

SYRIA

220318 YÛSUF b. ESBÂT (babası)

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the last years of his life, he was appointed over the Court of Appeals.¹³⁹ This means that just as other of his like-minded Qadarite colleagues he must have fled Syria under Marwān.¹⁴⁰

To what extent he was a Qadarite beyond his political commitment is difficult to say. Ka'bi, following Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Shāfi', certainly sees in him the best expert on Ghaylān's doctrine,¹⁴¹ and not only the Mu'tazilites but later orthodox authors as well subscribed to this judgement,¹⁴² but the *Ta'riḫ Baghdād* contains nothing of the sort whatsoever. His reputation as a *muḥaddith* was contested,¹⁴³ yet one stressed that Sa'īd b. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Tanūkhī, the strict and orthodox Damascene, was deeply moved when he died.¹⁴⁴ It appears that he emphasized less the responsibility of man and more the omnipotence and forgiving goodness of God. He transmitted as a saying of the Prophet that God can forgive everything as long as "the separating curtain has not fallen", i.e. as long as one does not give oneself over to the deadly sin of *shirk*.¹⁴⁵ At any moment God will accept repentance – though not any longer during one's death throes.¹⁴⁶ If one plays with the idea of doing something (*hamma*), this will only be counted if it concerns good works, not on the other hand bad ones.¹⁴⁷ In this regard, it is no coincidence that Ibn Thawbān argues so extensively on the basis of *ḥadīths*. He was very committed to this medium. We find him, like Ḥassān b. 'Aṭiyya al-Muḥaribī, in the *isnād* of the saying in which the Prophet recommends transmitting his own words along with tradition from the Jews,¹⁴⁸ and from him one could hear that Muḥammad had had no objections to recording his words in writing.¹⁴⁹ – Somewhat outside the usual mould is

Asbāt b. Wāṣil al-Shaybānī.

139 Ibid. 223, ll. 13 f.

140 Abyaḍ, *Tarbiya* 355, following Ibn 'Asākir.

141 *Maq.* 103, l. 4. In *Anfänge* 245 I mistakenly took this remark to be about the father.

142 *Faḍl* 339, l. 3 from bot. > IM 136, l. 10. On this *Mizān*, op. cit., and TT VI, 150, no. 304.

143 TB X, 224, ll. 12 ff.

144 AZ 273, no. 394 (= 703, no. 2203); Fasawī I, 153, ll. 11 ff. The problem with this story is that Sa'īd may well have died before Thawbān (162 or 163; cf. TH 222, ll. 3 f.). For this reason one had the Syrian Abū Mushir testify that in reality he departed this world in the year 167 (TB X, 225, ll. 6 ff.).

145 Fasawī II, 358, ll. 1 ff.; TTD III, 364, l. 17.

146 *Mizān* II, 552, l. 6.

147 AZ 314 f., no. 587. Here he was probably thinking of surah 12/24.

148 Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Sharaf* 14, ll. 16 ff.; on this above p. 104 f.

149 Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Taqyid al-'ilm* 72, ll. 13 ff.