

THE MAKĀRIM AL-AKHLĀQ BY IBN ABĪ 'L-DUNYĀ

(A PRELIMINARY STUDY)

Among the Arab writers of the third century of the Hijrah, Ibn Abī'l-Dunyā (208-281/823-894) ¹ occupies a place considerably lower than that given to such giants as al-Jāhīz, Ibn Qutaybah, al-Mubarrad, and the great collectors of *ḥadīth* who flourished at this time. We can suggest a number of reasons why this should be so: Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā was not a philologist or a *kātib*, so he was little influenced by this class of writer; though he was a traditionist, he was not of the sort whose writings could be used by the *fuqahā*² in their work. His main interest lay in the field of personal piety and asceticism, taken in a very broad sense, which by the middle of the third century, though retaining its theoretical importance, had nevertheless lost ground to Ṣūfism on the one hand and to the increasing legalistic orientation of Islam on the other. Moreover Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā's style is not as attractive as that of the *kuttāb* and philologists. These facts, taken together, may account at least partially for the relative neglect with which he has been treated by modern scholars, both in East and West, even though he deserves to be published and studied seriously, if only because he was an early and prolific writer of Arabic prose.

Other reasons than this, however, may lead us to a re-evaluation of the importance of Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā in the development of Arabic prose literature. Some of these have already been set forth by Alfred Wiener, ² who has demonstrated the esteem in which Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā's writings were held in later times. This he has done by counting the number of works by him which were studied by later scholars and noted by them in their curricula. For example, Abū Bakr b. Abī 'l-Khair al-Ishbīlī (d. 575/1179) studied more than thirty of his works; the famous biographer Ibn Ḥajar (d. 852/1449) studied no less than fifty-five. ³ From such lists and from the *Fihrist*, Wiener has compiled a list of over a hundred works by Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā, ⁴ most of them unfortunately no longer extant.

Wiener's main contribution to our knowledge of Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā is his illustration of the author's place in the development of the prose-*genre* known as *faraj ba'd al-shiddah* (deliverance after great trouble), a type of work which consists mainly of anecdotes about people who were miraculously delivered from dire straits. The first work of this

¹ See GAL (C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur*) I, 160; S I, 247; he was a Ḥanbalite, a teacher of the Caliph al-Muktafi, and a client of the Umayyads; *Al-Muntaqā min Kitāb al-Ruhbān*, ed. Ṣalaḥuddin al-Munajjid, *MIDEO*, 3 (1956), p. 349-58.

² Alfred Wiener, "Die *Faraġ ba'd aš-Šidda*-Literatur," I/II, *Der Islam*, 4 (1913), pp. 270-298, 387-420.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 282 f.

⁴ To this list we may add *K. al-Ramy wa'l-Nidāl* (*Book of Archery and Archery Matches*), mentioned in the *Makarim al-Akhlaq*, f. 18b.

sort was written by Abū 'l-Ḥasan al-Madā'ini (d. 215/830?),⁵ and to him must go the credit for originating the *genre*. His work, no longer extant, consisted of no more than five or six leaves, and, judging from quotations found in Tanūkhī's work of the same name, seems to have contained only anecdotes with a few verses.⁶

Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā's *K. al-Faraj ba'd al-Shiddah* is much longer than al-Madā'ini's, running to 42 folios in manuscript (Berlin 8731), and 39 pages in the edition printed in India in A. H. 1323. In keeping with his interest as a traditionist, Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā introduced *ḥadīth* bearing on the subject and in addition to the anecdotes brought in quite a number of verses, concentrating most of them towards the end of the work.⁷ This arrangement is characteristic of Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā as we shall see later on.

From Wiener's study Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā emerges as both a popular writer and one significant in the development of Arabic prose literature.

The main purpose of this article is to describe another of Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā's works, one which should further add to his reputation as a literary figure. This is the *K. Makārim al-Akhlāq*⁸ (Book of Noble Qualities of Character, or, Noble Character; sometimes "virtues" is a good translation), which is the earliest extant work of Arabic prose of the *genre* commonly referred to as *Akhlāq* (ethics; or, more accurately, popular morality). This type of work was extremely popular in later times. Bishr Fāris, in his study on the term *makārim al-akhlāq*,⁹ has listed no less than fifteen works in whose titles the phrase appears. Nine are still extant and of these none is anterior to the work of Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā. Fāris lists six works no longer in existence bearing this title,¹⁰ by the following writers: Raḍī al-Dīn al-Naysābūrī,¹¹ Abū Maṣṣūr Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wāḥid Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh,¹² Sulaymān b. Banīn,¹³ 'Abd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb (d.

⁵ GAL I, 146.

⁶ Wiener, *op. cit.*, p. 276 f.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 283 f.

⁸ The writer is at present engaged in preparing an edition of the Arabic text.

⁹ B. Fāris, *Mabāḥith 'Arabīyah*, Cairo, 1939, p. 31f.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 33, note II.

¹¹ At first glance this might seem to be a duplication of the *Makārim al-Akhlāq* by Raḍī al-Dīn al-Ṭabarsī (d. 548/1153 or 552/1158), see Fāris, *op. cit.*, p. 32, note 5; Fāris has erroneously used the reference to Ḥājjī Khalīfah, *Kashf al-Zumūn*, Leipzig, 1835-58, VI, 98 for both the work by Ṭabarsī and the lost work by Naysābūrī, but the text refers only to the latter. Elsewhere, however, Ḥājjī Khalīfah IV, 164 refers to Naysābūrī as a Ḥanafite (Ṭabarsī was a Shī'ite); and in I, 361 to Ṭabarsī under the name Abū 'Alī al-Faḍl b. Ḥusayn(!); cf. GAL S I, 709 item 6; see also Zarnūjī, *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* (Enchiridion Studiosi) ed. by C. Caspari, Leipzig, 1839, p. 22, the source of Ḥājjī Khalīfah, VI, 98. In any case, the name Raḍī al-Dīn makes it clear that the work is later than Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā's, since names of this form did not come into use till after his time.

¹² This author must be the nephew of the well-known 'Abd al-Sayyid b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wāḥid Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh (d. 477/1083), see GAL I, 486; S I, 671; his grandfather's name is given by Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-A'yan*, Cairo, 1948, II, 385.

¹³ Died 613/1216, see GAL I, 366; S I, 530.

238/853 or 239/854),¹⁴ Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Khāliq (?),¹⁵ al-Barqī, and Aḥmad b. Abī ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥammad b. Khālid b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān.

The last two writers listed by Fāris are really one and the same. The correct form of the name is Aḥmad b. Abī ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad b. Khālid b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Barqī, which can be ascertained from his biographies in the *Fihrist* and in Yāqūt, *Irshād al-Arib*.¹⁶

The dates of this writer cannot be established with certainty. His grandfather Khālid was a small boy at the time of the death of Zayd b. ʿAlī (121/739);¹⁷ his father Muḥammad was a friend of the Imām Ridā (d. 203/818) and of the latter's son Muḥammad (d. 220/835).¹⁸ So it seems that the author Aḥmad b. ʿAbī ʿAbdallāh al-Barqī lived in the early and middle parts of the 9th century of our era; that is, he was a somewhat older contemporary of Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā and his work *Makārim al-Akhlāq* was in all likelihood prior to that of Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā.

Since the works of both Ibn Ḥabīb and Ibn al-Barqī are no longer in existence, any study of this particular *genre* of Arabic prose must begin with the work of Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā.

In this study of the *Makārim al-Akhlāq* of Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā I have relied exclusively on MS Berlin 5388, which is apparently the only manuscript of the work in the West.¹⁹ As it has been described fully

¹⁴ A Spanish historian and theologian; see GAL I, 156; S I, 231.

¹⁵ I have not found Khāliq used as a personal name in Arabic, so this is surely a mistake for Khālid.

¹⁶ Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, Leipzig, 1871/2, p. 221, gives short biographies of both father and son. Though there is some confusion in listing their works, and the biography of a third person, Hasan b. Maḥbūb, has inadvertently been inserted between them, the names are quite clear. Abū ʿAbdallāh's name was Muḥammad; thus his son should appear as Aḥmad b. Abī ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad, and not as Aḥmad b. Abī ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥammad, as the text of *Irshād al-Arib*, II, 30, has it. Furthermore *Irshād* gives his *nisbah* as al-Raqqī (!) instead of al-Barqī. That these are both merely copyists' errors and not due to Yāqūt is shown by his correct citation of both name and *nisbah* in his *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, Leipzig, 1866/70, I, 575 (Barqah), where he refers to the biography in the *Irshād al-Arib*. Yāqūt also gives the names of his ancestors beyond Khālid.

Note that Fāris, following al-Kantūrī, *Kashf al-Hujub*, Calcutta, 1330, p. 547, gives the title of the work in question as *Makārim al-Akhlāq wa-Madhāmm al-Akhlāq*, whereas Yāqūt, *Irshād al-Arib*, II, 31 f., lists these as separate works.

¹⁷ Yāqūt, *Irshād al-Arib*, II, 30.

¹⁸ *Fihrist*, 221.

¹⁹ Now at the Universitätsbibliothek Tübingen, Depot der ehemaligen Preussischen Staatsbibliothek; note that the British Museum does *not* possess a copy of this work, MS Or. 7595 having been miscatalogued. There are, however, two manuscripts of the work in the Near East; see ʿAbdallāh Mukhlis, "Majmūʿ Nādir," in *RAAD* (Revue de l'Académie Arabe de Damas), X (1930), p. 577 f.; and Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā, *Majmūʿat Rasāʾil*, Cairo, 1354/1935; the latter is a collection of five short treatises by Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā, at the end of which (p. 137) the editor states that Part II will begin with *Makārim al-Akhlāq*. As far as I know, this has never appeared.

Since I have not yet been able to consult all the manuscripts, I have omitted discussion of two textual matters which will have to be dealt with eventually:

by W. Ahlwardt,²⁰ I shall not discuss it further here except to make one important correction in his description. Ahlwardt states that a leaf is missing after f. 58 and f. 65; in fact, however, no leaves are missing from the manuscript, the appearance of omission being due to the faulty binding of the manuscript. The correct order of the folios is 1-50, 65, 51-58, 64, 59-63, 66.

An examination of the *Makārim al-Akhlāq* and the published works of Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā will show that he limited himself severely in the type of material with which he worked. For the most part Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā's works are made up of (1) Traditions of the Prophet; (2) Occasional stories from the pre-Muḥammadan prophets (*Isrā'īliyyāt*) and *ḥadīth qudsī*; (3) Anecdotes, for the most part about eminent figures of early Islam, companions and relatives of the Prophet, famous holy men, caliphs, and so forth. In some cases the main protagonist is not even named, a circumstance which shows that we are dealing with a kind of religious fiction; (4) Poetry, usually in conjunction with an anecdote.

These are not all of equal importance. Material of the second category is quite infrequent, and only a few examples occur in the *Makārim al-Akhlāq*. In certain works the poetry is negligible or completely wanting;²¹ in others, such as the *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, many verses are found.

The omission of certain kinds of material is equally significant. Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā avoids including anything that is not within the strictest Arabic-Islamic tradition, which of course in his own mind included the *Isrā'īliyyāt*. We find no quotations from the "books of the Indians," the Greek philosophers, the Sassanian kings, or Persian wisemen such as Buzurjmīhr; nothing even from Ibn al-Muqaffa^c, or any of the more recent writers in the Arabo-Persian tradition, which was especially cultivated by the *kuttāb*. Furthermore Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā had no real interest in Arabic philology, secular literature, or pagan lore; consequently the names of the well-known transmitters of this type of material occur but seldom in his works, and even anecdotes about pre-Islamic Arabs are rare.

Especially significant is the infrequency with which Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā quotes the Qur'ān. In the *Makārim al-Akhlāq* there are only a few quotations from the Qur'ān, and they are always introduced, not primarily in support of the point the writer is trying to make, but so

(1) Whether or not the *K. Qirā 'l-Dayf* originally formed part of the *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, see note 26 below; and (2) the relation to *Makārim al-Akhlāq* of the *K. Mudārāt al-Nās* by the same writer, see GAL I, 160; S I, 247. However these matters may ultimately be decided, they are not likely to affect the statements made in this article about the style and orientation of the work.

²⁰ W. Ahlwardt, *Verzeichnis der arabischen Handschriften der königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, Berlin, 1887/99, Vol. V, p. 3.

²¹ E.g., *K. al-Awliyā²*, in *Majmū^cat Rasā'il*, p. 100 f., and *K. Dhamm al-Malāhī*, in *Tracts on Listening to Music*, ed. by J. Robson, London, 1938, p. 41 f.

that they themselves may be elucidated in the light of what has gone before. One example should suffice. On f 13a after having cited five traditions from the Prophet, two from Abū Bakr, and one each from ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān, ʿUmar II, Muṭarrif b. Ṭarīf, and an anonymous speaker, all commenting on the goodness of truth and the evil of lying, Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā records a brief dialogue between Muḥammad and a Jew, in which the Jew confirms from the Torah the Prophet's warning against lying. Only then does the author quote Qurʾān LI, 10, *qutila 'l-kharrāṣūn*, "May the conjecturers be slain," and states that Qatādah held that "conjecturers" here means "liars."

Of the material included it is the prophetic traditions that the writer held to be of greatest importance. In some sections of the *Makārim al-Akhlāq* they make up more than half the text. Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā clearly took his function as a transmitter of traditions very seriously. In the *Makārim al-Akhlāq* he invariably gives full *isnāds*, which one might not consider necessary in a popular work of this kind, and he frequently repeats traditions simply for the sake of a different *isnād* or a trivial variant in the text.

In seeking the immediate source of Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā's fund of prophetic traditions, we do not have far to go. Since Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā was a Ḥanbalite, it comes as no surprise to find that a large number of the traditions cited by him are also contained in the *Musnad* of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal; in some cases there alone, to the exclusion of the other well known collections of *ḥadīth*.

As for the anecdotes dealing with later personages, the matter is not so easy, for in most cases Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā is himself the earliest extant source in which they appear. Some of them, it is true, are found in later anthologies, but many of them this writer has not found elsewhere. It seems that there was in circulation at this time a vast store of anecdotal material, both oral and written, much of it having to do with asceticism, upon which Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā could draw, but which has since perished, except for occasional citations in later works.

Considering the repetitious nature of the work and that perhaps as much as half the text consists of *isnāds*, one can conclude that matters of style were not uppermost in Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā's mind. He was, however, style-conscious enough to work out a rudimentary order of presentation, beginning with prophetic traditions, then going on to traditions and anecdotes about later personalities arranged in roughly chronological order. Anecdotes including verses are generally clustered towards the end. This arrangement is not followed with absolute rigor; especially in the longer chapters of the *Makārim al-Akhlāq* we find some prophetic traditions scattered throughout.

One last stylistic feature of Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā's work in general should be mentioned. This is that the writer almost never allows himself the privilege of speaking for himself. His works are almost all bare recitations of *ḥadīth*, anecdotes, and verses, on which the author makes

no comment, and for which he provides not even an introductory statement.

The *Makārim al-Akhlāq* is a significant exception to the rule stated above, for here the author expresses his intentions quite clearly.²² In one other respect as well, the *Makārim al-Akhlāq* represents a considerable stylistic improvement over the other works of Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā that this writer has consulted. This consists in the use of a tradition of ʿĀʾishah, in which she lists a number of cardinal virtues, as a framework on which the book is constructed.²³ The result is that the *Makārim al-Akhlāq* is divided into an introduction and nine chapters, each of which follows the pattern outlined above.²⁴ Thus the *Makārim al-Akhlāq* is the equivalent of several books in the author's usual style.

We shall now give a few translations of typical traditions and anecdotes from the various sections of the *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, summarizing where the length of the passage requires it. Only a small portion of the whole can be included, but enough, we hope, to substantiate the remarks made above and the conclusions at the end.

ff. 1b-8a. Introductory part containing many traditions on good character in general; the traditions around which the book is constructed; a few verses.

f. 2b. Muḥammad: I was sent to perfect good character (*ṣāliḥ al-akhlāq*).²⁵

f. 3a. Muḥammad: O ʿUqbah, verily I shall inform you of the best qualities of the people of this world and the people of the hereafter; cement relations with those who cut you off, give to those who deprive you, and forgive those who wrong you.

The above *ḥadīth* is repeated several times in slightly differing forms.

f. 4b. ʿĀʾishah: Islam came when among the Arabs were sixty-odd (good) qualities, all of which Islam intensified; among them are hospitality, good-neighborliness, and faithfulness to one's engagements.

ff. 4b-5a. ʿĀʾishah: There are ten noble qualities of character (*makārim al-akhlāq*): Speaking the truth (*ṣidq al-ḥadīth*), firm courage in obeying God (*ṣadq al-baʿs fi ṭāʿat Allāh*), giving to him who asks (*iṭṭāʿ al-sāʾil*), repaying (good) deeds (*mukāfāt al-ṣanīʿ*), strengthening family ties (*ṣilat al-raḥim*), keeping faith (*adaʿ al-amānah*), behaving honorably towards neighbors (*al-tadhammum li 'l-jār*), behaving honorably towards friends (*al-tadhammum li 'l-ṣāhib*), hospitality to guests

²² See below, p.

²³ See below, p.

²⁴ The only other work by Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā consulted by me which is divided into chapters in his *K. Qaḍāʾ al-Hawāʾij*, in *Majmūʿat Rasāʾil*, p. 73 f., which after an introductory section on doing favors has chapters on *Qaḍāʾ al-Hawāʾij* (Satisfying the needs of others), *Ṭalab al-Hawāʾij* (Seeking satisfaction of one's wants), and *Shukr al-Ṣanīʿah* (Gratitude for favors done).

²⁵ Not *makārim al-akhlāq*, which occurs only once in the canonical collections of *ḥadīth*, and there the term is not used by the Prophet; see Fāris, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

(*qirā al-dayf*), and modesty ^{25a} (*hayāʿ*), which is the chief of them all.

The two traditions just cited are extremely important to the book. The former, I believe, sets the fundamental orientation of the work, in which one can detect a hidden motivation of the writer. This will be discussed below. The latter is the frame tradition which determines the organization of the book, as the following statement shows.

f. 5a. Statement of purpose: Abū Bakr Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā said: We are going to mention in this book of ours some of that which has come down to us from the Prophet, from his companions, from those who followed them in doing good, and from the ^c*ulamāʿ* of learning and renown, concerning each ²⁶ of the qualities mentioned by the Mother of the Believers, in order that persons of insight may increase in insight and those lacking therein may be aroused from their long neglect, and come to desire those noble qualities and strive to perform those good works which God has made an adornment to faith and an embellishment to his saints, for it has been said that there is no noble quality or good work but that God has joined it to faith.

f. 6a. Muḥammad: There are two qualities in the character of the Arabs which are the support of religion and which you are on the point of abandoning . . . modesty and noble character (*al-akhlāq al-karīmah*).

f. 8a. Chapter on Modesty.

f. 8b. Muḥammad: Modesty is a part of faith.

Frequently repeated.

f. 9a. Muḥammad: Lack of modesty is disbelief.

ʿImrān b. Ḥuṣayn: I heard the messenger of God say: Modesty is all good. Al-ʿAlāʿ b. Ziyād said: We find in the books that weakness is a part of it. He (ʿImrān) grew exceedingly angry and said: I speak to you on the authority of the Messenger of God, and you come to me with your books! The people said: Al-ʿAlāʿ is a pious man, and this and that (that is, in order to mollify ʿImrān).

Repeated several times with considerable variations.

f. 10a. ʿUmar returns a *mujāhid* to his wife because he fears for her modesty, since she had boasted of it.

f. 10b. Muḥammad: Every religious people has a particular characteristic (*khuluq*), and the characteristic of Islam is modesty.

f. 11a. Muḥammad: I have hope for the hypocrite so long as he is modest.

Two verses in praise of the modesty of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān.

Three verses by an Arab commending his own modesty.

f. 11b. Salmān: If God wishes someone to perish, he strips him of his modesty, and you find him disgusting and abominable.

f. 12a. Chapter on Truth and the Blame of Lying.

²⁶ There is no section on hospitality to guests (*qirā 'l-dayf*); see above, note 19; see Wiener, *op. cit.*, pp. 418 and 419; GĀL I, 160, and Ahlwardt, *loc. cit.*, for suggestions as to the reason for this omission. ^{25a} I.E., sense of shame.

Muḥammad: Truth leads to piety and piety leads to paradise... lying leads to sin and sin leads to the fire.

Muḥammad: The signs of the hypocrite are three: If he speaks, he lies; if he promises, he goes back on his word; if he is entrusted with something, he behaves treacherously.

f. 12b. ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz: I have not lied since I learned that lying dishonors him who lies.

f. 13a. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Salamah: I have not lied since becoming a Muslim, except once, when a man invited me to eat. I said: I do not want to. And then I almost wept.

f. 13b. Yazid b. al-Walīd, rebuking a liar: O man, you lie to yourself before you lie to your associates. Thereafter the man became known for his devoutness.

Al-Ḥajjāj spares a man's sons who were deserters, because the father was unable to lie in order to save them.

f. 14b. ʿAlī: The adornment of speech is truth, and the greatest of errors with God is the lying tongue...

f. 15a. Muḥammad says that a believer may be cowardly and stingy, but never a liar.

f. 15b. Chapter on Firm Courage in Obeying God.

This chapter contains no traditions exhorting one to bravery, but only anecdotes about the bravery of Muḥammad and early Muslims in battle.

f. 15b. Muḥammad's bravery at Ḥunayn; f. 16a. at Uḥud. ʿAlī's courage at Badr after being thrown by his horse.

f. 17a. Al-Zubayr's bravery as a boy; verses by his mother.

f. 17b. Al-Zubayr escapes from his enemies by cutting the bridle of his horse.

f. 18b. Bravery of al-Aḥnaf b. Qays in rallying his panic-stricken troops during a night attack; one verse.

f. 22b. Chapter on Strengthening Family Ties.

f. 23a. Muḥammad: Kinship (*raḥim*) is closely related to the Merciful (*al-Raḥmān*), and he who cuts off his kin, God will deprive him of heaven.

f. 24a. Muḥammad: Looking at your parents and smiling, and their looking at you and smiling is better than breaking swords in the way of God.

A man said to Ḥasan al-Baṣrī: I have performed the pilgrimage with permission of my mother. He said: Your sitting with your mother once at table is more pleasing to me than your pilgrimage.

Abū Hurayrah did not go on the pilgrimage until after his mother had died.

f. 24b. ʿĀʾishah states that the two men of the Muslim community who were kindest to their mothers were ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān and Ḥārithah b. al-Nuʿmān.

f. 25b. Three anecdotes, accompanied by *rajaz*-verses, of men seen

performing the *ṭawāf* with their aged mothers on their backs. Said to be an inadequate recompense for the mothers' care.

f. 26b. A short dialogue in verse between 'Alī and a father and son. The son complains that his father owes him money; the father acknowledges the debt but is unable to pay. 'Alī decrees that the money rightfully belongs to the father.

ff. 27a-28a. Two versions of an anecdote about a poet, Umayyah b. Askan al-Jundu'ī, who complains to 'Umar that his sons have left him in his old age to go off on a *jihād*. 'Umar brings them back. A number of verses. ²⁷

f. 28b. A man will not say *lā ilāha illā Allāh* on his deathbed, but is still admitted to heaven because of his filial piety.

f. 29a. Muḥammad: A father's blessing on his son is like that of the Prophet on his community, and a son's blessing on his father is the same.

ff. 29b-30a. Waḥrah al-Ash'ariyah, who lived in the Jāhiliyah, is admitted to heaven because of her kindness to her mother. Six verses.

Chapter on Keeping Faith.

f. 30a-b. Muḥammad: The first things that will be taken from this community are modesty and faithfulness, so ask God for them.

f. 30b. 'Umar: Do not be deceived by a man's muttering at night; that is, his praying. The real man is the one who keeps faith with the one who trusts him and from whose hand and tongue people are safe.

f. 31a-b. Muḥammad: He who is entrusted with something and fulfills his trust when he has it in his power not to do so, God will marry him to a black-eyed houri...

f. 31b. Chapter on Behaving Honorably toward One's Friends.

Muḥammad: With God, the best of friends is the one who is best for his friend, and the best of neighbors in God's sight is the one who is best for his neighbor.

ff. 31b-32a. Musāwir al-Warrāq: I am not the sort of person to say to a man, 'I love you in God' and then refuse him anything of worldly goods.

f. 32b. Al-Ḥasan, when he missed a friend, would go to his house; if he was absent, he would give something to his family; if present, he would enquire about his condition and give something to his children.

f. 33a. Ḥammād b. Abī Sulaymān used to give dinner to fifty persons every night in the month of Ramaḍān. At the end of the month he gave them each a garment.

f. 34b. Ṭalḥah b. Muṣarrif used to be charitable towards the mother of 'Umāran b. 'Umayr, more than ten years after 'Umārah's death, even though she was a foreigner.

f. 35a. Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. 'Alī used to invite his friends

²⁷ Cf. Ibn Qutaybah, *Uyūn al-Akhhbār*, Cairo, 1925-30, III, 97.

every Friday; he would provide them with good food, perfumes, and presents; and then they would go to the mosque together from his house.

ʿUmar: Three things will make your friend love you: Greet him first when you meet him, call him by his favorite name, and make room for him in the *majlis*.

Chapter on Behaving Honorably toward One's Neighbors.

f. 35b. Muḥammad: Jibrīl kept on commending neighbors to me till I thought he would make them heirs.

Muḥammad: Who believes in God and the last day, let him honor his neighbor.

f. 36b. Muḥammad, to a man complaining of a bad neighbor: Do not harm him, and bear his harming you, for death is a sufficient separator.

Mālik b. Dīnār used to feed his neighbor's sick dog.

ʿĀʾishah to Muḥammad: I have two neighbors: to which shall I give? He said: To the one whose door is nearer.

f. 37a. Muḥammad: There are three kinds of neighbors, one with three claims against you, one with two claims, and one with one. The one with three claims is the Muslim neighbor who is related to you, for Islam, kinship, and neighborliness each has its due; the one with two claims on you is your Muslim neighbor, and the one with one claim is your neighbor who is not of your religion.

f. 37b. The rainspouts of Shurayḥ were inside his house; if a cat of his died, he buried it inside his house, not wishing to offend his neighbors with it.

Muḥammad: The believer is not the one who is full while his neighbor is hungry.

f. 38a. Al-Aḥnaf b. Qays went to the roof of his house and looked down on his neighbor, and said: Alas, I have intruded on my neighbor without his permission. I will never go up on this house again.

Chapter on Repaying Good Deeds.

f. 38b. Muḥammad: Gifts are provision from God; let him who is given a gift accept it and give something better in return.

Muḥammad: Give to one another, for gifts remove ill will.

f. 39a. Wahb b. Munabbih: Failing to return good deeds is (equal to) giving short measure.

f. 40a. Saʿīd b. al-ʿĀṣ was in the mosque alone one day when a man of Quraysh came up to him and accompanied him home. Saʿīd asked him if he needed anything, and he replied: Nothing, I just saw you walking alone, so I joined you. Saʿīd gave the man 30,000 dirhams, which was all the money he had in the house.

f. 40b. Chapter on Giving to Him who Asks.

This is the last and longest chapter of the book, comprising more than one third of the whole.

Muḥammad never said no, when something was asked of him.

Muḥammad was given a *burdah* as a present. When he appeared wearing it, a man in the crowd asked for it, and he gave it to him. The people chided the man for demanding it, since it was known that Muḥammad would never say no. The man replied that he only wanted it to use for his shroud, and so it was.

f. 41b. Anas b. Mālik: The Messenger of God was the best, the most generous, and the bravest of men...

f. 42b. The husband of the daughter of Khadījah was taken prisoner at Badr, and his wife sent a necklace of Khadījah's to ransom him. Muḥammad recognized the necklace, sent it back and released her husband.

f. 43a. Muḥammad: The suppliant has a right, even if he comes on horseback.

f. 44a. Muḥammad sent money to Abū Sufyān to distribute among the poor of Quraysh, even though they were pagans. Abū Sufyān said: I have never seen anyone more charitable with his kin or more generous to them (*abarr wa-awṣal*) than he... we seek his life, yet he sends us gifts and treats us charitably.

f. 46. Abū Bakr trades a slave for Bilāl, whom he then frees. He freed seven slaves altogether before the *Hijrah*; their names are given.

f. 47a. ʿUmar roughly rejects the appeal of a relative of his, says: ...He asked me for God's money; if he had asked me for my own, I would have sent him ten thousand.

f. 47b. ʿUthmān was on a trip to Mecca among a group of people. He was the only one with provisions, which were on a camel ridden by a *mawlā* of his. In response to a request, he distributes the provisions, gives away the camel, and lets his *mawlā* ride behind him.

ff. 47b-48a. When ʿAlī died his income was 100,000, but he had debts of 70,000 which he had incurred by giving to relatives and friends who had no share in the booty. His son Ḥasan paid the debts and thereafter freed fifty slaves yearly till he died; then Ḥusayn did likewise until he was killed; no one has ever done that since.

f. 48a-b. A man's camel gave out, and he went to the Amīr of Madīnah, who did nothing for him. He was told to go to Abū Jaʿfar. He did and recited verses to him. Abū Jaʿfar provided him with a mount, expense money, and a garment.

ff. 48b-49a. ʿAbdallāh b. Jaʿfar gives a gold pomegranate to a suppliant. When weighed it was found to contain 300 mithqāls.

f. 49b. Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī gave Farazdaq 400 dinars. People protested but he said: The best of your wealth is that with which you protect your honor.

f. 50a-b. The *khutabāʾ* of Ḥijāz appear before Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik. They all address him, and finally Ibn Abī Jahm b. Ḥudhayfah speaks. He asks for 3000 dinars; Hishām refuses, but Ibn Abī Jahm argues so eloquently that Hishām finally yields.

f. 65b.²⁸ Abū 'l-Sā'ib sent to Muḥammad b. 'Amr b. 'Awf b. 'Uthmān, asking for a milch camel. He sent him nineteen camels and the herdsman.

f. 51b. An Umayyad and a Hashimite boast of the generosity of their respective families and decide to put them to the test. The Umayyad goes to ten members of his family and each gives him ten thousand dirhams. The Hashimite goes first to 'Ubaydallāh b. 'Abbās who gives him 100,000; then to Ḥasan b. 'Alī, who, on being told that 'Ubaydallāh had given him 100,000, gives him 130,000; then he goes to Ḥusayn, who does not wish to excel his chief (*sayyid*), so he gives him only 130,000. Thus the Hashimite receives 360,000 from three persons in his family, whereas the Umayyad gets only 100,000 from ten. The Umayyad then returns the money, but the Hashimite donors refuse to take their gifts back.

f. 52a. Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik pays the debts of Sa'īd b. Khālīd, which amounted to 30,000 dinars.

f. 53a-b. Al-Ḥārīth b. al-'Āṣ b. Hishām waited upon 'Abd al-Malik for more than a year, but was not admitted. He composed three verses and left. When 'Abd al-Malik read them, he summoned him and made him governor of Mecca for one year (80-81/699-700).

f. 53b. Hushaym said: When al-Zubayr came to Kūfah, the governor Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ (for 'Uthmān) sent him 700,000; said if there were more in the treasury he would send it. This story was told to Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī, who said: We thought the only one who gave him money was al-Walīd b. 'Uqbah Abū Mu'īt, and we said 500,000, but Hushaym knows best.

f. 56b. Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt praises Bishr b. Marwān (2 verses); asks for 20,000; Bishr gives him 100,000.

ff. 64a-b. and 59a-b.²⁹ 'Amr b. Mas'ūd of Sulaym then of Dhakwān had been a friend of Abū Sufyān. He becomes poor in his old age, and goes to see Mu'āwiyah, who keeps him waiting for over a year. He writes seven verses to Mu'āwiyah, who then summons him. He gives a long recital of his woes, concluding with 20 verses. Mu'āwiyah weeps and rewards him richly.

Hishām orders 100,000 dinars distributed to the poor of Madīnah at the behest of an Arab.

f. 60a-b. Al-Ḥakam b. al-Muṭṭalib is imprisoned for giving away the revenues of his bailiwick instead of forwarding them to the governor. While in prison he gives 3000 dinars to a suppliant.

ff. 62b-63a. Kuthayyir the poet asks 'Abd al-Malik for the loan of a piece of land; receives it. Then he has second thoughts and asks for it outright. 'Abd al-Malik gives him the land.

f. 66a. A group of Quraysh go to see Abū Bakr b. 'Abd al-Rahmān

²⁸ See above

²⁹ See above

b. al-Hārith, who entertains them royally and gives them rich gifts. When they are ready to depart, his servants will not assist them. They chide him for this, but he laughs and says: They do not help anyone to depart from us.

End of the *Makārim al-Akhlāq*.

It is clear from his selection and arrangement of materials that Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā had attained a conviction in his own mind that a sufficient basis and authority for proper conduct was to be found in the prophetic tradition, and that this tradition could be proven viable and practicable by appeal to examples taken from the lives of famous Muslims from the early generations of Islam. In stressing the importance of the traditions of the Prophet, Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā was, of course, following a trend which had been going on for many years, but he applies traditions exclusively to the sphere of private morality where no action at law can be taken. A man cannot be arrested for failing to be a good neighbor, and a beggar has no recourse to the courts against the one who refuses him. And yet the traditions are no less explicit in enjoining good neighborliness and generosity than they are on such matters as marriage and inheritances.

Ibn Abī 'l-Dunyā evidently considered himself as a moralizer or preacher whose duty it was to urge his co-religionists to follow the pristine Muslim virtues in areas that tended to be neglected.

There is another tendency, however, which pervades the *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, of which the writer must surely have been aware. This is the pro-Arab conciliatory spirit, adumbrated in the first tradition from ʿĀ'isha cited above,³⁰ which conveys the idea that Islam, in some moral sense at least, represents a continuation of the ancient Arab way of life, and developed clearly in the anecdotal material, in which all the famous early Muslims (except the Khārijites) are made to appear virtuous. The Zubayrids, the ʿAlids, the Umayyads, and the ancestors of the ʿAbbāsīd caliphs are all paragons. The Umayyads, who are usually dealt with harshly, appear in the *Makārim al-Akhlāq* as scarcely inferior to the other groups. Hishām's reputation for miserliness is mitigated, and even Yazīd b. al-Walīd, whom most Muslims would hardly consider a model of good conduct, is allowed to shame a liar into reforming.

We should read the *Makārim al-Akhlāq* against the background of the time in which it was written. In the latter part of the ninth century (Christian era), the ʿAbbāsīd Caliphate had already begun to show symptoms of its internal weakness, which ultimately was to lead to its eclipse. The administration was largely in the hands of Persians;

³⁰ See above

orthodox Islam was becoming more and more legalistic; and Ṣūfism, which was disliked by the orthodox, especially the Ḥanbalites, was developing into a formidable movement.

Considered in this light, together with the author's Ḥanbalism and his Umayyad connection, one can recognize in the *Makārim al-Akhlāq* a nostalgic reaching back towards a time—fictional to be sure, but easily conceivable—in which a nobler and more generous spirit prevailed, when the pristine Arab virtues, strengthened by an Islam as yet unsullied by foreign influences, dominated public and private life.

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