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Ma'bad b. 'Abdallāh al-Juhanī

Ma'bad b. 'Abdallāh b. 'Ukaym al-Juhanī (executed c.80/699) was a Basran religious thinker who was associated with the Qadarī doctrine of human free will (*qadar*). While he was ultimately condemned as a heretic, for a time he enjoyed a good reputation in Basra and was trusted by the Umayyad authorities. Al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf (d. 95/714), governor of the East, recommended him to the caliph 'Abd al-Malik (r. 65–86/685–705) as an emissary to the Byzantine emperor. Ma'bad also tutored one of the caliph's sons. He may also have played a role in negotiations between 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 41/660–1) and Mu'āwiya b. Abī Sufyān (d. 60/680) after the battle of Ṣiffīn (37/657), possibly in 38/658. He is even said to have preferred the judgement of Mu'āwiya to that of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (d. 23/644), who was typically held in much higher esteem.

Ma'bad's respectability in the eyes of Umayyad authorities contrasts with the derision cast upon him for his heretical views. Historical and biographical sources label him uniformly as a Qadarī, an advocate of human free will. He is

often described as the first to preach Qadarī doctrine in Basra and sometimes as the leader of the Qadarīs in Basra. In a widely repeated report, al-Awzā'ī (d. 157/774) asserted that Ma'bad learnt his aberrant views from a Christian convert who later reverted to Christianity and that he was the teacher of the notorious Ghaylān al-Dimashqī (fl. c.100/719).

The circumstances of his transformation from Umayyad notable to condemned heretic are not clear. There are several reports in which respected Basran religious scholars, such as al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728) and Abū l-Sawwār al-'Adawī (d. after 80/699), condemn Ma'bad for unspecified erroneous views. These stories imply that Ma'bad embraced Qadarī doctrines later in life, prompting his expulsion from reputable circles. It is also possible that these reports are later fictions intended to distance respected scholars from Ma'bad and his Qadarī views.

Accounts of his execution add further confusion. Most reports indicate that 'Abd al-Malik executed Ma'bad in 80/699 as punishment for his Qadarī heresy. Other reports indicate that al-Ḥajjāj killed Ma'bad for his refusal to acknowledge some unspecified doctrinal error. One