

I.B. TAURIS

# Violence in Early Islam

*Religious Narratives, the Arab Conquests  
and the Canonization of Jihad*

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To Enea (*my son*)



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## The Qur'ān and militant violence in chronology

### The chronology of violence in the Qur'ān and its hermeneutical understanding

The debate on the chronology of the Qur'ān from a historical perspective is a fascinating argument which has interested specialists since the beginning of the contemporary period, and today it is a prominent subject in the attempt to make a more evident parallelism between Muḥammad's life, his prophetic period and the history of the early community.<sup>1</sup>

The attempts by Th. Nöldeke, R. Bell and R. Blachère have already been mentioned; nevertheless, the correlation between *Sūras* and the level of violence in the Islamic revelation is a topic of clear importance to decipher the narrative behind it.

We certainly do not have to be experts to understand how the level of violence in the Qur'ān increases in the Medinan *Sūras* reaching its height in the 8th, 9th and, partially, in the 5th, which are usually recognized, the latter, as being the last in the chronology of the Revelation: for W. Muir, as well as for Grimme, the 9th is the last, while for Th. Nöldeke and the Egyptian chronology it is the penultimate one; the 5th is the last for Nöldeke and the 112th for the Egyptian chronology.<sup>2</sup>

Different interdisciplinary approaches to the Qur'ānic chronology have been adopted in recent decades: the comparison between the Islamic revelation and the *Sīra* of the Prophet in a more historical *spectrum* has been included with a terminological and thematic one as well as with respect to the length of the *Sūwar*.<sup>3</sup>

As N. Sinai states:

For example, references to the *munafiqūn*, or hypocrites, only appear in *sūrahs* with a mean verse length of above ninety-two transcriptions letters. Similarly, it is only in *sūrahs* with relatively long verses that we encounter injunctions to fight (*qātala*) the unbelievers, explicit calls to obey 'God and his Messenger', and sustained polemics against Jews and Christians.<sup>4</sup>

In parallel, as already deciphered by R. Bell, the non-unitary nature of the majority of the longer *sūwar* as well as their independent originality in relation to subjects treated, the discontinuity among them and the specific terminology adopted, underscores the

complexity in following a historical track directly linked with the Prophet's life and more specifically in relation to the Medinan phase.

If in the following part, we will work on different historical-thematic passages of the *sūwar* 9 and 5, it is important here to try to better understand the concrete level of violence in the Medinan phase as linked to the 'historical events' that emerge considering the Islamic narrative of the same (622–632).

Assuming that the continuity of *Sūrah* 9 with 8 is hard to prove and that the vast majority of the specialists on Qur'anic chronology put the latter in around the 88th (Egyptian), 95th (Th. Nöldeke) and 97th (W. Muir and H. Grimme) position, this speculation will only be introduced in the following part and not considered in the analysis at present.

Simultaneously, Th. Nöldeke and the Egyptian chronology will be used to establish an order that can put the Islamic narrative on warfare in relation to the Medinan part of the Revelation dividing it into three subsections: (1) the permission to fight, (2) the war against the unbelievers and against the Jews of Medina, (3) the raids against Others after the conquest of Mecca and before the death of Prophet Muḥammad (632).

1. *Sūrah* 2 is the longest in the entire Revelation and usually considered the first of the Medinan period; nevertheless, its inner complexity is related to a process of canonization which has been unable to elucidate the cognitive steps about the different thematic parts: for example, verses 189 and 190 are thematically distant from one another, while the continuity between 190 and 191 up to 194–195 persists in stressing one of the first instances in which the Believers' permission to defend themselves is clearly emphasized.

These verses are usually linked to 22:38–48 where the 'Believers' defence by God as well as by themselves is clarified again. According to that, from verse 42, the Revelation starts a brief Biblical excursus, quoting Noah and Moses in stressing the Old Testament's exemplary chastisement against those cities or nations that have abused God's patience.

However, there is a huge difference between 22:38–39 and 2:190–191: in the former, God's defence of those who hope and desire (*Āmanū*) softly switches towards – 'those who have been attacked are permitted to take up arms if they have been wronged – God has the power to help them, those who have been driven unjustly from their homes only for saying: Our Lord is God'. In the latter, the initial – 'Fight in God's cause against those who fight you, but do not overstep the limits [...], Kill them wherever you encounter them and drive them out from where they drove you out, for persecution is more serious than killing' – is more vocative and impositive.

Independently of the chronology (Th. Nöldeke 107, Egyptian 103), those verses seem to highlight, for the first time, the possibility to fight back, as well as to militarily contest those who have been aggressive with the 'Believers', even though clear limits need to be imposed, in order not to overstep the same.

It is evident that if *Sūrah* 22 seems to underscore an intermediate status of the 'Believers' between freedom and obstruction, it is not a coincidence that Th. Nöldeke himself considered some verses – 1–24, 43–56, 60–65, 67–75 – as still Meccans;<sup>5</sup> on the contrary, the complexity of *Sūrah* 2 amply confirms that we are already in Medina.

The dissimilarity is not only linked with the strong presence of Biblical references – the protagonism of the ‘Children of Israel’ who are directly appealed to as if they were close to the door of the Prophet’s house – but there is an inclusive-exclusive dynamic which is completely non-existent in the Meccan period: ‘The Believers, the Jews, the Christians and the Sabians, all those who believe in God and the last day and do good will have their rewards with their Lord. No fear for them, nor will they grieve’ (2:62). The numerous verses referring to Abraham, Moses and Jesus, who had already signed an agreement with God, stressed Muḥammad’s ongoing relation with them; at the same time, the early disagreement against the People of the Book’s sense of superiority in an eschatological dimension (2:111–113) stressed the Medinan geographical spectrum.<sup>6</sup>

The reiteration, in verses 216–218, about the fighting, unlike the previous ones, is historically attributed to a specific event that we have already mentioned above: the killing of ‘Amr ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥaḍramī, who led a caravan a few months before the battle of Badr (around 623–624) during one of the sacred months of the pre-Islamic age, and which gave Muḥammad the opportunity to reiterate the importance of fighting because ‘*al-fitnatu akbaru min al-Qatli*’ and also ‘they will not stop fighting you until they make you revoke your faith, if they can’.

Unlike the previous verses of the same *sūrah* (2:190–191) – (22:38–39), this reiteration aims to confirm the permission to fight and kill a Quraysh even during a sacred month of the pre-Islamic calendar.<sup>7</sup>

In this case the defensive skirmish is adapted to a more ‘common’ practice – the killing of a polytheist during a raid (*ghazwa*) – and is justified as a contingency of fighting against *Fitna*, as well as the efforts against those who are trying to make you revoke your faith.

It is evident how, in this first phase, God’s permission to fight for defence is embedded in the Arab custom of raids: leaving the *Muhajirūns*’ houses and properties in Mecca gave them the need to recover a certain well-being that the attacks against the polytheists’ caravans could have guaranteed. However, if the attacks against Meccan caravans at Badr (624) are a form of refund revenge, the following clashes will assume a belligerent attitude which stressed a clear religious, political and ideological struggle.

2. After having had the permission to fight, the belligerent attitude becomes multifaceted and the believer’s struggle on God’s way more pervasive in religious-political life. Nöldeke and the Egyptian chronology differ greatly, generally speaking, even though a sort of continuity is preserved as far as the most violent verses are concerned.

It is clear, however, that if the Meccans are the main enemies, the People of the Book are perceived as being in an intermediate position, between respect and distrust. *Sūwar* 98, 64 and 62, albeit far from the issues of violent conflict, try to convince the unbelievers and the People of the Book that the new Revelation, the Qurʾān, is trustworthy.

However, the verses which referred to the ‘*Ahl al-Kitāb*’ and the idolaters (98:6) remained confused because if, on the one hand, they attest that those who do not believe are condemned to remain in Hell, those who believe, on the other hand (pagans

and People of the Book), worshipping God alone, sincerely devoting their religion to Him and keeping up the prayer, paying the prescribed alms, will be among the best.

The eschatological dimension of *sūrah* 64 emphasized that the disbelievers should act differently to reach the eternal Paradise, while 62 is interesting in highlighting how Friday, the day of congregation (*min al-Yawmi al-Jumu'ati*), was the usual day of prayer in Medina, for those who converted and for those who remained Jews, starting the celebrations in the evening to prepare for the Sabbath (*yawm al-Sabt*).<sup>8</sup>

This distinction seems to clarify the breakthroughs of the new religious community in the attempt to mark some differences in the praxis from the Medinan Jews. It also wanted to legitimize their greater independence from a previous adoption of Jewish rituals. This speculation on the level of attraction to and participation in Jewish rites is emblematically linked to those that the Meccan *sūwar* defined as being able to 'make less doubtful what has been revealed to you [the Prophet]', which paraphrasing the *sūrah* (10: 94–95) is advice that God gives to Muḥammad to not deny Allāh's signs.

Following the permission to fight against the unbelievers, the verses that come afterwards are related to the *sūrah al-'Anfāl* (8) which, the 'Islamic narrative' historically established in relation to the battle of Badr (624), however, its length as well as the absence of *Basmala* at the beginning of the following one, the 9th, has made Orientalists express some doubts on its location. The beginning of the *sūrah* is thematically related to a practical problem: the distribution of the gains from the Battle which is such a prominent aspect that from the opening it clarified the need to obey God and his Messenger on it (8: 1–5). At the same time, the early verses seem to try to reduce the power of the *'Anfāl's* materialistic topic in stressing that the 'true believers are those whose hearts tremble with awe when God is mentioned, whose faith increases when His revelations are recited to them, who put their trust in their Lord'.

The emphasis that God and his Angels are with the Prophet (8: 9-15) and the disbelievers are condemned to lose because fear will invade their hearts (*'Āmanū Sa'ulqī fi Qulūbi al-ladhīna Kafarū*) is over-emphasized by: 'It was not you who killed them but God [...] it was not your throw that defeated them but God's, to do the believers a favour' (8:17) in the evident attempt to limit the 'Believers' doubts in killing and fighting unbelievers with whom there was personal reciprocal knowledge and a common clan's lineage.

Both verses 8: 26 and 30, which start with 'Remember' (*Adhkurū – Idh-Yamkuru bika*, referring to the Prophet), underscore the way in which the Believers were victimized and plotted against, stressing the anger and resentment against them: the Meccans will be punished for their disbelief, they will be the losers (8:37), but, 'if they desist their past will be forgiven, but if they persist, they have an example in the fate of those who went before' (8:38): in the *sūrah* under examination there are not, as in others, references to people previously condemned by God.

Verse 8: 39 reiterates the same message in 'fighting the unbelievers until there will be no more *Fitna* and all worship is devoted to God alone, but if they desist then God sees all that they do'.

The following verses (8: 41ff) are mixed with juridical attributions in clarifying the initial topic of the *'Anfāl*, in fighting constantly during the battle, keeping

God firmly in mind (8:45), and not to quarrel during it, because God is with the steadfast (*al-ṣābirīna*) (8:46).

However, the attack against the Believers is already attributed to the hypocrites (8:47–52) who tried to bar them from going to war: they are like the Pharaoh's people and those before them who ignored God's signs.<sup>9</sup> It is as though the Believers' doubts in being the aggressors needed a specific elucidation, specifically in the case of the attack on the Meccan caravan.

From verse 8:55, other topics are discussed: the technical improvement in warfare against those who are the worst creatures in the sight of God is added to the Believers' need for self-confidence because if there are twenty of them and steadfast, they will be able to overcome two hundred unbelievers while if there are one hundred of them, they will overcome one thousand. In other words, God is with them and is able to militarily empower them against their enemies. This is an assumption that finds consistency in the tradition of the Old Testament.

At the same time, new military indications are given directly to the Prophet: 'It is not right for the prophet to take captives before he has conquered the battlefield. Your people desire the transient goods of this world, but God desires the Hereafter for you' (8:67); 'Prophet, tell the captives you hold, "If God knows of any good in your hearts, He will give you something better than what has been taken from you and He will forgive you"', in assuming, for the first time, that the captives have the possibility of desisting from their evilness.

However, the most important verses for our analysis are the following: 'Those who believed and emigrated and struggled for God's cause with their possessions and persons, and those who gave refuge and help, are allies of one another,' *'Inna al-Ladhīna Ḍamanū wa Hājarū wa Jāhadū bi ʾamwālihim wa ʾanfusihiḡ fi sabīli Allāhi'* (8:72), which is put in relation to the fact that the 'Disbelievers support one another. If you do not do the same, there will be persecution in the land and great corruption, *Fitnatun Fi Al-ʾArḡi Wa Fasādun Kabīrun'* (8:73), in which the personal struggle dynamic is material and physical at the same time for those who emigrated as well as for those who gave refuge, making a clear distinction from the people who believed but did not emigrate.

The complexity of the situation is evident: for those non-emigrants but believers who are asking for help because they are persecuted for religious reasons, you need to intervene militarily if there is no previously signed treaty with those you should attack (8:72). This last part of the *Sūrah* which is probably ascribed to the early Medinan phase due to the difficulties in finding a solution to the complexity of the relations among believers, *muhajirūn* and *anṣār*, is made even more complicated by the last verses which argue: 'And those who came to believe afterwards and emigrated and struggled alongside you (*wa Jāhadū maʾakum*), they are part of you, but relatives still have prior claim over one another in God's scripture: God has full knowledge of things' (8:75).

If al-Tustarī had interpreted those last verses with these words: 'All forms of obedience to God involve struggle with the lower self (*jihād al-naḡs*). There is no struggle easier than the struggle with swords, and no struggle harder than opposing the lower self': the words of a clear mystical hermeneutic;<sup>10</sup> the main problem for a correct interpretation remains historical.

Independently of the 'Islamic narrative' that suggests how the last verse of this *sūrah* was abrogated by 33:6, it is hard to include it in a Chronology, at least from verses 72–75.

The evidence that this *sūrah* is directly associated with the battle of Badr is circumstantial, while the normative confusion of the last verses is indicative that the 'Believers' still had some doubts about the connection between those who emigrated in attesting their intention to follow the Prophet, and those who did not, although willing to follow the promulgated monotheism.

This lack of clarity is accentuated by the great importance that on the one hand is granted by the unification between those who emigrated with those who gave them refuge, while, on the other hand, Arab kinship remained predominant: '*wa 'Ulū al-'Arḥāmi ba'duhum 'Awlā biba'din fi Kitābi*', but relatives still have prior claim over one another in God's scripture (8:75).

Ibn Kathīr's logical analysis reflects on the fact that in the case a Medinan Believer died in battle or for other reasons, a relative, even though still a Meccan unbeliever, keeps his rights of inheritance of the Believer's property.<sup>11</sup>

In this *sūrah*, the permission to fight back is implemented by a more precise identification of the fighter as well as the kind of the enemy that they will encounter: the hypocrites are compared to the Pharaoh's followers, those who while seeing God's signs did not believe them. The destruction for their sin is Biblical as reported in Exodus; however, if the *munafiqūn* are drowned in relation to the previous revelation, the unbelievers, who are the worst of the creatures in the eyes of God, 'if desist and incline towards peace, you (Prophet) must also incline towards it and put your trust in God (8:61)', which seems a more conciliatory position compared to that of the hypocrites themselves.

Apart from this peculiarity, the entire *sūrah* looks quite juridical in the clear attempt to develop a technical and normative *spectrum* in a new geography. The intention seems to give strength to the new community under construction and it is possible that the constitution of Medina has already been signed, as the emphasis on the hypocrites' presence in the *Umma* itself accentuates; moreover, the verses 15, 41 and 67–75 intend normalizing important aspects in relation to the *'Anfāl*, the battle's captives, the relationship between believers and the behaviour to adopt in fighting. The entire *sūrah* is focused on fighting because, at the time, fighting is the major activity in this new community for the Medinans.<sup>12</sup>

Following Nöldeke's chronology, between *sūrah* 8 and the third one, there is *sūrah* 47, which is called the *sūrah of Muḥammad* and is thematically in continuity with the previous one, 46; however, some verses are more interesting than others for our analysis.

Verses 47: 4–6 continue in being indicative of the behaviour to assume during the battle and with the captives; dissimilarly, those who die in the fighting, even if the concept of martyrdom is still not mentioned, will not be dead but already in the Garden, an early description of which emerged in verses 11–15.<sup>13</sup>

However, the following verses 20–21 argue:

Those who believe ask why no *sūrah*, (about fighting), has been sent down. Yet when a decisive *Sūrah* that mentions fighting (*al-Qitālu*) is sent down, you can see

the sick at heart looking at you and visibly fainting at the prospect of death, better for them would be obedience and fitting words; better for them to be true to God when the decision to fight has been made,

which stressed that some of the early believers were unwilling to fight; this is a subject which is very present in the Revelation and which is supported by the hypocrites who complained that fighting each other causes breaking the bonds of kinship, as reported in verse 47:22: ‘If you turn away now, could it be that you will go on to spread corruption all over the land and break your ties of kinship?’

This verse, like 33:6, would lead to developing, in contrast with 8:75, that during the Medinan phase, the ‘Believers’ position in breaking the ties of clan kinship, in particular in this belligerent phase and until the conquest of Mecca, was, at least, conceptualized by the Revelation itself. This quranic verse, anyway, will remain as deeply in contrast with the historical evidence, that from the *Khulāfa al-Rāshidūn* (632–661) as well as the Umayyad and ‘Abbāsīd periods showed clan’s strategies as always a priority over those of the community of believers.<sup>14</sup>

Finally, verse 35 seems to suggest that the Medinans would like to offer peace to the unbelievers, even though they had won at Badr, establishing that God was with them; nevertheless, the reasons for this decision are unclear: it is obvious that part of the *muhajirūn* were fighting against relatives and other clan members.

The presence of an unbalanced sense of belonging in part of the Medinan verses is symptomatic as a reaction to the more bellicose militantism, even if this is usually attributed to the hypocrites’ behaviour.

**Sūrah 3** (the family of ‘Imrān) is as complex as the second one: if verses 13 and 14 seem to refer to the battle of Badr, it is clear that we are in a later period; verse 3:7 reports how the Revelation is made in both clear and ambiguous verses: the former are the cornerstone of the scripture, the latter are those pursued by the perverse at heart in trying to create ambiguities and to make trouble.<sup>15</sup>

The need to frame an increasing sense of belonging is expressed in verses 3:19: ‘True Religion, in God’s eyes, is Islam (devotion to Him alone)’, and in 3:28: ‘The Believers should not make the disbelievers their allies rather than other believers, anyone who does such a thing will isolate himself completely from God’. Conversely, a long part of *sūrah 3* is dedicated to the People of the Book as well as Christianity and Judaism (3:33–115). A clear distinction, however, is marked by the story narrated about ‘Imrān’s family which reflects the life of Maryam as miraculous from the beginning: Jesus’s birth is only one of the irrational aspects that are related to her life:

The angels said: ‘Mary, God gives you news about a Word from Him, whose name will be the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, who will be held in honour in this world and the next, who will be one of those brought near to God.’ (3:45) – ‘When Jesus became aware that they still did not believe, he said, ‘Who will help me in God’s cause?’ The disciples said, ‘We will be God’s helpers; we believe in God-witness our devotion to Him’ (3:52),

which shapes a clear parallelism with the prophet Muḥammad and the *Anṣār*. However, the following verses (55–61), on the one hand, claimed:



‘Jesus will take you back and raise you up to Me: I will purify you of the disbelievers. To the day of the Resurrection I will make those who followed you superior to those who disbelieved. Then you will all return to Me and I will judge between you regarding your differences’ (3:55), as well as: ‘We related to you Muḥammad this revelation, a decisive statement. In God’s eyes Jesus is just like Adam: He created him from dust, said to Him, Be and he was. This is the truth from your Lord, so do not be one of those who doubt. If anyone disputes this with you now that you have been given this knowledge, say, “Come, let us gather our son and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves, and let us pray earnestly and invoke God’s rejection on those of us who are lying.”’ (3:58-61)

Those verses, like the following ones (62–100) which are Christologically important,<sup>16</sup> are mixed with an increasing lack of confidence in the People of the Book (3:69, 75); in parallel, there is also an early attempt to define who the Believers are: ‘Say Muhammad, We [Muslims] believe in God and in what has been sent down to us and to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and the Tribes (*‘asbāt*). We believe in what has been given to Moses, Jesus and the prophets from their Lord. We do not make a distinction between any of them, it is to Him (God) that we devote ourselves’ (3:84), arguing that sole devotion to God is the only religion that the Believers are willing to put into practice (3:85).

It is historically evident that after the battle of Badr, an increasing conflict with the Jewish tribes of Medina was showing its first signs; it is also palpable that the Qur’ān is again univocally addressing the Jews (3: 110-112), though using the term of People of the Book.

The same verses also allowed the Believers, for the first time, to fight against the People of the Book in case of being attacked: ‘they will not do you much harm; even if they will come out to fight you (*wa yuqātilūkum*), they will soon turn tail; they will get not help; and unless they hold fast to a lifeline from God and from mankind, they are overshadowed by vulnerability wherever they are found.’

Those verses clearly referred to a specific ‘story’ related to the prophetic phase, probably when after the victory of Badr, the Banū Qaynuqā’ were exiled from Medina;<sup>17</sup> the same verse continues: ‘They have drawn God’s wrath upon themselves. They are overshadowed by weakness, too, because they have persistently disbelieved in God’s revelation and killed prophets without any rights (*wa Yaqtulūna al-‘Anbiya’a bighayri Haqqin*), all because of they disobedience and boundless transgression’, which, again, clearly reflects on the Jews of Medina, the Christians never having killed a Prophet of the Abrahamic tradition.<sup>18</sup>

As has clearly emerged in other parts of the Revelation, after strong verses against a specific target, the following ones are clearly more accommodating and inclusive: ‘But they are not all alike. There are some among the People of the Book who are upright, who recite God’s revelations during the night, who bow down in worship’ (3:113–115).

In the conclusive part of the *sūrah*, two main facets are marked in the new believers’ activism against corruption: the eschatological struggle to reach the Garden (3:142) for those who showed their faith in God as well as in the Prophet, and the fight against those who defined themselves Believers but, on the contrary, acted as hypocrites (3:165–167).



It is a sort of moral lesson which through the Revelation God tried to impart to the believers and which probably referred to those who remained faithful to the Prophet during the difficult phase of the battle of 'Uḥud.<sup>19</sup>

Only those who want to struggle for God's cause, remaining steadfast, will enter the Garden; God will test them: 'am Ḥasibtum 'an tadkhulū al-Jannata wa lammā ya'lami Allāhu al-ladhīna jāhadū minkum wa ya'lama aṣ-Ṣābirīna (142), if Muhammad died or was killed, would you revert to your old ways?' (144) which placed this part of the *sūrah* closely after the major defeat of the Medinese, at 'Uḥud, in distinguishing those who lost heart or weakened or surrendered because God loves those who are steadfast (145–147).

The hypocrites, the *munaḥiqūn*, are those who when it was said to them: 'Come, fight for God's cause, or at least, defend yourselves,' answered: 'we would follow you if we knew how to fight. On that day they were closer to disbelief than belief' (167).

The fight against the enemies assumed a paradigmatic *spectrum*, in concretely being part of the believers' side as well as the battle of 'Uḥud becoming symptomatic in exalting the faith of those who concretely followed the Prophet, from those that out of cowardice did not.

In particular, 'Abd-Allah ibn Ubayy, the leading chief of the Banū Khazraj, decided not to join the Prophet on the battlefield, remaining in Medina, contrary to his son 'Abd Allāh, who fought at 'Uḥud and was also injured.<sup>20</sup>

However, the simplistic reading of the Islamic narrative only tries to hide the complexity and the difficulties in the amalgamation of an early Believers' community in which different personalities and subjectivities were trying to co-exist both in relation to 'Believers' and Jews as well as to *Muhajirūn* and *Anṣār*.

Al-Ṭabarī in his *Tārīkh*,<sup>21</sup> for example, assumed that 'Abd-Allah ibn Ubayy had the same opinion as the Prophet in not fighting an open battle against the Meccans, but he reports how some 'Believers' and *Muhajirūn*, who missed Badr and its spoils, wanted to encounter their enemies in battle for different reasons and asked Muḥammad to lead them.

Ibn Ubayy, on the contrary, argued:

O Messenger of God stay in Medina and do not go out to meet them. By God, we have never gone out of it to meet an enemy but that they have inflicted severe losses on us; and no enemy has ever entered it but that we have inflicted severe losses on them. Leave them alone, O Messenger of God, and if they remain, they will be in the worst possible place; and if they enter Medina, the men will fight them face to face, and the women and boys will hurl stones at them from above; if they then withdraw, they will withdraw disappointed in their hopes, as they came,

which more than a cowardly or hypocrite stance seems a more strategic one, which will be adopted afterwards, during the Battle of the Trench.<sup>22</sup>

However, as reported by al-Ṭabarī again, Ibn Ubayy reached the battlefield with part of the 'Believers' army but when saw the Meccans' number he returned to Medina: 'split off from him with a third of the army, saying, "He obeyed them by setting out and disobeyed me. By God, we do not know why we should get ourselves killed here, men".

So, he went back to Medina with those of his people of the Hypocrites and doubters who followed him.<sup>23</sup>

As it had begun, *sūrah 3* ends with an inclusive Abrahamic *visio* (3:199–200), even though a large part of the same is emblematically devoted to an aggressive campaign against religious hypocrisy, independently of the actor involved.

The Jewish Medinan clan as well as ‘Believer’ hypocrites seem to be considered in almost the same way; moreover, the most relevant facet is the concrete attempt to distinguish the new community from the disrespectful consideration that Jews and hypocrites started to feel for Muḥammad and his main supporters.

It is clear that the ‘Constitution of Medina’ was failing and even though Badr was a military success, the involvement in a frontline clash with Mecca was provoking many doubts, so much so as to divide the core of the newly established community: *Anṣār* and *Muhajirūn*.

The impression is that we are facing an inconclusive militancy without a concrete strategy and a great internal fragmentation; the fact that the very son of Ibn Ubayy, ‘Abd-Allāh ibn ‘Abd-Allāh ibn Ubayy, took part in the battle of ‘Uḥūd in disagreement with his father is emblematic of the disunity of the Medinans. Far from any kind of religious belligerency, it is the relationship with the Prophet, the war’s spoils or other unknown personal reasons that make the expectation of a confrontation concrete or not.<sup>24</sup>

Considering the Egyptian and Nöldeke’s chronology, great differences anticipate the *sūrah 4*: for the former, *sūrah 3* is followed by 33 and 60, for the latter, 61 and 57. Independently of any doubts, *sūrah 33* has usually been considered as related to the battle of the Trench:

God sent back the disbelievers (the Meccans) along with their rage, they gained no benefit and spared the believers from fighting. He is strong and mighty. He brought those People of the Book who supported them down from their strongholds and put panic in their hearts. Some of them you ‘believers’ killed and some you took captive. He passed on to you their land, their houses, their possessions and a land where you had not set foot: God has power over everything. (25–27)

The description is evidently linked to the Meccans’ incapacity to enter Medina as well as the sack of the Banū Qurayza’s property and goods, again in this case generally named People of the Book. It is therefore important to stress how until the battle of the Trench, which was resolved without a military confrontation, all the clashes with the Meccans – Badr, ‘Uḥūd and the last one – subsequently experienced pillage against one of the Jewish clans of Medina, usually accused of being supportive of the believers’ enemies.<sup>25</sup>

However, as reported by al-Wāqīdī, only the last one against the Qurayza was recorded by Islamic chronicles as a real battle with registered deaths on the Believers’ side as well.<sup>26</sup>

*Sūrah 60* of the tested women was probably revealed in the phase between the treaty of Ḥudaybiyya and the conquest of Mecca (6–8 AH); moreover its significance for our analysis reflects on God’s permission in being kind and just with anyone

who has not fought you (*qāṭalūkum*) for your faith or driven you out of your homes; simultaneously, God forbids taking as allies those who have fought you for your faith, driving you out of your homes or helping others to drive you out (60:8–9). This is an important assertion which probably referred to a part of the Banū Khuzāʾah, a Meccan clan that were still idolators, that with the Banū Mudlij, a branch of the Kinānah, never engaged in the fight against the Believers; on the contrary, when they realized that after ʿUḥud, the idolators were organizing a vast expedition to destroy Medina, they sent some knights to inform Muḥammad of the imminent peril.<sup>27</sup>

Considering Th. Nöldeke's chronology, only *sūrah* 61 is able to repeat something already found in 8:72.

Verse 11 highlights how only those who will struggle (*wa tajāhidūna*) for God's cause with their possessions and persons (*bi'āmwālikum wa ʾanfusakum*) will be forgiven for their sins and admitted to the Garden; a parallel is traced among the followers of the Prophet and Jesus's disciples in an inter-religious conclusion.

The verses from 71 to 76 of *sūrah* 4 emerged as particularly militant and war-oriented. The fight in God's cause, univocally assumed in the revelation with *q-t-l*, is introduced again in a historical phase in which after the battle of the Trench, the Meccans are disheartened due to the lack of success against the Medinans, while the latter feel more confident of having blocked a concrete and dangerous attempt of annihilation.

The removal of the Qurayza is a definitive step in the clear attempt to impose Muḥammad's view as the dominant one in the Medinan area. However:

Why should you not fight in God's cause and for those oppressed men, women and children who cry out, 'Lord, rescue us from this town whose people are oppressors! (*al-Ladhīna Yaqūlūna Rabbanā ʾAkhrijnā Min Hadhihi Al-Qaryati Aẓ-Ẓālimi ʾAhluhā*) By Your grace give us a protector and give us a helper!?' The Believers fight for God's cause, while those who reject faith fight for an unjust cause,  
(*al-Ṭaghūti*)

still seems an expression of a request to force the Believers to fight against their enemies, specifically now that many requests for help seem to come from Mecca.<sup>28</sup>

As stated in 4:77, God first imposed on the believers not to fight but to pray, to pay the prescribed alms and only afterwards to contest the community's enemies; but even when God's command reached the *Ummah*, some of them found excuses not to become involved.

The ongoing presence of hypocrites among the Believers tried to be finally resolved by arguing about the impossibility of signing a treaty with them, because they are people you cannot trust (4:88–91), while killing a Believer, except by mistake, is a grave sin, for which the punishment is Hell (4:92–93).

Verse 4:95 is a very emblematic verse in which the previous condemnation of hypocrisy is mitigated by a clearer distinction without a permanent condemnation. Those who engage in war or support them materially and those who withhold all support from the campaigns, staying at home, are not equal for God; 'God has raised such people to a rank above those who stay at home, although He has promised

all believers a good reward, those who strive (*al-mujāhidīn*) are favoured with a tremendous reward above those who stay at home.<sup>29</sup>

It is quite logical that those who strive on God's way, in this case the sense is clearly related to fighting, and those who risk their lives to show their beliefs cannot be considered equal to those who stay quietly at home.

However, it is interesting how this verse did not reproach those who stay at home as hypocrites but still as believers. Verses 4:95–96 are significant in deciphering a believer's ranking due to having different behaviour in war as well as identifying the *mujāhid* as a fighter in God's way.

According to Qur'anic chronology, this is only the second verse, after 2:218, in which the semantic correlation between to struggle and to fight is hermeneutically clarified. In the previous verses of the *sūwar* 2, 8, 3, the acts of belief, emigration and struggle were not directly and semantically ascribed to a belligerent attitude, contrary to the verses which anticipate 2:218 and 4:95–96 where the literary *milieu* is more emblematically linked with militancy.

It would be important to decipher when this correlation is further considered in the attempt to better identify the concrete difference between *q-t-l* and *j-h-d* in the Qur'anic context: a topic to which we will return shortly, at the end of this chapter.<sup>30</sup>

The following verse, 4:97, placed the previous ones in a historical phase in which the Prophet is demanding the Meccan believers to abandon the city and to emigrate to Medina because it was probably the time to politically and numerically verify the Believers' strength.<sup>31</sup>

It is possible that Mecca's crisis of legitimacy started, as well as the conciliatory-provocative phase for the real believers and the unbelievers, to assume a clearer political stance in front of their own community. After the battle of the Trench, the Believers fortified themselves, while the Meccans' inner doubts about their ability to resist a sort of Medinan *embargo* started becoming clearer.

Following the Egyptian chronology, *sūrah* 47 has to be considered after *sūrah* 4; moreover, stressing the semantic correlation previously mentioned, it is important to underline the importance of the context: verses 30–31 are far from being linked to a bellicose *spectrum*: 'We shall test you to see which of you strive (*al-mujāhidīn*) your hardest and are steadfast (*al-ṣābirīna*); we shall test the sincerity of your assertion, and even if the term *mujāhid* is adopted, the hermeneutical meaning remains peaceful and not related to any kind of violent task.

It would have been different if *mujāhidīn* had been replaced by *muqātilīn* or a term closer to aggressive militancy.

According to the above analysis, *sūrah* 59 is more focused on the Jewish clan of the Banū Naḍīr who first agreed with the Prophet in never assuming a military position against him or on his side, but after the Meccans' victory at 'Uḥud, they formed an alliance with the unbelievers.

The Islamic narrative also reports that they tried to kill the Prophet and when they were asked to leave the city of the Prophet, Medina's hypocrites demanded if they wanted to fight the Believers with their support.<sup>32</sup>

Nevertheless the *sūrah* is closely linked to a bellicose subject: the term *q-t-l* is mentioned once (59:14) clarifying how the adoption of terminology in the Islamic

Revelation is related to the literary hermeneutics of the same in assuming a strong correlation between Islamic historical narrative, the Prophet's life and the Qurʾān. In other words, when the Qurʾānic verses are hermeneutically associated with inter-clanic conflict, the historicizing legitimization of the early Believers is widely canonized through the violence of *q-t-l*, in particular when the enemies turn against previously established rules, or against their honour (*Sharaf* and *Muruwwa*).<sup>33</sup> However, belligerency is usually attributed to the petty and deceptive behaviour of those who will be punished by God through the believers' military actions. On the contrary, the efforts required to be steadfast are a moral-ethical projection that only partially involved the bellicose perspective.

Both Chronologies, the Egyptian and Nöldeke's, put *sūrah* 22 after *sūrah* 47 and towards the end of the Medinan period, although before the conquest of Mecca.

The quartet of the *sūwar* 24-22-63-58 (Egyptian) and 63-24-58-22 (Nöldeke, after 59 and 33) remained quite mysteriously associated with the topic of war.

If *sūrah* 22, as stated above, should be inserted at the end of the Medinan phase, from verse 75 it still seems pedagogically related to a Believers' community still unable to understand: 'God chooses messengers from among the angels and from among the humans'. This is an interesting aspect but dissociated from an Abrahamic background.<sup>34</sup> The process of the Qurʾānic canonization still remained mysteriously associated with a *collage* praxis that in some cases appears more obvious.

If *sūwar* 24 and 58 are correlated to moral aspects and not linked with militantism, while *sūrah* 63 on the contrary is against the Hypocrites, *Munāfiqūn*, who persist in being among the believers, the historical periodization established that the latter was probably pronounced while the Prophet was leading the raid against the Banū Muṣṭaliq, a Meccan-allied tribe who had settled on the Red Sea between Jeddah and Rābigh, around 627/6 AH.

This clan, part of the Khuzāʾah, was still allied with the Meccans; moreover, after the Medinan raid in their territories, Juwayriya bint al-Ḥārith, the daughter of the defeated chief, became the sixth wife of Prophet Muḥammad, pushing them into an alliance with the Believers as well as further limiting the hypocrites' attempts to rule in Medina.<sup>35</sup>

The importance of *sūrah* 48 is prominent because of its historical topic of reference: the pact of Ḥudaybiyya.

Regarding this agreement, while widely considered a huge victory in the Qurʾān, the *Sīra*, on the contrary, does not omit to contemplate the opposition to it that emerged, in particular, from ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.<sup>36</sup> Ḥudaybiyya determined the early Medinan-Meccan attempt to find an agreement: an armistice of ten years which allowed the Believers to reach Mecca, the following year, to peacefully make the pilgrimage.

This last aspect, decreeing a year's delay, was rejected by some of the most irreducible 'believers', who were already ready to fight to reach the Ka'bah and pray inside it, independently of the blood spilt to achieve this goal.

Verses 48:15–20, moreover, stressed that to pacify the souls of its community, in particular those who followed him to Ḥudaybiyya and afterwards returned to Medina, Muḥammad promised them a pillage-raid (*ghazwa*) against the Jewish oasis of Khaybar.

This location played a significant commercial role in the north of the Peninsula, even rivalling Medina; at the same time the Jews there had taken up a position against Muḥammad, and the Prophet, after having been contested for the pact that had been signed, wanted to guarantee a generous booty for the Believers.<sup>37</sup>

It is possible that the raid in this case, as in many others which are reported in the Qurʾān, cannot be attributed to any sort of *Jihād* or concrete religious militantism; on the contrary the same verses argue about God's omniscience about those who support the Prophet under the tree, because He knew what was in their hearts and so He sent tranquillity down to them with a speedy triumph and with many future gains (v. 19). Those gains (*maghānima*) 'have been hastened for you. He has held back the hands of hostile people (the Jews of Khaybar) from you as a sign for the faithful and He will guide you to a straight path' (v. 20, *Waʿadaku Allāhu Maghānima Kathīran Ta' khudhūnahā Fa' ajjala Lakum hadhihi wa kaffa 'aydiya an-Nāsi 'ankum wa litakūna 'Āyatan Lilmu'minīna wa yahdiyakum Širāṭan Mustaqīmān*).

There is another important *topos* in this *sūrah* that needs to be considered and which continues in the following one, 49, and that allows wondering about the Prophet's strategic militantism.

The need to relate to the Bedouins is a complicated topic: until the end of the Qurʾanic chronology they are still accused of unbelief (9: 97–98, 101) as well as of hypocrisy (48:11, 16; 49:14–18); however, the last verses of *sūrah* 49 emphasized the main difference between *Islām* and *Imām*, in a clear accusation against the Bedouins.

*Qālati Al-'A'rābu 'Āmannā Qul Lam Tu'uminū Wa Lakin Qūlū Aslamnā Wa Lammā Yadhkuli Al-'Imānu Fī Qulūbikum Wa 'Inna Tuṭī'ū Allaha Wa Rasūlahu Lā Yalītkum Min 'A'mālikum Shayāan 'Inna Allāha Ghafūrun Raḥīmun*, and continues: 'The True Believers are the ones who have faith in God and His Messenger and leave all doubt behind, the ones who have struggled (*wa jāhadū*) with their possessions and their persons in God's way: they are the ones who are true' (49:14–15).

The pedagogical verse stresses the unfaithful but at the same time increasing relationship between the Believers and those Bedouins who started to sign a political agreement with the Prophet and that is evidently underlined in this final Medinan phase.

The correlation between the Prophet's policies of raids (*maghāzī*) started after the *Hijra*, when the conflict with Mecca caused its enlargement in the clear attempt to form a different set of alliances to isolate the city of the *Ka'ba* in the long term.

At the same time, this policy evidently showed clear frictions in the early community in parallel with an initial unstable definition of who a Muslim-Believer was, as well as the easiness, from the beginning, of accusing the Other of being a true believer or not.

The struggle in the way of God with their possessions and their persons assumes a pedagogical position in the clear attempt to show the way, for the Bedouins, to become believers. Anachronistically, the early Islamic narrative, starting from the second half of the eighth century, was to negate and ideologically underestimate the importance as well as the impact of pro-Believer Bedouin tribes during the war against Mecca and afterwards. Nevertheless, reading between the lines, as well as reflecting on published literature, it is historically clear that increasing numbers of Arabs of the Desert supported Prophet Muḥammad in isolating Mecca and its

allies first, and played a significant role in the conquests, after being reported in the ranks following the *Ridda*.<sup>38</sup>

Egyptian chronology argued that the last *sūrah* of the Qurʾān revealed to the Prophet was the 110, which says: ‘When God’s help comes and He opens up (*al-Faṭḥ*) your way (Prophet), when you see people embracing God’s faith in crowds (*ʿAfwājāan*), celebrate the praise of your Lord and ask forgiveness: He is always ready to accept repentance’; however, Nöldeke claims that the words *al-naṣr Allāhi wa-l-Faṭḥ* are probably attributable to the conquest of Mecca.<sup>39</sup>

The doubt that the same verses can be attributed after the battle of Ḥunayn, when, as also reported in Muḥammad’s biography, many Thaḳīf and Hawāzin of Ṭāʾif decided to convert in mass,<sup>40</sup> is a possibility taken into consideration by al-Wāḥidī,<sup>41</sup> although rejected by Bukhārī and Muslim.<sup>42</sup>

The complexity of the debate on the historicization of *sūrah* 110 also reflects on the last ones (9 and 5) and that probably have to be fixed between the conquest of Mecca (630/8 AH) and the Prophet’s death (632/10 AH).

### The ‘verses of War’ and *Jihād* (*sūwar* 9–5)

3. The inter-connection between *sūwar* 110, 9 and 5 must not distract us from the possibility that once 8 and 9, or better, parts of them, were a single *sūrah*, subsequently fragmented for unknown reasons.

If indeed both Chronologies place the *sūwar* in different phases of the Medinan period: 8 in verses 7–12, but also 42ff and 56 seem to reflect on events in Badr (624), while, 9, in verses 25, 38–39, 74, 81, 106–110, 118, probably referred to Ḥunayn and Tabūk (630); the last verses of 8, moreover, at least from 72 and the beginning of 9 could be considered semantically in continuity, at least for verses 1 and 2, but also for the following ones.

The main topic, which is echoed at the end of 8 as well as at the beginning of 9, reflects on the plurality of treaties signed between the Believers and the idolaters in the Medinan phase from the so-called ‘Constitution of Medina’ up to the pact of Ḥudaybiyya.

The fact that at the end of *sūrah* 8 there is a sort of recap about the behavioural attitude to adopt in relation to the idolaters and those who became believers after the *Hijra* stressed the existence of pacts that probably have to be considered in relation to individual transactions between the Medinese and specific clans still affiliated to the Meccans, as well as Bedouin polytheists.

However, as R. Blachère outlined, those concluding verses are more focused on better defining the Medinan believers’ community, stressing the pre-Islamic rules in legislating on those who accepted the Prophet’s message and role after the *Hijra* and Badr. These policies were updated at the beginning of the following *sūrah*, **the 9th**.

Nevertheless, from verse 3, the previous agreements (*ʾĀhadtum*) were nullified by a new proclamation that was pronounced during the *yawma al-Ḥajj al-Akhari*, perhaps the ‘complete’ pilgrimage performed by the Believers after entering Mecca and the victory of Ḥunayn (9 AH).



The Pilgrimage was led by Abū Bakr, but the Prophet's new message was pronounced by 'Alī who essentially argued about the concession of another four months to idolaters to move within the Believers' territory in complete safety, but after that period, 'when the forbidden months are over, wherever you encounter the idolaters, kill them, seize them, besiege them, wait for them at every lookout post' (v. 5).

Some exceptions remained however for those idolaters that 'should seek your protection', the Prophet's, then grant them and make them hear the word of God, as well as for those who had already signed a special treaty with Muḥammad, close to the Sacred Mosque (which probably refers to Ḥudaybiyya) and that will continue to be respected until the expiry of the previous agreement.<sup>43</sup>

Referring to this last passage, if Ibn Khatīr and Jalālayn attribute those signed treaties to Ḥudaybiyya, Ibn Abbas, on the contrary, argues about some treaties contracted after it. The lack of clarity about the schedule and the referring clans – nine months–ten years, the Banū Kinānah or others – remains.

It is plausible that the end of *sūrah* 8 and the beginning of *sūrah* 9 could be semantically linked, which is a hypothesis that is strengthened by the absence of the *Basmala*.<sup>44</sup>

However, the importance of this digression reflects on the famous verse 5 of the latter that without this hermeneutical contextualization can easily be de-contextualized assuming a generalized perspective; on the contrary, this *Sword verse* clearly referred to the remaining idolaters of Ḥijāz at the end of the Medinan phase.<sup>45</sup>

As reported by Firestone, the common idea that 9:5 abrogated any restrictions of fighting during the old four pre-Islamic sacred months continues to reflect a clear personal and geographical context: the idolaters of that time and the calendar of the same period.<sup>46</sup>

The idea of an indiscriminate belligerent attitude against the idolaters is limited by the fact that with some of them a pact had recently been signed at Ḥudaybiyya which, if they respected it, consequently had to be respected by the other party as well (v. 7).

From verse 13, the analysis focuses on identifying those Meccans that after the entrance of Muḥammad in his hometown remained in an unclear position. It is possible that as for the Arabs of the Desert, the Prophet's peaceful conquests of Mecca, if on the one hand, were a clear political strategy that put the Meccans in the face of a *fait accompli*, due to their weakness, on the other, they provoked a rapid acceptance of the new *status quo* on the political level.

Those verses emphasized what Ṭabarī describes in his chronicle about the conquest of Mecca:

The People assembled in Mecca to swear allegiance to the messenger of God in Islam. As I have been informed, he sat for them on al-Ṣafā. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was below the messenger of God, lower than the place where he sat, administering the oath to the people. He received from them the oath of allegiance to the Messenger of God, to heed and obey God and His Messenger to the extent of their ability.<sup>47</sup>

However, a firm condemnation remained for those who continued to be idolaters (9: v. 23–28) with whom nothing can be shared any longer, including ties of kinship; God



continued to entrust you, Believers, against your enemies, as in the battle of Hunayn (v. 25), when their huge numbers were not sufficient to defeat you, even if (v. 27) 'after all this, God turns in His Mercy to whoever He will'.

This probably refers to the fact that after the battle, large numbers of Thaḳīf and Hawāzin decided to accept Muḥammad's role.

The verses (9: 28–35) continue to be quite chaotic semantically, but also linguistically.

If 28 forbids the *mushrikūna* from going to the sacred Mosque of Mecca, limiting *de facto* the pre-Islamic pilgrimage and its commercial function, 29, the famous *Jizya* verse, says: 'Fight (*qātilū*) those who believe not in God and the Last Day and do not forbid what God and his Messenger have forbidden, such men as practise not the religion of truth (*wa Lā Yadīnūna Dīna al-Ḥaqqī*), being of those who have given the Book (*mina lladhīna 'ūtū'l-kitāb*), until they pay the tribute out of hand and have been humbled (*ḥattā yu 'ū l-jizya 'an yadin wa-hum ṣāghirūn*)'.

This verse, that was paradigmatically considered in the following centuries as emblematic of the institution of *Jizya*, in relation to the Muslims, as attributed to Jews and Christians, but also Hindus, after the Islamic conquest (twelfth–thirteenth centuries) of the Indian subcontinent, continues to reflect on a normative verse that again has to be contextualized in its period of reference.

If Blachère in arguing about 9:29 is *tranchant*, simplistically quarrelling that '*Tout ce passage paraît être une addition ultérieure*'<sup>48</sup> (this whole passage appears to be a later addition), Abdel Haleem and Uri Rubin clarified some interesting aspects:

1. *dīna bi-* is a behavioural act of obedience to the rules, established through the Prophet by God; however, to talk about a 'religion of truth' in a historical phase in which there is still not an Islamic religion or a clear Islamic jurisprudence able to elucidate this passage is quite problematic. The same hermeneutical analysis attributed to Ibn Abbas referred this verse to the Jews and Christians of the Arabian Peninsula without assuming a clear generalization.<sup>49</sup>
2. *mina lladhīna 'ūtū'l-kitāb*, as argued by Abdel Haleem,<sup>50</sup> is a partitive expression which clarified 'those of the People of the Book who do not believe in God and the Last Judgement and do not forbid what God and His Messenger have forbidden', which confirmed the local geographical space to which this verse is attributed: we are still talking about the Jews of the Ḥijāz as well as, probably, the Christians of Najrān. At the same time, if it is evident that ordinary Jews and Christians, if believers, usually consider God and the Last Judgement part of their faith; on the contrary they are not aware about what Allah and Muḥammad have forbidden because they have never lived under Islamic rules and because, as already reported above, it will take a couple of centuries after the Prophet's death (632/10 AH) for a clear *Sharīah* to be contemplated. In this verse, the Qur'an allowed for the first time fighting those People of the Book who do not believe in God etc., but above all, who do not forbid what Allah and Muḥammad have forbidden; in other words, they do not respect the initial rules that emerged from the Revelation, which is practical behaviour.
3. *ḥattā yu 'ū l-jizya*, until they paid the *Jizya*, reflects the payment of a 'Poll Tax', which if it is easily identifiable two centuries later, during the time of the Prophet

it was not, due to the lack of a Treasury, as well as the people who collected taxes. The Qur'anic meaning of j-z-y was 'to reward somebody for something', paying in relation to services received, which assumes a more positive connotation. It is evident that the *Jizya* will assume the right for Jews and Christians to live under Islamic protection, preserving their religions and property, without having to join the Muslim army. This last aspect, as reported in the historical part, was only limitedly adopted during the Arab campaigns of conquest, with numerically consistent Arab Christian clans who took on a military role in the conquests as well as during the *Fitnas*, for at least eighty years after the Prophet's death. As reported by M. 'Imāra, those Jews and Christians who fought on the Believers' side in the early and later military campaigns were exempted from paying the *Jizya*, because at the beginning, this sort of tax was *badal jundiyya*, in exchange for military service.<sup>51</sup> Even in this case, it is historically evident that we have to wait, contrary to a banal Islamic narrative about it, a longer period of time in relation to the canonization of a state system during the Umayyad age, but after the end of the second *Fitna* (692). At that time, if the early Muslim community started to pay the *Zakat*, from which the People of the Book were exempted, the latter began to pay the *Jizya*, to continue to reside under Muslim protection as well as, if not directly, involved in the army.

4. *'an yadin* is another part of the verse on which the hermeneutical interpretation has found some difficulties. If the easiest understanding reflects the simple translation – 'by their own hand', as reported by Uri Rubin – it is evident that this exegesis is late and not linked to previous material, before the canonization of the *Jizya* in the Islamic Law.<sup>52</sup> As reported by al-Ṭabarī in his Chronicle,<sup>53</sup> when the Arab conquerors, such as Khālid ibn al-Walid, reported that treaties had been signed with the conquered towns of Mesopotamia and asked them to pay by community and not by male, it was a sort of *ante-litteram Jizya*. However, the fact that the Qur'anic verse and the expression *'an yadin* do not appear in any except one of these treaties makes Blachère's doubts more concrete. If indeed in the reported treaties entered into by the Arab conquerors, there is no evidence referring to 9:29 of the expression *'an yadin*, it is possible that at the time of the Revelation, there was still not a clear understanding of *Jizya*. Finally, if we consider the *Muwatṭā'* of the Imām Mālik, produced in the second half of the eighth century, the *Jizya* is cited only once, and directly linked with the stipulation of a covenant of peace.<sup>54</sup>
5. *wa-hum ṣāghirūn*, the last part of the verse wants to emphasize the humbleness with which the People of the Book need to act in paying the *Jizya*. Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī (d. 1344), as reported by Abdel Haleem, argues that 'they should stand and the recipient be sitting, or that they should not be thanked for giving *jizya*, or that the receiver should say to the giver, "Pay the *jizya*", and smack him on the back of his neck, or that someone should take hold of his beard and hit him under the jaw', which is very humiliating. However, until the time of al-Jāhīz, in the middle of the ninth century, it seems that, at least in the urban areas, the reluctance of the Christians to pay the *Jizya* was seriously considered a problem of total disrespect towards the Islamic Caliphate,<sup>55</sup> which again could suggest the possibility of a later addition.

The following verses (9:30–35) continue to deride Jews and Christians in accusing them of associating human beings with God (even if until today, the accusation that Judaism made Ezra the son of God remains very mysterious), of taking Rabbis and Monks (*Aḥbārahūm wa Ruḥbānahūm*, learned person and monk-ascetic) as lords beside God. The latter accusation will be partially upended in 5:82 and we will return to it later.

If it is evident that those last *sūwar* are more inclined to better define the Believers' early community as something different from Arabian Judaism and Christianity, regarding the internal identity, the belligerent attitude still remained projected on a defensive option, 9:36 argues:

God decrees that there are twelve months organised in God's book on the day when He created the heavens and earth, four months of which are sacred: this is the correct calculation. Do not wrong yourselves in these months – though you may fight the idolaters at any time if they first fight you (*wa qātilū al-Mushrikīna Kāffātan Kamā Yuqātilūnakum Kaffātan*), remember that God is with those who are mindful of Him.

This translation, not always univocal,<sup>56</sup> emphasized how, contrary to the *Jāhiliyya* Arabian conduct, it was not possible to fight an enemy during the Sacred Months of Dhūl-Qaḍah, Dhūl-Ḥijjah, Muḥarram and Rajab, while this verse cancels *de facto* the norm.

Conversely, its most important part reflects on the fact that this permission to fight the *Mushrikūm* is valid if they start to fight first, independently of the month. This hermeneutical interpretation, established by important Muslim authors,<sup>57</sup> confirmed the reactionary defensive attitude of belligerency in one of the last *sūwar*, of the same Revelation.

This conceptualization seems to be in continuity with 2:194 and not in contrast, as argued by Qurṭubī, in his *Jāmi'*.<sup>58</sup>

If the aim of the fighting (*qātilu*) is the eradication of unbelief and polytheism (*shirk*), only those who fight you are particularly dangerous as confirmed by 9:36; as well as when the unbelievers were prone to fighting the Prophet, at the time that 2:194 was revealed, they had to be fought back, as attackers against the early Medinan community.

The following verses (9:38–42) are mainly significant because if they are in continuity with the previous ones, they show, for the first time, a synonym between *n-f-r* (*naḥara*: to stand up and join a fighting army) and *j-h-d* (*jahada*: to struggle) in giving an updated understanding of the conceptualization of *jihād*.

'Believers, why, when it is said to you, *Up and Go forth on the way of God*, [...] If you do not go out, (God) will punish you with grievous penalty' (v. 38-39); 'Even if you do not help the Prophet, God helped him when the disbelievers drove him out: when the two of them (Muḥammad and Abū Bakr), he said to his companion, "Do not worry, God is with us", and God sent his calm down to him, aided him with forces invisibles to you, and brought down the disbelievers' plan. God's plan

is higher: God is almighty and wise (v. 40). So, go out, no matter whether you are lightly or heavily armed and struggle in God's way with your possessions and persons' (*Anfirū Khifāfāan wa Thiqālāan wa Jāhidū bi'āmwālikum wa 'ānfusikum fī Sabīli Allāhi*, v. 41).

These verses, which probably referred to the expedition of Tabūk, when false information seemed to announce a Byzantine invasion of Hijāz,<sup>59</sup> form a directly meaningful correlation between the action of rising up, independently of the preparation of the military equipment, and struggling on the way of God. This association, if it clearly refers to a military expedition, confirmed the Qur'anic difficulties in enforcing the link between to fight (*q-t-l*) and to struggle (*j-h-d*).

What can be historically perceived at this time is that there were few brave men, among the old and new believers, who wanted to encounter the Byzantines in battle, including during the summer when the oppressive heat usually reached its height; moreover, the incitation to leave for the mission is directly associated with a form of *jihād*, which logically could lead to a fight.

However, it is the action and the bravery in rising up, even if militarily unprepared, even if the weather is dry, that is symptomatic of showing the Believers' struggle on the way of God, which hermeneutically confirmed the absolute confidence of the Believer in God: this complete abnegation in God's faith, which, in the above verses, is specular to that for the Prophet becomes the core of the concrete meaning of being a *mujāhid*.

In other words, it is not the fighting which makes you a *mujāhid* but your absolute trust in divine transcendence. Striving on God's way, which sometimes referred to a warlike defensive attitude (as in the case of Tabūk), is only partially associated with military militancy, but more generally in a form of personal activism that put the believers' confidence in God as the most important aspect of their personal faith.

Blind belief in God as well in the Prophet makes the difference in being a Believer or not:

Those who were left behind were happy to stay behind when God's messenger set out; they hated the thought of striving (*yujāhidu*) in God's way with their possessions and their persons. They said to one another, 'Do not go out with this heat', [...] So Prophet, if God brings you back to a group of them, who ask you the permission to go out, say, 'You will never go out and fight an enemy with me: you chose to sit at home the first time, so remain with those who stay behind.' (9:81, 83)

Verses 86 and 88 continue, possibly referring to the Tabūk expedition, in emphasizing the difference between those who strive on God's way and those who stay behind.<sup>60</sup> The accusation is directed to the hypocrites but also to some desert Arabs (9:90, 97, 101) who stayed behind and were:

the most stubborn of all people in their disbelief and hypocrisy. [...] Some of the desert Arabs consider what they give to be an imposition; they are waiting for fortune to turn against you, but fortune will turn against them. (9:98) [...] But there are also some desert Arabs who believe in God and the last Day and

consider their contributions as bringing them nearer to God and the prayers of the Messenger: they will indeed bring them nearer and God will admit them to His mercy. (9:99)

This *topos* is particularly important in relation to subduing the Arabs of the Desert, but even more, if we put the above verses in parallel with 3:110/199 ‘Some of the People of the Book believe in God, in what has been sent down to you and in what has been sent down to them,’ 5:66, 10:40 and others, in which the People of the Book are equally considered and apostrophized.

The Qurʾān seems to adopt the same method in fragmenting the community between those who are on God’s way, and those who are still far away from understanding it.

It is evident that those who strive on the way of God only for monetary reasons, or who too rationally calculate costs-benefits in being a Believer to take part in an expedition, are very far from being considered a real devotee by God and his Prophet. The vast majority of the verses in the 9th *sūrah*, the penultimate one for both chronologies, referred to the still ongoing presence of hypocrisy among the believers.

Even in this case, the importance of the post-Islamic narrative is important to exegetically understand the concrete meaning of the *sūrah*, which is named *Tawbāh*: repentance.

Quite surprisingly, verse 111 assumed that the eschatological expectations for the Believers in being prepared ‘to kill and being killed’ are something shared with what had been written in the Torah and the Gospel, in an ongoing covenant to reinforce the idea that salvation can also come from those who died fighting on God’s way.

This verse, which as reported by N. Sinai and N. Reda<sup>61</sup> seems in continuity with 2:246/250 or 3:146, is linked with a huge generalization; in contrast, as reported above, the 9th again stressed the attempt to form a believers’ religious identity, different from that of Jews and Christians (as reported above in referring to 9:30–31/36).

However, the ensuing verses finally argue about the *Tawbāh*, the pietistic act in asking God for a form of salvation even though for idolaters and hypocrites: the 9th *Sūrah* in 84, 112–118 on the one hand dismissed the obligation for Muḥammad to do it, but on the other hand, the Prophet, as Abraham before him, did not have to be blamed for having prayed for the disbelief of their ancestors as well as for the infidelity of their companions: ‘God has relented towards the Prophet, and the emigrants and helpers who followed him in the hour of adversity when some hearts almost wavered. In the end He has relented towards them; He is most kind and merciful to them’ (v. 117).

The interpretation is hard to investigate: the *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, Ibn Khatīr’s *Tafsīr* and other sources<sup>62</sup> stressed the Prophet’s prayers for his uncle Abū Ṭālib, but it would be chronologically untenable, referring to it at the end of the Medinan period; even if Muḥammad would certainly have interceded for ‘Alī’s father, the believers are admonished to follow the example of Abraham, to whom the same verses seem to refer.

Considering the *Sīra an-Nabawiyya*, conversely, the death of the hypocrite Ibn Ubayy is differently contemplated by the sources. Ibn Ishāq argues that the funerary prayer for him was led by the Prophet himself, with the clear opposition of figures such as ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb;<sup>63</sup> at the same time, the chronicle highlights how those verses

(9:84/113ff) which prevented praying for the hypocrites' souls reached the community after the Prophet's actions for Ibn Ubayy, while others argue the contrary. The Prophet's traditions argue about the fact that Ibn Ubayy was shrouded in a Prophet's mantle,<sup>64</sup> as well as, in referring to the same 'story', that God, afterwards, denied, through a revelation, praying at the funeral for a hypocrite.<sup>65</sup>

However, it would be quite shocking to hermeneutically interpret this passage as well as to admit that Muḥammad's mercy overcame that of God, in antithesis with the same *Basmala*.

Nevertheless *sūrah* 9 ends with a relational crackdown among the believers and those hypocrites and disbelievers who, while they continued to be linked through family to *mu'minīn*, act and behave differently; verse 123, the last, is directly correlated with warlike militantism, in asking to fight (*Qātilū*) 'the disbelievers near you and let them find you standing firm', which is also strategic advice in keeping the believers' military forces not so far away from Ḥijāz. It is clear indeed that the campaigns of conquest are not semantically considered by the Islamic revelation.

The last *sūrah* that will be analysed is the **fifth**. Nöldeke's and the Egyptian chronology argue differently about it, but both admit their temporal vicinity in relation to the Prophet's future biographies: if Bukhārī, Muslim, Ṭabarī and Bayḍāwī maintain that the 9th is the last, Tirmidhī, Zamakhsharī and Shūshāwī claim, that for some of its verses, the 5th is the last of the entire Revelation.<sup>66</sup>

As argued by Nöldeke,<sup>67</sup> the verses which positioned the *sūrah* in direct relation with the Farewell Pilgrimage and Muḥammad's biography are the first, in which the Prophet decreed some rules of how God made you lawful in continuity with the People of the Book (5:4–5) but also in showing your clear and higher affiliation to justice (5:8).

Independently of this digression, it is important to focus on whether the 5th *sūrah* can add anything relevant to our analysis on proto-Islamic militantism and *jihād*.<sup>68</sup> Unlike the 9th, which independently of 9:29, seems to be more active in fighting hypocrisy and unbelievers than the People of the Book, the 5th, from verse 12, begins a Biblical examination of Judaism and Christianity, starting from the *mithāq*, the pledge, previously signed by God.

The analysis is probably one of the most inter-religious Abrahamic examples of dialogical and theological confrontation in the Qur'ān, more focused on Judaism than on Christianity and it is not very violent, but clearly accused both of them of having incorrectly interpreted their revelations. The military attack against God and His Messenger (5:33) will certainly be counterbalanced, but, apart from it, most of the *sūrah* reflects on bringing information from Biblical or apocryphal Gospel sources which intend to better clarify the relationship that the Believers need to maintain with them. However, the relationship that the Believers can assume with them is quite complicated to frame easily.

1. The women of the People of the Book can marry Believers (v. 5), but Jews and Christians cannot be considered as allies, probably understood from the military-political aspect (v. 51ff); they include those who believe in God and the Last Judgement and do good deeds (v. 69); some of them are on the right course (v. 66), but many of them do very evil things (v. 66). Finally, the famous verse 82ff.

argues that the most hostile to the Believers are the Jews, probably in relation to the increasing conflict which emerged during the Medinan period, while ‘you are sure to find that the closest in affection towards the believers are those who say, ‘We are Christians,’ for there are among them people devoted to learning and ascetics.’

2. From the juridical-theological aspect, if the food of the People of the Book is also lawful for the Believers (v. 5), the deification of Jesus is a clear attempt on the unity of God (v. 17, 116ff.), as well as the disobedience of the Children of Israel: when Cain killed Abel committing fratricide (v. 27ff). However, God sent different messengers in the attempt to redeem his nations, since if ‘God had so willed, He would have made you one community, but He wanted to test you through that which He has given you, so race to do Good’ (v. 48) reflects God’s will in preserving their differences. In parallel, verses 42ff. clarify another important assumption that every member of a community of the People of the Book needs to be judged in relation to their revelation of reference, using their main legal framework.<sup>69</sup>

It is obvious that this *sūrah* amply confirmed the intention to shape a new community of Believers, showing some relevant differences from the People of the Book as well as also emphasizing clear independence of them. However, two main aspects need to be considered:

1. The aggressive attitude against the People of the Book is univocally attributed to Jews, those who resided around the Believers’ territories, following the conflicts that in Medina, Khaybar etc. caused increasing enmity among them. Verses 57ff. stressed when the Jews in Medina ridiculed the Believers’ prayer for standing up during their *Ṣalāt*,<sup>70</sup> at the same time, verse 82 harshly accused the Jews of being the most hostile of the believers, unlike the Christians.
2. The existence of good people, Jewish, Sabians and Christians who believe in God and the Last Day (v.69), is strengthened in relation to the latter, in verses 82ff. when the Qur’anic message seems to exalt those Christians who, when encountering Muḥammad or a Believer, had kind words concerning their message: the Negus of Ethiopia, the monk Bahīrā and many Christians mentioned by al-Wāhidī (d. 1075) and Ibn Abbas: a sort of delegation of more than seventy people.<sup>71</sup>

The presence of Christian dignitaries at the presentation of Muḥammad in Medina, after having submitted all the unbelievers of Ḥijāz, in the last months of his life, when different delegations reached the city of the Prophet,<sup>72</sup> remained only hypothetical and cannot be traced in any reliable historical sources.

Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that in the mentioned *sūrah*, although the prominent religious differences are stressed as well as both Jews and Christians are accused of having failed in the covenant with God, due to their behaviour and erratic theological assumptions, the level of violence against them remained limited, compared to the 9th.

Contrary to the previous one, the 5th is important to begin a process of distinguishing the religious identity between the People of the Book, even if the inconsistencies, in particular in relation to Christianity and the dogma of the Trinity, remained evident (v. 73ff., 116ff.).

The proto-Islamic belligerent attitude continued to be either defensive or still rooted in the pre-Islamic Arab practice of raid and pillage, which was commonly adopted during the war against Mecca and during the early conquering campaigns.



- 46 A. Neuwirth, 'Meccan Text- Medinan Addition? Politics and the Re-reading of Liturgical Communication', in Arnzen R. and Thielmann J. (eds), *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 139, Words, Texts and Concepts Cruising the Mediterranean Sea: Studies on the Sources, Contents and Influences of Islamic Civilizations and Arabic Philosophy and Science, Dedicated to G. Endress on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, Leuven: Peeters, 2004, pp. 80–5.
- 47 Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fi Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, Vol. 9, pp. 196–9; *Tanwīr al-Miqbās min Tafsīr Ibn 'Abbās*, p. 101.
- 48 A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, pp. 437ff, 461ff.
- 49 D. Marshall, *God, Muhammad and the Unbelievers*, pp. 164–75; H. Yaman, 'The Criticism of the People of the Book (*Ahl al-Kitāb*) in the Qur'an: Essentialist or Contextual?', pp. 196–7.

## Chapter 6

- 1 Nöldeke Th., Schwally Fr., Bergsträßer G. and Preztl O., *The History of the Qur'an*, pp. 47ff.; M. Watt and R. Bell, *Introduction to the Qur'an*, pp. 108ff; R. Blachère, *Introduction au Coran*, pp. 64ff; W. Muir, *The Life of Mohamet and History of Islam to the Era of Hegira, with Introductory Chapters on the Original Sources for the Biography of Mohamet and on the pre-Islamic History of Arabia*, London: Smith, Elder & Co, 3ed. 1894; H. Grimme, *Mohammed. Das Leben den Quellen. Einleitung in den Koran; system der koranischen Theologie*, Münster: 1892–1895; N. Sinai, *The Qur'an*, pp. 122–32; F. Donner, 'The Qur'an in Recent Scholarship. Challenges and Desiderata', in G. Said Reynolds (ed.), *The Qur'an in Its Historical Context*, London: Routledge, 2008, pp. 29ff; C. Gilliot, 'Reconsidering the Authorship of the Qur'an: Is the Qur'an Partly the Fruit of a Progressive and Collective Work?', in G. Said Reynolds (ed.), *The Qur'an in Its Historical Context*, pp. 88ff.; G. Said Reynolds, 'Le problème de la Chronologie du Qur'an', *Arabica*, 58 (2011), pp. 477–502; H. Motzki, *Reconstruction of a Source of Ibn Ishāq's Life of the Prophet and Early Qur'an Exegesis*, Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2017.
- 2 M. Watt and R. Bell, *Introduction to the Qur'an*, p. 207.
- 3 N. Robinson, *Discovering the Qur'an*, pp. 37–44; B. Sadeghi, 'The Chronology of the Qur'an: A Stylometric Research Programme', *Arabica*, 58 (2011), pp. 282ff.
- 4 N. Sinai, *The Qur'an*, p. 122; N. Sinai, 'The Unknown-Known: Some Groundwork for Interpreting the Medinan Qur'an', *Mélanges de l'Université Saint Joseph*, 66 (2015–2016), pp. 47–96.
- 5 Nöldeke Th., Schwally Fr., Bergsträßer G. and Preztl O., *The History of the Qur'an*, pp. 172–4.
- 6 *Ibid.*, pp. 141ff.
- 7 Fleischer H.O., *Behidhawii commentarius in Coranum*, 1, pp. 154ff.; Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fi Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, Vol. 5, pp. 234ff.; Aḥmad al-Wāhidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, pp. 18–19; *Tanwīr al-Miqbās min Tafsīr Ibn 'Abbās*, p. 37; *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, p. 39; A. Guillaume, *The Life of the Prophet*, pp. 286ff.
- 8 Nöldeke Th., Schwally Fr., Bergsträßer G. and Preztl O., *The History of the Qur'an*, p. 151; N. Sinai, *The Qur'an*, pp. 198–9.
- 9 N. Robinson, *Discovering the Qur'an*, pp. 40–1; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fi Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, Vol. 8, pp. 170ff.; Ibn Khatīr, *Tafsīr*, Vol. 4, pp. 332ff.; Aḥmad al-Wāhidī,

- Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, pp. 81ff; *Tanwīr al-Miqbās min Tafṣīr Ibn ‘Abbās*, p. 182ff; *Tafṣīr al-Jalālayn*, pp. 183ff; *Tafṣīr al-Tustarī*, pp. 81–2.
- 10 *Tafṣīr al-Tustarī*, p. 82.
  - 11 Ibn Khatīr, *Tafṣīr*, Vol. 4, pp. 368ff.
  - 12 al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān fi Tafṣīr al-Qur’ān*, Vol. 8, pp. 175.; Aḥmad al-Wāhidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, pp. 81ff; *Tanwīr al-Miqbās min Tafṣīr Ibn ‘Abbās*, p. 192; *Tafṣīr al-Jalālayn*, pp. 193.
  - 13 M. Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History*, pp. 72–83; A. Afsaruddin, *Striving in the Path of God*, pp. 150ff.; A. Morabia, *Le Ġihād dans l’Islam medieval*, pp. 251ff.; M. Canard, ‘La guerre sainte dans le monde Islamique et dans le monde chrétien’, *Revue Africaine* (1936), pp. 605–23; J. Flori, *Guerre Sainte, Jihad, Croisade: violence et religion dans le christianisme et l’Islam*, Paris: Le Seuil, 2002.
  - 14 Ibn Khatīr, *Tafṣīr*, Vol. 9., pp. 107ff. In this commentary Ibn Khatīr seems to suggest that *qitāl* and *jihad* have become synonyms in his time; at the same time, he also argues that ‘a general prohibition of severing the ties of kinship. In fact, Allah, has ordained to people to establish righteousness on earth, as well as to join the ties of kinship by treating the relative s well in speech, actions and spending wealth in charity’. The hermeneutical understanding of Ibn Khatīr seems to emphasize how one of the main reasons for the spread of corruption all over the land (*‘an tufsidū fi al-ardī*) during the pre-Islamic age was the breaking of the ties of kinship, a topic that the Qur’an stressed as greatly in contrast with the proto-Islamic message in the clear attempt to increase the union among believers. However, this argument is also complex in relation to the same fragmentation that the emigration of the Believers had brought to the Meccan community. In this phase, Ibn Khatīr seems to emphasize that the clan ties are still parithetically important for every kind of religious affiliation, which is an aspect that will never change, concretely and continuously emerging as a problem in the early Islamic age.
  - 15 Al-Zamakhshari, *Tafṣīr al-Kashshāf*, ed. Muṣṭafā Ḥusain Aḥmad, 4 Vols., Cairo: 1953–1955, 2, pp. 25ff; *Tanwīr al-Miqbās min Tafṣīr Ibn ‘Abbās*, p. 52; *Tafṣīr al-Jalālayn*, p. 54.
  - 16 Mark Beaumont, *Christology in Dialogue with Muslims*, Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2005, pp. 1–11.
  - 17 A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, pp. 363–4; M. Lings, *Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources*, trad. Ita, *Il Profeta Muhammad*, Torino: Leone Verde Ed. 2004, pp. 164–6.
  - 18 Ibn Khatīr, *Tafṣīr*, Vol. 2., pp. 243ff.; *Tanwīr al-Miqbās min Tafṣīr Ibn ‘Abbās*, p. 68.
  - 19 Nöldeke Th., Schwally Fr., Bergsträßer G. and Preztl O., *The History of the Qur’an*, pp. 157–7.
  - 20 M. Watt, ‘Abd-Allah ibn Ubayy’, in *EI*. 2nd ed. Leiden: Brill, 1986, Vol. 1, p. 53; L. Caetani, *Annales*, Vol. 1, pp. 418, 548, 602; M. Lings, *Muhammad*, pp. 182, 200, 242–4.
  - 21 Al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Tabari*, Vol. 7, p. 108.
  - 22 *Ibid.*
  - 23 *Ibid.*, p. 110.
  - 24 *Ibid.*, pp. 134–8.
  - 25 Al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Tabari*, Vol. 7, pp. 85–7; 156–61; Vol. 8, pp. 27–41; Ibn al-Wāqidi, *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, ed. R. Faizer, London: Routledge, 2011, pp. 87–90; 177–87; 244–57; A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, pp. 363–4; 437–9; 461–70; M. Lings, *Muhammad*, pp. 164–6; 207–9; 234ff.

- 26 Ibn al-Wāqīdī, *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, pp. 260–1.
- 27 *Tanwīr al-Miqbās min Tafṣīr Ibn ‘Abbās*, p. 662; M. Lings, *Muhammad*, p. 221.
- 28 Ibn Khatīr, *Tafṣīr*, Vol. 2, pp. 514–17; *Tanwīr al-Miqbās min Tafṣīr Ibn ‘Abbās*, pp. 94–5; *Tafṣīr al-Jalālayn*, p. 97.
- 29 Ibn Khatīr, *Tafṣīr*, Vol. 2, pp. 555–8; Firestone, *Jihad. The Origin of Holy War in Islam*, p. 81.
- 30 N. Sinai, *The Qur’an*, p. 191; Firestone, *Jihad. The Origin of Holy War in Islam*, pp. 32ff.
- 31 Ibn Khatīr, *Tafṣīr*, Vol. 2., pp. 559–63.
- 32 Ibn Khatīr, *Tafṣīr*, Vol. 9, pp. 542ff.; *Tanwīr al-Miqbās min Tafṣīr Ibn ‘Abbās*, pp. 657ff.; M. Lings, *Muhammad*, pp. 207–9; Ibn al-Wāqīdī, *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, pp. 186–8.
- 33 S. Natij, ‘Muru’ā. Soucis et Interrogations éthiques dans la culture arabe Classique (1ère partie)’, *Studia Islamica*, 112 (2017), pp. 216ff.
- 34 Ibn Khatīr, *Tafṣīr*, Vol. 6, pp. 621ff.; Nöldeke argues, in fact, in his comment that 22 is ‘commonly regarded as Meccan but occasionally also as Medinan’, but it becomes ‘primarily important for the Medinan parts which it contains, despite that it was largely revealed during the third Meccan period before the *Hijra*’. Nöldeke Th., Schwally Fr., Bergsträßer G. and Preztl O., *The History of the Qur’an*, pp. 172ff.
- 35 A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, pp. 490–9; M. Lings, *Muhammad*, p. 247;
- 36 M. Lings, *Muhammad*, p. 259.
- 37 Ibn Khatīr, *Tafṣīr*, Vol. 9, pp. 144–5; *Tanwīr al-Miqbās min Tafṣīr Ibn ‘Abbās*, p. 598; Al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Tabari*, Vol. 8, pp. 115ff.; Ibn al-Wāqīdī, *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, pp. 311; M. Lings, *Muhammad*, pp. 268–75; A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, pp. 510ff.
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- 39 Nöldeke Th., Schwally Fr., Bergsträßer G. and Preztl O., *The History of the Qur’an*, p. 178.
- 40 A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, pp. 592–7; M. Lings, *Muhammad*, pp. 316–20.
- 41 Wāḥidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, p. 167.
- 42 Bukhārī/Muslim, *Riyāḍ Al-Ṣāliḥīn*, Vol. 1, n, 114.
- 43 Ibn Khatīr, *Tafṣīr*, Vol. 4, pp. 369ff.; Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-Bayān ‘an al-Ta’wīl ‘Āy al-Qur’an*, Vol. 10., pp. 77–9; *Tanwīr al-Miqbās min Tafṣīr Ibn ‘Abbās*, pp. 192–3; *Tafṣīr al-Jalālayn*, pp. 194–5; A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, pp. 617ff; M. Lings, *Muhammad*, pp. 332–3.
- 44 The Sanaa Palimpsest, on the contrary, at least in relation to the manuscripts 1–27.1 of the *Dār al-Mukhtūṭāt* in fol. 5a, notes the Basmala presence in 8:75 and 9:1 arguing that if the Cairo edition does not have it, some non-‘Uthmānic *muṣḥafs* such as that of Ibn Mas’ūd, al-Rabī’ Ibn Khuthaym and Ṭalḥa note it. Asma Hilali, *The Sanaa Palimpsest. The transmission of the Qur’an in the first century AH*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017, p. 102.

- 45 Abdel Haleem, 'Qur'anic *Jihād*: A Linguistic and Contextual Analysis', *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 12 (2010), p. 152.
- 46 R. Firestone, *Jihād. The Origin of Holy War*, pp. 88–9; 'Disparity and Resolution in the Qur'anic Teaching on War: A Reevaluation of a Traditional Problem', *JNES*, 56/1 (1997), pp. 14–16.
- 47 Al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Tabari*, Vol. 8, p. 182.
- 48 R. Blachère, *Le Coran*, p. 216 n. 29; At the same time, the Sanaa Palimpsest in relation to Folio 6a–6b is unable to consider the verse 29 as it is non-existent and due to the impossibility of reading the manuscript. Asma Hilali, *The Sanaa Palimpsest*, p. 106.
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- 50 *Ibid.*, p. 75.
- 51 M. 'Imāra, *Al-Islām wa-l-'aḡalliyāt*, Cairo: Maktabat al-Shurūk al-dawliyya, 2003, p. 15; Abdel Haleem, 'The Jizya Verse (9:29)', pp. 75–6; Abdel Haleem, ElSaid M. Badawi, *Arabic-English Dictionary of Quranic Usage*, Leiden: Brill, 2008, pp. 163–4.
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- 53 Al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Tabari*, Vol. 11, pp. 34ff.
- 54 Anas ibn Mālik, *Al-Muwaṭṭa'*, pp. 484–7; Uri Rubin, 'Quran and Tafṣīr. The Case of 'an yadin', p. 141 n. 53.
- 55 I.S. Allouche, Un traité de polémique christiano-musulmane au IXe siècle, *Hespéris*, 26 (1939), 123–55; J. Finkel, 'A Risāla of Al-Jāhiz', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 47 (1927), 311–34. Partial reprinted with helpful notes in N.A. Newman (ed.), *The Early Christian-Muslim Dialogue: A Collection of Documents from the First Three Islamic Centuries, 632–900 A.D.*, Hatfield, PA: Interdisciplinary Biblical Research Institute, 1993, pp. 685–717; Jim Colville, 'Contra Christianorum', in *Sobriety and Mirth: A Selection of the Shorter Writings of Al-Jahiz*, London: Kegan Paul, 2002, pp. 70–93.
- 56 Bausani and Blachère, for example, usually translate *Kaffātan*, with *totalmente*, *totalmente*, which is quite problematic because it cannot give the hermeneutical perception of a reaction. Arberry A.J., on the contrary, used the term *continuously*, while Abdel Haleem, *at any time*.
- 57 Ibn Khatīr, *Tafṣīr*, Vol. 4, pp. 421–5; Al-Zamakhsharī, *Kashshāf*, Vol. 1, pp. 395–7.
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- 59 Ibn Khatīr, *Tafṣīr*, Vol. 4, pp. 427ff.; *Tanwīr al-Miqbās min Tafṣīr Ibn 'Abbās*, pp. 198–9; Wāhidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, p. 87; M. Lings, *Muhammad*, pp. 325–8.
- 60 Ibn Khatīr, *Tafṣīr*, Vol. 4, pp. 489ff.; *Tanwīr al-Miqbās min Tafṣīr Ibn 'Abbās*, pp. 204–5; *Tafṣīr al-Jalālayn*, pp. 205–6.
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## Chapter 7

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# Appendix

## Jafnids (Ghassānid Confederation), sixth century

1. Jabalah ibn al-Ḥārith (d. 528)
2. Al-Ḥārith V ibn Jabalah (d. 569, *phylarch Phoenice, Syrian and Euphratensis*)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (brother) Abū Karib ibn Jabalah (*phylarch, Palestina Tertia, Arabia Deserta*)
3. Al-Mundhir III ibn al-Ḥārith, (d. c. 602, reign until 581, in exile in Sicily from 581)
4. Al-Nu'mān VI ibn al-Mundhir (reign 581–583, d. unknown, in exile in Sicily too)

## Naşrids (Lakhmīds Confederation), sixth century

1. Abū Ya'fur ibn 'Alqamā (d. unknown, not mentioned in the book)
2. Al-Mundhir III ibn Nu'mān (d. 554) during the battle of Chalcis
3. 'Amr III ibn al-Mundhir (d. c. 569–570) \_\_\_\_\_ (brother) Qābūs ibn al-Mundhir (reign from c. 569–570 to 573) \_\_\_\_\_ (brother) Al-Mundhir IV ibn al-Mundhit (reign 574–580)
4. Al-Nu'mān III ibn al-Mundhir (d. 602, converted to Christianity c. 594)
5. Ḥasan ibn al-Mundhir (d. unknown) \_\_\_\_\_ (brother) al-Nu'mān IV ibn al-Mundhir (d. unknown) both converted to Christianity (c. 594)

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