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THE ARABS IN MAWARANNAHR
THE BATTLE OF TALAS

NICOLA A. ZIADEH *

Shortly after the death of the Prophet (10/632) a population explosion, which had been gathering momentum in Arabica, expressed itself in a succession of waves of warriors taking to the roads leading to Bilad al-sham and Iraq. Those men marched, so to speak, under tribal banners and were, more or less, although not systematically, commanded by their own leaders. A central authority, the Caliph, stationed at Medina, did in fact plan, command and control their movements and decide their destination. Thus began the great Arab conquests which, within the scope of a century, had already brought the area stretching from the Indus and Central Asia east, to the Iberian Peninsula west, under the domain of the new state, the Caliphate.

Turning our attention to the eastern march of these armies we see that by about 30/651, Iraq and Persia had already fallen to Arab arms. But this initial conquest of Persia was far from being conclusive. Civil wars which took place within the Caliphate soon after conquests, loosened the grip of the central authority and many conquered peoples managed to wriggle their way to freedom or anarchy.

During the lull which followed in the procession of conquests, internal changes at home occurred. The Rashidi caliphate came to an end (41/661) and the Umayyads (41-132/661-750) took over. The capital was moved from Medina to Damascus (Ali 35-40/656-661 had made Kufa his capital). The Umayyad caliphs, generally speaking, viewed their role, more than less, pragmatically and semi-secularly; their policy rested on expansion. When Abd al-Malik (65-86/685-705) assumed his post as caliph, he took such matters seriously and he appointed al-Hajjaj al-Thaqafi as his vice-roy in Iraq (75/694); he was charged with regaining lost land and expanding eastwards. During his vice-royalty (75-95) al-Hajjaj restored law and order in Iraq and chastised people of Khurasan, northern part of Persia, for their misbehaviour. Then he attended to the lands beyond, the Mawarannahr and its northern neighbours.

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TARANTO [see İTALIYA].

TARĀWĪH (A.), pl. of *tarwīha*, the term for *ṣalāts* which are performed in the nights of the month of Ramaḍān. Tradition says that Muḥammad held these prayers in high esteem, with the precaution, however, that their performance should not become obligatory (al-Bukhārī, *Tarāwīh*, trad. 3). 'Umar is said to have been the first to assemble behind one *kār'* those who performed their prayers in the mosque of Medina singly or in groups (*loc. cit.*, trad. 2); he is also said to have preferred the first part of the night for these pious exercises.

The religious law recommends the performance of the *tarāwīh* shortly after the *ṣalāt al-ʿiṣhā'*. They consist of 10 *taslīmas*, each containing 2 *rak'as*; after every four *rak'as* a pause is held, hence the name *tarāwīh* "pauses". In the Mālikī law school, they consist of 36 *rak'as*. They belong to the *ṣalāts* that are *sunna* and are as popular as any rite connected with Ramaḍān [*q.v.*]. *Shī'ī fiqh* prefers a thousand supererogatory *rak'as* throughout the month of Ramaḍān.

In Mecca, people assemble in groups varying from 10 to 150 persons, behind one *imām*, who acts in this case unofficially, even if he should be an appointed official. The recitation of the *Qur'ān* has a prominent place in these *ṣalāts*. Certain groups abide behind their *imāms* reciting the *Qur'ān* once or several times in the nights of Ramaḍān. Even after the *tarāwīh*, many people stay for pious exercises.

In Atcheh, every night large crowds assemble in order to perform the *tarāwīh*. Usually, however, it is the *tönku* alone who takes the active part in them, the others limiting their part to a loud joining-in with the *āmīn* and the eulogies on the Prophet.

Bibliography: Bukhārī, *Tarāwīh*, with the commentaries; Mālik, *Muwatta'*, *ṣalāt fī Ramaḍān* with Zurkānī's commentary; Abū Ishāq al-Shīrāzī, *Tanbīh*, ed. Juynboll, 27; Ramlī, *Nihāya*, Cairo 1286, i, 503 ff.; Ibn Haḍjar al-Haytamī, *Tuhfa*, Cairo 1282, i, 205-6; Abū 'l-Kāsim al-Hillī, *Sharā'ī' al-Islām*, Calcutta 1255, 51; Caetani, *Annali*, A.H. 14, §§ 229-30; Juynboll, *Handleiding*, Leiden 1925, index; Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka*, ii, 81 ff.; idem, *Mekkanische Sprichwörter*, no. 49; idem, *De Aijehers*, i, 247 ff.; d'Ohsson, *Tableau général de l'empire ottoman*, Paris 1787, i, 214-15 (to be used with caution); Lane, *Manners and customs of the modern Egyptians*, London and Paisley 1899, ch. XXIV, 481; K. Lech, *Geschichte des islamischen Kultus*, i, *Das Ramaḍān Fasten*, Wiesbaden 1979. See also *ṢALĀT*. (A.J. WENSINCK)

TARĀZ, the Arabic name for **TALAS**, a river of Central Asia and a town of pre-Islamic and early Islamic times on its bank. The exact site is unknown, but was probably near the later Awliyā

Atā/Aulie Ata, modern Dzhambul. This last is now just within the Kazakhstan Republic, but the old name Talas has been revived for a modern settlement some distance to the east, on the left bank of the Talas River and just within Kirghizia. The original Talas certainly lay in the river valley, between two mountain ranges which run westwards and end in the Ak Kum desert.

The valley carried an important trade route eastwards to the Ču [*q.v.*] valley and the Semireč'e [see *YETI SUJ*]. Talas was an ancient town, mentioned in the report of the Byzantine envoy Zemarchos, who travelled to the encampment of the Kaḡhan of the Western Turks in 568, and known as a commercial centre to the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Hūan Tsang (*ca.* 630) as Ta-lo-si. Its origin was possibly Sogdian, and as late as the 5th/11th century, Maḥmūd Kāshgharī states that both Sogdian and Turkish were spoken at Talas and the nearby towns of Isfīdjāb and Balāsāghūn [*q.v.*] (*Diwān lughāt al-turk*, Tkish. tr. B. Atalay, i, 30, Eng. tr. R. Dankoff and J. Kelly, i, 84). Recent archaeological excavations in the region have shown that various faiths were professed there in early times, including Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Buddhism, and inscriptions have been found in the Talas valley in the Old Turkish "runic" alphabet and in Uyghur script.

Talas first comes into prominence in Islamic history as the general locale of the battle fought in Dhu 'l-Hiǧǧija 133/July 751 between the Chinese governor of Kuča, Kao Sien-chih, and his Turkish allies, and the Arab commander Ziyād b. Šāliḥ al-Khuzā'ī [*q.v.*], a battle which checked Chinese ambitions of establishing direct control over Central Asia (see Barthold, *Turkestan down to the Mongol invasion*³, 195-6; H.A.R. Gibb, *The Arab conquests in Central Asia*, London 1923; R. Grousset, *L'empire des steppes*⁴, Paris 1952, 170-1, Eng. tr. *The empire of the steppes. A history of Central Asia*, New Brunswick, N.J. 1970, 119-20; W. Samolin, *East Turkistan to the twelfth century. A brief political history*, The Hague 1964, 66-7; D.M. Dunlop, *A new source of information on the Battle of Talas or Atlakh*, in *Ural-altäische Jahrbücher*, xxxvi [1965], 326-30). In 280/893 the Sāmānid Amīr Ismā'il b. Aḥmad [*q.v.*] raided Talas, which O. Pritsak believes was now the capital of the Western Turk Kaḡhan, Oghulčak Kadir Khān, and turned the Christian church there into a mosque (*Von den Karluk zu den Karachaniden*, in *ZDMG*, ci (1951), 288-9; Samolin, *op. cit.*, 78-9). In the next century, a local ruler (*dihkān*) of Talas is mentioned, perhaps a tributary of the Sāmānids. Talas is now, in the 4th/10th century, described by the Islamic geographers. Ibn Ḥawqal and al-Muqaddasī state that it was strongly fortified and populous, a centre for trade with the Karluḡ [*q.v.*] Turks who lived in the steppes beyond the town; the second of these authors mentions goat-skins as one of the products of Talas (see Le Strange, *The lands of the Eastern Caliphate*, 468-7). According to the *Hudūd al-'ālam*, both Muslim and [infidel] Turks inhabited this haunt of merchants, the *dar-i Khallukh* (tr. 119, comm. 358).

Under the Karakhānids [see **ILEK-KHĀNS**], Talas became of special importance. It formed part of Kaḍir Khān Yūsuf's patrimony, which extended from Eastern Turkestan through the Semireč'e to the eastern part of the middle Sir Daryā province (of which Talas, with Isfīdjāb, was reckoned a part), and after his death in 423 or 424/1032, fell to his second son Yiḡhantiḡin Muḥammad (d. 449/1057), who now assumed the title Bughra Khān. We begin to possess Karakhānid coins minted at Talas, e.g. by Tamghaç Bughra Khān

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