

Yasamah }
22926

nakh) see further, Bosworth, *op. cit.*, i, 100-3). Especially valuable evidence on this type of activities is to be found in the chapter on *talaṣṣuṣ* and associated malfesances in al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī's *Muḥādarāt al-udabā'* (ed. Cairo 1287/1870, ii, 108-12, ed. Beirut 1961, iii, 189-99). Al-Iṣfahānī cites as an outstanding figure amongst successful criminals one 'Uṭmān al-Khayyāt, who as a skilful practitioner himself (called al-Khayyāt, not because his original profession was that of tailor, but because he "sewed up", *khāta*, the holes bored into houses for felonious purposes so neatly that they were almost undetectable) had apparently become something of a semi-legendary figure by al-Rāghib's time (the Dāwūd al-Ḍalabī Library in Mosul—whose contents are now dispersed and their location largely unknown—contained a *Hikāyat 'Uṭmān al-Khayyāt fi 'l-luṣuṣ wa-waṣāyāhu*, see Pellat, *loc. cit.*; and one wonders whether there is some connection with the hero of two anecdotes given by al-Tanūkhī, named as 'Abbās b. Khayyāta and described as a supremely clever thief of Baṣra, see *Nishwār*, vii, 97-102, nos. 58-9).

According to this 'Uṭmān, there were five main categories of thieves and brigands: (1) the *muṭtāl* or "trickster", who worked by stratagems and who did not kill in the course of his crimes and was therefore looked down on his more desperate and violent confrères; (2) the *ṣāhib al-layl* or "worker by night", the nocturnal housebreaker, who got in either by boring or by scaling walls (the *mutasallik*), and the robber with violence (*mukābir*); (3) the *ṣāhib al-tarīk* or "gentleman of the road", the highwayman or brigand; (4) the *nabbāsh* or "burrower, excavator", said to be well-known and presumably a man who dug up a people's buried treasure hoards; and (5) the *khannāk* or "strangler, assassin", who may work by suffocating his victim, but may also be a disemboweller (*bā'idī*) or one who pounds his victim's head with a stone (*rādikh*). He then goes on to detail the types of confederates and auxiliaries (*awna*) whom criminals employed, e.g. to "case" likely premises for a future break-in or to create diversions whilst a raid could be made (for further details, see Bosworth, *op. cit.*, i, 101-6).

Bibliography: Given essentially in the article.

On the legal status of highway robbers and thieves, see Majid Khadduri, *The Islamic law of nations*, *Shaybānī's Siyar*, Baltimore 1966, 247-50.

(C. E. BOSWORTH)

LITERATURE [see ADAB; 'ARABIYYA; GHAZAL; MADH; MAKĀMA; MATHIYA; SHI'R; TA'RĪKH, etc.]

LITHĀM (A.) (sometimes also pronounced *lifām*), the mouth-veil, is a piece of material with which the Bedouins concealed the lower part of the face, the mouth and sometimes also part of the nose (see the commentary on al-Ḥarīrī, ed. de Sacy, Paris 1821, 374, 2). According to the *LA*, *lifām* is a mouth-veil which also covers the nose top (*arnabat al-anf*) and is worn by women. It served the practical purpose of protecting the organs of respiration from heat and cold as well as against the penetration of dust (cf. *Dhu 'l-Rumma*, no. 5, 43, also no. 39, 24 and 73, 16; and the commentaries on al-Mutanabbī, 464, 27, and al-Ḥarīrī, 374, 2). It also made the face more or less unrecognisable, and thus formed a protection against the avenger of blood (Goldziher, in *ZDMG*, xli [1887], 101). The *lithām* was therefore also sometimes worn as a deliberate disguise by people who did not usually wear it; thus in the *1001 Nights* (ed. Macnaghten, i, 878) it is worn by a princess, who disguises herself as a man, and (*ibid.*, ii, 59) by a woman for similar reasons. A denominative verb

has been formed from *lithām*, the fifth form of which in particular means "to put on the *lithām*" (e.g. *Aghānī*, viii, 102, 20; xxi, 55, 19; *Aghānī*, ed. Kosegarten, 121, 13; Wright, *Opuscula arabica*, iii, 2; al-Ḥarīrī, *Makāmāt*, ii, 433, 2), while the eighth form in the meaning "to put on something as a *lithām*" is generally used only metaphorically (see below). *Talḥīma* usually means a woman's veil (Cherbonneau, in *JA* [1849], i, 64), but *talḥimat al-ḥayyā* is also found as the distinctive dress of a particular office under the Fāṭimids: their chief *ḥādīs* wore it along with the *turban* and *ṣaylasān* (de Sacy, *Chrest.*, ii, 92). In general, however, the *lithām* does not seem to have been worn by town-dwellers.

The *lithām* has no considerable importance for Islam from the purely religious point of view; it is forbidden along with certain other garments for the *muhārim* (al-Bukhārī, i, 390, below).

The custom of wearing a *lithām* was generally disseminated among the Ṣanhādja tribes [q.v.] in north-west Africa, who are therefore described as *lithām* wearers, *mulaththimūn* or *awlād al-mulaththīma*; as the Almoravids originated in one of their clans, the Lamtūna [q.v.], the *lithām* thus came to have a certain political significance. The custom of wearing a *lithām* (below the *niḥāb*, see al-Bakrī, 170; the *lithām* is also mentioned by al-Yaḥyā, Ibn Ḥawkal, Ibn Baṭṭūta, Ibn Khaldūn, etc., cf. Corso, 151) was found in other parts of Africa also, e.g. in Kānem (al-Makrīzī, i, 193, 33 f.) and still prevails among the Tuareg. The Tuareg veil has been the object of several special studies (see *Bibl.*). Amongst the Tuaregs, it is not called *lithām*, but *teguṣmūt* or *shāsh* ("muslin"). Its origin seems to be pre-Islamic and perhaps even prehistoric. Among the ancient paintings and rock engravings found by Leo Frobenius there are human figures without mouth and nose, but with only two eyes. The primary motive for a veil seems to be magical, to protect the ways of life from evil forces. These Africans retained their veils even on journeys into the eastern lands of Islam, where it was not the fashion, while their women went unveiled. A tradition of late invention explains these remarkable customs by a story that on one occasion during an attack on a village, where there were many women but only a few men, the men put on veils and the women took up arms to deceive the enemy as to their real numbers (Goldziher, in *ZDMG*, xli, 101); another story has it that after the fall of the Umayyads, 200 members of the Umayyad family and their clients escaped to Africa disguised as women and that the wearers of the *lithām* are descended from them (Wüstenfeld, *Der Tod des Husejn*, p. viii). According to al-Bakrī (text, 170, tr. 321), they never took off the *lithām*, and if one of them fell in a battle and lost the *lithām*, not even his friends could recognise him till the *lithām* was put on him again; they also called other men who did not wear the *lithām* "fly-mouthed". The Almohads, particularly Ibn Tūmart, opposed the veiling practised by the Almoravids. They continuously insisted that it was forbidden for men to imitate the dress of women, but they did not succeed in abolishing the custom of wearing the *lithām* (Goldziher, in *op. cit.*, 102). Among further passages where the term *mulaththim* occurs in this sense may be mentioned 'Abd al-Latīf, ed. de Sacy, 483, 48 (with other references); Fleischer, *Kleinere Schriften*, ii, 243 (discusses several passages); Marquart, *Die Benin-sammlung*, Index, s.v. *Lithāmträger*.

The word *lithām* and its derivatives was very much used in figurative language, especially by poets.