



A detailed illustration of Muhammad in the center, wearing a white robe and a headscarf, with a sword at his waist. He is surrounded by a large group of soldiers on horseback, also in traditional attire, holding spears. The background shows a desert landscape with mountains.

STUDYBOOKS

Muhammad

Earliest witnesses

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2026



'THE LORD OF THE HEAVENLY HOSTS SAYS: SWORD! AWAKE AGAINST MY SHEPHERD, THE MAN WHO IS MY COLLEAGUE! STRIKE HIM, SCATTER THE SHEEP! BUT MY HAND WILL LIFT UP THE HUMBLed AGAIN' (ZECHARIAH 13.7).

لاستترک 7th 7th شمع کجاء

کشیکه شمل عم تامل

تامل عم تمنامکدر کانتا

فانهمش له

شمکنه تظن

علاظککم 7th کمشمه

عجتمعشکه کعمش

مهنتم له 1 تمعشم

معهمظ له 2 تمعشم

تمعش نله 3 تمعشم

مکنر ته 4 تمعشم

هلمعنمش له 5 تمعشم

کتمعشتمش تمعشم تکناک

معکم عم مععش

هتلمه

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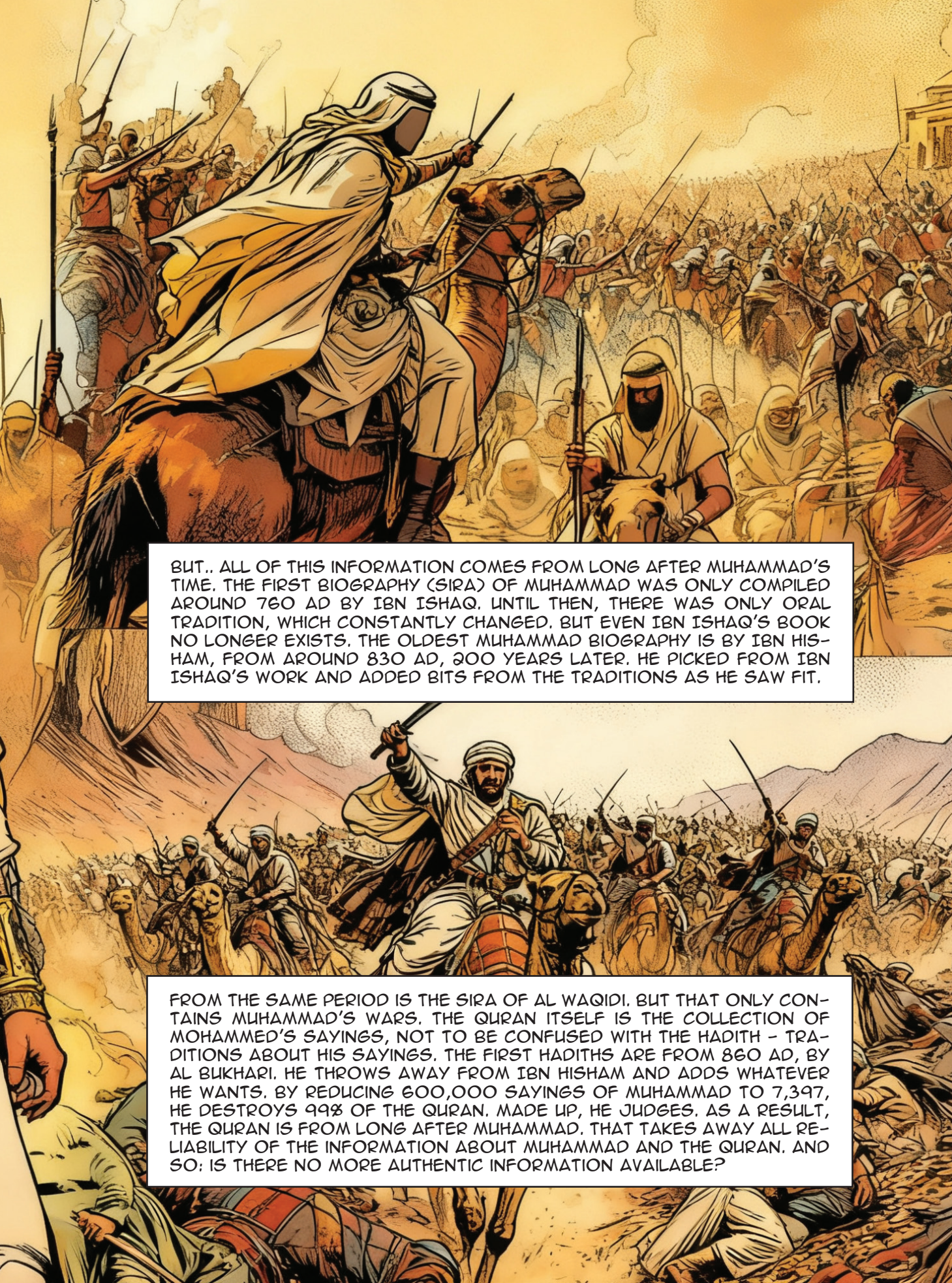
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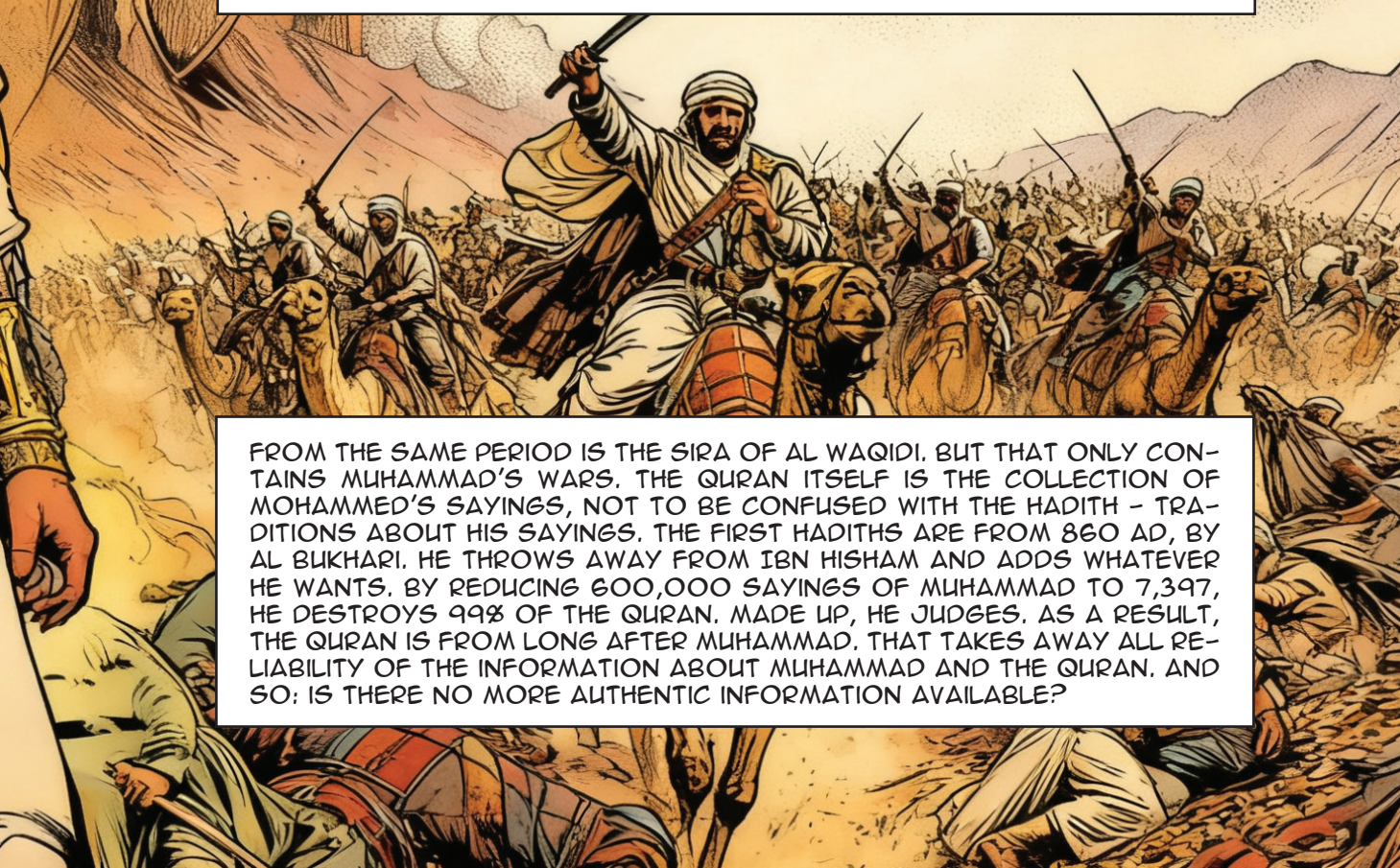


TRADITIONALLY, THE STORY OF THE ORIGIN OF ISLAM GOES ROUGHLY AS FOLLOWS. IN 570 AD, MUHAMMAD WAS BORN. IN 610, HE RECEIVED HIS FIRST QURANIC REVELATION. IN 621, HE FLEW ON A HORSE TO JERUSALEM (THE MIRAJ) WHERE HE LEARNED THE FIVE DAILY PRAYERS. IN 622, HE MOVED FROM MECCA TO MEDINA (THE HIJRA). IN 630, HE CONQUERED MECCA, ONLY TO DIE IN 632.

ABU BAKR GETS TO BE THE CALIPH (GOVERNOR, 'SUCCESSOR'). AFTER TWO YEARS, UMAR TAKES OVER. HE GETS KILLED TEN YEARS LATER. IN 644, UTHMAN BEGINS HIS TWELVE-YEAR RULE. UTHMAN DECIDES WHICH OF THE TRADITIONS ABOUT MUHAMMAD SHOULD BE KEPT OR BURNED. IN 652, THE QURAN IS COMPILED AND WRITTEN DOWN. WHEN UTHMAN IS KILLED IN 656, ALI SUCCEEDS HIM AS THE LAST OF MUHAMMAD'S CALIPHS, FOR FIVE YEARS.



BUT.. ALL OF THIS INFORMATION COMES FROM LONG AFTER MUHAMMAD'S TIME. THE FIRST BIOGRAPHY (SIRA) OF MUHAMMAD WAS ONLY COMPILED AROUND 760 AD BY IBN ISHAQ. UNTIL THEN, THERE WAS ONLY ORAL TRADITION, WHICH CONSTANTLY CHANGED. BUT EVEN IBN ISHAQ'S BOOK NO LONGER EXISTS. THE OLDEST MUHAMMAD BIOGRAPHY IS BY IBN HISHAM, FROM AROUND 830 AD, 200 YEARS LATER. HE PICKED FROM IBN ISHAQ'S WORK AND ADDED BITS FROM THE TRADITIONS AS HE SAW FIT.



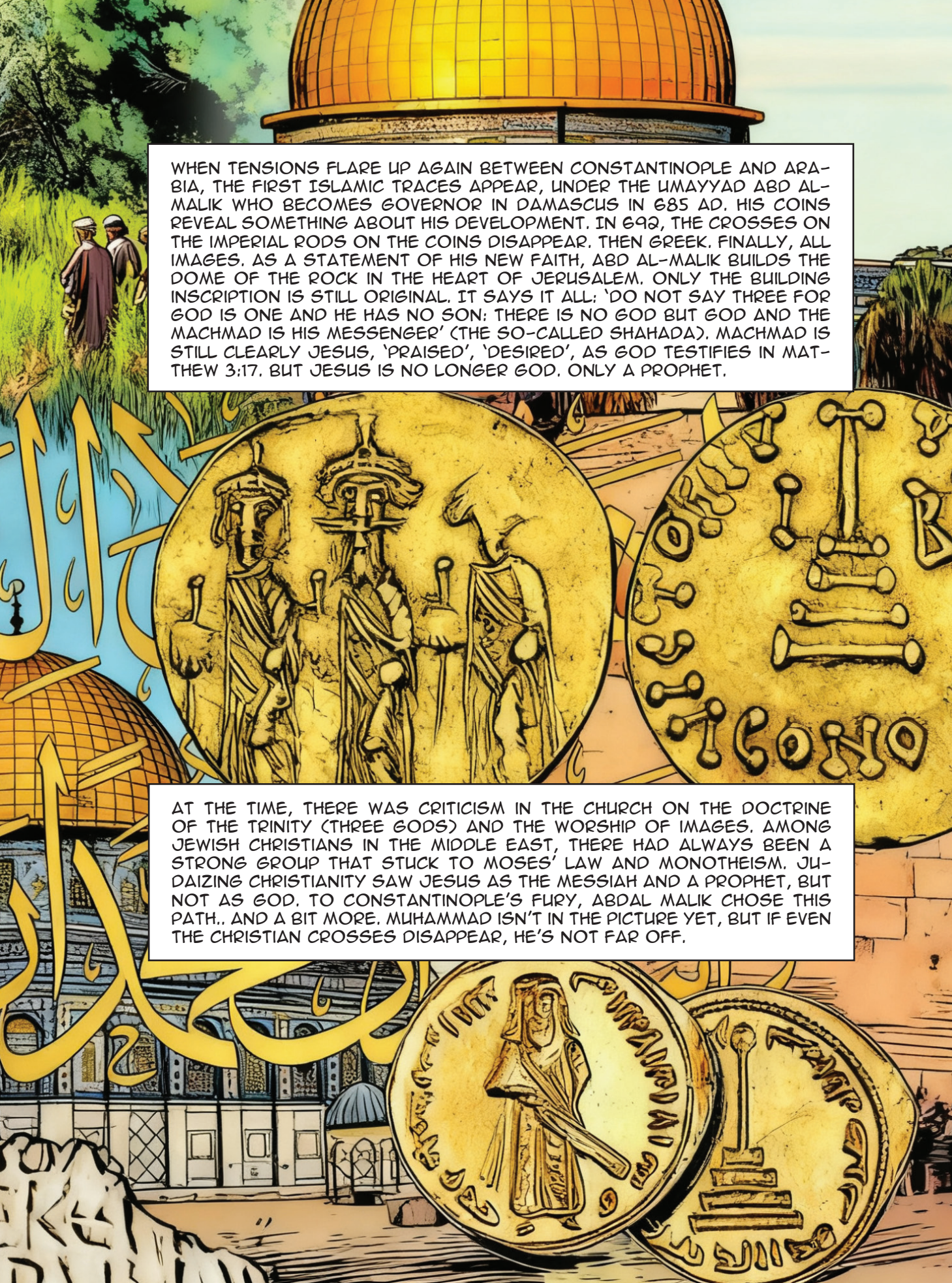
FROM THE SAME PERIOD IS THE SIRA OF AL WAQIDI. BUT THAT ONLY CONTAINS MUHAMMAD'S WARS. THE QURAN ITSELF IS THE COLLECTION OF MOHAMMED'S SAYINGS, NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH THE HADITH - TRADITIONS ABOUT HIS SAYINGS. THE FIRST HADITHS ARE FROM 860 AD, BY AL BUKHARI. HE THROWS AWAY FROM IBN HISHAM AND ADDS WHATEVER HE WANTS. BY REDUCING 600,000 SAYINGS OF MUHAMMAD TO 7,397, HE DESTROYS 99% OF THE QURAN. MADE UP, HE JUDGES. AS A RESULT, THE QURAN IS FROM LONG AFTER MUHAMMAD. THAT TAKES AWAY ALL RELIABILITY OF THE INFORMATION ABOUT MUHAMMAD AND THE QURAN. AND SO: IS THERE NO MORE AUTHENTIC INFORMATION AVAILABLE?

يعتقد الـ 7th ق^م كجما

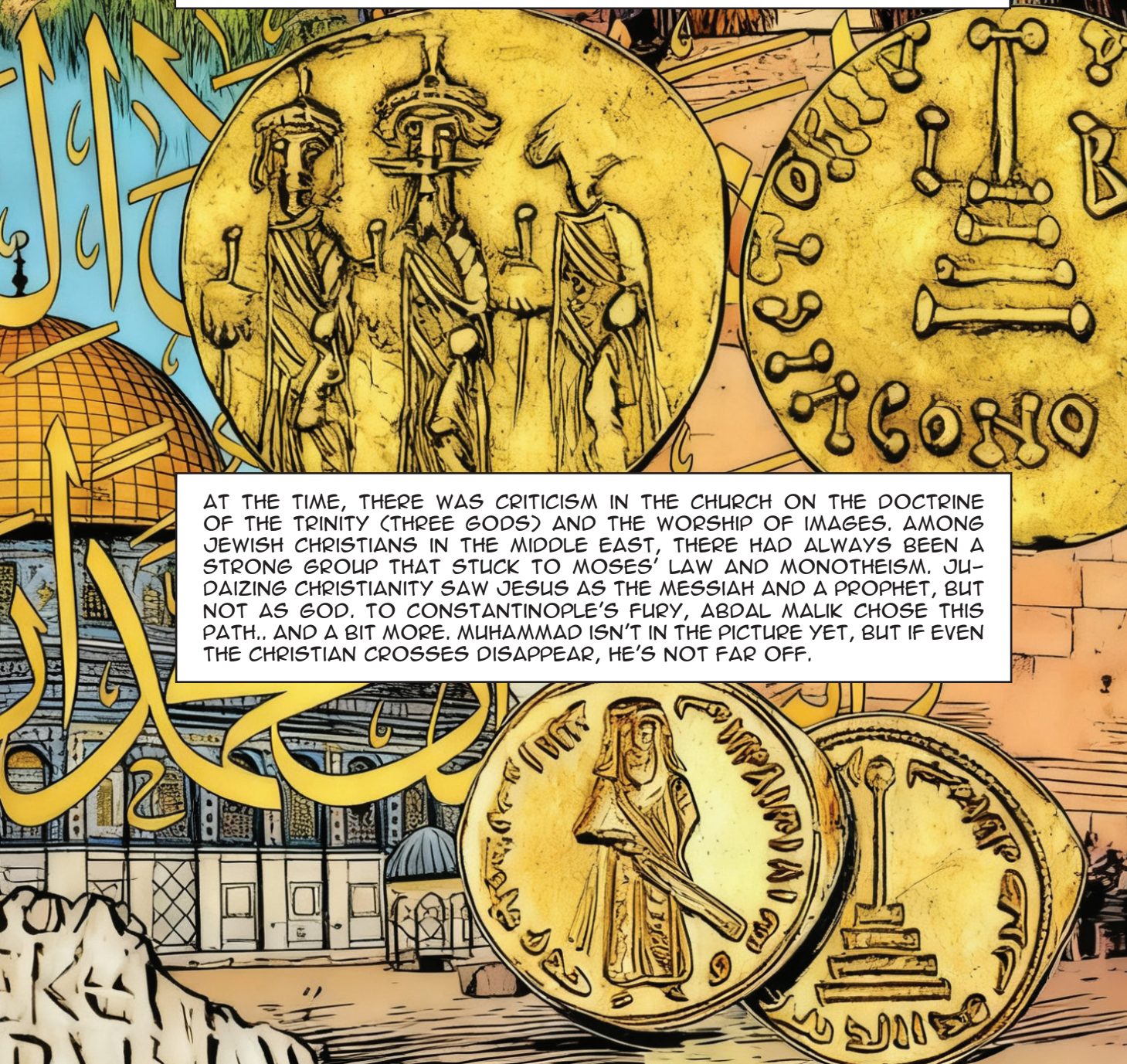
COIN OF MUAWIYA,
663 AD.

IT'S NOT LIKE THERE AREN'T ANY ARAB TRACES IN THE 7TH CENTURY. AS EARLY AS THE 670S, ARABS WERE BESIEGING CONSTANTINOPLE, THE CENTER OF THE CHRISTIAN WORLD. WITHOUT ANY MENTION OF MUHAMMAD OR THE QURAN.

IN 661 AD, MUAWIYA BECOMES THE FIRST CALIPH FROM THE Umayyad family. ON ONE OF HIS COINS IT SAYS 'MUHAMMAD'. BUT ON THE REVERSE SIDE THERE ARE IMAGES AND CROSSES. THERE EXISTS AN ARABIC INSCRIPTION IN GREEK LETTERS OF MUAWIYA THAT BEGINS WITH A CROSS. SO MUAWIYA IS CHRISTIAN. AND THE INSCRIPTION 'MUHAMMAD'? ACTUALLY IT SAYS: 'MCHMD', MACHMAD. AN INSCRIPTION FROM ARABIA A CENTURY EARLIER ALREADY SAYS: 'GOD THE MACHMAD'. SO MACHMAD IS A TITLE FOR GOD AND MUAWIYA USES IT FOR JESUS. ON HIS SILVER COIN, IT'S THE SAME: 'GOD THE KING'. AFTER HIS CORONATION IN JERUSALEM, MUAWIYA KEEPS HIS SEAT IN DAMASCUS - NOT THE HONOR OF MACHMAD'S THRONE, GOLGOTHA, JERUSALEM (MARONITE CHRONICLE, 664 AD). MECCA IS NOT IN THE PICTURE.



WHEN TENSIONS FLARE UP AGAIN BETWEEN CONSTANTINOPLE AND ARABIA, THE FIRST ISLAMIC TRACES APPEAR, UNDER THE Umayyad Abd al-Malik who becomes governor in Damascus in 685 AD. His coins reveal something about his development. In 692, the crosses on the imperial rods on the coins disappear. Then Greek. Finally, all images, as a statement of his new faith, Abd al-Malik builds the Dome of the Rock in the heart of Jerusalem. Only the building inscription is still original. It says it all: 'DO NOT SAY THREE FOR GOD IS ONE AND HE HAS NO SON; THERE IS NO GOD BUT GOD AND THE MACHMAD IS HIS MESSENGER' (THE SO-CALLED SHAHADA). Machmad is still clearly Jesus, 'praised', 'desired', as God testifies in Matthew 3:17. But Jesus is no longer God. Only a prophet.



AT THE TIME, THERE WAS CRITICISM IN THE CHURCH ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY (THREE GODS) AND THE WORSHIP OF IMAGES. AMONG JEWISH CHRISTIANS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THERE HAD ALWAYS BEEN A STRONG GROUP THAT STUCK TO MOSES' LAW AND MONOTHEISM. JU-DAIZING CHRISTIANITY SAW JESUS AS THE MESSIAH AND A PROPHET, BUT NOT AS GOD. TO CONSTANTINOPLE'S FURY, ABDAL MALIK CHOSE THIS PATH.. AND A BIT MORE. MUHAMMAD ISN'T IN THE PICTURE YET, BUT IF EVEN THE CHRISTIAN CROSSES DISAPPEAR, HE'S NOT FAR OFF.