

The interpretation of dreams
An unknown manuscript of Ibn Qutayba's
“*Ibārat al-Ru'yā*”

In memory of
Gustave von Grunebaum

A manuscript of Ibn Qutayba's compilation on dreams¹ hitherto considered lost has recently turned up in the Library of the Hebrew University.²

The manuscript contains 67 folios of text (15 lines to each page), carefully written in small, vowelised, clear script; three additional folios contain a list of contents written by a later scribe, a remark of a reader and a *waqf* note. The colophon records the date of copying and the place: Damascus, 20 Dhū l-qa'da 845 H.³

The title of the book as given on the title page and in the colophon is “*Ibārat al-ru'yā*”. But the title recorded on fol. 1b and at the end of the book is “*Ta'bīr al-ru'yā*”. The book seems to have been known by both titles. Ibn al-Nadīm mentions the compilation as “*Kitāb ta'bīr al-ru'yā*”,⁴ Ibn Khayr records it as “*Kitāb 'ibārat al-ru'yā*”.⁵

¹ See G. Lecomte, *Ibn Qutayba* (Damas, 1965), p. 157; T. Fahd, *La Divination Arabe* (Leiden, 1966), pp. 316–328, 350, no. 97. Lengthy passages from Ibn Qutayba's work are quoted in Ps. Ibn Sīrīn's *Muntakhab al-kalām fi tafsīr al-aḥlām*, Cairo 1382/1963.

² Collection Yahuda, Ms. Ar. 196. I should like to express my gratitude to Dr. M. Nadav and Mr. E. Wust who kindly let me read the manuscript and provided me with the needed photographs. An edition of the text is now in course of preparation. I should also like to thank the following libraries and their librarians: the British Museum, Cambridge University Library, the Chester Beatty Collection, the Bodleian Library, London University Library, the Sulaymaniyya and Ankara University.

³ Fol. 67a: ...*ammā ba'du qad waqa'a l-farāghu min kitābati hādhihi l-muskhati l-sharīfati l-mausūmati bi-kitābi 'ibārati l-ru'yā 'alā yadi l-'abdi l-qa'ifi l-naḥḥfi l-rāji ilā raḥmati llāhi l-bāri yahyā bni muḥammadin il-bukhārī fi 'ishrīna min dhi l-qa'dati sanata khamsin wa-arba'īna wa-thamāni mi'atin bi-dimashqa l-mahrūsati šānahā llāhu ta'ālā 'an il-āfāt wa-l-nakabāt. al-lāhumma ghfir li-kātibihi wa-li-man naẓara fīhi āmin, yā rabba l-'ālamīn.*

⁴ *Al-Fihrist* (Cairo, 1348), p. 439 ult.

⁵ *Fahrassa*, ed. F. Codera, J. Ribera Tarrago (Saragossa, 1893; reprint Baghdad 1963), p. 266. Al-Zurqānī refers evidently to our manuscript quoting from Ibn Qutayba's *Kitāb usūli l-ibāra* (al-Zurqānī, *Sharḥ 'alā l-mawāhib al-ladunniyya*, Cairo, 1328, VII, 173). The compilation of al-Kirmānī is quoted by al-Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ, *Tartīb al-madārik*, ed. Aḥmad Bakrī

The chain of the transmitters of the book is given as follows: Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Abd al-Bāqī b. Fāris b. Aḥmad al-Muqri’, known as Ibn Abī l-Faṭḥ al-Miṣri;⁶ Abū Ḥafṣ ‘Umar b. Muḥammad b. ‘Arāk;⁷ Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Marwān al-Mālikī.⁸ The Ms begins: *qara’tu ‘alā l-shaykhi l-ṣālihi abī l-ḥasani ‘abdi l-bā qī...* The name of the scholar who read the Ms aloud to Abū l-Ḥasan is not mentioned throughout the book. The remark on the margin of the colophon: *qābalnāhā ‘alā nuskhati l-aṣli bi-qadri l-imkāni* may support the assumption that the scribe copied it from the copy of the student who read it to Abū l-Ḥasan. It may be worthwhile to remark that Aḥmad b. Marwān al-Mālikī, the first person in the chain of the transmitters of our manuscript, is also recorded by Ibn Khayr as the transmitter of his manuscript.⁹

Our manuscript is thus the earliest extant Muslim compilation on dreams. Ibn Qutayba stresses that he derived his material from the “science of al-Kirmānī¹⁰ and others” and undertakes to explain the principles of oneiromancy overlooked by the former scholars.¹¹ This passage indicates that Ibn Qutayba’s compilation forms in fact a continuation of an earlier Muslim tradition of oneiromancy, which may be traced to the first half of the second century. The continuity of transmission of the lore of oneiromancy in later centuries is represented by the personality of Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. ‘Attāb¹² who transmitted to Ibn Khayr the compilations of al-Kirmānī and Ibn Qutayba, the commentary on the book of al-Kirmānī compiled by Abū ‘Abdallah Muḥammad b. Yaḥya b. al-Ḥadhhdhā,¹³

Maḥmūd (Beirut–Tripoli 1387/1967), IV, 734, as *Kitāb al-‘ibāra* (mentioning the commentary on it “*al-Buṣhrā fi ‘ibārat al-ru’yā*” by Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-Ḥadhhdhā’; this commentary is mentioned in an abbreviated manner as “*al-Buṣhrā*” *ib.*, IV, 429); it is also recorded as *Kitāb al-‘ibāra* by Ibn Khayr, *op. cit.*, p. 266 (he records however the commentary of al-Ḥadhhdhā’ under the title “*Kitāb al-buṣhrā fī ta’wil al-ru’yā*”, *ib.*, p. 267).

⁶ See on him al-Jazarī, *Ghāyat al-nihāya fī ṭabaqāt al-qurrā*, ed. G. Bergsträsser (Cairo, 1932), I, 357, no. 1529; he was a student of ‘Umar b. ‘Arāk; d. ca. 450 H.

⁷ See on him al-Jazarī, *op. cit.* I, 597, no. 2431 (d. 388 H).

⁸ See on him Ibn Ḥajar, *Lisān al-mizān*, I, 309, no. 931. He was the most prolific transmitter of the lore of Ibn Qutayba (*wa-kāna min arwā l-nāsi ‘an ibni qutayba*). D. 333 H; but see al-Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ, *op. cit.*, I, 27, l. 19.

⁹ *Fahrāsa*, p. 267, l. 1.

¹⁰ In text: Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abd al-Malik, which seems to be an error; read: b. ‘Abdallah; see on him Fahd, *op. cit.*, pp. 316, 345 no. 67.

¹¹ *‘Ibāra*, fol. 17a: ...*qāla abū muḥammadin: wa-sa-ukhbiruka ‘an ta’wili l-aḥādīthi mā naj’ al-uhu laka mithālan, thumma naṣiru ilā ikhbārīka ‘an al-uṣūli nakhtasiru (text yahtaḍīru) li-dhālika min ‘ilmi ibrahīma bni ‘abdi llāhi (text: ‘abdi l-maliki) l-kirmāni wa-ghayrihi wa-mufaḍḍalin (perhaps: muḥaḍḍalin) min al-akhbāri muḥtawin ‘alā jumalin jāmi’atin kāfiyatīn li-man aḥsana tadbīrahā wa-u’īna bi-l-tafsīri ‘alayhā wa-ubayyinu min ‘ilali tilka l-uṣūli mā aḡḡfalu l-mutaqaddimūna fa-lam yadhkurūhu in shā’a [llāhu] wa-lā quwwata illā bi-llāhi.*

¹² See on him al-Dhahabī, *Tadhkirat al-huffāz*, Hyderabad 1377/1958, IV, 1271 (d. 520 H).

¹³ See on him al-Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ, *op. cit.*, IV, 429, 733–734 (d. 416 H).

The interpretation of dreams

the book of Abū Dharr al-Harawī¹⁴ and the book of Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād.¹⁵

The compilation of Ibn Qutayba is divided into two parts: an extensive introduction (fols. 1b–25a) followed by a compendium of oneiromancy containing forty six chapters (fols. 25a–67b). Lists of chapter headings are given in the Appendix.

Our manuscript is, however, not complete. It is, therefore, fortunate that another Ms of this work, Ms. Ankara, Is. Saib Sincer I, 4501 (fols. 180a–217b) could be consulted. This Ms contains only the first part of our manuscript, i.e. the introduction; the last folios of this Ms are missing. This missing part of the Ms corresponds to fols. 23a, l. 10 – 25a, l. 11 of our manuscript. A former owner of Ms. Ankara rightly noted on the margin of fol. 217b: “*nuṣṣānuhu waraqun au waraqayn (!) bi-shahādati wuqʿi hādihā l-bābi fī ākhiri l-fihrisi l-thāniyati l-wāqʿati fī raqmi 179.*” On fol. 180a there is in fact a list of twenty three (actually twenty four) chapters into which the introduction is divided; every chapter in this Ms is indeed preceded by a headline which conforms to this list. The missing chapter is No. 24: *bāb adab al-taʿwīl*; only the beginning of this chapter is found on fol. 217b; it can however be supplemented from our manuscript.

The missing passage in our manuscript, fol. 1b, l. 12, should be supplied from Ms. Ankara fols. 180b, l. 8 – 182a ult.; the missing passage on fol. 3a, l. 10 has to be supplied from Ms. Ankara fols. 184a, l. 7 – 185b ult. On fol. 5a, l. 8 of our manuscript the short chapter “*bāb al-taʿwīl bi-l-maʿnā*” from Ms. Ankara fols. 188b–189a ought to be added. On fol. 17a, l. 4 seven chapters from Ms. Ankara (fols. 203a–212b) have to be supplemented.

The missing material on fol. 1b of Ms. Jerusalem, which can be supplemented from Ms. Ankara, is of some importance. Counting the wonders and signs of God’s creation, Ibn Qutayba stresses the Oneness of God and the grace granted to man by the fact that he has been enabled to smell, see, hear and taste in dream as well as to laugh and to cry, to cross countries while his own body is reclining, his senses inactive and his legs motionless.

These wonders associated with dream which were granted to man by God caused some unbelieving people in ancient times (*taḥayyara qaumun min muta-qaddimī l-mulḥidīn*) to be in a state of perplexion. They drew the conclusion that everything in the world has to be considered as the effect of phantasy and imagination. The sleeping person is indeed certain that the appearances of his dream are realities exactly as he who is awake considers the objects which he perceives to be realities. Ibn Qutayba quotes arguments already adduced in ancient times against this opinion.

Ibn Qutayba stresses that the majority of people in the period of the Jāhi-

¹⁴ See on him al-Qāḍi ʿIyāḍ, *op. cit.*, IV, 696–698 (d. 435 H).

¹⁵ Ibn Khayr, *op. cit.*, pp. 266–267.

liyya and Islam believed in dreams with the exception of a group of atheistic materialists (*qaumun min al-zanādiqa yaqūlūna bi-l-dahri*) and a group of physicians in ancient times. Another group of physicians who were upholders of religion (*al-dayyānūna min al-aṭibbā*) partly accepted and partly refuted the veracity of dreams. The reality of dreams was based on the story of Joseph recounted to the People of the Book as well as on the stories recorded by transmitters (of stories) and prophets. The denial of the truth of dreams was based on the assumption that content and form of dreams are conditioned by the difference in the temperaments of men and the preoccupation of their mind.¹⁶ Ibn Qutayba admits the existence of such dreams, argues however that they belong to the category of “confused dreams (*aḍghāth*). True dreams are brought by angels; they are copied from the Tablet in Heaven and contain good tidings or warnings against performing bad deeds. The truth of these dreams can only be denied by a stubborn man or an apostate.

The passage missing in our manuscript, fol. 3a, and which has to be inserted from Ms. Ankara fols. 184a–185b deals with the denotations of the words “*nafs*” and “*rūh*”.

The additional chapters in Ms. Ankara, fols. 203a–212b, contain anecdotes about dreams of the Prophet, his Companions and pious men.

Initially, the field of dream interpretation had to obtain recognition as legitimately Islamic and to get the approval of the orthodox circles by reference to the permission or injunction of the Prophet. The Prophet is indeed said to have commented on Sūra x 64 (“Those who believe and are godfearing for them is good tidings in the present life and in the world to come”) and stated that “good tidings in the present life” refer to good dreams which they have in their sleep.¹⁷

The importance of dreams was emphasized by the utterance attributed to the Prophet in which he established the relation between prophecy and dream: “Prophecy has passed”, said the Prophet, “and there remain only bearers of good tidings, good dreams which a man sees or which are shown to him in sleep.”¹⁸

¹⁶ See N. Bland, “On the Muhammedan Science of Tabīr, or Interpretation of Dreams” *JRAS*, 1856, p. 128; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *Muntakhab al-kalām fi tafīr al-aḥlām* (Cairo, 1382/1963), p. 7.

¹⁷ *Ibāra*, fol. 2, ll. 1–2; al-Ṭabarī, *Tafīr*, ed. Maḥmūd Muḥammad Shākīr (Cairo, 1960), XV, 124–139, nos. 17717–17756; al-Qurṭubī, *Tafīr* ([reprint] Cairo, 1387/1967), VIII, 358; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr* (Cairo, 1314), III, 311–313; al-Ḥākīm al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak* (Hyderabad, 1342), IV, 391; al-Khargūshī, *al-Bishāra wa-l-nidhāra fi ta’bīr al-ru’yā wa-l-murāqaba*, Ms. Br. Mus., Or. 6262, fol. 2b.

¹⁸ *Ibāra*, fol. 1b, penult. (reported on the authority of Umm Kurz al-Ka’biyya; see on her Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba* (Cairo, 1325/1907), VIII, 272, no. 1459); al-Ḥākīm, *op. cit.*, IV, 391;

The interpretation of dreams

An early¹⁹ and widely current tradition gives an evaluation of a good dream by stating, on the authority of the Prophet, that it is one out of forty six parts of prophecy.²⁰

True, sound and good dreams were of course those of the Prophet. The Prophet saw in his dream that he rode a camel with a ram behind him and that the edge of his sword was broken. The Prophet predicted that he would kill a leader of the (troops of the) enemy (= the ram – K) and that a man from his family will be killed (= the broken edge of his sword – K). In fact the leader of the enemy Ṭalḥa b. abī Ṭalḥa and the uncle of the Prophet, Ḥamza, were both killed (in the battle of Uḥud).²¹

The Prophet dreamt that two bracelets were put on his arms; he threw

al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr*, III, 312; al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, *Muḥādarāt al-udabā'* (Beirut, 1961) I, 149; al-Tibrīzī, *Mishkāt al-maṣābīḥ* (Karachi, 1350), p. 394; al-Zurqānī, *op. cit.*, VII, 163; al-Majlisī, *Bihār al-anwār* (Tehran, 1390), LXI, 177, 192; al-Khargūshī, *op. cit.*, fol. 2a; G. E. von Grunebaum, "The Cultural Function of the Dream as Illustrated by Classical Islam", in: G. E. von Grunebaum and Roger Caillois, *The Dream and Human Societies* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1966), p. 7, note 2.

¹⁹ Recorded in Ma'mar b. Rāshid's *Jāmi'*, Feyzullah 541, fol. 152a penult.–152b.

²⁰ *Ibāra*, fol. 2a; Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, *al-Lu'lu' wa-l-marjān fīmā ttafaqa 'alayhi l-shaykhān* (Cairo, 1368/1949), III, 102–103, nos. 1457–1460; al-Haythamī, *Majma' al-zawā'id* (Beirut, 1967), VII, 172; al-Hākīm, *op. cit.*, IV, 390; al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, *op. cit.*, I, 149; al-Tibrīzī, *op. cit.*, pp. 394, 396; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr*, III, 312–313; al-Majlisī, *op. cit.*, LXI, 175, 178, 191; al-Jarrāḥī, *Kashf al-khafā'* (Beirut, 1351), I, 436, no. 1407; al-'Azīzī, *al-Sirāj al-munīr* (Cairo, 1377/1957), II, 322; al-Hanafī, *al-Mu'taşar min al-mukhtaşar* (Hyderabad, 1362), II, 231; and see other versions: Abū Nu'aym, *Ḥilyat al-auliya'* (Cairo, 1351/1932), VIII, 196 (a ninetieth part); al-Majlisī, *op. cit.*, LXI, 167, 177 (a seventieth part); Ma'mar b. Rāshid, *op. cit.*, fol. 152b (a seventieth part); al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu'jam al-ṣaḡīr*, ed. 'Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad 'Uthmān (al-Madīna, 1388/1968), II, 56 (a seventieth part); al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr*, III, 312–313 (a seventieth part); al-Ḥanafī, *op. cit.*, II, 231 (a seventieth or fiftieth part); al-Ṭabarī, *op. cit.*, XV, 132, no. 17730 (a part of forty four parts, or a sixtieth part); *ib.*, p. 131, no. 17729 (a part of forty nine parts); al-Zurqānī, *op. cit.*, VII, 162–165 (a part of forty four, forty five, twenty four, twenty five, fifty, seventy, seventy six parts of prophecy); and see al-Haythamī, *op. cit.*, VII, 173–174 (a fortieth, a fiftieth, a sixtieth part of prophecy); al-Qaṣṭallānī, *Irshād al-sāri* (Cairo, 1323), X, 123–127 (a part of forty six, forty four, forty, fifty, seventy, seventy six, twenty six parts of prophecy); cf. A. Kristianpöler, *Monumenta Talmudica* II, I: "Traum und Traumdeutung" (Wien-Berlin, 1923), p. 25, no. 69 (*halom ehad mi-shishim li-nbu'a*); and see *ibid.*, no. 70, and see *ibid.*, p. XI); A. Löwinger, *Der Traum in der jüdischen Literatur* (Leipzig, 1908), p. 4.

²¹ *Ibāra*, fol. 52b, inf.; al-Wāqidi, *al-Maghāzī*, ed. M. Jones (London, 1966), I, 209, 225–226, 307; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Khaṣā'ish al-kubrā*, ed. Muḥammad Khalīl Harās (Cairo, 1386/1967), I, 529; al-Haythamī, *op. cit.*, VII, 180; al-Zurqānī, *op. cit.*, VII, 174, 184–185; Ps. Ibn Strīn, *Muntakhab al-kalām fi tafsir al-aḥlām* (Cairo, 1382/1963), p. 186 inf.; al-Majlisī *op. cit.*, LXI, 179; Fahd, *op. cit.*, p. 282; al-Khargūshī, *op. cit.*, fol. 142a.

them away and they fell down. He expounded this dream by the appearance of the two false prophets Musaylima and al-Aswad al-ʿAnṣī.²²

The Prophet saw in a dream reddish-white and black sheep (*ghanam*) coming to him. He interpreted the reddish-white ones as referring to non-Arabs, the black ones as referring to the Arabs and predicted that non-Arabs will embrace Islam and join the Arabs.²³

The fate of Islam was revealed to the Prophet in another dream: he saw himself seated in the house of ʿUqba b. Rāfiʿ where dates of Ibn ʿĀbī²⁴ were served. He interpreted it by using verbal associations, predicting that Islam will gain excellence in this and in the next world (*ʿrāfiʿ* – *rifʿa*) and that the faith of Islam has already become pure (*ṭāb* – *ṭāba*).²⁵

A tradition attributed to the Prophet divided dreams into good and evil; good dreams come from God, evil ones from Satan. “If you see a displeasing appearance in your dream, seek refuge from Satan in God and spit three times at your left side, then it will not harm you”, said the Prophet. A special prayer was devised: “I seek refuge in the God of Mūsā, ʿĪsā and Ibrāhīm from the evil of the dream, lest it harm me in my faith or in (my dealings in) this world or in my sustenance. Strong is the man protected by God, glory and power are His. There is no God but Him.”²⁶

²² *ʿIbāra*, fol. 46b, sup.; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya*, ed. Maḥmūd Muḥammad al-Ṭanāḥī (Cairo, 1385/1965), V, 90; al-Haythamī, *op. cit.*, VII, 181; Ibn Kathīr, *Shamāʿil al-rasūl* ed. Muṣṭafā ʿAbd al-Wāḥid (Cairo, 1386/1967), p. 387; Ibn al-Jauzī, *al-Wafā bi-ahwālī, l-muṣṭafā*, ed. Muṣṭafā ʿAbd al-Wāḥid (Cairo, 1386/1966), II, 633; Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmiʿ al-uṣūl*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fiqrī (Cairo, 1374/1955), XII, 376, no. 4980; al-Qasṭallānī, *op. cit.*, X, 154–156; Hammām b. Munabbih, *al-Ṣaḥīfa al-ṣaḥīḥa*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥamīdullah (Hyderabad, 1375/1956), p. 119, no. 134.

²³ *ʿIbāra*, fol. 53a; al-Ḥākim, *op. cit.*, IV, 395; al-Suyūṭī, *Taʾriḫ al-khulafāʾ*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyi l-Dīn ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd (Cairo, 1371/1952), p. 105; al-Haythamī, *op. cit.*, VII, 183; Ibn al-Jauzī, *op. cit.*, II, 631; al-Majlisī, *op. cit.*, LXI, 231; I. Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, transl. C. R. Barber and S. M. Stern (London, 1967), I, 112; Aḥmad b. Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *al-Ṣawāʾiq al-muḥriqa fī l-raddi ʿalā ahli l-bidaʾi wa-l-zandaqa*, ed. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ʿAbd al-Laṭīf (Cairo, 1375), p. 33; al-Khargūshī, *op. cit.*, fol. 170a.

²⁴ See about this kind of dates al-Thaʿālibī, *Thimār al-qulūb*, ed. Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 1384/1965), p. 266, no. 387; al-Bakrī, *Muʾjam mā staʾjam*, ed. Muṣṭafā al-Saqā (Cairo, 1364/1945), I, 37, note 2.

²⁵ *ʿIbāra*, fol. 4b, sup.; al-Tibrizī, *op. cit.*, p. 395; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba*, IV, 250; al-Zurqānī, *op. cit.*, VII, 186; Ibn al-Jauzī, *op. cit.*, II, 631; Ps. Ibn Sirīn, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

²⁶ *ʿIbāra*, fol. 24b; cf. Maʾmar b. Rāshid, *op. cit.*, fol. 152a–b; al-Haythamī, *op. cit.*, VII, 174–175, 181; al-Ḥākim, *op. cit.*, IV, 392; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Taʾriḫ Baghdād* (Cairo, 1349/1931), XII, 484; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr*, III, 313; al-Tibrizī, *op. cit.*, p. 394; al-Zurqānī, *op. cit.*, VII, 168–169; al-Shiblī, *Ākām al-marjān*, ed. ʿAbdallah Muḥammad al-Ṣadiq (Cairo, 1376), pp. 182–184; al-Majlisī, *op. cit.*, LXI, 174, 188, 193; Ibn al-Sunnī, *ʿAmal al-yaum wa-l-layla* (Hyderabad, 1358), pp. 207–208; Ps. Ibn Sirīn, *op. cit.*, p. 15; Muḥammad Fuʾād ʿAbd al-Bāqī, *op. cit.*, III, 102, no. 1456; N. Bland, “On the Muhammedan Science of Tabīr,

The interpretation of dreams

A dream in which the Prophet appears is considered sound and good. The Prophet is said to have stated: "He who sees me in a dream sees me in reality, because Satan does not take up my appearance".²⁷ Seeing the Prophet in dream is like seeing him in reality.

or Interpretation of Dreams" *JRAS*, 1856, p. 130; cf. Kristianpöler, *op. cit.*, p. 17, nos. 42–43 (and see p. IX); Löwinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 32–33.

²⁷ 'Ibāra, fol. 2a; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *Kit. al-manām*, Ms. al-Jazzār (*majmū'a*), Acre, p. 321; al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, *op. cit.*, I, 149; Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākīr (Cairo, 1370/1950), V, 138, no. 3410 and p. 304, no. 3798; al-Haythamī, *op. cit.*, VII, 173, 181–183; al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍa, *Amālī*, ed. Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 1373/1954), II, 394; al-Ḥākim, *op. cit.*, IV, 393; al-Suyūfī, *al-Khaṣā'is*, III, 339; Abū Nu'aym, *op. cit.*, VII, 246; al-Shiblī, *op. cit.*, pp. 184–186 ("fi bayāni anna l-shayṭāna lā yatamaththalu bi-l-nabīyyi -ṣ-"); cf. Ma'mar b. Rāshid, *op. cit.*, fol. 153a (*man ra'āni fi l-manāmi fa-huwa l-ḥaqqu*); al-Tibrīzī, *op. cit.*, p. 394 (...*fa-qad ra'ā l-ḥaqqu*); al-Qaṣṭallānī, *op. cit.*, X, 133–135, 139 (and see *ibid.*, the version: *man ra'āni fi l-manāmi fa-sa-yarāni fi l-yaqza*); Ibn 'Asākir: *Tahdhib ta'rikh*, ed. Aḥmad 'Ubayd (Damascus, 1349), VI, 380 ult. (*man ra'āni fi l-manāmi fa-innahu lā yadkhulu l-nāra*); al-Khargūshī, *op. cit.*, fol. 16b. Some scholars included in this category of sound and true dreams the appearance in dreams of prophets, angels, the sun, the lighting stars and clouds containing rain. (See al-Majlisī, *op. cit.*, LXI, 238, quoted from al-Baghawī's *Sharḥ al-sunna*). A remarkable *ḥadīth* transmitted by al-Ṭabarānī reports that the Prophet stated that Abū Bakr would interpret (scil. truly – K) the dreams and that his true dreams would form his lot of prophecy. (Aḥmad b. Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-muḥriqa*, ed. 'Abd al-Wahhāb 'Abd al-Laṭīf (Cairo, 1375), p. 67 with a comment of the author on this tradition: *inna abā bakrin yu'awwīlu l-ru'yā wa-inna ru'yāhu l-ṣāliḥata ḥaḏzuḥu min al-nubuwwati*).

Shī'ī sources record the tradition about the appearance of the Prophet in a dream with some significant additions. Satan will not appear in the form of the Prophet or of one of the trustees (*auṣiyā*), i.e. the Shī'ī *imāms*), nor in the form of anyone of the Shī'a. (See this tradition: al-Majlisī, *op. cit.*, LXI, 176; and see the discussion of this tradition *ibid.*, pp. 211, 216, 234–236).

Shī'ī tradition reports that 'Alī saw the Prophet every night in a dream. The Prophet revealed to him that five of his Companions (among them Abū Bakr and 'Umar) plotted against him and decided to deprive him of the Caliphate, thus violating the injunction of the Prophet. The Prophet informed 'Alī in a dream about the pains suffered by Abū Bakr and 'Umar on their death-beds in connection with their mischievous deed. (See Sulaym b. Qays, *Kitāb al-saqifa*, al-Najaf, n.d., pp. 96, 181; quoted by al-Majlisī, *op. cit.*, LXI, 240–241).

A sunni tradition reported that Anas b. Mālik used to see the Prophet almost every night in his dream (Al-Haythamī, *op. cit.*, VII, 182).

There are interesting stories about dreams in which the Prophet expresses his opinion concerning religious leaders and scholars, commending, permitting or rejecting their teachings. Yazīd b. Ḥākīm saw the Prophet in a dream. He asked him about Sufyān al-Thaurī and the Prophet gave a favourable opinion about him. (Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, Beirut 1385/1966, IV, 259).

Zayd b. Dāwūd saw in a dream the Prophet granting Mālik b. Anas musk and asking him to divide it among the people. Zayd interpreted musk as representing knowledge (Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *al-Manām*, p. 348; al-Qāḍī 'Iyād, *op. cit.*, I, 375). Abū 'Abdallah saw in a

The seriousness of dreams and their interpretation was stressed, as usual, by a *ḥadīth*. “He who lies about his dream will be ordered (at the Day of Judgement – K) to join two barley corns and will be put on burning coal.”²⁸

Ibn Qutayba defines the dream as a “kind of revelation and a sort of prophecy” (*li-annahū jinsun min al-waḥyi wa-ḍarḅun min al-nubuwwati*).²⁹ The art of oneiromancy, argues Ibn Qutayba, is shrouded in mystery, very complicated and intricate; it is distinguished and sublime. Consequently, the requirements imposed on an interpreter of dreams are manifold as regards qualifications, knowledge and character. While the way to every other science is straight, its principles not being diverse and its standards (*maqāyīs*) not liable to change, the principles of oneiromancy are changeable according to the position of the person who dreams, his belief, profession, ambitions and the time and period of dreaming. Sometimes a dream is a coined proverb, which has to be interpreted according to the meaning of its words, sometimes it

dream a person coming out of a *maqṣūra* in the mosque of Ṭarsūs, quoting the utterance of the Prophet: “Imitate those who will come after me, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal” (Abū Nu‘aym, *op. cit.*, IX, 185; and see *ib.*, p. 187: a man saw al-Khiḍr in a dream; he stated that Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal was a truthful person [*ṣiddīq*]; and see other dreams about Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *ib.*, pp. 187–193).

Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā al-Farrā’ saw the Prophet in a dream and asked him about the *ḥadīths* reported by al-Qāsim b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān on the authority of Abū Umāma; the Prophet disapproved of them (Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, VIII, 324, no. 581).

The Prophet recommended Muḥammad b. Muslim to record the knowledge of Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā al-Ḥanzalī (Al-Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ, *op. cit.*, I, 408).

The Prophet ordered in a dream Salama b. Shabīb at the age of fifty to refrain from transmission of *ḥadīth*; afterwards the Prophet ordered him to transmit traditions (Ibn ‘Asākir, *Tahdhīb ta’riḫh*, ed. Aḥmad ‘Ubayd, Damascus 1349, VI, 229).

A dream served as means for establishing the Prophet’s approval of a Shī‘ī poet. Sa‘d al-Asadī saw the Prophet in a dream. The Prophet asked him to recite a poem of al-Kumayt (Qaṣida 2 of the *Hāshimīyyāt*, ed. J. Horowitz, Leiden, 1904, p. 27). After the Prophet had heard the *qaṣida* he ordered Sa‘d to inform al-Kumayt that as a reward for this poem God forgave him his sins (Al-Mausūlī, *Ghāyat al-wasā’il*, Ms. Cambridge Qq 33 (10), fols. 181b inf. — 182a).

The authority of al-Tha‘labī, the author of *Qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā’*, was established by God. Abū l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī, the author of the well-known “*Risāla*”, saw God in a dream. While God was talking with al-Qushayrī He remarked: “The righteous man has come”; it was al-Tha‘labī (Al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt*, VII, 308, Beirut 1389/1969, ed. Iḥsān ‘Abbās).

²⁸ *‘Ibāra*, fol. 24b; Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *op. cit.*, V, 130, no. 3383; al-Ḥākim, *op. cit.*, IV, 392; al-Haythamī, *op. cit.*, VII, 174; al-Majlisī, *op. cit.*, LXI, 183; Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmi’ al-uṣūl*, XII, 332–333, nos. 9348–9350; al-‘Azīzī, *op. cit.*, III, 386; Bland, *op. cit.*, p. 131. (And see another version of this tradition ‘*Ibāra*, fol. 24b); Anonymous, *al-Dhakhira wa-kashfu l-tauqī’ li-ahli l-baṣira*, Ms. Br. Mus., Or. 3922, fol. 29b; al-Khargūshī, *op. cit.*, fol. 8a.

²⁹ *‘Ibāra*, fol. 2a, l. 4.

The interpretation of dreams

has to be interpreted antithetically. Sometimes the content of the dream refers to another person (like the dreamer's brother, or his superior or peer).³⁰ Sometimes the dreams are confused (*aḡhāth*).

Due to the intricate character of dreams the requirements from the interpreter are wider than in the field of any other science. "For every scholar of some branch of the sciences", says Ibn Qutayba, "the tool of his science can be sufficient for practising it; but the oneirocritic has to be a scholar of Qur'ān and *ḥadīth* in order to interpret dreams according to their ideas, to be acquainted with Arab proverbs and rare verses of poetry, to have a knowledge of Arabic etymology and of current colloquial speech. Besides, he has to be an "*adīb*", gentle, sagacious, endowed with a capacity to judge the countenance of the people, their character-features, their rank and state, to have a knowledge of analogy and an acquaintance with the principles of oneiromancy".³¹ Only with God's guidance and help will he be pious and pure of sins and get his lot of the heritage of the prophets, says Ibn Qutayba.³²

Ibn Qutayba's intent in his introduction is to set out the ways of oneiromancy and to supply examples of dreams dealt with according to different methods: etymological, antithetical, symbolical and the ones based on Qur'ān, *ḥadīth*, current verses or proverbs.³³ The many dreams recorded by Ibn Qutayba contain forebodings, stories about reward in Paradise and punishment in Hell, judgements about character and behaviour of people; they reveal some hidden facts, edify and admonish and touch upon a wide range of subjects like religious tenets, political conditions, cultural life and moral ideas.

The attitude of the orthodox circles towards the heterodox factions in Islam is reflected in the dream of Yazīd b. Hārūn.³⁴ He saw a man who uttered *fatwās* in the mosque of Mecca. He inquired about the man and was told that he was the prophet Joseph. Yazīd asked him about drinking *nabīdh*.³⁵ Joseph stated that it was not forbidden, but disliked. Yazīd asked about the *khawārij* and Joseph answered: "They are Jews." Joseph gave the same

³⁰ *'Ibāra*, fols. 16b inf. – 17a sup.: Abū Jahl was seen in a dream embracing Islam; this referred to his son 'Ikrima. (See Ma'mar b. Rāshid, *op. cit.*, fol. 153a inf.; Muṣ'ab b. 'Abdallah al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, ed. E. Lévi-Provençal (Cairo, 1953), p. 311; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba*, IV, 258, no. 5632). The Prophet saw in a dream Asīd b. Abī l-'Iṣ entering Paradise; this referred to his son 'Attāb b. Asīd (*al-'Ibāra*, *ibid.*; cf. Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba*, IV, 211, no. 5383); cf. Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 7, ll. 3–4.

³¹ *'Ibāra*, fol. 2a inf. – 2b sup.; cf. Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 7; Bland, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

³² *'Ibāra*, fol. 2b.

³³ *'Ibāra*, fol. 4a; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

³⁴ See on him Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, XI, 366, no. 711.

³⁵ About drinking *nabīdh* see e.g.: al-Ṭahāwī, *Sharḥ mushkil al-āthār*, ed. Muḥammad Zuhrī al-Najjār (Cairo, 1388/1968), IV, 215–229; Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, *op. cit.*, III, 17–18, nos. 1304–1306.

answer when asked about the *rāfiḍa*: “They are Jews.” Yazīd could not remember what Joseph said about the *Murji’a*. “What about a man praying, fasting, carrying out his duties, not trespassing in these things whatsoever?” asked Yazīd. “That is my message and that of my fathers,” said Joseph.³⁶

The *khawārij* are, as is usual,³⁷ depicted as dogs in another story. The sister of the Khārijī leader Abū Bilāl Mirdās b. Udayya saw her brother in dream in the form of a dog, weeping. He told her that he had been turned after his death into one of the dogs of Hell.³⁸

The activity of the *khawārij* is mirrored in another dream, interpreted by Ibn Sīrīn. A woman told him that her patroness saw in her dream that two snakes came out from two holes in her house. Two men approached the snakes and milked them from their heads. Ibn Sīrīn remarked that a snake cannot give milk;³⁹ the men milked poison. They were leaders of the *khawārij* who were visiting the woman. They claim that their tenets are the *sunna* and *fiṭra*; but in fact their tenets are poison. The woman (who recounted the dream – K) confirmed that her lady had been a righteous woman until the two leaders of the *khawārij* came to her and changed her mind.⁴⁰

The murder of Ḥusayn was also predicted in a dream. Ibn ‘Abbās saw in his dream the Prophet with dishevelled hair, dust coloured, holding in his hand a bottle filled with blood. When asked about it the Prophet said: “It is the blood of al-Ḥusayn; I am collecting it through the night.” Later the date of the dream was checked; that night al-Ḥusayn was in fact killed.⁴¹

³⁶ ‘*Ibāra*, fol. 13a.

³⁷ See the tradition *al-khawārij kilāb al-nār*: Ma‘mar b. Rāshid, *op. cit.*, fol. 4a; al-Muttaqī l-Hindī, *Kanz al-‘ummāl* (Hyderabad, 1383/1963), XI, 182, no. 886; al-Tha‘ālibī, *Thimār al-qulūb*, p. 394, no. 622.

³⁸ ‘*Ibāra*, fol. 14b; al-Jāhīz, *al-Ḥayawān*, ed. ‘Abd al-Salām Hārūn (Cairo, 1384/1965), I, 271.

³⁹ Milk denotes in Muslim oneirology true belief, the *fiṭra*; see ‘*Ibāra*, fol. 36b, ult.: *wa-man ra’ā annahu shariba labanan fa-hiya l-fiṭratu*; al-Haythamī, *op. cit.*, VII, 183.

⁴⁰ ‘*Ibāra*, fol. 17b; al-Jāhīz, *al-Ḥayawān*, IV, 269; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 208; cf. Abū Nu‘aym, *op. cit.*, II, 277.

⁴¹ ‘*Ibāra*, fol. 20b; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *al-Manām*, p. 320; al-Ḥākīm, *op. cit.*, IV, 398; al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn* (Cairo, 1352/1933), IV, 431; cf. Haythamī, *op. cit.*, IX, 193 ult. – 194 sup.; Ibn Kathīr, *Shamā’il al-rasūl*, ed. Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Wāḥid (Cairo, 1386/1967), p. 447; al-Majlisī, *op. cit.*, XLIV, 239; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 282; Fahd, *op. cit.*, p. 296; Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Tamīmī, *al-Miḥān*, Ms. Cambridge Qq. 235 (8), fol. 48 a; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Khaṣā’iṣ al-kubrā*, II, 452; al-Dhahabī, *Ta’rikh al-Islām* (Cairo, 1367), II, 349; al-Yāfi‘ī, *Mir’āt al-jinān* (Hyderabad, 1339), I, 134; al-‘Iṣāmī, *Simṭ al-nujūm al-‘awālī* (Cairo, 1380), III, 78; al-Ṭabarsī, *I’lām al-warā* (Tehran, 1338), p. 217; al-Ganjī, *Kifāyat al-ṭālib fi manāqib ‘Alī b. abī Ṭālib*, ed. Muḥammad Hādī l-Aminī (al-Najaf, 1390/1970), p. 428.

The interpretation of dreams

The attitude of the orthodox circles towards compilations of *nasab* is reflected in the story of the dream of al-Kalbī. He saw himself on the Day of Judgement. He was brought into the presence of God, Who rebuked him for “compiling genealogies which he did not know” and ordered to lead him to Hell. On his way al-Kalbī met the Prophet and asked him to intercede for him with God, mentioning the merit of having compiled a commentary on the Qur’ān. The Prophet ordered ‘Alī, who was in his company, to interrogate al-Kalbī. Al-Kalbī having answered the questions well, ‘Alī reported the fact to the Prophet, who interceded for him and he was let free. He sat down with the Prophet and asked him when the Umayyad rule was going to end. The fall of the Umayyad dynasty happened in fact at the date fixed by the Prophet in his answer to al-Kalbī.⁴² The opposition of orthodox circles to dubious genealogies, the esteem for commentaries of the Qur’ān, the desire to know the dates of the rise and fall of dynasties and the belief in the intercession of the Prophet are reflected in this story.

The negative attitude towards the Umayyads is mirrored in a passage dealing with the meanings of “soul” and “spirit”. The spirits of the wicked people gather in Barhūt.⁴³ On the cornice of a large house in ‘Umān there used to shelter an owl. Some night another owl came and stood at its side. The ‘Umāni owl asked it who it was and it said: “I am the spirit of al-Walīd b. ‘Abd al-Malik and I am on my way to Barhūt.”⁴⁴ When the date was checked it tallied with the date of the death of al-Walīd. Ibn Qutayba states that the story resembles *jāhili*-beliefs about the *hāma* as reflected in the verse of Abū Duwād al-Iyādī:

*sullīṭa l-mawtu wa-l-manūnu ‘alayhim
wa-lahum fī ṣadā l-maqābiri hāmu*

Death and fate were imposed upon them

and they have in the birds of graves their (embodied) spirits.

and stresses that the Prophet abolished this belief.⁴⁵

⁴² *Ibāra*, fols. 10b–11a.

⁴³ See Yāqūt, *Mu’jam al-buldān* (Beirut, 1374/1955), I, 405; and see al-Majlisī, *op. cit.*, LX, 206, 239.

⁴⁴ *Ibāra*, fols. 3b–4a; al-Samarqandī, *Qurrat al-‘uyūn* (Cairo, 1354/1935), p. 93 (on margin of *Mukhtaṣar Tadhkirat al-Qurṭubī*; but here the owl is the spirit of ‘Abd al-Malik). Another anti-Umayyad interpretation of a dream is reported on the authority of Ibn al-Musayyab. A girl saw in her dream that Moses appeared in Syria. He held in his hand a stick and walked on the surface of the water. Ibn al-Musayyab stated that if this dream be true — ‘Abd al-Malik died this night. He explained how he arrived at this conclusion: God sent Moses in order to shatter the tyrants. He did not find a tyrant (to whom this dream might refer – K) except ‘Abd al-Malik (Al-Khargūshī, *op. cit.*, fol. 15a).

⁴⁵ The *ḥadīth*: *lā ‘adwā wa-lā hāma wa-lā ṣafara* is analysed by Abū ‘Ubayd in his *Gharīb al-ḥadīth*, I, 27 (the verse of Abū Duwād is recorded there); cf. Ibn Athīr, *al-Nihāya*, V, 283.

The story of the dream of Ghālib al-Qaṭṭan⁴⁶ reflects the struggle of the orthodoxy against innovators. He saw in his dream Mālik b. Dīnār wearing clothes like those which he used to wear in mosque. Mālik advised him to refrain from the company of rich worldly people and unlawful innovators.⁴⁷

Qur'ān versus poetry is symbolized in the dream of A'shā Hamdān,⁴⁸ which he told to al-Sha'bī. He saw in his dream that he exchanged wheat for barley. Al-Sha'bī interpreted it that he exchanged Qur'ān for poetry. Ibn Qutayba remarks: "The meaning of wheat and barley was here interpreted by Qur'ān and poetry. Would a man of the *ahl al-ra'y*⁴⁹ dream this dream it would be interpreted as exchange of *ḥadīth* for *ra'y*."⁵⁰

The role of Abū Ḥanīfa in Islam is attested in the following dream: Abū Ḥanīfa saw in a dream that he was digging the bones of the Prophet; (he collected them and pressed them to his breast). Ibn Sīrīn was told this dream and said: "This is a man who will revive the *sunna* of the Prophet."⁵¹

The dream served sometimes as confirmation of the truth and reliability of a *ḥadīth*. 'Ubaydullah b. 'Adī b. al-Khiyār⁵² considered a lie the *ḥadīth*: "The molar-tooth of the unbeliever in Hell is like the mountain of Uḥud",⁵³ which was reported by Abū Hurayra. 'Ubaydullah dreamt that he had an ulcer on his finger; he scratched it and it grew and became like the mountain of Uḥud. He went to Abū Hurayra and asked him to beg for him God's pardon, which Abū Hurayra did.⁵⁴

Ibn Qutayba relates his own dream about a *ḥadīth*. He saw in a dream Abū Dharr who transmitted to him the following utterance of the Prophet: "God said: 'He who approaches Me by the measure of a span I shall approach him by the measure of an arm; he who approaches Me by the measure of an arm I shall approach him by the measure of two arms; he who comes forth to Me walking I shall hurry to him'." When Ibn Qutayba woke up he asked about

⁴⁶ See on him al-Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i'tidāl*, ed. 'Alī Muḥammad al-Bijāwī (Cairo, 1382/1963), III, 330, no. 6642; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, VIII, 242, no. 444.

⁴⁷ 'Ibāra, fol. 15a; Abū Nu'aym, *op. cit.*, II, 380 sup.

⁴⁸ See on him al-Āmidī, *al-Mu'talif wa-l-mukhtalif*, ed. F. Krenkow (Cairo, 1354), p. 14, no. 15; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Asmā' al-mughtālīn (Nawādir al-makḥṭūṭāt)*, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Hārūn (Cairo, 1374/1955), VII, 265-266.

⁴⁹ See Aṣḥāb al-ra'y, EI², 692 (J. Schacht).

⁵⁰ 'Ibāra, fol. 9b.

⁵¹ 'Ibāra, fol. 34b; al-Ibshīhī, *al-Mustaṭraf* (Cairo, 1308), II, 80. (See the striking remark of Ibn Sīrīn: *mā yanbaghi li-aḥādīn min ahlī hādihā l-zamāni an yarā hādihī l-ru'yā*).

⁵² See on him Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, VIII, 36, no. 67.

⁵³ See al-'Azīzī, *op. cit.*, II, 410; al-Suyūfī, *al-Khaṣā'is*, III, 9; al-Jarrāḥī, *op. cit.*, II, 34, no. 1637.

⁵⁴ 'Ibāra, fol. 11a.

the *ḥadīth* and was told that Abū Dharr and Abū Hurayra transmitted this *ḥadīth*.⁵⁵

Sometimes a peculiar word, or a curious one, is revealed and elucidated in a dream. 'Abdallah b. 'Ā'idh al-Thumālī⁵⁶ promised Ghudayf b. al-Ḥārith⁵⁷ on his death-bed to tell him what befell him after death. 'Abdallah appeared to him in a dream and said: "We barely escaped (scil., pain – K); we met the Lord, Who forgave the sins and did not punish for the bad deeds except the *ahrād*" (whom He did punish – K); Ghudayf asked who were the *ahrād*. 'Abdallah explained the word as denoting people who are pointed at with the fingers secretly. Ibn Qutayba discusses several words of this root (*ḥ r ḍ*) and accepts 'Abdallah's definition of this word.⁵⁸

There is a dream which shows how faithful a believer Abū Bakr was. The Prophet, says the story, fraternized between Salmān and Abū Bakr. One night Salmān had a dream after which he turned away from Abū Bakr. When asked by Abū Bakr about his behaviour Salmān told him that he had seen him (i.e. Abū Bakr) in a dream, his hands fastened to his neck. Abū Bakr explained the dream as denoting that he had his hands fettered so as to prevent him from doing evil deeds until the Day of Judgement. The truth of this interpretation was subsequently established by the Prophet.⁵⁹

A similar tendency can be discerned in the following story: Rabī'a b. Umayya recounted a dream of his to Abū Bakr: "I was in a fertile land, then I moved into a land struck by barrenness. Your hands (i.e. Abū Bakr's) were fastened to your neck and you were at the side of Sarīr b. Abī l-Ḥashr."

⁵⁵ 'Ibāra, fol. 12a; al-Mundhirī, *al-Tarḥīb wa-l-tarḥīb*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī l-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd (Cairo, 1381/1962), V, 289, and see *ibid.*, no. 4531; al-Sharīf al-Raḍīyy, *al-Majāzāt al-nabawiyya*, ed. Maḥmūd Muṣṭafā (Cairo, 1356/1937), p. 272, no. 287 (with an interpretation of the *ḥadīth*); Abū Nu'aym, *op. cit.*, IV, 101; Ma'mar b. Rāshid, *op. cit.*, fol. 170a. The reliability of the *ḥadīth*: *inna aḥadakum yujma'u khalquhu...*, transmitted by Ibn Mas'ūd, was established by the Prophet in a dream. Muḥammad b. Yazīd al-Asfāṭī (see on him Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, IX, 525, no. 861) saw the Prophet in a dream and asked him about this *ḥadīth*, reported by al-A'mash on the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd. The Prophet stated that he himself reported this utterance to Ibn Mas'ūd and repeated this statement three times. "May God forgive al-A'mash, as he transmitted it, and may God forgive those who transmitted it before him and those who will transmit it after him", said the Prophet. (Ibn Rajab, *Jāmi' l-'ulūm wa-l-ḥikam*, ed. Muḥammad al-Aḥmadī Abū l-Nūr, Cairo, 1970, I, 103; on al-A'mash [Sulaymān b. Mihrān] see al-Dhahabī, *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*, I, 154, no. 149; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Kitāb al-thiqāt*, ed. 'Abd al-Khālīq al-Afghānī (Hyderabad, 1388/1968), p. 90).

⁵⁶ See on him Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt* (Beirut, 1377/1958), VII, 415.

⁵⁷ See on him Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba*, V, 189, no. 6906; Ibn Sa'd, *op. cit.*, VII, 443.

⁵⁸ 'Ibāra, fol. 16a; Ibn Sa'd, *op. cit.*, VII, 415; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *al-Manām*, pp. 297, 327; see al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Fā'iḳ*, ed. 'Alī Muḥammad al-Bijāwī and Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 1971), I, 276; L'A, s.v. *ḥ r ḍ*.

⁵⁹ 'Ibāra, fol. 9a.

Abū Bakr interpreted the dream as follows: “Your dream is true. You will abandon belief for unbelief; my affairs were destined for me righteously (i.e., my hands will not reach out for anything wrong – K) and I shall remain in a state of joy (*sarīr* → *surūr*) until the Day of Resurrection (*ḥaṣhr*).” It is told that Rabīʿa indeed embraced Christianity and left for Byzantium.⁶⁰

Many stories of dreams predict the rule of the first Caliphs, the rise of the Umayyad-dynasty and the *fitan*, reflecting often the conflicting religio-political views of the various factions of Muslim society.⁶¹

⁶⁰ *ʿIbāra*, fol. 19a; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba*, II, 224, no. 2746.

⁶¹ The succession of the two caliphs after the Prophet was predicted according to his dream in which he saw himself drawing a bucket from a well. He was followed in this action by Abū Bakr, who drew however no more than two buckets with little force. Then he was followed by ʿUmar. The bucket grew in his hands very large and he drew it with the greatest energy. See this story, Maʿmar b. Rāshid, *op. cit.*, fol. 18a; Abū ʿUbayd, *Gharīb al-ḥadīth*, I, 87; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Kit. al-ʿīlāl*, Ms. Chester Beatty 3516, fol. 286b; al-Bayhaqī, *Maʿrifat al-sunan wa-l-āthār*, ed. Aḥmad Ṣaqr, Cairo 1389/1969, I, 119; Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *op. cit.*, p. 22; al-Zurqānī, *op. cit.*, VII, 187–188; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Fāʾiq*, III, 61; Abū Bakr Ibn al-ʿArabī, *al-ʿAwāṣim min al-qawāṣim*, ed. Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb (Judda, 1387), p. 188; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Khaṣāʾiṣ al-kubrā*, II, 417–418; Muḥammad Fuʿād ʿAbd al-Bāqī, *op. cit.*, III, 165–166, nos. 1548–1549; al-Qastallānī, *op. cit.*, X, 147–149; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 292; al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *op. cit.*, XII, 176–177, nos. 930–933 (the *ḥadīth* no. 932 and Suyūṭī, *Khaṣāʾiṣ*, II, 418 combines the tradition of succession with the tradition about the ʿAjam embracing Islam, mentioned above p. 72, note 23), 183–184, nos. 972–973; Fahd, *op. cit.*, p. 277. The succession of the three first Caliphs was foreseen in a dream of the Prophet. He saw in a dream Abū Bakr attached (*niṭa bihi*) to him; ʿUmar was attached to Abū Bakr. and ʿUthmān to ʿUmar (al-Ḥākim, *op. cit.*, III, 71, 102; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Khaṣāʾiṣ al-kubrā*, II 417).

Abū Bakr saw himself in a dream clad in a yemenī garment and treading on human excrements; he had two moles on his chest. The Prophet interpreted it by saying that for two years he would rule as Caliph. (al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *op. cit.*, XII, 162–163, no. 827. Ibn Saʿd *op. cit.*, III, 176–177; Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *op. cit.*, p. 24).

ʿAuf b. Mālīk saw in a dream a man in a crowd taller than the rest of the people. He was told that the man was ʿUmar. ʿUmar, he was told, surpasses them because he is not wary of being blamed while acting for God’s sake, he will be an appointed Caliph by the predecessor and will die as martyr. ʿAuf told Abū Bakr the dream, who summoned ʿUmar and ordered ʿAuf to relate him the dream. When he said “he will be an appointed Caliph” (by the predecessor), ʿUmar silenced him and pulled him away roughly. When he became Caliph, he met ʿAuf, admitted that one part of the dream has been fulfilled, expressed his wish to act fearlessly for God’s sake, but wondered how he could gain the death of a martyr if he remains in the Arab peninsula (Ibn Saʿd, *op. cit.*, III, 331; al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-naḍira*, Cairo 1372/1953, I, 212).

Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī saw himself in a dream facing many highways, which, however, dwindled away. He went on the one which had been left and reached a mountain on which he saw the Prophet; on his side stood Abū Bakr. The Prophet pointed at ʿUmar ordering him to draw near. Abū Mūsā understood that the dream foreboded the death of ʿUmar (Ibn Saʿd, *op. cit.*, III, 332).

The interpretation of dreams

'Uthmān saw the Prophet in a dream when he was besieged in his court. 'Uthmān was fasting and the Prophet told him that he would break the fast in his company in the morning. In the morning, while still fasting, 'Uthmān was indeed killed, (al-Ḥākīm, *op. cit.*, III, 94, 103; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Khaṣā'ish al-kubrā*, II, 443–444; Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā b. Abī Bakr, *al-Tamhīd wa-l-bayān*, ed. Maḥmūd Yūsuf Zāyid, Beirut, 1964, p. 175; al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabari, *al-Riyāḍ*, II, 161, 167–168; and see another version *ibid.*, 167: 'Uthmān, when besieged, saw in a dream the Prophet who asked him: "Have they besieged you, have they caused you intense thirst?" "Yes", said 'Uthmān. The Prophet gave him a bucket with cold water and 'Uthmān drank until he quenched his thirst. Then the Prophet said: "If you want I shall help you against them [i.e. against the besiegers] or if else you will break the fast with us." 'Uthmān preferred to break the fast in the company of the Prophet [i.e. in Paradise] and was killed next day).

The Prophet interpreted the fire seen by Zurāra b. 'Amr al-Nakha'ī as indicating the *fitna* which will flame up after the Prophet's death. (See 'Ibāra, fol. 47b ult. — 48a; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba*, III, 8; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Isti'āb*, ed. 'Alī Muḥammad al-Bijāwī, Cairo, n.d., II, 517, no. 811; al-Zamakhsharī, *op. cit.*, II, 182–183; al-Zurqānī, *op. cit.*, VII, 193–194; Fahd, *op. cit.*, p. 286; and see 'Ibāra, fol. 51a, inf.).

The neutrality of Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ was approved of in a dream. Ḥusayn b. Khārija al-Ashja'ī became perplexed when the *fitna* broke out (i.e. after the murder of 'Uthmān). He asked God to grant him a sign how to act righteously. He saw in a dream this world and the next world and was guided by angels to a place where Ibrāhīm and the Prophet stayed. He heard the Prophet asking Ibrāhīm to beg God to pardon the sins of his people. Ibrāhīm said: "You know what your people invented (*aḥdathū*; for the meaning of *aḥdatha* see Goldziher, *op. cit.*, II, 27–31) after your death; they spilled their blood and killed their *imām*; why did they not act like my friend Sa'd?" Ḥusayn b. Khārija went to Sa'd and related him his dream. Sa'd was pleased that Ibrāhīm had named him his friend. When asked which of the two factions he joined, Sa'd stated that he kept away from both parties. He advised Ḥusayn to buy a flock and stay far away until the *fitna* came to an end (al-Dhahabī, *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid, I, 81, al-Ḥākīm, *al-Mustadrak*, III, 501).

The heated discussion about the position of 'Alī is reflected in a story about a *muḥaddith* who appeared in a dream to his friend and told him about the privileged status of Muḥammad b. 'Ubayd in Paradise, because he preferred 'Uthmān to 'Alī (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghādī, *op. cit.*, II, 367). Muḥammad b. 'Ubayd, when alive, used to warn his audience not to listen to the Kufians who scoff at the people (*ibid.*, the Kufians were known as the partisans of 'Alī).

The negative attitude towards the Umayyad rulers was reflected in a story according to which the Prophet saw the Umayyads in a dream jumping like apes on his minbar (al-Suyūṭī, *al-Khaṣā'ish al-kubrā*, II, 427–428; al-Majlisī, *op. cit.*, LXI, 156).

The attitude of the orthodoxy towards the conflict between 'Alī and Mu'āwiya (comp.: *idhā dhukira aṣḥābī fa-amsikū*, al-Suyūṭī, *Ta'riḥ al-khulafā'*, p. 176; Aḥmad b. Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *op. cit.*, p. 214) is mirrored in the story of the dream of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz. He saw in a dream the Prophet in the company of Abū Bakr and 'Umar. 'Alī and Mu'āwiya were brought in and entered a house the door of which was closed behind them. After a time 'Alī went out and stated that a verdict was given in his favour; then Mu'āwiya went out and said that God forgave him his sins (Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *al-Manām*, p. 319).

The personality of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz and his orthodox rule are emphasized in a story in which he tells of a dream which he dreamt. He saw the Prophet in the company of Abū Bakr and 'Umar, and the Prophet ordered him to follow the path of Abū Bakr and 'Umar when he will be entrusted with government (Ibn Sa'd, *op. cit.*, III, 291; al-Suyūṭī, *Ta'riḥ al-khulafā'*, p. 230).

A cloud flowing with butter and honey, which a man saw in a dream, was interpreted by Abū Bakr as Islam (the cloud) and Qur'ān (butter and honey).⁶²

The esteem for scholars occupied with the study of the Qur'ān is reflected in the story of a dream in which al-Kisā'i appeared and stated that God had forgiven his sins because he was dedicated to the study of the Qur'ān.⁶³

The preceding tradition belongs in fact to a particular kind of stories about the rewards in Paradise granted to the pious and godfearing for their good deeds. A fine specimen of a collection of this genre of stories is the *Kitāb al-manām* of Ibn Abī l-Dunyā,⁶⁴ a contemporary of Ibn Qutayba.⁶⁵ Similar in content are some chapters on this subject in Ibn Abī Ḥātim's *Taqdimat al-ma'rifa li-kitābi l-jarḥ wa-l-ta'dīl*.⁶⁶ Our *'Ibāra* contains many stories of this kind. In some cases the tendency is to stress the specific virtues by which the pious gained Paradise, to guide the living and to admonish.

Mālik b. Dīnār saw al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī in a dream and asked him about his experiences in the other world. Al-Ḥasan told him that he was guided by God's grace to the abode of the righteous in reward for his sorrow and weeping in this world. He accordingly said: "The longer the man's sadness in this world the longer is his joy in the life to come."⁶⁷ Ibn Qutayba remarks that this utterance is expressed in a manner which resembles al-Ḥasan's own style.⁶⁸

Mālik b. Dīnār also saw Muslim b. Yasār⁶⁹ in a dream. Muslim told him that he had been subjected after his death to dreadful experiences, but that later God had forgiven him his sins and accepted his good deeds. Mālik sobbed and fainted. After a few days he died.⁷⁰

⁶² *'Ibāra*, fol. 36a; see the different versions of this story: Ma'mar b. Rāshid, *op. cit.*, fols. 152b–153a; Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, *op. cit.*, III, 42–43, no. 1462; Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *op. cit.*, III, 357, no. 2113; Ps. Ibn Strīn, *op. cit.*, p. 130; al-Ḥanafī, *op. cit.*, II, 265; al-Qaṣṭallānī, *op. cit.*, X, 160–161; al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ*, I, 107; Abū Bakr Ibn al-'Arabī, *op. cit.*, p. 189; cf. al-Khargūshī, *op. cit.*, fol. 120b.

⁶³ *'Ibāra*, fol. 15a; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghādī, *op. cit.*, XI, 410, 414.

⁶⁴ Ms. al-Jazzār, Acre, *majmū'a*.

⁶⁵ D. 280 H. F. Meier's statement "Die Welt der Urbilder bei 'Alī Hamadani", (*Erano Jahrbuch*, 1950), p. 125, that the earliest collection of such stories is in the *Risāla* of al-Qushayrī must thus be altered.

⁶⁶ Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Taqdimat al-ma'rifa* (Hyderabad, 1371/1952), pp. 119–122, 311–312.

⁶⁷ *'Ibāra*, *op. cit.*, fol. 12b; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *al-Manām*, p. 301; comp. a similar dream of Ibn Strīn in al-Dhahabī's *Ta'rikh al-Islām* (Cairo, 1367), IV, 198.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, ...*aṭwalu l-nāsi ḥuznan aṭwaluhum farāḥan fī l-ākhirati; qāla abū muḥammadin: wa-hādḥā kamā tarā ashbahu bi-jayyidi kalāmi l-ḥasani.*

⁶⁹ See on him Ibn Sa'd, *op. cit.*, VII, 186.

⁷⁰ *'Ibāra*, fol. 13a, ult. — 13b sup.; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *al-Manām*, p. 299, ll. 5–12; Abū Nu'aym, *op. cit.*, II, 294 inf.

The interpretation of dreams

Mālik b. Dīnar appeared after his death in a dream to Suhayl Akhū Ḥazm⁷¹ and informed him that he had come to the presence of God with many sins, but that God had forgiven him because of his confidence in God (*ḥusnu l-ẓanni bi-llāhi*).⁷²

Sufyān al-Thaurī appeared in a dream to Abū Khālīd al-Aḥmar and informed him that he had found rest from the troubles of this world and came at the Mercy of God. According to another story Sufyān said that God had forgiven him his sins because of his *ṭalab al-ḥadīth*.⁷³

Šāliḥ al-Barrād saw in a dream Zurāra b. Aufā.⁷⁴ Zurara told him that the best things by which to reach Paradise are trust in God and hope of little duration.⁷⁵

Another class of dreams contain predictions about the death of pious men and how they will enter Paradise. A pious woman in Mecca dreamt about maid-servants, dressed in yellow clothes and holding sweet basil in their hands, encircling the Ka'ba. She was shocked by what she saw and said to herself: "Such a thing around the Ka'ba?" She was told in her dream that 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Abī Rawwād⁷⁶ was getting married. That night, when she woke up, she was informed that he had died the same night.⁷⁷

A woman saw in her dream a beautiful garden in which there was placed a golden throne. On this throne sat a man surrounded by servants with cups in their hands. She was told that the man was Marwān al-Muḥallimī. When

⁷¹ See on him Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, IV, 261, no. 449.

⁷² *'Ibāra*, fol. 13b; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *Majmū'at rasā'il* (Cairo, 1354/1935), p. 41, no. 7 (*Kitāb ḥusni l-ẓanni bi-llāhi*).

⁷³ *'Ibāra*, fol. 14a; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *op. cit.*, p. 121; comp. Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *al-Manām*, p. 351: A man saw Yazīd b. Hārūn after his death in a dream and asked him whether God forgave him his sins because he studied Qur'ān. "No", said Yazīd, "because (my study of) *ḥadīth*". And see al-Fasawī, *Kit. al-ma'rifa wa-l-ta'rikh*, Esad Ef. 2391, fol. 190b inf.: 'Amr b. Murra hesitated whether to choose *ḥadīth* or Qur'ān. He saw in a dream a man granting gifts to the readers of Qur'ān, not to the transmitters of *ḥadīth* and he decided to prefer Qur'ān. See about *ṭalab al-ḥadīth*: Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, II, 164 seq.; 'Abdallah b. al-Mubāarak told his friend in a dream that God forgave him his sins because of *ṭalab al-ḥadīth* (*Majmū'at rasā'il fi 'ulūm al-ḥadīth*, ed. Šubḥī al-Badrī al-Samarrā'i, al-Madīna al-Munawwara 1389/1969, p. 47).

⁷⁴ See on him Waki', *Akhbār al-quḍāt*, ed. 'Abd al-'Azīz Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī (Cairo, 1366/1947), I, 292–297; Ibn Sa'd, *op. cit.*, VII, 150.

⁷⁵ *'Ibāra*, fol. 13a; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *al-Manām*, p. 298, cf. al-Tha'labī, *Kitāb qatā l-Qur'ān*, Ms. Leiden, Or. 9981 (*majmū'a*), fol. 9a–b.

⁷⁶ See on him al-Sha'rānī, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā* (Cairo, [n.d.]), p. 52; Abū Nu'aym, *op. cit.*, VIII, 191.

⁷⁷ *'Ibāra*, fol. 11b; al-Yāfi'i, *Mir'āt al-jinān* (Hyderabad, 1338), I, 339 ult.–240 sup.; Ps. Ibn Sirin, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

she woke up in the morning, she was informed that the funeral of Marwān al-Muḥallimī passed by her door at that time.⁷⁸

Ḥafṣa bint Rāshid was moved by the death of her neighbour Marwān al-Muḥallimī. She then saw him in a dream and asked him what God's decision about him was. He told her that he had been introduced into Paradise, that he had then joined the "People of the Right" (*aṣḥāb al-yamīn*) and been finally raised to "those near the Presence" (*al-muqarrabīn*). When asked whom he had met in Paradise, he answered that he had seen there al-Ḥasan (al-Baṣrī), Maymūn b. Siyāh,⁷⁹ and Muḥammad b. Sīrīn.⁸⁰

The stories adduced above may give an idea about the dreams recorded by Ibn Qutayba concerning the pious in Paradise.

Yet another group of dreams contain injunctions, warnings and forebodings. Ismā'īl al-Ḥaḍramī became blind. In a dream he was taught a supplication and, having recited it, he regained his eyesight.⁸¹

Wahb b. Munabbih fell into destitution. One night he dreamt that a man brought him a thing resembling an almond or a pistachio nut. Having opened it, he found a piece of silk on which there was an inscription saying that it was not fitting for a man who knows the justice of God, or his affair by God's mercy, to consider the sustenance given by God as too slow. Later God gave him indeed plentiful sustenance.⁸²

A pious man from Hamdān saw in a dream a piece of paper on which an injunction was written ordering him to practise submission and fear of God in order to reach the rank of the righteous.⁸³

A secretary of al-Ḥasan b. Sahl⁸⁴ resigned from his post and became a pious man. In his dream he saw a man who told him that his Lord called

⁷⁸ *'Ibāra*, fol. 10a–b; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *al-Manām*, p. 300, ll. 10–16; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 70; al-Khargūshī, *op. cit.*, fol. 62b.

⁷⁹ See on him Abū Nu'aym, *op. cit.*, III, 106; Ibn Sa'd, *op. cit.*, VII, 152.

⁸⁰ *'Ibāra*, fol. 10a; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *al-Manām*, p. 300, ll. 7–10; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, pp. 69–70; al-Khargūshī, *op. cit.*, fol. 62b.

⁸¹ *'Ibāra*, fol. 11a. Cf. Ibn Ḥanbal, *Kit. al-'īlāl*, ed. T. Kacyigit and I. Cerrahoglu (Ankara, 1963), I, 68, no. 401: Simāk became blind. He saw in his dream Abraham who stroked his eyes, ordered him to enter the Euphrates and to open his eyes in the river. He did it and regained his sight.

⁸² *'Ibāra*, fol. 13a; al-Tanūkhī, *al-Faraj ba'da l-shidda* (Cairo, 1357/1938), I, 168; comp. Ibn Nāsir al-Dīn al-Dimashqī, *Jāmi' al-āthār fī maulidi l-mukhtār*, Ms. Cambridge Or. 913, fol. 75a sup. (It was the Prophet who saw the inscription in his dream; the story is transmitted on the authority of Wahb. b. Munabbih).

⁸³ *'Ibāra*, fol. 12b.

⁸⁴ See on him al-Jahshiyārī, *al-Wuzarā' wa-l-kuttāb*, ed. al-Saqā, al-Abyārī, Shalabī (Cairo, 1357/1938), pp. 230–231.

The interpretation of dreams

him. He understood the hint, made the necessary preparations and set out for a pilgrimage to Mecca. He died in fact on his journey.⁸⁵

‘Umar saw in a dream a cock which pecked him once or twice. He interpreted it that an alien (a Persian) would kill him.⁸⁶

‘Ā’isha bint Ṭalḥa (and another man) saw Ṭalḥa in a dream. He complained of dampness discomfoting him in his grave and asked to be removed into another place. When his grave was opened, the people found it exactly as described by Ṭalḥa. His body was found unchanged except for some of the hair in his beard.⁸⁷

A woman saw her deceased daughter in a dream. The daughter ordered her mother to divide walnuts amongst the poor. Ibn Sīrīn interpreted the dream as follows: the woman should take out her hidden treasure and divide it among the poor. The woman admitted that she had buried this treasure at the time of a plague.⁸⁸

A woman told Ibn Sīrīn that she dreamt the moon was entering into the Pleiades; a herald from behind her ordered her to go to Ibn Sīrīn and to tell him the story. Ibn Sīrīn’s interpretation was that he would die within seven days; he died in fact on the seventh day.⁸⁹

A man saw in a dream a bird coming down from heaven, alighting on a shrub of jasmin and picking it, then flying back towards heaven. Ibn Sīrīn explained it as referring to the death of scholars. In fact a number of scholars died in that year, among them al-Ḥasan and Ibn Sīrīn.⁹⁰

Laylā bint Aufā al-Ḥarashīyya, the wife of Furāt al-Bakkā’ī, had a daughter who saw in her dream that she would break three banners. Her mother asked Ibn Sīrīn about it, and he interpreted the dream by saying that three of her husbands would be killed. In fact Yazīd b. al-Muhallab, ‘Amr b. Yazīd al-Taymī, and al-‘Abbās b. ‘Abdallah b. al-Ḥārith b. Naufal b. al-Ḥārith b. ‘Abd

⁸⁵ *‘Ibāra*, fol. 14a.

⁸⁶ *‘Ibāra*, fol. 19a; Ibn Sa’d, *op. cit.*, III, 335–336; al-Ḥākim, *op. cit.*, III, 90; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Ta’rikh ‘Umar*, ed. Ḥasan al-Hādī Ḥusayn (Cairo, [n.d.]), p. 166; al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī, *op. cit.* (Cairo, 1372/1953), II, 99; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 201; al-Majlisī, *op. cit.*, LXI, 231; Fahd, *op. cit.*, 291; Ibn Sa’d, *op. cit.*, III, 355; Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Tamīmī, *op. cit.*, fols. 5b, 8a, 10b, 12b.

⁸⁷ *‘Ibāra*, fol. 11b; ‘Abd al-Razzāq, *al-Muṣannaf*, Ms. Murād Molla 604, fol. 60b; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *al-Manām*, p. 332; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *op. cit.*, II, 768–769; al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī, *op. cit.*, II, 348 (quoted on the authority of Ibn Qutayba); Fahd, *op. cit.*, p. 290; Cf. Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, ed. ‘Abd al-Khāliq al-Afghānī (Hyderabad, 1388/1968), III, 389.

⁸⁸ *‘Ibāra*, fol. 18b; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

⁸⁹ *‘Ibāra*, fol. 18b; al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt*, ed. Sven Dederling (Damascus, 1953), III, 146, no. 1095; al-Dhahabī, *Ta’rikh al-Islām*, IV, 196; Abū Nu’aym, *op. cit.*, II, 277; al-Ibshīhī, *op. cit.*, II, 79; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 221; Cf. Ibn Ḥanbal, *‘Ilal*, I, 6, no. 17: Sa’īd b. Jubayr was told in his dream that al-Ḥajjāj would kill him.

⁹⁰ *‘Ibāra*, fol. 20b; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya* (Beirut–Riyāḍ, 1966), IX, 275.

al-Muṭṭalib were killed. Al-Ḥasan b. 'Uthmān b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Auf succeeded to divorce her when he heard about the story of her dream and saved his life.⁹¹

'Ā'isha saw in a dream three moons falling in her bosom. Her father, Abū Bakr, interpreted it by saying that three men, the best people in the world, would be buried in her home.⁹²

Of special interest are sections of the manuscript reporting about dreams in which verses unknown to the dreamer were recited. These verses, underlining the true Arabic-Islamic character of these sections, serve in some cases as predictions, in others for recording some *gharīb* versions, or for purposes of admonition.

It may be of some interest to gain more insight⁹³ into the dreams of Ibn Qutayba himself, he being a man of outstanding knowledge in Arabic literature, language and religious lore. Ibn Qutayba reports⁹⁴ that he saw in his youth a dream in which there were many books containing many *gharīb* expressions. He remembered some of them, but later forgot them except the expression *wa-balaghat ilayhi ṣallatu l-hawā'i*. At that time he did not know the meaning of *ṣalla*; afterwards he learnt that it meant dryness.⁹⁵

Ibn Qutayba describes another dream which he dreamt as "a marvel" (*u'jūba*). A man asked him one day about the word *junahiyy*, which he did not know. In a dream a person explained to him the word as a synonym of *khayzurān* (bamboo). After a while Ibn Qutayba heard a man reciting:

*fī kaffīhi junahiyyun riḥuhu 'abiqun
min kaffi arwa'a fī 'irnīnihi shamamu
idhā ra'athu qurayshun qāla qā'iluhā
ilā makārimi hādihā yantahī l-karamu*⁹⁶

Ibn Qutayba knew before that this verse in the version: *fī kaffīhi khayzurānun*; when he heard it in the new version he understood that the explanation in the dream was right.⁹⁷

⁹¹ 'Ibāra, fol. 21a; see Ibn Ḥabīb, *al-Muḥabbar*, ed. Ilse Lichtenstaedter (Hyderabad, 1361/1942), p. 443; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 152; cf. al-Khargūshī, *op. cit.*, fol. 142b, penult.

⁹² 'Ibāra, fol. 29a; al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, *op. cit.*, I, 150; al-Suyūṭī, *Ta'riḥ al-khulafā'*, p. 105; al-Haythamī, *op. cit.*, VII, 185; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 220; al-Ibshībī, *op. cit.*, II, 79; al-Muttaqī l-Hindī, *op. cit.*, XII, 176, no. 927; *Al-Manāsik*, ed. Ḥamad al-Jāsir (al-Riyāḍ, 1389/1969), p. 374.

⁹³ See Ibn Qutayba's dream in connection with a *ḥadīth*, above, note 55.

⁹⁴ 'Ibāra, fol. 16b. ⁹⁵ See L'A, s.v. ṣ l l.

⁹⁶ 'Ibāra, fol. 16b; cf. Muṣ'ab b. 'Abdallah al-Zubayrī, *op. cit.*, p. 164; *Rijāl al-Kashshī*, ed. Aḥmad al-Ḥusaynī (Karbalā', [n.d.]), p. 119; Ṣadr al-Dīn 'Alī Khān al-Shirāzī al-Madanī, *al-Darajāt al-rafi'a* (al-Najaf, 1382/1962), p. 549.

⁹⁷ See L'A, s.v. j n h.

The interpretation of dreams

A man from Ghassān dreamt that he saw on the wall of Damascus a person who recited verses predicting the death of 'Amr b. Sa'id who "considered the fortress as a place of rescue from death, sought refuge in the fortress, but the fate of death visited him in the fortress." The Ghassānī recounted the dream to 'Abd al-Malik who asked him to keep the dream in secret. After some time the dream was fulfilled: 'Abd al-Malik killed 'Amr b. Sa'id (al-Ashdaq) in the fortress of Damascus.⁹⁸

At the time of 'Uthmān a man saw in a dream a person reciting verses predicting the death of 'Uthmān. A short time afterwards 'Uthmān was killed.⁹⁹

A man saw in a dream 'Alī b. Hishām. He played a lute and sang:

By my life, if Khurāsān causes me to forfeit my head
so I was indeed far from the gates of Khurāsān.

After some time al-Ma'mūn sent al-'Ujayf and ordered to kill 'Alī b. Hishām.¹⁰⁰

Ascetic poetry is represented in verses recited by girls in Paradise (*hūrīs*) whom a man saw in his dream:

God of men, the Lord of Muḥammad, created us
for people standing on their feet sleepless (praying – K)
Whispering to their God, the Lord of all Being
the worries of this people, circulate during the night, while (other) men
sleep.¹⁰¹

Of the same character are the verses recited in a dream to Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya, when she was ill:

Your prayer, when people sleep, is light

⁹⁸ *Ibāra*, fol. 15b; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *Manām*, p. 347; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, VIII, 311 (all the sources recording the verses:

alā yā la-qaumi li-l-safāhati wa-l-wahni
wa-li-l-'ājizi l-mauhūni wa-l-ra'yi dhi l-afni.
wa-li-bni sa'idin baynamā huwa qā'imun
'alā qadamayhi kharra li-l-wajhi wa-l-baṭni.
ra'ā l-ḥiṣna manjātan fa-ltājā
ilayhi fa-zārathu l-maniyyatu fi l-ḥiṣni.)

and see the story of his killing al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'riḥ* (Cairo, 1358/1939), IV, 598–600. See *ibid.*, p. 598: 'Amr b. Sa'id saw in a dream 'Uthmān on the night before he was murdered; 'Uthmān dressed him in his gown.

⁹⁹ *Ibāra*, fol. 15b; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *al-Manām*, p. 347:

la-'amru abika fa-lā ta'jalan
laqad dhahaba l-khayru illā qalilā
wa-qad safiha l-nāsu fi dīnihim
wa-khallā bnu 'aḥfāna sharran ṭawilā.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibāra*, fol. 20b; see the story of his execution al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'riḥ*, VII, 192–193.

¹⁰¹ *Ibāra*, fol. 15b, inf. – 16a sup.

your sleep is diverse, opposed to prayer.
Your life is a plunder and a respite
it goes on and passes away steadily and ceases.¹⁰²

Different in content is a story about a couple who promised each other to refrain from marriage in case one of them should die. The husband was the first to die. The widow kept her promise, but was persuaded by some women to remarry. On the night of her second marriage she saw in a dream her first husband who said: "How quickly did you forget the obligation, o Rabāb!" He recited the following verses:

I greeted the dwellers of this house, all of them
except Rabāb, for I am not greeting her.
She became married, while my abode
became a grave, indeed graves hide people who dwell in them.¹⁰³

Besides the prognostic interpretations of dreams, a great number of interpretations are concerned with unknown facts of the past or the present, mainly details of private life, which would never have come to the person's knowledge without the help of the oneirocritic.

A man dreamt that he drank from a bottle with two heads, one sweet and one salty. Ibn Sirīn said in his interpretation that he sought the favours of his wife's sister and bade him desist. The man admitted that the interpretation was a true one.¹⁰⁴

A man saw in a dream that he drank from a bottle with a narrow neck. Ibn Sirīn interpreted it by saying that the man was enticing a girl.¹⁰⁵

A man dreamt a dream that he owned an ostrich that was grinding. Ibn Sirīn said that it denoted that the man bought a slave-girl and hid her amongst the tribe of Banū Ḥanifa.¹⁰⁶

A man dreamt a dream that his hand was cut off. Ibn Sirīn interpreted it that he was a carpenter and changed his occupation.¹⁰⁷

A man dreamt a dream that a pebble fell into his ear and he shook it off. Ibn Sirīn interpreted it by saying that the man was associated to people of unorthodox innovations and heard vicious words, which his ear shook off.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰² *'Ibāra*, fol. 16a; al-Sarrāj, *Maṣāri' al-'ushshāq*, Cairo, 1325/1907, pp. 146–147.

¹⁰³ *'Ibāra*, fol. 15a–b; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *al-Manām*, p. 344; Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyya, *Akhbār al-nisā'*, ed. Nizār Riḍā, Beirut 1964, pp. 127–128.

¹⁰⁴ *'Ibāra*, fol. 17a; Abū Nu'aym, *op. cit.*, II, 276–277; al-Khargūshī, *op. cit.*, fol. 125b.

¹⁰⁵ *'Ibāra*, fol. 17b.

¹⁰⁶ *'Ibāra*, fol. 17b; and see the version of al-Jāhīz, *al-Ḥayawān*, IV, 368–369 (Parts of the Banū Ḥanifa were peasants [they supplied Mecca with their agricultural products]. See EI², s.v. Ḥanifa b. Ludjajm. And see Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *op. cit.*, XIII, 92, no. 7355; Ibn 'Asākir, *op. cit.*, VI, 170).

¹⁰⁷ *'Ibāra*, fol. 18b; Ps. Ibn Strin, *op. cit.*, p. 115; al-Khargūshī, *op. cit.*, fol. 106b.

¹⁰⁸ *'Ibāra*, fol. 20a.

The interpretation of dreams

A man saw in a dream Qatāda swallowing small pearls and spitting them out larger than those which he swallowed. Qatāda, according to Ibn Sīrīn's interpretation, transmitted more *ḥadīth* than he heard.¹⁰⁹

A similar symbolism underlies Abū Bakr's interpretation of a dream, in which a man saw a big bull who came out from a small hole and could not enter it when he tried to return. Abū Bakr interpreted it as a grievous expression which cannot be taken back.¹¹⁰

A man heard in a dream a child shouting in his house. Ibn Sīrīn ordered him to stop playing on the guitar; it was in fact a singer.¹¹¹

Drinking from a vessel symbolizes, as we have seen above,¹¹² sexual intercourse. The same interpretation is applied by Ibn Sīrīn in the following dream: a man saw in a dream a woman from his family lifting to her mouth a vessel of milk, but, outspeeded by a pressure to urinate, she had to put down the vessel at every attempt to drink. The woman, according to Ibn Sīrīn, was a righteous woman who longed for a man. Ibn Sīrīn advised to find for her a husband.¹¹³

A similar subject is dealt with in another story: Khālid b. Yazīd (or Yazīd) dreamt that he put three times a knife on the neck of a *ḥīṭawā*-bird trying unsuccessfully to slaughter it;¹¹⁴ he managed to slaughter it only on the fourth time. An interpreter of dreams was summoned and explained that it refers to a virgin girl whom the dreamer failed to deflower three times, but succeeded on the fourth time. The interpreter added that the girl broke wind during the intercourse, which he deduced from the name of the bird "*ḥīṭawā*". Khālid admitted the facts.¹¹⁵

Sagacity was shown by Ibn Sīrīn in the interpretation of the following dream: A man saw in a dream that Yazīd b. al-Muhallab put up an arch between his house and that of the dreamer. Ibn Sīrīn asked the man: "Did your mother cohabit with Ibn al-Muhallab?" The man asked his mother and she admitted that she had been a slave-girl of Ibn al-Muhallab (scil. his concubine – K), later marrying the dreamer's father.¹¹⁶

¹⁰⁹ *'Ibāra*, fol. 20b. Cf. al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt*, ed. S. Dederling (Damascus, 1953), p. 146.

¹¹⁰ *'Ibāra*, fol. 20a; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 183; al-Khargūshī, *op. cit.*, fol. 168a.

¹¹¹ *'Ibāra*, fol. 20b; Abū Nu'aym, *op. cit.*, II, 277; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

¹¹² See above notes 104, 105.

¹¹³ *'Ibāra*, fol. 21a; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

¹¹⁴ See slaughter as symbol of sexual intercourse in the story recorded by al-Ibshīhī, *op. cit.*, II, 79 (a man saw in a dream a woman, who was his neighbour, slaughtered...); and see *'Ibāra*, fol. 54a, l. 10: *wa-man dhabaha ḥabyan iftaḍḍa jāriyatan...*; and see *ibid.*, fol. 57b, l. 9: *...wa-man dhabaha dajātan iftaḍḍa jāriyatan 'adhrā'a*.

¹¹⁵ *'Ibāra*, fol. 21b; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 12; al-Damīrī, *op. cit.*, II, 102; Abdel Daim, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

¹¹⁶ *'Ibāra*, fol. 21a; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

A significant dream of Abū 'Amr al-Nakha'ī reflects the feeling of the victory of the Arabs over the Persians in the early period of Islam and their sense of self-identification with the past. Abū 'Amr saw al-Nu'mān b. al-Mundhir, the king of al-Ḥīra, in a dream, wearing two earrings and bracelets. When he informed the Prophet about his dream, the Prophet said: "This indicates that the kingdom of the Arabs returned to its splendour and beauty."¹¹⁷

The "Arab-character" of an object helps Sa'īd b. al-Musayyab to give an interpretation of a dream. A man saw in a dream on the battlements of the mosque a beautiful white pigeon, which was snatched away by a falcon. Ibn al-Musayyab interpreted it by saying that al-Ḥajjāj married the daughter of 'Abdallah b. Ja'far. His explanation as to how he reached his conclusion is as follows: the pigeon denotes a woman, the whiteness denotes her pure pedigree; the falcon is an Arab bird, not an alien one (*laysa min ṭayri l-a'ājim*); among the Arabs he did not find anyone more closely resembling a falcon than al-Ḥajjāj.¹¹⁸

The Islamic character of Ibn Qutayba's compilation is underlined by the frequent quotations from Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*, which serve as the basis for the interpretations.

Abundance of mushrooms denote sustenance and wealth without fatigue, according to the utterance of the Prophet that mushrooms stem from *Manna*.¹¹⁹

The mouse denotes a profligate woman, because the Prophet called the mouse "*al-fuwaysiqa*" (the small profligate).¹²⁰

According to this utterance, Ibn Sīrīn interpreted a dream in which a man saw himself having sexual intercourse with a mouse which gave birth to a date. Ibn Sīrīn asked the man whether he had at home a profligate wife. "Yes", the man answered. Further he asked: "Is she pregnant?" "Yes", the man answered. Ibn Sīrīn predicted that she would give birth to a righteous boy. He based his prognostic on the utterance of the Prophet about the mouse and his favourable saying about dates.¹²¹

¹¹⁷ 'Ibāra, fol. 45b; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba*, III, 8, no. 2789; al-Zurqānī, *op. cit.*, VII, 194; Fahd, *op. cit.*, p. 286, note 1.

¹¹⁸ 'Ibāra, fol. 57a; al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, *op. cit.*, I, 150; al-Damīrī, *op. cit.*, II, 181; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 196; Fahd, *op. cit.*, p. 311, no. 6.

¹¹⁹ 'Ibāra, fol. 39b; al-Damīrī, *op. cit.*, II, 345-346; Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyya, *Zād al-ma'ād* (Beirut, [n.d.]), III, 181, 183; al-Ḥanafī, *op. cit.*, II, 366; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya*, IV, 199; al-'Azīzī, *op. cit.*, III, 109; Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmi' al-uṣūl*, VIII, 327, nos. 5636-5637.

¹²⁰ 'Ibāra, fol. 5b ult.; al-Damīrī, *op. cit.*, II, 201 inf.; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 209; Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmi' al-uṣūl*, XII, 367, no. 9449; about black and white mice denoting days and nights see 'Ibāra, fol. 8a; al-Damīrī, *op. cit.*, II, 202; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, p. 209.

¹²¹ 'Ibāra, fol. 19a; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 209; cf. Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, IX, 275.

The interpretation of dreams

The raven symbolizes, according to a *ḥadīth*, a profligate man.¹²²

Bottles denote women, according to the utterance of the Prophet to An-jasha.¹²³

A long right hand in a dream is to be interpreted as a generous helping person, as the Prophet said, addressing his wives: "The first of you who will join me (i.e. to die after me – K) will be the one with the longest hand." The first who died after the Prophet was Zaynab bint Jaḥsh.¹²⁴

A rib seen in a dream denotes a woman according to the recommendation of the Prophet to treat woman gently because woman was created from a crooked rib and cannot be set aright.¹²⁵

The liver denotes a treasure according to the saying of the Prophet about the troops of Mecca: *ḥādhihi makkatu qad ramatkum bi-aflādhī akbādhīhā*.¹²⁶

Watering a garden and seeds denotes sexual intercourse, according to the prohibition of the Prophet to water the seeds of another man (referring to sexual intercourse with pregnant women).¹²⁷

Many interpretations of dreams are based on verses of the Qur'ān, on expressions of the Qur'ān or meanings attached to them. Eggs denote women according to Sūra xxxvii 49, in which the women in Paradise are compared to hidden eggs.¹²⁸

Timber denotes hypocrisy according to Sūra lxiii 4: "... but when they speak thou listenest to their speech, and it is as if they were propped up timbers."¹²⁹

Stones in a dream symbolize hardness according to Sūra ii 74.¹³⁰

Water denotes sometimes trial and allurement (*fitna*) according to Sūra lxxii 16.¹³¹

A king entering a locality not suiting his rank and honour (because of its smallness) denotes that the locality will be afflicted by humiliation or calamity,

¹²² 'Ibāra, fols. 5b, 24a; al-Damīri, *op. cit.*, II, 180; al-Majlisī, LXI, 173.

¹²³ 'Ibāra, fol. 6a; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-'Iṣāba*, I, 68, no. 259; al-Bukhārī, *al-Adab al-mufrad*, ed. Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb (Cairo, 1379), p. 305, no. 883; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *op. cit.*, I, 140; al-Jurjānī, *al-Muntakhab min kināyāt al-udabā'*, ed. Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn al-Na'sānī (Cairo, 1326/1908), p. 7; al-Tha'ālibī, *al-Kināyāt*, ed. al-Na'sānī (Cairo, 1326/1908), p. 4.

¹²⁴ 'Ibāra, fol. 7a; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *op. cit.*, IV, 1850, no. 3355; Ibn Sa'd, *op. cit.*, VIII, 108; al-Haythamī, *op. cit.*, IX, 248; al-Ḥanafī, *op. cit.*, II, 250; Ibn Kathīr, *Shamā'il*, p. 389; Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmi' al-uṣūl*, XII, 66, no. 8850; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Khaṣā'ish al-kubrā*, II, 462.

¹²⁵ 'Ibāra, fols. 6a, 31a inf.; al-Sulamī, *Adāb al-ṣuḥba*, Jerusalem 1954, p. 82, note 245; al-Majlisī, *op. cit.*, LXI, 173.

¹²⁶ 'Ibāra, fol. 31a; al-Sharīf al-Raḍīyy, *op. cit.*, p. 22, no. 1 (and see *ib.*, p. 226, no. 231)

¹²⁷ 'Ibāra, fol. 37b.

¹²⁸ 'Ibāra, fol. 5a.

¹²⁹ 'Ibāra, fol. 5a; and see al-Qurṭubī, *Tafsīr*, XVIII, 125; al-Sharīf al-Raḍīyy, *op. cit.*, p. 293, no. 320.

¹³⁰ 'Ibāra, fol. 5a. ¹³¹ 'Ibāra, fol. 5a.

according to Sūra xxvii 34: “Kings when they enter a city disorder it and make the mighty ones of its inhabitants abased.”¹³²

Dress denotes women according to Sūra ii 187: “Permitted to you upon the night of the fast is to go to your wives; they are a vestment to you and you are a vestment for them.”¹³³

A wood-carrier denotes a slanderer, according to Sūra cxi 5: “... and his wife, the carrier of the firewood” (i.e. the slanderous woman – K).¹³⁴

The rope denotes a pact according to Sūra iii 103, 113: “And hold you fast to God’s bond together...”; “Abasement shall be pitched on them wherever they are come upon except they be in a bond of God and a bond of the people.”¹³⁵

Scattered pearls denote servants according to Sūra lii 24: “... and there go round them youths, their own, as if they were hidden pearls.”¹³⁶

Fresh dates (*ruṭab*) denote good and pleasant sustenance, according to Sūra xix 24: “Shake also to thee the palm-trunk, and there shall come tumbling upon thee dates fresh and ripe.”¹³⁷

Drunkenness in a dream, without drinking intoxicants, denotes fear, according to Sūra xxii 2: “... and thou shalt see mankind drunk, yet they are not drunk, but God’s chastisement is terrible.”¹³⁸

Washing with cold water symbolizes repentance, recovering from disease, being freed from prison, paying a debt, or being freed from fear, according to Sūra xxxviii 42: “This is a laving-place, cool and a drink.”¹³⁹

Rain in a restricted place (a house or locality) denotes pains and calamities, according to Sūra xi 82: “... and rained on it stones and baked clay.”¹⁴⁰

The tongue symbolizes a (convincing) argument or fame, according to Sūra xxvi 84: “... and appoint me a tongue of truthfulness among the others.”¹⁴¹

Praying with the back to the Ka’ba symbolizes renouncing Islam, according to Sūra iii 187: “... but they rejected it behind their backs.”¹⁴² Praying above the Ka’ba also denotes renouncing Islam, according to Sūra ii, 144, 150: “From whatsoever place thou issuest, turn thy face towards the Holy Mosque...”; the man praying above the Ka’ba has no *qibla*.¹⁴³

Eating fruits in Paradise (or getting women there) predicts welfare in this world and improvement of belief, knowledge and piety, according to Sūra xv 46: “Enter you there in peace and security.”¹⁴⁴

¹³² 'Ibāra, fol. 5b. ¹³³ 'Ibāra, fol. 5b.

¹³⁴ 'Ibāra, fol. 6b. ¹³⁵ 'Ibāra, fol. 5b.

¹³⁶ 'Ibāra, fol. 45b. ¹³⁷ 'Ibāra, fol. 40b.

¹³⁸ 'Ibāra, fol. 38a. ¹³⁹ 'Ibāra, fol. 36b.

¹⁴⁰ 'Ibāra, fol. 36a. ¹⁴¹ 'Ibāra, fol. 30a.

¹⁴² 'Ibāra, fol. 27a.

¹⁴³ 'Ibāra, fol. 27a; Ps. Ibn Sirīn, *op. cit.*, p. 56, ll. 14–16.

¹⁴⁴ 'Ibāra, fol. 26a.

The interpretation of dreams

Manacles (*aghlāl*) constitute a bad omen, according to Sūra v 67: "... their hands are fettered and they are accursed for saying so..." and Sūra xxxvi 8: "Surely We have put on their necks fetters."¹⁴⁵ Another interpretation stresses the difference between manacles and shackles (*qayd*): manacles denote unbelief, but shackles denote firm belief.¹⁴⁶

‘Umar withdrew the nomination of his governor to Syria when the latter told him his dream. He saw the sun and the moon fighting each other; some of the stars aided the sun, some of them the moon. "With which of them were you?" asked ‘Umar. "With the moon", answered the man. ‘Umar withdrew his appointment, basing his decision on Sūra xvii 12: "... then We have blotted out the sign of the night."¹⁴⁷

Two different interpretations of an identical dream, both based on the Qur’ān, were issued by Ibn Sīrīn. Two different persons dreamt that they were calling to prayer as *mu’adhdhins*. Ibn Sīrīn predicted to the first one that he would perform the *ḥajj*; to the other he foretold that his hand would be cut off (as punishment for theft). When asked about this opposite interpretation of the same dream, he said: "In the first person I noticed marks of good countenance and based my interpretation on Sūra xxii 27: "And proclaim unto mankind the pilgrimage." I was not pleased with the countenance of the other man and I interpreted according to Sūra xii 70: "... then a herald proclaimed: Ho, cameleers, you are robbers."¹⁴⁸

A considerable number of verses enhance, the Arabic character of the compilation. It is indeed not surprising to find so many verses in a book by Ibn Qutayba, given his profound knowledge of Arabic poetry.

In a lengthy passage, in which he discusses the meanings of spirit (*rūḥ*) and soul (*nafs*) and the differences between them, Ibn Qutayba quotes a verse of Dhū l-Rumma, who said at the point of his death:

¹⁴⁵ ‘*Ibāra*, fol. 8b (but if a pious man sees manacles in a dream it is a good omen).

¹⁴⁶ ‘*Ibāra*, fol. 47a, inf. – 47b sup.; see Ma’mar b. Rāshid, *op. cit.*, fol. 152a inf.; al-Tibrīzī, *op. cit.*, p. 394; al-Suyūfī, *al-Durr*, III, 312. Of interest is the interpretation of the following dream: A man saw in a dream that his son tied him with a black rope and then started to slaughter him. Ibn Sīrīn interpreted the dream by saying that the son is pious in his attitude towards his father and that he would pay a debt owed by his father (‘*Ibāra*, fol. 31b inf.; and see a more detailed report of this story Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *al-Ishrāf fi manāzil al-ashrāf*, Ms. Chester Beatty 4427, fol. 32a).

¹⁴⁷ ‘*Ibāra*, fol. 17a; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba*, I, 285, no. 1353; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *op. cit.*, I, 279, no. 378; al-Ibshīhī, *op. cit.*, II, 79; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *al-Ishrāf*, fol. 49a; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 291; al-Muttaqī l-Hindī, *op. cit.*, XI, 340, no. 1341; Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Tamīmī, *op. cit.*, fol. 35a.

¹⁴⁸ ‘*Ibāra*, fol. 9a; Bland, *op. cit.*, p. 133; Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Tamīmī, *op. cit.*, fol. 22a; al-Khargūshī, *op. cit.*, fol. 36a.

O, He Who takes my spirit from my soul at the point of death
and He Who forgives the sins, remove me from fire (of Hell).¹⁴⁹
and an anonymous verse:

I remain the whole day maddened by love, and there meet
at night in dream my spirit and her spirit.¹⁵⁰

The interpretation of the quince (*safarjal*) and the iris (*sūsan*) are derived
from the components of these words (*sū-san* = *su' sana*; *safarjal* = *safar-jal*)
and illustrated by the following anonymous verses:

She sent him as gift a quince and he drew a bad omen
and remained the whole day contemplating.

He was afraid of departure, as the first of it is journey (*safar*);
right he was in that he drew a bad omen.

and about the iris:

You gave me an iris and you did not
do well in (choosing your) gifts.

The first of it is evil and its end,
is evil of a (barren) year.¹⁵¹

A surveyer (of land) is interpreted as a traveller; this is expounded by two
anonymous verses:

May God render the people of Barmak ugly, for I
became associate in their journeys because of them.

If Dhū l-Qarnayn did survey the Earth
then I am indeed a keeper of the dust.¹⁵²

Two verses of Khidāsh b. Zuhayr are quoted attesting that the word *daj-
jāla* denotes a caravan; an anonymous verse conveys that the word denotes
camels smeared with tar.¹⁵³

The verb *ramā*, to throw arrows, denoting also calumny, slander (for

¹⁴⁹ *Ibāra*, fol. 3b, l. 1; *Diwān*, ed. C. H. H. Macartney (Cambridge, 1919), p. 667 (no. 47); L'A, s.v. *z ḥ ḥ*; the variants pertinent to the discussed problem may be mentioned:

Ibāra: *yā qābiḍa l-rūḥi min nafsi idhā ḥtuḍīrat*
wa-ghāfira l-dhanbi zaḥiḥni min al-nāri.

Diwān: *yā mukhrīja l-rūḥi min jismi idhā ḥtaḍarat*
wa-fārija l-karbi...

L'A: *yā qābiḍa l-rūḥi 'an jismin 'aṣā zamanan*
wa-ghāfira l-dhanbi...

¹⁵⁰ *Ibāra*, fol. 3b, l. 10. See this verse in the *Diwān* of Jamīl Buthayna, ed. Bashīr Yamūt (Beirut, 1352/1934), p. 18.

¹⁵¹ *Ibāra*, fol. 5a; Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 311, 9; Bland, *op. cit.*, p. 135; al-Khargūshī, *op. cit.*, fol. 217b.

¹⁵² *Ibāra*, fol. 6b; Ibn al-Faḳḥ, *al-Buldān*, ed. de Goeje (Leiden, 1885), p. 52 ("muwak-kalun bi-l-'iyāri", not "bi-l-ghubāri").

¹⁵³ *Ibāra*, fols. 6b-7a.

The interpretation of dreams

its interpretation of dreams in the latter connotation) is attested by Sūra xxiv 4, 6, and two verses of Labīd.¹⁵⁴

The symbol of a falcon (*ṣaqr*) as a courageous man is attested by a verse of Abū Ṭālib:

The courageous men (falcons) came one after the other, as if
everyone of them clad in over-long mail (were a warrior) walking
heavily.¹⁵⁵

Honour is symbolized in dreams by the sky. This is attested by a verse of al-Nābigha al-Ja'dī, recited during his meeting with the Prophet:

Our glory and our greatness reached the sky
and we hope to gain an elevated place above that.¹⁵⁶

The sun symbolizes in dreams the power of the king. A verse of al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī is quoted:

So you are the sun and the kings are the stars
when it appears, no star from among the stars appears.¹⁵⁷

Stars denote the noblemen from among the people. An anonymous verse testifies it:

Whomever you will meet from amongst them you will say: "I met their
chief"
they are like the stars by which the travellers travel.¹⁵⁸

A rib symbolizes, as already mentioned, a woman. A verse of an anonymous poet attests it:

She is a hooked rib, you will not set her aright
lo, setting aright the ribs means breaking them.¹⁵⁹

Lice in dreams symbolize the welfare of the family. A verse about it is quoted:

Up to the time when your clans grew full of lice (i.e. grew large – K)
and you saw that your sons grew up...¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁴ *Ibāra*, fol. 7a; see the verses *Dīwān*, ed. Ihsān 'Abbās (al-Kuwayt, 1962), pp. 194–195 (nos. 72, 74); and see these verses analysed by Ibn Qutayba in his *Kit. al-ma'āni l-kabir* (Hyderabad, 1368/1949), pp. 818, 1046–1047.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibāra*, fol. 7b, l. 8; Ibn Hishām, *al-Sira al-nabawiyya*, ed. al-Saqā, al-Abyārī, Shalabī (Cairo, 1355/1936), II, 18, l. 8 (*Ibāra: tatāba'a fihā; Sira: a'āna 'alayhā*); cf. Muṣ'ab b. 'Abdallāh al-Zubayrī, *op. cit.*, p. 431.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibāra*, fol. 26a; Maria Nallino, *Le Poesie di an-Nabīga al-Ġa'dī* (Roma, 1953), pp. 60 (v. 66, and see the references of the editor), 70 (v. 22); Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Ṭabāṭabā al-'Alawī, *'Iyār al-shi'r*, ed. Tāhā al-Ḥājirī and Muḥammad Zaghlūl Salām (Cairo, 1956), p. 45.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibāra*, fol. 28b, l. 10; al-'Askarī, *Dīwān al-ma'āni* (Cairo, 1352), I, 16; *Dīwān al-Nābigha*, p. 17, l. 4.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibāra*, fol. 28b, l. 13; al-'Askarī, *op. cit.*, I, 23 ult., 41; al-Jurjānī, *op. cit.*, p. 99 ult.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibāra*, fol. 31a ult., al-Mu'āfā b. Zakariyyā, *al-Jalīs al-ṣāliḥ al-kāfi*, Ms. Topkapi Saray. Ahmet III, no. 2321, fol. 103a; Ibn Abī l-Ḥādīd, *Sharḥ nahj al-balāgha*, ed. Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 1964), XVIII, 199.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibāra*, fol. 32a (in text: *qabilat*; correct reading: *qa milat*); L'A, s.v. *q m l*.

A hand-mill in a dream symbolizes war. An anonymous verse and a verse of Zuhayr b. abī Sulmā¹⁶¹ are quoted.¹⁶²

A cloth-tent in a dream symbolizes royal power. This is based on the verse of al-Aʿshā (about the killing of al-Nuʿmān b. al-Mundhir):

He introduced al-Nuʿmān into a house the roof of which
were the chests of the elephants after (he dwelt in) the cloth tent.¹⁶³
and on an anonymous verse:

O Ḥakam b. al-Mundhir b. Jārūd
the cloth-tent of glory is pitched upon you.¹⁶⁴

There is an oneirocritical utterance which says: "He whose affairs have been accomplished in a dream and who, in a dream, has got hold of this world, has to expect decline and change of state, because everything accomplished is about to decay. This is supported by the following verse:

If a thing is accomplished, its decrease is near
expect decline if people say: "it is accomplished".¹⁶⁵

A tent denotes sometimes a woman. The explanation for this interpretation is based on an expression in Arabic: "he pitched a tent upon his wife." The origin of this expression, records Ibn Qutayba, is a custom according to which people used to pitch a tent upon the man who married and slept with his wife; consequently a man sleeping with his wife on the night of his marriage was called "the pitcher of the tent". This is illustrated by a verse of ʿAmr b. Maʿdīkarib:

Have'nt you remained sleepless watching this yemeni lightening
it looks as if it were a candle of a pitcher of a tent.¹⁶⁶

Wearing silk brocade not in the usual way forebodes that the dreamer will be whipped or afflicted by small-pox. Two verses of a man afflicted by small-pox expound this meaning:

Hasn't she got the tidings that I clothed myself after her (i.e. after my
departure from her)
with a white striped cloth, the dyer of which is not foolish.
I was bare of it before I wore it
and my wearing it was for me bitter and hard.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶¹ *Dīwān*, ed. ʿUmar al-Suwaydī (Leiden, 1306/1889), p. 85.

¹⁶² *Ibāra*, fol. 37b.

¹⁶³ *Ibāra*, fol. 40b, l. 6; *Dīwān*, ed. R. Geyer (London, 1928), p. 251 (no. 169).

¹⁶⁴ *Ibāra*, fol. 40b, l. 8.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibāra*, fol. 62a inf. — 62b sup.; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *Kit. dhamm l-dunyā*, Ms. Zāhiriyya, Damascus, fol. 22a, no. 187 (The edition of the manuscript is being prepared by Mrs. E. Almagor); Al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, *Muḥāḍarāt al-udabāʾ*, IV, 388.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibāra*, fol. 40b ult.; L'A, s.v. *b n y* (the second hemistich); al-Jurjānī, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibāra*, fol. 41b, penult.; the first verse is recorded in the *Dīwān* of Dhū l-Rumma, p. 670, l. 4 (quoted from *Aghānī*, XVI, 122); Ibn Qutayba, *al-Maʿānī l-kabīr*, I, 486 (only

The interpretation of dreams

According to the *ḥadīth*: “the man fearing God is bridled”, it seems to be a good omen to see oneself bridled in a dream. A verse is quoted in connection with this interpretation:

Free from vices is only he who controlled his mouth with a bridle.¹⁶⁸

The milk of hare denotes paucity, subsequently it symbolizes paucity of means of sustenance. This is attested by an anonymous verse:

Your evil is present and your welfare is (small like)
the milk of a hare after her first parturition.¹⁶⁹

Girding a sword in a dream denotes being appointed as governor; what happens in a dream to the sword or to the sword-belt (*ḥamā'il*) will happen to the man in his post as governor. The sword-belt takes the position of a cloak; the Arabs called it therefore “the cloak”. A verse attesting this is quoted:

And in many a calamity brought about by a culprit
you turned your cloak into a muffler.

Ibn Qutayba adds: you turned your sword in it into a muffler, i.e. you beat with it (i.e. with your sword) their heads.¹⁷⁰

The mare symbolizes a noble woman. This is illustrated by a verse of the wife of Rauḥ b. Zinba', in which she scoffs at her husband:

Am I not merely an Arab filly
born from (noble) horses, mounted by a mule.¹⁷¹

A horse with a blazon on his forehead, or white in the lower parts of his legs (*muḥajjal*) denotes in a dream a noble man; a verse of al-Nābigha al-Ja'dī attests it:

Greet you both Laylā and say to her: “be calm”
as she set out for fame and an eminent deed.¹⁷²

These verses current in the circles of philologists and lexicographers, some of them recorded by the *udabā'* and transmitters of *akhbār*, became thus a means of interpreting dreams.

the first verse; anonymous); for the expression *amarru wa-a'laqu* see al-A'shā, *Diwān*, p. 148, l. 1 (XXXIII, 31).

¹⁶⁸ *'Ibāra*, fol. 62b, penult.; see Abū Nuwās, *Diwān*, ed. Maḥmūd Kāmil (Cairo, 1933), p. 287, l. 2; Ibn Qutayba, *Uyūn al-akhbār*, Cairo 1924, II, 177.

¹⁶⁹ *'Ibāra*, fol. 38a, ult.; Ibn Qutayba, *al-Ma'ānī l-kabīr*, I, 210 (with a commentary on the verse); L'A, s.v. *kh r s*; al-Jāḥiẓ, *Rasā'il*, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Hārūn (Cairo, 1385/1965), II, 358 (attributed to 'Amr b. Qamī'a); al-Jurjānī, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

¹⁷⁰ *'Ibāra*, fol. 44b, l. 5; Ibn Qutayba, *al-Ma'ānī l-kabīr*, I, 480 (with a commentary); L'A, s.v. *r d y*; cf. al-A'shā, *Diwān*, p. 39 (V, 47); al-Khansā', *Diwān* (Beirut, 1888), p. 31.

¹⁷¹ *'Ibāra*, fol. 50a, l. 3 from bottom; al-Jāḥiẓ, *Rasā'il* (*Kitāb al-bighāl*), II, 358; Aḥmad b. Abī Ṭāhir, *Balāghāt al-nisā'*, al-Najaf 1361, p. 97, l. 1; al-Bakrī, *Simṭ al-la'ālī*, ed. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Maymanī (Cairo, 1354/1936), p. 179 (see the references of the editor *ibid.*).

¹⁷² *'Ibāra*, fol. 50a; M. Nallino, *op. cit.*, p. 94; Aḥmad b. Abī Ṭāhir, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

The examples of verses of poetry, *ḥadīths*, Qur'ān-verses and pious stories adduced above, may convey some idea about the richness of the material provided by Ibn Qutayba in this compilation.

Many of the stories are recorded with *isnāds* in which the names of the scholars from whom Ibn Qutayba directly transmitted, are mentioned: Ishāq b. Rāhawayh,¹⁷³ Aḥmad b. Khalīl,¹⁷⁴ Abū Ḥātim,¹⁷⁵ who transmitted a great number of stories from al-Aṣma'ī,¹⁷⁶ al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥasan al-Marwazī,¹⁷⁷ Abū l-Khaṭṭāb¹⁷⁸ and others.

Ibn Qutayba's¹⁷⁹ detailed and elaborate compilation gives information about the different methods of interpretation: the symbolical, the reciprocal and anti-theoretical, the etymological, the interpretation by addition and subtraction and the interpretation based on Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*.¹⁸⁰ The classification of dreams according to *jins*, *sinf*, *ṭab'* is recorded as well.¹⁸¹ Instruction and advice are given to the oneirocritics about their duties, methods and practices.¹⁸²

Ibn Qutayba's compilation is, in fact, the continuation of an earlier tradition of oneiromancy already approved of by orthodox circles and drawing on a rich treasury of historical anecdotes, *adab* stories, *zuhd* traditions, poetry, *ḥadīth* and Qur'ān. The numerous stories about dreams in Ibn Ishāq's *Sīra*, the chapter about interpretation of dreams in Ma'mar b. Rāshid's *Jāmi'*, the *ḥadīths* about dreams in Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal's *Musnad*, the compilation of Ibn Abī l-Dunyā about the dreams of the righteous and pious, *Kitāb al-manām*, (with a special chapter about verses recited in dreams) bear evidence to the wide currency of this material among the orthodox and pious.

It is obvious that there existed another kind of oneiromancy based on non-Islamic and non-Arabic sources. This is indicated by a remark of al-Shāfi'ī (d. 204): "I left in al-'Irāq a thing which was invented by the *zanādiqa*; they call it "*ta'bīr*" and they occupy themselves with it, being distracted by it from the study of Qur'ān."¹⁸³ One may suppose that al-Shāfi'ī referred to some

¹⁷³ Lecomte, *op. cit.*, pp. 52–53, no. 3.

¹⁷⁴ Lecomte, *op. cit.*, p. 57, no. 9; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *al-Jarḥ wa-l-ta'dīl* (Hyderabad, 1271/1952), I, 50, no. 49.

¹⁷⁵ Lecomte, *op. cit.*, p. 50, no. 1; al-Marzubānī, *Nūr al-qabas*, ed. R. Sellheim (Beirut, 1964), I, 225–228.

¹⁷⁶ See e.g. *'Ibāra*, fols. 3b, 4b, 9b, 17b, 20a, 21b, 14b, 38a, 27a, 40a, 23a, 54b, 55a.

¹⁷⁷ Lecomte, *op. cit.*, p. 64, no. 21; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *al-Jarḥ*, II, 49, no. 219.

¹⁷⁸ Lecomte, *op. cit.*, p. 56, no. 8; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *al-Jarḥ*, II, 549, no. 2479.

¹⁷⁹ See Fahd, *op. cit.*, p. 317.

¹⁸⁰ *'Ibāra*, fols. 4a–8b; see Fahd, *op. cit.*, pp. 317–328; Joseph de Somogyi, "The Interpretation of Dreams in ad-Damīrī's *Ḥayāt al-Ḥayawān*", *JRAS*, 1940, 1–20.

¹⁸¹ *'Ibāra*, fol. 23b; see Bland, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

¹⁸² See e.g. *'Ibāra*, fol. 23a.

¹⁸³ Abū Nu'aym, *op. cit.*, IX, 146.

The interpretation of dreams

compilations or traditions of Greek oneiromancy. In fact the translation of Artemidoros' *The Interpretation of Dreams* was done by Ḥunayn b. Ishāq (d. 260).¹⁸⁴ Ibn Qutayba's compilation seems to have been intended as a response to the unorthodox trend of oneiromancy. It was addressed to the orthodox scholar of *ḥadīth*, to the *kātib*, to the *adīb*, to the pious believer. It differs from the work of Artemidoros in that it has at its core the notion that the interpretation of dreams should be subjected to the Arabo-Islamic tradition. The duty of the oneirocritic is to explain the symbols according to these principles, to admonish and to guide. Nowhere in the compilation of Ibn Qutayba is Artemidoros mentioned, although Ibn Qutayba who died in 270, ten years after the death of Ḥunayn, might have seen Ḥunayn's translation, or at least have been acquainted with its contents; no hint is given in the compilation of the opinions of philosophers. Some of the quotations from Artemidoros recorded by Abdel Daim (compared with the text of Ps. Ibn Sīrīn)¹⁸⁵ can in fact be found in the compilation of Ibn Qutayba. But these interpretations of dreams might have been already current in 'Irāq in the first centuries of Islam and might have lost their foreign character; they were probably absorbed at a very early period into the lore of Muslim oneiromancy.

In fact Muslim oneiromancy seems to have absorbed some elements of the oneiromancy of the Ancient Near East. A vestige of this kind seems to be the story of the dream of 'Abd al-Malik.¹⁸⁶ The interpretation of this dream tallies with one used for an identical case in an Assyrian tablet.¹⁸⁷ The idea of classifying dreams by the time of night or day¹⁸⁸ is echoed in Muslim oneiromancy.¹⁸⁹

Traces of Jewish lore are conspicuous. The idea of interpretation based on the Qur'ān, followed by Ibn Qutayba, is reminiscent of Talmudic interpretation which is based on the Torah.

¹⁸⁴ Edited by Toufic Fahd (Damascus, 1964).

¹⁸⁵ *L'Oniromancie Arabe d'après Ibn Sīrīn*, pp. 151–165.

¹⁸⁶ 'Abd al-Malik saw himself in a dream urinating four times in the *miḥrāb*. Ibn al-Musayyab interpreted it, saying that four of his sons will rule as Caliphs. The dream was in fact fulfilled, and four of his sons were Caliphs (al-Quḍā'i, *Ta'rikh*, Ms. Bodleiana, Pococke 270, fol. 70a; al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, *op. cit.*, I, 151; Ibn Ra's Ghanama, *Manāqil al-durar*, Ms. Chester Beatty 4254, fol. 88a; al-Qalqashandī, *Ma'āthir al-ināfa*, ed. 'Abd al-Sattār Farrāj (al-Kuwayt, 1964), I, 128; Ibn Sa'd, *op. cit.*, V, 123; al-İbshīhī, *op. cit.*, II, 80; Fahd, *op. cit.*, p. 310, note 2).

¹⁸⁷ See A. L. Oppenheim, "The Interpretation of Dreams in the Ancient Near East", *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 46, part 3, p. 265.

¹⁸⁸ See Oppenheim, *op. cit.*, pp. 240 inf. – 241.

¹⁸⁹ *İbāra*, fol. 8b: ...*wa-aṣḍaqu auqāti l-ru'yā bi-l-layli l-aṣḥāru wa-bi-l-nahāri l-qā'ilatu...* This is recorded as an utterance of the Prophet by al-Ḥākīm (*al-Mustadrak* IV, 392: *aṣḍaqu l-ru'yā bi-l-aṣḥāri*) and al-Zurqānī (*Sharḥ al-mawāhib* VII, 166 l. 1); see Oppenheim, *op. cit.*, p. 241 (quoting Bland, *op. cit.*, p. 129).

Furthermore, some passages from the Talmūd are almost verbally quoted in the Muslim compilations. A man came to Ibn Sirīn, according to a story and told him the dream of one of his acquaintances: the man had dreamt that he split the heads of eggs, left the yolk and took the outer parts of the eggs. Ibn Sirīn refused to interpret the dream and insisted that the dreamer come to him personally. The man admitted that it was he who had had the dream. Ibn Sirīn stated that the dream indicated that he was a grave-digger, plundering the graves, ransacking the shrouds of the dead and leaving their bodies. The man admitted and promised to refrain from doing it again.¹⁹⁰ This very dream, with an identical interpretation, is recorded in the story of Rabbi Yishma'el talking with the heretic.¹⁹¹ The passage in Berakhot contains also the story of another dream: the man saw himself pouring oil into an olive tree. Rabbi Yishma'el stated that the man had had sexual intercourse with his mother. The same story is recorded in the Muslim sources with an identical interpretation attributed to Ibn Sirīn.¹⁹²

The principle, related in the Talmūd,¹⁹³ whereby the dream is fulfilled according to its interpretation is recorded as an utterance of the Prophet.¹⁹⁴ This principle is illustrated in the Talmūd by a story of a woman, who saw twice in her dream that a beam broke down from her roof. She came twice to Rabbi El'azar and he interpreted it saying that she would give birth to a male child; so it happened in fact in both cases. Then she dreamt again that the beam of her roof broke down; she came to Rabbi El'azar but did not meet him. His students interpreted the dream by saying that her husband would die. When Rabbi El'azar heard about it, he accused his students of having caused the death of the man by their interpretation, because dreams are fulfilled according to their interpretation.¹⁹⁵ Closely reminiscent is the story recorded in Muslim sources about a woman who came to the Prophet and told him that she saw in a dream a beam of the roof of her house breaking down; he interpreted it by saying that her husband would return; so it happened. After some time she saw in her sleep the same dream; she came

¹⁹⁰ *Ibāra*, fols. 22b, 23b, ll. 5–8; al-Ibshīhī, *op. cit.*, II, 79.

¹⁹¹ Bab. Berakhot, 56b.

¹⁹² Ps. Ibn Sirīn, *op. cit.*, p. 305; al-Ibshīhī, *op. cit.*, II, 79; al-Majlisī, *op. cit.*, LXI, 206.

¹⁹³ Berakhot, 55b; see Löwinger, *op. cit.*, p. 25, note 9; Kristianpöler, *op. cit.*, p. XII, and p. 37, no. 107, note 1.

¹⁹⁴ Ma'mar b. Rāshid, *op. cit.*, fol. 152b sup.; al-Ḥākim, *op. cit.*, IV, 391; al-Majlisī, *op. cit.*, LXI, 173, 175 (*al-ru'yā 'alā mā tu'abbaru*).

¹⁹⁵ Kristianpöler, *op. cit.*, pp. 51–52, nos. 164–165; Löwinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 25 inf. – 26 sup.

¹⁹⁶ According to another version she told her dream to 'Ā'isha. See al-Zurqānī, *op. cit.*, VII, 171.

The interpretation of dreams

to the Prophet but did not meet him, and related the story of her dream to Abū Bakr.¹⁹⁶ He interpreted it by saying that her husband would die.¹⁹⁷

The stories, recorded in Jewish sources, about the pious in Paradise¹⁹⁸ and about gaining knowledge of religious precepts and guidance in dreams,¹⁹⁹ are closely reminiscent of similar passages in Muslim oneiromancy.

The continuity of the Hebrew oneiromancy²⁰⁰ can be gauged from the story of a man who found a book on oneiromancy written in Hebrew in the ruins of a house in al-Baṣra.²⁰¹

The various elements of oneiromancy were successfully absorbed and combined in the Muslim literature on dreams. Enriched by genuine Arabic and Islamic material, thoughtfully developed by Muslim scholars, it reflects the various ideas and trends in Muslim society and became a popular topic of Arabic literature.

Ibn Qutayba's compilation is the earliest extant composition in the field of Muslim oneiromancy, a fine and rich specimen of this genre of literature.

¹⁹⁷ *'Ibāra*, fol. 9a inf. – 9b sup. (Ibn Qutayba attempts to justify the two different interpretations by the fact that either the countenance of the woman changed or the times of the two dreams were different); the version recorded by al-Zurqānī (see above note 196) ends with the Prophet's admonition to 'Ā'isha to give good interpretations to the dreams of the Muslims, because dreams are fulfilled according to their interpretations. This reminds closely the account of the story in Jewish sources. And see al-Zamakhsharī, *op. cit.*, I, 243–244; al-Majlisī, *op. cit.*, LXI, 164–165 (quoted from *al-Kāfi*. The woman came twice to the Prophet; in both cases he interpreted the dream by saying that her husband would return safely. At the third time she met an unlucky man [*A'sar*] who predicted that her husband would die. Al-Majlisī eagerly gives the Sunnī version identifying the "unlucky man" as Abū Bakr).

¹⁹⁸ Kristianpöler, *op. cit.*, p. 31, no. 93 and p. 32, no. 96.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. Kristianpöler, *op. cit.*, pp. 29–30, nos. 88–91.

²⁰⁰ About the dependence of the Talmudic material on Greek sources see S. Liebermann, *Greek and Hellenism in Jewish Palestine* (Jerusalem, 1962), pp. 202 seq. [Hebrew].

²⁰¹ Ps. Ibn Sīrīn, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

APPENDIX

A. List of chapters of the Jerusalem Ms.:

1. <i>ta'wil ru'yati llāhi ta'ālā</i>	fol. 25a
2. <i>ta'wilu l-qiyāmati wa-l-jannati wa-l-nāri</i>	fol. 25b
3. <i>ru'yatu l-malā'ikati</i>	fol. 26a
4. <i>ru'yatu l-samā'i</i>	fol. 26a
5. <i>ru'yatu l-anbiyā'i</i>	fol. 26a
6. <i>ru'yatu l-ka'bati wa-l-qiblati</i>	fol. 26b
7. <i>man taḥawwala kāfiran</i>	fol. 27a
8. <i>man taḥawwala smuhu</i>	fol. 27a
9. <i>man qara'a l-qur'āna au adhdhana au banā masjidan</i>	fol. 27b
10. <i>al-qāḍī</i>	fol. 27b
11. <i>mathalu l-qāḍī fi l-manāmi</i>	fol. 28a
12. <i>al-imāmu</i>	fol. 28a
13. <i>al-shamsu wa-l-qamaru wa-l-nujūmu</i>	fol. 28b
14. <i>ru'yatu l-insāni wa-a'ḍā'ihi</i>	fol. 29a
15. <i>al-tazwiju wa-l-nikāḥu wa-l-ṭalāqu wa-l-waladu</i>	fol. 32b
16. <i>ru'yatu l-amwāti</i>	fol. 33b
17. <i>al-araḍūna wa-l-abniyatu</i>	fol. 34b
18. <i>ta'wilu l-tilāli wa-l-jibāli</i>	fol. 35b
19. <i>ta'wilu ru'yati l-amṭāri wa-l-andā'i wa-mā ttaṣala bi-dhālika</i>	fol. 36a
20. <i>al-ashribatu</i>	fol. 38a
21. <i>ta'wilu l-ashjāri wa-l-thimāri wa-l-nabāti</i>	fol. 38b
22. <i>ta'wilu l-hubūbi</i>	fol. 39b
23. <i>al-surādiqātu wa-l-fasāfiṭu wa-mā ashbahahā</i>	fol. 40b
24. <i>al-thiyābu wa-l-libāsu</i>	fol. 41a
25. <i>al-farshu</i>	fol. 42b
26. <i>al-silāḥu</i>	fol. 43b
27. <i>al-ḥuliyyu</i>	fol. 45a
28. <i>ta'wilu l-nāri wa-mā yunsabu ilayhā</i>	fol. 47b
29. <i>al-saḥābu wa-l-maṭaru wa-mā yakūnu bihimā</i>	fol. 49a
30. <i>al-ṭayarānu wa-l-wathbu</i>	fol. 49a
31. <i>ta'wilu l-khayli wa-l-barādhini wa-ashbāhihā</i>	fol. 49b
32. <i>ta'wilu l-bighāli wa-l-ḥamīri</i>	fol. 50b
33. <i>ru'yatu l-ḥimāri</i>	fol. 51a
34. <i>al-ibilu</i>	fol. 51b
35. <i>al-thīrānu wa-l-baqaru</i>	fol. 52a
36. <i>ta'wilu l-ḍa'ni wa-l-kibāshi</i>	fol. 52b
37. <i>al-ma'izu</i>	fol. 53b
38. <i>ta'wilu l-waḥshi</i>	fol. 53b

The interpretation of dreams

39. <i>al-fīlu wa-l-jāmūsu wa-l-khinzīru</i>	fol. 54b
40. <i>al-ḥaṣharātu</i>	fol. 55a
41. <i>al-sibā'u</i>	fol. 55a
42. <i>fī ta'wili l-ḥayri</i>	fol. 56b
43. <i>banātu l-mā'i min al-samaki wa-ghayrihi</i>	fol. 58b
44. <i>al-'aḡāribu wa-l-ḥayyātu wa-l-hawāmmu</i>	fol. 59a
45. <i>ta'wīlu l-ṣunnā'i</i>	fol. 59b
46. <i>ta'wīlu l-nawādiri</i>	fol. 62a

B. List of chapters of the Ankara Ms. :

1. *Dhikru l-naḡsi wa-l-rūḥ*
2. *Al-ta'wīl bi-l-asmā'*
3. *Al-ta'wīl bi-l-ma'nā*
4. *Al-ta'wīl bi-l-Qur'ān*
5. *Al-ta'wīl bi-l-aḡādīth*
6. *Al-ta'wīl bi-l-mathal al-sā'ir*
7. *Al-ta'wīl bi-l-ḡidd wa-l-maḡlūb*
8. *Ta'bīru l-ru'yā bi-l-ziyāda wa-l-nuḡṣān*
9. *Ta'bīru l-ru'yā bi-l-auḡāt*
10. *Ta'bīru l-ru'yā bi-khtilāfi l-hay'āt*
11. *'Ajā'ib al-ru'yā*
12. *Wa-min 'ajībi l-ru'yā*
13. *Intihā'u l-ru'yā*
14. *Wa-min nawādirihi mā rawā Jābiru bnu Ḍamra*
15. *Wa-min nawādirihi mā rawā Marwānu bnu Mu'āwiyata*
16. *Wa-nawādir aṣḡābihi 'alayhi l-salām*
17. *Nādīra fī l-ru'yā*
18. *Wa-min nawādir al-ru'yā*
19. *Wa-min nawādirihi 'alā ḡhayri aṣḡlin*
20. *Wa-min nawādirihi wa-'ajā'ibihi*
21. *Wa-min nawādirihi fī l-ru'yā*
22. *Amthilat al-ru'yā*
23. *Wa-min 'ajā'ibi bni Sīrīn*
24. *Adab al-ta'wīl*