

Book Review

Ṭaha Ḥusayn ʿAwaḍ Hudayl, *Tamarrudāt al-qabīla fī ʿaṣr al-dawla al-Rasūliya wa-atharhā fī al-ḥayāt al-ʿamma fī al-Yaman (626-858 H)* [Tribal Revolts in the Era of the Rasulid State and their Impact on Ordinary Life in Yemen] (Aden: Dār al-Wafāq, 1433/2012), 440 pages.

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This important volume is based on a doctoral dissertation submitted in 2004 to the Department of History at Aden University. It follows a number of valuable sources on the Rasulid era in Yemen that have been published in Yemen and are rarely accessible outside Yemen. The author has consulted 182 Arabic sources (manuscripts and printed material), including the major chronicles, but is unaware of important sources in Western languages by R. B. Serjeant, G. Rex Smith, Eric Vallet and other scholars who have written on the Rasulids. The Introduction (pp. 15-20) lays out the purpose of the book, which is to highlight the interaction of Yemeni tribes with the Rasulid state. The Rasulids and the Zaydi imams, located in the northern highlands, forged alliances with various tribes, who were prone to frequently rebel against Rasulid policies and taxation. The main value of the book is presenting information on the relations of the Rasulid rulers to specific Yemeni tribes rather than simply having a

chronological account.

His text is divided into four parts. The first part describes the politics of the Rasulid state and the nature of the tribal system at the time. The second part focuses on several specific tribal rebellions, indicating their causes and consequences, whether political, economic, social or religious. The third part concentrates on the Yemeni tribes ʿAkk, al-Ashʿār, Madhḥaj and Ḥimyar, but also discusses other specific tribes as they related to the Rasulid state. The final part analyzes the methods of peacemaking and military action of the Rasulids in dealing with the tribes. Also included in the Introduction (pp. 20-36) is an annotated description of the major Rasulid texts consulted for the study.

The book includes a number of valuable appendices, listing the Ayyubid and Rasulid rulers in Yemen, as well as the Zaydi imams during the period. A genealogical chart of the descendants of ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ibn Hārūn (known as al-Rasūl) is provided,

as well as a chart of Yemeni tribes from the ancestral stock of Kahlān and Ḥimyar. The four maps provided (of the Rasulid state and tribal groups) are very difficult

to read, given the small size of the print. In addition to the bibliography there are indices of individuals (pp. 395-411), tribes (pp. 413-421) and placenames (pp. 423-436).