Appendix 2

The letters of al-Walīd II and Yazīd III

The Letter of al-Walīd II

Al-Walīd II’s letter concerning the designation of his successors is preserved in the chronicle of al-Ṭabarī (ser. ii, pp. 1756ff., sub anno 125; also reproduced in Ṣafwat, Rasā’il, vol. ii, pp. 448ff.), and apparently there alone. It was first singled out as a document of some importance by Dennett, who also offered a summary translation (or more precisely a loose paraphrase) which is very deficient in places (D. C. Dennett, ‘Marwan ibn Muhammad: the Passing of the Umayyad Caliphate’, Harvard Ph.D. diss. 1939, pp. 169ff.; partially reproduced in M. Khadduri, The Islamic Conception of Justice, Baltimore and London 1984, p. 26). More recently the letter has been discussed by Nagel (Rechtleitung, pp. 82ff) and Khadduri (Justice, pp. 25ff.). All three scholars assume it to be authentic, and so do we. For one thing, it is hard to see why anyone should have felt tempted to forge the text of a succession document equally devoid of religious significance and historical effect. For another, a forger active in the ‘Abbāsid period (and he could scarcely have been active before it) would have required extraordinary historical insight to produce a document in which the importance of the caliphal institution is stressed, but its Umayyad incumbents are taken for granted. Further, the fact that al-Ma’mūn produced a succession document along very similar lines (see appendix 4) shows that the inshā‘ did indeed come out of a bureaucratic file; and since the ‘Abbāsids before al-Ma’mūn do not appear to have made use of this type of inshā‘, we must assume either that it antedated the ‘Abbāsids or that it originated in the time of al-Ma’mūn. It does not seem likely that al-Ma’mūn’s secretary would have amused himself by penning elaborate succession documents in the name of Umayyad caliphs (nor would one have assumed him to have had sufficient historical sense to omit Ḥadīth, be it
Prophetic or other; but of hadith there is none). We are thus entitled to assume that the *insha* antedated the 'Abbāsids and that the letter was written by Samāl on behalf of al-Walīd II precisely as the letter states. (The name Samāl is peculiar and should perhaps be read Simāk though there do not appear to be any variant readings of it; it could scarcely be a corruption of Sālim [b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān, ṣāḥib dīwān al-rasā'il, cf. Tab., ser. ii, p. 1750].) Given that we only have al-Ṭabarī's version, it is hard to say whether it is based on a written copy of the letter or on an oral version thereof, but one would have thought it to be based on a document. The letter is long and so close to al-Ma'mūn's in formulation that if it was copied from somebody who had simply heard it read aloud, the person in question must have had an extraordinary memory. Al-Ṭabarī says that he has it from 'Alī, sc. al-Madā'īnī, 'from his aforementioned shuyukh', according to whom two men came to Naṣr [b. Sayyār] with the letter wa-huwa amma ba'ḍa[... ]etc, a formulation apt to suggest that he is reproducing the text of the copy sent to Khurāsān.

The text is corrupt in places and not always easily amended. In our attempt to restore meaning to it we have greatly benefitted from the fact that Professor Ihṣān 'Abbās was willing to place his expertise at our disposal. Even in its amended version, however, the letter does not lend itself to translation. The style is involved and overloaded: as the scribe piles warning upon warning, both syntax and logic are stretched to breaking point. Exactly what he has in mind at any particular point is often less than clear, and those who heard the letter read aloud must frequently have lost the thread; on the other hand they must have felt that the overall message was being positively hammered into them: the caliphs are God's own instrument and everyone must obey them; obedience will be amply rewarded, whereas disobedience and dissension have dire consequences in both this world and the next. We hope that our cumbrous English version retains some of the same effect.

Both Dennett and Nagel saw evidence in this letter that the Umayyads denied the doctrine of free will ('Marwan b. Muhammad', p. 172; *Rechtleitung*, p. 71 and note 1 thereto), and Khadduri even claims that the letter was intended as a reply to Qadarite critics of the Umayyad regime (*Justice*, p. 25). But we must beg to differ. There is indeed a strong sense in it that God is responsible for everything, not least for the success of His caliphs and the downfall of their enemies, but there is not anything remotely resembling a thought on the relationship between the divine and the
human will as a theological problem. What the letter broadcasts is a strong conviction that the caliphs have God on their side, or in other words a strong conviction that the caliphs are in the right. Feeling in the right has nothing to do with determinism. ‘Needless to say’, Khadduri assures us, ‘the aim of Walid’s letter was to identify Umayyad political justice with the doctrine of predestination’ (Justice, p. 27). But to argue that a ruler owes his power to God is not to adopt a predestinarian position, and to assert that his acts are in accordance with God’s will is not to deny his capacity to act against it; practically all rulers would have to be classified as Jabrites if it were. In fact, the strong emphasis of the letter on the rewards and punishments in store for the obedient and disobedient is anything but predestinarian. And Umayyad court poetry similarly presents the caliphs as God’s own instruments on the assumption that the caliphs wished to be assured of their own rectitude, not that they hankered for statements on the human inability to determine events. In general, the theory that the Umayyads were Jabrites must be said to rest on slender foundations (and the commonly accepted view that Qadarism originated as a reaction to Umayyad Jabrism is unacceptable even if they were, cf. F. W. Zimmermann, review of J. van Ess in International Journal of Middle East Studies 16 (1984), p. 441).

The numbers in the margin refer to the text. The paragraph divisions are by us.

1756 [The era of the prophets]

1. ‘To continue, God (blessed are His names, mighty is His praise, and exalted is His glorification), chose // Islam as His own religion and made it the religion of the chosen ones of His creation. Then He selected messengers from among angels and men, and He sent them with it and enjoined it upon them. So there was between them and the nations which passed away and the generations which vanished, generation upon generation [events of the type described in the Qur‘ān, but they continued to? ] call to ‘that which is better and guide to a

1 Reading dīn for khayr with BM and O. Similarly M. A.-F. Ibrāhim (ed.), Ta‘rikh al-Tabari, Cairo 1960–9 (which preserves the Leiden pagination in the margin).
3 The scribe must have omitted a line here. It is true that a simple insertion of man before yad‘ina would suffice to make some sense of the passage (‘so there were among them and among the nations which passed away, etc, those who called to that which is best’). But what is being announced is clearly a relationship between God’s messengers and past nations, not something to be found among them; in other words, the letter must have said something about the strained relations between past messengers and past nations which regularly caused God to destroy the nations in question (cf. W. M. Watt, Bell’s Introduction to the
straight path. Ultimately the grace of God [as manifested] in His prophethood reached Muhammad, at a time when knowledge had become obliterated and people had become blind, having acquired different desires and gone their separate ways, the waymarks of truth having become effaced. Through him God made guidance clear and dispelled blindness, and through him He saved [people] from going astray and perishing. He elucidated the religion through him, and He made him a mercy to mankind. Through him He sealed His revelation, He gathered unto him everything with which He had honoured the prophets before him, and He made him follow their tracks, confining the truth of that which He had revealed together with them, preserving it, calling to it and enjoying it.

2. In due course there were those from among his nation who responded to him and became adherents of the religion with which God had honoured them. They confounded the truth of that which previous prophets of God [had preached], where their people used to call them liars, accepted their sincere advice where they used to reject it, protected their sacred things from the desecration which they used to commit, and venerated those things which they used to hold in contempt. No member of Muhammad's nation would hear someone give the lie to one of God's prophets concerning that with which God had sent him, or impugn him in what he said or hurt him by calling him stupid, arguing against him or denying that which God had sent down with him, without deeming his blood to be lawful for it and cutting off such ties as he might have with him even if they were their fathers, their sons or their clansmen.


4 Allātī Ḥiya ʿaḥsan, cf. Qur., 17: 55; 29: 45; 41: 34.
6 Tāshīrī mi鼻āl-ḥawā. The temptation to read ḥudārā for ḥawā is strong, but compare Kumayl, p. 54 = 40 (no. 2:73): wa-kayfa ẓalālahum huda wa-l-ḥawāshattā bihim mutashālbū). 7 Reading anhwāj for abhājā, following Ṣafwat, Rasā'il, vol. u, p. 448.
9 Wāqaffa bihi ʿalā ʿaḥārīhim, 'he caused their tracks to be retraced through him', cf. Qur., 2: 81; 5:50; 57:27. 10 Cf. Qur., 5: 52.
11 Compare the similar account in al-Rashīd's letter to Constantine, Ṣafwat, Rasā'il, vol. ii, pp. 258f.
12 Reading muḥaddithīn as the object of yasmaʿū (or yusmaʿū).
13 Reading aw for idh, following O. Similarly Ibrāhīm.
14 Lī-mān anzala ʿlāhī alayhi maʿāhu. We omit alayhi, following O. on the ground that the text has previously used maʿāhu alone (compare Qur. 2: 209).
15 We omit the f al-am yabqa kāfir preceding illā, following BM and O. The alternative translation would be: 'so no unbeliever remained without thereby rendering his blood lawful and cutting off such relationships as he might have with him'.
16 Wa-in kānū ḏūʾāhum aw abnāʾahum aw ʾashiratahūm. The sudden shift from singular to plural arises from the fact that this is a Qur'ānic quotation, if a slightly deviant one (cf. Qur., 58:22).
[The era of the caliphs]

3. Then God deputed His caliphs over the path of His prophethood (alā minhāj nubuwatihi) – [that is] when He took back His Prophet and sealed His revelation with him – for the implementation of His decree (hukm), the establishment of His normative practice (sunna) and restrictive statutes (ḥudūd), and for the observance of His ordinances (farā'id) and His rights (ḥuqūq), supporting Islam, consolidating that by which it is rendered firm, strengthening the strands of His rope, keeping [people] away from His forbidden things, providing for equity (ṣalīl) among His servants and putting His lands to right, [doing all of these things] through them.

[The importance of obedience to the caliphs]

4. God (blessed and exalted is He) says, "and if God had not kept back the people, some by means of others, surely the earth would have been corrupted; but God is bounteous to mankind". So the caliphs of God followed one another, in charge of that which God had caused them to inherit from His prophets and over which He had deputed them. Nobody can dispute their right without God casting him down, and nobody can separate from their polity (jāmī'a) without God destroying him, nor can anyone hold their government in contempt or query the decree of God concerning them [sc. the caliphs] without God placing him in their power and giving them mastery over him, thus making an example and a warning to others. This is how God has acted towards anyone who has departed from the obedience to which He has ordered [people] to cling, adhere and devote themselves, and through which it is that heaven and earth came to be supported. God (blessed and exalted is He) has said, "then He lifted Himself to heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and to earth, 'come willingly or unwillingly'. They said, 'we come // willingly'".

And God (exalted is His invocation) has said, "when your Lord said to the angels, 'I am placing a deputy (khalīfa) on earth', they said, 'are you placing in it someone who will act corruptly and shed blood while we are celebrating Your praise and sanctifying You?'. He said, 'I know what you know not'".

17 Reading tashhīd for tashyīd, following BM.
19 Ḥarāmihi, for all that one would have expected mahārimihi (the word used below).
20 We have taken the liberty of not repeating 'through them' seven times (as does the text).
21 Qur., 2:252.
22 Literally 'from the matter of His prophets' (min amr anbiyā'ihī).
24 Qur., 41:10.
5. So through the caliphate God has preserved such servants of His as He has preserved on earth: to it He has assigned them, and it is through obedience to those whom He has appointed to it that those who have been given to understand and realise its importance\(^{16}\) attain happiness. God (blessed and exalted is He) knows that nothing has any mainstay or soundness save by the obedience through which He preserves His truth, puts His commands into effect, turns [people] away from acts of disobedience to Him, makes [them] stop short of His forbidden things and protects His sacred things. So he who holds to the obedience which has been apportioned to him is a friend of God and obeys His commands, attaining rectitude and being singled out for good fortune in [both] this world and the next. But he who leaves off it, forsakes it and is refractory towards God in respect of it loses his share, disobeys his Lord and forfeits both this world and the world to come.\(^{37}\) He becomes one of those overwhelmed by misery\(^{46}\) and overcome by aberrant things which lead their victims to the foulest places of water and the vilest places of slaughter in respect of the humiliation and retribution which God will inflict on them in this world. And He will cause them to undergo all the chastisement and grief which He has prepared for them [in the next].\(^{19}\)

6. Obedience is the head of this matter, its summit, its apex, its halter, its foundation, its refuge and its mainstay, after the declaration of belief in the unity of God with which God has distinguished between His believers. Through obedience the successful\(^{30}\) attain their stations from God and gain a right to reward from Him; and through disobedience others obtain those of His punishments which He metes out to them, that chastisement of His which He inflicts upon them, and that anger of His which he causes to befall them.\(^{31}\) In abandonment\(^{22}\) and neglect of obedience, in departure from it, lack of attention to it and carelessness of it,\(^{32}\) God destroys [all] those who stray and disobey, who are blind and go to excess, and who leave the

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26 Reading ušhimahā (or ušhimahā) wa-buṣṭrahā.
29 Reading fimā d'adda lahum for fimā 'indahum/indahu following Ṣafwat, Rasā'il, vol. ii, p. 450n.).
30 Al-muṣfiḥūn, a term used twelve times in the Qur'ān, always in the phrase ulā'ika hum al-muṣfiḥūn.
31 We have resorted to fairly drastic emendations here, reading wa-bi'l-maṣira nāla ghayrhum mā yuḥillu bihim naqāmītihī wa-yuṣībhum min 'adḥābihi wa-yuṣīqqu 'alayhim min sukḥihi. The text makes no sense as it stands, and though less drastic emendations are possible, we cannot think of any other which will preserve the parallelism.
32 Reading wa-bi-tark al-tā'a for wa-yuṇzalu bi-l-tā'a, cf. BM and O; similarly Ibrāhim.
33 Reading tabadhdhul for tabaddul.
paths of piety and religiosity. So adhere to obedience to God whatever may befall, come upon or happen to you. Be sincere in it, hold to it, hasten to it, devote yourselves to it and seek to come close to God through it. For you have seen instances of how God judges those who practise it in [the way in which He] elevates them, causing their argument to prevail, and rebuts the falsehood of those who oppose them, act with enmity against them, contend with them and seek to extinguish the light of God which is with them. Moreover, you have been informed of what disobedient people have incurred in the way of reproach and restriction, to the point that their affairs have come to ruin, ignominy, humiliation and perdition. In that there is a warning and a lesson for the perceptive person. [Such a person] will benefit from their clear message and hold fast to the favour bestowed by them, acknowledging the blessing of God’s decree in respect of those who pay heed to it.

[The covenant of succession]

7. Then God (to Him is praise and [from Him come] favour and bounty) guided the community to the best of outcomes for it from the point of view of prevention of bloodshed within it, preservation of its unity, consensus of its doctrine, straightness of its pillar, setting aright of its masses, and storing up of grace for it in this world – [the best, that is] after the caliphate with which He has made a system of order for them and a mainstay for their affairs – namely the covenant [of succession]. God has inspired His caliphs to make firm this covenant and to pay due regard in it to the Muslims at times of crisis, so that when something befalls their caliphs [sc. when they die], it will be for them something which they can trust when fear arises, in which they can seek refuge when problem[s] occur, which brings together that which is disunited and which leads to a state of concord, stabilising the lands of Islam and cutting short the insinuations of Satan regarding the destruction of this religion, the

37 Reading mawīţa wa’-ibra for mawīţa ‘ibra’, cf. B.
38 Reading bi-wādīhihā (or possibly bi-nawāṣihihā, ‘from their counsels’).
39 ‘It’ standing for either obedience or warning and counsel.
40 Reading ḥiqbat‘n for ḥiyat‘n with BM and O; similarly Şafwat, Rasā’il, vol. ii, p. 451, and Ibrāhīm.
41 Literally ‘in a great affair of theirs’ (fī jāsim amrihihi).
42 ‘Inda mā yahdithu bi-khuṭla‘a‘ihih [ḥadith‘n]: the subject is implicit.
44 Arjū’ al-İslām, possibly a corruption of arkān al-İslām.
splitting up of the unity of its adherents and their coming to disagree on that over which God has brought them together, for which his friends yearn and to which he incites them. God will show them nought in this matter but that which harms them and gives the lie to their ambitions; and they shall find that through that which He has decreed for His friends, God has made firm the settlement of their affairs and banished from them those who wish to introduce corruption and unfaithful conduct among them, or to enfeeble that which God has strengthened or to rely on that from which God has turned away. So through these things God has perfected for His caliphs and His pious party, to whom He has entrusted obedience to Him, the good things to which He has accustomed them, and He has appointed for them part of His power to strengthen, ennoble, elevate and consolidate so that they may accomplish their end. The matter of this covenant is part of the completion of Islam and the perfection of those mighty favours by which God makes His people obliged to Him, and [also] part of that which God has made in it [sc. in Islam?]. - for the person at whose hands He brings it about and at whose tongue He decrees it, making it successful for him whom He has appointed to this position - a most valuable treasure from His point of view, and from the point of view of the Muslims, the most excellent manifestation of the favour which He manifests among them and of the safeguard which He extends to them. Of His power on which they rely, and of His refuge in which they enter. Through His refuge God has given them power to resist and through it He preserves them from all destruction, gathers them in from all disunion, subdues the people of hypocrisy and renders them immune to all dissension and schism.

So give praise to God, your Lord, who takes pity upon you and does you good in your affairs for that which He has guided you to in this covenant. God has made it something in which you can trust, on which you can rely, from which you can attain tranquillity and in the shade of which you can seek shelter. Through it He shows you the right path wherever you turn your necks, wherever you direct your faces, and wherever your forelocks meet in matters of your religion and this world. In this there is a momentous grace.

46 Reading 'aqd for the 'uqad adopted by the Leiden editors.
47 Reading fimā lāwālī 'lāh ānḥu minhū, though the ānḥu is missing.
48 Bihā, a general reference to what has just been mentioned.
49 Ahsanā ilādhi awwadahum. We have opted for 'good things' on the ground that the best cannot be perfected.
50 This clause is implicit in sabbaba ālahum, cf. Lane, Lexicon, s.v.
51 Literally 'the most excellent impress in that which He impresses upon them'.
52 Reading afya'īhi for afṣānīhi, 'branches'. on the ground that the preposition is fi rather than bi.
53 Viz. wherever you are together.
and a great favour from God bestowing amleness of health and safety, as is recognised by those of intelligence and good intentions who pay close attention to the consequences of their acts and who are cognisant of the beacon of the paths of rectitude. So you have reason to thank God in respect of all those ways in which He has preserved your religion and the state of your polity (amr jamā'atikum), and you are competent to know the essence of His binding right[s] in this matter and to praise Him for that which He has resolved for you. So let the importance and worth of this in your estimation be in proportion to the favour which God has bestowed upon you in it, God willing. There is no strength save in God.

10. Moreover, ever since God deputed him, the Commander of the Faithful has not had a greater preoccupation or concern than this covenant, on account of his knowledge of its pre-eminent role in the affair[s] of the Muslims and those things in it which God has shown them for which they are thankful. He [sc. the Commander of the Faithful] ennobles them by that which he decrees for them, and he chooses to exert himself in this matter [both] for himself and for them. On his own and their behalf he asks for a decision regarding it from his God and Master, the all-powerful in whose hand is the decision and with whom are all invisible things, and he asks Him to help him to achieve that which // is most righteous for him in particular and for the Muslims in general.

11. The Commander of the Faithful has deemed it best to appoint two heirs, so that you may be in the same position as those who were before you, enjoying a respite of ample hope and inner tranquillity, a flourishing state of concord, and a knowledge of the state of affairs which God has established as a protection, rescue, goodness and life for his people and as a humiliation, loss and restraint for every hypocrite and godless person who desires the destruction of this religion and the corruption of its adherents.

[The designation of al-Ḥakam and 'Uthmān]

12. So the Commander of the Faithful has appointed to it al-Ḥakam, son of the Commander of the Faithful, and after him 'Uthmān, son

55 Literally just 'in'.
56 Dḥawā' 'l-ālbaḥ, where the Qur'ān has ʾulā' 'l-ālbaḥ (in fifteen places).
57 Fīmā . . . min dhālīka, a general reference to what had just been said.
58 Qur., 18:37.
59 Literally 'in that'.
60 Cf. Qur., passim.
61 Literally 'to make a covenant after a covenant'.
62 Literally just 'in'.
63 Cf. Qur., 8:1.
of the Commander of the Faithful. Both of them are persons of whom the Commander of the Faithful hopes that God has created them for this purpose and fashioned them for it, perfecting in them the most godly virtues of those whom He appoints to it in respect of plenitude of insight, soundness of religion, superabundance of manliness and knowledge of what is right. And the Commander of the Faithful has spared no effort or good action on your behalf or his own in this matter.

13. So give allegiance to al-Ḥakam, son of the Commander of the Faithful, and to his brother after him, [undertaking to] hear and to obey. In so doing, reflect upon [the reward of] the best of what God used to show you and bestow on you and accustom you to, and what He has acquainted you with in similar situations in the past by way of extensive prosperity, general good and mighty bounty, into the amleness, security, blessing, safety and protection of which you have passed. This is a matter which you have deemed slow in coming and to which you have tried to hurry. You have praised God for causing it to come to pass and for decreeing il for you, II and you have burst out with thanks regarding it, deeming it to be a good fortune for you. You hasten towards it, and you exert yourselves in the fulfilment of God’s claim upon you; for so much of God’s blessing, generosity and good apportioning has come to you in the past that you are disposed to want it and desire it in the measure that God has favoured and benefitted you with it.

14. Further, if something should befall one of his two successors, the Commander of the Faithful is entitled to put in his place and position whoever he may wish to put there from among community or his sons and give priority to him over the survivor if he so wishes, or to place him after him. So know that and understand it. We ask God, apart from whom there is no god, and who has knowledge of the unseen and the visible, the merciful and the compassionate, to bless the Commander of the Faithful and you in that which He has decreed.

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64 According to the Aghāni, vol. vii, p. 7014, al-Walid gave precedence to 'Uthmān. This is an inference from a widely cited poem attributed to al-Walid himself, which is cited there too and according to which ‘we hope for ‘Uthmān after al-Walid’. But one version adds ‘or Ḥakam’, and the poem is not by al-Walid in any case (cf. his Shi‘a, pp. 147f., where full references are given).

65 Wafā al-ra' y wa-siḥḥat al-dīn wa-jazālat al-murumma wa’l-ma‘rifa bi-sāliḥ al-umūr.

66 Reading rakhdhī ‘ihi for raja‘ihi.

67 Abdatum fihi shukr ‘in an expression conveying suddenness and impulsivity. Adaytum is possible, if less likely.

68 Literally ‘there has come to you in the past of God’s grace... what’.

69 It is notable that al-Walid considers the possibility of selecting a successor from among his umma, viz. somebody who need not apparently be an Umayyad or even a Qurashi.

at his tongue and determined to this effect, and to make its outcome well-being, happiness, and joy. For that is in His hand; nobody but He controls it, and from Him alone can it be petitioned.

15. Peace and the mercy of God be upon you. Written by Samāl, Tuesday, 21 Rajab, in the year 125 [= 20 May, 743].

The letter of Yazīd III

Yazīd III's letter to the people of Iraq is to be found in al-Tabari (ser. ii, pp. 1843ff., sub anno 126; also reproduced in Ṣafwat, Rasā'il, vol. ii, pp. 465ff.), and al-Balādhurī (Ans. (MS), vol. ii, fols. 170a–b, where the date is given as 28 Rajab, 126 = 15 May 744, and the scribe is named as Thābit b. Sulaymān b. Sa'id (read Sa'd), i.e. the chief of Yazīd's diwan al-rasā'il (see Tab., ser ii, p. 847). The two versions differ considerably in a number of places, and at least one of them, possibly both, must be based on oral sources. Our translation renders al-Tabari's text (for which al-Madā'inī is once more named as the authority); we indicate only significant variants in al-Balādhurī's version.

1843 'God chose Islam as a religion, approved of it and purified it, and He stipulated in it certain dues which He enjoined, and He prohibited [other] things which He made forbidden, in order to test His servants in respect of their obedience and disobedience. He perfected in it every good virtue and great bounty. Then He took charge of it, preserving it and acting as guardian of those who observed His hudūd, protecting them and making them cognisant of the merit of Islam. God does not honour with the caliphate anyone who observes the command of God and draws near to Him, whereupon someone opposes him with a covenant or attempts to take away what God has given him, or a violator violates, but that [such a person's] guile is [rendered] very weak and his cunning most defective, so that God may complete what He has given to [the caliph] and store up a recompense and reward for him, making his enemy most prone to lose his way and most apt to forfeit his acts. So the caliphs of God followed one another as guardians of His religion, judging in it according to His decree, following the book in it. In all this they received from Him by way of His support and help that which completed the favours bestowed on them.'

71 Note that al-Waqt is taking out a double insurance policy: he wants God to bless the decision (thus acknowledging that it is his own) and He credits it to God Himself (thus obviating the need for a blessing).
72 Thumma wamatāhu. B. adds Allāh. Yet one would have expected the letter to introduce the caliphs at this point (thumma wallāhu khaṭīfatahu or something similar): the khilāfa appears in the following line as something already introduced.
73 Reading yuḥāwīlu with B. and Ṣafwat for bi-hulūl.
upon them, and God was pleased with them for it (i.e. the caliphate) until Hishām died.74

Then the office75 passed to the enemy of God76 al-Walīd, the violator of sacred things on a scale not perpetrated by either a Muslim or an unbeliever [since both would desire] to preserve themselves from committing such things. And when [news of that] spread abroad and it became publicly known and misfortune was intensified and blood spilt on his account, and assets were taken wrongfully, along with [other] abominations which God will not let people commit for long, I went to him with77 the expectation that he would mend his ways78 and apologise to God and to the Muslims, disavowing his behaviour and the acts of disobedience to God which he had dared to commit, seeking from God the completion of that which I had in mind by way of setting straight the pillar of the religion and holding to that which is pleasing among its people. Ultimately, I came to79 an army [of men] whose breasts were enraged against the enemy of God, on account of what they had seen of his behaviour, for80 [this] enemy of God could not see any of God’s statutes without wanting to change them and act contrary to what God has revealed.81 He did this publicly, generally and quite openly. God placed no screen around it and [did] not [cause] anyone to doubt it. I mentioned to them what I loathed and what I feared by way of corruption of both the religion and this world, and I spurred them on to put their religion to rights and protect it, they [at first] being doubtful about that, having feared that they were merely saving themselves in what they were undertaking until I called upon them to change it.

Then they hastened to respond and God sent a deputation made up of the best82 of those of them possessed of religion and what is pleasing, and I sent ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. al-Ḥājjāj b. ‘Abd al-Malik in charge of them. (He went forth with them) until he met the enemy of God near a village83 called al-Bakhrā. They called upon him84 to set up a shūrā in which the Muslims85 might consider for themselves whom

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74 This sentence is missing in B.
75 Al-amr, cf. chapter 5. note 47.
76 ‘Adamw Allāh, to be contrasted with khalīfât Allāh.
77 B. reads bēda in place of m’dā.
78 Intizār murājā’atihī.
79 B. reads wājaqū in place of ataytū.
80 From this point to the end of the paragraph. B.’s account is much briefer and different in much of its wording.
81 I.e. a scriptural definition of sharā‘ī; but B. reads baddala ... amr Allāh wa-sunan nabīyyīhi.
82 Reading bi-khayrīhim in place of yukhbiruhum (the text of B. differs at this point).
83 B. adds min qurā Ḥims.
84 B. reads fa-da‘āhu in place of fa-da‘awhu.
85 B. reads fuqahā al-muslimīn wa-ṣulāḥāwhum.
to invest [with authority] from among those they agreed on; but the enemy of God did not agree to that. So, in ignorance of God, he hastened to attack them, but found that God is mighty and wise and that His grip is strong and painful. So God killed him for his evil behaviour and those of his agnates too who were with him, forming his vile retinue. They did not reach ten [in number], and the rest of those who were with him accepted the truth to which they were called. So God extinguished his jamrat and relieved His servants of him: good riddance to him and those who follow his path! I have desired to inform you of that, and to do so quickly, so that you may praise God and give thanks to Him. You are now in a prime position, since your rulers are from among your best men and equity is spread out for you, nothing being done contrary to it among you. So multiply your praise of your Lord for that and take the oath of allegiance [to the Commander of the Faithful] with Manṣūr b. Jumhūr, with whom I am satisfied for you, on the understanding that the compact of God and His covenant and the mightiest of what has been compacted and covenanted on any one of His creation are upon you. Listen to and obey me and whoever I may depute to succeed me from those upon whom the community agrees. You have the same undertaking from me: I shall act among you in accordance with the command of God and the sunna of His prophet, and I shall follow the way of the best of those who have gone before you. We ask God, our Lord and Master, for the best of His granting of success and the best of His decree.

86 B. omits the second part of this sentence (from 'whom to invest...').
87 B. omits this sentence.
88 B. omits this sentence.
89 Apparently a play on the two senses of the term: 'burning coal' and 'band'.
90 Reading bāyi‘ū (with B. and Ṣafwat) in place of tābi‘ū.
91 This is from B.
92 Who had been appointed by Yazūd to the governorship of Iraq.
93 From this point to the end of the paragraph, B.'s account is much briefer than that of Tab. and there is practically no coincidence of wording.