

THE MEMORY OF ‘ALĪ B. ABĪ ṬĀLIB IN EARLY SUNNĪ THOUGHT

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ABSTRACT

Pro-‘Alid sentiment (*al-mayl ilā ‘Alī, tashayyu’*) is a prevalent, trans-sectarian tendency to venerate ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/661) and his family. In contrast, Muslims expressing anti-‘Alid sentiment (*naṣb*) historically viewed ‘Alī and his descendants with contempt. In a literary and social world of binary sectarian characterizations, this dissertation argues that medieval authors conflated early pro-‘Alid sentiment with Shī‘ism. First, this dissertation examines both the biographies and literary contributions of pro-‘Alids who were marginalized as too “Shī‘ī” centuries after their deaths in Sunnī literature. Second, it locates and contextualizes the literature of anti-‘Alids who historically opposed pro-‘Alid sentiment and criticized ‘Alī as a heretic and criminal. Each of these studies documents the contributions, declining popularity and eventual demise of a minority theological tradition in early Sunnism to consider problems related to the politics of identity, history writing, and the formation of orthodoxy. By the third/ninth century, an emerging Sunnī orthodoxy sought to minimize early partisan divisions within the community by actively criticizing pro-‘Alid and anti-‘Alid tendencies among scholars and rejecting their literary contributions. Furthermore, influential Sunnī scholars attempted to develop an image of ‘Alī that suited orthodoxy in their *ḥadīth* collections and commentaries. This study explores the methods in which these scholars rehabilitated ‘Alī’s image from the third/ninth to seventh/thirteenth centuries.

The literary contributions of both zealous pro-‘Alids and anti-‘Alids to Sunnī historiography have largely been suppressed or lost over the centuries. Previous research has overlooked the “erased” histories of these groups due to a dependency on later Sunnī meta-narratives that mostly excluded their perspectives. However, this study demonstrates that many influential texts possess an understudied undercurrent of early authorities who once upheld views of ‘Alī contrary to the sect’s later established tenets. This dissertation contributes to studies of Muslim historiography, Sunnī *ḥadīth*, Shī‘ism, and the impact of early theological debates on the formation of communal boundaries in religion.

For every Sunnī mistaken for a Shī'ī

And every Shī'ī made to feel unwelcome

“Those who mind don't matter, and those who matter don't mind”

-B. M. Baruch

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INTRODUCTION

Despite many shared ethical values, rituals, and sacred texts, Sunnī and Shīʿī communities possess some enduring differences in their interpretations of history and theology. Sunnīs have cited Shīʿī affronts to the sanctity of early figures venerated in Sunnī Islam as a long-standing grievance. Shīʿī devotion to ʿAlī and his family is also considered fanatical and misguided. In contrast, Shīʿīs have considered many Sunnīs guilty of obfuscating the central role of ʿAlī and his sons in providing guidance after the Prophet. Some Sunnīs have even been accused of showing disdain for ʿAlī and his family. A thematic study of Sunnī *ḥadīth*, theological, and biographical literature may problematize some of the false dichotomies drawn between Sunnism and Shīʿism listed above. While some early transmitters in Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections reportedly despised ʿAlī, other authorities resembled Shīʿīs in refusing to venerate Muʿāwiya and others who fought against ʿAlī. Some even considered ʿAlī the most exalted personality after the Prophet. What were some of the contributions of these factions to Sunnī *ḥadīth* literature about ʿAlī? How did Sunnī scholars contest the claims of these texts? Which reports entered the canonical *ḥadīth* collections of al-Bukhārī and Muslim?

This dissertation is not a biography of ʿAlī although Muslim historiography regarding his life is prominent throughout. Rather it is an attempt to understand the various portrayals of ʿAlī within the Sunnī community and among its authorities active in the transmission of *ḥadīth* from the Umayyad era until the late ʿAbbāsīd. Despite the warranted objections to the

use of the term “proto-Sunnī,”¹ I use it to refer to authorities who lived from the second to fourth centuries² and appeared in influential Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections and legal texts. Notwithstanding obvious differences in legal methodologies³ and theology,⁴ these proto-Sunnī authorities generally considered the first three caliphs to have been legitimate authorities and apparently abstained from attending Khārijite and Imāmī circles of learning. Some proto-Sunnīs considered ‘Alī’s life to have been one of complete wisdom, while others condemned it. Contestation in the Sunnī community regarding the place of ‘Alī in history, law and theology is an important indication of his prominence in the literature. Due to the vast diversity and breadth of the sources, developments in the representation of ‘Alī amongst Sufi brotherhoods that venerated him or scholars that articulated Sunnī orthodoxy in the Mamluk-era largely fall outside the limits of the current investigation and are only mentioned in brief. However, the literary output of Mamluk-era scholars will be utilized to access relevant texts from earlier periods and the depictions of ‘Alī therein. Maria Dakake's excellent work on the image of ‘Alī in Shī‘ism relieves this study of the need to delve deep into the Shī‘ī intellectual tradition.⁵

A description of the earliest images of ‘Alī before analyzing their reception in the Sunnī community is in order. The earliest depictions of ‘Alī exist in two purportedly Marwānid-era

¹ For a discussion of the methodological problems associated with the term, see Michael Dann, “Contested

² This dissertation utilizes *hijrī* dates to refer to developments in Islamic history. For the death dates of scholars, the *hijrī* date appears before the common era.

³ ‘Abd al-Majīd, *al-Ittijāhāt al-fiqhiyya ‘inda aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth fī al-qarn al-thālith al-hijrī* (Cairo: 1979).

⁴ *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*, ed. Winter (Cambridge; New York: 2008), pp. 1-117.

⁵ Dakake, *The Charismatic Community: Shi‘ite identity in early Islam* (Albany: 2007), pp. 1-99.

texts written by individuals active at the start of the second century. The authors of both texts venerated ‘Alī as a saintly hero who possessed distinctions that his peers did not. The author of *Kitāb Sulaym b. Qays* was a Kūfan Shī‘ī who viewed the majority of the community as misguided in following political leaders other than ‘Alī. Although the narratives in this polemical and hagiographical Shī‘ī text do not seem to offer any reliably historical information, a sermon of ‘Alī’s summarizing the edicts of the first three caliphs warrants some attention.⁶ The sermon mentions subjects that are partially and independently verifiable in the Sunnī intellectual tradition.⁷ In a number of cases, the early Sunnī tradition has further noted ‘Alī or his kin’s apparent disagreement with the caliphs on the same issue. In the Umayyad-era papyrus written by our proto-Sunnī author, Wahb b. Munabbih (d. 110/728 or 114/732), ‘Alī is depicted as the valiant commander of an important and difficult raid.⁸ While Wahb’s tale briefly exalts ‘Alī above his peers, it does not discuss the issue of succession or his disagreements with others. Nonetheless, one finds vestiges of a seemingly Shī‘ī image of ‘Alī in other early Sunnī texts. ‘Alī appears as a nonconformist in contrast to his peers. When other

⁶ ‘Askarī, *Ma‘ālim al-madrasatayn* (Beirut: 1990), 2:352-356; Kulaynī, *al-Uṣūl min al-Kāfi* (Tehran: 1968), 8:58-63 (for one relevant commentary); *Kitāb Sulaym ibn Qays al-Hilālī* (Qum: 2002), pp. 262-265.

⁷ For example, *K. Sulaym* claims the *maqām Ibrāhīm* once stood directly beside a wall of the Ka‘ba, but the second caliph moved it further away (where it remains today). See Bayhaqī, *Dalā’il al-nubuwwa wa-ma‘rifat aḥwāl šāḥib al-sharī‘a* (Beirut: 1985), 2:63; Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘aẓīm* (Beirut: 2003), 1:226-227; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘aẓīm* (Beirut: 1993), 1:176; *Kitāb Sulaym*, p. 225. See also Nebil Husayn, “Scepticism and Uncontested History: A Review Article” *Journal of Shi‘a Islamic Studies* 7, no. 4 (2014), pp. 395-396.

⁸ M. Kister, “On the Papyrus of Wahb b. Munabbih,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 37, no. 3 (1974), pp. 560-563.

Companions of the Prophet obeyed the first three caliphs on an issue, ‘Alī and his family would occasionally maintain a divergent opinion.⁹ Shī‘ī writers emphasized this motif to the extent that it appeared ‘Alī never agreed with the actions of other caliphs, but such an image does not fully capture his portrayal in the literary sources. Even if one assumed that Twelver Shī‘ī law and ethics actually reflected the opinions of ‘Alī, they frequently converged with Sunnism and displayed too many similarities to the heritage of Companions to warrant the claim that ‘Alī *always* disagreed with others.

How did proto-Sunnīs react to Umayyad-era portrayals of ‘Alī as a dissident? I argue that *naṣb* (anti-‘Alid sentiment) and *tashayyu* (pro-‘Alid sentiment)¹⁰ prominently stood against each other as currents within early Sunnism, always in conflict both politically and intellectually. Anti-‘Alids considered ‘Alī to be the worst calamity to befall the community, while his partisans considered him a peerless and charismatic leader. A third group consisted of Muslims who were ambivalent about ‘Alī’s personality and viewed him as a Companion no different from other Companions of the Prophet. ‘Alī was liable to mistakes, but he was not

⁹ For discussions regarding ‘Alī’s views on the caliphate and the Prophet’s estates, see below, ch. 2. For the divergent opinions of ‘Alī and his family on the origin of the *adhān*, the phrase “come to the best of works,” *sahm dhi’l-qurba*, the waiting period of widow who is pregnant, and certain rituals related to the pilgrimage, see Abū Ya‘lā al-Mawṣilī, *Musnad Abī Ya‘lā al-Mawṣilī* (Damascus: 1984), 5:123-124; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad wa-bi-hāmishihi muntakhab Kanz al-‘ummāl fī sunan al-aqwāl wa’l-a‘māl* (Beirut: 1969), 1:135; Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā* (Beirut: 1999), 1:425; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shayba fī al-aḥādīth wa’l-āthār*, ed. Laḥḥām (Beirut: 1989), 1:244, 3:342, 374, 393-394, 4:341; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān bi-tartīb Ibn Balbān* (Beirut: 1993), 11:155-156; Ibn Shāhīn, *Nāsikh al-ḥadīth wa-mansūkhuh*, ed. ‘Alī (Beirut: 1999), pp. 272-275.

¹⁰ lit. “inclining to Shī‘ism”.

evil. This middle ground between warring factions eventually became the hallmark of Sunnism, where ‘Alī became a nondescript personality amongst many righteous peers.

Various Sunnī and Shī‘ī sources have depicted ‘Alī's kin, close friends in Medina, and disciples in Kūfa as the earliest group of individuals that championed his views and resolutely followed them despite their divergence from normative practice. This pro-‘Alid faction generally believed that the community had wronged ‘Alī in rebelling against him as caliph, while some considered him the rightful heir of the Prophet. Shī‘ism eventually encompassed the sentiments of the latter group and developed its own literary tradition that embellished (sometimes clearly ahistorical) anecdotes in which ‘Alī would display his superior wisdom at the expense of the first three caliphs.¹¹ The motif, however, exists implicitly in Sunnī sources as well.¹² Chapters one and two discuss the beliefs of *ḥadīth* transmitters who venerated ‘Alī before his official acceptance in Sunnism centuries later through an analysis of Sunnī biographical dictionaries, pro-‘Alid *ḥadīth* and their reception in *ḥadīth* commentaries. Based on *ḥadīth* attributed to the Prophet and his Household, some transmitters in the Sunnī *ḥadīth* corpus considered ‘Alī to have been superior to all of his predecessors to the caliphate.

Theological, historical, and biographical literature all mention individuals and groups who

¹¹ For example, see Ibn Shahrāshūb, *Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib* (Qum: 1959), 2:178-194.

¹² For example, see Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ed. al-Laḥḥām (Beirut: 1990), 2:339; Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-ṣaḥīḥayn wa bi-dhaylihi al-Talkhīṣ* (Beirut: 1986), 1:457; Khuwārizmī, *al-Manāqib* (Qum: 1993), pp.80-81, 95-96, 99-101.

believed in the superiority of ‘Alī (*tafḍīl ‘Alī*) after the Prophet in Shī‘ī and non-Shī‘ī circles. For example, members of his own clan (the Hāshimids), a number of Companions, and Kūfāns who fought for him, all appear as proponents of *tafḍīl ‘Alī* in various genres of Sunnī literature.¹³ Later Mu‘tazilī and Sufi scholars became proponents of *tafḍīl ‘Alī* as well. It is frequently unclear whether this belief was purely spiritual, political or both. Nonetheless, chapter two attempts to document those who maintained *tafḍīl ‘Alī* within and according to the Sunnī intellectual tradition. Chapter two also surveys the ways in which Sunnīs reinterpreted *ḥadīth* about ‘Alī’s merits to restrict their scope and the degree to which he could potentially be exalted. These efforts served to render reports about ‘Alī’s merits and his conduct after the Prophet’s death innocuous in arguments about the superiority of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān to him.

Chapter three reviews the intellectual and political history of anti-‘Alid sentiment (*naṣb*) before its suppression and virtual extinction in the Sunnī community. A large number of Muslims across various cities seem to have despised the personality of ‘Alī and considered him to have been evil. Likewise, these Muslims condemned those who cherished the memory of ‘Alī as heretics. Influential *ḥadīth* scholars of the third century, like Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241/855), are portrayed as publicly expressing their discontent with peers and predecessors

¹³ See below, ch. 1, n. 145-149.

who displayed anti-‘Alid sentiment.¹⁴ The formation of Sunnism as a social and intellectual tradition seems to have encouraged the condemnation of both eccentric pro-‘Alid and anti-‘Alid views. Each chapter in this dissertation provides evidence of this among scholars of *ḥadīth* and its transmission.

Chapter four presents a few case studies on Companions of the Prophet and other early Muslims who were portrayed as anti-‘Alids. A commitment to the belief in the righteousness of Companions played an important role in the reception of anti-‘Alid *ḥadīth* in Sunnī Islam. Not only was it an incentive for scholars to reject or charitably reinterpret texts that disparaged ‘Alī, but also those that portrayed other Companions despising him. Chapters three and four also explore cases in which scholars concerned with discrediting the claims of Shī‘ism have been criticized by their Sunnī co-religionists for sometimes displaying anti-‘Alid sentiment in the course of their work.

The concluding chapter discusses the rehabilitation of ‘Alī’s image in the Sunnī *ḥadīth* corpus by primarily surveying the methods scholars utilized to selectively appropriate anti-‘Alid reports. The pro-‘Alid (and Shī‘ī) image of ‘Alī as an impeccable saint is tempered by these reports which portrayed him as sinful or frequently mistaken. Sunnī efforts to construct an image of ‘Alī that differed from Shī‘ī and anti-‘Alid circles can be considered successful.

After three centuries of contestation, Sunnism universally came to value ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib as no

¹⁴ See below, ch. 1, section I.C.

less than a knowledgeable Companion, brave warrior, and the fourth Rightly-Guided Caliph. Most Sunnīs subsequently understood the succession of Rightly-Guided Caliphs (*al-khulafā' al-rāshidūn*) to symbolically indicate their spiritual ranks in the sight of God. 'Alī could not have obtained the caliphate before 'Uthmān or 'Umar before Abū Bakr since God had ensured that those with most merit ruled first. However, beyond this simple picture lies an intense history of debate between Muslims inside and outside of the Sunnī community.¹⁵

As I previously mentioned, I do not attempt to provide a definitive narrative of the life of 'Alī or judge the historicity of the reports utilized in this study. The historicity of accounts describing events from the life of the Prophet and his Companions, including the personality of 'Alī, has been subject to vigorous debate amongst academics. Jonathan Brown and other scholars have accurately described many of the tensions and methodologies in utilizing classical Muslim historiography and *ḥadīth* as sources for understanding history.¹⁶ The tendency of pro-'Alid Sunnī and Shī'ī writers to exalt 'Alī or, conversely, 'Uthmānīs to laud 'Alī's political rivals would certainly problematize efforts to reach an "objective" historical description of events. However, this author views authoritative claims to "objective" historical truth regarding the earliest periods of Islamic history with skepticism and considers

¹⁵ For an excellent study of debates regarding spiritual precedence, merit and their relationship to selecting the Prophet's successor in Sunnī-Shī'ī debates about Abū Bakr and 'Alī, see Afsaruddin, *Excellence and Precedence: medieval Islamic discourse on legitimate leadership* (Leiden; Boston: 2002).

¹⁶ Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's legacy in the medieval and modern world* (Oxford: 2009), pp. 197-275; Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins: the beginnings of Islamic historical writing* (Princeton N.J.: 1998); Noth and Conrad, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: a source-critical study* (Princeton, N.J.: 1994).

such a pursuit a chimera.¹⁷ A comparative reading of the past may occasionally yield information when the points of agreement between various sources with mutually antagonistic views are emphasized.¹⁸ However, the possibility of opposing factions simply affirming shared cultural myths still engenders doubt in such historical kernels and the historiographical enterprise in general.¹⁹ Humans cannot transcend the agency of other humans to understand the past when relying upon their memories, narrative techniques, and interpretations of right and wrong. Thus, modern historians of Islam have begun to utilize documentary evidence such as coins, Arabic papyri, and ancient inscriptions on mountains and tombstones to check and supplement literary sources.²⁰

The work of A. Barzegar, T. El-Hibri, and E. Petersen reflects a recent and important turn away from the study of Muslim historiography solely within the context of debates regarding historicity.²¹ This study will utilize Barzegar's methodological approach, which in summary,

¹⁷ For references to studies which understand historical narratives as a particular type of cultural memory, see Wolf Kansteiner, "Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies," *History and Theory* 41, no. 2 (2002), p. 184.

¹⁸ Donner, *Narratives*, pp. 25-31, 138-41, 285-90; Nebil Husayn, "Scepticism and Uncontested History: A Review Article," *Journal of Shi'a Islamic Studies* 7, no. 4 (2014): 385-409; Behnam Sadeghi and Uwe Bergmann, "The Codex of a Companion of the Prophet and the Qurān of the Prophet," *Arabica* 57, no. 4 (2010), pp. 364-366 and fn. 35.

¹⁹ Noa Gedi and Yigal Elam, "Collective Memory — What Is It?," *History and Memory* 8, no. 1 (1996/04/01): 30-50.

²⁰ M. S. M Saifullah and 'Abdullah David, "The Codex of a Companion of the Prophet and the Qurān of the Prophet," *Islamic Awareness*, www.islamic-awareness.org/History/Islam/Inscriptions/earlyislam.html (accessed May 3, 2014).

²¹ Abbas Barzegar, "Remembering Community: Historical Narrative in the Formation of Sunni Islam" (Emory University, Ph.D., 2010); El-Hibri, *Parable and Politics in Early Islamic History the Rashidun Caliphs* (New York: 2010); Petersen, *Alī and Mu'āwiya in early Arabic tradition: studies on the genesis and growth of Islamic historical writing until the end of the ninth century* (Copenhagen: 1964).

analyzes *ḥadīth* and Muslim historiography as attempts to produce collective identities and historical narratives that validate them.²² To what extent those narratives can reflect historical reality is a debate relegated to other historians who wish to pursue them. The literary analysis of such texts, however, provides rich information regarding the beliefs of those agents who produced such narratives. One can also comment on the social and intellectual history of those who shared in the authorial enterprise of *ḥadīth* through biographical dictionaries. In addition to prosopographical details, biographical entries show the reader how later *ḥadīth* specialists negotiated the identity and contributions of controversial predecessors in the community. Thus, the reports of Sayf ibn ‘Umar al-Tamīmī (d. ca. 180/796) about the caliphate of ‘Alī are not analyzed to better understand ‘Alī, but the methods which the *‘Uthmāniyya* in second-century Kūfa narrated early political conflicts and judged the characters of ‘Alī, his disciples, and his rivals.

When a *ḥadīth* appears in multiple collections, a comparison of the variants can also provide information about the sensibilities of early Muslim historians. For example, when one documents the transmission and reception of a report about a legal dispute involving ‘Alī across multiple sources, it quickly becomes apparent which compilers frequently made use of their editorial privilege by censoring material they considered objectionable. For example, Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl al-Bukhārī (d. 256/869), who compiled the most revered collection of

²² Barzegar, “Remembering Community,” pp. 19-43.

canonical *ḥadīth* in the Sunnī tradition,²³ was strongly inclined to omit dialogue that his predecessors and contemporaries preserved. According to the canonical collection of Muslim (d. 261/874), the second caliph criticized ‘Alī for viewing him and Abū Bakr as sinful and deceitful, but in al-Bukhārī’s collection, ‘Alī is criticized for vaguely claiming “this and that” (*kadhā wa-kadhā*).²⁴ ‘Alī’s affront to the honor of the first and second caliphs is omitted. Even if respected proto-Sunnī transmitters of the previous century accepted the historicity of this event, al-Bukhārī was careful not to include material that vindicated Shī‘ī sentiments about the first two caliphs or ‘Alī. Thus, the case studies in chapters two and four demonstrate the important role the editorial enterprise played in constructing orthodoxy in the third century.

Academia once affirmed the particular historical vision of Sunnī *ḥadīth* specialists as “orthodox,” unbiased or “neutral.” Utilizing the same Sunnī hegemonic worldview, pro-‘Alid reports were automatically suspect, biased and labeled as Shī‘ī contributions. For example, in his study of interpretations of a Qur’ānic verse (Q33:33) regarding the Prophet’s family, Moshe Sharon characterizes ‘Uthmānī (and possibly Khārijite) reports as “exegetically neutral” in contrast to the pro-‘Alid and Hāshimid reports that displayed “political and factional undertones.”²⁵ Although the pro-‘Alid reports eventually entered Sunnī canonical *ḥadīth*

²³ See Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhārī and Muslim: The Formation and Function of the Sunnī Ḥadīth Canon* (Leiden; Boston: 2007).

²⁴ See below, ch. 2, section II.A.

²⁵ Moshe Sharon, “Ahl al-bayt—People of the House,” *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 8, (1986), pp. 174-175. Many of the anti-‘Alid reports are transmitted on the authority of ‘Ikrama, the client of ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās who

collections, the anti-‘Alid reports claimed the verse had nothing to do with ‘Alī and his family.²⁶

The anti-‘Alid reports were in fact polemical, ‘Uthmānī rebuttals of parallel reports that understood the verse as a proof-text for the purity of Fāṭima, the daughter of the Prophet, and her household. Neither ‘Uthmānī nor pro-‘Alid reports can be described as possessing neutrality when they fundamentally represent cases of scriptural hermeneutics and the exaltation of saints in competing communities. Barzegar writes:

“Historical narration, that is, any speech act that lays claim towards the recollection [of] past events, contains a moralizing impulse and produces a legitimating function, because it posits one interpretation over and against another. Even in its singularity, a solitary historical account is always part of a debate.”²⁷

Thus, a narrative about the past can always “be read as an argument between groups.”²⁸

The ethos of a community is built upon myth-making and story-telling. A representative of any community holds himself accountable in narrating its view of the past. Although the collective memory of a community is also referred to as “metanarrative” and “myth,” “myth” does not necessarily refer to the fantastic or false.²⁹ Rather, myth is “ideology in narrative form.”³⁰

reportedly became a Khārijite, see Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq* (Beirut: 1995), 41:120.

²⁶ Fīrūzābādī, *Faḍā’il al-khamsa min al-ṣiḥāḥ al-sitta wa-ghayrihā min al-kutub al-mu’tabara ‘inda ahl al-sunna wa-l-jamā’a*, 3rd ed. (Beirut: 1973), 1:224-243; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘aẓīm*, 3:491-2; Muslim, *al-Jāmi’ al-ṣaḥīh* (Beirut: 1974), 7:130.

²⁷ Barzegar, “Remembering Community,” p. 25.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Barzegar, “Remembering Community,” p. 26; Gedi and Elam, “Collective Memory — What Is It?”.

³⁰ Barzegar, “Remembering Community,” p. 26; Lincoln, *Theorizing Myth* (Chicago: 1999), p. 147.

Thus, one must understand historical reporting as a discursive tradition that gradually produces communities through the articulation and transmission of their ideologies. In Muslim historiography and *ḥadīth*, competing sub-communities argued their narratives of the past through agents who eulogized certain predecessors, while explicitly or implicitly discrediting their rivals. Through a few case studies, this dissertation analyzes the methods which Sunnī scholarship utilized to contest the image of ‘Alī in theological, legal, historical, biographical and *ḥadīth* literature.

This investigation lies at the intersection of Sunnī concepts of orthodoxy, *ḥadīth*, Shī‘ism, identity formation, and the discipline of *al-jarḥ wa’l-ta’dīl*. Since the crystallization of Sunnism in the fifth century, debates regarding the precedence of ‘Alī in Sunnī theology have largely subsided. Although there is some evidence of overt anti-‘Alid sentiment (*naṣb*) at the turn of the fourth century in the mob attack on Aḥmad b. Shu‘ayb al-Nasā’ī (d. 303/915), it does not reappear in subsequent centuries. The suppression of *naṣb* in the Sunnī community coincides with efforts to promote a four-caliph theory in Sunnism that considered ‘Alī rightly-guided after centuries of defamation in many regions. The impact of the four-caliph theory on the memory of ‘Alī is discussed in the conclusion. The appendices offer the reader excerpts of primary texts utilized in this study in English translation.

CHAPTER 1. A conceptual history of pro-‘Alid sentiment

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/661) occupies an enigmatic place in the collective memory of the Muslim community.³¹ In addition to his partisans, medieval scholars who did not possess any particular devotion to the personage of ‘Alī have largely portrayed him as an intensely devout, valiant, tragic hero and member of the Prophet Muḥammad’s Household (*ahl al-bayt*). The Prophet raised ‘Alī in his own home and married his daughter Fāṭima to him. ‘Alī distinguished himself as an early convert, a fierce warrior, and a wise judge. His assassination as the fourth caliph of the community further added the aura of martyrdom to his image. Numerous specialists in the Sunnī *ḥadīth* tradition throughout history have devoted chapters and even voluminous works to enumerating the distinctions of ‘Alī and his family.³² In addition to the veneration of ‘Alī in *ḥadīth* literature, numerous spiritual and intellectual traditions in Islam derived their ethos primarily from an allegiance to ‘Alī.³³ In fact, for the purposes of this study, it would be best to identify a trans-sectarian, pro-‘Alid sentiment that recognized both reverence for the Household and sometimes their succession to the Prophet

³¹ For references to academic studies on the historical ‘Alī, see Asad Ahmed, “Between the Acts: The Hijazi Elite and the Internal Politics of the Umayyad and Early Abbasid Empires” (Princeton University, Ph.D., 2007), p. 278.

³² For relevant sources, see Fīrūzābādī, *Faḍā’il al-khamsa* and its bibliography.

³³ In addition to all Shī‘ī sects one may mention some Sufi brotherhoods with a strong devotion to ‘Alī and the role of ‘Alī in Persian poetry. See Daftary, *Ismailis in Medieval Muslim Societies* (London: 2005), pp. 183-203; Seyyed Hossein Nasr, “Shī‘ism and Sufism: Their Relationship in Essence and in History,” *Religious Studies* 6, no. 3 (1970): 229-242; Habibeh Rahim, “Perfection Manifested: ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib’s image in classical Persian and modern Indian Muslim poetry” (Harvard University, Ph.D., 1989); Riza Yildirim, “Shī‘itisation of the Futuwwa Tradition in the Fifteenth Century,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 1 (2013): 53-70.

in spiritual authority. Pro-‘Alid sentiment was described as *al-mayl ilā ‘Alī* (“inclining toward ‘Alī”) and *tashayyu’* (lit. “inclining to Shī‘ism”) in Sunnī biographical literature.³⁴ Some pro-‘Alid Sunnīs believed ‘Alī to have occupied a special spiritual rank due to esoteric knowledge he received directly from the Prophet and later transmitted to his sons al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn.³⁵ Despite ‘Alī’s central prominence, or at the very least, positive standing in most Muslim communities, some historically viewed him with contempt. The competing positive and negative assessments of ‘Alī in the Sunnī community are described in the chapters below.

Literature Review

A number of scholars have investigated the presence of *ḥadīth* transmitters described as possessing some sort of pro-‘Alid sentiment or *tashayyu’* in Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections. They include Muhammad ibn ‘Aqīl al-‘Alawī, Muḥsin al-Amīn, and Maḥmūd al-Baghdādī, Rasūl Ja‘fariyān, ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn, and Muḥammad Ja‘far al-Ṭabasī.³⁶ These authors have

³⁴ For *mayl ilā ‘Alī*, see Ibn Ḥazm, *Kitāb al-Fiṣal fī al-milal wa’l-ahwā’ wa’l-niḥal* (Cairo: 1904), 4:99; Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyya al-kubrā* (Cairo: 1964), 4:167. For a survey of literature describing *tashayyu’* and relevant references, see below, section II, III, and ch. 1, appendix.

³⁵ For these Sunnīs ‘Alī’s role as “*mawlā* of the believers” after the Prophet was differentiated from the caliphate, which was a succession in governance and military command. See Ibn Ṭalḥa al-Naṣībī, *Maṭālib al-sa’ūl fī manāqib Āl al-Rasūl*, ed. ‘Aṭīyah (Beirut: 2000), pp. 28-31. See also Nasr, “Shī‘ism and Sufism,” pp. 231-236; Tahir-ul-Qadri, *The Ghadīr Declaration* (Lahore: 2002), pp. 5-16.

³⁶ Amīn, *A’yān al-Shī‘a* (Beirut: 1983); Maḥmūd Baghdādī, “Min a’lām al-thiqāt,” *Risālat al-Taqrīb* 3, no. 10 (1996): 202-231; Ibn ‘Aqīl, *al-‘Atb al-jamīl ‘alā ahl al-jarḥ wa’l-ta’dīl*, ed. al-Wardānī (Cairo: n.d.), pp. 45-74; Ja‘fariyān, *al-Shī‘a fī Īrān: dirāsa ta’rīkhiyya min al-bidāya ḥattā al-qarn al-tāsi’ al-hijrī* (Mashhad: 1999), pp. 416-423; Sharaf al-Dīn, *al-Murāja‘āt* (Beirut: 1982), pp. 105-182; Ṭabasī, *Rijāl al-shī‘a fī asānīd al-sunna: dirāsa tafṣīliyya ḥawla rijāl al-shī‘a fī asānīd al-kutub al-sitta* (Qum: 2000). For a number of Companions who were remembered for strongly pro-‘Alid inclinations, see Sharaf al-Dīn, *al-Fuṣūl al-muhimma fī ta’līf al-a’imma* (Tehran: 1964), pp. 189-200. The World Forum for Solidarity Between Islamic Schools of Thought has published additional articles by al-Baghdādī and its own

combed Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections and biographical dictionaries to identify both pro-‘Alid *ḥadīth* and their transmitters as part of an apologia to uphold pro-‘Alid sentiment as an early, prevalent, and acceptable persuasion in the early Muslim and specifically proto-Sunnī community. Such an argument contradicts the worldview of many Sunnī *ḥadīth* specialists (in the past and in modernity) who considered *tashayyu’* a reprehensible quality that Companions and their students never possessed.³⁷ The aforementioned authors all identified as Shī‘ī except for Ibn ‘Aqīl al-‘Alawī who studied in Shāfi‘ī circles and wrote as an inheritor of the Sunnī tradition in spite of his staunchly pro-‘Alid proclivities. These Shī‘ī authors have argued that some transmitters in the earliest centuries of Islamic history were in fact Shī‘īs who were renowned in the Sunnī community for their piety, knowledge and reliability. In their opinion, later Sunnī animosity for all things related to Shī‘ism is unfounded and does not accurately reflect the attitude of early Sunnī scholarship. There are indications that a few transmitters that appear in Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections may have identified as members of an insular Shī‘ī community.³⁸ One can only speculate the circumstances that led to their inclusion in Sunnī *ḥadīth* chains of transmission, which I will attempt below. Identifying sectarian boundaries in

research on the issue, see *Risālat al-Taqrīb*, vol. 2 no. 7-8 and vol. 3 no. 9.

³⁷ Bayhaqī, *al-I‘tiqād wa’l-hidāya ilā sabīl al-rashād* (Beirut: 1984), 1:352ff, 369; Ibn Bāz, *Majmū‘ fatāwā wa-maḳālāt mutanawwi’a: al-tawḥīd wa-mā yalḥaqu bi-hi* (Riyadh: 1997), 3:324-5; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya* (Beirut: 1988), 6:333; Ibn Taymiyya, *Minḥāj al-sunna al-nabawiyya*, ed. Sālim ([Riyadh]: 1986), 1:518-20; Idem, *Majmū‘ fatāwā shaykh al-Islām Aḥmad ibn Taymiyya*, ed. Qāsim (Medina: 1995), 4:421; Shaykh, *‘Aqīdat ahl al-sunna wa’l-jamā’a fī al-ṣaḥāba al-kirām raḍīya Allāh ta’ālā ‘anhum* (Medina: 2009), 1:285-90.

³⁸ For a study of some of these figures, see Dann, “Contested Boundaries: The Reception of Shī‘ite Narrators in the Sunnī Hadith Tradition”.

eras in which they may not have existed and drawing conclusions from fragmentary data reflect two difficulties in analyzing the views of Muslims who lived before the fourth century. Nonetheless, in chapter two, I will discuss the lives of some prominent pro-Alid Muslims throughout Islamic history and contrast them to their Shī'ī peers when possible to accentuate the lines of demarcation. Clarifying the existence of pro-Alid claimants in non-Shī'ī circles and understanding their views is the purpose of this chapter.

In this study, Shī'īs are primarily identified when they appear to be proponents of *rafḍ* (lit. 'to reject'), the rejection of Abū Bakr, 'Umar and all authorities other than 'Alī and his household. A review of relevant biographical dictionaries and *ḥadīth* collections reveal that proponents of *rafḍ* were usually avoided in proto-Sunnī circles. It seems that by the fourth century, *rafḍ* had become a necessary requisite to Shī'ism which had crystalized into Jārūdī and Imāmī movements that criticized and split from other Muslims who accepted non-'Alid authorities after the Prophet. Al-Shaykh al-Mufīd (d. 413/1022) defined Shī'ism as the acceptance of 'Alī as the direct successor and Imam after the Prophet. He similarly concluded that only Jārūdīs and Imāmīs truly qualified as Shī'ī.³⁹ However, al-Najāshī (d. 450/1058-9) quoted Abān ibn Taghlib (d. 141/758) as describing early Shī'ism in the following methodological terms:

³⁹ Mufīd, *Kitāb Awā'il al-maqālāt fī al-madhāhib wa-'l-mukhtārāt* (Beirut: 1993), pp. 34-37.

“When people disagree upon [the conduct of] the Prophet, the Shī‘a are those who follow the opinion of ‘Alī, when people disagree upon [the conduct of] ‘Alī, they follow the opinion of Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad.”⁴⁰

Abān’s definition potentially expands and restricts a working definition of Shī‘ism in the Umayyad period. While a proponent of *rafḍ* would not have relied upon the larger Muslim community to understand ritual law or prophetic practice, Abān’s definition implied that early Shī‘is may have followed their non-Shī‘ī co-religionists in these matters.⁴¹ Their Shī‘ism only became manifest when Muslims disagreed upon prophetic practice. Such a definition could potentially expand Shī‘ism to include Ibn ‘Abbās, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Layla (d. 83/702), ‘Abīda al-Salmānī (d. 72/691-2) and other proto-Sunnī Kūfan jurists who would reportedly follow the opinion of ‘Alī when he disagreed with other Companions.⁴² However, Abān’s definition also included deference to Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq, which effectively excluded most (but not all) proto-Sunnīs and Zaydīs.

Reports from Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam (d. 179/795-6) and Ibn al-Rāwandī (active third/ninth century) about early Shī‘ism further complicate attempts to define it by way of *rafḍ*. In a work attributed to Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1025), Hishām is quoted as remarking:

⁴⁰ Najāshī, *Rijāl al-Najāshī = Fihrist asmā’ muṣannifi al-shī‘a* (Qum: 1986), p. 12.

⁴¹ A report from al-Ṣādiq similarly states this about Shī‘is, see ‘Ayyāshī, *Kitāb al-Tafsīr*, ed. al-Maḥallātī (Qum: 1961), 1:252-3; Kulaynī, *al-Uṣūl min al-Kāfi*, 2:20. See also Modarressi, *Crisis and Consolidation in the formative period of Shi‘ite Islam* (Princeton: 1993), p. 4.

⁴² Baghdādī, *Kitāb Uṣūl al-dīn* (Istanbul: 1928), p. 311; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf* (Beirut: 1977), 2:100. Some of these Kūfan jurists could alternatively be described as “centrists,” see Dann, “Contested Boundaries: The Reception of Shi‘ite Narrators in the Sunnī Hadith Tradition,” pp. 105-110.

“I met Shī‘a of the first generation and they considered themselves followers of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān. They would defend their actions and say, ‘these [three caliphs] did not prevent the Commander of the Faithful from obtaining his rightful office; rather it was the hypocrites which the Qur’ān would censure. These [three caliphs] saw that after ‘Alī, they were the most suitable candidates for leadership, so they legitimately entered office.’ Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam also explained, ‘Some [Shī‘īs] also believed that when the *waṣī*, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, saw the hypocrites had successfully displaced him from his rightful station, he gave Abū Bakr precedence and temporarily made him caliph in his place until [‘Alī] could find the opportunity to take office.’ Hishām continued, ‘cowardice from disassociating from Abū Bakr ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, the *muhājirūn* and the *anṣār* caused [these Shī‘īs] to concoct all of these justifications. If [these Shī‘īs] knew them as well as I know them, they would have had no qualms in disassociating from them.”⁴³

Layth ibn Abī Sulaym (d. 143/760) also reportedly met early Kūfan Shī‘īs who considered Abū Bakr and ‘Umar superior to ‘Alī.⁴⁴ Although the two should be disambiguated, biographical sources regularly associate love and devotion to ‘Alī with Shī‘ism. It seems the vast majority of those described as possessing *al-tashayyu‘* in Sunnī biographical traditions were individuals who articulated their pro-‘Alid sentiment in various ways without upholding *rafḍ*. For example, Sharīk ibn ‘Abd Allāh (d. 173/793), a famous Kūfan jurist venerated in the Sunnism, staunchly defended the superiority of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar to ‘Alī, but apparently considered himself Shī‘ī.⁴⁵ The idiosyncrasies of scholars, the nature of our sources and even the gradual development of sectarian identities greatly hinder categorizing the sect to which

⁴³ ‘Abd al-Jabbār (attrib.), *Tathbīt dalā’il al-nubuwwa* (Cairo: 2006), 1:224-5 (where the author cites Ibn al-Rāwandī’s K. al-Imāma as a second source), 2:448. Ibn al-Rāwandī attests to the existence of some Shī‘īs who charitably viewed the first three caliphs in contrast to the views of Hishām in his *Faḍīḥat al-Mu’tazila*, see Khayyāt, *Kitāb al-Intiṣār wa-l-radd ‘alā Ibn al-Rāwandī al-mulḥid*, ed. Nyberg (Cairo: 1925), p. 138.

⁴⁴ Dhahabī, *Siyar a’lām al-nubalā’* (Beirut: 1993), 6:182.

⁴⁵ ‘Abd al-Jabbār (attrib.), *Tathbīt dalā’il al-nubuwwa*, 1:63; Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 1:13, 2:86.

some transmitters subscribed. In view of these difficulties, the following section attempts to identify the characteristics of pro-‘Alid sentiment in Sunnī Islam below.

I. What is pro-‘Alid sentiment in the earliest periods?

Statements about *ḥadīth* transmitters and early ascetics possessing *tashayyu‘* in the first and second centuries should largely be interpreted to mean that they were pro-‘Alid in some way. A. Afsaruddin, P. Crone, I. Goldziher, M. Hodgson, W. Madelung, and M. Qasim Zaman have clarified that those who upheld the legitimacy of ‘Alī’s caliphate or the spiritual precedence of his family opposed a hostile cultural climate in which the majority of public figures subscribed to pro-Umayyad, pro-Abbasid or three-caliph worldviews.⁴⁶ Thus, references to individuals as “Shī‘ī” (*min shī‘at ‘Alī*) because they simply upheld the legitimacy of ‘Alī’s caliphate or were soldiers in his army⁴⁷ should not confuse the researcher. These individuals were identified as such in contrast to pro-Umayyads and the ‘*Uthmāniyya* (*min shī‘at ‘Uthmān*) who only upheld the legacy of the first three caliphs, and frequently, ‘Ā’isha and the Zubayrids.⁴⁸ There have been numerous studies on the popularity of ‘Uthmānī sentiment in

⁴⁶ E.I.², s.v. “Imāma” (W. Madelung); “‘Uthmāniyya” (P. Crone); Afsaruddin, *Excellence*, pp. 14-23; Crone, *God’s Rule: Government and Islam* (New York: 2004), pp. 20-32; Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, trans. Stern (Chicago: 1973), 2:95-120; Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization* (Chicago: 1977), 1:247-267; Zaman, *Religion and Politics Under the Early ‘Abbāsids: The Emergence of the Proto-Sunnī Elite* (Leiden: 1997), pp. 49-63, 167ff.

⁴⁷ Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 39:495-6; Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 1:13, 4:132.

⁴⁸ For references to *shī‘at ‘Uthmān*, see Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 2:453; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 39:495; Ibn A’tham al-Kūfī, *Kitāb al-Futūḥ* (Beirut: 1991), 4:229. The ‘*Uthmāniyya* in the Umayyad period can be divided between two groups, those who followed ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Umar, ‘Usāma b. Zayd and other Companions who were non-confrontational and refused to join the civil wars of ‘Alī. The other, more militant wing, consisted of those who supported ‘Ā’isha at the Battle of the Camel and the Zubayrid caliphate.

the proto-Sunnī community.⁴⁹ Biographical dictionaries and works of history refer to the conflict between the armies of ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyā ibn Abī Sufyān (r. 41-60/661-680) as one between *shī‘at ‘Alī* and *shī‘at ‘Uthmān*. According to literary sources, people described themselves as such in the first century.⁵⁰ The obvious tension that existed amongst Muslims of the first century was that one could not be both. However, when influential *ḥadīth* transmitters reconciled themselves to accepting both ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī as legitimate caliphs in the third century, the traces of the historic conflict between those who upheld the legitimacy of ‘Alī and those who rejected him remained in the literature that they produced. As a result, references to *tashayyyu‘* in Sunnī biographical literature frequently referred to pro-‘Alid sentiment amongst individuals who were considered predecessors in the Sunnī community. These pro-‘Alids generally did not reject the authority of Companions and their students. Pro-‘Alid sentiment amongst such individuals can be described in one of three increasingly zealous ways:

1. This first type of pro-‘Alid sentiment seems to have been the most widespread and enduring in the Sunnī community. First, ‘Alī’s merits (*faḍā’il*) were accepted as authentic. Second, pro-‘Alids upheld the legitimacy of both ‘Alī’s caliphate and his wars with rivals. If the person was a contemporary of ‘Alī, he joined his army. Pro-‘Alids of

⁴⁹ See Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, 2:115-20; Jamāl El-‘Aṭṭār, “The political thought of Al-Jāhīz with special reference to the question of Khilafa (Imamate) : a chronological approach” (University of Edinburgh, 1996), pp. 115-125. and the references listed above.

⁵⁰ See the references above. See also Crone, *God’s Rule*, pp. 26-27; Jafri, *The Origins and Early Development of Shi‘a Islam* (Karachi: 2000), pp. 95-96.

this type were easily identified amongst Sunnīs by their aversion to Mu‘āwiya and any praise of him.⁵¹ Thus, al-Dhahabī described al-Nasā’ī as having *tashayyu‘* that was *qalīl* and showing unwarranted animosity toward ‘Alī’s rivals like Mu‘āwiya and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ.⁵² Most Sunnīs would not be considered pro-‘Alid, but rather non-partisan and universalist in their commitment to all Companions. Non-partisan Sunnīs (discussed in chapter five) venerate ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiya together and do not consider them to have been enemies.⁵³ For Sunnīs in the latter case, ‘Alī’s merits are not particularly more meaningful than the hagiography narrated about other leading Companions. A “non-partisan” commitment to all Companions became a quintessential Sunnī cultural and theological position. Pro-‘Alids, however, felt authentic prophetic reports condemned the person of Mu‘āwiya, who was undoubtedly an enemy of the Prophet and ‘Alī.⁵⁴

2. The individual revered ‘Alī over ‘Uthmān. This sentiment was prominent in Kūfa and a consequence of individuals blaming ‘Uthmān for Umayyad excesses during his reign and the dynasty that ruled after him.
3. The individual believed ‘Alī was superior in merit to Abū Bakr and ‘Umar and achieved a higher spiritual rank than them. Theologians and historians referred to this belief as *tafḍīl ‘Alī*. The superiority of ‘Alī to other Companions was hotly debated in the community during the caliphate of Ma’mūn (r. 198-218/813-833) who publicly

⁵¹ Although it was very possible for an ‘Uthmānī to also possess animosity for Mu‘āwiya and the Umayyads as was exemplified by partisans of the Zubayrids.

⁵² Dhahabī, *Sīyar*, 14:133.

⁵³ Mu‘āwiya is portrayed as revering ‘Alī and never doubting the legitimacy of his caliphate in these types of reports, see Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī bi-sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: [1980]), 13:75; Ibn Ḥazm, *Kitāb al-Fiṣal fī al-mīl wa’l-ahwā’ wa’l-niḥal*, 4:124.

⁵⁴ For example, see Ibn ‘Aqīl, *al-Naṣā’ih al-kāfiya li-man yatawallā Mu‘āwiya wa-yalihi Taqwīyat al-īmān wa-Faṣl al-ḥākīm fī al-nizā’ wa’l-takhāṣum* (Qum: 1992); Mālikī, *Ma’a Sulaymān al-‘Alwān fī Mu‘āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān* (Amman: 2004); Saqqāf, *Zahr al-rayḥān fī al-radd ‘alā Taḥqīq al-bayān: al-ta’aqqub ‘alā mā katabahu Qāsim ibn Nu’aym al-Ṭā’ī ḥawla Ibn Abī Sufyān* (Beirut: 2009).

proclaimed it.

The pro-‘Alid positions above reflect the relatively increasing levels of commitment to ‘Alī that various non-Shī‘īs historically possessed in the community. Sentiment (3) was the staunchest one and upheld by a matrix of authorities revered in the Sunnī, Zaydī, and Imāmī traditions. In the post-formation period of Sunnism and Shī‘ism, it would not be accurate to retroactively refer to proto-Sunnīs who upheld sentiment (3) as “Shī‘ī” when the term came to entail the rejection of non-‘Alid authorities (*rafḍ*). Numerous Twelver Shī‘ī writers have utilized references in Sunnī biographical literature to document early pro-‘Alids and identify some of them as predecessors of the Imāmī community.⁵⁵ Many Kūfans falling under group (1) fought in Ali's army because their tribe had aligned itself with the caliph against the Syrian army. By the Umayyad era, some of these individuals became loyal Umayyads, Zubayrids and Khārijites.⁵⁶ The ascription of Shī‘ism to individuals like Ziyād ibn Abīh,⁵⁷ Yazīd ibn Bābanūs,⁵⁸

⁵⁵ For example, see Sharaf al-Dīn, *al-Fuṣūl al-muḥimma*, pp. 189-200; Idem, *al-Murāja‘āt*, pp. 105-182; Ṭabasī, *Rijāl al-shī‘a fī asānīd al-sunna*.

⁵⁶ Examples include Khālīd ibn al-Mu‘ammar al-Dhuhlī, al-Qa‘qā‘ b. Shawr al-Sadūsī, Shabath b. Rib‘ī, Shimr b. Dhī ‘l-Jawshan, ‘Amr b. Ḥarīth al-Makhzūmī, Ḥijār b. Abjar al-Bakrī, and Muḥammad b. Ash‘ath al-Kindī, see Ibn ‘Asākīr, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 16:205. See also Ḥakīm, *Maqatal Abī ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥusayn ‘alayhi al-salām: min mawrūth ahl al-khilāf* (Qum: 2005), 2:155-203, 216-286.

⁵⁷ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Mizān* (Beirut: 1971), 2:493-4.

⁵⁸ Yazīd is paradoxically described as a Shī‘ī “who fought ‘Alī,” see Bukhārī, *al-Ta’rīkh al-kabīr* (Beirut: 1987), 8:233; Dhahabī, *Mizān al-ītidāl fī naqd al-rijāl* (Beirut: 1963), 4:420. As a Baṣran who seems to only have narrated from ‘Ā’isha it is unlikely that he was a Shī‘ī. It seems he accidentally obtained his reputation as a Shī‘ī from a copyist’s error. The source text may have identified him as an ‘Uthmānī (*min shī‘at ‘Uthmān*), but ‘Uthmān’s name dropped in the transmission of the text. A copyist may have also misread the original text since one source describes him as “one of the seven who fought ‘Alī” (*min al-sab‘a* instead of *min al-shī‘a*). See ‘Uqaylī, *Kitāb al-Ḍu‘afā’ al-kabīr*, ed. Qal‘ajī (Beirut: 1998), 6:123.

and Ḥujr ibn Yazīd al-Kindī,⁵⁹ who possessed no real allegiance to the personage of ‘Alī has added to the ambiguity of the term “Shī‘ī” in Sunnī biographical literature. A number of scholars have affirmed the need to disambiguate those who only fought for ‘Alī at Ṣiffīn from those who maintained a strong allegiance to his house.⁶⁰ For group (3), there is some ambiguity as to whether a person's belief in *tafḍīl* ‘Alī led him to reject the authority of non-‘Alids. In cases where a person believed in *tafḍīl* ‘Alī, but did not reject non-‘Alid contributions, some were integrated into the Sunnī heritage, as Najam Haider has demonstrated with the so-called “Batri” community of second-century Kūfa.⁶¹ In later centuries, some Ḥanafīs and Shāfi‘īs subscribed to *tafḍīl* ‘Alī and enjoyed warm relations with prominent Zaydīs and Imāmīs. They critically engaged and accepted some Shī‘ī arguments about *tafḍīl* ‘Alī while rejecting Shī‘ism.⁶² Proponents of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī are discussed in greater detail in the next chapter. This chapter offers a broad, chronological trajectory of some of the tensions related to the study of pro-‘Alid Sunnism utilizing Sunnī *ḥadīth* literature produced until the eighth century *hijrī*. The following survey attempts to disambiguate pro-‘Alid sentiment from Shī‘ism and document important vocabulary that authors used to possibly differentiate the former from the latter.

⁵⁹ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 3:467.

⁶⁰ Ja‘fariyān, *al-Shī‘a fī Īrān*, pp. 416-421; Kātib, *al-Tashayyu‘ al-siyāsī wa’l-tashayyu‘ al-dīnī* (Beirut: 2009).

⁶¹ See Haider, *The Origins of the Shī‘a: identity, ritual, and sacred space in eighth-century Kūfa* (New York: 2011), pp. 20, 206.

⁶² Ḥanafīs upholding *tafḍīl* ‘Alī include Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Baṣrī (d. 369/980) and Muwaffaq al-Khwārizmī (d. 568/1172). Shāfi‘īs include al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1025) and Ibn Abī al-Hadīd (d. 656/1258). For more, see below, ch. 2.

A. Pro-‘Alid Sentiment in the Second Century

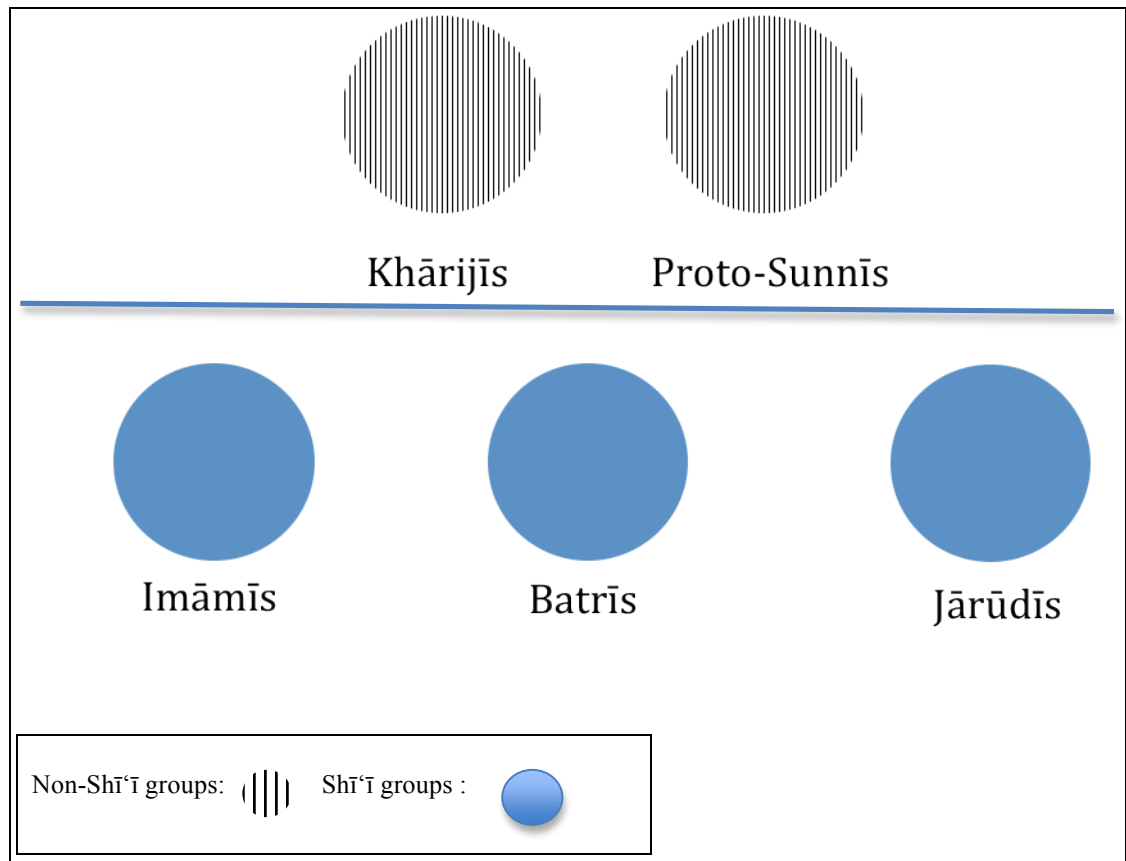
No literary evidence indicates that a group of pro-‘Alids ever referred to themselves as the *Batriyya*. Nonetheless, heresiographies and some Shī‘ī *ḥadīth* referred to a group of pro-‘Alids with this designation.⁶³ Although Batrīs of the second century were identified as Shī‘ī, Najam Haider finds that they did not diverge from the larger proto-Sunnī community in either *ḥadīth* transmission, the practice of legal norms, or mosque visitation.⁶⁴ Haider’s findings suggest that Batrīs may have represented the most zealous pro-‘Alids in proto-Sunnī circles that included those with pro-Umayyad, pro-Zubayrid and quietist sentiments. Haider’s contribution lies in the discovery that these individuals still functioned in the same circles as their non-Shī‘ī peers. Haider’s designation of the group as members of a proto-Sunnī milieu can be considered a possible corrective to previous portrayals of them as an independent and separate sect akin to early Imāmīs and Khārijites.⁶⁵ Haider demonstrates that Kūfans described as “Batrī” were universally recognized as *ḥadīth* transmitters not only amongst later Zaydīs, but also in the Sunnī intellectual tradition.

⁶³ Baghdādī, *al-Farq bayna al-firaq* (Beirut: 1994), pp. 41-42; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār al-jāmi‘a li-durar akhbār al-a‘immat al-aṭḥār* (Beirut: 1983), 37:30-31.

⁶⁴ Haider, *Origins*, pp. 43-46, 90, 126, 133, 175.

⁶⁵ Wilferd Madelung has recently questioned the identification of second-century Batrīs as proto-Sunnīs. Madelung, in agreement with classical heresiographers, prefers to view Batrīs as simply an early Zaydī group. Wilferd Madelung, “The Origins of the Shī‘a: Identity, Ritual, and Sacred Space in Eighth-Century Kūfa, by Najam Haider,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 73, no. 1 (2014/04/01): 175-176.

Figure 1: The Heresiographical Conception of Sectarian Divisions in the Second Century



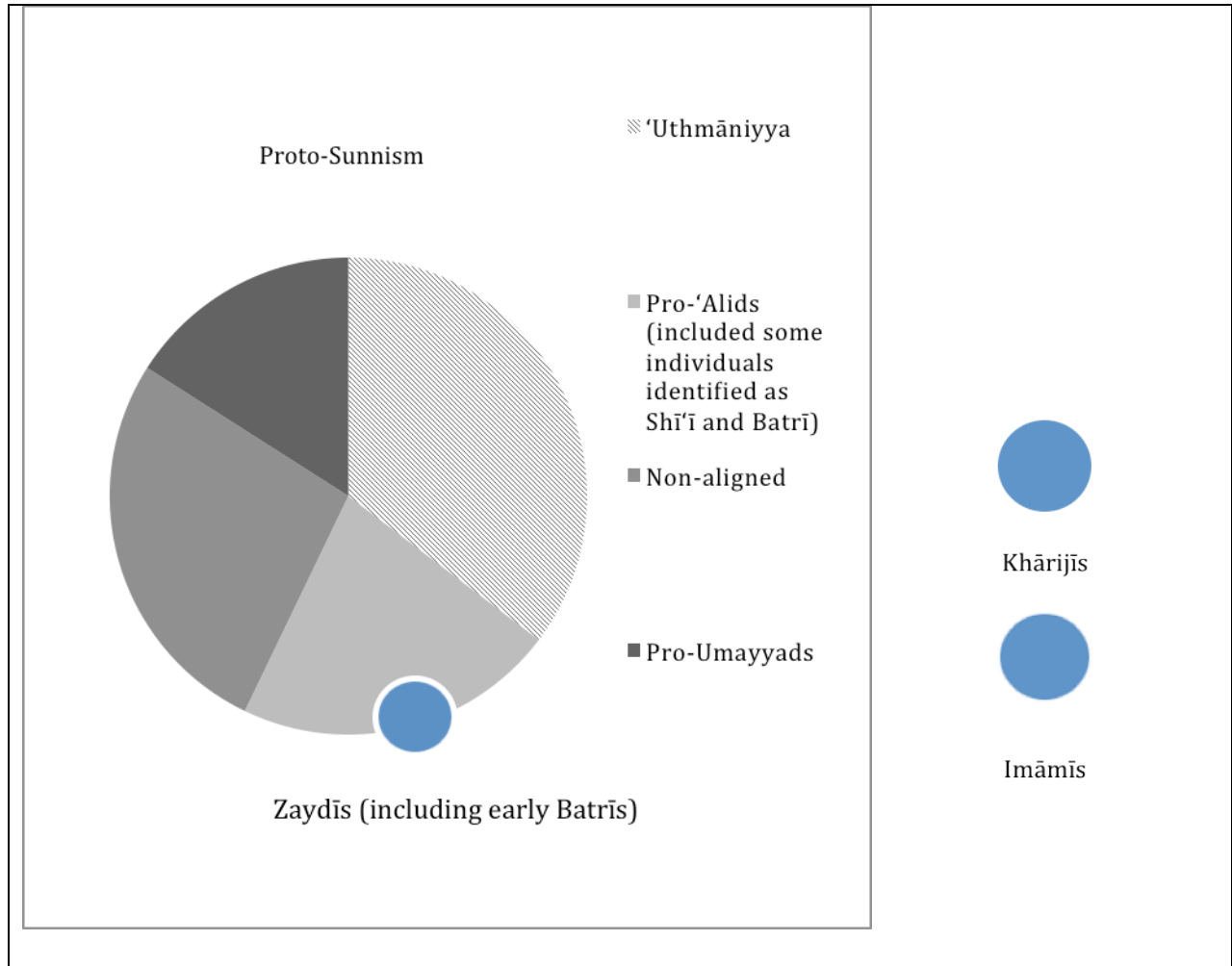


Figure 2 The Second Century

Figure 1 illustrates the tendency of classical heresiographers to characterize early Muslims who venerated 'Alī as Shī'ī and separate them from those who did not. Figure 2 complicates and revises such a narrative by portraying early pro-'Alids as occupying an ambiguous space. It seems the testimony attributed to Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam about early Shī'īs who respected the first three caliphs may have been references to Batrīs or the students of

Sulaymān ibn Jarīr (d. late 2nd/8th century), who shared very similar beliefs.⁶⁶ Biographical texts sometimes identified such individuals as Zaydī or Batrī, but Haider’s research suggests they also functioned as members of a larger community of proto-Sunnīs. By the fourth century, the disappearance of Batrīs and the crystallization of independent Jārūdī and Imāmī communities prompted pro-‘Alids to enter one of three communities.⁶⁷ Those who considered ‘Alids to be their only rightful guides either joined the Jārūdī (Zaydī) or Imāmī communities. Others accepted the normative culture that venerated most Companions, their students and other non-‘Alid jurists and theologians. Some non-Shī‘ī pro-‘Alids became well-respected Sunnī *ḥadīth* specialists, Ḥanafī and Shāfi‘ī jurists, Mu‘tazilī theologians, and Sufi thinkers. Some defended *tafḍīl* ‘Alī, while most did not. Whatever their persuasion pro-‘Alid Sunnīs shared at least three common characteristics with their non-partisan Sunnī peers who venerated all Companions. (1) They considered the first four caliphs to have been legitimate rulers, even if they believed those caliphs made mistakes or were not the best candidates, (2) they did not limit legitimate religious and political authority to the Prophet’s family alone, and (3) they criticized the cultural, theological or legal norms of Zaydīs and Imāmīs of the third and fourth centuries as incorrect.

⁶⁶ For more on Sulaymānīs, see Haider, *Origins*, p. 20.

⁶⁷ Haider notes the Batrī movement’s virtual extinction in the second-century due to individuals either fully reconciling themselves to the ‘Abbāsids (and thus the legitimacy of non-‘Alid caliphs and quietism) or radicalizing and embracing *rafḍ*. Thus, the radicalization of Batrīs caused the genesis of Jārūdīs and the conversion of some to Imāmī Shī‘ism, see *Ibid.*, pp. 192, 204-207.

As Haider has mentioned, heresiographers legitimized their enterprise by portraying Muslims as dividing into over seventy misguided factions and utilizing origin myths to name and describe these so-called sects.⁶⁸ Heresiographers frequently utilized pejorative nicknames to describe Muslims that never self-identified as members of a separate sect. The alleged names of these sects and the beliefs projected on to them sometimes border the absurd and are unverifiable at best. These shadowy groups seem to possess neither a roster of adherents beyond a few names nor an enduring literary tradition in which they elucidate their own views. When the agency to articulate a group's beliefs is only left to rivals who portrayed them as misguided, predestined to hell, and extinct due to divine action, then there is room for skepticism regarding the historicity of such narratives.

An early Shī'ī censured in proto-Sunnī circles may have possessed some of the following characteristics:

- (1) Anecdotes state that the person was part of a group of partisans who swore a second oath to go to war against all of 'Alī's enemies after pledging allegiance to him with the rest of the community.⁶⁹
- (2) The individual claimed 'Alī was the legatee (*waṣī*) of the Prophet.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 12 (n. 36), 24.

⁶⁹ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-ta'rikh* (Beirut: 1965), 3:224; Mufīd, *al-Amālī* (Beirut: 1993), p. 295ff; Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh al-Ṭabarī* = *Ta'rikh al-umam wa'l-mulūk* (Beirut: 1983), 3:494.

⁷⁰ Mīnā', the client of 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf, reportedly considered 'Alī the Prophet's *waṣī*, see Ibn al-Maghāzili, *Manāqib 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib* (Qum: 2005), p. 224. He was accused of extreme Shī'ism (*ghāl fī al-tashayyū'*), see Ibn Ḥajar

(3) The person was dedicated to al-Ḥusayn (and joined his insurrection) or venerated his memory. This group included the *tawwābūn* (“Penitents”) and the followers of Mukhtār b. Abī Ubayd al-Thaqafi.⁷¹

(4) The individual believed only Hāshimids could inherit religious and political authority after the Prophet. Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam and Shī‘īs who disassociated from the first three caliphs after him became influential authorities in Imāmī Shī‘ism. Although only partisans of ‘Alī and his house left an enduring tradition, some Shī‘īs in the second century upheld the imamate of the ‘Abbāsids and other Hāshimids.⁷²

B.Pro-‘Alid Sentiment in the Third Century and *al-jarḥ wa’l-ta’dīl*

The *ḥadīth* of a number of sub-communities (Imāmī, Zaydī, Khārijite, etc.) were already excluded from the collections of the emerging Sunnī community in the third century. It is clear that Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855), Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl al-Bukhārī (d. 256/869), and their successors, despite living in regions with ‘Alids or Mu‘tazilis sparingly narrated from those circles.⁷³ Individuals excluded from proto-Sunnī *ḥadīth* circles were considered

al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb* (Beirut: 1984), 10:354. For further references to ‘Alī as a *waṣī*, see also ‘Askarī, *Ma‘ālim al-madrasatayn*, 1:216-232; Sharaf al-Dīn, *al-Murāja‘āt*, pp. 301-2, 398-407.

⁷¹ For the case of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Sharīk, a partisan of Mukhtār, see Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 5:223. See also Kadi, *al-Kaysāniyya fī al-ta’rīkh wa-l-‘adab* (Beirut: 1974), p. 125 n. 2 (for other examples as well).

⁷² Nāshi’ al-Akbar (attrib.), “Masā’il al-imāma wa muqtaṭifāt min al-kitāb al-awsaṭ fī al-maqālāt,” in *Frühe Mu‘tazilitische Häresiographie*, ed. Josef van Ess, (Beirut: In Kommission bei F. Steiner, 1971), pp. 30-36. See also Crone, *God’s Rule*, pp. 87-98; Sharon, “Ahl al-bayt—People of the House,” pp. 176-178.

⁷³ The introduction to *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* includes reports that justify ignoring legal reports from ‘Alī as fabricated,

untrustworthy as a source of correct knowledge. However, why did some *ḥadīth* transmitters described as Shī'ī appear in Sunnī canonical collections? To answer this question, biographical data regarding each transmitter must independently be examined. Many pro-'Alids who appeared in Sunnī *ḥadīth* compilations studied and worshiped with their 'Uthmānī peers in the same mosques. Some scholars in Kūfa appeared more "centrist," possessing both moderate 'Uthmānī sensibilities and respecting 'Alī.⁷⁴ In spite of their differences, all of these figures seemed to be members of a single community. It seems a few Shī'īs like Jābir ibn Yazīd al-Ju'fī (d. 128 or 132/746 or 750) and Abān ibn Taghlib appeared in Sunnī *ḥadīth* compilations because they attended those *ḥadīth* circles and did not regularly offend their audience. By the end of the third century, if a Shī'ī consistently displayed objectionable beliefs, he was probably discredited and ignored.

The characterization of some pro-'Alids as "Shī'ī" is an important example of how Sunnī biographers of later centuries and their sources participated in the development of their own community's identity. When a Sunnī labeled transmitters as Shī'ī, they were either designating them as the "other" or criticizing them as influenced by the "other." Sunnism, like other religious groups, possessed a narrative that identified itself as the community of God. As

rejecting reports from Ṭālibids like 'Abd Allāh ibn Miṣwar ibn 'Awn, Shī'īs like 'Amr ibn Abī al-Miqdām Thābit, Jābir ibn Yazīd al-Ju'fī, Ḥārith al-A'war al-Ḥamdānī, and the proto-Mu'tazilī authority 'Amr ibn 'Ubayd for their theological beliefs, see Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1:10-12, 14-17.

⁷⁴ Michael Dann points to 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Laylā and 'Āṣim b. Abī al-Najūd (d. 127/745) as examples, see Dann, "Contested Boundaries: The Reception of Shī'ite Narrators in the Sunnī Hadith Tradition," pp. 105-110.

His honest and pious adherents, the Sunnī narrative claimed that God favored “us” and was displeased by the beliefs of “others.”⁷⁵ Exclusion from the Sunnī community (*jamā’a*) entailed either misguidance and/or the malicious intent of nefarious authorities. Sunnī historians, for example, largely portrayed Imāmīs as followers of a legendary arch-heretic and crypto-Jew who single-handedly destroyed the unity of the early community.⁷⁶ Pro-‘Alids who were not actually members of the Shī’ī “other” were influential in transmitting *ḥadīth* related to law, theology, and the merits of ‘Alī.⁷⁷ Nonetheless, pro-‘Alids sometimes faced the threat of stigma, ostracism and verbal attack from respected authorities who were hostile to Shī’ism or anything resembling it. Their daily participation in the study of law, theology, and *ḥadīth* with scholars who did not share their pro-‘Alid sentiments frequently presented opportunities for their peers to observe and criticize them. On the other hand, Jārūdīs and Imāmīs possessed their own authorities and circles of *ḥadīth* transmission that ignored both the norms and objections of partisans of the first three caliphs. These circles largely developed Shī’ī law and theology separately from their ‘Uthmānī peers.⁷⁸ For example, the *Burātha* mosque in Baghdad

⁷⁵ A. Barzegar thoroughly studies the implications of the Sunnī historical narrative of itself and the past within the framework of social theories regarding religious communities, see Barzegar, “Remembering Community,” pp. 44-88.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 89-119.

⁷⁷ al-Nasā’ī was a famous pro-‘Alid scholar who narrated all types of *ḥadīth*. *Ḥadīth* scholars admitted that the contributions of early pro-‘Alids (e.g. Abān ibn Taghlib who was a prominent early Imāmī) could not be rejected wholesale, since some of their *ḥadīth* were essential to Sunnī law and theology, see Dhahabī, *Mīzān al-i’tidāl*, 1:5-6; Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Kitāb al-Kifāya fī ‘ilm al-riwāya* (Beirut: 1985), pp. 157, 159-60.

⁷⁸ Shī’ī and non-Shī’ī *ḥadīth* circles would also share the same spaces. For example, Faḍl ibn Shādhān and other

was a well-known center for Shī'īs.⁷⁹ There are indications that *masjid al-sharqiyya*, at least in the Buyid period, was also a Shī'ī center.⁸⁰ Thus, after the third century, Shī'īs, now defined as either Jārūdī or Imāmī, appeared much less in Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections and biographical dictionaries than in Shī'ī literature.

In spite of the exclusion of those who were considered outsiders, it was apparent from the critical comments of compilers of various *Sunan* works (Abū Dāwūd, al-Tirmidhī, et al.) that there was a growing need to grade *ḥadīth* that circulated even within the Sunnī community. These authors would cite individuals in a report's chain of transmission and criticize their memory or trustworthiness.⁸¹ Thus, to meet the need of Sunnī scholars wishing to distinguish reliably transmitted *ḥadīth* from those that were not, scholars of *ḥadīth* wrote books specifically dealing with *al-jarḥ wa'l-ta'dīl* (lit. "disparaging and endorsing").⁸² The genre is referred to as *'ilm al-rijāl* (lit. "knowledge of men"), since it consists of biographical data and critical judgments of *ḥadīth* transmitters.⁸³ Upon review of the different biographical dictionaries it is

Shī'īs would narrate the *ḥadīth* of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq in the grand mosque of Kūfa, see Ṭūsī, *Rijāl al-Kashshī = Ikhtiyār ma'rifat al-rijāl* (Qum: 1983), 2:744-5. It is also clear that Shī'īs in Kūfa would avoid certain 'Uthmānī mosques. For the mosque of Simāk b. Makhrama, see Iṣbahānī, *al-Aghānī* (Beirut: 1994), 11:167. See also Modarressi, *Tradition and Survival: a bibliographic survey of early Shi'ite literature* (Oxford: 2003), p. 202. For a survey of mosques that Shī'īs attended and avoided, see Haider, *Origins*, pp. 231-248.

⁷⁹ Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rīkh Baghdād aw Madīnat al-Salām* (Beirut: 1997), 8:17.

⁸⁰ *ibid.*, 3:86, 8:17.

⁸¹ For example, see Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan*, 1:220, 225, 238; Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī = al-Jāmi' al-ṣaḥīḥ* (Beirut: 1983), 1:37, 49, 112.

⁸² *E.I.*², s.v. "al-Djarḥ wa 'l-Ta'dīl" (J. Robson).

⁸³ For the rise of this literature, see Andi Amiruddin, "Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī on *tajrīh* and *ta'dīl* of *ḥadīth* transmitters. A study of his *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*" (McGill University, M.A., 1999), pp. 30-32.

quickly apparent that authors disagreed on the reliability and righteousness of various personalities.

The disagreements between these authors on the extent to which pro-‘Alid sentiment was acceptable in their community is a microcosm of the same tensions and debates that existed in Sunnī communities across vast regions of the empire from Nishapur to Damascus, Kūfa and Medina. The same scholar reviled as a liar in one text was lavishly praised in another. One famous example is a comparison of the biographical entries on Ibn Ishāq (d. 150/767), whose different intellectual pursuits, methods, and rivalry with Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/796) led some *ḥadīth* specialists to condemn him as a *dajjāl* and others to praise him.⁸⁴ Thus, the subjectivity within the genre should not be ignored. Some biographers were embroiled in regional conflicts and sectarian rivalries of later centuries between Mu‘tazilīs, Ash‘arīs, Shāfi‘īs, Ḥanafīs, Ḥanbalīs, and Shī‘īs. These rivalries provide some insight to understanding how biographers dealt with the various levels of pro-‘Alid sentiment amongst *ḥadīth* transmitters. One important question is: how did the terminology used to describe such partisan conflicts change over the years? This is relevant up until the third century in which leading proto-Sunnī *ḥadīth* specialists had not yet accepted the caliphate of ‘Alī as legitimate. Some ‘Uthmānī and pro-Umayyad transmitters would have described any support for ‘Alī as

⁸⁴ E.I.², s.v. “Ibn Ishāq” (J. Jones). Juynboll notes the contradictory praise and criticism of transmitters and cites the example of Ḥajjāj b. Arṭāt al-Kūfī, see Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition: studies in chronology, provenance, and authorship of early ḥadīth* (Cambridge; New York: 1983), pp. 176-190.

Shī'ism.⁸⁵ Likewise, many heresiographers and *ḥadīth* scholars did not hesitate in condemning any support for Imāmī theological principles or ritual practices as *ghuluww* or misguided. Thus, a number of questions arise when reading biographical entries on pro-ʿAlids who lived up until the end of the third century. Which transmitters described as possessing *tashayyuʿ* were simply individuals who upheld the legitimacy of ʿAlī's caliphate and his wars against rivals? Which transmitters possessed the type of pro-ʿAlid sentiment that entailed ʿAlī's superiority to ʿUthmān or even Abū Bakr? Who was guilty of *ghuluww*? Who was a *rāfiḍī*?

The significance of biographical dictionaries in identity formation

Similar to works on ancient genealogies, individuals who appeared in *rijāl* literature were part of the formation of folklore that placed great emphasis on the achievements of pious predecessors.⁸⁶ Those praised in biographical literature were representative of not only their profession, but also the religion of Islam and virtue itself. Hagiographic overtones are present in the biographies of some *ḥadīth* transmitters, who were credited with extraordinarily long lives, miraculous memories and legendary piety. They were a source of pride for the family, school or city they represented. The biographical literature, like *ḥadīth*, also became a locus for Sunnī attempts to establish orthodoxy and a coherent identity. In the third century,

⁸⁵ See above, section I.A. In this vein, Hodgson writes “The Shia began as a minority party, whose leader was rejected by the other companions of Muḥammad...” see Marshall Hodgson, “How Did the Early Shīʿa become Sectarian?,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 75, no. 1 (1955), p. 2.

⁸⁶ For genealogy, see Szombathy, *The Roots of Arabic Genealogy: a study in historical anthropology* (Piliscsaba: 2003).

influential *ḥadīth* scholars presented a historical narrative in which their predecessors had established a student-teacher chain of transmission of knowledge reaching back directly to the Prophet. This unbroken chain of authorities from the era of Companions and Followers (*tābi'ūn*) to an author in later centuries ensured the guidance of the community. According to *ḥadīth* specialists, Sunnism was best represented in its *ḥadīth*, not its caliphs, jurists or theologians.⁸⁷

Due to their large sizes and the relatively early date at which their compilers were active, the *ḥadīth* collections of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī (d. 211/827), Ibn Abī Shayba (d. 235/849) and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal can be utilized as repositories for the intellectual heritage of the proto-Sunnī community. Respectively, their collections have at least nineteen, thirty-seven, and twenty-seven thousand *ḥadīth*. While later *ḥadīth* specialists did not accept the authenticity of many of the reports in these collections and their attribution to figures of the first century, such massive collections along with *rijāl* literature are excellent sources for identifying beliefs that circulated in the community before the establishment of orthodoxy in the third century and beyond. Various authors have described the formation of orthodoxy in Sunnī history in the fields of *ḥadīth*, theology, and law.⁸⁸ One may utilize this literature to ask

⁸⁷ This vision of history is outlined in Lucas, *Constructive Critics, Ḥadīth Literature, and the Articulation of Sunnī Islam: the legacy of the generation of Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Ma'in, and Ibn Ḥanbal* (Leiden; Boston: 2004).

⁸⁸ Crone, *God's Rule*, pp. 3-69, 125-141, 219-256; Hallaq, *The Origins and Evolution of Islamic Law* (Cambridge; New York: 2005); Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*; Lucas, *Constructive Critics*; Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought* (Edinburgh: 1973); *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*, pp. 33-54, 77-90.

what beliefs regarding the Prophet's Household (*ahl al-bayt*) were no longer acceptable after the establishment of a Sunnī orthodoxy.

C. Pro-‘Alid Sunnism until the sixth century

A number of scholars have chronicled the rehabilitation of the image of ‘Alī among *ḥadīth* transmitters that occurred in the third century.⁸⁹ A. Barzegar provides the most comprehensive analysis.⁹⁰ All of the writers note that before this period, the ‘*Uthmāniyya* generally rejected the legitimacy of ‘Alī’s caliphate. Many pro-Umayyad and ‘Uthmānī jurists and *ḥadīth* transmitters in Syria, Baghdad, Baṣra, and Medina, viewed ‘Alī as the misguided patron of their most volatile rivals, ‘Alids and Shī‘īs. These same scholars are described in the biographical literature as *ahl al-sunna*.⁹¹ Their credentials as predecessors in the Sunnī community and expert authorities are beyond question. Afsaruddin and Zaman speculate the influence of a few influential Sunnī scholars who may have been the first to insist on the legitimacy of ‘Alī’s caliphate amongst their peers. These scholars include the Baṣran Ḥammād ibn Salama (d. 167/783), Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi‘ī (d. 204/820), Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, and a couple scholars from Wāsiṭ.⁹²

In contrast, Madelung, Crone, and Barzegar do not credit specific thinkers for the four-

⁸⁹ E.I.², s.v. “Imāma” (W. Madelung); “‘Uthmāniyya” (P. Crone); Afsaruddin, *Excellence*, pp. 14-23; Crone, *God’s Rule*, pp. 134-135; Zaman, *Religion and Politics Under the Early ‘Abbāsids*, pp. 49-59, 167-80.

⁹⁰ Barzegar, “Remembering Community,” pp. 127-176.

⁹¹ Zaman, *Religion and Politics Under the Early ‘Abbāsids*, pp. 49-59, 169ff.

⁹² Ibid.; Afsaruddin, *Excellence*, p. 18.

caliph theory.⁹³ Crone notes the four-caliph theory first spread in Iraq, while Madelung broadly credits pro-‘Alid *ḥadīth* transmitters from Kūfa for the rapid dissemination of a narrative that included ‘Alī as a Rightly-Guided Caliph. It seems pro-‘Alid proto-Sunnīs who narrated the merits of ‘Alī caused scholars like Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and Yaḥyā ibn Ma‘īn to shift from three-caliph to four-caliph worldviews. Barzegar is more forceful in denying a specific thinker as a source for the four-caliph theory. He writes:

“How did a new narrative emerge that displaced previous incommensurable ones which, for example, treated ‘Alī as a treasonous figure? Answering that question with absolute precision is probably impossible in light of the nature and scarcity of Islamic source materials prior to the mid-ninth century, not to mention the limits of positivist historiography in general...I harbor reservations about the way in which Zaman’s treatment, whether explicitly or implicitly, privileges the role of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal in establishing or at least consolidating the idea of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. An initial and rather unobjectionable criticism is that such a representation simply imbues Aḥmad with a level of authority that is likely anachronistic...scholars across a range of disciplines have largely discarded the “great minds, great books” paradigm of history that ascribes the origin of a set of ideas, discourses, or doctrines to a particular singular person, moment in time, or text.”⁹⁴

Barzegar is justifiably skeptical of narratives that portray one thinker or proof-text as the source of innovative and influential ideas of a period, especially in cases where the evidence is not documentary and based on literary evidence that is so contentious.⁹⁵ Barzegar opts to describe the ideal as the result of a “protracted set of debates, nuanced settlement of

⁹³ See above, n. 89-90.

⁹⁴ Barzegar, “Remembering Community,” pp. 129,144.

⁹⁵ Zaman also cautions readers from readily accepting literature that credits a Muslim scholar as the first to propound an idea or perform a deed, see Zaman, *Religion and Politics Under the Early ‘Abbāsids*, pp. 52-54.

related discourses,” and the “emergence of a particularized tradition of historical discourse.”⁹⁶

In the rehabilitation of ‘Alī’s image in Sunnism, other actors may have been just as pivotal as Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and his informants.

Perhaps non-partisan Kūfans described as Murji’a and Mu’tazila played a role in dialectically refuting anti-‘Alid sentiment in various proto-Sunnī circles. Pro-‘Alid Mu’tazilīs who argued for *tafḍīl* ‘Alī disputed the arguments of their anti-‘Alid interlocutors through the citation of dialectical arguments and relevant proof-texts.⁹⁷ Some of their arguments probably influenced no less than the ‘Abbāsīd caliph al-Mamūn who publicly proclaimed ‘Alī the greatest Muslim after the Prophet in 211/826 and once more the following year.⁹⁸ However, pro-‘Alid Mu’tazilīs may have been much more influential in Sunnī legal theory through their formulations of the legitimacy of a “ruler who possessed lesser merit” than other candidates (*imāmat al-maḥḍūl*). Madelung notes Mu’tazilī phrasing and influence can be observed in later Shāfi’ī and Ḥanbalī texts on political theory and in this matter specifically.⁹⁹ Such reasoning may have been used to justify the rule of ‘Alī’s predecessors in a four-caliph worldview that implicitly

⁹⁶ Barzegar, “Remembering Community,” p. 159.

⁹⁷ For example, the works of al-Iskāfī, Iskāfī, *al-Mi’yār wa-l-muwāzana fī faḍā’il al-Imām Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, wa-bayān afḍaliyyatihi ‘ala jamī’ al-‘ālamīn ba’d al-anbiyā’* (Beirut: 1981); Idem, “Naqḍ al-‘Uthmāniyya,” in *al-‘Uthmāniyya*, ed. ‘Abd al-Salām Hārūn, (Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, 1955), pp. 281-343. There is some disagreement on whether *al-Mi’yār* was written by Abū Ja’far or his son, see Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, ed. Tajaddud (Tehran: 1971), p. 213; cf. Ansari, *Barrasīhā-yi ta’rikhī dar ḥawzah-i Islām va Tashayyu’* (Tehran: 2012), pp. 493-506.

⁹⁸ Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, 7:188. See also *E.I.*², s.v. “al-Ma’mūn” (M. Rekaya).

⁹⁹ *E.I.*², s.v. “Imāma” (W. Madelung)

acknowledged *tafḍīl* ‘Alī. The authority of “one with lesser merit” was equally important in defense of quietism during the Umayyad period and the legitimacy of political rule after the reign of the first four caliphs.

Many Murji’a are associated with Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150/767) who studied with teachers in a period that predates the thinkers credited in the narrative of Afsaruddin and Zaman. Abū Ḥanīfa reportedly had very favorable views regarding ‘Alī and his house,¹⁰⁰ while the Murji’a generally doubted reports that defamed ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī and refused to judge them negatively. I am not arguing that Abū Ḥanīfa and his students caused any paradigm shifts in views regarding ‘Alī, but simply acknowledging the problems in crediting some thinkers and not others, or specifically *ḥadīth* transmitters, but not theologians, jurists, or policies of the state.

The efforts of a few ‘Abbāsīd caliphs to achieve a rapprochement with ‘Alids and their partisans were probably very influential. Al-Ma’mūn’s pro-‘Alid policies likely caused many proto-Sunnī families (and scholars) to reconsider their negative views regarding ‘Alī. The compromise with a large segment of pro-‘Alid proto-Sunnīs (some of whom were known as Batrīs) in the second century caused an influx of Kūfan *ḥadīth* that included ‘Alī in the chains of transmission and projected non-Shī‘ī legal and theological views onto him. Al-Ma’mūn’s

¹⁰⁰ Ibn Abī al-Rijāl, *Maṭla‘ al-budūr wa-majma‘ al-buḥūr fī tarājīm rijāl al-Zaydiyya* (Ṣa‘dah: 2004), 2:309-11; Zarandī, *Naẓm durar al-simṭayn fī faḍā’il al-Muṣṭafā wa-l-Murtaḍā wa-l-Batūl wa-l-Sibṭayn* (Najaf: 1958), 110. See also *E.I.*², s.v. “Imāma” and “Murdji’a” (W. Madelung)

policies probably encouraged discussion and the increased circulation of *ḥadīth* about the merits of ‘Alī and his house beyond pro-‘Alid and Shī‘ī circles in Kūfa. The inclusion of pro-‘Alid Kūfans in Sunnī *ḥadīth* literature produced in the third century was an indication that the compilers of these texts studied in circles where ‘Uthmānīs, pro-Umayyads, and pro-‘Alids had developed a culture in which all of their heroes from the lifetime of the Prophet were collectively venerated and tolerated.

In the third century, some *ḥadīth* transmitters venerated Mu‘āwiya as a Companion with countless merits.¹⁰¹ While some pro-‘Alids of the period and thereafter still displayed some reservations about Mu‘āwiya, his outright condemnation as a villain was no longer tolerated in proto-Sunnī circles of learning. The inclusion of pro-‘Alids led all of the major factions that later comprised Sunnism to agree on a four-caliph worldview and discontinue disputes regarding early conflicts. By the middle of the third century, *ḥadīth* scholars had successfully formulated hermeneutical tools and a narrative that promoted a non-partisan and universalist view of Companions where Umayyads, Hāshimids, and their rivals were venerated together.¹⁰²

By the fourth century, pro-‘Alids who were not members of Shī‘ī communities

¹⁰¹ For two studies on the veneration of Mu‘āwiya, see Barzegar, “Remembering Community,” pp. 177-231; Ammar Nakhjavani, “Authority and Leadership in Early Islam: a historiographical study of the Caliphate of Mu‘āwiya b. Abi Sufyan” (University of Exeter, Ph.D., 2011).

¹⁰² For more, see below, ch. 4; Conclusion (The Evolution of ‘Alī).

articulated their beliefs about ‘Alī by either transmitting *ḥadīth* or engaging in dialectical theology. Members of the Baghdādī school of the Mu‘tazila were arguably the most zealous pro-‘Alids to have resisted becoming Shī‘īs. They universally upheld *tafḍīl ‘Alī*.¹⁰³ Although some Shāfi‘ī and Ḥanafī jurists subscribed to Mu‘tazilism and *tafḍīl ‘Alī*,¹⁰⁴ most became Ash‘arī, Mātūrīdī, or strongly influenced by the culture of *ḥadīth* and its scholars (*ahl al-ḥadīth*). The latter groups have left enduring traditions in Sunnism that have largely suppressed and condemned Mu‘tazilī contributions to Sunnī jurisprudence and dialectical theology, with few exceptions.¹⁰⁵ Since much of the legacy of the Mu‘tazila is lost, most of the evidence that exists for various forms of pro-‘Alid Sunnism is in *ḥadīth* literature and biographical dictionaries rather than theological treatises. The most prevalent type of literature that I have used to identify pro-‘Alid Sunnīs across the centuries is a genre of hagiographic material entitled *manāqib* (“merits”), *ḥadīth* that extolled the merits of the Prophet, his Companions, and other early Muslims. The more that a person narrated, corroborated as authentic, or used pro-‘Alid *manāqib* to analyze history and criticize ‘Alī’s rivals, the more committed he was to pro-‘Alid sentiment. A few important pro-‘Alid authors who composed *manāqib* works are discussed in the following chapter.

¹⁰³ Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāgha* (Qum: 1983), 1:7.

¹⁰⁴ See above, n. 62.

¹⁰⁵ The exegesis of Zamaksharī (d. 538/1144), a Ḥanafī Mu‘tazilī, would be one exception, see Walid A. Saleh, “The Gloss as Intellectual History: The ḥāshiyahs on al-Kashshāf,” *Oriens* 41, no. 3-4 (2013): 217-259. For the influence of Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī’s *al-Mu‘tamad* and other Mu‘tazilī legal works, see Qarāfī, *Nafā’is al-uṣūl fī sharḥ al-Maḥṣūl* (Mecca; Riyadh: 1995), pp. 1:91-2. See also Brown, *Canonization*, p. 187.

The convergence of competing circles of scholars claiming to represent the heritage of the Companions of the Prophet gave birth to a movement in third century Baghdad that sought to appropriate ‘Uthmānī, pro-Mu‘āwīya, and pro-‘Alid *ḥadīth*. Rather than rely on the legacy of their own partisan group alone, *ḥadīth* specialists and theologians utilized and critiqued the traditions of their rivals. These scholars produced narratives regarding the community’s history and critiques of various predecessors that became influential in the Sunnī intellectual tradition. Consequently, their contributions are important tools to analyzing Sunnī reception of pro-‘Alid sentiment. G. H. Juynboll and S. Lucas provide a guide to some of the most oft-cited *rijāl* (biographical) works consulted in this investigation.¹⁰⁶

An Historical Survey of pro-‘Alid sentiment in rijāl literature

Sunnīs such as Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī (d. 852/1449) and Ibn ‘Aqīl al-‘Alawī, and modern Shī‘ī writers like ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn and M. Ja‘far al-Ṭabasī all consider *naṣb* (anti-‘Alid sentiment)¹⁰⁷ to have left a clear legacy in *rijāl* literature. They have demonstrated that later anti-Shī‘ī authors within and external to the Ḥanbalī school relied upon the biases and judgments of early *ḥadīth* specialists who subscribed to a three-caliph theory or Umayyad partisanship in their work. Anti-Shī‘ī sentiment has led early ‘Uthmānīs and later Sunnīs to characterize *tashayyu‘* as a blemish and condemn it. Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) upheld a

¹⁰⁶ For an exhaustive list, see *E.I.*², s.v. “*Ridjāl*.” (G.H. Juynboll); Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, pp. 63-156.

¹⁰⁷ For more on *naṣb*, see below, ch. 3-4.

narrative in which early Shī'īs are portrayed to have never doubted the superiority of Abū Bakr and 'Umar to 'Alī.¹⁰⁸ According to this narrative, Shī'īs then became progressively radical and hostile to the previous caliphs until they began to curse them. However, such a narrative ignored reports about contemporaries of 'Alī and their students who upheld *tafḍīl* 'Alī.¹⁰⁹ Some Umayyad-era *rāfiḍa* also seemed to have venerated Companions who were Hāshimid like Ḥamza b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib and Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib, or staunch partisans of 'Alī, like Ḥujr b. 'Adī, Salmān and Abū Dharr, to the exclusion of 'Alī's rivals.¹¹⁰ Indeed, some early pro-'Alids believed that the greatest Companions were Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Alī, then 'Uthmān.¹¹¹ Others ranked 'Alī as the best and the first three caliphs followed him in merit.¹¹² All of these reports indicate a spectrum of pro-'Alid beliefs amongst those described as possessing *tashayyu'* in Sunnī *rijāl* works.

Ibn Ḥajar and others have demonstrated that many sources of condemnation for pro-'Alid sentiments were individuals who lived up until the third century and despised 'Alī and his family as heretics.¹¹³ Their repulsion and suspicion of anyone who granted legitimacy to 'Alī's

¹⁰⁸ Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū' fatāwā*, 4:436; Idem, *Minhāj*, 4:132.

¹⁰⁹ See section 1D below.

¹¹⁰ K. Sulaym ibn Qays, pp. 125-127, 133-134, 143-5.

¹¹¹ See section 1B below.

¹¹² Ibn Mardawayh, *Manāqib 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib wa-mā nazala min al-Qur'ān fī 'Alī* (Qum: 2001), p. 108; Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-'ummāl fī sunan al-aqwāl wa-'l-af'āl* (Beirut: 1989), 13:143; Suyūṭī, *al-Lā'ālī' al-maṣnū'a fī al-aḥādīth al-mawḍū'a* (Beirut: 1996), 1:348. See also Rayshahrī, *Mawsū'at al-Imām 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib fī al-Kitāb wa-'l-sunna wa-'l-ta'rīkh* (Qum: 2000), p. 12.

¹¹³ Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Hady al-sārī: muqaddimat Faṭḥ al-bārī bi-sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: 1988), p. 446. See

caliphate or upheld his merits reflected their own belief that no caliph ruled between ‘Uthmān’s assassination and Mu‘āwīya’s succession. There was only chaos and violence in the period between the two rulers. ‘Alī and his sons were despised as rebels and heretics who constantly contended for the caliphate and had to be suppressed. For example, Ibrāhīm b. Ya‘qūb al-Jūzajānī (d. c. 259/873) was a *ḥadīth* specialist who publicly displayed animosity toward ‘Alī and anyone who loved him. Al-Jūzajānī is described by biographers as a *nāṣibī* whose hatred for ‘Alī led him to dismiss *ḥadīth* transmitters from Kūfa as untrustworthy.¹¹⁴ However, he was highly regarded as an expert in *ḥadīth* and transmitter criticism. For example, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal held him in very high esteem and would honor him.¹¹⁵ In contrast, Ibn Ḥajar is adamant in clarifying that Jūzajānī's views regarding Kūfans should never be considered authoritative given his anti-‘Alid sentiments.

Ḥanbalīs in the Mamluk era seemed to revive the opinions of anti-‘Alids in rejecting the historicity of reports about the merits of ‘Alī and the reliability of pro-‘Alid *ḥadīth* transmitters. In an effort to curb the influence of various Shī‘ī missionary movements and dynasties that appeared all over the Muslim world, these Mamluk scholars sought to discredit most of the pro-‘Alid tradition found in exegesis, *ḥadīth* collections outside of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, and Sufism. Shī‘ī missionaries had challenged the four-caliph paradigm through the utilization of

also Ṭabasī, *Rijāl al-shī‘a fī asānīd al-sunna*, p. 18.

¹¹⁴ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 10:5. For more on al-Jūzajānī, see below, ch. 3, appendix, section III.

¹¹⁵ Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī asmā’ al-rijāl* (Beirut: 1980), 2:248.

pro-‘Alid *ḥadīth* in Sunnī literature and dialectical arguments in favor of ‘Alī’s direct succession to the Prophet and his *tafḍīl*. During Ibn Taymiyya's era, Shī‘īs (and specifically Nuṣayrīs) were active in the Levant,¹¹⁶ Ismā‘īlīs were covertly influencing Persian Sufi circles since the fall of Alamut,¹¹⁷ and the Ḥasanid Sharifs of Mecca still upheld Zaydism for all to observe every year on the pilgrimage.¹¹⁸ However, the most dangerous threat came from the Mongols who fought for control of Syria and Egypt, the strongholds of the Mamluks, throughout the lifetime of Ibn Taymiyya. The Mongols had settled and established the Ilkhānid state in Persia after destroying the ‘Abbāsid capital of Baghdad. Their invasions of Aleppo and Damascus forced the inhabitants of those cities to flee to Egypt on multiple occasions. Occasionally, the Ilkhānid army would briefly take control of those cities before the Mamluks would retake them and drive out their opponents. The animosity between the Ilkhānids and Mamluks became sectarian when the Ilkhānid Sultan Öljaytu posed an ominous threat to Sunnism by converting to Twelver Shī‘ism. Ibn Taymiyya and his successors lived in a period where the Mongols had shattered Sunnism’s triumphalist narrative of a divine right to rule Muslim lands if not the world. Their recourse was to retell Islamic history as one in which believers participated

¹¹⁶ For his *fatwā* condemning Nuṣayrīs of his era as infidels and the necessity of waging war against them, see Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū‘ fatāwā*, 35:150-160. Ibn Taymiyya joined the Mamluk military expedition against the Shī‘īs of Kasrawān, see also *E.I.*², s.v. “Ibn Taymiyya” (H. Laoust).

¹¹⁷ Daftary, *Ismailis in Medieval Muslim Societies*, pp. 183-203.

¹¹⁸ For references to Zaydī ascendancy in Mecca, see Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *al-Durar al-kāmina fī a’yān al-mi’a al-thāmina* (Hyderabad, India: 1972-1976), 2:9; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira fī mulūk Miṣr wa’l-Qāhira* (Cairo: [1970]), 6:249-250, 8:199-200. See also R. Mortel, “Zaydi Shiism and the Hasanid Sharifs of Mecca,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 19, no. 4 (1987): 472-455.

principally as transmitters of sacred knowledge rather than rulers. Furthermore, there was a great incentive to discredit Shī'ism, which Ibn Taymiyya attempts in his *Minhāj al-Sunna*. Some of these circumstances may explain the reasons for which Ibn Taymiyya and his student, al-Dhahabī, supported a methodology in which early pro-'Alid *ḥadīth* and their transmitters could be discredited as Shī'ī or untrustworthy.

The following is a survey of *rijāl* literature and the debate amongst biographers regarding those who qualified as a pro-'Alid *ḥadīth* transmitter without being heretics followed by those who were condemned for *rafḍ*. The characteristics associated with pro-'Alid sentiment are categorized in relatively ascending order of zeal. The designations for each quality are provided in the following table and discussed below:

Table 1 Qualities that were condoned: *al-tashayyu' al-ḥasan*

1A. The transmitter affirmed reports about 'Alī's merits, but refrained from any praise of Mu'āwiya
1B. He believed 'Alī was more meritorious than 'Uthmān
1C. He was a disciple of 'Alī who fought for him
1D. He believed 'Alī was more meritorious than the first two caliphs (<i>tafḍīl</i> 'Alī)

II. *al-tashayyu' al-ḥasan*

Despite the appropriateness of the term, *tashayyu' ḥasan*¹¹⁹ was not utilized in

¹¹⁹ lit. "Shī'ī sentiment that is good."

biographical dictionaries to describe pro-‘Alid sentiment that was acceptable to Sunnīs.¹²⁰ The one exception was al-Nasā’ī, who was a highly venerated ḥāfiẓ and described as possessing *tashayyu’ ḥasan*.¹²¹ What characteristics did al-Nasā’ī have to receive the honor of having *tashayyu’* that was acceptable?

Al-Nasā’ī is respected as a pillar of orthodoxy and the author of a canonical *ḥadīth* collection in Sunnī Islam.¹²² Paradoxically, al-Nasā’ī was also killed as a result of his love for ‘Alī and contempt for Mu‘āwīya. This section describes the beliefs of *ḥadīth* transmitters who were similarly considered authorities in Sunnī *ḥadīth* literature despite their devotion to ‘Alī. Later Sunnīs had reservations about *tashayyu’*—even in its mildest forms. Nonetheless, the qualities below did not render a person totally untrustworthy in Sunnī *rijāl* works. It seems that these figures could hypothetically be described as having *tashayyu’ ḥasan* along with al-Nasā’ī.

(1) Qualities that were condoned

1A. *The transmitter upheld reports about ‘Alī’s merits (faḍā’il), but refrained from any praise of Mu‘āwīya.*

Al-Nasā’ī exemplified *tashayyu’ ḥasan* by authenticating reports about ‘Alī’s merits and

¹²⁰ Michael Dann also notes the absence of the phrase in *rijāl* literature despite its usage in contemporary academic works, see Dann, “Contested Boundaries: The Reception of Shī’ite Narrators in the Sunnī Hadith Tradition,” p. 35 n. 20.

¹²¹ Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira fī mulūk Miṣr wa’l-Qāhira*, 3:188.

¹²² For more on six canonical *ḥadīth* collections in Sunnī Islam, see J. Brown, “The Canonization of Ibn Mājah: Authenticity vs. Utility in the Formation of the Sunni Ḥadīth Canon,” *Revue des Mondes Musalmans et de la Medeterranee* 129, (2011): 169-181.

rejecting any praise of Mu‘āwiya as false.¹²³ There are a number of well-known *ḥadīth* transmitters who reportedly held similar views, a teacher of al-Bukhārī, Ishāq ibn Rāhawayh (d. 238/853)¹²⁴ and the Ḥanbalī Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1201)¹²⁵ are two examples. Al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī (d. 405/1014) was reportedly prevented from teaching and forced to remain home because he refused to transmit *ḥadīth* extolling the merits of Mu‘āwiya.¹²⁶ Similar to al-Nasā’ī,¹²⁷ he considered all who fought ‘Alī to have been mistaken and openly showed contempt for Mu‘āwiya and the Umayyads.¹²⁸ Conversely, some Sunnī *ḥadīth* specialists with anti-Shī‘ī sentiments (and a small minority with anti-‘Alid sentiments) considered all or most pro-‘Alid reports and transmitters to be untrustworthy. As an indication that he disagreed with such criticisms, al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī narrates from those transmitters of previous centuries who were criticized for *tashayyu’*.¹²⁹ The source of criticism for many of these individuals was their veneration of ‘Alī, support for his actions as caliph, and condemnation of rebellions against him.

¹²³ Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a‘yān*, ed. ‘Abbās (Beirut: 1968), 1:77-78; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, 3:188.

¹²⁴ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 7:81. See also the biographical entries on ‘Alī b. al-Ja‘d, Ibrāhīm b. al-Ḥakam b. Zuhayr, ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, Abū Bakr al-Faqīh (Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Māhān), Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa al-Ni‘ālī, and Ibrāhīm b. Abī Yaḥyā.

¹²⁵ Ibn al-Jawzī states that there are abundant *ṣaḥīḥ* reports about ‘Alī’s distinctions, but denies that there are any authentic reports in praise of Mu‘āwiya, see Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Mawḍū‘āt* (Medina: 1966), 1:338, 2:24.

¹²⁶ Dhahabī, *Ta’rīkh al-Islām wa-wafayāt al-mashāhīr wa-l-a‘lām* (Beirut: 1998), 28:132; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam fī ta’rīkh al-mulūk wa-l-umam* (Beirut: 1992), 15:110; Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyya al-kubrā*, 4:163; Ṣafadī, *Kitāb al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt* (Beirut: 2000), 3:260. See also Brown, *Canonization*, pp. 159-160.

¹²⁷ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 14:133.

¹²⁸ Dhahabī, *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāẓ* (Beirut: [1980]), 3:1045.

¹²⁹ For example, see Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 2:510.

1B. He believed ‘Alī to have greater merit than ‘Uthmān.

Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161/778), Sharīk b. ‘Abd Allāh (d. 177/793) and Ibn Khuzayma al-Naysābūrī (d. 311/923) are named as some of the famous proponents of ‘Alī’s superiority to ‘Uthmān.¹³⁰ Ibn Sa’d, Ibn Ma‘īn, and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal have all admitted that this belief existed in the proto-Sunnī community.¹³¹ This opinion is attributed to al-A‘mash (d. 148/765), Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150/767), Sh‘uba b. al-Ḥajjāj (160/777), ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Mūsā (d. 213/828), and Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. 327/929).¹³² The authenticity of such a claim is difficult to judge in cases where there is no documentary evidence that the person upheld such a belief. Perhaps reports about the *tashayyu’* of these individuals were actually due to 1A. Al-Dhahabī notes that 1B was prevalent amongst Companions, Followers (*tābi‘ūn*), and Kūfans who appeared in Sunnī *ḥadīth* literature. He argues that it should not be condemned as a misguided accretion in the faith (*bid‘a*) or as *rafḍ*.¹³³ Elsewhere, he describes 1B as *tashayyu’ khafīf*.¹³⁴ Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ (d. 643/1245) died in Damascus during the Ayyūbid era, when anti-Fātimid (and Shī‘ī) sentiment ran high, but he is tolerant of transmitters in this group. He writes, nonetheless, that the authoritative opinion in Sunnism and the “consensus of *ḥadīth* folk” is to consider

¹³⁰ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 7:252; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 4:296. See also Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, p. 83.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 322.

¹³² Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i‘tidāl*, 2:588. See also Dickinson, *The Development of Early Sunnite Hadith Criticism: The Taqdim al-Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī* (Leiden; Boston: 2001), p. 27.

¹³³ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 16:457.

¹³⁴ *Idem*, *Mizān al-i‘tidāl*, 3:551-2.

‘Uthmān superior to ‘Alī.¹³⁵ Likewise, al-Mizzī and Ibn Ḥajar note the prevalence of 1B in Kūfa and the early Sunnī community without condemning it.¹³⁶

According to Abū Bakr al-Khallāl (d. 311/923), Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal condemned 1B despite its prevalence in proto-Sunnism. He referred to such sentiment as *bid‘a*, *rafḍ*, or slightly better (*aḥsan*) than *rafḍ*.¹³⁷ Al-Dāraquṭnī condemned 1B in similar terms.¹³⁸ Such criticism reflects the intolerance for disagreement regarding the spiritual rankings of each caliph amongst *ḥadīth* folk (*ahl al-ḥadīth*)¹³⁹ and Ḥanbalīs who viewed themselves as a theological movement seeking to establish orthodoxy.

1C. He was a disciple of ‘Alī who fought for him

Many who personally knew ‘Alī in Kūfa and fought for him in his army were later criticized for revering him too much or narrating material about him that others did not.

Examples include Abū ‘l-Ṭufayl ‘Āmir b. Wāthila,¹⁴⁰ al-Aṣḥab ibn Nubāta,¹⁴¹ Iyās ibn ‘Āmir al-

¹³⁵ Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, p. 37.

¹³⁶ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 6:132; Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 26:58.

¹³⁷ Khallāl, *al-Sunna* (Riyadh: 1989), 2:380-1.

¹³⁸ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 16:457.

¹³⁹ *Ḥadīth* folk refers to the *ahl al-ḥadīth aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth*, and *al-muḥaddithūn*; those scholars within Sunnism who participated in the hegemonic movement to grant *ḥadīth* and the methodology of *ḥadīth* specialists central authority in the religion, see *E.I.*², s.v. “Ahl al-Ḥadīth” (J. Schacht). *Ḥadīth* folk frequently disagreed with the methods of dialectical theologians and legal theorists. For example, see Ibn al-Jawzī, *Daf shubah al-tashbīh bi-akuff al-tanzīh*, ed. al-Saqqāf (‘Ammān: 1991). See also ‘Abd al-Majīd, *al-Ittijāhāt al-fiqhiyya ‘inda aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth fī al-qarn al-thālith al-hijrī* (Cairo: 1979); Aron Zysow, “The Economy of Certainty: An Introduction to the Typology of Islamic Legal Theory” (Harvard University, 1984).

¹⁴⁰ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 3:470; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 26:113; Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Kifāya*, p. 159.

¹⁴¹ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 1:316-7.

Ghāfiqī,¹⁴² and Mālik ibn al-Ḥārith al-Ashtar.¹⁴³ Disciples of ‘Alī were described as members of his party (*min shī‘at ‘Alī*) when they had served as his soldiers.¹⁴⁴

1D. He considered ‘Alī to have greater merit than the first two caliphs (*tafḍīl ‘Alī*)

Al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013), Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456/1064), Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr (d. 463/1071), and Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406) mention the existence of authorities from the earliest generations who considered ‘Alī the greatest Muslim after the Prophet.¹⁴⁵ These writers mentioned al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās, Salmān, ‘Ammār b. Yāsir, Abū Dharr, al-Miqdād, Hudhayfa ibn al-Yamān, Jābir ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī, Abū al-Haytham ibn al-Tayyihān and Abū ‘l-Ṭufayl ‘Āmr ibn al-Wāthila as Companions who upheld this belief. A number of *tābi‘ūn* like Abū ‘l-Aswad ibn ‘Amr al-Du‘alī (d. 69/688),¹⁴⁶ ‘Aṭīyya ibn Sa’d (d. 110/728)¹⁴⁷ and Yaḥyā ibn Ya‘mar (d. 129/747),¹⁴⁸ as well as Kūfans of the second-century,¹⁴⁹ were reportedly proponents of *tafḍīl ‘Alī*.

M. Ja‘far Al-Ṭabasī explains that al-Dhahabī frequently considered *tābi‘ūn* weak and included

¹⁴² Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 3:404.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 27:126. Surprisingly, al-Ashtar was not portrayed as an untrustworthy transmitter. Sayf b. ‘Umar, however, portrayed him as an extreme partisan of ‘Alī who coerced others to pledge allegiance at the point of a sword, see Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 3:451, 456-7. In a conversation with Ibn Saba’, al-Ashtar allegedly admitted his culpability in the assassination of ‘Uthmān and even considered killing ‘Alī, see Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya*, 7:265-6.

¹⁴⁴ Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 39:495-6; Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 1:13, 4:132.

¹⁴⁵ Bāqillānī, *Manāqib al-a‘immat al-arba‘a* (Beirut: 2002), pp. 294, 306, 480-481; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī‘āb fī ma‘rifat al-aṣḥāb* (Beirut: 1992), 2:799, 3:1090, 1116; Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal*, 4:90, 106. See also Ja‘fariyān, *al-Shī‘a fī Īrān*, pp. 7-8. Ibn Khaldūn portrays the Hāshimids as individuals who considered themselves the most eligible for the caliphate after the Prophet’s death, see Ibn Khaldūn, *Ta’rīkh* (Beirut: 1971), 3:170-1.

¹⁴⁶ Sukkarī, *Dīwān Abi-l-Aswad al-Du‘alī*, ed. Āl-Yāsīn (Beirut: 1998), pp. 152-159.

¹⁴⁷ Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 7:200-202.

¹⁴⁸ Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a‘yān*, 6:173-174.

¹⁴⁹ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i‘tidāl*, 1:5-6; Khallāl, *al-Sunna*, 3:489.

them in his *Lisān al-mizān* when the only criticism leveled against them was that they believed in *tafḍīl* ‘Alī.¹⁵⁰ However, al-Ṭabasī does not provide evidence indicating that the pro-‘Alids he mentions actually believed in *tafḍīl* ‘Alī. Instead, he accepts al-Dhahabī’s characterization of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī as the belief of a person who is Shī‘ī through-and-through (*Shī‘ī jalad*).¹⁵¹ Some ḥadīth specialists, like al-Jūzajānī, considered anyone with pro-‘Alid sentiments untrustworthy, whether due to 1A, 1B, or 1C. One should ensure that a person has not been criticized for one of those reasons before speculating that they believed in *tafḍīl* ‘Alī (1D), which was closer to Shī‘ism than the other types of pro-‘Alid sentiment.

Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī characterized one who upheld *tafḍīl* ‘Alī to have been a *rāfiḍī* and *ghāl* (extreme) in his *tashayyu*.¹⁵² Although al-Dhahabī, Ibn Ḥajar and other ḥadīth folk criticized proponents of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī, both of them noted that their reports should not be summarily rejected.¹⁵³ Al-Dhahabī wrote:

“*tashayyu*‘ that is neither radical nor perverted...is abundant amongst Followers (*tābi‘ūn*) and their students. They were [righteous] men of faith, piety, and sincerity. If their reports were rejected, a number of prophetic traditions would be lost as a result and certainly become a cause of corruption.”¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁰ Ṭabasī, *Rijāl al-shī‘a fī asānīd al-sunna*, p. 9.

¹⁵¹ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 16:458. See below, ch. 1, appendix.

¹⁵² Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Hady al-sārī*, p. 460.

¹⁵³ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i‘tidāl*, 1:5-6; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 1:81.

¹⁵⁴ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i‘tidāl*, 1:5-6. See also Mamdūh, *Ghāyat al-tabjīl wa-tark al-qat’ fī al-tafḍīl: risāla fī al-mufaḍala bayna al-ṣaḥāba* (Abū Ḥabīb: 2005), pp. 220-222.

Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal's apprehension of those who believed in *tafḍīl* 'Alī encapsulates the reason why Sunnīs tended not to narrate from such individuals. When asked about those who upheld *tafḍīl* 'Alī, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal states, "I'm afraid he may [turn out to] be a *rāfiḍī*."¹⁵⁵ Elsewhere he allegedly recommended against praying behind an Imam who upheld such a doctrine because such beliefs were insulting to the majority of Companions and those prophetic reports that indicate the precedence of the first three caliphs.¹⁵⁶ Pro-'Alid Sunnīs have criticized biographers for conflating *tafḍīl* 'Alī with *rafḍ*.¹⁵⁷

Maḥmūd Sa'īd Mamdūḥ, a pro-'Alid Sunnī from Egypt, recently published a comprehensive study regarding the discourse on *tafḍīl* in the Sunnī intellectual tradition.¹⁵⁸ He writes that not all Sunnīs ventured to rank the early caliphs in merit. There is evidence that some theologians like Dāwūd ibn 'Alī al-Zāhirī (d. 270/884)¹⁵⁹ and Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (d. 463/1071)¹⁶⁰ abstained from ranking specific Companions. They simply considered early Meccan converts collectively superior to the Medinese, who in turn were more meritorious than later converts.¹⁶¹ Al-Bāqillānī, al-Juwaynī (d. 478/1085),¹⁶² al-Taftāzānī (d. 793/1390), Ibn

¹⁵⁵ Khallāl, *al-Sunna*, 3:489. See also Ja'fariyān, *al-Shī'a fī Īrān*, p. 418.

¹⁵⁶ Ibn Abī Ya'lā, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila* (Beirut: 1970), 1:146, 173, 2:120.

¹⁵⁷ Ibn 'Aqīl, *al-'Atb al-jamīl*, pp. 17-33.

¹⁵⁸ Mamdūḥ, *Ghāyat al-tabjīl*.

¹⁵⁹ Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal*, 4:91.

¹⁶⁰ Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Istidhkār* (Beirut: 2000), 5:107.

¹⁶¹ Mamdūḥ, *Ghāyat al-tabjīl*, pp. 45, 55-59, 87-88. The equal merit of all ten Qurashī Companions granted paradise is also attributed to Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī (d. 236/851), see Bāqillānī, *Manāqib*, p. 513.

¹⁶² In one text, al-Juwaynī actually refrains from declaring 'Uthmān superior to 'Alī and says the evidence is

Ḥajar al-Haytamī (d. 974/1566) and other theologians who ranked the spiritual precedence of the four caliphs in the order of their reigns admitted that such rankings were ultimately speculative and part of the knowledge of God alone.¹⁶³ Conversely, many later Ash‘arīs, Ḥanbalīs and *ḥadīth* folk participating in the formation of orthodoxy claimed certainty and consensus in the declining merit of each successive caliph.¹⁶⁴

Tafḍīl ‘Alī is attributed to ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, but in one anecdote he allegedly denies it.¹⁶⁵ Some *ḥadīth* specialists accused ‘Abd al-Razzāq of *tashayyu’* for two closely related reasons, he narrated *ḥadīth* about the merits of ‘Alī that other specialists had not encountered (*manākīr*) and enjoyed listening to *akhbār*.¹⁶⁶ *Akhbār* generally referred to historical reports from story-tellers (*al-quṣṣāṣ*), but in this context signified merits of the Prophet’s household and the misdeeds of ‘Alī’s political rivals.¹⁶⁷

Ibn ‘Asākir (d. 571/1176) cites many reports condemning *tafḍīl ‘Alī*, but their polemical value becomes quickly apparent in their alleged sources. He is careful to quote reports

contradictory regarding who was more meritorious. Elsewhere, he says that “it appears” ‘Uthmān was more superior, since the Companions elected the best among them in successive order. In both cases, he seems to admit that judging the spiritual ranks of Companions was a speculative enterprise, see Juwaynī, *Kitāb al-Irshād ilā qawā’id al-adilla fī uṣūl al-i’tiqād* (Cairo: 1950), pp. 430-431; Idem, *Luma’ al-adilla fī qawā’id ‘aqā’id ahl al-sunna wa-l-jamā’a* (Beirut: 1987), pp. 129-130.

¹⁶³ Bāqillānī, *Manāqib*, pp. 481, 513-4; Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *al-Ṣawā’iq al-muḥriqa fī al-radd ‘alā ahl al-bid’a wa-l-zandaqa*, ed. al-Laṭīf (Cairo: 1965), p. 59; Juwaynī, *al-Irshād*, pp. 430-431; Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-‘Aqā’id al-Nasafiyya* (Cairo: 1988), p. 95. See also Mamdūḥ, *Ghāyat al-tabjīl*, pp. 45-53.

¹⁶⁴ Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū’ fatāwā*, 4:421. See also Mamdūḥ, *Ghāyat al-tabjīl*, pp. 47, 209.

¹⁶⁵ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Kitāb al-‘Ilal wa-ma’rifat al-rijāl* (Beirut; Riyadh: 1988), 2:59; Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 18:60.

¹⁶⁶ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-‘Ilal*, 2:59; Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil fī ḍu‘afā’ al-rijāl* (Beirut: 1988), 5:315; Khallāl, *al-Sunna*, 3:502-3, 507-8.

¹⁶⁷ Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 5:315.

condemning *tafḍīl* ‘Alī from individuals who were accused of believing in it like A‘mash and Sufyān al-Thawrī.¹⁶⁸ Ibn ‘Asākir was also instrumental in transmitting the bulk of reports that portray Zayd b. ‘Alī strongly defending Abū Bakr and ‘Umar.¹⁶⁹ Ibn ‘Asākir was invested in appropriating famous ‘Alid Imams and pious predecessors known for pro-‘Alid sentiments into the non-partisan, but anti-Shī‘ī community to which he belonged. Due to the relative obscurity and marginalization of Sunnī scholars openly advocating *tafḍīl* ‘Alī, the next chapter discusses the subject in greater detail.

Table 2 Unacceptable Qualities: when *tashayyu*‘ becomes *rafḍ*

2A. He cursed the Umayyads
2B. He cursed or disgraced “the Companions”
2C. He cursed those who fought ‘Alī at the Battle of the Camel or Ṣiffīn
2D. He cursed or dishonored Abū Bakr and ‘Umar
2E. He killed ‘Uthmān

III. When *tashayyu*‘ becomes *rafḍ*

(2) *Unacceptable Qualities*

In order to safeguard the community from Shī‘ī claims regarding the precedence of ‘Alī, some Sunnīs like Ibn Ḥazm and those who followed his opinion, like Ibn Taymiyya and

¹⁶⁸ Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 30:394, 39:506, 44:384, 385.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 19:460-4, 468, 471, 472.

Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb al-Fīrūzābādī (d. 817/1415), have rejected most *ḥadīth* about ‘Alī’s merits as fabricated.¹⁷⁰ Ibn Taymiyya dismissed Sunnī scholars who compiled books with abundant reports about the merits of ‘Alī as men with little or no expertise in *ḥadīth* criticism.¹⁷¹ It is apparent from their refutations of a Twelver Shī‘ī text on the imamate that Ibn Taymiyya and al-Fīrūzābādī both feared the misguidance of Sunnīs who accepted *ḥadīth* (and dialectical arguments) about the unique merits of ‘Alī (1A). They had a higher likelihood of incorrectly concluding that he was the most meritorious (1D) and becoming misguided through Shī‘ism. Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal’s aforementioned fear that some *ḥadīth* transmitters who upheld *tafḍīl* ‘Alī were actually *rāfiḍa* raises the question: how many of these transmitters were actually Shī‘īs who rejected the authority of non-‘Alids? Boundaries between proto-Sunnī pro-‘Alids and Shī‘īs are difficult to draw when members of the former camp shared the same anti-Umayyad sentiments as the latter. *Ḥadīth* transmitters who censured those who fought against ‘Alī’s army as disobedient and rebels (*bughāt, mukhti’ūn*)¹⁷² were sometimes hard to distinguish from those who were considered moderate Imāmīs or Zaydīs. Some of the characteristics which later Sunnī scholars considered objectionable and “Shī‘ī” appear to have survived even amongst some pro-‘Alid Sunnīs today. Before describing these characteristics commonly

¹⁷⁰ Fīrūzābādī, *al-Radd ‘alā al-rāfiḍa = al-Qaḍḍāb al-mushtahar ‘alā riqāb Ibn al-Muṭahhar*, ed. al-Shāfi‘ī (Cairo: 2007), pp. 66-68; Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal*, 4:116; Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 7:320-1, 354-5. See below, ch. 3, appendix, section V.

¹⁷¹ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 7:355.

¹⁷² Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal*, 4:119. See also Hararī, *al-Dalīl al-shar‘ī ‘alā ithbāt ‘iṣyān man qātalāhum ‘Alī min Ṣaḥābī aw Tābi‘ī* (Beirut: 2004).

attributed to *rāfiḍa*, a few historical notes are in order.

The Sunnī intellectual tradition depicts some individuals of the first century as believing that ‘Alī was the sole authority after the Prophet. ‘Alī undoubtedly inspired ardent Kūfan supporters during his tenure in the city as caliph from 36-40 AH. In addition to his own descendants,¹⁷³ a number of ‘Alī’s disciples in Kūfa appear to have believed that he was the legate (waṣī) of the Prophet.¹⁷⁴ ‘Uthmānīs implicitly affirmed the existence of such claims in the lifetime ‘Alī, but discredited them as the beliefs of a crypto-Jew who wished to lead Muslims astray.¹⁷⁵ Kūfans in the Marwānīd period who expressed this belief publicly were known as *rāfiḍa* and produced an Umayyad-era text known as the *Kitāb Sulaym ibn Qays*.¹⁷⁶ Other early manifestations of Shī‘ism included the *tawwābūn* movement and Mukhtār al-Thaqafī's revolt.

A clear theological dilemma in Sunnism appears in the lives of Abū ‘l-Ṭufayl ‘Āmr ibn al-Wāthila (d. 110/728) and Sulaymān b. Ṣurad al-Khuzā‘ī (d. 65/685). Both were universally recognized as Companions of the Prophet who joined ‘Alī in his wars.¹⁷⁷ Later, they became

¹⁷³ For a report describing ‘Alī as the Prophet’s waṣī with a chain of transmission only consisting of ‘Alids, see Ḥākim, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:172. In his revolt, al-Ḥusayn allegedly described himself as the son of the Prophet’s waṣī, see Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 4:322.

¹⁷⁴ For example, see Khuwārizmī, *al-Manāqib*, pp. 85, 220 (for Mālik al-Ashtar), 360. For further references, see also ‘Askarī, *Ma‘ālim al-madrasatayn*, 1:216-232; Qundūzī, *Yanābī‘ al-mawadda* (Qum: [1995]), 241 (for Aṣḥab ibn al-Nubāta); Sharaf al-Dīn, *al-Murāja‘āt*, pp. 398-407.

¹⁷⁵ Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 3:378.

¹⁷⁶ For more on this text, see Modarressi, *Tradition and Survival*, pp. 82-86.

¹⁷⁷ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 3:470; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī‘āb*, 2:650; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 26:113.

leading participants in Shī'ī movements in Kūfa. Abū 'l-Ṭufayl reportedly was a standard bearer in Mukhtār's army,¹⁷⁸ while Sulaymān was the leader of the *tawwābūn* ("Penitents").¹⁷⁹ The *tawwābūn* were Kūfans who chose to fight the Umayyad army despite the strong likelihood of defeat in penitence for failing to defend al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī and the 'Alid house at Karbalā'. Despite Sulaymān's Shī'ī identity, he was venerated as a Companion and his *ḥadīth* appeared in the six major canonical collections in Sunnism.¹⁸⁰ There is no criticism of his beliefs in spite of his prominence as the leader of the Shī'a and the *tawwābūn*. Ironically, other prominent Shī'ī authorities seem to be criticized for possessing the same characteristics and beliefs as Sulaymān or Abū 'l-Ṭufayl.

After Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam, it seems *rafḍ* had become a common tendency amongst Kūfan Shī'īs. Some Sunnī scholars permitted traditions to be transmitted on the authority of *rāfiḍa*, others did not.¹⁸¹ As previously mentioned, early *rāfiḍa* were largely excluded from proto-Sunnī *ḥadīth* circles because they were considered misguided. Kohlberg writes, "opposition to the Rāfiḍīs also came to the fore in the legal sphere: the *ḳāḍī* of Kūfa Ibn Abī Laylā (d. 148/765) reportedly refused to accept their testimony."¹⁸² Under such conditions it

¹⁷⁸ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 3:469; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī'āb*, 2:798; Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb Ta'wīl mukhtalif al-ḥadīth fī al-radd 'alā a'dā' ahl al-ḥadīth* (Beirut:), p. 17; Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi*, 16:334.

¹⁷⁹ Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī'āb*, 2:650. See also Jafri, *Origins*, pp. 222-233.

¹⁸⁰ Ṭabasī, *Rijāl al-shī'a fī asānīd al-sunna*, pp. 155-157.

¹⁸¹ For example, see Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Kifāya*, pp. 148-160.

¹⁸² E.I.² s.v. "al-Rāfiḍa" (E. Kohlberg). Kohlberg cites Wakī', *Akhbār al-qudāt* (Beirut: n.d.), 3:133. In addition, see *al-Tafsīr al-mansūb ilā al-Imām Abī Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī al-'Askarī* (Qum: 1988), pp. 310-312.

seems the acceptance of *rāfiḍa* in proto-Sunnī circles was due to their sustained efforts to maintain secrecy regarding their beliefs in the presence of non-Shī'īs. *Rāfiḍa* knew that the public expression of *rafḍ* led to dire political and social consequences, including discrimination, persecution and death. It is no surprise that Shī'īs who frequented Sunnī circles presented themselves as Sunnīs.¹⁸³ Nonetheless, *ḥadīth* transmitters known for *rafḍ* were occasionally accepted as authorities. For example, Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 354/965) explains that the *ḥadīth* of a *rāfiḍī* is accepted as long as he did not proselytize.¹⁸⁴ Al-Dhahabī notes that some considered reports from a *rāfiḍī* authoritative, even if he proselytized, as long as he was a man of integrity.¹⁸⁵

In the early 'Abbāsīd period, partisan self-segregation was a mutual affair. The *rāfiḍī* layman was not generally interested in learning about the legal opinions of Companions and caliphs who he believed had no authority in issuing such judgments anyway. The *rāfiḍa* became an insular sub-community that created its own tradition of authoritative teachers and students. Their participation in proto-Sunnī circles was limited and only occurred when they concealed their Shī'ism. The sectarian allegiance of Shī'īs was sometimes discovered after

¹⁸³ For more on this phenomenon, see Stewart, *Islamic Legal Orthodoxy: Twelver Shiite Responses to the Sunni Legal System* (Salt Lake City: 1998).

¹⁸⁴ Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt* (Hyderabad, India: 1973), 6:140-1; Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Kifāya*, p. 156 (for Ibn Ḥanbal stating the same).

¹⁸⁵ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i'tidāl*, 1:27.

their deaths.¹⁸⁶ Whether or not *ḥadīth* transmitters described with the characteristics below considered themselves to be part of a *rāfiḍī* community is not always clear. However, they were criticized for one of the following qualities:

2A. They cursed the Umayyads

Increased global communication through the internet and satellite television has provided an opportunity for contemporary pro-ʿAlid Sunnīs who still possess animosity against Muʿāwiya and the Umayyads to publicly share their views and heritage.¹⁸⁷ These scholars consider Muʿāwiya to have been a man who unethically fought to establish himself and the Umayyads as kings of the Muslim empire. They accept historical reports that portray Muʿāwiya as a life-long enemy of the Muslim community and *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet invokes God to give him an insatiable appetite or identifies him as doomed to hell.¹⁸⁸ Although proof-texts that dishonored Muʿāwiya sometimes appeared in the canonical collections of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, many influential Sunnīs employed various hermeneutical techniques to

¹⁸⁶ For example, see Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 7:119.

¹⁸⁷ For example, see Mālikī, *Sulaymān al-ʿAlwān fī Muʿāwiya*. For al-Mālikī's other works on Muʿāwiya, see his web publications on www.al-malikiy.com. Saqqāf, *Zahr al-rayḥān*; Idem, *Naqd kitāb Taḥḥīr al-jinān wa-l-lisān taʿlīf al-ʿallāma al-faqīh al-Shāfiʿī Ibn Ḥajar al-Ḥaytamī*, 3rd ed. (Amman: 2011); Ibn ʿAqīl, *al-Naṣāʾih*; Idem, *Taqwiyat al-īmān: bi-radd tazkiyat ibn Abī Sufyān* (Beirut: 1993); Abū Bakr ibn Shihāb, *Kitāb Wujūb al-ḥamiyya ʿan muḍār al-raḥiyya* (Singapore: 1910). The pro-ʿAlid ʿAdnān Ibrāhīm has presented relevant material in a polished video lecture series, see ʿAdnān Ibrāhīm, “Silsilat Muʿāwiya fī l-mizān,” <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8E14F9936B7695CD> (accessed May 1, 2014).

¹⁸⁸ In one canonical report, the rebellious party that kills ʿAmmār b. Yāsir (referring to Muʿāwiya's army at Ṣiffīn) is condemned as hell-bound. In another report, the Prophet invokes God to never satiate Muʿāwiya Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: 1981), 1:115; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 8:27.

charitably reinterpret such reports.¹⁸⁹ Modern pro-‘Alid Sunnīs refrain from praying for Mu‘āwiya’s damnation (with the pronouncement of a *la’na*) in spite of their dislike for him and defense of early pro-‘Alids who damned him.

From the third century, the non-partisan culture which *ḥadīth* folk promoted led to the rehabilitation of first-century leaders that were previously damned in various geographic and partisan rivalries. The memories of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, and Mu‘āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān all benefitted from this new vision among *ahl al-ḥadīth* (and Sunnī Islam in later centuries) which sought to suppress and transcend partisan conflicts. Thus, hagiography extolling the virtues of these rulers was obtained from ‘Uthmānī, pro-‘Alid, and pro-Umayyad sources, while literature attacking their deeds as rulers were largely rejected, censored, or charitably reinterpreted.¹⁹⁰ Censorship usually involved obfuscation of the Companion’s identity¹⁹¹ or omissions in the parts of a report that transmitters considered objectionable.¹⁹²

Pro-‘Alid Sunnīs argue that the image of Mu‘āwiya has benefitted the most from these

¹⁸⁹ For example, see Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal*, 4:124-6.

¹⁹⁰ The principle of charity was employed to legitimize the sacred status of the canonical collections of al-Bukhārī and Muslim and their *ḥadīth* informants. This same principle was similarly utilized to rehabilitate Companions who had been involved in political conflicts. For the principle of charity, see Brown, *Canonization*, pp. 263-299. For the reception of conflicts between Companions in Muslim literature, see Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, pp. 221-285.

¹⁹¹ For example, the identities of ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ, Samura ibn Jundab and Mu‘āwiya are omitted in some condemnatory reports, see Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 1:217, 4:421; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 3:40, 4:145; Haythamī, *Majma‘ al-zawā‘id wa-manba‘ al-fawā‘id* (Beirut: 1988), 1:112, 5:243; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, 5:188, 8:695. Their names appear in other versions of these reports, see Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 1:25; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 5:127; Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 4:4; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 5:41; Nasā‘ī, *Sunan al-Nasā‘ī* (Beirut: 1930), 5:253; Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam al-kabīr*, ed. Salafī, 2nd ed. (Beirut: 2002), 11:32. See also Saqqāf, *Zahr al-rayḥān*, pp. 79, 156-161.

¹⁹² See below, ch. 2, section II.

mechanisms of rehabilitation.¹⁹³ Thus, the vast majority of the Sunnī community has come to venerate Mu‘āwīya as a Companion and the social ramifications of cursing him today are as volatile and sacrilegious as cursing any other Companion. While the biographical dictionaries only briefly describe an early *ḥadīth* transmitter’s opposition to Mu‘āwīya, the nature of anti-Mu‘āwīya sentiment can be understood better from the many proof-texts cited among Sunnī authors that condemn him today.

2B. *They cursed or disgraced “the Companions”*

Biographers who wished to criticize a transmitter for opposing Mu‘āwīya may have not differentiated between pro-‘Alid opposition to those who rebelled against ‘Alī and *rāfiḍī* opposition to the first three caliphs. Some Sunnī jurists considered all rebels during the caliphate of ‘Alī to have committed a sin and did not charitably reinterpret their actions as an example of *ijtihād*.¹⁹⁴ Since ‘Alī became a legitimate caliph upon assuming office, pro-‘Alid Sunnīs could criticize ‘Alī’s military opponents without censuring any of his predecessors. On the other hand, *rāfiḍa* considered all of ‘Alī’s predecessors and rivals as usurpers of his divine right to the caliphate. Thus, transmitters who were criticized for narrating reports that “disgraced” Companions (*al-mathālib*) could have fallen into either the proto-Sunnī or Shī‘ī

¹⁹³ For example, Ḥasan al-Saqqāf argues that the mantra of ‘defending Companions,’ is invoked specifically to safeguard the honor Mu‘āwīya, see *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21. For possible examples of this editorial process, see below, ch. 4, section III.D.

¹⁹⁴ Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal*, 4:119. See also Hararī, *al-Dalīl al-shar‘ī*.

camp. In either case, it is clear that the individual did not subscribe to the Sunnī doctrine in the righteousness of *all* Companions.

Contemporary Sunnīs opposed to the veneration of Mu‘āwiya insist that their opposition to the Umayyad caliph should not be subsumed under the vague category of “disgracing Companions.” They argue that their interlocutors have unfairly conflated anti-Umayyad sentiment with anti-Companion sentiment in order to obfuscate critical investigations of Mu‘āwiya.¹⁹⁵ In their estimation, Mu‘āwiya did not qualify as a Companion. Rather Mu‘āwiya was a war criminal who only surrendered to the Prophet at the conquest of Mecca after opposing him for two decades.¹⁹⁶ According to the Saudi scholar Ḥasan ibn Farḥān al-Mālikī (b. 1390/1970), it is in defense of the image of Mu‘āwiya that Sunnīs are discouraged from studying the conflicts between Companions.¹⁹⁷ Partisans of Mu‘āwiya have characterized attacks on him as not only anti-Companion, but anti-Islamic.¹⁹⁸ Al-Mālikī argues that the Umayyads strategically redefined themselves as “Companions” after they had not been

¹⁹⁵ Mālikī, *Marāsīm Mu‘āwiya al-arba’a wa-āthāruhā fī’l-ḥadīth wa’l-‘aqā’id* (n.d.), p. 13 n. 18; Idem, *Sulaymān al-‘Alwān fī Mu‘āwiya*, pp. 166, 197-201; Saqqāf, *Zahr al-rayḥān*, pp. 20-21.

¹⁹⁶ Since those who surrendered due to conquest were considered prisoners of war, the Prophet possessed the right to execute them for their past crimes or grant them amnesty. When the Prophet chose the latter, he reportedly told them “You are free (*antum al-ṭulaqā*),” see Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 9:118. Thus, Mu‘āwiya’s detractors considered him to be a member of the *ṭulaqā* (freed criminals of the Prophet) rather than a Companion, see Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 3:143; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 59:145. See also Ibn ‘Aqīl, *al-Naṣā’ih*, p. 28; Mālikī, *Ḥadīth Mu‘āwiya fir’awn hādhihi al-umma*, 1st ed. (n.d.), pp. 51-2, 58; Idem, *al-Ṣuḥba wa’l-ṣaḥaba: bayna al-ṭlāq al-lughawī wa’l-tashkhīs al-shar’ī* (Amman: 2004), pp. 41-117.

¹⁹⁷ Mālikī, *Ma’a Sulaymān*, p. 140.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 19, 31, 118-123.

considered as such by early authorities.¹⁹⁹ Consequently, Muslims today who venerate Mu‘āwiya are certain that attacks against him qualify as an attack against all Companions.²⁰⁰ It is also quite possible that in the biographical entries on some early *ḥadīth* transmitters that their anti-Mu‘āwiya sentiment was summed up as opposition to “the Companions.” Thus, in the biographical entries on pro-‘Alids of the first three centuries, one must acknowledge the frequent lack of clarity on whether a person opposed (1) all non-‘Alid leaders, (2) ‘Alī’s military opponents, or (3) only Mu‘āwiya and the Umayyads.

There was a Shī‘ī tendency to recognize the distinctions of ‘Alī and his family and reject the distinctions of other caliphs or narrate denigrating reports (*mathālib*) about them to disgrace them.²⁰¹ The famous execution of ‘Alī b. Abī al-Faḍl (d. 755/1354) occurred under the auspices of judges representing the four major Sunnī law schools.²⁰² He was found guilty of disturbing the peace by insistently cursing the first three caliphs and the first two Umayyads in a raised voice at the mosque. The major judges of Damascus agreed to his execution after he refused to offer a full repentance. This example of Imāmī opposition to other caliphs (and ‘Alī’s military opponents) should not be equated with the attitude of ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 59-61.

²⁰⁰ ‘Alwān, *Al-istanfār li’l-dhabb ‘an al-ṣaḥāba al-akhyār* (Ṣan‘ā: 2001).

²⁰¹ Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 3:191.

²⁰² Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya*, 14:287; Subkī, *Fatāwā al-Subkī* (Beirut: n.d.), pp. 569- 594. See also H. Modarressi, *Ta’rīkhīyāt: majmū‘a-i maqālāt va taḥqīqāt-i ta’rīkhī* (New Jersey : 2009), pp. 227-250.

and other early scholars who transmitted material that Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and al-Khallāl considered offensive toward Companions.

2C. They cursed Those who Fought ‘Alī at the Battle of the Camel or Ṣiffīn

Anti-Shī‘ī writers have misinterpreted *rāfiḍī* animosity against ‘Ā’isha to refer to an incident that allegedly occurred in the lifetime of the Prophet. Canonical Sunnī reports narrate that a group of hypocrites accused ‘Ā’isha of adultery and that the Prophet, Abū Bakr, and other leading Companions refrained from judging her guilt or innocence for an extended period that caused ‘Ā’isha agony.²⁰³ The Umayyads reportedly taught that ‘Alī had been one of the hypocrites who had slandered ‘Ā’isha.²⁰⁴ Al-Bukhārī similarly reported that ‘Alī opposed ‘Ā’isha by advising the Prophet to consider divorce as an option.²⁰⁵ ‘Ā’isha is finally vindicated when verses of the Qur’ān are revealed condemning the slander of innocent women. However, some Imāmī historians have voiced severe skepticism regarding the entire episode since the Qur’ān does not name the accused woman. They considered the entire tale about ‘Ā’isha to be fictitious hagiography created to exalt her.²⁰⁶

The alternative exegesis notes that all of the Prophet's wives after Khadija were barren, so contemporaries began to believe that the Prophet had become sterile. According to Shī‘ī

²⁰³ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 6:5-10.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 5:60. See below, ch. 4, section III.B. See also ‘Āmilī, *al-Ṣaḥīḥ min sīrat al-Nabī al-a‘ẓam* (Qum: 2005), 13:283-88.

²⁰⁵ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 6:7.

²⁰⁶ Askarī, *Aḥādīth umm al-mu‘minīn ‘Ā’isha* (Beirut: 1997), 2:99-187; ‘Āmilī, *Ḥadīth al-ifk* (Beirut: 1980). For an updated revision, see ‘Āmilī, *al-Ṣaḥīḥ min sīrat al-Nabī*, 13:1-346.

(and Sunnī) proof-texts, Māriya became the only woman to give birth to a child of the Prophet after Khadija in 8/629. When she gave birth to Ibrāhīm, some Muslims claimed that the boy did not look like the Prophet. Some further slandered Māriya and stated that the child's biological father was a male servant of Māriya who would visit her frequently. It was eventually clarified that this claim was impossible, since the male servant turned out to be a castrated eunuch.²⁰⁷ According to Shī'ī literature, the relevant verses of the Qur'ān (Q24:11-26) were revealed affirming the innocence of Māriya and the Prophet's paternity.²⁰⁸

The entire episode about the alleged slander of 'Ā'isha in the Sunnī tradition is irrelevant to Shī'ism despite a widespread misconception amongst Sunnīs that Shī'īs not only believed in the historicity of the event, but in 'Ā'isha's guilt in the matter.²⁰⁹ However, Shī'ī criticism of 'Ā'isha, Talḥa, and Zubayr is related to their roles in leading the first civil war against 'Alī at the Battle of the Camel. The majority of later Sunnīs exonerate the leaders of the Battle of the Camel through a narrative that places blame on a legendary Jew.²¹⁰ In

²⁰⁷ Baḥrānī, *al-Burhān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (Qum: 1996), 4:52-55; Ḳhaṣībī, *al-Hidāyat al-Kubrā* (Beirut: 1991), pp. 297-298; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 76:103 n. 2.

²⁰⁸ Al-'Āmilī makes the astute point that the slander against Māriya was clearly proven false when the male servant turned out to be a eunuch. The accusers were left with no fodder for their claims. Consequently, when the Qur'ān declares their rumors a "clear slander" (*ifk mubīn*, Q24:12), the judgment makes sense. However, in the alternative exegesis, 'Ā'isha's accusers do not encounter any clear refutations of their claims beyond the evidence of the Qur'ān which "hypocrites" would not have accepted as authoritative proof, see 'Āmilī, *al-Ṣaḥīḥ min sirat al-Nabī*, 13:330.

²⁰⁹ Sharaf al-Dīn, *al-Fuṣūl al-muḥimma*, pp. 144, 156; Mukhtār Ṭaybāwī, "Maṭā' in al-shī'a fī 'Ā'isha," *Mawqī' al-shaykh Mukhtār al-Ṭaybāwī*, http://www.taibaoui.com/index.php?type=1&detail_prod=35 (accessed May 26, 2014).

²¹⁰ Anthony, *The Caliph and The Heretic: Ibn Saba and The Origins of Shi'ism* (Leiden: 2012), pp. 105-138; Askarī, 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba' wa asāṭir ukhrā, 6th ed. (Tehran: 1992).

contrast, these three Companions are categorically criticized as disobedient toward the rightful caliph and Imam of their era amongst some pro-‘Alid Sunnīs.²¹¹ In spite of this critical assessment, the same pro-‘Alid Sunnīs applied the principle of charity to these three Companions to affirm the authenticity of reports regarding their sincere repentance to God.²¹² Shī‘ī literature is much more uncompromising and generally paints these Companions as villains who either sought political power or possessed a grudge against ‘Alī.²¹³

2D. They cursed or dishonored Abū Bakr and ‘Umar

Animosity for the first two caliphs is a hallmark characteristic of the early *rāfiḍa* of Kūfa and the Jārūdī and Imāmī communities that appeared thereafter. If transmitters like Talīd ibn Sulaymān (active early 3rd/9th century)²¹⁴ or Ismā‘īl al-Suddī (d. 127/745)²¹⁵ were accused of animosity toward Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, then it is very likely that they frequented Shī‘ī circles and appear in Zaydī or Imāmī literature as well.

2E. They were accused of participating in the assassination of ‘Uthmān

Close partisans of ‘Alī are accused of assassinating ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān and largely condemned in Sunnī biographical dictionaries. Consequently, they are largely excluded from

²¹¹ Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal*, 4:119. See also Hararī, *al-Dalīl al-shar‘ī*; Khālīdī and Mālikī, *Bay‘at ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib fī ḍaw’ al-riwāyāt al-ṣaḥīḥa: ma‘a naqd al-dirāsāt al-jāmi‘iyya fī al-mawḍū‘* (Riyadh: 1997), p. 194.

²¹² Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-dīn*, pp. 289-290; Āmidī, *Abkār al-afkār fī uṣūl al-dīn* (Cairo: 2004), 5:294-5. See also Hararī, *al-Maqālāt al-sunniyya fī kashf ḍalālāt Aḥmad ibn Taymiyya* (Beirut: 2004), p. 326.

²¹³ Mufīd, *al-Jamal = al-Nuṣra fī ḥarb al-Baṣra* (Qum: 1960).

²¹⁴ Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 4:322.

²¹⁵ ‘Uqaylī, *al-Ḍu‘afā’*, 1:88.

ḥadīth literature. These disciples of ‘Alī include Ḥukaym b. Jabala, Mālīk al-Ashtar, ‘Amr b. Ḥamiq al-Khuzā‘ī, Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr and others.²¹⁶

Terminology in the Biographical Dictionaries

The biographers were neither systematic nor in agreement in the description of their subjects. The differences in vocabulary and their technical definitions reflected a developing need to identify correct and acceptable attitudes in the Sunnī community and the various individuals who historically breached those norms. Most of the phrases that are used to describe pro-‘Alid sentiment reflect negative value judgments that lie between noting its prevalence and pragmatically accepting it as a popular belief of the past to condemning some beliefs as intolerable and inexcusable. The only type of *tashayyu‘* that became acceptable in the circles of Ibn Taymiyya and Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb al-Fīrūzābādī was none at all.

None of the later biographers, even those who defended the trustworthiness of early pro-‘Alid Kūfans, ever admitted to sharing their views or condemned ‘Alī’s rivals for their actions.²¹⁷ Some Sunnī jurists perhaps only had recourse to two methods to expressing solidarity with this early pro-‘Alid group. First, ‘Alī was upheld as the exemplar in all issues related to civil strife, while his rivals were not.²¹⁸ Although Sunnism consolidated around a

²¹⁶ For references, see below, ch. 3, appendix, section VIII.

²¹⁷ Although some Ash‘arī theologians were willing to condemn the army that fought against ‘Alī at the Battle of the Camel as *fāsiqūn*, they applied the principle of charity to ‘Ā’isha, Ṭalḥa, and Zubayr, see Āmidī, *Abkār al-afkār*, 5:294-5; Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-dīn*, pp. 289-290.

²¹⁸ Baghawī, *Sharḥ al-sunna* (Beirut: 1983), 10:236 (for Ibrāhīm al-Nakha‘ī’s statement that ‘Alī was the exemplar on

position that abstained from negatively judging the actions of ‘Alī's rivals, it implicitly acknowledged they were incorrect by never utilizing them as role models, passing over the period without analysis, or attributing the wars to the machinations of an evil “Jew.” Second, biographers sympathetic to the Kūfan community maintained a policy of defending the righteousness of pro-‘Alid transmitters when others criticized them for such sentiments. By defending the righteousness of these Kūfans, these scholars were able to uphold the authenticity of their pro-‘Alid *ḥadīth*. Anti-‘Alid elements of the first and second centuries fueled much of the anti-Shī‘ī sentiments of later centuries articulated in both distrust towards Kūfans and a distaste for their pro-‘Alid heritage. When Shī‘ī populations challenged both Sunnī political and religious hegemony after the Būyid era through Ismā‘īlī and Ilkhānid incursions into the Mamluk polity in Syria and Egypt, the neo-Ḥanbalī tradition searched for various means to respond. In response to Shī‘īs who used Sunnism's pro-‘Alid heritage to gain converts, Ibn Taymiyya and his disciples embarked on a mission to discredit much of this pro-‘Alid heritage for a narrative in which the only leaders of the community were *ḥadīth* transmitters that never diverged from later Sunnī orthodoxy in their creed. Unfortunately for Kūfa, this resulted in many of its pro-‘Alid notables becoming retroactive culprits in the crime of giving fodder to Shī‘ism.

these issues); Qurṭubī, *Kitāb al-Tadhkira bi-aḥwāl al-mawtā wa-umūr al-ākhirā*, ed. Ibrāhīm (Riyadh: 2004), p. 1089. See also Abou El Fadl, *Rebellion and Violence in Islamic Law* (Cambridge; New York: 2001), pp. 34-37.

The historic rivalry of Iraq and Syria or Kūfa and Baṣra allowed puritan Ḥanbalīs of the Mamluk period to take on the mantle of historic antagonists to Kūfa. The criticisms of early anti-‘Alid *ḥadīth* specialists provided later puritans the tools they needed to discredit pro-‘Alid Kūfans and their beliefs regarding ‘Alī's unrivaled merit. Since the eighteenth century, the anti-Shī‘ī and anti-Sufi sentiments of Wahhābism have led its leaders to revive and disseminate the writings of Ibn Taymiyya on a massive scale. Although Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī and other Sunnīs criticized Ibn Taymiyya for his views on ‘Alī,²¹⁹ their criticisms have not dislodged the newfound authority and popularity of Ibn Taymiyya and his disciples.

IV. Conclusions

A comprehensive review of the *ḥadīth* attributed to a transmitter gives one a better idea of the teachings he may have circulated. One can compare this material to the criticisms of his peers and later biographers to understand whether or not a transmitter was considered a sectarian outsider. The presence of a transmitter’s *ḥadīth* within the canonical collections or other encyclopedic compilations like those of Aḥmad, al-Ḥākim or al-Ṭabarānī is already an indication that some leaders of the Sunnī tradition considered him part of their own community. Cross-referencing these individuals with Imāmī and Zaydī biographical literature would be an important second step. H. Modarressi has already noted that some experts of

²¹⁹ See below, ch. 3, appendix, section VI; ch. 4, section II.

ḥadīth would frequent both Imāmī and non-Imāmī circles.²²⁰ Although their erudition did not lead them to attribute proto-Sunnī teachings to the Twelver Imams, some of their less educated students may have inadvertently done this, as in the case of the influx of reports from the proto-Sunnī community regarding deletions of the Qur’ān.²²¹

If the same transmitters narrated *ḥadīth* in Shī’ī collections, then they may have been Shī’īs who also frequented proto-Sunnī circles. Those who did this may be considered the source of any pro-‘Alid *ḥadīth* in the Sunnī tradition if no other chains of transmission exist except through them. However, if there is no evidence of their narrating *ḥadīth* from the Twelver Imams in Imāmī books then these individuals may be identified as individuals who cherished the memory of ‘Alī in the proto-Sunnī community.²²²

Sunnī biographical collections noted at least one-hundred thirty *ḥadīth* transmitters active in the first three centuries who possessed *tashayyu’*.²²³ It is clear from the survey above that these individuals differed greatly in their beliefs. Some were proponents of *tafḍīl ‘Alī*, but most apparently were not.

Those who upheld *tafḍīl ‘Alī* can be divided into two camps. The first group believed he was the best human being after the Prophet, but did not reject the authority of Abū Bakr and

²²⁰ Modarressi, *Tradition and Survival*, pp. 86-103, 107-121, 131-33, 135-37, 203-206, etc.

²²¹ Idem, “Early Debates on the Integrity of the Qur’ān: A Brief Survey,” *Studia Islamica* no. 77 (1993/01/01): 5-39.

²²² Their presence in Zaydī collections would not be as helpful, since Zaydī and Sunnī collections relied upon a shared group of transmitters until the end of the second century, see Haider, *Origins*, pp. 43-46, 90, 126, 133, 175.

²²³ Dann, “Contested Boundaries: The Reception of Shī’ite Narrators in the Sunnī Hadith Tradition,” pp. 39-40.

‘Umar or the intellectual achievements of the Companions. Whenever these individuals are referred to as possessing *tashayyu‘* the biographer means he was publicly “pro-‘Alid” despite the dangers of such proclivities in the Umayyad and ‘Abbāsīd eras. The contributions of such personalities were still included in canonical *ḥadīth* collections or recorded by other leading authorities. However, their staunchly pro-‘Alid beliefs were not considered praiseworthy.

The second group encompassed those who rejected the authority of anyone other than ‘Alī and his household, a doctrine known as *rafḍ*. *Rafḍ* became an important feature of Shī‘ī communities that crystallized after the third century. Thus, in agreement with al-Mufīd’s assessment, only Jārūdīs and Imāmīs could be characterized as Shī‘ī after this period.²²⁴

Zaydī and Sunnī literature has characterized the proto-Imāmī community as the “*rāfiḍa*” and reveled in attributing absurdities to the group in various straw man arguments and prophetic reports about their damnation. This group is viewed as upholding belief in anthropomorphism, antinomianism, missing chapters of the Quran and the divinity or prophethood of their leaders.²²⁵ Perhaps a minority of Kūfan *rāfiḍa* and splinter groups made these claims, but evidence beyond the claims of heresiographers antagonistic to them is meager. In spite of non-Imāmīs historically utilizing the term “*rāfiḍī*” pejoratively,²²⁶ the term

²²⁴ Mufīd, *Awā’il al-maqālāt*, pp. 34-37.

²²⁵ Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal*, 2:67; Rassī, *al-Radd ‘alā al-rāfiḍa* (Cairo: 2000), pp. 88-101. See also Modarressi, “Early Debates”; Tucker, *Mahdis and Millenarians: Shī‘ite extremists in early Muslim Iraq* (Cambridge: 2008), pp. 9-36, 114-15.

²²⁶ Etan Kohlberg, “The Term “*Rāfiḍa*” in Imāmī Shī‘ī Usage,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 99, no. 4 (1979/10/01): 677-679.

in its literal sense is helpful in distinguishing the Shī'ī from the pro-'Alid Sunnī. The best definition of *rafḍ al-shaykhayn* is the rejection of the authority of the *shaykhayn* (lit. “the two elders,” i.e. the caliphs Abū Bakr and 'Umar) as well as 'Uthmān and the Umayyads. For this reason it would be correct to refine the term *rāfiḍī* to include not only various types of Imāmīs, but Jārūdī Zaydis.²²⁷ However, given the Jārūdī animosity towards the proto-Imāmī *rāfiḍa* and the heresiographical disambiguation between both currents, it suffices to properly refer to both as Shī'ī.

Any person who publicly identified as Shī'ī was generally considered guilty of following *bid'a* and *hawā*.²²⁸ While some *ḥadīth* specialists claimed that Shī'īs were included in their collections as long as they did not invite others to join their sect, this is true only as an historical reality and not as an example of Sunnī efforts at ecumenism. Sunnī *ḥadīth* specialists and their predecessors were extremely intolerant of those who rejected the legacy of Abū Bakr and 'Umar. In the rare instances in which 'Alids or their partisans appeared in biographical dictionaries, it was emphasized that they were untrustworthy sources of knowledge.²²⁹ The even smaller number of Shī'īs who appeared in the canonical collections consisted of

²²⁷ In fact, 'Abbād ibn Ya'qūb al-Rawājīnī (a Zaydī) is described as a *rāfiḍī*, see Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb* (Beirut: 1995), 1:469-470. See also Ṭabasī, *Rijāl al-shī'a fī asānīd al-sunna*, pp. 215-218.

²²⁸ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 1:59-69; Khallāl, *al-Sunna*, 3:496. See also Muhammad Qasim Zaman, “Death, Funeral Processions, and the Articulation of Religious Authority in Early Islam,” *Studia Islamica* no. 93 (2001), pp. 32-33.

²²⁹ For criticisms of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā, al-Ḥasan b. Zayd b. al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn b. Zayd b. 'Alī, see Dhahabī, *Mīzān al-i'tidāl*, 1:492; Ibn 'Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 2:131; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 2:294; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-Majrūhīn min al-muḥaddithīn wa'l-ḍu'afā' wa'l-matrūkīn*. (Mecca: 1970), 2:106; Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 5:76. See also Ibn 'Aqīl, *al-'Atb al-jamīl*, pp. 37-73.

individuals who probably hid their Shī'ism for a variety of reasons or converted to Shī'ism later in life and after the proliferation of their reports.²³⁰ For example, there is some indication that Abū Maryam al-Anṣārī (d. middle of the 2nd/8th century) converted to Shī'ism later in life.²³¹ In the case of Shī'is like Abān ibn Taghlib, biographers of later generations recognized the dilemma of their inclusion and reasoned that their contributions were congruent with and too integral to the Sunnī intellectual tradition to warrant exclusion *ex post facto*.²³²

Contemporary, anti-Shī'ī Salafī thinkers specializing in *ḥadīth* have begun rejecting the contributions of pro-'Alids or almost anyone accused of Shī'ism.²³³ Their efforts, similar to historic rivalries between Ḥanbalīs and other groups, have occasionally angered representatives of other Sunnī legal schools. Medieval *ḥadīth* specialists agreed that individuals who were well-known teachers and imams of a Shī'ī sect were considered a *dā'ī ilā al-bid'a* and universally avoided. It comes as no surprise that the various legal opinions of Mūsā al-Kāẓim and later Imams in Twelver Shī'ism or their Zaydī counterparts (i.e. al-Qāsim b.

²³⁰ See the case of Ibn al-Qaddāḥ and narratives about Abū Bakr al-Ji'ābī in Damascus. The titles of al-Ji'ābī's works seem to indicate his Shī'ism, see Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 16:88-92; Najāshī, *Rijāl al-Najāshī*, pp. 394-395. See also Modarressi, *Tradition and Survival*, p. 146.

²³¹ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i'tidāl*, 2:461; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Mizān*, 4:42; 'Uqaylī, *al-Ḍu'afā'*, 3:102. See also Modarressi, *Tradition and Survival*, p. 135.

²³² Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i'tidāl*, 1:5.

²³³ See the works of Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, Sulaymān al-'Awdah, and their students, for example, 'Awdah, 'Abd Allāh ibn Sabā' wa atharuhu fī aḥdāth al-fitna fī ṣadr al-Islām (al-Riyādh: 1985); Nūr Walī, *Athar al-tashayyu'* 'alā al-riwāyāt al-ta'rikhiyya fī al-qarn al-awwal al-hijrī (Medina: 1996). For a few pro-'Alid Sunnī responses, see Ghumārī, *Irgḥām al-mubtadi' al-ghabī bi-jawāz al-tawassul bi-al-Nabī* (Amman: 1992), pp. 27-60 (in defense of accepting reports from al-Ḥārith al-A'war); Mālikī, *Naḥwa inqādh al-ta'rikh al-Islāmī: qirā'a naqdiyya li-namādhij min al-a'māl wa-l-dirāsāt al-jāmi'iyya* (Riyadh: 1998).

Ibrāhīm al-Rassī, Yaḥyā al-Hādī ilā 'l-Ḥaqq and Aḥmad b. 'Īsā b. Zayd) along with hundreds of others 'Alids are ignored in Sunnī canonical collections.²³⁴

As a consequence of segregation along partisan lines, Shī'īs were considered people of innovation (*bid'a*) and ignored. Some who considered 'Alī superior to his peers, while maintaining the legitimacy of the proto-Sunnī heritage were tolerated. Ḥanbalīs and *ḥadīth* scholars who censured pro-'Alids tolerated their partisanship to 'Alī as a small blemish, while other like-minded pro-'Alid Sunnīs considered such a characteristic to be *ḥasan*. So in the parlance of our Sunnī authors, who best reflected *tashayyu'* *ḥasan*? It seems the best candidates for this title were not Shī'ī after all, but pro-'Alid Sunnīs like al-Nasā'ī, al-Ḥākim, and Ibn al-Jawzī.

²³⁴ For an encyclopedic reference to thousands of *ḥadīth* transmitters from the descendants of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib who were largely criticized or ignored in the Sunnī tradition, see Rajā'ī, *al-Muḥaddithūn min Āl Abī Ṭālib* (Qum: 2007).

CHAPTER 1 Appendix

The Vocabulary of *tashayyu'*

I. (1 A-D) Terminology for acceptable *tashayyu'*

*Ghālī fī'l-tashayyu'*²³⁵ (extreme in pro-‘Alid [lit. “Shī‘ī”] sentiment) / *ghuluww al-tashayyu'*²³⁶ / *min'l-mughālīn fī'l-tashayyu'*. An anecdote states that *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* is overflowing with *ḥadīth* from Shī‘īs of this sort.²³⁷ *Ghuluww* (extreme zeal) in this case refers to *ḥadīth* transmitters who did not subscribe to *rafḍ*, but were thought to love and revere ‘Alī too much for their own good. Enthusiastic love of ‘Alī was considered to be a form of *ghuluww* in many proto-Sunnī circles influenced by anti-‘Alid and anti-Shī‘ī sentiment. The fact that many transmitters were not *ghulāt* can be substantiated through their inclusion in the canonical collections, transmission from a large number of Companions and Followers, the content of their reports, and their absence from Imāmī texts. Transmitters considered *ghālī* in the second century would not be characterized as such in later years.²³⁸

Wa kāna yatashay'a – see previous entry. Ibn Ma‘īn narrates a report from a person of this description who narrated the merits of ‘Uthmān as well.²³⁹ The implications are that those who are described as possessing “Shī‘ī” sentiment or even extreme forms of it (*ghālī fī'l-tashayyu'*), did not necessarily display animosity towards ‘Alī’s predecessors or associate with Kūfan *rāfiḍa* and their views. One should understand this term as simply referring to some form of pro-‘Alid sentiment among a transmitter in proto-Sunnī circles.

²³⁵ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i'tidāl*, 1:436, 2:369; Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 7:168. See also Ṭabasī, *Rijāl al-shī'a fī asānīd al-sunna*, p. 89.

²³⁶ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i'tidāl*, 1:5.

²³⁷ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 13:317, no. 147; Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Kifāya*, p. 159; Ṭabasī, *Rijāl al-shī'a fī asānīd al-sunna*, p. 14.

²³⁸ For conflicting assessments of ‘Alī ibn Hāshim ibn al-Barīd (d ca. 181/797), see Dhahabī, *Mizān*, 3:160. Compare al-Bazzār's assessment of ‘Alī b. Thābit (d. 219/834) to al-Dhahabī's, see Dhahabī, *Mizān*, 3:116. See also Ṭabasī, *Rijāl*, 278.

²³⁹ Ibn Ma‘īn, *Ta'rikh Yahyá ibn Ma'īn*, ed. Ḥasan (Beirut: 1990), 2:112.

Al-tashayyu‘ bi lā ghuluww (pro-‘Alid sentiment without extreme zeal) – al-Dhahabī states that numerous *tābi‘ūn* possessed this quality and leading Sunnī *ḥadīth* experts still considered them men of faith, piety, and integrity. *Tashayyu‘* should be considered a small innovation that can be overlooked. Dhahabī argued that if their reports were rejected, “a number of prophetic traditions would be lost as a result and certainly become a cause of corruption.”²⁴⁰ Only six of the eighteen transmitters described as possessing *tashayyu‘* in Ibn Sa‘d’s work are described as weak.²⁴¹

Shī‘ī jalad (“Shī‘ī through and through”)²⁴² – Al-Dhahabī explains that anyone who believed ‘Alī was superior to Abū Bakr and ‘Umar was *Shī‘ī jalad*.²⁴³ Since many of these individuals still transmitted the intellectual tradition of various Companions, they may have been proto-Sunnīs with staunchly pro-‘Alid sentiments, rather than Shī‘īs. It is unclear if al-Dhahabī was consistent in only describing proponents of *tafḍīl ‘Alī* as *Shī‘ī jalad* or if he used the term for other types of pro-‘Alids. The sources describe sentiments ranging from 1A to 1D, although a few reportedly showed animosity toward ‘Uthmān and Mu‘āwiya (2A and 2B).

Transmitters active in the second century and described as *Shī‘ī jalad* seem to possess characteristics that run the gamut of pro-‘Alid sentiment. For example, Fiṭr b. Khalīfa and al-‘Alā’ b. Abī ‘l-‘Abbās appear to have upheld various reports about the legitimacy of ‘Alī’s wars and his various merits (1A).²⁴⁴ al-Ḥasan b. Ṣāliḥ b. Ḥayy and Abū Hārūn al-‘Abdī are described as

²⁴⁰ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i‘tidāl*, 1:5.

²⁴¹ Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, p. 322.

²⁴² *Jalad* is interpreted as *shidda* and *quwwa*, see Zabīdī, *Tāj al-‘arūs min jawāhir al-Qāmūs* (Beirut: 1994), 4:395.

²⁴³ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 16:458.

²⁴⁴ Idem, *al-Kāshif fī ma‘rifat man la-hu riwāya fī al-Kutub al-Sitta* (Jeddah: 1992), 2:125; Idem, *Ta‘rīkh al-Islām*, 8:495.

possessing critical views of ‘Uthmān (1B and 2B).²⁴⁵ ‘Adī b. Thābit, who became the Imam of a Shī‘ī mosque in Kūfa, was the grandson of a Companion who joined ‘Alī in all of his wars (1C).²⁴⁶ Kuthayyir ibn Nawā and Sālim ibn Abī Ḥafṣa believed in the superiority of ‘Alī and the Household (1D), but harbored animosity for the *rāfiḍa* and those who criticized the first two caliphs.²⁴⁷ Ibrāhīm b. al-Ḥakam b. Ḥayyir and his father probably believed Mu‘āwiya was hell-bound (2A).²⁴⁸

A transmitter described as *Shī‘ī jalad* may have also been an early Zaydī or Imāmī. The term is used to describe the Jārūdī ‘Abbād b. Ya‘qūb and two Imāmīs, Abān b. Taghlib and Muḥammad b. Nu‘mān Mu‘min (or Shayṭān, according to his detractors) al-Ṭāq.²⁴⁹

Rāfiḍī – The widespread usage of the term to describe both Sunnīs (like al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī) and Shī‘īs indicates that any technical definition of the word was superseded by social and political conventions in which it was hurled as an epithet to discredit a Muslim with pro-‘Alid sympathies. Early Muslims who displayed pro-‘Alid sentiments that were not necessarily hostile towards Companions (1A-1D) were labeled *rāfiḍī*. Critics invested in discrediting pro-‘Alid proof-texts and Shī‘ism in general regularly discredited Sunnī rivals by accusing them of Shī‘ī sentiment and *rafḍ*.²⁵⁰

The more technical usage of the phrase was discussed in chapter one. Historically, the *rāfiḍa* referred to disciples of the Twelver Imams who rejected non-‘Alid authorities.²⁵¹ They

²⁴⁵ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i’tidāl*, 3:174; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 7:370; Modarressi, *Tradition and Survival*, pp. 256-257.

²⁴⁶ Dhahabī, *al-Mughnī fī al-ḍu‘afā’* (Beirut: 1997), 2:54; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 5:188.

²⁴⁷ Dhahabī, *al-Mughnī*, 1:387; Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i’tidāl*, 3:402; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, pp. 44:125, 54:288; Modarressi, *Tradition and Survival*, pp. 105-107.

²⁴⁸ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i’tidāl*, 1:27; Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 2:209; Ṣadūq, *al-Amālī* (Qum: 1995), p. 489.

²⁴⁹ Dhahabī, *al-Kāshif*, 1:532; Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i’tidāl*, 1:5; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 10:553.

²⁵⁰ For example, al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī was called a *rāfiḍī khabīth*, see Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 17:174-5. For the terms usage in Shī‘ism, see Kohlberg, “Rāfiḍa”.

²⁵¹ The writings of the ‘Alid al-Qāsim b. Ibrāhīm (d. 246/860) are particularly valuable since he was a contemporary

were usually described as rejecting the precedents of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar and despising them. Instances where *rāfiḍa* narrated from a large number of proto-Sunnī authorities indicate that they desired to obtain knowledge from that community. Most individuals who were *rāfiḍī* did not join proto-Sunnī *ḥadīth* circles while those who did were generally regarded as untrustworthy. There were exceptions, like Abān b. Taghlib, who were highly regarded in both communities.

*Tashayyu‘ yasīr*²⁵² (“slightly pro-‘Alid in sentiment”)/ *Tashayyu‘ qalīl* – al-Dhahabī notes proto-Sunnī Kūfan *ḥadīth* transmitters can generally be described as possessing sentiment that was “slightly pro-‘Alid.”²⁵³ The phrase refers to the general tendency of Kūfans to legitimate ‘Alī’s caliphate and uphold his distinctions (1A). Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī is described as such probably due to his defense of the historicity of *ḥadīth al-ghadīr*.²⁵⁴ Sufyān al-Thawrī and Wakī‘ b. al-Jarrāḥ are described as such due to (1A) and (1C).²⁵⁵

Tashayyu‘ khafīf (slightly pro-‘Alid sentiment)-al-Dhahabī notes that this sentiment is also representative of proto-Sunnī Kūfans.²⁵⁶ Many believed ‘Alī had greater merit than ‘Uthmān and did not justify the actions of those who went to war with him, while praying for their forgiveness.

of the later Twelver Imams. He identifies their partisans as *rāfiḍa*, see Rassī, *al-Radd ‘alā al-rāfiḍa* (Cairo: 2000).

²⁵² Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i‘tidāl*, 2:66.

²⁵³ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 10:348

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 3:499; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 14:274; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya*, 11:167; Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr: fī ’l-kitāb wa-’l-sunna wa-’l-adab* (Beirut: 1977), 1:152-3 (for further references).

²⁵⁵ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 7:241, 9:154.

²⁵⁶ Idem, *Mizān al-i‘tidāl*, 3:551-2.

*Mutashayyi'at al-Kūfa*²⁵⁷ – see *Tashayyu' yasīr and khafīf* above.

Min shī'at 'Alī – This phrase was frequently used to describe those who joined 'Alī's army.²⁵⁸

Rumiya bi'l-rafd / al-tashayyu' – A number of individuals were accused of *rafd* and *al-tashayyu'*, but there is no evidence of their membership to the Jārūdī or Imāmī community. They appeared in canonical works²⁵⁹ and biographers considered them trustworthy.²⁶⁰

min 'utuq al-Shī'a – An “ancient Shī'ī.” Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī uses the term to refer to Kūfan Batrīs. He does not seem to criticize them based on their pro-'Alid proclivities, since some are trustworthy, while others are not.²⁶¹

*shadīd al-tashayyu'*²⁶² Such individuals considered 'Alī correct in his wars as caliph and his rivals to have been mistaken. Some may have believed 'Alī to have greater merit than his predecessors. Some *ḥadīth* specialists like Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and al-Jūzajānī considered such views offensive to the first three caliphs. Ibn Ḥajar would not follow Jūzajānī in considering those folk untrustworthy *ipso facto*.²⁶³ The compilers of canonical collections of Sunnī *ḥadīth* narrated from such folk.²⁶⁴

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 3:118.

²⁵⁸ Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 2:404.

²⁵⁹ For example, Bukayr b. 'Abd Allāh, Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*, 1:138. See also Ṭabasī, *Rijāl al-shī'a fī asānīd al-sunna*, pp. 64-65.

²⁶⁰ Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 1:360, 493, 668.

²⁶¹ Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *al-Jarḥ wa-'l-ta'dīl* (Beirut: 1980), 2: 532, 3:337, 4: 180, 324. One editor argues that *'utuq* implies a very strong sentiment, see Dhahabī, *al-Kāshif*, 1:72.

²⁶² Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 8:9-10; Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, p. 322.

²⁶³ Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 10:5.

²⁶⁴ There are numerous examples, see Ṭabasī, *Rijāl al-shī'a fī asānīd al-sunna*, pp. 285-6, 296-8, 313-5, 342-4, 353-5, 463-4.

Biographical dictionaries seemed to utilize the terms above to refer to proto-Sunnīs and later scholars who displayed varying levels of pro-‘Alid sentiment that differed from their non-partisan or ‘Uthmānī peers. These scholars were generally accepted as members of the developing Sunnī community who possessed a small imperfection. In contrast, the vocabulary below indicates a greater aversion to Muslims who displayed such characteristics. Contemporaries and later scholars who engaged in the formation of a normative Sunnī creed considered Muslims with the following sentiments as outsiders or misguided:

II. (2 A-E) Terminology for objectionable *tashayyu*‘

*yaghriq*²⁶⁵ / *yafriṭ fi’l-tashayyu*‘ – “he is extreme in *tashayyu*‘.” This person was considered untrustworthy due to his presence in Shī‘ī circles.²⁶⁶ Some of them appeared in canonical collections.²⁶⁷

Min ahl ’l-kufa al-ghālīn – This phrase is used to describe Abū ’l-Jārūd (the eponym of Jārūdī Zaydīs) for his tendency to narrate the distinctions of the Household and denigrating material about other Companions.²⁶⁸ M. Ja‘far al-Ṭabasī omits the second part of this criticism when he argues that Abū ’l-Jārūd was unfairly considered unreliable amongst biographers for simply narrating the distinctions of the Household.²⁶⁹ Rather Abū ’l-Jārūd was criticized for the Shī‘ī tendency to narrate objectionable material about Companions. It should be noted that Abū ’l-

²⁶⁵ (lit. “drowning in Shī‘ism”) This term seems to have appeared only once in the biographical literature and may have been a transmission error from the term *yufriṭ*, see Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 3:349.

²⁶⁶ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-ī‘tidāl*, 2:123.; Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, p. 322.

²⁶⁷ Ṭabasī, *Rijāl al-shī‘a fi asānīd al-sunna*, pp. 162-163.

²⁶⁸ Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 3:191.

²⁶⁹ Ṭabasī, *Rijāl al-shī‘a fi asānīd al-sunna*, p. 15.

Jārūd narrated reports from the proto-Sunnī community. It is unclear whether he was one of the rare Shī'īs who did this for dialectical and comparative purposes or he narrated this material early in his life before he turned to narrating from 'Alids alone. Abū 'l-Jārūd may have considered such transmissions probative throughout all his life, however, this last possibility is the least probable since he allegedly opposed Kūfan Batrīs who maintained this stance and he reportedly burned his own books before his death, which might be an indication of a change in his beliefs.²⁷⁰ Ibn 'Adī explains that when Abū 'l-Jārūd narrated from proto-Sunnīs, who narrated from Companions, there was a difference of opinion on whether such a report should be considered authentic.²⁷¹ This statement reveals that some peers and predecessors believed *ḥadīth* from a *rāfiḍī* should be accepted, while some did not.

Shī'ī baghīḍ – The type of Shī'ī that publicly vilified the first three caliphs or other prominent Companions.²⁷²

Rāfiḍī khabīth – Transmitters described as such were generally considered untrustworthy, see *rāfiḍī* above.²⁷³ Neo- Ḥanbalīs and their followers used the phrase to disparage later pro-'Alid Shāfi'īs like al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī.²⁷⁴ Their attack provoked a response from Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 771/1370) who explained that al-Ḥākim should not be described as such since he narrated *ḥadīth* regarding the distinctions of the first three caliphs and gave them precedence over 'Alī in his *al-Mustadrak*.²⁷⁵ Ḥanbalīs and other anti-Shī'ī *ḥadīth* folk were angry with al-

²⁷⁰ Modarressi, *Tradition and Survival*, pp. 121-125.

²⁷¹ Ibn 'Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 3:191.

²⁷² Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i'tidāl*, 4:490 (this narrator appears to be a Jārūdī).

²⁷³ Idem, *Ta'rikh al-islām*, 13:138. For an example of a person with this description who still received a positive grade of *lā ba's*, see Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 4:320-3. See also Ṭabasī, *Rijāl al-shī'a fī asānīd al-sunna*, p. 66.

²⁷⁴ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 17:174-5.

²⁷⁵ Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya*, 4:161-71.

Ḥākim for reporting the *ḥadīth al-ṭayr*, the contents of which upheld *tafḍīl* ‘Alī, and other pro-‘Alid reports.²⁷⁶ Al-Subkī admitted the *ḥadīth al-ṭayr* did not meet *ṣaḥīḥ* standards, but stated it could be considered *ḥasan* or *ḍa‘īf*. The report could not be considered fabricated as al-Ḥākim’s detractors claimed.²⁷⁷

madhhabuhu al-tashayyu’ - In the case of Talīd ibn Sulaymān, it is likely that the narrator was an Imāmī or Jārūdī.²⁷⁸

yu’minu bi’l-raj’a - this attribute was viewed as an infamous incorrect belief of the *rāfiḍa*.²⁷⁹

Shī‘ī munḥarif - the complete phrase would be *munḥarif‘an ‘Uthmān*²⁸⁰ or *munḥarif‘an Mu‘āwīya*.²⁸¹

The indirect quote that a person was a *Shī‘ī mutaḥarriq* (a flaming Shī‘ī) is probably a scribal error from *Shī‘ī munḥarif*.²⁸² There are a number of similar quotations that refer to individuals as *Shī‘ī muḥtariq*. One scholar reasoned that the epithet referred to individuals who enflamed the hearts of Sunnīs by narrating denigrating reports (*mathālib*) about Companions.²⁸³ Later authors quoted Abū Dāwūd as the original source of the description, but I have not discovered a work of his that can clarify whether he actually said *mutaḥarriq* or *munḥarif*.

²⁷⁶ Ibid., 4:164, 166. See also Brown, *Canonization*, pp. 159-160.

²⁷⁷ Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyya*, 4:170.

²⁷⁸ Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta’rīkh Baghdād*, 7:144. See also Ṭabasī, *Rijāl al-shī‘a fī asānīd al-sunna*, pp. 66-68.

²⁷⁹ “He’s a liar, he believes in *raj’a*.” see Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i’tidāl*, 1:380. For an overview of the doctrine, see *E.I.*², s.v. “*Radj’a*” (E. Kohlberg) and *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. “*Raj’a*” (M. Amir-Moezzi).

²⁸⁰ For example, Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd al-ghāba fī ma‘rifat al-ṣaḥāba* (Beirut:), 3:394; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 9:360.

²⁸¹ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 17:175.

²⁸² For example, see Idem, *Mizān al-i’tidāl*, 3:16 n. 2.

²⁸³ Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 4:320.

*The actions associated with objectionable tashayyu' in relation to Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān
and those who fought 'Alī*

yashtam / yasubb Abā Bakr wa 'Umar – to insult/revile Abū Bakr and 'Umar. A researcher who encounters this phrase might initially assume it to mean “he verbally abuses or curses Abū Bakr and 'Umar” (or any other Companion considered to be an enemy of 'Alī and his house). However, this term may have been used in a broader sense to refer to Muslims who generally narrated tales in which these Companions were portrayed as criminals rather than venerated saints.²⁸⁴ *Yashtam* (lit. “he uses offensive and explicit language” or “bad words”)²⁸⁵ literally implied the use of foul language in comparison to *yasubb* (lit. “verbally abuses”),²⁸⁶ where one directed such words toward an object in verbal abuse. *Shatm* could be the utterance of one word out of anger while *sabb* is a conscious and concerted effort of multiple words. Thus, *sabb* may have implied a string of verbal attacks compared to *shatm*.²⁸⁷ Biographical dictionaries, however, utilized these words interchangeably to refer to another cultural phenomenon.

Shī'īs would narrate history and anecdotes in which the first three caliphs and other Companions were portrayed as villainous characters who despised 'Alī and his family. Since the principle of charity required Sunnīs to either reject or charitably reinterpret accounts in which 'Alī and his family disagreed with other Companions, the transmission of reports that attributed misdeeds to Companions may have been considered *shatm* in of itself. For example, after the death of the Prophet, Abū Bakr and 'Umar are portrayed as sending an armed militia to forcefully extract the pledge of allegiance from 'Alī, usurping the caliphate and the estates

²⁸⁴ In one anecdote, a Shī'ī states his belief that the first three caliphs are in hell and this seems to qualify as *sabb*, see Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi*, 3:18-19.

²⁸⁵ See the entries on Ismā'īl b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Suddī and Talīd b. Sulaymān, Dhahabī, *al-Mughnī*, 1:126; Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rikh Baghdād*, 7:145; Mizzi, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 4:320-322; 'Uqaylī, *al-Ḍu'afā'*, 1:88.

²⁸⁶ 'Uqaylī, *al-Ḍu'afā'*, 4:180.

²⁸⁷ Al-'Askarī explained the “extended length” of *sabb* through two ancient usages of the word: (1) *Sabb* referred to a long turban and (2) *Sabīb* was the long tail of a horse, see Askarī, *Mu'jam al-furūq al-lughawiyya: al-ḥawī li-kitāb Abī Hilāl al-'Askarī wa-juz'an min kitāb al-Sayyid Nūr al-Dīn al-Jazā'irī* (Qum: 1992), p. 294.

of Fāṭima, and forging *ḥadīth* to justify their actions.²⁸⁸ Sunnīs obviously considered such reports defamatory. The popularity of recounting such tales in Shī'ī sermons may be gauged from the content of the aforementioned *K. Sulaym ibn Qays*. Participants in the Shī'ī audience would probably pray for God's punishment of those characters who oppressed the Prophet's kin upon hearing a preacher narrate their misfortunes. Consequently, *rāfiḍī* culture encouraged some Shī'īs with deep contempt for 'Alī's rivals to refer to them with derogatory nicknames or damn them in public spaces with graffiti.²⁸⁹ Sunnīs probably considered early *rāfiḍa* and later Shī'īs who prayed for the damnation and punishment (*la'ana/yal'an*) of the first three caliphs and other leading Companions guilty of *shatm/sabb*.

yatabarra' min... – (lit. “he ‘disassociates from”) A Shī'ī would disassociate from a person considered to be an enemy of the Household. While Khārijites disassociated from caliphs who ruled after Abū Bakr and 'Umar, Shī'īs generally disassociated from all of 'Alī's political rivals, whether the preceding caliphs or those who rebelled against him. Ritual disavowal from the “enemies” of the Household, which included their misguided beliefs and actions, was considered a religious duty of faithful partisans.²⁹⁰ Umayyads and later Shī'īs who claimed religious authority for themselves or supported 'Alid rivals to the Twelver Imams were similarly disowned in Imāmī literature.

yal'an - he damns Abū Bakr, 'Umar, et al.– (lit. “prays for the damnation”)²⁹¹

*yanāl min*²⁹² / *yantaqīṣ*²⁹³ – he disparages/criticizes Abū Bakr, 'Umar, et al.

yubghīḍ – he despises Abū Bakr and 'Umar.²⁹⁴

²⁸⁸ *K. Sulaym ibn Qays*, pp. 148-161, 224-259.

²⁸⁹ Etan Kohlberg, “Some Imāmī Shī'ī Views on the *ṣaḥāba*,” *Jerusalem Studies on Arabic and Islam* 5, (1984): 143-175.

²⁹⁰ Idem, “*Barā'a* in Shī'ī Doctrine,” *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 7, (1986): 139-175.

²⁹¹ Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rikh Baghdād*, 9:123.

²⁹² This phrase occurs more frequently with 'Uthmān, see the entries on 'Amr b. Abī Miqdām and 'Alī b. Badhīma, Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rikh madīnat Dimashq*, p. 41:279; Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 8: 10.

²⁹³ See the entries on Sālim b. Abī Ḥafṣa and al-Mughīra b. Sa'īd, Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 10:136; 'Uqaylī, *al-Ḍu'afā'*, 2:153, 4:180.

CHAPTER 2

When Ali was without equal: *Tafḍīl* ‘Alī in Sunnī Islam

This chapter examines the literary contributions of a minority theological tradition in Sunnī Islam to consider problems related to the politics of identity, history writing, and the formation of orthodoxy. Although the previous chapter identified pro-‘Alid sentiment as a prevalent, trans-sectarian tendency to venerate ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib through a spectrum of increasingly zealous beliefs, this chapter studies only one of those dimensions. *Tafḍīl* ‘Alī is the belief that ‘Alī was the most meritorious Muslim after the Prophet Muḥammad.²⁹⁵ Many pro-‘Alid *ḥadīth* transmitters active in the second century *hijrī* appeared in Sunnī *ḥadīth* literature and seem to have been part of a large proto-Sunnī network of scholars who relied upon non-‘Alid authorities that included caliphs, Companions, and jurists to understand law or theology. Other pro-‘Alids were Imāmīs and Zaydīs who generally restricted authority to ‘Alid imams and their partisans. It is also in the second century that many pro-‘Alids occupied ambiguous spaces as members of proto-Sunnī *ḥadīth* circles of transmission and critics of the theological and political persuasions of many of their teachers and students.²⁹⁶

This chapter surveys texts upholding *tafḍīl* ‘Alī in Sunnī *ḥadīth* literature. A brief review

²⁹⁴ See the entry of Ja‘far b. Sulaymān al-Ḍaba‘ī, who was considered a trustworthy authority in his transmissions despite his animosity for Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam al-buldān* (Beirut: 1979), 3:452.

²⁹⁵ See above, ch. 1, section II, 1D.

²⁹⁶ For a comprehensive study of these tensions, see Dann, “Contested Boundaries: The Reception of Shī‘ite Narrators in the Sunnī Tradition”.

of such literature problematizes the assumption that the topos is simply a Shī'ī assertion only found in Shī'ī works. While portrayals of 'Alī as the most meritorious figure after the Prophet and best fit to succeed him as caliph certainly appear in Shī'ī literature, these images are also present (if not buried) in Sunnī *ḥadīth* and historical sources. In fact, by the fifth century proponents of *tafḍīl* 'Alī included Shāfi'ī and Ḥanafī jurists who disagreed with and criticized adherents of Shī'ism. This study locates and contextualizes both the biographies and the literary contributions of pro-Alids in the Sunnī intellectual tradition who were marginalized as too “Shī'ī” years (sometimes centuries) after their deaths due to their belief in *tafḍīl* 'Alī. *Tafḍīl* 'Alī has survived as a minority theological tradition in Sunnism down to the modern period. Some of its proponents and their contributions in recent centuries are mentioned below.

M. Hodgson, L. Lewisohn, M. Molé, L. Ridgeon and R. Yildirim have noted the unparalleled status and central role of 'Alī in the spirituality of many Sufis active at the end of the 'Abbāsīd period and in Ilkhānīd territories due to policies of rapprochement with Shī'ism enacted by various rulers, the *futuwwa* movement, and numerous pro-'Alīd Sufi brotherhoods.²⁹⁷ This chapter complements these studies by identifying a few transmitters who were responsible for circulating *ḥadīth* that described 'Alī as the Prophet's most exalted

²⁹⁷ Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, 2:446, 452; Lakhani, Shah-Kazemi, and Lewisohn, *The Sacred Foundations of Justice in Islam: the teachings of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib* (Bloomington Ind.; North Vancouver B.C.: 2006), pp. 112-145; Marijan Molé, “Les Kubrawiyya entre Sunnisme et Shiisme,” *Revue des études islamiques* 29, (1961): 61-142; Ridgeon, *Morals and Mysticism in Persian Sufism: a history of Sufi-futuwwat in Iran* (New York: 2010), pp. 61-76, 92-99; Yildirim, “Shī'itisation of the Futuwwa Tradition in the Fifteenth Century”.

Companion in Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections. I identify proponents of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī who lived from the earliest period of extant literary activity (the second century) down to the eighth century *hijrī*. To complete this research I conduct two historiographical and one theological case study utilizing relevant literature from each genre. For the second century, I rely upon the *isnād-cum-matn* methodology developed by Harald Motzki, Behnam Sadeghi, and Gregor Schoeler to identify the geographic regions in which these reports circulated.²⁹⁸

The question of *tafḍīl* was inextricably tied to theories regarding the caliphate.²⁹⁹ While Mu‘tazilī and Ash‘arī theologians developed theories that allowed persons to rule even if there were other candidates superior to them,³⁰⁰ their compromises followed an earlier period in which ‘Uthmānī³⁰¹ and pro-‘Alid³⁰² transmitters had circulated a large number of *ḥadīth* that portrayed their heroes as the only legitimate candidate for the caliphate when they took office. Proponents of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī believed that ‘Alī had considered himself the best candidate for the caliphate at the time of the Prophet’s death. The two historiographical case studies below reveal that some influential and early ‘Uthmānīs accepted this motif of ‘Alī as historical fact as

²⁹⁸ For this methodology, see Harald Motzki, *The Origins of Islamic jurisprudence: Meccan fiqh before the classical schools* (Leiden: 2002); Behnam Sadeghi, “The Traveling Tradition Test,” *Der Islam*, 85 (2010), pp. 203–42; Gregor Schoeler, *The Biography of Muhammed: nature and authenticity* (New York: 2011).

²⁹⁹ For example, see Bāqillānī, *Manāqib*; Iskāfī, *al-Mi‘yār*; Jāḥiẓ, *al-‘Uthmāniyya*, ed. Hārūn (Cairo: 1955). See also Afsaruddin, *Excellence*.

³⁰⁰ Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 9:328–330; Juwaynī, *al-Irshād*, pp. 430–431; Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sultāniyya wa-‘l-wilāyāt al-dīniyya* (Cairo: 1978), p. 8.

³⁰¹ For *ḥadīth* legitimating the rule of the first three caliphs, see Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *al-Ṣawā‘iq al-muḥriqa*, pp. 3–115.

³⁰² For a pro-‘Alid Sunnī collection, see Kanjī, *Kifāyat al-ṭālib fī manāqib ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib wa-yalīhi al-Bayān fī akhbār Ṣāḥib al-Zamān* (Tehran: 1984). For a Shī‘ī collection, see Ṭabrisī, *al-Iḥtijāj* (Najaf: 1966).

well. Later ‘Uthmānīs and Sunnīs generally denied this image of ‘Alī and depicted him as strongly supporting the candidacy of the first three caliphs and advocating belief in their superiority to him.³⁰³ These two diametrically opposed portrayals of ‘Alī's conduct after the death of the Prophet are surveyed below.

In contrast to ‘Uthmānī reports that portrayed ‘Alī as eagerly pledging allegiance to Abū Bakr,³⁰⁴ it seems a few Marwānid-era texts substantiate the conflict-ridden narrative propounded by S. Jafri, S. Lucas and W. Madelung.³⁰⁵ The first case study examines various accounts of ‘Alī's refusal to pledge allegiance to Abū Bakr for six months as they appear in canonical Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections.³⁰⁶ I then identify the reasons for which such a portrayal, which contradicted later Sunnī dogma, appeared in canonical works. The chapter identifies Sunnīs who acknowledged this narrative as historically accurate and the few thinkers who espoused *tafḍīl* ‘Alī in their commentaries on this event.

The second case study investigates reports regarding ‘Alī's statements allegedly made during deliberations that preceded the election of ‘Uthmān. A matrix of reports in both Sunnī and Shī‘ī literature depict ‘Alī as delivering a speech in which he criticized the succession of his

³⁰³ For ‘Alī's belief in their superiority to him, see Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:195; Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim, *Kitāb al-sunna*, ed. al-Albānī (Beirut: 1993), pp. 555-561; Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *al-Ṣawā‘iq al-muḥriqa*, pp. 60-65; Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū‘ fatāwā*, 7:511-512; Samhūdī, *Jawāhir al-‘aqdayn fī faḍl al-sharafayn: sharaf al-‘ilm al-jalī wa-l-nasab al-Nabawī* (Beirut: 2003), pp. 248-250, 451-460 (for quotes from the ‘Alid imams as well). For ‘Alī's support for their candidacy, see below, n. 304.

³⁰⁴ Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 8:143; Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:76; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 2:447.

³⁰⁵ I am referring to Jafri, *Origins*; Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, pp. 221-238; Madelung, *The Succession to Muḥammad: a study of the early caliphate* (New York: 1996).

³⁰⁶ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 5:82; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 5:153. See the case studies below.

predecessors before explicating the reasons for which he was the best candidate for the caliphate. ‘Alī is portrayed as repeatedly challenging his peers to deny any of his unique merits with the refrain *anshudukum bi’llāh* (I appeal to you in the name of God...). The other Companions on the electoral council are portrayed as meekly confirming each of his merits. I trace recensions of the report, known as the *ḥadīth al-munāshada*, among proto-Sunnī *ḥadīth* transmitters and specifically note those that include an introductory complaint about the election of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar. Al-Bukhārī’s portrayal of ‘Alī seeking the caliphate after ‘Umar’s death compliments other non-canonical texts that indicate he did not expect or support ‘Uthmān’s subsequent election. I hypothesize that many of the individuals that appear in the transmission of the *ḥadīth al-munāshada* were members of the same intellectual circles that circulated versions of the final set of *ḥadīth* under investigation.

The third case study reviews *ḥadīth* attributed to the Prophet which explicitly described ‘Alī as “the best of mankind/of my community” (*‘Alī khayr al-bashar; khayr ummatī; khayr man atruku ba’dī*).

Proponents of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī cited many other *ḥadīth* about the merits of ‘Alī that endorsed their views.³⁰⁷ For example, *ḥadīth* were used to challenge the widespread practice of honoring Abū Bakr and ‘Umar respectively with the epithets *al-Ṣiddīq* and *al-Fārūq*. Some *ḥadīth* portray the Prophet as naming ‘Alī the grand witness (*al-ṣiddīq al-akbar*) to the truth and the ultimate

³⁰⁷ Kanjī, *Kifāyat al-ṭālib*; Qundūzī, *Yanābī’ al-mawadda* (Qum: [1995]).

criterion (*al-fārūq al-a'zam*).³⁰⁸ 'Alī was portrayed as qualitatively superior to and unlike other Companions in many other *ḥadīth* as well, three of which are briefly discussed here: the *ḥadīth al-ṭayr*,³⁰⁹ the “brothering” of 'Alī and the Prophet,³¹⁰ and the *ḥadīth al-manzila*.³¹¹ In the *ḥadīth al-ṭayr*, the Prophet is presented with a roasted bird, but prays that God first send the most beloved of His creatures to dine with him. At this point, 'Alī visits the Prophet's home, but the Prophet's servant turns him away a few times before allowing him to finally enter. The Prophet believes his prayer is answered and is delighted to see 'Alī who then dines with him. The reader is left with the impression that God considered 'Alī His most beloved creation after the Prophet. Sunnīs who considered 'Alī to have occupied a rank lower than Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān sometimes narrated the report with some trepidation.³¹² Others interpreted the report to refer to one specific dimension in which 'Alī was more beloved than his peers, rather than universally so. For example, Shāh 'Abd Al-'Azīz ibn Shāh Walī Allāh (d. 1239/1823) argued

³⁰⁸ Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:112; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, 7:498; Ibn Māja, *Sunan*, ed. 'Abd al-Bāqī (Beirut: 1954), 1:44. For further references, see Fīrūzābādī, *Faḍā'il al-khamsa*, 1:188-191, 2:87-9. Of course, these nicknames of 'Alī appear in early Shī'ī texts as well, see Ṣaffār, *Baṣā'ir al-darajāt fī faḍā'il Āl Muḥammad*, ed. Kuchabāghī (Tehran: 1983), p. 73; K. Sulaym ibn Qays, p. 156.

³⁰⁹ Bukhārī, *al-Ta'rikh al-kabīr*, 1:258; Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:130-1; Nasā'ī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, ed. Bindārī and Ḥasan (Beirut: 1991), 5:107; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 5:300. See also Fīrūzābādī, *Faḍā'il al-khamsa*, 2:189-195. Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Mardawayh apparently composed entire works dedicated to recensions of this report, see Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa'l-nihāya*, 7:390.

³¹⁰ Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:14; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī'āb*, 3:1098-9; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 5:300.

³¹¹ This report is very widely-circulated. For a small selection, see 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, ed. al-A'zamī (Beirut: 1970), 5:406, 11:206; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 1:170, 173, 175, 177, 179; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:28, 5:129; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, 7:496, 8:562; Ibn Māja, *Sunan*, 1:43, 45; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 7:120-121; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 5:302, 304.

³¹² Although he does not want to accept the report as authentic, al-Dhahabī also refrains from rejecting it altogether, see Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 13:233.

that the *ḥadīth* may only have indicated that God considered ‘Alī to be the Prophet’s most beloved dining companion.³¹³ Proponents of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī argued that this incident provided clear evidence that ‘Alī was more beloved and therefore superior in the sight of God than any other Companion.³¹⁴

In the second example, the Prophet divided early members of his community into pairs and instructed them to treat one another as “brothers.”³¹⁵ According to one report, it was on this occasion that Abū Bakr was paired with ‘Umar and Ṭalḥa with Zubayr,³¹⁶ highlighting the close ties that “brothers” apparently maintained with each other long after this incident. When the Companions had all paired up, ‘Alī reportedly came to the Prophet distressed and explained no one was paired with him. To his surprise, the Prophet responded, “you are *my brother* in this life and the hereafter.” Pro-‘Alids argued that the Prophet had paired like-minded men who shared similar sensibilities and could assist one another in spirituality. The obvious implication was that the Prophet considered no one in the community to be an appropriate match for ‘Alī but himself and vice versa.³¹⁷

³¹³ Dihlawī and Ālūsī, *Mukhtaṣar al-Tuḥfa al-Ithnā ‘ashariyya*, ed. al-Khaṭīb (Cairo: 1967), p. 164.

³¹⁴ Iskāfī, *al-Mi’yār*, pp. 224-225; Khuwārizmī, *al-Manāqib*, pp. 107-108. For a report in which al-Ḥākim states that the *ḥadīth* implied *tafḍīl* ‘Alī, see Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 17:168; Idem, *Ta’rīkh al-islām*, 28:127.

³¹⁵ In some recensions this incident occurs between early believers in Mecca. In others Meccans are paired with Medinese residents right after the Prophet’s *hijra*. Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr reasons that this incident occurred twice, see Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī‘āb*, 3:1098-9.

³¹⁶ Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:14.

³¹⁷ Iskāfī, *al-Mi’yār*, p. 208; Ījī, *Faḍā’il al-thaqalayn min kitāb Tawḍīḥ al-dalā’il ‘alā tarjīḥ al-faḍā’il*, ed. al-Birjandī (Tehran: 2007), p. 21. A number of the transmitters must have agreed with the assessment they attributed to

The topos of ‘Alī serving as the brother of the Prophet appears again in the *ḥadīth al-manzila* where the Prophet allegedly said to him, “you are unto me like Aaron unto Moses.”³¹⁸

The role of Aaron in the Qur’ānic narrative of prophetic history consequently led scholars to debate the extent to which ‘Alī was analogous to Aaron. Aaron is named as a vizier of Moses (Q20:29; Q25:35), his brother, and his partner (Q20:30-32). Elsewhere Aaron appears as the deputy of Moses over the Israelites when the latter enters seclusion for forty days (Q7:142). Aaron is charged with confirming the truth of Moses’ mission and speaking on his behalf (Q28:34). Sunnīs engaged in anti-Shī‘ī polemics followed early ‘Uthmānīs and generally sought to limit the extent to which ‘Alī could be compared to Aaron,³¹⁹ while pro-‘Alids argued the parallel was absolute.³²⁰ ‘Alī possessed all of the responsibilities of Aaron as the vizier and deputy of a Lawgiver and Messenger, but could not formally be considered a prophet since the same *ḥadīth* identified Muḥammad as the last of them.

Some considered ‘Alī to be the member of a household that was beyond any comparison. According to this report, the Prophet said, “We are all members of a (sacred)

Ḥudhayfa ibn al-Yamān, see Ibn al-Maghāzilī, *Manāqib ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib*, pp. 54-55. Ibn Ishāq seems to support *tafḍīl ‘Alī* when he agrees with Ḥudhayfa’s sentiments and words without naming Ḥudhayfa as his source, see Ibn Hishām, *Sīrat al-Nabī* (Cairo: 1963), 2:351.

³¹⁸ See above, note 311.

³¹⁹ Dihlawī and Ālūsī, *Mukhtaṣar al-Tuḥfa al-Ithnā ‘ashariyya*, pp. 163-164; Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *al-Ṣawā‘iq al-muḥriqa*, p. 49; Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal*, 4:78; Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 5:34-6, 7:326-341; Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid fī ‘ilm al-kalām* (Lahore: 1981), 2:291.

³²⁰ Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 13:211; Ibn Ṭalḥa, *Maṭālib al-sa’ūl*, pp. 114-5, 129-32; Iskāfī, *al-Mi’yār*, 219-221, 253. Al-‘Aynī also notes that the parallel between ‘Alī and Aaron could be considered absolute, see ‘Aynī, *Umdat al-qārī: sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Cairo: 1929), 16:214.

house. No one can compare to us (*naḥnu ahl bayt lā yuqās binā aḥad*).” This report is only weakly attested in the sources.³²¹ It is positively received by some Sunnīs who were not proponents of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī, but considered Hāshimids to be the noblest clan in the world.³²² The reception of reports that identified the Prophet’s family as beyond any comparison and ‘Alī as the Aaron of this community or the Prophet’s brother is outside the scope of this survey.

I. Topos I: The delay in pledging allegiance to Abū Bakr

‘Alī, Fāṭima, their kin from the clan of Hāshim, and their partisans are portrayed as expressing dissatisfaction and refusing to pledge allegiance to Abū Bakr for a number of months in both Sunnī and Shī‘ī literature. While the historical chronicles of al-Balādhurī, al-Mas‘ūdī, al-Ṭabarī, and al-Ya‘qūbī document reports in which ‘Alī and his partisans express some discontent over the election of Abū Bakr,³²³ the circulation of such reports in Sunnī canonical *ḥadīth* collections are largely overlooked in discussions of such a topos. Some Sunnīs have dismissed the topos of ‘Alī’s discontent with the elections of his predecessors as a spurious claim of the *rāfiḍa*.³²⁴ This chapter grounds the topos in Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections by briefly tracing its circulation and reception among proponents and opponents of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī.

³²¹ Daylamī, *al-Firdaws bi-ma’tḥūr al-khiṭāb*, ed. Zaghlūl (Beirut: 1986), 4:283; Ibn Mardawayh, *Manāqib* ‘Alī, p. 213; Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-‘ummāl*, 12:104; Qundūzī, *Yanābī’ al-mawadda*, 2: 68, 83, 114, 117.

³²² Daylamī, *al-Firdaws*, 2:29, 178, 3:187.

³²³ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 1:586; Mas‘ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab wa ma’ādin al-jawhar* (Qum: 1984), 2:301; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 2:443-444; Ya‘qūbī, *Ta’rīkh* (Beirut: 1960), 2:123-126. It should be noted that al-Mas‘ūdī and al-Ya‘qūbī were Shī‘īs.

³²⁴ Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *al-Ṣawā’iq al-muḥriqa*, p. 15; Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 1:518-20, 8:330; Juwaynī, *al-Irshād*, p. 428.

Upon the Prophet's death, the Muslim community in Medina reportedly segmented into three political blocs: those supporting the Hāshimids, the Medinese tribal chiefs, or the Meccan emigrants (*muhājirūn*) of the tribe of Quraysh. While 'Uthmānī narratives of the 'Abbāsīd period gloss over and diminish the existence of these political differences among Companions, a few reports below accentuate them.

A. Ḥadīth 1: The segmentation of the community

A widely-transmitted report from al-Zuhri (d. 124/742) describes a sermon of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb in which he angrily responds to those who characterized Abū Bakr's succession as a precipitate affair (*falta*).³²⁵ While some recensions explicitly portray the Companions who aroused 'Umar's anger as partisans of 'Alī,³²⁶ their identities are suppressed in most sources. This survey is only concerned with establishing the fact that classical *ḥadīth* collections (in addition to *maghāzī* works) included the motif of the community dividing into three blocs after the Prophet's death. Since such texts portray pro-'Alids as comprising a faction opposite to that of Abū Bakr and 'Umar, *tafḍīl 'Alī* emerges as an undercurrent that proto-Sunnī transmitters acknowledged once existed in contrast to *tafḍīl al-shaykhayn* in the era of the Companions. Fragments of this long *ḥadīth* that appear in other sources are excluded from the

³²⁵ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 1:583, 591, 5:500; Ibn Hishām, *Sīrat al-Nabī*, 4:1071-3; Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 2:445-6.

³²⁶ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 1:581. See also El-Hibri, *Parable and Politics*, p. 355 n. 63; Madelung, *Succession*, pp. 28-31.

survey below when the topos of the community dividing into three blocs is missing.³²⁷

al-Bukhārī transmits the long report which includes the following excerpt from a sermon delivered by ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb:

“No one amongst you can command the allegiance and popularity that Abū Bakr once enjoyed. When the Prophet died, indeed news reached us that the *anṣār* opposed (*khālafū*) us and that all of them had gathered at the portico of Banū Sā‘ida. Furthermore, ‘Alī, Zubayr and others with them also opposed us. The *muhājirūn*, however, became united in their support for Abū Bakr...”³²⁸

The recension received by Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (and the Medinese jurist Mālik ibn Anas) is fairly similar except for three slight differences. The pro-‘Alid and pro-Medinese parties held back (*takhallafū*) from the *muhājirūn* rather than opposed (*khālafū*) them, the pro-‘Alids are mentioned before the *anṣār* rather than after them, and the location in which pro-‘Alids congregated after the Prophet’s death is identified as the house of Fāṭima. ‘Umar states,

“No one amongst you can command the allegiance and popularity that Abū Bakr once enjoyed. When the Prophet died, indeed news reached us that ‘Alī, Zubayr and those who were like-minded held back from us [and remained] in the house of Fāṭima, the daughter of God’s Messenger. Furthermore, the *anṣār* collectively held back from us [and gathered] at the portico of Banū Sā‘ida, but the *muhājirūn* became united in their support for Abū Bakr...”³²⁹

Both of these texts suffer from the awkwardly worded *innahu kāna min khabarinā* (“indeed news reached us”) that ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s recension from Ma‘mar resolves:

³²⁷ For example, Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaḥ*, 8:570-1; Nasā’ī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 4:272-3.

³²⁸ Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 8:142; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 8:25-7.

³²⁹ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 1:55.

“No one today can command the allegiance and popularity that Abū Bakr once enjoyed. Indeed, he was the best among us (*innahu kāna min khayrinā*) when the Prophet died. However, ‘Alī, Zubayr and others with him (‘Alī) parted ways with him (Abū Bakr) [and gathered] in the house of Fāṭima. Furthermore, the *anṣār* collectively held back from us [and gathered] at the portico of Banū Sā‘ida, but the *muhājirūn* became united in their support for Abū Bakr...”³³⁰

The Transmission of Ḥadīth 1

Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī appears to be the common link for Ḥadīth 1 and the principle source responsible for the circulation of the long report in the early second century. Al-Zuhrī became a towering figure in Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections partly due to students who flourished in a period when it became common for religious scholars to produce books for public consumption.³³¹ Al-Zuhrī not only documented his own reports, but also willingly shared his work with students who made copies and included them in their literary works. His ‘Uthmānī sensibilities, patronage under multiple Marwānid caliphs, tutelage under many famous scholars, and students who transmitted his literary contributions ensured the proliferation and preservation of his transmissions.³³²

Al-Zuhrī narrates this report on the authority of ‘Ubayd Allāh b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Utba b. Mas‘ūd (d. ca 98/716), one of the seven jurists of Medina active near the end of the first century. Al-Zuhrī reportedly studied with ‘Ubayd Allāh in Medina and occasionally

³³⁰ ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *al-Muṣannaḥ*, 5:442; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt*, 2:153.

³³¹ Abbott, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri* (Chicago: 1957), 2:22-34, 174-9.

³³² Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 5:326ff, 7:226; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 4:197; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a‘yān*, 4:178. See also *E.I.*¹, s.v. “al-Zuhrī” (J. Horowitz); *E.I.*², s.v. “al-Zuhrī” (M. Lecker); Michael Lecker, “Biographical Notes on Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī,” *Journal of Semitic Studies* 41, no. 1 (1996): 21-64.

transmitted reports on his authority.³³³ ‘Ubayd Allāh narrated the report on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās with whom he studied for many years.³³⁴ Dating the tradition to a period earlier than al-Zuhrī’s lifetime or to his sources in Medina is outside the scope of this investigation. More important to this study is the role the report played in articulating the views of al-Zuhrī and his prominent successors regarding Islamic history. The content of al-Zuhrī’s report (and Ḥadīth 2 below) secures a portrayal of ‘Alī as a rival to Abū Bakr after the Prophet’s death. This topos circulated in the Marwānid period among prominent proto-Sunnī transmitters active in Medina. However, by the start of the third century this portrayal began to crumble under the influence of an ‘Uthmānī portrayal of ‘Alī that Sayf ibn ‘Umar and others promoted in Kūfa. In Sayf’s counter report, ‘Alī is so enthusiastic in pledging allegiance to Abū Bakr that he leaves his home without wearing undergarments and sends for them only once he has pledged allegiance.³³⁵ In Sayf’s timeline, ‘Alī pledged allegiance to the caliph immediately upon hearing of his succession and no rivalry is acknowledged.

‘Uthmānī reception of pro-‘Alid claims to political and religious authority varied greatly. Some were hostile and dismissive, others denied the authenticity of such claims by providing counter-reports, and others were more conciliatory.³³⁶ Al-Zuhrī’s reports in this

³³³ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 4:475-478. See also *E.I.*¹, s.v. “al-Zuhrī” (J. Horovitz); *E.I.*², s.v. “al-Zuhrī” (M. Lecker); Abd al-Aziz Duri, “Al-Zuhrī: A Study on the Beginnings of History Writing in Islam,” *BSOAS* 19, no. 1 (1957): 1-12.

³³⁴ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 4:475.

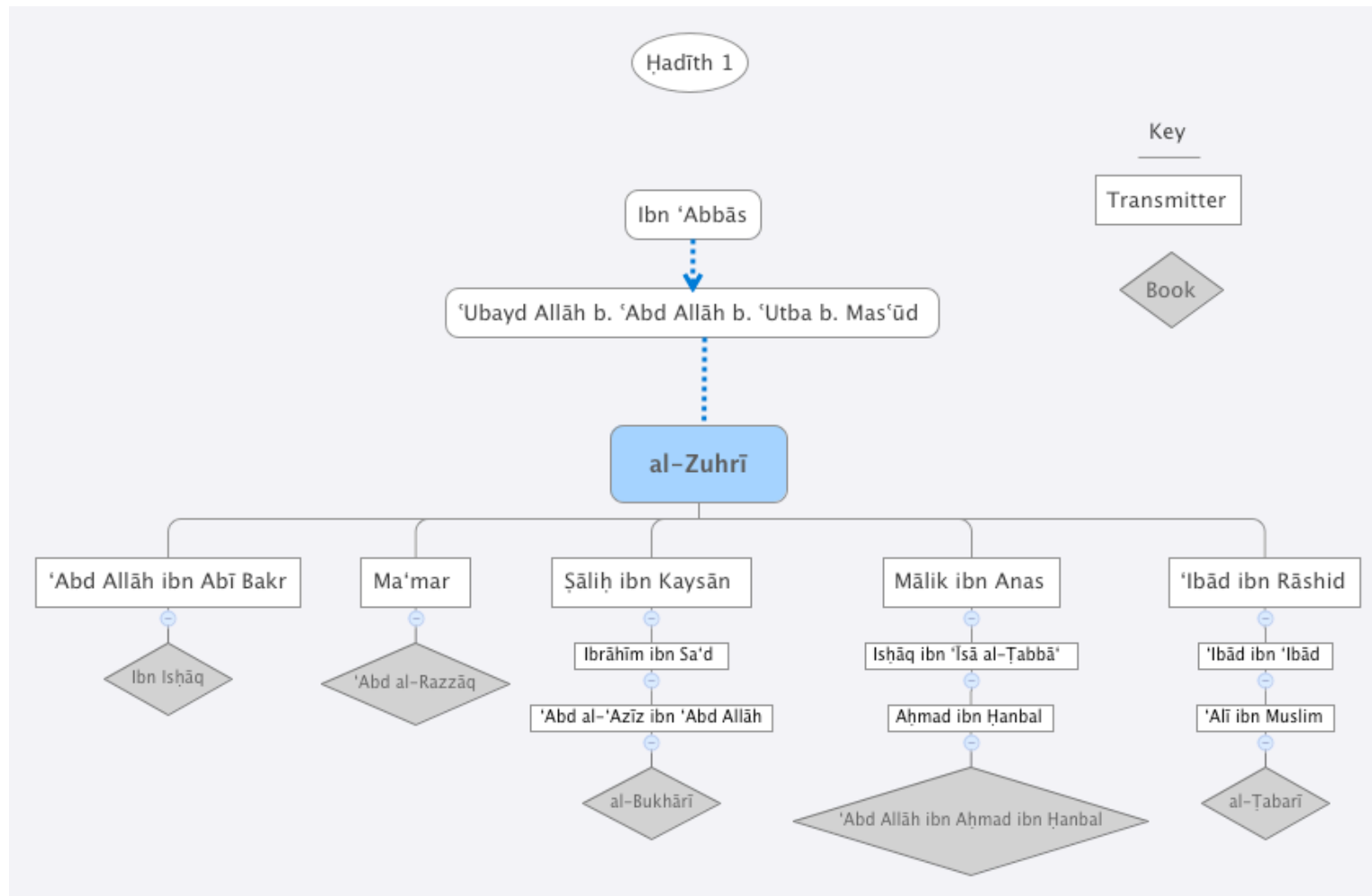
³³⁵ Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, 2:447.

³³⁶ A comparison of these three approaches is included in the conclusion below.

chapter could be considered conciliatory to proponents of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī since they corroborated the historicity of portrayals of ‘Alī and his family disagreeing with Abū Bakr’s legislative and executive authority rather than avidly supporting it. In Ḥadīth 2 below, al-Zuhrī attempts to diminish the severity of the rivalry between the two by portraying them as remorseful over the conflict and having the utmost respect for each other. Later Sunnīs who accepted Sayf’s narrative of history argued that ‘Alī and his supporters neither criticized Abū Bakr’s succession nor questioned his preeminence. These Sunnīs argued that Ḥadīth 1 only indicated that ‘Alī and his partisans gathered at Fāṭima’s home to mourn the Prophet and keep his daughter company.³³⁷ For example, Ibn Kathīr argued that ‘Alī only renewed his pledge of allegiance after Fāṭima’s death to demonstrate his loyalty to the caliph and reconcile a feud over the Prophet’s estates—not the caliphate.³³⁸ According to Ibn Kathīr, ‘Alī never questioned Abū Bakr’s candidacy as caliph and had pledged with everyone else upon his succession.

³³⁷ ‘Aynī, *‘Umdat al-qārī*, 17:258-9.

³³⁸ Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya*, 5:270, 6:333-4.



B. Ḥadīth 2: ‘Alī’s delay in pledging allegiance

Unlike Sayf ibn ‘Umar and other mild ‘Uthmānīs in Kūfa, al-Zuhrī portrayed ‘Alī as someone who was dissatisfied with the succession of Abū Bakr and his own absence from the deliberations. Ḥadīth 2 was a widely transmitted report that interested Shī‘ī polemicists for a number of topoi: Fāṭima’s anger with Abū Bakr, her request to maintain ownership of the Prophet’s estates, her burial at night due to her feud with the caliph, and ‘Alī’s refusal to pledge allegiance for six months. Sunnī commentators like al-Nawawī (d. 676/1277) and Ibn Kathīr attempted to diminish the apparent rivalry between the family of ‘Alī and Abū Bakr by arguing that ‘Alī never questioned Abū Bakr’s right to succession. According to al-Nawawī, Ḥadīth 2 only indicated that ‘Alī became upset that deliberations occurred in his absence.³³⁹ Ibn Kathīr argued that Ḥadīth 2 only described the context that led ‘Alī to pledge a second time to Abū Bakr after an unrelated feud.³⁴⁰ Both of these authors charitably read Ḥadīth 2 to defuse al-Zuhrī’s portrayal of ‘Alī that potentially challenged Sunnī conceptions of his unyielding support for Abū Bakr’s caliphate.

Ḥadīth 2 is narrated through the following transmitters: al-Zuhrī-‘Urwa b. Zubayr-‘Ā’isha. Reports possessing this chain of transmitters do not shy away from portraying ‘Alī and

³³⁹ Nawawī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim bi-sharḥ al-Nawawī* (Beirut: 1987), 12:78-9.

³⁴⁰ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 7:379; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya*, 6:333-4.

his family as individuals in conflict with Abū Bakr and his daughter ‘Ā’isha.³⁴¹ For example, in some reports of the *Ifk* incident, ‘Alī is portrayed as encouraging the Prophet to divorce ‘Ā’isha.³⁴² According to al-Zuhrī, this leads ‘Ā’isha to remark that ‘Alī had been injurious to her in this affair (*musī’an fi amrī*).³⁴³ Al-Zuhrī may have transmitted such reports for a few reasons. First, his pro-Abū Bakr and pro-Zubayrid informants in Medina, whether named in the chain or anonymous, probably considered ‘Alī and his family rivals to Abū Bakr and his family upon the death of the Prophet, at the Battle of the Camel, and during the caliphate of Ibn Zubayr. Second, al-Zuhrī’s Umayyad patrons reportedly accepted a historical narrative in which ‘Alī showed jealousy and opposed the succession of the first three caliphs.³⁴⁴ Finally, ‘Uthmānīs in the Marwānid period do not seem to have considered ‘Alī’s caliphate legitimate or developed a policy of charitably rereading reports about his conflicts with other Companions.

al-Bukhārī and others transmit the following report on the authority of al-Zuhrī-‘Urwa b. Zubayr-‘Ā’isha:

Fāṭima, the daughter of the Prophet, sent word to Abū Bakr requesting her inheritance from the Messenger of God, (specifically) that which [he] received from God as spoils in Medina, Fadak and that which remained of the *khumus* of Khaybar. However, Abū Bakr responded, “God’s Messenger said, ‘*lā nūrath mā taraknāhu ṣadaqa*.’³⁴⁵ The family of

³⁴¹ See below, ch. 4, section III.A-C.

³⁴² Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 3:155, 5:58, 6:7, 8:163; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 8:115.

³⁴³ This report is transmitted in response to the Marwānid belief that ‘Alī was the culprit who slandered ‘Ā’isha, see ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān* (Riyadh: 1989), 3:52; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 2:160; Ibn Shabba, *Ta’rīkh al-Madīna al-munawwara*, ed. Shaltūt (Qum: 1989), 1:337; Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr fi al-tafsīr bi-al-ma’t’hūr* (Cairo: 1897), 5:32. For the reception of this report, see the Conclusion, section I.E.

³⁴⁴ See below ch. 3, appendix, section III.

³⁴⁵ The statement is left untranslated due to historic disagreements in interpreting it. The Sunnī tradition

Muḥammad only eats from this [public] property (with no rights of ownership).’ By God, I will not allow the public endowment(s) of God’s Messenger to undergo any shifts in (legal) status after his death. I shall manage them as God’s Messenger used to manage them.”

So Abū Bakr refused to relinquish any of it to Fāṭima. Thereafter, Fāṭima became upset with Abū Bakr and avoided him on account of this affair. She ceased speaking to him for the rest of her life. After the Prophet, she lived for six months. When she died, her husband ‘Alī buried her at night and performed the funeral prayers for her without informing Abū Bakr.

In the lifetime of Fāṭima, folks held ‘Alī in high esteem, but when she died, ‘Alī could see from their faces that they no longer did. For that reason, he resolved to reconcile with Abū Bakr and pledge allegiance to him, for he had not offered his allegiance in those months. So ‘Alī sent word to Abū Bakr, “come to us and do not let anyone come with you,” articulating his aversion to ‘Umar showing up (as well). ‘Umar responded, “Never! By God, you shall not go to them alone!”

“What do you think they will do to me? By God, I shall visit them!” answered Abū Bakr. Abū Bakr appeared before them. ‘Alī began by proclaiming the testimony of faith (*tashahhada*) and said, “We acknowledge your merit and that which God has conferred upon you. We have not considered you unworthy of a bounty that God has directed to you. However, you seized this authority from us in an authoritarian manner (*istabdadtā ‘alaynā bi’l-amr*)³⁴⁶ when we believed that we had a claim to it due to our kinship with the Messenger of God.”

[‘Alī spoke] until Abū Bakr’s eyes filled with tears... ‘Alī then said to Abū Bakr, “I promise to pledge allegiance to you this afternoon.”

After Abū Bakr prayed *zuhr*, he ascended the pulpit and proclaimed the testimony of faith before mentioning ‘Alī’s affair, his decision to withhold the pledge of allegiance, the excuses that [‘Alī] had previously offered to him for doing so. ‘Alī then began by requesting (God’s) pardon and proclaiming the testimony of faith. He extolled Abū Bakr³⁴⁷ and explained that his own actions had not been motivated by a belief that Abū

understood the Prophet’s words in the following way, “we do not leave inheritance. *That which we leave behind is a public endowment (ṣadaqa^{tan})*.” Shi‘ī thinkers either rejected Abū Bakr’s report as fabricated or claimed that he misunderstood the Prophet who said, “we do not leave as inheritance *that which we have left as a public endowment (ṣadaqa^{tan})*,” see ‘Aynī, *Umdat al-qārī*, 15:20; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya*, 5:312; Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 12:74. Cf. Mufīd, *Ḥadīth naḥnu ma‘āshir al-anbiyā’*, ed. al-Jalālī (Beirut: 1993); Ṣadr, *Fadāḥ fī al-ta’rīkh* ([Qum]: 1994), pp. 159–162.

³⁴⁶ Alternatively, “in this affair, you seized it from us in an authoritarian manner”

³⁴⁷ *fa-‘azzama ḥaqqā Abī Bakr*. ‘Abd al-Razzāq has *fa-‘azzama min ḥaqqi Abī Bakr wa faḍīlatihi wa sābiqiyyatihi* which

Bakr had been unworthy or that God had not bestowed a merit upon him. [‘Alī explained,] “rather we believe that we have a claim to this authority, so when he seized [it] from us, we sensed anger in our souls.” On account of this, Muslims became content (with ‘Alī) and said, “you have done the right thing.” Muslims became friendly with ‘Alī once he returned to that which was considered *ma’rūf* (correct) in this affair.³⁴⁸

In this report, members of the community are portrayed as collectively exerting pressure on ‘Alī to pledge allegiance to Abū Bakr by exhibiting scorn for him in their faces. Fāṭima was revered so highly that this pro-Abū Bakr faction refrained from manifesting their disdain for ‘Alī’s political claim or conduct until after her death. ‘Alī also expresses his aversion to ‘Umar, or at the very least, his aversion to ‘Umar accompanying Abū Bakr to the private gathering in his home. ‘Alī’s statement confirmed a well-known theme for a Sunnī audience that ‘Umar was allegedly hot-tempered.³⁴⁹ According to the transmitters of this report, ‘Umar’s presence had the potential to escalate tensions rather than defuse them. When Abū Bakr visits ‘Alī’s home, the latter explains that his refusal to pledge allegiance did not come from envy or a denial of Abū Bakr’s popularity and stature among members of the community. Rather, ‘Alī and his supporters were unhappy that Abū Bakr and his party seized power without allowing them to make their case. In spite of his criticism of the method by which Abū

gives the impression that he praised Abū Bakr and discussed his merit as a senior Companion rather than Abū Bakr’s “right” to authority, see ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, 5:474.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., 5:472-4; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 5:82-3; Ṭabarānī, *Musnad al-Shāmiyīn*, 2nd ed. (Beirut: 1996), 4:198-9; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 2:447-449; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 5:153-4.

³⁴⁹ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 7:378. One recension explicitly alludes to this point, when it states that ‘Alī did not wish for ‘Umar to attend *li-shiddatihi*, see ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, 5:473; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 2:448 (for a similar note).

Bakr seized power, ‘Alī’s brief concession speech reaffirmed at least three beliefs regarding the past for later Sunnī audiences:

(1) Despite some reservations, ‘Alī’s words confirmed his belief that Abū Bakr was a person of merit and a legitimate ruler. Sunnīs were invested in discrediting reports that circulated in *rāfiḍī* circles that portrayed ‘Alī and his house manifestly condemning Abū Bakr as a usurper of his right to the caliphate.³⁵⁰ Some argued that if ‘Alī truly believed that Abū Bakr had wrongfully become caliph, then ‘Alī’s famous valor and strength would have led him to revolt.³⁵¹ Some theologians contrasted ‘Alī’s conduct late in life with his actions during the reign of Abū Bakr. ‘Alī’s decision to go to war with rivals decades later served as evidence that he fought for the office only after he believed that he had rightfully obtained it.³⁵²

(2) To an audience that believed in pre-determinism and salvation histories in which a deity guided events in the community, Hadith 2 and other reports about ‘Alī’s conduct before Abū Bakr’s succession, served as reminders that humans (i.e. ‘Alī) may expect one outcome, while God has plans for another. For example, ‘Alī’s uncle, ‘Abbās ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, reportedly offered to pledge allegiance to him before Abū Bakr’s succession.³⁵³ In these

³⁵⁰ For these reports, see K. Sulaym ibn Qays, pp. 148-161, 224-259; Majlisī, *Bihār al-anwār*, 30:145-403.

³⁵¹ Samhūdī, *Jawāhir al-‘aqdayn fī faḍl al-sharafayn*, pp. 248, 451-2; Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-naḍira fī manāqib al-‘ashara* (Beirut: 1984), 1:246.

³⁵² ‘Abd al-Jabbār (attrib.), *Tathbīt dalā’il al-nubuwwa*, 1:232-3; Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *al-Ṣawā’iq al-muḥriqa*, pp. 62-63; Ibn Ḥazm, *Kitāb al-Fiṣal fī al-milal wa’l-ahwā’ wa’l-niḥal* (Beirut: 1974), 4:97.

³⁵³ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 5:509; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:423-6; Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā* (Beirut: 1957-1968), 2:245-7; Ibn Ṭalḥa, *al-‘Iqd al-farīd li’l-Malik al-Sa’id* (Cairo: 1888), pp. 44-45; Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-nizā’*

accounts, ‘Alī declines the offer because he does not fathom the possibility that the community would elect a successor other than him. ‘Alī consistently appears surprised at the turn of events.

Sunnī scholarship generally considered ‘Alī mistaken in his initial opposition to pledging allegiance to Abū Bakr.³⁵⁴ They shared the sentiments of Companions in Ḥadīth 2 who only became happy with ‘Alī once he pledged allegiance. Some commentators like al-Nawawī and Ibn Kathīr wished to absolve ‘Alī of any wrongdoing – and Shī‘ī sentiment – by arguing that his pledge of allegiance was delayed for other reasons.³⁵⁵ The early community’s collective approval of Abū Bakr signified a divine decree in favor of his succession.³⁵⁶ Sunnī conceptions of *jamā‘a* and *ijmā‘* meant that anyone who opposed such a consensus was misguided.³⁵⁷ Ibn Taymiyya alludes to such a worldview when he criticizes Sa‘d ibn ‘Ubadā for refusing to pledge allegiance to Abū Bakr and following his *hawā*.³⁵⁸ Thus, ‘Alī’s concession

wa-’l-takhāṣum fīmā bayna banī Umayya wa-banī Hāshim (Cairo: 1988), pp. 74-76.

³⁵⁴ Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal*, 4:80-81, 126; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Kashf al-mushkil min ḥadīth al-ṣaḥīḥayn*, ed. Bawwāb (Riyadh: 1997), 1:30; Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-naḍira*, 1:247-9.

³⁵⁵ Some argued that ‘Alī did not pledge because he made an oath to compile the Qur’ān first, see ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, 5:450; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī‘āb*, 3:974. For the arguments of al-Nawawī, Ibn Kathīr and Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, see above, n. 339-340.

³⁵⁶ For the error of those who opposed Abū Bakr’s succession, which is portrayed as a consensus, see Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan*, 2:397; Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *al-Ṣawā‘iq al-muḥriqa*, pp. 13-16.

³⁵⁷ On the topic of opposing the *jamā‘a*, see ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, 2:379; Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan*, 2:426; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 2:306, 488; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 8:87; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, 8:597, 599; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 12:177-178; Jaṣṣāṣ, *Uṣūl al-fiqh = al-Fuṣūl fī al-uṣūl*, ed. Nashamī ([Kuwait]: 1988), 3:262-3; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 6:21; Nawawī, *Rawḍat al-ṭālibīn*, ed. Mu‘awwad (Beirut: 1992), 7:27; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 4:226.

³⁵⁸ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 8:335. Ibn Taymiyya only acknowledges that ‘Alī may have delayed in pledging of allegiance, but not that he ever opposed Abū Bakr’s rule, see *ibid.*, 6:176, 8:270, 330, 335. Ibn Taymiyya also rejects

speech appeals to these ideals when it seems to ascribe Abū Bakr's political ascendancy and popular support to divine favor and agency (i.e. "we acknowledge your merit and that which God has conferred upon you..."). For proponents of *tafḍīl* 'Alī, 'Alī's words only signified a public admission that it was neither in his interests nor of benefit to the community to continue challenging Abū Bakr's authority. Abū Bakr's *faḍl* and *khayr* (merit and bounty) were allusions to the widespread support he enjoyed among his constituents.

(3) Ḥadīth 2 confirmed for 'Uthmānī and Sunnī audiences that 'Alī and Fāṭima made mistakes in their conflicts with Abū Bakr, while the latter acted righteously. 'Alī and Fāṭima are portrayed as ignorantly opposing the Prophet's wishes about his own inheritance in their conflict with the first caliph. Abū Bakr's decision to designate all of the Prophet's estates as public endowments is justified through an explicit command from the Prophet, while his caliphate is legitimated through pre-determinist conceptions of God and salvation history. It was God who bestowed such authority upon Abū Bakr and public approval was an indication of divine sanction for him to rule.

II. Topos II: 'Alī's dissatisfaction with the succession of previous caliphs

A. Ḥadīth 3: 'Alī and 'Abbās acknowledge their dissatisfaction with the first two caliphs

Following al-Zuhri's portrayal of Fāṭima in Ḥadīth 2, Ḥadīth 3 depicts 'Alī as one who

reports in which 'Alī and Fāṭima disagree with the ruling of Abū Bakr regarding the Prophet's estates since that would constitute a rejection of God's judgment, a major sin and a break from the *jamā'a*, see *ibid.*, 4:256-8.

argued with Abū Bakr and ‘Umar about ownership and/or management of the Prophet’s estates. Al-Zuhrī did not have qualms in believing that ‘Alī supported Fāṭima’s claims against Abū Bakr and maintained them years later in the reign of ‘Umar. In contrast, some Sunnīs who depicted ‘Alī as a partisan of the first two caliphs argued that ‘Alī agreed with his predecessors on this issue and cited the absence of any evidence of him taking control of the estates during his caliphate.³⁵⁹ The latter group interpreted Ḥadīth 3 as evidence that ‘Alī concurred with ‘Umar that Abū Bakr’s judgment regarding the estates was correct and that the Prophet would have viewed them this way.

By the ‘Abbāsīd period, both ‘Alids and the ‘Abbāsīd caliphs made competing claims to being legal heirs to the Prophet, his estates and the caliphate. ‘Alids in the Marwānīd period also reportedly litigated over management of the public endowments of the Prophet and ‘Alī.³⁶⁰ For an ‘Uthmānī audience, when ‘Alī and ‘Abbās appeared in Ḥadīth 3 as litigants before ‘Umar, the report established (1) ‘Umar’s magnanimity and piety as a ruler, (2) the pettiness of both ‘Alid and ‘Abbāsīd claims to property, and (3) persistent ignorance among Hāshimīds regarding the Prophet’s ruling that prophets leave no material inheritance. The last point meant that from the time of Abū Bakr to the era in which Sunnī audiences encountered Ḥadīth 3, whether

³⁵⁹ ‘Aynī, *Umdat al-qārī*, 25:43; Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *al-Ṣawā’iq al-muḥriqa*, p. 40; Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 4:220. For a similar discussion regarding ‘Alī’s conduct as caliph and the share of Hāshimīds in the *khums*, see Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 6:342-3; Sarakhsī, *Kitāb al-Mabsūṭ* (Beirut: 1986), 10:9-11.

³⁶⁰ Abū Naṣr Bukhārī, *Sirr al-silsila al-‘Alawiyya*, ed. Baḥr al-‘Ulūm (Najaf: 1962), p. 97; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 5:482.

in ‘Abbāsīd, Mamluk, or later periods, Hāshimids were immortalized as people who would mistakenly challenge the Prophet’s alleged wishes. Since Hāshimids actively litigated over these matters in the Marwānīd and early ‘Abbāsīd periods (at least until the reign of al-Mutwakkil),³⁶¹ Ḥadīth 3 seemed to voice the sentiments of ‘Uthmānī contemporaries who critiqued their conduct as covetous and uninformed. Shī’īs invariably focused their attention on Ḥadīth 3’s motif of ‘Alī as a *rāfiḍī*,³⁶² which manifestly appeared in some recensions and was suppressed in others. A survey of Ḥadīth 3 recensions follows below.

(A) *The most explicit versions*

In at least two sources, ‘Umar lambasts ‘Alī and ‘Abbās for viewing him and Abū Bakr as unjust usurpers of the caliphate. The most explicit versions appeared in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s *Muṣannaḥ*. Muslim reports the following event on the authority of al-Zuhrī:

[‘Umar] then turned to al-‘Abbās and ‘Alī and said, “I appeal to both of you in the name of God, Lord of the Heavens and Earth, do you acknowledge that God’s Messenger said, ‘*lā nūrath mā taraknāhu ṣadaqa*.’”³⁶³

“Yes,” they said...

“So when God’s Messenger died, Abū Bakr said, ‘I am the representative (*walī*) of God’s Messenger,’ so you both came (to him). You (‘Abbās) sought your share in the inheritance of your nephew, while he sought his wife’s share in the inheritance of her father,” ‘Umar explained.

“But Abū Bakr said God’s Messenger once stated, ‘*lā nūrath mā taraknā[hu] ṣadaqa*.’

³⁶¹ Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 16:217.

³⁶² Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Ṭarā’if fī ma’rifat madhāhib al-tawā’if* (Qum: 1979), pp. 270-274; Tustarī, *al-Ṣawārim al-murhiqa fī naqd al-Ṣawā’iq al-muḥriqa* (Tehran: 1948), p. 164.

³⁶³ Sunnīs and Shī’īs historically differed upon how to understand this statement, see Ḥadīth 2 above.

Consequently, both of you considered him a lying, sinful, deceitful, and treacherous man (*kādhīb^{an} āthim^{an} ghādir^{an} khā'in^{an}*), but God knows that he was trustworthy, righteous, rightly-guided, and correct (*tāb' li'l-ḥaqq*). Then Abū Bakr died and I became the representative of God's Messenger and the representative of Abū Bakr although both of you considered me a lying, sinful, deceitful, and treacherous man. Nonetheless, God knows that I am trustworthy, righteous, rightly-guided, and correct. So I managed [the estates] until you [i.e. 'Abbās] came to me alone. Then he [i.e. 'Alī visited] as well. Afterwards, you allied with one another and approached (me) jointly. 'Hand them over to us,' both of you petitioned. 'If you like, I will hand them over to you under the condition that you swear to God that you manage them as God's Messenger used to manage them,' I responded. So you took control of them only in this way. Is this not the case?" he ('Umar) asked. "Yes," they both answered...³⁶⁴

'Abd al-Razzāq reports that 'Umar said,

"So when God's Messenger died, Abū Bakr said, 'I am the representative of God's Messenger after him...' then turning to 'Alī and 'Abbās, ['Umar] said, "and you two claimed that he was unjust and wicked (*ẓālim fājir*) on account of this, but God knows that he was trustworthy, righteous, and correct. After Abū Bakr I managed [the estates] for two years of my rule. I administered them as God's Messenger and Abū Bakr used to administer them although you two claimed that I was unjust and wicked. Nonetheless, God knows that I am trustworthy, righteous, and correct in this affair..."³⁶⁵

(B) *Partial censorship*

Al-Bukhārī transmits censored versions in which the views of 'Alī and 'Abbās are not explicitly stated, but 'Umar criticizes them for objecting to his and Abū Bakr's succession. The 'Uthmānī sentiments of certain transmitters and their audience led some to suppress the incendiary descriptions of the first two caliphs that appeared in (A). It is generally accepted

³⁶⁴ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 5:152-3.

³⁶⁵ 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī, *al-Muṣannaḥ*, 5:470-1.

that ‘Uthmānīs began to rehabilitate the image of ‘Alī by the era of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, so the most extreme images of him as an illegitimate claimant to the caliph or assassin of ‘Uthmān were replaced with slightly better depictions. If in the Marwānid period al-Zuhrī could still circulate reports in which ‘Alī opposed his predecessors outright, by the time of al-Bukhārī this was no longer the case. As a newly legitimized caliph among the ‘*Uthmāniyya*, it was important that ‘Alī was also depicted as an ‘Uthmānī who praised and deferred to his predecessors and opposed any hints of *tashayyu’* or *rafḍ*. In Ḥadīth 3, ‘Alī’s opinions about his predecessors were partially censored, so they became vague statements. For example, in one report ‘Umar states that ‘Alī claimed “that Abū Bakr was this and that (*kadhā wa-kadhā*).” In C recensions (below) ‘Alī’s negative sentiments are fully censored and there is no indication that ‘Alī opposed the judgment or authority of Abū Bakr or ‘Umar. Al-Bukhārī narrates on the authority of al-Zuhrī that ‘Umar said,

“Then God’s Messenger died and Abū Bakr said, ‘I am the representative (*walī*) of God’s Messenger,’ so Abū Bakr took control of [the estates]. He administered them as God’s Messenger used to do so in spite of you two.” Here, ‘Umar turned to ‘Alī and ‘Abbās and continued, “[in spite of you two] *saying about Abū Bakr what you used to say!* God knows that he was trustworthy, righteous, rightly-guided, and correct. When God made Abū Bakr pass away, I said, ‘I am the representative of God’s Messenger and Abū Bakr’ and I took control of them for two years of my rule. I administered them as God’s Messenger and Abū Bakr used to administer them and God knows that I am trustworthy, righteous, rightly-guided, and correct in this matter...”³⁶⁶

In another recension, al-Bukhārī reports that ‘Umar said,

³⁶⁶ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 5:24.

“Then God caused his Prophet to pass away and Abū Bakr said, ‘I am the representative of God’s Messenger,’ so Abū Bakr took control of them. He administered them as God’s Messenger used to do in spite of you two,” turning to ‘Alī and ‘Abbās, [‘Umar] continued, “*claiming that Abū Bakr was this and that (kadhā wa-kadhā)*, but God knows that he was trustworthy, righteous, rightly-guided and correct.”³⁶⁷

(C) Full censorship

In C recensions, there is no indication that ‘Alī or ‘Abbās opposed Abū Bakr or ‘Umar’s succession or their judgment regarding the Prophet’s estates. In this portrayal, ‘Umar discusses the Prophet’s estates and praises Abū Bakr as a Rightly-Guided Caliph and the Hāshimids do not appear as antagonists. C texts provided Sunnī audiences with Abū Bakr and ‘Umar’s judgment regarding the Prophet’s estates while removing any possible material from the historical context that ‘Uthmānīs and later universalists³⁶⁸ would have considered objectionable.

al-Bukhārī reports from ‘Umar,

“Then God caused his Prophet to pass away and Abū Bakr said, ‘I am the representative of God’s Messenger,’ so Abū Bakr took control of [the estates]. He administered them as God’s Messenger used to do and God knows that he was trustworthy, righteous, rightly-guided, and correct. When God made Abū Bakr pass away and I became the representative of Abū Bakr, I took control of them for two years of my rule. I administered them as God’s Messenger and Abū Bakr used to administer them and God knows that I am trustworthy, righteous, rightly-guided, and correct in this matter...”³⁶⁹

³⁶⁷ Ibid., 6:191, 8:147; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 1:209.

³⁶⁸ I am referring to non-partisan Sunnīs who extolled the merits of all Companions without regard to their involvement in any civil strife.

³⁶⁹ Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan*, 5:21-2; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:44; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 3:82.

B. Ḥadīth 4: ‘Alī seeks the caliphate after ‘Umar’s death

After the death of ‘Umar, either five or all six senior Companions whom ‘Umar selected as potential candidates to succeed him convened to elect the third caliph. At this juncture, Sunnī historians reported two statements of ‘Alī’s that pointed to his personal belief that he possessed a greater (or equal) right to authority than his peers and predecessors. ‘Alī made the first statement after a council member, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf, desired to offer him the caliphate under the condition that he implement the Qur’ān, prophetic practice, and the edicts of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar. ‘Alī is depicted as refusing the final commitment to defer to the precedents of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar. When ‘Alī declined to abide by such a condition and ‘Uthmān acquiesced to it, the latter reportedly became the third caliph. Ibn Shabba, al-Ṭabarī and other historians narrate the event in this way:

Banū Hāshim and Umayya each spoke [in support of their candidate’s right to rule]. “Everyone listen up!³⁷⁰ God honored us with his Prophet and exalted us with his religion, do not avert this authority³⁷¹ from the household of your Prophet,” urged ‘Ammār [ibn Yāsir].

“O son of Sumayya, you have gone too far! What business of yours is it to comment on how Quraysh decides to govern itself?” responded a Makhzumite.

“O ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, end this before everyone is engulfed in sedition,” warned Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ.

“I have already deliberated and consulted others. O people, do not cause harm to your

³⁷⁰ *Ayyuhā al-nās*, lit. ‘O mankind!’

³⁷¹ *hādha al-amr*, one could also understand it as “this affair.” Sunnīs and Shī’īs understood historical reports that utilized the phrase as a euphemism for *amr al-khilāfa*, see ‘Aynī, *Umdat al-qārī*, 17:259; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 7:379; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Kashf al-mushkil*, 2:576; Munāwī, *Fayḍ al-qadīr sharḥ al-Jāmi‘ al-ṣaghīr min aḥādīth al-bashīr al-nadhīr* (Beirut: 1994), 5:446; Tustarī, *al-Ṣawārim al-murḥaqa*, p. 98.

own selves (*falā taj'alanna...alā anfusikum sabīlā*, i.e. by causing sedition),” implored ‘Abd al-Raḥmān. He then summoned ‘Alī, “Do you make a solemn oath and covenant with God to act in accordance with the Book of God, the practice of his Messenger, and the example of the two caliphs that followed him?” he asked.

“I hope to act in accordance with the best of my knowledge and ability,” he responded. He (‘Abd al-Raḥmān) summoned ‘Uthmān and made the same request to him that was made to ‘Alī.

“Yes,” answered ‘Uthmān, so [‘Abd al-Raḥmān] pledged allegiance to him.

“*ḥabwatuhu ḥabwa dahr*,³⁷² this is not the first time in which you all collaborated against us. ‘But patience is most fitting and God's help is sought in that which you describe’ (Q12:18). By God, you only appointed ‘Uthmān, so that such authority may return to you. But ‘God manifests Himself everyday’ (Q55:29),” responded ‘Alī.

“O ‘Alī, do not cause harm to your self (*lā taja'al alā nafsika sabīlā*)! I have already deliberated and consulted others. They do not consider anyone equal to ‘Uthmān.”³⁷³

In the classical *ḥadīth* collections, only ‘Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal narrates the incident in his father's *Musnad* through a Kūfan chain of authorities.

Abū Wā'il Shaqīq b. Salama al-Asadī (d. c. 99/717) said, “I once asked ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf, ‘how is it that you pledged allegiance to ‘Uthmān and cast ‘Alī aside?’”

“How could anyone blame me when I commenced with ‘Alī?” [‘Abd al-Raḥmān] replied, “I said [to him], ‘I pledge allegiance to you in accordance with God's Book, the practice of his Messenger and the example of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar.’”

“[Rather] in accordance with the best of my ability,” answered [‘Alī].

“After that I offered it to ‘Uthmān who accepted,” explained [‘Abd al-Raḥmān].³⁷⁴

In these portrayals, ‘Alī rejected the necessity of deferring to the legal authority of his predecessors or considering it to be binding. This statement reflects the belief that in relation to Abū Bakr or ‘Umar, ‘Alī was an independent authority of equal or greater merit. It seems

³⁷² “This partiality to him, is the same partiality [you have always shown to him]” or “this is a gift to him due to the partiality [you have always shown him].” Alternatively, the text could be read as *ḥabawtahu* i.e. “you gave him a gift only for [him to return it after] a short while.”

³⁷³ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 3:71; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madīna*, 3:930; Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 3:297-8, 301-2.

³⁷⁴ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 1:75; Dhahabī, *Ta'rikh al-Islām*, 3:304-5; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta'rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 39:202.

that the recension of ‘Amr ibn Ḥammād al-Qannād (d. 222/837) that appeared in Sunnī and Shī‘ī circles combined the topos in Ḥadīth 4 with the content of Ḥadīth 5 (the famous *al-munāshada* report).³⁷⁵ Al-Qannād’s chain of transmission from Abū ‘l-Ṭufayl ‘Āmir ibn Wāthila is the same in the collections of al-Ṭabarī, Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, al-Dhahabī, Ibn ‘Uqda (a Zaydī) and al-Ṭūsī (an Imāmī). Sunnī authors like Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr and Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī each cited only one line from the report. Al-Ṭūsī included the full text on the authority of Ibn ‘Uqda whose work is no longer independently extant. Ibn Rustam al-Ṭabarī includes a text similar to al-Qannād’s report without listing his chain of authorities. Like other Shī‘ī versions of the *ḥadīth al-munāshada*, Ibn Rustam’s recension is much longer than those in Sunnī sources and includes dozens of additional merits. Ibn Rustam’s text is included in this survey because he keeps al-Qannād’s structure of narrating Ḥadīth 5 followed by the topos of Ḥadīth 4 (‘Abd al-Raḥmān offering the pledge).

The absence of a complete copy of the version that Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr or Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī possessed prevents one from judging the extent to which the Shī‘ī and Sunnī recensions are identical to each other, but there are a few indications that Ibn Rustam and al-Ṭūsī are reproducing texts similar to the one attributed to al-Qannād in Sunnī circles. First, both the

³⁷⁵ Dhahabī, *Risālat Ṭuruq ḥadīth man kuntu mawlāhu fa-‘Alī mawlāh* (Qum: 2002), pp. 41-4 (for Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī’s fragment); Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī‘āb*, 3:1098 (for a fragment); Ibn Rustam al-Ṭabarī, *al-Mustarshid fī imāmat Amīr al-Mu‘minīn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib* (Qum: 1994), 332-365 (without the chain of transmission); Ṭūsī, *al-Amālī* (Qum: 1993), pp. 554-6 (for Ibn ‘Uqda’s report).

Sunnī and Shī'ī sources show a correspondence in narrators from al-Qannād to Abū 'l-Ṭufayl.

Second, the opening line about the *shūrā* that Ibn 'Abd al-Barr quotes is identical to the introduction in al-Ṭūsī's text. The merits that Ibn 'Abd al-Barr and al-Ṭabarī cite are also attested in the Shī'ī recensions.³⁷⁶ Third, where the two texts diverge in narrators, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr's transmitters still exhibit strong pro-'Alid inclinations in material they transmit elsewhere.³⁷⁷ Lastly, al-Qannād, known for Shī'ī sentiments,³⁷⁸ narrates this text from Ishāq ibn Ibrāhīm al-Azdī,³⁷⁹ Abū 'l-Jārūd (the eponym of the Jārūdī Zaydīs),³⁸⁰ and Ma'rūf ibn Kharbūdh,³⁸¹ all of whom are described as Shī'īs. For these reasons, it is likely that Ibn 'Abd al-Barr's text from these narrators was nearly identical to the one al-Ṭūsī transmits from them. Abū 'l-Ṭufayl reportedly said,

“When 'Umar [was on his deathbed], he created an electoral council made up of six (candidates): 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān, Ṭalḥa, Zubayr, Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās and 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf. 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar participated as a consultant but not as a candidate.” Abū 'l-Ṭufayl continued, “so when they gathered, they sat me at the door, so I could turn people away.”

“You have gathered for a specific matter, so listen as I speak,” began 'Alī. “If what I

³⁷⁶ Ibn 'Abd al-Barr cites the “brothering” incident which appears in Ibn Rustam's text. Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī mentions the *ḥadīth al-Ghadīr* which al-Ṭūsī includes in his recension.

³⁷⁷ For the pro-'Alid reports of 'Abd al-Wārith ibn Sufyān, Qāsim ibn Aṣḥab and Aḥmad ibn Zuhayr, see Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī'āb*, 3:1091, 1096, 1102, 1183, 1242.

³⁷⁸ Dhahabī, *al-Kāshif*, 2:75; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 8:21.

³⁷⁹ Dāraquṭnī, *Mawsū'at aqwāl Abī al-Ḥasan al-Dāraquṭnī, fī rijāl al-ḥadīth wa-'ilalih*, ed. al-Muslimī [et al.] (Beirut: 2001), 1:110 (citing an unpublished volume of al-Dāraquṭnī's *al-'Ilal*). For another example of a pro-'Alid report that Ibrāhīm narrates, see Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:471.

³⁸⁰ Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-Majrūhīn*, 1:306; Mizzi, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 9:517-520. See also Modarressi, *Tradition and Survival*, pp. 121-125.

³⁸¹ Dhahabī, *al-Mughnī*, 2:419; 'Uqaylī, *al-Ḍu'afā'*, 4:221. For some of his reports in Shī'ī literature, see Kulaynī, *al-Uṣūl min al-Kāfi*, 1:338, 2:236, 8:391.

assert is true, then attest to it. If what I say is false, then respond to me and do not be intimidated. I am only a man like yourselves. I appeal to you in the name of God, do any of you possess a cousin like mine (the Prophet) or claim closer kinship ties to him?"

"By God, no," they answered.

"I appeal to you in the name of God, do any of you possess an uncle like Ḥamza, the Lion of God and His Messenger?" he asked.

"By God, no..."³⁸²

‘Alī continues to mention a number of other kinship ties and merits, until the report closes with the topos of Ḥadīth 4:

"I appeal to you in the name of God, did any of you descend into the grave of God's Messenger other than me?" he asked.

"By God, no," they answered.

"Carry on and do as you please (*fa-ṣna'ū mā antum ṣāni'ūn*)."

"O 'Alī, we hereby cede our claim [to authority] to you," Ṭalḥa and Zubayr declared.

"Defer [the final decision] regarding this authority³⁸³ to me, so that I can bestow it on one of you," said 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf.

"Done." they said.

"Stretch out your hand, O 'Alī!" began 'Abd al-Raḥmān. "Accept it (this authority) with what it entails of conforming to the example of Abū Bakr and 'Umar when presiding over us."

"I accept it with what it entails of striving to abide by the Book of God and the practice of the Prophet when presiding over you," he responded. Letting go of 'Alī's hand, he said, "Stretch out your hand, O 'Uthmān! Accept it with what it entails of conforming to the example of Abū Bakr and 'Umar when presiding over us."

"Of course," he replied. After that, they left.³⁸⁴

In al-Bukhārī's recension, 'Uthmānīs transmitted the motif of 'Alī seeking the caliphate after 'Umar's assassination when the electoral council met to appoint a third caliph. After

³⁸² Ṭūsī, *al-Amālī*, pp. 554-556.

³⁸³ *Hadhā al-amr*, alternatively "this affair".

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 555-556; Ibn Rustam al-Ṭabarī, *al-Mustarshid*, 364-365 (for a report with a similar structure).

deliberations with ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf, ‘Alī is described as harboring a strong desire (*huwa ‘alā ṭama’*) and confidence³⁸⁵ that he would become the next caliph. On the other hand, transmitters depicted ‘Abd al-Raḥmān as concerned and fearful (*yakhshā*) that ‘Alī’s reaction would be unpleasant when learning of ‘Uthmān’s succession. In fact, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān warns ‘Alī to pledge allegiance before laying himself open to attack as an enemy of the state or community (*lā taj‘alanna ‘alā nafsika sabīlā*) in both al-Bukhārī’s text and the reports that appeared in chronicles. The subtext of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s cautionary words to ‘Alī is that if the latter refuses to pledge allegiance and this leads to sedition, the state and security apparatus would be forced to intervene. Al-Bukhārī’s text provides some context by crediting ‘Abd al-Raḥmān with the decision to summon military commanders to the mosque for the announcement of ‘Uthmān’s succession. In the chronicles above, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān cautions others with the same words after they publicly bicker over the superiority of their respective candidates in the mosque. Pro-‘Alids interpreted ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s words as a threat of execution. Pro-‘Alids cited reports in which ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s threat was more explicit³⁸⁶ or ‘Umar provided orders to behead anyone who refused to pledge.³⁸⁷

In al-Bukhārī’s disjointed text, ‘Alī’s dissatisfaction with the succession of ‘Uthmān and

³⁸⁵ The chronicles portray ‘Alī as confident (*lā yashukk*) that he would become the next caliph rather than covetous (*‘alā ṭama’*), see Ibn Shabba, *Ta’rīkh al-Madīna*, 3:929; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 3:296.

³⁸⁶ Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 6:168.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 1:194.

the need to defer to the edicts of his predecessors is muted. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s final cautionary words to ‘Alī are neither preceded or followed by any words or actions from ‘Alī. One only becomes aware of the omission of ‘Alī’s complaints in al-Bukhārī’s report when comparing it to the lengthier versions listed above. As is the case in all of the previous examples, al-Bukhārī transmits Ḥadīth 4 from al-Zuhri. This time, al-Zuhri’s narrative is based on the recollections of a pro-Zubayrid nephew of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf, al-Miswar ibn Makhrama (d. 64/683). Al-Miswar explains that late one evening, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān asked him to begin summoning each candidate, so he could consult them and decide on the matter:

“Go and summon Zubayr and Sa’d.”

“So I summoned them both and he sought their counsel. Then he summoned me and said, ‘Summon ‘Alī for me,’ so I summoned him. [‘Abd al-Raḥmān] privately spoke to him until the wee hours of the night. ‘Alī then got up and left, harboring a strong desire (*wa huwa ‘alā ṭama’*) (for the caliphate). ‘Abd al-Raḥmān used to feel somewhat anxious (*yakhshā*) about ‘Alī (for this reason).”

“Summon ‘Uthmān for me,” he said.

“So I summoned him and [‘Abd al-Raḥmān] privately spoke to him until the (call to prayer from the) muezzin led them to part ways at dawn. After folks completed the dawn prayers, they began to gather around the pulpit. He (‘Abd al-Raḥmān) sent word to those present (in the city) among the *muhājirūn* and *anṣār*. He also sent for the military generals. They had come as a delegation to attend the pilgrimage with ‘Umar. So when they had all assembled, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān began by proclaiming the testimony of faith.”

“O ‘Alī,” he began, “I have deliberated over the affairs of the community and it seems that they do not consider anyone equal to ‘Uthmān. So do not cause harm to your own self (*fa-lā taj’alanna ‘alā nafsika sabīlā*).” Then he (turned to ‘Uthmān and) continued, “I pledge allegiance to you in accordance with the *sunna* of God, His Messenger, and the two caliphs after him.” ‘Abd al-Raḥmān then pledged allegiance to him, followed by the *muhājirūn*, *anṣār*, the military commanders, then the [entire community of] Muslims.³⁸⁸

³⁸⁸ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 8:123.

C. Ḥadīth 5: ‘Alī and the *ḥadīth al-munāshada*

If Ḥadīths 1-4 reflected faint echoes of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī that reverberated in the historiography of ‘Uthmānīs like Mālik ibn Anas and al-Zuhrī, who became pillars of the Sunnī *ḥadīth* corpus, Ḥadīths 5 and 6 presented the belief in relatively explicit terms. Drowned out by so many counter-reports in which ‘Alī affirmed the superiority of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān,³⁸⁹ al-Bukhārī’s transmission of Ḥadīths 1-4, which contradicted such a motif, generally did not seem to influence the development of Sunnī historiography and theology. As the case studies above detailed, later theologians and commentators rejected or charitably reinterpreted ‘Alī’s portrayals in Ḥadīth 1-4. On the other hand, Ḥadīths 5 and 6 reflected a significant shift in tone, history of transmission, and reception in the Sunnī community. Unlike the reports above that appeared in al-Bukhārī’s *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Ḥadīths 5 and 6 possessed defective chains of transmission according to most Sunnī scholars of *ḥadīth*. Many of the narrators were unknown, criticized as unreliable, or described as Shī‘īs.³⁹⁰ When these texts appeared in *faḍā’il* literature and other sources, compilers frequently criticized the report as non-authoritative unless they were proponents of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī.³⁹¹ The first example of a non-authoritative report upholding *tafḍīl* ‘Alī

³⁸⁹ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:195; Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim, *Kitāb al-sunna*, pp. 555-561; Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *al-Ṣawā’iq al-muḥriqa*, pp. 60-65; Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū‘ fatāwā*, 7:511-512; Samhūdī, *Jawāhir al-‘aqdayn fī faḍl al-sharafayn*, pp. 248-250, 451-460 (for quotes from the ‘Alid imams as well).

³⁹⁰ For example, see Dhahabī, *Ṭuruq ḥadīth man kuntu mawlāhu*, p. 44.

³⁹¹ For al-Suyūṭī’s criticisms of the report’s transmitters, see Suyūṭī, *Musnad Fāṭima al-Zahrā’* (Beirut: 1993), pp. 76-80.

is Ḥadīth 5, known as *ḥadīth al-munāshada*.

According to Ḥadīth 4 recensions in historical chronicles, ‘Alī voiced his opposition to ‘Uthmān’s succession once deliberations had come to an end and he was offered the caliphate. Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd (d. 656/1258), a Shāfi‘ī Mu‘tazilī proponent of *tafḍīl ‘Alī*, believed that after ‘Abd al-Raḥmān pledged allegiance, he ordered ‘Alī to follow suit, but ‘Alī objected with the lines that appear in the *ḥadīth al-munāshada*.³⁹² Thus, according to Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, Ḥadīth 5 chronologically follows events that occurred in Ḥadīth 4.

In Ḥadīth 5, ‘Alī challenges his peers to deny any of his unique merits with the repeating refrain *anshudukum bi’llāh* (I appeal to you in the name of God...). Ḥadīth 5 usually ends with them admitting to their inability to refute ‘Alī’s claims. In al-Qannād’s *ḥadīth* mentioned above, the *ḥadīth al-munāshada* precedes the motif of Ḥadīth 4. Al-Qannād’s narrative of events offers a fascinating alternative to Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd’s chronology. According to al-Qannād, the electoral council actually became convinced of ‘Alī’s superiority and this led ‘Abd al-Raḥmān to offer him the caliphate first. ‘Alī only loses this opportunity when he declines to rule in accordance with the precedents of the first two caliphs and ‘Uthmān subsequently agrees.

Authors invested in portraying ‘Alī and his family as pious Sunnīs (who never doubted the pre-eminence of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar) made sure to transmit versions of the *ḥadīth al-*

³⁹² Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 6:168.

munāshada that agreed with their sensibilities. Al-Dāraqūṭnī (d. 385/995), for example, circulated versions of Ḥadīth 5 that possessed none of ‘Alī’s introductory critical remarks about the succession of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar.³⁹³ Ibn ‘Uqda and pro-‘Alids like Ibn al-Maghāzili (d. 483/1090) and Ibn Mardawayh also transmitted recensions of Ḥadīth 5 without ‘Alī’s words of dissatisfaction.³⁹⁴ It is unclear where in the transmission of Ḥadīth 5 some recensions lost (or gained) ‘Alī’s critical remarks about his predecessors. It is unlikely that Ibn ‘Uqda removed any criticisms regarding the first two caliphs from his reports since he was a Jārūdī Zaydī. A survey of pro-‘Alid *ḥadīth* that Ibn al-Maghāzili and Ibn Mardawayh transmitted suggest that they were not the type of scholars to censor pro-‘Alid reports as well.³⁹⁵ Both of them transmitted many other *ḥadīth* that other Sunnīs rejected due to their polemical value to Shī‘īs or chains of transmission. The *ḥadīth al-munāshada* clearly had two versions: one with ‘Alī’s complaints and one without them. Ibn ‘Uqda and Ibn ‘Asākir had access to both. Is it possible that ‘Alī’s complaints were censored at some point in the early transmission of reports that omit them? Perhaps, but no conclusive evidence indicates this.

One case of censorship of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī texts involves Muḥammad ibn Ṭalḥa al-Qurashī al-Naṣībī (d. 652/1254), a proponent of *tafḍīl* and a Twelver Sunni³⁹⁶ whose extant works cite

³⁹³ Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:431.

³⁹⁴ Ibn al-Maghāzili, *Manāqib ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib*, pp.116-120; Ṭūsī, *al-Amālī*, p. 333.

³⁹⁵ Ibn al-Maghāzili, *Manāqib ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib*, pp. 30-263; Ibn Mardawayh, *Manāqib ‘Alī*, pp. 47-183.

³⁹⁶ In his cosmology, the Twelver imams were necessarily imams and no one could possess the imamate after them, see Ibn Ṭalḥa, *Maṭālib al-su’ul*, pp. 28-31. For more on those who followed a Sunni legal school, but venerated

various pro-‘Alid texts he considered to be authentic. Sections of his work that would have included criticism of ‘Alī’s predecessors or an argument for *tafḍīl* ‘Alī are carefully avoided³⁹⁷ and clearly censored at least once.³⁹⁸ It is unclear whether it was Ibn Ṭalḥa or later transmitters of his work who were careful not to annoy other Sunnīs with such material.

The following survey regarding the transmission of Ḥadīth 5 selects those recensions that included an introductory section in which ‘Alī discussed his dissatisfaction regarding the succession of his predecessors. The matrix of Ḥadīth 5 recensions can be organized into the following sections:

- I - The transmitter indicates there was a heated debate (“they raised their voices”)
- II - ‘Alī expresses discontent about the succession of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar
- III - ‘Alī argues for his superiority over others due to merits that they all admit he uniquely possessed
- IV - ‘Alī ends with a complaint that they will not elect him despite his superiority to them
- V - ‘Abd al-Raḥmān is convinced by ‘Alī’s arguments and offers him the caliphate on the condition he defers to the precedents of the first two caliphs, but ‘Alī declines
- VI - ‘Uthmān (agrees to the conditions and) receives the pledge of allegiance

the Twelver imams as their own sources of guidance, see also Ja‘fariyān, *al-Shī‘a fī Īrān*, pp. 486-493; Yildirim, “Shī‘itisation of the Futuwwa Tradition in the Fifteenth Century”.

³⁹⁷ Ibn Ṭalḥa accepts a report in which ‘Abbās describes the ways in which he attempted to have ‘Alī become caliph instead of his predecessors. Elsewhere, he says that ‘Alī and other Twelver imams certainly possessed the imamate, but declines to give an explanation on why this is the case. He states that the books of *uṣūl* have sufficiently discussed this issue, see Ibn Ṭalḥa, *al-‘Iqd al-farīd*, pp. 44-45; Idem, *Maṭālib al-su’ūl*, pp. 28-29.

³⁹⁸ In the alleged correspondence between al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiya, the topic of the caliphate is discussed, see Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 16:33-4; Iṣbahānī, *Maqātil al-Ṭālibiyyīn*, ed. Muḥaffar (Najaf: 1965), pp. 35-36. In the published version of Ibn Ṭalḥa’s work, the sentences in which al-Ḥasan describes the dissatisfaction of ‘Alī and his household over the succession of Abū Bakr are deleted, see Ibn Ṭalḥa, *Maṭālib al-su’ūl*, p. 356. Nineteen manuscripts of Ibn Ṭalḥa’s work exist including an autograph copy apparently from Aleppo. Further investigation of these manuscripts would indicate whether Ibn Ṭalḥa may have originally included the censored lines.

The first two elements did not always appear in Ḥadīth 5. Ḥadīth 4's topoi (V and VI) usually did not appear in Ḥadīth 5 either. Al-Qannād's report is one exception, since it essentially combined the contents of Ḥadīth 4 and Ḥadīth 5. Shī'ī transmitters used section III of Ḥadīth 5 to circulate very long lists of 'Alī's merits as they understood them.³⁹⁹

The reception of Ḥadīth 5

In contrast to Ḥadīths 1-4, when al-Bukhārī and other leading *ḥadīth* scholars discussed Ḥadīth 5, they frequently criticized the report's chain of transmission as defective or rejected the historicity of its contents.⁴⁰⁰ At least three Sunnīs accepted Ḥadīth 5 (with element II) as authentic, Muwaffaq al-Khuwārizmī (d. 568/1172), Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Kanjī (d. 658/1260), and Ibrāhīm ibn Sa'd al-Dīn al-Ḥammū'ī (d. 722/1322).⁴⁰¹ All three scholars can be considered zealous pro-'Alid Sunnīs and proponents of *tafḍīl*.

There is some evidence that Ibn Mardawayh also believed Ḥadīth 5 to have been authentic. First, it seems he wished to endorse its authenticity by transmitting the report through multiple chains of transmission.⁴⁰² Second, he allegedly transmitted over forty

³⁹⁹ For example, see Ibn Rustam al-Ṭabarī, *al-Mustarshid*, 332-365; Ṭūsī, *al-Amālī*, pp. 545-554.

⁴⁰⁰ Bukhārī, *al-Ta'rīkh al-kabīr*, 2:283 (for his criticism of al-Ḥārith ibn Muḥammad, one of the transmitters); Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i'tidāl*, 1:441-2; Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:435; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Mizān*, 2:156-7; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Mawḍū'āt*, 1:380; Suyūṭī, *Musnad Fāṭima al-Zahrā'*, pp. 76-80; 'Uqaylī, *al-Ḍu'afā'*, 1:211.

⁴⁰¹ Ḥammū'ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn: fī faḍā'il al-Murtaḍā wa-'l-Batūl wa-'l-Sibṭayn wa-'l-a'imma min dhurriyyatihim*, ed. Maḥmūdī (Beirut: 1978), 2:319-20; Kanjī, *Kifāyat al-ṭālib*, p. 386; Khuwārizmī, *al-Manāqib*, p. 313.

⁴⁰² Ibn Mardawayh, *Manāqib 'Alī*, pp. 127, 130.

recensions of Ḥadīth 6 (*‘Alī khayr al-bashar*) which explicitly promoted *tafḍīl*.⁴⁰³ Lastly, he transmitted many *ḥadīth* that showed Abū Bakr and ‘Umar recognizing ‘Alī as their superior.⁴⁰⁴ Ibn Mardawayh even transmitted one report where the Prophet is portrayed as desiring ‘Alī to succeed him as caliph.⁴⁰⁵ Thus, it should not be ruled out that Ibn Mardawayh considered Ḥadīth 5 to have been authentic. Ibn Mardawayh’s tendency to transmit many *ḥadīth* supporting *tafḍīl* ‘Alī that rarely appeared in any well-known works before him makes him a strong candidate for inclusion among Sunnī proponents of *tafḍīl*. There is a possibility that he transmitted all of this material because he felt it was his duty as a *ḥadīth* transmitter to preserve information he received from his sources. Did Ibn Mardawayh disagree with the content of what he transmitted? In the absence of any writings in which he articulates his own theological beliefs one may not know for sure, but the titles and subjects of his works strongly suggest his pro-‘Alid inclinations. For example, he wrote a work on the *ḥadīth al-ṭayr*,⁴⁰⁶ a large work on ‘Alī’s merits,⁴⁰⁷ and on subjects like verses of the Qur’ān revealed about ‘Alī,⁴⁰⁸ *ḥadīth* about the Prophet miraculously delaying the setting of the sun in honor of ‘Alī,⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰³ Ibn Ṭāwūs, *Binā’ al-maqāla al-Fāṭimiyya fī naqḍ al-Risāla al-‘Uthmāniyya* (Beirut: 1991), p. 148. Al-Majlisī seems to have preserved all or some of these reports, see Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 38:11-13.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibn Mardawayh, *Manāqib ‘Alī*, pp. 56, 70, 108, 123, 125-7, 130, 148, 162.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya*, 7:390.

⁴⁰⁷ Irbilī, *Kashf al-ghumma fī ma’rifat al-a’imma* (Beirut: 1985), 1:332-3.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 1:331-2.

⁴⁰⁹ Bayāḍī, *al-Širāṭ al-mustaḳīm ilā mustahiqqī al-taqdīm*, ed. Bihbūdī (Tehran: 1964), 1:153.

and the *ḥadīth al-thaqalayn*.⁴¹⁰

It seems al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī also believed in the historicity of Ḥadīth 5 since he included it in his treatise substantiating the historicity of the *ḥadīth al-ṭayr*.⁴¹¹ Al-Ḥākim's work is lost and his assessment of the report is unknown. It is likely, nonetheless, that he considered the report to have been authentic since he included it in a work aimed at silencing those who doubted the historicity of the *ḥadīth al-ṭayr*. Al-Kanjī narrates his version from al-Ḥākim's lost book.

Al-Dāraquṭnī, al-Qāḍī al-Ḥusayn ibn Hārūn al-Ḍabbī (d. 398/1008), Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Ibn al-Maghāzili (d. 483/1090), Ibn 'Asākir, Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd, and Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī all approved of at least one recension of Ḥadīth 5 and transmitted it without criticizing its chain of transmission.⁴¹² These recensions conspicuously did not include 'Alī's opening criticisms of his predecessors (element II). Al-Ṭabarī and Ibn 'Abd al-Barr's recensions may have included element V which was also provocative, but this is unclear since they only cited small portions

⁴¹⁰ Ibid., 2:102.

⁴¹¹ Kanjī, *Kifāyat al-ṭālib*, pp. 386-387.

⁴¹² Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī'āb*, 3:1098; Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 6:167-8; Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 39:198, 42:431ff (citing al-Dāraquṭnī); Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-muḥriqa*, pp. 126, 156; Ibn al-Maghāzili, *Manāqib 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib*, pp. 116-120. Al-Ḍabbī's *Amālī* remains unpublished, see al-Ḥusayn ibn Hārūn al-Ḍabbī, *Amālī al-Ḍabbī: al-majlis al-khamsūn wa-'l-ḥādī wa-'l-sittūn*, ms. Damascus, Ṣāḥibīyya, Majmū' no. 3759, item 11, ff. 140b-141b. Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī narrated Ḥadīth 5 in his lost book on Ghadīr Khumm. Since the work was written to substantiate the historicity of the event of Ghadīr, he probably cited reports that he did not consider fabrications to bolster his claim. I am unsure of his assessment of the transmitters of the report, but he does cite most of them as sources in his *Ta'rīkh*. For his use of 'Isā ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Marwazī, 'Amr al-Qannād, Ma'rūf ibn Kharbūdh, and Abū 'l-Ṭufayl, see Dhahabī, *Ṭuruq ḥadīth man kuntu mawlāhu*, pp.41-44; Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, 2:13, 3:450, 3:438, 3:538, 4:97.

of al-Qannād's report.

A – Zāfir ibn Sulaymān's text

According to Zāfir ibn Sulaymān (active late second century),

Abū 'l-Ṭufayl said, "I was at the door on the day of the electoral council when they started to raise their voices at each other. I heard 'Alī state, 'The community pledged allegiance to Abū Bakr when, by God, I was more suitable for such authority and possessed a greater right to it. Nonetheless, I listened and obeyed, fearing that folks would backslide toward unbelief through killing one another in war. Then Abū Bakr obtained the pledge of allegiance on 'Umar's behalf when, by God, I was more suitable than him to rule. Nonetheless, I listened and obeyed, fearing that folks would otherwise backslide toward unbelief. Now you all wish to pledge allegiance to 'Uthmān. In that case, I neither listen nor obey..."⁴¹³

Sunnī ḥadīth scholars noted that Zāfir's text existed in two forms, one that acknowledged a chronological gap in the chain of transmission⁴¹⁴ and one that did not.⁴¹⁵ Clearly, proponents of *tafḍīl* 'Alī were invested in presenting the text without any gaps in its chain of transmission, so they did not acknowledge the doubts other Sunnīs raised about certain transmitters never meeting each other to hear this report. Al-'Uqaylī and others believed the break in the chain of transmission was between Zāfir and al-Ḥārith ibn Muḥammad (active late second century), however, evidence suggests that Zāfir was a

⁴¹³ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i'tidāl*, 1:441ff; Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:434ff; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Mizān*, 2:156ff; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Mawḍū'āt*, 1:380; Suyūṭī, *Musnad Fāṭima al-Zahrā*, pp. 76-80; 'Uqaylī, *al-Ḍu'afā*, 1:211ff. For the pro-'Alid sources, see Ḥammū'ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, 2:319-20; Ibn Mardawayh, *Manāqib 'Alī*, p. 127; Khuwārizmī, *al-Manāqib*, p. 313.

⁴¹⁴ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i'tidāl*, 1:441ff; Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:434ff; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Mizān*, 2:156ff; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Mawḍū'āt*, 1:380; Suyūṭī, *Musnad Fāṭima al-Zahrā*, pp. 76-80; 'Uqaylī, *al-Ḍu'afā*, 1:211ff.

⁴¹⁵ Ḥammū'ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, 2:319-20; Ibn Mardawayh, *Manāqib 'Alī*, p. 127; Khuwārizmī, *al-Manāqib*, p. 313.

contemporary of al-Ḥārith and heard the report directly from him. Zāfir regularly visited Kūfa, al-Ḥārith's place of residence, and narrated from *ḥadīth* transmitters who were contemporaries of al-Ḥārith.⁴¹⁶ Nevertheless, it is unclear if Zāfir obtained all of these reports directly, since he was known for *irṣāl*.⁴¹⁷ Al-Bukhārī, Ibn 'Adī and Ibn Ḥibbān seem to have accepted the fact that Zāfir heard *ḥadīth* directly from al-Ḥārith, but they doubted whether al-Ḥārith heard *ḥadīth* directly from Abū 'l-Ṭufayl.⁴¹⁸ This suspicion seems justified since elsewhere al-Ḥārith appears to have reported a pro-'Alid *ḥadīth* from Abū 'l-Ṭufayl with two intermediary transmitters.⁴¹⁹ Al-Ḥārith's other reports indicate that his informants were generally scholars active in the 'Abbāsīd period, not young Companions like Abū 'l-Ṭufayl. Sunnī biographers considered al-Ḥārith an unidentifiable narrator.⁴²⁰ In any case, it is possible Zāfir sat with al-Ḥārith since he seems to have obtained *ḥadīth* from informants active in the third quarter of the second century.

To sum up: al-Khuwārizmī and Ibrāhīm al-Ḥammū'ī accepted the following chain of transmission as authoritative: Zāfir – al-Ḥārith – Abū 'l-Ṭufayl.

Al-'Uqaylī, Ibn Ḥajar, al-Dhahabī, al-Suyūṭī and others believed the defective chain was

⁴¹⁶ Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *al-Jarḥ*, 3:624-5; Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rīkh Baghdād*, 8:495-6.

⁴¹⁷ Bukhārī, *al-Ḍu'afā' al-ṣaḡhīr* (Beirut: 1985), p. 51; Ibn 'Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 3:232.

⁴¹⁸ Bukhārī, *al-Ta'rīkh al-kabīr*, 2:283; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt*, 4:136.

⁴¹⁹ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i'tidāl*, 1:443; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Mizān*, 2:159; Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu'jam al-awsaṭ* (Cairo: 1995), 2:348.

⁴²⁰ Ibn 'Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 2:194; 'Uqaylī, *al-Ḍu'afā'*, 1:212. The previous footnotes indicate that he was a pro-'Alid or Shī'ī named al-Ḥārith ibn Muḥammad al-Makfūf.

rather: Zāfir – an unnamed source – al-Ḥārith – Abū 'l-Ṭufayl.

Al-Bukhārī accepts Zāfir's transmission from al-Ḥārith but doubts the latter's direct transmission from Abū 'l-Ṭufayl, so according to him, the chain was probably: Zāfir – al-Ḥārith – an unnamed source – Abū 'l-Ṭufayl.

B – *al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī's report from Abān ibn Taghlib*

According to Abān ibn Taghlib, Abū 'l-Ṭufayl said,

“I was at the door on the day of the electoral council while ‘Alī was inside. I heard him state: ‘Abū Bakr obtained the caliphate although I considered myself to have a greater right to it than him. Nonetheless, I listened and obeyed. Then ‘Umar became caliph although I considered myself to have a greater right to it than him. Nonetheless, I listened and obeyed, fearing that folks would otherwise backslide toward unbelief. [This time] you all wish to make ‘Uthmān the caliph. In that case, I neither listen nor obey’...”⁴²¹

Al-Kanjī narrated this report from al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī's book on the *ḥadīth al-ṭayr* that is no longer extant.⁴²² Both al-Ḥākim and Ibn Mardawayh obtained this report from a text composed by the Shī'ī *ḥadīth* expert Abū Bakr ibn Abī Dārim (d. 352/963) who resided in Kūfa.⁴²³ Ibn Abī Dārim transmits this *ḥadīth* through a Kūfan Shī'ī family *isnād*: Mundhir b. Muḥammad b. Mundhir – his father Muḥammad – Muḥammad's uncle Ḥusayn b. Yūsuf b. Sa'īd b. Abī al-Jahm – Ḥusayn's grandfather Sa'īd. The patriarch of the family, Sa'īd b. Abī al-Jahm, allegedly heard the report from the famous Imāmī authority Abān ibn Taghlib (d. 141/758), who heard it

⁴²¹ Ibn Mardawayh, *Manāqib 'Alī*, p. 130; Kanjī, *Kifāyat al-ṭālib*, p. 386.

⁴²² Kanjī, *Kifāyat al-ṭālib*, p. 387.

⁴²³ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 15:576.

from Abū 'l-Ṭufayl.

The three Sunnī authors who reported this *ḥadīth* exemplify the tendency – and willingness – of those who upheld *tafḍīl* 'Alī to occasionally rely on Shī'ī sources in their compositions.

C – *al-Qannād's text*

Al-Ṭabarī and Ibn 'Abd al-Barr both transmit a version of al-Qannād's report that probably included 'Alī's refusal to defer to the precedents of Abū Bakr and 'Umar, but it seems that each author was only concerned with utilizing other excerpts from this report in their respective works.⁴²⁴

D – *Ibn 'Uqda's report from Jābir al-Ju'fī*

Other than partial attestations to the existence of its chain of transmission, I could not find any mention of this text in any extant Sunnī works of *ḥadīth*. Ibn Mākūlā (d. 475/1082) notes that Ibn 'Uqda narrated from Mazyad ibn al-Ḥasan who narrated from Khālīd ibn Yazīd al-Ṭabīb.⁴²⁵ Since this chain of transmission does not seem to appear elsewhere in Sunnī literature, it is possible that Ibn Mākūlā gleaned this information specifically from Ibn 'Uqda's transmission of Ḥadīth 5. In this text, Jābir al-Ju'fī⁴²⁶ narrated that Abū 'l-Ṭufayl said,

⁴²⁴ For more on al-Qannād's text, see above, section II.B (on Ḥadīth 4).

⁴²⁵ Ibn Mākūlā, *al-Ikmāl fī raf' al-irtiyāb 'an al-mu'talif wa-'l-mukhtalif min al-asmā' wa-'l-kunā wa-'l-ansāb* (Cairo: n.d), 7:232-3. Ibn Ḥajar also notes that Ibn 'Uqda transmits from Mazyad, but does not provide any examples, see Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Tabṣīr al-muntabih bi-taḥrīr al-mushtabih* (Cairo: 1964), 4:1273.

⁴²⁶ Although al-Mu'ayyad bi'llāh's text has Jābir ibn Zayd, the content of the report and the existence of other pro-

“I was at the door on the day of the electoral council when ‘Alī and the council members entered. ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar also joined them. I heard ‘Alī state, “the community pledged allegiance to Abū Bakr, so I listened and obeyed. Then they pledged allegiance to ‘Umar, so I listened and obeyed. [This time] you all wish to pledge allegiance to ‘Uthmān? In that case, I will listen and obey, but unequivocally present my case against you...”⁴²⁷

Only one work by the Zaydī imam al-Mu‘ayyad bi’llāh preserves this report from Ibn ‘Uqda.

III. Topos III: ‘Alī as the best of mankind

One set of reports that affirmed ‘Alī’s superiority to his peers depicted him as “the best of mankind” *khayr al-bashar/al-nās/al-bariyya* (Ḥadīths 6-9). In Ḥadīth 10, the Prophet describes ‘Alī as “the best of my community” (*khayr ummatī*). Ḥadīths 6-10 primarily circulated among pro-‘Alids and Shī‘īs. These reports did not appear in the six canonical Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections that conspicuously presented ‘Uthmānī counter-reports in their place. In the ‘Uthmānī reports, both the Prophet and ‘Alī unambiguously described Abū Bakr and ‘Umar as “the best of my community” (*khayr ummatī*) or the best of mankind (*khayr al-nās*) instead.⁴²⁸ It seems that most political blocs,⁴²⁹ theological groups,⁴³⁰ and prominent transmitters in the canonical

‘Alid and Shī‘ī reports with a chain of Jābir ibn Yazīd–Abū ‘l-Ṭufayl suggest that the narrator is al-Ju‘fī. For other instances in which Jābir al-Ju‘fī transmits from Abū ‘l-Ṭufayl, see Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:242; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 37:191, 298; Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam al-kabīr*, 22:416-7; Ṭūsī, *al-Amālī*, p. 578.

⁴²⁷ Mu‘ayyad bi’llāh, *al-Amālī al-ṣuḡhrā* (Ṣa‘dah: 1993), p. 114.

⁴²⁸ See above, n. 303.

⁴²⁹ The political blocs include ‘Uthmānīs of the *hijāz* and Iraq, pro-Umayyads of the Levant, and quietists across the empire who abstained from political conflicts.

⁴³⁰ These groups include the so-called Murjī’a, many Mu‘tazilīs, Ash‘arīs and Sufīs before Ibn ‘Arabī.

ḥadīth collections⁴³¹ agreed upon the relative superiority of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar to their peers.

Tafḍīl al-shaykhayn was a normative creed in Sunnism by the fifth century and it reflected continuity with the beliefs of many influential thinkers of earlier centuries. Personalities who disagreed with this normative trend by narrating reports that supported Topos III reflected a minority circle of pro-‘Alids and Shī‘īs who articulated *tafḍīl ‘Alī* in proto-Sunnī circles. The circulation of these reports (Ḥadīths 6-10) and their contents are the subject of the final survey of this chapter.

Ḥadīth 6: *khayr al-bashar*

In Ḥadīths 6-10, either the Prophet or a Companion describes ‘Alī as the “best of mankind.”⁴³² Some recensions of this report added the rhyming verse “and he who refuses has disbelieved” (*wa-man abā fa-qad kafar*),⁴³³ but only the first line about the rank of ‘Alī is discussed in this survey.

⁴³¹ Especially those who appear in Scott Lucas, *Constructive Critics*.

⁴³² ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:433; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Kitāb Faḍā’il al-ṣaḥāba*, ed. ‘Abbās (Beirut: 1983), 2:564, 671; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 2:103; Daylamī, *al-Firdaws*, 3:62; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, 7:504; Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 4:10, 67; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:373-374; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt*, 9:281; Khaythama ibn Sulaymān, *Min ḥadīth Khaythama ibn Sulaymān al-Qurashī al-Ṭarābulusī* (Beirut: 1980), p. 201; Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta’rīkh Baghdād*, 7:433; Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyya*, 4:170 (for the report al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī); Suyūṭī, *al-Lā’ālī*, 1:300-1.

⁴³³ Daylamī, *al-Firdaws*, 3:62; Dhahabī, *Talkhīṣ Kitāb al-Mawḍū‘āt li-Ibn al-Jawzī* (Riyadh: 1998), p. 115; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:372; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Mawḍū‘āt*, 1:347-8; Kanjī, *Kifāyat al-ṭālib*, pp. 245, 246; Khaythama ibn Sulaymān, *Min ḥadīth Khaythama*, p. 201; Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta’rīkh Baghdād*, 7:433; Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyya*, 4:170; Suyūṭī, *al-Lā’ālī*, 1:300-1. Discussion about the dynamics and ramifications of this line is left for future research.

Ḥadīth 7: *khayr al-nās*

The Prophet or a Companion describes ‘Alī as the “best of humanity.”⁴³⁴

Ḥadīth 8: *khayr al-bariyya*

‘Alī is described as “the best of creation.”⁴³⁵

Ḥadīth 9: *ulā’ika hum khayr al-bariyya* (Exegesis of Q98:7)

When the phrase “it is they who are the best of creation” (Q98:7) was revealed the Prophet said, “O ‘Alī! It is you and your party.”⁴³⁶ Other exegetes opted for “‘Alī and his household.”⁴³⁷ In other recensions, a pro-‘Alid Companion remarks that after the revelation of the verse, whenever ‘Alī would approach a gathering, “we would say ‘the best of creation’ has arrived.”⁴³⁸

Ḥadīth 10: *khayr ummatī*

The Prophet describes ‘Alī as the “best of my community.”⁴³⁹

Topos III: *The results of isnād-cum-matn analysis*

Reports that ‘Alī was “among the best of mankind” (*min khayr al-bashar*) appear in the works of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and the prolific proto-Sunnī Kūfan *ḥadīth* transmitter Ibn Abī

⁴³⁴ ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, 3:409; Dhahabī, *Talkhīṣ Kitāb al-Mawḍū‘āt*, p. 115; Ḥammū’ī, *Farā’id al-Simṭayn*, 1:154; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:372; Kanjī, *Kifāyat al-ṭālib*, p. 245; Suyūṭī, *al-Lā’ālī*, 1:300.

⁴³⁵ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 2:103; Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī, *Shawāhid al-tanzīl li-qawā’id al-tafḍīl fī al-āyāt al-nāzila fī Ahl al-Bayt*, ed. Maḥmūdī (Tehran: 1990), 2:470-472; Ḥammū’ī, *Farā’id al-Simṭayn*, 1:155; Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 1:170; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:371; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-Majrūhīn*, 1:140; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Mawḍū‘āt*, 1:349; Kanjī, *Kifāyat al-ṭālib*, p. 245; Khuwārizmī, *al-Manāqib*, p. 111; Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam al-kabīr*, 9:76.

⁴³⁶ Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī, *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, 2:459-466, 472-473; Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *al-Ṣawā’iq al-muḥriqa*, p. 161; Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh, *al-Fuṣūl al-muhimma fī ma’rifat al-a’imma* (Qum: 2001), 1:576; Ījī, *Tawḍīḥ al-dalā’il*, p. 198; Khuwārizmī, *al-Manāqib*, pp. 265-266; Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī = Jāmi‘ al-bayān ‘an ta’wīl al-Qu’rān* (Beirut: 1995), 30:335; Zarandī, *Naẓm durar al-simṭayn*, p. 92.

⁴³⁷ Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī, *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, 2:472-473 (for ‘Alī alone as well); Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Tadhkirat khawāṣṣ al-umma bi-dhikr khaṣā’iṣ al-a’imma* (Qum: 1998), p. 27.

⁴³⁸ Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī, *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, 2:467ff.; Ḥammū’ī, *Farā’id al-Simṭayn*, 1:156; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:371; Kanjī, *Kifāyat al-ṭālib*, p. 245; Khuwārizmī, *al-Manāqib*, p. 111.

⁴³⁹ Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 4:96; Ibn Mardawayh, *Manāqib ‘Alī*, p. 50; Iskāfī, *al-Mi’yār*, p. 224; Ījī, *Tawḍīḥ al-dalā’il*, pp. 198-99; Khuwārizmī, *al-Manāqib*, p. 106; Suyūṭī, *Musnad Fāṭima al-Zahrā’*, p. 155. Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd’s text closely resembles one that appears in an early Shī‘ī text, see K. Sulaym ibn Qays, p. 167.

Shayba. To contrast this recension from all others where the word *min* is omitted, I refer to it as the *min* report. The appearance of the *min* report in the works of these two scholars indicates its circulation in ‘Uthmānī *ḥadīth* circles in Kūfa and Baghdad at the end of the second and start of the third century. All other parallel, if not later, recensions of the report differ in one tiny, but evidently significant way: the word *min* is omitted. In pro-‘Alid and Shī‘ī circles ‘Alī was categorically “the best of mankind” after the Prophet rather than “among the best of mankind.”

Ibn Abī Shayba and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal probably utilized the *min* report as evidence against anti-‘Alids who believed that ‘Alī was a criminal and the worst of mankind.⁴⁴⁰ The report described ‘Alī as a member of an elite class of people in Sunnī theology, the Companions, who were collectively the best of mankind. Proponents of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī and Shī‘īs of the same period (and certainly much later) circulated the report without the *min* as an unequivocal statement of *tafḍīl*. This second group no longer engaged anti-‘Alids in pro-Umayyad or ‘Uthmānī circles as anti-‘Alid sentiment gradually declined in popularity in the third century. Rather proponents of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī directed their polemic at any Sunnī who revered Abū Bakr, ‘Umar or ‘Uthmān above ‘Alī. The thesis that ‘Alī was *afḍal* even if he ruled after the first three caliphs was certainly discussed among theologians and the general public during the rule of al-Ma’mūn. This ‘Abbāsīd caliph issued public statements in favor of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī on

⁴⁴⁰ For a survey of anti-‘Alid sentiment, see below, ch. 3 and 4.

multiple occasions.⁴⁴¹ Like his belief in the createdness of the Qur’ān, al-Ma’mūn expressed Mu’tazilī theological opinions that did not gain popularity in the Sunnī community and were ultimately rejected. *Tafḍīl ‘Alī* was another pillar of the Mu’tazilī school of Baghdad that found little support in Sunnī Islam. Most Sunnī *ḥadīth* scholars gave Ḥadīths 6-9 a negative assessment,⁴⁴² and for good measure some included prayers of damnation⁴⁴³ upon the source of these reports.

Pro-‘Alids and early Imāmī authorities like Jābir al-Ju‘fī were the primary sources of Ḥadīth 9, exegesis of Q98:7 (*ulā’ika hum khayr al-bariyya*) that identified ‘Alī as the best of mankind. They also narrated Ḥadīth 8 in which ‘Alī is simply described as *khayr al-bariyya*, independent of any allusions to the Qur’ān. Transmitters who upheld *tafḍīl* either explicitly or implicitly can be viewed as common links important in the transmission of this material, in contrast to the first two case studies in this chapter (‘Alī’s delay in pledging allegiance and discontent with his predecessors) which were accepted in ‘Uthmānī circles. Representatives of Sunnī orthodoxy like Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and pro-‘Alids of lesser zeal narrated the less-objectionable *min* report which characterized ‘Alī as a person *among* the best of mankind

⁴⁴¹ Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, 7:188.

⁴⁴² Dhahabī, *Mīzān al-i’tidāl*, 1:521; Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 1:170, 4:67; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-Majrūhīn*, 1:140; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Mawḍū‘āt*, 1:349; Zarkashī, *al-Nukat ‘alā Muqaddimat Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ* (Riyadh: 1998), 1:221 (he notes that al-Ḥākim was criticized for circulating the report).

⁴⁴³ Dhahabī, *Talkhīṣ Kitāb al-Mawḍū‘āt*, p. 115. Elsewhere, Dhahabī is kinder when he asks God to forgive an ‘Alid for narrating this report. He believed that the ‘Alid’s transmission of the report was an indication that he had “little shame,” see Idem, *Mīzān al-i’tidāl*, 1:521.

against anti-‘Alids who denied this.

Among the compilers of Sunnī *ḥadīth* works, the following scholars believed in *tafḍīl* ‘Alī and cited reports unambiguously identifying ‘Alī as the best of mankind as evidence:

- al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī (d. 405/1014), a Shāfi‘ī jurist
- Ibn Mardawayh (d. 410/1019), a respected *ḥāfiẓ* and *muḥaddith*
- al-Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī (d. c. 490/1097), a Ḥanafī scholar
- Muwaffaq ibn Aḥmad al-Khuwārizmī (d. 568/1172), a Ḥanafī scholar
- Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 654/1256), a Ḥanafī scholar
- Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Kanjī (d. 658/1260), a Shāfi‘ī scholar
- Ibrāhīm al-Ḥammū‘ī (d. 722/1322), a Shāfi‘ī of the Kubrawī order
- Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Zarandī (d. 750/1349), a Ḥanafī *qāḍī*
- ‘Alī Hamadānī (d. 786/1384), a Shāfi‘ī of the Kubrawī order
- Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ījī (active 820/1417), a Shāfi‘ī scholar
- Yūsuf al-Qundūzī (d. 1294/1877), a Ḥanafī of the Naqshbandī order

Al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī is included in this list due to a number of indicators. First, Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī notes in his biographical entry on al-Ḥākim that he reportedly upheld *tafḍīl* ‘Alī without disparaging any Companions (i.e. the first three caliphs).⁴⁴⁴ Second, he narrated Ḥadīth 6 with at least three different chains of transmission.⁴⁴⁵ Al-Ḥākim probably argued that Ḥadīth 6 was authentic, otherwise scholars would not have criticized him for transmitting it.⁴⁴⁶ Third, al-Ḥākim once explained that if the *ḥadīth al-ṭayr* was authentic, “then no one would be superior to ‘Alī after the Messenger of God.”⁴⁴⁷ To the dismay of some Sunnīs,⁴⁴⁸ al-Ḥākim then

⁴⁴⁴ Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyya*, 4:161-162.

⁴⁴⁵ Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Mawḍū‘āt*, 1:348; Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyya*, 4:170; Suyūṭī, *al-Lā‘ālī*, 3:100; Zarkashī, *al-Nukat*, 1:221.

⁴⁴⁶ Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyya*, 4:170.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 4:169.

included the *ḥadīth* in his *al-Mustadrak* and categorized it as *ṣaḥīḥ*.⁴⁴⁹ He even went on to author a separate book dedicated to the authenticity of the *ḥadīth al-ṭayr*.⁴⁵⁰ Fourth, al-Ḥākim believed that the Prophet was once asked to appoint a successor, but he declined to do it out of fear that the community would be punished if it rebelled against such a person. While praising Abū Bakr and ‘Umar as possible candidates, the Prophet intimates that it was ‘Alī whom he wished would succeed him, but that the community would never allow it.⁴⁵¹ Fifth, al-Ḥākim consistently argued in his works that ‘Alī was the first to become a Muslim.⁴⁵² Sixth, he argued that no Companion possessed more merits than ‘Alī.⁴⁵³ Finally, he apparently abstained from transmitting any of the popular ‘Uthmānī rebuttals to Ḥadīth 6 that claimed Abū Bakr and ‘Umar were either the best of the community or the best of mankind.

Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī attempted to rehabilitate al-Ḥākim as a Sunnī who represented orthodoxy on the issue of *tafḍīl* by pointing to his transmission of reports about the merits of the first three caliphs.⁴⁵⁴ However, these reports only prove that al-Ḥākim believed that the reigns of the first three caliphs had been predetermined by God. Other proponents of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid., 4:164, 166.

⁴⁴⁹ Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:130-131. He also categorizes it as *mashhūr*, see Idem, *Ma‘rifat ‘ulūm al-ḥadīth* (Beirut: 1980), p. 93.

⁴⁵⁰ Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyya*, 4:165. For a fragment, see Kanjī, *Kifāyat al-ṭālib*, pp. 386-387; see above, Ḥadīth 5.

⁴⁵¹ Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:70.

⁴⁵² Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *Ma‘rifat ‘ulūm al-ḥadīth*, pp. 22-23; Idem, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:136.

⁴⁵³ Idem, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:107.

⁴⁵⁴ Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyya*, 4:167.

have also acknowledged the same.⁴⁵⁵ One must distinguish al-Ḥākim's belief that the first four caliphs were righteous and legitimate from his beliefs about 'Alī. According to al-Ḥākim, 'Alī was God's most beloved creature after the Prophet, the best of mankind, the first to embrace Islam, and the Prophet's choice to succeed him – although the Prophet approved of Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān as well.

In some extant literature, a few representatives of the Mu'tazilī school of Baghdad argued in favor of *tafḍīl 'Alī* using Ḥadīths 6-10. They include:

- Abū Ja'far al-Iskāfī (d. 240/854)
- Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd (d. 656/1258), a Shāfi'ī scholar

In the Umayyad and early 'Abbāsīd periods, a few personalities appear to be responsible for the circulation of this material. They appear as common links in several chains of transmission. They include:

- Al-A'mash (d. 148/765, Kūfa) (from 'Atiyya-Jābir al-Anṣārī) who narrated topos III abundantly.
- Sharīk (d. 177/794 Kūfa) and Wakī' (d. 197/813, Kūfa) were important in the circulation of *min* reports in proto-Sunnī circles. They narrated the *min* reports directly to Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and Ibn Abī Shayba.
- Two disciples of Jābir al-Anṣārī who upheld *tafḍīl* appear frequently as transmitters of these reports, 'Atiyya ibn Sa'd al-'Awfī (d. 110/728, Kūfa) and Abū Zubayr al-Makkī (d. 128/746, Mecca).
- The famous Shī'ī authority Jābir al-Ju'fī (Kūfa, d. 128 or 132/746 or 750) is the source of at least a dozen reports.
- The chain of transmission Jābir al-Ju'fī – Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Bāqir (Medina, d. 114/732) is the source of seven reports.

⁴⁵⁵ For example, Ibn Ṭalḥa al-Naṣībī accepts the belief that *qadar* kept 'Alī from becoming caliph three times, see Ibn Ṭalḥa, *al-'Iqd al-farīd*, pp. 44-45.

According to the literary tradition, a few Companions were associated with this material: Jābir al-Anṣārī, Ibn ‘Abbās, and Ibn Mas‘ūd. A few scholars believed in the historicity of Ḥadīths 6-9 (i.e. that a Companion narrated them) but denied *tafḍīl* ‘Alī. They include:

- Ibn Abī Shayba (d. 235/849) and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241/855) who narrated *min* reports
- Balādhurī (d. 279/892)
- Al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923)
- Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 354/965)
- Al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360/971)
- Abū Shujā‘ Shīrūya ibn Shahr-dār al-Daylamī (d. 509/1115)
- Ibn ‘Asākir (d. 571/1176)
- Abū Maṣṣūr Shahr-dār ibn Shīrūya al-Daylamī (d. 558/1163)
- Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh (d. 855/1451)
- Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī (d. 974/1566)

Later Sunnīs generally narrated both the *min* report and other versions. When they considered the *ḥadīth* to have been authentic, their own comments and the commentary of later scholars suggested that they believed the statement referred to ‘Alī as the best of mankind only in the era of his caliphate and after his death.⁴⁵⁶ By restricting the scope of the report, belief in the pre-eminence of the first caliphs over ‘Alī remained intact.

Sunnīs hermeneutically diminished the polemical force of some texts like Ḥadīth 10 by arguing that ‘Alī was the best amongst the Prophet’s kin. In fact, in some manuscript copies of compilations that mention Ḥadīth 10, *khayr ummatī* appears as *khayr ahlī*. It seems some *ḥadīth* transmitters demoted ‘Alī from the best Muslim in the entire community to only the best of

⁴⁵⁶ Daylamī, *al-Firdaws*, 3:62; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 8:205.

the Prophet's kin. A study of Ḥadīth 10's reception in Sunnī literature reveals great inconsistency between many collections in identifying the phrase which appeared in the report.

Ḥadīth 10: Between khayr ummatī and khayr ahli

The Prophet reportedly described 'Alī as "the best of my community" in the Umayyad-era Shī'ī work *K. Sulaym*⁴⁵⁷ and in an early third-century Baghdādī Mu'tazilī text.⁴⁵⁸ The earliest known sources for Ḥadīth 10 in the Sunnī *ḥadīth* tradition are Ibn Mardawayh and al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī who apparently share a common source.⁴⁵⁹ Both the chain of transmission and structure of Ḥadīth 10 in the works of al-Khuwārizmī, Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd, and Shihāb al-Dīn ibn Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ījī indicate that these authors utilized sources other than the shared source of Ibn Mardawayh and al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī to transmit their reports.⁴⁶⁰ Many subsequent authors who cite the report as *khayr ahli*, like Ibn 'Asākir, al-Suyūṭī and al-Muttaqī al-Hindī rely on al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī's *al-Muttafiq wa'l-mutafarriq* for this solitary report.⁴⁶¹ Al-Khaṭīb only mentions the report once in his work, but in al-Suyūṭī's *Musnad Fāṭima*, Ḥadīth 10 appears once

⁴⁵⁷ *K. Sulaym ibn Qays*, p. 167.

⁴⁵⁸ Iskāfī, *al-Mi'yār*, p. 224.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibn Mardawayh's full chain of transmission is not preserved, but like al-Khaṭīb, Burayda is his final source and the content of the report is identical.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 4:96; Ījī, *Tawḍīḥ al-dalā'il*, pp. 198-99; Khuwārizmī, *al-Manāqib*, p. 106.

⁴⁶¹ Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:126, 131 (for al-Khaṭīb's report from al-Muttafiq), 132-136; Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Kitāb al-Muttafiq wa'l-muftariq* (Damascus: 1997), 1:162; Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-'ummāl*, 11:605, 13:135; Suyūṭī, *Musnad Fāṭima al-Zahrā'*, p. 110.

as *khayr ummatī*⁴⁶² and elsewhere as *khayr ahlī*.⁴⁶³ In both places, al-Suyūṭī attributes the text to al-Khaṭīb's *al-Muttafiq*. Others like Ibn 'Asākir and al-Muttaqī al-Hindī cite al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī's work as their source for *khayr ahlī* and do not narrate any *ḥadīth* describing 'Alī as *khayr ummatī*. The source of this confusion is the identical skeletal structure of the words *ummatī* and *ahlī*. Those who upheld *tafḍīl* were keen to cite the report as *khayr ummatī*, while others who did not wish to attach any significance to it cited it as *khayr ahlī*. The latter version did not challenge Sunnī conceptions of *tafḍīl al-shaykhayn* since the report only implied that the Prophet believed 'Alī was the best among his family of Hāshimids, a clan that included the likes of Abū Lahab and others who had not converted. In the 'Abbāsīd period, the report may have circulated in response to 'Abbāsīd efforts to exalt al-'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib as the most venerated member of the Prophet's family.

Unfortunately, manuscript copies of *al-Muttafiq* do not resolve the question of whether al-Baghdādī received the report as *khayr ummatī* or *ahlī*. Most extant copies are missing the section in which this report is mentioned. According to one editor of an extant copy that includes Ḥadīth 10, the *ḥadīth* appears as *khayr ahlī*.⁴⁶⁴ Nonetheless, other evidence suggests Ḥadīth 10 may have circulated as *khayr ummatī* in the second and third centuries regardless of how it was preserved in al-Baghdādī's text.

⁴⁶² Suyūṭī, *Musnad Fāṭima al-Zahrā'*, p. 155.

⁴⁶³ Ibid., p. 110.

⁴⁶⁴ Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Muttafiq wa-l-muftariq*, 1:162.

The grammatical structure of Ḥadīth 10 and the suppression of the contentious phrase altogether in some parallel recensions (D and E below) strongly suggest that the earliest transmitters portrayed the Prophet as describing ‘Alī as *khayr ummatī*. Ḥadīth 10’s circulation as *khayr ummatī* in the circles of Ibn Mardawayh and al-Khuwārizmī further supports this possibility.

A – ‘Alī was absolutely the best in the community: *khayr ummatī*

Ibn Mardawayh, al-Baghdādī (according to al-Suyūṭī), al-Khuwārizmī, Ibn Abī ’l-Ḥadīd, and al-Suyūṭī narrated that the Prophet visited his daughter Fāṭima and found her hungry, impoverished, and distressed. He said to her, “O Fāṭima, are you not pleased that the best of my community, the earliest of them to embrace Islam, and the one demonstrating the most knowledge and self-restraint amongst them has married you?”⁴⁶⁵ In Recension A, ‘Alī is described as the best of the community in unequivocal terms. Consequently, proponents of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī, like al-Khuwārizmī and Ibn Abī ’l-Ḥadīd, cited the *ḥadīth* as an important proof for their belief in ‘Alī’s superiority to all other Companions, including the first three caliphs.

B – ‘Alī was the best of the Prophet’s kin: *khayr ahlī*

Ibn ‘Asākir and al-Muttaqī al-Hindī narrated that the Prophet said to Fāṭima, “I have married you to the best of my family, the most knowledgeable among them, the one

⁴⁶⁵ Ibn Abī ’l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 4:96; Ibn Mardawayh, *Manāqib* ‘Alī, p. 50; Khuwārizmī, *al-Manāqib*, p. 106; Suyūṭī, *Musnad Fāṭima al-Zahrā*, p. 155.

demonstrating the most self-restraint, and the first of them to embrace Islam.”⁴⁶⁶ Ibn Sa’d also transmitted a shorter text that similarly described ‘Alī as the best of the Prophet’s kin.⁴⁶⁷

C – ‘Alī was the best in the community in regards to a few limited dimensions

‘Abd al-Razzāq, Ibn Abī Shayba, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, al-Ṭabarānī and others narrated that the Prophet said, “Are you not pleased that I have married you to the earliest to embrace Islam in the community, the most knowledgeable among them, and the one with the most self-restraint?”⁴⁶⁸ In this recension, ‘Alī is described as the best of the community in regards to a number of characteristics, but a judgment in favor of his absolute superiority is omitted. The omission of any reference to ‘Alī as the absolute best of any group (whether the Prophet’s family or the community) may indicate the circulation of the report before the eruption of ‘Abbāsīd-‘Alīd rivalries in the caliphate of al-Manṣūr or polemics regarding *tafḍīl* during and after the reign of al-Ma’mūn. Alternatively, transmitters may have intentionally omitted any reference to ‘Alī as *khayr ummatī/ahli* to facilitate the transmission of the report in an era in which both pro-‘Abbāsīds and proto-Sunnīs concerned with propounding orthodoxy recognized other historical figures as superior to ‘Alī. Compared to the other recensions, this version was the most widely reported in Sunnī sources, both early and late.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:130-131; Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-‘ummāl*, 11:605, 606.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, 8:24.

⁴⁶⁸ ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, 5:490; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 5:26; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, 7:505; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:126, 131-133; Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam al-kabīr*, 1:94, 20:229-230.

D – *The identifying noun is omitted*

Ibn ‘Asākir narrated that the Prophet said, “O Fāṭima! Are you not pleased that I have married you to _____, the earliest of them to embrace Islam, the most knowledgeable among them, and the one demonstrating the most self-restraint...”⁴⁶⁹ Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Dūlābī and al-Iskāfī narrated similar reports.⁴⁷⁰

In this recension, the Prophet announces to Fāṭima that he has married her to the “best of them” in possessing a number of merits, but conspicuously omits the exact identity of the group. The absence of any identifying noun to which the pronoun “them” can refer suggests a deletion in either the early oral or subsequent manuscript tradition. D recensions can be amended to match the A or B versions above.

E – *Both the verb and the contentious phrase are omitted*

Al-Khaṭīb and Ibn ‘Asākir reported that the Prophet said to Fāṭima, “I have not failed you _____ the earliest of them to embrace Islam, the most knowledgeable among them, the one demonstrating the most self-restraint...”⁴⁷¹

In this recension of Ḥadīth 10, not only does the identifying noun go missing, but the accompanying verb is also absent. The absence of the noun and verb results in a

⁴⁶⁹ Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:132.

⁴⁷⁰ Dūlābī, *al-Dhurriyya al-ṭāhira* (Qum: 1987), pp. 93, 144; Iskāfī, “Naqḍ al-‘Uthmāniyya,” p. 290.

⁴⁷¹ Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:131; Khaṭīb al-Baghḍādī, *Kitāb Talkhīṣ al-mutashābih fī ‘l-rasm wa-ḥimāyat mā ashkala minhu ‘an bawādir al-taṣhīf wa-‘l-wahm* (Damascus: 1985), 1:472.

grammatically awkward and chopped sentence that strongly suggests a deletion has occurred in the text. The editors of Ibn ‘Asākir's *Ta’rīkh* note the apparent gap in their manuscript copies of the *ḥadīth*.⁴⁷² A likely amendment would read, “I have not failed you [in marrying you to the best of my community], the earliest of them to embrace Islam...” as it reads in the recensions of al-Suyūṭī and Ibn Mardawayh.

At first glance, the few sources that preserve Ḥadīth 10 as *khayr ummatī* (recension A above) seem to be the only indication that the report circulated in this form. However, the tendency of transmitters and/or copyists to drop this part of the *ḥadīth* as well as the skeletal similarity to the phrase *ahlī* suggest that *khayr ummatī* once accompanied many of the recensions (B-E) that appeared in the sources above.

IV. Conclusions

Hadiths 1-4 reflect Islamic historiography among scholars considered foundational sources in Sunnī Islam. The prominent jurist of Medina, Mālik b. Anas, narrates Hadiths 1, 3, and 4. Ḥadīths 1-4 appear in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* as well as other classical *ḥadīth* compilations reflecting transmitters who remain pillars of Sunnī law, theology and historiography. However, with Ḥadīths 5 and 6 there is a clear shift in the reception and transmission of the reports. ‘Uthmānī transmitters largely resisted circulating these reports explicitly claiming *tafḍīl ‘Alī* and transmitted counter-reports instead. Although Ḥadīths 5 and 6 were abundantly

⁴⁷² Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:131 n. 4.

reported in Shī'ī circles, few Sunnīs utilized them as the foundation of their views of history and theology.

A brief review of pro-'Alid Sunnī *ḥadīth* literature problematizes the assumption that the three topoi discussed in this chapter were simply Shī'ī assertions only found in Shī'ī works. While portrayals of 'Alī as the most meritorious figure after the Prophet or best fit to succeed him as caliph are well-known Shī'ī topoi, these images were accepted in Sunnī *ḥadīth* and historical sources as well. By the fifth century, proponents of *tafḍīl 'Alī* included Shāfi'ī and Ḥanafī jurists who disagreed with and criticized adherents of Shī'ism. *Tafḍīl 'Alī* has survived as a minority theological tradition in Sunnism down to the modern period.⁴⁷³

This chapter has provided a better idea of the individuals and personalities that acknowledged three important pro-'Alid motifs: (1) 'Alī delayed his pledge of allegiance to Abū Bakr due to his belief that the family of the Prophet had a greater right to the office, (2) he was dissatisfied with the succession of his predecessors, and finally (3) 'Alī was superior to other Companions. *Ḥadīth* regarding the third point may have developed gradually from reports that appeared in the works of Ibn Abī Shayba and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal that included 'Alī in a class of superior men. These two scholars narrated these reports about 'Alī's distinguished rank against counter-claims from anti-'Alids who viewed 'Alī with contempt. Anti-'Alid sentiment is examined in chapters three and four below.

⁴⁷³ For example, see Ghumārī, *al-Jawāb al-mufīd li 'l-sā'il al-mustafīd*, ed. 'Imrānī (Beirut: 2002), p. 110.

CHAPTER 3

Anti-‘Alid Sentiment: a literary survey and conceptual framework

“Praise the Lord who made the truth manifest
and...killed the liar, son of a liar Ḥusayn, the son of ‘Alī
and his partisans” – Ibn Ziyād (d. 67/686)⁴⁷⁴

I. Part 1: An Introductory Framework

Over the centuries, Sunnī *ḥadīth* specialists have devoted many works to enumerating the merits of ‘Alī and his family. The Sunnī *ḥadīth* tradition was complemented by various Sufi orders that gave ‘Alī a pre-eminent role in their cosmology and spirituality.⁴⁷⁵ Despite the popularity of a trans-sectarian pro-‘Alid sentiment that recognized both reverence for the Household and sometimes their succession to the Prophet in spiritual authority, some Muslims also viewed ‘Alī with contempt. In fact, his almost-universal portrayal in the literature as a saint comes as a surprise given the early successes of two separate parties that essentially destroyed him, namely the Khārijites and the Umayyads. The former declared ‘Alī an infidel and succeeded in assassinating him. Their ideology persisted and survived on the fringes of the community throughout Islamic history. The latter were his political rivals, who staunchly denounced him, his legacy, his descendants and his partisans as wretched criminals in his own lifetime and after his death. Shortly after his assassination, the Umayyads succeeded in obtaining the reins of the caliphate and establishing their dynasty. Medieval sources indicate

⁴⁷⁴ Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, 4:350-1.

⁴⁷⁵ See above, ch. 1, n. 33.

that anti-‘Alid rhetoric and propaganda permeated all public discourse. Umayyad governors reportedly cursed him on the pulpits on Fridays.⁴⁷⁶ In the Umayyad period, non-Shī‘ī scholars of *ḥadīth* and law distanced themselves from prominent ‘Alids lest they be labeled Shī‘ī themselves and face persecution.⁴⁷⁷ Poets also publicly dismissed the merits of ‘Alids not only to please their royal benefactors, but also to influence public opinion on the matter.⁴⁷⁸ As a result of political developments and rivalries some towns like Damascus and Baṣra became famous for populations that publicly expressed anti-‘Alid sentiment.⁴⁷⁹

Anti-‘Alid sentiment has received little scholarly attention for a number of reasons. First, unlike pro-‘Alid sentiment which found intellectual backing in Shī‘ism, the type of anti-‘Alid sentiment popular amongst Umayyads and the early ‘*Uthmāniyya* did not possess a parallel, independent and enduring sect to represent most of its beliefs after their demise

⁴⁷⁶ Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-bālagha*, 4:56-63. See below, ch. 3, appendix, section II; ch. 4, section III.D. See also Josef van Ess “Political Ideas in Early Islamic Religious Thought” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 28, 2 (Nov. 2001), p. 154 n. 20.

⁴⁷⁷ Dhahabī, *Siyar a‘lām al-nubalā’*, 7:130-1 (for a report that al-Awza‘ī and scholars of the Umayyad court were coerced to swear ‘Alī was a hypocrite to receive their stipends); Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 6:44-7; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 9:116 (for the murder of the Companion Muḥammad b. Maslama because he refused to help Mu‘āwiya in his wars); Ibn Qutayba, *al-Ikhtilāf fī al-lafẓ wa-‘l-radd ‘alā al-Jahmiyya wa-‘l-mushabbiha* (Riyadh: 1991), p. 54. See also Muḥammad b. ‘Aqīl, *al-‘Atb al-jamīl*, pp. 116-8; Muḥammad Kuthayrī, *al-Salafiyya bayna ahl al-sunna wa-‘l-imāmiyya* (Beirut: 1997), pp. 609-10, especially p. 609 n. 7.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibn Sukkara al-Hāshimī (d. 385/995) was an ‘Abbāsīd who allegedly claimed in his poetry that ‘Alī unjustly rebelled (*baghā*) against Mu‘āwiya and the Umayyads justifiably killed Ḥusayn, see al-Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr*, 4:90 (who cites an unpublished copy of the *Diwān Ibn al-Ḥajjāj*); Muḥsin Mu‘allim, *al-Nuṣb wa-‘l-nawāṣīb* (Beirut: 1997), p. 463. For geographic regions and cities which publicly expressed animosity toward ‘Alī, see Mu‘allim, pp. 229-244.

⁴⁷⁹ The people of Baṣra were known to have contempt for ‘Alī, see Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 4:103 (who cites Abū Ja‘far al-Iskāfī); Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad Thaqafī, *al-Ghārāt* (Tehran: 1975), 2:554. In one narrative, a group of Baṣrans command a narrator to desist from transmitting any of Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq’s *ḥadīth* to them, see Ibn Ḥajar, 1:312. See also Mu‘allim, *al-Nuṣb wa-‘l-nawāṣīb*, pp. 232-234. Baṣrans also joined Mu‘āwiya in opposition to the caliphate of al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī, see *E.I.*², s.v. “‘Uthmāniyya” For Damascus, see examples below.

(although some Sunnīs partially transmitted their doctrines). In contrast, the anti-‘Alid sentiment of Khārijites has persisted amongst many Ibāḍī scholars.⁴⁸⁰ Ibāḍism would qualify as a sect that condemns ‘Alī and rejects any veneration of him due to a Khārijite heritage that was anti-‘Alid. Ibāḍīs portray ‘Alī as a righteous Muslim and a legitimate caliph until the end of the battle of Ṣiffīn.⁴⁸¹ This image of ‘Alī as a pious person who made an ignoble turn to misguidance consequently differs from ‘Uthmānī and Umayyad portrayals of him as a vicious and sinful person throughout his life. Although anti-‘Alid sentiment was present in a variety of ideological and political circles, the failure of ‘Uthmānī and Umayyad views of ‘Alī to flourish within a distinct sect is one reason heresiographers of later centuries omitted chapters dedicated to anti-‘Alid sentiment.

Theologians may have abstained from commenting on anti-‘Alid sentiment because such an examination required one to address biographical details related to ‘Alī, his descendants, and their rivals that fell under the realm of *fitna* (civil war, lit. “sedition”). In the second century, historical reports from various geographical regions occasionally portrayed Companions, Followers (*tābi‘ūn*), Caliphs, and respected authorities in the Sunnī *ḥadīth* corpus as anti-‘Alid. However, by the end of the third century, proto-Sunnīs generally rejected or

⁴⁸⁰ Some Ibāḍīs certainly upheld anti-‘Alid beliefs, while others fell under “Group 2” in the social categories listed below.

⁴⁸¹ *al-Siyar wa’l-jawābāt li-‘ulamā’ wa-a’immat ‘Umān*. Ed. Sayyidah Ismā‘īl Kāshif. ([Muscat]: 1989), 1:97-104, 371, 375; *Wārjalānī, Kitāb al-Dalīl li-ahl al-‘uqūl li-bāghī al-sabīl* (Egypt: 1888), 1:28.

reinterpreted such reports to keep from identifying their own religious and political authorities as anti-‘Alid.⁴⁸² Identifying early caliphs or their kin as anti-‘Alid not only validated the complaints of ‘Alid insurrectionists who were considered enemies of the state, but also vindicated the claims of their Zaydī and Imāmī partisans who believed non-Shī‘īs generally neglected the rights of ‘Alids and treated them unjustly. The existence of anti-‘Alid Companions and Followers reflected a contradiction (or exception) to belief in the righteousness of *all* Companions or the superiority of the earliest generations of Muslims, both of which became orthodox in Sunnism. Thus, there was a sectarian incentive for Sunnīs to regularly deny the existence of anti-‘Alid sentiment amongst the same individuals accused of propagating such doctrines in reports about the past. Sometimes historical events, like the ritual cursing of ‘Alī on Umayyad pulpits, were undeniably anti-‘Alid. In these cases, many Sunnīs advised against discussing such events altogether.⁴⁸³ Scholars argued that historical reports about such events had the potential to lead Muslims astray (from Sunnism) by causing them to dislike some Companions and other venerable predecessors. Anti-‘Alid sentiment came to possess an *erased history* in Sunnī Islam.⁴⁸⁴ After enjoying some popularity in the

⁴⁸² See below, ch. 3, appendix; ch. 4. One can compare portrayals of ‘Alī’s political rivals in Balādhurī’s *Ansāb al-ashrāf* (or Madelung’s *The Succession to Muḥammad*) to their presentation in Ibn Ḥanbal, *Kitāb Faḍā’il al-ṣaḥāba* (Beirut: 1983); Abū Bakr b. al-‘Arabī, *al-‘Awāṣim min al-qawāṣim* (Cairo: 1997), pp. 280-1, 289, 340. See also Scott Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, pp. 221-85; Amr Osman, “‘Adālat al-Ṣaḥāba: The Construction of a Religious Doctrine.” *Arabica* 60, no. 3-4 (2013): 272-305.

⁴⁸³ Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 20:10-12; Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi’ li-aḥkām al-Qur’ān = Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī* (Beirut: 1985), 16:321-2.

⁴⁸⁴ On erased histories, identity politics and their relationship to memories of pain, see Wendy Brown, “Wounded

Umayyad period, influential *ḥadīth* scholars of the third century began to condemn and cease transmitting many early ‘Uthmānī doctrines that were anti-‘Alid. The erased history of anti-‘Alid sentiment consisted not only of its disappearance, but also a denial that it had ever existed among Companions or their partisans. The suppression of earlier depictions only becomes apparent with a sustained reading of *ḥadīth*, biographical dictionaries and theological texts.

The absence of anti-‘Alids as an independent sect in heresiographies consequently led to the status quo in which secondary literature only provided brief, tangential notes about individuals who were accused of anti-‘Alid sentiment without providing a framework to contextualize and judge such claims. A. Afsaruddin, A. Barzegar, P. Crone, W. Madelung and M. Zaman have all commented on early anti-‘Alid sentiment in the nascent Sunnī community, but have provided neither a comprehensive rubric nor a chronological narrative that accounts for various claims in the literature that “so-and-so” was anti-‘Alid.⁴⁸⁵ This investigation aims to fill this lacuna in sustained studies of anti-‘Alid sentiment in Islamic history.

II. Anti-‘Alid Sentiment Defined

Scholars of the intellectual and political history of Islam have classified some early

Attachments.” *Political Theory* 21, no. 3 (1993): 390-410.

⁴⁸⁵ Asma Afsaruddin, *Excellence and Precedence*, pp. 14-23; Barzegar, “Remembering Community”; Patricia Crone, *God’s Rule: Government and Islam* (New York: 2004), pp. 20-32; *E.I.*², s.v. “Imāma” (W. Madelung); “‘Uthmāniyya” (P. Crone); Zaman, *Religion and Politics*, pp. 49-63.

expressions of anti-‘Alid sentiment as *naṣb*.⁴⁸⁶ They described adherents of *naṣb* in at least three ways. First, anti-‘Alids are those who hold ‘Alī and by extension, his family in contempt (*bughḍ*); such people are identified as *nāṣibī* (sing.), *nawāṣib*, *nāṣiba*, *nuṣṣāb*. Some Imāmī sources extend *naṣb* to include hatred for Shī‘īs.⁴⁸⁷ Second, *nawāṣib* are those who seek to cause pain to the Household of the Prophet through words or deeds.⁴⁸⁸ Third, they are individuals who possess animosity toward ‘Alī and defend it within a theological framework (*dīn*) or as a virtuous principle.⁴⁸⁹ These descriptions differentiated *nawāṣib*, who considered ‘Alids heretics or evil in the sight of God, from those who were simply political rivals of ‘Alī or his descendants. The malicious nature of *naṣb* best distinguishes this sentiment from two other similar, concurrent currents, *khilāf* and *taqṣīr*, which are described below.

Sunnī scholarship utilized these definitions of *naṣb* primarily to save Companions who were political rivals of ‘Alī from condemnation as *nawāṣib*, a dreadful alternative that directly undermined Sunnī belief in their righteousness. However, scholars simply could not censor or reinterpret the overwhelming amount of literary evidence that portrayed some

⁴⁸⁶ The linguistic root “*naṣaba*” possesses numerous meanings, including (1) to designate (2) to establish (3) to have enmity, see Ṭurayhī, *Majma‘ al-Baḥrayn*. Ed. Aḥmad al-Ḥusaynī (Qum: 1987), 4:314-316.

⁴⁸⁷ Yūsuf Baḥrānī, *al-Ḥadā’iq al-nāḍira fī aḥkām al-‘itra al-ṭāhira* (Qum: 1984), 5:177, 185, 10:361-2; Ibn Bābawayh, ‘*Ilal al-sharāyī*’ (Najaf: 1966), 2:601; Ṭurayhī, *Majma‘ al-Baḥrayn*, 4:316-7.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū‘ fatāwā shaykh al-islām Aḥmad ibn Taymiyya*. Ed. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Qāsim (Medina: 1995), 3:154.

⁴⁸⁹ Fīrūzābādī, *al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ* (Cairo: 1980), 1:132. *Dīn* in its various notions includes *ḥukm*, *madhhab*, and *milla*, which are translated as judgment, doctrine and religious community. *Dīn* implies “faith, obedience, and the practice of a given belief.” The affairs and the concept of *dīn* were sometimes cited in contradistinction to *dunyā*, see *E.I.*², s.v. “*dīn*.”

contemporaries of the Prophet as hating the person of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.⁴⁹⁰ As a result, Sunnī orthodoxy by the end of the fourth century invoked the right of *ijtihād* for those individuals,⁴⁹¹ while earlier sources cited more mundane reasons like envy or a desire for power, wealth, honor and vengeance.⁴⁹² In accordance with early historical sources, Shī‘īs considered Companions capable of committing any vice or crime.⁴⁹³

Sunnī scholarship wished to acquit revered authorities in religion, in addition to the Companions, of charges of any wrongdoing in their disagreements with the Household. For example, Sunnīs generally understood Abū Bakr to have been correct in his disagreement with Fāṭima about the legal status of the Prophet’s estates.⁴⁹⁴ Those who went to war against ‘Alī were considered *mujtahids*.⁴⁹⁵

Umayyad-era Shī‘ī literature like *K. Sulaym* portrayed most individuals who disagreed

⁴⁹⁰ Story-tellers in Kūfa and other regions narrated historical reports in which Companions were portrayed as hating or disagreeing with ‘Alī for mundane reasons. See below ch. 3, appendix; ch. 4.

⁴⁹¹ Ibn al-Fūrak, *Maqālāt al-Shaykh Abī al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī* (Cairo: 2005), p. 195; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 1:451; Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal*, 4:125; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya*, 8:135; Juwaynī, *Kitāb al-Irshād*, p. 433.

⁴⁹² For example, Zubayr admits that (political) ambitions led him to the Battle of the Camel, see Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, 7:258, 8:712. See below, ch. 4, section III.A-C.

⁴⁹³ Shī‘ī polemical texts portrayed the Companions, including early Caliphs, as explicitly expressing contempt for ‘Alī and his household. See the portrayal of Companions in *Kitāb Sulaym*, pp. 150-7, 162-3. See also Etan Kohlberg ‘Some Imāmī Shi‘ī views of the Sahaba’ *JSAI* 5 1984, p. 143-75; Madelung, *The Succession to Muḥammad*.

⁴⁹⁴ For the dispute about Fadak, see Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 6:46-50, 16:208-84; Nawawī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim bi Sharḥ al-Nawawī* (Beirut: 1987), 12:69-82. See also Nebil Husayn, ‘Legal Codes Specific to Hāshimids,’ Presented at the University of Chicago Symposium, ‘The Practical Authority of the Imams and Their Representatives,’ April 3, 2015, pp. 5-10.

⁴⁹⁵ ‘Ā’isha, Ṭalḥa, Zubayr, Mu‘āwiya and ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ utilized independent reasoning (*ijtihād*), a right of authorities in the tradition, in their rebellion against ‘Alī. For claims of “*ijtihād*” for the aforementioned Companions, see Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal*, 4:161; Ibn Taymiyya, *Minḥāj al-Sunna*, 4:320; Qurṭubī, *Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*, 14:182. See also Murtaḍā ‘Askarī, *Ma‘ālim al-Madrasatayn*, 2:66-75; M. Farid bin M. Sharif “Baghy in Islamic Law and the thinking of ibn Taymiyya” *Arab Law Quarterly*, 20:3 (2006), pp. 299-301.

with ‘Alid imams as anti-‘Alid figures. However, it is unlikely that everyone who disagreed with ‘Alī or opinions attributed to him were necessarily *nāṣibī*. Nonetheless, other factions of the first century (partisans of the Zubayrids, Umayyads, and others like the Khārijites) had similarly propounded an inflexible view regarding “others.” They condemned various Companions and their followers as heretics. In contrast, many Sunnī *ḥadīth* transmitters and scholars after the third century tendentiously attempted to reinterpret all disagreements between ‘Alī and his rivals into a benign history in which disagreements always led to reconciliation.⁴⁹⁶ An implausible reinterpretation of history in which well-meaning Companions accidentally fought with their peers or became the victims of a mischievous Jew named Ibn Saba’ who sought to covertly destroy the Muslim community became the hallmark Sunnī response to polarizing debates regarding the conflicts between Companions.⁴⁹⁷ For example, it was Ibn Saba’, desperate to cause havoc in the community, who initiated the Battle

⁴⁹⁶ For example, according to one report, Fāṭima reconciled with Abū Bakr before she died, see Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, 6:301; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya*, 5:310. See also Madelung, *Succession*, p. 52 n. 67; van Ess, “Political Ideas,” pp. 155-156 (on how the civil wars were charitably reinterpreted).

⁴⁹⁷ For texts regarding Ibn Saba’, see below, ch. 3, appendix, section VIII. See also Sean Anthony, *The Caliph and The Heretic: Ibn Saba and The Origins of Shi’ism* (Leiden: 2012); Abbas Barzegar, “Remembering Community: Historical Narrative in the Formation of Sunnī Islam.” The Sunnī theological tenet of ‘*adālat al-ṣaḥāba*’ (the righteousness of Companions) required Muslims to believe that they were all just and to read all actions attributed to them charitably, see Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Istidhkār*, 3:301; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1:162; Nawawī, *al-Majmu’*, 6:190, 348. See also Feisal Abdul Rauf “What is Sunnī Islam?” *Voices of Islam: Voices of Tradition*. Ed. Vincent Cornell. (Westport: 2007) pp. 200-4; ‘Askarī, *Ma’ālim*, 1:95-7; van Ess, “Political Ideas,” pp. 155-156. For recent Sunnī criticisms of ‘*adālat al-ṣaḥāba*’, see Maḥmūd Abū Rayya, *Aḍwā’ alā al-sunna al-Muḥammadiyya* (n.p.: n.d.) 5th ed., pp. 339-363; Ḥasan b. Farḥān Mālikī, *al-Ṣuḥba wa al-Ṣaḥāba*, pp. 90-126.

of the Camel by attacking ‘Ā’isha’s army in the middle of the night.⁴⁹⁸ Otherwise, ‘Ā’isha’s army would have never fought ‘Alī. Likewise, after ‘Alī’s death, when Mu‘āwiya learned of his merits, he wept⁴⁹⁹ and exclaimed that had he previously known them, he would have become ‘Alī’s faithful servant.⁵⁰⁰ In other reports, Mu‘āwiya is depicted as testifying to the Prophet that he loves ‘Alī.⁵⁰¹

Khilāf without naṣb

Various authorities, including other ‘Alids, active in the second century and in subsequent periods are portrayed as respecting the Twelver Shī‘ī imams while disagreeing with their legal opinions.⁵⁰² Although Shī‘īs have considered *khilāf*, disagreement with ‘Alī and the Shī‘ī Imams, to be tantamount to differing from the command of God and His Prophet,⁵⁰³

⁴⁹⁸ Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya*, 7:265-267.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 24:401.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 20:360-361; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya*, 8:84.

⁵⁰¹ Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 59:139-140.

⁵⁰² Although al-Awza‘ī is listed as one who transmitted from al-Bāqir, the former disagreed with a number of opinions associated with jurists in the *Hijāz* and the Imāmī community, including combining prayers without an excuse and the temporary marriage, see al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 7:131. One prominent ‘Alid who publicly differed with Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq and gave his own legal opinions was ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥasan (d. 145/762), see Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 1:349-51, 359 (where he is upset with al-Ḥusayn for excluding Ḥasanids from the imamate), 2:155, 3:507, 8:363-4. See also Khū‘ī, *Mu‘jam Rijāl al-Ḥadīth* (Qum: 1992), 11:170-5; Modarressi, *Crisis and Consolidation*, p. 53. For non-Shī‘ī contemporaries who praised Muḥammad al-Bāqir, but did not necessarily follow his rulings, see Arzina Lalani, *Early Shī‘ī Thought: The Teachings of Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir* (London: 2000), pp. 96-102. For case studies that compare 2nd century Imāmī legal rulings to other schools, see Haider, *The Origins of the Shī‘a*, ch. 3-5; Lalani, pp. 120-6.

⁵⁰³ Some Shī‘ī jurists considered such folk impure (*najis*) and no better than polytheists, see Baḥrānī, *al-Ḥadā’iq al-nāḍira*, 5:175-190. See also Kohlberg, “Barā’a in Shī‘ī Doctrine,” 154. The term *mukhālif* in these contexts sometimes referred to *nawāṣib* who were not considered Muslims in Shī‘ī law. Other times it referred to any scholar was not an Imāmī or Twelver. There was a radical current in the Imāmī community that considered all non-Imāmīs as enemies of the Household, but this was not universal, see Dakake, *Charismatic Community*, pp. 132-9,

non-Shī'īs obviously did not. Shī'īs accused of *naṣb* in Imāmī literature were generally involved in a dispute regarding the imamate with other Shī'īs or an Imam.⁵⁰⁴ Imāmī factions frequently condemned each other for disagreeing on the identity of the correct Imam. For example, some Zaydīs and Wāqifī Imāmīs are described as “worse than *nuṣṣāb* (*nawāṣib*).”⁵⁰⁵ Shī'īs who were accused of *naṣb* were more appropriately guilty of *khilāf*, but the nature of these disagreements is outside the scope of this study as they usually do not indicate anti-‘Alid sentiments.⁵⁰⁶

Sunnī and Shī'ī literature portrays only a few Companions and their students as Shī'ī or ardent partisans of ‘Alī.⁵⁰⁷ Most Companions freely disagreed with the opinions of the Household, oriented their devotion and allegiances to other individuals and clans, or were non-partisan. Eventually the later Sunnī community did recognize the need to rehabilitate the rank of ‘Alī and legitimize their own beliefs by citing texts in which ‘Alī and his household repudiated Shī'ī historical claims, doctrines or laws.⁵⁰⁸ Sunnī polemicists such as Ibn Taymiyya

151-5.

⁵⁰⁴ Baḥrānī, *al-Ḥadā'iq al-nāḍira*, 5:189-190. See also Kohlberg, *Barā'a*, pp. 158-63.

⁵⁰⁵ Baḥrānī, *al-Ḥadā'iq al-nāḍira*, 5:189-190; Ṭūsī, *Tahdhīb al-aḥkām* (Tehran: 1987), 4:53. See also Kohlberg, *Barā'a*, p. 163.

⁵⁰⁶ In one uprising, however, Zaydīs reportedly showed contempt for Ja'far al-Ṣādiq by violently imprisoning him and confiscating wealth belonging to him and his family, see Kulaynī, *al-Kāfi*, 1:362-363. I am indebted to Hossein Modarressi for this reference.

⁵⁰⁷ For Companions who allegedly displayed pro-‘Alid tendencies, see above, ch. 1, section II, 1D. See also Muḥammad b. ‘Aqīl, *al-Naṣā'ih al-kāfiya*, pp. 296-298; ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn, *Al-Fuṣūl al-muḥimma fī ta'līf al-a'imma* (Tehran: 1964), pp. 189-200; *Al-Murāja'āt*, pp. 105-182.

⁵⁰⁸ For ‘Alī threatening to whip anyone who considered him more meritorious than Abū Bakr and ‘Umar and denying his precedence over them, see Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-Sunna*, 1:308, 6:135-8. For ‘Alī denying that he or the Household received any special knowledge from the Prophet, see Bukhārī, 4:30; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, 1:118, 152. For Fāṭima reconciling with Abū Bakr, see above, n. 496. For more on ‘Alī's rehabilitation, see below, Conclusion

vigorously disassociated the later Shī'ī Imams from Shī'ism and claimed that they followed the beliefs and practices of the Sunnī community despite their relative absence in Sunnī *ḥadīth* and legal texts.⁵⁰⁹

After nearly a century of rule, the Umayyads fell to the 'Abbāsids who attempted to replace anti-'Alid propaganda with one that was pro-Hāshimid and occasionally pro-'Alid as well.⁵¹⁰ The 'Abbāsids eventually had to defend their legitimacy from 'Alid rivals to the caliphate by devising, if not sometimes reverting to, arguments that denied the merits of 'Alī and his household. 'Abbāsids endeavored to prove, like their political predecessors, that the 'Alids had no proper legal or theological claim to authority in Islam.⁵¹¹ 'Abbās and his descendants became the sole inheritors of the Prophet and his *ahl al-bayt*.⁵¹² 'Abbāsīd

(The Evolution of 'Alī). See also *E.I.*², s.v. "Imāma" (W. Madelung); "Uthmāniyya" (P. Crone).

⁵⁰⁹ For example, Ibn Taymiyya states that contemporary jurists did not study under 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā or the later Imams, but later maintains that that 'Alid Imams and proto-Sunnī jurists all agreed with each other, see Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4:29, 50-52, 63-64. He reiterates elsewhere, "the one who follows that which is verified in its transmission from the Prophet, his successors, Companions and the Imams from his Household, like Imam 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn Zayn al-'Ābidīn, his son Imam Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Bāqir, his son Imam Abū 'Abd Allāh Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, the shaykh of the scholars of the (Muslim) community, and the likes of Mālik b. Anas and [Sufyān] al-Thawrī and their peers, will conclude [their knowledge] to be in complete agreement in regards to the principles of their faith (*uṣūl al-dīn*) and the divine law (*sharī'a*)." See Ibn Taymiyya, *Jāmi' al-Masā'il* (Mecca: [2001]), 3:87-8.

⁵¹⁰ The 'Abbāsids utilized reverence for 'Alī, al-Ḥusayn, and Zayd ibn 'Alī as well as an 'Alid *waṣiyya* in their favor as tools to legitimizing their rule, see, for example, Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 3:273-5; Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 7:131; Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-muḥriqa*, 247; Ibn Qutayba, *Uyūn al-akhbār* (Beirut: 2003), 2:275; Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab*, 3:257. See also Najam Haider, "The *waṣiyya* of Abū Hāshim: the impact of polemic in premodern Muslim historiography." In *The Islamic Scholarly Tradition: Studies in History, Law and Thought in Honor of Professor Michael Allan Cook*, ed. Asad Q. Ahmed, Behnam Sadeghi, and Michael Bonner. (Leiden: 2011), pp. 49-77; Zaman, *Religion and Politics*, pp. 33-35.

⁵¹¹ Zaman, *Religion and Politics*, pp. 43-48.

⁵¹² In an 'Abbāsīd version of the *ḥadīth al-kisā'*, the Prophet refers to 'Abbās and his sons as "my household (*ahl*

repudiation of ‘Alid claims to be the Prophet’s inheritors closely resembled the tendency among other rivals to the ‘Alids to reject special reverence for ‘Alī and his household or repudiate their rights (*ḥaqq*, pl. *ḥuqūq*) or merits (*khaṣā’iṣ/ḥaḍa’il*). Proponents of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī like the Baghdādī Mu‘tazila referred to this tendency as *taqṣīr* and considered it to be an indicator of anti-‘Alid sentiment.⁵¹³ In addition to *taqṣīr*, Sunnī scholars of *ḥadīth* accused personalities who rejected the merits of ‘Alī and his house widely transmitted in Sunnī texts of *tanqīṣ*⁵¹⁴ and *tabkhīṣ*.⁵¹⁵ Abū Ja‘far al-Iskāfī, a Baghdādī Mu‘tazilī, wrote that some of his contemporaries sought to refute ‘Alī’s merits (*naqḍ ḥaḍā’ilahu*) and reject their authenticity (*ya’tariḍ fihā wa yaṭ’an*).⁵¹⁶ Although al-Iskāfī is probably referring to the ‘Uthmāniyya and *ḥadīth* transmitters dedicated to the cult of Mu‘āwiya,⁵¹⁷ in subsequent centuries, Sunnī scholars who attempted to refute Shī‘ism or *tafḍīl* ‘Alī were also accused of going too far in rejecting ‘Alī’s merits.⁵¹⁸ The tensions Sunnīs faced in engaging in anti-Shī‘ī polemics through the use of methodologies and

baytī),” see Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 4:5; Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam al-kabīr*, 19:263. See also Moshe Sharon, “Ahl al-bayt – People of the House” *JSAI* 8 (1986), p. 176-7.

⁵¹³ Lit. to shorten; diminish; fail to reach. Iskāfī, *al-Mi‘yār wa-l-muwāzana*, pp. 32-33 (also cited in Modarressi, *Crisis*, p. 36 n. 105). Although Ibn al-Nadīm attributes the text to Ibn al-Iskāfī, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ṭabāṭabā’ī and Hassan Ansari argue that the text should be attributed to the father, see Ansari, *Barrasīhā-yi ta’rikhī dar ḥawzah-i Islām va Tashayyu’*, pp. 493-506.

⁵¹⁴ Ibn Ḥajar, *Lisān al-mīzān*, 1:319-20; Abū Ja‘far Iskāfī, *al-Mi‘yār wa-l-muwāzana*, pp. 33-34. For further discussion, see below, ch. 3, appendix, section V-VI.

⁵¹⁵ Ibn Qutayba, *al-Ikhtilāf fī al-lafẓ*, p. 54. The Qur’ān condemns *bakhs* a number of times, see Q7:85, Q11:85, and Q26:183.

⁵¹⁶ Iskāfī, “*Naqḍ al-‘Uthmāniyya*,” p. 282.

⁵¹⁷ One such transmitter was Abū ‘l-Qāsim al-Saqāṭī (d. 406/1015). He indicated his strong devotion to Mu‘āwiya in a number of reports, for a sample, see Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rikh*, 14:113-114, 59:70-71, 87, 89, 93, 104-105, 142, 211-212. See also Barzegar, “Remembering Community,” pp. 178, 193-195.

⁵¹⁸ See below, ch. 4.

arguments that their Sunnī and Shī'ī interlocutors considered anti-'Alid is discussed in the next chapter.

Shī'ī *mufawwiḍa* (Imāmīs who believed God granted His divine responsibilities to the Imams) and *ghulāt* accused non-Shī'īs and moderate Shī'īs of *taqṣīr* if they did not uphold certain doctrines regarding the Imamate. For example, *mufawwiḍa* accused other Shī'īs of *taqṣīr* if they limited the scope of the knowledge, miraculous ability, or infallibility of the Imams.⁵¹⁹ Although *taqṣīr* and *naṣb* were utilized synonymously,⁵²⁰ modern frameworks should attempt to distinguish the two, since many individuals accused of *taqṣīr* were pro-'Alid Sunnīs and Shī'īs.

III. Surveying Muslim Literature for Anti-'Alid Sentiment

Historically, the most staunchly anti-'Alid figures were part of a larger collective that did not necessarily agree with all of their views, whether in a pro-Umayyad mosque in second century Kūfa, proto-Sunnī *ḥadīth* circles, or in an army that fought against 'Alī and his descendants.⁵²¹ An investigation of non-Shī'ī personalities accused of *khilāf* and *tanqīṣ* can help identify the beliefs of *nawāṣib*, even if those same personalities were not *nawāṣib* themselves. Individuals with varying degrees of anti-'Alid sentiments were members of the same political and social groups, with the group responding to the most extreme elements either with silence or some criticism, but not excommunication. Thus, Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī and al-Dhahabī note

⁵¹⁹ Modarressi, *Crisis*, pp. 36-51.

⁵²⁰ For example, Abū Ja'far Iskāfī, *al-Mī'yār wa-'l-muwāzana*, p. 32. See also Modarressi, *Crisis*, p. 36 n. 103 and n. 105.

⁵²¹ For a topography of mosques infamous for anti-'Alid sentiment in Kūfa, see Haider, *Origins*, pp. 232-42.

dozens of instances in which *ḥadīth* transmitters up until the fourth/tenth century would disparage ‘Alī, but were accepted as authorities by the compilers of Sunnī canonical *ḥadīth* collections and other scholars.⁵²² Consequently, *ḥadīth* transmitters who were not anti-‘Alid recorded the claims of their anti-‘Alid peers either in biographical dictionaries or *ḥadīth* compilations. Some anti-‘Alid *ḥadīth* seem to have appeared in the canonical work of al-Bukhārī and other influential Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections.⁵²³ However, as anti-‘Alid sentiment lost favor among *ḥadīth* transmitters, the contributions of *nawāṣib* were emended or ceased to circulate.⁵²⁴ Due to the extinction of overt *naṣb*, a methodology that distinguishes it from *taqṣīr* and *khilāf* and surveys the reception of anti-‘Alid sentiment in *ḥadīth* and biographical literature will enrich this investigation with the claims of *nawāṣib* partially preserved in Sunnī literature. The results of a survey of *ḥadīth* literature will either problematize or substantiate descriptions of them in works of history and theology.

Academia has noted the attempts of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, Muḥammad b. Sa’d and their successors to minimize the early partisan divisions within the Sunnī community.⁵²⁵ The process required not only the inclusion of pro-‘Alid sentiments, but the repudiation of anti-

⁵²² See below, ch. 3, appendix, section III. For a list of over one-hundred examples, see ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ‘Uqaylī, *Mu’jam nawāṣib al-muḥaddithīn*. 2011.

⁵²³ See below, ch. 3, appendix; ch. 4; Conclusion (The Evolution of ‘Alī).

⁵²⁴ For Sunnī reception of anti-‘Alid reports, see below, ch. 4; Conclusion (The Evolution of ‘Alī). Using an *isnād-cum-matn* method, one may even date the periods in which implicitly anti-‘Alid *ḥadīth* circulated amongst *ḥadīth* transmitters in the second century and earlier periods. However, such an endeavor is left for future research.

⁵²⁵ See Scott Lucas, *Constructive Critics*.

‘Alid elements in the greater, non-Shī‘ī community. The Sunnī intellectual tradition sought to include individuals who were accused of *khilāf* and *bughḍ/naṣb* by censoring, discrediting, or charitably reading their contributions. Many historians of the second/eighth century were discernibly more partisan than others. Sectarian works are exemplified by the works of the unabashedly anti-Shī‘ī story-teller Sayf b. ‘Umar (d. 180/796), his *Kitāb al-Jamal wa masīr ‘Ā’isha wa ‘Alī*, and his reports about ‘Alī transmitted in al-Ṭabarī’s *Ta’rīkh*. Another example is *Kitāb Sulaym b. Qays*, a book that was clearly an early Shī‘ī apologia. On the other hand, many Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections did not attempt to weave a cohesive narrative.

Many ‘Abbāsīd-era works of history and *ḥadīth* became a receptacle for various sentiments of the time period. One finds anti-‘Alid, pro-‘Alid, and universalist *ḥadīth* in the same collections, despite the attempts of Sunnī orthodoxy to only propagate the last type. For example, the histories of al-Balādhurī and al-Ṭabarī and the *ḥadīth* collections of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and al-Ṭabarānī contained various currents in the community, including the pro-‘Alid and anti-‘Alid, despite some censorship of the most extreme elements. It seems that the compilers of Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections after Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal supported this universalist reading of history by attempting to diminish all of the historic partisan identities of the Companions and defending them all as one pious group. Although some Sunnīs have criticized al-Qāḍī Abū Bakr b. al-‘Arabī (d. 543/1148) for defending Umayyads accused of *naṣb* and other

crimes, he maintained such positions as part of an overall worldview that judged all Companions to be blameless.⁵²⁶ Thus, Abū Bakr b. al-‘Arabī equally rejected all insinuations that ‘Alī or any other Companion was responsible for the death of ‘Uthmān.⁵²⁷ Similarly, Muḥammad ibn Ṭulūn (d. 953/1548) has paradoxically written a treatise in defense of Yazīd ibn Mu‘āwiya⁵²⁸ and another text that exalts the Twelver Imams.⁵²⁹ The dual pro-‘Alid and pro-Umayyad arguments of these Sunnī authors should be understood as a consequence of their belief that all Companions deserved reverence and that any texts denigrating early Muslims should be rejected or charitably interpreted. Rather than showing fidelity to any particular political faction, these authors exemplified allegiance to Sunnism as a sect that gradually opposed criticism of early Muslim political figures.

Second century literary sources regarding the political histories of Iraq described the different allegiances which people possessed in relation to ‘Alids, Umayyads and others. However, those sources have not fully explicated the nature of those allegiances and specifically their theological dimensions.⁵³⁰ Such a reality complicates any characterizations

⁵²⁶ For criticisms, see Shihāb al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Ālūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma‘ānī fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘aẓīm wa-’l-sab‘ al-mathānī* (Beirut: n.d.), 26:73-74; Ibn Khaldūn, *Ta’rīkh*, 1:217; ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf al-Munāwī, *Fayḍ al-qadīr sharḥ al-Jāmi‘ al-ṣaḡhīr min aḥādīth al-bashīr al-nadhīr* (Beirut: 1994), 1:265, 5:313. See also Ḥasan al-Mālikī, “Mā ma’ākhidhuka ‘alā Kitāb al-‘Awāṣim yā ustādh Ḥasan?” *Facebook* (2013): <https://ar-ar.facebook.com/hasanalmaliki/posts/10151846813623001> (accessed Feb 2, 2015);

⁵²⁷ Abū Bakr b. al-‘Arabī, *al-‘Awāṣim min al-qawāṣim*, pp. 280-1, 298.

⁵²⁸ Ibn Ṭulūn, *Qayd al-sharīd min akhbār Yazīd*. (Cairo: 1986).

⁵²⁹ Ibn Ṭulūn, *al-A‘imma al-ithnā ‘ashar* (Beirut: 1958).

⁵³⁰ Dakake, *Charismatic Community*, pp. 3-5.

regarding the nature of anti-‘Alid and anti-Shī‘ī sentiments during the period. Some Shī‘ī sources condemned all disagreements with the opinions of ‘Alī as *naṣb*, without regard to who was charged or the relative significance of the issue. For example, al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī is condemned essentially for not following Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq and the Imāmī community.⁵³¹ The framework of this study differentiates between *khilāf*, *taqṣīr*, and *naṣb* in order to historically identify clear expressions of the latter and assist future academic inquiries into the phenomenon. While this investigation will not claim the portrayal of any given *nāṣibī* to be historically accurate, it will acknowledge that later Muslims associated the individual with a group of people who held such beliefs. Although the prevalence of *khilāf* and *taqṣīr* in the first three centuries of Islamic history would not be a contentious claim, the existence of *naṣb* requires further discussion.⁵³² A sample of supporting data in translation is organized into a number of sections in the Appendix below. This chapter provides a brief summary of those results.

A Framework for Texts & Social Groups

Based on primary and secondary sources, the following two tables provide a framework

⁵³¹ Khū‘ī, *Mu‘jam Rijāl al-Ḥadīth*, 5:289. Animosity towards Ḥasanids or other ‘Alid in Imāmī sources was most likely due to conflicts between them regarding the imamate during the early ‘Abbāsīd period, see Kohlberg, “Barā’a,” 162-3 (For animosity toward ‘Abd Allāh b. Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq); Modarressi, p. 53 (for the rivalry between the Ḥasanids and the Shī‘ī Imams).

⁵³² No one generally denies that multiple factions went to war with ‘Alī during his caliphate or that he was assassinated. The parties that fought him obviously exemplified *khilāf* because each war was predicated upon a disagreement. The assassin’s belief that ‘Alī no longer deserved obedience and had forfeited his right to life would constitute rejection of a right (*taqṣīr*) of ‘Alī according to most Muslims.

for the organization of data for future research on *naşb*. A partial list of examples is included in the chapter three appendix.

Anti-‘Alid Texts

Expressions of contempt for ‘Alī and his family were identified through eight characteristics:

1. Individuals defended the motives for the murder, persecution or physical attack on ‘Alī and members of his household.
2. Individuals cursed or insulted ‘Alī or members of his family.
3. They accused ‘Alī or members of his family of heresy, causing evil, or intentionally disobeying God or His Prophet.
4. They mocked ‘Alid claims to inheritance from the Prophet.
5. They dismissed most of the Household’s alleged merits as false. The individuals reveal their bias by promoting the political claims or merits of rivals.
6. Individuals criticized the actions and opinions of ‘Alī and his sons as unwise, a mistake, or unintentionally disobeying God and His Prophet. ‘Alids are sometimes portrayed as committing objectionable deeds in pursuit of their own carnal desires.
7. Texts exalted individuals who fought ‘Alī and his sons.
8. Texts denounced close companions of ‘Alī as evil.

Social Groups

Based on primary and contemporaneous secondary sources, the following framework describes pro-‘Alid and anti-‘Alid sentiments that existed in the second century as they pertained to various social and political groups organized into five broad categories.⁵³³

1. Group 1, the *nawāṣib*, displayed animosity toward ‘Alī and his household and allegiance to them. They frequently directed their loyalty to a rival group.
2. Group 2 opposed granting any special distinction or reverence to ‘Alī. One would generally believe other Companions (in addition to the three early caliphs) to be equal or greater than ‘Alī in merit. A member of this group would not necessarily have contempt for ‘Alī, but other political and theological allegiances would prevent him from acknowledging any of ‘Alī’s alleged merits.
3. Group 3 opposed the *tafḍīl* of ‘Alī, but ranked him as the greatest Companion after the previous caliphs. This traditional Sunnī position allowed pro-‘Alid scholars to accept many *ḥadīth* about the merits of ‘Alī and his family. Political allegiances (to the three caliphs, ‘Ā’isha, Mu‘āwīya and others) and theological beliefs (e.g. the righteousness of all Companions) sometimes caused tension or kept Group 3 from accepting some pro-‘Alid *ḥadīth*.
4. Group 4 upheld *tafḍīl* ‘Alī, but opposed ‘Alī’s veneration as a person endowed with

⁵³³ For further details, see below, ch. 4.

omniscience and supernatural power over the physical world. Some recognized that his imamate or *wilāya* was (1) designated by God and (2) obligatory to accept after the Prophet. Group 4 revered ‘Alī above all of his peers and lauded his merits, which sometimes included miracles. Some early Imāmīs, pro-‘Alid Sunnīs, Mu‘tazila, and Zaydīs fall within Group 4.

5. Group 5, which was composed of Imāmīs, only rejected his deification. Imāmī *ḥadīth* literature is full of reports in which various groups and their leaders were cursed and condemned as extremists (*ghulāt*).⁵³⁴ While groups 1-4 also opposed the deification of the Household, Group 5 was distinguished by its belief in the Household possessing some superhuman qualities like miraculous power over the natural world, infallibility and some level of omniscience that was inspired by God rather than acquired through education.

6. Group 6 deified the Household of the Prophet as manifestations or incarnations of God. Members of this group were commonly identified as *ghulāt* in heresiographies.

IV. Conclusions: Tensions in Developing a Framework for *naṣb*

Naṣb is a phrase used disparagingly by some *mufawwiḍa* towards anyone who disagreed with them concerning the divine nature of the Imams.⁵³⁵ Such a characterization would

⁵³⁴ Kohlberg, “Barā’a,” pp. 164-7.

⁵³⁵ Modarressi, *Crisis*, p. 36 n. 102-3.

include Twelver Shī'īs who disagreed with them, Shī'īs who recognized other Imams (e.g. Zaydīs), Sunnīs who respected 'Alids, and even other 'Alids who disagreed with one of the Twelver Imams. Some Imāmīs did not shy away from accusing Muslims of *naṣb* or *kufr* if they did not recognize the imamate of their line of 'Alids. Political and theological disputes of the time period fueled sectarian tendencies and salvific exclusivity. Obviously, the aforementioned groups were not actually *nawāṣib*. As for Companions and Muslims with allegiances to other than the Household, their disagreements with 'Alids ranged from benign to violent. The collective Muslim literary tradition recognizes some of 'Alī's rivals as guilty of *naṣb*.

The different methods and reasons for which Shī'ī and Sunnī authors classified examples of *naṣb* in the lifetime of 'Alī and in the Umayyad period greatly varied due to sectarian incentives to defend the integrity of their respective creeds and frameworks. Obviously hatred of 'Alī was unequivocally condemned in canonical Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections, so individuals proven to have such hatred could not remain revered figures in the tradition.⁵³⁶ As a consequence, Sunnīs and Imāmīs (in the case of some 'Alids) were forced to charitably reinterpret some instances where Companions or other distinguished figures disagreed with the Shī'ī Imams. Historical reports that predate the rise to prominence of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and his peers in Sunnī *ḥadīth* circles describe animosity toward 'Alī as originating from envy,

⁵³⁶ Although Ibrāhīm al-Jūzajānī and others are famous exceptions, see below, ch. 3, appendix, section III.

greed, and pride. In addition, Shī'ī and pro-'Alid Mu'tazilī writers argued that many Muslims were jealous of 'Alī's close relationship to the Prophet, his marriage to Fāṭima, and his victories in battle in the lifetime of the Prophet. After the Prophet's death, 'Alī's rivals desired power, wealth and land, which led them to reject any pro-'Alid or Shī'ī arguments for his authority or pre-eminence.⁵³⁷ 'Alī's rivals refused to recognize his right to the caliphate because his pious and egalitarian methods of governance would either hinder or oppose their desires for upward mobility. Recognition of any of 'Alī's merits would have delegitimized a rival's personal claim to authority. Some Umayyads and other late converts to Islam are portrayed as detesting 'Alī for his role in killing their kin in the battles led by the Prophet. Khārījites are commonly described as condemning 'Alī as an infidel for agreeing to an arbitration with Mu'āwiya. During the life of 'Alī, an individual's contempt for him may have originated from any of these sentiments. After his death, anti-'Alid sentiment may have flourished specifically through Umayyad and (later) 'Abbāsīd propaganda that was both anti-'Alid and anti-Shī'ī.

Because Sunnī and Shī'ī sources describe the *nawāṣīb* as extremists, their extinction as a separate group has contributed to the disappearance of complete primary source materials. One theological treatise and a few biographical dictionaries written by authors who lived in the early third century provide contemporaneous source material for some *nawāṣīb*. However,

⁵³⁷ See Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāgha* (and the historical sources he cites); 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā, *al-Shāfi'ī fī al-imāma* (Tehran: 1986). For English narratives, see also Jafri, *The Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam*; Madelung, *The Succession to Muhammad*.

they are secondary sources only reporting the alleged existence and nature of anti-‘Alid sentiment. During the first three centuries of Islamic history, ‘Uthmānīs, Umayyads, Khārijites, and ‘Abbāsids were sources of *nāṣibī* arguments, which included anti-‘Alid interpretations of Qur’ān, law and *ḥadīth*. Further research into primary sources, such as poetry and *ḥadīth* transmitted from purported *nawāṣib* within these factions, could confirm many of the claims made in secondary sources.

The historical tensions between Companions, ‘Alids and caliphs, competing Shī‘ī factions, pro-‘Alid and anti-‘Alid currents in Sunnism, and finally Shī‘īs and Sunnīs, have complicated the classification of individuals as *nāṣibī* and our understanding of *naṣb*. Identifying these tensions has helped provide a framework that can assist us in judging the characterization of alleged beliefs or events in Islamic history that qualify as *naṣb*. The Chapter 3 appendix and the next chapter survey famous expressions of anti-‘Alid sentiment in Islamic literature and examine a few individuals accused of anti-‘Alid sentiment and their purported beliefs. The two case studies below offer a broad overview of anti-‘Alid beliefs according to two famous authors who were accused of harboring anti-‘Alid sentiment themselves. The reception of their work and the translated excerpts below demonstrate the difficulty theologians faced in discrediting Shī‘ism without disrespecting ‘Alī even in the eyes of non-Shī‘īs with pro-‘Alid commitments.

V. Part 2: Two Medieval Texts Summarizing *naṣb*

The second through fourth centuries are central in the genesis of the Sunnī community. The period witnessed (1) the fall of the Umayyad dynasty, (2) an attempt at a Sufyānid restoration,⁵³⁸ (3) the rise of the scholars of *ḥadīth* and the articulation of Sunnī orthodoxy, and (4) the rejection of overt *naṣb* in the intellectual tradition. Two scholars wrote extensively on the beliefs of *nawāṣib* in the early Muslim community, sometimes validating them, to the extent that they were accused of *naṣb* themselves, ‘Amr b. Baḥr al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/869) and Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328). A case study that compares the work of al-Jāḥiẓ, a scholar who lived in a period when anti-‘Alid sentiment still ran high in different parts of the Islamic world, and Ibn Taymiyya, whose anti-Shī‘ī polemics led him to mention these beliefs, would be valuable to a study of *naṣb*. The following section briefly introduces these two authors and surveys a few of their literary works that discussed pro-‘Alid and anti-‘Alid sentiment in Islamic history.

‘Amr b. Baḥr al-Jāḥiẓ was a Mu‘tazilī Baṣran belle-lettrist who won favor at the ‘Abbāsīd court.⁵³⁹ His interests in an encyclopedic array of intellectual questions and in rationalist disputation, together with his acquaintance with the beliefs of his contemporaries are important assets in this investigation. He lived at the end of the second century and flourished

⁵³⁸ For Syrian attempts at a Sufyānid restoration, see Paul Cobb, *White Banners: Contention in ‘Abbāsīd Syria* (Albany: 2001); Wilferd Madelung, “Abū ‘l-‘Amayṭar the Sufyānī” *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 24, (2000): 327-342; “The Sufyānī between Tradition and History” *Studia Islamica* no. 63 (1986): 5-48.

⁵³⁹ *E.I.*², s.v. “Djāḥiẓ.”

in the third, a period in which an Umayyad revolt, led by a descendant of Mu‘āwīya b. Abī Sufyān, occurred in Syria (195/811) and *ḥadīth* transmitters rose to great prominence.⁵⁴⁰ Al-Jāḥiẓ’s exposition of ‘Uthmānī and Umayyad views provides important details regarding anti-‘Alid and anti-Shī‘ī arguments that these groups may have utilized. The Sufyānid revolt at the end of the second century indicates that Syria was still a bastion of pro-Mu‘āwīya and Umayyad sentiment despite decades of ‘Abbāsid rule. A century later Aḥmad b. ‘Alī al-Nasā‘ī (d. 303/915) was violently expelled from the Umayyad mosque in Damascus after he attempted to teach the community *ḥadīth* about the merits of ‘Alī and refused to validate their love for legends about Mu‘āwīya. He eventually died from the injuries sustained from the Syrian mob attack.⁵⁴¹ Al-Nasā‘ī’s death indicates that anti-‘Alid sentiment was still prevalent in traditionally pro-Umayyad districts in the early fourth century.

Although there is difficulty in ascertaining the historicity of information regarding the first century, *ḥadīth* collections can certainly provide access to the teachings of *ḥadīth* transmitters who lived in the second century and beyond. The reports of a narrator can be considered primary source material for their teachings, while biographical dictionaries record additional, sometimes contemporary, indirect information about them. Historical works written in the third and fourth centuries, at the very least, reference the beliefs of Muslims in

⁵⁴⁰ See above, n. 538.

⁵⁴¹ Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, 14: 132-3; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, 5:282.

the era of the writer regarding events of the previous two centuries. Some sources, like al-Balādhurī's *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, contain narratives and teachings that are pro-Umayyad. Modern scholarship has praised this aspect of al-Balādhurī's work since it was written for the 'Abbāsid court.⁵⁴² This study utilizes *ḥadīth* collections, biographical dictionaries and historical works as sources for understanding the purported beliefs of figures living in the second and third centuries.

The influential Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyya is particularly authoritative in commenting on anti-'Alid views prevalent amongst the people of Syria. He was a resident Ḥanbalī jurist of Damascus and a staunch opponent of Shī'ism. His prodigious memory, knowledge of the Sunnī intellectual tradition, analytical skill, and talent for disputation on behalf of the Ḥanbalī tradition is well-known.⁵⁴³ His polemical treatises attacked Ash'arī theology, Greek logic, many classical Sunnī legal opinions, popular Sufi practices and beliefs, and anything related to Shī'ism as deviant and false. Although leading Sunnī scholars fiercely disagreed with his views in his lifetime,⁵⁴⁴ Saudi Arabia has been instrumental in the dissemination and acceptance of his teachings throughout the Sunnī world in modernity. His puritan and absolutist rhetoric is especially popular in conservative Sunnī, Salafī and Wahhābī circles, including terrorist ones.

⁵⁴² Dakake, *Charismatic Community*, 37; Khalil Athamina, "The Sources of al-Balādhurī's *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 5, (1984), pp. 246-7.

⁵⁴³ For a laudatory introduction, Abdul Hakim Matroudi, "The removal of blame from the great Imāms: An annotated translation of Ibn Taymiyyah's *Raf' al-malām 'an al-a'immat al-a'lām*" *Islamic Studies* 46:3 (2007), pp. 317-27.

⁵⁴⁴ See *E.I.*², s.v. "Ibn Taymiyya."

Ibn Taymiyya's numerous references to the alleged claims of the *nawāṣib* in his multi-volume, anti-Shī'ī treatise, *Minhāj al-sunna al-nabawiyya fī naqḍ kalām al-Shī'a al-Qadariyya* are noted below. Like al-Jāḥiẓ, Ibn Taymiyya probably utilized *naṣb* as a tenet to provide some hypothetical responses to Shī'ī claims, and did not necessarily encounter individuals who claimed each of the opinions he attributed to them. Muslims of the Umayyad and 'Abbāsid period who allegedly agreed with Ibn Taymiyya's anti-'Alid and anti-Shī'ī claims are surveyed in the chapter three appendix and chapter four.

A. Case 1: al-Jāḥiẓ

Al-Jāḥiẓ is an eloquent polemicist in his *al-'Uthmāniyya*, which essentially defends the precedence of the first three caliphs over 'Alī.⁵⁴⁵ The partisans of these caliphs are referred to as *Bakriyya*, *'Udariyya*, and *'Uthmāniyya* in some heresiographies, but persons who generally upheld the legitimacy of the first three caliphs are described as *'Uthmānī*.⁵⁴⁶ Umayyad partisanship strengthened and grew out of a partisanship to 'Uthmān. However, as al-Jāḥiẓ points out in a separate treatise, the refusal to recognize 'Alī's caliphate and legitimation of the

⁵⁴⁵ For more on this work, see Afsaruddin, *Excellence and Precedence*, pp. 13-4. Al-Jāḥiẓ states the thesis of his work, namely, that "Alī does not possess a rank except that Abū Bakr possesses one that is better in that same regard or another. In addition, Abū Bakr possessed distinctions that neither 'Alī nor any other person shared with him," see Jāḥiẓ, "al-'Uthmāniyya" *Rasā'il al-Jāḥiẓ: al-rasā'il al-siyāsiyya*. Ed. 'Alī Abū Maḥmūd (Beirut: 1987), 3:152.

⁵⁴⁶ Mīlānī, *Sharḥ Minhāj al-Karāma* (Qum: 2007), 1:127-8 (for the *Bakriyya*). Al-Jāḥiẓ refers to the *Bakriyya* as a group independent of the *'Udariyya* (*Rasā'il al-Jāḥiẓ: al-rasā'il al-siyāsiyya*, 3:368). The *Bakriyya* may refer to a sect that formed within or separate from the proto-Sunnī community. According to some sources, the *Bakriyya* believed that the Prophet explicitly designated Abū Bakr to succeed him as caliph, see Afsaruddin, *Excellence and Precedence*, p. 29.

Umayyad dynasty became an affair specific to Umayyad (both Sufyānid and Marwānid) partisans.⁵⁴⁷ Umayyad partisans believed the Rightly-Guided Caliphs proceeded in the following order: Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān and then Mu‘āwiya. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal as well as other influential early Sunnī scholars responded to this anti-‘Alid worldview by including ‘Alī as a fourth caliph.⁵⁴⁸ Al-Jāḥiẓ, after providing his own argumentation to support the legitimacy of the three-caliph paradigm, does explain in other writings, like his *Risālat al-Ḥakamayn*, that ‘Alī was the legitimate caliph after the death of ‘Uthmān.⁵⁴⁹ He does not shy away from recognizing the same ‘Alid distinctions which he had previously attacked in his *‘Uthmāniyya*.⁵⁵⁰ al-Jāḥiẓ eloquently expounds the views of Umayyad partisans in his *Risālat al-Ḥakamayn*, which leads one to believe that as a testament to his Mu‘tazilī persuasion, Jāḥiẓ engaged in dialectics by expounding the views of those with whom he did not necessarily agree. The response of a contemporary, Abū Ja‘far al-Iskāfī and many others to al-Jāḥiẓ’s *al-‘Uthmāniyya* indicates his work was widely read and his interlocutors strongly believed it warranted refutations.⁵⁵¹ There is evidence that al-Jāḥiẓ was offended by al-Iskāfī’s work and by others who identified him as an ‘Uthmānī or a *nāṣibi*.⁵⁵²

⁵⁴⁷ ‘Amr b. Baḥr Jāḥiẓ, “*Risālat al-Ḥakamayn*”, *Rasā’il al-Jāḥiẓ*, 3:385-90.

⁵⁴⁸ Afsaruddin, p. 18.

⁵⁴⁹ Jāḥiẓ, “*Risālat al-Ḥakamayn*,” *Rasā’il al-Jāḥiẓ*, 3:398.

⁵⁵⁰ For his praise of ‘Alī and affirmation of his merits, see Jāḥiẓ, “*Risāla al-awṭān wa’l-buldān*”, *Rasā’il al-Jāḥiẓ*, 3:109.

⁵⁵¹ Afsaruddin, pp. 7, 23-5.

⁵⁵² Jāḥiẓ: *Rasā’il al-Jāḥiẓ*, 3:26-7; *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*. Ed. ‘Abd al-Salām Muhammad Hārūn. (Cairo: 1965), 1:11. See also Afsaruddin, p. 24.

Ironically, his pro-Hāshimid treatises generated criticism amongst contemporaries as well.⁵⁵³ Al-Jāḥiẓ claimed that he only wrote his pro-Hāshimid and ‘Uthmānī treatises to detail their beliefs and provide the best explanations for them, but denied that such presentations represented his personal beliefs.

In one treatise, he readily acknowledged that Mu‘āwiya and his companions never utilized some of the pro-Umayyad arguments that he presents to the reader. Rather the arguments may come from (1) “accursed *nāṣiba*” of later generations who despised ‘Alī, (2) Mu‘tazilī efforts to rationally reconstruct Umayyad theories before refuting them, or (3) his own attempt to elucidate the basis of their views.⁵⁵⁴ He defended his method of argumentation as the soundest when engaging in polemics because whosoever is able to expound the proofs of his opponents, even when the latter lacked the opportunity to defend themselves in such a manner, is more adept in defending his own beliefs and decisively winning the debate. The following is a summary of arguments that may have been agreeable to *nawāṣib* in his presentation of the views of the ‘Uthmāniyya, Umayyads and Khārijites.

1. ‘Uthmāniyya

The ‘Uthmāniyya believed:

‘Alī’s conversion as a child was not equal to that of a rational adult as he probably did not perceive the gravity of his action. His conversion was identical to children born of Muslim

⁵⁵³ Jāḥiẓ, *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*, 1:7.

⁵⁵⁴ Jāḥiẓ, “Risālat al-Ḥakamayn,” *Rasā’il al-Jāḥiẓ*, 3:393.

parents who follow the religion of their household. Others (namely the three caliphs) converted as a result of a rational decision inspired by faith.⁵⁵⁵ Unlike other Companions, ‘Alī did not lose wealth and social standing in society as a result of his conversion. Adult converts sacrificed their wealth to free Muslim slaves and offer other services that ‘Alī could not. ‘Alī did not have to fear persecution due to the protection of his father and clan, while others were punished.⁵⁵⁶ Furthermore, no one converted to Islam due to ‘Alī’s missionary efforts, whereas they did so at the hands of Abū Bakr.⁵⁵⁷ ‘Alī was not the most knowledgeable, ascetic, or heroic in battle as his partisans claim. Other Companions shared equally in his merits and even surpassed him.⁵⁵⁸ Shī‘īs claim that he only gave the wisest opinion on a matter and never changed his mind, however, there is evidence he occasionally erred in his rulings like the rest of mankind.⁵⁵⁹ Exegeses of the Qur’an and *ḥadīth* of the Prophet in praise of ‘Alī are uncorroborated, ambiguous or narrated by individuals who were considered unreliable.⁵⁶⁰ If such reports were true, a greater number of Companions and scholars would have transmitted them.⁵⁶¹ Unlike other Companions, ‘Alī is never mentioned as one who memorized the Qur’an in the lifetime of the Prophet or as an authority for its recitation, script, or exegesis.⁵⁶² Others were superior to him in knowledge of the Qur’an, *ḥadīth* and Islamic law.⁵⁶³ Others received appellations from the Prophet, signifying their great faith, while ‘Alī did not.⁵⁶⁴ The authenticity of the *ḥadīth* of Ghadīr is doubtful, but if true, only concerned Zayd b. Ḥāritha, the client of the Prophet, who was ordered to recognize ‘Alī as his *mawlā* in addition to the Prophet.⁵⁶⁵ There is no clear textual evidence that any of the Companions which Shī‘īs

⁵⁵⁵ Jāḥiẓ, “Risālat al-‘Uthmāniyya,” *Rasā’il al-Jāḥiẓ*, 3:129-138. He essentially argues that ‘Alī had not reached the age of discernment when he converted.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid., 3:142, 144, 146, 148. Al-Jāḥiẓ argues that other Companions either utilized those things in the service of Islam or were forced to relinquish them due to their conversion.

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid, 3:146-150.

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid, 3:157 (for valor in war), 175, 185, 189-90 (in knowledge), 190-191 (in governance and expansion of the empire), 192 (in asceticism),

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid, 3:186-88 (where al-Jāḥiẓ cites a few examples).

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid, 3:206, 227-41 (for examples in which he repudiates such reports).

⁵⁶¹ Ibid, 3:209-10.

⁵⁶² Al-Jāḥiẓ obviously wrote for the ‘Abbāsīd court. His pro-‘Abbāsīd sentiment is evident in his writing, see Jāḥiẓ, “Risāla al-‘Uthmāniyya,” *Rasā’il al-Jāḥiẓ*, 3:210-211; “Faḍl Hāshim ‘alā ‘Abd Shams,” 3: 419-60, “‘Abbāsiyya,” 3:467-70.

⁵⁶³ Al-Jāḥiẓ qualifies his attack on the precedence of ‘Alī in Islamic scholarship by admitting that ‘Alī was indeed “a jurist, scholar, and one who had knowledge in each (aforementioned) field.” This acknowledgement, Al-Jāḥiẓ contended, was in contrast to (Imāmī) Shī‘īs who stubbornly refused to recognize the scholarly capacities of the first three caliphs. See Jāḥiẓ, “Risāla al-‘Uthmāniyya,” 3:189-90.

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid, 3:211-212.

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid, 3:227-8.

champion (as their predecessors) were ever partisans of ‘Alī or ever considered the first three caliphs illegitimate.⁵⁶⁶ Kinship with a prophet plays no role in leadership of a religious community or the salvation of a person on the Day of Judgment. Thus, the cousin or descendant of a prophet should not be conceited about his ancestry.⁵⁶⁷ Neither ‘Alī nor his companions ever claimed that the Prophet explicitly designated him as his successor.⁵⁶⁸ It would be correct for one to claim that the Prophet designated Abū Bakr as his successor by way of the latter’s designation as the general leader of prayers.⁵⁶⁹

2. The Umayyads

The Umayyads believed:

‘Alī was an illegitimate claimant to the caliphate because of his culpability in the death of ‘Uthmān, and protection of the latter’s killers. ‘Alī claimed the caliphate despite failing to obtain either a clear designation from ‘Uthmān, a consensus of constituents regarding the legitimacy of his caliphate, or the support of surviving members of the *shūrā* after the death of ‘Umar.⁵⁷⁰ Furthermore, ‘Alī was misguided and sinful in generally disagreeing with the opinions of Umar and the rest of the community.⁵⁷¹ After the deaths of Ṭalha and Zubayr, ‘Alī had no right to the caliphate over Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāṣ. Had the two agreed on a matter, Mu‘āwiya would have obeyed their decision.⁵⁷²

‘Alī was a man who married and divorced abundantly.⁵⁷³ Some were averse to ‘Alī’s stringent

⁵⁶⁶ These Companions include ‘Ammār b. Yāsir, Abū Dharr, Miqdād, Salmān and others, see Jāḥiẓ, “Risālat al-‘Uthmāniyya,” 3:251-261.

⁵⁶⁷ Al-Jāḥiẓ is making veiled references to ‘Alī and his descendants, see *ibid*, 3:273-277.

⁵⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 3:324.

⁵⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 3:326.

⁵⁷⁰ Jāḥiẓ, “Risālat al-Ḥakamayn,” 3:346, 386. The three previous caliphs allegedly gained power through the following three methods; a consensus of the community, designation by the previous caliph, or winning the election of a council of leaders. Many sources mention Companions who in fact contested Abū Bakr’s election, see al-‘Askarī, *Ma‘ālim*, 1:124-135.

⁵⁷¹ Jāḥiẓ, “Risālat al-Ḥakamayn,” 3:389. The argument that ‘Alī considered the practice of his predecessors or the opinion of the community to be incorrect or that he was responsible for the death of ‘Uthmān, implicitly assumes a fact that some Sunnī polemicists such as Ibn Taymiyya deny: that ‘Alī believed he was the only legitimate authority after the Prophet.

⁵⁷² *Ibid*, 3:386.

⁵⁷³ Al-Jāḥiẓ cites the alleged phrase of Mu‘āwiya “I am one who neither marries nor divorces frequently” as a criticism of ‘Alī, whereas others cite this as a criticism of his son Ḥasan. In either case, it portrays members of the ‘Alid house as self-indulgent to contradict popular belief in their piety and sanctity. See Jāḥiẓ, “Risālat al-

fiscal policies, particularly his refusal to use public funds for personal use or cronyism.⁵⁷⁴ Mu'āwiya was better in judgment and more skillful in its implementation than 'Alī.⁵⁷⁵ 'Alī was assassinated due to his own negligence, while Mu'āwiya and 'Amr b. al-ʿĀṣ escaped such attempts through their own prudence.⁵⁷⁶ Some claim that Mu'āwiya was completely justified in going to war against 'Alī.⁵⁷⁷ As an Umayyad chieftain, Mu'āwiya had every right to seek vengeance for the murder of 'Uthmān. An Imam (referring to 'Alī) who does not punish murderers or help a victim's family seek retribution is unjust and should not be in any leadership position.⁵⁷⁸

3. The Khārijites

The Khārijites believed that 'Alī was guilty of a number of errors:

'Alī chose Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī as an arbiter, when there were others who were better suited to represent him. He chose to have arbitration, when the command of God was to fight until the opposing army surrendered. Just as no one has the right to judge differently from the laws of *ḥudūd*, 'Alī had no right to cease fighting or honor his peace treaty with Mu'āwiya.⁵⁷⁹ 'Alī mistakenly stopped the battle of Ṣiffīn due to doubt about his own cause, stupidity, cowardice (in the face of the mutineers), regret for engaging in a war which led to a massive loss of life, or a desire for the repentance of Mu'āwiya.⁵⁸⁰

B. Case 2: Ibn Taymiyya

Ibn Taymiyya's *Minhāj al-Sunna* is a refutation of 'Allāma al-Ḥillī's *Minhāj al-karāma*, a treatise explicating Imāmī doctrine. Ibn Taymiyya, like Jāḥiẓ before him, dialectically presents

'Uthmāniyya," 3:193.

⁵⁷⁴ Jāḥiẓ, "Risālat al-Ḥakamayn," 3:350.

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid, 3:365.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid, 3:368.

⁵⁷⁷ For example, Abū Bakr al-Aṣamm argued along these lines, see Nāshi' al-Akbar (attrib.), "Masā'il al-imāma," pp. 59-60. Those who hesitated in unequivocally justifying his actions argued that Mu'āwiya, at the very least, had a greater right in going to war (due to tribalism) than the leaders of the Battle of the "Camel," see Jāḥiẓ, "Risālat al-Ḥakamayn," 3:383.

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid, 3:387.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid, 3:358. After the mutineers realized their mistake in ceasing the war with Mu'āwiya, 'Alī allegedly refused to follow their proposals to break his peace treaty and preempt war before arbitration. Al-Jāḥiẓ alludes to this point, see ibid, 3:365.

⁵⁸⁰ Al-Jāḥiẓ recognizes that some of these hypothetical reasons are implausible, see ibid, 3:360.

the hypothetical views of *nawāṣib*. He generally oscillates between condemning them as extreme and upholding them as sounder and less evil than the Shī'ī position.⁵⁸¹ In other cases, he presents his own anti-Shī'ī position as representative of a consensus within Sunnism or amongst the earliest generations of Muslims. It is clear that the *nawāṣib* would have agreed with many aspects of Ibn Taymiyya's thought. Summary A lists hypothetical arguments that he attributes to the *nawāṣib*, followed by Summary B, which lists some of his own anti-Shī'ī views.

1. *The beliefs of the nawāṣib*

'Alī was not an *imam* to whom obedience was obligatory since his caliphate was neither established through a clear proof-text nor consensus.⁵⁸² Mu'āwiya carried out *ijtihād* (rationalized a valid legal opinion on the basis of the Qur'ān and prophetic practice) and was correct in rejecting 'Alī's authority and going to war against him.⁵⁸³ On the other hand, 'Alī was mistaken in going to war against Mu'āwiya.⁵⁸⁴ The Marwānids substantiated this belief with a number of arguments.

[For example,] the Marwānids defended Mu'āwiya as the rightful guardian (avenger) of 'Uthmān's spilled blood since he was his paternal cousin and the Umayyads, including 'Uthmān's sons, all acquiesced to his seniority and authority. Both Mu'āwiya and the Umayyads requested that 'Alī either surrender 'Uthmān's murderers to them or give them the right, as a clan, to exact vengeance upon the suspects. When 'Alī rejected their requests, they refused to pledge allegiance to him, but did not commit any acts of war against him.⁵⁸⁵ 'Alī, on

⁵⁸¹ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4:400. For example, he argues that praise for 'Umar b. Sa'd (who led the army against al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī) and considering him better than his father, is far less evil than considering Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr better than his father, see *ibid.*, 2:65-8. In contrast to his father, Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr was an ardent partisan of 'Alī and highly respected in Imāmī tradition, see Maya Yazigi, "Defense and Validation in Shi'i and Sunni tradition: The Case of Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr," *Studia Islamica*, 98/99 (2004), pp. 49-70.

⁵⁸² Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4:401.

⁵⁸³ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4:391, 401.

⁵⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 4:401; 405.

⁵⁸⁵ Ibn Taymiyya notes elsewhere several reasons for which 'Alī could not acquiesce to these requests. For

the other hand, initiated war with them, so they fought him in self-defense and in defense of their territories. This group claimed that ‘Alī was an unruly aggressor (*bāghī*) against them. As for the *ḥadīth* from the Prophet condemning the “transgressing party” (*fi’at al-bāghiya*) which kills ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir, some denied the authenticity of the *ḥadīth*, while others interpreted it differently. Some claimed that ‘Alī, in fact, represented the “transgressing party” since he and his party killed ‘Ammār “by practically throwing him upon our swords.” Others positively reinterpreted the adjective (*bāghiya*) to mean “seeking” rather than “transgressing,” since Mu‘āwīya’s army “sought” to avenge ‘Uthmān’s blood.⁵⁸⁶ Marwānids and their partisans also argued that ‘Alī was a co-conspirator in the death of ‘Uthmān. Some claimed that ‘Alī publicly ordered it, while others claimed he did so clandestinely. Others stated that ‘Alī only rejoiced and took satisfaction in his assassination.⁵⁸⁷

Yazīd was a Companion, a Rightly Guided Caliph, or a prophet.⁵⁸⁸ Ḥusayn was rightly killed because he wished to destroy the unity of the community. Furthermore, the army that killed Ḥusayn was obeying the Prophet who ordered his followers to kill all those who caused dissension after the authority of a ruler had been established.⁵⁸⁹ Many Umayyad partisans believed their caliphs would face neither punishment nor accountability on the Day of Judgment.⁵⁹⁰ Mu‘āwīya possessed a greater right to the caliphate and was more meritorious than ‘Alī.⁵⁹¹ ‘Alī was either unable or unwilling to protect the Syrians from individuals in his army who wished to do them harm. ‘Alī’s army was the aggressor and responsible for initiating civil war.⁵⁹²

Some groups verbally abused ‘Alī and considered him blameworthy a reprehensible person.⁵⁹³

example, ‘Alī (and society at large) may not have known the precise identities of ‘Uthmān’s killers. Perhaps ‘Alī did not consider it permissible to execute multiple offenders for the death of one person, see *ibid.*, 4:407.

⁵⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 4:405. Elsewhere, Ibn Taymiyya explains that *baghy* should be understood in this context as *ẓulm* and rejects any positive reinterpretations, see *ibid.*, 4:418.

⁵⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 4:406, Ibn Taymiyya considers these claims to be slanderous and defends ‘Alī as innocent of any wrongdoing in the death of ‘Uthmān. He notes that it is narrated that some contemporaries of ‘Alī even committed perjury by swearing to the Syrian people that ‘Alī had been a participant in ‘Uthmān’s murder.

⁵⁸⁸ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4: 559.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibn Taymiyya and Abū Bakr b. al-‘Arabī mention this argument on behalf of Muslims who may have mistakenly killed Ḥusayn. The two authors never deny that Ḥusayn was wronged and died a martyr, see Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4:559, Ibn al-‘Arabī, *al-‘Awāṣim*, 338. Ibn al-‘Arabī generally defends all Companions as pious individuals, including those Umayyads and their partisans who were infamously accused of crimes, see *ibid.*, 280-1, 289, 290, 340.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 6:430.

⁵⁹¹ Ibn Taymiyya claims most of Mu‘āwīya’s soldiers believed ‘Alī was greater in merit than Mu‘āwīya. Only a few evil or misguided people believed Mu‘āwīya was better than ‘Alī, see *ibid.*, 4:383.

⁵⁹² *Ibid.*, 4:383-4.

⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*, 4:400.

Different groups of *nawāṣib* claim that ‘Alī was either an infidel (*kāfir*) or a criminal (*fāsiq*), or doubt he was a just person.⁵⁹⁴ Compared to the *rawāfiḍ*, *nawāṣib* arguments are dialectically stronger; it is easier to doubt ‘Alī’s conversion and faith, or consider his caliphate illegitimate due to the number of Companions who refused to pledge allegiance to him.⁵⁹⁵ Those who went to war against ‘Alī were more righteous and closer to the truth than him (*awlā bī’l-ḥaqq minhu*).⁵⁹⁶ For a number of reasons, ‘Alī was unjust (*ẓālim*) and the unruly aggressor (*bāghī*) when he went to war against Muslims. First, he fought only in pursuit of strengthening his authority. He was the first to strike and initiate battle, he led an assault against Muslims (instead of a defensive war), and, finally, he shed the blood of the Community without a single benefit, neither worldly nor in the cause of religion. His sword was sheathed against non-Muslims and only unsheathed against Muslims.⁵⁹⁷ Khārijites state he was correct in the beginning of his reign, but committed *kufṛ*, became an apostate after arbitration, and died as a disbeliever.⁵⁹⁸ Marwānids state that ‘Alī was unjust, while Mu‘āwiya was innocent of any wrongdoing.⁵⁹⁹

2. The beliefs of “ahl al-sunna”

The legitimacy of Abū Bakr’s caliphate is established through a clear designation (*naṣṣ*) and consensus, but such evidence does not exist for the caliphate of ‘Alī. Nothing in the *ṣaḥīḥayn* establishes his caliphate. Rather some authors of *sunan* works transmitted a report from Safina that some experts of *ḥadīth* criticized (as untrustworthy). As for consensus, (this is impossible since) more or less than half of the community refrained from pledging allegiance to him or joining his army in his wars.⁶⁰⁰ The Prophet designated Abū Bakr as his successor either explicitly or through numerous indications.⁶⁰¹ The Prophet died without a *waṣīyya*. None of the Companions disagreed on the superiority of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar to ‘Alī.⁶⁰² Scholars have agreed in consensus that Mu‘āwiya was good (*ḥasan*) in his behavior after becoming Muslim.⁶⁰³ It is reported that al-Shāfi‘ī and others believed, “The [legitimate] caliphs were three: Abū

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid., 4:386, 401.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibn Taymiyya is responding to the Imāmī tendency to doubt or dismiss the faith of the first three caliphs and attack the legitimacy of their rule because there were Companions who opposed them, see *ibid.*, 4:386-7.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid., 4:400.

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid., 4:389.

⁵⁹⁸ Ibn Taymiyya held that all those who condemn ‘Alī are incorrect and misguided, *ibid.*, 4:390.

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid., 4:390.

⁶⁰⁰ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4:388-9.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid., 1:486 (for indications).

⁶⁰² Other Sunnī scholars disagreed, see al-Mīlānī, *Sharḥ*, 1:133.

⁶⁰³ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4:382.

Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān.”⁶⁰⁴

Some say Mu‘āwiya erred in his *ijtihād*, but will either receive a reward for his sincere effort or be forgiven for it. Others say ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiya were both correct in their judgments.⁶⁰⁵ Participation in the battle of Ṣiffin was neither obligatory nor recommended in Islamic law.⁶⁰⁶ Leading Sunnī jurists, like Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and Mālīk believed those who opposed ‘Alī were not the first to strike or begin warfare. Thus, he was not legally obliged to fight them.⁶⁰⁷ In fact, had ‘Alī abstained from war it would have been better (*afḍal*), virtuous (*khayr*), and a greater good (*aṣḥaḥ*).⁶⁰⁸ Many Sunnī scholars of *ḥadīth* in Baṣra, the Levant (*shām*), and Andalusia believed that ‘Alī, like many other Companions, was both superior in merit and closer to the truth than Mu‘āwiya, but never became a legitimate caliph. They would wish for God’s mercy upon ‘Alī, but maintain that there was no caliph in the years in which ‘Alī allegedly ruled, rather there was only sedition and factionalism. The legitimate caliph was he who received the pledge of allegiance from the entire Muslim community and ‘Alī never achieved this. Consequently, when listing [and praising] the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, some of these scholars would intentionally exclude ‘Alī. Instead, they would name Mu‘āwiya as the fourth caliph after ‘Uthmān in their Friday sermons since he received the pledge of allegiance without dissent.⁶⁰⁹

‘Uthmān was less deserving of murder than Ḥusayn. ‘Umar b. Sa’d’s participation in the murder of Ḥusayn is analogous to the sin Muslims generally incur when they choose to disobey God. Mukhtār al-Thaqafī, the Shī‘ī, is worse than ‘Umar b. Sa’d, the *nāṣibī*.⁶¹⁰ Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf al-Thaqafī was better than Mukhtār because he did not spill blood without just cause.⁶¹¹ The Imams of the Household, like the rest of the Muslim community, would learn from the (proto-Sunnī) scholars of *ḥadīth*.⁶¹² In contrast to Shī‘īs, the Imams never denied pre-determinism or

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid., 4:404.

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid., 4:391-2.

⁶⁰⁶ *Lā wājib wa lā mustaḥabb*, see ibid., 4:384. This claim obviously contradicts those pro-‘Alid Sunnīs who believed participation in the war under the command of ‘Alī was obligatory since he was God’s Rightly-Guided Caliph, see ‘Abd Allāh Hararī, *al-Dalīl al-shar‘ī*.

⁶⁰⁷ Other reports identify Khārijites as those who started the civil war, see Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4:390.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid., 4:389, 392.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid., 4:400-1. Ibn Taymiyya mentions Umayyads of Andalusia considered Mu‘āwiya the fourth caliph, but this belief was upheld in other regions as well.

⁶¹⁰ He condemns Mukhtār for being a liar and allegedly claiming prophethood. In addition to praise for his deeds, criticism of Mukhtār exists even in Shī‘ī *ḥadīth*, although Shī‘ī scholars have doubted the authenticity of many of the texts condemning him. For a discussion, see al-Khū‘ī, *Mu‘jam Rijāl al-Ḥadīth*, 19:102-110.

⁶¹¹ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 2:70.

⁶¹² Ibid., 2:454.

that God could be seen. The Twelve Imams neither claimed infallibility nor the explicit designation of ‘Alī as caliph. There were scholars who were more knowledgeable than the ‘Alid Imams and more beneficial to the Muslim community.⁶¹³ In fact scholars agree that al-Zuhrī was more knowledgeable in prophetic *ḥadīth* than his contemporary, Muḥammad al-Bāqir. After Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq, the Imams evidently possessed neither useful knowledge nor an expertise that required scholars to seek their tutelage. Imām ‘Alī al-Hādī and Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī were not scholars of religion. If those two Imams issued legal opinions to any respected scholar of the (Sunnī) tradition, it would have been more appropriate, and in fact, obligatory on the latter to follow his own opinion instead.⁶¹⁴

Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn may not have reached an age at which they could independently discern right from wrong in the Prophet’s lifetime.⁶¹⁵ That which is narrated about Fāṭima claiming to have received Fadak as a gift, having individuals testify for her, or a final will in which she asks to be buried at night and have none of them (Abū Bakr and his supporters) pray for her does not befit her (and is probably false), but if the affair is true, it would be considered a sin for which she shall be forgiven rather than a praiseworthy deed.⁶¹⁶ There is nothing praiseworthy in the anger of a person who is fully oppressed (*maẓlūm^{an} maḥḍ^{an}*) if the anger is for a worldly affair.⁶¹⁷ Indeed, God rebuked hypocrites (*munāfiqīn*) when He said, “And among them are those who slander thee in the matter of the (distribution of) alms. If they are given a portion, they are pleased. If not, behold! They are indignant!” (Q9:58)...Does not the one who praises Fāṭima for bearing a resemblance to such people actually malign her?⁶¹⁸

⁶¹³ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 6:387. He cites the likes of Mālik b. Anas, al-Shāfi‘ī, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Layth b. Sa‘d, al-Awzā‘ī, Yaḥyā b. Sa‘īd, Wakī‘ b. al-Jarrāḥ, ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Mubārak, Ishāq b. Rāhawayh and a few others, see *ibid.*, 2:460.

⁶¹⁴ He lists twenty-four famous scholars from the proto-Sunnī community whom he considered more knowledgeable than these two ‘Alid Imams. Greater knowledge and expertise relieved them of any need to refer to these ‘Alid Imams and prohibited them from deferring to them for edicts, see *ibid.*, 2:470-473.

⁶¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1:456. Ibn Taymiyya makes this claim despite the existence of *ḥadīth* which Ḥasan and Ḥusayn narrated from the Prophet. To verify one had reached the age of discernment in the framework of *ḥadīth* scholars, a person only needed to show an ability to learn and transmit *ḥadīth*. Some Sunnīs required children to have reached the age of discernment for them to be considered Companions (see Mālikī, *al-Ṣuḥba*, 151-4). Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections include reports in which the Prophet’s grandsons narrate from him, thus, pro-‘Alid scholars would consider Ibn Taymiyya’s comment offensive. For a selection of *ḥadīth* narrated by Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, see Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, 1:199-201.

⁶¹⁶ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4:243, 247, 248, 256, 257, 264.

⁶¹⁷ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4:245.

⁶¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 4:245-46.

If Abū Bakr upset her in this affair, he is nonetheless above reproach since he did so in obedience to God and His messenger, in contrast to ‘Alī. ‘Alī upset Fāṭima by attempting to marry a second wife, thus, he personally desired that which caused her pain (*lahu fī adhāhā gharaḍ*)...and bore responsibility in that which disturbed her (*lahu ḥaẓẓ fīmā rābahā bihi*).⁶¹⁹ Since obedience to the ruler is obligatory and disobedience a major sin...‘Alī's conduct (in allegedly supporting Fāṭima's claims against Abū Bakr) was more serious (*a’ẓam*). It entailed...disobedience to [the Prophet's] commanders, which entailed disobedience to him (the Prophet), which in turn entailed disobedience to God.⁶²⁰

As for Yazīd, all scholars agree in consensus that he did not order the murder of Ḥusayn nor did he take any of his women folk captive. In fact, Yazīd was pained by the murder of Ḥusayn; he honored Ḥusayn's family and returned them safely to their homeland.⁶²¹ The evil that results from rebelling against a ruler is usually greater than any good. In the case of those who rebelled against Yazīd (he cites the people of Medina and Ḥusayn), no good (*maṣlaḥa*) came from their actions whether worldly or in the cause of religion.⁶²² In the case of Ḥusayn, there was a debauchery (*fasād*) that resulted from his revolt and his murder that would not have occurred had he remained at home.⁶²³ He obtained none of the good which he desired and did not repel any evil. In fact, his revolt and death resulted in the increase of evil.⁶²⁴ Thereafter, Satan caused two extremes, which become manifest every ‘Āshūrā’. The *nawāṣib* take great joy and celebrate the event, while another group mourns, recites eulogies and many fictitious narratives, curses Muslims of previous generations (including some Companions), attributes sins to innocent individuals, wails over calamities of a distant past in a way that God has forbidden and sows dissension in the community.⁶²⁵

⁶¹⁹ Ibid., 4:255.

⁶²⁰ Ibid., 4:256.

⁶²¹ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4: 472. Elsewhere Ibn Taymiyya admits that Yazīd continued to kill others in pursuit of establishing his rule and never punished those responsible for the death of al-Ḥusayn and his followers, see Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū‘ fatāwā*, 4:506. Al-Mīlānī quotes numerous texts in which Yazīd ordered the death of anyone who refused his allegiance, including al-Ḥusayn. Al-Mīlānī claims that only *nawāṣib* defend the innocence of Yazīd (or specifically his inculpability in the death of Ḥusayn), see Mīlānī, *Sharḥ*, 2:180-3, 191-192 (for Sunnī scholars that cursed Yazīd).

⁶²² Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4:528, 530.

⁶²³ Those who defend Ḥusayn's actions would argue that such a belief is incorrect because his safety was predicated upon a pledge of allegiance, which Ḥusayn refused to give. As a result, he was safe neither in his home in Medina, which he was forced to flee, nor in the Sacred Mosque at Mecca.

⁶²⁴ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4:530.

⁶²⁵ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4:530.

Scholars of *ḥadīth* agree that most reports regarding the merits of ‘Alī are either false or possess weak chains of transmission. One cannot find a single fault in the first three caliphs except that one finds its like or that which is worse in ‘Alī.⁶²⁶ The officials who worked for ‘Alī betrayed and disobeyed him more than any previous governors did with ‘Uthmān.⁶²⁷ Marwān b. al-Ḥakam is wrongly portrayed as a villainous figure whom the Prophet exiled with his father; ‘Uthmān was justified in allowing their return.⁶²⁸ Abū Dharr criticized individuals who were blameless and obliged them to an asceticism that was beyond the obligatory commandments of God.⁶²⁹ If the logical purpose of an infallible, divinely appointed Imam is to ward off oppression, then it is clear that ‘Alī did not occupy such an office as God did not facilitate or aid him in ending injustice. Historically, neither God nor mankind aided any of the so-called Imams in successfully ending oppression.⁶³⁰

⁶²⁶ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 5:6-7.

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.*, 6:184.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*, 6:268.

⁶²⁹ *Ibid.*, 6:272.

⁶³⁰ *Ibid.*, 6: 393-4.

CHAPTER 3 Appendix: Anti-‘Alid Statements and Events in Historical Texts

A few authors are credited with writing refutations of the beliefs of *nawāṣib*. In the Sunnī tradition, Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭūfī (d. 716/1316) was imprisoned and paraded around the city of Cairo for allegedly writing such a work.⁶³¹ Like his Shī‘ī counterparts, his work probably offended Sunnīs by accepting the historicity of reports in which Companions (especially Umayyads) were depicted as *nawāṣib*. Imāmī authors included “*nawāṣib*” in the titles of works that were largely unrelated to the study of *nawāṣib*. Instead, these texts were dedicated to establishing the imamate of ‘Alī, his merits, and the legitimacy of Shī‘ism. Frequently, Imāmīs wrote their works in refutation of an anti-Shī‘ī book penned by a Sunnī whom they identified as a *nāṣibī*.⁶³² In the apparent absence of classical works specifically dedicated to cataloging anti-‘Alid sentiment, the following appendix provides a survey of *naṣb* in Sunnī literature. At least three contemporary authors have also published surveys of *naṣb* in the Islamic intellectual tradition.⁶³³

Expressions of contempt for ‘Alī and his family were identified through eight characteristics:

⁶³¹ Ibn Rajab, *al-Dhayl ‘alā Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila* (Beirut: 1980), 4:368-369; Ziriklī, *al-A‘lām: qāmūs tarājim li-ashhar al-rijāl wa-l-nisā’ min al-‘Arab wa-l-musta‘ribīn wa-l-mustashriqīn* (Beirut: 1980), 3:128.

⁶³² Ibn Shahrāshūb, *Mathālib al-nawāṣib* (Baghdad: 2016); ‘Abd al-Jalīl Qazvīnī, *Kitāb naqṣ = Ba‘z-i maṣālib al-navāṣib fī naqṣ ba‘z faṣā’ih al-Ravāfiṣ* (Tehran: 1973); Nūr Allāh Tustarī, *Maṣā’ib al-nawāṣib: fī al-radd ‘alā Nawāqid al-rawāfiḍ* (Qum: 2005).

⁶³³ ‘Awwād, *al-Naṣb wa-l-nawāṣib* (Riyadh: 2012); Mu‘allim, *al-Nuṣb [sic] wa-l-nawāṣib* (Beirut: 1997); ‘Uqaylī, *Mu‘jam nawāṣib al-muḥaddithīn* (Karbala’: 2014).

I. Support for the murder or assault of ‘Alī or his kin

‘Imrān b. Ḥiṭṭān was a Khārijite who had the distinction of being included as a transmitter in al-Bukhārī's *ḥadīth* collection.⁶³⁴ As a Khārijite, he believed that ‘Alī committed acts of disbelief (*kufṛ*) as caliph that warranted his murder. He paid homage to ‘Alī's assassin, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muljam with the following lines of poetry:

What a strike from he who was God-conscious! He desired nothing
But to obtain the satisfaction of [God], The Enthroned
I remember him occasionally and deem him
The most loyal of God's creation when [all of mankind's deeds are] judged⁶³⁵

According to Sunnī and Shī'ī sources, when the Syrians raised copies of the Qur'ān on spears and asked for arbitration, ‘Alī initially ignored the request because he considered it a ploy to prolong hostilities. These sources portray proto-Khārijites as individuals who supported arbitration. If ‘Alī did not desist from fighting, they threatened to betray him with the following words, “we shall hand you over to these people or we shall deal with you as we dealt with ‘Uthmān.”⁶³⁶

A Khārijite attacked al-Ḥasan with a pick-axe for considering a peace treaty with Mu‘āwiya, saying “you’ve become a polytheist like your father before you.”⁶³⁷

A number of Sunnīs mention reports that accused Mu‘āwiya of poisoning al-Ḥasan to facilitate Yazīd b. Mu‘āwiya's succession.⁶³⁸ Some reports considered Yazīd the culprit.⁶³⁹

al-Ḥusayn warns his murderers that his death violated the inviolability of the Household of the Prophet.⁶⁴⁰

⁶³⁴ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 7:45, 65; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 4:214-216. See also ‘Uqaylī, *Mu‘jam nawāṣib al-muḥaddithīn* ([2011]), pp. 362-366.

⁶³⁵ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 4:215; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī‘āb*, 3:1128; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 43:495; Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā bi’l-āthār* (Beirut: n.d.), 10:484.

⁶³⁶ Ibn Shahrāshūb, *Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib*, 2:364 (citing ibn Mardawayh); al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal wa’l-niḥal*, 1:114.

⁶³⁷ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 3:35. See also Madelung, *Succession*, p. 319.

⁶³⁸ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 1:404; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī‘āb*, 1:389; Ibn Sa’d, *K. al-Ṭabaqāt al-kabīr* (Cairo: 2001), 6:386; Maqrīzī, *Imtā’ al-asmā’ bi-mā li’l-Nabī min al-aḥwāl wa’l-amwāl wa’l-ḥafada wa’l-matā’* (Beirut: 1999), 5:361; Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-khawāṣṣ*, p. 192; Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam al-kabīr*, 3:71.

⁶³⁹ Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, 5:226; Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 6:253.

‘Ubayd Allāh b. Ziyād wrote to ‘Umar ibn Sa’d, his commander at Karbalā’, “Prevent al-Ḥusayn and his companions from obtaining any water. Do not let them taste a drop of it just as they did to the pious ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān.”⁶⁴¹

Ibn Ziyād wrote in another letter to ‘Umar, “If Ḥusayn and his followers submit to my authority and surrender, you can send them to me in peace. If they refuse, then march against them to kill and mutilate them, for they deserve that. If Ḥusayn is killed, make the horses trample on his chest and back, for he is a disobedient rebel, an evil man who splits the community, severs kinship relations,⁶⁴² and iniquitous (*‘āqq mushāqq qāṭi’ ḡalūm*).”⁶⁴³

Ibn Ziyād instructed Shimr ibn Dhī ‘l-Jawshan, “If ‘Umar b. Sa’d acts according to my instructions, then heed him and obey him. However, if he refuses to fight them, then you are the commander of the people; attack Ḥusayn, cut off his head and send it to me.”⁶⁴⁴

Shimr reasoned that he fought and killed al-Ḥusayn because disobedience to rulers (appointed by God) made a person more wretched (*sharr*) than donkeys.⁶⁴⁵

When Ibn Ziyād met ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn Zayn al-‘Ābidīn, he was confused and asked, “wasn't ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn killed?” When Zayn al-‘Ābidīn clarified that the army had killed a brother of the same name, Ibn Ziyād answered, “rather God killed him.” Ibn Ziyād was invoking the belief that it was God's wish to destroy such individuals who had incurred His wrath.⁶⁴⁶

⁶⁴⁰ Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, 4:322-3. See also Dakake, *The Charismatic Community*, pp. 88-90, 93-5.

⁶⁴¹ Dīnawarī, *al-Akhhbār al-ṭiwāl* (Cairo: 1960), p. 255; Khuwārizmī, *Maqatal al-Ḥusayn*, ed. al-Samāwī (Qum: 1998), 1:346.

⁶⁴² Alternatively, *qāṭi’* may refer to claims that al-Ḥusayn was “a highway robber” (*qāṭi’ al-ṭariq*). Such an interpretation rests on the fact that al-Ḥusayn and his followers took up arms and rebelled against the state. Jurists sometimes included rebels in the *muḥārība* verse (Q5:33) and considered the death penalty to be a proper punishment for the sedition they caused, see Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘azīm*, 2:53.

⁶⁴³ Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, 4:314; Idem, *The History of al-Ṭabarī. Vol. XIX: The Caliphate of Yazīd b. Mu‘āwiyah*, trans. Howard (Albany: 1990), p. 110; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 3:183.

⁶⁴⁴ Ṭabarī, *The Caliphate of Yazīd*, p. 110.

⁶⁴⁵ Dhahabī, *Ta’rikh al-Islām*, 5:125-6.

⁶⁴⁶ Ibn A‘tham al-Kūfī, *al-Futūḥ*, 5:123.

Ibn Ziyād proclaimed, “Praise the Lord who made the truth manifest and those who follow it triumphant! He gave victory to the Commander of the Faithful Yazīd and his party and killed the liar, son of a liar, Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī and his partisans.”⁶⁴⁷

Muslim b. ‘Amr al-Bāhili believed that Muslim b. ‘Aqīl b. Abī Ṭālib, al-Ḥusayn’s cousin and messenger to Kūfa, was hell-bound because he was a rebel against the caliph, who was the deputy of God on earth. It follows that he also believed al-Ḥusayn and his associates were also doomed to hell. He reportedly relished Muslim’s thirst before his execution in the following conversation:

Ibn ‘Aqīl requested, “Pour me some of this water.”

Muslim b. ‘Amr responded, “Do you wish for it? It gives me great joy (*mā abradahā*)!⁶⁴⁸ No, by God you will never taste a drop until you drink *ḥamīm* in the fire of hell.”⁶⁴⁹

‘Amr b. al-Ḥajjāj, a commander of the Umayyad army at Karbalā’, addressed his soldiers with the following: “Oh people of Kūfa, maintain obedience [to the caliph] and your allegiance to the [greater] community! Do not doubt [the necessity of] killing those who have rebelled against faith (*maraqa min al-dīn*) and opposed the Imam (Yazīd).⁶⁵⁰

After the massacre at Karbalā’ the family of al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī was sent to the palace of Ibn Ziyād, who addressed Zaynab bint ‘Alī with the following words, “Praise the Lord who disgraced you, killed you, and discredited your claims.”⁶⁵¹

Abū Rajā’ al-‘Uṭaridī once heard a neighbor of the clan of Hujaym say, “Did you not see how God killed the criminal, son of the criminal, al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī?”⁶⁵² The speaker allegedly became blind thereafter.

⁶⁴⁷ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 4:82-3; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-Muḥabbar* (Hyderabad: 1942), p. 480; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 4:350-1.

⁶⁴⁸ Lit. “nothing cools [the heart] more” (*mā abradahā ‘alā al-fu’ād*) Zabīdī, *Tāj al-‘arūs*, 2:443.

⁶⁴⁹ *ḥamīm* refers to a drink in hell, see Q6:70, Q10:4 and other verses. Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 4:281.

⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 4:331.

⁶⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 4:349.

⁶⁵² Ibn Sa’d, *K. al-Ṭabaqāt* (2001), 6:454. With slight differences, the report appears in Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Faḍā’il al-ṣaḥāba*, 2:574; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 3:211; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 3:313; Haythamī, *Majma’ al-zawā’id*, 9:196; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 14:232; Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 6:436; Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu’jam al-kabīr*, 3:112.

Maysa bint Siḥām al-Rubay‘ī, the wife of Abū Bakra al-Thaqafī says, “al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī has died, so praise God who has relieved us of him!”⁶⁵³

Ibn Zubayr threatened to execute Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyya if he continued to withhold his pledge of allegiance or meet with his partisans. Some reports claim that Ibn Zubayr had already gathered firewood to burn Ibn al-Ḥanafīyya alive at the time of his rescue.⁶⁵⁴ It seems Ibn Zubayr kept him confined near the Sacred Mosque in Mecca and under house arrest.⁶⁵⁵

II. Cursing or insulting ‘Alī and his sons

A number of biographers mention Rabī‘a ibn Yazīd al-Sulamī as a Companion of the Prophet who despised ‘Alī and would curse him.⁶⁵⁶

When al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī surrendered to Mu‘āwiya some disgruntled men addressed him with the following epithets:

“Oh he who disgraced (*mudhill*) Arabs!”⁶⁵⁷

“Oh he who disgraced the faithful!”⁶⁵⁸

“Oh he who dishonored (lit. blackened) the faces of the faithful”⁶⁵⁹

“Oh he who brought shame to the faithful (*‘ār al-mu’minīn*)”⁶⁶⁰

Ibn Ziyād disparaged ‘Alī, ‘Aqīl ibn Abī Ṭālib, and al-Ḥusayn before executing Muslim b. ‘Aqīl.⁶⁶¹

⁶⁵³ Ibn Sa’d, *K. al-Ṭabaqāt* (2001), 6:395.

⁶⁵⁴ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 3:280-85.

⁶⁵⁵ See below, ch. 4, section III.C.

⁶⁵⁶ Some did not consider Rabī‘a to have been a Companion, see Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī‘āb*, 2:493-4, 495; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *al-Iṣāba fī tamyiz al-ṣaḥāba* (Beirut: 1995), 2:398; Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi*, 14:60.

⁶⁵⁷ Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, 5:184; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 4:126.

⁶⁵⁸ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 3:147; Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:175; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī‘āb*, 1:387; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 13:279, 59:151; ‘Uqaylī, *al-Ḍu‘afā’*, 2:175-6. See also Madelung, *Succession*, p. 323 n. 29.

⁶⁵⁹ The person who said this was Sufyān b. al-Layl al-Ḥamdānī, see Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 3:272; Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:170-1; Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 30:330; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 5:115.

⁶⁶⁰ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 3:145; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī‘āb*, 1:386; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, 8:631; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 13:261; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 13:56.

⁶⁶¹ Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 4:283.

Ibn Ziyād ordered al-Ḥusayn's messenger to Kūfa, Qays b. Musahhar al-Ṣaydāwī, to damn al-Ḥusayn, and his father 'Alī from the pulpit. Ibn Ziyād executed Qays after he agreed to do so, but damned Ibn Ziyād and his father instead.⁶⁶² In one recension, Ibn Ziyād orders Qays, "ascend [to the top of] the palace and curse the liar, son of the liar (al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī)."⁶⁶³ In another version, Ibn Ziyād ordered Qays to damn al-Ḥusayn's brother (al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī) as well. Qays publicly damned the caliph, Yazīd b. Mu'āwiyā, and the Umayyad apparatus instead.⁶⁶⁴

A soldier in the entourage of Shimr b. Dhī 'l-Jawshan yells at al-Ḥusayn and his associates that they are the ones described as foul and wicked (*khabīth*) in the Qur'ān (Q3:179), "I swear by the Lord of the Ka'ba, we are the virtuous and pure while you are all foul and wicked! He has distinguished us from you!"⁶⁶⁵ In the recensions of al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Kathīr the soldier is identified as Abū Ḥarb al-Sabī'ī.⁶⁶⁶

Al-Ḥusayn and his companions lit firewood around their tents at Karbalā' to keep the Umayyad army from attacking them from the rear. When Shimr rode to the tents, "he could not see anything except the fire blazing in the firewood. He began to ride back and he called out at the top of his voice, 'al-Ḥusayn, are you hurrying toward Hell-fire in this world before the Day of Resurrection?'"⁶⁶⁷ Mālīk b. Jarīra was another soldier who similarly mocked al-Ḥusayn.⁶⁶⁸

'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥawza al-Tamīmī was a soldier who allegedly taunted al-Ḥusayn, "Good news! [You're going] to hell!"⁶⁶⁹ Shimr and Muḥammad b. al-Ash'ath al-Kindī allegedly mocked al-Ḥusayn with these words as well.⁶⁷⁰

'Alī b. Quraḥa b. Ka'b says to Husayn, "Liar! Son of a liar! You misled my brother and deceived him until you caused his death!"⁶⁷¹

⁶⁶² Ibid., 4:306 (transmitting from Abū Mikhnaf).

⁶⁶³ Ibid., 4:297.

⁶⁶⁴ Khuwārizmī, *Maqatal al-Ḥusayn*, 1:336.

⁶⁶⁵ Ibn A'tham al-Kūfī, *al-Futūḥ*, 5:199; Khuwārizmī, *Maqatal al-Ḥusayn*, 1:355.

⁶⁶⁶ Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa'l-nihāya*, 8:192; Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 4:320.

⁶⁶⁷ Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 4:322; Idem, *The Caliphate of Yazīd*, p. 122.

⁶⁶⁸ Khuwārizmī, *Maqatal al-Ḥusayn*, 1:352.

⁶⁶⁹ 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, 8:40, 633; Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu'jam al-kabīr*, 3:117; Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 4:327-8.

⁶⁷⁰ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 3:193.

⁶⁷¹ Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 4:330.

Hishām ibn Ismā‘īl (r. 84-87 AH/703-706 CE) was the governor of Medina. He would cause pain to ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn and his family. He would publicly acknowledge this in his sermons and disparage ‘Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] from the pulpit.⁶⁷²

Ibn Ḥazm writes that al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf, the ruthless Umayyad army commander who governed Iraq (75-95/694-714), and the preachers he employed would publicly damn (*yal’an*) ‘Alī and Ibn Zubayr from the pulpit.⁶⁷³ Other sources depicted al-Ḥajjāj regularly disparaging ‘Alī, persecuting his former disciples, and punishing those who refused to curse ‘Alī.⁶⁷⁴

The brother of al-Ḥajjāj, Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Thaqafī, was the governor of Yemen and he would publicly damn ‘Alī from the pulpit.⁶⁷⁵

The Marwānid caliph al-Walīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik disparagingly referred to ‘Alī as a donkey.⁶⁷⁶

Al-Mubarrad (d. 285/898) reported, “Khālīd b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Qasrī, may God damn him, would damn (*yal’an*) ‘Alī, may God have mercy on him, from the pulpit with the following words, ‘May God [damn]⁶⁷⁷ ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib b. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib b. Hāshim b. ‘Abd Manāf: paternal cousin to the Messenger of God, husband to his daughter, and the father of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn.’ Then he would turn to the audience and ask, ‘Have I properly mentioned [all of] his titles?’⁶⁷⁸

One informant reported that Khālīd al-Qasrī would mention ‘Alī with words that “were not permissible” to repeat.⁶⁷⁹ Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn described Khālīd with the following words, “he was an evil man (*rajul sū’*) who would vilify (*yaqa’u fi*) ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib.”⁶⁸⁰ Al-Dhahabī added, “he was honest, but anti-‘Alid, loathsome, and frequently unjust.”⁶⁸¹

⁶⁷² Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, 5:220; Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-khawāṣṣ*, 1:295.

⁶⁷³ Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā*, 5:64.

⁶⁷⁴ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 13:388; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 4:267; Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī, *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, 1:121-122.

⁶⁷⁵ Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya*, 9:80.

⁶⁷⁶ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 8:82.

⁶⁷⁷ Out of respect for ‘Alī, copyists of al-Mubarrad’s work amended *la’ana Allāh* to *fa’ala Allāh* to keep from actually pronouncing the invocation. Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd’s copy read *Allāhuma ‘l’an*.

⁶⁷⁸ Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 4:57; Mubarrad, *al-Kāmil fī ‘l-lughat wa’l-adab wa’l-naḥw wa’l-taṣrīf*, ed. Wright (Leipzig: 1864), 2:414.

⁶⁷⁹ Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 16:160; Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 8:116.

⁶⁸⁰ Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 16:160; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 3:88; Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 8:116.

⁶⁸¹ *ṣadūq lākinnahu nāṣibī baghīḍ ṣalūm*, see Dhahabī, *Mīzān al-i’tidāl*, 1:633.

After Khālīd was removed from office and imprisoned in 120/738, he was subject to long periods of torture until his death in 126/743. It seems that the governor of Iraq, Yūsuf ibn ‘Umar al-Thaqafi, once extracted a false confession from Khālīd by means of torture. Khālīd was forced to accuse a few Hāshimids of agreeing to safeguard his wealth and assist him in embezzling state funds. When one of the accused, Zayd b. ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, came to Iraq to face his actual accuser (Yūsuf ibn ‘Umar), both he and Khālīd denied that any such agreement could have occurred, since Khālīd was staunchly anti-‘Alid. Zayd b. ‘Alī reportedly said:

“How is it that he (Khālīd) would ask me to safeguard his wealth when he curses my ancestors every Friday from the pulpit?” Then [Zayd] gave sworn testimony that he never received any money from him. Khālīd was then summoned from prison to accuse Zayd again, but he only confirmed Zayd’s testimony and said, “why would I [give him my wealth] when I curse his father every Friday?”⁶⁸²

When the accused asked Khālīd why he had initially implicated them, he explained that he had only accused them under severe torture and had hoped for a settlement and his own release before any of them were summoned.⁶⁸³

Khālīd b. ‘Abd al-Malik b. al-Ḥārith b. al-Ḥakam was an Umayyad who governed Medina (r. 114-118/732-736) and referred to Zayd b. ‘Alī as stupid (*saḥīh*) and encouraged another resident of Medina to address Zayd in the following way, “O son of Abū Turāb and son of Ḥusayn, the stupid one.”⁶⁸⁴

III. Condemnation of ‘Alī and his kin as wicked or sinful

In these texts, ‘Alī and his house were portrayed as individuals guilty of heresy, causing evil, or intentionally disobeying God or His Prophet.

A Companion named Burayda ibn ‘Āzib admitted to loathing ‘Alī in the lifetime of the Prophet. His hatred of ‘Alī led him to join Khālīd ibn al-Walīd in a plot to disgrace ‘Alī in the eyes of the

⁶⁸² Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 9:118; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 5:230; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya*, 9:358; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, 5:487.

⁶⁸³ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 5:230; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, 5:487.

⁶⁸⁴ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 5:231; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, 5:485. *Saḥīh* may have referred to someone who was legally incompetent, see Q4:5 and its exegesis.

Prophet by accusing him of unlawfully appropriating a female prisoner of war for himself. Instead the Prophet became upset with Burayda for harboring malice toward ‘Alī.⁶⁸⁵

‘Amr b. Yathribī al-Ḍabbī was a poet-warrior who boasted of killing three of ‘Alī's partisans during the Battle of the Camel. He ridiculed these men for following the religion (*dīn*) of ‘Alī.⁶⁸⁶ ‘Alī's rivals seem to have accused him of following his own misguided beliefs instead of the religion of the Prophet. ‘Ammār b. Yāsir eventually injured Ibn Yathribī in a duel and brought him to ‘Alī who ordered his execution for his deeds.

A common attitude amongst conquerors in the ancient world was a clear sense of triumphalism and pre-determinism in interpreting the world around them and their political ascendancy. The statements of pro-Umayyads and their various rivals reflect these sentiments. For example, Ibn Ziyād says to Zaynab, the daughter of ‘Alī and Fāṭima, and other survivors of the massacre at Karbalā, “God has relieved me of that terrible bully of yours (*tāghiyatiki*) and the disobedient rebels (*al-‘uṣāt al-marada*) of your family.”⁶⁸⁷ God is credited with giving military victories to the Umayyad army over disobedient rebels like al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī. Umayyad military victories were construed as a source of divine validation and legitimacy for the regime. Thus, Yazīd b. Mu‘āwiya reportedly believed al-Ḥusayn was killed because he disregarded the following verse of the Qur‘ān, “Say: O God! Possessor of sovereignty (or kingship); you grant sovereignty to whom You please, and remove sovereignty from whom You please. You honor whom You please and humiliate whom You please. In Your hand lies all that is good. You have Power over all things” (Q3:26).⁶⁸⁸

Yazīd similarly appealed to the agency of God when he addressed the only son of al-Ḥusayn to survive the massacre, ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn Zayn al-‘Ābidīn, “Your father was a man who cut kinship ties with me, was ignorant of my rights, and contested my sovereignty. Thus, God did with him that which you have witnessed.”⁶⁸⁹

⁶⁸⁵ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 5:350; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 5:110; Nasā’ī, *Khaṣā’is Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib*, ed. al-Amīnī (Najaf; Tehran: 1969), p. 102.

⁶⁸⁶ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 2:244; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 43:464; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, 3:526. For *dīn* ‘Alī see also Amir-Moezzi, *The Spirituality of Shi’i Islam: beliefs and practices* (London: 2011), pp. 4-15.

⁶⁸⁷ Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, 4:350.

⁶⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 4:355.

⁶⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 4:352.

Islamic law prohibited the enslavement of Muslims born free as a legal norm. When Zaynab bint ‘Alī protested at the court of Yazīd that her household could not be enslaved unless the caliph and his entourage became apostates and followed another faith that permitted the enslavement of Muslims, Yazīd quipped, “Rather, it was your father and brother who already became apostates.”⁶⁹⁰ Yazīd is portrayed as upholding a common belief amongst pro-Umayyads that ‘Alī, al-Ḥusayn and their partisans were apostates and criminals who caused sedition (*fitna*). Umayyad propaganda interpreted a theological principle known as *qadr* to argue that it was divinely ordained for ‘Alī and his house to face military defeat due to their iniquities and false claims to authority and entitlement. In fact, God was continuously discrediting their claims and exposing their vile nature by consistently granting the caliph's armed forces victory over them.

Another example of this belief is Yazīd’s statement, “As for [al-Ḥusayn's] claim that his father was superior to mine, my father disputed with his father and everyone knows in whose favor the dispute was resolved.”⁶⁹¹ Mu‘āwiya’s rejection of ‘Alī’s caliphate and claim to sovereignty possessed divine approval and the military victories over ‘Alī and his house reflected God's favor and grace upon the Umayyads.

When the family of al-Ḥusayn was brought in chains to Yazīd b. Mu‘āwiya, a soldier named Miḥfaz b. Tha‘laba reportedly announced to the caliph that he had brought “vile and insolent criminals” (*al-li‘ām al-fajara*) to the palace in Damascus.⁶⁹²

In another recension, Miḥfaz, in possession of the head of al-Ḥusayn, announced from outside the palace gates, “I have the head of the most ignorant and disgraceful of men (*aḥmaq al-nās wa al’amihim*).”

Yazīd retorted, “Rather the mother of Miḥfaz gave birth to someone more disgraceful and ignorant, but [al-Ḥusayn] was an unjust man who severed kinship ties (*qāṭi‘ ḡālīm*)”⁶⁹³

⁶⁹⁰ *Kharaja min al-dīn abūka wa-akhūka*, see Ibid., 4:353.

⁶⁹¹ Ibid., 4:355.

⁶⁹² Ibid., 4:352.

⁶⁹³ Ibid., 4:354. Alternatively, *qāṭi‘* could refer to “a highway robber” (*qāṭi‘ al-ṭarīq*). Yazīd may have viewed Miḥfaz as uncouth for shouting from the palace gates to address the caliph.

In his exchange of letters with ‘Alī, Mu‘āwiya argued that ‘Alī had been envious of the first three caliphs (*kullahum ḥasadta*) and that everyone knew this by the discontent he showed at their election as caliphs.⁶⁹⁴ Although various pro-‘Alid Sunnī and Shī‘ī texts portrayed ‘Alī as disgruntled at the succession of his predecessors, ‘Uthmānīs and Umayyads sometimes characterized ‘Alī as envious of them.

According to a report that exalted ‘Umar b. al-Ḳhaṭṭāb, ‘Umar criticized ‘Alī as inordinately covetous (*ḥarīṣ*) of the caliphate and argued that the position did not suit him since he hankered for it.⁶⁹⁵

Some North African Mālikī jurists influenced by the Umayyads who ruled Andalusia reportedly held Mu‘āwiya to have been a better Muslim than ‘Alī. They argued that, “‘Alī had no legal right to claim the imamate and should not, therefore, have waged war against Mu‘āwiya.”⁶⁹⁶ Pro-Umayyad Mālikīs of North Africa seemed to have substantiated their views by reporting

⁶⁹⁴ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 2:277-8. See also Madelung, *Succession*, p. 211. Specifically, he was accused of coveting (*ṭama‘*) the caliphate, see Madelung, *Succession*, p. 271.

⁶⁹⁵ Ibn A‘tham al-Kūfī, *al-Futūḥ*, 2:325.

⁶⁹⁶ Ibn al-Haytham, *The Advent of the Fatimids: A Contemporary Shi‘i witness: An Edition and English Translation of Ibn al-Haytham’s Kitāb al-munāẓarāt*, ed. Madelung and Walker (London ; New York : 2000), pp. 29-30, 165-6. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad ibn al-Birdhawn and Abū Bakr ibn Hudhayl were two Mālikīs executed in 297/909 for reportedly rejecting ‘Alī’s claim to the caliphate. Sunnī sources either remain silent regarding the reason for their executions or portray their deaths as a consequence of their refusal to recognize ‘Ubayd Allāh al-Mahdī either as the Messenger of God or the new sovereign (depending on the source). Others noted their refusal to recognize the superiority of ‘Alī to the first three caliphs, see Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 14:216; Idem, *Ta’rīkh al-islām*, 22:135; Ibn ‘Idhārī, *al-Bayān al-mughrib fī akhbār al-Andalus wa’l-Maghrib*, ed. Cohen and Lévi-Provençal (Beirut: 1983), pp. 154-5, 282-3; Khushanī, *Kitāb Ṭabaqāt ‘ulamā’ Ifrīqiya*, ed. Cheneb (Paris: 1915), pp. 215-216. Their refusal to recognize the sovereignty of al-Mahdī would have been a capital offence, but the alternative theological explanations for their executions do not seem credible in light of the history of the Fāṭimid empire. Generally, Sunnīs were not executed for refusing to become Ismā‘īlī. Ismā‘īlī theology also did not consider al-Mahdī to be the Messenger of God, but rather the divinely appointed legatee of the Prophet and ‘Alī. Ismā‘īlīs also did not consider the first three caliphs to have been pious for comparisons of merit to have been made. Although this study generally relies on the Sunnī intellectual tradition to understand Sunnism, I have mentioned Ibn al-Haytham’s account since he was a contemporary eyewitness to the events. One could argue that since Ibn al-Haytham was a Zaydī who became Ismā‘īlī, his claim that these two Mālikīs were executed for refusing to recognize ‘Alī as a legitimate caliph is unattested in Sunnī literature. However, Ibn Taymiyya testifies to the existence of pro-Umayyad Sunnīs in Andalusia who considered Mu‘āwiya the fourth caliph. Consequently, Ibn al-Haytham’s account should not be discounted as unlikely, see Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 4:400-1.

Imām Mālik's disapproval of 'Alī's decision to leave Medina for Kūfa and engage in warfare with all of his rivals (at the Battle of the Camel and Šiffin).⁶⁹⁷

'Alī was responsible (either directly or indirectly) for the death of 'Uthmān.⁶⁹⁸

'Alī encouraged and/or directed the sedition that ended in the death of 'Uthmān.⁶⁹⁹

'Alī was not willing to surrender "the murderers of 'Uthmān" since he was in need of their military and political support.⁷⁰⁰ For example, 'Ubayd Allāh ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was a commander of Mu'āwiya's army who proclaimed that the killers of 'Uthmān were the people of Iraq in general and 'Alī's *anṣār* in particular.⁷⁰¹ Texts that defended 'Alī clarified that the Umayyads accused 'Alī's closest companions of killing 'Uthmān, but he considered those accusations to have been false.⁷⁰² The names of some of these accused companions are listed below.

⁶⁹⁷ 'Abd al-Malik ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-ta'rikh* (Madrid: 1991), p. 115; Nu'mān, *The Epistle of the Eloquent Clarification Concerning The Refutation of Ibn Qutayb*, ed. Hakim (Leiden: 2012), pp. 11, 14.

⁶⁹⁸ Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 8:189; Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *al-'Iqd al-farīd* (Beirut: 1983), 5:81; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 8:411; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa'l-nihāya*, 7:288; Sibṭ Ibn Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-khawāṣṣ*, p. 82; Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 4:4, 30. See also Madelung, *Succession*, pp. 156 (for Marwān b. al-Ḥakm's accusations), 189-90, 198-99 (for al-Walīd b. 'Uqba's poetry), 200-201, 205, 211 (for Mu'āwiya making such a claim).

⁶⁹⁹ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 2:277-8, 5:551, 581; Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *al-'Iqd al-farīd*, 5:83; Ibn A'tham al-Kūfī, *al-Futūḥ*, 2:559; Mubarrad, *al-Kāmil*, 1:184. See also Madelung, *Succession*, pp. 122 n. 209, 126, 134 n. 262.

⁷⁰⁰ 'Aynī, *Umdat al-qārī*, 15:51; Dīnawarī, *al-Akhhbār al-ṭiwāl*, pp. 162, 170-1; Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *al-'Iqd al-farīd*, 5:83; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 6:454, 13:448; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa'l-nihāya*, 7:288. Ibn Ḥajar is slightly inconsistent in explaining 'Alī's conduct toward the claims of his rivals. In one place he alluded to the 'Uthmānī argument that 'Uthmān's assassins made up a large contingent of 'Alī's army and he was unwilling to surrender them since he was in need of their support. In other places, Ibn Ḥajar principally argued that 'Alī disregarded the claims of Mu'āwiya and the commanders of the army at the Battle of the Camel since they were not 'Uthmān's heirs and offered no admissible evidence to back their accusations that a particular person killed 'Uthmān, see Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 6:454, cf. 7:84, 13:47, 13:448.

⁷⁰¹ Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 4:24.

⁷⁰² In letters attributed to 'Alī, he considered Mu'āwiya's claim to be the avenger of 'Uthmān a diversion from his real wish to maintain power, see Dīnawarī, *al-Akhhbār al-ṭiwāl*, p. 157; Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 59:128; Ibn A'tham al-Kūfī, *al-Futūḥ*, 2:506. Al-Qurṭubī noted that there were no witnesses who were able to positively identify 'Uthmān's assassins under oath. It seems only rumors and hearsay surrounded 'Alī's compatriots and the actual assassins were unknown assailants who came from various parts of the empire, see Qurṭubī, *al-Tadhkira*, pp. 1072, 1083.

‘Alī drank alcohol at a party and led a group of Companions in prayer while intoxicated.⁷⁰³

‘Alī was a thief⁷⁰⁴ and the son of a thief.⁷⁰⁵

‘Alī was not one who offered prayers.⁷⁰⁶

Hāshimids were evil.⁷⁰⁷ Ibn Zubayr believed the Prophet’s kin were conceited.⁷⁰⁸

Abū Labīd Limāza b. Zabbār al-Baṣrī (d. c. 80-89/699-708) was a prominent Follower (*tābi‘ī*) and *ḥadīth* transmitter who fought ‘Alī at the Battle of the Camel. He was famous for cursing ‘Alī. When asked if he loved ‘Alī, he responded, “how can I love a person who killed two thousand five hundred members of my family in a single day?”⁷⁰⁹

When the Kūfan Murra ibn Sharāḥīl (d. 85/704) once disparaged ‘Alī, he was asked how he could do this given that ‘Alī had been a Companion of the Prophet known for good deeds. He replied, “what is my sin if his deeds preceded me and I only experienced evil from him?”⁷¹⁰

Thawr ibn Yazīd al-Ḥimṣī (d. ca. 153/770) was a prolific *ḥadīth* transmitter whose grandfather died fighting for Mu‘āwiya at Ṣiffīn. Since he considered ‘Alī responsible for his death, he

⁷⁰³ Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan*, 2:182; Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 1:389; Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘aẓīm* (Beirut: 2003), 3:958; Ibn Humayd, *al-Muntakhab min musnad ‘Abd ibn Ḥumayd* (Beirut: 1988), p. 56; Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 5:134; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 4:305. In other recensions, ‘Alī joined them in drinking and another Companion led the prayer intoxicated, see Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 4:142; Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 5:133. For more references, see also ‘Āmilī, *al-Ṣaḥīḥ min sirat al-imām ‘Alī: al-murtaḍā min sirat al-Murtaḍā* (Beirut: 2009), 3:53-6.

⁷⁰⁴ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 8:82. Al-Walīd b. ‘Uqba accused ‘Alī and the Hāshimids of looting the property of ‘Uthmān by killing him and usurping the caliphate. ‘Alī also reportedly confiscated some items from ‘Uthmān’s residence that he considered to be public property, see Madelung, *Succession*, p. 221. When Marwānids described ‘Alī as a “thief, son of a thief,” they may have been referring to the sentiments articulated by al-Walīd.

⁷⁰⁵ Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 4:58; Jāḥiẓ, *al-Bayān wa’l-tabyīn* (Beirut: 1926), p. 317.

⁷⁰⁶ Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, p. 4:30 (where Syrians state this is what they have heard regarding ‘Alī). ‘Alī also refuses to pray when the Prophet invites him, see al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 2:43, 8:155, 190; ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, 1:77, 91, 112; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 2:187.

⁷⁰⁷ Wilferd Madelung, “Abū ‘l-‘Amayṭar the Sufyānī,” *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 24, (2000), p. 332. Given the context, the taunt was probably directed toward the ‘Abbāsīd caliphs who presented themselves as the chief representatives of the Hāshimids. An ‘Abbāsīd accused the insurrectionists of rebelling against the “Banū Hāshim,” see *ibid*, p. 336.

⁷⁰⁸ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 3:291, 5:317, 7:133.

⁷⁰⁹ Dhahabī, *Ta’rikh al-islām*, 6:538; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 50:305-6; Khalīfa ibn Khayyāt, *Ta’rikh Khalīfa ibn Khayyāt*, ed. Zakkār (Beirut: 1993), p. 140; Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi*, 24:304.

⁷¹⁰ Fasawī, *Kitāb al-Ma’rifa wa’l-ta’rikh* (Beirut: 1981), 3:183.

would reportedly say, “I cannot love a person who killed my grandfather,” whenever ‘Alī was mentioned in his presence.⁷¹¹

Ḥarīz ibn ‘Uthmān al-Ḥimṣī (d. 163/779) was a respected *ḥadīth* transmitter⁷¹² who despised ‘Alī and blamed him for killing his ancestors at Ṣiffin. He reportedly claimed that ‘Alī attempted to injure or kill the Prophet.⁷¹³ While most Muslims believed the Prophet had likened ‘Alī to Aaron in a famous *ḥadīth*,⁷¹⁴ Ḥarīz argued that they had misheard the *ḥadīth*: the Prophet had compared ‘Alī to the Biblical Korah, who rebelled against Moses, rather than to Aaron (Qārūn instead of Hārūn).⁷¹⁵ According to one source, Ḥarīz claimed that the Prophet, on his deathbed, had commanded the community to cut off the hand of ‘Alī.⁷¹⁶

Ibrāhīm b. Ya‘qūb al-Jūzajānī (d. c. 259/873) was a prominent *ḥadīth* transmitter who reportedly considered ‘Alī guilty of killing over twenty thousand Muslims.⁷¹⁷

Ibn Taymiyya believed that Fāṭima bore a resemblance to hypocrites (*munāfiqīn*) who become angry when public funds (*ṣadaqāt*) are withheld from them and content when they are paid, if reports about her bearing a grudge against Abū Bakr are true.⁷¹⁸ If it is true that ‘Alī and

⁷¹¹ Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 11:186; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 2:30; Ibn Qutayba, *al-Ma‘ārif* (Cairo: 1969), p. 505; Ibn Sa‘d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, 7:467.

⁷¹² Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan*, 2:161.

⁷¹³ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 2:210; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Kitāb al-Ḍu‘afā’ wa’l-matrūkīn* (Beirut: 1986), 1:197. See also Kohlberg, “Some Imāmī Shī‘ī Views on the ṣahāba,” p. 156 n. 69.

⁷¹⁴ ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, pp. 5:406, 11:206; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 1:170, 173, 175, 177, 179, 182, 184, 185; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:208, 5:129; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, 7:496; Ibn Māja, *Sunan*, 1:43, 45; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, pp. 7:120-1; Nasā‘ī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 5:44, 120-5; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 5:302, 304. See also Mar‘ashī al-Najafī, *Mulḥaqāt al-Iḥqāq*, ed. M. al-Mar‘ashī (Qum: 1988), 21:150-255, 22:333-408, 23:60-75; Tustarī, *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq wa-izhāq al-bāṭil*, ed. al-Mar‘ashī al-Najafī (Qum: 1982), 5:132-234, 16:1-94.

⁷¹⁵ Dhahabī, *Ta’rīkh al-islām*, 10:122; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 12:349; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 2:209; Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta’rīkh Baghdād*, 8:262; Mizzi, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 5:577.

⁷¹⁶ Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 4:70; Jawharī, *al-Saqifa wa-Fadak*, ed. al-Amīnī (Beirut: 1993), pp. 56 (this publication is based upon ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd’s citations).

⁷¹⁷ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 1:159.

⁷¹⁸ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4:245-6; see above, ch. 3, section V.B. Al-Bukhārī and others reported that she became upset with Abū Bakr after he refused her request to grant Fadak and other estates of the Prophet to her, see ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, 5:472; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 1:6; Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 6:300-301; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:42, 5:82, 8:3; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 5:153; Ṭabarānī, *Musnad al-Shāmīyīn*, 4:198.

Fāṭima were dismayed with the succession of Abū Bakr or his decision regarding the Prophet's estates, they were guilty of disobedience to God, His Prophet, and divinely-selected caliphs.⁷¹⁹

Reports in the collections of al-Bukhārī, Muslim and other sources indicate that Ibn Taymiyya's rebuke of anyone challenging Abū Bakr's authority was a sentiment shared by some Companions and 'Uthmānīs. These sources report that after the Prophet's death, when 'Alī refused to pledge allegiance to Abū Bakr, many Muslims were displeased with him and he became a social outcast (*inṣarafat wujūh al-nās 'anhu*).⁷²⁰ Once 'Alī ended his feud with the caliph and pledged, his peers believed that he was no longer misguided (or a rebel) and began to honor him once again.⁷²¹

Ibn Taymiyya belittled 'Alī's wars with rebels as military campaigns for personal power rather than virtuous wars to please God.⁷²² He believed 'Alī's caliphate neither strengthened nor ennobled the Muslim community.⁷²³ He believed al-Ḥusayn's revolt and death resulted in the increase of evil, and no good, worldly or spiritual, came out of such actions.⁷²⁴

IV. Mockery of 'Alid claims to inheritance from the Prophet

Individuals in this category discouraged Muslims from venerating 'Alī and his house in any special way. For example, A few poets famously lampooned 'Alids in service of the 'Abbāsīd claim to power. They included Marwān ibn Abī Ḥafsa (d. 182/798), his grandson Abū al-Simt Marwān ibn Abī 'l-Janūb (d. c. 240/854), and Manṣūr ibn Sulaymān al-Namarī (d. c. 201/826).

For example, Ibn Abī Ḥafsa was financially compensated for the following lines:

Do you wish to efface the stars from the sky with your palms or conceal its crescent?

⁷¹⁹ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4:256.

⁷²⁰ In the recensions of al-Bukhārī and Muslim: *istankara 'Alī wujūh al-nās*.

⁷²¹ 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, 5:472-4; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 5:82-3; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 5:153-4; Ṭabarānī, *Musnad al-Shāmiyyīn*, 4:198-9; Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 2:447-449.

⁷²² Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 7:454.

⁷²³ He believed the era of 'Alī's caliphate could not be described as 'azīz or possessing 'izz, see Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 8:241.

⁷²⁴ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4:530.

Or reject the words of your Lord that Gabriel conveyed to the Prophet and he then pronounced?

The final verse of *Anfāl* bore witness to their inheritance! Now you all wish to negate it!

Leave the lions alone in their dens! Do not cause their cubs to lap up your blood...⁷²⁵

Ibn Abī Ḥafsa argued that part of a verse of the Qurʾān, “those with blood relations are more entitled [to inheritance] in the Book of God” (Q8:75), guaranteed ‘Abbās ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, the only uncle (and closest agnate) to outlive the Prophet, the Prophet’s inheritance, which included the imamate or authority over the Muslim community. Since Fāṭima was a female, she was not eligible to inherit such authority from her father. Consequently, her descendants should not claim to have inherited any authority from the Prophet through their kinship with her. Ibn Abī Ḥafsa warned that if ‘Alids began to challenge ‘Abbāsids, they would be killed without hesitation and ‘Abbāsids cubs, an allusion to the *abnāʾ*, would relish their deaths. His grandson Marwān ibn Abī ’l-Janūb further censured ‘Alī and al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī and their political careers in a famous poem:

Your father ‘Alī was superior to all of you, but the electoral council rejected him, and they were men of great merit.

He harmed the Messenger of God by upsetting his daughter with his proposal to the daughter of the Abū Jahl, the Damned

The Messenger of God publicly rebuked your father and [lamented] taking him as a son-in-law from the pulpit for undeniable reasons

In the case of your father, the two arbiters judged that he should be divested and removed (from power) like sandals from one’s feet

And his son Ḥasan certainly sold [the caliphate] after him. Therefore, both of them have rendered void your claims to it and your rope has become worn out

Indeed you withdrew from it when those who were undeserving possessed it and demanded it once those who were suitable obtained it⁷²⁶

⁷²⁵ Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 12:391; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 57:291; Khaṭīb al-Baghḍādī, *Taʾrīkh Baghdād*, 13:144-6.

The second and third lines referred to an incident in which ‘Alī is portrayed as angering Fāṭima and the Prophet for either considering or extending a marriage proposal to the daughter of Abū Jahl.⁷²⁷ The story may have developed to counter claims that the prophetic *ḥadīth* “Fāṭima is a part of me, he who angers her, upsets me as well,” was historically relevant only in the case of Abū Bakr when he famously upset Fāṭima by disinheriting her and rejecting her claims to ownership of various estates of the Prophet.⁷²⁸ In order to safeguard the honor of Abū Bakr, Ibn Kathīr argued that Fāṭima’s anger was misplaced in this case since she was a woman and women were liable to volatile emotional states.⁷²⁹ Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Kathīr both argued that she eventually realized her error and accepted Abū Bakr’s opinion that a prophetic *ḥadīth* had already disinherited her.⁷³⁰

A few biographical sources noted that Maṣṣūr al-Namarī was a poet who originally had anti-‘Alid Khārijite sympathies and then became an Imāmī after encountering Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam in Kūfa.⁷³¹ The poetry below reflects some of the pro-‘Abbāsīd poetry al-Namarī composed for Hārūn al-Rashīd. Al-Namarī argued that Ḥasanids and Ḥusaynids violated the Qur’ān in regarding themselves as descendants of the Prophet or considering him their father due to a verse that states “Muḥammad is not the father of any of your men” (Q33:40). He urged them to desist from any ambitions to obtain power (or anything else) by virtue of their descent from Fāṭima. Al-Namarī stated:

They call the Prophet “a father” but a line from *Aḥzāb* forbids this

⁷²⁶ Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 4:65; Ibn Maṣṣūr, *Mukhtār al-Aghānī fī al-akhbār wa-l-tahānī* (Cairo: 1965), 6:424; Iṣbahānī, *al-Aghānī*, 23:150.

⁷²⁷ ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:300-2; Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan*, 1:460; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 4:5, 326, 328; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:212, 6:158; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, 7:527; Ibn Māja, *Sunan*, 1:643-644; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 7:141-2; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 5:359-60.

⁷²⁸ ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, 5:472; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 1:6; Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 6:300-301; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:42, 5:82, 8:3; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 5:153; Ṭabarānī, *Musnad al-Shāmiyyīn*, 4:198.

⁷²⁹ Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, 5:270, 310.

⁷³⁰ Ibid., 5:309; Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 4:234. Although Al-Bayhaqī cited a report which portrayed Fāṭima as becoming satisfied with Abū Bakr before she died, her opinion regarding the *ḥadīth* he narrated is not explicitly discussed, see Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 6:301.

⁷³¹ Ḥuṣrī, *Zahr al-ādāb wa-thamar al-albāb* (Beirut: 1972), 3:705; Tustarī, *Qāmūs al-rijāl* (Qum: 1989), 11:526. Others mentioned that he composed poetry with pro-‘Alid sentiment, but concealed his beliefs due to the anti-‘Alid sentiment of Hārūn al-Rashīd, see Iṣbahānī, *al-Aghānī*, 13:97-108; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu‘jam al-mu‘allifīn: tarājīm muṣannifī al-kutub al-‘Arabiyya* (Beirut: 1983), 13:13; Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta‘rikh Baghdād*, 13:67-70.

If they said: “(We are) the sons of a daughter!” and returned that which only suits descendants of men, then this would be just

The sons of daughters do not inherit anything when paternal uncles are present, even the Psalms testify to this law

O sons of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn: do the right thing!

Stay far from false hopes and desires! And dreams that only promise lies...⁷³²

V. Dismissal of reports about ‘Alī’s unique merits (*khaṣā’iṣ*) as false

Individuals in this category rejected most reports exalting ‘Alī and his family members, especially those that indicated a right to the caliphate or the Shī‘ī imamate. Authors would generally reveal their partiality by promoting ‘Uthmānī, Umayyad, or ‘Abbāsīd theological and political claims. Writers upholding this opinion would argue that *ḥadīth* about ‘Alī’s merits lacked reliable chains of transmission.

It seems al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bukhārī (d. 256/870), Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456/1083), Ibn Taymiyya, and Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb al-Fīrūzābādī (d. 817/415) rejected all of ‘Alī’s unique merits in a small sample of their texts. They are discussed further in Chapter 4.

Ibn Zubayr viewed Ibn al-Ḥanafīyya as a competitor for the caliphate due to al-Mukhtār al-Thaqafī’s success in establishing a government in his name in Kūfa and Ibn al-Ḥanafīyya’s own refusal to pledge allegiance to Ibn Zubayr. Ibn Zubayr reportedly told a number of Ibn al-Ḥanafīyya’s partisans, “[he] has never distinguished himself in spirituality, personal judgment, or intelligence. He has no right to this affair (the caliphate).”⁷³³

VI. Condemnation of the actions and opinions of ‘Alī and his sons

In these texts, ‘Alī and his sons are portrayed as committing objectionable deeds in pursuit of their own carnal desires and in disobedience to God and His Prophet.

⁷³² Ḥuṣrī, *Zahr al-ādāb*, 3:705. Ibn Qutayba only transmits a small excerpt, see Ibn Qutayba, *al-Shī‘r wa-l-shu‘arā’* = *Ṭabaqāt al-shu‘arā’* (Cairo: 2006), 2:847. See also ‘Awwād, *al-Naṣb wa-l-nawāṣīb: dirāsa ta’rikhiyya ‘aqadiyya*, p. 316.

⁷³³ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 3:280.

When second and third century theologians criticized ‘Alī’s political career and the way he dealt with challenges to his authority, the Baghdādī Mu‘tazila accused them of belittling (*tanqīṣ*) ‘Alī.⁷³⁴ They believed that some scholars unfairly avoided defending ‘Alī’s conduct as caliph while charitably understanding ‘Uthmān’s actions that aroused discontent during his caliphate or justifying Abū Bakr’s war with those who refused to send him alms. The author of *al-Mi‘yār* argued that ‘Alī’s conduct as caliph could be vindicated on identical grounds.⁷³⁵

In his *Minhāj al-sunna*, Ibn Taymiyya occasionally expressed his personal disapproval of ‘Alī’s actions. He criticized ‘Alī for allegedly angering the Prophet and Fāṭima in seeking a second wife, refusing to pray with the Prophet, giving many erroneous legal opinions, supporting Fāṭima’s claims against Abū Bakr, and fighting at Ṣiffīn. He criticized Fāṭima for seeking ownership of the estate of Fadak and becoming upset with Abū Bakr’s judgment. He also disapproved of al-Ḥusayn’s rebellion against Yazīd.⁷³⁶ Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī believed that Ibn Taymiyya was heretical in expressing disapproval (*i’taraḍa*) of the conduct of various Sufi authorities and caliphs like ‘Umar and ‘Alī.⁷³⁷ He wrote that Ibn Taymiyya “mentioned ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib in a gathering and said, ‘Indeed ‘Alī erred in more than three hundred places.’”⁷³⁸

In his biographical entry on Ibn Taymiyya, Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī explains that some of Ibn Taymiyya’s contemporaries considered him a hypocrite (*munāfiq*) because they perceived anti-‘Alid sentiment in his views. Ibn Ḥajar writes:

“[Ibn Taymiyya] said that ‘Alī was ‘wrong in seventeen matters and in these cases violated a clear proof-text from scripture.’⁷³⁹ For example, ‘Alī held the legal opinion that a widow

⁷³⁴ Iskāfī, *al-Mi‘yār*, pp. 33-34.

⁷³⁵ Ibid., p. 34.

⁷³⁶ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 4:243, 247, 248, 256, 257, 264, 389, 392, 530, 559. For further references, see above, ch. 3, section V.B.

⁷³⁷ For Ibn Taymiyya’s criticism of the legal opinions of ‘Umar and ‘Alī, see Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 7:502.

⁷³⁸ Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *Kitāb al-fatāwā al-ḥadīthiyya* (Cairo: 1927), pp. 84-85.

⁷³⁹ This indirect source states that Ibn Taymiyya claimed ‘Alī violated verses of the Qur’ān. It seems he claimed that ‘Alī violated *nuṣūṣ* (proof-texts) which may equally refer to *ḥadīth*, see Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 7:507.

should wait the longer of the two terms (before contracting another marriage)...⁷⁴⁰ Some (of Ibn Taymiyya's detractors) attributed *nifāq* (hypocrisy) to him due to the aforementioned statement about 'Alī and his argument that "Alī was forsaken (*makhdhūl*) wherever he turned."⁷⁴¹ 'He attempted to become caliph multiple times, but never truly obtained it.'⁷⁴² 'He fought for the sake of worldly power (*riyāsa*) rather than religion (*diyāna*).'⁷⁴³ 'He loved worldly power and 'Uthmān loved wealth.'⁷⁴⁴ 'Abū Bakr converted as an adult with full mental faculties, while 'Alī converted as a child, but the conversion of a child is not valid according to some scholarly opinions.'⁷⁴⁵ He also maligned (*shanna'a*) ['Alī] in his comments regarding the report about Abū Jahl's daughter...and the lesson he derived from it.⁷⁴⁶ So they (Ibn Taymiyya's detractors) were certain of his *nifāq* due to the prophetic report, 'no one will despise you but a hypocrite.'⁷⁴⁷

Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ḥalīm ibn Muḥammad Amīn al-Laknawī (d. 1285/1868) also found Ibn Taymiyya's allusions to 'Alī's love of worldly power and the insignificance of his conversion as a child to be offensive. Al-Laknawī concluded, "he spoke words about the Household of the Prophet that a faithful person would never say..."⁷⁴⁸

⁷⁴⁰ Alternatively one could read Ibn Taymiyya's quote as "Alī was wrong in seventeen matters," but in his *Minhāj*, Ibn Taymiyya does not count the number of edicts in which 'Alī erred, rather he says, "examples of this are abundant," see Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, 4:242-3.

⁷⁴¹ Ibn Taymiyya essentially utilized triumphalism to argue that since 'Alī never defeated Mu'āwiya, he was forsaken by God (*makhdhūl*) while Mu'āwiya and his army were *manṣūrūn*. God did not give victory to those who helped 'Alī, but to those who forsook him since Mu'āwiya went on to establish a dynasty with an army that led successful conquests against non-Muslims, see *ibid.*, 7:20-1, 55-9.

⁷⁴² Ibn Taymiyya acknowledged that some *ḥadīth* folk believed 'Alī's caliphate was never established, see *Ibid.*, 1:537, 4:388-9, 401-2, 6:191. He generally wished to present 'Alī as someone who supported the succession of his predecessors, but he provides a few possible indications to the contrary in his writing, see *ibid.*, 4:388, 6:156, 162, 176, 8:270, 8:330-1, 333-5.

⁷⁴³ *Ibid.*, 6:191, 8:329-330. Elsewhere, Ibn Taymiyya presented this opinion as a hypothetical argument of *nawāṣib*, see *ibid.*, 4:499-500.

⁷⁴⁴ Ibn Taymiyya implicitly argued this by praising 'Alī as more austere with wealth and 'Uthmān with worldly power, see *ibid.*, 8:229, 231.

⁷⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 7:155, 8:424. For similar arguments from al-Jāḥiz, see above, ch. 3, section V.A.

⁷⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 4:255.

⁷⁴⁷ Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-Durar al-kāmina*, 1:179, 181-2.

⁷⁴⁸ Laknawī, *Ḥall al-ma'āqid fī sharḥ al-'Aqā'id* (Lucknow: 1854), p. 28.

Various *ḥadīth* portrayed ‘Alī as angering and disobeying the Prophet or violating Islamic norms. Universalist Sunnīs read these reports charitably, so that ‘Alī learned from his mistakes, while anti-‘Alids probably used these stories to dishonor him and criticize his character. For example, in one report ‘Alī and Fāṭima refused to join the Prophet in prayer.⁷⁴⁹ Other examples include ‘Alī burning people alive,⁷⁵⁰ leading prayer intoxicated,⁷⁵¹ and wishing to marry a second wife in the lifetime of Fāṭima.⁷⁵²

Governors of Syria would allegedly claim piety for themselves by proclaiming that they were without need of divorce or even marriage, but ‘Alī married ten times in his lifetime and had seventeen concubines upon his death.⁷⁵³

In some reports, ‘Umar and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ criticized ‘Alī as someone who was known to jest.”⁷⁵⁴

Al-Ḥasan was portrayed in some texts as abdicating to Mu‘āwiya with the primary concern of obtaining large sums of wealth for himself and his clan.⁷⁵⁵ He is portrayed as a womanizer who married seventy, ninety, or hundreds of women.⁷⁵⁶

According to Ibn Taymiyya, al-Bukhārī accepted Yaḥyā ibn Sa‘īd’s negative judgment regarding Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq and refrained from narrating from this ‘Alid Imam because he considered him an unreliable source of prophetic reports.⁷⁵⁷ Abū Bakr ibn Shihāb (d.

⁷⁴⁹ For further references, see above, section III.

⁷⁵⁰ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 1:282-3; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:21, 8:50; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, 7:658; Nasā’ī, *Sunan*, 7:104; Shāfi‘ī, *Kitāb al-Umm ma’ Mukhtaṣar al-Muzanī* (Beirut: 1983), 1:294. In some versions, ‘Alī cremates them after executing them, see Haythamī, *Majma’ al-zawā’id*, 6:262; Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu’jam al-awsaṭ*, 7:140.

⁷⁵¹ For references, see above, n. 703.

⁷⁵² See above, n. 727.

⁷⁵³ Makkī, *Qūt al-qulūb fī mu‘āmalat al-maḥbūb wa-waṣf ṭariq al-murīd ilā maqām al-tawḥīd* (Cairo: 2001), 3:1621.

⁷⁵⁴ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 2:151, 10:344; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī‘āb*, 3:1119; Ibn Qutayba, *Ta’wīl mukhtalif al-ḥadīth*, p. 273 (Ibn Qutayba assumes the characteristic to be true of ‘Alī).

⁷⁵⁵ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 3:170; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 13:271; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 4:22-3. See also Madelung, *Succession*, pp. 329-330.

⁷⁵⁶ Makkī, *Qūt al-qulūb*, 3:1621 (for the figures two hundred fifty and three hundred). See also Madelung, *Succession*, pp. 380-387.

⁷⁵⁷ Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 2:131 (for Ibn Sa‘īd’s criticism of al-Ṣādiq); Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 7:533-4.

1341/1922) and Muḥammad ibn ‘Aqīl al-‘Alawī (d. 1350/1931) considered the views of Yaḥyā ibn Sa‘īd and al-Bukhārī about al-Ṣādiq an affront to the Household of the Prophet.⁷⁵⁸

VII. Exaltation of individuals who fought ‘Alī and his sons

Frequently, universalist Sunnīs who revered both ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiya relied on pro-Umayyad literature to argue for the piety, salvation and merits of Mu‘āwiya and his house. In some texts Mu‘āwiya was portrayed as a righteous Muslim,⁷⁵⁹ while in others Yazīd was a pious person who was wrongly accused of misdeeds.⁷⁶⁰ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal allegedly explained, “‘Alī had many enemies who carefully searched for his vices, but could not find any. Thus, they turned to excessively praising a man who went to war against him out of malice for ‘Alī.”⁷⁶¹ This study has identified animosity for Mu‘āwiya and rejection of his alleged merits as the necessary condition for differentiating a pro-‘Alid Sunnī from a non-partisan or universalist one.⁷⁶²

VIII. Denunciation and censure of ‘Alī’s close companions

‘Alī’s companions were criticized primarily due to their opposition to ‘Uthmān and his governors before his assassination. The thesis of the corruption of ‘Alī’s disciples further lent support to ‘Uthmānī arguments about their role in causing sedition, bloodshed, and the emergence of political factions and sects.

Texts condemned ‘Ammār b. Yāsir as a murderer of ‘Uthmān⁷⁶³ and one who was influenced by the legendary ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ and his cronies.⁷⁶⁴ Abū Dharr⁷⁶⁵ and ‘Amr b. Ḥamiq al-

⁷⁵⁸ Ibn ‘Aqīl, *al-‘Atb al-jamīl*, pp. 37-39.

⁷⁵⁹ For example, see Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *Kitāb Taḥīr al-janān wa-l-lisān ‘an thalb Mu‘āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān*, ed. al-Atharī (Ṭanṭā: 1992). See also Barzegar, “Remembering Community,” pp. 177-231.

⁷⁶⁰ For example, see Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Qayd al-sharīd min akhbār Yazīd* (Cairo: 1986).

⁷⁶¹ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Faṭḥ al-bārī*, 7:81; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Mawḍū‘āt*, 2:24. See also ‘Awwād, *al-Naṣb*, p. 599.

⁷⁶² See above, ch. 1, section II.

⁷⁶³ Dīnawarī, *al-Akhbār al-ṭiwāl*, p. 149; Ibn Shabba, *Ta’rīkh al-Madīna*, 4:1250. See also Madelung, *Succession*, p. 156.

⁷⁶⁴ Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 3:379. See also Sean Anthony, “The Caliph and the Heretic: Ibn Saba’, the Saba’īya and early Shī’ism between myth and history” (University of Chicago Ph.D., 2009), pp. 61 (n. 38), 88, 91, 95.

⁷⁶⁵ Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 3:335. See also Anthony, “Ibn Saba’, the Saba’īya and early Shī’ism,” pp. 52-55; Madelung, *Succession*, p. 84.

Khuzā'ī,⁷⁶⁶ also Companions of the Prophet and 'Alī, were similarly considered associates of Ibn Saba' and enemies of 'Uthmān. Sayf b. 'Umar reported that 'Ammār and Abū Dharr were associates of Ibn Saba' in order to discredit their criticisms of 'Uthmān and his Umayyad governors.⁷⁶⁷ Ibn Saba' was portrayed as a crypto-Jew who was the source of civil unrest across the empire during the caliphate of 'Uthmān and the cause of the Battle of the Camel.⁷⁶⁸ By portraying 'Alī's disciples as associates of Ibn Saba', Sayf effectively discredited pro-'Alid sentiment, Shī'ism, and alternative historical reports that blamed 'Alī's political rivals, like 'Ā'isha or the Umayyads, for these conflicts.

Other disciples of 'Alī who are condemned in Sunnī historical narratives include Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr,⁷⁶⁹ Ḥukaym b. Jabala,⁷⁷⁰ Mālik al-Ashtar,⁷⁷¹ and many others. For example, in one report 'Ā'isha cursed 'Ammār, Mālik al-Ashtar, and her brother Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr.⁷⁷²

Tensions in the Texts

In the cataloging of anti-'Alid sentiments in literature, texts can fall into one of eight categories. Texts of categories 1-3 reflected the beliefs of Muslims who (reportedly) possessed anti-'Alid sentiments, while texts of categories 4 and 5 presented the views of Muslims who were criticized as irreverent toward 'Alids, but may not have been personally motivated by

⁷⁶⁶ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 2:382, 5:272. See also Anthony, "Ibn Saba', the Saba'iya and early Shī'ism," p. 100.

⁷⁶⁷ Askarī, *Ma'ālim al-madrasatayn*, 1: 277-90. Al-'Askarī dismissed as fiction the alleged role of 'Abd Allāh b. Saba' as the founder of Shī'ism and the instigator of all conflicts during the caliphate of 'Uthmān and 'Alī in a famous study, see Murtaḍā al-'Askarī, *'Abd Allāh ibn Saba' wa asāṭir ukhrā* (Tehran: 1973).

⁷⁶⁸ For example, see Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa'l-nihāya*, 7:265-267.

⁷⁶⁹ Bukhārī, *al-Ḍu'afā' al-ṣaghīr*, 1:104, 121. See also Anthony, "Ibn Saba', the Saba'iya and early Shī'ism," p. 95; Madelung, *Succession*, p. 156; Maya Yazigi, "Defense and Validation in Shī'i and Sunni Tradition," pp. 62-64.

⁷⁷⁰ Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 3:368, 457, 483. Sayf b. 'Umar described him as a thief, someone who would curse 'Ā'isha, a host of 'Abd Allāh b. Saba', and one whom 'Uthmān had previously imprisoned, see also Anthony, "Ibn Saba', the Saba'iya and early Shī'ism," pp. 128-129; Madelung, *Succession*, p. 144 n. 14.

⁷⁷¹ Bukhārī, *al-Ḍu'afā' al-ṣaghīr*, 1:121; Dīnawarī, *al-Akhbār al-ṭiwāl*, p. 149; Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 3:561. See also Anthony, "Ibn Saba', the Saba'iya and early Shī'ism," pp. 34-5, 42, 46, 135-6.

⁷⁷² Bukhārī, *al-Ḍu'afā' al-ṣaghīr*, 1:121; Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 56:381; Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madīna*, 4:1244; Jāḥiẓ, *al-Bayān wa'l-tabyīn*, p. 359. See also Madelung, *Succession*, pp. 160-161.

anti-ʿAlid sentiments. The sentiments expressed in category 4 texts were prevalent among courtiers who were primarily concerned with receiving financial gifts from a caliph. Their poetry reflected a type of state media and propaganda of the era. Poets and others who wished to please their patrons would occasionally make anti-ʿAlid statements between categories 1-4. In addition to seeking upward mobility in the bureaucracy, some may have felt coerced to make such statements in a show of loyalty to the state. It is quite possible that the figures that appeared in this appendix were not anti-ʿAlids. Nevertheless their reported statements reflected beliefs that anti-ʿAlids publicly proclaimed and wished for the community to accept.

Texts of type 5-8 are characteristic of both anti-ʿAlids and common Sunnī responses to Shīʿism. I have attempted to provide a gradation of texts that were clearly anti-ʿAlid (types 1-3) and differentiate them from those composed for anti-Shīʿī purposes (category 4-8). If an individual only expressed category 7 or 8 statements, he may have been much more tolerant of pro-ʿAlid sentiments, but remained anti-Shīʿī. On the other hand, individuals like Ibn Taymiyya, expressed sentiments that ranged from anti-Shīʿī (types 5-8) to anti-ʿAlid (type 3) in some cases. Sunnī polemicists who relied on the views of anti-ʿAlid predecessors in their vigor to discredit Shīʿism normally began contradicting their claim to revere the Household by rejecting reports about their merits and tendentiously accepting ʿUthmānī and Umayyad reports as authentic.

A systematic enquiry of Sunnī literature about the turbulent lives of ʿAlids Umayyad and early ʿAbbāsīd periods reveals the animosity that existed between ʿAlids and some of their

political and intellectual rivals.⁷⁷³ Sunnī *ḥadīth*, historical, and biographical literature describes many of these rivalries in detail. While pro-‘Alid Sunnī scholars utilized this literature, anti-Shī‘ī polemicists dismissed most texts as false and further utilized anti-‘Alid elements in the Sunnī tradition to substantiate their claims.

⁷⁷³ As the survey above has demonstrated, see also Jafri, *Origins*; Madelung, *Succession*.

CHAPTER 4

The Tension Between Anti-‘Alid and Anti-Shī‘ī Sentiment in Sunnī Islam

It is often difficult to distinguish between two currents: staunch opposition to Shī‘ism and hatred for ‘Alī and his descendants. While Shī‘īs claim these sentiments are all representative of *naṣb*, it seems the currents were occasionally mutually exclusive. For example, Kūfan history narrates the existence of individuals who held pro-‘Alid sentiments, but held Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and other Companions to be authorities in religion.⁷⁷⁴ Zaydīs who viewed the first two caliphs positively were accused of *naṣb* or cursed in Imāmī literature,⁷⁷⁵ but these accusations probably referred to the contempt some Zaydīs reserved for specific Twelver imams or Imāmī theology.⁷⁷⁶

Shī‘ism is essentially distinguished by its restriction of ultimate authority to ‘Alids who were considered to be the sole successors to the Prophet. Pro-‘Alid sentiment, as previously defined, was a spectrum that ranged from hostility to Mu‘āwiya and staunch support for ‘Alī’s wars against rebels to the belief that God selected ‘Alids to inherit the Prophet’s sanctity and esoteric knowledge. Non-Shī‘īs with the strongest pro-‘Alid sentiment tended to still recognize the Companions and other early jurists as authoritative sources of law and practice. The

⁷⁷⁴ See above, ch. 1. See also Haider, *Origins*, pp. 18-20.

⁷⁷⁵ For example, Sālim b. Abī Ḥafṣa was a Batrī cursed in the literature, see Māzandarānī, *Sharḥ Usūl al-Kāfī*, 10:56-7; Ṭūsī, *Ikhtiyār Ma‘rifat al-Rijāl*, 2:503-5. Another reference to *naṣb* may refer to him, see Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 2:403.

⁷⁷⁶ For portrayals of ‘Alids upset with al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī and al-Šādiq, see Kulaynī, *al-Uṣūl min al-Kāfī*, 1:359, 362-363. For Zaydī attacks of Imāmī conceptions of the imamate and the competency of child imams like Muḥammad al-Jawād, see Rassī, *al-Radd ‘alā al-rāfiḍa*, pp. 98-101.

following questions deserve consideration; can one venerate and love the Household but despise Shī'ism? In contrast, can one oppose various types of pro-'Alid sentiment, but still not have any contempt for 'Alids in particular? The existence of pro-'Alid and universalist Sunnīs (who were willing to accept reports that extolled any Companion) seems to answer both questions in the affirmative.

I. Anti-'Alid and Pro-'Alid sentiments as a social phenomenon

The following framework describes pro-'Alid and anti-'Alid sentiments that existed in the second to third centuries as they pertained to various social and political groups organized into five broad categories.

A. Group 1 – *nawāṣib*

Group 1, the *nawāṣib*, were hostile to 'Alī and his household, and to those who gave allegiance to them. They frequently loved and were loyal to a rival group. Many in Group 1 were found amongst the following groups and their partisans: Umayyads, Khārijites, 'Abbāsids, and early 'Uthmānids who supported the first three caliphs and publicly pledged devotion to 'Ā'isha. These Muslims disparaged 'Alī or his family, had a malicious intent to cause pain to the Household, and considered 'Alī a criminal.

B. Group 2 – Opposition to any special veneration of 'Alī

Group 2 opposed granting any special distinction to 'Alī. One would generally believe

other Companions (in addition to the three early caliphs) to be equal or better than ‘Alī.

Someone of this persuasion would not necessarily have contempt for ‘Alī, but other political and theological allegiances would keep him from revering him.

Group 2 included *ahl al-ḥadīth*, anti-Shī‘ī politicians and polemicists, puritan Sunnīs, or those Sunnīs with no knowledge or interest in the biography of ‘Alī. This group included people who simply felt it was fundamentally wrong to venerate objects or persons other than God. Others refused to accept the validity of any Shī‘ī beliefs or practices. In their zeal to defend their puritan Sunnī positions, they attempted to deny many of the merits of the Household and defend the arguments of those who disagreed with the Household or were considered anti-‘Alids.

C. Group 3 – Opposition to *tafḍīl* ‘Alī

Group 3 opposed the *tafḍīl* of ‘Alī, but ranked him as the greatest Companion after the previous caliphs. This traditional Sunnī position accepted some reports that exalted ‘Alī and his family. Political allegiances (to the three caliphs, ‘Ā’isha, Mu‘āwiya) and theological beliefs (the righteousness of all Companions, the integrity of the Sunnī *ḥadīth* folk method) led one in Group 3 to reject some pro-‘Alid *ḥadīth* and read the actions of his rivals charitably.

Many Sunnī scholars who believed in the merits of ‘Alī and the Household considered them to be a special group, but would not allow such a belief to contradict their allegiance to the first three caliphs. For these individuals, allegiance to the early caliphs required an affirmation of their merit over ‘Alī. Others would admit that some Companions and other figures revered in the proto-Sunnī tradition considered ‘Alī and his Household the most meritorious Muslims after the Prophet, but would not systematically defend this position.

D. Group 4 – Opposition to his veneration as a miraculous imam

Group 4 opposed veneration of ‘Alī and his descendants among many Imāmīs as individuals endowed with magical abilities, clairvoyance, alchemy, knowledge of all languages (including communication with various types of animals), and power over the natural world. Many in Group 4 were known for the *tafḍīl* of ‘Alī and revered him as superior to all of his peers.

Muslims in this group universally believed ‘Alī had been the best candidate for the caliphate after the Prophet. Some believed ‘Alī had been designated by God to directly succeed the Prophet either explicitly or implicitly as a legatee (*waṣī*), *walī*, or *Imām*. The political or apolitical significance of this succession differed between various types of Muslims. Some early Imāmīs, pro-‘Alid Sunnīs,⁷⁷⁷ Mu‘tazila, and Zaydīs fell within Group 4.

⁷⁷⁷ See above ch. 2, section II.C-III.

E. Group 5 – Opposition to his deification

Group 5 consisted of many (but not all) Imāmīs who only rejected ‘Alī's deification. Imāmī *ḥadīth* literature is full of reports in which various groups and their leaders are cursed and condemned as *ghulāt* for ascribing divinity to ‘Alī.⁷⁷⁸ While groups 1-4, also opposed the deification of the Household, Group 5 was distinguished by its portrayal of ‘Alī and his descendants as endowed with miraculous power over the natural world. Through their access to the supreme name of God, the Imams possessed (1) expertise in divination and the occult, (2) infallibility that did not allow any type of mistakes, and (3) some level of omniscience that was not learned but inspired.

F. Group 6 – *ghulāt*

Group 6 deified the Household of the Prophet as manifestations or incarnations of God. This group included those whom Imāmīs described as *ghulāt*, *mufawwiḍa* and Nuṣayrīs.⁷⁷⁹ Many believed the Prophet and/or the Imams were endowed with divine abilities like management of the affairs of the universe.

There was tension amongst early Imāmīs between groups who recognized varying

⁷⁷⁸ Kohlberg, “Barā’a,” 164-7.

⁷⁷⁹ Ibn Shahrāshūb, *Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib*, 1:228 (for a description of the Nuṣayrīs). See also Yaron Friedman “al-Husayn ibn Hamdān al-Khasībī: a historical biography of the founder of the Nusayrī-‘Alawite Sect” *Studia Islamica* 93 (2001), pp. 91-112. Ishāq al-Aḥmar (d. 286/899) reportedly believed that ‘Alī was God incarnate. He was considered an authority of the *ghulāt* and close to Nuṣayrīs in doctrine, see Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i’tidāl*, 1:196-197.

degrees of the divine capabilities of the Imams and those who did not.⁷⁸⁰ There is also evidence that these groups were exclusivist and believed non-Shī'īs or members of other groups to be infidels.⁷⁸¹

II. Al-Bukhārī, Ibn Taymiyya and their detractors

This investigation has identified individuals that the intellectual tradition considered to be members of Groups 1 and 2. Historically some members of Group 2 may have hated 'Alids in addition to opposing their veneration. However, if the literary contributions of such individuals, like Ibn Taymiyya, indicated a tendency to only dismiss 'Alid distinctions rather than attack the group as evil, I will consider the two sentiments to be mutually exclusive for this enquiry. Group 1 is "anti-'Alid," meaning having contempt for 'Alī and his family. Group 2 is opposed to the veneration of the Household and recognition of any of their alleged merits, but does not explicitly characterize them as evil. Detractors of Ibn Taymiyya will cite many of his extremely anti-Shī'ī dialectical positions as evidence of his position in Groups 1 and 2. There is some indication that he did not regard 'Alī's political career highly, but he nevertheless claimed to belong to Group 3, the vanguard of orthodox Sunnism.⁷⁸² However, Ibn Taymiyya is not the only Sunnī to argue that 'Alī possessed no unique merit in the Islamic

⁷⁸⁰ For a summary of this historical tension in the Imāmī community, see Modarressi, *Crisis*, 20-51.

⁷⁸¹ In one narrative, Abū al-Khaṭṭāb argues that non-Shī'ites were *kāfirūn*, see Dakake, *Charismatic*, 188. For the groups associated with him, see *E.I.*², s.v. "Khaṭṭābiyya" (W. Madelung).

⁷⁸² He states that no one was more meritorious than 'Alī except for the three caliphs who preceded him, see Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 4:396.

tradition.⁷⁸³

It seems al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bukhārī, Ibn Ḥazm, Ibn Taymiyya, and Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb al-Fīrūzābādī rejected all of ‘Alī’s unique merits in a small sample of their texts. Depending on geographical and historical factors, other Sunnīs would exalt ‘Alī by reporting hundreds of his alleged distinctions with chains of transmission that they considered acceptable. Some Sunnīs like Aḥmad ibn Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ījī (active c. 820/1417) exalted ‘Alī due to strong pro-‘Alid theological beliefs, while others like Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal did so as part of a culture that exalted all Companions with similar types of hagiographical reports. Chapter three presented a small selection of ‘Uthmānī and anti-Shī‘ī arguments found in the works of al-Jāḥiẓ and Ibn Taymiyya. These two authors are also included in this section because they specifically displayed a tendency to doubt the authenticity of most *ḥadīth* about ‘Alī’s merits or reason that his merits were neither significant nor unique.⁷⁸⁴

Al-Bukhārī mentioned six *ḥadīth* about ‘Alī in his chapter dedicated to his merits, but only three could be characterized as pro-‘Alid reports that exalted him. Al-Bukhārī reported that the Prophet allegedly said to ‘Alī, “I am from you and you are from me,” “you are unto me like Aaron unto Moses,” and that he described ‘Alī as a man whom God and His Prophet loved

⁷⁸³ It seems the Zubayrids maintained such a position regarding Hāshimids in general, see above, ch. 3, appendix, section V; see below, section III.C.

⁷⁸⁴ See the previous chapter for the case studies on al-Jāḥiẓ and Ibn Taymiyya. See also Afsaruddin, *Excellence*, pp. 64-69, 99, 115-120, 199-202 (for al-Jāḥiẓ).

before giving him the banner at the battle of Khaybar.⁷⁸⁵ It seems al-Bukhārī excluded hundreds of reports about the merits of ‘Alī that his predecessor Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal considered acceptable for transmission.⁷⁸⁶ The final report which al-Bukhārī mentioned in his chapter on ‘Alī provided justification for his decision to abstain from narrating many *ḥadīth* about ‘Alī. Al-Bukhārī appealed to the authority of Ibn Sīrīn (d. 110/729) and stated, “Ibn Sīrīn considered most of that which is narrated regarding ‘Alī to be false.”⁷⁸⁷ The Moroccan Sufi scholar of *ḥadīth* who professed *tafḍīl* ‘Alī, Aḥmad ibn al-Ṣiddīq al-Ghumārī (d. 1380/1960) accused al-Bukhārī of having some anti-‘Alid sentiment.⁷⁸⁸

Like al-Jāhīz before him, Ibn Ḥazm devalued ‘Alī’s military prowess, conversion as a young boy, asceticism, expertise in religion, and other merits by reinterpreting them, so they did not cause ‘Alī to appear superior to his peers in excellence. Ibn Ḥazm also rejected the authenticity of many reports that exalted ‘Alī.⁷⁸⁹ Some historians have criticized Ibn Ḥazm for displaying anti-‘Alid sentiment and great reverence for the Umayyads due to his sharing kinship with them through clientage.⁷⁹⁰

⁷⁸⁵ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:207-9.

⁷⁸⁶ For Aḥmad’s reports about ‘Alī, see Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Faḍā’il Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ‘alayhi al-salām* (Qum: 2012). A Shī‘ī author takes al-Bukhārī to task for his decision to exclude most *ḥadīth* about ‘Alī’s merits, see Najmī, *Aḍwā’ ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Qum: 1998), pp. 108-109.

⁷⁸⁷ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:209.

⁷⁸⁸ ‘Awwād, *al-Naṣb*, p. 431. However, al-Ghumārī apparently did not provide justification for labeling al-Bukhārī anti-‘Alid.

⁷⁸⁹ Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal*, 4:78, 107, 110-112, 114-116. See also Afsaruddin, *Excellence*, pp. 69, 99, 102-104.

⁷⁹⁰ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 18:184, 201; Ibn Hazm, *Rasā’il Ibn Ḥazm al-Andalusī*, ed. ‘Abbās (Beirut: 1983), 1:91, 208, 2:22 (for

Ibn Ḥazm, Ibn Taymiyya, and al-Firūzābādī all argued for the following belief:

“The merits of ‘Alī which are authentic consist of the Prophet’s words: (1) ‘you are unto me like Aaron unto Moses except there is no prophet after me.’ And his statement, (2) ‘I shall give the banner to a man who loves God and His Prophet while God and His Prophet love him too,’ but this is a characteristic of every believer and person of merit. Also his promise to ‘Alī that (3) only a person of faith will love him and only a hypocrite will despise him, but this distinction is also authentically reported about the *anṣār*...as for (the *ḥadīth*) “Alī is the *mawlā* of whosoever considers me his *mawlā*...” it is not authentically reported by any reliable transmitters. As for all other *ḥadīth* which the *rāfiḍa* usually cite, they are fabricated. Anyone with the slightest bit of knowledge regarding historical reports (*akhbār*) and their transmission already knows this.”⁷⁹¹

Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī was a respected *ḥadīth* scholar with universalist (rather than pro-‘Alid) sensibilities, nonetheless, he criticized Ibn Taymiyya with the following words:

I examined [Ibn Taymiyya’s *Minhāj al-sunna*]...but I found it extremely prejudiced and unfair (*kathīr al-taḥāmūl*) in achieving its purpose of refuting the *ḥadīth* that Ibn al-Muṭahhar mentioned even if the majority of them were fabricated and baseless. In this process, however, he refuted a multitude of *ḥadīth* considered first-rate (*jiyād*)...one cannot count the number of times that excessively discrediting the *rāfiḍī*’s words led him to belittling (*tanqīṣ*) ‘Alī.⁷⁹²

Some pro-‘Alid Sunnīs criticized the views expressed by these five authors as anti-‘Alid although these writers would have been offended by such a charge. A representative of the Mu‘tazilī school of Baghdad, Abū Ja‘far al-Iskāfī, commented on the tendency amongst his

Ibn Ḥazm’s reverence for the Umayyads of Andalusia); Ṣafādī, *al-Wāfi*, 20:93, 96. See also ‘Awwād, *al-Naṣb*, pp. 471, 476; Ghumārī, *al-Jawāb al-mufīd*, p. 67; Mālikī, *Naḥwa inqādh al-ta’rīkh*, pp. 136, 288.

⁷⁹¹ Firūzābādī, *al-Radd ‘alā al-rāfiḍa*, pp. 66-68; Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal*, 4:116; Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 7:120, 199, 320-1, 354-5, 8:420-1.

⁷⁹² Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Mizān*, 1:319-20. It seems Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Laknawī agreed with this sentiment, read *wa qad radda al-aḥādīth al-ṣiḥāḥ* for *wa qad warada al-aḥādīth al-ṣiḥāḥ*, see Laknawī, *Ḥall al-ma‘āqid fī sharḥ al-‘Aqā’id*, p. 28.

proto-Sunnī contemporaries to either reject, refrain from mentioning, or reinterpret the merits of ‘Alī so they were no longer viewed as merits.⁷⁹³ Al-Iskāfī and others considered al-Jāhiz guilty of anti-‘Alid sentiment and/or ignorance for doing this.⁷⁹⁴

Aḥmad ibn Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ījī was a Shāfi‘ī who composed a work about the merits of ‘Alī and implicitly argued for his *tafdīl*.⁷⁹⁵ He referred to an unnamed contemporary who composed a text with the passage mentioned above. Al-Ījī was dismayed that the author could compose a book that aimed to either reject or devalue ‘Alī’s merits and conclude that he only possessed three authentic reports in his favor. Al-Ījī seems to be referring to al-Firūzābādī, whom he described as so prejudiced in his anti-Shī‘ī sentiment that it led him to quarrel with proof-texts from scripture and the *sunna*.⁷⁹⁶

Pro-‘Alid Sunnīs of the twentieth-century, like Abū Bakr ibn Shihāb al-Dīn al-‘Alawī al-Ḥadramī (d. 1341/1922), Muḥammad ibn ‘Aqīl al-‘Alawī (d. 1350/1931), Aḥmad al-Ghumārī, his brother ‘Abd Allāh al-Ghumārī (d. 1413/1993), ‘Alawī ibn Ṭāhir al-Ḥaddād (d. 1382/1962), ‘Abd Allāh al-Harārī (d. 1429/2008), Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-Saqqāf (b. 1380/1961), and Ḥasan ibn Farḥān al-Mālikī (b. 1390/1970) have all criticized Ibn Taymiyya for anti-‘Alid sentiment.⁷⁹⁷ In addition to

⁷⁹³ Iskāfī, “Naqd al-‘Uthmāniyya,” p. 282.

⁷⁹⁴ See Iskāfī, “Naqd al-‘Uthmāniyya,” 297, 302-5, 318, 320; al-Jāhiz, *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*, 1:11; *al-Rasā’il al-siyāsiyya*, pp. 26-7; See also Afsaruddin, *Excellence*, pp. 7, 23-5.

⁷⁹⁵ For places in which the author offers evidence of ‘Alī superiority to his peers, see Ījī, *Tawḍīḥ al-dalā’il*, pp. 21, 160-161, 198-199, 331-336.

⁷⁹⁶ Firūzābādī, *al-Radd ‘alā al-rāfiḍa*, 66; Ījī, *Tawḍīḥ al-dalā’il*, p. 225.

⁷⁹⁷ Abū Bakr ibn Shihāb, *Wujūb al-ḥamiyya*, p. 10; Ibn ‘Aqīl, *Taqwiyat al-īmān*, p. 71; Ghumārī, *al-Qawl al-muqni’ fi al-*

Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, scholars who censured Ibn Taymiyya for showing animosity to ‘Alī and his family in previous centuries included Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Laknawī, and unnamed contemporaries of Ibn Taymiyya.⁷⁹⁸

As chapter three noted, the characterization of a statement as anti-‘Alid or irreverent rather than anti-Shī‘ī was contentious. Sunnism possessed a spectrum of pro-‘Alid beliefs (discussed in chapter one) wherein proponents of each trend criticized each other. Pro-‘Alid Sufis who viewed ‘Alī as the legatee and inheritor of the Prophet’s spiritual knowledge were offended by anti-Shī‘ī polemicists who rejected most merits attributed to ‘Alī. Although they viewed Ibn Taymiyya as anti-‘Alid, others influenced by him considered him an exemplary, puritan Sunnī. Although the five authors in this section were proponents of the “four caliph” theory, it seems they relied upon the views of some ‘Uthmānī predecessors who rejected the legitimacy of ‘Alī’s caliphate to devalue his alleged merits.

The problem in categorizing the thought of Ibn Taymiyya and other anti-Shī‘ī polemicists who shared his sensibilities is their appeal to arguments and individuals

radd ‘alā al-Albānī al-mubtadi’ (Tangier: 1986), pp. 6-9; Ghumārī, *‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib imām al-‘arīfīn = al-Burhān al-jalī fī taḥqīq intisāb al-ṣūfiyya ilā ‘Alī wa-yalihi Kitāb Faṭḥ al-Malik al-‘Alī* (Cairo: 1969), pp. 51-56; Idem, *Faṭḥ al-Malik al-‘Alī bi-ṣiḥḥat ḥadīth bāb madīnat al-‘ilm ‘Alī*, ed. al-Amīnī (Isfahan: 1983), pp. 108-109; Mālikī, *al-Ṣuḥba wa-l-ṣaḥaba*, pp. 238-239; Idem, *Sulaymān al-Alwān fī Mu‘āwiya*, p. 18 n. 5; Hararī, *Ḍalālāt Aḥmad ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 353-374 (for al-Ḥaddād’s statements, see p. 353); Saqqāf, *al-Salafiyya al-wahhābiyya : afkārūhā al-asāsiyya wa-judhūruhā al-ta’rīkiyya* (Beirut: 2011), pp. 72-73; Idem, *Majmū‘ rasā’il al-Saqqāf* (Beirut: 2007), 1:96 n. 51 (for ‘Abd Allāh al-Ghumārī’s comments); Idem, *Ṣaḥīḥ sharḥ al-‘aqīda al-Ṭaḥāwiyya = al-manhaj al-ṣaḥīḥ fī fahm ‘aqīdat ahl al-sunna wa-l-jamā’a ma’a al-tanqīḥ* (‘Ammān: 1995), p. 651 n. 383; ‘Awwād, *al-Naṣb*, p. 512.

⁷⁹⁸ See above, ch. 3, appendix, section VI.

characteristic of Groups 1 and 2. Their reliance on such sources reflects a Sunnī tendency to reach into the *nāṣibī* and anti-veneration traditions that it both assimilated and suppressed. The tension in incorporating the intellectual tradition of individuals from group 1 and those in group 4 (pro-‘Alid folk) was a challenge for Sunnism, which sought in its very name (*al-jamā‘a*) to unite them. The contradiction between Ḥarīz ibn ‘Uthmān, who despised ‘Alī for killing his ancestors at Ṣiffīn, and Abū ‘l-Ṭufayl who ranked ‘Alī higher than Abū Bakr, is clear in their biographical dictionaries, nevertheless they both appear in Sunnī canonical collections like al-Bukhārī’s *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Group 4’s overtly pro-‘Alid stance within the proto-Sunnī tradition has continued even till the modern period. Identifying their historical predecessors as proto-Sunnīs, Batrīs, or moderate proto-Imāmīs remains a contested question. According to pro-‘Alids of the modern period, when individuals were anti-‘Alid or anti-veneration, the compilers of Sunnī biographical dictionaries would generally mention this characteristic without any further comment. In contrast, biographical entries on members of groups 4 and 5 would include criticism and condemnation of their beliefs.⁷⁹⁹

III. Literary Portrayals of Anti-‘Alid Sentiment

Those who fought against ‘Alī and his descendants (or perpetuated their massacre) in early Islamic history were usually characterized as anti-‘Alid in pro-‘Alid Kūfan *ḥadīth*, Mu‘tazilī historical accounts, and Shī‘ī literature. Umayyads, Zubayrids, ‘Abbāsids and their

⁷⁹⁹ Muḥammad ibn ‘Aqīl al-‘Alawī argued this point in a famous treatise, see Ibn ‘Aqīl, *al-‘Atb al-jamīl*.

partisans largely became villains in such narratives. Shī'īs were keen to include Companions who not only emerged as rivals to 'Alī after the death of the Prophet, but also allegedly expressed malice for 'Alī in the lifetime of the Prophet. Shī'īs used certain cues to let the reader know that a person was anti-'Alid without using the word *naṣb* by portraying the character as maliciously plotting to oppose 'Alids or confessing his hatred of them. Other times the person is described as a hypocrite or possessing envy (*ḥasad*).

The political careers of many of the characters listed below demonstrate their opposition to the restriction of religious and political authority to 'Alī and his house. While these figures seem to have disagreed with Shī'ī sentiments, this investigation does not assume the historicity of the anti-'Alid sentiments attributed to them. The existence of this literature rather confirms that some non-Shī'ī Muslims believed that these reports accurately reflected the past. These authors accepted the presumption that some Companions and their partisans were anti-'Alid.

Peoples and Parties Associated with Anti-'Alid Sentiment

A. Leading elders in the tribe of Quraysh

Wilferd Madelung has cited many of the relevant types of texts that are found in the works of al-Balādhurī and Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd, and in some biographical dictionaries, that indicate 'Alī and al-Ḥasan believed that the tribe of Quraysh had refused to recognize their greater

right to rule.⁸⁰⁰ “Quraysh” seems generally to refer to Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān and their partisans, in other words, the ‘*Uthmāniyya*. Pro-‘Alids in Sunnī *ḥadīth* and Mu‘tazilī circles occasionally interpreted opposition to ‘Alī’s claim to the caliphate as stemming from anti-‘Alid sentiment. Madelung’s work in his *Succession* suffices in providing relevant literary examples of ‘Uthmānī and pro-Umayyad sentiment in the early community. In order to avoid redundancy, examples that appear in Madelung’s text are excluded from further inquiry.

Both ‘Umar and Mu‘āwiya are portrayed as acknowledging, on behalf of the elders of Quraysh, that “they detested the idea of prophethood and caliphate remaining in one family.”⁸⁰¹

In one report, ‘Umar explained that ‘Alī was disliked due to his youth and love of his kinsmen.⁸⁰² ‘Umar’s alleged comments imply that it was common knowledge that ‘Alī considered himself and his Household the rightful heirs of the Prophet.⁸⁰³

According to Caetani and Madelung, leaders of Quraysh who sought political power and hegemony over the Islamic empire possessed interests virtually identical with those of the

⁸⁰⁰ These views are expressed in their alleged letters to Mu‘āwiya, see Madelung, *Succession*, pp. 213-214 (for ‘Alī); 314 (for Hasan). For Shī‘ī *ih̥tijāj* literature of this type, see Ṭabrisī, *al-Ih̥tijāj*. See also Ḥasan, *Munāẓarāt fī al-imāma* (Qum: 1994).

⁸⁰¹ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 10:378; Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr*, 2:173; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 3:288. Al-Balādhurī and al-Ṭabarī cited al-Madā’inī as their source.

⁸⁰² Madelung, *Succession*, p. 68.

⁸⁰³ Madelung postulates that ‘Umar recognized this, see, Madelung, *Succession*, p. 73.

Umayyads.⁸⁰⁴ These leaders generally maintained policies that did not benefit Hāshimids, Arabs of other tribes, and non-Arabs. ‘Uthmānīs who supported the interests of Quraysh extolled the virtues of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and the commanders of the Battle of the Camel.⁸⁰⁵ This party also defended the legacy of ‘Uthmān after his death, in spite of their opposition to Umayyad ascendancy near the end of his life. After the Battle of the Camel, ‘Uthmānīs in Yemen sought the patronage of Mu‘āwiya.⁸⁰⁶ The Zubayrids revived their claim to the caliphate and the interests of the aristocrats of Quraysh after the death of Mu‘āwiya.

B. ‘Ā’isha

Sunnī literature occasionally portrayed ‘Ā’isha, the daughter of Abū Bakr and wife of the Prophet, as loathing ‘Alī, some of his close kin, and his disciples. For example, al-Zuhri and Ma‘mar ibn Rāshid quoted Ibn ‘Abbās as explaining that ‘Ā’isha loathed to mention ‘Alī in favorable terms.⁸⁰⁷

She was also portrayed as jealous of the Prophet’s love and devotion toward others.

The amount of affection and time the Prophet devoted to others became a central source of

⁸⁰⁴ Madelung, *Succession*, p. 96 (also citing Caetani). The dominance of Quraysh in the reign of the first three caliphs can be understood through the ascendancy of the Umayyads and their partisans during ‘Uthmān’s rule.

⁸⁰⁵ Madelung, *Succession*, p. 147. The inhabitants of Mecca, the historic home of Quraysh, also refused to pledge allegiance to ‘Alī and supported ‘Ā’isha at the Battle of the Camel, see *ibid*, 155.

⁸⁰⁶ Madelung, *Succession*, p. 298 (for Ṣan‘ā’), 305 (for Ḥaḍamawt).

⁸⁰⁷ ‘Aynī, *Umdat al-qārī*, 5:192; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1:545; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 2:131; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 2:433. For a canonical report in which ‘Ā’isha refused to mention the name of ‘Alī, see Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1:162, 3:135, 5:140; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 2:22.

tension and competition in narratives about ‘Ā’isha and may serve as the basis for understanding her alleged resentment toward ‘Alī. For example, exegetes of the Qur’ān narrated that after the Prophet began prolonging his visits to his wife Zaynab bint Jaḥsh, ‘Ā’isha became jealous and devised a plan that would embarrass him and cause him to refrain from visiting Zaynab so frequently.⁸⁰⁸ On another occasion, ‘Ā’isha criticized the Prophet for spending too much time with ‘Alī.⁸⁰⁹ In an argument with the Prophet she complained, “by God, I have come to know that you love ‘Alī more than my father and me.”⁸¹⁰ The Prophet’s other wives reportedly felt that ‘Ā’isha would monopolize time with him.⁸¹¹

The Prophet is portrayed as deeply loving his first wife Khadīja and never marrying another woman in her lifetime. ‘Ā’isha reportedly admitted to being jealous of the Prophet’s lifelong devotion to the memory of Khadīja and his praise of her.⁸¹² The fact that Khadīja bore him children was a source of great happiness for the Prophet,⁸¹³ but may have been a source of resentment for ‘Ā’isha who never gave birth to children. ‘Ā’isha may have considered Fāṭima a

⁸⁰⁸ Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan*, 2:191; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 6:221; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 6:68, 167; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:184; Nasā’ī, *Sunan*, 6:151, 7:13, 71; Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr*, 6:239. For further references, consult works of exegesis for Qur’an, 66:1-12.

⁸⁰⁹ Ibn Abī ’l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 9: 195.

⁸¹⁰ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 4:275; Haythamī, *Majma‘ al-zawā‘id*, 9:126-7; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fatḥ al-bārī*, 7:19; Nasā’ī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 5:139, 365. Note that some *ḥadīth* transmitters suppressed all references to the Prophet’s love of ‘Alī in some recensions of the report, see Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan*, 2:477.

⁸¹¹ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 7:136; Ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 6:88.

⁸¹² According to Sunnī canonical *ḥadīth* she states that she never envied anyone more than Khadīja, see al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:230-1; Ibn Ḥanbal, 6:58, 202; Muslim, 7:133-4.

⁸¹³ al-Bukhārī, 4:231.

living remnant of Khadīja in the Prophet's home when feuding with her.⁸¹⁴ Pro-'Alid *ḥadīth* portrayed 'Ā'isha as acknowledging that Fāṭima and her husband were the persons most beloved by the Prophet.⁸¹⁵ Once the couple began to have children, the Prophet may have increased the amount of time he spent with them to her disappointment.

Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd summarized the reasons for which 'Ā'isha disliked 'Alī according to the beliefs of one of his teachers, another Mu'tazilī who upheld *tafḍīl* 'Alī, the Ḥanafī Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf ibn Ismā'īl al-Lam'ānī (d. 606/1209).⁸¹⁶ The views of al-Lam'ānī and Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd would be representative of many pro-'Alids who lived before the proliferation and widespread acceptance of creeds and methodologies in proto-Sunnī circles such as the righteousness of all Companions, the application of the principle of charity for reports about their misdeeds, and the tendency to refrain from listening to such reports. It seems some Shāfi'īs and Ḥanafīs who were Mu'tazilīs did not follow these tenets well into the seventh century. They freely narrated second-century literature that portrayed Companions acting sinfully. Although they considered the soldiers who fought against 'Alī at the Battle of the Camel to be doomed, they made exceptions with regard to the commanders. Since these Sunnī Mu'tazilīs upheld the merits of Ṭalḥa, Zubayr, and 'Ā'isha as narrated in Sunnī literature, they also accepted reports

⁸¹⁴ Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd argued that it would only have been natural for Fāṭima to have resented her step-mother and 'Ā'isha to have resented the daughter of Khadīja, see Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 9:192-193.

⁸¹⁵ Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:157; Nasā'ī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 5:139-40; Idem, *Khaṣā'is Amīr al-Mu'minīn*, p. 109; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 5:362; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī'āb*, 4:1897; Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:261-263.

⁸¹⁶ Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 9:192-99.

about them repenting from their misconduct and reasoned that all of them were inhabitants of Heaven.⁸¹⁷ Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd and al-Lam'ānī discussed some of the following points:

The more the Prophet praised Fāṭima, the more 'Ā'isha resented her. [According to Sunnī *ḥadīth*,] 'Alī encouraged the Prophet to marry other women in place of 'Ā'isha during a scandal in which she was accused of infidelity.⁸¹⁸ The event is cited as a reason for her resentment toward 'Alī. Furthermore, when the Prophet closed Abū Bakr's door to the mosque, he then opened 'Alī's. Later, he sent her father with *al-Barā'a* [Qur'ān, Sūra 9] to Mecca, but then forbade him from presenting it and sent 'Alī in his place. During the Prophet's final illness, 'Alī believed that both 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa rushed to have their fathers (Abū Bakr and 'Umar) lead the community's prayers. When the Prophet realized their ambitions he became upset and said, "you are like the women of Joseph!"⁸¹⁹

Fāṭima and 'Alī refused to join the community in pledging allegiance to 'Ā'isha's father after the death of the Prophet. Fāṭima further disputed with Abū Bakr regarding the inheritance of the Prophet, her ownership of various estates, and a designated share in the spoils of war. It seems 'Alī only reluctantly pledged allegiance a few months later after Fāṭima passed away. 'Ā'isha in turn publicly refused to recognize the legitimacy of 'Alī's caliphate and led an army against him after the death of 'Uthmān.⁸²⁰

⁸¹⁷ Ibid., 6:214, 17:254.

⁸¹⁸ al-Bukhārī, 3:155; Muslim, 8:115; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr*, 5:25. Imāmī literature did not narrate this episode and some Shī'ī scholars doubt its historicity, see Muḥsin al-Amīn, *A'yān al-Shī'a*, 1:393; Murtaḍā al-'Askarī, *Aḥādīth Umm al-Mu'minīn 'Ā'isha*, 2:165-84.

⁸¹⁹ A reference to Q12:30-33, 50-51. 'Uthmānī *ḥadīth* noted that the Prophet said these words when 'Ā'isha piously protested his resolute desire for Abū Bakr to lead the prayers. The pro-Abū Bakr reports are widely reported, for a small selection of the material, see 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, 5:433 (in this version 'Ā'isha's concern is her father's social standing); Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 6:34, 96: 159, 202; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 162, 165-6, 4:122; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, 2:228; Ibn Māja, *Sunan*, 1:390; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 2:22-3, 25; Mālik, *Kitāb al-Muwaṭṭā'*, ed. 'Abd al-Baqī (Beirut: 1985), 1:170-1; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 5:275-6.

⁸²⁰ For additional arguments and the full text, see Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 9:192-99.

According to al-Bukhārī and others, the Umayyads believed that ‘Alī was a leading personality guilty of slandering ‘Ā’isha in the *Ifk* incident.⁸²¹ Those who believed this claim would have argued that this was the cause of poor relations between them.

C. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Zubayr and the Zubayrids

Ibn Zubayr was portrayed as despising ‘Alī and his house in some historical literature.⁸²² After ‘Alī became caliph, Ibn Zubayr joined his family in leading a rebellion against him. In fact, as a scion of the family of Abū Bakr, he possessed a greater interest in opposing ‘Alī than his own father.⁸²³ The commanders at the Battle of the Camel may have viewed themselves as representatives of the family of Abū Bakr and appealed to his memory for authority. All three daughters of Abū Bakr (and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, one of two surviving sons) were present in the army against ‘Alī. ‘Ā’isha, who possessed the most clout as the Prophet’s widow, was Abū Bakr’s second daughter. Abū Bakr’s eldest daughter, Asmā’, was married to one commander, Zubayr, while his youngest daughter, Umm Kulthūm, was married to the other, Ṭalḥa ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh.

It is no coincidence that Ṭalḥa’s father and Abū Bakr were brothers, making Ṭalḥa a son-in-law

⁸²¹ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 5:60; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 7:335-7.

⁸²² For reports from ‘Umar ibn Shabba and other sources now lost, see Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 4:61ff.

⁸²³ For indications that Ibn Zubayr vigorously opposed ‘Alī in contrast to his father, see Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 2:255; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī‘āb*, 3:906; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, 7:271; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 18:404; Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd al-ghāba*, 3:162-3. When Zubayr promised ‘Alī to desist from participating in the war, Ibn Zubayr became upset with him and urged him to break his oath, even mocking him as afraid of ‘Alī’s military prowess and the prospect of death in some recensions, see Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 2:255; Bayhaqī, *Dalā’il al-nubuwwa wa-ma’rifat aḥwāl ṣāhib al-sharī’a* (Beirut: 1985), 6:415; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 18:410; Ibn A’tḥam al-Kūfī, *al-Futūḥ*, 2:470; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya*, 6:238; Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:366; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, 3:520-1. See also Madelung, *Succession*, p. 105.

and nephew. In this war, Abū Bakr's family essentially fought against 'Alī's kin which consisted of al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyya, Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr ('Alī's stepson), 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Abbās, other Hāshimids and their supporters. Furthermore, 'Ā'isha reportedly considered 'Alī (and his party) responsible for 'Uthmān's death and the third caliph to have been unequivocally better than 'Alī.⁸²⁴ The soldiers in her army also voiced anti-'Alid sentiments by accusing the Hāshimids of 'Uthmān's death.⁸²⁵

As a grandson of Abū Bakr, Ibn Zubayr was well positioned to revive the family's claim to the caliphate two decades after their defeat at the Battle of the Camel. When the Hāshimids of Mecca refused to pledge allegiance to Ibn Zubayr, he is portrayed as publicly manifesting animosity for them after concealing his true feelings for decades.⁸²⁶ For example, he believed that whenever the Prophet was mentioned, Hāshimids would rejoice and become excessively proud of their kinship ties to him, and consequently he refrained from mentioning the name of the Prophet in his sermons.⁸²⁷ Ibn Zubayr reportedly said:

By God, I ceased mentioning [the Prophet] publicly, but continued to do so in private and abundantly. I did this when I saw that Hāshimids would rejoice [and become excessively proud] whenever hearing his name. By God, I will never give them any reason to rejoice! It is my desire to confine them to an enclosure made of firewood and

⁸²⁴ Madelung, *Succession*, p. 107.

⁸²⁵ Madelung, *Succession*, p. 156 (for a Meccan aristocrat who accuses the Hāshimids of Uthman's murder).

⁸²⁶ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 3:291.

⁸²⁷ *Ibid.*, 3:291, 7:133; Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, pp. 4:61-2. See also Khalil Athamina, "The Sources of al-Baladhuri's *Ansab al-ashraf*," p. 259.

burn them alive. Were I to kill them, I have no doubt that I would be killing sinful and unbelieving men who only bewitch others (*āthim^{an} kaffār^{an} saḥḥār^{an}*). May God diminish them in number and never give them grace! They are an evil clan...the Prophet of God left nothing (or no one) good amongst them...they are the most deceitful of men.⁸²⁸

Ibn Zubayr also imprisoned Ibn al-Ḥanaḥfiyya and Ibn ‘Abbās.⁸²⁹ They were rescued after he had threatened to burn his Hāshimid prisoners alive and made the arrangements.⁸³⁰

After the fall of the Zubayrid caliphate, members of the family continued to flourish in the community as *ḥadīth* transmitters and scholars. A few of them are criticized and portrayed as anti-‘Alids. For example Muṣ‘ab Zubayrī (d. 236/851) and his father are criticized as anti-‘Alids.⁸³¹ One of the most prolific *ḥadīth* transmitters in Sunnism, ‘Urwa ibn Zubayr, was portrayed as anti-‘Alid in pro-‘Alid Mu‘tazilī circles. According to Abū Ja‘far al-Iskāfī and Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, ‘Urwa was part of a group of transmitters that fabricated reports to defame ‘Alī. Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd writes:

‘Urwa reportedly said, “‘Ā’isha said to me, ‘I was with the Messenger of God when he saw al-‘Abbās and ‘Alī. He said, ‘O ‘Ā’isha, indeed these two shall not die as members of my community (*millatī*).’ He may have said, ‘my religion (*dīnī*).’...‘Urwa also claimed that

⁸²⁸ The text is a fragment from the writings of al-Madā’inī, see Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, pp. 20:127-8.

⁸²⁹ ‘Aynī, *Umdat al-qārī*, 18:267; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 5:317; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 8:245. See also Sean Anthony, “Ibn al-Zubayr’s Meccan Prison and Imprisonment of Ibn al-Ḥanaḥfiyya: an historical inquiry,” (forthcoming) *Festschrift* in honor of Prof. Wadad Kadi ed. Jonathon Brown and Wen-Chin Ouyang, pp. 6-17; Athamina, “The Sources,” p. 259 n. 138.

⁸³⁰ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 3:282; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 4:545. See also Sean Anthony, “Ibn al-Zubayr’s Meccan Prison,” pp. 11, 13.

⁸³¹ Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 19:91-94 (for a hagiographical report in which Yaḥyā al-Daylamī curses the father and causes his death); Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 7:57. Muṣ‘ab was the son of ‘Abd Allāh b. Muṣ‘ab b. Thābit b. ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Zubayr.

‘Ā’isha said to him, ‘I was with the Prophet when he saw al-‘Abbās and ‘Alī. He said, ‘if you would like to take pleasure in looking at two men from the people of Hell then look at these two who have just appeared.’”⁸³²

‘Urwa also reportedly claimed that ‘Alī would (secretly) climb the walls of Umm Salama’s residence to meet her. In doing this, ‘Alī scraped his fingernails so much that they were reduced to stubs.⁸³³

D. Umayyads

There is evidence that the Umayyads claimed to be the Prophet’s kin and his heirs. There are some reports that when the ‘Abbāsids entered the Levant, some Syrians were confused about their claims to be the Prophet’s kin. These Syrians stated that they never knew the Prophet possessed any Household other than the Umayyads.⁸³⁴ Second, in pursuit of discrediting the claims of their ‘Alid rivals, the Umayyads were keen on making no distinction between Hāshimids and other members of Quraysh. They wished the Muslim community to consider the descendants of Hāshim and ‘Abd Shams as equal in their kinship to the Prophet. The two progenitors were brothers and equally sons of ‘Abd Manāf; thus, one branch could not

⁸³² Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 4:63-4.

⁸³³ Abū ‘l-Shaykh, *Ṭabaqāt al-muḥaddithīn bi-l-ṣḥābahān* (Beirut: 1987), 3:303; Dhahabī, *Ta’rīkh*, 23:517; Ibn ‘Adī, *al-Kāmil*, 4:266. In some versions of this report, both ‘Alī and Umm Salama’s names are omitted, see Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 13:229; Idem, *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*, 2:771. In contrast to ‘Ā’isha, Umm Salama was a wife of the Prophet who was depicted as staunchly pro-‘Alid and enjoying warm relations with ‘Alī, see Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:119; Iskāfī, *al-Mi’yār*, pp. 27-30.

⁸³⁴ Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 7:159; Maqrīzī, *al-Nizā’ wa-l-takhāṣum*, p. 68. See also Ibn ‘Aqīl, *Fasl al-Hikam*, 10; M. Sharon “Umayyads as ahl al-bayt,” p. 120.

claim superiority over the other.⁸³⁵ Since the Umayyads viewed ‘Alids and their partisans as a threat to their authority, they killed many of ‘Alī’s most famous partisans,⁸³⁶ publicly cursed ‘Alids, and portrayed them as heretics.

Some Umayyads may have held rancor for ‘Alī because he killed their relatives in the Prophet’s wars with Quraysh.⁸³⁷ It seems Mu‘āwīya claimed to be the rightful successor of ‘Uthmān and his avenger amongst his kin. Since the Umayyads considered ‘Alī to be culpable in ‘Uthmān’s murder, he was rejected as a pretender to the caliphate.⁸³⁸ Mu‘āwīya was also reportedly delighted with al-Ḥasan’s death because it facilitated the Yazīd’s succession.⁸³⁹ Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam also desired to please Mu‘āwīya when he blocked al-Ḥusayn from burying al-Ḥasan next to the Prophet.⁸⁴⁰

⁸³⁵ Al-Jāḥiẓ, “Faḍl Hāshim ‘alā ‘Abd Shams,” 3:455. See also Sharon, “Umayyads as ahl al-bayt,” 139 n. 49.

⁸³⁶ For example, Ḥujr b. ‘Adī (d. 51/671) and Maytham b. Yaḥyā al-Tammār (d. 60/680) were two companions of ‘Alī who were killed during the reigns of Mu‘āwīya and Yazīd, see Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 3:139; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 3:472-488; Ṭūsī, *Rijāl al-Kashshī*, 1:296-298. See also Kohlberg, “Barā’a,” p. 156; Madelung, *Succession*, p. 334-339; Modarressi, *Tradition and Survival*, 42.

⁸³⁷ For example, ‘Alī killed many of Mu‘āwīya’s relatives, see Madelung, *Succession*, p. 218 n. 300. Ḥarīz b. ‘Uthmān states this as the source of his animosity for ‘Alī, see above, ch. 3, appendix, section III. According to Shī‘īs and those who upheld *tafḍīl ‘Alī* this was an important reason why many members of Quraysh and other Arabs did not wish ‘Alī to succeed the Prophet as caliph, but al-Jāḥiẓ dismisses this argument, see Jāḥiẓ, *al-Uthmāniyya*, p. 60.

⁸³⁸ That Mu‘āwīya and his party never recognized ‘Alī as caliph is evident even in narratives of the arbitration when they insisted that he erase his title “Commander of the Faithful” from the treaty, see Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 4:37. See also Madelung, *Succession*, p. 242.

⁸³⁹ Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan*, 2:275 (although this recension suppresses Mu‘āwīya’s name); Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 4:132; Jāḥiẓ, *al-Bayān wa’l-tabyīn*, 3:291; Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu’jam al-kabīr*, 3:43, 20:269.

⁸⁴⁰ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 2:605; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 13:290-1, 67:355; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya*, 8:116. See also ‘Awwād, *al-Naṣb*, p. 679.

According to al-Jāḥiẓ and al-Maqrīzī, the Umayyads assaulted Hāshimids without any justification on many occasions. These deeds included going to war against ‘Alī, poisoning al-Ḥasan, and sending Busr b. Abī Arṭāt on raids that led to the murder of two young sons of ‘Ubayd Allāh b. ‘Abbās.⁸⁴¹ Although some wished to defend Yazīd as a pious Muslim,⁸⁴² he is explicitly described as a *nāṣibī* in some biographies.⁸⁴³ Historians generally criticized him for causing the deaths of al-Ḥusayn and the sons of ‘Alī and ‘Aqīl ibn Abī Ṭālib at Karbalā’, killing many Medinese Hāshimids at the battle of al-Ḥarra, taking the Prophet’s female descendants captive, disrobing ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn and treating him as a non-Muslim, and poking Ḥusayn’s decapitated head with his cane.⁸⁴⁴

Near the end of ‘Alī’s caliphate, Busr b. Abī Arṭāt infamously led raids to terrorize citizens who pledged allegiance to ‘Alī and obtain support for Mu‘āwiya.⁸⁴⁵ As a loyal Umayyad soldier he considered everyone who was not a partisan of the third caliph to have been culpable in ‘Uthmān’s death, including Hāshimids and the inhabitants of Medina.⁸⁴⁶ The Hāshimids he killed included the descendants of Abū Lahab and the children of ‘Ubayd Allāh b.

⁸⁴¹ Jāḥiẓ, *Rasā’il al-Jāḥiẓ* (Beirut: 1987), 3:421-3; Maqrīzī, *al-Nizā’ wa-l-takhāṣum*, pp. 27-34 (for a list of the crimes Umayyads perpetuated against Hāshimids).

⁸⁴² Murtaḍā al-‘Askarī references three positive opinions of Yazīd in the Sunnī intellectual tradition: (1) some prohibited cursing him and considered him a believer, (2) some declared him a *mujtahid* and an Imam who was justified in attacking dissenters, and (3) others considered his actions to be acceptable errors, see ‘Askarī, *Ma‘ālim*, 2:75.

⁸⁴³ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 4:37.

⁸⁴⁴ Jāḥiẓ, *Rasā’il al-Jāḥiẓ*, 3:421-2; Maqrīzī, *al-Nizā’ wa-l-takhāṣum*, pp. 27-34.

⁸⁴⁵ For details regarding his violent raids, see Madelung, *Succession*, pp. 299-307.

⁸⁴⁶ Madelung, *Succession*, pp. 301-302.

‘Abbās.⁸⁴⁷ After Ḥasan’s abdication, Mu‘āwiya appointed Busr the governor of Baṣra. He began his first sermon as governor by verbally abusing ‘Alī and insulting him.⁸⁴⁸ Despite an infamous campaign of terror, murder and looting, under orders from Mu‘āwiya, Ibn Taymiyya considered him a reliable transmitter of *ḥadīth*.⁸⁴⁹ The following section examines the circulation and reception of portrayals of Umayyads as anti-‘Alids in Sunnī literature.

Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam cursing ‘Alī

A number of reports name Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam (d. 65/685) as a personality who would publicly curse ‘Alī because he believed the practice strengthened partisanship and support for the Umayyad dynasty.⁸⁵⁰ The following section presents four different types of texts related to Marwān’s devotion to cursing ‘Alī from the pulpit when he was governor of Medina. The attitudes and concerns of transmitters toward the subject can be gleaned from their willingness to report details about it or even acknowledge its existence. The most explicit types of reports are presented in descending order to reflect the gradual process of censorship.

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal reported from Ishāq ibn ‘Umayr, a resident of Medina during the reign of Mu‘āwiya, “Marwān was our governor for six years and he would revile

⁸⁴⁷ Madelung, pp. 301, 303-304.

⁸⁴⁸ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 3:414; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, 5:186; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 4:128.

⁸⁴⁹ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 1:456.

⁸⁵⁰ Dhahabī, *Ta’rīkh al-Islām*, 3:460-1; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:438; Jāḥiz, *al-Uthmāniyya*, p. 283. See also Madelung, *Succession*, p. 334.

(*yasubb*) ‘Alī every Friday (during the sermon). Then he was dismissed and replaced with Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ who governed for two years. He would not verbally abuse [‘Alī]. Later Marwān was reappointed and the cursing continued.”⁸⁵¹

A report in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* described a governor of Medina “from the family of Marwān” who not only cursed ‘Alī, but also ordered a member of the aristocracy of Medina, Sahl b. Sa‘d b. Abī Waqqāṣ, to publicly do so as well. The governor is Marwān b. al-Ḥakam himself, but he is not named in this recension to respect both pro-Umayyad sensibilities and the Sunnī creed that had come to uphold the righteousness of all Companions. The report states:

“A member of the family of Marwān became the governor of Medina. He once requested the presence of Sahl b. Sa‘d. After [Sahl appeared they engaged in a conversation in] which he (the governor) ordered him to insult (*yashtam*) ‘Alī (in a public gathering). Sahl refused. [The governor] said, “If you won’t do this, then [at least] proclaim “God damn (*la‘ana Allāh*) Abū Turāb...”⁸⁵²

Al-Bukhārī included a heavily censored version of the report in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. The name of the governor, Sahl’s role as a direct witness to the governor’s anti-‘Alid sentiment, the governor’s order to direct explicit language toward ‘Alī, and his final compromising request to damn ‘Alī with a short invocation are all omitted. Al-Bukhārī reported:

“A man came to Sahl b. Sa‘d and said ‘so-and-so, the governor of Medina, *yad‘u ‘Alīy*^{an} from the pulpit.”

⁸⁵¹ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-‘Ilal*, 3:176; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 57:243; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya*, 8:284.

⁸⁵² Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 2:446; Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *Ma’rifat ‘ulūm al-ḥadīth*, p. 211; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:17; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 7:123-4. See also Mālikī, *Naḥwa inqādh al-ta’rīkh*, pp. 21-27.

Sahl asked, “what does he say?”

The man said, “he says Abū Turāb.”

Sahl laughed, “by God it was the Prophet who gave him that name...”⁸⁵³

Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī reports that the unnamed man said, “he says Abū Turāb and damns (yal’an) Abū Turāb.”⁸⁵⁴ In contrast, al-Bukhārī’s wording “*yad’u ‘Alīy^{an}*” is both slightly ambiguous and seemingly innocuous. The phrase could be charitably understood as “he mentions ‘Alī with another name...” Without any context, the reader is left with the impression that an anonymous and ignorant man came to Sahl and mentioned, in passing, that he heard the governor refer to ‘Alī with a strange nickname. Sahl jovially explains that the governor has done nothing wrong, since the Prophet allegedly gave the nickname to ‘Alī. A reader aware of the Umayyad practice of cursing ‘Alī from the pulpits can read the phrase as “he invokes evil upon ‘Alī” (*yad’u [‘alā] ‘Alī*). However, both of these readings are probably incorrect. As Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī notes in his commentary, the phrase *yad’u ‘Alīy^{an}* may have been shortened from *yad’ūka li-tasubb ‘Alīy^{an}* (he invites you to curse ‘Alī) found in other recensions.⁸⁵⁵

Finally, in one parallel recension, all references to anyone possibly disparaging of ‘Alī are removed and Sahl’s explanation that the Prophet named him Abū Turāb becomes the first element:

⁸⁵³ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:207-8.

⁸⁵⁴ Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-khawāṣṣ*, 1:16.

⁸⁵⁵ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fatḥ al-bārī*, 7:58.

Al-Bukhārī and others reported from Sahl ibn Sa'd that the Messenger of God visited Fāṭima and asked, "where is your cousin ('Alī)?" She said...⁸⁵⁶

Early *ḥadīth* transmitters suppressed any indications that the Umayyads ever cursed 'Alī in this recension probably to placate Muslims in the early 'Abbāsīd period who refused to hear or transmit reports that portrayed Umayyads negatively.

Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī inconsistently argued that no *ṣaḥīḥ* reports existed in which Marwān curses 'Alī and his family, while citing a few reports in another work where Marwān is portrayed as doing just that.⁸⁵⁷

Al-Mughīra cursing 'Alī

A number of sources indicate that al-Mughīra b. Shu'ba (d. c. 51/671) would ritually curse and disparage 'Alī in his sermons when he was appointed the governor of Kūfa during the reign of Mu'āwiya.⁸⁵⁸ The motif appears in two recensions of a famous *ḥadīth* in Sunnism about the ten Companions granted paradise. 'Abd Allāh b. Zālim⁸⁵⁹ and 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Akhnas reported, "al-Mughīra b. Shu'ba began delivering a sermon and then disparaged (*nāla*) 'Alī. This led Sa'īd b. Zayd to stand up [and interrupt him]..."⁸⁶⁰

⁸⁵⁶ Bukhārī, *al-Adab al-mufrad* (Beirut: 1986), p. 183; Ījī, *Tawḍīḥ al-dalā'il*, p. 163; Ṭabarī, *Dhakhā'ir al-'uqbā fī manāqib dhawī al-qurbā* (Cairo: 1937), p. 57.

⁸⁵⁷ Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-muḥriqa*, pp. 55, 139; Idem, *Taṭhīr al-janān*, pp. 95-96.

⁸⁵⁸ Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 3:31; Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:450; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, 5:241.

⁸⁵⁹ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 1:188.

⁸⁶⁰ Ṭayālīsī, *Musnad Abī Dāwūd al-Ṭayālīsī* (Beirut: 1980), p. 32; Abū Ya'lā al-Mawṣilī, *Musnad*, 2:259; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-'Ilal*, 1:188.

Ibn Ḥanbal and al-Ḥākim reported that al-Mughīra b. Shu'ba cursed (*sabba*) 'Alī in a speech and this caused Zayd b. Arqam to stand up and address him with the following words, "Indeed you know the Messenger of God prohibited the cursing of the deceased. Why do you curse (*tasubb*, lit. verbally abuse) 'Alī when he is dead?"⁸⁶¹

Mu'āwiya cursing 'Alī

It seems various proto-Sunnī *ḥadīth* transmitters in the early 'Abbāsīd period and later Sunnīs like Ibn Taymiyya accepted reports about 'Alī, Mu'āwiya and their partisans mutually supplicating for the damnation of their rivals.⁸⁶² For example, both Abū Yūsuf (d. 182/798) and al-Shaybānī (d. 189/804) narrated from Abū Ḥanīfa that 'Alī would supplicate against Mu'āwiya in his *qunūt* and vice versa:

'Alī began to supplicate against Mu'āwiya in his prayers when he confronted him in war. Kūfans then followed him in this practice. Likewise, Mu'āwiya began to supplicate against 'Alī in his prayers and Syrians followed him in this practice.⁸⁶³

Al-Balādhurī, al-Ṭabarī, Ibn al-Athīr and Ibn Khaldūn similarly narrated:

If 'Alī offered his dawn prayers, he would supplicate [in the course of his *qunūt*], "O God damn (*il'an*) Mu'āwiya, 'Amr, Abū al-A'war al-Sulamī, Ḥabīb (ibn Maslama al-Fihri), 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Khālīd (ibn al-Walīd), al-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Qays and al-Walīd (ibn 'Uqba). When news of this reached Mu'āwiya, if he offered *qunūt*, he would damn 'Alī, Ibn 'Abbās, (Mālīk) al-Ashtar, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn."⁸⁶⁴

⁸⁶¹ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 4:369; Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 1:385.

⁸⁶² Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 4:468.

⁸⁶³ Abū Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-Āthār*, ed. al-Afghānī (Beirut: c1978), p. 71; Shaybānī, *Kitāb al-Āthār*, ed. al-Afghānī (Beirut: 1993), 1:595-99.

⁸⁶⁴ Balādhurī, *Ansāb Al-Ashraf*, 2:352; Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil*, 3:333; Ibn Khaldūn, *Ta'rikh*, 2.II:178; Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 4:52.

In his refutation of al-‘Allāma al-Ḥillī’s claims about history, Ibn Taymiyya wrote that one should not believe that Mu‘āwīya and his partisans were alone in cursing their rivals. The practice may have fallen under the realm of *ijtihād* or might have been a sin. Ibn Taymiyya implied that since ‘Alī and his party also engaged in the practice, Mu‘āwīya should not be denounced for doing the same:

“As for what he has mentioned regarding invocations for the damnation of ‘Alī (from the pulpits), both parties mutually engaged in supplications against one another just as they mutually engaged in war. Each party would supplicate for the damnation of the leaders of the [rival faction]. Furthermore, it is narrated that each faction would utilize the *qunūt* to supplicate against the other. In any case, armed conflict is graver than mutual cursing (*al-talā‘un*), which is only speech. Whether this is considered a sin or *ijtihād*, God forgives all of this through repentance.”⁸⁶⁵

Once Mu‘āwīya became caliph, his supplication from the pulpit every Friday was allegedly the following:

“May God damn Abū Turāb, indeed he has become heretical in his practice of your religion and has obstructed the Path to You. Damn him grievously and punish him severely!”⁸⁶⁶

Anti-Shī‘ī polemicists have generally rejected claims that Mu‘āwīya either cursed ‘Alī from the pulpit or instituted the practice. The first group of writers has regularly argued that such a belief is a Shī‘ī fabrication that only appears in untrustworthy works of history rather than canonical Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections that are regarded as possessing authentic reports about

⁸⁶⁵ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 4:468.

⁸⁶⁶ Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 4:56-7 (citing an unspecified work of al-Jāḥiẓ as his source).

the past.⁸⁶⁷ A second group has recognized the existence of such reports in canonical collections, but argues that one should interpret these reports charitably. For example, Aḥmad ibn ‘Umar al-Qurṭubī (d. 656/1258) postulated that perhaps Mu‘āwiya only criticized ‘Alī’s relationship to those who killed ‘Uthmān and his war with other Muslims without cursing him, but this criticism was considered *sabb* by *ḥadīth* transmitters.⁸⁶⁸ Al-Nawawī argued that Mu‘āwiya was simply asking another Companion (Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāṣ) amicably and without any rancor why he refrained from cursing ‘Alī.⁸⁶⁹ Finally, a third group has argued that both works of history and canonical collections of *ḥadīth* like *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* contain fabricated reports about Mu‘āwiya cursing ‘Alī.⁸⁷⁰ Some, like Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī (d. 1342/1924), inconsistently vacillated between all three approaches: he wrote that (1) all reports about Mu‘āwiya cursing ‘Alī were false, then admitted (2) *ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth* also exist, but they should be charitably reinterpreted to safeguard the honor of Mu‘āwiya. In one instance, al-Ālūsī even

⁸⁶⁷ ‘Umar al-Bāḥith and ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm al-‘Uways argue along these lines, see ‘Umar Bāḥith, “Firyat amr Mu‘āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān bi-sabb ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib,” *Mukāfiḥ al-shubahāt*, <https://antishubohat.wordpress.com/2014/01/29/sabtabary/> (accessed May 7, 2015); Mālikī, *Naḥwa inqādh al-ta’rikh*, p. 20.

⁸⁶⁸ Qurṭubī, *Kitāb al-Mufhim li-mā ashkala min Talkhīṣ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut; Damascus: 1996), 6:278-9.

⁸⁶⁹ Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 15:175-6; Qurṭubī, *al-Mufhim*, 6:278-9. See also Rabī’ Madkhalī, “Bayān manāqib Mu‘āwiya raḍiya Allāh ‘anhu wa’l-dhabb ‘an Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim,” *al-Mawqī’ al-rasmī li-Rabī’ ibn Hādī ‘Umayr al-Madkhalī*, <http://www.rabee.net/ar/articles.php?cat=8&id=224> (accessed May 7, 2015).

⁸⁷⁰ ‘Umar al-Bāḥith limits his analysis to a report which Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī considered *ṣaḥīḥ* in *Sunan ibn Mājah*. His argument that the report, despite appearing in a canonical compilation, has narrators who have been criticized in biographical sources could hypothetically be extended to *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, as Suhayla Ḥammād has done. A leading Wahhābī cleric, Rabī’ al-Madkhalī, has taken Ḥammād to task for rejecting the authenticity of these reports found in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, see ‘Umar Bāḥith, “Firyat Mu‘āwiya yanālu min ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib,”; Suhayla Ḥammād, “Mu‘āwiya raḍiya Allāh ‘anhu al-muftarā ‘alayhi,” *al-Madīna*, <http://www.al-madina.com/node/370002?risala> (accessed May 7, 2015); Madkhalī, “Bayān manāqib Mu‘āwiya”.

advised readers to (3) refrain from accepting *ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth* that claim this.⁸⁷¹ In all of these cases, the authors rely upon the theological principle that Mu‘āwiya and any other Muslim who met the Prophet Muḥammad were above reproach to underpin their certainty of the impossibility of Mu‘āwiya ever cursing ‘Alī.

Following the first approach, one contemporary who characterizes reports about Mu‘āwiya cursing ‘Alī as fabrications is the popular Salafī jurist, Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Munajjid. He misrepresents his sources when presenting his opinion on the matter and never acknowledges the existence of a report in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that problematizes his claims.⁸⁷² He does not indicate that he is appealing to the authority of a different “al-Ālūsī” of the twentieth century instead of the celebrated exegete of the Qur’ān Shihāb al-Dīn al-Ālūsī (d. 1270/1854). He also suppresses some of the commentary that al-Qurṭubī and Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī offer which contradicts his thesis.⁸⁷³ Reports portraying Mu‘āwiya cursing ‘Alī evidently forced Sunnīs to address their theological and epistemological assumptions regarding accounts that depict Companions as villains, the need to charitably interpret any reports about their

⁸⁷¹ Ālūsī, *Ṣabb al-‘adhāb ‘alā man sabba al-aṣḥāb* (al-Riyadh: 1997), pp. 421-22, cf. 427.

⁸⁷² Although he mentions a similar report transmitted by al-Ḥākim and al-Nasā’ī, their recensions (conveniently for him) exclude an introductory sentence found in Muslim’s version where Mu‘āwiya appears to command Sa’d to curse ‘Alī, see Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 7:120; cf. Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:108; Nasā’ī, *Khaṣā’is Amīr al-Mu’minīn*, pp. 48, 81. See also Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Munajjid, “Lam yathbut ‘an Mu‘āwiya sabb ‘Alī,” *al-Islam su’āl wa jawāb*, <http://islamqa.info/ar/219799> (accessed May 7, 2015).

⁸⁷³ al-Munajjid does not acknowledge to the reader that al-Qurṭubī admitted that Mu‘āwiya may have criticized ‘Alī in a way that others may have described as *sabb* or that al-Ālūsī recognized the existence of *ṣaḥīḥ* reports, but consciously rejected their contents, see M. Ṣāliḥ Munajjid, “Lam yathbut ‘an Mu‘āwiya sabb ‘Alī”; cf. Qurṭubī, *al-Mufḥim*, 6:278-279; Ālūsī, *Ṣabb al-‘adhāb*, p. 422.

misconduct, and the authenticity of *ḥadīth* that appear in various types of literature. Since Sunnīs and Shī'īs were invested in discrediting each other's historical narrative, the authors above were ever vigilant in ensuring that Shī'īs could not effectively use Sunnī literature to substantiate Shī'ī opinions. The greatest sources of tension lay in defending blanket statements like “all Companions are righteous” and balancing sectarian allegiances (i.e. Shī'ī claims are generally false)⁸⁷⁴ with epistemic ones (i.e. the *Ṣaḥīḥayn* are only surpassed by the Qur'ān in the authenticity of their contents’)⁸⁷⁵ when these principles occasionally contradicted each other.

Mu'āwiya cursing 'Alī in the presence of Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ

Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ was a member of the electoral council that had elected the third caliph, but joined neither 'Alī's army nor any of the factions that rebelled against him. Some historians portrayed Mu'āwiya as attempting to obtain full political support from Sa'd or, at the very least, a public condemnation of 'Alī. However, Sa'd refused all his advances. Sunnī *ḥadīth*, biographical, and historical sources transmitted a story in which Mu'āwiya allegedly cursed 'Alī in the presence of this prominent Companion. The following section briefly reviews the method by which elements of the story were censored to reflect the sensibilities of transmitters and consumers of Sunnī *ḥadīth*. Sources presented the story in five different

⁸⁷⁴ Ibn Taymiyya's *Minhāj al-sunna* is exemplary in reflecting this tenet.

⁸⁷⁵ Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Taghliq al-ta'liq 'alā Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, ed. al-Qazaqī (Beirut; Amman: 1985), 5:423-426; Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Muqaddimat Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ fī 'ulūm al-ḥadīth* (Beirut: 1995), pp. 19- 21. See also Brown, *Canonization*.

ways:

Type (A) –Both Mu‘āwiya’s identity and his command to curse ‘Alī are suppressed in full:

According to one report in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ‘Āmir ibn Sa’d simply reported from his father that the Prophet praised ‘Alī as possessing the rank of Aaron, the brother of Moses. All references to the public cursing of ‘Alī and the historical context which led Sa’d to narrate this *ḥadīth* are omitted.⁸⁷⁶ This merit of ‘Alī is mentioned along with two others in all of the parallel recensions below.

According to Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Dawraqī (d. 246/860), ‘Āmir ibn Sa’d reported the following from his father, “Sa’d joined *the company of a man* who asked, ‘what keeps you from cursing *so-and-so*?’ He said, ‘I remember three things that the Messenger of God said to him, therefore I will never curse him...’”⁸⁷⁷

According to Ibn al-Bāghandī (d. 312/925), ‘Āmir ibn Sa’d reported that “*a man passed by* Sa’d and asked, ‘what keeps you from cursing Abū Turāb?’”⁸⁷⁸

According to the Ḥanafī jurist Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Zarandī (d. 750/1347), ‘Āmir ibn Sa’d reported from his father that *a head of state* asked, “what keeps you from cursing Abū Turāb?’ He said, ‘I remember three things that the Messenger of God said to him, therefore I will never curse him...’”⁸⁷⁹

It is unclear if the sources above censored their own transmissions or if they were unaware that the questioner in this incident was Mu‘āwiya. Although the *Sunan al-Tirmidhī* usually has Type (C) texts that name Mu‘āwiya as the questioner, al-Zarandī’s copy of *Sunan al-Tirmidhī* may have been censored. One indication that al-Zarandī was not responsible for such censoring is the presence of other reports that portray Mu‘āwiya unfavorably elsewhere in his

⁸⁷⁶ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 7:120.

⁸⁷⁷ Dawraqī, *Musnad Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqās* (Beirut: 1987), p. 51.

⁸⁷⁸ Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:112. It seems *amara* became *marra* in a few recensions.

⁸⁷⁹ Zarandī, *Naẓm durar al-simṭayn*, p. 107.

book.⁸⁸⁰ It is possible that the authors simply received their texts from sources that were sensitive to any negative portrayals of Mu‘āwīya. For example, al-Dawraqī lived in Baghdad when pro-Mu‘āwīya sentiment was popular amongst some residents. Whatever the case, (A, B, and C) texts were clearly circulated in an environment where transmitters did not wish to be accused of dishonoring Mu‘āwīya or Shī‘ī sentiment.

Type (B) – Mu‘āwīya’s identity is revealed, but the command to curse ‘Alī is entirely suppressed:

‘Āmir ibn Sa’d reported that “Mu‘āwīya once asked Sa’d, ‘what keeps you from cursing Abū Turāb?’”⁸⁸¹

Type (C) – Mu‘āwīya’s command appears in the text, but is partially censored with the removal of the second verb.

According to Muslim and others, ‘Āmir ibn Sa’d reported that “Mu‘āwīya ibn Abī Sufyān ordered Sa’d [to ____]. Then he asked, ‘what keeps you from cursing Abū Turāb?’”⁸⁸²

Type (D) – Mu‘āwīya’s command appears in full, but without any further detail about the historical setting of the incident.

Various narrators reported on the authority of Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ that “Mu‘āwīya commanded Sa’d to curse Abū Turāb. However [Sa’d] objected, ‘But I remember three things that the Prophet said to him (‘Alī)...’”⁸⁸³ Ibn al-Bīṭrīq’s transmission from *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* is

⁸⁸⁰ al-Zarandī points to reports where ‘Alī disparages him, Mu‘āwīya keeps the company of someone who curses ‘Alī, and another report in which he wishes to dishonor al-Ḥasan, see *Ibid.*, pp. 97, 108, 200-201.

⁸⁸¹ Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:108; Nasā’ī, *Khaṣā’is Amīr al-Mu’minīn*, p. 81.

⁸⁸² Dhahabī, *Ta’rikh al-islām*, 3:627; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:111; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa’l-nihāya*, 7:376; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, p. 7:120; Nasā’ī, *Sunan*, 5:107-8; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 5:301.

⁸⁸³ Bā’ūnī, *Jawāhir al-maṭālib fī manāqib al-Imām ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib* (Qum: 1994), p. 171; Ījī, *Tawḍīḥ al-dalā’il*, p. 312; Qundūzī, *Yanābī’ al-mawadda*, 2:119; Ṭabarī, *Dhakhā’ir al-‘uqbā*, 3:152.

distinguished from other recensions in that it quotes Mu'āwīya's command in the first person:

“Mu'āwīya ordered Sa'd,⁸⁸⁴ “I command you to curse Abū Turāb.” He (Sa'd) answered, ‘But I remember three things that the Prophet said to him that ensure I will never curse him...’⁸⁸⁵

Ibn al-Biṭrīq's (D) recension complements the parallel (C) versions which exclude any direct quotation of Mu'āwīya's command or indirect description of it.

Type (E) – Mu'āwīya either disparages 'Alī or explicitly commands Sa'd to curse him. A context for Sa'd's response is provided.

According to Ibn Māja, 'Āmir ibn Sa'd reported from his father that Mu'āwīya visited the [dār al-nadwa]⁸⁸⁶ on one of his pilgrimages. Sa'd soon joined the gathering and those who were present started discussing 'Alī. He (Mu'āwīya) disparaged 'Alī which caused Sa'd to become angry and say, “You talk this way about a man of whom I heard the Messenger of God say, “Alī is the *mawlā* of the one who considered me his *mawlā*...”⁸⁸⁷

Ibn 'Asākir and Ibn Kathīr transmitted a more detailed version of the incident:

'Āmir ibn Sa'd reported from his father that during his pilgrimage, Mu'āwīya took the hand of Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ and said, ‘O Abū Ishāq! Conquest has prohibited us from carrying out the pilgrimage for so long that we have almost forgotten some of its rites...’ Once he (Sa'd) completed the rites, [Mu'āwīya] invited him to enter the *dār al-nadwa* and sit next to him on his throne. Then he mentioned 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and vilified him (waqa'a fīhi). [Sa'd] responded, ‘you invited me to your private residence, sat me on your throne, then you proceed to vilify ['Alī] and insult him (*tashtumuhu*)?’⁸⁸⁸

Texts (A) and (B) best reflect the efforts of transmitters to narrate material that did not

⁸⁸⁴ Either a copyist or Ibn al-Biṭrīq, a Zaydī, adds here “and may God damn him (Mu'āwīya)”

⁸⁸⁵ Ibn Biṭrīq, *Khaṣā'is al-waḥy al-mubīn* (Qum: 1996), p. 126.

⁸⁸⁶ Originally a meeting place of Quraysh, later a place of residence for nobility (e.g. the caliphs in the Umayyad and 'Abbāsīd periods) near the Ka'ba.

⁸⁸⁷ Ibn Māja, *Sunan*, 1:45.

⁸⁸⁸ Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:119; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa'l-nihāya*, 7:376.

implicate Companions in any scandalous behavior. Type (C) texts indicate that Mu'āwiya commanded Sa'd to carry out an action, but the verb that should have appeared after the command (*amara Mu'āwiya...*) is missing and clearly leaves the sentence incomplete. The missing verb is an indiscreet example of censorship in medieval Sunnī scholarship. It is unclear whether Muslim and his sources may have received (C) or (D) reports since copyists increasingly played an important role in censoring texts during the period. Parallel (D) recensions that leave the complete command intact (*amara Mu'āwiya...an yasubb Abā Turāb*) can be found in at least five sources.⁸⁸⁹ Type (E) texts reflect the type of narratives transmitted in circles generally concerned with history (*akhbār*) rather than *ḥadīth*. Muḥammad ibn Ishāq is listed as a source of (E) and he probably included the story in his history of the caliphate.

Despite scouring numerous Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections for obscure *faḍā'il* of Mu'āwiya and responding to various criticisms regarding his character, Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī never addressed reports in canonical collections about Mu'āwiya disparaging 'Alī or ordering others to curse him in his monograph dedicated to the rehabilitation of Mu'āwiya. The absence of any discussion of the topic is conspicuous and may indicate the author's hesitancy in addressing evidence that directly contradicted his thesis that Mu'āwiya never questioned 'Alī's superiority

⁸⁸⁹ It is also possible that these five sources received Type (C) texts, but independently added the missing verb based on their understanding of the context and/or the rest of the report. In either case, these authors would have disagreed with all attempts to read the text charitably so that Mu'āwiya was innocent of cursing 'Alī or commanding Sa'd to curse him.

to him or his merit.⁸⁹⁰

It seems al-Haytamī wished his audience to subsume any claim about Mu‘āwiya cursing ‘Alī under the category of false reports transmitted about Mu‘āwiya. Had he chosen to discuss the *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* reports about the subject, al-Haytamī could have followed al-Nawawī in interpreting them charitably so that Mu‘āwiya never explicitly engages in the practice.⁸⁹¹ Al-Haytamī could have argued hypothetically that even if it was historically accurate that Mu‘āwiya cursed ‘Alī, since Mu‘āwiya was a Companion and a *mujtahid*, he had only good intentions (rather than any anti-‘Alid sentiment) and made an ill informed mistake in doing so. Consequently, God will eventually reward him with paradise and Muslims should overlook these honest mistakes. Al-Haytamī employed a similar argument when discussing Mu‘āwiya’s rebellion against ‘Alī.⁸⁹² The famous anti-Shī‘ī and anti-Sufi polemicist ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Dimashqiyya argues along these lines when acknowledging that a few *ṣaḥīḥ* reports seem to indicate that al-Mughīra b. Shu‘ba and Mu‘āwiya cursed ‘Alī. He argues that once other Companions explained the prohibition against cursing ‘Alī, Mu‘āwiya and al-Mughīra realized their misconduct and ceased cursing him.⁸⁹³

⁸⁹⁰ Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *Taṭhīr al-janān*, p. 77.

⁸⁹¹ Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 15:175-6.

⁸⁹² Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *Taṭhīr al-janān*, p. 77.

⁸⁹³ ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Dimashqiyya, “Ibtāl da‘wā al-rāfiḍa anna al-dawlah al-umawiyya wa-ba‘ḍ al-ṣaḥāba kānū yal’anūn sayyidanā ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib,” *Mawqī’ faḍīlat al-shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Dimashqiyya*, <http://www.dimashqiah.com/ar/forums/topic/> (accessed May 7, 2015).

Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār (d. 256/870), Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, and Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Bā‘ūnī (d. 871/1466) narrated an ostensibly pro-‘Alid report in which al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī and his rivals are portrayed as arguing against one another until al-Ḥasan succeeds in shaming them all for accusing him and his father of any misconduct.⁸⁹⁴ Despite the hagiographical nature of this report, the ‘Uthmānī and Umayyad reports in the Appendix of chapter three suggest that the anti-‘Alid views expressed below were acceptable to anti-‘Alids who lived until the era of al-Jāḥiẓ. According to Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd’s copy⁸⁹⁵ of Zubayr ibn Bakkār’s *al-Mufākharāt* (no longer extant), al-Ḥasan’s rivals argued the following:

“Mu‘āwiya stated, “we invited you here so that you may concede that ‘Uthmān was unlawfully murdered and that your father killed him...”

‘[Then ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ began to censure ‘Alī] ‘Alī disparaged Abū Bakr and loathed his succession, he refused to pledge allegiance to him until he was coerced, he is partially responsible for ‘Umar’s assassination, he unlawfully murdered ‘Uthmān, then he falsely claimed a right to the caliphate.”⁸⁹⁶

‘Amr then blamed ‘Alī for his conduct in the civil wars and argued that God would not grant the Hāshimids any political authority because they hankered after it, had the blood of

⁸⁹⁴ Bā‘ūnī, *Jawāhir al-maṭālib*, 2:217-20; Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 6:285-294. The Egyptian writer Muḥammad Diyāb al-Itlīdī (active 1100/1689) narrates the report without mentioning his source, see also Itlīdī, *Nawādir al-khulafā’* = *I’lām al-nās bi-mā waqa’a li ‘l-Barāmika ma’a Banī al-‘Abbās* (Beirut: 2004), pp. 27-29. For other anecdotes with a similar theme, see Jāḥiẓ (attr.), *al-Maḥāsin wa-l-aḍḍād* (Beirut: 2002), pp. 133-142; Sibṭ Ibn Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-khawāṣṣ*, pp. 182-184.

⁸⁹⁵ Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 6:285-294.

⁸⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 6:287.

caliphs and innocent people on their hands, and committed other sinful acts to obtain it. He continued:

“As for you O Ḥasan...you neither have the fortitude nor the intellect to rule as caliph. God has removed your intellect and made you *aḥmaq Quraysh*...as a consequence of the sins of your father. We have brought you here to disgrace you and your father. As for your father, God decided to take care of him for us. As for you...if we executed you, God would neither consider it a sin, nor would society censure us for it.”⁸⁹⁷

Al-Walīd ibn ‘Uqba, ‘Utba ibn Abī Sufyān and al-Mughīra b. Shu‘ba all reiterate the accusation that ‘Alī killed ‘Uthmān, or more precisely, that he was culpable in ‘Uthmān’s death, since they believed his assassins were mostly obedient to ‘Alī. Al-Walīd also stated, “O children of Hāshim, you were the maternal uncles of ‘Uthmān... but the first to become jealous of him, so your father killed him wrongfully...”⁸⁹⁸ ‘Utba ibn Abī Sufyān said:

“O Ḥasan, your father was the worst Qurashī to afflict the tribe of Quraysh. He shed their blood the most. He had a shameful sword and tongue. He killed the living and would disparage the dead...Indeed you participated in ‘Uthmān’s murder and we will execute you in retaliation...as for your desire for the caliphate, you are clearly unqualified...O children of Hāshim, you killed ‘Uthmān and it is our right to execute you and your brother (al-Ḥusayn) in retaliation...”⁸⁹⁹

E. ‘Uthmāniyya

‘Uthmānī ḥadīth transmitters

In early proto-Sunnī circles, some ‘Uthmānīs seemed to have fostered a culture that

⁸⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁸ Ibid., 6:287-8.

⁸⁹⁹ Ibid., 6:288.

criticized narrators who transmitted pro-‘Alid reports that lauded ‘Alī and his house. As the chapter three appendix noted, some of them despised ‘Alī because they were descendants of individuals who had died fighting him (e.g. Abū Labīd al-Baṣrī and Thawr b. Yazīd al-Ḥimṣī). Since they did not consider ‘Alī a legitimate caliph, they frequently viewed those who venerated him with suspicion and accused them of Shī‘ism. For example, Yaḥyā ibn Ma‘īn studied with Wakī‘ b. al-Jarrāḥ for an extended period and saw him consciously refraining from narrating *ḥadīth* about the merits of ‘Alī. Finally, Ibn Ma‘īn asked, “why do you refrain from narrating such reports?”

Wakī‘ answered, “These people will resent us for [discussing the merits of ‘Alī],” and he began narrating them.⁹⁰⁰ Other *ḥadīth* transmitters like al-A‘mash similarly complained of mosque attendees who prevented him from openly narrating ‘Alī’s merits.⁹⁰¹ In one report, al-Shāfi‘ī and an unnamed companion both complained that their peers disdained any mention of the merits of ‘Alī, Fāṭima or their sons. If anyone attempted to transmit *ḥadīth* about the Prophet’s Household in a gathering, the congregation tended to label the person a *rāfiḍī* and quickly change the subject.⁹⁰² There are reports of attendees leaving a gathering when the lecturer turned to discussing the merits of ‘Alī in later centuries as well. For example, Abū ‘l-Faḍl al-Sulaymānī (d. 404/1013) was a Sunnī *ḥadīth* transmitter who became angry and left a

⁹⁰⁰ Ibn Ma‘īn, *Ta’rikh*, 1:320.

⁹⁰¹ Fasawī, *al-Ma‘rifa wa-’l-ta’rikh*, 2:764. I am indebted to Hossein Modarressi for this reference.

⁹⁰² Zarandī, *Naẓm durar al-simṭayn*, p. 111.

gathering when Abū Bakr al-Dihqān (d. 350/961) began transmitting reports about the merits of ‘Alī.⁹⁰³ In the introduction to his book on the merits of ‘Alī, Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Kanjī (d. 658/1260) explained that he decided to compose the book after experiencing a similar disruption in 647/1249. Al-Kanjī was lecturing to an audience that included nobility at the *dār al-ḥadīth* in Mosul when he decided to end his lecture by narrating reports about the merits of ‘Alī. However, he was dismayed when a member of the audience whom he considered ignorant of *ḥadīth* began rejecting the authenticity of some of those reports.⁹⁰⁴

Ibn Ḥibbān reported, “I have not recorded a single *ḥadīth* about the merits of ‘Alī from all that Mālik and al-Zuhrī used to report...”⁹⁰⁵ It seems that al-Zuhrī’s pro-Marwānid sentiments⁹⁰⁶ and Mālik’s ‘Uthmānī sentiments⁹⁰⁷ led them both to reject the authenticity of pro-‘Alid reports or refrain from narrating them.⁹⁰⁸ Mālik believed ‘Alī hankered for the caliphate, while his predecessors piously did not. According to Mālik, this fact certainly made ‘Alī inferior to his predecessors,⁹⁰⁹ if not illegitimate as a ruler.⁹¹⁰ Al-Bukhārī transmitted a

⁹⁰³ The transmitter of the report interpreted al-Sulaymānī’s actions charitably and argued that he left due to anti-Shī‘ī, rather than any anti-‘Alid sentiment, see Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 15:524; Idem, *Ta’rīkh al-islām*, 25:450. See also ‘Awwād, *al-Naṣb*, p. 627.

⁹⁰⁴ Kanjī, *Kifāyat al-ṭālib*, pp. 36-37.

⁹⁰⁵ Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-Majrūhīn*, 1:258.

⁹⁰⁶ Balkhī, *Qabūl al-akhbār wa-ma’rifat al-rijāl* (Beirut: 2000), 1:269; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 42:228.

⁹⁰⁷ For the ‘Uthmānī sentiments of Mālik and his ancestors, see Iyāḍ, *Tartīb al-madārik wa-taqrīb al-masālik li-ma’rifat a’lām madhhab Mālik* (Beirut: 1998), pp. 48, 90.

⁹⁰⁸ Mālik reportedly gave the excuse that Ibn ‘Abbās, ‘Alī and their partisans lived in other lands, so he did not rely on them as authorities, see Suyūṭī, *Tanwīr al-ḥawālik: sharḥ ‘alā Muwaṭṭa’ Mālik* (Cairo: 1934), 1:7; Zurqānī, *Sharḥ al-Zurqānī ‘alā Muwaṭṭa’ al-Imām Mālik* (Cairo: 1892), 1:9.

⁹⁰⁹ Iyāḍ, *Tartīb al-madārik*, p. 90.

report from Mālik and al-Zuhrī where ‘Alī is described as coveting the caliphate (*wa-huwa ‘alā ṭama’*) after the death of ‘Umar.⁹¹¹ ‘Alī also left Medina to engage his rivals at the Battle of the Camel and move the center of his government to Kūfa where he found greater support. When asked about ‘Alī’s decision to leave Medina for these reasons, Mālik reportedly answered, “his *khurūj* was an error.”⁹¹² As a follower of Ibn ‘Umar’s opinions, Mālik seemed to have supported his decision to refrain from participating in ‘Alī’s military conflicts with other Muslims after the death of ‘Uthmān.

‘Uthmānī *ḥadīth* transmitters who denounced and cursed ‘Alī, but still appear in Sunni *ḥadīth* collections, include Qays b. Abī Ḥāzim al-Bajalī (d. 98/717),⁹¹³ ‘Abd Allāh b. Shaqīq al-Baṣrī (d. ca. 100/719),⁹¹⁴ Abū Qilāba al-Jarmī (‘Abd Allāh b. Zayd) al-Baṣrī (d. ca. 104-107/722-5)⁹¹⁵ Azhar ibn Sa‘īd al-Ḥarrāzī al-Ḥimṣī (d. ca. 129/746),⁹¹⁶ Ishāq ibn Suwayd al-‘Adawī al-Baṣrī

⁹¹⁰ Although Mālik may not have narrated the maxim, other Sunnīs and Mālikīs believed that a person who coveted authority was not suitable for it, see ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *al-Muṣannaḥ*, 11:320; Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan*, 2:13, 159; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 4:409, 5:62-3; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 3:48, 7:216, 240, 8:50; Ḥaṭṭāb, *Mawāhib al-Jalīl li-sharḥ Mukhtaṣar Khalīl* (Beirut: 1995), 8:69, 85; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Tamhīd* (Rabat: 1967), 21:244; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaḥ*; Ibn Māja, *Sunan*; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 5:86, 6:5-6; Nasā’ī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 1:64, 3:463-4; Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi‘ li-aḥkām al-Qur’ān = Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī* (Beirut: 1985), 9:216; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 3:42.

⁹¹¹ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 8:123. For a report where ‘Umar describes ‘Alī as coveting the caliphate, see Ibn A‘tham al-Kūfī, *al-Futūḥ*, 2:325.

⁹¹² I am reading *khurūj* to refer not only to ‘Alī’s “departure” from the city, but also to his decision to engage in warfare, see ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-ta’rīkh*, p. 115; Nu‘mān, *The Eloquent Clarification*, pp. 11, 14. See above, ch. 3, appendix, section III.

⁹¹³ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 10:352; Mizzi, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 24:14.

⁹¹⁴ *wa kāna yaḥmil ‘alā ‘Alī..wa kāna ‘Uthmānī^{an}...yubghī ‘Alī^{an}* Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 29:161; Mizzi, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 15:91.

⁹¹⁵ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 5:198.

⁹¹⁶ Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Su‘ālāt Abī ‘Ubayd al-Ājurri Abā Dāwūd Sulaymān ibn al-Ash‘ath al-Sijistānī fī ma‘rifat al-rijāl wa-jarḥihim wa-ta’dīlihīm* (Mecca; Beirut: 1997), 2:253; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Mīzān*, 1:385; Idem, *Tahdhīb al-*

(d. 131/748),⁹¹⁷ Mughīra b. Miqṣam al-Kūfī (d. 136/753),⁹¹⁸ Asad b. Wadā'a (d. ca. 136/753),⁹¹⁹

Nu'āym ibn Abī Hind (d. 211/827),⁹²⁰ Maymūn ibn Mihrān al-Raqqī (resident of Raqqa, d.

118/736),⁹²¹ Ḥuṣayn b. Numayr al-Wāṣiṭī,⁹²² and many others.⁹²³

'Uthmānī Mu'tazilīs

A few heresiographies portrayed early Mu'tazilīs as refraining from judging either army that participated at the Battle of the Camel to have been criminals, while acknowledging the fact that one of them erred. Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā', 'Amr b. 'Ubayd, Ḍirār b. 'Amr, and Abū 'l-Hudhayl are portrayed as proponents of this view.⁹²⁴ Some early Baṣran Mu'tazilīs like Abū Bakr al-Aṣamm (d. ca. 201/816) and Hishām al-Fuwaṭī (d. ca. 227-232/842-847) are portrayed as possessing anti-'Alid sentiment and rejecting the legitimacy of 'Alī's caliphate altogether. Following other 'Uthmānīs, al-Fuwaṭī allegedly believed 'Alī's claim to the caliphate was

Tahdhīb, 1:179; Ibn Ma'īn, *Ta'rikh*, 2:326.

⁹¹⁷ *kāna yaḥmil 'alā 'Alī*...he also reportedly said, "I have no love for 'Alī," see Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Hady al-sārī*, p. 387; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 1:207.

⁹¹⁸ Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 28:401.

⁹¹⁹ Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Su'ālāt Abī 'Ubayd*, 2:253; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Mizān*, 1:385; Ibn Ma'īn, *Ta'rikh*, 2:326.

⁹²⁰ *kāna yatanāwal 'Alī*^{yan}, see Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i'tidāl*, 4:271; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 10:418.

⁹²¹ Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rikh madīnat Dimashq*, 61:348; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 10:349; Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 29:214.

⁹²² Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Hady al-sārī*, p. 396; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 2:337.

⁹²³ For two modern studies devoted to cataloging Muslims accused of anti-'Alid sentiment, see Mu'allim, *al-Nuṣb wa'l-nawāṣīb*; 'Uqaylī, *Mu'jam nawāṣīb al-muḥaddithīn*.

⁹²⁴ Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-dīn*, p. 335; Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rikh Baghdād*, 12:175. See also 'Awwād, *al-Naṣb*, pp. 634-637.

invalid because it was ratified during a period of sedition and civil war.⁹²⁵

Abū Bakr al-Aṣamm staunchly supported Mu‘āwiya in his conflict with ‘Alī.⁹²⁶ He argued that Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, and Mu‘āwiya, in contrast to ‘Alī, had been legitimate caliphs since political authority could only be established through a consensus.⁹²⁷ He believed ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān became caliphs through a consensus and both of them had appointed Mu‘āwiya as the governor of Syria. As a legitimate governor of Syria, Mu‘āwiya had no choice but to defend the territory from ‘Alī, an illegitimate pretender, who desired to oust him. Al-Aṣamm also believed that Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ were correct in renouncing ‘Alī’s caliphate, since it facilitated an eventual consensus in favor of Mu‘āwiya.⁹²⁸

F. ‘Abbāsids

‘Alid challenges to ‘Abbāsīd rule led a number of caliphs and their partisans to persecute and go to war against ‘Alids. Similarly, in lands ruled by Zaydīs, ‘Alids regularly went to war against each other. In many of these cases both parties held ‘Alī, Fāṭima, and their children in high esteem, but considered their rivals misguided for refusing to recognize their right to rule. In a few cases the ‘Abbāsīd caliphs were well-known for loathing ‘Alī and his

⁹²⁵ Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-dīn*, p. 272.

⁹²⁶ Ibid., p. 291; Nāshi’ al-Akbar (attrib.), “Masā’il al-imāma,” p. 60.

⁹²⁷ Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-dīn*, p. 287; Nāshi’ al-Akbar (attrib.), “Masā’il al-imāma,” p. 59.

⁹²⁸ Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-dīn*, p. 292.

sons.⁹²⁹ For example, biographers portrayed al-Mutawakkil as a staunch anti-‘Alid who mocked ‘Alī for entertainment and razed the shrine of al-Ḥusayn to the ground.⁹³⁰ Anti-‘Alid sentiment among ‘Abbāsīd caliphs is left for future research.

III. Conclusions

The schema of competing social groups among Sunnī scholars in the introduction to this chapter offers researchers a methodology for identifying pro-‘Alid and anti-‘Alid sentiment in Sunnī literature. The schema provides some context to understanding the subsequent case studies on the circulation and censorship of reports portraying leading Companions as proponents of anti-‘Alid sentiment. The varied reception of *ḥadīth* about ‘Alī and his rivals reflects a negotiative process that has endured between Sunnīs of competing theological commitments down to the modern period. Sunnī theologians with pro-‘Alid proclivities have accepted the historicity of portrayals that exalt ‘Alī and his house as righteous figures who faced profound enmity from villains who truly loathed them. Meanwhile Sunnīs committed to the maintenance of orthodoxy denied the historicity of such texts, charitably reinterpreted them, or circulated abridged versions that excluded the objectionable material. Anti-Shī‘ī polemics played an important role in encouraging Sunnīs to deny anti-‘Alid sentiment among Companions or *ḥadīth* about many of ‘Alī’s alleged merits.

⁹²⁹ For poets who lampooned ‘Alids to the delight of some ‘Abbāsīds, see above ch. 3, appendix, section IV.

⁹³⁰ Abū ‘l-Fidā’, *al-Mukhtaṣar fī akhbār al-bashar = Ta’rīkh Abī al-Fidā’* (Beirut: 1919), 2:38; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 12:18, 35; Idem, *Ta’rīkh al-islām*, 18:552; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 7:55-6; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān*, 3:365; Qalqashandī, *Ma’āthir al-ināfa fī ma’ālim al-khilāfa* (Kuwait: 1964), 1:230-1. See also Modarressi, *Crisis*, p. 16.

The literary survey above reveals that a vigorous debate regarding the piety and character of early political leaders raged between Mu'tazilī theologians, Sunnī ḥadīth specialists, and proponents of *tafḍīl* 'Alī well into the Mamluk period. By the third century, the locus of conflict between competing factions had shifted from the battlefield to ḥadīth collections and texts describing the history of the early conflicts in the community. The new weapons of choice included an authorial enterprise that actively chose to portray rivals of 'Alī as either villains or saints and an editorial privilege that selected certain texts for preservation and censored others.

CONCLUSION

The Evolution of ‘Alī in Sunnī Hadith and Historiography

The chapters above examined the themes of *tashayyu’*, *tafḍīl* ‘Alī, and *naṣb* in Sunnī literature. Each chapter briefly considered the ways in which Sunnīs with competing theological commitments, whether to pro-‘Alid sentiment, anti-Shī‘ī polemics, or the righteousness of ‘Alī’s political rivals, dealt with the early source material. Pro-‘Alids consistently accepted and transmitted *ḥadīth* that exalted ‘Alī, while early ‘Uthmānīs and pro-Umayyads viewed him and his followers as a scourge in the community and the source of sedition. In contrast to pro-‘Alids, these anti-‘Alids transmitted *ḥadīth* that extolled the merits of ‘Alī’s rivals. The narratives of the Kūfan story-teller Sayf ibn ‘Umar reflected ‘Uthmānī sentiment that was slightly more reserved than in previous decades. ‘Alī was still surrounded by criminals who were the source of civil unrest and misguidance in the community. Sayf did not seem to recognize ‘Alī as a Rightly-Guided Caliph and portrayed him only as one contender among many during a time of civil unrest. However, the literary contributions of Sayf and other milder ‘Uthmānīs represented an important shift in the legacy of ‘Uthmānī sentiment. In their reports, ‘Alī no longer appeared as the arch-heretic, but a Companion who was surrounded by such heretics, venerated by them, and fell victim to their machinations on numerous occasions. In refuting early Shī‘ī and ‘Uthmānī portrayals of ‘Alī as someone who disagreed with his predecessors and rivals on a number of issues, these milder ‘Uthmānīs

circulated counter reports in which ‘Alī became a loyal partisan of the first three caliphs. ‘Uthmānīs of the third century may have appropriated these images of ‘Alī from quietists, centrists and partisans of ‘Alī who respected the first two caliphs and ‘Alī together. Some like Abū ‘l-Qāsim al-Saqāṭī (d. 406/1015) went further in portraying ‘Alī and his house as individuals who loved Mu‘āwiya. In one report, al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī swears that Mu‘āwiya was a scribe of the Qur’ān, *khāl al-mu’minīn*, and that Gabriel had once announced that no real devotee of the Prophet’s family would speak ill of Mu‘āwiya.⁹³¹

Influential scholars of *ḥadīth* like Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, al-Bukhārī and many of their successors optimistically hoped that all of the Prophet’s Companions could be respected as righteous figures in the literature they produced. To meet this objective, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal transmitted many reports about the merits of those Companions who were embroiled in early conflicts from their partisans. ‘Uthmānī, pro-Umayyad, and pro-‘Alid *ḥadīth* all appear in Aḥmad’s *Musnad*. As the previous chapters have noted, al-Bukhārī was much more circumspect in his transmission of *ḥadīth* regarding ‘Alī’s merits and the history of the caliphate.

Despite their differences in methodology and receptiveness to pro-‘Alid reports, these scholars and their successors shared a concern for articulating orthodoxy through *ḥadīth* and their assessments of *ḥadīth* transmitters. Consequently, they sought to (1) condemn and

⁹³¹ Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 14:113-114.

suppress the legacy of *naṣb*, (2) discredit *ḥadīth* that undermined the superiority of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar (and explicitly upheld *tafḍīl* ‘Alī), and (3) appropriate ‘Alī as an innocuous member of the early community. The third objective resulted in these authors accepting *ḥadīth* that regularly depicted ‘Alī committing errors and upsetting the Prophet or other Companions. The various ways in which the work of these scholars of *ḥadīth* fulfilled these objectives are discussed below.

I. The Process of Rehabilitation

The compilers of Sunnī *ḥadīth* literature faced a great challenge in sifting through a plethora of conflicting narratives about ‘Alī and reconciling them with their own vision of early Islamic history and what constituted orthodoxy. Although these scholars wished to portray themselves as engaging in this selective process with an air of objectivity by simply relying on narrators who were trustworthy and avoiding those who were not, the reality was much more complex. *Ḥadīth* scholars clearly judged reports by their contents even when they cited problems in the chain of transmission as principal reasons for their objection.⁹³² When confronting anti-‘Alid *ḥadīth*, these authors seemed to have responded in at least seven different ways.

⁹³² Jonathan Brown, “How We Know Early Hadīth Critics Did Matn Criticism and Why It’s So Hard to Find,” *Islamic Law and Society* 15, no. 2 (2008): 143-184; Idem, “The Rules of Matn Criticism: There Are No Rules,” *Islamic Law and Society* 19, no. 4 (2012): 356-396.

A. Rejection

There are a number of cases where scholars outright rejected the anti-‘Alid report as a fabrication. For example, claims that ‘Alī tried to physically injure or kill the Prophet or that the Prophet referred to him as the *Qārūn* rather than *Hārūn* of the community never entered the canonical *ḥadīth* collections.⁹³³ Nevertheless, the transmitter of these claims, Ḥarīz ibn ‘Uthmān, was considered trustworthy, so he appeared in the collections of Aḥmad, al-Bukhārī, and many others.⁹³⁴ It is unclear to what extent anti-‘Alids pervade chains of transmission in Sunnī *ḥadīth* literature since biographers usually did not provide a transmitter’s views on ‘Alī when they were pro-Umayyad or ‘Uthmānī. Needless to say, geographically, contempt for ‘Alī seems to have been common in pro-Umayyad Syria and ‘Uthmānī Baṣra.

B. Deflection

Scholars deflected accusations of ‘Alī’s culpability in a serious crime by acknowledging his culpability in keeping bad company or committing a minor sin. For example, the Marwānids accused ‘Alī of leading the *munāfiqūn* in the slander of ‘Ā’isha in the *Ifk* incident. In narratives that appeared in the canonical collections, on the authority of al-Zuhri, ‘Alī appears as an antagonist who does not assume ‘Ā’isha’s innocence and encourages the Prophet to

⁹³³ See above, ch. 3, appendix, section III.

⁹³⁴ For example, see Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan*, 2:392; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 4:99, 105, 106; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:164; Ibn Māja, *Sunan*, 1:151; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 4:10.

divorce her. However, he is not depicted as one of her slanderers.⁹³⁵ When a Marwānid asked al-Zuhrī if ‘Alī was a slanderer, he reportedly answered, “No...but ‘Ā’isha said, ‘he behaved badly in my affair (*kāna musī’an fī amrī*).”⁹³⁶

While the Umayyads claimed that ‘Alī was culpable in the assassination of ‘Uthmān,⁹³⁷ Sunnī scholars tended to shift responsibility to ‘Alī’s close partisans.⁹³⁸ Some Sunnīs portrayed ‘Alī as unwilling to surrender ‘Uthmān’s murderers because he was in need of their military and political support.⁹³⁹

In addition to the crime of killing ‘Uthmān, belief in ‘Alī’s superiority to his predecessors was a heresy that was deflected away from ‘Alī to a legendary heretic in his army. According to this narrative, Ibn Saba’ was the real source of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī while ‘Alī strongly condemned such beliefs and punished Ibn Saba’ for harboring them.⁹⁴⁰ Ibn Saba’ came to represent a locus to which Sunnism could attribute all crimes and heresies related to the memory of ‘Alī and the first civil war. Ibn Saba’ was not only responsible for the death of ‘Uthmān, but also for the Battle of the Camel, and the birth of Shī‘ism. Thus, Barzegar writes:

“Through reliance on stories such as the infiltration of the community by the subversive Jew ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Saba’, the responsibility for the events of the *fitna* in

⁹³⁵ See above, ch. 1, section III, 2C; ch. 4, section III.B.

⁹³⁶ ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*, 3:52; Bayhaqī, *Dalā’il al-nubuwwa*, 4:73; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 2:160; Ibn Shabba, *Ta’rīkh al-Madīna*, 1:337; Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr*, 5:32.

⁹³⁷ For references, see above, ch. 3, appendix, section III.

⁹³⁸ See above, ch. 3, appendix, section VIII.

⁹³⁹ For references, see above, ch. 3, appendix, section VIII.

⁹⁴⁰ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Mizān*, 3:290.

Sunni historical traditions are externalized, placed outside the space of the “community” ...”⁹⁴¹

Rather than utilizing narratives in which Companions remained responsible for discord and bloodshed, Sunnī heresiography and historiography mostly opted for a conspiracy theory that identified a Jewish scapegoat as the source for everything that went wrong in the community.

C. Recasting

The Curious Case of Abū Turāb

In at least one case, it seems *ḥadīth* transmitters attempted to recast a derisive epithet of ‘Alī that Umayyads frequently used to refer to him into an honorific nickname and distinction. ‘Alī possessed the unique distinction of giving birth to the Prophet’s descendants and used the agnomen of Abū ‘l-Ḥasan in honor of al-Ḥasan, his eldest son, whose mother was Fāṭima, the daughter of the Prophet. It was not in the interest of the Umayyads to remind their audiences of ‘Alī’s close relationship to the Prophet every time they publicly disparaged him or ritually cursed him on Friday. Thus, according to abundant literary evidence in the Sunnī tradition, the Umayyads opted to refer to him as Abū Turāb, the father of dust.⁹⁴²

⁹⁴¹ Barzegar, “Remembering Community,” p. 148.

⁹⁴² For references in Sunnī and Shī‘ī literature, see below, n. 945-946. See also Etan Kohlberg, “Abū Turāb,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 41, (1978): 347-352.

Mu'āwiya, Marwān, Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf,⁹⁴³ Khālīd al-Qasrī and many other Umayyads reportedly referred to 'Alī with this epithet.⁹⁴⁴ All of these anti-'Alid figures clearly utilized the epithet sarcastically. By the third century, however, Sunnī *ḥadīth* literature firmly established a pious narrative in which the Prophet gave 'Alī the nickname Abū Turāb. Some believed 'Alī received the name in the course of a battle,⁹⁴⁵ while others said that he obtained it after having a disagreement with his wife.⁹⁴⁶ In many of these reports, the transmitters state unequivocally that 'Alī himself considered Abū Turāb his most cherished nickname.⁹⁴⁷ Shī'īs also followed their Sunnī co-religionists in circulating many *ḥadīth* that recast Abū Turāb positively.⁹⁴⁸ The apparent agreement between Sunnī and Shī'ī tradition leaves little room for challenging the shared narrative regarding the origins of the epithet. Nonetheless, the following survey presents evidence that suggests the epithet was neither honorific nor commonly used by those who knew or venerated 'Alī.

Classical Arabic

According to some lexicographers, variations of an invocation with the verb *ta-ri-ba* were used in classical Arabic to damn someone. Examples include *taribat yadāk* (may your

⁹⁴³ For al-Ḥajjāj, see Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 7:295, 13:365; Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, 1:251; Jāḥiẓ, *al-Bayān wa'l-tabyīn*, p. 200; Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī, *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, 1:121-122.

⁹⁴⁴ For Umayyad usage of this epithet, see above, ch. 3, appendix, section II; ch. 4, section III.D.

⁹⁴⁵ For example, see Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 4:263; Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:141; Ibn al-Maghāzilī, *Manāqib 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib*, p. 27; Nasā'ī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 5:153.

⁹⁴⁶ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1:114, 4:208, 7:119, 140; Ibn al-Maghāzilī, *Manāqib 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib*, pp. 28-29; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 7:124.

⁹⁴⁷ See the references in the previous note.

⁹⁴⁸ Ibn Shahrāshūb, *Manāqib*, 2:305-306; Ṣadūq, *ʿIlal al-sharāyīʿ*, 1:155-157.

hands be soiled!), *taribat yamīnuk* (may your right hand be soiled!), *taribat jabīnuk* (may your forehead be soiled!).⁹⁴⁹ The invocation *taribat yadāh* was understood to mean *lā aṣāba khayr^{an}* “may he not find any bounty!”⁹⁵⁰ Scholars also argued that similar to other curses, a speaker would frequently pronounce harsh invocations against someone, but not literally hope for such a result. Rather the speaker used these phrases to express condemnation to an addressee, usually in response to words or deeds that s/he considered objectionable.⁹⁵¹ In these cases, the speaker’s words of disapproval could be understood literally as “your hands have become soiled” and “your forehead has become soiled.” Figuratively, the first phrase signified “you have become impoverished,” “your mind has become impoverished (and in need of knowledge),” “you have lost everything (and become impoverished),”⁹⁵²

Ḥadīth

As some of the lexicographers noted, *taribat yadāk* and its variants were commonly used in classical Arabic and even appear in some *ḥadīth*. Sometimes the Prophet is portrayed as chiding a Companion for saying something wrong or rude.⁹⁵³ In another case, he gives advice

⁹⁴⁹ ‘Aynī, *‘Umdat al-qārī*, 2:211-212; Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab* (Qum: 1984), 1:229; Suyūṭī, *Tanwīr al-ḥawālīk*, p. 72; Zabīdī, *Tāj al-‘arūs*, 1:322.

⁹⁵⁰ Fīrūzābādī, *Al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ* (Cairo: 1980), 1:39; Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, 1:228; Zabīdī, *Tāj al-‘arūs*, 1:231-232.

⁹⁵¹ Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 3:221; Suyūṭī, *Tanwīr al-ḥawālīk*, pp. 71-72.

⁹⁵² ‘Aynī, *‘Umdat al-qārī*, 3:237; Fīrūzābādī, *Al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ*, 1:39.

⁹⁵³ Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan*, 1:60; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 6:33, 92, 201, 306, 309, 377; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 6:27, 7:110; Ibn Māja, *Sunan*, 1:197; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1:171-173, 4:163-164, 8:189.

and ends it with a cautionary *taribat yadāk* if the audience ignored such advice.⁹⁵⁴

Commentators understood this usage to mean that ignoring such advice would lead to disastrous consequences.⁹⁵⁵ When the Prophet reportedly said, “your forehead has become soiled,” the phrase connoted his desire that the addressee repent for his error with abundant prayers and prostration on the ground.⁹⁵⁶

The Qur’ān and its Exegesis

The Qur’ān refers to *turāb* (earth, soil, dust) as the fundamental origin of mankind in its creation in a number of verses.⁹⁵⁷ The most relevant verse to this discussion is Q90:16, *aw miskīn^{an} dhā matraba*, “Or a poor person in dire need (lit. covered in dust).” Exegetes understood *dhū matraba* literally as someone covered in dust, but also figuratively as someone in abject poverty and in dire need.⁹⁵⁸ Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī includes a long discussion about the various possible interpretations of the phrase.⁹⁵⁹ Some interpreted the term to refer specifically to a person who had too many children and lived in abject poverty with them.⁹⁶⁰ The phrase also referred to the homeless person who slept outside in the elements and

⁹⁵⁴ Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan*, 1:454; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 2:428, 3:158, 302; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 6:123; Ibn Māja, *Sunan*, 1:597; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:175; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 2:275.

⁹⁵⁵ Nawawī, *al-Majmū‘ sharḥ al-Muhadhdhab* (Beirut: n.d.), 16:136.

⁹⁵⁶ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 3:144; Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, 1:229; Zabīdī, *Tāj al-‘arūs*, 1:322.

⁹⁵⁷ For example, see Q18:37, 22:5, 30:20, 35:11, 40:67.

⁹⁵⁸ Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī ‘ulūm al-Qur’ān*, ed. al-Mandūb (Beirut: 1996), 1:373; Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 30:258.

⁹⁵⁹ Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 30:256-259.

⁹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 30:258-259.

“possessed nothing, but the dust that adhered to him.”⁹⁶¹

Reception of the epithet among ‘Alī’s disciples

A few reports suggest that those who personally knew ‘Alī, considered themselves his partisans, or lived in Iraq and respected his legacy would never utilize the term Abū Turāb to refer to ‘Alī. In a number of cases, the Umayyads are portrayed as utilizing the term exclusively to the confusion of ‘Alī’s associates who are unaware that the Umayyads are referring to ‘Alī. The non-Umayyad interlocutor frequently interprets the epithet as demeaning to ‘Alī. For example, in reports about the execution of ‘Alī’s companion Ṣayfī ibn Faṣīl (d. 51/671) one finds the following exchange:

The Umayyad governor of Kūfa Ziyād b. Abīh said, “O enemy of God! What is your opinion of Abū Turāb?

“I do not know an Abū Turāb.”

“Are you (really) unacquainted with him?”

“I do not know him.”

“Do you not know ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib?”

“Of course I do.”

“That man was Abū Turāb.”

“No, that man was Abū al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn.”

“The governor tells you that he is Abū Turāb and you (have the audacity to) say no?” interjected Ziyād’s police chief.

“Even if the governor says a lie, do you wish for me to lie and testify to falsehood as he has done?”

“This (insolence) shall be added to your (original) offense...” answered Ziyād.⁹⁶²

⁹⁶¹ Ibid., 30:257-258.

⁹⁶² Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 5:251-252; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 24:259-260; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 3:477; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 4:198.

“A man came to Sahl b. Sa’d and said ‘so-and-so, the governor of Medina, *yad’u ‘Alīy*^{an} from the pulpit.”

Sahl asked, “what does he say?”

The man said, “he says Abū Turāb...”⁹⁶³

A Kūfan is brought before the Umayyad prince Muḥammad ibn Hishām who asks him whether or not he was a follower of Abū Turāb. The man responds:

“Who is Abū Turāb?”

“‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib.”

“Do you mean the cousin of God’s messenger and husband of his daughter Fāṭima? The father of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn?”⁹⁶⁴

When al-Ḥajjāj requests al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī to share his opinion regarding Abū Turāb, al-Ḥasan must also ask, “do you mean ‘Alī?”⁹⁶⁵ All of these anecdotes suggest that Abū Turāb was a pro-Umayyad epithet that Muslims who venerated ‘Alī never used. According to Sunnī and Shī‘ī *ḥadīth*, the Prophet gave ‘Alī the nickname Abū Turāb. In Sunnī *ḥadīth*, the Prophet gave it to him jokingly upon finding him sleeping on the ground and covered in dust. However, the Umayyads reportedly referred to ‘Alī as Abū Turāb disparagingly throughout their reign. It is unclear why they chose to refer to him with that nickname specifically. Perhaps the Umayyads were aware of one origin story for the nickname that portrayed ‘Alī and Fāṭima as experiencing marital strife. The audience learns that ‘Alī left the home and stayed at the mosque after a disagreement with his wife. When the Prophet found him sleeping in the

⁹⁶³ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:207-8. For more on this report, see above, ch. 4, section III.D.

⁹⁶⁴ Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih, *al-‘Iqd al-farīd*, 5:348.

⁹⁶⁵ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 2:147; Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī, *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, 1:122.

mosque with dust all over him, he named him Abū Turāb.⁹⁶⁶ Perhaps the Umayyads utilized the story to depict ‘Alī as unhappily married to Fāṭima. The story could also be used to portray the Prophet as giving ‘Alī the name Abū Turāb in dismay. If this is the case, the story would fall under a genre of anti-‘Alid *ḥadīth* that attempted to portray ‘Alī as a bad husband to Fāṭima. For example, al-Bukhārī and others narrate another famous report in which the Prophet allegedly censured ‘Alī for upsetting him and Fāṭima by considering the daughter of Abū Jahl as a second wife.⁹⁶⁷ In some reports, the Prophet praises an Umayyad son-in-law in the same story. Thus, the topos of ‘Alī as a bad son-in-law that appears elsewhere in *ḥadīth* literature may have something to do with the Umayyad use of Abū Turāb.

Discussions on the meaning of *taribat yadāh* and *dhā matraba* suggest that the Umayyads may have used the epithet to deride his appearance and imply that he looked like a dirty, homeless man. In contrast to the great wealth that the Umayyads secured and distributed to their partisans, Abū Turāb was a pretender to the caliphate who commanded no such wealth. While pro-‘Alid texts portrayed ‘Alī as refusing to use public funds to enrich himself or the aristocracy of his society,⁹⁶⁸ the Umayyads may have depicted him as a poor man who possessed nothing but dust. Abū Turāb may also have referred to the fact that ‘Alī had many children, but remained extremely poor. Finally, the epithet may have referred to their belief

⁹⁶⁶ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1:114, 4:208, 7:140; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 7:124.

⁹⁶⁷ See above, ch. 3, appendix, n. 727.

⁹⁶⁸ Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 7:37-40; Ibn Ṭalḥa, *Maṭālib al-su’ul*, pp. 178-188.

that he was a person who caused great misfortune with his many errors and deserved the wrathful invocation *taribat yadāh*. For these reasons, Abū Turāb may exemplify cases in which anti-ʿAlid beliefs regarding ʿAlī were recast as merits and accepted in subsequent centuries.

D. Erasure

Scholars of *ḥadīth* were occasionally compelled to delete components of a report that was offensive to their sensibilities. *Ḥadīth* denigrating ʿAlī in particular could not continue to circulate after the Umayyad period intact as ʿUthmānīs gradually accepted him as the fourth caliph. For example, both Abū Bakr ibn al-ʿArabī and Ibn Abī ʿl-Ḥadīd transmitted a *ḥadīth* on the authority of al-Bukhārī that stated, “the family of Abū Ṭālib are not my allies (*awliyā*).”⁹⁶⁹ By the Mamluk period, extant copies of al-Bukhārī’s *Ṣaḥīḥ* no longer identified the family of Abū Ṭālib as the clan in question.⁹⁷⁰ In his assessment of the report, Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī concurred that Abū Ṭālib’s family was indeed the clan originally named in the report although copies of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* no longer did so. Ibn Ḥajar found a variant of the report in Abū Nuʿaym al-Iṣbahānī’s *Mustakhraj* of al-Bukhārī’s text that had not deleted the family name.⁹⁷¹ The following section briefly discusses the transmission of this report in canonical *ḥadīth* collections and their commentaries.

⁹⁶⁹ Abū Bakr Ibn al-ʿArabī, *Aḥkām al-Qurʾān*, ed. ʿAṭṭā (Beirut: 1988), 3:461; Ibn Abī ʿl-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 4:64.

⁹⁷⁰ ʿAynī, *Umdat al-qārī*, 22:94; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Fatḥ al-bārī*, 10:350-354. For further references, see below, n. 972 and 975.

⁹⁷¹ Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Fatḥ al-bārī*, 10:352.

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, al-Bukhārī, and Muslim all narrated from: Muḥammad ibn Ja‘far Ghundar (Baṣran, d. 193/809) - Shu‘ba (Kūfa and Baṣra, d. 160/777)– Ismā‘īl ibn Abī Khālīd (Kūfa, d. 146/763)– Qays ibn Abī Ḥāzim al-Aḥmasī (Kūfa, d. c. 98/717) – ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ (d. c. 43/663) that the Prophet announced openly, not privately, “The family of Abū so-and-so are not my allies. Rather my guardian is God and the righteous among the faithful...”⁹⁷²

al-Bukhārī’s direct informant ‘Amr ibn ‘Abbās (Baṣran, d. 235/849) noted, “there is a blank space (*bayāḍ*) in the book of Muḥammad ibn Ja‘far (Ghundar).”⁹⁷³

al-Bukhārī added on the authority of the Umayyad ‘Anbasa ibn ‘Abd al-Wāḥid (Kūfa, active early third century) – Bayān ibn Bishr al-Aḥmasī (Kūfa, active in the second century)– Qays ibn Abī Ḥāzim al-Aḥmasī – ‘Amr that the Prophet continued, “but they have kinship ties that I will honor.”⁹⁷⁴

Ibn Ḥajar also transmitted one report from al-Bukhārī as “the descendants of Abū ____ are not my allies...”⁹⁷⁵

Al-Bukhārī’s first report from ‘Amr ibn ‘Abbās seems to have circulated in Baṣra from at least the middle of the second century. Baṣra was well-known for possessing anti-‘Alid inhabitants.⁹⁷⁶ Al-Bukhārī’s second report is through an Umayyad informant who narrates the *ḥadīth* on the authority of two transmitters from the Aḥmasī clan in Kūfa. The chain of transmission seems incomplete since only one person, Bayān, is listed as the only transmitter active in the second century. Ibn Ḥajar and Badr al-Dīn al-‘Aynī noted in their commentaries on the Baṣran text that some copyists mistook the note about the deletion or blank space

⁹⁷² Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 4:203; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 7:73; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1:136.

⁹⁷³ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 7:73.

⁹⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁷⁵ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taghliq al-ta‘liq*, 5:87.

⁹⁷⁶ See above, ch. 3, n. 479.

(*bayāḍ*) in the manuscript for the name of a tribe. Thus, these copyists understood the Prophet to have declared, “The family of Abū Bayāḍ (Blank Space) are not my allies.”⁹⁷⁷ It seems al-Bukhārī’s *ḥadīth* essentially appeared in three different forms as a result of the sensibilities of the narrators.

First, the earliest narrators transmitted the report with the family of Abū Ṭālib identified (Text A). Sunnī *ḥadīth* scholars identified Qays ibn Abī Ḥāzim and the Umayyad ‘Anbasa ibn ‘Abd al-Wāḥid as anti-‘Alids in the chain of transmission who may have fabricated the report.⁹⁷⁸ Pro-‘Alids identified the close confidant of Mu‘āwiya, ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ, as the anti-‘Alid who fabricated it.⁹⁷⁹ ‘Amr is depicted as instrumental in securing Mu‘āwiya’s political victories as a rebel against ‘Alī and al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī, and finally as an Umayyad ruler. ‘Alī reportedly condemned ‘Amr as a sinful man on repeated occasions and would pray for his punishment in his *qunūt*.⁹⁸⁰ Most Sunnīs did not follow suit in censuring ‘Amr since he was a Companion of the Prophet. However, some prominent Sunnīs like al-Nasā’ī and Abū ‘l-Fidā’ did not venerate him given his opposition to ‘Alī.⁹⁸¹ It seems that at least in the Umayyad period, transmitters identified Abū Ṭālib’s family as the subject of the *ḥadīth*. Scholars who read al-Bukhārī’s *Ṣaḥīḥ* frequently found Abū Ṭālib’s name removed, but it sometimes appeared

⁹⁷⁷ Idem, *Fatḥ al-bārī*, 10:351; ‘Aynī, *Umdat al-qārī*, 22:94.

⁹⁷⁸ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fatḥ al-bārī*, 10:352.

⁹⁷⁹ Ibn Abī ‘l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 4:64, 12:88.

⁹⁸⁰ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 2:127, 352; Ibn A‘tham al-Kūfī, *al-Futūḥ*, 4:201-202; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 4:34, 37, 52, 81.

⁹⁸¹ Abū ‘l-Fidā’, *Ta’rīkh*, 1:186 (for a report from al-Shāfi‘ī that identifies ‘Amr and three others as Companions whose testimonies are rejected); Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 14:133.

in full. Since al-Bukhārī himself reported that his informant found the clan name deleted, it is clear that deletions began to occur at least one generation before al-Bukhārī. It is unclear, however, when exactly copies of al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* gained or lost the name of Abū Ṭālib. Extant copies no longer appear to have Abū Ṭālib's name in full.

The testimony⁹⁸² of al-Bukhārī's informant suggests that Ghundar's book of *ḥadīth* once possessed Abū Ṭālib's name in full, but either Ghundar or a copyist of his book deleted the second part of the name (leaving the "Abū" intact, Text B). The agent responsible for the deletion probably considered the report to have an anti-'Alid tone to it and offensive to Ṭālibids (the descendants of 'Alī, 'Aqīl, and Ja'far ibn Abī Ṭālib). Ṭālibids possessed great social capital in early Islamic history as the Prophet's kinsfolk, so much so that they threatened 'Abbāsīd claims to power.⁹⁸³ Transmitters who desired to teach the lesson that one's allegiance to faith should trump family ties, but had qualms about the anti-Ṭālibid tone of the report, transmitted the text with the deletion or the anonymous "Abū so-and-so." Both Abū Bakr ibn al-'Arabī and Ibn Ḥajar had no problems in accepting the authenticity of the report since they reasoned it only cut ties between the Prophet and non-Muslim Ṭālibids. As previously mentioned, pro-'Alids like Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd considered the report an Umayyad fabrication. Copyists who misunderstood notes from previous generations about the "blank space" in

⁹⁸² Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 7:73.

⁹⁸³ Crone, *God's Rule*, pp. 87-93; Elad, *The Rebellion of Muhammad al-Nafs al-Zakiyya in 145/762: Ṭālibīs and Early 'Abbāsīds in Conflict* (Leiden: 2016); Zaman, *Religion and Politics Under the Early 'Abbāsīds*, pp. 33-48.

manuscripts blundered in believing that the Prophet spoke of a clan named “Abū Blank Space”

(Text C). The ways in which the *ḥadīth* appeared are summarized here:

(Text A) No Qualms in transmission of the *ḥadīth*:

“The family of Abū Ṭālib are not my allies”

“The descendants of Abū Ṭālib are not my allies”⁹⁸⁴

(Text B) Qualms:

“The family of Abū _____ are not my allies”

“The descendants of Abū _____ are not my allies”

“The family of Abū so-and-so are not my allies”

(Text C) Unaware of the Context:

“The family of Abū Bayād are not my allies”

E. Emendation

Copyists and scholars emended *ḥadīth* that they considered objectionable in at least three ways. First, there was the obfuscation of a Companion’s identity if a *ḥadīth* seemed to depict the person in a negative light.⁹⁸⁵ In the previous section, the clan of Abū Ṭālib became Abū so-and-so. In chapter four the Umayyad governor of Medina who cursed ‘Alī became anonymous. Second, some chose to obfuscate the portion of the text that denigrated them. In chapter two, ‘Alī’s offensive views about the first two caliphs were reduced to him claiming “this and that.” Third, it appears some emended a text, so negative words about a Companion became positive.

⁹⁸⁴ Ibn Ḥajar claims to have found a variant in Abū Nu‘aym’s *Mustakhraj* that had *banī Abī Ṭālib*, see Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 10:352.

⁹⁸⁵ For example, the identities of ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ, Samura ibn Jundab and Mu‘āwiya are omitted in some condemnatory reports, but appear in other versions of these reports, see above, ch. 1, n. 191.

‘Alī benefited from the third type of emendation when early transmitters reported that ‘Ā’isha criticized ‘Alī’s conduct in the *Ifk* affair. She reportedly said, “he behaved badly in my affair.”⁹⁸⁶ Some transmitters emended *kāna musī’^{an}* to *kāna musallam^{an}* so that ‘Ā’isha praised ‘Alī as someone who had been free of any wrongdoing (*musallam*).⁹⁸⁷ Consequently, scholars taught al-Bukhārī’s *Ṣaḥīḥ* with either version of the text. Published versions of al-Bukhārī’s work contain the positive *musallam*, but many scholars in the medieval period possessed copies in which ‘Alī was censured as *musī’*. The rehabilitation of ‘Alī played an important role in the gradual shift in interpreting the content of this report. In the Umayyad period, an ‘Uthmānī like al-Zuhrī had no qualms in saying that ‘Alī had treated ‘Ā’isha unfairly in the *Ifk* incident, but centuries later, after ‘Alī’s rehabilitation as an ‘Uthmānī, it would be unthinkable to believe he had ever been portrayed as an antagonist of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, or ‘Ā’isha. Thus, later Sunnīs would assume that ‘Ā’isha described ‘Alī as *musallam* in the *Ifk* incident rather than *musī’*.

F. Circulation of Counter Reports

Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections included the contributions of ‘Alī’s partisans and detractors in the construction of an image of ‘Alī that was neither evil nor fully impeccable and pure. Rather ‘Alī appeared as a normal human being subject to the same challenges and temptations as everyone else. The content of some of the reports below suggests that when ‘Alī’s

⁹⁸⁶ ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*, 3:52; Bayhaqī, *Dalā’il al-nubuwwa*, 4:73; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 2:160; Ibn Shabba, *Ta’rīkh al-Madīna*, 1:337; Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr*, 5:32.

⁹⁸⁷ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 5:60; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 7:336.

detractors encountered a *ḥadīth* about his merits, they would narrate a counter report to contradict it.

The appendix in chapter three noted that some *nawāṣib* like Ḥarīz ibn ‘Uthmān cited Marwānids as their authorities for emending a famous *ḥadīth* that described ‘Alī as the *Hārūn* of the community, so that he now became its *Qārūn*. In this case, it is clear that anti-‘Alids were engaged in circulating a report that contradicted a well-known merit of ‘Alī. In other cases the examples are slightly more subtle.⁹⁸⁸ ‘Alī’s partisans portrayed him as a saint who worshipped God abundantly and greatly resembled the Prophet in his habits of worship.⁹⁸⁹ On the other hand, ‘Alī was portrayed as leading prayer services intoxicated in the lifetime of the Prophet and in a state of major ritual impurity as caliph.⁹⁹⁰ Al-Bukhārī also narrated a report in which ‘Alī annoyed the Prophet by declining his invitation to join him in prayer.⁹⁹¹ All of these reports appear to contradict the image of ‘Alī as a devout worshipper and support the pro-Umayyad image of ‘Alī that he was a man who did not pray.⁹⁹²

Famous *ḥadīth* portrayed the Prophet congratulating ‘Alī as the man whom God had

⁹⁸⁸ Hypothetically, texts could have circulated independently of one another or the less flattering reports about ‘Alī could be more ancient than the ones in his praise.

⁹⁸⁹ Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 2:180; Ibn Shahrāshūb, *Manāqib*, 1:338-390; Ibn Ṭalḥa, *Maṭālib al-su’ul*, p. 129 (where ‘Alī is compared to Christ in his worship).

⁹⁹⁰ Ḥabīb ibn Abī Thābit narrates reports in which ‘Alī accidentally prays in a state of major impurity and another in which he leads prayer intoxicated, see ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, 2:350; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 4:305. For further references, see above, ch. 3, appendix, section III.

⁹⁹¹ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, 1:77, 91, 112; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 2:43, 8:155, 190; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 2:187.

⁹⁹² Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 4:30 (where Syrians state that they had heard that ‘Alī did not pray).

selected to marry his daughter Fāṭima, undoubtedly a great honor in the community.⁹⁹³ Some pro-‘Alid *ḥadīth* further stated that had it not been for ‘Alī, Fāṭima would never have found a suitable partner for herself.⁹⁹⁴ However, as the examples above indicated,⁹⁹⁵ some counter reports depicted ‘Alī as a bad husband to Fāṭima.

Some *ḥadīth* depicted the Prophet as commanding everyone in his community except for ‘Alī to close their private entrances to his mosque.⁹⁹⁶ In contrast, ‘Alī, Fāṭima, and their two sons were given permission to enter the mosque through their private entrance at any time, even in a state of major ritual impurity (*janāba*).⁹⁹⁷ Pro-‘Alids and Shī‘īs understood these reports as further confirmation of the purity of the Prophet’s household. However, the dispensation that his daughter’s family received had one pragmatic benefit: it allowed them easy access to the Prophet’s home. They could pass through the mosque even in a state of major ritual impurity without angering God or His Prophet.

As H. Modarressi has pointed out, merits that were ascribed to ‘Alī in pro-‘Alid circles were ascribed to the first three caliphs among the *‘Uthmāniyya*.⁹⁹⁸ Thus, in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, the permission given to ‘Alī and Fāṭima to keep their entrance to the

⁹⁹³ Haythamī, *Majma‘ al-zawā‘id*, 9:204; Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam al-kabīr*, 10:156; Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-naḍira*, 3:145-146.

⁹⁹⁴ Daylamī, *al-Firdaws*, 3:373 (read *li-Fāṭima* for *li-nā ṭayh*); Qundūzī, *Yanābī‘ al-mawadda*, 2:67, 80, 286.

⁹⁹⁵ See above, section I.C (*The Curious Case of Abū Turāb*); ch. 3, appendix, section IV.

⁹⁹⁶ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 4:369; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, 7:500; Nasā‘ī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 5:118-119; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 5:305; Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam al-kabīr*, 12:78.

⁹⁹⁷ Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 7:65.

⁹⁹⁸ Modarressi, “Early Debates,” pp. 16-22.

Prophet's mosque open was given to Abū Bakr instead.⁹⁹⁹ While the *ḥadīth* granting Abū Bakr the same privilege may be viewed as a counter report, 'Uthmānīs further narrated *ḥadīth* that portrayed 'Alī as someone with a malady. According to these reports, 'Alī frequently found himself with seminal discharge (*madhy*).¹⁰⁰⁰ Reports about this malady may be understood as 'Uthmānī explanations of the dispensation he received to enter the Prophet's mosque even in a state of ritual impurity.

G. The Principle of Charity

An ideological commitment to belief in the righteousness of Companions led scholars to either reject or charitably interpret texts that seemed to present Companions in a negative light. In chapter two, canonical reports that depicted 'Alī delaying his pledge of allegiance to Abū Bakr were charitably reinterpreted, so that 'Alī never questioned the first caliph's pre-eminence or challenged his candidacy. On the other hand, texts that portrayed 'Alī complaining about the succession of his predecessors did not enter the canon and were largely rejected.

It seems both Mu'āwiya and 'Alī benefitted from the principle of charity and the shift to defending all Companions as righteous. As chapter four noted, influential scholars like al-Nawawī read canonical *ḥadīth* charitably when Mu'āwiya appeared to curse or encourage

⁹⁹⁹ Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:254; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 7:108; Nasā'ī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 5:35; Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, 5:270.

¹⁰⁰⁰ 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, 1:155-157; Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan*, 1:53; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, 1:80, 87, 108; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1:42, 52; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, 1:115; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1:169.

cursing ‘Alī, while others rejected such texts altogether.¹⁰⁰¹ To safeguard ‘Alī’s honor, scholars interpreted the *ḥadīth* “the family of Abū Ṭālib are not my allies” to only hypothetically refer to non-Muslims in ‘Alī’s family. Such charitable interpretations were irrelevant to early ‘Uthmānīs and pro-Umayyads who never recognized ‘Alī and his descendants as Muslims, but rather condemned them as apostates and evil criminals. Consequently, charitable interpretations of the *ḥadīth* only safeguarded the honor of ‘Alī and his sons after their rehabilitation in Sunnism.

II. From Three Caliphs to Four

Not only did the early ‘Uthmāniyya support the caliphate of the first three caliphs, but also the insurrection of ‘Ā’isha, Ṭalḥa and Zubayr against ‘Alī. ‘Uthmānīs like Wurayza ibn Muḥammad al-Ḥimṣī (d. 281/294) reportedly refused to recognize ‘Alī as a legitimate caliph because they believed it necessarily entailed opposition to and censure of the leaders of the Battle of the Camel who fought ‘Alī.¹⁰⁰² ‘Uthmānī shifts to accepting ‘Alī as a legitimate caliph probably began in Kūfa and Baghdad. S. Lucas has argued for the possibility that early theologians who were Zaydī or Baghdādī Mu‘tazilī “contributed to the profound respect for ‘Alī and his family found in the *Musnad* of Ibn Ḥanbal, *Muṣannaḥ* of Ibn Abī Shayba, and *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim that seems stronger than the fourth-place status accorded [to] him by [later] Sunnī

¹⁰⁰¹ See al-Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 15:175-176; see above, ch. 4, section III.D.

¹⁰⁰² Ibn Abī Ya‘lá, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, 1:393. See also ‘Uqaylī, *Mu‘jam nawāṣib al-muḥaddithīn*, pp. 42-43.

doctrine.”¹⁰⁰³ The literary output of al-Jāhiz, Abū Ja‘far al-Iskāfī and other theologians who discussed the issue of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī was contemporaneous with the activities of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. All of these figures resided in Baghdad where they encountered the opinions of their rivals. Perhaps Aḥmad accepted *ḥadīth* about the merits of ‘Alī from pro-‘Alid transmitters in Baghdad after conceding to the arguments of pro-‘Alid theologians in the city. For example, probably to the dismay of ‘Uthmānīs in the city, Aḥmad reportedly agreed with proponents of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī that no Companion possessed as many merits as ‘Alī.¹⁰⁰⁴ Aḥmad’s decision to transmit hundreds of anecdotes in which the Prophet singled out ‘Alī for praise bears witness to his assessment.¹⁰⁰⁵ Aḥmad also reportedly began arguing for the need to accept ‘Alī as a legitimate fourth caliph among his ‘Uthmānī peers.¹⁰⁰⁶ To do this entailed some acceptance of historical narratives from ‘Alī’s partisans. Although Aḥmad was not a proponent of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī, his acceptance of pro-‘Alid *ḥadīth* led him to transmit some reports related to *tafḍīl* ‘Alī that appeared in chapter two as well.

Although Sunnī scholars relied on reports that explicitly articulated the merits of Companions both generally and specifically, Lucas suggests that the most enduring achievement of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal was an implicit polemic that vindicated Companions who

¹⁰⁰³ Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, p. 284.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī‘āb*, 3:1115; Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-naḍira*, 3:188.

¹⁰⁰⁵ For example, see Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Faḍā’il Amīr al-Mu’minīn*.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Ibn Abī Ya’lā, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, 1:393; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 7:47. See also Madelung, *Der Imam al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm und die Glaubenslehre der Zaiditen* (Berlin: 1965), pp. 223-228.

had been criticized for their conduct after the death of the Prophet by including them as important sources of *ḥadīth* in his *Musnad*.¹⁰⁰⁷ Their presence in his *Musnad* indicated that despite the circulation of reports that criticized their political careers and the criticisms levied against most of them by pro-‘Alid theologians, Companions who fought against ‘Alī were still trustworthy sources for information about the life of the Prophet and his teachings. By the middle of the third century, ‘Alī also benefited from an emerging Sunnī orthodoxy that had utilized the hermeneutical tools mentioned above to delegitimize hostile depictions of him and appropriate him as the fourth caliph, extending the three-caliph model of the early ‘*Uthmāniyya*. As others have noted, giving ‘Alī fourth place (*tarbī‘ ‘Alī*), was an innovation for ‘*Uthmānīs* in the third century.¹⁰⁰⁸

III. Conclusions

The image of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib that appeared in Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections produced after the start of the third century was as complex and composite as the compiler’s sources. Anti-‘Alids viewed ‘Alī and his family with contempt, while some pro-‘Alids viewed him as the most meritorious Muslim after the Prophet. A third group consisted of those who were ambivalent about ‘Alī’s personality and viewed him as a Companion no different from his peers. For

¹⁰⁰⁷ Lucas, *Constructive Critics*, p. 285.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Ibn Abī Ya‘lā, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, 1:393. See also Afsaruddin, *Excellence*, 16-18; Zaman, *Religion and Politics*, 49-59, 169ff.; *E.I.*², s.v. “Imāma” (W. Madelung); “‘Uthmāniyya” (P. Crone).

example, Ibn Taymiyya argued that ‘Alī possessed merits, but also many shortcomings.¹⁰⁰⁹ He forcefully argued that ‘Alī upset the Prophet and afterwards unnecessarily went to war against his rivals.¹⁰¹⁰ Thus, ‘Alī was responsible for some civil strife although he was not evil.

While pro-‘Alids remembered ‘Alī as someone who viewed himself as an independent authority after the Prophet, later orthodoxy frequently portrayed him as agreeable to the views of other authorities. ‘Alī’s variant opinions on political and religious questions were gradually replaced with answers that avowedly affirmed Sunnī orthodoxy.

The case studies in this conclusion (and in chapters two and four) suggest the ways in which Sunnī scholars made use of their editorial privilege in the transmission of selected versions of a text that specifically omitted controversial material. Copyists and scholars resorted to deletion or obfuscation of certain parts of a text they considered objectionable when they were obliged to transmit it.

Summary

Despite the fragmentary nature of the data and the absence or fluidity of boundaries for those who lived before the fourth century, chapters one, two and three respectively examined expressions of *tashayyu‘*, *tafḍīl* ‘Alī, and *naṣb* among proto-Sunnī *ḥadīth* transmitters. The first two chapters sought to better clarify the existence and contributions of ‘Alī’s partisans in non-

¹⁰⁰⁹ Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 5:7.

¹⁰¹⁰ Ibid., 4:255, 384, 389, 392. For further references, see above, ch. 3, section V.B.

Shī'ī intellectual circles. Chapter one surveyed the spectrum of pro-'Alid sentiment, while chapter two focused on one specific dimension of it. Since most Sunnī scholars were not pro-'Alid, but universalist in their commitment to all Companions, expressions of pro-'Alid sentiment can easily be mistaken for Shī'ism. However, pro-'Alid Sunnism should be recognized as an important tradition that developed separately – even if it was not completely independent of Shī'ism.¹⁰¹¹ In contrast, universalist Sunnīs venerated 'Alī and his rivals together and did not consider them to have truly been enemies.¹⁰¹² The non-partisan commitment to all Companions became a quintessential Sunnī cultural and theological position. From the third century, the non-partisan culture which *ḥadīth* specialists promoted led to the rehabilitation of first-century leaders that were previously damned in various geographic and partisan rivalries. Both 'Alī and Mu'āwiya benefitted from this new Sunnī vision which sought to suppress and transcend partisan conflicts. 'Uthmānī, pro-'Alid, and pro-Umayyad hagiography played an important role in extolling the virtues of these rulers, while texts that maligned their character were largely rejected, censored, or charitably reinterpreted. As previously noted, censorship usually involved obfuscation of a Companion's

¹⁰¹¹ Pro-'Alids like Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd and Sufis like Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Ḥammū'ī occasionally cited (and critiqued) Shī'ī texts in their works. 'Alā' al-Dawla al-Simnānī, for example, relied upon the *Nahj al-Balāgha*, see Ḥammū'ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, 1:45, 54, 312; Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, 2:27, 42, 324, 328ff; Simnānī, *Manāẓir al-maḥāḍir li 'l-munāẓir al-ḥaḍir* (al-Zāhir [Cairo]: 1989).

¹⁰¹² For example, Mu'āwiya was portrayed as revering 'Alī and never doubting the legitimacy of his caliphate in these narratives, see Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī*, 13:75; Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal*, 4:124.

identity¹⁰¹³ or omissions in the parts of a report that transmitters considered objectionable.¹⁰¹⁴

Chapter two examined proponents of *tafḍīl* ‘Alī who believed that ‘Alī had considered himself the best candidate for the caliphate at the time of the Prophet’s death. The case studies on Ḥadīths 1-3 revealed that some influential and early ‘Uthmānīs accepted the motif of ‘Alī challenging the succession of his predecessors as historical fact as well. Later ‘Uthmānīs and Sunnīs generally denied this image of ‘Alī and depicted him as strongly supporting the candidacy of the first three caliphs and advocating belief in their superiority to him. Thus, these two diametrically opposed portrayals of ‘Alī’s conduct after the death of the Prophet were preserved in canonical Sunnī *ḥadīth*.

While earlier conceptions of ‘Alī among proto-Sunnī *ḥadīth* transmitters recognized his tendency to act as an independent authority after the Prophet, later orthodoxy frequently portrayed him as deferring to others. ‘Alī’s variant opinions were gradually replaced with answers that avowedly affirmed Sunnī orthodoxy. In his rehabilitation, ‘Alī was clipped of his objectionable wings and he became an obedient and nondescript citizen who approved the views of his peers. He was neither a criminal (as anti-‘Alids claimed) nor a Shī‘ī imam. ‘Alī became a virtuous Companion in the company of many others. ‘Alī *the dissenter* gave way to ‘Alī *the conformist*.

¹⁰¹³ See above, section E (Emendation).

¹⁰¹⁴ See above, Chapter 2, section II.

Chapter three examined anti-‘Alid sentiment which came to possess an *erased history* in Sunnī Islam. After enjoying some popularity in the Umayyad period, various scholars of the third century began to condemn and cease transmitting many early ‘Uthmānī reports that were hostile to ‘Alī. The erased history of anti-‘Alid sentiment consisted not only of its disappearance, but also of a denial that it had ever existed in the first century. Anti-‘Alid sentiment was generally too unsettling for Sunnī scholars to keep as part of their own community’s collective memory. Consequently, some externalized it as only a Khārijite phenomenon.¹⁰¹⁵

Chapter four presented a few case studies on the circulation and reception of reports that portrayed leading Companions as proponents of anti-‘Alid sentiment. The varied reception of *ḥadīth* about ‘Alī and his rivals reflects a negotiative process that has endured between Sunnīs of competing theological commitments down to the modern period. Pro-‘Alids generally accepted *manāqib* literature about ‘Alī and the *mathālib* regarding his rivals while universalists committed to the maintenance of orthodoxy denied the historicity of such texts or charitably reinterpreted them.

This dissertation updates and extends the seminal work of E. L. Petersen on portrayals of ‘Alī in Sunnī literature by primarily utilizing Sunnī *ḥadīth* and biographical literature rather than historical chronicles.

¹⁰¹⁵ Zabīdī, *Tāj al-‘arūs*, 2:436. See also ‘Awwād, *al-Naṣb*, p. 70.

The formation of orthodoxy in Sunnism appears as an intellectual and social endeavor that involved scholars in control of the teaching and transmission of texts. Scholars of *ḥadīth* possessed mechanisms that facilitated the censorship of objectionable material and the marginalization and censure of their sources. This investigation of the declining popularity, contributions and eventual disappearance of *ḥadīth* transmitters who upheld *tafdil ‘Alī* and *naṣb* emphasizes problems related to the politics of *ḥadīth* transmission and identity formation.

M. Keita writes that wars of identity and culture “are about epistemological construction and reconstruction. They are about exclusion and inclusion...the excluded parties are regarded as being without culture: uncivilized...without intellectual capacity.”¹⁰¹⁶ In a sectarian milieu, the excluded “other” could not have a claim to true piety or share in God’s grace. Thus, scholars loathed to engage or preserve the intellectual contributions of these minorities and viewed them with suspicion, if not contempt. Authors of foundational *ḥadīth* texts (compilations, commentaries, and *‘ilm al-rijāl* works) utilized the genre to construct boundaries for their community in the imagined past based upon those that existed in the author’s own lifetime. Pro-‘Alid and anti-‘Alid predecessors who did not fall within these newly-formed boundaries in Sunnī Islam were criticized and their contributions excluded *ex post facto*. The vulnerability of minority theological groups and their ideas to extinction is apparent in this survey of Sunnī *ḥadīth* literature regarding ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib.

¹⁰¹⁶ Keita, *Race and the Writing of History: Riddling the Sphinx* (Oxford; New York: 2000), p. 11.

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