Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Wāqidī's Historiography of the Prophet Muhammad's Military Expeditions (A Critical Study of the Methododology with Special Focus on al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*)

Submitted by **Ranyh Saied S Alatawī** to the University of Exeter

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Abstract

Within the very specialist realm of Islamic history, the name of Abū 'Abdullāh Muhammad b. 'Umar al-Wāqidī retains a somewhat unique place. Praised and respected by many, but also criticised by his fellow historians, al-Wāqidī is without doubt a polarising scholar of the military expeditions of the Prophet Muhammed. His most famous and the only fully preserved work, '*Kitāb al-Maghāzi*', continues to divide opinion as it has done for many centuries. His critics have pointed to his over-reliance on archival materials at the expense of more traditional and conventional sources, while others have celebrated his efforts at making hugely important parts of the *Sīra* fathomable and consequential. Comparisons with other scholars such as Ibn Ishāq only serve to widen the disparities that already exist. However, this thesis does not seek to expand on the controversies surrounding al-Wāqidi's '*Kitāb al-Maghāzi*' because these have already been commented on extensively. Instead, it explores the actual historiographical methodologies used by al-Wāqidī in his seminal work, because in the application of his methodologies we can fully appreciate this remarkable piece of historical material and, in addition, realise how history is forged and constructed within the framework of *Sīra* authorship. Besides, the importance of context in its widest sense in the reporting of history is also developed through the medium of al-Wāqidī's most important work. The environment in which al-Wāqidī wrote is a crucial element and intertwines with the very methodologies that this thesis is concerned with. It is hoped that this research will lead to greater understanding and recognition of this historian for the contribution he made to his field.

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In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

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Preface

Born in Medīna circa 130/747, Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Wāqidī was an Islamic scholar whose major work, the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, is one of the earliest surviving biographies of the Prophet Muḥammad chronicling mainly his *maghāzīs* (literally, stories of military expeditions). Though not overlooked, but rather taken seriously by scholars, his work has drawn split opinions. For some, al-Wāqidī's impact as an Islamic historian is unsurpassable. For instance, notice Khalidi's unqualified approval of al-Wāqidī who, in his estimation, helped "move history in the direction of factual accuracy;" his vision of history is a "rigorous [and] practicable one"; in sum, al-Waqidi stripped the "historical record…of its fantastical elements, made normative, given a graspable structure, dated, arranged in generations, and made to stretch in one unbroken chain of legitimacy and social custom, fortified by custom."[1] At the same time, his approach to the traditional methods of knowledge transmission, his style of analysing reports and his focus on the historical rather than the traditional *per se*, led to a number of his peers and near peers questioning his authenticity as a historian of early Islamic society.[2] This has inclined many scholars to question al-Wāqidī's work and also the genre it is situated in. Lewis, for instance, denounces the *maghāzī* and *sīra* canons as "subjective and episodic, [as they present] a series of heroic figures and incidents without concern for chronology, sequence, or consistency – in a word, saga rather than history."[3]

The criticisms of the source material, therefore, do not extend solely to al-Wāqidī. Indeed, a rich tradition of scholarship has arisen pointing to the many difficulties in depicting the historical Muḥammad.[4] This literature stands in contrast to more traditional scholarship such as Watt's *Muhammad at Makka* and *Muhammad at Medīna*.[5] Whilst the question of authenticity around al-Wāqidī's surviving *Kitāb al-*

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[1] Tarif Khalidi. *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 48.
[2] Harald Motzki. *The Biography of Muḥammad* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000), pp. 20–21.
[3] Bernard Lewis. *Islam and the West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 92.
[4] See, for example, Patricia Crone and Michael A. Cook. *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic* World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977); Francis E. Peters. *Muhammad and the Origins of Islam* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994); Irving M. Zeitlin. *The Historical Muhammad* (Cambridge: Polity, 2007); Fred M. Donner. *Muhammad and the Believers* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010); Kecia Ali.*The Lives of Muhammad* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014); Robert Spencer. *Did Muhammad Exist? An Inquiry into Islam's Obscure Origins* (New York, NY: Open Road Media, 2014).
[5] William M. Watt. *Muhammad at Makka* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953); William M. Watt. *Muhammad at Medina* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956).

Maghāzī will not be overlooked, the substantive contribution of this thesis is orientated toward a pressing gap in literature: al-Wāqidī's historical method. Al-Wāqidī's idealisation of the Prophet's life in Madina will also receive serious attention in the later part of the thesis against the wider perspective of his method to be majorly discussed in this thesis. The following sections will identify the thesis' principal research questions and outline the theory and methods applied to this research.

Research Questions

A review of the secondary literature on al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is conducted more extensively in the first chapter, which reveals that itis mainly concerned with questions of authenticity. It is argued that al-Wāqidī's employment of *akhbār* (i.e., narrative reports), his tendency toward the embellishment of the received reports and even his use of sources he purportedly plagiarised suggest that al-Wāqidī's work is unauthentic and therefore unreliable. Being consumed with source criticism has meant that the literature on al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* has offered very little insights into his method of history writing—the procedures and practices involved in the production of his historical tome. In view of these serious observations, this thesis seeks to address the following questions:

- How did al-Wāqidī practice and produce history? What, in other words, were the methods and techniques employed by al-Wāqidī to narrate the *sīra* (Life) of the Prophet Muḥammad?

 A broader and deeper understanding of how al-Wāqidī practiced and produced history is expected to enhance our understanding of how he understood history and how and why he selected certain details for the purpose of 'meaning-making' and 'idealisation.' This leads to our next important research question to explore in this thesis:

- What does al-Wāqidī's historical method of practising and producing history tell us about his philosophical understanding of history?

Next, the importance of social and political context is increasingly seen as crucial to understanding the shape a work of history – or any work for that matter – ultimately takes. In this respect, this thesis seeks to address the next significant research question:

- To what extent was al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* shaped by the social, political and cultural context and historical time in which it was written?

A thorough exploration of this question will naturally lead to the consideration of an aspect closely linked to this question as a necessary corollary of it. It is whether his history only faithfully mirrors his historiographical milieu, or it is something more or less than that. So, this thesis also seeks to address the following question:

- To what extent was al-Wāqidī able to surpass and outgrow his immediate socio-politico-cultural milieu as well as his received scholarly tradition?

The whole discussion will remain inconclusive until it is related to a subject of vital significance, that is, al-Wāqidī's idealisation of the Prophet's life in Madina and the purposes this idealisation might be thought to serve. The final question to be explored in this thesis is:

- In what way does al-Wāqidī idealise the life of Muhammad[sa] in Madina and what might be the purposes of this idealisation?

Theory and Method

What is Islamic historiography? This question will be addressed in full a little later in the first chapter so only a brief answer is provided here. In essence, this thesis draws upon Hirschler who defines the field's core *problematique* as the search for the ways in which early Islamic historians "produced meaningful narratives within their social context."[6] If it is pertinent to define the field in this sense, namely the search for and understanding of the ways in which early Islamic historians produced meaning, then logically the field seems epistemologically orientated toward constructivism.

In terms of knowledge production, constructivists believe that reality and by extension meaning are created through intersubjective practice – meaning is, in other words, "socially constructed."[7] From this philosophical position, meanings about human facts and events are not objective. Rather, they are reached through intersubjective

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[6] Konrad Hirschler. *Medieval Arabic Historiography* (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 3.
[7] Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (London: Penguin, 1991[1966]), p. 1.

agreement.[8] If the "'meaning'" of phenomena is based on "constructed reality",[9] then knowledge, including historical knowledge, is a "human product" built "with locally situated cultural and material resources."[10] Although this epistemological position is often conflated with a radical form of Hayden inspired postmodernism[11] – the more sceptical position touched upon in the previous section – the 'softer' constructivists believe that the early texts of Islamic history were "a body of well-defined literary practices that can be studied as a thing apart without doing undue violence to the cultural and intellectual contexts in which these practices were originally imbedded."[12]

From this perspective, the ultimate concern is how early Islamic historians made history meaningful.[13] Thus, the analysis is not only focused on the "superstructure" of the text, namely the historical narrative, but also equal, if not greater, attention is paid to the "infrastructure" of the text – "the totality of methods and techniques employed by the historian in the course of his journey."[14] The focus of this thesis' on al-Wāqidī's historical methodology is not only justified in intellectual terms (the gap in the existing literature) but is also largely in line with existing theoretical perspectives found in the field.

Thesis' Contribution and Structure

This thesis' contribution is fourfold. First and foremost, the thesis provides an extensive exposition of the methods and techniques used by al-Wāqidī to narrate the *maghāzī* dimension of the *sīra* of the Prophet Muḥammad. This is important because, as mentioned above, very little work has been orientated toward uncovering al-Wāqidī's method – how al-Wāqidī did history in the practical sense of the word and wrote history in the productive sense. Instead, the available literature has largely been

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[8] John R. Searle. *The Construction of Social Reality* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 2011[1985]), p. 1.

[9] Peter Lampe. *New Testament Theology in a Secular World: A Constructivist Work in Christian Apologetics*, trans. by Robert Brewley (London: T&T Clark International, 2012), p. 51.

[10] Jan Golinski. *Making Natural Knowledge: Constructivism and the History of Science* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. xvii.

[11] Dominick LaCapra. *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2014[2011]), pp. 1–10.

[12] R. Stephen Humphreys. "Turning Points in Islamic Historical Practices" in *Turning Points in Historiography: A Cross Cultural Perspective*, eds. Q. Edward Wang and Georg G. Iggers (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2002), p. 89.

[13] Hirschler. *Arabic Historiography*, p. 3; Daniel M. Varisco, "Making 'Medieval' Islam Meaningful." *Medieval Encounters* 13, no. 3 (2007), pp. 385–412.

[14] F.R. Ankersmit. *History and Tropology* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994), p. 85.

captivated by the perennial question of source authenticity. In many respects, this thesis undertakes, therefore, to push the literature forward by tackling the methodology aspect as well. Second, in unearthing al-Wāqidī's historical method, this thesis contributes to al-Wāqidī specific literature as well as Islamic historiography literature more widely by outlining how al-Wāqidī made Islamic history meaningful. The way in which al-Wāqidī anchored his history will be identified, in the fourth chapter specifically, and also how it provides insights into what al-Wāqidī thought of history in the theoretical and philosophical sense. This opens the way not only for more comparative work specific to the Islamic historiography discipline but also, potentially, into the bounds of cross-cultural comparative historiography. Third, in addressing the extent to which al-Wāqidī's work was conditioned by the space and time that it was written in, the thesis contributes to wider philosophical debates regarding structure and agency and context and action. Fourth, the way in which al-Wāqidī idealises the Prophet's life in Madina and the purposes thereof.

This basic structure has been fleshed out in the subsequent pages. Here, the main contribution of this thesis can be seen in the brief outline of the main argument that will be developed in the following chapters. In brief, this thesis makes two main arguments. First, all the methods that al-Wāqidī employed to collect data hinge upon the importance for him of authenticity. That is, they suggest that al-Wāqidī sought to authenticate his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* as an authoritative account of the Prophet Muḥammad's biography. The direct implication of this is that, both philosophically and theoretically, al-Wāqidī saw that there *was* such a thing as an authentic history and therefore, by extension, an unauthentic history. In other words, al-Wāqidī thought that the past could be objectively known, understood and recorded. Secondly, despite al-Wāqidī's evident though unarticulated philosophical position on the nature of history, the methods he used to compose his biography and the way in which his work was anchored to other works in the *maghāzī* tradition, all point to the fact that al-Wāqidī's work was in many respects subjectively conditioned by his time and place. Al-Wāqidī's text, in sum, is a quintessential example of what can plausibly be termed E.H. Carr's most important contribution to the philosophy of history: the historian is a conditioned being.[15]

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[15] E.H. Carr. *What is History?* (London: Penguin, 1964).

In order to make these arguments, this thesis is divided into four chapters of which a detailed description would appear towards the end of the next chapter. The First introductory chapter contextualises al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* in a larger perspective. This chapter is divided broadly into three parts: 1. extensive literature review including contemporary research on al-Wāqidī vis-à-vis the Prophet's biography, the debates on Islamic historiography, and a review of secondary literature on al-Wāqidī, identifying the gaps. It provides the justification for moving the literature beyond the question of source authenticity and for turning toward the issues of method. 2. (a) theoretical framework of this research, (b) al-Wāqidī's biography and the wider context of his work, and 3. the main arguments and a chapter-by-chapter description of the thesis. This chapter also provides a potted background of the specific political and social context that al-Wāqidī inhabited. This is necessary given the nature of the research questions. One cannot logically consider the conditioned nature of a text or otherwise without having an adequate understanding of the presumed conditioning time-space context. The second chapter begins to consider al-Wāqidī's historical methodology in terms of his methods for i. gathering historical data in greater detail, and ii. then producing a historical narrative out of it. It focuses specifically on the ways in which al-Wāqidī practiced history. That is, how he collected his historical material and what this indicates about his understanding of history. A study of the material-collection methodology and chronology naturally leads us to the subject of history-production methodology. This chapter, therefore, also takes up the question of how al-Wāqidī produced history. Studying the various techniques that al-Wāqidī uses in composing his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, this chapter illustrates the way in which his narrativisation as well as philosophy of history was conditioned by his social and political context. This particular observation naturally throws up a question that this conditioning was absolute or there are instances of transcending this limitation in *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. The third chapter, therefore, is devoted to studying this aspect of al-Wāqidī's philosophy and method of history and see how far he was able to transcend the immediate social and political determinants. For this purpose, a brief comparison in the preceding works in the genre will be made first between his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* and Ibn Ish'āq's *Sīrat Rasūl Allah* followed by a detailed comparison between his work and Ma'mar b. al-Rāshid's *The Expeditions.* Through this comparative study, it will be determined how far al-Wāqidī was able to transcend them through his capacity for scholarly agency and creativity. The comparison demonstrates that whilst in many

respects al-Wāqidī sought to go beyond the work of his predecessors – to go beyond tradition that is – his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was nevertheless conditioned by the intellectual inheritance bequeathed to him. This, however, should not be read as a stain on the historian's work. Instead, it reflects a well-known paradox – whilst historians are potential agents of historical change, they are at the same time socially-and historically-conditioned beings. The discussion in the three sections in the final chapter remains largely anchored in al-Wāqidī's idealisation of the Prophet's life in Madina and its possible purposes. The chapter takes into account the importance of the Qur'anic citation and revelation and the role of the Prophet and the theme of salvation together with a detailed analysis of the direct instances of the idealization of Muhammad's life in Madina.

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Contextualising al-Wāqidī's Kitāb al-Maghāzī

1.1.1 Introducing the Chapter

At the outset of this scholarly research work, let us first define the discipline and situate the author and his text subjected to textual analysis in this research thesis. The discipline in our case is Islamic historiography, the author al-Wāqīdī, and the text his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. In order to develop insights into the existing work in the field and achieve the goal of building on it, this introductory chapter is divided broadly into three parts: 1. extensive literature review including contemporary research on al-Wāqidī vis-à-vis the Prophet's biography, the debates on Islamic historiography, and a review of secondary literature on al-Wāqidī, identifying the gaps, 2. (a) theoretical framework of this research, (b) al-Wāqidī's biography and the wider context of his work, and 3. the main arguments and a chapter-by-chapter description of the thesis.

For further clarity, the first part comprises several sections dealing with different interconnected issues. Following a brief context of the contemporary scholarship, it discusses the contemporary works of exposition, critical and instrumental literature and the middle-ground literature on the Prophet's biography, locating the areas neglected in those works. Apart from providing a broad overview of the extant sources of the Prophet's biography and the second century sources, it provides a broad overview of the field of Islamic historiography as well. Admittedly, this area is problematic as the field is relatively unripe, marked by scepticism and criticism hindering its linear progression. Nevertheless, by outlining and engaging with the discipline's foundational texts, authors and approaches, the section demonstrates that Islamic historiography is, in essence, best thought of as a study of historical method. Notwithstanding the problematic sources, it nevertheless can produce weighty answers about how historians of the past made Islamic history meaningful. It is followed by a review of the secondary literature in the field of al-Wāqidī studies. It underscores that contemporary scholars have engaged in limited studies, mostly focusing on issues of credibility and authenticity. Lacking, in other words, in the secondary sources is a wider study of al-Wāqidī's historical method. The second part works out the theoretical framework for this research majorly focusing on the difference between 'history' and 'historiography' and 'positivist' and 'deconstructionist'

views of history while also taking into consideration the processes of 'meaning-making', and idealisation together with al-Wāqidī's philosophy of history. The second part of this section provides relevant biographical details of al-Wāqidī, the socio-politico-cultural circumstances as well as the overall intellectual and scholarly cannon surrounding his scholarly endeavours. Apart from briefly evaluating the issues of authenticity and reliability raised about al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, an overview of the content and structure of his composition has been presented with a view to completing the wider context. The very important feature of chronology as a part of his methodology has been postponed for an in-depth study in the following chapter. The third part articulates the main arguments and maps out the plan of the thesis by presenting a chapter-by-chapter description in a progressive manner. This chapter concludes by setting before itself the task of outgrowing the issues of authenticity and reliability and addressing the research gaps identified in the secondary literature on al-Wāqidī with major focus on his methodology, mostly conspicuous by its absence in there. The rest of the thesis investigates and explores this issue, of course, together with studying the other issues directly relevant to it.

1.1.2 A Review of the Literature

Context

The tradition of a sort of discourse about Muhammad[sa], the Qur'an and Islam in the European literature is centuries old. In the early centuries of the second millennium, it was mostly motivated by the missionary zeal of exposing a false creed propounded by an impostor. Peter the Venerable, under the aegis of his Order of the Preachers, initiated a targeted study of the Islamic literature and his colleague Robert of Ketton brought out a Latin rendering of the Qur'an in 1143 entitled *Lex Mahumet psuedoprophete* ('The law of Mahomet the false prophet').[16] And in 1649 Alexander Ross produced the first English translation of the Qur'an from a French work *L'Alcoran de Mahomet*. Peter the Venerable also attached an appendix to the translation 'Refutation of Beliefs of Muhammadans.'[17] A twelfth century life of the Prophet[sa] by Guibert of Nogent's was considered an important earliest, though brief, treatise of the

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[16] Afnan Fatani. "Translation and the Qur'an". In *The Qur'an: an encyclopaedia*, ed. Oliver Leaman (Great Britain: Routledge, 2006), pp. 657–669. Hitti identifies the date as 1141 in his *Islam and West*, (Princeton, D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc. 1962), p. 53.
[17] Philip K. Hitti. *Islam and the West*, (Princeton, D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc. 1962), p. 53.

day produced outside Spain about which "he frankly admitted that he had no written source for his account of Mahomet," and "What he gives is the plebeia opinio."[18] Humphrey Prideaux (1648-1724) in his *Life of Mahomet* (1697) set some critical principles for such a composition in which he advocated for discarding the irrational element (e.g., the tame pigeon tale) about the Prophet[sa].[19] The prominent among the 18th century orientalists who wrote on Muhammad[sa] or Islam are Joseph White, Humphrey Prideaux, Simon Ockley, Edward Gibbon, George Sale, Voltaire, and Goethe. The 18th century scholarship displays some change taking place in the attitude towards Muhammad[sa]; Voltaire, for instance, appears more tolerant to his steadfastness and achievements in his *Essai sur les moeurs des nations* (1756), and Goethe remained unconvinced of his being an impostor and on the life of the Prophet[sa] he left behind a poetic fragment called *Mahomets Gesang* (1772).[20] The approach to Muhammad[sa] after Goethe tends to appear somewhat more composed and reasonable. However, both the traditional and the emergent attitudes about the Prophet[sa] appear to be concurrent during the 19th century mainly represented in the writings, for instance, of Thomas Carlyle, Devon Port, Bosworth Smith, Stanley Lane-Poole, Washington Irving, H. G. Wells, Theodor Noldeke, Arthur N. Wollaston, Clair Tisdall, Ignaz Goldziher, Richard Bell, David S. Margoliouth, Max Weber and William Muir. Access to new skills and facts paved the way to comparative studies. The shift in attitude is markedly noticeable in Thomas Carlyle's lectures. In the second lecture he deviates from his received tradition and absolves Muhammad[sa] of 'Inanity' and 'Theatricality' and asserts:

> A silent great soul; he was one of those who cannot but be an earnest; whom Nature herself has appointed to be sincere. The word of such a man is a Voice direct from Nature's own heart.[21]

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[18] R. W. Southern. *Western Views of Islam in the Middle*, 3rd ed. (Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 31.
[19] Humphrey Prideaux. *The True Nature of Imposture Fully Displayed in the Life of Mahomet*, 10th ed. (W. Nicholson, London, 1808). Online copy:
https://archive.org/details/truenatureimpos01pridgoog/page/n9.
[20] Hitti, *op.cit.*, p. 59
[21] Thomas Carlyle. "The Hero as Prophet" in *On Heroes, Hero Worship, and the Heroic in the History,* eds. Sorensen and Kinser, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2013), pp. 54 and 60.

Such assertions further reinforced the new trend, while the customary one still persisted according to which, in Weber's words, the Prophet's religion "was never a religion of salvation."[22] He further insists:

> The religion of the Prophet, which is fundamentally political in its orientation, grew primarily out of his purely prophetic mission. A merchant, he was first a leader of pietistic conventicles in Makka, until he realised more and more clearly that the organisation of the interest of the Warrior Clans in the acquisition of the booty was the external basis provided for his missionising.[23]

Muir[24] and Grunebaum[25] come to their conclusions about Muhammad[sa] and his faith through what they thought were facts of history and reasoning. About the Prophet's isolation in the Cave of Hira, Davenport, reckoned sympathetic to him, opines that it was for pondering the Bible and the Gospel which resulted in what he later presented as the divine revelation.[26] The Prophet's revelation (the Qur'an) for Nicholson resulted from the unauthentic content of the Apocrypha rather than that of the Gospel.[27] Even though Nicholson acknowledges Muhammad's sincerity, he comments:

> When by force of circumstances, the prophet in him had grown into the ruler and legislator, it was a psychological necessity he should still feel himself to be chosen medium of the divine message.[28]

The concurrence of the two competing streams of thought (traditional and fact-based) is discernible not only in different authors but also in the same author at times. The superficiality giving way gradually to rational, fact-based discourse seems to be a direct result of, together with the new research skills and methods, the availability of translations in the European languages of almost all major classical works on *hadīth*, biography (*Sīra*), history and war-chronicles (*maghāzī*) along with the Qur'an. It included the major history books such as *Sīra* ibn Hishām, *Tārīkh Abū al-Fidā'*,

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[22] Max Weber. *Economy and Society, Vol 3*, ed. Gunther Roth (University of California, Berkley, Los Angeles and London), p. 625.
[23] Max Weber. *The Sociology of Religion*, trans. Ephraim Fischoff (Methuen & Company Ltd. London, 1965), p. 47.
[24] William Muir. *Life of Mohammed*, 1858.
[25] G.E. Grunebaum. *Islam, Essays on 'Nature and Growth of a Cultural Tradition*.
[26] John Davenport. *An Apology for Mohammad and Quran*, p. 13
[27] R.A. Nicholson. 'Introduction to "The Koran"' (E. H. Palmer's Translation of the *Koran*), pp. x-xix.
[28] Ibid.

Samhūdī's *Tarīkh Madīna,* Ibn Qutaiba's *Tārīkh Ma'ārif,* Mas'ūdī's *Tārīkh Murawwij al-Dhahab, Tārīkh Ya'qūbī, Tārīkh al-Tabarī, and Tabaqāt ibn Sa'ad.* Certainly, the list includes our historian al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* as well.

Faizer and Rippin in their introduction to Faizer's recent translation of *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* (2011) have traced the available translated manuscripts of the book in several locations in Europe. According to their finding:

> Today, the work exists in three main manuscripts: British Library Or. 1617, the sole complete copy discovered so far (dated 564 *hijrī* [1169 CE]), one that is error-ridden and a significant challenge to use; British Library Add. 20737, a good manuscript butone that contains only the first half of the text; and Vienna 881, containing about one-third of the overall text in a somewhat fragmentary state.[29]

We also find in the introduction that Faizer's translation, used as the primary source material for this research, was based on Marsden Jones' translation (1966) which in turn was based on these three manuscripts. Alfred Kramer had undertaken his translation in Calcutta about a century before Jones in 1856 entitled *The History of Mohammed's Campaigns by Aboo 'Abdollah ʿAbdollah Mohammad bin ʿOmar al-Wakidy*. It was a fragment just as the Viennese manuscript on which it was based. Julius Wellhausen brought out his abbreviated German translation (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1882) which is far from perfect because of the imperfections in the British Museum Or. 1617 manuscript on which it was based. It is entitled '*Muhammad in Medina. Das ist Vakidi's Kitab alMaghazi in verkürzter deutscher Wiedergabe*'. Joseph Horowitz's research *De Wāqidii libro qui Kitāb al Maģāzī inscribitur* (1898) is based on Kramer and Wellhausen's translations.[30]

Though a recurrent name in scholarly discussions, such as in Crone or Lecker (as we will see in our detailed review of contemporary literature below), al-Wāqidī has not yet been subjected to an exhaustive critical study as a major contributor to early Islamic history. Nevertheless, some subjects of import in his history have received attention of modern scholars. He has been recognised as one of the major sources of

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[29] Rizwi Faizer, ed. *The Life of Muhammad*: *Al-Wāqidī's Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, trans. Rizwi Faizer, Amal Ismail and Abdul Kader Tayob, ed. Rizwi Faizer (New York: Routledge, 2011), Introduction, p. xiii.
[30] Ibid.

knowledge of the Prophet's life in Madīnah. For al-Tabarī, he represents a strain of the Prophet's life as not always overlapping with that of Ibn Ish'āq. Modern scholarship has pointed out that early Islamic historians are different from the *hadīth* experts in that the former are concerned with building a chronological narrative out of the traceable traditions and narrative reports (*Hadīth* and *Akhbār*), whereas the concern of the latter is to trace and preserve the Prophet's utterances or practice regarding 'ritual and legal matters.' That is why, we notice al-Wāqidī's preference for combined authority while his main focus stays on producing a flowing, meaningful narrative, rather than on determining the chain of transmitters; something we will discuss in detail in the chapters dealing with his method. "His technique of collective transmission is an artful selection with the sources while indicating his preference."[31] This is what attracted scathing criticism to him from both the ancients and the moderns. For an ancient authority as sound and outstanding as Shāfeʾī, "All the books of al-Waqidi are lies. In Medina there were seven men who used to fabricate authorities, one of whom was al-Waqidi."[32] This opinion of him was shared not only by classical pillars such as Imām Ahmad bin Hambal, Nasāʾī, Bukhārī, Abū Daʾūd among others but also by a modern *Hadīth* authority Nasser Albānī (d. 1999) who declared him a liar.[33] Some lesser authorities showed confidence in him nonetheless, such as Yazīd ibn Hārūn etc. The only concession made to him is that in history he would be tolerated but not in *hadīth* which definitely requires more accuracy and uninterrupted sound authority. Hinting at the preservation of his book, Faizer and Rippin have pointed out in the introduction to Faizer's translation:

> What is here presented as the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* by al-Wāqidī has in fact come down to us through the transmissions of a series of scholars, as indicated by the introductory chain of authority (*isnād*), who are in order of priority: Muḥammad b. Shujāʿ al-haljī (d. 266/879), who specialised in law and the recitation of Qurʾān and *ḥadīth*, and was appointed judge by the caliph al-Mutawakkil (d. 247/861); Abū l-Qāsim ʿAbd al-Wahhāb b. Abī Ḥayya (d. 319/931) who was the librarian of al-Jāḥiz (d. 255/869); Abū ʿUmar Muḥammad b. al-ʿAbbās b. Zakariyā b. Ḥayawayhi (d. 382/992), who specialised in *ḥadīth and Maghāzī* and was a transmitter of both al-Wāqidī and IbnSaʿd; and Abū

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[31] Ibid, p. xvi.
[32] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Waqidi (the page contains references to classical sources.).
[33] Ibid.

Muḥammad al-Hasan b. ʿAlī al-Jawhari (d. 454 A.H.) who was one of the ʿulama of the Iraqi school and later judge of Medina.[34]

The contemporary scholarship seems to share the conjecture with the classical one that al-Wāqidī composed his book to imply legitimacy of the Abbasid political authority, particularly by portraying the Prophet's uncle 'Abbās, the progenitor of the Abbasids, in the positive light and by extension legitimising the Sunni faith. It is beside the point, however, that no Sunni sect as such had been established by then. Even the term was not familiar. When the faction of 'Alī (Shia) split away from the main body politic of Muslims, the rest came to be known after over two centuries as Sunnis by default, a term sanctified later as an abbreviation of *ahl al-sunnah wa al-'adl wa al-jamā'ah* (i.e., people of the Prophet's Practice, justice and community). For Lecker, al-Wāqidī's material does not improve in accuracy over time as per Schacht's theories, but because of his access to the sources untapped by Ibn Ish'āq.[35] For Crone, some details in him may not be the facts of history as they actually occurred, but might be a way of contextualising and explaining certain passages in the Qur'an.[36]

The changing trends in the 19th century, as indicated above, saw a renewed interest in the early Islamic history and the life of the Prophet of Islam, as a result of which it is said about fifty books on the Prophet's *Sīra* appeared in that century. But this conscious tendency of sticking to the facts in preference to the received narrative engendered a new problem for the researchers. It arose from within the classical texts: the disparities and conflicts in the reported historical accounts and other issues. It led many of them to conclude that the details found in the biographies of the Prophet[sa] are largely unreliable or insufficient to accurately reconstruct his life. These were committed to writing centuries after the demise of the Prophet[sa], so it would not be unfair to say that the real life of the Prophet[sa] and life around him were not exactly the same as portrayed in the biographical books. These are not facts of history as it actually happened at that time but emplotted and tropologised narratives composed to suit the political and ideological goals of the authors; a combination of the constructionist and deconstructionist views of history (to be discussed a little later). It was meant to impose on historical facts (whatever they were) the author's own plots and concepts, rather than determining the actual facts of history. It remains

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[34] Faizer. *op. cit.,* p. xiii.
[35] Ibid, p. xiv.
[36] Ibid, p. xv.

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constructionist in the sense of imposing the historian's own preconceived design on history and deconstructionist in the sense that their designs can be seen through in that their disparate narratives do not converge upon similar facts, rather diverge in different directions leaving the actual reality perpetually elusive and undetermined (a 'trace' or 'absent presence'). Since the modern scholarship finds it difficult, to the extent of being impossible, to establish the historical fact around the life of the Prophet[sa], it finds it more profitable to focus on 'the purpose' of the writing of the historian. And, therefore, 'the goal of the writing of his accounts' has been identified as the *raison d'etre* to study al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* by Faizer and Rippin:

> Here we can see that *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is a work designed to show the role of Muḥammad as the chosen messenger of God whose work led to the fulfillment of the will of God in establishing His community of Islam. It portrays the Prophet within the ideals of the time, establishing his image as a prophet and his status as a statesman. It provides a basis for establishing the general outlines of Muslim behavior modeled on the example of Muḥammad.[37]

These and other pertinent issues will be subjected to research and exploration in greater details in the literature review section below and also in the chapters on al-Wāqidī's method of history. The discussion on the Islamic historiography will follow the review of the contemporary literature.

1.1.3 Contemporary Scholarship and the Prophet's Biography

Contemporary scholarship on the Qur'ān and the Prophet's biography is largely concerned with their worth as a historical artefact. As Motzki notes, "[they] are used as a source for the preaching of Muḥammad and for details of his prophetic career, as a document of early Islam and even as a source for pre-Islamic religion and society of the Arabs."[38] That said, scholarship in this area is besieged with a number of problems. The first, and perhaps least problematic, is concerning the discipline's progressiveness, or more appropriately lack thereof. These ideas are summarised neatly by Donner who argues that relatively speaking the discipline of Islamic

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[37] Ibid, p. xvi.
[38] Harald Motzki. "The Collection of the Qur'ān. A Reconsideration of Western Views in Light of Recent Methodological Developments," *Der Islam* 78, no. 1 (January 2001), p. 1.

historiography is "a very young subject", which is compounded by the "relatively small number of scholars who…choose to dedicate themselves to this study." As a result, "the field as a whole remains poorly developed."[39] Peacock repeats this point, arguing that the "study of the pre-modern historiography of the Middle East has scarcely begun…in spite of a number of valuable general studies of Islamic historiography the outlines of its development and characteristics remain hazy, let alone the details."[40] Given the relative immaturity of the discipline, the literature tends to develop haphazardly. As Humphreys laments, major contributions to the field are often viewed as definitive and subsequently a lack of critical interrogation of major works in the field is notable in its absence.[41]

However, the most pressing problem for contemporary historians is the issue of the sources. As Zeitlin contends, "the quest for the historical Muhammad is beset with difficulties and problems, the chief of which is the nature of the sources."[42] The problem here is the space between the *living* and the *historical* Muḥammad. Thus, when contemporary scholars consider the Prophet's biography, especially the *maghāzī* and *sīra* literature and the *ḥadīth* (traditions) they were in part drawn from, the question arises: can compilations over a hundred years after the event truly and accurately reflect the said event, the Prophet's life, in appropriate historical terms. This pressing question, although hard to resolve, has led to a number of differing positions, which generally reflect variant approaches to contemporary Islamic historiography/scholarship on the Life of Mohammad, which can be understood in three broad categories: works of exposition, critical works, and middle-ground scholarship.

1.1.4 Works of Exposition

Works concerned with exposition, as the name would suggest, are concerned on the whole with describing and classifying early Islamic writing in addition to explaining and understanding key historical events. Broadly, works in this category "accept the

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[39] Abd al-Dūrī. *The Rise of Historical Writing among the Arabs*, trans. Lawrence I. Conrad, ed. Fred M. Donner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. vii.
[40] Andrew C.S. Peacock. *Medieval Islamic Historiography and Political Legitimacy*: *Bal'amī's Tārīkhnāma* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 1.
[41] R. Stephen Humphreys. *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry* (New York, NY: I.B. Taurus, 1991), p. 69.
[42] Zeitlin. "Historical Muhammad," p. 2.

traditional picture of Islamic origins presented by the Muslim sources."[43] Thus, just as say the works by Ibn Isḥāq and al-Wāqidī were largely uncritical toward their sources and instead sought to document as much information of the Prophet's life as possible,[44] contemporary works of exposition do the same. Early writers in this vein include the renowned historian Gibbon. His early literature, as Lewis notes, presents a "picture of the Prophet and the rise of Islam that was clear, elegant, and above all convincing."[45] Indeed, much of the literature that could reasonably be labelled as works of exposition focuses broadly on providing specific expositions, chiefly via an engagement with the relevant historical literatures, of the Prophet's life.[46]

An important figure in this literature is William Muir. His major work, *The Life of Moḥammad*, was one of the earlier attempts at reconstructing the Prophet's biography from the extant sources,[47] described as largely descriptive and narrative based by Donner.[48] Although recognising, as with any form of historical enquiry, that his sources may be imperfect, Muir recorded the idea that "Muslim [historic] tradition is of a peculiar and systematic character, bearing in some respects an authority superior to that of common tradition."[49] Other notable authors who can be classified as authors of exposition include Philip Ḥitti, whose *The Arabs: A Short History* includes a chapter on the Prophet's biography largely consistent with the extant traditions,[50] and Gustav Von Grunebaum,[51] whose *Classical Islam* also contains biographical information on Muḥammad that is largely consistent with the second century sources discussed above.

Works of exposition, as just noted, tend to focus more specifically on providing episodic accounts of specific events in early Islamic history. Kennedy's work is of

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[43] Zeitlin. "Historical Muhammad," p. 3.
[44] Tayeb El-Hibri. *Parable and Politics in Early Islamic History: The Rashidun Caliphs* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006), p. 44
[45] Bernard Lewis. *Islam and the West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 98.
[46] Tariq Ramadan. *The Messenger: The Meanings of the Life of Muhammad* (London: Penguin, 2008); Maxime Rodinson. *Muhammad*, trans. Anne Carter (Penguin: London, 1971).
[47] Alan M. Guenther. "Response of Sayyid Aḥmad H̱ān to Sir William Muir's Evaluation of 'Ḥadīṯ' Literature," *Oriente Moderno* 21, no. 1 (2002), p. 219.
[48] Fred M. Donner. *Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginning of Islamic Historical Writing* (London: Darwin, 1998), p. 7.
[49] William Muir. *The Life of Moḥammad: From Original Sources* (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1861, new and revised edition by T.H. Weir, 1923), pp. xiii–xiv.
[50] Philip K. Ḥitti. *The Arabs: A Short History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1943), pp. 30–41.
[51] G.E. von Grunebaum. *Classical Islam: A History 600 A.D. to 1258 A.D.* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2009, originally published 1970), pp. 28–49.

particular importance here. He has written extensively on the 'Abbāsid caliphate and military-societal relations in the early Islamic state in addition to a monumental history of the early Arab conquests.[52] From Kennedy's perspective, the sources are obviously problematic; nevertheless, he makes the case that they can still reveal much about the history of the time. As he notes, "The early Islamic historical sources both inform and tantalise us…We often have to tease out nuggets of information from incidental detail."[53] Additional work in this vein can be classified as being broader in nature, given that it attempts to offer a more complete exposition of Islamic history and the development of Islamic thought into the contemporary era.[54]

Notable writers who broadly represent this approach include Franz Rosenthal. His works include translations of Ibn Khaldūn's *Muqaddimah* (prolegomenon or preface) and sections of al-Ṭabarī's *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk*; expositions of key political and philosophical concepts, such as freedom and ontology, in Islamic writing; a lengthy treatise on the origins of Islamic historical writing, which contained a consideration of how the Golden Age set the tone for subsequent Islamic scholars; and an insightful study of how early Islamic writers in many scholarly fields translated, engaged with and reproduced earlier civilisational writings.[55]

One can also include other notable scholars in this literature including Shaban. In his *Islamic History*, although recognising that facts have to be interpreted, Shaban notes that much "has been written about the life and career of Muḥammad, and every detail has been adequately scrutinised and fully analysed [therefore] we are now generally

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[52] Hugh Kennedy. *The Armies of the Caliphs: Military and Society in the Early Islamic* State (London: Routledge, 2013); Hugh Kennedy. *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates* (Harlow: Pearson, 2004, 2nd edition); Hugh Kennedy. *The Great Arab Conquests: How the Spread of Islam Changed the World We Live In* (New York, NY: Perseus, 2007).

[53] Kennedy. "The Armies," p. xvi.

[54] Anthony Black. *The History of Islamic Political Thought: From the Prophet to the Present* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011, 2nd edition); John L. Esposito, ed. *The Oxford History of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Bernard Lewis. *Islam in History: Ideas, People, and Events in the Middle East* (New York, NY: Open Court, 1993).

[55] Ibn Khaldūn. *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, trans. Franz Rosenthal (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969); Rosenthal. "Muslim Historiography"; Franz Rosenthalf, *The Muslim Concept of Freedom Prior to the Nineteenth Century* (Leiden, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960); Franz Rosenthal. *Knowledge Triumphant: The Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam* (Leiden, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1970); Franz Rosenthal. *The Classical Heritage in Islam* (London: Routledge, 1975); Ibn al-Ṭabarī. *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Volume XXXVIII, The Return of the Caliphate to Baghdad*, trans. Franz Rosenthal (New York, NY: State of New York University Press, 1985).

assured about the basic facts of his activities."[56] William Montgomery Watt could also be argued to represent this tradition. His prominent works include two biographies of the Prophet Muḥammad which sketch out the Prophet's time in Makka and then the *hijra* (migration) to Medīna, both of which make ample references to the *maghāzī* canon, in particular.[57]

Works of exposition are therefore primarily concerned with shedding light on early Islamic history either by discussing key historians or by analysing and explaining events deemed central in early Islamic history. Owing to known issues with regard to the sources of Islamic history, which will be discussed later, works of exposition are largely based on scholarly inference, if one is constructive, or guesswork, if one takes a more pejorative stance to the approach.[58] Nevertheless, from the expositionist's perspective the sources of early Islamic history can aid in an actual reconstruction of the events in order to historicise the Prophet Muḥammad and his era.

1.1.5 Critical and Instrumental Literature

The critical or instrumental approach can be traced to the late 19th century orientalist texts which forwarded the idea that the texts of early Islamic history were historically unauthentic. Noeldeke's *Geschichte des Korans* and Goldziher's *Muhammedanische Studien*, for example, have been argued to "[raise] serious questions about the historical authenticity of the Muslim oral tradition…[while demonstrating] that much of it…is spurious [and] introduced by partisans of one or another theological or political faction for their own private advantage."[59] Similar ideas were reflected in Schacht's *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*. He argued that *isnād* "show a tendency to grow backwards and to claim higher and higher authority until they arrive at the Prophet" and that "there is no reason to suppose that the regular practice of using *isnad* is older than the beginning of the second century."[60] Thus, Schacht's contribution was, in many respects, pivotal to the question of the Prophet's biography. As Pickard

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[56] M.A. Shaban. *Islamic History: A New Interpretation, A.D. 600–750 (A.H. 132)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 1.
[57] William M. Watt. *Muhammad at Makka* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953); William M. Watt. *Muhammad at Medina* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956).
[58] Robinson. "Islamic Historical Writing," pp. 256–257.
[59] Leon Nemoy. "Wansbrough's 'Quranic Studies'", *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 68, no. 3 (January 1970), pp. 102.
[60] Joseph Schacht. *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (Oxford: Clarendon), pp. 4–5 and p. 37.

notes, the implication of Schacht's argument was that the *isnād*, which was central to the compilation of the *maghāzī* and *sīra* literatures, was in fact invented during 'Abbāsid rule. He notes, "[they] were *created* and put into circulation to reinforce the legal and property interests of the ruling elite and, in doing so, they consolidated [*inter alia*] the increasingly elaborate biography of the Prophet, two hundred years after the subject of the biography."[61]

These ideas were then developed further in the 20th century, chiefly by the influential yet controversial figure of John Wansbrough and his former students. Wansbrough's major works, *Quranic Studies* and *The Sectarian Milieu*, advanced the claim that the ideas contained within the Qur'ān were largely ahistorical; that is, they were culled from the Judean tradition and were used purposefully to outline and legitimise the development and consolidation of the Islamic faith.[62] Work by scholars associated with Wansbrough, including Crone and Cook[63] and Cook,[64] although slightly more subtle than the principle that the extant sources are complete fables,[65] advanced an overt scepticism toward the sources, leaving contemporary scholars questioning whether a historic Muḥammad[sa] is at all a possibility. From this perspective, accordingly, the *maghāzī* and *sīra* traditions are understood as "highly selective arrangements of short reports…on aspects of Islamic origins circulating at this time in the Islamic empire…but histories they are not."[66]

Others have voiced similar critical claims with regard to the extant Islamic history literature: Hawting, for instance, questioned the veracity of early writings on the *Jāhilīya* (pre-Islamic period) because the sources on this period date to approximately 150 years after the *Hijra*; and Schoeler, for instance, questioned the authenticity of

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[61] John Pickard. *Behind the Myths: The Foundations of Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (Bloomington, IN: Author House, 2013), p. 343.
[62] John E. Wansbrough. *Quranic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977); John E. Wansbrough. *The Sectarian Milieu: Content and Composition of Islamic Salvation History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978).
[63] Crone and Cook. "Hagarism".
[64] Michael Cook. *Muḥammad* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983); Michael Cook. *Early Muslim Dogma: A Source-Critical Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).
[65] R. Stephen Humphreys. "The Scholarship of Michael A. Cook: A Retrospective in Progress," in *The Islamic Scholarly Tradition: Studies in History, Law, and Thought in Honor of Professor Michael Allan Cook,* eds. Asad Q. Ahmed, Behnam Sadeghi and Michael Bonner (Leiden, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2011), pp. xxii–xxiv.
[66] Peter von Sivers. "The Islamic Origins Debate Goes Public," *History Compass* 1, no. 1 (January–December 2003), p. 5.

Islam's oral tradition as a method of transmission.[67] These ideas continue to permeate the literature. Keaney, for instance, has recently produced a detailed investigation into the various writings on the revolt against Uthmān ibn ʿAffan, the third caliph, which contended that the various disagreements in the historical texts reflect how early Islamic writers have continued to reinterpret the past in light of their contemporaneous circumstances.[68] Likewise, Peacock, in a study of Balʿamī's *Tārīkhnāma*, concludes that the text was not a source of objective history; instead, it was primarily written to legitimise the political rule of the Sāmānid regime. He concludes that early Islamic writing "was often extensively patronised by dynasties…to promote a certain vision of the origins of the ruling house, its right to hold power, and its place in Islamic history."[69]

The work of Fred Donner is also broadly indicative of this approach. Donner is also concerned with tracing the origins of Islamic thought, and does so with reference to the need to firmly delineate and consolidate the Islamic tradition and community following the death of Muhammad[sa].[70]

1.1.6 Middle Ground Scholarship

Although Berg documents a spectrum of positions in contemporary scholarship with regard to *isnād* and *ḥadīth*, and therefore by extension the second century sources on the Prophet's biography, he concludes that there are, in reality, only two positions: sceptics (those who are critical of the extant sources) and advocates (those who recognise their worth in a historical reconstruction of the Prophet's life).[71] Nonetheless, there does exist literature that occupies a middle ground. The "central premise" of this literature, as Zeitlin makes clear, is "that the existing narrative sources contained much accurate, early historical material, but that it was intermixed with unreliable material, presumably also of early date."[72]

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[67] Gerald R. Hawting. *The Idea of Idolatry and the Emergence of Islam: From Polemic to History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Gregor Schoeler. *The Oral and Written in Early Islam*, trans. Uwe Vagelpohl, ed. James E. Montgomery (London: Routledge, 2006); Ibn Warraq. *The Quest for the Historical Muhammad* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2000).
[68] Heather N. Keaney. *Medieval Islamic Historiography* (London: Routledge, 2013).
[69] Peacock. "Medieval Islamic Historiography," p. 2.
[70] Donner. "Islamic Origins"; Fred M. Donner. *The Beginning of Islamic Historical Writing* (London: Darwin, 1998); Donner. "Muhammad."
[71] Herbert Berg. *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period* (Richmond: Curzon, 2000), pp. 49–50
[72] Zeitlin. "Historical Muhammad," p. 3.

Motzki's scholarship is indicative of this tradition. He argues that the debate over the sources has largely been conducted at an abstract level and based often on *ad-hoc* analysis of a limited range of extant sources. As a corrective, he calls for wider comparative work to sift correct and distorted chains of authority in order to reconstruct a more reliable account of the *isnād* and by extension the events of the Prophet's life.[73] Motzki's ideas have gained traction amongst younger historians, perhaps dissatisfied with perennial debates about the sources. Boekhoff-Van der Voort's *isnād-cum-matn* (a comparative analysis of topically related traditions) analysis of al-Zuhrī's traditions, which concludes with a positive analysis of the traditions of al-Zuhrī, is a sample of this type of literature.[74] Görke's various contributions to this literature underscore the same approach.[75] This literature, on the whole, takes a middle ground to the question of the sources: whilst recognising that some traditions may be unauthentic, it also contends that some traditions may be historically valid.

1.2. Islamic Historiography: Defining the Field of Enquiry

Scholars of the history of political thought have increasingly drawn attention to the Western centrism of contemporary academic practice.[76] In the course of its progression, the study of the history of ideas in the Western academia, it has been argued, has focused almost exclusively on the Western canon, beginning with the Greek and Roman classics, through the Renaissance, Enlightenment and then the revolutionary and romantic era. In the broad field of history, the discipline is argued to be in the same state. As Iggers, Wang and Mukherjee note: "In the past two centuries, and particularly in the twentieth century, a number of histories of historiography have been written. Yet the focus has always been Western or national." They note further

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[73] Motzki. "Introduction," pp. xiv–xv.

[74] Nicolet Boekhoff-Van der Voort. *Between History and Legend: The Biography of the Prophet Muhammad by Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (PhD, Nijmegen, Leiden: Radboud University, 2012);* Boekhoff-Van der Voort. "The *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* of 'Abd al-Razzāq," pp. 27–47; Nicolet Boekhoff-Van der Voort. "The Raid of the Hudhayl: Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī's Version of the Events," in *Analysing Muslim Traditions: Studies in Legal, Exegetical and Maghāzī Ḥadīṭ,* eds. Nicolet Boekhoff-Van der Voort and Sean V. Anthony (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 305–383.

[75] Andres Görke. "The Historical Tradition About al-Ḥudaybiya: A Study of 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr's Account," in *The Biography of Muḥammad,* ed. Harald Motzki (Leiden, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000), p. 240–275; Andreas Görke and Gregor Schoeler. "Reconstructing the Earliest *Sīra* Texts: The Hiǧra in the Corpus of 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr' *Der Islam* 82, no. 2 (2005), pp. 209–220.

[76] Fred Dallmayr, ed. *Border Crossings: Toward a Comparative Political Theory* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 1999); Michael Freeden and Andrew Vincent, eds. *Comparative Political Thought* (London: Routledge, 2013); Anthony J. Parel and Ronald C. Keith, eds. *Comparative Political Philosophy* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 1992).

that the "larger histories of historiography continue to be Western orientated, and like earlier works generally have continued to be restricted to the English, French, German and occasionally Italian literature."[77]

This approach overlooks the significant and diverse corpus of scholarship which can broadly be distilled into the Islamic historiography tradition. It is this literature as a whole which this thesis seeks to contribute to. Hence, it is first necessary to delineate the field, to overview the major texts in the discipline, to consider the major trends in the discipline and outline any significant issues or problems that one needs to be cognisant of when undertaking work within the field of Islamic historiography.

While defining the field of study, we may start with the axiom that Islam consists of the teachings of the Qur'an and the Holy Practice (*sunnah*) of the Prophet Muḥammad[sa] (d. 11/632). History, as a discipline, although containing a certain intuitive meaning, is a less settled term.[78] In rather broad terms, it is possible to render at least two broad understandings of history: the notion of an objective history as a collection of empirical facts, which is represented by Geoffrey Elton, as an example; and the more subjective notion of history as an interpretation of facts and events, represented most prominently by E.H. Carr and then taken to an extreme by contemporary post-modernists and post-structuralists. Defining history is made even more problematic as the term has an immediate dual meaning. On the one hand, and although from its Greek root the term literally means inquiry, in common usage it is shorthand for the past. On the other hand, however, the term also refers to the academic practice of history – the teaching, learning and thinking about the past.[79] Historiography, as the suffix '-graph' would denote, is concerned with the writing and rendering of the past.[80] The term goes beyond history as a body of narratives about the past and stands now for a philosophy and discipline of history. This would be clarified further in the next section. Islamic historiography, therefore, is initially concerned with the life, times and biography of the

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[77] Georg G. Iggers, Q. Edward Wang, and Supriya Mukherjee. *A Global History of Modern Historiography* (London: Routledge, 2008), pp. 2–3.
[78] Edmund H. Carr. *What is History?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961); Geoffrey E. Elton. *The Practice of History* (Fontana: London, 1967); Keith Jenkins. *Re-thinking History* (London: Routledge, 1991); Keith Jenkins. *On 'What is History': From Carr and Elton to Rorty and White* (London: Routledge, 1995).
[79] Chase F. Robinson. *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. xxiv.
[80] Franz Rosenthal. *A History of Muslim Historiography* (Leiden, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1952), p. 3.

Prophet Muḥammad[sa].[81] It is also concerned with how Islamic historians made Islamic history intelligible, how they produced concrete historical meaning in the objective sense of the word and how they produced tangible, coherent and ultimately meaningful historical narratives in the subjective sense.[82] In sum, early Islamic historiography is a textual discipline concerned with the extant histories of the Prophet Muḥammad[sa].[83]

The most notable source should be Islam's holy book, the Qur'ān. However, the issue here is whether or not the Qur'ān, which literally translates as 'reading' and contains God's message to humanity,[84] tells us anything about the historical Muḥammad[sa]. Peters contends that the Qur'ān is relatively unhelpful with regard to biographic information "since its form is that of a discourse, a divine monologue or catechism so to speak, that reveals little or nothing about the life of Muhammad and his contemporaries."[85] Moreover, its discourse tends to be context-free and universal in tone. The other source is history which has bequeathed to us a great deal of information with regard to the Prophet[sa]. Muḥammad[sa] was born in Makka in 570 or 571 CE to 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Muṭṭalib and Āminah bint Wahb ibn 'Abd Manāf ibn Zuhrah. His father died before his birth and his mother when Muḥammad[sa] was very young and he was thus raised by his grandfather, 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, and then by his uncles, Zubair and Abū Ṭālib, when his grandfather passed away. Fifteen years after marrying Khadījah bint Khuwaylid, Muḥammad[sa] received a vision of the angel Jibrīl (Gabriel) following which he declared himself as the *rasūl* (Messenger) of God, which brought him and his small group of monotheistic followers into conflict with the idolatrous Makkan chiefs, notably Abū Jahl, Abū Lahab, and Abū Sūfyān resulting in his severe thirteen-year long persecution culminating an attempt on his life. To avoid that, in 622 CE the Prophet and his companions undertook the *Hijra* (migration) and journeyed from Makka to Medīna. A number of battles between the Makkan forces and the Prophet's Companions followed, as well as conflicts between the Prophet's forces and

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[81] Harald Motzki. "Introduction," in *The Biography of Muḥammad,* ed. Harald Motzki (Leiden, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000), p. xi.
[82] Konrad Hirschler. *Medieval Arabic Historiography* (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 3.
[83] Mohammad Luqman. *An Analysis of the Earliest Arab Historical Writers (Ibn Isḥāq, Al- Ṭabarī and Al-Balādhurī* (PhD, Glasgow: University of Glasgow, 1981), p. 1.
[84] Muhammad A. Haleem. *Understanding the Qur'an: Themes and Style* (New York, NY: I.B. Taurus, 2011); Fazlur Rahman. *Major Themes of the Qur'an* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009).
[85] F.E. Peters. "The Quest of the Historical Muhammad," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 23, no. 3 (August 1991), p. 299.

some Jewish tribes, before the Prophet finally conquered Makka ten years after his *hijra*, performed hajj in 632 AH, dying a mere three months later in Medina.[86]

The manner in which this information has come down to us is well-documented, though controversial. In essence, information and knowledge of the Prophet's biography – the historical Muḥammad was passed orally from generation to generation following the Prophet's death (7th C.) until it was documented sometime in the eighth century, available to us in the form of extant texts. In Donner's words: "Islamic tradition provides a richly detailed narrative of the life of Muhammad [which is] based on reports that were circulated and collected within the Muslim community during the several centuries following Muhammad's death."[87] This is further endorsed by Boekhoff-Van der Voort who contends that "the information about Muḥammad's life is based on accounts that his followers passed from one generation to the next until they were finally collected and recorded in compilations."[88] Generally, this oral transmission was achieved via the *ḥadīth* (literal: discourse and utterance).[89] Ḥitti proclaims that the "chief source from which history writing flowed was tradition (*ḥadīth*)."[90] Actually, what led to the *ḥadīth* collection was the initial impulse to preserve the history of the days of the Prophet[sa] which naturally included his utterances and deeds as well. It was called *riwāyah* initially (i.e., narration) and the transmitters *ruwāt* (plural of *rāwī*), the terms supplanted later by *ḥadīth* and *muḥaddith*. For the *muḥaddith* (the traditionists) the *ḥadīth* generally referred to the actions, sayings and tacit approval of the Prophet Muḥammad[sa].[91] These were transmitted by *isnād*, which are chains of witnesses and

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[86] Karen Armstrong. *Muhammad: A Biography of the* Prophet (San Francisco, CA: Harper); Clinton Bennett. *In Search of Muhammad* (New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 1998); Martin Lings. *Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2006); ʿAlī Muḥammad Muḥammad Ṣallābī. *The Noble Life of the Prophet,* trans. Faisal Shafeeq (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Dar-us-Salam, 2005); Irving M. Zeitlin. *The Historical Muhammad* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007).

[87] Fred M. Donner. *Muhammad and the Believers: At the Origins of Islam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), p. 39.

[88] Nicolet Boekhoof-Van der Voort. "The *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* of ʿAbd al-Razzāq b. Hammām al-Sanʿānī: Searching for Earlier Source-Material," in *The Transmission and Dynamics of the Textual Sources of Islam,* eds. Nicolet Boekhoff-Van der Voort, Kees Versteegh and Joas Wagemakers (Leiden, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2011), p. 27.

[89] Harald Motzki, ed. *Hadith: Origins and Developments* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

[90] ʾAḥmad Ibn Yaḥyā al-Balādhurī. *Kitāb Futūḥ al-Buldān*, trans. Philip K. Ḥitti (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1916), p. 2.

[91] Ali Nasiri. *An Introduction to Hadith: History and Sources*, trans. Mansoor Limba (London: MIU Press, 2013), pp. 9–12.

authorities that give legitimacy and authenticity to the *ḥadīth* – a pre-modern form of citation. [92]

1.2.1 The Earliest Known Sources of the Prophet's Biography

The earliest known transmitters include Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā b. Sahl b. Abī Ḥathma al-*Anṣārī* (d. circa 60 AH) who was believed to have been a young companion of the Prophet. Although little is known about him, some of his traditions survived in al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*[93] and in al- Balādhurī's *Kitāb Futūh al-Buldān*.[94] Another of the Prophet's companions, 'Abdullah ibn Abbās (d. 688 CE), his cousin, is also a renowned compiler and transmitter of the historical reports.[95] Ibn Abbās' traditions are seen as authoritative, at least by subsequent Islamic historians, and have therefore survived in the works of historians such as al-Wāqidī, Ibn Isḥāq and al-Razzāq.[96] Another pivotal name in the canon is ʿUrwa ibn al-Zubayr (d. circa 93 AH). Although not known to have compiled a book, 'Urwa's traditions, chiefly a fallout of his correspondence with the Umayyad caliphs, survived in the work of his renowned student, Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī, and therefore served as the foundations for the *maghāzī* and *sīra* canons that would flow from Medīna in the eighth and ninth centuries.[97] Abbān ibn Uthmān ibn Affān (d. 105 AH), the son of 'Uthmān, the third caliph, is also a central source of the Prophet's biography. His traditions were believed to be compiled in a book form by his student, 'Abd al-Rahmān b. al-Mughīrah, although the text is extinct.[98] Nevertheless, many of his traditions survive in the histories of the eighth and ninth centuries.

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[92] John J. Saunders. *A History of Medieval Islam* (London: Routledge, 1965), pp. 18–19.

[93] Sarah Z. Mirza. *Oral Tradition and Scribal Conventions in the Documents Attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad* (PhD, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 2010), p. 105, fn. 250.

[94] al-Balādhurī. *Kitab Futūh al-Buldān*, trans. Philip K. Hitti (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1916), p. 3.

[95] Amira El-Zein. *Islam, Arabs, and the Intelligent World of the Jinn* (Syracuse, NY: New York University Press, 2009), p. 249; Abbasali Farahati, Mahmood Atharizadeh and Fatemeh T. Moqaddam. "Activities of Mosques in Amavids Period," *International Journal of Culture and History* 1, no. 1 (2014), p. 73.

[96] G.R. Hawting. "'We Were Not Ordered with Entering It but Only With Circumambulating It.' *Adīth* and *Fiqh* on Entering the Ka'ba," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 47, no. 2 (June 1984), p. 229.

[97] Nicolai Sinai. "When Did the Consonantal Skeleton of the Quran Reach Closure? Part II," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 77, no. 3 (October 2014), pp. 517.

[98] Muzaffar Iqbal. "Living in the Time of Prophecy: The Internalized Sīrah Texts," *Islamic Studies* 50, no. 2 (Summer 2011), pp. 198.

1.2.2 Second Century Sources

The beginnings of early Islamic history can be traced, as Robinson does, to figures such as al-Zuhrī (d. 124/742), Musā b. Uqba (d. 140/758) and Maʿmar b. Rāshid (d. 153/770), amongst others.[99] Although the Prophet Muḥammad had died almost a century before, these historians were amongst the first who attempted to outline the teachings of the Prophet in a systematic and written form, not including the Qurʾān of course. For these early historians, it was the "career of the Prophet [that] became the focus of Muslim pious tradition and sacred history."[100] Whereas the teachings of Islam had predominantly been oral in transmission, the growth in the function and role of the state produced an increasing tendency toward documentation, which was reflected in the burgeoning historical discipline.[101] The development of the Islamic historical tradition was thus intimately bound to the development and consolidation of the *ummah* (community).

Al-Zuhrī's influence on the Prophet's biography is perhaps crucial. Although some have voiced scepticism over his close association with the Umayyd ruling elite,[102] al-Zuhrī, to be discussed further in the coming chapters, is pivotal to understanding the growth of history writing among Muslims. He provided tuition to Musā b. Uqba, whose *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is available in fragments,[103] and Ma'mar's *Kitāb*, which has survived in ʿAbd al-Razzāq's recension.[104]

More importantly, al-Zuhrī's influence, and by extension Musā's and Ma'mar's, shaped the development of two existing historical sources, namely the *Sīra* of Ibn Isḥāq and the *Maghāzī* of al-Wāqidī. Ibn Ishāq, who was born circa 84/701 to a Muslim family in Medinā, became a master of the *ḥadīth* and was a tutor to the son of Abū Jaʿfar ʿAbdallah ibn Muḥammad al-Mansūr, the second ʿAbbāsid caliph.[105] Ibn Isḥāq produced the now highly regarded – even termed seminal by some authors – *Sīrat*

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[99] Chase F. Robinson. *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 19.
[100] Carole Hillenbrand. "Muḥammad and the Rise of Islam," in *The New Cambridge Medieval History, Volume 1, c.500–c.700,* ed. Paul Fouracre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 325.
[101] Chase F. Robinson. *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 21.
[102] Travis Zadeh. "Touching and Interesting: Early Debates over the Material Qur'an," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 129, no. 3 (July-September 2009), p. 444.
[103] Gregor Schoeler. "Musā b. Uqba's *Maghāzī*" [English Summary], in *The Biography of Muḥammad,* ed. Harald Motzki (Leiden, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000), pp. 90–97.
[104] Maʿmar Ibn Rāshid. *The Expeditions: An Early Biography of Muhammad*, trans. Sean W. Anthony, ed. Sean W. Anthony (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2014).
[105] Juan E. Campo. *Encyclopedia of Islam* (New York, NY: InfoBase, 2009), pp. 332–333.

Rasūl Allāh (The Biography of God's Messenger).[106] Although Ibn Isḥāq is generally venerated for authoring one of the earliest biographies of the Prophet and is therefore regarded as a leading figure in the tradition, the extant copy of Ibn Isḥāq's text is in actuality an abridged and redacted edition compiled by Ibn Hishām (d. 218/833), which makes al-Wāqidī's later work, the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, as one of the few surviving early texts of Islamic history in the *maghāzī* tradition.[107]

What is perhaps most important here is that these two early historians of the *maghāzī* tradition would later provide the basic source materials for what is widely regarded as one of the definitive works of Islamic history, namely Ibn Jarir al-Ṭabarī's *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk* (History of the Messengers and Kings), which explains why Ibn Isḥāq's and al-Wāqidī's contributions to Islamic history have been argued to be "the most masterly *Sīras* of the Prophet Muhammad."[108] Al-Ṭabarī's work in many respects, as already established by scholars, not only heavily draws upon but also directly quotes from both Ibn Isḥāq and al-Wāqidī.[109] Accordingly, the *maghāzī* tradition is no less central to the development of Islamic historiography as a whole than to the field of Islamic historiography.

1.3 Reviewing the Secondary Literature on al-Wāqidī

Having outlined the field of Islamic historiography, this section now turns to the historian al-Wāqidī. It begins by reviewing Islamic scholarship on al-Wāqidī, pointing to the essential debate over al-Wāqidī's status as a genuine historian. Subsequently, the discussion points to existing controversies among the Western scholars with regard to al-Wāqidī, focusing specifically on the problem of translation, the claims of

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[106] Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq. *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Isḥāq's Sīrat Rasūl Allāh*, trans. Alfred Guillaume (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955); Tariq Ramadan. *In the Footsteps of the Prophet: Lessons from the Life of Muhammad* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 10.

[107] Chase F. Robinson. "Islamic Historical Writing, Eight through the Tenth Centuries," in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing, Volume 2: 400–1400,* eds. Sarah Foot and Chase F. Robinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 244; al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*."; Al-Wāqidī. *The Life of Muhammad: Al-Wāqidī's Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, trans. Rizwi Faizer, Amal Ismail and Abdul Kader Tayob, ed. Rizwi Faizer (London: Routledge, 2011), p. xi–xiii.

[108] Muhammad T. Husayn. "Arab Historiography in the Last Hundred Years," *Islamic Review* 50, no. 2 (March 1962), p. 24.

[109] Ibn al-Ṭabarī. *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Volume VIII, The Victory of Islam*, trans. Michael Fishbein (New York, NY: State of New York University Press, 1997), pp. xx–xxi; Ibn al-Ṭabarī. *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Volume XXXIX, Biographies of the Prophet's Companions and Their Successors*, trans. Ella Landau-Tasseron (New York, NY: State of New York University Press, 1998), p. xxiv.

plagiarism and the question marks surrounding al-Wāqidī's status as a credible historian.

1.3.1 Reviewing al-Wāqidī's Status among Islamic/Classical Scholars

Although, as hinted above, it is true that existing scholarship on al-Wāqidī may be limited, al-Wāqidī's peers or near peers, from what has been established in the extant literature, were certainly engaged with his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. A review of the opinions of his peers and near peers demonstrates that there is little agreement amongst Islamic scholars concerning al-Wāqidī's merit as a biographer of the Prophet Muḥammad.

A number of Islamic scholars welcomed al-Wāqidī's historical work within the *maghāzī* tradition and undeniably venerated him as an authentic and credible historian of early Islamic period. The author of the *Kitāb Nasab Quraysh* (The Genealogy of the Quraysh), Abū Mus'ab al-Zubairi (d. 236/851), for instance, contends that "[in terms of trustworthiness] we have never seen one like [al-Wāqidī]."[110] Other peers or near contemporaries, including al-Darāwardi, Yazid Ibn Harūn, Abu Bakr San'āni, Ibrāhīm Harbī and Muhammad Ibn Ishāq al-Saghāni also acknowledged al-Wāqidī as an authoritative source on the *maghāzī*.[111] Ibn Sayyid al-Nās (d. 734/1334) held al-Wāqidī's work in great esteem, even though admitting that a number of controversies surrounded his work.[112] Importantly, as Ahmad makes clear, "no one [denied] his dependability in biographical matters or war reports."[113]

Nevertheless, other Islamic scholars spoke less positively about al-Wāqidī's work. Imām Ahmad (d. 241/855), for example, questioned al-Waqidi's fidelity.[114] Likewise, the eminent *Hadīth* scholar, Abū al-Dāraqutnī (d. 385/995), was highly critical of al-Wāqidī's method, claiming that his "narration of *ḥadīth* is weak."[115] Abū 'Abdilla

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[110] Muḥammad ibn Ahmad al-Dhahabī. *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā', Vol. 8* (Cairo, Egypt: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1956), p. 298.

[111] Ella Landau-Tasseron. "New Data on an Old Manuscript: An Andalusian Version of the Works Entitled Futūh al-Shām", *Al-Qantara* 21, no. 2 (2000), p. 361; Aḥmad ibn 'Alī Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī. *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb, Vol. 9* (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār Ṣadir, 1968), pp. 364–365.

[112] Muḥammad Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Sayyid al-Nās. *Kitāb 'uyūn al-athar fī funūn al-maghāzī wa-al-shamā'il wa-al-siyar, Vol. 1* (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Āfāq al-Jadīdah, c. 1800), p. 23.

[113] Mahdi Rizqullah Ahmad. *A Biography of the Prophet of Islam: In the Light of the Original Sources an Analytical Study, Volume 1*, trans. Syed Iqbal Zaheer (Riyadh: Dar-us-Salam, 2005), p. 20.

[114] al-Dhahabī. "Siyar," Vol. 8, p. 298.

[115] Ibid.

Muhammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī, who was a leading *fiqh* (jusrisprudence) expert, castigated him as a liar and fabricator of *hadīth* and also denounced al-Wāqidī's work and indeed the wider *maghāzī* canon as being indicative of fallacious scholarship.[116] In addition, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal was no less critical of al-Wāqidī's work. He goes to the extreme of branding al-Waqidi "a liar" who "makes alterations in the traditions [*ḥadīth*]."[117] That he could be tolerated as a historian was the only concession allowed to him, as indicated earlier.

The issue here, then, is one of authenticity with regard to the *ḥadīth*. *Muḥaddith* scholars were largely protective of their received wisdom and saw any variations in the chains of authority or in the teachings, sayings and actions of the Prophet as effective heresy. On the other hand, al-Wāqidī, perhaps as a result of his leaning toward *akhbār* as opposed to *hadīth*, was more cavalier with the tradition.[118] Doubtless, as will be discussed later, al-Wāqidī adopted a radical approach to *ḥadīth* reporting which combined multiple chains of transmission (*ruwāt* and *isnād*) into one, obscuring which bit was reported by whom or what was added or deleted. This explains why *muḥaddith* scholars were largely critical of al-Wāqidī's traditions. Ibn Hanbal (164–241/780–855AD), in fact, stressed that he disapproved of al-Wāqidī's practice of "producing one text with an orderly narrative transmitted from a group of people who are often in disagreement."[119]

However, it was not just the *hadīth* experts who voiced criticism of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. His detractors included historians as well. Although the eminent Islamic historian al-Tabarī frequently alludes to al-Wāqidī, he was deeply sceptical, it is believed, about al-Wāqidī's credibility. Fishbein notes that al-Ṭabarī was recorded as saying that "he considered al-Wāqidī unreliable as a transmitter of *ḥadīth* and therefore quoted his work on Qur'ānic exegesis only when he referred to 'history, biography, or Arab stories' and only when the material could be found only in his work." In contrast,

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[116] S.S. Nadvi. "Muhammad Ibn Umar Al-Wāqidī," *Al-Seerah International* 13 (2005), p. 5.
[117] Ibid, p. 7.
[118] Rizwi S. Faizer. "The Issue of Authenticity Regarding the Traditions of al-Wāqidī as Established in His Kitāb *al-Maghāzī*," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 58, no. 2 (April 1999), p. 106; Andreas Görke. "The Relationship between *Maghāzī* and *Adīth* in Early Islamic Scholarship," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 74, no. 2 (June 2011), pp. 174–175.
[119] al-Dhahabī. *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, Vol. 8. p. 303.

al-Ṭabarī referred to Ibn Isḥāq's work much more frequently, which, according to Fishbein, "demonstrates al-Ṭabarī's cautious use of al-Wāqidī."[120]

1.3.2 The Problem of Translation

As mentioned already, those interested in al-Wāqidī and who seek to understand his approach to history are largely reliant on certain edited compilations, notably by Jones,[121] and translations of his work produced by contemporary scholars, notably Faizer, which this thesis is based upon.[122]

The secondary literature has reached similar conclusions with regard to the translated and compiled texts of al-Wāqidī's work. Norris, for example, in reviewing a work by Lings on the Prophet Muḥammad[sa], with his translation of a number of short passages from al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, argues that Lings' translation is lacking something of the original text. He notes, for instance, that "at times it misses the vitality of the Arabic original" and that it "seems to lack something of the sharp contrast of light and shade and harsh brutality of early Arabia."[123] Not only that the act of translation may result into certain aspects of meaning being lost, equally important is the fact that in the process of translating texts, meaning can be lost altogether; hence, translation is not an exact practice. Lecker's review of Faizer's translation of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is highly critical of her translation in many places precisely for this fact.[124]

1.3.3 The Claim of Plagiarism

As mentioned earlier, one of, if not the major, issues in Islamic historiography concerns the credibility and authenticity of the sources. The credibility of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is often questioned for the possibility of plagiarism. Within the secondary literature, a controversy can be detected about the relationship between al-Wāqidī and Ibn Isḥāq. That is, for the fact that Ibn Isḥāq's *Sīra* was written before al-Wāqidī's work and that the whole passages between the two texts are similar, suspicion runs high

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[120] al-Ṭabarī. "Volume 8," pp. xx–xxi.
[121] Muḥammad ibn 'Umar al-Wāqidī. *Kitāb al-maghāzī li-al-Waqīdī*, trans. Marsden Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966).
[122] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī.*"
[123] H.T. Norris. "Review: Muḥammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources by Martin Lings," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 115, no. 2 (April 1983), p. 291.
[124] Michael Lecker. "Review: The Life of Muhammad: al-Wāqidī's Kitāb *al-Maghāzī,"* The Journal of the American Oriental Society 133, no. 4 (October 2013), pp. 717–720.

that al-Wāqidī might have copied from Ibn Isḥāq without acknowledgement. Such observations tend to undermine his credibility as a primary source historian. This section evaluates such claims via an engagement with the secondary literature.

The charge of plagiarism can generally be traced to the late 19th century orientalist scholarship, namely Wellhausen's *Muhammad in Medīna* and Horowitz's *De Wâqidii libro qui Kitâb al Maġâzî inscribitur*. Both of these works claim that al-Wāqidī fashioned his narrative by directly lifting from Ibn Isḥāq without properly acknowledging the fact.[125] This claim was repeated, although admittedly less trenchantly, by Wansbrough who, in reviewing Jones' compilation of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb* (see below), argued that although "the use of the collective *isnād*…is hardly conclusive evidence" of plagiarism, it does not refute the claim "that plagiarism of Ibn Isḥāq as well as others did not take place."[126] In a further review of Jones' translation of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb*, Abbott makes a similar suggestion. She notes that Jones' refutation of the plagiarism claim is "unconvincing" as it is based on "but two episodes in their lengthy works." She also infers that as al-Wāqidī must have had access to Ibn Isḥāq's work, either through his known love of books or through former pupils of Ibn Isḥāq, the issue of plagiarism needed to be "further explored."[127] Contemporary scholars have heeded this voice and continued to articulate trenchant criticisms of al-Wāqidī's fidelity as a learned scholar.[128] Schoeler, who has written extensively on the problem of oral transmission in the study of early Islamic history, went as far as to suggest that al-Wāqidī not only borrowed from Ibn Isḥāq's *isnāds* but also knowingly changed them.[129]

Alternative literature has, however, rejected the claim that al-Wāqidī plagiarised from Ibn Isḥāq. This line of reasoning can be traced to Jones who challenged the notion that just because al-Wāqidī's work followed Ibn Isḥāq's and the two works were similar in many respects, impropriety had necessarily taken place. Instead, by comparing the key passages of the text, particularly the passages on the dream of ʿĀtika and the raid

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[125] Victor J. Bauhung. *Early Sīra Material and the Battle of Badr* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, MPhil, 2012), p. 34.
[126] John Wansbrough. "Review: Kitāb *al-Maghāzī* of al-Wāqidī edited by Marsden Jones," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 31, no. 1 (February 1968), p. 148.
[127] Nabia Abbott. "Review: The Kitāb *al-Maghāzī* of al-Wāqidī edited by Marsden Jones," *The American Historical Review* 73, no. 3 (February 1968), p. 865.
[128] Cook. "Muḥammad," pp. 63–64; Gerald R. Hawting. "Al- Ḥudaybiyya and the Conquest of Mecca," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 8, no. 2 (1986), pp. 1–24.
[129] Cited in Donald P. Little. "Narrative Themes and Devices in al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*," in *Reason and Inspiration in Islam,* ed. Todd Lawson (New York, NY: I.B. Taurus, 2005), p. 34.

on Nakhla, Jones found that the two authors diverged in terms of the narrative style they employed. Accordingly, he concluded that "the similarity between Ibn Isḥāq's account…and that of al-Wāqidī may be due not to plagiarism but to the fact that they were drawing upon a common reservoir of *qāss* [primary source] material."[130] Similarly, al-Dūrī vociferously opposed the idea that al-Wāqidī had plagiarised from Ibn Isḥāq. al-Dūrī concluded that al-Wāqidī "was more rigorous than Ibn Isḥāq," and, as such, al-Dūrī concluded that "Al-Wāqidī took nothing from Ibn Isḥāq."[131] Faizer does admit that al-Wāqidī's work has drawn heavily upon Ibn Isḥāq's, though, she opines, this is a purposeful act in order to overcome the problem of referring to what would have been considered an unauthentic source. She notes, "[al-Wāqidī's] use of familiar material was essential [as] it provided the foundation and the framework within which al-Wāqidī could display his skills and make certain that those who knew the popular Ibn Isḥāq compilation would recognise immediately the intricate weavings of new material that al-Wāqidī introduced into the account."[132]

Thus, at present there is a fracture in the literature with regard to al-Wāqidī's credentials as a scholar of Islamic history. On the one hand, some literature has evidenced the claim that al-Wāqidī directly lifted without acknowledgement from Ibn Isḥāq's preceding work. On the other hand, other literature has assiduously defended al-Wāqidī's originality, arguing that certain similarities in the works reflect the common source material available to both historians.

1.3.4 The Issue of Credibility

The secondary literature does raise the issue of embellishment as well, querying in turn the authenticity of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* (as seen above in the discussion of the critical or instrumental tradition) and in effect, challenging al-Wāqidī's credibility as a historian.

Work by Crone is illustrative of the same here. In her work on Islamic trade, she argues that the early Islamic history – the primary sources – is nothing more than "a mass of

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[130] J.M.B. Jones. "Ibn Isḥāq and al-Wāqidī: The Dream of 'Ātika and the Raid to Nakhla in Relation to the Charge of Plagiarism," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 22, no. 1 (February 1959), p. 47.
[131] al-Dūrī. "Historical Writing," pp. 38–39.
[132] Rizwi S. Faizer. "The Issue of Authenticity Regarding the Traditions of al-Wāqidī as Established in His *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 58, no. 2 (April 1999), p. 102.

detailed information, none of which represents straightforward *facts* (emphasis in the original)." Instead, she argues, the extant sources are best thought of as being written by "storytellers" who "drew on their historical knowledge for the circumstantial details with which they embellished their accounts."[133] She singles out al-Wāqidī as an embellisher by referring to what she argues is a standard practice in early Islamic historical writings, namely narrative accumulation. That is, the first author in a sequence would offer limited information on a specific event; the next would build on this further; and the final author in the sequence "would know everything that an audience might wish to hear about it." And because al-Wāqidī's work is larger than his predecessor Ibn Ishaq's, Crone reasons that it must contain a substantial amount of historical embellishment.[134] Schoeler's commentary is also illustrative of the claim that al-Waqidi embellished historical detail. Citing the example of a conversation between Sa'd Ibn 'Ubādah, the leader of the Khazraj, and Sa'd Ibn Mu'ād, the leader of the Aws, Schoeler demonstrates that al-Wāqidī's account, when compared with other known sources of the conversation, is far more elaborately detailed. Schoeler, therefore, infers that some "of the additional material not occurring in other sources could consist of (explanatory) additions by al-Wāqidī's;" that al-Wāqidī "probably used other sources here and there"; and, most controversially, that "some of these additions could have been the products of his imagination."[135] Görke, noting that "while some [*asānīd*] traditions are well documented and exist in several independent transmissions, some as *asānīd* seem to have been invented or forged by al-Wāqidī and, possibly, Ibn Isḥāq" also stresses the viewpoint that al-Wāqidī's historical writings are largely fraudulent.[136] In his complementary work as well, Görke asserts that al-Wāqidī was prone to using "fictitious" *asānīd*.[137]

On the other hand, other scholars have pointed to al-Wāqidī's method, namely the received practice of combined reports, as being central to his corrupt historiography. For instance, Lecker, in comparing al-Wāqidī's and al Bayhaqī's narration of the

[133] Patricia Crone. *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2004), p. 222.
[134] Ibid, pp. 223–225.
[135] Gregor Schoeler. *The Biography of Muḥammad: Nature and Authenticity*, trans. Uwe Vagelpohl, ed. James E. Montgomery (London: Routledge, 2011), p. 97.
[136] Andreas Görke. "Prospects and Limits in the Study of Historical Muḥammad," in *The Transmission and Dynamics of the Textual Sources of Islam: Essays in Honour of Harald Motzki,* eds. Nicolet Boekhoff-Van Der Voort, Kees Versteegh and Joas Wasgemakers (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2011), p. 142.
[137] Andreas Görke. "The Relationship between Maghazi and Adith in Early Islamic Scholarship," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 74, no. 2 (June 2011), pp. 179–180.

assassination of the Jewish leader Ka'ab al-Ashraf, finds discrepancies between the two accounts which rest in al-Wāqidī's editing of the source material. Although admitting that there may have been a "scribal error" involved, Lecker argues that "Wāqidī's combined report…includes a corrupt version of the original report" and that "Wāqidī probably unintentionally changed the statement concerning the status of the Jews."[138] Likewise, Marsham has recently argued that the pact between Muʿāwiya ibn Abī Sufyān and ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ was, in fact, "an eighth- or early ninth-century composition, again most likely by al-Wāqidī," which would in turn generate further literature demonstrating that al-Wāqidī fabricated his history.[139]

 Crandall, for example, argues that al-Wāqidī either used "sources which he did not acknowledge or he embellished segments of his books."[140] In the same vein, Murād argues that al-Wāqidī liberally edited his historical reports, making "new narratives."[141] Haykal, too, argues that al-Wāqidī and others fabricated *hadith* as a means to assuage the seventh Caliph, al-Ma'mūn.[142] Other scholarly works have also questioned many of the narrations found in al-Wāqidī's history.[143] Anthony asserts that al-Wāqidī was "known to play fast with his source material",[144] which suggests a lack of credibility on the historian's part.

Alternative literature, on the other hand, is more sanguine about the veracity of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Gibb, for instance, in discussing al-Ṭabarī's account of the demolition and reconstruction of the Dome of the Rock with Byzantium assistance, argues that al-Wāqidī is a "truly prodigious figure" in Islamic historiography, which is evidenced by al-Ṭabarī's invocation of him, and that "efforts to discredit or reinterpret

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[138] Michael Lecker. "Wāqidī's Account on the Status of the Jews of Medina: A Study of a Combined Report," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 54, no. 1 (January 1995), p. 18.
[139] Andrew Marsham. "The Pact (amāna) between Muʿāwiya ibn Abī Sufyān and ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ (656 or 658 CE): 'Documents' and the Islamic Historical Tradition," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 57, no. 1 (2012), p. 89.
[140] Richard Crandall. *Islam: The Enemy* (New York, NY: Xulon Press, 2008), p. 95.
[141] Sulaimān 'Alī Murād. *Early Islam between Myth and History: Al-Ḥasan Al-Baṣrī (d. 110H/728CE) and the Formation of His Legacy in Classical Islam* (Leiden, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2006), p. 6.
[142] Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal. *The Life of Muḥammad*, trans. Ismail Raji al-Faruqi (Sclangor, Malaysia: Islamic Book Trust, revised edition), p. lxxxiii.
[143] W.N. Arafat. "New Light on the Story of Banū Qurayẓa and the Jews of Medina," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 108, no. 2 (April 1976), pp. 100–107; M.J. Kirster. "On the Papyrus of Wahb b. Munabbuh," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 37, no. 3 (February 1974), p. 549; Michael Lecker. "The Emigration of 'Utba b. Abī Waqqāṣ from Makka to Medina," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 59, no. 1 (February 1996), pp. 116–119.
[144] Maʿmar Ibn Rāshid. *The Expeditions: An Early Biography of Muḥammad*, trans. Sean W. Anthony, ed. Sean W. Anthony (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2014), p. xliv, fn. 55.

the tradition transmitted by al-Wāqidī carry no conviction."[145] Gibb's argument for al-Wāqidī proves the latter a credible historian in his eyes.[146] The Scottish orientalist, William Muir, also remarked that he did not "hesitate to designate [al-Wāqidī's] compilation as the fruit of an honest endeavour to bring together the most credible authorities current at the end of the second century."[147] Watt's liberal use of al-Wāqidī's text in his biographies of the Prophet shows that he largely saw al-Wāqidī's history as credible,[148] while Serjeant's copious references to al-Wāqidī in his work on the Constitution of Medīna would also reflect the idea that he thought that al-Wāqidī's text was largely credible.[149] Likewise, on al-Wāqidī's use of less credible historical reports, Hodgson contends that these "[historical] anecdotes are mostly quite humanly credible in themselves, and present a realistically ambiguous picture of the moral responsibility of the various parties [involved in his narrations]."[150] Similarly, Rubin contends that al-Wāqidī's chronology and by extension his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* "must be regarded as having the greatest claim to authenticity."[151] Azad, too, suggests that al-Wāqidī's biography of the Prophet was largely credible given that "[he] was an important authority, and was often cited by transmitters to give authenticity to assertions on the early Islamic period."[152]

Other scholars have advanced alternative defences of al-Wāqidī's Kitāb al-Maghāzī. In an insightful comparison of al-Wāqidī's and Ibn Isḥāq's accounts of the Tamīm's delegation to the Prophet Muḥammadsa, for example, Landau-Tasserson highlights a number of anomalies between the two texts (e.g. the date, the number and identities of the participants, the Qur'ānic verses the event is linked to, the purpose of the delegation and the presence of certain individuals). In reviewing the extant sources in their totality, however, Landau-Tasserson concludes that the differences arise from

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[145] Hamilton A.R. Gibb. "Arab-Byzantine Relations under the Umayyad Caliphate," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 12 (1958), pp. 226 and 228.

[146] Hamilton A.R. Gibb. *Studies on the Civilization of Islam* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962), p. 53.

[147] Cited in Clinton Bennett. *In Search of Muhammad* (New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 1998), p. 30.

[148] Watt. "Mecca."; Watt. "Medina."

[149] R.B. Serjeant. "The Sunnah Jāmi'ah, Pacts with the Yathrib Jews, and the Tarīm of Yathrib: Analysis and Translation of the Documents Comprised in the So-called 'Constitution of Medina'", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 41, no. 1 (February 1978), pp. 1–42.

[150] Marshall G.S. Hodgson. "Two Pre-Modern Muslim Historians: Pitfalls and Opportunities in Presenting Them to Moderns," in *Towards World Community,* ed. John U. Nef (New York, NY: World Academy of Art, 1968), p. 56.

[151] Uri Rubin. *The Life of Muḥammad* (Farnham: Ashgate, 1998), p. 217.

[152] Arezou Azad. *Sacred Landscape in Medieval Afghanistan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 45.

the fact that there were actually two separate delegations. More importantly, over time the two stories got combined into one. She argues that this started with Ibn Ishaq's account as there is an anomalous individual in his narration of the event. She concludes, therefore, that al-Wāqidī's account "seems fairly coherent and there is not much in it which makes it suspect." She further adds that "the historical material underwent considerable changes not only as a result of tendentious forgeries but also through the mere process of redaction, which was for the most part carried out in good faith."[153] In turn, this would lend further credence to the principle that al-Wāqidī was a faithful historian.

Just as with the question of plagiarism, the question of embellishment as well remains firmly within the extant secondary literature on al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. On the one hand, scholars aligned with the instrumental or critical approach to Islamic historiography, in effect, argue that al-Wāqidī's work is unreliable, with the natural inference of its preclusion from the corpus of work on Islamic history. Less cynical scholars have, on the other hand, argued that al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, despite having a number of question marks surrounding its authenticity (much like all texts from that era), remains a useful source of early Islamic history. This detailed review of literature pertaining to al-Wāqidī studies leads us to locate a lacuna in the contemporary literature on him; that is, little attention has been paid to studying his historical method as scholars have been overly preoccupied with the questions of authenticity and reliability, as we will see in the section to follow.

1.3.5 Addressing a Lacuna in the Contemporary Literature

The issues of translation, charges of plagiarism and embellishment, and issues of credibility, as already discussed in our review of literature, expose al-Wāqidī's work to doubt as a reliable source of early Islamic historiography. And if it cannot be treated as a dependable source for reconstructing the past as it actually happened, it provides a perfect justification for Humphreys' assertion that "if our aim is to find out 'what really happened' [with reference to the early texts of Islamic history] – i.e. to develop reliably documented answers to modern questions about the earliest decades of Islamic

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[153] Ella Landau-Tasseron. "Processes of Redaction: The Case of the Tammīte Delegation to the Prophet Muḥammad," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 49, no. 2 (June 1986), pp. 256 and 270.

society – then we are in trouble."[154] This certainly implies that as a work of empirical history, al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* (just like other texts of Islamic history or any history for that matter) is effectively too unreliable to unearth the actual reality of the history and biography of the Prophet Muḥammad. This is yet another representation of the fact of history re/constructed by its author as an emplotted and troped narrative rather than the fact itself, as we understood in the deconstruction part earlier. To study *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, therefore, under the assumption of having a direct access to the reality of history will largely remain an impossible task.

However, this does not mean that the study of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is a fruitless, futile and ultimately non-academic endeavour as we have located an obvious lacuna in the contemporary literature with regard to al-Wāqidī not properly addressed so far. That is, there have been relatively few studies devoted to understanding his historical method. Instead, the secondary literature, which the review confirms, has majorly engaged itself with, though failed to resolve, ongoing controversies relating to al-Wāqidī's credibility.[155] Faizer makes this clear in the introduction to her English translation of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. In other words, the secondary literature on al-Wāqidī has been shaped predominantly by wider debates regarding the nature and reliability of the historical sources of the Prophet's biography.

This focus is problematic because the field of Islamic historiography, as defined earlier, is primarily concerned not with the question of *what* (what did or did not happen), but rather with the question of *how* (how did Islamic historians make history).[156] Thus, it is only through a study of the *how* – the study of method and indeed the social and cultural milieu in which history is written – that we can obtain a clearer meaning of *what history* (philosophy) is to the historian concerned (if not also the wider society in which they wrote).[157] Thus, in consideration of the review of the literature and Faizer's claim, there is a pressing gap in the literature concerning the historiography of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. In order to address this gap, therefore, in the following chapter this thesis will address the following questions: how did al-Wāqidī do and write history? What does his method inform us about his philosophy of history? And to what

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[154] Humphreys. *"Islamic History,"* p. 69.
[155] al-Wāqidī. *"al-Maghāzī,"* p. xiv.
[156] Rosenthal. *"Muslim Historiography,"* p. 6.
[157] Humphreys. *"Islamic History,"* p. 70.

extent was al-Wāqidī's history shaped by the time and place in which he wrote? Addressing these concerns – investigating the historiography of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* – will let us address the lacuna in the current literature, which has stagnated in terms of questions of authenticity and veracity, and will instead hopefully offer new insights and new avenues of research for scholars with an interest in al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, one of the earliest extant texts of the historical Muḥammad[sa].

The latter part of this chapter is devoted to developing the theoretical framework, discussing the difference between 'history' and 'historiography,' 'positivist view of history' and 'deconstructionist' view of history, and processes of 'meaning-making' and idealisation in al-Wāqidī.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

1.4.1. History and Historiography

This part discusses the theoretical framework necessary to accurately place al-Wāqidī's historiography. A prerequisite to work out this theoretical framework is to clearly see first the distinctions between 'history,' 'historiography,' and 'philosophy of history,' and between 'positivist' view of history and 'deconstructionist' view of history. Despite possible conceptual overlap, the first three fields have now their own distinct features and scope. 'History' (literally 'inquiry') can be defined as the received narratives of the past including the social, political, economic, cultural, and religious occupations of the past human and an account of the historical agents who affected all or any of these areas of human life in certain historical fields. In modern times, historians are expected to abide by certain rules and norms to produce authentic and dependable history; such as they should be meticulous in their research and findings, exclude dubious sources from their research, render or depend on accurate translations of the past languages, employ comparative method to come to terms with competing chronicles, avoid cherry-picking evidence supportive of their preconceived notions or philosophical or ideological inclinations, and give equal importance to counter evidence in order to establish the facts of history in the most objective manner.[158] However, the ancient historians were not really sensitive to all these norms

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[158] Wendie Ellen Schneider. "Past Imperfect," (Irving v. Penguin Books Ltd., June 2001), no. 1996-I-1113, 2000 p. 1535, (http://www.yalelawjournal.org/pdf/110-8/schneider.pdf)

as we know them today. Their main concern used to be to collect and record as much bulk of information as they could lay their hands on from whatever sources. They would not be scrupulous about piecing together even the most conflicting or unreasonable reports. Comparing, sifting, or scrutinising the received reports was not usually a part of their historical composition project. Rather than being sceptical or critical, at times they were attracted to the uncanny and bizarre. Heredotus (c. 484- c.425 BCE), for instance, would at times treat myth and historical fact alike and confidently report of fox-sized, furry, gold-digging 'ants' living in a far-off Indian province that would chase and devour a full-grown camel (Book 3, passages 102 to 105). Plato mentioning the non-existent island 'Atlantis' in his *Timaeus* and *Critias* is another case in point. The early Islamic historians in general, including our historian al-Wāqidī, make not much of an exception to the rule. Though they appear vaguely concerned with the issues of authenticity and accuracy of their historical accounts, particularly the *hadīth*, they incline to record conflicting and contradictory reports or even the role of *deus ex machina* in the development or conclusion of an episode. Their concern for authenticity formalised in the disciplines such as *Isnād* and *Rijāl*; however, what rendered a certain report reliable for them was the unbroken chain of its transmitters (*Isnād*) rather than the intrinsic merit and plausibility as well of a reported event. A strict adherence to this principle was observed largely in *Hadīth*; less so in *Sīra* and least in *Tārīkh* (history). Al-Tabarī, who comes later than the early Islamic historians, has padded his *History of Messengers and Kings* with all sorts of chronicles he could lay his hands on. Anyhow, the historical narratives or accounts consist of "primitive elements" that take the form of a *chronicle* or *story* to be conveyed to an audience. In the words of Hayden White, "the historical work represents an attempt to mediate among what I will call the *historical field*, the unprocessed *historical record, other historical accounts,* and an *audience*."[159] In the chapters on al-Wāqidī's methodology, his process of selection and arrangement of data from the available or accessible historical record will be taken into consideration. The foundational works of Islamic history and their writers have already been introduced earlier. Understanding the distinction between 'history' and 'historiography' as modern scholarly terms in the discipline of history is essential for conceptualising a clear theoretical framework for a research work like this.

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[159] Hayden White. *Metahistory: the historical imagination in nineteent-century Europe*, (Baltimore and London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), p. 5.

Initially 'historiography' simply meant 'history writing', but in modern metahistorical terminology the term means 'history of history writing' with certain critical and philosophical dimensions to it, which renders it as philosophy and discipline. While history remains a narrative account of the past, historiography, as a discipline, critically studies features of history writing such as the methods, strategies and techniques employed by historians in producing historical accounts. It also considers the nature and method of argumentation and ideological implications if any to ascertain the worth of a certain historical account. For historiographers, to quote Hayden White, "the historical work as what it most manifestly is—that is to say, a verbal structure in the form of a narrative prose discourse that purports to be a model, or icon, of past structures and processes in the interest of *explaining what they were by representing them*."[160] Historiography involves deep reflection over the nature of the functioning of history; that is how it works; what are the underlying principles involved in its functioning; what are the propelling forces involved in taking its course forward etc. In historiography they study all these factors to understand the given historical field in its depth. With reference to the 19th century historiography, White has methodically traced how historiographical processes work to not only to know "what happened" but also to explicate "the point of it all" or "what it all adds up to" eventually (p. 11). A historiographer may offer explanation 'by emplotment,' 'by argument' and 'by ideological implication'. In fact, a combination of these modes is discernible in a historiographical style. White, after Pepper, identifies the modes of Formism, Organicism, Mechanism, and Contexutalism for argument; the archetypes of Romance, Comedy, Tragedy, and Satire for emplotment; and for ideological implication the tactics of Anarchism, Conservatism, Radicalism, and Liberalism (p. x). The "Formist considers an explanation to be complete when a given set of objects has been properly identified, its class, generic, and specific attributes assigned, and labels attesting to its particularity attached to it"[161] in a given historical field. This mode though wide in 'scope' is considered 'dispersive.' Carlyle is a representative of this explanatory mode. "The Organicist is inclined to talk about the "principles" or "ideas" that inform the individual processes discerned in the field and all the processes taken as a whole."[162] However, such 'ideas' or 'principles' are not supposed to restrict human

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[160] Ibid, p. 2.
[161] Ibid, p. 14.
[162] Ibid, p. 16.

action from attaining its goals as it is in the case of Mechanistic mode. In this later approach, the thrust is on discovering the causal laws operative beneath the manifest processes in the historical field. A Mechanist "studies history in order to divine the laws that actually govern its operations and writes history in order to display in a narrative form the effects of those laws."[163] Their firm belief is in the perfect scientificity of the laws of historical forces, though yet to be discovered in full. White further stresses that "Ultimately, for the Mechanist, an explanation is considered complete only when he has discovered the laws that are presumed to govern history in the same way that the laws of physics are presumed to govern nature."[164] Hegel represents the former approach while Marx the latter. Last comes Contextualism of which Burckhardt of the 19th century remains the main proponent. This approach holds that historical events can be explained against the 'context' of their occurrence. "The determination of this functional interrelationship," to quote White, "is carried out by an operation that some modern philosophers called 'colligation'" (p. 18). By isolating elements for scrutiny, the Contextualist traces the interlinking "threads" of the event to determine its 'origins' in the past as well as its 'impact' and 'influence' in the subsequent time (p. 18). Historiographers, therefore, endeavour to grasp, explain, and formulate the laws operative in a historical field, while also talking about the historical consciousness and historical imagination. And upon this rest the proper methods they propound for studying and explaining history. Though historiography endeavours to achieve 'objectivity,' 'scientificity,' and 'realism,' to the full, its data cannot be as exact and empirically verifiable as in physical sciences, a feature common to all social sciences. In history, "there is no way of pre-establishing what will count as a 'datum' and what will count as 'theory' by which to explain what the data 'mean'" (p. 429). Though history is said to be a combination of science and art, little attention is focused on its artistic/poetic aspect. To work out this aspect, White has postulated four principal modes of historical consciousness: Metaphor, Synecdoche, Metonymy, and Irony (p. x-xi). In his opinion, historiography is an activity which is "at once poetic, scientific, and philosophical in its concerns" (p. xii). In White's opinion, the contemporary historiography must be disentangled from the 'Ironic perspective' within which it remains locked. Rather than strictly scientific or epistemological, it is the moral or

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[163] Ibid, p. 17.
[164] Ibid. The intext page numbers in the passage below refer to White, *op. cit.*

aesthetic grounds to prefer one vision of history over the other. His effort is in the direction of freeing historiography from "the Ironic condition" "from within which most of modern academic historiography is generated" (p. 434).

Now, 'historiography' and 'philosophy of history' are not identical either in that whereas the former treats given historical field/s as its subject of enquiry, the later focuses on certain questions relevant to all past. It studies the theoretical foundations of the practice, application, and social consequences of history and historiography. It focuses its philosophical attention on vicissitudes of history with all its attendant issues, such as social evolutionism, teleological sense, determinism, causality, propaganda or farce aspects. Ibn Khaldūn, Hegel, Marx, Croce, and Foucault, for instance, are considered great philosophers of history. In White's words, "The philosopher of history seeks not only to understand what happened in history but also to specify the criteria by which he can know when he has successfully grasped its meaning or significance."[165]

In the Islamic historiography tradition, a Spanish Muslim Ibn Khaludūn's is the most prominent name whose work *Muqaddimah* (*Prolegomena*) of 1377 is considered of foundational value the world over. The intended preface to a larger work on world history, it encompasses a number of subjects with 'historical method' and 'philosophy of history' in the main. This preface has come to acquire the value of an independent work by itself.

In the section below, the difference between positivist view of history and deconstructionist views of history will be discussed.

1.4.2 Positivist view of history

White mentions 'Positivism' as one of the three distinct schools of historical thought to take shape in the early nineteenth century (the other two being 'Romanticism' and 'Idealism').[166] This happened when Auguste Comte (d. 1857) gathered the dispersed threads of positivist thought to formulate this approach in his book *The Course in Positive Philosophy*. Positivism emerges from the view that the operations of the social phenomena are governed by the underlying absolute laws, as it is in the case of natural

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[165] Ibid, p. 428.
[166] Ibid, p. 39.

sciences, and which can be uncovered employing empirical, scientific method.[167] Since history is considered a science in this approach, like sociology, economics, and politics, the Positivists believe in applying the methods of the natural sciences to the study of history as well. The facts of history for them exist as external reality independent of the perception of the historian. "Historical positivism is the historiographical view that historical evidence requires no interpretation, the work of the historian being to compile the primary sources, "letting them speak for themselves."[168] They conceptualised history, therefore, as narratives of the past with the main task of the historian being the reconstruction of the past as it was, rather than foisting any particular view or interpretation on it; hence, their belief in the linear sequencing of the historical events and the predictability of the future historical course through the use of inductive methods.

Hegel's dialectics and Marx's historical materialism largely draw upon Positivism as revealed by their commitment to uncovering the underlying (quasi-)absolute laws of historical processes. This is what encourages Marx in particular to not only predict future course of history but also devise tools/means to control rather manipulate it. Though positivism dominated the historiographical scene during the 19th century, dissenting voices were heard against it in the 19th century itself. Burckhardt and Wilhelm Dilthey opposed the positivist method of history-writing. Empiricism was also criticised by Augustin Thierry and Jules Michelet as the right mode of history-writing. Openly opposing positivism by 1920, Giovanni Gentile wrote, ''Positivism was defeated in its major and minor representatives; persecuted, hunted, satirised in all its forms."[169]

Apart from its reductionism, historical positivism was also criticised on grounds that history (or human sciences in general) differs from natural sciences both in subject matter and method since they are ontologically and epistemologically distinct. And "Experimental methods and mathematical models do not generally apply to history,

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[167] John J. Macionis. *Sociology 14th Edition*. (Boston: Pearson, 2012), p. 11.
[168] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Positivism#Historical_positivism
[169] Giovanni Gentile. (1929) *Origini e dottrina del fascismo*. Rome: Libreria del Littorio. p. 21, (qtd. in Dylan Riley, 'The Paradox of Positivism'
https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/faculty/Riley/positivism.pdf)

and it is not possible to formulate general (quasi-absolute) laws in history."[170] Ergo, the local and the particular merited greater significance than universal and general.

Positivist view of history remained the dominant trend in historiography until the early 20th century when Albert Einstein's Relativity theory caused a dent to the study in natural sciences which ineluctably impacted the study of social sciences as well. His 'relativism' demolished 'absolutist' view of reality. This automatically demolished the concept of history being the quasi-absolute objective truth to be reconstructed in its pristine form by the historian without his subjectivity impacting the historical field in any way. Positivism was spurned by the first wave of German sociologist, including Max Weber and Georg Simmel, around the turn of the 20th century.

Hayden White's preference for moral or aesthetic visions of history over hardcore positivism (scientific or epistemological in strict sense), particularly in the absence of apodictic absolute laws, has been mentioned above.[171] Speaking of the same in *Traces and Threads*, Carlo Ginzburg says that White "has become interested less and less in the construction of a 'general science of society,' and more and more 'in the artistic side of the historian's work'—a shift not far removed from Croce's long battle against positivism, which inspired, among other things, his scorn toward the social sciences."[172] Antipositivist scepticism of the 20th century shifted the focus from the 'text' to the producer of the text. To quote Ginzburg again, "Historical narratives speak to us less about reality than they do about whoever has constructed them" (p. 3). R. G. Collingwood also upheld that "the kind of history one wrote, or the way one thought about history, was ultimately a function of the kind of man one was."[173] It was the subjective component in a text rather than the text itself what attracted the primary attention of historiographers in the post-positivist scenario. "The *Memoires* of Saint Simon or the lives of the early medieval saints," points out Ginzburg, "interest us not

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[170] Wallace and Gach. *History of Psychiatry and Medical Psychology* (New York: Springer, 2008), p. 28.
[171] Hayden White. *Metahistory: the historical imagination in nineteent-century Europe*, (Baltimore and London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), p. 433.
[172] Carlo Ginzburg. *Threads and Traces: True False Fictive* (University of California Press, California, 2012)
p. 170.
[173] (qtd. in White, *op. cit.*, p. 433.)

so much for their allusions to actual facts, which are often invented, as for the light they throw on the mentality of the writers of those texts."[174]

In the case of early Islamic historians, including al-Wāqidī, it was a sort of positivistic approach that they mostly adopted (though without being philosophically conscious of it); that is, collecting the historical fact as an external fact and then serialising the discontinuous chronicles in the continuous mode of a story, through a process of selection and rejection, under the belief that they were reconstructing the past as it was. But it was in this very process that their personal inclinations played an imperative role, secretly defying their personal intention. The interpretation or treatment of the same chronicle by a person of a different inclination rendered the story a completely new orientation frequently leading to different inferences about the historical events or agents involved. In the chapters on al-Wāqidī's methodology it will be seen how positivist approach worked in the processes of his history-writing.

1.4.3 Deconstructionist View of History

The rejection of the positivist view of history in either of its forms, contextualism (reconstructionism) or constructionism, in the first half of the 20th century asked for a new theoretical framework for understanding or explaining the historical discourse. It was soon provided by a new poststructuralist and postmodernist theory of deconstruction propounded by Jacque Derrida in the second half of the same century.[175] It was not proposed as a mode of investigating only the historical text but all types of texts in whatever discipline, which naturally included the historical texts as well. Derrida's clarification that 'deconstruction' is not to be confused with 'destruction' is further elucidated by Barbara Johnson who says that "*Decontruction* is not synonymous with *destruction*…. If anything is destroyed in a deconstructive reading, it is not the text, but the claim to unequivocal domination of one mode of signifying over another."[176] Derrida rejects logocentrism or 'metaphysics of presence' by arguing that there is no 'ultimate referent' or 'transcendental signified' outside the text ("il n'y a

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[174] Carlo Ginzburg. *Threads and Traces: True False Fictive* (University of California Press, California, 2012),
p. 3.
[175] The main argument of this theory was built by Jacques Derrida in his three books: *Of Grammatology, Writing and Difference*, and *Speech and Phenomena* (published in 1967).
[176] Barbara Johnson. *The Critical Difference : Essays in the Contemporary Rhetoric of Reading* (Baltimore : Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), p. 5.

rien hors du texte"). He further argues that all efforts of language in the direction of establishing a self-sustaining absolute truth outside the text are illusory, because in effect it offers no more than an indefinite signifier-signified play, in other words, an illusion of 'truth-effects' rather than a determinate truth 'out there.' He coins the term 'differance' (differ+defer) to bring home the concept. A deconstruction-conscious reading of a text exposes the conflicting forces within the text and subverts its claim to some 'determinate meaning' outside the text. To quote J. H. Miller, "Deconstruction is not a dismantling of the structure of a text but a demonstration that it has already dismantled itself."[177] The deconstructionist view of history has been enriched in its course of development by the thoughts of historiographers and philosophers such as Hayden White, Dominick LaCapra, David Harlan, Allan Megill, Keith Jenkins, F.R. Ankersmit, Philippe Carrard, Joan W. Scott, Patrick Joyce, Roger Chartier etc.

In the previous section, with reference to Hayden White and Carlo Ginzburg, we have noticed how the historical account shapes into a narrative with the tropological and figurative features of a story (with the only difference that events in a fictional story are invented). Troping is unavoidable since it facilitates the creation of meaning. Derrida's deconstruction, when applied in its wider connotations, reveals the historical account to be a literary enterprise rather than an objectivised empiricist undertaking. Historians are obliged to present their findings in the narrative form for them to make sense to the reader, and in so doing they impose their own emplotment, argument or ideology on their historical narrative which for a deconstructionist is yet another representation of the past rather than *the past* as it actually was. There is no way to directly encounter the past as an 'extrinsic referent' except through its representation in the historian's narrative. The nature of the figurative language is such that it carries the seeds of its undoing (deconstruction) in the very process of its doing (construction) against or in spite of the intention of its author. For further clarity, look at this reported *hadīth* for instance: "Abu Bakr as-Siddiq pulling his tongue said to 'Umar, 'This has brought me to dangerous places'" (*Muattā*, 56:12). The meaning that the reporter would like to project here is Abū Bakr's heightened consciousness of the use/abuse of language. However, the reporter is frustrated in his effort by the very structure of his narrative; that is, if Abū Bakr pulled his tongue he would not be able to utter meaningful sounds,

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[177] J.H. Miller. *Theory Now and Then* (Duke University Press, 1991), p. 126.

and if he uttered meaningful sounds, he must have released his tongue. The two actions together are not possible: the report thus undermines itself as a genuine report. Or, 'Ali in *Kitāb Sulaim* is reported to have said that he would have launched a revolt against Abū Bakr if he had as few as 40 men on his side.[178] The reporter projects here the insincerity of people towards 'Ali, but what gets projected against or in spite of his intention is that people did not see 'Ali's claim to power as legitimate, hence general apathy to his pleas. There is no way for us, therefore, to know the actual *truth* outside this narrative. The 'transcendental signified' in history is the supposed truth lying buried somewhere in the past and the historian's task being to exhume it through his probing of the evidence. But each such step on his part proves yet another remove from that *real* past rather than a step closer to it in the deconstructionist perception since what he provides is just another explanation of and not the *real* past as such. 'Facts' by themselves are mute unless a historian endows them with meaning through his explanation and interpretation and in so doing he imposes his perceptions/ideologies on them and thus always influences the nature of causality; hence, divorcing historian from history is an impossibility. The historical narrative is also seen interwoven with the demands of power and ideology. In the words of Alun Muslow, "Written history is always more than merely innocent story-telling, precisely because it is the primary vehicle for the distribution and use of power. The very act of organising historical data into a narrative not only constitutes an illusion of 'truthful' reality, but in lending a spurious tidiness to the past can ultimately serve as a mechanism for the exercise of power in contemporary society."[179] In the case of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* we have noticed that it was said to have been written to lend credence and legitimacy to the power structure of the day. Deconstruction poses a constant challenge to the traditional paradigm and holds that the past is never fixed as an absolute objective truth but a text to be revisited for multiple possibilities of meaning. History proceeds no further than offering the representations after representations of the past rather than rediscovering the past as such. Our knowledge of the past remains helplessly circumscribed to the historian's written interpretation. How s/he chooses to interpret the evidence or past explanations is what creates the past for the reader. Deconstructionist historians study not only the content of the

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[178] Al-Ansārī and M. Baqir, eds. *Kitab Sulaim b. Qais al-Hilali*, 5th ed. (Qum, H. Kitab Khana Milli, Iran, 1386), p. 588. Online PDF: http://alzahrapdf.blogspot.com/2014/04/blog-post_27.html
[179] Alun Munslow. *Deconstructing History* (Routledge, London and New York, 2005), p. 13.

narrative but also its literary form. Munslow says, "The deconstructionist historian… maintains that evidence only signposts possible realities and possible interpretations because all contexts are inevitably textualised or narrativised or texts within texts."[180] White argues that historical narratives "are verbal fictions, the contents of which are as much invented as found and the forms of which have more in common with their counterparts in literature than they have with those in the sciences."[181] For Carr, echoing Collingwood's general position:

> the facts of history never come to us 'pure' since they do not and cannot exist in a pure form: they are always refracted through the mind of the recorder. It follows that when we take up a work of history, our first concern should not be with the facts which it contains but with the historian who wrote it."[182]

Deconstructionist analysis throws a challenge to the emplotted or prefigured form of narrative interwoven with ideological insinuations and equations of power. The deconstructionist historian would like to uncover if that power is used to create a usable past for the present social structures. For Michel Foucault, all written history can never be free from the wilful act of the historian's emplotment of data and, thus, it remains an ideological product of its age.[183] In Roland Barthes' opinion history is 'at best a fudged-up performative and unavoidably ideological.' In deconstructive view of history, all

> written narratives *are* supported by a philosophy or ideology, often buried so deeply that no amount of conscious historical awareness can eliminate it; and second, because it relates stories about real past events in the evidence, deconstructionist history is not a fictional narrative. But, as a form of representation, all historical narrative proposals are shaped by the conventions of rhetoric and language-use – emplotment, argument and other culturally provided constraints, both material and ideological.[184]

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[180] Ibid, p. 26.
[181] Hayden White. 'The Historical Text as Literary Artifact', in *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), p. 82.
[182] E.H. Carr. *What Is History?* (London, Penguin, second edition, 1987), p. 65.
[183] Rudy Koshar. 'Foucault and Social History: Comments on "Combined Underdevelopment"', *American Historical Review* 98, no. 2 (April 1993), pp. 354–363.
[184] Alun Munslow. *Deconstructing History* (Routledge, London and New York, 2005), PDF, p. 70.

Raising serious questions about the structuring of the narrative, intention of the author, and creation of truth-effect illusion in history, deconstructionists conclude that all historical interpretation is "provisional, relative and constructed. Deconstruction, as a historical method, is the de-layering of these constructed meanings and interpretations."[185] Self-reflexivity generated by deconstructionist perception enables historians to see the multiplicity of truth and that language clouds rather than clarifies meaning and so they write about a past within a self-conscious framework employing deconstructive strategies to dismantle the ideological mystifications operative beneath a text. To sum it up, the de-layering or

> This peeling-back process seeks out that which is repressed in the text (primary or secondary) – not only what is hidden from the naïve reader but also what is hidden from the intentions of author(s). The deconstructive historian seeks out that which is present in the text that runs against the grain of what, at first blush, it appears to assert. This self-conscious reflexivity seeks out that which is avoided and suppressed as well as that which is openly de-legitimised and denied. We must constantly seek out that which, in the name of objectivity and rationality, the text is indifferent to – what many historians call 'the other'.[186]

Having sought clarity about these complex aspects of theoretical framework, we turn now to deal with another significant aspect of current move into 'meaning-making'. After the general discussion of the subject with regard to al-Wāqidī's work, we will consider some concrete examples from his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* to understand his processes of meaning-making, how and why certain details appear in his work and his idealisation of the Prophet[sa].

1.4.4 Literature beyond the Historical Debate:

Current Move into Meaning-Making

As hinted earlier, the debate with regard to the historic Muḥammad[sa] is often classified as a "hopeless situation",[187] chiefly because the debate, as it has hitherto been conducted, has largely been superficial and conducted dogmatically.[188] There are very

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[185] I.bid, p. 102.
[186] Ibid, p. 102
[187] Harald Motzki. "Introduction," p. xiv.
[188] Berg. "Exegesis in Early Islam," pp. 49–50.

few people who would dispute, for instance, the following claim made by Donner: "The problem is that this detailed picture of Muhammad's career is drawn not from documents or even stories dating from Muhammad's time, but from the literary sources that were compiled many years – sometimes centuries – later. The fact that these sources are so much later, and shaped with very specific objectives in mind, means that they often do not tell us many things about which we would like to know more."[189] Yet, even Donner in his account of the early Islamic conquests in Iraq and Syria, suggests that the criticism over the employment of the primary sources as accurate representations of early Islamic history is "exaggerated" and "unwarranted."[190] Likewise, even those who harbour the critical position contend that the extant sources have utility of their own. Peacock, for instance, concludes that "[historiography], if treated in the right way, can…offer a much more nuanced view of the past [as historical] writing is our principal [if not our only] source for the past of Islamic civilisations."[191]

Thus, a less stagnant and a fresher approach to Islamic historiography, focuses less on the question of the veracity of a historical account and, instead, more on its social, cultural and intellectual anchoring. This is perhaps more in line with the discipline's emphasis on how Islamic historians made Islamic history intelligible and meaningful. Historical literature, which might be broadly defined as contextual and interpretive, ought to be concerned with placing early Islamic historical writing within its correct social, political and historical context. That is, literature in this vein emphasises the necessity of understanding the given socio-cultural milieu within which the Islamic historical writings emerged. Al-Dūrī's *The Rise of Historical Writing among the Arabs* is a case in point here. He argues that understanding the cultural currents underlying historical writing is essential as the latter "can only be understood in terms of other cultural activities and developments", and further to study historical writing in isolation will result in "a confused and incomplete understanding of its origins and developments."[192] As a whole, al-Dūrī focuses on the *maghāzī* scholars, namely the Islamic historians who explored Muḥammad's military campaigns, paying particular attention to Abbān ibn Uthmān ibn Affān, 'Urwa ibn al-Zubayr, Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī, Ibn

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[189] Donner. "Muhammad," pp. 50–51.
[190] Donner. "Islamic Conquests," p. iv.
[191] Peacock. "Islamic Historiography", p. 174.
[192] al-Dūrī. "Historical Writing," p. 136.

Isḥāq and al-Wāqidī. In arguing that historical writing is shaped by cultural and religious factors alongside contingent currents and intellectual perspectives, al-Dūrī distinguishes between the ḥadīth scholars of Medīna and the tribal scholars of Iraq, clearly favouring the former as representatives of legitimate modes of historiography while critiquing the latter as producers of fictional, exaggerated and glorified accounts of the battles and conquests of the early Islamic period.[193]

Another work aligned to the interpretive or contextual tradition is Khalidi's Arab Historical Thought in the Contemporary Period.[194] Through extensive engagement with the extant Islamic literature, this commendable interpretive study finds the existence of different epistemic traditions, namely ḥadīth, adab, ḥikma and siyāsa (i.e., the Prophet's sayings, literature, philosophy and politics), in Islamic history which accord to different time periods. Likewise, Robinson's comprehensive Islamic Historiography can also be placed within this tradition, given that he is chiefly concerned with how, following E.H. Carr, historical literatures are very much part of the historical fabric in which they are written; that is, the writing of history – Islamic historiography included – is a historically conditioned practice.[195] Although critical of Khalidi for not taking the analysis as far as it could go, Robinson is in basic agreement with the tenet that "notions of historical truth are variable, and conditioned by social life."[196] Thus from this vantage point, the chief aim while analysing early Islamic historical texts is to consider the extent to which, and the way in which, the histories contained within a text are a product of the social, political and even historical milieu.

The definition of the field of Islamic historiography, discussed above, suggests it was a field of study ultimately concerned with *how* early Islamic historians made history intelligible and meaningful. That is, Islamic historiography is principally a study of the historical method of Islamic historians. The problem here, however, is that method is often overlooked by scholars working in the field. In her doctoral thesis, Straley writes that "[with the exception of Ibn Khaldūn] few attempts have been made to study the

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[193] Ibid, pp. 23–33, 94–95, 137–138 and 155.
[194] Tarif Khalidi. *Arab Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
[195] Chase F. Robinson. "Islamic Historical Writing," p. 5.
[196] Chase F. Robinson. "The Study of Islamic Historiography: A Progress Report," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 7, no. 2 (July 1997), pp. 224–225.

methods and attitudes of individual Islamic historians."[197] Although Straley's observation is almost four decades old, to this day it encapsulates the principal disciplinary trends, as indicated by the overview of the discipline in this section. And this is problematic because, despite articulating a strong degree of caution toward the sources of early Islamic history, Humphreys argues that a study of method is how the field could overcome such uncertainty. That is, it is only through a study of method together with social and cultural institutions and milieu in which *history is written* can we hope to obtain a clearer meaning of *what history is* to each individual historian concerned.[198]

Indeed, if the field of Islamic historiography is best thought of as being concerned with *how* questions, then this sort of focus seems entirely pertinent and in line with the discipline *tout court*. As Rosenthal notes, the issue of authenticity is a primary concern when one is asking *what* questions, namely what "is the historical importance of the thing which an author says?" If on the other hand one is concerned with *how* questions – namely what "did he do with whatever information was available to him" – then the issues surrounding the use of primary sources appear less problematic.[199] From this vantage point, therefore, the purpose of contemporary Islamic historiographers is to treat the surviving texts as cultural artefacts and explore them on the basis that they can provide insights into the ideas and philosophy of a particular civilisation at a specific moment of its history.

If this is indeed an appropriate framework for conducting Islamic historiography, it is sadly lacking in terms of the secondary literature specific to al-Wāqidī. The secondary literature is largely populated with concerns over the veracity and authenticity of al-Wāqidī's text. In turn, a more in-depth analysis of the way in which al-Wāqidī rendered Islamic history is conspicuous by its absence in the contemporary scholarship. If true, then this necessitates a study such as this one.

With this background of meaning-making in the Islamic historiography, we will very briefly look in the section below at how and why certain details appear in al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, that is his process of selecting materials, and gather insights into his

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[197] Dona S. Straley. *Perspective and Method in Early Islamic Historiography: A Study of al- Ṭabarī's Ta'rīkh al-Rusl wa 'l-Mulūk* (PhD, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 1977), p. 12.
[198] Humphreys. "*Islamic History"*, p. 70.
[199] Rosenthal. "*Muslim Historiography*," p. 6.

method of meaning-making and idealisation of Muhammad[sa]. A detailed discussion of meaning-making and idealisation of the Prophet[sa] will appear in the final chapter.

1.4.5 Meaning-Making and Idealisation

Examples of meaning-making and idealisation of the Prophet[sa] in al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* are numerous. Majority of the anecdotes carry details which underscore his efforts towards meaning-making, though marked by inconsistency in places, with the ultimate aim of idealising the Prophet's character. Inconsistency occurs whenever he reads into his character the typical contemporaneous Arab characteristics of which the Prophet[sa] otherwise appears an antithesis in the fundamentals of his Call and Practice. This is done perhaps under the impression as though the typical Arab characteristics would create an ennobling effect about the Prophet's persona, an example of presentism indeed. The examples of idealisation are scattered throughout the text of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* of which just a few would be hinted at here.

Al-Wāqidī[200] selects narratives that show the veracity of the Prophet's claim to prophethood; his miraculous powers (95, 119, 318, 322, 329, 441); direct help he receives from God on occasions (39, 116, 117); his knowledge of the unknown (64, 416, 457); his sense of equity and justice; his kindness (65,66, 419, 420, 422); his exemplary uprightness; his acute military sense (113); his ability to see through people and situations (64, 104); his ability to assign right job to right people (108, 127); his modesty, humility and temperance in all situations (406); his exemplary self-composure and patience; his aversion to low character and immodest language or expressions (58, 127); his valour and capacity of taking risks; his political acumen and negotiating skills (88, 144, 390); his capacity of taking pre-emptive measures to avert a bigger problem; his exemplary fearlessness in the face of extreme danger (97, 106, 118, 123, 438, 441); his remembrance of God both in adversity and prosperity (p. 106,107, 108, 110); his unparalleled generosity and munificence (419, 420, 425); his soft-heartedness (p. 141); considerateness to people's opinion (316); and his belief in the perfect human equality, qualified only by piety (p. 411).

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[200] All page numbers in this section refer to:
Rizwi Faizer, ed. *The Life of Muhammad*: *Al-Wāqidī's Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, trans. Rizwi Faizer, Amal Ismail and Abdul Kader Tayob, ed. Rizwi Faizer (New York: Routledge, 2011), Online copy: https://www.questia.com/read/126124631/the-life-of-mu-ammad-al-w-qid-s-kit-b-al-magh-z

Regarding the Prophet's adversaries, Al-Wāqidī would choose details which show their tendency to pomp and show, arrogance and pride, deeply-entrenched tribal bias, and extreme hostility towards the Prophet^{sa} and his pure monotheism (the characteristics of which the Prophet^{sa} is mostly projected as an antithesis); their preparations for the Battles of Badr and Uhud are just two instances out of numerous others scattered throughout the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Such details are selected to strike a contrast and suggest how different the character of the Prophet^{sa} was from that of his adversaries. He would also pick the details that would establish the ardent faith, valour and selflessness of the Prophet's followers mostly leading them to victory, whereas the disobedience to the Prophet^{sa} leading to their disgrace (113, 115). He would mention those companions both male and female who showed extreme devotion to the Prophet^{sa} (131) as well as those who cheated, detested and betrayed him (130,132, 134), with the intention of portraying the former in the positive light; and the worst of the Prophet's enemies acknowledging his virtues (419, 422); how the Prophet^{sa} was protected and strengthened by the unseen powers (446); and the role of the weird and the uncanny (414, 438, 445); hence idealising his character.

He would also mention details which seem to explain or form a context to certain verses of the Qur'an of which the instances are found all over the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* (66, 393), such as regarding Badr, Uhud, Hunain and other occasions. For a clearer understanding of these features, several examples from the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* are analysed in detail in the final chapter. From that analysis it would appear, therefore, that the details al-Wāqidī selects are not for the sake of bland narration but an intelligible narration composed in the service of 'meaning-making' anchored in the eventual idealisation of the character of the Prophet^{sa} in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Apart from this, his tendency of precision about dates, time, chronology, names and numbers is also considered an effort towards making his biography meaningful.

In the section below we focus our attention on al-Wāqidī's life and the background of his historical composition for a proper understanding of his method of collection of materials, emplotment, and narrative formation which contributed to his 'meaning-meaning' and 'idealisation' strategies.

1.5 Situating al-Wāqidī and His Work in the Relevant Cultural Milieu

This section situates al-Wāqidī's Kitāb al-Maghāzī within the wider social, intellectual and political milieu in which al-Wāqidī lived and wrote, in view of the vital significance of the context for the analysis of historical texts and thought. In Mottahedeh's words, the writing of history is often shaped by the "pressures of immediate political circumstances."[201] Here, the focus, therefore, is on the key biographical details, the attendant cultural and political circumstances and the main intellectual canon that al-Wāqidī's Kitāb al-Maghāzī belongs to, the subject of study in this thesis. This discussion is followed by a brief introduction and outline of the text itself which is ascribed to al-Wāqidī and defended as a reliable work of early Islamic history.

1.5.1 The Man

In order to contextualise al-Wāqidī, this section discusses his early life and his devotion to education and learning, illustrates his love of books and writing, considers his later adult life in Baghdad and closes by addressing the question of al-Wāqidī's alleged attachment to the Shi'a doctrine.

Abū Abdullah Muhammad b. 'Umar al-Wāqidī (d. 207/823), who was born in Medinā circa 130/747, is an Islamic historian and a scholar and biographer of the Prophet Muhammad[sa]. Though occupied in wheat sale, he was known to be a tireless collector of information on the Life of the Prophet Muhammad[sa] and an avid collector of books.[202] It is believed that al-Wāqidī had amassed over 600 separate chests of books by the time he died in Baghdad.[203]

He was raised during the era of the last *Tabi'īn* (lit. 'successors' or 'followers'), those who were born after the death of the Prophet Muhammad[sa] but nevertheless met his companions.[204] This early-life exposure inspired al-Wāqidī to learn the *Ḥadīth*, the narrations of the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad[sa], which were considered

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[201] Roy P. Mottahedeh. "Foreword," in *Modern Islamic Thought*, ed. Hamid Enayat (New York: I.B. Taurus, 2005), p. ix.
[202] Al-Wāqidī . The Life of Muhammad: Al-Wāqidī 's Kitāb *al-Maghāzī* , trans. Rizwi Faizer, Amal Ismail and Abdul Kader Tayob, ed. Rizwi Faizer (London: Routledge, 2011), p. xi.
[203] Robinson. "Islamic Historiography," p. 7.
[204] Muhammad Zubair Siddiqi. Ḥadīth Literature: Its Origin, Development and Special Features (Cambridge, UK: Islamic Texts Society, 1993), p.28.

relevant and authentic at the time.[205] Education, especially of religious nature, was central to al-Wāqidī's intellectual development. There exists an account of the first time al-Wāqidī, along with his brother Shamla, attended *al-Kuttāb* (elementary school). His mother, Bint Īsā b. Ja'far b. Sā'ib Khāthir, clearly impressed on the young al-Wāqidī the importance of education and learning.[206] The evidence still exists to show that al-Wāqidī's mother inspired her son to lead a life dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge.[207]

Ingrained in the pedagogical practices of the time, namely oral transmission, it is widely believed that al-Wāqidī excelled in memory and recollection.[208] He was also keen to anchor his knowledge in observation informed by his own experience. It is acknowledged, for instance, that he collected historical material in the Hejaz and directly visited the sites of the military campaigns in order to acquire firsthand a deeper understanding of the historical era and the *maghāzī* he was fundamentally interested in.[209]

Recognised as a learned authority on the Islamic history and *hadīth*, al-Wāqidī was obviously known to the social and political elite of the time. When Harun al-Rashīd, the fifth Abbasid Caliph, visited Medīna after performing the *hajj*, it was al-Wāqidī who acted as a tour guide for al-Rashīd around Madina.[210] Shortly thereafter, al-Wāqidī moved to Baghdad, the capital of the Abbasid caliphate, where he was appointed as a *qāḍī* (judge) by either al-Rashīd or al-Ma'mūn, al-Rashīd's son.[211] This demonstrates that, just like his senior contemporary Ibn Ishāq, al-Wāqidī too enjoyed the support of the Abbasid court.[212] He remained a *qāḍī* in Baghdad until his death in the year 207/823.[213] This fact has a particular bearing upon any study of al-Wāqidī as for some it provides a degree of evidence that al-Wāqidī's main purpose in writing *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was primarily political.

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[205] Dhahabī. Siyar a'lām al-nubalā', Vol. 8, p. 291. Some of his masters were Imām Mālik, Thūr b. Yazīd.
[206] Ibid, p. 293; al-Wāqidī, Muhammad. *Kitāb al-Maghāzī, Vol 1,* ed. Marsden Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 5.
[207] Muḥammad ibn Sa'd ibn Manī' al-Zuhrī, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrá* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā ' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1996) p. 415.
[208] Ibid, p. 255.
[209] al-Khatīb.al-Baghdādī. *Tārīkh Baghdād; aw madīnat al-Salām, Vol. 3* (Beirut:Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī,1966), p.6.
[210] Al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī ,*" p. xi.
[211] Ibid, p. xi.
[212] Aisha Y. Musa. "Ḥadīth Studies," in *The Bloomsbury Companion to Islamic Studies*, ed. Clinton Bennett (New York, NY: Bloomsbury), p. 85.
[213] Ibn Sa'd. al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrá, p. 9

Whether or not he was inclined toward Shi'ism has been a subject of enquiry and debate with the classical as well modern scholars. Ibn al-Nadīm, who authored *al-Fihrist* (a catalogue of celebrated books), claims that al-Wāqidī was a follower of *tuqiah* (equivocal speech) principles. Such principles enable followers of Shi'ism to outwardly project themselves as followers of Sunnism if an explicit and overt dedication toward Shi'ism would bring danger to them. Ibn al-Nadīm also alleged that al-Wāqidī venerated Alī b. Abī Tālib (cousin and son-in- law of the Prophet[sa] and the fourth Rashidūn Caliph),[214] and the first rightful Imām for the Shi'as.

In the introduction to his translation of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, Marsden Jones, a modern Scholar, makes the case that since al-Wāqidī wrote chronicles of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, entitled the *Mawlīd al-Ḥasan Wa al-Ḥusayn* and the *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, his wider allegiance to the Shi'a doctrine and tradition stands confirmed.[215]

However, it is possible to reject the claims made by Ibn al-Nadīm and Marsden Jones on the basis that they are spurious. Take al-Nadīm's claims, for instance. The controversial claim that al-Wāqidī was a Shi'a is rather a rare one that has not been entertained by anyone but his follower, Muḥsin al-Amīn.[216] In addition, if al-Wāqidī was indeed aligned with Shi'a doctrine, one would assume that his name and work would feature more frequently and prominently in the Shi'a exegeses/literature.[217] Given that this is not the case, al-Nadīm's claims appear to lack substance. The same holds true of Jones' claims. In addition to the books mentioned by him, al-Wāqidī also produced the *Hayāt Wa Wafāt Abū Bakr* (the life and death of Abū Bakr), which in turn would suggest that al-Wāqidī was not solely concerned with chronicling the lives of important figures in the Shi'a doctrine.[218] Moreover, 'Alī, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are equally venerated by the Sunnis as well; hence, writing on them should not count as writing on exclusively Shi'a figures or a defence of the Shi'a creed. If it was indeed the case that writing specifically about figures central to the Shi'a doctrine automatically equates one to being Shi'a, then it would be necessary to extend this classification beyond al-

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[214] Muhammad Ibn al-Nadīm. *al-Fihrist* (Beirut: Dār al- Maʿrifah, 1997), p.144
[215] Muhammad al-Wāqidī. *Kitāb al-Maghāzī, Vol. 1*, ed. Marsden Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 16.
[216] Abd al-'Azīz al-Salūmī. *Al-Waqidī wa Kitābuh al-Magāzī.* (Madina: al-Gāmiʿah al-Aslāmyīah. 2004), p. 136.
[217] Abd al-'Azīz al-Salūmī. *Al-Waqidī wa Kitābuh al-Magāzī.* p. 135; al-Sulami, Muḥammad. *Manhag Kitābat al-Tarīkh al-Aslamī* (Saudi: Dār Ibn al-Gawzī. 2006), p. 356.
[218] Abd al-'Azīz al-Salūmī. *Al-Waqidī wa Kitābuh al-Magāzī*, p.136.

Wāqidī to include many other well-known scholars. Another evidence refuting the claim is al-Wāqidī's upholding Muhammad b. Maslamah as the killer of the Jewish strongman Marhab at Khaybar, even though in the Shi'a literature it is 'Alī who is celebrated as the one who finished him off. As 'Alī and Muhammad b. Maslamah stood before the Prophet[sa] arguing about killing Marhab, Ali finally concedes that he severed Marhab's head only after his legs had been cut off and he lay on the ground helpless: "'Alī said, "He is truthful. I cut off his head after his legs had been cut off….They all said that Muhammd b. Maslamah killed Marhab."[219] This portrayal of 'Alī is beyond a person of Shiite leanings. Had he been so, al-Wāqidī would also have avoided mentioning that "The Messenger of God forbids you…from pleasure marriages with women…,"[220] which is what goes against the Shi'a creed in which pleasure marriage (*mut'ah*) is a solemn and spiritually rewarding practice to this day. Clearly, then, associating al-Wāqidī with Shi'ism is a problematic and spurious argument.

In sum, this section has provided a potted biographical account of al-Wāqidī's life: highlighting the centrality of learning and education in his formative years, hinting at al-Wāqidī's association with the 'Abbāsids court – the ruling elite of the time; and challenging a persistent although obtuse accusation of al-Wāqidī's Shi'ism. Now, we turn to the socio-politico-cultural conditions having a bearing upon the composition of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*.

1.5.2 The Maghazi Tradition

Having provided both a biographical and politico-cultural context for al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, this section undertakes to facilitate the understanding of the intellectual tradition to which al-Wāqidī's work belongs, namely the *maghāzī* tradition. Although the distinction is often less clear in practice, the *maghāzī* literature is usually distinguished from works that fall broadly within the *sīra* (i.e. biography) tradition. After providing broad definitions of the two scholarly traditions, this section, drawing on al-Dūrī's *The Rise of Historical Writing among the Arabs*, outlines the principal tenets of, as well as scholars associated with, the *maghāzī* tradition.

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[219] al-Wāqidī. *al-Maghāzī*, p. 323.
[220] Ibid, p. 325.

Maghāzī and *sīra*, although often used interchangeably, are usually distinguished as two separate genres of early Islamic writing. The *sīra* literature developed in the period immediately following the death of the Prophet and is closely associated with the development, spread and consolidation of *Ḥadīth*. It was aimed to bring a deeper understanding of the Prophet's life to the developing Muslim community. In Kirster's words, the *sīra* literature was concerned with establishing "a record of the life of contemporary society, reflecting as it did the mutual relations between the Prophet and his society."[221]   Relevant and pertinent works in this genre usually include: Al-Ma'mun's *A'lām al-Nubūwwah* (the proofs of prophecy); al-Jāhiz's *Dalā'il al-Nubūwwah* (the signs of prophethood); al-Jūzjānī's *Amarāt al-Nubūwwah* (prophethood); Ibn Qutaybah's *A'lām al-Nubūwwah*; and *Dalā'il al-Nubūwwah* books by Ibn Abi 'al-Ḍunya, Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī, al-Firyābi, Ibrāhīm b. Hammād b. Ishāq, Muḥammad b. al-Hasan al-Naqqāsh, Abu 'l-Shaykh al-Isfahānī, Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Shāshī, Abū Hafṣ ʿUmar b. Shāhīn and ʿAbd al-Malik b. Muḥammad al-Khargush. As a whole, the *sīra* genre is generally concerned with recording the Prophet's life, evidencing and verifying the actions he took and glorifying his actions through stories and narrations about the miracles he performed.[222]

Notwithstanding these elements within the *maghāzī* genre, the *term maghāzī* is "specifically applied to the accounts of the early Muslim military expeditions in which the Prophet [and/or his Companions] took part."[223] So, although *maghāzī* texts would include other events such as the Prophet's last pilgrimage, these texts were predominantly devoted to chronicling the major battles of early Islam such as Badr, Uḥud and Khaybar etc. Perhaps what best characterises the *maghāzī* tradition is its concern with blending both *Ḥadīth* (received sources of authority) and *Akhbār* (historical/narrative reports) on the basis that *maghāzī* scholars were first and foremost concerned with accurately recording historical events. As well, *maghāzī* texts usually involved, as Jones puts it, "a mélange of prose and verse" in an attempt to paint a more vivid and fuller account of the Prophet's campaigns.[224]

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[221] M.J. Kirster. "The *Sirah* Literature," in *Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period,* eds. A.F.L. Beeston, T.M. Johnstone, R.B. Serjeant and G.R. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 353.
[222] Ibid, p. 355.
[223] Jones. "Maghazi," p. 344.
[224] Jones. "Maghazi," p. 344.

The tradition, according to al-Dūrī, can be traced back to Abān ibn 'Uthmān b. ʿAffān (d. 105/723), the son of the third Caliph, and taken forward most prominently by scholars attached to Medīna, namely 'Urwah ibn Zubayr (d. 94/713), Wahb ibn Munabbih (d. 110/728) and Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 124/741).[225] Although no known surviving text has been attributed to Ibn 'Uthmān, he is characterised as having a "special knowledge of the subject."[226] Munabbih's influence on the genre, on the other hand, was largely downplayed by later authorities.[227] Thus, the two *maghāzī* scholars generally seen as the originators of the literature, at least by contemporary scholars, are 'Urwa and al-Zuhrī. Below, we will assess the influence of these two luminaries on the development of the *maghāzī* literature.

'Urwa, was born sometime between the years 22 and 29 AH and died sometime between the years 92 and 101 AH, 713 AD.[228] From a notable Quraysh family, 'Urwa was held in high esteem as an eminent *Ḥadīth* scholar.[229] From what is known about his work, not extant unfortunately, is that it equally recognised the importance of the *sīra* and the *umma* and the history of the Prophet, and indeed Islam. It belonged not only to the learned but "was representative of a more general social and cultural appeal."[230] Al-Zuhrī, on the other hand is regarded as a "nodal point" in the *maghāzī* tradition as his "influence on the development of the *maghāzī* cannot be questioned and it seems probable that it is with him that it first became structured in the form familiar to us [in the extant sources]."[231] Born sometime between 50 and 58 AH and living until the year 124AH/741-742 AD, al-Zuhrī is regarded as the "first true historian" of the *maghāzī* tradition.[232] A student of 'Urwa, al-Zuhrī was also an expert in *Ḥadīth* and *Isnād* ; however, he did "introduce a new concept, the collective *Isnād*, under which he would combine a number of accounts into a single continuous narrative [and in doing so] he took an important step towards continuous historical writing."[233]

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[225] al-Duri. "Historical Writing," pp. 25–32.
[226] Jones. "Maghazi," p. 345.
[227] Ibid, p. 345.
[228] al-Duri. "Historical Writing," p. 77.
[229] Ibid, p. 78.
[230] Ibid, p. 95.
[231] Jones. "Maghazi," p. 345.
[232] al-Duri. "Historical Writing," p. 27.
[233] Ibid, p. 29.

Although 'Urwa and al-Zuhrī were no doubt the originators of the *maghāzī* genre, it is the surviving works of al-Wāqidī and Ibn Ishāq which "crystallised [the *maghāzī* literature] into a pattern that remained little changed during subsequent generations."[234] Ibn Ishāq's *Sīrat Rasūl Allah* [biography of the Messenger of God] is generally seen as the primary *maghāzī* text. This extant text was compiled by Ibn Hishām, a younger contemporary of al-Wāqidī, and is available in English.[235] Nevertheless, given the nature of how Ibn Ishāq's text has come down to us, it is possible to contend that al-Wāqidī's text is "the 'earliest' composition on the Prophet's life that has come down to us in its entirety."[236] Thus, its importance to the field of Islamic historiography cannot be underestimated. His *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is generally seen as providing the foundation for later works such as Ibn Saʿd's *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt* (Book of the Classes) and al-Tabari's *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk* (History of Messengers and Kings).[237]

Many scholars, and especially those aligned with the critical approach outlined in the previous chapter, reject the historical reliability of the *maghāzī* literature on the basis that its method of transmission and its use of combined reports make it more fiction than fact.[238] Nevertheless, as Jones makes clear, the *maghāzī* tradition, in respect of its richness, remains a vital source of information about the development of the Islamic community as well as the scholarly traditions of the time.[239] However, as regards al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, it has escaped the serious and sustained attention of the Islamic historiographers, save the debates over plagiarism and issues of reliability. Faizer and Rippin have also noticed that there have "been no recent exhaustive studies that have been devoted to considering the work's overall contribution and value to history."[240] A proper analysis of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is therefore overdue. This stupendous task cannot be accomplished in one research work, this

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[234] Jones. "Maghazi," p. 347.
[235] al-Duri. "Historical Writing," p. 33; Andrew Rippin. "Review: The Rise of Historical Writing among the Arabs by A.A. al-Duri," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 48, no. 2 (June 1985), p. 358; al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*", p. xiii.
[236] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*", p. xiii.
[237] Ibid, p. xi.
[238] Rizwi Faizer. "Sira," in *Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Josef W. Meri (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 754.
[239] Jones. "Maghazi," p. 345.
[240] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī* ", p. xiv.

work nonetheless is a significant step in that direction, which is focused on a thorough study of al-Wāqidī's method.

This section has briefly reviewed the *maghāzī* genre of Islamic historical writing in order to place al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* in its correct historical and scholarly context. Tracing the evolution of the genre and highlighting its main concerns, it has asserted the centrality of al-Wāqidī's place in the genre, though deprived so far of the scholarly attention it actually deserves. A proper overview of al-Wāqidī's text is the next significant step in this regard, which is the subject of our next section.

1.5.3 A Brief Introduction of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*

Having contextualised al-Wāqidī's work, this section now moves on to introduce and outline his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. It first ascertains the ascription of the historical tome to al-Wāqidī by drawing on the extant sources. Next, it considers how far al-Wāqidī's work can be thought of as a significant, reliable and relevant source of the Prophet's biography. And last, it considers the main content and construction of the book.

As we discussed in the previous chapter, one of the principal issues that researchers working within the field of Islamic historiography face relates to the disputed credibility of the extant sources. The sceptical argument states that since the extant sources cannot be verified, their authenticity must be questioned. To address this concern, therefore, it is necessary first to explore the credibility of al-Wāqidī as the author of *al-Maghāzī*. By drawing on existing literature in the field, it will be established that al-Wāqidī is indeed the author of *al-Maghāzī* and that his book has for a long time been perceived as one of the fundamental sources in the field of the *sīra* and *maghāzī* literature.

First, there is a clear evidence in the extant sources that al-Wāqidī was a respected and knowledgeable teacher and an expert in the Prophet's biography genre. Al-Khaṭīb and al-Ḍhahabī, amongst others, note that al-Wāqidī held a class at the Prophet's mosque and that he lectured extensively on the Prophet's military campaigns.[241] In view of al-Wāqidī's recognised competence and mastery of the subject, it is not difficult to imagine that he could have authored an authoritative text on the subject.

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[241] Baghdādī. *Tārīkh Baghdād*, *Vol. 3*, p. 7; Dhahabī. *Siyar aʻlām al-nubalā'*, *Vol.9*, p .460.

Secondly, and more importantly, a number of Islamic historians involved in the compilation of al-Wāqidī's biography incontestably attribute *al-Maghāzī* to his penmanship. Ibn Nadīm, for instance, identified al-Wāqidī as *inter alia* the author of *al-Maghāzī*.[242] And so did Yaqūt. [243] Amongst certain scholars al-Wāqidī was alternatively known as the lord of *al-Maghāzī*.[244] This would suggest indubitably that al-Wāqidī was recognised not only as the author of *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* but also an established authority on the Prophet's campaigns for his work. Ibn Hajar, who provided a summary of al-Wāqidī's *al-Maghāzī* entitled *Muntaqā min Maghāzī al-Wāqidī* (Selections from al-Wāqidī's *al-Maghāzī*), held him in such a high esteem that he declared: "[al-Wāqidī] is considered as a reference [ultimate authority on the Prophet's campaigns] by most of the scholars." Many historians including Ibn Ḥajar and Ibn Saʿd heavily drew upon al-Wāqidī's content in their respective works on early Islamic history.[245] Equally important, al-Wāqidī's work seemed to enjoy a wide-spread appeal. Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī for instance, proclaimed that "[al-Wāqidī's] books on the Prophet's campaigns were the talk of the people everywhere."[246] Thus, not only was al-Wāqidī identified as the indisputable author of the work in question, the popularity, fame and widespread circulation of his book were also established.

Lastly, this major work of al-Wāqidī's has been translated into English on three separate occasions, as already mentioned at the start of this chapter. The 20th century translations by Marsden Jones and Rizwi Faizer have survived today's rigorous academic review process and have been, for the most part, welcomed by the Islamic historiographer's community of our day. Thus, the consensus so far that al-Wāqidī is indeed the author of *al-Maghāzī* seems certain.

Some may still contend that although the book's authorship may not be in doubt, its veracity as a credible source may yet be questionable. But this would make the centrality of al-Wāqidī's *al-Maghāzī* to the field of Islamic historiography disputable. However, there are at least five reasons to dismiss this criticism of al-Wāqidī as unfounded.

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[242] Ibn al-Nadīm. *al-Fihrist* (Beirut: Dār al- Maʿrifah, 1997), p. 144.
[243] Yāqūt al- Ḥamawī. *Mu'jam al-'udabā', Vol. 18* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al ʿImīyah, 1991), p. 28.
[244]   Mukhtaṣar Ibn ʿAsakir. *Tārīkh Dimashq, Vol 15* (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr al-Muʿāṣir, 1996), p. 784.
[245] Ibn Ḥajar. *Faṭh al-Bārī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿilmiyah), pp. 79-80.
[246] Baghdādī. *Tārīkh Baghdād, Vol. 3*, p. 3.

First, as already mentioned, al-Wāqidī was widely regarded, despite some qualifications, as a teacher, historian, chronicler and biographer during his lifetime. Considering his eminence, it seems unjustifiable to reject his work on the basis of its hypothetical non-credibility. Secondly, al-Wāqidī's *al-Maghāzī* is one of the earliest surviving texts of the Prophet's military campaigns. Beyond doubt, it is widely regarded as second in import only to Ibn Ishāq's work. Given that it has survived as a reputable work for such a long period of time, it has an obvious air of authority and authenticity attached to it. Thirdly, al-Wāqidī's methods, and in particular his use of eye-witness accounts, lend a certain degree of credibility to his work. Fourthly, al-Wāqidī is considered to be one of the most credible sources with regard to dating—something of particular significance for Islamic historians. No less an authority than Ibn Kathīr affirms that "al-Wāqidī dated the events accurately, and therefore he was one of the predominant in his field."[247] And lastly, one of al-Wāqidī's methods, as already established above, was to narrate history through *Isnād* (chain of authority). Such a link to the established tradition of the time suggests that al-Wāqidī himself was greatly concerned with the authenticity of his work. On the basis of these five facts, it can be argued that al-Wāqidī's *al-Maghāzī* is a credible source for scholars of Islamic historiography. With sufficient clarity on this matter, it is time now to discuss the content, design and structure of the text of al-Wāqidī's book.

Although the exact dating of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* can probably never be verified, it is conjectured to have been written sometime after his senior compatriot Ibn Ishāq's biography of the Prophet, to which it can be considered a direct challenge. The lack of reference to Ibn Ishāq by al-Wāqidī is recognised as being illustrative of a potential scholarly rift between Ibn Ishāq and Musa b. 'Uqba; the latter al-Wāqidī references as an authority on early Islamic history but Ibn Ishāq does not.[248] That it was al-Wāqidī's intention to offer a competing account of the Prophet's biography which would challenge the general popularity of Ibn Ishāq's is rather conjectural than factual.

Al-Wāqidī's book is an extensive account of the post-*hijra* conquests and excursions of the Prophet Muhammad[sa] and therefore serves as an extant key-source on the

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[247] Ibn Kathīr. *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya*, *Vol.3,* p. 234.
[248] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī,*" p. xi–xii.

Prophet's biography in particular, and early Islamic history in general. The book opens with the Prophet's arrival in Medīna several months after his forced emigration from Makka. In the following chapters, al-Wāqidī narrates the important events, incidents, battles and conquests of this period of the Prophet's life. Structurally, the lengthy text is divided into three separate volumes; the first volume provides the details of eight *sarīyya* (battles that the Prophet did not participate in, henceforth expeditions) and seventeen *ghazwāt* (battles in which the Prophet^sa participated). A number of chapters in this volume provide information on separate events deemed important by al-Wāqidī (e.g., The Killing of Kaʿb b. al-Ashraf), a number of chapters of the Qur'anic revelation (e.g., The Mentioning of the Qur'anic Chapter *al-Anfāl*) and a number of chapters dedicated to documenting specific information (e.g., The Names of Those Muslims Who Were Killed at Badr). The first volume narrates the Prophet's biography from his arrival in Medīna to the year 5 AH. The second volume charts twenty-three expeditions and eleven *ghazwāt* (we will use this term in the absence of its perfect equivalent in English). Like the preceding one, the second volume also devotes space to narrating additional information on events deemed significant by al-Wāqidī (e.g. The Affair of Fadak), chapters on the Qur'anic revelation and a number of chapters devoted to the description of those killed and martyred during the principal conflicts as well as the spoils of battle. The third volume follows a similar structure. It chronicles five *ghazwāt* and five expeditions while a number of additional chapters list those killed and martyred in battle, detail Qur'anic revelation and discuss events deemed pertinent by al-Wāqidī to the Prophet's overall biography (e.g. The Speech of the Prophet on the Day of the Animal Sacrifice). Importantly, volume three ends with the Prophet's farewell pilgrimage, his demise and subsequently the expedition of Usama b. Zayd to Mu'ta.

Fundamental to al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* are therefore, as the name would suggest, the expeditions in which the Prophet participated, in addition to those which the Prophet did not take part in, but which did occur during a similar timeframe. As noted above, al-Wāqidī's chronicle contains much more than just the military aspect of the Prophet's life. It is a multidimensional account with expeditions as its central referent. Faizer notes, although *maghāzī* is the plural of *ghazwa* (*maghzāt*) and literally means incursion, there is certainly more subtlety to the term than what its literal English equivalent conveys. Just as the term '*hajj*' which originally means 'intention' but

idiomatically 'pilgrimage,' the term *ghazwah* too idiomatically means much more than its literal denotation.[249] This realisation makes Faizer and Rippin contend that a more appropriate translation would recognise that the term especially in use in the period of early Islamic history would generally convey the sense of the 'achievement of goals.'[250] In my view, the term 'accomplishment' would certainly be a better alternative to the term 'raid' for *ghazwah* until we find an exact term for it in English. And the terms 'battle' or 'campaign' is preferable to 'raid.' Nevertheless, most of the text is devoted to chronicling the campaigns and battles of early Islamic history; and in that sense it does demonstrate that al-Wāqidī, as well as other writers within the tradition, saw these campaigns as being of critical importance to the survival of the growing Islamic community and to the career of the Prophet in the Medinan phase of his life.

Marked out for special attention by al-Wāqidī are a number of expeditions deemed noteworthy to the Prophet's biography, which can be evidenced by the amount of space al-Wāqidī devotes to their narration. Unsurprisingly, as one of the critical battles of the period (even mentioned in the Qur'an), The Battle of Badr, stands out most prominently in this respect. The battle, its aftermath and the various related chapters, run into one hundred and fifty-five pages, which covers a considerable portion of the first volume of *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Other lengthy narrations include the Battle of Uḥud, covering one hundred and thirty-four pages, the Battle of al-Khandaq fifty-six pages, the peace agreement reached at al-Hudaybiyyah sixty-two pages, and the battle of Quraydah thirty-two pages. Throughout the three volumes, al-Wāqidī strictly adheres to the principle of chronological order, and the centrality of chronology seems to be a most significant feature of *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. The aspect of chronology would receive the attention it deserves in the following chapter as a part of the discussion of his methodology.

C.1. Thesis' Main Arguments and Structure

Apart from the issues discussed so far in this introductory chapter, the contribution of this thesis is threefold. First and foremost, it provides an extensive exposition of the methods and techniques used by al-Wāqidī to narrate the *sīra* of the Prophet

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[249] The term is used for the battles in which the Prophet[sa] personally participated, and the rest are called *Sarīyya*.
[250] Ibid, p. xiv.

Muḥammad. This is important because, as mentioned above, very little work has been orientated toward uncovering al-Wāqidī's method – how al-Wāqidī did history in the practical sense of the word and wrote history in the productive sense. Instead, the available literature has largely been captivated by the perennial question of source authenticity. It is about time to realise that the modern research has already moved ahead of questions such as authenticity or originality. In many respects, this thesis endeavours, therefore, to push the al-Wāqidī studies forward by undertaking an in-depth probe of the methodology aspect in detail as its major concern. Secondly, in unearthing al-Wāqidī's historical method, this thesis contributes to al-Wāqidī specific literature as well as Islamic historiography literature more widely by exploring how al-Wāqidī made Islamic history meaningful. The way in which al-Wāqidī anchored his history will be identified, in the second chapter specifically, and also how it provides insights into what al-Wāqidī thought of history in the theoretical and philosophical sense. This opens the way not only for more comparative work specific to the Islamic historiography discipline but also, potentially, into the bounds of cross-cultural comparative historiography. Thirdly, in addressing the extent to which al-Wāqidī's work was conditioned by the space and time that it was written in, the thesis contributes to broader philosophical debates regarding structure, agency, context and action.

The main contribution of this thesis can be seen in the brief outline of the main argument that will be developed in the subsequent chapters. In brief, this thesis makes two main arguments. First, all the methods that al-Wāqidī employed to collect data hinge upon the importance for him of authenticity and accuracy. That is, they suggest that al-Wāqidī sought to authenticate his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* as an authoritative account of the Prophet Muḥammad's post-hijra biography. The direct implication of this is that, both philosophically and theoretically, al-Wāqidī saw that there *was* such a thing as an authentic history and therefore, by extension, an unauthentic history. In other words, al-Wāqidī thought that the past could be objectively known, understood and recorded. Secondly, despite al-Wāqidī's evident though unarticulated philosophical position on the nature of history, the methods he used to compose his biography and the way in which his work was anchored to other works in the *maghāzī* tradition, all point to the fact that al-Wāqidī's work was in many respects subjectively conditioned by his time and place. Al-Wāqidī's text, in sum, is a quintessential example of what can plausibly be termed E. H. Carr's most important contribution to the philosophy of history: the

historian is a conditioned being.[251] Nonetheless, the tendency to outgrow and transcend the time-space constraint is also discernible in his text as a persistent effort, as will be established in the following chapters.

In order to make these arguments, this thesis is divided into four chapters. The First chapter deals with the Islamic historiography field in general and the secondary literature on al-Wāqidī in particular. It covers debates about Islamic historiography and questions of authenticity, plagiarism and embellishment etc. It works out the distinction between history and historiography and positivist and deconstructionist views of history. It also discusses the processes of meaning-making and idealisation in al-Wāqidī with examples to demonstrate why and how certain details appear in his history. Next, it provides a potted background of the specific political and social context that al-Wāqidī inhabited. This is necessary given the nature of the research questions. One cannot logically consider the conditioned nature of a text or otherwise without having an adequate understanding of the presumed conditioning time-space context. The chapter provides the justification for moving the literature beyond the question of source authenticity and for turning toward the major issues of al-Wāqidī's historical method. The very important feature of chronology as a part of his methodology has been postponed for an in-depth study in the second chapter.

The second chapter focuses specifically on the first significant aspect of his method; ways in which al-Wāqidī practiced history. That is, how he collected his historical material and what this indicates about his understanding of history and what goes behind his conscious/unconscious selection of the material for his narrative. A study of the material-collection methodology naturally leads us to the second equally crucial aspect of his method; the subject of history-production. This chapter, therefore, also takes up the question of how al-Wāqidī produced history including processes of meaning-making and idealisation. Studying the various techniques that al-Wāqidī uses in composing his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, this chapter illustrates the way in which his work as a whole was conditioned by time and place. It demonstrates that in numerous places, despite his work evidencing signs of being conditioned by the context, al-Wāqidī also displays an unmistakable capacity for scholarly agency and creativity.

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[251] E.H. Carr. *What is History* (London: Penguin, 1964).

This analysis extends to the third chapter where al-Wāqidī's work is compared with preceding works in the genre, namely biographies by Maʿmar Ibn Rāshid. It demonstrates that whilst in many respects al-Wāqidī sought to go beyond the work of his predecessors – to go beyond tradition that is – his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was nevertheless conditioned by the intellectual inheritance bequeathed to him. This, however, should not be read as a stain on the historian's work. Instead, it reflects a well-known paradox – whilst historians are potential agents of historical change, they are at the same time socially- and historically-conditioned beings.

The fourth chapter discusses the core issues in the inferential mode through close and extensive analysis of the relevant text passages of *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* anchored in the idealisation of the life of Muhammad[sa] in Medina and the purposes this idealisation serves. The first section in this chapter takes up the importance of the Qur'anic citation and revelation. It shows that al-Wāqidī viewed history as being concerned with the divine revelation, which in turn points to the specific time and place that he wrote his history of. The second section looks at the role of the Prophet and the theme of salvation. This demonstrates the importance of this theme to al-Wāqidī's philosophy of history while underlining that his understanding of history was conditioned by the specific context in which he wrote. This discussion takes into consideration the Prophet's war ethics, his war speeches, his diplomatic acumen, and the subject of martyrs. Next, the chapter looks at the related issue of female identity. It is noticed that in one respect, al-Wāqidī's writing is conditioned by the time and place it was written in, which at times he shows a tendency to transcend such as by rendering females with agency in his history. Next, in terms of collective memory, the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is evidently an act of collective memorisation. Yet, it is equally in places an act of collective amnesia. And in that respect as well, al-Wāqidī demonstrates a capacity for rising beyond his immediate geographical and historical context. And lastly, through deep analysis of certain representative passages from *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* the chapter infers that al-Wāqidī has employed multiple devices to idealise the Prophet's life in Madina of which the main purpose seems to establish the justification of his central spiritual, political and moral authority in Madina.

1.6. Conclusion

This introductory chapter encompasses all essential aspects necessary to contextualise al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* for a proper critical understanding of his historical method. 1. In the first part, it explored the concerns in the modern scholarship on the Prophet's biography focusing on the expository, critical, and middle-ground scholarship. 2. Next, it undertook the delineation of the field of Islamic historiography and its principal sources surveying the earliest to the second century sources. 3. It then turned its attention to evaluate the secondary literature on al-Wāqidī by i. paying special attention to the case of reliability resulting from the issues of translation and claims of plagiarism and embellishment, and ii. to address any gaps in our knowledge concerning al-Wāqidī. Based on this broad critical survey, the chapter identifies his historical method as a much-neglected area in the contemporary literature on al-Wāqidī, promising it as the main research focus of this study. In the second part, 1. the theoretical framework is discussed focusing attention on the difference between history and historiography, and 2. positive view of history and deconstructionist view of history. It is followed by 3. a discussion of al-Wāqidī's biography and the context of his work taking into consideration the socio-political milieu in which he wrote as well as the broad Maghāzi tradition. With regard to al-Wāqidī's biography, the centrality of learning and education, especially in his formative years, was stressed. The controversial claim of al-Wāqidī's Shi'ism was also reviewed and rejected. Concerning the political milieu, the chapter introduced the 'Abbāsid era in order to contextualise al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. However, in contrast to existing literature, it was argued that al-Wāqidī's book was not a purely political account in which the 'Abbāsids were venerated; instead, his *al-Maghāzī* is best thought of as a work of history regardless of al-Wāqidī's association with the ruling elite. The section also sketched out the *maghāzī* tradition as a canon in which continuous history rather than the disjointed *Ḥadīth* bits were emphasised. 4. Lastly, the chapter articulates the main arguments of the thesis and offers a chapter-by-chapter description of the thesis.

The next chapter of this thesis takes up the core issue of this research which is to launch an intensive as well as extensive inquiry into al-Wāqidī's historical method, outgrowing the rehashed credibility issues. It will explore the ways in which al-Wāqidī practiced history; that is, how he collected his historical material, how he narrativised

it, and what this indicates about his understanding of history and whether or not it was coloured and conditioned by the social and political context within which he was situated.

Chapter Two: Al-Wāqidī's Historical Method: Gathering Information and Narrating History

The last chapter provided a comprehensive background to al-Wāqidī and his work. The literature review critically surveyed the multiple aspects of the relevant contemporary scholarship, Islamic historiography, secondary literature, and method of meaning-making and idealisation. Situating al-Wāqidī's work within the wider cultural and social milieu, it also highlighted that the proper attention has yet to be paid to the crucial aspect of his historical methodology, identifying the need to address this lacuna as the chief task of this research. Having provided this necessary contextual information, this chapter proceeds to begin considering al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* in light of the research questions of this thesis. That is, the chapter begins to consider al-Wāqidī's historical methodology in terms of his methods for i. gathering historical data in greater detail, and ii. then producing a historical narrative out of it. Accordingly, this chapter is chiefly concerned with addressing four questions. First, what were the methods that al-Wāqidī employed for gathering and presenting his data on the Prophet's campaigns? This question is important because, as argued earlier, a detailed and in-depth study is overdue of al-Wāqidī's methodology in particular and the methodologies of Islamic historians in general. This research, therefore, will majorly address this gap in the Islamic historiography field. Second, whether al-Wāqidī's narration of the information gathered was conditioned by the specific time and place he inhabited. The answer is sought through an analysis of the principal narrative techniques al-Wāqidī employs in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*: his literarily based narrative techniques, and the way he portrays central figures of Islamic history in the immediate socio-political context. Third, whether al-Wāqidī's history was subjectively conditioned, despite his subscribing to a universalist and objective understanding of history, as established in the previous chapter. This discussion provides further evidence to demonstrate the importance of context and storytelling to al-Wāqidī's history as retold in the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Fourth, and equally important, whether al-Wāqidī's methodology of information collection and its narrativisation can bring to light the ideas that al-Wāqidī held of history. In other words, taking seriously the contention that the study of historical texts can inform much about the writer and indeed the society within which they were situated, this chapter seeks to understand whether a

close analysis of al-Wāqidī's methodology can offer insights into his nascent and hitherto unarticulated philosophy of history.

The principal finding, which was achieved via a close textual analysis of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, is that binding the various methods that al-Wāqidī utilised is the notion of authority and authentication. That is, al-Wāqidī was keen to demonstrate the authenticity of *his* narrations of the Prophet's campaigns by demonstrating *his* commitment to a mastery of the known sources. If this is indeed correct that creating an authentic retelling of the Prophet's biography was a principal aim for al-Wāqidī, then it would seem logical to deduce that al-Wāqidī saw such an authentic history possible. To reiterate, this does not mean to say that the narration of the Prophet's campaigns found in the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* represents a true and authentic account of the past – it is doubtful whether appropriate methods and means of adjudication between competing accounts can be found in this era of Islamic history. Instead, what it means is that al-Wāqidī himself believed such a true representation of the past could be constructed. This is an important finding as it challenges somewhat the existing secondary literature on al-Wāqidī. As will be shown below, Faizer, whose translation of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* marks her out as an expert in this niche literature, asserts that as al-Wāqidī would often express doubt over the reliability of his sources and often leave controversies in the sources unresolved. In so doing, he appropriated a critical stance toward the fidelity of his sources and therefore narration. In contrast, it is shown here that in many other places al-Wāqidī did the exact opposite: he emphasised the reliability of his sources and resolved conflicts where possible. In turn, this suggests that whilst al-Wāqidī may have been aware of the limitations of his methods, he was nevertheless equally sure that an authentic and therefore objective retelling of the past could be achieved. However, despite subscribing to a universalist and objective understanding of history, as the chapter shows, al-Wāqidī's history was found subjectively conditioned.

In order to make these arguments, this chapter is divided into eleven sections. Sections one to ten are largely descriptive. Engaging in a close analysis of the text, they reveal the methodology al-Wāqidī employed while writing his *al-Maghāzī*. Ten methods are documented: the collection of dates, the importance of dating and chronology; the collecting and recording of time and temporality; the collection and

establishment of fact; the collection and illustration of disputed fact; the importance of place; the use of *isnād* as a connection to accepted conventions; the employment of learned scholars; the use of ancestral narrations; the use of literary devices of dialogue, poetry and dreams; and the use of genealogy, close relationships to the Prophet[sa] and heroic figures of early Islam. The eleventh section then moves beyond the descriptive and ventures into explaining how authority and authenticity underpin each of the ten methods which al-Wāqidī employed in collecting information for his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* followed by his narration of history in the storytelling mode.

2.1 The Collection of Dates and the Importance of Dating

According to E.H. Carr, "there are certain basic facts which are the same for all historians and which form, so to speak, the backbone of history," one aspect of which deemed crucial by Carr is the importance of dates and dating. He says, it "is no doubt important to know that the [Battle of Hastings] was fought in 1066 and not in 1065 or 1067."[252] One of the important purposes of this seems to prevent the falsification of history and avoid undue inferences. The gathering and then recording of dates and striving to provide accurate chronology remain the most fundamental and crucial aspects of al-Wāqidī's method. After sketching out the importance of dates as it can be seen in his introduction to the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, the section then moves on to stress how this significant feature of his method provides one of the cornerstones to his history of the *al-Maghāzī*. This, in turn, necessarily lends a critical insight into al-Wāqidī's latent historical philosophy. The importance of this finding is then discussed in greater depth in the thematic analysis section.

A cursory glance at al-Wāqidī's introduction to the *al-Maghāzī* reveals how meticulous and methodical he was in providing the exact dates of the battles and military expeditions he narrates in the *al-Maghāzī*.[253] This method involves collating and recording the exact day, month and year of a specific historical event. Indeed, in the opening lines, and in recording Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. ʿAli. b. Muḥammad al-Jawharī's testimony, al-Wāqidī even deems it important to record the date on which this transmission was received, namely the month of Jamādā l-Ākhira in the year 318

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[252] Carr. "History," p. 10.
[253] ʿAlī al-Durī. *Nash'at ʿlm al-Tārīkh ʿnd al-ʿArab* (UAE: Markaz Zāyyd l-laturāth al-Islamī, 2000), p.35.

AH.[254] On the face of it, the importance of the date of transmission of the tradition seems irrelevant to the main purpose of the book which is the biographical and chronological charting of the Prophet's life in Madina and his engagement in military expeditions during the last few years of his life. Nevertheless, his inclusion of it strongly suggests that he regarded dates and dating as offering an air of authenticity to his writing, considering the significance of this method as an effective tool to avoid the falsification of the historical narrative.

The remainder of his introduction to *al-Maghāzī* also illustrates the importance that al-Wāqidī assigned to accurate dating in terms of his historical method. In providing a short synopsis of the events—which he would later cover in-depth in his *al-Maghāzī*—he introduces each important event, from the Prophet's arrival in Madīna on the twelfth of Rabīʿ al-Awwal to the Prophet's death on the twelfth of Rabīʿ al-Awwal in the year 11 AH, by first specifying the date on which it occurred.[255] At first glance, this would seem to be related to the form in which al-Wāqidī, as seen in the previous chapter, opted to present his book, that is, a historical chronicle . However, it is also possible to contend that there is something of deeper importance with regard to dates and in particular accurate dating and chronology.

First, his consistent adherence to the style of placing the date first throughout the introduction of his book, suggests that al-Wāqidī assigned paramount importance to the date of the event. The objection that obviously the date would logically appear first seems to discredit this position somewhat; particularly when this was not an essential feature of the *Hadīth*. Such a marked consistency is indicative of his deliberate choice to prefix an event with its accurate date of occurrence and remains a significant aspect of his methodology. An effort towards accurate dating naturally results in a chronological order in a historical account and, therefore, the centrality of chronology seems to be a most significant feature of *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*.

The introductory text is a prime example of the importance that al-Wāqidī saw in accurately chronicling events,[256] right from the Prophet's arrival in Medīna until his death with focus on his campaigns, notwithstanding a few instances of deviation from

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[254] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 3.
[255] Ibid, pp. 3–5.
[256] ʿabd al-ʿazīz al-Durī. *Nash'at ʿilm al-Tārīkh ʿind al-ʿArab* (UAE: Markaz Zāyyd lilturāth al-Islamī, 2000). p.35.

the rule as we will see later. The noteworthiness of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, to quote Musa, rests in the "attention he pays to chronology and the dating of Muhammad's military expeditions."[257] This is hardly surprising as this tacit evidence, at the very least, suggests that the emphasis that al-Wāqidī placed on chronology in terms of the structure of his book was shared by his peers and near-peers in addition to informing the scholarly work of his era and tradition. Faizer clarifies that al-Wāqidī's presentation of his *maghāzī* in chronological terms reflects in many ways Ibn Ishāq's work, which suggests in turn that al-Wāqidī's work and style were very much informed by the popular scholarly trends of the time. In fact, Medīna seems to have been the locus for this burgeoning chronologically centred history. To quote Jones, "a growing consciousness of the importance of chronology seems to have marked the emergence of the *maghāzī* literature in Medīna."[258] Although it should not distract one from the uniqueness of his work, the presentation of al-Wāqidī's *al-Maghāzī*, in many ways, remains very much a product of the scholarly milieu of the time.

The point of this thesis, however, is not simply to describe in detail the methods that al-Wāqidī used in constructing his chronicle of the Prophet's campaigns; rather, based on the assumption that the way in which al-Wāqidī presented his history and the methods he used to inform his scholarly work can provide insights into his philosophical view of history. The point here is to reflect on the significance, if any, of chronology to philosophy. It could be that the style simply reflects both al-Wāqidī's personal choices and wider cultural norms. On the other hand, the centrality that al-Wāqidī apportions to chronology suggests something far deeper.

It is clear that later historians ascribed significance in terms of authority and objectivity to chronology. Sosan writes, "Chronology is a *sine qua non* of [mimicry]…After all, in real life, that is, in history…there is only one way, from the most to the more to the less and least distant in time. This is, by and large, what one finds in [Tabarī's History]…the order of presentation follows the sequence of events in the 'real world'."[259] It has been said of the historians of Tabarī's era and beyond that they "used chronology to prove

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[257] Aisha Y. Musa. "Ḥadīth Studies," in *The Bloomsbury Companion to Islamic Studies*, ed. Clinton Bennett (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 89.
[258] J.M.B. Jones. "The *Maghazi* Literature," in *Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*, eds. A.F.L. Beeston, T.M. Johnstone, R.B. Serjeant and G.R. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 349.
[259] Boaz Sosan. *Poetics of Islamic Historiography: Deconstructing Tabari's History* (E.J. Brill: Leiden, 2004), p. 61.

the veracity of prophetic biography to understand and 'prove' *Ḥadīth*."[260] Likewise, one could argue that chronology was not only "an essential phase in the nascent development of [early Islamic history],"[261] it was also seen by al-Wāqidī as imbuing his history with an air of authority and objectivity while also serving certain purposes with regard to the development of Islam and the specific political, religious and cultural milieu of the time. If Robinson is correct to argue that historical narratives are not only informed by specific aims, but also shed light on 'thought' permeating those writings and the wider culture they emerged from, then the chronological aspect of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* provides a unique insight into his philosophy of history, and in particular its objective or 'real' nature.[262]

That al-Wāqidī was demonstrably concerned with chronology is equally evident in the secondary literature as well. Like Musa,[263] Calder, Mojaddedi and Rippin also observe that "al-Wāqidī's [*Kitāb*] is a coherent and cohesive presentation which puts emphasis on establishing the sequence of events by providing a complete chronological framework."[264] Levi Della Vida also comments on al-Wāqidī's use of chronology, noting that "he had a great talent for chronology, the systematic treatment of which, as we know, goes back to him."[265] In addition, in his analysis of the chronology of the *maghāzī* literatures of al-Wāqidī, Ibn Isḥāq and Mūsā b. 'Uqba, Jones concedes that al-Wāqidī's "chronological system is more complete than that of Ibn Isḥāq,"[266] although admitting that some of al-Wāqidī's narrations were unverifiable in terms of accurate chronology. Thus, the secondary literature clearly advances the claim that al-Wāqidī evidently attached great importance to the collection and establishment of dating and chronology.

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[260] Peter Claus and John Marriot. *History: An Introduction to Theory, Method and Practice* (New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 249.

[261] Jones. "Maghazi," p. 349.

[262] Chase F. Robinson. *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 56.

[263] Aisha Y. Musa. "Hadīth Studies," in *The Bloomsbury Companion to Islamic Studies*, ed. Clinton Bennett (Bloomsbury, NY: New York, 2013), p. 85.

[264] Norman Calder, Jawid Mojaddedi and Andrew Rippin, eds. *Classical Islam: A Sourcebook of Religious Literature* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 50.

[265] G. Levi Della Vida. "Sīra," in *E.J. Brill's First Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1913 – 1936, Volume VII*, eds. M. Th. Houtsma, R. Basset and T.W. Arnold (Leiden, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993, originally published 1927), p. 443.

[266] J.M.B. Jones. "The Chronology of the Maghāzī – A Textual Survey," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 19, no. 2 (June 1957), p. 18.

Secondly, al-Wāqidī was also keen to stress any specific inconsistencies with regard to dating and to offer an authoritative resolution to those controversies. As an example, while discussing the Prophet's arrival in Medīna, he notes that the Prophet arrived on "Monday, the twelfth of Rabīʿ al-Awwal." This is then qualified with the statement that "some say the second of Rabīʿ al-Awwal" before stating authoritatively that "the twelfth is confirmed."[267] Again, at first glance, this could be al-Wāqidī simply stating a fact. But it is also possible to suggest that by pointing out this inconsistency followed by a resolution, al-Wāqidī was stressing the importance of the method of the accurate collection of dates and process of dating as a means to authenticate his *al-Maghāzī* as an authoritative work on the Prophet's biography and distinguish his book as commanding account of early Islamic history.

This fact – that al-Wāqidī would adjudicate between competing accounts – is also supported in the secondary literature. Calder, Mojaddedi and Rippin, for instance, note that "When confronted by contradictory sources, [al-Wāqidī] frequently supplies his preferred version. Many of the accounts which he provides are reports formed by combining various sources and presenting the story as an overall coherent narrative."[268] Of course, this directly leads to the question of the trustworthiness or verifiability of al-Wāqidī's chronology. In this respect, Conrad comments, "It has long been known that the chronological scheme commonly transmitted by the early Arabic sources for events of the latter half of the sixth century A.D. poses a number of major problems." And, as a result, doubts are raised "about the reliability of the traditional chronological framework" applied in texts such as al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*.[269]

Jones' analysis of discrepancies between and perhaps irresolvable conflicts among pivotal extant *maghāzī* texts in terms of chronology is indicated here.[270] So, too, is the claim advanced recently by Shoemaker that the chain of authority from ʿUrwa to al-Zuhrī to *inter alia* al-Wāqidī is historically unverifiable as, owing to the distance in time between the events and their documentation in the extant *maghāzī* texts, the possibility of corruption, which could be substantiated by Jones' work above, is an all too real a

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[267] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 3.
[268] Calder et al. "Classical Islam," p. 50.
[269] Lawrence I. Conrad. "Abraham and Muḥammad: Some Observations Apropos of Chronology and Literary *Topio* in the Early Arabic Historical Tradition", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 50, no. 2 (June 1987), p. 225.
[270] Jones. "Chronology of the Maghāzī," pp. 245–280.

prospect.[271] In fact, building on Shoemakers' claims, recent work has argued that the chronicling of the Prophet Muḥammad's Life which occurred at the time of the *maghāzī* scholars, and by extension al-Wāqidī, was largely a product of ʿAbbāsid rule and the demands for a strict, rigid interpretation of history that was aligned with their political aims and expediencies.[272]

To refer back to Humphreys, therefore, if it is truly the case that al-Wāqidī's chronology is suspect while the point of Islamic historiography is to find out what really happened, then al-Wāqidī's text may indeed be problematic in this regard.[273] If, on the other hand, the point of Islamic historiography, to paraphrase Hirschler, is to consider *how* early Islamic historians produced meaningful narratives and to consider the meanings they attached to their narratives, then the point about the questionable historical record is rather moot.[274] And in this respect, it is evidently clear that chronology, date and dating was one of the chief methods that al-Wāqidī employed in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, which is clearly evidenced in Tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1: The Recording of Dates in Volume 1 of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*

Chapter	Date	Chapter	Date
The Expedition of Ḥamza b. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib	Ramaḍān, the seventh month AH	The Affair of the Raid of the Ghatafān	Rabīʿ al-Awwal, the twenty-fifth month AH
The Expedition of ʿUbayda b. al-Ḥārith to Rābigh	Shawwāl, the eighth month AH	The Raid of the Banū Sulaym in Buḥran in the Region of al-Fur	Jumādā l-Ula, the twenty-seventh month AH
The Expedition of Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ to al-Kharrār	Dhū l-Qaʿda, the ninth month AH	The Affair of the Expedition to al-Qarada	Jamada l-Ākhira, the twenty-seventh month AH
The Raid of al-Abwāʾ	In the month of Ṣafar	The Raid of Uḥud	Shawwāl, the thirty-second month AH

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[271] Stephen J. Shoemaker. "In Search of ʿUrwa's Sīra: Some Methodological Issues in the Quest for "Authenticity" in the Life of Muḥammad," *Der Islam* 85, no. 2 (May 2011), pp. 257–344.

[272] Antoine Borrut. "Vanishing Syria: Periodization and Power in Early Islam," *Der Islam* 91, no. 1 (May 2014), pp. 37–68.

[273] Humphreys. "Islamic History," p. 69.

[274] Hirschler. "Medieval Arabic," p. 3.

The Raid of Buwāṭ	Rabīʿ al-Awwal, the thirteenth month AH	The Raid of Ḥamrā al-Asad	Shawwāl, the thirty-second month AH
The Raid of the first Badr	Rabīʿ al-Awwal, the thirteenth month AH	The Raid of Bi'r Maʿūna	Ṣafar, the thirty-sixth month AH
The Raid of Dhū l-ʿUshayra	Jamādaā l-Ākhira, the sixteenth month AH	The Raid of the Banū Naḍīr	Rabīʿ al-Awwal, the thirty-seventh month AH
The Expedition to Nakhla	Rajab, the seventeenth month AH	The Raid of Badr al-Mawʿid	Dhū l-Qaʿda, the forty-fifth month AH
The Raid of the Banū Qaynuqāʿ	Shawwāl, the twentieth month AH	The Expedition of Ibn ʿAtīk to Abū Rāfiʿ	Dhū l-Hijja, the forty-sixth month AH
The Raid of al-Sawīq	Dhū l-Ḥijja, the twenty-second month AH	The Raid of Dhāt al-Riqāʿ	Muḥarram, the forty-seventh month AH
The Raid of Qarāra al-Kudr	Muḥarram, the twenty-third month AH	The Raid of Dūmat al-Jandal	Rabīʿ al-Awwal, the forty-ninth month AH
The Killing of Kaʿb b. al-Ashraf	Rabīʿ al-Awwal, the twenty-fifth month AH	The Raid of al-Muraysīʿ	In the month of Ramaḍān

Table 2: The Recording of Dates in Volumes 2 and 3 of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*

Chapter	Date	Chapter	Date
The Raid of al-Khandaq	Dhū l-Qaʿda, in the year five AH	The Expedition of the Commander Kurz b. Jābir	Shawwāl, in the sixth year AH
The Raid of the Banū Qurayẓa	Dhū l-Hijja, in the year five AH	The Raid of Khaybar	Dhū l-Hijja, in the sixth year AH
The Expedition of ʿAbdullah b. Unays to Sufyān b. Khālid b. Nubayḥ	al-Muḥarram, the forty-fourth month AH	The Expedition of Ibn Abī l-ʿAwjā al-Sulamī	Dhū l-Hijja, in the seventh year AH
The Raid of al-Qurṭā'	al-Muḥarram, the fifty-fifth month AH	The Expedition to Khadira led	Year eight, although no month recorded

		by Abū Qatāda in Shaʿbān	
The Raid of the Banū Liḥyān	Rabīʿ al-Awwal, in the sixth year AH	The Destruction of al-ʿUzzā	Ramaḍān, although no year was supplied
The Raid of al-Ghāba	Rabīʿ al-Ākhir, in the sixth year AH	The Expedition of the Banū Kilāb	Rabīʿ al-Awwal, in the year nine AH
The Expedition led by the Commander Abū ʿUbayda to Bhu l-Qassa	Rabīʿ l-Ākhir, in the sixth year AH	The *Hajjart al-Wadāʿ* (the farewell pilgrimage)	Rabīʿ al-Awwal, although no year was recorded
		The Raid of Usāma b. Zayd to Muʾta	Ṣafar, in the year eleven AH

In sum, Tables 1 and 2 clearly demonstrate that this method, namely the accurate collection of dates and their documentation, is apparent throughout the entirety of his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, which illustrates the centrality that al-Wāqidī placed on dates and dating as a core component of his historical methodology.

However, there are numerous instances where al-Wāqidī shifted tact. Dates were still collected and given; however, they were only noted in the introductory text and not emphasised in the actual narration of events. The first of these is the Battle of Badr. In the introduction to the *al-Maghāzī*, al-Wāqidī notes that "[the Prophet] marched to the Battle of Badr on the morning of Friday, the seventeenth of Ramaḍān, the nineteenth month AH."[275] However, in chronicling the battle, al-Wāqidī does not commence the narrative with a stress on the date, and instead only makes passing reference to it throughout his lengthy and detailed narration.[276] Table 3, below, records the instances where this practice was evident.

Table 3: Instances Where a Narration was Not Headed by the Date

Chapter	Date	Chapter	Date

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[275] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 56.
[276] Ibid, pp. 11, 13 and 27.

The Raid of Badr	The seventeenth of Ramaḍān, the nineteenth month AH	The Expedition of the Banū ʿAbd b. Thaʿlaba commanded by Ghālib b. ʿAbdullah to al-Mayfaʿa	Ramaḍān, year seven
The Expedition led by Abī Salamā b. ʿAbd al-Asad to Qaṭan, to the Banū Asad	Muḥarram, in the thirty-fifth month AH	The Expedition of Bahīr b. Saʿd to al-Jināb	Shawwāl, year seven
The Raid of al-Rajīʿ	Ṣafar, in the thirty-sixth month AH	The Raid of al-Qaḍiyya	Dhū l-Qaʿda, year seven
The Expedition of ʿUkkāsha b. Miḥṣan to al-Ghāmr	Rabī al-Ākhir, no year	The Expedition of Kaʿb b. ʿUmayr to Dhāt Aṭalāḥ	Rabīʿ al-Awwal, year eight AH
The Expedition of Muḥammad b. Maslama to Dhū l-Qaṣṣa	Rabī al-Ākhir, no year	The Expedition of Shujāʿ b. Wahb to al-Siyy	Rabīʿ al-Awwal, year eight AH
The Expedition of Zayd b.Ḥāritha to al-Ṭaraf	Jamādā l-Ākhira, no year	The Raid of Dhāt al-Salāsil	Jamādaā l-Ākhira, year eight AH
The Expedition of Zayd b. Ḥāritha to Ḥismā	Jamādā l-Ākhira, no year	The Expedition to al-Khabaṭ led by Abū ʿUbayda	Rajab, year eight AH
The Expedition of its Commander ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAwf to Dūmat al-Jandal	Shaʾbān, no year	Banū Jadhīma	Shawwāl, year eight AH
The Expedition of Zayd b. Ḥāritha to Umm Qirfa	Rabīʿ al-Awwal, no year	The Raid of Ḥunayn	Shawwāl, year eight AH
The Expedition of the Commander ʿAbdullah	Shawwāl, no year	The Raid of al-Ṭāʾifa	Shawwāl, year eight AH

b. Rawaḥa to 'Usayr b. Zārim			
The Expedition of the Commander Kurz b. Jābir	Shawwāl, no year	The Expedition led by 'Alqama b. Mujazziz al-Mudlijī	Rabī al-Ākhir, year nine AH
The Raid of al-Ḥudaybiyya	Dhū l-Qa'da, year six AH	The Expedition of 'Alī b. Abī Tālib to Fuls	Rabī al-Ākhir, year nine AH
The Expedition of 'Umar b. al-Khāṭṭab to Turba	Sha'bān, year seven AH	The Raid of Tabūk	Rajab, year nine AH
The Expedition of Abū Bakr to Najd	Sha'bān, year seven AH		
The Expedition of Bashīr b. Saʿd to Fadak	Sha'bān, year seven AH		

It is effectively unclear why al-Wāqidī was inconsistent in this manner. A number of reasons could be thought of: it could be an issue of personal style; it could indicate that his manuscript was produced over a long period of time and that the structural shift reflected this; or it could be that he felt it unnecessary in places to repeat that which was already recorded in his introductory text. There is, in effect, little way to offer a resolution to this beyond an educated guess. Nevertheless, despite this anomaly about his otherwise strict adherence to dating and chronology, there is still little reason to doubt the importance of fact to al-Wāqidī's historical methodology.

It is clear from the existing secondary literature that many of these dates are disputable. Again, Jones' work is indicative of the same fact here. In a comparison with the extant *maghāzī* traditions of Ibn Isḥāq and Mūsā b. 'Uqba, Jones finds only twenty-one of al-Wāqidī's dates (al-Abwā', Buwāṭ, Dhū l-ʿUshayra, Nakhla, Badr, al-Sawīq, Uḥud, Ḥamrā al-Asad, Bi'r Maʿūna, al-Ḥudaybiyya, al-Qaḍiyya, Mu'ta, the conquest of Makka, Banū Jadhīma, Ḥunayn, al-Ṭā'ifa, al-Jiʿrāna, Tabūk, Dūmat al-Jandal, Abu Bakr's pilgrimage, the farewell pilgrimage, and Usama's raid) correspond to those provided by his *maghāzī* peers.[277] As a result, the dates of a number of the

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[277] Jones. "Chronology of the Maghāzī," p. 279.

battles and events narrated by al-Wāqidī turn out to be unaligned with existing traditions, which explains why Jones has elsewhere decried the chronology of the *maghāzī* canon as unacceptable, at least from a contemporary historian's perspective.[278] Whether this is true or not is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Since the perspective adopted in this thesis is concerned less with the historical veracity of al-Wāqidī's **K**itāb al-Maghāzī and is instead concerned more with how al-Wāqidī produced meaning, it is quite clear that the structure of his narration, and by extension his narrative as a whole, was largely informed by the emphasis he placed on dates and dating and chronology.

2.2 Collecting and Recording of Timeframes and the Emphasis on Temporality

The last section established that the collection and recording of dates and determining the right chronology was of central importance to al-Wāqidī's historical methodology. Logically, this section now moves on to consider the collection of time, or more specifically the collection and documentation of facts about time, as being of equal importance to al-Wāqidī's *al-Maghāzī*. The term has logical relevance because in many respects there is a common-sense tripartite association between date, time and history.[279] That is, when we discuss differences in dates, we are instantly referring to time and intimately discussing temporal change. Certainly, time in many respects is crucial to the human experience. In Rüsen's words, "in every human culture the mind conceptualises time in a special way such that it distinguishes between different time dimensions related to [the] past, present, and future." He goes as far as to suggest that temporality is the "universal and fundamental mental strategy of telling a story."[280] The purpose of this section, therefore, is to illustrate how the collection of facts about time was a central method of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* and was therefore pivotal to his narration of the Prophet's biography. The importance of this finding will be discussed in greater depth later in the thematic analysis section of this chapter.

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[278] Jones. "Maghāzī," p. 346.
[279] Reinhart Koselleck. *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts*, trans. Todd S. Presner (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), pp. 100–101.
[280] Jörn Rüsen. "Making Sense of Time: Toward a Universal Typology of Conceptual Foundations of Historical Consciousness," in Jörn Rüsen *Time and History: The Variety of Cultures*, ed. Jörn Rüsen (New York: Berghahn), p. 9.

As noted above, the introductory passage to the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* lends credence to the notion that the collection of facts as regards time as well as the passage of time was central to al-Wāqidī's historical methodology, which explains his chronologically ordered narrative throughout the book. Chronology is significant here because, in effect, it is synonymous with a historical timeline. The short synopsis that al-Wāqidī provides in his introduction suggests that he is deeply concerned with collecting facts concerning time and charting times' sequential development. He, as already discussed, established that the Prophet arrived in Madīna on the twelfth of Rabīʿ al-Awwal, that over the next eleven years he took part in twenty-seven raids (participating in nine of them), directed forty-seven expeditions and performed three *'Umras* (lesser pilgrimage performed anytime during the year at the Sacred *Kaʿba* Mosque in Makka).[281] Thus, for al-Wāqidī, it is not simply the collection of dates which is important to the documentation of the Prophet's biography and early Islamic history; rather, it is the collection of dates and time and the documentation of these within a temporally bounded sequential framework which is of importance to the method of a learned historian.

In this respect, al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is both biographical (an elite focused biography of the Prophet's and his companions') and *chronographical* (a work purely organised according to the annual organisation of time).[282] Therefore , what we have in al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is an early attempt, certainly mirroring Ibn Isḥāq's model (although, as argued above, al-Wāqidī's chronology is deemed to be more accurate), and no doubt influenced by al-Zuhrī, to synthesise both traditional Arabic writing genres, which would in turn influence later scholars especially in Iraq, such as Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī.[283] Thus, these three scholars, al-Zuhrī, Ibn Isḥāq and al-Wāqidī, according to Donner are chiefly responsible for providing a hitherto absent chronological framework to early Islamic history.[284] Of course, those of a more critical persuasion, owing to the gulf in time between the actual events and their chronicling,

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[281] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 3–5.
[282] Chase F. Robinson. "Islamic Historical Writing, Eighth through the Tenth Centuries," in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing, Volume Two, 400–1400*, eds. S. Foot and Chase F. Robinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 251.
[283] Alex Mallet. "Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī," in *Medieval Muslim Historians and the Franks in the Levant*, ed. Alex Mallet (Leiden, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2014), p. 98.
[284] al-Dūrī. "Historical Writing," pp. vii–xviii.

would argue that the temporal sequence is unverifiable if not outright inaccurate.[285] Nevertheless, it is perhaps unfair to adjudicate from afar on the practices of a historian who died over a thousand years ago. Instead, the aim here, referring to Hirschler,[286] is to consider how al-Wāqidī created historical meaning; and it is quite evident that the collecting and documenting of time was crucial in this respect.

Table 4: The Recording of an Explicit Timeframe in the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*

Events Given a Timeframe	Events Not Given a Timeframe
Raid of al-Abwā' (fifteen nights).[287]	The Expedition of Ḥamza b. 'Abd Muṭṭalib.[288]
Raid of the Banū Qaynuqāʿ (lasted from the middle of Shawwāl to the first day of Dhū l-Qaʿda).[289]	The Expedition of Ubayda b. al-Ḥārith.[290]
Raids at al-Sawīq and Qarāra al-Kudr (fifteen days respectively).[291]	The Expedition of Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ.[292]
Affair of the Raid of the Ghaṭafān in Dhu Amārr (eleven days).[293]	The Raid of Buwāṭ.[294]
Raid of the Banū Sulaym (ten days).[295]	The First Badr.[296]
Raid of Hamra' al-Asad (five days).[297]	The Raid of Dhū l-'Ushayra.[298]
Raid of Badr al-Maw'id (sixteen days).[299]	Badr (although it is possible to discern from the text that the Prophet left Būyut al-Suqyā on the twelfth of Ramaḍān and that the battle was on the seventeenth).[300]
Expedition of Ibn 'Atīk to Abūʿ Rāfi (ten days).[301]	Uḥud (although, again, the date is discernible).[302]

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[285] Henri Lammens. "The Koran and Tradition: How the Life of Muḥammad was Composed," in *The Quest for the Historical Muḥammad*, ed. Ibn Warraq (Amherst, MA: Prometheus, 2000), pp. 169-187.
[286] Hirschler. "Medieval Arabic," p. 3.
[287] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 8.
[288] Ibid, p. 6.
[289] Ibid, p. 87.
[290] Ibid, p. 7.
[291] Ibid, p. 90.
[292] Ibid, p. 7.
[293] Ibid, p. 96.
[294] Ibid, p. 8.
[295] Ibid, p. 98.
[296] Ibid, p. 8.
[297] Ibid, p. 163.
[298] Ibid, p. 8.
[299] Ibid, p. 188.
[300] Ibid, pp. 11, 13 and 27.
[301] Ibid, p. 192.
[302] Ibid, p. 99.

Raid of Dhāt al-Riqāʿ (fifteen days).[303]

The Raid of Bi'r Maʿūna.[304]

Raid of Dūmat al-Jandal (lasted from the last five nights of Rabīʿ al-Awwal until the last ten nights of Rabīʿ al-Akhir).[305]

The Raid of al-Rajīʿ.[306]

Raid of al-Muraysīʿ (just short of a month).[307]

The Raid of the Banū Naḍīr.[308]

al-Khandaq (fifteen days).[309]

The Expedition of ʿUkkāsha b. Miḥṣan.[310]

Raid of the Banū Qurayẓa (fifteen days).[311]

The Expedition of Muḥammad b. Maslamā.[312]

Expedition of ʿAbdullah b. Unays to Sufyān b. Khālid b. Nubayḥ (twelve nights).[313]

The Expedition of Abū ʿUbayda.[314]

Raid of al-Qurṭāʿ (nineteen days).[315]

The Expedition of Zayd b. Ḥāritha.[316]

Raid of the Banū Liḥyān (fourteen days).[317]

The Expedition of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAwf.[318]

Raid of al-Ghāba (five days).[319]

The Expedition of Alī b. Abā Ṭālib.[320]

Expedition of Shujāʿ b. Qahb to al-Siyy (fifteen days).[321]

The Expedition to ʾUsayr b. Zārim.[322]

The Expedition of Kurz b. Jābir.[323]

al-Ḥudaybiyya.[324]

Khaybar.[325]

al-Qaḍiyya.[326]

The Raid of Dhāt al-Salāsil.[327]

The Raid of al-Fatḥ.[328]

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[303] Ibid, p. 194.
[304] Ibid, p. 169.
[305] Ibid, p. 197.
[306] Ibid, p. 173.
[307] Ibid, p. 198.
[308] Ibid, p. 177.
[309] Ibid, p. 216.
[310] Ibid, p. 270.
[311] Ibid, p. 244.
[312] Ibid, p. 270.
[313] Ibid, p. 261.
[314] Ibid, p. 271.
[315] Ibid, p. 262.
[316] Ibid, p. 271.
[317] Ibid, p. 263.
[318] Ibid, p. 275.
[319] Ibid, p. 264.
[320] Ibid, p. 276.
[321] Ibid, p. 371.
[322] Ibid, p. 278.
[323] Ibid, p. 279.
[324] Ibid, pp. 281, 290 and 291.
[325] Ibid, p. 312.
[326] Ibid, p. 360.
[327] Ibid, p. 379.
[328] Ibid, p. 384.

As the Table 4 demonstrates, al-Wāqidī set many of his narrations within an explicit timeframe which generally headed the narration. Thus, the timeframe of an event was a crucial fact that al-Wāqidī deemed necessary to collect and record, which suggests that this was a crucial aspect of the way in which al-Wāqidī constructed meaning from the historical record. Nevertheless, there were many places where al-Wāqidī chose neither to document explicitly the timeframe of an event nor to omit it from his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* entirely. In the short introductory section of the *al-Maghāzī*, al-Wāqidī concentrates largely on dates as opposed to length of time. This does not mean to say that al-Wāqidī recorded the temporal aspects of the events elsewhere in his work. The most obvious answer to why the lengths of time have not been properly collected and documented by al-Wāqidī is that they were perhaps unavailable to him.[329] This stance seems more reasonable than the notion that al-Wāqidī's was lax in his method of data collection.

Nevertheless, one could, as was the case with chronology in the previous section, contend that al-Wāqidī's timing of events is an artificial construct. Indeed, this is what Faizer implies when she argues that "[in both al-Wāqidī's and Ibn Isḥāq's works] the chronology of events is artificial and imposed; it is based on the purposes of the compiler and the interpretation that he desires to impose on this material."[330] By extension, this argument could easily be applied to al-Wāqidī's work on the temporal aspects of the events he was narrating. On the other hand, it could simply reflect the idea that, owing to the well-documented problems with the sources of Muhammad's life, such information was not necessarily evident. Thus, as Table 5 below indicates, al-Wāqidī provided the timeframe of certain events in situations where it was known or where he could possibly excavate it:

Table 5: Further Recording of Timeframes in al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*

Chapter	Timeframe	Chapter	Timeframe
The Expedition to the Banū Asad	Abū Salamā b. al-Asad spent a month	Khaybar	Following al-Ḥudabiyya, the

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[329] Harald Motzki. "The Murder of Ibn Abī l- Ḥuqayq: On the Origin and Reliability of Some *Maghāzī* Reports," in *The Biography of Muḥammad: The Issue of the Sources*, ed. Harald Motzki (Leiden, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000), p. 233.
[330] Rizwi S. Faizer. "Muhammad and the Medinan Jews: A Comparison of the Texts of Ibn Ishaq's Kitāb *Sīrat* Rasūla Allāh with al-Waqidi's Kitāb *al-Maghāzī*," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 28, no. 4 (November 1996), p. 482.

	nursing a wound received during his expedition.[331]		Prophet returned to Madīna, staying there for two months before heading to Khaybar.[332]
The Expedition to the Banū Asad	Amr b. Umayya travelled for four days on foot to Qanāt.[333]	Khaybar	The Prophet stayed in al-Rajīʿ for seven days.[334]
The Raid of Badr al-Mawʿid	The Prophet and his companions stayed for eight days at a market in Badr al-Ṣafr'.[335]	Khaybar	The Prophet besieged Qalʿat al-Zubayr for three days and that it took the Prophet seven days of raiding from there to conquer Naṭā.[336]
al-Khandaq	It took the Prophet and his companions six days to dig the trench.[337]	The Raid of al-Fatḥ	Following the raid the Prophet stayed in Makka for either fifteen or twenty days praying.[338]
The Raid of the Banū Quraẓya	The Prophet had Abū Lubāba b. ʿAbd Mundhir starved and bound to a pillar for seven days for a dereliction of duties.[339]	A Record of the Party of Hawāzin	The Prophet stayed in al-Jiʿirrāna for thirteen days.[340]
al-Ḥudaybiyya	The negotiations with the Quraysh lasted for three days.[341]	The Raid of Tabūk	The Prophet stayed for twenty days.[342]

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[331] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 167.
[332] Ibid, p. 312.
[333] Ibid, p. 171.
[334] Ibid, p. 317.
[335] Ibid, p. 188.
[336] Ibid, pp. 328 and 338.
[337] Ibid, p. 222.
[338] Ibid, p. 428.
[339] Ibid, p. 249.
[340] Ibid, p. 469.
[341] Ibid, p. 296.
[342] Ibid, p. 497.

| al-Ḥudaybiyya | That the peace between the parties lasted twenty-two months before it was broken.[343] | A Record of What Was Revealed of the Qur'ān about the Raid of Tabūk | 'Abdullah b. Ubayy was sick for twenty days before succumbing to his illness.[344] |

This suggests that where al-Wāqidī could collect information regarding the length/duration of events, he felt it necessary to document such information in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Of equal importance, however, is the fact that in a number of cases al-Wāqidī points to any controversies in the sources with regard to the length of an event, which suggests his credibility as a scholar. For instance, in his chapter 'A Record of Nuʿaym b. Masʿūd', he noted a dispute concerning the length of time the polytheists besieged the Prophet. On the one hand, he reports on the authority of Muḥammad b. 'Abdullah, from al-Zuhrī, from Ibn al-Musayyib that the polytheists attacked the Prophet while he was in the trench for ten days. On the other hand, he records that tradition from al-Daḥḥāk b. 'Uthmān, from 'Ubaydullah b. Miqsam, from Jābir b. 'Abdullah, which states that the Prophet was besieged for twenty days. He concludes by noting that another tradition notes the length of the event as fifteen days and that this "is the most confirmed with us."[345] As was argued with regard to dating, such practices could be employed by al-Wāqidī to demonstrate his mastery of the sources and therefore authenticate his work as a genuine work of the Prophet's biography. In addition, al-Wāqidī's attention to detail in respect of the collection of facts of time provides further credence to the argument that he was a historian concerned with providing an empirically richer and more full-bodied account of the Prophet's biography than was hitherto documented in the sources.[346]

Such mastery, however, was not always evident or consistently applied. Indeed, in a number of places al-Wāqidī highlighted disputes over the length of an event without providing a definitive resolution to the issue. For instance, in his narration of the

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[343] Ibid, p. 307.
[344] Ibid, p. 518.
[345] Ibid, p. 241.
[346] Donald P. Little. "Narrative Themes and Devices in al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*," in *Reason and Inspiration: Essays in Honour of Hermann Landolt*, ed. Todd Lawson (New York, NY: I.B. Taurus, 2005), p. 44.

excursion of al-Ḥudaybiyya, al-Wāqidī notes that some traditions state that the Prophet stayed in al-Ḥudaybiyya for ten days whilst other traditions document that the Prophet stayed for twenty nights.[347] He does not, however, bring this dispute to a close. Likewise, his discussion of the campaign of al-Ṭa'if reveals an equally ambiguous stance toward questions of temporality. The following passage is indicative of the same: "The Messenger of God had struck up two tents for his wives. He used to pray between the two tents, all the time he laid siege to al-Ṭa'if. There was disagreement among us about its siege. Someone said: eighteen days; another, nineteen days; another fifteen days."[348]

The reason for this is perhaps undiscernible; however, as in the above case it could be as simple as to say that al-Wāqidī could not offer a definitive resolution to the lengths of these events. That is, the sources rather than al-Wāqidī could offer no generally authoritative resolution. Rather than being inconsistent or careless in his work, al-Wāqidī may have actually subtly recognised, although admittedly unstated, the limitations of his own historical fact-based methodology.

Nevertheless, overall this section has illustrated that the collection and then accurate documentation of fact in respect of time was a key feature of al-Wāqidī's unstated but clearly discernible and analysable historiographical method. It demonstrated the importance of time and temporality to the chronological construction of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* in addition to illustrating how al-Wāqidī made known, where possible, the duration of the events he was chronicling. Although this was not always consistently applied, there is ample reason to suggest that this may be an actual problem with al-Wāqidī's sources rather than with his methodology or scholarship. The next section will now move on to discuss another significant aspect of al-Wāqidī's methodology, namely the collection and establishment of historical fact.

2.3 The Collection and Establishment of Fact

Leopold Von Ranke, a famous nineteenth century German historian, is intimately associated with a historical methodology in which the facts, and therefore by-proxy the writing of history as it actually happened, is elevated above all else. Historians, from

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[347] Ibid, p. 302.
[348] Ibid, p. 454.

this perspective, should write history by "[sticking] to the facts…they [must] revive the past 'as it really was'." That is, historical narration should be grounded in a "'strict presentation of the facts, contingent and unattractive though they may be'."[349] In many respects, both dates and time can be considered crucial historical facts. As already suggested, they are fundamental to the establishment of a historical timeline or chronology. As illustrated in the previous two sections, al-Wāqidī's historical methodology was in many ways grounded in the meticulous collection and presentation of facts with regard to date and time. It will now be illustrated in this section that al-Wāqidī's collection of facts as his principal methodology is readily apparent in two other areas: first, the establishment of fact with regard to naming those involved in the major events which he chronicled; and secondly the establishment of fact with regard to numbers. This section will largely provide a descriptive illustration of this idea. The analysis and evaluation of this historical methodology and its implications for al-Wāqidī's latent philosophy of history will be presented later.

First, in terms of the *maghāzī* canon, al-Wāqidī is not alone in his method of factual collection and then documentation. Indeed, the collection of facts seems central to the genre as a whole. Al-Dawoody, for instance, notes that the "aim of the [*maghāzī*] biographers was to record all the accounts relevant to the life or the person of the Prophet."[350] That is, al-Wāqidī as well as fellow historians of the time were preoccupied with the collection of historical facts as opposed to the development of a critical attitude toward the sources.[351] Thus, the collection and documentation of facts is perhaps the sine qua non method of *maghāzī* scholarship and by extension al-Wāqidī's historical work.

In his perception of history, al-Wāqidī was especially keen to establish facts about those involved in the battles of early Islamic history, and especially those killed; this is particularly evident in volume one of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. For instance, it is evident in the limited chronicle of the expedition of 'Abdullah b. Jaḥsh's, a maternal cousin of the Prophet's. Here, al-Wāqidī records the names of the eight individuals who participated in the event, providing little further information concerning the nature of

[349] Marnie Hughes-Warrington. *Fifty Key Thinkers on History* (London: Routledge, 2015), p. 259.
[350] Ahmed al-Dawoody. *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 13.
[351] Tayeb El-Hibri. *Parable and Politics in Early Islamic History: The Rashidun Caliphs* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006), p. 44.

the expedition or the potential motives behind it. He is also keen to stress that some "said there were twelve and others that there were thirteen, but eight is confirmed among us."[352] It is not immediately clear why al-Wāqidī felt the need to document the disputed nature of the number of participants in Jaḥsh's expedition. It could be that he was keen to emphasise his deep knowledge of the sources. It could also be that in documenting the dispute and offering an authoritative resolution, al-Wāqidī was attempting to demonstrate the authenticity of his chronicle, chiefly by establishing the basic facts of the expedition. Nonetheless, what this demonstrates is the centrality in terms of methodology that al-Wāqidī assigned to the collection of facts, particularly accurate factual information.

This feature – that the collection and establishment of facts was central to al-Wāqidī's historical methodology – is also evident in the major battles that are chronicled in volume one: the Battles of *Badr* and *Uḥud.* About the former, al-Wāqidī devotes two chapters – "The Providers of the Polytheists at Badr" and "The Names of Those Who Approached about the Prisoners" – which underscores his command and knowledge of those who were involved. Concerning "The Providers of the Polytheists at Badr", he names three individuals from the 'Abd Manāf, two from the Banū Asad, one from the Banū Makhzūm and two from the Banū Sahm.[353] Regarding "The Names of Those Who Approached about the Prisoners", he names two individuals from the Banū 'Abd Shams, one individual from the 'Abd Manāf, one individual from the 'Abd al-Dār, one individual from the Banū Asad, four individuals from the Banū Makhzūm, two individuals from the Banū Jamuḥ, two individuals from the Banū Sahm and one individual from the Banū Mālik.[354] In establishing the basic facts of the matter, it could be argued that al-Wāqidī is demonstrating his familiarity with and command of both the events being documented and the sources of those events.

The same is clearly evident in other chapters as well that narrate the Battle of Badr, namely "A Record of Those Taken Captive from the Polytheists", "The Names of the Providers on the Road to Badr among the Polytheists", "The Names of Those Muslims Who Were Martyred at Badr", and "The Names of the Polytheists Who Were Killed at

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[352] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 11.
[353] Ibid, pp. 64–65.
[354] Ibid, pp. 65–66.

Badr."[355] In each case, al-Wāqidī meticulously records the names of individuals who were crucial to the event in question, demonstrating his knowledge of the basic facts of each event.

In terms of the Battle of Uḥud as well, al-Wāqidī dedicates two quite lengthy chapters entitled 'A Record of Those Killed among the Muslims at Uḥud' and 'The Names of Those Killed among the Polytheists', to demonstrate his remarkable capacity for collecting and then documenting basic facts relating to the actors involved in the events, and indeed the emphasis he places on this as a central method of a historical chronicler.[356] It is also evident that al-Wāqidī stresses the historical veracity of his narration. For instance, in documenting that seventy-four Muslims had died (seventy from the Quraysh and four from the *Anṣār*), he states that this "is the consensus."[357] Likewise, in recording the death of Ḥamza b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib from the Banū Hāshim, al-Wāqidī states that this "is verified and there is no dispute about it with us."[358] Again, al-Wāqidī, in places, would also authenticate his narrative as well as his knowledge by documenting what he understood to be factually incorrect history. For instance, although noting that "Some say Quzmān killed him", he accurately records that Qāsiṭ b. Shuryaḥ b. 'Uthmān was rather killed by Ṣuāb.[359]

The emphasis on facts and their collection, through respected *ḥadīth* or historical reports, generally marks the development of the *maghāzī* canon around that time, especially the course it took after al-Zuhrī in his tradition. Gibb contends that the *maghāzī* canon marked a fundamental shift in the "critical accuracy of historical information amongst the Arabs. For the first time we can feel that we are on firm historical ground."[360] At the same time, perhaps reflecting his teacher al-Zuhrī's interest in popular folklore,[361] we also see a degree of popular stories and traditions creep into al-Wāqidī's history,[362] which is undoubtedly related to the spread and

[355] Ibid, pp. 70–74.
[356] Ibid, pp. 145–154.
[357] Ibid, p. 145.
[358] Ibid, p. 145.
[359] Ibid, p. 149.
[360] Hamilton A.R. Gibb. *Studies on the Civilization of Islam* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014, originally published 1962), p. 112.
[361] al-Dūrī. "Historical Writing," p. 112.
[362] Rizwi S. Faizer. "Muhammad and the Medinan Jews: A Comparison of the Texts of Ibn Ishaq's *Kitāb Sīrat Rasūla Allāh* with al-Waqidi's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 28, no. 4 (November 1996), p. 466.

popularity of the *qaṣṣāṣ* at the time, and their known penchant for imbuing historical reports with more extensive, though at times inauthentic and legendary, details.[363] Although controversial then and even now amongst critical scholars, popular storytellers and preachers occupied a prominent space in cities such as Basra in which scholars, popular preachers and lay-people could transmit and receive, diffuse and articulate, Islam and its history and doctrine.[364]

Of particular interest in these two chapters is that al-Wāqidī is seen departing somewhat from his style of collating and then recording pure facts such as the names of individuals. Instead, he opts to elaborate on specific details, personalising the biography of the Prophet to some degree. For instance, he charts the death of al-Mujadhdhar b. Dhiyād at the hands of Ḥārith b. Suwayd b. al-Ṣāmit in retribution for the death of the latter's father; and the Prophet's response to this (the ordering of 'Uwaym to cut off Ḥārith's head).[365] In the chapter, "The Names of Those Killed among the Polytheists", on the other hand, after recording factual information with regard to the polytheists who died, he spends a large portion of the chapter discussing how the Prophet prayed over the Muslims who died at Uḥud, the burial procedures that took place after the battle and acts of remembrance which followed.[366] It is unclear why al-Wāqidī chose to suffuse his narrative with greater detail here and to move beyond a more fact-based documentation of events. Nevertheless, the information presented in these two chapters still serves to illustrate the importance al-Wāqidī placed on the collection of facts in terms of his historical methodology.

The volume two of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* also provides further evidence of the importance that al-Wāqidī assigned to the collection of fact, especially with regard to those who died in a battle. He records the deaths of six Muslims at the Battle of al-Khandaq (Trench);[367] the deaths of one Muslim and four polytheists at the Raid of al-Ghāba;[368] the deaths of ninety-three Jews at Khaybar;[369] and the deaths of eight

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[363] Thomas Herzog. "Orality and the Tradition of Arab Epic Storytelling," in *Mediaeval Oral Literature*, ed. Karl Reich (Berlin, Germany: De Gruyter, 2011), p. 635.

[364] Jonathan P. Berkley. *Popular Preaching and Religious Authority in the Medieval Islamic Near East* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press), pp. 23–35.

[365] al-Wāqidī. " *al-Maghāzī* ," p. 148.

[366] Ibid, pp. 150–154.

[367] Ibid, p. 243.

[368] Ibid, pp. 269–270.

[369] Ibid, p. 344.

people at Mu'ta.[370] Again, what is also clear is that al-Wāqidī highlights the conflict of facts where necessary. In documenting his collected facts on the Battle of the Trench, for instance, he notes that whilst some say that Abū Usāma al-Jushamī shot Saʿd b. Muʿādh, his narration on the other hand records that it was in actual fact Ḥibbān b. 'Ariqa who shot Saʿd.[371] Again, it is not obvious why al-Wāqidī chose to record such a controversial report; however, one obvious explanation would be that he was seeking to demonstrate his command of the received traditions in order to authenticate himself and his work.

This aspect of al-Wāqidī's historical methodology can also be found in volume three of his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. In the chapter entitled "Those Muslims Who Were Killed on the Day of the Conquest", he records the death of twenty-four individuals;[372] in "The Names of Those Who Were Martyred at Ḥunayn", he records the death of four individuals;[373] and in the chapter entitled "The Names of Those Who Were Martyred in Al-Ṭa'if", al-Wāqidī records the death of twelve individuals. The documentation of such basic facts concerning the names of those who died in battles is an evidence that al-Wāqidī's historical methodology was grounded in the collection of facts followed by their accurate documentation.

Structurally, of course, the focus on the recording of those killed in battles tends to reflect Ibn Isḥāq's work and focus.[374] However, it also reflects the emphasis of the *maghāzī* literature on the heroic. This is obviously reflected in the way in which the literature depicts the heroic Muḥammad[sa],[375] a point to be explored further in the subsequent chapter. Besides, it also reflects the wider cultural milieu of the day. Charting the martyrs of the early wars and conquests of Islam specifically serves as a timely reminder of Islam's first heroic age founded and indeed fought for by Muḥammad[sa] and his *ṣaḥāba* (companions).[376] At the same time, it also reflects the

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[370] Ibid, p. 378.
[371] Ibid, p. 243.
[372] Ibid, p. 430.
[373] Ibid, p. 452.
[374] Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq. *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Isḥāq's Sīrat Rasūl Allāh* trans. Alfred Guillaume (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), pp. 327–339.
[375] Walid A. Saleh. "The Arabian Context of Muḥammad's Life," in *The Cambridge Companion to Muhammad*, ed. Jonathan E. Brockopp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 27.
[376] Francesco Gabrieli and M.S. Khan. "Arabic Historiography," *Islamic Studies* 18, no. 2 (Summer 1979), p. 83.

structure and format of the *ayyām al-ʿArab* traditions.[377] In collating and documenting such facts, therefore, al-Wāqidī was attempting to popularise Islamic history through constructing its meaning in terms of the heroic accomplishments of the Prophet, his followers and the campaigns they undertook.[378]

The importance that al-Wāqidī attached to facts, however, did not just extend to the naming of those individuals killed or martyred in battles. Throughout his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī,* al-Wāqidī was keen to demonstrate his mastery of the collection of facts, and indeed therefore of the events themselves, in terms of numbers. There are abundant examples throughout the *al-Maghāzī* which bear out the fact that al-Wāqidī had gone to great lengths to collect historical facts in terms of details about numbers, which generally reflects the idea that al-Wāqidī as well as other historians of the time were preoccupied with the collection of historical facts in preference to the development of a critical attitude toward the sources.[379]

Table 6: Facts about Numbers in the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*

Chapter	Fact	Chapter	Fact
Badr	Quraysh had thirty men in their caravan when it entered al-Shām[380]	Raid of *al-Murays*ī ʿ	Two hundred prisoners were captured and that the bounty included two thousand camels and five thousand sheep[381]
Badr	Twenty additional camels were provided to the Quraysh to	Raid of the Banū Qurayẓa	One thousand five hundred swords, three hundred armours, one thousand lances and

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[377] Ihab Hamdi El-Sakkout. *The Arab Tribes from Jāhilīya to Islām: Sources and Historical Trends* (PhD, St. Andrews: St. Andrews University, 1994), pp. 40–80.

[378] Peter Heath. *The Thirsty Sword: Sīrat 'Antar and the Arabic Popular Epic* (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 1996) p. 59.

[379] Tayeb El-Hibri. *Parable and Politics in Early Islamic History: The Rashidun Caliphs* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006), p. 44.

[380] al-Wāqidī. " *al-Maghāzī* ," p. 16.

[381] Ibid, p. 201.

Badr			
	strengthen their caravan[382]		one thousand five hundred shields were taken from them[383]
Badr	The Banū Makhzūm number one hundred and that they had thirty horses and seven hundred camels[384]	The Expedition of Zayd b. Ḥāritha to Ḥismā	Every man involved received seven camels and seventy sheep[385]
Badr	The Banū Zuhra numbered a hundred or less[386]	The Expedition of the Commander Kurz b. Jābir	Twenty horsemen were involved[387]
Badr	The Prophet divided the plunder from the polytheists' prisoners into three hundred and seventeen portions divided among three hundred and thirteen men[388]	al-Ḥudaybiyya	Six hundred Muslims followed the Prophet and seventy men attacked a Quraysh caravan[389]
Badr	Forty-nine prisoners survived, although seventy prisoners were initially captured[390]	Raid at Khaybar	The plunder included two hundred horses[391]
Badr	Fourteen of the Quraysh arrived with ransom for the prisoners[392]	Raid of al-Qaḍiyya	The Prophet led one hundred men into battle[393]

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[382] Ibid, p. 18.
[383] Ibid, p. 250.
[384] Ibid, p. 21.
[385] Ibid, p. 275.
[386] Ibid, p. 24.
[387] Ibid, p. 280.
[388] Ibid, p. 51.
[389] Ibid, pp. 282 and 308.
[390] Ibid, p. 58.
[391] Ibid, p. 339.
[392] Ibid, p. 65
[393] Ibid, p. 179.

Raid of Qarāra al-Kudr	The Prophet apportioned the plunder among two hundred people so that each received seven camels[394]	Raid of al-Fatḥ	Forty riders led by 'Amr b. Sālim al-Khuza'ī fled to the Prophet[395]
Uḥud	The Quraysh numbered three thousand and that they had two hundred horses, seven hundred coats of mail and three thousand camels[396]	Raid of the Banū Jadhīma	Khālid b. al-Walīd led a force of three hundred and fifty men[397]
Uḥud	Abū 'Āmir supported the Quraysh with fifty men[398]	Ḥunayn	The Prophet commanded a force of twelve thousand[399]
Uḥud	Fourteen women arrived to feed and quench the thirst of the Prophet and his followers[400]	March of the Prophet to al- Jiʿirrāna	The Prophet and his forces accrued six thousand prisoners and twenty-four thousand camels[401]
Uḥud	The Prophet was supported by seven men from the *Muhājirūn* and seven from the *Anṣār*[402]	The Expedition Led by 'Alqama b. Mujazziz	The Prophet mustered a force of three hundred men to repel a supposed assault from the people of al-Shuʿayba[403]

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[394] Ibid, p. 91.
[395] Ibid, p. 388.
[396] Ibid, p. 101.
[397] Ibid, p. 430.
[398] Ibid, p. 102.
[399] Ibid, p. 437.
[400] Ibid, p. 122.
[401] Ibid, p. 462.
[402] Ibid, pp. 118 and 143.
[403] Ibid, p. 482.

Raid of *Bi'r Ma'ūna*	The *Anṣār* numbered seventy young men[404]	Raid of Ukaydir b. 'Abd al-Malik in Dūmat al-Jandal	Four hundred men and twenty horseman were recorded as the force[405]
Raid of Banū Naḍīr	Jews, left on six hundred camels[406]		The Prophet's forces obtained one thousand camels, eight hundred heads of slaves, four hundred armour plates and four hundred spears[407]
Raid of *Badr al-Mawʿid*	the Prophet set out with ten horses and one thousand and five hundred men[408]	The Raid of Usāma b. Zayd to Mu'ta	Usāma's forces amounted to three thousand men and a thousand horses[409]

from a critical perspective, the veracity of these facts collected by al-Wāqidī is doubtless questionable given the gap between the time of the events and the writing of the *maghāzī* literature. In this respect, some have gone as far as to suggest that Ibn Ḥisham's account of Badr, and therefore by extension Ibn Isḥāq's and al-Wāqidī's, is "nothing but a fiction, a dramatic just-so story fashioned to explain allusions within the Qur'an that would otherwise have remained beyond explanation."[410] Likewise, owing to the *qāṣaṣ* heritage of the *maghāzī* texts, Crone contends that al-Wāqidī and Isḥāq "came to agree on the historicity of events that never took place."[411]

If this was indeed the case, then it would seem strange that while collecting historical facts al-Wāqidī often drew attention to any disputes among the traditions with regard to numbers. In the Battle of Badr, for example, while discussing the Quraysh and the entry of their caravan into al-Shām al-Wāqidī points to a number of different accounts

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[404] Ibid, p. 169.
[405] Ibid, p. 502.
[406] Ibid, p. 183.
[407] Ibid, p. 193.
[408] Ibid, p. 190.
[409] Ibid, p. 548.
[410] Tom Holland. *In the Shadow of the Sword: The Battle for Global Empire and the End of the Ancient World* (London: Hachette), p. 51.
[411] Crone. "Meccan Trade," p. 255.

about how much wealth was with the caravan and to which family the wealth belonged to.[412] In this case, al-Wāqidī offered no definitive answer to this question and, instead, left the conflict in the sources unresolved. However, on a number of other occasions, al-Wāqidī not only drew attention to factual conflicts, he also adjudicated between them. In his narration on the raid of *Bi'r Maʿūna*, as an example, he notes a dispute regarding whether forty or seventy of the *Anṣār* were killed before settling that "I believe forty is confirmed."[413] Similarly, in The Excursion of al-Ḥudabiyya he notes a dispute about the number of people involved before authoritatively stating that "the first saying is confirmed with us, that there were sixteen hundred."[414] It would seem strange that if al-Wāqidī was actually conjuring up history, he would take the strenuous trouble of presenting and noting alternative accounts. A less pejorative stance, on the other hand, referring to Hirschler,[415] would suggest that the collection of facts was one of the ways in which al-Wāqidī ascribed meaning to the biography of the Prophet.

This section has attempted to tease out a further, although admittedly related, key tenet of the historical methodology that informed the work of al-Wāqidī in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Accordingly, this section has emphasised the concept as well as the centrality of the fact to al-Wāqidī's methodology. His *al-Maghāzī* is in many ways informed by his strong penchant for the collection and establishment of facts, as has already been demonstrated in our discussion of dates and time above. This section has further demonstrated that al-Wāqidī was not only concerned with collecting and recording facts of date and time, his historical methodology was equally seriously concerned with establishing facts with regard to names and numbers: names of those involved in the campaigns of the Prophet and especially those who died in the battles; and numbers involved in the Prophet's campaigns and the amounts that were accrued from the spoils of war. That al-Wāqidī's emphasis on fact collection did not result from naivety is the subject of our discussion in the next section. Indeed, some sections of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* do bear it out that al-Wāqidī at times had a more nuanced attitude toward historical fact.

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[412] Ibid, p. 15.
[413] Ibid, p. 169.
[414] Ibid, p. 302.
[415] Hirschler. "Medieval Arabic." p. 3.

2.4 Disputed Historical Facts

It was noted in the previous section that al-Wāqidī's collection of historical facts extended to charting any controversies with regard to facts and, where possible, resolving these controversies through reason and evidence. However, it was also noted that at times al-Wāqidī left such controversies unresolved. For Faizer, this indicates that al-Wāqidī was extremely dubious about the historical veracity of the sources. As she notes, "al-Wāqidī was clearly endowed with a considerable scepticism towards the sources and keenly aware of the subjective nature of these traditions."[416] For Faizer, this is evidenced by the way in which al-Wāqidī "provides different transmissions of single incident, one after another, and then concludes his presentation by informing his audience of which one of the traditions he prefers."[417] Our study challenges Faizer's account somewhat. Here it is argued that al-Wāqidī was certainly aware of the limitations of factual knowledge, he nevertheless evidenced a tendency toward the notion of a historical truth in the objective sense of the word.

The idea that al-Wāqidī took a sceptical stance toward some of his sources is easily demonstrated. Throughout his *al-Maghāzī*, as the discussion on the collection of facts relating to numbers lays bare, al-Wāqidī would often mention some form of factual dispute but leave it effectively unresolved. There are numerous examples to substantiate this claim. During the Battle of Badr, for instance, al-Wāqidī reports the story of Abū Jahl's death at the hands of Muʿadh b. ʿAmr b. Jamūh and that the Prophet gave Muʿadh the sword of Abū Jahl's and his other possessions. However, towards the end of the same section, al-Wāqidī notes that "I have heard other tales of how [Abū Jahl] was killed, and his possessions plundered."[418] He makes no attempt, however, to discuss these in-depth or adjudicate between competing accounts in this instance. Other known traditions ascribed to al-Bukhārī suggest that it was the sons of 'Afrā who killed Abū Jahl.[419] Similarly, in The Battle of Uḥud, al-Wāqidī describes a duel between Talḥa b. Abī Talḥa and 'Alī, noting that the latter, although defeating the former, did not kill him. Instead, according to one tradition, "some Muslims passed by Talḥa and finished him off." However, al-Wāqidī immediately qualifies this by stating

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[416] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. xvi.
[417] Ibid, p. xvi.
[418] Ibid, p. 45.
[419] Rodney J. Philips. *The Muslim Empire and the Land of God* (New York, NY: AEG Publishing, 2008), pp. 179–180.

that "Others say that 'Alī finished him off."[420] Again, al-Wāqidī leaves the conflicting traditions unresolved. Yet other traditions claim that Ḥamza killed Talḥa.[421] The same issue appears in The Raid of al-Rajī'. Here, al-Wāqidī notes that the Prophet sent seven individuals to meet with the Banū Liḥyān. But he also draws attention to the fact that some traditions identify ten individuals being sent by the Prophet. He also mentions that some traditions identify Marthad b. Abī Marthad as the commander whilst other traditions identify 'Āṣim b. Thābit b. Abī l-Aqlaḥ as the commander.[422] In this case as well, al-Wāqidī does very little to resolve the conflict and simply bypasses it. In the same chapter, disputes over the two slaves, Khubayb b. 'Adī and Zayd b. al-Dathinna are spoken about by al-Wāqidī. In terms of the former, there is a dispute whether 'Adi was purchased for eighty weights of gold or for one hundred camels. In terms of the latter, it is highlighted that his death was either at the hands of Ṣafwān b. Umayya or the Quraysh.[423] In both cases, al-Wāqidī failed to document whether one tradition was more accurate than the other. The authenticity of this tradition, especially the manner in which it has been drawn from an allegedly *mursal isnād* (of discontinuous chain) of al-Zuhrī, has recently been called into question.[424] Nevertheless, the conflicting information that appears in al-Wāqidī's text does generally reflect the variable facts that were available to him through traditions transmitted from al-Zuhrī to Ma'mar, as recorded meticulously by Boekhoff-Van der Voort.[425] Finally, about the Raid of Ukaydir b. 'Abd al-Mālik in Dūmat al-Jandal, likewise, al-Wāqidī reports but fails to resolve competing facts with regard to the Prophet's arrival in Dhū Awān.[426]

It is not clear and indeed it may be impossible to establish why in the instances above al-Wāqidī left disputable facts in the sources he had collected unresolved. Effectively, only these possible responses to this can be thought of: al-Wāqidī did not know which account was more accurate, or he failed to reason out the preferability of a particular

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[420] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 112.

[421] Maurice Gaudefroy-Demombynes. "Shaiba," in *E.J. Brill's First Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1913 – 1936, Volume VII*, eds. M. Th. Houtsma, R. Basset and T.W. Arnold (Leiden, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993, originally published 1927), p. 270.

[422] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 173.

[423] Ibid, p. 174.

[424] G.H.A. Juynboll. *Encyclopaedia of the Canonical Ḥadīth* (Leiden, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2007), p. 718.

[425] Nicolet Boekhoff-Van der Voort. "The Raid of the Hudhayl: Ibn Shihāb al Zurhī's Version of the Event," in *Analysing Muslim Traditions: Studies in Legal, Exegetical and Maghāzī Ḥadīṯ*, eds. Nicolet Boekhoff-Van der Voort and Sean V. Anthony (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 313–381.

[426] Ibid, p. 514.

account, or he chose not to document this in his *al-Maghāzī* for reasons of his own. It is possible to argue that the first to appear is to carry greater explanatory weight. This is because on numerous occasions throughout his chronicle al-Wāqidī did both: providing information relating to disputed facts *and* resolving the conflict by stating the veracity of one tradition or account over another.

One example of this is found in "The Battle of Badr" chapter. Here al-Wāqidī notes a conflict in report about some of the polytheists involved in the battle, especially relating to their names. After citing a number of traditions which provided names for those involved, al-Wāqidī, using Ibn Wāqid as a source, confirms that the names in question were unknown.[427] In the same chapter, al-Wāqidī introduced two separate accounts of al-Ḥārith's sons with regard to actions they might have taken in revenge for their father's death against Abū Jahl. Here, after narrating both accounts, al-Wāqidī claimed that the first, saying that the two sons effectively did not attack Abū Jahl, was the more reliable one of the versions.[428] In the Battle of Uḥud chapter, al-Wāqidī also attempts to bring some closure with regard to the death of Abū Shayba. In the first tradition, it is noted that Saʿd b. Abī Waqqās killed Shayba by bow and arrow. However, in citing another more authentic tradition, al-Wāqidī concludes that Abī Waqqā killed Shayba not from afar but in a hand-to-hand combat.[429] In the same chapter, al-Wāqidī also confirms the names of two Quraysh men, namely Ibn Qamī'a and ʿUtba b. Abī Waqqāṣ, who threw stones at the Prophet while the Prophet stood unaware in front of a ditch that had been dug for such a surprise attack.[430] Yet another example is found in the chapter on the raid of Bi'r Ma'ūna where al-Wāqidī, after discussing an alternative tradition, confirms those who were with the Prophet at Qanāt.[431] While chronicling the affair of Ibn Ubayy, al-Wāqidī again demonstrates his clear tendency for stating alternative accounts of a specific event while attempting to offer some form of factual resolution. In this chapter, it is first noted that as part of the bridal contract to Juwayriya, traditions suggested that the Prophet demanded the release of the Banū Muṣṭaliq prisoners; however, al-Wāqidī confirms the veracity of an alternative tradition which presented the idea that the Banū Muṣṭaliq prisoners had already been ransomed and

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[427] Ibid, p. 30.
[428] Ibid, p. 45.
[429] Ibid, p. 112.
[430] Ibid, p. 120.
[431] Ibid, p. 171.

released, which made the alternative tradition untenable.[432] In the sequence on ʿĀ'isha, al-Wāqidī introduces a story which mentions the Prophet striking a number of his followers who failed to believe in the innocence of 'Ā'isha. Again, however, al-Wāqidī, with reference to an authoritative source, concludes that the Prophet did not strike anyone at that time.[433] The Battle of al-Khandaq chapter provides yet another instance to illustrate the point. Here al-Wāqidī, again citing an authoritative source, clarifies the order of prayer preceding and following the battle.[434]

Such differences in traditions do not necessarily reflect badly on early Islamic historiography as a whole. Instead, they generally reflect the principle that early Islamic historians, and indeed legal scholars, were more vibrant and dynamic in their interpretations of the historic and religious record.[435] Yes, it could be argued that the disputes reflect attempts to "historicise early Islam and to use it to establish hierarchies of moral or social seniority or prestige."[436] At the same time, however, the different interpretations and traditions, especially in terms of adjudicating between them, also reflect the individual creativity and capacity for critical thought that al-Wāqidī amongst others was capable of.[437] Amassing such historical detail, including, where available, disputed facts and resolved controversies, was clearly therefore one of the ways in which al-Wāqidī sought to inform the Prophet's biography with historical meaning and significance.

That being said, there are a number of instances in the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* where al-Wāqidī does indeed display a high degree of scepticism with regard to the veracity of his sources. First, on two separate occasions, after listing a chain of authorities, al-Wāqidī comments that some of those cited in the chain of authority had more information than others in the same chain. This is seen in The Affair of the Raid of Ghaṭafān in Dhū Amarr. Here, al-Wāqidī records the names of five individuals to lend credence to his narration before qualifying his sources with the notation that "some

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[432] Ibid, p. 202.
[433] Ibid, p. 213.
[434] Ibid, pp. 231–232.
[435] Linda G. Jones. *The Power of Oratory in the Medieval Muslim World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 24–25.
[436] Tarif Khalidi. *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 34.
[437] Faizer. "Muhammad," p. 464.

had more on this tradition than others."[438] Similarly, al-Wāqidī begins his narration of the Raid of Dūmat al-Jandal by citing five authorities on the event. Again, however, he immediately qualifies his sources by noting that one of his sources "provided more information [than the others]."[439] Given that this would imply not all accounts of events were equal, this would certainly imply that al-Wāqidī adopted a critical stance toward the data he had collected and the history he was recording. That is, this would suggest that al-Wāqidī did recognise that his historical method as well as his historical sources were fallible. Nevertheless, it is impossible to discern why, for al-Wāqidī, some sources had more information than others. It could be that such a fact underscored al-Wāqidī's attachment to the recognition of the fallibility as well as subjectivity of historical sources. On the other hand, it could also be the case that al-Wāqidī was simply informing his audience that some of his sources offered a more complete account of the historical record, which would speak more to his authenticity as a scholar rather than his critical subjectivity.

Second, and in a greater number of instances, al-Wāqidī documented a number of authorities who had provided the data for his narrative before explicitly stating that remarkably he found some of the authorities to be comparatively unreliable, although he never explicitly identified which authorities he was most cautious of. As mentioned, there are numerous examples of this aspect of al-Wāqidī's scepticism: in The Battle of Uḥud chapter, he cites fifteen individuals and suggests that some are more reliable than others;[440] in The Raid of Bi'r Maʿūna, he cites seven authorities before claiming that some are more reliable than others;[441] in The Raid of al-Raji ̒, he cites six authorities by name before expressing doubt about the credibility of some;[442] in The Raid of the Banū Naḍīr, he records the names of six authorities before suggesting that some may lack credibility;[443] in the Raid of al-Ḥudaybiyya, he documents the names of nineteen sources before suggesting that some were more credible than others;[444] in The Raid of Khaybar he notes twenty-six sources and states that some were more reliable;[445] in The Raid of al-Fatḥ, he provides the names of sixteen

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[438] Ibid, p. 97.
[439] Ibid, p. 197.
[440] Ibid, p. 99.
[441] Ibid, p. 97.
[442] Ibid, p. 173.
[443] Ibid, pp. 177–178.
[444] Ibid, p. 281.
[445] Ibid, pp. 311–312.

sources and again qualifies their authority by suggesting that some lacked reliability;[446] in The Raid of Ḥunayn, thirteen individual authorities are documented before al-Wāqidī qualifies his sources with his usual refrain about the credibility of some;[447] in The Raid of Tabūk, al-Wāqidī records the names of seventeen sources and documents the fact that some are more reliable than others;[448] and finally in The Farewell Pilgrimage, after recording the names of nine individuals he qualifies his historical sources regarding the comparative credibility of some and therefore the comparative unreliability of others.[449]

One could argue, in the style of Faizer as already hinted above, that such scepticism toward the information that al-Wāqidī collected illustrates a critical stance toward the notion of objective fact and therefore objective history. However, this overlooks that in many other places throughout his *al-Maghāzī*, as documented above, al-Wāqidī would attempt to resolve factual disputes. If this is true, then we must ultimately assume that the principle of critical objectivity that the likes of Faizer emphasise is overstated.

Moving on from the method of collecting and establishing historical facts, this section has discussed the way in which al-Wāqidī deals with the question of conflicting facts, perhaps an eternal yet essentially irresolvable question that historians across space and time must contend with. In order to do so, the section began by detailing the instances where al-Wāqidī effectively left disputed fact unresolved. Subsequently, and in contrast, it was noted that in several other places in his text al-Wāqidī would document a controversy before offering an authoritative resolution, which would imply that at times al-Wāqidī favoured the view of the objectivity of fact. Such a view of al-Wāqidī, however, is debatable as in many of his narrations he would qualify his sources by underscoring their unreliability in places. The section attempted to offer some limited challenges to this idea, which will be advanced further in the thematic analysis section. Before doing so, however, it is necessary to outline further principles underlying al-Wāqidī's historical methodology. The next section will concentrate on place.

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[446] Ibid, p. 384.
[447] Ibid, p. 435.
[448] Ibid, p. 485.
[449] Ibid, p. 532.

2.5 The Importance of Place to al-Wāqidī's Historical Methodology

Beyond collecting information concerning general facts, disputed facts, time and date, it is also possible to demonstrate that al-Wāqidī saw the collection of facts with regard to place as being crucial to his work and therefore more widely to the work of the historian. This is hardly surprising given the critical importance early Islam and its adherents assigned to place. Pickard notes, for example, that "Islamic tradition goes to great lengths to create a geographical setting for the birth of Islam far removed from the centres of Christianity and Judaism."[450]

With reference to various sections of his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, this section sketches out this idea. It shows that al-Wāqidī took a particular interest in collecting information relating to the geographical place, especially through direct or indirect experience. As already discussed in the previous chapter, al-Wāqidī was in many respects regarded as an expert on Madīna and its sites. This geographical expertise becomes evident by means of a textual analysis of his *al-Maghāzī*. In many places throughout the book, al-Wāqidī demonstrates his expertise by clearly locating and describing a geographical place. In other instances, al-Wāqidī draws on his expertise to provide more in-depth and specific information in respect of the place of the event he was narrating.[451] As a first cut, this section is largely descriptive in tone. An analysis of this feature and its importance for the research question of this thesis is then undertaken in the final section of this chapter.

The reputation of al-Wāqidī for commanding a mastery of place has already been established. Indeed, as mentioned in the discussion of al-Wāqidī's services as a guide to the Caliph al-Rashīd in chapter two, among the political elite al-Wāqidī was clearly a renowned and local font of knowledge. The very fact that the people unequivocally recommended al-Wāqidī to al-Rashīd, however, also illustrates the notion that al-Wāqidī's expertise and knowledge were also a well-known fact among the people. It is also the case that al-Wāqidī himself was keen to underscore his authority on the subject matter. In recounting his stint as the Caliph's guide, al-Wāqidī boasted saying:

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[450] John Pickard. *Behind the Myths: The Foundations of Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (Bloomington, IN: Author House, 2013), p. 350.
[451] F. Ḥamāda. *Maṣādir al-sīra al-Nabawyya Wa Taqwīmaha* (Damascus: Dār alqalam, 2003), p. 95.

"I did not miss a site or a view to show the leader of the believers"[452] It is therefore no surprise that Alī ibn Aḥmad al-Samhūdī used al-Wāqidī extensively throughout his four volume opus on Madīna.[453]

However, it was not simply a matter of collecting facts about geographical place; rather, for al-Wāqidī, place had a special if not perhaps even mystical aura. Indeed, it is possible to suggest that a core component of al-Wāqidī's historical methodology was concerned with experiencing place either directly or indirectly. In terms of indirect experience, al-Wāqidī actively sought information from the descendants of those involved in the campaigns he chronicled. It will be shown in the subsequent section that such testimony was considered an authentic source of history as it allowed al-Wāqidī to collate information vis-à-vis the place and circumstances of the Prophet's campaigns. About second-hand information, al-Wāqidī commented that upon receiving such information "[I] would go to the site where the battle took place and examine it, I went to the Almurisīʿ and examined it…I examined every site of a battleground I could get."[454] However, al-Wāqidī was also keen to experience place directly. This devotion that al-Wāqidī attached to experiencing place is also confirmed by Hārūn al-Qarawī in al-Ṭabarī's monumental history. Al-Qarawī notes that "I met al-Wāqidī in Makka who was carrying a water bag. I asked him, 'what are you up to?' And he answered, 'I am going to Ḥunyin to see the site where the battle took place.'"[455] Thus, al-Wāqidī clearly saw place, and more importantly the feel of place either directly or indirectly, as being crucial to his collection of data with regard to the history of the Prophet's campaigns.

Through a close reading of his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, it is possible to establish that al-Wāqidī had a sound grasp of the geographical location which he was writing about; and, more importantly, that he was keen to demonstrate this expertise. This is evidenced by the number of times that al-Wāqidī expands upon and accurately delineates a geographical location. In the second chapter, "The Expedition of 'Ubayda b. al-Ḥarith to Rābigh", al-Wāqidī records Rābigh as being situated in the direction of

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[452] The whole statement can be found in: M. Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrá, Vol. 5 (*Beirut: Dār Iḥyā 'al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1996), p. 425.
[453] A. al-Samhūdī. *Wafāʾ al-wafāʾ bi-akhbār al-Muṣṭafā, Vol. 2* (Macca: al- Furqān, 2001)*, pp 938, 939, 1125, 1152 and1166.
[454] al-Khatīb.al-Baghdādī. *Tārīkh Baghdād; aw madīnat al-Salām, Vol. 3* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī,1966), p. 6.
[455] Ibid.

Qudayd ten miles from Juḥfa.[456] A similar example of al-Wāqidī's attention to geographical detail is found in his brief narration of the Raid of Buwāṭ. Here, al-Wāqidī locates Dhū Khushub opposite D̲abba. He also notes that between Madīna and Buwāṭ there are three postal stations.[457] Likewise, he situates Nakhla within a valley in the region of Bustān Ibn ʿĀmir in the chapter on the expedition to Nakhla.[458] His chronicle of the Battle of Badr also offers further evidence to validate the claim that al-Wāqidī was concerned with geographical place. He opens the lengthy and detailed narration with a discussion of the fact-finding mission that the Prophet had arranged regarding the Quraysh caravan. He notes that this took place in al-Nakhbār, which he identifies as being located along the coast and to the rear of Dhū l-Marwa.[459] In the same chapter, he notes that the Prophet met with those he sent on the mission in Turbān, recording this place as situated between Malal and al-Sayyāla.[460] His situating of Khumm approximately two miles from al-Juḥfa, which also appears in his narration of the Battle of Badr, serves to further establish the point that al-Wāqidī was keen on collecting and documenting facts with regard to geographical place.[461] Three more examples from the Battle of Badr further reinforce this point. He notes that Zarqāʾ is located two miles from Adhriʿāt, that al-Thaniyyāt is situated near Fakh and that al-Ḥawra is situated at the rear of Dhū l-Marwa.[462] In addition, when narrating the raid of Biʾr Maʿūna, al-Wāqidī records this site as being "one of the waters of the Banū Sulaym", which rests "between the land of the Banū ʿĀmir and the Banū Sulaym."[463] Furthermore, he states that al-Shuʿayba is located on the outskirts of Makka in his chronicle of the expedition led by ʿAlama B. Mujazziz.[464] Clearly, then, there are numerous examples in al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* that demonstrate that he had collected information about and had sound knowledge of the geographical background of the Prophet's campaigns and was equally keen to document this in his book.

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[456] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 7.
[457] Ibid, p. 8.
[458] Ibid, p. 8.
[459] Ibid, p. 11.
[460] Ibid, p. 12.
[461] Ibid, p. 13.
[462] Ibid, pp. 15, 19 and 51.
[463] Ibid, p. 169.
[464] Ibid, p. 482.

It is evident that al-Wāqidī's geographical knowledge can be considered as accurate. The information that al-Wāqidī details in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is consistent with other literature chiefly devoted to geography, such as Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī's *Muʿjum al-Buldān*[465] and al-Bakrī's *Muʿjam ma Istaʿjam*.[466] Thus, al-Wāqidī had extensive geographical knowledge but also specific knowledge of the places in which many of the battles took place, which suggests that it was also a key feature of the information he collected. The Battle of Badr narration is indicative of the same here. For instance, he notes how the Prophet, after arriving at Badr, sent ʿAlī, al-Zubayr, S'ad b. Abī Waqqās and Basbas b. ʿAmr to find water at a watering hole in al-Zurayb, which was a small hill.[467] A short while thereafter in the same narration, al-Wāqidī provides details of how the Prophet, after consulting al-Ḥubāb b. al-Mundhir, decided to camp close to the well on a strategic as opposed to religious basis.[468] He also provides specific details of a march through a sandy valley after a downpour in addition to extensive details on the positioning of the Prophet and his troops as they prepared for battle.[469] In other words, al-Wāqidī not only collected extensive detail with regard to geographical place but also provided details of specific places of importance in his overall narrative.

The reason for al-Wāqidī's fixation on geographical place plausibly stems from a belief that existing traditions lacked this crucial contextual information. Drawing upon recent work dedicated to the excavation of ʿUrwa's traditions, Shoemaker, for instance, comments that the earliest traditions "are rather minimal, and in their earliest state they seem to have lacked any geographic or chronological context."[470] It is highly plausible that al-Wāqidī was concerned with filling this empirical lacuna, which explains why he focused on collecting facts with regard to geographical place. In addition, it is equally likely that this particular method that al-Wāqidī employed in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* reflected wider elite and societal concerns with the preservation of Islam. It has recently been argued that "Sacred spaces…have throughout history played an

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[465] Yāqūt Al-Ḥamawī. *Muʿjum al-Buldān, Vol. 3* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir,1995), pp. 11, 137; Ibid, Vol. 2, p. 261.
[466] A. al- Bakrī. *Muʿjam ma istaʿjam min asmā'al-Bilād, Vol. 1* (*Beirut: ʿĀlam al- Kutb,* 198*),* p. 474; Ibid, Vol . 2, p. 884.
[467] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 27.
[468] Ibid, p. 28.
[469] Ibid, pp. 28–29.
[470] Stephen J. Shoemaker. *The Death of the Prophet: The End of Muhammad's Life and the Beginnings of Islam* (Philadelphia, PN: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), p. 275.

important role, not only in such efforts at drawing up boundaries between communities, but also in demonstrating one community's superiority over another."[471]

This section has introduced a further facet of al-Wāqidī's historical methodology. It has demonstrated that another set of facts that al-Wāqidī deemed necessary to collect were those relating to place. In turn, as demonstrated in this section, al-Wāqidī made extensive use of geographical facts in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* by either providing specific information with regard to a place or by providing more in-depth information with regard to where a battle or event of importance occurred.

2.6 The Centrality of Tradition, the Use of Isnād and the Historical Methodology of al-Wāqidī

As this chapter has progressed, it is at least implicitly clear so far that al-Wāqidī's historical methodology – the way in which he collected his facts and subsequently recorded them in his text – were in many respects focused on claiming and evidencing an authoritative account of early Islamic history. Unsurprisingly, therefore, equally central to al-Wāqidī's gathering of information was his reliance on traditional chains of authority – *Isnād*. It is unsurprising because in many respects *Isnād* were at the time the chief method for transmitting authoritative knowledge from one scholar to next and from one generation to the next.[472] Equally important, a degree and air of authenticity were attached to *Isnād*, especially trustworthy *Isnād*. As Abu-Lughold makes clear, "One makes reference to an earlier authority in order to substantiate a statement's authenticity of truth."[473] Through a close analysis of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* as a whole, the purpose of this section is to document/highlight the importance that al-Wāqidī attached to traditional and authoritative chains of authority as a means of gathering historical information.

It is first necessary to stress that al-Wāqidī collected *Isnād* by referring specifically to the portions of his *al-Maghāzī* in which he employed this method. Although it is worth noting that in many respects individual references dominate his narrations of the

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[471] Harry Munt. "'No Two Religions': Non-Muslims in the Early Islamic Ijāz," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 78, no. 2 (June 2015), p. 267.
[472] ʿAlī al-Durī. "*Nash'at ʿlm al-Tārīkh ʿnd al-ʿArab*", p. 23.
[473] Janet L. Abu-Lughold. "The Islamic City – Historic Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 19, no. 2 (May, 1987), p. 155.

Prophet's campaigns, he also makes demonstrable use of collective chains of authority. Indeed, the introductory text stands testament to this idea. Here, he lists a number of individuals as authoritative sources for his chronicle before beginning the next paragraph with the phrase "They said."[474]

Elsewhere, al-Wāqidī makes use of collective references on twenty-one occasions throughout his text, which would seem to suggest that he made extensive use of *Isnād* in terms of gathering information on the Prophet's campaigns. It is therefore prudent to document the instances where al-Wāqidī used this method, which is duly recorded in Table 7 below.

Table 7: The Use of Collective Reports in al-Wāqidi's *Kitāb al-Magāhzī*

Chapter	Collective Report	Chapter	Collective Report
The Killing of Kaʿb b. al-Ashraf	Three separate chains involving six individuals.[475]	Raid of the Banū Liḥyān	Six individuals named qualified with "as well as others."[476]
Uḥud	Thirteen individuals named qualified with "as well as men who are not named."[477]	al-Ḥudaybiyya	Twenty individuals qualified with "Others who are unnamed, people of trust, have also informed me."[478]
Abū Salama b. ʿAbd al-Asad's expedition	One report qualified by "and others as well."[479]	Khaybar	Twenty-six individuals qualified with "others not mentioned."[480]
The Raid of Biʾr Maʿūna	Six individuals named qualified with "as well as those that have not been named."[481]	al-Qaḍiyya	Eight individuals qualified with "as well as others whom I have not named."[482]

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[474] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 3.
[475] Ibid, p. 91.
[476] Ibid, p. 263.
[477] Ibid, p. 99.
[478] Ibid, p. 281.
[479] Ibid, p. 166.
[480] Ibid, p. 312.
[481] Ibid, p. 169.
[482] Ibid, p. 360.

The Raid of al-Rajī'	Six individuals named qualified with "and men who have not been named."[483]	The Raid of Dhāt al-Salasil	Six individuals named qualified with "Some who are not named also informed me."[484]
The Banū Naḍīr	Five individuals named qualified with "among men whom I have not named."[485]	The Raid of al-Fatḥ	Fourteen individuals named qualified with "And others have related to me also."[486]
The Raid of Badr al-Mawʿid	Eight individuals named qualified with "as well as others who are not named."[487]	The Raid of Ḥunayn	Twelve individuals named qualified with "as well as others not named."[488]
The Raid of Dhat al-Riqāʿ	Thirteen individuals named qualified with "And others have related to me about it as well."[489]	Raid of Tabūk	Fourteen individuals named qualified with "and others not named, who are reliable, informed me as well."[490]
Dūmat al-Jandal	Six individuals qualified with "Others also related to us."[491]	Farewell Pilgrimage	Nine individuals named qualified with "Some who are not named also related to us."[492]
al-Khandaq	Twenty-six individuals.[493]		

Having chronicled the main events for which al-Wāqidī employed collective references, it is equally necessary to discuss some important aspects with regard to the way in which al-Wāqidī incorporated this method into his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. First, as made clear in the preceding discussion, al-Wāqidī indicated to his readers that what

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[483] Ibid, p. 173.
[484] Ibid, p. 379.
[485] Ibid, p. 178.
[486] Ibid, p. 384.
[487] Ibid, p. 188.
[488] Ibid, p. 435.
[489] Ibid, p. 194.
[490] Ibid, p. 485.
[491] Ibid, p. 197.
[492] Ibid, p. 532.
[493] Ibid, p. 216.

followed was based on combined reports with the phrase 'they said'. At numerous times, and especially through the actual narration of an event, the phrase would also be employed by al-Wāqidī. For the reader, this could appear as confusing. Nevertheless, it was al-Wāqidī's method for stressing that the narrative was based on combined reports.

Secondly, although each of the events documented above were informed by the method of combined chains of authority, in many instances al-Wāqidī would flesh out his narrative alluding to individual references—as if the combined reports were a form of macro history while individual references supplied micro details. The chapter on the Battle of Uḥud is a case in point here. He refers to Bukayr b. Mismār from Ziyād the mawlā of Saʿd from Nisṭās, as an example, to flesh out the combined reporting that documented that the Quraysh leaders disagreed over whether women should join them.[494] Later on in this chapter, al-Wāqidī again interrupts the narrative based on combined reports to give additional information with regard to a dream by the Prophet. He first cites Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ from ʿĀsim b. ʿUmar b. Qatāda from Mahmud b. Labīd to give details of the metaphorical dream and then references ʿUmar b. ʿUqba from Saʿid to offer alternative accounts of what the Prophet said with regard to his dream.[495] Further on in the chapter, al-Wāqidī again interrupts the narrative to provide specific information concerning the Prophet, which is drawn from Usāma b. Zayd from his father. In response to a statement from one of his followers that the he will be killed the next day, al-Wāqidī recants that the "Prophet struck his chest with his hand and said, "Is not tomorrow the whole future", which illustrates that al-Wāqidī would rely on individual references to recant anecdotes and specifics of an event.[496] He also interrupts the combined reportage to draw from an individual chain from Ibn Abī Sabra, from Isḥāq b. ʿAbdullah from ʿUmar b. al-Ḥakam to paint a particular picture of the Prophet's companions. Drawing on these sources, al-Wāqidī writes that "[they] did not know anyone from the companions of the Prophet who attacked for plunder or land."[497] In the same narration, he makes frequent use of individual references from a number

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[494] Ibid, p. 101.
[495] Ibid, p. 104.
[496] Ibid, pp. 106–107.
[497] Ibid, p. 114.

of individuals to provide a fuller account of the Prophet's companions' response to Azabba al-Aqaba's shout that the Prophet had been killed.[498]

Synthesising reports is not a practice unique to al-Wāqidī; Görke and Schoeller have demonstrated that 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr's son, Hishām, and his foster-child, Abū al-Aswad, combined reports;[499] 'Urwa's most celebrated pupil, al-Zuhrī, also combined reports.[500] Lecker has even declared the practice to be widespread.[501] Nevertheless, the practice did draw ire from traditionists (*Hadīth* collectors) who were primarily concerned with protection and preservation of the *Ḥadīth*. As Robinson explains, "[the *muḥaddith* took] offence at this practice…since it risked blurring lines of transmission and – perhaps more important – endowed authors with more authority that [those] traditionist-transmitters thought seemly."[502] Indeed, the secondary literature has honed in on al-Wāqidī in this respect,[503] which explains why some contend that al-Wāqidī "is notorious for his absurd and baseless reports and his is a negative reputation."[504] However, a less pejorative analysis would recognise that al-Wāqidī's method was largely informed by the tradition and canon in which he wrote; and in that respect, references to known traditions were one of the principal methods whereby he constructed meaning for the events he was narrating.

Thus, it is clear that al-Wāqidī also relied heavily on collected reports and traditional sources of authority in constructing his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. However, as first and foremost a historian, al-Wāqidī turned to alternative sources as well to flesh out his narrative where necessary. The subsequent sections will focus on these aspects of al-Wāqidī's methodology.

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[498] Ibid, pp. 116–118.

[499] Andreas Görke and Gregor Schoeler. "Reconstructing the Earliest *sīra* Texts: the Hiğra in the Corpus of ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr," *Der Islam* 82, no. 2 (December 2005), pp. 213–214.

[500] A. A. Dūrī. "Al-Zuhrī: A Study on the Beginning of History Writing in Islam," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 19, no. 1 (February 1957), p. 8.

[501] Michael Lecker. "Wāqidī's Account on the Status of the Jews of Medina: A Study of a Combined Report," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 54, no. 1 (January 1995), pp. 19–20.

[502] Robinson. "Islamic Historiography," p. 97.

[503] Lecker. "The Jews of Medina", pp. 15–18; Harry Munt. "The Prophet's City before the Prophet: Ibn Zabāla (d. after 199/814) on Pre-Islamic Medina," in *History and Identity in the Late Antique Near East*, ed. Philip Wood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 106.

[504] ʿAllahma S. Nu'mani. "Life of the Prophet," *Islamic Review*, Vol. 51 (April–June 1963), p. 13.

2.7 Learned Scholars as a Source of Authority

In many respects al-Wāqidī's use of *Isnād*, whether such use was innovative or not, suggests that he was attached to tradition, although qualified, as a source of authoritative knowledge of early Islamic history. Likewise, it is possible to demonstrate that al-Wāqidī saw learned scholars especially his teachers as an equally authoritative source of historical knowledge, and that this in turn formed a further crucial methodology that al-Wāqidī employed in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Through a close analysis of the text, this section provides examples to support this claim.

At the time and in the place that al-Wāqidī was living, the transmission of knowledge, and especially authentic knowledge, was grounded in the oral transmission from teacher, in other words a learned scholar, to student. As El Shamsy notes, "the fundamental method of transmission at the heart of the emerging Islamic disciplines was the face-to-face encounter of teacher and student."[505] Conrad makes the case that biographical materials of the Prophet contained in *akbhār* and *ḥadīth* were "usually transmitted orally through family connections or from teacher to student."[506] In many respects, this reflects that the development of Islam for, as Neuwirth notes, the Qur'an, and therefore by extension Islamic tradition, is inherently oral; the focus is on recitation.[507] In many respects, the student-teacher dyad was pivotal therefore to the transmission and indeed preservation of Islamic tradition.[508]

This explains why al-Wāqidī made numerous references to his teachers as learned sources in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. From what is known and established, al-Wāqidī's education in the Prophet's campaigns can be traced to ʿAbdullah b. Jaʿfar, Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ , Abū Maʿshar and Maʿmar Ibn Rāshid among others. It can be demonstrated that in many places in his text al-Wāqidī referenced these learned scholars. In fact, throughout the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, al-Wāqidī would reference these teachers in many of the combined reports which topped his narration. Table 8, below, charts the

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[505] Aḥmed El Shamsy. "Social Construction of Orthodoxy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*, ed. Tim Winter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 98.
[506] Lawrence I. Conrad. "Muḥammad, the Prophet (d. 11/632)," in *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature, Volume 2, L–Z*, eds. Julie S. Meisami and Paul Starkey (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 540.
[507] Angelika Neuwirth. "Qur'an and History — a Disputed Relationship: Some Reflections on Qur'anic History and History in the Qur'an," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 5, no. 1 (2003), p. 13.
[508] Tarif Khalidi. *Arab Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 30.

references to Jaʿfar and Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ (a much more extensive account of al-Wāqidī's references to Maʿmar Ibn Rāshid is undertaken in a subsequent chapter).

Table 8: References to Learned Sources in the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*

ʿAbdullah b. Jaʿfar	Muḥammad b. Ṣaliḥ	Abū Maʿshar
The Raid of the Banū Qaynuqaʿ[509]	The Raid of al-Rajīʿ[510]	Uḥud[511]
The Raid of Biʿr Maʿunā[512]	The Raid of the Banū Naḍīr[513]	The Raid of Biʿr Maʿuna[514]
The Raid of the Banū Naḍīr[515]	The Raid of al-Muraysīʿ[516]	The Raid of Badr al-Mawʿid[517]
The Raid of Badr al-Mawʿid[518]	al-Khandaq[519]	The Raid of al-Muraysīʿ[520]
The Raid of al-Muraysīʿ[521]	al-Ḥudaybiyya[522]	al-Khandaq[523]
al-Khandaq[524]	al-Qaḍiyya[525]	Khaybar[526]
Zayd b. Ḥāritha's Expedition[527]	The Raid of al-Fatḥ[528]	The Raid of al-Ṭaʾif[529]
Khaybar[530]	Ḥunayn[531]	The Raid of Tabūk[532]
The Expedition Commanded by Ghālib b. ʿAbdullah[533]	The Raid of Tabūk[534]	
al-Qaḍiyya[535]		

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[509] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 87.
[510] Ibid, p. 173.
[511] Ibid, p. 169.
[512] Ibid, p. 169.
[513] Ibid, p. 177.
[514] Ibid, p. 188.
[515] Ibid, p. 177.
[516] Ibid, p. 198.
[517] Ibid, p. 198.
[518] Ibid, p. 188.
[519] Ibid, p. 216.
[520] Ibid, p. 216.
[521] Ibid, p. 198.
[522] Ibid, p. 281.
[523] Ibid, p. 216.
[524] Ibid, p. 216.
[525] Ibid, p. 360.
[526] Ibid, p. 312.
[527] Ibid, p. 277.
[528] Ibid, p. 384.
[529] Ibid, p. 452.
[530] Ibid, p. 312.
[531] Ibid, p. 435.
[532] Ibid, p. 485.
[533] Ibid, p. 357.
[534] Ibid, p. 485.
[535] Ibid, p. 360.

Ghālib b. ʿAbdullah's
Expedition to al-Kadīd[536]
The raid of al-Fatḥ[537]
Ḥunayn[538]
The Raid of al-Ṭaʾif[539]
The Raid of Tabūk[540]

It is clear, therefore, that al-Wāqidī made extensive use of learned sources, namely his teachers, when collecting his information on the Prophet's campaigns. However, it is also possible to demonstrate that in certain cases al-Wāqidī relied on learned scholars to obtain further details with regard to an event or even clarify certain matters. During his chronicle of the Battle of Uḥud, as an example, al-Wāqidī narrates a claim made by Ḍirār b. al-Khaṭṭāb that he had killed ten of the Prophet's companions. He interrupts the narrative, however, and states that " I asked Ibn Jaʿfar whether he killed ten men, and he replied, 'We only learned that he killed three.'"[541] Another example attesting to this can be found in the Battle of al-Khandaq where al-Wāqidī characterises Hassān b. Thābit, after referring to Ibn Jaʿfar as a reliable source, as a coward.[542] Overall, this demonstrates how al-Wāqidī consulted his teachers regarding the information he was collecting and therefore how these teachers, as learned sources, were also considered a vital and indeed authentic means through which to collect information on the Prophet's biography.

In line with the scholarly tradition of the time, this section has clearly demonstrated that learned scholars, and specifically his teachers, were a valuable source of information that al-Wāqidī mined when preparing his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. The next section will now show that his method of collecting information went beyond the traditional learned sources on the Prophet's campaigns.

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[536] Ibid, p. 369.
[537] Ibid, p. 384.
[538] Ibid, p. 435.
[539] Ibid, p. 452.
[540] Ibid, p. 485.
[541] Ibid, p. 137.
[542] Ibid, p. 226.

2.8 Ancestral Sources: The Indirect Collection of Eyewitness Accounts

Beyond gathering information from learned sources, al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was also very much informed by indirect eyewitness accounts usually via ancestral lineages and stories. It suggests that this was also a key feature of al-Wāqidī's historical methodology for gathering information on the Prophet's campaigns. Accordingly, before undertaking a thematic analysis of al-Wāqidī's methods, this section will introduce and sketch out the relevance of eyewitness accounts and ancestral sources in al-Wāqidī's *al-Maghāzī*. The section begins by demonstrating that al-Wāqidī is on record as highlighting the significance of this method for his work. Having done so, through a close analysis of the text, the section then moves on to illustrate the centrality of this method of data collection in al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*.

Before evidencing the principle that al-Wāqidī flavoured his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* by collecting, where possible, eyewitness accounts and firsthand information, it is first necessary to again clarify and differentiate between *Ḥadīth* based narratives and historical and chronological based narratives. *Ḥadīth,* in fact, has a specific meaning in terms of Islamic scholarship. In effect, as Ali notes, it refers to the collected and established "sayings of the Prophet, his Companions, the first Caliphs and others of the pious scholars of early Islam."[543] *Ḥadīth*, when it meets specific criteria (e.g. continuity, integrity, infallibility, free from integrity and free from aberration), is understood as an authentic source of early Islam.[544] In terms of the extant sources of early Islamic history it is therefore customary to distinguish between *Ḥadīth*, which incorporate full and traceable *Isnād* and *tārikh* or *akhbār* (historical reports), which utilise either incomplete *Isnād* or sources exogenous to known and respected chains of authority.[545] Commonly, therefore, both *Ḥadīth* and *akhbār* differed in their content and context while the conditions and criteria employed for determining the former were stricter than those applied for the latter. As Robinson notes, "the historians [as

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[543] ʿAlī Maulana Muḥammad. *Manual of Ḥadīth* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 1.
[544] Israr Ahmad Khan. *Authentication of Ḥadīth: Redefining the Criteria* (London: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2010), p. xvi.
[545] Jonathan A.C. Brown. *Hadith: Muḥammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* (Oneworld: Oxford, 2009), pp. 23–25.

opposed to the *muḥaddithūn*], some of whom collected and transmitted as well, followed [traditional] standards, albeit to a lower standard."[546]

It has already been established that al-Wāqidī's novel approach to the use of *Isnād* characterises him as more a historian than a legal scholar. It is also possible to argue that al-Wāqidī's employment of sources external to known and established chains of transmission does likewise. Indeed, al-Wāqidī's historical methodology is built upon a desire to broaden his narrations by supporting them with extra and often unknown or recorded information, at least *vis-à-vis* his peers. The chief method in which al-Wāqidī achieved this was to seek out and collect indirectly eyewitness and firsthand accounts of the events he narrated in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī.* This is illustrated by the following quote from al-Wāqidī: "I used to find the sons and grandsons of the Prophet's companions and the martyrs or their slaves and asked them whether they heard from any of the family members' information or talked about whether and how the martyr or the fighter was killed."[547] Extending where possible his sources as part of his historical methodology offered al-Wāqidī the opportunity to collect much more extensive information with regard to the Prophet's campaigns, which in turn allowed him to construct a much fuller and deeper account of this period of early Islamic history. In this respect, al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* extended the hitherto literature. Ibn Sayyad an-Nāss comments that due "to the broadness of his work, the later historians did not have enough sources of information to confirm the credibility of his work."[548]

Al-Wāqidī is not alone in this aspect. Just a cursory glance at Guillaume's most authoritative translation of Ibn Isḥāq's *Sīrat Rasūl Allah* reveals that Ibn Isḥāq also utilised this method extensively.[549] His narration of the Battle of Badr is especially relevant in this regard. It is replete with reporting similar in many respects to al-Wāqidī, e.g., 'I was told that…'[550] Thus, Khalidi is quite right to note that "because [of] his cavalier use of *isnad*" Ibn Isḥāq, much like al-Wāqidī, was "helping to move *Hadith*

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[546] Chase F. Robinson. "Islamic Historical Writing," p. 249.

[547] al- Baghdādī. "*Tārīkh Bagdād*," *Vol. 3,* p. 6.

[548] Ibn Sayyid al-Nās . '*Uyūn al-athar, fī funūn al-maghāzī wa-al-shamā'il wa-al-sīyar, Vol. 1* (Beirut: Dār al-Āfāq al- Jadīdah, 1980), p. 29.

[549] Ibn Isḥāq. "*Sīrat*"; Philip K. Hitti. "A Review of the Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ibn Ishaq's *Sirat Rasul Allah* by A. Guillaume," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 47, no. 1 (1956), pp. 84–85; R.B. Serjeant, "Professor A. Guillaume's Translation of the *Sīrah*," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 21, no. 1 (1958), pp. 1–14.

[550] Ibn Isḥāq. "*Sīrat*," pp. 289–314.

in the direction of wider historical perspectives."[551] This feature will be discussed further in a subsequent chapter of this thesis. Thus, the similarity in method between al-Wāqidī and Ibn Isḥāq probably explain why traditionists, such as Ibn Hanbal, condemned and denounced these *maghāzī* scholars.[552]

A close reading of al-Wāqidī's text does indeed reveal that he scrupulously collected voluminous indirect accounts of the events he narrated, especially from family and ancestral traditions. Although there are far too many of these reports to document in full, Table 9 documents ancestral reports that al-Wāqidī referenced in his narration of the Battle of Badr and contrasts them with Ibn Isḥāq's account of the same event.

Table 9: A Comparison of al-Wāqidī's and Ibn Isḥāq's Narration of Badr with Reference to al-Wāqidī's Use of Indirect Witness Accounts

Report	Comments
Abū Bakr b. Ismāʿīl b. Muḥammad←his father← ʿĀmir b. Saʿd←from his father.[553]	Tells the story of Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ' brother, ʿUmayr b. Abī Waqqāṣ, wishing to fight, despite being of a young age. This narration does not appear in Ibn Isḥāq's narration of Badr, although ʿUmayr's death is recorded in the list of martyrs at Badr.[554]
Ibn Abī Dhi'b←al-Maqburī←ʿAbdullah b. Abī Qatāda←from his father.[555]	Recites a prayer the Prophet said while at Buyūt al-Suqyā prior to the battle. It does not appear in Ibn Isḥāq's narration of Badr.
Ubayd b. Yaḥyā←Mu'adh b. Rifā'a←his father.[556]	Tells a fable of the Prophet rejuvenating Rifā'a's collapsed camel, making it ride again. It does not appear Ibn Isḥāq's narration of Badr, where the detail of the ride to Badr is far less limited in scope.[557]

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[551] Tarif Khalid. *Arab Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 38.
[552] Rizwi Faizer. "Sira," in *Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Josef W. Meri (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 754.
[553] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 12.
[554] Ibn Isḥāq, "*Sīrat*," p. 336.
[555] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 13.
[556] Ibid, p. 14.
[557] Ibn Isḥāq. "*Sīrat*," pp. 292–293.

Yaḥyā b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Saʿīd b. Saʿd b. ʿUbāda←his father and Abū Bakr b. Ismāʿīl b. Muḥammad←his father← Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ.[558]	Provides two different accounts of the number of camels (twenty and seventy) used by the Prophet and his companions. It does not appear in Ibn Isḥāq's narration of Badr, who instead states categorically that seventy camels were used.[559]
Muḥammad b. Bijād←his father, Saʿd.[560]	Recalls the stay at Tūrban and that, with the Prophet's guidance, Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ slayed a gazelle, which was then shared among the companions. Ibn Isḥāq provides no information on the stay at Tūrban.[561]
Mūsā b. Yaʾqūb←his aunt←from her father←Ḍubāʿa bt. Zubayr←al-Miqdād b. ʿAmr; and Saʿd b. Mālik al-Ghanawi←his ancestors.[562]	That the group had two horses: Sabḥa, which was ridden by al-Miqdād b. ʿAmr al-Bahrāni, and a-Sayl, which was ridden by Marthad b. Abī Marthad al-Ghanawī. This information is not conveyed in Ibn Isḥāq's work; instead Marthad is recorded as being on a camel.[563]
Mūsā b. Ḍamra b. Saʾīd←his father.[564]	Retells a portion of what Abū Sufyān informed Ḍamḍam to tell the Quraysh. It does not appear in ʿĀtika bt. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib's dream sequence in Ibn Isḥāq's *Sīrat*.[565]
Kuthayr b. ʿAbdullah b. ʿAmr b. ʿAwf al-Muzannī←his father←his grandfather.[566]	Recalls what the Prophet said after two scouts, Basbas b. ʿAmr and ʿAdī b. Abi l-Zaghbāʾ, had returned with information on the Quraysh. Ibn Isḥāq's *Sīrat* contains information pertaining to the scouting mission but does not convey the Prophet's response.[567]
ʿAbd al-Malik b. Jaʿfar←Umm Bakr bt. al-Miswar←her father.[568]	Conveys information with regard to what Akhnas b. Sharīq informed the Banū Zuhra with regard to Abū Jahl. Ibn Isḥāq's and al-Wāqidī's texts are very similar in terms of wording and content.[569]
Abū Ismāʾīl b. ʿAbdullah b. ʿAṭiyya b. Abdullah b. Unays←his father.[570]	Recalls the Prophet giving out three flags. Ibn Isḥāq's narration does not contain this information, although it does contain, like al-Wāqidī's text, the exchange

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[558] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 14.
[559] Ibn Isḥāq. "*Sīrat*," p. 286.
[560] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 15.
[561] Ibn Isḥāq. "*Sīrat*," p. 293.
[562] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 15.
[563] Ibn Isḥāq. "*Sīrat*," p. 293.
[564] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 15.
[565] Ibn Isḥāq. "*Sīrat*," pp. 290–291.
[566] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 22.
[567] Ibn Isḥāq. "*Sīrat*," p. 295.
[568] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 24.
[569] Ibn Isḥāq. "*Sīrat*," p. 296.
[570] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 26.

	between Saʿd b. Muʿādh that preceded the giving of the battle standards.[571]
ʿUbayd b. Yaḥyā←Muʿādh b. Rifāʾa←his father.[572]	Recalls the rain sent by God, which impeded the Quraysh. Similar information is presented in Ibn Isḥāq's text, although the detail is comparably less.[573]
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. al- Ḥārith←his grandfather, ʿUbayd b. Abī ʿUbayd←Khufāf b. Īmāʾ b. Raḥḍa.[574]	Contains information on why Khufāf's father gave the Quraysh a gift of ten camels. The gift is noted in Ibn Isḥāq's text, although the reasoning is not.[575]
Ibn Abi l-Zīnād←his father.[576]	Contains a line criticising ʿUtba b. Rabīʾa, which does not appear in Ibn Isḥāq's work.[577]
Ibn Abi l-Zīnād←his father.[578]	Contains a line criticising ʿUtba b. Rabīʾa, which does not appear in Ibn Isḥāq's work, although the ʿUtba's death is noted in a similar vein to al-Wāqidī's narration.[579]
ʿUbayd b. Yaḥyā←Muʿādh b. Rifāʾa←his father.[580]	Tells the Quraysh's reaction to Surāqa b. Juʾsham al-Mudliji's actions (the slaying of al-Ḥārith and the fleeing from the battle). Ibn Isḥāq's account does not mention Surāqa's actions and that al-Mujadhdhar b. Dhiyād al-Balawī killed al-Ḥārith.[581]
Mūsā b. Muḥammad←his father.[582]	Gives details about the four distinguished fighters (Ḥamza, ʿAlī, al-Zubayr and Abū Dujāna), especially with regard to how their garb could identify them. Ibn Isḥāq's account only gives information with regard to Ḥamza.[583]
Khārija b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Thābit b. Qays b. Shammās←his father.[584]	Contains an exchange between the Prophet and Gabriel, which does not appear in Ibn Isḥāq's Sīrat.

[571] Ibn Isḥāq. "Sīrat," p. 295.
[572] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," p. 28.
[573] Ibn Isḥāq. "Sīrat," p. 296.
[574] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," p. 31.
[575] Ibn Isḥāq. "Sīrat," p. 297.
[576] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," p. 32.
[577] Ibn Isḥāq. "Sīrat," p. 298.
[578] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," p. 36.
[579] Ibn Isḥāq. "Sīrat," p. 299.
[580] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," pp. 38–39.
[581] Ibn Isḥāq. "Sīrat," p. 301.
[582] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," p. 39.
[583] Ibn Isḥāq. "Sīrat," p. 303.
[584] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," p. 39.

'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith←his father←his grandfather, 'Ubayd b. Abī 'Ubayd←Abū Ruhm al-Ghifārī←the son of an uncle of his.[585]	Contains details of Gabriel's intervention. A similar tale from the word of a man from the Banū Ghifār appears in Ibn Isḥāq's text.[586]
Isḥāq b. Yaḥyā←Ḥamza b. Ṣuhayb←his father.[587]	Contains details of Gabriel's intervention, which does not appear in Ibn Isḥāq's Sīrat.
Mūsā b. Muḥammad←his father.[588]	Contains details of Gabriel's intervention, which does not appear in Ibn Isḥāq's Sīrat.
'Ubayd b. Yaḥyā←Mu'ādh b. Rifā'a b. Rāfi←his father; Muḥammad b. Qudāma b. Mūsa←his father←'Āisha bt. Qudāma.[589]	Retells the killing of Umayya b. Khalaf. A similar version appears in Ibn Isḥāq's text, although with a different chain of authority.[590]
Muḥammad b. Awf←son of Mu'awwidh b. Afrā←Ibrāhīm b. Yaḥyā b. Zayd b. Thābit.[591]	Interjects in the narrative of Mu'ādh b. 'Amr b. Jamūḥ's slaying of Abū Jahl to tell a story of the deaths of two sons of al-Ḥārith by Abū Jahl. The narrative does not feature in Ibn Isḥāq's Sīrat, although Abu Jahl's death is treated similarly in both texts.[592]
'Umar b. 'Uthmān al-Jaḥshī←his father←his paternal aunt.[593]	Tells the story of 'Ukkāsha b. Miḥṣan's broken sword. The story also features in Ibn Isḥāq's Sīrat, although al-Wāqidī's text does offer an additional contrasting account.[594]
Mūsā b. Ya'qūb←his uncle.[595]	Provides an account of Ḥakīm Ḥizām which explains that the Prophet threw pebbles and the Quraysh lost at Badr. Ibn Isḥāq's Sīrat does not contain this report; however, it does contain a passage about the Prophet throwing pebbles at the commencement of the battle.[596]

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[585] Ibid, p. 40.
[586] Ibn Isḥāq. "Sīrat," p. 303.
[587] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," p. 40.
[588] Ibid, p. 41.
[589] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," p. 43.
[590] Ibn Isḥāq. "Sīrat," p. 303.
[591] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," p. 45.
[592] Ibn Isḥāq. "Sīrat," p. 304.
[593] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," p. 47.
[594] Ibn Isḥāq. "Sīrat," p. 305.
[595] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," p. 48
[596] Ibn Isḥāq. "Sīrat," p. 301

'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith←Makhlad b. Khufāf←his father.[597]	Notes that there was a great deal of booty from the battle. Ibn Isḥāq also cites al-Ḥārith (via Abū Umāma al-Bāhilī); however, the passage reveals that quarrelling over the booty led to God, via the Prophet, intervening to ensure its equal distribution.[598]
Muḥammad b. Abī Ḥumayd←'Abdullah b. 'Amr b. Umayya←his father.[599]	Provides a statement highlighting the Quraysh's cowardice. It does not appear in Ibn Isḥāq's Sīrat.
Yaqūb b. Mujāhid Abū Ḥazra←'Ubāda b. al-Walīd b. 'Ubāda←his father←his grandfather; and Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā b. Sahl←his uncle, Muḥammad b. Sahl b. Abī Ḥathma.[600]	Reveals quarrels over the booty from the battle, which would reflect Ibn Isḥāq's al-Ḥārith report, as above.[601]
Ibn Abī Sabra←Yaqūb b. Zayd←his father.[602]	Notes that the Prophet apportioned booty to fourteen of those who died at Badr. This report does not feature in Ibn Isḥāq's Sīrat.
'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Abdullah b. Dhakwān←his father←'Ubaydullah b. 'Abdullah b. 'Utba←Ibn 'Abbās.[603]	Notes that the Prophet received Munabbih b. al-Ḥajjāj's sword, Dhū l-Faqār, as a spoil of war. This report does not feature in Ibn Isḥāq's Sīrat.
Abū Bakr b. Ismā'īl←his father←'Āmir b. Sa'd←his father; and 'Īsa b. Ḥafṣ b. 'Āṣim←his father; and Abū Bakr b. Ismā'īl←his father←his father 'Āmir b. Sa'd.[604]	Provides information about the Quraysh prisoners, which does not appear in Ibn Isḥāq's Sīrat.
Muhammad b. Yahya b. Sahl b. Abi Hathma←his father←his grandfather.[605]	Tells the killing of the Quraysh prisoner, 'Uqba b. Abī Mu'ayt. It does not feature in Ibn Isḥāq's Sīrat.

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[597] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," p. 49.
[598] Ibn Isḥāq. "Sīrat," p. 307
[599] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," p. 49.
[600] Ibid, p. 50.
[601] Ibn Isḥāq. "Sīrat," p. 307.
[602] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," p. 50.
[603] Ibid, p. 52.
[604] Ibid, p. 53.
[605] Ibid, p. 57.

The comparison of these two historians is not a purely academic exercise. The literature about these two historians and their use of indirect accounts, *akbhār* or what can effectively be called *qaṣaṣ* material reveals two positions. On the one hand, Crone argues that both drew from the same pool of material which in turn explains why there are similarities in their accounts of the Prophet's biography,[606] which is a point that Jones would be in agreement with.[607] On the other hand, Faizer contends that, rather being simple slaves to the data, both compilers had much more agency in terms of material selection, which explains some of the differences in narration.[608]

A look at al-Wāqidī's use of indirect eyewitness reports clearly supports Faizer's position. Indeed, the two authors seemingly used only one similar report – a member of the Banū Ghifārī's account of Gabriel's intervention and his shout of 'advance, Ḥayzūm' (his horse's name).[609] This, in turn, would tend to lend credence to al-Dūrī's assertion that "al-Wāqidī took nothing from Ibn Isḥāq",[610] in addition to providing further support to the claim that al-Wāqidī "can be seen…as a better, fuller, storyteller than Ibn Isḥāq."[611]

That being said, there are of course critical problems regarding ancestral tradition, principally flowing from the practice of oral transmission. It is clear that oral transmission, given the context of the time, was the preferred method of documenting and spreading knowledge; hence, any criticism of this method cannot be limited to al-Wāqidī. Nevertheless, it is equally clear that demonstrable problems exist about the practice of oral transmission, especially with regard to the veracity of the source material.[612] Such problems are succinctly documented by 'Alī Murad:

> Of course, oral transmission involves memory, which determines the
> shape and form of the stories and the information that is being passed
> down. But memory has its own shortcomings. Problems resulting from
> orality…include confusion about the sequence and significance of events

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[606] Crone. "Meccan Trade," p. 255.
[607] Jones. "Ibn Isḥāq and al-Wāqidī," p. 46.
[608] Faizer. "Muhammad and the Medinan Jews," p. 482.
[609] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 40; Ibn Isḥāq. "*Sīrat*," p. 303.
[610] al-Dūrī. "Historical Writing," p. 39.
[611] Little. "Narrative Themes," p. 44.
[612] Peter Mandaville. "Reimagining the *Ummah*? Information Technology and the Changing Boundaries of Political Islam," in *Political Islam: A Critical Reader*, ed. Frederic Volpi (London: Routledge, 2011), p. 398.

as well as details such as names and settings. The historiography of the Islamic conquests, for examples, abounds with such problems. In societies where orality is the principal means of communication, historical fact easily becomes mixed with legend, rendering the product meaningless as history, although still of immense value in preserving a society's traditions and beliefs.[613]

It is certainly crucial to be aware of such issues with regard to this methodology of knowledge transmission, as this quotation points to and all the methods which al-Wāqidī employed and which have been discussed in this chapter so far. However, such methods do have value beyond the question whether or not they actually provide a true representation of the history they purport to produce. Of particular importance to this thesis is the question of philosophy: can an analysis of al-Wāqidī's historical methodology aid in the reconstruction of his unarticulated philosophy of history? Apart from determining facts, al-Wāqidī also seems equally concerned about lending them the air of authenticity and immediacy for which he employs certain narrative techniques. The next two sections discuss al-Wāqidī's use of literary devices and socio-political factors as crucial aspects of his historical methodology that go hand-in-hand with the methods of information gathering.

2.9 Literary Narrative Devices in al-Wāqidī's Kitāb al-Maghāzī

Apart from the above eight methods of information gathering, there are some other tropological devices as well whereby al-Wāqidī strives to build an aura of veracity and authenticity around his narrative. His effort seems to be oriented to not only present a fact but also to make a fact sound and feel like a fact, an essential aspect of storytelling. Literarily embedded narrative devices in his historical text, such as dialogue, poetry and dream sequences, therefore, play a crucial role as essential features of al-Wāqidī's narrative methodology in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. This section discusses how each feature informs a specific aspect of al-Wāqidī's history – history as storytelling. Besides, these features also accentuate how al-Wāqidī's history was conditioned by the specific place and time he was anchored to.

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[613] 'Alī Murad Sulaimān. *Early Islam between Myth and History: al-Hasan al-Basri (d. 110H/728CE) and the Formation of His Legacy in Classical Islamic Scholarship* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2006), p. 5.

To begin with, an extensive examination of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* reveals 'dialogue' to be one of the fundamental techniques that he used in determining endogenous facts about and chronicling the Prophet's campaigns as opposed to the exogenous nature of the facts discussed in the sections above. The previous chapter has already established that al-Wāqidī was keen to anchor his history in authority and authenticity. In many respects, the dialogical technique relates to this. As Rabat highlights, "Inserting dialogues in historical narrative is a known technique for lending an account an appearance of authenticity and immediacy."[614]   Evidences abound to confirm the claim that dialogue is one of al-Wāqidī's central techniques, only some of which are discussed below for reasons of space limitations:

This technique is employed by al-Wāqidī during his narration of the Battle of Uḥud in order to emphasise certain aspects of the battle. Take the following passage as an example:

> …Anas b. Qatāda said, 'O Messenger of God, it is one of the two good results either martyrdom or [booty] and victory in killing them.' The Messenger of God said, 'Indeed I fear defeat.'…

It is then discussed by al-Wāqidī that some of the Prophet's companions, against the popular opinion, were concerned about the Prophet going out:

> …They [the people] anticipated his going out. Sa'd b. Mu'ādh and Usayd b. Ḥuḍayr came to them and said, 'You have spoken to the Messenger of God and forced him to go out. But the orders come to him from heaven, so return the command to him, and do as he commands you.'…

He then advances the narrative by focusing on the dialogue between the Prophet and the people,

> …when the Messenger of God went out, the people regretted what they did. Those who had pressured the Messenger of God said, 'It was not for us to force the Messenger of God about a matter which he did not desire and ignored the people's opinion who advised to stay.' They said, 'O Messenger of God it was

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[614] Nasser Rabat. "Representing the Mamluks in Mamluk History," in *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt*, ed. Hugh N. Kennedy (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2001), p. 73.

not for us to disagree with you, so act according to your opinion.' The Prophet replied, 'I asked you about this, and you refused. It is not appropriate for a prophet that once he puts on his cuirass to take it off until God has judged between him and his enemies.'[615]

Here al-Wāqidī is using dialogue not only to demonstrate his command of the historical sources but also to bring into sharper relief certain aspects of the Battle of Uḥud that he deems significant, namely the role of the Prophet's companions in forcing the Prophet out to face the Quraysh.

Dialogue is also utilised by al-Wāqidī in order to highlight certain aspects of the Prophet's character and nature he deems noteworthy. In the following dialogue between the Prophet and 'Abdullah b. Unays, for instance, the Prophet is clearly depicted as all-knowing:

> The Messenger of God called 'Abdullah b. Unays and sent him by himself on an expedition to kill Sufyān. The Messenger of God said to him, 'Attach yourself to Khuzā'a.' And 'Abdullah b. Unays said, 'O Messenger of God, I do not know him. Describe him to me.'

The dialogue proceeds further:

> The Prophet then replied, 'Indeed, when you see him you will dread him, fear him, and remember Satan.' 'Abdullāh said, 'But I did not fear men, so I said, 'O Messenger of God, I have not feared anything, ever.' The Messenger of God said, it will be a sign between you and him that you will shudder when you see him.'[616]

The following dialogue, on the other hand, illustrates that al-Wāqidī wishes to emphasise the wise nature of the Prophet:

> …the Messenger of God joined [Abū 'Abs b. Jabr] and said, 'What is the matter with you that you go ahead of the people and do not go with them?' [Abū 'Abs]

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[615] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 106.
[616] Ibid, p. 261.

replied, 'O Messenger of God, surely my camel is superior.' He said, 'Where is the garment with which I clothed you?'

Abū 'Abs then replied:

"I sold it for eight dirhams, made a provision of dates for two dirhams, left two dirhams as funds for my family and bought a cloak for four dirhams.'

The Prophet replied:

'O Abū 'Abs, you and your companions are, by God, poor! By Him Who keeps my soul in His hands, if you stay safe, and live a little, your provisions will increase, and what you leave to your family will increase; and your land and your slaves and whatever is in your interest will increase, and how good it will be for you!'

Abū 'Abs said in reply: 'And by God, it was just as the Messenger said'.[617]

Moreover, al-Wāqidī uses dialogue to convey a message about Islam as well: the power of its beliefs and the dedication and commitment of its believers. The conversion of Khubayb b. 'Adī is indicative of the same here:

… [the Quraysh] Give up Islam, and we will set you free!' He replied, 'No, by God, I will not leave Islam even if all that is on the earth were mine!' They said, 'Do you not wish that Muhammad were in your place and that you were seated in your house?'

Khubayb b. 'Adī retorted:

'By God, I do not desire that Muhammad were pierced with prongs while I am seated in my house.' They repeated, 'Return, O Khubayb!' He replied, 'I will never return!'

The Quraysh then said:

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[617] Ibid, p. 313.

'By al-Lāt and al-'Uzzā, if you will not do so we will kill you.' He said, 'My death in the path of God is little.'… 'Regarding your turning my face away from the *qibla* [the Ka'bah], indeed God says: Wherever you turn is God.'

Then Khubayb b. 'Adī said:

'O God, I do not see except the face of an enemy. O God, there is not one here who will take to your Messenger greetings from me, so please convey my greetings to him'.[618]

These dialogic passages represent only a very small sample of the numerous – in fact extensive – such passages that al-Wāqidī has deployed in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Their significance here, however, is not limited to charting the aspects of this part of the Islamic history that al-Wāqidī deemed significant. In analytical terms, the extensive use of dialogue as a narrative technique goes some way toward demonstrating the subjective and conditioned nature of al-Wāqidī's historical narrative.

The time period in which al-Wāqidī documented his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was very much a pre-literate one since in that era knowledge and information were predominantly transmitted orally.[619] The origins of Islam therefore very much shaped the development of early Islamic historical writing; dialogue being a chief tool is an obvious manifestation of this. Wolf has pointed out that the early oral "tradition would continue after the coming of Islam, as storytellers or *qussās* recounted tales of the life of the Prophet, forming folklore that inevitably became intermixed with the scholarly traditions about Muhammad's life."[620] If true, this explains al-Wāqidī's reliance on the dialogical narrative technique. Besides, it also illustrates the subjective nature of his historiography inasmuch as it lays bare that his historiographical strategy was conditioned by the wider intellectual and cultural milieu that he inhabited.

In addition, it is clear from an extensive examination of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* that poetic recitation was a narrative technique that the historian used. The employment of poetic passages in historical narratives was a fairly common practice of the time, with al-Wāqidī being no exception in this regard. However, in comparison

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[618] Ibid, p. 176.
[619] Robinson. "Islamic History," pp. 7–10.
[620] Daniel Woolf. *A Global History of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 92.

with Ibn Isḥāq, who used poetic recitation much more extensively, al-Wāqidī did not consider poetry as such a critical source of history.[621] Al-Wāqidī cites approximately three hundred verses of poetry in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī,* whereas Ibn Isḥāq cites approximately four hundred verses of poetry in the Battle of Badr alone. Nevertheless, poetry does feature as a key narrative device in the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* in three crucial aspects: as narrative decoration; as a form of narrative glorification; and, in certain respects, as a juxtaposition of Islam and the Prophet.

By narrative decoration it is meant that al-Wāqidī, in many instances, used poetry as a means to embellish, in the non-pejorative sense of the term, his historical narrative. For example, the verse: "Was it cowardice, when I commanded my commands?/ I will make my announcement of bereavement to the mother of 'Amr",[622] which were uttered by 'Utba b. Rabī'a prior to the battle as a contrast to the more offensive-minded Quraysh and to advocate for peace over conflict. In the context of the actual outcome of Badr, the verses cited add more emotion and poignancy to the actual text. A similar technique is apparent in the following verses:

> My mount almost fell from fright at the voices
> When the ground flowed with troops of horses.
> They ran with noble lion like warriors
> Eager for the fray, firm in the saddle, fully armed.
> I said: Alas for Ibn Ḥarb when he meets them
> When the plain is surging with men.[623]

The verses, which were recited by Maʿbad b. Abī Maʿbad al-Khuzāʿī after meeting with Abū Sufyān and 'Ikrima b. Abī Jahl, were intended to emphasise the fear of a further battle between the Prophet and his companions and the Quraysh. The idea of using poetry to engender emotion is also evident in Zayd b. Arqam's recitation of this verse:

[621] 'abd al-'azīz al-Durī. *Nash'at ʿilm al-Tārīkh ʿind al-ʿArab* (UAE: Markaz Zāyyd lilturāth al-Islamī, 2000), p.35.
[622] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 33.
هل جبانٌ وأَمَرْثُ أَمْرِي   فَبَشِّري بالثُّكلِ أمَّ عَمرو
[623] Ibid, p. 165.
كادثَ تُهَدُّ من الأصواتِ راحِلتي   إذ سالت الأرضُ بالجُرِد الأبابيلُ
تعدو بأسدٍ كرامٍ لا تَنابِلةٍ   عند اللقاءِ ولا مِيلٍ معازيلُ
فقلتُ ويل ابن حربٍ من لقائهمُ   إذا تَغَمْضت البطحاءُ بالجيلِ

When you brought me and carried my gear
A four nights' journey from the swampy ground,
Then enjoy life and bear no blame.
May I never return to my people at home.
And when the Muslims have gone and left me
in al-Shām where I wish to be,
There I shall not care for the pollen of the date,
Nor for the palms whose roots are watered.[624]

The retelling of Khālid b. al-Walīd's entry into Makka is also illustrative of the way in which al-Wāqidī used poetry as a narrative device to elaborate upon the story being told. While Khalid was fighting, it is said, he composed the following verse:

When the Messenger of God is among us,
You see us as the roar of the sea reaching its bed.
When we put on the armour and picked up the spears
The deaf could be led by its sounds.
Indeed, Muhammad would help it. It becomes mighty, and its helper mighty too.[625]

The point here is to emphasise the power of Islam and by extension the power of its followers at a critical juncture in the development of the Islamic community.

The poetry cited by al-Wāqidī would often glorify Islam, the Prophet and the events chronicled in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. While narrating the Killing of Kaʿb b. al-Ashraf, for example, he cites a lengthy verse from ʿAbbād b. Bishr after the Prophet's companions had returned with the head of Ibn al-Ashraf. Although not quoted in full, the following verse demonstrates the way in which al-Wāqidī used poetry to glorify certain aspects of his narrative:

But in our right hands are white swords
Practiced in the slitting of the unbeliever.
Ibn Maslama the one who struck embraced him
Like a lion and smothered him.

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[624] Ibid, p. 373.

إذا بَلَّغتِني وحملتِ رحلي   مسافَةَ أربعٍ بعد الجِساء
فزُلكِ أنعُمِّ وخَلاكِ ذَمٌّ   ولا أرجعُ إلى أَهلي ورائي
وآبَ المسلمونَ وغادروني   بأرضِ الشامِ مُشتهيَ الثَّواءِ
هنالك لا أبالي طلع نخلٍ   ولا نخلٍ أسافِلُها رِواءُ

[625] Ibid, p. 407.

إذا ما رسولُ اللهِ فينا رأيتنا   كلُجّةِ بحرٍ نالَ فيها سريرُها
إذا م ارتدينا الفارسيّةَ فوقها   رُديْنِيّةٌ يهدي الأصمّهَ خريرُها
(   )وإن محمداً   لها ناصرٌ عزّت وعزَّ نصيرُها

Strengthened by his sheathed sword upon him
Abū ʿabs Ibn Jabr pierced him.
I arrived with my companions and when
We killed the infidel he was like a slaughtered animal.
A noble took off his head.
They were renowned for fidelity and piety
And God was sixth among us, and we
Returned with mercy and blessings and a splendid victory."[626]

In the chapter on Khaybar, al-Wāqidī also cites a verse from ʿĀmir b. Sinān which is meant to illustrate the splendour through which the Prophet's followers related to their leader. It goes thus:

"By God, without you we would not have seen the right path,
Nor given charity nor prayed.
So throw Your tranquillity upon us and strengthen our feet when meet.
Indeed, when we are called we answer. They can depend on our help."[627]

Likewise, al-Wāqidī used verse to glorify the Islamic community as a whole. Consider the following verses, for example:

The noblest people are partisans of the Messenger of God

At a time when desires and partisanship are dispersed,

Their purity is revealed in the Qur'ān.

They are not greedy, and greed of others does not stop them

Such that they in the midst of battle, facing death,

Are like the Lions of Bīsha with their paws curved.

They do not boast when they nail their enemy.

[626] Ibid, p. 95.

وفي إيماننا بيضٌ حدادٌ   مُجرّبَةٌ بها الكُفّارَ نفرى
فعانقةُ ابن مسلمةَ المُرادي   بهِ الكَفّان كالليثِ الهزبرِ
وشدَّ بسيفٍ صلتاً عليهِ   فقطّرهُ أبو عبس بن جبر
وصلتُ وصاحباي فكان لمّا   قتلناهُ الخبيثَ كذبحِ عترِ
ومرَّ برأسهِ نفرٌ كِرامٌ   همُ ناهوك من صدقٍ وبرِ
وكا الله سادسنا فأبنا   بأفضلَ نعمةٍ وأعزّ نصرِ

[627] Ibid, p. 314.

اللّهمَ لولا أنتَ ما اهتدينا   ولا تصدّقنا ولا صلينا
فألقينْ سكينةً علينا   وثبّتْ الأقدامَ إن لاقينا
إنّا إذا صِحَ بنا أتينا   وبالصّياح عَولوا علينا

If they are taken, they are not weak or scared …

They are the best of tribes whether they are serious or joking.[628]

At the same time, however, it is also clear that al-Wāqidī conveys a distaste of poetry in places.[629] At times, al-Wāqidī would intentionally juxtapose poetry with Islam in order to legitimise the latter over the former, which probably stems from the tension between poetry and the Qur'ān and Prophetic tradition.[630] While narrating Badr, for instance, al-Wāqidī makes numerous references to the following lampoonery:

Badr's mill ground out the blood of its people
At events like Badr you should weep and cry.
The best of the people were slain around its cisterns,
Don't think it strange that the Kings are being killed.
Some people whose anger humiliates me say
Ka'b b. al-Ashraf is utterly afraid.
They speak the truth. O that the earth when they were killed
Had split asunder and engulfed its people.[631]

Likewise, al-Wāqidī notes 'Aṣmā bt. Marwān "insulted the Prophet, vilified Islam and incited the people against the Prophet with poetry."[632] He cites the following satirical verses as an evidence of this:

I despise the Banū Mālik and al-Nabīt and 'Awf and I despise the Banū l-Khazraj
You obey a stranger who is from other than you; not from Murād or Madhḥij,
Do you have hopes of him even after the killing of your chiefs
Like one who awaits a well-cooked broth?"[633]

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[628] Ibid, p. 479.

أكرم بقوم رسول الله شيعتهم   إذا تفرّقت الأهواءُ والشِّيَعُ

أعَفَةٌ ذُكِرَت في الوحي عفتهم   لا يطمعون ولا يُرديهمُ الطمعُ

كأنهمْ في الوغى والموتُ مُكتَنَعٌ   أسدٌ ببيشةَ في أرساغها فَدُعُ

لا يفخرون إذا نالوا عدوهمْ وإن   أصيبوا فلا خَورٌ ولا جَزَعُ

[629] M. Th. Houtsma and Russell C.D. Arnold. *Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1913–1936* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993), p. 443.

[630] Wen-chin Quyang. *Literary Criticism in Medieval Arabic-Islamic Culture: The Making of a Tradition* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), p. 59.

[631] al-Wāqidī, "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 61.

طحنتْ رحى بدرٍ لمهلك أهلِهِ   ولمثل بدرٍ تستَهلُّ وتدمعُ

قُتلتْ سراةُ الناسِ حول حياضِهِ   لا تبعَدوا إنَّ الملوك تُصَرّغُ

ويقولُ أقوامٌ أُذَلُّ بسخطهم   إنَّ ابن أشرفَ ظَلَّ كعباً يجزعُ

صدقوا فليتَ الأرض ساعةَ قُتَّلوا   ظلَّت تَسيخُ بأهلها وتَصَدَّعُ

[632] Ibid, p. 85.

[633] Ibid, p. 85.

Despite this selective disapproval of poetry, there is nevertheless clear empirical evidence that al-Wāqidī employed poetic citation as a principal narrative technique in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. In turn, this informs us a great deal about the subjective nature of al-Wāqidī's history chiefly because it illustrates the way in which his narrative technique was informed by the wider social, cultural and intellectual milieu that he inhabited. Poetry played a pivotal role in the transmission of knowledge in pre-Islamic and early Islamic society. In the words of al-Balādhuri, poetry was "one of the earliest and most fully-developed modes of expression among the Arabs."[634] In fact , in pre-Islamic society poetry was central to the production and reproduction of community narratives as it was an effective way of memorising cultural and historical narratives and myths.[635] Thus, even after the advent of Islam, poetry continued to play "a preeminent role" in the transmission of cultural knowledge.[636] It is clear, despite the fact that al-Wāqidī employed less poetry than say Ibn Ishāq, that al-Wāqidī was no exception to the pre-eminence of poetry. In that respect, al-Wāqidī's history of the Prophet's latter life was very much informed as well as conditioned by the context in which it was written; and in that sense the history he produced in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was considerably subjective in nature and character.

At the same time, the employment of this particular narrative technique also reveals certain aspects with regard to al-Wāqidī's unarticulated yet clearly evident philosophy of history. It has been argued that the adoption of poetry within the *maghāzī* texts correlates in places to the *qussās* (storytellers).[637] If this is true, then philosophy of history underlying the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is less concerned with probing, testing or explaining – how contemporary traditional historians might define the subject of history – and instead it is more concerned with storytelling, in the non-pejorative sense of the word.[638]

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[634] Amhmad b. Yahyay b. Jabir al- Bilāduri. *Futuh al-Buldān* (Beirut: Dār al-Hilāl, 1988), p. 1.
[635] Stephen Vernoit. "Artistic Expressions of Muslim Societies," in *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Islamic World,* ed. Frances Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 250; Suzanne P. Stetkevych, *The Mantle Odes: Arabic Praise Poems to the Prophet Mouhammad* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010), p. 31.
[636] Franz Rosenthal. "Gustave E. von Grunebaum," in *Medieval Scholarship: Biographical Studies on the Formation of a Discipline, Volume 1: History*, eds. H. Damico and Joseph B. Zavadil (London: Routledge, 2014), p. 330.
[637] Fitzpatrick and Walker. "Muhammad in History," p. 351.
[638] Robinson. "Islamic Historiography," p. 12.

Other areas that clearly indicate the conditioned nature of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* include the extensive use of '**dream**' as a narrative technique. It has been opined that the development of the Islamic faith following the Prophet's death is very much correlated to the development of oneirocritica, or dream interpretation.[639] As it has been argued, "medieval and modern Muslims have considered dreams to be windows in the hidden mysteries of both this world and the next. In this respect, dreams are akin to, and part of, prophecy itself."[640] The concept of *mubashshirāt* can be cited as an example. In the *sīra* and *maghāzī* genre, dreams "are communal experiences that serve to activate the community," [641] though occasionally also used as phenomena to be examined or interpreted. Thus, this particular method of narrating history was clearly an established practice; and given that it features throughout *al-Maghāzī*, it establishes the claim that al-Wāqidī's history was conditioned by time and place.

The narrative technique of dreams features quite prominently and recurrently in the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. In the Battle of Badr, for example, Ātika bt. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib's dream foretells the arrival of Ḍamḍam b. 'Amr and the way in which he roused the Quraysh into a confrontation with the Prophet and his followers;[642] Ḍamḍam also recounts one of his dreams to al- Ḥārith in the same chapter;[643] at Uḥud, al-Wāqidī narrates the Prophet's dream of invulnerability;[644] the wife of Nabbāsh b. Qays' dream following al-Khandaq is mentioned by al-Wāqidī;[645] in the battle of Khaybar, al-Wāqidī also narrates a section on Abū Shuyaym's dream which led to his conversion;[646] Khālid b. al-Walīd's conversion is also narrated through a dream sequence;[647] Hind b. 'Utba's conversion to Islam is also narrated through dream;[648] and the retelling of the Prophet's dream to Abū Bakr legitimise his actions with regard to al- Ḥudaybiya.[649]

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[639] John C. Lamoreaux. *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002), pp. 1–14; Elizabeth Sirriyeh, *Dreams and Visions in the World of Islam* (New York, NY: I.B. Taurus, 2015), pp. 1–8.
[640] Alexander D. Knysh. "Introduction," in *Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies*, eds. Özgen Felek and Alexander D. Knysh (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2012), p. 2.
[641] Sarah Mirza. "Dreaming the Truth in the Sīra of Ibn Hisham," in *Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies*, eds. Özgen Felek and Alexander D. Knysh (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2012), p. 15.
[642] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 16–17.
[643] Ibid, p. 20.
[644] Ibid, p. 104.
[645] Ibid, p. 244.
[646] Ibid, p. 332.
[647] Ibid, p. 368.
[648] Ibid, p. 427.
[649] Ibid, p. 459.

The point here is not to critique al-Wāqidī's method of telling history as being incompatible with history as it is understood in this specific time and place. Instead, the point here is to emphasise that al-Wāqidī's method of narrating history was very much conditioned by the place and time that he worked within. In turn, recognising this also illuminates the mode of history writing underlying the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, namely storytelling. As Faizer argues, al-Wāqidī's work operates "within typical models of story-telling devoted to continuing and enhancing cultural notions of heroes and legends."[650]

It is quite clear that al-Wāqidī's use of this narrative technique chimes with Ibn Ishāq's, who likewise made extensive use of dreams as a narrative technique.[651] Ishāq's text, for example, contains a very similar narration of Ātika's dream.[652] This has, of course, led to charges of plagiarism against al-Wāqidī, which, as already discussed, have been refuted by Jones.[653] Interestingly, however, Jones did not extend his analysis to look at other potential sites of comparison. Both texts not only contain narrations of Ātika's dream at Badr, they also contain narrations of the Prophet's dream preceding Uḥud. A comparison of the relevant passages of the texts should therefore contribute to controversies in the literature.

Each author's narrations, however, are not identical. Ishāq's proceeds thus:

> [The Prophet said] 'I have seen (in a dream) something that augurs well. I saw cows, and I saw a dent in the blade of my sword, and I saw that I had thrust my hand into a strong coat of mail and I interpreted that to mean Medīna.

In Ishāq's version, the Prophet interprets the dream as follows:

> 'If you think it well to stop in Medīna and leave them where they have encamped, for if they halt they will have halted in a bad position and if they try to enter the city, we can fight them therein'.[654]

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[650] Ibid, p. xvi.
[651] Elizabeth Sirriyeh. *A History of Muslim Dreaming and Foreknowing* (New York, NY: I.B. Taurus, 2015), p.32.
[652] Ibn Ishāq. "*Sīrat*," pp. 290–291.
[653] Jones. "Ibn Ishāq and al-Wāqidī," pp. 41–51.
[654] Ibn Ishāq. "*Sīrat*," p. 371.

Although al-Wāqidī's text is similar, it does differ in many respects. It proceeds as follows:

> [The Prophet said] 'O people, surely I had a dream. I was wearing invulnerable armor, and my sword, Dhū l-Fiqār, broke at the tip; I saw cows slaughtered, and I led a ram behind me'.

After being asked by the people how he interpreted the dream, al-Wāqidī's text records that the Prophet made the following answer:

> 'The invulnerable armor is Medīna,' so stay in Medīna. 'The break at the tip of my sword is an injury to myself; as for the slaughtered cows they are the dead among my companions; the ram that I lead are the troops that we will kill'.[655]

The clear differences between the texts probably lend further credence to Jones' argument that any similarities between the texts reflect the fact that these historians had access to a common well of sources. Yet, at the same time, they selected and arranged the material according to their own concerns.[656] Nevertheless, dream sequences and other narrative techniques employed by al-Wāqidī attest to the idea that his work was considerably conditioned by the specific time and place in which he wrote. Some other techniques of narrating history were also employed by him, such as genealogies and close relations, which will be discussed in the following section.

2.10 The Socio-Political Aspects of al-Wāqidī's Kitāb al-Maghāzī

Storytelling, therefore, seems crucial to understanding al-Wāqidī's understanding of history. It will be demonstrated in this section that certain aspects of his text reveal and reflect particular social and political aspects of the time in which he composed the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Although it would be erroneous to write his text off as a polemic, his narrative does demonstrate the importance of context to his writing.

The first and most obvious instance of this is in the depiction of al-'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, which may have stemmed from al-Wāqidī's already documented close relationship with the 'Abbāsid rulers. It has been noted in the wider Islamic

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[655] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p 104.
[656] Jones. "Ibn Ishāq and al-Wāqidī," p. 51.

historiography literature that the *sīra* and by extension *maghāzī* literature often served political purposes.[657] It has also been noted that al-Wāqidī purposefully offered a specific representation of al-'Abbās in line with what the 'Abbāsid rulers of the time may have wished for. Specifically, Faizer contends that al-Wāqidī renders "al-Abbās (the eponym of 'Abbāsids) as a caring uncle of the Prophet even though he does not convert in the first years of the Muhammad's prophethood."[658] Through an extensive analysis of the text, it is possible to lay bare a number of ways in which al-Wāqidī narrates this specific view of al-'Abbās.

First, al-Wāqidī was keen to draw a clear distinction between al-'Abbās and the Quraysh, especially Abū Jahl. This is evident in al-Wāqidī's narration of the dream of 'Ātika bt. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, al'Abbās' sister. Here 'Ātika dreamt a vision of an ominous rider approaching the Quraysh, creating fear and stirring them to their slaughter. This led to a dispute between al-'Abbās and Abū Jahl. Indeed, the dialogue demonstrates real tension between the two:

> And [Abū Jahl] replied, 'O Banū 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, does it not satisfy you that your men prophesy, but that even your women must prophesy? Ātika claims that she saw in her sleep whatever she saw and we will wait three days until it happens. If it happens that what she said is true, it will be. But if three days pass and it does not happen, we will write of you that you are the worst liars of any family with the Arabs.' [al-'Abbās] responded, 'O you of the yellow buttocks, you are the first of the liars and more vile than us!' [659]

Of course, we subsequently learn that 'Ātika's vision did come true and that Ḍamḍam b. 'Amr rode into the city and incited the people of Makka into fighting. In turn, the implication of this is that al-'Abbās and by extension therefore the 'Abbāsids are visionaries. In addition, the narration clearly distinguishes between al-'Abbās on the one hand and Abū Jahl on the other as the enemy of the Prophet and his companions.

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[657] Meir J. Kister. "The *Sirāh* Literature," in *Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*, eds. A.F.L. Beeston, T.M. Johnstone, R.B. Serjeant and G.R. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 362–363.
[658] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. xii.
[659] Ibid, p. 16

In other places in the text, al-Wāqidī also emphasised the genealogical relationship between al-'Abbās and the Prophet. This was seemingly a common practice in the *sīra* and *maghāzī* literature. Indeed, as Kister notes, "Genealogy was an essential subject of the *sīra* literature. Traditions stress the purity of the Prophet's pedigree and the qualities of his ancestors."[660] During the Battle of Badr, for instance, Ḥamza b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, the Prophet's paternal uncle, is characterised, not unexceptionally, as the lion of Allah and of his Prophet. Immediately following this, al-Wāqidī makes the following observation: "Ḥamza was older than the Prophet by four years, and al-'Abbās was older than the Prophet by three years."[661] This could be argued to be a seemingly innocent statement of fact; however, it clearly resonates with the idea that the highlighted genealogical relationships were exploited by al-Wāqidī in order to inculcate the idea of excellence of al-'Abbās and by extension the 'Abbāsids in his readers' minds.

Furthermore, as noted by Faizer above, al-Wāqidī's narrative did go some way toward rendering al-'Abbās as an especially caring and protective uncle. In the account of the Battle of Uḥud, for example, it is made clear that al-'Abbās sent a warning letter that the Quraysh were marching toward the Prophet and his companions.[662] A passage in the narration of Ḥunyan also demonstrates this idea. Quoting from Shayb b. 'Uthmān b. Abī Ṭalḥa, the passage proceeds thus:

> I saw the Messenger of God raid Makka and be successful, and then I set out to the Hawāzin, so I said, 'I will set out, and perhaps, take my revenge!' I remembered that my father was killed on the day of Uḥud. Ḥamza had killed him and 'Alī had killed my uncle. When the Prophet's companions were exposed, I came to him from his right but all of a sudden al-'Abbās stood before me wearing white armor that appeared silver, and dust was removed from it. I said: His uncle never abandons him. He said: Then I came to him from his left, and lo and behold, there was Abū Sufyān, the son of his uncle. So I said: The son of his uncle will never abandon him!' .[663]

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[660] Kister. "The *Sirāh* Literature," p. 361.
[661] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 36.
[662] Ibid, p. 101.
[663] Ibid, p. 446.

Although a relatively minor incident in the text, this passage is quite telling, indeed. The obvious import of the statement is that al-'Abbās and by extension his descendants have been the true protectors of the Prophet. Coming at a time when the 'Abbāsids had overturned the Umayyad rule, the overture that they alone were the rightful and legitimate protectors of the Prophet and his legacy after him is indicative of the underlying intent; that is, to signify in some way that al-Wāqidī was nodding knowingly to the 'Abbāsid court.

This is precisely the claim that critical scholars such as Horovitz make. Horovitz makes three assertions with regard to al-Wāqidī's text and the 'Abbāsid court.[664] First, al-Wāqidī sanitised the historical record by omitting al-'Abbās' name from the list of captives in the wake of the Battle of Badr, presumably to save embarrassment to the ruling elite. Secondly, al-Wāqidī accentuated if not fabricated al-'Abbās' role by giving him a prominent place in 'Umar b. al-Kattab's list of liberality and donation. Thirdly, that al-Wāqidī neglected to mention that al-'Abbās did not participate at Khaybar on the side of the Muslims.[665] Taken together, these critical observations suggest ostensibly that al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was less of an accurate history and more of a political polemic.

However, it is possible to refute these claims in a way that renders Horovitz's arguments erroneous. In terms of the first criticism, al-Wāqidī does actually state in the text that al-'Abbās was captured .[666] Moreover, al-Wāqidī states that there were seventy captives but only names thirty-eight of them.[667] If it was al-Wāqidī's intention to sanitise the historical record, then one would expect more consistency in this regard. It could also be argued, as Jones has done, that such omissions could reflect scribal or memory issues rather than being deliberate.[668] In terms of the second criticism, al-Wāqidī is not alone in making this claim; this information has been recorded elsewhere as well.[669] As such, it is possible to reject the claim that al-Wāqidī fabricated al-'Abbās' prestige. Instead, al-Wāqidī's adherence to known historical sources actually increases his reliability as a historian. Finally, the third criticism is also rather dubious.

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[664] Joseph Horovitz. *al-Maghāzī al'ula wā m'alifīhā,* trans. Husaīn Nassār(Cairo: Maktabt al-khāngi,2001), p,125.
[665] al-Salūmī. Abd al-'Aziz. *Al-Waqidī wa Kitābuh al-Magāzī.* p. 150.
[666] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī,*" p. 70.
[667] Ibid, pp. 70 and 72–73.
[668] Jones."*al-Maghāzī,*" Vol. 1, p.18.
[669] Ibid.

It is clear that al-Wāqidī explicitly refuted the claim that al-'Abbās and Abū Hurairah arrived when Khaybar was conquered, that they subsequently were allocated rewards by the Prophet and that al-'Abbās received the news of Khaybar whilst he was in Makka.[670]

Other aspects of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, too, serve to illustrate how its author was anchored to a particular time and place. The rendering of al-'Abbās found in a sequence in al-Wāqidī's narration of Khaybar is indicative here. The passage recounts al- Ḥajjaj b. 'Ilāṭ al-Sulamī, having converted to Islam, obtaining permission from the Prophet to return to *Hijāz* and collect his money before it is found out that he is now a Muslim. It is made clear that Ḥajjaj confides in al-'Abbās for the fact of his conversion, and more importantly that al-'Abbās keeps the news secret for three days, which allows Ḥajjaj to flee without being pursued.[671]

As with Ātika's dream, discussed in the previous subsection, al-Wāqidī's narration of this event bears close resemblance to Ibn Ishāq's. Although the relevant passages of the text are not identical in language, they do convey the same message. Ishāq, for instance, charts Ḥajjaj's meeting with the Prophet as follows:

> Having got his permission [from the Prophet to return Ḥajjaj said] 'I must tell lies, O Apostle.' [The Prophet] said, 'Tell them'.[672]

In contrast, al-Wāqidī's text says:

> 'O Messenger of God, permit me, until I go and take what is mine that is with my wife, for if my Islam is known I will not be able to take anything'.

Ḥajjaj is recorded as requesting the Prophet. The Prophet grants him permission and Ḥajjaj is recorded as saying: 'There is no certainty, O Messenger of God, about what I will say'. And, in response, al-Wāqidī records, that "the Messenger of God permitted him to say what he wished."[673]

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[670] Ibid, pp. 17-18
[671] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 345–347.
[672] Ibn Isḥāq. "*Sīrat*," p. 519.
[673] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 346.

However, there are differences in the text. On the meeting between Ḥajjaj and al-'Abbās, Ibn Isḥāq's text records the following statement by Ḥajjāj:

> When 'Abbās heard the news and heard about me he came and stood at my side, as I was in one of the merchants' tents, asking about the news which I had brought.[674]

In contrast, al-Wāqidī's text does not mention this meeting. Instead, it focuses on al-'Abbās' reaction to the news that Ḥajjaj had returned and that al-'Abbās initially met with Ḥajjaj through an intermediary, Abū Zubayna.[675] Although the texts do contain similar information in terms of al-'Abbās maintaining the information as promised, the differences in content probably provide further information refuting the charge of outright plagiarism. Nevertheless, the similarities in the message probably also indicate that the two historians shared a similar fount of cultural narratives from which they drew their historical sources.[676] If this is true, it stands to reason that al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was conditioned by the time and place in which it was written, which in turn underpins considerably subjective nature of the history it contains .

It could also be argued that the objectivity of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* could be questioned by looking at the way in which the Quraysh polytheists were portrayed, especially in the battle. Take the narration of the death of 'Alī b. Umayya at Badr, as an example. It is noted in the text that after his leg is cut by al-Ḥubāb b. Mundhir, 'Alī "screamed a scream, in sorrow, the like of which [Khubayb b. Yasāf, the source, had] never heard."[677] Following this, al-Wāqidī quotes from 'Ā'isha bt. Qudāma, that "God humiliated 'Alī b. Umayya with the blows of al-Ḥubāb b. Mundhir, and was gracious to al-Ḥubāb with his blows against 'Alī."[678] Likewise, the Quraysh are compared to women in passages which narrate them fleeing during the Battle of Badr.[679] Again, although this is relatively a minor aspect of al-Wāqidī's overall text, they do attest to the fact that the specific political context shaped the historical narrative of al-Wāqidī's

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[674] Ibn Isḥāq. "*Sīrat*," p. 520.
[675] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 346.
[676] Jones. "Ibn Isḥāq and al-Wāqidī," p. 51.
[677] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 43.
[678] Ibid, p. 43.
[679] Ibid, p. 49.

Kitāb al-Maghāzī. If this is indeed the case, it stands as a clear evidence of the fact that al-Wāqidī's history was subjectively anchored to particular time and place.

Moreover, many parts of the *Kitab al-Maghāzī* which evidence a glorification of the *Rāshidūn* caliphs, understood as generally meaning "rightful Muslim rulers."[680] In particular, as Faizer notes, 'Umar and Abū Bakr are depicted in many places by al-Wāqidī as close confidants and indeed legitimate successors of the Prophet Muhammad[sa].[681] The following seemingly banal passage perhaps affirms this:

> The Messenger of God went out until he was at a place below Badr, and news came to him about the Quraysh marching. The Messenger of God informed the people about their march and consulted them. Abū Bakr stood up and said nice words. Then 'Umar got up and said nice words.[682]

In one sense, yes this is a rather simple statement of fact. On the other hand, however, it is a clear mnemonic to the readers of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* that the legitimate line of succession went the Prophet, Abū Bakr and then 'Umar. In the context of the time, namely the caliphate of Hārūn al-Rashīd, this is as much a political as a historical statement, which evidences the claim that al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was anchored in the social and political context of the time in which it was written.

 In fact, throughout the text this close relationship between the Prophet, Abū Bakr and 'Umar is repeatedly emphasised by al-Wāqidī. In the "Battle of Uḥud" chapter, for example, al-Wāqidī notes that Abū Bakr and 'Umar dressed the Prophet before he addressed the people;[683] in his narration of Badr, in addition, al-Wāqidī makes it clear that the Prophet saw both Abū Bakr and 'Umar as close confidants and political advisers;[684] likewise, in the chapter on the campaign of Badr al-Mawʿid the Prophet again clearly relies on the advice of both Abū Bakr and 'Umar;[685] and finally the relationship is also evidenced in places where Abū Bakr and 'Umar are recorded as being side-by-side with the Prophet during battle scenes.[686] Faizer has indicated

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[680] Mansoor Moaddel. *Islamic Modernism, Nationalism, and Fundamentalism: Episode and Discourse* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. 33.
[681] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. xii.
[682] Ibid, p. 25.
[683] Ibid, p. 106.
[684] Ibid, pp. 54–55.
[685] Ibid, p. 189.
[686] Ibid, p. 400.

elsewhere that al-Wāqidī employed his narrative in such a way as to legitimise a specific understanding of the proper line of succession following the Prophet's death, which in turn exposes the subjective nature of al-Wāqidī's historical tome.

Nevertheless, there are places in the text where this succession sequence seems to break down. For instance, in some places al-Wāqidī would refer to three of the first caliphs, Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān. The following passage, which details the death of 'Ubayda b. Saʿīd b. al-'Āṣ, is indicative here as it symbolically links the Prophet and the first three caliphs as righteous rulers: "The Messenger of God took the spear and it was held between his hands and those of Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthmān, may peace be upon them."[687] While composing the chapter on the Affair of Ibn Ubayy, passages of al-Wāqidī's text also symbolically suggest the true lineage as flowing from the Prophet to 'Uthmān. While discussing the matter of the Prophet's protection of Ḥāṭib b. Abī Baltaʿa's well, al-Wāqidī notes the following: "And when it was the caliphate of Abū Bakr he protected it as the Prophet had protected it, while 'Umar increased the extent for the horses and 'Uthmān protected it as well."[688] If Ḥāṭib's well is symbolic of the Prophet's legacy more broadly, then all three of the first caliphates have been argued by al-Wāqidī to be preserving and protecting the Prophet's legacy. The same idea is presented in the following passage of the text that again shows the caliphates preserving the Prophet's legacy: "The people continued to attend to their properties in Khaybar according to the contracts of the Messenger of God, Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān."[689]

On the one hand, it is not quite clear that the inclusion of 'Uthmān at various points does a damage to the argument presented above and elsewhere by Faizer. After all, according to another view, 'Uthmān along with Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Alī b. Abī Ṭalīīb is presented in the literature as the rightly guided caliphs, who collectively oversaw the growth and development of the Islamic community in a rightful manner following the death of the Prophet.[690] On the other hand, the literature has questioned whether 'Uthmān, who was actually from the Umayyad clan, ruled the Islamic community in a

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[687] Ibid, p. 44.
[688] Ibid, p. 208.
[689] Ibid, p. 352.
[690] Peter Mandaville. *Islam and Politics* (London: Routledge, 2014), p. 33.

principled manner.[691] If it was the intention of al-Wāqidī to deploy his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* solely as an anti-Umayyad polemic, then a more consistent approach from al-Wāqidī would have perhaps overlooked or belittled 'Uthmān.

Thus, the way in which al-Wāqidī depicts 'Uthmān is difficult to pin-point. On the one hand, his absence from Uḥud is underscored by al-Wāqidī; yet, on the other hand, al-Wāqidī makes it clear with 'Umar's dialogue that the Prophet had forgiven 'Uthmān.[692] Moreover, the sequence involving the Prophet granting protection to 'Abdullah b. Saʿd b. Abī Sarḥ, leaves the question of 'Uthmān open. Here, 'Uthmān petitions the Prophet to forgive 'Abdullah. It goes thus:

> The Messenger of God was surprised by 'Uthmān …And the Messenger of God turned away from him. And every time the Prophet turned his face away, 'Uthman confronted him…Surely the Prophet turned away from him desiring that a man stand and cut off his [Abī Sarh's] head because he did not grant him protection…The Messenger of God said, 'Yes.' Then he turned to his companions and said, 'What prevented one of you from going to this dog [Abī Sarh] and killing him?' Or he said, 'the corrupt one.' [693]

Yet, in an early portion of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, the narrative tended toward a more positive description of 'Uthmān. While narrating the al-Ḥudaybiyya, for instance, al-Wāqidī demonstrates that 'Uthmān did not perform the ʿumrah while the Prophet was absent.[694] Further, about the assumption that 'Uthmān had been killed by the Quraysh, al-Wāqidī also records the Pledge of the Tree, and in particular the following passage: "Indeed 'Uthmān acts in accordance with the needs of God and His messenger, so I shall pledge for him, and [the Prophet] struck his right hand on his left."[695] These aspects certainly indicate that, although anchored to specific social

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[691] John J. Robinson. *Dungeon, Fire and Sword: The Knights Templar in the Crusades* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1991), p. 63; Josef W. Meri and Jere L. Bacharach, *Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia* (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 131; Tareq Y. Ismael and Jacqueline S. Ismael, *Government and Politics of the Contemporary Middle East: Continuity and Change* (London: Routledge, 2011), p. 21.
[692] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 135–136.
[693] Ibid, p. 421.
[694] Ibid, p. 296.
[695] Ibid, p. 297.

and political conditions, al-Wāqidī's historical text is actually far more complex and subtle than a simple political polemic.

The complexity of al-Wāqidī's narrative is further evidenced by certain depictions of 'Umar. In many places, 'Umar's deference to the Prophet is evident as his centrality to Islam. The tale of al-Ḥakam b. Kaysān is a good example. 'Umar initially advised the Prophet that he should execute al-Ḥakam. But the Prophet entered into a dialogue with al-Ḥakam with the result that he converted to Islam. 'Umar is then recorded as saying "How could I dare rebut the Prophet on a matter about which he is more knowledgeable than I?."[696] Besides, 'Umar is also depicted as inspiring the companions when they believed that the Prophet was dead, which suggests 'Umar as being worthy of leading the Muslims.[697] In the following passages, 'Umar is also compared to Noah, Gabriel and Moses while Abu Bakr is compared to the angel Michael, Abraham and Jesus.[698]

However, during the peace treaty at al-Ḥudaybiyya, as well as on numerous other occasions, 'Umar[ra] is clearly shown to have reservations about the Prophet's authority.[699] In this respect, the following citation from al-'Abbās is quite significant: "Ibn 'Abbās used to say: During his caliphate 'Umar said to me: I was suspicious that day in a manner that I had never been since I converted. If on that day, I had found a group separating from the Muslims because they disliked the contract I would have joined them."[700]

This little but rather important piece of information serves to characterise 'Umar in a negative light. Nevertheless, the resolution to this matter neatly summarises the main themes of this chapter, namely salvation, revelation and culturally informed storytelling. Despite his momentary reservation about the Prophet's wisdom, 'Umar realises the veracity of the peace treaty, which is illustrated by the following passage in the text:

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[696] Ibid, pp. 9–10.
[697] Ibid, p. 136.
[698] Ibid, (both passages are on) p. 55.
[699] Ibid, p. 298.
[700] Ibid, p. 298.

Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī said: I sat with ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb one day, and he mentioned the contract to me and said: Surely doubt entered me at that time. I disputed the Prophet returning answer for answer, and I have not disputed with him ever…Then God made the outcome of the contract good, for it is necessary for the worshipper to question the opinion. By God, doubt surely entered me at that time, until I said to myself: If we were a hundred men who thought like me we would not enter into it. When the contract was signed, a greater number converted to Islam during the truce than the number that converted from the very first day of Islam until then. There was not in Islam a victory greater than that of al-Ḥudaybiyya.[701]

2.11 Al-Wāqidī's Historical Method and His Philosophy of History

Having discussed in exhaustive detail the principal methodologies that al-Wāqidī employed in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, this final section now provides a thematic and analytical overview. It does so by referring directly to this thesis' research question whether al-Wāqidī's methodology, as discussed above, can provide insights into the philosophy of history that underpinned his research and writing. This section provides a positive answer to this question. In reviewing each of the methods outlined above, this section concludes that the feature of authority remains crucial to al-Wāqidī's method. Each of his methods provides an anchor through which al-Wāqidī could authenticate his *al-Maghāzī* as an authoritative and therefore true version of the events of the Prophet's life after leaving Makka.   If al-Wāqidī did indeed juxtapose an authentic and a non-authentic understanding of history, then it would suggest that al-Wāqidī ascribed to an objective view of history – that the past could be objectively understood, interpreted and therefore recorded.

To begin with, it is necessary to define what is meant by objectivity. Here, it is appropriate to refer to the positivist understanding of history (discussed in the first chapter), according to which, history, that is the past, is understood as a "fixed object."[702] The task of the historian, from this perspective, is therefore to accurately

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[701] Ibid, pp. 298–299.
[702] F.R. Ankersmit. *History and Tropology: The Rise and Fall of Metaphor* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p. 205.

represent the past, notwithstanding the difficulty of such a task.[703] Accordingly, in this mode of thought, "historians seek to provide the 'facts', on the assumption that what they provide need not – indeed must not – be biased, but simply 'tells it as it actually was'."[704] The principle of objectivity, therefore, is intimately tied to the notion of an authoritative, understood as accurate, presentation, rather reconstruction, of the past as it was. And, ultimately, it is obviously connected to the realist ontology that the past is indeed knowable.[705]

Whether or not such a philosophy is fitting is beside the point.[706] In fact, there are a large number of criticisms of the notion of objectivity in history. The notion of an objective history can be found in the work of Islamic scholars who wrote around the same time or after al-Wāqidī. As Arkoun notes in respect of the narrative approaches to history which characterised the *maghāzī* tradition, "the narrative history suggests that all events are understandable according to a 'rational' system of knowledge."[707] This quotation underlines the idea of objectivity and truthfulness with regard to the representation of the past. It is possible to demonstrate therefore that al-Wāqidī's historical methodology reflects a similar concern.

Consider, for instance, al-Wāqidī's method of collecting and accurately recording dates, discussed in section one of this chapter. There it was established that al-Wāqidī placed a great deal of emphasis on the collection and accurate documentation of dates, which is seen quite clearly in the introductory section and indeed throughout the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Dating is in fact quite significant, as Jones clarifies, in that it provides the developing literature – that is the *maghāzī* tradition – with its own coherence.[708] Though al-Wāqidī assigns serious importance to the collection and accurate documentation of dates, there are obviously further aspects of significance that can be attached to this feature. As Shoemaker clarifies, the earliest traditions of the Prophet's biography mostly ignored the chronological sequence of events, hence

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[703] Ernst Breisach. *On the Future of History: The Postmodernist Challenge and Its Aftermath* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), p. 120.
[704] Lawrence J. Butler. "History: Theory and Practice," in *Modern British History: A Guide to Study and Research*, eds. Lawrence J. Butler and Anthony Gorst (New York: I.B. Taurus, 1997), p. 16.
[705] Alan J. Holland. *Philosophy, Its History and Historiography* (Leiden: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1984), p. 54.
[706] See, for instance, Keith Jenkins, ed. *The Postmodern History Reader* (London: Routledge, 1997).
[707] Moḥamed Arkoun. "Rethinking Islam Today," in *Liberal Islam: A Source Book*, ed Charles Kurzman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 219.
[708] Jones. "Maghāzī," p. 349.

they were effectively weak as accurate representation of the past. In contrast, al-Wāqidī's and Ibn Isḥāq's focus on the actual sequence and order of events, shown by the way in which they placed them within the known calendar, immediately offers a more reliable and authoritative history of the Prophet.[709] In turn, this suggests, or at the very least implies, that al-Wāqidī saw the date of an event and ergo the past more broadly as something that could be objectively known, which is illustrated by his attempts where possible to introduce and settle any controversies concerning the actual date of an event. In this sense, then, this aspect of al-Wāqidī's methodology illustrates his, though nascent and definitely unarticulated, philosophy of an objective history.

A similar argument can be advanced with reference to the discussion in section two of this chapter – al-Wāqidī's method of meticulously collecting and then accurately recording of time. There, through an extensive analysis of the text, it was demonstrated that al-Wāqidī accurately recorded, where known, the duration of events and resolved, where possible, any factual controversies regarding the duration of the events he narrated. This is perhaps ironic given Islām's message of timelessness in its developing era.[710] Nevertheless, it clearly shows the importance that al-Wāqidī assigned to the timing of events for having a clearer historical perspective. If this is true, then the questions why this was and what it means for the way in which he understood history are readily apparent. The answer can be found through comparison. Contemporary, critical or post-modern historians tend to treat time as "immeasurable, a-chronic and qualitative."[711] Facts about time, from this perspective, are subjective. On the other hand, al-Wāqidī clearly saw facts in respect of time as being objectively known, which is in no doubt related to the way in which then the concept of time was culturally envisaged as a constant. It is logical and indeed possible to argue therefore that the collection of facts acted as an anchor for al-Wāqidī. And in that sense, this aspect of his historical methodology also reflects the way in which al-Wāqidī understood history objectively.

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[709] Stephen J. Shoemaker. *The Death of the Prophet: The End of Muhammad's Life and the Beginnings of Islam* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), pp. 101–103.
[710] Youssef M. Choueiri. *Islamic Fundamentalism: The Story of Islamist Movements* (London: Continuum International, 2010), p. 15.
[711] ʿAziz al-Azmeh. *The Times of History: Universal Topics in Islamic Historiography* (New York: Central European University Press, 2007), p. 4.

Peacock writes of early Islamic historians that the writings they produced were "rarely if ever the search for the facts about the past 'as it really was'."[712] Robinson repeats a similar view: "The 'facts' expressed by the *Ḥadīth* …are not historical facts about early Islam, but sociological facts of what the community held to be true about early Islām."[713] From this viewpoint, the documentation of fact is usually perceived as a political act rather than as a scholarly one. That is, facts are reinvented and even invented to serve particular purposes.[714] Indeed, as Faizer ably contends, the way in which al-Wāqidī documents the battles of the Prophet as defensive in nature serves a particular political purpose of legitimising Islām at a crucial stage in its development.[715]

Whilst these arguments may be correct, it is interesting to note that culturally at the time there was something of an aversion to facts. As Touati notes of pre-modern Arab-Islamic historiography, "No fact is a fact in itself; a fact exists only to the extent that God grants it substance. Moreover, there can be no independent certification of fact because history, as a sequence of events, is conceived as the recurrence of an archetypal beginning."[716] However, it is possible to argue that, as noted above, al-Wāqidī's collection of historical facts and especially his attempts, although not always consistently applied, to resolve any disputed facts suggests that al-Wāqidī saw history as lying beyond the mythical; instead, facts for al-Wāqidī were a particular anchor to legitimise his history as an authoritative history. And if this is true, then it would go some way to supporting the notion that al-Wāqidī understood history as being knowable in the objective sense of the word.

It is equally plausible that al-Wāqidī's attention to place, his experience of place firsthand and the way in which he collected facts in respect of place equally demonstrate al-Wāqidī's commitment to an objective history.[717] Geographical place is a constant. As Robinson Kelly notes, "[place] endures beyond the scope of our finite lives." Place, in other words, "is a constant presence that anchors memory through the

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[712] Peacock. "Mediaeval Islamic Historiography," p. 1.
[713] Robinson. "Islamic Historiography," p. 88.
[714] Andrew Mallet. "Introduction," in *Medieval Muslim Historians and Franks in the Levant,* ed. Andrew Mallet (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2014), p. 6.
[715] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. xii–xiii.
[716] Houari Touati. "Algerian Historiography in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries: From Chronicle to History," in *The Maghrib In Question: Essays in History and Historiography*, eds. Michel Le Gall and Kenneth Perkins (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1997), p. 87.
[717] Fārūq Ḥamāda. *"Maṣādir al-sīra al-Nabawyya Wa Taqwīmaha,"* p.95.

vicissitudes of human generations."[718] Like date and time of occurrence, place is a fixed fact. But more than this, place was then and perhaps still is symbolic of authority. As Antrim notes, "Land mattered [in early Islamic texts]; it stimulated the geographical imagination and acted as a powerful vehicle for articulating desire, claiming authority, and establishing belonging."[719] Geographical place, in other words, was viewed as a source of authority during the time at which al-Wāqidī was writing.[720] If so , then it is possible to suggest that al-Wāqidī saw his command of place as illustrative of his authority as an Islamic historian. And if al-Wāqidī saw himself as an authority, then it suggests that he saw some form of objectivity in history. Literally then place anchored al-Wāqidī's authority as a historian of the Prophet's biography.

This is further confirmed with reference to al-Wāqidī's command and use of *Isnād* as the cultural form of knowledge transmission. *Isnād* and *Ḥadīth* are argued to reflect and "affirm a set of propositions about 'history' and 'reality'."[721] And their use by historians such as al-Wāqidī reflected the "strong need to state one's sources," which was realised as the first century of Islam advanced and the first important histories…came to be written."[722] In other words, this methodology, even despite al-Wāqidī's unique and perhaps cavalier approach to the reports, allowed him to claim authority and indeed mastery of the known sources on the Prophet's life. In this sense then, this attachment to authority and constant need to legitimise his narrations, al-Wāqidī demonstrated an attachment to history as being objectively true and the past as being, in essence, knowable.

The other aspects of al-Wāqidī's methodology, namely his use of learned scholars and his employment of ancestral traditions, provide further evidence in support of the claim that al-Wāqidī saw the past as essentially knowable and therefore held an objective view of history, though unarticulated. In both cases, these methods were employed by

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[718] Molly Robinson Kelly. *The Hero's Place: Medieval Literary Traditions of Space and Belonging* (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2009), p. 52.
[719] Zayde Antrim. *Routes and Realms: The Power of Place in the Early Islamic World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 1.
[720] Blain H. Auer. *Symbols of Authority in Medieval Islam: History, Religion and Muslim Legitimacy in the Delhi Sultanate* (New York: I.B. Taurus, 2012); Travis Zadeh, *Mapping Frontiers across Medieval Islam: Geography, Translation and the 'Abbāsids Empire* (New York: I.B. Taurus, 2011).
[721] Solomon Schimmel. *The Tenacity of Unreasonable Beliefs: Fundamentalism and the Fear of Truth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 25.
[722] E. Sreedharan. *A Textbook of Historiography, 500 B.C. to A.D. 2000* (India: Orient Longman, 2004), p. 78.

al-Wāqidī in order to authenticate his work as a legitimate exposition of the Prophet's life. Clearly, as Shoemaker notes, the scholars that al-Wāqidī referred to such as al-Zuhrī were and are still regarded as authorities.[723] Likewise, the canon in which al-Wāqidī situated his work – *maghāzī* – required historical, contextual and empirical expertise. As Görke notes, *maghāzī* scholars were "considered experts not in the question of the authenticity of the material they used, but in questions of context."[724] Accordingly, *maghāzī* scholars such as al-Wāqidī had to authenticate their work with reference to evidence. The use of ancestral traditions, in many ways, was one such answer to this issue. But in authenticating his history, al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* implies that history – the past – can in essence be known and discovered. And in that sense, al-Wāqidī clearly understood history as being open to objective interpretation.

The analysis of the principle narrative methods al-Wāqidī employed in his history, namely literarily embedded storytelling techniques and the outlining of heroic figures of early Islam, brings to light the subjective element in his historical narrative. Each of these lends crucial insights into al-Wāqidī's understanding of history and demonstrates that though al-Wāqidī's methods point toward an objective view of history, the way in which he presents his historical information is largely conditioned by and anchored to the time and place he inhabited, highlighting the subjective nature of his historiography. It also demonstrates the way in which the given context shaped the composition of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. If this is indeed the case, it can be justifiably inferred that the history al-Wāqidī produced was largely subjective in nature.

Having made this argument, however, it is necessary to qualify it with two caveats. First, when it is argued that al-Wāqidī subscribed to an objective view of history – that the past is indeed knowable – al-Wāqidī demonstrated, as already shown in this chapter, that historical sources were nevertheless not one-hundred percent reliable. For example, in section two of this chapter, it was shown that al-Wāqidī did not always collect and therefore document the temporal nature of the events he was narrating. There, it was reasoned that this may have resulted from a lack of information, which in turn would suggest that al-Wāqidī could only work with the material at hand. In addition, in section three it was documented that al-Wāqidī would often leave disputes

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[723] Stephen J. Shoemaker. "In Search of 'Urwa's *Sira*: Some Methodological Issues in the Quest for 'Authenticity' in the Life of Muhammad," *Der Islam* 85, no. 2, p. 257.
[724] Görke. "Maghāzī and Adith," p. 175.

and controversies unresolved. Again, it was reasoned that this may have resulted from a lack of information and data relating to the event. In both cases, however, al-Wāqidī was inconsistent – at times he would resolve disputes and then record information whilst at other times he would not. This would, in turn, suggest that where it was possible to do so he would do so, which in turn would indicate that al-Wāqidī was acutely aware of the limits of historical material, but would nevertheless work with the source material. In addition, the discussion in section four also noted that al-Wāqidī was aware that the sources he used, especially from individuals, could be considered less reliable than others. Hence, al-Wāqidī recognised some of the problems that contemporary scholars of Islamic historiography wallow in, e.g. the problems of oral transmission and memory.

The second caveat follows logically from the first. The challenges against the veracity of the early texts of Islamic historiography are well-known. Briefly, to refer to Robinson again, the problem with the early texts of Islamic history is that the methods employed were obviously far removed from what one would conventionally understand as accurate scholarship in the contemporary world. Thus, whilst "the material may be authentic…it is much more useful as a barometer of social change…than as a record of what actually happened."[725] Thus, the argument here is not that al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* provides an authentic representation of what actually happened during the Prophet's campaigns. But that al-Wāqidī saw *his* work as supplying an authentic and reliable account of the Prophet's campaigns; that this followed from his methods of sourcing material; and that this in turn implies that al-Wāqidī saw the past as being objectively knowable. To reiterate, the point here is not to adjudicate from afar on the veracity of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*; the point here is to consider how the past (the Prophet's campaigns) can tell us about the present (the writer and the time in which he was writing); and in this case the book informs us a great deal about al-Wāqidī's unarticulated philosophy of history.

2.12 Conclusion

This chapter has covered an extensive amount of material. It is therefore necessary to succinctly summarise the main themes and argument in this chapter. At its core, the

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[725] Robinson. "Islamic Historiography," pp. 10–11.

chapter was chiefly concerned with addressing substantively the main research question of this thesis, namely what methods did al-Wāqidī employ in gathering data and historical information for his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*? The discussion naturally enfolded the discussion of the principles involved in his narration of history, as it is the necessary corollary of collection of information. In addition, however, the chapter studied the broader importance of al-Wāqidī's methodology. That is, whether exploring the methods he employed in greater detail than hitherto found in the literature could shed light on how al-Wāqidī would have answered the question 'what is history?'

Via an extensive textual analysis of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī,* it was laid bare that al-Wāqidī's research was based on eight significant methods: the collection of dates and the importance of dating and chronology; the collecting and recording of time and temporality; the collection and establishment of fact; the collection and illustration of disputed fact; the importance of place; the use of *Isnād* as a connection to accepted conventions; the employment of learned scholars; the use of ancestral narrations; the employment of literary devices; and socio-political aspects involving genealogies and heroic figures of early Islam. The last two particularly relate to his method of presentation rather than collection of information and determine how far his philosophy of history was coloured and conditioned by the social and political context within which he was situated. Although these methods have been critiqued by contemporary scholars, chiefly because they are in many ways unreliable and difficult if not impossible to replicate or verify in the contemporary world, it was argued that al-Wāqidī employed these methods chiefly because it allowed him to claim a sort of authenticity and authority for his writing.

If true, all this leads us to believe that al-Wāqidī, whether conscious of the fact or not, saw the past as being knowable. That is, if he thought that the retelling of the past could be authenticated (and, therefore, he implied unauthentic), then for al-Wāqidī the past could be objectively reconstructed and interpreted and therefore rendered true for his audience. This finding is important because it directly contradicts the limited literature on al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* and, in this respect, this finding advances the literature. In sum, whilst the methodology that al-Wāqidī employs may have served to suggest that he held an objective view of history, the way in which he narrated history demonstrates the subjective nature of the work he produced, and that his

philosophy of history was coloured and conditioned by the social and political context within which he was situated. "The historian," according to E.H. Carr, "is of his own age and bound to it by the conditions of human existence. The very words which he uses…have current connotations from which he cannot divorce them."[726]

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[726] Carr. "History", pp. 24–25.

Chapter Three: A Comparative Analysis of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* of al-Wāqidī and Maʿmar and Ibn Ishāq's *Sīrat Rasūl Allah*

In the last chapter, we studied several aspects of al-Wāqidī's historical method in detail and came to the conclusion that while his collection of information has an aura of objectivity, his narrativisation as well as philosophy of history was obviously conditioned by his social and political context. In this chapter, we move a step ahead to another significant aspect of his philosophy and method of history and see how far he was able to transcend the immediate social and political determinants. For this purpose, a comparative approach will be adopted to see similarities and dissimilarities between his work and the works of two eminent authorities, his predecessors, in the field of early Islamic history. First of all, a brief comparison will be made between his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* and Ibn Ish'āq's *Sīrat Rasūl Allah*. It will be followed by a detailed comparison between his work and Ma'mar b. al-Rāshid's *The Expeditions.* The comparative study takes us to infer that though bound by his immediate socio-political milieu, al-Wāqidī was able at multiple times to transcend them in a novel and creative way.

3.1 A Brief Comparison of the Kitāb al-Maghāzī and the Sīrat Rasūl Allah

This section will explore the main theme of this chapter, namely the conditioned but not determined nature of the history that al-Wāqidī produced, by undertaking a brief comparison of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* and Ibn Isḥāq's *Sīrat Rasūl Allah*. It would be followed by a detailed comparative analysis of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* with that of Ma'mar's in the rest of the chapter. A very brief comparison of these two texts (al-Wāqidī's and Ibn Ish'āq's) has already occurred in the section on secondary literature in chapter 1, which focused on al-Wāqidī's use of indirect or second-hand eye-witness accounts in his narration of Badr. Here, however, the focus will be on the similarities as well as the differences between both historians' accounts of Uḥud.

To begin with, it is first necessary to briefly revisit a debate in the secondary literature regarding al-Wāqidī's and Ibn Isḥāq's work. On the one hand, Jones contends that both al-Wāqidī and Ibn Isḥāq drew from the same traditions, which in turn explains why their works are similar in places.[727] The histories produced by both these

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[727] Jones. "Ibn Isḥāq and al-Wāqidī," p. 46.

historians, in other words, were determined by tradition. Nonetheless, Faizer contends, rather than being determined by traditions that they had access to, both compilers were able to display agency with regard to the selection and marshalling of facts and the resultant composition of their respective narratives.[728]

At a very general level, there are obvious similarities between *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* and the *Sīrat Rasūl Allah* in their depiction of Uḥud. This is particularly evident when we think in terms of structure and specifically how each author closes (in the loosest sense) his narrative. Although Ibn Isḥāq's history contains an additional section on the poetry from the battle, both texts sketch out quite specifically a record of the Muslims killed, the polytheists killed and what was revealed of the Qur'ān at Uḥud.[729] The obvious similarity in terms of this structure possibly reflects the reliance on rigid sequence that pre- and early-literate societies often exhibit.[730] Both the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* and the *Sīrat Rasūl Allah* were in many respects conditioned by their context. However, a closer inspection of both texts reveals certain nuanced differences between them. They demonstrate, in a manner of words, creative and scholarly agency in respect of selecting fact and detail and producing history.

The opening sequence of both historians' narrative of Uḥud pretty obviously draws from a similar source. They both depict Abū Sufyān b. Ḥarb returning with his caravan. Moreover, they both point to the principle that the Quraysh were roused into battle by their leaders. Besides, the opening sequence of both ends on the same Qur'ānic revelation (Q.8:3).[731] However, evident differences do also exist in this sequence. Notably, al-Wāqidī's outline of the Quraysh leaders involved here is more extensive. Moreover, al-Wāqidī also documents Abū Sufyān's detention of the Zuhra's caravan, which is not recorded by Ibn Isḥāq.[732] Thus, whilst access to the same narrative reports, no doubt, conditioned the histories produced by these scholars, it did not necessarily determine them.

This principle can also be seen at work in other places in the respective histories. In both narratives, that is, it is recorded that the Quraysh prepared for the battle and went

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[728] Faizer. "Muhammad and the Medinan Jews," p. 482.
[729] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 145–162; Ibn Isḥāq, "*Sīrat*," pp. 391–426.
[730] Fentress and Wickham, "Social Memory", p. 47.
[731] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 99–100; Ibn Isḥāq, "*Sīrat*," p. 370.
[732] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 100.

out with their women to fight. Unarguably, there are remarkable similarities in the two texts in this regard.[733] However, Ibn Isḥāq's *Sīrat* deviates in one crucial regard: his discussion of Waḥshī, an Abyssinian slave, and his interaction with Hind, in particular, which allows Ibn Isḥāq to tease out the idea of revenge more fully.[734] This distinction lends credence to Faizer's position vis-à-vis Jones' position and provides further evidence of the fact that both al-Wāqidī and Ibn Isḥāq, demonstrate agency in terms of selecting facts and producing a narrative.

This is equally true if we turn to the Prophet's dream preceding the same battle. Again, the texts bear remarkable consistency. Ibn Isḥāq records that "the Prophet said, 'By God, I have seen (in a dream) something that augurs well. I saw cows, and I saw a dent in the blade of my sword, and I saw that I had thrust my hand into a strong coat of mail and I interpreted that to mean Medīna'."[735] The Prophet's dream is narrated by al-Wāqidī in a very similar manner. It records the Prophet as saying: "O people, surely I had a dream. I was wearing invulnerable armor, and my sword, Dhū l-Fiqār, broke at the tip; I saw cows slaughtered", and that "The invulnerable armor is Medīna" when asked to interpret the dream.[736] However, elsewhere the narrations are different. Al-Wāqidī's use of al'Abbās' warning letter, which is not recorded by Ibn Isḥāq, is indicative of the same fact. In turn, this suggests that whilst the histories produced by both historians were no doubt influenced and conditioned by similar oral and narrative reports, they were nevertheless creative enough to pick and choose aspects of the reports they wanted to emphasise.

In sum, what becomes clear from this analysis is that whilst there are similarities between the texts, there are evident points of divergence as well. This further reinforces the veracity of Faizer's position vis-à-vis Jones' position. That is, whilst the history that al-Wāqidī produced was no doubt conditioned by the oral narratives he and his contemporaries had access to, it was nevertheless not determined by them. Al-Wāqidī, and by extension early Islamic historians, were capable of marshalling facts and producing history in their own idiosyncratic manner.

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[733] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 101; Ibn Isḥāq, "*Sīrat*," p. 371.
[734] Ibn Isḥāq. "*Sīrat*," p. 371.
[735] Ibn Isḥāq. "*Sīrat*," p. 371.
[736] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 104.

This comparative analysis of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* and Ibn Isḥāq's *Sīrat* has been kept purposefully brief; it is to allow more space for the following comparative study much neglected so far. If there is one trend that has been dominant in the field, it is a focus on the relationship between these two (al-Wāqidī's and Ibn Ish'āq's) surviving texts of early Islamic history. Conspicuous by its absence in the literature, however, is the systematic study of the relationship between al-Wāqidī and one of his teachers, Maʿmar ibn Rāshid. The rest of the chapter, which extends the analysis and argument of this chapter, will address this pressing lacuna found in the existing literature.

3.2 A Comparative Analysis of the Kitāb al-Maghāzī of al-Wāqidī and Maʿmar

This part seeks to gain a greater appreciation of al-Wāqidī's work and also the idea of history underpinning his work through a comparison with the surviving work of one of his tutors, Maʿmar Ibn Rāshid. As noted earlier, much of the comparative work on al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* focussing entirely on the relationship between al-Wāqidī and Ibn Ishāq has led to an unfair depiction of al-Wāqidī as a dubious scholar. Broadening the comparative canvas, as attempted below, to include another historical document of import demonstrates the integrity of al-Wāqidī's approach to received reports as a historian. Four main sections with many subsections in this part of the chapter have been devoted to this focussed comparative analysis.

After providing first a potted contextual background to Maʿmar, the second section below lays bare similarities between al-Wāqidī's and Maʿmar's texts in terms of narrative style, although recognising that al-Wāqidī's history is demonstrably vaster in terms of scope and detail. Next, the third section looks specifically at the places where al-Wāqidī directly referenced Maʿmar in his history. It shows that many, although not all, of the references are corroborated. At the same time, however, the section also demonstrates the places in the text where direct references are distorted and argues that a positive reading of al-Wāqidī would recognise that this may reflect his desire to obtain new knowledge and greater detail regarding the Prophet Muḥammad's biography and history. The fourth section then analyses each author's narrations of the key battles of early Islamic history. It demonstrates that al-Wāqidī's text reconstructs, almost in full, Maʿmar's reports, which suggests faithfulness on al-Wāqidī's part. At the same time, however, there are obvious differences in terms of

scope, extensiveness and detail between the two authors. The final section of this chapter then contends that the difference between al-Wāqidī and Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* rests in competing ideas about the nature of historical scholarship underpinning each author's work. Whereas Maʿmar took a traditionalist position – history as the preservation of existing knowledge – al-Wāqidī's history was greatly underpinned by the need to discover new forms of knowledge.

3.2.1 Introducing Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*

Not a great deal is known about Maʿmar in terms of his early life. It is believed that he was a Persian born in Basra circa 96 AH/715 AD and died in Yemen circa 154 AH/781 AD.[737] It is also believed that he led a relatively disadvantaged early life in financial and political terms. He was a *mawla* (slave) of the Azd tribe,[738] which interestingly was politically and tribally opposed to the Umayyad caliphate,[739] and he travelled across Arabia selling the wares of his paymasters.[740] From an early age, however, he displayed an interest in Islamic learning.[741] In his youth, he is believed to have heard the great *muḥaddith*, Qatāda ibn Diʿāma D 736speak, which in turn engendered [742] in him a passion for discovery.[743]

In terms of tutelage, Maʿmar received instruction from Qatāda in Basra.[744] In addition, he also studied along with Ibn Isḥāq under the great al-Zuhrī in Medīna at the time when the *maghāzī* traditions were in the process of transforming from the spoken into

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[737] Abi al-Ḥasan Ahmad b. Abdullah al- ʿjli. *Maʾrifat al-Thiqāt, vol. 1* (Madina: Maktābat al-Dār, 1985), p. 435; Mahmood ul-Hassan, *Ibn al-Athir: An Arab Historian: A Critical Analysis of His Tarik-al-Kamil and Tarikh-al-Atabeca* (New Delhi: Northern Book Centre, 2005), p. 16

[738] Ḍhahabī. Sīr Aʾlām al-Nubalaʾ, vol. 7, p. 5; Yaʿqūb b. Sufyān al-Fasawi *al-Maʿrifah wā al-Tārīkh, vol, 2* (Madina: Maktabat addār, 1989), p. 200.

[739] Adam Gaiser. "Slaves and Silver across the Strait of Gibraltar: Politics and Trade between Umayyad Iberia and Khārijite North Africa," in *Spanning the Strait: Studies in Unity in the Western Mediterranean,* eds. Yuen-Gen Liang, Abigail K. Balbale, Andrew Devereux and Camilo Gomez Rivas (Leiden: Brill, 2013), p. 41.

[740] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," pp. xvii–xix.

[741] Sīr Aʾlām al-Nubalaʾ.vol, 7. p 17.

[742] Yusuf b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mazzi. *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī asmāʾ al-rijāl, vol. 28* (Buyout: Muʾsasat al-Risālah, 1994), p. 307.

[743] al-Bukhāri. *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr, vol. 7* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿilmyyah, 1943), p. 378; Josef Horovitz. *The Earliest Biographies of the Prophet and Their Authors*, trans. Lawrence I. Conrad (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 2002), p. 72.

[744] Ibn Abi Ḥātim ʿAbud alrraḥmān Abu Muḥammad, *al-Jarḥ wā attaʿdīl, vol. 8* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿilmyyah, 1952), p. 256; Scott C. Lucas, *Constructive Critics, Hadīth Literature, and the Articulation of Sunnī Islam: The Legacy of the Generation of Ibn Saʿʾd, Ibn Maʿīn, and Ibn Ḥanbal* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), p. 357; Fasawi, *al-Maʿrifah wā al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2, p. 200.

the written word.[745] Having access to such renowned knowledge meant that in the world of *hadīth* and *isnād* and indeed the history of the Prophet and his companions Maʿmar was viewed as a respected authority.[746] In fact, it was remarked of Maʿmar that he was especially sought after "because no one among his companions of Basra, Kufa, or the Hejaz possessed *isnāds* as high as his were."[747] Ibn Abu Hātim said, "that referencing *Isnād* [is traced] to six people, whom [Maʿmar] witnessed all and wrote from them. I knew no other one who was competent in doing so, apart from [Maʿmar]."[748] Ibn Saʿd said the following of Maʿmar: "[Maʿmar] means: filled with the learning of al-Zuhrī."[749] Maʿmar was a respected teacher as well who instructed many scholars including ʿAbd Allāh ibn Dāwūd, Hishām ibn Yūsuf, ʿAbd al-Razzāq ibn Hammām and al-Wāqidī.[750] Sufyān al-Thawri, d.778, travelled to Yemen to study under Maʿmar.[751] In addition, his recensions of al-Zuhrī's traditions, at the very least, are contemporarily seen as authentic and reliable.[752]

However, it is not only the traditions that Maʿmar mastered from his teacher, al-Zuhrī, he was equally influenced by his master's approach to scholarship. Al-Zuhrī was an important figure in the *maghāzī* canon, as he was crucial to the Umayyad's demands for *maghāzī* traditions to be produced in written form, he was nevertheless a scholar who placed more prestige and emphasis on the oral tradition and the act of memorisation.[753] Likewise, Maʿmar placed greater emphasis on the spoken word than on the written word and saw the true test of one's scholarly merit as resting in memory and recall.[754] History, from this perspective, was to be preserved.

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[745] Barnaby Rogerson. *The Heirs of the Prophet Muhammad* (London: Hachette, 2006), p. 324.
[746] al-Bukhāri. *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, vol. 7, p. 378 ; Ḍhahabī, *Sīr A'lām al-Nubala'*, vol. 7, p. 6; ibn Abi Ḥātim, *al-Jarḥ wā attaʿdīl*, vol. 8, pp. 256-257; Mazzi, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī asmā' al-rijāl*, vol. 28, p. 307.
[747] Houari Touati. *Islam and Travel in the Middle Ages*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010), p. 40.
[748] ibn Abi Ḥātim. *al-Jarḥ wā attaʿdīl*, vol. 8 pp. 256–257.
[749] Ruth S. Mackensen. "Arabic Books and Libraries in the Umaiyad Period," *The American Journal of Semitic Languages* 54, no. 3 (1937), p. 243.
[750] Nicolet Boekhoff-Van der Voort. "The Raid of the Hudhayl: Ibn Shihāb al Zurhī's Version of the Event," in *Analysing Muslim Traditions: Studies in Legal, Exegetical and Maghāzī Ḥadīṭ*, eds. Nicolet Boekhoff-Van der Voort and Sean V. Anthony (Leiden: Brill, 2010), p. 311.
[751] al- 'jli. *Ma'rifat al-Thiqāt*, vol. 1, p. 435.
[752] Harald Motzki. "The Jurisprudence of Ibn Shihāb al Zurhī: A Source Critical Study," in *Analysing Muslim Traditions: Studies in Legal, Exegetical and Maghāzī Ḥadīṭ*, eds. Nicolet Boekhoff-Van der Voort and Sean V. Anthony (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 4–11.
[753] Tarif Khalidi. *Arab Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 27.
[754] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. xxvi; Ḍhahabī, *Sīr A'lām al-Nubala'*, vol, 7, p. 5.

Thus, Maʿmar marks what Conrad defines as the emergence of the classical *maghāzī* tradition.[755] Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is presumed to reflect a traditional understanding of the *maghāzī* literature, given that it begins with the digging of the well at Zamzam, narrates portions of the Prophet's early life, outlines the main aspects of his life following his departure from Makka and then proceeds to discuss the caliphates of 'Umar and Abū Bakr, the conflict between ʿAlī and Muʿawiyah and the marriage of Fāṭimah.[756]

Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* survives in the form of al-Razzāq's recension. Accordingly, Maʿmar is not the conventional author of the surviving text we have. Just as Ibn Ishāq's surviving work comes from his pupil, Ibn Hishām, through the act of oral transmission, so too does Maʿmar's text come direct from his pupil, al-Razzāq. The problem here, of course, is that such a process raises questions as to the authorship: is al-Razzāq's text a true version of Maʿmar's and by extension al-Zuhrī's reports? Is it embellished in any shape or form? Or is it even a redacted account?[757] For Anthony such issues do not mean that Maʿmar "is not directly responsible for [the] text" as he is clearly "the pivotal personality responsible for its content and form."[758]

Some scholars have questioned the veracity of al-Razzāq's recension. Jarrar, for example, has argued that al-Razzāq's recension lacks reference to traditions which appear in the work of Ibn Kathīr, Muḥammad b. Thawr and Hishām b. Yūsuf, amongst others.[759] In other words, al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* could therefore be regarded an incomplete one. On the other hand, Anthony contends that such missing traditions are likely to be limited in scope.[760] Adjudicating between these positions, however, is beyond the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, a direct comparison of al-Wāqidī's and Maʿmar's works may contribute to and extend this debate in respect of the extant *maghāzī* texts. Accordingly, the remainder of this

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[755] Lawrence I. Conrad. "'Umar at Sargh: The Evolution of an Umayad Tradition on Flight from the Plague," in *Story-telling in the Framework of Non-Fictional Arabic Literature*, ed. Stefan Leder (Wiesbaden, Germany: Otto Harrassowitz, 1998), p. 504.
[756] M. Hinds. "Al-Maghāzī," in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., eds. C.E. Bosworth, E. Van Donzel, B. Lewis and C. Pellat (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1985), p. 1162.
[757] Robinson. "Islamic Historiography," p. 25.
[758] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. xx.
[759] Maher Jarrar. "Review: Maʿmar Ibn Rāshid, *The Expeditions: An Early Biography of the Muḥammad*, ed. and trans. Sean W. Anthony," *Speculum* 90, no. 2 (April 2015), p. 560.
[760] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. xliv, fn. 55.

chapter will undertake a detailed comparison of these two author's texts as they are available to us.

3.2.2 Comparing Structure and Style

With the aim of a comparative analysis of the works of al-Wāqidī and Maʿmar in mind, this subsection begins by looking at the structure and style that the two scholars employed in their respective works. Unsurprisingly, given the prestige attached to the relationship between the teacher and the pupil at the time and place that both inhabited, there are obvious similarities between the two works, especially in terms of narrative style and technique. This clearly demonstrates the way in which al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was a product of its time. At the same time, however, evidence suggests that al-Wāqidī used his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* to *move beyond* the traditions he had received. To begin with, the discussion will focus on certain similarities in the two *maghāzī* books.

3.2.2.1 Similarity in Terms of Narrative Style

Doubtless, there are clear differences between al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* and al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, which will be discussed shortly. Nevertheless, there are also obvious similarities between the two texts and, by extension, the two historians, owing to the fact that they are both firmly within the *maghāzī* tradition. In this respect, al-Wāqidī's text – as already discussed in the first chapter – and Maʿmar's text are effectively purposeful. For instance, Anthony notes, the *maghāzī* tradition, as a whole, reflects "a cauldron in which the early Muslims…mixed their ideals and visions of their model man, Muḥammad…[Through the *maghāzī* literature] Muslims recorded and compiled these traditions as their new born community surveyed the wonders of a journey travelled to a destination hardly imagined at the outset."[761] Whilst it would be clearly inaccurate to say that all the *maghāzī* texts are indistinguishable,[762] there are nevertheless key features in terms

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[761] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. xix.
[762] Muhammad Q. Zaman. "Maghazi and Muhaddithun: Reconsidering the Treatment of 'Historical' Material in Early Collections of Hadith," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 28, no. 1 (Feb., 1996), pp. 1–18.

of style and structure which are shared by authors in the tradition broadly and shared by al-Wāqidī and Maʿmar specifically.

Given this, the respective works of al-Wāqidī and Maʿmar share certain characteristics in terms of narrative style and technique. In the first instance, al-Wāqidī, as already noted earlier, made extensive use of the Qurʾānic citation and revelation as a means to advance his narrative and decorate his prose. For Faizer, this narrative technique reflects a broader attempt to give historical meaning and context to the scripture, which in turn reflects the socio-political development of the Islamic community at a specific time while al-Wāqidī was composing his history of the Prophet.[763] Similar aspects are evident in Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, according to al-Razzāq's recension. Owing to the difference in their respective sizes, which will be revisited below, Maʿmar does not make an extensive use of the Qurʾānic citation, it is still present. A number of revelations are   supplied with the context in his narration of the following events: digging of the well of Zamzam;[764] Ḥudaybiyah;[765] the Banū Hudhayl and Banū al-Naḍīr;[766] Uḥud;[767] the triumph at Makka;[768] the story of ʿĀʾishah;[769] chapter entitled The Story of the People of the Pit;[770] the construction of the Mosque;[771] and the beginning of the   Messenger of God's illness.[772] Equally important, just like al-Wāqidī's, Maʿmar's use of the Qurʾānic revelation was purposeful; the first revelation of God to the Prophet Muḥammad, for example, instructs him to read and to know, and by extension, instructs Muslims to read and to know the Word of God.[773]

Another similarity shared by al-Wāqidī and Maʿmar is that when compared to their use of the Qurʾānic revelation, their use of poetry is found to be comparably less. Indeed, Maʿmar uses verse very sparingly in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*.[774] Thus, although the works may be a generation apart, there is nevertheless obvious evidence to suggest that Maʿmar's work and the *maghāzī* tradition on the whole influenced al-Wāqidī's

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[763] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. xvii.
[764] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," pp. 15, 17, 21 and 25
[765] Ibid, pp. 39 and 41.
[766] Ibid, pp. 63, 65, 67, 71, 73 and 75.
[767] Ibid, p. 79.
[768] Ibid, pp. 101 and 103.
[769] Ibid, p. 157.
[770] Ibid, p. 165
[771] Ibid, p. 175.
[772] Ibid, pp. 187 and 189.
[773] Ibid, p. 15.
[774] Ibid, pp. 13 and 63.

scholarship. In turn, given that al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* owes an intellectual debt, it stands as an evidence of the way in which it was anchored to a specific place and time.

It is also clear that, just as with al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, dialogue plays a critical role for Maʿmar in terms of narrating the Prophet Muḥammad's biography. This is hardly surprising as dialogue – the spoken word – was the chief method of transmitting knowledge from teacher to scholar and from generation to generation, and it often enjoyed prestige over the written word. In turn, the written word often reflects the way in which authoritative chain reports were the chief vehicles of knowledge transmission, and as such it took on a dialogical aspect.[775] Many of the chapters which narrate the history of the caliphs, for example, are littered with direct dialogue, which owing to space constraints cannot be recounted in full here.[776] Likewise, storytelling in the non-pejorative sense of the word which, as the last chapter demonstrated, features prominently in al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* also features heavily in Maʿmar's traditions as recorded in al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*.[777]

Other similarities in al-Wāqidī's and Maʿmar's *maghāzī* books can be found in the way in which Maʿmar's text, although admittedly less extensively than al-Wāqidī's, focuses on the miracles performed by the Prophet.[778] Genealogical comparisons were also employed by Maʿmar in his text, which prompted their subsequent use by al-Wāqidī, too, as detailed in the previous chapter. The Prophet's grandfather, ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, is depicted by Maʿmar as "steadfast" who "[was held in great esteem by the Quraysh] for his perseverance and reverence for the holy things."[779] The Prophet's father, ʿAbd Allāh, was also portrayed by Maʿmar in a positive light. A passage in the text, for instance, states about him that "[he] was the finest-looking man ever seen among the Quraysh…and the light between his eyes shimmered, for light shone from between them."[780]

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[775] Chase F. Robinson. "Islamic Historical Writing, Eight through Tenth Centuries," in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing, Volume 2: 400–1400*, eds. Sarah Foot and Chase F. Robinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 247.
[776] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," pp. 193–265.
[777] Ibid, pp. 139 and 165.
[778] Ibid, pp. 105 and 119.
[779] Ibid, p. 3.
[780] Ibid, p. 7

3.2.2.2 Differences in Terms of Scope

Despite the fact that legacies of Maʿmar and by extension authors in his *maghāzī* are easily identifiable within al-Wāqidī's work, there are equally obvious and evident differences between al-Wāqidī's and Maʿmar's *maghāzī* texts. In particular, the two historians differ in terms of the extensiveness of the scope and quantity of their respective histories; in terms of detail and sources; and in terms of the extent to which they were willing to depart from tradition.

The first and the most obvious difference between al-Wāqidī's and Maʿmar's works is their respective size. The sheer size of the two English translations of these works is indicative here: Maʿmar's *The Expeditions* runs into two hundred and eighty-one pages (with half being in the original Arabic and a large portion of the text devoted to discussing the caliphs) whilst al-Wāqidī's text runs into five hundred and fifty pages. The original Arabic manuscript of al-Wāqidī, consisting of three volumes, runs into one thousand one hundred and twenty-seven pages.[781] Without a doubt, al-Wāqidī's is far more extensive in terms of scope and quantity of the history and narrative he produced. Maʿmar's *Expeditions*, on the other hand, is primarily an intensive, short and focused biography of the Prophet, especially when compared with the other known texts in the tradition. Using Ibn Isḥāq as a point of reference, Anthony notes that Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is "a far more slender, economic volume, even though it covers similar ground."[782] The same comparison can be drawn between al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* and al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* as the former is a much more extensive, detailed and all-encompassing history of the Prophet Muḥammad following his migration from Makka until his death. Thus, despite Maʿmar's work clearly influencing his pupil's work, his pupil, al-Wāqidī, clearly surpasses the work of one of his teachers.

Several observations evidence this claim. Take each author's narration of Ḥudaybiyah as a case in point. In the English translation of Maʿmar's *The Expeditions*, this narration is completed in twelve pages (as it is in the Arabic version) whilst in the English translation of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* it occupies thirty pages. In Jones'

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[781] al-Wāqidī. *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, 3 vol., ed. Marsden Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966).
[782] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. xxviii.

Arabic edition, it is sixty-two pages in length.[783] The contrast between the two accounts of Badr is even starker. Whilst Maʿmar's *The Expeditions* narration of this pivotal event of early Islamic history is completed in just five pages, al-Wāqidī's narration in the English translation covers seventy-four pages; in the original Arabic manuscript, it covers a hundred and thirty-three pages.[784] The chronicles each author provides of Uḥud also illustrate a clear difference in terms of scope: in the English translation of Maʿmar's *The Expeditions*, the event is recorded in three pages whilst the English translation of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* devotes sixty-four pages to Uḥud and in Jones' Arabic edition it is one hundred and one pages in length.[785] Clear quantitative differences are also evident in al-Wāqidī's and Maʿmar's accounts of Khaybar. Maʿmar's rather slender account is covered in two pages whilst al-Wāqidī's account extends to over thirty pages and in Jones' Arabic edition it covers sixty pages.[786]

The reason for this quantitative difference, which will be discussed shortly, rests in the vastly different approach each scholar took to source material. Whereas al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* drew from a limited number of largely authoritative traditions, al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* drew from a veritable assortment of traditions, both respected and questionable, in order to compose his history of the Prophet Muḥammad. In turn, the respective size of each scholar's *maghāzī* text, as they have been handed down to us, stands as an evidence of the way in which al-Wāqidī's work extended beyond Maʿmar's and by extension the traditions which he had access to.

This can also be evidenced in the way Maʿmar and al-Wāqidī approached the question of chronology. As it has already been mentioned elsewhere in this thesis, al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* stands out primarily as a text within the *maghāzī* canon in which chronology is a key feature. As it was discussed in chapter two, collecting facts in respect of the temporal and chronological aspects of history was seen as crucial to understanding al-Wāqidī's philosophy of history and, as a result, the work that he

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[783] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," pp. 27–50; al-Wāqidī, "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 281–311; al-Wāqidī, *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, ed. Marsden Jones, pp. 571–633.
[784] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," pp. 51–59; al-Wāqidī, "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 11–85; al-Wāqidī, *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, ed. Marsden Jones, pp. 19–152.
[785] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," pp. 77–81; al-Wāqidī, "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 99–163; al-Wāqidī, *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, ed. Marsden Jones, pp. 199–300.
[786] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," pp. 91–93; al-Wāqidī, "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 311–34; al-Wāqidī, *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, ed. Marsden Jones, pp. 633–693.

produced in the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. In this respect, al-Wāqidī's work fits into what Robinson terms an annalistic chronography.[787] Maʿmar's *Expeditions*, on the contrary, does not appear to fit this categorisation.

Instead, Maʿmar's work, as Anthony points out, seems to "have been compiled without a strong concern for chronology." In fact, citing Schoeler, Anthony goes as far as to claim that in him "chronology is not determinative for the text's structure; Maʿmar's approach is, instead, rather ad hoc."[788] Although the first chapter of Maʿmar's text – "The Digging of the Well of Zamzam" – begins with a depiction of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, the Prophet Muḥammad's grandfather, and narrates the Prophet's early life, and the next chapter confusingly jumps to Ḥudaybiyah, six years after the Prophet left Makka (about a fifty year's gap in between). Maʿmar's third chapter then moves on to the narration of Badr, which occurred two years prior to Ḥudaybiyah.[789] This rather cavalier approach to chronology is evident elsewhere as well in al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Maʿmar's *The Expeditions*, unlike al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, contains a great deal of discussion of the succession of the caliphates following the Prophet's death; however, this narration is interspersed by other events that occurred during the Prophet's life, i.e. Dhāt al-Salāsil and the story of al-Ḥajjāj ibn ʿIlāṭ, before returning to the stories of the caliphates.[790] Thus, chronological sequence or even the timing of events is evidently not a concern for Maʿmar, which clearly differentiates him from one of his pupils, namely al-Wāqidī.

That said, al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* does contain an interesting passage within the chapter on the Banū Naḍir. It proceeds as follows:

> Two months before Badr, there was a raid – it was the day on which al-Ḥaḍramī was slain. Then there was the battle of Uḥud, then the Battle of the United Clans took place two years after Uḥud. Then there was al-Ḥudaybiyah – the Day of the Tree – when the Prophet agreed to a treaty stipulating that he would undertake a lesser pilgrimage in the same month of the following year…The conquest of Makka followed the lesser pilgrimage…Then, twenty nights later, the Prophet set off for Ḥunayn, then went to Taif, and finally returned to Medīna,

[787] Robinson. "Islamic Historical Writing," p. 251.
[788] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. xxviii.
[789] Ibid, pp. 3–59.
[790] Ibid, p. 193.

whence he ordered Abū Bakr to lead the hajj. The Prophet undertook the hajj himself the following year, after which he delivered his farewell sermon. He returned to Medīna, where he passed away on the third day of the month of Rabīʿ I.[791]

Al-Wāqidī's text records the Prophet Muhammad's date of death as the twelfth of Rabīʿ al-awwal,[792] which suggests obvious inconsistency between Maʿmar and al-Wāqidī; however, it is likely that this tradition of Maʿmar was probably not transmitted to al-Wāqidī. In turn, this probably provided the blueprint and initial structure for al-Wāqidī's greater and more extensive chronological effort, in addition to providing al-Wāqidī the impetus to obtain this further knowledge. Thus, from the information provided to us in terms of the surviving *maghāzī* texts, we can see that whilst al-Wāqidī's history was shaped by the traditions he received from his predecessors (in this case one of his teachers, Maʿmar Ibn Rāshid), he nevertheless actively sought to stand above and go beyond the traditions and history that was bequeathed to him.

Another way in which this principle can be illustrated rests in al-Wāqidī and Maʿmar's contrasting approaches to the question of tradition as symbolised by the use of authoritative source material. The way in which al-Wāqidī used chain reports has been covered extensively in earlier parts of this thesis where it was noted that al-Wāqidī relied on both combined reports, especially at the beginning of an individual narration, and formal, traditional and singular reports within the core of his narrative. In addition, al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* demonstrates clear attempts to go beyond the received historical record, drawing on genealogical and bequeathed eye-witness accounts where possible. Although, as indicated above, this allowed al-Wāqidī to narrate a much richer history, it also left him exposed to historical charges of distortion of traditions while contemporary scholars, as discussed in an earlier chapter, have charged him of embellishing the historical record.

In contrast, Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is much more focused in terms of the use of *isnād*. Not only does Maʿmar rely, for the most part, on singular reports, overwhelmingly he also relies on the reports of one figure, namely al-Zuhrī. In fact, people called him "Muʿumr al-Zuhari" because of his close association with his

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[791] Ibid, p.75.
[792] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 5.

teacher.[793] Recent research by Boekhoff-Van der Voort has quantified the historical reports employed by Maʿmar in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. He demonstrates that almost seventy percent of Maʿmar's reporting comes from al-Zuhrī. In addition, although other known traditionists are referenced by Maʿmar, such as Qatāda, Ayyūb and ʿUthmān al-Jazarī, these feature comparatively less frequently.[794] Thus, al-Wāqidī's and Maʿmar's *maghāzī* books differ in terms of how they apply the chief methodology of approaching and chronicling early Islamic history, and therefore they differ, as above, in terms of the extensiveness of their respective histories.

All the same, there are still parallels that can be drawn between al-Wāqidī's and Maʿmar's works, which in turn demonstrates some of the residual influences that the latter left on the former. Maʿmar, for example, although in a comparatively limited manner, often introduced competing, rather contradictory, reports and did not adjudicate between them, which, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, was a method that al-Wāqidī also used extensively. Consider the following passage of Maʿmar's text from the narration of the digging of the well of Zamzam, for instance:

> The Messenger of God remained with Khadījah, and eventually she bore him several daughters. The two of them also had al-Qāsim. Some scholars claim that she bore him another young boy named al-Ṭāhir. Another scholar said, 'We do not know of her giving birth to any boy except al-Qāsim, and she also bore him his four daughters: Zaynab, Fāṭimah, Ruqayyah, and Umm Kulthūm'.[795]

In the same chapter, Maʿmar also outlines a controversy with regard to who was the first to convert to Islam. On the authority of Qatāda from al- Ḥasan al-Baṣri and from ʿUthmān al-Jazarī from Miqsam from Ibn ʿAbbās, Maʿmar notes this to be ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib. On the other hand, he also cites a tradition from al-Zuhrī identifying Zayd ibn Ḥārithah as the first one to convert.[796] It has been clarified earlier that al-Wāqidī made much more extensive use of this approach in his much more detailed biography of the

[793] Abu Zarʿah ʿAbdarrhman al-Dimashqī. *Tārīkh abī zarʿh al-Dimashqī, vol. 1* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿImyyah, 1996), p 437.

[794] Nicolet Boekhoof-Van der Voort. "The *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* of ʿAbd al-Razzāq b. Hammām al-Ṣan'ānī: Searching for Earlier Source-Material" in *The Transmission and Dynamics of the Textual Sources of Islam: Essays in Honour of Harald Motzki*, eds. Nicolet Boekhoff-Van der Voort, Kees Versteegh and Joas Wagemakers (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2011), p. 30–31.

[795] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 13.

[796] Ibid, p. 19.

Prophet. It is easier to infer, therefore, that Maʿmar's work certainly influenced al-Wāqidī with the difference that al-Wāqidī's made much more extensive use of this technique of recording the controversies. At the same time, it also illustrates the way in which al-Wāqidī goes beyond the traditions handed down to him.

This is equally clear when we look at the question of combined reporting. Maʿmar, on an occasion, also used the collective report caveated with some questions regarding the veracity of the sources which, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, al-Wāqidī deployed extensively throughout his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Maʿmar's narration of the story of ʿĀʾishah begins with the following line: "Each of my sources related to me a portion of her story, some of them being more knowledgeable of her story than others or more reliable narrators."[797] This is unlikely to be anything specific to Maʿmar and al-Wāqidī; in fact, given that Maʿmar's report here cites al-Zuhrī, it probably reflects his particular style. Nevertheless, it evidences the way in which al-Wāqidī's work was, in part, conditioned by the work of his scholarly peers and seniors. At the same time, however, it also demonstrates the way in which al-Wāqidī, considering the comparatively larger use of this technique, surpasses the work of his predecessors.

This feature is also evident regarding the issue of anonymous reporting. On two occasions Maʿmar makes use of anonymous *isnād* in his narration. The story of Abū Luʾluʾah, for instance, opens thus: " Someone other than al-Zuhrī said."[798] Likewise, while narrating the story of the *Shūrā*, Maʿmar employs the exact same line: "Someone other than al-Zuhrī said."[799] As already noted in an earlier chapter of this thesis, al-Wāqidī makes more extensive use of this reporting technique, especially in his deployment of combined reports that head many of his narrations. Accordingly, this stands as a testament to the idea that al-Wāqidī's history, the way in which he presents the biography of the Prophet, relies, in part, on precedents set by earlier scholars of Islamic history. Thus, although al-Wāqidī's work was anchored to a particular time, place and intellectual tradition, he did take steps to move beyond his specific contextual position.

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[797] Ibid, p. 149.
[798] Ibid, p. 261.
[799] Ibid, p. 263.

3.3 Analysing al-Wāqidī's Direct References to Maʿmar

Having compared al-Wāqidī's and Maʿmar's *maghāzī* at the level of style and structure, this section now progresses to consider, in greater depth, the instances where al-Wāqidī made direct reference to Maʿmar in terms of *isnād*, whether of the combined or more traditional, singular variety. In doing so, the section demonstrates the importance of Maʿmar as a source of authority to al-Wāqidī which, in turn, illustrates the way in which al-Wāqidī's text is anchored to a specific intellectual climate. At the same time, however, in revealing certain differences between the authors, notably the instances where al-Wāqidī made no reference to his learned authority, illustrates the point that al-Wāqidī, by moving beyond the traditions passed down to him, was seeking to extend his history beyond that of existing intellectual boundaries. Finally, this section, by examining the instances where al-Wāqidī made use of a single *isnād* in reference to Maʿmar, contributes to the contemporary secondary literature on al-Wāqidī by reconstructing, in certain places, his image as an authentic reporter of known and authoritative traditions.

To begin with, al-Wāqidī alludes to Maʿmar ibn Rāshid throughout his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* in the form of including Maʿmar as part of the combined report technique he employs at the commencement of several chapters. In fact, Maʿmar's name appears as many as thirteen times suggesting that al-Wāqidī's work was heavily influenced by Maʿmar, which is unsurprising given the teacher-student relationship that was pivotal to the transmission of Islamic traditions at the time. Thus, al-Wāqidī lists Maʿmar in the combined reports for his chapters: "The Killing of Kaʿb b. al-Ashraf";[800] "The Raid of Uḥud";[801] "The Raid of Biʿr Maʾūna";[802] and "The Raid of al-Rajīʿ."[803] The combined report at the top of "The Raid of the Banū Naḍīr" chapter also includes a reference to Maʿmar.[804] Likewise, Maʿmar's name is present as a noteworthy authority in the *isnād* of the combined reports preceding these chapters: "The Raid of Badr al-Mawʿid" ;[805] "The Raid of al-Muraysī by al-Wāqidī";[806] "The Raid of al-Khandaq";[807] "The Raid of

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[800] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 91.
[801] Ibid, p. 99.
[802] Ibid, p. 169.
[803] Ibid, p. 173
[804] Ibid, pp. 177–178.
[805] Ibid, p. 188.
[806] Ibid, p. 198.
[807] Ibid, p. 216.

the Banū Liḥyān";[808] "The Raid of Khaybar";[809] "The Raid of al-Fatḥ";[810] "Abū Bakr's pilgrimage";[811] and finally, "The Prophet's farewell pilgrimage."[812] Thus, of the twenty-two chapters that contain a combined report, al-Wāqidī has referenced Maʿmar's name in the thirteen of them. This appears highly significant as it would suggest that, as mentioned above, al-Wāqidī's scholarship owed, in part, a debt to the tutelage and inspiration he drew from Maʿmar. This reflects the core principle that al-Wāqidī's history, as narrated in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, is bound to a specific time and place owing to its intellectual anchoring.

Nevertheless, it is equally evident, at least from a cursory glance at the narrations provided by each author, that al-Wāqidī was not as reliant on Maʿmar as, say, Maʿmar was on al-Zuhrī. This is not a direct criticism of Maʿmar; rather, it is more of an appraisal of al-Wāqidī in terms of the creativity he displayed in furthering existing knowledge beyond its known boundaries. This capacity for creating a more extensive history is borne out by the way in which al-Wāqidī provided new material which extended beyond the reports he had received from *inter alia* Maʿmar.

The majority of the times that Maʿmar was excluded from al-Wāqidī's reporting simply reflects more extensive knowledge on the part of the latter. Three chapters of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, namely "The Raid of Dhāt al-Riqāʿ", "The Raid of Dūmat al-Jandal" and "The Raid of Ukaydir b. ʿAbd al-Malik in Dūmat al-Jandal", receive no substantial treatment in Maʿmar's *The Expeditions*.[813] In consideration of the differing understanding of history that the teacher and pupil held, therefore, al-Wāqidī's omission of Maʿmar's name in places reflects the fact that al-Wāqidī had, in many respects, surpassed the teachings of one of his learned resources.

This is readily apparent in two other combined reports that fail to include Maʿmar's name, namely Tāʾif and Tabūk.[814] Maʿmar's understanding or knowledge of these events, at least according to al-Razzāq's recension, is evidently limited. Indeed, they are only mentioned in passing in the brief chronology that is provided halfway through

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[808] Ibid, p. 263.
[809] Ibid, pp. 311–312.
[810] Ibid, p. 384.
[811] Ibid, p. 527
[812] Ibid, p. 532.
[813] Ibid, pp. 194, 197 and 502.
[814] Ibid, pp. 452 and 485.

the text, where it is noted that "the Prophet set off for Ḥunayn, then went to Taif…Also, when Abū Bakr had returned from the hajj, the Messenger of God raided Tabūk."[815] In contrast, al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* provides full and extensive details of the battles that occurred in both places.[816] Of course, the issue here, to paraphrase from Crone, is that al-Wāqidī's more extensive treatment of these events is illustrative of the fallacy of the 'first author in a sequence knowing very little' and the 'last author in a sequence knowing virtually everything'.[817] This, however, may not be a case reflective of embellishment. After all, al-Wāqidī provides ample references in combined reports for his narrations of both Tā'if and Tabūk. It may simply be, therefore, an evidence of the difference in scope between al-Wāqidī and Maʿmar and their respective difference in terms of the extensiveness of their history. Thus, whilst al-Wāqidī's text was no doubt a product of the particular time, place and intellectual climate it was produced in, al-Wāqidī the historian nevertheless demonstrates a capacity for outgrowing the existing intellectual boundaries.

To be noted is one further glaring omission of Maʿmar in al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*; it is the combined *isnād* that opens al-Wāqidī's introductory chapter. Here, in the short chronology of the Prophet's life after moving to Medīna, al-Wāqidī cites numerous authorities including some of his known savants , such as 'Abdullah b. Jaʿfar, Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ b. Dīnār and Abū Maʿshar.[818] Yet, not only did he not cite ibn Ishāq, which as noted elsewhere caused great consternation among contemporary Islamic historiographers, but al-Wāqidī failed to acknowledge Maʿmar as well. However, this omission may not reflect sloppy scholarship on al-Wāqidī's part; instead, it may reflect the idea that al-Wāqidī was trying to distance himself from Maʿmar in terms of what he saw as the appropriate role of the historian. As mentioned above, chronology – understood as the accurate recording of sequence – is not an evident feature of Maʿmar's text. Yes, Maʿmar does include the brief passage in which he goes through Badr, Uḥud, al-Ḥudaybiyah, the lesser pilgrimage, the Conquest of Makka, Ḥunayn, Abū Bakr's pilgrimage and the farewell pilgrimage.[819] If al-Razzāq's recension is a reflection of the knowledge that was transmitted to al-Wāqidī from

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815 Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 75.
816 al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 452–460 and pp. 485–502.
817 Crone. "Meccan Trade," p. 222.
818 al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 3.
819 Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 75.

Maʿmar, then this may have indeed served as a blueprint and springboard for al-Wāqidī's concern for chronology. However, al-Wāqidī's introductory chapter and Maʿmar's brief chronological passage are in no way substantively equal. Thus, there is little to no dubiety in al-Wāqidī's omission of Maʿmar from the combined report heading his introductory chapter; instead, al-Wāqidī evidently surpasses one of his teachers in terms of the chronological detail he excavated and chose to include in his history.

3.3.1 Corroborating al-Wāqidī's Use of Isnād

In contrast to the sceptical approaches to the Islamic historical source material, recent research by Görke and Schoeler has, on the other hand, suggested that the *isnād* in the *maghāzī* genre is not necessarily all corrupt and distorted. They argue, instead, that a verifiable chain dating back to ʿUrwa can be established through corroboration, although implying that some traditions are obviously dubious.[820] Whether this addresses the concern that critical scholars raise with regard to the capacity we have for reconstructing the historical prophet Muḥammad is another matter; after all, the evidence of an established chain of authority is no evidence that the events did occur as narrated. Anyhow, this debate is outside the purview of this thesis. Instead, the comparison of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* with that of one of his teachers, Maʿmar, provides a perfect opportunity to investigate the extent to which the former's text corroborates the latter's.

In many places, al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* fails to provide corroboration for many of the direct *isnād* references al-Wāqidī makes to Maʿmar. This observation possibly raises serious questions about al-Wāqidī's scholarship in general and his capacity for transmitting authentic and truthful traditions, in particular. Indeed, there are a number of examples that could substantiate this point.

In the Expedition to Nakhla account, for example, al-Wāqidī makes the following reference to Maʿmar: "Maʿmar related to me from al-Zuhrī from ʿUrwa saying: 'The Messenger of God paid the blood money for ʿAmr b. al-Ḥaḍrami. He observed the

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820 Andreas Görke and Gregor Schoeler. "Reconstructing the Earliest *Sīra* Texts: The Hiǧra in the Corpus of ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr', *Der Islam* 82, no. 2 (2005), pp. 209–220.

sacred month as it was until God revealed *Barā'a*.'[821] It is not possible to locate the said *isnād* in al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *The Expeditions*.

Likewise, in the chapter on Badr, al-Wāqidī cites a report from Maʿmar via al-Zuhrī, which narrates the death of Nawfal b. Khuwaylid by the sword of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭalīb.[822] However, the tradition could not be corroborated by Maʿmar's text. It is not in the comparatively short narration of Badr or the numerous passages which refer to Alī, although Maʿmar does make reference to the assistance Ḥamza b. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib provided to Alī in his duel with Saʿd b. Khaythama, which immediately follows the Nawfal tradition in al-Wāqidī's text.[823]

In the The Raid of the Banū Sulaym in Buḥrān in the Region of al-Furʿ section, al-Wāqidī also cites the following report from Maʿmar:

> Maʿmar b. Rashid related to me from al-Zuhrī, who said: 'When it reached the Messenger of God that all of the Banū Sulaym…were in Buḥrān, the Messenger of God prepared for that but he did not display his intent…He met a man from the Banū Sulaym and he asked him for information about the people and their group…The Prophet commanded that [the man] be imprisoned…Then the Prophet marched until he arrived in Buḥrān. There was no one there. He stayed a day then returned'.[824]

This report, however, does not feature in Maʿmar's *The Expeditions*. In fact, the Banū Sulaym only feature in Maʿmar's narration of Ḥunayn.[825]

Al-Wāqidī in his chapter entitled "The Record of ʿĀ'isha and the Companions of the Lie" also cites the following report from Maʿmar:

> Maʿmar related to me from al-Zuhrī, from ʿUbaydullah b. ʿAbdullah b. ʿUtba, from Ibn ʿAbbās from ʿAmmār b. Yāsir, who said: 'We were with the Messenger of God when the soldiers were detained on account of the necklace of ʿĀ'isha, at Dhat al-Jaysh. When dawn rose, or almost, the verse concerning

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[821] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 11.
[822] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 46–47.
[823] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 55; al-Wāqidī, "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 47.
[824] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 98.
[825] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 111.

tayammum[826] was revealed, and we grabbed the earth with our hands and wiped our hands up to our elbows, above and below. He combined the two prayers during this journey'.[827]

Again, however, it is not possible to corroborate this report from Maʿmar's *maghāz*i. In sum, accordingly, these reports raise questions with regard to al-Wāqidī's scholarship and his fidelity in terms of transmitting authentic traditions, which probably explains, as per the first chapter of this thesis, why there have been and continue to be concerns raised about the reliability of his work. Even Anthony, in his English translation of al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, raises the very same doubts when the subject of whether al-Wāqidī could be a source for potentially missing traditions from al-Razzāq's recension is broached. He notes that although al-Wāqidī and Ibn Saʿd "are a potential source", al-Wāqidī "is known to play fast and loose with his source material, making the prospect of recovering Maʿmar's authentic material from him slim."[828]

However, it is only an assumption that al-Wāqidī plays, to paraphrase Anthony, fast and loose with his sources. The discrepancies between the texts, for instance, could be explained through issues with regard to al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. The extant text of Maʿmar's, in other words, could be a redacted form of Maʿmar's traditions, much like Ibn Hishām redacted Ibn Ishāq's work.[829] It is also entirely plausible that what was recounted to al-Razzāq by Maʿmar was not exactly the same as that recounted to al-Wāqidī by Maʿmar. This analysis would seem plausible given the numerous examples that demonstrate that al-Wāqidī was faithful to Maʿmar's traditions, at least as they appear in al-Razzāq's recension.

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[826] "*O you who have believed, when you rise to [perform] prayer, wash your faces and your forearms to the elbows and wipe over your heads and wash your feet to the ankles. And if you are in a state of janabah, then purify yourselves. But if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself or you have contacted women and do not find water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and hands with it. Allah does not intend to make difficulty for you, but He intends to purify you and complete His favor upon you that you may be grateful*"*,* (Q.5:6).
[827] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 213.
[828] Maʿmar. "*The Expeditions,*" p. xliv, fn. 55.
[829] F.E. Peters. "*The Quest of the Historical Muhammad,*" International Journal of Middle East Studies 30, no. 3 (Aug., 1991), p. 298.

3.3.2 Faithful Reporting in al-Wāqidī's Kitāb al-Maghāzī

In the chapter on Badr, as a case in point, al-Wāqidī makes the following direct reference to Maʿmar: "Maʿmar b. Rāshid related to me from al-Zuhrī, from ʿAbdullah b. Thaʿlaba b. Suʿay, who said: Abū Jahl implored God for victory on the day of Badr. He said, 'O God, he cut us off from our relatives, and brought us the unknown. So destroy him today'."[830] Maʿmar's chapter entitled "The Incident at Badr" opens with the exact same Qur'ānic citation that accompanies al-Wāqidī's invocation of Maʿmar and al-Zuhrī.[831] In addition, al-Razzāq's recension contains a passage of the text very similar, at least in tone and message, to the one used by al-Wāqidī. It notes, "Abū Jahl ibn Hishām sought a divine decision, praying, 'O Lord, make known which of us…is more insolent against you and guiltiest of severing the bonds of kinship! May you cause him to perish this day!'"[832] The differences in language could reflect subtle alterations in terms of oral transmission, memory recall, the act of recension and the actions of scribes. However, the near similarity suggests that al-Wāqidī's use of a non-combined *isnād* is verifiable and therefore corroborated, if al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *maghāzi* is an effective adjudicator of this.

In addition, in "The Raid of al-Rajīʿ" chapter, al-Wāqidī cites the following report from Maʿmar:

> Maʿmar informed me from al-Zuhrī from ʿAmr b Abī Sufyān b. Usayd b. al-ʿAlā'i, from Abū Hurayra that the first who established the two prostrations at death was Khubayb. They said: "Then he said, 'If I feared death, as you believe, then I would have extended my prayer, but I did not extend my prayer.' Then he said, 'O God enumerate them by number and kill them one by one. Do not leave even one of them'.[833]

This episode is also reported in Maʿmar's *maghāzī* in the following passage of his text:

> Afterward, the sons of al- Ḥārith took Khubayb out of the Sacred Precincts to kill him. Khubayb said, 'Allow me to do two prostrations worth of prayers,' which

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[830] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 36.
[831] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 51.
[832] Ibid.
[833] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 175.

he did. Then he said, 'I'll pray no more, for otherwise you'll suspect I fear death.' Thus Khubayb was the first to establish the precedent of undertaking two prostrations worth of prayers before facing execution. He said, 'Oh Lord! Reckon well my killers' number!'.[834]

Although not completely verbatim, the two reports convey the exact same message. Khubayb was the first to establish the two prostrations and he did so because he believed further praying would make his captors suspect that he feared death.   Some variation in language could reflect stylistic issues, issues with the mode of oral transmission and memorisation or issues with the recension of Maʿmar's material. As such, it stands as a clear evidence of the veracity of al-Wāqidī's scholarship in transmitting accurate *isnād*, at least following the reporting of Maʿmar through al-Zuhrī through Abū Hurayra.

In the chapter entitled "A Record of Nuʿaym b. Masʿūd", al-Wāqidī cites a report from Maʿmar from al-Zuhrī which clearly correlates with passages in Maʿmar's *The Expeditions*, which affirms the veracity of al-Wāqidī's use of *isnād*. First, the *isnād* used by both historians is very similar: al-Wāqidī's speaks of being informed by Maʿmar from al-Zuhrī while Maʿmar's speaks of being informed by al-Zuhrī from Ibn al-Mussyyab.[835] Although al-Wāqidī's *isnād* omits al-Mussyyab, this could simply be an error in inscription or just a memory failure Secondly, aspects of the text are exceptionally close. The passages detail both the Prophet's conversations with Nuʿaym and his dealings with 'Uyaynah and Abū Sufyān. For example, al-Wāqidī's text begins with: "[Nuʿaym heard that] The Banū Qurayẓa sent to Abū Sufyān to come 'And we will attack the heartland of the Muslims from behind them'."[836] The following, and indeed a very similar passage, is found in Maʿmar's text: "Nuʿaym said, 'I was in the company of 'Uyaynah and Abū Sufyān when the messenger of the Qurayẓah tribe came to them, saying, 'Be resolute, for we will take the Muslims unawares from their own safe haven'."[837] When Nuʿaym informed the Prophet of this, his reply – that perhaps we instructed them in that way – is identically recorded in both texts.[838] A description of Nuʿaym's character is included in both texts, and it is virtually identical:

[834] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 63.
[835] Ibid, pp. 238–239; Maʿmar, "The Expeditions," p. 85.
[836] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 238.
[837] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 85.
[838] Ibid, p. 85; al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 238.

al-Wāqidī records that "Nuʿaym was a man who did not hide the news" while Maʿmar's text states that "Nuʿaym was not the type of man to keep secrets."[839] The dialogue between ʿUmar and the Prophet is also very similar. In al-Wāqidī's text it goes: "[ʿUmar] said, 'O Messenger of God, what is it that you said? If the affair was from God fulfil it. If this was a decision that has come to you of its own accord, then indeed the matter of the Banū Qurayẓa is more despicable than that you say something that will affect you".[840] Maʿmar's text records this information thus: "Then ʿUmar came to the Prophet and said, 'O Messenger of God, if this be God's decree, then let it come to pass, but if it be merely your opinion, then consider this: The matter of the Quraysh and the Qurayẓah clan is too perilous to just take one person's advice on the matter!'."[841]

On the other hand, al-Wāqidī's text does contain a passage that is not found in Maʿmar's text; it is the following reply from the Prophet to ʿUmar: "The Messenger of God said, 'Rather it is a decision of mine. War is deceit'."[842] This could easily be seen as a slippage in al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's tradition as opposed to dubiety on the part of al-Wāqidī. Further exchanges between the Prophet and Nuʿaym are also recorded virtually identically by both authors: al-Wāqidī records that the Prophet informed Nuʿaym "Did you consider what you heard me say previously? Be silent about it and do not mention it;"[843] while Maʿmar's text of this reads as "Consider carefully what we have said to you, but do not mention it to anyone."[844] Exchanges between Nuʿaym and ʿUyaynah and Abū Sufyān are also recorded very similarly by Maʿmar and al-Wāqidī. The latter's text records the following information: "[Nuʿaym asked] 'Did you know of Muḥammad saying something ever, but it was true?' [ʿUyaynah and Abū Sufyān] said, 'No.' [Nuʿaym] said. 'Indeed he told me regard what the Banū Qurayẓa sent you: "Perhaps we commanded them thus." Then he forbade me to mention it to you'."[845] Virtually identically, Maʿmar's text records the exchange thus: "[Nuʿaym] asked them, 'Have you ever heard Muḥammad say anything that wasn't true?' 'No,' they answered, and he continued, 'Indeed, when I myself mentioned

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[839] Ibid.
[840] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 239.
[841] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 85.
[842] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 239.
[843] Ibid.
[844] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 85.
[845] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 239.

the affair of the Qurayẓah clan to him, he said, "Perhaps we order them to do that'."[846] Both authors also record Abū Sufyān's exchanges with the Banū Qurayẓa while both provide a similar conclusion to the narrative. Maʿmar's text closes with the following passage: "God then sent the tempest against them. Casting fear into their hearts, he extinguished the blaze of their fires and broke the halter of their steeds. Thus they fled, vanquished without battle."[847] In a similar vein, al-Wāqidī's closing of the report goes as follows: "Then God sent them a wind, and as soon as one of them was guided to the places of his ride, he rode away."[848]

Two further passages are found in his discussion of the Banū Qurayẓa and both uphold the correctness of al-Wāqidī's use of historical reports from Maʿmar and al-Zuhrī, if al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is an effective judgement of this. Both passages refer to the story of Abū Lubābah b. ʿAbd al-Mundhir, a member of the *Anṣār*. The first passage refers to Abū Lubābah's attempts to secure the Prophet's forgiveness following a betrayal. It reads:

> Abū Lubābah was tied for around seven days and nights at the pillar, which was at the door of Umm Salama, in the strong heat. He neither ate nor drank. He said, 'I will continue thus until I'm separated from the world or God forgives me.' He said [meaning al-Zuhrī]: He continued this way until he could no longer hear voices for exhaustion. The Messenger of God looked at him every morning and evening. Then God forgave him and it was proclaimed, 'Indeed, God has forgiven you!' The Prophet sent someone to untie his ropes, but he refused to let any one but the Messenger of God untie him. So the Messenger of God came, and released him."[849]

Although not verbatim, this passage is clearly commensurate with Maʿmar's narration of the event, which proceeds as follows:

> [Abū Lubābah] tied himself to a pillar of the mosque and said, 'By God, I won't untie myself or taste food or drink until either I die or God accepts my repentance.' He remained there for seven days, tasting neither food nor drink,

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[846] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 85.
[847] Ibid.
[848] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 239.
[849] Ibid, p. 249.

until he collapsed to the ground unconscious. God then accepted his repentance, and he was told, 'God has accepted your repentance, Abū Lubābah.'

'By God,' he replied, 'I will not untie myself unless the Messenger of God unties me with his own hands!'"

So the Prophet came to untie him with his own hands. After this, Abū Lubābah said, 'O Messenger of God! With my repentance I swear to forsake my tribe's abode where I committed sin and to surrender my wealth in its entirety as alms to God and His Messenger!'

'A third of it will suffice, Abū Lubābah ,' replied the Prophet."[850]

Although there is an obvious difference in terms of Abū Lubābah offering a gift following his forgiveness, both reports follow the same *isnād* – al-Zuhrī – and provide the same overall message and theme – Abū Lubābah's repentance, self-inflicted punishment and subsequent forgiveness by God.

Likewise, a comparison of the following two passages clearly reflects the principle that al-Wāqidī's work was clearly anchored in that of his teacher's, namely Maʿmar. The first passage of the text is Maʿmar's narration of the story of Abū Lubābah and the orphan. It goes as follows:

The first matter for which Abū Lubābah had been censured related to a dispute between him and an orphan over a date palm. They brought their dispute before the Prophet, and he ruled that the tree belonged to Abū Lubābah; but the orphan wept, so the Prophet said, 'Hand the tree over to him.' Abū Lubābah refused, so the Prophet said, 'Give it to him and you shall have its like in Paradise.' Yet still he refused. Ibn al-Daḥdāḥah went to speak with Abū Lubābah: 'Would you sell this date palm in exchange for two gardens.' 'Yes,' he agreed. Ibn al-Daḥdāḥah then left to go see the Prophet and said, 'Messenger of God, do you think, if I give this orphan this date palm, that I shall have its like in Paradise?' 'Yes,' replied the Prophet, so Ibn al-Daḥdāḥah gave

[850] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 141.

the orphan the tree. Thus the Prophet used to say, 'How many fruit-bearing palms await Ibn al-Daḥdāḥah in Paradise!'."[851]

The recounting of this portion of the narrative by al-Wāqidī is very similar. It reads as follows:

> The first affair that the Messenger of God blamed Abū Lubābah b. ʿAbd al-Mundhir for his quarrelling with an orphan about a cluster of grapes belonging to him. The Messenger of God had judged the grapes for Abū Lubābah, but the orphan began to howl and complain to the Messenger of God. The Messenger of God said to Abū Lubābah, 'Give me the grapes, O Abū Lubābah, in order that I may give it to the orphan.' But Abū Lubābah refused to give it to the Messenger of God. The Prophet said, 'O Abū Lubābah, I will give it to the orphan, and you will have the same in Paradise.' Still, Abū Lubābah refused to give it to him. Al-Zuhrī said: A man from the *Anṣār* related to me that when he refused to give it, Ibn Daḥdāḥah – a man from the *Anṣār* – said, 'Do you think, O Messenger of God, if I bought these grapes and gave it to the orphan I will have similar to it in Paradise?' The Messenger of God said, 'Yes.' Abū Daḥdāḥah rushed until he met Abū Lubābah and said, 'I will purchase your grapes from you with my gardens' – there was to him a garden of date palm – Abū Lubābah agreed. Ibn Daḥdāḥah purchased the grapes with the garden of the date palm and gave it to the orphan…The Messenger of God said, 'May the grapes come down to Ibn Daḥdāḥah in Paradise'."[852]

Again, the obvious similarities in these passages demonstrate that al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is very much anchored to, and as such conditioned by, the work of one of his learned teachers, Maʿmar. They also demonstrate the capacity of al-Wāqidī for replicating authentic and faithful reports.

Portions of the text in each authors' narration of al-Ḥudaybiyya reflect that al-Wāqidī's history was bound to place and time by mirroring, in parts, the traditions of the past scholars, in this case Maʿmar's. Moreover, although the *isnād*, in both cases, comes from al-Zuhrī, in al-Wāqidī's case, the chain flows from ʿUrwa from Miswar b.

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[851] Ibid, p 88.
[852] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 248.

Makhrama, whilst Maʿmar's chain flows from Miswar and Marwān ibn al- Ḥakam.[853] Nevertheless, this discrepancy is largely irrelevant; after all, at the top of the chapter Maʿmar clearly cites ʿUrwah in the chain.[854] As such, the texts are remarkably similar in terms of overall message and content, flow of dialogue and also most of the phrasing. Maʿmar's text reads as under:

> The Prophet marched onward until he reached the mountain pass from which he could descend upon the Quraysh. His she-camel, al-Qaṣwā, knelt down there, and the people said, 'Ḥal, ḥal!' They also said, 'Al- Qaṣwā has turned defiant; al-Qaṣwā has turned defiant!' 'Al- Qaṣwā has not turned defiant,' the Prophet replied, 'for that's not in her nature. Rather, He Who halted the march of the war elephant has caused her to stop.' Later he said, 'By Him in Whose hands my soul resides, there is no course of action magnifying the sacred things of God that I will not grant them.' Then the Prophet spurred on his she-camel, and she rushed forward with him on her back.
>
> He turned away from them and descended to the farthest reaches of Ḥudaybiyah, at a spot overlooking a dried-up puddle containing little water. The people sipped at it little by little, and they had not tarried there long before they drank it all up. Complaints were made to the Messenger of God, so he removed an arrow from his quiver and ordered them to place it in the puddle.
>
> Al-Zuhrī said: By God, it did not cease gushing forth water until they had left."[855]

Similar content is found in al-Wāqidī's narration of the event. Although not a verbatim reproduction of the above passage, it contains the main content found in Maʿmar's narration: the Prophet's camel paused; the people tried to rouse it; the Prophet blamed he who halted the march of the war elephant; the Prophet made a promise; and he then rode to a spring where he was miraculously able to produce water from nothing. It goes as under:

> The Messenger of God marched and when he was close to al-Ḥudaybiyya, at the pass, a leg of the camel slipped on the excrement of the people. The camel

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[853] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," pp. 27–28; al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 288.
[854] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 27.
[855] Ibid, p. 29.

knelt down, and the Muslims said: Ḥal! Ḥal! But the camel refused to be provoked. They said: 'Al-Qaṣwā knelt down.' The Messenger of God said, 'Indeed, she generally does not refuse. It is not her custom. What confines her is what confined the elephant. Today, whatever they ask me of a plan regarding the glorification of God's sanctuary, I shall grant it to them.' Then we rebuked it and it stood up, turned and returned to the beginning until it alighted with the people at one of the watering places of al-Ḥudaybiyya suspecting that it had a little water. A spring of water came up but the people expressed their doubts to the Messenger of God of the little water. The Messenger of God pulled out an arrow from his quiver and commanded that the watering place be stabbed with it. A rivulet bubbled up for them until they left it soaking.[856]

The similarity in these two passages clearly establishes the opinion that al-Wāqidī's history was conditioned by the chronicles of past historians, here al-Zuhrī through Maʿmar. The remarkable similarity between these two passages of the two texts reinforces the claim that al-Wāqidī was clearly capable of citing *isnād* in line with the received chronicles.

3.3.3 Distorted Chains of Authority in al-Wāqidī's Kitāb al-Maghāzī

Notwithstanding the examples of faithful reporting, there are also reports which question the veracity of al-Wāqidī's use of *isnād*. This is because the information outlined in al-Wāqidī's text would occasionally exceed the information presented in Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Each author's narration of the division of the spoils from Khaybar is a glaring example of this. Maʿmar's account, as per al-Razzāq's recension of his teacher's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, which is drawn from al-Zuhrī, is rather limited in substance. It provides the following information: "The Messenger of God took the fifth portion from Khaybar, which was his right, and then divided the rest as spoils among those Muslims who had witnessed the triumph in Khaybar and the rest of the people of Ḥudaybiyah who had not."[857] In contrast to this relatively sparse narration, al-Wāqidī, citing Maʿmar from al-Zuhrī from Saʿīd b. al-Musayyib, documents a great deal more of information regarding a visit by Jubayr b. Muṭʿim and ʿUthmān b. Affān to

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[856] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 288.
[857] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 58.

the Prophet in order to secure greater spoils of the victory for some from the Banū Muṭṭalib seemingly excluded.[858]

Another example of the claim that al-Wāqidī's reporting often contained information far in excess of his teacher's is found in passages relating to the aftermath of Khaybar and, in particular, the apportioning of the land. Maʿmar's text, which cites al-Zuhrī from Saʿīd al-Musayyab, is again rather scarce in terms of information. It goes: "The Messenger of God summoned the Jews of Khaybar, who had been forced to abandon the oasis and had left, and he handed the settlement back over to them on the condition that they would administer its lands and deliver half its produce to God's Messenger and his companions."[859]

In the apparently corresponding portions of the text, al-Wāqidī, in contrast, provides two chains of authority: Maʿmar from al-Zuhrī from Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab and Maʿmar from 'Ubaydullah b. ʿAbdullah b. 'Utba.[860] In terms of the former, al-Wāqidī's narration revolves around the death of a member of the *Anṣār* at Khaybar and the Prophet blaming the Jews owing to the fact that he was found in one of the Jewish wells.[861] In terms of the latter, on the other hand, which does not appear to be the tradition that Maʿmar is using, al-Wāqidī's discussion revolves around the apportioning of the spoils.[862]

The same issue – distorted *isnād* – is also present in a lengthy report via Maʿmar that is cited by al-Wāqidī in his narration on the Banū Naḍīr. It goes as under:

> Maʿmar related to me from al-Zuhrī, from Khārija b. Zayd, from Umm al-ʿAlāʾi. She said [the Prophet spoke with the Anṣār with reference to the apportioning of the Banū Naḍīr's booty and] the Anṣār called out, 'We are satisfied and content, O Messenger of God.' The Messenger of God said, 'May God have compassion on the Anṣār and the sons of the Anṣār.' The Messenger of God divided what God had given as booty to him, and he gave the *Muhājirūn* and

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[858] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 342–343.
[859] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 91.
[860] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 352–353.
[861] Ibid, p. 352.
[862] Ibid, p. 353.

he did not give any one of the Anṣār anything from that booty except [Sahl b. Ḥunayf and Abu Dūjāna]."[863]

The text recorded in Maʿmar's *The Expeditions* is relatively similar in terms of overall theme and message. A passage in the chapter entitled "The Incident Concerning the Clan of al-Naḍīr" notes the following: "The Prophet gave most of the spoils to the Emigrants. He divided the spoils between them and also portioned out some to two men from the Allies who were in need, but no other Ally besides those two received any portion thereof."[864] However, there are clear discrepancies between Maʿmar's and al-Wāqidī's texts. The chain of authority is similar but not exact. The chain reported by al-Wāqidī, as above, includes Maʿmar from al-Zuhrī, from Khārija b. Zayd, from Umm al-ʿAlā'i.[865] Maʿmar's report, as per al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *maghāzi*, goes from al-Zuhrī, from 'Abd Allāh ibn Kaʿb ibn Mālik, from one of the Prophet's companions (presumably al-ʿAlā'i).[866] In other words, if al-Razzāq's recension is indeed accurate, then al-Wāqidī appears to have altered the isnād by including Zayd over ibn Mālik.

From a critical perspective toward al-Wāqidī specifically (e.g. Anthony)[867] or toward early Islamic history more broadly (e.g. Crone),[868] these examples of potentially distorted reporting would stand as a clear evidence of why scholars are critical of the source texts in general and al-Wāqidī's in particular. However, this thesis is not chiefly concerned with whether the events narrated by al-Wāqidī, Maʿmar and the *maghāzi* scholars as a whole occurred the same way as the sources have depicted them. The *maghāzi* texts contain, at least from this particular vantage point, questionable elements; nevertheless, this does not mean to say they are pure myth. Given somewhat eternal nature of the debate over the veracity of the extant sources, this thesis is primarily concerned with the nature of ideas contained within the texts rather than their representation of reality.

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[863] Ibid, pp. 185–186.
[864] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 73.
[865] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 186.
[866] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 67.
[867] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. xliv, fn. 55.
[868] Crone. "Meccan Trade," p. 222.

In this case, a more positive analysis could give al-Wāqidī the benefit of the doubt by recognising his reasoning for distorting authoritative reports, if that is indeed what he did in the aforementioned cases. Take the last example – his account of the Banū Naḍīr. Unlike Maʿmar, he is able to provide the names of the *Anṣār* who were given a portion of the Banū Naḍīr's property, namely Sahl b. Hunayf and Abu Dūjāna. In addition, he also provides much more information with regard to the reasoning behind the Prophet's actions. It is noted by al-Wāqidī that the Prophet reasoned that if he divided the booty between the *Muhājirūn* (or emigrants) and the *Anṣār* (or allies), then the former would continue to rely on the latter for housing and support. If, on the other hand, he gave the larger amount of the spoils to the *Muhājirūn*, then the *Muhājirūn* would become independent and leave the properties of the *Anṣār*.[869] Thus, al-Wāqidī's history is ultimately richer and more detailed than his predecessor's precisely because he was willing to go beyond the bounds of accepted chains of authority and seek out new information where possible. If it is true to assume that there is always a trade-off between rigour and contextual detail, then clearly al-Wāqidī's idea of where an appropriate balance rests is different from Maʿmar's and other traditionists.

3.4 Comparing Content

The idea that al-Wāqidī's work was clearly influenced by the chronicles he received from Maʿmar becomes evident through a comparison of each author's narration of three major battles of early Islamic history. Through an analysis of each historian's narration of Badr, Uḥud and al-Khandaq, it is possible to demonstrate that al-Wāqidī reconstructed, with limited deviations, virtually all of Maʿmar's accounts as they have survived. This demonstrates not only the faithfulness of al-Wāqidī but also the way in which his work is clearly anchored to a specific intellectual time and place. At the same time, however, the obvious difference in terms of extensiveness, demonstrates quite clearly the way in which al-Wāqidī sought to transcend the traditions he had received.

3.4.1 The Battle of Badr

The Battle of Badr, considering its centrality to early Islamic history and the *maghāzī* genre as a whole, stands unsurprisingly as a testament to the idea that whilst al-Wāqidī deploys the learned traditions he had received as blueprints or starting points, he, in

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[869] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 185–186.

many respects, also goes beyond those learned traditions. That is, if al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* stands as a good example of the traditions that al-Wāqidī was exposed to. The sheer scale of al-Wāqidī's narration of Badr confirms this when compared to the scale of Ma'mar's narration of the same event. The former's account in the English translation stretches over seventy-four pages and in Jones' Arabic edition it runs into one hundred and thirty-three pages, whereas in the latter's account it covers just five pages both in Arabic and in its English translation.[870] The sources used also demonstrate this quantitative difference in terms of extensity of history: Maʿmar bases his account on just four *isnād*, referring to al-Zuhrī, al-Zuhrī from 'Urwa, Ayyūb from 'Ikrimah and Hishām ibn 'Urwah; in contrast, al-Wāqidī bases his extensive account of Badr on combined reports (presumably from the scholars listed in the introduction) and complements these with singular reports throughout the text. Thus, it is unsurprising that the two treatments of Badr are radically different in terms of overall quantity. At the same time, however, al-Wāqidī's and Maʿmar's texts do demonstrate some similarities, which confirms the notion that there is a clear scholarly link between al-Wāqidī and preceding *maghāzī* scholars, which in turn demonstrates that in places he faithfully reproduced received information.

In addition to faithfully citing Abū Jahl's declaration, which was mentioned in the previous section, other passages of text produced by Maʿmar and al-Wāqidī are similar in terms of overall content. Take the following text from Maʿmar's narration of sequences before the battle, as an example:

> Abū Sufyān had drawn near to Medīna in a caravan of the Quraysh returning from Syria, and the Pagans marched out to provide support for their caravan because the Prophet had set out in pursuit of Abū Sufyān and his troop. The Messenger of God sent two men as spies to discover at which well Abū Sufyān had stopped. The two went out to search for him and ascertained his whereabouts and what he was up to; then they quickly returned to report back to the Messenger of God. [871]

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[870] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," pp. 51–59; al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 11–85; al-Wāqidī. *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, edited by Marsden Jones, pp. 19–152.
[871] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 34.

A very congruent passage is found in al-Wāqidī's text, which suggests he was influenced by the traditions bequeathed to him. It reads as follows:

> Abū Sufyān approached with the caravan. As they came closer to Medīna they became very afraid and lingered waiting for Ḍamḍam…
>
> …Basbas b. 'Amr and 'Adī b. Abī l-Zaghbā' came to Majdī at Badr in search of information…When Basbas and 'Adī [heard information from a Quraysh slave] they set off on their return to the Prophet. They met him at 'Irq al- Ẓabya and informed him of the news.[872]

Of course, there are obvious differences, especially in terms of the detail that al-Wāqidī's account offers *vis-à-vis* Maʿmar's. Nevertheless, these passages demonstrate that al-Wāqidī's history, in places, is broadly in line with that of earlier traditions.

As al-Wāqidī's narration advances, we can see further traces of Maʿmar's traditions in al-Wāqidī's work. Consider the following passage, for instance:

> [Abū Sufyān] said, 'O Majdī, did you see anyone?'… Majdī replied, 'By God I have not seen anyone whom I do not like for there is not an enemy between you and Yathrib, he would not be hidden from us and I would not conceal it from you; except that I saw two riders coming to this place'… Abū Sufyān came to where the riders [Basbas and 'Adī] had alighted and took a dropping from their camels; he crumbled it and found there were date stones in it. He said, 'This, by God, is the fodder of Yathrib. They are spies of Muḥammad and his companions. I believe they must be near'.[873]

There are obvious parallels with the following text passage found in al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*:

> Abū Sufyān proceeded as far as the well where the two men had been and alighted there. He asked the people near the well, 'Have you noticed anyone from Yathrib?'

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872 al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 21–22.
873 Ibid, p. 22.

'No,' they answered.

Then he asked, 'Has anyone at all passed by you?'

'We've seen no one,' they answered, 'except for two men from such-and-such place.'

'And where did the two men make camp?'

They led him to the place, and he walked about until he came upon their feces, which crumbled apart. There in the feces he found the pits of dates, whereupon he asked, 'Aren't these the dates that come from such-and-such a clan? These are the watering holes of the people of Yathrib!' [874]

Again, there are evident differences between the two passages; however, they clearly show the traces of Maʿmar, and therefore by extension the early *maghāzī* scholars, on the historical narrative produced by al-Wāqidī.

Both works, in addition, refer to the Prophet's capture of the Quraysh slaves and narrate virtually identical dialogue from the Prophet.[875] Besides, there are clear correlations between Maʿmar's and al-Wāqidī's texts in terms of the speech given by ʿUtba b. Rabīʿa immediately before the battle and the exchange between ʿUtba and Abū Sufyān is recorded virtually verbatim.[876] Al-Wāqidī's narration of early skirmishes involving Ḥamza b. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib and ʿUbayda b. al-Ḥarith b. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib b. ʿAbd Manāf is also largely faithful to the information presented in Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, while Ḥamza's assistance to ʿAlī is recorded in both accounts, with al-Wāqidī's narration being much more extensive.[877] Al-Wāqidī, like Maʿmar, also notes the first Muslim death in the battle, that of Mihjaʿ, the *mawlā* of ʿUmar, although admittedly al-Wāqidī provides much more extensive detail to the narration.[878] Likewise, the severing of ʿAli b. Umayy's leg and his subsequent death is narrated in both al-Wāqidī's and Maʿmar's respective texts, although again the former provides much more extensive detail in comparison to the latter.[879] The death of Abū Jahl is also recorded in both scholar's works and the fact that the Prophet knew that Abū Jahl had a scar on the back of his legs is also made clear in both texts.[880] Finally,

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[874] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 53.
[875] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 53; al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 27–28.
[876] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 53; al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 33.
[877] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 55; al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 35–36 and 46.
[878] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 57; al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 34.
[879] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 56; al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 42–43.
[880] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 57; al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 46.

both note similar although not identical dialogue involving the Prophet and his companions as they buried the slain Quraysh.[881]

Given the respective size of each author's narration of the Battle of Badr, it is no surprise that al-Wāqidī's work is significantly richer in terms of historical detail. His narration, for instance, includes ʿĀtika bt. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib's dream sequence;[882] depictions of the Prophet as doubting;[883] comparatively more fantastic and mythical details about Gabriel's intervention;[884] far more extensive details about the battle;[885] and much more extensive detail about the apportioning of the booty.[886] Given that this more extensive history was drawn from a richer source of information, if not always deemed appropriate from a traditionalist perspective, it demonstrates that al-Wāqidī was inclined to outgrow the boundaries of existing knowledge.

3.4.2 The Battle of Uḥud

The Battle of Uḥud also stands as testament to the principle that al-Wāqidī's history transcends that of one of his teacher's. Even at a very basic detail, namely dating, al-Wāqidī's account is richer and more precise. Whilst Maʿmar records the battle as taking place in Shawwāl, six months after the raid on the Banū al-Naḍīr,[887] al-Wāqidī opens his narration with the information that the battle occurred on Saturday the seventh of Shawwāl.[888] The more extensive nature of al-Wāqidī's history is also demonstrated by his more extensive use of reporting: whilst Maʿmar cites one *isnād* from al-Zuhrī from 'Urwah in addition to one report from Kaʿb ibn Mālik within the text,[889] al-Wāqidī uses a combined report of fourteen individuals as well as others unnamed together with making reference to a number of singular chains of authority throughout the text.[890] The most obvious indicator of al-Wāqidī's extensiveness *vis-à-vis* Maʿmar's intensiveness rests in the quantity of the text produced: the English translation of Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* extends to two and a half pages; in Jones'

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[881] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 57; al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 56.
[882] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 16–17.
[883] Ibid, p.35
[884] Ibid, p. 39.
[885] Ibid, p. 45.
[886] Ibid, p. 50.
[887] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 77.
[888] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 99.
[889] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," pp. 77–79.
[890] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 99–162.

Arabic edition it is hundred and one pages;[891] the English translation of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is over sixty three pages.

Maʿmar's narration begins with the Prophet's ominous dream relating to the upcoming battle. Maʿmar includes the following details:

> ...the Prophet said, 'I had a vision that I donned an impenetrable coat of armor, which I surmise must be Medina. Remain, therefore, in your stately houses and fight from within their walls…

> …the Prophet called for his armor. When he donned it, he said, 'I suspect the number of fallen will be great on both sides. While asleep, I had a vision of a slaughtered animal – a cow, I'd say. By God, this omen is a boon'.[892]

The detail of this prophetic dream provided by al-Wāqidī is similar in terms of overall content. That is, the Prophet had an ominous dream which he interpreted to mean that the Muslims should defend from a position of strength in Medīna. It proceeds as follows:

> …[the Prophet] said, 'O people, surely I had a dream. I was wearing invulnerable armor, and my sword, Dhū l-Fiqār, broke at the tip; I saw cows slaughtered and I led a ram behind me'…[When asked by the people to explain the dream] He replied, 'The invulnerable armor is Medīna…The break at the tip of my sword is an injury to myself; as for the slaughtered cows they are the dead among my companions; that ram that I lead are the troops that we will kill, God willing'…

> …The Messenger of God thought that he would not go out of Medīna because of his dream. The Messenger of God desired to stay in Medīna because of what he dreamed and the way he interpreted it.[893]

The two passages are also similar in that they note the pressure was placed on the Prophet to adopt an alternative strategy, that is, going on the offensive and attacking the Quraysh. However, there are evident differences in the way this is presented. In

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[891] al-Wāqidī. Kitāb *al-Maghāzī*, ed. Marsden Jones, pp. 199–300.
[892] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 77.
[893] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 104.

al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* the pressure comes from Ḥamza b. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib and other youths who were not present at Badr as well as the Aws and Khazraj and the Banū ʿAbd al-Ashhal.[894] In contrast, the only name Maʿmar offers for those who pressured the Prophet into a confrontational strategy is ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ubayy ibn Salūl.[895] This is quite critical for al-Wāqidī presents an entirely contradictory narrative saying that Ibn Ubayy actually pleaded with the Prophet to remain in Medīna.[896] Both accounts also present contradictory information with regard to Ibn Ubayy's actions during the conflict. Anthony, relying on the Arabic word *inkhazala* (remaining behind), suggests that Ibn Ubayy never joined the conflict,[897] whilst al-Wāqidī, in contrast, contends that Ibn Ubayy did march with the Prophet but tensions were evident: the Prophet is believed to have said that "We will not seek help from a people of polytheism [meaning the Banū Naḍīr] against others of polytheism";[898] that Ibn Ubayy and the Banū Naḍīr felt aggrieved that the Prophet had not heeded Ibn Ubayy's advice and "they [presumably meaning the Prophet and his companions] encountered hypocrisy and disloyalty from Ibn Ubayy";[899] that subsequently "Ibn Ubayy departed from that place [Shaykhayn] with his troops, like an ostrich";[900] and that he "was pleased and expressed joy [when the Prophet and his companions were taken by the Quraysh]. [Ibn Ubayy] said, 'He disobeyed me and obeyed those who have no understanding of it [meaning the youth who petitioned the Prophet into confronting the Quraysh]'."[901] Thus, although different, both accounts are largely critical of Ibn Ubayy's actions.

Both texts also show congruity about why the Prophet decides to adopt an offensive strategy. Maʿmar's text provides the following quotation: "[the Prophet said,] 'It does not behove a Prophet, once he has donned his armor, to remove it until he has faced the trial'."[902] Al-Wāqidī provides a very similar passage, which notes that "[the Prophet said,] 'It is not appropriate for a prophet once he puts on his cuirass to then put it down until God judges between him and his enemies'."[903]

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[894] Ibid, pp. 104–105.
[895] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 77.
[896] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 104.
[897] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," pp. 77 and 297, fn. 128.
[898] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 107.
[899] Ibid, p. 107.
[900] Ibid, p. 108.
[901] Ibid, p. 109.
[902] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 77.
[903] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 106.

All the same, al-Wāqidī, owing to his more extensive style, yet again demonstrates a capacity for going beyond the traditions he received. This is perhaps best evidenced in the way al-Wāqidī and Maʿmar narrate the chaos in the Muslim ranks. Maʿmar's text is very Spartan; it notes only that "The Muslims disobeyed the Prophet, and they fought and quarrelled among themselves."[904] Headed by the collective 'they said', indicating a combined report, al-Wāqidī's text recounts a speech by the Prophet instructing his marksmen to remain in position;[905] that these marksmen were crucial to repelling Khālid b. al-Walīd's advances;[906] that the marksmen, according to one marksman who stayed in position, al-Ḥārith b. Anas b. Rāfiʿ (again headed by the collective 'they said'), left their positions to collect the spoils, which in turn caused the tide to turn against them in the battle.[907]

Thus, al-Wāqidī's text is, on the one hand, closely related to his learned seniors or predecessors, in that Maʿmar's more intense and focused history of Uḥud serves as a blueprint or framework for al-Wāqidī's more decorative and extensive history. At the same time, however, al-Wāqidī demonstrates, as we repeatedly noticed in almost all the instances discussed, a keen capacity for surpassing the wisdom and knowledge he had inherited from his scholarly predecessors.

3.4.3 The Battle of al-Khandaq

The idea that the passages of his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* demonstrate that al-Wāqidī's was faithful, in places, to traditions and accounts bequeathed to him is further confirmed by a comparison of his and Maʿmar's narrations of al-Khandaq, or the Battle of the Trench. At the same time, this comparison testifies that whilst al-Wāqidī's historiography reflects the work of one of his teachers at the very least, it also reveals not only a desire but also a capacity for moving beyond and standing above the historical traditions handed down to him. A cursory glance at the relevant texts reveals an obvious quantitative difference between the texts. Maʿmar's recension of al-Khandaq and its subsequent events is relatively limited in comparison to al-Wāqidī's account. In terms of quantity, the former's text in English translation covers four pages just as in the Arabic version, whilst the English translation of the latter's text reaches

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[904] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 79.
[905] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 111.
[906] Ibid, p. 113.
[907] Ibid, p. 114.

forty-one pages and in Jones' Arabic edition it covers sixty pages in length.[908] Unsurprisingly, there is also a vast difference in the number of sources used. Maʿmar's text cites three reports: one from al-Zuhrī; one from Ibn Abī Najīḥ; and one from al-Zuhrī from Ibn Musayyab.[909] In contrast, al-Wāqidī's text is headed with a combined report of twenty- three authorities over and above the single reports throughout the body of the text.[910]

Yet, despite these differences in terms of the extensiveness of history, the core ideas of Maʿmar's text are retained in full within the body of al-Wāqidī's narration. The passage referring to the dialogue between the Prophet, ʿUyaynah ibn Ḥiṣn ibn Badr al-Fāzarī, Sʿd ibn Muʿādh and Saʿd ibn ʿUbādah, is a glaring example of this fact. In Maʿmar's text it reads as follows:

> [The Prophet said to ʿUyaynah,] 'If I were to offer you a third of the Allies' harvest, would you return, along with all those who are with you from Ghaṭafān, and dissuade the united clans from fighting?' [Uyaynah said,] 'If you send half of the harvest over to me, I shall do so.' [The Prophet said to Muʿādh and ʿUbādah,] "Uyaynah ibn Ḥiṣn has demanded half of your harvest as a condition for withdrawing with his allies from Ghaṭafān and dissuading the united clans from fighting. I had already offered him a third, but he refused to accept anything but half the harvest. How do you two see the matter?' 'Oh Messenger of God!' the two replied. 'If you have been commanded by God to do a thing, then let God's decree be fulfilled!' The Messenger of God retorted, 'Had I been commanded by God to do a thing, then I wouldn't have sought your consent. Rather, this is my own opinion I present to you.' They replied, 'Indeed, then, our view is that we shall grant him nothing but the sword.' And the Prophet answered, 'So then, the matter is settled'.[911]

Although al-Wāqidī's text contains more extensive dialogue, including the signing of a document (presumably a treaty), more tension between ʿUyaynah and the Prophet's

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908 al-Wāqidī. *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, ed. Marsden Jones, pp. 633–693.
909 Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," pp. 83–89.
910 al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 216–257.
911 Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 83.

companions and the tearing up of the document following the dialogue, the exact same dialogue is present in al-Wāqidī's narration, which reads as follows:

[The Prophet said to 'Uyaynah,] 'Do you think that if I put away a third of the dates of Medīna for you, you will consider returning with those who are with you, and you two will discourage the Bedouin?' ['Uyaynah said,] 'Will you give us half of the dates of Medīna?' [text here suggests they settled on no more than a third as opposed to the above]….

… [Muʿādh and 'Ubādah replied to the Prophet,] 'If this is an affair from the heavens fulfil it. If it is an affair you were not commanded about, but for which you have a desire, then we hear and obey. But if it is an option that you seek, then we have only the sword for them'.[912]

Other parts of Maʿmar's text are also faithfully narrated in al-Wāqidī's text, this much is evident from the last section where it was shown that the portion of Maʿmar's text referring to Nu'aym ibn Masʿūd al-Ashjaʿī. In addition, however, portions of Maʿmar's narration of the Prophet's Qurayẓah affair also appear in al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Again, although al-Wāqidī evidently goes beyond his teacher, providing information on dialogue between key characters and details about the battle and its combatants, he also faithfully reflects the word of Maʿmar.

Maʿmar's text progresses as follows:

[After having returned to Medīna from as far as Ḥamrā' al-Asad], the Prophet then removed his armor, performed his ablutions, and perfumed himself. But Gabriel called out to Muḥammad, 'Who has excused you from battle? Did I not see you remove your armor? We angels have yet to remove ours!'.[913]

Al-Wāqidī recounts the exact same information, noting that:

Gabriel came to [the Prophet]…and called out, 'Who excused you from fighting!... Surely we drove them to Ḥamrā' al-Asad. Surely God commands you

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[912] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 234.
[913] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 87.

to march to the Banū Qurayẓah. Indeed I will approach them and shake their fortress'."[914]

Al-Wāqidī also provides the following information:

The Muslims gathered at the Messenger of God's for *'Ishā*. Among them there were those who did not pray until they came to the Banū Qurayẓah, and those who had prayed. They mentioned that to the Messenger of God, and he did not blame one who prayed nor one who did not pray until he reached the Banū Qurayẓah.[915]

The following passage clearly reflects Maʿmar's:

…one group prayed [after the Prophet forbid the prayer] full of faith and seeking God's reward, and the other neglected the prayer, also full of faith and seeking God's reward. The Prophet, accordingly, did not deal harshly with either group. [916]

Finally, the passages each provides concerning Ḥuyayy b. Akhṭab also bear remarkable similarities, although al-Wāqidī's is demonstrably grander in terms of detail. Maʿmar's passages refer to Ḥuyayy pressing the Qurayẓah leaders into breaking their pact with success, although noting that Ḥuyayy was treated as a bad omen by the Qurayẓah.[917] Al-Wāqidī's text does likewise but narrates at length from conversations between Ḥuyayy and Ghazzāl b. Samaw'al and Kaʿb b. Asad.[918] Besides, both recount similar details with regard to the execution of Ḥuyayy. Maʿmar's text reads as follows:

When the Qurayẓah clan were brought forth to be executed, Ḥuyayy was also brought forth, his hands tied with a single leather strap. Ḥuyayy addressed the Prophet: 'I swear by God that I do not reproach myself for having opposed you,

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[914] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 244.
[915] Ibid, p. 246.
[916] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 87.
[917] Ibid, p. 89.
[918] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 222–224.

but he who forsakes God shall himself be forsaken!' The Prophet issued the command to execute him, and his head was severed from his neck. [919]

Al-Wāqidī's narration is remarkably similar. It goes thus:

Those who did the killing were 'Alī and al-Zubayr. They brought in Ḥuyayy b. Akhṭab with his hands gathered to his neck. He wore a red garment to be killed in and proceeded to tear it up with his finger-tips in order that one would not take it as plunder. The Messenger of God said to him, 'Did God not grant you to us?' He said, 'But of course, and by God, I do not blame myself for opposing you. Indeed, I sought the power at his place, but God refused except that you overpower me. I have tried every way, but whoever lets God down is forsaken'…Then Muḥammad commanded that his head be struck off. [920]

Thus, a comparison of the chief content of both al-Wāqidī's and Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* texts brings forth a number of key findings. First, in places, al-Wāqidī's text displays remarkable similarities to Maʿmar's. In fact, virtually all the detail in Maʿmar's chapter is reproduced, with limited discrepancies, in al-Wāqidī's text. Secondly, this suggests that al-Wāqidī was capable of, for the most part, faithfully reproducing the traditions narrated to him, if al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's traditions is indeed a good representation of this. Thirdly, this illustrates that, in part, al-Wāqidī's text was subjective in nature; it was anchored to a particular place and time, in this case a specific intellectual lineage. Fourthly and finally, because al-Wāqidī's and Maʿmar's texts differ greatly in terms of content and detail, this illustrates the way in which al-Wāqidī used the scholars he studied under as a springboard for producing a much grander history; he surpassed the known historical record, in other words.

3.5 Differences between al-Wāqidī and Maʿmar in Ideas of History

Thus, it should be clear that the broader stories in the *maghāzī* canon – Badr as a defensive battle, Uḥud as being caused by a failure to follow the Prophet's instructions, al-Khandaq and its aftermath legitimised by treachery – are relatively intact in both histories. Although not all the references al-Wāqidī makes to Maʿmar can be corroborated and in some cases there are clear distortions in reports, it is nevertheless

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[919] Maʿmar. "The Expeditions," p. 89.
[920] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 252.

possible to illustrate the evident influence that Maʿmar had on al-Wāqidī. In fact, virtually all of Maʿmar's traditions, as far as we can tell from al-Razzāq's recension of his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, are faithfully reconstructed in al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Nevertheless, there are evident quantitative differences in terms of style. Before concluding, this final section will consider the reasons for this difference, chiefly by returning to one of the main themes of this thesis – the philosophy of history underpinning al-Wāqidī's work.

There are, of course, two alternative explanations for the vast difference in scope of the two histories that more critically minded scholars would forward, namely omission and embellishment. In terms of the former, there is no way to confirm that al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is a definitive and complete recension of Maʿmar's work.[921] It has been argued that Maʿmar collected and redacted al-Zuhrī's traditions and, in turn, al-Razzāq collected and then redacted Maʿmar's traditions.[922] Thus, it could be the case that what we actually have in al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is a summary of Maʿmar's traditions as opposed to a full and detailed account of his teachings. Furthermore, as Conrad has highlighted, it is actually fallacious to assume that everything X taught on subject Y appears automatically in the written form of their text.[923] In terms of the latter, from a critical perspective, the fact that al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is far more extensive than one of his teachers stands testament to the idea that later scholars in a sequence would know more about an event because they tended to embellish material.[924]

Unfortunately, there is actually no scholarly way to adjudicate between these two propositions, thus a definitive conclusion to why such a difference in terms of the quantity of the text exists between al-Wāqidī and Maʿmar is beyond reach. However, from the known information – the surviving texts – what can be said is that al-Wāqidī clearly surpassed his teacher in terms of historical detail. That is, whilst al-Wāqidī's text was anchored and bound to time and place, he nevertheless took steps to move beyond the traditions that were handed down to him. That is, as it has been hitherto

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[921] Harald Motzki. *The Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence: Meccan Fiqh before the Classical Schools* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2002), pp. 57–58.

[922] Julie S. Meisami and Paul Starkey, eds. *Encylcopedia of Arabic Literature, Volume Two* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 542.

[923] Lawrence I. Conrad. "Review: Recovering Lost Texts: Some Methodological Issues," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 113, no. 2 (April – June 1993), p. 259.

[924] Crone. "Meccan Trade," p. 222.

discussed, al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* vis-à-vis al-Razzāq's recension of Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is more extensive in terms of scope and quantity, in terms of detail and sources and in terms of the deployment of less respected reporting techniques. Thus, whilst al-Wāqidī's work was no doubt anchored to the precedents set by earlier scholars, the history found in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* nevertheless stood above and went beyond the traditions he had received.

This principle is important because it relates to the wider question of philosophy underpinning the historian's work, especially with regard to the notion of what the principal functions of a historian were understood to be. It is clear, at least from Anthony's work on Maʿmar, that the latter's less extensive history was informed by his specific understanding of scholarship. To be clearer, Maʿmar's understanding of scholarship was informed by a particular cultural aversion to the possession of books and the dependence on written word. As Anthony points out, "to possess…books for any purpose except private use could considerably harm one's scholarly reputation, as it suggested that one's knowledge…was not known by heart, and therefore [one was] not truly learned."[925] This, in many respects, resulted from a specific cultural understanding of the function of scholarship. One was considered indeed learned if he had information at the tip of his tongue and could reel it off at the opportune moment without having the need to referring to the written word. In Robinson's view, Maʿmar existed at a time when the oral word was thought more prestigious than the written word, and he practised history during the period when scholarship was understood generally to be directed toward the preservation of existing knowledge rather than the discovery of new knowledge.[926] In fact, Maʿmar's student, Hishām b. Yusuf, recalled that Maʿmar never wrote anything down. His approach, instead, was based on recalling memorised facts.[927] In contrast, the thirty years between al-Wāqidī and Maʿmar (a generation's gap in other words), al-Wāqidī's already established love of books and the written word, al-Wāqidī's wider exposure to the blossoming cultural milieu of Iraq[928] and the growing tendency within the Iraqi schools for tribal, and ultimately newer, histories,[929] all possibly explain the differences between the

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[925] Ibid, p. xxvi.
[926] Robinson. "Islamic Historic Writing," p. 248.
[927] Dhahabī. Sīr Aʻlām al-Nubala', vol. 7, p. 5.
[928] Robinson. "Islamic Historic Writing,".
[929] al-Duri. "Historical Writing," p. 6.

traditionalism of Maʿmar and al-Wāqidī's more extensive history. For - al-Wāqidī, in other words, the act of history was less about preservation of existing knowledge and more to do with the discovery of new knowledge or new dimensions of the existing knowledge.

Of course, one could critique the sources al-Wāqidī used; they are after all questionable in places as are some of the narratives he produced.[930] However, this is largely a critique of the sources rather than that of the historian, which again illustrates the way in which al-Wāqidī's history was bound to a specific place and time. Yet, at the same time, in seeing history as the discovery of new knowledge, al-Wāqidī demonstrated what Carr termed a capacity for "[rising] above the limited vision of his own situation in society and in history."[931] From our particular vantage point, al-Wāqidī's history may be based on potentially unreliable sources; however, situating al-Wāqidī in his own place and time and juxtaposing his work with one of his teachers' reveals him to be an independent, hard-working, judicious and creatively minded historian.

3.6 Conclusion

Through a brief comparison of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* with Ibn Ish'āq's *Sīrat Rasūl Allah* first and then its detailed comparison with Maʿmar's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, this chapter has sought to gain a greater appreciation of finer nuances of al-Wāqidī's historical method and his contribution to the *maghāzī* genre and, by extension, the post-migration history of the Prophet Muḥammad. The brief comparison with the *Sīrat Rasūl Allah*, highlighting points of commonalities and points of divergence, bears further testimony to the opinion that al-Wāqidī's work was conditioned but not determined by the historical sources he drew his inspiration from. It is almost the same conclusion we reach through the detailed comparison between his and Ma'mar's *maghazīs*. In doing so, this analysis has demonstrated the obvious influence that Maʿmar had on al-Wāqidī. This is evident in the latter's faithful reconstructions of the former's accounts, especially in terms of the major battles of early Islamic history. It can also be seen in how most of al-Wāqidī's direct references to his teacher are faithful to Maʿmar's traditions, as far as al-Razzāq's recension informs us. Nevertheless, there

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[930] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. xvi.
[931] Carr. "History," p. 123.

are clear differences between the two historian's works, particularly in terms of extensiveness, detail and scope. From a less pejorative perspective, this thesis concludes that the difference rests in competing understandings of history underpinning each historian's work. Finally, the common point between the two comparisons is that al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* may have been bound to a specific intellectual time and place; nevertheless, he demonstrates a capacity for moving beyond his limited social, historical and intellectual situation.

Chapter 4: Meaning-Making and the Idealisation of the Prophet's Life in Madina

There are three broad sections in this final chapter. The discussion remains largely anchored in al-Wāqidī's idealisation of the Prophet's life in Madina and its purposes. The first section takes up the importance of the Qur'anic citation and revelation. It shows that al-Wāqidī viewed history as being concerned with the divine revelation, which in turn points to the specific time and place in which he wrote his history. The second section looks at the role of the Prophet and the theme of salvation. This demonstrates the importance of this theme to al-Wāqidī's philosophy of history while laying bare, yet again, that his understanding of history was conditioned by the specific context in which he wrote. Moving beyond the context question, the third section shifts focus exclusively to the textual evidences of idealising the Prophet's life in Madina and the purposes thereof through a deep textual analysis of al-Wāqidī's narrative. *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* abounds in such evidences, however, only representative instances of his life and character have been chosen for our analysis and inferences.

4.1 Qurʾānic Scripture and History as Revelation

Perhaps the most central narrative device employed by al-Wāqidī in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was the extensive use of the Qur'ānic verses as a means to provide a chronicle of the Prophet's life from his migration to his death. This is hardly surprising. The Qur'ān, which literally translates as utterances or recitation, contains God's message to man and is Islam's holiest text (the only text left behind by the Prophet[sa], so to say).[932] The Qur'ān is thus a collection of the revelations of God to the Prophet and, according to one view, was codified through oral transmission and written form sometime after the Prophet's death as a means to ensure the continuation of the Islamic community.[933] It thus played a crucial role in the Prophet's life and the development of Islam.[934] Thus, as Faizer enunciates, the Qur'ān was "creatively given a historical context [by al-Wāqidī] through which the scripture (must) be interpreted."[935]

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[932] Muhammad A. Haleem. *Understanding the Qur'an: Themes and Style* (New York, NY: I.B. Taurus, 2011); Fazlur Rahman. *Major Themes of the Qur'an* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009).
[933] 'iffat M. al- Sharqāwī. *Adab al-Tārīkh* (Beirut: Dār al-'awdah, 1973), p. 218; Fred M. Donner. "The Historical Context," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'an*, eds. Jane D. McAuliffe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 30–33. The other less popular view holds that the Prophet[sa] himself got it compiled in the book form during his very lifetime.
[934] Al-Sayyid 'abd al-'azīz Sālim. *al-Tārīhk wā al mu'arrikhūn al-'arab* (Alexandria: Mu'assast shabāb al-'iskandariyyah, 1981), p.174.
[935] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. xvii.

This section therefore overviews the use of the Qur'ānic revelation as a narrative device by al-Wāqidī. After showing the way in which he incorporated this device into his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, the section reflects on how the use of this narrative technique addresses the research questions of this thesis. In sum, the section shows that the Qur'ānic revelation is crucial to demonstrating the subjective nature of al-Wāqidī's history in that it testifies clearly to the idea that al-Wāqidī's work was conditioned by and anchored to the specific time and place in which he wrote.

First, however, it is important to highlight the existence of a standardised way in which a Qur'ānic verse was interpreted. To begin with, a reference was made to another verse in the Qur'ān, then to the Sunna (words and deeds) of the Prophet as a source of exposition of the given verse. Next, interpretations would refer to the sayings of the Prophet's companions, particularly the senior ones such as the four Caliphs, 'Abdūllāh b. Masʿūd (who swore by Allah that he knew every verse revealed, whom it was about and where it was revealed) and also 'Abdūllāh b. 'Abbās, who was described by the Prophet as the scholar of the nation.[936] Finally, it was possible to use the sayings of the followers/successors of the Prophet's companions such as Mujāhid and Saʿīd b. Jubayr in the process of interpreting the Qur'ānic verse.[937]

During al-Wāqidī's time, broadly there were three main schools of the Qur'ānic interpretation which were located in the three key centres of the Islamic world: Makka, Medīna and Baghdad. The school in Makka was led by Ibn 'Abbās (d. 687); in Medīna, the school was under the leadership of 'Ubay b. kaʿb (d. 649); and 'Abdūllāh b. Masʿūd (d. 642) led the school in Baghdad.[938] With respect to the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, most of the material discussing the Qur'ānic verses and their interpretations came directly from al-Wāqidī's teacher, ibn Jurej. The latter collected his narrations mainly from two significant figures, namely Mujāhid and 'Aṭa' b. Rabāḥ, both had a direct link to already mentioned Ibn 'Abbās.[939] Thus, it is evident that al-Wāqidī was following what was then one of the most reputable sources of the Qur'ānic commentary, namely the work of Ibn 'Abbās.[940]

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[936] Al-Sayyid 'abd al-'azīz Sālim. "al-Tārīhk wā al mu'arrikhūn al-'arab," p.175.
[937] Ibn Kathīr. *Tafsīr al- Qur'ān al-ʿathīm,* vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr1994), p. 5.
[938] al-Salūmī. Abd al-'Aziz. Al-Waqidī wa Kitābuh al-Magāzī. p.576.
[939] Al- Ḍhahabī, *al- Tafsīr wā al- Mufasirūn, vol. 1* (Cairo: Maktabat Wahbah, 2000), p. 10.
[940] al-Salūmī. Abd al-'Aziz. Al-Waqidī wa Kitābuh al-Magāzī. p. 577.

Indeed, his knowledge and use of the Qur'ānic verses is evident in the chapter devoted to the Battle of Badr where he uses the Qur'ānic text as a means to reveal certain truths with regard to both the event taking place and Islam as a whole. His employment of scripture, for instance, invokes the divinity and strength of God. In narrating the scene before the commencement of the battle , al-Wāqidī quotes the following passage from the Qur'ān: "*When you implored the assistance of your Lord, He answered you, 'I will assist you with a thousand angels rank upon rank'* (Q. 8.9)."[941] He also quotes the Qur'ānic text to stress the strength of belief by citing the following passage: "*If you ask your lord for victory the conquest comes to you. If you desist (from wrong) it is better for you* (Q .8:19)."[942] Multiple verses are cited by al-Wāqidī to underscore the necessity of belief while discussing seven Quraysh youth who had converted to Islam.[943] Duty is another theme revealed by the Qur'ānic interpretation. He quotes, for example, the following verse: "*Know that from what you obtain of spoils, to God and His prophet belongs a fifth* (Q. 8:41)."[944] The Prophet's character is also revealed by al-Wāqidī through the Qur'ānic verse. In a brief story involving the confusion about a dead man's belongings, it was revealed about the Prophet's role that: "*It is not for the Prophet to be unfaithful* (Q. 3:161)."[945] To provide an external evidence to prove the Qur'anic assertion, al-Wāqidī makes it clear that it was another who had buried the aforementioned goods. Multiple verses of the Qur'ān are also cited by al-Wāqidī in order to elaborate upon the dilemma faced by the Prophet concerning the Quraysh prisoners and especially the differing advice the Prophet received from Abū Bakr and 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. With regard to Abū Bakr, who took a more lenient stance, the following verse was revealed: "*Who follows me is of me, and who disobeys me, but indeed Thou art oft forgiving, most merciful* (Q. 14:36)."[946] With regard to 'Umar, on the other hand, the following Qur'ānic passage is cited: "*leave not of the unbelievers a single one on earth* (Q. 16 :26)."[947] In addition, al-Wāqidī employed numerous quotes from *al-Anfāl* outlining many basic tenets revealed alluding to the Battle of Badr, including faith, obligation, devotion and truthfulness amongst others.[948]

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[941] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 29–30.
[942] Ibid, p. 36.
[943] Ibid, pp. 37–38.
[944] Ibid, p. 50.
[945] Ibid, p. 51.
[946] Ibid, p. 55.
[947] Ibid, p. 55.
[948] Ibid, pp. 66–70.

In sum, this narrative device revealed certain aspects of both Islam in general and the Battle of Badr in particular. Certain truths of this type are perhaps best distilled in the following passage of *al-Maghāzī*:

> God put power in the hands of the believers on the day of Badr such that twenty, if they were forbearing, could conquer two hundred. He bestowed on them two thousand Angels, and when He knew that they were weak He relieved them. God most high revealed the return of His Prophet from Badr. With those who were taken in Badr were those who claimed to be Muslims, but were doubting, and were killed with the polytheists at that time.[949]

Other examples confirm the idea that al-Wāqidī employed this specific narrative device – the citation of Qur'ānic verses – in order to lay bare certain truths about the events being narrated or Islam more broadly. The Prophet's grievance with the Banū Qaynuqāʿ, for instance, is elaborated upon if not legitimised by the following verse: "*if thou fearest treachery from any group, throw back (their covenant) to them, (so as to be) on equal terms: for God loves not the treacherous.*"[950] The Prophet's relations with the *Aws* and the *Khazraj* tribes upon his entry into Medīna, on the other hand, were emphasised through the following verse: "*And you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you from those who received the Book before you and from those who worship many Gods. But if you persevere patiently and guard against evil, then that will be the determining factor in all affairs* (Q. 8:58)."[951] Besides, the protective nature of God and ergo Islam was constituted through the story of Duʿthūr's attempt to murder the Prophet and the following verse: "*O you who believe call to remembrance the favour of God unto you when certain men planned to stretch out their hands against you* (Q. 3:186)."[952]

The lengthy section on the Battle of Uḥud also provides numerous examples to suggest that al-Wāqidī employed the Qur'ānic verses by way of establishing certain truths or aspects of the battle specifically and Islam more broadly. Owing to the number of casualties as well as the injuries sustained by the Prophet, and although the Prophet was in the end able to rally his forces and ensure the Makkans left Medīna,

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[949] Ibid, pp. 37–38.
[950] Ibid, p. 88.
[951] Ibid, p. 92.
[952] Ibid, pp. 97–98.

the battle is generally understood to be a setback for the Prophet and his companions.[953] Crucial to this was the fact that a group of archers had been ordered by the Prophet to hold a specific position in the battle; however, after Khālid b. al-Walīd's forces had been repelled, the marksmen left their position in order to join the pillage, which in turn decisively shifted the course of the battle and led to the Prophet's injuries.[954] Regarding this, Bogle points out, "The Prophet's battle plan disintegrated…after some archers that he had placed strategically to counter the Meccan cavalry…disobeyed his instructions…The Meccan cavalry maneuvered behind the Muslims and changed the course of the battle."[955] Many of the Qur'ānic citations al-Wāqidī incorporates into his narrative in this section reflect this outcome. Although citations are used extensively, in fact too extensively to record in full detail here, a few would suffice: "*The unbelievers spend their wealth to hinder (men) from the path of God (Q. 8:36)*";[956] "*Not for you is the decision whether He turn in mercy to them (Q. 3:128)*";[957] "*God rejected those who disbelieve with their resentment and they did not obtain happiness. God is sufficient for the believers who fight (Q. 33:25)*";[958] "*Men who have been true to their covenant with God, of them some have completed their vow, and some wait (Q. 33:24)*";[959] "*Yes, if you remain patient, and act right, even if the enemy should rush here on you in hot haste, Your Lord would help you (Q. 3: 126)*";[960] and, perhaps most importantly, "*What you suffered on the day the two armies met…was by permission of Allah, that he might know the true believers from the Hypocrites (Q. 3.166).*"[961] In sum, these narrative devices were employed to lend certain insights into the Battle of Uḥud.

In his narrations of the Battle of al-Khandaq and the resulting raid on the Banū Qurayẓa, al-Wāqidī also makes use of the Qur'ānic verse narrative technique. Take the former, for example, which has been argued to be a strategic success for the Prophet given that the ingenious trench digging effectively undermined his opposition's

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[953] Richard A. Gabriel. *Muhammad: Islam's First General* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), p. 122.
[954] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī,*" pp. 113–114.
[955] Emory C. Bogle. *Islam: Origin and Belief* (Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press, 1998), p. 16.
[956] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī,*" p. 100.
[957] Ibid, p. 120.
[958] Ibid, p. 129
[959] Ibid, p. 151.
[960] Ibid, p. 155.
[961] Ibid, p. 158.

strategic advantage, namely the Makkans' large cavalry forces.[962] This idea of ingenuity would seem to be reflected in the following Qur'ānic revelation: "*God is sufficient for the fighting believers. God is powerful, wise* (Q. 33:25)."[963] The latter, the raid on the Banū Qurayẓa, is alleged to have seen six to nine hundred Jews massacred, the enslavement of the group's women and children and the acquisition of their property.[964] The alleged massacre resulted from the alleged treachery of the Banū Qurayẓa following the Battle of al-Khandaq.[965] The Prophet, according to al-Wāqidī's narrative, "did not give the order to fight [the Banū Qurayẓa] until Gabriel came to him."[966] Of course, the historical veracity of this incident is disputed. It has been cogently argued by some that this recorded version is, in effect, a collection of "'odd tales'" from the Jews of Medīna via Ibn Isḥāq.[967] Nevertheless, the narration still stands as an evidence of al-Wāqidī's use of the Qur'ānic verse as a principal narrative technique.

Qur'ānic citations are also employed by al-Wāqidī in two other important events, namely al- Ḥudaybiyya and Khaybar. The peace at al-Ḥudaybiyya was significant in that it underscored the consolidation of the Prophet's position while indicating the rise and continuing significance of Islam as a social and political force.[968] What is perhaps marked about the citations here is that they tend to focus on rules (e.g. "*He should in compensation, either fast, or feed the poor, or offer a sacrifice* (Q. 2 :196)" and "*Enter the gate with humility in posture and words* (Q. 2:58)").[969] They also speak, in many respects, to the greatness of victory.[970] In that respect, al-Wāqidī employed the Qur'ānic verse to make explicit certain meanings about the strength and vitality of the Islamic community at this juncture. At Khaybar, the Qur'ānic citations (e.g. "*God promises you gains in plenty take it when He hastens this for you* (Q. 48:20)") tend to

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[962] William M. Watt. *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 169.

[963] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 232.

[964] Daniel C. Peterson. *Muhammad: Prophet of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. Eerdmans, 2007), pp. 126–128.

[965] Hajjah A. Adil. *Muhammad, the Messenger of Islam: His Life and Prophecy* (Washington, DC: Islamic Supreme Council of America, 2002), pp. 392–393.

[966] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 244.

[967] W.N. Arafat. "New Light on the Story of Banū Qurayẓa and the Jews of Medina," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 108, no. 2 (April 1976), pp. 105–107.

[968] Carole Hillenbrand. "Muhammad and the Rise of Islam," in *The New Cambridge Medieval History: Volume 1, c.500–c.700*, ed. Paul Fouracre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 324.

[969] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 284 and 287.

[970] Ibid, p. 304.

reflect the reality of the battle.[971] Both cases, however, testify the opinion that al-Wāqidī was employing this particular narrative device in order to confer meaning on both the event itself and Islam.

Moreover, al-Wāqidī employed the technique of Qur'ānic citation in order to uncover certain truths about life in general and Islam in particular. Although an extensive list is not possible, a number of passages show this to be the case. In recounting the Prophet's return from Khaybar, al-Wāqidī cites that "*Our souls are in the hands of God, and if He wished He would have taken them, and He is entitled to them* (Q. 39:4)";[972] while narrating the Raid of al-Qaḍiyya, he cites, "*spend in the cause of God, and make not your own hands contribute to (your) destruction* (Q. 2:195)";[973] while narrating al-Fatḥ, al-Wāqidī quotes, "*Truth came and throttled the false, indeed the false are destroyed* (Q. 17:81)"[974] and "*God will forgive you. He is the most merciful of the merciful* (Q. 12:92)" is also quoted by al-Wāqidī in the same chapter;[975] in the chapter on Ḥunayn al-Wāqidī quotes, "*(Forbidden to you) are married women except those whom your right hand possesses* (Q. 4:24)"[976], "*Do not approach Adultery, for indeed it is a corrupt and evil way* (Q. 17:32)";[977] and "*God loves those who make themselves pure* (Q. 9:107)."[978] Indeed, it is telling that al-Wāqidī ends his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* with this Qur'ānic citation: "*It is not fitting for a Believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by God and His apostle to have any option about their decision. If anyone disobeys God and His Apostle, he is indeed on a clearly wrong path* (Q.33:36)."[979]

Thus, it is evident that one fundamental narrative technique that al-Wāqidī employed in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was Qur'ānic citation. This is not simply an empirical fact; this narrative technique can, it is argued here, help us understand the philosophy of history – the idea of history – that underpinned his work. Here, one could argue that the Qur'ānic revelation serves to illustrate the conditioned nature of al-Wāqidī's history. In Islamic faith, according to Nigosian, the Qur'ān is understood to be "God's final

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[971] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 336.
[972] Ibid, p. 350.
[973] Ibid, p. 360.
[974] Ibid, p. 409.
[975] Ibid, p. 411.
[976] Ibid, p. 451.
[977] Ibid, p. 473.
[978] Ibid, p. 513.
[979] Ibid, p. 550.

revelation – the perfection and culmination of all truth – sent through his angel to Muhammad…This is the cardinal Islamic view regarding the Qur'an."[980] According to Haddad, Muslims are therefore duty bound to "make known to the world the reality of the historical revelation of the Qur'ān, that which provides for the proper understanding of God's continuing action in history."[981] In turn, history, especially at the time and place that al-Wāqidī was writing, was broadly understood as the history of divine revelation.[982] Evidently, therefore, al-Wāqidī's use of the Qur'ānic citation illustrates the way in which his history was anchored to a specific place and time. At the same time, it also clearly points to the principle that al-Wāqidī, like his religious and cultural counterparts, subscribed to a view of history in which divine revelation played a central if not a fundamental role.

4.2 The Story of the Prophet and History as Salvation

Given that the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is, in effect, a biography of the Prophet Muhammad, the way in which al-Wāqidī portrays the Prophet would appear crucial to obtaining an overall understanding of the way in which al-Wāqidī understood history. It must be borne in mind, however, that this is not a comprehensive biography encompassing all aspects of his life, rather its focal point is his military campaigns to the exclusion of a number of other significant aspects of his daily life, such as family life, moral preaching and sermons, invitation strategies to Islam, etc. Within this limited scope offered by the book, this section, therefore, analyses the way in which al-Wāqidī's description of the Prophet evidences the importance of salvation to his overall understanding of history in addition to establishing how specific cultural and intellectual traditions framed the history he produced.

It is patently clear that the central figure of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is the Prophet Muhammad[sa]. As already noted earlier, al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is, in effect, a chronological retelling of the latter part of the Prophet's life focusing on his armed campaigns. The most obvious question then, from a scholarly perspective, is how he chose to narrate this portion of the Prophet's life. One possible, though vague, answer

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[980] Solomon A. Nigosian. *Islam: Its History, Teaching, and Practices* (Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press, 2004), p. 65.
[981] Yvonne Y. Haddad. *Contemporary Islam and the Challenge of History* (Albany, NY: State University of New York University Press, 1982), p. 6.
[982] Otfried Weintritt. "Interpretations of Time in Islam" in *Time and History: The Variety of Cultures*, ed. Jörn Rüsen (New York, NY: Berghahn, 2008), p. 88.

is provided by Faizer. She argues that al-Wāqidī's narrative is "designed to show the role of Muhammad as the chosen messenger of God…It portrays the Prophet within the ideals of time."[983] An extensive engagement with the text reveals that Faizer is generally correct. If it is correct to assume that the ideals of the day cover such qualities as leadership, valour, compassion, piousness and generosity, then al-Wāqidī's narrative certainly supports this characterisation of the Prophet Muhammad[sa]. Some details of such idealising features will be discussed later in this chapter.

"In Islamic thought," according to Adair, "model leaders were simultaneously both exalted and humble, capable of visions and inspiration, yet at the same time dedicated to the service of the people."[984] Many narratives woven through the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* do the utmost to present the Prophet as the natural leader of the community. Take the brief interlude in the "Expedition to Nakhla" where the conversion of al-Ḥakam b. Kaysān is discussed. Here, the Prophet is pressed into killing al-Ḥakam by 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. The Prophet is presented as not heeding 'Umar's advice, and indeed he is seen as being prescient on the basis that later, in 'Umar's words, al-Ḥakam "converted, and, by God, he was the best of converts. He strove in the way of God until he was martyred." The Prophet's farsighted leadership is then emphasised by al-Wāqidī, noting that the Prophet said that: "Had I obeyed you and killed [al-Ḥakam] in anger, he would now be in hell."[985] It is clear, therefore, that al-Wāqidī portrays the Prophet as being exalted; his foresight and knowledge are above ordinary humans, in other words.

The way in which al-Wāqidī narrates how his companions responded to the Prophet also indicates that al-Wāqidī was keen to stress how the Prophet inspired devotion in his followers. Take the following passage for example, found in the "Raid of al-Muraysīʿ": "The Messenger of God summoned his people and informed them with news of the enemy, and the people hastened to set out."[986] Again, the intention of this narrative is quite clear, namely to illustrate how the Prophet commanded devotion among his followers. This is also clear in the following passage during the Battle of al-

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983 al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. xvi.
984 John Adair. *The Leadership of Muhammad: On a Journey, the Leader of a People is Their Servant* (London: Kogan Page, 2010), pp. 1–2.
985 al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 9–10.
986 Ibid, p. 198.

Khandaq: "The Messenger of God had prepared his companions and encouraged them to battle. He promised them victory if they would be patient."[987]

It is also clear that al-Wāqidī used his narrative to convey the bravery of the Prophet. The Battle of Badr is a case in point here. In narrating the raid on the Quraysh caravan, characterised by al-Wāqidī as "the first raid by which God strengthened Islam and humbled the disbelievers", the Prophet's bravery was underscored by the fact that the Prophet went on the raid despite his companions' fears for the Prophet.[988] Furthermore, in this part of the narrative, al-Wāqidī also demonstrates that the Prophet could instil valour and bravery in others. In this respect, the story of 'Umayr b. Abī Waqqāṣ, a youngster who wanted to join the battle is told. Evidently, he was so inspired by the Prophet that he felt impelled to join in despite being a teenager. Although the Prophet was initially against this, 'Umayr was later permitted to join the battle.[989] This portion of the narrative demonstrates not only the Prophet's bravery but also his ability to inspire similar qualities in his followers.

Popular portrayals of Islam are littered with the link between Islam and violence; however, the link is rather mythical.[990] Rather, as Pal notes, "The notion of compassion is integral to Islam."[991] It is quite clear that al-Wāqidī also used his narrative to portray the Prophet as a compassionate being. Following the Battle of Badr, for example, the Prophet consoles the mother and sister of Ḥāritha b. Surāqa who had died in the battle.[992] The Prophet is also recorded as consoling Saʿd b. Muʿādh's mother after his burial.[993] Furthermore, it is also clear that al-Wāqidī used his text to present the Prophet as both pious and generous. In terms of the former, on numerous occasions throughout the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, the Prophet was recorded as leading or praying with his followers, suggesting again the attachment to his community.[994] Evidently, in numerous places in the text, al-Wāqidī employs his

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[987] Ibid, p. 231.
[988] Ibid, p. 12.
[989] Ibid, p. 13.
[990] William T. Cavanaugh. *The Myth of Religious Violence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
[991] Amitabh Pal. *Islam Means Peace: Understanding the Muslim Principle of Nonviolence Today* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2011), p. 19.
[992] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 47–48.
[993] Ibid, p. 260.
[994] Ibid, pp. 107, 182 and 240.

narrative technique to ensure that the Prophet is presented as one who apportioned the spoils of war equally and fairly. [995]

It is quite clear, therefore, that al-Wāqidī uses his narrative to outline a particular understanding of the Prophet within a particular social, cultural and religious framework. However, what is also equally clear is that some of the contradictory descriptions of the Prophet employed by al-Wāqidī, in particular the tension between his human qualities and his superhuman feats, reflect a tension between the Qur'ānic and *maghāzī* depictions of the Prophet, which in fact reflect the social and cultural juncture at which al-Wāqidī composed his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*.

In clearer terms, the Qur'ān presents "clear passages attesting to [the Prophet's] role as a messenger of God, as a warner to his people, and as an able military leader." In sum, it teaches that "Muhammad himself was but a human and achieved great feats only through the power and blessing of God."[996] This is evidenced in the passages of his book that focus on the Prophet's vulnerability, for instance the injuries he sustained during the Battle of Uḥud.[997] Moreover, during the Battle of al-Khandaq, the Prophet was portrayed in rather uncharacteristic terms as having a "wrinkle in the midst of his belly. His stomach was hollow and I saw dust on the folds of his skin."[998] This portrayal too has an aspect of idealisation in it, which is his utter modesty in that unlike other spiritual gurus he did not assign himself to a superior status but joined commoners in their menial tasks; hence a practical demonstration of equality and humility. His hollow stomach shows that he was as hungry as others, or even more. In sum, as Faizer highlights, "al-Wāqidī never allows us to forget that essentially Muhammad was but a man."[999]

However, what Faizer fails to acknowledge is that al-Wāqidī also focuses on the Prophet's miracles in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, reflecting his cultural background. The *maghāzī* literature, as Fitzpatrick and Walker remind us, "begins with tales told in an oral culture about the life and exploits of the Prophet. These accounts by believers and for believers…were written by and for the faithful." As a result, the "Muhammad

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[995] Ibid, p. 91.
[996] Coeli Fitzpatrick and Adam H. Walker. "Introduction," in *Muhammad in History, Thought, and Culture: An Encyclopedia of the Prophet of God*, eds. Coeli Fitzpatrick and Adam H. Walker (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2014), p. xvii.
[997] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 121–123.
[998] Ibid, p. 221.
[999] Ibid, p. xvi.

who emerges…is sometimes presented as superhuman" in order to "solidify his status as the perfect Prophet."[1000] It is evident from even just a cursory overview of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* that al-Wāqidī was not averse to such a narrative device.

As an example, during the Battle of Badr, especially as the battle intensified, al-Wāqidī devotes a whole section to the Prophet's almost superhuman prowess in warfare. He notes, "The Messenger of God ordered, and taking a handful of pebbles, aimed them at the enemy…There did not remain one among them, but his face and eyes were full of pebbles."[1001] Furthermore, concerning the same battle, al-Wāqidī narrates a sequence in which Ukkāsha b. Miḥṣan broke his sword. The Prophet stepped in and provided him with a rod which proved a useful fighting tool for Ukkāsha, which he used until his death.[1002] In the Battle of Uḥud, too, the Prophet is recorded to be performing battlefield miracles. Qatāda b. al-Nuʿmān's eye, for instance, is reported to be sticking out of its socket and resting on his cheek. It is recorded that the "The Messenger of God took [the eye] and replaced it and [Qatāda's] vision returned as it was before."[1003] He is also recorded as having fixed the bow of Ukkāsha b. Miḥṣan despite not having enough string to do so.[1004] In the same battle, the Prophet is also recorded to have spat on Abū Ruhm al-Ghifārī's wound and thus miraculously healed the wound on his throat.[1005] The Prophet, according to one of al-Wāqidī sources, also had a miraculous capacity for dodging arrows. As the passage notes: "The arrows passed to his right and left, they fell short before his hand and they went out from behind him."[1006] The superhuman power of the Prophet is also told in a narration about the campaign of al-Ḥudaybiyya. Here, the Prophet meets with a young lad. After the youth tells him of the beautiful conditions in Ẓajnān, the Prophet offers him his hand. In the words of al-Wāqidī:

> The Messenger of God said, 'Come close!' So [the youth] went close and took the hand of the Messenger of God and kissed it. The Messenger of God stroke his head and said, 'May God bless you!' He [the lad] reached a ripe old age and

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[1000] Fitzpatrick and Walker. "Introduction," pp. xvii–xviii.
[1001] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 41–42.
[1002] Ibid, p. 47.
[1003] Ibid, p. 119.
[1004] Ibid, p. 119.
[1005] Ibid, p. 120.
[1006] Ibid, p. 128.

enjoyed grace and happiness with his people until he died in the time of Walīd, the son of ʿAbd al-Malik.[1007]

The ability of the Prophet to perform miracles is also mentioned in the chapter on the Battle of Khaybar. Upon arrival at Khaybar, his companions got infected with fever after eating some green dates. In response, the Prophet, according to al-Wāqidī, instructed them saying: "Pour the water in buckets, and when it is between the two calls to prayer, pour the water on yourselves and mention the name of God." According to al-Wāqidī, "They did so and became well again."[1008] His feats in the battle also evidence the claim that al-Wāqidī painted a superhuman picture of the Prophet in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, as illustrated by the following passage: "I saw the Messenger of God aim with an arrow. He did not miss a man among them."[1009] One final example of the Prophet's capacity to perform miracles is found in the following passage in the chapter "Raid of Ukaydir b. ʿAbd al-Malik in Dūmat al-Jandal". Here, it is noted that the Prophet produced water from rock.

> [The Prophet] alighted [from his horse] and placed his hand on the rock, and touched it with his finger, until he collected a little in the palm of his hand. Then he sprinkled the rock and rubbed it with his hand. Then prayed, as God wished him to pray, and asked about it, and the water burst out.[1010]

Of course, one could argue that al-Wāqidī's recounting of the superhuman dimension of the Prophet reflected his sources. Nevertheless, the fact that al-Wāqidī chose to include these details and employ this narrative device, even if just for effect, suggests that at the very least his intent to portray the Prophet as merely a man, in Faizer's words, was tempered by the social conditions and linguistic traditions of the genre in which he was writing.

If the analysis of narrative technique is a trustworthy means to infer the above, it certainly indicates that al-Wāqidī's philosophy of history was decidedly conditioned by his social and historical context. As discussed in a section of the last chapter, al-Wāqidī may have subscribed to a universalist conceptualisation of history, this

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[1007] Ibid, p. 291.
[1008] Ibid, p. 318.
[1009] Ibid, p. 326.
[1010] Ibid, p. 509.

conceptualisation was at the same time conditioned or tempered by the very context in which he wrote his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*.

This argument can be advanced by undertaking a macro analysis of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, mainly focusing on the theme of salvation, understood here as either deliverance or fulfilment of destiny. It is claimed that the historical writing at the time of al-Wāqidī–the intellectual tradition he was rooted in–was grounded in a particular Islamic view of history, a view which saw "the history of creation [as] the history of salvation." History was understood as being "meaningful and [having a] divinely ordained goal", with divine order making "it possible for man to fulfil his mission and destiny."[1011] This would seem to fit with what E.H. Carr would have called a pre-theory of history. From this perspective, history – the "passage of time" – was linked to "natural processes – the cycle of the seasons, the human life-span."[1012] As just mentioned, a macro analysis of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* shows how these philosophies are discernible in the way in which he chose to write his history.

To begin with, as already mentioned in the previous chapter, the principal narrative technique employed by al-Wāqidī' in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was chronological and biographical in nature. In many respects, the history presented by al-Wāqidī' charts the life-span of the Prophet in the last decade of his life, given that it follows the Prophet from his migration from Makka, his conquest over the Arab tribes and his return to Medīna following the final pilgrimage to Makka. Along with the Prophet's revelations which were recorded in the Qur'ān, this is in many respects the Prophet's legacy – the return of his people.[1013] The main theme – the departure of the Muslims from Makka and then their return to Makka to conquer it– is also cyclical in nature and chimes with the philosophies of history just outlined above.

4.3. The Conditioned but not Determined Nature of al-Wāqidī's Kitāb al-Maghāzī

The purpose of the previous section was to demonstrate that the way in which al-Wāqidī produced his history of the last decade of the Prophet's life was largely

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[1011] Otfried Weintritt. "Interpretations of Time in Islam," in *Time and History: The Variety of Cultures*, ed. Jörn Rüsen (New York, NY: Berghahn), p. 88.
[1012] Carr. "History", p. 134
[1013] Recep Senturk. "Muhammad, the Prophet," in *Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Josef W. Meri (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 527–530.

conditioned by and anchored to the time and place that he inhabited. In other words, despite his method representing an objective view of history, the way in which his history was produced demonstrates that it was subjectively conditioned. This section takes the argument a step further and illustrates that despite the fact that al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was conditioned by the wider context in which it was written, it was nevertheless not determined by the given context. That is, throughout his history of the Prophet's biography following the *hijra*, al-Wāqidī demonstrates a clear capacity for going beyond the historical and intellectual context he inherited. This, then, is a question of structure and agency or context versus conduct. On the one hand, contextual approaches believe that events and by extension thought are conditioned by the wider structures in which they take place. On the other hand, conduct approaches stress the role of agency.[1014] This chapter will demonstrate that in numerous places, despite his work reflecting signs of being conditioned by context, al-Wāqidī equally demonstrates an evident capacity for scholarly agency and creativity. This becomes all the more obvious when he idealises the Prophet's life in Madina and links it to the purpose of setting in place a new value system, supplanting the existing chaos.

To make this argument, this chapter draws on themes from the philosophy and the methods of the history of ideas. In terms of the former, E.H. Carr argues that "the historian is just another dim figure trudging along in another part of the procession" and, more importantly, the "point in the procession at which [the historian]…finds himself determines his vision over the past."[1015] However, Carr was no crude determinist. In the same text he argues that historians have agency; that is, they have the capacity for rising above their immediate context.[1016] In terms of the latter, this chapter draws upon the traditions approach to historical ideas. The traditions approach argues that historians are shaped by *inter alia* the traditions they inherit, implying that they are influenced by the historical and intellectual context. On the other hand, traditions are not determinative because scholars can opt to "nurture, squander, build upon, or even reject" that what has come down from the past as "inheritances" since

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[1014] Colin Hay. *Political Analysis: A Critical Introduction* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 89–96.
[1015] Carr. "What is History", pp. 35–36.
[1016] Carr. "What is History", p. 43.

they are not fixed but liable to be "reinterpreted and passed on to others."[1017] Accordingly, this section looks at the issues of warrior and diplomat, martyrs, forms of male and female identity, and collective memory in order to study the interplay between the conditioned nature of the history al-Wāqidī produced and its non-determined aspects. With this broad conceptual understanding, the chapter would mainly focus in the last part on the aspects of the idealisation of the Prophet's life together with the possible purposes of that idealisation in Madina as it appears in al-Wāqidīs text.

4.3 Warrior and Diplomat

This first section homes in on two prominent themes deployed by al-Wāqidī with regard to male and Muslim identity, namely the warrior and the diplomat. It demonstrates that the history that al-Wāqidī produced was certainly influenced by the intellectual and historic climate, particularly concerning its emphasis on the warrior ethos. Nevertheless, pointing to the importance placed on diplomacy, the section demonstrates that al-Wāqidī's history was not altogether determined by its context.

An especially prominent theme in medieval Islamic history is that of the paradigmatic *mujāhid* or holy warrior. Clarke contends that this theme was not "unusual for classical and medieval Islamic historiography."[1018] In the *akhbār* tradition broadly and the *maghāzī* tradition more specifically, the warrior ethos is seen as a central literary theme.[1019] The warrior motif, especially as it appears in the *maghāzī* canon, was born of a particular historical and political context. Lieberman observes that "the first Muslim historical accounts recounted the story of Islam and the initial formation of a community as a series of battles." In turn, the "religious imperative and motive for expansion set the foundation for Islamic religious life in newly conquered lands."[1020] Moreover, as it is noted by al-Dūrī, knowledge of and indeed connection to the warriors who had fought at Badr and Uḥud were intimately bound to status and prestige at the

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[1017] Ian Hall and Mark Bevir. "Traditions of British International Thought", *The International History Review* 36, no. 5, pp. 823–834, at p. 829.

[1018] Nicola Clarke. *The Muslim Conquest of Iberia: Medieval Arabic Narratives* (London: Routledge, 2012), p. 25.

[1019] Albrecht Noth. *Early Arabic Historical Tradition and Early Islam*, trans. Lawrence I. Conrad (Tavistock: Northcote House, 1994), pp. 129, 145 and 168; Boaz Shoshan. *The Arabic Historical Tradition and the Early Islamic Conquests: Folklore, Tribal Lore, Holy War* (London: Routledge, 2015), p. 55.

[1020] Benjamin Lieberman. *Remaking Identities: God, Nation, and Race in World History* (Boulder, CO: Rowman and Littlefield, 2013), pp. 23–24.

time that al-Wāqidī wrote his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*.[1021] Consequently, the importance that al-Wāqidī gives to the notion of the warrior illustrates the way in which his text was conditioned by the time and place in which it was written.

As Gunny explains, the *maghāzī* tradition was produced and reproduced on the basis of pride in the achievements of the Islamic community.[1022] In terms of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, we can see the notion of duty toward the defence of the Islamic community and its relationship to the warrior ethos in the narration of Badr. In describing the initial skirmishes, al-Wāqidī notes that it was the members of the *Anṣār* who first responded to the challenge of the Quraysh (polytheists). "The messenger of God", according to al-Wāqidī, "was ashamed of that." That is to say, the Prophet wanted the effective force to be from *Muhājirūn* (the Muslim Quraysh), *Muhājirūn* the sons of his uncle and his people.[1023] Thus, al-Wāqidī's biography of the Prophet is clearly grounded in themes drawn from the *maghāzī* tradition, namely the stress on the warrior ethos.

This can also be substantiated in links between the *maghāzī* and *futūḥ* (conquest) traditions. Although some draw a clear distinction between the two,[1024] others such as Urban effectively collapse the distinction.[1025] Whether a distinction exists between the two traditions, and if so where, is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, what can be demonstrated is that, in places, al-Wāqidī's narrative emphasises the conquest dimension, which in turn highlights the way in which his narrative is anchored to particular traditions. The following passage from the chapter "Raid of al-Muraysīʿ" is a case in point here:

> The Prophet commanded ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭab to call out to the people, "Say, there is no God but Allāh, and protect your souls and your property" ʿUmar did so, but they refused. The first to aim an arrow was a man from among them [the Balmuṣṭaliq], and the Muslims aimed arrows for a while. Then, the Messenger of God commanded his companions to attack. They attacked as a

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[1021] al-Dūrī. "Historical Writing", pp. 27–28.
[1022] Ahmad Gunny. *The Prophet Muhammad in French and English Literature, 1650 to the Present* (Leicester: Islamic Foundation, 2012), p. 248.
[1023] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 35.
[1024] Thomas Herzog. "Orality and the Tradition of Arab Epic Storytelling" in *Medieval Oral Literature*, ed. Karl Reichl (Berlin, Germany: De Gruyter, 2012), p. 634.
[1025] Elizabeth Urban. "The Identity Crisis of Abū Bakra: *Mawlā* of the Prophet, or Polemical Tool?" in *The Lineaments of Islam: Studies in Honor of Fred McGraw Donner*, ed. Paul Cobb (Leiden, The Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 2012), p. 133.

single man and not a man among them escaped. Ten of them were killed and the rest of them were taken captive. ... Only one man was killed from the Muslims.[1026]

Aligned with these themes, al-Wāqidī's narrative also lays emphasis on conversion in places. Although there is extensive debate over the importance of war to early Islamic history,[1027] this is hardly surprising that the theme of the *maghāzī* literature remains that the Prophet's expeditions were undertaken "for the survival of God's Word and his own person."[1028] In other words, for the survival of the Islamic community on the whole. Parts of al-Wāqidī's narrative, especially regarding the Prophet's return from Khaybar to Medīna, reflect such themes. In this account, it is noted, for instance, that "the Messenger of God invited the Jews to Islam."[1029] It is also recorded by al-Wāqidī that whenever "a man was killed [the Messenger of God] invited those who were remaining to Islam."[1030] Thus, it is quite clear that prevalent traditions and ideas of the time and place in which the text was written, in many respects, coloured and conditioned the narrative of the Prophet's biography that al-Wāqidī produced.

Although the warrior spirit and ethos were not the outstanding characteristics of the Prophet's person or the message of Islam as evidenced by the major part of his life, it is quite clear that the *maghāzī* literature focused on the Prophet Muḥammad's war heroism and his role as a military and religious leader.[1031] Peppered throughout al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* are themes of heroism and bravery, and the Prophet's companions are clearly depicted in these terms. This is hardly surprising as heroic themes in Islamic history, according to Renard, are both entertaining and galvanising in the sense of community cohesion.[1032] In both the *maghāzī* and *futūḥ* literatures, it is clear that the heroic motif served a particular religious and sociological function.[1033] Thus, al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is clearly grounded in a particular tradition – the

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[1026] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 199.
[1027] Ahmed al-Dawoody. *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 31–38.
[1028] Ahmed al-Dawoody. "The Islamic Law of War", p. 37.
[1029] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 349.
[1030] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 350.
[1031] Walid A. Saleh. "The Arabian Context of Muḥammad's Life" in Jonathan E. Brockopp, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Muḥammad* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 27.
[1032] John Renard. *Islam and the Heroic Image: Themes in Literature and the Visual Arts* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1999), pp. 10–11.
[1033] U. Marzolph. "Popular Literature" in *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature, Volume Two*, eds. Julie S. Meisami and P. Starky (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 610–611.

maghāzī literature – which emphasises stories of heroism.[1034] Therefore, it evidences the way in which narrative traditions clearly anchored the historical work that al-Wāqidī produced.

This feature is discernible in al-Wāqidī's portrayal of Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ, the Prophet's maternal uncle. He is an important figure in early Islamic history as he is believed to be the seventh convert to the nascent religion and who accompanied the Prophet in all his battles.[1035] Accordingly, al-Wāqidī records that Saʿd "was the first who aimed an arrow for Islam."[1036] In doing so, he "scattered his quiver-full before his companions" with the result that there "was not an arrow aimed except he injured someone with it."[1037] Saʿd's skill in battle is emphasised in other parts as well of al-Wāqidī's history. At Uḥud, Saʿd is recorded as slaying Ṭalḥa b. Abī Ṭalḥa in a particularly heroic manner. Moreover, Saʿd's personal testimony of this event is taken as being an authentic rendering of it, which in turn suggests that al-Wāqidī places much stock in Saʿd as an early Islamic hero.[1038] Perhaps a better illustration of Saʿd's bravery and heroism can be found in al-Wāqidī's narration of al-Khandaq. Here, citing ʿĀʾisha's testimony, it is noted that Saʿd watched over the Prophet as he slept in the trench. Indeed, al-Wāqidī records that the Prophet asked for a "'good man to watch over me'", and when it was clear that Saʿd was fulfilling this role the Prophet "slept until [ʿĀʾisha] heard his snore."[1039]

Khubayb b. Yasāf and Wāqid b. ʿAbdullah, Kaʿb b. Mālik amongst others are also marked out by al-Wāqidī in terms of bravery and heroism. At Badr, although not a Muslim, Khubayb is recorded as being brave. It is also noted by al-Wāqidī that Khubayb submitted to God's word and that, henceforth, he "was of great use both in and out of Badr."[1040] Moreover, Khubayb's strength was underscored by al-Wāqidī as it was noted that he received a deadly sword wound at Badr – one that was healed by

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[1034] Peter Heath. *The Thirsty Sword: Sīrat Antar and the Arabic Popular Epic* (University of Utah Press, 1996), p. 59; Bernard Lewis. *From Babel to Dragmons: Interpreting the Middle East* (New York, NY: Phoenix, 2013), p. 220.
[1035] al-Dhahabī. *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ, vol. 1* (Cairo, Egypt: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1956), p. 93; Hee-Soo Lee, "Islam in the Far East" in *The Spread of Islam Throughout the World, Volume Three*, eds. Idris El Hareir and El Hadji Ravane M'baye (Paris, France: UNESCO, 2011), p. 760.
[1036] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 7.
[1037] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 7.
[1038] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 112.
[1039] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 227.
[1040] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 25.

the Prophet.[1041] At Nakhla, Wāqid b. 'Abdullah's skill in battle is evidenced in the following passage: "[Wāqid b. 'Abdullah] twanged his bow, aimed his arrow, and shot at 'Amr b. al-Ḥaḍrami – he never missed his mark – and his arrow killed 'Amr b. al-Ḥaḍrami."[1042] Kʿab b. Mālik's performance at Uḥud is particularly illustrative here because, in effect, the narration suggests that he gave his life in defence of the Prophet. It is noted by al-Wāqidī that Kaʿb b. Mālik gave the Prophet his cuirass and then "fought…a strong battle until he had seventeen wounds."[1043]

It should be noted that the themes of warrior ethos and bravery and heroism cannot be related solely to the medieval Islamic history. Given-Wilson observes with regard to medieval English history that there "was in the Middle Ages a certain type of chronicler…for whom the chief purpose in writing a chronicle was to preserve the memory of the famous knights and of the deeds they performed in war",[1044] which is a point recognised by others.[1045] Nevertheless, it is quite clear that with the Islamic history in particular, these motifs were a crucial component of the *maghāzī* tradition as a means to celebrate the victories and achievements of the Islamic community. Considering that these themes are crucial to the *maghāzī* literature as a whole, it is clear to see how al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was conditioned by the social, political and religious context in which it was written.

Moreover, the notion of the heroic male warrior fits into preconceived ideas about gender identity, itself also shaped by context. Roded, for instance, observes that male identity is crucial to understanding the *maghāzī* literature. "Men were warriors", she writes, and their "Military exploits were recorded in battle stories [*maghāzī*]."[1046] However, to note that the history al-Wāqidī produced in the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was shaped by a particular understanding of the true Islamic male – the warrior – is to provide only a partial account of the depth of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Equally crucial is the centrality of place that al-Wāqidī affords to diplomacy in his narrative.

[1041] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 43.
[1042] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 9.
[1043] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 116.
[1044] Chris Given-Wilson. *Chronicles: The Writing of History in Medieval England* (London: Hambledon and London, 2004), pp. 106–107.
[1045] Richard W. Kaeuper. *Holy Warriors: The Religious Ideology of Chivalry* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009); David R. Wyatt. *Slaves and Warriors in Medieval Britain and Ireland: 800–1200* (Leiden, The Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 2009).
[1046] Ruth Roded. "Alternate Images of the Prophet Muhammad's Virility" in *Islamic Masculinities*, eds. Lahoucine Ouzgane (London: Zed Books, 2006), p. 58.

If it is true that the "*maghāzī* genre took the form of a classical battle epic",[1047] the space that al-Wāqidī gives to the peace treaty at al-Ḥudaybiyya, and not least the manner in which it is narrated, suggests that al-Wāqidī had the capacity for going beyond his historical and intellectual context. Indeed, al-Wāqidī's narrative emphasises the huge concessions that the Prophet made to securing peace, including the refusal to bear arms as a pilgrim, the use of ʿUthmān as an ambassador, the patient exchange of prisoners, the ability of the Prophet to maintain unanimity in his camp, despite widespread frustration at the ostensibly humiliating terms, and the negotiated text of the agreement.[1048] In a rare passage of the text, seemingly in his personalised voice, al-Wāqidī extolls the result of the Prophet's actions here in panegyric terms:

> The war separated people…there was fighting when they met…When there was peace the war put down its burdens. Some people trusted others. There was not one who spoke about Islam understanding something, but he entered Islam. Even braves from the polytheists…and others similar to them…The number of people was equal to and more than those who had entered Islam previously. Islam spread in every direction in the regions of the Bedouin.[1049]

Undoubtedly, the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was a product of its time. This section has demonstrated that it was clearly influenced by the intellectual tradition in which it was written, particularly the way in which it stressed if not glorified the warrior ethos and tradition. However, despite being conditioned by time and place, the history that al-Wāqidī produced was not determined by the given time and place. It is important to bear in mind that the text may have been written to celebrate the Prophet's and his companions' battle victories as a major purpose in mind. At the same time, however, the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* lays no less stress on the Prophet's and his companions' diplomatic and political victories in which course numerous instances of the multifaceted idealisation of the Prophet[sa] takes place.

[1047] Michael A. Sells. "Finhās of Medina: Islam, "The Jews," and the Construction of Religious Militancy" in John Renard, ed. *Fighting Words: Religion, Violence, and the Interpretation of Sacred Texts* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012), p. 111.
[1048] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 281–304.
[1049] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 307.

4.4 Martyrs

A very serious attention has been paid by al-Wāqidī to the topic of martyrdom. Along with picturing the spirit, motivation and reward aspects, he has also painstakingly provided lists of martyrs of Badr, Uhud, al-Khandaq, Khaybar, Mu'ta, and Hunain, etc. with at times names, numbers and tribal identity in different wars. (The death score on the opposite camp has also been provided.) The Prophet[sa] has been idealised as a mesmerising preacher who made the Afterlife look like a concrete reality to most of his followers. They developed a firm belief in martyrdom as the greatest attainment in the cause of God which is instantly recompensed with a life of eternal peace and pleasure after this life: "the Messenger of God said, "It was in the cause of God, O Abū Burda, and for you is a reward exactly as if one of the polytheists struck you. And, whoever was killed, he is a martyr."[1050]

Even those who got no chance to enjoy the company of the Prophet[sa] took pride in attaining martyrdom which guaranteed paradise even without one having performed a single bowing in prayer. Mukhairiq the Jewish scholar and Amr b. Waqash (p. 128) are two such examples during Uhud apart from many other examples (pp. 127-129). Here is the example of one who was martyred soon after embracing Islam:

> "What brought you here, O ʿAmr?" He replied, "Islam; I believe in Allah and His messenger so I took my sword and I joined in the battle. God granted me martyrdom." He died in their hands. The Messenger of God said, "Indeed he is of the people of Paradise."[1051]

Their hearts brimmed with the desire of paradise to the extent that at times sons and fathers vied with one another to be martyred first because the recompense of paradise was no less than the highest ranks in paradise. Take this example:

> Among those who drew lots about going out to Badr were Saʿd b. Khaythama and his father. Saʿd said to his father, "If it was other than Paradise, I would prefer it for you. Indeed, I hope this is the way to martyrdom." Khaythama said, "Prefer me, and stay with your women," but Saʿd refused. Khaythama

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[1050] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 115
[1051] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 128

said, "Indeed it is inevitable that one of us stays." They drew lots and the arrowhead went to Saʿd. He was killed at Badr.[1052]

An old man pleads with the Prophet[sa] to pray for his martyrdom and be with his martyred son in paradise:

> By God, O Messenger of God, I have come to yearn to be with my son in Paradise. I have grown old, and my bones tender. I desire to meet my Lord. Pray to God, O Messenger of God, to grant me martyrdom and the companionship of Saʿd in Paradise." The Prophet prayed for him about that, and he was martyred at Uḥud.[1053]

When 'Āisha[ra] confronted a woman, Hind, returning from Uhud with the dead bodies of her brother, son and husband, she appeared very calm as she was happy that these close relatives had entered paradise being martyrs. Rather than being upset, she herself desired to join them there (p. 130). The idea of martyrdom made this life worthless in their eyes to the extent that even the greatest sorrow did not upset them:

> Āʾisha said, "Who are those?" She replied, "My brother, my son Khallād, and my husband ʿAmr b. al-Jamūḥ." ʿĀʾisha said, "Where are you going with them?" She replied, "To Medina. I will bury them there…."[1054]

The following anecdote is probably intended to provide a literal interpretation of the promise in the Qur'an that the martyrs are not dead but alive. Al-Wāqidī's story of 'Abdullāh b. Amr and Amr b. Jamuh (p. 130-131) serves almost the same purpose:

> Abdullah b. ʿAmr b. Ḥarām said: Before the battle of Uḥud, I dreamed about the battle. I thought I saw Mubashshir b. ʿAbd al-Mundhir say, "You are coming to us in days." I said, "Where are you?" He said, "In Paradise where we may roam wherever we wish." I said to him, "Were you not killed on the day of Badr?" He replied, "Of course. But then I came alive." He mentioned that to the Messenger of God, who said, "This is martyrdom, O Abū Jābir."[1055]

[1052] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 12
[1053] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 105
[1054] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 129
[1055] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 130

Jamila's reaction to the news of her husband's martyrdom (p. 134) and al-Muzanni's death as that of a perfect martyr, envied by 'Umar[ra] (p. 134) are examples of people happily laying down their lives for the sake of the Prophet[sa] and in the cause of faith.

4.5 War Ethics

The Prophet[sa] is idealised as a leader who does not believe everything to be fair in war. From occasion to occasion he laid down certain rules to be observed by the Muslims in war situations. And he strictly reprimanded or even severely punished those who indulged in excess, undue killing, killing of women or children, or fighting for the sake of spoils. His proclamation on the occasion of Khaybar, for instance, stresses the point that his intention was to inculcate in his followers the sacrificial spirit for a cause. Their driving spirit must not be greed. So, he announced that if they desired to lay down their lives in the cause of Islam, they must proceed, otherwise they must not participate if their intention was a share in the spoils of war. He offered only discouragement to those who had any other purpose in joining the expedition except struggle in the way of God:

> The Messenger of God said, "You will not go out with me unless you desire jihād. As for plunder, there will be none." He sent a herald out to cry, "Only those desiring jihād will go out with us. And as for plunder there will be none!"[1056]

The Prophet[sa] was kind and reasonable even towards the prisoners of war. He took ransom only from those who could pay it and freed the others without payment. This was going to be the principle for the prisoners of war in future for the Madinans; that is, freedom for a ransom or without a ransom:

> The Prophet of God made the ransom for the Battle of Badr four thousand for every man. Isḥāq b. Yaḥyā related to me saying, I asked Nāfiʿ b. Jubayr: How much was the ransom? He replied, "From the highest of them four thousand, to three thousand, to two thousand, to one thousand, to nothing for the people who had no money. The Prophet was kind to them."[1057]

[1056] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," (Khaybar), p. 312
[1057] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 65

The Prophet[sa] is idealised in the following passage as a tolerant man who would accept people's statements at the face value. Their intentions would not be doubted without an external evidence. And none would be judged by doubts and suspicions. The Prophet[sa] would not exempt from this principle even his adopted grandson and reprimand him for what he had done:

> He said: And Usāma began to inform him of the news until he reached his companion who was killed. The Messenger of God said, "You killed him, O Usāma, when he said, 'There is no God but Allah?'" He said: I began to say, "O Messenger of God, surely he said it as a protection from being killed." The Messenger of God said, "Did you split open his heart to learn whether he was truthful or a liar?"[1058]

The killing of women, old men and children was also abominable to him: "The Messenger of God commanded a man to overtake Khālid and say, "Surely the Messenger of God forbade you to kill women and old men."[1059] And so was the killing of children: "What is the matter with people that they go killing even the children! Indeed, children should never be killed!"[1060]

The long instructions the Prophet[sa] gives to the army about to leave on the Tabuk expedition show him as a person who thinks that even in the war everything is not fair. Rather, certain moral principles must be abided by the Muslims in a war situation; such as, fear of God is paramount, when to fight and when to refrain from fighting, who to attack and who to spare, the alternatives of actual fighting, and so on. He stopped his followers from doing what is generally done and also considered allowable in wars:

> [the Messenger of God] said, "I decree for you fear of God, and for those Muslims who are with you, goodness."…Attack in the name of God, and fight the enemy of God and your enemy in al-Shām. You will find men in hermitage cells, withdrawn from the people. Do not attack them. You will find others desiring Satan, their heads seeking out vice. Draw your swords against them. Do not kill a woman or a suckling child, or the old and senile. Do not destroy the date palm, cut down trees, or pull down a house."[1061]

[1058] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 357
[1059] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 448
[1060] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 444
[1061] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 372-372

The following instructions while sending an expedition to Yemen underline that the purpose of the Prophet's expeditions is not occupying lands for exploitation but to make people stop believing in false beliefs and be humble and help the poor by paying charity; that is, replacing exploitative systems with the fair and just ones:

> The Prophet said to Ali while sending him to Yemen, "When you alight in their courtyard, do not fight them until they fight you; if they attack you, do not fight them until they kill one of you. If they kill one of you, do not fight them or blame them, but show them patience. Say to them, 'Will you say that there is but one God?' And if they say, 'Yes,' say, 'Will you pray?' And if they say 'Yes,' say, 'Will you take from your property and give charity to your poor?' And if they say 'Yes,' do not desire anything else. By God, may God guide a man by your hand, it is better for you than whatever the sun rises or sets on!"[1062]

4.6 War Speeches and Prayers

A strange recurrent aspect of the Prophet's pre-war or post-war speeches is that they hardly contain anything, apart from few sporadic phrases, relating to war, war strategies, inevitability of war, themes of inciting the Muslims to destroy the enemy and so on. Mostly they sound like passionate appeals to turn to God, correct their morals and earnestly seek God's forgiveness. Through these, it seems, al-Wāqidī portrays him as a highly idealised sympathiser and benefactor of humankind whose job is not the business of war as such but a means to suppress the forces of evil and release of the forces of good. Just a couple of examples, though somewhat lengthy, would serve the purpose here. The first one is his post-war speech delivered just before the battle of Badr and the other the post-war speech delivered sometime after the Uhud debacle. The point cannot be seen until they are quoted in full. The Badr speech goes thus:

> They said: The Messenger of God spoke at that time. He praised God and commended Him. Then he said, while he was commanding them and urging them and increasing their desire regarding the reward that was to come, "As for that which is after, indeed I urge you to what God urges you, and I forbid you from what God forbids you. Surely God is great in His affairs, commanding the

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[1062] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 528

right and loving the truth. He gives His people happiness according to their position with Him. With Him do they seek remembrance and with Him do they seek precedence in excellence. Surely, you have awakened in one of the places of righteousness. God receives in it only those who desire His face. Indeed, patience in places of difficulty is one of the means by which God releases one's grief and saves one from distress, and brings one to deliverance in the next world. With you is the Prophet of God who will warn you and command you. Be humble today that God most high will overlook something of your affair that He detests you for. Indeed God says: greater was the aversion of God to you than your aversion of yourselves (Q. 40:10). Observe that which He commands you from His Book and shows you of His signs, for He has strengthened you after lowliness. Cling to it so that your Lord will be satisfied with you. Perform repeatedly for your Lord in these situations as decreed, so you will deserve that which He promised you in it from His graciousness and His forgiveness. Indeed His promise is true, His word, trustworthy, and His punishment, severe. Indeed you and I are with God everlasting. He is our refuge, and to Him do we cling. In God do we trust. With Him is our destiny. May God forgive me and the Muslims."[1063]

In al-Wāqidī's report of this speech of the Prophet[sa] just before the battle of Badr has nothing about the need or strategies of war. It is rather a reminder to all and sundry to maintain a strong relationship with God in whatever situation. He seems to be totally turned to God in the face of war.

The long speech the Prophet[sa] delivers just before the battle of Uhud[1064] is all about the moral and spiritual training of the believers and nothing to do with the war. For space constraint, it is not possible to quote it here. It says nothing about how to attack, when to attack, when to retreat, when to advance etc. It rather asks them to fear God and obey His Prophet for the success here and in the Hereafter and observe good manners. It is not about the skills or the strategies of winning a war. It shows that the ideal moral conduct of the believers was of paramount significance for him including the fear of God, trust in God, unworldliness, mutual trust, love and care, and observance of permissible and impermissible. And he reminds them of their faith and

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[1063] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 31
[1064] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," (not possible to quote it here for space constraint) p. 110

duties when they see their lives under threat. It reads like a Friday sermon rather than a war speech. Below is an example of a post-war speech of his in the backdrop of a large number of his companions martyred including his beloved uncle Hamza. Once again it has no overtones of lamentations or mourning notes or themes of war:

> When the Prophet finished burying his companions he called for his horse and rode it. The Muslims went out; most of those around the Prophet were wounded. …When they were at the bottom of the al-Ḥarra he said, "Get into rows and let us praise God." The men arranged themselves in two rows, the women behind them. Then the Messenger of God prayed and said, "O God, to you is due all praise. O God, there is no one to take what You have spread and no one to prevent what You have given. And there is no giver for what You have denied. There is no guide for whom You have led astray, and there is none to lead astray one You have guided. No one can bring close to God one whom You have abandoned, and there is no one who can distance one whom You have brought close. O God, I seek Your blessings, grace, Your generosity and Your forgiveness. O God, I seek Your significant blessings that never change or come to an end. O God, I seek Your protection on the day of fear, and riches on the day of poverty. Protection is with You, O God, from the worst of what You give us, and the evil that You keep from us. O God, cause us to die as Muslims. Endear faith to us, and beautify it in our hearts, and make disbelief and ignominy and sin detestable to us. Make us among the righteous. O God, punish the disbelievers among the people of the book who rejected Your messenger and obstructed Your path. O God, send upon them Your chastisement and punishment. God of truth, amen."[1065]

Just as his pre-war prayers or speeches do not appear to be war prayers or speeches, this post-war prayer as well does not appear to be a prayer relating to war or its consequences. It stands for one's sheer return to God and has no complaint about the debacle or loss in war. Al-Wāqidī has made his character look extraordinary in that no human can transcend the immediate tragic circumstances so quickly and be focussed on the glorification of God. Some more interesting examples of his war prayers and

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[1065] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 152

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speeches appear on pages 31, 239 and 240 (al-Khandaq), 242, 275 (Dumat al-Jandal), 316 (al-Khaybar), etc.

4.7 Women and the Kitāb al-Maghāzī

According to Van Houts, historical memories – including, historical texts – are gendered. Through close analysis, they reveal certain ideas about what it is to be male and female, particularly in terms of how the genders interact.[1066] A gendered analysis of the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, as such, would not be complete without an accurate understanding of how al-Wāqidī wrote the female and, in particular, if it evidenced "disparities in…the social roles permitted to men and women."[1067] Complementing the previous section, this section focuses on female identity in al-Wāqidī's text. It betrays (in mourning and authority) its historical context in terms of the female identity. At the same time, however, al-Wāqidī's history was not completely determined by context. His historiography is marked by multiple aspects as would be expected of a writer of his time and tradition.

The manner in which the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* betrays its cultural and historical context is the consistent connection between the female and mourning. It has been hinted that mourning for the dead, in an appropriate and sober Islamic manner, used to be a key feature of early Islamic texts.[1068] Moreover, the notion of caring for and mourning the dead is gendered throughout the medieval historical period. That is, it is typically women that mourn for, grieve for and memorialise the dead.[1069] These features recur quite prominently throughout the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, which again points up the manner in which al-Wāqidī's production of history was bound by time and place.

The death of Ḥāritha b. Surāqa, which occurs in the battle of Badr narration, stands as an evidence of both the gendered and cultural aspects of mourning that appears in

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[1066] Elisabeth Van-Houts. "Medieval Memories" in *Medieval Memories: Men, Women and the Past, 700–1300*, ed. Elisabeth Van-Houts (London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 10–11.

[1067] Julia M.H. Smith. "Introduction: Gendering the Early Medieval World" in *Gender in the Early Medieval World: East and West, 300–900*, eds. Leslie Brubaker and Julia M.H. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 5.

[1068] Leo Halevi. *Muhammad's Grave: Death Rites and the Making of Islamic Society* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2007), p. 120; Nadia Maria El Cheikh. *Women, Islam, and Abbasid Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), pp. 23–25.

[1069] Elisabeth Van Houts. "Medieval Memories" in *Medieval Memories: Men, Women and the Past, 700–1300*, ed. Elisabeth Van-Houts (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 2. Mathew Innes. "Keeping it in the Family: Women and Aristocratic Memory" in *Medieval Memories: Men, Women and the Past, 700–1300,* ed. Elisabeth Van-Houts (London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 17–18.

al-Wāqidī's history. Ḥāritha's mother demonstrates steadfastness by not crying until the Prophet returns. Moreover, she demonstrates acceptance of fate by refusing to cry because of her belief that her son was now in eternal heaven.[1070] Narrating   the burial of Saʿd b. Muʿādh, in which al-Wāqidī depicts his mother grieving solemnly by his graveside while being consoled by the Prophet, is also reflective of the way in which al-Wāqidī's text reflects cultural norms.[1071] The chapter on Uḥud also indicates the gendered practice of grieving found in the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Following the death of his uncle, Ḥamza, in the battle, the Prophet declares his great sadness. He is then approached by Ḥamza's sister who refuses to believe in his death and has to be consoled (held down) while he is buried. By stating that "If our women were not saddened" by the death he would have left him to be reassembled on the judgement day, the Prophet was giving voice to the idea that grieving was very much a feminine practice.[1072]

The second area in which al-Wāqidī's history betrays its historical and cultural context rests in the use and transmission of authoritative chains of historical knowledge. It can be argued that the practice of oral transmission bequeathed to al-Wāqidī was very much gendered. That is, it was males who had the authority to speak – and the transmission of knowledge was a very masculine practice. This can be summed up by an exchange between al-Zuhrī and Abū Bakr al-Hudhalī where the former informs the latter that *ḥadīth* is enjoyed by "the manliest of men" and the "effeminate among them dislike it."[1073] This, however, is not an issue specific to the texts of Islamic history. Indeed, it has been argued that the medieval chroniclers across the globe "preferred the stories of male informants and in particular the stories of ecclesiastical men."[1074] For Islamic history in particular this means that women were not featured prominently as active transmitters of knowledge,[1075] unless they were elite woman in most cases such as the Prophet's wives.[1076]

[1070] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 47–48.
[1071] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 260.
[1072] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 140–141.
[1073] Asma Sayeed. *Women and the Transmission of Religious Knowledge in Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 63.
[1074] Van Houts. "Medieval Memories", p. 12.
[1075] Maria Massi Dakake. *The Charismatic Community: Shi'ite Identity in Early Islam* (Albany, NY: State University Press of New York, 2007), p. 224.
[1076] Sayeed. "Women", pp. 63–63.

For sure, al-Wāqidī was far more heavily reliant on male sources in terms of producing his history. This is perhaps best illustrated by the introduction to the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* in which al-Wāqidī lists thirty-one sources of authority, and every one of them is a male.[1077] If culturally and contextually the transmission of historical knowledge was a distinctively male practice, as affirmed by the above quotation attributed to al-Zuhrī, one of al-Wāqidī's masters, then al-Wāqidī's text would seem to be influenced by the space and time when it was written. Moreover, when al-Wāqidī did use reports from females, he largely relied on reports from elite Muslim women, namely the Prophet's wives. As a matter of fact, al-Wāqidī's history draws upon a number of reports from the Prophet's wife, ʿĀʾisha.[1078] Other reports come from Umm Salama, another wife of the Prophet.[1079] Al-Wāqidī also references a number of female companions including, Ṣafiyya bt. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib,[1080] the Prophet's aunt, Umm ʿUmara,[1081] an early convert to Islam, Umm Muṭāʿ al-Aslamiyya,[1082] a nurse, and Umm ʿAlī bt. al-Ḥakam,[1083] ʿUthmān's grandmother.

Smith writes that regardless of whether "we are discussing the time before, during or after the prophet, instances of strong Islamic women playing leadership roles in any capacity were far from the norm".[1084] The Prophet's wife, ʿĀisha[ra] makes a remarkable exception in that she played a very important role on two levels: 1. intellectual/scholarly level, and 2. leadership level. She on the one hand guided the Muslims on religious matters, and on the other led the army in the Battle of Jamal. Echoing this view, Barazangi observes that whether to do with exegesis or to do with history, "Muslim elites" and their "gendered views of authority" have "reinforced the view that gender issues and women's perspectives do not matter."[1085] Given that the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* displays, at least in part, a similar gendered perspective, it is difficult to refute the

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[1077] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 3.
[1078] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 337, 44, 62, 121, 201, 227, 229 and 233.
[1079] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 228 and 249.
[1080] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 140.
[1081] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 296.
[1082] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 324.
[1083] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 337
[1084] Jane I. Smith. "Women, Religion and Social Change in Early Islam" in *Women, Religion, and Social Change*, eds. Yvonne Y. Haddad and Ellison B. Findly (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992), p. 31.
[1085] Nimat H. Barazangi. *Woman's Identity and Rethinking the Hadith* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), p. 161.

claim that it was very much conditioned by the intellectual, historic and even religious context in which it was written.

Nonetheless, in many places throughout his text al-Wāqidī demonstrates a capacity for going beyond the traditions and context bequeathed to him. That is, whilst reproducing certain gendered tropes in places, as just discussed, he also demonstrates a capacity throughout his text for rendering females with agency. In other words, al-Wāqidī demonstrates his own capacity for scholarly agency.

This is perhaps evidenced by the way in which al-Wāqidī outlined the pivotal role that the Quraysh women played in rousing their men into battle for the revenge of Badr. This is first broached in a dialogue attributed to Ṣafwān b. Umayya who attests that "'it is most appropriate that the women rouse you and remind you of those who were killed at Badr'"[1086] Singled out here is Hind bt. ʿUtba who seems to exhort the Quraysh into marching into battle once more.[1087] Further into his depiction of Uḥud the strong motivation that the Quraysh took from their women is evident. "The women went out with their tambourines", writes al-Wāqidī, "and instigated the men and reminded them of the dead of Badr in every station."[1088] Moreover, later in the text he writes that "the women of the polytheists led the rows…striking their large drums and tambourines…whenever a man turned away, they goaded him and reminded him of their dead at Badr."[1089] Moreover, citing a chain of authority from Umm ʿUmāra, al-Wāqidī records the following actions of the Quraysh women at Uḥud: "I saw them strike tambourines and drums and remind the people of the dead at Badr. Moreover, they kept kohl and kohl sticks and whenever a man withdrew from battle one of them took a kohl stick to him and said, 'Surely you are a woman!'"[1090] This last bit was a female tactic to draw them out of their pusillanimity through biting taunt. Rather than being passive objects, in these passages of his text women were rendered in terms of agency, although an agency that al-Wāqidī was more than likely critical of.

Fuller depictions of the female – ones less reliant on parochial motifs – are also deployed by al-Wāqidī in terms of grief and mourning. Take El Cheikh's argument that at the time in which al-Wāqidī was writing his text, there was a clear distinction drawn

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[1086] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 101.
[1087] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 101.
[1088] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 103.
[1089] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 110.
[1090] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 132.

between Islamic grieving (sober) and pre-Islamic grieving (immoderate).[1091] If al-Wāqidī's text was as wholly conditioned, one would expect that pre-Islamic grieving would be clearly contrasted with the Islamic practices. However, this is not the case in recanting Hind bt. ʿUtba's reaction to the loss of life amongst the Quraysh. Hind bt. ʿUtba is an important character in Islamic history because she is very much seen as the quintessential pre-Islamic woman, although she did convert after the conquest of Makka.[1092] Rather than mourning and grieving in the traditional pre-Islamic fashion, Hind is presented as endowed with a certain degree of agency in al-Wāqidī's history. After the Quraysh men approach her and ask her to cry for her slain brethren, she retorts: "Shall I cry over them so it will reach Muḥammad and his companions and the women of the Khazraj, so they will rejoice over our misfortune?"[1093] Answering her own rhetorical question, Hind continues: "No, by God, not until I am revenged of Muḥammad and his companions. Oil is forbidden to me…until we raid Muḥammad…if I knew that the sorrow would leave my heart I would cry. But it will not leave unless I seek revenge before me for the death of the beloved ones."[1094] Whether he was conscious of it or not, al-Wāqidī evidently imbued Hind with agency, which in turn demonstrates that the context in which he wrote *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* did not always determine the history he produced.

In terms of the chains of authority that he employs, one could certainly argue that for al-Wāqidī they reflect the "inferior status of women in Islamic tradition", which is directly related to Judaeo-Christian as well as pre-Islamic influences on the *hadīth*, which in turn evidences a "gender bias" in the Islamic tradition.[1095] However, al-Wāqidī also deploys a number of familial sources which often draw from unnamed females. This suggests that al-Wāqidī was not averse to bucking cultural and scholarly norms of his time. In narrating the conversation of al-Ḥakam b. Kaysān, he references a report from the mother of the aunt of ʿAlī b. Yazīd b. 'Abdullah, for instance.[1096] To report of the Prophet giving assistance to a companion during Badr, he again relies on a report

[1091] El Cheikh. "Woman", pp. 20–30.
[1092] Guity Nashat and Judith E. Tucker. *Women in the Middle East and North Africa: Restoring Women to History* (Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), pp. 39–40.
[1093] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 62.
[1094] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 62.
[1095] Syafiq Hasyim. *Understanding Women in Islam: An Indonesian Perspective* (Jakarta, Indonesia: Solstice, 2006), pp. 46–47.
[1096] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 9.

from the aunt of the father of ʿUmar b. Uthmān al-Jaḥshī.[1097] In his narration of Uḥud, al-Wāqidī refers to a report from the mother of Mūsā b. Yaʿqūb in order to provide details of the order of battle while two other familial reports are used to outline details of the action that took place at the battle.[1098] In addition, the daughter of al-Ḥārith is named in the report that documents the beheading of polytheists.[1099] Furthermore, the Raid of al-Ghāba also contains two chains of authority initiating with a female.[1100] Although the use of female sources of authority is not extensive, there is enough evidence to suggest that al-Wāqidī's biography of the Prophet was not completely determined by tradition and context. In selecting his sources more widely, he was able to display a certain amount of scholarly agency and creativity.

Just as with forms of male identity evident in the text, it is clear that in terms of female identity, al-Wāqidī's production of history was in many respects shaped by the historical, cultural and intellectual climate. However, to leave it there would be unjust to the depths of the history that al-Wāqidī produced. A fuller analysis reveals that whilst his depiction of the female may betray the era in which his history was written, al-Wāqidī nevertheless demonstrates an evident capacity for moving beyond the given tradition and context.

4.8 Collective Memory and Collective Amnesia

As it has already been discussed elsewhere, the transmission of knowledge of Islamic history was undertaken orally. Indeed, the *maghāzī* tradition was in many respects an act of memorisation; a method, so to speak, for ensuring the successful transmission of collective knowledge from one generation to the next. In that respect, as an act of collective memory, al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was conditioned by context. However, as will be shown in this section, his text also demonstrates a panache, in places, for collective amnesia, which demonstrates this historian's capacity for scholarly innovation. He was shaped but not determined by his temporal and spatial context.

[1097] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 47.
[1098] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 118 and 131.
[1099] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 119.
[1100] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 267 and 269.

Given-Wilson argues regarding medieval English history that its "primary aim…was to commit to writing things which ought to be remembered."[1101] This idea can easily be extended to early Islamic history as well. Clarke observes that early Islamic historiographical texts were "drawn from a shared pool of remembrance: ideas about past events sufficiently important…to the identity of the community that they were preserved within its collective memory."[1102] The *maghāzī* tradition has been argued to have acted as memory aid.[1103] Memory, according to Summit, is both a library (a collection of knowledge) and a storytelling device (the selection and arrangement of available knowledge into narratives in order to make sense of the world).[1104] But memory, especially collective memory, is shaped by culture and context. Although the practice and art of cultural and collective memory may be a universal practice,[1105] collective memory, like anything, is shaped by context and circumstance.[1106] Fentress and Wickham, for example, notice the differences in memory practices between literate and non-literate societies. They contend that in literate societies, collective memory is likely to be more liberal and looser, individualised and highly personalised, creative and unstructured. On the other hand, the collective memory practices of illiterate societies are likely to be more heavily structured and more formulaic with pronounced emphasis on rigid sequence and adherence to tradition.[1107]

In certain aspects, the structure of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* reflects the *maghāzī* canon as a whole. Brockopp, for instance, argues that Ibn Isḥāq's work set the tone for the tradition, at least as it appears to us. He argues that Ibn Isḥāq's structure "cuts through much of early Islamic narratives", that is, "the before and the after of the *hijra*", and emphasised the significance of the Prophet Muḥammad's migration from Makka to Medīna "to the extent that his immediate followers would look back and reckon an

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[1101] Chris Given-Wilson. *Chronicles: The Writing of History in Medieval England* (Hambledon and London, 2004), p. 57.

[1102] Nicola Clarke. *The Muslim Conquest of Iberia: Medieval Arabic Narratives* (London: Routledge, 2012), p. 2.

[1103] Coeli Fitzpatrick and Adam H. Walker. *Muhammad in History, Thought and Culture: An Encyclopedia of the Prophet of God* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2014), pp. 572–573.

[1104] Jennifer Summit. *Memory's Library: Medieval Books in Early Modern England* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press).

[1105] Jan Assmann. *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 15–16.

[1106] Alan Confino. "Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method" in *Historiography: Culture*, ed. Robert M. Burns (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 268.

[1107] James Fentress and Chris Wickham. *Social Memory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), pp. 36–38.

Islamic calendar that started with this event."[1108] Al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, which begins with the arrival of the Prophet in Medīna and closes with Usāma's raid at Mu'ta, very much reflects the historical traditions he inherited from previous scholars. However, there are obvious differences between the two in terms of the history they produced, which is a point that will be revisited in a subsequent section; it remains that "the basic story-line was established" by Ibn Isḥāq and followed by al-Wāqidī.[1109]

It is also evident that parts of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* are formulaic in that, in terms of structure, they demonstrate a rigid adherence, especially indicating here the similarities between al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* and Isḥāq's *Sīrat* in terms of the closing of the Badr narrative. Both, following the oral tradition of the time, conclude their respective narratives with an outline of the revelations following Badr, a detailed list of those who witnessed the battle and a detailed list of those who were killed.[1110] Both historians also closed their respective chapters on Uḥud in a similar fashion, although al-Wāqidī uses Qur'ānic revelation whereas Isḥāq uses poetry.[1111] Despite this difference, the two surviving texts suggest that there was a stock structural formula for narrating the *maghāzī* tales which probably reflects its oral beginnings and the related necessity of memory retention. In turn, this provides further evidence that al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was largely a product of its time and place.

However, what is unique to al-Wāqidī is his deployment of *jāhiliyya* – the ignorance of the pre-Islamic era – throughout his biography of the Prophet's later life. *Jāhiliyya* is important because it has been argued that the *maghāzī* tradition owes a lot to the traditions of *jāhiliyya*. Shryock argues that early "accounts of Muhammad's career, the *maghāzī*, clearly resemble the storytelling genres of the Jahiliyya…great importance is given to the accurate, face-to-face transmission of historical reports, to the recitation of poetry and genealogy, to the commemoration of raids and battles, and so on."[1112] Etheredge contends that the "religion and poetry of the *jahiliyyah*…were sometimes gathered into accounts of [the Prophet's] campaigns, called *maghāzī*."[1113] Likewise,

[1108] Walid E. Saleh. "The Arabian Context of Muḥammad's Life" in *The Cambridge Companion to Muḥammad*, ed. Jonathan E. Brockopp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 27.

[1109] John Pickard. *Behind the Myths: The Foundations of Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (Bloomington, IN: Authorhouse, 2013), p. 245.

[1110] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," pp. 65–85; Ibn Isḥāq, "Sīrat," pp. 330–339.

[1111] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," pp. 145–162; Ibn Isḥāq, "Sīrat," pp. 410–426.

[1112] Andrew Shyrock. *Nationalism and the Genealogical Imagination: Oral History and Textual Authority in Tribal Jordan* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), p. 320.

[1113] Laura Etheredge. *Islamic History* (New York, NY: Rosen, 2010), p. 70.

Jones observes that "in terms of form as well as theme, *maghāzī* literature is superficially reminiscent of the pre-Islamic accounts of tribal battles [as] both deal with battles and are a mélange of prose and verse."[1114] However, in the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* what we see is an attempt at collective amnesia as opposed to collective memorisation.

In many places al-Wāqidī's reference to *jāhiliyya* is simply to juxtapose Islamic and pre-Islamic times in terms of conventions. Indicative here is the difference between the apportioning of one-fourth and one-fifth;[1115] how the al-Aswad used to pay double blood money in the period;[1116] how idols were made in *jāhiliyya*;[1117] and different slaughtering practices between the two eras.[1118] Perhaps more importantly, many of al-Wāqidī's references to *jāhiliyya* are made in terms of forgetting the past – forgetting the pre-Islamic era. A case in point here is the tale of 'Abd al-Raḥmān. It is recorded by al-Wāqidī that al-Raḥmān refused to answer to his previous pre-Islamic name, 'Abd ʿAmr.[1119] This is important because in effect it is an attempt to erase the past from memory. Numerous utterances of the Prophet that al-Wāqidī records also affirm this. The Prophet is recorded as saying that "Islam cuts off what was before it";[1120] that "God has removed the arrogance of *jāhiliyya* and its veneration of the forefathers";[1121] that "Islam cancels what was before";[1122] and that "Islam [erases] what was before it."[1123] In sum, al-Wāqidī's references to *jāhiliyya* demonstrate a more subtle approach to collective memory and the relationship between the *maghāzī* tradition and *jāhiliyya*. By stressing the ideas, he effectively called for a collective amnesia of the pre-Islamic period. Thus, al-Wāqidī's scholarly work demonstrates a capacity for going beyond the traditions and context which undoubtedly shaped but not determined the history he produced.

If *maghāzī* and *jāhiliyya* traditions crucially informed al-Wāqidī's work, they did so in a unique manner. This is because the history that al-Wāqidī produced was not

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[1114] Jones. "Maghāzī," p. 345.
[1115] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 11.
[1116] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 384.
[1117] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 428.
[1118] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 438.
[1119] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 42.
[1120] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 368–369.
[1121] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 411.
[1122] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 417.
[1123] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 433.

determined, in absolute terms, by the cultural and historical context. It is quite clear that the scholarly work he produced demonstrates an independence and creativity that ensued from his own agency. This can also be shown by looking at historical account within the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*.

4.9 Idealisation of the Life of Muhammad[sa] at Madina

4.9.1 Visionary and Seer

A serious limitation of Al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is that it does not encompass the entire Madinan life of the Prophet[sa]. Its narrative centres around the Prophet's life in or around the battlefield to the exclusion of his normal life in Madina as a family man, a preacher, a missionary, a social and political reformer and so on. However, even this account, though limited in scope, contains numerous instances of idealising the Prophet's life in Madina in many respects and the purposes thereof. The instances are so numerous that it is not possible to present all of them here. However, a rather detailed discussion of some outstanding anecdotes is necessary to have a clear idea of this highly significant aspect of *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. It will be seen where this idealisation conforms to the contemporary standards or expectations and where it diverges. The Prophet[sa] has been idealised as a visionary and a seer, a social and political reformer, a strategist and planner, a paragon of mercy, just and balanced, humble, kind and humane, invincible, a democrat, and a spiritual figure of uncanny powers, etc. Some of these aspects of idealisation are discussed in detail in this section.

He is idealised as a visionary and a seer at three levels by al-Wāqidī in his narrative: his capability of reading people's minds and seeing through them; his knowledge of the unseen at times; and his foreknowledge of certain events and capability of peeping into the future. Below, we consider the relevant instances in the same order. When a total stranger, Qubath b. Ashyam, suddenly confronts him in Madina, the Prophet[sa] latter revealed to him a secret thought of his that crossed his mind on the day of Badr, which dumbfounded him. Qubāth reports with noticeably astonished tone:

> The Prophet[sa] replied, "O Qubāth b. Ashyam, you are the one, who said on the day of Badr, 'I have not seen such an affair of fleeing except from women.' "I responded, "I testify that you are the Messenger of God. Surely this affair never

went out from me to any one…If you were not a prophet, God would not have acquainted you of it.[1124]

In this passage the Prophet's capability of reading people's mind has been portrayed which stunned and dumbfounded the stranger and inclined him instantly to believe in the veracity of the Prophet's messengership. In a similar incident, the Prophet[sa] exposes the secret undertaking of a Makkan agent which leaves him speechless:

> The Messenger of God said to him, "Speak the truth. For what did you arrive?" He replied, "I approach only for the prisoner." The Messenger of God said, "Did you not make some stipulations to Ṣafwān b. Umayya in the Ḥijr?" ʿUmayr was alarmed. He said, "What did I stipulate to him?" He said, "You agreed to kill me to fulfill your debt while he supports your family, but God stood between me and you," ʿUmayr replied, "I testify that you are the Messenger of God and that you speak the truth; and I testify that there is no God but Allah.[1125]

The Prophet[sa] is idealised here as one who can know the unseen at times. Umayr, who intended to assassinate him, was staggered when the Prophet[sa] revealed to him his secret conversation with Safwan in Makka and his real intention behind visiting Madina.

The episode of the lost Qiswa, the Prophet's she-camel, also confirms his power of distance perception. When the Prophet[sa] was put to test about its whereabouts, his perceptive powers came to play and he knew exactly where the camel was, and there it was found (p 208).

Along with his capability of reading people's minds and knowledge of the unseen, he is idealised as one who is capable of seeing and predicting the future. Regarding the Badr events, al-Wāqidī shows him pinpointing the exact spots where his enemies would fall dead. The Prophet[sa] said:

> By God, it looks to me as if I see the places where the people fall." The Messenger of God showed us the places of death at that time. This is the site of so and so; and not one of them was killed away from his prescribed place.

[1124] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 49.
[1125] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 64.

His uncanny capability of foreknowledge of events saved him his life while visiting the quarters of Banī Nadhīr. As the Banī Nadhīr conspired to drop a stone from atop upon the Prophet[sa] while he was leaning against a wall, the Prophet[sa] was divinely informed about it just in time and he hurriedly left. Al-Wāqidī's narrative shows as if he left in a trance, that is, without letting his companions know where or why he was leaving. As they asked him later about his sudden departure, the Prophet[sa] said: "The Jews plotted treachery against me, and God informed me about it, so I left." Later, he reveals to his companions in detail the plot of his assassination with names of the individuals involved (p 180). The following is a classical example, as provided by al-Wāqidī, of the Prophet's crystal-clear vision of the brilliant future for his followers who faced the risk of being annihilated by a mighty enemy. The Prophet[sa] made this prediction while he was busy with others digging the trench hungry:

> Wherever he [the Prophet[sa]] struck, Salmān followed it with his eyes, and he saw with every blow a light. Salmān said, "O Messenger of God, I observed the hoe whenever you struck with it, and it lit up what was under it." And the Prophet said, "Did you see that?" And he said, "Yes." The Prophet said, "Indeed, I saw with the first, the castles of al-Shām; with the second, the castles of al-Yemen. And with the third, the white castles of Khusrau, of the nobility in Madāʾin." He began to describe it to Salmān, who said, "You speak the truth…. "This conquest of God will open for you after me, O Salmān, for al-Shām will be open to you. Heraclius will flee to the most distant kingdom, and you will be victorious over al-Shām and no one will contest you. Yemen will be open to you. The East will be conquered and Khusrau killed after it." Salmān said, "All this did I see."[1126]

The intention of al-Wāqidī through these details is certainly to idealise the Prophet[sa] as a great visionary who could foresee the unbelievable future and predict that the helpless people who were busy defending their little city from the Makkan enemy would soon be ruling over not only the Arabian Peninsula but also subdue the superpowers of the day. Similar is the purpose of the following passage:

> Ṣāliḥ b. Jaʿfar related to me from Ibn Kaʿb, who said: The Messenger of God said: Indeed I hope to circumambulate the ancient house and take the key, for

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[1126] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 220.

God will destroy Khusrau and Ceasar and their wealth will be paid in the way of God. He was saying that when he saw the suffering of the Muslims, ….

What counted as the moments of utter dejection for ordinary Muslims were in fact the moments of reassurance for the Prophet[sa]. He appeared to rejoice in the forthcoming fulfilment of the promise of conquering Roman and Persian empires and obtaining their wealth for common welfare. Al-Wāqidī implies that the Prophet[sa] was clear in his vision of the success of his mission and the spread of his call far and wide.

Yet another classical instance is provided by al-Wāqidī of the Prophet's sustained clairvoyant vision of a distant occurrence in Mu'ta of which he gave a running commentary to his followers in Madina:

They said: While the people met in Muʾta, the Messenger of God sat on the minbar [pulpit] in Medina and there was revealed to him all that occurred between him and al-Shām, and he observed the battle ground sitting in Madina.[1127]

Al-Wāqidī's intention here again seems to idealise the Prophet[sa] as a visionary and a seer. Sitting on the pulpit in his mosque in Madina, he could see the events unfolding hundreds of miles away in Mu'ta with the clairvoyance of a seer. Al-Wāqidī implies that such extraordinary powers cannot be found in an ordinary person and so obedience to him was incumbent upon the Madinans. The little passage above is followed by a long passage in which the Prophet[sa] gives as if a running commentary to what happened to Zaid b. Thabita, Ja'far, and 'Abdullāh b. Rawaha both in the battlefield and in paradise. His prophetic vision seems here to encompass both the earth and heaven. Not only that, he could also read even the inner thoughts of the two martyrs during the last moments of their lives. He kept praying for those who were martyred far away in Tabuk in front of Muslims present with him.

Al-Wāqidī reporting the episode, on the occasion of al-Fath, in which the Prophet's vision of entering the Ka'ba, collecting its key from 'Uthmān[ra] b. Abī Talha, and then restoring the key back to him is again to reinforce the idea of his being a visionary who could see the future events exactly as they were going to unfold. "Is it not as I said to you?" are the Prophet's words to 'Uthmān.[1128]

[1127] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 375.
[1128] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 412.

These are some of the several incidents gleaned from *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* whereby al-Wāqidī idealises the Prophet[sa] as a seer, a visionary and a clairvoyant, implying doubtless his superiority to the rest of the Arabs and therefore establishing the obligatoriness of rendering obedience to him since none can demonstrate those qualities in such a sustained and persistent manner than a true Prophet of God.

4.9.2 Miracles

The Arabic term 'mu'jizah' (i.e., miracle) does not occur in the Qur'an. Nor does the Qur'an hold tangible miracles to be an essential sign of Muhammad's prophethood. It holds itself to be his living miracle. Yet, al-Wāqidī's narrative records several occurrences of the category of miracles by way of idealising him as a Prophet. In doing so, he conforms to the traditional belief that a prophet must be able to perform supernatural feats. Nevertheless, he stops short of showing him raising the dead or ascending into heaven, where he deviates from the received tradition of portraying prophets in that light. And in this deviation, he transcends the received pattern. The miracles that al-Wāqidī attributes to him are about blinding or confounding the enemy, multiplying little amount of food into plenty, producing water from rocks, and miraculous healing of wounds, etc. Some of these will be discussed below in the same order.

Blinding or miraculously inflicting defeat on them by tossing a handful of pebbles towards the enemy is a miracle reported by al-Wāqidī at least thrice in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. On the occasion of Badr,

> They said: The Messenger of God ordered, and taking a handful of pebbles, aimed them at the enemy. He said, "The faces are ugly! O God, terrify their hearts and let their steps stumble." The enemies of God fled and they did not turn around for anything…. There did not remain one among them, but his face and eyes were full of pebbles and he could not tell from his eyes where he was going.[1129]

The passage underlines the miraculous powers of the Prophet[sa], in turn affirming his prophethood. However, it does not align with the angel story in that when a handful of

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[1129] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 41.

pebbles could turn away the enemy, where was the need for a thousand angels. A similar incident is reported regarding Khaybar[1130] and Hunain.[1131]

Though the Prophet[sa] has not been reported by al-Wāqidī to resort to miracles in normal circumstances who would rather leave things proceed in a natural way even if unpleasant or hurtful. But in extraordinary circumstances at times miraculous things happened at his hand. A miraculous feat of the same nature is reported yet again regarding the battle of Hunayn which effectively turned away the enemy:

Apart from the few examples of miraculous healing mentioned earlier, several other similar episodes have been reported by al-Wāqidī in which the Prophet[sa] is shown to have healed or cured an animal or human of a troublesome illness, wound, or physical ailment. For instance, when Jabir complained of the sickness of his camel the Prophet[sa] said:

> "Is there some water with you?" I said, "Yes," and I gave him a bowl of drinking water. He blew on it, then splashed it on my camel's head, back and rump. Then he said, "Give me a stick." so I gave him the stick … and he urged it and prodded it with the stick. Then he said, "Ride, O Jābir." He said: And I rode. He said: He set out, and by Him who sent him with the truth, Jābir's camel exceeded its pace and did not fail him.[1132]

On the occasion of Khaybar, "Marḥab threw down a millstone which struck Maḥmūd's head. It struck the helmet of his head until the skin of his forehead fell on his face. He was brought to the Messenger of God and he pushed the skin until it returned just as it was. The Messenger of God bandaged it with a cloth."[1133]

Besides miraculous healing, multiplication of food stuff is another significant recurrent miracle attributed to the Prophet[sa] by al-Wāqidī repeatedly in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* with the purpose of idealising him as the compelling spiritual authority. A few typical episodes, out of numerous, are discussed here which are sufficient to form an opinion about the nature of this miracle. The bottom line remains that a little amount of food barely sufficient for one person was miraculously multiplied by the Prophet[sa] into an unending supply. In the Uhud narrative, we come across the following report:

[1130] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 329.
[1131] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 441-442.
[1132] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 196.
[1133] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 317.

> Jābir said: Food sufficient for one or two men was brought; the Messenger of God put his hand in it and said, "Take in the name of God!" We ate from it until we were full, and by God, it did not appear to us that we had touched a thing. Then they brought us ripe dates in a saucer from the first fruit or a little later, and the Messenger of God said: "In the name of God, eat!" He said: We ate until we were full, and I looked in the saucer and there remained approximately what was brought in it. … Then ʿAṣar came, and the remainder of the food was brought and there was plenty of it to fill them up.[1134]

He performed a similar miracle on the occasion of al-*Al-Ahzāb*. Jābir b. ʿAbdullah, looking at the hollow, wrinkled stomach of the Prophet[sa] realised how hungry he must be. He asked his wife to arrange for whatever food she could to feed the Prophet[sa]. She prepared a small amount of food enough just for a few people, but the Prophet[sa] invited all to dine at Jābir's to his dismay first and then to his surprise:

> The Messenger of God approached leading his companions. They were in groups, tens upon tens. Then he said to us, "Scoop from the pot, then cover it, and take out the bread from the oven, then cover it." We did so. We began to spoon and cover the pot, and when we opened it, we saw no decrease. We took out the bread from the oven and covered it, and we did not see it decrease, either. The people ate until they were full. And we ate and shared with the others.[1135]

A little amount of food was sufficient for a large number of people and yet it did not diminish in quantity which amazed everyone on the one hand and on the other strengthened their faith in his Messengership since it conformed to their belief that only an extraordinary person could do such a thing. Along with the multiplication of food, the example offers yet another level of idealisation; it is that the Prophet[sa] was hungry, more than others, and still he was labouring as hard as others demanding or expecting no special treatment for himself.

Along with similar typical examples of food multiplication, we also come across miracles relating to water. The following instance relates to al-Hudaibiyya:

[1134] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 161.
[1135] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 221.

A spring of water came up but the people expressed their doubts to the Messenger of God of the little water. The Messenger of God pulled out an arrow from his quiver and commanded that the watering place be stabbed with it. A rivulet bubbled up for them until they left it soaking. He said: Indeed they filled their utensils sitting on the edge of the well.[1136]

4.9.3 Deus ex Machina

Under the Direct Divine Protection

Apart from the above miracles relating to healing, multiplying food, and producing water, there recurs in *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* yet another type of miracle attributed to the Prophet[sa] which is that he always appears to be divinely shielded as efforts of physical harm to him mostly fall flat. In the details of Uhud, as mentioned earlier, it so appeared that the arrows fly past him or fall in front of him without causing him any harm. It is reported by al-Wāqidī in the chronicle of Hunayn that Shayba made repeated attempt to assassinate him from all sides but always experienced that some unseen force was shielding him:

> Shayba said: Indeed I was about to kill him, but something came forward until it wrapped my heart and I could not bear that, and I knew that he was protected from me. It was said: He said: Darkness wrapped me until I could not see. So I knew that he was protected from me, and I became convinced of Islam.[1137]

His effort failed because sometimes he felt some sort of darkness wrapped him and sometimes a flame interposed between him and the Prophet[sa]:

> So I came to him from behind him, and it only remained for me to get him with the sword, when all of a sudden a flame was raised between me and him from a fire which looked like lightening. I feared that it would burn me, so I placed my hand on my sight and walked backwards, and the Prophet turned to me and said, "O Shayba, come near me!" Then he put his hand on my chest and said, "O God, take Satan away from him." … Then he related to me what I had intended to do with him.[1138]

[1136] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī,*" p. 288.
[1137] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī,*" p. 446.
[1138] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī,*" p. 446.

The deus ex machina reportedly active in aiding and shielding the Prophet[sa] mostly involves the role of angels, as already hinted at in the first chapter, together with some other invisible forces. The bottom line of this method of idealisation of the Prophet[sa] remains that no less a person than a true Prophet of God would be so actively and persistently assisted and protected by the celestial forces; hence, belief in him and rendering obedience to him is but natural. In this idealisation al-Wāqidī mostly operates within the traditional framework of thought, however, in some place he does seem to transcend the received framework, though minutely, as would be indicated in the discussion below. In reference to the battle of Badr, Ali is quoted by al-Wāqidī explaining the gusts of winds blowing from all direction thus:

> The first was Gabriel with a thousand angels with the Messenger of God, and the second was Mikāʾīl with a thousand from the right of the Messenger of God and Abū Bakr, and the third was Isrāfīl with a thousand, who alighted from the left side of the Messenger of God and I was on the left.[1139]

Within the Badr events, the eyewitness account of the descending angels occurs which proves for al-Wāqidī, so it seems, the veracity of the Prophet's claim of being the Messenger of God since heavens responded to his prayers and to compensate the small number of his followers angels were sent down to fight alongside Muslims; hence, the Prophet's direct links with the invisible divine order.[1140]

Al-Wāqidī mentions the sighting of angels on the battlefield marked by their dappled or piebald horses and the colour of turbans. What he actually means through these crude details is to make the reader believe in the literal truth of the Qur'anic verses promising the divine aid through angels to the Prophet and his followers. It is a different matter altogether that the Qur'anic expression is figurative since just one little angel (of the popular belief) is sufficient to destroy the whole world and no army of theirs was needed to fight a handful of the Quraysh. Al-Wāqidī says:

> The mark of the angels was turbans that dropped to their shoulders, green, yellow, and red, of light. The wool was in the forelocks of their horses…. al-Zubayr

[1139] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 30.
[1140] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 39.

related that the angels alighted on the day of Badr riding dappled horses, and wearing yellow turbans…. (39)

There are a lot more curious details regarding the appearance of angels obviously to give credence to the reporters' account of sighting them. Ironically, the angels were no more advanced in war technology or culture than the early seventh century Arabs as they also rode horses, brandished swords and wore turbans.

Killing of Abū Jahl

Al-Wāqidī makes the Prophet[sa] say that Abū Jahl's killing was a result of combined human and angelic effort. The idea seems to be that the divine forces were on the side of the Prophet[sa] against his enemies. And that it was an extraordinary event settling in favour of the Prophet[sa]: "It was said: "O Messenger of God, who else joined in killing him?" He said, "The angels; and Ibn Masʿūd finished him off. All joined in killing him."[1141]

The reports about the vision of angels are included in al-Wāqidī's history to impress upon the readers' mind the extraordinary personality of the Prophet[sa] by telling them that he enjoyed the company of the celestial forces which accompanied him right and left and would not leave him without his permission. For instance the Prophet[sa] is reported to have said:

> Gabriel came to him, at the end of his fighting the people of Badr, upon a female horse with knotted forelock and dust on its front teeth, saying, "O Muḥammad, my Lord sent me to you and He commanded me not to leave you until you are satisfied. Are you satisfied?" The Messenger of God replied, "Yes."[1142]

In the narrative of Hunain al-Wāqidī reports another type of Divine help, somewhat similar in nature to the affliction sent upon the oppressors of the Israelites in Egypt:

> He said: The likeness of a black shadow approached from the heavens until it darkened on us and them, and blocked the horizon. Then, all of a sudden I saw Wādī Ḥunayn flow with ants, black ants spread like a carpet and I had no doubt that it was God helping us. And God most high defeated them.[1143]

[1141] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 46.
[1142] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 57.
[1143] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 444.

These are some of the numerous instances,[1144] scattered throughout *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, of the Divine help to the Prophet[sa] whereby he is idealised as a person aided and protected by the celestial powers with or without his knowledge which legitimises his control of Madina and abroad.

4.9.4 Dedication to the Mission

The Prophet[sa] has also been idealised by al-Wāqidī as a person of missionary zeal with the utmost amount of sincerity and dedication to his cause. No temptation could lure him away to fall for a worldly gain, however lucrative, at the cost of his mission and high goals of societal transformation. When Khubayb wanted to join him on the expedition of Badr for the sake of spoils, the Prophet[sa] declined his offer of much needed military services. He asked him to fight for the cause and not for the worldly gains. Al-Wāqidī reports:

> They said, "You were the son of our brother and our neighbor. We are coming out with our people for the plunder." The Messenger of God said, "A man does not come out with us without accepting our faith" Khubayb said, "My people know that I have great ability in war, and am strong in offense. I will fight with you for plunder but I will not convert." The Messenger of God said, "No; but convert, then fight." Then he met him again at al-Rawḥāʾ and he said, "I submit to God the Lord of the worlds, and I witness that you are the Messenger of God." The Prophet was happy about that. He said, "Go forth!"[1145]

He idealises the Prophet[sa] here as a person for whom the success of his mission was of paramount importance, rather than any worldly victory or materialistic gains, which was to see the people enter the monotheistic faith. No temptation of worldly gains could deter him from his single-minded mission. The same dedication is uppermost in his mind while responding to the challenge thrown by the Quraish to fight. Al-Wāqidī portrays him not to appear in haste to start the war. He is still concerned with the Quraish to join the war on the side of God rather than against Him, as al-Wāqidī shows in the following passage:

> Then a herald from the polytheists called out, "O Muḥammad, send our equals from our people out to us." The Messenger of God said to them, "O Banū

[1144] For some more relevant examples: al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 41, 66, 67, 446.
[1145] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 25.

Hāshim, stand and fight for the rights that God sent with your prophet for they have brought their evil to extinguish the light of God."[1146]

Al-Wāqidī seems to idealise him as a person whose missionary resolve was so intense that he inspired the same in his companions. The evidence he produces is that even after the false news of the Prophet's death in Uhud, the Muslims were not completely dejected. They rather said that they should stand up with double force and die for the cause of the Prophet[sa] for which he died. Filled with double courage, their cry now was: "If Muḥammad has been killed, yet, God lives and will not die. Fight for your religion! Indeed God will help you and give you victory."[1147]

Al-Wāqidī's real intent behind describing the people of Khaybar of formidable skills, means and might seems to strike a contrast with the Muslim resolve. He reports them as

> "a people of forbidding fortresses, and numerous men and weapons. If you [Muslims] stay you will destroy those with you. If you desire to fight they will hasten to you with men and weapons. No, by God, these are, unlike the Quraysh, a people who will march to you. If they obtain heedlessness from you, that is what they desire, if not, they will turn back. They will deceive you about the war and lengthen it for you until you become tired of them."[1148]

This description pictures them as an invincible force with no comparison to that of the Muslims. The contrast is played upon to prove later that the Muslims were so determined in their resolve and so fearless that they eventually defeated their otherwise indefatigable enemy at Khaybar. For their merits the credit goes to the Prophet[sa] as implied by al-Wāqidī.

4.9.5 Strategist and Planner

Al-Wāqidī's narrative in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* idealises Muhammad[sa] as a person in whom the spiritual and secular dimensions had merged in a balanced manner. In it, he deviates from the received concept whereby spirituality usually precludes secular wisdom and vice-versa. On the one hand, he idealised him, as discussed, as a spiritual figure, on the other as the one who deeply understands the material processes and

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[1146] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 35.
[1147] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 136-137.
[1148] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 320.

how to sync them with the goals of his mission. Since military expeditions remain the focal point of his book, he has recurrently idealised him as a strategist and a planner. The passage on the expedition to Nakhla reflects the Prophet's knowledge of the land, sense of directions (Najdiyya), sense of distance and time (two nights) and precise knowledge of landmarks (a small well). He also knew when to disclose the relevant information and the harms of divulging it prematurely (opening the letter after a journey of two nights), and sense of perfect planning.

> The Prophet called Ubayy b. Kaʿb, and commanded him to write a document. Then he called me and giving me the sheet of leather from Khawlān, said, "I have appointed you over this group. Proceed until you have traveled for two nights, then unfold my letter and do as it says." I said, "O Messenger of God, in which direction?" He replied, "Go towards Najdiyya until you reach a small well."[1149]

Al-Wāqidī quotes his enemies' statement as an external evidence to prove the Prophet's perfect knowledge of the terrain, his excellent system of espionage, his planning skills, and precise time and distance calculations are shown in these passages. In other words, he is idealised here as a perfect strategist and planner whose every move is calculated to success:

> we met a man from Judhām, who said, "Muḥammad and his companions have been observing you since you started your journey." He said, "But indeed, he stayed a month then returned to Yathrib. On the day Muḥammad approaches you, you must be quick for he is now well prepared to obstruct you. Surely he has computed for you the number of days, so be careful of your caravan and consider your decision. By God, I do not see the numbers, or the camels, or the weapons."[1150]

On getting the news of the Quraish marching towards Madina (Ibn 'Abbās' letter) with an intention to attack, the Prophet[sa] set out his spies to find out the actual situation who joined the Quraish caravan and brought vital intelligence for him about the number

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[1149] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 9.
[1150] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 15.

of marchers, camels, horses, weapons etc. Acting like a skilled army commander, therefore, he began preparing to thwart the attack.[1151]

Al-Wāqidī shows him endowed with robust practical sense and sagacity while planning for the Uhud. Though the Prophet[sa] had established fraternity among the believers, he was aware of the undercurrents of the centuries-old tribal consciousness which he observed while assigning flags separately to Aws, Khazraj and Migrants.[1152] This way none felt belittled which was a psychological necessity to enable them to have their tribal honour and confidence maintained. Al-Wāqidī portrays him as a farsighted strategist who could spot a vulnerable gorge in a glance and appointed marksmen to guard it at every cost:

> They said: The Prophet approached the marksmen and said, "Shield our backs, for we fear those who come from behind us, and stay in your places and do not leave them. Even if you see us put them to flight and enter their camps, do not withdraw from your places. If you see us being killed, do not come to help us or defend us. O God, I testify to You against them! Pelt their horses with arrows, for indeed, the horses would not come forward against the arrows!"[1153]

Earlier, he had instructed them to obey him if they wanted to be victorious. Al-Wāqidī clearly implies that their disregard of both his instructions led them to a momentary though serious setback: "They said: God never granted such a victory on a field to his Prophet as He granted him and his companions on the day of Uḥud, until they disobeyed the Prophet and disputed his command. Indeed, the masters of the banner were killed."[1154]

Al-Wāqidī pictures him as a man of strongest nerves when the Prophet[sa] announced his resolve to take on the Makkans yet again if they turned to Madina with any malicious intentions, even though his army was exhausted and he himself was wounded "By Him who holds my soul in his hand, if they march to Medina I shall go to them and attack them."[1155] In the details of the Hamra al-Asad campaign al-Wāqidī idealises him as an extremely valiant, fearless, cautious, resilient and bold man of unparalleled farsightedness. Soon after the Uhud setback he, wounded as he was,

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[1151] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 103.
[1152] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 107.
[1153] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 111.
[1154] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 113.
[1155] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 144.

along with his wounded and exhausted companions hurried in the track of the retreating enemy to chase them away if they ever ventured into raiding Madina. It shows his concern for the inhabitants of Madina as a caring ruler who prefers their safety to his own comfort.[1156]

The way the Prophet[sa], as per al-Wāqidī's report, tackled with the Banī Qurayza threat, in the wake of al-Khandaq, presents him as a master strategist full of robust practical sense. He arranged for the defence of Madina from all sides.[1157] Instead of desiring a bloody clash at every cost, he sanctioned a strategy proposed by Nu'aim aimed at confusing the enemies and set them against one another by arousing mutual suspicions. It succeeded and the war came to an end without fierce clashes. The loss of life in the battle of al-Khandaq was minimal. Al-Wāqidī idealises him thus as a tactful strategist and defender.[1158]

Just as after Uhud, the Prophet's valour and resolve are idealised once again in the wake of al-Khandaq as a leader and army commander who would not allow the threat to grow until it becomes unmanageable and dangerous. Soon after returning from al-Khandaq, he realises that the treachery of Banī Qurayza ought to be punished first. Without resting, therefore, and without letting others rest, he immediately ordered that they all march towards the quarters of Banu Quraizah, even though he knew that they were already exhausted and cold and hungry. They spent the night only eating dates.[1159] It show how critical was their treachery in the Prophet's view and how quickly it deserved a solution. They had endangered the lives of all the believers including women and children and had virtually brought them as well as the Prophet's mission to the verge of destruction. The whole realisation of the fact on his part has been given a supernatural colour by al-Wāqidī; i.e. a warning from the angel Gabriel.[1160]

Though the crime of Banu Qurayzah was unpardonable in his eyes since it could have caused the extinction of the Muslims and Islam if successful, the Prophet[sa] listened to the pleadings of the 'Aws on their behalf and agreed, though very reluctantly, to appoint an arbitrator from among them whose decision would be binding upon the two

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[1156] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 163-164.
[1157] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 224-225.
[1158] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 225- 237.
[1159] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 245.
[1160] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 244.

sides. (The Messenger of God said, "Will it satisfy you that a man from among you will judge them?" They said, "But of course." He said, "That will be Saʿd b. Muʿādh."[1161]

The Prophet's being a master planner and strategist has further been idealised by al-Wāqidī with reference to the Makka Conquest, one aspect of which was to keep all guessing about the final destination of his army:

> One thought that the Messenger of God desired al-Shām; another thought it was the Thaqīf; another, the Hawāzin. The Messenger of God sent Abū Qatāda b. Ribʿī with eight individuals to the valley of Iḍam in order to make some think, and the news spread, that the Messenger of God was going in that direction.[1162]

> Ayyūb b. al-Nuʿmān related from his father, who said: The Messenger of God smiled but did not add to that. The people began to say: By God, the Messenger of God did not clarify anything for you. We do not know before whom he will appear: the Quraysh, the Thaqīf or the Hawāzin.[1163]

The purpose of his strategy is obviously to take the enemy unawares. On the way to Makka, he kept collecting intelligence about the moves of the Makkans and the other tribes around. He also took fool-proof measures to avert their designs and not to reveal his real destination of the journey.[1164]

> Not a word of the Prophet's march to them had reached the Quraysh. They worried and feared that Muḥammad would attack them. When the Messenger of God alighted in Marr al-Ẓahrān at ʿIshāʾ, he commanded his companions to light fires, and they lit ten thousand fires. The Quraysh decided to send Abū Sufyān to carefully consider the news. They said, "If you meet Muḥammad, obtain a protection for us from him— unless you see weakness from his companions—then declare war."[1165]

On the hilly slopes of Marr al-Ẓahrān the Prophet[sa] ordered fires to be lit and his companions lit ten thousand fires which offered an awful spectacle to the Quraish in Makka watching from afar. The view together with the information brought back by Abū Sufyān served to inflict a psychological defeat on them even before the actual

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[1161] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 250.
[1162] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 392.
[1163] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 392-395.
[1164] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 397.
[1165] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 401.

defeat. Al-Wāqidī has implied here that his tactics was not intended to finish off the enemy, but to bring about a successful bloodless revolution which soon encompassed the whole of Arabia. He idealises the Prophet[sa] as a peace-loving and tolerant person through his 'forbidding fighting'[1166] and declaration of general amnesty for the worst of his enemies on the day of Makka Conquest. The Prophet's strategy of a bloodless revolution began appearing successful when Abū Sufyān's announcement, authorised by him, persuaded people to rush back and take shelter in their homes discarding their weapons on the way:

> Abū Sufyān b. Ḥarb and Ḥakīm b. Ḥizām began shouting, "O people of the Quraysh, why are you killing yourselves? Whoever enters his house is protected. Whoever puts down his weapons, is protected." People began to rush to their houses and lock themselves in. They threw the weapons in the streets so that the Muslims could take them.[1167]

Al-Wāqidī idealises the Prophet's seriousness about his non-violence policy on this occasion. He did not want any fighting or bloodshed at all in Makka. He is also idealised as an extremely successful strategist and planner. The description portrays the Prophet[sa] as the sole and supreme leader of Arabia hence, not only politically, but also culturally and spiritually, all set to establish the new world order soon to sway the whole of Arabia, with his opponents looking from afar in awe and shaking in fear and disgrace:

> When the Prophet reached the Kaʿba and saw it, the Muslims were with him. He went forward on his beast, touched the corner with his staff, and proclaimed takbīr. The Muslims responded, and returned the takbīr until Makka shook with the takbīr, so that the Messenger of God began signing to them to be silent. The polytheists were above the mountain observing. Then the Messenger of God circumambulated the Kaʿba on his camel.[1168]

4.9.6 Statesman

Al-Wāqidī has reported instances of the Prophet's statesmanship repeatedly in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. The Muslims and the Jews lived in Madina under the protection of

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[1166] "What is this gleam? Did I not forbid fighting?" al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 407.
[1167] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 407.
[1168] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 409.

a treaty. However, after Badr, Banī Qainuqāʾ chose to abandon the agreement, upon which they were first warned by the Prophet[sa] to which they responded rather too arrogantly:

> The Prophet sent for them and having gathered them together, said, "O Jewish people, submit, for, by God, you surely know that I am the Messenger of God, before God inflicts upon you the like of what he inflicted on the Quraysḥ" The Jews said, "O Muḥammad, let not those whom you met deceive you. Surely you have defeated a people who have no experience in war. But we are, by God, the masters of war, and if you fight us you will learn that you have not fought with the likes of us."[1169]

The Prophet[sa] stood firm in the face of their treason and like a strong statesman intended to punish them for their treachery and ordered their expulsion from Madina. This was to insulate Madina from the internal threat. Though they were the strongest among the Madinans, endorsed by ʿAbdullāh b. Ubayy as well, the Prophet[sa] saw to it that they surrendered to his authority eventually and evacuate their dwellings. Al-Wāqidī implies that though the normal punishment for treason is death, but their lives were spared, and only an expulsion was ordered.

In their interaction, the Prophet[sa] as well as Banī Nadhīr refer to the land as *the Prophet's land*. The Prophet[sa] himself refers to it as 'my land' and Banī Nadhīr too as 'his land.' Al-Wāqidī underscores here that though the Prophet[sa] was a Makkan, he was invited and received there as the Master and Ruler in Madina. And it was not a disputed but mutually accepted fact for all parties involved. Ibn Ubayy was the only one to put up resistance now and then, but he too recognised that the Prophet[sa] was accepted by all as their ruler. It is important to note that on receiving the command 'Leave *my* land', none said that it was in fact *their* land where they had been living for centuries together and where Muhammad[sa] was given asylum. They readily accepted the claim, which proves his worth as an astute statesman.[1170]

4.9.7 Compelling Leadership

It has occurred earlier that there was a compelling aspect about the Prophet's leadership as pictured by al-Wāqidī in several places. He commanded total obedience

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[1169] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 87,
[1170] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 180.

and inspired strong feelings of love, devotion and obedience in his followers. They are depicted to have full faith in his prophethood and ever willingness to sacrifice everything in the cause of his mission, which reflects the stupendous leadership qualities the Prophet[sa] had. He made the people think the way he thought which they did ungrudgingly. This submission wrapped in devotion on the part of his followers led him to establish a sustainable social and political order in Madina based on the monotheistic values he stood for, as we see in this example:

Saʿd said, "… 'we hear and obey.' So go, O Prophet of God, for by Him who sent you with the truth, if you consider this a sea and go through it, we will go with you, for there is not a man among us who will stay behind. Take whoever you wish and leave behind whoever you wish. And take from our property what you wish, for what you take from it is dearer to us than what you leave.…But we do not hate to meet our enemy tomorrow."[1171]

The Prophet's followers believed that whatever they gave him was more precious to them than what was not given. They felt gratified and fortunate in spending for his sake. He is idealised as a person who aroused sacrificial spirit in people: "Saʿd said, "O Messenger of God, by the grace of God and His messenger, what you take from our wealth is more precious to us than what you do not take."[1172]

His utterances carried such an imperative illocutionary force according to al-Wāqidī that each of his followers appears to have firm faith in him and in the promises of the Afterlife:

> mother said, "By God I will not cry for him until the Prophet arrives; I will ask him, and if my son is in heaven I will not cry for him. But if my son is in hell, I will cry for him, by the everlasting God, and mourn him." When the Messenger of God arrived from Badr, his mother came to the Messenger of God, who said, "he is in the highest paradise."[1173]

This faith strengthened an ordinary woman to the extent that she refuses to cry over her dead son; rather feels happy that he was in paradise ("will not cry for him ever!" p. 47). Such a belief would eventually lead to the common acceptance of his

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[1171] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 26.
[1172] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 536.
[1173] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 47.

authority to establish a new order in Madina. Numerous other examples of this idealistic devotion and obedience are found in al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*.[1174] Al-Wāqidī reports that mere sight of the Prophet[sa] filled the believers with confidence. Even after the debacle at Uhud when they saw the Prophet[sa] they felt rejuvenated and refilled with energy and confidence. Seeing him alive and well, they forgot the loss of their own near and dear ones. His compelling leadership transformed them so thoroughly that they thought little of the value of their own lives in comparison to that of the mission and faith. His very presence gave them a new hope and a new lease of life and guaranteed to them a success of this world and of the hereafter. This underlines the great persuasive and exhortative power of the Prophet[sa] apart from the force of his character.[1175] No torture for them was more painful than deserting the Prophet[sa]:

> Then they began to say to Zayd, "Return from your recent religion and follow our religion, and we will release you." He said, "No, I will not leave my religion ever." They said, "Would you be happy if Muḥammad were in our hands instead of you and you were in your house?" He replied, "I would not be happy if Muḥammad was attacked by you with a prong while I was in my house." He said: Abū Sufyān b. Ḥarb says, "No, we have never seen the companions of a man that possess a greater love for him than the companions of Muḥammad for Muḥammad."[1176]

Al-Wāqidī reports the following as an external evidence to idealise the Prophet[sa] as a compelling leader who commanded obedience in an unparalleled manner. Even kings were not obeyed with that sincerity and sacrificial spirit. His followers rush to carry out the Prophet's command the moment it is uttered. It was to impress upon the enemies of the Prophet[sa] that the man they were opposing was no ordinary man to deal with. And they must think a hundred times before opposing them.

> ʿUrwa b. Masʿūd rode until he came to the Quraysh and said, "O people, I have gone before kings, Kisra, Heraclius, and the Najashī, and by God, I have never seen a king who was obeyed by those he was in the midst of, as Muḥammad is by his companions. By God, they do not look directly at him. They do not

[1174] For instance, see al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 37, 45, 118, 123-124, 234, 296, 392, 407.
[1175] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 153.
[1176] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 177.

raise their voices in his presence. It is sufficient that he only indicates an affair and it is done. He does not clear his throat and spit, but it falls on the hand of a man among them and he rubs it on his skin. He does not make ablution, but they swarm to him, each of them to take something from it. I have assessed the people, so know that if you desire the sword they will exchange blows with you. I have seen a people who do not mind what is done with them when they protect their companion. By God, surely I saw women with him, and they would never surrender under any condition.[1177]

Long passages occur within the details of Makka Conquest in which the Prophet[sa] has been portrayed as of leadership mettle. By al-Wāqidī he is idealised as *The Leader* whatever the situation may be. They assemble at his call, disperse at his call, light fires at his call, become friendly at his call, show indifference at his call, take on hostility at his call, and offer peace at his call. In brief, they are controlled fully by the Prophet[sa]. On his way to Makka, the attitude of certain tribes shows that they are now vying with each other to win his favour and present themselves as more loyal and obedient to him than others:[1178] "Then he [Abū Sufyān b. Harb] saw them rush to the ablution of the Messenger of God, and he said, "I have not seen, O Abū l-Faḍl, a ruler thus ever. Neither Kisra and nor the king of Banū al-Aṣfar (Byzantines)!"[1179]

The keys of the Ka'ba were meekly placed in his hands this day, even though not too long ago he was made to flee for his life from the city and only some months ago he was not allowed to visit the Sacred House. He is portrayed in his utmost glory here and his adversaries in utmost disgrace. They see him taking the control of the Sacred Mosque but cannot do anything except watching helplessly. Despite this astounding success he chose to conduct himself humbly.[1180] Al-Wāqidī has idealised the Prophet[sa] throughout as a compelling leader who commands absolute respect, whose devotees are willing to sacrifice all for the sake of his mission, who subjugates even the worst of his adversaries, and who shows modesty even in the hour of success.

[1177] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," (al-Hudaibiyya), p. 294.
[1178] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," (al-Fath), p. 400-401.
[1179] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 401.
[1180] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," (al-Fath), p. 410.

4.9.8 Opponents' Hidden Belief

Al-Wāqidī has found yet another way of idealising the compelling leadership dimension of the Prophet's personality; it is the external evidence originating from his adversaries including the Makkans, the Jews of Madina, and the non-Arabs. Common to the first two is their hidden belief of the mysterious superiority and invincibility of the Prophet[sa] and his eventual victory. A few examples would be discussed below.

The panic noticed in Makka at the news of the Prophet[sa] approaching and the way they hurriedly prepared for going to war, particularly after Atika's dream, indirectly idealised him in that he was no longer a nonentity to be ignored. Their remarks show that they were quite aware and convinced of his capabilities. In their minds he has begun emerging as a person to reckon with, who could be a potential threat to their economy and then leading eventually to the collapse of their religious and social system. It is further confirmed by Addas' warning to Utba and Shayba, readying for war, when he told them: "By my father and mother, you two, surely he is the Messenger of God. Do not conscript for it will be your death!"… He further says: …They are leaving to their deaths. They will fight the Messenger of God."[1181]

Banu Murra as well are shown to harbour that secret belief about the Prophet's invincibility and his being Divinely favoured:

> When the Ghaṭafān gathered for the march, al-Ḥārith b. ʿAwf refused to march with them, saying to his people, "Disperse in your land and do not attack Muḥammad. Indeed I think that Muḥammad will be victorious. Even if those between the east and west oppose him, he will still win." So they dispersed in their land and not one of them was present.[1182]

The dismayed reaction of the Makkans and remarks made by Najashi, Madinans who missed Badr and the Jews of Madina are underlined by al-Wāqidī to reinforce their secret belief of the justness of the Prophet's cause at Badr. Citing their scriptures, the Jews among them said to each other: This is what is described in the Torah. By God, a flag will not be raised for him after this day but it will be victorious.[1183]

[1181] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 17 and 19.
[1182] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 217.
[1183] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 60-61.

Al-Wāqidī quotes the statement of Kinanah, a Jew of Banī Nadhīr, as an external evidence to affirm the veracity of the Prophet's messengership. He is idealised here as a person whose veracity was admitted even by the worst of his enemies. Yet they refrained from frankly acknowledging it for their racial pride. Kinanah says:

> (Surely our books and what we studied of the Torah that were not changed and altered, state that his birth is in Makka and the land of his emigration is Yathrib. His exact description does not disagree by a letter from what is in our book. What he brings you is better than his fighting you. But it appears to me as if I see you departing. Your children scream, for you have left your homes and your possessions that are the basis of your nobility behind. So obey me in two things, for the third has no virtue in it."[1184]

The Prophet[sa] is being praised by the Jews of Madina for his moral uprightness and noble behaviour and the trust he enjoyed with the people of the Jewish faith. He was looked upon as a promise fulfilling man and the one who could be trusted for one's protection. This is what Ka'ab of Banī Quraiza says to Huyayy of Banī Nadhīr affirming his faith in the Prophet[sa]:

> Kaʿb said, "O Ḥuyayy, indeed I made an agreement with Muḥammad, and I contracted with him. We have only seen honesty from him. He has not abandoned his protection of us, nor exposed us to ill. Indeed he is the best of our protectors." Ḥuyayy replied, "Woe unto you. Indeed I bring you an overwhelming sea and an eternal glory.[1185]

An interesting occurrence at the court of the Negus, the Ethiopian king, has been reported by al-Wāqidī to press home the point that the Prophet's fame as the true prophet of God was not confined to Arabia alone. In it we are told that even the Negus held the Prophet[sa] in high esteem and didn't tolerate slurs against him:

> [Negus] said, "O ʿAmr [b. ʿĀs], you ask me to hand you the messenger of the Messenger of God—to whom the great namus, which came to Moses and to Jesus son of Mary, arrived, so that you may kill him?" ʿAmr said: God changed my heart from what I was about, and I said to myself, the Arabs and non-Arabs knew about this truth but you disagreed? I said, "Did you witness, O King, about

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[1184] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 179.
[1185] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 223.

this?" He said, "Yes, I witnessed about him with God, O ʿAmr, so obey me and follow him. By God, he is on the truth and he will be victorious over every religion opposing him, just as Moses was victorious over the Pharoah and his soldiers." I said, "Will you take my pledge of allegiance to Islam?" He said, "Yes." He stretched out his hand and I gave him my pledge of allegiance to Islam.[1186]

In incidents relating to Hunain and Tā'if as well, al-Wāqidī brings out the hidden fear of the Prophet's opponents of his ultimate victory and their secret belief of his invincibility. As some tribes of Tā'if prepared to confront the Prophet[sa] after the Conquest of Makka, this was one of the comments made by some of them. This reflects their hidden belief of the ultimate dominance of Muhammad[sa] and their own defeat:

> It was said to some of them: Why did the Kilāb leave and not attend? He said: It was not a matter of them being close, but Ibn Abī l-Barāʾ forbade them from attending, and they obeyed him. He said, "By God, even if those from the East to the West opposed him, Muḥammad would be victorious over them."[1187]

The (160 years old) blind Durayd is portrayed as the Tiresias of Tā'if who can see what cannot be seen by those who have eyes. Durayd said, "O People of the Hawāzin, this is not the right decision for you. This will dishonor you in your weak spot and bring the enemy to you. Reach the fortress of the Thaqīf and stay there."[1188] His advice against the war or at least the war strategy also affirms their hidden belief of the victory of the Prophet[sa]. Strangely, this ancient seer is not made to say anything about the Prophet[sa] and his mission. Durayd's words make Mālik angry who reacts to him like Oedipus reacted to Tiresias: Mālik became angry at his words and said, "I will not do so, nor will I change a command I have made. Indeed you have grown old and your knowledge is old. After you comes one who is more understanding of war than you!"[1189] In his desperation, he threatened to commit suicide if the Hawāzin listened to him.

[1186] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 366.
[1187] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 435.
[1188] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 436.
[1189] Ibid.

4.9.9 Monotheist and Iconoclast

The Prophet's dedication to his mission as it occurs in al-Wāqidīs narrative has already been discussed. The focal point of his mission was the call to monotheism and negation of idolatry in totality. Al-Wāqidī idealises him as the greatest monotheist in the Abrahamic tradition who did not aspire to occupy land and establish a dynastic rule, but to cleanse the earth of all forms of polytheism. This theme is recurrent in *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* of which a few examples are discussed below.

A passage from the Prophet's letter to Abū Sufyān shows that his main concern was to eradicate idolatry which he promises in his reply to this chief of Makkan polytheists and his arch-enemy, in expressing which wish he minces no words. Not only that, he was hundred percent sure, as the passage shows, of this possibility becoming a reality sooner than later. He warns Abū Sufyān about the idol-worship:

> …It will be our turn, until you stop mentioning al-Lāt and al-ʿUzzā.…Surely a day will come when you will push me with your hand, and a day will come when I will break al-Lāt, al-ʿUzzā, Isāf, Nāʾila, and Hubal, and I shall remind you of this letter."[1190]

When three stalwarts of the Quraish, Khālid b. al-Walīd, ʿUthmān b. Ṭalḥa, and 'Amr b. 'Ās, approached the Prophet[sa] in Madina to embrace Islam, "Indeed he was happy—his face shone like the moon." Nothing made the Prophet[sa] happier than people joining the faith of monotheism and relinquishing idolatry. It was also an act for him that cleanses a man of all his previous sins. On their request to forgive their sins, the Prophet[sa] assured them that the monotheistic faith and emigration in the cause of God automatically erase previous sins: "He said that Islam cuts off completely what was before it, and that the emigration would cut off what was before it."[1191]

What the Prophet[sa] had warned Abū Sufyān of earlier, does literally come true on the day of the Makka Conquest which the latter helplessly watched. Thence, al-Wāqidī idealises him not only as a great iconoclast and an uncompromising monotheist but also as a seer and visionary. This marks the beginning of the accomplishment of his

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[1190] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 242.
[1191] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 367.

mission. The ending also shows a sort of miraculous touch to his iconoclasm. Al-Wāqidī reports:

> Around the Kaʿba were three hundred idols. Sixty idols were of lead. Hubal was the largest of them. It was facing the Kaʿba at its door. Isāf and Nāʾila stood at the place of slaughter and sacrifice of the sacrificial camels. Whenever the Prophet passed one of the idols he pointed at it with the staff in his hand saying, *Truth came and throttled the false, indeed the false are destroyed* (Q. 17:81), and the idol fell to the ground on its face….The Messenger of God no more than pointed at the idol with his staff, and it fell down on its face."[1192]

His literal iconoclasm also carries an unmistakable echo of metaphorical iconoclasm in the sense that the entire socio-economic structure erected on idolatry, of which Abū Sufyān was the chief upholder, was also crumbling with the destruction of idols.

> The Prophet commanded that Hubal be destroyed as he watched. al-Zubayr b. al-Awwām said to Abū Sufyān b. Ḥarb, "O Abū Sufyān, Hubal lies broken! Was it not indeed you who on the day of Uḥud, in self-deception, claimed that he bestowed his favours!" Abū Sufyān said, "Forget it, O Ibn Awwām…"[1193]

Al-Wāqidī depicts how all images within the Kaʿba were destroyed, on the day of the Conquest of Makka, by the Prophet's orders who would allow absolutely no traces of idolatry in the precincts of the Ka'ba:

> Indeed the Messenger of God dispatched ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb with ʿUthmān b. Ṭalḥa from al-Baṭḥā, commanding him to approach and open the House, and to erase all the pictures and leave none…,but that ʿUmar left the picture of Abraham. When the Messenger of God entered, he saw the picture of Abraham and said, "O ʿUmar, did I not command you to erase every picture?" ʿUmar said, "The picture is of Abraham." The Prophet said, "Erase it."[1194]

Usāma b. Zayd further reports: I entered the Kaʿba with the Messenger of God, and he saw a drawing in it and commanded me to bring him a bucket of water. Then he

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[1192] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 409.
[1193] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," (al-Fath), p. 410.
[1194] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 410-411.

wet the garment and struck off the drawing with it, saying, "May God destroy a people who draw what they cannot create!"[1195]

He is not presented by al-Wāqidī as a preacher of monotheism in the fashion of a mystic but as a radical reformer who would take practical steps to see things changed on ground. Therefore, not only in the Ka'ba, but nowhere in Makka or other places the Prophet[sa] would allow any idol to stand and so he assigned different individuals the task of demolishing their erstwhile gods which they, including staunch idolaters like Abū Jahl's son and Abū Sufyān's wife, happily did:

> When the Messenger of God conquered Makka he sent out the raiding party. He sent Khālid b. al-Walīd to al-ʿUzzā, and al-Ṭufayl b. ʿAmr al-Dawsī to Dhū l-Kaffayn the idol of ʿAmr b. Ḥumama. He burned it with fire…He sent Saʿd b. Zayd al-Ashhalī to Manāt in al-Mushallal and he pulled it down. And he sent ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ to the idol of Hudhayl—Suwā ʿ—and he pulled it down.[1196]
>
> The Prophet[sa] sent Khālid b. al-Walīd to al-ʿUzza to bring it down. Khālid set out with thirty riders from his companions to al-ʿUzza and brought it down.[1197]
>
> Then a herald of the Messenger of God called out in Makka, "Whoever believes in God and His messenger does not leave an idol in his house but breaks it." He said: The Muslims began to break the idols. ʿIkrima b. Abī Jahl when he converted, did not hear about an idol in one of the houses of the Quraysh except he marched to it and destroyed it.[1198]

The Prophet's sermon at 'Arafat is not presented by al-Wāqidī as celebrating a big territorial conquest but as an occasion to proclaim the ascendancy of pure monotheism: "There is but one God; He has no partner; To him is Kingship and to him is praise; In His hands is our betterment, life and death; He has power over all things.[1199]

On all significant occasions, he would refresh and reinforce the lesson of monotheism for his followers.

[1195] Ibid.
[1196] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 428.
[1197] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 429.
[1198] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 428.

[1199] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 540.

The Messenger of God, when he returned from Ḥajj or ʿUmra, or a raid, ascended over Thaniyya or Fadfad and proclaimed takbīr three times, and then said, "There is but one God, He has no partner; to Him is all authority; to Him is all praise. He lives, gives life and death, and He does not die. Good is in His hands. He has power over all things. We are returners, repenting, prostrating worshiping, and we are thankful to the Lord. God has fulfilled his promise. He has made his servant victorious, and He, alone, defeated the factions….O God, let us achieve goodness through which we will achieve your forgiveness and acceptance."[1200]

He is idealised by al-Wāqidī in this passage as a great monotheist in the Abrahamic tradition. It implies that an ordinary conqueror, adventurer or ambitious warrior would use such occasions to celebrate his personal accomplishments and his prowess leading to victory, insulting and humiliating his opponents, announcing exemplary punishments for them, and declaring his next of kin to inherit the power he consolidated for his descendants etc. But in the Prophet's declarations, al-Wāqidī makes us hear some moral norms to be followed by his followers for a more just and balanced life, glorification of God and giving all credit to Him for all his success and accomplishments and no mention directly or indirectly of establishing a family rule.

4.9.10 Radical Reformer

In numerous places, al-Wāqidī seems to idealise him as a radical reformer who was on the mission of establishing a new world order, rather than a grabber of power and wealth. The Prophet's opponents, such as Abū Jahl, were less concerned with the veracity of his message and more with the tribal and ancestral superiority and social and political eminence. They saw the call of the Prophet[sa] as something of a threat to their hitherto dominant status. The Prophet[sa] is idealised as one whose right moves ultimately shatter their false pride, and who remains unparalleled in that his call was not about replacing one dynasty by another, but completely undoing the concept of *some* being permanently centred and *some* being permanently marginalised. He initiated an incessant play between the centred and the marginalised. Had he appointed his close family to replace the existing system, it would have been the

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[1200] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 545.

continuation of the same structure with only faces changed. He is idealised therefore as a great revolutionary who overhauled the system as such rather than replace the agents. The following passage also shows him in the same light:

> Then the Messenger of God…spoke to the people and said, "O People, indeed I exist for you as a reward. I leave with you, in your hands, what will not lead you astray, the book of God and its practices." And some say that he said, "I have left with you the Book of God and the practices of His Prophet."[1201]

Here the Prophet[sa] has been idealised as a republican and a democrat to use the modern terminology. He does not sound here the founder of a dynasty whose mission is to establish a family kingdom, but the one who intends to leave behind the Book of God and the teachings therein or his own practice, that is a set of rules and norms, for a successful running of human affairs. A glimpse of that new social order has been shown by al-Wāqidī in the Prophet's sermon at ʿArafat:

> Indeed every usurious act in jāhiliyya, whether blood, property, or memorable event, is forgotten; except for the custody of the temple [Kaʿba] and the watering of the pilgrims. Those unintentionally but inevitably killed by club or whip, for him the blood-wit is heavy: a hundred camels, of which forty must be pregnant. Indeed God has removed the arrogance of jāhiliyya and its veneration of the forefathers. All of you are from Adam and Adam was from dust. The most honorable of you before God, is the most pious of you. Did not, indeed, God make Makka sacrosanct the day He created the heavens and the earth, for it is a sanctuary by the grace of God. It was not lawful to one before me and it is not lawful to one who will be after me.[1202]

The Prophet[sa] is idealised here as a person who not only believes in but would also like to establish in practical terms equality of humanity, social justice, eternal brotherhood of believers, equality of their blood, sacredness of human life, protection of the weak and assistance to the incapable, abolishment of usury, abolishment of familial or racial pride, piety as the only criterion for distinction, and eternal sanctity of Makka. The instructions included several norms relating to personal manners, social norms and etiquette, economic measures, and norms of ritual performance. The

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[1201] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 284.
[1202] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 411.

speech portrays the Prophet[sa] as a revolutionary whose job was not to occupy certain territory or city and then establish a sort of dynastic rule over it but to reorganise the whole society—socially, politically, religiously and culturally— on the divinely inspired egalitarian and catholic values. His job was also to ensure that that new value system spreads to other societies as well and transforms the whole world. The victory speech idealises him as a radical reformer whose job was not confined to merely offering theories, mooting ideas or teaching meditational techniques, but to install a real practical change. His entire struggle and strife seem to be a relentless effort in this direction as portrayed by al-Wāqidī.

The purpose of idealising the Prophet[sa] in Madina by al-Wāqidī seems to underline the impact his teachings and practical training made on the people. The otherwise belligerent, intolerant, and warlike people were turned into civilised and rational beings can be seen in the event of Abū Ubaida al-Jarrah and Amr b. al-'As in the expedition of Dhat al-Salasil. It was going to be a leadership clash, but one of them gently backed out to ease the situation and thus a clash was averted. Such a thing was not possible during the pre-Islamic days. Why the Prophet[sa] didn't specify in the first place as to who would be the leader when Abū Ubaida joins Amr was probably deliberate as to see if they could settle matters and disputes by themselves. And they did not fail the test.[1203]

A glaring practical example of human equality has been implied by al-Wāqidī in the black slave Bilal's ascending atop the Ka'ba and raising the call to prayer from there. The spectacle must have been not only unbelievable for most of the Makkan, racist to the core, but thoroughly disgusting as well since it was no less than a sacrilegious act for them:

> Khālid b. Asyad said, "Praise God who was generous to my father so he could not hear this today!" Al-Ḥārith b. Hishām said, "What a loss! Would that I were dead before this day that I hear Bilāl bray above the Kaʿba." al-Ḥakam b. Abī l-ʿĀṣ said, "This, by God, is great news that the slave of Banū Jumaḥ shouts from atop the little building of Abū Ṭalḥa."[1204]

[1203] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 380.
[1204] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 416.

Bilal, a mere humble slave in the eyes of proud Makkans, proclaiming the call to prayer by the order of the Prophet[sa] atop the Ka'ba building was a solid demonstration of the new value-system the Prophet[sa] finally set in place. And in that call, the mention of the name of the Prophet as the prophet of God was all the more dismaying and upsetting to them; the man they expelled was back to subdue them. But in this new value system the distinction came from piety and not from ancestry, race, territory or family status.

Among many radical changes on the Makka conquest day introduced by the Prophet[sa], market reforms also figured prominently.

> He said: Ibn Abī Dhiʾb related to me from al-Zuhrī, who said: On the day of the Conquest the Messenger of God forbade the selling of wine, pork, the meat of the dead, and of idols, and the presenting of money to the Kāhin.[1205]

Such instructions were meant to go into the formation of a new society in Madina, where the market would follow a certain policy of allowable merchandise; what is good to be consumed and sold and what not. This would set new economic trends and market ethics in the future Madinan market to be followed by other markets around the Islamic world.

4.10 Personality Traits

4.10.1 Human Side

Al-Wāqidī has portrayed the human side of the Prophet[sa] as well in which we see him behave with the emotions and reactions of an ordinary human. At times, he would be overcome by the sway of emotions, irritation, fear, sorrow, anger etc. For instance, the Prophet's sorrow over the martyrdom of his dear uncle Ja'far was noticeable. He cried with tears, took Ja'far's two sons with him showering extreme love and affection on them and kept them with him for three days to assuage their hurt. It is to show the human side of the Prophet[sa]; emotions that upset others upset him as well. He also rose to such occasions to do the needful for the sufferer.[1206] Ja'far's son, 'Abdullāh, reports: "Then the Messenger of God came down, and entered his house and he took me in. He ordered food that was prepared for my family. He sent for my brother and

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[1205] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 425.
[1206] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 376-377.

we breakfasted with him, and by God, the food was tasty and good….and we stayed three days in his house."[1207]

In the passage below, he is shown by al-Wāqidī reacting under a sway of emotions like a normal human. When it is pointed out to him, he regrets about it in an extraordinary way, citing his humanness to be the cause, and prays deeply for the well-being of all he might have felt angry with:

> When a prisoner escaped placed under the custody of ʿĀisha[ra], the Prophet[sa] got slightly angry and said, "May God cut off your hand!" Later, when the Prophet[sa] returned ʿĀʾisha said: The Prophet came to me, so I turned my hands to him, and he said, "What is the matter with you?" I said, "I consider how my hands will be cut, as you have asked in your prayer about me!" She said: The Prophet turned in the direction of prayer and raising both his hands, said, "O God, surely I am a man. I get angry and I regret it just as any other man would. Whichever one of the believing men or women I pray against, transform my prayer into a blessing."[1208]

Al-Wāqidī has portrayed the Prophet's emotional and psychological state just before the battle of Badr. In the passage, the Prophet[sa] appears a human; he is concerned, worried, and apprehensive. Yet, his excellence is shown to rest in the fact that he is able to rise above his ordinary humanness in a moment of extreme crisis. He prays to God and has fullest faith that God's promise would come true. "The Prophet became fearful and raised his hands and begged God for the help He had promised him, saying, "O God, if this group perseveres over me, polytheism will prevail and your religion will not stand."[1209] As the promise comes true, it establishes his status as a divinely inspired human in the eyes of the people. In turn, their faith in his mission is further strengthened which paves the way later for the reorganisation of the Madinan society as per the values he upheld.

4.10.2 Humility

Al-Wāqidī has cited multiple examples of the Prophet's modesty and humility. He would often join the community in their drudgeries and toils as an ordinary member.

[1207] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 377.
[1208] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 272.
[1209] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 33.

He has idealised him as a person free from delusions of grandeur. He is shown to behave differently from the typical spiritual figures who demand service to them rather than joining the hard work. On the occasion of al-Khandaq,[1210] he is seen digging the earth like everybody else, hungry and cold as they all were: "The siege of al-Khandaq took place during intense cold and hunger."[1211] He was not only digging and shovelling, but also carting off the earth: "The Muslims at that time were three thousand. Indeed I saw the Messenger of God when he struck once with the pickaxe, once, shoveling the earth with a shovel, and once, carrying the earth in a basket.[1212] "The Messenger of God was at that time carrying soil in the baskets and throwing it…"[1213]

Al-Wāqidī has pictured his modesty at its height on the day of Makka Conquest. The Prophet[sa] has been idealised as a humble servant of God. The sight of Muslims around him in vast numbers from all the different tribes moving towards the Sacred Mosque of Ka'ba did not make him proud or imperious, but instead he bowed down to God in all humility and submission celebrating his glory and expressing his gratitude to Him for His Grand Help and bestowing upon him victory against his worst enemies. He became humility incarnate before God and was in a mood to pardon the transgressors rather than exacting any revenge upon them.

He said: The Messenger of God approached with his green battalion on his camel al-Qaṣwāʾ, …wearing a black turban; his flag and banner were black, and he stopped in Dhu Ṭuwā in the midst of the people, his beard almost touching the middle of the saddle. He inclined himself humbly before God, when he saw what he saw of the conquest and the increase of Muslims. Then he said, "The life is the other life."[1214]

4.10.3 Justice and Equity

Al-Wāqidī portrays the Prophet[sa] as always maintaining high standards of justice and not tolerating any injustice to anyone including the Jews living in Khaybar under the protection guaranteed by the Prophet[sa]. He made it clear to all Muslims, therefore, that

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[1210] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," pp. 219-220 (fuller details).
[1211] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 240.
[1212] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 222.
[1213] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 219.

[1214] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 406.

nothing would be taken from them except the due. The rest could only be purchased from them:

> The people gathered. The Messenger of God stood up and praised God and commended Him. Then he said, "The Jews complain to me that you have taken from their quarter. We have given them protection over their blood and their property and that which is before them of their lands. And we trade with them. Surely one does not dissolve the property of the contractors except in righteousness. The Muslims shall not take from their greens except for a price. May be the Jews say: I will give it for free, but the Muslims must refuse except for a price."[1215]

The following passage underscores the Prophet's sense of justice and equity as he apportions the booty in such a way that everyone gets their rightful share and none is deprived or unfairly dealt with. It implies that this was the new social value that he stood for in the Madinan life:

Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā b. Sahl related to me from Muḥammad b. Sahl b. Abī Ḥathma from Rāfiʿ b. Khadīj from Abū Burda b. Niyār, who said: The Prophet put away the plunder of the people of Nakhla and proceeded to Badr. When he returned from Badr he apportioned it together with the plunder from the people of Badr, and gave all the people their rightful share.[1216]

4.10.4 Tolerant and Merciful

Al-Wāqidī has highlighted the aspects of tolerance and mercy about the Prophet's personality. His incessantly tolerating the hypocrites around him has been cited as a classic example of his tolerance.[1217] Al-Wāqidī depicts him as a person who was merciful not only to humans but also to stray animals to the extent that he halted the whole army headed to conquer Makka for the sake of a bitch and her puppies, as already mentioned elsewhere:[1218]

[1215] al-Wāqidī. "al-Maghāzī," p. 340.
[1216] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 11.
[1217] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 204.
[1218] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 396.

On the Makka Conquest day, the Makkans expected a total annihilation for their sustained enmity towards the Prophet[sa] over all those years, but the Prophet[sa] chose to declare a general amnesty and forgave them all: The Messenger of God said, "Indeed, I say just as my brother Yūsuf said: No reproach this day shall be upon you; God will forgive you. He is the most merciful of the merciful. (Q 12:92)."[1219] After offering 2 bowings within the Ka'ba, the Prophet[sa] announced general amnesty standing at the doors of the Ka'ba, which remains an unparalleled example of forgiving one's sworn enemies.

Hind, Abū Sufyān's wife, was the most outspoken woman in her enmity to the Prophet[sa] and Islam. She got the Prophet's uncle Hamza killed in Uhud of whose limbs she made a garland for herself and whose liver she chewed out of hatred and enmity. A normal man's response in her case would have been spiteful and vengeful. But the Prophet[sa] welcomes her and accepts her declaration of faith. It is yet another case of idealising him by al-Wāqidī as a man of exemplary compassion and forgiveness who is ready to forgive even the worst of his enemies.

> Hind bt. ʿUtba spoke and said,…let your grace touch me O Muḥammad. Indeed I am a believing woman attesting before God." Then she removed her veil and said, "Hind bt. ʿUtba," and the Messenger of God said, "Greetings to you." She said, "By God, O Messenger of God, what was most desirable for me was the humiliation of you and the people of your tent; but today I woke up, and there is no one on earth for whom I wish more glory than you and your people." The Messenger of God said, "And still more!"[1220]

Similar was his attitude towards another of his enemies, son of Abū Jahl, Ikrima whom he forgave at his first request. The Prophet's generous reception of one of his worst enemies had such a great impact on him that he found himself a completely transformed man:

> ʿIkrima said, "I ask that you forgive me every hostility I returned to you, or journey that I put down in it, or place that I met you in, or words I spoke to you directly, and in your absence." The Messenger of God said, "O God, forgive all the enmity that he returned to me. And every march in which he went into a

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[1219] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 411.
[1220] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 418.

place desiring with that march to put out your light. Forgive him his insults to my face, or in my absence."[1221]

4.10.5 Sophistication and Refinement

Al-Wāqidī has recurrently portrayed the Prophet[sa] as a man of ideally refined sensibilities who detested anything crude, unpleasant or ugly even in manners or speech. He turns away in disgust at the following exchange:

> He said,"Are you the Messenger of God?" The Messenger of God said, "Yes." The Bedouin said, "If what you say is true, tell me what is in the belly of my camel?" Salama b. Salāma b. Waqash replied, "You had sexual intercourse with it and it has been impregnated by you!" The Prophet hated his words and he turned away from him.[1222]

Al-Wāqidī shows him pretty conscious of hygiene and disinfection issues. When the Muslims wanted to use the utensils taken from the fortresses of Khaybar, he asked them first to "Heat water in it and cook after. Eat and drink."[1223] He did allow the use of the Jews' utensils but only after water was heated in them first, a method of disinfection he suggested. Probably his followers did not know how to disinfect utensils otherwise they would do that by themselves and so the Prophet[sa] would not need to teach them so. He is idealised thus as an all-round teacher of which we have another example. Al-Wāqidī also depicts him as a man of highly refined olfactory and gustatory taste. What a common Arab enjoyed to drink, he detested for its pungent taste. His rejection of that drink was an instruction towards refining people's taste about what food or drink is worthy of relish and what not. It was a case of refinement of the Bedouin manners and sensitising them in olfactory aspects. [1224]

4.10.6 God First

From the events recorded regarding al-Khandaq[1225] on the pages 231-232, it is evident that the Prophet[sa] is portrayed as the one who would hold God and his obligations to God uppermost. He would not miss any of the prayers. And if under compelling

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[1221] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 419.
[1222] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 25.
[1223] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 327.

[1224] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 425.
[1225] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," (al-Khandaq) pp. 231-232.

circumstances he omits one it would distress him badly. He would also curse the polytheists who caused such a delay or omission. ("The polytheists distracted us from midday prayer—meaning ʿAṣar. May God fill their insides and their graves with fire."[1226] Interestingly, such a curse would not issue from his lips on a setback in a conflict. His devotion to and trust in God supersedes all other considerations. The Prophet[sa] is shown[1227] to offer midday and afternoon prayers even though Muslims were unarmed and they faced the enemy. This again shows that his love and fear of God was uppermost in his mind. He didn't miss the prayer even while facing the greatest threat of being attacked during prayer.[1228]

4.10.7 Selflessness

Al-Wāqidī has also cited numerous examples of the Prophet's selflessness and inclination to sacrifice, for instance he refrained from reclaiming his house sold out illegally and deprived his descendants of a share in charity. On the occasion of Makka Conquest, he declined to stay in his ancestral house or any other house of Makka but:

> The Messenger of God refused, saying, "I will not enter those houses," and he continued to stay unsettled in al-Ḥajūn, and he never entered a house. He came to the mosque from al-Ḥajūn.[1229]

It would have been a good chance for any other conqueror to reclaim any of his or ancestral property in his own city. Not only that, but also to occupy others' properties by evicting them by force just for nothing. Yet, the Prophet[sa] decided not to enter his house, which he had to leave under threat to his life, or any other house. His house had been sold out by Aqīl, his cousin, who was not the real owner of that house, nor entitled to sell it while the Prophet[sa] lived away in Madina. Nor did he punish Aqīl for doing so. He chose to stay in his leather tent in Hajūn and enter the Mosque from there. Yet another example of idealising him for sacrifice and selflessness.

In the other instance, al-Wāqidī idealises him for another sort of sacrifice, that is, depriving his family of charity or alms. Some of the Prophet's family members asked him:

[1226] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 232.
[1227] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," (Hudaibiyya) p. 286.
[1228] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 286.
[1229] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 408.

"O Messenger of God, we come to you to be appointed over these charities, to make what people make of profit." The Prophet was silent. He raised his head to the ceiling of the house, then approached and said, "Surely charity is not permissible for Muḥammad or the family of Muḥammad. Indeed it is the alms of the people.[1230]

Here, al-Wāqidī places the Prophet[sa] much higher on the pedestal of spiritual and moral excellence since typical spiritual gurus usually desire eternal superiority and privilege for themselves and their descendants and a share in their earnings. Their close family usually form a privileged class among their followers being all time exclusive recipients of their charity and alms. But, going against the established trend in the spiritual and religious circles, the Prophet[sa] declared all charity and alms eternally forbidden for his family and thus he deprived them of this advantage for ever. Thus, he also obstructed the way for a priestly or brahmin class from ever emerging among Muslims. It was the greatest contribution made by a religious leader in the history of religious leadership.

4.10.8 Generosity and forgiveness

The Prophet's spirit of magnanimity and forgiveness have also been idealised by al-Wāqidī in several places. When his milk sister, Shaima, was brought to him as a prisoner in Hunain, he was visibly moved:

The Messenger of God said to her, "Where is your family?" She replied, "In Dhanb Awṭās." The Messenger of God ordered clothing for her and gave her a camel with a sedan seat, and two hundred dinars, and she departed, saying, "You were the best foster child as a baby, and you are the best of men as an adult. You are a great blessing."[1231]

However, his generous grant of land to Safwan at Hunayn is a greater example of his generosity. Safwan had been his sworn enemy until then and was still a polytheist though he had softened a bit. He helped the Prophet[sa] with arms on the occasion of Hunayn. In return, he granted to him a huge portion of booty and land which shows

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[1230] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 343.
[1231] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 428.

not only his magnanimity but also his capacity of forgiveness, which caused Safwan's conversion:

> The Messenger of God observing him [Safwan] said, "Abū Wahb, do you like this pass?" He said, "Yes." He said, "It is yours with everything in it." Ṣafwān said at that, "No one would give this with such satisfaction as one with the heart of a prophet. I witness that there is no God but Allah, and Muḥammad is his messenger." And he converted instantly.[1232]

Safwan's words again serve as an external evidence to his veracity, generosity, dependability, and forgiveness. This realisation drives him to accepting Islam instantly.

4.10.9 Rationalist and practical

> The Messenger of God came to me in the year of the farewell pilgrimage, when I got sick and pain overwhelmed me. I said, "O Messenger of God, you see the pain I am in; I am the owner of property but I have no heir except for a daughter of mine. Shall I give a third of my property in charity?" He said, "No!" I said, "Half?" He said, "No!" Then he said, "A third. A third is a lot! It is better that you leave your heir wealthy than that you leave her needy, and begging.[1233]

The Prophet[sa] is idealised here by al-Wāqidī as a practical and rational reformer. A spiritual zealot would say on such an occasion to give away everything to reap spiritual rewards just to look idealistic and ascetic. But the Prophet[sa] taught here a practical lesson, that is, to give charity but also to fulfil one's obligations towards their kith and kin and not leave them destitute. So, in his philosophy a balance is maintained between one's material well-being and spiritual well-being and not one celebrated at the cost of the other.

4.10.12 Anti-superstition

The Prophet[sa] spared no occasion to drag his companions out of superstition in which their society had been steeped for centuries. His stress appears to be on reason and trust in God. The passage below states the same:

> The Messenger of God prayed the dawn prayer with us in al-Ḥudaybiyya soon after the rainfall during the night. When he finished, he approached the people

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[1232] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 420.
[1233] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 545.

and said, "Do you know what your Lord said?" They said, "God and His messenger are most wise!" He said, "There has risen among the worshippers a believer in me, and a disbeliever. As for he, who said it rained by the grace of God and His graciousness, he believes in me and does not believe in the stars. As for he who says it rained on us emphasising the position of such and such a star, thus and thus, that is one who does not believe in me but believes in the stars."[1234]

4.11 Conclusion

The first part of this chapter has concerned itself with advancing one central claim. Namely, although al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was conditioned by the wider context in which it was written, the given context did not determine the history that al-Wāqidī produced. This argument is necessary as a counterbalance to what we had in an earlier chapter (that his history was conditioned by time and space) and produces a more nuanced understanding of the manner in which al-Wāqidī produced history in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. In turn, what was demonstrated above was that, despite traces of time and space – context in other words – seeping into the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, al-Wāqidī demonstrates throughout his historical narrative his capacity for transcending the historical and intellectual context he inherited. To make this argument, the first part draws upon advanced methods in the history of ideas where context and intellectual traditions form crucial influences on the work a historian produces, but not the be all and end all. Historians as agents, in other words, matter to the history produced.

This argument was advanced through multiple themes. In the first part, the chapter looked at the question of male identity and, in particular, how al-Wāqidī's depictions of the warrior drew upon cultural motifs. At the same time, however, the text that al-Wāqidī produced equally emphasised the role of the diplomat-warrior, particularly with regard to the Prophet[sa]. This discussion also takes into consideration the Prophet's war ethics, his war speeches and the subject of martyrs. Secondly, the chapter looked at the related issue of female identity. It was inferred that in one respect, al-Wāqidī's writing here betrays the time and place it was written in. In another respect, al-Wāqidī demonstrates a capacity for transcending his historically conditioned vantage by rendering females with agency in his history. Thirdly, in terms of collective memory,

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[1234] al-Wāqidī. "*al-Maghāzī*," p. 289-290.

the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is evidently an act of collective memorisation. Yet, it was equally in places an act of collective amnesia. And in that respect, al-Wāqidī demonstrated a capacity for rising beyond his immediate geographical and historical context. And lastly, through deep analysis of certain representative passages from *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* the chapter infers that al-Wāqidī has employed multiple devices to idealises the Prophet's life in Madina of which the main purpose seems to establish the justification of his central spiritual, political and moral authority in Madina.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

In its basic approach, this thesis is a work of textual interpretation, orientated toward obtaining fuller and greater appreciation of Abu ʻAbdullāh Muḥammad b. ʻUmar al-Wāqidī's celebrated *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. Situated within the field of Islamic historiography, this thesis has concerned itself with approaching al-Wāqidī's historical retelling of the Prophet's expeditions with an explicit concern for understanding the manner in which al-Wāqidī made history intelligible – how he made historical meaning in other words, and how he idealised the Prophet[sa] and the purpose thereof in Madina. This final chapter concludes the main findings of this research, spells out and considers in greater depth both the narrow and wider implications of this research and closes by pointing to this thesis' greater impact by considering the avenues for further research that it potentially generates. First, however, it is perhaps apt to restate the questions that this thesis, at its beginning, posed to answer. The next major focus is on al-Wāqidī's method of meaning-making and the processes of idealising the Prophet[sa] and the purpose of that idealisation in Madina.

First, based on the principle that little excavation of al-Wāqidī's historical methodology and technique has hitherto been done in the field, this thesis sought to consider, in greater depth, how al-Wāqidī practiced and produced history. Secondly, on the basis that this immediate aim potentially opened a space for more analytical thought, the thesis also posed to consider whether having acquired a greater appreciation of al-Wāqidī's method of practising and producing history would ultimately lead to an equally greater appreciation of al-Wāqidī's history in philosophical terms. Thirdly and finally, in view of the importance of the social, political and historical context, this thesis proposed to question the extent to which al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was a product of the time and space it was written in and where it outgrew the received knowledge. Providing a succinct summation of this work's response to these questions should present a clear overview of this thesis' main findings.

5.1 Principal Findings

The first chapter of this thesis discussed several issues regarding al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. It discussed the background of his tome, difference between history as a narrative and historiography as a discipline. It also discussed the positivist and

deconstructionist views of history. The second chapter dealt with the core issue in this research which is al-Wāqidī's method and his minute attention to chronology. It addressed in detail the major question of this research, that is, how al-Wāqidī practised and produced history. It was noted that addressing this question had intrinsic value in and of itself; little effort has gone so far into understanding al-Wāqidī's historical methodology. The findings of this thesis, in chapter two particularly, should therefore compensate for this lacking in the literature. In terms of practising history, this chapter outlined eleven methods for collecting historical data that were employed by al-Wāqidī in his biography of the Prophet's later life. These methods include: the collection of chronological facts, temporal facts, geographical facts and historical facts more widely; the attempted adjudication between competing historical facts; and the use of customary and traditional sources including isnād, learned scholars and ancestral and indirect narrations. In terms of producing history and chronology, on the other hand, chapter two identifies and scrutinises several devices and techniques that al-Wāqidī deploys in his narrative. These productive techniques include: the use of the Qur'ānic scripture as a means of revelation; the symbolism of the Prophet as a means of salvation; and the extensive use of culturally specific storytelling devices including dialogue, poetry and dream sequences. The chapter also focuses on the manner in which al-Wāqidī's text reflects the wider social and political rhythms of the time.

This chapter not only provides a concrete exposition of al-Wāqidī's historical methodology; analytically it also begins to address the second (al-Wāqidī's philosophy) and third questions (the social conditioning of al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*) of this research. In terms of the former, it was argued that unifying the different and disparate methods employed by al-Wāqidī was the concept of authoritative knowledge. That is, each of the ten methods used by al-Wāqidī had, at their core, claims to legitimate and authentic knowledge. In other words, al-Wāqidī made his historical method meaningful by anchoring it in methodological practices that could, at least at the time of his writing, be argued to offer authoritative knowledge. From the study it emerges that al-Wāqidī thought it possible to acquire and obtain authentic historical knowledge. By extension, it also implies that al-Wāqidī thought it possible to have unauthentic historical knowledge, the two points being mutually related. Moreover, in soaking his biography in authentic and authoritative history, al-Wāqidī would seem to be taking the view that history is objectively knowable and

recordable. Extensively analysing al-Wāqidī's methods of practising history, this research infers that for him history has value beyond the immediate worth of simply having this knowledge. His methods lend us insights into his wider philosophy of history, even if it is reached by supposition and left unarticulated by al-Wāqidī.

In the course of exploring and evaluating al-Wāqidī's techniques for producing history in chapter two, on the other hand, we are left with a different impression. Whilst al-Wāqidī may have theoretically subscribed to the view of an objectively knowable history, the techniques he uses to produce his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* belie the historical place and cultural space which largely conditioned the composition of his history. In focusing on specific culturally informed means of producing history (i.e. Qur'ānic scripture, the recurring theme of salvation, the extensive use of culturally specific storytelling devices such as dialogue, poetry and dream sequences, and the politicised and purposeful nature of certain aspects of the text), the analysis undertaken in chapter two and partly in chapter four logically leads to the conclusion that the means through which al-Wāqidī produced history were historically and culturally contingent and conditioned.

Moving further along with this irrefutable observation, the chapter "Al-Wāqidī's Historical Method: Gathering Information and Narrating History" establishes the fact that though al-Wāqidī's book was conditioned by the wider context in which it was written, it was not decisively determined by the given context in absolute terms. On the basis of concrete findings, the chapter proves that al-Wāqidī demonstrates a certain capacity for surpassing and outgrowing the historical and intellectual context he inherited. This observation is further confirmed in chapter four.

This finding is subjected to further scrutiny in chapter three, which compares al-Wāqidī's historical narrative to that of the eminent figures preceding him in the *maghāzī* canon, with special focus resting on one of his teachers, Maʿmar Ibn Rāshid. This chapter ultimately bears out that, whilst al-Wāqidī has endeavoured to move beyond the chronicle bequeathed to him intellectually (i.e. by seeking out historical data beyond Maʿmar's narrations), the history he produced in his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was very much influenced by and anchored to his intellectual inheritance. In this respect, al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* remains very much a product of the time and

place in which it was written, though enriched with a new dimension of fact-finding and meaning-making.

5.2 Implications of this Research for the Literature

These findings are important for several reasons. At the most foundational level, this research contributes to the secondary literature on al-Wāqidī by addressing the literature's principal oversight, namely the gap in our understandings of how al-Wāqidī practiced and produced history, that is, his historic methodology. At the very least, this should be of interest to scholars with a specific interest in al-Wāqidī and scholars with a broader interest in the sources of early Islamic history and the Prophetic biography. Further than that, it is necessary to stress the implications of this thesis at three levels of abstraction: the specific (al-Wāqidī studies); the general (the field of Islamic historiography); and the metatheoretical (the philosophy of history).

At the specific level, that is studies and research pertaining to al-Wāqidī, or at the very least studies pertaining to the early Islamic historians, this research has significant implications for how we think about al-Wāqidī, especially with regard to intermittently reoccurring debates about al-Wāqidī's scholarship, as outlined in the first chapter. In particular, the comparison between al-Wāqidī and one of his mentors, Maʿmar, reveals in extensive detail the multiple similarities between the texts, which in turn suggests that al-Wāqidī was, for the most part, faithful to the traditions transmitted to him (at least via Maʿmar, that is). The third chapter points to a few chains of authority used by al-Wāqidī but not corroborated by Maʿmar together with a small number of distorted traditions. About such discrepancies, the chapter suggests that they could be explained by other factors, such as scribal errors and errors in transmission. From the study, it becomes evident that the scope of al-Wāqidī's history surpasses Maʿmar's but this may logically imply, at the same time, that al-Wāqidī embellished his historical record. However, this study comes to the conclusion that the claim of embellishment is just an assertion rarely substantiated with evidence. Given that al-Wāqidī was manifestly faithful to his master's work in many respects, it is certain that al-Wāqidī was a faithful historian (at least in terms of his society's understanding of the term). Although, as this study finds out, al-Wāqidī was definitely interested in a more extensive history, Maʿmar's balance between rigour (adherence to tradition) and detail (extent of information) was evidently not something shared by his worthy pupil.

Moreover, the comparative section in chapter three on al-Wāqidī's and Ibn Ishāq's works hopefully will put to rest at least one fallacy in the literature, the claim that al-Wāqidī did not reference Ibn Ishāq. This research has pinpointed in greater detail the explicit references to Ibn Ishāq's work in al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. It has also hypothesised – not without justification – that some more such references may have existed prior to redaction. In doing so, it has tended toward the Marsden Jones school of thought as opposed to the Faizer school of thought: similarities between their texts exist because the two classical historians likely drew from common historical sources. In turn, this provides further credence to the main findings of this research, i.e., that al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* was very much anchored to the time and place whence it originated. The final chapter is mainly focused on the study of the devices al-Wāqidī's applies for meaning-making and, despite the limited war scope of the narrative, finds ways to idealise the life of the Prophet[sa]. It also explores the purpose of this idealisation at Madina, which apparently is to legitimise his spiritual, moral, political, and social hold in Madina.

Beyond the specific, this thesis has more general implications for the field of Islamic historiography as a whole. In drawing inspiration from more constructivist approaches concerned with how historians create meaning, as opposed to wallowing in critical introspection of the sources, this thesis hopefully contributes to thinking more specifically about a positive form of historiography. That is, if Islamic historiography is ultimately concerned with how early Islamic historians made meaning, then the field should be more focused on this rather than lingering on in the perennial problems associated with the aged and orally transmitted sources.

Finally, this thesis' findings have immediate value beyond the specific domain in which the research was conducted, specifically in respect of the philosophy of knowledge broadly and the philosophy of history specifically. In particular, this research as a whole points to the veracity of E.H. Carr's claims relating to the conditioned nature of the historian. Whilst al-Wāqidī may have, at least theoretically, subscribed to an objective understanding of history, particularly considering the way in which he practiced and produced history, this research makes us realise the conditioned and contingent nature of his *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. History in practice, as the search for meaning of the past, appears to have universal applicability especially when an

individual or a social group, to quote E.H. Carr yet again, is "self-conscious and therefore conscious of history".[1235] However, the way in which history is produced is necessarily conditioned by time and space, which is precisely what Carr means when he says that the "historian is part of history. The point in the procession at which he finds himself determines his angle of vision over the past".[1236] This study gives credence to this principle.

5.3 Areas for Further Research

Carr's thesis is, however, more subtle than this. His basic contention is that, though historically conditioned, the historian is nevertheless an agent of historical change. To quote Marx, in history it is "*man*, real living *man* who does everything, who possesses and fights".[1237] From this perspective, although conditioned by time and space, the historian nevertheless has the capacity to rise above their subjective location and act as an agent of change. The historian is, at the same time, both part of history and capable of influencing historical change. The most immediate and pressing question from this viewpoint, then, centres on the impact and influence that al-Wāqidī had on later historians, especially those whom he tutored and who would presumably have carried on al-Wāqidī's traditions. Further research would therefore seek an extensive comparison between al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* and the *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr* of his pupil, Muḥammad Ibn Saʿd. The research should focus on the extent to which Saʿd's work reflects al-Wāqidī's and, moreover, whether Saʿd's writings reflect Maʿmar's.   The special focus must rest on the extent to which traditions moved on from teacher to student, to student.

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[1235] E.H. Carr. *What is History* (London: Penguin, 1964), p. 134.
[1236] Ibid, p. 36.
[1237] Ibid, p. 49.

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