SOME ZAYDI VIEWS ON THE COMPANIONS OF THE PROPHET

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The history of the Zaydiyya and the growth of Zaydi thought, law, and doctrine have become increasingly well known as a result of studies by R. Strothmann,1 E. Griffini,2 C. van Arendonk,3 W. Madelung,4 and others. As Madelung has convincingly shown in his book on al-Qāsim b. Ibrāhīm, Zaydi doctrine, which initially differed appreciably from that of the Mu’tazila on many issues, eventually adopted all of the principal tenets of Mu’tazilism. At the same time, the various Zaydi branches retained the essential Shi’ī belief in an Imām descended from ‘Ali and Fāṭima. Yet the Zaydi doctrine of the imāmate differs from the doctrine of Imāmī (or Twelver) Shi’ism in some important respects: the Zaydi Imām is not infallible, sinless, and omniscient,5 and, according to the Batri Zaydis,6 he need not even always be the most excellent person of his generation.7 Most Zaydis maintained instead that the Imām had to prove his leadership by fighting for the faith (jihād). The Imāmī claim that all the Imāms had been personally designated by God and His Prophet was restricted by the Zaydis to ‘Ali, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn.8

With these basic facts in mind, it might prove useful to investigate briefly an important offshoot of the Zaydi doctrine of the imāmate, namely, Zaydi attitudes to the Companions of the Prophet. Since the Zaydiyya occupies a middle ground between Mu’tazili and Imāmī Shi’ī doctrines of the imāmate, it is not surprising that its views on the intimately related topic of the Sahāba should also lie somewhere between these two poles.9 Yet even within this circumscribed area different, and sometimes conflicting, points of view could be accommodated. This is mainly because Zaydi authors influenced by radical Shi’ism are more severe in their judgement of the Sahāba than those who have unreservedly adopted the Mu’tazili line. Since the latter belong in the most

3 De opkomst van het Zaidietische Imamaat in Yemen, Leiden, 1919.
5 Most Zaydi doctors maintain, however, that ‘Ali, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn were endowed with infallibility. Cf. below, p. 98.
7 This theory, often referred to as imāmat al-mafḍūl, was adopted by some pro-Shi’ī Mu’tazilis. See, e.g., al-Nāshī’ al-Akbar, Masā’il al-imāma, in J. van Ess, Frühe mu’tazilitische Häresiographie, Beirut, 1971, 56–8.
8 For further details see Strothmann, Staatsrecht, 63 ff.
9 Imāmī Shi’ī theories on the subject are dealt with in The attitude of the Imāmī Shi’īs to the Companions of the Prophet, unpublished D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, 1971. Sunni and Mu’tazili views on the Companions are discussed in the first two chapters; the present article is an elaboration of the second appendix of that thesis.
part to the later period of Zaydi history, it is in the writings of that period that more moderate views prevail. It should also be borne in mind that the Zaydi Imāms, who composed many of the most significant works in Zaydi literature, did not always adhere to currently held dogma or to doctrines laid down by their predecessors, and could strike out in new and unexpected directions.

Zaydi scholars agree that during Muḥammad's lifetime the Companions served the cause of Islam with loyalty and devotion. At the same time they maintain that 'Alī was the legitimate successor to the Prophet. Their problem was to reconcile these two positions with the fact that the Companions elected Abū Bakr and not 'Alī.

An answer given by moderate Zaydis is that while Muḥammad often praised 'Alī's virtues, he did not issue an unequivocal declaration appointing 'Alī as his successor. 'Alī's designation was not explicit (nasṣ jaṣīl) but concealed or implicit (nasṣ khafī), of a kind that could be inferred logically (nasṣ istidālī) but which could not be proved by reference to an explicit text. In order to discover the identity of the Imām the Companions had to resort to individual reasoning (ijtihād), a course of action sanctioned by the Prophet himself. The application of the theory of ijtihād to the Companions can be traced back to the early Zaydi Jarīriyya sect. It is also attributed to the mutakallim al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī al-Karabīsī (d. 248/862). Al-Ash'arī (d. 324/935-6) adopted this view, which was subsequently incorporated into Ash'arī doctrine. The Zaydis, however, unlike al-Ash'arī, believe that the Companions acknowledged 'Alī's superiority to all of them; they therefore have to show which motives prompted most Companions to support Abū Bakr. One such motive is said to have been the fear that any delay in electing a new ruler would cause widespread apostasy among the newly converted and among the munāfiqūn. Since 'Alī was engaged in preparing the Prophet's body for burial, the Companions chose Abū Bakr instead. Another reason for the haste in which Abū Bakr was elected was the wish of the Muhājirūn to forestall the Ansārī plan to elect their own leader Sa'd b. 'Ubadā. Whatever their reasoning, the Companions cannot be accused of having committed any sin, since they were acting within the prescribed rules of ijtihād.

Other Zaydi authors, while accepting the notion that the Companions in

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10 Yahyā b. Muḥammad ibn Ḥumayd (d. after 972/1564), Nuzhat al-abṣār, BM MS Or. 3850, fol. 164a.
11 Al-Nāṣīh al-Akbar, in van Ess, op. cit., 44.
12 ibid., 67 (where al-Karabīsī is erroneously identified as the Mu'tazī Walīd b. Abān al-Karabīsī; see van Ess's explanation, p. 52 of the German section); cf. al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt al-islāmiyyān, ed. H. Ritter, Istanbul, 1929-33, 457.
14 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Najīrī (d. 877/1472), Mirqāt al-anṣār, Leiden MS Or. 6355, fol. 130a.
15 ibid. For an Imāmī account cf. al-Sharīf al-Murtadā, al-Shāfi′ī li 'l-imāma, Tehran, 1884, 100.
16 Ibn Ḥumayd, op. cit., fol. 167b; cf. Ahmad b. al-Ḥusayn Mānakdim (d. 426/1034), Shark al-uṣūl al-khamea (erroneously attributed to Mānakdim's teacher 'Abd al-Jabbār), ed. 'Abd
general had the best interest (maṣlaḥa) of the community in mind, maintain
that the confused and often conflicting reports about the early period make it
impossible to gain a clear picture of the precise motives for the actions of
individual Companions. The wisest course therefore is to refrain from expressing
any opinion on them and to let God be their judge.17

More radical Zaydis take a different point of view. They claim that although
the designation of ‘Alī as Muḥammad’s successor was implicit, its contents and
purport were clear-cut and unambiguous (nuṣūṣ qaʾīyya), leaving room neither
for assumptions (zann) nor for individual reasoning. Hence the first three
caliphs and their supporters are guilty of error (khaṭaʿ). It does not follow,
however, that they are also guilty of sin (fisq), since they did not act in a spirit
of rebellion (tamnarrud) against God.18 Although the Companions are not
perfect, their virtuous deeds during the Prophet’s lifetime more than com-
penstate for any subsequent lapses. This is corroborated by a tradition on the
authority of Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yaman in which Muḥammad is quoted as declaring,
‘My Companions will err after my death but this will be forgiven them because
they were the first to follow me’.19

The most uncompromising attitude is the one which depicts the community
after Muḥammad’s death as being divided into two camps: ‘Ali and his
supporters, who followed the commandments of the Qurʾān, and the rest of
the people, who ‘went astray like a blind camel’.20 In an account related by
proponents of this view, many distinguished Companions are described as
opposing Abū Bakr’s election. Among them were twelve—six Muhājirūn and
six Ṭimār—who spoke up for ‘Ali’s rights.21 Their speeches are said to have
made such an impression on Abū Bakr that he went into seclusion for

al-Kaʿīrī ‘Uthmān, Cairo, 1965, 763. Ḥamīdān b. Yāḥyā (fl. seventh/thirteenth century),
who opposed the strong Muʿtazilī influence on Zaydī doctrine (see Madelung, op. cit., 218 ff.),
rejects the application of the theory of yiḏhāḏ to the Companions. See his Kitāb al-taṣrīḥ,
BM MS Or. 3727, fols. 114a–115a.

17 Ibn Ḥumayd, op. cit., fols. 164b, 171a; al-Najrī, op. cit., fol. 130b, quoting the Muʿtazilī
Abī ʿl-Ḥusayn al-Khayyāt (d. 319/931). Al-Khayyāt is also reported to have justified
the action of the Companions in passing over ‘Alī and electing others instead. See Ibn al-Murtadā,

18 Al-Najrī, op. cit., fol. 130b (where this view is attributed to a group of Zaydis known as
al-muḥaqiqīn ‘those who seek to establish the truth by critical investigation ’).

19 Ṭakānū ḫi-ʾaṣḥābī baʿdī zalla tughfārū laḥum li-sābiqātihim naʿī (Ibn Ḥumayd, op. cit.,
fol. 165a). For this tradition see also Muhīb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī, al-Riḍāy al-nadira fi manāqib
al-ʾashara, Cairo, 1372/1952-3, 1, 21–2; al-Muttaqī al-Hindi, Kanz al-ʿummāl, Ḥaydarābād,
1384/1965–6, XII, 155 (on the authority of ‘Alī).

20 Ḥamīdān b. Yāḥyā, al-Muntazaʾ al-awwal min aqwāl al-aʾimma, BM MS Or. 3727, fol. 75b,
quoting from the Kitāb dharr al-ahwāl waʾl-wuḥūm by al-Qāsim b. ‘Alī al-ʿAyyānī (d. 393/1003)

21 Yāḥyā b. ʿAbdAllāh al-Ḥadawi al-Ṣadī, Najāt al-talīb, BM MS Or. 3727, fols. 4a–5b. This
tradition is very popular in Imāmī literature. See, e.g., al-Barqī, Kitāb al-rijah, ed. Kāẓim
al-Mūsawī al-Mayyāmawī, Tehran, 1963, 63–6; Ahmad b. Abī Tālib al-Ṭabarānī, al-Iḥājāj, Najaf,
Urnawī, Tehran, 1952, 655–64; al-Bayyāḏī, al-Ṣirāt al-mustaqīm, India Office Library, MS, l, 471,
fols. 204b–205a. The list of the twelve Companions in the various sources is not always identical.
three days. His followers, fearing that he might decide to abdicate in favour of 'Ali, marched into the streets and threatened to kill anyone who henceforth dared to challenge Abū Bakr’s authority.22

In their attitude to Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān, some Zaydi writers prefer a position of neutrality (tawaqquf) and state that no judgement should be passed on them.23 Other authors maintain that the three caliphs committed an odious deed (qabāḥ) and an act of rebellion (ma‘ṣiyah), but that there is no definite proof that their action constituted a grave sin (fisq).24 This view is challenged by a third group, whose members claim that the three caliphs are indeed guilty of fisq, since they committed a major offence (kabīra) by usurping power.25 In a detailed accusation, Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and their chief supporters are said to have deliberately broken their own pledge by taking over the reins of power after Muhammad’s death. They thus proclaimed themselves guilty of error and moral blindness (al-ḍalāla wa ‘l-‘amā). Their crime is so obvious that those who oppose them can dispense with any attacks on them.26 In addition, Abū Bakr and ‘Umar allegedly proved their inadequacy as rulers by their ignorance of the religious law. When ‘Umar became caliph he consistently attacked his predecessor and rejected many of the legal decisions made by Abū Bakr. Such criticism, according to this view, can be interpreted in one of two ways: either ‘Umar had not discovered Abū Bakr’s errors until after Abū Bakr’s death, in which case he is ‘the most blind-hearted and unintelligent of God’s creatures’; or else he had been aware of Abū Bakr’s errors but had hypocritically concealed this knowledge from him, because Abū Bakr’s approval was more important to him than the anger of God and His apostle; in that case ‘Umar has no share (ḥazz) in Islam.27 Only a short distance separates these formulations from the position of the Jārūdī Zaydīs, who flatly condemned both Abū Bakr and ‘Umar as unbelievers.28

22 Al-Hadawi al-Ṣa’di, op. cit., fol. 6a. Cf. also al-Hādi Yahyā b. al-Ḥusayn (d. 298/911), Kitāb tathbīṭ al-imāma, BM MS Or. 3727, fol. 164a–b; al-Manṣūr Ḥasan b. Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 669/1271 or 670/1272), Kitāb anwār al-yaqīn fi ḫimāmat amīr al-mu’minīn, BM MS Or. 3868, fol. 156b.

23 Ahmad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Jundārī, Simţ al-jumān, Leiden MS Or. 6637 (unpaginated).

24 This view was reportedly held by the Ḥāmid al-Mu’ayyad bi-‘l-lāh (d. 411/1020) and others. In fact, most Zaydīs refused to regard Abū Bakr and ‘Umar as guilty of fisq (ibid.); these Zaydīs are known as al-Sīliyya. See Mānakdūm, op. cit., 761.

25 This minority view is attributed to the İmām Abū ‘l-Faṭḥ al-Daylāmī (lived fifth/eleventh century), al-Mutawakkil Ahmad b. Sulaymān (d. 566/1170), and others (al-Jundārī, op. cit.).


27 ibid., fol. 164a. Many of these accusations are set out in great detail in İmām polemical writings.

28 See al-‘Nāshī’ al-Akbar, in van Es, op. cit., 42; al-Nawbakhṭī, Fīraq al-shir‘a, ed. H. Ritter, Istanbul, 1931, 48; al-Asḥarʿī, Maqāllat al-islāmiyyīn, 66–7. Among Zaydī İmāms, al-‘Qāsim b. Ibrāhīm (d. 246/860), who was the real founder of Zaydī dogmatics, was sharply critical of the first caliphs and the other Companions of the Saqīfa, but tried to avoid giving his views a definitive form in the shape of a dogma (see Strothmann, Staatsrecht, 38). No such doubts beset al-‘Qāsim’s grandson, the İmām al-Ḥādi Yāḥyā b. al-Ḥusayn: he condemned Abū Bakr and ‘Umar and declared them to be unbelievers who deserved the death penalty (see van Arendonk, op. cit., 254; cf. Madelung, op. cit., 167).
Of the Companions who plotted against ‘Ali, none is said to have played a more sinister role than al-Mughira b. Shu’ba, who reportedly boasted that he was the first to have wrested power from the *ahl al-bayt*. According to a Zaydi account, Abü Bakr was on the point of giving ‘Ali the oath of allegiance when al-Mughira appeared and warned him that ‘Ali would become both the *Qaysar* and the *Kisrā* of the Muslims, and that authority would henceforth reside solely with the Hāshimis. When Abü Bakr failed to be impressed by these arguments al-Mughira turned to ‘Umar and succeeded in winning him over to his standpoint. The two men then returned to Abü Bakr and proceeded with him to the Saqifa of the Banū Sā‘ida, where the actual usurpation took place.29

It is al-Mughira, then, even more than the two caliphs, who must, according to this account, bear the responsibility for the injustice perpetrated against ‘Ali.30

The different views on the first three caliphs are reflected in the argument as to whether the formula ‘may God be pleased with them (*raḍiyya ʾllāhu ‘anhum*)’, known as the *tardiya*, should be employed after their names. Some early Zaydis forbade its use, while others maintained a position of neutrality on that question. Only the later Zaydi authors taught that the *tardiya* could definitely be added to the names of the three caliphs.31

A good example of the gamut of Zaydi views on specific Companions is provided in the case of ‘Ali’s opponents during his caliphate, especially the leaders in the Battle of the Camel and at Ṣīfīn. On ‘Ā’isha, Ṭalḥa, and al-Ẓubayr, some Zaydis adopt the view held by many of the later Muʿtazilīs: the three rebelled against the lawful Imām, and thus committed an error (*khata‘*) which reached the degree of a grave sin (*fisq*). Yet they subsequently repented and died as believers who will enter Paradise.32 A minority among

29 Al-Hadawi al-Ṣaʿdī, op. cit., fol. 3a–b, quoting from *al-Shāfi‘* by al-Mansūr bi-ʾllāh ‘Abd Allāh b. Ḥamza (d. 614/1217).

30 The claim that al-Mughira played a central part in laying the groundwork for the usurpation seems to be specifically Zaydi. The Imāmīs, too, attribute to al-Mughira a variety of anti-ʿAlid actions (cf., e.g., al-Maḍli, op. cit., v, 56–7); but in discussing the usurpation itself they usually mention Abū ‘Ubayda b. al-Jarrāḥ as the main collaborator with Abū Bakr and ‘Umar. Cf. in general H. Lammens, ‘ Le “Triumvirat” Abou Bakr, ‘Omar et Abou ‘Obaida’, MFO, Université Saint-Joseph, Beyrouth, iv, 1910, 113–44.


32 Al-Najri, loc. cit. Cf. the exposition of this view by ‘Abd al-Jabbār in his *al-Mughiri*, xx, ii, ed. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Mahmūd and Sūlaymān Dūnā, Cairo, c. 1966, 84–92. The Zaydi Ibn al-Murtadd (quoted by al-Najri, op. cit., fol. 131b) disagrees, however, with ‘Abd al-Jabbār’s claim that since it is impossible to know man’s innermost thoughts, a person may be considered as having repented even when there is no conclusive evidence to that effect. According to Ibn al-Murtadd, a definite error (*khata‘ al-maqti‘ bihi*) can be rectified only by a clear repentance. Since external, apparent actions (*zāhir*) are the basis of all worship, repentance, too, must be regarded as having taken place when there are external proofs for its existence. The implication from Ibn al-Murtadd’s argument is that no distinction can be drawn between what a man says and what he believes.
the Zaydiyya, clearly influenced by Imāmi beliefs, refuse to acknowledge that such repentance took place, and claim that these three Companions died in error.33 The claim that the error of Taḥta and his accomplices actually amounted to disbelief is reported to have been held by the founder of the Jarīriyya, Sulaymān b. Jarīr;34 it is not adopted by the mainstream of later Zaydi thought. On the other hand, Muʿawiyā is painted in very dark colours. He is described by some Zaydis as a grave sinner who did not repent, while his followers at Siffin are said to be guilty of rebelling against a lawful Imām.35 Other Zaydis maintain that Muʿawiyā was an unbeliever because of his many sins, which include the slaying of Companions, belief in predestination (jabr), and the adoption of Ziyād b. Abīhi despite Muhammad’s decree, ‘the child belongs to the [master of the] marriage-bed, and the fornicator shall have nothing’.36

The degree of culpability ascribed to the Ṣaḥāba as a whole or to particular Companions is directly linked to the question of whether or not it is permissible to vilify the Companions (ṣabb al-ṣaḥāba). While such vilification was denounced by most Sunni jurists as a major offence,37 it was widely practised in radical Shiʿi circles.38 In Zaydi literature there is evidence of a considerable divergence of opinion on this issue. The pro-Imāmi position (quoted approvingly in Imāmi texts) is formulated by an anonymous Zaydi (baʿd al-shū'a al-zaydiyya) in a discussion which he allegedly held with the Ashʿari theologian Abū l-Ḥādi al-Juwayni (d. 478/1085). The Zaydi scholar points out that God Himself has cursed and has ordered His servants to curse (e.g. Qur’an II, 96).

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33 Al-Najri, op. cit., fol. 131a.
(154). He then mentions numerous cases in which one Companion cursed another, or branded him a liar, or pointed to some deficiency in him.\(^{39}\) The gist of the argument is clear: once it is established that cursing or vilifying \textit{per se} is not prohibited and that there is no reason to exempt the Companions from the category of ordinary, erring mortals, then there can be no objection in principle to the cursing of Companions, given sufficient reasons to do so.

This point is also made in the seventh/thirteenth century by Ḥamīdān b. Yahyā. He maintains that ‘Ṣaḥāba’ is a generic term referring to all those who accompanied the Prophet. As such it includes apostates and hypocrites as well as virtuous men, ‘Ali’s opponents at the battles of the Camel, Ṣiffin, and Nahrawān as well as his most ardent supporters. Hence no generalizations should be made about the Companions: they should neither be praised nor vilified as a group. A virtuous Companion should not be cursed; but it is permissible (\textit{ja'iz}) to curse those Companions whose sinfulness has been established beyond doubt. Among them are Mu‘āwiya and his followers, al-Mughīra b. Shu‘ba, and Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘ārī.\(^{40}\)

In contrast to such views, many moderate Zaydis accept the Sunni doctrine that vilification of the Companions in any form is forbidden. Yahyā b. Muhammad Ibn Ḥumayd, writing in the tenth/sixteenth century, quotes an impressive number of earlier authorities in support of that doctrine.\(^{41}\) He stresses in particular that the Prophet himself forbade anyone to make derogatory statements about the Companions, and that Zayd b. ‘Allī refused to curse Abū Bakr and ‘Umar and was therefore forsaken by the Rāfīḍīs.\(^{42}\) The Imāmiyya is accused of having adopted the explicit designation theory so as to have a pretext for vilifying the Companions.\(^{43}\)

Ibn Ḥumayd’s attitude appears to have been shared not only by later Zaydi jurists, but also by some of the early Imāms. Thus it is reported that al-Ḥasan b. Zayd (d. 270/884), the founder of the northern Zaydi state,\(^{44}\) ordered the execution of a man who had cursed ‘Ā’ishā. When the ‘Alīds protested against this harsh verdict on one of their own, al-Ḥasan explained that cursing ‘Ā’ishā was tantamount to reviling the Prophet.\(^{45}\) Similarly, the Imām al-Ḥādi b. Yahyā b. al-Ḥusayn (d. 298/911) is said to have flogged people in Ṣan‘ā who had vilified Abū Bakr and ‘Umar.\(^{46}\)


\(^{40}\) Ḥamīdān b. Yahyā, \textit{Kitāb al-taṣrīḥ}, fol. 113a, whence al-Hadawi al-Sa’dī, \textit{op. cit.}, fols. 25a–26b.

\(^{41}\) Ibn Ḥumayd, op. cit., fol. 161b.

\(^{42}\) ibid., fols. 162b–163b, 168a.

\(^{43}\) ibid., fol. 164a.

\(^{44}\) He is not generally liked by the later Zaydi authors. Cf. Madelung, op. cit., 154–9.


\(^{46}\) Ibn Ḥumayd, op. cit., fol. 168a. The story seems rather suspect in view of al-Ḥādi’s known hostility towards the leading Companions (cf. above, p. 94, n. 28).
One further point in the context of Zaydi attitudes to the Companions concerns the role of the Şahāba as transmitters of Muḥammad’s utterances. For the Zaydis, the most reliable and trustworthy authorities are the Imāms belonging to the Prophet’s family (a’immat al-‘ɪtra). All other members of the ahl al-bayt (descendants of ʿĀli and Fāṭima) are also commonly accepted as authorities, irrespective of their being recognized as Imāms or not. In contrast, the question of whether or not the transmission of traditions by the Companions can be admitted caused serious disagreement among Zaydi scholars, particularly in the early period. According to the moderate Batriyya, any member of the community might act as transmitter. This view was adopted at least by some of the Zaydi Imāms. It is reported that when the Imām al-Nāṣir lil-Ḥaqq al-Uṭrūsh (d. 304/917) dictated traditions on the authority of Abū Bakr and ʿUmar he noticed that the person who was taking down the notes did not add the tardiya after the names of the two caliphs. Al-Uṭrūsh asked him reproachfully, ‘Why don’t you write the tardiya? Such knowledge is reported only from them and from those like them’. In a similar vein, the Muʿtazili Zaydi al-Ḥākim al-Jushami (d. 494/1101) attacks the Rafida for rejecting the authority of the Companions in the transmission of traditions.

Some later Zaydi doctors, following Batri teachings, maintain that transmission on the authority of the Şahāba is no less trustworthy than that of the ahl al-bayt, since it is universally acknowledged (lil-ijmā`) that after Muḥammad’s death the common people (al-dmma) could choose whether to turn for guidance to members of the ahl al-bayt or to other Companions. At the same time, ‘Āli, al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn, and Fāṭima can also be accepted as authorities in their own right, and not merely as transmitters from the Prophet, since they are the only persons after Muḥammad who were endowed with infallibility (‘īṣma). This solution enabled the Zaydiyya to accept Sunni traditions, without compromising the special status enjoyed by the ahl al-bayt.

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47 See İbrāhîm b. Muḥammad ibn al-Wazîr (d. 914/1508), al-Falak al-dawwâr, BM MS Or. 3850, fol. 26a.
49 ibid., 49–50.
50 Inna mithla hâdhâ ‘l-‘îlm lâ yu’tharu illâ ‘anhumâ wa-‘an amthâlihimâ (Ibn Ḥumayd, op. cit., fol. 169b). It is to be noted, however, that al-Uṭrūsh is rather anti-Muʿtazili and often close to Imami doctrine (cf. Madelung, op. cit., 159 ff.). According to al-Manṣîr bi-llâh, the Companions are the most excellent of the community after the ahl al-bayt (Ibn Ḥumayd, op. cit., fol. 171a).
51 Al-Ḥākim al-Jushami, Kitâb sharh ‘uyûn al-masâ‘îl, Leiden MS Or. 2584, fol. 31b. The acceptance of this transmission hinges at least on a tacit acknowledgement of the Sunni principle that all Companions are persons of high morals (‘udâl). The majority of Zaydi scholars accept that principle, with the reservation that it does not apply to those Companions whose sinfulness has become apparent, such as those who fought against ʿAli and did not repent. See Ibn al-Wazîr, op. cit., fol. 70a; cf. al-Maqbali, op. cit., 307.
52 Al-Najîrî, op. cit., fol. 133b.
53 ‘Āli, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn are also said to be the most excellent among the Companions (afdal al-saḥâba) (Mânakdim, op. cit., 767). The claim, attributed to some Muʿtazili authors, that ten of the most renowned Companions (known as al-‘aṣhara al-mubashsharûn) were also infallible, is rejected by the later Zaydiyya as dubious (fihi nazar) (Al-Najîrî, op. cit., fols. 133b-134a).