The Rebellious Son: Umayyad Hereditary Succession and the Origins of Ḥijāzī Opposition*

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Abstract

This article concerns early representations in Arabic-Islamic sources of Ḥijāzī opposition to the dynastic succession initiated by Muʿāwiya b. Abī Sufyān shortly before his death in 41/661. The study emphasizes the importance of Qurʾānic exegesis for understanding the origin of the Ḥijāzī-Umayyad debate over rightful caliphal succession. It also demonstrates that examining how this episode is depicted in various literary genres offers a wider perspective on the construction of historical narratives in terms of provenance, protagonists, and objectives. The analysis of tafsīr *interpretations of Q 46:17, which serve as the article's underpinning, reveals that the Umayyad court promoted the view that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr was the rebellious son mentioned in this verse. Depictions of this dispute in the* ḥadīth, ansāb, *and* adab *genres clearly connect Marwān b. al-Ḥakam with this interpretation after ʿAbd al-Raḥmān questioned Muʿāwiya's appointment of his son Yazīd as his successor. The portrayals of the Ḥijāzī-Umayyad debate in* taʾrīkh *accounts represent a different perspective, one that shows a transition from a tribal and provincial setting to a broader caliphal political framework. The gradual shift from a reliance on Medinan transmitters to a focus on Iraqi authorities testifies to this orientation, as does the appearance of new leading protagonists. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's central role as a leader of the Ḥijāzī opposition to the Umayyads in the* tafsīr, ḥadīth, *and* adab *literature becomes secondary and overshadowed by other Ḥijāzī figures, particularly ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Zubayr.*

1. Introduction

The establishment of the Umayyad caliphate by Muʿāwiya b. Abī Sufyān (r. 41–60/661–680) represents a new stage in early Islamic history. Not only did he come to power under contentious circumstances, but he also initiated disputed religio-political transformations.[1]

* This article is dedicated to my parents (Arifa and Mahmud) for their endless love and support.

1. On Muʿāwiya's introduction of new religious rituals, see al-Maqdisī, *Kitāb al-Badʾ wa-l-taʾrīkh* (Beirut: Maktabat Khayyāṭ, n.d.), 6:5–6; Abdesselam Cheddadi, *Les Arabes et l'appropriation de l'histoire: Émergences*

His most controversial venture was turning the office of the caliph into a dynastic monarchy by asking Muslims to pledge allegiance to his oldest son Yazīd (r. 60–64/680–683). This shift also brought about modifications to the succession traditions established by previous caliphs,[2] particularly Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (r. 11–13/632–634) and ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (r. 13–23/634–644). Besides hereditary succession, Muʿāwiya also introduced changes to the accession ritual[3] and the oath of allegiance (*bayʿa*) ceremony.[4] Thus, the question of rightful succession and legitimate leadership lay at the center of Islamic religio-political discourses. The main opposition to Muʿāwiya's plan for dynastic succession came from the Ḥijāz,[5] and it was spearheaded particularly by Medinan leaders. In response, the Umayyads adopted certain strategies to silence opposition: they used force and constructed counternarratives[6] that could bestow religio-political legitimacy upon their caliphate.[7]

This article examines portrayals of the Ḥijāzī opposition to Muʿāwiya's initiation of dynastic succession in early Islamic sources from different literary perspectives. It pivots around the analysis of early interpretations of Qurʾān 46:17, seeking to identify connections between the Umayyad-Ḥijāzī dispute over succession and the circulation of competing interpretations regarding the identity of the rebellious son mentioned in this verse. It also

et premiers développements de l'historiographie jusqu'au II/VIII siècle (Paris: Sindbad-Actes Sud, 2004), 38; Najam Haider, "Muʿāwiya in Ḥijāz: The Study of a Tradition," in *Law and Tradition in Classical Islamic Thought: Studies in Honor of Professor Hossein Modarressi*, ed. Michael Cook et al., 43–64 (New York: Palgrave, 2013).

2. Hugh Kennedy, *Caliphate: A History of an Idea* (New York: Basic Books, 2016), 34–38; Andrew Marsham, *Rituals of Islamic Monarchy: Accession and Succession in the First Muslim Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 81–83; Stephen Humphreys, *Muʿawiya ibn Abi Sufyan: From Arabia to Empire* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2006), 98–101; Khaled Keshk, *The Historians' Muʿāwiya: The Depiction of Muʿāwiya in the Early Islamic Sources* (Saarbrücken: Verlag Dr. Müller, 2008), 142–75.

3. Muʿāwiya's accession ritual was a combination of Roman Christian kingship and Ḥijāzī religio-political traditions. See Marsham, *Rituals of Islamic Monarchy*, 89–90.

4. Since the inception of the caliphate the *bayʿa* served as the central ritual through which Muslim dignitaries and tribal leaders pledged allegiance to the newly elected caliph. Turning the caliphate into a hereditary position, the Umayyads introduced the institution of *wilāyat al-ʿahd* (succession). In doing so, they transformed the *bayʿa* "from a consensus-based, tribal custom into an instrument of monarchic power." Marsham, *Rituals of Islamic Monarchy*, 40–44, 83.

5. For a good discussion on this phase of Islamic history, see Humphreys, *Muʿawiya ibn Abi Sufyan*, 77–84; Matthew Gordon, *The Rise of Islam* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 33–35; Mizrap Polat, *Der Umwandlungsprozess vom Kalifat zur Dynastie: Regierungspolitik und Religion beim ersten Umayyadenherrscher Muʿāwiya ibn Abī Sufyān* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1999), 56–65; Gerald Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam: The Umayyad Caliphate, AD 661–750* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press, 1987), 34–35.

6. For the use of the past and genealogy, see Cheddadi, *Les Arabes*, 55–63.

7. For discussions on the Umayyads' concept of caliphate (*khilāfa*) and the religious foundations of their political power, see Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds, *God's Caliph: Religious Authority in the First Centuries of Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 24–42, 58–80; Uri Rubin, "Prophets and Caliphs: The Biblical Foundation of the Umayyad Authority," in *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins*, ed. Herbert Berg, 87–99 (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Fred Donner, "Umayyad Efforts at Legitimization: The Umayyads' Silent Heritage," in *Umayyad Legacies: Medieval Memories from Syria to Spain*, ed. Antoine Borrut and Paul Cobb, 187–211 (Leiden: Brill, 2010); Wadad al-Qadi, "The Religious Foundation of Late Umayyad Ideology and Practice," in *The Articulation of Early Islamic State Structures*, ed. Fred Donner, 37–79 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012).

explores how the interplay between these Qurʾānic commentaries and other literary genres can enhance our understanding of the dynamics affecting narrative construction in terms of arrangements, settings, main characters, motives, and objectives. This study thereby touches on a number of topics pertinent to the study of the formative period of Islam. Such is the case with power relationships between the Umayyad central government and regional Ḥijāzī leadership,[8] the emergence of new Islamic religious elite,[9] and the transmission of reports from the Ḥijāz (particularly Medina) to other centers of learning, such as Basra and Kufa.[10] The examination of these themes also offers insights into the evolution of early Islamic historical writing.

Methodologically, the article rests primarily on a source-critical comparative analysis of relevant reports. The evaluation of the chains of transmission (*isnād*s) and relevant biographical details about the narrators as well as about some protagonists are essential to a full appreciation of the provenance, evolution, and reliability of these reports. Diverse literary genres, such as Qurʾānic exegesis (*tafsīr*), prophetic tradition (*ḥadīth*), belles-lettres (*adab*), and historical narratives (*akhbār)*, are vital to this study. Before we analyze the different views of Q 46:17 presented in the commentaries, a few words ought to be said about modern scholarship on the Umayyad period.

2. The Umayyads in Modern Scholarship

The Umayyad caliphate represents a significant stage in the formative period of Islam and one that is regarded as controversial by modern scholars. The complexity of this subject stems from the nature of the early Islamic sources, which are not contemporaneous to the events they purport to describe. Two major procedural premises inform modern scholarship on this period, the first of which concerns the question of the authenticity of early Islamic traditions. Second, scholars differ on the methodological approaches and strategies best suited to investigating this stage of Islamic history. This debate permeates all areas of Islamic studies, including Qurʾānic studies,[11] Qurʾānic exegesis,[12] prophetic

8. For discussion on the relations between caliphs and Ḥijāzī elites during the second/eighth century, see Harry Munt, "Caliphal Imperialism and Hijazi Elites in the Second/Eighth Century," *al-Masāq* 28 (2016): 6–21.

9. Asad Ahmed applies matrilineal lineages to examine the sociopolitical networks that five Ḥijāzī families developed during the Umayyad and eary Abbasid period. See *The Religious Elite of the Early Islamic Hijaz: Five Prosopographical Case Studies* (Oxford, 2011).

10. Medina was the first center of learning in Islam, and many Companions and Successors moved from there to the two Iraqi cities of Kufa and Basra. Scott Lucas, *Constructive Critics, Ḥadīth Literature, and the Articulation of Sunnī Islam: The Legacy of the Generation of Ibn Saʿd, Ibn Maʿīn, and Ibn Ḥanbal* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 221–37, 332–58.

11. Angelika Neuwirth, "Qurʾan and History: A Disputed Relationship; Some Reflections on Qurʾanic History and History of the Qurʾan," *Journal of Qurʾānic Studies* 5, no. 1 (2003): 1–18, esp. 1–11.

12. For an informative discussion about this debate, see Harald Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions: Studies in Legal, Exegetical and Maghāzī Ḥadīth* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 231–303; idem, "The Question of the Authenticity of Muslim Traditions Reconsidered: A Review Article," in *Method and Theory*, ed. Herbert Berg, 211–57; Herbert Berg, *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period* (Richmond: Curzon, 2003), 6–64; C. H. M. Versteegh, *Arabic Grammar and Qurʾānic Exegesis in Early Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 41–61.

tradition, jurisprudence,[13] and historical narratives.[14]

Besides the question of the reliability of the sources, scholars of the Umayyad caliphate face two additional obstacles. The first is that almost all materials available on the Umayyads were composed during the caliphate of their sworn enemies, the Abbasids. Hence, the construction of the Umayyads' historical memory was greatly inspired by an Abbasid ideological agenda that manipulated authors' historical objectives. Second, these Abbasid-inspired portrayals of the Umayyads, being composed in Iraq, were geographically distant from the center of the Umayyad caliphate.[15] Modern scholars, therefore, have to resort to more effective methodologies and strategies for a better understanding of the Umayyad period.[16] The application of different genres to illuminate the Umayyad-Ḥijāzī dispute over hereditary succession is this article's methodological contribution.

3. Who Is the Rebellious Son in Qurʾān 46:17?

This section considers divergent views on the identity of the rebellious son in early commentaries on Qurʾān 46:17 (*Sūrat al-Aḥqāf*). The verse reads:

> The one who said to his parents: "Uff to you; are you promising me that I will be raised up when generations before me had already passed while they cried for the help of God?" [The parents' response:] "Woe to you! Believe! Indeed, the promise of God is true." But he said: "These are nothing but the tales of previous generations."

The verse depicts a disobedient son whom his devout parents are entreating to renounce paganism and embrace the path of God. The son not only rudely defies these appeals but also dismisses the imminence of the Day of Judgment as a worthless tale of the ancients. Besides the theme of infidelity (*kufr*), the verse emphasizes rebelliousness to parents (*ʿuqūq*), which amounts to a grave sin in Islam.[17] The Qurʾānic exegetical tradition is full of references to this verse, seemingly, as we shall see, for its political implications. We ought to remember

13. Harald Motzki, *The Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence: Meccan Fiqh before the Classical Schools*, trans. Marion Katz (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 1–49.

14. Fred Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing* (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1998), 1–31; Albrecht Noth and Lawrence Conrad, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: A Source-Critical Study*, trans. Michael Bonner (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1994), 2–25.

15. Steven Judd, *Religious Scholars and the Umayyads: Piety-Minded Supporters of the Marwānid Caliphate* (London: Routledge, 2014), 3–20; Antoine Borrut, *Entre mémoire et pouvoir: L'espace syrien sous les derniers Omeyyades et les premiers Abbassides (v. 72–193/692–909)* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 11–37; idem, "The Future of the Past: Historical Writing in Early Islamic Syria and the Umayyad Memory," in *Power, Patronage, and Memory in Early Islam*, ed. Alain George and Andrew Marsham, 275–300 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

16. Tayeb El-Hibri, "The Redemption of Umayyad Memory by the ʿAbbāsids," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 61, no. 4 (2002): 241–65; Antoine Borrut, "La memoria omeyyade: Les Omeyyades entre souvenir et oubli dans les sources narratives islamiques," in Borrut and Cobb, *Umayyad Legacies*, 25–61, esp. 33–35.

17. The Qurʾān and the *ḥadīth* literature are full of admonitory references to rebelliousness to parents. See Qurʾān 2:83; 4:36; 17:23–24; 29:6; 29:14; 31:14; 46:15. See also ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *al-Muṣannaf* (Beirut: al-Majlis al-ʿIlmī, 1983), 11:163–67; al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, ed. Aḥmad Shākir and Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Bāqī (Cairo: Dār Ibn al-Haytham, 2004), 707–8 (nos. 5975–77).

that the early *tafsīr* tradition emerged initially to provide brief lexical explanations and clarity regarding syntactical ambiguities in selected Qurʾānic verses.[18] The use of Qurʾānic exegesis to gain political profit seems to have arisen at a later stage.[19]

Early Qurʾānic commentaries on Q 46:17, which can be traced back as early as to the mid-second/eighth century, center on the identity of the rebellious son in this verse. The first of four major interpretations identifies the disobedient son as ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr (d. 53/673). This view, henceforth referred to as the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative, is the preponderant one in the commentaries. The second interpretation reflects early counterreports to the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative. The third view associates the disobedient son in Q 46:17 with other sons of Abū Bakr. The fourth position sees the rebellious son as a broad concept, unconnected to any specific individual.

An examination of the transmission of these views contributes to understanding their provenance and evolution. The authorities affiliated with these interpretations are, as we shall see, absent from commentaries composed before the beginning of the third/ninth century, particularly in presentations of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative. Identifying the authorities for these competing views involves dealing with a number of contradictions and inconsistencies, especially as few of these *tafsīr* accounts provide full *isnāds*. Finally, Basran scholars, who maintained scholarly connections with Medinan authorities, are notably present in the transmission histories of these reports. The following subsections offer a detailed analysis of the origins and evolution of the four interpretations of Q 46:17.

3.1 The ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Narrative

The identification of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr with the rebellious son in Q 46:17 is, as previously mentioned, the predominant view in early Islamic *tafsīr* works. Given his centrality to these interpretations, it is instructive first to outline his biography. He was the oldest son of the first caliph, Abū Bakr, and the full brother of ʿĀʾisha (d. 58/678), the Prophet's wife. He had also two half-brothers, ʿAbd Allāh (d. 8/630) and Muḥammad (d. 38/658), and two half-sisters, Asmāʾ (d. 73/692) and Umm Kulthūm. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's pre-Islamic past somewhat tarnished his biographical image. First, during the battles of Badr and Uḥud he sided with the Quraysh against the Muslims, and he even sought to meet his

18. There is debate among modern scholars about how and when the *tafsīr* tradition began. Some trace its genesis to Ibn ʿAbbās (d. 67/687). However, others consider him a mythical figure and they place the beginning of the exegetical tradition somewhere in the second/eighth century. Claude Gilliot, "The Beginnings of Qurʾanic Exegesis," in *The Qurʾan: Formative Interpretation*, ed. Andrew Rippin, 1–27 (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 1999); Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 231–303; Fred Leemhuis, " Origins and Early Development of the *Tafsīr* Tradition," In *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qurʾān*, ed. Andrew Rippin, 13–30 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2013).

19. Versteegh, *Arabic Grammar*, 63–65, 84–89; Gilliot, "Beginnings of Qurʾanic Exegesis," 20–22; Y. Goldfeld, "The Development of Theory on Qurʾānic Exegesis in Islamic Scholarship," *Studia Islamica* 67 (1988): 5–27, esp. especially 14–16; idem, "Discussion and Debate in Early Commentaries of the Qurʾān," in *With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, ed. Jane McAuliffe et al., 320–28 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

father in a duel at Badr, which was prevented thanks to the Prophet's intervention.[20] Second, he converted to Islam relatively late, around the time of the signing of the Ḥudaybiya treaty in 6/628. Finally, Islamic sources refer to ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's passionate love of a Ghassānid woman named Laylā, the daughter of al-Jūdiyy. He is reported to have been so consumed by his passion that he composed amatory verses for the woman, which reverberate in the Islamic sources.[21] This biographical background elucidates ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's blackened image in terms of religiosity, earnestness, and precedence in Islam. Perhaps his past made him an easy target of criticism for his detractors, especially since he was the oldest son of the first caliph who served as a model of devotion and legitimate rulership. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's biography provides the justification for his identification as the disobedient son in Q 46:17 in Ibn ʿAṭiyya al-Andalusī's (d. 541/1146) *tafsīr* work, which justifies the identification on three grounds: ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's siding with the Quraysh against the Muslims at Badr, seeking to fight his father in a duel, and being the oldest but weak-willed son of the first caliph.[22]

Muqātil b. Sulaymān's (d.150/767) *tafsīr*, considered the first still extant exegesis to provide comprehensive commentary on the entire Qurʾān, contains the earliest reference to the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative.[23] Muqātil's teachers included Mujāhid b. Jabr (d.104/722) and Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 124/741–742).[24] Many subsequent scholars viewed Muqātil as a controversial figure and an unreliable *ḥadīth* transmitter and exegete.[25] The absence of *isnād*s in his *tafsīr* raised suspicions among many scholars regarding the reliability of his work.[26]

Muqātil's interpretation of Q 46:17, presented without an authority, names ʿAbd al-Raḥmān as the rebellious son. Echoing the Qurʾānic narrative, he also relates that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's parents, Abū Bakr and Umm Rūmān bt. ʿAmr b. ʿĀmir[27] (d. 6/628),[28] worked to convince him to embrace Islam, but their efforts were to no avail. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān not only denied the Day of Judgment but also claimed that none of the deceased Qurayshite

20. Al-Wāqidī, *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, ed. M. Jones (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), 1:257.

21. Al-Zubayrī, *Kitāb Nasab Quraysh*, ed. Evariste Lévi-Provençal (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1976), 276; Ibn Abī Khaythama, *al-Taʾrīkh al-kabīr*, ed. Ṣalāḥ Hilāl (Cairo: al-Fārūq al-Ḥadītha li-l-Nashr, 2006), 2:882–84.

22. Ibn ʿAṭiyya, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿazīz*, ed. ʿAbd al-Salām Muḥammad (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2001), 5:99.

23. Nicolai Sinai, "The Qurʾanic Commentary of Muqātil b. Sulaymān and the Evolution of Early *Tafsīr* Literature," in *Tafsīr and Islamic Intellectual History: Exploring the Boundaries of a Genre,* ed. Andreas Görke and Johanna Pink, 113–43 (London: Oxford University Press, 2014), 113; Kees Versteegh, "Grammar and Exegesis: The Origins of Kufan Grammar and the *Tafsīr Muqātil*," *Der Islam* 67 (1990): 206–42, 207–9.

24. Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-aʿyān wa-anbāʾ abnāʾ al-zamān*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 2005), 5: 255.

25. Al-Baghdādī, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Baghdād*, ed. Bashshār Maʿrūf (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2001), 15:208–19; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, 5:256–57; Sinai, "Qurʾanic Commentary," 113–14.

26. Al-Baghdādī, *Taʾrīkh*, 15:208–13.

27. He appears in other sources as ʿĀmir b. ʿUwaymir. See al-Zubayrī, *Kitāb Nasab Quraysh*, 276; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās (Beirut: Franz Steiner, 1996), 5:169.

28. Umm Rūmān was from the tribe of Kināna. Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, ed. ʿAbbās, 5:167–68.

dignitaries, such as ʿAbd Allāh b. Jadʿān, ʿUthmān b. ʿAmr, and ʿĀmir b. ʿAmr,[29] would make it back from the dead.[30] A similar presentation of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative appears in the *tafsīr* works of al-Farrāʾ (d. 207/822),[31] Hūd b. Muḥakkam al-Hawwārī (d. ca. 280/893),[32] and Ibn Abī Zamanīn (d. 399/1009).[33] However, unlike Muqātil and Hūd, the other two commentators include other views regarding the identity of the disobedient son, which will be discussed later.

ʿAbd al-Razzāq b. Hammām al-Ṣanʿānī's (d. 211/827) *tafsīr*[34] seems to be the earliest work to present the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative along with its transmitters. It is worth noting that his account includes other interpretations as well, which will be examined later. ʿAbd al-Razzāq traces the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān version through his teacher, Maʿmar b. Rāshid (d. 153/770),[35] back to the Basran Qatāda b. Diʿāma al-Sadūsī (d. 117/735) and the Kufan Muḥammad b. Ṣāʾib al-Kalbī (d. 146/767). More than other scholars, Qatāda is associated with the transmission of commentaries on Q 46:17, particularly the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative. A few biographical details about Qatāda, therefore, are useful for understanding his role in the debate. Qatāda occupies a conspicuous place in Islamic traditions as a knowledgeable expert on language, genealogy, *tafsīr*, and *ḥadīth* literature.[36] He was among the prominent Successors who contributed to the evolution of the *tafsīr* tradition. His famous teachers included the Medinan Saʿīd b. al-Musayyib (d. 94/715) and Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728).[37] Qatāda had many students, the closest of whom was Maʿmar b. Rāshid,[38] who also studied for many years with

29. These were some of the tribe's notables in pre-Islamic Meccan society. Al-Sadūsī, *Kitāb Ḥadhf man nasaba Quraysh*, ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-Jadīd, 1976), 76–77.

30. Muqātil b. Sulymān, *Tafsīr*, ed. ʿAbd Allāh Shiḥāta (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Tārīkh al-ʿArabī, 2002), 4:21–22.

31. Al-Farrāʾ, *Maʿānī al-Qurʾān*, ed. Muḥammad al-Najjār and Aḥmad Najātī (Beirut: Dār ʿĀlam al-Kutub, 1983), 3:53–54.

32. Hūd b. Muḥakkam al-Hawwārī, *Tafsīr kitāb Allāh al-ʿazīz*, ed. Balḥāj Sharīfī (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1990), 4:149.

33. Ibn Abī Zamanīn, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿazīz*, ed. Ḥusayn ʿUkāsha and Muḥammad al-Kanz (Cairo: al-Fārūq al-Ḥadītha li-l-Ṭibāʿa wa-l-Nashr, 2002), 4:227.

34. Fuat Sezgin argues that this work is basically a modification of the work of his teacher Maʿmar b. Rāshid (d. 154/770). See Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums* (Leiden: Brill, 1967), 1:99.

35. ʿAbd al-Razzāq relies heavily on Maʿmar b. Rāshid, especially in his *tafsīr* and his *Muṣannaf*. Ibn Rāshid was a native of Basra and was a student of a number of renowned scholars, such as Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728), Qatāda (d. 117/735), and al-Zuhrī (d. 124/741–42). See Maʿmar b. Rāshid, *The Expeditions: An Early Biography of Muḥammad*, ed. and trans. Sean Anthony (New York: NYU Press, 2014), xix–xxiv; Nicolet Boekhoff-van der Voort, "The *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* of ʿAbd al-Razzāq b. Hammām al-Ṣanʿānī: Searching for Earlier Source-Material," in *The Transmission and Dynamics of the Textual Sources of Islam: Essays in Honour of Harald Motzki*, ed. Nicolet Boekhoff-van der Voort, Kees Versteegh, and Joas Wagemakers, 27–48 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 30–31.

36. Al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufassirīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1983), 2:47–48; Abdulrahman Al-Salimi, *Early Islamic Law in Basra in the 2nd/8th Century: Aqwāl Qatāda b. Diʿāma al-Sadūsī* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 4.

37. Suleiman Mourad mentions that Qatāda was one of the most renowned students of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. See Mourad, *Early Islam between Myth and History: Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110 H/728 CE) and the Formation of His Legacy in Classical Islamic Scholarship* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 47.

38. Maʿmar b. Rāshid, *Expeditions*, xxiii.

al-Zuhrī.[39] However, some Muslim scholars criticized Qatāda for being an untrustworthy *ḥadīth* transmitter[40]and for his failure to provide *isnād*s in his *tafsīr.*[41] Like other prominent scholars, Qatāda was involved in theological controversies with far-reaching political implications for Umayyad politics. For example, there are contradictory reports about the extent to which he professed Qadarite beliefs.[42] However, there are some allusions to the good relations that Qatāda maintained with the Umayyad rulers.[43] For example, Ibn Khallikān (d. 681/1282) relates that Umayyad emissaries frequented Qatāda's house, seeking his expertise on different matters.[44] The Umayyads' recruitment of well-known religious scholars to promote their religio-political propaganda[45] and counter the criticisms of their enemies (such as Ibn al-Zubayr)[46] was common practice.[47]

More importantly, Qatāda's connection with the Umayyads surfaces in later commentaries on Q 46:17. For example, al-Samarqandī (d. 375/985) portrays Marwān b. al-Ḥakam (r. 64–65/684–85) as the mastermind behind the circulation of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative, but without explaining his motives.[48] The same report is found in the *tafsīr* works of Ibn ʿAṭiyya and Abū Ḥayyān (d. 745/1344),[49] who also provide more details about the dispute's background.[50] They relate that Marwān initiated the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative when he served as the governor of Medina and lobbied for the appointment of Yazīd as Muʿāwiya's successor. Both assert that Qatāda espoused Marwān's interpretation of Q 46:17. A detailed discussion of Marwān's involvement in the circulation of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān version follows later in this article.

39. Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 4–11.

40. Al-Salimi, *Early Islamic Law*, 5–7.

41. Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, ed. ʿAṭā Muṣṭafā ʿAbd al-Qādir (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1994), 8:307.

42. Ibn Saʿd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAṭā (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1997), 7:171–73; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī asmāʾ al-rijāl*, ed. Bashshār Maʿrūf (Muʾassasat al-Risāla, 1992), 23:498–517; Sezgin, *Geschichte*, 1:31–32; Al-Salimi, *Early Islamic Law*, 7–8. The Qadarites were a sect that endorsed the doctrine of free will based on the notion that all individuals are responsible before God for their actions. The sect was perceived as a threat by the Umayyad authorities. Josef van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra: Eine Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im frühen Islam* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1991–97), 1:72–117.

43. Judd, *Religious Scholars*, 39–90.

44. Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, 4:85–86.

45. Borrut, *Entre mémoire et pouvoir*, 42–49.

46. Wilferd Madelung, "ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr the *Mulḥid*," in Madelung, *Studies in Medieval Muslim Thought and History*, ed. Sabine Schmidtke (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Variorum, 2013), no. 17.

47. Judd, *Religious Scholars*, 39–90.

48. Ibn ʿAṭiyya, *Muḥarrar*, 5:98–99.

49. Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ fī al-tafsīr*, ed. ʿĀdil ʿAbd al-Mawjūd et al. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1993), 8:61–62.

50. Al-Samarqandī, *Baḥr al-ʿulūm*, ed. ʿAlī Muʿawwaḍ, ʿĀdil ʿAbd al-Mawjūd, and Aḥmad al-Nūtī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1993), 3:233.

The name of Muḥammad al-Kalbī makes infrequent but contradictory appearances in the transmission of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative. For example, al-Jurjānī (d. 471/1078) traces the narrative back to al-Kalbī,[51] whereas Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's (d. 606/1209–1210) uses al-Kalbī as an authority to deny that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was the disobedient son in the verse.[52] The incorporation of al-Kalbī by some commentators stems from his prominence as an early scholar. Besides his expertise in genealogy, philology, Arab-Islamic history, and biblical materials, al-Kalbī also reportedly authored an early comprehensive *tafsīr* work. Although his reliability as both a Qurʾānic exegete and a *ḥadīth* transmitter was questioned by many Muslim scholars,[53] the attribution of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative to him seems to have been intended to strengthen the validity and the circulation of this view by connecting it to a well-known exegete. The same motivation appears in the affiliation of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative with other prominent *tafsīr* scholars, such as the Kufan al-Suddī (d. 128/745).

Al-Suddī, a *ḥadīth* scholar, played a major role in the evolution of the *tafsīr* tradition during the Umayyad caliphate. He was one of Ibn ʿAbbās's (d. 68/687) students and authored one of the earliest *tafsīr* works.[54] However, like other leading scholars active during the Umayyad caliphate, al-Suddī found his reliability as a *ḥadīth* transmitter subjected to criticism by some biographers. Some scholars even accused him of being a Shiʿite and of attacking the first two caliphs.[55] The attribution of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative to al-Suddī is presented without *isnād*s in the commentaries of Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. 327/938),[56] al-Māwardī (d. 450/1058),[57] and al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505).[58]

In some later commentaries on Q 46:17, al-Suddī figures as an authority on the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative alongside other early prominent Basran or Meccan *tafsīr* experts. For example, al-Ṭabrisī (d. 548/1153) presents this view, though without a complete *isnād*, on the authority of al-Suddī, Ibn ʿAbbās, Abū al-ʿĀliya al-Riyāḥī (d. ca. 93/712),[59] and Mujāhid b. Jabr.[60] Both al-Suddī and Qatāda feature as the originators of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān

51. Al-Jurjānī, *Darj al-durar fī tafsīr al-āy wa-l-suwar*, ed. Ṭalʿat al-Farḥān and Muḥammad Shakkūr (Amman: Dār al-Fikr, 2009), 2:566.

52. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1981), 18:23.

53. Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, ed. ʿAlī Ṭawīl (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1996), 152–53; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 1:417; 9:178–79; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, 25:250; Sezgin, *Geschichte*, 1:34–35.

54. Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 6:318; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān*, ed. Shuʿayb al-Arnaʾūṭ (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risāla, 2008), 786–87; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1:110; Sezgin, *Geschichte*, 1:32–33.

55. Al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, 3:132–38.

56. Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿaẓīm*, ed. Asʿad al-Ṭayyib (Riyadh: Maktabat Nizār al-Bāz, 1997), 10:3295–96.

57. Al-Māwardī, *al-Nukat wa-l-ʿuyūn, tafsīr al-Māwardī*, ed. al-Sayyid b. ʿAbd al-Raḥīm (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya and Muʾassasat al-Kutub al-Thaqāfiyya, 1992), 5:280.

58. Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr fī al-tafsīr bi-l-maʾthūr*, ed. ʿAbd Allāh al-Turkī (Cairo: Markaz Hajr li-l-Buḥūth wa-l-Dirāsāt al-ʿArabiyya wa-l-Islāmiyya, 2003), 13:329.

59. His name was Rufayʿ b. Mihrān and he was a prominent Basran expert on Qurʾānic exegesis and a student of Ibn ʿAbbās. Al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, 3:249–52.

60. Al-Ṭabrisī, *Majmaʿ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1997), 9:109.

narrative in al-Qurṭubī's (d. 671/1273) *tafsīr*.[61] The prominent place that Ibn ʿAbbās occupies in the evolution of the Islamic *ḥadīth* and *tafsīr* traditions is undeniable.[62] His inclusion in the discussion on the identity of the rebellious son in Q 46:17, therefore, should come as no surprise. The use of Ibn ʿAbbās as an authority reflects efforts to increase the probability of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative, seemingly in reaction to attempts to refute its authenticity.[63] Ibn al-Jawzī's (d. 597/1201) *Zād al-masīr* presents a good example of this orientation: he cites Ibn ʿAbbās as originating the view that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān is the disobedient son, but he claims that the exchange described in the verse occurred before ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's conversion to Islam.[64] The attribution of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative to early prominent Basran and Ḥijāzī *tafsīr* authorities suggests that this view was the dominant interpretation in early commentaries on Q 46:17, which made refuting it more difficult.

3.2 Early Alternatives to the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Narrative

Early efforts to refute the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative are found in the commentaries of al-Farrāʾ, ʿAbd al-Razzāq, and al-Nasāʾī (d. 303/915). Al-Farrāʾ bases his refutation on the lexical interpretation of Q 46:18. He contends that the rebellious son in Q 46:17 is not ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, but rather his forefathers.[65] Later exegetes, such as al-Zajjāj (d. 311/923),[66] Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 437/1045),[67] al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1050),[68] and al-Samʿānī (d. 562/1167)[69] share this view, adding further details that will be discussed later.

In ʿAbd al-Razzāq's account, his father, Hammām, told him that Mīnāʾ b. Abī Mīnāʾ al-Zuhrī[70] heard ʿĀʾisha bt. Abī Bakr deny the association of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān with the disobedient son in Q 46:17. She claimed, adds ʿAbd al-Razzāq, that the verse concerned someone else (*fulān*) instead and mentioned a name, which is is not specified in this report.[71] No details, however, are given about the background against which ʿĀʾisha defended her brother. Notably, in ʿAbd al-Razzāq's version, ʿĀʾisha appears as the main authority for refuting the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative. Besides being the Prophet's wife and Abū Bakr's

61. Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ li-aḥkām al-Qurʾān*, ed. ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Mahdī (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 2007), 15:169.

62. Al-Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 783-85; Gilliot, "Beginnings of Qurʾanic Exegesis," 7–13.

63. Al-Suyūṭī questions the reliability of many *tafsīr* reports traced back to Ibn ʿAbbās. *Al-Itqān*, 785-88.

64. Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-masīr fī ʿilm al-tafsīr*, ed. ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Mahdī (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 2010), 4:109.

65. Al-Farrāʾ, *Maʿānī*, 3:53–54.

66. Al-Zajjāj, *Maʿānī al-Qurʾān*, ed. ʿAbd al-Jalīl Shalabī (Beirut: ʿĀlam al-Kutub, 1988), 4: 443–44.

67. Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib, *al-Hidāya ilā bulūgh al-nihāya* (Sharjah: Kulliyyat al-Sharīʿa wa-l-Dirāsāt al-Islāmiyya, Jāmiʿat al-Shāriqa, 2008), 11: 345.

68. Al-Ṭūsī, *al-Tibyān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān*, ed. Aḥmad al-ʿĀmilī (Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, n.d.), 9:279.

69. Al-Samʿānī, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān*, ed. Ghunaym b. Ghunaym (Riyadh: Dār al-Waṭan, 1997), 5:155.

70. Mīnāʾ, who was the *mawlā* of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAwf (d. 32/653), was considered by many scholars to be an untrustworthy *ḥadīth* transmitter. See al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, 29:245–48; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 15:354.

71. ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *Tafsīr*, 3:201.

daughter, she also played a major role in the religious and political life of the early Islamic community.[72] Her presence in the interpretations of Q 46:17 was crucial in clearing ʿAbd al-Raḥmān of the accusation. ʿAbd al-Razzāq's account also indicates that the attempts to disassociate ʿAbd al-Raḥmān from the rebellious son not only appeared later but also were widely circulated. This theory is supported by the fact that the man whom ʿĀʾisha identified as the disobedient son in Q 46:17 remained anonymous in ʿAbd al-Razzāq's work as in all later *tafsīr* works.

Al-Nasāʾī's interpretation is an abbreviated version of his treatment of this topic in the *Sunan*, discussed in the next section. He offers an account similar to that of ʿAbd al-Razzāq but adds important details about the political background of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative. He traces his report back to the Medinan Muḥammad b. Ziyād (d. 120/745), who transmitted *ḥadīth*s on the authority of ʿĀʾisha, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar (d. 73/692–693), and ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Zubayr (d. 73/692).[73] The *isnād* consists of the following Basran transmitters: ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Darhamī (d. 253/867) → Umayya b. Khālid (d. 200/816) → Shuʿba b. al-Hajjāj (d. 160/776). Al-Nasāʾī relates that Marwān was behind the circulation of this view after ʿAbd al-Raḥmān disputed Yazīd's appointment as Muʿāwiya's successor and accused the Umayyads of turning the caliphate into hereditary rule. Coming to her brother's defense, ʿĀʾisha appears here as a counterauthority to Marwān's claim, accusing him of fabrication.[74]

3.3 The Affiliation of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's Brothers with the Disobedient Son

Interpretations that identify the rebellious son in Q 46:17 with other sons of Abū Bakr come in two versions: one points to an unspecified brother of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, the other to ʿAbd Allāh b. Abī Bakr (d. 8/630). I believe that these interpretations reflect later efforts to deflect blame from ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. Al-Ṭabarī (d. 311/923) seems to have been the first exegete to suggest that the disobedient son in the verse is an unspecified son of Abū Bakr.[75] He transmits this report on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās with an *isnād* that includes Muḥammad b. Saʿd[76] and members of his family.[77] Absent from this account is any mention of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. Al-Ṭabarī's interpretation reappears in some later commentaries on

72. Being the Prophet's favorite wife and Abū Bakr's daughter, ʿĀʾisha played a major role in the transmission of prophetic knowledge and early Islamic political debates, particularly in the context of the first civil war. See Bruce Lawrence, *The Quran: A Biography* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2006), 50–61; Denise Spellberg, *Politics, Gender, and the Islamic Past: The Legacy of ʿAʾisha bint Abi Bakr* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 101–32.

73. Al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, 25: 217-219.

74. Al-Nasāʾī, *Tafsīr*, ed. Sayyid al-Jalīmī and Ṣabrī al-Shāfiʿī (Cairo: Maktabat al-Sunna, 1990), 2:290.

75. Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān ʿan taʾwīl āy al-Qurʾān*, ed. ʿAbd Allāh al-Turkī (Cairo: Hajar, 2001), 21:144.

76. There is a debate about the identity of this person. Berg equates him with Ibn Saʿd (d. 230/845), the author of the *Ṭabaqāt*, whereas Motzki identifies him as Muḥammad b. Saʿd b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. ʿAṭiyya al-ʿAwfī (d. 276/889). See Berg, "Competing Paradigms," 272; Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 246.

77. Berg considers the family *isnād* "eclectic." See Berg, "Competing Paradigms," 272.

Q 46:17, such as those of Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib,[78] Ibn ʿAṭiyya,[79] al-Suyūṭī,[80] and Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373).[81] Unlike al-Ṭabarī, however, these scholars also include the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative in their accounts. This significant divergence suggests that al-Ṭabarī omitted it intentionally because of its controversial nature or its lack of an *isnād*. An elaboration on this conjecture appears in the following subsection.

The interpretation that the disobedient son in Q 46:17 is ʿAbd Allāh b. Abī Bakr appears first in the *tafsīr* works of al-Thaʿlabī[82] (d. 427/1035) and al-Māwardī.[83] Al-Thaʿlabī traces this version back to Ibn ʿAbbās, Abū al-ʿĀliya al-Riyāḥī, al-Suddī, and Mujāhid b. Jabr, whereas al-Māwardī presents Mujāhid as the only authority. The association of Mujāhid with the circulation of this view is notable in later commentaries, such as those of al-Baghawī (d. 516/1122),[84] al-Qurṭubī,[85] Ibn al-Jawzī,[86] and Ibn Kathīr.[87] As student of Ibn ʿAbbās, Mujāhid was a prominent Meccan *ḥadīth* expert who authored an early Qurʾānic commentary. His involvement in doctrinal discussions, such as those of the Qadarites of Mecca and the Murjiʾites of Kufa, seems to have soured his relationship with the Umayyads.[88]

This state of affairs begs the question of why other brothers of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān were incorporated into interpretations of Q 46:17. From the little information known about ʿAbd Allāh, we learn that he was a half-brother of ʿĀʾisha and a full brother of Asmāʾ, the mother of ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Zubayr.[89] Unlike ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, ʿAbd Allāh converted to Islam at an early stage and figured prominently in the story of the *hijra* to Medina. ʿAbd Allāh maintained good relations with his father to the extent that he became an example of an obedient (*bārr*) son. This is evident in ʿAbd Allāh's consent to divorce his wife, ʿĀtika bt. Zayd (d. 52/672), whom he passionately loved, at Abū Bakr's request because she was barren

78. Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib, *Hidāya*,11: 345.

79. Ibn ʿAṭiyya, *Muḥarrar*, 5:98–99.

80. Al-Suyūṭī, *Durr*, 13:329.

81. Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿaẓīm*, ed. Sāmī Salāma (Riyadh: Dār Ṭayba, 1999), 7:282.

82. Al-Thaʿlabī, *al-Kashf wa-l-bayān*, ed. Muhammad ʿĀshūr (Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 2002), 9:13.

83. Al-Māwardī, *Nukat*, 5:279–80.

84. Al-Baghawī, *Tafsīr al-Baghawī maʿālim al-tanzīl*, ed. Muḥammad al-Nimr, ʿUthmān Ḍamīriyya, and Sulaymān al-Ḥursh (Riyadh: Dār Ṭayyiba, 1989, 7:258.

85. Al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmiʿ*, 16:197.

86. Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād*, 4:109.

87. Ibn Kathīr traces this view back to Mujāhid along with Ibn Jurayj (d. 150/767), who was a well-regarded Meccan *ḥadīth* scholar. See *Tafsīr*, 7:283.

88. Van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft*, 2:640–43; Claude Gilliot, "Mujāhid's Exegesis: Origins, Paths of Transmission and Development of a Meccan Exegetical Tradition in its Human, Spiritual and Theological Environment," in Görke and Pink, *Tafsīr and Islamic Intellectual History*, 63–112, at 65–66.

89. Since ʿAbd Allāh was only a half-brother of ʿĀʾisha, the Islamic sources provide scarce biographical information about him. See al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, ed. ʿAbbās, 5:176–77; al-Ḥākim al-Nīsābūrī, *al-Mustradrak ʿalā al-ṣaḥīḥayn*, ed. Muṣṭafā ʿAṭā (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2002), 3:542–44.

and deemed a source of distraction to ʿAbd Allāh.[90] He died at a young age, even before his father, without being involved in religious or political controversies.

This biographical portrait of ʿAbd Allāh suggests that there was little benefit to gain from associating him with the disobedient son in Q 46:17. At the same time, the absence of Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr from these commentaries is mystifying. Muḥammad grew up in the home of ʿAlī (r. 35-40/656-661) and maintained close personal and political relations with him. ʿAlī appointed him the governor of Egypt, and he sided with ʿAlī against Muʿāwiya in the first civil war. He even met a horrible death for espousing this position.[91] These biographical details suggest that the identification of the disobedient son with other sons of Abū Bakr beyond ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was *not* initiated by Abū Bakr's opponents. Rather, these reports represent further efforts to downgrade the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative and interrupt its circulation. Ibn ʿAbbās, Abū al-ʿĀliya al-Riyāḥī, al-Suddī, and Mujāhid are also cited as authorities in two contradictory accounts provided by al-Ṭabrisī (who names ʿAbd al-Raḥmān) and al-Thaʿlabī (who points to ʿAbd Allāh). One needs to remember that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān had an embarrassing pre-Islamic past that increased the difficulty of refuting his opponents' accusations.

3.4 The Rebellious Son as an Archetype

The commentaries of al-Zajjāj and al-Ṭabarī seem to be the earliest works to present the rebellious son in Q 46:17 as a broad concept, without identifying him as a particular person. We start with al-Zajjāj, whose interpretation of this verse represents one the earliest accounts to diverge from the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative. He acknowledges the ubiquity of this narrative in early Qurʾānic exegesis but dismisses it as erroneous, concluding that the most correct (*al-aṣaḥḥ*) interpretation is that the verse concerns any rebellious and unbelieving son (*walad ʿāqq kāfir*).[92] Al-Zajjāj's interpretative argument reverberates in many later *tafsīr* works, such as those of al-Māturīdī (d. 333/944), al-Wāḥidī (d. 468/1076),[93] Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī,[94] al-Qurṭubī,[95] and Ibn Kathīr.[96] But some of these later accounts also include elaborations on al-Zajjāj's interpretation. For example, al-Māturīdī argues that the verse refers to an unspecified man with two sons: one was rebellious (*ʿāqq*) and the other was obedient (*bārr*).[97]

90. Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, ed. ʿAbbās, 5:177.

91. Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, ed. Wilferd Madelung (Beirut: Klaus Schwartz, 2003), 2:349–57; Wilferd Madelung, *The Succession to Muḥammad: A Study of the Early Caliphate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 267–68.

92. Al-Zajjāj, *Maʿānī*, 4:443–44.

93. Al-Wāḥidī, *al-Wasīṭ fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-majīd*, ed. ʿĀdil ʿAbd al-Mawjūd et al. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1995), 4:109.

94. Al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, 28:24.

95. Al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmiʿ*, 15:169.

96. Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, 7:283.

97. Al-Māturīdī, *Taʾwīlāt ahl al-sunna*, ed. Majdī Bassalūm (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2005), 248–49.

Al-Ṭabarī's characterization of the rebellious son in Q 46:17 as an unidentified figure takes two forms. The first resembles al-Zajjāj's interpretation and holds that the verse speaks of a licentious, unbelieving, disobedient son (*al-fājir, al-kāfir, al-ʿāqq li-wālidayhi*).[98] Unlike al-Zajjāj, al-Ṭabarī traces this interpretation back to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728), with an *isnād* that includes the following Basran transmitters: Muḥammad b. Bashshār (d. 252/866) → Hawdha b. Khalīfa (d. 210/826) → ʿAwf al-Aʿrābī (d. 146/764). Al-Baṣrī appears in many commentaries on Q 46:17 as the main originator of the view that the disobedient son is an archetype rather than a particular individual, and some biographical information about him is thus in order.

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī was a well-regarded Successor and an authority on *ḥadīth* literature and Qurʾānic exegesis.[99] He was born in Medina and later moved to Basra, where he established a large circle of pupils,[100] the most famous of whom was Qatāda. Al-Baṣrī's scholarly activities, therefore, explicate the transmission of knowledge from Medina to the other centers of Islamic learning. However, some scholars questioned his reliability as a *ḥadīth* transmitter.[101] When it comes to al-Baṣrī's involvement in Umayyad politics, he seems to have harbored anti-Umayyad sentiments but preferred not to express them openly.[102] This stance perhaps explains the association of his name in some traditions with the Qadarite movement.[103]

Al-Ṭabarī's account on the authority of al-Baṣrī echoes in many later *tafsīr* works, such as those of al-Ṭūsī,[104] al-Māwardī,[105] al-Baghawī,[106] al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1143–1144),[107] al-Ṭabrisī,[108] Ibn ʿAṭiyya,[109] Ibn al-Jawzī,[110] al-Nīsābūrī (d. 728/1328),[111] and al-Nasafī (d. 710/1310).[112] However, some of these later interpretations vary. For example, al-Māwardī argues that the verse is largely aimed at a group of infidels,[113] whereas Ibn al-Jawzī identifies

98. Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ*, 21:145.

99. Al-Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 788; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1:150–51.

100. Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 7:115–22; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, 6:95–126.

101. Mourad, *Early Islam*, 47–51.

102. Ibid., 34–43.

103. Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought* (Oxford: Oneworld, 1988), 100–103; van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft*, 2:45–50; Suleiman, *Early Islam*, 161–75.

104. Al-Ṭūsī, *Tibyān*, 9:279.

105. Al-Māwardī, *Nukat*, 5:280.

106. Al-Baghawī, *Tafsīr*, 7:258.

107. Al-Zamakhsharī, *Tafsīr al-kashshāf ʿan ḥaqāʾiq al-tanzīl wa-ʿuyūn al-aqāwīl fī wujūh al-taʾwīl*, ed. Khalīl Shīḥā (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifa, 2009), 1012.

108. Al-Ṭabrisī, *Majmaʿ*, 9:109.

109. Ibn ʿAṭiyya, *Muḥarrar*, 5:99.

110. Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād*, IV, 109.

111. Al-Nīsābūrī, *Gharāʾib al-Qurʾān wa-raghāʾib al-furqān*, ed. Ibrāhīm ʿAwaḍ (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī wa-Awlāduhu, 1962), 26:11–12.

112. Al-Nasafī, *Tafsīr al-Nasafī: Madārik al-tanzīl wa-ḥaqāʾiq al-taʾwīl*, ed. Yusūf Bidīwī and Muḥyī al-Dīn Mistū (Beirut: Dār al-Kalam al-Ṭayyib, 1998), 3:313.

113. Al-Māwardī, *Nukat*, 5:280.

the concept of a rebellious son with an unspecified group of infidels from the Quraysh.[114] Al-Baghawī and al-Ṭabrisī name both al-Baṣrī and Qatāda as authorities for the view of the disobedient son as a generic concept.

Conspicuously absent in al-Ṭabarī's presentation is the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative. Most likely he left it out intentionally[115] because of its lack of *isnād* or its controversial nature. Comparing al-Ṭabarī's account on the authority of al-Baṣrī with those of later exegetes further substantiates this conjecture. Like al-Ṭabarī, these scholars emphasize that the report on the authority of al-Baṣrī is the correct interpretation. However, at the same time they use this view as a counterargument to the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative.

Al-Ṭabarī relates his second interpretation of the rebellious son verse on the authority of Qatāda with an *isnād* that includes the following Basran transmitters: Bishr al-Mufaḍḍal (d. 186/802) → Yazīd b. Zurayʿ (d. 182/798) → Saʿīd b. Abī ʿArūba (d. 156/773). This interpretation claims that the verse pertains to any wicked and debauched slave who is disobedient to his parents (*ʿabd sūʾ ʿāqq li-wālidayhi fājir*). This view appears in later *tafsīr* works, such as those of al-Naḥḥās (d. 338/949),[116] al-Thaʿlabī,[117] Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib,[118] and al-Qurṭubī.[119] However, some of these scholars, such as al-Thaʿlabī and al-Qurṭubī, also include al-Baṣrī as an authority for this version. The fact that al-Ṭabarī relates the first report from al-Baṣrī and the second from al-Baṣrī's student, Qatāda, indicates that both were probably added to the interpretations of Q 46:17 later to diminish the circulation of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative. As previously noted, Qatāda was seen as the main originator of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative, which explains the need to associate the counternarratives with a senior authority, such as Qatāda's teacher al-Baṣrī.

The identity of the rebellious son described in Q 46:17 was thus debated in Qurʾānic exegeses composed between the second half of the second/eighth century and the first half of the fourth/tenth. The ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative initially emerged in these commentaries as the predominant interpretation. Allusions to the Umayyads' circulation of this narrative to silence ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's opposition to themselves are apparent in some versions. Counterinterpretations that sought to exonerate ʿAbd al-Raḥmān by proposing a different identity for the disobedient son arose at a later stage. These efforts took different forms at different times. In the first phase, ʿĀʾisha, as the Prophet's wife and Abū Bakr's daughter, played a major role in undermining the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative. Explanations that associated the rebellious son with other sons of Abū Bakr or with a nonspecific concept constituted further attempts to challenge the dominance of this narrative.

114. Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād*, 4:109.

115. For examples of alterations and omissions that al-Ṭabarī intentionally made to his sources, see Steven Judd, "Narratives and Character Development: Al-Ṭabarī and al-Balādhurī on Late Umayyad History," in *Ideas, Concepts and Methods of Portrayal: Insights into Classical Arabic Literature and Islam*, ed. Sebastian Günther, 209–26 (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

116. Al-Naḥḥās, *Maʿānī al-Qurʾān*, ed. Muḥammad al-Ṣābūnī (Mecca: Jāmiʿat Umm al-Qurā, 1988), 6:450.

117. Al-Thaʿlabī, *Kashf*, 9:13.

118. Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib, *Hidāya,* 6846.

119. Al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmiʿ*, 15:169.

4. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's Image in *Ḥadīth*, *Ansāb*, and *Adab* Works

This section has two main objectives. First, it considers the extent to which the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative as presented in other literary genres provides perspectives different from that of *tafsīr* works. Second, it investigates how the information gleaned from non-*tafsīr* works affects our understanding of the evolution of the Ḥijāzī opposition to Umayyad hereditary succession.

4.1 The Ḥadīth Literature

Early references to the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative in the *ḥadīth* literature are found in the works of al-Bukhārī (d. 256/870)[120] and al-Nasāʾī. The chains of transmission given by these authors consist of Ḥijāzī (particularly Medinan) and Basran scholars. These *isnād*s also illustrate the communication of knowledge from the Ḥijāz to Basra. Al-Bukhārī traces his report back to Yūsuf b. Māhak (d. ca. 113/731), a Meccan *ḥadīth* scholar and a transmitter of prophetic reports on the authority of ʿĀʾisha and other prominent Companions.[121] The *isnād* names the following Basran transmitters: Mūsā b. Ismāʿīl al-Tabūdhkī (d. 223/838) → Abū ʿUwāna al-Waḍḍāḥ (d. 176/792) → Abū Bishr Jaʿfar b. Iyās (d. 123–26/743–748). According to the report, when Muʿāwiya decided to appoint Yazīd his successor, he ordered his governor in the Ḥijāz, Marwān b. al-Ḥakam, to lobby for this idea in Medina. Marwān announced Muʿāwiya's decree in Medina's congregational mosque and requested the attendees to pledge allegiance (*bayʿa*) to Yazīd as the successor to his father. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr emerged as the foremost Medinan leader to oppose this move. Marwān commanded his guards to arrest ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, but they were unable to do so after he sought protection in ʿĀʾisha's house. It was at this juncture that Marwān declared that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was the rebellious son mentioned in Q 46:17. Al-Bukhārī concludes his account by rebutting Marwān's accusation, noting that ʿĀʾisha had asserted that nothing had been revealed in the Qurʾān about Abū Bakr's family except for her exoneration from adultery.[122] Al-Bukhārī's report is reproduced in many later *tafsīr* works, such as those of Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib,[123] Ibn ʿAṭiyya,[124] al-Nasafī,[125] Ibn Kathīr,[126] and Ibn Ḥajar (d. 852/1449).[127] These authors are at pains

120. For a good discussion on the central role that al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* plays in the evolution of the *ḥadīth* commentary tradition, see Joel Blecher, *Said the Prophet of God: Hadith Commentary across a Millennium* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2018), 4–13.

121. He was of Persian origin and was considered a reliable transmitter. Besides narrating from ʿĀʾisha, he narrated *ḥadīth*s on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās, Abū Hurayra (d. 59/681), and Muʿāwiya. Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 12:421; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, 32:451–52.

122. Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 583 (no. 4827).

123. Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib, *Hidāya*, 6845–46.

124. Ibn ʿAṭiyya, *Muḥarrar*, 5:99.

125. Al-Nasafī, *Madārik*, 3:313.

126. Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, 7:283.

127. Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba fī tamyīz al-ṣaḥāba*, ed. ʿĀdil ʿAbd al-Mawjūd and ʿAlī Muʿawwaḍ (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1995), 4:275.

to clear ʿAbd al-Raḥmān of the accusation of disobedience and to present him as a devout Muslim.

Al-Nasāʾī's account is basically a detailed version of the interpretation of Q 46:17 that he provides in his *tafsīr*. Although his report resembles that of al-Bukhārī, it includes additional details and has a different *isnād*. As in his Qurʾānic exegesis, al-Nasāʾī traces his report back to the Medinan Muḥammad b. Ziyād with an *isnād* that includes Basran transmitters. What is new in al-Nasāʾī's report is his description of the dispute between Marwān and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān over the appointment of Yazīd as Muʿāwiya's successor. First, according to al-Nasāʾī, Marwān argued that Muʿāwiya's order was consistent with the early traditions of caliphal succession inaugurated by the first two caliphs, Abū Bakr and ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. Second, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, opposing Marwān's announcement, accused the Umayyads of turning the caliphate into a temporal kingship modeled after the Byzantine (*hirqiliyya*) and Persian (*qaysariyya*) systems of hereditary kingship. In al-Nasāʾī's account, too, the dispute culminated in Marwān's suggestion that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was the rebellious son in Q 46:17. Al-Nasāʾī emphasizes ʿĀʾisha's role as a vehement defender of her brother, accusing Marwān's of having fabricated the allegation (i.e., ʿĀʾisha claimed it was a fabrication). ʿĀʾisha ended her argument by asserting that God's curse was upon Marwān because the Prophet had cursed his father, al-Ḥakam.[128] The anonymity of the person that she associated with the verse is also preserved in al-Nasāʾī's account.[129]

Al-Nasāʾī's details illuminate the circumstances that led to the emergence of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative. As in the case of al-Bukhārī's description of the events, the Umayyads' involvement in the initiation and circulation of the narrative is evident. The report also illustrates the Umayyads' use of Qurʾānic exegesis to defend themselves against the criticism of their opponents. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's opposition to the Umayyads' idea of monarchic succession generated his association with the rebellious son in Q 46:17. Furthermore, the reference to the model of rightful caliphal transition inaugurated by Abū Bakr and ʿUmar reflects the rupture represented by the Umayyads' proposed move from the previous tradition of caliphal succession. Hence, Muʿāwiya's decision was deviant as well as illegitimate. It is worth noting that Islamic sources teem with references to the ideal precedent of caliphal succession instituted by the first two caliphs.[130] More importantly, the reference to Roman and Persian patterns of hereditary succession seems to reflect Muslim opposition to Muʿāwiya's introduction of non-Arab and non-Islamic accession rituals.[131]

128. Al-Ḥakam converted to Islam unwillingly after the Prophet entered Mecca, and even the Prophet cursed him for his hypocrisy and treachery. See al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, ed. ʿAbbās, 4:255–56, 260–61.

129. Al-Nasāʾī, *Kitāb al-Sunan al-kubrā*, ed. Ḥasan Shalabī (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risāla, 2001), 10:257 (no. 11427).

130. Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, ed. Usāma b. Muḥammad (Cairo: al-Farūq al-Ḥadītha li-l-Ṭibāʿa, 2008), 10:449–56; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, ed. ʿAbbās, 5:126–27; al-Khallāl, *al-Sunna*, ed. ʿAṭiyya al-Zahrānī (Riyadh: Dār al-Rāya, 1989), 2:301–8, 372–73.

131. Marsham, *Rituals of Islamic Monarchy*, 90–92.

Al-Nasāʾī's report enjoys wide circulation in many later *tafsīr* works, such as those of al-Zamakhsharī,[132] al-Thaʿlabī,[133] al-Qurṭubī,[134] and Ibn Kathīr.[135] However, some of these scholars use different *isnād*s. For example, Ibn Kathīr associates the report with the following Medinan and Basran scholars: ʿAbd al-Razzāq → Maʿmar b. Rāshid → al-Zuhrī → Saʿīd b. al-Musayyib (d. 94/715).[136] Al-Suyūṭī provides the same report without an *isnād* on the authority of ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar.[137] Attributions to these transmitters demonstrate that the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān version originated in Medina and was then circulated to other centers, particularly Basra. The conspicuous presence of Medinan authorities in these *isnād*s indicates that the Umayyads were mindful of the opposition of the Medinan elite, particularly ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, to the proposed hereditary succession. This orientation is evident in the works of Ibn ʿAsākir (d. 571/1175) and Ibn Ḥajar, who trace it via al-Zuhrī to Ibn al-Musayyib. They claim that Muʿāwiya sent money to ʿAbd al-Raḥmān to bribe him, but the latter refused to accept the money.[138]

4.2 Ansāb *and* Adab *Writings*

This section assesses the presence of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative in al-Balādhurī's (d. 279/892) *Ansāb* and al-Iṣfahānī's (d. 356/967) *Kitāb al-Aghānī* as representatives of the genres of *ansāb* and *adab*, respectively.[139] Al-Balādhurī alludes to the narrative uncharacteristically without an *isnād*, as part of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's biographical portrait. In fact, he opens his account by dismissing the narrative as an erroneous interpretation. To substantiate his argument, al-Balādhurī cites ʿĀʾisha, alleging that the verse concerns someone other than ʿAbd al-Raḥmān but again without naming that person.[140] He then refers to two mortifying events in ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's pre-Islamic past. The first was ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's participation in the Battle of Badr against the Muslims and his attempt to meet his father in a duel. The second was his ardent love for Laylā the Ghassānid, whom he later married after Syria came under Islamic rule.[141] To salvage ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's image, al-Balādhurī declares, "When ʿAbd al-Raḥmān converted to Islam he became a decent Muslim and nothing of [his pagan life] remained attached to him."[142] However, al-Balādhurī

132. Al-Zamakhsharī, *Kashshāf*, 1012–13.

133. Al-Thaʿlabī, *Kashf*, 9:13.

134. Al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmiʿ*, 16:197–98.

135. Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, 7:283–84.

136. Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, ed. ʿAbd Allāh al-Turkī (Giza: Dār Hajr, 1999), 11:330.

137. Al-Suyūṭī, *Durr*, 13:328.

138. Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq*, ed. ʿUmar al-ʿĀmrawī (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1996), 35:35; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 4:276.

139. On the *Aghānī*'s sources, see Alfred-Louis de Prémare, *Les fondations de l'islam : Entre écriture et histoire* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2002), 345–46.

140. Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, ed. ʿAbbās, 5:169–70.

141. Ibid., 5:171–72.

142. *Wa-lammā aslama ḥasuna islāmuhu fa-lam yutaʿallaq ʿalayhi bi-shayʾ*. Ibid., 5:172.

offers no comment on the possible motives behind the circulation of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative.

Al-Iṣfahānī's[143] discussion of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān consists of four parts, with the main one addressing his passionate love of Laylā. He begins with genealogical information about ʿAbd al-Raḥmān.[144] The second part concerns the date of his conversion to Islam, which al-Iṣfahānī places before the Muslims' entrance in Mecca in 10/630. Al-Iṣfahānī adds that the conversions of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān and Muʿāwiya occurred at the same time.[145] Discussion about the association of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān with the disobedient son of Q 46:17 constitutes the third part of al-Iṣfahānī's presentation,[146] and in its contents it resembles al-Nasāʾī's treatment. What is different in al-Iṣfahānī's version is primarily the *isnād*, which includes the following names: Aḥmad b. Zuhayr b. Khaythama (d. 279/893) → his father, Zuhayr b. Ḥarb (d. 234/849) → Wahb b. Jarīr (d. 206/821)[147] → Juwayriyya b. Asmāʾ (d. 173/789).[148] These scholars were transmitters of both *ḥadīth* and *akhbār* who played an important role in the evolution of early Islamic historiography. Wahb b. Jarīr is of great importance here. His reports are considered a good example of the transition from *ḥadīth*- to *akhbār*-oriented narratives.[149] We will come back to Ibn Jarīr's role in reports regarding the Medinan opposition to Muʿāwiya's hereditary succession in the next section.

The last part of al-Iṣfahānī's account[150] recounts ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's amorous relations with Laylā. Al-Iṣfahānī's use of the verb *ustuhyima* (to be madly in love) indicates the damaging effect of this story on ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's image. Unlike al-Balādhurī, he provides two *isnād*s, both of which go through the Medinan historian ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr (d. 94/712). The first even includes his aunt, ʿĀʾisha. ʿUrwa, who played a significant role in the emergence of Islamic historiography, is reported to have been recruited by the Umayyads to confirm their legitimacy.[151]

An analysis of the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative in *ḥadīth*, *ansāb*, and *adab* writings yields a number of important observations. First, the analysis shows that the Umayyads, particularly Marwān, initiated the circulation of this view after ʿAbd al-Raḥmān emerged as the primary Medinan leader to oppose Muʿāwiya's plan of hereditary succession. Second, the reports that convey the narrative indicate that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's reprehensible *jāhilī*

143. On his life and works, see Hilary Kilpatrick, *Making the Great Book of Songs: Compilation and the Author's Craft in Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī's "Kitāb al-Aghānī"* (London: Routledge, 2003), 14–30.

144. Al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAmīr ʿAlī Muhannā and Samīr Jābir (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2002), 17:356.

145. Ibid., 357.

146. Ibid., 357–58.

147. Wahb b. Jarīr was a famous Basran *ḥadīth* scholar. See Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 7:298; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, 31:121–24.

148. Juwayriyya transmitted reports on the authority of Nāfiʿ and al-Zuhrī.

149. Tobias Andersson, *Early Sunnī Historiography*: *Aatudy of the* Tārīkh *of Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ* (Leiden: Brill, 2018)111–12.

150. Al-Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, 17:358–61.

151. Chase Robinson, *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 23–24; de Prémare, *Les Fondations*, 15–16.

past damaged his reputation and was effectively used by the Umayyads as a weapon to criticize him. That he was Abū Bakr's oldest son was also significant for the Umayyad justification of dynastic succession, which was based on tribal patrimonial considerations. Third, the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative attests to the significant role played by the Ḥijāzī elite, in general, and the Medinan dignitaries, in particular, in challenging the Umayyads' initiation of hereditary succession. Fourth, most of the relevant accounts make evident efforts to clear ʿAbd al-Raḥmān of identification with the rebellious son, typically invoking ʿĀʾisha to do so. Fifth, the *isnād*s that accompany these reports testify to the transmission of knowledge from Medina to Basra. Finally, the appearance of historians, such as ʿUrwa, Ibn Jarīr, Juwayriyya b. Asmāʾ, and Ibn Khaythama, in their transmission lines indicates a transition in the presentation of the Medinan confrontation with the Umayyads from provincial Arabian politics into a broader imperial context.

5. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān as an Opposition Leader in *Taʾrīkh* Narratives

This section attempts to assess the extent to which the portrayals of the Ḥijāzī opposition to Muʿāwiya's dynastic succession in *taʾrīkh* narratives are different from those found in previous literary genres. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's role as an opposition leader serves here as a yardstick for evaluating these distinctions. Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ's (d. 240/854) *Taʾrīkh al-khulafāʾ*[152] is our point of departure. Scholars consider this one of the earliest extant *taʾrīkh* works to reflect on Muʿāwiya's designation of Yazīd as his successor. Khalīfa, a Basran *ḥadīth* scholar and a historian, established a large circle of well-known students, such as al-Bukhārī.[153] His presentation of Muʿāwiya's shift to dynastic rule includes three reports, all of which go through the Basran Wahb b. Jarīr back to Medinan authorities.[154]

The *isnād* of the first report consists of Wahb b. Jarīr → Jarīr b. Ḥāzim (d. 175/791–792)[155] → al-Nuʿmān b. Rāshid (d. unknown)[156] → al-Zuhrī → Dhakwān (d.63/683).[157] The presence of al-Zuhrī, a prominent *ḥadīth* scholar who contributed considerably to the evolution of Islamic historiography, is important.[158] He also maintained close relations with some Umayyad caliphs. In fact, he was reported to have been forced by the Umayyads to alter certain prophetic reports to serve their political interests.[159]

152. For modern scholarship on this work, see Andersson, *Early Sunni Historiography*, 10–13.

153. Ibid., 46–58.

154. According to Andersson, Basran *ḥadīth* and *akhbār* transmitters occupy a place of prominence in Khalīfa's *Taʾrīkh*. See ibid., 105–38.

155. A famous Basran *ḥadīth* scholar.

156. Al-Nuʿmān was a *mawlā* of the Umayyads. His reliability as a *ḥadīth* transmitter is questionable. Al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, 29:445–48.

157. Dhakwān was ʿĀʾisha's *mawlā* and is considered a reliable *ḥadīth* transmitter. Ibid., 8:517–18.

158. Robinson, *Islamic Historiography*, 25–26; ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Dūrī, *Baḥth fī nashʾat ʿilm al-tārīkh ʿind al-ʿarab* (Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1993), 78–102.

159. In modern scholarship there is a debate about the extent to which the Umayyads influenced al-Zuhrī's circulation of certain reports that carried political significance. See Borrut, "The Future of the Past," 278;

In the first report,[160] Khalīfa says that when Muʿāwiya decided to appoint Yazīd his successor he traveled to Mecca for the lesser pilgrimage,[161] and from there he went to Medina with an army of one thousand Syrians. As he was about to enter Medina, three prominent leaders, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr, and ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Zubayr, left the city in protest. Muʿāwiya announced in the congregational mosque that no one was more suited than his son to the position of the caliph. He received the oath of allegiance to Yazīd from the attendees without any opposition. Back in Mecca, he summoned individually each of the three Medinan leaders who had absented themselves. Meeting first with Ibn ʿUmar, Muʿāwiya accused him of sowing discord among Muslims by refusing to pledge allegiance to Yazīd. Ibn ʿUmar denied this charge, arguing that previous caliphs had also had sons and that Yazīd was not better than these sons had been. Nevertheless, the previous caliphs had eschewed the appointment of their sons as successors in the interest of the Islamic community. In addition, Ibn ʿUmar suggested that Muʿāwiya pursue the consensus (*ijmāʿ*) of the Muslim community in the weighty matter of the succession.

Muʿāwiya then summoned ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, who also refused to comply with Muʿāwiya's request for allegiance to Yazīd and advised him to refer the matter to a council of Muslims (*shūrā*) to avoid opposition. Finally, Muʿāwiya met Ibn al-Zubayr, whom he described as an insidious fox.[162] He accused Ibn al-Zubayr of inciting Ibn ʿUmar and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān against his decision. Ibn al-Zubayr, too, rejected Muʿāwiya's demands on the pretext that he could not pledge allegiance concurrently to two caliphs. After the meetings, Muʿāwiya falsely announced that the three men supported Yazīd's succession but dismissed the request of his Syrian (*ahl al-Shām*) supporters to make the three proclaim their allegiance in public. This turn of events, Khalīfa concludes, caused confusion among the Muslims regarding whether the three men had really promised their allegiance to Yazīd.[163]

The report emphasizes the themes of legitimate leadership and rightful caliphal succession established by the first two caliphs. The appearance of Ibn ʿUmar next to ʿAbd al-Raḥmān helps make the point that if hereditary succession were accepted, either of the two, as the oldest son of a caliph, could have been the caliph. Ibn al-Zubayr's appearance, meanwhile reflects the serious future political challenge he posed to the Umayyads. The report also shows that the Umayyads assigned great importance to the Medinan religio-political elite when it came to crucial matters of state. The reference to the Syrian supporters, who played an important role in upholding Muʿāwiya's designation of Yazīd as his successor, reflects the dynamics of a tribal polity.[164] Khalīfa's account appears

Judd, *Religious Scholars*, 53–59; Michael Lecker, "Some Biographical Notes on Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 41, no. 1 (1996): 22–31; de Prémare, *Les Fondations,* 321–23.

160. Keshk terms this report "the Ḥijāz vs. Syrocentric version." See *Historians' Muʿāwiya*, 157–69.

161. According to Marsham, the *bayʿa* in the Ḥijāz was associated with the *ḥajj* or the *ʿumra.* See *Rituals of Islamic Monarchy*, 90.

162. In Arabic discourse fox signifies negative characteristics, such as treachery, cunning deceitfulness, betrayal, and lack of trust. Fox is also associated politically with the word *dāhiya,* such is the case with ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ (d. 43/663) who is known as *dāhiyat al-ʿarab.* See Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt,* 4: 191—95.

163. Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ, *Taʾrīkh al-khulafāʾ*, ed. Akram al-ʿUmarī (Riyadh: Dār Ṭayba, 1985), 213–14.

164. For the structure of the Syrian troops, see Marsham, *Rituals of Islamic Monarchy*, 89–91.

in later sources, such as those of Ibn Aʿtham al-Kufī[165] (d. 314/926),[166] Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi (d. 328/940),[167] and al-Suyūṭī.[168] However, unlike Ibn Khayyāṭ, these scholars also make reference to interpretations of Q 46:17, particularly the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative involving the confrontation between Marwān and ʿĀʾisha. Interestingly, Ibn Aʿtham, who was a Shiʿite sympathizer,[169] includes al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī (d. 61/680) in the story and presents him as the first leader with whom Muʿāwiya met. He also includes a conversation between ʿĀʾisha and Muʿāwiya in which she reprimands him for threatening her brother and the three other leaders.[170] These distinctions show that Khalīfa, as a historian, refrained from dealing with regional narratives in favor of a broader imperial context.

The *isnād* of Khalīfa's second report includes Wahb b. Jarīr → Jarīr b. Ḥāzim → Ayyūb al-Sikhtyānī (d. 131/749) → Nāfiʿ (d. 117/726).[171] Except for Nāfiʿ,[172] who was a Medinan and ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar's *mawlā*, the other transmitters were Basran. According to this report, Muʿāwiya threatened to kill Ibn ʿUmar if he refused to pledge allegiance to Yazīd. However, Muʿāwiya denied having made the threat when confronted by ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṣafwān (d. 73/692),[173] who came to Ibn ʿUmar's aid.[174] The emphasis on Ibn ʿUmar, the oldest son of the second caliph, reflects the view that Muʿāwiya's decision to embrace hereditary succession broke with the model of rightful caliphal transition established by the first two caliphs.

Khalīfa's third report[175] is transmitted on the authority of Wahb b. Jarīr and Juwayriyya b. Asmāʾ, who heard it from the elders of Medina. In this report, Muʿāwiya, seeking the support of Medinan leaders for the appointment of Yazīd, first employed conciliatory means to win their hearts. As he was approaching Mecca, he allowed al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr, Ibn ʿUmar, and Ibn al-Zubayr to accompany him. Muʿāwiya first pretended to be very respectful of these leaders, praising their virtues and the prominent place they occupied within the Quraysh and the Islamic community. When they arrived in Mecca, he requested that they pledge allegiance to Yazīd. In this report as in the first one, Ibn al-Zubayr emerges as the principal opposition leader, speaking on behalf of the

165. For discussions about the date of his death, see Lawrence Conrad, "Ibn Aʿtham and His History," *Al-ʿUṣūr al-Wusṭā* 23 (2015): 92–96.

166. Ibn Aʿtham, *Futūḥ*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Muʿīd Khān et al. (Hyderabad: Dāʾirat al-Maʿārif al-ʿUthmāniyya, 1388–95/1968–75), 4:232–44.

167. Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi transmits this report on the authority of al-Madāʾinī (d. 225/840). See *al-ʿIqd al-farīd*, ed. Mufīd Qumayḥa (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1983), 5:119–20.

168. Al-Suyūṭī, *Taʾrīkh al-khulafāʾ*, ed. Jamāl Muṣṭafā (Cairo: Dār al-Fajr li-l-Turāth, 1999), 156–57.

169. Conrad, "Ibn Aʿtham," 112–14.

170. Ibn Aʿtham, *Futūḥ*, 4:237–38.

171. Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 4:210–11.

172. For discussion about Nafīʿ's role in the transmission of reports and about whether he was a historical figure, see Motzki, *Analysing Muslim Traditions*, 61–124.

173. Ibn Ṣafwān, who was a prominent Umayyad figure, supported Ibn al-Zubayr's claim to the caliphate and was killed along with Ibn al-Zubayr at the end of the siege that the Umayyads imposed on Mecca. Al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, 15:125–27.

174. Khalīfa, *Taʾrīkh*, 214.

175. Keshk labels this report "the Ḥijazī centric version." See *Historians' Muʿāwiya*, 147–54.

other dignitaries. He argued that the Muslims would support Muʿāwiya only if he were to follow the model of succession established by the Prophet, Abū Bakr, and ʿUmar. Clarifying this statement, Ibn al-Zubayr specified three principles of succession: the consensus of the community, avoidance of hereditary succession, and the *shūrā*. Muʿāwiya not only refused to accept these traditions but, claims Khalīfa, threatened to kill all four dignitaries if they did not support his son. According to Khalīfa, the circumstances gave rise to the impression that the four leaders had acquiesced to Muʿāwiya's request, and the people of Medina consequently followed suit.[176] This report, like the other two cited by Khalīfa, centers on the theme of legitimate caliphal succession and depicts the appointment of Yazīd as undermining previous models of accession. New in this report is the appearance of al-Ḥusayn, which seems to reflect a later modification, perhaps by Shiʿite sympathizers aiming to connect him with the question of legitimate caliphal succession. The works of Ibn Aʿtham[177] and al-Maqdisī,[178] who likewise emphasize Ḥusayn's role in the debate, also display this orientation.

Khalīfa's third report appears in al-ʿAskarī's (d. 395/1005) *Kitāb al-Awāʾil*. The main difference between these accounts is that al-ʿAskarī combines this report with a description of the confrontation between Marwān and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān presented in the interpretation of Q 46:17.[179] Again, Khalīfa's omission of this material demonstrates that he was interested primarily in presenting significant junctures in caliphal history that had far-reaching implications. This orientation is evident in Khalīfa's eschewing of discussions regarding the interpretation of Q 46:17, in general, and the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative, in particular. At the same time, he presents Ibn al-Zubayr as the main opponent of Yazīd's succession, allocating a secondary role to ʿAbd al-Raḥmān.

Khalīfa's placement of Muʿāwiya's hereditary rule within broader caliphal history is repeated in later *taʾrīkh* works, particularly in early universal histories such as that of al-Yaʿqūbī (d. ca. 284/897), who was interested in situating the Islamic caliphate within the larger frame of universal history. He mentions Muʿāwiya's appointment of Yazīd as his successor only in passing, and without an *isnād*. Like Khalīfa, he refers to four Ḥijāzī leaders who opposed this move: al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, and ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Zubayr. However, al-Yaʿqūbī assigns the leading role in the opposition to ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar and Ibn al-Zubayr, claiming that they considered Yazīd immoral and unfit to be the caliph.[180] Ibn ʿUmar, the oldest son of the caliph ʿUmar, was known for his piety, while Ibn al-Zubayr would later pose a major political challenge to the Umayyads.

176. Khalīfa, *Taʾrīkh*, 215–17.

177. Ibn Aʿtham, *Futūḥ*, 4:241–44; cited in Keshk, *Historians' Muʿāwiya*, 147–50.

178. Al-Maqdisī incorporates the first and second reports into one narrative. He also mentions only three Medinan leaders: al-Ḥusayn, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, and Ibn al-Zubayr. See *Badʾ*, 6:6–7.

179. Al-ʿAskarī, *Kitāb al-Awāʾil*, ed. Muḥammad al-Wakīl (Cairo: Dār al-Bashīr li-l-Thaqāfa, 1987), 235–36.

180. Al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1960), 2:228. For the English translation, see *The Works of Ibn Wāḍiḥ al-Yaʿqūbī: An English Translation*, trans. Matthew Gordon, Chase Robinson, Everett Rowson, and Michael Fishbein (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 3:904.

A detailed presentation of the Ḥijāzī opposition to Muʿāwiya's hereditary succession appears in al-Ṭabarī's *Taʾrīkh.* Like Khalīfa, al-Ṭabarī locates his discussion of hereditary succession within a broader representation of caliphal history, where the opposition of the Medinan leadership to Muʿāwiya's questionable move occupies an important place in al-Ṭabarī's account. What is new in al-Ṭabarī's narrative arrangement is his reliance on predominantly Iraqi authorities. Citing al-Ḥārith b. Muḥammad (d. 282/895) and al-Madāʾinī (d. 225/840),[181] he reports that after the death of Ziyād b. Abīh (d. 53/673), Muʿāwiya declared publicly that in the event of his own death Yazīd would be his successor. All Muslim leaders but five supported this decision.[182]

A further report[183] on the authority of ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAwn (d. 151/768), who heard it from a man from Nakhla,[184] discloses the identity of these leaders:[185] they were al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī, Ibn ʿUmar, Ibn al-Zubayr, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, and Ibn ʿAbbās. Muʿāwiya met separately with the first four and silenced their opposition by persuasion and force.[186] Al-Ṭabarī's inclusion of Ibn ʿAbbās here seems to reflect a later redaction influenced by an Abbasid political agenda.[187]

Al-Ṭabarī concludes his discussion of Muʿāwiya's inauguration of hereditary succession by providing two additional reports, which take the form of political advice that Muʿāwiya issued to Yazīd on his deathbed, cautioning him about future political challenges. The *isnād* of the first report includes the Kufan scholars Hishām al-Kalbī (d. 204/819) → Abū Mikhnaf (d. 157/774) → ʿAbd al-Malik b. Nawfal b. Musāḥiq (d. unknown). In this account we see Muʿāwiya warning his son about four Qurayshite dignitaries: al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, Ibn ʿUmar, and Ibn al-Zubayr. Yet Muʿāwiya singled out Ibn al-Zubayr as the most serious threat to the Umayyad caliphate. The same report appears in later works, such as those of Ibn al-Jawzī,[188] Ibn Kathīr,[189] and Ibn al-Athīr.[190] However, these authors question the inclusion of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, claiming that he died two years before the event. This

181. On al-Madāʾinī's contributions to early Islamic historiography, see Robinson, *Islamic Historiography*, 28–29.

182. Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk,* ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1960), 5:303.

183. Julius Wellhausen presents these two reports on the authority of al-Madāʾinī. See *The Arab Kingdom and Its Fall*, trans. Margaret Weir (London: Curzon Press, 1973), 144.

184. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAwn was a reliable *ḥadīth* scholar and Qurʾān reciter who maintained close relations with the Umayyad rulers and hence held anti-Qadarite views. See Andersson, *Early Sunni Historiography*, 129; Judd, *Religious Scholars*, 62–70.

185. The *isnād* includes Yaʿqūb b. Ibrāhīm al-Dawraqī (d. 252/866) → Ismāʿīl b. Ibrāhīm (d. 169/785) → ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAwn → a man from Nakhla.

186. Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 5:303–4.

187. Marsham, *Rituals of Islamic Monarchy*, 91–92.

188. Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam fī taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAṭā and Muṣṭafā ʿAṭā (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1995), 5:321–22.

189. Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya*, 11:391.

190. Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-taʾrīkh*, ed. ʿUmar Tadmurī (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 2012), 3:120.

discrepancy between al-Ṭabarī and later historians gives insight into the process by which later reports were redacted.

Al-Ṭabarī's second report is transmitted on the authority of the Kufan Hishām al-Kalbī and ʿAwāna b. al-Ḥakam (d. 147/764). According to this report, after Muʿāwiya instructed Yazīd on how to deal with the people of the Ḥijāz, Iraq, and Syria, he warned him specifically of the Qurayshite leaders mentioned in the previous report, but excluding ʿAbd al-Raḥmān.[191] Al-Ṭabarī's reliance on Abū Mikhnaf[192] and ʿAwāna, who were important Kufan authorities on the history of the early Umayyad caliphs,[193] represents a transition from Medinan authorities to Iraqi historical traditions. The new orientation is evident in al-Masʿūdī's (d. 345/954) *Murūj*, which emphasizes the central role of Iraqi leaders, particularly al-Ḍaḥḥāq b. Qays al-Fihrī (d. 64/685), in supporting Muʿāwiya's appointment of Yazīd as his successor.[194]

In sum, the portrayals of Muʿāwiya's shift to hereditary succession in early *taʾrīkh* works differ from those found in other literary genres in terms of the narrative placement and protagonists. Instead of presenting the Ḥijāzī opposition to Muʿāwiya's decision as a regional conflict, the historians place the dispute within the broader setting of major events and transformations in caliphal history. This is evident in the gradual shift from the use of Medinan authorities to reliance on predominantly Iraqi sources. Another difference lies in the depiction of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. In *tafsīr*, *ḥadīth*, *ansāb*, and *adab* works he appears as the central Medinan opposition leader. However, in *taʾrīkh* narratives his role is secondary, eclipsed by the central role of Ibn al-Zubayr.

6. Conclusions

Various literary genres treating the Ḥijāzī opposition to Muʿāwiya's initiation of dynastic succession offer constructive perspectives on the provenance and evolution of representations of this event. Narrative placement, relevance of materials, and political agenda constitute significant variables in the construction of historical narratives. Early allusions to the Ḥijāzī-Umayyad dispute took the form of debates over the identity of the rebellious son in early commentaries on Q 46:17. The predominant view that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr was the disobedient son originated in Umayyad political arguments. Early *ḥadīth* and *adab* narratives portray Marwān b. al-Ḥakam as the initiator of the interpretation that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was the rebellious son in this verse to discredit him after the latter opposed Yazīd's appointment as Muʿāwiya's successor. An examination of the competing interpretations of the verse suggests two major conclusions. First, the Umayyads recruited prominent *ḥadīth* and *tafsīr* scholars, such as Qatāda, to disseminate the ʿAbd al-Raḥmān narrative effectively. Second, the construction of counterreports to clear ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's name—a difficult task—entailed the affiliation of these countervailing views with prominent authorities such as ʿĀʾisha and Ḥasan al-Baṣrī.

191. Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 5:322–23.

192. De Prémare, *Les Fondations*, 364.

193. Borrut, *Entre mémoire et pouvoir*, 58; Donner, *Narratives*, 183, 195; al-Dūrī, *Baḥth*, 35–37.

194. Al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab wa-maʿādin al-jawhar*, ed. Charles Pellat (Beirut: Manshūrāt al-Jāmiʿa al-Lubnāniyya, 1965), 3:217–19.

Consequently, references to ʿAbd al-Raḥmān as the leader of the opposition to Umayyad dynastic succession provide a yardstick by which to assess the origin and evolution of the Ḥijāzī opposition. In *tafsīr*, *ḥadīth*, *ansāb*, and *adab* sources ʿAbd al-Raḥmān is presented as the central Medinan leader to dispute the Umayyad rule of succession. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's disagreeable *jāhilī* past made him an easy target for Umayyad criticism, especially since he was the oldest son of the first caliph. The dispute between the Umayyads and the Medinan leadership is presented in these genres as regional conflict, with the Ḥijāz, particularly Medina, serving as the central setting. The significance of Medina as the origin of these reports can also be seen in the geographical affiliations of their transmitters.

Representations of the Ḥijāzī-Umayyad dispute over hereditary succession in *taʾrīkh* narratives offer a different perspective compared with those of the abovementioned literary genres. Instead of situating the dispute in a provincial setting, these historians placed it within a broader imperial framework that carried far more consequential political meanings. By doing so, they sought to draw attention to important junctures in caliphal history that impacted the construction of historical memory. This distinction is also evident in the gradual shift from reliance on Medinan transmitters to an emphasis on Iraqi authorities, as well as in the changing identification of the event's protagonists. The central role that the *tafsīr* and *ḥadīth* literature grants to ʿAbd al-Raḥmān in the Ḥijāzī opposition to the Umayyads is reduced to a secondary role in the *taʾrīkh* works, which instead elevate the influence of other Ḥijāzī leaders, particularly Ibn al-Zubayr. It comes as no surprise that discussions about the identity of the rebellious son in Q 46:17 are absent in the historical narratives. Common to the presentations of the conflict in all genres is Muʿāwiya's mindfulness of the Ḥijāzī leadership's reactions to Umayyad institutional innovations.

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