

envoy's rank accompanied him along the itinerary. Requirements in food and carriage were taken care of locally. The embassies were received in state in the cities and settlements on the way to the two capitals. The financial strain caused by the need to supply means of transportation and food proved too much for some of these localities, and the itinerary was occasionally changed and some exemptions were granted. The practice of paying for the expenses of foreign missions was, however, discontinued after 1792 when Yüsuf Ağâh Efendi was sent to London as the first Ottoman resident envoy abroad, when it became apparent that this usage was not enforced by foreign states.

Bibliography: Given in the article; see also V. Kopcan, *Osmanische Kriegsgefangene auf dem Gebiet der heutigen Slowakei in 16.-18. Jahrhundert, in Asian and African Studies*, xix (1983), 197-211.

(İLBER ORTAYLI)

MUBÂH (A.) 'licit, authorised', one of the five juridical qualifications [see AḤKÂM] of human acts [see *SHARĪʿA*].

MUBÂHALA (A.), synonym *mulāʿana*, literally 'mutual imprecation, curse' (e.g. "may God's curse over the one of us who is wrong, who lies"), implies swearing a conditional curse (e.g. "may God's punishment hit me, may I be cursed if...") and a purifying oath (cf. *b-h-l* VIII: *nabāhih*).

In fact, the term indicates: (1) spontaneously swearing a curse in order to strengthen an assertion or to find the truth; (2) a kind of ordeal, invoked for the same purpose, between disputing individuals or parties, in which the instigation or call to the ordeal is more important than the execution. Originally, both forms may have been some sacred elevation of the more profane *taḥkīm* [q.v.], or of some sacred, magical features of this or any other primitive way of performing divination. This is also clear from the fact that the term equally implies (3) a reference to a "historical" ordeal, the *mubāhala* (in a second instance also recognised as a legal remedy by adherents of the Sunna and *Shīʿa*), which, according to Sunnī and *Shīʿī* tradition, was proposed in the year 10/632-3 by the Prophet to a deputation of the Christian Balḥārīth b. Kaʿb from Nadjirān [see *HĀRIṬH* B. KAʿB]. This took place during a dispute on Christology and prophethood through examination of the "truthful" and the "liar", at the order of the apparently *ad hoc* revealed verse III, 54, of the Qurʾān which ostensibly suggested the "historical" ordeal (the *ʿilm asbāb al-nuzūl* and the *ʿilm al-tafsīr* in general relate the first 70-80 verses of Sūrat ʿImrān to this dispute). The Nadjirānis, who had been summoned to this and had had second thoughts, are said to have been given a respite for reflection and deliberation. Under the impression of the presumed calamity which most certainly was going to hit their community and native town, and of the increasingly growing certainty that Muḥammad indeed was the promised Prophet and an authorised messenger of God, they decided to request him to postpone the threatening curse. After an intermission for deliberation, both sworn groups, with their followers, met at a remote place (according to some, the Red Dune, *kathīb aḥmar*, later called *qabal al-mubāhala*, in the cemetery of Baḳīʿ al-Ḡharkad) where the ordeal was to be executed. According to the majority of the traditions, from which the very original ones, like those of Ibn Ishāk and Ibn Saʿd, must be excluded, both parties sent from their midst prominent personalities as sureties and witnesses to the place of the trial of strength. Fortunately for the Christians, it was, however, averted. Instead, the

Nadjirānis requested and received confirmed agreement, namely, an indissoluble treaty of protection (*ṣulḥ*, *muṣālaḥa*; *ʿahd*, *dhimma* [q.v.]), with most closely defined rights and duties of the *dhimmīs*.

The *mubāhala* account (perhaps through exegesis grown out of the abstract proposal to the ordeal as found in the Qurʾān rather than vice-versa), which is still fragmentary in Ibn Ishāk and others, soon became subject to enlargement and transformation as regards form and content. This certainly began during the lifetime of Ibn Hishām. In particular, it also underwent *Shīʿī* influence which is, in some features, even present in the accounts of the *ahl al-sunna*. Frame stories, earlier histories, interludes and after-pieces fill up the thin, original corpus and underline both the wondrous and the ominous elements of the *mubāhala*: prophecies, with eschatological perspectives, about the coming test of strength which were already pronounced during the council-meeting held by the Nadjirānis in their home town; ominous events during the journey; picture of the mimicry and gesticulation at the ordeal; interpolations in the deliberations, in the explanation of the moments of cession and of the hypothetical effects of the curse in case the ordeal should be put into practice. The *tafsīr* of the motivation, given by Ibn Ishāk (in Ibn Hishām), still unequivocally dominant before the *mubāhala* story had been arranged, decreases. The prelude to the ordeal, and especially the processing leading to it, obtains as much place as does the outfit of the persons on the stage of the ordeal, in particular the emphasis on the distinction of the sureties who, in the Sunnī tradition, are performers but who, in the *Shīʿī* tradition, even have a decisive role in the ordeal. Their number, at first probably limited, grows to four or five "people of the garment" (*aṣḥāb al-kisāʾ*, *ahl al-ʿabāʾ* [see *AHL AL-KISĀʾ*]). The Qurʾānic centre-piece, "Come here! We want to call together our sons and yours, our wives and yours, ourselves and yourselves", become for the *Shīʿīs* the corner-stone of their own tradition and interpretation of the ordeal. The nomination, function and position of the group of guarantors and witnesses become the centre of interest. To ʿAlī, Fāṭima, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn is opposed an equally prominent group of Nadjirānis, who are, however, not of the same quality as the first-mentioned. In addition, there takes place, in theory at least, an obvious association with the *Shīʿī tafsīr* of Qurʾān, XXXIII, 33, where the purification of the *ahl al-bayt* [q.v.] is mentioned: their purity, also brought forward in the *mubāhala*, liberates from guilt and protects from curse. Thus the highly-renowned *Shīʿī* garment traditions are fed from both sources. However, the *Shīʿī* development of the reports on the *mubāhala* and the garment are generally aimed at underscoring, through a suggestive investiture scene and its theological implication, the fact that the *ahl al-bayt* and their descendants have been chosen from eternity and that this has been confirmed over time more than once. Thus are emphasised their primal rights on the leadership of the community of the believers, that is to say, the principle of legitimacy, while at the same time the auguration and legitimisation of the Ḡhadir Khumm [q.v.] episode is effectively completed (cf. the *Shīʿī* feast of *mubāhala*, mostly celebrated on 21 *Dhu ʿl-Hijja* in connection with the remembrance of Ḡhadir Khumm on the 18th of the same "holy" *Shīʿī* month). Finally, in the esoteric doctrine of the extremist *Shīʿī ghuluww* [q.v.], the *mubāhala* is completely transposed into the mythical world, with replaced or doubled actors, linked together through a cosmic identity.

Bibliography: 1. Texts. Ibn Hishām, 401-11; Ibn Saʿd, i/1, 108, i/2, 84 f.; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 70 f.; Aghānī, x, 143; Tabarī, *Djāmiʿ al-bayān ʿan taʾwīl āy al-Kurʾān*, Cairo 1954, iii, 161 ff.; Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, Calcutta 1856, i, 207 f.; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Kurʾān*, Beirut 1966, ii, 47-52; idem, *Tafsīr al-Djalālayn*, Calcutta 1256, i, 281-3; Abū Nuʿaym, *Dalāʾil al-nubuwwa*, Haydarābād 1369, 197 ff.; Kummī, *Tafsīr al-Kurʾān*, Tehran 1315 A.H., 56; Djaṣṣāṣ, *Ahkām al-Kurʾān*, Istanbul 1335, ii, 14; Mirkhwānd, *Rawḍat al-safāʾ*, Tehran 1338 A.H., ii, 531 ff.; Muhammad Bakīr al-Madjlīsī, *Bihār al-anwār*, vi, Tehran 1323 A.H., 822 ff.

2. Studies. L. Massignon, *La Mubāhala de Médine et l'hyperdulie de Fāṭima*, in *Opera minora*, Beirut 1963, i, 550 ff.; R. Strothmann, *Die Mubāhala in Tradition und Liturgie*, in *Isl.*, xxxiii (1958), 5 ff.; W. Schmucker, *Die christliche Minderheit von Naḡrān und die Problematik ihrer Beziehungen zum frühen Islam*, in *Bonner Or. Studien*, N.S., xxvii/1, 183 ff. (W. SCHMUCKER)

MUBĀLAGHA (A.), verbal noun of the form III verb *bālagha* (fī), with the two related meanings of "to do the utmost [in s.th.]" and "to overdo [s.th.]", technical term in (a) grammar ("intensiveness") and (b) literary theory ("emphasis" and, more particularly, "hyperbole").

(a) In grammar. Already in Sībawayh, the term *mubālagha* is used to denote the intensive meaning of a number of morphemes and syntagmas (see G. Troupeau, *Lexique-index du Kitāb de Sībawayhi*, Paris 1976, 41). Most consistently it is henceforth applied to the intensive participles of the forms *faʿūl*, *faʿāl*, etc. Al-Sidjilmāsi (wrote ca. 704/1304) enumerates no less than 21 patterns for them under the general heading *ʿadl*, the term referring to nouns that are "diverged" (*maʿdūl*) from the active participle (*Manẓaʿ*, 272-3). When used for God's attributes, these forms are, according to some, not intensive per se, but refer to the multiplicity of their objects, while others consider their form to be non-literal (*maḍjāz*), according to al-Tahānawī (*Kashshāf iṣṭilāḥāt al-funūn*, ed. A. Sprenger, Calcutta 1862, i, 140).

(b) In literary theory. Although in the classical system of *ʿilm al-balāgha* the term *mubālagha* did come to mean "hyperbole", earlier theorists often protest against this narrow use and maintain that it means "emphasis, strengthening, heightening" in general, thus comprising "hyperbole" as one of its sub-categories. At the outset the situation is, however, rather confusing: the earliest writers do not use the term *mubālagha* at all, though they are quite aware of the existence of "hyperbole", which they call by various names (*Ṭhaʿlab* [d. 291/904]: *al-ifrāt fī ʿl-ighrāk* [*Ḳawāʿid*, 49], Ibn al-Muʿtazz [d. 296/908]: *al-ifrāt fī ʿl-ṣifa* [*Badīʿ*, 65], Ibn Ṭabāṭabā [d. 322/934]: *al-abyāt allatī aghraka kaʿlūhā fī maʿānīhā* [*ʿIyār*, 76]). Ḳudāma (d. 337/948) introduces the term *mubālagha*, though not in the sense of "hyperbole", for which he uses *ghulūw*, but to denote a very specialised type of emphasising (*ighāl* with later authors) in which a poetic idea is rounded out by a pertinent little exaggeration at the end of the line (*Nakd*, 77). He does, however, use *mubālagha* also in an untechnical way to describe the mechanism of *ghulūw*: the intention of hyperbole is "emphasis and image-forming (*tamthīl*, not the [literal] truth of a thing" (*Nakd*, 31, cf. also 27). Starting here, the "hyperbole" idea gradually spills over into *mubālagha*, although a man like Ibn Rashīk (d. 456/1063 or later) still defends the old meaning: those who reject "hyperbole" because of the untruth it entails mean *ghulūw* rather than

mubālagha, because, he says, "if all *mubālagha* were worthless and blameworthy, even simile would be worthless and metaphor would be blameworthy as well as the other beauties" (*ʿUmda*, ii, 85); obviously, all these figures serve to emphasise the poetic ideas to which they are applied. In Ibn Rashīk we also find the first systematic ordering of terms: *mubālagha*, now more narrowly understood as "intensification," comprises subcategories, such as *taḳāṣṣī* ("going to the limit"), *tarāduf al-ṣifāt* ("piling of descriptions one over the other"), and *ghulūw*. The enumeration is somewhat haphazard and probably not meant to be exhaustive. With the classical system of al-Ḳhaṭīb al-Ḳazwīnī (d. 739/1338), logical stringency is achieved: *mubālagha* is defined as "claiming that a certain quality, in intensity or weakness, attains an unthinkable or improbable degree", and it is subdivided, in accordance with the philosophical distinctions *mumkin-mumtaniʿ-mustaḥil*, "possible-impossible-unthinkable", into *tabligh*, *ighrāk*, and *ghulūw*, of which the second is possible in the mind, but not according to everyday experience, while the first and third are possible in both or neither, respectively (*ʿIdāh*, 514-16, *Talkhīṣ*, 370-1). This is the system represented in the nineteenth-century Western handbooks still in use (see Rückert, Mehren and Garcin de Tassy), which are based on al-Ḳazwīnī and later Arabic and Persian works.

Due to the inherent absurdity (*iḥāla*) of many hyperboles, *ghulūw* became a matter of dispute within the larger framework of untruth (*kaḍīb*) in poetry. Ḳudāma testifies to the existence of this literary feud in his time and opts for the permissibility of hyperbole by applying to it the adage *aḥsanu ʿl-ṣiʿri akḥabuh* (*Nakd*, 34-8). Others differ, and a sort of compromise emerges by postulating that a given hyperbole must survive the *kāda* test to be acceptable (thus already Ḳudāma, *Nakd*, 133, cf. Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī, *Ṣināʿalayn*, 375, Ibn Rashīk, *ʿUmda*, ii, 65), i.e., the hyperbole in question must admit of being rewritten with an explicit form of the verb *kāda* "to be close to [doing s.th.]" or some word to the same effect. There is no question that hyperboles were of great importance in *muhdath* poetry and in its Persian and Persianate successors, and the critics, even when averse to "lies" in poetry, had to come to terms with them. A conservative authority anonymously quoted by Ibn Rashīk says: "If poetry were [identical with] hyperbole (*mubālagha*) [apparently some went so far as to allege this], the sedentary people and the Moderns would be better poets than the Ancients" (*ʿUmda*, ii, 84). Others used the typical legitimising procedure of saying that the (or some) Moderns followed the Ancients in this respect (Ibn Ṭabāṭabā, *ʿIyār*, 81, al-Ḳāḍī al-Djurdjānī, *Wasāʾta*, 420-3). In any case, the idea that hyperbole was of the essence in traditional Islamic poetry became so engrained that in our time the Turkish poet Orhan Veli, in a poem critical of the old *Dīwān* poetry, referred to the latter as *mubālāga sanatı* "the art of hyperbole" (*Bütün şiirleri*, Istanbul 1966, 80).

Bibliography: 1. Sources. *Ṭhaʿlab*, *Ḳawāʿid al-ṣiʿr*, ed. Ramaḍān ʿAbd al-Tawwāb, Cairo 1966, 40, 46, 49; Ibn al-Muʿtazz, *K. al-Badīʿ*, ed. I.Y. Kratchkovsky, London 1935 (= GMS, NS, vol. x), 65-8; Ibn Ṭabāṭabā, *ʿIyār al-ṣiʿr*, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Nāṣir al-Mānī, Riyādh 1405/1985, 76-82; Ḳudāma b. *Djaʿfar*, *Nakd al-ṣiʿr*, ed. S.A. Bonebakker, Leiden 1956, 24-8 (*ghulūw*), 31-2 (in *madiḥ*), 77-8 (*mubālagha*), 131-3 (*ikāʿ al-mumtaniʿ*); Iṣḥāk b. Ibrāhīm b. Wahb al-Kātib, *al-Burhān fī wuḍūḥ al-bayān*, ed. Aḥmad Maṭlūb and *Khadija*