

# Love & Death in the Ancient Near East

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*Essays in Honor of Marvin H. Pope*



Edited by

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# THE DEATH OF ABŪ ṬĀLIB

FRED MCGRAW DONNER

## I

The death of the Prophet Muḥammad's uncle, Abū Ṭālib, in ca. A.D. 620 became the subject of considerable controversy among the early purveyors of historical and religious traditions in the Islamic world. On the one hand, as the chief of the clan of Hāshim among the Quraysh, Abū Ṭālib had defended Muḥammad and his earliest followers against the attacks of the rest of the Quraysh, who were outraged by Muḥammad's new religious ideas, and had thereby done signal service in the cause of Islam at a critical time in its early history. On the other hand, it seems to have been generally accepted that Abū Ṭālib himself never embraced Islam, but died a pagan, which implied that he would, like all pagans, be consigned on judgment day to everlasting punishment in the fires of hell.

The irony of Abū Ṭālib's apparent fate—that this stalwart defender of Muḥammad and of Islam in its earliest, most vulnerable days, should nonetheless suffer the extreme penalty after death—is not without a certain intrinsic interest, and may well have piqued the curiosity of the justice-conscious early Islamic community for that reason alone. But the main reason for the debate over Abū Ṭālib's death and fate was that they became matters of some importance in the religious and political polemic that developed between the Abbasids and the Shia after the Abbasids' accession to power in A.H. 132 / A.D. 749.<sup>1</sup>

In seizing power, the Abbasids had capitalized on widespread opposition to the ruling Umayyad dynasty, which they overthrew and virtually annihilated; and they justified their actions not only on the grounds that the Umayyads had been godless and oppressive rulers, but also on the principle that they—the Abbasids—were more closely related to the Prophet than the Umayyads were. The Abbasids, after all, belonged to the B. Hāshim, the Prophet's clan, whereas the B. Umayya constituted a different clan of the Quraysh altogether. It was therefore possible for the Abbasids to present one of their number as being the very one intended by the phrase *al-riḍā min alī Muḥammad*, "the one pleasing [to God] from the family of Muḥammad," in whose ambiguous name the revolution against the Umayyads had been raised.

<sup>1</sup> For an earlier study of this theme, see Theodor Nöldeke, "Zur tendenziösen Gestaltung der Urgeschichte des Islam's," *ZDMG* 52 (1898): 27–28. The following abbreviations have been employed in these pages to render the technical terms in *isnāds*: —s— = *sami'atu 'an*; —h— = *ḥaddatha-ni, ḥaddatha-nā*; < = *'an*.

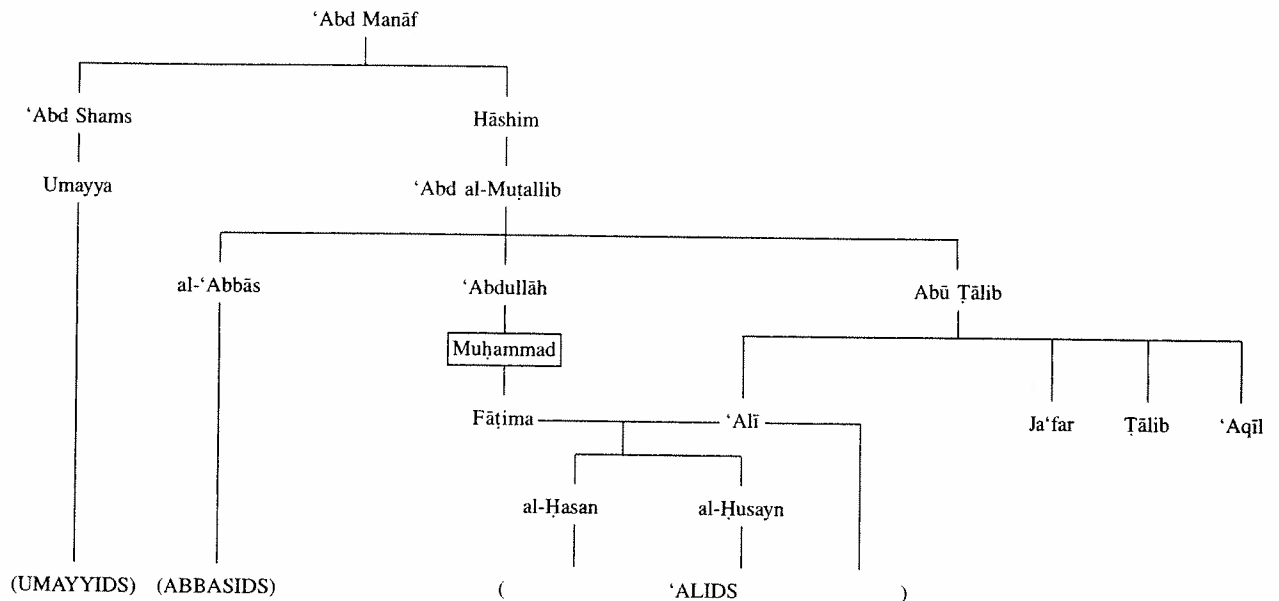
The Shia posed a problem for the Abbasids, however. Much of the wave of opposition to the Umayyads that the Abbasids had succeeded in riding to power had been generated by the Shia; and the 'Alids and other descendants of Abū Ṭālib, whose claims to leadership the Shia supported, had, by their peculiar combination of religious zeal and political miscalculation, managed to supply a goodly number of martyrs to the struggle against the Umayyads. At the same time, prominent members of the Abbasid house had been on rather cozy terms with the Umayyads during many of these decades of strife, and had only joined the opposition at a late date. In short, the descendants of Abū Ṭālib had far more impressive martyrological and "revolutionary" credentials than did the Abbasids. The descendants of Abū Ṭālib, furthermore, were every bit as closely related to Muḥammad as were the descendants of al-'Abbās, both men having been paternal uncles of the Prophet (see Figure 1). It was therefore fruitless for the Abbasids merely to raise the fact of their ancestry and relationship to Muḥammad when grappling with the ideological challenge posed by the Ṭālibids. They also had to find other, more effective, arguments to counter the Shiite claim that the 'Alids were more entitled to rule than others in the B. Hāshim because 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib had been on such intimate terms with the Prophet, had been one of the earliest converts to Islam, had been favored with the hand of the Prophet's daughter Fāṭima in marriage, and so on—whereas al-'Abbās had only embraced Islam late, probably in the year before the conquest of Mecca by Muḥammad in A.H. 8/A.D. 630.

The ideological threat that the Ṭālibids, and especially the 'Alids, represented must thus have been perfectly clear to the Abbasids from the moment of their accession, and it was certainly underscored in their minds by the outbreak of a number of Shiite rebellions in the opening decades of their rule. It was made yet more pointed by the elaboration of a systematic Shiite doctrine of the imamate, with its assertion of a single line of divinely guided spiritual leaders, or imams, descended from 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and his wife Fāṭima. This theory, drawing on older Gnostic ideas of charismatic leadership, appears to have taken full form in the intellectual circle surrounding Ja'far "al-Ṣādiq" b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. A.H. 148/A.D. 765), who became the sixth imam in the series.<sup>2</sup> For the Abbasids, such a

<sup>2</sup> On the development of the Shiite theory of the imamate,

concept was especially dangerous because its seductive logic deprived them of any right to rule at all, since according to it the imamate had been transferred by explicit designation (*naṣṣ*) from the Prophet to ʿAlī and

then on to specific descendants of ʿAlī, who were alone imbued with the divine guidance and special knowledge that was requisite to rule the Islamic community legitimately and justly.



## II

One line of attack pursued by the Abbasids or their apologists in their efforts to undermine the claims raised by the Shia was to emphasize the fact that Abū Ṭālib had died a pagan, thus placing him in a bad light in comparison with their own ancestor al-ʿAbbās. They tried, in short, by discrediting Abū Ṭālib to discredit the whole lot of his descendants. This policy was evidently already in place by A.H. 145/A.D. 762, for during the rebellion of Muḥammad b. ʿAbdullāh b. al-Ḥasan in Medina in that year the caliph al-Manṣūr wrote to the rebel, "The Apostle was sent [by God], and he had four paternal uncles. Two believed in him, one of whom was my father [i.e., ancestor], and two refused to believe in him, one of whom was your father."<sup>3</sup> Traditions such as the following one, transmitted by the historian al-Madāʾinī (d. A.H. 225/A.D. 840), underscored Abū Ṭālib's failure to become a Muslim: one of two men comparing pious wishes says, "I wish that Abū Ṭālib had embraced Islam, for the Apostle of God would have been delighted at that. But he was an unbeliever."<sup>4</sup> Such accounts, which stressed the Prophet's disappointment with his uncle,

were doubtless sought out and widely circulated by the Abbasids and their backers.<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, there circulated some traditions that attempted to demonstrate that Abū Ṭālib had inwardly accepted Islam, and that Muḥammad had recognized this fact. In some accounts, for example, Abū Ṭālib relates that Muḥammad had explained his mission to him. God had instructed him, he was told, to treat his relatives kindly, to worship God alone, and not to worship anything beside Him—"and," Abū Ṭālib concludes, "Muḥammad was veracious and trustworthy (*ṣadūq amīn*)."<sup>6</sup> According to another tradition, when Abū Ṭālib fell ill, Muḥammad fed him a bunch of grapes from his

5 We should note, however, that the account itself—even though serving a polemical purpose—may be old; successful polemic requires not so much the fabrication of new material, as the careful selection (and repression) of existing material to convey the desired message.

6 *Iṣāba* 4.116 middle (Iṣḥāq b. ʿIsā al-Hāshimī < his father—s—al-Muhājir, *mawlā* of B. Nufayl—s—Abū Rāfiʿ—s—Abū Ṭālib); *Iṣāba* 4.118–19 Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan "Dubays"—h—Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl b. Ibrāhīm al-ʿAlawī—h—uncle of Abū l-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad—his father Mūsā b. Jaʿfar < his father < ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn < al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī; *Iṣāba* 4.119 (. . . Jaʿfar b. ʿAbd al-Wāḥid al-qāss—q—Muḥammad b. ʿAbbād < Iṣḥāq b. ʿIsā < Muhājir, *mawlā* of B. Nawfal—s—Abū Rāfiʿ—s—Abū Ṭālib).

see *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, "Hishām b. al-Ḥakam" (W. Madelung); also Marshall G. S. Hodgson, "How did the Early Shi'a become Sectarian?" *JAOS* 75 (1955): 1–13.

3 Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Iṣāba fī tamyiz al-ṣaḥāba* (4 vols.; Cairo, A.H. 1328): 4.118 (hereinafter cited as *Iṣāba*).

4 Ibn Qutayba, *ʿUyūn al-akhbār* (4 vols.; Cairo, 1963): 1.263.

garden,<sup>7</sup> which Abū Bakr later said God had forbidden to unbelievers.<sup>8</sup> The implication of such traditions is clearly that Abū Tālib—whatever his outward actions—had privately accepted the correctness of Muḥammad's teachings, and that Muḥammad had recognized his inner conversion.

Another way of salvaging Abū Tālib's reputation was to emphasize his positive service to Islam. One of the milder of such traditions, attributed to the historian al-Wāqidi (d. A.H. 207 / A.D. 843), focuses on how Abū Tālib and the clans of Hāshim and al-Muṭallib, under his leadership, protected Muḥammad from persecution by the rest of Quraysh. When the Quraysh came to see that they could not coerce Abū Tālib into handing Muḥammad over to them, they ended their boycott of the two clans after three years. The account then notes that the boycott ended in the tenth year of Muḥammad's prophetic career, and was followed shortly thereafter by Abū Tālib's death. But no further remarks on Abū Tālib's death, except for some differing opinions on dating it, are provided.<sup>9</sup>

Such efforts to stress Abū Tālib's meritorious past were counter-balanced by other traditions in circulation. According to one, traced in its *isnād* back to 'Alī himself, Abū Tālib, upon learning of 'Alī's conversion to Islam, turned his son out with the brusque command, "Go live with your cousin" (scil. Muḥammad).<sup>10</sup> The effect, of course, was to call into question the notion that Abū Tālib had been favorably disposed to Islam at all. Far more numerous, however, were accounts that demonstrated that Abū Tālib was destined to suffer perdition regardless of his service in defending Muḥammad and the first Muslims. The many *hadīths* in this category generally relate to the question of Muḥammad's attempts to intercede for his uncle by praying for him after his death. A typical representative from this group of accounts goes as follows: people used to say that Abū Tālib had supported Muḥammad and aided him, so how did the Prophet help him? Muḥammad, learning of this, replied, "God favored him [in this way]; he used to be in the depths of hell, but He took him out for my sake and placed him in a shallow bank of fire; he has two sandals of fire, which cause his brains to boil."<sup>11</sup> Another common variant has Muḥammad declare, "Perhaps my intercession will help [Abū Tālib] on judgment day and make for him a shoal of fire reaching [only] to his heels, from which

his brains will boil."<sup>12</sup> Such traditions could leave little doubt about Abū Tālib's ultimate fate.

The question of Abū Tālib's fate was also debated within the context of accounts of his burial. There exists a sizeable number of traditions describing how Muḥammad ordered 'Alī to wind and bury his father's corpse, but the details vary considerably, and with them the tone and implications of the accounts. In the simplest of them, the Prophet directs 'Alī to wind and bury the body, but 'Alī objects that his father had died a polytheist. Muḥammad therefore repeats his instructions and 'Alī, seeing his insistence, then complies.<sup>13</sup> Like other accounts examined above, this one appears to suggest that Abū Tālib was recognized by Muḥammad as having been a Muslim, even though his conversion was not common knowledge—even his own son is shown to be ignorant of his "inner" conversion. Indeed, in one variant, 'Alī informs Muḥammad of his father's death by announcing, "Your uncle, the erring old man, has died."<sup>14</sup> His strongly disapproving tone makes the contrast between his own expectations and Muḥammad's treatment of Abū Tālib's corpse much more dramatic, and highlights the Prophet's favorable treatment of his uncle.

Indeed, not even Abū Tālib's wife, Fāṭima bint Asad b. Hāshim, could escape being drawn—posthumously—into the debate over Abū Tālib's death. All accounts agree that she embraced Islam, and this fact alone may have been sufficient in some circles to cast a favorable reflection on her son, 'Alī, and the later religious and political claims of the 'Alids. But, once again, the details provided in these accounts often bolster a certain tendentious viewpoint. According to one account, for example, the Prophet wound Fāṭima's corpse in his own shirt, and then lay down beside her in her grave before she was buried. His companions asked him about this, as they had never seen him do so for anyone else; to which Muḥammad replied, "No one after Abū Tālib was more devoted to me than she was. I dressed her in my shirt that she might be clothed in the vestments of paradise, and I lay down with her so that [lying in the grave] might be easier for her."<sup>15</sup> In its roundabout way, the tradition thus emphasizes Abū Tālib's support for Muḥammad, and

12 Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *Musnad* (6 vols.; Cairo, A.H. 1313): 3.8–9, 50, 55; cf. also *Iṣāba* 4.119; *Musnad* 1.206, 207, 210; al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ* (2 vols.; Cairo, A.H. 1309): 2.209; Ibn 'Abd Rabbīhi, *al-Iqd al-farīd* (8 vols. in 4; Cairo, 1953): 6.159.

13 Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *Musnad* 1.97 (. . . Muḥammad b. Ja'far —h—Shu'ba Abū Ishāq—s—Nājiya b. Ka'b—h—'Alī); cf. 1.103, 129–30, 131.

14 Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad* 1.131.

15 *innahu lam yakun aḥadun ba'da Abī Tālibin abirra bi minhā*. Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Maqātil al-Ṭālibīyīn* (ed. Aḥmad Ṣaqr; Cairo, 1949): 8–9 (al-'Abbās b. 'Alī b. al-'Abbās al-Nasā'ī—h—'Abdullāh b. Muḥammad b. Ayyūb—h—al-Ḥasan b. Bishr—h—Sa'dān b. al-Walīd Bayyā' al-Sabūrī <'Aṭā' < Ibn 'Abbās). Cf. the briefer account in *Ansāb* (Maḥmūdī): 35.

7 *unqud min jannati-hi*. The other meaning of *al-janna*, "paradise," is clearly hinted at in the account.

8 al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf* (ed. Muḥammad Bāqir al-Maḥmūdī; Beirut, 1974): 34 (h—'Amr b. Muḥammad—h—Abū Mu'āwiya < al-A'mash < Abū Ṣāliḥ). (Hereinafter cited as *Ansāb*.) Cf. *Iṣāba* 4.116 top.

9 al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf* 1 (ed. Muḥammad Ḥamīdullāh; Cairo, 1959): 236 (account no. 560, from al-Wāqidi).

10 *Iṣāba* 4.116 ('Abdullāh b. Ḍamīra < his father < 'Alī).

11 *Ansāb* (Maḥmūdī): 29, 30.

Muḥammad's fondness for his deceased uncle. In another account, on the other hand, Muḥammad approached Fāṭima bint Asad and asked her to embrace Islam. Fāṭima answered, "I know that you are true and good, but I would not like to die except in the religion of your uncle." Muḥammad replied, "Oh mother, I fear [hell-] fire for you." Fāṭima held her ground, however, so the Prophet left, saying "Verily, God's command (*ʿamr*) is a fate decreed." Only later, in her final illness, did Fāṭima bint Asad embrace Islam, and after her death the Apostle wrapped her in his shirt.<sup>16</sup> In contrast to the preceding account, this one clearly emphasizes Abū Ṭālib's death as a pagan, and makes it clear that Muḥammad assumed him to be in hellfire.

Some of those who desired to defend Abū Ṭālib's reputation went so far as to foster the notion that not only Abū Ṭālib, but also his ancestors, had been truly Muslims. One interesting account of this kind can be seen as a response to a series of traditions, to be examined below,<sup>17</sup> that emphasized that Abū Ṭālib had died "in the religion of ʿAbd al-Muṭallib," i.e., a pagan. According to this account, ʿAlī said that Abū Ṭālib had followed ʿAbd al-Muṭallib in all his affairs, and died still following his religion. Abū Ṭālib had requested ʿAlī to bury him in ʿAbd al-Muṭallib's grave, and the Prophet, informed of this, acquiesced and instructed ʿAlī to wash and wind the body properly before burial. After ʿAlī had done so, he opened ʿAbd al-Muṭallib's grave, and found his body facing the *qibla*. The narrator notes that neither ʿAlī nor any of his ancestors worshipped anything but God up to their deaths.<sup>18</sup> By thus making ʿAbd al-Muṭallib and his forebears into believers, the account clearly aims to dispel any misgivings about Abū Ṭālib's death "in the religion of ʿAbd al-Muṭallib."

Even such exercises in historical reinterpretation must seem modest in comparison with the efforts of some of the ideological extremists among the Shia; for in such circles the notion of divine incarnation and the transmigration of the spirit were applied to ʿAlī and his family—ancestors as well as descendants—so as to transcend entirely the "petty" question of whether or not Abū Ṭālib had made an open confession of his belief in God before dying. According to one sect, which followed the extremist leader Abū l-Khaṭṭāb Muḥammad b. Abī Zaynab al-Asadī (d. ca. A.D. 755 or 762),<sup>19</sup> God was a light that entered the bodies of the various designated trustees (*awṣiyāʾ*) and occupied them. The light that was God had been in ʿAbd al-Muṭallib, and then went to Abū Ṭālib, who became God and sent Muḥammad as his apostle;

when Abū Ṭālib died, the spirit (*rūḥ*) went on to settle in Muḥammad, who became God, and ʿAlī became his apostle; and so on down to Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq and from him to Abū l-Khaṭṭāb himself.<sup>20</sup> Such views were, of course, shared only by a small number even among the Shia; for most, the question of Abū Ṭālib's death was doubtless still one to be understood in more straightforward terms.

The Qurʾān was also brought into the service of those who desired to elucidate Abū Ṭālib's fate, as certain verses were said to have been revealed in connection with him. One such verse was *sūra* 6 (*al-Anʿām*) v. 26, "And they forbid [others] from it, and they keep away from it; and they ruin none but their own souls while they perceive not,"<sup>21</sup> which was considered by some to refer to the efforts of Quraysh to prevent Abū Ṭālib from embracing Islam on his deathbed (on which see the discussion below). The impact of the verse, taken in this context, is implicitly to absolve Abū Ṭālib of his failure to convert, while simultaneously putting full blame—and the promise of punishment—on those members of Quraysh who intimidated him.

Many of the Qurʾānic references said to relate to Abū Ṭālib, however, deal with the question of Muḥammad's intercession for him, and tend to work to his detriment rather than in his favor like the preceding example. A case in point is an account that states that the Prophet, after Abū Ṭālib's death, used to pray to God to forgive him until Qurʾān 9 (*al-Barāʾa*) v. 113 was revealed: "It is not for the Prophet and those who believe to ask forgiveness for the polytheists, even though they should be near relatives, after it has become clear to them that they are companions of the flaming fire." Certainly linking Abū Ṭālib to this particular verse made the implication about his fate vividly clear. Only somewhat less compromising to his reputation, perhaps, is the linkage of Abū Ṭālib to the revelation of Qurʾān 28 (*al-Qaṣaṣ*) v. 56: "Surely thou canst not guide whom thou lovest, but Allāh guides whom He pleases; and He knows best those who walk aright."<sup>22</sup> Other verses of the Qurʾān, too, could sometimes be used very effectively by authors who apparently wished to undercut Abū Ṭālib's reputation. Ibn Qutayba, in his *ʿUyūn al-akhbār*, for instance, mentions (with no *isnād*) that Muḥammad tried to get Abū Ṭālib to make on his deathbed the basic

16 *Ansāb* (Maḥmūdī): 35–36.

17 See section III below, nos. 3, 5, 6, 7.

18 *Iṣḍāba* 4.118 (... Abū Bishr al-Mutaqaddim < Abū Burda al-Sulamī < al-Ḥasan b. Māshāʾallāh < his father < ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. Muṭim—s—his father—s—ʿAlī).

19 On Abū l-Khaṭṭāb, see *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, "Abū l-Khaṭṭāb al-Asadī" (B. Lewis).

20 al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq al-shiʿa* (ed. Hellmut Ritter; Istanbul, 1931 = *Bibliotheca Islamica* 4): 39–41. On the idea of transmigration and God's spirit as light, see U. Rubin, "Pre-existence and light. Aspects of the concept of Nūr Muḥammad," *Israel Oriental Studies* 5 (1975): 62–119.

21 E.g., *Ansāb* (Maḥmūdī): 26 (Ibn Saʿd < al-Wāqidi < Sufyān al-Thawrī < Ḥabīb b. Abī Thābit < Yaḥyā b. Juʿda < Ibn ʿAbbās). In this and following Qurʾānic passages, I follow the translation of Muḥammad ʿAlī (5th edition, Lahore, 1963).

22 E.g., *Ansāb* (Maḥmūdī): 27–28 (Ibn Saʿd < al-Wāqidi < Sufyān al-Thawrī < Yazīd b. Abī Yazīd < ʿAbdullāh b. al-Ḥārith b. Nawfal).

statement of belief in one God, and follows it with a resounding reference to Qurʾān 4 (*al-Nisāʾ*), v 18: "And repentance is not for those who go on doing evil deeds, until when death comes to one of them, he says: Now I repent; nor (for) those who die while they are disbelievers. For such We have prepared a painful chastisement."<sup>23</sup>

### III

The most vexing problem for the historian, of course, is to establish what actually happened at Abū Ṭālib's death, a task that is complicated by the polemical content of many accounts. The accounts described in the preceding section all display a fairly obvious polemical utility (even if some of them may not, originally, have been recorded or transmitted with polemical intent). Other accounts, of a polemically "neutral" character, also existed, of course, such as one that notes simply that Abū Ṭālib died at age eighty, ten years after Muḥammad's teaching began, and was buried in the cemetery at al-Ḥajūn.<sup>24</sup> But by far the most complex accounts dealing with the question of Abū Ṭālib's fate are those that purport to describe the actual circumstances surrounding Abū Ṭālib's death. Many of them are what can be called *synthetic accounts*, that is, composite accounts constructed from a number of shorter elements that originally existed as independent "simple" accounts. In some cases, the underlying components out of which a synthetic account was built are still extant; more frequently, they must be retrieved by a process of "deconstructing" the synthetic accounts of which they now form a part, which can only be successfully done by comparison of similar accounts. Ideally, such a process will enable the investigator to determine which parts of a synthetic account represent older, perhaps historically reliable, material, which parts are somewhat later or may have obvious polemical intent, and which parts represent idiosyncratic formulations or elaborations introduced by the transmitter who constructed the synthetic account. In practice, of course, the analysis of synthetic traditions is complicated by factors such as the incomplete preservation of accounts on a certain theme or the fact that some such traditions appear to be constructed out of elements that themselves represent earlier, less extensive, attempts to synthesize existing material. Despite these shortcomings, however, the method does enable us to delve a bit more deeply into these accounts in such a way as to help us distinguish earlier from later material.

A close comparison of the accounts of Abū Ṭālib's death will enable us to isolate some of the earlier components that went into these synthetic accounts. As the analysis below of fourteen synthetic traditions will show, the most important component accounts appear to have been the following, which we list here briefly for convenience of reference:

- a Statement locating events at Abū Ṭālib's deathbed, or notice of his death
- b Description of a gathering of leaders of Quraysh at Abū Ṭālib's house to discuss the question of Muḥammad's activities
- c Muḥammad requests Abū Ṭālib to make the statement "There is no God but God," but Abū Ṭālib refuses because Quraysh would mock him
- d Muḥammad requests Abū Ṭālib to make the statement "There is no God but God," but Abū Ṭālib is dissuaded by Abū Jahl and ʿAbdullāh b. Abī Umayya
- e Muḥammad asks the Quraysh to make the statement "There is no God but God," saying that it would give them dominion over Arabs and non-Arabs; Quraysh reply with paraphrase of Qurʾān 38, vv 1-8
- f Muḥammad asks forgiveness for Abū Ṭālib until God revealed Qurʾān 9, v 113
- g Gloss to Qurʾān 28 v 56, barring intercession for unbelievers
- h Gloss to Qurʾān 6 v 26, "They forbid others from it. . . ."

Further analysis of the details of each of these component elements will follow the analysis of synthetic traditions, to which we now turn.

\* \* \*

- 1. h—Muḥammad b. Bashshār—h—Yaḥyā b. Saʿīd < Yazīd b. Kaysān—h—Abū Ḥāzim al-Ashjaʿī < Abū Hurayra (al-Tirmidhī, *Ṣaḥīḥ* [13 vols.; Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Ṣāwī]: 12.63 = commentary to Qurʾān 28: 56).

This account opens with a description of Muḥammad's effort to convert Abū Ṭālib. Abū Ṭālib refuses because he fears that Quraysh would revile him. It concludes with the remark that God revealed Qurʾān 28, v 56, "Surely thou canst not guide whom thou lovest, but Allāh guides whom he pleases. . . ." It is noteworthy that there is nothing that places this account explicitly in the context of Abū Ṭālib's death. The account appears to be a composite of elements c and g.

- 2. h—Bakr b. al-Haytham—h—Hishām b. Yūsuf < Maʿmar < al-Zuhri < Saʿīd b. al-Musayyib (Bal. *Ansāb* [ed. Maḥmūdī; Beirut: al-Muʿassasa al-ʿaḷami, 1974]: 25-26).

During Abū Ṭālib's final illness, Muḥammad tries to get Abū Ṭālib to declare his belief in God, but he refuses out of fear that the Quraysh would mock him after his death, saying he had embraced Islam out of fear of death after having repudiated it in good health. Abū Ṭālib then calls together the B. Ḥāshim and orders them to follow the Prophet and to assist him and defend him from injury. The account then notes that Qurʾān 6, v 26 was sent

23 Ibn Qutayba, *ʿUyūn al-akhbār* (4 vols.; Cairo: Wizārat al-thaqāfa wa-l-irshād al-qawmī, 1963): 1.6. Ibn Qutayba further reinforces this negative image of Abū Ṭālib by other means elsewhere in his work; cf. 2.49 top.

24 E.g., *Ansāb* (Maḥmūdī): 29 (*qālū*). On al-Ḥajūn, see Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, s.v.; it was a mountain above Mecca where the cemeteries of its inhabitants were.

down concerning Abū Ṭālib: "And they forbid [others] from it. . . ." The Prophet, after Abū Ṭālib's death, asks God's forgiveness for him until Qurʾān 9 v 113 was revealed, barring intercession.

The basic components of this account are elements a, c, f, and h, which set the context at Abū Ṭālib's death, describe one variant of the "*shahāda* episode," and provide the background explanations for the two Qurʾānic verses. However, the account also includes other information, which does not occur in other accounts about Abū Ṭālib's death, notably Abū Ṭālib's exhortation to the B. Hashim to support and aid Muḥammad. Whether this material represents another early account that has not survived elsewhere, or is an elaboration introduced by the collator who made up the synthesis, cannot be ascertained. It is noteworthy, however, that this material, which is favorable to Abū Ṭālib in that it strengthens his image as defender of the Prophet and Islam, occurs in the only synthetic account where Qurʾān 6 v 26—which is also favorable to Abū Ṭālib—is mentioned. It is therefore possible, though far from certain, that these two pieces of material made up another original early account.

3. no *isnād* (Bal. *Ansāb* [ed. Maḥmūdī]: 24).

This interesting account begins with the observation that Abū Ṭālib agreed to defend Muḥammad until his death. When the end came, Muḥammad attempted to get his uncle to state the *shahāda*, but Abū Ṭālib replied, "O nephew, I know you say only the truth, but I would hate to contravene the religion of ʿAbd al-Muṭallib, and [would hate] for the women of Quraysh to say that I was afraid at the time of death and [therefore] broke with his practice," so he died a pagan. ʿAlī was informed of his father's death, but hesitated to bury him because he had been an unbeliever. The account concludes with Muḥammad instructing ʿAlī to bury him and perform a major ablution, noting that when Muḥammad watched Abū Ṭālib's funeral he said, "I have treated you, as a relative, with kindness" (*waṣaltu-ka al-raḥim*).

In addition to the elements a and c, this account includes considerable material derived from accounts usually separate from those describing Abū Ṭālib's death—notably information about Abū Ṭālib's burial and details drawn from accounts attempting to verify Abū Ṭālib's recognition of Muḥammad's and Islam's virtues. These accounts have been noted in the preceding pages; in particular, the opening observation that Abū Ṭālib had vowed to defend Muḥammad as long as he lived, his remark that he knew Muḥammad always to speak the truth, and Muḥammad's comment *waṣaltu-ka al-raḥim* can be seen to derive from them. Such information, although sometimes occurring independently as we have seen, is not linked to the "deathbed" context in any other account examined here.

4. ak—al-Wāqidi—h—Maʿmar b. Rāshid < al-Zuhri < Saʿid b. al-Musayyib < his father (Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt* [9 vols.; ed. E. Sachau et al., Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1917–1940]: 1 / 1.77–78).

In this account the Prophet comes to Abū Ṭālib during his last illness, finding Abū Jahl and ʿAbdullāh b. Abi Umayya already with him. The Prophet asks his uncle to say "There is no God but God," but Abū Jahl and Ibn Abi Umayya ask Abū Ṭālib whether he had taken a dislike to the religion (*milla*) of ʿAbd al-Muṭallib, and the parties keep talking thus—Muḥammad urging Abū Ṭālib to make the *shahāda*, the two others pressing him about the religion of ʿAbd al-Muṭallib—until Abū Ṭālib utters as his last words that he remained in the religion of ʿAbd al-Muṭallib, and then dies. The Prophet declares that he would ask God's forgiveness for his uncle and did so until Qurʾān 9, v 113 was revealed. This account is a composite of elements a, d, and f.

5. h—Maḥmūd—h—ʿAbd al-Razzāq—ak—Maʿmar b. Rāshid < al-Zuhri < Saʿid b. al-Musayyib < his father (al-Bukhārī, *al-Ṣaḥīḥ* [Cairo, A.H. 1309]: 2.209; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Iṣāba fī tamyiz al-sahāba* [4 vols.; Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-saʿāda, A.H. 1328]: 4.116–17).

This account is virtually identical to the preceding one, except that the phrasing is slightly condensed in a few places. In addition, it ends with a revelation of both Qurʾān 9, v 113, and 28, v 56. It thus appears to be a composite of a, d, f, and g—perhaps formed by combining g with account no. 4 in a second phase of synthesis. Comparison of the *isnāds* of the two accounts indicates that the g material must have been added by ʿAbd al-Razzāq b. Hammām al-Ḥimyarī (d. A.H. 211 / A.D. 827) or by one of the later transmitters in the chain, in any case, not before the last third of the second / eighth century.

6. h—ʿAbdullāh—h—Ubayy—h—ʿAbd al-Razzāq—h—Maʿmar b. Rāshid < al-Zuhri < Saʿid b. al-Musayyib < his father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *Musnad* [6 vols.; Cairo, A.H. 1313]: 5.433).

Virtually identical to preceding account.

7. h—Ibn Saʿd < al-Wāqidi < Maʿmar b. Rāshid < al-Zuhri < Saʿid b. al-Musayyib < his father (Bal. *Ansāb* [ed. Maḥmūdī]: 35).

This account is identical to accounts 4–6 above from its beginning up to the point at which Abū Jahl and ʿAbdullāh b. Abi Umayya ask Abū Ṭālib if he had taken a dislike to the religion (here *dīn*) of ʿAbd al-Muṭallib. The account then ends by stating that Abū Ṭālib said nothing in reply to this question. No mention is made of Qurʾān 9 v 113 or 28 v 56.

Since the *isnāds* for all these accounts (4–7) share the same early links, we are faced with two possibilities for explaining the discrepancies among them; either the longer versions (accounts 4–6) represent the older form(s) of the account, from which no. 7 was derived by dropping the ending from the older account (including the Qurʾānic references) and adding the comment that Abū Ṭālib died without saying anything, or account no. 7 is the older version, from which the longer version (account



4-6) was formed changing Abū Ṭālib's words of response and adding the Qur'ānic glosses.

8. h—Maḥmūd b. Ghaylān and ʿAbd b. Ḥumayd al-Maʿnī—h—Abū Aḥmad—h—Sufyān < al-Aʿmash < Yaḥyā b. ʿUmāra < Saʿīd b. Jubayr < Ibn ʿAbbās (al-Tirmidhī, *Ṣaḥīḥ* [13 vols.; Cairo, 1931-1934]: 12.109-10; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, [see no. 6]: 1.227-28).

According to this account, a group of Quraysh came to Abū Ṭālib after he fell ill, and Muḥammad arrived while the Quraysh chiefs were there. Abū Jahl stood up as if to block the Prophet from nearing Abū Ṭālib, and complained to the latter about Muḥammad's activities, so Abū Ṭālib asked Muḥammad what he wanted of his tribe. Muḥammad replied, "I want them [to say] one word, by which the bedouin (*al-ʿarab*) will be subject to them and the non-Arabs (*al-ʿajam*) will offer tribute (*jizya*).” When they asked what that word might be, Muḥammad told them "There is no God but God.” The Quraysh responded, "One God? We never heard of this in the former religion—this must be some innovation” (a paraphrase of part of Qurʾān 38, vv 1-8). The account concludes by noting that Qurʾān 38, vv 1-8 was therefore revealed about them.

The account appears to be a fusion of elements a, b, and c, dealing with the gathering of Quraysh in Abū Ṭālib's house, and a specific formulation of the *shahāda* episode serving as the occasion for the revelation of Qurʾān 38, vv 1-8. All this is placed in the context of Abū Ṭālib's final illness. The presentation of the b material, however, does not fit very well into this context, for it seems ludicrous to suggest that Abū Ṭālib, who had for three years been undergoing with his tribe a boycott by other clans of Quraysh over Muḥammad's religious teachings, should not know what the nature of the Quraysh's complaint against Muḥammad was. Nor does it seem very likely that the Quraysh would have waited until Abū Ṭālib was on his deathbed to bring their complaints before Abū Ṭālib. It seems probable, therefore, that an early account of a meeting between Quraysh and Abū Ṭālib in which the former complained about Muḥammad's activities—an episode that presumably occurred at about the time the Quraysh decided to institute their boycott of B. Hāshim and B. Muṭallib, roughly three years before Abū Ṭālib's death—has been transposed into the context of Abū Ṭālib's death for, perhaps, dramatic effect. Other aspects of the b material—notably Abū Jahl's deliberate effort to block Muḥammad's approach to Abū Ṭālib—also seem to be intended to heighten the dramatic character of the confrontation between Muḥammad and the Quraysh.

The c material, on the other hand, appears less dramatic in intent, being focused rather on providing an explanation for the revelation of Qurʾān 38, vv 1-8. The references to ʿarab and ʿajam, as well *jizya*, suggest that this material assumed its present form after the early conquest period, perhaps at a time when the legal debate over *jizya* was much in the air, presumably after the

middle of the Umayyad period, i.e., around A.D. 700.

9. h—Abū Kurayb—h—Muʿāwiya b. Hishām < Sufyān < Yaḥyā b. ʿUmāra < Saʿīd b. Jubayr < Ibn ʿAbbās (al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr* [30 vols.; Būlāq, A.H. 1323-1329]: 23.79 lower).

This account is virtually identical to no. 8.

10. h—Ibn Wakīʿ—h—Yaḥyā b. Saʿīd < Sufyān < al-Aʿmash < Yaḥyā b. ʿUmāra < Saʿīd b. Jubayr < Ibn ʿAbbās (al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr* [see no. 9]: 23.79 lower).

Also virtually identical to nos. 8 and 9.

11. h—Abū Kurayb and Ibn Wakīʿ—h—Abū Usāma—h—al-Aʿmash—h—ʿAbbād < Saʿīd b. Jubayr < Ibn ʿAbbās (al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr* [see no. 9]: 23.79 middle).

This account resembles in most substantial respects the preceding three (accounts 8-10). In it, however, the chiefs of Quraysh complain to Abū Ṭālib about Muḥammad and ask him to summon the Prophet and to forbid him from cursing the Quraysh's gods. Abū Ṭālib summons Muḥammad, and it is for this reason that he comes to Abū Ṭālib's house. When he arrives, Abū Jahl notices that there is one free seat near Abū Ṭālib, so he sits in it himself to prevent the Prophet from doing so. After Muḥammad tells the assembly that he wants the Quraysh to say the *shahāda*, and that Arabs and non-Arabs will submit by it, the Quraysh chiefs get up in a disturbed state and, shaking the dust from their clothing, say "He has made the gods into one; indeed this is something strange” (a paraphrase of part of Qurʾān 38, vv 1-8). The account ends with the note that Qurʾān 38, vv 1-8 was revealed regarding this occasion.

12. h—Ibn Bashshār—h—ʿAbd al-Raḥmān—h—Sufyān < al-Aʿmash < Yaḥyā b. ʿUmāra < Saʿīd b. Jubayr (al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr* [see no. 9]: 23.79-80).

Virtually identical to no. 11, but lacking the notice about the Qurʾānic verses at the end.

13. h—ʿAbdullāh—h—Ubayy—h—Ḥammād b. Usāma—s—al-Aʿmash—h—ʿAbbād b. Jaʿfar < Saʿīd b. Jubayr < Ibn ʿAbbās (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *Musnad* [see no. 6]: 1.362).

Virtually identical to no. 11.

14. q—Ibn Ishāq—h—al-ʿAbbās b. ʿAbdullāh b. Maʿbad b. al-ʿAbbās < one of his family < Ibn ʿAbbās (Ibn Hishām, *Sira* [2 vols.; ed. Ferdinand Wüstenfeld; Göttingen: Dieterich, 1858-1860]: 277-78).

ʿUtba and Shayba bb. Rabīʿa, Abū Jahl, Umayya b. Khalaf and Abū Sufyān came to Abū Ṭālib along with other notables of Quraysh, asking him to call Muḥammad so that an agreement could be reached whereby they would leave one another and their religion alone. When Muḥammad arrived, Abū Ṭālib told him that the Quraysh had gathered so that he and they could make mutual assurances (literally, "so they can give to you and take

from you"). Muḥammad replied that he would give them one word which, if they say it, will let them rule the Arabs and dominate the non-Arabs. In response to their curiosity, he revealed that the intended words were "There is no God but God," and told them they should repudiate what they worshipped besides God. At this the Quraysh clapped and said, "Do you want to make all the gods into one? That is strange!" and, feeling that their efforts to reach an agreement with the Prophet were fruitless, they left. After their departure, Abū Ṭālib said to Muḥammad, "What you said wasn't so strange." Muḥammad, encouraged by these words to hope that his uncle might embrace Islam, pressed him to say the *shahāda*, telling him he would intercede on his behalf on the day of resurrection. But Abū Ṭālib refused on the grounds that the Quraysh would abuse Muḥammad and others after his death if he did so, that they would mock him, thinking that he had said it only from fear of death, and only to please Muḥammad.

When Abū Ṭālib was near death, the account continues, al-ʿAbbās saw him moving his lips and went close to listen; then he informed Muḥammad that he had heard Abū Ṭālib saying the *shahāda*. Muḥammad replied that he had not heard it.

The account continues with the remark that Qurʾān 38, vv 1-6 was revealed concerning the people who had come to Muḥammad to reach an agreement with him but rejected the oneness of God. Then, it concludes, Abū Ṭālib died.

More clearly than any of the other accounts, this one is a patchwork of several older accounts. Elements a, b, c, e, and f make up the bulk of the report, but they are not very smoothly combined. The b material, describing the gathering of Quraysh at Abū Ṭālib's house to complain about Muḥammad's preaching, is given with no reference to Abū Ṭālib's death in the material itself, but is followed by other material that takes place in that context. In order to make the two episodes fit more logically together, Ibn Iṣḥāq (d. A.H. 151 / A.D. 768) therefore prefixed the b material with an introduction that placed the Quraysh gathering at the time of Abū Ṭālib's death. That this material was originally separate from the b material is evident from the fact that Ibn Iṣḥāq's introduction is followed by the *isnād* of the b material, clearly marking its original beginning.

The combination of elements b and e in this account resembles that in accounts 8-13, except that in those accounts it is merely stated that a group of Quraysh were present with Abū Ṭālib, whereas here a list of names is provided. It is worth noting that the short list is similar to one provided in an account by al-Wāqidi for a meeting between Abū Ṭālib and the Quraysh said to have taken place earlier in Abū Ṭālib's life.<sup>25</sup> In the present account,

<sup>25</sup> *Ansāb* (Maḥmūdī): 31 (al-Wāqidi). Mentioned there are ʿUtba and Shayba bb. Rabīʿa, Ubayy b. Khalaf, Abū Jahl, al-ʿĀṣ b. Wāʿil, Muṭʿim and Ṭāʿima bb. ʿAdi, Munabbih and Nubayh bb. al-Ḥajjāj, and al-Akhnas b. Shariq al-Thaqafi.

however, the name of Abū Sufyān has been added and the names of several other Quraysh leaders dropped. It is possible that this reflects manipulation with polemical intent dating to the Umayyad period.

Peculiar to this account is the juxtaposition of elements c and e; that is, Muḥammad is shown proposing the *shahāda* to both the Quraysh and to Abū Ṭālib. In all other accounts, we find only one or the other, and the presence of both seems to reflect the fact that this account was pieced together from earlier (perhaps already synthetic) traditions. We find, however, an interesting transition between the c and the e material; after the Quraysh declare Muḥammad's idea of one God to be something strange and leave the room, Abū Ṭālib is said to tell Muḥammad that he did not find the idea of one God strange. As noted above, this serves to introduce the c material, since Muḥammad is now encouraged to ask Abū Ṭālib to say the *shahāda*. But it does so in a manner that is very favorable to Abū Ṭālib's image, implying that he accepted inwardly the idea of one God. The fact that the e material given here serves as the background for the revelation of Qurʾān 38, vv. 1-6, which comes at the end of the account, also suggests that the intervening material—element c and the episode in which al-ʿAbbās hears Abū Ṭālib murmuring the *shahāda*—was inserted in the midst of the e material, and made to fit by constructing the transition described above, which should therefore be considered relatively late.

The episode involving al-ʿAbbās is a unique element in this account. As it places both Abū Ṭālib and al-ʿAbbās in a favorable light it is tempting to see in it a vestige of pre-Abbasid polemic, when the B. Ḥāshim were attempting to establish their claim at the expense of the B. Umayya and the enmity between the Abbasids and the Ṭālibids had not yet arisen. It is more likely, however, that the episode is rather a polemical effort by Shiite apologists to demonstrate that even al-ʿAbbās himself recognized that Abū Ṭālib had become a Muslim on his deathbed, and to explain why Muḥammad himself did not seem to utter many or any statements to the effect that Abū Ṭālib had converted—for Muḥammad, as the episode would have it, did not hear Abū Ṭālib's words.

This account thus contains numerous bits of evidence to show that it has been built up from earlier, simpler elements, and that in the process much material that was favorable to Abū Ṭālib was introduced. It is interesting that this account was included in Ibn Iṣḥāq's *Sīra* and in Ibn Hishām's recension of it—a book that took shape and was widely circulated in the Abbasid period.

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Reviewing this lengthy examination of the synthetic traditions dealing with Abū Ṭālib's death, we can draw the following general conclusions:

1. One important element in several accounts describes a meeting between Abū Ṭālib and the Quraysh chiefs (referred to as element b in the foregoing analysis). As noted in the discussion of accounts 8 and 14, there is reason to think that this episode originally took place earlier in Abū Ṭālib's life, but that accounts of it were

transposed into synthetic accounts dealing with his death. In fact, separate accounts describing such an earlier meeting are extant.<sup>26</sup> The synthetic accounts describing this meeting go back to Ibn ʿAbbās (d. ca. A.H. 69 / A.D. 688), usually via Saʿīd b. Jubayr (d. A.H. 95 / A.D. 714), a prominent Qurʾān commentator and historian who was a student of Ibn ʿAbbās.<sup>27</sup> In the case of account 14, however, the chain of transmission of this material from Ibn ʿAbbās is different, passing via members of his family; it is hardly surprising, therefore, that the other material in this synthetic tradition is quite different from that in the accounts transmitted by Ibn Jubayr (accounts 8–13). One striking difference is that in account 14, the placement of the meeting in the context of Abū Ṭālib's death is only done by a late transmitter, Ibn Iṣḥāq, and it is clear that the original material deriving from Ibn ʿAbbās did not mention Abū Ṭālib's deathbed. We can conclude that the synthesis of the deathbed scene and the story of Abū Ṭālib's meeting with Quraysh in accounts 8–13 was probably done by Ibn Jubayr. The separate accounts of Abū Ṭālib's meeting with Quraysh do not have full *isnāds*, so they cannot assist us in this regard.

2. The episode in which Muḥammad proposes the *shahāda* to Quraysh, and they respond with words paraphrasing Qurʾān 38, vv 1–8 (referred to above as e) is closely linked with the meeting between Abū Ṭālib and Quraysh (element b) in accounts 8–14. This suggests that the synthesis of these two elements was already effected by Ibn ʿAbbās, probably as part of his Qurʾān commentary. On the other hand, the presence in this episode of material that seems to derive from the post-conquest period (see discussion of account 8) requires that we resist dating the episode, in its present form at least, too early. Again, it seems likely that this material was originally separate from the accounts of Abū Ṭālib's death, and later transposed into that context by Ibn Jubayr.

3. The episode in which Muḥammad asks his uncle Abū Ṭālib to state the *shahāda* occurs in two forms (referred to above as c and d). In one (element c), Abū Ṭālib refuses to state the *shahāda* for fear of the scorn of Quraysh; in the other, two prominent members of Quraysh are present and actively dissuade Abū Ṭālib from declaring the *shahāda* (element d). The first variant is transmitted by two completely different chains of authorities, one (account 1) going back via Yazīd b. Kaysān and Salmān b. Abī Ḥāzim al-Ashjaʿī (d. ca. A.H. 100 / A.D. 718) to Abū Hurayra (d. A.H. 58 / A.D. 678), and the other (account 2) via Maʿmar b. Rāshid (d. A.H. 154 / A.D. 770) and al-Zuhrī (d. A.H. 124 / A.D. 742)

to Saʿīd b. al-Musayyib (d. A.H. 94 / A.D. 713).<sup>28</sup> It is worth noting that, in the former case (account 1), the episode is not placed in the context of Abū Ṭālib's death as it is in account 2. We are probably dealing once again, then, with material that has been transposed into this context by one of its transmitters.

The second variant (element d) is given in accounts 4–7 and is also transmitted via Maʿmar b. Rāshid, al-Zuhrī, and ultimately Ibn al-Musayyib who is said to have obtained the material from his father.

It is impossible to determine with certainty which of these two variants is earlier or if both may be early. But the fact that the first variant is transmitted by at least two different chains of authorities, whereas the second is transmitted only by one of those two chains, suggests that the first variant may represent old material and the second a modification of that old material—that is, that the first form is the original account. Examination of the *isnāds*, however, forces us in this case to conclude that if we are in fact dealing with a modification or distortion of old material, the distortion must have been effected by both al-Wāqidī (d. A.H. 207 / A.D. 823 in Baghdād) and ʿAbd al-Razzāq b. Ḥammām (d. A.H. 211 / A.D. 827 in the Yemen), which seems unlikely. If the distortion was introduced by an earlier transmitter, he must have passed on both the original and the distorted form of the account, which seems equally unlikely. It is therefore tempting to conclude—however tentatively—that both forms of this episode (that is, elements c and d) represent fairly old material, already in circulation in the early eighth century A.D.

4. It is possible, as noted above in the discussion of account 2, that an early gloss of Qurʾān 6, v 26 involving Abū Ṭālib's exhortation to the B. Hāshim once circulated as a separate body of material, but it has survived only combined with other material in a synthetic account.

5. The glosses to Qurʾān 9, v 113 and Qurʾān 28, v 56, which appear in synthetic traditions combined with other material, also occur independently and probably also represent fairly early accounts.

6. Much of the remaining material found in the various synthetic accounts must be handled with caution. While it is possible that in some cases this material may represent very early accounts that were only transmitted to and synthesized by one particular authority, it seems more likely that such material reflects later elaborations carried out with polemical or dramatic intent.

28 On Salmān b. Abī Ḥāzim al-Ashjaʿī, see *GAS* 1.index; on Abū Hurayra, see *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd. edition, "Abū Hurayra" (J. Robson). On Maʿmar b. Rāshid, see *GAS* 1.290–91; on al-Zuhrī, *GAS* 1.280–83; on Saʿīd b. al-Musayyib, *GAS* 1.276. The episode in which Abū Ṭālib refuses to say the *shahāda* out of fear of the scorn of Quraysh (element c) is also found in account 3 (no *isnād*), and in account 14. In the latter it may not belong to the material conveyed by the opening *isnād*, because it is separated from that material by the word *qāla*, which may indicate that it was originally independent.

26 *Ansāb* (Maḥmūdī): 31 (al-Wāqidī); Ibn Hishām, *Sira* (2 vols.; ed. Ferdinand Wüstenfeld; Göttingen; Dieterich, 1858–1860): 167. The latter is evidently a "dressed up" version, but probably is based in its essentials on simpler old accounts describing a meeting between the two parties.

27 On Ibn ʿAbbās see Fuat Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums* (5 vols.; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967–1975): 1.25–28 (Hereinafter *GAS*). On Ibn Jubayr, see *GAS* 1.28–29.