

**EARLY ISLAMIC OMAN**

**(ca - 622/280-893)**

**a political history**

**by**

**‘Isam ‘Ali Ahmed al-Rawas**

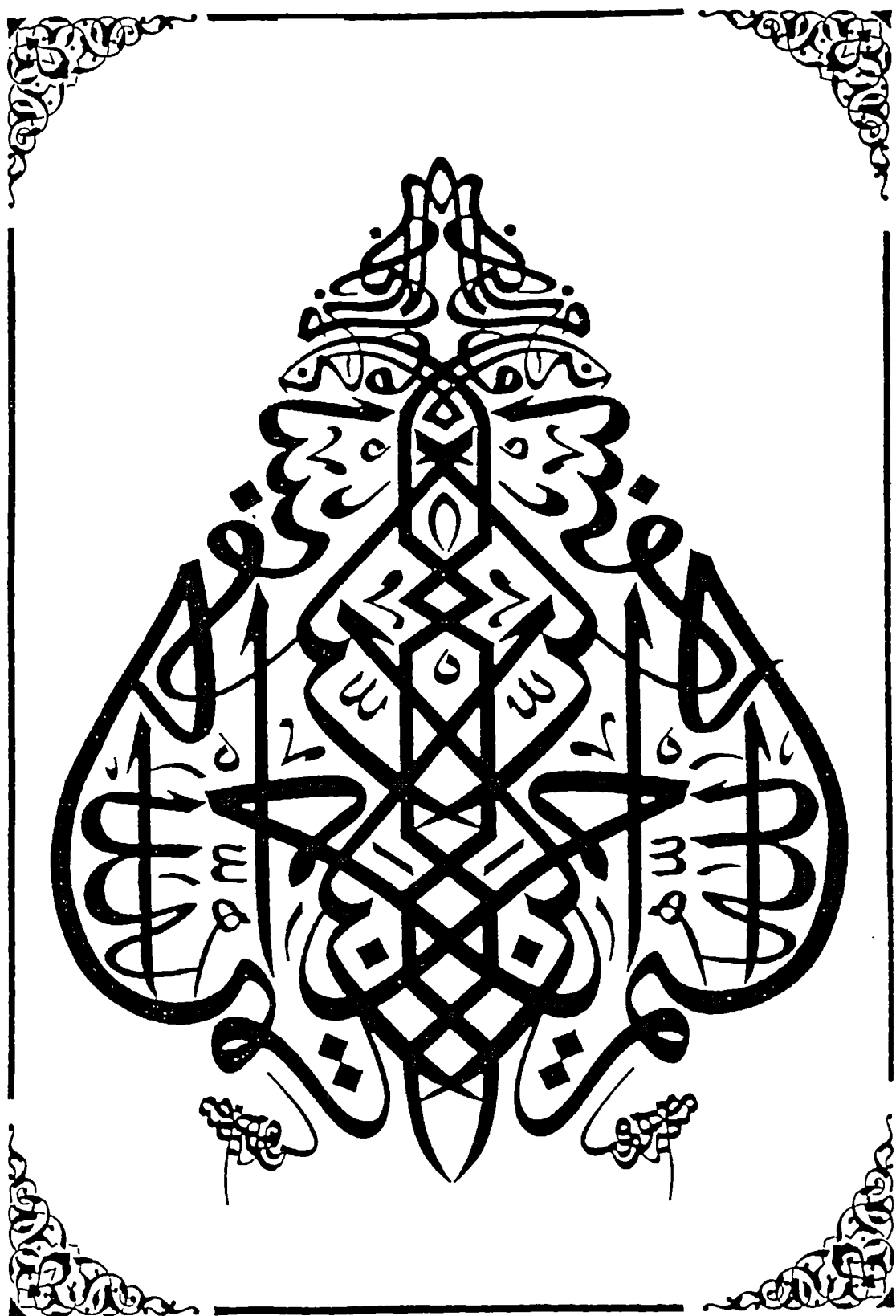
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## ABSTRACT

This thesis is an attempt to provide a comprehensive overview of Omani political history from the advent of Islam until the collapse of the second Ibādī imamate in 280/983.

The work commences with a review of the political situation in pre-Islamic Oman, with special emphasis on the arrival of the Azd and other Arab tribes in Oman. The Islamicization of Oman and its early relations with the Islamic central authorities in Medina are dealt with extensively, and the position of Oman during the Umayyad caliphate is discussed in depth. The relationship between the Omanis and the Khawarij is reappraised.

The middle section of the thesis deals with the foundation of the Ibādī school in Basra, the spread of Ibādī teachings in Oman, and the concept of imamate according to Ibādī doctrines. The heavy involvement of the Azd tribe in the promulgation of Ibādī teachings is highlighted.

The establishment of the first Ibādī imamate (132-134/750-752) is one of the most important events in Omani history, and this momentous occurrence is examined at length. The rise of the second Ibādī imamate and the policies of its various imams are covered extensively; the thesis concludes with the civil war and the collapse of this imamate in 280/893.

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## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my mother, who departed this world when I was a child, and to the souls of the loved ones I have lost during the course of this study. It is also dedicated to my father for his continual moral support.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

B.S.O.A.S.	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
D.I.	Der Islam
E.I.	Encyclopedia of Islam
G.J.	Geographical Journal
<u>Hisāḍ</u>	Nadwat al-Dirasat al-'Umaniyyah
J.A.S.B.	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal
J.O.S.	Journal of Oman Studies
J.U.P.	Journal of the University of Peshawar
J.W.H.	Journal of the World History
M.W.	Muslim World
P.S.A.S.	Proceeding of the Seminar for Arabian Studies

## TRANSLITERATION

Arabic Letter	Transliteration	Short Vowels
ا	'	َ a
ب	b	ُ u
ت	t	ِ i
ث	th	
ج	j	Long Vowels
ح	ḥ	
خ	kh	آ ā
د	d	و u
ذ	dh	ي i
ر	r	
ز	z	Diphthongs
س	s	
ش	sh	أ aw
ص	ṣ	أَي ay
ض	ḍ	أَيَّ iyy
ط	ṭ	أَوَّ uww
ظ	ẓ	
ع	‘	أَ -ah in pause/-at
غ	gh	
ف	f	
ق	q	
ك	k	
ل	l	
م	m	
ن	n	
ه	h	
و	w	
ي	y	

## INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of this work is to examine in depth the history of Oman from the advent of Islam until the fall of the second Ibādī imamate in 280/983.

Oman's relations with the nascent Islamic state in Medina began when the Prophet Muḥammad sent an envoy to the rulers of Oman with a letter calling upon them to embrace the new religion. The leaders and tribes of Oman accepted Islam, apparently without any opposition, and Omani history entered a new era.

Under the banner of the new Islamic government the political importance of Oman began to increase. The Arabs of Oman participated in the early Islamic conquests during the caliphate of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb; as sailors and navigators, the Azd and other Arab tribes in Oman crossed the Gulf to Persia, which had occupied Oman prior to the arrival of Islam. The heavy involvement of the Azd tribe in the Islamic conquests enabled them in later years to establish a foothold in the newly conquered land of Iraq, and hence play an important role in determining the political future of Oman within the wider Islamic empire.

Oman's position in the Islamic caliphate was to be decided in Basra, when the majority of the new powerful Azd settlers there voiced opposition to

the newly established Umayyad regime. One by-product of Omani opposition to the Umayyads was the foundation of the Ibādī school, which spread rapidly through Oman and became the predominant doctrine among the people of Oman at that time. The main goal of the followers of this school was to establish an imamate based on Ibādī principles - an objective which would, if realised, cleave Oman from the main body of the Islamic caliphate.

After many unsuccessful attempts, the Ibādīs, taking advantage of the Abbasid-Umayyad conflict, were eventually able to set up their own imamate. From this point onwards Oman became independent from the Islamic caliphate. And although many attempts were made by the Abbasids to regain authority over Oman, the Ibadis were able to maintain their independence and protect their imamate from all external threats. The collapse of the imamate, when it came, was the result of internal disputes concerning the legitimacy of the Ibādī imams; doctrinal conflict led eventually to civil war and to intervention from external powers.

The history of Oman at that time is linked inextricably with the fortunes of the Ibādiyyah. Indeed, Oman's written history began with the establishment of the first Ibādī imamate. The history of Oman prior to the rise of the Ibādiyyah was dealt with very loosely by the Omani Ibādī historians, who took their information from wider Islamic sources and interpreted events according to their own point of view and ideological bias. However, Islamic sources failed to cover political events in Oman which occurred during and after the decline of the caliphate of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, when Muslims were split by internal

conflict over the caliphate; as a result large gaps began to appear in the written history of Oman.

Despite the importance of the subject, very little has been written by modern scholars on this particular period of Omani history. The present study is an attempt to fill this gap. The researcher aims to bring together as many as possible of the scattered scraps of information on this period of Omani history and assemble them into a coherent and unified whole.

The study is divided into two parts, comprising nine chapters.

Chapter I introduces the reader to the geography of Oman and to the political developments in the region prior to the advent of Islam, with particular reference to the migration of the Azd and other Arab tribes to Oman.

Chapter II deals with the Islamicization of Oman from the time of Muḥammad until the end of the caliphate of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.

Oman’s relations with the Umayyad regime are examined in Chapter III, and an attempt is made to throw further light on the important role played by Oman on the political stage at the time.

Chapter IV focuses on the establishment of the Ibādī school in Basra and highlights the involvement of the Azd tribe in this event. Chapter V, which concludes the first part of the study, charts the spread of Ibādī teachings

throughout Oman and the submission of the Omani populace to the new doctrines.

Chapter VI is an exposition of the concept of imamate as enshrined in Ibādī teachings; the importance of the imamate in the eyes of the Ibādī ulema is underlined and reappraised.

The establishment and eventual collapse of the first Ibādī imamate form the subject matter of Chapter VII. The internal policies of the imamate are examined and the reasons for its downfall delineated.

Chapter VIII charts the rise of the second Ibādī imamate and presents a detailed review of the policies - political, economic and religious - of each of the imams in this period.

Chapter IX deals with the civil war and the collapse of the second Ibādī imamate following Abbasid intervention in 280/893.

#### **General observation on the sources**

The primary sources for this study are the Arabic works of the early Muslim historians; secondary sources are the works of modern scholars in both Arabic and English.

For practical purposes, this thesis can be divided into two parts, each dependent on a different kind of source material.

The bulk of the information used in the first part of this study has been taken from the works of the early Muslim historians, such as al-Ṭabari's Tārīkh; Ibn Sa'd's Ṭabaqat; Balādhurī's Futūḥ al-Buldān; al-Wāqidi's Maghāzī; Ibn Khayyāṭ's Tārīkh; and Yāqūt's Mu'jam al-Buldān. These are the standard sources of information for most historical studies of this kind.

These works give us a more or less comprehensive picture of Omani history up until the time of Caliph 'Uthmān, after which only scattered pieces of information on events in Oman can be found. It is from these fragments of historical material that the researcher has built up a picture of Oman's position in the Islamic community during the Umayyad period. Gaps in the history of Oman at that time were filled to some extent by local Omani historians, whose works have also been used in this part of the study.

Modern works on this period of Oman's history, such as al-'Ānī's Tārīkh 'Umān fī 'l-'Uṣūr al-Islāmiyyah al-ūlā, and Naboodah's Eastern Arabia in the 6th and 7th centuries, Wilkinson's Arab Settlement, and Miles' Countries and Tribes of the Persian Gulf, were also used.

The second half of the work, which focuses mainly in the Ibāḍiyyah, relies on the works of Ibāḍī religious scholars of Oman.

### **The Omani sources**

The following is an historical survey of the Omani sources used in this

study. The sources can be divided into two categories: manuscripts and printed texts. Both categories have been listed in the Bibliography in the normal way. Details of the manuscript sources and the printed works are given below.

It is regretted that my only opportunity to use the Omani MSS preserved in the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture in Muscat was to appear there in person. I was unfortunately not permitted to have photocopies. However I have now obtained copies of certain Omani manuscripts located <sup>Side</sup> out<sup>of</sup> Oman, in places such as Cairo, Damascus, the United Kingdom and France. For this study of the sources, I shall discuss each source according to the chronological order of their authors. The assessment will include information on each as follows:-

The date of the author, with a short biography wherever possible.

The sources the author uses, where these are known.

How the source relates to other sources.

The most important manuscripts, whenever the information is available.

A short summary of the Omani historical sources as a whole completes this section.

### **Kitāb al-Aḥdāth wa-'l-ṣifāt**

The author of this book is Abū 'l-Mu'aththir al-Ṣalt b. Khamīs al-Kharūṣī al-Bahlawī,<sup>1</sup> one of the Omani Ibādī ulema of the 3rd/9th century. Little is known about him, according to al-Sālimī.<sup>2</sup> Abū 'l-Mu'aththir attended the election of Imam al-Ṣalt b. Mālik (237-273/851-885) and therefore he was a contemporary of this imam until the latter was deposed in 273/885. There is no available



information about his death, but from his book one can say that he probably died before the collapse of the second Ibādī imamate in 280/893 after the Abbasid intervention, since he makes no reference to this incident.

The Aḥdāth wa-'l-sifāt is the first of the Omani primary sources considered to be of crucial importance, since the author was an eye witness of the events which took place during the last decade of the second Ibādī imamate before its collapse. He provides us with full material on the issues of the dispute over the imamate of al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk. These issues later developed into open conflict between the two branches of the Omani tribes (Qaḥṭān and 'Adnān) leading to the civil war which paved the way for the collapse of the second Ibādī imamate.

Abū 'l-Mu'aththir never refers to any source or author from which or whom he gathered his information, particularly concerning the Islamic civil war. Most of the material he produced consists basically of philosophical arguments on the theory of the imamate in Ibādī thought.

From his work we note that the author was clear in his support for the deposed Imam al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk. He defended his imamate by going back to the events from which the Muslims of the first century suffered as a result of their dispute over the caliphate (particularly between 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah). Abū 'l-Mu'aththir then gives a full description of the attempt by Mūsā b. Mūsā and his ally Rāshid b. Naẓr to depose Imam al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk, mentioning their claim that al-Ṣalt was not entitled to continue as imam. However, such a claim was, the

author regards, based on false allegations.

Most of the Omani authors of the later centuries relied on Abū 'l-Mu'aththir's book in covering the events of this particular and important period of the second Ibādī imamate. For example, al-Ṣalīmī is one of those who used this book frequently in his Tuḥfah (see below). He always refers to Abū 'l-Mu'aththir during his handling of the events of the second Ibādī imamate. Al-Sayyābī, in 'Umān 'abr al-tārīkh, also used Abū 'l-Mu'aththir's work often and refers to the author by name.

The Aḥdath wa-'l-ṣifāt was consulted for the current work, especially in Chapter Nine of this study, because of the important information this book provides regarding the period concerned.

This book, along with other Omani books of the same and later periods was published in two volumes by the M.N.H.C. in 1986,<sup>3</sup> and edited by Sayeda Isma'il Kashef (sic). The edition is based on one manuscript located in M.N.H.C. library and dated 1271/1854.<sup>4</sup>

When editing this part of Kitāb al-Siyar, the editor faced the difficulty of providing information about the Ibādī ulema mentioned in the text and also about Omani place names. For example, she places Sohar in the Ṣāḥirah region, instead of the Bāṭinah.<sup>5</sup>

## Sīrat Abū Qaḥṭān

The author of this work is Abū Qaḥṭān Khālīd b. Qaḥṭān al-Hajjārī, from the village of Hajjār of Wādī B. Kharūṣ.<sup>6</sup> He is one of the Ibādī ulema of the 3rd/9th century. Abū Qaḥṭān was a contemporary of Abū 'l-Muaththir al-Ṣalt b. Khamīs, and was considered to be an opponent of the imamate of Rāshid b. al-Naẓr who, with Mūsā b. Mūsā, deposed Imam al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk.

His work deals with a variety of matters but is of particular use for this current study because of the information he provides concerning the apostasy of the people of Dībā in Oman during the caliphate of Abū Bakr. Abū Qaḥṭān also provides interesting information regarding the Ibādīyyah from its beginnings in Basra until its establishment of independent imamates in Ḥaḍramawt, Oman and North Africa. The rest of the text deals with the Ibādī dispute over the office of the imamate at the end of the second Ibādī imamate. He enthusiastically defends the rights of the deposed Imam al-Ṣalt and accuses the latter's opponents of having abandoned the true Ibādī doctrine.

Abū Qaḥṭān does not mention any of his courses, but nevertheless provides us with inestimable information concerning the general state of affairs in Oman during the last years of the second Ibādī imamate and also tells a great deal about the ulema of that period. His account is valuable because he deals with events from a strictly Omani viewpoint. For example, he denies the apostasy of the people of Dībā, mentioned in the early Islamic sources.

Abū Qaḥṭān's method of presenting the historical events differs to some

extent from that of his contemporary Abū 'l-Mu'aththir al-Ṣalt b. Khamīs, although they both agree that Imam al-Ṣalt was the rightful imam.

Abū Qaḥṭān's work is regarded as one of the primary sources of the 3rd/9th century. Many Omani authors of later periods relied upon his work in their writing. Al-Izkawī, in his Kashf (see below) mentions Abū Qaḥṭān's name when he deals with the second Ibādī imamate. Al-Sālimī also depends to a large extent on Abū Qaḥṭān's Sīrah; he refers to him frequently in his book, Tuhfah, as does al-Sayabbī in his book, 'Uman. Even those, such as al-Baysawī in his Hujjah, who do not mention or refer to him, apparently used the same methods as Abū Qaḥṭān did in his Sīrah. This Sīrah is among those works of the Ibādī ulema published by the M.N.H.C., entitled al-Siyar wa-'l-jawābat,<sup>7</sup> edited by Sayeda Kashef. Her edition of Abū Qaḥṭān's Sīrah is of similar value to that of the Aḥdath.

#### al-Hujjah 'alā man abtakal-su'al

This work was compiled by Abū 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Baysawī, from the village of Bisya near Bahla in the interior of Oman. There is no information about his dates except that he lived during the 4th/10th century.<sup>8</sup> As well as the above-mentioned book, al-Baysawī also wrote Jāmi' Abi 'l-Ḥasan fi 'l-adyān wa-'l-aḥkām.<sup>9</sup>

The Hujjah is considered to be among the most important sources of the 4th/10th century for the study of the collapse of the second Ibādī imamate. The principal significance of the Hujjah lies in the fact that the author deals

succinctly with the issue of the caliphate in early Islam, and in particular with the Ibādī view concerning the caliph ‘Uthmān, and subsequently the civil war between ‘Alī and Mu’āwiyah. He deals especially with the teaching of the founders of the Ibādī school of thought in Islam, teaching which had a considerable influence on later Ibādī doctrine. Although al-Baysawī does not mention his sources, it seems to me that by comparing his work with that of Abū ‘l-Mu’aththir al-Ṣalt b. Khamīs and Abū Qaḥṭān Khālīd b. Qaḥṭān, he has relied heavily upon them since they were both contemporaries and supporters of Imam al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk.

It appears from the contents of this work that the writer was a fervent supporter of the deposed Imam al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk, since his writings are replete with violent attacks on the imamate of Rāshīd b. al-Nazr and its adherents.

Al-Sālimī (see below) used the material of the Hujjah directly and he refers to the author frequently. It is found in a collection of early Ibādī works known as al-Siyar wa-‘l-jawābāt in the M.N.H.C. in Muscat. As previously mentioned, these collected works by Ibādī ulema were published in two volumes and the Hujjah is in volume two of this work, edited by Sayeda Kashef.<sup>10</sup>

### Ansāb al-‘Arab

Abū ‘l-Mundhir Salamah b. Muslim al-‘Awtabī al-Ṣuḥārī was from B. Ṭaḥīyah of Azd.<sup>11</sup> We know very little indeed about him; his exact dates are unknown, but it is clear that he lived between the 4th and 5th/10th and 11th centuries.<sup>12</sup> His other works include the Ḍiyā’, a work of *fiqh*.<sup>13</sup> The Ansāb is

considered by all to be the most important document to come down to us on Arab genealogies in general, and on the early history of the Azd and other tribes of Oman in particular. The book consists of two main sections. The first of these runs from the creation to the Prophet Muḥammad. The second section deals with genealogies of the Qaḥṭāniyyah: Ḥimyar, Ṭayyi' and other tribes, and above all the Azd. This book is similar in its compilation to al-Balādhurī's celebrated work Ansāb al-Ashraf, since much of the former, like Balādhurī's is taken up with biographical essays. Al-'Awtabī gleaned his information from different sources. Sometimes he refers to them by name, such as Ibn al-Kalbī, al-Wāqidi and Ibn Durayd, himself an Azdī, who is mentioned frequently by al-'Awtabī when he deals with events of the civil war in Oman leading to the collapse of the second Ibādī imamate. On other occasions he does not mention names. He fails also to mention any Omani sources relating to the events which took place.

Sometimes he relates conflicting accounts of a particular incident without mentioning his sources. The Ansāb possesses special significance because it contains information about the early history of Oman not found in any other source. The Ansāb was used by later Omani authors. For example, al-Izkawī, in his Kashf, relied conspicuously on al-'Awtabī, and by comparing Chapter Four (which covers the information of al-Azd's immigration to Oman and expulsion of the Persians) with al-'Awtabī's account, it is clear that al-Izkawī used al-'Awtabī's material directly without referring to him. Those who came after al-Izkawī used the information which al-Izkawī himself had taken from the book Ansāb. Ibn Ruzayq, in his book al-Saḥīfah al-qaḥṭāniyyah, used the same

information provided in al-‘Awtabī’s book, about the Qaḥṭāniyyah in general and the Azd in particular. Ibn Ruzayq uses al-‘Awtabī’s accounts directly without mentioning his name. Al-Sālimī is also one of these who uses al-‘Awtabī’s information, but he always refers to him by name.

At ~~least three~~ manuscripts of the work exist outside Oman to my knowledge, and there are most probably further manuscripts in the private libraries of certain Omanis.<sup>14</sup>

1. Durham, formerly the property of the late Professor T.M. Johnstone, now located in the Palace Green Section of Durham University Library. Dated 1089/1678.
2. Paris Bibilothèque Nationale, MSS Arabe, no. 5019. Dated 1115/1703.
3. Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, no. 2461. Dated 1327/1718.
4. Muscat in the M.N.H.C. Dated 1327/1909.

We can see from the dates of these MSS a further important factor, namely the large gap between the date when al-‘Awtabī’s work, the Ansab, was presumably compiled (about the 5th/11th century) and our earliest surviving MSS (Durham) dated 1089/1678. There is thus a gap of as much as 700-800 years between the compilation and our earliest surviving MSS. It is worth mentioning that the Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah copy is the best because it is

written with clear handwriting, fewer omissions and is more complete than the others and has been tampered with less.

There is also a printed version of the work based on the Dār al-Kutub and the Muscat MSS. It was published in two volumes by the M.N.H.C. in Muscat in 1981. The publication is only a text based on two of the MSS. There are also many gaps and omissions left without correction. No name of an editor is given in this edition. This printed edition is therefore of very limited value to the historian. The work needs to be edited carefully by using all the copies of MSS available, in order to cover these missing paragraphs and pages.

### **Kitāb al-Ihtidā'**

The author of this book, Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad b. 'Abdullāh b. Mūsā al-Kindī al-Nizwānī, is considered one of the leading Omani Ibādī scholars of the 5th-6th/11th-12th centuries. No further information is available about him except that he wrote another book known as al-Jawhar al-muqtaṣar.<sup>15</sup>

According to the author, his reason for writing this book was the critical situation of the Ibādīs of Oman caused by the eruption of conflicts and the dispute over the legitimacy of the imamate of al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk.<sup>16</sup> The author also discusses in detail the theory of the imamate according to Ibādī thought and refers to the deposition of Imam Ṣalt b. Mālīk whom he supported.

The main sources which he used in gathering his material are the writings



of such ulema as Abū 'l-Mu'aththir al-Ṣalt b. Khamīs, Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad b. Maḥbūb b. al-Raḥīl and Abū Qaḥṭān Khālīd b. Qaḥṭān and Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad b. Rūḥ b. 'Arbī. He refers to these authors on several occasions as well as to contemporary ulema. The printed book was edited by Sayeda Isma'il Kashef and published by the M.N.H.C. in 1985. It provides the current study with vital information concerning the second Ibādī imamate. Most of the book lacks notes, apart from several places where the editor adds notes and comments on matters regarding which she is familiar. Apart from that the editing is poor. It seems, however, that the editor lacked the specialist knowledge required for the interpretation of Ibādī terms which the author frequently uses, and which would have enabled her to produce a satisfactory edition.

### **Al-Kashf wa-'l-bayān**

Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad b. Sa'īd al-Azdī al-Qalhātī. This author lived during the 4th/10th century, according to Sayeda Kashef, who edited this work. She bases her assertion on information in the MSS itself.<sup>17</sup> Wilkinson however listed him among the ulema of the 6th/12th century to early 7th/13th century.<sup>18</sup>

This work consists of two parts. The first part deals with the various Islamic groupings (*fīraq*) and al-Qalhātī's criticism of each, and also various fundamental doctrinal matters. The second part is of a more historical nature, and mentions, for instance, the dissension which took place among the Muslims after 'Uthmān became caliph and the subsequent disputes which occurred with special emphasis on the emergence of the Khawārij and the various factions

which developed among them.<sup>19</sup> In this current study use was made of this information about the Khawārij which concerns Oman.

Al-Qalhātī generally mentions his sources and those who transmitted them, especially the Omani authors such as al-‘Awtabī, al-Diyā, and al-Shajābī’s Miftāḥ al-Sharī‘ah.

Al-Qalhātī gives full information concerning the Islamic groupings. It is clear from his writings that he shows some sympathy with the earliest Khawārij (the Muḥakkimah) and attacks the policies of ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī.

I have no information about the later Omani authors who used al-Qalhātī’s book, but by examining the same issues presented in al-Izkawī’s Kashf concerning the same issues we can see the similarity between the two authors. This in my view represents the real Ibādī attitude to these matters.

The Kashf was published by the M.N.H.C. in 1980. The manuscript used by the editor of this book is unique. It is found in the British Library, Or.2606. Although the editor Sayeda Kashef has produced a clear text it is difficult for an accurate assessment to be made concerning the reliability of the edition without a detailed study of the whole work. Only a small part was used for the current study. One can say however that her editing is confined to mentioning the numerous Qur’ānic reference which occur through the work.

## Misbāḥ al-Zalām

The author of this work is Aḥmad b. ‘Abdullāh b. Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad Bakr b. ‘Uthmān al-Ruqayshī al-Izkawī. Apart from his name, no biographical information exists.

Ruqayshī’s work was originally based on the Kitāb Da‘ā’im al-Islām,<sup>20</sup> which was compiled by Aḥmad b. al-Naẓr al-‘Umānī in the 6th/12 century. His compilation, Misbāḥ al-Zalām ‘alā Da‘ā’im al-Islām, has in fact a detailed commentary on a poem composed by Ibn al-Naẓr in his Da‘ā’im.

The Misbāḥ is composed in a poetic style, and contains the biography of the Khawārij imams of the first Muḥakkimah as well as the Omani Ibādī imams down to the imamate of al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk (237-273/851-885). It is clear that al-Ruqayshī quotes Abū ‘l-Mu’aththir al-Ṣalt b. Khamīs (3rd/8th century). there is also a sort of similarity in style between Ruqayshī, who mentions the period of rule of each imam, and al-Izkawī in the Kashf. The question raised here is which author quoted the others. Since al-Ruqayshī’s dates are unknown, it is difficult to form a judgement on this issue.

The importance of the work has been demonstrated in its identification of the beginning and the end of the rule of the imams of the second Ibādī imamate. It has been noted that al-Ruqayshī’s accounts are concise, and all the information he provides is based on the Ibādī point of view. It is also difficult to say who used the Misbāḥ since the date of the author is unknown, but if, for example, he lived before the seventeenth century, there is no doubt that al-

Izkawī and al-Ma'walī, and Ibn Ruzayq and those later authors used his information especially that concerning the dates of rule he gives for each Ibādī imam of the second imamate.

The MSS copy of Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, B.20549, dated as 1294/1877 was consulted for this study. It has a clear text and is complete. To my knowledge this work has not so far been published.

### **Kashf al-ghummah**

It seems that most of the Omani sources failed to provide any clear information about the author Sirḥān b. Sa'īd. Al-Izkawī's biography and modern scholars have raised certain doubts as to whether he is the actual author. Ross was the first person to translate certain chapters of Oman history from the K. Kashf al-ghummah and refers to al-Izkawī as the author.<sup>22</sup> It is of interest that this argument has continued for some time and doubts about the author's authenticity are still held by some outside Oman. Nevertheless the Omanis at any rate have concluded that he was the actual author.

Fortunately, I managed to locate an unpublished manuscript by one of al-Izkawī's descendants which throws some light on al-Izkawī's life. According to Yahyā al-Sarḥanī<sup>23</sup> al-Izkawī was known as Sirḥān b. Sa'īd b. Sirḥān b. 'Umar b. Aḥmed b. Sa'īd al-Sarḥanī. He was born in Izki, in the interior of Oman in 1060/1650 and died in 1150/1737. Al-Izkawī was recognised as a religious scholar and a poet. It was believed that he started writing his book, Kashf al-ghummah, when he was 25 years old.

The Kashf has been regarded by most scholars as one of the most important chronicles of the early seventeenth century, due to its general and comprehensive coverage of Omani history, a period of more than one thousand years. This book consists of forty *bābs* or chapters. It contains very valuable information concerning Oman in the early Islamic period, from the coming of Islam until the collapse of the second Ibāḍī imamate. He gives full details about Oman during the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates. The author devoted more than seven chapters to the history of Oman and the Ibāḍī doctrine during the earlier centuries until the completion of his work in 1728.

Al-Izkawī gathered his material from different works written by many Omani authors before him. Unfortunately, he does not refer at all to the sources concerned by name. By comparing different known Omani works prior to his time, I have found that al-Izkawī did not add significant information, other than repeating what had been reported before him. there is no doubt that al-Izkawī relied conspicuously on al-‘Awtabī’s Ansāb and by comparing Chapter Four (which covers the information of the Azd immigration to Oman and expulsion of the Persians) with al-‘Awtabī’s accounts, it is clear that al-Izkawī used al-‘Awtabī’s material directly without referring to him. The only author he does refer to is Ibn al-Kalbī on whom al-‘Awtabī himself relied in the Ansāb.<sup>24</sup>

The main works which al-Izkawī used in his work on Oman in the early Islamic period were, among others, Abū ‘l-Mu’aththir’s K. al-Aḥdath and Abū

Qaḥṭān's Sīrah, as well as al-'Awtabī's Ansāb.

It has been noted that al-Izkawī's coverage of the second Ibādī imamate is general and concise, probably because of the scarcity of information available to him. Alternatively, it could be interpreted as being due to the need to be brief as he included in the work several centuries of general Omani and Islamic history.

There are several manuscripts of this work in different countries. I have in my possession microfilms of two copies of the Kashf: the first is the British Library Or. 8046, dated 1290/1874. It is worth mentioning that this copy is not in good condition, and that there are many spelling mistakes, and omissions of many entire pages. Above all, parts of the MSS are illegible. This copy is accordingly less reliable. The second manuscript is that of the Asad Library of Damascus. This is a much better copy, dated 1315/1897: that is, 23 years later than the British Library copy. It is in good condition and the handwriting is legible.

Ross made a great effort when he translated part of the Kashf concerning Oman's history, thereby introducing al-Izkawī to Western scholars. There are many spelling mistakes and misunderstanding of Arabic terms, which led Ross to give an English translation different from the actual meaning of the Arabic. He did not translate the poem in al-Izkawī's book. Ross's account is still generally considered by many to be the most important achievement to date.

Hedwig Klein<sup>25</sup> half a century later, managed to edit and translate a few chapters of Kashf, which were finally published.

In 1976 ‘Abd al-Majīd al-Qaysī, in response to an invitation from the M.N.H.C. of Oman, edited the first version in Arabic, relying on two MSS, those of the British Library and the al-Asad Library. However, al-Qaysī failed to meet the requirements for acceptable editing and he included no index of names and places mentioned in the text. It seems that his aim was simply to publish the book, rather than to make a valuable work of reference.

It was Aḥmad ‘Ubaydlī who made a better effort and published his edition in 1985.<sup>26</sup> It is of interest that ‘Ubaydlī omitted al-Izkawī’s name as the original author and attributed it to an unknown author.

### Qīṣaṣ wa-akhbār jarat fī Uḥmān

The author of this book is Abū Sulaymān Muḥammad b. ‘Āmir b. Rāshid al-Ma‘walī al-Afawī. Little is known about his life but he was probably one of the ulema of the eighteenth century.<sup>27</sup>

This book covers the period of Omani history from the Azd immigration before Islam until the end of the Ya‘aribah period in the first half of the eighteenth century. The author mentions no sources nor authors in gathering his material.

There is a great similarity between the information which this book

provides and that of the Kashf and Tārīkh ahl ‘Umān. Since the author ends his work in 1852 and al-Izkawī ends his Kashf in 1728, it is reasonable to suppose that his information was taken from al-Izkawī’s Kashf.

The author of the Qisṣa uses the same method as al-Izkawī: his account is general and concise, and the material and the style of writing similar to that of al-Izkawī, and the unknown author of Tārīkh ahl ‘Umān. It indeed looks as if all have been written by one another.

Two MSS of this work were consulted. The first was completed in Zanzibar and is to be found in Paris in the Bibliothèque Nationale, histoire 5126-11, and dated 1269/1852. It is written in a beautifully clear handwriting. The second MSS is to be found in al-Asad Library, Damascus (Tārīkh (fox. 228-417)) and dated to 1313/1895. There are serious omissions in this copy, and several pages are missing.

There is also a printed edition of this work published by M.N.H.C. IN 1979.

### **Tārīkh ahl ‘Umān**

This book by an unknown author covers the same period of the history of Oman as found in al-Izkawī’s Kashf. The book stops in 1154/1741.<sup>28</sup> Therefore it provides us with information not recorded in the Kashf which ends in 1728.



The author of this book does not refer to any sources or authors from which he gathered his information.

It has been noted that the accounts of this book match those of al-Izkawī, which leads one to suppose that the author of Tārīkh ahl ‘Umān uses al-Izkawī’s Kashf directly without rearranging the material he takes. The book is very short and it is useful to compare its information with that of al-Izkawī’s concerning Oman in the early Islamic period. I have in my possession the printed edition of this work, which was published by the M.N.H.C. IN 1980. This edition is poorly edited. The editor, Sa‘īd ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ ‘Āshūr, was more concerned to correct the spelling mistakes in the text. He gives neither additional information nor an index of the people and places mentioned in this book.

#### **Kitāb Kanz al-adīb wa-sulāfat al-labīb**

The author of this work is Sālīm b. Sa‘īd b. ‘Alī al-Ṣā’ighī. We have no information concerning al-Ṣā’ighī’s life, although Ibn Ruzayq mentions Ma‘rūf b. Sālīm al-Ṣā’ighī as one of the ulema of the 19th century.<sup>29</sup>

The Kanz is, in general terms, on the subject of *fiqh* and the *sharī‘ah*, according to the Ibādī ulema.

Al-Ṣā’ighī mentions in general many Omani authors such as Jā‘id b. Khamīs and Naṣīr b. Ḥabīb b. Sālīm.

I have in my possession a copy of Chapter Four, Bāb al-Imāmah, which has been used in Chapter Six of this study. The author concludes his comments on the imamate in the context of Ibādī thought.

Wilkinson, who wrote an article<sup>30</sup> based on this chapter suggests that al-Ṣā'ighī was giving a contemporary view of the imamate and not giving the view of the early Ibādī ulema. In my opinion, however, al-Ṣā'ighī was expressing the views of the imamate which the Ibādī ulema held for centuries.

A MSS is to be found in Cambridge University Library, Add. 2896, containing 63 *bābs*. To my knowledge this MSS has not so far been published.

### **Al-Fath al-mubīn**

Ibn Ruzayq Ḥamad b. Muḥammad b. Ruzayq b. Bakhīt b. Sa'īd b. Ghassān was probably born in the early 12th/19th century, and died in Muscat in 1873.<sup>31</sup> He received his early teaching from Ḥabīb b. Ṣālim al-Nizwī at his school in Nizwā. He was so successful that he was chosen as one of the seven readers (*qurrā'*) who constantly accompanied Ḥabīb b. Ṣālim and who read out loud to him because he was blind.

Ibn Ruzayq was recognised as an eminent historian who showed a considerable knowledge of the Arabic language and *fiqh*. He maintained a very good relationship with rulers of the Al-Bū Sa'īd family, especially al-Sayyid Ṣālim b. Sulṭān. This relationship influenced him to compile al-Fath. This book was generally intended to cover the genealogy of the Al-Bū Sa'īd dynasty, which has

ruled since the beginning of the second half of the 18th century, until the present time.

K. al-fath consists of three sections (*bābs*) of which the second concerns Oman history during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods. He mentions the Ibādī imams beginning with al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd and ending with Imam Aḥmad b. Sa'īd, the founder of the Al-Bū Sa'īd family.

The author, it would appear, relied on taking and gathering his information from several Omani sources, as well as many early Islamic authors. He mentions the names of Ibn Ishāq, al-Wāqidi, al-Mas'ūdī and Ibn Durayd. When discussing Oman's history, Ibn Ruzayq relied on Muḥammad b. 'Ariq al-'Adwānī, although he does not mention this book. He also quoted directly from al-Izkawī's Kashf in addition to other Omani source at his disposal.

Generally his accounts of Oman's history in the early Islamic period are brief. Ibn Ruzayq frequently omits the dates of the events he mentions and it is quite obvious that he repeats the information of al-Izkawī concerning this period.

Al-Fath al-mubīn was used by later authors such as al-Sālimī, who refers to him when he uses Ibn Ruzayq's material. Al-Sayyābī also quotes his information in his book 'Umān 'abr al-tārikh and mentions him by name.

There is a printed edition of the Fath published by the M.N.H.C. in 1984,

which was consulted for this study. It is edited by ‘Abd al-Mun‘im ‘Āmir and Muḥammad Mursī ‘Abdullāh.

**Al-Shu‘ā’ al-shā’i’ bī-l-lum‘ān fi dhikr a’immat ‘Umān**

This book was also compiled by Ibn Ruzayq. It consists of a lengthy poem composed by Ibn Ruzayq in 148 verses in which he included the names of twenty-five Ibādī imams throughout a period of one thousand years. The earliest name is that of al-Julandā b. Mas‘ūd, the founder of the first Ibādī imamate, and the last is Imam Sultān b. Sayf al-Ya‘rubī. He then wrote this book which was based on his original poem, and adopted a style of writing used by al-Ruqayshī when compiling his Miṣbāḥ al-Zalām. In this style of writing the author usually begins each paragraph with a verse from his poem and follows it with his interpretation and comments which normally cover semantic points and grammatical terms. He then finishes by giving a historical commentary regarding that particular verse and the events which are mentioned in the poem.

Ibn Ruzayq repeats the information he mentions in the Fath, which he quotes from different Omani sources. He did not add any significant information regarding historical matters, and his account regarding issues is very weak. He did not give the dates of Ibādī imams he mentioned and the time they ruled.

It is difficult to know whether any of the later sources used al-Shu‘ā’ or not since these authors refer to Ibn Ruzayq himself, not to his work.

This work was printed by the M.N.H.C. in 1984. I consulted the printed edition for this study especially on matters which concern the imams of the early Ibādī imamate. This edition was edited by ‘Abd al-Mun‘im ‘Āmir, who has produced editions of several Omani MSS. Examining this book, there is no doubt about the effort which has been expended in such editing. Nevertheless, there are some shortcomings, such as his failure to provide detailed information about these imams and the period they ruled, which does not appear in the original work of al-Shu‘ā’.

### Tuhfat al-A‘yān

The author is ‘Abdullāh b. Ḥumayd b. Sallūm b. ‘Ubayd b. Khalfān b. Khamīs al-Sālimī, (c. 1870/1914). He is considered to be one of the most celebrated Ibādī ulema of the late 19th century and the first decade of this century.

He was born in al-Ḥūqayn, near Rustāq, and lost his sight when he was about 12 years old. He received most of his early education from his father and then from various Omani ulema of his time. He then moved to Sharqiyyah province, where he accompanied Sheikh Sāliḥ b. ‘Alī al-Ḥārithī and acquired from him a wide range of knowledge, especially on the Ibādī *madhhab*.<sup>32</sup> He was requested by al-Sheikh Sāliḥ to stay in al-Qābil, where he began to write and to teach. It is believed that he started writing when he was 17. Despite the fact that he was blind, he became a famous scholar in a very short time, and compiled many different books, most of them on religion and Ibādī teachings. His most important book is the Tuhfat al-a‘yān.

The work is unique in the sense that it brings together most of the information available in other Omani sources. It is therefore regarded by many as one of the most reliable works written on the history of Oman.<sup>33</sup>

The importance of the Tuhfah (which was completed in 1913) is made clear from the various accounts which al-Sālimī provides in his book, especially on the period covered by this study. He uses all the MSS available to him, especially the work of the ulema of the 3rd/8th century and later periods, each of whom held different opinions on the dispute over the second Ibādī imamate.

Al-Sālimī mentions all the authors whose works he consulted, such as ‘Abū ‘l-Mu’aththir, Abū Qaḥṭān, al-Baysawī, al-‘Awtabī, al-Izkawī and so on. When he quotes from any work of the early Ibādī ulema he quotes the information directly and attributes it to its original author with <sup>و</sup> omission or changes. As well as drawing from Omani sources, al-Sālimī quotes from many early Muslim authors such as Abū ‘Ubayda, al-Ṭabarī, al-Aṣma‘ī, Ibn al-Athīr and Ibn Khaldūn.

Al-Sālimī gives full information about the events he mentions in his book, whenever this information is available to him. He often complains about the lack of information on the history of Oman. Examination of his account of the early period of Oman’s history shows that his style of writing and opinion, despite its late date, follows the traditional style of Omani authors.

Al-Sālimī's Tuḥfah was used by later authors such as al-Sayyābī and al-Ḥārithī, who have taken most of their information from his work. Generally they refer to him.

In the present study the present writer has benefited from the work of al-Sālimī to a great extent in most of the chapters of this thesis, since al-Sālimī's accounts are reliable and were gathered from different Omani works.

The Tuḥfah was first published in Cairo, 1380/1961 in two volumes, and there are now many reissues.

#### ‘Umān ‘abr al-tārīkh

The author of this work is Sālim b. Ḥamūd al-Sayyābī, born in Ghalā, near Muscat, in 1326/1908. He received his education from learned people during his early life and kept the company of Imam Muḥammad b. ‘Abdullāh al-Khalīlī. He held different posts as *qāḍī* in Oman. Al-Sayyābī currently works in the M.N.H.C. In addition to this work on history, which I have used as reference in this study, he has also written a number of other books on the Ibāḍīyyah.<sup>34</sup>

Al-Sayyābī relied on gathering his information from different Omani sources at his disposal. He refers in particular to al-Sālimī's Tuḥfah and mentions Ibn Ruzayq frequently. It has been noted that al-Sayyābī quoted directly from al-Sālimī's Tuḥfah, and in particular the information concerning the Ibāḍī ulema of the 3rd/8th century. His style of writing is characterised by an

abundance of ideas and themes concerning history, *fiqh* and the Ibādī *madhhab*. Al-Sayyābī's writings are considered important because he is a contemporary Omani writer. His book, 'Umān 'abr al-Tārikh, was published by the M.N.H.C. in 1982 in 4 volumes.

#### Al-'Uqūd al-fidiyyah fī usūl al-Ibādiyyah

Salīm b. Ḥamad b. Sulaymān b. Ḥumayd al-Ḥārithī is a modern authority on the Ibādī history of Oman. His book is a general history of the Ibādiyyah from its beginnings. He gives special attention to the Ibādī imams and the ulema of Oman and North Africa. The author relies upon North African Ibādī authors, such as al-Darjīnī and al-Shammākhī, when writing about the Ibādiyyah in the region and likewise upon the Omani sources when dealing with Omani Ibādī history. He usually mentions his sources and it is clear that he has relied especially upon al-Salīmī's Tuhfah. His book is important because it gives all information about the Ibādī ulema in general and those of Oman in particular, and mentions the name of their works. The book is thus useful and has been used in this current study.

This book was published in 1974 in Syria and Lebanon and reprinted by the M.N.H.C. in 1983.

#### **Concluding remarks on the Omani sources**

There are two different Omani sources: those of the early Ibādī scholars, and those which came after them and follow to some extent their style of writing.



The early Omani Ibādī religious scholars, such as Abū 'l-Mu'aththir al-Ṣalt b. Khamīs, Abū Qaḥṭān Khālīd b. Qaḥṭān, al-Baysawī and al-Kindī, produced contemporary writings exclusively Ibādī in spirit and style. Most of these writings were based on the dispute over the imamate which occurred during the last decade of the second Ibādī imamate after Imam al-Ṣaḳb. Mālik had been deposed by Mūsā b. Mūsā. In order to solve this dilemma, and to avoid it happening again, these contemporary authors give us crucial information on the general aspects of life during this period of our field of study, however with very little or no attention being paid to the socio-economic developments in Oman following the establishment of the Ibādī imamate. In part this early neglect is attributed to the thrust and impetus of Ibādī teaching which commanded the attention of those ulema. The historians felt they needed to record the spirit of the Ibādī imamate and describe events such as the dispute over the imamate. Their writings at the same time informed and had a lasting effect on the later Ibādīs of Oman. Therefore the researcher who embarks on a study of the history of the second Ibādī imamate has to dig very deeply into these writings in order to obtain the requisite information.

Generally the parts of Omani history written by later authors, starting from the beginning of the 17th century, present a coherent, orderly picture, at least to a large extent. Before the 17th century, Omani historical works were limited in scope, since they dealt almost exclusively with the activities of the Ibādī imamate, ignoring entirely news concerning those who revolted against the Ibādī imamate and whom were regarded by the Ibādī ulema as tyrants

(*jabābirah*). It is significant that, to my knowledge, there does not exist any history of Oman written by a non-Ibādī Omani. This prejudice against, virtually, any non-Ibādī activity has resulted in many serious gaps in early Omani history. Usually they portrayed their opponents in a bad light and would disregard any laudable features they might have possessed.

Al-Izkawī in his Kashf was the first Omani to attempt to write a comprehensive history of Oman. His sources were some of the earliest, therefore the incompleteness and historical bias of these works is reflected in his own writing. Al-Izkawī admits that he was no historian and that what prompted him to write a history was his fervour for the Ibādī creed. Many Omanis up to the present day have compiled histories of Oman, but their work too is biased towards the Ibādī viewpoint and their sources are largely those which al-Izkawī himself employed. Often they copied whole sections of these older Ibādī works without any attempt of analysis or criticism.

I am sure that there is more information regarding the lives and activities of the Ibādī imams contained in the many unpublished Ibādī manuscripts on both *fiqh* and *uṣūl*.

The M.N.H.C. of Oman (since its foundation in 1976) has until now only published a fraction of the MSS in its possession. Of course such publications are useful for any student of Omani history in general and of the Ibādī *madhhab* in particular. However the actual editing of the MSS usually does not fulfil the rigorous requirements of modern scholarship.

## NOTES

1. Originally from the town of Bahlā, near Nizwā, and blind. See Ennami, Studies, II, 7; Wilkinson, Imamate, 366.
2. Al-Ṣalt b. Khamīs was a contemporary of such celebrated Ibādī ulema of the 3rd/9th century as Bashīr b. al-Mundhir, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Qādī and al-Mu‘allā b. Munīr. See al-Salīmī, Tuḥfah, II, 108-109; cf. ed. Sayeda, al-Siyar, I, 23; see also al-Ḥārithī, ‘Uqūd, 255.
3. Ḥāshim, Ibādīyyah, mentions another manuscript similar to this which is located in the M.N.H.C. at Muscat. The editor of this book does not refer to Imam Ghālīb b. ‘Alī’s copy of this MSS which is found in his private library in al-Dammām.
4. See the Aḥdāth wa’l-sifāt in ed. Sayeda, al-Siyar, I, 23-85.
5. See al-Siyar, 31.
6. Ed. Sayeda, al-Siyar, I, 86; see also al-Sayyābī, Aṣdaq al-Manāhij, 52.
7. See his Sīrah in ed. Sayeda, al-Siyar, I, 86-154.
8. Al-Salīmī, Lam‘ah, 25; cf. al-Sayyābī, Aṣdaq, 52; al-Ḥārithī, ‘Uqūd, 257.
9. Al-Salīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 219; al-Ḥārithī, ‘Uqūd, 257; ed. Sayeda, al-Siyar, II, 62.
10. See the book of al-Hujjah in ed. Sayeda, al-Siyar, II, 62-105.
11. Al-Sayyābī, Aṣdaq, 54; also for fuller background information on al-‘Awtabī, see Wilkinson, “Omani and Ibādī background”, Johnstone in Bib., 126-30.
12. al-Ḥārithī, ‘Uqūd, 279.
13. Wilkinson, “Origins”, Arabian Peninsula, 86, considers the Ḍiyā’ to have been written by another person of the same family and suggests that the author of the Ansāb was the grandson (or even the great-grandson) of the author of the Ḍiyā’. However, in Oman at any rate the works of al-Ḍiyā’ and al-Ansāb are regarded as being by the same author. See al-Ḥārithī, ‘Uqūd, 279.
14. In 1987 a very important manuscript was discovered by the M.N.H.C. in a private library in Nizwā. This MS contains one of al-‘Awtabī’s works known as al-Ibānah, which uses to a considerable extent the method which al-Fayrūzābādī, the compiler of al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ employs several centuries later.

15. See al-Kindī, al-Ihtidā', 14; cf. al-Hārithī, 'Uqūd', 277.
16. The Ibādī ulema of Oman were preoccupied with this issue for centuries, attempting to resolve the dispute in order to avoid its reoccurrence. For a further detailed discussion regarding this matter, see Chapter Nine of this study.
17. See al-Kashf wa-'l-bayān, I, 8.
18. Imamate, 370.
19. M. Kfafi's translated<sup>the</sup> section which deals with<sup>the</sup> Khawārij from al-Qalḥatī's Kashf, and this was published in 1952; cf. "The rise of Kharijism", 29-48.
20. Wilkinson, Imamate, 368, gives the name of this book as Al-Da'a'im fī 'l-Islām; however, al-Hārithī, 'Uqūd', 278-279, has Da'a'im al-Islām.
21. The name Miṣbāḥ al-Zalām, appears on the first page of the MS. The word Da'a'im does not appear in this MS. However Wilkinson, Imamate, 368 refers to the copy of Sharḥ al-Da'a'im by Khalaf b. Aḥmad al-Ruqayshī without mentioning Miṣbāḥ al-Zalām.
22. Entitled Annals of Oman, see J.R.A.S.B. (1874) 111-98.
23. A'lām wa-udabā', 21-22.
24. Cf. al-Izkawī, Kashf, MS, 28b, 29b (al-Asad) and al-'Awtabī, Ansab, MS 185b and 186a (Cairo copy).
25. According to Wilkinson, Imamate, 372, Klein edited and annotated Chapter 33 of al-Izkawī's Kashf, as a doctoral dissertation, Hamburg, 1938. A copy of this work is in the possession of Professor R.B. Serjeant.
26. The Kashf is also edited and annotated by Aḥmad 'Ubaydlī as an MA in Institution of Islamic Studies in Beirut.
27. Wilkinson, Imamate, 370.
28. See ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh ahl 'Uman, 8.
29. Al-Fath, 347. Wilkinson, "Ibadi Imamah", BSOAS, 547, suggests that this work may be of the second half of the 12th/19th century.
30. Wilkinson, "Ibādī Imāmah", BSOAS, 535-551, gives a full discussion on the Bab al-Imāmah of al-Ṣā'ighī's work.
31. See Ibn Ruzayq, al-Fath, 2.

32. For more information of al-Salīmī's biography, see Muḥammad al-Salīmī, Nahdat al-A'yān, 99.
33. Wilkinson, Imamate, 8, regards the Tuhfah as a remarkable work of scholarship, written with the express purpose of inspiring the true believers to revive the Ibādī imamate.
34. For more detailed information concerning the author's biography, see the introduction to 'Umān 'abr al-tārīkh.

**PART I**  
**CHAPTERS I - V**

## **CHAPTER I**

### **OMAN IN PRE-ISLAMIC TIMES**

- 1.1 The Geography of Oman**
- 1.2 Regional and physical features of Oman**
- 1.3 The ancient history of Oman**
  - 1.3.1 Magan**
  - 1.3.2 Maritime activity**
- 1.4 Azd migration to Oman**
- 1.5 The principal settlement of Omani tribes**
- 1.6 Notes**



## 1.1 The geography of Oman

In the extreme south-east of the Arabian Peninsula lies the region of Oman, distinct structurally from the rest of Arabia and isolated on the landward side by the desert of the Rub' al-Khālī (Empty Quarter).

Historically, politically and geographically Oman has always been the most isolated part of Arabia.<sup>1</sup> Because of this geographical location Fisher gives the reasons that Oman and its cultural and economic life look more towards Persia and India rather than towards the Arab lands of the north and west. This explains the long-standing political independence of Oman.<sup>2</sup> What Fisher suggests may be correct concerning some aspects of the history of Oman, but in fact Oman has always had wide contacts with the Arabs of the Peninsula and those elsewhere. Oman's isolation is a political, rather than an economic or cultural, matter.

The Graeco-Roman accounts of ancient Oman tend to confuse rather than clarify this picture. Pliny (floruit first century AD), for example, thought the site of Oman to be located on the Arab side of the Persian Gulf,<sup>3</sup> while the author of the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* states the opposite: Omana being described as famous in Carmania (Kirmān) situated on the Persian coast "from which boats sail to Arabia".<sup>4</sup> The geographer Ptolemy places Omana in the south eastern part of the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>5</sup> To confuse matters further there appears to have been a tribe called the Omani, easily mistaken typographically for Omana.<sup>6</sup>



Arabic accounts of pre-Islamic Oman deal mainly with the Azd migration to the area. Apart from this, more attention was paid during the early Islamic period to the pre-Islamic history of Oman with interest falling off during subsequent periods. Therefore there exists very little information relating to pre-Islamic politico-social activity on which to comment.

The Arab geographers fail to give accounts of the division of Oman and its borders in the Islamic periods. Al-Bakrī, for example, mentions al-Ishfā' town (which is in al-Shiḥr) was located between Oman and al-Shiḥr.<sup>7</sup> Yāqūt, in his Mu'jam, mentions that the Omani town of Julfār is situated in the extreme north of the borders of Bahrain.<sup>8</sup> This ought to prove the fact that the province of Oman extended from Bahrain in the north to al-Shiḥr in the south. Ibn Hawqal mentions an area with different borders, with an independent people and its capital at Sohar.<sup>9</sup>

This information about the geography of Oman in early Islamic times which is given by these sources is not enough to clarify the picture of the borders of Oman. In addition, the historical perspective of these borders is missing, bearing in mind that they depend for stability on political and administrative factors which were constantly in a state of flux and which underwent change. The result was that the political situation in Oman did not remain stable, so the borders of the country in fact passed through periods of contraction and expansion.

## 1.2 Regional and physical features of Oman

At the present time Oman is considered to be the second largest country of the Arabian Peninsula after Saudi Arabia, with 300,000 square kilometres of very varied and striking terrain, with a coastline which extends for 1,700 kilometres. Dominated by an interior of jagged mountains simply called al-Ḥajar (the Rock), the country is a magic tapestry of different terrains. The mountains, the summit of which at a soaring 3,075 metres is the terraced al-Jabal al-Akhḍar (the Green Mountain), rise straight out of the coastal plains, or soar out of the gravel plateaux and shifting sands of the interior.<sup>10</sup> The country ranges from the fjord-like barren majesty of the Musandam Peninsula that plunges into the Strait of Hurmuz in the north, to the fertile Bāṭinah plain that inclines south-eastwards, towards Muscat, from the vast, sandy edge of the al-Rub' al-Khālī through the mountains to the lush tropical Ṣalālah Plain in the south, with its climate dominated by the monsoon.<sup>11</sup>

The name of Oman corresponds to the whole area of Dhofar in the south to Qatar in the north, with the sea and the desert as ultimate frontiers.<sup>12</sup> Oman borders to the west of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates; to the south, the People's Democratic Republic of South Yemen; to the north, the Strait of Hurmuz; and to the east the Arabian Sea.

Geographically, Oman falls into a number of distinct areas.

**Muscat :** The capital of Muscat is the most important populated area, with its larger port of Maṭraḥ.

**The Bāṭinah Plain :** The Bāṭinah Plain is situated between the coast and the Western Ḥajar. It runs from the frontier with the U.A.E. for a distance of some 270 kilometres south-east, almost to Muscat. The Bāṭinah is one of the most populous areas of Oman, the main towns are Barkā', Maṣna'ah, Suwayq-Khābūrah, Ṣaḥm, Sohar, Liwā and Shinās.

**The western Ḥajar mountains :** Like the Bāṭinah Plain, this mountain range runs parallel to the coast from the U.A.E. in the north to Wadi Ha'awil in the south. The highest peaks, up to 3,075 metres, lie to the south-east at al-Jabal al-Akhḍar. There are many settlements on the Western Ḥajar, the most important being al-Rustāq, 'Awābī and Nakhl.

**The interior (al-Jawf) :** This is the central plateau that slopes from the northern base of al-Jabal al-Akhḍar southwards to the desert. It is bounded on the west by Zāhirah and on the east by the Sharqiyyah. The area has four main wadis: Bath'ah, Wadi Ḥalfīn, Bahlā and Wadi Samā'il. The main towns of the Interior are Nizwā, Bahlā, Samā'il, Izki, Manh, Bidbid and Adam.

**The Zāhirah area :** This is a semi-desert plain, sloping from the southern flanks of the western Ḥajar into the al-Rub' al-Khālī. It is bordered to the north by the Yanqul, Jawf and Buraymi oases and to the south it is divided from Oman proper by Jabal al-Kūr (Diyār al-Durū') and from the east by Diyār Banī Hinā'. The major settlements are in two principal wadis, Wadi Ḍank and Wadi al-'Ayn, the main towns being Ḍank, 'Ibrī and Yanqul.

**The Sharqiyyah area :** The Sharqiyyah is an area of sandy plains and valleys lying on the inland side of the eastern Ḥajar. It is bordered to the south east by the district of Ja'lān and to the south by the Wahībah Sands. The main towns are Ṣūr, al-Qābil, Ibra, Muḍayrib, Samad, Muḍaybī, Sināw, Wadi Banī Khālīd, al-Kāmil, al-Wāfi, Bilād Banī Bū Ḥasan, Bilād Banī Bū 'Alī, al-Ashkharah and Ra's al-Ḥadd.

**The Musandam :** Separated from the rest of Oman by part of the U.A.E. this is the northernmost part of Oman. Its rugged mountains rise up to 1,800 metres above sea level and the coast which falls into the Strait of Ḥormuz. The main towns are Khaṣab, Bay'ah, Madhā, Bukhā', Kumzar and Līmā.

**The southern region :** The southern region of Oman accounts for a third of the country's total area. The coastal plain, extending from Raysūt in the west beyond Ṣalālah, is nowhere wider than about eight kilometres. The Dhofar hills rise up to 1,500 metres above the coastal plain. To the north-west the region's border with Saudi Arabia runs through the Empty Quarter and to the west is the border with PDRY. The main towns and villages are Ṣalālah, Ṭāqah, Mirbāt, Thamrīt and Shalīm.

**Climate :** The climate varies region by region. In the coastal areas it is hot and humid in summer. In the interior it is hot and dry, with the exception of some high locations where it is temperate all year round. In the southern region, the climate is more benign. The country's rainfall is generally low and although

heavy local rains are sometimes experienced, with the exception of the Southern Region where heavy monsoon rains regularly occur between June and September.

**Population :** The cross-currents of history with its migration and invasions have swept Oman since time immemorial, but its people have remained basically Arab in origin.

Oman society consists of four basic categories - the people of the sea who live by fishing, seafaring and trading: the agriculturalists of the Bāṭinah coast and the Southern Region, and those of the interior who employ a *falaj* system of irrigation; the mountain people of Dhofar and the Musandam; and the bedouin of the desert areas.<sup>13</sup>

### **1.3 The ancient history of Oman**

#### **1.3.1 Magan**

The identification of Magan with modern Oman finds confirmation once more in archaeological evidence. According to the records, Magan is mentioned particularly as a source of copper of which it was evidently a primary producer.<sup>14</sup> The cuneiform text tells us that Sumer's trading partner, Magan, was an important producer of copper, which also supplied diorite, a stone much favoured by the Sumerian kings, and the succeeding kings of Akkad for the manufacture of their statues. Magan also traded several kinds of timber down the gulf which Sumer put to various uses, such as the very durable and highly

esteemed sissoo wood, which was used for boat building.<sup>15</sup>

### **1.3.2 Maritime activity**

Situated as it is midway between Mesopotamia, on the one hand, and western India on the other, Oman occupied an unrivalled and most commanding position for inaugurating maritime commerce with those countries.<sup>16</sup> The Omanis took advantage of their opportunities to become a great seafaring nation. The history of Oman as a seafaring nation goes back to the dawn of civilisation in the ancient world, when Omanis inaugurated pioneering voyages across the oceans, seeking an exchange of trade and the establishment of contact with other peoples of the world.<sup>17</sup>

Little is known of the seafaring activities of Omanis in the age prior to the conquests of Alexander the Great. Alexander himself, in his last year, had been busy hiring Phoenicians to navigate the Gulf, prior to the voyage from Indus to Mesopotamia, organised under his admiral, Nearchos, in 323 BC.<sup>18</sup> Although the Parthians in Persia (140 BC to AD 224) held the monopoly of the trade with the Far East, Omani sailors were playing a part in developing the Ocean sea trade upon which the growing prosperity of South Arabian culture depended. The earliest documented long-distance sea trade in the world is that recorded on Sumerian and Akkadian baked clay tablets from Mesopotamia over 4000 years ago. These refer to sea-borne trade with regions known as Dilmun, Magan and Malukhkha.<sup>19</sup> The importation of Indian timber is mentioned in Sumerian inscriptions of Magan and the reference to head shipwrights there indicates the possibility that ships were already being built in Sumerian times

from 2000 BC.<sup>20</sup> Therefore we can say that ships were being built on Arab soil. These shipwrights must also have been sailors and traders, thus proving that the Omanis undoubtedly made an important contribution to exploration and maintenance of this great sea route of antiquity. They possessed an aptitude for navigation from ancient times.

In AD 224 the first Sasanian ruler, Ardashir I, overthrew the last of the Parthian dynasty. The Gulf, which had long been an important waterway, became the centre of Sasanian activity.<sup>21</sup> Sasanian policy was to divert the Indian Ocean trade from the Red Sea to the Gulf. In order to do this they needed to control the route as far as possible. Thus they created monopolies in Indian ports, who by this time were making use of the monsoon winds which allowed them to sail directly from the Gulf to India and Sri Lanka, whence they bought spices, silk and other luxury goods.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand the Gulf itself yielded pearls and frankincense (a Southern Arabian product) and other precious resins, all of which were much in demand.<sup>23</sup> In these objectives they were remarkably successful.

As every power has wished to exert effective control over the Gulf route, the Sasanians discovered that it was essential to secure a base in northern Oman, whether at Sohar, Muscat or Qalhāt, and hence it was natural that they should resuscitate the project of their Parthian predecessors by reviving Sohar as their centre.<sup>24</sup>

Sohar thus became once more the focus of Persian maritime activity in

the area. It is not clear exactly when the Sasanids assumed control of Sohar and the surrounding district of Mazūn, as it was known to them.<sup>25</sup>

Al-Nuwayrī,<sup>26</sup> reports that Ardashir I, the founder of the Sasanid dynasty, made an expedition against the kings of Oman, Bahrain and al-Yamāmah. The name of the king of Oman who was the last to appear before the advent of the Azd to Oman was ‘Amr b Wāqid al-Ḥimyārī who was reported killed in battle with Ardashir I somewhere between Oman and Bahrain. It was obvious that the Persian occupation of Oman had started by this time as a result of this battle under the Sasanid, Ardashir I, who was aiming to extend his rule over the Arabian Peninsula. He must have forced the Omanis to assist his army campaign. Yāqūt<sup>27</sup> notes that Ardashir b. Bābī<sup>k</sup> took sailors from Azd Oman six hundred years before Islam.

Sasanid influence was to be extended over Mazūn (Oman) to a greater or lesser extent, until the expansion of the Arab tribes by migration and the coming of Islam. Meanwhile the autonomous Omanis of the desert borderland and much of northern Oman maintained their independence, with their inland capital at Tu’ām (Buraimi) and their trading port of Dībā.

#### **1.4 Azd migration to Oman**

According to Hishām al-Kalbī the first group of al-Azd migrated from Wadi Oman in the Sarāh mountains near Mārib in the Yemen under Mālik b. Fahm.<sup>28</sup> The cause of this migration was reportedly the bursting of the Mārib Dam which led to the primary dispersal of the group throughout western Arabia



from the Ḥijaz to the Sūrāh. This was followed by the migration of major groups of the Azd and other Arab tribal groups following three main routes; northwards towards al-Shām and Iraq, eastwards through central Arabia to Bahrain,<sup>29</sup> and south-eastwards through Southern Arabia to Oman.<sup>30</sup> The Azd, according to the sources, were spread in many places, and are known to us by their own place names, such as Azd Oman for those who migrated to Oman, Azd Shan ū'ah, Azd al-Sūrāh, and Azd al-Shām.<sup>31</sup>

The migration of Mālīk b. Fahm and his tribe probably took place in the second century AD. Mālīk and his people made their way eastwards across Ḥaḍramawt directly to the sea coast, until they reached Raysūt,<sup>32</sup> where they remained for some time to rest. A portion of the Mahrah and B. Quḍā'ah stayed in al-Shiḥr.<sup>33</sup> After months of travelling Mālīk and his tribe with flocks. Before he was due to arrive in Oman, he was informed of the Persians there, according to the sources.<sup>34</sup> Thus he reorganised his tribe which, according to the sources had over 6000 men, horse and foot.<sup>35</sup> The Persians at this time were firmly established on the Bāṭinah coast with their capital at Singer (Sohar).<sup>36</sup>

When the Persians knew about the coming of the Azd they opposed their entry. Mālīk therefore turned aside to Qalhāt<sup>37</sup> on the east coast. He made Qalhāt his first base in Oman, where he left the families and set about negotiating an arrangement which would allow his people to settle peacefully in the country. Mālīk and his troops continued marching until they reached al-Jawf,<sup>38</sup> where they made their camp. The refusal of the Persians to allow

Mālik and his tribe to settle, presented the Azd with no alternative and brought about the battle in the desert of Salūt near Nizwā between the troops of Mālik and of the Persian governor of Sohar, in which the Persian army was defeated.<sup>39</sup> The subsequent campaign brought victory to the Azd, who succeeded after this battle in expelling the Persian colonists from Oman altogether. They left Sohar with their families and sailed to Fars. There upon Mālik is said to have become king and established an Arab kingdom over Oman.<sup>40</sup>

As a result of this, further waves of Azd and non-Azd tribes migrated to Oman. According to tradition, the first group of Azd to enter the country after Mālik b. Fahm succeeded in driving out the Persians were those of ‘Imrān b. ‘Umar who reached Oman through al-Yamāmah and Bahrain, followed by the B. al-Ghiṭrif and many groups of the Azd who settled in North Arabia after the collapse of the Mārib dam. Among these, non-Azd tribes settled in the north of the country.<sup>41</sup>

Oman itself witnessed the second mass migration of the Arabs during the late fifth century AD. This time by the Shanū’ah Azd from the Ṣarāh and Ḥijāz mountains, through the heart of the Peninsula by way of mainland Bahrain. They were established in the mountains of Oman led by the sheikhs of the B. Ma‘walah b. Shams, whose authority was recognised by most of the Arab tribes.<sup>42</sup>

## 1.5 The principal settlement of the Omani tribes

The picture of Oman on the eve of Islam as regards tribal structure and the settlements where the Azd tribes were to be found should be clarified. We can observe that the Azd tribes were its biggest and most powerful group, which led early historians to describe Oman as “the homeland of the Azd”.<sup>43</sup> The strong tribes of al-Azd had established themselves a long time before the advent of Islam. They had been migrating to Oman in waves since the second century AD. There were also the non-Azd groups who had migrated from the north of the Peninsula to Oman. These groups and tribes were associated with the wadis towns, villages and the desert of Oman.<sup>44</sup>

The majority of the Arab tribes in Oman succeeded in remaining independent from Persian influence which was to be found on the Bāṭinah coast, but also spread to the countryside and desert. There was a type of coalition between these tribes. We can observe a kind of federation between these groups to enable them to survive and make them strong against the enemy. Therefore it is not surprising to see that many tribes left their settlements and dispersed throughout the country. For example the Ḥārith tribe which appeared in Oman at the eve of Islam settled in Dibā,<sup>45</sup> yet after 145/762 they were found in Ibrā in the Sharqiyyah.<sup>46</sup> As a result of these varying alliances and federations it is difficult to trace these tribes and to follow their movements and changing positions throughout the country, over the years.

It is difficult to give a fixed account of the Omani population in pre-Islamic times or during the first period of Islam. What we can do is to give the names of the centre of these tribes.<sup>47</sup> The B. Hinā, the most powerful group of Mālik b. Fahm were associated with the northern Jawf,<sup>48</sup> whilst the B. Kamām, descents of Shubāb b. Mālik were to be found in the Buraimi area.<sup>49</sup> From the earliest times the Hinā clan dominated the majority of the Mālik b. Fahm tribes. The Ḥārith of the Mālik b. Fahm were concentrated in northern Oman, their concentrations being found in the Dībā region. This tribe later played a great role in the Riddah wars.<sup>50</sup> In addition some of this tribe, with other Azd, were to be found in Ibrā in the Sharqiyyah.

Because the sons of Mālik b. Fahm were the earliest settlers they tend to lose their tribal identity in the overlay of later migrations of Arab tribes, or possibly because many remained bedouin and were only loosely associated with the political power of central Oman.<sup>51</sup> Later there were groups from the secondary dispersal, groups like the B. Ḥadīd of the Farāhīd and elements of B. Šāmit of the B. Salīmah. Both settled on the Bāṭinah coast at the place called Majazz, south of Sohar.<sup>52</sup> Al-‘Awtabī shows that important groups of Omani Azd, notably the B. Qays b. Thawbān of the ‘Imrān and the B. Salīmah were to be found in Jask Island, Fars and Kirmān.<sup>53</sup> The Shanū’ah Azd came to Oman in the second migration, probably at the fifth century, under the domination of the clan of the Ma‘āwil.<sup>54</sup> The two major sections of Shanū’ah Azd have been reflected in the names of the Jabal Yaḥmad and Jabal Ḥiddān.

Both groups spread over into al-Jawf. Some of the Yaḥmad were to be found in Wadi B. Kharūṣ and the Ma'āwil in Wadi al-Ma'āwil.<sup>55</sup>

There were other non-Azd settlers in Oman, including Sāmāh b. Lu'ayy b Ghālib who settled in Tu'ām (Buraimi) alongside the Azd.<sup>56</sup> Sāmāh married his daughter Hind to al-Asad b. 'Imrān and she bore him a son, al-'Atīk b. Asad. The 'Abd al-Qays belong to a major grouping of Nizār tribes known as the Rabi'ah. Al-'Awtabī indicates that the 'Abd al-Qays groups were to be found in the mountain region of Oman.<sup>57</sup>

The Ṭayyi' group were to be found in their area of primary settlement in the Wadi Ṭā'iyyin.<sup>58</sup> Ṭayyi' were also present in the Samāil Gap where Māzin b. Ghudūbah was the first person who converted to Islam in Oman.<sup>59</sup>

There is a group of Kindah tribes who were to be found in Ḥaḍramawt and central Arabia, but who migrated to Oman in these waves of migration. It is also believed that the cause of the migration of Kindah to Oman and elsewhere was due to the fall of the kingdom of Kindah which had been established in central Arabia. The primary home for the tribe in Oman is known as the Jabal Kindah, in the mountains of northern Oman, south of which lay Jabal Ḥiddān.<sup>60</sup> Some of B. Tamīm also settled in Oman and some of al-Jatima b. Khāzzim.<sup>61</sup> It is reported that a group of B. al-Nabit of al-Anṣār of the Jāhiliyyah settled at 'Ibrī, al-Sulayf and Tan'am.<sup>62</sup> Some of B. al-Ḥārith b.

Ka'b came and settled at Ḍanak, with about a hundred people of the Qudā'ah.<sup>63</sup>

In addition to this a group of B. Rawāḥah are reported to be found in this area.



## Notes

1. Wilson, Persian Gulf, 77; see also Fisher, Middle East, 409.
2. Middle East, 409.
3. Natural History, II, Bk. VI, 148-151.
4. Periplus, see Chapter 36; Pliny, Natural, II, 148-151.
5. Ptolemy's Map.
6. Pliny, Natural, II, 142-145.
7. See 'Ānī, 'Umān, 27; Hamdānī, Ṣifat, 51 mentions that Raysūt is situated midway between Oman and Aden.
8. Mu'jam, II, 128, 154.
9. Ṣurat al-ard, 38.
10. For more detailed information concerning the al-Jabal al-Akhḍar see Miles, "Across the Green Mountains" in G.J., 465ff; cf. Ward, Travels in Oman, 210ff. See also Muḥammad, Mūqa' 'Umān, 12; the Omani sources also give the name of Ridwā' for this mountain. See Ṣalīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 6; Ḥārithī, 'Uqūd, 3.
11. Sa'dī, Zafār, 20-21; Bent, "Exploration", G.J., 109.
12. Ṣalīmī, Nahḍah, 6; cf. Wilkinson, Arab, 2.
13. This information is based on the account of Oman, a modern state, 14-17; Ward, Travels; Muḥammad, Mūqa', 9ff; Risso, Oman, 1-15; Wilkinson, Water, 4ff; Sa'dī, Zafār, 12ff.
14. For the identification of Magan with Oman, see Peak, "Copper", Antiquity, 452; Wilson, Persian Gulf, 27; Mego, Islam and trade, 105; Hornell, "Sea trade", Antiquity, 239; Leoppenheim, Ancient Mesopotamia, 36; Hourani, Arab seafaring, 6; Elisabeth, "Trade", P.S.A.S., 6; "identified Magan as a country whose people inhabited both sides of the entrance to the Arabian Gulf". She also asserted that Magan is part of Trucial Oman and Persian or Pakistan's Buluchistan; see also Oman, 16; Bathurst, "Maritime trade", A.P.S., 89.
15. Hornell, "Sea trade", Antiquity, 239; the timber of Magan may have been imported from India for re-export; see Wilson, Persian Gulf, 27; Hourani, Arab seafaring, 6.



16. Miles, Countries, I, 11.
17. Oman, 7.
18. Whitehouse and Williamson, "Sasanian Maritime", Iran, 35; See also, Wilson, Persian Gulf, 38; Salles, Hellenism, Chap. V, gives wide information concerning the Arab Persian Gulf under the Seleucids; Anani and Whittingham, Early History, 15.
19. Hourani, Arab seafaring, 6; Wilson, Persian Gulf, 28. See also Anani and Whittingham, Early History, 14-15; Oman, 16.
20. Wilson, Persian Gulf, 28; Meglio, Islam and trade, 105; Ziyādah, Maṣādir Tārikh, I, 274; Mahir, Bahriyyah, 56.
21. For more information about Ardashir I see al-Dīnawarī, al-Akhbār al-Tiwal, 42ff; see also Hasan, Persian navigation, 55; Whitehouse and Williamson, "Sasanian trade", Iran, 29.
22. Whitehouse and Williamson, "Sasanian trade", Iran, 30.
23. Whitehouse and Williamson, "Sasanian trade", Iran, 30; see also Anani and Whittingham, Early History, 10-11.
24. Oman, 28-29.
25. Oman, 29.
26. See also Dīnawarī, al-Akhbār al-Tiwal, 43.
27. Mu'jam, V, 122.
28. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 255a; Izkawī, Kashf, Ms. 30; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 1a; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣaḥīfah, MS. f. 137a; Ya'qūbī, Tārikh, I, 332; Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, I, 9; cf. Sālimī, Tuḥfah, I, 13; ed. 'Ashūr, Tārikh, 15ff; Sayyabī, Uman, I, 67; Miles, Countries, I, 19; ed. Pridham, Morony, "Arabisation", Wilkinson, Arab, 20ff; Ross, Annals, 3.
29. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 252; Qalqashandī, Ṣubḥ, I, 319; 'Alī, Mufaṣṣal, IV, 442-3; see also E.I., 1060.
30. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 30; cf. Ross, Annals, 4.
31. Qalqashandī, Ṣubḥ, I, 319; 'Awtabī, Ansāb, 252ff; cf. 'Alī, Mufaṣṣal, IV, 442; E.I., I, 811.
32. Raysūt at that time was a thriving town and trading port in the southern side of Oman; see Yāqūt, Mu'jam, III, 112; Hamdani, Sifat, 51; Bakrī, Mu'jam mā Ista'jam, I, 688; cf. Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣaḥīfah, Ms. f. 29a; Miles, Countries, I, 16-19; E.I., I, 811-13.

33. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. 252b; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 31; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 2a; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 15; ed. 'Ashūr, Tārīkh, 16; cf. Miles, Countries, I, 19; Ross, Annals, 4.
34. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 255a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 31; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣahīfah, MS. f. 137b; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 2a; cf. Miles, Countries, I, 19; Wilkinson, "Sasanid Oman", P.S.A.S., 41.
35. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 255a.
36. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 256b; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣahīfah, MS. f. 139a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 35. Concerning the role of Sohar as a capital trade centre of Oman, see Yāqūt, Mu'jam, III, 393-4; Bakrī, Mu'jam mā ista'jam, II, 82; Maqdaṣī, Taqāṣīm, 93; 'Alī, Mufaṣṣal, VII, 527; 'Alī, Tanzīmāt, 258; Ibn al-Mujāwir, Muṣṭabṣir, 285; for more information see also Williamson, "Sohar", P.S.A.S., 78-96.
37. Qalhāt is an important coastal town dating back at least to the time of the Azdi migration into Oman. Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, Rihlah, describes Qalhāt during his travels, 8th/14th century, as follows: "Qalhāt has fine bazaars and an exceedingly beautiful mosque. The inhabitants are traders and live entirely on what comes from India". For more information about Qalhāt, see Ibn al-Mujāwir, Muṣṭabṣir, 272, who discusses in detail the origin of Qalhāt's name; see also Oman, 46-48.
38. Al-Jawf is in the interior of Oman. It is bounded on the west by Zāhirah, and on the east by the Sharqiyyah regions; see Ḥārithī, Uqūd, 2. Concerning Mālīk b. Fahm's arrival to this area, see 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 256a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 32; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣahīfah, MS. 137b; cf. Miles, Countries, I, 20, who regards al-Jawf as a valley between Adam and Bahlā in the interior of Oman.
39. The two parties met at a place known as Salūt in the desert; for more detailed information concerning this battle, see 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 256a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 32; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣahīfah, MS. f. 139b; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 2b; cf. Miles, Countries, I, 20; Ross, Annals, 5.
40. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 258b; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 34; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣahīfah, MS. 139b.
41. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 253b; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 36; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣahīfah, MS. f. 136b; cf. ed. Pridham, Morony, "Arabisation", 14-15.
42. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 34; for more information about the new Shanū'ah Azd arrivals to Oman, see Qalqashandī, Ṣubḥ, I, 319; Yāqūt, Mu'jam, III, 368; E.I., I, 811; see also Wilkinson, "Julanda", J.O.S., 97.
43. Balādhurī, Futūḥ, 87.

44. It is well known that Omani wadis bear the names of these tribes which settled in them in pre-Islamic times.
45. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 283a.
46. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 73; their name appears during the events of the tribal conflict between them and that of B. Hinā'.
47. Beside these tribes there are many non-Arab origins. According to Wilkinson, "Sasanid Oman", P.S.A.S., 40-1, there were many non-Muslim Persian population, Majus, were to be found, in the Oman villages.
48. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. 277a; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣahīfah, Ms. f. 152a.
49. Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣahīfah, MS. f. 27b.
50. For more detailed discussion concerning B. al-Ḥārith's role during the Riddah war, see Chapter II of this study.
51. Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 97-8.
52. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 265b.
53. Ansāb, MS. f. 262b.
54. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 285a.
55. Sayyābī, Is'āf, 106, 112.
56. For more information concerning B. Sāmāh b. Lu'ayy's arrival in Oman, see Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, I, 108; Zubayrī, Nasab Quraysh, 13; Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 168; Ya'qūbī, Tārīkh, I, 370; Ibn Ḥazm, Jamharah, 163; see also 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 259a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 37; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣahīfah, MS. 27b; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 21.
57. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 259a; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣahīfah, MS. f. 136b; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 35.
58. Ḥārithī, Uqūd, 6; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣahīfah, MS. f. 1100; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 37.
59. About Māzin's conversion to Islam see Chapter II of this study.
60. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 270a.
61. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 37; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣahīfah, MS. f. 140a.
62. Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣahīfah, MS. f. 140a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 37.

63. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 37; Ibn Ruzayq, Sahīfah, MS. f. 140a; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 21.

**CHAPTER II**  
**THE ISLAMICIZATION OF OMAN**

- 2.1 Oman on the Eve of Islam**
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## 2.1 Oman on the Eve of Islam

Before the rise of Islam the Arabian Peninsula was not united as a single political unit, rather, the predominant organisational form was that of the tribe. The tribal system is based on ties of kinship, and thus as a system the tribe is neither expansionary nor diminishing. In the Arabian Peninsula there were many cities where several tribes lived. There had also been several kingdoms and emirates in the peninsula, such as the kingdoms of al-Julandā in Oman. Hudhah b 'Alī al-Ḥanafī in al-Yamāmah, al-Mundhir b Sāwī in Bahrain and the Abnā' in Yemen, and the emirates of many other sheikhs, each of whom controlled an area the size of which depended upon his strength and personality.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to its important location, which made it a point of contact between the Arabs of the north and south of the Peninsula, Mecca had other characteristics which gave it a significant role in events, and among these characteristics was the fact that it was held to be sacred.

The situation in Oman was similar to that of the rest of the Arabian Peninsula in that its political system was based on the tribal system, which comprised the Qaḥṭānī tribes who immigrated from the Yemen, and the 'Adnānī tribes who entered Oman from northern and central Arabia.

An Arab kingdom had been formed under the control of the kings of the

al-Julandā' dynasty, whose rule went back many decades before the rise of Islam.<sup>2</sup> When Islam came, Oman was under the rule of two kings, 'Abd and Jayfar, the sons of al-Julandā' b al-Mustakbir.<sup>3</sup> They had been building relations between Oman and other powers in the region, at that time, mainly the Persians who had some sort of military presence in the area of Bāṭinah coast and its capital Sohar.<sup>4</sup> According to the sources, Sohar was regarded as the natural trade centre, being an important maritime capital linking Oman with the outside world.<sup>5</sup> The Persian presence came about as the result of a treaty reached between al-Julandā' b al-Mustakbir and Kisrā'.<sup>6</sup> The treaty stated that the Persians should recognise al-Julandā's authority over the interior regions and the desert area, whereas the Omanis should allow the Persians to maintain a presence in Sohar.<sup>7</sup> The treaty also prevented the two sides from resorting to hostilities against each other. A few years after the treaty was signed the Persian military presence evolved into a commercial presence, and in addition the Persians were careful to keep their trade and maritime interests centered on Sohar. On the eve of Islam the power of al-Julandā' had increased so as to hold in his sway the Omani tribes, particularly in the area of the Bāṭinah which is described as being under Persian control. The Persian military presence had been reduced due to their withdrawal from their role as a regional power because of internal tensions. According to the sources the Julandā' kings started to exercise their authority over Sohar and the area around the Bāṭinah coast by imposing a tax on the people who came to attend the seasonal markets which used to be held in two of the Omani cities - Sohar, the new capital under Al-Julandā's rule, and Dibā, in the extreme north, which was the old centre of Oman. These two markets were among the famous Arab markets in

pre-Islamic times.<sup>8</sup> This proves to us the power of al-Julandā and his administrative authority over the Bāṭinah and the rest of Oman, which placed him in a strong position to the extent that his control over Oman was recognised by all other powers in Arabia.

Before the acceptance of Islam, the people of Oman had worshipped idols (*aṣṇām*) since idolatry (*wathaniyyah*) was the prevailing practice at that time in Arabia, except for some parts which were inhabited by Arab tribes who were Christian<sup>9</sup> or Magians<sup>10</sup> due to their strong ties with the two great powers at that time - the Roman Empire which believed in Christianity, and the Persian state which believed in Magianism.

According to Ṭabarī, Magianism (*Majūsiyyah*) was the dominant religion in Oman, and he suggests that it was to be found in those areas which were under Persian rule, mainly among those whose origins were not Arab, for example those of Persian or Indian or some other extraction who lived in Sohar.<sup>11</sup> Judaeism was also one of the main religions to be found in Arabia especially in the Yemen and the Ḥijāz; it was also known in some parts of Bahrain and Oman.<sup>12</sup> Idolatry had spread among the tribes of Oman especially among those who immigrated from central Arabia<sup>13</sup> where the influence of *wathaniyyah* was due to its proximity to Mecca, which provided these tribes with idols to worship. The Azd tribes of Oman and elsewhere made special idols for their own worship, and the sources provide information about the names of the idols which were known to them, such as Manāh, Dhū 'l-Khaṣṣah, Dhū 'l-Shurā, and Bājir,<sup>14</sup> which was associated with the Azd of Oman and their



neighbours, the Ṭayyi' tribe.

## 2.2. The Islamicization of Oman

Before the coming of Islam, Oman maintained relations of a sort with the Ḥijāz, and such ties were deeply rooted. Many Arab tribes from the north had immigrated to Oman, including some Azd tribes as well as 'Adnānī tribes such as B. Sāmāh b. Lu'ayy,<sup>15</sup> who settled in Oman centuries before Islam. Commercial contacts between Oman and the Ḥijāz were strong, especially the export of Omani and Sohari textiles.<sup>16</sup> The geographical, strategic and commercial position of Oman attracted the attention of all Arabs of the Peninsula during the pre-Islamic period, and by the time of the rise of Islam the Prophet had recognised Oman's importance. As a result, early contact was made between the Islamic state and the people of Oman.

The bulk of information available to us which describes the conversion of the Omani tribes to Islam is contained in the accounts of the books of biographies (*tarājim*) and those concerning the Riddah war in Oman, as well as local Omani sources.

In fact, it was not until after the peace treaty of Ḥudaybiyyah in 6/628 that the Prophet undertook to send his envoys to areas falling outside the Hijaz region, calling on Arabs to embrace Islam. He concentrated his attentions initially on those tribes located in the Yemen, Yamāmah, Bahrain and Syria. At least until this time Oman remained unaffected by central Medinan policy.<sup>17</sup>

The earliest connection between the Arabs of Oman and the Prophet appears in an account related by Ibn al-Kalbī, who states that Māzin b Ghudūbah of the Ṭayyī tribe,<sup>18</sup> was miraculously converted to Islam after he met the Prophet in Medina; before that time Māzin had had a very famous idol which, according to the sources, he used to worship at Samā'il.<sup>19</sup> No precise time is given for Māzin's conversion to Islam. The local Omani version which deals with the same theme contains more information about Māzin before and after his conversion.<sup>20</sup> According to the local version, when Māzin returned from Medina he destroyed his idol and composed this poem:

كسرتُ ناجراً ۱ جذاداً      وكان لنا ربّاً هـ لا بتضالٍ  
بالهاشمي هـ دانا من ضلالتنا      ولم يكن دينه مني على بالٍ

I smashed Nājir to bits;  
who used to be our misleading lord,  
by means of a Hashemite, who guided us away from error, when his  
religion had not (previously) caught my attention<sup>21</sup>

One of the recent works about the history of Oman in early Islamic times<sup>22</sup> considers that the story of Māzin's conversion was designed during the early Islamic period to boost the standing of the Azd tribe as being among the first of the tribes to convert to Islam. It seems to me that this opinion is not based on any strong argument or evidence. The fact is that Māzin, who was considered by the local Omani sources as the first Omani to become a Muslim, was from the Ṭayyī' tribe, not from the Azd. Since loyalty is to the tribe first

and foremost, the Azd would therefore have claimed that it was one of them and not a member of the Ṭayyi' tribe who was the first Omani to meet the Prophet.

### 2.3. The Azd delegations to Medina

The information concerning the delegation which the Arab, including Omani, tribes sent to Medina in the year 6/628 seems very confusing. The Omanis were mainly of the Azd, but different Omani delegations were sent at a time when the local Omani sources make no reference to any of them, nor to any sort of contacts made prior to the arrival in Oman of 'Amr b al-Āṣ, with the exception of that of Māzin b Ghuḏūbah.

Regarding this matter, Ibn Sa'd<sup>23</sup> provides an account of the Azd delegation to the Prophet in the year of delegations, 6/628. They arrived before the Prophet's envoys were dispatched to the rulers and tribes in the area. His account on this matter is confusing; he mentions that the Prophet is reputed to have sent al-'Alā' b. al-Ḥaḍramī to Oman to summon its people to Islam and to collect *ṣadaqah*, adding that the Prophet sent along with the delegation of the Omani Azd Makhrabah (or Makhramah) al-'Abdī as a religious guide.<sup>24</sup> He also mentions the names of the heads of the two delegations - the first one was headed by Asad b Yabruḥ al-Ṭaḥī, and the second was headed by Salamah b 'Ayyāth al-Azdi.<sup>25</sup>

According to early Islamic sources al-'Alā' b. al-Ḥaḍramī was sent to Bahrain and there is no mention in our sources confirming his having been to

Oman.<sup>26</sup> Ibn Sa'd himself, who gives the above account, asserted that 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ was the Prophet's envoy to Oman, therefore al-'Alā's name must be misplaced in the first account.

Ibn Sa'd also relates another account which tells that a group from two of the most famous Omani clans, namely Thumālāh and Ḥiddān, led by two of their leaders, approached the Prophet after the conquest of Mecca and offered him their pledge of allegiance.<sup>27</sup> Of the two leaders 'Abdullāh b. 'Alas al-Thumālī was considered a Companion (*ṣaḥābī*), but no mention is made of his delegation.<sup>28</sup> Al-Wāqidī mentions another group of Azd from among the inhabitants of Dibā who came to the Prophet and announced their willingness to embrace Islam; the Prophet responded by dispatching Ḥudhaifah b. al-Yamān with them on their homeward journey as a collector of *ṣadaqah*.<sup>29</sup> Al-Balādhurī gives an account of the same event which is similar to that of al-Wāqidī; he refers to Ḥudhaifah as being the agent of the Prophet over the period of Dibā.<sup>30</sup>

This matter requires further comment: as we know from the sources, it was not only the tribes of Oman who went to Medina, on the contrary many tribes from the Yemen and many northern Arabian tribes also went to see the Prophet, since these tribal factions regarded themselves as being entirely independent. Also in the case of Oman there were many Omani tribes over whom al-Julandā exercised no authority. When these delegations went to Medina they did so as representatives of their clans or tribes, and not as representatives of the whole country, because these Omani delegations did not

play any major or active role in spreading Islam; this indicates that they had no political or social influence, even over their tribes as a whole.

‘Umar rejects the different accounts of the Azd delegations. Instead he regards all these accounts as fabrications of a later period, when the struggle for power fostered greater competition.<sup>31</sup>

#### 2.4 The arrival of ‘Amr b. Al-‘Āṣ in Oman

After the conquest of Mecca, when the Islamic state acquired strength and fame all over Arabia, the Prophet Muḥammad sent many envoys to the kings, amirs and sheikhs of the region calling on them to accept Islam. ‘Amr b al-‘Āṣ<sup>32</sup> was chosen by the Prophet to deliver his letter to the kings of Oman, the two Julandā brothers, ‘Abd and Jayfar, and on this point all the early sources are agreed.<sup>33</sup> They also note that Abū Zayd al-Anṣārī accompanied ‘Amr to Oman. Al-Balādhurī reports that on their departure the Prophet said to them, “If these people (of Oman) accept the witness of truth and pledge obedience to Allāh and his Prophet, ‘Amr will be the commander, and Abū Zayd will officiate in prayer. Propagate Islam and teach the Qur’ān and the institutions of the Prophet.”<sup>34</sup> In another account al-Balādhurī notes that the Prophet told Abu Zayd, “From the Muslims take *ṣadaqah*, but from the Magians take poll tax.”<sup>35</sup> However, in studying the records concerning the life of Abū Zayd, and his role during the Prophet’s life, we find that the Muslim authors are not familiar with his name, nor is there any mention in their works of his mission to Oman.<sup>36</sup> If al-Balādhurī’s account concerning Abū Zayd holds any truth, he must have been sent with or after ‘Amr to Oman to instruct the

Omanis in the teaching of Islam, rather than as a tax collector (*amīr al-ṣadaqāt*), as al-Balādhurī asserts.

Although reliable Islamic sources give conflicting accounts concerning Oman's relations with Medina during the Prophet's lifetime, they all agree that 'Amr b al-Āṣ was the most important of the envoys dispatched to the kings of Oman, 'Abd and Jayfar, sons of Julandā.

Al-Wāqidī comments on 'Amr's mission to Oman, saying at first that 'Amr was dispatched as a collector of taxes in 8/629. Secondly, he mentions that 'Amr was sent in the same year to the kings of Oman to ask them to embrace Islam.<sup>37</sup> Al-Ṭabarī appears to contradict himself when, in the first instance, he gives the date of 'Amr's dispatch to Oman as 6/627 and yet on a second occasion he gives the date as 8/629.<sup>38</sup> Ibn al-Athīr gives 7/628 as the date of 'Amr's departure for Oman,<sup>39</sup> whilst other sources date 'Amr's dispatch as 10/631;<sup>40</sup> furthermore many sources give 11/632 as the year in which 'Amr arrived in Oman<sup>41</sup>. Regarding this matter, al-Ya'qūbī gives no fixed date for 'Amr's dispatch to the kings of Oman.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, as far as Ibn Ishāq's statement is concerned,<sup>43</sup> 'Amr b al-Āṣ can be counted as being among the last of the envoys dispatched by the Prophet with the aim of calling the people to Islam.

'Amr first arrived in Oman in Sohar, which was known as a famous Arab market.<sup>44</sup> These were held in this city which was of sufficient importance to have been chosen as the capital of Oman during the Julandā rule. The

Prophet's choice of 'Amr b al-'Āṣ as his envoy to the kings of Oman was linked with 'Amr's wide knowledge as a merchant, and, although the sources do not provide any information about 'Amr's connection with Oman prior to Islam, it is my opinion that 'Amr must have been to Oman before the rise of Islam as a merchant who travelled for the sake of trade to different regions, by land and by sea, and his selection for this task had to do with his experience and knowledge of the region and its people and tribes. According to tradition, 'Amr met 'Abd on his arrival since he ('Abd) was in charge of Sohar, and he met Jayfar b al-Julandā at a later date since he was in the desert at the time of 'Amr's arrival.<sup>45</sup> 'Amr delivered the Prophet's letter to them and the two Julandā brothers called for a general council meeting of the Omani sheikhs from both branches, Qaḥṭān and 'Adnān, and they resolved to accept Islam peacefully, not as a result of force, as many historians claim. Following this decision, 'Abd and Jayfar remained in their positions as governors of Oman. They thus sent envoys to different parts, such as Mahrah, Shiḥr and Dibā, and, according to the Omani sources, all of these regions accepted the teaching of Islam.<sup>46</sup> However, the Persians resident in Oman, mainly in Sohar and on the Bāṭinah coast were told to submit to Islam and on their refusal to do so they were expelled from the country. The expulsion of the Persians came about as the result of strong pressure exerted to this end by the Omani tribes, but Watt has suggested strongly that 'Amr b al-'Āṣ was behind this decision.<sup>47</sup> According to Islamic principles regarding this matter, the conquered people must accept Islam, poll tax (*jizyah*) or war, and, since the Persians were occupiers, their expulsion from the country was the only solution after their refusal of Islam.

Furthermore the central Islamic government in Medina did not impose heavy taxes on the people of Oman. The Omanis were, of course, expected to pay taxes, such as *zakāh* and *kharāj*, to Medina. As for the Magians, Jews and others, they had to pay the poll tax. It is worth mentioning here that an income tax collected by ‘Abd and Jayfar was distributed among the Omani poor.<sup>48</sup>

Shortly after the Omani’s acceptance of Islam the news of the Prophet’s death reached them. Ibn Wathimah<sup>49</sup> mentions Khamīṣah b. Abbān al-Ḥiddānī as being the first person to arrive in Oman from Medina bearing news of the Prophet’s death, and he described the situation of the inhabitants of Mecca as follows, “I left the people of Medina boiling like a pot on the stove”.<sup>50</sup> According to him ‘Amr composed the following lines of poetry:

صَدَعَ الْقُلُوبَ مَقَالَةُ الْحَدَّانِي      وَنَعَى النَّبِيَّ خَمِيصَةُ بَنِّ أَبَانَ

What al-Ḥiddānī is saying is breaking [our] hearts and Khamīṣah b. Abbān has announced the Prophet’s death."

After this ‘Amr b al-‘Āṣ left Oman for Medina as head of the Omani delegation.<sup>51</sup> Other accounts given by some Muslim authors report that ‘Amr was in Bahrain when news of the Prophet’s death reached him.<sup>52</sup>

The Prophet died after he had completed his message to the people of Arabia and elsewhere: the spread of his message was achieved by two means - firstly, by his use of envoys, and secondly, by his wars against those who



refused to believe in him.

As mentioned earlier, Oman and its people had converted to Islam by choice, not under threat of force, and its kings, 'Abd and Jayfar were truly convinced by the rightness of this new religion: they did not convert to Islam through weakness or fear, although many modern historians put forward contrary opinions and personal interpretations regarding this matter. For example, Muir claims that 'Amr came to Oman from Medina at the head of an army, and that he conquered Oman by force.<sup>53</sup> This claim has no basis in truth and this is borne out by the fact that no source or author mentions any such claim. From his side, Caetani claims that the reason that 'Abd and Jayfar accepted Islam was their weakness as a result of tribal rebellions which forced them to seek the assistance of the rising Islamic state in Medina.<sup>54</sup> Watt shares Caetani's opinion and notes that 'Abd and Jayfar approached Muḥammad of their own accord.<sup>55</sup> From the available sources we know that 'Abd and Jayfar had no contact with Medina prior to the arrival of 'Amr b al-Āṣ in Oman, nor did they make any attempt to seek assistance from the Islamic state.

'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ānī explains the kings' acceptance of Islam in terms of the benefit which could be derived from conversion to strengthen their political power against what he described as rebellious elements.<sup>56</sup> His explanation does not stand the test of evidence, and furthermore there were no rebellions in Oman during the Prophet's lifetime: rather there was a degree of internal feuding as a result of excessive tribal group feeling (*'aṣabiyyah*).

If Oman's acceptance of Islam is considered in terms of benefits and losses it is indeed true that Oman profited. The first point worth mentioning is the expulsion of the Persians from the country which restored Oman's unity. However, this did not result in an increase in al-Julandā's power since henceforth 'Amr b al-'Ās became the governor of Oman, this in spite of the suggestion made by some authors that he was sent to Oman as an envoy, not as an agent for the Prophet.<sup>57</sup> According to 'Amr himself, " 'Abd and his brother Jayfar have joined Islam and they believe in the prophethood of Muḥammad: they allow me to collect taxes (*ṣadaqah*) and also they allow me to rule. So I have taken *ṣadaqah* from the rich and given it to the poor."<sup>58</sup>

## 2.5 Oman during Abū Bakr's caliphate

After the Prophet had established the community of Islam in Medina and completed his message throughout most parts of Arabia, he died in 11/632. Not only did his death leave a spiritual vacuum among his followers, but it also left a political dilemma concerning the leadership of the Muslim community. This came to cause divisions in the Muslim community in Medina.

It is a historically established fact that the Prophet did not appoint anyone to succeed him after his death to conduct the affairs of the Islamic state. Nor did he prescribe any course to be followed in choosing a successor. Since the Prophet did not nominate a successor, the Muslims were confronted with the necessity of solving the problems themselves. This was done in a gathering known as "the meeting of the Saqīfah".<sup>59</sup> After a long discussion concerning this matter the two parties, the Muhājirīn (the

Emigrants) and the Anṣār (the Helpers) reached an acceptable agreement of their dispute, by selecting Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq as the first successor to the Prophet in the Islamic state and pledging fealty to him. This selection was important not only in the political history of the Islamic state but also in terms of its ramifications for the history of Islam.<sup>60</sup>

The first challenge Abū Bakr faced after becoming caliph was the need to protect the Prophet's achievements against apostasy (*riddah*) which quelled the strife in the Arabian Peninsula after the Prophet's death.<sup>61</sup> Due to his deep understanding of the critical situation Abū Bakr was successful in this by using force against the Arab tribes, some who were not carrying out the agreements made with the Prophet, paying tax (*zakāh*), and some who had rejected Islam as a whole. They thought that their ties with the Islamic state in Medina came to an end with the death of Prophet Muḥammad.<sup>62</sup> As a result, the Prophet's absence meant to them the end of their loyalty to his successor Abū Bakr. This feeling was expressed by one apostate:<sup>63</sup>

فـيـا لـعـبـاد الـلـه مـا لـابـى بـكـر و تـلك لـعـمـر الـلـه قـاصـمـة الـظـهـر	ا طـنـعـنا رـسـول الـلـه مـا كـان بـيـنـنا ا يـورثـها بـكـراً اذ مـات بـعـدـه
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We obeyed the Apostle of God as long as he was among us. Help the servants of Allāh! What's up with Abū Bakr.

Will he make a young camel (*bakr*) inherit? That, by the Eternal God, would break the back.

These heretical tribes had very great importance, and included B Ḥanīfah, headed by Musaylamah (“the Liar”) who claimed prophethood in Yamāmah. Among the Tamīm tribes a woman called Sujāḥ headed her tribe who then apostatacised. In the Yemen Abū ‘l-Aswad al-‘Ansī came to control most of the country and he also considered himself as a prophet.<sup>64</sup> In Oman, according to Islamic sources, there was a man called Laqīṭ b Mālīk al-Azdī who became a prophet and led the people of Dibā area against the Islamic government in Medina<sup>65</sup>.

## 2.6 The Riddah movement in Oman

After the news of the Prophet’s death reached Oman, ‘Amr b al-‘Āṣ lost no time in returning to Medina. The situation in Oman was in some respects similar to that of all the Arab tribes who had become Muslim, but the Prophet’s death was a great shock. There was a story that apostasy took place in Oman after the Prophet’s death: this story was reported by most of the Islamic sources with the exception of the Omani historic sources which regard this story as false. Three different accounts are given by Muslim authors.

The first account is that of al-Wāqidi<sup>66</sup> who mentions that the people of Dibā sent a delegation from the Azd tribe to the Prophet declaring their acceptance of Islam. The Prophet appointed Ḥudhaifah b. Muḥsin al-Azdī as tax collector (*muṣaddiq*) in the area of his birthplace, Dibā. On the Prophet’s death the people of Dibā rebelled against Islam. Ḥudhaifah wrote to Abū Bakr informing him of the situation and asking him for help from Medina. Abū Bakr wrote to ‘Ikramah b. Abī Jahl whom the Prophet had appointed tax

collector for the Hawāzin tribe and who later took part in the war against apostates in Yamāmah. He marched to Dibā where the apostates under the leadership of Laqīṭ b Mālīk were in control. They met in battle and a hundred of Laqīṭ's men were reportedly killed and his army defeated. Then the Muslim army entered Dibā and took captives who were sent to Medina including Abū Ṣufrah.<sup>67</sup>

Al-Wāqidi's account which is mentioned by most of the Muslim authors, is given in the biography of al-Muhallab b Abī Ṣufrah and the main object of this biography was to throw light on the conversion to Islam of his father Abū Ṣufrah and his arrival in Medina.<sup>68</sup> This account concerning Abū Ṣufrah was later taken by Omani sources who gave a different account of the reason for his becoming captive in the hands of the Muslim army.<sup>69</sup>

The second account regarding the Riddah in Dībā was given by al-Ṭabarī on the authority of Sayf b 'Umar.<sup>70</sup> He refers to the figure of Laqīṭ b Mālīk al-Azdī who was reported to have held a position in the tribal hierarchy during pre-Islamic times equal to that held by the two Julandā brothers, 'Abd and Jayfar. After the death of the Prophet he rose up against 'Abd and Jayfar and declared himself to be a prophet. Laqīṭ initially achieved substantial success in his rebellion against the Muslims. He managed to extend his control over the whole of Oman, forcing 'Abd and Jayfar and their followers to take refuge in the mountains, from where they wrote to Abu Bakr pleading for his urgent help. Abū Bakr, in response, sent two armies led by Ḥudhaḥfah b. Muḥṣin and 'Arfajah al-Bāriqī to Oman and Mahrah to subdue rebel activity in the two

areas. Abū Bakr also ordered 'Ikrimah, who was based in Yamāmah, to march towards the regions in support of Ḥudhaifah and 'Arfajah, thereafter commanding him to go to the Yemen. At first the Medinan army faced defeat during the battle, but after the arrival of reinforcements in the shape of local tribes, the Muslim army defeated Laqīṭ and his army at Dībā. After peace had been restored in the area Ḥudhaifah remained in Oman in order to calm the situation. 'Arfajah went to Medina with booty leaving 'Ikrimah to continue the battle among Mahrah.<sup>71</sup>

The third account is given by Ibn 'A'tham who states that 'Ikrimah's march against the tribes of Kindah in the Yemen precipitated a revolt by the people of Dībā against the Medinan government. The agent of Dībā, Ḥudhaifah b. Muḥsin, was expelled from the region and a concerted effort was made to prevent 'Ikrimah from continuing his mission to win over their blood relatives in the Yemen. Upon hearing this news Abū Bakr ordered 'Ikrimah to change direction and march against Dībā where the rebels were defeated.<sup>72</sup>

The fourth account is that of al-Balādhurī,<sup>73</sup> who reported that al-Azd and other tribes apostatized following the death of the Prophet, under the leadership of Laqīṭ b. Mālik Dhū 'l-Tāj, who left for Dībā. Abū Bakr thereupon dispatched Ḥudhaifah b. Muḥsin al-Makhzūmī against them. In a battle with Laqīṭ and his companions, Ḥudhaifah killed him and took many captives from the people of Dībā whom they sent to Abū Bakr. At this the Azd returned to Islam. However, other Omani clans apostatized and went as far as al-Shihr 'Ikrimah followed these and overpowered them, carrying away much booty and

killing many of their number<sup>74</sup>.

In addition to the previously mentioned accounts there are two accounts given by minor sources. These sources shed light on the wars of the Riddah and events in most of Arabia, and they also give more details about the Medinan government's effort to crush this attempt.

The first one was reported by Al-Kalā'ī al-Balansī<sup>75</sup> who gives more details about the Dībā affair than al-Ṭabari and al-Wāqidī in their accounts. His version is similar to that of al-Ṭabari which means that he agrees with the general facts given in al-Ṭabari's version quoted in the information he takes from him. In particular, he agrees with his account of the Dībā war.

We also find more details of the story of the Omani Azd captives who were brought to Medina after these events. Al-Balansī gives full information about their status in Medina during Abū Bakr's caliphate and that of 'Umar after him.<sup>76</sup> The most important information which al-Balansī provides is about the debate which took place in Medina between the Muslims. First of all he reported that about three hundred men and four hundred women were taken captive by Ḥudhaifah, according to Zayd b Thābit, who said that Abū Bakr accommodated these captives in the house of Ramlah b al-Ḥārith, and he was determined to kill those who survived the soldiers (*muqātilah*), but 'Umar was against killing them: he told Abū Bakr that they were faithful to Islam but that they were stingy with their money, and that they had sworn solemnly that they did not refuse to accept Islam, but rather did not want to give their money as

*zakāh*. But Abū Bakr did not accept ‘Umar’s arguments and they were kept in detention in the same house until Abū Bakr’s death.<sup>77</sup>

The second account is that of Wathaymah;<sup>78</sup> his account deals with the Riddah wars in Oman, but he makes no mention of the Dībā movement. Among the most important information he provides is a unique account of Khamīṣah b. Abbān al-Hiddānī who brought the news of the Prophet’s death to Oman. He is the only author who mentions this. The other information he gives us concerns the Riddah wars although he does not mention Laqīṭ b. Mālīk by name, nor the people of Dībā. He reports that Abū Bakr had appointed ‘Ajrafah b. Harthamah b ‘Abd b. Zuhayr al-Bārqi as leader of the army he sent to Oman to assist Jayfar b. al-Julandā when his people apostacized.<sup>79</sup> In addition Ibn Wathaymah also mentions three people from Oman; the first being Majfuna b. al-Nu‘mān al-‘Atakī who was a poet of the Azd, who told ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ before he left Oman that the Omanis would remain Muslims and he begged him to stay in Oman.<sup>80</sup>

قَدْ أَتَى بِهِ الْأَمْرُ الَّذِي لَا يُدْفَعُ  
حَارٌّ وَأَغْنَاكَ الْبَرِّيَّةَ خُضْعُ  
فِينَا وَتَنْظُرُ مَا يَقُولُ وَتَسْمَعُ  
يَا عَمْرُو ذَاكَ هُوَ الْأَعَزُّ الْأَمْنَعُ

يَا عَمْرُو إِنْ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ مُحَمَّدًا  
فَقُلُوبُنَا قَرْحَى وَمَاءُ دُمُوعِنَا  
يَا عَمْرُو إِنْ حَيَاتُهُ كَوَفَاتِهِ  
فَأَقِمْ فَإِنَّكَ لَا تَخَافُ رُجُوعِنَا

Oh ‘Amr, if there has [befallen] the Prophet Muḥammad that which no one can prevent,

Our hearts are smitten [with grief] (*qarhā*) and our tears are full of



sorrow and (the necks of) mankind are in obedience.

Oh ‘Amr, he means the same to us whether he be live or dead. We look to what he says and then we listen.

Stay and never fear that we will give up [Islam]; oh ‘Amr, [your being in our midst will be our] greatest strength and protection.

Wathaymah mentions two men from the Azd who accompanied ‘Amr to Medina among the Omani delegation, ‘Uqbah b. al-Nu‘mān al-‘Atkī who came to Abū Bakr with a group from his tribe, and Jayfar b. Jashm al-Azdī who also came with ‘Amr to Medina after the Prophet’s death.<sup>81</sup> It seems to me that the two names of Majfana and ‘Uqbah relate to one person since the two he mentions were poets.

### 2.6.1 The Local Omani Version

The accounts which are given by all Muslim authors concerning the Riddah movement make no mention of the Omani sources which provide an entirely different version. The Omani version reports that Abū Bakr sent Hudhayfah b. Muḥṣin al-Ghalfānī al-Bāriqī to Oman as his governor (*‘āmil*) to collect taxes (*ṣadaqah*) and he had no problem with tax collection until he came to Dibā which belonged to the sons of al-Ḥārith b. Mālīk b. Fahm. His collectors assessed the tax of a woman of the al-‘Ufāt as a one year old sheep. She refused to give it up, and offered instead a drinking bowl or a kid, but they took the sheep against her will. Thereupon she cried out calling her people to help her against B. al-Ḥārith b. Mālīk (*Yā ‘Al Mālīk*) and the tribesmen came to rescue her. A battle took place between the Muslim tax collectors and the

people of Dībā who were defeated in the end. Ḥudhayfah regarded this incident as apostasy and consequently took many people of Dībā captives and sent them to Medina. This event took place during the life of Abū Bakr.<sup>82</sup> As we can see from the story, there was no apostasy according to the Omani sources, Al-ʿAwtabī, in his account, makes reference to a small skirmish having occurred between the Medinan governor Ḥudhayfah and a small group from the B. Mālīk b. Fahm. The problem appears to have been resolved peacefully through the intervention of Abū Bakr and ʿUmar.<sup>83</sup>

The account of al-Izkawī makes no reference to this incident: rather, he gives a different account when he mentions that ʿAbd b. al-Julandā accompanied Amr b. al-ʿĀṣ on his return to Medina following the death of the Prophet.<sup>84</sup> Abū Bakr sent ʿAbd with Ḥassān b. Thābit on a raid against Āl Jafnah. After the raid Abū Bakr wrote a letter to the people of Oman thanking them and confirming the rule of ʿAbd and Jayfar over the area of Oman.<sup>85</sup>

Al-Sālimī strongly denies the accounts of the Riddah movement and considers the events as being a coincidence and a misunderstanding between the people of Dībā and Ḥudhayfah. He goes as far as to deny the existence of Laqīṭ b. Mālīk; he denies the whole story entirely and considers it fabrication.<sup>86</sup>

Al-Qalhātī describes the decision of Ḥudhayfah, Abū Bakr's governor in Dībā, to take the people captive as being his own decision in that he received no direct order to do so from Abū Bakr.<sup>87</sup> When he brought them to ʿUmar

b. al-Khaṭṭāb in Medina ‘Umar pointed out his mistake and was tough with him and he spoke forcefully to Ḥudhaifāh. Then he ordered him to return the captives to their home country. Al-Qalhātī reports ‘Umar’s words to Ḥudhaifāh as follows:

لو أعلم أنك سبيتهم بدينٍ منك لقطعتك طوائف ونفذت إلى كل مصر منك  
طائفة •

“If I had known that you had taken them captive according to your religious [convictions], I would have cut you to pieces and sent every garrison town a (*miṣr*) a part of you.”<sup>88</sup>

Meanwhile Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad al-Kindī suggests that taking people of Dībā captive occurred during ‘Umar’s caliphate, and in this he differs with the rest of the Omani sources.<sup>89</sup>

The Omani sources report another story about the two Azd delegations which went to Medina. The first one was headed by ‘Abd b. al-Julandā, and among the delegation two names of Azdī leaders are mentioned - Abū Ṣufrah Ṣārīf b. Zālim al-Azdī, and Jayfar b. Jashim al-Azdī.<sup>90</sup> The Omani delegation was given a warm welcome in Medina and Abū Bakr delivered a speech praising and thanking the people of Oman:

“You accepted Islam willingly, you were not forced or obliged, you did not stand against the Prophet Muḥammad, as some of the Arabs did. Then

‘Amr b al-‘Āṣ was sent to you without an army or weapons or soldiers. He remained in your country and was welcomed among you and left your country unimpaired. One of God’s blessings to you was the embracing by ‘Abd and Jayfar, the two sons of al-Julandā, of Islam. You had been going well until you received the news of the Prophet’s death when shown doubled favour.”

Abū Bakr ended his speech by saying, “I do not fear that you control your country or that you leave your religion. I am quite sure that you will meet with my approval”.<sup>91</sup>

From the speech we can notice the satisfaction and the warm feeling which is expressed by Abū Bakr towards the people of Oman. We should also note that the speech does not mention any apostasy on the part of the people of Oman. The apostasy may have taken place later, but not immediately after the Prophet’s death, as we notice from this speech by Abū Bakr, or perhaps the Julandā delegation represented the people of Oman and Dībā was not referred to as part of Oman, and Medina dealt with Dībā separately since the place had a sort of independence from the Julandā regime in Oman. If this is the case, the Omani accounts of ‘Abd and the Azd delegation are acceptable. Ṭabarī, however, mentions that ‘Amr b. al-Āṣ left Oman after the Prophet’s death,<sup>92</sup> and yet in Ṭabarī’s account we find no mention of any delegation accompanying him, nor any mention of names. Rather he reports that ‘Amr went to the B. ‘Āmir tribe where an argument broke out between him and Buqayrah b. Hubayrah, its leader when the latter refused to pay tax to Abū Bakr. In this account Ṭabarī mentions ‘Amr alone without naming any group from the Azd as being with him.<sup>93</sup>

There is another account related by Ibn Ḥajar,<sup>94</sup> who argued that all envoys of the Prophet returned before his death with the exception of ‘Amr. He is said to have been in Bahrain at the time when he heard the news of the Prophet’s death.

The above accounts given by Ṭabarī and Ibn Ḥajar show us their differences with the Omani sources; there are other minority sources which agree with the Omani version concerning the Omani delegation. If we accept Ṭabarī’s and Ibn Ḥajar’s accounts with regard to this matter, the Omani delegation did not accompany ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ on his way back to Medina, in which case they must have come to Medina later to pay homage to Abū Bakr.

The second Omani delegation who came to Medina was also reported by the Omani sources. This delegation represented the people of Dībā, and the members of the delegation were from the B. Mālīk, headed by Sabī‘ah b. ‘Irāk al-Sulaymī al-Mu‘allā b. Sa’d al-Khamāmī, and Ḥārīth b. Kulthūm al-Ḥadīdī. Their aim was to secure the release of their tribesmen, who were captives in Medina.<sup>95</sup> Al-‘Awtabī gives two accounts; in the first one he mentions that they came to Abū Bakr and pleaded with him to release the prisoners;<sup>96</sup> in his second account he mentions that they came to Medina after Abū Bakr’s death, so that they met ‘Umar and asked him to free their people and return them home. A long discussion took place between the two sides and in the end ‘Amr agreed to release the captives and send them free to Dībā.<sup>97</sup> Among the captives was Abū Ṣufrah Sarīf b. Zālim.<sup>98</sup> The story reported by al-‘Awtabī is

in fact similar to that of al-Kilā'ī al-Balansī who mentions that the argument was between Abū Bakr and 'Umar, but does not mention any Omani delegation. He reports that 'Umar released the captives when he became caliph, and he refused to take a ransom for them. He released them and they went to Basra. He also relates to 'Urwah that Abū Bakr gave each of them five dinars.<sup>100</sup>

What is mentioned above concerning the Omani Azd delegation only appears in the accounts of Omani sources and no Muslim author gives any similar account regarding these facts.

In general we can conclude that the apostasy movement took place in Dibā since most of the Muslim authors report this story. The rest of the people of Oman had nothing to do with the apostasy of Dibā. The people of Dibā seem to have enjoyed a certain degree of independence from al-Julandā in Sohar, which was recognised by the Medinan authority. The latter started to deal with them separately from the rest of Oman by sending them tax collectors and envoys similar to those sent to the sons of al-Julandā who remained loyal to the Medinan government. Dibā had to have an independent governor until the end of 'Umar's caliphate.<sup>100</sup> It is also noticeable that Abū Bakr and the rest of the caliphs after him left al-Julandā free to run the area under his control independently.

The accounts of the Omani sources and those of the Muslim authors are different and conflicting, but it seems that the apostasy was true since Islam had no strong hold in Dibā. Therefore, the apostasy is a fact which no one can

deny, because it was not only the people of Dībā who refused to pay *ṣadaqah* but also most of the Arab tribes. Doubt still remains concerning the story of Laqīṭ b Mālīk who was considered to be the leader of the apostasy.

## 2.6.2 The role of Laqīṭ b. Mālīk al-Azdī

There are conflicting accounts about whom the sources describe as the leader of the apostasy movement and the false prophet of the Azd. In all the Omani sources there is no mention of Laqīṭ b. Mālīk. All the sources agree that he was from the Azd but some modern scholars differ about Laqīṭ's genealogy. For example, Strenziok mentions that Laqīṭ was from the clan of 'Atīk, a very famous clan which lived in Dībā, where his followers and supporters were to be found.<sup>101</sup> Whilst Wilkinson<sup>102</sup> fails to give any information about the character of Laqīṭ, he does indicate that his clan was B. Mālīk b. al-Hārith b. Mālīk b. Fahm who also resided in Dībā. Earlier, al-Ya'qūbī, dealing with Laqīṭ, refers to him as being from the tribe of B. Nājiyah.<sup>103</sup> Meanwhile some consider him to be from B. Tha'labah of B. Mālīk b. Fahm 'Ubayd al-Nāji composed the following:<sup>104</sup>

لعمري لقد لاقى لقيط بن مالك      من الشر ما أخزى وجوه الشعالب

“Upon my life, Laqīṭ b. Mālīk has met with such evil as brought shame on the Tha'ālib notables.”

Miles suggests that Laqīṭ was one of the bravest and most ambitious sheikhs of the Azd<sup>105</sup> but he makes no further comments regarding him or his

clan. It is hard to understand the lack of information about Laqīṭ's genealogy, given that the sources mention his role in the apostasy and his claim to prophethood. Some consider that he controlled some part of Oman before the rise of Islam.<sup>106</sup> It is impossible to make any judgement regarding the role he played prior to Islam or during the rise of Islam, since we do not have enough information.

Although the Omani sources deny the role of Laqīṭ, this denial does not dismiss all the accounts mentioned above which are reported by Muslim authors, that is, that there was some sort of rebellion in Dībā but both the Muslim authors and the Omani authors fall prey to exaggeration concerning the affair.

Apart from the apostasy movement and its consequences, the sources provide no information about Oman during Abū Bakr's caliphate, which lasted only two years, during which he spent defending Islam against the threat of apostasy. Before Abū Bakr died, he reinstated the two brothers, 'Abd and Jayfar, the sons of al-Julandā as governors of Oman. He also made them responsible for tax collection in Oman; at the same time according to Khalīfah b Khayyāt, Abū Bakr appointed Ḥudhaifah b Muḥsin al-Balqānī as governor in Dībā after the Riddah wars.<sup>107</sup>

Ḥudhaifah remained ruler of Dībā until the end of Abū Bakr's caliphate.<sup>108</sup> Before Abū Bakr's death and after the Riddah war came to an end and security and peace were regained, Abū Bakr declared war (*jihād*) on the Byzantine and Persian emperors. This invitation to participate in the *jihād* was



accepted by the Arab tribes who gathered in Medina to spread Islam. According to Ibn 'Asākir,<sup>109</sup> Abū Bakr had written to those who were in charge of tax collection in all parts of Arabia, ordering them to recruit men instead of collecting money, in order to enable the Muslims to build up a huge army. He mentions that 'Ikrimah b Abī Jahl returned to Medina with a large number of warriors from Tihāmah, Bahrain and Oman. This is the first reference to the arrival in Medina of the first group of Omani tribes during Abū Bakr's lifetime, to participate in the Islamic conquests that were to take place in 'Umar b al-Khaṭṭāb's time. It is worth mentioning that during Abū Bakr's caliphate many of the powerful tribes of Arabia who had resisted Islam during the apostasy, and whose loyalty was therefore considered questionable, were prevented from joining the Muslim forces in the conquests of Iraq and Syria.<sup>110</sup>

Hudhaifah b Muḥsin was removed from Dībā during the caliphate of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, but no information is given about the two brothers 'Abd and Jayfar whom 'Umar appointed as his first governors over Oman. It is believed that he was from the Anṣār and was known as Abū Bilāl al-Anṣārī.<sup>111</sup> The Muslim authors provide no information about Abu Bilāl, nor about the role he played in Oman. But later in 15/636 'Umar replaced Bilāl with another governor from Thaḳīf 'Uthmān b al-'Āṣ al-Thaqafī who had formerly been governor of Bahrain.<sup>112</sup> 'Uthmān himself had been appointed by the Prophet leader of his tribe, Thaḳīf. Abū Bakr later appointed him governor of al-Ṭā'if.<sup>113</sup> He succeeded al-'Alā' b. al-Ḥaḍramī in Bahrain during the caliphate of 'Umar who then joined Oman and Bahrain under the single governorship of 'Uthmān.

‘Uthmān b. al-‘Āṣ followed a firm policy in the two regions; he managed to impose obedience over the Arab tribes of Azd, ‘Abd al-Qays, b. Nājiyah and Tamīm, who had taken control of the eastern coast of the Gulf. While ‘Uthmān was reorganising the administrative system in Oman and Bahrain, the campaign of Islamic conquests started from Iraq into Iran, where most of the Arab tribes were taking part in the important military operations.<sup>114</sup> As a result the Muslim army achieved a decisive victory in the battle of Jalūlā’ in Iraq in 16/637. After this victory the caliph ‘Umar b al-Khaṭṭāb ordered his governor over Oman and Bahrain, ‘Uthmān b. al-‘Āṣ, to raid Iran from the eastern coast across the Gulf.<sup>115</sup>

According to the sources ‘Uthmān was in Oman when he received the orders of the caliph, ‘Umar<sup>116</sup> and he spent most of his time in Dibā (where incidentally there is still a mosque called the ‘Uthmānī).<sup>117</sup> ‘Uthmān started to prepare for this campaign and he was able to form an army of three thousand fighters from the tribes of Azd, Rāsib, Nājiyah and ‘Abd al-Qays. Their objective was the capture of Iṣṭakhr city, the Sasanian capital. ‘Uthmān b. al-‘Āṣ divided and distributed his army into various groups, as follows:

- 1) the Azd Shanū’ah group led by Ṣabrah b. Salmān al-Ḥaddānī
- 2) the Mālīk b. Fahm group led by Yazīd b. Ja‘far al-Jahḍamī
- 3) the Ra’s ‘Imrān group led by Abū Ṣufrah, father of al-Muhallab b. Abī Ṣufrah<sup>118</sup>

The plan of ‘Uthmān b. al-‘Āṣ was to cross to Persia from the closest point on the Arab coastline. Julfār (a site north of present day Ra’s

al-Khaymah) was chosen as the point for this army to cross to Ibn Kāwān island which was to be the first target for 'Uthmān's army. The distance between Ibn Kāwān island and the Persian mainland is about ten miles; after capturing it the Muslims intended to use it as a bridge from which to launch their attack against the Persian mainland.<sup>119</sup>

Omani sources report that the emperor sent a leader named Shuhrak at the head of forty thousand men to meet 'Uthmān's army. He was killed in the battle and it was said by both Abū Ṣufrah, al-Muhallab's father, and Nāb b. Dhī al-Ḥarrah al-Ḥimyārī. The Persian army was defeated.<sup>120</sup>

The sources also report that 'Uthmān began to reorganise his army after he captured Ibn Kāwān island, before moving on to the Persian mainland. Therefore he chose most of the army, those belonging to the Azd tribe, and ordered the soldiers from 'Abd al-Qays to return to the Arab coast, perhaps to defend against Persian raids. 'Uthmān and his army went deep inside Persian territory; during his army's advance he appointed his brother al-Ḥakam b al-'Āṣ in his place as leader of the army with orders to continue the mission of conquest.<sup>121</sup> Al-Ḥakam and his army gained a great victory at a place called Tūj, the result of this defeat for the Persians was a severe blow to the morale of the Persian army, following which the Muslim army moved deeper into Persia.<sup>122</sup> 'Uthmān b al-'Āṣ returned to Oman after he received a letter from the caliph 'Umar and his brother al-Ḥakam had replaced him.<sup>123</sup>

Thus the Omanis participated in the process of conquering Persia by land

and by sea. By land, when they had taken part with the rest of the Arab tribes in the war from Iraq against Persia, where they were centred in Basra, and by sea, when they crossed the sea from Oman to the Persian coast, being used to the route as skillful navigators, where they succeeded in encircling the Persians along with their fellow soliders.

As a result, many Omani tribes, when they joined the Islamic army of conquest, emigrated and settled in Basra.<sup>124</sup> By this time for the first time, after completing the mission of conquering Persia, they returned to Basra.<sup>125</sup>

It is known that Basra was designed and planned to be used as a centre for the Arab tribes in accordance with orders issued by 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb to Abū Musā al-Ash'arī who was appointed as governor of Basra to organise the settlement of the tribes there and to allot to each tribe a certain area.<sup>126</sup> It is also said that Basra was founded by 'Utbah b Ghazwān by permission of the caliph 'Umar, and that Kufa was established by Sa'd b Abī Waqqāṣ on the orders of 'Umar himself.<sup>127</sup> Twenty years later Basra became one of the most important trade centres in the Islamic caliphate, and links were established with Basra mainly with India and China; it also became the main centre for the gathering of Arab tribes and other nationalities.<sup>128</sup> The Azd of Oman had their own quarter known as the Azd quarter (Ḥayy al-Azd).<sup>129</sup> In his account, al-'Awtabī reports that the first group of Omanis to settle in Basra numbered eighteen, among them the most prominent figure was Ka'b b. Sawār al-Luqayṭī who was the first qad Basra appointed by 'Umar b al-Khaṭṭāb.<sup>130</sup> By the time

Azd influence extended from Oman to Basra where the Omani presence began to increase until it reached its highest point at the time of Ziyād ibn Abīhi, the Umayyad governor of Iraq, when the Omanis began to form a strong contingent among the Arab tribes centred in Basra, Kufa and Khurāsān.<sup>131</sup>

On the other hand, the importance of Oman increased as a controlling centre of trade within the Gulf. This was a natural role for Oman to play, given its geographical position at the entrance to the gulf.

Oman was connected with Basra administratively since the latter became the base for Islamic armies which moved to Persia and other regions. This connection was established during the time of ‘Uthmān b ‘Affān;<sup>132</sup> however, this link did not affect the rule of al-Julandā over Oman. He continued to carry out administrative commercial policy providing that these policies did not clash with the interests of Islam and the general policy of the central authority. This administrative link between Oman and Basra strengthened the ties between them and it was one of the factors which helped the Azd tribes to immigrate to Basra.<sup>133</sup>

When ‘Umar ibn al-Khattāb died in 23/644 he was succeeded by ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān who became the third caliph. It is reported that ‘Uthmān b. al-‘Āṣ continued as governor of Oman until ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān became caliph.<sup>134</sup> No governor was appointed by ‘Uthmān over Oman, instead it was linked with Basra, which meant that henceforth Oman no longer had any sort of direct connection with Medina. There is little information about the period of

‘Uthmān’s caliphate which concerns Oman; the sources make no mention of the name of any governor appointed either by Medina or by Basra, and in fact, this is a sign of the beginning of Oman’s independence as a result of the negligence on the part of the central authority which made the people of Oman resentful of this policy.<sup>135</sup>

‘Uthmān was murdered in 36/656 as a result of a revolt against him by a group of people from Iraq and Egypt who opposed his policies.<sup>136</sup> His tragic death later caused a civil war which is known in the Islamic sources as Fitnah. ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, the Prophet’s cousin and son-in-law was elected as caliph by the people of Medina. He therefore succeeded ‘Uthmān. The first challenge to face ‘Alī after he became caliph was the revolt which was led by Ṭalhah and Zubayr with ‘Ā’ishah, the Prophet’s wife. Their demand was that the murderers of ‘Uthmān should be brought to justice, but this was not the only reason behind their revolt, rather there were personal causes behind their decision to oppose the caliph. ‘Alī’s opponents went to Mecca and from there they went to Iraq. ‘Alī followed them to Iraq to meet them; negotiations took place between the two parties, but in the end these negotiations failed and war broke out. ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib succeeded in defeating his enemies in the battle of the Camel. Both sides suffered great losses and Ṭalhah and Zubayr were killed. ‘Ā’ishah was sent back to Mecca with her brother.<sup>137</sup> In another development, Mu‘āwiyah b. Abī Sufyān, who was dismissed from the governorship of Syria, refused to obey ‘Alī’s directions and demanded that ‘Uthmān’s killers be brought to justice. Moreover he accused ‘Alī of complicity in ‘Uthmān’s murder. ‘Alī’s army, which was made up of Arab tribes from the Ḥijāz and southern Arabia,

met Mu'āwiyah's, which was made up mainly of Syrians, in battle at Ṣiffīn. Mu'āwiyah's army was about to be defeated when he raised copies of the Holy Qur'an on his lances to settle the dispute peacefully. 'Alī accepted this so-called arbitration (*taḥkīm*). A conference was held between the two parties in Udhruh which was through the deceit of 'Amr b al-ʿĀs, the representative of Mu'āwiyah, to depose 'Alī from the caliphate and to transfer it to his client Mu'āwiyah.<sup>138</sup>

The results of the arbitration angered 'Alī's supporters who totally refused the outcome of the arbitration. The dispute developed into open hostilities when some of 'Alī's supporters in Kufa and Basra asked him to confess his mistake and repent to Allāh concerning his dealings with Mu'āwiyah in accepting arbitration. Because 'Alī rejected their offer, they broke away (*kharajū*) from his army and went to a place called Ḥarūrā' where they assembled. 'Alī tried to win them back, but they refused, and he found himself obliged to fight them in a battle at al-Nahrawān where the majority of them were killed.<sup>139</sup> As a result the opposition inside 'Alī's party increased and many of his supporters left him, causing him to delay his war with Mu'āwiyah. The situation remained this way until 'Alī was assassinated by one of the dissenters in 40/661. 'Alī b Abī Ṭālib's assassination paved the way for Mu'āwiyah to take over the caliphate.<sup>140</sup>

These dramatic events reflected badly on the Muslim community which from now on became busy with their differences as a consequence of civil war. Also it resulted in separation and division within the Muslim Umma which led

to the rise of political parties, such as the Khawārij, Shī'ah, Murj'iyah and the 'Uthmāniyyah, etc.

The Omanis were among those who took part in these events, since many of their number, from the Azd group in particular, participated on 'Alī's side in this war and later many Omanis turned against 'Alī himself in the battle of Ḥarūrā'.<sup>141</sup> The Omanis as well as other Muslims were strongly affected by these events; their legacy was the Ibādī doctrine which was established a few years later, and whose teaching spread to Oman and other countries, since the Ibādī was followed by the Omanis, the separation of Oman from the body of the caliphate became only a matter of time.<sup>142</sup>

During 'Alī's caliphate the situation of Oman was similar to that of the times of his predecessor, 'Uthmān. The sources make no mention of 'Alī's activities with regard to Oman since he was fully occupied with the restoration of his rule in Iraq and Syria. This, however, did not prevent 'Alī from appointing a governor over Oman. According to Ya'qūbī,<sup>143</sup> 'Alī appointed al-Ḥalūf b. 'Awf al-Azdī governor of Oman in 38/659, but he did not last long because individuals from B. Nājiyah residing in the north of Oman killed him. Ya'qūbī states that B. Nājiyah had apostacized.<sup>144</sup> In my opinion, it is far from possible for this to happen in that period because Islam was so strong so as to prevent it. Also we do not find anything which supports al-Ya'qūbī's account from other sources. This story about B. Nājiyah's apostasy related by al-Ya'qūbī is associated with another account given by the same author. He reported that some men from the B. Nājiyah under the leadership of a man called Ḥurayth



b. Rāshid al-Nāji killed some people in Kufa, and they managed to escape to the coast of Oman. They carried out some robberies on their way to their homeland Oman. 'Alī sent a man called Ma'qil b. Qays al-Riyāhī<sup>145</sup> to Oman and he killed al-Ḥurayth b Rāshid and his men. He also took some of B. Nājiyah captive, but they were later released by 'Alī.<sup>146</sup> From Ya'qūbī's story we can notice that there were certain links between the killing of 'Alī's governor in Oman al-Ḥalūf b. 'Awf al-Azdī; it could be that he was killed at the hands of Ḥurayth b. Rāshid al-Nāji and his gang, since the latter escaped from Kufa and was wanted by the central authority in connection with killing and robbery. He came to Oman and thus 'Alī's governor, al-Ḥalūf, may have been killed trying to arrest al-Ḥurayth and his gang. Since they were among their tribe, B. Nājiyah, they must have been involved in an attempt to secure their lives, and were thus considered by the central authority as apostates, according to Ya'qūbī.<sup>147</sup>

# MAP 1

Oman during the Riddah Movement  
'Ikramah's Route according to al-Ṭabarī



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّكَّهِ الرَّكَّهِ  
 مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ  
 إِلَى خَيْرٍ وَعَدْتِ ابْنِي الْحَكِيمِ  
 وَبِسْلَامٍ عَلَى مَنْ أَسْعَى الْعَدَى  
 بِمَا نَهَى فَإِنِّي أَدْعُو كَمَا نَهَى  
 عَنْهُ إِلَّا بِسْلَامٍ إِسْلَامًا بِسْلَامًا  
 نَبِيَّ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ إِلَى النَّاسِ  
 خَافَهُ لَا يَدْرِي مَنْ كَانَ كَمَا  
 وَكَفَى الْمَوْلَى عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ  
 فَأَمَّا كَمَا أَنَا فِي رِجَالِي  
 بِسْلَامٍ وَلِسْكُمْ وَأَنَا بِسْلَامٍ  
 فَأَنَا مَلِكُكُمْ وَأَنَا بِسْلَامٍ  
 كُلِّ سِلَاسٍ كَمَا وَأَنَا بِسْلَامٍ  
 بِسْلَامٍ عَلَى مَلِكِكُمْ



## Appendix

### The Prophet's letter to the al-Julandā rulers of Oman

Many commentators (as has been already seen) maintain that the Omanis were forced to embrace Islam and they have based their argument largely upon this letter. The strong, uncompromising language of the Prophet's letter cannot be denied and such language is found in the other letters that were sent by the Prophet to the rulers of the region and beyond. However, the fact is that the Prophet never sent an army to Oman, as some writers have alleged nor was there of any fighting or dispute among the Omanis themselves over the question of whether they should become Muslims or not. When 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ (by himself, not at the head of an army) delivered the letter to the two Omani rulers, the latter requested time to consider and discuss its contents. The Omani sources are unanimous in relating that soon after this event the rulers together with their tribes, embraced Islam peacefully without any opposition and 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ remained in Oman as the Prophet's *āmil* until the Prophet died.

For more detailed information, see above.

من محمدٍ رسولُ الله الى جيفر وعبد ابني الجلندی  
السلام على من اتبع الهدی

أما بعد ، فأني أدعوكمَا بدعاية الاسلام ، أسلما تسليما ، فاني  
رسولُ الله الى الناس كافة ، لأنذر من كان حيًّا ، ويحق القولُ على  
الكافرين •

وأنكمَا ان اقررتمَا بالاسلام وليتكمَا ، وان ابیتمَا فأن ملككمَا  
زائلٌ عنكمَا وخيلی تحل بساجتكمَا وتظهر نبوتی على مليككمَا •

From Muḥammad the Messenger of God to Jayfar and 'Abd the (two) sons of al-Julandā. Peace be upon him who follows the right path (*al-hudā*).

To continue I call upon you both to accept Islam. Become Muslims and you will be safe. For indeed I am God's Messenger to all Mankind to warn every living creature, (so that) "the unbelievers will deserve punishments".<sup>1</sup> If you both accept Islam I will give you authority to rule, but if you refuse, then your sovereignty will pass from you and my cavalry (lit. my horses) will occupy your country and my prophethood will gain supremacy over your sovereignty.<sup>2</sup>

## Notes to Appendix

1. cf. Qur'ān, Yasīn, 70.
- 2a. The original letter is kept in the MSS section (Dā'irat al-Makhtūṭāt) of the Omani Ministry of National Heritage and Culture, Muscat.
- 2b. A photocopy of the Prophet's letter has been published in Ḥamīd Allāh, Wathā'iq, 4th Edition, 1983, 162. Also the text of the letter has been published in numerous works by Omani writers, e.g., 'Awtabī, Anṣāb, Ms. f., 272b; Sālimī, Tuhfah, I, 39.
- 2c. Ross, Annals, 9, strangely supplies only a rough paraphrase of the letter, despite the fact that he translates word by word the rest of Izkawī, Kashf, which concerns the history of Oman.
- 2d. It should be noted, however, that certain Western scholars have expressed doubts concerning the authenticity of this and similar letters addressed by the Prophet to other rulers.



**Table 2**

**The governors of the Rightly Guided Caliphs in Oman**

<b>Governor</b>	<b>Caliph</b>
1. Hudhayfah b. Muḥsin al-Ghalfānī	Abū Bakr al-Ṣaddīq
2. Abū Bilāl al-Anṣārī	‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb
3. ‘Uthman b. al-‘Āṣ	‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb
4. al-Ḥalūf b. ‘Awf al-Azdī	‘Alī b. Abī Ṭalīb
5. Ma‘qal b. Qays al-Riyāhī	

## Notes

1. Concerning the situation in Arabia before Islam see Kennedy, Prophet, 15-28. al-'Alī, Imtidād, 3-4, 'Alī, Mufasssil, IV, 158-271; ed, Holt, Cambridge History, Shahid, "Pre-Islamic", 3-29. Naboodah, Eastern, 99; Donner, Early, Ch. I, 11-49, cf. "Arabia", E.I., 367-380.
2. For more details about the origin of the Julandā family of the Ma'walī clan and its rule in Oman prior to the advent of Islam, see 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS, 286a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS, 451; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣaḥīfah, MS., f.141A; Ibn Ḥazm, Jamharah, 361-2; Ma'walī, Nubdhah, Ms, 420-37; ed, 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 27; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, 1, 23; full discussion is also given by Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 97-8; cf. Miles, Countries, I, 24; Naboodah, Eastern Arabia, 133-4; "Azd", E.I., 811-13; Ross, Annals, J.A.S.B. 118, 'Alī, Mufasssil, IV, 441; A'shā, Diwān, 63:

وجلنداء في عمان مقيماً      ثم قيساً في حضرموت المنيف

And Julandā is residing in Oman while Qays is in his exalted (palace) in Ḥaḍramawt.

3. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Isti'āb, I, 100; Ibn Hishām, Sirah, IV, 279; Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 77; Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, Iqd, III, 386; see also 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. 260; Izkawī, Kashf, MS, 450; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣaḥīfah, MS f149a; Ma'walī, Qisas, MS, f1256; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 39; ed, 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 40. Cf. Wilkinson, "Julanda", J.O.S. 97; Miles, Countries, I, 30; 'Amad, Harakat, 4; Naboodah, Eastern, 153.
4. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. 271b; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 450; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣaḥīfah, MS. f.149a; see also Wilkinson, "Relationship", P.S.A.S. 44; Naboodah, Eastern, 63; Williamson, "Sohar", P.S.A.S. 84; Miles, Countries, I, 27.
5. Sohar is situated on the low, sandy coast of the Bāṭinah. This location made Sohar a suitable stopping point on the route from the Gulf to India or to Africa. Sohar also served as the seat of the government in both the Sasanian and early Islamic period. For more information about this city see, Yāqūt, Mu'jam, III, 393-4; Ḥimyarī, Rawḍ, 354-355; Maqdisī, Taqāsīm, 30-34; Mu'jam mentions Sohar to be situated in the land of B. Tamīm, III, 825; Jawhari, Ṣiḥāḥ, II, 709; Ibn Manzūr, Lisān, IV, 415, Iṣṭakhri, Masālik, 25; Ibn al-Mujāwir, Mustabsir, 285. See also for more detailed discussion, Williamson, "Sohar", P.S.A.S., 82; E.I. Sohar; Jun-yan, "Relations", J.O.S. 91-108; 'Alī, Tanzimāt, 258; Nadvi, "Navigation". I.C. 76; Hanḥānī, Dawr Ḥisād, III, 69; Masarri, Tijarat, 291; Akhbār, 7-8.
6. 'Awtabī, Ansāb 271b, MS. The B. Julandā controlled the area of Oman on the basis of a treaty reached between the two parties awarding the

Sasanians the right to appoint a Persian agent with 4,000 troops based on the coast of Oman. See Izkawī, Kashf, 452; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣaḥīfah, MS. f. 149a; Ṣālimī, Tuḥfah, I. For more discussion of this treaty, see, Wilkinson, "Relationship", P.S.A.S. 44; cf. Naboodah, Eastern, 154.

7. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 271b; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 451; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣaḥīfah, MS. f. 149a.
8. Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 265-7; Ya'qūbī, Tārīkh, I, 314; Tawḥīdī, Imtā', I, 84-5; Iṣfahānī, Azminah, II, 163; 'Alī, Mufaṣṣil, VII, 368; for more detailed information about these aswāq see also Āfghānī, Aswāq, 231-347; 'Awtabī, Ansāb, Ms. 4a.
9. Christianity made more ground in Syria and Iraq, Yemen and the Gulf region. Many Christian missionaries sent by the Roman Empire played a part in converting some Arab tribes to Christianity, and Christianity also spread through the Nestorian Lakhmids of Iraq who enjoyed political influence over the Arab Gulf region before Islam, ed. Pridham, 'Umar, "Islamisation", 30.
10. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, III, 29; 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 66B; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣaḥīfah, f. 149a. The Majūs of Oman were known as *ahl al-bilād*, who were of non-Arab origin.
11. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, III, 29; 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 66b; 'Alī, Mufaṣṣil, IV, 200-203; Ṣālimī, Tuḥfah, 39, mentions that the Persian inhabitants of Oman were Magians; no further details given by him regarding the religion of the Arab tribes.
12. Bakrī, Mu'jam, IV, 1222; mentions that the inhabitants of the village of Mazūn in Oman were all Jewish, cf ed. Pridham, 'Umar, "Islamisation", 30, asserted that the Jews came to the Gulf area as traders and immigrants, mainly from Iraq. Ṣālimī, Tuḥfah, I, 44 mentions a story of a Jew from Oman with 'Amr b. al-Āṣ the Prophet's governor of Oman which proves that there was a sort of Jewish community in Oman, namely at Sohar, the commercial towns.
13. Especially from the Arab tribes of Nizārī origin which arrived in Oman from north Arabia, in addition to the Azd who came to Oman in the second wave of Azd migration by the sixth century. See Ibn Durayd, Ishtiqāq, 46B; Kalbī, Aṣnām, 6-64.
14. Kalbī, Aṣnām, 63; the idol Bājir was known in the Omani sources as Nājir, see 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 119b; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 450; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 11b; Ṣālimī, Tuḥfah, I, 36-37; Sayyābī, Umān, I, 107; Ibn al-Athīr, Uṣd al-Ghābah, IV, 269-70 mentions Bājir as Nājir, see Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Isti'āb, II, 6.



15. Zubayrī, Nasab, 13; Ya'qubī, Tārīkh, I, 370; Ibn Hishām, Sirah, I, 108; Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 168. See also Ibn Ḥazm, Jamharat, 163-164.
16. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, III, 226; cf. 'Alī, Mufaṣṣal, VII, 527; 'Alī, "Ansijah", Abḥāth, 577-8; 'Alī, Mufaṣṣal, VII, 376; see also ed. Pridham, 'Umar, "Islamisation", 35; Naboodah, Eastern, 87; Ḥasan, Tārīkh, I, 64.
17. No information is provided by the sources to prove that any contacts had been made by the Prophet Muḥammad with Oman, except that some sources mention a group of Omani Azd having arrived in Medina in 6/627.
18. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. 119a; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Istī'āb, II, 6; Ibn al-Athīr, Uṣd, IV, 269; 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 119a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 450; Ibn Zurayq, Ṣaḥīfah, MS. 10A; Ma'walī, Qisāṣ, MS. 253; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 36; ed. 'Ashūr, Tārīkh, 37.
19. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 119a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 450; Ibn al-Athīr, Uṣd, IV, 270; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣaḥīfah, MS. 10a; Ma'walī, Qisāṣ, MS. 253; ed. 'Ashūr, Tārīkh, 37; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 36.
20. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 119a.
21. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. 119b; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣaḥīfah, MS. 109; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 37; Sayyābī, Uman, I, 108; cf. Röss, Annals.
22. Naboodah, Eastern, 193.
23. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, II, 114-15.
24. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, II, 115. See also Nuwayrī, Nihāya, XVIII, 114-15.
25. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, II, 115.
26. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, III, 301; Balādhurī, Futūḥ, 89-92; Ibn Ḥazm, Jamharat, 431.
27. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, II, 116; see Nuwayrī, Nihāya, XVIII, 116; Ḥamid Allāh, Wathā'iq, 164.
28. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, II, 116.
29. Yāqūt, Mu'jam, II, 435.
30. Balādhurī, Ansāb, I, 529; see Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 385.
31. ed. Pridham, 'Umar, "Islamisation", 36.

32. According to the sources 'Amr had accepted Islam in 8/630, i.e. the same year he was dispatched to Oman; see Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, III, 29-31.
33. Ibn Hishām, Sirah, IV, 279; Balādhurī, Futūh, 87; Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, II, 95; Ibn Sa'd, Ṭabaqāt, II, 27; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, II, 185; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Istī'āb, I, 100; Ibn 'Abd Rabiḥ, 'Iqd, III, 386; Ya'qūbī, Tārīkh, II, 85; Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 77; Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, Futūh, 45; Zabīdī, Tāj, III, 105; Qalqashāndī, Ṣubḥ, VI, 380. See also 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 272a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 451; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣaḥīfah, MS. f. 149a; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. 13b; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 39; cf. Ḥamid Allāh, Wathā'iq, 161; 'Ānī, Umān, 75; ed. Pridham, 'Umar, "Islamisation", 37; Haykal, al-Fārūq, II, 85; Dawardī, Kanz, III, 64.
34. Balādhurī, Futūh, 87.
35. Balādhurī, Futūh, 87.
36. Ibn Ḥajar, Isābah, VII, 80; Balādhurī, Futūh, 87. According to Ibn Ḥazm, Jamharat, 352, Abū Zayd al-Anṣārī was a man called Sa'īd b. 'Aws b. Thābit, and he was well-known as a grammarian, who died in Basra in 215/830.
37. Tārīkh, II, 645, III, 95. Until 6/627 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ did not convert to Islam; see Nuwayrī, Nihāya, XVIII, 167. Ṭabarī mentions that 'Amr became a Muslim in 8/629 in the same year in which he had been sent as an envoy to Oman, III, 29-30. See Nuwayrī, Nihāya, XVI, 421-20.
38. Tārīkh, III, 95, II, 645. See also Dawardī, Kanz, III, 64.
39. Kāmil, II, 185, Waqīdī, Maghāzī, II, 634.
40. Ibn Hishām, Sirah, IV, 279; Ḥasan, Tārīkh, I, 112.
41. Mas'ūdī, Tanbīh, 240.
42. Tārīkh, II, 85, cf. Ibn Abd al-Barr, Istī'āb, I, 100; Ibn 'Abd Rabiḥ, 'Iqd, III, 386; Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 77. cf. Haykal, al-Fārūq, II, 85. The Omani sources do not mention the date of 'Amr's arrival in Oman. See Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 272ab; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 451; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣaḥīfah, MS. 149b; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 13a; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 39; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 41.
43. Ibn Hishām, Sirah, IV, 279.
44. Ya'qūbī, Tārīkh, I, 314; Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 265-267; Iṣfahānī, Azminah, II, 163; Maqdisī, Taqāsim, 53.
45. Nuwayrī, Nihāya, XVIII, 167-8; see Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 450; also see Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣaḥīfah, f. 149a.

46. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, Ms. f. 272b; Izkawī, Kashf, 451; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 40; Ibn Ruzayq, Sahifah, f. 149b.
47. Muhammad, 131.
48. Balādhurī, Futūh, 87; Nuwayrī, Nihāya, XVIII, 168. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 451; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 43; Haykal, al-Fārūq, II, 85; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 41.
49. Riddah, 26.
50. Ibn Wathimah, Riddah, 26.
51. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 452; Ma'walī, Qisas, MS. f. 14a; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 43; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 42. According to Wathimah, Riddah, 27, 'Uqbah b. Nu'mān al-'Atkī, was the head of the Omani Azd delegation to Medina, therefore 'Abd b. Julandā was not among them as the Omani sources mentioned. Cf. Watt, Muhammad, 131.
52. Ibn Hajar, Fath, I, 158.
53. Life of Mahomet, 441
54. Ed. Pridham, 'Umar, "Islamisation", 31. See also 'Ānī, Uman, 74.
55. Muhammad, 131.
56. Uman, 75. See also Kennedy, Prophet, 44.53.54.
57. Qalqashandi, Subh, VI, 380; Ḥamīd Allāh, Wathā'iq, 162. See also the copy of the Prophet's letter to the kings of Oman at the end of this chapter.
58. Yāqūt, Mu'jam, II, 435; see also Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 43; Sayyābī, Uman, I, 129.
59. About the Saqifah meeting and the discussion which took place during this meeting, see Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, III, 218-223; Ibn Hishām, Sirah, IV, 335-41; Ibn Kathīr, Bidāyah, V, 245-50. Cf. Shoufany, Riddah, 48-70 concerning the alleged election of Abū Bakr; Baydūn, Tayyārāt, 13-23; Dūrī, Muqaddimah, 42-49.
60. Ibn Hishām, Sirah, IV, 335-41.
61. For more detailed discussion concerning the apostasy after the Prophet's death, see Shoufany, Riddah, 48-71.
62. Dūrī, Muqaddimah, 42.

63. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, III, 246. See also Iṣfahānī, Aghānī, II, 157; cf. Dūrī, Muqaddimah, 42.
64. The first indications of the rebel movement had begun to emerge during the last two years of the Prophet's life. During this period several powerful leaders in Arabia posed a challenge to his government and vied with him on the issue of his Prophecy, namely al-Aswad al-'Ansi in the Yemen, Ṭulayha b. Khuwaylid in Western Najd and Musaylima b. Ḥabīb in Yamāma. For more information about these events see, Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, III, 227-40, 253-61, 267-75, 276-80, 301-13, 313-16, 316-218, 318-320, cf. E.I., Abu Bakr 80-82.
65. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, III, 314; Ibn Kathīr, Bidāyah, V, 329-30; Ya'qūbī, Tārīkh, II, 138; Yāqūt, Mu'jam, II, 435; Bulādhurī, Futūḥ, 87; see also al-Balansī, Riddah, 148; Shoufany, Riddah, 88; Naboodah, Eastern, 207; Miles, Countries, I, 43; 'Amad, Harakat, 9.
66. Yāqūt, Mu'jam, II, 435.
67. Yāqūt, Mu'jam, II, 436. The father of al-Muhallab b. Abī Ṣufrah, the famous Azdi leader.
68. Naboodah, Eastern, 208.
69. 'Awṭabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 282b; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 452; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 50. See also Qalhātī, Kashf, II, 426; Kindī, Ihtidā, 204.
70. Tārīkh, III, 314.
71. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, III, 316.
72. Futūḥ, I, 73-75, cf. Naboodah, Eastern, 209.
73. Futūḥ, 67.
74. Balādhurī, Futūḥ, 87-88.
75. al-Balansī, Riddah, 147-150; see Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, III, 314-16.
76. al-Balansī, Riddah, 149.
77. al-Balansī, Riddah, 149-50.
78. Sprenger, Riddah, 28.
79. Sprenger, Riddah, 27.
80. Sprenger, Riddah, 26-27.

81. Sprenger, Riddah, 27.
82. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS, f, 383a; Qalhātī, Kashf, II, 426; Kindī, Ihtidā', 204, Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 48; Sayyabī, 'Uman, I, 141.
83. Ansāb, MS. f, 283a; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 48; cf. Naboodah, Eastern, 211-12.
84. Kashf, MS. 452-3; see also Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. 259; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 42; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 42.
85. Kashf, MS, 453; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 44; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 45. Cf. Sayyabī, 'Uman, I, 138.
86. Tuhfah, I, 50.
87. Kashf, II, 426.
88. Qalhātī, Kashf, II, 426; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 50.
89. Ihtidā', 204.
90. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 452; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. 259; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 43. About the names of the delegation see also ed. Sprenger, Riddah, 26, 27. No mention for Abd b. Julandā or Abū Ṣufrah. Jayfar b. Jashim and 'Uqbah b. al-Nu'mān al'Atakī.
91. Izkawī, Kashf, 452-3; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. 261; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 43-44; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 43-44.
92. Tārīkh, III, 259. According to him, this was in 11/632.
93. Tārīkh, III, 259. According to Balādhurī, Futūh, 106, when 'Amr carried Buqayrah to Abū Bakr to whom Buqayrah said, "By Allāh, I never forsook my faith since I became a believer. As 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ on his way back from Oman passed by me, I treated him hospitably and was loyal to him".
94. Fath, I, 58; cf. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. 283b; Ibn Durayd, Ishtiqaq, 501.
95. Ansāb, MS. f. 156A; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 49. According to 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 283b, al-Mu'allab's name before he arrived in Medina was Tha'labah, and 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb changed his name to al-Mu'allā.
96. Ansāb, MS. f, 283b; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 49 regarding this event, Azd Ka'b b. Ma'dan al-Ashqarī composed this poetry:

في زمان سبيعة بن عراك  
 حين ردا سباء اهل عمان  
 والمُعَلَّ اذ يبينان الفعالا  
 اكثر الحل فيه والترحالا

At the time of Sabī'ah b. 'Arāk and al-Mu'allā' [b. Sa'id] whose [good deeds] they demonstrate. When they brought back the captives of the Omani people, they had made frequent movements to and fro.

97. 'Awṭabī, Ansāb; Ibn Ruzayq, Sahīfah, MS. f. 156A.
98. Al-Balansī, Riddah, 150. Omani sources do not mention Abū Ṣufrah among the captives, see 'Awṭabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 283b. See also Qalhātī, Kashf, II, 426; Kindī, Ihtidā, 204, was the only author who suggests that the people of Dibā had been taken captives during 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb's caliphate, not in that of Abū Bakr's.
99. Al-Balansī, Riddah, 150.
100. The last governor over Dibā was 'Uthmān b. al-'Āṣ al-Thaqafī who took Dibā as his residence.
101. E.I. Azd, 811-13, cf. 'Amad, Harakat, 3.
102. "Julandā", J.O.S. 100.
103. Tārīkh, II, 327-28. For more details about B. Nājiyah clan see Ibn Durayd, Ishtiqāq, 268; 'Awṭabī, Ansāb, MS. 259; Ibn Abī Ḥadīd, Nahj, II, 127.
104. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, III, 316.
105. Countries, I, 35.
106. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, III, 314; See also 'Amad, Harakah, 4.
107. Tārīkh, 123; Ya'qūbī, Tārīkh, II, 156; Haykal, al-Fārūq, 190.
108. Balādhurī, Futūḥ, 88.
109. Tahdhīb, I, 131; Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, III, 389.
110. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, III.
111. Ibn Khayyāt, Tārīkh, 154; Balādhurī, Futūḥ, 89.
112. Balādhurī, Futūḥ, 421; Ibn Khayyāt, Tārīkh, 154; Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 127; Dhahabī, Ṣirah, II, 269f. 'Uthmān b. al-'Āṣ replaced al-'Alā' b. Ḥaḍramī, who in 17/638 crossed the Persian sea toward Fars without 'Umar's permission. For more detailed information see Ṭabarī, Tārīkh,

IV, 79-83.

113. Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 127; Dhahabī, Sirah, 269.
114. Balādhurī, Futūh, 256; cf. Donner, Early, 157-212; ‘Umar, Tārīkh, 87-96.
115. Balādhurī, Futūh, 379-394.
116. ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 223b; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 47; Sayyabī, ‘Umān, I, 171. See also, for a more detailed discussion about this issue, Ḥanzal, “Liwā”, Tārīkh al-Khalīj, 199-204.
117. ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 224a; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣaḥīfah, MS. f. 114a,b; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 47; Sayyabī, ‘Umān, 171; cf. Ḥanzal, “Liwā”, Tārīkh al-Khalīj, 201.
118. ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 224a.
119. ‘Umar, Tārīkh, 86.
120. ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 224b; Ibn Ruzayq, Ṣaḥīfah, MS. f. 114b; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 48.
121. Balādhurī, Futūh, 378; Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 127; Dhahabī, Sirah, II, 269; ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 223b; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 48; cf. Māhir, Baḥriyyah, 62; ‘Umar, Tārīkh, 96; Miles, Countries, I, 45; Naboodah, Eastern.
122. Balādhurī, Futūh, 378; Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 127; Māhir, Baḥriyyah, 62; ‘Umar, Tārīkh, 96; Naboodah, Eastern, 231.
123. Balādhurī, Futūh, 379; ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 223b.
124. ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 224b; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 48.
125. ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 224b.
126. Balādhurī, Futūh, 342; ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 224b; cf. ‘Alī, Tanzīmat, 37-39; Shaban, Islamic history, I, 51-52.
127. Balādhurī, Futūh, 341.
128. Ibrahīm, Tārīkh, I, 399.
129. ‘Alī, Tanzīmat, 53.
130. Ansāb, MS. f. 225a; see also Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 48.
131. Concerning the Omani immigration to the land of the Central Caliphate

see chapter III, of this study.

132. 'Alī, "Idārat", Ibhāth, 15; 'Alī, Tanzīmat, 324-25, see also Chapter III, of this study.
133. For further discussion about the Azd immigration to Basra see Chapter III of this study.
134. According to Ṣalīmī, Tuhfah, I, 46, 'Abbād b. Abd al-Julandā had replaced 'Uthmān b. al-'Āṣ during 'Uthmān b. 'Affān's caliphate.
135. The Omani sources do not give any information regarding 'Uthmān b. Affān's caliphate and its relation with Oman.
136. Ṭabari, Tārīkh, IV, 340-96; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, III, 77-91; Jāhīz, 'Uthmāniyyah, 184, Ḥusain, 'Uthmān, 215-218.
137. For more detailed discussion concerning this dispute see Ṭabari, Tārīkh, IV, 508-32; Ibn al-'Athīr, Kāmil, III, 105-83.
138. Ibn Muzāḥim, Siffin, 251-267; Ṭabari, Tārīkh, IV, 558-59; Ibn al- Athīr, Kāmil, III, 147-8, 166; Ya'qūbī, Tārīkh, I, 166.
139. Ya'qūbī, Tārīkh, I, 167-70; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, III, 172. For more information about the Khawārij movements see Mubarrad, Kāmil, II, 121-194, cf. E.I. 246-249; Salem, Political theory, 25-31.
140. Ya'qūbī, Tārīkh, I, 189; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, III, 194.
141. In fact a large number of Azd were involved in this event, particularly on 'Alī's side.
142. For the spread of the Ibādī teaching in Oman and its earliest activities, see Chapter V of this study.
143. Tārīkh, II, 327, 28. Regarding al-Ḥalūf's appointment as governor of Oman, the writer suggests that he may have taken charge of Dibā where the B. Nājiyyah clan lived. The rest of Oman during 'Alī's caliphate was under the authority of 'Abbād b. Abd al-Julandā, see Ṣalīmī, Tuhfah, I, 46.
144. Tārīkh, 327,28. See also Ibn Durayd, Ishtiqaq, 109.
145. For more detailed information about Ma'qil see Abū al-Ḥadīd, Nahj, II, 127-144.
146. Ibn Durayd, Ishtiqaq, 109, called him al-Khurayt. According to Kindī, Ihtida', 204, (Imam), 'Alī had sent Ma'qil to the sons of B. Sāmāh b. Nājiyyah to call upon them to sever allegiance from 'Alī. When they



refused to accept his call, he fought them and took some of them captive.

147. Tārīkh, II, 128.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **OMAN'S RELATIONS WITH THE Umayyads AND THE KHAWĀRĪJ IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE FIRST CENTURY HIJRAH**

- 3.1 The relations between Oman and the Umayyad caliphate**
- 3.2 The expedition of al-Qāsim al-Muzanī to Oman**
- 3.3 Oman and the earliest Khawārij**
- 3.4 Notes**

### 3.1 The relations between Oman and the Umayyad caliphate

It is worth mentioning here, before going into detail about the relation of the Umayyad with Oman, that the Ibādīs held the view that all caliphs and their governors starting from Mu'āwiyah were tyrants (*jabābirah*).<sup>1</sup> The Ibādīs declared disassociation (*barā'ah*) from them with the exception of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz. Some Ibādī scholars state that he was a legal imam because of the consensus of the Muslims (*ijmā' al-ummah*) to accept his imamate.<sup>2</sup>

After Mu'āwiyah became caliph, following the murder of 'Alī, a new era of Islamic history under Umayyad rule began. Also the independence of Oman under the rule of 'Abbād b. 'Abd al-Julandā, who succeeded his uncle Jayfar b. al-Julandā in the reign of the caliph 'Uthmān,<sup>3</sup> was set to increase as a result of Mu'āwiyah's coming to power, since the new caliph was preoccupied by the opposition to his authority and in crushing his enemies elsewhere.

With regard to the relations between Oman and the new caliph, no communication between the two sides is reported by the sources, nor were any sort of relations established. 'Abbad b. Julandā who continued to rule Oman, did not openly oppose the first Umayyad caliph in Damascus and therefore Mu'āwiyah from his side did not see in Oman any sort of threat to his leadership and so there was no reason for him to attack it militarily. The Omani sources report that Mu'āwiyah had no power over the people of Oman,<sup>4</sup> which indicates that his rule was not recognised by the people of Oman.

Miles supports this idea by mentioning that Oman, like other provinces

of Arabia, refused submission to the first Umayyad caliph and remained for some time independent.<sup>5</sup> Hitti, however, in his account, regards Oman, during Mu'āwiyah's caliphate as fully incorporated into the Umayyad realm;<sup>6</sup> whilst Dixon indicates that the Omanis had rejected total Mu'āwiyah's caliphate, and they proved this by ceasing to pay the tax (*zakāh*) to the treasury (*Bayt al-Māl*), which they used to pay since the time of the Riddah war.<sup>7</sup>

Having said that, there is another account, which indicates that Oman was brought under Mu'āwiyah's authority by his governor Ziyād b. Abī Sufyān. Oman, which until recently belonged administratively to Medina, was transferred by the governor of Iraq, Ziyād b. Abī Sufyān, from the Hījāz to Basran administration.<sup>8</sup> (It continued to be governed from Basra during the Umayyad period and also during the first period of the Abbasid caliphate.)

The links between Oman and Basra go back to the second caliph, 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb who established them during the Islamic conquests. Basra itself had witnessed, during the latter part of Mu'āwiyah's rule, 41-61/661-80, and under Yazid I, 61-64/680-83, the rise of the power of the Azd, whose number had been increased by supplementary migration.<sup>9</sup> Modern scholars face a particularly awkward problem in attempting to distinguish between the various Azd sub-groups regarding their migration and settlement patterns in Basra and this is due to the scarcity of information dealing with this subject<sup>10</sup> The name of the Azd finds frequent mention in our sources amongst the Arab tribes known to have settled in the Basra area during the early period of Islamic history. Our interest here is to investigate the origin of the members of the Azd

confederation, in order to discover which of them were Omani. However, it remains unclear to this writer which group of Azd is being referred to here.<sup>11</sup> Using Abū ‘Ubaydah’s account,<sup>12</sup> Caskel argues that the majority of Azd present in Basra before the year 59/678 hailed from the Daws group, while the Omani Azd, he continues, migrated to the city after this date.<sup>13</sup>

Wilkinson disagrees with Caskel’s view, claiming that the Azd of Oman featured significantly in Basra before 59/678. He argues also that “in the first decades of Islam the Azd from the Sarāt and Shām (Syria) dominated the alliance in Iraq and that later it was the Omani Azd who did so”.<sup>14</sup> Wilkinson’s argument is based on Wellhausen, who suggested: “It must not be thought, however, that all the Azd had come to Basra only in the year 60/679. There were already Azdites there before that, and those certainly belonged, just as much as those in Kufa, to the western branch which had its home on Mount Sarāt to Daws mostly”.<sup>15</sup>

During the reign of Mu‘āwiyah and his son Yazīd I, the domination of the Hiddān group within the Azd confederation in Basra began to fade, following the arrival of large groups of Azd Oman to the area, especially during the governorship of ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Ziyād.<sup>16</sup> The Ma‘āwil appear to have been one of the most important Azd groups in Basra during the period of Mu‘āwiyah’s caliphate with their numbers substantially increased.<sup>17</sup>

After the death of Yazīd I in 63/682, we begin to receive a slightly clearer picture of the structure of the Azd confederation in Basra. The ‘Atik

clan of Azd under its leader Mas'ūd b. 'Āmr al-'Atikī assumed control and led his tribes against the confederation of Muḍar. However, the Azd tribes from both Oman and elsewhere formed a Qaḥṭānī confederation in the same manner as other Arabian tribes had done in the garrison towns.<sup>18</sup> The reason this confederation was known as al-Azd may be explained by the preponderance of the Azd in Basra over the Qaḥṭānī tribes.<sup>19</sup>

By this time the old tension between Tamīm and Rabī'ah had increased; Rabī'ah then allied themselves with Azd, and came under their protection, whilst Tamīm allied themselves with the Qays of Muḍar.<sup>20</sup> This resulted in the emergence of two groups constantly feuding with each other. Their feud extended to Khurāsān where there were also Azdi tribesmen. This constant conflict between Muḍar (Tamīm and Qays) and the Qaḥṭān (Azd and Rabī'ah) had also appeared on the scene there.<sup>21</sup> With the increase of the Kharijite threat these two parties buried their differences and united in order to stave off the creeping menace presented by the rebellious activities which had begun to dominate the city of Basra.<sup>22</sup> This had the effect of bringing into the conflict the Omani leader, al-Muhallab b. Abī Ṣufrah, a new arrival to Basra, who gathered around himself a large group of Omani warriors to combat the Khawārij.<sup>23</sup> Thus Basra, between the period 65-66/684-5, witnessed Omani domination within the Azd Confederation.

Along with two main Omani groups which find mention in the sources, namely the Ma'āwil and the 'Atik, we include the Yaḥmad and Mālīk b. Fahm groups.<sup>24</sup> By the end of the second civil war the Azd groups from Oman started

making their way to Khurāsān where they were to exert considerable influence and where they significantly affected Umayyad policy in the eastern province of the caliphate.<sup>25</sup>

The authority of the Umayyad caliphs appears, however, to have been merely nominal until the accession of the Umayyad caliph ‘Abd al Malik b. Marwān (65-86/684-705) who sent through his governor of Iraq, al-Ḥajjāj 75-95/694-714, various expeditions in an attempt to control Oman and restore it to Umayyad rule. ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān had faced during his caliphate various crises: there was the civil war between himself and Ibn al-Zubayr,<sup>26</sup> on one hand and on the other there was the Kharijite movement, which reached the height of activity at this period.<sup>27</sup> There were also the minor, scattered revolts which rose in the heart of the caliphate<sup>28</sup> and which affected Umayyad policy towards a number of regions which lay outside its control. Oman was not only an outlying province but also a mountainous region difficult to penetrate. Its western borders were the desert (the Empty Quarter) which could be used as an escape route in times of emergency.

The civil war between ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān and ‘Abdallāh b. al-Zubayr, together with the remoteness of Oman from the central government, encouraged the Omanis to seize this opportunity of re-asserting the independence they had maintained since the time of the Prophet.<sup>29</sup> Having succeeded in suppressing the insurrection of the opposition groups, the Umayyad focussed their attention on the Gulf Coast of Arabia in general and on Oman in particular, where opposition to their rule began to increase and threaten

Umayyad interests in the area, especially after the rise of Basra as a trade centre. Since trade came to Basra through the Gulf waters, it was important for the Umayyads to secure the trade route from any rising power in the region, especially Oman, which controlled the mouth of the Gulf. ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān had chosen for this task al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf al-Thaqafī, who held the governorship of Iraq which was considered the most responsible post in the whole of the Islamic Empire.<sup>30</sup> Al-Ḥajjāj, who is well-known to have been severe with his enemies, had shown determination to control Oman and bring it back under his authority, whatever the price. To achieve this end, al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf at first contented himself with despatching envoys, charged to demand submission and payment of tax (*zakāt*) to the Umayyad caliphate.<sup>31</sup> The two joint rulers of Oman, Sa‘īd and Sulaymān, the sons of ‘Abbād b. ‘Abd b. al-Julandā b. al-Mustakbar, rejected these demands with disdain.<sup>32</sup>

The Omanis felt that their independent position in the Islamic caliphate was threatened by the energetic policies of al-Ḥajjāj, which were directed towards making the authority of the caliph ‘Abd al-Malik effective throughout the empire.<sup>33</sup> Al-Ḥajjāj thereupon determined to reduce the power of the al-Julandā rulers and only by successive military campaigns was able to restore order and control them by controlling Oman. He was successful in Oman which was subjected to caliphate rule once again. He sent several armies against the people of Oman, but details are known only of the last three campaigns.<sup>34</sup>

The early Islamic sources do not usually concern themselves with minor



events in the outlying provinces, and thus events which took place in Oman during this particular time were dealt with in a summary fashion. These campaigns were only mentioned briefly by Khalīfah b. Khayyāt.<sup>35</sup> The account of Ibn ‘Asākir,<sup>36</sup> in the later sources, is not only brief and confused but is also unreliable, since his account reads more as a fable than a history.<sup>37</sup> However, we are fully informed by most Omani local history sources of this event.<sup>38</sup>

No date has been given for the earliest, unsuccessful, campaigns that al-Ḥajjāj sent against Sa‘īd and Sulaymān. In the first of these a force sent by sea to Oman was defeated and routed by an Azdī army under Sulaymān b. ‘Abbād. This force was one of many armies despatched to Oman by al-Ḥajjāj and according to Omani tradition they were all crushed by the Omani defenders, and sent back from where they came.<sup>39</sup>

The first Umayyad governor sent by al-Ḥajjāj, as Ibn Khayyāt mentions, was Musā b. Sinān b. Salmah,<sup>40</sup> but he failed in his task, because of the Omanis’ rejection of Umayyad policy in their country. Then al-Ḥajjāj sent another governor, Ṭafīl b. Ḥuṣayn al-Bahrānī to Oman, to replace Musā b. Sinan.<sup>41</sup> According to Ibn Khayyāt, he managed to control Oman, but later al-Ḥajjāj recalled him to Iraq and ordered him to appoint someone else to take up his post. Ḥājib b. Shībah then took his place until he died.<sup>42</sup> No reason is given for the cause of his death, nor is any information available about the reason for Ṭafīl al-Bahrānī’s recall to Iraq, but it seems that the increasing Omani opposition and their hostility to Umayyad rule was behind this change. It appears that this opposition led al-Ḥajjāj to consider sending a major military

expedition to control Oman and to suppress the insurrection of Omani Azd, under Saïd and Sulaymān, sons of ‘Abbād b. al-Julandā.

### 3.2 The expedition of al-Qāsim al-Muzanī to Oman

Having succeeded in crushing the rebellion of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ash‘ath,<sup>43</sup> al-Ḥajjāj now had a free hand to deal with Oman. After his previous unsuccessful attempt to end the Azd revolt against the Umayyads he now despatched a well-equipped army under the command of Qāsim b. Sha‘wah al-Muzanī by sea to Oman.<sup>44</sup> The ships of al-Qāsim with its large force, reached the coast of Oman and landed near the village of Ḥaṭṭāt.<sup>45</sup> The appearance of al-Qāsim’s fleet was speedily communicated to the Omani army, whose cavalry, led by Sulaymān b. ‘Abbād, attacked him and his forces. After a fierce encounter the Umayyad army was routed, al-Qāsim and a number of his men having been slain.<sup>46</sup> When the news of his army’s defeat reached him, al-Ḥajjāj was incensed and became intent on revenge. He therefore discouraged the Azd of Basra from any idea they may have had of helping their fellow-tribesmen in Oman by keeping the Azdite chiefs under close observation.<sup>47</sup> Al-Ḥajjāj then ordered a general levy of the Nizārī tribes, and it is said the number of the Nizārī army was about 40,000. This force was sent in two parts one by land and the other by sea.

Command was given to Muja‘ah b. Sha‘wah al-Muzanī, a brother of al-Qāsim, killed in the last campaign.<sup>48</sup> Muja‘ah meanwhile commanded the sea force, which had been transported by sea down the Persian Gulf. But the army, which consisted of about 20,000 men, both horsemen and men mounted on

camels, took the land route to Oman, and arrived before the sea force which might have sailed late. Sulaymān b. ‘Abbād and his troupes, which consisted of 3,000 horsemen and 3,500 on camels, met the Umayyad army<sup>49</sup> and were able to defeat the land division in a great battle. According to Omani historical sources, Sulaymān b. ‘Abbād after this battle knew nothing about that part of the Umayyad army which had been sent by sea, and in fact drew near to Omani territory soon after the Umayyad land force had been defeated.<sup>50</sup>

The Omani sources do not contain any information about the condition of the Nizārī tribesmen in this army, nor do they report anything relating to the losses on both sides, which led to the conjecture that the Umayyad army might have fled. The Omani sources have given the name of the place where the battle took place as being near the water of al-Bulqa‘ah.<sup>51</sup> Al-Sālīmī gives more details about its location and says it is near the village of Bawshar.<sup>52</sup> Miles was confused regarding the place and asserted that it was near al-Buraymi in the extreme north of Oman. Meanwhile Muja‘ah and the fleet were informed off the coast of Julfār about the defeat of the land army.<sup>54</sup> He changed his destination and made towards the Bāṭinah coast, where he landed, having been informed that Sa‘īd b. ‘Abbād had been left with only a small force, while his brother Sulaymān, with the rest of his supporters, was fighting the army that had come by land.<sup>55</sup> Muja‘ah’s army arrived at Barkā’, and was able to route Sa‘īd b. ‘Abbād and his small group at there. Sa‘īd, realising that with such a small number of men he could not withstand the large army of Muja‘ah, retreated by night and took refuge in the al-Jabal al-Akhḍar mountains<sup>56</sup> but was pursued and besieged.<sup>57</sup> When Sulaymān heard of this he turned back to help

his brother and his followers. Before he went to meet Muja'ah, Sulayman attacked the 300 ships of the Umayyad army in the port of Muscat. He succeeded in setting fire to fifty of Muja'ah's ships,<sup>58</sup> while the rest of the fleet managed to escape from Muscat for the open sea. Having heard about Sulayman and his army coming to fight him, Muja'ah found himself unable to cope with the former's army, so he withdrew his force from the al-Jabal al-Akhḍar, turned back towards the coast and was met by Sulayman's army at the town of Samā'il, on the road between the al-Jabal al-Akhḍar and Muscat, where a battle was fought between them resulting in the defeat of Muja'ah's army, the latter managing to escape in a ship to Julfār,<sup>59</sup> from where he wrote to al-Ḥajjāj asking for re-inforcements. Hearing of the defeat, al-Ḥajjāj sent reinforcements of 5,000 Syrians from Bādiyat al-Shām under the command of 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sulayman.<sup>60</sup>

According to al-Sālimī, Sulayman and Sa'id were informed of the coming of this force by an Azdi from Basra who was in the Umayyad army.<sup>61</sup> The two Julandā rulers after hearing this, realised that they could no longer resist al-Ḥajjāj's army. Muja'ah set out again. He was now able to subdue Oman without difficulty, especially after Sulayman and Sa'id who fought bravely until all hope had gone, fled with their families and other members of their tribe across the sea to East Africa (the land of Zanj). It is not known where they settled there.<sup>62</sup> It has been reported that they remained in East Africa until they died.<sup>63</sup> This also was a new era for the Omani Arabs in East Africa. There they established in recent centuries an independent state ruled by Omanis.<sup>64</sup>

Following their flight, Muja'ah and 'Abd al-Rahmān entered Oman where they punished its inhabitants for having supported the Umayyad opposition.<sup>65</sup> Although no date is given by the sources for the control of Oman by al-Hajjāj, Wilkinson suggests that the al-Hajjāj invasion probably took place about 86/705.<sup>66</sup> The same suggestion was also made by Dixon,<sup>67</sup> who mentions that after al-Hajjāj crushed the revolt of 'Abd al-Rahmān b. al-Ash'ath (ended in 85/704), he was then free to deal with Oman. However, one can conclude from the account of the Omani sources that al-Hajjāj's campaigns took place during the life of 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān, not after his death. Al-Hajjāj appointed al-Khayyār b. Subrah al-Mujāshī'ī governor of Oman and he remained there until the death of al-Hajjāj.<sup>68</sup> No information is given by the sources as to whether he faced any further trouble from the people of Oman. The appointment of al-Khayyār al-Mujāshī'ī as governor of Oman, according to al-'Awtabī, took place during the caliphate of al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik (86-96/705-714) and the reason behind al-Hajjāj's selection of al-Khayyār was because of his hostility towards the sons of al-Muhallab Yazīd and his brothers<sup>69</sup> who, during the caliphate of Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik, became powerful after they had been discredited by al-Hajjāj, during the reign of al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik.

The Omani sources mention that al-Khayyār followed an extremely harsh policy towards the Azd of Oman and all the Yemeni tribes, in order to please his master, al-Hajjāj, who was anti-Azd because of his enmity towards the Muhallabid family.<sup>70</sup> But when Yazīd b. al-Muhallab became governor of Iraq,<sup>71</sup>

he appointed his brother Ziyād b. Muhallab governor in Oman.<sup>72</sup> The latter had written to Sa'īd b. Hānī al-Hamdānī (who was sent as governor of Oman by Yazīd b. Muslim, the governor of Iraq after the death of al-Hajjāj), asking him to imprison al-Khayyār. When Ziyād arrived in Oman he ordered al-Khayyār b. Subrah al-Majāshi'i to be killed.<sup>73</sup> According to Ibn Khayyāt, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sālīm al-Kalbī was governor of Oman before al-Khayyār.<sup>74</sup> No details are provided by the other sources to confirm this claim.

There is in fact some confusion regarding 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān's governors in Oman, as reported by the Omani sources and another Islamic source, not only concerning the length of time they held their posts but also concerning their names, and the period they spent in Oman.<sup>75</sup> Ziyād b. al-Muhallab remained governor of Oman until Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik died. When 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz became caliph, he deposed Yazīd b. Muhallab from the governorship of Iraq.<sup>76</sup> He appointed 'Adī b. Arṭāh al-Fazārī in his place.<sup>77</sup> The new governor had sent several governors to Oman, but the people of Oman did not like their policy.<sup>78</sup>

According to al-Izkawī 'Adī b. Arṭāh himself was appointed by Caliph 'Umar II over Oman, but he subsequently removed him and appointed in his place 'Umar b. 'Abdallāh b. Ṭalḥah al-Anṣārī.<sup>79</sup> It is related that it was the caliph himself who selected al-Anṣārī to be sent to Oman. According to custom, the governor of Iraq or sometimes of Basra, used to appoint the governors of Oman and Bahrain.<sup>80</sup> This move by the caliph has something to do with the complaints he had received from the people of Oman about the Umayyad

governors who were appointed directly from Iraq. ‘Umar al-Anṣārī had implemented a lenient policy towards the inhabitants of Oman. He was also of a benevolent disposition, and won the affection of the people, so that they paid their tribute willingly.<sup>81</sup> ‘Umar II had shown a desire of following his governor’s policy in the provinces. According to al-Balādhurī,<sup>82</sup> on the authority of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Madā’īnī ‘Umar II wrote to ‘Adī b. Arṭāh al-Fazārī, his governor in Basra, regarding the land tax (*kharāj*) of Oman as follows.

“Greetings, I have previously written to ‘Amr b. ‘Abdallāh [al-Anṣārī, his governor in Oman], asking him to distribute whatever he received in Oman from date or grain tithes among the poor of its inhabitants, the nomadic people who may descend on it and those who through need, poverty, or persecution of the way are compelled to stay there. Regarding this, he wrote to me that having asked those representatives who came before him to Oman about these articles of food and dates, he was told that their representatives had sold them and delivered the price to you. Give back to ‘Umar, therefore, what the representative in Oman brought to you as the price of dates and grains, that ‘Umar may invest [the money] where I instructed him, and spend it as I told him. May this be the will of God, and peace be upon you!”

‘Umar b. ‘Abdallāh al-Anṣārī remained governor of Oman until ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-Azīz died. According to Omani sources, on the death of ‘Umar II, Ibn al-Anṣārī abdicated from his post in favour of Ziyād b. al-Muhallab.<sup>83</sup> These sources report that he said to Ziyād: “This is the country of your people, and it is fitting that you should take charge of their affairs.” Therefore Ziyād

became governor of Oman and continued to administer its affairs until the coming of the Abbasid caliphate.<sup>84</sup> No activities on the part of the Umayyad rulers have been reported by the sources except that Ibn Khayyāṭ mentions that, al-Walīd b. Yazīd b. ‘Abd al-Malik had appointed Yūsuf b. ‘Umar b. Muḥammad b. Kurūm b. Buhays his governor of Oman.<sup>85</sup>

### 3.3 Oman and the earliest Khawārij

It is not the intention of this study to deal with the origin of the Kharijites, nor their doctrines or theological differences. Rather it is concerned with the political aspect of Kharijite activities towards Oman during the Umayyad period. One of the issues which would have the most effect on Oman was the very appearance of the Khawārij. They have a strong association with the country from the earliest times. Apart from the general spread of Khariji ideas, through the close ties between Oman and Basra, Oman was directly influenced by primitive Kharijism in the form of a Khariji revolt, by a short period of subjection to the Najdāt and the teaching of the militant Ṣufriyyah under one of its leaders, ‘Imrān b. Hittān.<sup>86</sup>

The doctrines of the Khawārij were established after they split off from the main body of Islam, because of the disagreement concerning the issue of ‘Alī’s arbitration after Ṣiffīn. They had originally supported Alī’s faction against Mu‘āwiyah’s. However, when ‘Alī submitted the dispute to arbitration, the Khawārij took up arms against both factions. They maintained that only God could arbitrate the issue of the caliphate, and that ‘Alī had forfeited his rights by allowing human arbitration. Such people are known as al-Muḥakkīmah and



are the earliest Khawārij. However, after they were defeated by ‘Alī at the battle of Nahrawān, the Khawārij survivors apparently escaped to various parts of the Islamic caliphate. According to al-Baghdādī two of the nine Kharijites who survived, took refuge in Oman, and the Khawārij of Oman originated from that time.<sup>87</sup> Apart from this, we have little information about the earliest roots of the Khawārij in Oman, until the first attempt by Najdah to control the country.

Najdah b. ‘Āmir al-Ḥanafī, the founder of this doctrine, had established himself in his hometown of Wadi B. Ḥanīfah, where he received the oath of allegiance from his followers and tribesmen to become their imam.<sup>88</sup> Having become a leader he started to raid the areas surrounding al-Yamāmah. First he attacked the clans of Ka‘b b. Rabī‘ah b. ‘Āmir b. Ṣa‘ṣa‘ah of the Hawāzin. In the following year 67/68<sup>89</sup> he went to the coastal strip in the north east of Bahrain with an army of 3,000 men, leaving ‘Umārah b. Salīm al-Ḥanafī as his representative in al-Yamāmah. The purpose of this campaign was to subdue the clans of ‘Abd al-Qays, the most dominant and powerful tribe in Bahrain. They met at al-Qaṭīf where the Najdāt had received support from the clans of al-Azd.<sup>90</sup> The Azdites saw the Najdāt as the only hope of overthrowing the clans of ‘Abd al-Qays and bringing to an end their control of the area. Once this had been done the Azdites themselves hoped that they would be left alone to control the entire region. With the help of the Azdites, the Najdāt succeeded in defeating ‘Abd al-Qays, killing many of their men and capturing the remainder. Following this victory, Najdah turned against al-Azd and sent his commander, ‘Atīyah b. al-Aswad al-Ḥanafī, with an army to Oman, where

‘Abbād b. ‘Abd al-Julandā and his two sons, Sa‘īd and Sulaymān, were in control of the country.<sup>91</sup>

According to the sources, the Omanis had rejected outright Najdāt’s army and the two parties met as a result of this in a battle which in the end led to the death of ‘Abbād b. ‘Abd, while his two sons managed to take shelter in the Omani mountains.<sup>92</sup> However, ‘Aṭīyah succeeded in subduing the area. The name of the area where the battle took place between the Omanis and Najdāt is not provided by the sources but it would seem to have been in Sohar or in the land between Oman and al-Yamāmah. A few months later, ‘Aṭīyah left Oman, leaving as his representative Abū ‘l-Qāsim al-Ḥanafī.<sup>93</sup> The Omanis managed to reorganise themselves once more under the Julandā rulers, Sa‘īd and Sulaymān, and later defeated and killed Abū ‘l-Qāsim al-Ḥanafī and his followers,<sup>94</sup> and Oman once again became completely under the domination of the Julandā family. This shows to us the strong rejection of the Omanis of the Najdāt and their extremist ideas. In addition the Najdāt also failed to dominate the whole country and this fact enabled the resistance movement to consolidate its forces and eventually to expel them.

Meanwhile, ‘Aṭīyah b. al-Aswad al-Ḥanafī took the initiative in trying to re-establish an independent state in Oman after disputing with his imam, Najdah b. ‘Āmir al-Ḥanafī. Failing to do this because the people of Oman refused to accept him, he and his followers who were from different tribes, namely Ḥanīfah, Tamīm and ‘Abd al-Qays, crossed the Persian Gulf from Oman to Kirmān to join their fellow tribesmen of the Azāriqah in the eastern province

of the Gulf.<sup>95</sup> Following this incident a disagreement occurred between Najdah b. 'Āmir and his supporters. The principal reason for their disagreement as given by the sources, concerned Najdah's correspondence with their opponent 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān and his handing back to him a grand-daughter of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, one of the captives acquired in the raid on al-Tā'if and another reason was his inequality in distributing booty (*fay'*) among his troops.<sup>96</sup> In fact the successes which the Najdāt achieved during the early years was helped by the general division and the internal difficulties which weakened the movement of Ibn al-Zubayr, in Iraq, and the Umayyad aim to end the control of Ibn Zubayr in the Ḥijāz. These factors played an important role in encouraging Najdah to impose his control over Oman and Bahrain.

The Najdāt failed to establish and spread their teaching among the Omani tribes who rejected such teaching completely. This gave an opportunity for another branch of the Khawārij to propagate their teaching namely the Ṣufriyyah. According to Abu Sa'īd al-Kudāmī<sup>97</sup> the Omanis used to follow the Ṣufriyyah teaching before they became Ibādīs. The moderation of the Ṣufriyyah made their teaching acceptable to some of the Omani tribes, and these at a later date helped the Ibādī *ḥamalāt al-ilm* to spread Ibādī teaching among the Omani tribes. The first indication of Ṣufriyyah activities is given by al-Mubarrad,<sup>98</sup> who mentions that 'Imrān b. Ḥittān, the famous poet who was a Ṣufari follower, had taken refuge in Oman, during 'Abd al-Malik's caliphate where he found, according to him, many people of the Azd of Oman praising Abū Mirdās b. Udayyah and mentioning his good deeds. No date is given for Ibn Ḥittān's stay in Oman. What we do know is that 'Abd al-Malik's governor

over Iraq, al-Ḥajjāj al-Thaqafī, after he was informed that Ibn Ḥittān was in Oman, asked immediately for him to be brought to Iraq. ‘Imrān b. Ḥittān however realised the dangerous situation and decided to flee the country. It is believed that he had established good relations with the Azd of Oman, and he called upon them to join the Ṣufriyyah who regarded Abū Mirdās b. Udayyah as their imam (which was also the case for the Ibādīs).<sup>99</sup> The Kāmil transmits a poem which was composed by ‘Imrān b. Ḥittān, praising the Azd of Oman for their hospitality during his stay among them.<sup>100</sup>

<p>نَزَلْنَا بِحَمْدِ اللَّهِ فِي خَيْرِ مَنَازِلٍ نَزَلْنَا بِقَوْمٍ يَجْمَعُ اللَّهُ شَمْلَهُمْ مِنَ الْأَزْدِ إِنَّ الْأَزْدَ أَكْرَمُ أَسْرَةٍ</p>	<p>نُسِرُّ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْأَنْسِ وَالْخَفَرِ وَلَيْسَ لَهُمْ عُدُوٌّ سِوَى الْمَجْدِ يُهْتَصَرُ يَمَانِيَّةً طَابُوا إِذَا نُسِبَ الْبَشَرُ</p>
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We settled with God's grace in the best of dwellings, in which we enjoyed companionship and protection.

We stayed with people, united by Allāh, they have no crop except glory to be squeezed.

[They are] of the Azd; the Azd are the most noblest of tribes, Yemenites, who when people's pedigrees are being assessed come off well.

After ‘Imrān b. Ḥittān and his Ṣufri activities in Oman, the Ibādīs became active, and *ḥamalāt al-ilm* soon began to arrive. It is also worth mentioning that it is not clear at what time the Ibādīs became the dominant doctrine after the Khawārij activities of Najdah and the Ṣufriyyah. Najdah doctrine was rejected by the people of Oman and was driven out of the country, whilst the Ṣufriyyah seems to have survived until the Ibādīs took the initiative and gained the upper hand through the teaching of their school. The only doctrine which

had no roots or connections with Oman were the Azāriqah whose ideology was so extreme that they regarded any one who did not rise to join them in order to establish the Khārījī state as a polytheist.<sup>101</sup> The Khawārij spread to most parts of the Islamic caliphate during the campaign against the Umayyad authority. Many of them took refuge in their countries of origin and the majority were involved in the revolts which took place from time to time. the tribes of B. Ḥanīfah and Tamīm, and also Azd, played a very important role in the Kharijite movement with two branches the moderates and the extremists. Oman chose moderation and accepted the Ibādiyyah as its identity.

**Table 3****The governors of Oman in the time of the Umayyad Caliphate**

<b>Governor</b>	<b>Caliph</b>
1. Mūsā b. Sinān b. Salamah	‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān
2. Ṭafil b. Ḥuṣayn al-Bahrānī	
3. Ḥājib b. Shībah	
4. Mujjā’ b. Su‘ar	
5. Muḥammad b. Ṣa‘ṣa‘ah	
6. Surah b. al-Ḥurr	
7. Sa‘īd b. Ḥassān al-Asīdī	
8. al-Khayyār b. Sabrah al-Mujāsh‘ī	
9. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sālīm	al-Walīd b. ‘Abd al-Malik
10. ‘Abd al-Jabbār b. Sabrah al-Mujāsh‘ī	
11. Sa‘īd b. al-Hānī al-Hamdānī	
12. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Qays al-Laythī	
13. Ṣāliḥ b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Laythī	Sulaymān b. ‘Abd al-Malik
14. Ziyād b. al-Muhallab	
15. Sa‘īd b. Mas‘ūd al-Māzinī	‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-Azīz
16. ‘Amr b. ‘Abdullāh al-Anṣārī	
17. al-Fayḍ b. Muḥammad b. Kurdam b. Bahīs	al-Walīd b. Yazīd chosen by the people of Oman
18. Ziyād b. al-Muhallab	

## Notes

1. Qalhātī, Kashf, II, 257-261; Shammākhi, Siyar, I, 56ff; Ṭalībī, 'Arā', I, 206. For more detailed discussion concerning the Ibadi view towards the Umayyad caliphate, see Ennami, Studies, 376.
2. Ennami, Studies, 376.
3. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 453; Ma'walī, Qisas, MS. f. 15a; cf. ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 45; Hārithī, 'Uqūd', 31; see also Miles, Countries, I, 45-6 who stated that 'Abbād became governor of Oman in the thirtieth year of the Hijrah.
4. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 453; Ma'walī, Qisas, MS. f. 15; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 47; Salīmī, Tuhfah, I, 51; cf. Hārithī, 'Uqūd', 31-2; Sayyabī, 'Uman', I, 189; see also Phillips, History, 10.
5. Countries, I, 47.
6. History, 208.
7. Tārīkh 'Uman, Majallat al-Khalij, I, 140.
8. In fact Oman was transferred administratively from Medina to Basra during the caliphate of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān; 'Alī, "Idarat al-Hijāz", Abhāth, 15; cf. 'Alī, Tanzīmāt, 142; 'Ānī, 'Uman', 86.
9. Wilkinson, Arab, 62; Kennedy, Prophet, 48; Hasan, Arab Tribes, 98ff; Naboodah, Eastern, 245; Mason, "The role of the Azdite", Arabica, 201; Bathurst, Ya'rubī, 16.
10. Although many attempts were made by some scholars regarding the Azd and their origins, by putting their own judgement the picture remains unclear to some extent concerning this issue; cf. Naboodah, Eastern, 244; E.I., Azd, 811-15.
11. Balādhuri, Ansab, 4, I, 413; Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, III, 591; cf. Naboodah, Eastern, 244.
12. Despite the fact that Abū 'Ubaydah in his account makes no differentiation between the provenance of Azd, the term Azd here applies to Azd 'Uman, because they constitute the majority of the Azd group in Basra after the death of Mu'āwiyya; Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, V.; cf. Naboodah, Eastern, 258.
13. Gamharat, II, 41.
14. Arab, 55.

15. Kingdom, 339; Wellhausen also asserted that the Azd were of small consequence until they were strengthened by a later addition which was far greater in numbers, and streamed in from the east Arabian coast, a district of Oman; cf. Mad'aj, Yemen, 86.
16. The Hiddān were among the early arrivals of Azd, according to Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, IV, 522. They fought on the side of 'Ā'isha at the battle of Camel under the leadership of Ṣabrah b. Shaymān al-Hiddānī; cf. Naboodah, Eastern, 246.
17. The leader of the Ma'āwil at this time was Sayf b. Wahb al-Ma'walī, see Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, V, 225; cf. Naboodah, Eastern, 247; Mad'aj, Yemen, 86. Ibn Kayyāt, Tārīkh, 220, mentions a mosque known as al-Ma'āwil mosque in Iraq, which proves to us the increasing number of its members in Iraq.
18. Wellhausen, Kingdom, 210; see also Bathurst, Ya'rubi, 16.
19. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 244-5; see also Hasan, Arab tribes, 98; Mad'aj, Yemen, 87.
20. Mubarrad, Kāmil, II, 222; see also Wellhausen, Kingdom, 210; cf. Bathurst, Ya'rubi, 16; Ma'rūf, Khawārij, 135.
21. The hostility between Azd and Tamīm was deep rooted, and influenced the political life of Basra. A story told by Ibn Qutaybah, Uyūn, 111, 113, illustrates the depth of feeling which may have existed between the two tribes. A man of Azd was observed in Mecca praying for his father, when asked, "Why do you not pray for your mother, too?" he replied, "Because she was from Tamim"; cf. Hasan, Arab tribes, 91.
22. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 227b; see also 'Ubaydī, Tamīm, 60.
23. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, V, 618, 621 states that 12,000 people from the tribe of al-Muhallab al-Azd joined his army during his fighting against the Azāriqah, 65/684; see Nāṣirī, Ma'ārij, MS. 127b; cf. Naboodah, Eastern, 248; Dujalī, Azāriqah, 98. For further discussion concerning the Muhallabi campaigns against the Azāriqah see Mubarrad, Kāmil, II, 252ff; 'Awtabī, Ansāb, Ms. f. 225ff; cf. Hinds, Family, J.S.S., 11ff; see also Wellhausen, Religio-polical, 57-66; Baydūn, Tayyārāt, 234-241; Ma'rūf, Khawārij, 142.
24. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, V, 620-1; cf. Naboodah, Eastern, 248.
- 25a. The Arab tribes of Khurāsān had shown some worries about the increasing Azd power, especially those of Muḍar, when an Azdī was appointed, as a deputy of the governorship of Khurāsān during 'Abd al-Malik's caliphate, the Muḍarī tribes answered, "Could you not find a Mudari rather than divide Khurāsān between Bakr b. Wa'il and Muzūn



‘Umān [Azd]”.

مَا وَجَدَتْ فِي مَضْرُجٍ لَا تَسْتَعْمَلُهُ حَتَّى فَرَّقَتْ خِرَاسَانَ بَيْنَ بَكْرِ بْنِ وَائِلٍ وَمَزُونِ  
• عُمَان

- 25b. The Azd of Oman, to distinguish them from the Azd *sūrat*, were called the Muzūn, which refers to one of Oman’s oldest names, given to Oman by the Persians; see Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam*, V, 122; cf. Wellhausen, *Kingdom*, 399; Dixon, *Umayyad*, 106; Naboodah, *Eastern*, 245; Mason, “The role of the Azdite”, *Arabica*, 191-207.
26. Concerning the revolt of Ibn al-Zubayr, see Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, VI, 174, 175, 187-193.
27. For further information about the Khawārij, see Mubarrad, *Kāmil*, II, 121-144.
28. Such as the revolt of ‘Amr b. Sa‘īd ‘Abdallāh b. al-Jārūd and the Zanj in Basra and the revolt of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ash‘ath. Regarding these revolts full details were given by Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, VII, 357-365; cf. Dixon, *Umayyad*, 143-168; Wellhausen, *Kingdom*, 146-8, 244-5.
29. The full independence of Oman began to appear during the time of ‘Uthmān’s caliphate, until the time of Abd al-Malik b. Marwān. No information was provided by the sources to show or to prove any sort of activities had taken place during the period mentioned above; cf. Miles, *Countries*, I, 47; Dixon, *Umayyad*, 149.
30. See Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, VI, 202.
31. Miles, *Countries*, I, 50.
32. Miles, *Countries*, I, 50.
33. Dixon, *Umayyad*, 149.
34. The Omani sources mention that al-Ḥajjāj was the first Umayyad governor to send troops against the people of Oman, under successive commanders, but they were generally repulsed with the loss of their baggage; see Ibn Ruzayq, *Shu‘ā’*, 12; Sālīmī, *Tuhfah*, I, 51; cf. Badger, *Imams*, 3.
35. *Tārīkh*, 279.
36. *Tahdhīb*, IV, 167-8.
37. For full discussion on this matter, see Dixon, *Umayyad*, 150.
38. Izkawī, *Kashf*, MS. 453ff; Ma‘walī, *Qisṣa*, MS. f. 15b; Ibn Ruzayq, *Shu‘ā’*, 12-13; ed. ‘Ashūr, *Tārīkh*, 47-51; Sālīmī, *Tuhfah*, I, 51-3; cf. Sayyābī, *‘Umān*, II, 10-18.

39. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 453ff.
40. Tārīkh, 297. The date of the sending of Mūsā Sinān to Oman by al-Ḥajjāj, is not known, but the event might have occurred after al-Ḥajjāj became governor of Iraq in 75/694. Ibn Khayyāt gives the closest date of Ibn Sinān's arrival in Oman as after the year 70/689.
41. Ibn Khayyāt, Tārīkh, 297.
42. Ibn Khayyāt, Tārīkh, 297.
43. Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 489 mentions the Umayyad commander as al-Qāsim b. Sa'r al-Sa'dī; cf. Dixon, Umayyad, 150; 'Ānī, 'Umān, 88; see also Massari, "al-Baḥrayn wa-'Umān", Nadwat al-Khalij, 128.
44. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 454; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 15b; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 13; Fath, 213; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 52; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 47.
45. Ḥattāt is a wadi situated on the way leading to Samā'il from Muscat, see Ḥārithī, 'Uqūd, 1; cf. Badger, Imams, 2.
46. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 453; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 15b; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 13; Fath, 214; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 52; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 47; cf. Miles, Countries, I, 51; Dixon, Umayyad, 150; 'Ānī, 'Umān, 88; Badger, Imams, 2; Massari, "al-Baḥrayn wa-'Umān", Nadwat al-Khalij, 128; see also Bathurst, Ya'rubi, 16ff; 'Umar, Tārīkh, 120; Phillips, History, 10.
47. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 454; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 15b; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 13; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 48; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 52; cf. Sayyabī, 'Umān, II, 9; Miles, Countries, I, 53; Badger, Imams, 3; Dixon, Umayyad, 150.
48. Ibn Khayyāt, Tārīkh, 278-297; mentions him as Mujjā' b. Sa'r who, according to him, was sent to Mukrān as al-Ḥajjāj's governor there in 79/698 where he died; he was also in Oman for a short period but he was discharged from his post and returned to Iraq.
49. The number of the army which is mentioned by the sources is probably an exaggeration, there can be no doubt that every new force sent to Oman greatly exceeded the previous one.
50. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 454; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 13; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 52; cf. Badger, Imams, 4; Miles, Countries, I, 52.
51. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 454; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 16a; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 12. It is difficult to identify this place, which might be a well or *flaj* water.
52. Tuḥfah, I, 52; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 454; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 48. The village of Bushar is seven miles to the south of Muscat; see Badger,

Imams, 68.

53. Countries, I, 52, whilst Badger, Imams, 3, asserted that the place is near Julfar.
54. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 454; Ṣalīmī, Tuhfah, I, 52; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 48; Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 11, states that Muǧā‘ah was informed by a man from Tu‘am (Buraymi).
55. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 454.
56. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, II, 1038; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 454; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 14; Ṣalīmī, Tuhfah, I, 52; Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 12; cf. Ross, Annals, 1; Badger, Imams, 4; Miles, Countries, I, 52; Dixon, Umayyad, 151; Kirkman, “Early Connection”, Hiṣād, V, 276-7; ‘Umar, Tārīkh, 120; ‘Ānī, ‘Uman, 88; Philips, History, 10.
57. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, II, 1038.
58. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 454; Ma‘walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 16a; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 15, Fath, 215; Ṣalīmī, Tuhfah, I, 52; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 49; Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 13; cf. Badger, Imams, 5; Miles, Countries, I, 53; Dixon, Umayyad, 151; ‘Umar, Tārīkh, 120.
59. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 455; Ṣalīmī, Tuhfah, I, 53; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 49; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 15; cf. Badger, Imams, 5; Bathurst, Ya‘rubī, 16.
60. Probably he is ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ṣalīm al-Kalbī, one of al-Ḥajjāj’s famous military commanders. He played a very important role during the caliphate of ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān, and was appointed governor of Sajistan in 84/703. For more detailed information about his role see Ibn Khayyāt, Tārīkh, 295, 310, 328, 330, 332, 335. Isfahānī, Aqhānī, XIV, 298 states that ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sulaymān al-Kalbī was appointed governor of Oman by Muslamah b. ‘Abd al-Malik.
61. Tuhfah, I, 53; see also Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 14.
62. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 455; Ṣalīmī, Tuhfah, I, 53; see also Coupland, East Africa, 22; Kirkman, “Early connection”, Hiṣād, V, 277; Qāsim, al-Uṣūl al-Tārīkhiyyah, 56; Lofchie, Zanzibar, 26; Dixon, Umayyad, 151; ‘Umar, Tārīkh, 121 confuses between the Jabal al-Akhḍar of Oman and the Green Islands (al-Juzur al-Khaḍrā’) in East Africa, when he mentions that the early escape of the two brothers, Sa‘īd and Sulaymān, was to East Africa, not to al-Jabal al-Akhḍar, where they took refuge.
63. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 455; Ṣalīmī, Tuhfah, I, 53; cf. Kirkman, “Early connection”, Hiṣād, V, 278.
64. Mas‘ūdī, Marūj, III, 6, 8, 389, mentions the Omani connection with East

Africa; for more information concerning the Omani existence, see note 62 above.

65. Salīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 53; see also ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 50; cf. Miles, Countries, I, 53.
66. "Julandā", J.O.S., 101.
67. Umayyad, 150.
68. Ibn Durayd, Ishtiqaq, 241; Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 482; Ibn Khayyāt, Tārīkh, 310; see also 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 233a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 455; Ma'walī, Qisas, MS. f. 16b; Ibn Ruzayq, Fath, 216; Salīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 53; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 50; Sayyābī, Uman, II, 17; cf. Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 101; Dizon, Umayyad, 151; al-Khayyār b. Subrah remained in Oman until the death of the caliph, Walid, in 96/715.
69. Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 482; 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 233b; cf. 'Ānī, Uman, 89; Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 101.
60. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, Ms. f. 233b; Sayyābī, Uman, II, 17.
71. Ibn Khayyāt, Tārīkh, 319; see also 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 233a.
72. Ibn Khayyāt, Tārīkh, 319; Tabarī, Tārīkh, VI, 506.
73. According to Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 482, al-Khayyār b. Subrah had implemented a very tough policy against the Azd of Oman and Ziyād b. al-Muhallab ordered al-Khayyār to be executed; for more detailed information see 'Awtabī, Ansāb, Ms. f. 233b.
74. Tārīkh, 310.
75. Concerning the Umayyad governors of Oman, see Table 3.
76. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 233b.
77. Ibn Khayyāt, Tārīkh, 322; Balādhurī, Futūḥ, 93.
78. Salīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 59; Ma'walī, Qisas, MS. f. 17a.
79. Kashf, MS. 455; 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 234a; Salīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 59; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 51; see also Ibn Khayyāt, Tārīkh, 323.
80. Ibn Khayyāt, Tārīkh, 232.
81. Ibn Khayyāt, Tārīkh, 232; see also Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 455; Salīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 60; cf. Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 101.

82. Futūḥ, 883; cf. Hitti, English translation, Origins of the Islamic state, 118-119.
83. ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 234a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 455; Ma‘walī, Qisas, MS. f. 17a; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 53.
84. ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 234a.
85. Tārīkh, 367.
86. Mubarrad, Kāmil, I, 124; Ibn Durayd, Ishtiqaq, 353; see also ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 185; Ruqayshī, Misbāḥ, MS. f. 24b, 25a; Isfahānī, Aghānī, XVIII, 109.
87. Farq, 71.
88. For further information about Najdah b. ‘Āmir see Mubarrad, Kāmil; Ya‘qūbī, Tārīkh, II, 325; Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, Nahj, IV, 132-3; Nāsri, Ma‘ārij, MS. 94b, 95a; Ibn Khayyāt, Tārīkh, 253; Ibn Durayd, Ishtiqaq, 325; Himyarī, al-Hūr, 224; Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 261; cf. ‘Umar, Tārīkh, 107; Hayiyaha, Origins, 279; Wellhausen, Religio-political, 48.
89. cf. Hayiyaha, Origins, 277-8; Wellhausen, Religio-political, 48.
90. Qalhātī, Kashf, II, 430; ‘Umar, Tārīkh, 107; Hayiyaha, Origins, 277; Wellhausen, Religio-political, 48.
91. Nāsri, Ma‘ārij, MS. f. 15a; cf. Wellhausen, Religio-political, 49.
92. Nāsri, Ma‘ārij, MS. f. 15a; ‘Umar, Tārīkh, 127; Ma‘rūf, Khawārij, 147.
93. Nāsri, Ma‘ārij, MS. f. 15a; cf. Ma‘rūf, Khawārij, 147.
94. Nāsri, Ma‘ārij, MS. f. 15a.
95. Himyarī, al-Hūr, 224; Nāsri, Ma‘ārij, MS. f. 15a; cf. Salem, Political theory, 28; Hayiyaha, Origins, 279.
96. Ya‘qūbī, Tārīkh, II, 325.
97. Istiḳāmah, II, 91.
98. Kāmil, II, 125; see also Isfahānī, Aghānī, XVIII, 108; ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 186a.
99. After the death of Bilāl Mirdās, his followers could no longer, with clear conscience, continue to live in the Umayyad caliphate without opposing it. It was however the actual tactics of opposition that divided the quietists and gave rise to two major groupings, the militant Ṣufriyah and

the Ibādiyyah.

100. Mubarrad, Kāmil, II, 128; Isfahānī, Aqhānī, XVIII, 114; ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 186a.
101. For more detailed information about the Azāriqah doctrine, see Shahrastānī, Milāl, I, 179-186; cf. Dujayli, Azāriqah, 77, 78; Salem, Political theory, 76.

**CHAPTER IV**  
**THE FOUNDATION OF THE IBĀḌĪYYAH**

- 4.1    The fundamental dogmas of Islam from the Ibāḍī point of view**
- 4.2    The political theory of the Ibāḍiyyah**
- 4.3    Notes**

There is little consensus among Muslim historians concerning the origins of the Ibāḍiyyah and when it was established. The short accounts given by these historians reveal significant differences. In spite of the confusion apparent in the sources concerning the name of Ibāḍiyyah and the time at which it formed, most non-Ibāḍī sources indicate that the group derived its name from ‘Abdullāh b. Ibād.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, and although they give contradictory accounts, the prevailing opinion among Ibāḍī sources is that the group’s name was taken from ‘Abdullāh b. Ibād al-Murri of Tamīm.<sup>2</sup>

Very little is known about ‘Abdullāh b. Ibād himself, and the available information is not sufficient to clarify his role in the establishment of the Ibāḍī movement. The sources do not note where and when he was born, nor do they describe his youth, nor the way in which he joined the movement.<sup>3</sup> According to the Ibāḍī sources Ibn Ibād grew up during the rule of Mu‘āwiyah b. Abī Sufyān and lived until the time of ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān (65-86/685-705).<sup>4</sup> It is most probable that he was born during the first decade of Mu‘āwiyah’s caliphate 41-60/661-680. Thus he could have been no older than twenty-four when he participated in the defence of Mecca with Ibn al-Zubayr against the Umayyad forces in 63/681.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, Ibāḍī sources indicate that he was included among the class of the followers (*ṭābi‘ūn*) whom died before the end of the first century.<sup>6</sup>

Any account of the formation of the Ibāḍiyyah must be set in the context of the political situation associated with the al-Muḥakkimah al-ūlā,<sup>7</sup> and their



struggle against Umayyad authority. The tensions with which the Umayyads were confronted during the caliphate of Yazīd b. Mu‘āwiyah and following his death, provided an opportunity for opposition groups to rise and attempt to bring down Umayyad rule by any possible means.

In 63/682 at the battle of Ḥarrā’,<sup>8</sup> the Umayyad Leader, Muslim b. ‘Uqbah gave orders to his soldiers to sack the city of Medina and this resulted in deaths of a large number of its inhabitants. These tragic events had a considerable effect on the Muḥakkimah, and left them little option but to defend Mecca to prevent any repetition of such events.

‘Abdullāh b. Ibād̄ participated in the defence of Mecca with other well known figures such as Nāfi‘ b. al-Azraq and Najdah b. ‘Āmir al-Ḥanafī, along with Ibn al-Zubayr and his army.<sup>9</sup>

Such co-operation concealed differences in the goals and principles of the two groups. At a later stage the Muḥakkimah parted company with Ibn al-Zubayr, after they had fought at his side, as a result of their differences on the issue of caliphate.<sup>10</sup> One group, which included Ibn Ibād̄ returned to Basra in 64/684. While another faction of the Muḥakkimah made their way to al-Yamāmah where they swore allegiance to Najdah b. ‘Āmir al-Ḥanafī as their imam.<sup>11</sup> This group came to be known as the Najdāt. Having rejected moderation, they turned to greater militancy as a means to obtain their goals.

Abdullāh b. Ibād̄ was arrested with Ibn al-Azraq and both were

imprisoned with 140 other captives.<sup>12</sup> The disturbed political situation after the death of Yazīd in 64/683 enabled the Muḥakkimah prisoners including Ibn Ibād and Nāfi' b. al-Azraq to escape en masse from Basra prison, after which the position of the Umayyad governor of Iraq, 'Ubaydullah b. Ziyād was greatly weakened.<sup>13</sup>

The Muḥakkimah escapees prevented 'Ubaydullāh b. Ziyād from retaining the oath of allegiance sworn to him by the people of Basra after the death of Yazīd. According to al-Mubarrad, "They spread among the people calling upon them to fight the tyrants, and they made known their position until 'Ubaydullāh's rule was overthrown."<sup>14</sup> He then fled to Syria.<sup>15</sup>

As a result of the vacuum left by 'Ubaydullāh's departure for Syria, the Muḥakkimah found themselves at a crossroads, as differences emerged among them regarding the way in which they should develop their opposition to the authorities into a policy to bring them down. The Muḥakkimah were then divided into major factions.<sup>16</sup> The first group included those who wanted to stage an open rebellion (*khurūj*) under the leadership of Nāfi' b. al-Azraq. Their position was aided by the atmosphere of tension between the tribes of al-Azd and Rabī'ah and between B. Tamīm and Qays, tensions which could be exploited to assist their rebellion.<sup>17</sup>

The other minority group which opposed rebellion (*khurūj*) became known as the quietists (*qa'idah*) and included 'Abdullāh b. Ibād, 'Abdullāh b. Suffār and others of like mind.<sup>18</sup>

This division led to a new era in the development of the Kharijite and mutual accusations of unbelief. It led also to a clear division in thought and ideology. Those who favoured open rebellion (*khurūj*) espoused extreme views and adopted a militant stance towards other Muslims, including their fellow-believers of the quietists.

Ibn al-Azraq described other Muslims as non-believers and in so doing he declared it legitimate for his group to attack them, take their possessions as legitimate booty and kill them (*isti'rād*).<sup>19</sup> He called for his followers to avoid dealings with other Muslims, not to inter-marry with them, nor to pass on inheritance to them.<sup>20</sup>

It appears that the quietists chose Ibn Ibād as their spokesman against the Azāriqah and other extreme groups.<sup>21</sup> Some sources relate that it was at this time when Ibn Ibād became a leader of the opposition against the militant Kharijites that the formation of the Ibādī movement took place. The formation of the Ibādīyah is ascribed to Ibn Ibād himself and he is considered by these sources as the leader of the group and its founder.<sup>22</sup>

Ibādī sources, however, ascribe to Ibn Ibād a secondary role compared to that of Jābir b. Zayd al-Azdī whom they consider to be the imam of the Ibādīyah (which they refer to as the Jamā'at al-Muslimin) and the founder of their law (*fiqh*) and doctrine (*madhhab*) they note that all Ibn Ibād's words and deeds were inspired by Jābir b. Zayd.<sup>23</sup> Although the sources give this

interpretation, Ibn Iḥād was in fact the leader of the Iḥādīs in Basra and elsewhere.<sup>24</sup>

Some modern scholars consider that Jābir b. Zayd was the spiritual leader of the Iḥādīs, their *faqīh* and *muftī* and that it was he who developed Iḥādī ideology to the extent that it became distinct from that of other Islamic groupings.<sup>25</sup>

Ibn Iḥād was responsible for those who were involved in propagating Iḥādī thought in other countries and for this reason the sources refer to him as the head of the quietists in Basra and beyond. Jābir b. Zayd however was better known for his knowledge and, as a student of Ibn ‘Abbās was trusted to pass on the *ḥadīth* of the prophet’s wife ‘Ā’isha.<sup>26</sup> Jābir b. Zayd was born in Oman in a village of Nizwā province called Farq.<sup>27</sup> He was from the Yaḥmad clan of the Azd tribe.<sup>28</sup> He was born between 18-24/639-46, and left Oman to settle in Basra at an early age in order to study the Islamic religion.<sup>29</sup>

In Basra he settled in the Azd quarter.<sup>30</sup> He was taught by several of the Prophet’s Companions and went to Mecca on more than one occasion. He became closely attached to ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Abbās from whom he received a number of Traditions.<sup>31</sup> Jābir b. Zayd was considered to be among the leaders of the followers (*awā’il al-ṭabi’in*) who could be relied upon in the transmission of *ḥadīth* and Sunnah. The accepted *ḥadīth* of ‘Ā’ishah was taken from him, and Sunnī ulema relate many of his traditions.

Appointed as mufti of Basra,<sup>32</sup> Jābir was so highly esteemed for his knowledge, that he was described as *al-faqīh al-ʿālim*. His writings were collected as a book, *Diwān Jābir*, in 10 volumes.<sup>33</sup> Jābir urged people to return to the origins of the Islamic state, as it was during the time of the rightly-guided caliphs. In Basra he lived the life of an ascetic; he used to tell his followers, “There is no one of you richer than I and yet I do not have a *dirham*, nor am I indebted to anyone.”<sup>34</sup> He was pious and unconcerned with worldly comforts, to the extent that he accumulated no wealth from his position.<sup>35</sup>

Jābir’s connection with Kharijites appeared after the battle of Nahrawān, 40/660 and he was on friendly terms with Abū Bilāl Mirdās b. Udayyah, sheikh of the quietists in Basra who is considered to be among the most prominent members of the Muḥakkimah.<sup>36</sup> Such was Abū Bilāl’s piety that after the Kharijite movement became divided each group claimed him as one of their imams, but the Ibāḍiyyah was the group most influenced by his life and teachings.<sup>37</sup> He too was known for both his piety and ascetism. When the governor of Basra, ‘Ubaydallāh b. Ziyād implemented a hard-line policy against the Kharijites in 61/681, Abu Bilāl Mirdās rose up against him. Of this rebellion al-Baysawī says, “The state had fallen in to the hands of the tyrants to the extent that, when they heard about any Muslims (Kharijites), they would kill or imprison them, and when they stepped up their oppression and Islam was corrupted, Mirdās and his followers rose up for the sake of Islam”.<sup>38</sup>

Those who rebelled were about forty in number; they took refuge in Ask

a village in al-Ahwāz province, and Mirdās called upon them to emigrate. He posed no threat to security nor did he allow his followers to kill or plunder, not to take other Muslims as captive, and he did not stoop to the level of paganism.<sup>39</sup>

The Ibāḍiyyah were influenced by Abū Bilāl Mirdās's conduct and sought to follow his example in their relations with those Muslims with whom they were in dispute. In contrast, the Azāriqah differed on the issue of migration and in considering other Muslims to be non-believers such that they considered it legitimate to kill their co-religionists who disagreed with their ideas *isti'rād*.<sup>40</sup>

Abū Bilāl believed in taking booty from tyrannical governors. For example, he captured goods going to 'Ubaydallāh b. Ziyād, the governor of Iraq. He took some of this money and divided it among his followers, but he did not take all of it, and allowed the remainder to proceed to 'Ubaydallāh.<sup>41</sup> When his followers asked him to take the entire amount he refused, saying, "They are dividing this booty just as they perform their prayers, so we should not antagonise them".<sup>42</sup>

Furthermore, Abū Bilāl Mirdās believed that those with whom he and his followers were in dispute should be given an opportunity to prevent any attack against them by accepting the ideas of the Ibāḍiyyah. To this end the Ibāḍi way would be explained to them: if they refused to accept it, Abū Bilāl would fight them.<sup>44</sup> The Ibāḍiyyah sought to follow this method and to put it into practice in their own dealings; for them, such hesitation and explanation became a

symbol of moderation. Abū Bilāl was killed in 61/680 by ‘Ubuydallāh b. Ziyād at the battle of Ask.<sup>45</sup>

The establishment of a secret underground organisation among the Ibāḍiyyah cannot be traced to a fixed point in time. Some accounts suggest that the secret work was set up by Imam Jābir b. Zayd, that is, after the death of Abū Bilāl Mirdās. However, the modern faction of the Muḥakkimah the Qa‘idah had gone underground as a means of escaping the continuing persecution suffered by the Kharijites in Basra under Ibn Ziyād and then during the governorship of his son, ‘Ubaydallāh.<sup>46</sup>

One account which points to Jābir b. Zayd being responsible for organising an underground network is that of Abū Sufyān. An old man, Abū Sufyān was arrested in Basra as an Ibāḍī activist. He was given four hundred lashes, but refused to help the Umayyads identify the Ibāḍī followers. Jābir relates, “I was close to him and I was waiting for him to point his finger at me and say this is the man you are looking for, but God prevented him from doing so”.<sup>47</sup>

As has already been mentioned, Jābir b. Zayd was one of the most celebrated scholars of his time, not only in the eyes of Ibāḍiyyah, but also among other Muslim Communities, particularly among the ulema. Khalīfah b. Khayyāt who wrote his biography, considered him one of the reliable tellers of the Prophet’s Traditions.<sup>48</sup>

The underground network of the Ibādīyyah was established by means of secret sessions which were initially attended only by the movements leaders, who were close to the rank and file of the Ibādīyyah. After the death of Jābir b. Zayd a short time later, Abū ‘Ubaydah Muslim b. Abī Karīmah headed the movement and these restricted sessions were opened up to all Ibādī followers.<sup>49</sup>

After succeeding Jābir as imam of the Ibādī movement, Abū ‘Ubaydah concentrated in re-organising the movement on a stronger footing in order to lay the groundwork for the declaration of the imamate and for the election of a new imam for the Muslims, i.e. the Ibādīyyah. In addition to opening up the secret sessions to all Ibādīs, a further special meeting was instituted; this was known as the *majālis al-mashāyikh*, and was confined to the leaders of the Ibādī *da‘wah*. The *majālis al-mashāyikh*, acted as the supreme executive committee and laid down the policies to be followed by the *da‘wah*.<sup>50</sup>

A third type of secret session was also instituted; these sessions took the form of secret schools established by Abū ‘Ubaydah and known as *ḥamalat al-‘ilm* (knowledge carriers). Members of the Ibādīyyah who graduated from these schools were sent to propagate their beliefs in other regions.<sup>51</sup>

Communications between the imam and leadership of the Ibādī *da‘wah* in Basra and followers in other cities were maintained with great precision and in complete secrecy. The season of the pilgrimage to Mecca provided an opportunity for leaders of the *da‘wah* from different parts of the Islamic world to meet and exchange information and plans.<sup>52</sup>



Thus at this time the Ibāḍiyyah had opted to follow a political course, outwardly accepting the rule of the existing authorities, whilst at the same time secretly preparing their overthrow. By taking this peaceful course with respect to the authorities and avoiding a path which would antagonise them, the Ibāḍiyyah avoided inviting persecution.<sup>53</sup>

The Ibāḍiyyah continued to employ those methods even after their rising against the Umayyad and 'Abbasid states. That the Ibāḍī policy of secrecy was successful is shown by the attitude of the two caliphates towards Abū 'Ubaydah Muslim b. Abī Karīmah, who was the imam of the Ibāḍīs during their rebellion in Ḥaḍramawt, Oman and North Africa. Although these authorities were aware that Abū 'Ubaydah was an Ibāḍī, they failed to realise his connection with rebellion, let alone that he was masterminding it, thus showing how effectively Abū 'Ubaydah's role had been concealed.<sup>54</sup>

#### **4.1 The fundamental dogmas of Islam from the Ibāḍī point of view**

The first duty according to them is to know God. The knowledge of God is obligatory on young children.<sup>55</sup> With most Muslims this is an obligation only from the beginning of adolescence. It is forbidden not to know God or to doubt His existence. However, the Ibāḍiyyah assert that God is not seen either in this world or the Hereafter.<sup>56</sup> (They deny categorically any belief that God is seen in this world or in the next.) Principally, because in their view such a belief would contradict one of their fundamental doctrines, namely that God cannot be restricted to any particular place, and thus it cannot be said of Him that He

is in one place and not in another.<sup>57</sup>

The Ibādiyyah hold that faith consists of right belief and good deeds. To prove his argument al-Rabī' b. Ḥabīb pointed in his Musnad to many Prophetic Traditions. Commenting on these *ḥadīth*, he said, "they show clearly that faith is a combination of right belief and good work, and anyone who does not accept this is an unbeliever".<sup>58</sup>

In addition to this al-Rabī' b. Ḥabīb related twenty eight *ḥadīth* with their approbate chain of transmitters, proving that anyone who commits a grave sin and "does not repent" is an unbeliever, but in order to distinguish them, for instance, from the followers of other religions, who associate others with God (Shirk) they regard their unbelief as Kufr Ni'mah.<sup>59</sup> The unbelief of other religions is termed Kufr ishrāk.

Regarding to their relations with other Islamic doctrines, the Ibādiyyah do not share the extreme attitudes of most other Kharijites factions, and for example, it is forbidden to kill those who oppose them and also to take them into captivity except after they have pointed out to them the errors of their beliefs and invited them to accept the true version of Islam.<sup>60</sup> If they refuse this *da'wah* they are allowed then to fight them, but after making clear to them that war is the result of their refusal to accept the Ibādī teaching.

The Ibādiyyah also deny any possibility of intercession (*shafā'ah*),<sup>61</sup> for any Muslim who dies before he truly repents. the Ibādiyyah believe that God

is true in what He promises and in what He threatens (*al-wa'd wa-'l-wa'id*).<sup>62</sup>

#### **4.2 The political theory of the Ibādīyyah**

Briefly, the political theory of the Ibādīs is based on the acceptance of the validity of the caliphate of Abū Bakr, 'Umar and the first six years of 'Uthmān's caliphate and they recognised the period of 'Alī's caliphate prior to the arbitration.<sup>63</sup> However, the Ibādīs of more recent centuries maintain that it is not wise to involve one's mind in events that occurred at the very beginning of Islamic history. They say therefore the right standpoint is that one should refuse to pass judgement on the (i.e.) that one leaves this matter to God.<sup>64</sup>

## Notes

1. Mubarrad, Kāmil, II, 202; Baghdādī, Farq, 82; Ibn Qutaybah, Ma'ārif, 266; see also Ibn Ḥazm Jamharat, 207; Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, 'Iqd, III, 346-347; Ibn Manẓūr, Lisān, I, 111; Zabīdī, Tāj, V, 2; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Istī'ab, 116; Ibn Durayd, Ishtiqāq, 249; Ḥimyarī, Hūr, 227.
2. (a) 'Abd Allāh b. Ibād was of B. Ṣārim b. Ḥārith b. Muqlas of B. Tamīm, one of the main tribes of Muḍar.  
  
(b) The Ibādīs did not use the name Ibādīs; instead they used at first the term Muslims and Community of the Muslims and also *ahl al-da'wah*. Also they used the term *ahl al-Istiqāmah*. It is believed that the name Ibādiyyah was given to them by the Umayyads, i.e. by their enemies. It is difficult to find the word Ibādiyyah in the early Ibādī sources.
3. Ennami, Studies, 4-5; cf. Cook, Dogma, 64; Bārūnī, Mukhtaṣar, 22; Tu'aymah, Ibādiyyah, 43-46.
4. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 244; Qalhātī, Kashf, II, 471; Ḥārithī, 'Uqūd, 121; Bārūnī, Mukhtaṣar, 22.
5. Tabarī, Tārīkh, V, 566; Shammākhi, Siyar, 77; Zarikī, A'lām, IV, 184.
6. Shammākhi, Siyar, 72; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 244; Bārūnī, Mukhtaṣar, 22.
7. They were called al-Muḥakkimah, because of their slogan, *La ḥukma illā li-llāh* "Judgment belongs only to God".
8. For more details of al-Ḥarrā', see Ibn Kathīr, Bidāyah, VIII, 217-22; Tabarī, Tārīkh, IV. 370-84; see also Brunnow, Kharijites, 8.
9. Tabarī, Tārīkh, IV, 436-40; Mubarrad, Kāmil, II, 202-203; Muir, Caliphate, 314; Wellhausen, Religio-Political, 45; Salim, Mulakhkhaṣ, 34.
10. Tabarī, Tārīkh, IV. 438; Mubarrad, Kāmil, II, 207; cf. Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 78.
11. According to Wellhausen, Religio Political, 48, Najdah did not join those who returned home to al-Yamāmah but went with Ibn al-Azraq, then left him after he could not agree with him and returned to al-Yamāmah; Salem, Political Theory, 28.
12. Balādhurī, Ansāb, IVB, 102.
13. According to Brunnow, Kharijites, 8, it was 'Ubayd Allāh himself who let

the Khawārij out of Prison, as a facer to join forces with the Tamimī against the Azdī in the Basran tribal feuds, but Wellhausen, Religio Political, 46, rejects this opinion.

14. Mubarrad, Kāmil, II, 208.
15. Ṭabari, Tārīkh, V, 521; Sālim, Mulakhkhas, 33.
16. Such as the Azāriqah, Najdāt, Buhaysiyyah Ṣufriyyah and Ibādīyyah; see Mubarrad, Kāmil, II 214-15.
17. Ṭabari, Tārīkh, V, 567.
18. Ṭabari, Tārīkh, V, 568; for more details of this division, see Wellhausen, Religio-Political, chap. 8.
19. The doctrine is termed *isti'rād*, a practice under which the enemy is asked at the point of the sword whether he accepts certain views, literally it means inviting someone to speak his opinion; in practice it is killing for the sake of religion. See Salim, Political Theory, 90 ff.
20. Mubarrad, Kāmil, II, 209; Ṭabari, Tārīkh, V, 568; Dujyīlī, Azāriqah, 76 ff.
21. Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 79 also mentions that Imrān b. Ḥaṭṭān replaced him in this position.
22. Ibn Ḥazm, Jamharat, 207; Baghdādī, Farq, 82; Sālim, Mulakhkhas, 38.
23. Shammākhi, Siyar, 177; Bārūnī, Mukhtasar, 28.
24. Darjini, Tabaqāt, II, 6; Vaglieri, "L'imamato", Annali, 6, suggests that Ibn Ibād died at the time he did not have many followers, but the author of Aramco, Oman, 244, notes that the role of Ibn Ibād in the development of the Ibādīyyah has been exaggerated. Cook, Islamic dogma, 67, also doubts Ibn Ibād's role in the movement compared with that of Jābir b. Zayd. He goes too far when he suggests that the letter which was sent by Ibn Ibād to the Umayyad Caliph, 'Abd Al-Malik, was written by Jābir, not Ibn Ibād, and was sent to 'Abd Al-Malik b. al-Muhallab not to 'Abd Al-Malik b. Marwān. There is no evidence to prove Cook's argument regarding this matter. It is true that Ibādī sources suggest that the whole role ascribed to Ibn Ibād in the formation of Ibādism is exaggerated. However, the Ibādīs agree that he was one of many to whom they owe their true religion.
25. Ennami, Studies, 69; Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 80; Ḥārithī, Uqūd, 93 ff; Sawwāfī, Imām, 29; Mu'ammār, Ibādīyyah, 30.
26. Shammākhi, Siyar, 69-70; Darjini, Tabaqāt, II, 4; Sālimī, Sharh, 7; cf.

Sawwafī, Imām, 35; Ḥārithī, ‘Uqūd, 94; Khulayfāt, Nash’at, 80; Ḥashim, Ībādīyyah, 61.

27. A village between Nazwā and Manh. Ibn Ruzyq, Shu‘a’, 41.
28. ‘Āmir b. al-Yahmad, a branch of the Azd tribe, see Ibn Durayd, Ishtiqāq, 506; Ibn Khayyāt mentions the genealogy of Jābir as follows: Jābir b. Zayd from Yahmad b. Ḥammī b. ‘Uthmān b. Naṣr b. Sahrān from Azd, Tabaqāt, 210.
29. Sawwafī, Imām, 35.
30. He settled in Darb al-Jawf in Basra, a place which took its name from the area in which the clan of Jābir was living in Oman. Yāqūt, Mu‘jam, II, 158, mentions a place in Oman which was inhabited by the Azd known as Jawf al-Ḥamilah; cf. Ennami, Studies, 55.
31. Darjini, Tabaqāt, II, 3.
32. Ḥārithī, ‘Uqūd, 93; cf. Sawwafī, Imām, 40; Shammākhī, Siyar, 67; Sālīmī, Sharḥ, 7.
33. Sālīmī, Lam‘ah, 184.
34. Darjini, Tabaqāt, II, 2, 6.
35. Shammākhī, Siyar, 70; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 11; Ḥārithī, ‘Uqūd, 101.
36. Ḥārithī, ‘Uqūd, 107.
37. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, V, 567; also Abu Bilāl remained the leader of all the Khawārij until the appearance of the Azāriqah.
38. Baysawī, Hujjah, MS. 163.
39. About these events see Mubarrad, Kāmil, III, 1; cf. Brunnow, Kharijites, 7.
40. Salimi, Political Theory, 90; Dujyli, Azāriqah, 41; Brunnow, Kharijites, 8.
41. Darjini, Tabaqāt, II, 8.
42. Mubarrad, Kāmil, II, 183; Darjini, Tabaqāt, II, 8.
44. Mubarrad, Kāmil, II, 184; Darjini, Tabaqāt, II, 7.
45. Mubarrad, Kāmil, II, 185; Darjini, Tabaqāt, II, 8.

46. Mubarrad, Kāmil, II, 191; Bayḍūn, Tayyārāt, 232; Abd al-Rāziq, Khawārij, 28.
47. Shammākhi, Siyar, 86.
48. Tabaqāt, 210.
49. Darjini, Tabaqāt, II, 14; cf. Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 105; Madelung, Religious Trends, 73.
50. Darjini, Tabaqāt, II, 15; Shammākhi, Siyar, 84.
51. Darjini, Tabaqāt, II, 16; Shammākhi, Siyar, 80; Ḥārithi, 'Uqūd, 153; see also Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 108.
52. Darjini, Tabaqāt, II, 16.
53. Mu'ammār, Ibādiyyah, 52.
54. Ḥāshim, Ibādiyyah, 95.
55. At the age they are aware of what is going on around them (*sinn al-tamyiz*); cf. Ṭalibī, Arā', I, 208; Ibn Ja'far, Jāmi', I, 68.
56. Shammākhi, Sharḥ, 26; Qalhātī, Kashf, I, 55 ff.
57. Qalhātī, Kashf, I, 153-66; Bārūnī, Mukhtaṣar, 73; Ṣalīmī, Mashāriq, 186.
58. Rabi' b. Ḥabīb, Musnad, III, 5-6.
59. Rabi' b. Ḥabīb, Musnad, *Bāb man qala inna ahl al-kabā'ir laysū bi-kāfirīn*, 1-5; cf. Bārūnī, Mukhtaṣar, 73.
60. Bārūnī, Mukhtaṣar, 2; Nayfar, 'Aham, 66.
61. Ṣalīmī, Mashāriq, 287-91; see also Bārūnī, Mukhtaṣar, 74; Mu'ammār, Ibādiyyah, 60.
62. Qalhātī, Kashf, I, 471; Ṣalīmī, Mashāriq, 260-279; Janwānī, Wa'd, 23.
63. The Khawārij also have recognised the caliphates of Abū Bakr and 'Umar, and of 'Uthamān's for the first six years and of 'Alī's until he consented to arbitration, cf. Salim, Political theory, 19.
64. Bārūnī, Mukhtaṣar, 75.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **THE SPREAD OF IBĀDĪ TEACHING IN OMAN**

#### **5.1 Notes**



Any study of the Ibāḍiyyah must take into account the historical role which Oman played during the early expansion of Islam and particularly with regard to its relations with the Ibāḍī movement. From the end of the first century of Islam, Oman's political and religious history was linked with the Ibāḍī movement since Omanis formed a majority among those who followed the teachings and principles of this school.

The spread of Ibāḍī teaching among Omanis was greatly facilitated by the fact that the founding members of the Ibāḍī movement were from the Omani tribe of Azd, along with those of the Iraqi Tamīm tribe which partnered the Azd in establishing the movement.<sup>1</sup> Initially the Tamīm were able to use their political influence in Basrah to protect followers of the Ibāḍiyyah before power shifted in favour of the Azd.<sup>2</sup> This shift in power changed the political situation such that the Azd became dominant and took control of the community's leadership, and any member of the Omani Azd tribe in Basra became associated with the Ibāḍiyyah. This situation came about as a result of the increase in numbers, and correspondingly, in influence, of Azdis in Basra, following the Kharijite rebellion, when one of the most prominent members of the Azdī clan of al-'Atik, al-Muhallab b. Abī Ṣufrah, played a leading role in helping the Umayyads break the revolt against them.<sup>3</sup> At this time the political influence of the Muhallab's family in Basra was such that the city was known as Basrat al-Muhallab according to contemporary sources.<sup>4</sup>

Although al-Muhallab had backed the Umayyads against the Kharijite

revolt, some family leaders became victims. The role of the Muhallab family and the presence of members of the al-Azd tribe in Basra were among many factors which assisted the spread of Ibādī thought among Omanis. Similarly, the fact that Jābir b Zayd, imam and founder of the Ibādiyyah, was an Omani helped to make Omani Azdis more receptive to the Ibādī *da'wah*.<sup>5</sup>

A second significant factor in the spread of the *da'wah* in Oman was the role played by Abū 'Ubaydah Muslim b. Abī Karīmah in his determination to make Oman the base of the Ibādiyyah because of its geographical position, far removed from the central area controlled by the caliphate authorities.<sup>6</sup> Oman's isolation made it a place of refuge for those whose conversion to Ibādī teaching made them victims of repression by the central authorities.<sup>7</sup>

Abū 'Ubaydah also sought to make preparations in Oman in order that the Ibādīs would be able to declare the the imamate openly (*imāmat al-zuhūr*), and to establish the Ibādī state.<sup>8</sup>

In selecting cadres to propagate Ibādī teaching (*ḥamalāt al-ʿilm*), Abū 'Ubaydah took care to choose those who belonged to the main Omani tribes, because of their knowledge of local circumstances and their potential to influence their kinsmen.<sup>9</sup>

A third factor which assisted the spread of Ibādī teaching in Oman was the absence of any repressive measures imposed by the governors of Oman appointed during the early period of the Abbasid caliphate.<sup>10</sup> These governors,

in effect, condoned the spread of the Ibādīyah, by failing to obstruct Ibādī work; they, although appointed by the central authorities, were themselves members of the Omani Azd tribe and it may have been that they were sympathetic to Ibādī beliefs. They had, however, to conceal these sympathies.<sup>11</sup>

The sources do not provide an accurate picture of the time of which Ibādī teaching became widespread and occupied a leading place among current doctrines in Oman.

Bathurst has put forward the idea that there were Kharijite imams in Oman before the Ibādīyah.<sup>12</sup> This suggestion does not however appear to be firmly based since the Omanis rejected the ideas of the extremist Kharijite group and forced them to leave the country. This is true of their response to the Najdāt in particular; this group controlled Oman for a short period, but after that Oman regained its independence under the rule of the line of Julandā. This is not to deny that the Kharijites took refuge in Oman from Umayyad action against them. According to Abu Sa'īd al-Kudmī the Ṣufriyyah was spread in Oman before the appearance of the Ibādīyah.<sup>13</sup>

Wendell Phillips doubted that it was Jābir b. Zayd who brought the principals of the Ibādī movement to Oman,<sup>14</sup> but Ibādī sources confirm that the early historical roots of the Ibādī *da'wah* in Oman can be traced to the time when al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf al-Thaqafī became governor of Iraq (75-95/694-704).<sup>15</sup> At this time the Ibādī underground organisation was regarded as a threat to the authority of al-Ḥajjāj, especially in Oman where he

entered into a long war with local population in a bid to assert his control.<sup>16</sup>

It is likely al-Ḥajjāj may have doubted Jābir b. Zayd's loyalty and suspected that he was responsible for the activities of the Ibādīs; such activities being hostile to the Umayyad Caliphate. These suspicions may have brought about his decision to exile him to Oman.<sup>17</sup>

However, at this time there was in fact no relation between Ibādī activities and Jābir b. Zayd's expulsion. Rather Jābir's expulsion was linked with anger of the members of the Azd tribe living in Iraq about the fate which befell their Azdī kinsmen at the hands of the Umayyad military commander during his efforts to impose his control on Oman.<sup>18</sup>

The Azdites regarded al-Ḥajjāj as being responsible for the atrocities committed by his soldiers; they were outraged by his policies and hoped to see him ousted from the governorship of Iraq.<sup>19</sup> At the same time as these events were taking place, events which brought a worsening of relations between al-Ḥajjāj and the Azd, others also occurred which contributed to this effect, among them being al-Ḥajjāj's refusal to acknowledge the Muhallabid family as leaders of the Azd in Iraq.<sup>20</sup>

This placed a severe strain on relations between al-Ḥajjāj and the Muhallabids. Al-Ḥajjāj also began to conspire against Yazīd b. al-Muhallab, the governor of the Khurāsān, to put him out of favour with the caliph, 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān.<sup>21</sup> Al-Ḥajjāj succeeded in persuading 'Abd al-Malik to

remove Yazīd from Khurāsān, and ‘Abd al-Malik also allowed al-Ḥajjāj to imprison and torture Yazīd and other members of his family.<sup>22</sup> This enraged the Azd of Basra. Al-Ḥajjāj’s stance towards the Azd of Basra had positive effects for the Ibādī *da’wah*. As a leader of the Ibādīs in Basra Jābir b. Zayd used the atmosphere of hatred between the Azd tribe and al-Ḥajjāj to convince many Azdites of the wisdom of joining his movement, and he succeeded in winning as converts to the Ibādiyyah many of the most prominent members of the Azd.<sup>23</sup>

These developments in turn affected al-Ḥajjāj’s position regarding Jābir b. Zayd and his followers. Al-Ḥajjāj imprisoned Jābir along with some of the more distinguished personalities among his followers, including Ḍimām b. al-Sā’ib, Abū ‘Ubaydah Muslim b. Abī Karīmah and Ṣuhār al-‘Abdī and others.<sup>24</sup>

Later, however, Jābir was released and exiled to his home country, Oman, with one sheikh of the *da’wah* called Hubayrah.<sup>25</sup> It is probable that al-Ḥajjāj took this measure as a result of mediation from his secretary Yazīd b. Abī Muslim who was a close friend of Jābir.<sup>26</sup> Jābir’s expulsion to Oman brought about an increase in the spread of Ibādī teaching there since Jābir was able to propagate his doctrine among his own folk and those who were close to him in Oman.<sup>27</sup>

Jābir was able to use his knowledge of local customs and traditions in his dealings with Omanis and utilised their dislike of al-Ḥajjāj to spread the teaching

of the Ibādī *da'wah* throughout the country. The Ibādī efforts at this time were the forerunners of the *ḥamalat al-ʿilm*.<sup>28</sup>

It is not clear from the sources when exactly Jābir was expelled from Iraq, nor is it clear how long Jābir spent in Oman. The sources do agree, however, that Jābir returned to Basra where he died.<sup>29</sup> Historians dispute the date of Jābir's death, some suggesting that it took place in the same week as that of Anas b. Malik, in 93/711.<sup>30</sup> Others however put his death in 103/721,<sup>31</sup> while Shammākhī reports that Jābir died in 96/714.<sup>32</sup>

The correct date of Jābir's death is the first one listed above since this is the date given by those who pass on the Prophet's traditions; these writers would pay more attention to the details of the life of every traditionist (*muḥaddith*) and would thus be more likely to record the correct date of Jābir's death.

After Jābir's death the Ibādī movement, that is its underground organisation, in Basra entered a new era and started to employ new methods becoming more accurate and more efficient. Among these new methods which improved the framework of the movement was the sending out of the *ḥamalat al-ʿilm*,<sup>33</sup> Basra, to other cities. It was Abū 'Ubaydah's intention to choose a group of the Ibādī followers from every country reached by Ibādī thought, in order to teach them in Basra, preparing them intellectually and politically, before sending them back to their home countries to continue their role of propagating Ibādī beliefs.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, all the cadres of the *ḥamalat al-ʿilm* sent

by Abū ‘Ubaydah to Oman, were native Omanis;<sup>35</sup> they could thus carry out their task of spreading Ibādī teaching more effectively and with considerable success. It is not possible to pinpoint with any certainty the time at which this success was achieved. It is likely that the Ibādī *da‘wah* started to make good progress in Oman during the first two decades of the second/eighth century.<sup>36</sup>

Sources first cite the use of *ḥamalāt al-‘ilm* when Abū ‘Ubaydah became leader of the Ibādī movement; these units continued to operate during the leadership of his successor al-Rabī‘ b. Ḥabīb al-Farāhidī al-Azdī, thus they continued to fulfill the function for which they were established. Historians differ in their accounts of the number of *ḥamalāt al-‘ilm* who came to Oman during the period of Abū ‘Ubaydah Muslim b. Abī Karīmah, at the beginning of the second/eighth century. For example, al-‘Awtabī gives four names and considers that Muḥammad b. al-Mu‘allā al-Faḥshī was the first to call for the establishment of the Ibādī imamate in Oman<sup>37</sup>.

Among those who followed on from him were al-Rabī‘ b. Ḥabīb al-Azdī, Munīr b. al-Nayyar al-Riyyāmī and Bashīr b. al-Mundhir al-Nizwānī.<sup>38</sup> There is also another account which states that the *ḥamalāt al-‘ilm* sent by Abū Ubaydah were Maḥbūb b. al-Raḥīl, Mūsā b. Abī Jābir al-Izkawī, Munīr b. al-Nayyar and Ḥāshim b. Ghaylān.<sup>39</sup>

These men played a very significant role in Omani political affairs. Their role was not limited to that of *fuqahā’* (giving religious interpretation and instruction), but rather, within half a century from their arrival in Oman, they

became the masters of political affairs. No policy could be implemented without prior consultation with them and no one could be appointed to the imamate other than with their approval.<sup>40</sup>

It seems likely that some of these men became governors in various subdivisions of the Imamate Muḥammad b. al-Mu'allā became governor.<sup>41</sup> The success achieved by the *ḥamalāt al'ilm* in persuading the people of Oman to accept Ibādī teaching came about as a result of the strenuous efforts made by the *du'āt* in their work.

They owed their success largely to their membership of the Azd tribe and other tribes inhabiting Oman at that time. Strong tribal affiliation and an understanding of local circumstances enabled the *du'āt* to spread their teaching successfully; of these factors tribal affiliation was the most significant one. Finally, the conversion of many members of the Julandā family, who were the ruling dynasty in Oman, to the Ibādī school went a long way towards strengthening the position of the Ibādīyyah in Oman.<sup>42</sup> By the end of the second century A.H. the Ibādīyyah *madhhab* (doctrine) predominated among the people of Oman. This predominance was accompanied by the final separation of Oman and its imamate from the framework of the Islamic caliphate. From this time onwards Oman became independent and determined its own affairs under the Ibādī imamate; this state of affairs continued up till recent times.



TABLE 4

**Ibādī *ḥamalat al-ʿilm* (knowledge carriers)  
who came to Oman from Basra**

1. al-Rabī' b. Ḥabīb b. 'Amr al-Farāhīdī al-Azdī (d. 170/786)
2. Mūsā b. Abī Jābir al-Izkawī, of B. Sāmāh b. Lu'ayy b. Ghālib (d. 181/797)
3. Bashīr b. al-Mundhir al-Nazwānī of B. Sāmāh b. Lu'ayy b. Ghālib (d. 187/802)
4. Munīr b. al-Nayyar b. 'Abd al-Malik of B. Riyām (d. 280/893)
5. Muḥammad b. al-Mu'allā al-Kindī al-Faḥshī (d. in the 2nd/8th century)
6. Rāshid b. 'Amr al-Ḥadīdī al-Azdī (the date of his death is unknown)
7. Hāshim b. Ghaylān al-Sihānī (3rd/9th century)
8. Abū Sufyān Maḥbūb b. al-Raḥīl (2nd/8th century)

## Notes

1. Azd and Tamīm were the most powerful tribes at this particular time. Both of the tribes heavily participated in the political activities which Iraq had witnessed during the beginning of the Umayyad era. The members of the two tribes found themselves working together in forming the Ibādī school to oppose the Umayyad rule, despite the tribal differences between them.
2. The influence of the Azd tribes began to increase, when al-Muhallab b. Abī Ṣufrah brought a large number of the Azd of Oman to Basra in order to fight the Khawārij opposition in Iraq. For full detailed information concerning this matter see in particular 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 227aff; see also Wellhausen, Kingdom, 70-71; Wilkinson, Arab, 81-82; Hasan, Arab tribes, 174-5; Mason, "Azd role", Arabica, 201.
3. Tabarī, Tārīkh, VI, 195-9; Mubarrad, Kāmil, II, 295ff; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, V, 29-30; see also 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 227aff; cf. Wellhausen, Kingdom, 209.
4. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. 229a; see also Yāsiri, Mashāhīr, 269.
5. For further detailed discussion about Jabir b. Zayd's role see Shammākhī, Siyar, I, 67-72; cf. Ennami, Studies, 55-86; Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 86-102; Ṣawwāfī, Imām, 152-160; Bakkūsh, Jābir, 12-24.
6. Hāshim, Ibādīyyah, 173; see also Chapter IV of this work.
7. Shammākhī, Siyar, I, 69; Ruqayshī, Misbāḥ, MS. f. 21b.
8. Ruqayshī, Misbāḥ, MS. f. 23b; cf. Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 128-9; Hāshim, Ibādīyyah, 173; 'Umar, Tārīkh, 118-122.
9. Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 129; cf. Hāshim, Ibādīyyah, 172.
10. For more detailed information see Chapter VII of this study.
11. See previous note.
12. "Imamate", A.P.S., 90.
13. Istiḳāmah, II, 91.
14. History, 20.
15. See Chapter III of this study.
16. See Chapter III of this study.

17. Shammākhi, Siyar, 76; Ruqayshi, Misbāh, MS. f. 21b; Hārithi, 'Uqūd, 161; cf. Khulayfat, Nash'at, 102; Hashim, Ibādiyyah, 169.
18. For full discussion concerning al-Hajjāj's insurrection of the Azd of Oman see Dixon, Umayyad, 149-150.
19. Balādhuri, Ansāb, 3, 318-320; Mas'ūdi, Tanbih, 314; cf. Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 16; Badger, Imams, 5; Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 100.
20. 'Awtabi, Ansāb, MS. f. 231ff.
21. 'Awtabi, Ansāb, MS. f. 231b; see also Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 100; Hasan, Arab tribes, 179.
22. 'Awtabi, Ansāb, MS. f. 232.
23. It was reported that 'Ātikah, the sister of Yazīd b. al-Muhallab, was among those who gave financial support to the Ibādī movement, see Shammākhi, Siyar, I, 82-3; Hārithi, 'Uqūd, 104; cf. Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 101.
24. Shammākhi, Siyar, I, 70, 81; Lewicki, "Ibadis", J.W.H., 69 rejects that al-Hajjāj had designs on the lives of the Ibādī sheikhs, as the Ibādī sources report.
25. According to Shammākhi, Siyar, I, 71 Hubayrah was the grandfather of Abū Ṣufyān Maḥbūb b. al-Raḥīl, one of the *ḥamalat al-ilm* of Oman; see Ruqayshi, Misbāh, MS. f. 21a.
26. Shammākhi, Siyar, I, 70; Ruqayshi, Misbāh, MS. f. 21a.
27. Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 101.
28. Concerning the activities of *ḥamalat al-ilm* in Oman see Chapter IV of this study.
29. Shammākhi, Siyar, I, 72.
30. Ibn Khayyāt, Tabaqāt, 210; Dhahabī, Takhkirat, I, 73; cf. Sālīmī, Sharḥ, 7; Hārithi, 'Uqūd, 93-4; Ennami, Studies, 86; Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 102.
31. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, VII, 133; Ibn Qutaybah, Ma'ārif, 102; cf. Ennami, Studies, 86; Ruqayshi, Misbāh, MS. f. 21b; Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 102.
32. Siyar, 72.
33. *Ḥamalat al-ilm*, Basran *du'at*, who were sent by the Ibādī imam in Basra to Oman, Ḥaḍramawt and North Africa, they played an extraordinary

political role, which resulted in the establishment of the Ibādī imamate in these countries.

34. Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 101.
35. Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 101.
36. Ḥārithī, 'Uqūd, 256; Sayyābī, 'Atbā', 41-8; Kāshif, Fajr, 67-8; cf. Ḥāshim, Ibādīyyah, 173; Wilkinson, Arab, 82-3.
37. Ansab, MS. 107.
38. 'Awtabī, Ansab, MS. 193; see also Sayyābī, 'Atbā', 41-8; Ṣalīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 59; cf. Marmurī, 'Asūl, 11; Kāshif, Fajr, 68; Wilkinson, Arab, 83.
39. Qalḥātī, Kashf, II, 478; Ṣalīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 59.
40. For more information about the role which the Ibādī ulema played in Oman, see Sayyābī, Umān, II, 153; cf. Wilkinson, Imamate, 187-8.
41. Ṣalīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 74.
42. Although some of the al-Julandā family became Ibādīs, none of them was an imam, with the exception of Julandā b. Mas'ūd. For a full discussion on this matter see Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 97-108.

**PART II**  
**CHAPTERS VI - IX**

**CHAPTER VI**  
**THE IMAMATE IN IBĀDĪ THOUGHT**

- 6.1 The definition of the imamate**
- 6.2 The division of the Ibādī imamate**
  - 6.2.1 The stage of concealment**
  - 6.2.2 The activists' imamate**
  - 6.2.3 The defence imamate**
  - 6.2.4 The declaration imamate**
- 6.3 The selection of the imam and the personal qualities required for the office**
  - 6.3.1 The attributes of the imam**
  - 6.3.2 The installation of the imam and his oath**
  - 6.3.3 Deposing of an imam**
- 6.4 Notes**

## 6.1 The definition of the imamate

To define the word imamate, we should refer to the original Arabic verb, *'amma*. In the Lisān al-'Arab, for example, we find that *'amma* and *'amma bi-him* means “stand before”. Thus the imam can be anyone whom the people follow as an example, whether he shows a good or a bad example.<sup>1</sup> According to the Ṣiḥāḥ, “The imam is the person who is taken as an example, and its plural is *a'immaḥ*.”<sup>2</sup> Therefore it is concluded that the term *imāmah* means “leadership” or “presidency”. In common usage, the term *imāmah* is synonymous with the word caliphate, which means “having charge of Muslim affairs and administering them”. Some ulema have distinguished the term *imāmah* from the *imāmah* in the context of public prayer, the imam, who leads the prayer. The imamate, meaning leadership, is given the term *al-imāmah al-kubrā*.<sup>3</sup> Abu al-Mu'aththir defines *imāmah* by saying “the imamate is a part of God’s religion and it is a duty of his servants to remain within the *ḥudūd* (i.e. the restrictions that God has placed on man’s freedom of action) by treating the wronged fairly and by governing all the people”.<sup>4</sup> Finally, the imamate means, as indicated above, the system of ruling the Islamic state according to God’s *sharī'ah* and practicing his way. The Ibāḍiyyah have used the word imam and imamate since the beginning of the 2nd/8th century. The question to be raised here is why the Ibāḍiyyah did not use the term caliphate (*khilāfah*) instead of *imāmah*? The answer is clear. Firstly, the *imāmah* represented the principles of the Ibāḍī politico-religious theories. Therefore the word *imāmah* remained associated with the developing nature of its various divisions, i.e. it is linked with the *imāmat al-kitmān* (concealment), *imāmat al-shirā'* (activists), *imāmat al-difā'* (defence), and

*imāmat al-zuhūr* (declaration).<sup>5</sup> The imamate embraces all four, whilst the word caliphate is connected only with *imāmat al-zuhūr*, in which the *hudūd* can be practiced and the oath of allegiance (*bay'ah*) made.

Secondly, the historic establishment of the Ibādī imamate was founded, far from the seat of the caliphate (*dār al-khilāfah*) of the Umayyads and 'Abbasids, whom the Ibādīyyah consider, by tradition, to be tyrant states (*jabābirah*). These two caliphates established the ruling power of their Islamic state on the basis of succession from father to son within one house by nomination. According to Islam, it was not a divine attribute whereby the members of one dynasty could assert their right as heirs. Following this principle, the Ibādīyyah have distinguished their state from those of the Umayyad and 'Abbasid caliphates.

Finally, in common usage, the imamate or caliphate have the same meaning. The caliphate means succession to the Prophet in his capacity as ruler, or supreme leadership of the Muslim community after the death of the Prophet. The fact that the Ibādīyyah use the word *imāmah* changes nothing, as the word has the same meaning and purpose.

We must now ask how the Ibādīyyah see the imamate, whence it derived its legitimacy and the importance of the imamate in their traditional thought.

The Ibādīyyah consider the imamate as a religious duty (*farīdah* plur. *farā'id*), which is obligatory for the performance of God's *sharī'ah*, enjoining



what is right and denying what is wrong (*al-amr bi'l-ma'rūf wa'l-nahy 'an al-munkar*), and the maintenance of justice.<sup>6</sup>

Also the Ibāḍiyyah rely on setting up their imam on the basis of prophetic Tradition. According to al-Rabī' b. Ḥabīb and Imam Muslim, the tradition is that the Prophet predicted that there will be an *imāmah* who will not practice his practice (*sunnah*) and will not follow his correct guidance. His Companions asked the Prophet how best to escape from such rulers. He replied that they should obey them, unless they prevent them from obeying God's will, until the day when there is no shade, nor shelter apart from God's shelter.<sup>7</sup>

The *imāmah* is obligatory and the consensus (*ijmā'*) is a legitimate duty (*farḍ mashrū'*) according to Sā'ighī. The imamate is a duty (*farīḍah*) and the contract embodied within it is a means of access (*wasīlah*) to the imam. When the objective of the office is necessary by means of consensus (*ijmā'*), it does not go astray after the means of access, nor does it abandon it.<sup>8</sup>

From the historical point of view, Ibāḍiyyah considered that those Muslims who disputed the roots of the existence of the imamate, were only attempting to tyrannize the nation's legitimate authority, because it was not established on the basis of consultation (*shūrā'*), but was founded in a quite opposite situation. Thus the Ibāḍīs started to move towards the establishment of the Islamic state in the way which they regarded as legitimate. They relied on well organised, but secret, planning, instead of coming into direct conflict with the central authority, in which was found most of contemporary Islamic

doctrine, but which in the end collapsed and disappeared. The Ibādīs held different attitudes from the opposition, but created an excellent atmosphere in which to establish the imamate, with a facility to adapt and survive under any circumstances.

## 6.2 The division of the Ibādī imamate

The Ibādī imamate is divided into four for the requirements of its activities in order to protect the existence of the *daw'ah*,<sup>9</sup> and in order to be able to establish its own legitimate state. There are four stages, the state of concealment (*kitmān*), activists (*shirā'*), defence (*difā'*), and declaration (*zuhūr*).

### 6.2.1 The Stage of Concealment

This imamate is linked with conditions in which those people propagating the *da'wah* are unable to convey or demonstrate their doctrine publically. Under these conditions they have to fall back on “concealment” as a device to spread their message. In fact this stage presents the weakest state of the Ibādiyyah. The Ibādīs therefore compare it to the Prophet's (may God bless Him and grant Him peace) condition with his Companions before the Hijrah.<sup>10</sup>

Jābir b. Zayd, who died in 93/711, and Abū 'Ubaydah Muslim b. Abī Karīmah after him, were regarded as the heads of the secret Ibādī government in Basra. From here they spread their teaching to other regions such as Oman, Ḥadramawt, and North Africa. Later Ibādī states were declared in these countries as a result of the spread of Ibādī *daw'ah*.

There are two fundamental doctrines which must not be ignored at the concealment stage.

Firstly, the doctrine of dissimulation (*taqīyah*) requires the Ibādī to enunciate and perform the words and deeds by means of which they can protect themselves.<sup>11</sup> An example of this is Jābir b. Zayd, chief of the Ibādīyah, who propagated this doctrine entirely in secret.

Other Islamic doctrines which relate to the Ibādī movement are attributed to ‘Abdullāh b. Ibād. According to Ibādī sources, however, Ibn Ibād and Abū Bilāl Mirdās b. Ḥudayr and other Ibādī leaders, would not revolt against the central authority unless this is authorised by their Imam Jābir b. Zayd. However, Sunnī sources reject the idea of any connection between Jābir and the Ibādīs.<sup>12</sup>

There is a story which relates to Abū Sufyān. When the Ibādīs were active in Basra, Abū Sufyān was arrested on the grounds that he was an Ibādī. He was given four hundred lashes, but refused to help the Umayyads identify the Ibādī followers. Jābir said “I was close to him and I was waiting for him to point his finger at me and to say that this is the man you are looking for, but God prevented him from doing so”.<sup>13</sup>

Secondly, the doctrines of rightful allegiance, that is to say the obligation of friendliness towards the followers of the true faith (*walāyah*),<sup>14</sup> and more or

less militant hostility (*barā'ah*)<sup>15</sup> towards those who do not deserve to be considered as such. These doctrines, which have counterparts in orthodox belief only insofar as the general obligation of solidarity with the Faithful, and hostility towards infidels, are given great attention by the Ibādīs. In addition the imam must build a very strong bridge of confidence towards his followers in the faith (*da'wah*), during their secret activities of spreading it. The Ibādīs proudly practised this doctrine as far as they could. Abū Sufyān, an Ibādī sheikh related that al-Mu'tamir b. 'Umayrah said to Abū 'Ubaydah, "I love you much more than my father, and you are closer to me than my father". Abū 'Ubaydah replied, "This is what you have to do, because you are granting me the same loyalty as you gave to him".<sup>16</sup>

Abu 'Ubaydah used to gather the people together when he wanted to dismiss one of his followers for continuing misbehaviour, so that he could declare the miscreant an undesirable person. Then the people would sever their links with the wrong-doer until he was isolated from the Ibādī community. Open rejection (*barā'ah*) and sanctions were the only actions which the community could impose on an individual of whom they disapproved but, if that person continued in his opposition thus endangering the Ibādī community by putting lives at risk, then the death sentence was obligatory. Thus did Imam Jābir order the death of Khardhabah, who broke from the Ibādī community.<sup>17</sup> The role and personality of the imam had to be kept a complete secret, except to the followers of the faith, at this stage, as was the *da'wah* itself. The particular features of the *imāmat al-kitmān* can be distinguished as follows.

1) The election of the Ibādī imam had to be held in secret, by practising the doctrine of *taqīyah*, and the acceptance of the imam by the community is subject to the *walāyah*. The followers support the imam as long as they believe him to be following the faith. The homage (*bay'ah*) is gradually transferred to the imam of the *da'wah*.

2) The personal qualities of the imam played a manifest role in this choice. If we look closely at the personal characteristics of Imam Jābir b. Zayd and Abū 'Ubaydah Muslim b. Abī Karīmah, we notice that the imam of concealment must be "a very learned person" (*'ālim*), a *faqīh*, and must be able to resolve any dubious point which might face the followers of the faith. For example, Jābir b. Zayd himself was scholar and *faqīh*. He was also the close friend and disciple of 'Abdullāh b. al-'Abbās, from whom he received a number of traditions, until the latter was able to say, "Ask Jābir", whenever the people of the East and North Africa (*ahl al-Mashriq wa-al-Maghrib*) asked him about anything. His knowledge was so vast that, even if they acquired some of it, there would be enough for all.<sup>18</sup> In addition Jābir was one of the ulema whom he gave much of the knowledge of Islam which had been acquired from 'Ā'ishah Umm al-Mu'minīn, the Prophet's wife. Abū 'Ubaydah was the most scholarly of Jābir's pupils and his successor as president of the Ibādī college (*jamā'ah*) at Basra. He was a distinguished person, as the sources report.

3) Thirdly, the imam's efficiency and authority in some cases must be reduced and even dispensed with, whenever the work in secret required it. Some of the general Islamic laws could be suspended, such as the prescriptions

(*ḥudūd*), as required, to give the imam sound authority. Thus Abū ‘Ubaydah asked his followers not to deal with the governors of the Umayyad caliphate and to refuse to accept posts under their authority. In addition, he was not in favour of mixed marriages between his followers and the rest of the Muslim community.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, the most important duties of the imam at this stage were:

- 1) to reunify the group of those propagating the *da‘wah* and to educate them in the matter of their religion, their duties towards their God and their nation, and to give a formal legal opinion (*fatwah*) on urgent questions.
- 2) To create personal leaders. Abū ‘Ubaydah established a centre of learning in Basra, where he secretly trained students from all the Muslim provinces as missionaries. These missionaries were sent out in teams as “bearers of learning” (*ḥamalat al-‘ilm*). According to the Ibādī historians, Abū ‘Ubaydah sent such teams to the Maghrib, the Yemen, Ḥaḍramawt, Oman, and Khurāsān. He appointed Abū al-Khaṭṭāb al-Ma‘āfirī as the imam in the Maghribī team, and gave orders for him to be killed if he refused the appointment.<sup>20</sup>
- 3) To make preparations for the appearance of the Ibādī imamate, by choosing the right place and time. This task might take up the whole rule of the imam, as it was in the case of Jābir b. Zayd, who died before reaching this stage.

### 6.2.2 The activists' imamate

The people of this imamate were given the name “those who sell themselves” (*shurāh*, plural of *shārin*). This term is borrowed from the Qur’ān.<sup>21</sup>

The members of the *ahl al-da‘wah* must be forty men or more as a prerequisite for this imamate. If they have more than this number, they must appear and they, the *shurāt*, can choose their imam from their community. They must pay homage to the imam, who should guide them along the right path. They must be ready to accept death for the sake of justice. The imamate of the *al-shirā’* is the complete opposite of that of concealment in which *taqīyah* is obligatory. Therefore in order that the *shirā’* imamate does not present a danger to the rest of the Muslim community, they must isolate themselves far away from their companions.

Ibādī *fiqh* made this issue flexible, when the *shurāh* were concealed as strangers in their homes, made them shorten their prayers (*qasr*) while in their original homes, and bring them to an end, if they go out to fight the central authority i.e. when they are in the process of “moving out” (*khuṛūj*) against them.<sup>22</sup>

As if living in exile was quite natural, they remained away from their homes until they became less than three. The author of *Kitāb al-Nīl* gives permission to the imam of the *shurāh* to exercise his authority to force the

Muslim *shārī* to serve his colleagues, the followers of the Ibādīyyah, for the strength of the Ibādī state.<sup>23</sup>

Also the imam has the right to take the *shārī* from his home, if he is hiding himself there, and thereafter has the right to climb over the wall of his house, and remove its door.

The *imāmat al-shirā'* follows a very strange pattern, which is different from other imamates, as it moves towards the "declaration" (*zuhūr*), which is distinguished by courage. These *shurāh* are different from those mentioned by Sālīmī within the imamate of al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd. Their task is to guard the imamate after the declaration, because they segregated themselves from the community and are close to being under the state of emergency, to face any danger which might be threatening the Ibādī state.<sup>24</sup> The Ibādīyyah regarded Abū Bilāl Mirdās and his brother 'Urwah, as different from the *shurāh*. Yet Abū Bilāl was one of their imams and he went out with forty of his followers to al-Ahwāz. He also faced the army of Ibn Ziyād, the governor of Iraq, led by Aslam b. Zar'ah al-Kilābī, who was defeated by Abū Bilāl.<sup>25</sup> The *shurāh* did not behave in their secession (*khurūj*) as the Kharijites who killed anyone not following them, but they formed the central authority and established their state.

We understand this from the saying which is associated with Abū Bilāl.<sup>26</sup>

وَاللّٰهُ اِنْ الصَّبْرَ عَلَى هَذَا لِعَظِيْمٍ وَّاَنْ تَجْرِيدَ السِّيفِ وَاِضَافَةَ السَّبِيْلِ لِعَظِيْمٍ  
وَلَكِنَّا نَشُدُّ عَنْهُمْ وَلَا نُجَرِّدُ سَيْفًا وَلَا نَقَاتِلُ اِلَّا مَنْ يُّقَاتِلُنَا .

By God, patience in this case is indeed great and unsheathing the sword



is great, but we are unlike them;

we do not draw our swords, nor do we fight anyone who does not fight us.

### 6.2.3 The defence imamate

Whenever the Muslim community faced battle during the absence of the imamate of declaration, they must elect an imam for the purposes of defence (*difā'*), until the enemy has withdrawn.<sup>27</sup> The *imāmat al-difā'* was associated only with the danger from some enemy, which might threaten the followers of the community. If the enemy disappears the imamate must automatically disappear, without there being any conflict with the idea of rightful allegiance (*walāyah*). In addition this allegiance comes to an end regardless of whether the time and the place has been chosen for the imamate. The followers pay homage to the imam for purposes of defence, before they have any fixed provenance.<sup>28</sup>

It is correct to install the imam during or before the actual fighting, if it is necessary to make ready the apparatus of war. In this way the *bay'ah* of Muḥammad b. Abī 'Affān was created for defensive purposes after the reestablishment of the second Ibādī imamate. As research shows, they deposed him later without protest.<sup>29</sup> If the imam was given the *bay'ah* for a particular battle, it must also be reinvested in another imam, unless the people paid homage generally, by saying: "He is our imam defending us against anyone who comes to attack us".<sup>30</sup> This statement includes both the general and the specialised function of the imam, as declared by the fighters themselves. If the

*bay'ah* is general, it must cover the interests of all fighters and those of anyone coming to assist them. The defence imamate is based on the existence of brave men with complete expertise in waging war.

The Ibāḍiyyah in the defence imamate often follow the policy not to initiate an attack. Among the regulations of such an imamate it is forbidden to have more than one imam for one army, but there may be several imams to represent several armies. If the imam dies or resigns from the imamate, or escapes from the field of battle, the Ibāḍī followers must choose one amongst them to be imam, otherwise they would have to fight without an imam until the end of the battle.

The Ibāḍiyyah follow a very flexible policy within the defence imamate, because if they secure a victory, they establish the imamate of declaration, but if they are defeated, they have to return to the beginning, with the concealment imamate. This was shown after the Ibāḍiyyah were defeated at the hands of al-Āsh'ath in the Maghrib under the leadership of Abū al-Khaṭṭāb al-Ma'āfirī. They returned to the state of concealment and reorganised themselves until they could establish an defence imamate under the leadership of Abū Ḥatīm al-Malzūzī (154/770) to fight against the governor of the Abbasid caliph, Abu Ja'far al-Manṣūr, at Tripoli in Libya.<sup>31</sup>

#### **6.3.4 The declaration imamate**

This imamate is more basic than the other three Ibāḍī imamates. With its establishment, came the practice of carrying out the punishment prescribed

by the laws (*ḥudūd*) of God, including the stoning of an adulterer, the cutting off of a thief's hand, whipping the alcohol drinker and so on.<sup>32</sup>

The Ibāḍiyyah regard the imamate as an indication of the rise of an Islamic system, as well as one handling economic, political and administrative matters. This imamate is also regarded as proceeding as a result of the continuing struggle through the previous imamates. The roots of declaration imamate derive from the first and second caliphates of Abū Bakr and 'Umar; in addition to the earliest Ibāḍī imams, such as Imam 'Abdullāh b. Yahyā al-Kindī (Tālib al-Ḥaqq), the founder of the first Ibāḍī state in Ḥaḍramawt (128/745), Imam al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd, the founder of the first Ibāḍī state in Oman (132/749), and finally Imam Abū al-Khaṭṭāb al-Ma'āfirī, the founder of the first Ibāḍī imamate in North Africa (140/757).

The declaration imamate must be established as soon as the Muslims, that is, the Ibāḍīs, have gained victory and strength over their enemies. Moreover, they must be able to take on all the burdens which are included in this imamate.

The selection of imam must be performed on the basis of consultation, to the satisfaction of the Islamic community. The Ibāḍiyyah have set a fixed lower limit of forty men who can declare the declaration imamate, and between them there should be some sort of mutual understanding.<sup>33</sup> These forty men have to be free, in reasonable financial circumstances and sound in health. In addition six of the men should be very learned and also include the pious from

amongst the influential people in power (*ahl al-ḥill wa-'l-'aqd*). Some Ibādī scholars such as Ibn al-Mu'aththir think that the contract of declaration of imamate can be arranged by five men, including one religious scholar (*ʿālim*); however a contract of two of the five men can be made on condition that it is accepted by the general public also.<sup>34</sup>

If the Muslims decide to choose one of them as imam but he refuses to accept the appointment, he must be killed as by refusing the position of imam he is working against God's laws (*ḥudūd Allāh*). This would happen of course before they elected another imam, presenting a situation identical to the imamate of defence.<sup>35</sup> The Ibādiyyah take the appointment of the caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, as an example. He chose six of his companions for the office of caliph, so that they could choose one of them to replace him.<sup>36</sup> If any Muslim tries to stand down from the *bay'ah*, he must be forced to take on his responsibilities otherwise he must be killed. The public *bay'ah* must confirm the original *bay'ah* otherwise it is invalid. If the *bay'ah* turns in favour of ignorant people, then the Ibādiyyah must investigate its legitimacy, so as not to give an opportunity to any such person to demand obedience as imam. If he were to achieve the imamate he should be deposed.

It is stated by Ṣā'ighi that, "If the imam becomes ill, even though he might die from that illness, it is not permitted to choose another imam until he dies. If he dies, they must choose another before they bury him".<sup>37</sup> Of course the Ibādiyyah are against the system of inheritance in the imamate. Ibādī jurisprudence showed its willingness to conform under any circumstances by

giving permission for the people to revolt against a tyrannical and unjust leader. The history of the early imamate gives us an example. Muḥammad b. ‘Abdullāh and Mūsā b. Abī Jābir, the most learned person of his time, went with Ghassān b. ‘Abd al-Malik to depose the ‘Abbasid ally, Rāshid b. al-Nazr, from the seat of power in order to re-establish the imamate of declaration after the defeat of the first imamate by the ‘Abbasid caliphate (134/751).<sup>38</sup>

The ulema tried to avoid division and disputes with the common people, and fearing problems arising from the question of public allegiance. Therefore they had to choose the imam before there was any opportunity for such problems to arise, as was shown by the election of ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ghassān al-Yahmadi as imam in 192/807(37).

### **6.3 The selection of the imam and the personal qualities required for the office**

The Ibādiyyah do not believe that the imamate should be the monopoly of any tribe or any particular faction, as some groups in Islam do. They take notice of what was related by the Prophet, that the governorship (*wilāyah*) must be within Quraysh and the imams from Quraysh, but interpret it merely as a forecast by the Prophet as to who would take the post of caliph after him.<sup>40</sup> Besides, the judgement which they used here about this particular *ḥadīth* is different from the Islamic *shurā* and diverges from other traditions related to the Prophet.

#### **6.3.1 The attributes of the imam**

The imam must be a mature male of outstanding intelligence. He must

not be blind, deaf, senile, nor lack limbs which would prevent him from taking part in the obligation of war (*jihād*), nor should he be a eunuch or emasculated. He must not be mad, feeble-minded, nor should he be envious, cowardly, mean, a liar, nor a man who fails to keep promises and agreements, nor indeed possess any other characteristic that causes concern. He must be a man of great learning, for without learning and perception, how can he carry out his duties and interpret the laws aright and ensure that his subordinates do so.<sup>41</sup>

Concerning the knowledge of the imam, the Ibāḍiyyah prefer the most learned for the post, even if there are other excellent ones. The Ibāḍiyyah ulema in Basra gave a formal legal opinion (*fatwā*) to appoint Imam ‘Abd al-Wahhāb b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān in North Africa after some people under the leadership of the Ibn Affandīn rejected him, since, from their point of view, he was the most learned man for this position. The ulema of Basra reminded them of Abū Bakr, when he became caliph, while ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭalīb had the knowledge of judgement (*qadā’*) and Zayd b. Thābit was older (*afraq*).<sup>42</sup>

### 6.3.2 The installation of the imam and his oath

After the election to the imamate, the ulema *al-thiqāt* are present at the ceremony to install the imam. The most esteemed takes the imam’s right hand and says, “We present you ourselves as imam for the Muslims, provided you judge by God’s Book and by the practice (*sunnah*) of the Prophet (peace be upon Him), and provided you order by what is universally recognised (*al-ma’rūf*), prohibiting what is forbidden, making evident the religion of God whom you worship and demanding what you find necessary for that purpose”. If the

imam assents, the oath of allegiance (*bay'ah*) is then required, whereupon the election is confirmed. The declaration is for a defence imam; if he is to be an activist (*shār(in)*), the clause “provided you wage war (*jihād*) for the cause of God” is added. Then all present, one by one, swear allegiance.<sup>44</sup> After the prescribed prayers, the *takbīr* and *tahmid*, it is proclaimed”. No rule of government except God’s and no judgement by him who judges other than by means of that which God has revealed; no obedience to him who revolts against God; there is no judgement except God’s without reservation, and no disobedience to God.

### 6.3.3 Deposing of an imam

Ṣa’ighī concludes his chapter on the imamate by listing the principles that concern the abdication and deposing of an imam.<sup>45</sup>

The fundamental principle involved is that, since the imamate is a divine obligation, the imam may not be deposed or abdicate without good reason (*‘udhr*). There are many viewpoints as to what constitutes *‘udhr*, and exactly when an imam may resign or be deposed. Basically, however, there should always be an exchange of views between the two parties before either side takes any action. All agree that the defence imam may resign or be removed once such a discussion has occurred, but there are differing opinions about whether either party is permitted to act without it. In the case of an activist imam, there is a strong weight of opinion that such consultation is a prerequisite.<sup>46</sup>

There are three reasons for resigning or for removal from office. The

first is because of some physical defect. Old age in itself is no cause for the removal of an activist imam, but associated mental or physical incapacity is a factor. The second of these motives might be termed the sin of commission, that is, the breach by an imam of the powers vested in him. On the other hand, if an imam commits a major sin (*ma'syah*) his followers should not immediately actively disassociate themselves from him (*bara'a 'anhu*), unless his sin incurs a prescribed punishment (*ḥadd*), but should rather call upon him to repent formally (*tawbah*). If he does so and does not continue his errors, he can continue to hold the imamate and his *wilayāh*; if he does not, then it is the duty of his followers actively to disassociate themselves from him and, if necessary, fight against him, having done what they can to settle things peacefully. He is still the imam, but if he is deserted by a large body of his true followers, then he should be deposed. If on the other hand, his followers fail to give him the obedience which is his due, this may be a pretext for his resignation.<sup>47</sup>

The third category (comprising *'udhr*) might be termed sins of omission. These are not readily definable, although an obvious example of neglect is the failure of an activist imam to heed the call to holy war (*jihād*), or a case when an imam fails to act against insurrection through cowardice.



## Notes

1. Ibn Manẓūr, Lisān, XII, 24-25.
2. Jawharī, Ṣiḥāḥ, V, 1865-1866.
3. Ibn Khaldūn, Tārīkh, I, 343. For more detailed discussion about the meaning of the words '*khalīfah* and *imāmah* see Ibrāhīm, Tārīkh, I, 336, 338, 344; cf. Arnold, Caliphate, 47; Ma'rūf, Khawārij, 206.
4. ed. Sayeda, "Aḥdāth", 77
5. These terms are explained in detail below, pp. 139-143; 144-146; 146-147; 147-150.
6. Aṭafish, Nīl, XIV, 272.
7. Azdī, Jāmi', 18; cf. also Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ, XII, 199-203.
8. Sā'ighī, Kanz, MS. f. 81b.
9. The Ibādī *da'wah* is merely to be interpreted as the dissemination of the message, the mission to spread the true word.
10. Abū Ḥafs, Muqaddimah, 69-73.
11. Sālīmī, Mashāriq, 451.
12. Ennami, Studies 80; see also Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 93.
13. Shammākhī, Siyar, I, 101; Ṣawwāfī, Imām, see also Ḥāshim, Ibādīyyah, 72.
14. According to some Ibādī authors the term *walāyah* (association) is agreement in religion in respect of word and works. The persons deserving *walāyah* from the believers is he who is fully obedient to God, and who attains all good qualities through his performance of all religious duties and through abstention from what is forbidden.
15. The term *barā'a* (dissociation) is obligatory in Islam, in the same way as *walāyah* is an integral part of Ibādī doctrine, the believers must act according to the rules of *barā'a* from the very inception of the age of majority. The system of *walāyah* and *barā'a* served a great deal in securing the growth of the Ibadi movement in the right direction. It was one of the basic rules for the member who wanted to join the Ibādīyyah to declare his dissociation from his previous belief.

16. Darjini, Tabaqāt, II, 245; Shammākhi, Siyar, I, 101.
17. Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 96.
18. Abū Na'im, Hilyat, III 85-86; Dhahabi, Tadhkirat, I, 73; Darjini, Tabaqāt, II, 205; Shammākhi, Siyar, I, 62; Salimi, Sharh, 7; see also Sawwāfi, Imām, 39; Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 87.
19. Shammākhi, Siyar, 87; cf. Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 113.
20. Darjini, Tabaqāt, I, 21; Shammāki, Siyar, I, 114.
21. cf. Qur'ān 9, 110, Surat al-Tawbah, "Verily God has bought (*ishtarā'*) from the faithful their souls and their wealth on condition of paradise for them in return; in God's way shall they fight, and slay and be slain".

The Arabic word *shirā'* means buying and selling. This term is used in Ibadi writings for the action of sacrificing one's life in the cause of God to attain Paradise. For more detailed discussion about the word *shirā'* see Ennami, Studies, 402-403.

22. Abū Ḥafs, Muqaddimah, 72.
23. Aṭafish, Sharh, XIV, 351.
24. Salimi, Tuhfah, I, 90.
25. Tabari, Tārīkh, IV, 232; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, III, 255; see also Mubarrad, Akhbār, 62-63; cf. Darjini, Tabaqāt, II, 220.
26. Mubarrad, Akhbār, 61; see also Darjini, Tabaqāt, II, 218. The *shurāt* must not fight anyone except those who fight them, must not follow the defeated or kill the injured, must not kill old men, women or children, and must not take any spoils or property unless they have right to it. For more information see the *imāmat al-shirā'*; Ennami, Studies, 406-407.
27. Abū Ḥafs, Muqaddimah, 71; the imam of the defence must be a learned man of high military capability. For more information see Chapter VIII of this study.
26. Aṭafish; Nīl, XIV, 303.
29. Ed. Seyeda, Abū al-Mu'aththir, Aḥdāth, 71; Sā'ighi, Kanz, MS. f. 88b. There are many viewpoints on the way of how *al-difā'* imam should resign or be deposed. All Ibādī authors agree that the *difā'* imam may resign or be removed from his seat, such as the case of Muhammad b. Abī 'Affān. For more detailed discussion about *al-difā'* imamate see Wilkinson, "Imama", B.S.O.A.S., 541.

30. Ṭafīsh, Nīl, XIV, 312; Kudamī, Istiḳāmah, II, 97; cf. Wilkinson, Imamate, 155.
31. Darjīnī, Ṭabaqāt, I, 37; Shammākhi, Siḡar, I, 121-122. The first imam of defence given in Ibādī sources is Abdullah b. Wahb al-Rāsibī, who was elected before the battle of al-Nahrawān. The other imams of defence in Oman and North Africa included Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān, and Abū Ḥātim al-Malzūzi. See Ennami, Studies, 401.
32. Abū Ḥafs, Muqaddimah, 69.
33. Sālīmī, Jawāhir, III, 116.
34. ed. Sayed, Aḥdāth, 68-69; Ṭafīsh, Nīl, XIV, 312; Kindī, Ihtidā’, 165
35. Sālīmī, Jawāhir, III, 292.
36. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, III, 292; see also Qalhātī, Kashf, II, 205-206.
37. Ṣā’ighī, Kanz, MS. 82-89.
38. For full detailed discussion about the establishment of the second imamate see Chapter VIII of this study. See also Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 108.
39. Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 122. For more information about the way imam ‘Abd al-Malik was selected, see the imamate of Abd al-Malik, Chapter VIII of this study.
40. Sālīmī, Sharḥ, I, 75. According to the traditions of the Early Islamic state, that the caliph must be a member of the tribe of Quraish to which the Prophet himself belonged, and this qualification was fulfilled throughout the whole historical period considered above, in the persons of the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs, see Arnold, Caliphate, 47.
41. Ed. Sayeda, I, “Abu al-Mu’aththir”, Aḥdāth, 85; Ṣā’ighī, Kanz, MS. f. 98b; Sālīmī, Madārij, 171.
42. Darjīnī, Ṭabaqāt, I, 49; Shammākhi, Siḡar, 131; Bārūnī, Azhār, II, 152-153.
43. Ṣā’ighī, Kanz, MS. f. 83a; Darjīnī, Ṭabaqāt, I, 23; cf. Wilkinson, “Imama”, B.S.O.A.S., 539.
44. Ṣā’ighī, Kanz, MS. f. 82a; cf. Wilkinson “Imama”, B.S.O.A.S., 539.
45. Ṣā’ighī, Kanz, MS. f. 82-90.
46. Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 196.

47. Wilkinson, "Imama", B.S.O.A.S., 541; cf. Ennami, Studies, 344, 350.

## **CHAPTER VII**

### **THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FIRST IBĀDĪ IMAMATE AND ITS FALL, 132-134/750-752**

- 7.1 The general conditions of the Islamic caliphate prior to the rise of the first Ibādī imamate**
- 7.2 The establishment of the first Ibādī imamate**
- 7.3 The Imam al-Julandā b.Mas'ūd**
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- 7.5 The conflict between the Ṣufriyyah and Ibādiyyah**
- 7.6 The battle of Julfār and the fall of the first imamate**
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- 7.9 Notes**

### 7.1 The general condition of the Islamic caliphate prior to the rise of the first Ibādī imamate in Oman

In the last decade of the Umayyad Caliphate, the Umayyad rulers found themselves in serious political and social difficulties. The reign of the last Umayyad caliph, Marwān b. Muḥammad (known as al-Ḥimār) saw different internal revolts in many parts of the caliphal territories. In addition there was the surfacing of the Abbasid *da'wah*, which had now begun to play a role in events after a long period of underground activity. Historians agree that the outbreak of the tribal feuding between the Qays and the Kalb (i.e. the Northern and Southern Arabs) which existed long before 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān's reign, 65-86/685-701,<sup>1</sup> was one of the important factors underlying the fall of the Umayyad dynasty. Marwān b. Muḥammad had himself committed political suicide by showing in public his inclination to Qays; this angered Kalb who were regarded as the most loyal tribe, and who were the bodyguards of the Umayyads in Damascus. This led them to break their allegiance and to let themselves be led in revolt against the rightful ruler as part of the opposition to the caliphate.<sup>2</sup> The internal struggle within the Umayyad house for the caliphate, which resulted in the acts of violence perpetrated by Marwān upon Walid II, was a signal heralding the overthrow of the Umayyad dynasty. Furthermore, the harsh policies adopted by the Umayyad governors in the garrison towns (*amṣār*) provoked the inhabitants, who suffered greatly at the hands of these governors and who were no longer able to tolerate oppression.

The Umayyad caliphate had also suffered since its inception from the well organised opposition factions of the Khawārij, the Shī'ah, the Zubayris and,

ultimately the Abbasids. The corruption of Umayyad rule and the opposition to it was extremely detrimental to Muslim unity, engendering deep rifts between various groups in the community and debilitating the economy. Civil war between Qays and Kalb destroyed what little remained of Umayyad authority. The frequent attacks carried out by the different opposition forces gradually worked their effect, bringing the Umayyads to their knees. The sons of al-'Abbās, with their well-organised and highly successful *da'wah* opposition, worked the circumstances to their own advantage. They were able to win the support of victims of Umayyad policy, especially those who were oppressed socially and those who had suffered as a result of tribal feuding. All these factors guaranteed success to the Abbasids in their ultimate quest for the caliphate. In this atmosphere of political tensions and tribal division, the Ibādīs of Ḥaḍramawt announced the establishment of their imamate, 128-131/745-748. In addition to Ḥaḍramawt they gained sovereignty over the Yemen and extended their authority to the Ḥijāz;<sup>3</sup> but Caliph Marwān gained victory over them and their imam, 'Abdullah b.Yaḥya al-Kindī Ṭalib al-Ḥaqq was killed in battle.<sup>4</sup>

After the Abbasids had established their authority 132/749, they inherited the same crisis that had plagued their predecessors. The Shī'ah and the Khawārij continued their opposition to Abbasid rule. The refusal of the Khawārij to recognise the authority of the caliph was not on account of the personality or character of the caliph, rather their objection was to the hereditary - and thus innovative - nature of the caliphate, which was passed from father to son. They believed in holding free elections to choose the imam of the Islamic *ummah*.<sup>5</sup> The Shī'ah were fighting for the rights of the house of

Prophet (i.e. the sons of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭalīb), whom they believed to be most deserving of the caliphate.<sup>6</sup> The Abbasids followed the policy of the previous dynasty in their dealings with these opposition forces. The division within the Islamic *ummaḥ* was not thus simply a matter of who should or should not govern; it was also a division of principles and beliefs. In these troubled and confused circumstances the Ibādīs of Oman were encouraged to compensate for the collapse of the imamate of Ḥaḍramawt, by announcing the establishment of the first Ibādī imamate in Oman, during the period of transition from Umayyad to Abbasid rule.

## 7.2 The establishment of the first Ibādī imamate in Oman

By the time the Abbasids had risen to power, the strength and fanaticism of the Khawārij had waned considerably, and so they no longer posed a threat to the new rulers. The uprisings which had been so violent during the Umayyad Caliphate became weak and infrequent. The Ibādīs, on the other hand, were well organised, with a record of successful underground activities, and were able to emerge towards the end of the Umayyad period to establish the first Ibādī state in Ḥaḍramawt.

During the Abbasid era the Ibādī imamate found considerable support in distant provinces, not only in the Yemen but also in Oman and North Africa. The Ibādīs of Ḥaḍramawt under the Imam 'Abdullāh b. Yahya al-Kindī (Ṭalīb al-Ḥaqq) managed to gain control of Ṣan'ā' at the end of 129/746.<sup>7</sup> With a joint Ḥaḍramī-Omani army the Ibādīs moved from there to the Ḥijāz, where they took Mecca and Medina. According to al-Sālimī, a great number of



Omanis were among the ranks of the Ibādī army of Ḥaḍramawt.<sup>8</sup> After the defeat of the Ibādīs of Ḥaḍramawt at the hands of the Umayyad army, many Omanis fled from positions in the Yemen towards Oman, probably using the Dhofar route which connected Oman with the Yemen.<sup>9</sup> Al-Sālimī asserts that al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd, the first Ibādī imam of Oman, was among those who swore an oath of allegiance to Imam Ṭalib al-Ḥaqq.<sup>10</sup> He therefore appears to have participated in Ibādī activities there before returning to Oman.<sup>11</sup> The defeated Ibādī army of Ḥaḍramawt also sought refuge in Oman, which, given its long record of relations with the Yemen, seemed the best place in which to settle.

It is very well known that during this time the ground in Oman had, for different reasons, been prepared by the Ibādīs for the establishment of their first imamate. Ibādī *ḥamalāt al-ilm* used the opportunity to spread the teachings of the Ibādī school on a large scale throughout Oman. In this they were aided by some of the Umayyad governors in Oman who had followed a quietist line and had not involved themselves in any sort of conflict with the Ibādīyah. It was the 'Umayyad caliph 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz who followed a policy of conciliation not only with the Ibādīs but with all opposition groups during his reign. 'Umar's policy gained him the respect of all the Muslim people and restored stability to the caliphate. 'Umar appointed a new governor to rule Oman<sup>12</sup> who also favoured negotiations with the Ibādīyah of Oman. When 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz passed away, his governor (*āmil*) 'Umar b. 'Abdullāh al-Anṣārī handed the country back to Ziyād b. al-Muhallab, asserting that this was the country of his people and, as such, his affair. Ziyād reputedly stayed

on in Oman until the advent of the Abbasids. It appears that Ziyād avoided conflict with Ibādī activities on account of their shared tribal links; that a large number of Azd tribes, to which Ziyād belonged, were followers of the Ibādiyyah school. However, the 'Umayyad governors had limited power in Oman, since the Omanis early declared their position towards this caliphate at the time of Abd al-Malik b. Marwān who controlled Oman by force through his governor of Iraq, al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf al-Thaqafī.<sup>13</sup> The Umayyads since then had taken certain places in Oman while the inland parts of the country remained independent; the coastal cities might have also fallen under the influence of the Islamic central authority.<sup>14</sup>

When the first Ibādī imamate in Ḥaḍramawt collapsed at the end of the Umayyad reign 131/748, Oman became host to the second Ibādī state. Given this, it is not too much to suggest that the Ibādī forces were far from being exhausted after the fall of their imamate in Ḥaḍramawt; rather, they had shifted their field of action towards the country areas where they could still have remarkable success.<sup>15</sup> The Ibādīs of Oman took good advantage of the adverse conditions obtaining during the exchange of power from the Umayyads to the Abbasids. The Ibādiyyah of Oman announced the establishment of their first Ibādī imamate shortly after the beginning of Abbasid rule in 132/749. Al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd was chosen as imam of the Ibādiyyah for their new state.

The emergence of an Ibādī state in Oman was helped considerably by the fact that the first governors that Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr appointed on behalf of his brother (the caliph Abū 'l-'Abbās al-Saffāḥ) two members of the B. Hinā',

who, according to al-‘Awtabī, were regarded as heads of the Azd clans in Oman, Basra and Khurāsān at that time.<sup>16</sup> After ruling Oman for a short time, Junāḥ b. ‘Ubādah b. Qays b. ‘Umar al-Hinā’ī<sup>17</sup> was deposed by Abū Ja‘far al-Manṣūr, who held the office of Iraq. His son, Muḥammad b. Junāḥ was appointed in his place.<sup>18</sup> Junāḥ then sided with the Ibādīs who were able to gain control for themselves. All the Ibādī sources agree on the significant role which both Junāḥ and his son played during their governorships in Oman.<sup>19</sup> Junāḥ, for example, seems to have been a discreet and sagacious man who understood the uncertainty and delicacy of his position, for he ruled mildly and took care not to arouse popular irritation.<sup>20</sup>

The Ibādī sources also indicate that after being appointed as governor of Oman, Junāḥ allowed a very lenient policy towards the Ibādīs, and appears to have had much in sympathy with the Omanis.<sup>21</sup> According to Miles,<sup>22</sup> the non-Ibādī section of the Omani community had sided with the new governor, Muḥammad b. Junāḥ, but the Ibādī tribes, which constituted the stronger section of the people, threw off the yoke of submission and withheld payment of the tribute. Consequently, the governor finding his position untenable in face of the threatening attitude of the schismatics, left Oman and proceeded to the court of the caliph in Baghdad to report on the state of affairs.<sup>23</sup> The dismissal of Junāḥ b. ‘Ubādah from the governorship of Oman raises the question of how he came to be chosen as governor by the Abbasids without their being sure of his loyalty and his beliefs? To the question how did they appoint a person of whom they could not be sure, the answer is clear: after the new Caliph had assumed power, he saw it as his duty to correct the

mistakes made by the Umayyad and therefore was in no doubt about securing the trust and support of the people, especially those from regions which had opposed the rule of the Umayyads for many years. Oman was one such region, and its people, the Azd, were relieved to see the end of the Umayyads at whose hands they had suffered so much and from whose resentment they had so much to dread. The Abbasids, therefore, assumed that Oman would be on their side, and as a token of their goodwill towards them appointed an Azdī governor to rule Oman on their behalf. In actual fact, Oman was no longer prepared to accept the dictates of rulers who were so far removed from the teachings of the Ibādīyah, and the Omanis held out little hope that the Abbasids might change their ideas on how the Muslim *ummah* should be governed.

‘Ubādah himself was regarded not only as an Ibādī sympathiser, but also an Ibādī converter who secretly accepted Ibādī teachings and who had accepted the position conferred on him in order to help the Ibādīyah and enable them to establish their own state. The Ibādī sources do not say exactly when Junāḥ b. ‘Ubādah and his son took charge of Oman as clients of the new Abbasid caliph. The Abbasids came to power in 132/749 and it seems that during the same year they appointed Junāḥ, deposed him, and then appointed his son in his place. All the events therefore point to the establishment of the Abbasid regime and the election of Imam al-Julandā b. Mas‘ūd as having taken place in the same year. It is worth mentioning that many chronicles give different dates for this event.<sup>24</sup>

### 7.3 The Imam al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd

The genealogy of Imam al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd goes back to the al-Julandā family of Shams b. Ma'wālah of Azd, rulers of Oman from the beginning of the 6th century A.D.<sup>25</sup> They continued to rule Oman after two kings of this family, 'Abd and Jayfar, accepted Islam shortly before the demise of the Prophet. The sons of these two kings were kept on as governors of Oman by the rightly guided caliphs until the Umayyad family came to power. During the reign of Abd al-Malik b. Marwān, the Julandā family was overthrown by the invading army of al-Ḥajjāj, who controlled Oman by force after many unsuccessful battles.<sup>26</sup> Sa'īd and Sulaymān, the joint rulers of Oman, fled from Oman with their families to East Africa.<sup>27</sup> This marked the end of the family's dominance in Oman. Al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd, the grandson of Jayfar b. al-Julandā,<sup>28</sup> was reported to be among the Omani Ibādīs who paid allegiance to Imam 'Abdullāh b. Yahyā al-Kindī (Ṭalīb al-Ḥaqq), the elected head of the Ibādī state established in Ḥaḍramawt at the end of the Umayyad period.<sup>29</sup> His participation raises the question of the role Julandā b. Mas'ūd had played prior to the time of his imamate. The Ibādī sources do not mention that Julandā b. Mas'ūd was involved with the Ibādī movement before the establishment of the Ibādī imamate of Ḥaḍramawt. For example, he was not among those who carried the Ibādī teachings to Oman (*ḥamalat al-ilm*); nor, it appears did he have any connection with the Ibādī school in Basra.<sup>30</sup> It seems that his frequent comings and goings to Basra were few in comparison with others of the Ibādī *du'ah*, who received their education in this town, the centre of the Ibādī doctrine. The links of al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd with the Ibādī community might have come as a result of the efforts made by the Ibādīs of Oman. The Basran imams' work

was aimed at preparing the way for their followers to establish an Ibādī state in areas where there was strong opposition to the caliphate, whenever the moment for action was deemed propitious.<sup>31</sup> The Ibādī secret propagators who succeeded in converting the tribesmen of Oman as well as the more cosmopolitan merchants,<sup>32</sup> inevitably met opposition from the Julandā, whose power was rooted in the traditional tribal system of sheikhly authority.<sup>33</sup> Wilkinson suggests that in trying to win the Julandā family to their teachings, the Ibādīs might have offered one of them the imamate itself.<sup>34</sup> If this suggestion has any of truth, it would be indeed similar to the story of the early links and connections between the Ibādīs of Basra and Imam ‘Abdullāh b. Yaḥyā (Ṭālib al-Ḥaqq) who was elected imam of Ḥaḍramawt because of the strong position he occupied among his people as a chief and notable leader of Kindah. Ṭālib al-Ḥaqq himself had no strong connections with the Ibādī movement, before he became imam; according to the Islamic sources,<sup>35</sup> he had accepted the Ibādī teachings after meeting the Ibādī leader Abū Ḥamzah al-Shārī in Mecca. Having accepted the Ibādī teaching, Imam Yaḥyā was then set to be chosen as imam of the state in Ḥaḍramawt. Although historically the Julandā family had opposed the Khawārij movement, during Umayyad time they also opposed strongly the Ibādī activities, even after al-Julandā became imam.<sup>36</sup> Their selection of Imam al-Julandā was for several reasons, such as to win the support of the tribes which were traditionally loyal to his rule, and to prevent the rest of the Omani tribes from revolting against the imamate government.

#### **7.4 The election of Imam al-Julandā**

Having succeeded in winning over Imam al-Julandā b. Mas‘ūd and many

members of his family, the Ibāḍiyyah eventually appointed him imam of the Ibāḍī community in Oman.<sup>37</sup> No details are available of the method by which al-Julandā was elected. The electoral procedure which subsequently became practice, and which by reason of its derivation from early Islamic custom, and with Ibāḍī principals, may have been followed, as the *bay'ah* or public acclamation of allegiance. This was completed in two steps, the first made by the *ulema* or notables of the community, and the second being the general allegiance given by the people. The *bay'ah* is essentially a double contract: the people give their allegiance to the imam on the understanding that he will comply with the Book of God and the *sunnah* of His Prophet.<sup>38</sup> This imamate was regarded as an open imamate (*imāmat al-zuhūr*). The declaration of the Ibāḍī state came in fact in an atmosphere full of tension and conditions of instability which were felt in all parts of the caliphate outside Iraq. After assuming power, the Abbasids had to deal with every serious threat to their position. Oman, which declared its independence, with many parts of Islam and the empire, did not fully acknowledge the new caliph.<sup>39</sup> The Abbasid caliph regarded the changes taking place in Oman very seriously.

The Ibāḍīs, who had declared Oman independent of Islamic authority, were now seen as the main threat, not only to the unity of the caliphate but also to Abbasid interests and, above all, to their claim to be the only rulers of the Muslim *ummah* who had not had to share power with any other group. This being the case, the Abbasids would not allow any rising power to make such claims concerning the leadership of the Muslim *ummah*, even if their rule was considered by them to be the legitimate one and which represented the true

Islamic authority. The Ibādīs on their side have their point of view regarding this claim. As the Abbasids had worked for a long time to control the Islamic Caliphate, the Ibādīs also had a very long standing record of strife and underground activities to spread their teaching among the Muslims during the Umayyad period. They gained as a result of their activity many strongholds in different parts and regions.<sup>40</sup> By the end of the Umayyad period the Ibādīs had for the first time shown determination to declare independence and to establish their own Islamic state according to Ibādī principles of government. Unlike the Abbasids, the Ibādīs of Oman at this time had no intention of clashing with the Islamic authority. Oman thus became the target for the Abbasids, who regarded it as an outlaw state. Proof of this can be seen in the events that took place in Oman. This region was not far from Iraq, the centre of the caliphate, which in Basra had an outlet into the Persian Gulf. Yet despite its proximity to Iraq and the key position it held on the Gulf, Oman had managed to remain independent of the caliphs - which proves that the Omani troops were strong enough to resist attack.

The Abbasid caliph, Abū 'l-Saffāḥ, decided to send an expedition to Oman to overthrow the Ibādī imamate and also to rid the Gulf coast of all opposition, in particular the Khawārij, but also a number of friends and supporters of the Umayyad dynasty who had escaped from Basra, where they had suffered defeat at the hands of the Abbasid army, and had sought refuge on the Gulf coast and in some parts of Oman, where they had been sheltered by the people.<sup>41</sup> Al-Saffāḥ chose Khāzim b. Khuzaymah<sup>42</sup> to lead the military expedition against the Khawārij of Ibn Kāwān Island and the Ibādīs of Oman.<sup>43</sup>



The Islamic sources give conflicting accounts about this expedition. Al-Ṭabarī, for example, states that the caliph al-Saffāḥ made Khāzim b. Khuzaymah leader of the expedition in order to punish him. According to al-Ṭabarī, Khāzim b. Khuzaymah had killed a great number of the caliph al-Saffāḥ's uncles from the B. 'Abd al-Dār of the Yemen.<sup>44</sup> According to the sources, the al-Saffāḥ became angry, and thus wanted Khāzim dead.<sup>45</sup> He was advised to get rid of him by sending him to fight the Khawārij of Oman, who were led by Julandā b. Mas'ūd, and those who were on the island of Ibn Kāwān in the Persian Gulf led by Shaybān b. 'Abd al-Azīz al-Yashkurī. Ibn Khaldūn<sup>46</sup> mentions that the army was sent to fight the Khawārij of Ibn Kāwān. It has been reported that al-Saffāḥ equipped this army with reinforcements of 6700 men, most of them from Tamīm, the tribe of Khāzim.<sup>47</sup> It is said that he was given the option of choosing men from among his own family and servants to assist him in this expedition.<sup>48</sup> Sulaymān b. 'Alī, the governor of Basra, prepared the ships which would carry the army to the island of Ibn Kāwān on its way to Oman.<sup>49</sup> Shaybān b. 'Abd al-Azīz al-Yashkurī, the leader of the Ṣufri Khawārij, is believed to have taken refuge on this island, after withdrawing his supporters from Iraq in the year 129/744. This had occurred when, under strong pressure from the Umayyad army during their fight against the Khawārij, he and his followers had fled from Iraq to this island, which was situated between Oman and Bahrain.<sup>50</sup> Having arrived on the island of Ibn Kāwān, Khāzim gained victory over the Ṣufriyyah after a fierce battle. Those who survived the fight escaped by sea to Julfār in the NE of Oman.<sup>51</sup>

## 7.5 The conflict between the Ṣufriyyah and Ibādīyyah

After the Ṣufriyyah, under the command of Shaybān al-Yashkurī, arrived in Julfār, they were received by the Ibādīyyah, who refused them access to the town. The imam, al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd, who was by this time facing great challenge by the Ṣufriyyah and the Abbasid army, had sent Hilāl b. 'Atīyyah al-Khurāsānī and Yaḥyā b. Najīḥ to fight them.<sup>52</sup> According to Ibādī sources the imam's army refused to give the Ṣufriyyah shelter. Instead they asked them to accept the Ibādī doctrines or else to leave the town peacefully. The Ṣufriyyah chose to fight. They knew that the Abbasid army was on their trail. They escaped from the battle, in which a large number of their fellow believers were slain. The Ṣufriyyah were by now suffering from a shortage of men, which meant that they would most likely lose the battle, were they to remain in Julfār. Add to this the fact that they had not surrendered to the Ibādīyyah. Shaybān and his followers had no alternative but to fight the Ibādīyyah, who had the upper hand in Julfār.<sup>53</sup> It has been reported that before the battle started, Yaḥyā b. Najīḥ, one of Julandā b. Mas'ūd's leaders, asked the Ṣufriyyah for the last time to accept the Ibādī teachings. When they refused to do so he made the following supplication (*du'ā'*) before the battle commenced: "O God, if we hold to the religion of which You approve, and adhere to the truth which is agreeable to You, cause me to be the first to fall of my companions, and cause Shaybān to be the first to fall of his companions, and then put them to fight. But if Shaybān holds to the religion of which You approve, and adheres to the truth which is agreeable to You, then let Shaybān be the first to fall on his side".<sup>54</sup> The two parties then met in battle. The first to be killed on the Ibādī side was Yaḥyā b. Najīḥ; the first to fall in the Ṣufriyyah party was their

commander Shaybān b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Yashkurī. The battle took place in 134/751.

The Ibādī sources do not mention the number of men killed in this battle; the only thing they do reveal is that the Ṣufriyyah commander was killed, as was Yaḥyā b. Najīh on the Ibādī side. The sources are also quiet on the situation of the victorious Omani army. It seems that the Ṣufriyyah were few. The Ibādīs were in Julfār prior to the arrival of the Ṣufriyyah to guard the Omani coast. Julfār had been used by the Umayyads on several occasions during their attempts to conquer Oman.<sup>55</sup> It is possible that al-Julandā and his supporters may have heard about the despatch of this army from Basra, which was the centre of the Ibādīyyah. According to ‘Umar,<sup>56</sup> at the beginning of their reign, the Abbasids had shown that they had no intention of coming into conflict with the Azd and the Ibādīyyah in Basra and Oman. Both sides had taken a neutral position in the war between the Abbasids and Ṣufriyyah.<sup>57</sup> The Abbasids did not wish to clash with any who would pay homage to them, but one should not forget that they could not tolerate Oman as independent state far away from their authority. Their actual aim was to impose their authority over all Islamic regions, by means peaceful or belligerent; Oman was thus a prime target.

#### **7.6 The battle of Julfār and the fall of the first imamate**

After the Ibādīyyah defeated the Ṣufriyyah, the Abbasid military expedition pursued those of the Ṣufriyyah who had managed to escape from the island of Ibn Kāwān, with the express purpose of capturing their leader, Shaybān, whose

head was wanted by the caliph. Khāzim ordered his troops to proceed to Oman to complete his task of ending the opposition movement of the Ibādiyyah and the Ṣufriyyah. On his arrival in Julfār, Khāzim was allowed to disembark his troops without opposition, confident that he now had sufficient forces with him to overcome all resistance.<sup>58</sup> It would seem that the Ibādīs were ready to resist the Abbasid expedition with the help of reinforcements which arrived in Julfār, headed most likely by Imam al-Julandā himself, when the news of the arrival of Khāzim and his forces by sea reached him. According to al-Ṭabarī,<sup>59</sup> after landing at Julfār, Khāzim and his troops marched towards the desert where they were later to meet the Imam al-Julandā and his army. This shows that the battle did not take place in Julfār itself, but outside the town. It is possible that the Abbasid troops landed on the coast nearby, and from there marched towards the town itself, to take control of it.<sup>60</sup> The Ibādī sources mention that Khāzim sent word to Imam al-Julandā to say that the Abbasid troops had come in search of Shaybān al-Yashkurī and his followers, adding, "It suffices that God has decreed they should be slain by your hand. I wish, however, to go forth from you to the caliph and inform him you bear him obedience".<sup>61</sup> It is also stated that Khāzim asked for Shaybān's ring and sword<sup>62</sup> to take as evidence to the caliph in Baghdad. Ibādī accounts of these events indicate that Khāzim asked al-Julandā and his followers to submit and recognise the authority of Baghdad; if they accepted his condition then he would turn back. However, the Islamic accounts, among them that of al-Ṭabarī,<sup>63</sup> emphasise that the expedition was aimed basically at ending the revolt of those described as Khawārij. Ibn Kathīr classes Imam al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd and his followers as Ṣufriyyah.<sup>64</sup> There is also the possibility that Khāzim wanted to avoid conflict

with the Ibādiyyah, having realised that the Caliph al-Saffāh had wanted to get rid of him as punishment for slaughtering his relatives, B. ‘Abd al-Dār.<sup>65</sup>

In order to look into these demands Imam al-Julandā held a council of war with leading Ibādī sheikhs. They firmly rejected the demands Khāzim had made.<sup>66</sup> Al-Sālimī asserts that the Ibādī ulema indicated to Imam al-Julandā to give Khāzim Shaybān’s sword and ring, plus some money. Khāzim, however, refused to accept this offer and insisted on Julandā b. Ma’sūd and his followers swearing an oath of allegiance and offering prayers (*du‘ā’*) for the caliph in the Friday *khuṭbah*.<sup>67</sup> A clash between the Abbasid troops and the Ibādī Omanis now became inevitable and battle ensued at Julfār. The two parties met twice: in the first battle, which took place on the coast,<sup>68</sup> Imam al-Julandā’s army was victorious, and a great number of Khāzim’s army were slain, among them Khāzim’s brother, Ismā‘īl.<sup>69</sup> Al-Ṭabarī recounts the events of the second day of the fight between the two armies and mentions that Khāzim and three of his men, Humayd al-Warkānī, Muslim al-Argḥadī, and Faḍlā b. Na‘īm al-Nahshalī, led the army against the Ibādiyyah, Khāzim and his army managed to kill more than 900 men; 90 more were burnt to death by the Abbasid troops.<sup>70</sup> The two armies rested for seven days before entering their final, decisive battle.<sup>71</sup>

It has been reported that the Abbasid army employed new techniques against the army of Imam al-Julandā, who was assisted by two Ibādī leaders, Hilāl b. ‘Atīyyah al-Kurasānī and Shabīb b. ‘Atīyyah al-‘Umānī.<sup>72</sup> According to al-Ṭabarī, Khāzim was advised by one of his men to set fire to the houses of al-Julandā’s men in Julfār, which were built of wood.<sup>73</sup> The technique seems to

have worked, for al-Julandā's army fled from the battle field in order to save the lives of their families. As a result, many of al-Julandā's men were slain. According to the Ibādī sources no one in the army survived except al-Julandā and his commander. Hilāl b. 'Atiyyah al-Khurāsānī,<sup>74</sup> who said to al-Julandā, "You are my imam, precede me, and I engage not to survive you". Al-Julandā then advanced and fought until he was killed.<sup>75</sup> Hilāl then rushed forward to fight and was slain.<sup>76</sup> It is said that al-Julandā was killed by Khāzim.<sup>77</sup> Miles claims that al-Julandā was captured, and later put to death by Khāzim.<sup>78</sup> According to al-Ṭabarī, Khāzim and his army killed approximately 10,000 men in this battle. He also mentions that their heads were sent to Basra, where they remained for a few days before being sent to the Caliph al-Saffāh in Baghdad.<sup>79</sup> The number killed by Khāzim from the Omani side was exaggerated in accounts by al-Ṭabarī; had al-Julandā possessed such a high number of men it is inconceivable that he would have been defeated. Furthermore, Khāzim and his army despatched from Basra, numbered no more than 700 men.<sup>80</sup> According to the sources, no reinforcements were involved. It is impossible for such a small number to have defeated an army of 10,000 men, especially when one considers that the Abbasid army was fighting on alien territory of which the troops had no fighting experience.

With the death of Imam al-Julandā and his followers, the first Ibādī imamate of Oman fell in 134/752.<sup>81</sup> The Ibādī imamate was short-lived, lasting no more than two years and one month.<sup>82</sup> The death of al-Julandā was a bodyblow to the establishment of the imamate government, but was unable to remove the Ibādī doctrines from the hearts of the Omanis. There is no

information in the sources regarding the Abbasid expeditionary forces after the battle of Julfār, which it seems, remained in the town without advancing to the heart of Omani lands. Ṭabarī also mentions that Khāzim stayed for one month in Oman, whereupon he received a letter from the Caliph al-Saffāh, ordering him to return to Iraq with his army.<sup>83</sup>

### 7.7 The internal policy of the first Ibādī imamate

Imam al-Julandā was regarded by all Ibādī sources as the first of the rightful imams (*ahl al-haqq*) of Oman, and one who greatly promoted Ibādī doctrines.<sup>84</sup> He is described by them as a just, generous and pious, and above all revered by his people. The strength of the Ibādī community was of his making.<sup>85</sup> During his short imamate the imam exhibited some of his personal qualities as leader of the Ibādī community in Oman, despite his short standing in the Ibādī movement. The imam, who gained support from both Omanis and other Ibādīs who came from Basra and Ḥaḍramawt after the defeat of Imam Ṭalīb al-Ḥaqq, was influenced greatly by the experienced Ibādī ulema who had chosen him.<sup>86</sup> The first challenge Julandā b. Mas'ūd had to face as imam was the opposition of some tribes, and also of certain of his own kinsmen. Subsequent attempts to bring the interior of the country under Ibādī rule met with stiff opposition from both the tribesmen and from members of the imam's own family. According to historical accounts, Ja'far b. Sa'id al-Julandī and his two sons, al-Nazr b. Ja'far and Zā'idah b. Ja'far, refused to recognise his imamate and to pay the oath of allegiance to him.<sup>87</sup> Part of the opposition probably stemmed from internal clan rivalry; the Imam al-Julandā was a descendant of Jayfar b. al-Julandā, while his chief opponent was Ja'far b. Sa'id

b. ‘Abbād b. ‘Abd, the grandson of Abd b. al-Julandā, to whose grandfather, ‘Ubadah b. ‘Abd, the rule of Oman had previously passed, as we have already seen.<sup>88</sup>

Their opposition to al-Julandā’s becoming imam was for two reasons: firstly, they opposed the Ibāḍiyyah and its activities; secondly, they regarded themselves the only legitimate rulers of Oman. Therefore they could count on the support of the non-Ibāḍī tribes to prevent the Ibāḍīs from establishing their own state in Oman. The non-Ibāḍīs did not want to see Oman governed by Ibāḍīs, despite the fact that the latter had chosen al-Julandā b. Mas‘ūd in order to gain the support of the notable sheikhs of the Omani tribes and thus give these a legitimate role within the Omani community at large. The struggle within the house of al-Julandā led to the execution of Ibāḍī imam’s opponent, Ja‘far b. Sa‘īd al-Julandā, and his two sons, along with various other relations.<sup>89</sup> It has been reported that after having them all killed, the necessity for doing so brought tears to al-Julandā’s eyes.<sup>90</sup> Some of the Ibāḍī zealots were angry with this expression of grief and said to him, “O Julandā, is this group solidarity (*aṣabiyyah*)?” He said, “No, it is mercy (*rahmah*)”.<sup>91</sup> Those who had pressured Imam al-Julandā to dispose of his relations went a step further by demanding that he resign from the seat of the imamate, merely because he had shown remorse over the death of his relatives; eventually they gave up their demand and beseeched him to remain as imam.<sup>92</sup> With a blood feud added to other causes for opposition, the Julandā family now became the implacable enemies of the Ibāḍī movement. The action taken by Imam al-Julandā against his relations was regarded as a something new by the standards of the Omani



community and tribal traditions. The Ibādīs implemented this method in order to dissolve the tribal links and to replace it instead with allegiance to the Ibādī faith. The end of Imam al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd's brief imamate was not, however, a result of this opposition, but stemmed rather from a piece of misfortune.

During his imamate, al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd faced two external threats which resulted in the downfall of the Ibādī imamate. He was busy continuing the affairs of the imamate, and in particular trying to eradicate internal opposition, he appointed some governors over certain Omani towns. He appointed Abū Ṣāliḥ al-Waḍḍāḥ as governor of Ibrā' in the Eastern province of Oman, the Sharqiyyah; he appointed Mūsā b. Abī Jābir al-Izkawī as *qāḍī*, and al-Ḥasan b. 'Uqbah and Ja'far b. Bashīr as tax collectors.<sup>93</sup> Shabīb b. 'Aṭīyah also played a very important role during and after the imamate of al-Julandā, travelling throughout Oman, sometimes recognised as imam, or *muḥtasib*.<sup>94</sup> At the same time Shabīb was formulating a new social structure for the Omani people. It is believed that he compelled the Omani women to wear the Islamic dress stipulated by the Shari'ah law.<sup>95</sup> He also banned women from sitting on the roads, and from going out on certain days. Men were ordered to cut their hair and shorten their robes. Imam al-Julandā also encouraged men to get married by reducing women's dowries.<sup>96</sup> It has been reported that the non-Muslim residents, the Ahl al-Dhimma were ordered to wear special clothes to distinguish them from the Muslims; the latter, for their part, were forbidden to wear clothes similar to those of non-Muslims. All of these measures<sup>97</sup> were implemented according to the dictates of Ibādī doctrine.

## 7.8 The organisation of the Ibādī military (*shurāh*)

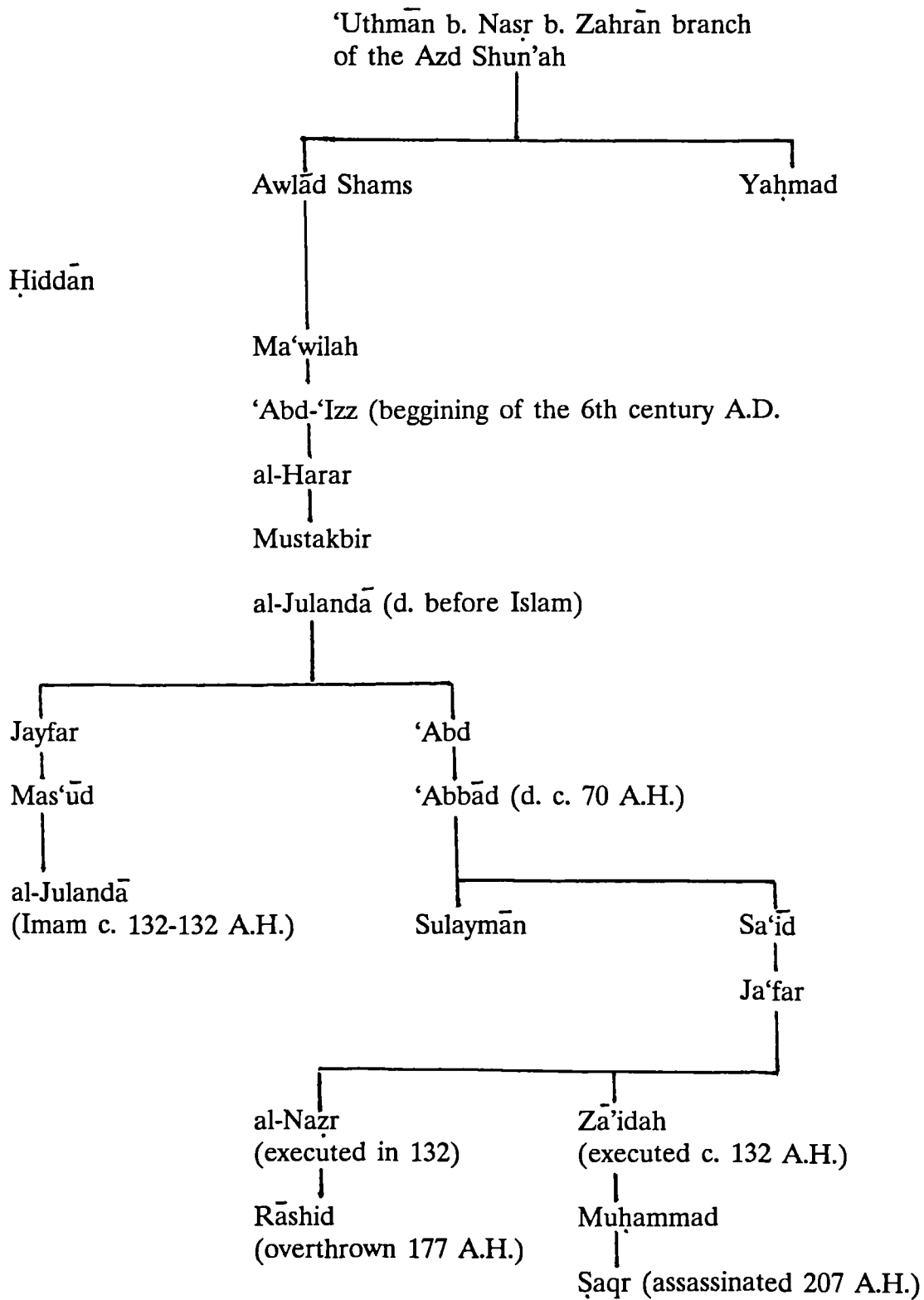
Taking into account both internal and external threats to his rule, Imam al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd paid special attention to military matters, and created a well-organised army from his following among the Ibādiyyah. The organisation of the army was based on Islamic principals and Ibādī teachings. For example he divided the Ibādī military volunteers (*shurāh*) into various divisions, each of which was made up of two hundred to four hundred men. Each division had a commander, who had to be possessed of military knowledge and expertise, and whose grounding in Islamic law had to be strong. Every division of the Ibādī *shurāh* was subdivided into groups consisting of ten men. At the head of each group was an educator (*mu'addib*) whose duty it was to teach the Ibādī doctrine and the principles of what is acceptable according to custom (*ma'rūf*).<sup>98</sup>

Every individual involved in the *shurāh* received monthly payment of seven dirhams. Al-Sālimī mentions that the low wages tended to prohibit most of the *shurāh* from marrying; Ibādī sheikhs of Basra later produced a *fatwā*, reducing women's dowries to ten dirhams and thus enabling the *shurāh* to get married.<sup>99</sup> This was another example of the economic difficulties which al-Julandā's imamate was facing. The low incomes of the Ibādī state came originally from the property derived from the booty (*ghanīmah*), residual, estates, gifts, and permitted taxes. Because the imamate of al-Julandā had only a weak political hold on Oman, the state treasury suffered as a result from low incomes and lack of resources. Security was such a problem that the Ibādīs were unable to collect certain taxes since the central authorities could not guarantee their safety.<sup>100</sup> The tithe (*'ushr*) on sea trade, for example, went uncollected

because the authorities were unable to protect the merchants; instead they were given the option of making a voluntary contribution to the *bayt al-māl*.<sup>101</sup> The taxes (*zakāt*) levied on agriculture were never designed to finance the state.<sup>102</sup> Revenue from non-Muslim populations is of particular interest in the period of al-Julandā's imamate, when many of the local non-Arab population retained their former religions and were thus liable to pay the poll tax, or *jizyah*. No attempt was ever made in Oman to transfer tax liability to the land when the population converted to Islam. In other words, the imamate was denied the land tax (*kharāj*) afforded by the caliphate.<sup>103</sup> It is worth mentioning that the treasury of the imamate depended totally on financial support provided by the Ibadi centre of Basra. This assistance had helped the imamate to overcome many serious economic problems. The Ibādīs of Basra supported Oman militarily and financially during the establishment of al-Julandā's imamate. The Ibādī merchants of Basra and elsewhere had also played an important role by providing financial support for those activist Ibādīs who were busy propagating the Ibādī *da'wah* and could not work. The *ḥalamat al-'ilm* who were sent to different regions of the Islamic caliphate (Oman, North Africa and the Yemen) depended totally on the financial support provided by Ibādī merchants. Finally, the imamate of al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd had made some achievements at which the Ibādīs were aiming to get from their own state. Despite the short life of this imamate, in which the imam and the ulema were plagued with internal opposition and external invasion, al-Julandā's rule produced some successes, putting into practice some of the Ibādī beliefs and principles. This paved the way for the imams of the second imamate.

Table 5

The Julandā family



## Notes

1. For more detailed discussion concerning the tribal solidarity see Lewis, The Arabs, 74; Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom, 180; cf. Dixon, Umayyad, 83.
2. Dixon, Umayyad, 93.
3. Ṭabari, Tārīkh, VII, 348; Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, Nahj, V, 107-108. See also Shammākhī, Siyyar, 91; cf. Lewicki, "Ibadites", J.W.H., 88; Mad'aj, The Yemen, 141; Serjeant, Saiyids, 9; Shāṭirī, 'Adwār, 123ff.; Vaglieri, "L'Imamato", Annals, 253.
4. He was killed in 130/747 near Jurash, a town in northern Yemen. See Mad'aj, The Yemen, 166.
5. For more information concerning the Khawārij policy see Salem, Political Theory, 47-67.
6. Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, Nahj, I, 189; for more discussion about this issue see also, Wellhausen, Religio-political, 93ff.
7. Ṭabari, Tārīkh, VII, 348; cf. 'Alawī, Ḥadramawt, 207; cf. Mad'aj, The Yemen, 164; Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom, 394; Wilkinson, Arab, 84; Lewicki, "Ibadites", J.W.H., 77.
8. Tuhfah, I, 60. See also, Ḥārithī, 'Uqūd, 187; cf. Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 102; Ḥāshim, Ibādiyyah, 127-28.
9. Ḥāshim, Ibādiyyah, 178; Ḥārithī, 'Uqūd, 253.
10. Tuhfah, I, 60; see also Ḥārithī, 'Uqūd, 253.
11. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 60
12. Some Ibādī sources claim that 'Umar b. 'Abd al-Azīz had converted the Ibādī teaching secretly on the hands of the Ibādī delegation which sent to him. See Shammākhī, Siyyar, 75; cf. Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 104.
13. For more discussion concerning al-Ḥajjāj expedition see Chapter III of this study.
14. Vaglieri, "L'Imamato", Annals, 254.
15. Vaglieri, "L'Imamato", Annals, 254.
16. Anṣab, MS. f. 276; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 53; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 59; cf. Miles, Countries, I, 60; Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 102.

17. Sulaymān b. 'Alī, Abū al-'Abbās' governor of Basra, might be the person who appointed Junāh b. 'Ubādah as his delegate over Oman. See Miles, Countries, I, 60.
18. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 59; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 53; Sayyābī, 'Uman, 11, 55; cf. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 179; 'Umar, Tārīkh, 141; Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 129; cf. Miles, Countries, I, 61; Bathurst, Ya'rubi, 17-18.
19. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 276a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 445; Ma'walī, Qisāṣ, MS. f. 17a; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 53; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 59-60; Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 55; Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 129; Hāsim, Ibādiyyah, 179; 'Umar, Tārīkh, 141.
20. Miles, Countries, I, 61.
21. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 276a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 445; Ma'walī, Qisāṣ, MS. f. 17a; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 53; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 59-60; Sayyābī, 'Uman 'abr, II, 55; cf. Khulayfāt, Nash'at, 129; Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 179; 'Umar, Tārīkh, 141; Ross, Annals, 12.
22. Countries, I, 61. All the Ibādī sources agree on the role that Junāh and his son, Muḥammad, have played in Oman but none of them mention any information regarding Miles' accounts.
23. Miles, Countries, I, 61.
24. Sālīmī, I, 65 mentions that al-Julandā became imam in 131/749 and was killed in 133/751. Ḥārithī, 'Uqūd, 253 gives 132-134, but most of the Ibādī sources do not give any information regarding this matter.
25. For more information concerning the genealogical tree of the Julandā b. Mas'ud: family, see 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 271b; cf. Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 102. See table, 5
26. For further detailed discussion about these events see Omani Umayyad relations in Chapter III of this work.
27. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 445; see also Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 53; cf. Kirkman, "Early Connection", Ḥisād, V, 277.
28. Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S. 102.
29. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 60; cf. Vaglieri, "L'Imamato": Annals, 253; Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 99.
30. Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 102.
31. Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 102.
32. Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 102.

33. Wilkinson, al-Julandā, J.O.S., 102
34. Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 102
35. Ṭabari, Tārīkh, VII, 348.
36. The Julandā family, since they had been deposed by al-Ḥajjāj's army at the end of the first century of Hijra, the beginning of seventh century A.D., remained out of power. Later the Khawārij movement represented a major threat to them to regain their rule. Therefore, they became hostile to the Ibādī teaching which began to spread among the Omani tribes, and they regarded it as a new threat to their attempt to regain their power.
37. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 445; Ma'wālī, Qisas, MS. f. 17a; Ruqayshī, Misbāh, MS. f. 26b; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 21; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 53; Sālimī, Tuḥfah, I, 60; Sayyābī, 'Umān, 11, 59; Ḥārithī, 'Uqūd, 253; cf. Ḥāshim, Ibādīyyah, 178; 'Umar, Tārīkh, 141; Miles, Countries, I, 61-62; Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 102; Bathurst, Ya'rubi, 19; Phillips, History, 11; Ross, Annals, 12; Badger, Imams, 7; Hawley, "Aspects", J.R.S.A.A., 29; Vaglieri, "L'Imamato", Annals, 254.
38. For more information about the way the Ibādīs elected their imams, see The Imamate in the Ibādī thought, in Chapter VI of this study. See also Ṣa'ghī, Kanz, MS. f. 83; cf. Wilkinson, "Imama", B.S.O.S., 542-544; Bathurst, Ya'rubi, 17-18.
39. These parts are Sind, North Africa, Spain and Oman. See Hitti, History, 289.
40. The Ibādīs have established themselves in many parts of the Islamic Empire, namely, Ḥadramawt, Oman and North Africa. In these parts they managed to declare Ibādī states and elected three Imams.
41. Miles, Countries, I, 60.
42. Khāzim b. Khuzyama b. Ḥanzalah of Tamīm, a famous military leader of Caliph al-Saffāh. For more detailed information about his activity, see Ṭabari, Tārīkh, VII, 462-464; cf. Auba'īdi, Tamīm, 62.
43. Ṭabari, Tārīkh, VII, 353; see also Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, IV, 343; Ibn Kathīr, Bidāyah, X, 57; cf. Aubaidi, Tamīm, 62.
44. Tārīkh, VII, 461; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, IV, 342; Ibn Kathīr, Bidāyah, X, 56-57. Miles, Countries, I, 62, confused matters when he regarded Shibān as an 'Abbasi leader. The fact was that Shibān himself, as Ṣufurī leader, was wanted by the Abbasid army headed by Khāzim b. Khuzaymah.
45. Ṭabari, Tārīkh, VII, 462; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, IV, 342-343; Ibn Kathīr, Bidāyah, X, 56-57.

46. Tārīkh, III, 381. See also Tabarī, Tārīkh, VII, 462; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, IV, 342-343; Ibn Kathīr, Bidāyah, X, 56-57.
47. Tabarī, Tārīkh, VII, 462; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, IV, 343; Ibn Kathīr, Bidāyah, X, 57; cf. in particular, Auba'idi, Tamīm, 62.
48. Tabarī, Tārīkh, VII, 462; cf. Auba'idi, Tamīm, 62.
49. Sulaymān b. 'Alī was also the governor of Oman; see Tabarī, Tārīkh, VII, 460, Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, IV, 341; cf. Ḥasan, Tārīkh, II, 215; Ibn Khaldūn, Tārīkh, III, 377.
50. According to Yāqūt, Mu'jam, II, 79, this island is fully populated and is rich in farms.
51. Tabarī, Tārīkh, VII, 463; Ibn Khaldūn, Tārīkh, III, 381.
52. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 455; Ruqayshī, Misbāh, MS. f. 26a; Ma'walī, Qisas, MS. f. 17b; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 21; ed. 'Ashūr, Tārīkh, 53-54; Sālimī, Tuhfah, I, 64; cf. Miles, Countries, 62; Badger, Imams, 7; Ross, Annals, 12.
53. The Ibādīyah army had taken Julfār as a base for their military activities prior to the advent of the Ṣufriyyah in the town. See Salimī, Tuhfah, I, 64. See also Ibn Khaldūn, Tārīkh, III, 381.
54. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 455; Ruqayshī, Misbāh, MS. f. 27a; Ma'walī, Qisas, MS. f. 17b; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 21; ed. 'Ashūr, Tārīkh, 54; Sālimī, Tuhfah, I, 64; Sayyābi, Uman, II, 71-72; cf. Ross, Annals, 12; Badger, Imams, 7-8.
55. For more information about the Umayyad attempts to control Julfār, see "Omani Umayyad relations" in Chapter III of this study.
56. Tārīkh, 142.
57. Actually, the Ibādīs of Oman were determined not to allow both the Ṣufriyyah and Abbasid troops to enter their territory, especially after the establishment of their first Ibādī imamate.
58. Miles, Countries, I, 64.
59. Tārīkh, VII, 463; see also Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, IV, 343; Ibn Kathīr, Bidāyah, X, 57.
60. They might have avoided landing in the town of Julfār port in order not to become an easy target for their enemy, especially after having known about the Ibādī victory over Shibāḥī and his followers.
61. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 455; Ruqayshī, Misbāh, MS. f. 27a; Ma'walī, Qisas, MS.



- f. 17b; ed. Sayida, Ibn Barkah, Mawāzinah, 393; see also Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 21; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 54; Salīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 64; Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 80; cf. Hashim, Ibādīyyah, 186; ‘Umar, Tārīkh, 144; Wilkinson, “Julandā”, J.O.S., 103; Miles, Countries, I, 63; Ross, Annals, 13; Badger, Imams, 8.
62. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 455; Ruqayshī, Misbāḥ, f. 27a; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 64; cf. Ross, Annals, 13.
63. Tārīkh, VII, 462; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, IV, 343. See also Ibn Khaldūn, Tārīkh, III, 381.
64. Bidāyah, X, 57.
65. For more information concerning this incident see Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, VII, 460-61; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, IV, 342; Ibn Kathīr, Bidāyah, X, 56-57; Ibn Khaldūn, Tārīkh, III, 380.
66. Among the Ibādī ulema who attended the meeting were Shabīb b. ‘Atīyyah al-‘Umānī, Khalaf b. Ziyād al-Baḥrānī, and Hilāl b. ‘Atīyyah al-Khurasānī, see Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 455; Ruqayshī, Misbāḥ, 27a; Ma‘walī, Qīṣas, 17b; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 64; cf. Ross, Annals, 13.
67. Tuḥfah, I, 64-65.
68. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, VII, 463; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, 343; Ibn Khaldūn, Tārīkh, III, 381.
69. Ismā‘īl was Khāzim’s step brother from the same mother. See Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, VII, 463.
70. Tārīkh, VII, 462; Ibn Athīr, Kāmil, IV. 343.
71. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, VII, 462. The Omani sources regarding the events of this battle do not give any information, except in brief, about the Omani side.
72. See Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 65; cf. Ross, Annals, 13.
73. Tārīkh, VII, 462; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, IV, 343; Ibn Khaldūn, Tārīkh, III, 381; see also Amīn, Duḥā, 337-338; Nayyfar, ‘Aḥm, 68.
74. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 455-456; Ruqayshī, Misbāḥ, MS. f. 27a; Ma‘walī, Qīṣas, MS. f. 17b; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 22; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 55; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 65; Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 80; Ḥārithī, ‘Uqūd, 253; cf. Ross, Annals, 13; Badger, Imams, 8.
75. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 456; Ruqayshī, Misbāḥ, MS. f. 27a; Ma‘walī, Qīṣas, MS. f. 17b; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 22; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 55; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 65; cf. Ross, Annals, 13; Badger, Imams, 8.

76. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 456.
77. Miles, Countries, I, 63.
78. Countries, I, 63. See also Ruqayshī, Misbāh, MS. f. 27b, who mentions that Imam al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd was in fact killed by Khāzim. Cf. ed. 'Ashūr, Tārīkh, 55.
79. Ṭabari, Tārīkh, VII, 463; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, IV, 343; Ibn Kathīr, Bidayah, X, 57; Ibn Khaldūn, Tārīkh, III, 381.
80. Ṭabari, Tārīkh, VII, 462; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, 343; Ibn Khaldūn, Tārīkh, III, 381.
81. Ṭabari, Tārīkh, 463; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, 343; Ibn Kathīr, Bidayah, X, 57.
82. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 456; Ma'wali, Qīṣas, MS. f. 18a; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 22; ed. 'Ashūr, Tārīkh, 55; cf. Ross, Annals, 13; Badger, Imams, 8.
83. Ṭabari, Tārīkh, VII, 463; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, IV, 343; Ibn Kathīr, Bidayah, X, 57.
84. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 455; Ma'wali, Qīṣas, MS. f. 17a; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 21; ed. 'Ashūr, Tārīkh, 53; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 60; Sayyābī, Uman, II, 53; cf. Ross, Annals, 12; Badger, Imams, 7.
85. Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 63; Sayyābī, Uman, II, 66; for more detailed discussion see Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 102; Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 191; 'Umar, Tārīkh, 146.
86. Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 63.
87. 'Ubādah b. Abd was the governor of Oman after his father 'Abd b. al-Julandā. His two sons, Sulaymān and Sa'id, ruled Oman jointly during the Umayyad caliphate. Both of them had fled the country after al-Ḥajjāj's expedition managed to capture Oman from them. For more detailed information see "Umayyad Omani relations" in Chapter III of this study.
88. See Chapter III.
89. Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 63; Sayyābī, Uman 'abr, II, 66; see also Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 191; Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S. 102.
90. Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 63; Sayyābī, Uman, II, 66. See Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 191; Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S. 102.
91. Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 63; cf. Wilkinson, "Julanda", J.O.S., 102.
92. Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 60-61; cf. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 193.

93. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 70; Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 88; Ḥārithī, 'Uqūd, 253, regards Shabīb b. 'Atīyyah as imam after the death of al-Julandā.
94. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 62; Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 59; cf. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 193.
95. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 61-62; Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 62-63; cf. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 193.
96. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 61-62; Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 62-63; cf. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 193.
97. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 61-62.
98. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 61; Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 62. Every three hundred to four hundred *shurāt* must have one commander. For full discussion, see Wilkinson, Imamate, 183-187.
99. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 61; Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 63; cf. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 192.
100. Wilkinson, Imamate, 180.
101. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 60; Sayyābī, 'Uman 'abr, II, 58; Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 192. See also Wilkinson, Imamate, 180-181.
102. Wilkinson, Imamate, 183.
103. Wilkinson, Imamate, 181. See also Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 192.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE RISE OF THE SECOND IBĀDĪ IMAMATE, 177/793

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## 8.1 Oman between the period of the first and second Ibādī imamates

As mentioned, one of the main factors contributing to the fall of the first Ibādī imamate was the direct intervention of Abbasid troops in Oman. This led to the killing of the first Ibādī imam, al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd, his followers from the ulema, and the Ibādī intellectuals.

Having taken control of Oman by force, the Abbasids either sent their agents to govern Oman, or, most often, chose local people, including al-Julandā, for this task. Al-Sālimī suggests that those who were chosen to work as governors of Oman for the Abbasids were in fact the two sons of al-Julandā, Muḥammad b. Zā'idah and Rāshid b. Shadhān b. al-Nazr, who were executed by their relative, the Ibādī imam, al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd.<sup>1</sup>

The two cousins were recognised by the Abbasids in Basra as the legitimate rulers of Oman, working first of all for Abbasid interests, but also for the benefit of those on whose support they depended. The traditional tribal allies, representing the main opposition for the Ibādī school and its teaching, gave their support and loyalty to the Julandā rulers of Oman.

The Ibādī sources consider the period of rule of the two Julandā rulers as illegitimate, and described it as a reign of tyranny over Oman and its people, accusing them of committing all manner of excess and extortion.<sup>2</sup>

The sources suggest that the reason for the tough policy implemented by

the Julandā rulers towards the Ibādī was because the Julandā considered the Ibādī to be the greatest enemy to their rule in Oman, and to have been responsible for the killing of their fathers. The Ibādīs were also behind the division within the Julandā family which led to their permanent loss of rule of Oman after more than two hundred years of power. In fact the Julandā family had begun to suffer from the time of the Umayyad Caliphate. ‘Abd al Mālik b. Marwān ordered his governor of Iraq, al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf, to exercise control over Oman and to bring its people back within the authority of the caliphate in Damascus. Having succeeded in this, al-Ḥajjāj implemented a tough policy which resulted in the killing of a great number of Omanis and which forced the two brothers, Sa‘īd and Sulaymān, sons of ‘Abbād b. Julandā and their families, to flee by sea to East Africa in order to escape death at the hand of al-Ḥajjāj.

This led finally to the demise of the Julandā as a strong governing power and to the emergence of a significant gap in their control of Oman. The challenge to the Julandā rule was not only by the central caliphate, but also by the new rising power of the Ibādīyah of Oman, whose main teaching was concerned with correcting the errors in ruling over the Muslim nation (*ummah*).

Although the Julandā rule relied heavily on the support of the tribal system, the power of which is difficult to imagine, and influenced the daily life of Omanis from before the rise of Islam,<sup>3</sup> the spread of Ibādī teaching had effected the unity of the Omani tribes: as a result, Julandā rule was shaken and weakened.

Muḥammad b. Zā'idah and Rāshid b. Shadhān b. al-Nazr were remarkably successful in imposing their authority on different parts of Oman. They appointed governors in the cities and villages of Oman.<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile Ibādī opposition began to decline after the military defeat of the Ibādī imamate.

The rule of Ibn Zā'idah and Ibn al-Nazr depended on the backing and support of the Abbasids. This was in addition to local support, mainly of some tribes who remained loyal to the Julandā rulers and who did not accept the Ibādī teaching, considering it to be a significant threat to the tribal system and its interests.

Despite the silence of the opposition, it has been reported that one of the leading Ibādī figures in Oman had started to play a vital political role after the killing of Imam Julandā b. Mas'ūd. According to the Ibādī sources, Shabīb b. 'Atīyyah<sup>5</sup> was successful in entering the villages of Oman in which the Abbasids had no presence. He became active in these villages until the time of the collection of taxes (*zakāh*) when he began to withdraw and disappear.<sup>6</sup> Al-Salīmī describes Shabīb as a religious, pious man, but tough with his enemies (*jabābira*), calling for opposition to them.<sup>7</sup>

The political role of Shabīb b. 'Atīyyah later conflicted with that of the Ibādī ulema: some considered him an elected imam. It is believed that al-Rabī' b. Ḥabīb, the Ibādī imam, recognized that Shabīb was elected imam, an opinion shared by Mūsā b. Abī Jābir. However, other groups of ulema opposed the idea that Shabīb was imam: those who opposed his imamate were led by 'Abd

al-Wahhāb b. Jayfar, who dissociated himself from any one who considered Shabīb an imam.<sup>8</sup> This put an end also to his role as *muḥtasib* (inspector of weights and measures).<sup>9</sup>

The period after the fall of the first Ibādī Imamate witnessed a tribal dispute which led to disorder and instability throughout Omani territory. During the first Ibādī imamate, many tribes entered a new stage of conflict, which continued after its fall. From this time the conflict developed to the point at which, in the latter part of the second Ibādī imamate, it existed between the two main tribal groups, the Qaḥṭānī tribes of the Yemen led by Azd, and the ‘Adnān groups of North Arabia led by B. Sāmāh.

Omani sources report some details of this disorder. According to them Ghassān al-Hinā’ī of B. Muḥārib attacked Nizwā in 145/762. As a result of this attack, many people from Banū Nājjyah and B. Ḥamīm were slain.<sup>10</sup> It seems that this attack was connected with the two Julandā rulers supported by the central authority of the Abbasids. Since Nizwā was the Ibādī base, this action caused outrage amongst the rest of the Azd tribes, who killed many people. Many of the survivors fled from Nizwā. This anger came from those tribes who had strong ties with the two clans of B. Nāfi’ and B. Ḥamīm, and especially of B. al-Ḥārith tribe of Ibrā’<sup>11</sup> who decided to take revenge for their relatives in Nizwā.<sup>12</sup>

The B. Ḥārith gathered and chose Ziyād b. Sa‘īd al-Bakrī as their leader.<sup>13</sup> They agreed to kill Ghassān al-Hinā’ī, by ambushing him between his



house and that of Jināḥ in Sohar, at a place called al-Khawr, as he was returning from visiting a sick person of B. Hinā'. He approached, unaware of their presence, and was slain.<sup>14</sup>

The killing of the sheikh of B. Hinā' angered his tribe, who decided to kill his killers, Manāzil b. Khanbashah, who was agent for Muḥammad b. Zā'idah, and Rāshid b. al-Nazr. Julandā was angered too, and therefore headed a group from B. Hinā' and their allies and attacked the people of Ibrā' unawares.<sup>15</sup> After a battle between the two sides, the B. al-Ḥārith of Ibrā' were defeated, with about forty of their number killed.<sup>16</sup>

These bloody events led to civil war among Omani tribes. These were not, as we observed above, isolated incidents of killing, but based on general agreement and were, in addition, highly organised. For example, the attack which Ghassān al-Hinā'i led on the people of Nizwā was prompted by his objection to the Ibādī teaching in Oman, since Nizwā was the base of the Ibādī scholars (*ḥamalāt al-ilm*). B. Nāfi', the tribe which Ghassān had attacked, was the clan of the celebrated scholar Abū 'l-Mundhir Bashīr b. al-Mundhir.<sup>17</sup>

The problem was that B. Hinā' were very loyal to the Abbasids and their agents, the Julandā. The continuity of good relations between the Abbasids and B. Hinā' stretched back to the time before the establishment of the first Ibādī imamate in Oman when Abū 'l-Saffāh, the first Abbasid Caliph, chose Ibn Jināḥ of B. Hinā' to be their governor over Oman, despite the co-operation which the two governors had given to Ibādī activities during their

time (as reported by Ibādī sources): however, B. Hinā' remained loyal to the caliphate of the Abbasids.

B. Hinā' had used the cover of Abbasid protection to attack the Ibādīs, for example Manāzil b. Khanbashah al-Hinā'i. Although he was agent for the Julandā, rulers he attacked Ibrā', which proved that he had obtained the Julandā rulers' agreement to do so, especially since we know that Nizwā and Ibrā' were the stronghold of the Ibādīs, who opposed the rule of Julandā Muḥammad and Rāshid who considered them as enemies.

Any ruler wanting to remain in control of Oman would have to take into account the achievement of some sort of agreement with tribes to assist him in implementing his policy by force, since there was no organised army to do this job. Therefore, B. Hinā' were in fact the army of B. al-Julandā Muḥammad and Rāshid. In addition, the role of the sheikhs in organising their tribesmen to gather for any emergency that might occur, cannot be ignored.

The Omani sources mention another event which took place during the two Julandās' rule. According to the sources, Ghassān b. 'Abd al-Malik had headed an opposition movement against the rule of Rāshid b. Naẓr al-Julandī, the main task of this movement being to call upon Rāshid to step down from governing Oman.<sup>18</sup> He was backed by well known Ibādī figures at that time, such as Muḥammad b. Jassās, and Mūsā b. Abī Jābir al-Izkawī. In addition to the fact that Ghassān b. 'Abd al-Malik was not an Ibādī the Ibādī sources describe him as a tyrant and unjust with bad morals who at the same time

provided the reasons for which two of the Ibādī sheikhs followed him and supported him in his calling to step down the rule of Rāshid b. al-Nazr. The Ibādī sources say that 'according to Ibādī principles, it is legal to support the unjust against those who are more just'.<sup>19</sup>

This source fails to give us a fixed date or further information about Ibn 'Abd al-Malik's movement which, it seems, failed to achieve its objectives because of a lack of support from the people of Oman. This may be attributable to the fact that on the one hand he was not acceptable to the people of Oman and that on the other he had the strong opposition of Rāshid b. al-Nazr, whose power increased after he became the only ruler of Oman.<sup>20</sup>

Although the attempt of the Ibādī ulema continued and their efforts to replace Rāshid b. al-Nazr by one of the Ibādī imams did not stop, for some time they led the revolt, and even went as far as supporting any attempt by any one to rise against the authority of the Abbasids and their agents, the Julandā rulers, despite their political differences. By keeping the pressure on the Julandā rulers, the Ibādī situation began to improve. At the same time the position of Rāshid b. al-Nazr started to weaken because of tribal feuding, which divided Oman's tribes between support for the Ibādī movement and those who stood alongside the Julandā. Therefore the Julandā failed to control the affairs of Oman. In addition to the tribal feuding, there was an external factor which helped the Ibādī movement become active: it appears that there was a loss of interest on the part of the Abbasid caliphate which also affected the Julandā rulers, who completely depended upon their support.

Moreover, Ibādī movement activity started to achieve some of its political goals when the Ibādī decided to step down the rule of Julandā Rāshid b. al-Nazr in order to establish their second Ibādī imamate. Al-Izkawī comments regarding this move as follows:

“God then blessed the people of Oman by bestowing on them love of the truth and a portion of the Muslims (Ibādīyyah) rose up in defence of God’s Truth, and overthrew the power of those tyrants.”<sup>21</sup>

Al-Baysawī describes Ibādī conditions between the first imamate and before the establishment of the second imamah as follows:

“The Muslims (Ibādīs) were weak and divided, they did not support Rāshid’s rule nor his governors, they rose against him from different villages and from different tribes until God unified them after disunity and increased their number after they were few. They were not seeking the domination of this world, but were in fact seeking to support God’s religion and putting in practice the justice of the Prophet’s sunnah.”<sup>22</sup>

From this text one gets the impression that the Ibādī *da’wah* did not become heavily reliant on the tribal structure to assist its claim to improve its control over Oman. It may also be said that the Ibādī imamate was subject to tribal influence because of its power and control of the daily life of the people of Oman.

However, as we shall see, many imams had depended completely and totally on tribal support, which they considered important, and vital for the maintenance of their position at the head of the imamate. As we have observed, some imams lost the support of the Omani tribes, and automatically their

authority became weak and they probably lost control of their power, as was seen with the role of the Ibādī imamate in Oman.

## **8.2 The establishment of the second Ibādī imamate**

Before examining in detail the foundation of the second Ibādī imamate, it should be mentioned that this imamate, which lasted for more than a century, implemented for the first time its theory of the imamate according to the Ibādī concept. Also this imamate was based on the foundation of the teaching and principles of the Ibādī school. Having put this teaching in practice, the Ibādīs were quite successful, although sometimes they were less successful because of the nature of the tribal structure of Oman, which played a very important role throughout its period.

This imamate faced many internal and external challenges, but internal factors played a very important role in its collapse as a result of tribal feuding. Besides this, the imamate seat was dominated by the large number of Omani tribes. The clan of Yaḥmad had inherited the role of the Julandā kings of ‘Atik. What was different was that the Yaḥmadī clan of Azd was linked with the Ibādī movement: since most of the leading Ibādīs and scholars were from this clan, they were chosen by the other Ibādīs to select from this clan the imams to run the Ibādī imamate. Despite this, there were many Ibādī ulema who were qualified for the imamate from different tribes from Azd and from Nizār of North Arabia. However it seems to me that a sort of compromise had taken place between the Ibādī ulema, who played a very important role within the policy of the imamate, and those chosen imams of Yaḥmad, to recognise the

role of the ulema in the Ibādī government.

The domination by the Yaḥmad clan of the imamate led finally to open dispute, not only between the Yaḥmad and the rest of the Omani tribes, but also within the Yaḥmadī house, for the possession of the imamate, which led to the civil war and the intervention of the Abbasid caliphate. As a result the imamate was overthrown by the Abbasid army, as we shall see from the events described below.

### 8.2.1 The first attempt to restore the Ibādī imamate

The Ibādī centre in Basra under the Imam Abū ‘Ubaydah Muslim b. Abī Karīmah had played a manifest and crucial role in trying to re-establish the Ibādī imamate in Oman after the first imamate had been brought to an end by the Abbasid army. Abu ‘Ubaydah, through his student *ḥamalat al-‘ilm*, became active during the period after the collapse of the first imamate. They started a big campaign and organized preparations to revolt against Rāshid b. al-Nazr, the Julandā ruler appointed by the Abbasids. Beside the *ḥamalat al-‘ilm* there were a number of prominent men who also returned to Oman from Basra. They came back to central Oman to live in a degree of safety.<sup>23</sup>

From the *ḥamalat al-‘ilm*, earlier sent by Abū ‘Ubaydah to Basra, there was one leading figure who called for the establishment of the imamate in Oman. This *‘ālim* was according to al-‘Awtabī, Muḥammad b. al-Mu‘allā al-Kindī.

It has been mentioned that al-Rabī' b. Ḥabīb al-Farāhīdī, the successor to Abū 'Ubaydah Muslim b. Abī Karīmah as imam of the Ibādī community in Basra, finally returned to Oman and was politically active in central Oman until his death at Nizwa in 170/786, that is a few years before Rāshid b. al-Nazr al-Julandī was overthrown.<sup>24</sup>

Opposition to Rāshid's rule had increased enormously as a result of an organized campaign by Ibādī activists. According to Omani sources, Muḥammad b. al-Mu'allā and al-Akhfish al-Fuḥshī from the Kindah tribe, led the revolt against Rāshid b. Nazr, calling on him to step down from power and to enable the Ibādīs to elect their imam.<sup>25</sup> The two men later went out leading the revolt against Rāshid, who was, according to the sources, away in Mahrah territory recruiting a force to help him against the Ibādī revolt.<sup>26</sup>

The Ibādī revolt was supported by the ulema and those of the *da'wah*, activists backed by the tribal allies under the leadership of the Yaḥmad tribe. These consisted mainly of the tribes of the interior of Oman (the base of the Ibādiyyah). The Ibādī leaders were the two *ḥamalat al-ilm* of the Kindah tribe. According to Wilkinson, no tribes of the Sāmi Ibādī leaders were prepared to join this motley revolt, and the only really important Ibādī figure who actually supported it were the Kindah ulema.<sup>27</sup>

The role of the B. Sāmāh tribe in this revolt was clear: although the Kindah ulema were the leading figures in it, B. Sāmāh also participated. Since many of the *ḥamalat al-ilm* were from B. Sāmāh,<sup>28</sup> this revolt was not tribal,

as some have suggested, but a real Ibādī revolt based on the continued attempts of the Ibādī to found and establish their imamate in Oman. No one can deny the tribal role in this movement. The group who revolted against Rāshid b. Naẓr were mostly Ibādī.

Battle was joined at place called al-Majāzah in the Zāhirah region, which has been suggested by some to be in the territory of B. Nijyah, probably the most important tribal supporters in northern Oman.<sup>29</sup>

Rāshid in fact had gathered his supporters in al-Majāzah, and chose the place of the battle which was joined later by the Ibādī followers, coming from Nizwā. The two parties met in Ramaḍān 177/December 793<sup>30</sup> and Rāshid's troops were overwhelmingly defeated by the Ibādī supporters under the Yaḥmad tribes, who demonstrated by this battle their rejection of the B. Ma'walah b. Shams of the Julandā leadership. Yaḥmad represented the new leadership, which depended for its support on the Ibādī followers rather than on the tribal allies on which Rāshid al-Julandā depended during his rule, which lasted for more than 43 years.<sup>31</sup> The result of this battle was not only Rāshid b. Naẓr's losing his rule in Oman but also the Julandā family losing its rooted power in Oman after more than three hundred years of conducting Oman affairs.

According to the Omani sources, Rāshid managed to escape from this battle and his son also succeeded in fleeing Nizwā after the news of the military defeat of the Julandā reached him.<sup>32</sup> The sources do not mention the place where they hid. Nor do they provide any sort of information about the role of



Muḥammad b. Zā'idah al-Julandā (who had jointly ruled Oman with Rāshid b. al-Nazr) either during this battle or in the time leading up to it, which might prompt the hypothesis that Muḥammad b. Zā'idah was no longer Rāshid's partner in the later years of his rule in Oman. Muḥammad's name is mentioned by none of the sources in connection with any events which took place in Oman for more than 10 years. Rāshid himself was the focus of the Omani Ibādī sources, in which it is indicated that he was ruling Oman alone until his overthrow by the Ibādī revolt. The sources mention neither the condition of Muḥammad b. Zā'idah's health, nor that he may have died before the collapse of the Julandā's historic rule of Oman.

The victorious Ibādī entered Nizwā, the seat of Rāshid b. Nazr's government, and took control of it. According to al-Sālimī,<sup>33</sup> the Ibādīyyah captured Rāshid's house in Nizwā and razed it to the ground. This action by the Ibādī tribesmen caused outrage amongst the other tribes, particularly to the sheikhs of Salūt and another member of Omani sheikhs in a different part of Oman. Furthermore, the Ibādīs themselves were divided on this issue, and, we are told, they had a long argument regarding this matter. The leader of the Ibādīs protested against this new tactic used by the Ibādīs against their enemies. Al-Ash'ath b. Muḥammad describes this incident as unacceptable, and denies that this action had anything to do with Muslim behaviour and morals. The Ibādī group who supported this action based their argument on the prophet Muḥammad's demolition of the castle or fort of B. al-Nadīr.

Another result of the al-Majāzah battle was the end of Abbasid role in

Oman, by virtue of the expulsion of Rāshid b. al-Nazr and Banū al-Julandā from power. Both parties (the Abbasids and the Julandās) had depended on each other's support and backing, and Rāshid, as we have seen, was an Abbasid agent, who worked for his tribe's allies: his interest was to remain in power, in spite of the Ibādī opposition to his rule.

### 8.2.2 The Manh meeting

After the Ibādīyyah succeeded in overthrowing Rāshid b. Nazr in 177/793, the Ibādī ulema assembled in Manh<sup>34</sup> near Nizwā to discuss the election of a new Ibādī imam after the declaration of the re-establishment of the second Ibādī imamate. The meeting was attended by learned Ibādī sheikhs, [*ahl al-ḥall wa-l-'aqd*] especially those from the *ḥamalat al-'ilm*, who played an active role in spreading Ibādī teaching among the Omani people. The latter were therefore in support of the rise of the Ibādī imamate in Oman for the second time. The meeting was held under the guidance of Mūsā b. Abī Jābir, who is described by the Ibādī sources as their chief and principal.<sup>35</sup>

According to them, Mūsā b. Abī Jābir was ill and was at his birth place in Izki.<sup>36</sup> He was carried down to Manh because he was so weak that he was unable to walk himself.<sup>37</sup> Also among the celebrated ulema who assembled in Manh were Muḥammad b. al-Mua'llā al-Kindī and Bashīr b. al-Mundhir.<sup>38</sup>

It is noteworthy that the sources mention that fiery discussions took place during this meeting, and also that most of those who attended were hoping to be elected as the Ibādī imam.<sup>39</sup> Mūsā b. Abī Jābir, the Ibādī chief and chairman

of the meeting, was favoured by the ulema, but he refused to accept the offer.<sup>40</sup> When Mūsā b. Abī Jābir noticed the division among the ulema about how to elect the Imam, he took a decisive stand by choosing some Ibādī sheikhs whom he appointed as governors over the Omani towns and villages, instead of electing one imam temporarily. The main reason which forced him to do this is explained by later Ibādī sources as being his fear that the purpose of the Ibādiyyah might be frustrated and that strife would ensue.<sup>41</sup>

Mūsā b. Abī Jābir is quoted as saying; “We have appointed Muḥammad b. al-Mu‘allā al-Kindī to govern Sohar<sup>42</sup> and we have elected Ibn Abī ‘Affān to govern Nizwā and the towns of al-Jawf”.<sup>43</sup>

By reaching this acceptable settlement until the situation calmed down, Mūsā b. Abī Jābir had proved that he was a man of considerable political abilities, acumen and foresight. He himself commented on the way the meeting went by saying; “Everyone who attended it regarded the matter only for himself”,<sup>44</sup> i.e. they all want to be chosen as imam.

From these events we learn that the Ibādī ulema were planning to elect Mūsā b. Abī Jābir imam because of his personal qualities, as a celebrated figure in the Ibādī *da‘wah*, and because of his service to the Ibādī teaching. But Mūsā, it appears, was more concerned with the Ibādī *da‘wah* than with personal ambition, especially compared with of every other *da‘ī* to become imam.

When Mūsā b. Abī Jābir appointed Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān as

governor of al-Jawf, one of the *ḥamalat al-ilm* Abū al-Mundhir Bashīr b. Mundhir opposed this decision by commenting, “We have wished to see what we like, but now we are seeing what we dislike. We expected to see what would please us, but we have seen what disgusts us”.<sup>45</sup> He added further, “We expected you to take charge of this state, but you returned it to those whom we fear in charge of the state.”<sup>46</sup> Mūsā b. Abī Jābir rejoined, “My view was that I should reject becoming a governor of the state,”<sup>47</sup> and he explained what he was doing by saying “We have done what you wish”. Al-Izkawī interpreted Mūsā’s decision of appointing governors in the various Omani towns as policy of dispersal lest strife should arise.<sup>48</sup> After a short time Mūsā b. Abī Jābir ordered Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān to act as imam and also ordered him to write letters to the Manh meetings of the Omani towns to dispose of the appointed governors. Al-Izkawī suggested that he disposed of them even before their arrival in their towns.<sup>49</sup>

### 8.3 The imamate of Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān

The appointment of Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān was in Ramaḍān 177/793.<sup>50</sup> Al-Izkawī suggested that Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān became imam in 175/791 and his imamate lasted for two years until 177/793.<sup>51</sup>

The sources offer little information about the early life of Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān, and his early involvement with Ibādī *da‘wah*. What is known is that he was from al-Yaḥmad of Azd tribe.<sup>52</sup> His genealogy goes back to Kharūṣ b. Shārī b. al-Yaḥmad b. ‘Abdullāh b. Mālīk b. Naṣr b. al-Azd b. al-Ghawth b. Yanbut b. Mālīk b. Zayd b. Kahlān.<sup>53</sup> He was brought up in Basra, in Iraq,

where the Azd were to be found. Al-Sayyābī<sup>54</sup> mentions that Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān was not an Omani but an Iraqi. He was brought from Basra to Oman especially to take charge of the imamate there because of his qualification for the office, and because a deal was struck between the two sides. The Ibādī ulema were locked in an irresolvable dispute concerning the election of Mūsā b. Abī Jābir for the imamate. The decision to choose Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān for this task was probably taken in Iraq by the Ibādī sheikhs in Basra, bearing in mind the role which the Ibādī community in Basra played in supporting this revolt in Oman: both with military support, and financially with donations which the Ibādī merchants and followers gave through the *da‘wah* centre in Basra, these were then sent to different places where the Ibādīs were to be found. Oman, being one of these places in the caliphate which received this support, was not, therefore, in a strong position to object when the Ibādī sheikhs in Basra decided to send Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān, one of its trusted men, to go to Oman as a military leader and then to act as imam.

Ibādī sources give little information about Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān’s role during the Ibādī revolt against Rāshid b. Naẓr. In all likelihood, he was the military leader of the Ibādī group in the battle of al-Majāzah in which the Ibādiyyah won a decisive victory against Rāshid’s army. It is probable that the victory owed much to Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān’s military experience from Iraq.

The tribal factor also played an important role in choosing Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān for the imamate. He belonged to Yaḥmad clan, whose military might was on the rise. Its power was recognised by other Omani tribes through

the gains which its members achieved within the Ibādī school in Iraq or Oman.<sup>55</sup>

At the same time, the role of some strong Omani tribes began to decline either for tribal or for religious reasons. Since these tribes, for example al-Ma'awil al-'Atik B. Hinā' and B. Nājiyah, were the traditional enemies of the Ibādī school of thought, they were the doomed tribes in Oman before the change took place there in favour of Yaḥmad clan and its allies. These tribes found themselves isolated because of their rejection of Ibādī teaching. Not only did they probably consider the Ibāḍiyyah thought a threat to their interests and influence, but also these tribes had strong connections with the Abbasids through the Julandā rulers.

The Ibādī also succeeded in converting many people of these tribes. Therefore, the position of these tribes on the eve of the battle of al-Majāzah was poor. They were unable to support Rāshid b. Naẓr al-Julandī, who sensed this weakness when he travelled to the south of Oman seeking support from the Mahrah tribes. These latter tribes were one of the Omani tribes which became an enemy to the Ibāḍiyyah imamate after its establishment.

After the defeat at al-Majāzah, these tribes dispersed to various parts of Oman in groups of individuals.<sup>56</sup> This favoured the Yaḥmad clan and its allies which became united under the flag of the Ibāḍiyyah doctrine. The Yaḥmad tribe became the religious family of the majority of the Ibādī imams who came to power, as was the case of the Julandā family before them. Julandā ruled Oman as tribal sheikhs, and the Yaḥmad in the name of Ibādī

teaching.

For reasons set out below, the choice by Mūsā b. Abī Jābir of Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān for the imamate was considered by some Ibādī ulema as a courageous move.

The choice of Ibn Abī ‘Affān as Ibādī imam was an acceptable solution to the followers of Oman’s different tribes, because he was Iraqi by birth and his relationship with Oman was only in name. Therefore he was acceptable by all parties and appointed to bring an end to the strife between those tribes for the Ibādī imamate.

The Ibādī centre in Basra might have had much to do with his nomination to lead the Ibādī revolt against Rāshid b. Naẓr al-Julandī and his allies, the Abbasids, in Oman. It is probable that he was chosen in Oman because he was nominated by the Ibādī sheikhs of Basra, despite the objections raised by some leading figures during the Manh meeting against his appointment as imam.

His appointment by the Ibādī leaders was intended to give the Yaḥmad a leadership role over the Omani tribes, because most of these tribes were Ibādīs and strong supporters of the Ibādīyyah in Oman. Contrasting with the opinion that the power and influence of the Yaḥmad was rising both in and outside Oman, one of Ibādī sheikhs<sup>57</sup> suggested that the Yaḥmad be given the leadership of the Ibādīyyah and Omani tribes because they were militarily weak,

because of the peaceful nature in which the Ibādī leaders chose most of imams from its clan, most of the Omani tribes were not in competition with Yaḥmad. Therefore most of them accepted its role within the Omani community.

### **8.3.1 The dispute over the imamate of Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān**

The task which faced Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān was difficult. It was especially hard for him to face the strong tribal alliance which started to rise up against his rule. According to Omani tradition the governor or any ruler is entitled to tribal power to give him support to protect his rule against any attempt against him. Since Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān was not an Omani by birth, he faced strong opposition within the Ibādī community itself. In addition to general tribal opposition, he faced in particular the hostility of those tribes loyal to the Julandā family. These parties became ungovernable. In response, Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān imposed a tough policy. As military leader he used forces to implement his policy and to win back these tribes onto his side, especially the tribes which were very supportive of Rāshid b. Naẓr and the Julandā family in general.

Subsequent to his appointment as Ibādī Imam, Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān began to appoint governors in the Omani towns and villages. This was after the former governors had been deposed by him by order of Mūsā b. Abī Jābir al-Izkawī, the chief Ibādī sheikh. The most important appointment made by the new imam was his selection of Sa‘īd b. Ziyād al-Bakrī as his minister<sup>58</sup> and commander-in-chief of the imamate army.<sup>59</sup> The first mission with which Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān charged his new military commander was to crush a



revolt in eastern Oman.<sup>60</sup> The people of the area were probably protesting against Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān. Sa‘īd al-Bakrī succeeded in controlling the region through the use of military force. It has been said that he was planning its destruction.<sup>61</sup> The tough measures implemented by Sa‘īd al-Bakrī in the Sharqiyyah region had something to do with old tribal dispute between B. Hinā’ and B. al-Ḥārith which took place in 145/762. It is said that al-Bakrī himself was among the conflicting parties.<sup>62</sup> When, more than thirty years later, Sa‘īd led the imamate army, he wanted to take revenge on his enemy, and set fire to the date palms belonging to B. Nāju.<sup>63</sup>

This action was considered by some sources to be the worst of crimes committed by him against the inhabitants of this region. According to the sources, before he began setting fire to the trees, Sa‘īd al-Bakrī sent an envoy to Mūsā b. Abī Jābir to consult him about this matter. When Sa‘īd’s messenger told Mūsā that he intended to cut down B. Nāju’s trees Mūsā answered him by reading a verse from the Qur’ān.<sup>64</sup>

Sa‘īd al-Bakrī had understood this as permission and a blessing from Mūsā b. Abī Jābir so he started cutting the trees and demolishing the houses.<sup>65</sup>

Al-Sayyabī offers several reasons for the *fatwā* given by Mūsā b. Abī Jābir in which Sa‘īd al-Bakrī, Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān’s military commander, understood as a green light to proceed with his plan to set fire to the trees and houses of B. Nāju. The B. Nāju were strong supporters of Rāshid b. Nazr and Muḥammad b. Za‘īdah. They suffered heavy losses during the Majāzah battle

between the supporters of Rāshid and the Ibādī army. Al- Sayyabī considers that the permission given by Mūsā b. Abī Jābir to set fire to and demolish the homes and trees of Nājū because it was a measure which would weaken them.<sup>66</sup> But the earliest Ibādī ulema condemned Sa'īd al-Bakrī's action and regarded it as going outside the principle of the morals of Islamic warfare.<sup>67</sup> For example, one of the Ibādī ulema who lived during the time of these events, Muḥammad b. Maḥbūb,<sup>68</sup> dismissed the measures of Sa'īd al-Bakrī against B. Nājū with this comment:

مَا سَمِعْنَا عَنْ أَحَدٍ مِنْ قَوَادِ هَذِهِ الدَّوْلَةِ أَوَّلَهَا وَلَا آخِرَهَا صَنَعَ ، وَلَا سَارَ فِي حَرْبِهِمْ مَعَ بَشَرٍ ، مِمَّا صَنَعَ سَعِيدُ بْنُ زِيَادٍ الْبَكْرِيُّ مِنْ سَفْكِ الدَّمَاءِ وَحَرْقِ الْمَنَازِلِ وَتَرْكِ الْمَعْرُوفِ .

“We have never before heard report of any commander of this state, from its beginning to its end, committing such acts or behaving in such a manner even in warfare, as Sa'īd b. Ziyād al-Bakrī, who has shed blood, set fire to houses and abandoned what is acceptable according to custom.”<sup>69</sup>

Another Ibādī scholar, Abū Ayyūb Wā'il al-Ḥaḍramī, regarded Sa'īd's deeds as harmful to the state treasury.<sup>70</sup> The important accusation of committing offensive acts against the people of the *Sharqiyyah*, made against Sa'īd b. Ziyād al-Bakrī, military commander of Muḥammad b. Abī 'Affān, reflected negatively on Ibn Abī 'Affān personally. He himself became the target of criticism which grew rapidly, extending beyond the affairs of his military commander to the way in which he was conducting the imamate. When he neglected one of the main Ibādī principles of following the *shūrā* of the ulema, most contemporary sources describe his rule as totalitarian. In addition to earlier widespread criticism of the appointment by Muḥammad b. Abī 'Affān of Sa'īd b. Ziyād al-Bakrī, Muḥammad b. Abī 'Affān was forced to take full responsibility for the deeds of

his commander. As a result of his policies, Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān found himself isolated. Eventually, due to pressure on the part of the Ibādī ulema, he was deposed from the seat of imamate. This was the first recorded expulsion in the Ibādī state of an imam from his post. Later allegations by the Ibādī ulema and other authors suggest that Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān was not an elected Ibādī imam, but a military commander serving as a temporary governor of Oman to fill a gap in the leadership, and appointed in order to resolve a dispute between Ibādī leaders who were themselves looking to be elected to the imamate.

### 8.3.2 The deposition of Ibn Abī ‘Affān from the imamate

The movement of the opposition to Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān’s rule increased rapidly, particularly on the part of the Ibādī ulema and their followers, as a result of the hard line policy against his opponents mentioned above. He had inflicted damage on Ibādī teaching and fundamental Ibādī principles. The decision to depose him, therefore, was taken by the ulema who had installed him as head of the Ibādī state. He was expelled. In accordance with their teachings, he was considered an outcast, and all were to dissociate themselves from him (*al-tabarru’ minhu*).<sup>71</sup> He was given the name ‘tyrant’<sup>72</sup>, a term usually reserved by Ibādīs for non-Ibādī rulers who pass their rule to their sons.

Whilst the Ibādī ulema seem to have agreed on the illegitimacy of Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān’s imamate, there was controversy over its categorisation. Most Ibādī authors agree that Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān was not an imam,<sup>73</sup> despite spending two years in the seat of the imamate. Some,

however, consider his imamate to have been a defensive one (*difā*).<sup>74</sup> He was also regarded as an army commander.<sup>75</sup> He was not elected, neither was he contracted to pursue expansionist policies (*‘aqd al-shirā’*) as al-Salīmī reports.<sup>76</sup> The account given by Abū ‘l-Hasan al-Baysawī differs from that given by Salīmī. Abū ‘l-Hasan al-Baysawī writes:

“If anyone suggests that an imam should be replaced for another imam as the people of Oman did with Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān, he should be told that he is factually inaccurate about Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān, who was a just imam (*imām ‘ādil*) whose appointment was agreed upon and generally accepted.”

Some authors suggest that he acted in defence of Oman, or that he acted in defence of Oman until the war ended. Not all authors agree to recognise his imamate. Some authors suggest that he was an army commander and not an imam. None of the people of the *da‘wah* recognised him by giving him the *walāyah*.<sup>77</sup> Other Ibādī sources report the way in which Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān was deposed from the imamate. According to these sources, when the Ibādī ulema decided to overthrow him, they tricked him into leaving his army in Nizwā. The Ibādī chief ‘ālim, Mūsā b. Abī Jābir al-Izkawī, played an important role in the deposition of Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān. It was Mūsā b. Abī Jābir al-Izkawī who had originally installed Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān after the defeat of Rāshid b. Nazr in 177/893.<sup>78</sup> A different account is given by Abū Qaḥṭān Khālīd b. Qaḥṭān,<sup>79</sup> who asserts that the Ibādīs expelled Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān from Nizwā by force. According to Abū Qaḥṭān Khālīd b. Qaḥṭān, Mūsā b. Abī Jābir al-Izkawī had pledged allegiance to al-Wārith b. Ka‘b, who was chosen to become the new imam.<sup>80</sup>

Had Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān been a legitimate Ibādī imam, or had he been elected as imam, the Ibādīs would not have chosen another imam to replace him. Because he was not an imam, no one recognised his imamate.

Ibādī sources mention nothing about Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān after his deposition, nor do they offer any information about his activities in Oman. This tends to strengthen the argument that he left Oman, probably for Basra where his family and clan lived.

#### 8.4 The imamate of al-Wārith b. Ka‘b (179-192/795-807)

Ibādī sources give little information about al-Wārith b. Ka‘b. himself. They give his full name as al-Wārith b. Ka‘b al-Kharūṣī al-Shārī al-Yahmadi al-Azdi.<sup>81</sup> The sources mention that he was a farmer from a village called Hijjar, in the Wadi B. Kharūṣ.<sup>82</sup> There is no indication about his background or early life regarding Ibādī activities in Oman, nor even any links with the movement.

The first reported appearance in political life of al-Wārith b. Ka‘b occurs during the dispute between the Ibādī ulema and Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān. According to these sources, al-Wārith b. Ka‘b led the parties opposed to Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān. In Nizwā, he protested about Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān’s rule and the way in which imamate affairs were conducted.<sup>83</sup> These same sources state that al-Wārith had one of Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān’s soldiers killed as a protest against the way the latter was treating Muslims. This

incident precipitated a violent revolt in Nizwā.<sup>84</sup> Thus al-Wārith b. Ka'b was chosen for the imamate under mysterious circumstances by the same person who first appointed Muḥammad b. Abī 'Affān and later deposed him. According to these sources, having deposed Muḥammad b. Abī 'Affān, Mūsā b. Abī Jābir was asked by the people of Nizwā who would be their imam. He replied that he himself was their imam until al-Wārith b. Ka'b arrived at Nizwā. No one showed any objection to his imamate.<sup>85</sup> This story of the installation of al-Wārith b. Ka'b as imam is similar to the conditions under which Muḥammad b. Abī 'Affān was appointed. But how did the Ibādī ulema come to depose Muḥammad b. Abī 'Affān without choosing his replacement? The choice of al-Wārith b. Ka'b seems to have been coincidental rather than planned, in that he arrived in Nizwā at the right time, and Mūsā chose him for the seat of the imamate.

Some sources find unacceptable the notion that the installation of al-Wārith b. Ka'b was unplanned. Believing the choice to be well planned, al-Sālimī proves that the selection of al-Wārith b. Ka'b went back to the time of the imamate of al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd (132-134/749-751).<sup>86</sup> Al-Sālimī offers legendary stories about al-Wārith. For example, he states that a caller approached al-Wārith b. Ka'b while he was sleeping and invited him to rescue the people from the rule of the Jabābirah, taking charge of the imamate.<sup>87</sup>

Whilst not disputing the importance of the imamate of al-Wārith b. Ka'b, his popularity with Ibādī authors is noteworthy. Indeed, their exaggeration of his qualities bring their writing closer to fiction than to reality. Their miracle

stories about al-Wārith b. Ka'b are based not on historical events but on traditional tales which have been handed down. Many Islamic doctrines have, for political purposes, suffered from the fault of glorifying their leaders and imams. Therefore, information from these sources is suspect, and cannot be taken at face value. While offering many legendary stories about al-Wārith b. Ka'b, these sources fail to shed light on his life prior to his appointment as imam, or on his education, or on his links with the Ibādī sheikhs (*hamalat al-ilm*).

From the events in which he was involved, he seems to have been one of the Yahmad's sheikhs. However, he had nothing to do with Ibādī activities in the early stages of his life, nor were his connections with the Ibādīs strong. None of his family was a firm Ibādī believer; according to al-Sālimī, neither his brother nor his nephews were Ibādī followers.<sup>88</sup> The fact cannot be ignored, therefore, that his selection for the imamate was based entirely on tribal balance.

#### 8.4.1 Internal policy

After al-Wārith b. Ka'b took charge of the imamate, his first measures were to bring about peace and stability in Oman. He re-established a system of justice, the absence of which (according to Ibādī sources) under Muḥammad b. Abī 'Affān led to injustice and oppression. In this matter, his first act was to dismiss, expel and deport to Bahrain Sa'īd b. Ziyād al-Bakrī, the army commander of Muḥammad b. Abī 'Affān.<sup>89</sup> It was the policies of Sa'īd b. Ziyād al-Bakrī which led to the downfall and removal of Muḥammad b. Abī 'Affān. However, having dismissed Sa'īd b. Ziyād al-Bakrī, al-Wārith b. Ka'b was then faced with a strong challenge from some non-Ibādī sheikhs, whom Ibādī authors

term *jabābirah*.

Al-Izkawī describes the life history and the policies of al-Wārith b. Ka'b as follows:

“Al-Wārith revived the ancient virtues of the Muslims, [i.e. the Ibādīyyah] and treading the paths of righteousness, honoured Truth and her followers. He repressed infidelity and thus vouchsafed the fall of oppressors.”<sup>90</sup>

During his period of office, which lasted twelve years and six months,<sup>91</sup> al-Wārith b. Ka'b achieved remarkable success in ending tribal feuds through the implementation of Ibādī teaching, which was the principal plank of his internal policy.<sup>92</sup> Al-Ṣalīmī praises al-Wārith b. Ka'b for his administrative ability, and for the way in which he ran the affairs of the imamate. Al-Ṣalīmī also illustrates the justice of al-Wārith b. Ka'b's rule in treating every person fairly, and keeping his relatives out of authority. It has been reported that al-Wārith b. Ka'b had to confer some of the wealth of the imamate on the people of Hajar<sup>93</sup> and Ṣāl.<sup>94</sup> The rest he distributed in the neighbouring regions, but prevented his nephew's sons<sup>95</sup> from taking their shares because they were not supporters of the Ibādī movement.<sup>96</sup> The most noteworthy event mentioned by Ibādī sources was his courage and sense of humour in the face of a siege in one of the wadis of Nizwā.<sup>97</sup> Al-Wārith b. Ka'b held himself fully responsible for the well-being of the prisoners of the siege, and when the wadi flooded, he went in person to rescue them. In his attempt to save them, he drowned with them.<sup>98</sup>



#### 8.4.2 The relations of the Ibādī imamate with the Abbasid caliphate

After the re-establishment of the second imamate in 177/793 the imamate faced many critical difficulties. One was an internal factor - the struggle to control power in Oman between the two rival parties, the Ibādiyyah and the non-Ibādīs in which tribal feuds played a very decisive role. The power struggle ended in favour of the Ibādī groups. The most serious threat to the new born imamate and its independence was an external threat which represented the first challenge for the Ibādiyyah of Oman and came from the central authority under the Abbasid rule. The latter, as we have noticed previously in this study, had attacked the Oman military and crushed the first Ibādī imamate which had been established under the leadership of Imam Julandā b. Mas'ūd who was killed as a result of the Abbasid intervention. Thus, the Islamic central authority in Baghdad represented the main external threat to the imamate and its leaders.

To go back to early relations between Oman and the new Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad, the Abbasid caliph, Abu 'l-'Abbās al-Saffāh, had appointed his uncle, Sulaymān b. 'Alī as governor of Basra one year after the rise of the Abbasid caliphate in 133/750.<sup>99</sup> As a result Oman was joined administratively to Basra. At that time Oman was independent under the rule of the first imamate until the Abbasids regained their control of Oman. Early Islamic sources do not mention any governor appointed by Basra over Oman until the time of the caliph Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr. The name of Oman was again mentioned in reports, namely that the governor of Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr in Oman, Tasnīm al-Hawwārī, had dispatched an expedition to India from the Omani territory, an expedition which had succeeded in taking some Indians

captive.<sup>100</sup> Oman therefore became very important to the Abbasids from a strategic point of view and it was used by them as a military base and starting point from which the Abbasid army could raid the East.

After these events Islamic sources neglect Oman affairs until the time of the caliph al-Hādī, who in 69/785 appointed al-Ḥasan b. Tasnīm<sup>101</sup> governor in Oman.<sup>102</sup> No information is given by Omani sources regarding the new Abbasid governor, nor do we find mentioned any activities by the above mentioned in Oman. The fact is that at this particular time Ibādī activities increased very rapidly, and the rule of Rāshid b. al-Nazr of the Julandā came under pressure from the Ibādīyyah and their supporters. During the caliphate of Hārūn al-Rāshid, Muḥammad b. Sulaymān b. ‘Alī, the Abbasid governor of Basra, dispatched Yaḥyā b. Sa’d al-Sa’dī in thirteen vessels to Oman, which he reached in safety.<sup>103</sup> There is no mention of the reasons behind the sailing of these vessels to Oman, but they had something to do with guarding the Gulf from strange vessels.<sup>104</sup>

When the Ibādī imamate declared its independence from the Abbasid caliphate for the second time, one of the main factors behind their success in establishing the imamate was the distance between Oman and Iraq, and the difficulty of land routes to Oman, along the west bank of the Gulf, a region where very few Arab tribes supported the Abbasids.<sup>105</sup> When the Ibādī revolt happened in Oman later, the Abbasids were unable to send reinforcements to the sons of al- Julandā, who were defeated.<sup>106</sup>

These factors encouraged the strengthening of the Ibādī imamate as a political entity in the absence of Abbasid threats. From the direction of movement it seems clear that the military expedition sent by the caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd to control Oman might have sought an alliance to help their agents, Rāshid b. al-Nazr and the Julandā family, but it arrived too late.<sup>107</sup> There are disagreements in the accounts from Islamic sources and those of the Ibādīs regarding the time of the expedition sent to Oman, and also about the character of its leader. Whilst the Omani Ibādī sources fail to give a definite date for this expedition, it is understood from other events that it was sent at the end of the caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd's reign.<sup>108</sup>

An hypothesis regarding the time has been given by some authors who assert that the expedition took place after 179/794, but before 193/808 - the year of Hārūn's death.<sup>109</sup> The year this expedition was directed towards Oman was probably 192/807. Islamic sources do not mention the starting date, and sources also differ regarding the identity of the commander of this military expedition. For example Ibādī sources name the main commander of the expedition as 'Isā b. Ja'far b. Abī Ja'far al-Mansūr who was a close relative of the caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd, and was in fact the commander-in-chief of this expedition.<sup>110</sup> But some Islamic authors give the name of 'Isā b. Ja'far b. Sulaymān b. 'Alī b. 'Abd Allāh b. al-'Abbās.<sup>111</sup> Al-Ṭabarī, in his accounts, mentions that the caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd had appointed 'Isā b. Ja'far b. Sulaymān governor of Oman in 189/804. He crossed the sea to the island of Ibn Kāwān in the Gulf and conquered one of its forts and besieged another, but was attacked by Ibn Mukhalid al-Azdī, the latter taking 'Isā b. Ja'far captive

and taking him to Oman in 189/804.<sup>112</sup> It has been confirmed that 'Īsā b. Ja'far was on his way to Oman.<sup>113</sup> This also increases the possibility that 'Īsā b. Ja'far b. Sulaymān was indeed the commander of this military expedition and not 'Īsā b. Ja'far b. Abī Ja'far al-Manṣūr, as Ibādī sources state. According to Islamic sources, the latter died in Ṭabaristān in 192/807.<sup>114</sup> The Abbasid army consisted of 1,000 horse and 5,000 infantry against the Ibādī imamate and its imam, al-Wārith b. Ka'b.<sup>115</sup> Omani sources state that 'Īsā b. Ja'far was the commander of this army.<sup>116</sup> The army came to Oman by sea and its vessels anchored in the port of Julfār, the same place Khāzim b. Khuzaymah used during the caliphate of al-Saffāh.<sup>117</sup> According to Omani sources, Imam al-Wārith b. Ka'b had received a letter from Dā'ūd b. Yazid al-Muhallabī<sup>118</sup> informing him of 'Īsā b. Ja'far's journey to Oman.<sup>119</sup> Another account asserts that Dā'ūd al-Muhallabī sent a letter to Imam al-Wārith's governor of Sohar, Maqārīsh b. Muḥammad al-Yahmadi, informing him of the departure of the Abbasid expedition and its entry into Omani territory.<sup>120</sup> Immediately the governor of Sohar took action by writing to Imam at his resident in Nizwā, informing him of the arrival of the Abbasid army. In his response, Imam Wārith charged his governor, Maqārīsh (Fārs) b. Muḥammad, with the task of defending Oman against this expedition and appointed him commander of the imamate army consisting of 3,000 foot infantry.<sup>121</sup>

It appears the Abbasid army went deep into the territory of the coastal area of Oman, arriving at a place called Ḥetta<sup>122</sup> on the north Bāṭinah coast, on the way to Sohar. There was no doubt that the Abbasid forces landed at the port of Julfār which was used by the Umayyad during Ḥajjāj's attempts to

control Oman,<sup>123</sup> and later by Khāzim b. Khuzaymah when he crushed the first imamate.<sup>124</sup>

Actually the Julfār region represented the main external threat for the imamate,<sup>125</sup> because of its distance from the imamate in Nizwā, in addition to the small number of people living there at this time, both of which created difficulties for defence for the central imamate authority. Besides, there were weak links with the tribes of this area, most of whom had no strong relations with Ibādiyyah in the interior of Oman. The two parties met in the Ḥettā area resulting in defeat for the Abbasid army who lost the battle for a variety of reasons, such as the nature of the land, their exhaustion after travelling and the strong resistance by the army who showed extreme courage in defending their imamate.

According to the Omani sources 'Īsā b. Ja'far withdrew all his army into his ships in Julfār port, and the Omanis pursued them, using, for the first time, three ships<sup>126</sup> belonging to the imamate commanded by Ḥumayd b. Fāliḥ (Aflaḥ) al-Ḥiddānī al-Salūtī with the assistance of 'Umar b. 'Umar, who together managed to take 'Īsā b. Ja'far captive and sent him to Sohar where he was held prisoner.<sup>127</sup> The imam Wārith was informed of this development while he was sending reinforcements from Nizwā. When he received the news of the arrest of 'Īsā b. Ja'far and the defeat of the Abbasid army, he returned to his capital in Nizwā.<sup>128</sup> It appears the imam Wārith held a meeting in Nizwā to discuss the issue of 'Īsā b. Ja'far. Among those who attended this meeting were the sheikhs and notables of Nizwā. Imam Wārith delivered a speech on the subject

of 'Isā b. Ja'far, saying that he was going to kill him and anyone who did not agree must tell the meeting.<sup>129</sup> 'Alī b. 'Azrah, a learned Ibādī sheikh<sup>130</sup> replied, saying,

“If you put him to death, you will do well; and if you spare him, you will do well.”<sup>131</sup>

The imam took the decision after this meeting to allow 'Isā to be kept alive but in prison.<sup>132</sup> In this he took into account that the killing of 'Isā might result in a strong reaction on the part of the Abbasid caliphate, especially as 'Isā was a relation of the caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd. This decision was considered very wise and instrumental in Oman's avoiding another attack by the Abbasids; but a number of the Ibādiyyah, headed by Yaḥyā b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, upon hearing of the imam's decision to keep 'Isā alive, were very angry. It has been reported that they went to Sohar without the knowledge of the imam Wārith and, concealing themselves in the prison, assassinated 'Isā and returned to their homes the same night.<sup>133</sup> This irresponsible action by Yaḥyā b. 'Abd al-'Azīz and his extremist followers was considered as an act of disobedience and a challenge to the imam Wārith b. Ka'b and his central authority. It seemed about to result in another Abbasid intervention when, as al-Izkawī mentions,

“Hārūn al-Rashīd, on hearing of the death of 'Isā b. Ja'far, resolved to send another army to Oman and the people of Oman were in great fear of him, but he died before his design could be carried out, and God saved the people from the evil he had in store for them.”<sup>134</sup>

Despite the fact that the assassination was opposed by some of the Ibādī ulema, others welcomed it and regarded it as a duty imposed upon them. One

who agreed with the killing of ʿĪsā gave his opinion on the matter thus: “the killer of ʿĪsā b. Jaʿfar will not be touched by hellfire.”<sup>135</sup> Another, an Ibādī ʿālim called Muḥammad b. Faḍl al-Ḥawwārī<sup>136</sup> supported the action, saying that the

“Muslims [Ibāḍiyyah] have the right to kill by assassination or by any other methods when they are able to do so.”<sup>137</sup>

Another version of this matter reported by two Islamic authors mentions the way he was killed. Ibn Ḥabīb, for example, states that after the people of Oman captured ʿĪsā b. Jaʿfar, he was crucified, and his name is mentioned along with those they killed by crucifixion.<sup>138</sup> Al-Balādhurī agrees with Ibn Ḥabīb that ʿĪsā was crucified by the people of Oman.<sup>139</sup>

The assassination by crucifixion of ʿĪsā b. Jaʿfar came as a result of the violent reaction of the Ibādīs of Oman against the bad behaviour displayed by the Abbasids during their expedition against Oman. The details of this misbehaviour were corroborated by historians. Ibn Ḥabīb describes the expedition towards Oman thus:

“ʿĪsā b. Jaʿfar went with the people of Basra, raping women and stealing on the way to Oman. The news of their misbehaviour reached the people of Oman who fought ʿĪsā b. Jaʿfar, preventing him from entering their country, and winning a great victory against him. He was crucified by them.”<sup>140</sup>

The Balādhurī version is similar to that of Ibn Ḥabīb;

“ʿĪsā went against them accompanied by troops from Basra, who began

to violate the women and to commit other outrages. The news of this reached the people of Oman and they resisted and eventually killed 'Īsā. Thereafter they refused to be under subjection, setting up one of their own people to rule over them."<sup>141</sup>

A study of the work of the Islamic authors on the subject reveals that they suffered from a lack of information about what was going on in Oman. Ya'qūbī mentions that the people of Oman were Ibāḍiyyah (*shurāh*) and that they had appointed one of themselves as imam.<sup>142</sup>

The main reason for the defeat of the Abbasids troops can be traced back to the fact that the Ibāḍī army was keen to protect the imamate and Omani independence from the central authority, and by their resistance and victory, avoiding the mistake by which the Abbasid troops crushed the first imamate. This victory also strengthened the Ibāḍī mamate and its institutions under the leadership of the imam al-Wārith b. Ka'b who gained respect and is given special importance among Ibāḍī authors. In addition, the victory over the Abbasids conferred respect and prestige on the imamate which thus strengthened its position in the hearts of the Omanis.

On the Abbasid side, this defeat was regarded as grave for its maritime activities in the Gulf, and as a strong retaliation against its influence in Omani. After the death of the caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd in 193/809, the Abbasid caliphate became involved in internal conflict between his sons, al-Amīn and al-Mā'mūn, about the succession. This conflict was later resolved in favour of al-Mā'mūn who became caliph. Al-Ya'qūbī claims that al-Mā'mūn's commander, Ṭāhir b.



al-Husayn, succeeded in controlling the eastern region of the caliphate during the struggle for its seat. Oman was among the regions that came under al-Ma'mūn's authority and he sent a governor to take responsibility for it.<sup>143</sup> Unfortunately we have no strong evidence that Oman remained loyal to al-Ma'mūn during the rule of the Ibādī imamate, nor do Ibādī sources indicate any sort of activity during his rule.<sup>144</sup>

#### **8.4.3 The death of Imam al-Wārith b. Ka'b**

It has been said that the reign of the imam al-Wārith b. Ka'b was considered by the Ibādīs of Oman to be the Golden Age. During his rule, which lasted for more than twelve years, he managed to establish strong pillars of national unity and peace. He also ruled Oman on the basis of justice and with the consultation of the Ibādī ulema.<sup>145</sup> He died as he was trying to rescue prisoners who were in a prison in the wadi which had become flooded. The imam ordered their release, but no one would venture to their rescue for fear of the torrent. He is reputed to have said, "Since they are in my charge and I shall be responsible for them at the day of Resurrection, I shall go across to them."<sup>146</sup> Accordingly he went to rescue them, followed by a number of his attendants, but the torrent overtook them and swept all away, including the prisoners. When the water of the wadi dried up, the imam's body was buried between 'Akr and Su'āl, where his grave is well known. His death was in 192/807.<sup>147</sup>

#### **8.5 The imamate of Ghassān b. 'Abdullāh al-Yahmadī . (192-208/808-823)**

After the death of al-Wārith b. Ka'b, the Ibādī ulema held a meeting at

Falij Dawt headed by two of the Ibādī sheikhs, Sulaymān b. ‘Uthmān and Sa’dah b. Tamīm.<sup>148</sup> The general consensus was to write to all the people of Oman or, as Ibādī sources describe it “the East and the *sirr*,”<sup>149</sup> regarding the election of a new imam. Those in favour of this action were lead by Sulaymān b. ‘Uthmān.<sup>150</sup> However Sa’dah b. Tamīm’s opinion was that a new imam should be chosen immediately without consulting the people of Oman, as he feared this might cause problems and differences amongst them.<sup>151</sup> It appears Sa’dah b. Tamīm feared that the election might give rise to the traditional rivalry between tribes such as B. Hinā’ who inhabited the Sharqiyyah and Zāhirah regions. These two had been the cause of much trouble to the Ibādī imam’s authority in Nizwā. It appears that Sulaymān b. ‘Uthmān was hoping only to consult the regions of Oman as a last resort. Al-Sālimī indicates that Sa’d b. Tamīm warned his colleague and companion, Sulaymān b. ‘Uthmān, not to delay the election of the new imam as this might provoke division among the people.<sup>152</sup> The Ibādī sheikhs elected the imam without consulting the Omanis and this became a traditional policy which later led to all sorts of disorder within the imamate.

On the basis of the traditional method of election, Ghassān b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Fajhī al-Yahmadi was elected the new Ibādī imam in 192/807.<sup>153</sup> Like his predecessor, al-Wārith, the sources give no information of his early life, nor of any of his activities and relations before the time he was elected. The policy of choosing Ibādī imams in this way was adopted by the sheikhs, namely that knowledge carriers’ (*ḥamalat al-‘ilm*) would be involved in the choice and

election of imams rather than they themselves having the right to be considered for election and, later on after the election, they would exercise full authority over their chosen imam and take on the role of decision-makers. This method is evident in the history of the Ibādī imamate, and it appears to have become a strategic policy implemented by the Ibādīyyah, not only in Oman, but also in other places such as North Africa and Ḥaḍramawt.<sup>154</sup> The selection of Imam Ghassān al-Yaḥmūdī increased the power of his clan who monopolised the Imamate. Ghassān was the third imam from this family in the short time since the imamate had been re-established. The role of the Ibādī ulema, especially that of the *ḥamalat al-ʿilm*, was clearly behind the rise of the Yaḥmad clan as the ruling family, and the imams were deeply rooted within this family for tribal and sectarian reasons.

After Ghassān b. ʿAbd Allāh became imam, he faced some political opposition from the tribes. This shows that the tribal problem was not yet settled, and that tribal solidarity still existed within the Omani community. Since the sons of al-Julandā had lost their role as ruling family over Oman forever after the second Ibādī imamate was re-established, their traditional opposition and challenge to the imamate remained constant. They relied upon support from their traditional allies, such as the B. Hināʾ tribe who were rivals of the Yaḥmad and the other tribes settled in Nizwā and the interior who benefited from being in the Ibādī centre and favouring the imamate government. Their power noticeably increased.

According to Omani sources two major revolts took place during the

imamate of Ghassān b. ‘Abd Allāh. Al-‘Awtabī<sup>155</sup> mentions that a tribal rebellion led by a member of the B. Hinā’ tribe called Rāshid b. Shadhān b. Ghassān b. Sa‘īd b. Shujā’ al-Hinā’ī of B. Maḥarib was broken up in the east.<sup>156</sup> The first target he and his men attacked was a place called Damā (now al-Sīb).<sup>157</sup> He killed the imam’s governor and many of his followers and looted the area. Imam Ghassān reacted by sending an expedition to arrest him, but it failed to do so.<sup>158</sup>

Al-Izkawī, in his version of events, mentions the name of the place where the rebellion took place as being east of Oman but does not give the name of its leader.<sup>159</sup> In his account al-Izkawī reports the name of al-Ṣaqr b. Muḥammad b. Zā’idah al-Julandī<sup>160</sup> as among those who revolted.<sup>161</sup> Al-Ṣaqr himself was a supporter of the Ibādī movement and helped by giving financial support and military equipment to the Ibādīs during their revolt against his uncle, Rāshid b. Naẓr al-Julandī.<sup>162</sup> Al-Izkawī also mentions that, when Imam Ghassān discovered that al-Ṣaqr’s brother was among the rebels, he sent to ask him where his brother was. Al-Ṣaqr told the imam his brother was ill and staying in his house, but, after the revolt, the imam’s army had captured his brother with the rebels. As a result al-Saqr b. Muḥammad b. Zā’idah was accused of flattery and secrecy, and Imam Ghassān ordered his *wālī* in Samā’il to bring him to Nizwā. The governor of Samā’il went to Nizwā accompanied by al-Ṣaqr and some *shurāh* to protect him from attack whilst on the way.<sup>163</sup> Imam Ghassān had also sent a military detachment from Nizwā with chief ‘ālīm Mūsā b. ‘Alī to protect al-Ṣaqr.<sup>164</sup> The two groups met in a place called al-Sahamāt.<sup>165</sup>

On his return journey to Nizwā, al-Ṣaqr b. Muḥammad was set upon by a group of extremist Ibāḍiyyah and killed, and neither the governor of Samā'il, Abū 'l-Waḍḍāh, nor Mūsā b. 'Alī was able to prevent them.<sup>166</sup> It seems likely that the assassination of al-Ṣaqr al-Julandī had been planned in advance and perhaps the imam himself was implicated in it in order to get rid of him, as all the indications showed al-Ṣaqr's brother was involved in the revolt against the imam and al-Ṣaqr's attempt to cover for him by saying he was in his house was regarded by the imam as an attempt to deceive him, for which he decided he must die. Imam Ghassān did not want to be seen to be directly involved in al-Ṣaqr's death as it might cause tribal conflict.<sup>167</sup> The imam therefore gave secret orders to fanatical Ibāḍīs to kill al-Ṣaqr, and this can be inferred from the sources which report that "they have not heard that Imam Ghassān ever denied who it was who killed al-Ṣaqr."<sup>168</sup>

There is a similarity between the killing of al-Ṣaqr b. Muḥammad al-Julandī and 'Isā b. Ja'far during the time of al-Wārith b. Ka'b.<sup>169</sup> In fact Imam Ghassān pursued a very tough policy against B. al-Julandā, as a result of which many besides al-Ṣaqr al-Julandī were killed at the hands of the Ibāḍīs; for example the leader of the revolt against Imam Ghassān, Rāshid b. Shadhān al-Hinā'i was not punished by the imam, in spite of the fact that he attacked Damā (al-Ṣīb). According to al-'Awtabī, after the revolt Rāshid al-Hinā'i went to Rustāq where the clan al-Fajḥ of Yaḥmad, the family of Imam Ghassān, lived and asked them for safety from him.<sup>170</sup> Ibāḍī sources are silent about this event. Imam Ghassān left Rāshid al-Hinā'i unpunished because he took

shelter with his family and in this way he escaped death despite his deeds against the imamate. At the same time al-Ṣaqr b. Muḥammad and the rest of the Julandā family faced death, accused of participation in the revolt of Rāshid b. Shadhān al-Hinā'i. This shows that Imam Ghassān and his Ibādī followers were determined in advance to get rid of the prominent sons of B. Julandā because the Ibādīs feared them and the threat they represented to their rule.

Tribal rule was also a very important factor in events of this period. Imam Ghassān acted in events as governor, not as imam and, by giving an amnesty to Rāshid al-Hinā'i, he acted as a tribal sheikh, his decision coming under the influence of the clan when Rāshid asked them to shelter him. This was a custom with Arab tribes before Islam and had nothing to do with Islamic principles.<sup>171</sup>

### **8.5.1 Internal and external policies of Imam Ghassān**

By implementing a very tough policy against his traditional enemies, Imam Ghassān succeeded in obtaining a sort of stability during his imamate. Ibādī sources agree that his reign was one of administrative control, where the imamate gained security and established itself. Additionally during Ghassān's rule, the imamate started to build up its military forces, particularly naval forces, to face the challenge of external powers who were regarded as a serious threat to the government and its stability.

### **8.5.2 The external policy of the imamate**

With regard to the threat of external intervention to the Ibādī imamate

in Oman, responsibility for defence became difficult and complicated because of Oman's increasing importance as a strategic location, astride the sea trade routes from the Gulf to South East Asia, India and East Africa. The Abbasid caliphate would not allow any power to exercise any role which might cause any sort of threat to its interests in this area and they took early steps to prevent the first Ibādī Imamate from rising in Oman, with their military intervention which resulted in the killing of Imam al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd. They made a second attempt to control Oman during the time of Hārūn, but this failed to achieve its purpose. The Abbasid caliphate did not engage in any activities against Imam Ghassān's imamate, and on its side the Ibādī imamate in Oman took care to avoid any conflict with Abbasid authority, fearing direct consequences.

Ibādī sources mention a very different threat that arose at the time to endanger the lives of the Omani people and the authority of the imamate; that of pirates. The Omani coast was infested with their vessels (*bawārij*)<sup>172</sup> of pirates who attacked Oman committing great depredations on the coast.<sup>173</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī mentions that during the time of al-Mu'tasim (218-247/833-851), great achievements were made in capturing the Indian vessels which were infesting the Gulf and disrupting the Omani trade routes.<sup>174</sup> Al-Sālimī also reports that these *bawārij* concentrated their raids on Omani coastal towns like Sohar, Julfār, and Diba<sup>175</sup> during the reign of Imam Ghassān b. 'Abdullāh. The pirates were Indians,<sup>176</sup> and al-Sayyābī mentions that there were also Persians.<sup>177</sup> Imam Ghassān b. 'Abdullāh had to deal with this new threat and made a very important decision to move from Nizwā, the capital of the imamate, to Sohar,

the old capital of Oman, temporarily in 206/821 where he could face this challenge close at hand.<sup>178</sup> He established himself at Sohar, staying for a number of years and organising a fleet to deal with the pirate raiders.<sup>179</sup> Imam Ghassān fitted out small vessels, designed to attack the pirates<sup>180</sup> and gave them the name of al-Shadhāwah or Shadhāh.<sup>181</sup>

Imam Ghassān managed to stop pirate raiders from reaching the Omani Coast during his stay in Sohar<sup>182</sup> and the idea of expanding the Omani fleet became important to the imamate government, to defend Omani lands and protect Omani trade in the Indian Ocean. Trade started again once Sohar had regained its commercial importance during the time of this imam as a sea port for the trade routes from Basra to East Asia and East Africa. After securing the Oman coast against these raiders, Imam Ghassān returned to Nizwā in 206/821<sup>183</sup> to deal with the tribal revolts which had been reported in the eastern and Zāhirah region.<sup>184</sup> Ibādī sources give no further information about the nature of this local problem caused by some Omani tribes.

Historical sources give no information regarding relations between the Imam Ghassān and the Abbasid caliphate and there is nothing to indicate any sort of contact between the two, nor is any kind of military clash recorded except by Ya'qūbī, who mentions that in the early reign of al-Mā'mūn, his commander, Ṭāhir b. al-Ḥusayn, controlled the eastern province of the caliphate, which included Oman and Bahrain, during a dispute between two brothers over the caliphate<sup>185</sup> and that al-Mā'mūn was appointed governor over Oman.<sup>186</sup> There is no evidence to support this claim and a contemporary author claimed



that Oman remained under the caliphate of al-Ma'mūn.<sup>187</sup> All Ibādī sources are silent on any sort of Abbasid presence in Oman, nor is there evidence of any political influence over the Ibādī imamate. After Hārūn's unsuccessful attempt to control Oman during the imamate of al-Wārith b. Ka'b, historical sources are again silent regarding any event or information which could support the argument of an Abbasid role in Oman. The political influence of the Abbasid collapsed with the loss of their agents amongst the Julandā rulers in 177/793. On their side, the Abbasids themselves did not make any attempts to control Oman at this time.

### 8.5.3 Trade and agricultural economy

Generally speaking, Oman is entirely dependent on irrigation. There is no rain-fed land whatsoever in Oman, and it is only the excess seasonal flow in the wadis and irrigation system that makes the growing of annual crops possible.<sup>188</sup> This being the case, Oman had already had a system of irrigation using *qanāhs* (known in Oman as *falaj*)<sup>189</sup> for hundreds of years. These were concentrated in the interior in the mountain areas where village settlements were entirely dependent upon this system of irrigation. In the Baṭīnah coastal and surrounding areas,<sup>190</sup> there was an alternative water supply using wells. According to Omani sources, Imam Ghassān paid special attention to improving the *falaj* irrigation in a move to develop agriculture and he started a scheme to improve and develop it which collapsed during the flood which occurred during his imamate. The imam was very aware of the need to maintain the channels in a good state of repair. Al-Sālimī<sup>191</sup> describes a story told of Imam Ghassān which illustrates how keen he was to improve the *falaj* system. One

day while Imam Ghassān was walking in Nizwā, he noticed that watermoss (*tahlub*) was beginning to grow in one of the main irrigation channels. Realising that this indicated detrimental changes, he determined to investigate. By pretending that he wished to raise a loan for war against India, the imam was able to sound out various groups who might have been responsible. Eventually he discovered that it was neither the merchants nor the landowners who were to blame for the deplorable state of affairs, but his own officials. He therefore changed the officials and afterwards it was seen that the flow of water from the channels increased. Another example of his concern about irrigation is shown when the Falaj al-Khatm irrigating the town of Manh collapsed. Imam Ghassān found an alternative source of water for the people of Manh by ordering the breaking off of a channel from another *qanāh*, that of the Nizwā's *falaj*. As a result of this, the channel had to go through part of Nizwā which was already full of crops and date palms and the imam asked the people of Manh to pay compensation to the landowners of Nizwā for the lands and cultivation which had been affected.<sup>192</sup>

The growth and prosperity of agriculture reflected positively on the imamate itself and its towns. It has been said that Nizwā flourished during the time of Imam Ghassān, as it represented the centre of the Ibādī central administration. The house of the imamate<sup>193</sup> occupied an area of Nizwā called al-'Aqr.<sup>194</sup> Despite the fact that Imam Ghassān had moved the seat of the imamate from Nizwā to Sohar during his reign, Nizwā reached the peak of its fame and was given the name of Bayḍat al-Islām (the territory of Islam).<sup>195</sup> Nizwā also bore the name of the Arab royal residence (*Takht Mulk al-*

'Arab').<sup>196</sup> It was the capital of the Julandā kings long before the establishment of the imamate.

Sohar and the rest of Oman also shared in Nizwā's progress. The Imam himself conducted the affairs of Sohar and the Bāṭinah regions from Sohar when he moved there temporarily during the time of the pirate raiders of the coast. Having succeeded in sweeping away these raiders and their ships from the seas of Oman, Sohar began to return to normality and resume its role as a strategic centre for trade between Oman and the Islamic caliphate in Iraq and the rest of the world. Because of its importance and the extent of its site, Arab geographical authors called it 'the gate to China' (*bawwābt al-Ṣīn*).<sup>197</sup>

#### 8.5.4 Religious policy

Since one aim of the Imam was to put the Shari'ah law into practice, sources provide us with full information about Imam Ghassān and his justice. Historical authors consider him to be the first Ibādī imam ever to cut off a thief's hand, interpreting God's will as having placed bounds of restriction on man's freedom of action (*ḥudūd Allāh*).<sup>198</sup> This incident took place while Imam Ghassān was in Sohar. A thief was brought to him and he ordered his hand to be cut off.<sup>199</sup> Imam Ghassān also gave judgment that a house belonging to B. al-Julandā in Samd in Nizwā should be demolished because of its isolated location, which represented a threat to Ibādī women who had to pass by this house.<sup>200</sup> Among the stories of Ibādī sources illustrating the justice of Imam Ghassān is one about the Bāṭinah slaves. They used to cultivate the soil of their lords during the night and Ghassān said, "We have made justice except

for the Bāṭinah slaves.” By this he meant that he did not agree with the way the lords of the Bāṭinah used their slaves at night as well as during the day and he ordered that if the owners wanted them to work at night, they were not to work during the day as well.<sup>201</sup> From this story we can also see that slavery had increased during this time in Sohar, which by now had become a trading centre similar to that of Basra where the numbers of slaves began to increase rapidly. These slaves were of African and Persian origin and were used in farming, trading and shipyard industries.

During the time of Imam Ghassān Ibādī sources also mention for the first time the presence of a Shī‘ah community in Sohar, indicating that the majority of non-Arabs of Sohar, besides the merchants who used Sohar as a trading centre, were mainly of Persian origin and Zanj and were Shī‘is. Historical sources indicate that the Shī‘ah community in Sohar started to push for a house of the Prophet in Sohar. The name of the leader of the Shī‘ah wanting this was Baqiyyah. The Ibādī ulema were annoyed by these Shī‘i activities and Imam Ghassān ordered the leader of the community to be brought before him where he was accused of inciting the people (*bi-lisanihī*)<sup>202</sup> and was ordered to be expelled from Oman. However he gave him four months to wind up his Sohar business before expulsion. According to al-Sayyābī, the Shī‘ah at that time used to insult Abū Bakr and ‘Umar<sup>203</sup> who were regarded by all Muslims, including the Ibāḍiyyah to be rightly-guided caliphs and good examples of Muslim rulers.

#### **8.6 The imamate of ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ḥumayd (208-226/823-840)**

After a reign of fifteen years and seven months Imam Ghassān b.

‘Abdallāh al- Yaḥmadī fell sick and died in Dhū ‘l-Qa‘dah, 207/802.<sup>204</sup> In the following year Sheikh ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ḥumayd al-‘Alawī, who derived from the family of Sūdah b. ‘Alī b. ‘Amr b. ‘Āmir Mā’ al- Samā’ al-Azdī,<sup>205</sup> became the fourth Ibādī imam. There are two dates given by the sources for his election as imam. The first gives his election as 27 Dhū ‘l-Qa‘dah, 207/822, i.e. immediately after the death of Imam Ghassān,<sup>206</sup> but most sources put the date of his election as 22 Shawwāl, 208/823.<sup>207</sup> The Ibādīs’ pledge of allegiance to the imams is based on their upholding justice, advocating what is good and prohibiting what is bad, pledging their souls for the use of God, demonstrating right and shunning wrong and upholding *jihād* for the sake of God.<sup>208</sup>

Ibādī sources are silent about ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ḥumayd’s life before he became imam, except to mention that he participated in the Ibādī revolt against Rāshid b. al-Naẓr, with Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Affān, the first Ibādī imam of the second imamate.<sup>209</sup>

When Imam ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ḥumayd was selected as imam, he was very old. He was originally from the town of Yanqul, in the Zāhirah region of northern Oman<sup>210</sup> and was from the Azd tribe. Despite his age he was elected by the Ibādīs as recognition for the important role he had played during their revolt to overthrow the Julandā family. Although he occupied the imamate for a long period, during which time he faced opposition because of his advancing age, Ibādī sources neglect to record the activities of his imamate, which may indicate that there was dispute and debate among the Ibādī ulema over this. Taking into account his long reign as imam, very little seems to have

occurred during his time compared with that of other imams. Al-Izkawī, for instance, only gives ten lines about the imamate of ‘Abd al-Malik. The majority of Ibādī sources agree that his imamate was distinguished by calm and stability. All sources use these words to describe his imamate; “He governed righteously and justly, and followed in the footsteps of his virtuous predecessor. In those days Oman was blessed with prosperity.”<sup>211</sup>

### 8.6.1 Internal policy

Because Imam ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ḥumayd was rather old to conduct the affairs of the imamate, he took a group of Ibādī ulema to assist him in its running. Among these was the chief of the ulema and Ibādī, Sheikh Mūsā b. ‘Alī,<sup>212</sup> who became acting imam during the illness of Imam Ibn Ḥumayd. The latter suffered from hearing and sight problems, and Mūsā occupied the position of prime minister in his reign.<sup>213</sup>

There was a group of Ibādīs who called upon ‘Abd al-Malik to step down from the imamate because of the effects of old age on him which disqualified him from continuing as imam. Mūsā b. ‘Alī refused to meet their demands to depose ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ḥumayd because, from his point of view, he had not lost his faculties, nor had he committed any errors which might have led him to step down from the imamate.<sup>214</sup> This, according to Ibādī thought on the imamate, did not disqualify him from being imam. It seems that the Ibādī ulema wanted ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ḥumayd to remain in power, and he did so. The opposition to the rule of the old imam was increased by some of the Ibādī ulema under the leadership of one of the great scholars of the Ibādīyyah,

Bashīr b. al-Mundhir who continued to call for the deposition of Imam ‘Abd al-Malik, describing him as a mountain.<sup>215</sup> It is well known to the Ibādīs that, if the Imam loses his physical strength, then he must be deposed, since it will become difficult for him to carry out his duties. Mūsā b. ‘Alī’s point of view concerning this matter was that there was no need for the imam to step down, since his instruction and ruling continued. Al-Sayyābī regards Mūsā b. ‘Alī’s interpretation as clearly contrary to Ibādī teaching.<sup>216</sup>

Although Ibādī sources described the reign of ‘Abd al-Malik imamate as calm and stable, they report one incident which took place during his reign: this was the rebellious movement of the Mahrah tribes which inhabited the southern area of Oman. These tribes became active during the third century. Their activities have been described by one Ibādī author as outside the law, involving robbery and looting.<sup>217</sup>

In fact, the Mahrah were always considered an enemy of the Ibādī imamate in northern Oman, not only because they opposed Ibādī teaching, but also because they were very strong allies of the former rulers of Oman, the Julandā family. A large number of those who were killed in the Majāzah battle between Rāshid b. al-Naẓr and the Ibādī groups were in fact from these tribes.<sup>218</sup> Al-Sayyābī explains that the events the battle of Majāzah had made them feel bitter and hostile towards the Ibādīyah and the imamate authority.<sup>219</sup> This led them to kill the tax collectors (*jubāt al-zakāh*) sent by ‘Abd al-Malik b. Humayd.<sup>220</sup> This action of the Mahrah tribes angered the imam who decided to punish the killers; however, some leaders of the Mahrah asked for pardon,

which was accepted by Imam ‘Abd al-Malik who consulted with his advisor, Mūsā b. ‘Alī.<sup>221</sup> It is worth mentioning that the Mahrah in fact suffered from a heavy taxes taken from them by the imamate. They had always been humiliated and considered to be a group of herdsmen who had no knowledge of the true religion.

Regarding external policy during the time of this imam, the Islamic sources do not indicate any sort of clash between the Imamate and the central Islamic authority of the Abbasid caliphate, nor do the Ibadi sources make mention of any connection with a foreign power, nor did any threat come from outside to the independence of the Ibādī imamate of ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ḥumayd.

#### 8.6.2 Intellectual activities

Ibādī sources focus on Sohar during Imam ‘Abd al-Malik, as a centre not only for trade, but also for intellectual activities, which reflect its development during this time. Muslim Islamic groups such as the Mu‘tazilites, Qadarites and Murja’ites were well known to the people of Sohar at that time and spread very rapidly among them.<sup>222</sup> Also Sohar had a very strong hold on the Ibādīyyah, but many Ibādī ulema had participated in discussions and arguments between these factions, and it has been reported that the Ibādī ulema of Nizwā feared the growing activities of these schools, whose teaching went as far as Tu‘ām.<sup>223</sup> Therefore they asked the Imam to take some tough measures against these groups. Ḥāshim b. Ghaylān was one of the Ibādī ulema who warned the imam of their threat and he asked him to expel them from Oman.<sup>224</sup> Beside these activities and discussions, al-Salīmī indicates the existence of the Jewish



community in Sohar during this time.<sup>225</sup> These people worked as merchants during times of commercial prosperity in Sohar. Persians, Hindus and Africans also lived in Sohar during this time.

#### **8.7 The imamate of al-Muhannā b. Jayfar (226-237/840-851)**

The al-Muhannā b. Jayfar al-Fajhī al-Yahmadi al-Azdi was elected imam on the same day as the death of ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ḥumayd, 3 Rajab 226/840.<sup>226</sup> It has been reported that Mūsā b. ‘Alī, the chief scholar (*‘ālim*), who selected the former imam ‘Abd al-Malik and acted as imam during his early illness, had now taken charge of making the imamate contract for the new imam. It seems that the new imam was a relative of Imam Ghassān b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Fajhī.<sup>227</sup>

The sources describe Imam al-Muhannā as a very strong personality and that “he was very strict and firm with all. No one was permitted to utter vain speeches in his councils; he never favoured one litigant against another; none of his assistants ventured to rise while he was seated; nor did any soldier who received pay approach him without his arms.”<sup>228</sup>

All Ibādīs agreed to his imamate and gave their support to him, which indicates that he had enjoyed the full backing of the Ibādī ulema.<sup>229</sup> Therefore his imamate was regarded as continuing the prosperity of the Ibādī imamate in Oman. His reign was distinguished by a very strong central government, which goes with the personal quality he had as imam.

It appears, as the Ibādī sources mention, that Imam al-Muhannā was

entirely different from previous imams in the use of force to implement his policy, and his governing style was very tough, especially against those who criticised him. He also punished everyone whom he considered to be a threat to the imamate.<sup>230</sup> According to the sources when Imam al-Muhannā became old, a group of Ibādīs suggested to Sheikh Mūsā b. ‘Alī that he should be deposed from the imamate, and they asked Mūsā to take their suggestion to Imam al-Muhannā. He said to Mūsā, when the latter approached him “I know what you have come here for. By God, if I obey the desires of the people of Oman, no imam would be able to remain a year among them.”

He then expelled Mūsā b. ‘Alī, a reflection of his anger. “Return to your place; I did not give you permission to approach me, nor did you ask for it; do not say this again.”<sup>231</sup>

His sharpness and toughness disturbed some of the Ibādī ulema, such as Muḥammad b. Maḥbūb and Bashīr b. al-Mundhir, but they did not reject him publicly, in order to avoid differences and division among the Ibādīs.<sup>232</sup> From these events, we can notice also the new dilemma which the Ibādīs were facing, that is, the age of the imam who became very old during his Imamate. This dilemma became apparent when the Ibādīs began to choose a very old individual to conduct the imamate, especially from the time of the previous imam, ‘Abd al- Malik.

Up to the time of Imam al-Muhannā and the coming imam al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk there is no information provided by the sources about their ages when

they were elected. The Ibādī ulema chose those already imams because of their long standing with the Ibādiyyah since the second Ibadi imamate was established. Also they followed the Arab tradition in the style of choosing the older person to be the sheikh of the tribe, who must be the oldest and most knowledgeable among them. This method created a type of opposition, not only from non-Ibādīs, but among the Ibādīs themselves who wanted to depose these Imams when they became too weak to conduct affairs. Later the dispute about deposing imams and disassociating from them cost the Omanis and Ibādīs the high price of what is referred to as the Civil War, as we shall see in the next chapter.

#### **8.7.1 The internal policy of al-Muhannā b. Jayfar (226-237/840-851)**

As we have seen, the Imam al-Muhannā possessed great firmness and strength of character and was a strict Ibādī, which in some ways gained him respect and made him feared by the people. Oman at this particular time appears to have needed a strong personality to impose order and stability. Imam al-Muhannā paid much attention to building up a very strong army and as a result, the imamate forces were extended. He also improved the navy which was established by Imam Ghassān to protect the long coast of Oman. The number of ships totalled more than three hundred, all armed for war, together with the commercial ships which might be used as warships, if they were needed.<sup>233</sup>

As well as these strong naval forces, the Imam al-Muhannā had an army consisting of ten thousand soldiers; the headquarters of this army was at

Nizwā.<sup>234</sup> This was in addition to the soldiers who were spread between the different Omani towns such as Sohar, Tu'ām, Julfār, Ja'lān and Damā. This large army was the first to be in the possession of any Ibādī imam during this time.<sup>235</sup> The rising military power of the imamate had automatically reflected prosperity in trade which witnessed an increase during the reign of Imam Ghassān b. 'Abd Allāh. Its centre was Sohar. In addition, agriculture improved because of the improvement in the *aflāj* system and the development of irrigation. Al-Sālimī indicates that internal stability and the spread of security led to the increase in the population in Oman. He gives the example of Su'al quarter, one of the Nizwā areas, whose population reached more than 14,000 people.<sup>236</sup>

### 8.7.2 Internal opposition

Every Ibādī imam had to face some sort of opposition during the period of his reign. This opposition came from certain people such as the tribal leaders, or from within the Ibādīs themselves, especially from the ulema and sheikhs. Any imam who attempted to ignore the role of the Ibādī ulema in sharing the power with him might face deposition or disassociation from him. The role upon which the ulema insisted was to be consulted on every decision (*shurā*) the imam wished to take; otherwise, he had to face difficulties within his imamate.

The reign of Imam al-Muḥannā witnessed tribal opposition from the main enemies of the imamate: the B. al-Julandā and that of the Mahrah tribes.

### 8.7.3 The Julandā revolts

This attempt from B. al-Julandā during the reign of Imam al-Muhannā was one of many attempts by them to regain their power, which they had lost to the Ibādīs, and particularly to the Yahmadi clan which controlled the seat of the imamate. This revolt tended to throw much light on the political condition of Oman as well as on the history of the Julandā tribe as a whole.<sup>237</sup> It was led by al-Mughīrah b. Rawsan al-Julandī (Rushin).<sup>238</sup> The Ibādī sources do not mention the place where the rebellion broke out; Miles described it as taking place in al-Zahirah region.<sup>239</sup> It has been reported that al-Mughīrah al-Julandī and his followers marched to Tu'am which they attacked; the governor Abu al-Waddāh who had been appointed by the imam, was killed in this fight.<sup>240</sup>

The news of this attack soon reached the imam who immediately dispatched a military expedition which had al-Ṣaqr b. 'Azzān as its commander.<sup>241</sup> He also involved his governor of Sohar, Abū Marwān, who left for Tu'am immediately to stem the tide of revolt. Numbers in the Sohar army were initially given as 12,000<sup>242</sup> which was doubtless an exaggeration. Al-Izkawī does not mention the number of the army, but he indicated that Indian elements were among this army.<sup>243</sup> The sources do not give us any information about the origin of these people, although some thought that they were an Omani tribe.<sup>244</sup> However the sources fail to tell us whether this Indian army were soldiers within the imam's army or mercenaries at work for him. They had their own leader called al-Maṭṭār al-Hindī.<sup>245</sup> Abu Marwān and his army inflicted so severe a defeat that the power of the Julandā movement was broken

and the family itself almost annihilated. Their villages or settlements were burnt to the ground, and their families cruelly driven into the desert to starve.<sup>246</sup> The Omani sources put this responsibility partly upon al-Maṭṭār al-Hindī and his men, and the sources describe them as foolish (*sufahā'*).<sup>247</sup> The imam ordered compensation for those whose houses were burnt to the ground.<sup>248</sup>

There is no information about an Abbasid involvement in this revolt, nor were they able to offer any aid to the rebels. The defeat which the Julandā suffered was the last attempt by them to overthrow the Ibādī imamate during the 3rd/9th century. From this date we hear nothing more of this family, which soon became extinct through absorption.

#### 8.7.4 Mahrah tribes and the Ibādī imamate

Mahrah was always under the influence of the Ibādī imamate, when the latter was in the strong position, as already mentioned. The tribes of Mahrah were very important to the imamate's financial income which came, as it did, from collecting tax (*zakāh*) from these tribes.<sup>249</sup> According to Ibādī sources the Mahrah during the time of al-Muḥannā b. Jayfar rejected payment of the tax and alms (*ṣadaqah*) to his agent, 'Abd Allāh b. Sulaymān al-Ḍabbī from the town of Manḥ who used to use the grazing ground to calculate contributions of cattle. It is reported that he entered the land of Mahrah<sup>250</sup> and went to an individual of the district, named Wasīm b. Jayfar, from whom two payments were due.<sup>251</sup> He, however, refused to pay more than one contribution, saying to the collector, "Take that if you like, if not, behold the graves of your comrades!"<sup>252</sup> 'Abd Allāh b. Sulaymān informed the imam of the conduct of

Wasīm.

Immediately the imam ordered the governors of Adam, Sināw and Ja'lān to arrest the Mahri chief, if possible.<sup>253</sup> At the same time, the imam dispatched three detachments to Mahrah; the *wālī* of Adam succeeded in capturing Wasīm. The *wālī* informed the imam who sent Yaḥyā al-Yaḥmadi, known as Abū al-Maqārish, to him with a body of horsemen.<sup>254</sup> The aim of the imam in sending these troops was to keep him secure and to send him word. In this manner, the imam continued to dispatch troops, so that it might be said that the prisoner was borne along on their spears, until they arrived at Nizwā with him. The imam ordered him to be imprisoned, and he remained a year in confinement, during which period no one dared to mention his name, nor to enquire after him.<sup>255</sup> Wasīm remained confined until the Mahrah sheikhs procured his liberation through the intercession of the Yaḥmad, the clan of the Imam al-Muḥannā al-Yahmadi, which is an Arab tradition well known to the Arabs in general and to the Arabs of Oman in particular.<sup>256</sup> Yaḥmad sheikhs interceded for him with Imam al-Muḥannā, who consented to release him on one of the following conditions, from which he desired them to choose: firstly, that they should emigrate from Oman; secondly that they should agree to fight; thirdly, that they should bring cattle every year to the camp of Nizwā.

The sheikhs accepted the third condition, to bring the camels to the imam. According to al-Izkawī, a pillar which stands at farq of Nizwā was erected in the time of al-Muḥannā as a mark to Mahrah tribes that they would assemble their camels every year on that spot.<sup>257</sup>

Some authors suggest that the reason behind the use of force by Imam al-Muḥannā was to show his power to the Arab tribes of Oman that they should fear him and give him their obedience.<sup>258</sup> Some regarded Imam al-Muḥannā's action towards the Mahrah tribes as reflecting his control over the imamate, this being the only method of keeping these difficult tribes under his authority.<sup>259</sup>

#### 8.7.5 The intellectual activities of Imam al-Muḥannā's imamate

Intellectual activities continued during the imamate of al-Muḥannā. As a result of the strong connection between Sohar and Basra, most of the Islamic groups (*fīraq*) were established in Sohar, as we have seen in the imamate of 'Abd al-Malik b. Ḥumayd, which witnessed the activities of the Shi'ites, Mu'tazilites, and Murji'ites.<sup>260</sup> The Ibādī sources report that an intellectual discussion during the time of Imam al-Muḥannā took place among followers about the case of the creation of the Qur'ān, whether it had been created or not.<sup>261</sup> Al-Sālimī mentions that this argument was between two well-known sheikhs, Muḥammad b. Maḥbūb and Muḥammad b. Hāshim. The former was among those who believed that the Qur'ān had been created and the latter was against this idea which he regarded as a new phenomenon which has nothing to do with Ibādī teaching.<sup>262</sup> Ibn Hāshim had threatened to leave Oman in protest against the spreading of these teachings among Ibādī followers.<sup>263</sup>

In a meeting which was attended by the Ibādī sheikhs to discuss this matter, Muḥammad b. Maḥbūb gave up his belief about the creation of the Qur'ān, and they agreed at the end of the meeting on the saying that God is

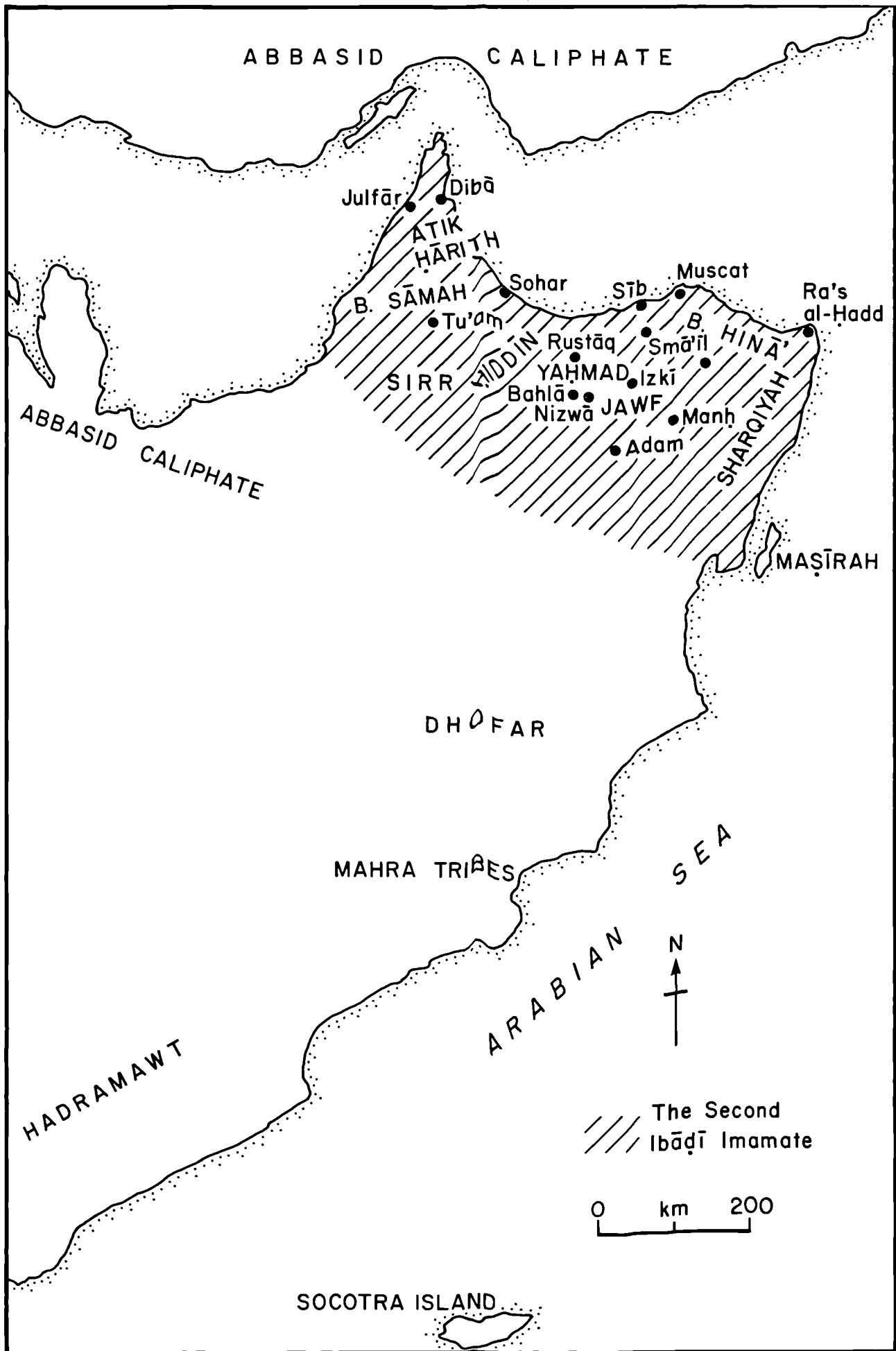


the creator of everything, but a part of Him has been created. The Qur'ān is the word of God and His Revelation and His Book which He revealed to His Prophet Muḥammad, "may God bless him and grant him peace."<sup>264</sup> Also among the decisions which they agreed upon was to ask the Imam al-Muḥannā b. Jayfar to intervene in this matter by using force to prevent any person from saying that the Qur'ān had been created.<sup>265</sup> As a result the Ibādī sheikhs ceased their discussion about this matter in obedience to the imam orders and their desire to maintain the unity of the Ibādīyyah.<sup>266</sup> Also at this time, the Ibādī ulema produced a great many writings, their books increased and their written advice to the imam, known as *siyar wa'ljawābāt*, increased also.

During this imamate a dispute arose between two of the Ibādī ulema, Maḥbūb b. al-Raḥīl, one of the *ḥamalat al-'ilm* in Oman, and Hārūn b. al-Yamman. It took place in Basra, the former centre. Each one of these had sent letters to Imam al-Muḥannā b. Jayfar and also to the followers of Ibādīyyah in Ḥaḍramawt, explaining their position about this dispute. According to al-Sālimī, Oman followed Maḥbūb b. al-Raḥīl and Ḥaḍramawt followed Hārūn b. al-Yamman.<sup>267</sup> No information about the nature of this dispute is mentioned by al-Sālimī, which appears to have been on one of the issues regarding Ibādī teaching. It has been reported that Imam al-Muḥannā himself had participated in these growing activities of the Ibādīyyah. He himself wrote a *sīrah* to Mu'adh b. Ḥarb, explaining to him the correct path of Islam.<sup>268</sup>

# MAP 3

OMAN DURING THE SECOND IBĀDĪ IMAMATE



## Notes

1. Tuhfah, I, 72; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 455; cf. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 191. For more detailed discussion concerning the role of al-Julandā, see Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 97-108; Badger, Imams, 11; see also Chapter VII of this study.
2. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 72; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 23; cf. Ross, Annals, 122; Badger, Imams, 4.
3. About the role of Omani tribes in supporting the Julandā rule, see ed. Hopwood, Wilkinson, "Origin", A.P.S., 67.
4. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f.; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 72-73.
5. He was a very well known Ibādī sheikh who participated with Imam al-Julandā b. Mas'ūd to establish the first Ibādī imamate. See Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 70. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 527 indicates that he was a Khurasānī, while Sayyābī, Umān, II, 88 called him al-'Umānī.
6. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 71. See also Sayyābī, Umān, II, 88.
7. Tuhfah, I, 70-71. For more information about Shabīb b. 'Aṭīyyah see ed. Sayeda, "Sirat Shabīb", II, 346-383.
8. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 73; Ḥārithī, Uqūd, 253.
9. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 70; cf. Wilkinson, Imamate, 161-162.
10. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS.f. 277a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 456; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 23; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 72; Sayyābī, Umān, II, 99; cf. Ross, Annals, 122; Badger, Imams, 9.
11. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 73; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 23; Sayyābī, Umān 'abr, II, 100; cf. Badger, Imams, 9, made the same mistake.
12. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 73.
13. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 456; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 23. Cf. Ross, Annals, 122 mistakenly translated 'Abdī as slave, i.e. "Sa'id al-'Abdī of Bakr" as "a slave from Bakr".
14. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 277a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 456; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 24; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 73; cf. Ross, Annals, 122; Badger, Imams, 9; see Miles, Countries, I, 64.
15. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 456.

16. Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 24; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 73; cf. Badger, Imams, 9.
17. One of the most learned Ibādī sheikhs who played a very important role within the Ibādī imamate. See Sayyābī, 'Atbā', 41-48; cf. Kāshif, 'Uman, 67-68.
18. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 73.
19. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 73.
20. The Ibādī sources henceforth made no indication of Muḥammad b. Za'idah Rāshid's partner, and his name was dropped from all the events which took place during this period, i.e. prior to the establishment of the second Ibādī imamate.
21. Kashf, MS. 456; see also Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 24; cf. Badger, Imams, 10.
22. Hujjah, MS. 164.
23. Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 104.
24. Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 104.
25. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f.; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 73.
26. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 73-74; cf. Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 104. See also Sayyābī, 'Uman, 94.
27. "Julandā", J.O.S., 104.
28. Mūsā b. Abī Jabir and Bashīr b. al-Mundhir were both from B. Sāmāh; see Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 392. See also Ruqayshī, Misbāh, 33a.
29. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 74. See also Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 104.
30. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 75; Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 96; see Wilkinson, "Julandā", J.O.S., 104.
31. In fact this period represented the time of the Abbasid control of Oman from 134/751 to 177/793.
32. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 74; Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 96 mentions that Rāshid had left the country after this battle.
33. Tuhfah, I, 74; see also Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 96.
34. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457 mentions that the meeting had taken place in Nizwā; see Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 24; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 57. According to Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 74, the meeting was held at the village of Manh,

near Nizwā; see Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 96.

35. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘a’, 24; Ruqayshī, Misbāh, MS.f. 33a; Salīmī, Tuhfah, I, 74; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 57; cf. Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 96; Ḥārithī, ‘Uqūd, 253-4.
36. Salīmī, Tuhfah, I, 74; Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 96.
37. Salīmī, Tuhfah, I, 74.
38. Both of them were among the Ibādī leading sheikhs of *ḥamalāt al-‘ilm*.
39. Salīmī, Tuhfah, I, 75; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 58; Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 97; cf. Ḥāshim, Ibādiyyah, 204.
40. Salīmī, Tuhfah, I, 75.
41. Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘a’, 24; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 58; Salīmī, Tuhfah, I, 75; Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 97; cf. Ross, Annals, 123; Badger, Imams, 10.
42. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 57; Salīmī, Tuhfah, I, 74; Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 94; cf. Ross, Annals, 123.
43. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457.
44. Salīmī, Tuhfah, I, 75; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 58; Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 97; cf. Ḥāshim, Ibādiyyah, 204.
45. Izkawī, Kashf, MS., 457; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 58; cf. Ross, Annals, 123.
46. Salīmī, Tuhfah, I, 75.
47. Salīmī, Tuhfah, I, 75.
48. Kashf, MS. 457; see also Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘a’, 24; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 57; cf. Ross, Annals, 123; Badger, Imams, 10.
49. Kashf, MS. 457; cf. Ross, Annals, 123.
50. Salīmī, Tuhfah, I, 75; Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 103; cf. Ḥārithī, ‘Uqūd, 253; Ḥāshim, Ibādiyyah, 204.
51. Kashf, MS. 457; Ruqayshī, Misbāh, MS. f. 27b; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 58; Kharūṣī, “Yahmad”, Ḥisād, I, 305; cf. Ross, Annals, 123.
52. ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS.f.; Kharūṣī, “Yahmad”, Ḥisād, I, 305.
53. Kharūṣī, “Yahmad”, Ḥisād, I, 305.

54. Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 101, 102.
55. Wilkinson, “Julandā”, J.O.S., 104-5.
56. These tribes had spread so widely that it is difficult to identify their origin in Oman; they are to be found in interior Oman as well as the Zahirah (northern Oman), eastern Oman and on the Bāṭinah coast. See ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. 274ff.
57. A private conversation with the Ibādī sheikh took place in Muscat in October 1987.
58. For more information concerning Sa‘īd al-Bakrī’s role prior to the imamate, see Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 73.
59. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 76; see also Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 105.
60. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 76; Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 105; cf. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 207.
61. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 76; Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 105; see also Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 207.
62. For more details discussion concerning this conflict, see the beginning of this chapter.
63. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 76; Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 105.
64. مَا قَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ لَيْنَةٍ أَوْ تَرَكْتُمُوهَا قَائِمَةً عَلَى أُصُولِهَا فَبِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلِيُخْزِيَ الْفَاسِقِينَ •  
 See Bell, Qurān, “Surat al-Hashr”, verse 5, 569;  
 “The fine palms which ye cut down or left standing on their roots was by the permission of Allah, that he might humiliate the reprobate”.
65. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 76; see also Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 106.
66. Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 106.
67. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 77.
68. Lived at the end of the second and beginning of the third century/8th-9th century.
69. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 76; Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 107; cf. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 208.
70. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, II, 76; Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 107; see Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 208.

71. Ed. Sayida, "Ibn Barkah", Mawāzinah, 393; see also Baysānī, Sīrah, 17. See also Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 77.
72. Wilkinson, Imamate, 154, which defines the term *jabābira* as non-constitutional rulers.
73. Baysawī, Hujjah, MS.; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 77; Sayyabī, ʿUman, II, 103; Hārithī, ʿUqūd, 253.
74. Ed. Sayida, "Ibn Barkah", Mawāzinah, 344.
75. Baysawī, Hujjah, MS. 164; ed. Sayida, Abū al-Mua'ththir, Ahdāth, 71.
76. Tuhfah, I, 77.
77. Baysawī, Hujjah, MS. 170; ed. Sayida, Abū al-Mu'aththir, Ahdāth, 71.
78. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457; Baysawī, Hujjah, MS. 171; ed. ʿĀshūr, Tārīkh, 57.
79. Ed. Sayida, Sīrah, 122; cf. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 79.
80. Ed. Sayida, Ibn Qahtān, Sīrah, 122.
81. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457; Ibn Ruzayq, Shuʿaʿ, 27-34; Fath, 224-26; Ruqayshī, Misbāh, MS. f. 27b; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 77; Sālīmī, Sharḥ, 64; Hārithī, ʿUqūd, 253; Kharūṣī, "Yaḥmad", Hiṣād, I, 308-311; cf. Ross, Annals, 123. See also Wilkinson, Water, 137.
82. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 78.
83. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 78. See Sayyabī, ʿUman, II, 109.
84. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 78.
85. Ruqayshī, Misbāh, MS. f. 27b; see also Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 77; Sayyabī, ʿUman, II, 109.
86. Tuhfah, I, 78.
87. Tuhfah, I, 78. See also Sayyabī, ʿUman, II, 112.
88. Tuhfah, I, 78; Sayyabī, ʿUman, II, 114.
89. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 76; see also Hāshim, Ibādīyyah, 213.
90. Kashf, MS. 457; Ibn Ruzayq, Shuʿaʿ, 27; ed. ʿĀshūr, Tārīkh, 58; cf. Ross, Annals, 123.

91. Ruqayshi, Misbah, MS. f. 27b; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a, 34; ed. 'Ashur, Tarikh, 60; Hārithī, 'Uqūd, 254 mentions that al-Wārith ruled Oman for more than thirteen years.
92. Hashim, Ibādiyyah, 214.
93. Hajar is a village in Wādī B. Kharuṣ in western Oman, the birth place of Imam al-Wārith b. Ka'b; see Hārithī, 'Uqūd, 3.
94. Stāl is situated in Wādī B. Kharuṣ; see Hārithī, 'Uqūd, 1; Sattālī, Diwān, 11.
95. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 78 mentions the name of al-Wārith's brother as Muḥammad b. Ka'b, who was regarded as a non-Ibādī follower.
96. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 78; cf. Hashim, Ibādiyyah, 214.
97. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457-8; cf. Ross, Annals, 124.
98. This wādī is known as Wādī al-Najdī (or Wādī Kalbūh); see Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 79; Hashim, Ibādiyyah, 214; cf. Ross, Annals, 124.
99. Tabarī, Tārīkh, 114; Sulaymān b. 'Alī had played a magnificent role in sending the Abbasid expedition to Oman from Basra. For more detailed discussion on this matter see Chapter VII of this study.
100. Tabarī, Tārīkh, VIII, 57.
101. It seems that he was the son of al-Manṣūr's governor of Oman, Tasnīm b. al-Hawārī.
102. Tabarī, Tārīkh, 8, 204; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, V, 77 mentions Nasīm, not Tasnīm, as Tabarī reported.
103. Ibn Khayyāt, Tārīkh, 447.
104. Miles, Countries, I, 70.
105. The first expedition launched against Oman by the Abbasids against the first imamate had used this sea road, where many tribes who lived in this area had participated in this campaign, particularly Tamīm, who were, it has been reported, strong allies of the Abbasids on the expedition. See 'Abdālī, Tamīm, 63.
106. Hashim, Ibādiyyah, 214.
107. Ibādī sources mention that Rāshid b. Naẓr left Oman after his defeat and may have gone to Iraq to ask Hārūn al-Rāshid for help, although his



name was not mentioned in relation to the expedition of Hārūn to Oman.

108. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 79-80; see also Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 32; cf. Badger, Imams, 11.
109. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 215.
110. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 79080; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 32; see also ed. Sayeda, Abū al-Hawwārī, Sirah, 342-343.
111. Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, II, 93; Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 488; Ibn Khayyāt, Tārīkh, 462.
112. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, VI, 507.
113. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, VI, 507.
114. Ibn Khayyāt, Tārīkh, 460, 62. This author also mentions that 'Isā b. Ja'far had taken charge of Basra twice - in 174/790 and 179/795 during the caliphate of Hārūn; see Zubayri, Nasab Quraysh, 288.
115. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457; Ibn Ruzayq Shu'ā', 32; cf. Badger, Imams, 11 mentions in his translation 500 footmen; see also Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 79; cf. Miles, Countries, I, 66-67.
116. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457.
117. See the previous chapter.
118. Da'ūd b. Yazīd b. Ḥatīm al-Muhallabī (d. 185/801) was to become governor of Ifriqiyyah after his father's death. He fought against the Ibādiyyah of North Africa, but when Hārūn al-Rāshid became caliph he replaced him with his own uncle, Ruḥ, the governor of Sind in 184/804, see Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, V, 83, 84-85; Ibn Khilīk'ān, Wafīyyāt, VI, 326. The fact that Da'ūd was an Omani by origin might have had something to do with this action. See Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457.
119. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457; cf. Ross, Annals, 14.
120. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 79. The name of Maqārash was mentioned by Izkawī as Fārs, see Kashf, MS. 457.
121. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457; cf. Ross, Annals, 14; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 79; Sayyābi, Uman, II, 119.
122. Ḥettā is a small valley to the northwest of Sohar, and was well known because of its strategic importance on the routes of northern Oman. See Ibn Durayd, Diwān, 63; cf. Ross, Annals, 81.

فَمَا لَكُمْ أَنْ لَمْ تَحْوَطُوا إِذَا مَرَكُمُ سَوَامٌ وَلَا دَارٌ يَجِئُ وَدَامَتْ

123. See Chapter II on Omani Umayyad relations at the beginning of this study.
124. See Chapter VII on the first Ibādī imamate.
125. Julfār was the key to the control of Oman, and was used by the Islamic caliphate from the appearance of Islam until the end of the Abbasid caliphate, when they wanted to crush any opposition just as the Persians used Sohar when they invaded Oman from before Islam until recent centuries.
126. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 217 mentioned a figure of 300 Omani ships, but three is the correct number, see Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 79; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 32; cf. Badger, Imams, 11.
127. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457; cf. Ross, Annals, 14; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 32; cf. Badger, Imams, 11; see also Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 79; Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 119.
128. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 79.
129. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 79; see also Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 120.
130. 'Alī 'Azrah is one of āl-'Azrah of B. Sāmāh b. Lu'ayy; Sayyābī, Is'af, 22.
131. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457; cf. Ross, Annals, 15; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 79; Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 120.
132. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457; cf. Ross, Annals, 123.
133. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457; cf. Ross, Annals, 122; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 33; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 80; Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 120. See also Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 219.
134. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457; cf. Ross, Annals, 124.
135. Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 120.
136. Muḥammad b. Faḍl al-Ḥawwārī was an Ibādī 'ālim of the 4th century. See Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 79.
137. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 79.
138. Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 488.
139. Balādhurī, Futūḥ, 93; cf. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 220.
140. Ibn Ḥabīb, Muḥabbar, 488.

141. Balādhurī, 103; cf. Badger, Imams, 11-12.
142. Ya'qūbī, Tārīkh, 285.
143. Ya'qūbī, Tārīkh, 285.
144. Masrī, Alāqāt, 77; this author claims that Oman was under the authority of al-Ma'mūn, whilst all the sources do not mention any information regarding this matter.
145. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457; cf. Ross, Annals, 124; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 81; Sayyābī, Uman, II, 121.
146. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 457; cf. Ross, Annals, 124; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 81; Sayyābī, Uman, II, 121.
147. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 458; cf. Ross, Annals, 124; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 81; ed. Sayida, Ibn Qaṭṭān Sirah, 122; Sayyābī, Uman, II, 126.
148. Hārithī, Uqūd, 254.
149. Al-Sirr is situated in the northwest of Nizwā in the Zahirah region; see Hārithī, Uqūd, 3; Maqdasī, Taqāsīm, 93 describes al-Sirr as a smaller town than Nizwā.
150. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 81; see also Sayyābī, Uman, II, 127.
151. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 81.
152. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 81; see also Sayyābī, Uman, II, 127.
153. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 81; cf. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 225.
154. Most of those who were chosen to become imams, had poor Ibādī teaching.
155. Anṣab, MS. f. 277a.
156. The east is *al-sharqīyyah*, the eastern region of Oman.
157. Hārithī, Uqūd, 5.
158. 'Awtabī, Anṣab, MS. f. 255a.
159. Kashf, MS. 458; cf. Ross, Annals, 125.
160. Al-Ṣaqr b. Muḥammad b. Zāidah al-Julandā was the son of the Julandī, Muḥammad b. Zāidah who was co-ruler with Rāshid b. Nazr but who is not mentioned in the sources after the Ibadi revolt against Rāshid b.

al-Nazr, which seems to indicate that he was overthrown by his partner, Rāshid b. al-Nazr.

161. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 458; cf. Ross, Annals, 125; Ma'walī, Qisāṣ, MS. 276.
162. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 458; cf. Ross, Annals, 124.
163. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 82.
164. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 82; see also Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 36; cf. Badger, Imams, 14; Ma'walī, Qisāṣ, MS. 276.
165. A hill on the heights of Wadī Samā'il and Wadī Helfīn; see Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 131.
166. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 458; cf. Ross, Annals, 16; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 36; cf. Badger, Imams, 15; see also Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 83.
167. Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 131.
168. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 458; cf. Ross, Annals, 125; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 36; cf. Badger, Imams, 15.
169. Despite the fact that both of them were under imamate protection, both were in the end assassinated.
170. Ansāb, MS. f. 277a.
171. This custom was very well known to the Arabs of Oman and also had strong roots, which still exist; see Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 458.
172. al-Bawārij which signifies large vessels equipped for war; see Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 82; Badger, Imams, 12-13.
173. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 458; cf. Ross, Annals, 124; cf. Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 36; cf. Badger, Imams, 12-13.
174. Tanbih, 307.
175. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 82; see also Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 139.
176. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 82.
177. Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 128.
178. Sālīmī, I, 82; Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 128.
179. For further information about the Omani navy, see Wilkinson, Imamate, 185-6.

180. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 458; cf. Ross, Annals, 124; see also Badger, Imams, 12.
181. These are Omani local boats; Ibn Zurayq, Shu'ā', 37, mentions that people also called them *zawāriq*, see Badger, Imams, 13, for more details about Omani ships. See Oman, 147.
182. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 458; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 82; Sayyābī, Uman, II, 134.
183. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 82.
184. Eastern districts, or *al-sharqiyyah*, which includes Ja'lān and Zāhirah, the tract beyond the hills extending from Oman to al-Buraymi. See Ross, Annals, 81.
185. Ya'qūbī, Tārīkh, II, 285.
186. Ya'qūbī, Tārīkh, II, 285.
187. Masri, Alāqāt, 77.
188. Wilkinson, Water, 73-74.
189. For more information about the *aflāj* system in Oman, see Wilkinson, Water, V, 97-124.
190. Most European sources claim that the *aflāj* irrigation system inherited by the Omanis was originally a Persian system created by them during their occupation of Oman, supporting this claim by indicating the existence of the same system in Iran. The writer disagrees with this claim because the area of the Bāṭinah coast - which the historical sources reported to be under Persian occupation - does not have this system. It only exists in the interior of Oman which was occupied by Arabs. Therefore this hypothesis has no strong evidence to support it.
191. Tuhfah, I, 84.
192. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 83; cf. Sayyābī, Uman, II, 144; Wilkinson, Water, 100.
193. The house of the imamate is the administrative residence for the Ibādī imamate in which the imam exercises his authority and his official engagements after he receives the pledge of allegiance, *bay'ah*. If they depose him he has to leave the house immediately for the newly elected imam to occupy.
194. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 183.
195. Sālīmī, I, 83; cf. Sayyābī, Uman, II, 127; Hārithī, Uqūd, 2.
196. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 84; see also Hārithī, Uqūd, 2.

196. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 84; see also Hārithī, ‘Uqūd, 2.
197. Maqdasī, Taqāsim, 30-34; Iṣṭakhri, Masālik, 25; Hamdanī, Ṣifat, 125.
198. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 84; Sayyābī, ‘Uman, II, 142.
199. Sayyābī, ‘Uman, II, 142.
200. Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘a’, 37; cf. Badger, Imams, 14; Ma‘walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. 277; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 85; Sayyābī, ‘Uman, II, 143.
201. They used cows, donkeys and camels because the high temperatures make it difficult to work during the day, see Sayyābī, ‘Uman, II, 151.
202. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 84; cf. Sayyābī, ‘Uman, II, 148-9.
203. ‘Uman, II, 149.
204. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 458; cf. Ross, Annals, 125; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘a’, 37; cf. Badger, Imams, 15; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 84. See also Miles, Countries, 170; Kharūṣī, Hiṣād, I, 313, who gives the year 208/823; Hārithī, ‘Uqūd, 254.
205. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 459; cf. Ross, Annals, 125; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘a’, 38; cf. Badger, Imams, 15; see also Miles, Countries, 70.
206. Sayyābī, ‘Uman, II, 158.
207. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 459; cf. Ross, Annals, 125; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘a’, 38.
208. Baysawī, Hujjah, MS. 160.
209. Sayyābī, ‘Uman, II, 158.
210. Sayyābī, ‘Uman, II, 158.
211. Ed. Sayeda, Ibn Qaṭṭān, Sirah, 123; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 459; cf. Ross, Annals, 125-126; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘a’, 38; cf. Badger, Imams, 15; ed. ‘Ashūr, Tārīkh, 7; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 89; Sayyābī, ‘Uman, II, 158.
212. Mūsā b. ‘Alī was born in 177/793 and died in 231/845. See Ruqayshī, Miṣbāḥ, MS. f. 33a.
213. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 90; Kharūṣī, Hiṣād, I, 314; see Miles, Countries, 71.
214. Sayyābī, ‘Uman, II, 160.
215. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 90; cf. Sayyābī, ‘Uman, II, 160.

216. ‘Uman, II, 161; for more details about the disqualification of the Ibādī imamate, see Chapter V of this study, “The imamate in Ibādī thought”.
217. Ed. Sayedah, Abū al-Mu’aththir, “Aḥdāth”, 20.
218. For more details about the role of Mahrah see the beginning of this chapter.
219. Sayyabī, ‘Uman, II, 162.
220. Sayyabī, ‘Uman, II, 162.
221. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 91; Sayyabī, ‘Uman, II, 162.
222. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 86; Sayyabī, ‘Uman, II, 162.
223. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 94.
224. This occurs in a long letter written by Hāshim b. Ghaylān to Imam ‘Abd al-Malik. For more details of this letter, see Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 93-4.
225. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 93.
226. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 459; cf. Ross, Annals, 126; Ruqayshī, Misbāḥ, MS. 28; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 43; cf. Badger, Imams, 16; Ma‘walī, Qisas, MS. 279; ed. ‘Ashūr, Tārikh, 63; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 101; Hārithī, ‘Uqūd, 255.
227. The third imam of the second imamate, see the beginning of this chapter.
228. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 459; cf. Ross, Annals, 126; Ruqayshī, Misbāḥ, MS. 28; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 43; cf. Badger, Imams, 16; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 101.
229. Ed. Sayedah, Baysawī, Sīrah, II, 87.
230. According to Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 107, Imam al-Muhannā had sent a large number from both Ibādī and non-Ibādī opposition to prison without prosecuting them. He denied them any sort of medication, nor did he show them any mercy. This led to the opposition by many Ibādīs to his policy.
231. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 102; cf. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 238.
232. Ed. Sayeda, Ibn Qaḥṭān, Sīrah, 123, reported that the two sheikhs also disassociated themselves secretly from his imamate. See Kindī- Ihtidā’, 89; ed. ‘Ashūr, Tārikh, 67.
233. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 101.

235. Sālimī also mentions that Imam al-Muhannā had more than six hundred horses, and more than seven hundred she-camels in Nizwā. Al-Subḥī also mentions that Imam al-Muhannā had in his possession between seven and eight thousand riding animals in different parts of Oman, Tuḥfah, I, 102.
236. Sālimī, Tuḥfah, I, 110; see also Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 239.
237. It has always been known that in any revolt involving the Julandā family, the main objective was to claim back their throne, so any imam would deal with any such revolt by using force to prevent them from doing so.
238. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 460; cf. Ross, Annals, 127; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 46, gives the name Wasīn; cf. Badger, Imams, 18; see also Miles, Countries, I, 72; Sālimī, Tuḥfah, I, 104; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 65, gives the name Duways; Sayyabī, ‘Umān, II, 178.
239. Miles, Countries, I, 72.
240. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 460; cf. Ross, Annals, 127; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 46; Badger, Imams, 18; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 65; Sālimī, Tuḥfah, I, 104; Kharūṣī, “Yaḥmad”, Hiṣād, I, 317; cf. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 214; ‘Umar, Tārīkh, 161.
241. Sālimī, Tuḥfah, I, 104. No more information was given concerning ‘Azzān and his army and their role in this battle. See Kharūṣī, “Yaḥmad”, Hiṣād, I, 317.
242. Sālimī, Tuḥfah, I, 104. See also Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 47.
243. Kashf, MS. 460; cf. Ross, Annals, 127; Miles, Countries, I, 72.
244. Miles, Countries, I, 72. There is not enough detailed information about the “Hindī” army to know whether they were Ibāḍīs or mercenaries. They could have been the Indians who lived in Sohār or been brought from Sind, which would indicate that Imam Muhannā was the first imam to use mercenaries. The Ya‘ārubah and al-Busa‘id dynasties used such people later on.
245. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 460; Sālimī, Tuḥfah, I, 104.
246. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 460; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 46; cf. Badger, Imams, 18; Miles, Countries, I, 72.
247. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 460; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 46; Sālimī, Tuḥfah, I, 104.
248. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 460.



249. The camels are in the Mahrah area where the local people depend completely on breeding them.
250. Mahrah is the land which lies between Oman and al-Shiḥr. Although the Ibādī sources consider it as part of the imamate, Oman had a very precarious hold over this district.
251. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 459; cf. Ross, Annals, 126; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 44.
252. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 459; Shu'ā', 44; Ruqayshī, Misbāḥ, MS. 29; an indication of those who were killed by Mahrah during the time of Imam Abd al-Malik.
253. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 459; Cf. Ross, Annals, 126; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 44; cf. Badger, Imams, 18; Ruqayshī, Misbāḥ, MS. 29b; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, 19; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 103; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 64; Kharūṣī, "Yaḥmad", Hiṣād, I, 316; Sayyābī, Uman, II, 173; cf. Miles, Countries, I, 71.
254. Kashf, MS. 459; Annals, 126; 'Āshūr, Shu'ā', 44-45; cf. Badger, Imams, 16; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. 19; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 64; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 103; Hiṣād, I, 316; Uman, I, 173; see also Miles, Countries, I, 72.
255. Kashf, MS. 460; cf. Ross, Annals, 127; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 45; cf. Badger, Imams, 16; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 65; Ruqayshī, Misbāḥ, MS. 29b; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 18; see also Sayyābī, Uman, II, 174; Kharūṣī, "Yaḥmad", Hiṣād, I, 317; mentioned that Wasīm was not alone in captivity; there were many of his tribesmen taken captive with him.
256. Regarding this tradition, see the section on the imamate of Ghassān b. 'Abd Allāh al-Yaḥmadī, Kashf, MS. 460; cf. Ross, Annals, 126; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 45; cf. Badger, Imams, 16; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 65; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 103; see also Miles, Countries, I, 71.
257. Kashf, MS. 460; cf. Ross, Annals, 127; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 65.
258. Hāshim, Ibādīyyah, 240.
259. Sayyābī, Uman, II, 174.
260. For further discussion about the Islamic grouping, see the books of Firaq.
261. Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 105.
262. Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 106; Khalīlī, al-Ḥaqq, 107, mentions the reason behind Ibn Raḥīl's declaring his opposition to the question of the creation of the Qur'an, because the north African Ibādīs accepted the saying that the Qur'an had been created.
263. Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 105; Khalīlī, al-Ḥaqq, 107.

264. Ṣalīmī, Tuhfah, I, 105.
265. Ṣalīmī, Tuhfah, I, 105; see also Khālilī, al-Haqq, 106.
266. Ṣalīmī, Tuhfah, I, 105.
267. For more details about these letters, see ed. Sayeda, Book of the ‘Ulama’ and Imams of Oman, 276-337.
268. Ṣalīmī, Tuhfah, I, 106.

## **CHAPTER IX**

### **THE CIVIL WAR AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE SECOND IBĀDĪ IMAMATE**

- 9.1 The rule of Imam al-Ṣalt, 237-273/851-885**
- 9.2 The most important historical events of al-Ṣalt's imamate**
- 9.3 Imam al-Ṣalt's external policy**
- 9.4 Civil War**
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### 9.1 The rule of Imam al-Ṣalt, 237-273/851-885

Al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk was chosen by the Ibāḍī ulema as the new imam. His election took place on the day of Imam al-Muḥannā's death (237/851). He had ruled Oman for ten years and some months.<sup>1</sup> Muḥammad b. Maḥbūb and Bashīr b. al-Mundhir, the most learned of the Ibāḍī ulema swore allegiance to the new imam, in the same way that the just imams who preceded him had been acknowledged.<sup>2</sup> As usual, the Ibāḍī sources shed no light on his career prior to his becoming imam, nor do they mention anything about his character or personal qualities, save for the fact that he was a Kharūṣī from the Yaḥmad clan.<sup>3</sup> Despite the fact that the selection of Imam al-Ṣalt was based on the general agreement of the Ibāḍī ulema without opposition,<sup>4</sup> towards the end of his reign there was growing opposition to his rule and as a result of the tribal strife which ensued, civil war broke out. Eventually the Abbasids were invited to intervene, by one particular alliance of Omani tribes, and consequently the imamate lost its independence and collapsed.

### 9.2 The most important historical events of al-Ṣalt's imamate

According to the Ibāḍī sources, Imam al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk managed to gain control of the affairs of the state at the beginning of his imamate and he governed wisely and justly for many years.<sup>5</sup> Political stability and security of the imamate were among many of the fruits enjoyed by the people of Oman during the imam's reign. The first administrative step taken by Imam al-Ṣalt, after coming to power was to dismiss the governors appointed by his predecessor. Among those deposed was the wali of Sohar, Abū Marwān, who returned to

Nizwā.<sup>6</sup> Imam al-Ṣalt appointed Muḥammad b. al-Azhar al-ʿAbdī as the new governor of Sohar, and a few years later chose the Ibādī sheikh Muḥammad b. Muḥbūb as *qāḍī* there.<sup>7</sup> This move indicates the importance of Sohar as the focal point for various Islamic groups which had increased in number, as the town grew in prosperity during the role of the imams. The Ibādī imams in Nizwā had also become aware of the increasing activities of these groups, who were working to spread their doctrine among the Omani people.<sup>8</sup> By appointing Muḥammad b. Maḥbūb as *qāḍī* of Sohar, Imam al-Ṣalt proved his determination to keep the control of Sohar in Ibādī hands and to prevent other parties from promulgating their teachings.<sup>9</sup> Imam al-Ṣalt indicated his new policy in a letter to his governor in Rustāq Hajar, Ghassān b. Khuwaylid, in which he emphasises the central authority of the imam. He also requested his governors to consult him before taking decisions.<sup>10</sup> This shows how reluctant he was to have them pass legal judgements before consulting him. He indicated to his governor that he was going to look to the opinion of the rest of the Ibādī ulema and then inform them of the best decision which would guide them to safety.

Imam al-Ṣalt also advised his governor in Rustāq Hajar on the treatment of non-Muslims; it was necessary he decreed, that they wear the same kind of special dress to distinguish them from the rest.<sup>11</sup> This implies the existence of a considerable number of non-Muslims resident in Oman during the Ibādī imamate. Imam al-Ṣalt stressed the importance of using firm measures against the non-Ibādī Muslims, who followed various other Islamic groups in the area.<sup>12</sup>

On the economic front, however, Oman slipped gradually into decline.

The main cause of the difficulties, as recorded in the sources, was a particularly disastrous flood which led to heavy loss of life, especially in low lying wadi territory where most of the Omani tribes were settled. Large numbers of livestock were swept away, and trees, dates and farm crops - all crucial generators of income - were lost.<sup>13</sup> According to al-Sālimī, the area most affected by the flood was the Bāṭinah region, where the town of Sohar, Oman's principal trading centre, was submerged by waters from Wadi Sillān.<sup>14</sup> The rest of the Bāṭinah area was also severely affected, and the people were left with nothing but disease and misery. Al-Sālimī also relates that the effects of the disaster were long-lived; most of the towns were emptied as the people fled to safety by sea to neighbouring lands. Most of the interior of Oman was also devastated, with towns such as Bidbid, Qīqā, Dima and Samā'il suffering heavy material losses.<sup>15</sup>

The sources give no information as to how Imam al-Ṣalt dealt with disaster, which must have placed extreme pressure on the Treasury. Similarly there is no record of how - if at all - Nizwā, the capital of the imamate, was affected by the rains.

### **9.3 Imam al-Ṣalt's external policy**

Little information exists on the nature and extent of relations between the second Ibādī imamate under Imam al-Ṣalt and the Abbasid caliphate; neither the Ibādī nor the Islamic sources give any indications whether contact was made between the two states.

In the Abbasid side, Caliph al-Mu'tasim who came to power in 218/833, had moved his residence from Baghdad to Samarrā', a move which threw the power of the caliphate into the hands of the Turkish guard, a body he himself had created. The decline of the Abbasid empire can be traced back to this point. Contemporaneous with the first signs of decadence in the Abbasid caliphate was the growth of power the Ibādī imamate and its tentative expansion beyond the countries of Ibādī territory. This is exemplified in Ibadi sources by the decision made by the Imam al-Ṣalt to send a military expedition to control the islands of Socotra.

The island of Socotra, which lies off the coast of South Arabia, in the Arabian Sea, was of strategic importance because of its proximity to the northern East African coast. Since the island is also close to southern Oman and Ḥaḍramawt. Ibādī teachings were familiar to its inhabitants, although it is not clear when the doctrines were first introduced there. Al-Hamdānī writes that the Ibādī *shurāh* were in control of the island,<sup>16</sup> which implies that an Ibādī military expedition to the island was carried out successfully during the reign of Imam al-Ṣalt. Al-'Awtabī also mentions in his account that Socotra was home to the Ibādiyyah.<sup>17</sup>

It would seem that the Ibādiyyah first arrived on the island after they had established their first imamate in Ḥaḍramawt and the Yemen at the end of the Umayyad caliphate, 128-131/275-748, under the leadership of Imam Yaḥyā Ṭalīb al-Ḥaqq al-Kindī. This first imamate lasted only a few years, succumbing finally to the Umayyad forces, as a result of which many Ibādī followers were forced

to flee the Yemen to northern Oman and Socotra. Other authors believe that the appearance of the Ibāḍiyyah there stems from the period of Ibāḍī domination in Oman during the second/eighth century.<sup>18</sup> It is difficult to tell whether Socotra was in fact controlled by the Ibāḍī imamate in Oman, although al-Ṣalīmī mentions that the Ibāḍiyyah maintained a political and administrative presence on the island. He also reports that the inhabitants had reneged on their allegiance to the imamate, killing the imam's governor and his followers and taking control of the island by force.<sup>19</sup> Aṭafīsh mentions that the Abyssinians controlled Socotra during the reign of Imam al-Ṣalt, the latter sent over one hundred fighting ships to the island before he was to regain control of it and expel the Abyssinians from its shores.<sup>20</sup>

Other accounts tell how a Socotran woman called Zahrah made an appeal to Imam al-Ṣalt for help against the Christian insurrectionists,<sup>21</sup> her entreaty coming in the form of a poem.<sup>22</sup>

<p>ابن الكرام وابن السادة النجب بعد الشرائع والفرقان والكتب من الحريم ولم يألوا من السلب ولو حبوتم على الاذقان والركب</p>	<p>قل للامام الذي تُرجى فضائله امست سقطرى من الاسلام مقفلة جار النصارى على واليك وانتهبوا يا للرجال اغيثوا كل مسلمة</p>
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Tell the imam whose virtues are to be hoped for, the son of the noble and distinguished Sayyids.

Socotra has become empty of Islam after Islamic law, the Qur'ān, [i.e. and the books of the Faith].

The Christians have committed an outrage against your governor, have taken women captive, and have continued to plunder.

Oh for men! Help every Muslim woman, even if you creep along on your chins and knees.



Imam al-Ṣalt subsequently despatched a large military expedition to the island; according to al-Ṣalīmī, enough men to fill a hundred ships were sent under the joint commands of Muḥammad b. ‘Ashīrah and Sa‘īd b. Shamlāl.<sup>23</sup> The commanders took with them a missive from the imam containing information on Islamic teaching concerning warfare, and also his recommendations that the *sharī‘ah* be put into practice on the island, especially those regulations governing the treatment of the prisoners of war.<sup>24</sup> The imam also gave instructions to the Ibāḍiyyah on how they were to conduct their affairs after regaining control of the island: “If from among those men and women who pray, there are some who wish to leave the island with you and seek refuge in an Islamic land, then take them with you in your ships and spend on them from the money God has given you until they reach the land of Islam; for indeed Socotra is no longer a safe place for them to reside.”<sup>25</sup>

It was clear that Imam al-Ṣalt feared a revenge attack from the Abyssinian Christians; in his letter he instructs his troops to drive the Abyssinian army as far back as possible, even if it meant venturing to the African coast itself.<sup>26</sup> Socotra itself was indefensible from Oman, thus the order from Imam al-Ṣalt to his army to aid those Socotran Muslims who wished to leave, to do so. Such was the degree of involvement of the Abyssinians in the affairs of the island.

The sources do not reveal the date of the Socrotran insurrection, although it probably took place in the last years of the imam’s rule. Support for this comes from the call made by the Imam’s detractors for him to step

down as a result of his failure, itself a symptom of old age and ineptitude, to protect Socotra from its invaders. The most likely time is some time between 269/882 and 273/886.<sup>27</sup>

#### 9.4 Civil war

Towards the end of Imam al-Ṣalt's long reign,<sup>28</sup> opposition to him began to appear, especially among a great number of Ibādī sheikhs who had played important roles during the Ibādī Imamate. The leader of the opposition was Mūsā b. Mūsā, who, having persuaded some of the Ibāḍiyyah to help him depose the imam, rose up in revolt.

The Ibādīs were divided in their opinions on the movement and later split into two factions - the Yemeni and Nizārī or ('Adnānī) parties, thus paving the way for a civil war which was to bring down the imamate.<sup>29</sup>

The movement against Imam al-Ṣalt is regarded as the first internal threat to the second Ibādī imamate, since its inception. The Ibādīs had successfully staved off external threats to the independence of the imamate, now, ironically, it was they themselves who engineered its downfall. Prior to this event, the Ibādīs and the other Omanis, despite their differences, had managed to co-exist relatively peacefully, yet the strife that led to civil war was such that Ibādī sources came to describe the period as the blackest in Oman's history.<sup>30</sup>

The Ibādī ulema were split down the middle on the issue of whether or

not Imam al-Ṣalt should be deposed: the group of Rustāq (*al-tā'ifah al-Rustāqiyyah*) comprising those scholars from Rustāq who remained loyal to the imam and opposed his deposition.<sup>31</sup> While the faction of Nizwā (*al-firqah al-Nizwāniyyah*) were a group of scholars from Nizwā,<sup>32</sup> who supported calls for the imam to be deposed. This particular schism in the ranks of the Ibādī ulema lasted from the third/ninth to the tenth/sixteenth century, with hundreds of books being written by supporters of both sides. One of the most important works regarding this issue is that of Abū al-Mu'aththir al-Ṣalt b. Khamīs<sup>33</sup> who was witness to the events and who recorded his impressions of them in a book entitled *al-Aḥdāth wa-al-Ṣifat*.<sup>34</sup> Another writer, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bayisawī, later wrote a book called *al-Hujjah 'alā man abṭala 'l-su'al fī 'l-ḥadath al-wāqī' bi-'Uman*, in which he defended the imamate of al-Ṣalt. A third book was written by Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad b. 'Abdullāh al-Kindī al-Nizwānī in the 5th-6th/11th-12th century, who was moved to put pen to paper because of what he saw as the division and conflict among the Ibādīs of Oman.<sup>35</sup> Many other writings by famous Ibādī ulema still exist today, some of them going back to the third/ninth century, when these events took place. These are known collectively as *al-Siyar wa-'l-jawābāt*, or the books of the ulema and imams of Oman.<sup>36</sup> Most of the ulema dealt in their works with the deposition of Imam al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk explaining in general the principles of the imamate and the ideal qualities of an imam. They also deal with the question of how the imam should be selected, his duties, and how long he should rule.<sup>37</sup>

It is very difficult to know the main reason why Mūsā b. Mūsā called for the deposition of al-Ṣalt. The fact is, however, that the imam introduced a

much less tribal approach, discontinuing the old feuding with the Julandā tribes. His imamate also saw an enormous development of *shari'ah* law and he genuinely seems to have governed fairly close to the Ibādī ideal. Ultimately the trouble was that he ruled too long, and he was obviously too easy going.<sup>38</sup> Wilkinson regards the death of Muḥammad b. Maḥbūb, whose prestige was such that he was regularly consulted by the Ibādī communities in Ḥaḍramawt and North Africa, as a great loss to Imam al-Ṣalt who was left with no strong guiding hand.<sup>39</sup> As Imam al-Ṣalt grew older, the control of the imamate began to slip from his hands. The younger generation tired with what they saw as the imam's senility and the conservatism of the governors he appointed, were united under Mūsā b. Mūsā, who eventually deposed him or according to them "persuaded him to resign".<sup>40</sup> The opposition to al-Ṣalt's imamate came from different Omani tribes, among them some very well known Ibādī sheikhs.<sup>41</sup> The slogan which united the opposition was the Islamic call for "enjoining what is good and prohibiting what is bad". The first demand made by the opposition was that al-Ṣalt depose some of his governors and force those described as his 'ministers' to resign.<sup>42</sup> According to Abū al-Mu'aththir, Imam al-Ṣalt responded to these demands by deposing his governor in Sohar, Muḥammad b. Fayḍ whom he then appointed in Julfār.<sup>43</sup> Both Abū Qaḥṭān and Abū al-Mu'ththir report that Mūsā b. Mūsā failed to produce any firm evidence that Imam al-Ṣalt or his followers had done anything wrong.<sup>44</sup> Mūsā remained critical, describing the affairs of the imamate as being in the hands of the sinful (*fasaqah*).<sup>45</sup>

Imam al-Ṣalt expressed his point of view in a letter sent to one of his followers. In this he explains how he had been deposed and says that he holds

the younger generation responsible for his downfall. The fact that they were able to rise up against him, he says, is due to the decline of the older generation of Ibādī men of ideals and *da'wah*. The Ibādī youth, he claims, love only this world and desire to rule it.<sup>46</sup>

All the Ibādī sources report that Mūsā b. Mūsā and his followers formed themselves into a party. Abū al-Mu'aththir mentions that Mūsā and his supporters marched to Farq, near Nizwā, where they gathered about three miles from al-Ṣalt b. Mālik's army headquarters.<sup>47</sup> After their arrival at Farq Imam al-Ṣalt learned of their motives and left his residence for the house of his son, Shadhān, on Thursday, 3 Dhū 'l-Hijjah 272/885.<sup>48</sup> He was too weak to be able to retain his position and he was considered as having been deposed from the imamate. Mūsā b. Mūsā and his party were prepared to depose Imam al-Ṣalt by force if he refused to accept their demands. Abū Qaḥṭān interpreted al-Ṣalt's departure from the house of the imamate as an attempt to avoid bloodshed.<sup>49</sup> Abū al-Mu'aththir describes the members of Mūsā b. Mūsā's party as a group of rabble (*ru'ā'*) who have no knowledge of right and wrong, and who know only how to obey their leader (Mūsā b. Mūsā). He identifies one Fahm b. Wārith al-Kalbī as one of those followers, and accuses him of nurturing a desire to become imam.<sup>50</sup>

Abū Qaḥṭān describes the motives of those who elected to follow Mūsā b. Mūsā in his revolt against al-Ṣalt as follows: the followers of Mūsā were from different classes: some were genuinely outraged by the Ibādī rulers; some nurtured personal ambition to gain for themselves a high position in the

government; and some who thought simply that they were doing the right thing but were misled.<sup>51</sup>

Before his departure from the house of the imamate, Imam al-Ṣalt told those of his soldiers who stayed behind to protect their military encampment until the arrival of the new imam.<sup>52</sup> After al-Ṣalt had left, Mūsā b. Mūsā installed Rāshid b. al-Naẓr. ‘Abū Qaḥṭān says that they never got the imam to explain himself; furthermore they neither accused him of unbelief (*makfirah*), nor made it clear precisely about what they were complaining.<sup>53</sup> The installation of Rāshid b. al-Naẓr as imam by Mūsā b. Mūsā engendered strong criticism about the way he was chosen and the difficult circumstances prevalent in Oman. Commenting on these events, Abū al-Mu’aththir says, “Did the Muslims meet together and consult mutually on the matter? Did they take account of what al-Ṣalt had to say or what objections there were against him?” If he had sinned, they would have suspended judgement (*wuqūf*), they would have asked whether he was resigning or reneging the imamate; whether he was weak, whether he persisted in his sin; they would have gone around from place to place seeking the view of the Muslims about him. Mūsā b. Mūsā did not do anything of the sort. He sent for Rāshid b. al-Naẓr and swore allegiance to him without consulting the Muslims. None of those entrusted with giving legal judgements, except those whom God willed, attended Mūsā on that day and even some of those, as we understand it, abhorred his act, counselling a different course, but the mass prevailed.<sup>54</sup>

Al-Izkawī,<sup>55</sup> accused the people of forsaking al-Ṣalt, who was very old.

After deposing Imam al-Ṣalt, Mūsā b. Mūsā became the chief and first adviser of the new imam, Rāshid b. al-Naẓr.

Some modern authors believe that Imam al-Ṣalt abdicated or resigned from the imamate of his own free will.<sup>56</sup> However, this hypothesis has no validity since it is clear that the Imam was forced to resign.

The author of the book al-Ihtidā',<sup>57</sup> cites four main principles as the basis of the difference of opinion between the two Ibādī schools, the Nizwā and the Rustāq, about the deposition of Imam al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk and the installation of Rāshid b. al-Naẓr as the new imam:

1. Imam al-Ṣalt was elected a *shārī* imam for all the people of Oman and enjoyed their consent to his rule. This was before the appointment of Rāshid b. al-Naẓr as imam by Mūsā b. Mūsā. Since Imam al-Ṣalt was chosen with the agreement of all Ibādīs, it is not permitted to depose him from the seat of the imamate without the full agreement of all Ibādīs.
2. The appointment of Rāshid b. al-Naẓr as imam was effected without revealing to the people any error made by Imam al-Ṣalt which would lead automatically to his resignation. Also the people who swore allegiance to him - whether from the elect or the masses should be informed of any plan to depose him.
3. When Mūsā b. Mūsā and Rāshid b. al-Naẓr took over the imamate from

Imam al-Ṣalt, the imam showed no opposition to their action. According to the Ibādīs this indeed made them appear unbelievers.

4. Those Ibādī ulema who witnessed this event were in disagreement over the validity of the action of Mūsā b. Mūsā and Rāshid b. al-Nazr, even though they were all in agreement about the certainty of al-Ṣalt's imamate when he resigned. The same applies to Rāshid and his position vis-a-vis Mūsā b. Mūsā; some of the ulema recognised al-Ṣalt's imamate and gave it their support, at the same time disassociating themselves from Mūsā b. Musa and Rāshid, whose actions they considered unjust and hostile.<sup>58</sup>

Other Ibādī ulema claim that Imam al-Ṣalt had disassociated himself from the office of imamate and regarded the imamate of Mūsā b. Mūsā and Rāshid b. al-Nazr as legitimate. They gave them the association (*wilāyah*), and swore allegiance to their imamate.<sup>59</sup>

This issue occupied and influenced the Ibādī ulema's discussions and arguments for a long time, and they wrote many books on the issue. Consequently, a large part of Omani history was neglected. Most of the Ibādī sources (both ancient and modern) agree that the rebellion against Imam al-Ṣalt and his subsequent deposition, was contrary to Ibādī teachings. This resulted in discord between the Ibādī ulema and their followers.<sup>60</sup>

There is a point worth mentioning here regarding the concept of the



imamate and Ibādī thought on the subject. Prior to Imam al-Ṣalt's deposition, the concept of the imamate had not been clearly defined. Imam al-Ṣalt's fall from power was the first crisis to occur in the history of the Ibādī imamate. As such, it prompted the Ibādī ulema to concentrate in their writings on the issue of imamate in general; gradually a clear definition of the imamate came into being. The Ibādī school established its imamate with the clear idea of ruling the Muslim *umma*; having put the Ibādī theory of the imamate into practice, however, they soon discovered flaws in their thinking. A group of Ibādī ulema had strongly criticised al-Muhannā b. Jayfar's way of conducting the imamate, although they did not disassociate themselves from him for the sake of the unity of the Ibādī *madhhab*.<sup>61</sup> Had the circumstances of the imam and the imamate been explained in the first place, it is conceivable that the revolt of Mūsā b. Mūsā against the legitimate Ibādī imam, would not have taken place. Taking these events into account we may conclude that there was some kind of conflict between the imam and the Ibādī ulema who were regarded as the guardians of the imamate. The imam is in fact, not a law-giver, but a law-enforcer. Creation of the law is from God and through his Prophet; interpretation is the role of the ulema, justice is the affair of all.<sup>62</sup> The imam has to create an atmosphere of mutual trust with the ulema, and not engage in conflict with them over the question of who should have the upper hand in the affairs of the imamate. One should not ignore the fact that the imam, having chosen to take on the responsibility of the imamate, automatically becomes responsible for the *umma* (nation). The religious authority (*ʿālim* or *marja'*) must realise that the role of the imam vis-a-vis the Ibādī community is that of representative of Ibādī unity. The case of Mūsā b. Mūsā's rebellion against Imam al-Ṣalt and the latter's

deportation gives a clear indication of the gap between the imam and the *‘alim*; if Mūsā b. Mūsā had any sort of mutual understanding with Imam al-Ṣalt, the Ibāḍiyyah of Oman would have been able to avoid this great schism. Instead, however, Mūsā elected to attack an imam who was too old and weak to defend himself and who inevitably would be forced to resign his position. A similar case is that of the imamate of ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ḥumayd, another old and ailing imam, who, towards the end of his reign, was accused by some of the Ibāḍī ulema of failing to conduct the affairs of the imamate correctly. Mūsā b. Abī Jābir, who had elected him, was aware of the consequences of accepting the demand of the opposition for Ibn Ḥumayd’s resignation, stood firm against the imam’s detractors and, according to the Ibāḍī sources, took the reins of the imamate in his own hand, as the imam grew ever more infirm.<sup>63</sup> Eventually the end of the imamate of al-Ṣalt opened a new chapter in the history of the Ibāḍiyyah in Oman. Once Imam al-Ṣalt had been deposed and Mūsā b. Mūsā had installed Rāshid b. al-Naẓr as the new imam, Oman entered a period of disorder and instability, which eventually led to civil war and the collapse of the second Ibāḍī imamate.

### 9.5 The imamate of Rāshid b. al-Naẓr, 273-77/885-90

After Mūsā b. Mūsā had driven al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk from the House of the Imamate (Bayt al-Imāmah) in Nizwā, he chose Rāshid b. Naẓr al-Fajhī al-Yahmādī to be the new imam.<sup>64</sup> The installation took place in the village of Farq near Nizwā in 272/885.<sup>65</sup> Other Ibāḍī sources give the year 273/886 as the date when Rāshid became imam.<sup>66</sup> Rāshid b. al-Naẓr had been as vociferous in his denigration of Imam al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk as had Mūsā b. Mūsā, and the two

became the backbone of the opposition which worked to discredit al-Ṣalt and his imamate. Their ultimate aim was, it seems, to depose him. The Ibādī sources do not mention any sort of collusion between the two rebels and reveal no overt plans for Rāshid to become imam and Mūsā to secure a position for himself as chief *qāḍī* and first adviser to the imam. Most of the Ibādī ulema regard the selection and subsequent installation of Rāshid b. al-Naẓr as imam as having happened without their being consulted or their approval for his appointment obtained. This naturally led Abū al-Mu'aththir to nurture doubts about the validity of Rāshid b. al-Naẓr's oath of allegiance and the manner in which the installation of the new imam had taken place.<sup>67</sup>

Rāshid b. al-Naẓr and Mūsā b. Mūsā had won the support of certain tribal sheikhs and military personalities, among them Fahm b. Wārith and 'Abdallāh b. Sa'īd, both of whom were described as having designs on the office of the imamate.<sup>68</sup>

The mastermind behind the new imamate, Mūsā b. Mūsā, appropriated for himself the position of *qāḍī*, a post which was to increase in importance as time passed. During the imamate of Rāshid b. al-Naẓr, Mūsā b. Mūsā was not only *qāḍī* but also chief adviser to the imam. As his handling of the dispute suggests, Rāshid b. al-Naẓr was a weak and ineffective ruler, and it soon became obvious that the real power in the land lay in the hands of Mūsā b. Mūsā. Thus it was that as Rāshid's reign progressed and his incompetence became even more manifest, the overwhelming impression given was that the position of the *qāḍī* and the religious sheikhs had eclipsed that of the imam in

importance.<sup>69</sup> After being elected imam, Rāshid b. al-Nazr left Farq with his supporters for Nizwā, the seat of the Ibādī imamate. There he proceeded to the House of the Imamate and asked for the seal (*khātam*) and the turban (*kummah*) of the imamate which were in the possession of the deposed Imam al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk. Having taken these from him, they were able to bestow legitimacy on Rāshid b. al-Nazr and prove that al-Ṣalt was no longer imam.<sup>70</sup> Rāshid's supporters regarded this move as indication of Imam al-Ṣalt's acceptance to resign from the imamate. Al-Baysawī defended al-Ṣalt by arguing that the appropriation of the ring and the turban were not sufficient to constitute Imam al-Ṣalt's deposition from the office of imamate.<sup>71</sup>

The new imam did not take any important measures to change the administrative structure of his imamate. He retained the governors of the former imam in their positions without deposing or replacing them.<sup>72</sup> Since this was the reason for the original opposition to him, this proves that al-Ṣalt's imamate was the legitimate one and that his detractors were in the wrong. The only change Rāshid made was to remove al-Ḥasan b. Sa'īd from Rustāq and appoint him as new governor of Julfār.<sup>73</sup>

With regard to his traditional opponents, the new imam embarked on a totally different policy to the one he had employed previously. For example, he endeavoured to win over Shadhān b. al-Ṣalt, the son of the deposed imam, to his own side, whereas previously he had blamed him and his father. Rāshid also appointed two of Imam al-Ṣalt's closest companions.<sup>74</sup> Ibādī sources later argued that Rāshid's decision to retain al-Ṣalt's men in positions of power

shows clearly that al-Ṣalt's enemies had no right to depose him. It is the writer's view that Rāshid's policy was to appoint al-Ṣalt's advisers and assistants to positions of power in order to win them over to his side and thus legitimise his rule. He also wished to show that opposition to Imam al-Ṣalt did not necessarily mean opposition to al-Ṣalt's friends and supporters.

Now that the situation had changed, it was not long before signs of disorder began to appear on the horizon. In the early years of Rāshid's imamate, the southern tribes of Mahrah fomented a widespread revolt against the Ibādī imamate, which was in too weak a position to impose order on them. According to Abū 'l-Mu'aththir,<sup>75</sup> Rāshid lacked the military wherewithal to control the tribal insurrection. In fact, Rāshid was engaged on another front against a rebellion which had taken place in Rustāq, to where he had sent most of his supporters and troops to establish control. The opposition there was under the leadership of the Yaḥmad sheikhs, bitter opponents of Rāshid's imamate.<sup>76</sup>

#### **9.6 The revolt against Rāshid's imamate and the beginning of civil war**

The disputes and differences between the Omanis resulted in a major split in their ranks. This division took place between the Omani tribes with each party accusing the other of betraying the teachings and ideals of the Ibādī movement, of deviating from the true path of Islam and the principles of the old Ibādī sheikhs. The division culminated eventually in tribal strife which had a profoundly negative effect on the Ibādī *da'wah* in Oman, leading in turn to civil war and the collapse of the imamate.

The first challenge to Rāshid's imamate came from the rivals of his clan, the Yaḥmad, especially those belonging to the B. Kalb, who were at the forefront of the opposition to his imamate.<sup>77</sup> From this time onwards, Rustāq became the centre of the opposition forces during Rāshid's imamate. It has been reported that Fahm b. Wārith al-Kalbī al-Yaḥmadī, along with a great number of Yaḥmadī sheikhs, formed the basic internal opposition to Rāshid's rule.<sup>78</sup> The Ibādī sources also mention the name of Shadhān b. al-Ṣalt, the son of the deposed imam, as being among the Rustāq party, while his father, the deposed imam, observed the unfolding drama from his home.<sup>79</sup>

It appears that the Rustāq-based opposition party had reached a final decision to depose Rāshid b. al-Naẓr from the imamate and look for a new imam to replace him. To translate their plan into reality they wrote to all of the tribal sheikhs scattered throughout Oman. According to al-'Awtabī, Fahm b. Wārith, the leader of the Rustāq opposition, had asked Muslim and Aḥmad, the sons of 'Isā b. Salamah al-'Awtabī, a close relative of the author, to swear the oath of allegiance to them in the Bāṭinah regions and asked them to secure allegiance on their behalf from the people of the area, especially the tribes of 'Atik b. 'Imrān which led the federation of Azd tribes of B. Mālīk b. Fahm in the Bāṭinah.<sup>80</sup> According to al-'Awtabī, these tribes had accepted the request of Fahm b. Wārith that they participate in the revolt against Rāshid b. al-Naẓr and his supporters.<sup>81</sup> In general all of the Azd tribes had also accepted the invitation of the opposition to revolt against Rāshid's rule, and had sworn the oath of allegiance to Shadhān b. Ṣalt and Fahm b. Wārith as leaders of their

party. But in Abū 'l-Mu'aththir's account, the leadership of the opposition to Mūsā b. Mūsā, himself the leader of the opposition against Imam al-Ṣalt, was attributed to Fahm b. Wārith rather than Shadhān b. al-Ṣalt,<sup>82</sup> which was almost certainly the case.<sup>83</sup>

Those opposed to Rāshid b. al-Nazr had left Rustāq which had become their gathering point on their way to Nizwā, the capital of the imamate, where Rāshid b. al-Nazr resided. Their ultimate aim was to depose him.<sup>84</sup> It is worth mentioning here that most of the opposition were the same people who had overthrown the former imam, al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk.<sup>85</sup> When the news of the departure of the rebels from Rustāq to Nizwā reached Rāshid b. al-Nazr he immediately gathered his army of supporters and despatched them to meet the opposition outside Nizwā.<sup>86</sup> He appointed two commanders; 'Abdullāh b. Sa'īd b. Mālīk al-Fajhī from Yaḥmad and al-Ḥawwārī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥiddānī from Salūt.<sup>87</sup>

The Yaḥmad tribal alliance swelled by supporters from the Bāṭinah and stirred up by accusations of injustice and favouritism, fermented by the anti-Mūsā brigade, eventually marched from Rustāq over the mountains to attack Nizwā.<sup>88</sup> They arrived at a place called al-Rawḍah.<sup>89</sup> There the army of Rāshid launched a sudden attack against them under cover of night and they were defeated.<sup>90</sup>

The army sent by Rāshid b. al-Nazr was formed from different tribal groupings. Most of them were Muḍarī under the leadership of B. Sāmāh b.

Lu'ayy. It was reported that al-Hawwārī b. 'Abdullāh al-Sāmī was the leader of Rāshid's army in the battle at al-Rawḍah.<sup>91</sup> Miles regards the army and supporters of Rāshid b. al-Nazr, who were Nizārī, as a coalition of Ibādī formed to fight the Sunnis. He also regards Mūsā b. Mūsā as the brains behind the Ibādī coalition, using his influence to incite the Ibādī people against them.<sup>92</sup> Miles interpretation of the causes of this battle is incorrect, however, since each party considered itself the better follower of Ibādī Islam. B. Sāmā and the rest of Nizārī tribes of Oman had played a very important role in the Ibādī movement, and there were among their numbers many distinguished Ibādī sheikhs and respected ulema. The conflict was not between Sunnī and Ibādī but between Ibādī and Ibādī.

The result of the Rawḍah battle created a very deep rift between the two parties. The opposition party sustained heavy losses and the sheikh, Naṣr b. Minhal was reportedly slain along with two of his sons. A great number of the Yaḥmad were killed or captured by Rāshid's army; any survivors were those who had managed to escape through the mountains, where their homes were.<sup>93</sup> According to al-'Awtabī, Fahm b. Wārith al-Yaḥmadī, the leader of the opposition, had been taken into captivity along with some of his supporters. Rāshid duly imprisoned them in Nizwā, but released them after one year on the advice of his *qāḍī*, Mūsā b. Mūsā, and many Omani tribal sheikhs.<sup>94</sup> Another important outcome of the battle of al-Rawḍah was the birth of the alliance of the Omani tribes, which was considered to be the first one within the Ibādī imamate in Oman. Each party with its tribal federation raised the slogan of defending the legitimacy of the Ibādī imamate. One further important



consequence of the conflict, was that Omani tribal sheikhs regained their influence and tribal role during this event. They replaced the Ibādī sheikhs in the political life of Oman. This increase in the importance of the tribal sheikhs served to complicate the crisis leading to tribal strife and deepening the rift until the clash between the Nizārī tribes and Yemeni tribes took place. The first call for revenge came from the Yemeni party of the Azd. Some well known poets appeared to urge their tribes into taking revenge from the tribes. Ibn Durayd, the famous author of *Ishtiqāq*, composed poetry inciting his people to stand and rise up against the Nizārīs.<sup>95</sup>

نَبِهْ نَابِهْ وَخَطْبٌ جَلِيلٌ يَا بَنِي مَالِكٍ عَقَلْتُمْ لِسَانِي	بَلْ رَزَايَا مِنْ عَبَاءِ ثَقِيلُ كَيْفَ يَمْشِي الْمَقِيدُ الْمَعْقُولُ
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أَيْنَ عَنْ شَارِهَا هَنَاقَةٌ وَفَرَاهِيدُ الَّذِينَ عَلَى الرَّوَضَةِ	فُرُوعُ الْعِزِّ أَمْ كَهْفُهُ الْمَأْمُولُ مِنْ خِيْلِهِمْ دُمَاءٌ تَسِيلُ
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A very important matter, a grave affair has been drawn to our attention, indeed disasters of great weight!

Oh sons of Mālik [b. Fahm] you have made me speechless. How on earth can the sensible man walk when he is chained?

Why do Hinā' not take their revenge, branches of glory, or its cave which is hoped for and

Farāhīd also from whose horses blood is flowing at al-Rawḍah.

Although Rāshid and his supporters had won the battle, his position as imam had become precarious, chiefly because most of the Yaḥmad clan and the rest of the Azd of B. Mālik b. Fahm opposed his imamate. Gradually he became isolated; the situation was exacerbated further when his chief *qāḍī* and adviser, Mūsā b. Mūsā withdrew his support from him and joined the Azd

alliance.<sup>96</sup> This move was regarded as an attempt to weaken Rāshid's position within the imamate by depriving his role of religious legitimacy with the ultimate aim of deposing him from the office of imam.

### 9.7 The deposition of Rāshid b. al-Nazr, 277/890

After the battle of al-Rawḍah, Rāshid b. al-Nazr suffered a distinct fall in popularity, despite the fact that he had been victorious in battle. It seems that the alliance of the Azd tribes had played a very important role in changing Mūsā b. Mūsā's view of his friend Rāshid. It was soon after this occurrence that relations between Mūsā and Imam Rāshid turned sour, the latter probably not proving so pliant a tool in Mūsā's hand as he had hoped. Mūsā accordingly exerted his influence to depose Rāshid b. al-Nazr from the imamate, just as he had been ready to depose Imam al-Ṣalt. When Imam Rāshid heard that Mūsā was in Izki,<sup>97</sup> he left Nizwā immediately to see him there, and to persuade him to change his attitude towards him. It seems that he was unable to do so.<sup>98</sup> The first action taken by Mūsā was to disassociate himself from Imam Rāshid, whom he now regarded as sinful (*fāsiq*) and to demand that he be stripped of the imamate. Were he to refuse, Mūsā pledged to use force against him.<sup>99</sup> Al-Baysawī notes that there was a general consensus among the people that Rāshid be deposed.<sup>100</sup> Contact was made between Mūsā b. Mūsā and the opposition, resulting in an agreement between him and Shadhān b. al-Ṣalt, the son of the deposed imam, to get rid of Rāshid, despite Mūsā b. Mūsā's hostility to al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk, the father of Shadhān.<sup>101</sup>

The opposition party, which consisted of the Azd tribal alliance and

Mūsā b. Mūsā, met in Farq, the same place in which they had agreed to depose al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk. Two of Rāshid b. al-Naẓr's main supporters, al-Ḥawwārī b. 'Abdullāh and al-Walīd b. Mukhlid, turned down the opposition's invitation to participate with them in deposing Rāshid. Both of them had played an important role alongside Mūsā b. Mūsā and Rāshid b. al-Naẓr in deposing al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk. Al-Ḥawwārī b. 'Abdullāh and al-Walīd b. Mukhlid made unsuccessful attempts to prevent the opposition from deposing their friend Rāshid; gathering their army together they went to Rustāq to fight Shadhān b. al-Ṣalt and the opposition, but were defeated.<sup>102</sup> After the battle, the opposition party made its way to Nizwā in order to depose imam Rāshid b. Naẓr. They managed to take him from the House of the Imāmate without any struggle and Rāshid was given a beating and put in prison.<sup>103</sup> His fall from office came in the month of Ṣafar, 277/890 (107). He had spent four years and 58 days as imam.<sup>104</sup>

### 9.8 The imamate of 'Azzān b. Tamīm, 277-280/890-893

Having succeeded in getting rid of Rāshid, Mūsā b. Mūsā nominated his friend, Sheikh 'Azzān b. Tamīm al-Kharūṣī as imam.<sup>105</sup> According to Sayyābī, the Omanis had chosen al-Ṣalt b. Qāsim before Azzān's nomination, but he was rejected,<sup>106</sup> and 'Azzān chosen instead. The selection of the imams is the duty of the Ibādī ulema, but it appears that there was a group of Ibādīs who had lost confidence in Mūsā b. Mūsā and had set about proposing and selecting their own imamas. According to the Ibādī sources,<sup>107</sup> the imamate at this time had deteriorated into a chaotic game as al-Sālimī observes, "The problem with the people of Oman is that if they swear the oath of allegiance to one man, it is clear that they will later abandon him".<sup>108</sup> On this particular occasion they

offered their support once more to Rāshid b. al-Nazr, who had repented, restored him as imam, and then rejected and deposed him.<sup>109</sup>

Generally speaking the disorder in the imamate at this time can be put down to two basic factors. Firstly there was the difficulty of finding an Ibādī sheikh who would unite the Ibādīs according to the Ibādī principles; secondly, there was the difficulty of finding a very strong personality who could have fulfilled the conditions required of an Ibādī imam. These two factors had affected the imamate, without a knowledgeable Ibādī sheikh and a pious and strong imam, the imamate would inevitably suffer weakness and collapse. The principles of the Ibādī school predominant at the time, were replaced by tribal solidarity (*aṣabiyyah*), thus opening a new chapter in Omani history.

After ‘Azzān became imam a group of well-known tribal sheikhs such as ‘Umar b. Muḥammad al-Qāḍī, Muḥammad b. Mūsā b. ‘Alī, ‘Azzān b. al-Huzbr, and Azhar b. Muḥammad b. Sulaymān, swore allegiance to him.<sup>110</sup> His *bay‘ah* took place on Ṣafar, 277/890.<sup>111</sup> There was some disagreement over the imamate of ‘Azzān, as is clear from the Ibādī sources with some authors not recognising his imamate<sup>112</sup> and others with doubts and reservations about its legitimacy.<sup>113</sup>

### 9.8.1 Internal policy

As usual, the Ibādī sources provide us with very little information about this imam, and fail to mention any role he had played within the Ibādī imamate prior to the dispute over Imam al-Ṣalt’s rule. His name is mentioned among those who supported al-Ṣalt b. Mālik and who refused to recognise the new

imam, Rāshid b. al-Nazr.

The first indication regarding Imam ‘Azzān’s policy comes in the Ibādī sources which assert that the first action he took after being elected was to dismiss Imam Rāshid’s governors in the various Omani regions, most of whom had also worked for Imam al-Ṣalt.<sup>114</sup> He replaced them with his very close friends, such as ‘Azzān b. al-Huzbr, who took charge of the Omani navy. He also appointed al-Azhar b. Muḥammad as governor of Sohar. Mūsā b. Mūsā was appointed as chief *qāḍī*,<sup>115</sup> and Nabḥān b. ‘Uthmān was appointed as leader of the Friday prayers.<sup>116</sup> These men had supported Imam ‘Azzān’s election as imam, and by giving them such important positions, it is clear that his motive was to reward them for their strong support.

The first year of his imamate passed relatively peacefully. Then relations between Imam ‘Azzān and his *qāḍī*, Mūsā b. Mūsā, began to change. Imam ‘Azzān observed with increasing jealousy and anger the encroachments of Mūsā b. Mūsā on his authority and the invidious attempts made to undermine his power, and he determined to bring the matter to a head.<sup>117</sup> Mūsā was removed by the imam from the office of chief *qāḍī*. Mūsā regarded Imam ‘Azzān’s move to deprive him of his position as a humiliating personal insult, especially since he saw himself as the most learned Ibādī sheikh and the head of *ahl al-ḥall wa-l-‘aqd*, the influential section of the Ibādīyyah. Mūsā fled to Izkī, his birthplace, where he took refuge with the faction he had so long and bitterly opposed.<sup>118</sup> His reception there did not fail to fill the imam with alarm and the apprehensions thus created naturally tended to increase the animosity between

the two sides.<sup>119</sup> Nevertheless, ‘Azzān stood in great dread of Musa, who might at any time call for him to be deposed from the imamate, as he had in the case of the two previous imams. To prevent this from happening, he despatched an army of men to Izki, composed chiefly of men whom he had released from prison for the express purpose of challenging Mūsā.<sup>120</sup> The Ibādī sources do not mention whether Mūsā b. Mūsā gathered an army at Izki, but it seems from the events that some soldiers might have joined Mūsā b. Mūsā there, which clearly would have added to the fear of military action against him under the leadership of Mūsā b. Mūsā. Hostilities now broke out afresh, and in Sha‘bān 278/891, eighteen months into the imamate of ‘Azzān, the Ibādī forces despatched by the imam laid siege to the walled enclosure of Izki.<sup>121</sup> The attacking force was too strong to be resisted and after a short struggle the enclosure was stormed, sacked and burnt to the ground. The slaughter was great, the town plundered, and in the ensuing conflagration<sup>122</sup> several of the town’s most eminent men were burnt to death.<sup>123</sup> Mūsā b. Mūsā was slain in the vicinity of the Stone in the quarter of al-Jinūr (al-Jibūr). Ibādī sources relate that never before had such acts of wanton violence and destruction been committed against Izki and its people.<sup>124</sup> Imam ‘Azzān received those who brought him the news of the success of the expedition with honour, and liberally rewarded his troops, feeling, no doubt, much relieved at the death of his former associate and supporter, Mūsā b. Mūsā.<sup>125</sup> The Nizārīs, who had suffered most in the massacre, were filled with hatred and anger, and yearned for revenge over their adversaries.<sup>126</sup> Some Yemeni tribes shared in the grief of Nizār and condemned the action of Imam ‘Azzān b. Tamīm.<sup>127</sup>

The Nizārīs began to send delegations to the Omani tribes, particularly to their alliance, to ask them for help against Imam ‘Azzān b. Tamīm and his alliance. It has been reported that very well known sheikhs from the B. Sāmāh tribe were sent throughout Oman for this task. Abu ‘l-Faḍl b. Ḥawwārī al-Sāmī, a sheikh of the B. Sāmāh, went to the region of al-Sirr, as did Ziyād b. Marwān. From the region of the Bāṭinah Abū Hudnah left to join al-Ḥawwārī b. ‘Abdullāh al-Ḥiddānī in the Ḥiddān mountains,<sup>128</sup> where they managed to gather a great army. After achieving his aims in al-Sirr, Abū ‘l-Faḍl reportedly went to Tu‘ām the headquarters of the Nizārīs of northern Arabia.<sup>129</sup> He was offered help and assistance by the tribe of B. ‘Awf b. ‘Umar b. Ṣa‘ṣa‘ah.<sup>130</sup>

From this point onwards Abū ‘l-Faḍl emerged as the leader of the Nizārī alliance; some of the Banū al-Ḥārith of Bāṭinah had joined the Nizārī party.<sup>131</sup> The Azd tribe al-Ḥiddān also participated in the Nizārī campaign under its sheikh, al-Ḥawwārī b. ‘Abdullāh al-Ḥiddānī.<sup>132</sup> Having succeeded in gathering enough supporters, Abū ‘l-Faḍl then returned to al-Ḥiddān b. ‘Abdullāh bringing with him al-Ḥawwārī b. ‘Abdullāh al-Salūṭī. It has been reported that before the Nizārīs faced Imam ‘Azzān’s army and alliance, they chose al-Ḥawwārī b. ‘Abdullāh al-Ḥiddānī as Ibādī imam not only for their party but for Oman as a whole.<sup>133</sup> This would give their supporters legitimate representation in their conflict with ‘Azzān and his followers. The army of the Nizārīs and their alliance had moved with its leaders down to Sohar in the Bāṭinah coast.<sup>134</sup> In the meantime, Imam ‘Azzān had used the month of Ramaḍān, which falls before Shawwāl, to declare a truce. He began to gather his supporters and forces which represented the Azd tribes alliance,<sup>135</sup> and appointed al-Ahyaf b. Ḥamḥām,

the sheikh of B. Hinā', as the leader of his troops.<sup>136</sup> The army of Imam 'Azzān proceeded to Sohar where the Nizārīs were gathered.<sup>137</sup> Both sides were prepared for the decisive battle which was to take place later at a place called al-Qā', in an atmosphere described by the Ibādī sources as full of hostility and division and also devoid of any of the principles of true religion. It was the spirit of *'aṣabiyyah* (tribal solidarity) that dominated the two parties of Yemenis and Nizārīs. Ibādī teachings had suffered a set back and collapsed as a result of the growth of the power of the tribal sheikhs who had begun to arrogate for themselves the right to make crucial decisions, hitherto the prerogative of the Ibādī ulema.

### 9.9 The battle of al-Qā', 278/891

The two parties met at a place called al-Qā' at al-Khayām of Zahr 'Awtab.<sup>138</sup> Al-Izkawī gives the name of the Majjaz<sup>139</sup> not far from Sohar. The Nizārī party was led by its Imam al-Ḥawwārī b. 'Abdullāh who took Sohar as his seat of government and the Yemeni party fought under the banner of Imam 'Azzān b. Tamīm, who was resident in Nizwā. The latter's army was led by al-Ahyaf b. Ḥamḥām, the sheikh of B. Hinā'. The battle took place on 26 Shawwāl, and ended in the defeat of the Nizārī army. A great number of them were slain, among them al-Ḥawwārī b. 'Abdullāh al-Ḥiddānī, and 'l-Faḍl b. Ḥawwārī al-Sāmi. Those who survived were forced to flee. According to al-'Awtabī, the Nizārī army numbered more than 600 men, while those killed on the Yemeni side were about 85.<sup>140</sup> It is possible that the number of deaths might be greater than that given in the sources. This battle brought the war practically to its conclusion, leaving the Yemeni party masters of the situation.



The Azd tribes welcomed the victory, and their poets composed a poem which expressed their pride and glory at winning this battle. The poet of the Azd, Aḥmad b. Jamīl of B. Ḥadīd of Mālik b. Fahm<sup>141</sup> wrote:

يا لك بالقياع من صباح  
قاع خيام الى البطاح  
تقدمنا الأسد من هنا  
في جحفل شاهري السلاح

What a lovely morning in al Qā', the Qā' of the tents as far as the plain!

We are led by the Lions of Hinā', at the head of a large army with their weapons unsheathed.

This shows us the great change in the thinking of the Omani people. Tribal strife and calls for revenge had become a way of life for them. The teachings of the Ibādī *da'wah* and the principles of Islam had been all but forgotten. Discord continued amongst the people of Oman and their mutual animosities increased in bitterness. Al-Izkawī<sup>142</sup> describes the situation of Oman as follows, "The imamate became no more than a plaything for them, an object of rebellions, contention and incentive, and of ambitious designs. They followed neither God's book nor the footsteps of their virtuous ancestors. Matters were such that in a single year they had no less than sixteen different imams, and in each case failed to stay faithful to the allegiance they had pledged". It is evident that the nature of the war had entirely changed since the rift between Mūsā b. Mūsā and Imam 'Azzān b. Tamīm. According to Miles,<sup>143</sup> the war at that time was a religious one between what he describes as the Sunnis and the Ibādīs, it had now become one of race between Yemen and Nizār. Fahm b. Wārith and B. Hinā', who had always opposed the rule of the imamate, were

now ranged on the imam's side. The religious differences between the Omanis were subsequently to lead to the Abbasid invasion. Mūsā b. Mūsā and his followers had to be blamed for all this discord. Mūsā, who caused the civil war, was a very ambitious man, but there is not sufficient information about this character. Miles regards Mūsā's policies as having been dictated by arrogance and ambition. He may have had good reasons for deposing al-Ṣalt and Rāshid, and quarrelling with 'Azzān, but he caused difficulties not only for the imamate, but also for the Omanis, who had to pay dearly for his selfish policies towards those who were, before the dispute, counted among his friends.<sup>144</sup>

#### 9.10 Abbasid intervention, 280/893

After the battle of al-Qā', in which the Nizārīs suffered a decisive defeat, the Omanis fell into a state of ruinous division, constantly feuding and fighting with each other to indulge their jealousies and calls for revenge.<sup>145</sup> It has been reported that two Nizārī sheikhs left Oman to seek help from outsiders. The delegation consisted of Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim and Bashīr b. al-Mundhir.<sup>146</sup> They went to Bahrain to ask for assistance from the Abbasids, who were in control there. The situation of the Nizārīs in Oman was extremely weak; now they found themselves threatened by the Azd alliance, which had the upper hand in the conflict. Muḥammad b. Nūr was Caliph al-Mu'taḍid's governor in Bahrain.<sup>147</sup> The Nizārīs complained to him on their arrival, of the sufferings they had endured from the Yemeni party. According to al-'Awtabī they invited him to accompany them to Oman, and tempted him by holding out hopes of great gains.<sup>148</sup> The Abbasid governor advised them to take their case to Caliph al-Mu'taḍid himself in Baghdad. It seems that Muḥammad b. Nūr did not

welcome their invitation to interfere in Oman without the caliph's permission, had he done so, it would have been difficult for him to despatch an army to Oman with the assistance of Iraq, especially since the Abbasid experience of controlling Oman had brought them no credit. The two sheikhs accepted the suggestion of Ibn Nūr. Accordingly Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim left Bahrain for Baghdad to see Caliph al-Mu'taḍid while Bashīr b. Mundhir remained with Muḥammad b. Nūr.<sup>149</sup> When Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim was admitted to the caliph's presence, he gave him a detailed account of the whole affair. The caliph decided not to reject the overtures of the Omani envoy and issued speedy orders for the organisation of an expeditionary force. He was determined that it should be of overwhelming strength, taking into account the previous expedition of Hārūn al-Rāshid whose small army had suffered at the hands of Imam al-Wārith b. Ka'b. Muḥammad b. Nūr carried out the orders of the caliph and began to muster an army from among the various tribes, principally from those of the north. The Nizārīs came from every corner of Northern Arabia; it has also been reported that an army from Ṭayyī' arrived from Syria.<sup>150</sup> Eventually he was able to set out with a force of 25,000 men, of whom 3,5000 were horsemen equipped in armour and with baggage. Because of the close boundaries between Oman and Bahrain to control Oman with a huge army would not be so difficult, especially since the Azd lacked training and experience in comparison with the Abbasid army. The Nizārī *ʿaṣabiyyah* appears yet again in these verses composed - according to al-Sālimī - by Muḥammad b. Nūr's scribe.<sup>151</sup>

مَقَالًا تَنْقَاهُ حَكِيمٌ مَجْرِبٌ	أَمِنْ مُبَلِّغٍ عَنَّا عَمَانَ وَأَهْلَهَا
لَمَلِكٍ فَتَى الْعَبَّاسِ تَرْضَى وَتَغْضَبُ	فَوَارِسُ مِنْ أَبْنَاءِ عَدْنَانَ كُلِّهَا

Will anyone communicate to Oman and its people about us a speech chosen by a wise and experienced man?

Knights from the sons of 'Adnān, all of them, they are content and angry for the Kingdom of the youth of al-'Abbās [i.e. the Abbasid caliph].

This large and well equipped expedition appears to have been divided into two divisions, one of which set sail from Basra with the impedimenta and stores in a flotilla of transports and disembarked at Julfār, while the other, comprising the main body under Muḥammad b.Nūr, marched overland from al-Aḥsā', crossing the area between Oman and Bahrain, engaging on the way with tribes of al-Sirr in skirmishes and desultory warfare. Ibn Nūr moved into Tu'ām on 24 Muḥarram 280/893.<sup>152</sup>

When news of these movements reached Oman, alarm spread through the whole country. The people of Oman were split up into rival factions, their counsels were devoid of concert and their hearts were disunited. A great number of Imam 'Azzān's supporters had abandoned him in Nizwā.<sup>153</sup> According to the Ibādī sources, many Omanis began to emigrate from Oman with their families and property, thereby laying themselves open to deserved contempt on account of their pusillanimity.<sup>154</sup> Most of those who left the country were from the Bāṭinah area, namely from Sohar, the centre of trade and commerce. Some of them left for Hurmuz<sup>155</sup> while the people of Sohar went to Shirāz, Basra,<sup>156</sup> and probably to Sirāf, and other coastal parts which were well-known to Omani people. Al-'Awtabī mentions that among those who abandoned Oman was Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Mālik al-Sulaymī, one of the noble Azd chiefs, who left with his family and clan of B. Sulaymah across the sea to Hurmuz.<sup>157</sup> Al-Sālimī

says that Sulaymān al-Sulaymī, who played a very important role in the battle of al-Qā', did not escape from Oman until after the arrival of the Abbasid's expedition, and thus heard about what they had committed during their attempt to control Oman.<sup>158</sup>

Muḥammad b. Nūr advanced with his forces by sea and took Julfār after a short battle with the Omani defenders of the town.<sup>159</sup> After taking control of Julfār he proceeded to Tu'ām, a key town on the road which connected the town with the Bāṭinah region. Tu'ām in fact is the hold place of the Nizārīs, who invited the Abbasid army to help them; many tribes such as the B. 'Āmir b. Ṣa'ṣa'ah and the B. Nājiyyah which participated in the battle of al-Qā' were found in this area.<sup>160</sup> Muḥammad b. Nūr's troops then marched towards al-Sirr, which fell easily into his hands. The aim of the Abbasid troops was to reach Nizwā, the centre of the imamate and the Azd alliance. The Bāṭinah region was also taken by Muḥammad b. Nūr and his troops on their way to Nizwā. There is no information or mention in the sources about any resistance the Abbasid army faced during their advance on Nizwā. Imam 'Azzān b. Tamīm, hearing the news of the advance of Muḥammad b. Nūr's army on Nizwā, immediately left for the village of Samd al-Shā'n.<sup>161</sup> Muḥammad b. Nūr entered Nizwā without encountering any opposition from the local people,<sup>162</sup> which shows that most of the Ibādī supporters and the Yemeni alliance had evacuated the town before the arrival of the expedition at Nizwā. The Ibādī sources mention that Imam 'Azzān, who took refuge in Samd al-Shā'n, began to gather what was left of his supporters and soldiers, and prepared to meet the invading troops. After taking Nizwā the Abbasid army advanced to Samd al-Shā'n, where they searched for

Imam ‘Azzān and the rest of his troops. The two sides clashed in battle at the end of the month of Ṣafar 280/893. The fighting was severe, resulting in the flight of the people of Oman and the death of Imam ‘Azzān b. Tamīm.<sup>163</sup> It is said that after the battle, Muḥammad b. Nūr sent the head of Imam ‘Azzān b. Tamīm to the caliph, al-Mu‘taḍid in Baghdad.<sup>164</sup> Al-Mas‘ūdī mistakenly reports that Muḥammad b. Nūr had killed al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk (al-Ṣalt had in fact died in 275/888), who was among the two hundred thousand of the *shurāḥ* (Ibāḍiyyah) who had lost heavily in this battle, and many heads of those who were slain were carried to Baghdad where they were displayed at a place called al-Jisr.<sup>165</sup> Al-Ṭabarī in his accounts of this expedition mentions only that Muḥammad b. Thawr had conquered Oman in the year 280/893 and sent the heads of some of its people to Baghdad.<sup>166</sup> Ibn al-Athīr also mentions the account given by al-Ṭabarī.<sup>167</sup> According to al-Ḥārithī’s account of the losses of the people of Oman in the battle of Samd al-shā’n, over four hundred knowledgeable Ibāḍī sheikhs were killed by the Abbasid army.<sup>168</sup> The heads of these ulema were probably among those which were sent to Baghdad. With the death of Imam ‘Azzān b. Tamīm, the Ibāḍī imamate can be said to have fallen on 25 Ṣafar 280/893.<sup>169</sup> The affairs of the imamate had passed from the hands of the Ibāḍīs to Muḥammad b. Nūr who, according to the sources, returned to Nizwā, which became his headquarters. From there he started to mop up the Ibāḍī resistance inside Oman, the stronghold of the Ibāḍiyyah. It is also believed that he began to collect *ṣadaqah* from them.

The Omanis were unable to bear these heavy losses and the destruction of their imamate. According to the Ibāḍī sources, al-Ahyaf b. Ḥamḥām, the

B. Hinā' sheikh, "the head Tamīmah sheikh and the leader of the Yemen faction in the battle of al-Qā', led an insurrection to drive the Abbasid army from Oman. He wrote to the sheikhs and tribes of Oman of all districts, calling on and exhorting them to rise against Muḥammad b. Nūr and drive him from Oman.<sup>170</sup> Those sheikhs who had not fled the country or surrendered to the conqueror, answered the appeal with greater enthusiasm and alacrity than they had shown towards that of Imam 'Azzān b. Tamīm.<sup>171</sup> They responded by sending men from each tribe; al-Ahyaf organised them into an army, which he led against Muḥammad b. Nūr and his forces. The name of the gathering point of the Azd army is not mentioned by the sources, but it was probably the Sharqiyyah. Al-Sālimī<sup>172</sup> mentions, that Munīr b. al-Nayyar al-Rāyāmī, who was one of the *ḥamalat al-ilm* in Oman,<sup>173</sup> headed a huge number of people of Ja'lān in al-Ahyaf's army. When Ibn Nūr heard of this, terror seized his heart.<sup>174</sup> He then decided to pull his troops out from Oman to avoid fighting the forces of al-Ahyaf b. Ḥamḥām. According to Ibādī sources, Muḥammad b. Nūr and his troops were heading towards the sea when the army of al-Ahyaf arrived in Damā (now al-Sīb). Muḥammad b. Nūr who was to cross the Omani frontier, made a stand and prepared for the inevitable conflict. The two armies met in battle, both suffering heavy losses, and the war began to swing in favour of the army of Omani Azd, which came close to winning the battle when the Abbasid troops began to lose heart, and sought safety on the sea shore.<sup>175</sup> At this critical point in the battle Nizārī reinforcements were dispatched by Abū 'Ubaydah b. Muḥammad, sheikh of B. Sāmāh, to assist Ibn Nūr's troops. They alighted from their camels and, seizing their weapons, charged with Muḥammad b. Nūr against al-Ahyaf al-Hinā'i. Now fortunes were reversed and the victory that had seemed

inevitable for the Omani Azd party was snatched from their grasp.<sup>176</sup> Al-Ahyaf and many of his relatives from the B. Hinā' and others of the Azd were slain,<sup>177</sup> with only a few of them managing to escape. Munīr b. al-Nayyar who was 120 years of age, was reportedly killed in this battle.<sup>178</sup> After the battle Muḥammad b. Nūr returned once more to Nizwā, there to rule supreme over all Oman. According to the sources, he executed a very tough policy with regard to the people of Oman. As soon as he had re-established his authority over Oman, he degraded the most honourable of the inhabitants and subjected them to the most abject conditions. He also gave orders for the cruel and inhuman treatment of the people and the devastation of the land. According to them,<sup>179</sup> he ordered people to have their hands, feet and ears cut off, their eyes gouged out, and generally treated the inhabitants with greatest severity and contempt.<sup>180</sup> But his most serious crime was to fill in and destroy the age-old water channels (*aflāj*) which the people of Oman depended on for irrigation. It has also been reported that he burnt many Omani books that dealt with the teachings of the Ibādiyyah.

The Nizārī tribes had played a very important role in assisting the policy of the B. Nūr towards the Ibādīs and the Yemeni faction, in return for taking revenge on the Azd alliance, who had killed a great number of Nizārīs in the battle of al-Qā'. After Muḥammad b. Nūr succeeded in imposing his authority over Oman, and a gradual return to normality was under way, he decided to return to his post as governor of Bahrain. There is no information given by the sources about the length of his rule over Oman, but it is unlikely that he remained there for very long. On his departure he appointed Aḥmad b. Hilāl



to replace him as governor of all Oman.<sup>181</sup> It seems that Muḥammad b. Nūr had withdrawn some of the Abbasid troops in Oman. Aḥmad b. Hilāl had chosen Bahlā<sup>182</sup> as his residence, rather than Nizwā, which had been the headquarters of Muḥammad b. Nūr. Aḥmad b. Hilāl appointed a certain Abū Aḥmad al-Buḥayrah governor of Nizwā, which remained loyal to the Ibādīyah and hostile to the Abbasid governors. But al-Buḥayrah was reportedly killed when the people of Nizwā rose up against him.<sup>183</sup> According to the sources his corpse was dragged away and buried in a well-known spot beneath the gate called Mu'thir on the road leading to Farq.<sup>184</sup> The rest of the Omani regions, such as Sharqiyyah and 'Umān al-Wuṣṭā remained under Abbasid rule. It is difficult for any army to occupy such a hostile area. By this time the Abbasid influx had begun to weaken and its principal task was to collect the tax. Meanwhile the Ibādīs started to recover and under the Abbasid rule they selected a considerable number of imams and gave them their allegiance.<sup>185</sup>

This shows the extent of the disorder suffered by Oman and also proves to us how the tribal strife between the Nizārīs and Yemenites was still strong and dominant over the lives of the Omanis. Finally it is worthy mentioning that the B. Sāmāh and the rest of Nizārī tribes remained Ibādīs and in calling the Abbasids to assist them not to get rid of the Ibādīs or of the imamate, as al-Mas'ūdī and al-Iṣṭakhri claim,<sup>186</sup> but rather to fight their enemies, the Yemeni faction. The Nizārīs had elected their Ibādī imam before they met the Yemenis in the Qā' battle.

### **9.10.1 The cause and results behind the collapse of the second Ibādī Imamate**

Before going into detail about the reasons for the collapse of the Ibādī imamate, for the second time, we have to discuss the Omani tribal factions and the tribal strife which played an important role in preventing the Ibādīyyah from extending their imamate and its political system. Since Oman is a tribal land with pure tribal assemblages in every town and valley, there was always the possibility of a challenge during the period of the rule of the second imamate since the fall of the Julandā rulers. The B. Hinā' were one of the tribes who were active during this time. They opposed strongly the imamate and Ibādī teaching in Oman, and also appear as the main challenger to the monopoly of Yaḥmad clan for the imamate, replacing the Julandā rulers. They always opposed most of the elected imams before changing their policy, and probably they had become Ibādīs by that time, to defend the imamate and its institutions during the time of the last Imam, 'Azzān b. Tamīm, under the leadership of al-Ahyaf b. Ḥamḥām who might become defender of the imamate under the tribal alliance rather than to be an Ibādī follower.

### **9.10.2 The reasons for the fall of the second Ibādī imamate**

1. The monopoly of the seat of the imamate by the Yaḥmad family was one of the main reasons for the steady growth of the opposition movement among the rest of the Azd tribes, especially al-'Atīk, the traditional kings and sheikhs of Oman, and the B. Hinā', the traditional supporters of the Julandā rulers, and the B. al-Hiddān and B. al-Hārith, the sons of Mālīk b. Fahm. If the monopoly of the imamate and the choice of the Yaḥmad

imams was under the pretext of their superior knowledge of Ibādī teaching, it must be said that none of the ruling imams of the second imamate had great knowledge nor were they qualified for the imamate itself. Those imams who were chosen for the imamate were Yaḥmādī and not Ibādī sheikhs. Another point which must be mentioned here is that the ulema who were taking charge of selecting the imams, had chosen some imams who had neither religious ability nor the tribal respect of the people of Oman, and who showed their failure to conduct the affairs of the imamate successfully.

2. The Ibādī ulema played an important role in selecting the imam after the second Ibādī imamate. It seems that the second generation of these ulema put the selection of the imam before the interest of the Ibādī community and the imamate. We have seen many imams who were weak because of old age, and who were simply unable to carry out the duties of the imamate. The ulema then played a second role by taking charge of the authority in their hands. Mūsā b. Mūsā was a very good example of those ulema who wanted to see anyone chosen, to rely on them in every matter. The civil war took place because of this policy.
3. Omani society was composed of different tribes, the Nizārīs of Northern Arabia and the Yemenites of Southern Arabia, who have more influence in Oman since they constitute the majority of the population. Tribal strife raised its head after the Ibādī doctrines were brought in to unify the Omani tribes under one rule. Since the Ibādīyyah suffered setbacks and

lost power, tribal feud replaced the Ibāḍiyyah, and the rule of the community fell into the hands of the tribal sheikhs instead of the Ibāḍī ulema. The role of the tribes under the tribal sheikhs increased the division between the two factions, the Nizārīs and Yemenis, with each faction choosing its own imam. Imam ‘Azzān, for instance, was the Yemeni imam of the Ibāḍiyyah, and al-Hawwārī b. ‘Abdullāh was the Nizārī imam. The civil war was the result of this division; because the Nizārīs as the minority faction faced the defeat, they called upon the Abbasid troops to assist them against their rivals. The consequence was the collapse of the imamate and its institutions.

4. All the reasons mentioned above had negative repercussions on the economic conditions of the people of Oman. The disorder which emerged during the struggle for power had damaged trade and navigation. In addition thousands of Omanis had escaped from the country, especially after the arrival of the Abbasid troops.

**TABLE 6**

**The imams of the second Ibādī imamate**

<b>Imam</b>	<b>Clan</b>
Muḥammad b. ‘Abdullāh b. Abī ‘Affān al-Yaḥmadi 177-9/793-5, removed from Office	Yaḥmad
al-Wārith b. Ka‘b (al-Kharūṣī), 179-192/795-808	Yaḥmad
Ghassān b. ‘Abdullāh al-Fajhī, 192-207/808-23	Yaḥmad
‘Abd al-Malik b. Ḥumayd, 207-26/823-41	B.‘Alī al-Azd
Muhannā b. Jayfar al-Fajhī, 226-37/841-51	Yaḥmad
al-Ṣalt b. Mālīk al-Kharūṣī, 237-272 (deposed)/851-86	Yaḥmad
Replaced by Mūsā b. Mūsā with Rāshid b. al-Nazr al-Fajhī, 272-277/886, deposed	Yaḥmad
‘Azzān b. Tamīm al-Kharūṣī, 277-80/890-893, killed by Abbasid invading force during the civil war of Oman	Yaḥmad

## Notes

1. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 461; Ruqayshī, Misbāh, MS.f. 286; Ma'walī, Qisa, MS.f. 210; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā' 47; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārikh, 66; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 102; Sayyābī, Uman, II, 186SF; Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 242; Ross, Annals, 128; Badger, Imams, 18-19; Miles, Countries, I, 73;
2. ed. Sayeda, Abū al-Mu'aththir, "Aḥdāth", 25 Many Ibādī sheikhs have attended the Installation of Imam al-Ṣalt, such as al-Mu'llā b. Munir, 'Abdallāh b. al-Hakam and Muhammad b. 'Alī al-Qādī. See Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 109 mentions Bashīr b. al-Mundhir as the most important sheikh who attended Imam al-Ṣalt's installation; see, Ross, Annals, 128; Badger, Imams, 19; Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 243.
3. Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 48, sf, Badger, Imams, 19.
4. ed. Sayeda, Abū Qaḥṭān, "Sīrah", 124; Abū al-Mu'aththir, "Aḥdāth", 25; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 109.
5. Izkawī, Kashf, Ms, 461; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 109; cf, Ross, Annals, 128.
6. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 109.
7. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 109; Sayyābī, Uman, II, 190. Imam al-Ṣalt appointed Muḥammad b. Maḥbūb as qādī of Sohar in 249/863.
8. For more detailed discussion about this issue, see the intellectual activities during the Imam al-Muḥannā period in Chapter 8.
9. This move came as a result of pressure exercised by the Ibādī sheikhs on Imam al-Ṣalt.
10. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 124; cf, Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 245. The letter which was sent by Imam al-Ṣalt to his governor was based on Caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb's letter on *qadā'*.
11. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 130; Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 246.
12. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 130.
13. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 110, was perhaps the only author to throw light on these economic events, which might be regarded among the factors behind the decline of the second Ibādī imamate.
14. Tuhfah, I, 110; cf, Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 245.
15. Tuhfah, I, 110. They probably travelled to Sirāf Hurmuz and Basra, where the Omanis have very strong links with these towns. Sālīmī also

describes the condition of the people of Oman living in these areas as follows, "The flood destroyed houses and crops, and men, women and their property and lives. Many had to flee, and the rich became poor and were forced to beg for food".

16. Ṣifat, 53.
17. Ansāb, MS.f. 58a.
18. Hāshim, Ibādīyyah, 249.
19. Tuhfah, I, 112; Sayyābī, ‘Uman, I, 192.
20. Tuhfah, I, 166.
21. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, 112; cf, Sayyābī, ‘Uman, II, 191.
22. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 112
23. Tuhfah, I, 113; Sayyābī, ‘Uman, II, 192; Imam al-Ṣalt also appointed Hāzim b. Hammām and ‘Abd al-Wahhāb b. Yazīd as reserve leaders of this expedition.
24. See the significance of the letter in Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 13-124.
25. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 123.
26. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 123.
27. Kindī, Ihtidā’, 50-128.
28. Ruqayshī, Miṣbāḥ, MS.f. 30a; Ma‘walī, Qīṣaṣ, f. 21b. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 132. His imamate lasted for thirty-seven years, eight months and eighteen days.
29. ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 269b; see also Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 54.
30. Ruqayshī, Miṣbāḥ, MS. f. 30a; Ma‘walī, Qīṣaṣ, f. 21b; ed, ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 67; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 138.
31. For more detailed discussion about the Rustāq group, see Kindī, Ihtidā’, 55. The Leader of this Rustāq group was ‘Abdallāh b. Muḥammad b. Barkah, and ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Bisyanī (Baysawī) the author of al-Hujjah and al-Jām’. See Sayyābī, ‘Uman, II, 245; cf Wilkinson, Imamate, 166-68; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 145.
32. Kindī, Ihtidā’, 58. The leader of this school is Abū Sa‘īd al-Kudamī, the author of the book al-Istiḳāmah, 3 volumes, and Abū ‘Abdallāh Muḥammad b. Rūḥ b. ‘Arabī. See Sayyābī, ‘Uman, II, 245; cf Wilkinson,

Imamate, 166-68; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 145.

33. One of Ibādī ulema of the second half of the 3rd/4th century. He was from the Kharūṣ clan of Yaḥmad and was blind. See Ennami, Studies, 7; Wilkinson, Imamate, 366.
34. The Aḥdāth wa al-Sifāt was written by al-Ṣalt b. Khamīs to Abū ‘Abdallāh Jābir b. Muḥammad b. Ja‘far in which he explains the events of the civil war in Oman as a result of Imam al-Ṣalt b. Mālik’s deposition. See the siyra in ed. Sayeda, “Aḥdāth”, Siyar, 23-86.
35. He is also regarded as one of the Rustāq group, who opposed those who deposed Imam al-Ṣalt b. Mālik.
36. See ed. Sayeda, Kashif, Cairo 1985.
37. This issue had dominated the Ibādī author’s work since that time up to the present time.
38. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 136.
39. Imamate, 208
40. Wilkinson, Imamate, 208.
41. Such as ‘Abdallah b. Sa‘īd b. Mālik al-Fajhī al-Yaḥmadī al-Hawwārī b. Abdallāh al-Salūtī, Fahm b. Wārith al-Kalbī al-Walīd b. Mukhlid al-Kindī in addition to Abū al-Hawwārī Muḥammad b. Hawwārī, Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Sa‘īd b. Abī Bakr, Abū ‘Abdallāh Muḥammad b. Ruḥ b. ‘Arbī, Abū ‘Abdallāh Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan, Abū ‘Uthmān b. Mishqī b. Rāshid, Abū Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh b. Muḥammad b. Sālīh Abū al-Mundhir Bashīr b. Muḥammad and A. Sa‘īd Muḥammad b. Sa‘īd. See Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 132-33.
42. ed. Sayeda, “Aḥdāth”, 27; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 142.
43. ed. Sayeda, “Aḥdāth”, 31.
44. ed. Sayeda, “Aḥdāth”, 29; “Sirat”, 126; Bisyawī, Hujjah, MS. 164. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 142.
45. ed. Sayeda, “Aḥdāth”, 27; cf Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 142.
46. ed. Sayeda, “Sirat”, 127-29; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 139-40; cf, Ḥāshim, Ibādīyyah, 257.
47. ed. Sayeda, “Aḥdāth”, 34; ed. Sayeda, Abū Qaḥṭān, Ṣirah, 127; Ruqayshī, Misbāh, MS. f. 30a; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 134; Sayyābī, ‘Uman, II, 261; cf, Miles, Countries, I, 73.



48. ed. Sayeda, A. al-Mu'aththir, "Aḥdāth", 34; ed. Sayeda, A. Qaḥṭān, Sirah, 127; Ruqayshī, Miṣbāḥ, MS. f. 30a; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 132. Sayyābī, 'Umān, II, 199.
49. ed. Sayeda, "Sirat", 127; Ibn Maḥbūb, Ḥadath, MS., 150. See Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 132; cf. Sayyābī, 'Umān, II, 207.
50. ed. Sayeda, "Aḥdāth", 31-32.
51. ed. Sayeda, "Si-rat", 126; Bisyawī, Hujjah, MS. 166; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 138.
52. Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 136-37; Sayyābī, 'Umān, II, 203.
53. ed. Sayeda, "Sirat", 130; Bisyawī, Hujjah, MS. 165; Sayyābī, 'Umān, II, 206.
54. ed. Sayeda, "Aḥdāth", 34; cf. Wilkinson, Imamate, 173.
55. Kashf, MS. 461; Ruqayshī, Miṣbāḥ, MS. f. 21b; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 52; ed. 'Ashūr, Tārīkh, 67; cf. Ross, Annals, 128.
56. Sālīmī and 'Assāf, 'Umān, 137; cf. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 262.
57. Kindī, Ihtidā', 44.
58. Kindī, Ihtidā', 60. See ed. Sayeda, A. al-Mu'aththir, "Aḥdāth", 39; Biysawī, Hujjah, MS. 167, called for a killing of Rāshid b. Naẓr according to prophet tradition (*sunnah*), "whenever two imams appear one of them should be killed". See Kudamī, Istiḳāmah, 230.
59. Kindī, Ihtidā', 45.
60. See notes 31 and 32.
61. Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 102.
62. For more detailed discussion about the Ibādī Community Law see Wilkinson, Imamate, 177-200.
63. Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 90.
64. ed. Sayeda, A. al-Mu'aththir, Aḥdath, 35; ed. Sayeda, A. Qaḥṭān, Sirat, 130; Ruqayshī, Miṣbāḥ, MS. f. 30a; Ma'walī, Qisās, MS.f. 21b; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 53; ed. 'Ashūr, Tārīkh, 67; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 147; Sayyābī, 'Umān, II, 199; Hārithī, 'Uqūd, 256, cf. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 264; Miles, Countries, 73; Wilkinson, Imamate, 166.

65. Sālimī, Tuhfah, I, 147; Sayyābī, ‘Umān, II, 198; Hārithī, ‘Uqūd, 256.
66. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 461; Ma‘walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 216; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 53; ed. ‘Ashūr, Tārikh, 67; cf. Miles, Countries, I, 73; Hāshim, Ibādīyyah, 264; Badger, Imams, 19; Ross, Annals, 128; Ruqayshī, Miṣbāḥ, MS.f. 30a, asserted that the date of Imam al-Ṣalt’s deposition was in 275/888 i.e. the year of his death which was reported by all of Omani sources.
67. ed. Sayeda, “Aḥdāth”, 34-35. “They did not give the oath of allegiance to Rāshid in the right place (i.e. Nizwā). They did not elect in the right place for electing an imam, and God alone knows what sort of allegiance they gave him ... Then they went with him till they brought him to the *Dār al-Imāmah* (Nizwā) and laid hold of the treasury of the Muslims (*bayt al-māl*) and proceeded to spend its wealth ... Then they made pretexts for deposing al-Salt without giving him a chance to speak. Then they sent for the seal of the imamate and took it from him.” Cf. Wilkinson, Imamate, 173.
68. ed. Sayeda A. al-Mu’aththir, “Aḥdāth”, 34-35. The two men are described as being miscreants with unsavoury reputations.
69. The Ibādī sheikhs always preferred to play the role of guardians of the imamate since the early establishment of the first Ibādī imamate. Most of the elected Imams were from the elite of the Ibādī ulema.
70. ed. Sayeda A. al-Mu’aththir “Aḥdāth”, 35.
71. Hujjah, MS. 66.
72. Those opposed to the imamate of Rāshid b. al-Nazr had used this in their arguments because of his failure to change Imam al-Ṣalt’s *wālīs* which simply meant there was no need for him to become imam. This also proves that al-Ṣalt’s imamate was the legitimate one and that his detractors were in the wrong.
73. Sālimī, Tuhfah, I, 147.
74. Sālimī, Tuhfah, I, 149; see also Sayyābī, ‘Umān, 11, 217.
75. ed Sayeda, “Aḥdāth”, 54, see also Sālimī, Tuhfah, I, 149-50.
76. ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS.f. 266a; Sālimī, Tuhfah, I, 151.
77. Hāshim, Ibādīyyah, 266.
78. ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 266a; ed Sayeda A. Al-Mu’aththir, “Aḥdāth”, 50; Sālimī, Tuhfah, I, 149. Wārith b. Fahm was among those who called for Imam al-Ṣalt to be deposed.

79. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 266a.
80. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 266a.
81. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 266b. The names of the Azd tribes in Bāṭina who supported the Rustāq revolt against Rāshid were given by 'Awtabī, who mentions that the leader of the B. Sulimah of Mālik b. Fahm was Sulaymān b. Abd al-Malik al-Sulaymī, while the leader of 'Atik was Naṣr b. Manhal al-'Atakī.
82. ed. Sayeda, A. al-Mu'aththir, "Aḥdāth", 50, cf. Miles, Countries, I, 74.
83. Both of them were close friends of the deposed Imam al-Ṣalt b. Mālik and had worked with him during his imamate.
84. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 266b.
85. The same happened for the second time when Mūsā b. Mūsā led the opposition to depose Imam al-Ṣalt: he left Rustāq to Farq in his way to Nizwā.
86. Sālimī, Tuhfah, I, 158.
87. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 266b.
88. Wilkinson, Imamate, 208-9.
89. Near Tanūf, from the west, between Nizwā and Jabal al-Akhḍar on the borders of al-Jawf, see 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 266b; Sālimī, Tuhfah, I, 158. See also Ibn Durayd, Diwān, 82.
90. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 266b, Sālimī, Tuhfah, I, 159.
91. ed. Sayeda, A. al-Mu'aththir, "Aḥdāth", 51. See also 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS.f. 266b.
92. Countries, I, 74.
93. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 266b; Sālimī, Tuhfah, I, 159. According to A. al-Mu'aththir a great number of camels and horses were slaughtered; "Aḥdāth", 51.
94. Ansāb, MS. f. 266b.
95. Ibn Durayd, Diwān, 101-5. See also 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 267a; Sālimī, Tuhfah, I, 160-65.
96. Sālimī, Tuhfah, I, 169.

97. ed. Sayeda, Abū Qaḥṭān, Sirat, 135.
98. ed. Sayeda, Abū Qaḥṭān, Sirat, 135.
99. ed. Sayeda, Abū Qaḥṭān, Sirat, 135; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 165.
100. Hujjah, MS. 167.
101. ed. Sayeda, Abū Qaḥṭān Sirat, 136.
102. Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 53, cf. Badger, Imams, 20; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 166.
103. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 270; see also Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 166.
104. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 270b. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 165. Ma'wali, Qīṣaṣ, MS.f. 21b; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 68; Ḥārithī, Uqūd, 256; cf. Miles, Countries, I, 74.
105. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 269b; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 461; Ruqayshī, Miṣbāḥ, MS. f. 30b, mentions that 'Azzān b. Tamīm had supported Imam al-Ṣālt b. Mālīk until the latter died 275/888, and he refused to recognise Rāshīd b. Nazr's imamate; see also Ma'wali, Qīṣaṣ, MS.f. 21b; cf. Ross, Annals, 128.
106. Umān, II, 256.
107. Ruqayshī, Miṣbāḥ, MS. f. 31a.
108. Tuhfah, I, 167.
109. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 167; Sayyābī, Umān, II, 158.
110. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 167; Ruqayshī, Miṣbāḥ, MS. f. 30a.
111. Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 53; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 68; Sayyābī, Umān, II, 260.
112. ed Sayeda, Abū Qaḥṭān, Sirah, 137, had doubt about the validity of 'Azzān's imamate; Biysawī, Hujjah, MS. 168: did not recognise him since there were differences between the Ibādīs about his imamate.
113. Izkawī, Kashf, does not give any information about 'Azzān or his imamate; Ruqayshī, Miṣbāḥ, is also silent on this question; while Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 52, mentions him but does not consider him as one of the Omani Ibādī imams.
114. ed, 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 68: Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 169.
115. Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 167. See also Sayyābī, Umān, II, 260.

116. Sayyabī, ‘Uman, II, 260.
117. Miles, Countries, I, 75.
118. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 461; cf. Ross, Annals, 129; ed. Sayeda, Abū Qaḥṭān, Sirat, 138; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 54; cf. Badger, Imams, 20; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 68; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 170, Hāshim, Ibādīyyah, 273; Miles, Countries, I, 75.
119. Miles, Countries, I, 75.
120. Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 54; cf. Badger, Imams, 20.
121. Badger, Imams, 20; see also Miles, Countries, I, 75.
122. ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 270a; ed. Sayeda, Abū Qaḥṭān, Sirat, 138; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 462; cf. Ross, Annals, 129; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 54; cf. Badger, Imams, 20; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 170. ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 69. Sayyabī, ‘Uman, II, 261.
123. Ma‘walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS.f. 22a; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 170. see also Badger, Imams, 20; Miles, Countries, I, 75.
124. Sayyabī, ‘Uman, II, 261.
125. Miles, Countries, I, 75.
126. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 462; cf. Ross, Annals; 129; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 54; cf. Badger, Imams, 21.
127. ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 270a.
128. Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 54; ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 270a. The B. Hiddān a clan of Azd loyal to B. Sāmāh.
129. ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 270a; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 54; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 173; Miles, Countries, I, 76.
130. ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 270a.
131. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 462; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, 54; cf. Badger, Imams, 20; see also Miles, Countries, I, 76; Ross, Annals, 129.
132. ‘Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 270a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 462; cf. Ross, Annals, 129; Miles, Countries, I, 76.
133. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 462; cf. Ross, Annals, 129; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘ā’, cf. Badger, Imams, 20; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 174.

134. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS.f. 270a; see also Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 275.
135. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 462; cf. Ross, Annals, 129; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 174.
136. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS.f. 270a; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 55; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 179, ed. Āshūr, Tārīkh, 70.
137. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. 270a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 462; cf. Ross, Annals, 129; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 55; Ma'walī, Qisas, MS. f. 22b; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 174.
138. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 270a; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 175; Sayyābī, Umān, II, 265; which was situated in the Bāṭinah region.
139. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 462; see Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 55; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 70. cf. Miles, Countries, I, 78; Ross, Annals, 129.
140. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 270b; Ma'walī, Qisas, MS. f. 22b; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 55; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 174; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 70; Sayyābī, Umān, II, 264.
141. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 270b; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, f. 175. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 462.
142. Kashf, MS. 461; cf. Ross, Annals, 130.
143. Countries, I, 77.
144. Miles, Countries, I, 74 describes Musā as "the immediate cause of the discord and particulars of the quarrel between the two parties, and must be regarded as the real author of the internecine war that brought so much misery and ruin to his country and led ultimately to a foreign mission".
145. Miles, Countries, I, 77.
146. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 270b; Ma'walī, Qisas, MS. f. 22b; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 55; Sālīmī, Tuhfah, I, 178; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 71; cf. Hāshim, Ibādiyyah, 278; Badger, Imams, 21, all Omani sources refer to Muḥammad b. Nūr as Ibn Būr, while Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, X, 31, in his account called him Ibn Thūr.
147. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, X, 31; Iṣṭakhrī, Māsālik, 26; Masūdi, Murūj, VIII, 143. See also Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 461; cf. Ross, Annals, 130.
148. Ansāb, MS. 271b; Ma'walī, Qisas, MS. f. 22b; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 461; cf. Ross, Annals, 130.

149. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 271a; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 23a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 461; cf. Ross, Annals, 130; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 56; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 71; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 178; cf. Badger, Imams, 22; Bathurst, Ya'rubi, 21-22; Miles, Countries, I, 79; 'Umar, Tārīkh, 204; Hāshim, Ibādīyyah, 279; ed. Hopwood, Wilkinson, Origins, 79-80.
150. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 271a; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 463; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 178; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 56; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 71; cf. Miles, Countries, I, 81; Badger, Imams, 22; Ross, Annals, 130.
151. Tuḥfah, I, 178; see also Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 461.
152. Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, I, 32; Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 463; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 23a; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 56; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 72; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 179; Ross, Annals, 130.
153. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 171a; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 23b; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 179;
154. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 271a; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 23a; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 56; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 72; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 179; Sayyābī, Uman, II, 268; Badger, Imams, 23; Miles, Countries, I, 1; 'Umar, Tārīkh, 204-205; Hāshim, Ibādīyyah, 280.
155. Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS.f. 23a; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, 179.
156. 'Awtabī, Ansāb, MS. f. 271a; Izkawī, Kashf, 463; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 23a; cf. Ross, Annals, 130; Badger, Imams, 23.
157. Ansāb, MS. f. 271a mentions that Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik al-Sulaymī settled with his family there and he became powerful until his death. 'Awtabī also mentions the names of Sulaymān's grandsons, 'Alī and Maḥdī, the sons of Bakhtiyār, which is clear indication that they became shi'a from their names.
158. Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 179.
159. Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 179. This port was always used by the central authority from the time of the 'Umayyads whenever they planned to control Oman.
160. Sayyābī, Uman, II, 264.
161. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 463; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 23a; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'ā', 56; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 72; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 179. See Ross, Annals, 131; Badger, Imams, 23; cf. Hāshim, Ibādīyyah, 281.
162. Izkawī, Kashf, Ms, 464; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 179; cf. Ross, Annals, 131.

163. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 464.
164. Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 57; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 73; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 179.
165. Murūj, VIII, 143.
166. Tārīkh, X, 32.
167. Kāmil, VI, 76.
168. 'Uqūd, 256.
169. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 463; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 179; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 72; cf. Miles, Countries, I, 84; cf. Ross, Annals, 125.
170. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 464; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 57; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 179; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 73; cf. Ross, Annals, 131.
171. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 464; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 179; cf. Ross, Annals, 131; Miles, Countries, I, 86: "describes B. Hinā' as one of the most powerful tribes in Oman. Its *tamima*, head sheikh, al-Ahyaf, is traditionally known to have been a man of bold and firm character"
172. Tuḥfah, I, 179.
173. According to Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 179: Munīr b. al-Nayyar was at that time 120 years old.
174. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 464; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 57; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 179; cf. Ross, Annals, 131; Badger, Imams, 24; Hāshim, Ibādīyyah, 281.
175. Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 57; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 23b; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 180.
176. Mas'ūdi, Murūj, VIII, 143.
177. Miles, Countries, I, 87.
178. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 464; Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 24a; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 58; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 180; Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 272; ed. 'Āshūr, Tārīkh, 74; cf. Ross, Annals, 132; Miles, Countries, I, 87; 'Umar, Tārīkh, 205; Hāshim, Ibādīyyah, 283.
179. Sayyābī, 'Uman, II, 272.
180. Ibn Ruzayq, Shu'a', 58; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 180; cf. Badger, Imams, 24; Miles, Countries, I, 87.
181. Ma'walī, Qīṣaṣ, MS. f. 24a; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 180.



182. Bahlā is situated in the interior of Oman, west of Nizwā, see Map 3.
183. Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 181.
184. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 465; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘a’, 59; cf. Ross, Annals, 132; Badger, Imams, 25.
185. Izkawī, Kashf, MS. 465; Ma‘walī, Qīṣas, MS. f. 24b; Ibn Ruzayq, Shu‘a’, 59; ed. ‘Āshūr, Tārīkh, 75; Sālīmī, Tuḥfah, I, 181; cf. Ross, Annals, 132. See the table at the end of this Chapter.
186. Murūj, VIII, 143; Iṣṭakhri, Māsālik, 26.

## CONCLUSION

During the 280-year period covered by this study, early Islamic Oman underwent a number of far-reaching changes which totally transformed the socio-political face of the country and left effects which are still strongly in evidence today.

Prior to the advent of Islam, Oman had been inundated with wave after wave of Arab migrants from both south and north Arabia. In a relatively short space of time the Arab immigrations constituted the majority of the Omani population, which was originally of Persian descent.

After the death of the Prophet, political activity in Oman increased; the country was targetted by the young Islamic government in Medina as a place in which Islam could spread and settle, and an envoy was sent there to call the people of Oman to Islam.

The Arabicisation of Oman was the chief factor behind the conversion of the rulers and people of the country to Islam; this adoption of the new religion by the majority of the Omani populace was without coercion; non-Arabs were free to stay with their own creeds, as many of them did.

The Omani tribes who had converted to Islam played an important part in the promulgation of Islam during the lifetime of the Prophet's first successors,

the 'Rightly-Guided Caliphs'. The Azd tribe in particular played an important military role in the Islamic conquests which took place during the reign of the second caliph, 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.

By virtue of the close ties it enjoyed with Basra, Oman became influenced early on by the heterodox Islamic movements there, in particular the Kharijite revolt. Again, the Azd tribe played a dominant role in the Kharijite movement in Oman, which was split into moderates and extremists. Oman eventually chose the Ibāḍī doctrine - the most moderate of the various offshoots of the Kharijite movement, as its national creed and symbol of religious identity.

The Ibāḍī school had been established in Basra by an Omani scholar, Jābir b. Zayd al-Azdī, and in its early years existed as an underground movement, the chief aim of which was to set up an Islamic state according to Ibāḍī principles. Starting with Mu'āwiyah, all of the Umayyad rulers were classed as tyrants by the Ibāḍīyyah, for whom the removal of oppression and the establishment of a true Islamic government was a religious duty.

Oman was seen as the ideal place in which to prepare the ground for the first Ibāḍī imamate, and the Ibāḍī *ḥamalāt al-ilm* used the opportunity to promulgate the religious teachings and political aims of the Ibāḍīyyah throughout Oman on a large scale. The Ibāḍīyyah relied on well-organised but secret planning, avoiding direct conflict with the central authorities. An atmosphere conducive to the establishment of an Ibāḍī state was prepared; with the collapse of the Ibāḍī state of Ḥaḍramawt, the Ibāḍīs of Oman were finally

successful in founding their own imamate, which came into being during the period of transition from Umayyad to Abbasid rule in 132-34.

With the formation of the Ibādī imamate, Oman became virtually independent from the central Islamic authority. Oman's new position was seen by the Abbasids as a threat not only to the unity of the Islamic empire but also to their own political interests, most notably their claim to be the only legitimate rulers of the Muslim community.

Military intervention on the part of the Abbasids eventually brought about the downfall of the first Ibādī imamate. However the Ibādīs, who after years of clandestine activity in hostile surroundings, were not easily troubled by adversity, re-organised themselves and worked with renewed fervour towards their aims. In 177/793 this activity bore fruit, and the second Ibādī imamate was established. This event has been seen as a watershed in Omani history, for it secured the country's position as an independent entity with its own distinctive brand of Islam - a position it has held up until the present day.

The Ibādīs ran their imamate by selecting leaders who, according to Omani sources, were noted for their strict and sincere adherence to the teachings of Islam. Yet discord was never very far away, and disagreement between various factions of the ulema on questions of leadership led ultimately to civil war between the tribes of Oman. The ensuing political chaos prompted the Abbasids to intervene yet again, and the second Ibādī imamate collapsed in 280/893.

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