Book Review

Al Salimi, Abdulrahman, and Wilferd Madelung, eds. *Ibāḍī Texts from the 2nd/8th Century*. Leiden: Brill, 2018. ISBN: 9789004330641. 390 pp. $144 cloth. $144 ebook.
and
Al Salimi, Abdulrahman, ed. *Ibadi Texts in Oman from the 3rd/9th Century*. Leiden: Brill, 2021. ISBN: 9789004473102. 383 pp. $179 cloth. $179 ebook.

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Ibāḍism has witnessed an increased uptick in attention over the past few decades.[1] Recent

1. The following list is far from being exhaustive. On the Iraqi origins of Ibāḍism and the development of Ibāḍī *fiqh*, see Ersilia Francesca, *Teoria e pratica del commercio nell'Islām medievale. I contratti di vendita e di commenda nel diritto ibāḍita* (Naples: Istituto per l'Orient C. A. Nallino, 2002); eadem, "The Formation and Early Development of the Ibadi *Madhhab*," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 28 (2003): 260–77; eadem, "'Put the Ocean between Them': Fornication as Permanent Impediment to Marriage in Early Ibāḍī Islam," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 50 (2021): 101–39. On Ibāḍism in Iraq and Oman, see John C. Wilkinson, "The Early Development of the Ibāḍī Movement in Baṣra," in *Studies on the First Century of Islamic Society*, ed. G. H. Juynboll, 125–44 (Carbondale/Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982); idem, *The Imamate Tradition of Oman* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); idem, *Ibâdism. Origins and Early Development in Oman* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). On North African Ibāḍī networks and history, see Cyrille Aillet, "Tāhart et l'imamat rustamide (c. 160/777–296/909) : matrice orientale et ancrage local," *Annales islamologiques* 45 (2011): 47–78; idem, "A Breviary of Faith and a Sectarian Memorial: A New Reading of Ibn Sallām's *Kitāb* (3rd/9th Century)," in *Ibadi Theology. Rereading Sources and Scholarly Works*, ed. E. Francesca, 67–83 (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2015); idem, "Warjlān, un foyer de l'ibadisme médiéval aux marges du Sahara," in *L'ibadisme dans les sociétés de l'Islam médiéval. Modèles et interactions*, ed. C. Aillet, 207–44 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018); idem, "Connecting the Ibāḍī Network in North Africa with the Empire (2nd–3rd/8th–9th Centuries)," in *Transregional and Regional Elites – Connecting the Early Islamic Empire*, ed. H.-L. Hagemann and S. Heidemann, 421–43 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020); idem, *L'archipel ibadite : une histoire des marges du Maghreb médiéval* (Lyon/Avignon: CIHAM-Éditions, 2021); Paul M. Love, *Ibadi Muslims of North Africa: Manuscripts, Mobilization, and the Making of a Written Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018). On Ibāḍī creed and historiography, see Ersilia Francesca, "La fabbricazione degli *isnād* nella scuola ibāḍita: il *Musnad* di ar-Rabīʿ b. Ḥabīb," in *Law, Christianity and Modernism in Islamic Society: Proceedings of the Eighteenth Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants*, ed. U. Vermeulen and J. M. F. van Reeth, 39–50 (Leuven: Peeters, 1998); Valerie J. Hoffman, *The Essentials of Ibāḍī Islam* (New York: Syracuse University Press,

publications have highlighted the value of studying what is commonly referred to as sectarianism and the historical trajectory of sectarian movements.[2] Rather than considering Sunnism as the orthodoxy—that is, the purportedly authentic reflection of the "rightful" religious position—contemporary scholars have emphasized the necessity of reckoning with the diversity of Islamic views and positions in the fields of creed, political thought, and law.[3] This is particularly true for the formative period of Islam that has been convincingly compared to a competitive "marketplace of religious ideas," to borrow Adam Gaiser's words.[4]

This new wave of scholarly interest is particularly welcome because Ibāḍism has been so neglected in the past. Historically, the movement has been regarded suspiciously as a relatively obscure offshoot of Khārijism.[5] In both Sunnī and Shīʿī sources, the Ibāḍis are often identified as supporters of sectarian groups (*firqa*) that are steeped in zealotry, position themselves in fierce opposition to statehood, and promote indiscriminate violence.

2012); eadem, "The Development of an Ibāḍī Textual Tradition in the Arabian Peninsula," *Nouvelles Chroniques du manuscrit au Yémen* 3 (2021): 5–38; Adam R. Gaiser, *Muslims, Scholars, Soldiers: The Origins and Elaboration of the Ibāḍī Imamate Traditions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); idem, "The Ibāḍī 'Stages of Religion' Re-examined: Tracing the History of the *Masālik al-Dīn*," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 73 (2010): 207–22; idem, "*Ballaghanā ʿan an-Nabī*: Early Basran and Omani Understanding of *sunna* and *siyar*, *āthār* and *nasab*," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 83, no. 3 (2020): 437–48; Josef van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra: eine Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im frühen Islam* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1991); Ismail Albayrak, *Approaches to Ibāḍī Exegetical Tradition* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2020). On the Ibāḍī manuscript tradition, see ʿAmr K. Ennami, "A Description of New Ibadi Manuscripts from North Africa," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 15, no. 1 (1970): 63–87; Josef van Ess, "Untersuchungen zu einigen ibāḍitischen Handschriften," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 126, no. 1 (1976): 25–63; Enki Baptiste "Des vallées du pays ibadite aux littoraux du sultanat : une histoire patrimoniale des manuscrits ibadites omanais," *Arabian Humanities* 15 (2022). Two major and useful historiographical encyclopedias have also been published recently. See Martin H. Custers, *Al-Ibāḍiyya: A Bibliography* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2016); Muḥammad K. Imām (dir.), *Miʾa kitāb ibāḍī* (Muscat: MNHC, 2013).

2. Adam R. Gaiser, *Sectarianism in Islam: The* Umma *Divided* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).

3. For an examination of these challenges, see the worthy recommendations of Christian C. Sahner, "What Is Islamic History? Muslims, Non-Muslims and the History of Everyone Else," *The English Historical Review* 138, no. 592 (2023): 379–409, esp. 397–403.

4. Adam R. Gaiser, Shurāt *Legends, Ibāḍī Identities: Martyrdom, Asceticism, and the Making of an Early Islamic Community* (Columbia: South Carolina University Press, 2016), 4–5; the expression is also used by Aillet, *L'archipel ibadite*, 211, 218.

5. On Khārijism, see Hannah-Lena Hagemann and Peter Verkinderen, "Kharijism in the Umayyad Period," in *The Umayyad World*, ed. A. Marsham, 489–517 (New York: Routledge, 2020), which provides a clear and recent overview on Khārijite history. Also, William Montgomery Watt, "Khārijite Thought in the Umayyad Period," *Der Islam* 36, no. 3 (1961): 215–31; Laura Veccia Vaglieri, "Il conflitto ʿAlī-Muʿāwiya e la secessione khārigita riesaminati alla luce di fonte ibāḍite," *Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli* 4 (1952): 1–94; Patricia Crone, "A Statement by the Najdiyya Khārijites on the Dispensability of the Imamate," *Studia Islamica* 88 (1998): 55–76; eadem, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), 54–65 ; eadem, "Ninth-Century Muslim Anarchists," *Past & Present* 167 (2000): 3–28; Hannah-Lena Hagemann, *The Khārijites in Early Islamic Historical Tradition: Heroes and Villains* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021); Annie C. Higgins, "Early *Shurāt*/*Khawārij* Poetry: Catalytic Qaṣīdas," in *Today's Perspectives on Ibadi History*, ed. R. Eisener, 83–91 (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2015); Adam R. Gaiser, "Source-Critical Methodologies in Recent Scholarship on the Khārijites," *History Compass* 7, no. 5 (2009): 1376–90.

The dearth of scholarly attention devoted to Ibāḍism has been further compounded by the fact that its influence on Islamic history has been deemed to be of minor importance when compared to Muʿtazilism, Ashʿarism, or Ismāʿīlism. Furthermore, the tendency to lump together Khārijism and Ibāḍism has contributed to a lack of clarity,[6] hindering an accurate understanding of the peculiar history of Ibāḍism and of its contribution to the formation of Islamic theology and *fiqh*. Accordingly, the presentation of the sources that are newly edited by Abdulrahman Al Salimi and Wilferd Madelung in the two books under review requires us to briefly unpack Ibāḍī history and to introduce its founding figures.

The genesis of the Ibāḍī movement took place in Baṣra in the first quarter of the second/eighth century, within a milieu dominated by men who belonged to the southern Arabian tribes of Qaḥṭān and Yaman. These tribes had moved from Yemen, Ḥaḍramawt, and Oman to Iraq during or shortly after the Islamic conquests. Jābir b. Zayd al-Azdī (d. *ca.* 91/711),[7] who is often considered as the founding father of Ibāḍism, settled in Baṣra during the Umayyad period. He belonged to the Azd, a major Yemeni tribe that had migrated from the Sarāt mountains to Oman, the Ḥijāz, Syria, and Iraq at some point in the pre-Islamic period. The Azd would soon form the backbone of Ibāḍī missionary and political activities in eastern Arabia. Although Ibāḍism developed in close contact with proto-Sunnism,[8] Jābir b. Zayd also laid down the first layers of Ibāḍī *fiqh* by positioning himself against his proto-Sunnī peers, especially in the fields of corporal purity and social relationships.[9]

After Jābir's death, Abū ʿUbayda Muslim b. Abī Karīma (d. between 145/762 and 158/775) took over the leadership of the Ibāḍī *majālis* of Baṣra. In later sources, he is usually regarded as the second imam of the Iraqi community. Together with Abū Mawdūd Ḥājib al-Ṭāʾī (d. *ca.* 150/767), Abū ʿUbayda planned the dissemination of Ibāḍism throughout the Umayyad empire that was already undergoing a severe political fragmentation. They organized missionary activities spearheaded by the "bearers of knowledge" (*ḥamalat al-ʿilm*). These were men allegedly from North Africa and Oman, secretly trained in Baṣra and dispatched to spread the Ibāḍī creed. While there is a paucity of detailed information regarding the dissemination of Ibāḍism, it is reasonable to hypothesize at this juncture that the tribal networks that connected Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula may have played a pivotal role in this process.

6. On the ambiguous relationship between Khārijism and Ibāḍism, see Gaiser, Shurāt *Legends*; idem, "'In Them Are Good Models': Ibāḍī Depictions of the *Muḥakkima*," in *Today's Perspectives on Ibadi History*, ed. R. Eisener, 75–83 (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2017); Enki Baptiste and Adam R. Gaiser, "Early Ibāḍī Historiography: The Case of the *Khawārij*," in *Between Rebels and Rulers in the Early Islamicate World: Power, Contention and Identity*, ed. H.-L. Hagemann and A. Grant (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming); Valerie J. Hoffman, "Historical Memory and Imagined Communities: Modern Ibāḍī Writings on Khārijism," in *Historical Dimensions of Islam: Essays in Honor of R. Stephen Humphreys*, ed. J. Lindsay and J. Armajani, 185–200 (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 2009).

7. Patricia Crone and Fritz Zimmermann, *The Epistle of Sālim ibn Dhakwān* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 301–3.

8. On the relationship between Ibāḍism and proto-Sunnism in Iraq, see Abdulrahman Al Salimi, ed., *Early Islamic Law in Basra in the 2nd/8th Century: Aqwāl Qatāda b. Diʿāma al-Sadūsī* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), esp. 1–25.

9. Francesca, "La fabbricazione," 41–46, 54–55; eadem, "Ibāḍī Law and Jurisprudence," *The Muslim World* 105 (2015): 209–23, esp. 210–11.

These connections tightened when Iraqi Ibāḍis provided support to armed Ibāḍī-inspired rebellions that broke out in the peripheral regions of the caliphate in the 740s.[10] The uprisings led to the establishment of the first—albeit short-lived—Ibāḍī imamates which were soon crushed by the Umayyads and then by the ʿAbbāsids. Later on, in the second part of the second/eighth century, al-Rabīʿ b. Ḥabīb al-Farāhīdī (d. 170/786)—another Omani—succeeded Abū ʿUbayda.[11] Upon al-Rabīʿ's death, he was replaced by Abū Ayyūb Wāʾil b. Ayyūb al-Ḥaḍramī (alive in 192/807–8), who likely hailed from the mountainous Ḥaḍramawt region, which would provide shelter for an Ibāḍī community, at least in the middle of the second/eighth century and from time to time until the sixth/twelfth century.[12] During the time of Abū Sufyān Maḥbūb b. Ruḥayl (d. between 195/811 and 205/820),[13] who is commonly presented as the last Ibāḍī *ʿālim* of Baṣra,[14] Ibāḍism is said to have withdrawn from Iraq to Oman and North Africa, where the control of the caliphate had been loosening.

Today, Ibāḍism is a minority within the minorities of the Islamic world and no longer plays a political role. It is still present in North Africa, where Ibāḍis are essentially concentrated in the Mzāb region, on the island of Djerba, and in the Jabal Nafūsa, a mountain range located southwestern Libya. On the eastern shores of the Arabian Peninsula, northern Oman remains the stronghold of Ibāḍism, although the sultanate has never explicitly claimed to be Ibāḍī *per se*.[15]

Following the death of his father, Saʿīd b. Taymūr, in 1970, Qābūs b. Saʿīd (d. 2020) assumed control of the sultanate.[16] It was not until his Omani revival policy (*nahḍa*), that many sources became available for study. The country opened up to the world, and soon afterwards, John C. Wilkinson and Gerald R. Smith, two British scholars, accessed the manuscripts collected by the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture (hereafter MNHC) in the Ibāḍī hinterland and brought to Muscat on the coast. Wilkinson and Smith provided the first inventories of these sources in 1978.[17] Although Wilkinson published

10. On the North African uprisings, see Aillet, *L'archipel ibadite*, 113–18. On the rebellion of ʿAbd Allāh b. Yaḥyā in Ḥaḍramawt, see my recent reconsideration in Enki Baptiste, "La *khuṭba* d'Abū Ḥamza al-Shārī : soulèvement ibāḍite et rhétorique de la contestation en péninsule Arabique au second siècle de l'Islam. Traduction commentée d'une version inédite du sermon," *Al-ʿUṣūr al-Wuṣṭā. The Journal of Middle East Medievalists* 32 (2024): 165–249, esp. 167–85.

11. Crone and Zimmermann, *The Epistle of Sālim ibn Dhakwān*, 305–8.

12. *Ibid*., 308–9.

13. *Ibid*., 309–13.

14. On his place in Ibāḍī sources, see Abdulrahman Al Salimi, *Ibāḍism East of Mesopotamia: Early Islamic Iran, Central Asia and Iran* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2016), 156; Enki Baptiste, *L'ibāḍisme omanais: histoire et mémoire d'un mouvement dissident aux marges de l'Empire* (PhD diss., Université Lumière Lyon-2, 2023), 1:91–92, 548.

15. On modern Oman and Ibāḍism, see Marc Valeri, *Le sultanat d'Oman. Une révolution en trompe-l'œil* (Paris: Éditions Kharthala, 2007).

16. Rabi Uzi, *The Emergence of States in a Tribal Society: Oman under Saʿid bin Taymur, 1932–1970* (Brighton/Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2006).

17. Gerald R. Smith, "The Omani Manuscript Collection at Muscat. Part I: A General Description of the MSS," *Arabian Studies* 4 (1978): 161–90; John C. Wilkinson, "The Omani Manuscript Collection at Muscat. Part II: The Early Ibāḍī *Fiqh* Works," *Arabian Studies* 4 (1978): 191–209.

shortly afterwards several meticulous and pioneering studies on the Omani Ibāḍī corpus and the history of the community in the Arabian Peninsula,[18] the sources have remained inaccessible to non-specialists. This is due to several challenges that have significantly shaped the field of Ibāḍī studies over the last decades.

Indeed, new source materials were published in Oman shortly thereafter, viz. the *Bayān al-sharʿ*, a huge *fiqh* encyclopedia of 72 volumes attributed to Abū Bakr al-Kindī, an important Ibāḍī *ʿālim* who lived between the end of the fifth/eleventh and the beginning of the sixth/twelfth centuries.[19] Since the 1970s, Sayyida Ismāʿīl Kāshif has taken great strides in editing Ibāḍī sources, as in the case of the major compilation of epistles (*sīra*; pl. *siyar*) published under the title *al-Siyar wa-l-jawābāt li-ʿulamāʾ wa-aʾimmat ʿUmān*.[20] One should mention at this juncture that in the Ibāḍī context, the term *sīra* refers to an epistle. Unlike their North African peers, the Iraqi and Omani Ibāḍis never used the word *sīra* in its classical meaning, viz. a biography.[21] Some *siyar* are short (a few pages long), whereas others can count almost a hundred pages in their edited versions. However, it is worth noting that the editions produced in Oman during the last quarter of the twentieth century often lacked a critical apparatus and were riddled with substantial flaws, making the sources (extremely) difficult to read. Furthermore, with the exception of the epistle of Sālim b. Dhakwān,[22] almost no Iraqi and Omani Ibāḍī sources have been translated.

Ibn Dhakwān's personal life and dates are shrouded in obscurity and have been a matter of debate.[23] Nevertheless, his theological and polemical *sīra* has quickly become a key source for historians examining Ibāḍī history from an internal perspective. Indeed, it has been postulated that Ibn Dhakwān's epistle encapsulates the Ibāḍī formative view on the first *fitna* and echoes the fierce debates surrounding the political legitimacy of the Umayyads. In their detailed and meticulous commentary of the text, Patricia Crone and Fritz Zimmermann argue for the authenticity of the *sīra*, which was likely to have been written either in Khurāsān, in Oman, or in Iraq between the end of the Umayyad caliphate and the last decades of the second/eighth century. They identify instances of intertextuality—

18. John C. Wilkinson, "The Ibāḍī *Imāma*," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 39, no. 3 (1976): 535–51; idem, "Oman and East Africa: New Light on Early Kilwan History from the Omani Sources," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 14, no. 2 (1981): 272–305; idem, "Ibāḍī Ḥadīth: An Essay of Normalization," *Der Islam* 62, no. 2 (1985): 231–59.

19. Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Kindī, *Bayān al-sharʿ*, ed. Aḥmad b. Ḥamād al-Khalīlī *et al*., 72 vols. (Muscat: MNHC, 1982–93).

20. Sayyida I. Kāshif, ed., *al-Siyar wa-l-jawābāt li-ʿulamāʾ wa-aʾimmat ʿUmān*, 2 vols. (Muscat: MNHC, 1986).

21. Crone and Zimmermann, *The Epistle of Sālim ibn Dhakwān*, 23–26; Abdulrahman Al Salimi, "Identifying the (Ibāḍī/Omani) *Siyar*," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 55, no. 1 (2010), 115–62, esp. 116–21; idem, *Ibāḍism East of Mesopotamia*. It is worth noting that, prior to the seventeenth century at least, eastern Ibāḍī *ʿulamāʾ* did not display any particular interest in compiling Muḥammad's story as Ibn Hishām did in his *Sīra al-nabawiyya*. In the sixth/twelfth century or at the beginning of the seventh/thirteenth century, Abū Saʿīd al-Qalhātī composed a *Kitāb al-Kashf wa-l-bayān* which contains a hundred-page long section on the Prophet. However, al-Qalhātī is less concerned with the life of the Prophet than with his legal legacy.

22. Crone and Zimmermann, *The Epistle of Sālim ibn Dhakwān*.

23. On Ibn Dhakwān, and for a short summary of the debates on his life, see Adam R. Gaiser, "Ibn Dhakwān, Sālim," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 3rd ed., ed. Kate Fleet et al. (Leiden: Brill Online).

first highlighted by Michael Cook in his seminal book *Early Muslim Dogma*[24]—between Ibn Dhakwān's epistle and Islamic religious sources composed in supposedly the same milieu, such as the *Kitāb al-Irjāʾ* commonly attributed to Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya, or alternatively other Ibāḍī *siyar* edited by Kāshif in the *Siyar wa-l-jawābāt* collection. This allows them to demonstrate that early Ibāḍis were not isolated from other sectarian groups. Instead, these religious sources were part of a broader historiographical network, they convincingly claim, and are therefore useful for tracing the formation of sectarian creeds during the first two centuries of Islam.

However, Crone and Zimmermann's authoritative study has not significantly prompted non-specialists to use Ibāḍī sources in a more systematic manner, nor did it spur Ibāḍī specialists to pursue the edition and translation of additional sources—at least not before the beginning of the 2010s. Indeed, since 2011 and their recovery of two Ibāḍī epistles that had long been considered lost,[25] Abdulrahman Al Salimi and Wilferd Madelung (d. 2023) have published numerous studies on Ibāḍism and Ibāḍī legal and theological literature.[26] The two books under examination here are good testaments to their intellectual legacy. Both scholars have acquired considerable experience in the field of early Islamic religious sources. Madelung is well known for his pioneering works on Zaydī Shīʿism and religious trends in the Middle East, Arabian Peninsula, and Central Asia.[27] Since Al Salimi received his PhD from Durham University in 2001,[28] he has continued to research and edit Ibāḍī sources. He is also credited with a full translation of three epistles composed in Khurāsān between the fourth/tenth and the fifth/eleventh centuries.[29] The current revival of Ibāḍī studies owes much to him.

24. Michael Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma: A Source-Critical Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

25. Abdulrahman Al Salimi and Wilferd Madelung, ed., *Early Ibāḍī Literature: Abu l-Mundhir Bashīr b. Muḥammad b. Maḥbūb,* Kitāb al-Raṣf fi l-Tawḥīd*,* Kitāb al-Muḥāraba *and* Sīra (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2011).

26. Among these publications are two books dedicated to ʿAbd Allāh b. Yazīd al-Fazārī, a prominent Ibāḍī scholar who lived in the second/eighth century in Kūfa. However, his legacy remains under-explored compared to that of Baṣran *ʿulamāʾ*. Both books contain a number of theological epistles that display an alternative Ibāḍī view on a range of religious issues such as God's unicity (*tawḥīd*), predestination (*qadar*), the imamate or the names and the statutes (*al-asmāʾ wa-l-aḥkām*). Abdulrahman Al Salimi and Wilferd Madelung, ed., *Early Ibāḍī Theology: Six* kalām *Texts by ʿAbd Allāh b. Yazīd al-Fazārī* (Leiden: Brill, 2014); Abdulrahman Al Salimi, ed., *Early Ibadi Theology: New Material on Rational Thought in Islam from the Pen of al-Fazārī (2nd/8th Century)* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

27. Wilferd Madelung, *Religious Trends in Early Islamic Iran* (Albany, NY: Bibliotheca Persica, 1988); idem, "The Early Murjiʾa in Khurāsān and Transoxiana and the Spread of Ḥanafism," *Der Islam* 59 (1982), 32–39; idem, *Der Imam al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm und die Glaubenslehre der Zaiditen* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1965), among many other pioneering works.

28. Abdulrahman Al Salimi, "The Omani *Siyar* as a Literary Genre and Its Role in the Political Evolution and Doctrinal Development of Eastern Ibadism, with Special Reference to the Epistles of Khwarizm, Khurasan and Mansura," (PhD diss., Durham University, 2001).

29. Al Salimi, *Ibāḍism, East of Mesopotamia.*

In two pathbreaking papers published successively in 2009 and 2010, Al Salimi provided an in-depth and almost exhaustive appraisal of the Iraqi and Omani *siyar* and then attempted to identify the main themes at stake.[30] However, a comprehensive historiographical study on Ibāḍī literature is still outstanding. On the one hand, such a study would allow for a more nuanced understanding of these early Islamic epistles, moving beyond the catch-all term of *sīra*. On the other hand, it would be beneficial to focus on early Ibāḍī sources not as a standalone literature produced by a marginal and heterodox group, but as one among many intellectual traditions in early Islam. As mentioned above, Crone and Zimmermann's 2001 book has paved the way. Such a method has the meaningful advantage of placing Ibāḍī epistles in their wider literary and religious contexts of production. It also has the merit of highlighting the scholarly competition between various Muslim religious groups in and around Iraq during the formative period of Islam.

At this juncture, the publication of a new set of Iraqi and Omani *siyar* is thus of great significance. Most of the epistles had hitherto remained unedited, although Al Salimi previously identified them as worthy of consideration in his two papers on Ibāḍī literature. These two new volumes provide scholars with a remarkable corpus of little-known sources that are thoroughly and carefully edited and that could lay the ground for a seminal investigation into an early sectarian literature.

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The first volume under consideration, *Ibāḍī Texts from the 2nd/8th Century* (hereafter *IT8*), was published by Al Salimi and Madelung in 2018. The subsequent volume, *Ibadi Texts in Oman from the 3rd/9th Century* (hereafter *IT9*), was edited by Al Salimi alone in 2021. Both volumes comprise Arabic critical editions of 14 and 23 *siyar*, respectively, accompanied by an overarching editorial introduction for each. In contrast to Kāshif's pioneering edition of the *Siyar wa-l-jawābāt*, based on a unique manuscript that intermingles epistles from the second/eighth century with others written in the sixth/twelfth century, Al Salimi and Madelung proceed in chronological manner. They single out a set of *siyar* they deem particularly representative of Ibāḍī thought for each century. Within the volumes, the texts are organized chronologically according to their supposed period of writing, from the earliest to the latest.

The texts edited in *IT8* and *IT9* are based on a sample of late Ibāḍī manuscripts that are briefly presented by Al Salimi and Madelung in the introductions to the two volumes (pp. 9–10 for *IT8*, and 25–26 for *IT9*). Four of these manuscripts are housed in private Omani libraries, namely the Maktabat Nāṣir b. Rāshid al-Kharūṣī of ʿAwābī, the Maktabat al-Sālimī of Bidiyya, the Maktabat al-Sayfī of Nizwā, and the Maktabat al-Būsaʿīdī in Muscat. One additional manuscript is held by the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture. In addition to the Omani manuscripts, Al Salimi and Madelung also utilized one manuscript held in the private library of Ghālib b. ʿAlī al-Hināʾī (d. 2009), the last Ibāḍī imam, who sought refuge in Dammām (Saudi Arabia) in 1959 following his defeat by Omani sultan Saʿīd b. Taymūr.

30. Al Salimi, "Identifying the (Ibāḍī/Omani) *Siyar*"; idem, "Themes of Ibadi/Omani *Siyar*," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 54, no. 2 (2009): 475–514.

It is worth mentioning that none of these manuscripts date to the medieval period. Most are copies of earlier works that are no longer extant in their original forms and that were made under the Yaʿāriba imams towards the end of the eleventh/seventeenth century or during the twelfth/eighteenth century.[31] Consequently, the history of the manuscripts raises pivotal questions about authenticity, transmission, and the circulation of information within and outside the Ibāḍī community. These questions require critical examination or, at the very least, discussion.[32] Regrettably, the editors provide only technical information about the manuscripts, including the place and the date in which they were copied and the name of the scribe, if mentioned.

The *IT8* volume is introduced with a cursory presentation of the sources. Considering the dearth of scholarship on Ibāḍī sources, one would have anticipated a more substantial discussion of the texts as a corpus rather than discussing the texts one by one. A more robust contextualization of the *siyar* within the broader framework of their writings would also have been welcome. Moreover, some of the editors' assertions need to be debated, such as the statement that Shabīb b. ʿAṭiyya's *sīra* was written "after the ʿAbbāsid invasion of Oman," which is dated incorrectly as having occurred in 123/741 whereas scholarly consensus and narrative sources date this event to 134/751 (p. 6). Likewise, Al Salimi and Madelung affirm without solid evidence that Khalaf b. Ziyād al-Baḥrānī's epistle was "evidently" addressed to the Ibāḍis in Oman (p. 7). What is more, the biographical information provided by Al Salimi and Madelung on Khalaf is drawn from a later source, a *sīra* attributed to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bisyāwī. The latter is known to have retrospectively rationalized the history of early Ibāḍism from the vantage point of his own time in the fourth/tenth century. As I have been unable to unearth these details elsewhere in the medieval Ibāḍī corpus, one must be cautious with such information.

In contrast to *IT8*, the introduction of the *IT9* volume is well structured and thus proves more useful for scholars. Al Salimi develops a number of thought-provoking hypotheses that warrant further investigation. Notably, he presents the 23 *siyar* as forming a corpus in themselves. The Omani scholar addresses the engagement of the *ʿulamāʾ* with scriptural sources, particularly the Qurʾān and the Prophetic ḥadīth. He also highlights the significant developments that transpired in Ibāḍī historiography during the third/ninth century.

The critical apparatus provided in both books are very helpful. Indeed, Qurʾānic quotations are properly referenced within the text as well as in a thematic index located at the end of the volumes, along with an index of Prophetic ḥadīth. Additionally, each volume contains a comprehensive geographical index and an exhaustive list of the individuals and sectarian groups mentioned in the *siyar* (for example, ahl al-Nahrawān, the Khawārij, the Murjiʾa, ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, etc.). This feature is convenient for navigating through the texts and allows for cross-reading.

31. John C. Wilkinson, "A Historic Perspective on the *Nahḍa*," in *Oman, Ibadism and Modernity*, ed. A. Al Salimi and R. Eisener, 25–35 (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2018).

32. To the best of my knowledge, Hannah-Lena Hagemann is the only one who has highlighted the issue so far. See Hagemann, *The Khārijites in Early Islamic Historical Tradition*, 28–29.

The *IT8* volume sheds new light on the formative period of Ibāḍism in Iraq and Oman, when the movement first developed as a religious and political group. In Baṣra, Abū ʿUbayda and Abū Mawdūd Ḥājib played a pivotal role in the theological and juridical debates inside the Ibāḍī community. They wrote two short *siyar* on predestination (*qadar*) and repentance (*tawba*) (no. 5, pp. 94–104; no. 6, pp. 104–12). Abū ʿUbayda is also credited with an epistle of his own, dedicated to the alms tax (*zakāt*) and addressed to his North African supporters (no. 8, pp. 118–46).[33] The text expresses the will of the western Ibāḍis to live in accordance with new sectarian rules that were under development further east. Thus, the *siyar* edited in the *IT8* volume provide evidence of the emergence of Ibāḍism as a political movement and the development of a genuine Ibāḍī creed. In addition to the theological and *fiqh*-focused *siyar* of Abū ʿUbayda and Abū Ḥājib, the *sīra* of Wāʾil b. Ayyūb, who resided in Baṣra during the last quarter of the second/eighth century, arguably epitomizes the formation of a nascent Ibāḍī creed. It encapsulates the first Ibāḍī profession of faith (*ʿaqīda*), although here Wāʾil b. Ayyūb employs the expression "genealogy of Islam" (*nasab al-islām*)[34] (no. 12, pp. 306–28). The epistle embraces the main religious and juridical issues that arose during the second/eighth century in a didactic manner, providing a comprehensive overview of these topics.

Establishing a new Ibāḍī ethic was also a key objective of Abū Mawdūd in his *sīra* (no. 3, pp. 60–80) wherein he urges his fellow believers to fear God (*taqwā*), to undertake systematic consultation (*shūrā*) among themselves upon every important matter, and to act in accordance with their words. In Abū Mawdūd's *Sīra*, we encounter one of the earliest mentions of the cornerstone idea asserted by Ibāḍis that faith encompasses both word and deeds (*al-qawl wa-l-aʿmāl*). Therefore, Abū Mawdūd Ḥājib appears as a proponent of activism (*shirāʾ*), as opposed to quietism (*quʿūd*).[35] In the middle of the second/eighth century, activism against those depicted as "tyrants" indeed became a rallying cry within the Iraqi and Omani communities.

The *siyar* are accordingly of considerable value to the study of the Ibāḍī stance on rebellion and political violence. In an especially lengthy *sīra* (no. 11, pp. 222–306), Khalaf b. Ziyād al-Baḥrānī (d. *ca.* 134/751) outlines the legal principles governing warfare within the context of the formation of the first Ibāḍī imamates. Indeed, he is known to have settled in Oman—perhaps in the 740s—where he was part of the council of *ʿulamāʾ* who advised al-Julandā b. Masʿūd (r. 132–34/749–51). His intricate and theoretical *sīra* is dedicated to the legal issue of "the names and the statutes" (*al-asmāʾ wa-l-aḥkām*). It testifies to the overwhelming need for Ibāḍis to establish a doctrine on the treatment of enemies in case of an armed conflict. Indeed, Khalaf b. Ziyād argues that the treatment of enemies should vary depending on whether they are polytheists (*ahl al-shirk*), idol worshippers (*ahl al-awthān*), non-Ibāḍī Muslims (*ahl al-qibla*), the people of rebellion (*ahl al-iṭʿān*), the people of war (*ahl al-muḥāraba*), the people of association (*ahl al-walāya*), and so on.

33. On the *sīra*, see Ersilia Francesca, "Law and Politics in the Early Ibāḍī Communities: Abū ʿUbayda al-Tamīmī's *Risāla* to Abū 'l-Khaṭṭāb al-Maʿāfirī," in *L'ibadisme dans les sociétés de l'Islam médiéval. Modèles et interactions*, ed. C. Aillet, 72–88 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), which offers an in-depth analysis of the epistle.

34. On the *nasab al-islām*, see Al Salimi, *Ibāḍism East of Mesopotamia*, 41–44; Baptiste, "L'ibāḍisme omanais," 1:329–32.

35. On the tensions between *shirāʾ* and *quʿūd* during the Baṣran period, see Wilkinson, *Ibâḍism*, 171–77.

The *siyar* also document the competing memories of the first civil war, the great *fitna*. The debate over the legality of ʿUthmān's murder is critically engaged by ʿAbd Allāh b. Ibāḍ, the eponymous and purported founding father of Ibāḍism,[36] in his letters supposedly addressed to the Umayyad caliph ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān (r. 66–86/685–705) (no. 1, pp. 19–44). The last *sīra* of the *IT8* volume is anonymous and is incidentally the only epistle of the volume that was arguably not composed in Baṣra or in Oman. The text is titled *Mukhtaṣar min kitāb fīhi aḥdāth ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān* (no. 14, pp. 350–68) and its authorship has been attributed by Madelung to al-Haytham b. ʿAdī, a Kūfan *akhbārī* who died in 207/822.[37] As indicated by the title, the *sīra* is concerned with the innovations (*bidaʿ*) that ʿUthmān is seen to have introduced, which ultimately led to his assassination. The arbitration (*taḥkīm*) that ʿAlī presided over during the battle of Ṣiffīn is at stake in Ibn Ibāḍ's second letter, which is likely to have been addressed to a Shīʿī (no. 2, pp. 44–60). The great *fitna* is also a matter of smoldering and acrimonious debates in Shabīb b. ʿAṭiyya's epistles (no. 9, pp. 146–212; no. 10, pp. 212–22). The Omani *ʿālim* emphasizes the necessity of taking a position on the conflict and criticizes the "doubters" (alternatively named the Shukkāk or the Murjiʾa) who advocate the benefit of suspending judgment (*wuqūf*) over the dramatic events that tore apart the *umma* after the reign of ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. It is quite clear that the refusal to take a stance was a bone of contention, as demonstrated by the severe rebukes directed towards the "people of doubt" (*ahl al-shakk*) in the anonymous reply (*radd*) that was addressed to them (no. 13, pp. 328–50).

As for the *siyar* in the *IT9* volume, they date to the period of the second Omani imamate (177–280/793–893). In 177/793, Ibāḍī *ʿulamāʾ* vanquished a coalition of Omani tribal leaders who had ruled the region on the behalf of the ʿAbbāsids for almost fifty years. Following the battle, Muḥammad b. Abī ʿAffān (r. 177–79/793–95) was appointed imam. From the late second/eighth century to the last years of the third/ninth century, six Ibāḍī imams succeeded each other until a civil war erupted in 273/886. Between 272/886 and 280/893, Oman was wreaked by internecine struggles after the overthrow of al-Ṣalt b. Mālik (r. 237–73/851–86), who had been in power for more than thirty years. The internal rivalry turned into a regional conflict when an ʿAbbāsid expeditionary corps invaded Oman, almost stamped out the Ibāḍis, and brought the region back into the bosom of the Iraqi empire.[38]

36. On the controversy over the existence of ʿAbd Allāh b. Ibāḍ, and the authorship of the letters usually attributed to him, see Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma*, 51–67; Wilferd Madelung, "ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Ibāḍ and the Origins of Ibāḍiyya," in *Authority, Privacy and Public Order in Islam: Proceedings of the 22nd Congress of L'Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants*, ed. B. Michakel-Pikulsk and A. Pikulsk, 51–57 (Leuven: Peeters, 2008); idem, "ʿAbd Allāh b. Ibāḍ's Second Letter to ʿAbd al-Malik," in *Community, State, History and Change: Festschrift for Prof. Riḍwān al-Sayyid on his 60th Birthday*, 7–17 (Beirut: al-Shabka al-ʿArabiyya li-l-Abḥāth wa-l-Nashr, 2011); idem, "The Authenticity of the Letter of ʿAbd Allāh b. Ibâḍ to ʿAbd al-Malik," *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 132 (2012): 37–43.

37. Wilferd Madelung, "Al-Haytham b. ʿAdī on the Offences of the Caliph ʿUthmān," in *Centre and Periphery within the Borders of Islam: Proceedings of the 23rd Congress of l'Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants*, ed. G. Contu, 47–51 (Leuven: Peeters, 2012).

38. On the place of Oman in the ʿAbbāsid empire during the fourth/tenth and the fifth/eleventh centuries, see Enki Baptiste, "Oman dans l'écosystème impérial irakien au premier âge abbasside et à l'époque buyide : entre marginalité construite et convoitises politique (seconde moitié du VIIIe – seconde moitié du XIe siècle),"

The epistles included in the *IT9* volume demonstrate the evolution of Ibāḍī historiography after the transfer of the Ibāḍī center of gravity from Iraq to Oman and the establishment of a long-lasting imamate in eastern Arabia. The third/ninth century is often considered as a golden age of Ibāḍism by later *ʿulamāʾ*. Even if this retrospective view should be approached with caution and nuanced, the Omani Ibāḍī community nonetheless did experience a period of swift economic, political, and religious growth. The coastal city of Ṣuḥār, on the shores of the Indian Ocean, became a commercial and cosmopolitan nerve center at the outlet of the Persian Gulf.[39] The increasing presence of non-Ibāḍī merchants in Oman is well-attested by the sources. As a result, Indian pirates started to plunder ships, enticed by the resources. They used to roam the Gulf with small vessels, raiding the ports and coastal cities and then quickly seeking shelter in secluded inlets. This forced the Ibāḍī imams to take urgent action. The *sīra* of Munīr b. al-Nayyir al-Jaʿlānī is of considerable interest in understanding how the Omani Ibāḍī community addressed the challenge of piracy (no. 4, pp. 52–66). Likewise, in the second half of the third/ninth century, the sixth imam, al-Ṣalt b. Mālik, sent a letter to the *shurāt*—the Ibāḍī volunteers—who were dispatched to Socotra to squelch a rebellion launched by the local Christian community (no. 17, pp. 200–211). The *sīra* demonstrates that by the third/ninth century Ibāḍism had become a major political force in the Indian Ocean; some later chronicles even assert that Ghassān b. ʿAbd Allāh and al-Muhannā b. Jayfar gathered ships to create a navy and enforce Omani-*cum*-Ibāḍī law on the sea.

These epistles are worthy of attention because they address the issue of the imamate and how the institution should ideally work. The *siyar* also allow access to the Ibāḍī memory of the first political models—including some of the most iconic Companions such as Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, as well as those among the Khārijites who rebelled against the Umayyads—whose life and deeds are supposed to inspire the imams. Along with the legal letters that Abū ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Maḥbūb addressed to his fellow Ibāḍis settled in North Africa and Ḥaḍramawt (no. 15, pp. 157–72; no. 16, pp. 172–200), the *siyar* unveil early layers of Ibāḍī political thought. Some of the epistles are embedded in theoretical considerations, such as that attributed to al-Muhannā b. Jayfar al-Yaḥmadī (r. 226–37/840–51) (no. 14, pp. 138–57). The imam was arguably skilled in legal matters, as he addressed technical issues such as marriage (*buʿūla*), divorce (*ṭalāq*), prayer (*ṣalāt*), and the status of the slave (*raqīq*).

Other *siyar* in this volume clearly pinpoint the effective balance of power within the imamate and the way the institution was regulated. It appears that the imam was advised by a council of scholars, as demonstrated by many *siyar* (see, for examples, no. 1, pp. 35–38; no. 2, pp. 38–42; no. 10, pp. 126–30; no. 11, pp. 130–34; no. 12, pp. 134–36; no. 13, pp. 136–38). These are short letters––no more than three or four pages in the edited versions––that one or more religious men dispatched to an imam. The prominent *ʿulamāʾ* who authored these letters advocated for the *naṣīḥa* or the *shūrā*, which refers to the good advice that a knowledgeable person is asked to provide freely to promote fair and just governance. These

Siècles 54 (2023).

39. On Ṣuḥār in the medieval period, see Muḥammad b. Nāṣir al-Mundhirī, *Tārīkh Ṣuḥār al-siyāsī wa-l-ḥaḍārī min ẓuhūr al-islām ḥattā nihāyat al-qarn al-rābiʿ al-hijrī* (Beirut: Dār al-ʿUlūm al-ʿArabiyya li-l-Ṭibāʿa wa-l-Nashr, 2008).

principles are depicted as both a political and religious requirement. The response (*jawāb*) of Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Maḥbūb to al-Ṣalt b. Mālik on the "people in prison" (*ahl al-sijn*) is a good example (no. 19, pp. 218–24). It shows how a man versed in *ʿilm* is expected to render practical assistance to a leader who is committed to meting out justice.

During the third/ninth century, creed was still a matter of debate in Oman and other places where Ibāḍī communities had settled. Such disputes occasionally gave rise to tensions within the community, as evidenced by several *siyar*. In the late second/eighth century or early third/ninth century,[40] the Ibāḍī community was torn apart when Abū Sufyān Maḥbūb b. al-Ruḥayl, a proponent of the Baṣran *ʿulamāʾ*, confronted Hārūn b. al-Yamān, who was supported by the Kūfan community led, at that time, by ʿAbd Allāh al-Fazārī (d. after 179/795). The *disputatio* focused on theological topics, but it primarily exemplifies the fierce competition between the two Iraqi strongholds of Ibāḍism that were struggling to impose their creed upon outlying communities. Abū Sufyān endeavored to promote the view of the Baṣran *ʿulamāʾ* that had held sway over Oman (no. 5, pp. 66–88; no. 6, pp. 88–101). Meanwhile, Hārūn upheld the views of al-Fazārī and received backing from the Ibāḍis in Ḥaḍramawt and Yemen (no. 7, pp. 101–10). Later, Hārūn b. al-Yamān and al-Fazārī's stances were edged out. As a result, academic literature has largely overlooked the history of Ibāḍism in Kūfa, which deserves to be reassessed.[41]

Likewise, and despite the exile from Iraq to Oman and the region's geographical remoteness, the Ibāḍis of Oman were not shielded from the ongoing and acrimonious debates over the nature of the Qurʾān that occurred in Bagdad after the ʿAbbasid caliph al-Maʾmūn (r. 198–218/813–33) launched the *miḥna*. Indeed, ʿAzzān b. al-Ṣaqr, an Ibāḍī *ʿālim*, is credited with an epistle dedicated to the nature of the Qurʾān (no. 20, pp. 224–33), which is thought to be one of the earliest surviving texts written on the issue. Moreover, Al Salimi has logically chosen to incorporate the letter (*risāla*) on the same matter attributed to the fourth imam of Tāhart, Muḥammad b. al-Aflaḥ (r. 261–81/874–94) and arguably sent to the Omanis (no. 21, pp. 233–46).[42]

The publication of this new collection of *siyar* by Al Salimi therefore represents a significant contribution to our understanding of the history of Ibāḍism in the third/ninth century, unfortunately still scant due to the lack of edited sources. It is worth mentioning that the *Siyar wa-l-jawābāt* compilation published by Kāshif in 1986 did not contain much material on the second Ibāḍī imamate. To the best of my knowledge, the only period of the third/ninth century that has hitherto been relatively well documented is the one that saw the outbreak of civil war in its final years, thanks to the numerous epistles edited by Kāshif in 1986, such as Abū al-Muʾthir's *Kitāb al-Aḥdāth wa-l-ṣifāt* and *Kitāb al-Bayān wa-l-burhān bi-l-shāhidayn*, or Abū Qaḥṭān Khālid b. Qaḥṭān's *Sīra*. These *siyar* have the significant advantage of having been composed while the civil war was raging in Oman. As a result,

40. The exact dates of the debate have been a matter of discussion. See Crone and Zimmermann, *The Epistle*, 311–12; Hoffman, "The Development of an Ibāḍī Textual Tradition," 19–21.

41. The recent editions of epistles attributed to al-Fazārī should encourage further investigations in the next decades. See footnote 26 above.

42. On this *sīra*, see Vanna Cremonesi, "Un antico documento ibāḍita sul Corano creato. La *Risālah* dell'Imām rustamide Muḥammad Abū l-Yaqẓān," *Studi Magrebini* 1 (1966): 133–78.

they offer invaluable insight, albeit steeply partisan, into the crisis. Conversely, historians have heretofore lacked sources that would help them to grasp mechanisms of power and means of legitimation during the heyday of the Omani imamate. Recent studies have overwhelmingly relied on *fiqh* sources of the fifth/eleventh and sixth/twelfth centuries, which provide a comprehensive and well-organized exposition of the theory of the imamate but are rather late. Therefore, the *IT9* volume fills the gap that had prevailed until now between the Iraqi-*cum*-formative period of Ibāḍism and the twilight of the medieval Ibāḍī imamate, at the end of the sixth/twelfth century.

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Among the *IT8* and *IT9* epistles, some had already been edited in Kāshif's compilation, *al-Siyar wa-l-jawābāt*. This is the case with respect to ʿAbd Allāh b. Ibāḍ's letter to ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān and Shabīb b. ʿAṭiyya's *Sīra* for *IT8*.[43] As for *IT9*, one will find a new edition of the epistle Hārūn b. al-Yamān sent to his adversaries during his clash with Abū Sufyān Maḥbūb b. al-Ruḥayl and the latter's responses. The *siyar* of Munīr b. al-Nayyir, Hāshim b. Ghaylān, Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Maḥbūb, and Abū al-Muʾthir have also been reedited. Madelung and Al Salimi's reedition is welcome given the poor quality of Kāshif's first edition, which lacked a critical apparatus. However, the reason that Al Salimi (and Madelung for the first volume) chose these specific *siyar* instead of others from the same periods is not explained in their introductions. In *IT9*, for example, the last epistle of the volume is a later text, composed by Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bisyāwī (d. *ca.* 364/975), in the second half of the fourth/tenth century (no. 23, pp. 280–331).[44] One wonders why Al Salimi went so far beyond the third/ninth century to include this *sīra* in the book, while omitting the *Kitāb al-Aḥdāth wa-l-ṣifāt*, the *Kitāb al-Bayan wa-l-burhān* attributed to Abū al-Muʾthir al-Ṣalt b. Khamīs al-Kharūṣī, and Abū Qaḥṭān Khālid b. Qaḥṭān's *Sīra*. Indeed, these three texts are masterpieces of the late third/ninth century Ibāḍī literary tradition and shed light on the internal strife that led to the dismantling of the Ibāḍī community in Oman. Although they had already been included in the *Siyar wa-l-jawābāt* collection, it would have been useful for scholars to have them freshly edited with the same care and skill that Al Salimi (and Madelung) brought to the texts included in the two volumes. Al Salimi justifies this omission by asserting that al-Bisyāwī's *sīra* encapsulates and exemplifies many of the internal evolutions that Ibāḍī historiography experienced between the course of the third/ninth and the fourth/tenth centuries. While this assessment is not wrong, the same rationale could have been made for Abū al-Muʾthir's epistles or for Ibn Baraka's *Kitāb al-Muwāzana*, composed in the first half of the fourth/tenth century.

In terms of structure, the epistles are printed in descending page order in the *IT8* volume: from page 44 to 19 for ʿAbd Allāh b. Ibāḍ's first letter; from 60 to 40 for the second one; from 80 to 60 for Abū Mawdūd's *sīra*, and so on. This editorial decision seems somewhat puzzling. It renders the quotations of the *siyar* in a scholarly work odd for an external reader, and the transition from the table of contents to the text quite uncomfortable.

43. Custers, *Al-Ibāḍiyya*, 1:259–60.

44. On al-Bisyāwī, see Crone and Zimmermann, *The Epistle*, 335–36.

Additionally, both introductions could have used additional proofreading. One can find several transliteration errors or approximations. While these small inaccuracies are usually not detrimental for those acquainted with Ibāḍī/Omani history, they do make the introductions less accessible to a non-specialist scholar or student. In the *IT9* introduction, we find *ʾāimma* instead of *aʾimma* (pp. 20 and 21) and *āʿmāl* instead of *aʿmāl* (p. 22). Errors occur in the transliteration of some proper names: we have Hināʿī instead of Hināʾī (p. 26), an important Azdī tribe settled in Oman and pertaining to the Mālik b. Fahm groups; al-Basyāwī instead of al-Bisyāwī (p. 15) or, alternatively Bisyawī or Bisyānī, the *nisba* of the Omani scholar who hailed from the small village of Bisyā; Abū al-Mūʾraj instead of Abū al-Muʾarrij (p. 7); Shʿabiyya instead of Shaʿbiyya (p. 7).

Far more problematic is the misattribution of a *sīra* to Abū Mawdūd Ḥabīb b. Ḥafṣ al-Hilālī and the blatant confusion between Abū Mawdūd Ḥājib al-Ṭāʾī and Abū Mawdūd Ḥabīb b. Ḥafṣ al-Hilālī. In the *IT8* volume, Al Salimi and Madelung edited a twenty-page epistle attributed to Abū Mawdūd Ḥājib, who is known as a prominent *ʿālim* of Baṣra. Abū Mawdūd supposedly died under the reign of the ʿAbbāsid caliph al-Manṣūr (r. 137–58/754–75) and never traveled to Oman, to my knowledge. In the *IT9* volume, Al Salimi purports to edit the *sīra* of Abū Mawdūd Ḥabīb, an Omani scholar whose life is barely known. Based on other *siyar* he authored and late biographical dictionaries, however, it can be safely assumed that he lived during the same period as Munīr b. al-Nayyir al-Jaʿlānī or Hāshim b. Ghaylān. Thus, Abū Mawdūd Ḥabīb likely died in the first half of the third/ninth century. None of the sources mentions that he visited Baṣra. Moreover, his name does not surface in the late Ibāḍī biographical dictionary composed in North Africa but based on earlier—albeit lost—sources. It is therefore important to note that Abū Mawdūd Ḥājib and Abū Mawdūd Ḥabīb are two different persons, as Martin Custers has already pointed out.[45] However, the *sīra* presented in *IT9* as an epistle addressed by Abū Mawdūd Ḥabīb to the imam Ghassān b. ʿAbd Allāh (r. 192–208/808–23) is *verbatim* identical to the one edited by Al Salimi and Madelung as Abū Mawdūd Ḥājib's *sīra* in *IT8*. Consequently, Abū Mawdūd Ḥabīb's *sīra*, which Al Salimi mentions in his 2010 paper, still remains unknown.[46]

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With *IT8* and *IT9*, Al Salimi and Madelung provide refreshing perspectives on a poorly known religious and juridic literature. These two volumes offer invaluable source-material for exploring the Islamic history of the second/eighth and third/ninth centuries from a different angle. The period that stretches from the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān to the stabilization of the ʿAbbāsid dynasty turns out to be pivotal in many respects, as it saw the establishment of the highly controversial dynastic principle by the Umayyads, the formation of an Islamic empire as such, and the downfall of the Damascene caliphate. Subsequently, the major social, economic, political, and religious transformations that disrupted the Islamic societies after the so-called ʿAbbāsid revolution led to territorial competition between the Iraqi heartlands of the ʿAbbāsid dynasty and its peripheral provinces, within

45. Custers, *Al-Ibāḍiyya*, 1:194–95.

46. Al Salimi, "Identifying," 132.

which centrifugal forces gradually increased. Oman was fully integrated into this world in motion, although it seems that neither the Umayyad forces nor their ʿAbbāsid successors were able to impose their rule over eastern Arabia, at least not lastingly.

Ibāḍism, which has long been regarded as an offspring of Khārijism, should nevertheless be reconsidered in the light of the sources available as a movement that played a pivotal role in the crystallization and definition of cornerstone theological and juridical concepts such as the association (*walāya*), the dissociation (*barāʾa*) and the suspension of judgment (*wuqūf*), quietism (*quʿūd*) and activism (*shirāʾ*), predestination (*qadar*) and postponement (*irjāʾ*), as well as consultation (*shūrā*). The Ibāḍī *ʿulamāʾ* acknowledged a similar set of political leaders and Companions as did the Sunnis, like Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq and ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. At the same time, they also rejected others, such as ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān and the Umayyads. Indeed, the formation of the sectarian movement proceeded in a manner identical to that of other Islamic *madhhab*s. Upon initial examination, the Ibāḍis distinguished themselves from the Sunnis and the Shīʿis by their historical memory of the first *fitna*, which one can unearth in the earliest *siyar*. The Ibāḍī rereading of the civil war led to the development of a genuine political ideal.

In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, the pioneering works of Cook, Crone, and Zimmermann paved the way for reconsidering Ibāḍism beyond a systematic affiliation with heterodoxy. More than twenty years after the publication of Sālim b. Dhakwān's *Sīra*, Al Salimi and Madelung have provided us with the necessary materials to investigate early Ibāḍism in Iraq and in eastern Arabia. This achievement undoubtedly enhances our understanding of the intellectual history of Ibāḍism. Further work remains to be done on the *siyar*. New translations would prove to be particularly beneficial.

Last but not least, it is hoped that my review has clarified that the newly edited Ibāḍī sources are of substantial importance not only to Ibāḍī specialists but also to all historians of the formative period of Islam. Indeed, a preliminary examination reveals that Ibāḍī intellectual developments resonated with the ongoing religious, political, and legal debates that raged in the Middle East throughout the second/eighth and the third/ninth centuries. Therefore, it is no longer possible to investigate early Islamic history without considering Ibāḍī sources.

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