

Mohamed Madi, *Jahjā b. al-Ḥusain b. al-Muʿajjad al-Jamanī's "Anbā' az-Zaman fī Aḥbār al-Jaman": Anfänge des Zaiditentums in Jemen; Textkritische Teillausgabe mit Übersetzungsprobe, Kommentar und Einführung in die historische jemenisch-zaiditische Literatur*. Studien zur Sprache, Geschichte und Kultur des islamischen Orients 9. Zwanglose Beihefte zu der Zeitschrift "Der Islam". Edited by R. Strothmann. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1936. xxxii + 80 pages. Hardcover published 1936, ISBN 978311283180. E-book published 2020, ISBN 978311667898. 109,95 €. DOI: 10.1515/978311667898

In this work, first published in 1936, Mohamed Madi (Muḥammad 'Abdallāh Mādī) presented the results of his doctoral research, conducted under the supervision of Rudolf Strothmann, one of the founding fathers of Zaydī studies. The book includes an edition of a section of *Anbā' al-zaman fī akhbār al-Yaman*, a Yemeni chronicle composed by the prolific Qasimid historian Yaḥyā b. al-Ḥusayn b. al-Imām al-Manṣūr al-Qāsim (d. 1099/1688). The fragment selected for edition is dedicated to the arrival of Zaydism in Yemen and its spread there in the period from 280/893 to 322/934. It discusses the imamate of al-Hādī ilā l-Ḥaqq Yaḥyā (d. 298/911), the short imamate of his son Muḥammad al-Murtaḍā (r. 299–301/911–913), and the rule of his other son al-Nāṣir Aḥmad (d. 322/934). The author chose this fragment of the chronicle because of his limited access to other sources on the early history of Yemen and his interest in the beginnings of the Zaydī imamate, which still survived in the region in Madi's time (p. 12 of the introduction).

The book consists of two parts: an introduction and the edition of the Arabic text with commentaries. The introduction opens with a discussion of Yemen's separation from the late Abbasid empire. First, Madi highlights the curious absence of Yemen from contemporaneous Abbasid chronicles discussing the disintegration of the empire (pp. 11–12, 15–17). He also lists the sources on the early history of Zaydī Yemen known in his time, providing a useful roadmap for researchers interested in the subject (pp. 12–15).

The introduction then discusses the path that led the author to the choice of his topic (p. 17) and highlights other textual sources that he used to clarify passages in the text he edited. These sources include a fragment of Musallam b. Muḥammad b. Ja'far al-Laḥjī's (d. after 544/1149) history of Yemen, *Kitāb fīhi shay' min akhbār al-Zaidīyya bi-l-Yaman min al-afāḍil min āl al-rasūl wa-shī'atīhim min ba'd al-Hādī ilā l-Ḥaqq Yaḥyā b. al-Ḥusayn* (MS Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Or.fol.1300, fols 71a–72a); a collection of biographies of Zaydī imams, *Kitāb al-Ifāda fī tārikh al-a'imma al-sāda*, and its continuation, *Tatimmat al-Ifāda* (MS Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Glaser 37), and a history of

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medieval Yemen composed by the South Yemeni historian ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Alī Ibn al-Dayba’ (d. 944/1537), *Qurrat al-‘uyūn fī tārikh al-Yaman al-maymūn* (MS Cairo v 104). Among these texts, the author pays special attention to *Tatimmat al-Ifāda* (pp. 18–21).

Madi highlights some aspects of the Zaydī Yemeni historical writing canon, such as the inclusion of lists of works composed by imams and stories of their *karamāt*, miracles confirming their special qualities (pp. 18–22). He then presents the edited text, *Anbā’ al-zaman*, and compares it to *Tatimmat al-Ifāda* to explain his choice (pp. 22–24). This comparison, though brief, flags a relevant direction for the development of Zaydī studies. Another section is dedicated to a short biography of the chronicler; owing to limited information, Madi misidentified him as the great-grandson of Imam al-Manṣūr al-Qāsim (pp. 24–25). The introduction concludes with a translation of a segment of the chronicle (pp. 27–29), a short historical analysis of this translation (pp. 29–30), and a discussion of the edition’s principles (pp. 31–32).

The second part of the book contains the edition, based on a single manuscript copy—MS Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Or.fol.1304. The author’s editorial approach is primarily diplomatic, but thanks to his use of the other above-mentioned sources, it includes elements of a critical edition. His comments meticulously identify historical personae and place names, and they clarify the context of events mentioned in the text. Navigation of the Arabic material is facilitated by the marking of the years in the chronicle as separate chapters and by the addition of short summaries of events on the margins. These short summaries are also used in the table of contents (pp. 3–5 of the edition). The edition has an index (pp. 72–80) and a bibliography (pp. 7–9 of the introduction).

Since the work’s publication, the primary sources concerning Zaydī Yemen’s early history that Madi mentions as inaccessible or extant only in manuscript have become available to researchers. Among them are the *Sīra* of al-Hādī ilā l-Ḥaqq, fragments of al-Laḥjī’s *Kitāb Akhbār al-Zaidiyya bi-l-Yaman*, Ibn al-Dayba’s *Qurrat al-‘uyūn*, and the *Kitāb al-Ifāda*.¹

Madi’s partial edition of *Anbā’ al-zaman* remains to date the only European-language study of this important chronicle and its author. It seems,

1 ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. ‘Ubaydallāh al-‘Alawī, *Sīrat al-Hādī ilā l-Ḥaqq Yaḥyā b. al-Ḥusayn*, ed. S. Zakkār, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1972; Abū Ṭālib Yaḥyā b. Ḥusayn al-Hārūnī al-Nāṭiq bi-l-Ḥaqq, *al-Ifāda fī tārikh al-a’imma al-sāda*, ed. M. Y. Ṣ. ‘Azzān, Ṣan‘ā’: Dār al-Ḥikma al-Yamāniyya, 1996; Musallam al-Laḥjī, *The Sīra of Imām Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh from Musallam al-Laḥjī’s Kitāb Akhbār al-Zaidiyya bi l-Yaman*, ed. W. Madelung, Exeter: Oxford Oriental Institute, 1990; ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Alī Ibn al-Dayba’, *Kitāb Qurrat al-‘uyūn fī akhbār al-Yaman al-maymūn*, ed. M. b. ‘A. al-Akwa’ al-Ḥiwālī, 2nd ed., [no place, no publisher], 1988.

in fact, that the manuscript Madi used does not contain the complete text of *Anbā' al-zaman* but rather an abbreviated version, known also under the title *Ghāyat al-amānī fī akhbār al-quṭr al-yamānī*. A complete edition of this source was subsequently published in Cairo.² Recent digitization projects have made more manuscript copies of other relevant Zaydī histories accessible. A new study of Yaḥyā Ibn al-Qāsim's oeuvre, including his *Anbā' al-zaman*, would therefore be a possible and welcome addition. All these developments in no way decrease the value of Mohamed Madi's work, which, thanks to its digital publication, has received new attention.

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- ² Yaḥyā b. al-Ḥusayn Ibn al-Qāsim, *Ghāyat al-amānī fī akhbār al-quṭr al-yamānī*, ed. S. 'A. 'Āshūr and M. M. Ziyāda, 2 vols, Cairo: Dār al-Kātib al-'Arabī li-l-Ṭibā'a wa-l-Naṣh, 1968.