

Baghdad

With the foundation of Baghdad Islamic intellectual history reached a decisive turning point. This statement will sound banal to anyone looking at the development retrospectively; for the contemporaries, however, what was taking place was too complex to be perceived consciously and described in these terms. They recorded how carefully Manşūr planned the external appearance of the city, how, maybe with reference to east Iranian models, he had it built perfectly circular, and how he parcelled it within the walls according to clear geometric principles, but also with a view to strict security. They also noted that he, being superstitious like most rulers, had his court astrologer Nawbakht calculate the precise moment for laying the foundation stone. But they did not notice, or if they did, they did not transmit it, the revolutionary consequences this would have for social structures and how they would influence intellectual life and alter consciousness.

After all, the depth of the historic caesura had by no means been evident from the very first. The Abbasids had moved their residence several times already. After Saffāḥ had proclaimed himself caliph in Kufa, he had first lived near Qaṣr Ibn Hubayra halfway between Kufa and the future Baghdad, and then moved into a newly established palace complex near Anbār. Manşūr had settled near Kufa, presumably in a town which, like Qaṣr Ibn Hubayra, had been built by the last Umayyad governor. As we know, the caliphs did not stay in Baghdad very long either; a century later they moved to Samarra, a good 125 km (75 miles) away. Baghdad, however, was not abandoned by its inhabitants and left to be washed away by the rains like the earlier centres, which historians list as 'Hāshimī dwellings' (Hāshimīyya). On the contrary, the city grew quickly to become a metropolis, surviving the temporary absence of the court and civil servants.

Texts by native geographers are collected in O. V. Tsikitišvili, *K istorii Bagdada* (Tbilisi 1968); cf. e.g. Ya'qūbī, *Buldān* 238, 20ff., or Ibn al-Faqīh, *Akhbār al-buldān*, Facsimile of MS Mashhad 5229 (*Collection of Geographical Works*, Frankfurt/Main 1987), p. 55ff. = Tsikitišvili, Ar. Part 3 ff. = ed. by Ṣ. A. al-'Alī entitled *Baghdād madīnat al-salām* (Paris/ Baghdad 1977). The foundation of the city was described in detail by Ṣ. A. al-'Alī in the extensive work of the same title *Baghdād madīnat al-salām*, vol. 1: *al-Jānīb al-gharbī* (Baghdad 1985). Cf. R. Hodges and D. Whitehouse,

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stable, no longer just the lecture notes of one or another student. Similarities between the *Musnad* and the *Umm* sufficiently outweigh discrepancies to confirm that acceptance.

The *Musnad* and the *Sunan* both confirm that there was a larger body of al-Shāfiʿī's teaching on which different disciples might draw, as Norman Calder proposed to account for discrepancies between the *Mukhtaṣar* of al-Muzanī and the *Umm*.⁴¹ Comparison between the *Musnad* and the *Umm* shows specifically that al-Rabīʿ himself transmitted more from al-Shāfiʿī than what made its way into the *Umm*, or at least than what survives to our day. Jonathan Brockopp has similarly proposed that early Mālikī authors drew on a body of Mālik's doctrine, some but not all of which found its way into the recensions of the *Muwattaʿa*.⁴² Calder and Brockopp disagree as to how much later jurists added pseudonymously to these bodies: very much according to Calder, negligibly little according to Brockopp. Study of the *Musnad* shows that some adjustment of al-Shāfiʿī's doctrine was still going on after the mid-ninth century but very little. As for the extent of it in the earlier ninth century, the *Musnad* cannot be expected to provide significant evidence.

⁴¹ Calder, *Studies*, 92.

⁴² Jonathan E. Brockopp, *Early Mālikī law*, *Studies in Islamic law and society* 14 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 95-100.

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Al-Karkh: the Development of an Imāmī-Shīʿī Stronghold in Early Abbasid and Būyid Baghdad (132-447/750-1055)

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Abstract

Following the foundation of Baghdad by Caliph al-Manṣūr (r. 136-158/754-775) in 145/762, the neighbourhood of al-Karkh attracted many Imāmī scholars, becoming the centre of the Imāmī *wikāla* (network of deputies of the Imām) in the late 3rd/9th century, and then the heart of the Imāmī *ḥawza* (seminary) and the rationalist school of theology which developed under the Būyids (333-447/945-1055). Al-Karkh also became the centre of a popular movement of Imāmī-Shīʿa; from the Būyid period onward, the latter played a significant role in the social and political life of the city until its fall under the Mongol invasion of 656/1258. From the point of view of the micro-history, this article investigates the incubation of the Imāmī-Shīʿī movement in this suburban area of the city, bringing together topography and social history data from medieval geography manuals, historical chronicles, local histories, biographical dictionaries, poetry, and travellers' accounts. More than a quarter, al-Karkh acted as a city within Baghdad; repeatedly destroyed and burnt down, its history sheds light on urban life in the Abbasid capital, and on the development of Imāmī-Shīʿism during its formative period.

Keywords

Baghdad – Karkh – Imāmī Shīʿism – *wikāla* – *ḥawza*