

The History of the Khalifahs who took the right way

3rd Revised edition

a translation of the chapters on
al-Khulafa' ar-Rashidun
from
Tarikh al-Khulafa'
of

Jalal ad-Din as-Suyuti
Translated by Abdassamad Clarke



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Preface to the First Edition

May Allah bless the Prophet, his Family and Companions
and grant them peace

This is a new translation of the chapters on *al-Khulafa' ar-Rashidun* from as-Suyuti's *Tarikh al-Khulafa'*. These chapters shine with a genuine light.

I have continued beyond the first four *khulafa'* to include al-Hasan ibn ʿAli ibn Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, because he was the fifth of the *khulafa'* and he legitimately transferred the *khilafah* to Muʿawiyah, may Allah be pleased with him.

The translation lacks the majority of references to the books which are the sources of the *hadith* quoted, because whoever is interested will find the Arabic text easily available.

Furthermore the translation stays as close as possible to the original Arabic at the risk of a slight awkwardness in the English. Where necessary I have added within parentheses whatever seemed necessary for an understanding of the book.

The history outlined in these pages is further illuminated by a work which is even greater than it, but is itself an exposition that assumes a knowledge of what is in these pages, that is *al-ʿAwasim min al-Qawasim* ('Defence Against Disaster') by Qadi Abu Bakr ibn al-ʿArabi, may Allah show him mercy. Whereas as-Suyuti gives the most authentic traditions relating to these *khilafahs*, Qadi Abu Bakr lays bare the real significance of many of the events which as-Suyuti so expertly relates.

Preface to the Second Edition

Living as we do in ‘later times’ if not necessarily ‘last times’, it is fruitful to bear in mind Imam Malik’s saying, may Allah be merciful to him, “Only what was right for the first of this *ummah* will be right for the last of it.” This is even more clear to us ‘late ones’, since the fantasy of evolution, progress and development is increasingly being exposed for the hollow fiction it is.

The best of mankind and the best generations of humanity have already lived and passed on. We who are alive now hope to model ourselves on them, and so this book will be of greatest value to those who take it in hand as an aid and inspiration for establishing a just and illuminated civilisation in the present age.

Having realised the greatness of these men, the first *khulafa’*, may Allah be pleased with them, it is also vital for the reader to grasp the greatness of the most recent *khulafa’*, the Osmanli (Uthmaniyyah or Ottomans). Their history is proof that the khalifate of Islam has endured right down to our own day, since the demise of the Uthmaniyyah (1923) is, historically speaking, only yesterday. It is important to realise this – otherwise we may become trapped in the helpless idealism of those who romanticise the *Khulafa’ ar-Rashidun* and then regard the rest of Islamic history as a continuing and irreversible decline, rather than as a series of cycles of emergence, greatness, decline and renewal as natural and as breathtaking as the life-cycle of a flower. To counter that false picture of decline, I can recommend nothing better for the reader than *Osmanli history, 1289-1922: based on Osmanli sources* by Professor Mehmet Maksudoglu.

It is clear from the whole texture of the lives of the great men painted so graphically within the pages of the book now in your hands, that they were not building a so-called ‘Islamic state’ – but that rather they typified the very form of prophetic Islamic governance, which has nothing in common with the modern bankers’ control technique that is statism. This is confirmed by the work of Professor Maksudoglu, who was the first to refuse to refer to the Osmanlis as the Ottoman ‘Empire’, and who went on to conclude that neither were they a ‘state’, since a state is a fictitious entity that legislates, whereas a *dawlah*¹ brings Allah’s revealed *ahkam* (judgement-rulings) into effect.²

It remains to draw the reader’s attention to Shaykh Abdalqadir as-Sufi’s book, *The Return of the Khalifate*, which exposes in most extraordinary detail the actual technique used to destroy the most recent khalifate of Islam – the names of the principle parties, the dates, and the sums of money involved. It was not by military conquest or superior technology that the destruction occurred, but by means of an unstoppable, exponentially growing, usurious debt which was presented to the Osmanlis as the only means of achieving a developed technology and systems culture.

The creation of that debt, owed to entities hostile to the *ummah*, can only have been possible in the ambience of supportive *fatwas* made from within the *ummah* by ‘*ulama*’ of modernist persuasion – *fatwas* which are now seriously in doubt, because it is so clear that they completely fail to consider the inherent nature and intrinsic worthlessness of the money used, the deceptions involved and the underlying objective – while simultaneously either displaying a

¹ *Dawlah*’s root meaning signifies a ‘turn of fortune’, revealing a dynamic concept utterly opposed to the static concept of ‘state’; it is organic growth as opposed to concrete and plastic.

² Also in accordance with the Professor’s work, we follow him in not translating *fath* as ‘conquest’ but as ‘opening [to Islam]’, and the *Fath Makkah* as ‘the Opening of Makkah [to Islam]’ rather than the ‘Conquest of Makkah’.

profound ignorance of the true nature and undoubted sophistication and superiority of the *fiqh* of Islamic commerce or being beguiled by their own superficial mastery of that very sophistication into devising means to circumvent the *fiqh* and permit usury. Today, only a few well-paid Islamic bankers, associated intellectuals and '*ulama*' still seek to maintain that what Allah has forbidden is permitted as long as the interest rate being charged is 'reasonable' and described as 'Islamic' or falsely concealed as a 'legitimate service charge' or a 'profit-sharing transaction'.

The Osmanli debt was based on nothing more complicated than writing some numbers on pieces of paper and then subjecting them to a compound mathematical formula in order to make them grow. The Osmanli were caught in the same trap that continues to ensnare most of us today, and which is perpetuated by our acceptance of the quite sinister power we have unwittingly handed over to a group of shadowy people to print money and then charge interest for its use, thus creating their wealth out of nothing, at our expense.

If that were the entire story, then it would only be bad news, but Shaykh Abdalqadir also draws attention to the logical corollary: a return to the Muslims' traditional bi-metal currency as being the correct and only way out of transitory decline after this 'second interregnum' in the Osmanli Khalifate. This remedy confirms the words with which we began: "Only what was right for the first of this *ummah* will be right for the last of it."

Contrary to those whose concept of the restoration of the khalifate is akin to the idea of building a house starting with the chimney and then proceeding to build roof, walls, floors and finally foundations, we see its restoration proceeding from the re-laying of the foundations of Islam, i.e. a return to the *halal* and non-usurious modes of transacting in Islam, first and foremost using the currency of the Muslims, the gold dinar and silver dirham, an important element of which will be the use of the e-dinar, a non-usurious utilisation of the Internet (<http://www.edinar.com>) according to the *fiqh* of transactions.

The most significant aspect of this initiative, and one which is an individual obligation on every Muslim man and woman, is the restoration of the dormant pillar of *zakat*, collected by *zakat* collectors – empowered by *amirs* – in gold dinars and silver dirhams, as was done by our Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and all the *khulafa'* who followed after, throughout history, until shortly before our own time.

This re-invigoration of the collection and distribution of *zakat*, combined with the concomitant cleansing of usury from the economic practice of the Muslims, will *insha'Allah* inexorably bring about a revival of the inner and social riches of Islam – in parallel with the inevitable self-destruction of the usurious monetarist system that has so enslaved mankind and polluted the earth during the last centuries.

In that programme we will need constantly to bear in mind the luminous human and spiritual qualities that the Islam of the Last Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, brings about in the people who actually live it as exemplified by these noble men, the Khalifahs who took the right way.³

This book is in honour of the khalifate to come; may Allah make it shine as brightly as those which have been.

Abdassamad Clarke
Charlottenlund, Denmark
Rabi' ath-Thani 1422/June 2001

³ *Rashidun* is translated as “who took the right way” as opposed to “rightly guided” since although the latter passive sense is the correct translation of *mah-diyyun*, *rashidun* has the more active sense indicated.

Preface to the Third Edition

Little was meant to have changed in this edition apart from a slight expansion of the appendix and the placement in the footnotes of some text previously located in parentheses in the body of the book, but then we restored as-Suyuti's own accounts of the sources of his *hadith* and narrations. It is probably the greatest indication of the profound changes that have taken place in the interim since its first publication, when it was felt unnecessary and perhaps even burdensome to the reader to include that material. The reader must on his part follow the author in his careful explication of this science and not reduce it to the simplistic search for only traditions from the two *Sahih* collections.

After extensive research I found no reason to revise the footnote about the death of al-Hasan, may Allah be pleased with him, and the alleged hand of Yazid in it.

Ironically, this book is being widely cited by Shi'ah sources because of its luminous chapter on Sayyiduna 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, may Allah honour his face, but it would be a serious mistake to take that chapter out of the context of all of these *Khulafa'* and Companions, may Allah be pleased with all of them without exception. As-Suyuti's penetrating insight is best illustrated by the fact that the chapter on Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, may Allah be pleased with him, is equal in volume to all of the other chapters combined, and contains proof after proof of his uniquely high standing and his prior right to the *khalifate*, many of them transmitted from Sayyiduna 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, may Allah honour his face.

Finally, I have included the Arabic text of the *du'a* taught by the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, to al-Hasan in a dream, as it is a part of the last words from him, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, in the book, and for the blessing of this wonderful *du'a*.

Abdassamad Clarke, Norwich
Tuesday 4th Rajab 1429/8th July 2008

Abu Bakr as-Siddiq

may Allah be pleased with him

Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, may Allah be pleased with him, was the *khalifah* of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. His name was ‘Abdullah ibn Abi Quhafah ‘Uthman ibn ‘Amir ibn ‘Amr ibn Ka‘b ibn Sa‘d ibn Taym ibn Murrah ibn Ka‘b ibn Lu‘ayy ibn Ghalib al-Qurashi at-Taymi, whose genealogy connects to that of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, in Murrah.

An-Nawawi said in his *Tahdhib*: What I have said, that the name of Abu Bakr as-Siddiq was ‘Abdullah, is correct and well known. It is said also that his name was ‘Ateeq, but the truth upon which the generality of the men of knowledge agree is that ‘Ateeq (the one set free) was an affectionate nickname and not his own name and he was given that name on account of his having been set free from the Fire as has been narrated in the *hadith* of at-Tirmidhi; and it is also said, on account of his face’s *‘itaqah*, that is to say its goodness and beauty, as Mus‘ab ibn az-Zubayr, al-Layth ibn Sa‘d and a whole group said; and it has also been said that it is because there is nothing in his genealogy to be found fault with.

Mus‘ab ibn az-Zubayr and others said, ‘The *ummah* agree unanimously on his being named as-Siddiq because he hastened to affirm the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and adhered steadfastly to truthfulness, and he was not remiss nor did he hesitate in any state or condition. He made exalted stands in Islam, among which was his story on the Night of the *Isra’*, his steadfastness and his replying to the *kuffar* about it.

There is also his emigration with the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, leaving his family and children, and his remaining by the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, in the Cave and on the rest of the journey (of the Hijrah). Then there are his words on the Day of Badr, and on the Day of Hudaibiyyah when the matter of delaying entry into Makkah seemed unclear to others. There is his weeping when the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Allah has given a slave the choice between this life and the next (and he has chosen the next)." Later there is his steadfastness on the day of the death of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, his addressing the people and his stilling them. There is his undertaking the matter of the oath of allegiance for the benefit of the Muslims, and then his diligence in sending the army of Usamah ibn Zaid to Syria and his determination on that. Then there is the stand he took over those who reneged (on their Islam) and his exchange of views with the other Companions until he overcame their arguments with his proofs, and Allah expanded their breasts as He had expanded his breast to the reality and truth, which was to fight the renegades. Then there is his equipping the armies to go to Syria to conquer it and his support of them. Then he sealed all of that by an important action which was one of his best deeds and most majestic of his virtues – his appointment of ʿUmar, may Allah be pleased with him, as *khalifah* of the Muslims, (and his perceptiveness concerning him, his bequeathing to him, and his entrusting the *ummah* to Allah, so that Allah, the Mighty and Exalted, made him succeed among them as the best *khalifah*, and for ʿUmar, who was one of his good actions, were realised the establishment of Islam, the strengthening of the *deen* and the fulfilment of the promise of Allah, the Exalted, that He would make it manifest over the *deen*, all of it.) How many qualities, stations and virtues of as-Siddiq there are which just cannot be numbered.'

The above is from an-Nawawi.

I say: I want to expand upon the introduction to as-Siddiq somewhat, mentioning about him much that I have discovered of his life, and to arrange that in sections.

His name and affectionate nickname

Ibn Kathir said that all admit that his name was ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Uthman, except for the narration of Ibn Sa‘d on the authority of Ibn Sirin which asserts his name to have been ‘Ateeq whereas the truth is that that was his affectionate nickname. Then there is some disagreement as to the time of his being so named, and the reason for it; for some say that it was on account of the *‘itaqah* of his countenance, that is, its beauty – but Abu Nu‘aym al-Fadl ibn Dukayn said that it was on account of his priority in merit – and also it is said on account of the nobility of his pedigree, that is its purity, as there is nothing in his lineage that can be accounted a stain; and it is said too he was first so named and afterwards called ‘Abdullah.

At-Tabarani narrated that al-Qasim ibn Muhammad questioned ‘A’ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, as to the name of Abu Bakr, and she replied, ‘Abdullah.’ Then he said, ‘The people call him ‘Ateeq.’ She answered, ‘Abu Quhafah had three sons whom he named ‘Ateeq, Mu‘taq and Mu‘aytaq.’

Ibn Mandah and Ibn ‘Asakir narrated that Musa ibn Talhah said: I said to my father Talhah, ‘Why was Abu Bakr called ‘Ateeq?’ He said, ‘His mother had no son surviving and when she gave birth to him, she faced towards the House (the Ka‘bah) with him and exclaimed, “O Allah if this one is ‘Ateeq (free) from death then give him to me.”’

At-Tabarani narrated that Ibn ‘Abbas said: He was only called ‘Ateeq because of the beauty of his face.

Ibn ‘Asakir narrated that ‘A’ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, said, ‘Abu Bakr’s name which his family called him by was ‘Abdullah, but the name ‘Ateeq became the dominant usage.’ In

a version, 'But the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, called him 'Ateeq.'

Abu Ya'la, Ibn Sa'd and al-Hakim, who declared it *sahih*, narrated that 'A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, said, 'By Allah, I was in my house one day and the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and his companions were in the courtyard, a curtain between me and them. Abu Bakr came up and the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Whoever is pleased to look upon one who is free from the Fire then let him look upon Abu Bakr." The name which his family knew him by was 'Abdullah but 'Ateeq became the dominant usage.'

At-Tirmidhi and al-Hakim narrated that 'A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, said, 'Abu Bakr entered upon the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, who said, "Abu Bakr, you are the one Allah has freed from the Fire." From that day he was known as 'Ateeq.'

Al-Bazzar and at-Tabarani narrated with an excellent *isnad* that 'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr said, 'Abu Bakr's name was 'Abdullah, then the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said to him, "You are Allah's freed one from the Fire." So he was known as 'Ateeq.'

As for the name as-Siddiq, it is said about it, 'He was given the affectionate nickname in the *Jahiliyyah*, because of the truthfulness for which he was known' as Ibn Musdi mentioned. It has been said also, 'Because of his haste in affirming the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, in that of which he informed.'

Ibn Ishaq narrated that al-Hasan al-Basri and Qatadah said: The first time that he became known for it was the morning after the Night of the *Isra'*.

Al-Hakim narrated in the *Mustadrak* that 'A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, said: The idolaters came to Abu Bakr and said, 'What do you think of your Companion? He claims that he was taken this night to Bait al-Maqdis (Jerusalem).' He replied,

‘Did he say that?’ They said, ‘Yes.’ He said, ‘He has definitely told the truth. I believe and affirm him in matters more remote than that: the news from heaven in the early part of the morning and in the evening.’ For that reason he was called as-Siddiq. Its *isnad* is excellent, and that has also been narrated from *hadith* of Anas and Abu Hurayrah, for which Ibn ‘Asakir gave *isnads*, and Umm Hani’, which was narrated by at-Tabarani.

Sa‘id ibn Mansur narrated in his *Sunan*: Abu Ma‘shar narrated that Wahb the freed slave of Abu Hurayrah said: When the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, returned on the night in which he was made to travel (to Jerusalem), and he was at Dhu Tuwa, he said, ‘Jibril, my people will not believe me.’ He (Jibril) said, ‘Abu Bakr will believe you, and he is as-Siddiq.’

Al-Hakim narrated in the *Mustadrak* that an-Nazzal ibn Sabrah said: We said to ‘Ali: ‘Amir al-Mu‘minin, tell us about Abu Bakr.’ He said, ‘That man, Allah named him as-Siddiq on the tongue of Jibril and on the tongue of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. He was the deputy of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, for the prayer; he was contented with him for our *deen* and so we were pleased with him for our worldly affairs.’ Its *isnad* is excellent.

Ad-Daraqutni and al-Hakim narrated that Abu Yahya said: I cannot count the number of times that I heard ‘Ali say upon the *minbar*, ‘Truly Allah named Abu Bakr through the tongue of His Prophet, a *siddiq*.’

At-Tabarani narrated with an excellent *sahih isnad* that Hakim ibn Sa‘d said: I heard ‘Ali say, and he swore upon it, ‘Allah definitely revealed from heaven the name of Abu Bakr, as-Siddiq.’

In the *hadith* of Uhud, ‘Be still, for there are only upon you a Prophet, a *siddiq* and two martyrs.’

‘Abu Bakr’s mother was the daughter of his father’s paternal uncle (she was his father’s cousin). Her name was Salma bint Sakhr ibn

‘Amir ibn Ka‘b. She was given the *kunyah* (surname) Umm al-Khayr (Mother of good),’ said az-Zuhri as narrated by Ibn ‘Asakir.

His birth and early life

He was born two years and some months after the birth of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and he died when he was sixty-three years old.

Ibn Kathir said: As for that which Khalifah ibn al-Khayyat narrated that Yazid ibn al-Asamm said, that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said to Abu Bakr, ‘Am I older (*akbar* – also greater) or you?’ And he said, ‘You are greater than me but I have more years than you,’ it is a *mursal* (attributed directly to the Prophet without mention of the Companion from whom it was heard) *ghareeb* (unusual, in having a single reporter at some stage of the *isnad*) tradition, and what is well known is the opposite (i.e. the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was older), and it is true only of al-‘Abbas (that he was some years older than the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace).

His early life was in Makkah, which he only left for trade, and he had great wealth among his people, complete manliness, and munificence, and courtesy among them, as Ibn ad-Daghniyyah said, ‘You join ties of kinship, you are truthful, you attain what others are denied, you support those in need, you help in difficult times, and you are hospitable to the guest.’

An-Nawawi said: He was one of the chiefs of Quraysh in the *Jahiliyyah*, one of their counsellors, beloved among them, and the wisest in the direction of their affairs. Then when Islam came he preferred it over everything else, and entered into it perfectly and completely.

Az-Zubayr ibn Bakkar and Ibn ‘Asakir narrated that Ma‘ruf ibn Kharrabudh said: Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, may Allah be pleased with him, was one of ten men of Quraysh who united pre-eminence in *Jahiliyyah* and Islam. He had responsibility for the settlement of

blood-money and debts. That was because Quraysh had no king to whom all affairs could be referred. Rather in each tribe there was a general area of responsibility which resided in its chief; so that Banu Hashim had responsibility for giving (the pilgrims) to drink, and feeding them (by collecting from the tribes of Quraysh), meaning that no-one ate or drank except from their food and drink. Banu ʿAbd ad-Dar had responsibility for being the doorkeepers and guardians (of the Kaʿbah) and for the banner and council, i.e. no-one could enter the House without their permission, and whenever Quraysh fastened on the banner of war, the Banu ʿAbd ad-Dar bound it for them, and whenever they assembled together for a matter, either to confirm or annul it, their assembly could not be anywhere but in the House of Council, nor decided upon except there, and it belonged to Bani ʿAbd ad-Dar.’

Abu Bakr was the most abstinent of men in the *Jahiliyyah*

Ibn ʿAsakir narrated with a *sahih isnad* that ʿAʾishah, may Allah be pleased with her, said: By Allah, Abu Bakr never spoke poetry (i.e. he never ‘composed’ poetry) either in the *Jahiliyyah* or in Islam, and he and ʿUthman gave up drinking wine in the *Jahiliyyah*.

Abu Nuʿaym narrated with an excellent *isnad* that she said, may Allah be pleased with her: Abu Bakr had forbidden himself wine in the *Jahiliyyah*.

Ibn ʿAsakir narrated that ʿAbdullah ibn az-Zubayr said: Abu Bakr never ever spoke poetry.

Ibn ʿAsakir narrated that Abuʾl-ʿAliyyah ar-Riyahi said: It was said to Abu Bakr as-Siddiq in a gathering of the companions of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, ‘Did you drink wine in the *Jahiliyyah*?’ He said, ‘I seek refuge in Allah.’ Someone said, ‘Why?’ He replied, ‘I tried to protect my honour and guard my manliness, for whoever drinks wine will lose his honour and his manliness.’ He said: That reached the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and he said, ‘Abu Bakr

has told the truth, Abu Bakr has told the truth,' twice. It is a *mursal ghareeb hadith* in both *isnad* and text.

His description

Ibn Sa'd narrated that 'A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, said that a man said to her, 'Describe Abu Bakr to us.' She said, 'A fair man, of slender build, thin cheeked and with a stoop; he could not keep his lower garment from slipping over his loins; gaunt-faced, eyes deep-set, with a prominent forehead, and the backs of his hands fleshless. This is his description.'

He narrated that 'A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, said that Abu Bakr used to dye [his hair and beard] with henna and indigo (*katam*).

He narrated that Anas said: The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, went to Madinah and there was no-one among his companions having hair of mixed white and black except Abu Bakr, so he dyed it with henna and indigo (*katam*).

His acceptance of Islam

At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Hibban, in his *Sahih*, narrated that Abu Sa'id al-Khudri said: Abu Bakr said, 'Am I not the most suitable of people for it (the *khilafah*)? Am I not the first to accept Islam? Am I not the one of such-and-such? Am I not the one of such-and-such?'

Ibn 'Asakir narrated by way of al-Harith who related that 'Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, said: The first among men to accept Islam was Abu Bakr.

Ibn Abi Khaythamah narrated with a *sahih isnad* that Zaid ibn Arqam said: The first to perform the prayer with the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was Abu Bakr as-Siddiq.

Ibn Sa'd narrated that Abu Arwa ad-Dawsi the Companion, may Allah be pleased with him, said: The first to accept Islam was Abu Bakr as-Siddiq.

At-Tabarani narrated in the *Kabir* and 'Abdullah ibn Ahmad [Ibn