

The history of the industrial and commercial area of ‘Abbāsīd Al-Raqqā, called Al-Raqqā Al-Muḥtariqa

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I. *Introduction*¹

The urban complex of al-Raqqā² was the largest urban entity west of Baghdad in the western part of the ‘Abbāsīd empire, until the foundation of Sāmarrā’ in the third/ninth century (see Figure 1). Al-Raqqā/al-Rāfiqa was even larger than the former Umayyad capital Damascus, a fact which is now almost forgotten. The reasons for this lie partly in the development of Arab historiography. In its formative period, during the fourth/tenth century, al-Raqqā had declined considerably and its fate was much overshadowed by the decline of the other imperial metropolis Sāmarrā’, a major theme in the chronicles then.³

In a vast urban complex such as al-Raqqā/al-Rāfiqa, different areas and districts have differing histories, for example, the core of the almost rectangular Hellenistic city of Kallinikos/Callinicum, the later monasteries, most importantly Dair al-Zakkā, north of al-Raqqā at the top of the ancient settlement mound of Tall al-Bi‘a (see map, no. 1), the almost horse-shoe shaped fortified ‘Abbāsīd garrison city al-Rāfiqa west of it (no. 6) and north of both the palace area from the time of Hārūn al-Rashīd’s residence. In the middle of these urban precincts lay a quarter which is currently under archaeological study, the industrial area.

Two major independent sources are valuable for the reconstruction of the history of the industrial and commercial area—the literary sources of the Arabic chronicles and the coin finds. The coin finds from the industrial district⁴ in particular represent an independent source for settlement patterns within the urban area over time in comparison with the finds from Tall al-Bi‘a,⁵ from the palace area and from the congregational mosque of

¹ For the history of al-Raqqā see also Michael Meinecke: ‘al-Raqqā’, in EI² VIII, 410–14, and Heidemann (2002, 2003a). I owe a debt of gratitude to the late Michael Meinecke who first brought me to the site of al-Raqqā to study its history and coin finds. The present study would not have been possible without the kind invitation by Julian Henderson, University of Nottingham, to take part in the excavation season in al-Raqqā in 2001 in order to continue my ongoing studies on al-Raqqā and al-Rāfiqa with a close look at the literary sources for the industrial area and the coin finds from his mission as an independent source. I also benefited from the discussion with Keith Challis during the excavation season. Alastair Northedge kindly improved the language and added some comments.

² Al-Raqqā has two distinct meanings in ‘Abbāsīd sources. In general it denotes the entire urban agglomeration composed of all suburbs and sub-cities; but the Arabic al-Raqqā also stands for the Hellenistic foundation Kallinikos (in contemporary Syriac spelling Qalliniqōs).

³ On the sources about al-Raqqā see Heidemann (2003a), 9–11.

⁴ The coin finds of Tall Aswad and Tall Zujāj are published in volumes *ar-Raqqā I* (Heidemann 1999) and *Raqqā II* (Heidemann 2003d, 187–95) of the series of the German Archaeological Institute. The 232 coins from the seasons 1996, 1998 and 2000 of the British Archaeological Mission to al-Raqqā are currently under study by the present author.

⁵ Excavation of the Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft and the Syrian Antiquity Authority under the direction of Eva Strommenger-Nagel. The coins finds are under study by the present author and are currently being prepared for publication in the series ‘Ausgrabungen in Tell Bi‘a, Tuttul, Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft’.

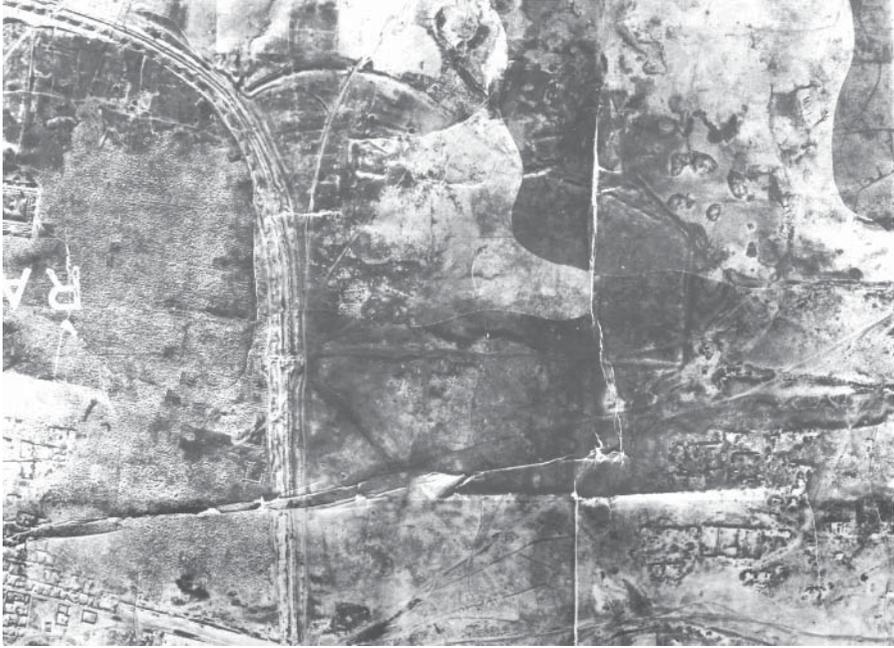


FIG. 1. French aerial view, about 1930, of the western part of al-Raqqā al-Muhtariqa between al-Raqqā/Kallinikos and al-Rāfiqa

al-Rāfiqa.⁶ This evidence can be compared with the topography visible on early aerial views of al-Raqqā taken during the 1920s and 1930s.

In 1985 a sounding was begun in Tall Aswad,⁷ north-east of al-Raqqā/Kallinikos, by the German Archaeological Institute under the direction of Michael Meinecke. Since 1992 Julian Henderson (University of Nottingham) has continued the exploration of this extended industrial site. In 1992 and 1993, glass furnaces at Tall Zujāj were discovered. In 1994, the project became the ‘British Archaeological Mission to al-Raqqā’ and included geological and environmental surveys.⁸ The excavations continued with further soundings within the industrial zone: Tall Fukkhār,⁹ Tall Abū ‘Alī and Tall Ballūr.¹⁰ In 2004 Keith Challis and Gary Priestnall presented a new archaeological and topographical analysis on the basis of the Corona satellite images on al-Raqqā with special reference to the industrial quarter.¹¹

These pottery and glass-producing facilities served the needs of the caliphal residence of Hārūn al-Rashīd as well as those of the prospering city. According to Julian Henderson the glass factories in al-Raqqā were among the earliest sites where remarkable technological changes in glass technology can be

⁶ Both are excavations of the the German Archaeological Institute and Syrian Antiquity Authority under the direction of Michael Meinecke and Murhaf al-Khalaf. For the coin finds see also Heidemann (2003d).

⁷ Miglus (1999). For the coin finds see Heidemann (1999).

⁸ On the glass furnaces found and the reconstruction of technological processes see Henderson (1994, 1996, 1998, 1999a, 1999b, 2000) and Henderson et al. (2004). For industrial and environmental issues see Henderson et al. (2002) and Challis and Priestnall (2002).

⁹ Tonghini and Henderson (1998); Henderson and McLoughlin (2003), 144; Henderson et al. (2004), 441–2, 451–2.

¹⁰ Henderson and McLoughlin (2001), 144, suggested a dating of the mound between the fifth/eleventh and sixth/twelfth century. The coin finds support only an ‘Abābsid dating.

¹¹ Challis et al. (2004).

detected (at the end of the second/turn of the eighth–ninth century): the switch from the use of mineral alkali to plant ashes (potassium, Arabic *ushnān*) as the source for alkali needed as flux in the glass production. Such plants, which usually grow at the desert margin, were readily available and probably far cheaper than minerals. Potassium lowered the melting temperature, thus cutting production costs further.¹² Julian Henderson associated these technological changes at least in part with the famous alchemist Abū Mūsā Jābir ibn Ḥayyān (d. probably 200/815), who is known to have had an interest in the use of colourants in the glass-making process.¹³ He was a client of Jaʿfar al-Barmakī (d. 187/803) and had to seek refuge in al-Kūfa after the fall of the Barmakids in 187/803. In conclusion, although it is not stated explicitly, Jābir ibn Ḥayyān was likely to have been a citizen of al-Raqqā.¹⁴ The soap making industry is closely connected with the technology of glass; both processes needed alkali as raw material.¹⁵ The technological and economic aspects of pottery production are currently under study by Marcus Milwright.

II. *The layout of the commercial and industrial area*

The industrial and commercial sector of al-Raqqā covered only a part of the urban area. Aerial views from the 1930s and the Corona images show its boundaries. It lay between the twin cities al-Raqqā/Kallinikos and al-Rāfiqa stretching further to the area north of al-Raqqā/Kallinikos and south of Tall al-Bīʿa. According to aerial views and geological surveys five main streets opened up this area.¹⁶ These streets might in future help to define the still unknown run of the city walls and the locations of the gates of al-Raqqā/Kallinikos. The northern main road (map, no. 36) runs from the east gate or *Bāb al-Sibāl*¹⁷ (map, no. 8) eastwards in the direction of the north-western corner of al-Raqqā/Kallinikos, which is not yet archaeologically defined. From there it follows parallel and eastbound the northern city wall on its northern side, passing several mounds of medieval industrial debris; these are sites of industrial activity: Tall Fukhkhār, a ceramic producing site, and Tall Ballūr, Tall Abī ʿAlī and Tall Zujāj (map, no. 31), all glass workshops. The street seems to end finally in the north-east of al-Raqqā/Kallinikos at Tall Aswad (map, no. 32), a mound consisting of ruins of pottery kilns, sherds, wasters and industrial debris. The second street runs from the *Bāb al-Sibāl* south-eastwards, presumably to the western gate of al-Raqqā/Kallinikos which is also not yet defined. The gate in the south-west of al-Raqqā/Kallinikos was called *Bāb al-Ḥajarain*, and led to the cemetery of the victims of the battle of Šiffīn.¹⁸ West of the *Bāb al-Ḥajarain* stood the *Masjid al-Janāʿiz* or

¹² Henderson (2000), esp. 88; Henderson (2002), esp. 598–9, Henderson (2003) and Henderson et al. (2004).

¹³ Sarton (1927), 532 claims that Jābir ibn Ḥayyān worked with manganese dioxide as colourant.

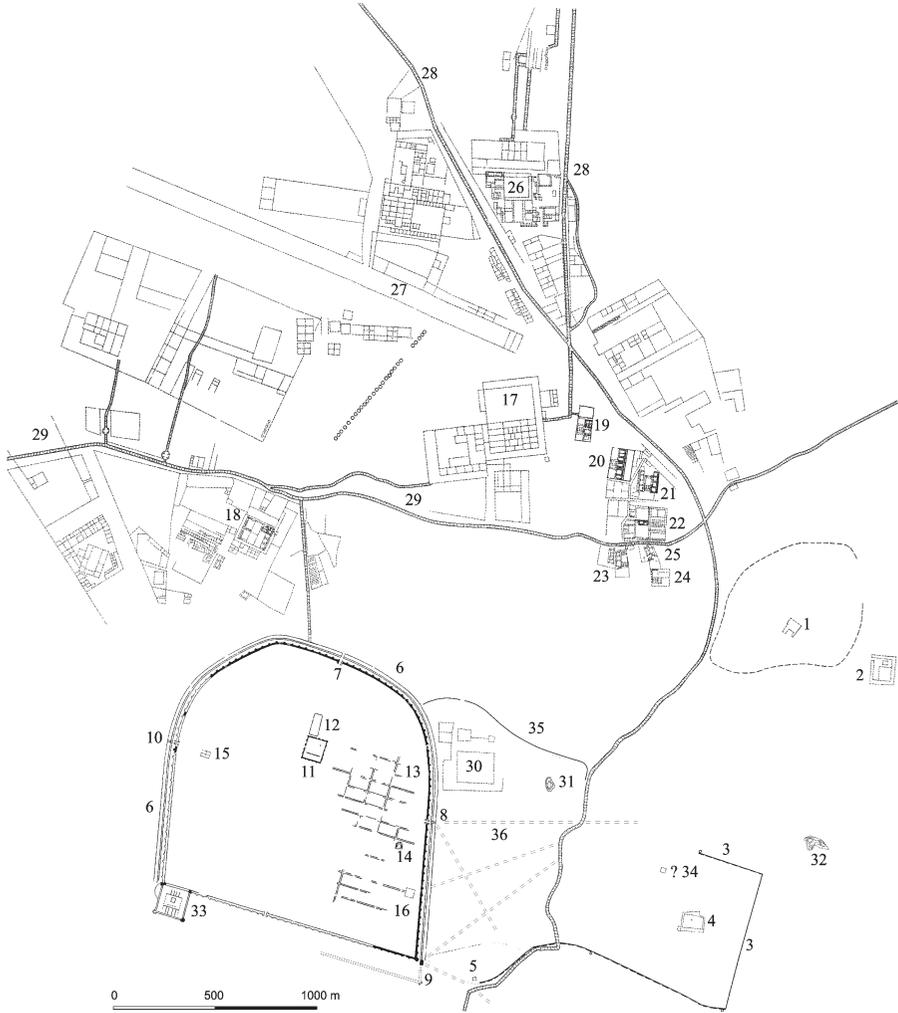
¹⁴ Henderson and McLoughlin (2003), 145; Henderson et al. (2004), 461. The historicity of Jābir ibn Ḥayyān and his oeuvre was much discussed during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Fuat Sezgin (1971, 132–269, see also 3–30; 1964) established the historicity of the person. But his opinion that all Arabic texts under his name might be ascribed to him was seriously challenged by Ullmann (1971, 198–208). On the identification of the author of the treatises of the alchemist Geber, the Latin form of Jābir, see Newman (1985, 76–90). Many of his chemical and metallurgical treatises remain unpublished and thus to be explained.

¹⁵ See n. 55 below and thus to be explained.

¹⁶ Khalaf and Kohlmeyer (1985), ill. 2 (map). For the French aerial views of about 1930 see S. Heidemann and A. Becker (eds), *Raqqā II—Die islamische Stadt*, Mainz, 2003, pl. 4 and 5. For an analysis of the Corona images Challis et al. (2004), 146–8 and fig. 2.

¹⁷ On this gate see Ibn Shaddād, Aʿlāq III, 71. Heidemann (2003a), 27, 32.

¹⁸ Qushairi, *Tārīkh*, ed. al-Naʿsāni, 141, 164; ed. Šālih, 156, 186. Ḥassūn (1993) 229–228; Heidemann (2003a) 19–20.



Map: German Archaeological Institute/Jena University

1) Dair al-Zakkā. 2) Roman-Byz. Square Building. 3) Walls of Kallinikos/al-Raqqā. 4) Congregational Mosque of al-Raqqā. 5) Mausoleum of Uwais al-Qaranī. 6) Walls of al-Rāfiqa. 7) North Gate. 8) East Gate or Bāb al-Sibāl. 9) Bāb Baghdad. 10) West Gate. 11) Congregational Mosque of al-Rāfiqa. 12) Cistern. 13) Street Grid. 14) Qaṣr al-Banāt. 15) So-called 'Church'. 16) Square Complex. 17) Main Palace of Hārūn al-Rashīd. 18) Palace A. 19) Palace B. 20) Palace C. 21) Palace D. 22) North Complex. 23) Western Palace. 24) Eastern Palace. 25) East Complex. 26) Northeast Complex. 27) Hippodrom. 28) North Canals. 29) West Canal/Nahr al-Nīl. 30) Sāmarrā'-Period Complex. 31) Tall Zujāj/Glass Tell. 32) Tall Aswad. 33) Ayyūbid Citadel. 34) Mausoleum of Yaḥyā al-Gharīb. 35) Wall of Ṭāhir ibn al-Ḥusain. 36) Main Street of al-Raqqā al-Muḥtariqa.

Mashhad al-Janā'iz which could not be archaeologically located either.¹⁹ Close to the Bāb al-Ḥajarain was the Khandaq al-Raqqā, the city's moat. This *khandaq* may be identified with the later canal leading from the north to the

¹⁹ Its existence is proved from the fourth/tenth century on until the end of al-Raqqā in the seventh/thirteenth century; Qushairī, *Tārīkh*, ed. al-Na'sānī, 164; ed. Šālih, 186 (*Masjid al-Janā'iz*); Ibn Shaddād, *A'lāq III*, 72 (*Mashhad al-Janā'iz*). Hassūn (1993) 229. Qushairī names a descendant of the Prophet Abū 'Abdallāh from a Khurāsānian Family, who lived at the *Bāb al-Ḥajarain* at the moat of al-Raqqā (*Khandaq al-Raqqā*), as the founder of the mosque.

south.²⁰ The interpretation of the canal as the *khandaq* is strengthened by the observation that there appears to be no moat enclosing the entire city walls. Both northern streets cut deep into the smooth plateau formed by settlement and industrial debris according to the aerial views.

The third street begins about 400 metres south. It leaves the city at gate 2, north of tower 11.²¹ A square building of about 25 × 25 metres with an open square adjunct to its north, seems to be the point of depart within the city enclosure. The building seems to have an inner court with *rivāqs* and four tower-like structures (map, no. 16). However, this may be only the substructure. It dates presumably either to the ‘Abbāsīd or Zangīd-Ayyūbid period.²² This third street runs to the north east, crossing the second street and aiming probably as well to the north western corner of al-Raqqā/Kallinikos. The fourth and the fifth streets, departing from the Baghdad Gate²³ (map, no. 9), mark the southern boundaries of the commercial and industrial area. The fourth street runs, like the second and third, to presumably the same focus at the north-western corner of al-Raqqā/Kallinikos. At this focal point a city gate of al-Raqqā/Kallinikos might have been likely. The fifth street cuts through the cemetery of Šifīn, runs south-west and passes the south-eastern corner of al-Raqqā/Kallinikos.²⁴ It might be of modern origin.

Al-Raqqā is known to have had an important main harbour for inland transportation;²⁵ this was necessary not only for rapid communication with Baghdad but also for shipping food and raw materials and exporting industrial products. To enter the city proper by ship from Baghdad in the time of Hārūn al-Rashīd’s residence, the famous scholar of prophetic traditions al-Wāqīdī (d. 207/823) had to pass a checkpoint (*maudi’ al-jawāz bil-Raqqā*) and stay in a poor, simple guesthouse (*khān nuzūl*).²⁶ Most of the ships used on the middle Euphrates seem to have been light carriers, called *ḥarrāqa*.²⁷ Archaeologically the port has not yet been located. One can suggest tentatively, on the basis of economic utility, that the bank of the Euphrates south of the industrial district between the main sub cities might have been a suitable location.

²⁰ See note 19 above.

²¹ On the archaeological situation between tower 10 and 11 see Hagen (1985), 126, 130 n. 27, pl. 43 c.

²² This complex was probably mentioned in the travel report by William F. Ainsworth (1888, 288) from 1836 (‘ruins of a caravanserai at the south-eastern gate’); Sachau (1883) 242 (‘einige Mauerreste in der Südwestecke des Stadtgebietes’). See also Khalaf and Kohlmeyer (1985), 151–60, esp. 158; Heidemann (2003a), 54. This building was never investigated. It is well placed into the ‘Abbāsīd street grid of al-Rāfiqa which continued to exist until the Ayyūbid period. The small gate 2 north of tower 11 obviously connected the square complex with the area outside, east of the city wall, suggesting probably either an ‘Abbāsīd origin in about the third/ninth century or an Zangīd-Ayyūbid complex built during the reconstruction of al-Rāfiqa.

²³ The Bāb Baghdad is probably a building from the late 5th/11th to 6th/12th; Heidemann (2003a) 48–49; Heidemann (2006) Hillenbrand (1985) 27–36. This later date of the gate might speak as well for a later origin of the fourth and fifth street. For a different view of the dating see Korn (2004).

²⁴ The description of the streets is based on the following photographs: Paris, Institut Géographique National—Photothèque Nationale Esc. 56:A 92/27-6-1922, 7h 3.500—26ZGC; (Reproduction DAI 1987). Paris, Institut Géographique National—Photothèque Nationale Photo c. 1930 (DAI Damascus 1988–2199 and 2200, P. Grunwald). Photo June 16 1936 (DAI Damascus, 1989-38-465, P. Grunwald). Photo c. 1930s (DAI, Damascus, 1989-38-461, P. Grunwald). A detailed topographical map in Khalaf and Kohlmeyer (1985).

²⁵ Ya’qūbī, Buldān, 250 ll. 18–20; 237, l. 18–21. For further sources about shipping and al-Raqqā see Heidemann (2003a) 29 n. 221.

²⁶ Ibn Sa’d, Tabaqāt V, 314–21, esp. 315–16, 319.

²⁷ The *ḥarrāqa* is mentioned in connection with al-Raqqā: Ibn Sa’d, Tabaqāt V, 319; Mas’ūdī, Murūj, ed. Barbier de Meynard, VI, 351; ed. Pellat IV, 227 §2549. On *Ḥarrāqa* on the Euphrates, see also Tabarī III, 684; tr. Bosworth, 225, n. 775; Bosworth suggested the *ḥarrāqa* were light craft, because a fire-ship used for war seems not to be appropriate in the cases mentioned. See also Fahmī (1980), 134–6.

III. *The history of the commercial and industrial district*

Originally founded by the Seleucids, Kallinikos became one of the fortified cities at the Byzantine–Sāsānian border. In the year 18/639 an Islamic army under ‘Iyād ibn Ghanm took the city by agreement. Several companions of the prophet Muḥammad settled in al-Raḡqa, as well as some important scholars of the prophetic traditions (*ḥadīth*). Members of the ruling Umayyad house had estates in al-Raḡqa and its neighbouring regions. Nevertheless, al-Raḡqa/Kallinikos remained a multi-religious city with a large Syriac-Christian, a Jewish and a small pagan Šābian community. The symbol of the Christian town was the monastery called Dair al-Zakkā at the top of the ancient settlement mound, now known as Tall al-Bī‘a (no. 1).²⁸ A second important monastery lay between al-Raḡqa/Kallinikos and the future al-Rāfiqa within the later commercial and industrial district. It was called the ‘monastery of the columns (*dērā d-estūnā*)’ or the *Bizūnā* monastery.²⁹

During the Umayyad period al-Raḡqa was a small and unimportant town. But the ruling Umayyad family’s agricultural investments in irrigation canals and the cultivation of their estates must have produced a degree of wealth and prosperity. During the late Umayyad period and the following ‘Abbāsīd-‘Alīd seizure of power, al-Raḡqa and the Diyār Muḍar—the western part of the Jazīra—became an area of military struggle and unrest. The population of northern Syria and the Diyār Muḍar in general and of al-Raḡqa in particular continued to have Umayyad leanings during the early ‘Abbāsīd period.³⁰ The earliest market known in the historical literature was that established north of al-Raḡqa/Kallinikos at the Bāb al-Ruhā’ after the Islamic conquest. It served as the commercial exchange between Muslims, probably mainly military personnel, and the indigenous population. It is the area of the later glass and ceramic production facilities with Tall Aswad to its west.³¹ In 155/771–2 the caliph al-Manšūr decided to build a fortified garrison city west of al-Raḡqa in order to reorganize the border defences against Byzantium, and to stabilize ‘Abbāsīd power in northern Syria, Cilicia and northern Mesopotamia. He named it al-Rāfiqa, literally ‘the companion’. An eastern Iranian, Khurāsānian, detachment, loyal to the ‘Abbāsīd cause, was settled here.

‘Alī ibn Sulaimān, governor of northern Mesopotamia between 166/782–83 and 169/785,³² transferred the ‘old market of the caliph Hishām (*sūq Hishām al-‘atīq*)’ from within al-Raḡqa into the free land between the two cities. This old market had probably served for the provision of the desert city and residence of Hishām (r. 105–32/744–50) at al-Ruṣāfa, south of al-Raḡqa.³³ The reason for this move might have been an improvement in economic exchanges between the population of the garrison town of al-Rāfiqa and that of the established city of al-Raḡqa/Kallinikos. It is probable that the markets in al-Raḡqa had become physically too small to supply the demands of such an

²⁸ Krebernik (1991); Kalla (1991); Kalla (1999).

²⁹ For the location of this monastery see Michael XII.VII, 494; tr. Chabot III, 26. Hage (1966); Krebernik (1991), 51–2.

³⁰ Cf. Tabarī III, 706.

³¹ Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 173. Heidemann (2003a), 27.

³² At an earlier point in his career ‘Alī ibn Sulaimān was governor of Mecca; ‘Uṣfuri, *Tārikh*, 358. In the year 166/782–3 ‘Alī ibn Sulaimān was appointed governor of the Jazīra; Azdi, *Tārikh*, 247. In the year 168/784–5 al-Tabarī mentions ‘Alī ibn Sulaimān as governor of the Jazīra and Qinnasrīn; Tabarī III, 521; tr. Kennedy, 240. Kindī, *Wulāt*, 131–2, mentions him being governor of Egypt from 169/785 to 171/787. Ibn Shaddād, *A‘lāq* III, 21, notes that the caliph Mūsā al-Hādī deposed ‘Alī ibn Sulaimān as governor of the Jazīra in 169/785–6. His name appears on Egyptian dinars dating from 170/787–8 and 171/788–9. He died in 186/802–3; Azdi, *Tārikh*, 303.

³³ Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, ed. ‘Athamina VI B, 82. Heidemann (2003a), 22.

important military settlement. The new location of the market might have helped to curb the presumed tensions between the Khurāsānians and the indigenous population. The latter were hostile towards the military settlement, at least at the beginning of the construction work of al-Rāfiqa. They expected a rise in their own costs of living.³⁴ This move of the markets must be seen as the start of the commercial and industrial area. Al-Balādhurī reports:

It is said, that there was no ancient trace [of settlement] at al-Rāfiqa. Rather the Commander of the Faithful al-Manṣūr built it in the year 155 [771–2 AD] according to the layout of his city in Baghdad. He ordered an army from the people of Khurāsān [to be stationed] in it. This happened under the supervision of al-Mahdī, who was the designated heir apparent (*walī 'ahd*). Then al-Rashīd built its palaces (*quṣūruhā*). There were between al-Raqqā and al-Rāfiqa areas of agriculture (*faḍā' mazāri'*). When 'Alī ibn Sulaimān ibn 'Alī came as governor (*walī*) into the Jazīra, he moved the markets of al-Raqqā to this land. The greatest *sūq* of al-Raqqā was previously known as *Sūq Hishām al-'Atīq*. When al-Rashīd came to al-Raqqā, he began to enlarge those markets, which are still taxed together with domain-land (*ṣawāfi*)³⁵ [which was free and distributed by the caliph].³⁶

As governor of the Jazīra, 'Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Sulaimān al-Hāshimī, frequently called 'Alī ibn Sulaimān,³⁷ had responsibilities for the religious cult (*ṣalāt*), the military administration (*ḥarb*) and the taxes (*kharāj*).³⁸ The last duty is closely connected with economic life. He is also known to have commissioned an emission of copper coins in the city of Sinjār in the year 167/783–4,³⁹ which is another indication of his attention to urban market activities. In 168/783–4 al-Mahdī Muḥammad ordered him in a letter to rebuild the city of al-Ḥadath in the Cilician Thughūr province.⁴⁰ Probably during his term in office, large quantities of copper coins were imported from Iraq into the Jazīra for the benefit of urban commerce.⁴¹ His term ended in the year 169/785–6, when he was promoted to governor of Egypt.⁴² In Tall Aswad, probably the oldest site excavated within the industrial district, the coin finds start with coins imported from al-Kūfa and their local imitations.

In the year 180/796–7 Hārūn al-Rashīd chose al-Raqqā for his new imperial residence and seat of the government of an empire stretching from northern Africa to Central Asia. He ordered the construction of palaces north

³⁴ Ṭabarī III, 374; tr. Kennedy, 67–9. Heidemann (2003a), 25.

³⁵ For the term *ṣawāfi* see Løkkegaard (1950), 51–2 and Morony (1981), 155.

³⁶ Balādhurī, Futūḥ, 179; tr. Hitti, 280. In brief see also in Ibn Faḳīh, Mukhtaṣar, 132. The taxation of the markets together with the free crown-land or domains (*ṣawāfi*), which were distributed by the caliph, may be connected with the fact that the new markets were located on such land, formerly used for agriculture.

³⁷ Cf. his name in Ṭabarī, III, 493, 500, 521; tr. Kennedy, 207, 215, 240.

³⁸ Azdī, Tārikh, 247.

³⁹ Heidemann (2003b) 118 n. 9, pl. 60. Known specimens: Tübingen University collection, (AM8-A2; 7.07g; 25mm; 2h; without date), (AM8-A3; 1.89g; 21mm; 12h) and 2 specimens deposit L. Ilisch (1.27g; 19mm; 12h), (1.38g; 20mm; 1h). Collection D. Schnädelbach (no. 1; 2.06g; 19mm; 6h; name of the official not legible). Private collection in the Middle East (2.02g; 19mm; 3h; photo Oriental Coin Cabinet Jena). A. H. Baldwin and Sons, London, *Islamic Coins 5* (January 2003) [fix price list], no. 33 (7.61g; without year, illustration). This emission names the governor 'Alī ibn Sulaimān, whereas the name of the mint official is not clear on any known specimen.

⁴⁰ 'Uṣfuri, Tārikh, 357. Al-Ḥadath, located between Malatiya und Sumaisāt, was partially destroyed during a Byzantine winter raid in Kānūn 162/Dec. 778–Jan. 779; Azdī, Tārikh, 210.

⁴¹ See section IV below. For an extensive discussion of this phenomenon see Heidemann (2003c).

⁴² See n. 32.

of the twin cities. The viziers and high ranking officials followed the caliph to his new residence and built palaces there as well. The main body of the administration, however, remained in Baghdad. In order to serve the increasing need for everyday pottery, glass and luxury products among the entourage and the growing population, the commercial and industrial zone was enlarged, according to the passage cited above. One of the new buildings within the area is probably named in one source. Under the year 246/860–1 al-Qushairi mentions the *Funduq Husain al-Khādim* within the suburb of al-Rāfiqa (*rabaḍ al-Rāfiqa*).⁴³ The founder is probably to be identified with Husain al-Khādim, a high-ranking eunuch of Hārūn al-Rashīd.⁴⁴ A *funduq* is like a *khān* or a caravanserai, a safe place where foreigners can stay and merchants can store their goods.⁴⁵

The numismatic evidence shows that the various sites within the industrial area began their activity between the governorate of ‘Alī ibn Sulaimān and the period of Hārūn al-Rashīd. A likely indication of an earlier beginning, before the foundation of al-Rāfiqa, would be a significant group of coins of al-‘Abbās ibn Muḥammad, governor of the Jazīra between 142–155/759–772.⁴⁶ They are frequent at other sites within the Diyār Muḍar. These coins, however, are not among those found in the commercial and industrial district.⁴⁷

The excavation at Tall Aswad reveals the area to be a major ceramic production site with many kilns. The site produced unglazed, moulded and high-quality glazed pottery. Petrographic analyses by R. B. Mason and E. J. Keall compared with results from other regions show that some potters from southern Iraq, specifically al-Baṣra, were working in al-Raqqā.⁴⁸ A well-known bowl from a Christian potter from al-Hīra further supports this suggestion.⁴⁹ It is not unlikely that Hārūn al-Rashīd ordered the transfer of whole workshops to al-Raqqā in order to provide everyday and luxury wares for the new inhabitants of the palace compounds.⁵⁰ Comparison with the pottery from the contemporary city of Ḥiṣn Maslama in the north of the Balikh valley confirmed that the production served not only local urban needs but was destined for export at least to the whole region of the Diyār Muḍar.⁵¹

Minerals suitable as colourant for glass production or glazing pottery were probably found south of al-Raqqā on the other side of the Euphrates between al-Ruṣāfa and Tadmur at the Jabal Bishr. This place was, at least in the Ayyūbid period, known to have fine white sands ‘like lead white (*kal-isfidāj*)’

⁴³ Qushairī, *Tārīkh*, ed. al-Na’sānī, 154; ed. Ṣāliḥ, 170. Challis et al. (2004) misread ‘*Funduq Husain al-Khādim*’ in Heidemann (2003a) as ‘*Funduq al-Qadim*’. Challis identified it with that building which is called here ‘Sāmarrā’-period complex’. The identification of the ‘Sāmarrā’-period complex with the *Funduq Husain al-Khādim*, which is mentioned briefly in al-Qushairī’s text, would be an overstatement of the literary evidence.

⁴⁴ Ṭabari III, 680, 705, 766, 967, 1042; tr. Bosworth, 219, 254; tr. Fishbein, 5, 242, tr. Bosworth, 103.

⁴⁵ R. Le Torneau, *Funduq*, in *EF* II, 945.

⁴⁶ Fals, al-Jazīra [Harrān], without year, Nützel (1898), no. 2260; Lavoix (1887), no. 1568.

⁴⁷ Only one ‘Abbāsīd coin prior to the foundation of al-Rāfiqa was found. It names Ismā’il ibn ‘Alī, governor of Mosul between 134–142/751–761 (Heidemann, 1999, no. 3, Fals, without mint and year, Nützel 1898, no. 2243–6). Although this coin is found within the area, it was mixed with the debris of Tall Aswad, where some Roman and Byzantine coins were found alike. Its significance to date the whole industrial area into an earlier period is low.

⁴⁸ Mason and Keall (1999).

⁴⁹ National Museum Damascus, inv. no. 2546/09668; ‘Ushsh (1960), 140–41, 171–2, plate 1, 2 no. 8, plate 15 no. 22.; ‘Ushsh (1963), 37, plate 11, no. 56; ‘Ush et al. (1980), 160, fig. 27; Meinecke (1982), 177–8 no. 252; Gonnella (1999), 57–8; Haase (2003), 108 no. 46; Heidemann (2003a), 33–4.

⁵⁰ For the construction of Madinat al-Salām workers came from all over Syria, the Jazīra and Iraq to Baghdad; see Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan*, 121; Lassner (1980), 175 and for al-Rāfiqa see Meinecke (1996), 24–5.

⁵¹ Bartl (2000), 298.

which were then used as colourant in glass production in Aleppo, according to Yāqūt.⁵² There are also some suggestions of glass production in the texts. For example al-Muqaddasī (d. 381/991)⁵³ describes al-Raqqa as follows: 'It is a source of fine soap (*ma'dan al-ṣābūn al-jayyid*) and olives'.⁵⁴ The production of soap requires ashes of halophytic plants with a high alkali content. These ashes were needed as flux in glass production.⁵⁵

Soon after the sudden death of Hārūn al-Rashīd in 193/809, near Tūs in Khurāsān, his widow Umm Ja'far al-Zubaida organized the relocation of the court back to Baghdad. Al-Raqqa, however, remained for many decades the capital of the western provinces of the empire including Egypt. In the year 196/811–2 the power of al-Amīn, son and successor of Hārūn al-Rashīd, collapsed within the Jazīra. Latent tensions between the Khurāsānian garrison and the Arab tribal auxiliaries (*zawāqil*) became apparent. Their most prominent leader was Naṣr ibn Shabath. In this year when the Arab auxiliaries were called to duty and gathered in the urban area of al-Raqqa a violent conflict broke out which resulted in a devastating fire.

These 'Umar⁵⁶ and Naṣr were rebels, they throw fire in the quarter/market (*b-sūqā*)⁵⁷ between Rāpīqā and Qalliniqōs and they set the Monastery of the Columns (*dērā d-estūnā*) on fire.⁵⁸

A few years later, in 203/818, this monastery became the stage for the installation of Patriarch Dionysios I. This would indicate only the partial destruction, or the restoration, of the monastery.⁵⁹ Later, this monastery can no longer be detected in the sources. It can only perhaps be suspected that the so-called 'mosque suspended on columns' (*masjid mu'allaq 'alā 'umūd*), mentioned by al-Muqaddasī, took its place.⁶⁰

In Muḥarram 198/September 813 al-Ma'mūn's supreme general, Ṭāhir ibn al-Ḥusain conquered Baghdad after a long and devastating siege. Without the order from al-Ma'mūn he allowed al-Amīn to be killed. As a kind of punishment and in order to remove him from the centre of power, Ṭāhir was appointed governor of the western provinces including Egypt with its seat in al-Raqqa, away from Baghdad or the imperial residence of al-Ma'mūn, then Marw, in eastern Khurāsān. In order to keep him militarily engaged, one of

⁵² Yāqūt, *Buldān* I, 631. Yāqūt, who lived in Aleppo during the Ayyūbid period, reports that in his time these sands were used for glass production in Aleppo. It can be assumed that the quality of this sand was already known in the 'Abbāsīd period. *Jabal Bishr* was mentioned by earlier Umayyad poets cited by Yāqūt.

⁵³ Miquel (1963), xvii–xxi; A. Miquel, al-Muqaddasī, in *IEP* VII, 492–3.

⁵⁴ Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan*, 141 (citation), 145. For further references to the soap making industry in al-Raqqa, see Anonymous, *Medicines* I, 554 line 18, 586 line 9. Cf. Margoliouth (1927), 323. A hint for the soap production could also be the nisba of a Qāḍī of al-Rāfiqa named Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Ja'far ibn Ahmad known as Ibn al-Ṣābūnī. He could not be dated further; Sam'ānī, *Ansāb*, ed. al-Bārūdī III, 28.

⁵⁵ Ashtor and Cevidalli (1983), 479–82 on the connection of soap and glass industry. Henderson (2002), esp. 598.

⁵⁶ He was imprisoned for some time in al-Raqqa. After his liberation in the period of turmoil he became a rebel; Michael XII.VII 491; tr. Chabot III, 21 (there: 'Amr); Barhebraeus, *Chronicon*, tr. Budge, 124.

⁵⁷ *Shūqā* in Syriac means street, quarter and as well market. See also Robinson (2003), 85.

⁵⁸ Michael XII.VII, 494 (left column), tr. Chabot III, 26, tr. Khalaf and Kohlmeyer (1985), 149 (*hāydēn 'Umar w-Naṣr māroḍē armīw nūrā b-šūqā d-bēt Rāpīqā l-Qalliniqōs w-awqedw l-dērā d-estūnā*). Krebernik (1991), 51–2. Khalaf and Kohlmeyer (1985), 140, 161, presumed a connection of this fire with traces of soot at the Justinian city wall of Kallinikos, which might be an overstatement. On the political background to the uprising see Cobb (2001), 120–21; Orthmann (2002), 382–3.

⁵⁹ Michael XII.X; tr. Chabot III, 43 (ordination of Dionysios).

⁶⁰ Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan*, 141.

Ṭāhir's duties ought to have been the suppression of the Arab Bedouin rebels in the Jazīra, notably Naṣr ibn Shabath, who constantly raided the region. But Ṭāhir was not interested in wasting his military power fighting Bedouins in their own domain, where they are supposed to be superior. Instead he waited for a chance to re-enter the scene of imperial politics. He reached a *modus vivendi* with the Bedouin leaders, much to the dissatisfaction of the harassed urban and sedentary population. Michael the Syrian, and subsequently Barhebraeus, report that in the year 1127 of the Seleucid era (beginning 22 Ṣafar 200/1, October 815) Ṭāhir turned his eyes away from the misdeeds of the rebels and built a protecting wall: 'And he built between Qalliniqōs and Rāpīqā a wall and it was made strong'.⁶¹ This wall could be explained as an attempt to separate the two cities,⁶² the one dominated by indigenous Christians and Arabs and the other, the military city of the Khurāsānians. Another explanation seems to be more plausible and in accordance with the evidence from aerial views: the wall was built in order to protect the commercial area from Bedouin raids. Challis et al. suggested a curvilinear 'boundary' north of the commercial and industrial district as a possible limit of the area.⁶³ They suggest that it could perhaps be associated with the above-mentioned wall protecting the commercial district. French aerial views from the 1920s and 1930s (Figure 1) clearly show a wall beginning at the north-east of the city wall of al-Rāfiqa curving eastwards and turning to the south at the canal (map, no. 35).⁶⁴ This presumed wall of Ṭāhir ibn al-Ḥusain protected the commercial and industrial area west of the canal from attacks from the north. Its visible course did not cover the industrial sites north of al-Raḡqa/Kallinikos, leaving them unprotected. Perhaps in this area there was no housing and no valuables to loot, except kilns, furnaces and workshops.

In 1953 and then in 1969 the Syrian Antiquity Authority undertook soundings east of the city wall of al-Rāfiqa, north of the main street of the commercial area running from the Bāb al-Sibāl eastwards. Aerial views show an almost square compound of about 200 × 200 metres and some construction adjunct to the north of it (map, no. 30). The soundings within the square compound of Kassem Toueir revealed several rooms decorated with stucco in the bevelled Sāmarrā'-style.⁶⁵ The numismatic evidence also points to continuous activity in this complex, later than 210/825–6 and probably even later than the middle of the third/ninth century.⁶⁶ Based on the above-mentioned quotation of

⁶¹ Michael XII.IX, 500; tr. Chabot III, 36 (*wa-hnā šūrā bēt Qalliniqōs l-Rāpīqā w-ethsen*). Barhebraeus, Chronicon, tr. Budge, 128. For *ethsen* see Payne-Smith (1897–1901), col. 1334.

⁶² According to Robinson (2003), 85.

⁶³ Challis et al. (2004), 147–8, fig. 6.

⁶⁴ Aerial views, German Archaeological Institute Damascus, neg.-no. 1988/2200 (reproduction with kind permission of the IFAPO), published in S. Heidemann and A. Becker (eds): *Raḡqa* II, p. 263 pl. 5, and V. Daiber and A. Becker (eds): *Raḡqa* III, pl. 85. Khalaf and Kohlmeyer (1985) ill. 2 (topographical map) show a canal running from the south to the north and the distinct curvilinear wall as elevation. Schirmer (1987), 61, shows in his topographical sketch of the area the flatter eastern part of the 'boundary' as a canal. Looking at the shades of the aerial view it distinguishes itself clearly as a wall. It is possible that this fortification may have had a fosse. Later Meinecke (al-Raḡqa. In: *EI*² VIII, 410–14, map) and all subsequent maps interpret this elevated boundary incorrectly as a canal. A different site of Ṭāhir's wall was suggested by Kai Kohlmeyer. He considered the possibility of identifying a wall adjunct to the west to the last identifiable Byzantine tower at the south-western corner of Kallinikos as Ṭāhir's construction; Khalaf and Kohlmeyer (1985) 138 (ill. 5), 161–2 (sounding 1, area ABC).

⁶⁵ The 1953 sounding is mentioned briefly in Meinecke (1991), 234. The Sāmarrā'-style stucco in Daiber and Becker (2004), pl. 16c comes from the 1953 sounding, east of al-Rāfiqa. For the 1969 sounding see Voüte (1971–72), 123; Heidemann (2003a), 37–9. Toueir (2004) provides a full report. See below n. 101.

⁶⁶ Heidemann (2003d), no. 99, 103, 106, 110. Heidemann (2004).

Michael's chronicle about Ṭāhir's construction between the two cities, K. Toueir incorrectly interpreted this Sāmarrā'-period complex as a Ṭāhirid residence, although the Ṭāhirids ruled in Khurāsān during the Sāmarrā'-period. Michael Meinecke followed him in this preliminary suggestion.⁶⁷ Two rows of small rooms on different levels, one facing east and opening on to a paved passageway, the other west and probably also opening on to a different passage, can be seen perhaps as two rows of shops.⁶⁸ However, Toueir does not provide the precise location of these rows of premises on the map of the complex. A further sounding, south of the fourth street within the cemetery of Ṣiffīn, by M. al-Khalaf and K. Kohlmeyer, yielded Sāmarrā'-style pottery as well.⁶⁹

Tall Aswad was the largest, easternmost, pottery-producing facility. Its location was probably determined by the thick smoke emissions and the direction of the wind. It is possible on the basis of the coin finds to suppose that activity in Tall Aswad declined in the first half of the third/ninth century, as Tall Aswad lay exposed north-east of al-Raqqā/Kallinikos, most vulnerable to nomadic attacks. The latest dated coin of this site is from 210/825–6.⁷⁰

IV. *The problems of coin finds in the middle 'Abbāsīd period*

The coin finds of this period are an ambiguous source in determining the end of activity in the commercial and industrial suburb. They are important for the dating of the site, and archaeological evidence is needed to date them in turn. Nevertheless, they serve as a source for the history of the commercial area as well as solving problems of copper coin circulation during the third/ninth century in northern Mesopotamia.⁷¹

A restriction on activity in the industrial district—limited to the period of residence of Hārūn al-Rashīd and his court—can be safely excluded. The latest dated copper emission of any size in the region of al-Raqqā, which can be expected to be found in an excavation, was struck in the year 226/840–1. A single coin from Tall Zujāj belongs to this emission,⁷² and, as mentioned earlier, Tall Aswad can be dated on the basis of coin evidence into the period post-210/825–6. Analysis of the pottery from Tall Aswad⁷³ and Tall Zujāj⁷⁴ seems to corroborate its production from the period of Hārūn al-Rashīd just up to the beginning of the so-called 'Sāmarrā'-ware', produced in al-Raqqā. Literary sources, however, suggest that activity in the commercial district continued until the 270s/880s and perhaps even beyond.

The copper coin circulation of the third/ninth century raises some problems. It seems that the circulation in general—at least in the first half of the third/ninth century—was dominated by cast copper coins, whose models are

⁶⁷ Meinecke, Michael, 'al-Raqqā', in: *EP* VIII, 412.

⁶⁸ A recent interpretation by Challis et al. (2004), 148, identifies this complex as the *Funduq Ḥusain al-Khādīm*. So far there is no further evidence to support this suggestion. See n. 43.

⁶⁹ Khalaf and Kohlmeyer (1985), 138, sounding 1, measuring point 203.

⁷⁰ Heidemann (1999) no. 4. The emissions of the years 208/210 and 226 could be reasonably expected in any larger group of coin finds from this time. The so-called octagonal metal sheet coins, which are typical of the other sites, were also not found there. On this specific group of coins and its dating see Heidemann (2003c).

⁷¹ For an introduction into those methodological problems see Heidemann (2003c).

⁷² Heidemann (2003d), no. 502 (Ra93-GT-16292).

⁷³ Miglus and Stępniewski (1999), 21, 28, 40–41. Early shards of the Sāmarrā' ware were found in the top layers.

⁷⁴ For Tall Zujāj see Henderson (1999a, 255–6; 2003, 112), Henderson et al. (2004) 441–2, 465. He suggested a short chronology of about thirty years from the time of Hārūn's settlement in al-Raqqā. This suggests a termination of the activity in about 210/825. This suggestion is superseded by the coin finds (see Heidemann 2003d, no. 502). A shard of Sāmarrā' lustre ware was found in the disturbed top surface.

barely, if at all, recognizable, and octagonal metal sheet coins, on which traces of a striking are hardly visible, if they ever existed. These coins are frequent among the coin finds from the industrial and commercial area of al-Raqqā. It is not known when the circulation of these forms of copper currency ceased. At the end of the third/ninth century, silver coin fragments were used as small change for daily expenses.⁷⁵ Silver coin fragments and later highly alloyed dirhams served as petty coinage for everyday purposes. Beginning slowly at the turn of the fourth/tenth century, then accelerating in the last third of the fourth/tenth century, the silver content of the dirhams declined from almost technical purity to being very low. These coins were called 'Black Dirhams' (*dirham aswad*). Important for their archaeological survival, or better, their absence, is that they seem not to have been thrown away like ordinary copper coins because of their, albeit small, precious metal content. That means coins are unlikely to be expected at any archaeological site for the fourth/tenth and most of the fifth/eleventh century, unlike the abundance of copper coins of the Umayyad and of the early 'Abbāsīd periods.⁷⁶

Only a comparison between archaeological sites within northern Syria and the Jazīra can help to date the undated cast coppers and these octagonal metal sheet coins. Recent investigations in the coin finds and history of Ḥiṣn Maslama, present-day Madīnat al-Fār, in the north of the Balikh valley, may provide a date for the circulation of cast and octagonal coppers in the period after 226/840–1.⁷⁷ A very similar pattern of coin finds was found in Ḥiṣn Maslama. Many of the cast coppers and octagonal coins were believed to belong to the last phase of settlement. In the early 270s/880s Ḥiṣn Maslama was still inhabited; the latest literary reference to Ḥiṣn Maslama is found for 271/884–5.⁷⁸ A fragment of a contemporary forgery of a dirham of Naṣībīn, dated 273/886–7, discovered on the surface, corroborates the literary evidence.⁷⁹ Later, perhaps during the 'Abbāsīd-Ṭūlūnid wars in the 270/880s, or during the devastating reign of the Ḥamdānid Saif al-Daula 'Alī (r. 333–56/945–67) Ḥiṣn Maslama was abandoned. A similar development seems to have occurred in al-Jārūd (present-day Kharāb Sayyār) in the north of the Diyār Muḍār. A dirham fragment from the reign of al-Mu'taḍid billāh (r. 279–89/892–902) was the last dated evidence. It corresponds to the Sāmarrā'-style stucco found there.⁸⁰ In comparison, it is not unlikely that commercial and industrial activities on the sites excavated in al-Raqqā also continued, at least until the 270s/880s.

V. *Al-Raqqā al-Muḥṭariqa and its decline*

The decline of the city of al-Raqqā began with the 'Abbāsīd wars against the Ṭūlūnids and the Qarmāṭīs in the 270s/880s and 280s/890s. It gained momentum under the rule of the Ḥamdānids and especially under Saif al-Daula 'Alī. We have a report on the initial phase of the decline of al-Raqqā in Yāqūt's

⁷⁵ Cf. Ilisch (1990).

⁷⁶ Heidemann (2002), 363–80.

⁷⁷ Excavation under the direction of Claus-Peter Haase, formerly University of Copenhagen, now director of the Museum of Islamic Art, Berlin, and Murhaf al-Khalaf, Syrian Antiquity Authority. The present author is in charge of the study of the coin finds.

⁷⁸ Yāqūt, *Buldān* II, 287. The information came from a book of Aḥmad ibn al-Ṭayyib al-Sarakhsī (d. 286/899) who passed Ḥiṣn Maslama in the year 271/884–5.

⁷⁹ Museum in al-Raqqā, blue steel coin-box of the excavation in Madīnat al-Fār, inv.-no. MF99-29.

⁸⁰ Excavation under the direction of Jan-Waalke Meyer, University of Frankfurt, and Murhaf al-Khalaf, Syrian Antiquity Authority. The author is in charge of the coin finds. Meyer et al. (2001); Heidemann (2003e).

geographical dictionary. He cites Aḥmad ibn al-Ṭayyib al-Sarakhsī (d. 286/899)⁸¹ who accompanied Abū l-‘Abbās Aḥmad ibn al-Muwaffaq billāh, the later caliph al-Mu‘taḍid billāh (r. 279–89/892–902), during his campaigns against the Ṭūlūnid amir Khumārawaih ibn Aḥmad. In 271/884–5 the caliphal army passed from the north through the Balikh valley and reached al-Raqqā:

Aḥmad ibn al-Ṭayyib said: al-Rāfiqa is a city (*balad*), whose built-up area is connected with al-Raqqā (*muttaṣil al-binā’ bil-Raqqā*). Both are situated on the banks of the Euphrates. Between them is a distance of 300 cubits [c. 150 to 200 m.]. He said: And around al-Rāfiqa are two walls, between them is an intervallum (*faṣīl*). It [al-Rāfiqa] is [built] according to the layout (*hai’a*) of Madīnat al-Salām. A suburb (*rabaḍ*) belongs to it which is situated between it and al-Raqqā. There are its markets (*aswāquhā*). However parts of the walls of al-Raqqā are in ruins (*kharibat ba‘ḍu aswari l-Raqqā*).⁸²

Although the city was in decline, the market and presumably the industrial area, the *rabaḍ*, between the twin cities was still populated. Later the decline and lack of prosperity of al-Raqqā was mourned by both Ibn Ḥauqal (d. after 378/988)⁸³ and al-Muqaddasī. Al-Muqaddasī probably provided the last description of the industrial district of al-Raqqā and he was the first to call this area with a proper name in three passages:

To [the district of] al-Raqqā belong al-Muḥtariqa,⁸⁴ al-Rāfiqa, Khānūqa,⁸⁵ al-Ḥarīsh,⁸⁶ Tall Mahrā,⁸⁷ Bājarwān,⁸⁸ Ḥiṣn Maslama,⁸⁹ (...).⁹⁰

This is repeated at the point at which he goes into detail:

Concerning Diyār Muḍar, its fortified capital (*qaṣaba*)⁹¹ al-Raqqā; to its [al-Raqqā’s] cities (*mudumuhā*) belong al-Muḥtariqa⁹² [vocalization is

⁸¹ About Aḥmad ibn al-Ṭayyib see Rosenthal (1943), esp. 23.

⁸² Yāqūt, Buldān II, 734; tr. Rosenthal (1943) 74.

⁸³ Ibn Hauqal, Sūra, 225–6; his text of the *Ṣīrat al-ard* is based on the description of Iṣṭakhrī, Masālik, 75. But in the case of northern Mesopotamia and al-Raqqā in particular he drew on his own experience. He lived in northern Mesopotamia until 331/943. After 351/961, following extended journeys, he returned to his home region. The first draft of the text is dedicated to Saif al-Daula ‘Alī and it must therefore have been completed before the latter’s death in 356/977. A later version is dated 367/977 and the final draft is from 378/988. For a very similar description see Idrisi, Nuzha, 665.

⁸⁴ There are two manuscripts in Berlin, the oldest manuscript (B) (Ahlwardt no. 6033; Sprenger no. 5) and a later copy of the same (Ahlwardt no. 6034; Sprenger no. 6). The manuscript from Constantinople (C), which De Goeje also used, seems to be a slightly earlier variant version with vocalization; Miquel (1963–64), xxv–xxvii. The Berlin manuscript was checked [by the present author]. For manuscript C I rely on the apparatus criticus of De Goeje. The manuscript B, fol. 15v, p. 29, ll. 19–20 has: *l-mkhrqh*. The *tā’* has no diacritic. No vocalization is given in the edition, so manuscript C also probably lacks vocalization.

⁸⁵ Yāqūt, Buldān I, 394, city (*madīna*) near the Euphrates, near al-Raqqā. Sarre and Herzfeld (1911–20) I, 164–6.

⁸⁶ It is probably not the al-Ḥarīsh mentioned in Yāqūt, Buldān II, 254, as a village in the district (*kūra*) Faraj of the districts (*a’māl*) of Mosul. If al-Ḥarīsh is situated near al-Raqqā, then the possibility of identifying it with al-Ṣālihiya should not be excluded according to Bartl (1993–94) 36; Bartl (1994) 257. Bartl suggests the hill BS 273 north of Ḥiṣn Maslama as a possible location.

⁸⁷ Yāqūt, Buldān I, 869–70, a small location (*bulaida*) between Ḥiṣn Maslama and al-Raqqā. For new archaeological research see Bartl (1993–94, 34–5; 1994 255–6).

⁸⁸ Ibn Khurradādhbih, Masālik, 97, between Bājarwān and al-Raqqā is a distance of about three *farsakh*, c. 18 km. Bartl (1993–94, 35–6; 1994, 256).

⁸⁹ Yāqūt, Buldān II, 278, in northern Mesopotamia between Ra’s al-‘Ain and al-Raqqā. Bartl (1993–94, 30–33; 1994, 253–4).

⁹⁰ Muqaddasī, Aḥsan, 54.

⁹¹ Cf. Muqaddasī, Aḥsan, 47–8. In his hierarchy of cities, a *qaṣaba* is below a *miṣr*, the all embracing town. He produced his own terminology and classification in his descriptions. He does not seem to refer to any juridical or administrative terminology at his time; Wheatley (2001), 74–84.

⁹² Manuscript B does not include this passage, cf. De Goeje (ed.), p. 137, note g. The vocalization seems to be provided from manuscript C.

given], al-Rāfiqa, Khānūqa, al-Ḥarīsh, Tall Mahrā, Bājarwān, Ḥiṣn Maslama⁹³ [...].⁹⁴

A location called ‘al-Muḥtariqa’ is not mentioned in other geographical works. It clearly constituted a separate urban entity. Presumably it was close to al-Raqqa and al-Rāfiqa, because it is named right after al-Raqqa and before the twin city of al-Rāfiqa. Al-Muqaddasī continues:

Al-Raqqa is the fortified capital (*qaṣaba*) of Diyār Muḍar on the Euphrates with an extended citadel (*ḥiṣn*) [he probably means the entire agglomeration], (...) al-Raqqa al-Muḥtariqa⁹⁵ [vocalization is given] is close to her. It has declined and fallen into ruins. Al-Rāfiqa is the suburb (*rabaq*) of al-Raqqa. The congregational mosque [of al-Rāfiqa] lays in [the market of] the goldsmiths (*al-sāgha*) and the congregational mosque of al-Raqqa [Kallinikos] in [the market of] the textile merchants (*al-bazzāzīn*), in which two jujube-trees (*shajaratā ‘umnāb*) and a mulberry tree (*shajarat tūt*) are. Nearby (*bil-qurb*) is the ‘Mosque suspended on columns’ (*masjid mu‘allaq ‘alā ‘umūd*).⁹⁶

During the political and military unrest at the beginning of the Ḥamdānid rule in the year 332/944, an undetermined part of al-Raqqa (*min al-balad qit‘atan*) was, according to the literary evidence, burnt down.⁹⁷ *Al-Raqqa al-Muḥtariqa* could be identified with this city quarter, because of the name ‘the burning al-Raqqa’.⁹⁸ However, a burnt quarter would be better termed al-Raqqa al-Muḥtaraqa, ‘the burnt al-Raqqa’. According to al-Muqaddasī ‘al-Muḥtariqa’ constituted a single urban entity. This is more than a burnt urban district and there seems to be no reason to include a burnt ruined quarter in a list of cities. This explanation seems unlikely in comparison with a second, more plausible, interpretation.

One has to look for another urban compound. After the decay of the palace area, starting after 193/809, there was only one entity which could constitute a city of its own, a ‘*madīna*’, in al-Muqaddasī’s terms: This is the commercial and industrial district, lying between al-Raqqa and al-Rāfiqa and stretching north of al-Raqqa. To be a *madīna* or *miṣr* in the juridical sense certain conditions need to be met. In the early Islamic period a discussion about the legal definition of the Islamic city (*miṣr*) took place. Traces of this discussion are found in the literature of the sixth/twelfth century. The origin of this discourse was then traced back to the Ḥanafī chief-qāḍī in Baghdad at the time of Ḥārūn al-Rashīd Abū Yūsuf (d. 182/798), to the qāḍī of al-Raqqa Muḥammad al-Shaibānī (d. 189/805) and also to Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150/767). The discussion probably goes further back in time into the period of the early garrison cities, the *amṣār*. The celebration of Friday prayers in a single central congregational mosque (*jāmi‘*) was seen as a prerequisite for a *miṣr*. If the population grows, a single congregational mosque was no longer practical. Two congregational mosques could only exist—according to a tradition of

⁹³ Yāqūt, *Buldān* II, 278, located in northern Mesopotamia between Ra’s al-‘Ain and al-Raqqa. Bartl (1993–94, 30–33; 1994, 253–4).

⁹⁴ Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan*, 137.

⁹⁵ Manuscript (B) (fol. 35v, p. 69, l. 16) has *‘l-mkhtarqitl*, the *tā’* and *khā’* with diacritics; manuscript (C) has, according to de Goeje, only *‘l-mḥtrq*. The vocalization given, however, seems to come from manuscript C.

⁹⁶ Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan*, 141. Translated in Khalaf and Kohlmeyer (1982), 149–50.

⁹⁷ Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil* VIII, ed. Tornberg 312, ed. Beirut VIII, 417. On the political events of those years: Bikhazi (1981) 511–31, 558–627 and Linder Welin (1961).

⁹⁸ Al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan*, 153, also names an al-Lādhiqiya al-Muḥtariqa, without vocalization, however. This city seems to be part of the agglomeration Lādhiqiya.

Abū Yūsuf—in two urban precincts distinct from each other. They must be clearly and visibly separated, by a canal, a river or by sufficient distance. According to al-Sarakhsī (d. c. 500/1106), summarizing earlier discussion, each part then constitutes a city.⁹⁹ This is clearly what happened in the case of al-Raqqā and al-Rāfiqa.

The commercial and industrial area seems to fulfil these requirements for a separate city. The northern boundary was the mentioned wall of Ṭāhir ibn al-Ḥusain. In the west the wall turns south at the canal or presumably the *Khandaq al-Raqqā*, which could constitute the western boundary together with the eastern limit of al-Raqqā/Kallinikos. The eastern separation is marked by the canal or the moat (*al-khandaq*) of the main city wall of al-Rāfiqa. In the south a separation might be seen in the cemetery of the victims of Ṣiffīn or the districts open at least to the Euphrates marches. But perhaps a wall running westwards from the last Byzantine tower of Kallinikos can be seen as the southern boundary.¹⁰⁰

With the ‘Mosque suspended on columns’ (*masjid mu‘allaq ‘ala ‘umūd*), the commercial and industrial district may have had a functioning congregational mosque. One representative complex large enough for a congregational mosque could be seen in the so-called Ṣāmarrā’-period complex (map, no. 30) or in parts of it until further evidence.¹⁰¹ These diverse and incidental pieces of information might hint at a possible formation of the industrial and commercial area as a distinct urban entity in the course of the early third/ninth century.

The proper translation of the name given by al-Muqaddasī confirms this hypothesis: al-Raqqā al-Muḥtariqa, ‘the burning al-Raqqā’. The name could be derived from the thick smoke of the numerous active glass furnaces, pottery kilns, the burning of alkali plants and perhaps the production of charcoal. A distant visitor might have got the impression of a burning city. If one visits modern (late twentieth-century) Fustāt, near Cairo, where many traditional kilns were operating producing simple pottery, one gets a similar impression. The thick industrial smoke might have affected the neighbouring city al-Raqqā/Kallinikos too. The supposed pollution could have influenced the depopulation and decline of al-Raqqā Kallinikos.¹⁰²

It seems that the industrial and commercial area fell into ruins at the end of the third/ninth or the beginning of the fourth/tenth century. The decline in glass and ceramic production—at the time of the Ḥamdānids at the latest—meant the end of one of the major sources of income for the inhabitants of the city. Outside the city the areas under cultivation shrank through the pressure of nomads newly immigrated from the Arabian peninsular, as we learn from the reports of al-Muqaddasī and Ibn Ḥauqal.¹⁰³ These mutually reinforcing internal and external factors contributed to the decline of so great a city as al-Raqqā/al-Rāfiqa, including al-Raqqā al-Muḥtariqa.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ On the reasons for founding new cities beside existing ones, and the twin cities in the early Islamic period see Lapidus (1969), 61–4. On the juridical and architectural consequences of Islamic law: Sarakhsī, *Mabsūṭ* II, 120; Kāsānī, *Badā’i’* I, 260; Johansen (1981–82), 149.

¹⁰⁰ Khalaf and Köhlmeier (1985), 138 (ill. 5), 161–2 (sounding 1, area ABC).

¹⁰¹ The sequence of rooms discovered by K. Toueir (2004) during his soundings in the Ṣāmarrā’-period complex, are not placed exactly within the existing maps or aerial views. Their location within the structure is not clear. See n. 65.

¹⁰² For the ecological situation see Challis and Priestnall (2002). On the further decline of al-Raqqā see Heidemann (2003a), 45.

¹⁰³ Ibn Ḥauqal, *Ṣūra*, p. 228; trans. Wiet, 222. Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan*, 141. Degener (1987), 24. Cf. Bikhazī (1981), 136–7.

¹⁰⁴ For these reasons see Heidemann (1999) and (2002), 29–33, 43–67.

During the renaissance of the cities in the Saljūq, Zangīd and Ayyūbid periods, the city of al-Raqqā recovered with the centre in the old al-Rāfiqa. The mass production of pottery, so-called Raqqā ware, was resumed. On the basis of the pottery finds Tonghini and Henderson suggested Tall Ballūr¹⁰⁵ Tall Fukkhār¹⁰⁶ as a production site again in the second half of fifth/eleventh century. It had been discontinued for about 150 years. In the sixth/twelfth century the industrial zone of al-Raqqā was moved into the protection of the old city enclosure of al-Rāfiqa, south of the congregational mosque.¹⁰⁷

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¹⁰⁵ Henderson and McLoughlin (2003), 144.

¹⁰⁶ Tonghini and Henderson (1998). See also Henderson et al. (2004), 452–3, 465. This hypothesis cannot yet be supported by the coin finds, which are quite in accordance with the other sites in the industrial area. Also the composition of the ‘11th century glass’ seems to be close to the earlier ‘Abbāsīd one. Glass type 3 in particular fits into the earlier pattern.

¹⁰⁷ Sauvaget (1948), 32–45.

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