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Translittération de l'arabe:
't, b, t, j, g, h, b, d, t, n, z, j, s, d, j, z, g, j, g, k, l, m, n, h, w, y.
la marbâla = a, et (état construit). ARTICLE: et- et l- (mêmes devant les «solaire»).
Voyelles: a, i, u, — à, é, ë. Diphytonques: au, ay.
THE FIRST-CENTURY CONCEPT OF HIJRA*

BY

PATRICIA CRONE

In sources for the first century of Islamic history, the word hijra is used of two different types of emigration. Most commonly, it refers to emigration from Mecca to Medina in the time of the Prophet: this is the classical meaning of the word. But at other times it stands for emigration from Medina and other parts of Arabia to garrison cities in the conquered lands after the Prophet’s death, which is not classical usage. Participants in both types of emigration are known as muhājirūn. How are the two meanings of the word related?

Most scholars undoubtedly envisage the classical meaning as original and the non-classical usage as a later development. “‘Hijra no longer meant Flight, but emigration (with wife and children) to a military and political centre in order to serve there’”, as Wellhausen says with reference to the post-conquest period1. In a recent study Madelung adopts the same view and traces the non-classical usage to ‘Umar: “The duty of hijra acquired renewed, if changed, significance with the expansion of Islam after the death of Muhammad”; reaffirmed by the caliph ‘Umar, the “renewed emigration” was no longer directed to Medina but to the newly founded garrison towns in the conquered territories. With this interpretation, the duty of hijra, based on the precedent of the Prophet’s time, remained a vital institution throughout the

* I should like to thank Uri Rubin for permission to quote his unpublished article, and Michael Cook, Frank Steward and Fritz Zimmermann for helpful comments on earlier drafts of mine.

1 J. Wellhausen, The Arab Kingdom and its Fall, Calcutta 1927, p. 25 (my italics).

Umayyad caliphate2. Thereafter, one takes it, the concept reverted to the meaning that it had in the Prophet’s days.

But there is something uncomfortable about a reconstruction in which a concept is born with its classical meaning so that evidence for the century after the Prophet’s death must relate to a diversion rather than the development from which the classical concept emerged. One would have expected the first century to be formative. This is not how the sources see it, of course, for they systematically equate their own, classical Islam with that of the Prophet and the ‘Abbāsid and so have no choice but to dismiss the pre-classical period as diversionary or positively aberrant. For example, they assure us that the caliphal title was born under Abū Bakr in its classical form of ḥalīfat rasūl allāh, though it was not actually used in that form until the ‘Abbāsid period: this was because the Umayyads ‘changed’ it;3. They also assure us that the canonical rules were fixed by the Prophet and ‘Umar, but that the Umayyads changed them too4, and that the Umayyads were in general wont to introduce innovations, though the original rules always won out in the end because the scholars ‘remembered’ how things had been under the Prophet and the ‘Abbāsid. But this is history as legitimation. In Madelung’s reconstruction it is ‘Umar who changes the original concept of hijra, not the Umayyads, who merely favour the un-classical idea; but one suspects the sources of doctrinal rewriting yet again. Is it not possible to propose a history of the concept of hijra in which the classical notion is the outcome of an evolution rather than its starting point? This is what will be attempted here.

Emigration in the Qur’an

The Qur’ān is generally assumed to be a faithful record of Muḥammad’s utterances, indeed the only reliable record that we possess. Wansbrough has cast doubt on this assumption, with considerable justification in my opinion5, but his theory is not suffi-

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3 See for example Wellhausen, Kingdom, pp. 277ff.
ciently concrete to be usable in the present context. Since the Qurʾānic evidence cannot simply be left aside, and since further the scholars who have worked on ḥiṣra subscribe to the conventional view of the provenance and transmission history of the Qurʾān, I shall meet them halfway by adopting it myself for purposes of the present argument.

The Qurʾān does not actually use the term ḥiṣra, but it pays considerable attention to emigrants (man yuḥāṣiru, al-muḥāṣirūn), of whom it strongly approves. They are identified as believers (2:217/215 [the figures separated by a dash refer to the Egyptian and Früdel editions respectively]; 8:71; 73/73, 75; 9:19/20; 29:25; 33:5/6), and their emigration is regularly presented as a response to maltreatment: we hear of “those who emigrated and were expelled from their habitations, those who suffered hurt in My way” (3:194), “Those who emigrated in God’s cause after they were wronged” (16:40/43), of “poor muḥāṣirūn who were expelled from their homes and their property” (59:7/8), and of “those who emigrated min baḍtā muḥāṣirūn, usually translated “after persecution” (16:109/111); when people complain of being muddaṣirūn fi ’l-ard, the angels ask why they have not emigrated (4:96/99); and those who emigrate in God’s cause are assured that they will find muddaṣirān kāfirīn, sometimes translated “many refugees” (4:99/101). But no persecution seems to be envisaged in the passage on Lot, who believed in Abraham saying, “I will emigrate unto my Lord” (29:25), unless the words are to be construed as Abraham’s.

Emigrants, who were often poor (cf. 24:21/22; 59:7/8), are contrasted with unbelievers and believers who have stayed behind: emigrants should not have friends in either group, though they should assist their co-religionists when the latter ask for help as long as it does not require action against allies (4:88/91; 8:71/73). The Qurʾān makes it clear that Muhammad has emigrated (33:49) and that others are expected to join him (4:88/91; 8:71/73; 60:9/10); rewards are held out to those who go out muḥāṣirūn yā ’lāl wa-rasīlīkī even if they die on the way (4:99/101). We are not told where people emigrated from or to, though it is clear that their destination was a place with earlier inhabitants, who were also believers (59:8/9).

The most striking characteristic of emigrants in the Qurʾān is their association with holy war. Rewards are held out to “those who emigrated … and fought and were slain” (3:194), “those who emigrated and were slain or died” (22:57), “those who believe and have emigrated and struggled with their possessions and their selves in the way of God” (8:71/73; 9:19/20), “those who believe and have emigrated and struggled in the way of God” (8:75/75), “those who have believed afterwards and emigrated, and struggled with you” (8:74/76), “those who emigrated after persecution, then struggled and endured” (16:109/111); and one verse seems to identify ḡiṣāda as an activity peculiar to emigrants as distinct from those “who have given refuge and help” (8:71/73). Emigration and warfare are meritorious for being performed fi sālī al-lähī, suggesting that they could also be performed in a non-religious vein (as warfare obviously could); and it seems reasonable to infer that ḥiṣra, ḡiṣāda and qiṭāl alike were secular terms in pre-Islamic times. This is also suggested by the fact that the Qurʾān hardly ever associates them with earlier prophets. One would have expected Abraham and Moses to figure prominently as muḥāṣirūn, and Moses to be presented as a war-leader too, given that Abraham was not only the first monotheist, but also the first to separate himself from his unbelieving people (as Hadith is well aware), while Moses staged the exodus from Egypt which culminated in the Israelite conquest of the Holy Land. But Lot is the only prophet before Muhammad to be described as a muḥāṣir; and not a single earlier prophet is depicted as a proponent of ḡiṣāda/qiṭāl.

Emigration to garrison cities

Most Islamicists probably assume the Qurʾānic and the classical concepts of ḡiṣāda to be identical or so closely related that the one developed into the other without intervening links. But is it not possible that the non-classical concept of ḥiṣra was such a link? Since the evidence has not been systematically collected before, I shall begin by listing all the attestations of the non-classical concept known to me (except for the ʿHārīṣite material, which will be considered later). The order of the list is chronological and based on the approximate time to which the passages refer, not on their time of origin or the dates of the works in which they are preserved.

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6 I owe many of the attestations to the authors cited above, notes 1-2, especially Rubin, and also to J.M.D.M. Jüda, al-ʿArab we al-ʿArād fi l-ʿIrāq fi ḥadīth al-ʾIslām, Amman 1979, pp. 228ff.
1. The Prophet predicted that "you will emigrate to Syria and conquer it."

2. The Prophet said that "there will be hijra after hijra," adding that "the best people on earth will be those who attach themselves most closely to Abraham's place of emigration (musha'ab)".

3. Abu Darr described Syria as ard al-hijra in conversation with the Prophet.

4. The Prophet cursed those who turned bedouin after having emigrated (man budu b'da' al-hijra'), but exonerated those who did so in times of fitna. Since there was no fitna in the Prophet's time, this must refer to people who abandoned their hijra after his death, be it in Kufa (below, nos. 32-3), Basra (nos. 33, 43), the Yemen (no. 56) or Medina.

5. The Prophet told his followers to invite the enemy to convert before engaging them in battle: if they accept, then "invite them to transfer from their abode to the abode of the emigrants" (al-tabi'atuwa min daraitum ila dar al-musha'ab), and tell them that they will have the same rights and duties as the Muhajirun; if they refuse to move, "then tell them that they will be like the bedouin Muslims (a-rab al-muslimin), who are subject to God's law on a par with the believers, but who do not share in the fay' or the ganima unless they fight jihad with the Muslims. And if they refuse to adopt Islam, then ask them to pay ziyada".

6. In 12/633f Hujjat b. al-Walid offered the people of Hijra the same rights and duties as the Muslims if they would convert, set up and emigrate (in aslamtum wa-nahdalam wa-hagi'artum).

7. The Arab who killed the Persian Ru'zib in the battle of Uthayd in Iraq in 12/633f was one of the Barara: every clan that migrated (haji'at) in its entirety was known as al-Barara, whereas groups that migrated in part were known as al-Hijra, so the Muslims consisted of Hijra and Barara.

8. 'Amr b. Ma'dikarib apostatized in the Yemen, then he hijara ila 'l-Iraq and converted.

9. 'Amr b. Ma'dikarib addressed the participants in the battle of Qadisiyya, fought between 14/635 and 17/637, as ma'sar al-musha'ab.

10. Groups of Taghib, Namir and Iyad from the Gazira hijara to al-Madina, whence they later transferred to Kufa.

11. 'Umar instructed Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas to create a dâr hijra wa-manazil hijad for the Muslims, or a dâr hijra wa-payrawa'awna, or a dâr hijra for the Arabs who were with him. So he went to al-Anbar to make it a dâr al-hijra, then he went to Kuwayt and then to the site on which Kufa was built in 17/638.

12. The poet al-Muhabbal and his son hijara to Basra.

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6 Ibid, below, notes 143-5.
7 'Abd al-Razzâq b. Hammâm al-Sâfâ'î, Mu'ammar, ed. H.-R. al-'Azmî, Beirut 1970-2, vol. v, no. 9426; Ibn Abi Sayba, Kitâb al-mu'mann fi 't-ahdâd wa l-adâd, ed. M.A. al-Nadwî, Bombay 1979-83, vol. xii, nos. 12678, 1406; Abû Arabs joining (or refusing to join) the Muhâjirûn outside Arabia, not of Arabs joining those in Medina, as is clearly partly from the fiscal terminology he employs and partly from the fact that the tradition is also ascribed to 'Umar.
8 In 12/633f Hâlid b. al-Walîd offered the people of Hijra the same rights and duties as the Muslims if they would convert, set up and emigrate (in aslamtum wa-nahdalam wa-hagi'artum).
9 The Arab who killed the Persian Ru'zib in the battle of Husayd in Iraq in 12/633f was one of the Barara: every clan that migrated (haji'at) in its entirety was known as al-Barara, whereas groups that migrated in part were known as al-Hijra, so the Muslims consisted of Hijra and Barara.
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14 The poet al-Muhabbal and his son hijara to Basra.
17 Tabarî, s.r. i. p. 2402.
18 Tabarî, s.r. i. p. 2360.
13. Rabī‘a, the son of al-Namir b. Tawlab, hāšara to Kufa.23
14. When Saqāṭ converted to Islam, she hāšara to Basra.24
15a. Kilāb b. Umayya b. al-Askar al-Laythi hāšara to Medina in the caliphate of Umar according to some; according to others, he had already done so in the time of the Prophet;25 he and his brother subsequently hāšara with Sa‘d b. Abi Waqqas, i.e. to Iraq.26
16. Kurayb b. Abrahah and his brother Abū Šamir hāšara to Egypt in the caliphate of Umar.26a
16. In 17/638 ‘Ali told ‘Umar that Kufa was ʿi l-ḥiğra ha’da ʿi-ḥiğra.27
17. ‘Umar held the best person to be the man endowed with a home, family and property who learns about Islam and who reacts by driving his camels to “one of the abodes of emigration (dār min dār el-ḥiğra)”, where he sells them and spends the money on equipment in the path of God, staying among the Muslims and confronting their enemy.28
18. Tustar reneged on its agreement, so the muḥāġirūn had to conquer it.29
20. The Coptic saint Samuel of Qalāmūn predicted the coming of “this umma who are the muḥāġirūn” and ummat al-ḥiğra al-ṣarābiyya.31

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24 Balāḏurī, Futūḥ, p. 100.
27 Tabarrī, ser. i, p. 2514.
30 Dinawari, Aḥār, p. 141.

21. The Muslims appear as Magaritäi in two Egyptian papyri of 642 and 643.32
22. ‘Umar identified the participants in a campaign against Kurds as muḥāġirūn.33
23. ‘Umar encouraged people to emigrate, saying hāšara wa-lā tahağgar.34
24. ‘Umar spoke of the Muslims as divided into muḥāġirūn, Ansār and bedouin. His muḥāġirūn clearly included emigrants to garrison cities, just those to the Prophet’s Medina: they were “beneath the shades of swords”, they and their families were to be paid their fay in full, and they were not to be kept too long in the field (lā tuغjarān lit).35
25. Isho‘yab refers to the Muslims as Mahgre, in a letter written not later than the mid-640’s.36
26. The Muslims appear as Mahgre, mahgraye in a Syriac account of a religious dispute set in 644.37
27. Of Nu’mān b. ‘Ubadah al-Bakrī we are told that he stayed in Fars, wa-lam yakun ḥaṣara ilā ʿl-Basra. Presumably this means that he had stayed on in Fars in 30/650, when Tawwaj ceased to be a dār ḥiğra and its troops were transferred to Basra.38
28. In 30/650f ʿUṭmān initiated a complex land exchange in favour of Medinese participants in the conquest of Iraq who had decided to stay in Medina instead of making the ḥiḍra to Iraq (min ahl al-Madīna minman aqua wa-lam yakun yuḥażr ila ʿl-Ṭīraj)\textsuperscript{37}.
29. ʿUṭmān referred to the Syrians as muḥāǧirūn in ar-d al-ḥiḍra\textsuperscript{40}.
30. In Kufa in the time of ʿUṭmān al-ʿAṣṭar told an Asadī that "your people only converted because they were forced and only emigrated (ḥaǧara) because they were poor"\textsuperscript{41}.
31. The poet Ḥakīm b. Ḥabība b. Dīrār al-Dabbī likewise told his son that "you have not emigrated for the sake of Paradise, but for the sake of bread and dates"\textsuperscript{42}.
32. The poet Ṭabīb b. Ḥabīb visited the Prophet, converted and returned to his people; then he ḥaǧara to Kufa; after his death in 41/661 his sons returned ila ʿl-bādiya aʿrābah\textsuperscript{43}.
33. At the time of Muʿāwiyah’s accession the population of Mosul and the Ḥazara consisted of Kūfians and Basrans who had abandoned their ḥiḍra, so Muʿāwiyah established the military district of Ḥinnasr in for them (maṣarūḥa wa-ṣamadakhū)\textsuperscript{44}.
34. Muʿāwiyah endowed it over ǧāmiʿat al-muslimūn min al-Anṣār wa ʿl-muḥāǧirūn in the year of his accession according to al-Ǧabīb\textsuperscript{45}. Apparently, there were no Muslims of other kinds (except perhaps bedouins, cf. above, no. 24).
35. The Muslims appear as Mahgrayn in a Syriac colophon dated 63/882\textsuperscript{46}.
36. After the death of Yazīd I in 683, ʿUbaydallāh b. Ziyāḥ tried to ingratiate himself with the Basrans by telling them that he had been born among them and that his father had made his ḥiḍra to them (mā muḥāǧar abī illā ilayhum)\textsuperscript{47}.
37. The Muslims also appear as Mahgrayn in the works of Jacob of Edessa (d. 708) and other Syriac sources of the Umayyad period\textsuperscript{48}.
38. Ṭāqībī in the Jazaʿrā were bedouin; after the battle of Marqū Rābiḥ, when they were feuding with Qays, they contacted their muḥāǧirūn in Azerbayjan\textsuperscript{49}.
39. The bedouin is distinguished from the muḥāǧir in a verse by the Taghibī poet al-Qutadī\textsuperscript{50}.
40. The same distinction is made in a verse by the Ṭāʾī poet Iyās b. Mālik\textsuperscript{51}.
41. Confronted with the Azāriqā at Dūlāb in 65/885, the governor of Basra promised any maṣāḥā who would join him the stipends of an Arab and any bedouin who would join him the stipends of a muḥāǧir\textsuperscript{52}.
42. When al-Haḍāq arrived as governor of Iraq in 75/994, he recited a verse by an anonymous Asadī poet with the line muḥāǧir layya bi-ṭarab\textsuperscript{53}.
43a. The father of the Ḥārīḥīte rebel Ṣahīb b. Yazīd was min muḥā-jīna al-Kifā. He had emigrated from Kufa to Mosul\textsuperscript{54}.
43. A poem in praise of al-Muhallab attributed to Dībīl says that the Basrans, threatened by the Azāriqā, "had decided to move to the bedouin, fearing that they might perish. They almost reached a state of extreme suffering, after nobility and after the ḥiḍra"\textsuperscript{55}. In other words, they had decided to abandon their ḥiḍra to Basra.

\textsuperscript{37} Ibn al-Muḥāṣar, Ḥibād, no. 194 (with parallels in the note there).
\textsuperscript{40} Ibn al-Muḥāṣar, Ḥibād, no. 194 (with parallels in the note there).
\textsuperscript{43} Abī Tammān, Hamasa, ed. G. Freytag, Born 1828-31, p. 792.
\textsuperscript{44} Ibn Saʿd, Tabaqāt, vol. vi, pp. 20f.
\textsuperscript{45} Tahārī, Ṭībīḍa ʿl-banī Umayya' in his Rasā'il, ed. H. al-Sanadībī, Cairo 1933, pp. 293ff.
\textsuperscript{46} W. Wright, Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum, London 1870, p. 92.
\textsuperscript{47} Al-Ǧabīb, al-Bayān wa ʿl-taḥyīn, ed. A.-S.M. Hārūn, Cairo 1960-61, vol. ii, p. 130.
\textsuperscript{48} Cf. the examples in P. Crone and M. Cook, Hagarism, the Making of the Islamic World, Cambridge 1977, pp. 11, 164ff., 173ff., 213ff.
\textsuperscript{49} Agānī, vol. xii, p. 205.
\textsuperscript{50} Al-Qutadī, Dībīl, ed. J. Barth, Leiden 1902, no. IV:25.
\textsuperscript{51} Abī Tammān, Hamasa, ed. G. Freytag, Born 1828-31, p. 792.
\textsuperscript{52} Agānī, vol. viii, p. 417.
\textsuperscript{53} Ḥibād, Bayān, vol. ii, p. 305, top. For other attestations, see Rubin, 'Ḥiḍra and Muḥāǧirān', note 13.
44. In the Greek papyri issued by Qurra b. Šarik al-ʿAbsi, governor of Egypt 709-14 AD, and others, the Muslim soldiers appear as Mēgōgōi and maules/maulai. 52.

45. In a story set between 93/712 and 95/714 Muqāṭil b. Ḥayyān relates how he abandoned his position as judge in Samarrāqand, went to Buhārā and emigrated (ḥiḍrat kardam) from there to Marv. 56.

46. Some Isfahānīs in Basra were said to owe their presence there to conversion and emigration (aslāmī wu-haǧrī) 57.

47. The misdeeds of the Umayyads, according to al-Ḥaǧīb, included their habit of returning (non-Arab) converts to their villages baʿda l-ḥiǧra. 58.

48. In his fiscal edict ʿUmar II declared himself obliged to “open the gate of ḥiǧra for the people of Islam.” He continues: “As for Islam......whoever accepts Islam, whether Christian or Jew or Zoroastrian......and joins himself to the body of Muslims in their abode, and who forsakes the abode wherein he was before, he shall have the same rights and duties as the Muslims. . . . As for emigration (hiɣra), we open it up to whoever may emigrate of the bedouin and who sells his cattle and transfers from his bedouin abode to the abode of emigration (dār al-ḥiɣra), to warfare against our enemy. Whoever does that shall have an equal share with the Mūḥāǧirīn in that which God has given them of booty” 59.

49. Gāhāb, a bedouin poet of the Umayyads period, was told by his wife that “it would be best for you if you were to emigrate (hāǧarata) to Medina, sell your camel and enroll for stipends (ifiyaḍa fi ṣaʿīld)” 60.

50. In 109/727 Asad al-Qaṣrī, the governor of Ḥurāsān, made a speech in which he asked God to take him back to his muḥāǧar and ʿuṣūn, presumably meaning Syria. 61

51. Al-Ḥasan, presumably al-Bayrāq (d. 110/728), held that “the ḥiḍrat of the bedouin (is effected) when they join their diwān”. Al-Ṣaybānī explains that “hiɣra was a duty in the beginning”, and al-Saraqīs adds that “it is part of al-Ḥasan’s doctrine that he did not consider this rule to have been abrogated and that a bedouin who converts must (in his view) inscribe his name in the diwān al-ɣazīt in order to become a muḥāɣir, the purpose of hiɣra being warfare in those days” 62.

52. Bilāl b. Abī Burda al-ʿAṣari, deputy for Ḥālīd al-Qaṣī in Basra until 120/738, reminded a Tamīmī that Ḥira was ṣaʿīld ar-ʿabīya and Basra his dār ʿabīya 63.

53. ‘Umayr b. Hānī al-ʿAnṣ, a member of Yazid III’s Yamaniyya, encouraged people to pay allegiance to Yazid, saying that “there are only two hiɣras, the hiɣra to God and His Messenger and the hiɣra to Yazid” 64.

54. The Fārāḥīd had their homes (maʿāzīl) in Oman and their muḥāɣar in Mosul; the Himam had their homes in Oman and their muḥāɣar in Mosul and Basra, as we are told sub anno 129/746-7 65.

55. Emigrants from the Yemen to Himam are referred to as muḥāɣar, and Syria as their muḥāɣar, in apocalyptic prophecies dating from the Umayyad and early Abbasid periods; here too emigrants are contrasted with bedouin 66.

56. In a letter to Ibrāḥīm b. ʿUbaydallāh al-Ḥaǧāb, governor of the Yemen for Fārūq al-Ṭāfṣū (786-809 AD), the Yemeni writer Bīr b. Abī Kūbār al-Ṭalawī says that “The amīr, may God preserve him, knows how long I have loved and respected him, and that I have emigrated with him (wā-ḥiḍrat māʿahu), and that I am one of those who ‘spent and fought before the victory’” (cf. Qur. 57:9:10), and further that I have not reverted to bedouinism after emigrating (nān lam ʿaʿīrāb baʿda l-ḥiɣra)” 67.


60. Gāhāb, Risalsī fl bānī Umayyā, p. 297.


63. Tāhārī, ser. ii, p. 1498.


The concept of hīghra in these passages conforms to that of the Qurʾān in that it is closely associated with warfare. A dār al-hīghra is a military centre (manzil ghābd, qayrawān, miṣr and fā'ir; cf. nos. 11, 33); and a muḥāḍir is a resident of such a centre, where he is registered as a soldier and receives stipends from the proceeds of the immovable spoils of war known as fay (nos. 5, 17, 24, 41, 48, 51).

Unlike the Qurʾān, the first-century material never envisages hīghra as a response to persecution; and despite the Qurʾānic inclusion of ‘poor Muhāḍirin’ among the recipients of booty bestowed by God on His Messenger (Q. 9:59-61), the stress on the fiscal entitlements of the muḥāḍir is new; so too is the contrast between muḥāḍirin and bedouin (nos. 5, 24, 32, 38-43, 48, 51, 52, 55, 56; cf. also 17, 49) and between the former and mawātī (nos. 41, 44, cf. also 48). But these changes are not problematic.

Such persecutions as the Muslims may have suffered obviously came to an end when they gained the upper hand in Arabia. They continue to emigrate in order to fight holy war, however, and the conquering resulted in the acquisitions of massive tracts of land which might have been distributed among the actual conquerors, but which ‘Umar decided to keep in public ownership as so-called fay’, rewarding the conquerors by paying them stipends out of the tax income instead: the conquerors could then be kept together as soldiers in garrison cities instead of dispersing (and ultimately disappearing) as landlords and peasants among the conquered peoples. This raised questions about precisely who was entitled to a share. In Umayyad practice it is clear that emigration to a garrison city and regular service there were normally required for a stipend, and this view is attributed to ‘Umar too: ‘the fay belongs to the inhabitants of these garrison cities and those who join them, help them and stay among them’, he is reputed to have announced when he instituted the dīwān; ‘he who hurries to hīghra hurries to stipends’, as he is also said to have put it (though he is credited with the alternative view as well). An emigrant thus came to be identified as a person endowed with fiscal rights which bedouin and non-Arabs lacked; for the former had not emigrated and thus could not claim a share in the fay; and though the latter might well have converted and emigrated to a garrison city, they were equally unable to claim a share in the spoils of conquests because they (or their ancestors) had fought on the wrong side: both were accordingly paid less than emigrants for such military services as they might perform (no. 41).

Some would grant non-Arab Muslims the same rights as emigrants (nos. 5, 48), and the distinction between Arab and non-Arab soldiers had largely disappeared by the late Umayyad period, but few seem to have been willing actually to count non-Arab Muslims as emigrants: as Qurra b. Šarık’s papyri distinguish between muḥāḍirin and mawātī (no. 44), so ‘Umar II distinguishes between the hīghra of bedouin and the mere fīṣāq of non-Arab converts (no. 49), while the Prophetic tradition refers to the latter’s emigration as simple tabaunāin (no. 5; contrast the otherwise similar offer to the Arab Hiḥrans in no. 6). By the ninth century, authors such as al-Balâṣīrī and al-Ǧabīrī unselfconsciously thought of non-Arab converts who emigrated to garrison cities as muḥāḍirin (nos. 46, 47); many others must have called their emigration a hīghra too, for in Iran making a hīghra apparently came to mean no more than moving to the provincial capital, while the tenth-century Qaṭī al-Nuṣrānī held every convert to be a muḥāḍir, now in the spiritual sense of someone who has made a mental journey to God and His Prophet. But first-century Muslims apparently saw hīghra as an act which only Arabs could perform. Whether this reflects an allusion, in the word muḥāḍir, to descent from Hagar is a question which need not detain us here.

All the above developments, however, turn on the fact that the concept of hīghra now included emigration to military centres outside Arabia, and the question is how this wider meaning of the term is

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68 Ṭabari, seer. 1, p. 2414.
69 Abū ʿUbayd, Amawal, p. 319, no. 547 (man araʾa sūt al-hīghra araʾa kibī al-ʿatā); Ibn Hanbal, Muqadd, vol. iii, p. 475. 2 up (likewise).
70 ‘Umar held that all Muslims (not just soldiers in garrison cities) were entitled to a share in the fay, except for slaves (Yaḥyā b. ʿĀdām, Kitāb al-ḥarāf, ed. Th. W. Juynboll, Leiden 1896, p. 6; similarly Abū ʿUbayd, Amawal, p. 304, end of no. 529).
71 Cf. the list, no. 45. Muqadd al-b. Ḥayyān was already a muḥāḍir, in so far as non-Arabs could be thus described: he did not go to Marw in order to convert and join the army or other institutions of government, being a Muslim and government employee before he set out.
72 Al-Nuṣrānī b. Muhammad, Dāʾīn al-ʾitīn, ed. A.A. al-Fayyūmī, Cairo 1951-60, vol. ii, no. 1198 (man dīwān fī ʾitīn fāʾsa ṣin fa-ha wa muḥāḍir). Note also that Abū ʿUbayd has no qualms about glossing the ṣamaʿa al-ʾitīn of the Prophetic tradition cited in no. 5 as ṣuḥāfī (Amawal, p. 304, no. 523).
73 Crone and Cook, Ḥagarism, pp. 81. Non-Muslims, on the other hand, had no compunction about labelling converts Maḥgrayn (cf. ibid., p. 160).
to be explained. It is in answer to this question that Madelung proposes reinterpretation by ʿUmar. ʿUmar does indeed figure prominently in the above list; and though the non-classical use of the word is also attested before his caliphate (nos. 1-7), this could (and in several cases clearly must) be dismissed as back-projection. It was ʿUmar who gave orders for the establishment of garrison towns, who decided not to distribute the conquered lands among the conquerors, who set up the diwāns for the payment of stipends and who ruled (or is said to have ruled) that only muhāǧirīn were entitled to a share. It would thus seem reasonable to infer that the very notion of hīḍra to garrison cities was ʿUmar’s brainchild too. But why do we take it for granted that the concept of emigration had to be changed in order to include movement to military centres outside Arabia? Given that ʿUmar and the Prophet were contemporaries, and indeed intimate associates, the presumption must surely be that they operated with the same concept of emigration. This presumption may strike us as odd because we all think of hīḍra (or rather the ‘real’ as opposed to the Ethiopian hīḍra) as a process which began in 622 and came to an end in 630, when Mecca was conquered, or as a single event of 622, so that any hīḍra encountered therefore must be a reinterpretation or re-enchanted of the original idea; but we owe this line of thought to the tradition, not to the Qurʾān. The Qurʾān nowhere states that emigration must go to a particular place, be it in Arabia or elsewhere, in order to count as hīḍra. On the contrary, it seems to suggest the opposite: ‘whoso emigrates in the way of God will find in the earth muqārman kafiran’ (Q. 4:99/101). It does convey the impression that Muhammad had a single centre in Arabia, and we may accept that this centre was Yaʿrib; but since the Qurʾān never reveals its identity, it would be difficult to present Yaʿrib as intrinsic to the Qurʾānic concept of emigration. Nor does the Qurʾān present the duty of hīḍra as finite; on the contrary, hīḍra and holy war are linked with such regularity that one would assume them to stand and fall together. Holy war remained a duty far beyond the lifetime of the Prophet, and we now find that the same is true of hīḍra. Why then assume that ʿUmar reinterpreted the concept? The primum facie reading of the evidence is that he simply continued it.

Here as so often, our perspective is skewed by classical conceptions, for we tacitly accept with our sources that the Prophet’s incomparability places him in a category of his own: hīḍra in his time was one thing, hīḍra thereafter something else. Obviously, if hīḍra in the time of the Prophet was a unique process—Hīḍra with a capital H—then all later emigration must be imitation and/or reinterpretation of the original idea; but what the continued use of the notion of hīḍra suggests is precisely that this view of things is secondary. Like the Qurʾānic concept, that which prevailed in the first century and a half was open-ended: Medina was Muhammad’s abode of emigration, but emigration continued to both this and other abodes of emigration after his death: one could still engage in hīḍra to Medina in the time of ʿUmar and the Umayyads (nos. 15, 49); one could make a hīḍra away from Medina too (nos. 15, 28), to one of the centres outside Arabia (a movement which later authors would describe as mere tahawwul24); and one could abandon one’s hīḍra in any of these centres by engaging in the reprehensible act of taʾarrub baʿda fi hīḍra. One abandoned one’s hīḍra by becoming a bedouin or a peasant as opposed to remaining a soldier wherever one happened to be inscribed25, not just by leaving Medina, for a dār al-hīḍra was simply an armed camp or mobilization centre to which one went to fight the infidels wherever one might be. There is no sense in this material of an original hīḍra with a capital ‘H’ versus an imitative one of less importance. All Arabs in all garrison cities are Muḥāǧirūn, be they in Arabia or elsewhere, and all are unspecifically referred to as such in official documents, poetry, incidental remarks and by their non-Muslim subjects.

If Muhammad operated with a closed concept of hīḍra for eight years and ʿUmar introduced the open-ended version which predominated for the next hundred years, one wonders how the original concept survived: for once all emigrants to garrison cities had come to be known as Muḥāǧirūn, the emigrants to Muhammad’s Medina can hardly have been distinguished from everyone else by that very title, and one would have expected the cheap currency to drive out the expensive variety. By contrast, it is easy to see how the closed concept could have driven out the open-ended one, given that the obligation to live as a Muḥāǧir in a mobilization centre lost relevance in the course of the Umayyad period, whereas

the Qur’anic references to emigrants in Muhammad’s time ensured that the earliest Muhāġirūn would be remembered even if the original use of the term was forgotten. In other words, the open-ended concept must have been the first. What the evidence suggests is not that ‘Umar reinterpreted the concept of hīghta to include emigration to garrison cities, but on the contrary that later generations interpreted it so as to exclude it.

The emergence of the classical concept

If this is correct, how and when did the classical concept emerge? We may start by surveying the material in which the open-ended concept of hīghta is under attack. It falls into three groups.

First, numerous traditions present Muhammad as exempting individuals and tribal groups from the duty of hīghta, or abolishing it altogether, before the conquest of Mecca, or without reference to it. Thus he allowed Salāma b. al-Akwa’ al-Aṣāmilī to live in the desert when he asked for permission to do so76; alternatively, he exempted the entire bedouin section of the Aslama from the duty of emigration in a letter stating that “they are Muhāġirūn wherever they are”77; or he exempted the Aslama emigrants in Medina, saying “inhabit the ravines/dwell in the desert, O Aslama . . . you are Muhāġirūn wherever you are”78. Ibn ‘Umar held Aslama to be the


77 Thus according to Salama b. al-Akwa’, who invoked the Prophet’s collective exemption of Aslama when he was accused of ittehad ‘an al-hīghta by Buraydā b. al-Ḥašib al-Aṣāmilī and whose version presents the Aslama as emigrants in Medina by making them express fear of committing that very sin (Abū ʿUbayd, Amūṣi, p. 314, no. 539; Ibn Hanbal, Musnad, vol. iii, pp. 361ff; iv, 55.5, Hayyam, Muṣfāṣ al-zāwa’id, vol. v, pp. 2330). According to other versions, Salama merely invoked his personal dispensation when he was accused of undoing his hīghta (see the references given below, note 114; the accuser is here al-Haqqū). and still others have it that he only left Medina when ‘Uthmān was killed, not in the time of the Prophet (al-Buḫairī, al-Sāḥī, ed. L. Kreī̇l and T.W. Juyubbow, Leiden 1867-1908, vol. iv, p. 373.


84 Ibn Sa’d, Tabaqat, vol. i/2, p. 42 = Wellhausen, Skizzen, vol. iv, p. 140, no. 79, where the names are corrupt. Al-Damād and Gāzān were places between Yemen and Mecca (Yāqūt, Muṣjam al-buldān, ed. F. Wüstenfeld, Leipzig 1866-73, s.vv, citing the ʿAbī tradition s.v. “al-Damād”).

85 Yahyā b. ʿAbd, Ḥorārī, p. 59.

86 Yāqūt, Buḍūn, s.v. “al-Damād”.


88 Rubin, “Ḥīghta”, note 109, citing Muṣfāṣ al-zāwa’id, vol. v, p. 254, and other sources. only Muslims to be allowed to live in the desert, but the classical tradition knows of many more. Thus the Prophet is said to have written to B. ʿAmr of Ḥuḍayr that “I give those of you who emigrate the same rights as I have myself, even if they emigrate in their own land”80. When four hundred men of Muzayyina came to Medina in 5/626, the Prophet ʿuṣūla rahman al-hīghta ḍārīḥā, telling them that “you are Muhāġirūn wherever you are”81. Three ʿAbīs had heard from their quara that one could not be a Muslim without emigrating (lā inā ilā man lā hīghta lahu), but the Prophet assured them that this was not so: “fear God wherever you are; God would not deprive you of your right of your deeds (cf. Qur. 32:20/21) even if you lived in al-Damād and Gāzān”82. A man desirous of ḍārīḥ and hīghta, but endowed with property that needed his presence, was similarly reassured that God would not deprive him of ought of his deeds even if he lived in al-Damād and Gāzān83, while another was told that it would not harm him to live in the vicinity of al-Damād of Gāzān. A certain Fudayk had heard that he who does not emigrate will perish (man lam yuḥāgra ḍāraka), but the Prophet told him to pray, pay zakāt, shun evil and to live among his people wherever he wanted84. ʿAbīs b. Asid al-Sulāmi fell ill in Medina, but did not want to leave for a more salubrious place because he did not want to undo his hīghta, but the Prophet told him to go, “for you are a Muhāġir wherever you are”85. Others were exempted from the duty of emigration to Medina by swearing allegiance to Muhammad on ḍārīḥ al-buḍūn/al-ḥudūd or ḍārīḥ al-rāsiḥiya, as
opposed to ħİĞRAT al-ba发动al-ba发动 or ba发动at al-ḤİĞRAT\(^9\). Some bedouin were positively advised by the Prophet to stay by their camels on the grounds that one could do good works "even across the seas"\(^8\). There was no duty to emigrate physically at all: "If you perform the prayer and pay the alms, you are a Muḥājir even if you die in al-Ḥaḍarāl-Ḥaḍrama-al-Ḥadramawt\(^{10}\), an anonymous bedouin was told\(^8\); "the earth is God's and the worshippers are God's, so wherever one of you finds it good to live, there let him fear God and stay\(^{11}\), the Prophet said on another occasion\(^9\). A muḥājir was not someone who emigrated physically, but rather someone who shunned what God has forbidden, as several Prophetic traditions inform us, invoking the root meaning of ḤIĞRA\(^9\), or someone who abandoned polytheism (i.e. a convert)\(^9\). Just as the best gihād is prayer, so shunning sins is the best ħIĞRA\(^9\). On ħIĞRA is a morally neutral act which acquires its meaning from intention: for just as the emigrant may turn to God and his Apostle, so he may turn to things of this world, depending on what his niṣ灯火 is\(^9\).

Secondly, a number of traditions tell us that the Prophet formally abolished the duty of ħIĞRA when he conquered Mecca, or that the duty came to an end when he died\(^9\). The former idea is by far the best attested. "Stay in your residences, for the duty of ħIĞRA has come to an end; but gihād and intention continue", he proclaimed on the conquest of Mecca according to one version\(^9\). "There is no ħIĞRA after the conquest (of Mecca), only gihād and intention\(^{11},\) as the classical lā ħIĞRA tradition has him say\(^9\). Practically all versions are careful to point out that holy war continues, and many add that people should respond when they are called up. Other traditions show us the new dispensation in action. Thus Muğābī\(^2\) b. Mas'ūd al-Sulāmi told the Prophet that he and his brother (or nephew) wished to pay him allegiance ʿalā l-ḤIĞRA, to which the Prophet replied that there was no ħIĞRA any more, but that they could swear allegiance on Islam and holy war\(^9\). Murra b. Waḥb al-Ṭaqāfī and his son Yaḥya received much the same reply\(^9\). Saʿwān b. Umayya and other Meccans who wished to emigrate to Medina after the conquest returned to Mecca because the ħIĞRA had been closed\(^9\). And when Muğāhid wished to emigrate to Syria, Ibn ʿUmar replied that "there is no ħIĞRA (any more), but there is gihād, so go and offer yourself", assuring him that he was free to return if he wished\(^9\).

Thirdly, a small number of counter-traditions argue against the above material by having the Prophet declare that "the duty of


\(^{88}\) Abū Dāwūd, Sunna, vol. iii, no. 2477; Nasāʾī, Sunna, vol. vii, p. 144 and the commentaries thereto; other references in Rubin, ʿḤIĞRA\(^{11}\), note 117.

\(^{89}\) Ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad, ed. ʿĀbir, vol. xi, no. 6890; vol. xii, no. 7055; Hayyānī, Muḥājir al-zawād`i, ed. ʿĀbir, v. v. 235; Rubin, ʿḤIĞRA\(^{11}\), note 122, with yet another reference.

\(^{90}\) Hayyānī, Muḥājir al-zawād`i, ed. ʿĀbir, v. v. 255, middle (first noted by Rubin).

\(^{91}\) Ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad, ed. ʿĀbir, vol. x, no. 6515; vol. xi, no. 6806, 6814, 6925, 7017, etc. (see the subject index s.v. ʿal-ḤIĞRA\(^{11}\)); vol. xii, no. 7086; Abū Dāwūd, Sunna, vol. iii, no. 2591; al-Taḥāwī, Maṣāḥih al-ṣaḥīḥ, Hyderābād 1335, vol. iii, no. 2591 (who also invokes ʿAbdāl, cf. above, note 85); Rubin, ʿḤIĞRA\(^{11}\), note 125, 125, citing other sources.

\(^{92}\) Nasāʾī, Sunna, vol. vii, p. 144f, where both ʿUmar and Abū Bakr on the one hand and the Ansār on the other are muḥājirīn in this sense; compare above, note 72.

\(^{93}\) Ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad, ed. ʿĀbir, vol. vii, no. 6947; vol. vii, no. 6792, 6813 (all of which proceed to discuss ħIĞRA in the literal sense); Ibn Ḥaḍār, Ḥaḍār, vol. iv, p. 832, s.v. ʿUmm Anas zawād` Abī Anas`.

\(^{94}\) Ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad, ed. ʿĀbir, vol. i, no. 168; Buḥārī, Sunna, vol. iii, p. 35.
hi破损 will not come to an end as long as infidels are fought. It will not come to an end until repentance does, and repentance will not come to an end until the sun rises in the west’. Muḥammad cites him as saying.

Group 1

What then can we make of this material? Modern scholars generally accept the traditions of group 1, or some of them, at face value and infer that Muḥammad relaxed and eventually abolished the duty of hijra because Medina was becoming overcrowded: ‘There seems to have been...a definite policy of requiring Muslims to be—or to become—settled people. As the number of converts from nomadic groups rose, however, this policy became increasingly difficult to implement’, Donner says. ‘As the conversions to Islam increased throughout Arabia, the duty of emigration to Medina no doubt became more and more unrealistic and was, if not formally abolished as the Meccan and Medinese traditions affirmed, left in abeyance’, as Madelung puts it. But this interpretation is difficult to accept.

In the first place, is there not something implausible about the idea that the Prophet should have abandoned the duty of hijra because Medina was filling up? If one abode of emigration was getting overcrowded, the obvious response would surely have been to set up another. When the bedouin of twentieth-century Arabia were fired by the idea of settling as holy warriors, they established a plurality of hijra, not just a single one, and the Muslims of seventh-century Arabia can hardly have been so witless as to abandon a policy of sedentarization and/or recruitment on the unsurprising discovery that not all the inhabitants of Arabia could be accommodated in a single town. If recruits continued to be needed, as they clearly did, one would have expected new abodes of hijra to be established, and so indeed they were. It merely so happens that the new dīr al-hijra (cf. above, no. 17) were established by caliphs rather than the Prophet, in Syria, Iraq, Egypt and Iran rather than in Arabia, and that this causes us automatically to classify the new foundations as wholly different from the first. But we should not see early Islamic history through classical eyes.

In the second place, the material is inconsistent, and moreover so didactic in tone as to leave no doubt that it is using history to make doctrinal points. Many traditions, for example, go out of their way to get their message across by first having the bedouin expound the view to be refuted, whereupon the Prophet explains the true position; ‘Our qurā’ say that there is no Islam for whoever does not emigrate’, ‘Oh Messenger of God, we are afraid of apostatizing after having emigrated’.

Oh Messenger of God, where should I make the hijra? To you wherever I am, or to a particular land or a particular people? And will it be cut off when you

169. In Donner’s view, the policy of sedentarization was not abandoned; rather, the bedouin were allowed to settle in their own land instead of Medina, this being the meaning of hijra fi dār dhim (Conquests, pp. 79f). But the traditions make it abundantly clear that bedouin who were allowed to ‘emigrate in their own homes’ were thereby allowed to remain bedouin.

170. Cf. the information on Aslam. If the entire tribe, or its bedouin members, had been granted status as emigrants regardless of their whereabouts, why did Salama need personal permission to live in the desert? And if he only left when Ubayyid was killed, how can he have asked for permission to leave in the days of the Prophet? (Cf. above, notes 76-8) Rubin’s answer to the first question is that Salama represents Aslam at large in the story of his individual permission (‘Hijra’, note 104); but the formulation does not suggest as much and the contexts do not tally: the letter in which the Prophet exempts all bedouin Aslamis from the duty to emigrate is addressed to Aslam in their own land, whereas Salama depicts the Aslam who received collective dispensation as emigrants in Medina. If moreover all Aslam, or their bedouin members, had been dispensed from the duty to emigrate one way or the other, how could an eminent Aslam Companion such as Burayyid b. al-Hasib be unaware of it? (Cf. above, note 78). If Burayyid was unaware of it, how can the Prophet have issued the dispensation in his presence? (Cf. above, note 77)? And if all and sundry individuals and tribes had received dispensation too, how could Ibn Umar think that Aslam were unique (note 79)?
die?" 110, the bedouin ever so innocently ask, whereupon the Prophet explains that they can be emigrants wherever they are. The traditions of group 2 and 3 also take that form at times: "Oh Messenger of God, they say that only emigrants will enter Paradise", 1 Sa'd b. Umayya asks, to be reassured by the Prophet that there is no ḥi žra after the face; "Oh Messenger of God... they claim that ḥi žra has come to an end", a Sa'di says, to be reassured by the Prophet that ḥi žra will continue as long as infidels are fought. 111 The material clearly reflects a debate, not developments in the thought of an individual.

In the third place, the traditions are dominated by the dichotomy between emigrants and bedouin which was commonplace in the Umayyad period, but hardly in Muhammad's time. The Qurʾān does of course denounce the bedouin as fickle, but not with reference to their unwillingness to emigrate, which it does not mention at all, 112 and though it prohibits social relations (waṣāya) with those who have not emigrated (Q. 8:71/72; cf. 4:88/91), it neither says nor implies that non-emigrants were bedouin, as opposed to settled Arabs or a mixture of both.

In historical fact, Muhammad must have been as eager to recruit settled people as bedouin, or more so, and settled Arabs can hardly have found it any easier to emigrate than bedouin, tied as they were to their land. One would accordingly have expected the tradition to pay much attention to their problems, but it does not. It knows of a settled Arab who sold his land in order to emigrate to Medina, 113 and it assures another (clearly as pars pro toto) that emigration was not necessary for salvation, 114; but for the most part it simply allows settled groups to stay where they were by having the Prophet write them letters in which the duty of ḥi żra is tacitly replaced by that of separation from infidels (fī ṣāf al-muṣūrīkīn), or in which neither separation nor emigration is mentioned at all, so that one is in danger of forgetting that the duty of emigration had ever applied to settled people. 115 By contrast, the tradition offers an abundance of stories about bedouin making the ḥi žra to Medina, their dislike of being there, their merit in having come, their assuredness in going back, their permission to go back, their exemption from the duty to come and so on, as if ḥi žra invariably involved a transition from bedouin to urban life. 116 It is for this reason that Donner interprets the duty of ḥi žra in the Prophet's time as a duty to settle, 117, a view that Rubin is close to espousing too; 118 but it seems more natural to infer that the material reflects later conditions.

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110 Ibn Hanbal, Musnad, ed. Ǧābirī, vol. vi, no. 6890; vol. xii, no. 7093; Ḥayyānī, Mağūs al-muṣūrīkīn, vol. v, pp. 252f. Ǧābirī reads the second question بَايَا خَالِدَة, "to you wherever you [Muhammad] are"; whereas Rubin translates "wherever I am"; since the answer is that people are emigrants unto God and His Messenger wherever they are, Rubin's reading seems preferable. Ǧābirī reads the final question ʾiḥā muṣāma ḥi žra, "will it come to an end when you die?", whereas Rubin translates "will it be annulled when I die?"; and here it is Ǧābirī's version that must be right (cf. above, note 105). In other words, the tradition affirms that the duty of ḥi žra will go on forever, but only in a spiritual sense.

111 Ḥusaynī, Sunan, vol. vii, pp. 146.1 and ult.; also 147.4; cf. above, note 102.

112 Pee MacDowell, "Ḥi žra", pp. 229f.


114 Yāḥya b. Adham, above, note 93.

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115 Cf. Ibn Saʿd, Taḥāqīf, vol. 1/2, pp. 155ff = Wellhausen, Šīrīzī, vol. iv, pp. 97ff. That many of these letters were addressed to wholly or partly settled tribes is clear from the nature of the property they discuss. Not one requires the recipients to emigrate. One explicitly exempts them from the duty of ḥi žra (cf. above, note 80), while another exempts their bedouin section without imposing it on their settled members (Aṣālim, cf. above, note 77). The rest either require the recipients to separate from infidels (vol. 1/2, pp. 21-3, 23, 30 - pp. 107, 109-12, 114, 128; Ṣaʿīd b. al-Fārābī al-muṣūrīkīn, at p. 22 - 109) or else make no mention of separation or emigration at all. It is not clear whether the ḥi žra is to be envisaged as actual departure or as mere termination of friendly relations with infidels. Rubin interprets it as actual departure ("Ḥi žra", section B, 3), but those who are to engage in it are often confirmed in their possession of their lands and wells and merely required to hand over a fifth of their booty, pay ḥi žra (on their animals) or ḥi žra (on their crops), keep the roads safe and so on. One would not have inferred that they left.


117 Donner, Companions, p. 79. For arguments against this interpretation, see the review by W. Landau-Tanenbaum in Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam 6 (1985), pp. 501ff (add Hayyānī, Mağūs al-muṣūrīkīn, vol. v, p. 255.4 where ʿAbbās identifies the emigrants of Muhammad's time as al-ḥi žra). Ibn Ḥalqām goes to the other extreme when he claims that bedouin were not required to emigrate at all in the Prophet's time (cited in MacDowell, "Ḥi žra", pp. 225f).

118 Rubin, "Ḥi žra", section A, argues that the original meaning was "transfer to a town", with reference to ḥi žra in the sense of town and lexicographical material. But though one would agree with him that there is more to the concept than the severance of ties, the lexicographers simply reproduce the distinction between bedouin and muṣūrīkīn current in the Umayyad period; and though ḥi žra in the sense of town (attested in the South Arabian epigraphical material and in the name of al-Ḥi žra) could be relevant, both Qūṣīr and Ḥanfī suggest that the additional meaning had more to do with getting together for war than with sedentarization as such.
Whereas the Qurʾānic never contrasts bedouin with emigrants, the Umayyad material regularly does, as has been seen. Possibly, settled Arabs who had stuck to their homes were less conspicuous from the vantage point of the new garrison towns, or less desirable as soldiers, than were bedouin. In any case, settled Arabs who stayed put were now classified as bedouin themselves, in so far as they attracted attention: thus the Hira and the Meccans, for example. It was the bedouin who had become the paradigmatic shirkers. Hence it was also to them that the Qurʾānic prohibition of ivalīya with non-emigrants was taken to refer; and since the prohibition implied that emigration was necessary for membership of the umma, bedouinism was widely regarded as tantamount to infidelity: ‘Umar II treated bedouin and non-Muslims as close to identical (above, no. 46); al-Hasan al-Baṣrī equated the hijra of bedouin with their conversion (above, no. 51); al-Haḍah and others regarded ḍa‘ūrīb bīda‘ l-hijra as tantamount to apostasy, or as a grave sin; and the frequency with which Prophetic traditions deny that non-emigrants were excluded from salvation shows that they were widely regarded as doomed to perdition.

All this had changed by early ‘Abbāsid times, however. Practically all jurists now accepted the bedouin as full members of the umma; and though some continued to deny them a share in the law (except in so far as they qualified under Q. 59:7/8), the majority granted them that right as well, on the grounds that the duty of hijra had been abolished and that all Muslims were now muḥāqirūn in the sense of believers regardless of their whereabouts: it was in support of this view that the traditions of groups 1 and 2 were

119 As Madelung notes (‘Hijra’, p. 230).
120 Al-Haḍah (or Buraydah) accused Salama b. al-Akwa of irridad on al-hijra (below, note 145; cf. ala Aṣim, ‘Land Property and jihāda’, pp. 2790). Compare Abu ‘Ubayd, Amwāl, pp. 324f.; na. 558, where a general of the early conquests implicitly excludes bedouin from the jum‘a. Naturally, the view that those who turned bedouin after emigration were apostates is ascribed to the Prophet himself (Ibn Hanbal, Musnad, ed. Śākir, vol. v, no. 3881; vol. vi, nos. 4090, 4426).
121 Abu ‘Ubayd, Amwāl, pp. 112f., 303, nos. 203, 530. In the story of al-Nahiy, ‘Umayr merely identifies it as mabkhāb (below, note 144).
122 The proof text was the Prophetic tradition on ‘abū al-muḥāqirūn, which endorses the Muslim status of the bedouin but denies them a share in the jum‘a (cf. the list above, no 5; Yahyā b. ʿAbd, Ḥadā‘, pp. 5f; Abu ‘Ubayd, Amwāl, pp. 933-6).

adduced. It does not seem likely that this wholehearted endorsement of the bedouin’s status as full members of the umma should have been accomplished in the time of Muhammad, reversed under the Umayyads and then accomplished again by the classical scholars. The developmental scheme is familiar enough, of course, but it seems more economical to assume that the Prophet traditions reflect the debate of the scholars themselves. Some take the duty of hijra for granted and merely exempt individuals or groups from it while others abolish the duty itself, but all tell us that membership of the umma does not depend on whereabouts. All, in short, are evidence for the process whereby the post-conquest distinction between emigrants and bedouin was effaced and eventually rejected.

Group 2

The message of the material of group 2 is to some extent identical with that of group 1: faith is not dependent on whereabouts; given that hijra does not exist any more, all believers, including bedouin, enjoy the same position and are all entitled to a share in the jum‘a. But whereas the traditions of group 1 abolish the duty of hijra by elevating all Muslims to the status of Muḥāqirūn in a metaphorical sense, those of group 2 terminate it at a specific point in time, so that the historical stump of the literal duty remains: and it is this stump which is hijra in the classical sense of the word. The cut-off point is usually identified as al-jafth, which some scholars took to be the events of al-Hudaybiyya, but which was classically understood as the conquest of Mecca; and in its classical interpretation the material has as much to say about Mecca as it does about emigration, a point to which I shall come back.

Unlike the traditions of group 1, those of group 2 are not normally taken at face value by modern scholars. In Madelung’s reconstruction, for example, the duty to emigrate falls into abeyance first in the Prophet’s time in response to overcrowding in Medina, reflected in group 1, and next under the early ‘Abbāsids.

in response to long-term developments, reflected in group 2. Though one can dispute his interpretation of group 1, Madelung is undoubtedly right as far as group 2 is concerned. Indeed, the long-term developments account very well for all of the material.

In the course of the Umayyad period, residence in a garrison city ceased to be synonymous with military service; the payment of stipends was gradually restricted to professional soldiers and other public servants, while the bulk of Muslims took to making a living on their own. Under those circumstances it obviously ceased to make sense that people should be obliged to live in garrison cities. Why should their status as members of the umma be doubtful merely because they lived in the desert or in villages? Why should they be branded as backsliders or even apostates if they took to earning their keep as pastoralists or peasants? One could worship God and shun evil wherever one was. The institution of hijra remained alive as long as the Umayyads recruited bedouin soldiers, and the Syrians defended it longer than anyone else; but it cannot have retained much significance when the Abbasids replaced the Syrian armies with Ḥarārisīī troops, and it must have been then that the "Hijāzī position that the duty of hijra had been abolished by the Prophet after the conquest ... sound backing by consensus", as Madelung says. This accords with the fact that the open-ended concept of hijra is densely attested from the conquests to the 720s, but practically gone by c. 800, except in connection with non-Arab converts.

But Madelung's position is not as clear-cut as one might like. Although it is in the Abbasid period that he finds a context for the classical ḫāṣalā tradition, he assumes it to have been in circulation for so long before it won general acceptance that for practical purposes he equips it with the usual history of origin in the earliest times, suspension under the Umayyads and restoration under the Abbasids: thus he implies that it was known to Muḥṣīwīya, who supposedly disliked it; and he treats it as familiar to 'Umar II, who "did not accept" this tradition, as he puts it. But Muḥṣīwīya's appearance as the transmitter of one of the counter-traditions does not of course mean that moves were afoot for the closure of hijra

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127 Cf. Cook, Dogma, p. 101 and note 127 thereto; below, note 130.
130 It shows that there was resistance to the abolition of hijra in circles apt to invoke the Umayyads as their authorities, clearly Syrians (cf. Cook, Dogma, p. 202, note 127, where Marwān is also invoked).
131 Cf. the list above, no. 51 (al-Ḥasan "did not consider this rule to have been abrogated"); al-Ṭabarānī, Maqālī āl-bayyān li-ṣūlim al-qur'ān, ed. H. al-Rasūl al-Mahallātī, Tehran n.d., vol. i, pp. 166, 167; al-Ṭustāfī, li-tīyān fi tīqīr al-qur'ān, ed. A.S. al-Amīn and A.H. Qasīr, Majallāt, Naqṣ 1957-63, vol. v, p. 166, both ad 8:74; 75f (al-Ḥasan said that "the hijra of the bedouin to cities will continue until the Day of Resurrection").
135 Sālim, Sīna, p. 175; Cook, Dogma, p. 17, 100ff.
136 Al-Afšārī, Maqālī, p. 255.
the Ḥārāqītes themselves saw ḥiṣra and ḍīḥād as ongoing duties. Like their opponents, they identified emigration to a military centre as indispensable for Muslim status and took the Qur’ānic prohibition of waqlāya with non-emigrants to exclude social relations with bedouin, from whom they duly dissociated even when the latter shared their views; and unlike later heretics, they did not appoint näqib or dāʿīs in their abodes of emigration, or call their followers anṣār: their concept of ḥiṣra was Qur’ānic, not inspired by the Sira. When the Azāraqī attacked Basra, the Basrans feared having to abandon their ḥiṣra by leaving Basra (above, no. 43), whereas the Azāraqī refused to acknowledge Basra as a dār al-ḥiṣra and enjoined emigration to their own camp instead: the concept of emigration was the same on the two sides of the fence. The first evidence for actual re-enactment of the Prophet’s ḥiṣra seems to be furnished by the Hāšimiyah in Ḥūrsan, who called Marw (or Ḥūrsan at large) their dār al-ḥiṣra, appointed dāʿīs and nøqib, and eventually elevated their followers to the status of anṣār (al-daʿwātal-dawla). It seems gratuitous to assume that the closed concept of ḥiṣra had been present from the start when it is only in the transitional period between the two dynasties that we begin to see it.

Group 3

The traditions of group 3 defend the open concept of ḥiṣra, and all are Syrian; it is because Muʿāwiyah was an authority to the Syrians that he appears as the transmitter of one of them. They take it for granted that ḥiṣra and ḍīḥād are related activities and assert that both will continue for ever, which agrees with the fact that when the generality of Muslim lawyers declared ḍīḥād to be a fard kifāya, the Syrians took the dissenting view that it was a fard sān, every Muslim being individually obliged to engage in holy war according to them. The Syrians were so preoccupied with ḍīḥād that they did not know much about anything else, as Mālik is supposed to have told al-Mansūr, but their attempt to salvage the open-ended concept of ḥiṣra was not successful.

The fate of the pre-classical material

It is the traditions of group 2, and above all the classical la ḥiṣra tradition, which lie behind all conventional accounts of the development of the concept of ḥiṣra, be they Muslim or Islamicist: all take it for granted that ḥiṣra in the original sense of the word came to an end in the lifetime of the Prophet. The classical position is neatly illustrated by al-Mawardi, who unconsciously crams a whole century’s development into the Prophet’s life. "The word ḥiṣra only applies to those who emigrated from their home to Medina in search of Islam", he says, forgetting the muḥājirūn to garrison cities or perhaps dismissing them as pale reflections of the genuine article. "Every tribe that emigrated in its entirety was called al-Bara'ar, while those which emigrated in part were known as al-Ḥiyar", he continues, automatically taking Sā‘īd’s information on Muḥājirūn in Ābū Bakr’s Iraq to relate to those in Muhammad’s Medina (cf. above, no. 7). "After the conquest (of Mecca) the duty of ḥiṣra ceased to apply, and the Muslims now came to include both Muḥājirūn and bedouin", he adds, innocently forgetting that the bedouin still had not come to be accepted as full members of the umma by Umayyad times. "In the time of the Prophet the people of yadāya were known as bedouin while the people of jayy were known as Muḥājirūn", he concludes, adding the verse muḥājir laya bi-ʿarabi cited by al-Ḥaqqāq in illustration (cf. no. 42) on the automatic assumption that the anonymous poet quoted by al-Ḥaqqāq was a contemporary of the Prophet.

137 This is clear from their very name, which is a self-designation derived from Q. 4: 99/101 (wa-maṣṣaṣ bi-waṣṣaṣ min biṣṣaṣ bi-muḥājirūn tālā lālah). Cf. R.E. Brünnh, Die Chartierkarten unter den ersten Omajjaden, Leiden 1984, pp. 280. Compare also the story of how al-Muhallab sowed dissension among the Azaqais (Mubarrad, Kamīl, vol. iii, p. 1040): he asked them about the fate of two men who went muḥājīrīn lāzīkum, one of them dying on the way and the other managing to arrive, only to fail his maḥāna. This sowed dissension because neither man had passed his exam, but Q. 4: 99/101 promises those who go out muḥājīran tālā lālah wa-nāṣāliḥi their reward even if they die on the way. The Azaqais evidently took the Qur’ānic injunction to emigrate to be addressed to themselves, not just to past believers whose obligation had been abolished on the conquest of Mecca.

138 Sīlis, Sira, p. 173; cf. Cook, Degas, p. 96 (where this is puzzling).


140 Cf. above, notes 127, 130.

141 Van Es, Theologie und Gesellschaft, vol. i, p. 68.

A whole century's development is likewise crammed into the lifetime of the Prophet when the classical texts illustrate the reprehensible act of ta'rurah ba'da 'l-hijra with exclusive reference to departures from the Prophet's Medina, though here some asymmetries survived: for it is not clear why Abū Darr should have accused 'Ummān of returning him to bedouinism by exiling him to al-Rabāda if the Prophet had declared that one could now be a muhājirūn "even in the ravines"\(^{143}\), or why al-Nābiya should have needed 'Ummān's permission to leave Medina for the desert if the duty of hijra had been abolished\(^{144}\), let alone how al-Hāshābī could accuse Salama b. Akwa' of irtidad 'an al-hijra some eighty years after the abolition of hijra had supposedly been effected\(^{145}\).

Asymmetries also survived in the form of all the passages on hijra in its open-ended sense collected in the above list. They do not seem to have been a source of anguish, presumably because they were taken to refer to hijra of a lesser and imitative kind: they were about al-hijra ba'da 'l-hijra, 'the emigration after (the real) hijra', as 'Ali called it (above, no. 16), carefully making the distinction between hijra in the Prophet's time and thereafter which Madelung has now reaffirmed. Several types of hijra were known to later scholars too, for though all accepted that the historical emigration from Mecca to Medina had come to an end, they obviously did not think that hijra in the spiritual sense of turning to God or shunning evil had been terminated\(^{146}\), and many held that physical emigration continued to be a duty on Muslims who fell under infidel rule. In favour of these views they would adduce the counter-traditions of group 5\(^{147}\). Historically, the counter-traditions of group 3 were out to preserve hijra as a duty to emigrate physically for service under legitimate rulers, not as a spiritual journey or as a flight from infidels: what they defended was movement in support of caliphs who represented God's cause, so that joining them was both a physical journey and a spiritual hijra ila allāh wa-rasūlīhi, as it had been in the Prophet's time. It was in this vein that 'Umār b. Hānr could speak of a hijra to God and his Messenger and a hijra to Yazid III (above, no. 53). But Bish b. Abī Kuhār al-Balāwī, writing about 800, is the last author to whom this concept of hijra is alive (above, no. 56).

The meaning of the reinterpretation

The open-ended concept of hijra is one of the rare Islamic notions of which we can unequivocally say that they take us back to the beginnings. It encapsulates the fact that Islamic history started with a great departure: to come to live one's home in order to fight for the cause; salvation lay in going forth for heroic ventures and a new world ahead, not in patiently staying by one's fields or camels. Hijra as originally understood was nothing if not a concept of mobilization. By the same token its lifespan was limited, for it is only at the beginning of a revolution that salvation lies in going forth: one cannot sit on bayonets, as Napoleon is reputed to have said. Muslim society could not remain a camp for ever, however attached the Syrians might be to the idea. Once the new world had been established, the Auffbruchstimmung of the early days gave way to the settled mentality of the classical pattern, and the open-ended concept of hijra had to be closed.\(^{148}\)

The first-century concept of hijra thus evokes a bygone era, and this is perhaps where its main interest lies. But there are also other things of interest to be learnt from its demise. The fact that the Muslims had to divest themselves of the open concept of hijra does not explain why they put its end where they did. They might have linked its abolition to the first civil war, for example, or to the waning of the great conquests: the latter would have been historically correct. But given that the Muslims liked to have the Prophet's own verdict on all questions of classical concern, it is not surprising that

\(^{143}\) Balâdūrī, Ansāb, vol. v, p. 59; cf. Athāamina, 'Alī and Muḥammad, pp. 11f.

\(^{144}\) Ağā, vol. v, p. 10.


\(^{146}\) Tahāwī, for example, calls the spiritual hijra, or hijrat al-'aṣū, 'the second hijra', explaining that it does not require departure from one's home and that it is the hijra which continues after the conquest of Mecca (Maṣṣīlī, vol. iii, p. 260).


\(^{148}\) I owe both the thought in this paragraph and the term Auffbruchstimmung to Fritz Zimmermann, whose comments on the first draft of this article made the point more vividly than I have been able to do.
they made him abolish the duty of hijra in person, be it at unspecified times or on the fath, or by dying. But why did the view that he abolished it on the conquest of Mecca win universal acceptance?

The answer presumably lies in the fact that it could be used to make at least three important statements about Mecca. First, by identifying the conquest of Mecca as the cut-off point, the tradition singles out the conquest of Mecca as the culmination of Muhammad’s career: the one and only purpose of emigration had been the fath; though there were to be many fath thereafter, they were of a different and lesser order, for one could no longer gain the status of muhajir by enlisting for holy war, be it in Medina (as the Islamics and others learnt) or in Syria (as Mu'adh was told). “The cancelling of the implementation of the hijra principle after the conquest of Makka … reinforced the belief that hijra was originally designed to strengthen the Muslim community in al-Madīnah, so as to increase the military potential of the Muslims in order to use it against Makka” as Athamina puts it149. The message is that the Prophet’s interest was focused on Mecca, the central shrine of Islam, not on conquests outside Arabia150.

Secondly, the tradition could be used to highlight the Meccan identity of Muhammad’s supporters. “There is no hijra today”, ʿAʾṣā explains with reference to the conquest of Mecca; “the believer used to flee (ṣaffiru) with his religion to God and His Messenger lest he be persecuted for it (ṣufri ʿalaHi); but as for today, God has made Islam victorious, so the believer can worship God wherever he wants; but ghād and samna (continue)”151. Here emigration is explicitly identified as flight, clearly on the basis of the Qurʾanic passages on persecution, and the possibility of hijra from places other than Mecca is implicitly denied, for the persecution is envisaged as a purely Meccan phenomenon to which the fath has now put an end. The fact that numerous converts emigrated to Medina from places other than Mecca, and that Mecca would hardly have been conquered if this had not been the case, is quietly ignored. That Muhammad’s hijra was a flight from persecution is a commonplace view in the literature, and it is of course also as such that hijra is envisaged in the enigmatic story of the emigration to Ethiopia, in which its link with ghād has wholly disappeared and the emigrants are Meccans pure and simple.

Thirdly, the lā hijra tradition could be used to absolve the Meccans from the stigma of living in the city the Prophet had left, as Cook and Rubin point out with reference to stories in which Qurašīs opt for continued residence in Mecca with the Prophet’s blessing, having learnt that the duty of hijra had come to an end152. But there was more than Meccan honour to the issue.

Being non-emigrants, the Meccans were regarded as bedouin, with whom one should not intermarry153 and whose ability to achieve salvation was in doubt, as we learn from the traditions on ʿAlī155, in which muhajirun should spend no more than three days after completing their pilgrimage according to ʿAlī155, in which ʿAlī says “don’t marry the people of Mecca, they are bedouin”154. Above, note 100, and Ibn Hambal, Musnad, vol. iv, pp. 82, 83, 14, 85, 2; Hayyami, Madina’i-al-zawā'id, vol. ii, p. 232, 7 up, on ʿUbayd b. Muʾāsim.

149 Athamina, “ʿArāb and Muhājirun”, pp. 8f.
150 Cf. Taḥāwī’s explanation of the counter-tradition that hijra will continue for as long as infidels are fought: it does not contradict the view that hijra was abolished on the conquest of Mecca, for the infidels could be those of Mecca (Muṣṭalh, vol. iii, p. 257). Even Noah takes the Qurʾanic duty of ghād for all Muslims to have been relaxed in the lifetime of the Prophet himself, presumably meaning after the conquest of Mecca (A. Noah, Heiliger Krieg und Heiliger Kampf in Islam und Christentum, Bonn 1966, v. p. 24).
151 Abū ʿUbayd, Amusāī, p. 312, no. 535; Buḥārī, vol. iii, pp. 35, 146; Taḥāwī, Muṣṭalh, vol. iii, p. 254, 9, where the drift of the tradition is well brought out. Sanna is presumably a corruption of ṣanāa.
152 Cook, Dogma, p. 100; Rubin, “Hijra”, p. 33.
153 Athamina, ʿArāb and Muhājirun, p. 12, citing Tabari, Taḥāwī, ser. ii, p. 825, where ʿAbd al-Malik castigates Ḥālid b. ʿAbdallāh b. Ḥālid b. ʿAbd for having appointed his brother, ʿAbdullāh b. Abī Bakr, to the war against the Rāṣihīs; Tabari, Maḥāna, vol. iii, p. 563; ʿUsī, Taḥṣīl, vol. v, p. 166, both ad 8: 740/751, where al-Ḥasan prohibits inter-marriage of Muhājirun and bedouin, and Ḥālid says “don’t marry the people of Mecca, they are bedouin”.
which the Prophet himself refrained from setting foot in the houses when he returned from the pilgrimage, and in which it was the greatest misfortune for a nãoahr to die. No doubt all this was painful to the Meccans, but more importantly it made for an odd sanctuary: how could the holiest place of Islam be so unholy? In fact, all lands abandoned by emigrants were unholy, and returning to live or die in them jeopardized one’s status as a believer wherever they might be: Mecca was no exception. It merely happened to be particularly unholy in that it was the Prophet himself who had left it. Hence it could not be successfully transformed into the central shrine of Islam unless the Prophet was made to soften the meaning of his departure, and this is what the hajj tradition and its interpreters achieve. Their message is that the Prophet’s mission was an essentially Meccan enterprise from beginning to end: both he and his followers were Meccans, and though they had to flee from Mecca in response to Meccan pressure, their period in Medina was a mere interlude, not a permanent departure, for the one and only object of their hajj was al-fāth. The Prophet’s hajj was a reluctant departure, not a rejection: “by God, you are God’s best land and the dearest of God’s land unto God; if I were not expelled from you, I would not leave”, as another tradition has him exclaim on his departure.

The closure of the duty of hajj is thus connected, not only with the waning of the Umayyad conquest society, but also with the elevation of Mecca to the central sanctuary of Islam. The literary sources contain residues of the view that Muhammad’s ambitions included the conquest of Syria, and what the open-ended concept of hajj suggests is precisely that the occupation of Mecca was preparatory to conquests on a wider scale: it came across as a step towards the consolidation of Muslim power in Arabia that was required for campaigns outside it, not as an end in itself. At the same time, literary and archaeological sources seem to indicate that from the time of Umar to Abūl-Malik the Muslims prayed in the direction of a central sanctuary in northern Arabia, or to Jerusalem, or to a plurality of sanctuaries, suggesting that the classical status of Mecca may be the outcome of an evolution stretching beyond Muhammad’s lifetime. But the closure of the concept of hajj drives a wedge between Muhammad’s campaigns and the great conquests and firmly identifies Arabia in general and Mecca in particular as the holy land, making the great conquests appear semi-accidental and reducing the rival sanctuaries of the post-conquest period to deviant qiblas for which the Muslims, in so far as they remembered them, unsurprisingly chose to blame the Umayyads.

Once again, then, we encounter the evolutionary scheme whereby the Prophet creates an institution which the Umayyads supposedly change and which has been restored by the time the sources set in (though in this case, as in that of hajj, the ‘change’ is attested already under Umar). Is it not time that we try to go beyond this scheme? The Umayyad period must be one of the most creative centuries of Islamic history, or indeed any history; and yet it is remembered above all as a century of impious deviation from an established tradition. This is an extraordinary fact, and we shall not be able to make sense of this fact, or of the formative period in general, unless we remember that the Muslim recollection of the Prophet reflects the lives and thoughts of all the believers who created a new civilization in allegiance to him, not just those of Muhammad himself.

159 Cf. Ibn Bābīyūh above, notes 155; ‘All said that one should not stay overnight in a land hajj-mahī ‘ra’sīl allāh.
162 Cf. Crone and Cook, Hagarism, pp. 7f, for the non-Muslim evidence; Donner, Conquests, pp. 101ff, for the Muslim material.