12 | Local Elites during Two Periods of Civil Strife: Al-Ashʿath b. Qays, Muḥammad b. al-Ashʿath, and the Quarter of Kinda in Seventh-Century Kufa

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This chapter contributes a micro-study of local elites during the two Islamic civil wars (*fitna*) of the seventh century to the overarching research into mechanisms and structures of social dependency in the early Islamic empire. By reconstructing the networks of al-Ashʿath b. Qays (d. after 41/661) and his son Muḥammad b. al-Ashʿath (d. 67/686), the preeminent leaders of the quarter of Kinda in Kufa for much of the seventh century, I will investigate the sources of authority at the disposal of local notables within the tribally formulated milieu of an early Islamic garrison town and the ties they needed to maintain to function as pivotal multipliers in interpersonal networks of patronage and mobilisation. Special attention will be given to the structures shaping the activities of these two Kindī power brokers during the first two civil wars when public authority and administrative control over the town were being contested.

During the reconstruction of these structures, there will be a special focus on the mechanisms deployed by Kindī and non-Kindī actors to establish, maintain, and contest the networks integrating the quarter of Kinda into the political, administrative, and military cityscape of seventh-century Kufa. While the source material for this micro-study will be drawn mainly from early and classical Arabic historiography, the resulting reconstruction of the structures and mechanisms of Kindī power brokers in Kufa will be integrated in an archaeologically and anthropologically informed reconstruction of the material environment of their quarter during the seventh century.

A Critical Assessment of the Centralisation of the Early Islamic Polity

> When they [the Arab-Islamic army after its victory at al-Qādisiyya] decided to begin the foundation of Kufa, [the Arab-Islamic general and paradigmatic first governor of Kufa] Saʿd [b. Abī Waqqāṣ] sent to Abū

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al-Hiyāj and notified him about the written command of [the second caliph] ʿUmar concerning the streets. He ordered the main streets to measure 40 cubits, the streets leading up to them 30 cubits, those between them 20 cubits, and the lanes to measure 7 cubits and no less. The wards (al-qaṭāʾiʿ)[1] were to measure 60 cubits with the exception of those of the Banū Ḍabba.

The notables (ahl al-raʾī) assembled to draw up a plan, until they determined a pattern according to which Abū al-Hiyāj was to establish the foundation. The first thing that was built in Kufa when they started construction was the mosque. It was situated in the area of the soap-sellers and date-merchants of the market, where it was laid out. Then a man stood in its middle and shot an arrow with all his strength to his right. He [Abū al-Hiyāj] ordered those who wanted to build [private buildings and houses] to construct them behind the spot where this arrow landed. Then [an arrow was shot] to the front and back, where he also ordered those who wanted to build to arrange their houses and buildings behind the spots where these two arrows had landed. Thus, the mosque was surrounded by a free square on all sides, having a shaded porch in front and no permanent structures on the sides or back.[2] This free square was established for the assembly of the people, to avoid them crowding each other. This was similar to the way in which the [other] mosques stood apart from the mosque of Mecca, so that its holiness would be underlined. Its shaded porch measured 200 cubits and was carried by marble columns, which had belonged to the Sassanian kings, while its ceiling was shaped like the ceilings of the Byzantine churches. They surrounded the court with a moat, so nobody could intrude upon it with a building.

Then they built a house for Saʿd in the area, which was connected to the mosque by a passageway of 200 cubits. Within this house, they built treasuries. This is the current keep of Kufa, which Rūzbah built for him with fired bricks that came from buildings of the Sassanian kings at

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[1] The interpretation of this term is somewhat controversial in this passage; see the discussion in Georg Leube, *Kinda in der frühislamischen Geschichte* (Würzburg: Ergon, 2017), 197.

[2] I read *laysat la-hā … maʿākhīr*, ʿ[the mosque] had no [permanent structures] on the […] back', interpreting *maʿākhīr* as a plural of the type *faʿālīlu* to the *nomen loci muʾakhkharun* or *muʾakhkharatun*, literally 'the place where something ends'. By contrast, the printed text reads *mawākhīru* as the plural to the (originally Persian) loanword *mākhūr*, 'wine palace, whore-house', and confirms this reading in a footnote. Due to the context, the reading as *maʿākhīru* is much to be preferred, as confirmed by the regular attestation of *muʾakhkharun* and *muʾakh-kharatun* as the term designating the parts of early Islamic mosques facing away from the direction of prayer (*qibla*). See e.g. Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, ed. ʿAlī Muḥammad ʿUmar (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqāfa al-Dīniyya, 2004), 159 [*muʾakhkharun*, al-Fusṭāṭ], or al-Bakrī, [*Kitāb*] al-*Masālik wa-l-mamālik*, ed. Jamāl Ṭalaba (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2003), 1:312 [*muʾakhkharatun*, Mecca] and 322 [*muʾakhkharun*, Medina], and 2:144 [muʾakhkharun, al-Fusṭāṭ].

al-Ḥīra. [The court around the mosque was made the starting point of the main streets, along which the tribally organised components of the army settled according to their tribal affiliation.][3]

This account of the foundation of Kufa, arguably the most important early Islamic garrison town manifesting Arab-Islamic dominance over the areas outside the Arabian Peninsula taken over during the early Islamic conquests, projects a clear notion of centralised hierarchy and state-run administration. Within the chain of command, ʿUmar (r. 13–23/634–44), as the caliph or successor of Muḥammad, gives orders based on his prestige as one of the closest companions of the prophet. He is presented as the embodiment of the normative presence of divinely sanctioned 'Islamic' normativity in the capital of Medina, literally the 'town of the prophet', in Western Arabia, which radiates into the newly conquered regions. In the above account, he represents the source of 'Islamic' authority on which Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ (d. ca. 50/670) draws as governor over central Iraq, as Saʿd owes his preeminent position to his appointment by the Medinese central authority embodied by ʿUmar. This dependence of Saʿd is reflected in his close adherence to ʿUmar's orders.

Due to these orders, Abū al-Hiyāj al-Asadī, who can be identified as a minor character in the deployment of the conquest of Iraq and an equally minor transmitter of Prophetic traditions (*ḥadīth*) from the fourth caliph ʿAlī (r. 35–40/656–61),[4] is entrusted with the practical direction of the town's foundation. The only prior mention of Abū al-Hiyāj in al-Ṭabarī's colossal work is as an envoy whom the people of the conquered fertile land under intensive cultivation (*sawād*) in Iraq sent to ʿUmar to voice some complaints.[5] Therefore, his authority during the foundation of Kufa depends on his appointment by ʿUmar, which drew on his prior selection as a spokesperson of Muslims in Iraq, rather than on an established preeminence of Abū al-Hiyāj as an influential leader of the armies of the conquest. This somewhat 'arbitrary' or possibly 'providential' appointment to high office of lower-ranking individuals by ʿUmar forms a recurring narrative

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[3] al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, eds. Muṣṭafā al-Sayyid and Ṭāriq Sālim (Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Tawfīqiyya, n.d.), 2:558–59.

[4] See Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt*, ed. Suhayl Sakkār (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1993), 263, and Ibn Saʿd, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭā (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2012), 6:245. This identification is, however, complicated as the father of Abū al-Hiyāj is called Mālik by al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh* 2:558, and Ḥuṣayn in Khalīfa, *Ṭabaqāt*, 263. As Khalīfa frequently gives alternative names in the genealogies of his transmitters, the same Abū al-Hiyāj al-Asadī may nonetheless be intended.

[5] al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, 2:509–10.

pattern in early and classical Arabic-Islamic historiography. This is also reflected, for instance, in the appointment of Shurayḥ, a young fatherless lad living with his mother in Medina, as judge (*qāḍī*) in Kufa, which is similarly attributed to ʿUmar.[6]

This recurring pattern of caliphal appointment of 'nobodies' to high office arguably reinforces a vision of early Islamic conquest society as solidly centralised and firmly led from Medina. Loyalty is presented as owed exclusively to the centralised government and its provincial appointees, as other claims to loyalty and preeminence (most notably those based on noble descent and personal wealth and aptitude) are explicitly delegated to the realm of the 'pagan' pre-Islamic 'time of ignorance' (*jāhiliyya*).[7]

In his role as chief engineer directing the foundation of Kufa, Abū al-Hiyāj works together with a council of notables who unquestioningly accept his direction of the colossal foundation project. They are also presented as following the caliphal order to the letter, and presumably mirror an equally hierarchy-conscious agreement of the essentially homogenous people who were to settle the town. The succession of the 'Islamic' state centred on Medina to the equally stable, centralised, and ordered 'states' of the Sassanians and Byzantines is emblematically represented in the deployment of materials from Sassanian imperial architecture and Byzantine models of the construction of ceilings during the construction of the specifically Islamic mosque at the centre of the new town.[8]
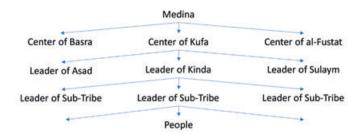
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[6] Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 6:183, and al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, eds. ʿAbd al-Amīr ʿAlī Muhannā, Samīr Yūsuf Jābir, and Yūsuf ʿAlī Ṭawīl (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2008), 17:217–18. See also Leube, *Kinda*, 162–64.

[7] See e.g. the statement by Shurayḥ, the judge (*qāḍī*) supposedly appointed by ʿUmar for Kufa, in which he negates the importance of tribal affiliation in Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 6:183.

[8] A comprehensive study on the conscious redeployment of architectural elements in seventh-century mosques waits to be written. The multidimensional significance of such a redeployment of visible spolia in (much later) mosques on the Indian subcontinent is explored exemplarily by Finbarr B. Flood, 'Pillars, Palimpsests, and Princely Practices: Translating the Past in Sultanate Delhi', in *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 43 (2003): 95–116. The significance and inherent multiplicity of practices of spoliation has recently been demonstrated within the Islamicate (if the term may be used this early) world for three salient examples of seventh-century Armenian architecture; see Christina Maranci, *Vigilant Powers: Three Churches of Early Medieval Armenia* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015). For the first century of Islamic history, the redeployment of the former idol of Dhū l-Khalaṣa as the threshold of the mosque of Tabāla may constitute a parallel case that is located on the Arabian Peninsula. See Ibn al-Kalbī, *Kitāb al-Aṣnām*, ms. Cairo Makhṭūṭāt Tawfīqiyya 344, 32. The most prominent instance in which Sassanian remains were integrated in central Iraq immediately after the Muslim conquest is the temporary holding of prayer under the great Īwān of Kisrā in al-Madāʾin/Ktesiphon. See Sarah Bowen Savant, 'Forgetting Ctesiphon: Iran's Pre-Islamic Past, c. 800–1100', in *History and Identity in the Late Antique Near East*, ed. Philip Wood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 169–86.

The command structure that directs the foundation of Kufa is accordingly rooted in the general acceptance of centralised institutions as embodied in provincial governors, task-specific specialists, and detailed directives for the administration of the conquered lands. This paradigm of loyalty to normatively Islamic and centralised institutions and ideas ties in very well with other paradigmatic accounts reflecting early Islamic centralisation. These include the institution of the 'register of stipends' (*dīwān*) of the army that contains every Arab-Islamic fighter within the thereby constituted army,[9] the centralised designation of governors and judges for the newly founded garrison towns,[10] or even the centrally directed establishment of these towns at localities which are not cut off from Medina by any larger body of water.[11]

To illustrate this entangledness of centralised administration with a centralised urban structure established in the newly founded garrison towns, I suggest Figure 12.1. According to this view, the administrative hierarchy of the early Islamic state under ʿUmar can be read as a highly abstract geographical map of the early Islamic domains. It is structured according to a fractal order of hierarchic relations recurring on different levels. Thus, the caliph in the Islamic capital of Medina directs the governors in the subordinate centres of Basra, Kufa, or al-Fusṭāṭ in the same way as, for instance, the governor residing in the centre of Kufa directs the leaders of different tribally organised quarters, who reside in the centre of their quarters, surrounding the residence of the governor in the centre of the town. This administrative and urban framework also has important implications both

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[9]   See Gerd-Rüdiger Puin, 'Der Dīwān von ʿUmar ibn al-Ḫaṭṭāb: Ein Beitrag zur frühislamischen Verwaltungsgeschichte' (PhD Dissertation, Rheinischen Friedrich Wilhelms Universität Bonn, 1970).

[10] See e.g. the story of Shurayḥ mentioned above; further examples abound.

[11] For instance Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ*, 115. The importance of this type of anecdote in the construction of specifically Islamic spaces has been investigated exemplarily for (much later) Anatolia and the Balkans; see Oya Pancaroğlu, 'The Itinerant Dragon-Slayer: Forging Paths of Image and Identity in Medieval Anatolia', *Gesta* 43 (2004): 151–64, as well as Cemal Kafadar, 'Introduction: A Rome of One's Own: Reflections on Cultural Geography and Identity in the Lands of Rum', *Muqarnas* 24 (2007), 7–25. For the first century of Islamic history, a lively debate about the factual extent of central planning has been ongoing since at least the publication of Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena zur ältesten Geschichte des Islams* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1899). A useful overview of the debate is given by Fred M. Donner (ed.), *The Expansion of the Early Islamic State* (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 2008). I provided a critical revision of some difficulties resulting from Donner's own view on this topic in 'Subversive Philology? Prosopography as a Relational and Corpus-Based Approach to Early Islamic History', in *New Methods in the Study of Islam*, eds. Abbas Aghdassi and Aaron Hughes (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022), 71–107.

Visualization I:

- All authority derives from the authority of Muhammad (exclusively „Islamic" normativity).
- Islamic Normativity is invested exclusively in the center and radiating along institutionalized paths.
- Administrative hierarchies are reflected in a hierarchized, orthogonal framework of urban planning.
- Contestative strategies can exclusively be deployed via the central authority of Medina (complaints, coups).
- ‚Muslims' as ‚the public' are essentially homogenous and deployed along centralized-institutionalized lines.

Figure 12.1 The seat of power in the early Islamic garrison towns according to the centralised-hierarchised model.

for operative concepts of authority within the early Islamic community and the homogeneity of Muslims within this community.

While this view of a fundamentally centralised administration of an early Islamic realm is upheld by some of the most influential studies of early Islamic Kufa[12] and has frequently been used in reconstructions of early Islamic history in general, it is difficult to reconcile this clear-cut central-ised institutionalism with findings deriving from more specific contexts. Pertaining specifically to the following discussion of the quarter of Kinda, three arguments are particularly difficult to reconcile with the institution-alised view of early Islamic history sketched above.

First, a close-reading of additional reports quoted by early and classical Arabic-Islamic historians such as al-Balādhurī (d. 279/892), Ibn Aʿtham (fl. ca. 285/900), and al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) himself, which describe events from the time of the foundation and the first century of Islamic history, allows the detailed reconstruction of an urban topography of the quarter of Kinda. This micro-topography is difficult or even impossible to reconcile with the symmetrical urban structure that al-Ṭabarī's account translated

[12] See Louis Massignon, 'Explication du Plan de Kufa (Irak)', *Mémoires de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire* 68 (1935): 338–60, Kāẓim al-Janābī, *Masjid al-Kūfa: Takhṭīṭuhū wa-ʿUmrānuhū* (Baghdad: Dār al-Jumhuriyya, 1966), Michael G. Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), and Hichem Djaït, *Al-Kūfa: Naissance de la ville islamique* (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 1986).

above presents as reflecting the centralised institutions of the early Islamic state.[13]

Second, although the existence of further reports corroborating a 'centralised' view of early Islamic administration has to be noted, recent studies of individual tribally formulated networks within the early Islamic realm have suggested a greater degree of regional autonomy, particularly during the conquest of Iraq, in the first half of the seventh century. These were followed by gradual processes of consolidation centred on Greater Syria rather than the Western Arabian 'capital' of Medina, which reached a first culmination under ʿAbdalmalik after the end of the second civil war.[14] This process of political and administrative consolidation was paralleled and extended beyond the period of Umayyad rule by a greater interest in the 'central' and 'Islamic' aspects of early Islamic history during the *longue durée* of processes of transmission and memory building in Muslim societies.[15] Both trends suggest that the society of the immediate conquest period may have been much less 'centralised' or 'Islamically oriented' than later generations of Muslims living in different social and administrative frameworks might have thought.

Accordingly, the contradiction between 'centralised' and 'autonomous' conceptions of early Islamic society, which are both attested within the vast corpus of early and classical Arabic-Islamic historiography, can be explained as reflecting the interferences between referential and normative functions of historical memory during the process of

[13] These accounts will be discussed and analysed in the following sections of this contribution, cf. Leube, *Kinda*, 197–211.

[14] See Brian Ulrich, *Arabs in the Early Islamic Empire: Exploring al-Azd Tribal Identity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 68–115, for Azdīs in Basra in particular, and Leube, *Kinda*, 139–76, for an examination of the degree of centralisation in the entire Islamic realm as reflected in the involvement in the early Islamic conquests of individuals affiliated to Kinda.

[15] A current overview of the field of memory studies within the pre-industrial greater Mediterranean is given by Aaltje Hidding, *The Era of the Martyrs: Remembering the Great Persecution in Late Antique Egypt* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020). A sustained engagement with paradigmatic shifts in Muslim cultural memory was pioneered by Antoine Borrut, *Entre mémoire et pouvoir: L'espace syrien sous les derniers Omeyyades et les premiers Abbasides (v. 72–193/692–809)* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), cf. Leube, *Kinda*, 135–38 and 143–44, for the theoretical impact of narrative dynamics during a process of transmission that needs to depart from the modelling suggested for textual sources in classical and medieval European philology. In a forthcoming article, I argue that an understanding of the dynamic negotiation of Muslim cultural memory should also include investigations of the unresolved ambivalence of 'recurring but minor' figures like al-Ashʿath b. Qays, see Georg Leube, 'Resolving Ambivalence through (Claimed) Excommunication: The Depiction of al-Ashʿath b. Qays in Early and Classical Arabic-Islamic Historiography', *al-Masāq* 35 (2022): 34–53.

transmission.[16] This may allow the nuanced application of the philological maxim of the so-called *lectio difficilior*, according to which information that contradicts normative standards may in some cases be more likely to be original. Seen from this perspective, it is precisely due to the uniformity and homogeneity of reports describing clear-cut institutionalised relations centred on Medina that their description as a narrative pattern impressed upon the material during the process of transmission becomes feasible.[17] By contrast, the information transmitted as 'trivial' and somewhat 'messy' detail surrounding multiple individual episodes of Islamic history that happened to take place in Kufa may in fact allow the reconstruction of an urban and administrative framework that is closer to 'historical truth'.

Finally, the 'principle of methodological individualism' states that the agency of institutions should be understood as the combined agency of individuals acting from within these institutions.[18] This principle ties in surprisingly well with the findings of Mottahedeh concerning loyalty and leadership during the early Abbasid period, where he suggests that loyalty is directed predominantly at persons, rather than towards institutions.[19] This has been further elaborated by Paul in his investigation of the importance of intermediaries between 'state' and 'society' in pre-Mongol Eastern Iran and Transoxania.[20] The specific positionality of such locally embedded intermediaries in their interactions with 'would-be-centralised' agents has been further explored by Franz.[21] A contribution by me has suggested a systemic approach to the *Freiheitsgrade* of Kindī leaders embedded in interpersonal

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[16] Cf. the groundbreaking work of Albrecht Noth on 'topoi' or (in his view) counterfactual narrative patterns projected into early and classical Arabic-Islamic historiography of early Islamic history, Albrecht Noth, *Quellenkritische Studien zu Themen, Formen und Tendenzen frühislamischer Geschichtsüberlieferung, I: Themen und Formen* (Bonn: Selbstverlag des Orientalischen Seminars der Universität Bonn, 1973). A revised English version was published by Albrecht Noth and Lawrence I. Conrad, *The Early Arabic Historiographical Tradition: A Source-Critical Study*, trans. Michael Bonner (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1994). While Noth implicitly subscribed to the view that these topoi had to be 'discarded' to arrive at 'historic' truth, I have made a sustained argument for the crucial importance of such narrative patterns to understanding the impact of narrative dynamics during the process of transmission of Muslim cultural memory, see Leube, *Kinda*, 51–138.

[17] See Leube, *Kinda*, 174–76.

[18] This principle was developed by Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Das Wesen und der Hauptinhalt der theoretischen Nationalökonomie* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1970), 88–98.

[19] Roy Parviz Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

[20] Jürgen Paul, *Herrscher, Gemeinwesen, Vermittler* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1996).

[21] Kurt Franz, *Vom Beutezug zur Territorialherrschaft* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2007).

networks of mobilisation and patronage within the social history of the early Islamic empire during the seventh century.[22] Accordingly, scholarship needs to engage with the 'messy' details of interpersonal relationships as described in early and classical Arabic-Islamic historiographical sources to understand Muslim society in the seventh century. This approach of 'building from the ground' is particularly important due to the well-known fluidity and openness during this time of terms that would subsequently become pivotal and stabilised in Islamic normative traditions.

These three arguments illustrate the problems posed on progressively more overarching levels by the assumption of an institutionalised-centralised administration of the early Islamic realm. In reaction, the present contribution suggests a modified adaptation of the philological criterion of the *lectio difficilior*. Therefore, I leave aside the large-scale narratives particularly susceptible to narrative alteration and embellishment due to the importance of early Islamic history as a pivotal cultural memory anchoring various views of Islam to this day. Instead, I analyse the structures and mechanisms of social dependency as they can be reconstructed from the exemplary micro-level of the quarter of Kinda in Kufa. The results of this exemplary 'topographical' investigation of Kinda certainly need to be checked for other contexts. Nonetheless, the importance of seventh-century Kufa in Arabic-Islamic historiography and cultural memory means that the prosopographically established corpus of information explicitly related to Kinda in Kufa contains around 500–1,000 reports, representing a sizable amount of information not selected according to a predetermined view of social dependency and early Islamic society. This corpus furthermore largely represents a micro-level of cultural memory that may (according to the above-mentioned principle of the *lectio difficilior*) not be as susceptible to post-factum alterations in the course of narrative transmission as the more visible general reports. Furthermore, the implicit character of the information evaluated in this study is for large parts integral to how the course of events is depicted. Thereby, it arguably pertains to a specific register of historiographical narrative that can be differentiated from stereotypical or idealising reports, which are not 'anchored' in the course of events and may have been more susceptible to narrative alteration during the process of transmission.

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[22] Georg Leube, 'Insult the Caliph, Marry al-Ḥasan, and Redeem Your Kingdom: *Freiheitsgrade* of Kindī Elites during the 7th to 9th Century', in *Transregional and Regional Elites – Connecting the Early Islamic Empire*, eds. Hannah-Lena Hagemann and Stefan Heidemann (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), 47–67.

Topography I: Establishment and Reconstruction

In this contribution, I argue that the topography of the quarter of Kinda in Kufa can in certain crucial aspects be reconstructed by a careful and archaeologically informed combination of the various specific reports pertaining to this section of the town. In this first part, I will give a brief overview of the foundation of this quarter and its material and spatial set-up. Subsequently, I will deploy this reconstructed townscape in the following part to analyse its implications for structures and mechanisms of social dependency.

The settlement of people affiliated to Kinda during the foundation of Kufa is narrated as being closely tied to the person of al-Ashʿath b. Qays al-Kindī. Before the foundation, he is prominently depicted as commander of Kinda during the decisive Battle of al-Qādisiyya. While the role of al-Ashʿath during the Arab-Islamic conquest of Iraq is somewhat contested due to his prior involvement in the movement of apostasy (*ridda*) after the death of Muḥammad,[23] his influence on the topography of Kufa is well attested. Possibly the most detailed example is given by the historian al-Yaʿqūbī (d. after 292/905) who, immediately after describing the settlement of the 'centrally' legitimated general and governor Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ in the centre of Kufa, writes as follows: 'Then, al-Ashʿath settled the free space (*jabbāna*)[24] of Kinda and Kinda settled around him'.[25] This settlement of al-Ashʿath left a topographical imprint in the form of a house and a mosque (*masjid*) tied to his name, which will be discussed in detail below. The intergenerational inheritance of al-Ashʿath's claim to preeminence within the quarter of Kinda in Kufa, as well as his interpersonal networks, is suggested by the indication that his descendants inherited the house, which will be discussed below as well.

This settlement of 'Kinda' around al-Ashʿath should not be understood in genealogical terms as the settlement of a 'clan' or 'tribe' based exclusively on common patrilineal descent.[26] Instead, the quarter of Kinda should be

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[23] See Leube, *Kinda*, 154–62, for a detailed discussion of the leadership of Kinda during the conquest of Iraq.

[24] The precise nature of this 'free space' within or bordering the quarter of Kinda in Kufa is somewhat elusive. It will be discussed in its functionalisation within the structures and mechanisms of social dependency below.

[25] al-Yaʿqūbī, *Tārīkh*, ed. Khalīl al-Manṣūr (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2002), 104.

[26] For a general critique of suggestions that genealogical descent was perceived to have been shared by more and less influential individuals within 'tribally' formulated networks, see David Sneath, *The Headless State: Aristocratic Orders, Kinship Society, and Misrepresentations of Nomadic Inner Asia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

understood in terms of a neighbourhood inhabited by a network of affiliates to al-Ashʿath and other Kindī mobilisers and multipliers, who are described collectively as 'Kinda' or gathering around the 'flag of Kinda' in times of military mobilisation.[27] The inclusion of individuals of non-Kindī descent within this network localised in the quarter of Kinda is exemplarily shown in the following anecdote. Here, a young man affiliated to Ḥaḍramawt, a genealogical grouping based on the geographical region in the southern Arabian Peninsula,[28] comes to the house of the family of al-Ashʿath to notify them that a fugitive from the governor hiding inside the quarter of Kinda of Kufa is currently in the house of his (the young man's) mother. The affiliation of this woman with the family of al-Ashʿath is narrated in terms of her having been a client (*mawlāt*), or slave (*umm walad*) of al-Ashʿath named Ṭawʿa, who married her to a man from (or affiliated to) Ḥaḍramawt, who is named Asīd al-Ḥaḍramī.[29]

Further inhomogeneity within the quarter of Kinda is indicated by the existence of toponyms and buildings that are related to subtribes of Kinda. I suggest interpreting these as *nuclei* of smaller-scale networks that could be incorporated within overarching networks, such as the one of al-Ashʿath, but also realigned depending on the predominating political or economic configurations within the quarter of Kinda or even within Kufa in its entirety. Such a realignment of networks could, for instance, take place during the neuralgic time of intergenerational succession within the progeny of a formerly established leader. This is attested, for instance, in reports of Ḥujr b. ʿAdī (d. 50/671), another prominent Kindī in Kufa who will be discussed in more detail below, declining the offer of the caliph ʿAlī

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[27] Cf. the parallel reconstruction of the integration of Muslim converts of non-Arab origin (*mawālī*) in the interpersonal networks of al-Fusṭāṭ by Sobhi Bouderbala, 'Les Mawālī à Fusṭāṭ aux deux premiers siècles de l'Islam et leur integration sociale', in *Les dynamiques de l'Islamisation en méditerranée centrale et en Sicile: Nouvelles propositions et découvertes récentes*, eds. Annliese Nef and Fabiola Ardizzone (Rome: Edipuglia, 2014), 141–51.

[28] For this phenomenon, see Werner Caskel and Gert Strenziok, *Ǧamharat an-Nasab* (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 2:66.

[29] See Abū Mikhnaf, *Maqtal al-Imām al-Ḥusayn*, ed. Kāmil Salmān al-Jabūrī (Beirut: Dār al-Majalla al-Bayḍā, 2000), 70; al-Iṣfahānī, *Maqātil al-ṭālibiyyīn*, ed. al-Sayyid Aḥmad Ṣaqar (Cairo: Al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, n.d.), 102; al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, 3:312. Variants are contained in Ibn Aʿtham, *Kitāb al-Futūḥ*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAbdalmuʾīd Khān (Hyderabad: Majlis Dāʾirat al-Maʿārif al-ʿUthmāniyya, 1968-75), 5:88, and al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab*, ed. Mufīd Muḥammad Qamīḥa (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1985), 3:72. The various views concerning the inclusion or exclusion of the genealogical grouping of Ḥaḍramawt within Kinda are reviewed in Leube, *Kinda*, 186–89.

(r. 35–40/656–60) to take over the leadership of Kinda from al-Ashʿath while the latter was still alive.[30]

In a similar manner, evidence exists of al-Ashʿath consciously strategising to enlarge his network of mobilisation and patronage to include other sizable tribally formulated entities beside Kinda. As well as the discussions of whether al-Ashʿath is entitled to lead the whole body of the army affiliated to Rabīʿa,[31] this phenomenon may also underlie his assumption of the role as speaker and negotiator on behalf of the 'pious readers of the Qurʾan' (qurrāʾ) and future Khārijites at the Battle of Ṣiffīn.[32]

The spatial establishment of an interpersonal network described in the sources under a genealogical paradigm as 'Kinda' around al-Ashʿath in Kufa is to some extent paralleled by the settlement of 'Kindīs' or – more precisely – individuals included in al-Ashʿath's interpersonal network of mobilisation and patronage at the town of Sarā in Ādharbayjān, probably identical with the contemporary Iranian town of Sarāb. As the historian al-Balādhurī claimed, some Kindīs from this town told him that they were 'descendants of those who were with al-Ashʿath', presumably referring to settlement during his conquests/raids within or governorship over Ādharbayjān or even over Armīniyya and Ādharbayjān together.[33]

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[30] al-Dīnawarī, *Kitāb al-Akhbār al-ṭiwāl*, ed. ʿUmar Fārūq al-Ṭabbāʿ (Beirut: Dār al-Arqam b. Abī al-Arqam, 1995), 207.

[31] For this claim in relation to the Battle of Ṣiffīn, see Ibn Aʿtham, *Futūḥ*, 3:105–107, and Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Kitāb Waqʿat Ṣiffīn*, ed. ʿAbd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn (Najaf: Maktabat Āyatallāh al-ʿUẓmā al-Marʿashī al-Najafī, 1998), 137–40. A comprehensive discussion of the relationship of Kinda to other Arab networks formulated in a terminology of genealogical descent is given in Leube, *Kinda*, 101–10.

[32] al-Balādhurī, *Kitāb Ansāb al-ashrāf*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥammad Tāmir (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2011), 2:108 and 203; al-Dīnawarī, *Kitāb al-Akhbār al-ṭiwāl*, 205; Ibn Aʿtham, *Futūḥ*, 4:1–4; al-Maqdisī, *Kitāb al-Badʾ wa-l-tārīkh* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqāfa al-Dīniyya, s.d), 5:220; al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj*, 2:433; Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Waqʿat Ṣiffīn*, 499–500; al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, 3:118–21, and al-Yaʿqūbī, *Tārīkh*, 2:131. For the 'readers of the Qurʾan' (qurrāʾ) in the context of the rebellion of al-Ashʿath's grandson, known as Ibn al-Ashʿath, see Redwan Sayed, *Die Revolte des Ibn al-Ašʿaṯ und die Koranleser: Ein Beitrag zur Religions- und Sozialgeschichte der frühen Umayyadenzeit* (Freiburg: Klaus Schwarz, 1977).

[33] See al-Balādhurī, *Kitāb Futūḥ al-buldān*, ed. Ayman Muḥammad ʿArafa (Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Tawfīqiyya, s.d.), 245, 372–74, and 376; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 2:88, 162, and 227; al-Dīnawarī, *Kitāb al-Akhbār al-ṭiwāl*, 147; Ibn Aʿtham, *Futūḥ*, 2:116, 363 and 367–71; Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Waqʿat Ṣiffīn*, 20-24; al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, 2:734 and 793, and 3:168, and al-Yaʿqūbī, *Tārīkh*, 2:139. The factual stability of early Islamic 'governorship' over Ādharbayjān and Armīniyya that could be understood to be implied by these sources is contested by Alison Vacca, *Non-Muslim Provinces under Early Islam: Islamic Rule and Iranian Legitimacy in Armenia and Caucasian Albania* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017). In any case, 'governorship over the province of X' and 'leadership of a raid in the rough vicinity of X' should be seen as the extreme points of a continuum of modes of Muslim presence during the early Islamic conquests.

The extension of these networks focussed on al-Ashʿath and his progeny beyond the perimeter of the urban cityscape of Kufa becomes tangible in two landed estates at Shumārā[34] and Ṭīzanābād.[35] While the prior history of Shumārā is unclear, Ṭīzanābād is mentioned in pre-Islamic times as a raidable estate in the possession of the Sassanian King or his notables,[36] before coming into the possession of al-Ashʿath during the rule of the third caliph ʿUthmān (r. 23–35/644–56),[37] possibly in exchange for some landed estates which he owned in Ḥaḍramawt.[38] This estate was later inherited by the descendants of al-Ashʿath, as will be discussed below.[39] Although this is not explicitly stated, these and similar estates probably served as a source of economic capital that was used in establishing and maintaining the interpersonal networks of mobilisation and patronage that under-pinned the leadership within 'Kinda' in Kufa exercised by al-Ashʿath and his descendants.[40]

Before sketching a possible reconstruction of the material topography of the quarter of Kinda in Kufa, some methodological aspects need to be clarified. The reconstruction of the quarter of Kinda in Kufa and structures and mechanisms of social dependency within it is based on the methodo-logical assumption of fundamentally stable (or at least continuously devel-oping) patterns of settlement and social dependency in Kufa during the first three generations of Islamic history. This assumption is corroborated by the explicit reference to landmarks visible and obviously well-known during the lifetime of the 'authors' of the early and classical Arabic-Islamic accounts some centuries after the events, such as 'the area of the soap-sellers and date-merchants of the market' in the account of the foundation of Kufa translated at the beginning of this article.[41] However, this stability

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[34] al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, 5:189–90.

[35] A sceptical evaluation of the archaeological record that could be used to corroborate these items of textual information is given by Michael G. Morony, 'Land Use and Settlement Patterns in Late Sasanian and Early Islamic Iraq', in *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East II: Land Use and Settlement Patterns*, eds. Geoffrey R. D. King and Averil Cameron (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1994), 221–29.

[36] A pre-Islamic raid of the site by 'Arabs' is mentioned in al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī* 24, 57–58, while al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, 317–18, reports that it had been in the possession of the Sassanian King or his notables before being given to al-Ashʿath by the caliph ʿUthmān. See al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, 328, for a derivation of the toponym from the names of pre-Islamic Arabs.

[37] al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, 317–18.

[38] al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, 2:704.

[39] al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, 3:510.

[40] See Leube, *Kinda*, 210.

[41] al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, 2:558–59. Similar references to landmarks contemporary to the time of nar-ration to anchor early Islamic cityscapes are contained, for instance, in the description of the

of patterns of settlement in the Islamic garrison towns also means that it is ultimately impossible to decide with absolute certainty whether a particular aspect of the topography mentioned in the context of al-Ashʿath and his children in Kufa indeed belongs to this early Islamic period, or should rather be interpreted as a plausible interpolation that entered the report during the process of transmission (and discussion) of cultural memories in later Muslim communities.

The assumption of a fundamentally homogeneous development of the settlement patterns within the quarter of Kinda in Kufa also means that changes in building materials and techniques are interpreted as processes of technological diffusion that took place over a period of time. This assumption accordingly necessitates interpretation of reports describing a sequence of building materials that were successively found to be disadvantageous, forcing 'central' authority personified in the caliph ʿUmar to allow the inhabitants of Kufa and Basra to use alternative materials,[42] as a narrative *topos* deployed during the process of transmission of Muslim cultural memory. Conversely, the methodological assumption of a continuous development in the settlement patterns within the quarter of Kinda in Kufa privileges a paradigm of autonomous and decentralised evolution and technological diffusion against the normative view of early Islamic settlement outside the Arabian Peninsula as firmly controlled by the agents of central authority situated at the caliphal 'court' of Medina.

This methodological stance is particularly important in light of the inconclusiveness of archaeological investigation in Kufa, as reflected in the major disagreement in secondary literature regarding the interpretation of the findings. On the one hand, Donner cites the archaeological work at Kufa as proving the existence of effective centralised planning,[43] while Kennedy and Wirth both argue that the material remains at Kufa are useless for the early Islamic period.[44] This inconclusiveness of the archaeological report at Kufa can only to a small part be emended on the basis of the somewhat clearer (if

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cityscape of al-Fusṭāṭ given by Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ*, 115–55, and of Kufa and Basra in al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, 319–32 and 392–415.

[42] See e.g. ʿUmar's sequential grant of permission to use reed as a building material within the camps and his subsequent permission to build with unfired bricks to counter the danger of devastating fires, al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, 2:558.

[43] Fred M. Donner, *The Arab Tribes in the Muslim Conquest of Iraq* (PhD Dissertation, Princeton University, 1975), 140–41, and Fred M. Donner, *The Early Islamic Conquests* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 228.

[44] Hugh Kennedy, 'From Polis to Madina: Urban Change in Late Antique and Early Islamic Syria', *Past and Present* 106 (1985): 17, and Eugen Wirth, *Die Orientalische Stadt im islamischen Vorderasien und Nordafrika* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 2000), 1:42.

certainly not unproblematic) archaeological findings at the contemporary Egyptian early Islamic garrison town of al-Fusṭāṭ.[45] Conversely, the centralised plans of later Umayyad foundations such as ʿAnjar and Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Sharqī in Greater Syria were shaped by a markedly different institutional and administrative context.[46] This Umayyad institutional and administrative context does, however, resonate remarkably well with the normative vision of an institutionalised and centralised direction of the foundation of early Islamic towns presented above. From an urbanistic point of view, therefore, the (Marwānid) Umayyad period constitutes a plausible starting point for 'centralising' narrative interferences with memories of the early Islamic conquests and the foundation of the early Islamic garrison towns of Kufa, Basra, and al-Fusṭāṭ.[47]

Notwithstanding these methodological *caveats*, the material topography that can be reconstructed by inference from the numerous reports of events that took place in the quarter of Kinda in Kufa is internally consistent and fits well into the general material environment of the early Islamic garrison towns of the seventh century. According to this 'incidentally inferred' topography, houses (*dār*) were constructed of mud bricks (*labin*) and consisted of multiple rooms (*buyūt*). Apart from the private quarters used by the permanent residents, which are usually not described in detail, references also indicate that additional rooms were used for storage or to shelter guests. These were grouped around an internal court, from which they were accessed, while their external walls formed the external walls of the house.

[45] See Wladyslaw B. Kubiak, *Al-Fustat* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1987). See also ʿAbd Allāh Khurshīd al-Barrī, *Al-Qabāʾil al-ʿArabiyya fī Miṣr fī al-qurūn al-thalātha al-ūlā li-l-Hijra* (Cairo: Al-Hayʾa al-Miṣriyya al-ʿAmma li-l-Kitāb, 1992); George T. Scanlon, 'Al-Fusṭāṭ: The Riddle of the Earliest Settlement', in *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East II: Land Use and Settlement Patterns*, eds. Geoffrey R. D. King and Averil Cameron (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1994), 171–79; Roland-Pierre Gayraud, 'Fostat: Évolution d'une capitale Arabe du VIIe au XIIe siècle d'après les fouilles d'Istabl ʿAntar', in *Colloque international d'archéologie islamique*, ed. Roland-Pierre Gayraud (Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1998), 435–60.

[46] For an introduction into the complex interpretation of these orthogonal foundations as 'urban centers', 'way stations', 'palaces', or 'places of refuge', see Robert Hillenbrand, 'ʿAnjar and Early Islamic Urbanism', in *The Idea and Ideal of the Town between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, eds. Gian Pietro Brogiolo and Bryan Ward-Perkins (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 59–98.

[47] The importance of the Marwānid period for processes of consolidation of Islam and the early Islamic empire has long been recognised in several fields. An exemplary discussion of this question has been undertaken for so-called 'Islamic law', see the authorative and complementary surveys by Noel J. Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1964) and Joseph Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964). For the current state of the debate, see the work of my esteemed teacher Benjamin Jokisch, *Islamic Imperial Law* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2007).

This court is separated from the more or less public sphere (see below) of the streets by a gate (*bāb*), which forms the main area of interaction between the house, frequently portrayed as a sphere dominated by women, and the streets, which are commonly dominated by men.[48] The floor plan of the houses appears to have been roughly orthogonal, as suggested by the existence of terraces (*saṭḥ*, plural *suṭūḥ*) on the roof.[49] These terraces appear to have covered the whole area of the rooms surrounding the court, as suggested by their external accessibility by means of ladders or neighbouring buildings.

This external access to the terraces on the roof is explicitly mentioned in the story of the successful and obstinate defence of the gate (and thereby, according to the reconstruction suggested above, also of the internal court) of the house of Ṭawʿa inside the quarter of Kinda by the fugitive Muslim b. ʿAqīl. In his case, the troops of the governor climbed the house's roof terraces and threw stones and burning reed at Muslim, ultimately forcing him to come to the street where he was brought down.[50] The use of burning reed (*qaṣab*) to smoke Muslim out also attests both to the availability of reed within the quarter of Kinda in Kufa and to its construction with fireproof materials, as the throwing of burning bundles of reed in a quarter constructed of reed or other flammable materials would likely have caused a disastrous conflagration.

Goods attested as stored in the rooms of such houses within the quarter of Kinda include water (probably brought from the Euphrates river or collected in cisterns), as well as oil (as inferred from Ṭawʿa bringing Muslim a lamp)[51] and food. In the story of Muslim's hiding in the house of Ṭawʿa, she also covers the ground with mats or straw for him to sleep on (*farashat*

[48] See e.g. the accounts of the fugitive Muslim b. ʿAqīl talking to Ṭawʿa at the gate of her house (Abū Mikhnaf, *Maqtal*, 70, al-Dīnawarī, *Kitāb al-Akhbār al-ṭiwāl*, 253; Ibn Aʿtham, *Futūḥ*, 5:89; al-Iṣfahānī, *Maqātil*, 102, and al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, 3:312) and of the Kindī poet and judge (*qāḍī*) Shurayḥ, who narrates the story of how he met his future wife sitting under a porch in front of her house (al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, 17:221); cf. the discussion in Leube, *Kinda*, 208–10. The second story is, however, situated in the quarter of the Banū Tamīm in Kufa, rather than the quarter of Kinda.

[49] This roughly orthogonal plan of the houses should be envisioned as being connected by irregular and wandering 'streets', cf. Gayraud, 'Fostat', 438 and fig. 2. on page 455, also reproduced in colour on the cover of the edited volume, and the photograph and plans of the excavations published by Roland-Pierre Gayraud and Lucy Vallauri, *Fustat II: Fouilles d'Isṭabl ʿAntar: Céramiques d'ensembles des IXe et Xe siècles* (Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 2017), 10–11.

[50] See the discussion of the multiple versions of Muslim's flight in Leube, *Kinda*, 202–203.

[51] Ibn Aʿtham, *Kitāb al-Futūḥ*, 5, 89.

lahū),[52] which also appear to have been stored in one of the rooms. In the story of Shurayḥ meeting his future wife, wine (*nabīdh*), milk (*laban*), and water are offered as refreshments by the women sitting under the porch in front of their house.[53] Although the choice between these three drinks constitutes a topos of 'evaluative hospitality' that also appears, for instance, in the story of Muḥammad's miraculous journey to heaven,[54] the plausibility of the story hinges on the plausibility of all three drinks being simultaneously present in a well-managed household.[55] The storage of these goods in all likelihood took place in clay jars or skins, as suggested by the archaeologically and textually attested material environment of the pre-modern Islamicate Middle East.

This type of individual house is embedded in a texture of more or less public passages, which combine to form the 'graded' public sphere typical of pre-modern 'Oriental' towns.[56] I interpret the attested gates (*abwāb*) controlling access to some of these passages as marking some of the more prominent points of transition between more 'public' and more 'private' parts of the armature of early Islamic Kufa,[57] even if most transitions between different levels of 'public sphere' were certainly gradual rather than sharply localised by means of gates or other architectural markers. Within the quarter of Kinda, explicit references attest to the existence of the 'gates of Kinda' as markers of urban topography, which appear to delimit the quarter of Kinda as a whole against the 'relatively more public' sphere surrounding the great mosque of Kufa.[58] Other zones of transition between more and less public

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[52] See the detailed discussion of the sources in Leube, *Kinda*, 202–203.

[53] al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, 17:221.

[54] Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīra al-Nabawiyya*, eds. Muṣṭafā al-Saqqā, Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī, and ʿAbd al-Ḥafīẓ Shalabī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2001), 287.

[55] See Leube, *Kinda*, 209. It would be fascinating to attempt a more general reconstruction of the foodscape of early Islamic Kufa based on a systematic and critical evaluation of incidental details contained in this and similar stories.

[56] See Wirth, *Orientalische Stadt* for this type of urban structure. My understanding of 'graded' public spheres is very much influenced by the haunting sketch by Dževad Karahasan, *Sarajevo: Exodus of a City*, tr. Slobodan Drakulic (Sarajevo: Connectum, 2012), particularly his 'City Portrait' on pages 13–27.

[57] For the stimulating concept of an armature of ancient Roman towns, see William Lloyd MacDonald, *The Architecture of the Roman Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988). While his analysis of the highly institutionalised social fabric of Roman provincial towns can certainly not be simply taken over for early Islamic contexts, I argue that his description of the importance of spatial markers in establishing boundaries and ruptures within the urban fabric does constitute a viable starting point for the interpretation of the 'gates' affiliated to particular 'tribes' in the early Islamic garrison towns.

[58] See al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 2:264; Ibn Saʿd, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt*, 2:27, Iṣfahānī, *Maqātil*, 41 and 102, al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, 3:176.

spheres within the quarter of Kinda are not explicitly stated to have been marked by gates.

Free spaces (*raḥba*, *jabbāna*) inside and around the quarter of Kinda served as areas for 'public' communal activities, such as burial, military mobilisation, and violent confrontations.[59] In addition, the graded public sphere is represented in a type of meeting place called 'place of seated reception' (*majlis*) or mosque (*masjid*), which are frequently named after individuals or subtribes of Kinda, likely indicating the involvement of specific individuals or subtribes in their establishment and maintenance. These meeting places serve as 'publicly' accessible points with the networks focussed on them, as for instance during the advent of the ʿAlid agitator al-Mukhtār (d. 67/687) in Kufa. His passage through the quarter of Kinda is narrated as follows:

> Al-Mukhtār went on until he came to the water of al-Ḥīra [near Kufa] on Friday, where he descended from his riding animal and performed his ablutions. Afterwards, he anointed himself lightly, got dressed in his garment, put on a turban, and girded his sword. Then he mounted his riding animal and passed by the mosque (*masjid*) of [the Kindī subtribe of] al-Sakūn and the 'free space' (*jabbāna*) of Kinda, greeting the people at every *majlis* he passed, and calling out: 'Rejoice in victory and redemption, what you love has arrived!' Thus, he went on until he passed the mosque (*masjid*) of the [Kindī subtribes of the] Banū Dhuhl and the Banū Ḥujr, where he found nobody, because the people had gone to the Friday prayer [conducted in the Great Mosque at the centre of Kufa]. He went on until he came to [the Kindī subtribe of the] Banū Baddāʾ, where he met ʿUbayda b. ʿAmr al-Baddī of Kinda.[60]

In this story, al-Mukhtār's performative visit to these public nodes of specific tribally formulated networks establishes his aim of taking over Kufa and overthrowing the incumbent administration. The 'place of seated

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[59] See the review of the sources in Leube, *Kinda*, 205–207, but cf. for the absence of free spaces in early Islamic al-Fusṭāṭ, Gayraud, 'Fostat', 438. This may, however, also just be due to a coincidental absence of free space inside the excavated area of Isṭabl ʿAntar, possibly reinforced by the selection of an 'archeologically relevant' site of plentiful material remains for excavation. Arguably, dense patterns of settlement could motivate the emergence of consolidated and extensive open spaces inside the residential area to serve the functions attested for the *jabbāna* or *raḥba* inside the quarter of Kinda in Kufa.

[60] Abū Mikhnaf, *Akhbār al-Mukhtār,* ed. Kāmil Salmān al-Jabūrī (Beirut: Dār al-Majalla al-Bayḍā, 2000), 46, and al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, 3:443. A parallel stands in al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 4:307, cf. Leube, *Kinda*, 207–208.
     This account may possibly be compared fruitfully with other cases of agitation, such as those discussed in the contribution of Paul E. Walker in chapter 14 of this volume.

reception' (*masjid*) or mosque (*majlis*) of a particular network is accordingly deployed by al-Mukhtār as a 'public' point of performative access to and interaction with this network, by means of which he addresses individuals living in houses within the 'more private' parts of the quarter of Kinda.

The houses of established leaders of networks within the quarter of Kinda could also serve a similar function as the localised node of a specific network. This is suggested by al-Mukhtār's meeting with ʿUbayda b. ʿAmr al-Baddī, even though it is not specified that they met at his home. In a similar fashion, the house of al-Ashʿath b. Qays and his descendants is attested as a meeting place, for instance, in the story of how the son of Ṭawʿa notified the family of al-Ashʿath (and subsequently the governor) that the fugitive Muslim was hiding in the house of his mother by coming to the house of al-Ashʿath.[61] On other occasions, the house of al-Ashʿath and his family also served as a public node allowing the integration of non-Kufan Kindīs within networks of mobilisation and patronage formulated in a terminology of common 'tribal' affiliation. This is explicitly indicated when Ibn Muljam, who had come from Egypt with the intention of killing the caliph ʿAlī, is claimed to have found shelter in the house of al-Ashʿath after his arrival in Kufa.[62]

Accordingly, I suggest grouping the different spatial markers of 'place of reception' (*majlis*), 'mosque' (*masjid*), and 'house' (*dār*) of a notable as functionally equivalent 'public' and visible localised markers of specific networks. By contrast, fugitives head to private homes of non-notable individuals while hiding from the forces of the governor. The best example of this phenomenon narrated within the quarter of Kinda concerns the (three different versions of the) flight of Ḥujr b. ʿAdī.[63] The pattern of a fugitive coming to a 'private' home to hide himself also underlies the story of Muslim mentioned above.
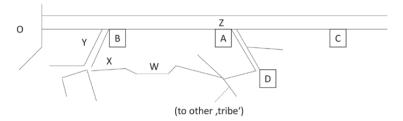
Another manifestation of the graded public sphere within the quarter of Kinda is in the form of lanes (*zuqāq*) and private passages (*khawkha*), in which fugitives hide from the governor's soldiers. In one of the versions of Ḥujr's flight, he is explicitly stated to have been helped by boys (*fityān*) living in the area, who led him through passages where the soldiers could not follow. It is not explicitly stated whether troops not affiliated to the tribe inhabiting the quarter were hindered by their ignorance of the lanes and private passages, or by some sort of a normative prohibition against

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[61] See Leube, *Kinda*, 118–23.
[62] See Leube, *Kinda*, 123–26.
[63] For the different versions of Ḥujr's flight, see Leube, *Kinda*, 201–202.

Visualization II:

- A, B, C: Houses / nodes integrated in networks established by performance of subordination or conflict.
- D: ‚Lesser' house with little chance of preeminence on the scale of A, B, and C, instead freedom of affiliation.
- If A is predominant: Designation of B, C, and D as masjid / majlis?
- Grades of public sphere: O > Z > Y > X > W.
- Deployment of various normative frames within contestative strategies of individual actors.

Figure 12.2 Localising negotiations of power in the early Islamic garrison towns.

entering the 'more private' spaces of individual quarters. In either case, this 'less public' character of some of the urban topography of the quarter of Kinda likely contributes to the characteristic pattern of the governor sending troops affiliated to the tribal groupings inhabiting a particular quarter into that quarter to enforce his authority. This will be discussed in more detail below.

In Figure 12.1 I suggested that the centralised administrative framework suggested by the 'centralised' view of the early post-conquest society can to a certain extent be read as a blueprint for the urban structure of early Islamic garrison towns. If we attempt a similar *Engführung* or *Stretto* of administrative and urban structure based on the 'incidentally attested' topography of the quarter of Kinda, we necessarily have to build 'from the ground' rather than from the 'caliphal' centre. Nonetheless, the concept of 'graded' public spheres allows a reading of this urban structure as a spatial reflection of administrative hierarchy. Accordingly, the authority and power of the governor residing outside the quarter of Kinda radiates into this quarter along interpersonal networks focussed on relatively 'public' and 'visible' markers. The possible reshuffling and dynamic development of these networks is reflected in the urban structure, as individual 'places of seated reception' (*majlis*), mosques (*masjid*), or houses (*dār*) may become more or less prominent and 'public' depending on the trajectory of the individuals and lineages they are affiliated with.

Topography II: Urban Structure and Social Dependency

In the following reconstruction of mechanisms and structures of social dependency, I methodologically build on an understanding of structures as enacted within the urban topography by means of a sustained performance of particular mechanisms. Due to the exceptionalist bias of the sources, the quotidian mechanisms of social dependency and affiliation that in this view make up the substance of networks of patronage and mobilisation can mainly be reconstructed *ex negativo* from instances where they were subverted. Nonetheless, the prominent visibility of structural capital as manifested in the urban topography means that subversions and realignments of social dependency left a visible imprint on the quarter of Kinda, which figures prominently in the sources. This can be contrasted with other quotidian manifestations of social dependency and affiliation, such as the distribution of rents and payments or the transaction of grocery shopping. Although, without doubt, these were also affected by subversions and realignments of social dependency, they did not leave any symbolic traces in the urban structure deemed sufficiently important for inclusion in the historiographical sources. Accordingly, the preceding reconstruction of the material environment of the quarter of Kinda in Kufa can be interpreted as a configuration of symbolic capital that is acted out by means of continuous low-level transactions or mechanisms. This configuration acutely reflects shifts and realignments within the general structures of social dependency inside the quarter of Kinda.

Within the social history of Kufa during the first three generations of Islamic history, it is remarkable that hierarchical interpersonal structures formulated in a (more 'official'?) terminology of tribal affiliation, such as the structures of social dependency deployed to perform mechanisms of mobilisation and patronage, are much more susceptible to political change and realignment than the trans-tribal structures of companionship and socialising between members of similar social backgrounds. Examples of this stability of trans-tribal networks within the quarter of Kinda include the companionship of the judge (*qāḍī*) Shurayḥ with his 'noble brothers among the readers of the Qurʾan (*qurrāʾ*)', whom Shurayḥ mobilises as brokers of his marriage to Zaynab,[64] or the companionable 'hanging out' of al-Ashʿath with other notables of Kufa, which is, for instance, depicted in anecdotes reporting the taunts of a foreign Arab who fails to recognise

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[64] al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, 17:222.

the notables he is goading based on hearsay standing before him.[65] In one version, this publicly accessible companionship of al-Ashʿath and other notables is localised at al-Kunāsa in Kufa, a landmark outside the sphere of any particular tribally allocated area which the – much later – scholar Yāqūt explains on philological grounds as a collection point for garbage, which certainly is somewhat puzzling in this context.[66]

According to the topographical reconstruction suggested above, two aspects of networks of mobilisation and patronage as spatially manifested within the quarter of Kinda are particularly noteworthy in times of internal strife (*fitna*). The first concerns the supposed 'treason' by al-Ashʿath and his progeny towards their fellow Kindī Ḥujr b. ʿAdī after his abortive revolt. This 'treason' is materially sanctioned after the subsequent takeover of Kufa by al-Mukhtār, who orders the reconstruction of the house (*dār*) of Ḥujr from the building materials (*labin* and *ṭīn*)[67] of the house of Muḥammad b. al-Ashʿath.[68] Thereby, the house of the wronged Ḥujr is reconstructed, while the 'traitors' are punished by the material eradication of their house from the urban fabric. This is particularly significant in light of the apparent policy of al-Mukhtār to refocus the networks of mobilisation and patronage within and beyond the quarter of Kinda in Kufa around surviving relatives of Ḥujr b. ʿAdī, most notably Ḥujr's nephew Muʿādh b. Hāniʾ b. ʿAdī.[69] Thereby, the redeployment of the building materials of the localised main 'public' point of contact and node of the networks underpinning the supremacy of al-Ashʿath and his descendants within the quarter of Kinda in Kufa manifests the reconfiguration of Kindī networks away from the 'traitors'. Simultaneously, this destruction of their house likely negatively affected the economic situation of the descendants of al-Ashʿath as well.

The second topographical aspect of the quarter of Kinda that is highlighted in times of social unrest is the graded accessibility of different areas within the quarter to different actors. The two most striking examples of this phenomenon are the attempts by Ḥujr b. ʿAdī and Muslim b. ʿAqīl to hide

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[65] See al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 8:410–11, and al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, 16:98–99.

[66] Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Marʿashlī (Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 2008), 7/8:153. An explanation that is probably more accurate of this area based on the reports contained in the historiographical works is given by Djaït, *Al-Kūfa*, 277–80.

[67] al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, 3:510.

[68] Abū Mikhnaf, *al-Mukhtār*, 112, Ibn Aʿtham, *Kitāb al-Futūḥ*, 6:138, and al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, 3:510.

[69] See Abū Mikhnaf, *Akhbār al-Mukhtār*, 105; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 3:399 and 405, and al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, 3:506.

from the forces of the governor after their abortive revolts.[70] After attempting to stage their revolts at or in the central Great Mosque of Kufa, both are reported to have fled towards their house within the quarter of Kinda (Ḥujr) or the 'gates of Kinda' (Muslim), which I have suggested interpreting as topographical markers of the border between a 'general public sphere' surrounding the mosque and a 'more particular public' sphere within the quarter of Kinda. After being surrounded by numerous followers during their attempted revolts within and around the Great Mosque, both arrive at the house of Ḥujr or within the gates virtually alone. Neither is reported to have been immediately pursued by agents of the respective governors. While Ḥujr is able to draw on networks of supporters within the quarter of Kinda and accordingly continues his flight from one private home to another with the help of multiple individuals and boys showing him passages and lanes, Muslim does not appear to have had any networks of local supporters at his disposal and accordingly is presented as wandering aimlessly through the lanes.

In both cases, al-Ashʿath and his son Muḥammad are localised in the immediate vicinity of the respective governor, who sends them out as brokers to ensure the rendition of the fugitives. In light of the concept of a 'graded' public sphere suggested above, this sending out of Kindī troops to enforce the interests of the governors within the quarter of Kinda may go beyond the testing of loyalties by forcing Kindī power brokers to take a clear stand for or against the governor, as it is not clear to what extent the presence of 'foreign' individuals within the 'more private' areas of the quarter of Kinda was seen as permissible or even practical due to their likely unfamiliarity with the plan of the streets and passages. Independent of the ultimate rationale behind the sending out of Kindī troops into the quarter of Kinda, which in all likelihood was motivated by multiple intersecting rationales, the presence of members of the family of al-Ashʿath in the immediate vicinity of the governor in times of social unrest clearly demonstrates the latter's reliance on the 'public' leaders of influential networks within the individual quarters to implement his policies. This mobilisation of troops for the governor along the personal networks of loyalty and affiliation invested in al-Ashʿath and his family was likely requited by the governor strengthening their position against possible rivals within the quarter of Kinda.[71]

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[70] The following systematic evaluation builds on the discussion of the various sources in Leube, *Kinda*, 201–11.
[71] See Franz, *Beutezug*, for this pattern.

Conclusion

This topographically informed close reading of the sources mentioning the quarter of Kinda in Kufa during the first three generations of Islamic history brings three main approaches and suggestions to the study of structures and mechanisms of social dependency in the early Islamic empire.

First, based on a close reading of individuals affiliated to the 'Kindī' networks of al-Ashʿath b. Qays and his family, I suggest redefining the concept of 'stable tribal affiliation' that pervades much of early and classical Arabic-Islamic historiography. Thereby, I argue that 'Kinda' and other 'tribal' entities should be conceptualised as networks of mobilisation and patronage that are formulated in a terminology of tribal affiliation but in fact include individuals from diverse genealogical backgrounds.

Second, I suggest interpreting the spatial configuration of the quarter of Kinda in Kufa as a topographical manifestation of the networks of multipliers and intermediaries on various levels. These multipliers and intermediaries function as hostages and power brokers for the 'central' agents and institutions located around the Great Mosque in the centre of Kufa or – on a subordinate level – inside the quarter of Kinda in Kufa.

Finally, I argue that the attempts attributed to al-Mukhtār and possibly also to the caliph ʿAlī of replacing al-Ashʿath and his immediate family as a main power broker between 'central' authorities and their localised networks demonstrate that the preeminent role of al-Ashʿath and his family was not rooted in any uncontested 'proof' of nobility. This contrasts sharply with the rhetorics of 'stable' genealogically underpinned claims to status and leadership that pervade the corpus of early and classical Arabic-Islamic historiography. Instead, I suggest that economic capital, such as the ownership of landed estates in the environs of Kufa, attested for the family of al-Ashʿath until the time of Hārūn al-Rashīd, played the most crucial role in stabilising the transgenerational importance of this family in and around Kufa. This 'economically stabilised' symbolic capital of the family was, according to this argument, subsequently expressed in the contested and polemic milieu of the early Islamic garrison towns in the form of 'genealogically' formulated claims and counterclaims to rightful authority.

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