

Khalifa Uthman bin Affan - Governors of Uthman

Objective assessment

When the entire episode of the deposition and penalization of Walid b Uqba is studied objectively one is apt to conclude that the accounts that have come down to us are distorted, and remote from reality. The tale appears to have been embroidered both by those who were critical of Uthman, and those who wanted to defend. Those who were hostile to Uthman took pains to establish that the person appointed by Uthman to high offices was guilty of heinous crimes, and hence Uthman was guilty of appointing undeserving person to high offices.

On the other hand those who stood for the defense of Uthman, and wanted to show that Uthman was just and impartial, held that even when a brother of Uthman was found guilty, Uthman did not hesitate to subject him to the penalty of law.

As a matter of fact, the accounts that have come down to us with regard to this episode do not stand the test of historical scrutiny. The case against Walid was not established, and according to the norms of justice he could not be penalized on the ground of mere hearsay or the evidence of interested witnesses. During his five years rule Walid had been most popular. Only a few persons conspired against him, and it is inconceivable that such high functionary of the State should have been publicly disgraced merely because of a conspiracy against him when the charge was not established.

Walid had the support of the Bani Umayya, and they were in sufficient strength and power. They could not submit to the public disgrace of one of their leaders. It is well known that Uthman had a great regard for his relatives. He could not have condemned his brother to such disgrace when the charge itself was not established.

The truth of the matter is that the charge against Walid was not established. As such no penalty was imposed and there was no flogging. Uthman merely deposed Walid b Uqba for administrative reasons.

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