

# UMAR IBN AL-KHATTAB'S VISITS TO BAYT AL-MAQDIS: A STUDY ON ITS REASONS AND OBJECTIVES

By:  
Othman Ismael Al-Tel\*  
Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor\*\*

## Abstract

*The aim of this paper is to examine historical accounts relating to Umar Ibn al-Khattab's visit to Bayt al-Maqdis, by focusing on the reasons, aims and objectives. Multiple historical sources with diverse accounts have posed a challenge to modern researchers in determining the accuracy and validity of issues surrounding Umar's visit to Bayt al-Maqdis. Therefore in this paper the authors gather all the available reasons, compare them and try to link them with the surrounding situation. At the same time, the authors provide explanations of the reasons for the great contradictions among the Islamic sources and accounts. In addition, the reasons behind the different visits of Umar's to Syria and the work he carried out in each visit is reported and explained. Through the analysis of the early sources, the authors also discuss and analyse the views of some modern researchers who have dealt with this issue.*

**Keywords:** *Islamicjerusalem, Umar al-Khattab, Bayt al-Maqdis, Palestine, Quds, Aqsa*

## Introduction

The discussion regarding the reasons behind the arrival of Umar Ibn al-Khattab in Bayt al-Maqdis and his historic visit involves number of issues. Such issues revolve around whether this visit was a special visit paid to Bayt al-Maqdis by Umar, or his arrival into Syria from Madinah had been for reasons connected with Bayt al-Maqdis, or this visit took place for other reasons, which had nothing to do with Bayt al-Maqdis. Furthermore, we may ask if this visit took place in order to meet certain conditions which were laid down by the inhabitants of Bayt al-Maqdis, and which made it necessary for Umar to come to them. Such questions are in turn connected with many other issues such as: what was the first place which Umar reached at the beginning of his visit and what were the tasks that he carried out during this visit and other visits to the region, in the light of the classification of the stages of the Islamic conquest of Syria? In other words, what were the circumstances surrounding each of Umar's visits to Syria?

Any researcher who tries to examine the reasons behind the arrival of Umar in Bayt al-Maqdis will face significant problems. This is because the Islamic sources greatly differ in identifying these reasons. They differ even with regard to the work Umar carried out while he was there. For instance, the Islamic sources contain an enormous number of accounts narrated by narrators with different political affiliations and areas as mentioned early.

Although Islamic sources, or indeed most sources, make the arrival of Umar personally in the walled part of Bayt al-Maqdis a condition laid down by its inhabitants in return for their surrender,<sup>1</sup> some other sources link the arrival of Umar in the region to military reasons required specifically by the Palestinian front. He arrived after the Muslims asked for his help in dealing with the inhabitants of Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular.<sup>2</sup> There is also a third group of sources, which mentioned that Umar was present at the liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis without mentioning any reasons for his arrival from Madinah.<sup>3</sup> Finally there are two accounts touched upon by some sources, which can be cited as legendary or non-historical narrations. Therefore, he arrived after the Muslims

---

\* Othman Ismael Al-Tel, PhD, Associate Professor at History Department, College of Arts, Al-Quds University (Abu Dis), Palestine. Email: [othmanaltel@yahoo.com](mailto:othmanaltel@yahoo.com)

\*\* Corresponding Author: Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Islamic History and Civilization, Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Email: [m\\_roslan@um.edu.my](mailto:m_roslan@um.edu.my)

<sup>1</sup> Friedman, Yohanan (trans.) (1992). *The History of al-Tabari Vol. 12: The Battle of al-Qadisiyyah and the Conquest of Syria and Palestine*. State University of New York Press.

<sup>2</sup> Krenkow, Fritz (1912). "The Tarikh-Baghdad (Vol. XXVII) of the Khatib Abu Bakr Ahmad b. Ali b. Thabit Albaghdadi. Short Account of the Biographies," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 4(1), 31-79.

<sup>3</sup> Zawati, Hilmi M. (2015), "Jihad and International Relations," in Niaz A. Shah (ed.), *Islam and the Law of Armed Conflict*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, pp. 288-323.

informed him of this.<sup>4</sup> This is because some sources make Bayt al-Maqdis as the first stop in the visit.<sup>5</sup> Other sources state that the first place Umar reached was al-Jabiya.<sup>6</sup> The issue becomes even more intricate when the same source mentioned more than one account. Some mentioned Bayt al-Maqdis while others mentioned al-Jabiya as the first stop. Also, these sources sometimes talk simultaneously about both, whether they define one of them as the first stop in the visit<sup>7</sup> or not.<sup>8</sup> The difference among the Islamic sources in defining the objective behind Umar Ibn al-Khattab's visit has created a division among modern researchers who have dealt with the issue of the Islamic conquests in general terms and those who have dealt with an aspect of the first Islamic liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis. The results they arrived at varied between those who deny that the visit took place<sup>9</sup> and those who acknowledge that it did take place, although they rule out the possibility that Bayt al-Maqdis was the main reason behind the visit.

### **Islamic Historical Accounts**

Nearly all the early Islamic sources cite some reasons for Umar Ibn al-Khattab's visit to Bayt al-Maqdis. Among the early historians who mention such reasons, is al-Waqidi. He states that, one of the Bayt al-Maqdis Patriarchs<sup>10</sup> informed who was besieging the walled part of Bayt al-Maqdis, that according to the Christian prophecy, the conqueror of Bayt al-Maqdis must be a man of a certain description and his name must be Umar. According to the Patriarch, Umar was not present among those who were taking part in the siege. This prompted Abu 'Ubayda to write to Umar in Madinah and inform him that he had been besieging the walled part of Bayt al-Maqdis for four months in the midst of snow, cold weather and rain. At the same time, he informed him of the Christian prophecy which he had heard from the Patriarch. After consultation with the Muslims, and upon the recommendation of Ali Ibn Abi Talib<sup>11</sup> Umar decided to travel to Bayt al-Maqdis where he made a treaty with the inhabitants of Bayt al-Maqdis, on the condition that they pay the *Jizya* tax.<sup>12</sup> A similar reason, to which some refer, with a little nominal difference in the personalities, was mentioned<sup>13</sup> who had laid siege to the walled part of Bayt al-Maqdis, and informed him that he would never be able to conquer it because, according to Christian prophecies, the conqueror of Bayt al-Maqdis must be a man named Umar. 'Amr wrote to Umar that he was conducting a difficult war and struggling for a land which had been held and preserved for Umar. Umar, who knew from the latter that 'Amr was speaking out of knowledge, came from Madinah, made a peace treaty with the inhabitants of Bayt al-Maqdis and conquered it.<sup>14</sup>

The Islamic sources, particularly the Syrian accounts, mentioned that Umar arrived in Bayt al-Maqdis in response to a condition laid down by its inhabitants that he personally should be the one to conduct the treaty with them in return for their surrender. In other words, the people of Bayt al-Maqdis asked the Muslims to conclude peace with them on the condition that Umar was personally responsible.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Al-Waqidi, Muhammad Ibn Umar (1966), *Kitab al-Maghazi*. London: Oxford University Press.

<sup>5</sup> Al-Tel, Othman Ismael (2012), "The Geographical Boundaries Of Aelia (Jerusalem) During The Byzantine Rule (135-638 AD): Islamic Perspective," *Jurnal Al-Tamaddun*, 7(2), 41-60.

<sup>6</sup> Mazor, Amir (2008), "The Kitab Futuh al-Sham of al-Qudami as a Case Study for the Transmission of Traditions About the Conquest of Syria," *Der Islam*, 84(1), 17-45.

<sup>7</sup> Nor, Mohd Roslan Mohd (2011), "Islamicjerusalem Under Muslim Rule: A Study of the Implementation of Inclusive Vision on the Region," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun*, 3(1), 186-208.

<sup>8</sup> Al-Baladhuri, Ahmad Ibn Yahya (1959), *Ansab al-Ashraf*. Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, pp. 150-195.

<sup>9</sup> Goitein, Shlomo D. (1982), "Jerusalem in the Arab period (638-1099)" in Lee I. Levine, (ed), *The Jerusalem Cathedra*. Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi Institute, p. 185.

<sup>10</sup> Ibn Qutayba (1961), *Kitab al-Ma'arif*. Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, pp. 203-218.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>12</sup> al-Waqidi, Muhammad Ibn Umar (1897). *Futuh al-Sham*. Beirut, pp. 45-70.

<sup>13</sup> Al-Baladhuri, Ahmad Ibn Yahya (1959), *Ansab al-Ashraf*.

<sup>14</sup> Donner, Fred McGraw (1993), *The History of al-Tabari Vol. 10: The Conquest of Arabia: The Riddah Wars AD 632-633 / AH 11*. SUNY Press.

<sup>15</sup> Al-Baladhuri, Ahmad Ibn Yahya (1988), *Futuh al-Buldan*. Beirut: Maktaba al-Hilal.

Al-Tabari, reported on the authority of Adi Ibn Sahl that the reason for Umar's visit to Bayt al-Maqdis was that he came to reinforce the Muslims who requested his help against the people of Palestine.<sup>16</sup> Ibn Sa'd and al-Baladhuri in *Ansab al-Ashraf*, reported in an account from Muhammad Ibn Muslim Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri that Umar attended the liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis and distributed the booty at al-Jabiya. The account did not give reasons why he came with regard to these two issues or even if he came on one or two different occasions, but what is understood from the text is that Umar arrived for the liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis before the distribution of the booty. What applies to the early sources applies to later sources since most of them state that the reason for Umar's visit to Bayt al-Maqdis was that its inhabitants requested his presence as a condition for their surrender as is widely reported by the Syrian narrators.<sup>17</sup>

### **Analysis of the Reasons**

To discuss the reasons mentioned by the Islamic sources with regard to Umar Ibn al-Khattab's visit to Bayt al-Maqdis, we can divide such reasons according to their narrators as follows:

1. The Syrian accounts, such as the accounts of Muhammad Ibn al-Sa'ib al-Kalbi, Abi Hafs al-Dimashqi, Sa'id Ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, Hisham Ibn 'Ammar, al-Walid Ibn 'Ammar, al-Uza'i, al-Walid Ibn Muslim and Yazid Ibn Raja' Ibn Hayawa, state that the reason for Umar's visit to Bayt al-Maqdis was that its inhabitants requested his presence as a condition for their surrender. On the other hand, other Syrian accounts, among them those of Yazid Ibn 'Ubayda, al-Walid Ibn Muslim and Abi Zir'a al-Dimashqi did not mention this condition at all.
2. The 'Iraqi accounts such as those of al-Waqidi, who lived most of his life in Iraq<sup>18</sup> state the reason for Umar's visit was that the people of Bayt al-Maqdis informed the Muslims who were besieging them of the name and description of the only person who was capable of conquering Bayt al-Maqdis. Umar arrived in Bayt al-Maqdis after the description matched him and conquered it. Furthermore, al-Baladhuri who took his information from Syrian sources states that the inhabitants of Bayt al-Maqdis agreed to capitulate on condition that the Caliph Umar Ibn al-Khattab in person wrote the peace treaty.<sup>19</sup>
3. The Madani or Hijazi accounts state that the reason for Umar's arrival in Bayt al-Maqdis was as leader of the military campaign. He came to reinforce the Muslims who asked his help in the matter of the people of Palestine. This was mentioned by Adi Ibn Sahl. Some of the Hijazi accounts, among them those of 'Urwa Ibn al-Zubair, Salim Ibn 'Abdullah, and Muhammad Ibn Muslim Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri, the famous Madani and Syrian jurist scholar, who lived in Damascus do not cite reasons for the visit.

Although the Syrian accounts are close to the event with regard to place as Bayt al-Maqdis lies in that region, the researchers assert that the Madani or Hijazi accounts are closer to the event not only with regard to place, but also time. This is because the narrator of the Hijazi accounts resided in the capital city of Madinah where Caliph Umar resided at the time of the liberation. In addition to that, some of these narrators belonged to the household of Caliph Umar, among them Salim Ibn 'Abdullah and, to a lesser degree 'Urwa Ibn al-Zubair.<sup>20</sup> The Syrian accounts as a general rule are also mostly characterised by length and detail, and differ from the Hijazi and Iraqi ones with regard to the aspects of both time and place, or they concur a little with Hijazi and Iraqi in their historical framework and internal content, but differ widely with them on other points.<sup>21</sup>

For instance, it is understood from these accounts that the people of Bayt al-Maqdis knew beforehand that, in the end, the walled part of Bayt al-Maqdis would fall to the Muslims. This goes against the fierce struggle they endured

---

<sup>16</sup> Daniel, Elton L. (1997), "Al-Tabari (Abu Ja far Muhammad ibn Jarir), The History of al-Tabari (Ta'rikh al-rusul wa'lmuluk). Vol. XXVIII: Abbasid Authority Affirmed, the Early Years of al-Man ur AD 753-763/AH 136-145, trans. Jane Dammen McAuliffe, Biblioteca Persica (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995). Pp. 349." *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 29(2), 287-289.

<sup>17</sup> Duri, Abdul Aziz (1990), "Jerusalem in the Early Islamic Period: 7th - 11th Century AD," in K.J. Asali (ed), *Jerusalem in History*. Essex: Scorpion Publishing, p. 105-129. See also Ibn Hajar (1994), *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib*. Beirut: Dar al-Kutb al-'Ilmiyyah, p. 10.

<sup>18</sup> Al-Waqidi, Muhammad Ibn Umar (1996), *The Kitab al-Maghazi of al-Waqidi*, Vol. 1, ed. Jones Marsden. Oxford University Press, pp. 5-9.

<sup>19</sup> Al-Baladhuri, Ahmad Ibn Yahya (1988), *Futuh al-Buldan*, pp. 140-145.

<sup>20</sup> Ibn Sa'd, Muhammad (1967), "*Kitab al-Tabaqat al-Kabir*," ed. Syed Moinul Haq, (Vol. 1). Pakistan Historical Society.

<sup>21</sup> Ibn Kathir (1966), *al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah*, Vol. 7&8. Riyadh: Maktabat al-Nasr, pp. 55-57.

with the besiegers, as al-Waqidi himself mentioned in another account.<sup>22</sup> Theophanes mentioned that the siege continued for two years as previously noted.<sup>23</sup> Even if, for the sake of argument, we accept these accounts as true and add to this the knowledge of some of the people of Bayt al-Maqdis about the name and description of the only person capable of conquering the city, we must then expect them to reveal this information to their besiegers at an early stage of the siege. The same applies to al-Waqidi citing in the same account a failed attempt by the Muslims to deceive the people of Bayt al-Maqdis by presenting Khalid Ibn al-Walid<sup>24</sup> as Umar in order to ensure that they were telling the truth.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, it is probable that the people of Bayt al-Maqdis did their best to gain as many guarantees as they could. Thus they laid down a condition that the head of the Islamic State, i.e. Umar Ibn al-Khattab, should be personally present for them to surrender the city. The Iraqi Ibn A'tham al-Kufi mentioned this as the reason behind their request that Umar should come from Madinah. He states that it is attributed in the first place to their lack of confidence in any of the Muslims who were besieging them. Therefore, they demanded the presence of Umar because they had admiration for and confidence in him personally more than the others.<sup>26</sup>

However, as far as the practical analytical aspect is concerned, the acceptance of this condition faces a major stumbling block, which makes it both difficult to justify or indeed to accept this condition as an absolute fact. After a thorough examination of the texts which mention the condition laid down by the people of Bayt al-Maqdis that Umar should be present for them to surrender the city, the researchers notice that the same accounts, especially the Syrian accounts mentioned the arrival of Umar in al-Jabiya before his arrival in Bayt al-Maqdis.<sup>27</sup> This is also mentioned by the Syrian Jurist scholar, Raja' Ibn Hayawa<sup>28</sup> as well as by Abu Maryam al-Filastini, Khalid Ibn Mi'dan (103 or 108 A.H/ 721 or 725 A.D) and 'Ubada Ibn Nusay (d. 118 AH). Some of these narrators state that Umar wrote his assurance to the people of Bayt al-Maqdis in al-Jabiya and not in Bayt al-Maqdis itself.<sup>29</sup> A number of them also state that the people of Bayt al-Maqdis left the city and met Umar in al-Jabiya where they concluded the peace treaty with him.<sup>30</sup> In short, the researchers are inclined to accept the Hijazi accounts because they are the most accurate with regard to the reasons behind the arrival of Umar Ibn al-Khattab in Bayt al-Maqdis. These accounts do not enter into details like the other accounts those erroneously report the visit with others that Umar undertook to the same region. They instead relate directly to the first Islamic liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis.

### **The Historical Accounts and Arguments of the Modern Scholars**

It seems that the inaccuracies and division in the Islamic sources and accounts with regard to the reasons concerning the arrival of Umar Ibn al-Khattab in Bayt al-Maqdis have also led to a division among modern researchers with regard to the same issue. For instance, Muir claims that Bayt al-Maqdis had absolutely nothing to do with the reasons behind the arrival of Umar in Syria. Rather it was because he headed for al-Jabiya to undertake other tasks. He then headed from there to Bayt al-Maqdis as he was eager to be one of the first to enter the holy city which contained sacred memories of the Prophet of Arabia (Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him) when it was the goal of his night journey.<sup>31</sup> According to Muir's claim, Umar did not apparently make directly for the city, but went first to al-Jabiya in the confines of Damascus. With regard to the reason for the visit he argues: "*The purpose of his coming was to set the whole government of the country upon a sound basis, to revise the treaties and fix the taxes upon real and other estate, and the mutual relations of conquerors and conquered to each other.*"<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Al-Waqidi, Muhammad Ibn Umar (1897). *Futuh al-Sham*, p. 152.

<sup>23</sup> Theophanes the Confessor (1982), *The Chronicle of Theophanes: An English Translation of Anni Mundi 6095-6305*, ed. Harry Turtledove. University of Pennsylvania Press, p. 39.

<sup>24</sup> Al-Baladhuri, Ahmad Ibn Yahya (1959), *Ansab al-Ashraf*, p. 383.

<sup>25</sup> Al-Waqidi, Muhammad Ibn Umar (1897). *Futuh al-Sham*, pp. 152-160.

<sup>26</sup> Al-Kufi, Ibn A'tham (1975). *Kitab al-Futuh*, vol. 1&2. Beirut, pp. 290-296.

<sup>27</sup> Al-Baladhuri, Ahmad Ibn Yahya (1988), *Futuh Al-Buldan*, pp. 200-230.

<sup>28</sup> Al-Tabari, Ibn Jarir (1963), *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk*, Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif.

<sup>29</sup> Al-Baladhuri, Ahmad Ibn Yahya (1988), *Futuh Al-Buldan*, pp. 230-235.

<sup>30</sup> Al-Tabari, Ibn Jarir (1963), *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk*, vol. 4.

<sup>31</sup> Muir, William (1891), *The Caliphate: Its Rise, Decline, and Fall*. Religious Tract Society.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*.

It has been argued that it is probable that Umar travelled to al-Jabiya to accept Bayt al-Maqdis's capitulations, and in order to attend to administrative matters.<sup>33</sup> For this reason, Umar dealt with many issues on that visit; and the most important tasks which he undertook were the formation of the register (*Diwan*) of soldiers, the constitutional position of non-Muslim tribute-paying people (*Dhimmi*) and the country's financial system which made Syria liable to a land tax or *Kharaj*.<sup>34</sup> At the same time, Umar distributed the booty of the battle of Yarmuk and, later went to visit the Holy City of Jerusalem, which in any case makes it hard to say that Umar should have shown an interest in Bayt al-Maqdis as he claims.<sup>35</sup>

In contrast, Shafiq Jasir in accord with Ignaz Goldziher tends to believe that Umar Ibn al-Khattab's visit to Syria coincided with the liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis.<sup>36</sup> Shafiq Jasir also believes that the purpose of the inhabitants' claim that they had an assurance from Umar personally, and the accounts which indicate the condition they laid down for his personal arrival, was to highlight the importance of the city for the Christians.<sup>37</sup> In contrast, the researchers argue that there are many Islamic accounts that confirm the importance of Bayt al-Maqdis for the Christians rather than deny it, especially that which is mentioned by al-Waqidi regarding the discussion between Ali Ibn Abi Talib and Umar Ibn al-Khattab when 'Ali advised him to head for Bayt al-Maqdis because the Byzantines will not delay to reinforce the people of their holy area.<sup>38</sup>

However, it is not clear whether Ali meant the people of Bayt al-Maqdis or the Muslims who were besieging them who asked Umar to come to them with the words: "the people have asked you".<sup>39</sup> What can be understood from the talk of Ali is that it centres around a military reinforcement, a fierce battle waged by the Muslims in order to conquer Bayt al-Maqdis, and the difficulty they faced in achieving that objective. It has been argued by Al-Maqdisi that Umar stayed at Jabal al-Zaytun (the Mount of Olives) for some days before the capitulation of Bayt al-Maqdis.<sup>40</sup> In the same context Theophanes indicated that Umar led a military campaign against the city in 635 A.D and was able to conquer the walled part of Bayt al-Maqdis. He states: "*In this year (635 A.D) Umar campaigned against Jerusalem; after he had besieged the holy city for two years' time he took it on terms.*"<sup>41</sup>

Furthermore, Ibn al-Murajja, (d. 450 A.H/ 1058 A.D) reported that Umar came with four thousand men to reinforce the Muslims against the people of Bayt al-Maqdis. He made his camp on the north of the Mount of Olives, which means Tour or Jabal al-Zaytun. According to Ibn al-Murajja when the people of Bayt al-Maqdis saw him they became weak and decided to capitulate.<sup>42</sup> Both Theophanes and al-Maqdisi mentioned Ali's advice to Umar and also Ibn al-Murajja revealed that Umar arrived in Bayt al-Maqdis before it fell to the Muslims and before his departure to al-Jabiya as previously mentioned, which is also confirmed by al-Waqidi.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, there were no conditions laid down by the people of Bayt al-Maqdis, which stated that Umar should arrive in Bayt al-Maqdis. What supports and makes it more likely that Umar arrived directly in Bayt al-Maqdis before any other place, is the road which Umar took in his journey. It was the road of Ayla as 'Urwa Ibn al-Zubair and others mentioned.<sup>44</sup> It was the same road that was taken by the army which was sent by Abu Bakr to Palestine and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular, under the leadership of 'Amr Ibn al-'As at the start of the Islamic conquests.<sup>45</sup> The arrival of Umar in Ayla and from there to Gaza, which is one of the Hijazi Arab roads to Syria in general and to Palestine in

---

<sup>33</sup> Jandora, John W. (1990), *The March from Medina: A Revisionist Study of the Arab Conquest*. Clifton, NJ: Kingston Press, p. 85.

<sup>34</sup> Donner, Fred McGraw (2014). *The Early Islamic Conquests*. Princeton University Press, pp. 151-152.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Jasir, Shafiq (1989). *Tarikh al-Quds wa al-'Alaqat bayna al-Muslimin wa al-Masihiyin fiha mundhu al-Fath al-Islami hatta al-Hurub al-Salibiyyah*. Amman: Matba'ah al-Iman, p. 109.

<sup>37</sup> Goldziher, Ignaz (1971). *Muslim Studies*, ed. S.M Stern. State University of New York Press, pp. 96-124.

<sup>38</sup> Al-Waqidi, Muhammad Ibn Umar (1897). *Futuh al-Sham*, p. 148.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Al-Maqdisi, Anis (1963), *Al-Ittiyaha al-Adabiyya fi al-'Alam al-'Arabi al-Hadith*. Dar al-'Ilm li al-Malayin.

<sup>41</sup> Theophanes (1982), *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, pp. 32-39.

<sup>42</sup> Little, Donald P. (1999), "Fada'il Bayt al-Maqdis wa al-Khalil wa Fada'il al-Sham," *The Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 119(3), 549-549.

<sup>43</sup> Al-Waqidi, Muhammad Ibn Umar (1897). *Futuh al-Sham*.

<sup>44</sup> Al-Tabari, Ibn Jarir (1963), *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk*, Vol. 4, pp. 56-82.

<sup>45</sup> Al-Tabari, Ibn Jarir (1963), *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk*.

particular<sup>46</sup> means that he was very close to Bayt al-Maqdis compared to the distance that separated him from al-Jabiya which was extremely far from that region.

The conclusion which the researchers reached from ruling out the possibility that Umar arrived in Bayt al-Maqdis in response to a condition laid down by its people, or that he arrived in al-Jabiya before Bayt al-Maqdis, conforms with the issue of dividing the spoils in Islam, i.e. they are usually divided by the leader of the battle between those who collected or gained them. This was the attitude of Umar towards dividing the spoils of the al-Yarmuk battle in particular as well as the issue of the formation of the register (*Diwan*) of soldiers, and its date, i.e. the date on which it was established. The researchers would argue that if the division of the spoils originally took place in al-Jabiya then it was almost certain that this occurred after the liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis.

The researchers did not find any accounts which categorically indicate that Umar had specifically divided the spoils of al-Yarmuk battle or that he came from Madinah to Syria for this purpose. In fact, most of the accounts in this regard revealed that Umar divided the spoils in al-Jabiya, without giving any details about the nature of these spoils and when the Muslims collected or gained them. The most significant accounts in this regard were the two accounts of Ibn Sa'd in *al-Tabaqat al-Kubra* and al-Baladhuri in *Ansab al-Ashraf*, which have been previously mentioned.<sup>47</sup> The researchers would like to draw attention here to the fact that the division of the spoils was not a difficult issue requiring Umar to come personally from Madinah to deal with it. In a similar and even more complicated situation, Umar wrote to his military leader in Iraq, Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas<sup>48</sup> and asked him to divide the spoils of the al-Qadisiyya battle (16 A.H/ 637 A.D) among the Muslims who took part in it and to leave the lands in the hands of its cultivators.<sup>49</sup> It is important to note that the spoils of al-Qadisiyya were far greater than the spoils of al-Yarmuk.<sup>50</sup> Al-Waqidi noted that Abu 'Ubayda divided the spoils of the al-Yarmuk battle before he directed the Muslims towards Bayt al-Maqdis.<sup>51</sup>

With regard to the attitude of Umar towards the division of the spoils of the al-Yarmuk battle, al-Ya'qubi narrates a unique account. This account describes the general situation in Syria after the battle and illustrates the decisive stand of Umar towards this issue. He states: “(After the battle of al-Yarmuk) Abu 'Ubayda returned to Jordan and besieged the people of Aelia, which is Bayt Al-Maqdis (IslamicJerusalem). They resisted and fought him. Then he sent 'Amr Ibn al-'As to Qinsariyin. The people of Halab (Aleppo), Qinsariyin and Minbij made a peace treaty with the Muslims and 'Amr imposed upon them just as Abu 'Ubayda did in Hims. The spoils of al-Yarmuk were collected in al-Jabiya and they wrote to Umar about the matter. Umar replied: do not do any things about these spoils until you conquer Bayt al-Maqdis (IslamicJerusalem).”<sup>52</sup>

This text clearly indicates the stand of Umar, which rejects any form of dividing the spoils of al-Yarmuk battle before the liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis was completed. This matter is in total agreement with the accounts which indicated that Umar, accompanied by the Muslims, headed to al-Jabiya from Bayt al-Maqdis after it was conquered, as al-Waqidi indicates and as is also understood from the accounts of Ibn Sa'd and al-Baladhuri on the authority of Muhammad Ibn Muslim Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri.<sup>53</sup> Finally, the most important point here is that the division of any spoils should take place in the presence of the people who took part in collecting or gaining them. What is in agreement in the Islamic sources is that Abu 'Ubayda directed the Muslim forces who had taken part in the al-Yarmuk battle to Bayt al-Maqdis, after he had consulted with Umar as al-Waqidi mentioned,<sup>54</sup> and even under direct order from Umar without consultation as is cited by Al-Kuffi and Zakkar.<sup>55</sup> Therefore, there is the possibility

<sup>46</sup> Al-Tel, Othman Ismael (2012), “The Geographical Boundaries Of Aelia (Jerusalem)...”, pp. 41-60.

<sup>47</sup> Al-Baladhuri, Ahmad Ibn Yahya (1959), *Ansab al-Ashraf*, pp. 380-390.

<sup>48</sup> Ibn Sa'd, Muhammad (1967), *Kitab al-Tabaqat*, p. 9.

<sup>49</sup> Yahya b. Adam (1958), *Taxation in Islam: Yahya Ben Adam's Kitab al-Kharaj*, A. Ben Shemesh, (trans.), Leiden: E.J. Brill, Vol. 1, pp. 4, 264-265.

<sup>50</sup> Al-Kufi, Ibn A'tham (1975). *Kitab al-Futuh*, pp. 25-30.

<sup>51</sup> Al-Waqidi, Muhammad Ibn Umar (1897). *Futuh al-Sham*.

<sup>52</sup> Ibn Rustah, Abu Ali Ahmad b. Umar (1892), *Kitab al-'Alaq an-Nafisa*, Leiden.

<sup>53</sup> Abd-ar-Rahman Mahmud Hafiz (1977), *The life of az-Zuhri and his scholarship in Qur'anic sciences and tradition (hadith and sunna)*, University of Edinburgh.

<sup>54</sup> Al-Waqidi, Muhammad Ibn Umar (1897). *Futuh al-Sham*.

<sup>55</sup> Al-Kufi, Ibn A'tham (1975). *Kitab al-Futuh*, pp. 25-30.

that the spoils of the al-Yarmuk battle were collected in al-Jabiya in the absence of their owners who were besieging Bayt al-Maqdis, as it is unlikely to have taken place before Bayt al-Maqdis was completely conquered and Umar had afterwards gathered the Muslims in al-Jabiya.

With regard to the establishment of the register (*Diwan*), in particular *Diwan al-Jund* (register of soldiers), the date of its establishment is outside the domain of this research. However, it is important to draw attention here to the fact that the register (*Diwan*) was established at a time somewhat later than the time of the first Islamic liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis. Although al-Tabari inaccurately reports several dates regarding the events between 13-17 A.H/ 634-638 A.D, he mentioned that it was among the events of 15 AH<sup>56</sup> whereas both al-Baladhuri and al-Ya'qubi state that it took place in 20 AH.<sup>57</sup> In another account, al-Tabari narrates on the authority of Sayf Ibn Umar that Umar established the register at the end of the Islamic liberation of both Syria and Iraq.<sup>58</sup> The same thing is cited by Qutayba who is described by the judge of al-Kufa, Shurayyih Ibn 'Abdullah (d.177 AH/ 793 A.D),<sup>59</sup> as the man who informed people about the affairs of the Islamic administration, especially in Iraq at the time of the Islamic conquest.<sup>60</sup> Al-Sha'bi notes that Umar Ibn al-Khattab established the register (*Diwan*) after the completion of the Islamic conquests and after the *kharaj* (taxes) were collected.<sup>61</sup> This is undoubtedly in total agreement with the natural development of the Islamic State following the Islamic conquests. It would be very surprising if Umar had taken such a step, i.e. the establishment of the register (*Diwan*), before the completion of the conquests and stability on the war fronts, and before the collection of taxes could take place which would enable Umar to calculate wages and how the monthly or yearly salaries ('*Ata*') and *Rizq* (food and clothing) would be allocated to every Muslim.

In this respect, Abu Yusuf, Abi 'Ubayd and al-Baladhuri mentioned that Umar sent Sahl Ibn Hanif and Hudhayfah Ibn al-Yaman to Iraq to survey the land of *al-Sawad* (in 'Iraq) in order to estimate the level of taxes to be imposed there.<sup>62</sup> This procedure, which started after the completion of the conquest of Iraq, must have taken considerable time to complete. In addition to that, the process of entering the soldiers in the register took place on a tribal basis. In other words, the names were arranged according to the tribes each tribe having its register.

This matter is, in general, confirmed by the Hijazi accounts. Al-Waqidi cited a letter from Abu 'Ubayda to Umar in which he mentioned that he had been besieging the walled part of Jerusalem (mean after al-Yarmuk battle) for four months in adverse weather conditions and, consequently, the Muslims had suffered greatly.<sup>63</sup> The same thing is also understood from Ali Ibn Abi Talib's discussion with Umar before the latter headed for Bayt al-Maqdis. In addition al-Tabari narrates on the authority of Salim Ibn 'Abdullah that: "*The people of Aelia caused distress to 'Amr Ibn al-'As and he caused distress to them, but he could not conquer Aelia, nor could conquer al-Ramlah.*"<sup>64</sup>

Adi Ibn Sahl narrates a unique account in al-Tabari; he claims that the Muslims asked Umar to help them overcome the people of Palestine. He states that: "*According to Adi Ibn Sahl: When the Muslims of Syria asked Umar to help them against the people of Palestine, he appointed Ali as his deputy and set off to reinforce them. Ali said: "Where are you going by yourself? You are heading toward a rabid enemy. "Umar said: "I hasten to fight the enemy before the death of al-'Abbas. If you lose al-'Abbas, evil will untwist you like the ends of a rope."*"<sup>65</sup> Moreover, Abi 'Ubayd, Al-Maqdisi, Theophanes and others have confirmed that Umar had participated militarily before the city fell to the Muslims.<sup>66</sup>

---

<sup>56</sup> Al-Tabari, Ibn Jarir (1963), *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk*. Vol. 2.

<sup>57</sup> Al-Baladhuri, Ahmad Ibn Yahya (1988), *Futuh Al-Buldan*, pp. 142-148.

<sup>58</sup> Al-Tabari, Ibn Jarir (1963), *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk*.

<sup>59</sup> Ibn Qutayba (1961). *Kitab al-Ma'arif*, p. 314.

<sup>60</sup> Ibn Abi al-Dunya, Abd Allah Ibn Muhammad & Najm, Abd Al-Rahman Khalaf (n.d.). *Kitab al-Samt wa Adab al-Lisan*. Dar Al-Gharb Al-Islami.

<sup>61</sup> Al-Baladhuri, Ahmad Ibn Yahya (1988), *Futuh Al-Buldan*.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>63</sup> Al-Ya'qubi, Ahmad (1960), *Tarikh al-Ya'qubi*, Vol. 2. Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, pp. 146-147.

<sup>64</sup> Al-Tabari, Ibn Jarir (1963), *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk*.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>66</sup> Al-Hanbali, Mujir al-Din (1968), *Al-Uns al-Jalil bi-Tarikh al-Quds wa al-Khalil* [The Glorious History of Jerusalem and Hebron], vol. 1. Al-Najaf al-Ashraf: Al-Matba'at al-Haydariyah, p. 255.

## **Why Did Umar Visit Syria?**

In order to explain the reasons behind the contradictions among the Islamic sources and hence the modern researchers, with regard to the reasons for Umar's visit to Bayt al-Maqdis, the researchers argue that this issue is related to the other visits Umar paid to the same region and approximately the same areas in the period between 14-18 A.H/ 634-639 A.D. The narrators, especially the Syrians, have inaccurately reported the reasons for these visits and the various works that Umar carried out on each of them. They dealt with the issue as if it were one visit. It might be also because they mentioned the reason for one of these visits and connected it with the work that Umar carried out on another visit. This is contrary to the other accounts, especially the Hijazi accounts, which avoided this sort of inaccuracies. The Hijazi narrators and sources did not go into details, which might, in their opinion, be insignificant. The sources with their different narrators are in unanimous agreement that Umar Ibn al-Khattab had visited Syria more than once. Some narrators stated that there were four visits and in one visit Umar returned from Saragh when he knew that the plague had reached its peak in Syria.<sup>67</sup>

It has been argued<sup>68</sup> that the question of Umar's interest in Syria is supported by the fact that various sources disagree on how many times he visited the area. He further argues that the most famous among these visits was the one that evidently coincided with the famous "year of ashes," nine months drought, during which occurred the devastating 'Imwas plague, which killed a large number of the Muslim military leaders.<sup>69</sup> On this particular visit (18 A.H/ 639 A.D) the researchers argue that, Umar might have carried out more work than he did on his other visits to Syria. This is mainly because of the special circumstances which the region witnessed in the wake of the 'Imwas plague. Al-Tabari reported on the authority of Muhammad Ibn Ishaq (d. 150 A.H / 767 A.D), Sayf Ibn Umar and 'Alqamah Ibn al-Nadir and on the authority of others that the Byzantine Empire in this year (17 A.H/ 638 A.D) marched towards Abu 'Ubayda and besieged him with some of the Muslims at Hims. When Umar became aware of this, he asked for reinforcements from Iraq and left Madinah to help Abu 'Ubayda, until he alighted at al-Jabiya. Abu 'Ubayda and his men, however, achieved victory over the besiegers, and they wrote to Umar to inform him. Umar replied, and asked them to share in the spoils with the Iraqis who arrived with reinforcements three days later, and returned directly to Madinah.<sup>70</sup>

It appears to the researchers that the arrival of Umar in al-Jabiya on this visit was the first time he had visited the region after he became caliph. This visit must have taken place some considerable time before the date mentioned by al-Tabari. First of all, there were no indications of any Byzantine military movements in Syria after the al-Yarmuk battle (15 A.H/ 636 A.D) that could have endangered the Muslim State. The reality was quite the opposite because the Byzantine forces had totally collapsed after this battle. Kennedy argues that after the defeat at al-Yarmuk and the final fall of Damascus the Byzantines put no more armies in the field.<sup>71</sup> Secondly, it appears that al-Tabari, inaccurately reports the important events, which took place in the period between 13-18 A.H/ 634-639 A.D. The most significant example of these inaccuracies is that he classified the al-Yarmuk battle as taking place in 13 AH, and the Ajnadin battle as having taken place in 15 AH/ 634 A.D. By doing so, al-Tabari has contradicted the majority of the early Islamic sources such as al-Waqidi, Ibn Sa'd, Khalifah Ibn Khaiyyat, al-Baladhuri, Ibn A'tham and al-Azdi. These sources are in unanimous agreement that the opposite is true. The Ajnadin battle took place in 13 A.H/ 634 A.D and the al-Yarmuk battle in 15 A.H/ 636 A.D.<sup>72</sup> Even Ibn al-Athir, who in most cases literally copies al-Tabari, is indecisive with regard to this issue. He mentioned Ajnadin twice, once as having taken place in 13 A.H/ 634 A.D and on another occasion as had taken place in 15 A.H/ 636 A.D. He tends towards 13 A.H/ 634 A.D.<sup>73</sup> For Ajnadin to have taken place before al-Yarmuk seems to be acceptable to the majority of modern researchers.<sup>74</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup> Al-Ya'qubi, Ahmad (1960), *Tarikh al-Ya'qubi*, vol. 2, p. 150.

<sup>68</sup> Donner, Fred McGraw (2014). *The Early Islamic Conquests*, p. 152.

<sup>69</sup> Gil, Moshe (1997). *A history of Palestine, 634-1099*, Cambridge University Press.

<sup>70</sup> Al-Tabari, Ibn Jarir (1963), *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk*, vol. 4, p. 98.

<sup>71</sup> Kennedy, Hugh (1986), *The Prophet and the age of the Caliphates: The Islamic Near East from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> Century*. New York: Longman Inc, p. 61.

<sup>72</sup> Al-Waqidi, Muhammad Ibn Umar (1897). *Futuh al-Sham*, pp. 37-38.

<sup>73</sup> Ibn al-Athir (1965), *Al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh*, Volume 2, Beirut: Dar Sadir, pp. 286-287 & 346-347.

<sup>74</sup> Donner, Fred McGraw (2014). *The Early Islamic Conquests*, pp. 128-130.



Although, Al-Tabari who also cited much detailed information about 'Amr's siege of the Byzantine leader al-Artabun, who entered Bayt al-Maqdis after being defeated in Ajnadin. In fact it appears that al-Artabun left Bayt al-Maqdis for Egypt only a short time after the Ajnadin battle or some considerable time after the arrival of Umar in Bayt al-Maqdis. This was apparently what prompted al-Tabari to use his sources Khālid Ibn Mi'dān (d. 103 or 108 A.H/ 721 or 726 A.D), and 'Ubada Ibn Nussay al-Kila'i al-Shami (d. 118 A.H/ 736 A.D) to say: "According to Khalid and 'Ubadah: The peace treaty concerning Palestine was concluded by the populace of Aelia and al-Ramlah. The reason for this was that Artabun and al-Tudariq had left for Egypt when Umar came to al-Jabiyah; they were subsequently killed in one of the summer expeditions."<sup>75</sup> Al-Duri, who wrote his article in 1980, provided date in his article. He also wrote in 1989 regarding the liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis that is 16 A.H/ 636 A.D<sup>76</sup> which he states that no important events took place after that date.

The researchers aim to indicate by detailing the dates when the battles of Ajnadin and al-Yarmuk took place, that the major movement of the Byzantine forces occurred during the period between these two battles, in 14 A.H/ 635 A.D and perhaps at the beginning of 15 A.H/ 636 A.D, i.e. some times after the defeat of the Byzantine forces in Ajnadin. Many accounts indicate that Hercules sent large forces from Antioch to al-Yarmuk during this period. This endangered military successes Muslims had achieved in the region where they had been forced to withdraw from many places they had originally been captured in order to gather one place.<sup>77</sup>

It is quite conceivable and in fact, acceptable to argue that Umar left Madinah on occasions when the Muslims came under military pressure, whether in Iraq or Syria, even if it is true that he did not visit any region outside the Arab Peninsula throughout his rule. However, the sources are unanimous in stating that he was about to leave for Iraq and even set up his military camp and where the Muslim facing great difficulties after his military leader had been killed in the battle of al-Jisr (the bridge) in 14 AH.<sup>78</sup> He only returned to Madinah after the Muslims advised him to send Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas as the general military leader of the Muslims there.<sup>79</sup>

The problems resulted from the deaths in Syria of the military leaders, among them Abu 'Ubayda, Shurahbil Ibn Hasana and Yazid Ibn Abi Sufyan, and a high proportion of other Muslims, estimated by al-Ya'qubi at around twenty five thousand,<sup>80</sup> the deterioration of the Syrian administrative and financial infrastructure, in addition to the problems of dividing the inheritance of the plague victims, prompted Umar to arrive personally in the region to deal with these problems, and to effect distribution at al-Jabiya of the aforementioned inheritance. Muhammad Ibn Ishaq cited that the Muslims found it difficult to deal with this issue because of its intricacy, and perhaps because of the death of those who were capable of solving it. He says: "I say, (Ibn Ishaq), for this reason Umar arrived thereafter in Syria (after the plague) and he divided the inheritance of those who perished in the plague when the commanders found it difficult to divide it."<sup>81</sup>

Furthermore, according to Abi Zir'a al-Dimashqi, from Duhaym, from al-Walid Ibn Muslim said: "Jerusalem was conquered in the year 16 AH. In 17 AH Umar came to Syria but he returned to Madinah from Saragh. Then in 18 AH he arrived in Syria where all the commanders gathered to meet him. They handed over to him the money they collected and he divided it among the Muslims and organised the armies and the regions and returned to Madinah afterwards."<sup>82</sup> Al-Tabari mentioned more than one account, which revealed the extent of the anxiety Umar showed with regard to the situation in Syria. For instance, Umar said: "The estates of the victims of the plague of 'Imwas are left untended, so I will begin (my tour of inspection) there (i.e. I shall begin my tour in Syria)."<sup>83</sup> He also said: "Since the estates of the people who recently died in Syria are left untended, I shall start my tour there. I shall properly divide the estates and I shall take measure for them as I think best. After that I shall return and

---

<sup>75</sup> Al-Tabari, Ibn Jarir (1963), *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk*, vol. 4, p. 190.

<sup>76</sup> Duri, Abdul Aziz (1990), "Jerusalem in the Early Islamic Period: 7th – 11th Century AD," p. 105-129.

<sup>77</sup> Al-Ya'qubi, Ahmad (1960), *Tarikh al-Ya'qubi*, vol. 2, p. 141.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Al-Baladhuri, Ahmad Ibn Yahya (1988), *Futuh al-Buldan*, p. 255.

<sup>80</sup> Al-Ya'qubi, Ahmad (1960), *Tarikh al-Ya'qubi*, vol. 2, pp. 141-142.

<sup>81</sup> Ibn al-Athir (1965), *Al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh*, vol. 1, p. 67.

<sup>82</sup> Ibn Kathir (1966), *al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah*, vol. 7&8, 79

<sup>83</sup> Al-Tabari, Ibn Jarir (1963), *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk*, vol. x, pp. 96-103.

*travel all over the country, renouncing my previous orders to them. (In all) Umar went to Syria four times, twice in the year 16AH (637AD) and twice in 17AH (638AD), but he did not set foot on Syrian soil on the first trip of the year 17AH (638AD).<sup>84</sup>*

Al-Tabari on the authority of Adi Ibn Suhayl also reported: *“According to al-Siri, Shu‘ayb, Sayf, Abu Damrah and Abu ‘Amr al-Mustawrid Adi b. Suhayl: When Umar had finished seeing to the access routes (to the Hijaz) and his other business, he divided the estates of persons recently deceased, letting various heirs who were still alive from inherit various others, and then he presented the estates to the living heirs of every man (deceased) among them.”<sup>85</sup>*

It is also evident that Umar, on the basis of the deteriorating economic situation, decided to include the Syrian tribes in the register (*Diwan*) with the exception of the Lakhkham and Jutham tribes. As can be understood from al-Baladhuri and al-Ya‘qubi, Umar changed his mind after he held a discussion with the tribes and included them in the register (*Diwan*) which took place during that visit.<sup>86</sup>

Theophanes mentioned another visit by Umar to Bayt al-Maqdis, in which he laid the foundation stone for al-Aqsa Mosque. He said: *“In this year Umar began to build a temple in Jerusalem (meaning al-Aqsa Mosque); the building would not stand, but fell down. When he asked why, the Jews told him the reason: “If you do not tear down the cross on top of the church on the Mount of Olives, your building will not stay up.” Therefore the cross there was torn down, and thus the building arose. For this reason the Christ-haters tore down many crosses.”<sup>87</sup>*

There is no strong reason to reject or deny this visit even though Theophanes made its date a little late (658 A.D). Finally, these are the reasons and date of each of his different visits in the light of analysis made:

1. The first visit took place in 14 A.H/ 635 A.D and at the beginning of 15 A.H/ 636 A.D. It was a very short visit and was restricted to al-Jabiya. Umar came to provide a military reinforcement for Abu ‘Ubayda and his companions who were besieged near Hims by a Byzantine force. During that visit Umar also asked for military reinforcements to be sent from Iraq to Abu ‘Ubayda because the Muslims in Syria were busy fighting. Umar did not carry out any significant work during this visit. He quickly returned to Madinah as soon as he learned that the siege had ended.
2. The second visit was the historic visit by Umar to Bayt al-Maqdis when it was liberated, which took place in *Jumada al-Awwal* (first) or *Jumada al-Thani* (second) (March or April), 16 A.H/ 637 A.D. Umar made this visit to help the Muslims liberate the city, especially after their repeated attempts to liberate it had failed. It appears that the people of the walled part of Jerusalem decided to surrender shortly after his arrival; and after they had lost all hope of any reinforcement from outside. On this visit, Umar headed with the Muslims from Bayt al-Maqdis after it was liberated, to al-Jabiya where he might have divided some spoils, or the spoils of the al-Yarmuk battle. He also appointed ‘Alqama Ibn Mujziz as governor of Bayt al-Maqdis.
3. The third visit took place in 18 A.H/ 639 A.D in the wake of the *‘Imwas* plague. This visit was preceded by Umar’s attempt to enter the region, which failed. The visit was made incumbent by the emergency situation, which resulted from the plague. Most of the military leaders, governors and important Muslims there died in the *‘Imwas* plague, which caused disorder and the collapse of the economic and administrative situation in Syria.

## **Conclusion**

It is clear that the narrators and the sources, in particular the Syrians, have inaccurately reported the reasons for each of these visits and the tasks which Umar carried out. They dealt with the matter as if it was one visit, and they did not even distinguish between the various tasks that Umar carried out on each visit. Moreover, these accounts

---

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibn Kathir (1966), *al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah*, vol. 7&8, pp. 57-60.

<sup>87</sup> Theophanes the Confessor (1997), *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History, AD 284-813*, ed. Cyril Mango & Roger Scott. Clarendon Press.

did not distinguish between the division of the spoils and the division of the inheritance. The reason for these inaccuracies might be because these visits took place within a relatively short time of each other in the period between 14-18 A.H/ 635-639 A.D. Furthermore, each visit occurred in unusual circumstances, whether these circumstances were military in the case of the first and second visits, or because of the 'Imwas plague during the third visit. In addition to all this, the fact that Umar arrived in al-Jabiya on all three visits, and also arrived in both Bayt al-Maqdis and al-Jabiya at least during the last two visits, is a convincing reason for these inaccuracies. Although this does seem to be erroneous in reality, it may be viewed as addressing different events in terms of both time and place.

As far as modern studies are concerned, some researchers have exploited what is understood as major contradictions and have used them as a pretext to cast doubt on and even deny the historicity of Umar's visit to Bayt al-Maqdis. Other researchers have ruled out the possibility that Bayt al-Maqdis was the cause of the visit, and they have accepted the texts as they are without any deep scientific analysis. The researchers argue that the reason for this is that these studies are not, in fact related to the first Islamic liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis, but deal rather with general historical issues.

## References

- Abd-ar-Rahman Mahmud Hafiz (1977), *The Life of Az-Zuhri and His Scholarship in Qur'anic Sciences and Tradition (Hadith And Sunna)*. University of Edinburgh.
- Al-Baladhuri, Ahmad Ibn Yahya (1959), *Ansab al-Ashraf*. Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif.
- Al-Baladhuri, Ahmad Ibn Yahya (1988), *Futuh al-Buldan*, Beirut: Maktaba al-Hilal.
- Al-Hanbali, Mujir al-Din (1968), *Al-Uns al-Jalil bi-Tarikh al-Quds wa al-Khalil* [The Glorious History of Jerusalem and Hebron]. Al-Najaf al-Ashraf: Al-Matba'at al-Haydariyah.
- Al-Kufi, Ibn A'tham (1975), *Kitab al-Futuh*. Beirut.
- Al-Maqdisi, Anis (1963), *Al-Ittiyaha al-Adabiyya fi al-'Alam al-'Arabi al-Hadith*. Dar al-'Ilm li al-Malayin.
- Al-Tabari, Ibn Jarir (1963), *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk*. Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif.
- Al-Tel, Othman Ismael (2012), "The Geographical Boundaries of Aelia (Jerusalem) During the Byzantine Rule (135-638 AD): Islamic Perspective," *Jurnal Al-Tamaddun*, 7(2), 41-60.
- Al-Waqidi, Muhammad Ibn Umar (1897), *Futuh al-Sham*. Beirut.
- Al-Waqidi, Muhammad Ibn Umar (1996), *The Kitab al-Maghazi of al-Waqidi*, edited by Jones Marsden. Oxford University Press.
- Al-Waqidi, Muhammad Ibn Umar (1966), *Kitab al-Maghazi*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Al-Ya'qubi, Ahmad (1960), *Tarikh al-Ya'qubi*. Beirut: Dar al-Fikr.
- Daniel, Elton L. (1997), "Al-Tabari (Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Jarir), The History of al-Tabari (Ta'rikh al-rusul wa'Imulūk). Vol. XXVIII: Abbasid Authority Affirmed, the Early Years of al-Man ūr AD 753–763/AH 136–145, trans. Jane Dammen McAuliffe, Biblioteca Persica (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995). Pp. 349," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 29 (2), 287-289.
- Donner, Fred McGraw (2014), *The Early Islamic Conquests*. Princeton University Press.

Donner, Fred McGraw (1993), *The History of al-Tabari Vol. 10: The Conquest of Arabia: The Riddah Wars AD 632-633 / AH 11*. SUNY Press.

Duri, Abdul Aziz (1990), "Jerusalem in the Early Islamic Period: 7th – 11th Century AD," in K.J. Asali (ed.), *Jerusalem in History*. Essex: Scorpion Publishing.

Friedman, Yohanan (trans.) (1992), *The History of al-Tabari Vol. 12: The Battle of al-Qadisiyyah and the Conquest of Syria and Palestine*. State University of New York Press.

Gil, Moshe (1997), *A history of Palestine, 634-1099*. Cambridge University Press.

Goitein, Shlomo D. (1982), "Jerusalem in the Arab period (638-1099)" in Lee I. Levine (ed.), *The Jerusalem Cathedra*. Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi Institute.

Goldziher, Ignaz (1971). *Muslim Studies*, edited by S.M Stern. State University of New York Press.

Ibn Abi al-Dunya, Abd Allah Ibn Muhammad & Najm, Abd Al-Rahman Khalaf (n.d.), *Kitab al-Samt wa Adab al-Lisan*. Dar Al-Gharb Al-Islami.

Ibn al-Athir (1965), *Al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh*, Vol. 1 & 2. Beirut: Dar Sadir.

Ibn Hajar (1994), *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib*. Beirut: Dar al-Kutb al-‘Ilmiyyah.

Ibn Kathir (1966), *al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah*, Riyadh: Maktabat al-Nasr.

Ibn Qutayba (1961), *Kitab al-Ma‘arif*. Cairo: Dar al-Ma‘arif.

Ibn Rustah, Abu Ali Ahmad b. Umar (1892), *Kitab al-‘Alaq an-Nafisa*. Leiden.

Ibn Sa‘d, Muhammad (1967), "*Kitab al-Tabaqat al-Kabir*," edited by Syed Moinul Haq, (Vol. 1). Pakistan Historical Society.

Jandora, John W. (1990), *The March from Medina: A Revisionist Study of the Arab Conquest*. Clifton, NJ: Kingston Press.

Jasir, Shafiq (1989). *Tarikh al-Quds wa al-‘Alaqat bayna al-Muslimin wa al-Masihyyin fiha mundhu al-Fath al-Islami hatta al-Hurub al-Salibiyyah*. Amman: Matba‘ah al-Iman.

Kennedy, Hugh (1986), *The Prophet and the age of the Caliphates: The Islamic Near East from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> Century*. Routledge.

Krenkow, Fritz (1912), "The Tarikh-Baghdad (Vol. XXVII) of the Khatib Abu Bakr Ahmad b. Ali b. Thabit Albaghdadi: Short Account of the Biographies," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 4(1), 31-79.

Little, Donald P. (1999), "Fada'il Bayt al-Maqdis wa al-Khalil wa Fada'il al-Sham," *The Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 119(3), 549-549.

Mazor, Amir (2008), "The Kitāb futūḥ al-Shām of al-Qudāmi as a Case Study for the Transmission of Traditions About the Conquest of Syria," *Der Islam*, 84(1), 17-45.

Muir, William (1891), *The Caliphate: Its Rise, Decline, and Fall*. Religious Tract Society.

Nor, Mohd Roslan Mohd (2011), "Islamicjerusalem Under Muslim Rule: A Study of the Implementation of Inclusive Vision on the Region," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun*, 3(1), 186-208.

Theophanes the Confessor (1982), *The Chronicle of Theophanes: An English Translation of Anni Mundi 6095-6305*, ed. Harry Turtledove. University of Pennsylvania Press.

Theophanes the Confessor (1997), *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History, AD 284-813*, edited by Cyril Mango & Roger Scott. Clarendon Press.

Yahya b. Adam (1958), *Taxation in Islam: Yahya Ben Adam's Kitab al-Kharaj*, translated by A. Ben Shemesh. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

Zawati, Hilmi M. (2015), "Jihad and International Relations," in Niaz A. Shah (ed.), *Islam and the Law of Armed Conflict*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, pp. 288–323.