab clans. Notwithstanding this fact, they had an equitable share of the gains, and were privileged by being ahl al-ayyām which was of great value for them in the future. They came mainly from the East-Arabian clans, of Rabīʿa b. Abī Waqqāṣ who later led them to Qādisiyah where some of them excelled themselves as heroes (at-Ṭabarī, Tārīḥ I, 2183, 2187-8, 2207, 2221, 2226, 2236, 2239, 2245, 2261, 2336-7, 2340; al-Balāḏurī, Futūḥ 259; al-Yaʿqūbī, Tārīḥ II, 145). At Qādisiyah, they were joined by their families, of whom 1,000 were women from Bağila and 700 from Nahāš who married afnāʾ men just before and after the battle of Qādisiyah (at-Ṭabarī, Tārīḥ I, 2362-4). This suggests firstly that the number of ahl al-ayyām increased at Qādisiyah, and secondly, that the people of al-ayyām began to develop their own interest and power.

Several prominent leaders emerged from among the ahl al-ayyām. Hilāl b. ʿUllafa at-Ṭaymī of Tamīm, for example, was sent to Dast Maysan in al-Anbar by al-Muṭan-nā b. Ḥarīta aš-Šaybānī to campaign against the Sasanians in 13/634, a campaign
which took place shortly after the battle of Buwayb where he was in charge of ar-Ri-
bâb. He was also reported to have excelled himself at Qâdisiyya, where he was able
to kill Rustum, the Sâsâniân King. His brother, al-Mustawrid b. Ullafa at-Taymî of
Tamîm, was also among al-Muṭânna’s forces and, in 13/634 was active in the expedi-
tion of Ġuda, near the area which was later known as Baṣra, in which he commanded
ar-Ri-
bâb with three other afla’ Tamîm leaders, Ǧazî Muʿāwiya, al-Ḥusayn b. Ni-
yâr al-ʿAmrî and al-Ḥusayn b. Maʿbad al-Hanẓalî. Another prominent leader was
al-Āṣtar Mâlik b. Ḥârîf al-Nâhîâ’i who had been with the Madīnân forces in the
ridda-war, and was a hero in the earliest campaign of Iraq before he was taken to
Yarmûk and then sent on to Qâdisiyya. Equally outstanding were Suwayd, an-Nuṣ-
mân, Ǧirrâr and Maʿqîl, sons of Muqarrin al-Muṣanî of Aws, who, despite their small
band of followers, fought gallantly in the ridda-war against the apostates, and became
prominent in Hâlid’s army in Iraq, particularly an-Nuṣmân and Suwayd.

Following their victories in the various campaigns, these leaders then joined the
all important battle of Qâdisiyya. The battle which took place at the end of 15/636
saw approximately 30,000 men of different Arab clans, both ex-ridda and non-ridda,
including the followers of ex-ridda leaders, al-Āṣat b. Qays al-Kindî and Qays b. al-
Makṣûh al-Murâdî. The participation of ex-ridda in this battle needs to be examined.
According to our sources, ʿUmar allowed an ex-ridda leader to lead a maximum of
100 men only. However, it is doubtful if Saʿd b. Abî Waqqâs observed this limit. Si-
milarly, according to Sayf, the number of al-Āṣat’s forces at Qâdisiyya was 1,700
Kindîs, while other sources claim, Qays b. Makṣûh’s followers to be 700 men. How-
ever, during ʿUmar’s time it is possible that ex-ridda leaders’ power and influence
were held in check, and none was appointed to any responsible position, either in the
army or in the conquered territories. Two other ex-ridda leaders, Ribî b. Husayn
and his son, Šabat b. Ribî al-Hanẓâlî of Tamîm, were also present in Iraq since the
battle of al-Buwayb, and fought along with al-Muṭânna’s forces. However, neither the
strength of their followers was mentioned nor were they ever appointed to any re-
 sponsible position, whether at al-Buwayb or Qâdisiyya.⁵

The participation of ex-ridda forces at Qâdisiyya, however, was not without its
significance in that it enabled the Arabs to defeat the Sâsâniân whose empire in Iraq
then began to decline. Futher, Arab warriors, both ex-ridda and non-ridda, were given
their share of the booty gained on the battlefield (at-Tabari, Târîh I, 2356). The term
ahl al-Qâdisiyya was subsequently applied to refer to their participation in this great
battle and a specific amount of aṭā’; stipends, was given to them (at-Tabari, Târîh
I, 2165, 2183, 2217-22, 2633). It was the first time that ex-ridda and non-ridda

⁵ Ibid. 2188-92, 2356; even the people of al-ḥamrâ’ had also shared the booty by their being ahl al-
Qâdisiyya (at-Tabari, Târîh I, 2261).
tribesmen had been placed on an equal footing under the newly acquired term of abl al-Qādisiyya.

After their victory at Qādisiyya, Sa'd and his Arab forces moved on to al-Madā'in in Ṣafar 16/637, making their base in Iraq and living in deserted houses left behind by Yazdağird, the Sasanian King, his family and officials, after their defeat. By this time many Madīnan and Makkān people had returned home with their families (ibid. 2362-3, 2400, 2441, 2443, 2451). The rest of Sa'd's troops were brought to Kūfa and only some chose to stay behind, and they were splinter groups, mainly from the clan of 'Abs who moved to Kūfa probably in the same year (16/637).

During the period of settling in al-Madā'in, some important campaigns were launched to the east and north, all of which were aimed at establishing garrisons, masālih, in those regions. One of these regions was Gālūla'. This campaign was headed by Hāšim b. 'Utbab Abī Waqqās az-Zuhri and al-Qa'qā' b. 'Amr at-Tamīmī with an army of 12,000 men. An additional 600 men were sent from al-Madā' in to Gālūla' to reinforce Hāšim and al-Qa'qā'’s army. Huğr b. 'Adī al-Kindī, who had earlier been at Qādisiyya, was appointed leader of the army and was accompanied by three ex-ridda leaders, Qays b. Makkā, 'Amr b. Ma'dikārib and Tulayhā b. Huwaylīd. After several battles, the Sasanian troops were defeated, and booty in the form of land and property was left to the Arabs, who then returned to al-Madā'in.

Another expedition to Masabādān, which took place just after their return from Gālūla’, was led by Sa'd himself. In the meantime, al-Qa'qā' b. 'Amr at-Tamīmī led an army of afnā' an-nās, splinter groups and the people of al-ḥamrā' to Hulwān. Hulwān was soon conquered and al-Qa'qā' returned to al-Madā'in, leaving some of his troops behind to look after the region. This took place while Sa'd and his troops were still at Masabādān, fighting against the Sasanians. An army from al-Madā’in, commanded by 'Abdallāh b. Wahb ar-Rāsībī, a halif of Bağila, together with three other leaders, Dirūr b. al-Ḥārīf b. al-Ṭāhirīb b. Muḍárrib b. Fulān al-Mīlīb and Qaddām b. al-Ḥudayl al-Asādī, was sent to Masabādān to reinforce Sa'd. Sa'd's army succeeded in subduing the Sasanians and returned to al-Madā’in. Another army of 5,000 from al-Madā’in was despatched to Takrit under the leadership of 'Abdallāh b. al-Mu'tamm accompanied by Rib'ī b. al-Afkal b. Anzīb, al-Ḥārītī b. Hassān al-Dūhali, Furāt b. Hayyān al-Mīlīb, Hānī b. Qays aṣ-Ṣaybānī and 'Arfaḡa b. Hārtama al-Azdi. The defeat of the enemy at Hulwān, Masabādān and Takrit, respectively, marked the end of the Sasanian empire in Iraq, and once again the Arabs secured a vast amount of fertile land.

Sa'd's essential task now was to protect the conquered territories and to find a new and suitable base for his Arab forces. However, following Caliph 'Umar's order to attack Qarqisiyya in the north, Sa'd sent another army from al-Madā’in, led by Rib'ī b. 'Amīr al-ʿAmrī of Tamīm, one of the early conquerors who had been with al-Muṭānā b. Ḥāriša aṣ-Ṣaybānī since the battle of the Bridge (Ibid. 2479).
The founding of Kufa

Sa’d then began moving his base from al-Madā’in, looking at several sites before settling on Kufa. It has been suggested by some sources that the move from al-Madā’in was due to the unsuitability of the province, which the Arab found too dirty and infested with insects. This explanation, however, is not convincing in the light of the military reasons which prompted the move. An examination of the area’s geographical location would highlight three strategic possibilities. Firstly, Kufa was more strategically placed to send help to Syria should it be needed (al-Balāḏurī, Futūḥ 276; at-Ṭabarī, Ṭārīḥ I, 2360, 2483); secondly, Madīna could be easily cut off by a thrust from the still unsubdued and powerful province of Fars, and thirdly, in a large city like al-Madā’in it was probably not easy to control the tribesmen effectively, an easier task in the garrison town of Kufa (Shaban 1971: 51). After having decided on Kufa as the military base in Iraq, all Arab tribal leaders, ex-ridda and non-ridda, and their followers were brought to Kufa, and every tribal grouping set up their houses and mosques under their own leader such as ‘Adī b. Hātim in Ṭayy, Ḡarīr b. ‘Abdallāh in Baǧila and al-Aṣṣat b. Qays in Kinda (al-Balāḏurī, Futūḥ 275.35).

For purposes of financial administration, the stipends were paid to the umanā‘ al-ḥāša‘ and aṣḥāb ar-rāya i.e. tribal leaders, who turned them over to the ‘arafa, nuqaba‘ and umanā‘, i.e. trustees, who duly paid those entitled to them. The ‘arafa became a unit for the distribution of 100,000 dirhams in the following way:

(i) an ‘arafa of abl al-ayyām, received 100,000 dirhams for 20 men (3,000 each), 20 women (300 each), and it is assumed that the 340 children received (100 each).

(ii) an ‘arafa of abl al-Qadisiyya, received 100,000 dirhams for 43 men (2,000 each), 43 women (200 each), and 500 children (100 each).

(iii) an ‘arafa of abl ar-ravādīf, received 100,000 dirhams for 60 men (1,500 each), 60 women (100 each), and 40 children (100 each) (at-Ṭabarī, Ṭārīḥ I, 2495-6).

The above figures clearly show that abl al-ayyām received proportionately bigger stipends than any other group. When a diwān, or a list of Arab warriors entitled to stipends, was established in 20/641, stipends for abl al-ayyām were still higher than those for abl al-Qadisiyya and ravādīf, as shown by the figures below:

(i) muḥāǧirūn and anṣār received 3,000-5,000 dirhams per annum.

(ii) abl al-ayyām received 3,000 dirhams per annum.

(iii) The people of Yarmūk and Qadisiyya, ex-ridda and non-ridda, received 2,000 dirhams per annum.

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6 al-Balāḏurī, Futūḥ 275.35; at-Ṭabarī, Ṭārīḥ I, 2495-6; Shaban 1972: 53. Hinds 1971: 349. Only Sayf’s account says that the diwān was established in 15/636, but according to others, such as al-Balāḏurī, Futūḥ 450; al-Ya’qūbī, Ṭārīḥ II, 153, it was established in 20/641.
(iv) rawādīf, i.e. new-comers to Iraq after the battles of Yarmūk and Qadisiyya received between 1,500 to 2,000 dirhams per annum, according to the time of their arrival (at-Ṭabari, Tārīkh I, 2412-3; al-Baladurī, Futūḥ 449; Ibn Saʿd, Tabaqāt III, i, 213-5; al-Yaʿqūbī, Tārīkh II, 153; al-Mawdūdī, Ahkām 199-201; Shaban 1971: 55).

The people of al-ayyām not only had large shares of the revenue from the abandoned lands and the surplus thereof, but also exclusive enjoyment of the authority over the occupied land in the Sawād. Moreover, it is hard indeed to believe that the diwān of 20/641 was put into effect immediately, a point supported by Ibn Saʿd, at-Ṭabari and al-Baladurī’s claim that the diwān was still incomplete at the time of ʿUmar’s death in 23/644 (Ibn Saʿd, Tabaqāt III, i, 144, 214; at-Ṭabari, Tārīkh I, 2752; al-Baladurī, Futūḥ 452; Hinds 1971: 350). Similarly, Hinds points out that “it was only at the tail-end of ʿUmar’s caliphate that the beginning of administrative organization in Iraq appeared; and by then the early-comers had enjoyed what amounted to a free run of the area for five years or more” (350-1). This was the period from the establishment of the trusteeship of the abandoned land, which took place after the conquest of al-Madāʾin in 16/637 until the death of the Caliph ʿUmar in 23/644. In fact, not all of the original conquerors had enjoyed the authority over the occupied land in the Sawād, particularly that of the abandoned land, as Hinds has suggested⁷, rather only those ahl al-ayyām, or trustees, to whom the Caliph ʿUmar entrusted the administration of the land. Some of the ahl al-ayyām also shared the task of receiving the taxes collected by dahāqīn, local heads and officials, and the transferring of the money to the public treasury in the Sawād. It is quite probable that they also supervised the assessment and collection of the poll-tax, ḡizyā, in the area⁸.

The Founding of Basra

In order to relieve the pressure of ceaseless immigration into Iraq, a new garrison town at Basra was established. In order to understand the situation in Basra, it is necessary to go back to the beginning of the Arab conquest in the region. During the time of Abū Bakr (12/633), some Arab forces, mainly from the clans of Bakr b. Wāʾil, raided Ubulla. The name of their leader, however, was a matter of some disagreement. Abū Mihnaft claimed it was Suwayd b. Qutba ad-Duhali (al-Baladurī, Futūḥ 241, 340) while al-Madāʾinī contended it was Qutba b. Qatāda as-Sadusi.⁹ al-Ma-

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⁷ Hinds 1971: 350, early-comers are mentioned here.
⁸ Shaban 1971: 53. Some of their names and the villages to which they were sent are mentioned above.
⁹ at-Ṭabari, Tārīkh I, 2381, also 2016, where Qutba b. Qatāda as-Sadusi is also mentioned.
dā‘īnī’s account of Baṣra and eastern provinces is more reliable than that of Abū Mihrāf, whose main interest after all was Kūfah and its affairs. Thus, one is inclined to accept al-Madā‘īnī’s narrative on this particular point.

According to our sources, Qutba b. Qatādah as-Sadūsī and his men fought in Baṣra separately from al-Muṭṭannā b. Ḥarīta as-Ṣaybānī’s force, who at the same time were raiding the same area. This contention is supported by the fact that when the Arab forces led by Ḥālīd b. al-Walīd arrived in Baṣra, Qutba and his men made their way to Ḥuraybah, the ruins of the old Sāsānian post, while al-Muṭṭannā and his troops joined Ḥālīd who succeeded in defeating the Sāsānian army at Ubullah (al-‘Alī 1953: 23-4). This early raid of Qutba is mentioned by Ṣālīḥ al-‘Alī who suggested that with their small force they fought on their own initiative, without receiving any instruction from the Caliph Abū Bakr in Madīnah, and no significant victory was reached in this raid (at-Ṭabarī, Tārīḥ I, 2382; al-Balāḍūrī, Futūḥ 242; al-‘Alī 1953: 24-5). When ʿUmar became Caliph, he sent ʿSurayḥ b. ʿĀmir as-Saʿdī with a small force to wage war on this front, but the latter was unsuccessful and was killed in one of the battles against the Sāsānians in the area10. Not long after, in 14/635, another Arab force was organised to raid the Baṣrān territory. This newly organised Arab army was led by ʿUtba b. ʿGazwān al-Muẓanī al-Anṣārī who set out from Madīnah with a force of 300 men and was later joined by another 200 nomads (at-Ṭabarī, Tārīḥ I, 2377, 2384, 2385). On reaching Ḥuraybah, ʿUtba, a prominent companion of the Prophet, chose the location to establish his military camp where his army could rest during the winter, when they were not campaigning. It has been pointed out by al-‘Alī that few women came along on this campaign (al-Balāḍūrī, Futūḥ 346), showing that the Arabs at that time did not intend to settle in Baṣra permanently (al-‘Alī 1953: 26). It is also worth mentioning that the Arab forces brought by ʿUtba had achieved no significant victory in their raid against the Sāsānians in the Basran territory (at-Ṭabarī, Tārīḥ I, 2378; al-‘Alī 1953: 27). Understandably, the founding of Baṣra at this time was a temporary measure, and its importance as a military base was not as great as that of Kūfa. In reviewing the importance of Kūfa, Hinds is correct in suggesting that “the difference between Kūfa and Baṣra at this stage was, therefore, that Kūfa was established from necessity and Baṣra from convenience”.

At the end of 17/638 the Arab tribesmen from Eastern Arabia began to pour into Baṣra. This move took place following the Arab defeat in the expedition to Fārs, an expedition sent by al-‘Alā’ b. al-Ḥadrāmī with a force from Bahrayn. This force was led by ʿArṣaḡa b. Ḥarṭama al-Bāriqī of Azd (al-Balāḍūrī, Futūḥ 386), while Sayf was

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10 Sayf gives the date of ʿUtba’s raid in 16/637 (at-Ṭabarī, Tārīḥ I, 2377). Sayf’s chronology of this particular event is, however, not attested by at-Ṭabarī (Tārīḥ I, 2377). All our authorities such as al-Madā‘īnī, aš-Ṣaʿbī and at-Ṭabarī give the date of ʿUtba’s campaign in 14/635 (at-Ṭabarī, Tārīḥ I, 2377).
of the opinion that it was headed by Hulayd b. al-Mundir b. Sāwī al-Hanẓalī of Ta-mīm, and two other Arab leaders, al-Ḡarūd b. ʿAmr b. Ḥanāš b. Muʿalla and as-Saw-wār b. Hammām of ʿAbd al-Qays (at-Ṭabarī, Tārīh I, 2546). They raided Fārs by sea without the Caliph ʿUmar’s order, showing their tendency to act independently from the Maḍīnan regime. When they arrived at Fārs, they were strongly resisted by the Sāsānian forces and defeated at Tawus, while their two leaders, Hulayd and al-Ḡarūd were killed and the rest withdrew to Baṣra, the safest and nearest place to Fārs (Ibid. 2547-8; al-Balāḏurī, Futūḥ 386; Shaban 1971: 51-2).

al-ʿAlī’s discusses in detail the social and economic system of Baṣra from the time of ʿUmar. He also gives a detailed account of the Arab expeditions into Baṣra and concludes that the founding of Baṣra took place during the time of ʿUtba b. Ǧawwān in 14/635 (al-ʿAlī 1953: 25). Although al-ʿAlī was aware that ʿUtba’s army was small and that they had no intention of staying in Baṣra permanently (Ibid. 26), he nevertheless failed to realise that the coming of the Arab tribesmen from Bahrān into the province was a turning point in the history of Baṣra. Having stayed temporarily, ʿUtba’s army decided to settle permanently in Baṣra. This decision had to be made in order to accommodate those tribesmen from Eastern Arabia. We may, therefore, agree with Shaban’s suggestion that the coming of the Arab tribesmen from Bahrān, after their failure to establish a safe base in Fārs, was another factor in the establishment of the garrison town of Baṣra (Shaban 1971: 51-2). We can further conclude that the actual founding of Baṣra was not done until the year 17/638, by which time the garrison town of Kūfah was already established.

When the Caliph ʿUmar was informed about the defeat of al-ʿAlā’s army in Fārs, he wrote to ʿUtba b. Ǧawwān in Baṣra, asking him to recruit a strong army to fight the Sāsānians in Fārs. ʿUtba was able to gather as many as 12,000 men from the Eastern Arab tribesmen, including those who were already in Baṣra. By this time, tribesmen from nearly all the clans of Eastern Arabia were involved in fighting against the Sāsānians in Fārs. Among the prominent leaders who were engaged in the wars during this time were ʿAṣim b. ʿAmr at-Ṭamīmī, ʿArfağa b. Ḥarthama al-Azdi, Hudayya b. Muḥṣin al-Ḥimyarī, Mağza b. Sūr as-Sadūṣī of Bakr, al-ʿAlāf b. Qays at-Ṭamīmī, Saṣaṣa b. Muʿāwiya at-Ṭamīmī and Abū Ṣabra b. Abī Ruḥm al-ʿĀmirī of ʿAbd al-Qays (at-Ṭabarī, Tārīh I, 2548-9). The list of leaders would suggest that they belonged to different Arab clans of Ta-mīm, Bakr, Azd and ʿAbd al-Qays, which in actual fact represented the core of the Arab army fighting on this front at that time (al-Balāḏurī, Futūḥ 386). After their campaign in Fārs, most of these tribesmen followed ʿUtba to Baṣra (at-Ṭabarī, Tārīh I, 2550).

Towards the end of ʿUtba’s governorship of Baṣra (17/638), he and his Baṣra forces also raided Ahwāz and Tustar, but he died before the areas were subdued and the governorship of Baṣra was taken by Abū Mūsā al-Aṣʿarī. The latter continued the campaign, particularly in the regions of Ramhurmuz and Tustar, with the help of the Kūfan army (at-Ṭabarī, Tārīh I, 2541 ff). With the defeat of the army at
Tustar, the Arab campaign in Iraq came to a standstill until the year 21/642, in which the important battle of Nihāwând took place, and which saw the predominance of the Kūfān forces.

It can therefore be concluded that the Arab tribesmen’s raid of Basra achieved no significant progress in comparison to that of Kūfā. Basra at the time of its founding was largely made up of Eastern-Arabian clans of Tamīm, Bakr, Azd and ‘Ābd al-Qays. The majority were new-comers to Iraq and had taken no role either in the ridda-war or in the earliest conquest of Iraq (Shaban 1971: 52). Except for ‘Āṣim b. ‘Amr at-Tamīmī, ‘Arfağa b. Harṭama al-Azdī and Ḥudayfa b. Muḥsin al-Ḥimyarī, their leaders were clearly not involved in the ridda-war (at-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh I, 1880-1), their task was confined only to fighting against the weak and small group of apostates in Mahra (Ibid. 1976-9). The Islamic-Arab forces regained their position when they received support from tribesmen of Nağiya led by al-Hirrit b. Rāṣid, ‘Ābd al-Qays led by Sayḥān b. Sawhān, and other Arab tribesmen of Rāṣib and Sa’d of Tamīm (Ibid. 1979, 1980). This suggests that the two leaders, ‘Arfağa and Ḥudayfa, played no important role in defeating the apostates in the ridda-war. Further, some of those who were involved in the ridda-war, such as ‘Arfağa and his tribesmen, did not come to Iraq until the battle of al-Buwayyib in 13/634 and after the departure of Ḥalid for Syria. Thus the number of the early arrivals in Basra must have been very small, and probably did not exceed 300 men, while the rest were new emigrants who did not come to Iraq until the year 17/638. A good number of these new emigrants came from the Arab clans of ‘Ābd al-Qays of Bahrayn, who did not become apostates during the time of the Prophet and remained loyal to the Madīnan regime after the death of the Prophet11.

For purposes of distributing the stipends, the people of Basra were initially organised along genealogical lines, but this proved unsuccessful as newcomers arrived irregularly, thereby varying the size of the tribal grouping in Basra (al-ʿAli 1953: 35). To overcome this problem, the system of ṣarāfa was applied in Basra, by which only the recognised leaders received 2,500 dirhams, while the rest of the Arab tribesmen in Basra received between 250 and 300 dirhams (at-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh I, 2413, 2496; Ibn Sa’d, Tabaqāt III, i, 112 ff; al-ʿAli 1953: 127-9; Shaban 1971: 55).

Meanwhile, new waves of tribesmen continued to pour into Kūfā. These newcomers were given low stipends, and they resented the position of ahl al-ayyām. They once complained to Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāṣ, the governor of Kūfā, for having divided the wealth unequally among the people (al-Balāduri, Futūḥ 278; at-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh I, 2606-7). al-ʿAṣār b. Qays al-Kindī and riğal min ahl al-Kūfā, i.e. leaders of the people

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of Kufa, are reported to have said "that Sa'd was biased and deprived us of our right" (al-'Askari, Avv'i' 225). No trouble arose, however, partly because the Caliph 'Umar is said to have raised the stipends of the new-comers who had shown valour at Nhiwad to the level of the stipends of abl al-Qadisiyya, 2,000 dirhams per annum (at-Tabari, Tarikh I, 2633), and partly because the plentiful booty gained on the battlefields during 'Umar's caliphate had helped to ease the situation (Shaban 1971: 54.73; at-Tabari, Tarikh I, 2676-7; al-Baladur, Futuh 279).

However, after the campaign of Nhiwad (21/642), Sa'd, the governor of Kufa, was replaced by 'Ammar b. Yasir, and the situation changed as the activities on the battlefield decreased, and the new emigrants became more numerous in Kufa. 'Ammar b. Yasir, the new governor of Kufa, was accused of being weak with no political shrewdness (at-Tabari, Tarikh I, 2676-7; al-Baladur, Futuh 279). The people opposed 'Ammar because he tried to impose order in Kufa and to exercise more authority over them. He was reported to favour the demand of the Basrans for authority over the province of Masabdan and to refuse control of Ramhurmuz to the Kufans (at-Tabari, Tarikh I, 2672). In fact, these two provinces, particularly Masabdan, were conquered by the Kufan army, in which many of abl al-ayyam were involved (Ibid. 2476, 2551 ff). The new arrivals, however, no longer pressured when their stipends were raised by 'Ammar. Opposition, however, came from the people of al-ayyam who had large interests in the conquered territories of the Sawad. A case in point was Garir b. Abdallah al-Bajali, a Kufan military commander during the conquest of Ramhurmuz with an interest in the area, who became an opposition leader in Kufa at the time. His opposition cost 'Ammar his governorship (Ibid. 2552, 2676-7). Although various sources attributed the dismissal to his political weakness, it would appear that his failure to look after the interest of abl al-ayyam and their prestige was equally responsible for his fate. It was at this time too that Abu Musa al-Ashari began to exert his influence among the people of al-ayyam in Kufa and he eventually became their governor, albeit only for a year, before he was transferred to Basra (Ibid. 2678, 2693).

From the foregoing pages we come to the conclusion that the people of al-ayyam benefited from the policy carried out by Abu Bakr and 'Umar. Although different in some ways, the two caliphs nevertheless shared a common policy of prohibiting the ex-ridda from assuming positions of responsibility, either on the battlefield or in the conquered territories, thereby confining leadership roles to abl al-ayyam. Consequently, whether they were from Hijaz or from North-Eastern Arabia, abl al-ayyam had established their power and privileges in Kufa and indeed in all of the Sawad. Their success in collecting revenues, supplying food from the villages of the Sawad to the people in the towns and in protecting the Arab front against the enemy was succintly summed up by the Caliph 'Umar when he referred to the Kufans as the spear of Allah ... and the skulls of the Arabs (rumh allah ... wa-juummat al-arab, yakkuffina tugurahum, wa-yaumuudda l-amur) (Ibid. 2515; al-Baladur, Futuh 289; Ibn
Sa’d, Ṭabaqāt VI, 1). Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāṣ, the governor of Kūfā, used a similar phrase to refer to ahl al-ayyām of Kūfā in the Sawād (at-Ṭabarī, Tārīḥ I, 2432).

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