Contents

Preface to the English Translation (2023) IX
Acknowledgements to the French Edition (2011) XX
Translator's Note XXII
List of Illustrations XXIII

Introduction 1

1 A Time of Writings and Rewritings: Writing History in the Syrian Space 9
1.1 Narrative Islamic Sources and the Question of Their Transmission 9
1.1.1 *The Act of Writing and Modes of Transmission* 12
1.1.2 *Lost Sources and Historical Reconstruction* 15
1.1.3 *Formal Aspects:* Isnād *and* Khabar 18
1.2 Writing History in the Syrian Space under the Late Umayyads and Early Abbasids 23
1.2.1 *On the Origins of Islamic Historiography* 23
1.2.2 *Syrian Historiography in the Umayyad Era?* 29
1.2.3 *Forgotten Sources?* 46

2 A Time of Writings and Rewritings: Historiographic Filters and Vulgates 53
2.1 In Search of Umayyad Historiographic Projects 54
2.1.1 *"Common Link," "Collective* isnāds*," or Umayyad Historiographic Filters?* 54
2.1.2 *Marwanid Writings and Rewritings* 58
2.2 Toward a Historiographic Vulgate: The History of Syria Rewritten in Abbasid Iraq 68
2.2.1 *Layers of Historical Rewriting under the Early Abbasids* 68
2.2.2 *Al-Ṭabarī: The End of History?* 88

3 A Time of Writings and Rewritings: Sources on the Margins of the Historiographic Vulgate? 94
3.1 Islamic Sources on the Margins of the Vulgate? 95
3.1.1 *Second/Eighth Century Sources?* 95
3.1.2 *Space before Chronology* 103
3.1.3 *Other Perspectives* 108

3.2 Non-Muslim Sources: "External" or "Eastern" Sources? 118
3.2.1 *Intercultural Transmission* 121
3.2.2 *Theophilus of Edessa, the Chronology of Qartamīn and the Syriac Common Source* 123
3.2.3 *Other Christian Sources* 132
3.2.4 *Historical Apocalypses* 140

4 The Second/Eight-Century Syrian Space: Between Memory and Oblivion 145
4.1 *Memoria* as an Object of Study 146
4.1.1 *Islam and Memory* 147
4.1.2 Memoria *outside the Field of Islamic Studies: A Historiographic Overview* 150
4.2 Umayyad Memoria 156
4.2.1 *Umayyad "Realms of Memory"* 157
4.2.2 *The Early Abbasids and Umayyad Memory* 160
4.2.3 *Umayyad Memory and Culture* 175
4.3 Spaces of Memory 178
4.3.1 *The Distorting Prisms of Post-Sāmarrā' Historiography* 179
4.3.2 *Syrian-Umayyad* Memoria *versus Iraqi-Abbasid* Memoria: *A False Dichotomy?* 180
4.3.3 *The Syrian Space in Umayyad Ideology: Appropriation of Solomonic Precedent* 189

5 The Creation of Umayyad Heroes: Maslama b. 'Abd al-Malik, Combat Hero 200
5.1 The Siege of Constantinople: Military Failure, Narrative Success 202
5.1.1 *Epic Tradition and Monumental Legacy* 203
5.1.2 *The Expedition against Constantinople in the Islamic Chronographies* 206
5.1.3 *The Christian Sources and the Construction of Heroes* 215
5.2 From Hero of the Byzantine Frontier to Islamic Hero? 228
5.2.1 *The Competition for Heroisation* 229
5.2.2 *Maslama and the Borders of the World: A New Alexander?* 232
5.3 Eschatology and the Creation of Heroes 238

6 **The Creation of Umayyad Heroes: 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, the "Holy" Caliph** 249
6.1 'Umar II in the Islamic Tradition 250
6.1.1 *The Fifth Orthodox Caliph* 251
6.1.2 *A New 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb* 253
6.1.3 Mahdī *and* Mujaddid*: The Caliph of the Year 100 Hijrī* 256
6.2 'Umar II in the Christian Sources 262
6.2.1 *Muslim Apocalyptic and Christian Tradition* 262
6.2.2 *The Caliph's Image* 266
6.2.3 *A Chronology of these* topoi *in the Syrian Space: Propositions and Hypotheses* 270
6.3 Constructing the Image of the Holy Caliph: Stages and Conditions 271
6.3.1 Sunna *and* Sīra*: The Traditionists' Caliph* 271
6.3.2 *The Caliph and the Law: 'Umar II and Mālik b. Anas* 273
6.3.3 *The Circulation of Elements Related to 'Umar II: Propositions and Hypotheses* 278

7 **Interpreting the Abbasid Revolution in the Syrian Space** 284
7.1 The Abbasid Revolution: Medieval and Modern Vulgates 287
7.1.1 *The Revolutionary Canon* 287
7.1.2 *A Century of Interpretations of the Abbasid Revolution* 289
7.1.3 *The "Abbasid Revolution" and Modern Scholarship: Questions and Debates* 292
7.2 Syrian Memories of the Abbasid Revolution 299
7.2.1 *In the Workshop of Abbasid History* 302
7.2.2 *History Continues?* 306
7.2.3 *Ibrāhīm al-Imām* 312
7.3 'Abd Allāh b. 'Alī and the Allure of a Syrian Abbasid Caliphate? 314
7.3.1 *Strategies of Isolation* 314
7.3.2 *Confiscation for and by Messianism* 327

8 **Exercising Power in the Syrian Space in the Second/Eighth Century: A History of Meanings** 339
8.1 Patrimonialism and the Creation of a Caliphal Landscape 341
8.1.1 *The Construction of an Islamic Caliphal Landscape* 342
8.1.2 *Patrimonialism and Regionalisation of Powers* 346

8.2 The Mobile Exercise of Power 351
8.2.1 *The Need for Mobility* 352
8.2.2 *The "Umayyad Castles" as an Expression of Mobile Power* 365
8.2.3 *Mobility Lost* 385
8.3 Abbasid Reconfigurations 393
8.3.1 *The Banū Ṣāliḥ and Abbasid Syrian Patrimonialism* 395
8.3.2 *Competition for Mobility and Its Consequences* 399
8.3.3 *Between Damascus and Baghdad: Spaces of Caliphal Power* 403

Conclusion 414

Abbreviations 421
Sources 422
Bibliography 430
Index 496