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THE EMIGRATION OF 'UTBA B. ABĪ WAQQĀŞ FROM MECCA TO MEDINA

This short article deals with the emigration of 'Utba b. Abī Waqqāş (or 'Utba b. Mālik), a member of the Quraysh subdivision named Banū Zuhra, from Mecca to Medina, which occurred several years before the Hijra of the Prophet Muḥammad and his Companions.¹ 'Utba's famous brother, Sa'd b.

¹ I briefly discussed this issue in my doctoral thesis. 'On the Prophet Muhammad's activity in Medina', *Jerusalem*, 1982, 33. However, I wrongly identified 'Utba's court in Qubā' (see below) with the court which he may have owned in the Balāt, i.e., in the Sāfila of Medina.

Abī Waqqāş, belonged to the inner circle of Companions surrounding the Prophet Muḥammad from early on in his career. 'Utba, by contrast, fought against the Prophet at Uḥud and probably died a pagan.²

Several years before the Hijra, part of the Aws attempted to form an alliance with the Quraysh of Mecca.³ A passage concluding one of the reports on the aftermath of this obscure affair concerns us here:

... then this alliance between the Quraysh and the Aws was severed, but for what existed between 'Utba b. Abī Waqqāş al-Zuhrī and 'Utba b. al-Mundhir b. Uḥayḥa b. al-Julāh.⁴ This specific alliance persisted and 'Utba b. Abī Waqqāş acquired a court in Qubā in which he often stayed. It is the court built in gypsum behind the Ghars Well to the right (... *thumma nqata'a hādihā 'l-hilf bayna Quraysh wa-'l-Aws illā mā kāna bayna 'Utba b. Abī Waqqāş al-Zuhrī wa-bayna 'Utba b. al-Mundhir b. Uḥayḥa b. al-Julāh, fa-innahu thabata dhālika 'l-hilf, fa-ttakhadha 'Utba b. Abī Waqqāş dāran bi-Qubā fa-kāna yanziluhā wa-yakūnu fihā, wa-hiya 'l-dāru llatī khalfa Bīr Ghars 'alā 'l-yamīn 'l-mabniyya bi-l-qassa*).⁵

² On 'Utba's role during the Battle of Uḥud see e.g. al-Wāqidi, *Kitāb al-maghāzī*, ed. Marsden Jones (London, 1966), 1, 243-45, 248. See also Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamharat al-nasab*, ed. Najī Hasan (Beirut, 1407/1986), 77: 'Utba's son, Nāfi', and 'Utba himself, fought at Uḥud with the unbelievers, then Nāfi' converted to Islam. According to Ibn Qudāma, *al-Tabayn fi ansāb al-Qurayshiyīn*, ed. Muḥammad Najīf al-Dulaymī (Beirut, 1408/1988), 291, Nāfi' embraced Islam upon the conquest of Mecca. For the dispute about 'Utba's Companion-status, see al-Fāsi, *al-'Iqd al-thamīn fi ta'rīkh al-balad al-amīn*, ed. Fu'ād Sayyid (Cairo, 1378/1958-1388/1969), vi, 12; Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-Isāba fi tamyiz al-sahāba*, ed. 'Alī Muḥammad al-Bijawī (Cairo, 1392/1972), v, 259-60. Ibn Qudāma, *Tabayn*, 289, quotes from al-Zubayr b. Bakkār an unequivocal statement, probably originating with family circles, that 'Utba converted to Islam: *aslama 'Utba wa-māta fi 'l-islām wa-awṣā ilā akhihi Sa'd*, 'Utba embraced Islam, died in the Islamic era, and appointed his brother, Sa'd, as his trustee', viz., regarding a child born to 'Utba by the slavegirl of another man. In the margin of one of the *Tabayn* manuscripts, a scribe, having compared this phrase with the relevant passage in al-Zubayr b. Bakkār's *Jamharat nasab Quraysh* (see below), implies that Ibn Qudāma altered a neutral statement made by al-Zubayr, i.e., *māta 'Utba fi 'l-islām*, into *aslama 'Utba wa-māta fi 'l-islām*. However, it seems more likely that Ibn Qudāma quoted a statement made by al-Zubayr b. Bakkār elsewhere. For another example of a family claim, see al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, MS Süleymanīe Kütüphanesi (Reisülküttap Mustafa Efendi), 597/598, 828: having quoted the claim that 'Utba died shortly after the Battle of Uḥud as a result of the Prophet's curse, al-Balādhurī quotes a counterclaim to the effect that 'Utba converted to Islam upon the conquest of Mecca: *wa-qāla qawm: aslama fi 'l-fath wa-māta ha'da 'l-fath*. Al-Balādhurī, who prefers the former claim, remarks: *wa-mawtuhu qabla 'l-fath athbatu*. (Indeed, the *hadith* immediately following in al-Balādhurī suggests that 'Utba died prior to the conquest of Mecca.) The existence of the counterclaim, presumably going back to a family tradition, is nevertheless noteworthy. The same family circles may have been behind the listing of 'Utba's daughter, Umm Ḥakīm, among the women who emigrated from Mecca to Medina, the *Muḥājirāt*; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī'āb fi ma'rifa al-ashāb*, ed. 'Alī Muḥammad al-Bijawī (Cairo n.d.), iv, 1933.

³ M. J. Kister, 'On strangers and allies in Mecca', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 13, 1990, 113-54, at 142-3. Also, J. Wellhausen, *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten*, iv (Berlin, 1889), 32-3.

⁴ I could not find any details on him. Perhaps he was the son of al-Mundhir [b. Muḥammad b. 'Uqba] b. Uḥayḥa b. al-Julāh. The latter fought at Badr; see al-Wāqidi, 1, 160 (the remark which then follows, *wa-laysa lahu 'aqib*, does not mean that he never begot a son, but that 'there was no male offspring remaining to him'; see E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English lexicon* (London, 1863-93), s.v., 'aqib, 2101b); Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt al-kubrā* (Beirut 1380/1960-1388/1968), iii, 473; Ibn Qudāma, *al-Istihār fi nasab al-sahāba min al-anṣār*, ed. 'Alī Nuwayhid (Beirut, 1392/1972), 315. For an indirect family link between Uḥayḥa b. al-Julāh and the Prophet, see M. Lecker, 'A note on early marriage links between Quraysh and Jewish women', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 10, 1987, 17-39, at 28.

⁵ Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-munammaq fi akhbār Quraysh*, ed. Khūrshīd Aḥmad Fāriq (Beirut, 1405/1985), 268. On Bī'r Ghars see the geographical dictionaries of Yāqūt (*Mu'jam al-hudūd*, Beirut, 1957) and al-Bakrī (*Mu'jam mā sta'jama*, ed. Mustafā al-Saqāqī, Cairo, 1364/1945-1371/1951), s.v. Ghars: al-Samhūdī, *Wafā' al-wafā' bi-akhbār dār al-mustafā*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyi al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, (Cairo, 1374/1955; repr. Beirut), iii, 978-81 and al-Firūzabādī, *al-Maghānīm al-muṭāha fi ma'ālim Ṭāba* (Riyād, 1389/1969), 46-7 (where the well is called Ghurs, al-Aghras and Ghars); also Ibn Shabba, *Tārīkh al-Madīna al-munawwara*, ed. Fahīm Muḥammad Shaltūt [Mecca, 1399/1979], i, 161-2 (al-Aghras, al-Ghars). On the territory of the Banū Jahjabā see M. Lecker, 'On the markets of Medina (Yathrib) in pre-Islamic and early Islamic times', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 8, 1986, 133-47, at 134-6; M. Lecker,