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Ibn 'Ā'isha, Abū Ja'far
Muḥammad

Abū Ja'far Muḥammad Ibn 'Ā'isha (d. c.126/744) was a renowned singer from Medina. His father's identity was unknown, so he was named after his mother, 'Ā'isha, who was a hairdresser. He studied with the renowned singers and composers Ma'bad (d. c.126/743) and Mālik Mālik (d. c.136/754) and became their equal in both composition and performance. He was renowned for singing well the beginning of a song and his pleasant recitation of the Qur'ān. The beauty of his voice was such that he was often compared to the Biblical figure David. He was accused of corrupting the young men of Medina, who would often visit him to listen to his singing. On one occasion his singing disturbed the passing by camel-borne litter. This disturbed the caravan, the camels stopped moving, stretched their necks, and riots almost occurred. People were so infatuated with his singing that they became paralyzed and imprisoned by him. This caused the Umayyad caliph Hishām b. 'Abd

al-Malik (r. 105–25/724–43) to reprimand him. He sang for the caliph al-Walid II b. Yazid (r. 125–6/743–4), who is said to have felt as if he were thrown into a skillet (*miqlā*), from the warmth of the singing. Ibn 'Ā'isha was not proficient in playing the lute, so he would either sing without accompaniment or accompanied by other musicians. His talent and fame made him arrogant: he would sing only for noblemen, disliked being asked to sing, and often refused requests to repeat a song.

There are four accounts concerning his death, which occurred in a palace near Medina. According to one, while drunk, he began singing from the palace balcony in order to attract some women who were standing nearby but, overcome with emotion, lost his balance, and fell to his death. According to another, when the son of the caliph Yazid b. 'Abd al-Malik (r. 101–5/720–24), al-Ghamr b. Yazid (d. 132/750), asked him to repeat one of his songs, he arrogantly refused, so al-Ghamr ordered that he be thrown from the balcony. The third account says that he drunkenly went to the balcony to