

Ka'b b. Malik (110010)

MADDE YAYIMLANDIKTA,
SONRA GELEN DOKÜMANI

K

Ka'b b. Mālīk

Ka'b b. Mālīk al-Anṣārī (d. 50/670 or 53/673) was a poet from the Banū Salīma branch of the Khazraj and an early convert of the Anṣār (Medinan Companions of the Prophet). Ka'b's birthdate is unknown but it appears he was an adult when Muḥammad emigrated to Yathrib (1/622), since he was reportedly present¹ at the second 'Aqaba meeting (where leaders of Yathrib swore allegiance to the Prophet), and the Prophet reportedly changed Ka'b's *kunya* from Abū Bashīr to Abū 'Abdallāh (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba*, 5:309). Most traditions state Ka'b was not at the battle of Badr (Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 8:440), but fought at Uhud where he was badly injured (al-Wāqidi, 1:260). He is reported to have joined all of Muḥammad's other campaigns with the notable exception of Tabūk, discussed below.

Along with two other Anṣār poets, Ḥassān b. Thābit (d. c.40/659 or 50-4/670-4) and 'Abdallāh b. Rawḥa (d. 8/629), Ka'b is remembered in Arabic historiography as one of the three "official poets" of the Prophet Muḥammad. His surviving poetry is predominantly political,

consisting of praises of the Prophet, lampoons of the Prophet's opponents, recollections of battles, and "flitings"—poetic duels between Ka'b and pagan Meccan poet adversaries. The earliest extant commentary on Arabic poetry, Ibn Sallām al-Jumāhī's (d. 231/845-6) *Ṭabaqāt fuḥūl al-shu'arā'* notes that Muḥammad commissioned each of Ka'b, Ḥassān, and 'Abdallāh to lampoon the pagan Meccans in response to Meccan poetry ridiculing the Muslims (1:216-7).

The entry on Ka'b in Ibn Sallām's *Ṭabaqāt* (1:220-3) and the citation of selections of Ka'b's verse across early Arabic literature indicate that scholars valued Ka'b as a poet in his own right, but the majority of his oeuvre is preserved in narratives of the Prophet's biography. Accordingly, details of Ka'b's life and appraisal of his poetry are difficult to separate from the discourses involved in the compilation of the Prophetic biography in the second/eighth and third/ninth centuries, and his verses are embroiled in issues of later poetry fabrication. Ibn Sallām and the biographer of the Prophet, Ibn Hishām (d. 213/828 or 218/833), both remark that many spurious verses were added by

73-74