
This volume is the translation of that part of al-Ṭabarī's History which deals with the events from the year 266 to the year 279 A.H. The recorded events relate mostly to the revolt of al-Khabīth, the Abominal leader of the Zanj against the ‘Abbāsīde caliphate. It also contains a very interesting chapter on the origin of the Qarmatians. The legends about a branch of this sect are well known throughout the world, i.e., the legends of Ḥasan Ṣabbāḥ, the Old Man of the Mountain, the father of international terrorism whose dagger made the most mighty kings of the world, tremble.

As for the translation, it is generally correct and thoroughly faithful, still, it seems to me that the translator sometimes misread certain words. A few examples are given below:-

On page 1 the translation of the original,

 ثم مضى هو وابنه إف كوتكيز إلى غزون وعليهما إفرون أهزه كرمل فاضلناة ودغلا غزون
وأخذا محمد بن الفضل بين سنان المجي ناخا إبنا إبنا وضابة

(E.J. Brill Ed. Series III. p. 1936)

is given as,

Then he and his son Adhkūtakīn went to Qazwīn, whose governor was Abrūn, the two entered the city, seized Muḥammad b. al-Faḍl b. Sīnān al-‘Ijālī, his clients and his estates.

The word إمارة means, his wealth; immovable property. The Arabic word for ‘his clients is إماراء, not إمارا. As the words look alike, the translator mistook one for the other.

At page 171 the original text,

وكان يأخذ من الرجل إذا دخل قتله في دينه دينار ويدفع إله يأخذ ذلك للا scrimmage

is translated as,

and he took a dinār from everyone who joined his religious group they thought he used it for the Imam.
This passage is related to Qarmat and his (religious) heresy, who used to take one dinár from every one who entered his order in the name of Imam. Here the subject of the verb *رَتاَمْ* (third person singular) is Qarmat, not the entrant into the order; because, how can an entrant think that the dinár paid to Qarmat was for the imam, if not so told by Qarmat himself. The translator may be correct according to the rules of grammar, but this translation does not agree with the facts.

Likewise is the translation of the words,

فَلَمْ بَلَغَ الْيَمِّ وَلَا سَمَّى بِهِمَا فَاتَرَغَّوا (٢١٨)

he al-Ṭāʾi) neither paid attention nor listened to them. The Kufans left (p.173), whereas the subject of the first two verbs is the Sulṭān (not al-Ṭāʾi). As the Sulṭān did not accept the complaint of the Kufans against al-Ṭāʾi, they returned to their homes.

The translation of وانک الحجة وانک الثلاثة وانک الدابة (2129) is quite interesting as, "...... and you are the proof: You are the she-camel, and you are the ass (p. 174). Why an ass? The word ‘dābbah’ means any beast or animal that creeps or walks on the surface of earth; particularly used for the horses, the mules and the asses. It was better to translate the word, ‘al-dābbah’ as an animal and explain the allegory in a footnote.

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