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## THE MURDER OF THE CALIPH 'UTHMÂN

The murder of 'Uthmân was an important turning-point in Islamic history, and the story of how opposition in the provinces, particularly Egypt, combined with opposition at Medina itself and brought about the Caliph's death has been repeated many times. Accounts in sources such as al-Ṭabarî's *History* and al-Balâdhurî's *Ansâb al-ashrâf* bring together much transmitted detail concerning this *dénouement*. Caetani's monumental *Annali dell' Islam* serves as an extensive compilation of such detail, and Wellhausen, Levi Della Vida, Gibb, Veccia Vaglieri and Petersen are only some of the other modern scholars who have commented on the event. Perhaps Professor Gibb best expresses the current view of the background to it in his thought-provoking article entitled 'An interpretation of Islamic history',<sup>1</sup> where he sees in the caliphate of 'Uthmân a conflict between two main parties, the Meccans and the 'tribesmen'. He points out that the Meccan merchants had been swift to seize the opportunities of wealth which arose in the immediate post-conquest phase, and goes on to say that in the course of 'Uthmân's caliphate there arose at Medina 'growing resentment at the rapid affirmation of Meccan political control . . . and the economic exploitation of the empire. Open discontent was first expressed by several religious personalities, whose conscience was shocked by the worldliness and grasping materialism displayed in the name of Islam. But these only provided a rallying-cry and a cloak for the material grievances of the tribesmen and Medinians, who swung into line behind them.'<sup>2</sup> Gibb therefore sees a total of four alignments, of which the Meccans and the tribesmen were the main parties, while the Medinans and the so-called religious party were secondary in importance.

It is intended in this article to take a rather different view of the alignments involved, notably by seeking to redefine such terms as 'tribesmen' and 'religious party' and by re-examining the idea that the main conflict in the time of 'Uthmân was between Meccans and tribesmen. The starting-point of the view taken here is that 'Uthmân was left with the legacy of maintaining unity in an immediately post-conquest phase, that this necessarily involved a greater measure of central control than had earlier existed, and that his caliphate was characterized both by the declining influence of an élite which had been promoted by 'Umar and by the increasing power of tribal aristocracy of the pre-Islamic type. 'Umar had been concerned with maintaining the Medinan hegemony established by Muḥammad

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of World History*, vol. 1 (1953), pp. 39-62, and *Studies on the civilization of Islam* (London, 1962), pp. 3-33.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 7.

and preserved by Abû Bakr in the face of extremely serious opposition. With the memory of this opposition still fresh in his mind, 'Umar had established as leaders those whose interests lay in the preservation of the existing order – principally Muhâjirîn, Anṣâr and other *ṣahâba*. His immediate aim was to neutralize as far as he was able the disruptive influence of the traditional type of clan and tribal leadership, and as a concomitant with this he attempted to provide a basis for society which cut across divisions of clan and tribe. The principle of Islamic priority (*sâbiqa*) led to the formation of an élite of early converts as the champions of Medinan hegemony; it also bestowed merit on provincial early-comers, whatever their tribal standing. However, this situation merely masked rather than neutralized the power of traditional leaders, whose political acumen and the support they could control brought them to the fore again in the time of 'Uthmân.

This much has already been argued in an article on political alignments at Kûfa,<sup>1</sup> where the explosive situation which developed in the early thirties A.H. stemmed directly from a reaction on the part of a relatively large proportion of early-comers of minor tribal stature to increased central control and to a waning of their own influence *vis-à-vis* the growing influence (mainly as a result of the arrival of newcomers) of some of the traditional tribal leaders; al-Ash'ath b. Qays al-Kindî is the prime example of the latter type of leader in the Kûfan context. Matters at Kûfa were further exacerbated by the failure of attempts to expand the Kûfan territories, and there arose a situation in which the principal tribal leaders established themselves in the existing Kûfan territories, in several cases at the expense of those original conquerors who had been there previously. The reaction which occurred at the *miṣr* of Kûfa was vented against 'Uthmân and his centralized control, rather than against the major tribal leaders themselves, and in 34/654–5 the reactionaries took the law into their own hands and repulsed the governor of Kûfa. The moderate clan elements at the *miṣr*, in taking a moderate position, were mainly responsible for the emergence of a situation in which central control was nominal and a *modus vivendi* embracing both the major tribal leaders and most of the so-called *qurrâ* was achieved. The purpose of this article is to demonstrate that 'Uthmân's Egyptian opponents, who were the most active of the provincial opposition in the events which culminated in his murder, were people whose experience of harmed interests and loss of influence was similar to the experience of the *qurrâ* of Kûfa. The Baṣran opposition, although less significant, can be attributed to parallel causes; and the Kûfans who participated in these events were *qurrâ* who were not prepared to accept the Kûfan *modus vivendi*. Finally, an attempt will be made here to distinguish the other alignments which participated with the provincial opposition at Medina and to determine where their interests lay.

<sup>1</sup> 'Kûfan Political Alignments and Their Background in the Mid-Seventh Century A.D.', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. II (1971), pp. 346–67; henceforward referred to as *IJMES*, vol. II (1971).

BACKGROUND TO THE EGYPTIAN OPPOSITION<sup>1</sup>

The conquest of Egypt began in 19/640 when 'Amr b. al-Āṣ went there with a force of 3,500 or 4,000 'Akkîs, one third of whom were from the clan of Ghâfiq.<sup>2</sup> He was soon afterwards joined by an army of 10,000 or 12,000 reinforcements, led by al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwâm and including other prominent *ṣahâbîs*.<sup>3</sup> With the resultant combined force, 'Amr conquered Alexandria in 21/642 and went on to establish at Babylon the base called al-Fuṣṭât, where he allotted *khîṭaṭ* to his army. The lists of *khîṭaṭ* mentioned by Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam provide a detailed picture of the different groups that made up the army at that stage. Of particular interest are references to 'Amr's formation of a group called *al-Râya*, which was made up of splinter groups (*afnâ' al-qabâ'il*) too small to be organized as individual units, yet unwilling to be merged into other clan groups, and so joined together by 'Amr into a single group under a banner (*râya*) that bore the name of no particular clan. Among the constituent groups of the *râya* were people from Quraysh, Anṣâr, Aslam, Ghifâr and Juhayna, but these are only some of the names mentioned by Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam in his account of groups and individuals who settled in *khîṭaṭ al-râya*.<sup>4</sup> Particular mention can be made here of (i) Ibn Muljam,<sup>5</sup> (ii) Abū Shamir Abraha b. al-Ṣabbâḥ al-Ḥimyarî,<sup>6</sup> (iii) 'Abd al-Raḥmân b. 'Udays al-Balawî, who was '*mimman bâya'a taḥta 'l-shajara*' and hence an early *ṣahâbî*,<sup>7</sup> and (iv) 'the Laythîs who were with 'Amr [i.e. when he first arrived]', namely Āl 'Urwa b. Shiyaym.<sup>8</sup>

In considering the situation in Egypt from the time of its conquest to the death of 'Umar (19/644), two main points need to be made here. The first of these is that we can hardly expect any systematic organization of the territory to have been introduced by the Arab conquerors during that short period; rather the country

<sup>1</sup> The source material is less rich on the subject of Egypt at this time than it is on Kûfa. The most useful sources (to be abbreviated as follows) are: FM = Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr wa-ahhbâruhâ*, ed. C. C. Torrey (New Haven, 1922); Kindî = al-Kindî, *Kitâb al-wulât wa-kitâb al-quḍât*, ed. R. Guest (Beirut, 1908); BF = al-Balâdhurî, *Futūḥ al-buldân*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1866); BA.V = al-Balâdhurî, *Ansâb al-aṣhrâf*, vol. v, ed. S. D. F. Goitein (Jerusalem, 1936); Tab = al-Ṭabarî, *Târikh al-rusul wa'l-mulûk*, ed. M. J. de Goeje et alii, 3 series (Leiden 1879-1901). Other works cited by abbreviation in this article are: BA/MS = al-Balâdhurî, *Ansâb al-aṣhrâf*, 2 vols., MS Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi (Reisülkuttap Mustafa Efendi), nos. 597, 598; Ibn A'tham = Ibn A'tham al-Kûfi, *Kitâb al-futūḥ*, 4 vols., Hyderabad, 1388/1968-1391/1971; Ibn Sa'd = Ibn Sa'd, *Kitâb al-ṭabaqât al-kabîr*, ed. E. Sachau et alii, 8 vols. (Leiden, 1905-17); Khalîfa = Khalîfa b. Khayyât, *Târikh*, vol. 1, ed. A. D. al-'Umarî (al-Najaf 1386/1967); Minqarî = Naṣr b. Muzâḥim al-Minqarî, *Waq'at Ṣiffîn*, ed. A. M. Hârûn, 2nd ed. (Cairo 1382/1962-3); Maqrîzî = Taqî al-dîn Aḥmad b. 'Alî al-Maqrîzî, *al-Mawâ'iz wa'l-i'tibâr bi-dhikr al-khîṭaṭ wa'l-âthâr*, 2 vols. (Bûlâq, 1270/1853-4).

<sup>2</sup> FM, pp. 56, 121; BF, pp. 212, 213, 214; Kindî, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> FM, pp. 59, 61, 62; BF, p. 213; Kindî, pp. 8-9.

<sup>4</sup> For this account see FM, pp. 98-117. On the formation of the *Râya*, see *ibid.* pp. 98, 116-17; Yâqût, *Mu'jam al-buldân*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld (Leipzig, 1866-73), vol. II, pp. 745-6; Maqrîzî, vol. 1, pp. 297-8 (which also mentions some other hotchpotch groups, notably the *Lafîf*).

<sup>5</sup> FM, p. 112.

<sup>6</sup> FM, p. 113.

<sup>7</sup> FM, p. 107; BA.V, p. 5; Kindî, pp. 19-20.

<sup>8</sup> FM, p. 115.

was extremely disorganized during the last years of Byzantine rule, and this can only have deteriorated further in the immediate aftermath of the Arab conquest. Bell describes how the system of fiscal administration, dating from the time of Justinian, had become increasingly cumbersome, decentralized 'with its endless subdivision into small units' and abused, to such an extent that 'much of the country was in a state of chronic anarchy'.<sup>1</sup> We know that 'Amr's successor was responsible for laying the foundations of an effective fiscal system, and this in itself indicates that 'Amr had done little or nothing in this direction. The evidence all points to his having been concerned at this time with extending the conquest south into Nubia and west as far as Ṭarâbulus. There is no evidence that he himself did anything to streamline the cumbersome fiscal system taken over from the Byzantines; rather, the upheavals of conquest can only have made the system more open to abuse than ever.<sup>2</sup>

Secondly, there is the question of what happened to the revenue of Egypt in the time of 'Umar. The sources are quite clear about 'Umar's decision that the land of Egypt should not be divided among the conquerors, but are decidedly hazy about the destination of the revenue. One of Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam's best authorities, 'Abd al-Malik b. Maslama, says outright that he does not know.<sup>3</sup> Elsewhere it appears that 'Umar expected 'Amr, while keeping some revenue for various specified needs, to make sizeable remittances of grain to Medina; it also appears that these remittances were frequently not forthcoming.<sup>4</sup> The information that 'Umar made the separate appointment over the Ṣa'îd of none other than 'Abdallâh b. Sa'd b. Abî Sarḥ, for all that his Islamic record was tarnished, constitutes a telling comment not only on Ibn Sa'd's own administrative ability but also on the general situation in Egypt under 'Amr.<sup>5</sup>

Change came in 25/645-6 when 'Uthmân replaced 'Amr with Ibn Sa'd as governor of all Egypt. Here, as with his appointment of al-Walîd b. 'Uqba to Kûfa at the same time, 'Uthmân was attempting to empower an executive upon whom he could rely. In particular, he was concerned to prise control of the revenues of Egypt from the hands of 'Amr, whose well-known rejection of the suggestion that his appointment should be restricted to 'alâ 'l-ḥarb while Ibn Sa'd should be 'alâ 'l-kharâj clearly illustrated his erstwhile attitude towards the revenues.<sup>6</sup> Ibn Sa'd went on to set up an effective fiscal system which preserved features of the Byzantine system but was characterized by a centralized and

<sup>1</sup> H. I. Bell, *Greek Papyri in the British Museum*, vol. iv, *The Aphrodito Papyri* (London, 1910), introduction, especially pp. xxiii, xxxvi-xxxvii.

<sup>2</sup> See Maqrîzî, I, p. 77 (*aqarra Qibṭahâ 'alâ jibâyat al-Rûm*); note also the reported remark by a Copt to 'Umar that 'Amr 'does not look to the cultivation ('imâra) and simply takes what appears to him, as if he wanted it (Egypt) for one year only' (Maqrîzî, vol. I, p. 74).

<sup>3</sup> FM, p. 155.

<sup>4</sup> See particularly FM, p. 160. Also *ibid.* p. 151; BF, p. 216; Tab, vol. I, p. 2577; Maqrîzî, vol. I, pp. 78-9.

<sup>5</sup> Kindî, p. 11; FM, p. 173; Maqrîzî, vol. I, p. 299.

<sup>6</sup> (*anâ idhan ka-mâsik al-baqara bi-qarnayhâ wa-âkhar yaḥlibuhâ*) FM, p. 178; BF, p. 223.

uniform method of collection.<sup>1</sup> As a result, it is to be expected that not only indigenous officials and dignitaries but also the Arab conquerors of Egypt were deprived of the opportunities for self-enrichment which they had hitherto enjoyed.

A second important development in Egypt during the caliphate of 'Uthmân came as a result of Ibn Sa'd's desire to resume large-scale campaigning to the west, which 'Umar had earlier halted. Whether this was dictated by the pressure of newcomers, as was the case with Baṣra and Kûfa soon afterwards, is not made clear in the sources. In any event, 'Uthmân, after some hesitation, agreed to sanction this, and in 27/647–8 reinforced Ibn Sa'd with a large army (*jaysh 'azîm*) raised in the vicinity of Medina and including a significant number of Qurashîs.<sup>2</sup> The campaign into North Africa took place in the same year and the lord of Carthage was killed, but it is likely that some setbacks were encountered by Ibn Sa'd, for he took payment from other local lords and returned to Egypt without leaving any of his forces behind.<sup>3</sup> Nor did the southward thrust into Nubia in 31/651–2 and the mainly maritime activities of 34/654–5 involve any settlement of forces outside Egypt.<sup>4</sup> The obvious result was that newcomers had to be accommodated within Egypt, and the effects of this at the *khiṭaṭ* of Fuṣṭât are described by Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam when he says: 'there were spaces between the tribal groupings; but when reinforcements came in the time of 'Uthmân b. 'Affân and afterwards and the people became numerous, each group made space for its brethren, so that the buildings became many and coalesced'.<sup>5</sup> Further in connection with newcomers, Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam gives an example of the sort of change consequent upon their arrival when he gives details about a Ḥaḍramî who had come to Egypt with 'Amr and had his *khiṭta* among Âl Ayda'ân b. Sa'd b. Tujîb of al-Sakûn. He and other Ḥaḍramî early comers were 'with their maternal uncles from Tujîb. Then their reinforcements came in the time of 'Uthmân and took *khiṭaṭ* to the east of Silhim and al-Ṣadif as far as the desert. Accordingly, those of them who were with Tujîb and wanted to move moved.'<sup>6</sup> In short, Âl Ayda'ân and presumably other early comer groups lost some of their strength when the newcomers arrived.

The emergence of open Egyptian opposition to Ibn Sa'd and to 'Uthmân himself is seen by the sources as beginning with the defiant refusal of Muḥammad b. Abî Ḥudhayfa b. 'Utba b. Rabî'a b. 'Abd Shams b. 'Abd Manâf to acknowledge Ibn Sa'd as the leader of prayers at the beginning of the campaign of Dhû (or Dhât) al-Ṣawârî in 34/654–5. He and Muḥammad b. Abî Bakr then

<sup>1</sup> D. C. Dennett, *Conversion and the Poll Tax in Early Islam* (Cambridge, Mass. 1950), p. 74. Severus b. al-Muqaffa' describes Ibn Sa'd's measures as follows: *fa-jumi'a lahu ahrâ'* (cod. *a.h.r.*<sup>an</sup>) *wa-huwa awwal man banâ 'l-dîwân bi-Miṣr wa-amara an yustakhrājâ fihî jamî' kharâj al-kûra* (*Kitâb siyar al-âbâ' al-batârîka*, ed. and trans. B. Evetts, pt. ii, *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. I (1907), p. 501).

<sup>2</sup> BF, p. 226; FM, p. 183; Tab, vol. I, pp. 2814, 2817–18.

<sup>3</sup> FM, p. 183; BF, p. 227. Cf. Tab, vol. I, p. 2814.

<sup>4</sup> FM, pp. 188–91; Kindî, pp. 12–13.

<sup>5</sup> FM, p. 128.

<sup>6</sup> FM, p. 123.

persisted in vilifying Ibn Sa'd and went on to foment hostility towards 'Uthmân, preaching the legality of armed action against him.<sup>1</sup> The exact chronology of subsequent events is unclear, but in Rajab 35/January 656 or a little later, when Ibn Sa'd had left Egypt for Medina – temporarily as he thought – Ibn Abî Hudhayfa found sufficient support to take over al-Fuṣṭāṭ and put out a general call for the removal of 'Uthmân. Ibn Sa'd was thwarted in his attempt to return to Egypt and withdrew to 'Asqalân in Palestine.<sup>2</sup>

The paucity of evidence renders difficult any clear understanding of the personality of Ibn Abî Hudhayfa. The sources say that he was an orphan and grew up in the custody of 'Uthmân, who was the guardian of orphans of his *ahl bayt*; beyond that we are told variously that his grudge against 'Uthmân stemmed from the latter's refusal to grant him an appointment and from a beating administered to him as punishment for drinking.<sup>3</sup> What is important here is that he provided a stimulus for the widespread dissatisfaction which evidently already existed. One of al-Kindî's reports may appear to be exaggerating when it says that 'all the Egyptians concurred with him (*tâba'uhu ahl<sup>u</sup> Miṣr<sup>a</sup> turran*), save a group (*'iṣâba*) which included Mu'âwiya b. Hudayj and Busr b. Abî Arṭât',<sup>4</sup> but the use of the word *tâba'a*, 'concur with', rather than *tabi'a*, 'follow', accords well with the impression given elsewhere in the sources that Ibn Abî Hudhayfa was unable to take control over the events which he had played a part in initiating. When he ejected Ibn Sa'd's deputy from al-Fuṣṭāṭ and prevented Ibn Sa'd from returning to Egypt, it did not necessarily mean that he was any more than a figurehead. There is no indication in the sources that he had any strong personal support in Egypt. At the time when the Egyptian opposition in Medina appeared to be in a position to dictate terms to 'Uthmân, they asked for Muḥammad b. Abî Bakr as governor and not Ibn Abî Hudhayfa;<sup>5</sup> and for the rest of his short career in Egypt, until he was killed by 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ at al-'Arīsh, Ibn Abî Hudhayfa was singularly unsuccessful in maintaining any effective control in Egypt. In contrast, the '*iṣâba*' which included Mu'âwiya b. Hudayj and other leaders and made its base at *Khīrbītâ* (in present-day Buḥayra) rapidly reached a reported total of 10,000 men.<sup>6</sup>

The Egyptian opposition to 'Uthmân consisted of fragmented groups, and it is for this reason that neither Ibn Abî Hudhayfa nor anyone else can be expected to have exercised effective control over them. The sources show that the Egyptian force which went to Medina was made up of four small groups,<sup>7</sup> and a verse given by al-Ṭabarî aptly refers to 'Uthmân's murderers as '*aḥâbīsh* from Egypt',

<sup>1</sup> Tab, vol. 1, pp. 2869, 2871; BA.V, pp. 49–51.

<sup>2</sup> Kindî, pp. 13–14, 17; BA.V, p. 51; Tab, vol. 1, pp. 2999, 3057, 3234; Maqrîzî, vol. 1, p. 300.

<sup>3</sup> Tab, vol. 1, p. 3029; BA.V, p. 50.

<sup>4</sup> Kindî, p. 17; see also Tab, vol. 1, p. 3088. The size and importance of this '*iṣâba*' should not be underestimated, for reasons which will be made clear below. For the names of leaders associated with it, see Kindî, p. 15; also Tab, vol. 1, p. 3237.

<sup>5</sup> BA.V, pp. 26, 67; Ibn A'tham, vol. II, p. 209.

<sup>6</sup> Kindî, p. 21; Tab, vol. 1, p. 3242.

<sup>7</sup> Kindî, p. 17; BA.V, pp. 59, 61; Tab, vol. 1, pp. 2954, 2986, 2991.

i.e. 'companies or bodies of men, not all of one tribe'.<sup>1</sup> Among those who are named as participants in the Egyptian opposition at Medina, three have already been mentioned as having been included in the *Rāya*, namely (i) the *ṣahābī* 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Udays al-Balawī,<sup>2</sup> (ii) 'Urwa b. Shiyaym al-Laythī, and (iii) Abū Shamir b. Abraha b. al-Ṣabbāh al-Ḥimyarī, who, it may be noted, later appears as one of the *qurrā' ahl al-Sha'm* at the Ṣiffīn confrontation;<sup>3</sup> the subclan of Āl Ayda'ān b. Sa'd b. Tujīb, to which a fourth, (iv) Kināna b. Bishr, belonged, has also been mentioned. To these names can be added those of (v) al-Ghāfiqī b. Ḥarb al-'Akkī (mentioned only by Sayf b. 'Umar), whose name epitomizes the whole of the original force with 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ, (vi) Sūdān b. Ḥumrān al-Murādī (Sayf says al-Sakūnī), who (like Ibn Muljam al-Murādī) had been with the force of 400 Sakūnīs who went with Mu'āwiya b. Ḥudayj to Qādisiyya,<sup>4</sup> and who in Egypt probably had a *khūṭa* among the people of the *Rāya*, since that was the case with Ibn Muljam, (vii) 'Amr (or Abū 'Amr) b. Budayl al-Khuzā'ī, who was a *ṣahābī*, and (viii), according to al-Wāqidī, 'Amr b. al-Ḥamiq al-Khuzā'ī, a *ṣahābī* who had earlier been among the *qurrā'* at Kūfa.<sup>5</sup>

The old-guard interests of these individuals are clear, for most of them are immediately recognizable as belonging to 'Umar's type of Islamic élite, either on the ground of their *ṣuḥba* or because they were Egyptian early-comers. In terms of clan leadership, however, they appear to have been of little significance. Some of them belonged to the *Rāya*, about which we have no further information but which must have been dominated by Qurashīs after the influx of 27/647-8. The Laythīs and 'Akkīs were both early-comer groups whose influence had almost certainly declined, and the waning condition of Kināna b. Bishr's Tujībī subclan has already been indicated. In this latter connexion it is important to note also the growing influence of the leader of al-Sakūn, Mu'āwiya b. Ḥudayj al-Tujībī, particularly as commander of the North Africa campaign of 34/654-5;<sup>6</sup> he, having taken reprisals after the death of 'Uthmān, was able to claim that he had killed seventy (var. eighty) of his fellow-clansmen (*qawm*) in retaliation for 'Uthmān.<sup>7</sup> The evidence all points to the Egyptian opposition to 'Uthmān nursing grievances which were bound up with the declining influence of the earlier élite, increased central control and the resurgence of tribal leadership. In

<sup>1</sup> Tab, vol. 1, p. 3065; E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English lexicon* (London 1863-93), *sub h. b. sh.* Cf. W. M. Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca* (Oxford, 1953), pp. 156-7, noting particularly the phrase *bi-lā nasab*.

<sup>2</sup> For this and the following names see: Kindī, pp. 17, 19; BA.V, pp. 59, 61; Tab, vol. 1, pp. 2954 (including *addenda* to that p.), 2986, 2991.

<sup>3</sup> Minqarī, pp. 222, 369 (reads *Shamir*, not Abū *Shamir*).

<sup>4</sup> Tab, vol. 1, pp. 2220-1.

<sup>5</sup> BA.V, p. 41; Ibn A'tham, vol. II, p. 179. See also Tab, vol. 1, p. 2921, and cf. *IYMES*, vol. II (1971), p. 358.

<sup>6</sup> FM, pp. 192-4, 318; Kindī, pp. 12, 15, 17. Maqrīzī (vol. 1, p. 297) mentions him in an earlier important context as one of the four men put in charge of the *khūṭa* by 'Amr in 21/642; these four '*anzalū 'l-nās wa-faṣṣalū bayna 'l-qabā'il*'.

<sup>7</sup> FM, p. 122; Kindī, p. 29. See also *ibid.* pp. 18-19.

particular, they complained of Ibn Sa'd and 'his unfair treatment (*taḥâmul*) of Muslims and *dhimmîs*'.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, they are reported to have demanded 'that the people of Medina should not take stipends, for this wealth (scil. the revenue of Egypt) is for those who fought for it and for these old men (*shuyūkh*) from [among] the companions of the Messenger of God . . .'.<sup>2</sup> It seems that grain continued to be sent from Egypt to Medina until the death of 'Uthmân<sup>3</sup> and this report indicates that Ibn Sa'd was discharging his function effectively; here, however, 'Uthmân found himself involved in further complications, for the same report says that he acquiesced in this demand, as part of the settlement which led the Egyptians to set off for Egypt, and so aroused the anger of the Medinans. Finally, it is important to note that Egyptian opposition came not only from al-Fustât itself but also from outlying districts; this is apparent from the half-verse '*aqbalna min Bulbays wa'l-Ṣa'id*'.<sup>4</sup>

#### THE PROVINCIAL OPPOSITION AT MEDINA

It was reportedly in 34, probably at the time of the *hajj*, that discontented provincials from Egypt, Kûfa and Baṣra first came together and discussed the possibility of joint opposition to 'Uthmân. They decided that 'Uthmân's 'changing about' (*tabdîl*) and 'his failure to fulfil his undertaking' (*tarkahu 'l-wafâ bimâ a'tâ min nafsihi*) were intolerable and they arranged to return to their provinces, mobilize support and reassemble at Medina in the following year to demand satisfaction of him.<sup>5</sup> In mid 35/early 656, or slightly later, groups from Egypt, Kûfa and Baṣra converged upon Medina; the Egyptians, who probably numbered between 400 and 600 and at most numbered no more than 1,000, formed the largest group and the most vociferous in complaint.<sup>6</sup> 'Uthmân appeared ready to give them satisfaction, however, notably in his declared intention of removing Ibn Sa'd, and, having arrived at what they regarded as a satisfactory settlement, they set off for Egypt. It was while they were on their way that they apprehended a message sent in 'Uthmân's name, in which Ibn Sa'd (who was probably then at Ayla<sup>7</sup>) was instructed to deal with them. Whether 'Uthmân was in fact ignorant of this message, as he later claimed, and Marwân b. al-Ḥakam was responsible for it, as seems likely, are questions which will not be gone into here. Whatever the case, the Egyptians considered themselves to have been deceived by 'Uthmân and, having returned to Medina, besieged him in his house; when he was killed soon after, most of those who struck blows at him were Egyptians.

<sup>1</sup> Tab, vol. 1, pp. 2993-4. See also BA.V, pp. 26, 27.

<sup>2</sup> Tab, vol. 1, p. 2964.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 2577.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 2984, 3004. This is presumably meant to indicate that they had come even from the extremities of Egypt. Bulbays, which is in present-day Sharqiyya province, was the first settlement reached by 'Amr when he entered Egypt - see, for example, FM, p. 59.

<sup>5</sup> BA.V, pp. 59-60.

<sup>6</sup> Kindî, p. 17; BA.V, p. 59; Tab, vol. 1, pp. 2954, 2986, 2999-3000; Maqrizî, vol. 1, p. 300.

<sup>7</sup> Tab, vol. 1, p. 2999.

In the course of these events, numerous complaints were made by the provincials against 'Uthmân and his governors. Basically, these were all complaints about the changed state of affairs during his caliphate, and the undertaking which they claimed that he had failed to fulfil was his undertaking at the time of the *shûrâ* to adhere not only to the Qur'ân and the *sunna* of Muḥammad but also to *sîrat al-shaykhayn* (Abû Bakr and 'Umar), i.e. to adhere to the existing order in its entirety.<sup>1</sup> The complaints reflected opposition to the greater measure of control being imposed by 'Uthmân and his governors and a yearning on the part of those in opposition for a time past when a preference for, and a lack of effective control over, those with Islamic priority (i.e. including provincial early-comers) had been accompanied by a check on the power and influence of traditional tribal and clan leaders. 'Uthmân was criticized for favouring his family, on whom he counted for support and from whom he was able to recruit governors upon whom he could rely; for his dismissal and rough treatment of *ṣahâba* and his deportation of others, all of whom had obstructed his organizational efforts; and for his standardized recension of the Qur'ân, which was intended to supersede varying recensions in the provinces.<sup>2</sup> A fair idea of what the provincials wanted can be gained from the several similar versions of the written undertaking by 'Uthmân, as a result of which the Egyptians set off for Egypt. This stipulated that 'Uthmân would act according to (i.e. be limited by) *kitâb allâh* and *sunnat nabiyihi*; that those who had been deprived of stipends should again be given them; that those who had been banished should be returned; that forces should not be kept in the field for long periods of time (*lâ tujammar al-bu'ûth*); that the *fay*' should be made abundant (*yuwaffar*); that division should be just and that wealth should be shared out 'among those with rights to it' (*wa-anna 'l-mâl yuradd 'alâ ahl al-ḥuqûq*); that '*dhû 'l-amâna wa'l-quwwa*' should be granted appointments; and that they, the provincials, should have whom they wished as governor.<sup>3</sup> When the Egyptians returned to Medina, after they had apprehended the message already mentioned, they wanted 'Uthmân's abdication. His assurance that he would follow *sîrat al-khalîfatayn* to the best of his ability (*tâqatî wa-juhdî*) was not enough for them.<sup>4</sup> There was no avoiding the collision between 'Uthmân's understanding of the office of *amîr al-mu'minîn* and the interests of the combined provincial and Median opposition. 'Uthmân's understanding of this can be seen in his reported remark 'they hope to rule' (*amaluhum al-imra*),<sup>5</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> 'Alî would not give such an undertaking, but is reported to have declared himself ready to act to the best of his ability (variously: *bi-mablagh 'ilmi wa-tâqatî*; *'alâ juhdî min dhâlika wa-tâqatî*; *bi-mâ yablughuhu 'l-ijtihâd minnâ wa-bi-mâ yumkinunî bi-qadr 'ilmi*. Tab, vol. I, pp. 2786, 2793, 2794; BA.V, p. 22).

<sup>2</sup> For the principal accounts of the complaints made against 'Uthmân, see: Tab, vol. I, pp. 2951-4; BA.V, pp. 62-3; al-Ya'qûbî, *Târîkh*, ed. M. T. Houtsma (Leiden, 1883), vol. II, p. 202.

<sup>3</sup> BA.V, pp. 64, 93; Tab, vol. I, p. 3043; Ibn A'tham, vol. II, p. 209; *Khalifa*, p. 147.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn A'tham, vol. II, p. 216. Cf. note 1, above.

<sup>5</sup> Tab, vol. I, p. 3042.

a half-verse aptly says of them 'they desire the passing away of the [i.e. 'Uthmân's] caliphate' (*yarûmûna 'l-khilâfata an tazûlâ*).<sup>1</sup>

Turning to provincial opposition other than that of the Egyptians, it has been suggested that the Kûfan opposition was made up of extremist *qurrâ'* who would not accept the *modus vivendi* which had been achieved at Kûfa.<sup>2</sup> Sayf b. 'Umar refers to a meeting at Kûfa, probably after the appointment of Abû Mûsâ, when al-Ashtar, Zayd b. Şuĥân, Ka'b b. 'Abda Dhî 'l-Ĥabaka and other members of the Ashtar group of *qurrâ'* agreed that 'No head will be lifted as long as 'Uthmân is over the people'; two of the group are reported to have made an unsuccessful attempt to murder 'Uthmân.<sup>3</sup> Not long afterwards, at the meeting of provincials at Medina in 34, the Kûfan leader was Ka'b b. 'Abda,<sup>4</sup> and in the following year a Kûfan group went to Medina. Abû Mikhnaf says that it numbered 200 and was led by al-Ashtar, but according to Sayf they were about as many as the Egyptians, whom he numbers at 600–1,000, and were organized in four groups led by Zayd b. Şuĥân, al-Ashtar, Ziyâd b. al-Naġr al-Ĥârithî and 'Abdallâh b. al-Aşamm; 'Amr (or 'Umar) b. al-Aşamm was in overall command.<sup>5</sup> These leaders are all mentioned earlier in the sources as *qurrâ'* with the exception of the sons of al-Aşamm, who are mentioned first in the context of the events of 34 and 35, and then only by Sayf. Reference to them by him provides a further hint of the connexion between 'Uthmân's Kûfan opponents and the Jazīra,<sup>6</sup> for al-Aşamm and his sons were residents of al-Raġqa.<sup>7</sup> Further in this connexion, it can be noted that the only recorded specific grievance by a Kûfan in the events of 35 at Medina was that of Şa'sa'a b. Şuĥân when he told 'Uthmân 'we have been expelled from our territories' (*ukhrijnâ min diyârinâ*).<sup>8</sup> The context in which this phrase occurs in the Qur'ân shows that Şa'sa'a was adducing it as a justification for taking up arms against 'Uthmân,<sup>9</sup> but at the same time it gives yet another indication of lost interests which, in the case of Şa'sa'a, were probably in the Jazīra.<sup>10</sup>

The Kûfan group, like that from Başra, played a role secondary to that of the

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* p. 3011. Scil. 'Uthmân's *khilâfa*, not the *imârat al-mu'minîn* – see also *ibid.* pp. 2993 (*fa-mâ sallamû 'alayhi bi'l-khilâfa*) and 2996 (*fa'rdud khilâfatanâ*).

<sup>2</sup> See above and *IYMES*, vol. II (1971), pp. 360–2.

<sup>3</sup> Tab, vol. I, pp. 3034–5.

<sup>4</sup> BA.V, p. 59.

<sup>5</sup> Tab, vol. I, p. 2954.

<sup>6</sup> See *IYMES*, vol. II (1971), p. 357.

<sup>7</sup> Abû 'Alî Muĥammad b. Sa'id b. 'Abd al-Raĥmân al-Quĥayrî al-Ĥarrânî, *Târikĥ al-Raġqa wa-man nazalahâ min aĥĥâb rasûl allâh şl'm wa'l-tâbi'in wa'l-fuġahâ wa'l-muĥaddithîn*, ed. T. al-Na'sânî (Ĥamât, 1378/1959), pp. 16, 58.

<sup>8</sup> *Khalifa*, p. 149; al-Jâĥiz, *al-Bayân wa'l-tabyîn*, ed. A. M. Ĥârûn, 2nd ed. (Cairo, 1960–1), vol. I, p. 393. Note as a sequel the report that, when 'Alî was leaving Nukĥayla for Şiffîn in the following year, Jundab b. Zuhayr said in the company of al-Ĥârith al-A'war and Yazîd b. Qays (all three, like Şa'sa'a, being erstwhile *qurrâ'* – see for example BA.V, pp. 40–1) 'qad âna li'lladhîna ukhrijû min diyâriĥim' (Minqarî, p. 121). It should also be recalled that it was to the Jazīra that 'Alî appointed al-Ashtar (Minqarî, p. 12; Ibn A'tham, vol. I, fol. 45 A; BA/MS, vol. I, p. 333).

<sup>9</sup> *Qur'ân*, II, v. 246, XXII, vv. 39–40.

<sup>10</sup> For Şa'sa'a's connexion with Âmid from the time of its conquest by the Arabs, see al-Wâġidî, *Futûĥ al-Şa'm* (Cairo, 1296), vol. II, p. 152.

Egyptian in the events that culminated in 'Uthmân's death. al-Wâqidî says that when the Egyptians thought that their demands had been satisfied and set off for Egypt, al-Ashtar and the Baṣran opposition leader Ḥakīm stayed in Medina, and that when the Egyptians returned and besieged 'Uthmân, al-Ashtar and Ḥakīm 'seceded' (*i'tazalâ*).<sup>1</sup> Other reports, however, indicate that al-Ashtar was connected with the siege. It is reported that at one point the besieged 'Uthmân asked what it was that the people wanted and that it was al-Ashtar who told him that they wanted him to choose between abdicating and punishing himself, and that if he refused to do either they would fight him.<sup>2</sup> Another report refers to a conversation which al-Ashtar is supposed to have had with 'A'isha during the siege, in which he asked her opinion about what should be done with 'Uthmân. When she said that she would not enjoin the shedding of blood, he retorted with the rebuke that she had written to them (encouraging them) until war broke out, and now was forbidding them.<sup>3</sup> Finally, the weakening of al-Ashtar's resolve to kill 'Uthmân becomes apparent in several places. He believed 'Uthmân's disclaimer of knowledge of the letter which had been apprehended by the Egyptians and voiced his opinion that it was a ruse (*qad mukira bihi wa-bikum*).<sup>4</sup> He is reported to have gone to 'Uthmân's house and to have killed one of 'Uthmân's followers, but to have shrunk from striking a blow at 'Uthmân himself.<sup>5</sup> He was nevertheless subsequently named as one of 'Uthmân's attackers<sup>6</sup> and was thenceforth regarded as one of the killers.

As with Egyptian and Kûfan opposition to 'Uthmân, so Baṣran opposition to him was made up of men whose earlier influence was waning and whose interests were harmed by increasing governmental control and the growing power of some tribal leaders. The Baṣran situation differed in that only Baṣran territories included fresh conquests made and held during the latter part of 'Uthmân's caliphate. In contrast with this, the failure to expand Kûfan territories at that time has already been identified as one of the secondary causes of Kûfan opposition, and in the case of Egypt, as noted above, the failure to leave forces to hold the conquests which had been made meant that the crowding at al-Fuṣṭāṭ was not eased. The existence of these Baṣran conquests must be regarded as the main reason why Baṣran opposition to 'Uthmân was less vociferous and probably less numerous than that of the Kûfans and Egyptians. Certainly their role in the events of 35 at Medina receives little attention in the sources, and their numbers were few according to Abû Mikhnaf and al-Wâqidî, who report that a group of 100 led by Ḥakīm b. Jabala al-'Abdî set off from Baṣra for Medina in 35 and that it was joined by another fifty people on the way.<sup>7</sup> Sayf, on the other hand, says that they were about as many as the Egyptians and Kûfans and were organized in

<sup>1</sup> Tab, vol. I, pp. 2995, 2999.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 2989-90; BA.V, p. 92; Kḫalifa, p. 147.

<sup>3</sup> BA.V, p. 102 (*katabtunna ilaynâ hattâ idhâ qâmat al-ḥarb 'alâ sâq ansha'tunna tanhaynâ*).

<sup>4</sup> Tab, vol. I, p. 3006; BA.V, p. 96.

<sup>5</sup> BA.V, p. 81; Ibn A'tham, vol. II, pp. 234-5.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* p. 263.

<sup>7</sup> BA.V, pp. 59, 97.

four groups, led by Ḥakīm b. Jabala al-'Abdī, Dhariḥ b. 'Abbād al-'Abdī, Bishr b. Shurayḥ al-Ḥuṭam b. Ḍubay'a al-Qaysī and Ibn Muḥarrish b. 'Abd 'Amr al-Ḥanafī; Ḥurqūṣ b. Zuhayr al-Sa'dī was in overall command.<sup>1</sup>

Two of these leaders, Ḥurqūṣ b. Zuhayr al-Sa'dī and Abū Maryam Ṣubayḥ b. al-Muḥarrish al-Ḥanafī, had taken part in the conquest of al-Ahwāz (17-20/638-41). Ḥurqūṣ is credited by Sayf with a prominent rôle in the taking and holding of Sūq al-Ahwāz,<sup>2</sup> and his later appearance at Kūfa, when Sa'id b. al-'Āṣ was governor, and his presence among the *qurrā'* who at first frequented Sa'id and later wrote to al-Ashtar that he should come and help repulse Sa'id suggests that he had by then been eased out of al-Ahwāz.<sup>3</sup> The most probable reason for this is that with the arrival of newcomers, few or none of whom joined him, he had become relatively less and less important as a leader. The case of Abū Maryam b. al-Muḥarrish was probably similar.<sup>4</sup> He is first mentioned in the sources on the side of Musaylima at Yamāma, where he killed Zayd b. al-Khattāb,<sup>5</sup> and thereafter was probably with 'Utba b. Ghazwān at the capture of al-Ubulla, so that he was one of the first 'Baṣrans'.<sup>6</sup> He is reported to have been the first in charge of *qaḍā'* at Baṣra, probably in 17/638,<sup>7</sup> and a year later Abū Mūsā reportedly left him in charge of Surraq and Rāmhurmuz.<sup>8</sup> He was still governor of Rāmhurmuz at the time of 'Umar's *muqāsama* of his governors, which took place after 21/642.<sup>9</sup> Thereafter there is no mention of him until 35/655-6, and it is striking that the only Baṣran Ḥanafī leader mentioned in the intervening years is Khulayd b. 'Abdallāh b. Zuhayr, who was with 'Abdallāh b. 'Āmir in Khurāsān.<sup>10</sup> Abū Maryam therefore appears to have been another of those who had been leaders in the time of 'Umar and whose influence was gradually eclipsed by that of leaders who emerged (or re-emerged) in the time of 'Uthmān. Bishr b. Shurayḥ al-Ḥuṭam seems to have been yet another of these for, although there is no other reference to him, it is known that his father, Shurayḥ al-Ḥuṭam b. Ḍubay'a b. 'Amr, earlier led the *ridḍa* of al-Baḥrayn at the head of B. Qays b. Tha'laba b. 'Ukāba and was clearly a clan leader of importance.<sup>11</sup> Finally, Ḥakīm b. Jabala al-'Abdī is a figure about whom we know little. al-Dhahabī puts him in the category of contemporaries of the Prophet (*man adraka zaman al-nubuwwa*, i.e. not a *ṣahābī*) and describes him as 'al-amīr, aḥad al-ashraf al-abṭāl',<sup>12</sup> but no early source confirms that he was a

<sup>1</sup> Tab, vol. I, p. 2955.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 2541-3, 2545.

<sup>3</sup> BA.V, pp. 40, 44-5.

<sup>4</sup> For various forms of his name, see W. Caskel, *Ġamharat an-nasab: das genealogische Werk des Hišām ibn Muḥammad al-Kalbī* (Leiden, 1966), vol. II, p. 539; BF, p. 91; BA/MS, vol. II, p. 656; Ibn Sa'd, vol. VII, pt. I, p. 64.

<sup>5</sup> BA/MS, vol. II, p. 656; Ibn Sa'd, vol. VII, pt. I, p. 64.

<sup>6</sup> Tab, vol. I, p. 2385, reading 'al-Ḥanafī' in place of 'al-Balawī'; there is no other reference to Abū Maryam al-Balawī or to any other Balawī at Baṣra.

<sup>7</sup> Tab, vol. I, p. 2570; BF, p. 91; BA/MS, vol. I, p. 352, vol. II, p. 656; Ibn Sa'd, vol. VII, pt. I, p. 64; Khalifa, p. 128.

<sup>8</sup> BF, p. 379; Khalifa, pp. 111-12.

<sup>9</sup> BF, pp. 384-5; BA/MS, vol. II, p. 621; FM, pp. 147-8.

<sup>10</sup> BF, pp. 405, 409; Khalifa, pp. 140-2; Tab, vol. I, p. 2831 (reads Khālid for Khulayd).

<sup>11</sup> Tab, vol. I, pp. 1961, 1968 ff; BF, p. 83.

<sup>12</sup> al-Dhahabī, *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, vol. III, ed. M. A. Ṭalas (Cairo, 1962), p. 348.

*sharîf* in the sense that he received a stipend of 2,000 dirhams per annum. The first specific reference to him is by al-Madâ'inî, who says that when Ibn 'Âmir arrived in 'Irâq in 29/649–50, he sent Ḥakîm to *thaghr al-Hind*, scil. towards Makrân and Sind, and that when Ḥakîm returned and reported that there was nothing there worth having the campaign was not resumed in that direction.<sup>1</sup> Thereafter, Ḥakîm seems to have taken to marauding in *dhimmî* territory, for Sayf describes him as a brigand (*liṣṣ*) who lagged behind when armies returned from campaigns and was responsible for depredations in *dhimmî* territory in Fârs. There were complaints about this behaviour, and 'Uthmân instructed Ibn 'Âmir to confine Ḥakîm to Baṣra until he was satisfied that he was amenable to discipline (*hattâ ta'nasû minhu rushd<sup>an</sup>*).<sup>2</sup> Neither at this time, nor at Medina, nor soon afterwards again at Baṣra, where he was killed by the Meccans and their allies shortly before the Battle of the Camel, does Ḥakîm appear to have been other than estranged from the main body of Baṣran 'Abd al-Qays; the distinctness of Ḥurqûṣ from the rest of B. Sa'd of Tamîm and that of Abû Maryam b. al-Muḥarrish from the rest of B. Ḥanifa of Bakr b. Wâ'il are equally striking. Sayf's account of the circumstances of the death of Ḥakîm at Baṣra describes those who had besieged 'Uthmân at Medina as 'those who were detached from all the tribes' (*nuzzâ' al-qabâ'il kullihâ*). It also says that Ḥakîm's following of 300 at Baṣra, in which are named those leaders who had been with him at Medina, consisted of such 'Abdîs as were his followers and 'those from the splinter groups of Rabî'a who attached themselves to them' (*man naza'a ilayhim min afnâ' Rabî'a*).<sup>3</sup>

The provincials who were connected with the murder of 'Uthmân were all seeking to preserve positions and interests which they had either lost or were in the process of losing. Basically they were provincial early-comers with small followings who were trying to retain privileges acquired in the disorder that followed the conquests and who were sensitive to the threat posed to their positions both by more substantial leaders of a type which 'Umar had sought to hold in check and by the central government itself. In the case of Kûfa, with its heterogeneous and fragmented population, much of which had come from afar, such small groups of early-comers made up a larger proportion of the population than elsewhere, and it has been suggested that it was for this reason that 'Umar's hopes of establishing a new type of social order were focused there.<sup>4</sup> The Kûfan *qurrâ'* in the latter part of 'Uthmân's caliphate were among the most entrenched of the provincial veterans. They were in a position to argue their case in terms

<sup>1</sup> BF, p. 432; *Khalîfa*, p. 159.

<sup>2</sup> Tab, vol. I, p. 2922.

<sup>3</sup> Tab, vol. I, pp. 3129–30. For other accounts, notably that of al-Madâ'inî, see: Tab, vol. I, pp. 3135–6; *Khalîfa*, p. 163; BA/MS, vol. I, p. 349, where figures of both 300 and (less probably) 700 are given, at least seventy of them being 'Abdîs; al-Madâ'inî does not specifically stress the *afnâ'* aspect of Ḥakîm's following, as Sayf does, but says that the group was made up of 'Abdîs and Bakrîs, mostly the former. On the use of *nuzzâ'* and *naza'a*, note particularly the *ḥadîth* cited by Ibn Manẓûr, *Lisân al-'arab* (Cairo, 1300–8), vol. x, p. 228.

<sup>4</sup> *IJMES*, vol. II (1971), p. 351.

both of the Islamic ideology which 'Umar had tried to promote and the political practice which had gone with it. 'Umar had given the status of Kûfan early-comers a special legitimacy according to his notion of the Islamic order by means of the principle of Islamic priority (*sâbiqa*). More than that, he had allowed them almost complete autonomy because he had no alternative; they were firmly established in Kûfa and the Kûfan territories at an early stage, they were numerous, and even if 'Umar had wanted to exercise tighter control over them he would scarcely have had the means at his disposal.

The interests of the Egyptian and Baṣran early-comers were less firmly identified with 'Umar's notions of a new social order. The Arab conquest of Egypt had come relatively late, so that 'Umar was not there faced with early-comers as entrenched and intractable as those at Kufa. It was in such circumstances that he sought to seize the opportunity of insisting, albeit with limited success, upon Egyptian remittances to Medina; there is no evidence to suggest that such heavy demands were made by the caliph on Kûfan revenue. Similarly, while at Kûfa the so-called *ahl al-ayyâm wa'l-Qâdisiyya* were granted preferential stipends of 3,000 and 2,000 dirhams per annum respectively, in the case of Egypt 'Umar laid down that the maximum stipends of 200 dinars per annum were for '*man bâya'a taḥta 'l-shajara*' and for a few others, including 'Amr.<sup>1</sup> At the *miṣr* of Baṣra concentrated settlement had come about slowly.<sup>2</sup> The 'Baṣrans' in 'Umar's later years were mostly neighboring Tamîmî and Bakrî subclans and splinter-groups which had spread over al-Ahwâz and into adjacent regions; even by the time of 'Umar's death there appears to have been no central control from the *miṣr* of Baṣra itself, for Sayf says that Abû Mûsâ was 'in charge of the prayer there, but its territories (*'amal*) were split up and disunited'.<sup>3</sup> The Egyptian and Baṣran opposition to 'Uthmân therefore contained less overtones of 'Umar's Islamic order than the Kûfan opposition did, and it may be for this reason that they did not style themselves *qurrâ'*.

The differences between the provincial groups are less striking than the similarities, however, for all three groups had it in common that they were made up of minor old-guard leaders with their small followings, opposing the implementation of an organization which was out of their hands and was carried out by

<sup>1</sup> FM, pp. 145, 230-1; BF, p. 456; Ibn Sa'd, vol. iv, pt. ii, p. 8. Cf. *IḤMES*, vol. II (1971), p. 349.

<sup>2</sup> The establishment of Kûfa arose from the need at that time for a permanent reserve base for the fighting men in 'Irâq, many of whom had come from afar, from which they could both hold the Sasanian front and support other fronts, notably the activated Jazîra front. The rôle of Baṣra was decidedly subsidiary to this; it may be seen as having superseded al-Ubulla in controlling the waterway, but beyond that it began as no more than a convenient centre for attempts to rally and control local tribesmen, and the initial force of non-locals there numbered only a few hundred. While we possess a detailed account of the marking-out (*ikhṭiṭât*) of Kûfa, the absence of one in the case of Baṣra indicates that settlement there was less organized; there are references only to a person who was in charge of *inzâl/tanzîl* there (Tab, vol. I, pp. 2381, 2488).

<sup>3</sup> Tab, vol. I, p. 2713 (*'alâ ṣalâtiḥâ, wa-kâna 'amaluḥâ muftaraqân ghayr majmû'*).

executives and clan leaders who diminished their erstwhile role and impinged upon what they regarded as their rights. Their grounds of grievance were much the same – unwelcome centralized authority and interference with *de facto* privileges which they had arrogated to themselves; a changing political situation arising from the arrival of newcomers; the consequent strengthening of the position of traditional clan leaders and the concomitant waning of those early-comers whose only claim to stature was that they were early-comers. The Egyptian counterpart to al-Ash‘ath b. Qays was clearly Mu‘âwiya b. Ḥudayj al-Tujībî, the leader of al-Sakûn. Only in Syria was there no opposition whatsoever to ‘Uthmân in 35. Mu‘âwiya b. Abî Sufyân’s control there was firm and he had been quick to stifle dissent, as in the case of Abû Dharr. The Arabs in Syria were scattered through the *junds* instead of being concentrated in a single *miṣr*; the position of Shurahbîl b. al-Simṭ al-Kindî at Ḥims is a telling example of the rein allowed by Mu‘âwiya to tribal leaders in Syrian *junds*<sup>1</sup> – and merely a foretaste of the power structure he set up when he became caliph.<sup>2</sup> Finally, of interest in this context is the report that Mu‘âwiya, when he reconquered Cyprus in 32/652–3, settled there 12,000 *ahl al-dîwân*, for the names of individuals in that force leave little doubt that it included many of those Syrian early-comers whose standing was more ‘Islamic’ than tribal.<sup>3</sup>

#### OTHER ALIGNMENTS AT MEDINA

The opposition to ‘Uthmân at Medina itself came from three main quarters, and it was the existence of this opposition that made his murder by the provincials possible. Of these three main groups, the first to which attention will be paid is that of those Muhâjirîn and other prominent *ṣahâba* who complained that he had departed from his undertaking to adhere to the Islamic order as it was at the death of ‘Umar. From their point of view, ‘Uthmân’s alteration in 29/649–50 of the number of *rak‘as* to be prayed at Minâ, with the mere justification that this was his opinion (*ra’y<sup>un</sup> ra’aytuhu*),<sup>4</sup> had been only one early example of many deplorable innovations and incidents. ‘Uthmân’s increasing use of his own family in order effectively to organize Arabia and the conquered territories, and the great wealth gained by his relatives in so doing, inevitably led to rancour among, and a diminution of, the gubernatorial role of the prominent *ṣahâba*. Shortly before his death in 32/652–3, ‘Abd al-Rahmân b. ‘Awf is supposed to have declared that ‘Uthmân had transgressed upon his undertaking to him (*khâlafa mâ a’tânî*), and desired that ‘Uthmân should not be allowed to pray over his corpse.<sup>5</sup> ‘Abdallâh b. Mas‘ûd died in the same year, reportedly having made the same request. He had earlier resigned (or been dismissed) from the Kûfan treasury

<sup>1</sup> Note, for example, the evidence of his influence immediately before Ṣiffîn-Minqarî, pp. 44 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *IYMES*, vol. II (1971), pp. 347–8.

<sup>3</sup> BF, pp. 153–4.

<sup>4</sup> Tab, vol. I, pp. 2833–5; BA.V, p. 39.

<sup>5</sup> BA.V, p. 57. See also Ibn A‘tham, vol. II, pp. 151–2.

and moved to Medina, where he criticized 'Uthmân for his changes (*ghayyara, baddala*). 'Uthmân had him ejected from the mosque and beaten when he spoke out of turn and kept him at Medina after Marwân b. al-Ḥakam counselled that Ibn Mas'ūd had already corrupted the people of 'Irâq and that if he were allowed to go to Syria he would do the same there.<sup>1</sup> Another of the prominent Muhâjirîn, Abû Dharr, was also critical of 'Uthmân's favouring of his own family, and in Syria he made unflattering comparisons between 'Uthmân and 'Umar. He also criticized Mu'âwiya who, having tried unsuccessfully to buy him off, wrote to 'Uthmân that Abû Dharr was corrupting Syria. 'Uthmân then exiled Abû Dharr to al-Rabadha, where he died in 31/651-2.<sup>2</sup> Yet another example can be seen in the case of 'Ammâr b. Yâsir, who was also critical of 'Uthmân and was beaten as a result.<sup>3</sup> He is reported subsequently to have played a part in fomenting Egyptian hostility towards 'Uthmân<sup>4</sup> and was among the first of the Medinans to join the provincials when they came to 'Uthmân's house.<sup>5</sup> The complaints of these and similar individuals were symptoms of a situation in which the principles of Islamic leadership and Islamic priority fostered by 'Umar were becoming less and less important; these *ṣahâba* were therefore protesting principally against a devaluation of their own importance.

The second group of opposition at Medina included the Anṣâr, whose loss of influence under 'Uthmân has been described by Vesely.<sup>6</sup> Under 'Umar they had been appointed to positions of authority, but this ceased to be the case under 'Uthmân. The introduction of irksome regulations<sup>7</sup> and such appointments as that of al-Ḥârith b. al-Ḥakam over the market at Medina<sup>8</sup> made the Anṣâr feel increasingly impotent in their own town and with only a few exceptions – and these were people who were personally dependent upon him – the Anṣâr were solid in their dislike of 'Uthmân. In this group too, although they could also be regarded as connected with the first group, there were various tribal oddments from Khuzâ'a, Sa'd b. Bakr, Hudhayl, Juhayna and Muzayna, who were also Medinans and who, together with the so-called *Anbât Yathrib*, were vigorous participants in the siege of 'Uthmân.<sup>9</sup> People from these same groups had been among Muḥammad's earliest supporters and had in some cases been accorded the status of Muhâjirîn by him.<sup>10</sup> Both they and the Anṣâr had been Islamic leaders in the time of 'Umar, but it was not only the restrictions at Medina and

<sup>1</sup> BA.V, pp. 36-7. Ibn Mas'ūd's reactionary spirit is best summed up in his own reported words: *sharr al-umîr muḥdathâtuhâ wa-kullu muḥdath bid'a wa-kullu bid'a ḍalâla wa-kullu ḍalâla fî 'l-nâr.*

<sup>2</sup> Tab, vol. I, pp. 2858-9, 2862; BA.V, pp. 52 ff; Ibn A'tham, vol. II, pp. 155-9.

<sup>3</sup> BA.V, pp. 48, 83; Ibn A'tham, vol. II, pp. 154-5. See also Tab, vol. I, p. 3029.

<sup>4</sup> BA.V, p. 51; Tab, vol. I, pp. 2943-4, 2951. Maqrîzî (vol. I, p. 296) merely says that 'Uthmân had sent 'Ammâr to Egypt '*fî ba'd umûrihi*'.

<sup>5</sup> BA.V, p. 59. See also Tab, vol. I, p. 2961.

<sup>6</sup> R. Vesely, 'Die Anṣâr im ersten Bürgerkriege (36-40 d.H.)', in *Archiv Orientalní*, vol. xxvi (1958), pp. 36-7.

<sup>7</sup> Tab, vol. I, pp. 3027-8; BA.V, p. 27.

<sup>8</sup> BA.V, p. 47; Ibn A'tham, vol. II, p. 151.

<sup>9</sup> BA.V, p. 99.

<sup>10</sup> W. M. Watt, *Muhammad at Medina* (Oxford, 1956), pp. 66, 242, 256-7.

the decline of their importance that accounted for their opposition to 'Uthmân; they were the people who stood to lose by any concession on the part of 'Uthmân to Egyptian demands that the Medinans should not take stipends.

The third group was scarcely distinguishable from the first up to the time of 'Uthmân's death, for many of its number were Muhâjirîn and *ṣahâba* and all of them were opposed to Umayyad domination. But they differed from those who made up the first group in that, under their masks as Muhâjirîn, they in fact favoured Qurashî domination. This was the group which formed around Ṭalḥa b. 'Ubaydallâh and included most of his clan, B. Taym b. 'Adî, among them 'Ā'isha; al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwâm, who was from B. Asad b. 'Abd al-'Uzza, also came to be associated with this group. In the early years of 'Uthmân's caliphate Quraysh were able to move into the newly conquered territories, for 'Uthmân, unlike 'Umar, did not confine them to the Hijâz.<sup>1</sup> They acquired wealth and influence, and Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr became extremely successful as investors and land-owners. Ṭalḥa acquired extensive estates and took advantage of the land-exchange in 'Irâq; he used some of his large income for taking care of the B. Taym.<sup>2</sup> al-Zubayr also had a large income and interests in the Hijâz, Egypt, Kûfa and Baṣra.<sup>3</sup> The principal ground of Ṭalḥa's opposition, when it arose, was that 'Uthmân, in his quest for dependable executives, had chosen his relatives for the task and so had significantly strengthened the B. Umayya *vis-à-vis* the other Qurashî clans. He became increasingly critical of 'Uthmân,<sup>4</sup> and his wealth rendered abortive 'Uthmân's attempts to buy his cooperation;<sup>5</sup> rather, he appears to have played upon his influence at Baṣra and its territories to encourage opposition to 'Uthmân.<sup>6</sup> Concerning his role at the time of the siege, al-Madâ'ini reports that none of the *ṣahâba* was more active against 'Uthmân than Ṭalḥa,<sup>7</sup> and the account of al-Wâqidî relates that Sûdân b. Ḥumrân emerged from 'Uthmân's house saying 'Where is Ṭalḥa b. 'Ubaydallâh? We have killed Ibn 'Affân.'<sup>8</sup> al-Zubayr, on the other hand, kept clear of the last stages of the siege.<sup>9</sup> So did 'Ā'isha, who went to Mecca, but she had already played a part in fomenting hostility towards 'Uthmân, as already mentioned. There can be little doubt that she hoped that 'Uthmân would be killed and that Ṭalḥa would assume control.<sup>10</sup>

There were, however, others at Medina who, ostensibly at least, were neither for nor against 'Uthmân. Among them were individuals such as 'Abdallâh b.

<sup>1</sup> Tab, vol. 1, p. 3026.

<sup>2</sup> BA/MS, vol. II, pp. 499, 502-3; Ibn Sa'd, vol. III, pt. i, pp. 157-8; Tab, vol. 1, p. 2854; al-Ya'qûbî, *Mushâkalat al-nâs li-zamânihim*, ed. W. Millward (Beirut, 1962), p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> BA/MS, vol. II, pp. 430-1; Ibn Sa'd, vol. III, pt. i, p. 77; al-Ya'qûbî, *op. cit.* p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> BA.V, pp. 15, 42; Ibn A'tham, vol. II, pp. 185-7.

<sup>5</sup> BA.V, pp. 7, 20; Tab, vol. 1, pp. 3037-8.

<sup>6</sup> BA/MS, vol. I, p. 349; Tab, vol. I, p. 3127.

<sup>7</sup> BA.V, p. 81. For further evidence of his activity at this time, see Tab, vol. 1, pp. 2989, 3000, 3037; BA.V, pp. 20, 68-70, 71, 74, 77, 90; Ibn A'tham, vol. II, p. 229.

<sup>8</sup> Tab, vol. 1, p. 3001.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 3011, 3019.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* p. 3040; BA/MS, vol. 1, p. 346; BA.V, p. 91.

'Umar, Sa'd b. Abî Waqqâs and al-Mughîra b. Shu'ba; among them too 'Alî and B. Hâshim should be counted. During the preceding years of 'Uthmân's rule, 'Alî had appeared as a restraining influence upon 'Uthmân without being in direct opposition to him. He had insisted upon the punishment of al-Walîd b. 'Uqba when the charges against him were deemed proved according to the prevailing legal standards,<sup>1</sup> and he had intervened when 'Uthmân had been about to punish the bearer of a letter from the Kûfan *qurrâ'*.<sup>2</sup> He had also shown sympathy with Abû Dharr<sup>3</sup> and had spoken strongly in the defence of 'Ammâr. Ibn A'tham makes the point that 'Alî knew that 'Uthmân would not dare to act against him.<sup>4</sup> It was 'Alî who conveyed to 'Uthmân the criticisms of the *ṣahâba*<sup>5</sup> and later acted on 'Uthmân's behalf as negotiator with the provincials when they came to Medina.<sup>6</sup> It was then that a real barrier of mistrust between 'Alî and 'Uthmân's family appeared, and shortly afterwards the Egyptians apprehended the letter to Ibn Sa'd and returned to Medina.<sup>7</sup> While there is no evidence that 'Alî made much use of his personal influence to put an end to the siege, he nevertheless made efforts to mitigate its severity, notably by his insistence that 'Uthmân should be allowed water.<sup>8</sup> It is reported that he asked Ṭalḥa to end the siege, but that Ṭalḥa said that he would not do so until the B. Umayya gave satisfaction (*hattâ tu'tiyâ B. Umayya al-ḥaqq min anfusihâ*).<sup>9</sup> More than that 'Alî could not do, for by standing up for 'Uthmân he would be standing up for the Umayyads; nor could he leave Medina altogether, for he had no intention of allowing Ṭalḥa to profit from 'Uthmân's death. He therefore had no option but to stay on the sidelines.

#### CONCLUSION

The main conflict in the time of 'Uthmân was not so much between the Meccans and 'tribesmen', as Professor Gibb has suggested, as between interests rooted in traditional patterns of leadership and privilege and interests rooted in a new and different pattern of leadership and privilege which had emerged in the time of Muḥammad, Abû Bakr and 'Umar. At Medina 'Umar counted on the support of those who were loyal to the concept of unity under Medinan hegemony. In the conquered territories his inability to quickly establish close control and uniform organization tended to be passed off as a reluctance to do so; moreover, it was accompanied by an affirmation of the collective privileged position of provincial early-comers. The subsequent conflict had two main aspects. It was

<sup>1</sup> BA.V, p. 33; Ibn A'tham, vol. II, p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> BA.V, pp. 41-2; Ibn A'tham, vol. II, p. 184.

<sup>3</sup> BA.V, p. 54; Ibn A'tham, vol. II, pp. 158-9.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 164.

<sup>5</sup> Tab, vol. I, p. 2937; BA.V, p. 60.

<sup>6</sup> Tab, vol. I, p. 2969; BA.V, pp. 61, 63-4; Ibn A'tham, vol. II, p. 209.

<sup>7</sup> Tab, vol. I, p. 3038; BA.V, pp. 89, 95; Ibn A'tham, vol. II, pp. 211 ff.

<sup>8</sup> Tab, vol. I, p. 3010; BA.V, pp. 71, 90; Ibn A'tham, vol. II, p. 219.

<sup>9</sup> Tab, vol. I, p. 3037.

a post-conquest conflict between the increasing power of central authority and provincial early-comer reaction for the retention of autonomy. At the same time, however, there was a developing conflict within the provinces between the re-emerging old-style tribal leaders, who possessed political acumen and were capable of mobilizing tribal support, and early-comers of lesser tribal stature who were opposed to any diminution of their independence or reduction of the 'Islamic' privileges acquired by them at the time of the conquest.

Once provincial opposition to 'Uthmân became active, first from the Kûfan *qurrâ*' and then notably from their Egyptian counterparts, it was given further impetus by malcontents at Medina. The situation in the Ḥijâz resembled that in the provinces, except that here the old-style power groups at one end of the scale were Qurashî, notably Umayya, and the 'Islamic' parvenus at the other end of the scale were various *ṣahâba* (either non-Qurashî or insignificant Qurashî), Anṣâr and other Medinan groups. Here there was a further complication, however, for the opposition led by Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr, and including 'Â'isha, was able by reason of its Muhâjirî and *ṣahâbî* character to present an Islamic face, but at the same time also had a decidedly Qurashî one. Reference has been made to the indications that this group had been active in fomenting hostility to 'Uthmân at Baṣra and Kûfa, and there is even a suggestion that the Baṣran and Kûfan groups at Medina regarded Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr respectively as their champions at one point at least during the events immediately preceding the murder of 'Uthmân.<sup>1</sup> This suggestion is not repeated in the record of events after his murder, however, for then Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr were no longer able to maintain the same breadth of support in the Ḥijâz; they were thrown back on the hard core of their support, at Mecca. The strongest groups at Medina were the Egyptians and the Anṣâr, but the Egyptians now faded out of the picture, presumably because most of them were anxious to return to the fray in Egypt without delay.<sup>2</sup> This left the Anṣâr, and for them there was no question of siding with Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr. They had no choice but to rally around 'Alî.

This initiative brought the Kûfan and Baṣran groups at Medina into line behind 'Alî. Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr soon saw that they would gain nothing from pretended support for 'Alî, and they and their Qurashî supporters gathered at Mecca. The situation in the Ḥijâz was now one of stalemate, with each side capable of raising no more than about 1,000 men<sup>3</sup> and neither strong enough to overcome the other. The Meccan initiative in moving to Baṣra and using 'Abdallâh b. 'Âmir's ability to mobilize support there (principally from the Azd and Dabba of Fârs – note 'Ubaydallâh b. Ma'mar al-Taymî's earlier role in Fârs

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 2955, 3076–7.

<sup>2</sup> Some Egyptians, however, appear to have stayed in the Ḥijâz – see BA.V, p. 361, where, in the account of Ibn al-Zubayr's unsuccessful defense of Mecca against al-Ḥajjâj (72/692), there is a reference to '*qawm qadimû ma'a Ibn 'Udays min Miṣr thumma sârû khawârij*'.

<sup>3</sup> On the Meccan force: Tab, vol. I, pp. 3101, 3105; BA/MS, vol. I, pp. 346–7. On 'Alî's force: Tab, vol. I, 3142–3, 3152 compared with 3155, 3181; BA/MS, vol. I, p. 350; al-Ya'qûbî, *Târikh*, vol. II, p. 211.

until his death<sup>1</sup>) was countered by 'Alî's move to Kûfa. In the circumstances, it is likely that al-Ash'ath b. Qays al-Kindî and Jarîr b. 'Abdallâh al-Bajalî would have sided with Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr if they had not been remote in Âdhar-bayjân and Hamadhân respectively. As it was, 'Alî contrived to raise substantial support at the *miṣr* of Kûfa.

The role of certain members of the Umayyad family in these events is interesting. Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr were concerned with placing responsibility for 'Uthmân's death upon 'Alî, once they had broken with him, and some Umayyads were prepared to go along with this. We therefore find the apparent paradox of 'Â'ishâ and Ṭalḥa, who had been among 'Uthmân's foremost critics, being joined by Umawîs such as Sa'îd b. al-Âṣ, Marwân b. al-Ḥakam and al-Walîd b. 'Uqba. Their diverging aims were clearly illustrated, however, when, on the occasion of the departure of the Meccan force in the direction of Baṣra, Sa'îd b. al-Âṣ suggested to Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr that they should agree to a handover to [one of] 'Uthmân's sons. When they refused, reportedly with the words 'Shall we leave the *shaykhs* of the Muhâjirîn and make it [scil. *al-khilâfa* or *imârat al-mu'minîn*] over to their sons?', Sa'îd left the force.<sup>2</sup> The continued presence of other Umawîs in the force does not affect the proposition that two divergent aims existed. Such Umawîs were prepared temporarily to suppress their long-term goals for the sake of dealing first with the common enemy, 'Alî. There can be no more poignant illustration of the existence of this fundamental split than the numerous indications that the 'stray arrow' which killed Ṭalḥa at the Battle of the Camel was in fact shot at him deliberately by Marwân.<sup>3</sup>

Mu'âwiya therefore clearly had no interest in supporting Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr; he would have to deal with whichever side was victorious at Baṣra, and in the interim he bided his time. After almost twenty years in Syria, he knew the value of the secure power base he had there. 'Uthmân had persisted in staying at Medina and had paid for his mistake; he had, moreover, relied too much on members of his immediate family and had gone too far in attempts to compromise with dissatisfied groups. Mu'âwiya had nothing to gain by making any serious attempt to save him; once dead, however, 'Uthmân provided him with an opportunity for making political capital which he was quick to seize when he came to resist 'Alî. Nor did Mu'âwiya have any illusions about the 'Islamic' leadership. While 'Alî was beset by the problems of attempting a final compromise between 'Islamic' leadership and tribal leadership, in order to form an 'Irâqî coalition, Mu'âwiya's lines of authority through the established tribal leaders remained firm. The lesson of 'Uthmân's murder had confirmed the importance of that.

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<sup>1</sup> Tab, vol. I, p. 2830; *Khalifa*, p. 137; BF, p. 390.

<sup>2</sup> Tab, vol. I, p. 3103 (*nada*<sup>u</sup> *shuyûkh al-muhâjirîn wa-naj' aluhâ li-abnâ'ihim?*).

<sup>3</sup> For reports which say unequivocally that Marwân shot Ṭalḥa, see: BA/MS, vol. I, p. 355; *Khalifa*, p. 165; Ibn A'tham, vol. II, p. 326. For reports which do not mention Marwân, see: Tab, vol. I, pp. 3171, 3184, 3192; BA/MS, vol. I, p. 350.