The Construction of Historical Memory in the Exegesis of Kor 16, 106

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Abstract

This article analyzes reports about the capture and torture of the companion ʿAmmār b. Yāsir and their later use in the exegesis of Kor 16, 106. It also shows why the reports were generated by different sectarian communities (Imamī Șīʿites, Zaydites, Murğiʾites) in the different parts of the early Islamic empire (Kufa, Mecca, Medina, Basra, and Jazira) in the late first/seventh and early second/eighth centuries. Through a detailed and comprehensive analysis of the isnāds of reports, the article shows that it is possible to correlate information about the sectarian affiliations of reports’ transmitters with the contents of the reports and in the process shows why different communities remembered and transmitted the specific forms of the reports that they did. The article shows how literary Islamic sources are susceptible to a much more granular historical analysis than previously assumed.

Keywords

Islamic history, theology, hadīt, Qurānic exegesis, ʿAmmār b. Yāsir, Islamic law, historical memory

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Résumé

Cet article analyse les hadiths concernant la capture et la torture du compagnon ʿAm-āmr b. Yāsir et leur utilisation ultérieure dans l’exégèse de Kor 16, 106. Il montre aussi pourquoi les autres hadiths ont été produits par diverses communautés (chītites imāmites, zaydites, murġīrites) situées en différents endroits de l’empire islamique (Koufa, La Mecque, Médine, Bassorah et Ǧazīra) à la fin du Ier/VIIe siècle et au commencement du IIe/VIIIe siècle. Par une analyse détaillée des isnāds des hadiths, l’article démontre qu’il est possible de mettre en rapport les données sur les transmetteurs de hadiths avec le contenu des hadiths et, de cette façon, montre pourquoi les différentes communautés gardaient le souvenir et transmettaient des formes bien spécifiques des hadiths. L’article démontre comment les sources islamiques permettent une analyse historique beaucoup plus fine qu’on ne l’estimait possible auparavant.

Mots-clés

histoire islamique, théologie, ḥadīṯ, exégèse coranique, ʿAmmār b. Yāsir, loi islamique, mémoire historique

Introduction

Almost all Islamic literary sources for the history of early Islam are composed of discrete reports preceded by an isnād (chain of transmission). These reports are found in books of hadith, biography, geography, genealogy, chronicles, exegesis, and much more. Yet, despite its ubiquity, scholarly attitudes towards the utility of an examination of isnād to establish historical truth vary widely.

Medieval and modern religious scholars of hadith view it as the most fundamental object of analysis for these scholars. The answer to the question of whether a given report is historically true or false depends in the most important ways on the analysis of its isnād. Hadith scholars combined a comprehensive comparative examination of the different versions of a text found in compilations of hadith with an analysis of the reputations of individual narrators found in the copious books of the riǧāl literature to establish the authenticity of text in question, usually in the service of some theological or legal end.1

1 Jonathan Brown has done the most to highlight the importance of and clarify the underlying logic of medieval and modern hadith scholarship in Islamic civilization. See Jonathan A.C.
The approach of Islamic scholars of hadith contrasts with the attitudes of most Western scholars. Until recently, Western scholars have had severe doubts about the utility of the analysis of the isnād of a report in saying anything of historical importance about what its text says. The skepticism culminated in the dismissal of the entirety of the corpus of Islamic literary sources as useless for historical research of the earliest period. This had the effect of encouraging historical scholarship in different directions, much of which has tended to avoid the literary sources altogether. Even those studies that have used the literary sources have tended to adopt methods of analysis that do not rely on the examination of isnāds.

With that said, the Western scholarly tradition on early Islam is not unanimous in its rejection of the analysis of the isnād as fruitful for historical research. Joseph Schacht, often thought of as a skeptic, actually re-introduced considerations of the isnāds in the dating of Islamic texts. Schacht did this in conjunction with a specific theory about how Islamic legal thought developed historically. The scholar of hadith literature, Gautier H.A. Juynboll further developed Schacht’s methods, and his use of the isnād entailed a perfunctory use of the riğāl literature to establish very basic facts about a narrator such as his death date and locale. More recently, scholars have pushed back against wholesale skepticism of the value of the isnāds as unjustified. These studies make persuasive arguments about the reliability of specific types of isnād analysis for the dating and geographic location of early Islamic texts.

The present study is an extension and further development of these recent methods. It hopes to demonstrate not only that the circulation of reports can be reliably dated and geographically located by an analysis of isnāds, but also answers questions about why different theological groups in the earliest history of Islam would circulate a given report in the specific form that they did. Results of this type are absolutely essential to the study of the history of religious ideas, practices, and institutions in early Islam. This paper hopes to demonstrate the viability of this type of comprehensive analysis through a wide-ranging examination of reports about the torture of the famous companion ʿAmmār b. Yāsir (d. 37/657) and their relation to a single Qurʾānic verse, namely Kor 16, 106:

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Anyone who disbelieves in God after his having belief – except one who is forced, while his heart is at peace with faith (muṭmaʿīnnun bi-l-imāni) – but anyone who has [willingly] opened his breast to disbelief, upon them is God’s anger and for them is a tremendous punishment.4

The reports assert that though ‘Ammār capitulated to Qurašī demands that he blaspheme God or the Prophet, the first part of Kor 16, 106, or what I call the coercion exemption clause exculpated him of his moral liability.

I will ultimately argue that the reports that regard ‘Ammār’s torture as the historical explanation for Kor 16, 106 are improbable, because it is a poor fit with an early Medinan dating of Kor 16, 106, and a report transmitted by the first century Meccan scholars Muǧāhid and ʿIkrima coheres much better with both an early Medinan dating and the Qurʾānic passage in which Kor 16, 106 is located. I will show that the ‘Ammār torture explanation for Kor 16, 106 was most likely produced in the late first/seventh century because of a confluence of factors that have to do with things like the identity needs of different sectarian communities.

By the early second century, there were a very large number of reports circulating in the different cities of the empire on the fact and nature of ‘Ammār’s torture. The majority of these reports make no connection between ‘Ammār’s torture and the revelation of Kor 16, 106. I argue that these reports predate those that connect his torture with Kor 16, 106. This requires dating the many different reports found in Islamic sources. My dating of the reports will rely on a number of techniques that have recently been used with much fruition in the fields of hadith and early Islamic historiography.

The most recent scholarly development to resolve this problem relies on a close analysis of both the isnāds and the content of the reports in conjunction in order to establish a terminus ante quem for a given report. This methodological tool, named isnād-cum-matn, correlates textual variations of different versions of the same report with changes in an isnād. For example, if we notice that all of the versions of reports with A transmitting to B have one wording and A transmitting to C have a different wording, then we can establish a terminus ante quem of A’s date death for the common elements of both sets of reports. The variation in the substance of the reports correlates with the variation in the isnād, and serves as a case of independent corroboration, and thus enables us to establish a date with confidence.5 Recent research on the methods of

4 The translation of this verse is mine.
5 Harald Motzki, Gregor Schoeler and Andreas Görke have used this method extensively with fruitful results. See Gregor Schoeler and Andreas Görke, “Reconstructing the Earliest Sīra
disseminating and transmitting textual knowledge in early Islamic history fits well the types of variations amongst different versions of the same text that we often find in historical reports.\footnote{6}

However isnād-cum-matn analysis, while especially powerful in dating the common elements of reports, can only work in cases when we have two or more versions of the same texts being transmitted along two or more isnāds that branch out at a given narrator. There are many texts that lack these features. In fact, most of the texts analyzed in this paper have single-transmission isnāds, meaning they were transmitted through one linear chain without branching out before ultimately being recorded in the published source. For these texts, I will rely on a number of different considerations to establish a date for the reports’ production and dissemination. As a general starting point, I start with the assumption that the isnāds of the reports are historical, especially in cases where the originator of the report is neither the Prophet nor a companion. As we will see, the vast majority of the reports of ʿAmmār’s torture go back at most to a successor. This does not mean I accept all isnāds uncritically. I reject many reports or parts of isnāds on a case by case basis after consideration of a number of factors.

This study relies on the vast literature produced by Muslim scholars of hadith documenting, amongst other things, basic biographical information, sectarian affiliations, places of residence and the most prominent teachers and students of individuals named in the isnāds to determine the plausibility and likelihood of transmission between individuals.\footnote{7}

Establishing why a given sectarian community would preserve and circulate a specific form of the ʿAmmār torture story requires the delineation of the sectarian affiliation of prominent narrators and the correlation of the content of

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\footnote{7} Rīğāl criticism, the discipline of hadith devoted to gathering and analyzing this data has been examined in two recent studies. See Eerik Dickinson, \textit{The Development of Early Sunnite Hadith Criticism: the Taqdimah of Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī} (240/854-327/938), Leiden-Boston-Köln, Brill (« Islamic history and civilization », 38), 2001; Scott C. Lucas, \textit{Constructive critics, Hadith literature, and the articulation of Sunnī Islam: the legacy of the generation of Ibn Saʿd, Ibn Maʿīn, and Ibn Ḥanbal}, Leiden-Boston, Brill (« Islamic history and civilization. Studies and texts », 51), 2004.
the transmitted report with the purported sectarian ends it served. It is not surprising that many of the transmitters of some of the texts were Shi'ites. 'Ammār was a vociferous supporter of the fourth caliph, 'Ali b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/661), and died fighting on his side in the first civil war. Later Shi'ites would name him one of the four truly steadfast companions of the Prophet. Nor should it be surprising that Murğī'ites, an early sectarian movement seemingly devoted to the restoration of Muslim political and religious unity, would be interested in disseminating a report originating with 'Ōṯmān b. 'Affān (d. 36/656), the third caliph, recounting 'Ammār's torture, given the memory of the animosity between the two; a memory that had ramifications for sectarian identity formation in the second/eighth and third/ninth centuries. Through this analysis I show the role of second/eighth century processes of sectarian identity construction in the formation and preservation of historical memory.

All of the reports on 'Ammār's torture, the connection to Kor 16, 106 notwithstanding, can be found in hadith, exegetical, biographical, and sīra sources. These reports can be divided into three categories:

1) Reports that note the circumstances of 'Ammār's torture without asserting any connection to the coercion exemption clause;
2) Reports that end up simply asserting that the coercion exemption clause was about 'Ammār;
3) Reports that narrate the circumstances of 'Ammār's torture and connect it to the coercion exemption clause.

As we move forward, the following basic facts about 'Ammār's biography should help in the analysis of the various reports about 'Ammār's torture. 'Ammār was an early convert to the Prophet's mission in Mecca. He is said to have participated in the military campaigns after the migration to the Medina. After the Prophet's death, he seems to have been a prominent member of the political elites in charge of governing a quickly burgeoning empire. He was

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8 With this said, there is a possible danger of circularity. What if authorities ascribe sectarian affiliation based on the content of the report transmitted by a given narrator? This circularity is possible, but not likely, though it is an issue in need of further study. My sense of ascription of sectarian affiliation in the biographical dictionaries and the rīǧāl works was that it was made on a basis of a number of factors, such as self-ascription and second-hand reports.

appointed by 'Umar as governor of Kufa and is noted to have been a partisan of 'Ali, ultimately dying on 'Ali's side at the battle of Ṣiffīn in the first civil war.¹⁰

1. Torture Reports with no Reference to the Coercion Exemption Clause

Of the three categories of 'Ammār reports, the reports that only attest to his torture without connecting it to the coercion exemption clause are both the most numerous and geographically diverse. We will begin with the Medinan reports.

One of these originates with 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr (b. 23/643-644, d. 93/711-712 or 94/712-713),¹¹ the famous scholar based in Medina. 'Urwa simply asserts that "'Ammār used to be one of the oppressed (mustaḍʿafūn) who was tortured in Mecca to make him recant his religion."¹² The report is recorded with a single isnād by Ibn Sa'd and al-Balāḏurī, both of whom have 'Urwa as transmitting to Yazīd b. Rūmān (d. 130/748). We cannot therefore corroborate the historicity of the transmission through an isnād-cum-matn analysis. However, because of 'Urwa's centrality in the collection of reports constituting Muḥammad's biography, his transmission activity has attracted much recent scholarly attention. Gregor Schoeler thinks that Yazīd's version of 'Urwa's reports are not as faithful as Hišām b. 'Urwa's or Zuhrī's versions. He thinks that Yazīd often embellishes and rearranges 'Urwa's texts, but does not reject the transmission from 'Urwa outright. Though Yazīd may have embellished some of Zuhrī's other texts, this, however, is not the case with our report. In fact, of all the 'Ammār torture reports surveyed in this study this report asserts only basic facts about 'Ammār's torture with no embellishing detail. If we rely on Schoeler's study

₁¹ See Gregor Schoeler, “'Urwa b. al-Zubayr”, EI².

Al-Balāḏurī records a longer version of this report directly from Yazīd b. Rūmān originating with 'Urwa. See Ahmad b. Yahyā l-Balāḏurī, Ansāb al-ašrāf, ed. Muḥammad Ḥamid Allāh, Cairo, Dār al-maʿārif, 1987, 1, p. 156.
and his consequent judgment of the basic reliability of ‘Urwa → Yazīd transmissions, then we may date this text to the last third of the first/early eighth century, *i.e.* ‘Urwa’s lifetime.13

Another early single isnād Medinan report asserts that ‘Ammār, along with others,14 was tortured to the point that he did not even know what he was saying.15 In yet another single isnād Medinan report, an unnamed eyewitness


14 The other individuals mentioned in the report are: Şuhayb, Abū Fakiha, Bilāl, and ‘Āmir b. Fuhayra. Şuhayb and Abū Fakiha are similarly described as being tortured to the point that they lost consciousness of what they were saying.

15 See Ibn Sa’d, *Ṭabaqāt*, III, p. 248. The report goes on to assert that Kor 16, 110 was revealed regarding Bilāl and ‘Āmir b. Fuhayra. Whether or not the report asserts that the same verse was revealed also about those who were tortured to the point of losing control over what they were saying, like ‘Ammār, Şuhayb, or Abū Fakiha is not clear. Here is the chain of transmission for the report:


recounts that, after seeing welts (ḥabaṭ) on ‘Ammār’s back, he asked him what they were. ‘Ammār replied, “This is from when the Qurayš used to torture me in the sunbaked hot grounds of Mecca (ramaḍāʾ Makka).”

A Basran report, originating with the famous Basran scholar Muḥammad b. Sīrīn (d. 110/720), narrates the following about ‘Ammār’s torture:

The Prophet met ‘Ammār, while ‘Ammār was crying. [The Prophet] started to wipe [‘Ammār’s] eyes while saying: ‘the disbelievers captured you, drowned you, and you said such and such. If they return, do it again! (fa-in ‘ādū fa-ʿud)”

\[\text{16} \quad \text{See Ibn Saʿd, } \text{al-Ṭabaqāt, I, p. 248. Here is the chain of transmission for the report: Unnamed eyewitness } \rightarrow \text{ Muḥammad b. Kaʿb al-Quraẓī (d. 118/736, Medina) } \rightarrow \text{ al-Ḥāriṯ b. al-Fuḍayl (n.d., Medina) } \rightarrow \text{ Uṭmān b. Muḥammad (n.d., Ḥiǧāz) } \rightarrow \text{ Muḥammad b. Wāqidī (d. 207/822, Medina/Baghdad)}
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On Muḥammad b. Kaʿb al-Quraẓī see al-Buḫārī, \text{al-Taʾrīḫ al-kabīr, I, p. 216-217, no 679;} Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, \text{al-Ǧarḥ wa-l-taʿdīl, VIII, p. 67, n° 303;} Ibn Ḥaģar al-ʿAsqalānī, \text{Kitāb Tahḏīb al-tahḏīb, IX, p. 373-374, n° 691. All of these sources indicate that while Muḥammad b. Kaʿb was from Medina, he lived in Kufa awhile, before returning home. None of these sources record the existence of a scholarly relationship between Muḥammad and al-Ḥāriṯ. The sources are virtually silent on al-Ḥāriṯ. For other reports in which al-Ḥāriṯ is a narrator in Ibn Saʿd, see Ibn Saʿd, \text{al-Ṭabaqāt, I, p. 204; III, p. 59;} and \text{V, p. 93. While none of the riǧāl sources indicate a scholarly relationship, Ibn Saʿd has al-Ḥāriṯ transmitting one more report from Muḥammad b. Kaʿb, through his son ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥāriṯ. This report is also on ‘Ammār, whom the report notes, was in the infantry (raǧǧāla) of ‘Ali’s army during the battle of Ṣiffīn. In another report transmitted by ‘Abd Allāh from his father al-Ḥāriṯ, the companion Ḫuzayma b. Tābit (d. 37/658) refuses to take sides in the battle of Ṣiffīn until he knows which side ‘Ammār will die on, referring to the famous hadith in which the Prophet prophesizes that the rebellious sect (al-fīʾa al-bāġiya) will kill ‘Ammār. As for the Sunnite riǧāl sources, Ibn Hibbān notes merely that he was a Medinan of Anṣārī extraction. See Abū Ḥātim Muḥammad b. Hibbān, \text{Mašāhīr ʿulamāʾ al-amṣār wa-aʿlām fuqahāʾ al-aqṭār, ed. Marzūq ʿAlī Ibrāhīm, al-Manṣūra, Dār al-wafāʾ li-l-ṭibāʿa wa-l-našr wa-l-tawzīʿ, 1991, p. 219, n° 1082 and Ibn Hibbān, \text{Kitāb al-tiqqāt,} III, p. 31; Ibn Ḥaģar notes that he was simply a Medinan, Ahmad b. ‘Ali b. Ḥaģar al-ʿAsqalānī, \text{Lisān al-mīzān, Beirut, Muʿassasat al-aʿlamī li-l-maṭbūʿāt, 1971, II, p. 156, n° 688. For ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥāriṯ b. al-Fuḍayl, see Ibn Saʿd, \text{al-Ṭabaqāt, V, p. 410-411. Ibn Saʿd records ‘Abd Allāh’s death date as 164/781.}}
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\[\text{17} \quad \text{On Ibn Sīrīn, see Toufic Fahd, “Ibn Sīrīn, Abū Bakr Muḥammad”, } EF}^{	ext{11}.}
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\[\text{18} \quad \text{This report is recorded in three different sources, with slight textual variations between them. The one quoted above is found in Ibn Saʿd, } \text{al-Ṭabaqāt, I, p. 249 and also in al-Balāḏurī, Ansāb al-aṣrāf, I, p. 159, n° 350. For the third source, see Muḥammad b. Ishāq, \text{Sīrat Ibn Isḥāq: al-musammāt bi-kitāb al-Mubtada wa-l-mabʿaṭ wa-l-maġāzi, ed. Muḥammad Ḥamīd Allāh, Rabat, Maḥḍad al-dirāsāt, } \text{1996/1976, IV, p. 172, n° 241. The textual variations are insignificant but since they correlate with the}}
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An isnād-cum-matn analysis of this report allows us to establish the terminus ante quem of ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥawn’s death date in 151/768. The riğāl and biographical sources record much material on the scholarly relationship between ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥawn and the source of this report, Muḥammad b. Sīrīn.19 This combined with the fact that the report is preserved in some of the earliest published sources and is transmitted through wholly Basran lines, and the fact that no transmitter attempts to link the report with a companion strengthens the likelihood that Ibn Sīrīn is truly the author of this report. That would mean this report was circulated by Ibn Sīrīn in Basra around the turn of the first/seventh century.

In contrast to the reports above, a single transmission Meccan report does not describe ʿAmmār’s torture but rather asserts that the verse Kor 29, 2, “Do men think that they will be left alone on saying, ‘We believe’, and that they will not be tested?”, was revealed about the time ʿAmmār was tortured in the cause of God (yuʿaḍḍabu fī Llāh).20 This report has many of the same features difference in who ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥawn transmits to, they establish a terminus ante quem of ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥawn’s death date. Importantly the Ibn Saʿd and al-Balāḏūrī versions are almost identical, consistent with the fact that both of have ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥawn transmitting to Ismāʿīl b. Ibrāḥīm. The Ibn Iṣḥāq version orders the text a little differently and uses a couple of different words. Here are the chains of transmission:

Ibn Saʿd: Muḥammad b. Sīrīn (d. 110/720, Basra) ➔ ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥawn (d. 151/768, Basra) ➔ Ismāʿīl b. Ibrāḥīm al-Karābīsī (d. 194/810, Basra);

Al-Balāḏūrī: Muḥammad b. Sīrīn (d. 110/720, Basra) ➔ ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥawn (d. 151/768, Basra) ➔ Ismāʿīl b. Ibrāḥīm al-Karābīsī (d. 194/810, Basra) ➔ Yahyā b. Ayyūb (d. 234/849, Baghdad);


20 Ibn Saʿd, al-Ṭabaqāt, I11, p. 250. Here is the chain of transmission for the report:

ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUbayd b. ʿUmayr (d. 113/732, Mecca) ➔ Ibn ʿUrayy (d. 150/767, Mecca) ➔ Haǧġag b. Muḥammad, Abū Muḥammad (d. 206/822, Syria)
as the Ibn Sīrīn report above. It is attributed to a scholar of first/seventh century Mecca, ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Ubayd b. ‘Umayr (d. 113/732). The riǧāl critics and biographers record a scholarly relationship between him and his student Ibn Ğurayġ and also a relationship between Ibn Ğurayġ and the person he transmits to, Ḥaǧǧāǧ b. Muḥammad (d. 206/822).21 For some of the same reasons we accepted the attribution of the previous report to Ibn Sīrīn, I think we can accept the attribution to ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Ubayd. This would have us date this report also to the first decade of the first/eighth century and locate it in Mecca.

1.1 The Prophet Consoling Reports

Of the reports about ‘Ammār’s torture that do not allude to Kor 16, 106, the most numerous record the Prophet’s address to ‘Ammār individually or to his family collectively while they were being tortured. These reports vary widely in their description of the details of the torture. We shall begin with the least diffusely transmitted reports and work our way to the most densely circulated ones.

Two of these reports are transmitted along a single isnād without ever branching out. These reports originate, respectively with ‘Abd Allāh b. Ğaʿfar b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 83/702), Umm Hāniʾ (Fāḫita bt Abī Ṭālib) (d. ca 50s/670s). Here is the report that originates with ‘Abd Allāh b. Ğaʿfar b. Abī Ṭālib:

The Messenger of God walked past Yāsir, ʿAmmār b. Yāsir, and ‘Ammār’s mother while they were being harmed in God’s [cause] (wa-hum yuʾḏūna fī Llāh). The Messenger of God said: “Be patient, Oh Abū Yāsir and Yāsir’s family (ṣabran yā Abā Yāsir wa-āl Yāsir), for you have been promised heaven (fa-inna mawʿidakum al-ǧanna).”22


‘Abd Allāh b. Ğaʿfar b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 83/702, Mecca) → Ismāʿīl b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Ğaʿfar (d. 145/763, Medina) → al-Zuḥrī (d. 124/742, Medina) → ‘Aqīl b. Ḥālid (d. 144/762, Ayla) →
The riǧāl and biographical sources do not record any type of scholarly relationship between the famous Madinan scholar Ibn Šihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 124/742) and either Ismā‘īl b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Ǧaʿfar b. Abī Ṭālib or his father ʿAbd Allāh.23 On its own, the isnād of the report does not inspire much confidence. But taken together with the Umm Hāni’ report below and other Meccan reports, the circulation of the report in Mecca at the turn of the first/seventh century makes sense.

We have much more information about the isnād of the Umm Hāni’ report. Here is the content of the report:

‘Ammār b. Yāsir, his father, Yāsir, his brother ‘Abd Allāh b. Yāsir, and Summayya, his mother, were being tortured in God’s [cause] (wa-hum yuʿaḏḏabūna fī Llāh). Then, the Prophet walked past them and said: ‘Be patient, O Yāsir’s family (ṣabran yā āl Yāsir), for indeed you have been promised heaven (fa-inna maw’idakum al-ǧanna).24

Umm Hāni’ is identified as Fāḫita bt Abī Ṭālib, ‘Ali b. Abī Ṭālib’s sister.25 The next narrator in the chain, Abū Ṣāliḥ, is identified as her freedman. The rest of the isnād is ubiquitous in Islamic sources for the transmission of material gathered by the famous genealogist Ibn al-Kalbī (d. 146/763, Kufa).26 For these
reasons I am inclined to date the circulation of this report to Abū Ṣāliḥ’s lifetime, i.e. to the late first/early eighth century in Kufa.

In a third report, the Meccan Yūsuf b. Māhak reports:

The Prophet passed by ‘Ammār, his father, and his mother while they were being tortured in the desert and said: “I give glad tidings to the family of ‘Ammār, for indeed they have been promised heaven (fa-inna maw’idakum al-ġanna).”

This report is recorded in two sources, with Šu’ba narrating it to two different recipients. Importantly, the content of the two reports varies, thus establishing a terminus ante quem for the report to Šu’ba’s date of death in 160/776. Given the fact that Yūsuf b. Māhak is reported to have transmitted material from Umm Hāni’, it is likely that this report does originate with him in Mecca.

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A fourth Meccan report, with largely the same content, originated with the Meccan Abū Zubayr (d. 126/744), according to one isnād, and with the famous Meccan companion Ğābir b. ‘Abd Allāh (d. 78/698) in three other isnāds. Here is the content of the report recorded by Ibn Sa’d, originating with Abū Zubayr:

The Prophet walked past ‘Ammār’s family while they were being tortured and said to them: “I give glad tidings to the family of ‘Ammār, for indeed, you have been promised heaven (fa-inna maw’idakum al-ǧanna).”

The isnāds of this report allow us to establish a terminus ante quem to Muslim b. Ibrāhīm’s death date in 222/837 through the isnād-cum-matn dating method. Muslim narrates to four different individuals with corresponding variation in the details of the content. One of the chains of transmission, recorded in the earliest published source (Ibn Sa’d), has Abū Zubayr as the originator of the report. The other three transmissions have the companion Ğābir b. ‘Abd Allāh narrating to Abū Zubayr. Though Motzki argues that the Abū Zubayr—Ğābir scholarly relationship is historical, and thinks that Abū Zubayr’s Ğābir reports in ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s Muṣannaf are authentic, the fact that the version of the isnād recorded in the earliest source has the report originating only with Abū Zubayr.


Ibn Sa’d: Abū Zubayr, [Muḥammad b. Muslim] (d. 126/744, Mecca) à Hišām al-Dustawāṭî (d. 153/770, Basra) à Muslim b. Ibrāhīm (d. 222/837, Basra)


Zubayr gives pause. It is safer to date the report to Abū Zubayr’s lifetime, at the turn of the first/seventh century in Mecca.

The basic structure of all of the Meccan reports is the same. Incidentally, compared to versions of the report whose isnāds indicate transmission outside of Mecca, the Meccan reports are more similar to each other than to reports that circulated outside of Mecca. It is hard to fathom this fact as either coincidental or the result of active fabrication and is strong evidence for the transmission of these reports in Mecca.

There do exist variations of reports outside of Mecca that have the Prophet consoling ʿAmmār. For example, a Kufan report, with an isnād originating in the famous companion, Ibn Masʿūd (d. 32/652-653), has Abū Ġahl thrusting a spear into Sumayya’s thigh, ʿAmmār’s mother, till it reached her private parts, resulting in her death. In the report, ʿAmmār says: “Oh Messenger of God! Our torture [or her torture] has become unbearable.” The Messenger of God replied: “Be patient O Abū Yaqẓān! O God, do not punish any member of the family of Yāsir with the fire.”

At the outset, the transmission from Ibn Masʿūd is unlikely. The early Baṣran riǧāl critic Šuʿba b. al-Ḥaǧǧāǧ explicitly denies that Abū Razīn heard any hadith from Ibn Masʿūd. Note that although the basic structure of the reports is similar, in the sense that it has the Prophet consoling ʿAmmār and his family while they were suffering, this Kufan report is missing the distinctive phrase found in all of the Meccan reports—the Prophet’s promise of heaven to the tortured. It is probable that either Abū Rāzin or a later narrator wanted to circulate this Meccan report in Kufa as originating from a specifically Kufan authority—the famous companion ʿAbd Allāh b. Masʿūd. The riǧāl sources also identify Abū Razīn as having fought on the side of ʿAlī in the battle of Ṣiffīn. This is consistent with the presence of ‘Alids and ‘Alid sympathizers either as the originators of the Meccan reports or involved in their transmission.

29 For his arguments, see Motzki, Origins, p. 208-210.
30 This is ʿAmmār’s nickname (kunya).
33 See ibid., vii, p. 126, n. 9929.
Another Kufan report, originating with ʿAmr b. Maymūn (d. 74/695, Kufa), asserts that the polytheists (mušrikūn) burned ʿAmmār with fire, and that the Prophet, as he was walking past ʿAmmār, while he was being tortured, passed his hand over his head, and said: “Become cold and a source of peace for ʿAmmār, O Fire, as you were for Abraham!” The report ends with the Prophet predicting that the transgressing party will eventually kill ʿAmmār. The riǧāl critics and biographers record the fact that Abū Balġ transmitted material from ʿAmr b. Maymūn, but note nothing else about their relationship. Similarly, some riǧāl critics note that Abū ʿAwāna and other Basrans such as Šuʿba b. al-Ḥaḡgaḡ and Huṣaym b. Baṣr also narrated from Abū Balģ. This is a difficult report to date. At a minimum it is likely that Abū ʿAwāna was circulating it in Basra in the middle second/eighth century.

Another report, transmitted by Ibn Isḥāq to two recipients with corresponding variation in the content, allows us to date its terminus ante quem to Ibn

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34 This is a reference to the Qurʾānic verse where God commands the fire to be cool and a source of peace when Abraham's disbelieving community threw him into it. See Kor 21, 69: “We said, 'O Fire! be thou cool, and (a means of) safety for Abraham!'”

35 The last phrase is a prominent independent hadith with sectarian implications. As it so happens, ʿAmmār was killed fighting for ʿAlī against Muʿāwiya at the Battle of Ṣiffīn. The hadith then, has the implication of identifying Muʿāwiya's side as wrongful in the conflict. On this, see Khaled Abou El Fadl, Rebellion and violence in Islamic law, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 40. This report is found in two sources. See Ibn Saʿd, al-Ṭabaqāt, 111, p. 248 and al-Balāḏurī, Ansāb al-ašrāf, 1, p. 167-168, no 397. Here are the chains of transmission for the report:


The content of the two reports varies insignificantly. Al-Balāḏurī's version has a mere additional “O ʿAmmār! (yā ʿAmmār)” at the end.

36 See for example Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, al-Ǧarḥ wa-l-taʿdīl, VI, p. 258, no 1422; al-Mizzī, Tahḏīb al-Kamāl fi asmāʾ al-riǧāl, XXI1, p. 262, no 4458.

Isḥāq’s death date in the year 150/767 or 768. In two versions of the report, Ibn Isḥāq attributes the report to an unnamed member of ‘Ammār's household. Here is the content of the longest version of the report:

A particular clan of the Banū Muğira b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ʿUmar b. Maḥzūm tortured Sumayya, ‘Ammār’s mother for her conversion to Islam. She refused to change [her religion], so they killed her. The Messenger of God used to pass by ‘Ammār, his mother, and his father as they were being tortured in the valley with the sunbaked stones of Mecca, and said: “Be patient, oh family of Yāsir, you have been promised heaven.”

This report is found in three different sources. Two sources have Ibn Isḥāq narrating it to Yūnus b. Bukayr, and one source has him narrating it to Ibrāhīm b. Sa’d. Importantly there are significant differences in narrative ordering and wording that correlate with the difference in the isnād. Moreover the two Yūnus b. Bukayr sources are almost identical. For the Yūnus b. Bukayr reports see ʿIzz al-Dīn b. al-Aṯīr, Usd al-ġāba fi maʿrifat al-ṣaḥāba, ed. ‘Ali Muḥammad Mu’avwaḍ and ʿĀdil Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Mawḡūd, Beirut, Dār al-maʿrifa, 1994, VII, p. 152, n° 7021; al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, al-Mustadrak ʿalā l-ṣaḥiḥayn, 111, p. 432, n° 5646. Here are the isnāds for these reports:


For the version with Ibn Isḥāq narrating to Ibrāhīm b. Sa’d, see Abū Nuʿaym al-Iṣfahānī, Maʿrifat al-ṣaḥāba, p. 3361, n° 7679. Here is the isnād:

Ibn Isḥāq (d. 150/767, Medina, Baghdad) → Ibrāhīm b. Sa’d al-Zuhrī (d. 183/799, Baghdad) → Aḥmad b. Muhammad (d. 228/843, Baghdad) → Muḥammad b. Yahyā (d. 287/900, Baghdad) → Ḥabīb b. al-Ḥasan (d. 359/970, Baghdad)

On the Banū Maḥzūm, see Martin Hinds, “Banū Makhzūm”, EI².

See also Ibn al-Aṯīr, Usd al-ġāba, VII, p. 152, n° 7021. The isnād of the report is cited above. See also Ibn Isḥāq, Sīrat Ibn Isḥāq, IV, p. 172, n° 239. This is a publication of three recent manuscripts that contain copious quotations from a lost recension of Ibn Isḥāq’s work of Prophetic biography (sīra). The two manuscripts from Qayrawān are recensions of the Kufan scholar Yūnus b. Bukayr (d. 199/815), while the Damascene manuscript is the recension of Razian scholar Muhammad b. Salama (d. 191/807). The value of the work lies in the fact that it contains material that differs from the extant and enormously popular work of Ibn Hišām. On these points, see Ḥamīd Allāh’s introduction, pages 147. However, it also contains some material that is not ultimately attributed to Ibn Isḥāq, indicating that
This report is rather late and has an attention to detail (the name of the clan that tortured Yāsir’s family) indicative of the handiwork of a historian, Ibn Ishāq. The examination of the isnāḍ yields little useful information.

The evidence indicates that, in general, the ‘Ammār torture report, which involved the Prophet consoling ‘Ammār’s family, was circulating in the last quarter of the first century in Mecca. The presence of prominent ‘Alids (‘Abd Allāh b. Ġa’far b. Abī Ṭālib and Umm Hāni’) or individuals connected to them (Yūsuf b. Māhak) or to ‘Alī himself (Abū Razīn) coheres well with the memory of ‘Ammār as a staunch supporter of ‘Alī. It makes sense that these would be the people interested in preserving and circulating memories of ‘Ammār and his family’s sacrifice in the cause of Islam. Without a correlative investigation of the isnāḍs and contents, we would not have been able to date either of these reports with any level of precision or to identify why particular individuals would be interested in preserving and circulating reports in the first place.

Before we begin our examination of the ‘Ammār torture reports that connect it to the revelation of Kor 16, 106, there is one last category of ‘Ammār torture reports with no connection to Kor 16, 106—the one’s whose isnāḍs originate with ‘Uṯmān b. ‘Affān. The content of the ‘Uṯmān reports is substantially similar to the Meccan reports analyzed above with one significant difference: ‘Uṯmān is made the co-eyewitness along with the Prophet of ‘Ammār’s torture. Examination of the isnāḍ and the content along with the ascriptions of sectarian identity of the narrators allow us to locate and date the report and glean why it may have been preserved and circulated by the Murǧiʾites of the early second/eighth century.

1.2 The ‘Uṯmān b. ‘Affān Reports

By far the isnāḍ of the most widely recorded ‘Ammār torture report originates with the companion and third caliph, ‘Uṯmān b. ‘Affān. This report most probably originates in Kufa. It reached the published sources through approximately seventeen chains of transmission (see figure 1: isnāḍs of the ‘Uṯmān torture report). This raises the question as to why the ‘Uṯmān version of ‘Ammār’s torture enjoy such popularity?

It is probable that the proto-Sunni impetus to conciliate the memory of the troubled relationship between ‘Ammār and ‘Uṯmān must have motivated the circulation of this specific report and its popularity. ‘Uṯmān had apparently treated ‘Ammār, along with other early Muslim converts of lowly origin, Abū

at least one of the narrators of Ibn Ishāq’s material, Yūnus b. Bukayr (d. 199/815), added material of his own from other sources.
Ḏarr and Ibn Masʿūd, arrogantly when he was caliph.\(^{41}\) In addition, ʿAmmār is remembered as having actively fomented the discontent that ultimately culminated in ʿUṭmān's assassination. Given the growing proto-Sunni sentiment in the second/eighth and third/ninth century of attempting to clear all companions of mutual ill-will and the insistence on the equal legitimacy and piety of the first four caliphs, memories of conflict between the companions inspired the creation and circulation of reports that showed a firm basis of mutual respect amongst all the companions and especially those that were remembered to have been on opposite sides in the conflicts that roiled the early caliphate. For these reasons, I think the earliest part of the isnāds of the reports that allege ʿUṭmān as the companion narrator and eyewitness of the report is fabricated. More precisely, it is probably the case that the report about the Prophet's response to the torture of ʿAmmār and his family was already in circulation. Someone, perhaps one of the narrators in the isnāds of the ʿUṭmān report, took the content of these reports and added ʿUṭmān as the origin of the report. If this theory is correct, then dating the ʿUṭmān report will yield also a terminus ante quem for the non-ʿUṭmān, generic version of the report, surveyed in the previous section. As it so happens, given the wide circulation of the ʿUṭmān version of the report, we are able to use the isnād-cum-matn analysis to establish a quite early terminus ante quem for the report.

The earliest branching of the isnād of the ʿUṭmān report occurs with ʿAmr b. Murra, who transmits the ʿUṭmān report to al-Qāsim b. al- Faḍl (d. 167/784) and al-Aʿmaš (Sulaymān b. Mihrān) (d. 147 or 148/764-765). The consistent differences between reports transmitted by al-Aʿmaš from ʿAmr b. Murra and those of al-Qāsim's allow us to assign a terminus ante quem for a basic version of the report to ʿAmr b. Murra's date of death, recorded variously as either 116/734 or 120/738. Here is one version of report transmitted by al-Aʿmaš (for the isnād see transmission 16 in figure 1):

‘Uṭmān said: I was with the Prophet when he walked by ʿAmmār b. Yāsir, his mother, and his father while they were being tortured. [The Prophet] said: ‘Be patient O family of Yāsir, for indeed you have been promised heaven!’\(^{42}\)


\(^{42}\) See Abū Bakr Ahmad b. ʿAli Ḥaṭīb al-Bağdādī, Taʿrīḫ Madīnat al-Salām wa-aḫbār muḥaddithīhā wa-ḏikr quṭṭānihā l-ʿulamāʾ min ʿayn ahlīhā wa-wāridīhā, ed. Baššār ʿAwwād Maʿrūf, Beirut, Dār al-Ğar al-İslāmī, 2001, xiii, p. 254. In addition to the fact that both versions (see transmission 17, diagram 1) of the report transmitted by al-Aʿmaš from
Al-Qāsim occurs most often in the isnāds of the ‘Uṯmān hadith, showing up in the isnāds of eleven hadiths out of a total seventeen hadiths. I will quote one of the three longest versions of the ‘Uṯmān report, because it brings out, most clearly, the sectarian motivations for putting the ‘Ammār torture report in the mouth of ‘Uṯmān. Here is the report recorded by the historian, Ibn Šabba (d. 262/878), who cites al-Qāsim b. al- Faḍl as his source. It is probable that Ibn Šabba got the report from an intermediary that he does not cite. Given the dramatic expansions upon the shortest versions of this report transmitted by ‘Amr b. Murra to both al-Qāsim and al-Aʿmaš, I think that the earliest the expanded report was circulated was during al-Qāsim’s career. That would make the termi- nus ante quem to be his death date, 167/784. Here is the report:

ʿUṯmān called some of the companions of the Messenger of God together. ‘Ammār b. Yāsir was amongst them. ʿUṯmān said [to them]: “I implore you by God, do you know that the Messenger of God used to prefer the Qurayš above all other people and he preferred the Banū Hāšim over all of Qurayš?” The people were silent. ʿUṯmān said: If the keys of heaven were in my hands, I would have given it to the Banū Umayya, such that even the last one of them would enter [heaven], and by God they would be given to me, and I would have appointed them [in my government] in spite of all. ‘Ammār asked: “in spite of me?” He responded: “in spite of you”. ‘Ammār asked: “in spite of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar”? ‘Uṯmān got angry and leapt at and severely trampled him. The people jumped back away from him. Then he sent for the Banū Umayya and said: “O most despici- ble of God’s people, you have caused me to be angry at this man to the point that it was shown to me that I have destroyed him and myself.” He then sent for Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr, and said: I should only have responded in kind when he said to me what he did and it would have been proper for me to do that against his force. Go to that man and offer him three choices:

‘Ammār are substantially similar to each other and different from versions of the report transmitted by al-Qāsim from ‘Amr, al-Aʿmaš also transmits another version of the same hadith through an isnād that reaches him from an entirely different route (see transmissions 2, 3, and 4 in diagram 1). Significantly, these reports differ only in slight vocabulary from the ‘Amr → al-Aʿmaš versions and are similar to each other. This fact strengthens the fact of ‘Amr's transmissions to al-Aʿmaš. Otherwise why would al-Aʿmaš bother to invent the tradition and transmit it with slight variations through two different isnāds? Here is the content of one version: “ʿUṯmān said: I heard the Messenger of God say to ‘Ammār, his mother, and his father: ‘Be Patient O family of Yāsir, you have been promised heaven.” For this report see, Abū Nuʿaym al-Iṣfahānī, Maʿrifat al-Ṣaḥāba, p. 3361-3362, no 7690 (narration 3, figure 1).
The report touches upon many of the themes in Muslim historiography on the events that culminated in the ʿUṯmān's assassination. One reason cited by ʿUṯmān's opponents in the run-up to his assassination was his favoritism towards his clan, the Banū Umayya, in making government appointments; something frankly acknowledged in the report. The claim that his actions are inconsistent with the way that Abū Bakr and ʿUmar, the two previous caliphs, governed is also acknowledged by the report, which was another allegation ʿUṯmān's opponents cited in their opposition to his caliphate. In the report ʿUṯmān physically assaults ʿAmmār. This aspect of the report coheres with reports of the maltreatment meted out by ʿUṯmān to prominent companions of lowly tribal origin. ʿUṯmān banished Abū Ḏarr al-Ǧifārī, had Ibn Masʿūd beaten, and in one report also had ʿAmmār beaten. Yet, while acknowledging what must have been perceived as ʿUṯmān's deficiencies, his favoritism towards the Banū Umayya and his assault on ʿAmmār, I would say that the gist of the report is conciliatory, in the sense of reconciling two prominent companions on opposite ends of a conflict that culminated in the first civil war in Sunni historical memory. The reconciliation is performed through a number of narrative devices, though it is ʿUṯmān who shoulders most of the blame and overcomes it by acknowledging ʿAmmār and his family’s great sacrifice in the early days of Islam. ʿUṯmān blames the Banū Umayya for his enmity towards ʿAmmār and acknowledges that it could lead to his and ʿAmmār’s undoing. Ultimately, in this specific version, ʿUṯmān realizes his mistake and recounts the tale of ʿAmmār’s family’s torture to two other prominent companions Ṭalḥa

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45 See ibid., p. 464-465.
and al-Zubayr. The attribution of the report to ʿUṯmān is contrived because it too neatly responds to the memory of the troubled relationship between the third caliph and ʿAmmār. The purpose of the report is to re-conciliate ʿUṯmān to ʿAmmār, two towering and revered companions for Sunnis, by having him explicitly acknowledge ʿAmmār's suffering for Islam.

There is other evidence, gleaned from the isnād, that support this interpretation. The biographical dictionaries describe ʿAmr b. Murra and al-Qāsim b. al-Faḍl, the most prominent narrators of this report, as Murǧiʾites. It is tempting to think that ʿAmr b. Murra and al-Qāsim's interest in transmitting, and perhaps embellishing the report, may have stemmed from their Murǧiʾite

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46 Why does ʿUṯmān recount the story to Talḥa and al-Zubayr specifically? This element too is connected to the history of the first civil war. Both Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr were participants in one of the battles of the civil war after ʿUṯmān's death, specifically against ʿAlī.

47 The three earliest narrators of most of these reports are Sālim b. Abī al-Ǧaʿd, ʿAmr b. Murra, and al-Qāsim b. al-Faḍl. The case with Sālim's purported theological leanings is ambiguous. Ibn Saʿd ascribes a statement to Sālim's father where, after describing his six sons, two of whom had ʾŠīʿite leanings (yatašayyaʿān), two of whom were Murǧiʾites, and two of whom held the beliefs of the Ḥawārīq, he notes that between them, they have completely opposed God! See Ibn Saʿd, ʿAl-Ṭabaqāt, VI, p. 292. For a repetition of the same sentiment see ʿAbd Allāh b. Muslim b. Qutayba, al-Maʿārif, ed. Sarwat ʿUkāsha, Cairo, Dār al-maʿārif, 1969, p. 452 and al-Ḏahabī, Siyar, v, p. 109, no 44. The report does not clarify which heresy Sālim was guilty of. In contrast with the ambiguity surrounding Sālim's political and theological views, ʿAmr b. Murra reportedly self-identified as a Murǧiʾite. See Aḥmad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿIǧlī, Maʿrifat al-ṯiqqāt min riǧāl ahl al-ʿilm wa-l-ḥadīṯ wa-min al-ḍuʿafāʾ wa-ḏikr maḏāhibihim wa-aḫbārihim, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAlīm ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm al-Bastawī, Medina, Maktabat al-dār, 1985, II, p. 185-186, no 1408, where he declares, "I looked into these views, and I have not found a people better than the Murǧiʾites. I am a Murǧiʾite." ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥaǧāǧ, one of ʿAmr's primary transmitters was asked, "Why do you transmit from ʿAmr b. Murra, when he was a Murǧiʾite?", to which he responded that ʿAmr was "the most trustworthy and knowledgeable of the people." See Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāżī, al-Ǧarḥ wa-l-taʿdīl, VII, p. 148, no 56. Ibn Qutayba lists ʿAmr b. Murra as one of the Murǧiʾites, see al-Dahabi, Mizān, p. 625. Al-Dahabi quotes Muǧāra b. Miqsam as describing ʿAmr as infatuated with the ideas of the Murǧiʾites, Ibn Ḥaǧār al-ʿAsqalānī, Lisān, 111, p. 288, no 6447. See also Ibn Ḥaǧār, who is probably relying on these earlier sources himself, Kitāb Tahḍīb al-tahdīb, VIII, p. 90, no 163. Al-Dahabi and Ibn Ḥaǧār relay the assessment of the hadith critic, Abū Dāwūd, who describes him simply as a Murǧiʾite. See al-Dahabi, Mizān, 111, p. 377, no 6731. Van Ess classifies him as a quietist Kufan Murǧiʾite who seems to have been on intimate terms with moderate ʾŠīʿite, see Josef van Ess, Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra: eine Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im frühen Islam, Berlin, Walter de Gruyter, 1992, I, p. 179. Ibn Ḥaǧār's citation of Abū Dāwūd has him specify al-Qāsim as a Basran Murǧiʾite, Ibn Ḥaǧār al-ʿAsqalānī, Kitāb Tahḍīb al-tahdīb, VIII, p. 296, no 596. Van Ess classifies al-Qāsim as a Basran Murǧiʾite, and characterizes the Basran Murǧiʾites as generally anti-ʾŠīʿite, see Ess, Theologie, 11, p. 164-165.
theological leanings. The two distinguishing features of early Murği’ite thought were the idea that one ought to suspend judgment on whether or not ʿUṭmān and ʿAlī deserved otherworldly blame for the conflicts that roiled their tenures as caliphs, and the positive affirmation of the legitimacy and righteous character of the first two caliphs.⁴⁸ According to Michael Cook’s analysis, the earliest Murği’ite texts argued for these positions by invoking consensus and requiring autopsy to make judgments of blame. Since all Muslims approved of the caliphates of Abū Bakr and ʿUmar, an affirmative moral judgment of their tenures is established. This consensus breaks apart with the schisms that afflicted the tenures of ʿUṭmān and ʿAlī. In the absence of consensus, only eyewitness or, as Cook calls it, autopsy, enables judgments of blame. In the absence of autopsy, no judgment can be made, and therefore judgment ought to be rightly deferred to God on the Day of Judgment. Since all we have are second hand testimonies about the conflicts during ʿUṭmān and ʿAlī’s time, the autopsy requirement for moral judgment fails, and we are therefore compelled to defer moral judgment on ʿUṭmān and ʿAlī’s culpability to God.⁴⁹ If we read al-Qāsim’s version of the text in light of Murği’ite ideas, it is possible that the purpose is not only reconciliation, but also a demonstration of how moral judgment is impossible. While it may be the case that ʿUṭmān assaults Ammār, someone who suffered for Islam, it is also the case that he was goaded into it by his clansmen. Moreover the report makes ʿUṭmān contrite for his actions. The report frankly acknowledges ʿUṭmān’s mistreatment, but does so in a way where the blame is diverted and contrition acknowledged. How can a reader of the report damn ʿUṭmān then to the fires of hell, even if he believed that ʿUṭmān was in the wrong?

It is clear that the report was constructed in response to theological controversies of the late first/early second century. Therefore, the attribution of the report to ʿUṭmān is clearly wrong. Yet, despite this, by way of an isnād-cum-matn analysis we are able to date it still to quite an early time, ʿAmr b. Murra’s lifetime, and locate it in a Kufan milieu. This means that the non-ʿUṭmān versions

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⁴⁹ See Cook, Early, p. 29-32.
of the report surveyed in the previous section must be even earlier. ‘Amr pro-
bably got them in Mecca, where it seems to have had wide circulation. ‘Amr or
Sālim, the person ‘Amr cites as his source, must have attributed this to ‘Uṭmān
on account of their Murǧiʾite theological leanings.

Figure 1 isnāds of the ‘Uṭmān torture reports50

50 The reports can be found in the following sources:
None of the reports surveyed so far connect the torture incident to the revelation of the coercion exemption clause. In fact, one report connects ‘Ammār’s torture to a different verse entirely. In terms of chronology, the earliest reports hail from the middle of the first/seventh century. Most of the reports come from around the turn of the century, with some possibly originating in the first half of the second/eighth century. Geographically, the reports originated in the most important intellectual centers of the Empire—Mecca, Medina, Basra, and Kufa. All of them indicate that at the very minimum some people harmed ‘Ammār. The report from the Medinan scholar, ‘Urwa b. al-Zubayr, asserts merely the basic fact that ‘Ammār was tortured in Mecca. Other reports elaborate on methods of torture (drowning, by fire, etc.). Some assert the role of the Prophet in the purported incident. Others assert that ‘Ammār’s whole family was tortured. One of the reports discussed above involves the companion ‘Uṯmān b. ‘Affān. Further analysis of this report’s transmission history indicates the high probability of the contrived nature of some of its contents and provides clues about the motivations behind the construction, preservation, and circulation of the ‘Ammār torture reports in early Islamic society. In terms of dating the variety of these reports—we have one firm conclusion—that the ‘Uṯmān reports are derived from the Meccan reports and certainly come after them. The Meccan reports, it is certain, were already circulating in the last quarter of the first/seventh century. From the perspective of content, none of the reports seem to be responding to legal and moral concerns surrounding the problem of coerced apostasy. With that said, we have yet to examine the reports that connect the apostasy verse, or more specifically the coercion exemption clause of the apostasy verse, with ‘Ammār’s torture. It is to this that we now turn.

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Salafi, Dār iḥyāʾ al-turāṯ al-ʿarabī, XXIV, p. 303.
Reports Which Simply Assert the Connection between ‘Ammār’s Torture and the Coerced Apostasy Verse (Kor 16, 106)

A number of reports either explicitly link the coercion exemption clause to ‘Ammār, or allude to one of its distinctive phrases (muṭmaʾinnun bi-l-īmān) in the course of recounting the events surrounding ‘Ammār’s capture and torture. Many of these reports seem to have originated and circulated in Kufa at the behest of a number of different scholars of varying theological persuasions. As we shall see, some of these reports are implicated in an on-going dispute between Batrite Zaydite and Twelver Šīʿite theological factions on the correct stance to take against what both mutually recognized as an illegitimate ruling regime.

Two reports attributed alternatively to the Kufan authorities, Ġazwān (Abū Malik, n.d.) and al-Ḥakam b. ‘Utayba (d. 113/732), simply assert that the coercion exemption clause was revealed about ‘Ammār.51 Significantly, both al-Ḥakam

Narration 14: ibid., XLIII, p. 370.
Narration 15: ibid., XXXIX, p. 252.

For the al-Ḥakam report see ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Abī Šayba, Musannaf Ibn Abī Šayba fī l-aḥādīṯ wa-l-āṯār, ed. Saʿīd Laḥḥām, Beirut, Dār al-fikr, 1989, VII, p. 524, n° 14 and Ibn Saʿd, al-Ṭabaqāt, 111, p. 250, who both cite the same exact isnād. Here is the chain of transmission:


For a modern summary biography of al-Ḥakam and description of his doctrine, see Ess, Theologie, 1, p. 242-243, who classifies him as a Batrite Zaydite. Ibn Haḡar ascribes Šīʿite inclinations to al-Ḥakam, though qualifies this by stating he did not use to profess it openly, Ibn Haḡar al-ʿAsqalānī, Kitāb Tahdīb al-tahdīb, 11, p. 373, n° 756. Al-Ḥakam also makes appearances in the Imāmī hadith criticism literature. Apparently he was known to have visited al-Bāqir’s circle. See al-Aḥmad b. ’Alī al-Naḡāšī, Riǧāl al-Naḡāšī, ed. Mūsā al-Šabbūrī al-Zanḡānī, Qom, Muʿṣassat al-naṣr al-islāmī l-tābiʿa li-ṃaṭṭaʾat al-mudarrisīn, 1416/1995-1996, p. 360, n° 966 and p. 112, n° 1099. Ibn Dāwūd al-Ḥilli notes that he was a Sunnite jurist and records the accusation that he may have been a Murğiʾite: al-Ḥasan b. ’Alī b. Dāwūd al-Ḥilli, Kitāb al-Riǧāl, ed. Muḥammad Šādiq Al-ʿUlūm, Najaf, al-Maṭba’a l-ḥaydarīyya, 1972, p. 243, n° 163. Al-Šahīd al-Ṭānī l-Ṭawūsī notes that he was
and his immediate narrator Ǧābir are identified in Sunnite riǧāl sources as harboring sentiments sympathetic to Šīʿism. On the other hand, Šīʿite sources note that al-Ḥakam was a Sunni jurist, record accusations that he was a Murğīʾite, or that he was a Batrite Zaydite.52 Taken together, these reports imply that Kufan scholars were connecting Kor 16, 106 to ‘Ammār at the turn of the first century.

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52 On the Batrites, see Wilferd Madelung, "Batriyya or Butriyya", *EI* 2. See also Der Imam al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm und die Glaubenslehre der Zaiditen, Berlin, de Gruyter (« Studien zur Sprache, Geschichte und Kultur des islamischen Orients : Biehefte zur Zeitschrift "Der Islam". Neue Folge », 1), 1965, p. 49-51. The early Batrites are described as committed
That ʿAmmār would serve as an authority of some sort to Kufans of varying theological and political persuasions is not entirely surprising. ʿAmmār’s role as a Kufan governor under the caliphate of ʿUmar and his loyalty to ʿAlī’s side in the civil war made him appealing to a whole host of different communities. The memory of his partisanship for ʿAlī and his martyrdom at Ṣiffīn made him favorable to both the more ideologically doctrinaire but politically quietist proto-Twelver-Imāmites of the period and the ideologically pragmatic but politically activist Batrite Zaydis. The fact that he served as a governor of Kufa under ʿUmar and fought for ʿAlī made him an appealing figure for a Murǧiʾite project of political and theological integration and the Batrite Zaydite desire to temper and widen ʿAlid claims to political rule. The fact that he was a famous companion of the Prophet, a governor of Kufa, and a martyr in ʿAlī’s cause against Muʿāwiya’s Syrian army made him a good candidate for communities who would assert the relative merit of Kufa in Islamic religious culture. In these larger motivations we have an explanation for why a scholar such as al-Ḥakam would assert that a particular Qurʾānic verse was about ʿAmmār, specifically, and why it would be preserved and circulated by the Šīʿite Ǧābir b. Yazīd, or in Kufa generally.

Unlike the reports attributed to al-Ḥakam and Ġazwān, whose main point was to merely assert the connection between ʿAmmār and the coercion exemption clause, two reports found in the Twelver source, al-Kāfī, deploy the ʿAmmār incident and its connection to the coercion exemption clause in the context of a larger policy recommendation, advocating precautionary dissimulation over active resistance. One of the reports originates with the sixth Twelver Imām, Ǧaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (d. 148/766), and the other Ǧaʿfar ultimately attributes to ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib. In the first report, Ǧaʿfar asks, rhetorically, “what prevented Mayṯam from engaging in precautionary dissimulation (taqiyya),

to the idea of the supreme excellence of ʿAlī as candidate for the Imām as immediate successor to the Prophet, over and above the other three caliphs. However, unlike other Imāmites, this did not mean the illegitimacy of the Imāmates of either Abū Bakr or ʿUmar. For a useful general introduction to al-Kāfī, and its author, al-Kulaynī, see Wilferd Madelung, “al-Kulaynī (or al-Kulīnī), Abū Djaʿfar Muḥammad b. Yaʿḳūb b. Ishāk al-Rāzī”, E1.

Significantly, al-Kulaynī classifies both of the hadiths under the chapter on precautionary dissimulation (bāb al-taqiyya).

The reference is to Mayṯam al-Tammār’s (d. 60/580) martyrdom, a prominent companion of ʿAli, who refused to dissociate himself from ʿAli or his cause on the pain of torture and death at the hands of ʿUbayd Allāh b. Ziyād (d. 67/686), the governor of Kufa. Generally on Mayṯam, and specifically on his activity in transmission see Modarressi Tabatabaʾī, Tradition, I, p. 42-45.
when he knew the following verse was revealed about ʿAmmār and his companions: “except one who is forced, while his heart is at peace with faith.”56 In the second report, Ǧaʿfar is asked about a speech of ʿAlī:

The people are transmitting that ʿAlī (upon him be peace) said on the minbar of Kufa: “O people, [when] you will be called upon to insult me, then insult me. Then you will be called upon to dissociate yourself from me. Do not dissociate yourselves from me.” Abū ʿAbd Allāh [Ǧaʿfar al-Ṣādiq] said: “People could not have lied more against ʿAlī.” Then he said. ʿAlī said only: “[When] you will be called upon to insult me, insult me. Then you will be called to dissociate from me, but I am on the religion of Muḥḥammad.” He did not say: “Do not dissociate yourselves from me.” The questioner asked him: “Do you not think he ought to choose death rather than dissociation?” He replied: “By God he is not obliged to do that. He should only do what ʿAmmār b. Yāsir did when he was forced by the people of Mecca, while his heart was at peace with faith and God revealed about him: ‘except one forced while his heart is at peace with faith.’” The Prophet said to him: “If they return, do it again, for God has

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On ʿAlī b. Ibrāhīm see Amīn Turmus al-ʿĀmilī, Tulāṭiyyāt al-Kulaynī wa-qurb al-isnād, Qom, Mu’assasat dār al-ḥadīṯ al-ṯaqāfī, 1417/1996-1997, p. 25 and 60-63. Al-ʿĀmilī describes ʿAlī b. Ibrāhīm as one of the Kulaynī’s primary sources for the Kāfī. For ʿAlī’s father, Ibrāhīm b. Hišām, see ibid., p. 64-68 and the sources cited therein. On Ġamīl, see Modarressi Tabataba’ī, Tradition, p. 307-308. The identification of the immediate narrator of Ǧaʿfar’s statement, Muḥḥammad b. Marwān has been difficult to say the least. The modern Imāmī scholar al-Ḥuṭrī records no less than fourteen different Muḥḥammad b. Marwān. Of these fourteen, three were identified by various scholars from within the Imāmī riǧāl tradition as having been a transmitter of Ǧaʿfar’s: Muḥḥammad b. Marwān b. ʿUtmān, who is simply identified as a Medinan; Muḥḥammad b. Marwān al-Ḏuḥlī, who is identified as Basran who died in 161/778; and Muḥḥammad b. Marwān al-Baṣrī, who is identified as Basran. It is possible that the two Basrans are in fact the same individual, as the riǧāl scholars identify both as having been of Kufan origin, but of Basran domicile. For these see Abū l-Qāsim b. ʿAlī Akbar al-Ḥuṭrī, Muʿṯam riǧāl al-ḥadīṯ, n.p., n.p., 1413/1992, XVII, p. 216-222. Also see, ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn al-Ṣabastarī, al-Fāʾiq fī ruwāt wa-aṣḥāb al-Imām al-Ṣādiq, Qom, Mu’assasat al-našr al-islāmī, 1418/1997-1998, 111, p. 185-187, no 3133-3135.
given you an excuse and commanded you to resort [to dissimulation], if they come back [to torture you].”

In this text, Ġaʿfar uses ‘Ammār’s act and its sanction by the coercion exemption clause as an argument for tempering the heroic impulses for martyrdom in the community and a general argument for a policy prudent dissimulation.

Ḡaʿfar’s text is a complicated rejoinder to the contemporary Batrites of his and his father’s generation. A putative Batrite version of the text is preserved in a fourth/tenth century Sunnī source. We can infer that it is Batrite because

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57 Al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 11, p. 219, no 10. Here is the chain of transmission:
The modern Imāmī scholar, al-ʿĀmilī, offers this isnād specifically as a paradigmatic example of a short, three-tiered chain of transmission, which occurs often in al-Kulaynī’s al-Kāfī. See al-ʿĀmilī, Ṭulāṭiyāyāt al-Kulaynī, p. 33. On Masʿada see Modarressi Tabatabaʾi, Tradition, p. 319-322. On Hārūn b. Muslim see ibid., p. 92-99, the sources cited therein and al-Ḥaṭīb al-Baḡdādī, Taʾrīḵ, XIV, p. 22. See also Modarressi Tabatabaʾi, Tradition, p. 322 on the relationship between Masʿada and Hārūn. Significantly the Imāmī riǧāl tradition records doubts on the Šīʿite bona fides of both Masʿada and Hārūn. Al-Naḡāšī states somewhat opaquely that Hārūn had a view on the issue of predestination (ジャー) and anthropomorphism (تاشبห). The significance of this statement is not clear to me, though al-ʿĀmilī attempts to vindicate Hārūn of the implications of al-Naḡāšī’s statement. More significantly for our purposes, Masʿada is described specifically as a Batrite. For some of these ascriptions in the Twelver-Imāmī riǧāl tradition see al-ʿĀmilī, Ṭulāṭiyāyāt al-Kulaynī, p. 114-117 and the sources cited therein. For the earliest ascription see, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī, Iḥtiyār maʿrifat al-riǧāl, al-maʿrūf bi-Riǧāl al-Kaššī, ed. Mir Dāmād al-Astarābādī and Mahdī al-Raḏāʾī, Qom, Muʾassasat āl al-bayt, 1404/1983-1984, II, p. 687-688. Al-Ṭūsī describes Masʿada b. Ṣadaqa as a Sunnite and counts him as a transmitter of al-Bāqir, see his Riǧāl al-Ṭūsī, ed. Gāwād al-Qayyūmī l-Īṣẖāḥānī, Qom, Muʾassasat al-naṣr al-islāmī, al-taḫīr li-ḡamāʿat al-mudarrisīn bi-Qum, 1415/1994, p. 146, no 1699. I cannot make sense of the Battr ascription for Masʿada. From the perspective of the substance of the text, Ġaʿfar’s text is a rejoinder to a specifically Battr rendition of ‘Ali’s speech circulated by a known Battr, Salama b. Kuhayl, a contemporary of al-Bāqir. The Battr rendition fits with Zaydite activism against an illegitimate regime. Masʿada’s text does not fit this aspect of the Zaydite political project, and in fact dilutes it. For an analysis of Masʿada’s putative sectarian affiliation by looking at the substance of the texts in which he is a transmitter, see Modarressi Tabatabaʾi, Tradition, p. 320, who provides evidence for both Masʿada’s Sunnite and Šīʿite predilections. For a vindication of both the charges of Batrism and Sunnism by a comparative analysis of the judgments of a number of Imāmī and Sunnite riǧāl critics, see al-ʿĀmilī, Ṭulāṭiyāyāt al-Kulaynī, p. 124-130, who points out the categorization of Masʿada as Ġaʿfar al-Ṣadīq’s transmitter is inconsistent with Batrism as a phenomenon prevalent in al-Bāqir’s time.
Indeed when you will be offered the chance to insult me, slander me. If you are offered the chance to dissociate from me, do not dissociate from me, because I follow Islam (fa-innī ala l-islām). He should sacrifice himself (fa-l-yamdud aḥadukum ʿunqahu taqalathu ummuhu). If you dissociate from me, [then know] he gives up this world and the next. Then he [ʿAlī] recited: "except for one forced while his heart is at peace with faith."
Here the practical import in the difference between the two texts seems to be whether dissociation from ‘Ali is a duty when one’s life is on the line, as implied by Ġa’far’s statement, or merely a dispensation, as implied by the Batrite text. Both cite the coercion exemption clause. Ġa’far cites the specific example of ‘Ammār as proof regarding what is to be done when one’s life is on the line. Ġa’far’s rejoinder to the Batrite text works on a couple of different levels. It both denies the particular wording of the Batrite text, and specifically asserts both the apostasy verse and its connection to ‘Ammār to argue against a policy of activist resistance to the demand to dissociate from ‘Ali. Rather Ġa’far says there is a duty to dissimulate, just as ‘Ammār had done. While Batrites may have seen the history of ‘Ammār’s political affiliations as a demonstration of the possibility of supporting the first two caliphs and ‘Ali, the Imāmites of Muhammad al-Bāqir’s and Ġa’far al-Ṣādiq’s generation see his capitulation under Qurayšite persecution, and its Qur’ānic endorsement as supporting their politics of passive resistance. These reports give a sense of the role of the circulation of reports about ‘Ammār’s torture and its connection to Kor 16, 106 in Kufan religious circles in the first half of the second/eighth century.

3 Torture Reports which allude to the Coerced Apostasy verse (Kor 16, 106)

With one exception, the most widely circulated reports that connect ‘Ammār’s torture to the Kor 16, 106 do not do so explicitly. In fact, they allude to it by having ‘Ammār respond to the Prophet’s query about his potential renunciation of faith upon torture, with a distinctive phrase found in Kor 16, 106, “at peace with faith” (muṭmaʾinnun bi-l-īmān). Some of these reports cannot be dated to earlier than the latter half of the second/eighth century, hence we will not examine them here. They can be found in the sources cited below.

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62 For the exception see al-Balāḏurī, Ansāb al-ašrāf, 1, p. 160, no 352.
63 See al-Ṭabarī, Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī, XIV, p. 373-374; al-Balāḏurī, Ansāb al-ašrāf, 1, p. 159-160, no 351; Yahyā b. Sallām, Tafsīr Yahyā b. Sallām, ed. Hind Šalabī, Beirut, Dār al-kutub al-‘ilmī,
3.1 *Abū ʿUbayda Reports*

The most widely recorded of the reports that connect ʿAmmār's torture to Kor 16, 106 has Abū ʿUbayda (n.d.), ʿAmmār's grandson, in the chain of transmission. Abū ʿUbayda's account for the specific circumstances surrounding ʿAmmār's capture and torture, and the allusion to the coercion exemption clause was one of the most popular in classical exegetical and legal literature. Because of its later fame, I shall engage in a much more detailed analysis of this report.64

The earliest narrator that narrates to different individuals thus giving rise for an opportunity to engage in an *isnād-cum-matn* analysis is the Meccan-Ǧazīran scholar, ʿAbd al-Karīm b. Mālik (d. 127/745). The *isnāds* of the reports have ʿAbd al-Karīm narrating to three different individuals: the famous Meccan scholar Maʿmar b. Rāṣid (d. 154/771), and the Ĝazīrans al-Furāt b. Salmān (d. 150/767) and ʿUbayd Allāh b. ʿAmr (d. 180/797). The content of the reports transmitted by the the two Ĝazīrans, al-Furāt and ʿUbayd Allāh are very similar to each other, while there is a fundamental difference between them and all the versions of the report that go through Maʿmar. Here is one of the Maʿmar reports (figure 2, narration 8):

> The polytheists took ʿAmmār b. Yāsir, tortured him till he came close to saying some of what they wanted. He complained about it to the Prophet. The Prophet asked him: “How did you find your heart?” He replied: “At peace with faith.” He said: “If they return, do it again!”65

Here is one version of the al-Furāt report (figure 2, narration 6):

> The polytheists took ʿAmmār and did not leave him till he cursed the Messenger of God and mentioned something good about their gods. They then left him. When he came to the Prophet, the Prophet asked: “What’s the matter?” He replied: “Evil! By God, the polytheists would not release me till I slandered you and said something good about their gods.” The Prophet asked: “How did you find your heart?” He replied: I found my heart at peace with faith. He said: “If they return, do it again!”66

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64 For the *isnāds* of this report see figure 2: *isnāds* of the Abū ʿUbayda reports.
66 Yahyā b. Sallām, Tafsīr Yahyā b. Sallām, 1, p. 92.
Here is a version of the ‘Ubayd Allāh b. ‘Amr report (figure 2, narration 3):

The polytheists took ‘Ammār and did not leave him till he cursed (nāla min) the Messenger of God and mentioned something good about their Gods. When he came to the Prophet, the Prophet asked: “What’s the matter?” He replied: “Evil! By God, the polytheists would not release me till I slandered you and said something good about their gods.” The Prophet asked: “How did you find your heart?” He replied: “At peace with faith.” He said: “If they return, do it again!”67

None of the versions of the report transmitted through Maʿmar contain the narrative element where the Prophet asks ‘Ammār “What’s the matter?”, but both of the texts of the two Ǧazīran narrators from ʿAbd al-Karīm contain this narrative element. The isnād-cum-matn analysis, particularly strong in this case, fixes a terminus ante quem for the common elements of the Maʿmar and Ǧazīran versions to ʿAbd al-Karīm’s death date, 127/745.

We ought to note one other feature of the Abū ʿUbayda reports. Three of the twelve narrations claim that the reports originate not with Abū ʿUbayda, ‘Ammār’s grandson, but with his son, Muḥammad b. ‘Ammār b. Yāsir (i.e. Abū ʿUbayda’s father). These versions were recorded in two of al-Bayhaqī’s works, and one of al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī. Al-Bayhaqī gets one of his reports from al-Ḥākim. Given the fact that the only sources that record the isnād as originating with Muḥammad b. ‘Ammār are al-Ḥākim and al-Bayhaqī’s collections, and that at least in one of al-Bayhaqī’s works, he cites al-Ḥākim as his immediate source, it is probable that al-Ḥākim extended the chain from Abū ʿUbayda to Muḥammad. I therefore reject Muḥammad, ‘Ammār’s son, as the original narrator of this report.

If we discount the attribution to Muḥammad as a later development and the isnād-cum-matn procedure establishes Abū ʿUbayda’s immediate narrator, ‘Abd al-Karīm, as a historical narrator of this report, that leaves us with the question of whether Abū ʿUbayda is indeed ‘Abd al-Karīm’s source, as all of the chains of transmissions of this report document?

Let us look at the assessments of the riǧāl critics on Abū ʿUbayda and ‘Abd al-Karīm. We do not have much information about Abū ʿUbayda himself and in fact the early riǧāl critics record some disagreement about whether or not Abū ʿUbayda and Salama b. Muḥammad b. ‘Ammār b. Yāsir, both putatively

Here are the sources for the reports:


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FIGURE 2  isnāds of Abū ʿUbayda reports

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ʿAmmār’s grandsons are actually the same person. The fact that there are a substantial number of hadiths that are transmitted through Abū ʿUbayda through a variety of transmitters though, to my mind, considerably mitigates this doubt. Significantly, the riǧāl critics do not explicitly record or allude by way of nisba to the place of Abū ʿUbayda’s residence. We can infer that he must have been a Medinan, at least with respect to his transmission activity, through looking at who he narrated to and from. The narrators are predomi-

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Ibn Abī Ḥātim reports that his father thought that Abū ʿUbayda was not named as such, meaning he either did not have a name other than his nickname (kunya) or it was not known and reports his father’s view that his hadith are to be rejected. See Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, al-Ǧarḥ wa-l-taʿdīl, IX, p. 405, n° 1944. Al-Buḥārī however seems to regard Abū ʿUbayda and Salama to be two distinct people and even cites an eyewitness report implying that. He also records two separate entries for the individuals. For Salama, along with the citation of the eyewitness report, see al-Buḥārī, al-Taʾrīḥ, IV, p. 77, n° 2011. For the entry on Abū ʿUbayda, see al-Buḥārī, al-Taʾrīḥ al-kabīr, p. 52, n° 449. To add to the confusion, in yet another place, al-Rāzī, on the authority of his father, reports that Abū ʿUbayda was actually ʿAmmār’s son, not grandson. See ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Abī Ḥātim, Kitāb Bayān ḫaṭaʿ Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl al-Buḥārī fī Taʾrīḥihi, Diyarbakir, al-Maktaba l-islāmiyya, n.d., p. 156-157, n° 735. The later hadith critics echo the confusion regarding the identity and ambivalence towards whether his hadith are reliable. Al-Mizzī and Ibn Ḥaǧar, perhaps relying on al-Rāzī’s statement, report the possibility that Salama and Abū ʿUbayda may be the same person, though al-Mizzī prefers the two-person view based on al-Buḥārī’s report. See al-Mizzī, Tahḏīb al-Kamāl fī asmāʾ al-riǧāl, XXXIV, p. 61-63, n° 4-7498 and Ibn Ḥaǧar al-ʿAsqalānī, Kitāb Tahḏīb al-tahḏīb, XI, I, p. 144, n° 4-8568. The early riǧāl critics probably also have in mind the paucity of material transmitted through Salama. He is found in only one hadith about ten etiquette practices which the Prophet proclaims are part of a human being’s nature (fiṭra). See Sulaymān b. al-Aṣʿaṭ al-Siǧistānī Abū Dāwūd, Sunan Abī Dāwūd, Riyadh, Harf Information Technology, 2003, CD ROM, hadith #49, Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Yazīd b. Māġa, Sunan Ibn Māʿa, in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith #290, and Ahmad b. Ḥanbal, Musnad Ahmad b. Ḥanbal, in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith #17606 for the hadith. He is said to have transmitted it from his father, ʿAmmār. That ʿAmmār’s family may not have been well known is also confirmed by the fact that Ibn Iṣḥāq, himself, narrates one account of the torture of ʿAmmār’s family from an unidentified male member of his family. For this, see Muḥammad b. Iṣḥāq, Sirāt Ibn Iṣḥāq, ed. Muḥammad Ḥamīd Allāh, Rabat, Mrʿād al-dirāsāt wa-l-ʿabḥāt li-l-taʾrīḥ, n.d., IV, p. 172, n° 239. It is possible that the unidentified member in this report is actually Abū ʿUbayda.
nantly Medinan. Moreover the relative differences in death dates of the individuals he transmits from as opposed to those he transmits to seem reasonable, thereby increasing the plausibility of his transmission activity. The fact that both Abū ‘Ubayda’s sources and his transmitters were predominantly Medinan also seems to strengthen the plausibility of his transmission activity. We can also infer the relative date of his transmission activity as occurring in the first quarter of the second/eighth century (ca 100/719-125/743). In one case, Abū ‘Ubayda transmits information about ‘Ammār not directly, or even from his father, but through a third party. Thus it is possible that Abū ‘Ubayda may


71 Interestingly, though Abū ‘Ubayda is ‘Ammār’s grandson, all of the reports he transmits as found in the some of the standard Sunnī collections of the late third and fourth centuries are about personalities and issues that do not seem to have a direct connection to ‘Ammār. Doing a narrator search in the software program Mawsūʿat al-ḥadīṯ al-šarīf on Abū ‘Ubayda yields 13 total hadiths, which can be grouped into five different groups. Briefly they are about a range of issues, with no unifying thematic, sectarian, or political concern. The hadiths are about the following topics: the validity of the practice of wiping one’s leather socks (mashʿ al-ḫuffayn) and turban (‘amāma) (Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā l-Tirmiḏi, Gāmiʿ al-ṣaḥīḥ, in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith #95), the fact that one who dies defending his religion, property, self, or family, dies as a martyr (Aḥmad b. Šu‘ayb al-Nasāʾī, Sunan al-Nasāʾī, in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith #4026 and #27; Abū Dā‘ūd Sulaymān b. al-Aṣ’at al-Siǧistānī, Sunan Abī Dāwūd, in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith #4142; Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Musnad Ahmad b. Ḥanbal, in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith #1565); a report about the workings of a muzāraʿa contract (Aḥmad b. Šu‘ayb al-Nasāʾī, Sunan al-Nasāʾī, in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith #3466; Abū Dā‘ūd Sulaymān b. al-Aṣ’at al-Siǧistānī, Sunan Abī Dāwūd, in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith #20606 and #41), an apocryphal report about the Ḫawāriǧ who will go deep into the religion to the point of leaving it (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Musnad Ahmad b. Ḥanbal, in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith #6741), and a physical description of the Prophet (al-Dārimī, Sunan al-Dārimī, in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith #60).

72 See the report about information conveyed about the circumstances surrounding the Prophet’s marriage to Ḥadīǧa in Ahmad b. al-Husayn al-Bayhaqī, al-Sunan al-kubrā, Beirut, Dār al-fikr, n.d., VII, p. 129. In this tradition Abū ‘Ubayda gets information about
merely have been reporting a tradition about ‘Ammār that he received through other unnamed sources. In other words, the fact that he was ‘Ammār’s grandson did not necessarily grant him insider access to information about ‘Ammār. On the whole, how does this information help assess the probability of transmission between Abū ‘Ubayda and ‘Abd al-Karīm? Dating Abū ‘Ubayda’s transmission activity to the first quarter of the second/eighth century and locating it in Medina implies at the very least the plausibility of contact with ‘Abd al-Karīm. Given the plausibility of Abū ‘Ubayda’s contact with ‘Abd al-Karīm, what can then be known about ‘Abd al-Karīm?

In general, ‘Abd al-Karīm gets high marks from the riǧāl critics.73 Many of ‘Abd al-Karīm’s primary sources are prominent Meccans from the turn of the first century, such as ‘Aṭā’ b. Abī Rabāḥ, Muǧāhid b. Ğabr, and ‘Ikrima, whereas who he transmitted to are both Meccan and Kufan, such as Maʿmar b. Rāšid, Ibn Ğurayġ, Sufyān al-Ţawrī, and Isrā’il b. Yûnus.74 Ultimately, ‘Abd al-Karīm seems to have settled somewhere in the Ğazīra (northern ‘Iraq/Syria), thus his nisba. Anecdotal evidence about ‘Abd al-Karīm’s transmission activity in Kufa found in biographical sources corroborates information gleaned from the presence of Kufan scholars in his chains of transmission. The fact that Abū ‘Ubayda transmitted mostly to and from Medinans while ‘Abd al-Karīm transmitted mainly to and from Meccans or Kufans though is not problematic in assessing the plausibility of the transmission between the two individuals. Mecca, because of its status as the pilgrimage center in the empire, was the meeting ground for scholars from all of the other regions, and the location of much inter-regional transmission activity. Many of the hadith recorded through ‘Abd al-Karīm are of strictly legal import, ranging from Prophetic

‘Ammār’s tradition, from the Medinan Muqsim, the mawlā of ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥāriṭ, who transmits from ‘Abd Allāh, who in turn transmits from ‘Ammār.

See al-Buḫārī, al-Taʾrīḫ al-kabīr, v1, p. 88, no 1794, where he quotes the famous hadith scholar Sufyān b. ‘Uyayna as remarking that he had never seen anyone like ‘Abd al-Karīm. Al-ʿIrāqī praises the precision of his transmission practice, saying that he only transmitted by saying “I heard” or “I asked”. While this is an exaggeration, as an analysis of how he’s quoted in the chains of transmissions of actual hadiths has him narrate often using the transmission formula of ‘an, al-ʿIrāqī’s assertion can be construed as making a relative judgment on the precision of ‘Abd al-Karīm’s transmission activity. See Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, al-Ǧarḥ wa-l-taʿdīl, v1, p. 58-59, no 310, who quotes Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Yahyā b. Maʾin, and al-Rāzī’s father as declaring ‘Abd al-Karīm, sound (tīqqa). For more judgments by the riǧāl critics, see Ibn Ḥaǧar al-ʿAsqalānī, Kitāb Tahḏīb al-tahḏīb, v1, p. 333-334, no 717. See Kitāb Tahḏīb al-tahḏīb, v1, p. 333-334, no 717, for a list of narrators.
reports about proper ḥaǧǧ practices,75 to the legality of certain types of drinks,76 to rules about sexual intercourse,77 and Prophetic comment on different types of commercial practices.78 Outside of Prophetic hadith, ‘Abd al-Karīm transmits the opinions of early Meccan juristic authorities like ‘Aṭāʾ and Ṭāwūs to Meccan scholars like Ma’mar and Ibn Ğurayq.79 Unlike the case with the narrators of the Kufan report connecting the coercion exemption clause to ‘Ammār, no overt political or sectarian motivation is detectable either internally in Abū ‘Ubayda’s ‘Ammār report, or in the hadith corpuses of Abū ‘Ubayda and ‘Abd al-Karīm, or in the information preserved about the two individuals in biographical and riğały sources.80 What can this analysis tell us about dating the report to Abū ‘Ubayda?

There are good reasons for dating the tradition to Abū ‘Ubayda’s lifetime, though these considerations do not approach the strength of results from the applications of the isnad-cum-matn procedure, which established a terminus ante quem of ‘Abd al-Karīm’s death date. Let’s start with the reasons for regarding the report as originating in Abū ‘Ubayda’s lifetime. First, we have found no good reason to doubt the attribution made to him in the chains of transmission. Second, an analysis of the hadiths and historical reports in which he is found as a transmitter has manifested a fairly plausible profile for a historical narrator. The chains of transmissions we have reflect that a diverse number of

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75 Assuming the transmission ascriptions to ‘Abd al-Karīm to be true, of course, he seems to have taken an interest in collecting and transmitting material about ḥaǧǧ ritual. See for instance the following hadiths al-Buḫārī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Buḫārī, in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith #1601, 1602, 1730; Muslim b. al-Ḥaǧǧāǧ, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith #2083, 2320; Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā l-Tirmiḏī, Ğāmiʿ al-ṣaḥīḥ, in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith # 876; Aḥmad b. Ṣu‘ayb al-Nasāʾī, Sunan al-Nasāʾī, in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith #2802, 2927, 3032.

76 See Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā l-Tirmiḏī, Ğāmiʿ al-ṣaḥīḥ, in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith #1810.

77 See ibid., in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith #127 and Abū Dā‘ūd Sulaymān b. al-As’at al-Siǧistānī, Sunan Abī Dāwūd, in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith #231.

78 See Aḥmad b. Ṣu‘ayb al-Nasāʾī, Sunan al-Nasāʾī, in the Harf Information Technology CD ROM, hadith #3668 and #807.

79 ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Ǧazarī is a prominent transmitter in ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s Muṣannaf; On this, and ‘Abd al-Karīm’s biography and narrator profile, see Motzki, Origins, p. 226-331.

80 This is my own impression after glancing through the corpus of hadiths transmitted through him. Interestingly, Sufyān al-Ṭawrī is quoted as approvingly saying that none of the following scholars was a theologian (muṭakallim): ‘Abd al-Karīm, Ayyūb, and ‘Amr b. Dinār. See Ibn Ḥaǧar al-‘Asqalānī, Kitāb Tahdīb al-tahdīb, vi, p. 333-334, no 717.
people narrate both from him and to him. Yet, despite this diversity, they all hail from the same region, the Ḥiǧāz, and in fact the vast majority comes from the same city, Medina. An analysis of the various death dates given for those from whom he purportedly narrated from and to also strengthens the plausibility of the profile. The relative differences between the death dates of his sources and who he transmits to are reasonable. But there is one reason against attributing it to Abū ʿUbayda. Some riǧāl critics cast suspicion on both Abū ʿUbayda’s identity and the acceptability of his narrations. I think this is a weak reason because of the plausibility of his narrator profile that I outlined above.

The isnad-cum-matn procedure produces a terminus ante quem for the circulation of the shared elements of this report to the death date of ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Ǧazarī, 127/745. Though, not as reliable, our analysis of the plausibility of the transmission profile of Abū ʿUbayda, Āmmār’s grandson, produces a date of somewhere in the first quarter of the second century 100-125/719-743.

The main question that remains is which of the two broad sets of reports we have reviewed, dated, and located thus far comes first: the reports that merely describe Āmmār’s torture or the reports that connect the torture incident to the revelation of Kor 16, 106?

4 Suggested Chronology for the Reports

At a minimum it is safe to say that by the last quarter of the first century there was widespread belief that Āmmār b. Yāsir was tortured during the Prophet’s time by the Meccans. This much is agreed upon by all of the numerous versions of reports.

In order to answer the question of which reports came first—the one’s that connect Āmmār’s torture to Kor 16, 106 or the one’s that do not, let’s review the most important results of our dating of the reports. We can divide them into three broad categories:

1) reports that simply assert how Āmmār was tortured;
2) reports that have the Prophet witness Āmmār’s torture and promise him and his family heaven;
3) reports that either assert or allude to the connection between Āmmār’s torture and Kor 16, 106.

The first set of reports have been recorded in sources only through single isnāds. All but one of these reports originated in Medina, with the exception
originating in Basra. These reports stem from the turn of the first/seventh century. The earliest goes back to the important collector of reports, the Medinan ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr.

For the second set of reports, the isnad-cum-matn method produced a quite early terminus ante quem of the death date of ʿAmr b. Murra in 120/738. The date for the circulation of this report is in fact definitively earlier, since ʿAmr b. Murra transmits his report as originating with ʿUṯmān b. ʿAffān, an attribution with a specific sectarian function. We know therefore that the content of the report is much earlier. Versions of the same report, recorded though in different single isnād versions, and without the attribution to ʿUṯmān were circulating in Mecca most probably around the turn of the first century.

The analysis of the third set of reports also dated them to the turn of the first century. Two single-isnād reports that simply asserted that Kor 16, 106 was about ʿAmmār stem from Kufa. The reports that allude to a distinctive phrase found in Kor 16, 106, “at peace with faith” (muṭmaʾinnun bi-l-īmān) date to the lifetime of Abu ʿUbayda, ʿAmmār's grandson, which also happens to be around the turn of the century.

What is the relationship between these sets of reports? There are two possible ways of conceiving of the relationship. One is to see the connection to Kor 16, 106 as always a part of the historical memory of ʿAmmār's torture, even if some reports do not explicitly make the connection or allude to it. This would require that we read the reports that do not allude or explicitly connect his torture to Kor 16, 106 as simply assuming the audience knows this.

The other way of thinking about the relationship between these reports is to regard the torture reports, without reference to Kor 16, 106, as coming before reports that connect it to the verse. I think this is the stronger explanation. Putting aside the Abū ʿUbayda reports, which merely allude to Kor 16, 106, the reports that explicitly connect ʿAmmār’s torture to the verse either explicitly cite it as support for an on-going dispute about political policy, as in the case of Ǧaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, or is asserted by individuals known to have been a party to that dispute, as in the case of al-Ḥakam b. ʿUtayba. It is probable that Abū ʿUbayda, around the same time or perhaps upon hearing Kufan reports asserting the connection between Kor 16, 106 and his grandfather’s torture, did not so much fabricate as much as circulate a more fleshed out and dramatic version of the story that he thought his grandfather must have been a part of. This would have added to his grandfather’s prestige and therefore to that of his family, for to be connected to the revelation of a Qur’ānic verse was a point of honor and pride. Moreover, the very fact that ʿAmmār’s torture is offered up as a candidate for historical explanation for three different verses indicates not transmission
of eyewitness or even hearsay reports of some sort, but rather attempts on the part of late first century scholars to correlate Qur’anic verses with episodes from the life of the Prophet.

There is one final consideration, one that goes beyond the veil of the first century. The gist of the reports about ʿAmmār’s torture, and even Abū ʿUbayda’s account alluding to the connection between the coercion exemption clause and ʿAmmār’s torture, imply a Meccan dating. Sumayya, ʿAmmār’s mother, is identified by Islamic sources as one of the first, if not the first, Muslim to have died as a martyr in the cause of Islam. His and his family’s torture probably took place when the Meccans were torturing other Muslim converts that did not have full tribal protection because of their status as slaves or clients. All of this happens in Mecca.

There is disagreement amongst both pre-modern Muslim authorities and modern Islamicists on the dating of the verse, though I think there are very strong reasons to regard it as early Medinan. The Muslim authorities are split, though most regard it as Medinan.\textsuperscript{81} It is not clear why the Muslim authorities classified the verse as they did, though it seems likely that they probably relied on assessments of theme to infer a date. Islamicists are also split on the issue. Blachère thinks it is Meccan, Bell thinks it is Medinan.\textsuperscript{82} Both of

\textsuperscript{81} One report has Ibn ʿAbbās regarding all but the last three verses of the chapter as Meccan. See Ǧalāl al-Dīn Abd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī, al-Itqān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān, ed. Markaz al-dirāsāt al-qurʾānī, Medina, Maǧmaʿ li-l-malik Fahd li-ṭibāʿat al-muṣḥaf al-šarīf, 1426/1991-1992, I, p. 49. Al-Suyūṭī’s immediate source is al-Naḥḥās’s al-Nāsiḥ wa-l-mansūḥ. Other reports have Qatāda (d. 117/735) and al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728) say the entire chapter was Meccan. See ibid., I, p. 50-51. Al-Suyūṭī’s immediate source is al-Bayhaqi’s Dalāʾil al-Nubuwwa. Other reports say that Qatāda thought the all of surah 16 was Medinan. See al-Ḥāriṭ b. Asad al-Muḥāsibī, al-ʿAql wa-l-fahm bi-l-Qurʾān, ed. Ḥusayn al-Quwwatalī, Beirut, Dār al-fikr, 1971, p. 395. Yet another report says that Qatāda thought the first forty verses of surah 16 was Meccan, while the rest was Medinan. See ‘Uṯmān b. Saʿīd al-Dānī, al-Bayān fī ʿadd āy al-Qurʾān, ed. Ġānim Qaddūrī Ḥamad, Kuwait, Markaz al-maḫṭūṭāt wa-l-turāṯ wa-l-waṯāʾiq, 1994, p. 133-134. Another report has Ḥābir b. Zayd holding the same opinion. For this see, al-Suyūṭī, al-İṭqān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān, I, p. 169. I thank the anonymous reviewers for some of these references.

\textsuperscript{82} Régis Blachère regards the chapter as from the third Meccan phase, Régis Blachère, Le Coran, traduction selon un essai de reclassement des sourates, Paris, G.P. Maisonneuve, 1947-1950, 11, p. 349. Richard Bell does not classify entire chapters as either Medinan or Meccan, but individual passages and verses. He considers the coerced apostasy verse as early Medinan, Richard Bell, The Qurʾān: Translated with a Critical Re-arrangement of the Surahs, transl. Richard Bell, Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1960, p. 259. The nineteenth century orientalist Theodor Nöldeke does not directly address the chronology of 16, 106, though he does think verses 111-125 are Medinan. See Theodor Nöldeke, Friedrich Schwally,
these authors rely on a combination of thematic and stylistic considerations. Sadeghi has recently done a very persuasive statistical analysis corroborating Mehdi Bazargan’s style-based chronology, which implies a Medinan dating for the verse.83 There are other strong reasons to regard the verse as Medinan. The verses surrounding Kor 16, 106 have to do with themes associated with the Medinan phase of the Prophet’s mission: persecution and immigration. The verse itself refers to the phenomenon of changing beliefs, which is found in six other verses in the Qurʾān.84 All of these verses are embedded in passages that speak of themes associated with Medina.85 In addition, there exist other non-ʿAmmār related reports that give an entirely different narrative context for Kor 16, 106.86 These reports did not gain nearly as much traction in the later scholarly traditions, but they all assume a Medinan context. The reports originating with the late first/seventh century Meccan scholars, Muğāhid and ‘Ikrima accord especially well with the passage in which Kor 16, 106 is found.87

Given the strong reasons for regarding Kor 16, 106 as early Medinan and the existence of other non-ʿAmmār related reports that cohere better with Kor 16, 106’s passage, how do we make sense of the ʿAmmār reports connected to


83 For the other verses, see Kor 3, 100; Kor 3, 106; Kor 2, 109; Kor 9, 66; Kor 9, 74; Kor 4, 137.

84 For a discussion of the formal features of the Medinan revelations, see Neal Robinson, *Discovering the Qurʾān: a Contemporary Approach to a Veiled Text*, Washington, Georgetown University Press, 2003, p. 196-198. On a discussion of the terminology and theological figures specific to the different phases of the Qurʾānic revelations, see Bell and Watt, *Introduction to the Qurʾān*, p. 118-120. See also Gerhard Böwering, “Chronology and the Qurʾān”, *Encyclopedia of the Qurʾān*.

85 These scholars are Muqātil b. Sulaymān (d. 150/767), Muğāhid b. Ġabr (d. 104/723), and ‘Ikrima (d. 105/723-724). For the Muqātil report, see Muqātil b. Sulaymān, *Tafsîr Muqātil b. Sulaymān*, ed. Ahmād Farīd, Beirut, Dār al-kutub al-‘ilmī, 2003, 1, p. 239.

the verse? We can thus posit three stages in the growth of the ‘Ammār reports in general, and specifically the reports connecting the revelation of the apostasy verse to ‘Ammār. In the first stage, reports were generated that concretized a seemingly widely shared yet vague historical memory of the torture of ‘Ammār at the hands of Meccans. At the second stage, the memory of ‘Ammār’s torture is correlated with the coercion exemption clause of the apostasy verse. In the third stage, the historical reports about the nature and circumstances of ‘Ammār’s torture and the connection to the coercion exemption clause are asserted in a narrative that combines aspects of previous reports while alluding to the connection to the apostasy verse. What I have labeled the Abū ʿUbayda account is born. The Abū ʿUbayda account itself undergoes further elaboration, as narrative events summarily noted in the Maʿmar recension are imaginatively elaborated by positing conversations between ‘Ammār and the Prophet in the later recensions. This picture of the development of the ‘Ammār torture tradition and its eventual linking to Kor 16, 106 fits well with recent scholarship of the “Qurʾānification” of the sīra.88

5 Why did the ‘Ammār Reports Predominate?

If we eliminate the ‘Ammār story as the explanation for the circumstances surrounding the apostasy verse, we are left with two generic accounts of the circumstances. Though the Muqātil and Muğāhid/Ikrima texts are recorded in some of the earliest extant exegetical works, their authors do not provide the sources for their texts. If we are forced to choose between the historical explanations recorded in the exegetical tradition surrounding the circumstances of Kor 16, 106, Muğāhid’s account coheres best with Kor 16, 106’s Medinan, perhaps even early Medinan context, as can be inferred from the verses in Kor 16, 106’s immediate vicinity and its use of the distinctive disbelief-after-belief phrase.

Notwithstanding the putative historical context of Kor 16, 106, the question as to why the ‘Ammār explanation achieved dominance in the exegetical and legal literature remains. Here we may surmise two factors. First, the Muğāhid tradition conveys fairly generic information. It does not provide names of specific people or even tribes. In contrast, the ‘Ammār tradition is about a specific

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88 On this see Uri Rubin, “The life of Muḥammad and the Qurʾān: the case of Muḥammad’s hijra”, Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam, 28 (2003), p. 40-64. For a brief overview of the different types of relationships between the Qurʾān and the sīra, see Wim Raven, “Sīra and the Qurʾān”, Encyclopedia of the Qurʾān. I thank the anonymous reviewers for these references.
heroic personality in early Islamic history. It is easy to surmise why scholars would find the specific and dramatic more appealing than the generic, thus contributing to the overwhelming popularity of the ʿAmmār explanation in the scholarly traditions. Even more, the memory of ʿAmmār’s historical personality offended no early sectarian community. In fact, ʿAmmār’s early conversion, his slave/client status, and his suffering for the cause of the Prophet’s mission made him an especially appealing figure to all sectarian groups jockeying for the legitimacy of their respective theological and political commitments. He was specifically appealing to Batrite Zaydites, because, in some sense, he exemplified their doctrine. He was remembered as a fierce partisan of ʿAlī, while at the same time participating in ʿUmar’s government as governor of Kufa. For similar reasons, though not necessarily for his partisanship on behalf of ʿAlī in the first civil war, Murĝīites could use his example to advocate an agenda of communal integration. Because of his staunch support for ʿAlī during the civil war and his martyrdom at Ṣiffīn, ʿAmmār would become one of the seven truly steadfast companions of the Prophet for the Šīʿites. More specifically, Ğaʿfar al-Šādiq used the memory of ʿAmmār’s capitulation when coerced under persecution and its validation by the Qurʾān to argue against the policy of heroic resistance, exemplified in Šīʿite memory by Mayṭam al-Tammār. No one community, whether in the formative or classical periods, had motivation to specifically contest the connection between ʿAmmār and the coercion exemption clause, and the Imāmī Šīʿites had very good reason to advocate it.