

Ismaili and other Islamic Studies in Honour of Farhad Daftary

و در روزگار آن قوم و ملک آن یکا که صیدند و در هر سرزمین است صدق میرست و دانش شایسته بود و خواست که هر یک از ایشان در آن شهر
 و ملک آن یکا که صیدند و در هر سرزمین است صدق میرست و دانش شایسته بود و خواست که هر یک از ایشان در آن شهر

حکایت از صومعه کاغان و از شام و پیغمبر که در این ملک و در شهر شام سلطان حبیب بن یحیی پیش صاحب بن ابی اسحاق و طاهر بن یحیی
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Fortresses of the Intellect

Ismaili and other Islamic Studies
in Honour of Farhad Daftary

Dedicated to the achievements of Farhad Daftary, a leading authority on Ismaili Studies and eminent scholar of Islamic history, this volume brings together a number of studies on Islamic intellectual and political history, particularly in the three areas where his scholarship has had the greatest impact – Ismaili Studies, Persian Studies and the wider context of Shi'i Studies.

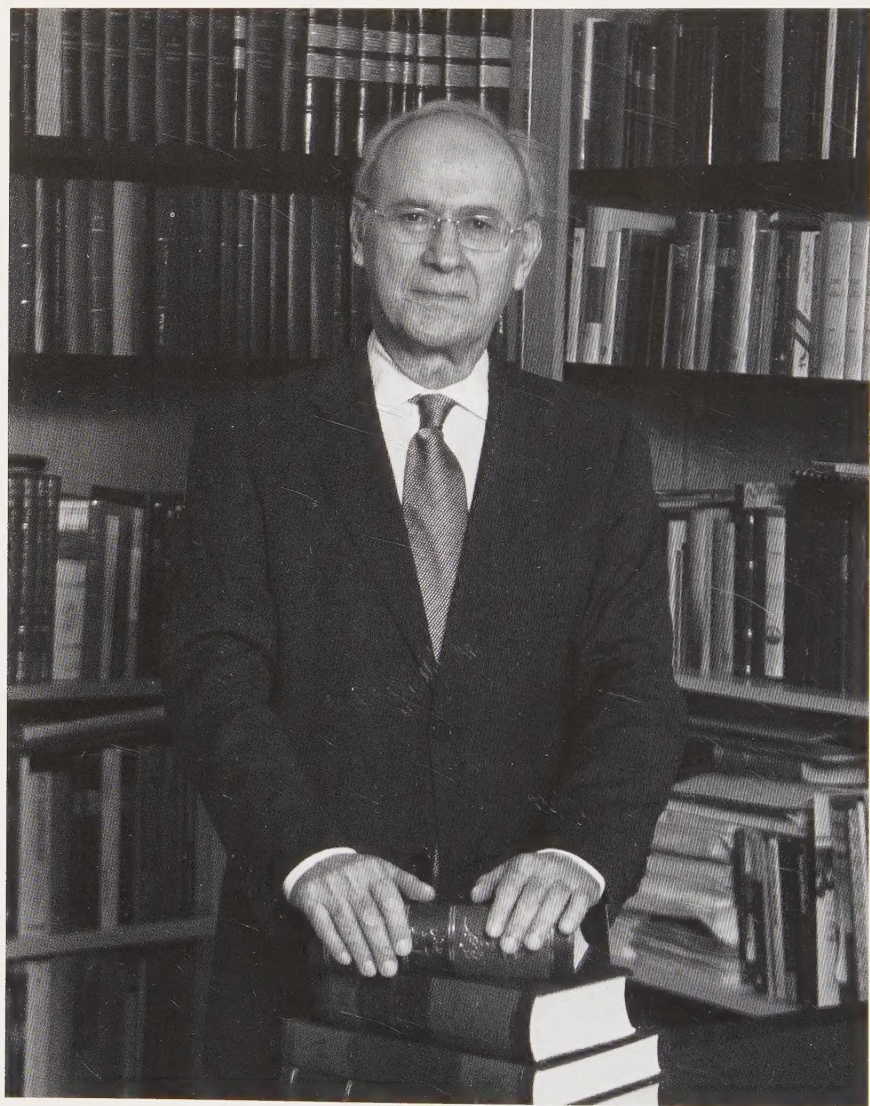
The volume covers issues in the fields of history, thought and language focusing, though not exclusively, on the intellectual contributions of the Ismailis and their role in broader Islamic history. It includes discussions on subjects ranging from early Ismaili texts, the scholars of the Fatimid and Alamūt eras of Ismaili history, Persian contributions to Islamic culture and literature, the presence of the Central Asian Turks and the Franks in the Islamic lands, and aspects of Shi'i thought in the Safavid era.

The contributors include: I. Afshar, H. Algar, M. A. Amir-Moezzi, S. J. Badakhchani, C. Baffioni, C. E. Bosworth, D. Cortese, P. Crone, D. De Smet, R. Gleave, H. Haji, I. Hajnal, A. H. Hamdani, C. Hillenbrand, A. C. Hunsberger, H. Landolt, L. Lewisohn, W. Madelung, A. Nanji, A. J. Newman, I. K. Poonawala and P. E. Walker.



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Fortresses of the Intellect



FARHAD DAFTARY

Fortresses of the Intellect

*Ismaili and Other Islamic Studies
in Honour of Farhad Daftary*

Edited by
Omar Alí-de-Unzaga

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The Institute of Ismaili Studies

The Institute of Ismaili Studies was established in 1977 with the object of promoting scholarship and learning on Islam, in the historical as well as contemporary contexts, and a better understanding of its relationship with other societies and faiths.

The Institute's programmes encourage a perspective which is not confined to the theological and religious heritage of Islam, but seeks to explore the relationship of religious ideas to broader dimensions of society and culture. The programmes thus encourage an interdisciplinary approach to the materials of Islamic history and thought. Particular attention is also given to issues of modernity that arise as Muslims seek to relate their heritage to the contemporary situation.

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These objectives are realized through concrete programmes and activities organized and implemented by various departments of the Institute. The Institute also collaborates periodically, on a programme-specific basis, with other institutions of learning in the United Kingdom and abroad.

The Institute's academic publications fall into several distinct and interrelated categories:

1. Occasional papers or essays addressing broad themes of the relationship between religion and society in the historical as well as modern contexts, with special reference to Islam.
2. Monographs exploring specific aspects of Islamic faith and culture, or the contributions of individual Muslim figures or writers.
3. Editions or translations of significant primary or secondary texts.
4. Translations of poetic or literary texts which illustrate the rich heritage of spiritual, devotional and symbolic expressions in Muslim history.
5. Works on Ismaili history and thought, and the relationship of the Ismailis to other traditions, communities and schools of thought in Islam.
6. Proceedings of conferences and seminars sponsored by the Institute.
7. Bibliographical works and catalogues which document manuscripts, printed texts and other source materials.

This book falls into category five listed above.

In facilitating these and other publications, the Institute's sole aim is to encourage original research and analysis of relevant issues. While every effort is made to ensure that the publications are of a high academic standard, there is naturally bound to be a diversity of views, ideas and interpretations. As such, the opinions expressed in these publications must be understood as belonging to their authors alone.

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Foreword

Azim Nanji

Farhad Daftary, in reflecting upon his initial engagement with Ismaili studies, often recounts a story associated with the late Wladimir Ivanow, the Russian scholar, who, in many ways, was one of the early pioneers of the field. Ivanow, while doing research in Iran, before the days of the 1917 Russian Revolution, on behalf of the Asiatic Museum of St Petersburg, chanced upon an Iranian community in Khurāsān. He was intrigued by the literature they had preserved and on learning from them that they were Ismailis, he expressed astonishment at the fact that some had survived the seventh/thirteenth-century Mongol onslaught, which was generally believed to have eradicated the Ismaili presence in Iran and almost banished them from the pages of history.

We have come a long way since then and the contributions in this volume, which recognise and honour Farhad Daftary's contribution to Ismaili studies, also illustrate the growth and maturity of scholarship on the Ismailis and Ismailism which has now emerged from a curricular black hole, and is establishing itself as a flourishing field within the larger context of Shi'i and Islamic studies.

For the last twenty-two years or so of his academic career, Farhad Daftary has been associated with The Institute of Ismaili Studies and led a remarkable renaissance of research and scholarship at this academic institution which was founded in 1977 with the object of promoting scholarship on Islam, in the historical as well as contemporary contexts, and a better understanding of its relationship with other societies and faiths. The re-examination of Ismaili history and doctrines based on solid documentary evidence, and their place in the larger context of Muslim history and thought, has enabled Farhad Daftary and others to put to rest the many

misrepresentations, conspiracy theories and falsehoods that nurtured the fantastical imaginings of a great variety of writers and scholars, ranging from Ibn Rizām to Marco Polo in the past to some today. In contrast, the value of contextualising Ismaili studies within a cosmopolitan frame of scholarship and geography, is to make it part of a broader history, that is neither parochial nor detached from the history of those amongst whom Ismailis lived and continue to live, across the world.

One of the most significant developments during this time has been the collection and preservation at the Institute of widely scattered and hitherto unavailable Ismaili manuscripts. This growing collection of Arabic, Persian and Khojki texts as well as an archive of oral materials in various dialects, now constitutes one of the largest and most diverse resources in the field. The textual and oral material are complemented by coins, artefacts and objects from the earliest to the contemporary period of Ismaili history and offer scholars an opportunity to access the entire spectrum of scholarly resources in the field. In the revised edition of his masterly account of the Ismailis and their history, *The Ismā'īlīs: Their History and Doctrines* (Cambridge, 2007), Farhad Daftary employs many of these new materials to amplify, refine and deepen many of his previous insights, particularly regarding lesser known Ismaili communities and periods of history. His *Ismaili Literature: A Bibliography of Sources and Studies* (London, 2004) is the culmination of more than three decades of research and together with Ismail K. Poonawala's *Biobibliography of Ismā'īli Literature*, reflects the significant progress and the comprehensive scope of modern Ismaili studies and its sources.

An enduring contribution of Farhad Daftary during his tenure at the Institute is the forging of collaborative relationships with scholars in Egypt, Syria, Iran, Central Asia and elsewhere, to promote and advance scholarly work, particularly in Arabic and Persian and to bring attention to the important work going on in the Muslim world. The fact that his *A Short History of the Ismailis* (Edinburgh, 1998) has already been translated into twelve languages and most of the Institute's publications are available in Arabic, Persian and Urdu translations, is an indication of the importance of the work and the international contacts he has been able to foster and the cosmopolitan community of scholars that has grown at the Institute and across the world. Thus by bringing together scholarship from different societies and scholarly perspectives, the Institute has enabled a great deal of unknown scholarship to become more widely available and also increased recognition of the fact that good scholarship must have an international dimension if it is to address the wider need of creating an

informed, global citizenship.

Ultimately, his contribution will be remembered because it has rehabilitated the value of historical knowledge and the discipline of history itself within the field of Ismaili studies. We remember our past because we wish to know how it relates to our present, if not our future. In that sense, we owe a debt to history. Farhad Daftary has shown us how we may begin to repay that debt. ♣

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* Professor Iraj Afshar sadly passed away on 9 March 2011.

Introduction: A Biographical Sketch¹

Omar Alí-de-Unzaga

Farhad Daftary is the world's foremost authority in Ismaili studies. With an impressive record of publications, his scholarship has become the main reference for those conducting research into the historical trajectory of the Ismailis and their imams, as well as into the religious doctrines and philosophical traditions developed in the Ismaili Shi'i interpretation of Islam. Farhad Daftary's singular contribution to scholarship is to have organised the history of a whole community, its leaders and its doctrines, from materials which were previously scattered and confused, often marred with prejudice and surrounded by legends, into a coherent narrative. He has done this by building a comprehensive historical framework in which Ismaili history and thought not only can be situated in their entirety, but also expressed in a sophisticated yet unpretentious style that unravels complex religious ideas in a clear, fluid and coherent narrative and with an objectivity that is based on the most precise historiographical approaches. Not an Ismaili himself, he has nevertheless had the opportunity to study, observe and engage with both the complexities of documenting the Ismaili past as well as the communities of the present day. A large portion of Farhad Daftary's scholarship consists of disentangling history from myth, of discerning the facts when working with conflicting sources (often only polemical), and above all of setting the record straight on the history of the Ismailis.

He lives in London with his wife Fereshteh (not to be confused with his sister Dr Fereshteh Daftari, an art curator and author based in New York), with whom he has been happily married for more than thirty years.

Family background

A truly cosmopolitan figure, Farhad Daftary was born in Belgium, brought up in Iran and later studied in Italy, England and the United States. A word on his family background is in order. He hails from a very old, aristocratic family in Iran, who have held public office since the eighteenth century. On his paternal side, his ancestry can be traced seven generations back, when his ancestors were mostly in charge of the public finances of the country, under the title (*laqab*) of Mustawfī al-Mamālik,² conferred by the Qājār monarchs on individual members of the family. The name of the family, however, originates in the calling of Mirzā Hidāyat Allāh Vazīr Daftar (d. 1892) and his son Mirzā Muḥammad Ḥusayn Vazīr Daftar (d. 1912), Farhad's great-great-grandfather and great-grandfather respectively, both of whom served successively as what today would be called Ministers of Finance with the title Vazīr Daftar in the second half of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth. Subsequently, in the early Pahlavī era, this title developed into the family name Daftari (also Daftary) when family names were adopted for the first time in Iran. The first member of the family to have used the surname as we know it was Farhad's grandfather, Maḥmūd Khān Daftarī (d. 1939), who earlier had been given the title 'Ayn al-Mamālik by Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh Qājār (r. 1896–1907). He acted as his father's deputy in the Ministry of Finance before holding high ranks in Iran's reformed judiciary system in the time of Riḍā Shāh Pahlavī (r. 1925–1941). Farhad's father, Mohammad Daftary (1904–1983), was educated in France, graduating from the famous military academy of Saint Cyr in 1928, and then pursued a military-diplomatic career. It was during one of his postings that Farhad was born, in Brussels on Friday 23 December 1938. Amongst the various distinctions bestowed on Mohammad Daftary, he was notably made a Commander of the Légion d'Honneur by the President of the French Republic in 1950. In the Qājār and Pahlavī eras, the family produced several prime ministers under a variety of names derived from other individual titles. To give but one example, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Vazīr Daftar's younger brother Muḥammad Khān Muṣaddiq al-Saltāna (1882–1967), the future Dr Mohammad Mosaddeq, became Iran's prime minister during 1951–1953 and nationalised the country's oil industry.

Farhad's mother, Farideh née Agha Khani (1914–2010), hailed from another prominent family that can be traced to mediaeval times. She was the great-granddaughter of Sardār Abu'l-Ḥasan Khān (d. 1880), son of Shāh Khalīl Allāh (d. 1817) and the younger brother of Ḥasan 'Alī Shāh (d.

1881), the spiritual leader of the Nizārī Shī'ī Muslims who was given the title Āghā Khān (Aga Khan) by Fath 'Alī Shāh Qājār (r. 1797–1834). Sardār Abu'l-Ḥasan Khān had helped his brother when the latter was engaged in military conflicts with the Qājār establishment which eventually resulted in his permanent settlement in India. Sardār himself led military expeditions in the early 1840s and seized parts of Balūchistān before being finally defeated in 1846 by a Qājār army and taken to Tehran. There he remained under house arrest until he was pardoned by Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh Qājār (r. 1848–1896) and married Mihr-i Jahān Khānum, a Qājār princess. Sardār Abu'l-Ḥasan Khān's son, Mīrzā Ismā'īl Khān (1854–1928), titled I'tibār al-Saltāna, who was Farhad's maternal great-grandfather, spent a large part of his early life in the entourage of Aga Khan I in Bombay, where he was known as the Ḥājji Šāhib, for having made the pilgrimage to Mecca. Then in the 1870s, he returned to Iran, received his title and subsequently (after the Constitutional Revolution, 1905–1911) became a member of the Majlis (Parliament), elected from the province of Kirmān, where the family had deep roots. Daftary's maternal grandfather was I'tibār al-Saltāna's son Nāṣir Qulī Khān (1873–1941), with the title Mukhbīr al-Sultān bestowed upon him in 1899 by Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh. Mukhbīr al-Sultān's mother was the daughter of 'Alī Qulī Khān Mukhbīr al-Dawla (d. 1897) of the eminent Hidāyat family, who were traditionally in charge of the country's Ministry of Post and Telegraph and produced several noted historians and literary figures. Starting with the historian and poet Riḍā Qulī Khān Hidāyat (d. 1871), this family was also closely affiliated to the Dār al-Funūn, an academy of learning founded in Tehran in 1851, marking the beginning of modern education in Iran. Mukhbīr al-Sultān himself was a graduate of this academy. Farhad Daftary's own earliest memories go back to his grandfather Mukhbīr al-Sultān, whom he can remember meeting when he was three years old. Mukhbīr al-Sultān had also inherited a part of this family's collection of manuscripts, documents and photographs, which eventually became incorporated into Farhad's library.

Early life and education

As mentioned above, Farhad Daftary was born in Europe. Following the outbreak of the Second World War, when he was about two years old, however, his family moved back to Tehran. He attended the Qā'im-maqām Madrasa for his primary education (1945–1950) and then the Dabīristān-i Alborz (Alborz Secondary School). Founded as the American College by Presbyterian missionaries in 1873 on the outskirts of Tehran,

it changed its name to Alborz College in the early 1930s in deference to the Persianisation of foreign names. The American College had been for several decades (until 1940) under the direction of the eminent educator Dr Samuel L. Jordan (d. 1952). By the time Farhad was a pupil at the college, it had become incorporated into the network of schools overseen by Iran's Ministry of Education and was under the direction of the famous Iranian educator Dr Mohammad-Ali Mojtahedi (d. 1997).³ There Farhad completed the first cycle of his secondary education (1951–1953). In 1954, Farhad moved with his family to Rome, not to return to Iran for nearly twenty years. He spent two years (1954–1955) finishing his secondary studies at the Overseas School of Rome (which was also known as the American School) in Via Cassia. During his adolescent years, he also devoted a great deal of time to studying the piano, at which he excelled. While in Rome, he studied with a teacher from the Santa Cecilia Academy of Music as well as with the Austrian-born Italian Conte Antonio di Monteforte, whose own teacher had been a student of the renowned Hungarian composer and pianist Franz Liszt. The Count had connections with Iran through his father who, at the invitation of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh Qājār, had organised a modern police force in Tehran.

In 1956, at the age of 17, Farhad was sent to England where he stayed for two years at Concord College in Tunbridge Wells, Kent, and then at a private tutorial establishment (Eaton and Wallis) in London studying for his General Certificate of Education (GCE). Meanwhile, he had continued to take piano lessons with Ippolit Motchaloff at the Wigmore Hall Studios in London.

However, his life was to take another course. Pursuing his family's traditional involvement in state financial administration, and perhaps as a natural progression of his education in American schools, in 1958, at the age of nineteen, Farhad Daftary moved to the United States where he pursued his higher education in the field of economics for some thirteen years until 1971. He first enrolled at the American University in Washington DC, where he took a BA degree (1958–1962) and then stayed for a fifth year, receiving his MA in 1963. Deciding to continue his post-graduate studies, in 1964 he enrolled at the University of California at Berkeley, where he initially obtained a second Master's degree.

The choice of Berkeley was in line with Daftary's academic record. He had excelled in his studies, always obtaining straight A-grades in all the courses he took. Berkeley's prestige in the mid-1960s, with its economics department ranking first amongst all American universities, was partly due to the fact that it had a high concentration of Nobel Prize

winners on its academic faculty. Farhad Daftary was on various occasions ranked among the top ten Iranian students in the US (out of the several thousand of his compatriots then studying there). He was even awarded a 'Special Citation' by Iran's Ministry of Education. As a result, the University of California granted him fellowships and graduate scholarships for several years to pursue his doctoral studies, which he started in 1964 and completed seven years later in 1971, somewhat prolonged due to his evolving interest in Ismaili studies. When the time came to choose a specialisation, Farhad opted for economic development. At UC Berkeley he had the privilege to be taught by a number of distinguished professors, among whom was the young (and future Nobel laureate) Amartya Sen, who taught economic development as a visiting professor. Amongst his other famous teachers, mention may be made of Tibor Scitovsky and Abba Lerner, whilst two more of his younger teachers, Daniel McFadden and Peter A. Diamond, would also become Nobel laureates. It was also at Berkeley that he made the acquaintance of Hamid Algar, who had then just joined the Near Eastern Studies Department after completing his doctoral studies at Cambridge University. Daftary's Ph.D. dissertation was entitled 'Economic Development and Planning in Iran', with a detailed analysis of the country's modern economic history.

Ismaili studies as a hobby: a largely unexplored field

It was during his years at Berkeley that Farhad developed a deep interest in Ismaili studies. Through the maternal line of his family he had always seen photographs and documents related to the Aga Khans, but it was at Berkeley that for the first time, he had access to modern studies on Islam and the Ismailis. It was Daftary's interest in economic history, as well as the history of Iran and Shi'i Islam, that led to his new interest in the history of the Ismailis residing in the Middle East and elsewhere. It was in this way that Farhad the economist would be transformed into an authority on Ismaili studies.

From the mid-1960s, Daftary developed and systematically pursued his intense curiosity about the history of the small and often misunderstood community of the Ismailis. He set himself the goal of acquiring copies of any available material on them. Access to old and new publications on the subject was crucial. Berkeley proved an excellent location to be based at, because it had a world-class library with a vast Islamic collection. He embarked on an ambitious project to photocopy all the classical articles in European languages related to Ismailism that he could

get his hands on in an extremely methodical way. When he had finished collecting everything he needed, he had all the articles bound, and ended up with more than thirty volumes of Ismaili-related articles. After that, he systematically collected all the articles of a few more recent authors in the field. He talks with delight about how he did all this before the idea of publishing the collected articles of an author, or a *variorum* series, had entered Islamic studies. Thus, Farhad had collected his own copies of the articles of Paul Kraus (1904–1944), Ḥusayn Hamdānī (1901–1962), Wladimir Ivanow, Marius Canard (1888–1982), Asaf, A. A. Fyzee (1899–1981), Samuel M. Stern (1920–1969), and all of the Ismaili articles of the prolific Henry Corbin (1903–1978), as well as the entire vast corpus of the Cambridge Iranologist Edward G. Browne (1862–1926), who made seminal contributions to the literary history of Persia and the various Shiʿi communities which had flourished there.

The field of modern Ismaili studies was then still new and emerging, but it already included the oeuvre of a towering figure, Wladimir Alekseevich Ivanow (1886–1970), who had made significant contributions to it. Ivanow had devoted a major part of his life to the recovery, editing and translation of Ismaili texts, especially those produced by the Nizārī branch. It must be said that this was a crucial time in generational terms: On the one hand, Ivanow was approaching his eightieth year and was at the end of his pioneering career. On the other hand, there were younger scholars, such as Marshal G. S. Hodgson, at Chicago, and Samuel Miklos Stern, at Oxford, still very active and in the prime of their academic careers. Both represented a new generation of scholars and were (and are still considered today) two of the leading authorities in modern Islamic studies in the West. Both also had a special interest in the intellectual history of the Ismailis on which they published extensively. Tragically, both died prematurely: Hodgson in 1968, at forty-six, and Stern the following year, in 1969, at forty-eight. These losses presented a turning point in the field and Farhad now became keenly aware that the historical momentum should not be lost and that, although a good start had been made, Ismaili studies still remained a largely unexplored field.

W. Ivanow as a role model

During his doctoral studies Farhad Daftary had the opportunity to correspond with and meet Ivanow in Tehran (where the latter had been living since 1959) in the course of a summer vacation not long before Ivanow's death. Farhad's communications with Ivanow on the state of Ismaili stud-

ies spurred on his interest in the subject. He remembers that he always had more questions than the old master could answer.

Of all the modern pioneers of Ismaili studies, Ivanow was to have by far the greatest influence on Farhad Daftary. He was curious to know what had made a Russian orientalist and a cataloguer of Islamic manuscripts at the Asiatic Museum in St Petersburg before the Russian Revolution become interested in the history and intellectual heritage of this scattered Shi'i community. He discovered that it had been Ivanow's love of manuscripts that had led him to the Ismaili texts, opening up a new chapter in his life. It had also introduced him to Sir Sultan Muhammad Shah, Aga Khan III (1877–1957), the 48th Ismaili Imam, who had facilitated Ivanow's intellectual journey. He settled in Bombay where he acquired many Ismaili friends from amongst both Khoja (Nizāri) and Bohra (Ṭayyibī) branches of the community.

Farhad Daftary takes pleasure in recounting Ivanow's achievements. He had made available much unknown material, of which his editions of Persian Nizāri texts are the most enduring element. Other scholars were working on the Arabic sources, but Ivanow devoted himself to the Nizāri texts which were almost exclusively, except for some texts of Syrian provenance, in Persian and which had been used as the religious language of the community from the time of Ḥasan-i Šabbāh (d. 1124). Thus he made the bulk of the extant Nizāri literature available to the wider academic world, which represented a major advance in the field in contrast to the hitherto almost total lack of availability of such textual resources. When asked to summarise his own contribution, Daftary always refers back to Ivanow, acknowledging his intellectual debt to this pioneer. In fact, he has not missed any opportunity to recognise Ivanow as 'the leading pioneer' of modern Ismaili studies.⁴ Farhad Daftary's tribute to Ivanow has taken various forms: he wrote Ivanow's obituary (see Bibliography, nos. 16 and 24) and survey articles on his publications (Bibliography, nos. 15 and 22); published a collective volume by way of the Festschrift that Ivanow had never received (Bibliography, no. 9; see below); and has also contributed encyclopaedia articles on Ivanow (Bibliography, nos. 96 and 129); he is also editing Ivanow's memoirs and is currently collaborating through The Institute of Ismaili Studies with the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences on the organisation of a conference to be held in 2011 in St Petersburg to commemorate Ivanow.

Back at Berkeley, and when not engaged on his doctoral work, Farhad's main occupation was the study of the Ismailis, including the compilation of an Ismaili bibliography that served as the basis of his *Ismaili Literature*

(Bibliography, no. 4) published more than four decades later. He also embarked on an extensive programme of collecting books, articles and other documents, which was complemented by correspondence with many of the leading authorities in Ismaili studies at the time. One of these authorities was Abbas Hamdani, who had then just started his career at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. Professor Hamdani belonged to a distinguished family of Dā'ūdī Ṭayyibī Ismaili scholars from Yemen and India, who possessed a significant collection of Ismaili manuscripts. This collection, readily accessible to scholars, was to be eventually donated to The Institute of Ismaili Studies Library in London. He also established correspondence with the late Sherali Alidina and other leaders at the then Ismailia Association in Karachi, Pakistan.

Bibliophilia: the making of a private library

Farhad Daftary's interest in Ismaili studies was slowly turning from a hobby into an all-absorbing activity and a highly structured project of collecting the sources and studying them. Not without some nostalgia, Farhad Daftary describes one of his main activities at Berkeley for several years as a continuous toing and froing between the Central Library there and the photocopy shop on the campus. In this way he came to possess copies of all the existing articles on the Ismailis, including those of the nineteenth-century orientalists, E. M. Quatremère (1782–1857), A. I. Silvestre de Sacy (1758–1838), C. F. Defrémery (1822–1883) and J. M. de Goeje (1836–1909), as well as the modern scholars noted above. It was thus, with these self-made *variorum* volumes, that he started his own library collection.

He had now also begun acquiring all the books in Arabic and in European languages on Ismaili subjects then available, in addition to searching for out-of-print and rare works through a number of antiquarian book dealers, such as E. J. Brill in Leiden and Ad Orientem in England, etc., and for decades he regularly corresponded with them. Similarly, he familiarised himself with the Ismaili publications of the Islamic Research Association, established in 1933 in Bombay, which was later effectively transformed in 1946 into the Ismaili Society.⁵ They had published five editions and translations of Nizārī texts by Ivanow, and Daftary purchased all of them from Bombay. He recounts how during the years of his doctoral studies, one of the most exciting moments virtually every day was when he heard the postman knocking at the door, delivering the books he had ordered. When he had started corresponding with Ivanow in Tehran, the

Russian scholar was residing temporarily at the house of his friend, M. H. Asadi, who owned a bookshop in Bahārsitān Square and distributed the publications of the Ismaili Society throughout the Middle East. There, Daftary found many of Ivanow's books which now are no longer available (and even then were very difficult to obtain), and so he did not hesitate to buy them.

As a devoted bibliophile, he has continued, throughout his career, to acquire rare volumes. He talks proudly about his library. Amongst the manuscripts in his collection, mention may be made of the copies of the Qur'an commissioned or personally copied in the nineteenth century by his maternal forebear, Sardār Abu'l-Ḥasan Khān, and a beautifully illuminated copy of the complete *Dīwān* of Ḥāfiẓ, the famous Persian poet of the fourteenth century, commissioned by Sayyid Abu'l-Ḥasan 'Alī (d. 1792), Shāh Khalil Allāh's father and the 44th Nizārī Ismaili Imam who was the governor of Kirmān during the era of the Zand dynasty.⁶ Apart from extensive collections on Ismaili and Persian history, his library also includes rare travelogues on Iran (Persia), like G. Barbaro and A. Contarini, *Viaggi in Persia* (1545), accounts composed by two Venetian ambassadors to Persia in the late fifteenth century; Sir Thomas Herbert, *A Description of the Persian Monarchy* (1634), the first English account of Persia; John Fryer, *A New Account of East India and Persia* (1698); Jean Chardin, *Voyages en Perse*, in various editions including its 1811 critical edition by L. Langlès in ten volumes plus an atlas; and Sir John Malcolm's *History of Persia* (1815), which he acquired in the 1960s for \$300 (less than a tenth of its current market value!). He also acquired rare lithographed editions of Persian texts and histories, such as the *Tārīkh-i Firishta* (1822) and mediaeval accounts of the Crusades, such as J. Bongers (ed.), *Gesta Dei per Francos* (1611), with references to the contemporary Nizārī Ismailis. His library is all the more impressive given the fact that for years he had his books leather-bound in Tehran by a specialist binder, Friedrich Lankamerer (1922–2002), the son of a German engineer posted to Iran in the early twentieth century.

By the time Farhad completed his Ph.D. and was ready to return to Iran, he had amassed an extensive library of Ismaili sources and studies, perhaps the largest private collection of its kind. In fact, as he himself declares, he had for many years initially conducted most of his research on the basis of materials from his own collection.

Return to Iran: from promising career to a life-long passion

Back in Iran, in 1972, after spending almost two decades abroad, Farhad Daftary embarked on what at the time looked like a promising professional career in line with his family tradition and expectations. He became an Advisor to the Plan and Budget Organisation, the government body that prepared Iran's five-year economic development plans and annual budgets. Then a year later, in 1973, he was appointed Director of the Economic Research Department at the Central Bank of Iran, which had only been established the previous decade, and where he remained for several years. At this juncture, Farhad had the opportunity to pursue a successful career in the government's financial and economic administrations but he decided to take a different route: in 1974 he left the public sector. He became the co-founder and Director of Yekom Economic Consultants, the first (as its Persian name, Yekom, indicates) firm of consultants specialising in economics and management in Iran, with a separate section for water resources projects. Following his bibliophilic character, Daftary made a point of establishing a library at the company, which soon became the best private library of its kind in Tehran, with a major share of his own economics books incorporated into it.

During the years 1973–1977, Farhad Daftary also taught post-graduate courses on economic history and development at the Faculty of Economics of both the National University and Tehran University. During those years Farhad published a number of economic articles, and prepared several consultancy reports for the Iranian government and various international agencies such as the International Labour Office in Geneva.⁷

Events in the late 1970s, after the Iranian Revolution, accelerated Daftary's shift to a new discipline altogether. At the end of 1978 with the overthrow of the Shah there was general euphoria in Iran for a brief period of time. But almost immediately, the Iran–Iraq war broke out in 1980 and there was no possibility to travel outside the country for several years. His next visit abroad did not, in fact, take place until 1985. It was under such circumstances that with the encouragement of his wife, Fereshteh, he finally decided the time had come to write a book on the Ismailis.

The story of a history

Farhad Daftary took up the challenge and embarked on a new and fascinating enterprise: writing a comprehensive history of the Ismailis. Throughout the decades in California and Tehran, he had continued to

pursue his personal interest in collecting and studying materials produced by scholars in the field of Ismaili studies while Ivanow had continued to be a role model for him in several respects. Firstly, Ivanow was also someone who had moved from his original discipline of Iranian languages and dialects to the field of Ismaili studies. Just as the time spent in Bombay, making Ismaili acquaintances there and being introduced to Aga Khan III, had opened up a new chapter in Ivanow's life, so Daftary was about to embark on a similar journey. This personal interest had become a passion and an intellectual challenge and now Daftary had the chance to devote his full attention to it. As a pioneer, Ivanow had had to lay the foundation for studying Ismaili history and doctrines. When Ivanow started his Ismaili studies in the 1930s and earlier, there was next to nothing published of the Nizāri Ismaili texts, and for more than three decades he set himself the task of identifying the gaps in the field and filling them with his contributions. That was exactly the model adopted by Daftary from the time of his graduate studies at Berkeley and it remained the model that he was to follow during his unfolding career in Ismaili studies: he made it his ongoing concern to take stock of what had been done before him, what was the current state of Ismaili studies, and then to identify the gaps in the field pointing to new directions for research.

The notorious lack of methodological underpinnings in Islamic studies in general was perhaps to some extent compensated for in Ismaili studies by Farhad Daftary's training. Economics was, in his own words, 'the most precise and quantifiable of the social sciences'. This training, he says, had provided him with a good intellectual discipline, a sound methodology and a facility for clear thinking and well-organised analysis, argumentation and writing. When presented with the inevitable question of how he managed to succeed in a new field of research, on the margin of his other activities, Daftary has one constant answer, demonstrating his belief in 'steady' scholarship: there are no short cuts or fast tracks to scholarship. Rather than intensive and exclusive research carried out in a concentrated span of time on a specific subject, one might say that he has pursued extensive scholarship regularly, on a daily and progressive basis, even if only for a few hours each morning or evening. This method has yielded very fruitful results, as can be seen in the bibliography of his works of some 240 titles (with many more in the pipeline). A rigorous editor himself, Daftary has also had inputs of various kinds into all the publications produced by The Institute of Ismaili Studies since the mid-1990s (and currently exceeding 80 monographs and texts).

His earlier training helped: according to Daftary, in order to write on

history, one must be very organised and systematic, be familiar with the historiography of the subject and then bring together a full range of the sources. Next one must be able to assess these sources, then analyse and interpret them, producing a sequential history. In his view a historian must have a logical mind (he benefited from studying both logics and mathematics), and also be able to substantiate (as in proving a hypothesis) and assign relative importance to events (this is where his background in quantitative methods in economics has come in very handy). One must also avoid unnecessarily complicating the issues by writing in an indeterminate and obscure style. He has set it upon himself to explain the misunderstood history of a misrepresented community. The readership he had originally in mind was principally the scholarly community, but he also took into account the educated non-specialist reader. He wanted to explain Ismaili history in an accessible and clear manner. In his view, 'the beauty of scholarship is to have the ability to express difficult concepts and ideas in simple terms and language'. He gives as an example the time when he was asked what, exactly, was meant by 'esoteric literature'. He thought for a minute and said: 'It is based on the distinction between a literal and a hidden meaning, between what is perceived and what really exists; it also implies the need for a guide to help others proceed in this spiritual journey in search of certain ultimate truths.' Indeed, anyone who has dealt with Farhad Daftary quickly realises his ability to present complex ideas in concise and clear terms with no verbiage or frills.

Having read the bulk of the existing literature on the Ismailis, in a variety of languages, the main question in Farhad Daftary's mind was: Why do we not possess a book that deals with all the periods and phases of Ismaili history? It had become clear to him that the first and indispensable task to be accomplished in this regard was a comprehensive history of the Ismailis, something which did not yet exist. He set this as his overriding objective: a history as comprehensive as possible, covering all Ismaili communities and groupings, tracing and documenting their doctrines and intellectual elaborations, stretching from the formative period of Shi'i Islam to the present time, using all available materials, published and unpublished, remaining always aware of the nature and biases (often hostile) of the mediaeval sources. It was difficult to decide on a methodology for this task. The most appropriate model for Daftary was Marshall Hodgson's *The Order of Assassins* (unfortunately mistitled as later admitted by the author himself),⁸ a book on the Alamūt phase of Nizārī Ismaili history (1090–1256), with an approach and structure that could serve as a model for Ismaili history in its entirety with all its phases as first identified by Ivanow.

Meanwhile, he had started studying Arabic systematically, with the eminent Professor Ādhartāsh Ādharnūsh (also a regular contributor on Arabic literature to the *Great Islamic Encyclopaedia*) and made good use of the libraries at the University of Tehran, especially the one at its Faculty of Literature. He also began to visit Ismaili heritage sites in Iran, including several of the major fortresses and the mediaeval sites in Anjudān, Kahak and Kirmān which had been visited by Ivanow in the 1930s; indeed, in the 1970s he was the first scholar to visit them since Ivanow and he found that further deterioration had taken place at some sites.⁹ In Kirmān he found that some of the eighteenth-century structures and monuments described by Ivanow were actually no longer in situ. Then he went to Maḥallāt (where there was still in existence part of a wall of the residential compound of Aga Khan I as well as the Ḥusayniyya founded by him in the 1830s). Subsequently, he organised an expedition with some friends to Alamūt. After a difficult journey with two Range Rovers, which involved crossing a river in Rūdbār, they erected tents and spent the night at the foot of the rock of Alamūt. The locality was breathtaking. It was also very emotional for him – in fact, he can only describe the experience as resembling a ‘pilgrimage’, something he had aspired to do for a very long time: he could finally stand on the spot where almost 900 years earlier Ḥasan-i Ṣabbāḥ, founder of the Ismaili state in Persia, had stood. The visit was giving tangible substance to his research. The historian ‘Aṭā Malik Juwaynī (d. 1283), who visited Alamūt just before its destruction by the Mongols in 1256, had described the fortress as majestic and now Farhad could see for himself that even its ruins remained so. Another trip was made later to the fortress of Lamasar, stopping at the ruins of the castle of Shamīrān, the seat of the Musāfirid dynasty of northern Persia (and visited in 1047 by the Persian poet and Ismaili *dā‘ī* Nāṣir-i Khusraw on his way to Fatimid Cairo). He also went to the castle of Girdkūh, which had been besieged by the Mongols for seventeen years until 1270, and where the stones of the mangonels used by the Mongols against the local Nizārī garrison are still scattered on the ground. In 1985, he visited the Ismailis of Khurāsān (where the bulk of their community in Iran resides). There in the village of Dīzbād, in the mountains between Mashhad and Nīshāpūr, he attended the ceremonies of Naw Ḥiṣār which take place annually on the last Friday of August, an occasion when the Ismailis of Iran gather and take part in elaborate rituals which include the recitation of the mystical poetry of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (d. 1273) and other great Persian poets. This was Daftary’s first encounter with the contemporary Ismailis of Iran who are very much attached to their traditions. He was shown rare manu-

scripts, and given photocopies of some of them; he met the elders of the community who showed him manuscripts of collected poems of Ismaili poets such as Khākī Khurāsānī (d. after 1646), and his descendant Fidā'ī Khurāsānī (d. 1923), whose *dīwān* of poetry remains unpublished.

The Ismā'īlīs: Their History and Doctrines

Farhad Daftary's research for this book had effectively begun in the mid-1960s and lasted over twenty years. But he actually started to write the book in 1978 and it took him a further eight years to complete its first draft. His initial plan laid out the work in seven chapters: five main chapters on the Ismailis (covering the four phases devised by Ivanow, early, Fatimid, Alamūt and Post-Alamūt, and including also a chapter on the Musta'lian Ismailis) with two initial chapters on the early Shi'a, and on the progress in Ismaili studies. And this was indeed the way the book was structured and finally published in 1990 under the title *The Ismā'īlīs: Their History and Doctrines*.¹⁰ He allowed himself roughly one year for each chapter, with the object of covering all the key events, personalities and doctrinal developments in each period. Each chapter naturally underwent numerous drafts and was expanded and revised many times. Nowadays, even with all the technological advances that scholarship can make use of, this may seem daunting, but not excessively so. However, in the early 1980s his chapters were typed by his wife Fereshteh on an electric IBM typewriter. The need to make revisions to the typescript raised continuous difficulties that had to be resolved with ingenious solutions. On many occasions, he had to count the words and letters of a revised passage to ensure that the new text could be accommodated without any change in the page layout!

From very early on Daftary was aware that this mammoth task could not be accomplished in isolation and that he would need to be in touch with some established scholars in the field of Ismaili studies. For this purpose, he started corresponding with Professor Wilferd Madelung, then the Laudian Professor of Arabic at Oxford University and a leading contributor to modern Ismaili studies, and informed him that he was working on this project, a history of the Ismailis. He asked Madelung if he would agree to read through the chapters, which he did. In 1985, Farhad Daftary finally had the chance to travel outside Iran. He visited Paris, London and Oxford, where he conducted further research in various libraries and met a number of scholars. By then, he had written three chapters ('Progress in Ismā'īlī Studies', 'Origins and Early Development of Shi'ism' and 'Early

Ismā'īlism'). At Oxford, he showed them to Madelung at the Oriental Institute and subsequently received positive comments from this foremost authority, which encouraged him to continue along the lines he had set himself, especially after Madelung's approval of the third chapter, which was one of his own main fields of expertise. Madelung's reviews of the chapters continued and their relationship has been maintained to this day (indeed, Daftary was closely involved in the *Festschrift* for Madelung and his affiliation to The Institute of Ismaili Studies as Senior Research Fellow).¹¹

Farhad Daftary's focus was obviously on history. He was especially interested in investigating how the different Muslim communities had arisen, especially within Shi'i Islam. He was attracted towards investigating the disputes arising over the succession to the Prophet. Was there a theological component to it? Yet again, though the Fatimid period of Ismaili history was relatively well known when Daftary started writing his book, there was next to nothing in modern scholarship on much of the seven centuries after the Alamūt phase in Nizārī history. Daftary's book filled this gap in a structured manner, particularly through the original research he carried out using a large number of Persian regional histories, especially those on Ṭabaristān (Māzandarān) and other Caspian provinces. For this long period he essentially followed again the categorisation introduced by Ivanow: the early period of this phase (that is to say the first two centuries after the Mongol destruction of the Nizārī state, centred at Alamūt, in 1256), the Anjudān period (beginning in the fifteenth century, when the imams of the Qāsim-Shāhī Nizārī line had settled in the village of Anjudān near Maḥallāt in central Iran), and the modern period (from the 1840s onwards). As Madelung says in the Foreword to *The Ismā'īlis*, in some areas the book covers 'entirely new ground'; the second feature of the book praised by Madelung is that it 'offers a first comprehensive and detailed synthesis of the complex history of Ismā'īlism', reflecting 'the progress of recent research' and integrating an 'evenly readable account'.

Although Daftary's main concern was the chronological history of the Ismailis he also sought to cover the main intellectual and theological developments in a systematic fashion. If the history of the Ismailis had still to be unravelled, it was clear to him that, at that time, the doctrines of the various Ismaili groups were even more difficult to understand clearly. At the time, scholars had just begun to understand, for example, who the Qarmaṭīs were. Until then, after the earlier studies of de Goeje, Ivanow had the most realistic understanding of them, but his information, too, was still sketchy and confused, as he had only managed to scratch the surface

of the subject. By the early 1960s, new hypotheses had been proposed in three articles by Stern (in 1955, 1960 and 1961)¹² and by Madelung in another three articles (in 1959 written in German, which Daftary later had translated into English, in a slightly revised version, and published as part of an edited volume on the Ismailis in 1996; and in 1961 again in German; and in his article on the Qarmaṭis for *EI2*).¹³ He was similarly interested in clarifying the controversial issues surrounding the opening phase of Ismailism, but the few early sources only provided conflicting information. Basically subscribing to the Stern-Madelung position he spent some time trying to resolve the alleged identification of the early Ismailis with the Khaṭṭābīs, followers of Abu'l-Khaṭṭāb (d. 755), a contemporary of Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq (d. 765). This identification was first propounded in the works of the early Imāmī Shi'ī heresiographers, such as al-Nawbakhtī (d. ca. 912) and al-Qummī (d. 913),¹⁴ as a part of their polemical treatment of the early Ismailis, and also reasserted in the early studies of Bernard Lewis and Henry Corbin; he arrived at the conclusion that this identification was groundless and that it had to be rejected, in line with Madelung's view.¹⁵ This conclusion was strongly substantiated by the fact that later mediaeval Ismaili authorities, like al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān (d. 974), the foremost jurist of the Fatimid period, condemned the Khaṭṭābiyya as 'heretics' for having propagated the divinity of the imams, something that went against the doctrine of the Fatimids.¹⁶ This also explains why Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī (d. ca. 1021), the most learned contemporary Ismaili theologian, was called to Cairo by the Fatimid Imam-Caliph al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh (r. 996–1021) to refute the emerging doctrines of the founders of the Druze religion, who were beginning to preach the divinity of al-Ḥākim. Subsequently, Daftary refined his own ideas on the early Ismailis and published several studies on the subject.¹⁷

The move to London and affiliation with The Institute of Ismaili Studies

In 1985, on his travels to Europe, he visited The Institute of Ismaili Studies in London for the first time. The Institute had been founded by His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan only eight years earlier in 1977 and was then located in one of its early temporary premises on Great James Street in London. Incidentally, this year was crucial for the Ismailis in the UK, since a major institution, the Ismaili Centre in South Kensington, London, was inaugurated in April, giving the Ismailis the greatest degree of visibility and exposure they had ever experienced in a Western environment.

In the library of the Institute, Farhad Daftary found many manuscripts and also new publications in Arabic that contributed towards his research. Also, for the first time, he met Mr Shams Vellani, then the Institute's Executive Officer, who showed great interest in Daftary's project. On his return to Iran, he resumed his work and completed the final draft of his book in 1987.

On Farhad Daftary's next visit to London in 1987, he gave Mr Vellani a draft of the work, and the latter subsequently suggested that he join the Institute to prepare the work for publication. Daftary accepted, but it took another year to return to Tehran and wrap up all his affairs and commitments there. In 1988 he settled in London with his wife, just before turning fifty. He officially joined the Institute in September 1988. By then, the Institute had developed a teaching programme under its Department of Education and had also produced its first publications: English translations of two sets of collected articles by Henry Corbin, undertaken by the Paris branch of the Institute then still operative and directed by the Iranian philosopher Daryush Shayegan, an old friend of Daftary's, and a two-volume catalogue of the Arabic manuscripts in its library. A small number of scholars were also working there on different texts, including J. Badakhchani and H. Haji (both contributors to this volume).

Farhad Daftary's immediate task now was to get his book published. Two further years were needed to fine-tune the work with additional annotations, based on the resources at the library of the Institute and elsewhere. Wilferd Madelung read through the remainder of the typescript providing his customary meticulous comments. Daftary sent copies of the typescript to the University Presses of Cambridge and Oxford; both had this work evaluated by scholars and eventually both accepted it for publication. In the end Daftary decided on Cambridge University Press as his publisher and the book finally appeared in 1990.

A historian of historians

The Institute had started its publications with Corbin's highly intricate phenomenological essays, reconstructing Ismaili doctrines within a metahistorical frame. However, Daftary attached greater weight to historiography and textual analysis in many of the Institute's subsequent publications. Asked about this matter, he says that in a historical investigation of events, a chronological framework is of the highest importance since ideas do not develop in a vacuum, but out of previous ideas; and events, often, are responses to previous events. And textual materials, conveying

the literary and intellectual heritage of a community, are indispensable for studying and understanding that heritage.

One of Farhad Daftary's constant interests has been the figure of the modern historian and his role in shaping history-writing. During his doctoral studies, he had carried out research on the lives and times of many economists. Once his attention shifted to Ismaili studies, he adopted a similar methodology for contextualising the contributions of the key figures in the field. Several of his early publications were devoted to scholars' lives and achievements. In the majority of his books, too, he has always tried to begin by explaining the state of the field of research and the individuals who have shaped the study of Ismaili history.¹⁸

Asked about his great interest in modern historians, he responds by saying that studying a person's life reveals much about his context, his interests, his thought. We are, as he says, the products of our own histories and intellectual environments. He believes in the theory of 'challenges and responses' in history-writing: when historians write, they are often responding to something, even though it is frequently the case that a hundred years later people may not know what it was that they had been responding to. Unfortunately, he adds, it may also happen that the historians themselves may have fabricated or misinterpreted the required evidence, producing polemical material that will be used as a reliable source by later historians. And if a 'fiction' is repeated often enough it may eventually be taken as representing a 'fact'. Looking into the lives of scholars and the contexts in which they worked has enabled him to have some understanding of what it was that they responded to, or, in his words, 'why was a certain author writing what he was writing?' This kind of two-fold historiography has added an extra dimension to his work, making him keenly aware of the necessity of evaluating one's sources and distinguishing fact from fiction.

Stories versus history: insiders and observers

In 1992, two years after Farhad Daftary produced his *magnum opus*, there was an organisational restructuring at the Institute. Now, under the deanship of Dr Aziz Esmail, a new Department of Academic Research and Publications was created. Daftary was appointed as the first head of that department, a post he has retained to this day despite the demands of his other responsibilities.

Next, he devoted his attention to one of the most contentious and least understood issues in the entire history of the Ismailis: the 'black legend'

that had developed about them and had spread in the middle ages in both the Islamic world and in Europe. His book on this subject, *The Assassin Legends: Myths of the Ismā'ilis*, was published in 1994. This was a research issue of immense interest and complexity due its popular appeal and intricacies. Daftary was initially interested in understanding the etymology of the word 'assassin' and its connection with the Ismailis: why were they referred to by their neighbours in Syria and in the Caspian region of northern Persia as *hashishīs* or *hashishīn*; and, following them, in the European sources as 'assassins'? Why were there so many fanciful tales around this? Not much progress in research on this topic had taken place since the pioneering study of Silvestre de Sacy (d. 1838), the doyen of the nineteenth-century orientalis, who had solved the etymological puzzle of the word 'assassin'. Showing that it derived from the Arabic word *hashish*, de Sacy himself nevertheless subscribed at least partially to the legends, as recounted by Marco Polo and other mediaeval Europeans, as being accurate accounts of the secret practices of the Ismailis. *Hashishī* was a term of abuse in Arabic, which was then used in reference to the Nizārī Ismailis in some polemical Sunni and Zaydī sources. The derogatory term itself then gave rise to the tales circulating in the mediaeval Crusader circles, connecting the Ismailis with the consumption of hashish (a product of hemp) and appearing variously in European sources. These so-called 'Assassin legends' have no counterparts in Arabic or Persian sources of the same period, despite their authors' hostile stances. Farhad Daftary's conclusion was that the tales were fabricated by the Crusader circles and their occidental observers themselves to justify what they perceived as 'irrational' behaviour (martyrdom) that had to be given a rational explanation (as behaviour motivated under the influence of intoxicating drugs such as hashish).

If the first edition of *The Ismā'ilis* had had a significant impact in the field (with numerous reprints, reviews and regular citations in academic literature), *The Assassin Legends* was no less interesting to scholars: it attracted thirty reviews in the lustre following its publication. Nevertheless, was it possible that Farhad Daftary's formal affiliation with an institution connected to the community on whose past he was writing could somehow tarnish his academic rigour and objectivity? While the vast majority of the reviewers welcomed the book and its role in deconstructing the centuries-old myths, there were also one or two who questioned the project as they thought he was an Ismaili, an 'insider' of a religious community, taking an apologetic stance.¹⁹ When suggestions of apologetic intentions were made by one such reviewer, Daftary was quick

to publish a rebuttal in the same journal declaring: 'I would like to state that I am not an Ismaili, and that my academic affiliation to The Institute of Ismaili Studies, London, has in no way affected my academic objectivity [...] My main aim in writing *The Assassin Legends* was to trace the roots of some of the major legends surrounding the Nizari Ismailis of the mediaeval times [...] and it has never been my intention to be apologetic.'²⁰ However, a more important phenomenon was now taking place. Although the academic credibility of institutions linked formally or informally with a Christian faith community, like the various schools of divinity, theology faculties and even entire universities, had been accepted without question on both sides of the Atlantic for hundreds of years, Western academics were now witnessing the fact that an academic institute connected to a Muslim community and based in central London could produce research of the highest calibre, deeply committed to the standards of critical scholarship and yet empathetic to the historical and intellectual preoccupations of Muslims, and more particularly in this case, the Ismailis. Farhad Daftary had achieved this difficult balance, as he defines himself neither as an 'insider' nor an 'outsider' but as a close and empathetic 'observer'. In the context of the 'Assassin legends', too, he maintains that much in the same way that 'fiction' through repetition over time becomes accepted as 'fact', then facts also need to be repeated frequently and widely enough to replace fictions.

Promoting scholarship

Farhad Daftary has contributed significantly to The Institute of Ismaili Studies, establishing it as a recognised academic centre for Ismaili studies. One of the aims of the Institute has been to promote scholarship on Islam, and he made this his own objective. He himself had originally published outside the Institute because there was no publishing programme as such. Now, he established the Institute's first publication series: the Ismaili Heritage Series, which was initiated in 1996 under his own general editorship. This was designed to be a series of monographs with the objective of exploring the intellectual and religious heritage of the Ismailis, a heritage which still resonates in the contemporary world since the community is very much in existence. He signed contracts with several of the leading authorities who had already contributed to a collective volume he had just edited, *Mediaeval Isma'ili History and Thought*. Four years later, in 2000, he established a second series, the Ismaili Texts and Translations Series, again under his general editorship and with an editorial board of eminent schol-

ars of Ismaili studies. This new series was devoted to critical editions and annotated translations of authentic texts in Arabic and Persian produced by the Ismailis themselves, or about them, clarifying the actual teachings of the community. The series had a two-fold objective: to produce materials for further progress in the field and to address the misrepresentations of Ismaili doctrines and practices. The primary selection criteria for the series were major texts that remained unpublished as well as texts that had been published in defective editions. He invited Professor Madelung, who had already taught at the Institute, to be a consulting editor for the series. Daftary's general support of sound academic projects is well known and he has generously supported or sponsored a number of publications, conferences and other academic initiatives both inside and outside the Institute. He has also promoted the publications of various types of anthologies of Ismaili literature and other Islamic texts, especially those related to the contributions of Shi'i Muslim scholars who have been hitherto marginalised in Islamic studies in the West.

Meanwhile, Farhad Daftary had also started developing the academic faculty of his Department of Academic Research and Publications. Wilferd Madelung became a Senior Research Fellow, a position which through Daftary's initiative was later offered to Professors Hermann Landolt (in 2002) and M. A. Amir-Moezzi (in 2007) as well. He contributed to developing and running the Institute's Graduate Programme in Islamic Studies and Humanities (GPISH), in which two years were spent on an innovative course at the Institute and a third year studying for a Master's degree at a British university. While the intellectual design of this innovative academic programme was the brainchild of Aziz Esmail and Mohammed Arkoun (1928–2010), who had been another Senior Research Fellow and one of the governors of the Institute, Daftary was responsible for finding and engaging most of the lecturers for this programme. Thus, he contributed to the students' exposure to some of the best minds in the field of Islamic studies in the UK, as he successfully invited eminent scholars from Cambridge (Patricia Crone, Charles Melville and John Cooper), Oxford (Julie Scott Meisami), or Edinburgh (Carole Hillenbrand and Robert Hillenbrand), and Manchester (C. Edmund Bosworth), some of them contributors to this volume, to teach in this programme. This approach not only brought the Institute's graduate students into contact with these scholars, but it also facilitated the admission of the students to the best UK-based universities in their third year. Daftary himself has been regularly teaching a survey course on Ismaili history in this programme since its inception in 1994.

Mediaeval Isma'ili History and Thought

Daftary kept his own publication activities alive despite intensive administrative duties. His next publication, this time an edited volume, *Mediaeval Isma'ili History and Thought* (1996; see Daftary Bibliography, no. 9), was designed to cover selected areas in Ismaili studies that needed further attention. This was to be a turning point in its own right since he had now started to galvanise other scholars in the field of Ismaili studies. For the volume, he assembled some of the most renowned scholars in the field, such as Ali Asani, Heinz Halm, Abbas Hamdani, Wilferd Madelung, Azim Nanji, Ismail K. Poonawala and Paul E. Walker, again, some of them contributors to this volume, and also several others, like C. Edmund Bosworth, Carole Hillenbrand and Charles Melville who were then also teaching at the Institute. This process widened his circle of academic friends and colleagues. He now had the opportunity to meet some of these scholars for the first time in London. With others, such as Abbas Hamdani, he had already established working relationships through correspondence. He dedicated this collective volume to Ivanow, who had never had a Festschrift and, beyond a few circles, had never received sufficient recognition for his pioneering accomplishments in modern Ismaili studies.

In this volume Farhad Daftary also demonstrated his ability to make materials available in English as the primary language of scholarship in the West. The first two chapters of this edited volume were, in fact, translations from the German: Madelung's 1959 groundbreaking article on the Qarmatis and the Fatimids, and a summary in English of Halm's seminal *habilitation* work on the pre-Fatimid Ismaili cosmology.²¹ Equally, in his *Assassin Legends* he had inserted an annotated English translation of de Sacy's classical study in French on the Nizārīs, *Mémoire sur la dynastie des Assassins* (pp. 129–188). All these translations were meticulously produced by Azizeh Azodi (1922–2008), an Iranian polyglot then living in Paris. Later, she translated into English Halm's book for the Ismaili Heritage Series, under the title *The Fatimids and their Traditions of Learning* (1997).

Daftary's work began to have some impact also in the Middle East. By 1997, *The Ismā'īlīs* and *The Assassin Legends* had been translated into Arabic and Persian. The Persian translation of *The Ismā'īlīs* received the 'Best Book of the Year Award' in Iran (see Daftary Bibliography, no. 1(b)); and then subsequently when a group of religious scholars from the main seminary in Qumm compiled a collection of studies on the Ismailis, they had their work evaluated by Daftary who was also invited to contribute

an extensive introduction to the volume (Daftary Bibliography, no. 47). Subsequently, Daftary himself became active in commissioning translations of the Institute's publications into Arabic, Persian and Urdu as well as some European languages. He also responded to translation requests from various publishers in a wide range of countries. At the time of writing this introduction, Daftary's own works have been variously translated into fourteen languages, including Arabic and Persian, as well as French, German, Gujarati, Italian, Indonesian (Bahasa), Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Tajik (in Cyrillic alphabet), Turkish and Urdu. Some of his books have been translated also into Hungarian through the initiatives of István Hajnal (a contributor to this volume) who is single-handedly promoting Ismaili and Qarmaṭī studies in Budapest. Further, Daftary has ensured that most of the major publications of the Institute (other than the Arabic and Persian texts published in the Ismaili Texts and Translations Series) are translated into Arabic and Persian as well as other languages such as Gujarati, Portuguese, Russian, Tajik (Cyrillic) and Urdu, languages used by the Ismailis of different countries.

Aiming to make his own major publication more broadly accessible, given that the eight-hundred page volume of *The Ismā'īlīs* was essentially a highly specialised academic work, he decided to devote his next two years to working on *A Short History of the Ismailis* (1998; see Daftary Bibliography, no. 3), published in the Islamic Surveys series under the general editorship of Carole Hillenbrand. It is important to note that this book is not a summary or a condensed version of his *magnum opus*. For a start, it is organised thematically within a chronological frame. He also added much new material, incorporating more recent progress in the field since the time of writing *The Ismā'īlīs* more than a decade earlier. This also attested to the accelerated speed of progress in Ismaili studies.

There followed an interlude whilst he edited two more multi-authored volumes: *Intellectual Traditions in Islam* (2000; see Daftary Bibliography, no. 10), based on the proceedings of a conference organised by the Institute in 1994 at Churchill College, Cambridge, covering an overview of intellectual life in Islam as expressed through different traditions, and a Festschrift in honour of Wilferd Madelung, *Culture and Memory in Mediaeval Islam* (2003, see Daftary Bibliography, no. 11), which Daftary co-edited with Joseph W. Meri, a former student of Madelung's who was at the time a research associate at the Institute. Subsequently, Daftary was instrumental in launching the Institute's *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'* ('Epistles of the Brethren of Purity') series, which will result in the critical edition of the Arabic text and annotated English translation of this work in seventeen

volumes by more than twenty scholars. Daftary serves on the Advisory Board of this series of publications, with Nader El-Bizri as its general editor. In terms of promoting scholarship in Ismaili studies, quite aside from organising an extensive programme of publications for the Institute and inviting various scholars to participate in these efforts,²² Daftary also arranged for subventions to publishers which made other Ismaili publications possible. In this category, two cases merit particular attention here: the second volume of H. Halm's trilogy of books on Fatimid history,²³ and the Ismaili section of the *Jāmi' al-tawārikh* of Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh (d. 1318),²⁴ a chief primary source on the Nizārī Ismaili state of Persia in mediaeval times. The latter book was dedicated to Farhad Daftary.

Bibliographies

For Madelung's Festschrift, Farhad Daftary had invested much effort in compiling a bibliography of the works published by this polymath and highly prolific German scholar, which he arranged chronologically. Indeed it had been through bibliographical studies that Daftary had entered the field of Ismaili studies, by using an index card system in Berkeley. For more than four decades, he had been collecting bibliographical information. This passion for bibliographies finally culminated in his publication of *Ismaili Literature* (2004; see Daftary Bibliography, no. 4), which has the subtitle 'A bibliography of sources and studies'. Previously, there had been two important bibliographical works in Ismaili studies.²⁵ Whereas those works had been devoted exclusively to manuscript sources, Daftary was now presenting a bibliography of all the published works, primary sources as well as secondary studies, on Ismaili-related subjects, an area which had not been covered by the other two bibliographies. Given the rapid progress in the field, Daftary is currently compiling notes for a second edition of his *Ismaili Literature*.

Daftary had been equally active in publishing journal articles and contributing chapters to collected volumes. In 2005, he selected ten of the most significant articles he had published by that time, and collected them in a volume entitled *Ismailis in Medieval Muslim Societies*, in which some of the studies appeared in expanded forms with additional notes while others were slightly abridged.

Works of reference

Farhad Daftary was aware that the bulk of the academic publications on Ismaili studies might be read only by specialists, and that most scholars in the wider field of Islamic studies, as well as researchers and students in general, remained largely unaware of the complexities of Ismaili history and thought. Consequently, he decided to embark on a project of writing both English and Persian entries for encyclopaedias and other reference works, and these currently number more than 130 (See Daftary Bibliography, nos. 76–211). He started with the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (*EIr*), the then major new work of reference in Islamic and Iranian studies. In the early 1990s, after the publication of *The Ismāʿīlīs*, he was invited to be the consulting editor for that encyclopaedia's Ismaili articles, identifying the entries and their prospective authors. In that role, he himself has contributed many articles to *EIr*. His major contributions to the *EIr* are 'Carmatians', a ten-page article published in 1990, and the seventeen-page entry on 'Ismaʿilism: iii. Ismaʿili History', published in 2007. Meanwhile, Professor Bosworth, then one of the main editors of the second edition of *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (*EI2*), which was in its final volumes, got him involved in writing many of their remaining Ismaili articles, starting with 'Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad', published in 1993. Several of his later articles appeared in the *Supplement to EI2*.

By the early 1990s, vast Islamic encyclopaedias had started to be produced also in Persian in Iran. Thus, we now have the *Dāʿirat al-Maʿārif-i Buzurg-i Islāmī* (the 'Great Islamic Encyclopaedia' or *GIE*) and the *Dānishnāma-yi Jahān-i Islām* ('Encyclopaedia of the World of Islam' or *EWI*). The entries in the latter were initially translations of those published in *EI2* or other works of reference. Daftary became an academic consultant for the *Dānishnāma*, contributing many of their new Ismaili entries, and has worked closely also with the *GIE*. He has written the detailed twenty-two-page article 'Ismāʿīliyya' for the *GIE*, published in 1998.

He and Madelung are also the Editors-in-Chief of the *Encyclopaedia Islamica*, an abridged English version of the ongoing *GIE*. This translation project had been initiated by John Cooper (1947–1998) in the early 1990s with his translations of some forty articles. Years later, Daftary was contacted by Kazem M. Bojnurdi, Director of the Centre for the Great Islamic Encyclopaedia, in order to involve the Institute in this project: they had a meeting in Tehran and agreed to collaborate, calling the prospective publication *Encyclopaedia Islamica* at Daftary's suggestion. What made

this vast work of reference appealing was the fact that, in addition to covering Islam in all regions, it concentrated on two categories of entries not found widely anywhere else: on Shi'i personalities, ideas and concepts, and on the history and culture of the greater Persianate world. Since this fell within the Institute's mandate, the project was thereafter taken on board and the translated volumes are being published in association with E. J. Brill of Leiden. Daftary himself edits all the Ismaili-related articles and monitors the work of the team of editors and translators involved in this project with Reza Shah-Kazemi acting as its managing editor.

Over the years, Daftary has also been closely involved in the work of the Institute's library. For example, he played a key role in facilitating the library's acquisition of the Zāhid 'Alī Collection of some 221 Arabic Ismaili manuscripts in 1997, also arranging for Delia Cortese (another contributor to this volume) to compile a descriptive catalogue of that collection.²⁶ Zāhid 'Alī (1888–1958), one of the pioneers in modern Ismaili studies, belonged to another learned family of Dā'ūdī Tayyibī Ismailis with an important collection of manuscripts.

Directorship

Professor Azim Nanji (now at Stanford University and the author of the Foreword to this volume) was the Director of The Institute of Ismaili Studies for a decade (1998–2008). In the last two years of that period (2007–2008), Daftary served as Associate Director of the Institute. After Nanji's departure he served a stint as Acting Director, before being appointed in September 2009 as the Institute's Co-Director, together with Professor Karim H. Karim. At the same time, he has continued to head the Department of Academic Research and Publications. Asked about his association with the Institute, Daftary repeatedly asserts that he has learnt a great deal through his experience of working there for more than two decades. The Institute has in many ways shaped his intellectual experience and sharpened his scholarship. For example, while originally he would use the term 'sect' to refer to the Ismailis and other Shi'is, in the second edition of *The Ismā'īlis* he uses 'community' and 'communities of interpretation' (in the plural), since he is now reluctant to use the former term to refer to a community that still exists on the contemporary scene (as opposed to those short-lived sects of mediaeval times).

In 2008, on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of His Highness Prince Karim al-Husayni, Aga Khan IV, celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of his accession to the imamate of the Nizārī Ismailis, Farhad Daftary's

Department of Academic Research published, among other works, five books to specifically commemorate the event.²⁷ One of these was a book he himself co-authored with Zulfikar Hirji, *The Ismailis: An Illustrated History* (Daftary Bibliography, no. 7), a work, the first of its kind, addressed to a general audience, containing hundreds of images (several of them from Daftary's private collection) documenting the eventful history of the Ismailis in a lucid and accessible manner.

More recently, Daftary has edited *A Modern History of the Ismailis*, a publication designed to fill, at least partially, the gap in our knowledge of the recent history of the Ismaili communities, including the Ṭayyibīs, in different geographical locations (Syria, India and Pakistan, East Africa, Tajikistan and the rest of Central Asia, with the least explored region of all, China). Farhad Daftary's work is still ongoing. He belongs to a generation of prolific scholars, well reflected in his recent contributions to the festschriften of many of his friends and colleagues, including C. Edmund Bosworth, Hermann Landolt, Urbain Vermeulen, Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti, Etan Kohlberg, Carole Hillenbrand, Paul E. Walker, Heinz Halm and Charles Melville (the last two forthcoming).

As the recent author of the long chapter on 'Varieties of Islam' in *The New Cambridge History of Islam* (Daftary Bibliography, no. 74), covering mainly the various Shi'i communities, he is now working on an expanded version of that study. This will be published in monographic form as *A Short History of Shi'i Islam*. Daftary's broader interests in Shi'i studies is aligned with the Institute's expansion of its remit into covering all communities and schools of thought within Shi'i Islam. Daftary's current work includes three other research projects, to which he has regularly devoted his attention for years: a *Historical Dictionary of the Ismailis*; a book on *Ḥasan-i Ṣabbāḥ and his Times*; and, as mentioned earlier, an edition of W. Ivanow's memoirs (*Fifty Years in the East: An Autobiographical Sketch*). Daftary has been a member of various academic and professional associations and societies, including The British Institute of Persian Studies, on whose Governing Council he served for two terms (2002–2007).

New horizons in Ismaili studies

Over the past forty years, Farhad Daftary's impressive publication record has contributed to our knowledge of the events related to Ismaili history and the intricacies of the intellectual traditions elaborated by the Ismaili Shi'is. His greatest contribution is to have produced a straightforward narrative account of them in a framework constructed in accordance with

the view of Ismaili history outlined earlier. As we have seen, Daftary's work continues as strong as ever. Yet, it may be in order here to identify what areas in Ismaili studies are still unexplored. The following observations are not intended as a critique of Farhad Daftary's approach to Ismaili history, but rather to present some possible avenues of research that future generations of scholars may wish to consider when embarking on this field.

i. Contextual, comparative and thematic approaches

The religious significance of Ismaili thought within Islam can be assessed in the context of the history of religions. A comparative approach with other groups in Islam (other Shi'i groups, Sufis, theological and philosophical schools) seems imperative if we are to understand the significance of Ismaili ideas. Similarly, those ideas can be studied in the light of similar literature produced in other religious traditions, especially those groups that propounded an esoteric understanding of scriptures and that formed around a charismatic authority. Similarly, the enterprise pursued by the various Ismaili authors can be studied in close connection with their contemporary intellectual history. Thus, one might analyse, for example, al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān's (d. 363/974) role in the history of Ismaili Shi'ism vis-à-vis the contributions of other similar figures such as al-Kulaynī (d. 329/941) for Ithnā'asharī Shi'ism and al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) for Sunni Islam; or Fatimid-sponsored theories of the *imāma* vis-à-vis contemporaneous *imāma* theories sponsored by the Umayyads of al-Andalus and the 'Abbasids of Baghdad; or the *gināns* in the wider context of Indo-Muslim literature; or the doctrine of *ta'lim* in the light of similar Sufi theories of knowledge and leadership; or the theory and practice of Ismaili *ta'wīl* together with the *ta'wīl* practised by the Mu'tazilīs, the Sufis and others; or the provocative question, 'What has Alamūt got to do with Cairo?' (the question is reminiscent of the statement by Tertullian about Athens and Jerusalem). These are just some examples of the research possibilities at our disposal.

In contrast with a view of history as a concatenation of events, rulers, imams and authors, another fruitful approach might be the thematic approach. Possible themes to be explored can then encapsulate research questions such as, 'Is there such a thing as an Ismaili approach to the Qur'an?'; 'Do Ismaili and Ithnā'asharī forms of Shi'ism differ in essence?'; 'Is it right to assume (as Marshall Hodgson did)²⁸ that Ismailism is to Shi'ism what Sufism is to Sunnism?'

ii. Problematising methods and theories

It is vital to build on Farhad Daftary's historiographical achievements, but it is equally important for future scholars to put them to the test. New methodological tools developed in the fields of historiography, anthropology, religious studies and discourse analysis can be used to deconstruct the ways in which the Ismailis have constructed their own history, literature, self-image and religious identity. Similarly, while the emphasis on history, and the history of the Ismaili imams in particular, is undoubtedly indispensable, more attention might be given to the communities – their diverse customs and practices, both historically and in the present times. It is possible that questions such as these will be followed by other, perhaps contrasting, views or even re-readings of Ismaili (and wider Islamic) history.

iii. New technologies

Finally, mention must be made of the chances that new technologies offer for the history of ideas. In the first place, texts could be made available through electronic media to researchers in every country to facilitate the exchange of scholarship. Manuscripts can be digitalised and texts can be made available so that they can be explored by key-words (and Arabic roots) through search engines. What only three decades ago was almost unthinkable is now possible: glossaries and lexicons of technical terms in Ismaili works might be created so that they are better studied together with other texts from other, better known, traditions. An online database of Qur'anic citations in Ismaili sources is a necessary step towards an in-depth research into their exegesis and hermeneutical approach.

*The contributors would like to join the editor of this volume
in offering their collective work to Dr Farhad Daftary
with esteem and affection.²⁹*

Notes

1. Much of the information contained in this introduction is based on a series of interviews I conducted with Farhad Daftary during the course of 2010.
2. On this and other Persian titles see Ahmad Ashraf and Ali Banuazizi, 'Class System: v. Classes in the Qajar Period', *EIr*, vol. 5, pp. 667–677.
3. See Y. Armagani, 'Alborz College', *EIr*, vol. 1, pp. 821–823.
4. See Daftary, 'Ivanow, Vladimir Alekseevich', *EIr*, vol. 14, pp. 293–300.
5. See Daftary, 'Anjoman-e Esmā'ili', *EIr*, vol. 2, p. 84.
6. See Daftary Bibliography, no. 7, pp. 40–41, 172–173.
7. See Daftary Bibliography, nos. 17–21, 78.
8. Marshall G. S. Hodgson, 'The Ismā'ili State', in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 5, ed. J. A. Boyle (Cambridge, 1968), p. 424, n.1.
9. See W. Ivanow, 'Tombs of Some Persian Ismaili Imams,' *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, NS, 14 (1938), pp. 49–62, also his *Alamut and Lamasar* (Tehran, 1960).
10. See Daftary Bibliography, no. 1.
11. See Daftary Bibliography, no. 11.
12. These three articles of S. M. Stern are respectively: 'Heterodox Ismā'ilism at the Time of al-Mu'izz', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 17 (1955), pp. 10–33; 'The Early Ismā'ili Missionaries in North-West Persia and in Khurāsān and Transoxania', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 23 (1960), pp. 56–90, and 'Ismā'ilis and Qarmaṭians', in *L'Élaboration de l'Islam* (Paris, 1961), pp. 99–108; all three repr. in his *Studies in Early Ismā'ilism* (Leiden, 1983), pp. 257–288, 189–233 and 289–298, respectively.
13. W. Madelung's two original German articles were based on his doctoral thesis written in 1957 at the University of Hamburg. See respectively, his 'Fatimiden und Bahrainqarmaṭen', *Der Islam*, 34 (1959), pp. 34–88; revised tr. as 'The Fatimids and the Qarmaṭis of Baḥrayn', in Daftary, ed., *Mediaeval Isma'ili History and Thought* (See Daftary Bibliography no. 9), pp. 21–73; and his 'Das Imamāt in der frühen ismailitischen Lehre', *Der Islam*, 37 (1961), pp. 43–135; and 'Qarmaṭī', *EI2*, vol. 4, pp. 660–665.
14. Ḥasan b. Mūsā al-Nawbakhtī, *Fīraq al-Shi'a*, ed. H. Ritter (Istanbul, 1931), pp. 58–59; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh al-Ash'arī al-Qummī, *Kitāb al-maqālāt wa'l-fīraq*, ed. M. J. Mashkūr (Tehran, 1963), p. 81.
15. B. Lewis, *The Origins of Ismā'ilism: A Study of the Historical Background of the Fātimid Caliphate* (Cambridge, 1940), pp. 33–35; H. Corbin, *Étude préliminaire pour le 'Livre réunissant les deux sagesse' de Nasir-e Khosraw* (Tehran and Paris, 1953), pp. 14–19; W. Madelung, 'Khaṭṭābiyya', *EI2*, vol. 4, pp. 1132–1133.
16. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, *Da'ā'im al-Islām*, ed. Asaf A. A. Fyzee (Cairo, 1951–1961), vol. 1, pp. 49–50; English trans. by A. A. A. Fyzee, completely revised by I. K. Poonawala, as *The Pillars of Islam* (New Delhi, 2002–2004), vol. 1, pp. 65–66.

17. See Daftary Bibliography, in addition to chapter 3 in nos. 1 and 6, in nos. 23, 29–31, 33.
18. See, for example, Daftary Bibliography, no. 1, pp. 1–31, no. 3, pp. 1–20, no. 4, pp. 84–103, no. 5, pp. 27–41, no. 6, pp. 1–33, as well as nos. 23, 44 and 57.
19. See the review of Daftary's *The Assassin Legends* by Patrick Franke in *Die Welt des Islams*, 35 (1995), pp. 134–136.
20. See Daftary's response to Franke's review, 'An den Herausgeber/To the Editor', *Die Welt des Islams*, 36 (1996), p. 144.
21. H. Halm, *Kosmologie und Heilslehre der frühen Ismā'īliya: Eine Studie zur islamischen Gnosis* (Wiesbaden, 1978); idem, 'The Cosmology of the Pre-Fatimid Ismā'īliyya', in Daftary, *Mediaeval Ismā'ili History and Thought* (Daftary Bibliography, no. 9, pp. 75–83).
22. See The Institute of Ismaili Studies, Department of Academic Research and Publications, *Catalogue of Publications 2010* (London, 2010).
23. H. Halm, *Die Kalifen von Kairo. Die Fatimiden in Ägypten 973–1074* (Munich, 2003).
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Persian, the Other Sacred Language of Islam: Some Brief Notes

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Some years ago, Father Serge de Beaurecueil (1917–2005), a specialist on the great mystical thinker Khwāja ‘Abd Allāh Anṣārī (d. 481/1089), confided to me during a private conversation that, thanks to his protracted dealings with the writings of the Master of Herat, as Anṣārī is known, and particularly the latter’s famous *Munājāt-Nāma*, he started to consider Persian as more suitable than Arabic for expressing those subtleties and depths of feeling and experiences that are purely religious. Here, I am not able to develop the beautiful ideas that he set down in writing on the mode of expression, the thought and the literary images of that great Iranian mystic in his introduction to the *munājāt*, or ‘confidential prayers’.¹ In order to pay tribute to the scholar who is the recipient of this volume, my friend and colleague Farhad Daftary, and his mother tongue, it seemed to me useful to reflect on what the French Islamicist thought about ‘Abd Allāh Anṣārī’s language, in particular the language of these unique prayers, within the context of the larger question of the relation between the Persian language and Islamic spirituality and the progressive sacralisation of the Persian language during the first centuries of the Hijra.

Ferdinand de Saussure said that the first institution is language. This means, among other things, that behind language is to be found the political aspect, in its historical and collective dimension, as well as in its individual, subjective and spiritual dimension. The competition for the status of the sacral between Arabic and Persian, the two major languages in Islam, is, above all, political and is very old. It originates from the wide-ranging Muslim conquests and from the ethno-centric and racial (not to say ‘racist’) Arabian policies of the first Umayyads, who came to dominate the conquered peoples roughly between the first half of the first/seventh

century and the first half of the second/eighth century.

It is true that, by and large, the anthropology of the Qur'an is non-egalitarian, since it highlights the superiority of men over women, of free men over slaves, of Muslims over non-Muslims.² However, the Qur'an insists on equality among Muslims, without distinction of race or language – piety being the sole criterion for prevalence: 'O mankind, we have created you male and female, and appointed you races and tribes, that you may know one another. Surely the noblest among you in the sight of God is the most godfearing of you'³ (Q. 49:13). Yet, the vast and dazzling conquests, and the mentality of the first Umayyad caliphs, still imbued with pre-Islamic tribal culture, changed all that. Men in power, and the scholars that supported their policies, attributed the victory of God's religion to the superiority of the Arabs over the conquered peoples and of the Arabic language over others by referring to it as the language of the most perfect of divine revelations. The Qur'an's neutral statements on the fact that the language of the revelation 'sent down' on Prophet Muḥammad is Arabic (Q. 12:2; Q. 13:37; Q. 16:103; Q. 20:113; Q. 26:195; Q. 39:28; Q. 41:3, and so on) quickly became the basis for ideological and apologetic arguments in a number of theologico-political trends, which presented Arabness as a sign of divine election and the Arabic language as a divine language. This tendency was entertained in the midst of powerful traditionalist Sunni movements under the 'Abbasid caliphate.

At the turn of the second/eighth and third/ninth centuries, despite the evidence adduced by other scholars, the philologist Abū 'Ubayda (d. 208/823–824) considered the claim that the Qur'an could contain words other than Arabic as an offence against God; before him, Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā (d. 154/770) had stated that knowledge of the Arabic language was the essence of religion. A tradition had Caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, the author of the first conquests, say that knowing Arabic augmented intelligence (*'aql*) and manliness (*murū'a*).⁴ The position of the proponents of Arabness as a sign of divine election is illustrated by a report attributed to Ibn 'Abbās (d. ca. 68/687–688), the famous cousin of the Prophet, which states that God had never revealed anything that was not in Arabic. In the case of religions other than Islam, it had been the angel Gabriel who had translated the original Arabic revelations into the tongues of the prophets and of their recipient peoples.⁵ In other words, Arabic is the very language of God.

It is true that, later, this kind of doctrine would be the background to the theoretical discussions among intellectuals on the form and the content of the Qur'an, but originally the central issue of the controver-

sies around this kind of assertion seems to have been the resistance of the Iranians to Arabisation, and their defence of Persian-ness through the protection and promotion of Persian. In fact, as is known, among the regions that had had an ancient civilisation and which were conquered and Islamicised, such as Syria, 'Iraq and Egypt, it was only Iran that managed to maintain its language in its different dialectal components. The struggle of traditionalist Arab scholars against this resistance is illustrated by the hostility of the Ḥanbalis towards Persian, or even the prohibition to speak Persian in mosques, issued in the third/ninth century by the 'People of the *ḥadith*'.⁶ As an echo of the previously mentioned tradition by 'Umar, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505) reports a *ḥadith* which indicates that speaking Persian diminishes manliness.⁷ We shall come back to the reactions against Persian as a religious language.

In contrast to this religious offensive that often maintained and justified violence, repression and humiliation in the political and social spheres, other traditions, that took pride in the virtues of the Iranians, started to circulate. By way of the commentary of Q. 5:54, 'God will assuredly bring a people He loves, and who love Him', some great Iranian scholars, such as Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣfahānī, and 'Umar al-Suhrawardī, report traditions attributed to the Prophet where he declares that this verse was revealed in reference to his Companion Salmān the Persian and to his people. The account closes with these words: 'Even if religion was hanging down from the Pleiades, some Persians would reach it.'⁸ Another tradition on the admirable qualities of the Iranians has Ja'far al-Ṣādiq say, 'If the Qur'an had been revealed to the Persians, the Arabs would not have been able to benefit from it; but the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic and the Persians have benefited fully from it.'⁹

Just to complement the traditions above, others often go back to Muḥammad himself or to other saintly personalities of Islam, highlighting the celestial nature of Persian, thus laying the foundation for the process of its sacralisation: 'The language of those who surround the divine throne is Persian. If God wants to reveal anything gentle, He does in Persian, and if He wants to reveal anything violent, He does in Arabic.'¹⁰ Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Balkhī, the author of the famous work entitled *Virtues of [the city of] Balkh* (*Faḍā'il Balkh*), which only survives in the Persian translation by Muḥammad Ḥusaynī Balkhī (seventh/thirteenth century), reports a tradition which holds that the Persian language is that of the inhabitants of Paradise.¹¹

These texts were authoritative for undoubtedly a sizeable audience of Persian-speaking Iranian converts. They supported a long tradition

of defence of the Persian language and culture as the foundation of a 'national' identity. We now know that this adjective is not anachronistic. Indeed, after the work by Bertold Spuler, which became a classic, the conclusive studies by Gilbert Lazard, Muḥammad Muḥammadī Malāyirī, Shaul Shaked, Ehsan Yarshater and Mohsen Zakeri, among many others, have shown in a convincing way the tireless efforts deployed by numerous learned Iranians to safeguard their culture during the first centuries of the invasion of Iran by the Muslim armies. It suffices to remember here the central role of translators (of Pahlavi works into Arabic), such as Ibn al-Muqaffa', numerous members of the Nawbakhti' family, many generations of secretaries (*kātib*, pl. *kuttāb*) of Iranian origin in the caliphal administration, who were at the head of the Shu'ūbiyya movement, or even scholars (like Zādūya the son of Shāhūya of Iṣfahān, 'Umar the son of Farrukhān, and so on), and of Muslim intellectuals who, by updating it, kept their ancestral culture alive (such as Mas'ūdī, Tha'ālibī, Firdawsī, Miskawayh, 'Abd Allāh Anṣārī, Suhrawardī 'Shaykh al-Ishrāq', and so on).

Once Persian had established itself as a language of the empire, during the four Sasanian centuries, it was necessary to face the arrival of the new religion and its language by attempting to protect the cultural, scientific and sapiential patrimony. This was accomplished, on the one hand, by translating the Pahlavi literary traditions into Arabic and, on the other hand, by continuing to produce new works, in Arabic as well as Persian, rooted in the country's past, but adapted to the new conditions.¹² The coming to power of the main Iranian dynasties, which were virtually independent of the central caliphate – the Tahirids, the Saffarids and, above all, the Samanids in the third/ninth and in the fourth/tenth centuries – and at their instigation, the writing of Persian using the Arabic alphabet were determining factors in the process.¹³ Thus, when Firdawsī (d. 410/1019) explains the aim of his *Book of Kings* thus:

basī ranj burdam dar īn sāl sī 'ajam zindah kardam bidīn pārsī

I suffered so much in these thirty years to bring Iranians to life in Persian

to speak of a definite national sentiment crystallised around the language would indeed not be anachronistic at all.¹⁴ This sentiment would resist the passing of time remarkably, running like a thread through different periods and layers of Persian culture and continuing on today.¹⁵

That is why it was necessary, first of all, to demonstrate that the Persian language had the capacity to accommodate Islam and its fundamental components. The famous Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150/767), the eponym of

the Sunni Ḥanafī school of law, allowed the profession of faith (*shahāda*) and the *ādhān*, the call to the canonical prayer (*ṣalāt*), to be translated into Persian, as well as certain formulas of the prayer itself.¹⁶ Relying on the authority of his imam, the Ḥanafī jurist Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī (d. 189/805) entertained, with just some minor differences, the same opinion.¹⁷ Later on, another important figure of Ḥanafī law in Central Asia, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Sarakhsī (d. 483/1090 or 1091), while maintaining the universal character of the Qur'an, declared that the miraculous character of the Revelation resides in its contents and not in its language; hence the permissibility to recite the Qur'an in any language, and in Persian in particular. Similarly, since the ultimate aim of the canonical prayer was the remembrance (*dhikr*) of God, it can be performed in languages other than Arabic.¹⁸ Thus in the Central Asian regions of Iranian culture and Ḥanafī rite, the daily prayer was recited in a mixture of Arabic and Persian for many centuries.¹⁹ This is confirmed by the author of the *History of Bukhara*, according to whom the daily canonical prayer was conducted at least partly in Persian in many villages of Transoxiana during the first centuries of the Hijra.²⁰ Contrary to Jāhīz, who considered the Persian translation of religious texts and formulas as being highly damaging to the faith, another illustrious Mu'tazilī, Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Baṣrī (d. 369/979–980), composed a juridical treatise entitled *Legality of the Canonical Prayer in Persian* (*Jawāz al-ṣalāt bi'l-fārisiyya*).²¹ From the third/ninth century onwards, among the Twelver Shi'is, contrary to the defenders of Arabness such as the influential family of Yemeni origin of the Ash'arīs of Qumm, other scholars defended Persian and the permissibility of its use in supererogatory prayers (*du'ā'*) as well as during the *ṣalāt*. As a case in point for this confrontation, we can mention Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh al-Ash'arī, the author of a work on the superiority of Arabic and the Arabs, and other members of his family who deemed the use of Persian during the canonical prayer a sign of extremism (*ghuluww*).²² Contrary to them, al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, author of the *Kitāb Baṣā'ir al-darajāt*, and later the famous Ibn Bābawayh, 'al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq', defended the use of Persian for supererogatory prayers, during the *ṣalāt*, and on any other occasion, basing their opinion on the *ḥadīths* of the Shi'i imams and on juridical common sense, which advised that everything that has not been forbidden is licit if it is not contradicted by reason.²³ Moreover, al-Ṣaffār is one of the very first authors to maintain that the wife of Ḥusayn, and 'mother' of the whole line of Husaynid imams, was an Iranian princess, daughter of the last Sasanid emperor. It is noticeable that in the traditions he reports on this subject, 'Alī speaks in Persian

with the princess, his would-be daughter-in-law.²⁴ In this discussion, Abū Ja'far al-Ṭūsī in the fifth/eleventh century held an ambiguous position: he professed the permissibility of Persian in supererogatory prayers in his *Tahdhīb al-aḥkām* and in his *Nihāya*, but he forbids it in other works like *al-Mabsūṭ* and *al-Khilāf fi'l-aḥkām*.²⁵ These contradictions seem to reflect the harshness of the opposition between the two parties and the hesitations of a number of scholars. Indeed, the same ambiguity is found in the works of other renowned Ithnā'asharī scholars of later centuries, such as al-'Allāma al-Ḥillī (d. 726/1325) or Muḥammad Ibn Makkī, known as *al-Shahīd al-Awwal* ('the First Martyr') (d. 786/1384), until Majlisī (d. 1110/1699) clearly opted for the permissibility of the use of Persian.²⁶

The reaction of the partisans of Arab-ness, including Iranian scholars, did not wait long. I have already mentioned Jāḥiẓ's opinion against the use of Persian in religious matters. Another Mu'tazilī, the celebrated Iranian Maḥmūd b. 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144), was also against the use of Persian during the canonical prayer.²⁷ Representatives of other juridical schools, apart from the Ḥanafis, seem to have been equally reticent concerning the use of languages other than Arabic in religious practice on the occasion of the canonical prayer. The Ḥanbalī Ibn Qudāma (d. 260/873), the Ash'arī Mālikī Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013) or even the Zāhirī Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456/1064) assert that every Muslim must learn sufficient Arabic to be able to perform the prayer in that language.²⁸ As for the Shāfi'īs, generally speaking, they tended to follow the directives of their school's eminent eponym, Muḥammad b. Idris al-Shāfi'ī, according to whom the canonical prayer, just like the Qur'an, can only be recited in Arabic.²⁹ As we shall see, notable exceptions defending the permissibility of Persian for ritual purposes did make themselves remarked among Iranian scholars belonging to those schools.

Indeed, the partisans of Persian-ness and the Persian language became active very early on. As early as the second/eighth century, according to the testimony of Jāḥiẓ, scholars such as Mūsā b. Sayyār al-Aswārī (d. 155/771–772) excelled in Persian as well as Arabic. During his teaching sessions in Baṣra, Aswārī translated and commented on the Qur'an in Persian for his Iranian students.³⁰ According to a report transmitted by Dhahabī, Aswārī is said to have asserted that the first Arab Muslims were ignorant and rude, and that the depths of the Prophet's religion were only revealed by the Persians.³¹

Undoubtedly, the most decisive turning point, with particularly profound historical and cultural implications, was the number of Persian commentaries and translations of the Qur'an. According to certain reports

(quite probably false ones, but very significant for our purposes), Salmān the Persian had already received from the Prophet permission to translate certain parts of the Qur'an into Persian, particularly the *Fātiḥa*.³² Among the earliest and most prominent of these translations of the Qur'an we can cite the following:

- i. The translation of the Qur'an, now apparently lost, by the Mu'tazilī Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī (d. 303/915), written in a Persian dialect of Khūzistān.³³
- ii. The translation written in Persian rhyming prose, of two sections (sing. *juz'*) of the Qur'an (from Q. 10:62 to Q. 14:26), dating from the end of the third/ninth and the beginning of the fourth/tenth century. This translation was discovered in 1972, during the restoration of 'Alī al-Riḍa's mausoleum in Mashhad.³⁴
- iii. The translation, undoubtedly the most important one, written on the basis of the monumental Qur'anic commentary by Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān*, undertaken anonymously during the reign of the Samanid amir Manṣūr b. Nūḥ (r. 350–366/961–976) and under the supervision of an assembly of Transoxianan scholars.³⁵ The Samanid claim to be descended from the Sasanid sovereign Bahrām Chūbīn probably played a decisive role in this all-important enterprise, as did their affinity to the Ḥanafī juridical school.³⁶ It is noteworthy that the Persian translation of Ṭabarī's work includes typically Iranian additions with regard to the original, namely the histories of the mythical kings of ancient Iran, or data related to ancient Iranian astronomy.³⁷
- iv. The so-called Āstān-i Quds Qur'an (the name being that of the institution that manages the mausoleum of 'Alī al-Riḍa), roughly contemporary to no. iii, or perhaps slightly later, and written in a dialect of the Sīstān region.³⁸
- v. The stylistically beautiful anonymous Persian translation called the Rayy Qur'an, dating from 556/1161.³⁹
- vi. One of the most important Qur'anic commentaries in Persian, being naturally accompanied by ample translations of the Qur'anic text, appeared as early as the second half of the fifth/eleventh century, namely the *Tāj al-tarājim* by the Ash'arī Shāfi'ī scholar Abu'l-Muẓaffar al-Isfarā'īnī (d. 471/1078–1079).⁴⁰
- vii. Exactly in the same period, the great Karrāmī of Nishāpūr, Abū Bakr al-Sūrābādī (d. 494/1100), composed his vast, famous Qur'anic commentary-translation in Persian.⁴¹

- viii. The Ḥanbalī mystic Rashīd al-Dīn Maybudī composed his *Kashf al-asrār* from the year 520/1126 onwards. This work, which contains an exoteric as well as an esoteric commentary of the Qur'an, also includes in its first section (*nawbat al-awwal*) a Persian translation of the Qur'an.⁴²
- ix. As for Ithnā'asharī Shi'ism, the great scholar Abu'l-Futūḥ al-Rāzī (d. ca. 525/1131) composed, starting in the second half of the fifth/eleventh century, his large Persian Qur'anic commentary, naturally accompanied by a translation, the *Rawḍ al-jinān*.⁴³
- x. Finally, mention should be made of the translation accompanying the commentary written in Persian rhymed prose, resembling the Arabic *saj'*, by the famous Māturidī Ḥanafī scholar from Samarqand, Najm al-Dīn al-Nasafī (d. 537/1142).⁴⁴

Since then, a rich, powerful tradition of Qur'anic commentaries in Persian that endures even today was established.⁴⁵

As has been seen in the case of the use of Persian during the canonical prayer, those opposed to translating the Qur'an into any language, more particularly into Persian, were numerous even among Iranians themselves. The fear (mainly, but not only, held by the pro-'Abbasid theologians) of the increasing political influence of the Iranian Shu'ūbiyya was not unconnected to these reactions. Indeed, among the first major denouncers of the translation of the Qur'an into Persian we find illustrious anti-Shu'ūbīs like Jāḥiẓ, mentioned above, and the Iranian Ibn Qutayba.⁴⁶ Later, the Iranian Ash'ārī Shāfi'ī Abū Ishāq al-Firūzābādī (d. 476/1083) and, above all, the famous Abū Ḥamid al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) defended a certain elitist and aristocratic standing for religious disciplines, holding that the true comprehension of the Qur'an, as well as of the subtleties of theology, can only be attained through the Arabic language and that those who do not know it must have recourse to the teachings of the scholars; hence their refusal to accept the permissibility of translating the Qur'an. Certainly, all these scholars based their arguments above all on the miraculous character and the inimitability of the Qur'an (*i'jāz*), both in its original Arabic form and in its content, which can only be rendered in Arabic.⁴⁷ In contrast to this 'aristocratic' conception, in the same period, the Karrāmīs of Khurāsān vindicated the religious education of the popular masses, which absolutely justified, in their view, translating the Qur'an into the language of the faithful who need it. The *Tafsīr*/translation into Persian by Sūrābādī, as we have noted, was composed with this aim in mind.⁴⁸

Despite this resistance on the part of renowned and influential schol-

ars, the intense activity of translating and interpreting the Qur'an into Persian, as we have seen, took effect and Persian, as a language of the Qur'an and the first language into which it was translated, seems to have secured its sacralisation alongside Arabic since the third–fourth/ninth–tenth centuries.⁴⁹ From then onwards, the extraordinary flourishing of Persian literature started, in prose as well as in poetry, and in all fields of knowledge, in parallel with the Qur'anic disciplines, in the intellectual and spiritual domains of philosophy, mysticism and theology. Prose authors like Ibn Sīnā, Mustamlī Bukhārī, Hujwīrī, Anṣārī/Maybudī, the two Ghazālī brothers – Aḥmad and Muḥammad – and philosopher-poets like Abū Sa'īd Abu'l-Khayr, Rūdakī, Firdawsī or 'Umar Khayyām, just to mention a few from a multitude of authors of all sorts, presented a scathing denial of the great Abū Rayḥān Bīrūnī, who, at the beginning of the fifth/eleventh century, still obstinately held that Persian was only suitable for the heroic deeds of kings or bedtime stories.⁵⁰ By the sixth/twelfth century, a prose writer like al-Mu'ammil b. Masrūr (d. 517/1123) could depict Persian as the language of knowledge⁵¹ and a poet like Sanā'ī (d. 536/1141) could proudly declare the equal sacredness of the Arabic and Persian languages. According to the great poet, faith concerns the inner life and this life can be expressed in Arabic as well as in Persian.⁵² Ismaili thinkers, from the earlier Nāṣir-i Khusraw (d. ca. 470/1077) to later authors such as Suhrāb Walī Badakhshānī (d. after 856/1452), Abū Ishāq Quhistānī (d. second half of the ninth/fifteenth century) and Khayr Khāh Harātī (d. after 961/1553), contributed significantly to consolidating the religious and sapiential sacredness of the Persian language.⁵³

Since the fifth/eleventh century, authors such as the Ḥanbalī 'Abd Allāh Anṣārī in his *Munājāt* (his 'confidential whisperings' in prayer form) and the Shāfi'ī Aḥmad Ghazālī in his *Sawāniḥ* (the first, sublime, monograph in Persian on mystical love) were able to monumentally exemplify the depth in which spiritual life could be expressed through the Persian tongue.⁵⁴ Unrivalled masterpieces of Persian prose, these works brilliantly illustrate the effort of numerous Iranian intellectuals, who, after the necessary time of maturation, saw themselves as being fully vested, in as much as being inheritors of an ancient wisdom, in the formation of the culture of Islam and the deployment of its civilisation. Their method seems to have been the following: appropriate the new religion, sometimes including its most traditional elements, in order to have the legitimacy required to effect its evolution from the inside.⁵⁵

Notes

1. Khwāja ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad Anṣārī al-Harawī, *Munājāt*, ed. as *Munājāt wa naṣā’ih* (Berlin, 1924), and other editions; French tr. based on the earliest manuscripts by Serge de Laugier de Beaurecueil, tr., *Cris du cœur* (Paris, 1988). English translations of the *Munājāt* are based on later manuscripts: see Arthur J. Arberry, ‘Anṣārī’s Prayers and Counsels. Translated from the original Persian’, *Islamic Culture*, 10 (1936), pp. 369–389; Wheeler M. Thackston, tr., in Victor Danner and Wheeler M. Thackston, *Ibn ‘Ata’ Illah: the Book of Wisdom/Khwaja Abdullah Ansari: Intimate Conversations* (London, 1979).
2. Jacques Jomier, *Dieu et l’homme dans le Coran. L’aspect religieux de la nature humaine joint à l’obéissance au Prophète de l’islam* (Paris, 1996); Guy Monnot, ‘L’islam et l’humanité’, in Marie Thérèse Urvoy, ed., *En hommage au père Jacques Jomier, o.p.* (Paris, 2002), pp. 143–159; Claude Addas, ‘Homme’, in Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, ed., *Dictionnaire du Coran* (Paris, 2007), pp. 395–400.
3. English citations of the Qur’an in this chapter are taken from Arthur J. Arberry, tr., *The Koran Interpreted* (London, 1955).
4. Yāqūt b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥamawī, *Mu’jam al-udabā’ [Irshād al-‘arīb ilā ma’rifat al-adīb]* (Beirut, 1400/1980), vol. 1, pp. 53–54 and 77.
5. Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, ‘Vocabulaire étranger et mots énigmatiques’, in M. A. Amir-Moezzi, ed., *Dictionnaire du Coran*, pp. 921–924, esp. pp. 921–922.
6. Ignaz Goldziher, ‘Die Shu’ūbiyya’, in Ignaz Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien* (Halle an der Saale, 1889–1890), vol. 1, pp. 147–176; English version: ‘Shu’ūbiyya’, in his *Muslim Studies*, tr. C. M. Barber and Samuel M. Stern, ed. Samuel M. Stern (London, 1967–1971), vol. 1, pp. 157–165.
7. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *al-La’ālī al-maṣnū’a fi’l-aḥādīth al-mawḍū’a* (Cairo, n.d.), vol. 2, pp. 281–282; see also Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i’tidāl fi naqd al-rijāl*, ed. ‘Alī Muḥammad Mu’awwaḍ et al. (Beirut, 1415/1995), vol. 3, p. 124.
8. (...) *law kāna’l-dīn mu’allaqan bi’l-thurayyā la-tanāwalahu rijālun min abnā’ al-furs* (...); other versions of this tradition contain slight variants, such as *al-‘ilm* (knowledge) or *al-islām*, instead of *dīn*; Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb aw al-tafsīr al-kabīr* (Tehran, n.d.), *sub* Q. 5:54; Abū Nu’aym al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb Dhikr akhbār Iṣbahān*, ed. Sven Dederling as *Geschichte Iṣbahāns* (Leiden, 1931–1934), vol. 1, pp. 1–14 (this tradition and many others on the virtues of the Iranians); Shihāb al-Dīn ‘Umar al-Suhrawardī, *Rashf al-naṣā’ih al-imāniyya wa kashf al-faḍā’ih al-yūnāniyya*, extant only in the Persian translation by Mu’allim Yazdī (ninth/fifteenth century), ed. Najīb Māyil Harawī (Tehran, 1365 Sh./1986), pp. 362–363.
9. *Law nazala’l-Qur’ān ‘alā’l-‘ajam mā aminat bihi’l-‘arab wa qad nazala*

- 'alā'l-'arab fa-aminat bihi'l-'ajam, a tradition cited by al-Nūrī al-Tabrisī, *Nafas al-raḥmān fi faḍā'il Salmān* (lithographed ed., Tehran, 1285/1868–1869), p. 10 of the text.
10. *Inna kalāma'lladhīna ḥawla'l-'arsh bi'l-fārisiyya wa inna'llāha idhā awhā amran fihi līn awhāhu bi'l-fārisiyya wa idhā awhā amran fihi shidda awhāhu bi'l-'arabiyya*. See Abu'l-Faraj 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Alī Ibn al-Jawzī, *Kitāb al-Mawḍū'āt*, ed. 'Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad 'Uthmān (Medina, 1386–1388/1966–1968), vol. 2, p. 48; Abu'l-Hasan 'Alī b. Muḥammad Ibn 'Arrāq al-Kinānī, *Tanzīh al-sharī'a* (Cairo, 1387/1967), vol. 1, p. 136.
 11. Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Balkhī, *Faḍā'il Balkh*, only extant in the Persian translation by Muḥammad Ḥusaynī Balkhī (seventh/thirteenth century), ed. 'Abd al-Ḥayy Ḥabībī (Tehran, 1350 Sh./1971), pp. 17 and 29 (according to a variant version, 'the language of the people of Paradise is first Arabic and then Persian'). It is interesting to note that the scholars of other cultures and other languages from the regions conquered by Muslims equally attempted to promote the sacred character of their language, but they were obviously less successful than the Iranians; for an example of Syriac as the language of the inhabitants of Paradise or as an angelic language see for instance Franz Rosenthal, *Die aramaistische Forschung seit Theodor Nöldekes Veröffentlichungen* (Leiden, 1964), see especially the Introduction; see also Bernd Radtke, 'Syrisch: Die Sprache der Engel, der Geister und der Erleuchteten. Einige Stücke aus dem Ibriz des Aḥmad b. al-Mubārak al-Lamaṭī', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 32 (2006), pp. 472–502, passim.
 12. Bertold Spuler, *Iran in frühislamischer Zeit* (Wiesbaden, 1952); Gilbert Lazard, *Les premiers poètes persans (IXe–Xe siècles): fragments rassemblés, édités et traduits* (Tehran and Paris, 1964); idem, *La formation de la langue persane* (Louvain and Paris, 1995); Muḥammad Muḥammadī Malāyirī, *Farhang-i Īrānī-yi pīsh az Islām wa āthār-i ān dar tamaddun-i Islāmī wa adabiyyāt-i 'Arabī* (Tehran, 1354 Sh./1976); idem, *Tārikh wa farhang-i Īrān dar dawrān-i intiqāl az 'aṣr-i Sāsānī bih 'aṣr-i Islāmī* (Tehran, 1372 Sh./1993); Shaul Shaked, *From Zoroastrian Iran to Islam* (Aldershot, 1995); Ehsan Yarshater, *The Persian Presence in the Islamic World*, ed. Richard G. Hovannisian and Georges Sabagh (Cambridge, 1998); Mohsen Zakeri, *Persian Wisdom in Arabic Garb: 'Alī b. 'Ubayda al-Rayḥānī's Jawāhir al-kilām wa farā'id al-ḥikam* (Leiden, 2006).
 13. 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Zarrīnkūb, *Tārikh-i mardum-i Īrān az Sāsāniyān tā pāyān-i āl-i Būyah* (Tehran, 1367 Sh./1988); Muḥammad Muḥammadī Malāyirī, *al-Tarjama wa'l-naql 'ani'l-Fārisiyya fi'l-qurūn al-Islāmiyya al-ūlā* (Beirut, 1964); idem, 'Chigūnigī-yi intiqāl-i zabān-i Fārsī az 'aṣr-i Sāsānī bih dawrān-i ba'd az Islām', *Hastī* (Winter 1371 Sh./1992), pp. 12–32.
 14. See the fine reflections by Gherardo Gnoli, *The Idea of Iran* (Rome, 1989), passim; Jalāl Matīnī, 'Īrān dar dawrān-i Islāmī', *Īrān Shināsī*, 4, 2 (1371 Sh./1993), pp. 236–243 and pp. 255–265; 4 (1371 Sh./1993), pp. 692–706, and 5, 2 (1372 Sh./1994), pp. 307–327; Jalāl Khālīqī Muṭlaq, 'Īrān dar guza-

- sht-i rüzigārān', *Īrān Shināsī*, 4, 2 (1371 Sh./1993), pp. 199–215, and 4, pp. 655–671.
15. See Theodor Nöldeke, *Das iranische Nationalepos* (2nd ed., Berlin and Leipzig, 1920), esp. the Introduction; Alessandro Bausani, *Persia religiosa: da Zaratustra a Bahā'ullāh* (Milan, 1959); Ehsan Yarshater, 'Iranian National History', in idem, ed., *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 3(i) (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 359–477; idem, *The Persian Presence in the Islamic World*; Guy Monnot, 'L'écho musulman aux religions d'Iran', *Islamochristiana*, 3 (1977), pp. 85–98; repr. in his *Islam et religions* (Paris, 1986), ch. 3; Alinaqi Munzawī, 'Īrān dūstī dar sada-yi siwwum wa chahārum-i hijrī', in Yahyā Mahdawī and Īraj Afshār, ed., *Haftād maqāla. Yād nāma-yi duktur Ghulām Husayn Yūsufī* (Tehran, 1371 Sh./1992), vol. 2, pp. 727–760; Muḥammad Karīmī Zanjānī Aṣl, 'Falsafa-yi sīnawī wa farhang-i Īrān dar qarn-i Ismā'īlī', in Muḥammad Karīmī Zanjānī Aṣl, ed., *Ibn Sīnā wa junbish-hā-yi bāṭinī* (Tehran, 1383 Sh./2004), pp. 19–48.
 16. Al-Nu'mān b. Thābit Abū Ḥanīfa, *al-Fiqh al-akbar* (2nd ed., Hyderabad, 1399/1978), p. 7; Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī, *Kitāb al-Aṣl*, ed. Abu'l-Wafā' Afghānī (Hyderabad, 1966), vol. 1, p. 15; Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Sarakhsī, *Kitāb al-Mabsūt*, ed. Ismā'īl al-Shāfi'i (Beirut, 1422/2001), vol. 1, pp. 137ff.
 17. Shaybānī, *al-Aṣl*, vol. 1, p. 15; idem, *al-Jāmi' al-ṣaghīr* (Karachi, 1987), pp. 82ff.
 18. Sarakhsī, *al-Mabṣūt*, vol. 1, p. 137.
 19. See Muḥammad Taqī Bahār (known as 'Malik al-Shu'arā'), *Sabk shināsī, yā tārikh-i taṭawwur-i nathr-i Fārsī* (Tehran, 1321 Sh./1942), vol. 1, p. 229; Ādhartāsh Ādharnūsh, *Tārikh-i tarjuma az 'Arabī bih Fārsī. Vol. 1 : Tarjumahā-yi Qur'ānī* (Tehran, 1375 Sh./1996), p. 21.
 20. Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Ja'far Narshakhī (or Barsakhī), *Tārikh-i Bukhārā*, extant only in the Persian translation by Abū Naṣr Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Qubāwī (d. 522/1128), ed. Muḥammad Taqī Mudarris Raḍawī (Tehran, 1363 Sh./1984), pp. 67ff.
 21. On Abū 'Uthmān 'Amr b. Baḥr al-Jāḥiẓ's position, see his *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn (Beirut, n.d.), vol. 4, pp. 75ff.; idem, *Kitāb al-Bayān wa'l-tabyīn*, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn (Cairo, 2nd ed., 1380/1961), vol. 1, pp. 384–385; on the work (apparently lost) by al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, see Muḥammad b. Ishāq Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, ed. Riḍā Tajaddud (Tehran, 1350 Sh./1971), p. 261.
 22. Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Najāshī, *Kitāb al-Rijāl* (Qumm, n.d.), p. 134; 'Ināyat Allāh b. 'Alī al-Quhpā'i, *Majma' al-rijāl*, ed. Ḍiyā' al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī (Iṣfahān, 1384–1387/1964–1968), vol. 4, pp. 119 and 125.
 23. On Ṣaffār and his work see M. A. Amir-Moezzi, 'Al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī (m. 290/902–903) et son *Kitāb baṣā'ir al-darajāt*', *Journal Asiatique*, 280, iii–iv (1992), pp. 221–250, and Andrew J. Newman, *The Formative Period of Twelver Shi'ism* (Richmond, 2000), chs 3 and 5; on his position, as well as

- that of Ibn Bābawayh, regarding the use of Persian in prayer see Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Qummī Ibn Bābawayh ('al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq'), *Kitāb Man lā yaḥḍuruḥu'l-faqih*, ed. Mūsawī Kharsān (Tehran, 1390/1970), vol. 1, p. 208, traditions no. 935–937 and p. 312, tradition no. 1419.
24. Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Ḥasan al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, *Baṣā'ir al-darajāt*, ed. Mirzā Muḥsin Kūchebāghī (2nd ed., Tabriz, ca. 1960), ch. 7, section 11, no. 8, p. 335. On the tradition about the Persian princess in *Baṣā'ir* see M. A. Amir-Moezzi, 'Shahr-bānū, Dame du pays d'Iran et Mère des imams: entre l'Iran préislamique et le shi'isme imamite', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam (Studies in Honour of Shaul Shaked)*, 27 (2002), pp. 500–502; repr. in his *La religion discrète. Croyances et pratiques spirituelles dans l'islam shi'ite* (Paris, 2006), ch. 2, pp. 52–54, English trans. as *The Spirituality of Shi'i Islam, Beliefs and Practices* (London, 2010), pp. 49–52.
 25. See, respectively, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī, *Tahdhib al-aḥkām*, ed. Mūsawī Kharsān (Najaf, 1379/1959), vol. 2, p. 315, tradition no. 1281, p. 325, no. 1330, and p. 326, no. 1337; idem, *al-Nihāya fi mujarrad al-fiqh wa'l-fatāwā* (mediaeval Persian translation), ed. Muḥammad Taqī Dānishpazhūh (Tehran, 1342 Sh./1963), vol. 1, p. 86; idem, *al-Mabsūt fi fiqh al-imāmiyya*, ed. Muḥammad Taqī Kashfī (Tehran, 1387/1967–1968), vol. 1, p. 109; idem, *al-Khilāf fi'l-aḥkām* (Qumm, 1376/1956), vol. 1, p. 108, question no. 94.
 26. See al-'Allāma al-Ḥasan b. al-Muṭahhar al-Hillī, *Muntahā'l-maṭlab* (Mashhad, 1412/1991), vol. 5, p. 63ff.; idem, *Tadhkirat al-fuqahā'* (Qumm, 1414/1994), vol. 3, pp. 135–140. Muḥammad Ibn Makkī ('al-Shahīd al-Awwal'), *Dhikrā'l-Shi'a fi aḥkām al-shari'a* (Qumm, 1419/1998–1999), vol. 3, pp. 303f.; Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār* (Tehran and Qumm, 1376–1392 Sh./1956–1972), vol. 85, pp. 64f. (this edition is based on the one by Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Gharawī al-Iṣfahānī, known as Kumpānī).
 27. Jār Allāh Maḥmūd b. 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf an ḥaqā'iq al-tanzīl* (Beirut, 1367/1947), vol. 2, pp. 347f., 538f. and vol. 3, p. 335.
 28. Muwaffaq al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad Ibn Qudāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Mughnī*, ed. Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā (Cairo, 1367/1947), vol. 1, pp. 486ff.; Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. al-Ṭayyib al-Bāqillānī, *Intiṣār li'l-Qur'ān*, ed. 'Umar Ḥasan al-Qayyām (Beirut, 1425/2004), p. 20; 'Alī b. Aḥmad Ibn Ḥazm, *Kitāb al-Muḥallā bi'l-āthār*, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir (Beirut, 1389/1969), vol. 3, pp. 254f.
 29. Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī, *Kitāb al-Umm*, ed. Muḥammad Zahri al-Najjār (Cairo, 1381/1960–1961), vol. 1, pp. 102f.
 30. Al-Jāhīz, *Kitāb al-Bayān wa'l-tabyīn*, vol. 1, p. 368.
 31. Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i'tidāl*, vol. 6, pp. 544 and 569.
 32. Abū'l-Muẓaffar Shāh-fūr b. Tāhīr al-Isfārā'inī, *Tāj al-tarājim fi tafsīr al-Qur'ān li'l-a'ājim*, ed. Najīb Māyil Harawī and 'Alī Akbar Ilāhī Khurāsānī (Tehran, 1375 Sh./1995–1996), vol. 1, p. 8; Muḥyi al-Dīn al-Nawawī, *al-Majmū': sharḥ*

- al-Muhadhdhab*, ed. Muḥammad Maṭraǧī (Beirut, 1996), vol. 3, pp. 330–331. According to the Ḥanafī scholars, the fact that the Prophet had allowed Salmān to translate the *Fātiḥa* authorised the recitation of the canonical prayer in Persian; see Sarakhsī, *al-Mabsūṭ*, vol. 1, p. 138.
33. See Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur. Supplement 1* (Leiden, 1937), p. 342.
 34. See Aḥmad ‘Alī Rajā’ī, *Pulī miyān-i shi‘r-i hijā’ī wa ‘arūd-i Fārsī dar qurūn-i awwal-i hijrī: tarjuma-yi āhangīn az du juz’-i Qur’ān-i majīd* (Tehran, 1353 Sh./1974). See also Ā. Ādharnūsh, *Tārīkh-i tarjuma az ‘Arabī bih Fārsī*, vol. 1, pp. 83–88.
 35. *Tarjuma-yi Tafsīr-i Ṭabarī*, ed. Ḥabīb Yaghmā’ī (Tehran, 2536 Persian Imperial year/1356 Sh./1977). On this translation, of critical importance, of Ṭabarī’s work, see also Charles A. Storey, *Persian Literature: A Bio-bibliographical Survey. Vol. 1i: Quranic Literature* (London, 1927) pp. 1ff.; Arthur J. Arberry, *Classical Persian Literature* (London, 1958), pp. 40ff.; Gilbert Lazard, *La langue des plus anciens monuments de la prose persane* (Paris, 1963), pp. 41ff.; Ā. Ādharnūsh, *Tārīkh-i tarjuma az ‘Arabī bih Fārsī*, vol. 1, pp. 49ff.
 36. On the Sasanian ancestry of the Samanids, see for instance Abu’l-Qāsim Muḥammad b. ‘Alī Ibn Ḥawqal, *Kitāb Ṣūrat al-arḍ*, ed. Michael J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1873), p. 388; Narshakhī, *Tārīkh-i Bukhārā*, p. 70. On their Hanafism, see Shams al-Dīn Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī ma’rifat al-aqālīm*, ed. Michael J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1877), pp. 323ff. and 339. It was also at this time, around 370/980, that the *Kitāb al-Sawād al-a’ẓam fī l-kalām* by Qāḍī al-Ḥakīm Abu’l-Qāsim Ishāq b. Muḥammad al-Samarqandī, a major Ḥanafī work, was translated into Persian at the command of Amir Nūḥ Sāmānī (r. 366–387/976–997): see *Tarjuma-yi al-Sawād al-a’ẓam*, ed. ‘Abd al-Ḥayy Ḥabībī (Tehran, 1348 Sh./1969); the Arabic text was first published in Būlāq (1253/1837).
 37. See, for instance, *Tarjuma-yi Tafsīr-i Ṭabarī*, vol. 2, pp. 402ff.; vol. 4, pp. 1151ff.; vol. 6, pp. 1509ff.
 38. On the Āstān-i Quds Qur’an, see ‘Alī Rawāqī, *Qur’ān-i mutarjam-i quds: kuhantarīn bargardān-i Qur’ān bih Fārsī* (Tehran, 1362 Sh./1984); Gilbert Lazard, ‘Lumières nouvelles sur la formation de la langue persane: une traduction du Coran en persan dialectal et ses affinités avec le judéo-persan’, in idem, *La formation de la langue persane*, pp. 107–121 (Lazard does not agree, and rightly so in my view, with Rawāqī on the dating of this Qur’an and deems it slightly later that the Persian version of Ṭabarī’s Commentary).
 39. Anonymous, *Tarjuma-yi Qur’ān: nuskhā-yi mu’arrakh-i 556 hijrī*, ed. Muḥammad Ja’far Yāḥaqqī (Mashhad, 1364 Sh./1985).
 40. Al-Isfarā’īnī, *Tāj al-tarājīm fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān li l-a’ājim*. The title can hardly be more revealing: ‘The Best (literally, “The Crown”) of Translations on the Commentary of the Qur’an for Persians’. According to this al-Isfarā’īnī, *Tāj al-tarājīm*, vol. 1, pp. 7–8, the translation of the Qur’an into the language of

those who do not understand Arabic, in this case the Persians, is a canonical obligation (*farīda*).

41. Abū Bakr 'Atīq b. Muḥammad al-Sūrābādī, *Tafsīr al-tafāsīr*, ed. Sa'īdī Sirjānī (Tehran, repr. 1381 Sh./2002). The author's *nisba* can also be read as Sūrābānī (ibid., vol. 1, p. 3) or Sūrāyānī (ibid., vol. 4, p. 2529). On this work, see Yaḥyā Mahdawī, 'Tafsīr-i ma'rūf bih Sūrābādī', *Majalla-yi Dānishkada-yi adabiyyāt*, 12, 52 (1345 Sh./1967), pp. 112–122; Joseph van Ess, *Ungenutzte texte zur Karrāmiyya* (Heidelberg, 1980), pp. 73–74.
42. Abū'l-Faḍl Rashīd al-Dīn Maybudī, *Kashf al-asrār wa 'uddat al-abrār*, ed. 'Alī Aṣghar Ḥekmat et al. (Tehran, 1331–1339 Sh./1952–1960); see also Annabel Keeler, *Sufi Hermeneutics: The Qur'an Commentary of Rashīd al-Dīn Maybudī* (Oxford, 2006).
43. Abū'l-Futūḥ Ḥusayn b. 'Alī al-Rāzī, *Rawḍ al-jinān wa rūḥ al-janān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, ed. Abū'l-Ḥasan Sha'rānī (Tehran, 1382/1962).
44. Najm al-Dīn 'Umar b. Muḥammad al-Nasafī, *Tafsīr al-Nasafī*, ed. 'Azīz Allāh Juwaynī (Tehran, 1353 Sh./1974).
45. On the literary genre of Qur'anic commentary in Persian, see e.g. Ḥasan Sādāt Nāṣiri and Manūchihr Dānishpazhūh, *Hizār sāl tafsīr-i Fārsī* (Tehran, 1369 Sh./1990); Ā. Ādharnūsh, *Tārikh-i tarjuma*, vol. 1, passim; Franklin Lewis, 'Persian Literature and the Qur'ān', in Jane D. McAuliffe, ed., *EQ*, vol. 4, pp. 55–66.
46. Al-Jāhīz, *Kitāb al-Bayān wa'l-tabyīn*, vol. 1, pp. 384ff.; idem, *Kitāb al-Akhhbār wa kayfa taṣiḥḥ*, ed. Charles Pellat in 'al-Ġāhiz: les nations civilisées et les croyances religieuses', *Journal Asiatique*, 255 (1967), p. 62 (Arabic text), p. 81 (French translation); 'Abd Allāh b. Muslim Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wīl mushkil al-Qur'ān*, ed. Ibrāhīm Shams al-Dīn (Beirut, n.d.), p. 23. It is worth noting that Zamakhsharī, who was opposed to the use of Persian during the *ṣalāt*, seemed to tolerate the translation of the Qur'an into other languages (see his *Kashshāf*, vol. 2, p. 538).
47. Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. 'Alī al-Firūzābādī, *al-Muhadhdhab fī fiqh al-imām al-Shāfi'i*, ed. Zakariyā 'Umayrāt (Beirut, 1415/1995), vol. 1, pp. 136f and 140f.; Abū Ḥamid Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Iljām al-'awāmm 'an 'ilm al-kalām*, ed. Muḥammad al-Mu'taṣim bi'llāh al-Baghdādī (Beirut, repr. 1405/1985), pp. 51–56.
48. On these questions, a useful source is Abdul Latif Tibawi, 'Is the Qur'an translatable? Early Muslim Opinion', *Muslim World*, 52 (1962), pp. 4–16. It is noteworthy that Tibawi knew little about the Iranian works, although it is true that most of them were published after his study.
49. Later, the Qur'an was translated into other languages used by Muslims (like Berber, Turkish, etc.) or by non-Muslims (like Latin); on this subject see above all İsmet Binkar and Halit Eren, *World Bibliography of Translations of the Meanings of the Holy Qur'an: Printed Translations 1515–1980*, ed. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu (Istanbul, 1986); see also Muhammad Jafar Yahaghi [Yāhaqqi], 'An Introduction to Early Persian Qur'anic Translations', *Journal*

- of *Qur'anic Studies*, 6 (2002), pp. 105–109; François Déroche, 'Traductions', in M. A. Amir-Moezzi, ed., *Dictionnaire du Coran*, pp. 874–876; see also Hartmut Bobzin, 'Translation of the Qur'ān', in *EQ*, vol. 5, pp. 340–358.
50. Abū Rayḥān Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Bīrūnī, *Kitāb al-Ṣaydana fi'l-ṭibb*, ed. 'Abbās Zaryāb Khu'ī (Tehran, 1370 Sh./1991), p. 14; cited also by Nasrollah Pourjavady, 'Ḥikmat-i dinī wa taqaddus-i zabān-i Fārsī', in idem, *Būy-i jān. Maqālahā'ī dar bāra-yi shi'r-i 'irfānī-yi Fārsī* (Tehran, 1372 Sh./1993), article no. 1, pp. 13–14.
 51. Abū'l-Rajā' al-Mu'ammil b. Masrūr al-Shāshī, *Rawḍat al-fariqayn*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥayy Ḥabībī (Tehran, 1359 Sh./1980), p. 29.
 52. Abū'l-Majd Majdūd b. Ādam Sanā'ī, *Ḥadiqat al-ḥaqīqa*, ed. M. T. Mudarris Raḍawī (Tehran, 1359 Sh./1980), pp. 403–404:

tāzī ar shar'-rā panāhastī
 Bū Lahab az zamīn-i Yathrib būd
 būd Salmān khud az diyār-i 'ajam
 rūḥ bā 'aql u 'ilm dānad zist

Bū Lahab āftāb u māhastī
 lik qad qāmati'l-ṣalā nashinūd
 bar dar-i dīn hamī fishurd qadam
 rūḥ-rā pārsī u tāzī chist

If Arabic is a protection for religion

then Abū Lahab [opponent of the Prophet] shines like the sun and the moon

Abū Lahab was from Yathrib [Medina]

and yet he did not answer the *qad qāmati'l-ṣalā* [call to prayer]

While Salmān came from the country of Iranians

and was firmly established in the faith

It is with intelligence and knowledge that the soul knows how to live
 what are Persian or Arabic for the soul?

53. See, for instance, Henry Corbin, 'L'ismaélisme iranien de langue persane', in his 'Étude préliminaire' to Nāṣir-i Khusraw, *Kitāb Jāmi' al-ḥikmatayn*, ed. Henry Corbin and Muḥammad Mu'in as *Le livre réunissant les deux sagesse ou harmonie de la philosophie grecque et de la théosophie ismaélienne* (Tehran and Paris, 1332 Sh./1953), pp. 4ff. of the French introduction.
54. On the peculiarities of Anṣārī's language see the works of Father de Beaucueil, whose complete bibliography is found in the obituary written by Jacques Jomier and Régis Morelon, 'In memoriam Serge de Laugier de Beaucueil, O.P. (1917–2005)', *Mélanges de l'Institut Dominicain d'Etudes Orientales*, 27 (2008), pp. 7–14; see further Wladimir Ivanow, 'Tabaqāt of Anṣārī in the Old Language of Herat', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1923), pp. 1–34 and pp. 337–382. On the work of Aḥmad Ghazālī and his language, see the Introduction by Nasrollah Pourjavady to his edition of Aḥmad Ghazālī's *Sawāniḥ* (Tehran, 1359 Sh./1980); for the English translation of this work see Nasrollah Pourjavady, *Sawāniḥ: Inspirations from the World of Pure Spirits* (London, 1986).

55. For details on this method see for instance Konstantin A. Inostrancev, *Iranian Influence on Moslem Literature, with Supplementary Appendices from Arabic Sources* (tr. Gushtaspshah K. Nariman, Bombay, 1918); Clifford Edmund Bosworth, 'The Persian Impact on Arabic Literature', in Alfred F. L. Beeston et al., ed., *Cambridge History of Arabic Literature. Vol. 1: Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 483–496; M. A. Amir-Moezzi, 'Shahrbānū', pp. 532ff. (translation, pp. 83ff.); idem, 'Note bibliographique sur le *Kitāb Sulaym b. Qays*, le plus ancien ouvrage shi'ite existant', in Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, Meir Bar Asher and Simon Hopkins, ed., *Le Shi'isme imāmite quarante ans après: hommage à Etan Kohlberg* (Turnhout, 2009), p. 37.

Sunni Claims to Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq

Hamid Algar

I

That Ja'far al-Šādiq (d. 148/765) played a central role in the consolidation of Imāmī Shi'ism and provided the basic elements needed for the crystallisation of its Ithnā'asharī form requires little proof or elucidation. With his insistence on the concept of prudential dissimulation (*taqiyya*) and its political corollary, quietism, in the face of caliphal tyranny, he set a pattern that remained in force for the Twelver community until the onset of the occultation, and even beyond. The great majority of *ḥadīths* contained in the Shi'i books of tradition are either narrated by him on the authority of his forebears or represent his own authoritative pronouncements. To him is justly ascribed the formation of the distinct school of jurisprudence that bears his name, including both its principles (*uṣūl*) and its specific rulings (*furū'*). Building on the precedent established by his father, Muḥammad al-Bāqir (d. 117/735), he elaborated the concept of the witnessed designation of a successor (*naṣṣ*) as the criterion for succession to the Imamate. Notwithstanding the historic bifurcation after Ja'far al-Šādiq's demise into Ismaili and what six generations later became Ithnā'asharī Shi'ism, as well as other, evanescent disputes over succession, the principle of *naṣṣ* helped secure the survival and transmission of the Imamate under circumstances of extreme difficulty.¹

There are, however, other claims to the legacy of Ja'far al-Šādiq; it has been observed, indeed, that 'nearly all the early intellectual factions of Islam (with the exception perhaps of the Khārijīs) wished to incorporate Ja'far al-Šādiq into their history in order to bolster their schools' positions'.² This is hardly surprising, for he enjoyed widespread prestige and

respect in an age when neither Sunni nor Shi'i Islam had fully crystallised, and he had significant dealings with many beyond the circle of followers for whom he was imam in the distinctively Shi'i sense of the term. Sunni and Shi'i sources concur that both Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150/767) and Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/795), eponyms of the Ḥanafī and Mālikī *madhhabs* respectively, associated with Ja'far al-Šādiq in either Medina or Baghdad. Details are particularly copious concerning Ja'far al-Šādiq's encounters with Abū Ḥanīfa, whom he is held to have vanquished in debates on several of the principles of jurisprudence. In addition, he transmitted *ḥadīths* from Sunni sources, thus earning the classification of 'trustworthy' (*thiqa*) in the works of later Sunni traditionists.³ Finally, he is reported to have bestowed pious counsel on proto-Sufis such as Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161/776) and Dā'ūd al-Tā'i (d. 160/775), a circumstance which foreshadowed his fully fledged incorporation into the lore of Sufism.⁴

According to the generational scheme characteristic of Sunni historiography, Ja'far al-Šādiq thus counts legitimately as a Follower (*tābi'ī*), one who associated with one or more of the Companions of the Prophet and drew benefit from them. Among the Companions with whom he is so linked are Anas b. Mālik (d. 93/711) and Sahl b. Sa'd. The historian and traditionist Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1347) grants him pride of place in the fifth group of the Followers, describing him as 'one of the greatest scholars of Medina', but although he prefaces his name with 'imam', this seems to have no particular significance; the primary honorific al-Dhahabī awards him is rather 'Shaykh of the Banī Hāshim'.⁵ Together with his standing as a *tābi'ī*, Sunni sources also emphasise the indubitable fact that on his mother's side he was descended from Abū Bakr, in twofold fashion as follows: his mother, Umm Farwa, was the daughter of Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr and Asmā' bt. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr. In acknowledgement thereof, Ja'far al-Šādiq is said to have observed, 'Abū Bakr begat me twice'.⁶ His maternal grandfather, Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr, counts as one of the 'seven jurists' (*al-fuqahā' al-sab'a*) of Medina, and there is no reason to doubt that Ja'far al-Šādiq both studied with him and transmitted *ḥadīths* from him.

More complex, interesting and questionable are a series of statements attributed to Ja'far al-Šādiq in a variety of Sunni sources that seem to validate essential doctrines of the Sunnism that was crystallising in his lifetime and, by the same token, to forswear central themes of Shi'ism. He is held, with particular frequency, to have affirmed his respect or even veneration for Abū Bakr and 'Umar, who, jointly designated as *al-shay-khayn*, were being elevated at the time to a position of supreme excellence

among the Companions of the Prophet.⁷ Once, asked for his view of them, Ja'far al-Šādiq is said to have responded, 'Are you asking concerning two men who have already eaten from the fruits of Paradise?'⁸ The very posing of the question implies, of course, a suspicion that Ja'far al-Šādiq held a low view of *al-shaykhayn*; hence the exasperated and emphatic tone of the answer. The response he gave on another occasion was at first met with scepticism, for when he disowned (*tabarra'a min*) 'whosoever disowns those two', the questioner countered that perhaps he was saying this by way of *taqiyya*. He therefore found it necessary to affirm, 'were this to be the case, I would be disavowing Islam itself and placing myself beyond the intercession of Muḥammad.'⁹ On another occasion while lying on his sickbed, he was heard by a visitor to proclaim: 'O God, I truly love Abū Bakr and 'Umar. If there is other than this in my soul [i.e. if I am practising *taqiyya*], let me have no share in the intercession of Muḥammad.'¹⁰ On yet another occasion, Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq attributed to God Himself the disowning of whosoever disowns Abū Bakr and 'Umar.¹¹ Most noteworthy of all, perhaps, is a statement in which the disowning of disowning is joined to a repudiation of the very notion of an inerrant leader of the community. Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq is reported to have told a group of travellers leaving Medina to return home, presumably to Kūfa or some other centre of Shi'ism in 'Iraq: 'Tell the people of your city that whoever claims I am an inerrant Imam (*imām ma'šūm*) to whom obedience is due, I disown him; and whoever claims that I disown Abū Bakr and 'Umar, him too I disown.'¹²

One questioner of the merits of *al-shaykhayn* is said to have been not one of their partisans but a Shi'i, Sālim b. Abi Ḥafṣa. When he asked Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq together with his father, Muḥammad al-Bāqir, for their opinion of Abū Bakr and 'Umar, they answered in unison, presumably to his surprise: 'O Sālim, take them as your protectors and disown their enemies, for they are both imams of guidance (*imāmā hudan*).'¹³ This epithet is part of the Shi'i vocabulary and its occurrence here suggests a transfer of the quality it conveys from the imams of the *ahl al-bayt* to the *shaykhayn*, or at least that all the individuals concerned share in it jointly.

A particularly significant set of utterances attributed to Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq refers to both of his distinguished ancestors together, Abū Bakr and Imam 'Alī. Some proclaim a belief that both were equally valid as intercessors for him. Thus, 'I do not seek intercession of 'Alī unless I seek the same of Abū Bakr.' Or again, 'I do not know from which of my ancestors to seek intercession – Abū Bakr or 'Alī.'¹⁴ Here an equivalence between the two is expressed, which is at variance with the Sunni notion

that the Rightly Guided Caliphs (*al-khulafā' al-rāshidūn*) were meritorious in chronologically descending order. In yet other statements, however, Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq is portrayed as expressing an intense, if not primary, attachment to Abū Bakr. He thus affirms that 'whoever does not refer to him [Abū Bakr] as "the veracious one" (*al-šiddiq*), God will place no veracity (*šidq*) in his speech'.¹⁵ Any suspicion that Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq might have vilified Abū Bakr filled him with indignation: 'Would a man vilify his ancestor?'¹⁶ Especially remarkable is another proclamation Ja'far al-Šādiq made from his sickbed, perhaps as he lay dying, although this is not made explicit: 'I hope that God may grant me benefit through my descent from Abū Bakr. I have now fallen sick and I appoint as my legatee (*wašī*) my maternal uncle, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Qāsim.'¹⁷ Here no mention is made of Imam 'Alī and the benefit descent from him might bring in the Hereafter, and it is a descendant of Abū Bakr, not of Imam 'Alī, whom Ja'far al-Šādiq nominates as his legatee. What is suggested here is made explicit in another utterance: 'The family of Abū Bakr was known in the time of the Messenger as the Family of the Messenger of God (*āl rasūl Allāh*).'¹⁸ The sense is unmistakable: the true family of the Prophet is not the *ahl al-bayt*, descended from Imam 'Alī, but the progeny of Abū Bakr, and it is as one of their number that Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq claims spiritual descent from the Messenger. The Bakrī lineage thus vanquishes its 'Alawī rival, implicitly downgraded as a post-Prophetic innovation.

Virtually all these purported utterances of Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq have in common the use of Shi'i terminology to subvert Shi'i doctrines while promoting their Sunni counterparts. *Tawallā* (the affirmation of loyalty) and its negative counterpart *tabarrā* (dissociation, disowning) are invoked in respect not of the imams of the *ahl al-bayt* and their enemies but Abū Bakr and 'Umar and their adversaries. Intercession in the Hereafter, commonly ascribed to the imams of the *ahl al-bayt*, is presented as a prerogative of the *shaykhayn*, who are in addition 'imams of true guidance'. From his sickbed, Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq exercises his function of *naṣṣ*, but the legatee (*wašī*) he names is a Bakrī descendant, his maternal uncle 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Qāsim, not a scion of the 'Alawī line. The inerrancy (*'iṣma*) of the *ahl al-bayt* is negated in tandem with an affirmation of veneration for Abū Bakr and 'Umar. All this suggests a deliberate manipulation, at a time and by hands unknown, of Shi'i concepts and beliefs with the aim of presenting a central figure in the evolution of Shi'ism as fundamentally opposed to its main tendencies. Decisive, surely, is the fact that Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir had already rejected the entreaties of Zayd b. 'Alī to accept the legitimacy of Abū Bakr and 'Umar, and together with the

permissibility or impermissibility of rebellion this remained a major point of difference between the Zaydī and Imāmī wings of the Shi'ī movement that continued in the time of Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq and beyond.¹⁹

It remains hypothetically possible that the utterances attributed to Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq were in fact uttered by him, but by way of *taqiyya*. The evaluation of narrations emanating from Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq is admittedly rendered difficult by his observance of *taqiyya*, as Shi'ī traditionists acknowledge.²⁰ But it is precisely the mention of *taqiyya* in two of the utterances – explicit in one, 'were this to be the case ...', implicit in the other, 'if there is other than this in my soul' – that logically nullifies this possibility. For if the questioner suspected that Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq was engaged in the practice when giving his answer, he would have had no reason to believe his assurance to the contrary; after all, *taqiyya* mandates its own concealment, so that denial of *taqiyya* can be a form of *taqiyya*. There is, in addition, no evidence that Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq's embracing of *taqiyya* was known to his non-Shi'ī contemporaries; and if it was, they would surely have regarded sceptically not simply the two traditions in question, but all the others relating to the *shaykhayn*, and much else besides.

Furthermore, it cannot reasonably be doubted that *tabarrā* (or *barā'a*) as the necessary complement to *tawallā* was indeed espoused by Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq.²¹ On the other hand, the reviling (*sabb*) of Abū Bakr and 'Umar, as the audible and public expression of *tabarrā*, might indeed have been shunned or denounced as a violation of *taqiyya*, so its repudiation did not necessarily count as an endorsement of the two personalities being execrated.²² In any event, the traditions under discussion are more concerned with *tabarrā* than with *sabb*.

All the traditions cited so far relate only to the first two caliphs. By contrast, a token of Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq's alleged conformity to the definingly Sunni concept of four Rightly Guided Caliphs is to be found in *Ḥaqā'iq al-tafsīr*, a partial commentary on the Qur'an assembled by Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021) and questionably attributed by him and others to Ja'far al-Šādiq. One of the fragments of exegesis that make up this work relates to the 'Light Verse' (Q. 24:35): Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq interprets it as a reference to four terrestrial lights (Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī) rising up to merge with their celestial counterparts, the archangels Jibrīl, Mikā'il, Isrāfil and 'Azrā'il.²³ A comparable pronouncement is to be found in *Hizār hikāyat-i Šūfiyān*, an anonymous compilation of Sufi dicta and stories dating apparently from the ninth/fifteenth century. There Ja'far al-Šādiq is said to have proclaimed that on

the leaves of each of the four trees of Paradise – the Lote Tree of the Limit (*sidrat al-muntahā*), Ṭubā, the Eternal Abode (*al-ma'wā*), and the Tree of Immortality (*shajarat al-khuld*) – is written the name of one of the four, complete with a laudatory invocation.²⁴ In both instances – the *tafsīr* and the *Hizār hikāyat-i Šūfiyān* – the uniquely lofty status of the Rightly Guided Caliphs is transported to the Hereafter; the two works may therefore be said to echo each other. This does not amount, however, to a proof of authenticity, if for no other reason than that the concept of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, as a harmonious and normative quartet, in chronologically descending order of merit, had not fully crystallised even among Sunnis in the time of Ja'far al-Šādiq. For it took Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855) a while to concede that Imam 'Alī might legitimately be included in the group, even in last place.²⁵

II

The lengthiest and most detailed set of utterances attributed to Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq in refutation of the essential beliefs and attitudes of Shi'ism consists of an altercation he allegedly had with an unnamed 'Rāfiḍī' at a time and place unmentioned. The text of this exchange is set down in two manuscripts, one preserved in Istanbul (Şehid Ali Paşa 2764, ff. 152–157) and the other in Damascus (al-Zāhiriyya, 3847, ff. 227–235). The former is dated 669/1270 and the latter is undated, although the name of its copyist, a certain 'Alī b. Mas'ūd al-Mawṣilī, is known, and annotations at the end of the text, the earliest being dated 588/1192, point to it being more ancient than the Istanbul manuscript. The edition of this exchange published by 'Alī b. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-'Alī in Riyadh in 1417/1996 is critical in the technical sense that it is based on a collation of the two manuscripts, but uncritical in its endorsement of the text as the authentic record of an actual exchange; the prefatory material is also poorly arranged.²⁶

It is to be noted that the foil for Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq's supposed repudiation of Shi'ism is identified simply as a Rāfiḍī, a term that does not occur in the discrete utterances examined above. This must indicate that the text originated at a time when the word had become a simple pejorative designation for all types of Shi'i, although the primary sense of 'rejectors' – notably of the first two caliphs – remained no doubt uppermost in the minds of those who used it.²⁷

After greeting Ja'far al-Šādiq respectfully, the Rāfiḍī goes straight to the heart of the matter by asking him who was the best of all men after the Prophet. Ja'far al-Šādiq replies, 'Abū Bakr', citing the allusion made

to him in Q. 9:40 (*the second of two when they were in the cave*).²⁸ The Rāfiḍī responds that on the same occasion, that of the Hijra, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib slept in the bed of the Prophet in order to delude the Meccans, 'without fear or anxiety', to which Ja'far al-Šādiq retorts that the same fearlessness characterised Abū Bakr.²⁹ The Rāfiḍī questions this, pointing to the part of the verse in which the Prophet is described as exhorting 'his companion' not to be sad! Ja'far al-Šādiq points out, however, that fear is one thing and sadness another, apart from which it was the possibility of the Prophet being killed that induced sadness in Abū Bakr, not concern for his own welfare.³⁰ The Rāfiḍī turned next to Q. 5:55, with its mention of *those who give charity while bowing in prayer*, explained by the Prophet as a laudatory reference to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. Without disputing this interpretation, Ja'far al-Šādiq responds that the preceding verse, Q. 5:54 (*O you who believe, if any among you turn back from his religion, certainly God will bring forth a people whom He loves and who love Him*), implies a still higher and more virtuous rank for Abū Bakr, for it was he who triumphantly warred against the apostates (*ahl al-ridda*) who refused to accept the payment of *zakāt* after the death of the Prophet. Ja'far al-Šādiq then gives a summary account of the wars in question, one significantly marred by the assertion that the apostates gathered at Nihavand to confront the forces mustered by Abū Bakr.³¹ The struggle against the *ahl al-ridda* was waged, of course, in Arabia, primarily in the region of Ḥā'il, while the historic battle that took place at Nihavand, in western Iran, was the decisive rout of the Sasanid armies, known as the supreme victory (*fath al-futūḥ*), that laid the Iranian plateau open to the Muslims in 21/642, that is to say, during 'Umar's caliphate. It is inconceivable that Ja'far al-Šādiq should have confused the two events.³²

Still intent on proving the superiority of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib to Abū Bakr, the Rāfiḍī next cites Q. 2:274 (*those who spend of their goods by night and by day, in secret and in public*), claiming that it refers specifically to his well-known munificence, for he would regularly spend one dinar at night and another during the day, one dinar in secret and one openly. Ja'far al-Šādiq counters that Q. 92:5–7 (*he who fears God and testifies to the best, for him We will make smooth the path to bliss*), as well as verses Q. 92:17–21, which similarly promise supreme reward to those who combine generosity, piety and devotion to God, all refer specifically to Abū Bakr, who divested himself of all of his wealth for the sake of Islam.³³

The next verse to be invoked by the Rāfiḍī in support of 'Alī's supremacy was Q. 9:19 (*do you make the giving of water to drink to the pilgrims and the maintenance of the Sacred Mosque equal to [the deeds of] those*

who believe in God and the Last Day and struggle in the path of God? They are not equal in the sight of God). At least the equal of this, counters Ja'far al-Šādiq, is Q. 57:10, a verse in which the superior merit of those who spent of their wealth and fought for Islam before the conquest of Mecca is proclaimed. This description, Ja'far al-Šādiq asserts in some detail, applies pre-eminently to Abū Bakr: he was the first of all the Companions to spend of his wealth as well as the first to enter into battle.³⁴

To the Rāfiḍī's next claim, that 'Alī was never guilty of *shirk*, for even the blink of an eye, Ja'far al-Šādiq responds that God praised Abū Bakr to a higher degree, indeed beyond all measure, in Q. 39:33 as *the one who testifies to the truth*, the verse from which can be inferred his attribute of *ṣiddīq*. For when all others doubted or disputed the first reports of the Mi'rāj, Abū Bakr immediately affirmed their veracity.³⁵ As for the love of his progeny that the Prophet is instructed to seek from the believers as his sole reward (Q. 42:23), the next argument advanced by the Rāfiḍī, this is trumped, according to Ja'far al-Šādiq, by Q. 59:10, in which the believers are enjoined to seek God's forgiveness for their brethren who have preceded them in belief and to refrain from all manner of grievance against them. From this Ja'far al-Šādiq concludes that seeking forgiveness for him is obligatory, loving him a duty, and hating him tantamount to unbelief (*kufr*).³⁶ Still not deterred by Ja'far al-Šādiq's effortless refutation of all his arguments, the Rāfiḍī cites a *ḥadīth* wherein the Prophet proclaims his grandchildren, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, to be the masters of the youth of Paradise, and their father, 'Alī, to be better than both of them. Ja'far al-Šādiq responds with another *ḥadīth*, supposedly transmitted to him by his paternal line of descent. According to that *ḥadīth* 'Alī was once alone with the Prophet when he caught sight of Abū Bakr and 'Umar. 'O 'Alī,' proclaimed the Prophet, 'these two are the masters both of the old men of Paradise and of its youth, both those of all ages gone by and of those yet to come, exception being made only of the prophets and messengers. Do not inform them of this, O 'Alī, as long as they are alive.'³⁷ This *ḥadīth* seems to have been modelled structurally on the far better-known tradition cited by the Rāfiḍī, with the mention of two other names, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn; hence the need to include 'Umar in tandem with Abū Bakr.³⁸ Be that as it may, the citation of this *ḥadīth* at this point serves to introduce the theme of *al-shaykhayn* into the discussion.

The altercation then moves to the relative virtues of Fāṭima and 'Ā'isha as the female representatives of the two lineages at issue, the Rāfiḍī obviously favouring the former. After reciting the opening verses of *Sūrat Yā-Sīn* (Q. 36) and *Sūrat Ḥā-Mīm* (Q. 41), perhaps to indicate the equal

worth of these two Suras, each beginning with a compound of two letters, as a parallel to the allegedly equal status of the two women, Ja'far al-Šādiq refuses to answer the question, for, he says, anyone who criticises the wife of the Prophet is accursed of God and anyone who insults his daughter is reviled by Him. The Rāfiḍī responds with the incontestable fact that 'Ā'isha fought against 'Alī, to which Ja'far al-Šādiq can reply only with Q. 33:53 (*It is not right for you that you should annoy the Messenger of God*), implying that criticism of 'Ā'isha is tantamount to causing distress to the Prophet.³⁹

Until this point, the argument has centred on the relative merits of Abū Bakr and 'Alī alone, with the exception of the pairing of 'Umar with Abū Bakr as masters of young and old alike in Paradise. Now, all four of the Rightly Guided Caliphs come under discussion as the Rāfiḍī asks whether they are mentioned at all in the Qur'an. To this Ja'far al-Šādiq responds with perhaps the most ingenious assertion in the whole discussion: that mention of them is found not only there, but also in the Torah and the Gospel. The Qur'anic verses alluding to them are those in which the words *khala'if*, *khulafā'* and *yastakhlifannakum* occur (Q. 6:165; Q. 27:62; and Q. 24:55, respectively). As for their mention in the Torah and the Gospel, this too derives from the Qur'an, that is, from Ja'far al-Šādiq's particular reading of Q. 48:29: *Muhammad is the Messenger of God and those who are with him [=Abū Bakr] are strong against the unbelievers [= 'Umar], compassionate amongst each other [= 'Uthmān]; you will see them bowing and prostrating themselves seeking the favour and pleasure of God [= 'Alī]. On their faces are their marks, the traces of prostration; this is their similitude in the Torah and their similitude in the Gospel.* Now exasperated beyond measure by the obduracy of the Rāfiḍī, Ja'far al-Šādiq struck him in the chest before continuing with his special exegesis of this lengthy verse: 'Like a seed which sends forth its blade then makes it strong [=Abū Bakr], it then becomes tough [= 'Umar] and it stands on its own stem [= 'Uthmān], filling the sowers with delight and thereby enraging the unbelievers [= 'Alī]. God has promised those among them who believe and do righteous deeds forgiveness and a great reward [=the general body of the Companions].'⁴⁰

He then concludes his exposé of the virtues of the four caliphs with a *ḥadīth*, transmitted to him from 'Alī by means of the intervening generations of the *ahl al-bayt*. The Prophet is reported to have said that once he, before all the rest of mankind, has been resurrected, God will invite him to summon his successors (*khulafā'*). Each of the four *khulafā' al-rāshidūn* will then be resurrected in the order corresponding to their exercise of the

caliphate, called gently to account for their deeds in this world (*hisāban yasīran*), wrapped in two green cloaks and made to stand before the divine throne. The Rāfiḍī asks whether this tradition finds confirmation in the Qur'an, to which Ja'far al-Ṣādiq replies by citing Q. 39:69: *the prophets and the witnesses (shuhadā') shall be brought forward; a just decision will be pronounced between them, and they shall not be wronged*, and interpreting the second category referred to, that is, the witnesses, as Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī.⁴¹ The alleged conformity to the Qur'an of this *hadīth* finally suffices to convince the Rāfiḍī of his error, and he asks Ja'far al-Ṣādiq whether his repentance for setting 'Alī apart (*tafriq*) from his three predecessors can be accepted. He assures him that it can, solemnly affirming that if he had maintained his opposition to the three until death, he would have died outside the pale of Islam and all his good deeds would have been as 'scattered dust' (*habā'an manthūran*, Q. 25:23), just like those of the unbelievers.⁴²

The authenticity of this text, in whole or in part, is extremely dubious. It is marred not only by the glaringly erroneous relocation of the wars of apostasy to Nihavand, but also by omissions in the line of imams (as cited by Ja'far al-Ṣādiq as authority for certain of his statements) on more than one occasion; it is still less conceivable that he should have been subject to confusion in this matter.⁴³ Granted, the Istanbul manuscript bears the notation that it was transmitted, in 669/1269–1270, by a certain Shaykh Abū'l-Qāsim 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Anṣārī al-Bukhārī, who received it in Mecca from Shaykh Majd al-Dīn Abū'l-Faṭḥ b. al-Ḥusayn b. Sahl b. 'Alī b. Bindār al-Yazdī, by way of *qirā'a*,⁴⁴ who had it from Shaykh Abū'l-Naṣr 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Qāsim b. Abī'l-Faḍl, who had it from Abū'l-Ḥasan Sa'd b. 'Alī b. Bindār. Little is known of any of these persons except Majd al-Dīn al-Yazdī, who at a certain point in his life – presumably after his sojourn in Mecca – migrated to Mosul and died there in 571/1175–1176.⁴⁵ Mosul also appears in the earliest annotation to the Damascus manuscript: in 588/1192 a certain 'Alī b. Mas'ūd al-Mawṣilī gave an *ijāza* for the transmission of the text to some eight persons including his three wives.⁴⁶ This may indicate that the text and its transmission represented something of a Mosul tradition. The Damascus manuscript also has in common with its Istanbul counterpart a chain (*sanad*) beginning with Shaykh Abū'l-Qāsim al-Anṣārī al-Bukhārī and continuing with Abū'l-Ḥasan Sa'd b. 'Alī b. Bindār; the name next mentioned is, however, that of Abū'l-Naṣr b. 'Ubayd Allāh b. 'Alī al-Faḍl b. al-Ḥusayn al-Yazdī who passed the tradition on to Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf b. Hibat Allāh b. Maḥmūd al-Dimashqī in 546/1151, two years before both men died. In

addition to all this, the Istanbul manuscript takes the chain of transmission back from the same Shaykh Abu'l-Qāsim al-Anšārī al-Bukhārī to – in turn – Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh b. Musāfir; Abū Bakr b. Khalaf al-Hamadhānī; Abu'l-Ḥasan Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Azma; Abu'l-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī al-Ṭanāfasī; Khalaf b. Muḥammad al-Qaṭwānī; and finally 'Alī b. Šāliḥ.⁴⁷ The last-named is cited neither as having received the tradition from anyone, nor as having heard it from Ja'far al-Šādiq himself.

There is, moreover, the general consideration that the exchange is too schematic and artificial to represent even the approximate transcript of a debate. Given the inability of the Rāfiḍī to refute any of the answers Ja'far al-Šādiq provides to his questions, his persistence rings untrue and serves only the dialectic purpose of permitting the imam to consolidate his triumph. There is no obvious reason why the Rāfiḍī penitently confesses his error at the point that he does rather than earlier in the exchange; his change of heart comes entirely unannounced. It seems reasonable to conclude that the *Munāẓara* is a maladroitness and relatively late polemical confection that sought to assemble in a single text themes earlier adumbrated in isolated utterances and to expand on them in the form of a sustained argument. The existence of only two known manuscripts suggests, moreover, that the text enjoyed only limited circulation and did not serve as a weapon of choice for anti-Ši'i polemicists.

III

A number of the Sufi orders, Sunni in sectarian affiliation, that were active in the Iranian world during the Mongol and Timurid periods are noteworthy for the enhanced devotional attention they paid to the twelve imams as a privileged line of spiritual transmission from the Prophet. This phenomenon, felicitously described as 'Twelver Sunnism',⁴⁸ has often been cited as evidence for a supposed shift in the direction of Ši'ism that reached its natural if violent conclusion under the auspices of the Safavids, with their coercive propagation of Ši'ism. These 'Twelver Sunnis' were not, however, proto-Ši'is; their goal, at least in several noteworthy cases, was to detach the imams from Ši'ism entirely and claim them instead for the Sunni tradition. In this context, Ja'far al-Šādiq was viewed as a particularly suitable candidate for appropriation, partly because of his inclusion in the initiatic chains of the orders in question. Thus the Kubravī shaykh Nūr al-Dīn Isfarā'īnī (d. 717/1317) wrote that Ja'far al-Šādiq certainly enjoys a rank of particular distinction in view of his dual descent (both spiritual and physical) from the Prophet, but that this recognition in

no way involves an embrace of Shi'ism. On the contrary, Isfarā'inī says, 'Imam Ja'far is disgusted with them [the Shi'is] ... what is the proof that their *madhhab* is the *madhhab* of Imam Ja'far?'⁴⁹

It was, however, the stringently Sunni Naqshbandīs who deployed the greatest energy in claiming Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq for their own tradition. Uniquely among the major Sufi orders, they traced their initiatic line of descent from the Prophet primarily through Abū Bakr; from him it proceeds first to Salmān Fārisī, next to Ja'far al-Šādiq's maternal uncle, Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr, and then to Ja'far himself. The notion of an esoteric link between Salmān Fārisī and Abū Bakr deserves note in passing for its improbability, but more significant for the orientation of the Naqshbandiyya is the recasting of Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr's relationship with Ja'far as one of spiritual as well as scholarly transmission. This resulted in a different type of dual descent for Ja'far al-Šādiq than the one envisaged by Isfarā'inī, for it specifically included Abū Bakr as a *spiritual* ancestor. The Bakrī lineage thus became at least the equal of Ja'far al-Šādiq's descent from 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, and he acquired special significance as the confluence of two streams deriving from the Prophetic source – Bakrī and 'Alawī.

The point was made with characteristic vigour and insistence by Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī (d. 1034/1624), known as Imām-i Rabbānī or, with respect to his millennial claims, as Ḥaḍrat-i mujaddid-i alf-i thānī, d. 1624), eponym of the Mujaddidī branch of the Naqshbandī order. He hypothesised:

It may be said that most of the Sufi paths go back to Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq who is spiritually affiliated (*mansūb*) to Ḥaḍrat-i Šiddīq [Abū Bakr]; why then do the other chains (*salāsīl*) not go back to him [but to Imam 'Alī instead]? My answer is that the Imam [Ja'far al-Šādiq] is connected both to Ḥaḍrat-i Šiddīq and to Ḥaḍrat-i Amīr [Imam 'Alī], may God be pleased with them both. Although both these exalted lineages (*nisbat-i 'aliyya*) are combined in his [Ja'far al-Šādiq's] person, the perfections of each remain separate and distinct from each other. One group [of Sufis] has derived from him a Šiddīqī [i.e. Bakrī] affiliation because of his Šiddīqī lineage, while another group has derived from him an Amīrī [i.e. 'Alawī] affiliation because of his Amīrī lineage and is connected to the Amir. This lowly one once had occasion to travel to the pergana of Benares, to the place where the waters of the Ganges and the Jumna join together. Despite that junction, it was entirely apparent that the waters of the Ganges and the waters of the Jumna remain distinct from each other, as if separated by a barrier so as not to intermingle. Those living at the point of junction on the banks of the Ganges draw their water from that river, and those living

on the banks of the Jumna draw their water from that river.⁵⁰

None of this should be taken to imply an equality between the two streams, for Sirhindī immediately reminds the reader that, according to Khwāja Muḥammad Pārsā (d. 822/1418), a prominent Naqshbandī of the first generation, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib received spiritual training not only from the Prophet, but also from Abū Bakr, not to mention 'Umar and 'Uthmān; Abū Bakr was not conversely indebted to 'Alī.⁵¹ This privileging of Abū Bakr over 'Alī corresponds fully to the *tafḍīl* of the former over the latter that is attributed to Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq in the utterances examined above; it is perhaps not coincidental that here, too, it occurs in a context where Ja'far al-Šādiq is under consideration. In any event, it is presumably because of the unique position of Ja'far al-Šādiq in the imagined prehistory of the Naqshbandī order as the confluence of two streams that genealogical as well as spiritual descent from him came to be attributed to its eponym, Bahā' al-Dīn Naqshband (d. 791/1389).⁵²

The hostility of the early Naqshbandīs to Shi'ism is apparent also from Pārsā's *Faṣl al-khiṭāb*, a bulky assemblage of various doctrinal themes. The chapter on punishments ('*uqūbāt*) opens with a subsection devoted to miraculous chastisements suffered by certain Rāfiḍīs. Thus a man in the Yemen who had cursed Abū Bakr and 'Umar had the misfortune gradually to be transformed into a monkey, the simian features working their way upwards from feet to pate, with the result that he was adopted by a troop of monkeys who took pity on him. Another reviler was slowly converted into a pig, and yet another into a dog.⁵³ Ja'far al-Šādiq is not cited here for the insistence attributed to him elsewhere that respect be shown to the *shaykhayn*, but later in the work Pārsā does link him to Abū Bakr by suggesting that the similarity of their cognomina – *šiddīq* and *šādiq* both deriving from the root ṣ-d-q – points to a descent that is spiritual as well as genealogical.⁵⁴ While not explicitly claiming Ja'far al-Šādiq for Sunni tradition, Pārsā insists that he be viewed primarily as a gnostic ('*ārif*): 'he never sought the Imamate nor contested the Caliphate with anyone, for one who is drowned in the ocean of gnosis (*ma'rifa*) will not aspire to a mere rivulet.'⁵⁵ Such, indeed, was the case of all the *ahl al-bayt* down to his time, for 'the knowledge of the Sufis is a knowledge reserved for the *ahl al-bayt*, in the first, second and third generations, down to Ja'far b. Muḥammad al-Šādiq'. Moreover, Pārsā presents him as a terminal figure in the line of the *ahl al-bayt*: 'after him, whoever keeps the company of the Sufis (*al-fuqarā'*), he and all his peers count as belonging to the people of his [Ja'far al-Šādiq's] household (*ahli baytihi*).'⁵⁶ The implication is clear: the Naqshbandīs, as initiatic heirs to Ja'far al-Šādiq, count as *his ahl*

al-bayt, and thus have a privileged if not exclusive relationship with him.

At the same time, Pārsā is of course aware that the line of imams of the Prophet's *ahl al-bayt* continued after Ja'far al-Šādiq and he accordingly takes issue with the various groups from among the Shi'a who have laid claim to him. Pārsā's use of the terms 'Rawāfiḍ', 'Shi'a' and 'Imāmiyya' is inconsistent and suggests that for him they were more or less interchangeable, but he seems to have viewed 'Shi'a' as a generic term embracing all the sects and subsects. In any event, the distinctions that may exist among them are ultimately of little importance, for all of them are, in Pārsā's words, 'deluded and cut off from the truth' (*ḥayārā munqaṭi'ūn*).⁵⁷ This being the case, Ja'far al-Šādiq is declared innocent of any and all connection to the totality of the Shi'a, not only the *ghulāt* who were intent on deifying him:

He is free of blame for the peculiarities and stupidities of the various schools of the Rāfiḍīs. The Shi'a divided into sects and each of them formed a school (*intaḥala kullun minhum madhhaban*) and in their desire to propagate it they attributed and connected it to him. But he has no connection whatsoever to *rafḍ*, *i'tizāl*, or any other capricious doctrines (*sā'ir al-ahwā'*).⁵⁸

According to Pārsā, both Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq and his father, Muḥammad al-Bāqir, had explicitly distanced themselves (*tabarra'a*) from the foolish teachings of the Rāfiḍīs, but

when the Shi'a split into different groups, each wishing to propagate its own views, they sought to attribute them to one or other of the imams of the *ahl al-bayt*. The claims (*maqālāt*) of the Shi'a are such that any reasonable person will regard it as impermissible to listen to them, let alone believe in them.⁵⁹

A similar attempt to detach the twelve imams in general and Ja'far al-Šādiq in particular from Shi'ism was undertaken by the celebrated poet and scholar, 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (d. 898/1492). An enthusiastic devotee of the Naqshbandiyya, he nourished a deep hatred for Shi'ism throughout his life, condemning it as a subversively false doctrine. Jāmī is reported once to have declared:

We are firmly convinced that the People of the Messenger's House, consisting of the twelve imams – may peace and blessings be upon him and upon them – never held this impure belief. By God Exalted and Almighty, if I were convinced that this was the creed and belief of the immaculate progeny of the Prophet, I would be the first to accept it. [What happened was

rather than] a handful of ignorant Jews, wishing to cast doubt on the very bases of religion, concocted some nonsense and slanderously attributed it to those pure and immaculate ones, although they were never aware of any part of it.⁶⁰

Jāmī similarly explained on another occasion that although the Rāfiqīs of his time, who had 'transgressed all bounds of decency', attributed their doctrine, 'a fistful of lies', to Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq, his actual school (*madhhab*) was 'none other than the straight path of [the people of] the *sunna* and the Community (*jādda-yi sunnat va jamā'at*)'.⁶¹ In keeping with the general Naqshbandī tendency to emphasise Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq's Bakrī genealogy, he significantly opens his notice on Ja'far in *Shawāhid al-Nubuwwa* with the imam's oft-cited reference thereto, 'Abū Bakr begat me twice'.⁶²

Most remarkable, perhaps, is that Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq himself is claimed to have endorsed in person this Naqshbandī enterprise of rescuing him from the clutches of the Shi'is. Sayyid Muḥammad Bādāmyārī, a Naqshbandī shaykh obliged by Safavid persecution to seek refuge in Urūmiya, a Kurdish and therefore predominantly Sunni city at the time, once found himself debating with a group of Shi'is. They declared in the course of the argument that the *mujtahid* (that is, the founding figure) of their *madhhab* was Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq. But once they had left, Bādāmyārī told his followers that while the Shi'is had been speaking, the imam himself had appeared (*mutamaththil gasht*) to him and declared, 'I know nothing of what they say; they are slandering me.'⁶³ One wonders why, for the sake of maximum effect, Bādāmyārī did not disclose this miraculous intervention as soon as it occurred.

A considerably later Naqshbandī, Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz Dihlawī (d. 1239/1824), took a somewhat different tack in trying to disengage Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq from the *madhhab* for which he generally counts as eponym. Alarmed by the rising influence of Shi'ism in northern India and intent on discrediting the claims to authority of Shi'i 'ulamā', past and present, Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz compiled a lengthy polemic against Twelver Shi'ism that he sarcastically entitled *Tuḥfa-yi Ithnā'ashariyya* ('A Gift to the Twelvers').⁶⁴ Towards the end of the work, he points out that according to various sources both Abū Ḥanīfa and Mālik b. Anas studied with Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq, and that, in turn, al-Shāfi'i was a student of Mālik and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, a student of al-Shāfi'i. A line of Ja'farī affiliation is thereby established for the founders of all four schools of Sunni jurisprudence, making them the true heirs of the imam. Particularly important for Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz is that while Abū Ḥanīfa was certified as capable

of *ijtihād* by Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq, contemporary Shi'i scholars cannot in the very nature of things be so authorised by the Twelfth Imam in whose name they claim to act, given his occulted state: 'How can the *madhhab* of one who has acquired the qualifications for *ijtihād* in the presence of an imam and received from him permission to engage therein and to issue *fatwās* not then be regarded as more worthy of adherence?'⁶⁵ The Ḥanafī *madhhab* – the school followed by the quasi-totality of Naqshbandis at the time, whether in India or elsewhere – thus emerges as the preferred claimant to the juristic (*fiqhī*) legacy of Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq.⁶⁶

Another anti-Shi'i polemicist, Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328), approached the matter quite differently from Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz. He dismissed any claim that Abū Ḥanīfa studied with Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq as 'a lie, apparent to anyone with the slightest degree of knowledge'.⁶⁷ According to Ibn Taymiyya, the two were 'contemporaries and equals' (*aqrān*), Abū Ḥanīfa was already engaged in delivering *fatwās* during the lifetime of Muḥammad al-Bāqir, and he did not derive a single ruling (*mas'ala*) from either Ja'far al-Šādiq or Muḥammad al-Bāqir.

IV

In 1945 a group of Sunni and Shi'i scholars established in Cairo the Dār al-Taqrīb bayn al-Madhāhib al-Islāmiyya, an organisation dedicated to rapprochement and unity among the various schools of Islamic jurisprudence – not only the four of the Sunni tradition but also the two Shi'i schools of jurisprudence (Ja'farī, Zaydī) and the Ibādī school. As the most substantial and widespread of the non-Sunni schools, it was, of course, primarily Ja'farī *fiqh* that was at issue. The new and positive approach this initiative heralded, especially in Egypt, culminated in the *fatwā* issued by Shaykh al-Azhar Maḥmūd Shaltūt (d. 1963) declaring the Ja'farī *madhhab* to be a valid school of Islamic jurisprudence.⁶⁸ The aim was not merely to establish unity of sympathy and action among all Muslims in the face of Western imperialism, but also to draw on all schools of jurisprudence, without discrimination, in order to solve various contemporary problems. Among the contributors to *Risālat al-Islām*, the journal published by the Dār al-Taqrīb at irregular intervals from 1949 to 1972, were prominent Shi'i scholars such as Muḥammad Taqī al-Qummī, Muḥammad Jawād al-Maghniya, Muḥammad Šādiq al-Šadr and Abu'l-Qāsim al-Khū'i.

Muḥammad Abū Zahra (d. 1974), a professor of Shari'a at the Faculty of Law at Cairo University, renowned for independence and originality of thought, was fully in accord with the aims of the Dār al-Taqrīb, as he made

plain in a series of articles on the need for Islamic unity published in its organ.⁶⁹ More than any other Sunni member of the group, he concerned himself in a detailed and scholarly fashion with the Ja'farī *madhhab* and its eponym. His goal was to view the Shi'a – as well as other non-Sunni groups – not as a 'sect' (*firqa*) but as a 'school' (*madhhab*), this mode of approach being more conducive to unity.⁷⁰ It was against this background of concern, both ecumenical and practical, that he examined Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq and the school of jurisprudence bearing his name, referring to its adherents with consistent respect as 'our Shi'i brethren'. He published an outline sketch of Shi'i law concerning inheritances, together with a brief account of Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq's life,⁷¹ and followed it with a detailed study of the imam's life and times, together with his theological doctrines and legal methodology.⁷² At about the same time, he also published a two-volume history of legal and theological schools in Islam, devoting the last forty pages of the second volume to Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq and his teachings.⁷³

Abū Zahra differs from other Sunni authors reviewed above in that he recognises Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq as having been the leader of a distinct religio-political current, not a simple contributor to the Sunni consensus that was in the process of gestation. He nonetheless contests the attribution to him of virtually all the historical judgements and distinctive teachings of Shi'ism, relying on many of the same sources as his predecessors, although not naming them. Thus he reports Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq to have declared that 'whoever is unaware of the excellence of Abū Bakr and 'Umar is ignorant of the *sunna*'. Similarly, Ja'far al-Šādiq is said to have addressed Jābir al-Ju'fī as follows:

O Jābir, it has reached me that some people in 'Iraq claim to love us, but they vilify Abū Bakr and 'Umar, may God be pleased with them both. They claim that I have commanded them to do so. Tell them that I disown them before God. By Him Who holds in His hand the soul of Muḥammad, had I the power to do so, I would seek to draw nigh to Him by shedding their blood. May I not benefit from the intercession of Muḥammad if I fail to seek forgiveness and mercy for those two. Certainly the enemies of God know nothing concerning them.⁷⁴

Supposedly, Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq condemned *mut'a* (term marriage) as a species of fornication; did not assert the inerrancy (*išma*) of the imams of the *ahl al-bayt*; did not benefit from divinely inspired (*ilhāmī*) knowledge; did not affirm the doctrine of *bidā'* (the appearance of change in the divine will); and did not teach the belief in *ruj'a* (the provisional return

to this world of certain sacred personages in advance of the general resurrection).⁷⁵ Although no doubt sincerely intended, this distancing of Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq from doctrinal features of Shi'ism seems to have been motivated by the wish to present him as primarily the founder of a school of jurisprudence, in accordance with the stated aim of viewing Twelver Shi'ism as a *madhhab* rather than a *firqa*.

As for the traditions narrated from Ja'far al-Šādiq in the Shi'i sources, Abū Zahra divides them into four categories determined by content alone, not by their chains of transmission. First come those that are in full accord with the authoritative Sunni books and the acceptance of which is therefore not problematic. By contrast, those that stand in clear opposition to the Qur'an and Sunni *ḥadīths* of manifest authenticity (*mutawātir*) must be rejected. *Ḥadīths* in the Shi'i books that contradict each other must be evaluated with respect to the prevalent opinion of the learned (*al-jumhūr*); those at variance with it are to be rejected. Finally, Shi'i *ḥadīths* that are fully in accord with each other and do not contradict those found in the Sunni books are not necessarily to be accepted or rejected.⁷⁶ Conformity to Sunni criteria applies also to the individual provisions of the Ja'farī *madhhab*: if found to be in accord with the Qur'an and the *sunna* as understood and recorded by Sunnis, they can be accepted.⁷⁷ The scope available for permissible borrowing from Shi'i *fiqh* or reliance on its bases in narrations from Ja'far al-Šādiq and the other imams thus proves in the end to be quite narrow. It is not therefore surprising that a number of Shi'i authors have charged Abū Zahra with betraying his proclaimed goal of reconciling the Sunni and Shi'i traditions.⁷⁸

The Islamic Revolution in Iran was considered by many of those who, whether Shi'i or Sunni, participated in it directly or felt affinity with it, as an event of crucial relevance to the entire Islamic world, including its vast Sunni majority. Attempts were accordingly made in Iran to resume the project of rapprochement between the Sunni and Shi'i traditions. In 1991, at the initiative of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, an institution called al-Majma' al-'Ilmī li'l-Taqrīb bayn al-Madhāhib al-Islāmiyya (The Academic Assembly for Rapprochement between the Islamic Schools of Thought) was established in Tehran, explicitly to serve as a successor organisation to the Dār al-Taqrīb, and it began publishing a journal, *Risālat al-Taqrīb*, that took *Risālat al-Islām* as its model.⁷⁹ A complete run of the earlier journal and other publications of the Dār al-Taqrīb were republished in Mashhad for broad distribution, and annual unity conferences began to be held in Tehran to coincide with the birthday of the Prophet. It was, however, in Beirut that, in December 1996, the cultural affairs counsellor of the

Iranian embassy organised a conference on the theme of Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq and the various schools of Islamic jurisprudence; the proceedings were published the following year.⁸⁰

As often happens on such occasions, most participants failed to address themselves with any degree of precision to the topic announced. One exception was Shaykh Ḥasan Ḥamāda, a Lebanese Shi'i scholar. After tracing the history of the Imamate from the time of Imam 'Alī, Ḥamāda asserts that many of the *ḥadīths* found in the Sunni books can be traced back to either Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq or his father, Muḥammad al-Bāqir; it was they and their predecessors who were foremost in the preservation of the *sunna*. True, this fact is not reflected in the chains of transmission that are commonly cited in the Sunni books, but only because the Sunni scholars of the age feared the persecution to which all devotees of the *ahl al-bayt* were subject; those scholars were effectively engaged in the practice of *taqiyya*, much like the imams themselves.⁸¹ In similar fashion, Ḥamāda presents Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq as the progenitor or ancestor of all four Sunni *madhhabs*, especially the Ḥanafī. At the end of the two years he spent studying with Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq in Medina, Abū Ḥanīfa remarked, according to Ḥamāda, 'Were it not for the two years, al-Nu'mān (Abū Ḥanīfa) would certainly have been ruined.'⁸² Mālik b. Anas spent even longer with Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq as his pupil, and in turn al-Shāfi'i studied both with Mālik and with other students of the imam such as Sufyān b. 'Uyayna and Ibrāhīm b. Sa'd al-Anṣārī. Finally, Ibn Ḥanbal kept the company of al-Shāfi'i during his sojourn in Baghdad.⁸³ This process of *fiqhī* transmission from Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq to the eponyms of the four Sunni *madhhabs* is essentially the same as that traced out by Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz Dihlawī.⁸⁴ Dihlawī's purpose had been to present the Sunni schools as the true heirs of Ja'far al-Šādiq and thereby to deny legitimacy to Shi'ism; that of Ḥamāda is to establish Ja'far al-Šādiq as the point of departure for all the schools, Sunni and Shi'i alike. For Ḥamāda immediately goes on to complain, with some justice as this article has demonstrated, that many Sunni writers who express deep respect for Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq mercilessly attack the Shi'is as if they had no connection to him nor he to them.⁸⁵

V

The purpose here has been not to explore, in any detail, the complex role played by Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq in the intellectual and religious developments of his age, but, more modestly, to review a polemical tradition

that sought to detach him from Shi'ism and either align him with Sunni Islam or straightforwardly appropriate him for it. The attempt was clearly misguided, but the simple fact that Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq was viewed as a suitable recruit for the campaign is significant. Obvious reasons for his selection include his Bakrī descent and his denunciation of *ghulāt* elements in the Shi'i movement such as the Khaṭṭābiyya; it may have seemed to some a logical next step to extend his condemnation to the Imāmīs. Central, however, is the fact that he interacted with a wide range of personalities, in both Medina and Baghdad, at a time when neither Sunni nor Shi'i Islam had assumed definitive shape. A detailed and dispassionate study of the various aspects of his life and thought would surely help to clarify this formative period in Islamic history; it might also aid in reconciling all who, with varying degrees of justification, continue to invoke the name of Ja'far al-Šādiq.

Notes

1. On Ja'far al-Šādiq's place in the general evolution of Shi'ism, see S. H. M. Jafri, *The Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam* (London, 1981), pp. 259–312.
2. Robert Gleave, 'Ja'far al-Šādeq: ii, Teachings', *Elr*, vol. 14, p. 351.
3. 'Alā' al-Dīn Muḡhaṭṭāy b. Qilij al-Bakcharī, *Ikmāl tahdhīb al-kamāl fī asmā' al-rijāl*, ed. 'Ādil b. Muḡammad and Usāma b. Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 2001), vol. 3, p. 227. This author clarifies, however, that traditions transmitted from him only by his progeny have no evidentiary value.
4. See Hamid Algar, 'Ja'far al-Šādeq: iii, and Sufism', *Elr*, vol. 14, pp. 356–362.
5. Shams al-Dīn Muḡammad al-Dhahabī, *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, ed. Shu'ayb Arnā'ūt and Ḥusayn al-Asad (Beirut, 1401/1981), vol. 6, p. 255.
6. Dhahabī, *Siyar*, vol. 6, p. 255; Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *al-Šawā'iq al-Muḡriqa* (Cairo, n.d.), p. 53.
7. Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *Religion and Politics under the Early 'Abbasids: The Emergence of the Proto-Sunni Elite* (Leiden, 1997), pp. 50–51.
8. Muḡibb al-Dīn Aḡmad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-naḍira fī manāqib al-'ashara*, ed. 'Īsā b. 'Abd Allāh b. Mānī' al-Ḥimyarī (Beirut, 1996), vol. 1, p. 386; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, vol. 6, p. 259.
9. Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-naḍira*, vol. 1, p. 385.
10. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 386. The version of this tradition reported by Ibn Haytamī includes the wording 'and I swear loyalty to them (*atawallāhumā*)'; *al-Šawā'iq al-muḡriqa*, p. 53.
11. Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-naḍira*, vol. 1, p. 386.
12. Dhahabī, *Siyar*, vol. 6, p. 259.
13. Ibid., vol. 6, pp. 258–259. The modern editors of this text seek to extend

the sense of the reply given by the imams Muḥammad al-Bāqir and Ja'far al-Šādiq to cover all four of the Rightly Guided Caliphs: 'This tradition clarifies the position of the immaculate *ahl al-bayt* with respect to the Rightly Guided Caliphs. Anything contrary to it that is attributed to them is pure calumny against them' (vol. 6, p. 259, n.1). The same tradition is cited by Haytamī (*al-Sawā'iq al-muḥriqa*, p. 53), who confirms that the narrator was Shi'i and finds it necessary to add immediately 'but he was trustworthy (*thiqa*)'.

14. Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-nāḍira*, vol. 1, p. 386; Haytamī, *al-Sawā'iq al-muḥriqa*, p. 53.
15. Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-nāḍira*, vol. 1, p. 386. A similar statement is attributed to Imam Muḥammad Bāqir; see Haytamī, *al-Sawā'iq al-muḥriqa*, p. 53.
16. Dhahabī, *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, vol. 1, pp. 258–259; Haytamī, *al-Sawā'iq al-muḥriqa*, p. 53.
17. Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-nāḍira*, vol. 1, p. 386.
18. Dhahabī, *Siyar*, vol. 1, p. 258.
19. Zaman, *Religion and Politics under the Early 'Abbasids*, p. 43.
20. See Majid Ma'ārif, *Pazhūhishī dar tārikh-i ḥadīth-i Shī'a* (Tehran, 1374 Sh./1995), pp. 276–289. Ja'far al-Šādiq both embraces and enjoins *taqiyya* in this well-known tradition: 'Taqiyya is of my religion and of the religion of my father, and one who does not observe *taqiyya* has no religion' (Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb al-Kulaynī, *al-Ūṣūl min al-Kāfī* [Tehran, 1375–1377/1955–1957], vol. 2, p. 48).
21. See Kulaynī, *al-Ūṣūl min al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, pp. 22–23.
22. Some *ḥadīths* from Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq on the subject are summarised in 'Alī Rafī'i, 'Tawallā wa Tabarrā', *Dā'irat al-ma'ārif-i tashayyu'*, ed. Aḥmad Ṣadr Ḥāj-Sayyid-Jawādī et al. (Tehran, 1375 Sh.–/1996–), vol. 5, pp. 157–158. See also Etan Kohlberg, 'Barā'a', *Elr*, vol. 3, pp. 738–739; idem, 'Barā'a in Shī'i Doctrine', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 7 (1986), pp. 139–175; and Jean Calmard, 'Les rituels shiites et le pouvoir. L'imposition du shiisme safavide: eulogies et malédictions canoniques', in Jean Calmard, ed., *Études Safavides* (Paris and Tehran, 1993), pp. 109–150.
23. See 'Alī Zay'ūr, ed., *Kāmil al-tafsīr al-šūfī al-'irfānī li'l-Qur'ān bi-ḥasb Ḥaqā'iq al-tafsīr wa Ziyādāt Ḥaqā'iq al-tafsīr li'l-Sulamī* (Paris, 2002), p. 126.
24. Anonymous, *Hizār ḥikāyat-i Šūfiyān*, ed. Īraj Afshār and Maḥmūd Umīdsālār (Tehran, 1382 Sh./1993), fols 76a–b.
25. See Zaman, *Religion and Politics under the Early 'Abbasids*, pp. 51, 169–171.
26. *Al-Munāzara li'l-imām al-ḥujja Ja'far b. Muḥammad al-Šādiq raḍiya'llāhu 'anhumā*, ed. 'Alī b. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-'Alī (Riyadh, 1417/1996).
27. Occasionally, however, the term is used by Shi'i authorities, possibly including Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq himself, as a positive self-designation, intending thereby a generic rejection of evil and misguidance. See Etan Kohlberg, 'The Term "Rāfiḍa" in Imāmī Shī'i Usage', *Journal of the American Oriental*

- Society*, 99 (1979), pp. 677–679.
28. *Al-Munāẓara*, p. 95.
 29. While Sunnis cite *al-Tawba*, 40, as proof of Abū Bakr's valour and excellence, Shi'is have seen in *al-Baqara*, 207 ('there is one among men who is prepared to sell his life in order to earn the pleasure of God') an allusion to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib's willingness to risk death by substituting for the Prophet in his bed, an incident known as 'spending the night' (*al-mabīt*). Competitively measuring the degrees of courage thus manifested by the two during the Hijra remained for many centuries a frequent theme of Sunni-Shi'i polemics; see Asma Asfaruddin, 'Sunnī-Shī'ī Dialectics and the Qur'an', in Khaleel Mohammed and Andrew Rippin, ed., *Coming to Terms with the Qur'an* (North Haledon, NJ, 2008), pp. 107–123.
 30. *Al-Munāẓara*, pp. 99–102.
 31. *Ibid.*, pp. 105–106.
 32. The Saudi editor concedes that this relocation to Nihavand of the wars against the apostates – found in both manuscripts – is 'strange' (*gharīb*; p. 105, n.2); he does not, however, entertain the possibility that the error may cast doubt on the authenticity of the whole text.
 33. *Al-Munāẓara*, pp. 107–113.
 34. *Ibid.*, pp. 114–117.
 35. *Ibid.*, pp. 118–121.
 36. *Ibid.*, pp. 123–124.
 37. *Ibid.*, pp. 125–126.
 38. This *ḥadīth* is cited, however, in a number of Sunni books; see *al-Munāẓara*, p. 126, n.2.
 39. *Al-Munāẓara*, pp. 127–129.
 40. *Ibid.*, pp. 130–133.
 41. *Ibid.*, pp. 133–135.
 42. *Ibid.*, pp. 135–136.
 43. *Ibid.*, p. 125.
 44. *Qirā'a* denotes a mode of transmission whereby a tradition is read aloud in the presence of a scholar of *ḥadīth* and certified by him; see Ṣubḥī al-Ṣāliḥ, *'Ulūm al-ḥadīth wa muṣṭalaḥuhu* (Damascus, 1378/1959), pp. 93–95. The reading may take place either from memory or from a written text; the latter appears more probable in the present case, given the length of the alleged tradition.
 45. *Al-Munāẓara*, pp. 89–90, p. 89, fn.1.
 46. *Ibid.*, p. 63.
 47. *Ibid.*, pp. 93–94.
 48. The expression 'Twelver Sunnis' is used by Muḥammad Ja'far Maḥjūb in his *'Az faḍā'il wa manāqib-khwāni tā rawḍa-khwāni*, *Iran Nameh*, 2, iii (1984), p. 414.
 49. Nūr al-Dīn Isfarā'īni, *Kāshif al-asrār*, ed. Hermann Landolt (Tehran, 1980); cited on p. 58 of Landolt's introduction.

50. Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī, *Maktūbāt-i imām-i rabbānī* (Istanbul, 1977), vol. 1, p. 667. In point of fact, the Jumna merges with the Ganges not at Benares, but some distance upriver, at Allahabad.
51. Khwāja Muḥammad Pārsā, *Qudsiyya*, ed. Aḥmad Tāhirī 'Irāqī (Tehran, 1354 Sh./ 1975), p. 13.
52. This attribution appears to be a relatively late phenomenon. The earliest occurrence of it known to the present writer is to be found in Ghulām Sarwar Lāhūrī's hagiographical compendium, *Khazīnat al-ašfiyā* (Lucknow, 1290/1873), vol. 1, p. 539, where the genealogy, reported on the authority of a certain Shaykh Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad Naqshbandī, runs as follows: Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn, the father of Bahā' al-Dīn; Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn; Sayyid 'Abd Allāh; Sayyid Zayn al-'Ābidīn; Sayyid Qāsim; Sayyid Sha'bān; Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn; Sayyid Maḥmūd; Sayyid Bilāq (*sic*; perhaps Bilāl is intended); Sayyid Taqī; Šūfi Khalwatī; Sayyid Fakhr al-Dīn; Sayyid 'Alī Akbar; Imam Ḥasan al-'Askarī; and then the imams preceding him, concluding with Ja'far al-Šādiq. The ancestral line given in another source is slightly different: Sayyid Muḥammad Jalāl al-Dīn Bukhārī; Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn 'Khāldār'; Sayyid 'Abd Allāh; Sayyid Zayn al-'Ābidīn; Sayyid Sha'bān; Sayyid Burhān; Sayyid Ishāq, 'known as Īlāq'; Sayyid Taqī; Sayyid Khalwatī; Sayyid Fakhr al-Dīn; Sayyid Maḥmūd Jāmi'; Sayyid 'Alī Akbar; Imam 'Alī Taqī; and then the imams preceding him, concluding with Ja'far; see Nūr al-Dīn Tūra Bukhārī, *Tuḥfat al-zā'irīn* (Bukhārā, 1327/1909), p. 54. Although this genealogy is difficult to evaluate, its absence from the earliest Naqshbandī sources – what might be called the classics of the order – casts considerable doubt on its authenticity. Particularly noteworthy is that in the *Tuḥfat al-zā'irīn*, maternal descent from Abū Bakr is also attributed to Bahā' al-Dīn, without any further elaboration; the overall purpose is plainly to have him resemble Ja'far al-Šādiq as a possessor of both 'Alawī and Bakrī lineages. A new and handsomely calligraphed headstone for the tomb of Bahā' al-Dīn Naqshband at Qaṣr-i 'Ārifān, a suburb of Bukhārā, awaiting installation when I visited the site in October 2007, repeats the same attribution of Ja'fari descent, minus the complete genealogy.
53. Khwāja Muḥammad Pārsā, *Faṣl al-khiṭāb*, ed. Jalil Misgarnizhād (Tehran, 1381 Sh./2002), pp. 395–398.
54. Pārsā, *Faṣl al-khiṭāb*, p. 568.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 572.
56. *Ibid.*, pp. 534, 571.
57. *Ibid.*, pp. 618–619.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 573. The passing reference to *i'tizāl*, i.e. the Mu'tazili school of theology, is due no doubt to the perception that Shi'i *kalām* was formatively influenced by its Mu'tazili counterpart; see Martin J. McDermott, *The Theology of al-Shaikh al-Mufīd* (Beirut, 1978), *passim*.
59. Pārsā, *Faṣl al-khiṭāb*, p. 619.
60. 'Abd al-Wāsi' Bākharzī, *Maqāmāt-i Jāmi*, ed. Najib Māyil Haravī (Tehran,

- 1371 Sh./1992), p. 157. The mention of 'ignorant Jews' is presumably an allusion to the fictitious figure of 'Abd Allāh b. Saba', a Yemeni Jew who is said to have made an insincere conversion to Islam during the caliphate of 'Uthmān in order to disseminate the false teachings that subsequently became the foundation of Shi'ism; see Murtaqā al-'Askarī, *Uṣṭūrāt 'Abd Allāh b. Saba'* (Beirut, n.d.).
61. Bākharzī, *Maqāmāt-i Jāmī*, pp. 155–156.
 62. 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Shawāhid al-nubuwwa li-taqwīyyat yaqīn ahl al-futuwwa* (Istanbul, 1995), p. 245.
 63. Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn Qazwīnī, *Silsila-nāma-yi khwājagān-i Naqshband*, MS 1418, Supplément persan, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, fol. 19b.
 64. For a detailed précis of its contents, see Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *Shāh 'Abd al-'Aziz: Puritanism, Sectarian Politics and Jihād* (Canberra, 1982), pp. 245–355.
 65. Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz Dihlawī, *Tuḥfa-yi Ithnā'ashariyya* (Istanbul, 1990), p. 768.
 66. It may be remarked that whether deliberately or not Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz is implicitly conflating two types of *ijtihād*: absolute ('*mutlaq*'), that practised by the founders of the Sunni *madhhabs*, who formulated a series of legal principles (*uṣūl*); and limited ('*muqayyad*'), that practised within the parameters of an existing *madhhab*, as by the Shi'i scholars against whom he railed.
 67. See Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna al-nabawiyya* (Beirut, n.d.), vol. 4, p. 143.
 68. The *fatwā* was issued in the year of his death. It was published a year later in English translation as 'The Official Text of the Counsel Issued by His Eminence the Great Master Shaykh Mahmoud Shaltut, Rector of al-Azhar, on the Validity of Worship according to the Imamite Shi'a Doctrine', in *Risālat al-Islām*, 55–56 (1384/1964), pp. 14–16 of the English section.
 69. Muḥammad Abū Zahra, '*al-Waḥdat al-Islāmiyya*', in *Risālat al-Islām*, 10, i (Rajab, 1377/January, 1958), pp. 28–35; idem, 10, ii (Shawwāl, 1377/April, 1958), pp. 138–145; idem, 10, iii (Muḥarram, 1378/July, 1958), pp. 242–250; idem, 10, iv (Rabi' I, 1378/October, 1958), pp. 352–361. On the life and work of Abū Zahra, see Kate Zebiri, *Maḥmūd Shaltūt and Islamic Modernism* (Oxford, New York, 1993) and Saffet Köse, 'Muhammed Ebü Zehre', *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 30, pp. 519–522.
 70. Muḥammad Abū Zahra, *al-Imām al-Ṣādiq: ḥayātuhu wa 'aṣruhu, ārā'uhu wa fiqhuhu* (Cairo, n.d.), p. 12. The same language is used in Shaltūt's *fatwā*, for precisely the same reason as footnote no. 1 to the English translation makes clear.
 71. Muḥammad Abū Zahra, *al-Mirāth inda'l-Ja'fariyya* (Cairo, 1955).
 72. Abū Zahra, *al-Imām al-Ṣādiq*. The copy of this work held by the library of the University of California, Berkeley, was acquired in 1963, so presumably it was published either that year or somewhat earlier, perhaps in order to

coincide with the issuance of Shaltūt's *fatwā*.

73. Abū Zahra, *Ta'riḫ al-madhāhib al-Islāmiyya, al-juz' al-thānī: fī ta'riḫ al-madhāhib al-fiqhiyya* (Cairo, n.d.), pp. 525–563.
74. Abū Zahra, *al-Imām al-Šādiq*, p. 24. The occurrence of the oath 'By Him Who holds in His hand the soul of Muḥammad' in this tradition is curious, since it was used frequently by the Prophet himself; it might be expected that Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq would more appropriately have mentioned his own soul.
75. Abū Zahra, *al-Imām al-Šādiq*, pp. 13, 69, 71–74, 236, 239.
76. *Ibid.*, pp. 13–14.
77. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
78. See, for example, al-Sayyid Ḥusayn Yūsuf Makkī al-ʿĀmilī, *Aqīdat al-Shī'a fī'l-imām al-Šādiq wa sā'ir al-a'imma* (Beirut, 1382/1963; repr. 1407/1987), pp. 10–12. For other Shī'i reactions to Abū Zahra's evaluation of Ja'far al-Šādiq, see Rainer Brunner, *Islamic Ecumenism in the 20th Century: The Azhar and Shiism between Rapprochement and Restraint*, translated from the German by Joseph Greenman (Leiden and Boston, 2004), pp. 171–173; orig. pub. *Annäherung und Distanz: Schia, Azhar und die islamische Ökumene im 20. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1996).
79. See Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī, 'Ḥawl Ahdāf al-Majalla', *Risālat al-Taqrīb*, 1, i (Ramaḍān 1413/February–March 1993), p. 7.
80. *Mu'tamar al-imām Ja'far al-Šādiq wa'l-madhāhib al-islāmiyya* (Beirut, 1417/1997).
81. *Mu'tamar*, pp. 446–447.
82. *Ibid.*, p. 448. This internally rhyming sentence (*sanatān, al-Nu'mān*) bears a suspicious resemblance to the confession of 'Umar that only the insight and wise counsel of Imam 'Alī had prevented him from committing some serious errors in his exercise of caliphal power: 'Were it not for 'Alī, 'Umar would certainly have been ruined.'
83. *Mu'tamar*, p. 448.
84. See above, pp. 91–92.
85. *Mu'tamar*, p. 449.

The *Kitāb al-Rusūm wa'l-izdiwāj wa'l-tartīb* Attributed to 'Abdān (d. 286/899): Edition of the Arabic Text and Translation

Wilferd Madelung and Paul E. Walker

'Abdān is the name under which the earliest author of the pre-Fatimid Ismaili *da'wa* is known to us. In the accounts of the origins of the Ismaili missionary activity, he appears associated with Ḥamdān Qarmaṭ, the founder of the *da'wa* in the *Sawād*, the countryside around Kūfa, soon after the beginning of Qarmaṭ's activity between the years 261 and 264/874–877. He became Qarmaṭ's brother-in-law and was in charge of teaching and training the *dā'īs* to be sent to local districts in the *Sawād*, as well as to remote regions such as Baḥrayn and Yemen. He was murdered when the early *da'wa* split over the claim of the Fatimid 'Abd Allāh al-Mahdī to the imamate in 286/899.¹

According to Ibn al-Nadīm, writing a century later, 'Abdān was the most prolific author of the *da'wa*, though most of his books were merely ascribed to him, as everyone composing books in the *da'wa* used his name. This practice evidently was continued after his death by the *dā'īs* active in 'Iraq still during the early decades of the fourth/tenth century. In particular a nephew of 'Abdān, Abu'l-Qāsim 'Īsā b. Mūsā, is mentioned by the anti-Ismaili polemicist Akhū Muḥsin as having compiled numerous books and attributed them to 'Abdān in order to create the impression that 'Abdān was an erudite scholar in all branches of philosophy and science. 'Īsā b. Mūsā was captured by the 'Abbasid army in 316/928, but escaped and remained in Baghdad where he continued to spread the teaching of his uncle.² Ibn al-Nadīm gives the titles of a few of 'Abdān's books that were generally available in his time and which he had seen. None of these works seems to be extant now. He also mentions a catalogue (*fihrist*) of all of 'Abdān's books, but does not indicate whether it goes back to 'Abdān himself and whether it contained only the titles of books

composed during his lifetime.³

The book titles contained in 'Abdān's *Fihrist* are quoted by Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 672/1274), spread out over many pages in his *Safīnat al-aḥkām*, an astrological compilation written presumably during his stay in Alamūt at the court of the Nizārī Ismaili imam.⁴ Several of the titles mentioned by Ibn al-Nadīm, though not all, appear in Ṭūsī's listing.⁵ Collectively the book titles give the impression that the treatises were meant to provide a kind of encyclopaedia of contemporary sciences, both religious and natural. This seems to confirm the description of Akhū Muḥsin and may indicate that the *Fihrist* was compiled by 'Īsā b. Mūsā rather than his uncle 'Abdān.

Most of 'Abdān's books are lost now, and references to them in later Ismaili works are rare. Ṭayyibī Ismaili libraries, according to Ismail Poonawala's *Biobibliography of Ismaili Literature*, have preserved two texts ascribed to him: a *Risālat al-Sham'a al-musammāt bi-Mafātīḥ al-ni'ma* and a *Kitāb al-Rusūm wa'l-izdiwāj wa'l-tartīb*.⁶ The former title is not quoted by Ṭūsī and its text was not available to us. Judgement as to whether it may belong to the corpus of 'Abdān's writings thus must be suspended at present.⁷

The second extant text, the *Kitāb al-Rusūm wa'l-izdiwāj wa'l-tartīb*, probably belongs to the corpus of 'Abdān's books.⁸ On the title page of the manuscript the author is named as Abū Muḥammad 'Abdān, and in 'Abdān's *Fihrist*, as quoted by Ṭūsī, it appears as *Kitāb al-Izdiwāj*. The latter title, without the name of an author, is also mentioned as being among the books of the Ismailis by the sixth/twelfth century Yemenite heresiographer Abū Muḥammad.⁹ In the author's account of the cyclical hiero-history of seven Speaker-Prophets (*nuṭaqā'*), the sixth one, Muḥammad, was followed by his Legatee (*waṣī*) or Foundation (*asās*), 'Alī, and six concealed imams. The seventh imam and Speaker-Prophet, who can safely be identified as Muḥammad b. Ismā'il b. Ja'far, will be the *qā'im*, whose advent is expected. There is no room for the historical Fatimid imam-caliphs.

The primary thesis of the author of the text is the pairedness (*izdiwāj*) and duality of all created beings, basically evident in the pairedness of everything with its attribute. Things are distinct from their attributes, yet they are inevitably paired with them and cannot subsist without them. God alone is one and unique (*fard*). His names and attributes are separate from Him. While they can be known, God alone is beyond recognition.

This theology, which places God categorically beyond recognition and being, has, as is well known, always remained fundamental in Ismaili

religious thought and must be considered as an essential constituent of the original teaching of the *da'wa*. The text, on the other hand, does not show any trace of the Neoplatonic cosmology that became characteristic of early Persian Ismailism and was widely adopted in Fatimid Ismaili works. Of the ranks of the higher, spiritual world, the author names only the Preceder (*Sābiq*) and the Follower (*Tālī*), but does not identify them as the First Intellect and Soul as was commonly done in later texts. This is consistent with the assumption first expressed by Samuel M. Stern that Neoplatonic philosophical thought was introduced in Ismaili doctrine by the early Transoxianan *dā'ī* Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Nasafī (d. 332/943).

The absolute impossibility of recognising and knowing God necessarily implies rejection of any rational proof for the existence of God. 'Abdān thus argues in the text that acknowledgement of the Creator on the basis of His creation is of no avail for salvation, since mere affirmation of Him is innate and natural, and mankind is endowed (*fuṭirat*) with it. Salvatory knowledge (*ma'rifa*) is rather attained through inspired instruction (*ta'līm*) by the Prophets, their Legatees and the imams, and by reasoning (*iktisāb*) from it. This instruction was not concerned with proofs for the existence of God and with the exoteric (*ẓāhir*), openly available aspect of the Scripture and religious law, but with their concealed inner meaning (*bāṭin*). The adversaries, who believed that they could reach knowledge of God by reason and that the exoteric sense of revelation alone constituted true faith without the need for an imam, were the rationalist *kalām* theologians as much as the anti-rationalist traditionalists.

When Ḥasan-i Ṣabbāḥ (d. 518/1124) over two centuries later founded his 'new *da'wa*', he must have found in the books of 'Abdān ideas that attracted him and that he sought to reinvigorate. Ḥasan-i Ṣabbāḥ's *da'wa* centred on the doctrine of the need for inspired instruction, which he reformulated in his famous *Four Chapters*, and his Nizārī Ismaili followers became known as the Ta'līmīs.¹⁰ The theological atmosphere, however, had changed since the age of 'Abdān. The most serious rationalist challenge to Ismaili Shī'i thought came no longer from *kalām* theologians, but rather from the tradition of the Aristotelian philosophical school as reformulated by Ibn Sīnā (d. 428/1037), whose theological thought was rapidly spreading among Muslim religious scholars. Ibn Sīnā's family, it is known, had been Ismaili Shī'i, but he turned away from his father's faith¹¹ to take up the mantle of al-Fārābī (d. 339/950) as the chief of the Peripatetic philosophers in Islam. God for him was not the unique One beyond being and recognition, but rather the Necessary Being (*wājib al-wujūd*) that is the cause of all contingent being and also an intelligible Intellect that

eternally emanated the supreme Intellect of the Universe. His elegant proof for the existence of the Necessary Being impressed many Muslim theologians even though it entailed the eternity of the world. And while for Ibn Sīnā the exoteric aspect of prophetic revelation also concealed its true meaning, this meaning was accessible to the elite of philosophers through direct contact with the Active Intellect which was equally the source of prophetic revelation. There was no need for inspired instruction by an imam.

Ḥasan-i Šabbāḥ's elder contemporary Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) in his youth wrote a rebuttal of Ibn Sīnā's philosophical theology on the basis of Ash'arī *kalām*. Later in his life, however, he adopted Ibn Sīnā's views even on points on which he had at first accused him of unbelief, although he now intimated that his own views were informed by Sufi insight rather than Greek philosophy. Altogether, Ghazālī's highly influential teaching did more to promote Ibn Sīnā's Aristotelian thought in Islam than to counter its tide. At the same time Ghazālī maintained his polemical opposition to Shi'i Ismaili thought. Still in his late work *Faysal al-tafriqa bayn al-islām wa'l-zandaqa* he classified the Ismaili thesis that God is beyond being and non-being as sheer unbelief.

Yet Ḥasan-i Šabbāḥ's defence of Ismaili thought in his renewal of the *da'wa* did not remain without echo in the wider Muslim community beyond his immediate Nizārī constituency. A decade after his death, Tāj al-Dīn al-Shahrastānī, originally an Ash'arī theologian like Ghazālī, took up the cause of Ismaili theology in the *Kitāb al-Muṣārā'a*, his *Wrestling Match* with Ibn Sīnā.¹² There he affirmed that God was above existence and non-existence, the existentiator (*mūjid*) of existence and the giver of both. God was above all opposites, and their sovereign judge (*ḥākim*). Attributes such as knowledge, power and unity could be predicated of Him only equivocally, as their meaning was entirely unrelated to their ordinary or analogical meaning in the world. He is no intellect, as Ibn Sīnā asserted, and the mode of divine omniscience is beyond the comprehension of the human mind. The reality of God, he asserted much like 'Abdān, was too well known for His existence to be proved by anything; it was indeed innate in the human conscience (*fiṭra*). The mission of Prophets was needed not to establish the reality of God, but to reveal His uniqueness that is beyond rational recognition. And why, he questioned, should the Active Intellect that leads human minds from potentiality to actuality be identified with the intellect of the lunar sphere as Ibn Sīnā claimed? Could it not rather be a human mind that has reached perfection and is supported by divine inspiration? Here Shahrastānī clearly envis-

aged the inspired instruction of the prophets and imams.

Shahrastānī's philosophical defence of Ismaili theology a century later impressed the young Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, a Twelver Shī'i with a solid grounding in the philosophical sciences, and encouraged him to visit the centres of the Nizārī *da'wa* first in Quhistān and then in Alamūt. For nearly three decades he stayed with his Ismaili hosts and produced some writings supporting their views. The inclusion of 'Abdān's *Fihrist* in one of his books reflects his involvement with the concerns of the *da'wa*. He also continued, however, to write books expounding Ibn Sīnā's thought as well as ones on logic and astronomy. He seems to have been somewhat torn between two philosophies. After the fall of Alamūt to the Mongol conquerors in 654/1256 and his break with the Ismailis, he wrote an angry refutation of Shahrastānī's work which he called *The Downfalls of the Wrestler*.¹³ Denouncing him as a mere populist preacher incompetent in logic and philosophy, he dismissed Shahrastānī's arguments point by point and upheld Ibn Sīnā's positions comprehensively. Yet at the beginning and end of his treatise he insisted that it was not his aim to advocate Ibn Sīnā's views.

In two passages of his refutation Ṭūsī chides Shahrastānī for his apparent failure to comprehend the teaching of his (Ismaili) masters, whom he describes as followers of Pythagoras in philosophical terms. Concerning the origins of multiplicity in the world, Pythagoras had affirmed that 'when a one is established, an opposite not-one is necessarily entailed and duality ensues'. The origin of the world thus was duality and contrariety (*taḍādd*). God, having no contrary, must evidently then be absolutely transcendent without any relation to the world. Among the founders of religion, Ṭūsī continues, Zoroaster described the origins of multiplicity similarly. When an angel, named Yazdān by Zoroaster, issued from the One, a satan arose from his shadow, whom Zoroaster named Ahriman. Their teachers ascribed to Pythagoras the principle of contrariety, which, according to him, preceded sequential gradation (*tarattub*) in the universe. They reproached Aristotle for deviating from his position and asserting that gradation was the origin of multiplicity in the world, a single one issuing from the One, with contrariety arising only after gradation.¹⁴ This evidently was consistent with Ibn Sīnā's concept of God as the Necessary Being and intelligible Intellect from which necessarily emanated a single contingent Intellect capable of cognising its Origin.

Ṭūsī here calls the doctrine ascribed to Pythagoras a profound secret of creation and seems inclined to his position. It was no doubt the concept of an absolutely transcendent God that had initially attracted him to the

Ismailis. It had raised for him the problem of how a God beyond being could produce the world since it could not simply emanate from Him by necessity as Ibn Sinā held. Why should there be a world at all? Ṭūsī, it is known, meditated long about the need for a divine Command (*amr*) or Word (*kalima*) which Ismaili teaching posited as an intermediary between the transcendent God and the first being, the Prime Intellect and 'Abdān's 'Preceder'.¹⁵ In 'Abdān's *Kitāb al-Izdiwāj* there is no trace of the concept of the divine Command or Word, and it is not known if it was mentioned in any of his other works. It was commonly discussed, however, in early Persian Ismaili texts.¹⁶

Ṭūsī's description of Shahrastānī's Ismaili teachers as Pythagoreans raises questions. He obviously found the name a convenient means for classing them as representatives of a philosophical school distinct from the Aristotelian Neoplatonic tradition of Fārābī and Ibn Sinā. Ṭūsī states explicitly, however, that they themselves claimed to be followers of Pythagoras and that they ascribed to him the statement that the positing of a one necessarily entailed a not-one opposite to it. This saying does not seem to be attested of Pythagoras elsewhere, although it is generally in concord with other views tradition attributed to him. Ṭūsī accuses Shahrastānī of having apparently forgotten what he had learned from his teachers about the doctrine of Pythagoras.

Yet Shahrastānī nowhere described the Ismailis expressly as followers of Pythagoras. In his doxographical *Kitāb al-Milal wa'l-niḥal* he mentioned summarily that Ḥasan-i Šabbāḥ recommended that the principles of contrariety and gradation be applied as a measurement in all disputation, but did not associate Pythagoras with these principles.¹⁷ In the *Kitāb al-Muṣāra'a* he cites a doctrine about animal and human recognition of God which is ascribed in the *Kitāb al-Milal* to Pythagoras, but identifies it here as the statement of 'the sages who are the pillars of wisdom'.¹⁸ Ṭūsī furthermore criticises Shahrastānī for referring to a view according to which there are three principles corresponding to three aspects of the Prime Intellect: another intellect, a soul and prime matter (*hayūlā*). Ṭūsī objects to this, saying that the followers of Pythagoras to whom the (Ismaili) fellows of Shahrastānī belonged rather speak of the three principles as an intellect, a soul and a nature (*ṭabī'a*). In the *Kitāb al-Milal* Shahrastānī quoted this latter view as a doctrine of Pythagoras. In the *Kitāb al-Muṣāra'a*, however, he speaks of differing views in this regard without mentioning Pythagoras.¹⁹ Shahrastānī thus probably was unaware of any Ismaili claims to be followers of Pythagoras; nor is it likely that Ḥasan-i Šabbāḥ ever put forward such a claim. In earlier Ismaili

works Pythagoras, if mentioned at all, was not treated more favourably than other Greek philosophers.

Was Ṭūsī's account of Ismaili claims to be followers of Pythagoras then simply made up by him? In view of his evident fascination by the doctrine ascribed to Pythagoras this seems unlikely. The claim must have been intimated to him by some high authority in the *da'wa*, perhaps even the imam. As an analytical description of Ismaili theological thought from its origins the claim was revealing; as an explanation of its historical filiation it lacks credibility.

Notes

1. On 'Abdān see in general Wilferd Madelung, in *EI3*, vol. 1, pp. 23–24.
2. Wilferd Madelung, 'The Fatimids and the Qarmatīs of Bahrayn', in Farhad Daftary, ed., *Mediaeval Isma'ili History and Thought* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 55, n.27.
3. Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, ed. Gustav Flügel (Leipzig, 1871), pp. 279–282; tr. Bayard Dodge as *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm: A Tenth-century Survey of Muslim Culture* (New York and London, 1970). MS 1174 ArI ZA.
4. Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, *Safinat al-aḥkām*, MS 3640, Chester Beatty Collection, Dublin.
5. Only the following titles listed by Ibn al-Nadīm are quoted by al-Ṭūsī: *Kitāb al-Raḥā wa'l-dūlāb*, *Kitāb al-Mizān*, *Kitāb al-Nirān*, *Kitāb al-Malāḥim*.
6. Ismail K. Poonawala, *Biobibliography of Ismā'ili Literature* (Malibu, CA, 1977), p. 33.
7. There is another text with the title *Risālat Mafātiḥ al-ni'ma* that is commonly ascribed to al-Qāḍi al-Nu'mān; see Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, pp. 66–67; Ismā'il b. 'Abd al-Rasūl al-Majdū', *Fahrasat al-kutub wa'l-rasā'il [Fihrist al-Majdū]*, ed. 'Alinaqi Munzawī (Tehran, 1966), p. 187. This is an admonishing letter addressed to a neophyte about the obligatory payment of religious dues. It is unlikely it was written by al-Qāḍi al-Nu'mān, who is named only in an appendix to the letter. Although the text is distinctly early, there is no indication that it might belong to the corpus of 'Abdān's works.
8. The manuscript available to us has been MS 1174 ArI ZA of the Zāhid 'Alī collection, now in the possession of The Institute of Ismaili Studies, London. It is described by Delia Cortese in *Arabic Ismaili Manuscripts: The Zāhid 'Alī Collection in the Library of the Institute of Ismaili Studies* (London, 2003), pp. 81–82.
9. See Abū Muḥammad al-Yamani's *'Aqā'id al-thalāth wa'l-sab'in firqa*, ed. Muḥammad Zarbān al-Ghāmīdī (Medina, 1993), p. 513.
10. Ḥasan-i Šabbāḥ, *Chahār Faṣl* (=Fuṣūl-i arba'a), see Shahrastāni, *Kitāb al-Milal wa'l-niḥal* (ed. Cureton), pp. 150–152; French tr. Gimaret and

- Monnot, *Livre des religions et des sects*, vol. 1, pp. 560–565; English tr. Kazi and Flynn as *Muslims Sects and Divisions*, pp. 168–170.
11. See Ibn Sīnā's autobiography as preserved in Ibn al-Qifti, *Ta'rikh al-Ḥukamā'*, ed. Julius Lippert (Baghdad and Leipzig, 1903), pp. 413–417 and Ibn Abi Uṣaybi'a, *'Uyūn al-anbā' fī ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā'*, ed. Nizār Riḍā (Beirut, 1965), pp. 437–445.
 12. Shahrastānī, *Kitāb al-Muṣāra'a*, ed. and tr. Wilferd Madelung and Toby Mayer as *Struggling with the Philosopher: A Refutation of Avicenna's Metaphysics* (London, 2001).
 13. Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, *Maṣāri' al-muṣāri'*, ed. Wilferd Madelung (Tehran, 2004).
 14. *Ibid.*, pp. 105–106.
 15. See especially Hermann Landolt, 'Khawāja Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī (597/1201–672/1274), Ismā'ilism and *Ishrāqī* Philosophy', in Nasrollah Pourjavady and Živa Vesel, ed., *Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī: Philosophe et savant du XIII^e siècle* (Tehran, 2000), pp. 19–21; and idem, 'Introduction', in Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, *Rawḍa-yi taslīm*, ed. and tr., S. Jalal Badakhchani, *Paradise of Submission: A Medieval Treatise on Ismaili Thought* (London, 2005).
 16. See, for instance, Heinz Halm, *Kosmologie und Heilslehre der frühen Ismā'īliya: Eine Studie zur islamischen Gnosis* (Wiesbaden, 1978), see index s.v. *amr* and *kalima*.
 17. Shahrastānī, *Milal*, pp. 151–152.
 18. Shahrastānī, *Struggling with the Philosopher*, Arabic text p. 89; tr. p. 72; *al-Milal*, pp. 265–256.
 19. *Ibid.*, p. 268; Ṭūsī, *Maṣāri' al-muṣāri'*, p. 121.

The Book of Norms, Pairedness and Ranking

By Abū Muḥammad ‘Abdān, may God have mercy on him

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate, in whom we have recourse in all matters.

Praise be to God who appointed for each period people of knowledge who persist in bringing the people out of the darkness and into guidance, patiently endure injury from them, who continue to restore life to the lifeless through the Book of God and who, by the light of God, give sight to those who are blind. How many of those fallen to Iblis have they revived and how many of those gone astray and become lost have they guided! How good are their effects on the people and how evil the effects of the people on them! They banish from the Book of God the distortion of the exaggerators, the arrogation of the falsifiers and the interpretations of the renegades who hoist the banners of innovation, who plant their feet on the path to perdition and swerve from the roads of right guidance and who hasten in ignorance to the furthest limit. Sacred preserves are by them violated; forbidden things are by their interpretation (*ta’wīl*) permitted. They deviate from the straight path and tell lies against God concerning His Book without any knowledge of it. They depart from what is proper to Him. We seek refuge in God from the seduction of those who lead astray and from the caprice of the deviators, the fanaticism of the ignorant and those who lie against God and are insolent to His Friends. Praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds, who is unique in singleness and single in uniqueness, who is the first from eternity and the last who will not cease, the one who innovates creation and annihilates it, who brings it back and who starts it, who refuses description, who cannot be characterised in His essence nor encompassed by the senses. Thoughts cannot reach Him and *sights do not perceive Him. Yet He perceives sights; He is subtle and knowing* (Q. 6:103).

God bless the one chosen and approved among His Prophets, the one chosen of His Messengers, sent to jinn and men as herald of good tidings and as warner in order to bring religion to perfection and complete the path of the messengers by conveying its proof and illuminating the way to it. A complete, pure and growing prayer be upon him in the morning and evening; and on the good among his family, the righteous in his community and the God-fearing among their followers, keep them in peace.

Understand – may God inspire you with guidance and lead you to what is right – that the first thing that is required of all novices is to acknowledge

God, hallowed is His mention and then to acknowledge His Messengers. Next comes recognition of those appointed to command and rendering them obedience. God, the exalted and glorious, said, *O you who believe, obey God and obey the messenger and obey those in command among you* (Q. 4:59). Understand – may God teach you the good – that the actions of the servants are all related to God, the glorious and the great, and that they are closely tied to what connects them to the reality of the confession of His uniqueness. Thus someone who acknowledges God with the acknowledgement truly due Him and declares Him truly one has rendered his actions righteous and his efforts good. Someone who is ignorant of that forfeits his effort and renders his actions base. His reward from God is as God said: *We will come to whatever actions they have done and make them as if scattered dust* (Q. 25:23). The Commander of the Believers ‘Alī, the blessings of God be upon him, said in one of his sermons: ‘Truly the first matter of religion is to acknowledge God and the perfect acknowledgement of Him is to confess His uniqueness. The proper form in which to acknowledge His oneness is to deny of Him attributes through the testimony of the intellects that every attribute and that to which it is attributed are both created; and by the testimony of that which is other than the attribute, and the testimony of both together, that they are a duality, each one being unable to subsist without the other; and the testimony of duality in itself to having come into existence, which precludes being eternal.’ These words contain the meanings of recognising [God’s] uniqueness for the person who acknowledges it, who recognises its true reality, and understands what its definition entails.

Understand – may God adapt you to righteousness – that the true acknowledgment of God is to attribute to Him uniqueness and to recognise Him as absolutely single, and that He is the single creator who has no opposite, no equal, no partner, no mate; that He cannot be apprehended in any way, or by any means, and, even though His names are perceptible, His names and His attributes are other than He. Every thing other than He is created, paired, joined together, mutually alike, subject to description, apprehensible, possible, identifiable, formed and demonstrable. Everything created, even if its name is but a single name, has aspects in pairs such that one of them exists in its likeness and mate. An example is the human, who has two aspects: the spirit and the body, such that the spirit exists with the body and the body with the spirit, and neither can subsist without its companion. Moreover, the body in itself is a compound of two natures, which are coolness and dryness. Similarly, the spirit is a compound of two natures, which are heat and moistness. The indica-

tion for that is that you observe a human as hot and dry, the heat and dryness being of the substance of the spirit. When the spirit departs from the body, the body reverts to its own substance. Similarly, everything in the world has necessarily two substances in it, either hot and moist or hot and dry or cool and moist or cool and dry, because God, the almighty and the sublime, innovated this world out of these four natures. There is thus nothing that does not combine in itself two substances compounded in such a manner that one of them subsists with its companion.

All things seen and unseen have of necessity two aspects: coarse and fine; and every thing coarse and fine is of necessity of two kinds: alive and inanimate, one of which is the contrary of the other and its partner and mate. All things exist in their paired relationship, joined to the other, mutually contrary, one in need of the other. One is an indication of the other, so that from the mate its mate can be deduced, and by the contrary its contrary, and by the like its like. Each partner is unrecognisable except through its partner; one of them is not understood without the other, like the sky and the earth, the east and the west, night and day, light and dark, black and white, land and sea, the plain and the mountain, the near and far, the long and short, the wide and deep, the high and the low, the handsome and the ugly, pleasant and rotten, sweet and bitter, fresh and salty, soft and rough, moist and dry, light and heavy. These things are alike in being contraries in implied pairings that indicate one of them by reference to the one it resembles and is contrary to it, is paired with it and is its partner. These characteristics, which adhere to the two, indicate the uniqueness of their Creator and His singularity and that He is different from them in all aspects. He cannot be perceived by an effort of the heart, nor comprehended by thought; one cannot say that He is He by way of demonstration nor of imagination, in order that there be a distinction between Creator and creation, between Lord and subject, between Maker and what He made. 163

Since it is proven that the Creator is different in all respects, His thingness (*shay'iyya*) is different from that of all created beings, because a created being must either be physical, and thus apprehended by the external senses, or be spiritual, and thus apprehended by the internal senses. Since it is proven that a created being, whatever it is, is apprehended either by the external senses or by the internal senses, it is also proven that the Creator cannot be apprehended through anything from those He created, under any circumstance or by any means, nor does some phrase stand for Him or an allusion or imagination point to Him. No likeness can be coined for Him; nothing low or high encompasses Him. Things apprehended by

162 these senses we have mentioned you apprehend solely through their association and you distinguish them by their being paired. They are, in their essence, joined together and not singular, given that no sense apprehends something that is perceived without a partner that is paired with it. If the sense is isolated from its mate, it becomes inoperative and ceases to function. The five physical senses are the ear, the eye, the nose, the mouth and the hand. The partner of the ear is hearing, the partner of the eye is sight, the partner of the nose is smell, the partner of the mouth is taste, the partner of the hand is touch. These are to them in the position of spirits to bodies. Each sense that loses its partner has fallen dead. Have you not noticed that the deaf man, once he lacks hearing, cannot use his ears for anything? Similarly the blind man, once his sight is gone, cannot use his eyes for anything. The mouth, once blocked for some reason, finds no way to taste things as they really are and it then finds the sweet bitter and the fresh salty. In the same way someone with a sense of smell, once having lost the ability to smell, cannot use his nose for anything. Also the hemiplegiac, having lost his sense of touch, has no use for his hand. Thus these senses come in known pairs that only apprehend things by their association.

The Creator, however, has no partner that He might be known through, nor an equal to be compared with. The five senses do not reach Him. Indeed, *nothing is like Him; He is all-hearing and all-seeing* (Q. 42:11); *He has power over every thing* (Q. 5:120 and others). Things do not apprehend the One who made them things but He comprehends them. For that reason God said, *Sight does not apprehend Him but He comprehends sight; He is fine and knowing* (Q. 6:103). The common people claim that *sight* is the sight of the eyes and that He cannot be perceived by the eyes. It is not as they suppose, rather He means – glorious is His name – the sight of the five senses which function separately to attain cognition of all things and that all things necessarily have five aspects, which are sound, colour, taste, body and spirit. The Creator, however, is not a sound, nor a colour, nor a fragrance, nor a taste, nor a body, but rather He is the Creator of these things and is divorced from their attributes.

If someone were to say: The heart is a sixth sense and the Creator is attained by the heart, we would say to him: The heart is the manager of the senses and the ruler over them, and the senses are in the position of the elements, which are the mothers. Whatever the senses apprehend, the heart manages and gauges it by its partner and seeks evidence for it through what is like it. The heart does not perceive anything but what the five senses indicate and does not cognise anything but what they witness.

It is not alone by itself but is, rather, a partner that is connected to what is subtler than it and which it is in need of, namely, the intellect. The intellect in relation to the heart is in the position of the spirit with respect to the body, and the heart is to the intellect in the position of the body to the spirit. Every heart that has no intellect has fallen into an inanimate state like the hearts of the beasts. God created things only in pairs, conjoined and doubled because, if He had created anything as unique, it would be His equal, or as single other than Him, that single one would be associated with Him in His singularity, and would be His partner in His uniqueness and there would be neither Creator nor created thing. God said: *If there were in them¹ gods other than God, they would go to ruin; hallowed be God, the Lord of the throne, above what they describe* (Q. 21:22). But He is isolated in uniqueness from having partners; He created all creatures in need of each other as an indication that He is single in oneness; *blessed be God, the best of creators* (Q. 23:14). 161

Thus all we observe in the lower world exists doubled and in pairedness. It is likewise true for matters that are absent from us about which information comes from the Prophets, peace be upon them, when they speak about, for example, Paradise and Hellfire, Reward and Punishment, the Tablet and the Pen, the Throne and Footstool, Jibra'il and Mikā'il, the place of the Last Judgement (*mawqif*) and the Bridge (*ṣirāṭ*), the Reckoning and the Balance. About that God, hallowed is He, spoke in His Book, when He said: *Of everything We created two of a kind, perhaps you will take note* (Q. 51:49); and He said: *and We created you in pairs* (Q. 78:7). He also said: *Hallowed be He who created all things in pairs, those that the earth produces, those that are from themselves, and those about which they know not* (Q. 36:36); and He said: *He created for you among yourselves mates, and among the cattle also pairs, through them to multiple you; nothing is like Him, He is all-hearing and all-seeing* (Q. 42:11); and He said: *By the even and the odd* (Q. 89:3). This is proof for the negation of similitude for God. Thereupon God established His religion on the likeness of His creation so that, from His creation, evidence could be obtained about His religion and, from His religion, about His singularity. For that reason He said: *Say, observe what is in the heavens and the earth, but signs and warnings will not be enough for those who do not believe* (Q. 10:101); and He said: *And how many signs in the heavens and the earth do they pass by, turning away from them* (Q. 12:105). He said also: *And in your own selves, will you not see* (Q. 51:21). And there is more like this in the Book of God.

Next God selected from His creatures the most choice of them and He called them by two names: Prophets and Messengers. He described

them with two attributes: heralds of good tidings and warners. He chose from them [a man named] Muḥammad and Aḥmad, and He sent him to the jinn and the humans, to the Arabs and non-Arabs. He made for him two residences: Mecca and Medina. He divided his companions into two parties: the Emigrants (*muḥājirūn*) and the Supporters (*anṣār*). He arranged ties of brotherhood between each pair of them, even to a tie of brotherhood between himself and 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, peace be upon him. He established the rules of religion on two foundations: obligatory duties and normative practice. He left at his death among us the two loads: the Book of God and his family. Some say: the Book of God and his normative practice, but both expressions indicate one meaning. The Book is in itself of two types: revelation and interpretation, interior and exterior, of fixed meaning and ambiguous, Meccan and Medinan, abrogating and abrogated, licit and illicit, commanded and forbidden, promise and threat, prior and subsequent. In it there are reports of what is and what will be, and he [i.e. Muḥammad], peace be upon him, summoned to the religion of Islam and to faith, a pairing in the position of spirit and body: one cannot stand without the other. In some reports from the Prophet, he is reported to have said: 'Islam is built on five things.' He was asked, 'What are they, O Messenger of God?' He replied: 'On the testimony of faith (*shahāda*), performance of prayer, giving of alms, fasting in the month of Ramaḍān and the pilgrimage to the House for all those who have a way to do it.' Each one of these basic principles is linked with another. The testimony that there is no god but God is paired with the testimony that Muḥammad is the Messenger of God; one has no standing without the other. Prayer is linked to ablutions; alms with charity; fasting with the night vigil (*qiyām*), the pilgrimage with the visitation (*'umra*). The followers of the Prophets fall into two types: those who are obedient and those who are coerced, and that is as He said: *Those in the heavens and the earth submitted to Him either obediently or resentfully* (Q. 3:83). Among them there are those who know and those who are ignorant; as to that He said: *Are they equal, those who know and those who do not know* (Q. 39:9). There are those who obey and those to be obeyed, in accord with His statement: *Obey God and obey the Messenger* (Q. 4:59). There are those with command and those under command, as in His statement: *Let those who oppose his commands be warned that some trial is about to befall them* (Q. 24:63). There are the elite and the common people, as in His words: *God guides whomever He wants to a straight path, for those who do good there is good and more* (Q. 10:25–26). There are the more excellent and the less excellent, as in His statement: *God grants, as a favour to those who fight over those who sit*

at home, a greater reward (Q. 4:95). And there are many examples such as these in the Book of God; if we were to mention them, the illustration would have run on at length.

Here we say that the simplest method of all for perfecting the confession of uniqueness is to deny of the Creator, who created the spirit and body, all that is found in the spirit or the body in the way of substance, genera, attributes and acts, because the spirit occupies the body and the body occupies its space. Similarly, all other accidents occupy bodies and bodies occupy the earth. Their Creator is different from them and cannot be described as in need of space, nor does He move or cease, since He is prior to all that. Nor is He borne, or mixed, or located in an abode, nor does He inhere in anything. All found in creation is excluded from God; all that is possible in them, is impossible in Him. His names in the Revelation and His attributes apply to their meanings, which are spiritual and bodily beings. His names are, as one says: O Most Merciful, O Most Compassionate One, and His attributes are likewise: O Most Mighty, O Most Noble, O All-Knowing. His names are related to the first of His names. When you understand these names and attributes, the limits and rules are set, the lighthouse of Islam is lit, and the veracity of Muḥammad is apparent. Thus this is a part of perfecting the confession of uniqueness and of the duality of created things, their being paired, mutually alike and contrary to each other, in order that it serve as an indication and aid for the novice.

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We say – and it is God of whom we seek assistance – that the affirmation by creatures of the Creator – sublime is His name – on the basis of His product is of no avail and does not deliver, because the affirmation of Him is innate and natural, and they are endowed with it. The knowledge that saves comes through instruction (*ta'līm*) and acquisition and by it [people] are tested. By acquisition, the innate and natural states are cognised, and by instruction the soundness of a report and the knowledge of the informant is realised. If the knowledge of God necessarily saved them in the same way that the knowledge of the proof and affirmation of Him are necessary, then the inspiration, the Books, the Prophets and Messengers would be vain, and to recognise God there would be no need for a proof beyond the existence of His creation, because, in regard to saying 'God', there is no need for a proof beyond His being and His evidence. Since it is correct that the proof for one who cannot be witnessed is by way of his product, it is proven that cognition of Him is through instruction and by way of the Prophets and Messengers. And likewise is the affirmation of the Messengers and what they convey. God said: *If you ask them who created*

the heavens and the earth, they would surely say God; say Praise be to God, but most of them do not know (Q. 31:25); and He said: Most of them do not believe in God except in so far as they are idolaters (Q. 12:106). He also said: But most of the people do not know; they know the externals of worldly life but are heedless of the life to come (Q. 30:6-7); and He said: Is then someone who knows that what was revealed to you from your Lord is the truth like one who is blind? It is those with understanding that take notice (Q. 13:19). He said also: The blind and those who see are not alike (Q. 35:19); and He said: Are those who know and those who do not know equal? (Q. 39:9); and He said: They do not know the Book except as desires (Q. 2:78). By desires He means 'perusal' (dirāsa) and that they are not cognisant of its meanings. He said: Those to whom they appeal other than Him possess no power of intercession other than he who bears witness to the truth and they know (Q. 43:86); and He said: Supposition is of no use with the truth (Q. 10:36).

158 Then He extolled others saying: *Only those who know understand them (Q. 29:43); and He said: None know its interpretation except God and those firmly grounded in knowledge, they say, we believe in it, all is from our Lord (Q. 3:7). He also said: God will raise in degrees those of you who believe and have been given knowledge (Q. 58:11); and He said: Those who truly fear God among His servants are the men of knowledge (Q. 35:28).* Thus he informs us that He is not feared but by those with knowledge of Him and of His religion, and that the affirmation of God and acting in accord with the exterior of the law and abiding by it without recognising its true realities is reprehensible and not praiseworthy. Rather it is unbelief, as He has said: *Is it then that you believe in part of the Book and reject the rest? (Q. 2:85)* because they believe in the exterior of the law and reject its inner significance. For the external aspect is not the religion in reality, but rather a way to religion and a right that is not established except by its true reality, since God said: *God makes the truth true by His words (Q. 10:82); and He said: That God makes the truth true and the false false even though the idolaters hate that (Q. 8:8).* Thus the exterior is true and those who uphold it are truthful; those who act on it are right, if only they understand the true reality of their statements and work because God has said: *That He may question those who are truthful about their truth (Q. 33:8).* Accordingly, they may be questioned about the true reality of their statements and work, if they are to succeed. Otherwise they are, like the rest of the adherents of religious laws, transgressors of it, because of His having said: *Those who believe and those who are Jewish and the Christians and the Sabians, those who believe in God, the Last Day and do righteous deeds, for them is their reward with their Lord, no fear for them nor will they grieve*

(Q. 2:62). Do you not notice that He has combined them in addressing them and decided clearly in this verse that they do not believe in God or in the Last Day, and they are only called believers because of their faith in the word and the act in the absence of the knowledge that is the true reality of their words and deeds? And that is in His statement: *O you who believe, believe in God and His messenger and the light that We have sent down* (Q. 64:8); and His statement: *Truly I am the one who forgives those who repent and believe and do righteous deeds, and then find guidance* (Q. 20:82). He indicates by these words that repentance is the beginning of faith, and that deeds are the path to guidance, which is the second step in faith. He said: *O you who believe, shall I indicate to you a transaction that will save you from a painful penalty so that you believe in God* (Q. 61:10–11) and the Last Day? Thus He reports that the *transaction*, which brings salvation from the painful penalty, is the second step in faith. There is much like this in the Book of God. Thus He says, acting in accord with the externals of the law is a means to faith and a pathway to it. God said: *If they had done what they were admonished to do, it would have been good for them and a strengthening confirmation; and then We would have granted from Us a great reward and guided them on the straight path* (Q. 4:66–67). 157

Affirmation consists in the two testimonies of faith and performing the rest of the obligatory duties. These are the externals of the law, which the people are compelled and forced by the sword to enter into and say and do, because of His statement: *And fight them until there is no more temptation and the religion is all God's* (Q. 8:39). Since they accepted it obediently but under duress, he set up among them penalties in all matters as he was ordered to do. Whoever apostatised from Islam after having entered it was killed and whoever did something that required the imposition of a penalty was flogged. Thus, by their having accepted the exterior of Islam, which is the outward aspect of the law, and their having entered into it, He made them in this life gain security from the shedding of blood, protection of property, immunity from having to submit and pay tribute and the captivity of offspring. By recognition of its true reality, He awarded them a reward in the Afterlife, as God's Messenger said: 'I was commanded to wage war on the people until they say there is no god but God. When they say it, by that they render immune from us their blood and property except for a right cause; their reckoning is up to God.' The externals of the law to which the people are compelled are beneficial to life in the here and now, but they are not religion in itself, which is beneficial for life in the Afterlife. The words of God confirm that statement: *There is no compulsion in religion* (Q. 2:256); and also His statement: *Would you then coerce*

the people to become believers? (Q. 10:99).

Next He urged them to seek knowledge and the meaning of the parables God mentioned in His Book, such as His statement: *O you who believe, a parable has been coined, listen to it; those who call upon someone other than God can never create so much as a fly even if they worked together* (Q. 22:73); and His statement: *If We had sent down this Qur'an on a mountain, you would have seen it become humble and split asunder out of fear of God, and these examples We coin them for the people that they might reflect* (Q. 59:21). He also said: *We have coined for you parables* (Q. 14:45); and His statement: *These parables We have set forth for the people* (Q. 29:43); and His words: *For each We issued parables* (Q. 25:39); and His words: *Truly We have coined for the people in this Qur'an every sort of parable, yet most of the people refuse to accept except with ingratitude* (Q. 17:89); and His words: *Truly God is not ashamed to coin as a parable even a gnat or what is just above it* (Q. 2:26). There is much like this in the Book of God. For that reason He said: *A Book We have sent down to you, a blessing that the men of understanding may ponder its signs and so remember* (Q. 38:29); and He said: *Do they not ponder the Qur'an* (Q. 4:82); and He said: *Now We have brought the word to them so that they might remember* (Q. 28:51); and He said: *On that day the tidings will blind them and they will not be able to question each other* (Q. 28:66).

He would not urge them to meditate on the parables put forth in the Book of God and to ponder His signs and not leave them to themselves before having established for them an indication of what they mean. He is Omniscient and Wise. And He said: *The most Merciful, ask anyone well informed about Him* (Q. 25:59); and He said: *None can inform you like the expert* (Q. 35:14); and He said: *So ask the people of remembrance if you do not know* (Q. 16:43 and Q. 21:7); and He said: *If they had referred it to the Messenger* (plus the rest of this verse, Q. 4:83); and He said: *And in whatever you differ about, the judgement belongs to God* (Q. 42:10). Do you think He obligated His servants to ask someone who is non-existent? Hallowed be He; He is more just than that, and more compassionate with His servants. It has been related from the Messenger of God that he said: 'Seek knowledge even in China' and he said: 'Seeking knowledge is the obligation of every Muslim.'

Thus, if that which he urged upon them were the exterior without the inner meaning, he would not have made the seeking obligatory, because the externals are present with everyone, and what is present does not need to be sought and does not require instruction. The quest for knowledge to which the Messenger of God urged applies solely to knowledge of the

inner meaning. Understand the expression to understand the intention of the Messenger of God. Then he indicated to [the people] the source of knowledge and the waymarkers of the religion. He said: 'I am the city of knowledge and 'Ali is its gateway; whoever would enter the city, let him come in by the gate.' For that reason God said: *It is not virtuous if you enter houses from the back of them, but it is virtuous if the God-fearing come into houses through their doorways* (Q. 2:189). The *houses* are the Friends of God (*awliyā'*) and their *doorways* are the Legatees (*awṣiyā'*), on whom be peace. The veracious one,² on whom be peace, said: 'By God, you will not reach the city unless you enter it by the doorway.' This statement by him is an argument against them and is his indication to them that they should follow the evidence of the meanings of God's knowledge. He said also: 'The truth is with this one' and he pointed to 'Alī; and he said: 'This is his party (*ḥizb*), they are those who succeed'; and he said: 'O God, make the truth turn with 'Alī wherever he turns.' Thus whoever comes and takes it from him, will prosper and be saved and whoever turns away from him, will go astray and be misled.'

But the person who would attain the true reality of the religion of God will never reach it in the absence of confirmed commitments and sacred covenants in accord with what God laid down for the Prophets and their righteous followers: *The Law of God that was in effect in the past and you will find no change in the Law of God* (Q. 48:23). This is His statement: *We took from the Prophets their covenant, and from you and from Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus the son of Mary, and We took from them a binding covenant* (Q. 33:7). Have you not observed that He mentions them by their names, those whose covenant is to transmit the proof in order that they be for the world an example and that none of them should have an excuse in opposing the covenant or cancelling a condition, or offer God an excuse for himself? For these prophets there are imams of inner meaning and the veracious summoners (*dā'īs*), who confess to the former and stand firm on the various aspects of their laws. It is evident to everyone who has religion among those of differing opinion that he will never understand the true reality of God's religion or that he will have any share of certainty in the absence of a covenant that obligates him to keep it and commits him to it. God said: *Have you seen the person the one who denies Our signs but says, 'Surely I will be granted wealth and children; has he looked into the unknown or sworn a covenant with the Most Merciful* (Q. 19:77-78); and He said: *And fulfil the covenant, the covenant will be a matter subject to questioning* (Q. 17:34); and He said: *Fulfil My covenant; I will fulfil yours* (Q. 2:40); and He said: *Fulfil the covenant with God, once you have made*

one, and do not go back on your oaths after having affirmed them; you have then made God your surety (Q. 16:91); and He said: *And those who keep their trusts and covenants* (Q. 23:8); and He said: *And fulfil God's covenant that He has charged you with* (Q. 6:152); and He said: *And do not be like the woman who breaks into untwisted strands the yarn she has spun after it has become strong, nor take your oaths in order to practice deception between yourselves* (Q. 16:92); then a foot that was firmly planted may slip and you will taste the evil in having blocked the path to God and for you is a great punishment (Q. 16:94). God has stated clearly that those who violate their covenant are those whose feet slip astray on their way and that those who keep their covenant are those who are firm of foot, being guided to a straight path and adhering to the firm bond of God. The Messenger of God took the oath of allegiance even from women because God ordered him to do that in His saying: *O Prophet, when believing women come to you to make with you a contract not to associate anything with God, nor to steal, nor to commit adultery, nor to kill their children, to His words: make a contract with them and ask God to forgive them* (Q. 60:12); and He said: *God was pleased with the faithful when they pledged allegiance to you under the tree* (Q. 48:18); and He said: 'Those who make a contract with you certainly make a contract also with God, the hand of God being above their hands' to His words: *[will have] an immense reward* (Q. 48:10). Thus it is established that God took from His Prophets a covenant and the Prophets took it from their followers, just as He commanded them to do, in accordance with the Law of God that was in effect among His servants in the past.

Thus whoever violates his covenant is a hypocrite gone astray from his guidance; whoever fulfils it is a believer who has been led to knowledge of the inner meaning and the exterior, the interpretation of the revelation, and the meanings of the parables. He is safe from doubts and suspicions, having moved from dissension to agreement. He upholds faith with Islam, obediently and without compulsion. The path from error to good conduct is clear to him and he grasps the Strong Rope of God and His firm bond. Religion in its true reality includes faith along with Islam and knowledge of the externals with the inner meaning, the interpretation with the Revelation. Islam is truth and faith is the reality of the truth. There is no attaining the recognition of the truth but by recognising the reality, as the Messenger of God said: 'For every truth, there is a true reality, on all that is right a light.' The truth is what the Prophets appealed for in public with the sword that is the exterior of the law, and the true reality is the interpretation of the Revelation. Whoever stays with the exterior of Islam

without acknowledging its inner meaning renders unlawful his property, his blood, and is safe from humiliation and tribute in this world, but, if he upholds Islam and faith, the faith is a security and sanctuary in his after-life. His spirit, which sustains his body and is the combiner of its parts, is safe from the punishment of hellfire. For that reason the Messenger of God declared inviolable for himself two sanctuaries so that this would be an indication and example that religion is based on two foundations, one of which is the sanctuary of the body and the other the sanctuary of the spirit. Just as the body is alive and is sustained by the spirit, likewise Islam is sustained by faith.

Likewise knowledge is spirit and work is body. The learned is a parent and the pupil is a child. The exterior of the law is a body and the interior is its spirit. As we explained at the beginning of this book of ours, all things exist in pairs, in religion and in the world. Thus the adherents of the exterior are dead in their ignorance of the interior. If they respond to the interior, they live and walk with the people in the light of knowledge. They go out from the darkness of factions that dissent from and contradict each other into harmony and mercy. Have you not observed His statement: *O you who believe, respond to God and the Messenger when he summons you to what gives you life* (Q. 8:24); and He said: *Can thus he who was lifeless and We revived him and gave him a light with which to walk among people be as someone like him in the darkness from which he does not exit* (Q. 6:122). If they were those responding to God in reality, He would not have said: *O you who believe, answer God and the Messenger when he summons you to what gives you life* (Q. 8:24). He only called them believers because they believe in the exterior of the law. These believers affirm a truth and are united on it, but differ over it, curse and revile each other, being ignorant of its true reality. They affirm what they do not understand and accept what they do not know. They are *as the dead without life and do not know when they will be raised* (Q. 16:21). Do you not see that He denounces those like them? He said: *Do you then believe in part of the book and deny part* (Q. 2:85); and He said: *What is with you that you do not believe in God and the Messenger who summons you to believe in your Lord and has taken your covenant if you are believers* (Q. 57:8); and He said: *That they may be increased in belief with their belief* (Q. 48:4). Therefore the believers in the true reality are those who affirm the exterior, which is the truth, and also recognise the interior, which is the reality of the truth. God gives them life by the light of knowledge as He said: *Or can he who was lifeless and We revived him and gave him a light with which to walk among people be as someone like him in the darkness from which he does not exit* (Q. 6:122).

The Messenger of God set up the obligatory duties of religion such that some of them are connected to others. Thus he connected the duties with legal practices and He made known that the duties are from God and the legal practices are from His Prophets. By the duties and the practices He indicated the persons in charge of them. Thus the duties indicate the ranks of the Speaking-Prophets and the practices indicate the Legatees because God appointed the Speaker-Prophets without the intermediary of humans, and the practices after the duties [indicate the Legatees] because God made obedience to them a duty that follows after obedience to Him and obedience to His Prophets. He said: *O you who believe, obey God and obey the Messenger and those with command among you* (Q. 4:59). The duty and the practice include acknowledging the Imam and the *Hujja* in each age and period. The duty is the Speaker-Prophet and the practice is his Gate (*bāb*), there is no difference between them. Thus the Messenger of God said: 'Whoever abandons my practice is accursed.' He meant by 'practice' his Gate, who is his Executor and his *Hujja* whom he chose for the interpretation of his Law. God said in confirming the truth of that: *He does not speak capriciously; it is rather a revelation revealed* (Q. 53:3–4); and He said: *Say, I ask no reward of you* (Q. 6:90); and He said: *Had he attributed any words falsely to Us, We would have seized him by the right hand and then cut his aorta* (Q. 69:43–46). Then He urged obedience to him. He said: *Accept what the Messenger brings you and abstain from what he forbids you* (Q. 59:7); and He said: *Let those who contravene his command beware lest trouble befall them and a painful punishment overtake them* (Q. 24:63); and He said: *If you obey him, you will be rightly guided* (Q. 24:54); and He said: *No believing man or woman has a choice in a matter once it has been decided by God and His Messenger; whoever disobeys God and His Messenger has gone astray and into an obvious error* (Q. 33:36).

The Speaker-Prophet and the Foundation (*asās*) in reality are in the position of father and mother, and the believers are in the position of children. God said: *The Prophet is closer to the believers than they are to themselves and his wives are their mothers* (Q. 33:6), and he is their father. Likewise the Messenger of God said to the Commander of the Believers 'Ali: 'I and you are the parents of this community.' The veracious (*al-Ṣādiq*) said: 'The believer is the brother of the believer in regard to his father and his mother; their father is light and their mother is mercy.' The drop of sperm that will become the human being goes out from the loins of the father into the womb of the mother. It is hidden there and grows strong until the appointed time, such that they become the reason for its nobil-

ity. If he leaves the loins of the father, [who is the Prophet], he then enters the womb of the *Hujja*, who occupies the position of the mother. There he comes to understand the confession of the uniqueness of God and he comes to perfect His religion. The knowledge and the work are in the position of two sperm drops from the two parents who are the cause that brings into existence the human being. Whoever stops at the exterior of the law and remains ignorant of the interior, his religion is vain. His position is that of a drop of sperm that leaves the loins of the father but does not reach the womb of the mother. *In that there are signs for those who reflect* (Q. 13:3 and others). It is thus proven from the evidence we have taken from the Book, the verses and the traditions that the Messenger of God was father to the community and his wives were their mothers because of his having said about the wives, in terms of inner meaning, that the wives are the Gates. If the matter were as the community would have it and that his wives were his wives, he would not have forbidden the community to look at his harem, for when has looking at the mothers become forbidden? But he only meant by his wives his *Hujjas* and he made them Gates to himself. They were likenesses of him in his religion and his companions in his affairs. He did not mean by that his wives. God said: *Gather together those who were unjust to themselves and their wives* (Q. 37:22). He means by that those who are like them and their companions in their religion. It is possible, however, that a woman be an unbeliever and her husband a believer and for a woman who is a believer that her husband be an unbeliever, as was the case with Noah and his wife and Pharaoh and his wife and Lot and his wife. The spouse is a likeness and mate. God said: *And another of the same kind in pairs* (Q. 38:58). The Messenger of God wed in the exterior sense twelve women in order that it be an indication that he appointed twelve Gates in the inner sense who would summon to the perfection of the confession of the uniqueness of God and to the interpretation of the revelation. They are to the believers in the position of mothers and the Prophet is their father.

Muḥammad displayed love to women and wives, giving the impression that he did that out of a desire on his part for women and his appetite for intercourse. The masses were ignorant of the meaning of his actions and attributed to him the desire for women because he said: 'Dear to me of your worldly things are three: sweet scent, women and my delight is prayer.' He meant by sweet scent knowledge, by women the Gates, and by prayer his Legatee, who takes over his command. He is the commanding and prohibiting prayer. This prayer indeed is an action, as God said: *Prayer prohibits you from abomination and what is reprehensible* (Q. 29:45). Thus

prayer is the Friends of God who command the good and prohibit the reprehensible.

Another indication is that he made twelve doorways for his mosque. He said: 'Block all the doorways except the door of 'Alī,' alluding thereby to his being the one in charge after himself and that he is the *Hujja* obedience to whom is imposed on them all. Then he ordered them not to enter the mosque other than by his door. In that way he indicated to them that no one would attain an understanding of the confession of the uniqueness of the Creator and the meaning of His law, nor hear a single letter of explanation of what Muḥammad had brought, other than through 'Alī. This was out of the high esteem for him and the honour God conferred on him, the position God had given him and the imamate God placed in his offspring. The common people of the Shi'a have narrated that the Messenger of God turned over to the Commander of the Believers the divorcing of his wives. This is a parable, however, whose meaning they ignored. He only wanted to delegate authority over his *Hujjas* to him, so that he might promote of them whomever he wished and demote whomever he wished.

Similarly, he chose in the exterior meaning twelve men from the Anṣār to be guardians over their people, like the guardianship of the apostles on behalf of Jesus son of Mary. He meant by that to have the community understand that, in the inner meaning, he chose twelve of his companions to support him in setting up the *da'wa* in his name. They are the Leaders (*nuqabā*) and supporters (*anṣār*) in reality, not the common Anṣār who do not know the statutes of God's revelation. The Prophet said: 'The Anṣār are my companions and my confidants and the repositories of my secret. If the people were to follow a mountainous path, I would follow the path of the Anṣār and, if it were not for the *hijra*, I would be a man from the

150 Anṣār. O God, grant power to the Anṣār and to the sons of the Anṣār and to the sons of the sons of the Anṣār and the clients of the Anṣār.' Do you think that every one of the Anṣār and their sons and their clients with whatever sins and grave offences each has committed merited this prayer while there were among them those who opposed, dissembled, resisted, went astray and perished? Rather this prayer was for his *Hujjas*, the twelve who supported him in reality to affirm the confession of the uniqueness of God and reject all doubts about God. They are his companions about whom he said: 'My companions are like the stars; if you are guided by any one of them, you will be led rightly.' And he said: 'Do not curse my companions.' He did not mean by his companions the Emigrants and Anṣār of the opponents whom God cursed. How could the cursed person be a model to be followed?

The Anṣār then are the Leaders and their sons are the *dā'īs* and the sons of their sons are the licentiates (*ma'dhūns*) and their clients the believers to whom he gave guardianship. They were called Leaders only because they extract the interior meaning from the exterior and explore (*naqabū*) the meanings that are truly real but obscure, of which the adherents of the exterior, are ignorant. The *naqīb* in the speech of the Arabs is he who extracts meanings and discerns them, exploring the speech and revealing what is hidden. God mentioned them in His Book. He said: *We took a covenant from the Israelites and We raised from among them twelve Leaders* (Q. 5:12); and He said: *We divided them into twelve tribes* (Q. 7:160). Among what He said in the story of Moses is: *We said, strike the rock with your rod, then there gushed from it twelve wellsprings, each group of the people then knew their place for drinking* (Q. 2:60). By wellsprings he means the twelve *Hujjas*, who were wellsprings of knowledge and the place for the believers to drink. The Messiah had twelve disciples. He said in the Gospels: 'I answer you with parables; yet none accept from me but these twelve disciples.' Some of the common people say that the Apostles of the Messiah were fullers; others said they were dyers; and yet others that they were fishermen. All were correct in speech but wrong in meaning. The meaning of those who said they were fullers is that they bleached the people with knowledge and thereby cleansed them of impurities. They clarified for them what was ambiguous to them of their scriptures and their laws with lucid proofs and concise words. The meaning of their being dyers is that they used to dye the people with knowledge of the interior sense after the exterior. The exterior has one colour and the interior many colours. For that reason John the son of Zachariah was called a dyer, because he used to dye the people in the exterior meaning of it with the water that is called baptismal and which was, in the interior sense, knowledge. This dyeing was a religious practice among the people of Israel as an indication that the dye in the interior sense was knowledge. God said: *dye-colour of God, and whose dye-colour is better than God's? and we are His worshippers* (Q. 2:138): He means the religion of God. He said: *The tree that sprouts from Mount Sinai produces oil and relish (ṣibgh) for those who eat* (Q. 23:20), i.e. knowledge for the learners. The meaning of their being fishermen is that, on the basis of the exterior, they summoned the people from the exterior to the recognition of the inner sense. It is written in the Gospels that the Messiah once passed by the bank of the river Jordan and noticed a group catching fish. He said to them: 'Leave aside catching fish and follow me; I will make you fishers of men.'

The parables here are many and the indications clear and enlightening.

Among them is His statement: *Truly the number of the months with God is twelve in the Book of God, the day He created the heavens and the earth, four of them are sacred, that is the upright religion* (Q. 9:36 and others). Is it then allowed for them to consider these months religion to the exclusion of other duties and practices? and how can these duties and practices not be made religion and yet the months be made religion? This is something not permitted in the exterior of the law but is confirmed in its interior. By the twelve are meant those who summon to the Imam of the time and to the perfection of the confession of uniqueness by avoiding both ascription of similarity and denial of attributes. Thus he who acknowledges them and accepts from them, his religion stands upright in accordance with His word about the months: *that is the upright religion* (Q. 9:36). Of that which requires consideration and thought is that God sent a hundred thousand Prophets and of those six are the chosen: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muḥammad. That is in His statement: *God selected Adam and Noah and the family of Abraham and the family of 'Imrān in preference to the worlds, descendants of one another* (Q. 3:33–34). These are the elect of God from amongst His creation and the choicest of His servants. They are the Masters of the Scriptures and the Laws, commandment and prohibition, none but them has a Law. Instead the Prophets and Messengers
 148 upheld the Laws of these six, and all books other than these consist of parables, sermons, prayers and glorification in which there is neither command nor prohibition.

God only created the seven days to indicate thereby the seven Speaker-Prophets. Then God created, after that, the heavens and the earth and what is between them in six days, excluding the seventh day, so that the six days would be an indication for the Speaker-Prophets, the Masters of the Laws. He whose name is glorious would have been able to create the heavens and the earth and what they contain in *the blink of an eye*, because He said – and His word is true: *Our command is but once like the blink of an eye* (Q. 54:50); and He said: *We have only to say if We want something, We say to it, be and it is* (Q. 16:40). Then He made five of these Speaker-Prophets the ones with resolution (*ūlī'l-'azm*). They are Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muḥammad, may God bless them all. Adam was not one of *those with resolution*. In the speech of the Arabs *resolution* consists of imposition [of a new law] and rupturing [with the past]. These five but not Adam are called *those with resolution* because he was the very first to establish religion and begin the Law.

Then those Prophets and Friends and adherents of religion who came after him maintained his law until the coming of Noah with a new law. He

abrogated the law of Adam and determined for the people the acceptance of what he brought. He forbade them from some of what they previously had upheld of the first dispensation. Thereafter whoever had faith in him and believed him and acted in accordance with his law was a believer. He who opposed him and maintained solely the first dispensation was an unbeliever. Then those Prophets and Friends and adherents of religion who came after him upheld his law until Abraham arrived. He brought a new law and abrogated the law of Noah, determining that the people accept what he brought and abandon some of what was in their hands. Whoever obeyed him was a believer and whoever disobeyed him and remained on the earlier dispensation was an unbeliever. Then after him, the Prophets, Friends and adherents of religion upheld his law until the coming of Moses. He brought a new law and abrogated the law of Abraham. He insisted that the people adopt what he had brought and abandon what they had previously. Whoever obeyed him was a believer and whoever disobeyed him and remained under the earlier dispensation was an unbeliever. Those Prophets, Friends and adherents of religion who came afterwards upheld his law until Jesus came. He brought a new law and abrogated the law of Moses. He determined that the people accept what he had come with and abandon what was in their hands. Whoever obeyed him was a believer and whoever disobeyed him and remained under the earlier dispensation was an unbeliever. Thereafter, those Prophets, Friends and adherents of religion who came after him upheld his law until the coming of Muḥammad. 147 He brought a new law and abrogated the law of Jesus. He determined that the people would adopt what he brought and abandon what was in their hands. Whoever obeyed him was a believer and whoever disobeyed him was an unbeliever. The law of Muḥammad thus abrogated all previous laws, and his law will not be abrogated nor changed or replaced until the day of resurrection. The licit is what he allowed and the illicit is what he forbade. He therefore has no equal among the Masters of the Laws.

Each one of them in his own time appointed for himself a Foundation who is his Legatee. He assigned him twelve Adjutants (*lāḥiq*, pl. *lawāḥiq*), who are the Gates, with the command that runs through them for a single *da'wa* that was divided among those whom he dispersed in the provinces (*jazā'ir*), in order that they propagate the interpretation of the revelation and the law, each of them in one province, in the manner the Foundation set it up. They are those whom God mentioned in his Book when He said: *We divided them into twelve tribes* (Q. 8:160); and He said: *We raised among them twelve as Leaders (naqīban)* (Q. 5:12). Each one of them would set up Wings (*ajniḥa*, sing. *janāḥ*) in his territory in every division. They are the

dā'is. All this is so that the master of the place (*buq'a*) would convey the explanation of what Muḥammad brought in that place, as the Adjutant conveys it to those below him. This was the practice of Muḥammad in his time and the practice of the Speaker-Prophets before him.

When Muḥammad and his Foundation passed away, he appointed an Imam in the place of the Speaker-Prophet and set up for him twelve Adjutants. He made him the keeper of the trust so that there would be neither increase nor decrease in anything the Speaker-Prophet and the Foundation had established. He is the keeper of the trust in which the Speaker-Prophet deposited the acts of the spiritual kingdom he had brought, in order that the latter convey them after him to the Adjutants, just as it was done as long as he remained alive. When he departed from this world, he would put in his place someone like himself to do as he had done. Nothing needed by the worshippers would escape him, until their number reached seven Imams, the seventh of them becoming a Speaker-Prophet. For each of them, there would be twelve Adjutants conveying the knowledge bequeathed to them by the two Foundations concerning *the two paths (najdayn)*³ with the spiritual support (*ta'yid*) of the two bases (*aṣlayn*)⁴. Thus he becomes the intermediary between these two and the
 146 Adjutants, the Wings and the believers who are lower than him, and the spiritual support would never be far from the Adjutants until the seventh era reaches its conclusion. These are the seven Imams whom He mentions in His Book. He said: *We created above you seven pathways; We were not neglectful of creation* (Q. 23:17).

He explained that the masters of the eras are six in number and they are the masters of the laws. Therefore the lower world rests on the six eras of the Speaker-Prophets. What confirms our statement is His words: *Your Lord is God who created the heavens and the earth in six days* – He means by that the six Speaker-Prophets – *then He sat on the throne* (Q. 10:3 and Q. 7:54), meaning that the matter of the Speaker-Prophets attains straightness with the seventh, the Qa'im. The first of the eras was that of Adam and his Foundation was from him; the Imams were seven, six of whom were hidden in separate periods of time and different ages, Imam after Imam, successor after predecessor. Each Imam among them had a *Hujja* for the people of his time. They upheld the law of Adam and taught the people what they needed to know about the matter of his religion, until the era of Noah arrived and he commenced a new law. Then his Foundation Shem rose up after him and the Imams were seven, six of whom were concealed, upholding the law as defined by Noah, permitting what he allowed and prohibiting what he forbade, until the arrival of Abraham, who was the

seventh of them. He put a seal on the law of Noah. Abraham began a new law and he appointed afterwards his Foundation, who was Ismā'il and the Imams were seven, six of whom were concealed, upholding the law as laid down by Abraham. They allowed what he permitted and forbade what he prohibited until the arrival of Moses, who was the seventh of them. He put the seal on the law of Abraham and began a new law. Then after him arose his Foundation, who was Yūsha' (Joshua) b. Nūn, following the death of Aaron. The Imams were seven, six of whom were concealed, upholding the law as laid down by Moses, permitting what he permitted and forbidding what he forbade, until the arrival of Jesus, who was the seventh of them. He put the seal on the law of Moses and began a new law. Then he appointed afterward his founder who was Shim'un (Simon) b. Tūmā al-Iṣṭafī. The Imams were seven, six of whom were concealed, upholding the law as laid down by Jesus, permitting what he permitted and forbidding what he forbade, until the arrival of Muḥammad, who was the seventh of them. He abrogated what existed of the laws previous to him and began a new law. Then after him his Foundation arose, who was 'Alī, and the seven Imams following him from his offspring, six of whom were concealed, upholding the law as laid down by Muḥammad, permitting what he permitted and forbidding what he forbade. They called attention to the appearance of the one rising (*qā'im*) with the truth, the avenger of injustice, slayer of the accursed Iblīs.

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God has made clear the signs of His Friends and their evidence in the structure of the world and in the Laws of the Messengers, such that no one can deny them, except out of unbelief, insolence and arrogance and so that, in all respects, God's argument is binding for His servants. Among the evidence for the hidden Imams is that Moses ordered his community to work six days and cease working on the seventh day, which is Saturday, and to make it a feast day for them, as an indication of the six who were hidden, that they would maintain his law and that the seventh would abrogate it and bring forth a new commandment, which would be for the believers in the position of a feast that he obligated them to observe communally. Likewise Jesus ordered that his community labour six days and adopt the seventh day as a feast, which is Sunday. Similarly the Messenger of God allowed prayer in tribal mosques and in living quarters during six days and required them to gather together communally on the seventh day, which is Friday. God revealed on that matter a recitation; He said: *O you who believe, when the call for prayer is given on the day for congregation, listen then to the remembrance of God* (Q. 62:9). He commanded us to lower our voices in recitation during the six days, in

the prayer of the afternoon, and in other prayers during the day which are performed for seven hours of the day, and then to recite out loud on the seventh day, which is the day for congregation [Friday]. That is because the executors of the Law are six concealed Imams, and the seventh will reveal himself, announce his *da'wa* and will be for the believers in the position of the feast day on which they are required to assemble communally, and that the six Speaker-Prophets were summoners for the seventh Speaker, because they summoned to faith in God and the last day, which is the seventh Speaker. God said: *That is a day in which the people will be gathered together, that is a day witnessed, and We will not delay it except for a fixed term* (Q. 11:103–104) to His words: *except with his permission* (Q. 11:105). He did not say: with my permission.

144 When He created the heavens and the earth and what they contain in six days, He created the heavens and the earths seven by seven. The spheres are seven, the stars are seven, the seas are seven, the climes are seven, the days are seven, the gateways to hell are seven, the length of a man in spans is seven and the openings in the face are seven – two ears, two eyes, two nostrils and a mouth – and the body of a man is composed of seven parts – brain, bones, nerves, blood vessels, flesh, blood and skin. Then He commenced him from seven other things that God mentioned in His book. He said: *We created man from an extract of clay; then We made him a drop of sperm in a secure place; then We created of the drop of sperm a clot; We created out of the clot tissue; We created out of the tissue bones; then We clothed the bones with flesh; thus did We form him into another creature; hallowed be God, the best of creators* to His words: *We were not neglectful of creation* (Q. 23:12–14). The pathways are the Friends of God; the seven are pathways to God. That is since the newborn, if born at seven months, it lives, and if born at eight, it dies, despite the implication of the greater number, namely eight being greater than seven. However, God placed life in the seven, such that the people look for a blessing in it, even though they are not aware of the reason for it. If a child is born, they set for him a week, and the custom in regard to his circumcision is the seventh day. He devotes himself to the worship of God at seven years and he learns prayer at seven years. If someone takes sick, relief for him is expected on the seventh day. If he dies, he is embalmed on the seven members of the body that touch the ground during prostration⁵ and seven leaves of the lotus tree are gathered for him⁶ and he is enshrouded in seven pieces of cloth.

Moreover, God fashioned the Qur'an seven sevenths. It is related that the Messenger said: 'The Qur'an was revealed in seven letters, each letter

of it clear and appropriate.' The Opening Sura of the Book, without which no prayer is permissible, is seven verses. Likewise He, the hallowed and exalted, said: *We have given you seven of the oft repeated and the mighty Qur'an* (Q. 15:87) which is the praise. It is related of Ja'far b. Muḥammad [al-Ṣādiq] that he said: 'We are [the Sura of] Praise (*al-ḥamd*) and the Praise is ours.' He meant by this phrase that no one's work is accepted without his having acknowledged the seven Imams and acting towards them obediently. Also the long suras are seven and the *ḥawāmim*⁷ are seven. The watchword of the Commander of the Believers (Alī) in war was *al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm*, as an indication by him for the seven Imams among his progeny.⁸ Ablutions are seven; they are: cleansing after excretion, rinsing the mouth, drawing water through the nostrils, two washings, and they are of the hands and face, and two wipings, and they are of the head and the feet. The prime obligations in prayer are seven, and they are: facing the direction of the *qibla*, the first *takbīr*, the recitation, the inclinations (*raka'*), the two prostrations, and the sitting. The circling of the sacred house of God consists of seven obligations; the running between al-Ṣafā and Marwa is seven courses; and the throwing of the stones is seven by seven. *Truly in that there are signs for the people who reflect* (Q. 13:3 and others).

God never creates anything vainly, but rather He created all things as indications for His religion. For that reason He said: *We will show them Our signs in the horizons and in their souls so that it will become clear to them that it is the truth* (Q. 41:53) and He did not say 'that I am the truth'. If someone were to ask: What indication from the horizons and the souls supports what you claim about the extent of the number of the Imams in each law being seven? What indication is there that for each Imam and Speaker-Prophet there are twelve Gates? What indicates that for each Speaker there is a Foundation and seven Imams and twelve Adjutants? We reply – and to God is our recourse – that the first item of evidence from the world, the horizons and the souls that we would present as to what He mentioned is the body of the human being. That is because there is in it the chest, two temples, two haunches and two buttocks; these are seven. Then there is what is inside his interior, which is the throat, oesophagus, stomach, lungs, heart, two kidneys, liver, spleen, gall bladder, two exits, one of which is for excrement and the other for urine. Thus that makes twelve. They are all combined by the back and the belly. Its likeness in the sky is the seven spheres and the twelve signs of the zodiac, which are combined by the sphere of the zodiac and the rectilinear sphere, as an indication of Adam and his Legatee and the seven Imams and the twelve *Hujjas*. 143

The four fingers in one hand of a human have twelve pieces and joints. The thumb and palm are seven separate pieces. These seven and twelve are combined by the forearm and upper arm, and its likeness in the world is the seven seas and twelve islands, which are combined by Mount Qāf and the encompassing sea. That is an indication for Noah and his Foundation and the seven Imams and twelve *Hujjas*. It is like that with the other hand. Its likeness in the world is the overlap of the night in the day and the overlap of the day in the night and the four central points between them. This amounts to seven days and twelve hours, combined by the night and the day as an indication of Abraham and his Foundation and the seven Imams and twelve *Hujjas*. A foot is also like that. Its likeness in the world is seven days and twelve months, which are combined by the seasons and the year. This indicates Moses and his Foundation and the seven Imams and twelve *Hujjas*. Similarly the other foot: its likeness in the world is the four mother elements, which are earth, water, air and fire, and the three realms of nature, which are animal, vegetable and mineral. That is seven, and the six kinds of animals which are humans, cattle, beasts of prey, ..., ⁹ and the four kinds of plants which are fruit-bearing trees, non-fruit-bearing trees, cereal plants, ..., ¹⁰ and the two kinds of minerals which are melting bodies and stones. These seven and twelve are combined by motion and location. That is an indication for Jesus and his Foundation and the seven Imams and twelve *Hujjas*.

Then there is the head, which has seven apertures in it: two eyes, two ears, two nostrils and the mouth. These seven adjoin twelve, and they are: in the two eyes, the white and the black, and the pupil in one eye and its like in the other, and the two ears with the two holes in the ears, the two nostrils with the nose, and the mouth with the tongue and the two lips. That is twelve,¹¹ which are combined by the head and the face. Its likeness in the world at large is the seven governing planets and the twelve winds, which are combined by time and place. This is an indication for Muḥammad and his Foundation and the seven Imams and twelve *Hujjas*.

Next the human being is composed of seven members: the head, the trunk, two hands and two legs, the seventh is the spirit, which is what combines them. Likewise the world was established in seven cycles, the seventh of which is that of the Qā'im around whom the cycles revolve and with whom the matter that runs through the six Speaker-Prophets reaches completion and with whom is its appearance. Confirmation of that is what He said in the account of the perfection of the body: *We have created man from an extract of clay*, meaning Adam, *then We made him a drop of sperm in a secure place* meaning by that the *h* of Noah, *We created*

out of the drop a clot, meaning by that the 'm' [of Abraham]¹², *We created out of the clot tissue*, meaning by that 's' [of Moses], *We created out of the tissue bones*, meaning by that 'm' [of Masīḥ = Jesus], *We clothed the bones in flesh*, meaning by that 'd' [of Muḥammad], *thus did We form him into another creature, hallowed is God, the best of creators* (Q. 23:12), meaning by that the formation of the other creation, which is the appearance of the Qā'im.

Among the indications for the grades of the hierarchy that summons to God, confirming what we have said that the eras are six and that the master of each cycle, its Speaker-Prophet, has a Foundation and seven Imams, is the calculation (*ḥisāb*) upon the cycles of the grades of the hierarchy, which consists of the two Foundations and the seven Imams. The first starting-point of the calculation that uses the hands goes from one to nine and its positions cover three fingers.¹³ When it reaches nine, it brings it back to ten and the units. When it reaches nine tens, it consolidates it into hundreds and it runs through them on fingers other than those which accommodated the tens and now accommodate the hundreds. When it reaches nine hundred, it consolidates them into thousands and turns to the other fingers. It accommodates ten thousand reaching up to ninety thousand. The calculation turns from those to other fingers which accommodate a hundred thousand reaching up to a thousand thousands (i.e. one million). At that the reckoning that can be done on the hands comes to an end. That indicates the beginning of creation. Likewise the world is established in seven cycles, the seventh of which is that of the Qā'im. The beginning of creation is Adam, and the seven Imams; the period of Adam and the seven Imams and their cycle lasted until the appearance of Noah. He attained a multiple of the power that had been Adam's; it is the multiple of the tens over the ones. He and his Foundation lasted until the appearance of Abraham. His power and the power of his Foundation and the seven Imams was a multiple of the power of Noah as in the multiple of hundreds over tens. Similarly Muḥammad. His power and the power of his Foundation and the seven Imams was a multiple of what came before him of the Speaker-Prophets as in the multiplying of thousands and hundreds and tens and ones reaching up to a million. This is the limit of numbers accommodated on the hands because, above a million, it cannot be counted on the hands. That is an indication of the Qā'im, who is the Speaker and who is the summation of the Speakers who came before, because his rank is higher than the realm of works (*amal*). Works are of no avail with him. Calculation [over one million] is no longer carried out with the hands, but rather is preserved in the heart

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or established by writing. This is an indication that, when matters reach the Qā'im, there will be no additional work, but records of the works will be present, on the basis of which the believer will be rewarded and the unbeliever punished. Thereupon the spiritual forms will appear. Just as calculation thus leaves the body for the spirit and the reunion of the nine aforementioned ranks is three: the Speaker-Prophet, the Foundation and the Imam, and the six after them are as one Imam revolving through the seven Imams insofar as each Imam is called Imam. Similarly, the office of Messenger and prophecy by the three ranks combines the nine. These are the scales of God by which wisdom is weighed out for the servants. The three scales make a combination of nine scales by which gems and other weighed objects are weighed. That is an indication of the scales of wisdom. There are three scales, the first of which is the scale, the second the beam and the third the balance. Each one of the three is in itself three: large, medium and small. Each one of them combines in its circumstances twelve, seven and two. That is because, for each scale, there are two pans and six strings fastened to the pans and the heads of the strings have two rings fastened by two strings. That is twelve attached to a pole. In the pole is the tongue and there is attached to a portion of it two seals. Above it is its register decreasing by degrees and it is the loop in which is the ring. That is seven. Next the ring and the strand that is in the grasp of the weigher by which the weight is steadied. These are a likeness for the Speaker-Prophet, the Foundation, and the seven and the twelve who are contained in the seventy are a likeness for the seven Imams and twelve Adjutants.

Furthermore, Islam is founded on seven components. They are: the testimony of faith, performance of prayer, giving of alms, fasting in the month of Ramaḍān, pilgrimage to the House by whomever has the means to do it, the endeavour, and obedience to the Imam of each age and time.¹⁴ These seven have parts and in them are twelve. That is because the testimony of the faith combines recognition and sincerity, prayer necessitates ablution and requires washing, alms tax is obligatory on four things, from gold, silver, grain and livestock, fasting is abstaining from the cup, pilgrimage has with it the visitation by the one who performs the lesser pilgrimage, the endeavour requires resolution, obedience to the Imam requires dissociation. These are twelve, which are combined by the Law. Prayer, which is the mainstay of religion, consists of seven obligatory duties: facing the direction of the *qibla*, the first *takbīr*, standing, the inclinations, the two prostrations and sitting. Its parts are twelve and they are the *takbīr* of the inclination and its *tasbīḥ*, straightening up from it, saying 'God hears those who praise Him', four *takbīrs*, prostration and straight-

ening up from it, saying the greetings to God and *taslīm*. These are twelve, which are combined by intention and knowledge.

We have adduced here just testimony and clear demonstrations and lucid proofs that do not depart from reason and the Scriptures or the explanation of Law and nature in this world. It should therefore be a guide for each seeker and for those whose heart God has opened for the faith. All that by the aid of God and His power and His grace and His Friends!

The *Book of Norms and Pairing* is finished with the aid of God the Giver, and the aid of His friend and His *dā'i*, the master of servants, the annihilator of the enemies of God and the parties (*al-aḥzāb*), the *dā'i* of the time and age, our lord Shaykh Ibrāhīm¹⁵ Bhāi, son of the Ḥāfiẓ who held the rank of *ma'dhūn*, the Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir b. Mullākhān,¹⁶ may God the merciful and compassionate keep him. The year is 1157 [1744]. Copied by Miyān Ḥasan Shaykh, may God, the exalted, steady him.

Notes

1. Viz. in heaven and earth.
2. al-Ṣādiq, the veracious one, is here the Prophet.
3. *al-najdayn* (Q. 90:10), the two paths, one to good and the other to evil.
4. *al-aṣlān*, the two bases, are the first and second ranks of the spiritual hierarchy.
5. A balm (*ḥanūt*) is put on the *masājid*, the places of the prostration, i.e. the seven members of the body that touch the ground, namely the two feet, two knees, two hands and forehead. See al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Dā'īm al-Islām fī dhikr al-ḥalāl wa'l-ḥarām wa'l-qadāyā wa'l-aḥkām*, ed. Asaf A. A. Fyze, vol. 1 (Cairo, 1951), p. 230; tr. Asaf A. A. Fyze as *The Pillars of Islam*, completely revised and annotated by Ismail K. Poonawala; vol. 1: *Ibadat: Acts of Devotion and Religious Observances* (New Delhi, 2002), p. 286.
6. The leaves of the lotus-tree are mixed with the water used for the first of the three ritual washings of the deceased. See the *Dā'īm al-Islām*, vol. 1, p. 230; tr. p. 285.
7. The *ḥawāmīm* are suras of the Qur'an that begin with the letters *ḥā'* and *mīm* as a verse by itself. They are numbers 40 to 46.
8. The symbol here is that the phrase *al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm* contains seven letters : a-l-r-ḥ-m-n-ī (or perhaps r-ḥ-m-n-r-ḥ-m).
9. The names of the remaining three kinds are missing in the manuscript.
10. A term for the fourth kind of plant is missing in the manuscript.
11. Counting here two whites of the eye, two blacks and two pupils, plus two ear-holes, the nose, tongue and two lips.
12. This name and those that follow of the Prophets are mentioned on the

margin of the manuscript.

13. On the *hisāb bi'l-yad*, see in general Charles Pellat, 'Ḥisāb al-'aḳd', *EI2*, vol. 3, p. 466. It is, however, not clear that the method described here is the same.
14. The same list of 'pillars' appears in al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im al-Islām*, vol. 1, p. 2, tr. Fyzee, rev. and ed. Poonawala, *The Pillars of Islam*, vol. 1, pp. 2–3.
15. This is Ibrāhīm Wajih al-Dīn, the 39th Dā'ūdī *dā'ī* (1150–1168/1737–1754).
16. This *ma'dhūn* 'Abd al-Qādir b. Mullākhān, who was the father of the *dā'ī* Ibrāhīm, died in 1142/1730, according to Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p. 198.

والإخلاص، والصلاة توجب الوضوء وتوجب الاغتسال، والزكاة تجب من أربعة من الذهب والفضة والحبوب والمواشي، والصوم ترك الجاه^١، والحج فعمرة المعتمر^٢، والجهاد يوجب الثبات، وطاعة الإمام توجب البراءة، فتلك اثناً^٣ عشر تجمعها الشريعة، والصلاة^٤ التي هي قوام الدين، فروضها سبعة، التوجه إلى القبلة والتكبير الأولى والقيام والركوع والسجدتان والجلوس، وأجزاؤها^٥ اثناً^٦ عشر وهي تكبير الركوع وتسبيحه والاستواء منه وقوله سمع الله لمن حمده وأربع تكبيرات، السجود والاستواء منه وقوله التحيات لله والتسليم، فهذه اثناً^٧ عشر تجمعها^٨ النية والعلم. فقد استشهدنا بشواهد عادلة وبراهين واضحة وحجج بالغة غير خارجة عن العقول والكتب والتبيين لما هو موجود في هذا العالم من شريعة أو طبيعة ليكون ذلك دليلاً لكل مرتاد^٩ ولمن شرح الله صدره للإيمان^{١٠}، وكل ذلك بعون الله وقوته وتوفيقه وأوليائه عليهم السلام.

تمت كتاب^{١١} الرسوم والأزواج بعون الله الملك الوهاب، وعون وليه وذاعيه مالك الرقاب ومبيد أعداء الله والأحزاب، داعي الوقت والزمان سيدنا شيخ إبراهيم بهائي بن حافظ رتبة مرتبة المأذون شيخ عبد القادر بن ملاخان، حفظه الله الرحيم الرحمن، سنة ١١٥٧، كتب میان حسن شيخ، ثبته الله تعالى.

^١ الجاه: الحام، ص

^٢ المعتمر: العمر، ص

^٣ اثنا: اثني، ص

^٤ والصلاة: وهي الصلاة، ص

^٥ وأجزاؤها: أجزاها، ص

^٦ اثنا: اثني، ص

^٧ اثنا: اثني، ص

^٨ تجمعها: جمعها، ص

^٩ التبيين لما هو موجود: التبيين فما هو من خرق، ص

^{١٠} للإيمان: للإسلام للإيمان، ص

^{١١} كتاب: الكتاب، ص

قبله من النطق لأن حده علا عن دار العمل لا ينفع عنده العمل، ولا يعقد [الحساب] باليدين، بل يحفظ بالقلب أو يثبت بالكتابة، دليل على أن الأمر إذا بلغ إلى القائم لا يكون عمل، بل تكون نقوش الأعمال حاضرة عليها يثاب المؤمن ويعاقب الكافر، ويكون عند ذلك ظهور الصور الروحانية، كما أن الحساب^٢ زال عن الجسد إلى الروح وأن مجمع الحدود المذكورة التسعة^٣ فهم ثلاثة وهو الناطق والأساس والإمام وأن الستة من بعدهم كإمام واحد يدور في سبعة أئمة فيها^٤ يسمى الإمام إماماً، وكذلك الرسالة والنبوة بالمراتب الثلاث تجمع^٥ التسعة^٦، وهي موازين الله الذين بهم^٧ وزنت الحكمة على العباد، فجعلت الموازين الثلاثة مجمع التسعة^٨ موازين بها توزن الجواهر وسائر الموزونات، وهي دليل على موازين الحكمة، فالموازين الثلاثة أحدها الميزان والثاني الشاهين^٩ والثالث القسطاس، كل واحد من الثلاثة يكون في نفسه ثلاثة، كبير ووسط وصغير، وكل واحد منها ما يجمع لأحوال اثني عشر وسبعة واثنين^{١٠}، وذلك أن لكل ميزان كفتان وستة أخياط مشدودة بالكفتين ورؤس الخيوط في حلقتين مشدودة بخيطين، فذلك اثنا عشر معلقاً بعمود، وفي العمود لسان وقد تعلق بشقص له خاتمان، وأعلاه زقاعة^{١١} المنقص وهي العروة التي فيها الحلقة، فتلك سبعة، ثم الحلقة والذؤابة التي تكون في قبضة الوزن بها يستقيم الوزن، وهما مثل على الناطق والأساس، والسبعة والاثنى عشر التي تكون في السبعين مثل على [الأئمة السبعة و] اللواحق الاثنى عشر.

ثم الإسلام مبني على سبعة أقسام، وهي الشهادة وإقام الصلاة وإيتاء الزكاة وصوم شهر رمضان وحج البيت، من استطاع إليه سبيلاً، والجهد وطاعة الإمام في كل عصر وزمان، فهذه سبعة أجزاء، وبها^{١٢} اثنا عشر، وهو أن الشهادة تجمع المعرفة

^١ عنده: بحب، ص

^٢ عند: عدد، ص

^٣ الحساب: حسابات، ص

^٤ التسعة: السبعة، ص

^٥ فيها: فيها، ص

^٦ تجمع: يجمع، ص

^٧ التسعة: السبعة، ص

الذين بهم: الذينهم، ص

^٨ التسعة: السبعة، ص

الشاهين: الشاهدين، ص

وسبعة واثنين: والسبعة والاثنين، ص

^{١١} زقاعة: وقاعة، ص

^{١٢} وبها: وهما، ص

س، ﴿فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضَعَّةَ عِظَامًا﴾، أراد به م، ﴿فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا﴾، أراد به د، ﴿ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ﴾ [٢٣: ١٢-١٤] أراد به إنشاء الخلق الآخر وهو ظهور القائم.

[و] مما يدل على الحدود الداعية إلى الله عز وجل توكيداً لما قلنا أن الأدوار ستة، صاحب كل دور ناطق له أساس وسبعة أئمة، الحساب على أدوار الحدود، وهي الأساسان والأئمة السبعة، فأول مبتدأ الحساب الذي يؤخذ بالأيدي جعل من الواحد إلى التسعة وجعلت منازلها على ثلاثة أصابع، فلما بلغ التسعة أداره إلى العشرة الأحاد، فلما بلغ تسع عشرات أحكمها إلى المائتين، وأدارها على غير الأصابع التي أخذ عليها العشرات^١ وأخذ المائتين بها، فلما بلغ التسعمائة أحكمها على الألف وحولها إلى الأصابع الأخرى، فأخذ عشرة ألف عليها إلى أن بلغ تسعين ألفاً، فأحكمها على مائة ألف، وأدار الحساب منها إلى أصابع أخرى وأخذ عليها المائة [ألف] إلى أن بلغ ألف ألف، فتمّ الحساب ما تأخذه الأيدي، فدل ذلك على بدئ^٢ الخلق لها. كذلك الدنيا ثبتت على سبعة أدوار، سابعها القائم عليه السلام، بدؤ الخلق وهو آدم عليه السلام والأئمة السبعة، فكان مدة آدم عليه السلام والأئمة السبعة ودورهم إلى أن ظهر نوح عليه السلام، فقام بأضعاف قوى ما كان عليه آدم، وهو تضعيف العشرات على الآحاد^٣ وكان هو وأساسه إلى أن ظهر إبراهيم وكانت قوته وقوة أساسه والأئمة السبعة أضعاف قوى نوح لتضعيف المائتين على العشرات، كذلك محمد عليه السلام وكانت قوته وقوة أساسه والأئمة السبعة أضعاف ما كان من قبله من النطقاء لتضعيف الألوف والمائتين والعشرات والآحاد إلى أن بلغ إلى ألف ألف، وهو نهاية ما يؤخذ من العدد بالأيدي لأن فوق الألف ألف لا تؤخذ^٤ بالأيدي، وهو دليل على القائم عليه السلام الذي هو الناطق، وهو مجمع من كان

^١ س: + (حاشية) موسى

^٢ م: + (حاشية) مسيح

^٣ د: + (حاشية) محمد

^٤ أدوار: دكور، ص

^٥ التسعة: السبعة، ص

^٦ التسعة: السبعة، ص

^٧ العشرات: عشرات، ص

^٨ بدئ: بدؤ، ص

^٩ على الآحاد: والآحاد، ص

^{١٠} تؤخذ: تؤخذ، ص

نظيره من العالم الأمهات الأربع وهي الأرض والماء والهواء والنار، وثلاث مواليدات^١ وهي الحيوان والنبات والمعادن، فتلك سبعة، وستة^٢ أجناس الحيوان [وهي] الإنس والبهايم والسباع...^٣ [وأربعة أجناس النبات وهي الأشجار] المثمرة وغير المثمرة^٤ والنبات الحبوية^٥...^٦ وجنسان من المعادن وهي الأجساد المذابة والأحجار، فذلك سبعة واثنا عشر يجمعها الحركة والكون، دليل على عيسى عليه السلام وأساسه والأئمة السبعة والحُجج الاثني عشر.

ثم الرأس وهو أن فيه سبعة^٧ خروق، عينين وأذنين ومنخرين وفماً^٨، فذلك سبعة يليها اثنا^٩ عشر، وذلك أن في العينين البياض والسواد والناظر في عين واحدة وفي الأخرى مثله، والأذنان والسماخان والمنخران^{١٠} والأنف والفم واللسان والشفتان، فتلك اثنا عشر يجمعها الرأس [و] الوجه، ونظيره من العالم النجوم السبعة المدبرات والرياح الاثنا^{١١} عشر يجمعها الزمان والمكان، دليل على محمد عليه السلام وأساسه والأئمة السبعة والحجج الاثني عشر.

ثم إن الإنسان بني على سبعة أعضاء، الرأس والبدن واليدين والرجلان سابعتها الروح، وهو الجامع لها، كذلك الدنيا ثبتت على سبعة أدوار، سابعتها القائم عليه السلام الذي تدور عليه الأدوار وبه تم المادة الجارية في^{١٢} النطقاء الستة ومنه يكون ظهورها، يؤكد ذلك ما قال عز وجل في قصة انتهاء الجسد: ﴿وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ﴾، أراد آدم^{١٣}، ﴿ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ﴾، أراد به ح^{١٤} نوح عليه السلام، ﴿فَخَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً﴾، أراد به ميم^{١٥}، ﴿فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً﴾، أراد به

^١ مواليدات: موالدات، ص

^٢ وستة: ومنه، ص

^٣ سقطت أسماء ثلاثة من أجناس الحيوان في النص.

^٤ المثمرة: الثمرة، ص

^٥ المثمرة: الثمرة، ص

^٦ الحبوية: الحيوانية، ص

^٧ سقط اسم رابع أجناس النبات في النص.

^٨ سبعة: سبع، ص

^٩ وفماً: وفم، ص

^{١٠} اثنا: اثني، ص

والأذنان والسماخان والمنخران: والأذنين والسماخين والمنخرين، ص

^{١١} الاثنا: الاثني، ص

^{١٢} في: بين، ص

^{١٣} آدم: إمام + (حاشية) آدم

^{١٤} ح: + (حاشية) نوح

^{١٥} ميم: + (حاشية) إبراهيم

فالله عز وجل لم يخلق شيئاً عبثاً، بل خلق الأشياء كلها دلالةً على دينه، فلذلك قال: ﴿سُرِّيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ﴾ [٥٣: ٤١]، ولم يقل^١: 'أني الحق'. فإن قال قائل: ما الدليل من الآفاق والأنفس على ما قلت أن مبلغ عدد الأئمة في كل شريعة سبعة؟ وما الدليل على أن لكل إمام وناطق^٢ اثني عشر باباً؟ وما الدليل على أن لكل ناطق أساساً^٣ وسبعة أئمة واثني عشر لاحقاً؟ فنقول والله المستعان: إن أول ما نورده من الشواهد على ما ذكره من العالم والآفاق والأنفس بدن الإنسان، وهو أن فيه الصدر والجبين والوركين والأيتين، فهذه سبعة، ثم الذي في جوفه وهو الحلقوم والمريء والمعدة والرئة^٤ والقلب والكلبتان والكبد والطحال والمرارة والمنفذان^٥ أحدهما للغائط والآخر للبول، فذلك اثني عشر، يجمعها الظهر والبطن^٦، ونظيره من الفلك الأفلاك السبعة والبروج الاثنا^٧ عشر يجمعها فلك البروج والفلك المستقيم دليل على آدم ووصيه والأئمة السبعة والحجج الاثني عشر.

ثم اليد الواحدة من الإنسان أصابعها الأربعة فيها اثنا^٨ عشر قطعاً ومفصلاً، ثم الإبهام والكف سبع قطع مفصلات، فذلك سبعة واثنا عشر يجمعها الساعد والعضد، ونظيره من العالم السبعة الأبحر واثنا^٩ عشر جزيرة يجمعها جبل قاف والبحر المحيط، دليل على نوح وأساسه والأئمة السبعة والحجج الاثني عشرة، ثم كذلك من اليد الأخرى، ونظيره من العالم إيلاج الليل في النهار وإيلاج الليل وأربعة مراكز بينهم، فذلك سبعة أيام واثنا^{١٠} عشر ساعة يجمعها الليل والنهار، دليل على إبراهيم عليه السلام وأساسه والأئمة السبعة والحجج الاثني عشر، كذلك من الرجل الواحدة، ونظيره في العالم سبعة أيام واثنا^{١١} عشر شهراً يجمعها الفصول والسنة، دليل على موسى وأساسه والأئمة السبعة والحجج الاثني عشر، وكذلك من الرجل الأخرى،

^١ يقل: يقبل، ص

^٢ وناطق: + بينهما، ص

^٣ أساساً: أساسان، ص

^٤ الرئة: الرئة، ص

^٥ والمنفذان: والمفاحان، ص

^٦ يجمعها الظهر والبطن: جمعها ذلك الظهر والبطن، ص

^٧ الاثنا: الاثني، ص

^٨ اثنا: اثني، ص

^٩ اثنا: اثني، ص

^{١٠} اثنا: اثني، ص

^{١١} اثنا: اثني، ص

وأبواب جهنم سبعة وطول الإنسان بشيره سبعة والخروق في الوجه سبعة، أذنان وعينان ومنخران وفم، وجسد الإنسان مركب على سبع، مخ وعظم وعصب وعروق ولحم ودم وجلد. ثم ابتدأه من سبعة أخرى التي ذكرها الله عز وجل في كتابه فقال: ﴿خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَامًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ﴾ إلى قوله ﴿وَمَا كُنَّا عَنِ الْخَلْقِ غَافِلِينَ﴾ [٢٣: ١٢-١٧]. والطرائق هم الأولياء، السبعة طرق إلى الله جل جلاله، وذلك أن المولود^١ إن ولد لسبعة عاش وإن ولد لثمانية مات، فإن يكن المعنى في الأكثر فالثمانية أكثر من السبعة، إلا أن الله عز وجل جعل الحياة في السبعة حتى أن الناس ليتبركون بها ولا يدرون ما السبب، فإن وُلِدَ ولدٌ أسبعوا له أسبعوا، والسنة في ختانه^٢ في اليوم السابع، ويتعبد^٣ في سبع سنين، وعلم الصلاة في سبع سنين، وإن مرض مريض فإنما ينتظر له العافية في اليوم السابع، وإن مات حُطَّ على سبع مساجد وأخذ له سبع ورقات من الصدر وكفن في سبعة أثواب.

ثم جعل القرآن سبعة أسباع، وروي أن الرسول قال: «إن القرآن نزل على سبعة أحرف كل حرف منها شافٍ كافٍ»، وفاتحة الكتاب التي لا تجوز الصلاة إلا بها سبع آيات، وكذلك قوله تبارك وتعالى: ﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَاكَ سَبْعًا مِنَ الْمَثَانِي وَالْقُرْآنَ الْعَظِيمَ﴾ [٨٧: ١٥] هي الحمد. وروي [عن] جعفر بن محمد عليه السلام أنه قال: «نحن الحمد والحمد لنا»، أراد بهذا القول أن الأئمة السبعة لا يُقبل عمل عامل إلا بمعرفتهم والعمل بطاعتهم. والسور الطوال سبعة، والحواميم سبعة، وكان شعار أمير المؤمنين في الحرب الرحمن الرحيم، إشارة منه إلى الأئمة السبعة من ولده، والوضوء سبعة وهي الاستنجاء والمضمضة والاستنشاق وغسلان، وهما اليدين والوجه، ومسحان، وهما الرأس والرجلان، وفرض الصلاة سبعة، وهي التوجه إلى القبلة والتكبير الأولى والقراءة والركوع والسجدتان والجلوس، ثم الطواف ببيت الله الحرام سبعة، والسعي بين الصفا والمروة سبعة أشواط، ورمي الجمار سبعة سبعة، «إن في ذلك لآياتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْتَكِرُونَ» [١٣: ٣ وغيرها].

^١ أن المولود: المولودات + (حاشية) ظ وذلك أن المولود، ص

^٢ ختانه: حيواته، ص

^٣ ويتعبد: وسعر، ص

^٤ بيت: بيت، ص

^٥ والمروة: والمشر، ص

علي صلوات الله عليه والأئمة السبعة من بعده من ولده، ستة منهم مكتومون^١ يقيمون الشريعة على منهاج محمد عليه السلام، يحللون حلاله ويحرمون حرامه ويشيرون بظهور القائم بالحق، المنتقم من الظلم، ذابح إبليس اللعين.

وقد بين الله جل اسمه آثار أوليائه وشواهدهم في تركيب العالم وشرائع الرسل لأن لا ينكر أحد إلا جحداً وعتواً واستكباراً ولتكون الحجة لله عز وجل لازمة عباده من جميع الجهات. ومن الشواهد على الأئمة المكتومين أن موسى عليه السلام أمر أمته أن يعملوا ستة أيام ويبطلوا العمل في اليوم السابع، وهو السبت، ويجعلوه عيداً لهم، دلالة منه على الستة المكتومين أنهم يقيمون شريعته وأن السابع ينسخها ويأتي بأمر جديد يكون للمؤمنين بمنزلة العيد الذي أوجب عليهم الاجتماع فيه، وكذلك أمر عيسى عليه السلام أن يعمل أمته ستة أيام وتتخذ اليوم السابع عيداً، وهو الأحد، وكذلك أطلق رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الصلاة في مساجد القبائل والمحال ستة أيام وأوجب عليهم الاجتماع في اليوم السابع، وهو يوم الجمعة، وأنزل الله في ذلك قرآناً فقال: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ﴾ [٢٦: ٩]، فأمرنا أن نتخافت في القراءة في الستة أيام لصلاة الظهر وغيره من صلاة النهار، وهي تصلى على سبع ساعات من النهار، وأن نجهر بالقراءة في اليوم السابع، وهو يوم الجمعة. وذلك أن [مقيمي] الشريعة ستة أئمة مكتومون وأن السابع يكشف نفسه ويعلن دعوته ويكون للمؤمنين بمنزلة العيد الذي يجب عليهم الاجتماع إليه وأن النطقاء الستة كانوا دعاة إلى الناطق السابع لأنهم دعاوا إلى الإيمان بالله واليوم الآخر، وهو الناطق السابع، قال الله عز وجل: ﴿ذَلِكَ يَوْمَ مَجْمُوعٍ لَهُ النَّاسُ وَذَلِكَ يَوْمَ مَشْهُودٍ وَمَا تُؤَخِّرُهُ إِلَّا لِأَجَلٍ مُعَدُودٍ﴾ [١١: ١٠٣-١٠٤] إلى قوله: ﴿إِلَّا يَازِّنُهُ﴾ [١١: ١٠٥] ولم يقل ياذنني.

ثم لما خلق السموات والأرض وما بينهما في ستة أيام خلق السموات والأرضين سبعا^٢ سبعا والأفلاك سبعا والنجوم سبعا والبحار سبعا والأقاليم سبعا والأيام سبعا

^١ مكتومون: مكتومين، ص

^٢ أن: بأن، ص

^٣ مساجد: مسجد، ص

^٤ الشريعة: شريعة، ص

^٥ مكتومون: مكتومين، ص

^٦ ويعلن: ويعلني، ص

^٧ «يوم يأتي لا تكلم نفس الا باذنه...»

سبعا: سبوعاً، ص

وبين من هو دونه من اللواحق والأجنحة والمؤمنين، وإن التائيد لا يبعد عن اللواحق، فيتمّ الدور السابع، فملك سبعة أئمة الذين ذكرهم في كتابه فقال: ﴿وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعَ طَرَائِقَ وَمَا كُنَّا عَنِ الْخَلْقِ غَافِلِينَ﴾ [٢٣: ١٧].

وقد بين أن أصحاب الأدوار ستة، وهم أصحاب الشرائع، فلذلك ثبتت الدنيا على ستة أدوار النطقاء، يؤكد ما قلناه قوله عز وجل: ﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ﴾، أراد به النطقاء الستة، ﴿ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ﴾ [١٠: ٣ و ٧: ٥٤]، أراد استواء أمر النطقاء بالسابع القائم. فأول الأدوار آدم عليه السلام وأساسه منه والأئمة سبعة، ستة منهم مكتومون^١ في أزمنة متفرقة ودهور مختلفة، إمام بعد إمام وخلف بعد سلف، لكل إمام منهم حجة على أهل زمانه، يقيمون شريعة آدم عليه السلام ويعرفون الناس ما يحتاجون إليه من أمر دينهم، حتى جاء دور نوح عليه السلام واستأنف شريعة جديدة، ثم قام من بعده أساسه سام والأئمة سبعة، ستة منهم مكتومون^٢ يقيمون الشريعة على منهاج نوح، يحللون حلاله ويحرمون حرامه، حتى جاء إبراهيم وهو سابعهم، فختم شريعة نوح، واستأنف إبراهيم شريعة جديدة وأقام من بعده أساسه إسماعيل، والأئمة سبعة، ستة منهم مكتومون يقيمون الشريعة^٣ على منهاج إبراهيم، ويحللون حلاله^٤ ويحرمون حرامه، حتى جاء موسى عليه السلام وهو سابعهم، فختم شريعة إبراهيم واستأنف شريعة جديدة، ثم قام من بعده أساسه يوشع بن نون بعد وفاة هارون، والأئمة سبعة^٥، ستة منهم مكتومون يقيمون الشريعة على منهاج موسى، يحللون حلاله ويحرمون حرامه، حتى جاء عيسى وهو سابعهم، فختم [شريعة موسى واستأنف شريعة جديدة، ثم قام من بعده أساسه] شمعون بن توما الاصطفي، والأئمة سبعة، ستة منهم مكتومون^٦ يقيمون الشريعة على منهاج عيسى، يحللون حلاله ويحرمون حرامه، حتى جاء محمد عليه السلام وهو سابعهم، فنسخ ما كان من الشرائع التي كانت قبله^٧ واستأنف شريعة جديدة، ثم قام من بعده أساسه

^١ دونه من: فوقه ومن، ص

^٢ مكتومون: مكتومين، ص

^٣ مكتومون: مكتومين، ص

^٤ جاء: لجأ، ص

^٥ الشريعة: شريعة، ص

^٦ حلاله: حلال، ص

^٧ سبعة: السبعة، ص

^٨ مكتومون: مكتومين، ص

^٩ قبله: قبل، ص

والأوصياء وأهل الدين حتى جاء [محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم فأتى بشريعة جديدة ونسخ شريعة عيسى وعزم على الناس في^١ الأخذ بما جاء به وترك ما في أيديهم، فمن أطاعه كان مؤمناً ومن عصاه كان كافراً، فشريعة محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم ناسخة لجميع الشرائع المتقدمة وشريعته لا تنسخ ولا تتغير ولا تتبدل إلى يوم القيامة، فالحلل ما حلله والحرام ما حرمه، فهو في أصحاب الشرائع ليس له نظير.

وكل واحد منهم في زمانه أقام لنفسه أساساً، وهو الوصي، وجعل له من اللواحق اثني^٢ عشر لاحقاً، وهم الأبواب، بأمر يجري فيهم للدعوة^٣ الواحدة المنقسمة بين الذين^٤ يفرقهم في الجزائر لينشر تأويل التنزيل والشريعة، كل واحد منهم في جزيرة، كما أسسه الأساس عليه السلام، وهم الذين ذكرهم الله في كتابه فقال: ﴿وَقَطَّعْنَاهُمْ اثْنَتَيْ عَشْرَةَ أَسْبَاطًا﴾ [٧: ١٦٠] وقال: ﴿وَبَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ نَقِيبًا﴾ [٥: ١٢]، كل واحد منهم يقيم الأجنحة في جزيرته في كل قطعة، وهم الدعاة، ليؤدي صاحب البقعة في بقعته كما يؤدي اللاحق لمن دونه^٥ من تبيان ما أتى به محمد عليه السلام، فهذه سنة محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم في زمانه وستة^٦ النطقاء من قبله.

فلما مضى محمد وأساسه عليهما السلام أقام إماماً^٧ مقام الناطق وجعل له اثني [عشر] لاحقاً، وجعله صاحب الأمانة لا يزيد في شيء مما أسسه الناطق والأساس ولا ينقص، وهو صاحب الأمانة قد استودعه الناطق ما حمّله من أفعال الملكوت ليكون المؤدي بعده^٨ إلى اللواحق كما وجد السبيل جارياً فيها ما دام حياً. فإذا فارق هذا العالم أقام مقامه مثله يؤدي مثله، لا يعزب عنه شيء^٩ مما يحتاج إليه العباد، حتى يبلغ عددهم سبعة أئمة سابعهم يكون ناطقاً، لكل منهم اثنا عشر لاحقاً يؤدون ما ورّثه الأساسان^{١٠} من علم النجدين بتأييد الأصلين، فيكون هو الواسطة بينهما^{١١}

في: -، ص

١ اثني: اثنا، ص

٢ فيها للدعوة: بينهم للنجوة، ص

٣ الدين: البين، ص

٤ وقطعناهم اثني عشرة أسباطا: في الأصل يابض قدر أربع كلمات + سطا

٥ دونه: حوله، ص

٦ وستة: وسنن، ص

٧ أقام إماماً: قام إمام، ص

٨ عده: بعده، ص

٩ شيء: شيئاً، ص

١٠ الأساسان: الأساسين، ص

١١ بينهما: بينهما، ص

هؤلاء الستة وكل كتاب سوى كتب هؤلاء فهي أمثال ومواعظ ودعاء وتسبيح ليس فيها أمر ولا نهي.

وإنما خلق الله الأيام السبعة ليستدل بها على النطقاء السبعة، ثم خلق الله بعد ذلك السموات والأرض وما بينهما في ستة أيام دون اليوم السابع لتكون الأيام الستة دليلاً على النطقاء أصحاب الشرائع، وقد كان جل اسمه قادراً أن يخلق السموات والأرض وما بينهما في لحظة البصر لأنه قال وقوله الحق: ﴿وَمَا أَمْرُنَا إِلَّا وَاحِدَةٌ كَلَمْحٍ بِالْبَصَرِ﴾ [٥٤: ٥٠] وقال: ﴿إِنَّمَا قَوْلُنَا لِشَيْءٍ إِذَا أَرَدْنَاهُ أَنْ نَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ﴾ [١٦: ٤٠]. ثم جعل [من] هؤلاء النطقاء خمسة أولي العزم، وهم نوح وإبراهيم وموسى وعيسى ومحمد صلى الله عليهم أجمعين، ولم يكن آدم من أولي العزم، والعزم في كلام العرب الحتم والقطع، وإنما سمي هؤلاء الخمسة أولي العزم دون آدم لأنه أول من أسس الدين وابتدأ الشريعة.

ثم قام بشريعته من كان بعده من الأنبياء والأولياء وأهل الدين حتى جاء نوح بشريعة جديدة، نسخ شريعة آدم عليه السلام وعزم على الناس بالأخذ بما جاء به وحرّم عليهم بعض ما كان في أيديهم من الأمر الأول، فمن آمن به وصدق وعمل بشريعته كان مؤمناً ومن خالفه فأقام على جملة الأمر الأول كان كافراً. ثم قام بشريعته من كان بعده من الأنبياء والأولياء وأهل الدين حتى جاء إبراهيم، فأتى بشريعة جديدة ونسخ شريعة نوح وعزم على الناس بالأخذ بما جاء به وترك بعض ما كان في أيديهم، فمن أطاعه كان مؤمناً ومن عصاه وأقام على جملة الأمر الأول كان كافراً. ثم قام بشريعته بعده الأنبياء والأولياء وأهل الدين حتى جاء موسى عليه السلام، فأتى بشريعة جديدة ونسخ شريعة إبراهيم وعزم على الناس في الأخذ بما جاء به وترك ما في أيديهم، فمن أطاعه كان مؤمناً ومن عصاه وأقام على الأمر الأول كان كافراً. ثم قام بشريعته من كان بعده من الأنبياء والأولياء وأهل الدين حتى جاء [عيسى عليه السلام، فأتى بشريعة جديدة ونسخ شريعة موسى وعزم على الناس في الأخذ بما جاء به وترك ما كان في أيديهم، فمن أطاعه كان مؤمناً ومن عصاه وأقام على جملة الأمر الأول كان كافراً. ثم قام بشريعته من كان بعده من الأنبياء

^١ الأيام: أيام، ص

^٢ قولنا لشيء: امرنا، ص

^٣ اردناه: ارادناه، ص

^٤ سمي: سموا، ص

^٥ وأقام على الأمر الأول كان كافراً: كان كافراً وأقام على الأمر الأول، ص

ما التيس عليهم من كتبهم وشرائعهم بالبراهين الواضحة والألفاظ الموجزة، ومعنى أنهم كانوا صباغين فإنهم كانوا يصبغون الناس بعلم الباطن بعد الظاهر، فللظاهر لون وللباطن ألوان، ولذلك سمي يحيى بن زكرياء الصباغ لأنه كان يصبغ الناس في الظاهر بالماء الذي يسمى المعمودية، وفي الباطن بالعلم، وكانت هذه الصبغة سنة في بني إسرائيل دليلاً على الصبغة في الباطن بالعلم، قال الله سبحانه: ﴿صَبَّغَهُ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ صَبْغَةً وَنَحْنُ لَهُ عَابِدُونَ﴾ [١٣٨: ٢] أراد دين الله وقال: ﴿وَشَجَرَةً تَخْرُجُ مِنْ طُورِ سَيْنَاءَ تَنْبُتُ بِالذَّهْنِ وَصَبَّغٍ لِلْأَكْلِيلِ﴾ [٢٣: ٢٠]، علم للمتعلمين، ومعنى كانوا صيادين، عني به أنهم كانوا يدعون الناس من الظاهر إلى معرفة الباطن، كما هو مكتوب في الإنجيل أن المسيح مرّ على شاطئ نهر الأردن فرأى قوماً يصيدون السمك فقال لهم: «دعوا صيد السمك واتبعوني أجعلكم تصيدون الناس».

فالأمثال كثيرة والدلائل واضحة منيرة، ومن ذلك قوله عز وجل: ﴿إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْرًا فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ﴾ [٩: ٣٦]، فهل يجوز لهم أن يجعلوا هذه الشهور ديناً دون سائر الفرائض والسنن، وما بال هذه الفرائض والسنن لم يجعلها ديناً وجعل الشهور ديناً؟ وهذا ما لا يجوز في ظاهر الشريعة، وإنما يثبت في باطنها، فالمراد بالاثني عشر الذين دعوا إلى إمام الزمان وإلى تجريد التوحيد بلا تشبيه ولا تعطيل، فمن عرفهم وأخذ عنهم استقام دينه لقوله في الشهور: ﴿ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ﴾ [٩: ٣٦ وغيرها]، ومما يوجب الاعتبار والفكر فيه أن الله تعالى بعث مائة ألف نبي، والمصطفون منهم ستة^١ سلام الله على ذكرهم: آدم ونوح وإبراهيم وموسى وعيسى ومحمد، ذلك قوله: ﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَى آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ﴾ [٣: ٣٣-٣٤]، فهؤلاء خيرة الله من خلقه وصفوتهم من عباده، وهم أصحاب الكتب والشرائع والأمر والنهي ليس لغيرهم^٢ شريعة، بل الأنبياء والرسل قاموا بشرائع

^١ المعمودية: العمودية، ص

^٢ للمتعلمين: المتعلمين، ص

^٣ اثنا: اثني، ص

^٤ والمصطفون: والمصطفين، ص

^٥ ستة: سبعة، ص

^٦ خلفه: خلفهم، ص

^٧ لغيرهم: بغيرهم، ص

الأنصار وأبناء أبناء الأنصار وموالي الأنصار». أفترى كلاً من الأنصار وأبنائهم ومواليهم مع ما له^١ من الذنوب والكبائر يستوجب^٢ هذا الدعاء وقد كان منهم من خالف وناقض وعاند وضل وهلك؟ بل كان هذا الدعاء لحججه الاثني عشر الذين نصره بالحققة في تجريد التوحيد ونفي الشبهة عن الله عز وجل، وهم أصحابه الذين قال فيهم: «أصحابي كالنجوم بأيهم اقتديتم اهتديتم»^٣، وقال: «لا تسبوا أصحابي»، ولم يعن^٤ بأصحابه المهاجرين والأنصار من الأضداد الذين لعنهم الله في عامة أصحابه عليه السلام، وكيف يكون ملعون قدوة يهتدى به؟

فالأنصار النقباء وأبناؤهم الدعاة وأبناء أبنائهم المأذونون^٥ ومواليهم المؤمنون الذين أقام^٦ لهم الولاية، وإنما سموا نقباء لأنهم استخرجوا الباطن من الظاهر ونقبوا المعاني الحقيقية الغامضة التي جهلها^٧ أهل الظاهر. والنقيب في كلام العرب المستخرج للمعاني الفطن لها الذي ينقب الكلام ويظهر المكنون، وقد ذكرهم الله في كتابه فقال: «وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَبَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ نَقِيبًا» [٥: ١٢]، وقال: «وَقَطَّعْنَاهُمْ اثْنَتَيْ عَشْرَةَ^٨ أُسْبَاطًا» [٧: ١٦٠]، ومما قال في قصة موسى: «فَلَمَّا أَضْرَبَ بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ فَانْفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا^٩ عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَشْرِبَهُمْ» [٢: ٦٠]، يعني بالعيون الحجج الاثني عشر الذين كانوا عيوناً للعلم ومشرباً للؤمنين. وكان للمسيح اثنا عشر تلميذاً، وقال في الإنجيل: «أنا أجيبكم بالأمثال ولا يقبل عني إلا هؤلاء التلاميذ الاثنا^{١٠} عشر»، وقال قوم من العامة أن حوارتي^{١١} المسيح كانوا قصّارين، وقال آخرون: كانوا صباغين، وقال آخرون: كانوا صيادين، وكل قد أصاب في القول وأخطأ في المعنى، فمعنى من قال أنهم [كانوا] قصّارين فإنهم كانوا يقصّرون الناس بالعلم ويظهرونهم به من النجس ويوضحون لهم

^١ كلاً من الأنصار وأبنائهم ومواليهم مع ما له: كل أنصار وأبناؤهم ومولاهم له من، ص

^٢ يستوجب: ما يستوجب، ص

^٣ قارن دعائم الإسلام، ١: ٨٦-٨٧

^٤ يعن: يعني، ص

^٥ بأصحابه: نامته، ص

^٦ المأذونون: المأذون، ص

^٧ أقام: أقاموا، ص

^٨ جهلها: جهله، ص

^٩ ولقد: وإذ، ص

^{١٠} اثنتي عشرة: اثني عشر، ص

^{١١} اثنا: اثنتي، ص

^{١٢} الاثنا: الاثني، ص

^{١٣} حوارتي: حوارتي، ص

إقامة اثني عشر باباً له في الباطن يدعون الناس إلى تجريد التوحيد وتأويل التنزيل، وهم للمؤمنين بمنزلة الأمهات والنبى بمنزلة الأب لهم.

وقد كان محمد عليه السلام أحب نساء وأزواجاً [بما أوهم] أن يكون فعل ذلك رغبة منه في النساء أو شهوة منه للنكاح، فجهلت العامة معنى فعله فنسبته إلى الرغبة في النساء لقوله: «حب إلي من دنياكم ثلاث الطيب والنساء وقرة عيني في الصلاة» فأراد بالطيب العلم والنساء الأبواب وبالصلاة وصيه القائم بأمره، وهو الصلاة الآمرة الناهية، وهذه الصلاة فعل لما قال الله عز وجل: ﴿إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ﴾ [٢٩: ٤٥]، فالصلاة أولياء الله الآمرون بالمعروف والناهون عن المنكر.

ودليل آخر أنه جعل لمسجده اثني عشر باباً. قال عليه السلام: «سدوا الأبواب كلها إلا باب علي»، إشارة إليه أنه المتولي بعده والحجة المفترضة الطاعة عليهم أجمعين، ثم أمرهم ألا يدخلوا المسجد إلا من بابه، دلهم بذلك أنه لا يصل أحد إلى معرفة توحيد البارئ ومعاني شريعته ولا يسمع حرفاً من تبيان ما جاء به محمد عليه وعلى آله السلام إلا من جهة علي إجلالاً له وكرامة أكرمه الله بها ومنزلة أعطاه الله إياها وإمامة جعلها الله في عقبه. فقد روت عوام الشيعة أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه جعل طلاق نسائه إلى أمير المؤمنين، وهذا مثل جهلوا معناه، وإنما أراد بذلك تفويض حججه إليه ليقدم منهم من شاء ويؤخر منهم من شاء.

وكذلك اختار في ظاهر الأمر اثني عشر رجلاً من الأنصار ليكونوا كفلاء على قومهم ككفالة الحواريين لعيسى ابن مريم عليه السلام، أراد بذلك تعريف الأمة أنه اختار اثني عشر من أصحابه لينصروه بإقامة الدعوة إليه في الباطن، وهم النقباء والأنصار بالحقيقة، لا عامة الأنصار الذين لم يعلموا حدود ما أنزل الله، وقد قال عليه السلام: «الأنصار كَرَشِي وعيبي ومعدن سرِّي ولو سلك الناس شِعْباً لَسَلَكْتُ شعب الأنصار ولولا الهجرة لكنت رجلاً من الأنصار، اللهم أعز الأنصار وأبناء

^١ أحب: أظهر + (حاشية) ظ أحب، ص

^٢ للنكاح: لنكاح، ص

^٣ وبالنساء: والنساء، ص

^٤ وبالصلاة: والصلاة، ص

^٥ لما: لها، ص

^٦ ما: مما، ص

^٧ اثني: ثناء، ص

^٨ اثني: ثناء، ص

^٩ الذين: الذي، ص

نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَأَتَتْهُمَا ﴿٥٩: ٧﴾ وقال: ﴿فَلْيَحْذَرِ الَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِ أَنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ أَوْ يُصِيبَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ﴾ ﴿٢٤: ٦٣﴾ وقال: ﴿وَإِنْ تُطِيعُوهُ تَهْتَدُوا﴾ ﴿٢٤: ٥٤﴾ وقال: ﴿وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُبِينًا﴾ ﴿٣٣: ٣٦﴾.

فالناطق والأساس بمنزلة الأب والأم^١ في الحقيقة والمؤمنون بمنزلة الأولاد، قال الله سبحانه: ﴿النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ﴾ ﴿٣٣: ٦﴾، وهو أب لهم، وكذا قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لأمر المؤمنين علي عليه السلام: «أنا وأنت أبوا هذه الأمة»، وقال الصادق: «المؤمن أخو المؤمن لأبيه وأمه، أبوهما النور وأمهما الرحمة»، فالنطفة التي تكون منها الإنسان تخرج من ظهر الأب، فتصير إلى بطن الأم، فتخفى هناك وتقوى إلى الوقت المعلوم حتى [كانا] سبب شرفها، وإن خرجت من ظهر الأب [الذي هو النبي] ثم تدخل في بطن الحجة الذي هو بمنزلة الأم فهناك يعرف توحيد الله ويكمل دينه، والعلم والعمل، فإنهما بمنزلة النطقتين من الأبوين اللذين كانا سبب تكوين الإنسان. فمن وقف على ظاهر الشريعة وجهل باطنها بطل دينه وكان منزلته منزلة النطفة التي خرجت من ظهر الأب ولم تصل إلى بطن الأم: ﴿إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾ ﴿١٣: ٣﴾ وغيرها، فقد ثبت بما استشهدنا من الكتاب والآيات والآثار أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم للأمة أب وأزواجه أمهاتهم لقوله في الأزواج في الباطن أن الأزواج هم الأبواب. ولو كان الأمر كما ذهب إليه الأمة وأن أزواجه نساؤه لما حرم على الأمة النظر إلى حرمه، متى كان النظر إلى الأمهات حراماً؟ وإنما عني بأزواجه حججه، جعلهم أبواباً لنفسه، وكانوا له أشكالا في دينه ومرافقين له في أمره، ولم يرد بذلك نساءه، قال الله تعالى: ﴿أَحْشَرُوا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَزْوَاجَهُمْ﴾ ﴿٣٧: ٢٢﴾ عني بذلك أشكالهم ومرافقيهم في دينهم. وقد يجوز أن تكون المرأة كافرة وزوجها مؤمن وتكون المرأة مؤمنة وزوجها كافر كنوح وامراته وفرعون وامراته ولوط وامراته، فالزوج هو الشكل والقرين، قال الله تعالى: ﴿وَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْ شَكْلِهِ أَزْوَاجًا﴾ ﴿٣٨: ٥٨﴾، وإنما تزوج رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في الظاهر باثني عشر امرأة ليكون ذلك دليلاً على

^١ الأب والأم: الأم والأب، ص

^٢ أزواجه: أزواجه، ص

^٣ حراماً: حرام، ص

^٤ مرافقين: مرافقون، ص

^٥ أنفسهم: -، القرآن

يُخَيِّكُم بِهِ» وإنما سماهم مؤمنين لأنهم آمنوا بظاهر الشريعة، فهؤلاء المؤمنون على حق مقررون له مجتمعون عليه، متفرون عليه متسابون متلاعنون جاهلون بحقيقته، قد أقروا بما لم يعرفوا وقبلوا ما لم يعلموا، فهم ﴿أَمْوَاتٌ غَيْرُ أَحْيَاءٍ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ﴾ [١٦: ٢١]. أما ترى أنه عاب أمثالهم فقال: ﴿أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ﴾ [٢: ٨٥]، وقال: ﴿وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ يَدْعُوكُمْ لِتُؤْمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ وَقَدْ أَخَذَ مِيثَاقَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ [٥٧: ٨]، وقال: ﴿لِيَزَادُوا إِيمَانًا مَعَ إِيمَانِهِمْ﴾ [٤٨: ٤]، فالمؤمنين بالحقيقة مقررون بالظاهر الذي هو الحق، عارفون بالباطن الذي هو حقيقة الحق، قد أحياهم الله بنور العلم كما قال: ﴿أَوْمَنْ كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَاحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَنْ مَثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا﴾ [٦: ١٢٢].

فرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أقام فرائض الدين مقرونة بعضها ببعض، ففرض بالفرائض السنن وأعلم أن الفرائض من الله عز وجل والسنن من أنبيائه عليهم السلام، فدل بالفرائض والسنن على المقيمين فيها، فالفرائض تدل على مراتب النطقاء عليهم السلام، والسنن تدل على الأوصياء، لأن الله تولى إقامة النطقاء بغير واسطة من البشر، والسنن بعد الفرائض [تدل على الأوصياء] لأن الله فرض طاعتهم بعد طاعته وطاعة أنبيائه عليهم السلام، فقال: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولَى الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ﴾ [٤: ٥٩] فإن الفرض والسنة في معرفة الإمام والحجة في كل عصر وزمان، فالفرض هو الناطق والسنة بابه عليهم السلام لا فرق بينهما، وكذلك قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «تارك سنتي ملعون»، أراد بالسنة بابه الذي هو وصيه وحجته الذي اصطفاه لتأويل شريعته. قال الله تعالى تصديقاً لذلك: ﴿وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ﴾ [٥٣: ٤-٣] وقال: ﴿قُلْ مَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا﴾ [٦: ٩٠] وقال: ﴿وَلَوْ تَقَوَّلَ عَلَيْنَا بَعْضُ الْأَقَاوِيلِ لَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُ بِالْيَمِينِ ثُمَّ لَقَطَعْنَا مِنْهُ الْوَتِينَ﴾ [٦٩: ٤٣-٤٦]، ثم حث على طاعته، فقال: ﴿وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا

بحقيقته: حقيقة، ص

وقال: وقالوا، ص

تولى: الولي تولى، ص

فان: وان، ص

والسنة: والسنن، ص

ما: ٦، القرآن

وأيضاً ٤٢: ٢٣

الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ ﴿٤٨﴾ إِلَى قَوْلِهِ ﴿أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا﴾ [٤٨]:
[١٠]. فقد ثبت أن الله أخذ على أنبيائه المواثيق وأخذت الأنبياء على أتباعهم كما أمرهم عز وجل، سنة الله التي قد خلت في عباده.

فمن نقض عهده كان منافقاً ضالاً عن رشده، ومن وفى به كان مؤمناً قد هدى إلى علم الباطن والظاهر وتأويل التنزيل ومعاني الأمثال، وسلم من الشكوك والشبهات ومن الاختلاف إلى الائتلاف، وأقام الإيمان مع الإسلام طائعاً غير مكره، وبان له الرشد من الغي، واستمسك بحبل الله المتين وعروته الوثقى، والدين بالحقيقة هو الدخول في الإيمان مع الإسلام ومعرفة الظاهر مع الباطن والتأويل مع التنزيل، والإسلام حق والإيمان حقيقة الحق، ولا وصول إلى معرفة الحق إلا بمعرفة الحقيقة كما قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه: «إن لكل حق حقيقة وعلى كل صواب نور»، فالحق قد دعا إليه النبيون جهراً بالسيف وهو ظاهر الشريعة، و[الحقيقة هي] تأويل التنزيل، فمن أقام على ظاهر الإسلام دون معرفة باطنه حرم ماله ودمه وأمن من الذلة والجزية في الدنيا، وإن أقام الإسلام والإيمان كان الإيمان أمناً وحرماً في معاده، وسلمت روحه التي هي قوام جسده والجامعة لأجزائه من عذاب النار، فلذلك حرم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لنفسه حرمين ليكون دليلاً ومثلاً [على] أن الدين على أصلين، أحدهما حرم الجسد والآخر حرم الروح، كما أن الجسد حياته وقيامه بالروح كذلك الإسلام قوامه الإيمان.

وكذلك العلم روح والعمل جسد، والعالم والد والمتعلم ولد، وظاهر الشريعة جسد والباطن روحه، كما شرحنا في صدر كتابنا هذا أن الأشياء مزدوجات كلها ديناً ودنيا، فأهل الظاهر موتى بجهلهم للباطن، فإذا استجابوا للباطن حيوا ومشوا في الناس بنور العلم، وخرجوا من ظلمات الفرق المختلفة المتناقضات إلى الائتلاف والرحمة، ألا ترى إلى قوله: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ﴾ [٨: ٢٤] وقال: ﴿أَوْ مِنْ كَانَتْ مِثْقَالُ حَبِّ خَيْبَةٍ جَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَنْ مَثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا﴾ [٦: ١٢٢]، ولو كانوا مستجيبين لله على الحقيقة لم يقل: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا

^١ أن: مكرر في الأصل

^٢ أو من: أفمن، ص

^٣ كمن مثله: كمن هو، ص

^٤ لما: لا، ص

ولن يصل واصل إلى حقيقة دين الله إلا بالعهد المؤكدة والمواثيق المغلظة على ما سنه الله عز وجل في الأنبياء وأتباعهم الصالحين، ﴿سُنَّهَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَنْ تَجِدُ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا﴾ [٤٨: ٢٣]، فذلك قوله عز وجل: ﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ مِيثَاقَهُمْ وَمِنْكَ وَمِنْ نُوحٍ وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا﴾ [٣٣: ٧]، ألا ترى أنه قد ذكرهم بأسمائهم بالذي أخذ عليهم بإبلاغ الحجة ليكون للعالم بهم أسوة ولأن لا يعتل أحد منهم بعلّة في مخالفة عهد أو ترك شرط أو معذرة الله على نفسه، لأن لهؤلاء عليهم السلام أئمة باطنون ودعاة صادقون، لأنهم بهم معترفون وعلى فنون شرائعهم مقيمون، وبين لكل ذي دين من المختلفين أن [لن] يعرف حقيقة دين الله أو يكون له حظ في اليقين من غير عهد يلزمه الوفاء به والتعاهد له، قال الله: ﴿أَفَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ بِآيَاتِنَا وَقَالَ لَأُوتِيَنَّ مَالًا وَوَلَدًا أَطَّلَعَ الْغَيْبَ أَمِ اتَّخَذَ عِنْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ عَهْدًا﴾ [١٩: ٧٧-٧٨] وقال: أوفوا بالعهد إن العهد كان مسؤولاً [١٧: ٣٤]، وقال: ﴿وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِي أُوفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ﴾ [٢: ٤٠] وقال: ﴿وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ وَلَا تَنْقُضُوا الْأَيْمَانَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا﴾ [١٦: ٩١] وقال: ﴿وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ﴾ [٢٣: ٨] وقال: ﴿وَبِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ أَوْفُوا ذَلِكَكُمْ وَصَاكُم بِهِ﴾ [٦: ١٥٢] وقال: ﴿وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِي نَقَضَتْ غَزْلَهَا مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ أَنْكَاثًا تَتَخَذُونَ آيْمَانَكُمْ دَخَلًا بَيْنَكُمْ﴾ [١٦: ٩٢] ﴿فَتَزَلَّ قَدَمٌ بَعْدَ ثُبُوتِهَا وَتَذُوقُوا السُّوءَ بِمَا صَدَدْتُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَكُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾ [١٦: ٩٤]. قد بين الله أن الناكثين بعهدهم هم الزالة أقدامهم الضالون عن سبيلهم و[أن] الموفين بعهدهم ثابتة أقدامهم قد هدا إلى صراط مستقيم واستمسكوا بعروة الله الوثقى، وقد بايع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حتى النساء لأن الله أمره بذلك لقوله: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ يُبَايِعْنَكَ عَلَى أَنْ لَا يُشْرِكْنَ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَسْرِقْنَ وَلَا يَزْنِينَ وَلَا يَقْتُلْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ﴾ إلى قوله ﴿فَبَايَعَهُنَّ وَأَسْتَغْفِرَ لَهُنَّ اللَّهُ﴾ [٦٠: ١٢] وقال: ﴿لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ﴾ [٤٨: ١٨]، وقال: ﴿إِنَّ

^١ لهؤلاء: هؤلاء، ص

^٢ لكل ذي: للذي، ص

^٣ الوفاء: للوفاء، ث

^٤ لأوتين: لأتخذن، ص

^٥ فتزل: أن تزل، ص

^٦ عظيم: أليم، ص

^٧ بعهدهم: بعهد، ص

لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ^١ [٥١: ٢٨] وقال: ﴿فَعَمِيَّتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَنْبَاءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَهُمْ لَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ﴾ [٢٨: ٦٦].

ولم يحثهم^٢ على التفكير في الأمثال المضروبة في كتاب الله والتدبر لآياته ولم يكلهم إلى أنفسهم حتى أقام لهم الدليل وهو العليم^٣ الخبير، وقال: ﴿الرَّحْمَنُ فَاسْأَلْ بِهِ خَبِيرًا﴾ [٢٥: ٥٩] وقال: ﴿وَلَا يُنَبِّئُكَ مِثْلُ خَبِيرٍ﴾ [٣٥: ١٤] وقال: ﴿فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾ [١٦: ٤٣ و ٢١: ٧] وقال: ﴿وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ^٤ الْآيَةُ﴾ [٤: ٨٣] وقال: ﴿وَمَا اخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِيهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَحُكْمُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ﴾ [٤٢: ١٠]، أفتراه كلف عباده سؤال معدوم؟ سبحانه وهو أعدل من ذلك وأرأف بعباده، وقد روي عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه أنه قال: «اطلبوا العلم ولو بالصين»، وقال: «طلب العلم فريضة على كل مسلم».

فلو كان الذي حثهم عليه هو الظاهر دون الباطن لما أوجب عليهم الطلب لأن الظاهر موجود عند الكل، والموجود لا يوجب الطلب، ولا^٥ يوجب التعليم، وإنما حث رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم على طلب العلم، علم الباطن، فاعرف اللفظ تعرف مراد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وعلى آله السلام، ثم دلهم على معدن العلم ومعالِم الدين، فقال: «أنا مدينة العلم وعلي بابها، فمن أراد المدينة فليأت الباب»، فلهذا قال سبحانه: ﴿لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهَا وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنِ اتَّقَى وَأَتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِهَا﴾ [٢: ١٨٩]، فالبُيُوت هم الأولياء وأبوابهم الأوصياء عليهم السلام. وقال الصادق عليه السلام: «والله لن تصلوا إلى المدينة حتى تدخلوا من الباب، وكان هذا القول منه^٦ حجة عليهم ودلالة منه لهم ليتبعوا آثار معاني^٧ علم الله»، وقال: «الحق مع هذا، وأشار إلى علي»، وقال: «هذا حزبه هم المفلحون»، وقال: «اللهم أدر الحق مع علي حيث دار، فمن أتى وأخذ عنه فاز ونجا، ومن عدل عنه ضل وغوى».

^١ يتذكرون: يذكرون، ص

^٢ يحثهم: نحثهم، ص

^٣ العليم: العالم، ص

^٤ فاسألوا: واسألوا، ص

^٥ «وإذا جاءهم أمر من الأمن والخوف اذاعوا به ولو ردوه إلى الرسول وإلى أولى الأمر منهم لعلمه الذين يستنبطونه منهم ولولا فضل الله عليكم رحمته لاتبعتم الشيطان الا قليلا»

^٦ ولا: بل، ص

^٧ منه: معه، ص

^٨ معاني: معان، ص

سبب إلى الدين وطريق إليه، وقال الله: ﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوا مَا يُوعَظُونَ بِهِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَأَشَدَّ تَثْبِيثًا، وَإِذَا لَا تَأْنِيَهُمْ مِنْ لَدُنَّا أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا، وَلَهْدَيْنَاهُمْ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا﴾ [٤: ٦٦-٦٧].

فالإقرار بالشهادتين والعمل بسائر الفرائض، وهو ظاهر الشريعة التي أكره الناس عليها وقهروا بالسيف على الدخول فيها والقول والعمل بها، لقوله: ﴿وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّهِ﴾ [٨: ٣٩]. فلما قبلوا منه طائعين مكرهين أقام فيهم الحدود كلها كما أمر صلى الله عليه، فمن ارتد عن الإسلام بعد الدخول فيه قتل ومن أتى ما وجب عليه حد جلد، فقبلهم ظاهر الإسلام الذي هو ظاهر الشريعة ودخلهم فيه أكسبهم في العاجلة حقن الدماء وتحصين الأموال وأمناً من الذل والجزية وسبي الذرية. وبمعرفة حقيقتها يوجب لهم ثواباً في المعاد لقول رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «أمرت أن أقاتل الناس حتى يقولوا لا إله إلا الله، فإذا قالوها عصموا بها مآء دماءهم وأموالهم إلا بحقها، وحسابهم على الله». فظاهر الشريعة الذي أكره الناس عليها هو صلاح المعيشة في العاجلة، وليس هو الدين نفسه الذي هو صلاح المعيشة في الآخرة، ويؤكد هذا القول قول الله: ﴿لَا إِكْرَافَ فِي الدِّينِ﴾ [٢: ٢٥٦] وقوله: ﴿أَفَأَنْتَ تُكْرِهُ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ [١٠: ٩٩].

ثم حثهم على طلب العلم ومعاني الأمثال التي ذكرها الله في كتابه مثل قوله: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ضُرِبَ مَثَلٌ فَاستَمِعُوا لَهُ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَنْ يَخْلُقُوا ذُبَابًا وَلَوْ اجْتَمَعُوا لَهُ﴾ [٢٢: ٧٣] وقوله: ﴿لَوْ أَنزَلْنَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى جَبَلٍ لَرَأَيْنَاهُ خَاشِعًا مَتَصَدِّعًا مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾ [٥٩: ٢١] وقوله: ﴿وَضَرَبْنَا لَكُمْ الْأَمْثَالَ﴾ [١٤: ٤٥] وقوله: ﴿وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ﴾ [٢٩: ٤٣] وقوله: ﴿وَكُلًّا ضَرَبْنَا لَهُ الْأَمْثَالَ﴾ [٢٥: ٣٩] وقوله: ﴿وَلَقَدْ ضَرَبْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِي هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ مِنْ كُلِّ مَثَلٍ فَأَبَى أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ إِلَّا كُفُورًا﴾ [١٧: ٨٩] وقوله: ﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي أَنْ يَضْرِبَ مَثَلًا مَا بَعُوضَةٌ فَمَا فَوْقَهَا﴾ [٢: ٢٦]. ومثل هذا في كتاب الله كثير، فلهذا قال: ﴿كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ [مُبَارَكٌ] لِيَذَّبُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَذَّكَّرَ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ﴾ [٣٨: ٢٩] وقال: ﴿أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ﴾ [٤: ٨٢] وقال: ﴿وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا

١ يا أيها الذين آمنوا: يا أيها الناس، القرآن
٢ يدعون: تدعون، القرآن
٣ لكم: لهم، ص
٤ ضربنا: صرنا، القرآن
٥ وليذكرك: وليذكر، ص

ثم مدح آخرين فقال: ﴿وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا الْعَالَمُونَ﴾ [٢٩: ٤٣] وقال: ﴿وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا﴾ [٣: ٧] وقال: ﴿يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ﴾ [٥٨: ١١] وقال: ﴿إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ﴾ [٣٥: ٢٨]. فأخبرنا أنه لم يخشِه إلا العلماء به وبدينه، والإقرار بالله والعمل بظاهر الشريعة والمقام عليها دون معرفة حقائقها مذموم غير محمود، بل هو كفر لقوله: ﴿أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ﴾ [٢: ٨٥]، لأنهم آمنوا بظاهر الشريعة وكفروا بباطنها ولأن الظاهر ليس هو الدين بالحقيقة، بل هو طريق إلى الدين وحق لا يثبت إلا بحقيقته، لأن الله يقول: ﴿وَيُحِقُّ اللَّهُ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَاتِهِ﴾ [١٠: ٨٢] وقال: ﴿لِيُحِقَّ اللَّهُ الْحَقَّ وَيُبْطِلَ الْبَاطِلَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ﴾ [٨: ٨]، فالظاهر حق والقاتل به صادق والعامل به مصيب إن عرف حقيقة قوله وعمله لأن الله جل وعز يقول: ﴿لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ بِمَا تَعْبُدُونَ وَلَكِنْ بِالْحَقِّ وَبِالْعَمَلِ﴾ [٣: ٨]، وهو أن يُسألوا عن حقيقة قولهم وعملهم، فإن أفلحوا، وإلا فهم كسائر أهل الشرائع المخالفين، لقوله: ﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴾ [٢: ٦٢]. ألا ترى أنه قد جمعهم في المخاطبة وأوجب بهذه الآية أنهم لم يؤمنوا بالله ولا باليوم الآخر، وإنما سموا مؤمنين لإيمانهم بالقول والعمل دون العلم الذي هو حقيقة قولهم وعملهم، بقوله: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا﴾ ﴿آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالنُّورِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلْنَا﴾ [٨: ٦٤] وقوله: ﴿وَإِنِّي لَغَفَّارٌ لِمَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ اهْتَدَى﴾ [٢٠: ٨٢] فدل بهذا القول أن التوبة الإيمان الأول، والعمل طريق إلى الهداية وهو الإيمان الثاني، وقال: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَى تِجَارَةٍ تُنْجِيكُمْ مِنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ تُوْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ﴾ [٦١: ١٠-١١] واليوم الآخر^٦، فأخبر أن التجارة الناجية من العذاب الإيمان الثاني. ومثل هذا في كتاب الله كثير، فقال العمل بظاهر الشريعة

^١ وأيضاً ٥٣: ٢٨

^٢ وقال: وقا، ص

^٣ الله: - القرآن

^٤ المشركون: المجرمون، القرآن

^٥ آمنوا: قَامُوا، القرآن

^٦ القرآن ٤: ١٣٦: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي...﴾

^٧ القرآن ٦١: ١١: تُوْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ

روحانية وجسمانية، فأسماءه جل وعز كقوله: يا رحمن يا رحيم، وصفاته^١ كذلك: يا عظيم يا كريم يا عليم، وأسماءه وصفاته مضافة إلى أول اسم من أسمائه. فإذا عرفت هذه الأسماء والصفات قامت الحدود والأحكام، واستنار منار الإسلام، وظهر صدق محمد عليه السلام، فكان^٢ هذا فصلاً^٣ من تجريد التوحيد وتشنية المخلوقات وازدواجها وتشاكلها وتضادها ليكون ذلك دليلاً^٤ وعوناً للمرتادين.

ونقول والله المستعان: إن إقرار المخلوقين بالخالق جل اسمه من طريق صنعه غير نافع ولا منج^٥ لأن الإقرار به جل وعز غريزي وطبيعي وعليه فطروا، والمعرفة الناجية تعليم واكتساب وبها اختبروا، فبالاكتساب تعرف الأحوال الغريزية والطباعية، وبالتعليم تعرف صحة الخبر ومعرفة المخبر. ولو كانت المعرفة بالله جل ذكره منجية لهم اضطراباً كاضطراب معرفة الإثبات والإقرار به عز وجل إذا لبطل الوحي والكتب والأنبياء والرسول ولم يكن يحتاج في معرفة الله إلى دليل أكثر من وجود صنعه، لأن قول الله لا يحتاج إلى دليل أكثر من وجوده^٦ وظهوره، فلما صح أن إثبات من لا مشاهدة له من طريق الصنع ثبت أن معرفته من جهة التعليم^٧ ومن طريق الأنبياء والرسول عليهم السلام، وكذلك الإقرار بالرسول وما جاءت به، قال الله عز وجل: ﴿وَلَيْنَ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ [٣١: ٢٥] وقال: ﴿وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ أَكْثَرُهُمْ بِاللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُمْ مُشْرِكُونَ﴾ [١٢: ١٠٦] وقال: ﴿وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ؛ يَعْلَمُونَ ظَاهِراً مِّنَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ عَنِ الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ غَافِلُونَ﴾ [٣٠: ٧-٦] وقال: ﴿أَفَمَن يَعْلَمُ أَنَّمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ كَمَنْ هُوَ أَعْمَى إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ﴾ [١٣: ١٩] وقال: ﴿وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَى وَالْبَصِيرُ﴾ [٥٣: ١٩] وقال: ﴿هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ [٣٩: ٩] وقال: ﴿لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا أَمَانِي﴾ [٢: ٧٨]، أراد بالأمني الدراسة وأنهم غير عارفين معانيه، وقال: ﴿لَا [يَمْلِكُ الَّذِينَ] يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ الشَّفَاعَةَ إِلَّا مَن شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ [٤٣: ٨٦] وقال: ﴿إِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئاً﴾

^١ وصفاته: وصفته، ص

^٢ فكان: كان، ص

^٣ فصلاً: فصل، ص

^٤ منج: منجي، ص

^٥ وجوده: جوده، ص

^٦ التعليم: العلم، ص

^٧ هو: -، القرآن

^٨ وأيضاً ٤٠: ٥٨

على معنى واحد، والكتاب في ذاته على نوعين: تنزيل وتأويل، باطن وظاهر، محكم ومتشابه، مكّي ومدني، ناسخ ومنسوخ، وحلال وحرام، أمر ونهي، وعد ووعد، مقدم ومؤخر، فيه خبر^١ ما كان وما يكون، ودعا عليه السلام إلى دين الإسلام والإيمان، قرينان بمنزلة الروح والجسد لا قوام لأحدهما إلا بالآخر. في بعض الروايات عن النبي عليه وعلى آله السلام أنه قال: «الإسلام بُني على خمسة أشياء، قيل: ما هي يا رسول الله؟ قال: على الشهادة وإقام الصلاة وإيتاء الزكاة وصوم شهر رمضان وحج البيت من استطاع إليه سبيلاً»، وكل واحد من هذه الأصول مقرون بآخر، فشهادة أن لا إله إلا الله مقرون بشهادة أن محمداً رسول الله، لا يقوم أحدهما إلا بالآخر، وقرنت الصلاة بالوضوء، والزكاة بالصدقة، والصيام بالقيام والحج بالعمرة، وأتباع الأنبياء عليهم السلام على ضربين: طائعين ومكرهين^٢، وذلك قوله: ﴿وَلَهُ أَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا﴾ [٣: ٨٣]، وفيهم عالم وجاهل وذلك قوله: ﴿هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ [٩: ٣٩]، ومطيع ومطاع لقوله: ﴿أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ﴾ [٤: ٥٩ وغيرها]، وأمر ومأمور لقوله: ﴿فَلْيَحْذَرِ الَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِ أَنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ﴾ [٢٤: ٦٣]، وخاص وعام لقوله تعالى^٣: ﴿يَهْدِي اللَّهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَى وَزِيَادَةٌ﴾ [١٠: ٢٥-٢٦]، وفاضل ومفضول لقوله: ﴿فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا﴾ [٤: ٩٥]، ومثل هذا في كتاب الله كثير مما لو ذكرناه لطال به الشرح.

ثم نقول: إن أقرب الوجوه كلها في تجريد التوحيد هو أن تنفي عن الخالق الذي خلق الروح والبدن جميع ما تجده في الروح والبدن من الجوهر والأجناس والصفة والفعل، لأن الروح شاغل للبدن والبدن شاغل للمكان، وكذلك سائر الأعراض كلها شاغلة للأجسام والأجسام شاغلة للأرض، وخالقها بخلافها لا يوصف بالحاجة إلى مكان ولا انتقال ولا زوال، إذ كان قبل ذلك أجمع ولا هو محمول ولا ممتزج ولا متبوء ولا حال في شيء. فكل موجود في الخلق فمفني عن الله عز وجل، وكل ممكن فيهم فممتنع منه، وأسماءه في التنزيل وصفاته واقعة^٤ على معانيها، وهي أعيان

^١ خبر: خبر، ص

^٢ ومكرهين: مكرهين، ص

^٣ تعالى: نورا، ص

^٤ الله: -، القرآن

^٥ واقعة: واقعة، ص

وشريكاً له في وحدانيته، ولما كان خالق ولا مخلوق، قال الله عز وجل: ﴿لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ﴾ [٢١: ٢٢]، لكن انفرد بالوحدانية عن الأقران، وخلق الخلق كله محتاجاً بعضه إلي بعضٍ، دليلاً على أن له الانفراد بالوحدة ﴿تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ﴾ [٢٣: ٢٤].

فهكذا كل ما شاهدناه في الدنيا قائم بالثنوية والازدواج، وكذلك ما غاب عنا من الأمور على ما جاءت به الأخبار عن الأنبياء عليهم السلام كما قالوا: جنة ونار، وثواب وعقاب، ولوح وقلم، وعرش وكرسي، وجبرئيل وميكائيل، والموقف والصراط، والحساب والميزان، وبذلك أخبر الله سبحانه عز وجل في كتابه فقال: ﴿وَمَنْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ﴾ [٥١: ٤٩]، وقال: ﴿وَخَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا﴾ [٧٨: ٨]، وقال: ﴿سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا مِمَّا تُنْبِتُ الْأَرْضُ وَمِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمِمَّا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ [٣٦: ٣٦]، وقال: ﴿خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَمِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ أَزْوَاجًا يَذُرُّكُمْ فِيهِ لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾ [٤٢: ١١]، وقال: ﴿وَالشَّفْعِ وَالْوَتْرِ﴾ [٨٩: ٣]، فهذا دليل على نفي التشبيه عن الله تبارك وتعالى، ثم إن الله أسس دينه على مثال خلقه ليستدل بخلقهِ على دينهِ وبدينهِ على فردانيته، فلذلك قال: ﴿قُلْ انظُرُوا مَاذَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا تُغْنِي الْآيَاتُ وَالنُّذُرُ عَنْ قَوْمٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ [١٠: ١٠١]، وقال: ﴿وَكُلَّيْنِ مِنْ آيَةٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يَمُرُّونَ عَلَيْهَا وَهُمْ عَنْهَا مُعْرِضُونَ﴾ [١٢: ١٠٥]، وقال: ﴿وَفِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ﴾ [٥١: ٢١]، ومثل هذا في كتاب الله كثير.

ثم إن الله اختار من خلقه صفوته وسماهم باسمين: نبين ومرسلين، ووصفهم بصفتين: مبشرين ومنذرين، واصطفى منهم محمداً وأحمد وبعثه إلى الثقليين: الجن والإنس، وإلى العرب والعجم، وجعل له دارين: مكة والمدينة، وفرق أصحابه فرقتين: مهاجرين وأنصاراً، وأخى بين كل اثنين حتى أخى بينه وبين علي ابن أبي طالب عليه السلام، وأقام أحكام الدين على أصليين: الفريضة والسنة، وخلف فينا عند مصابه الثقليين: كتاب الله وعترته، وقال بعضهم: كتاب الله وسنته، وكلتا اللفظتين تدلان

- ١ دليلاً: دليل، ص
- ٢ خلق: جعل، القرآن
- ٣ محمداً: محمد، ص
- ٤ وأنصاراً: وانصار، ص
- ٥ وسنته: سنة، ص
- ٦ وكلتا: وكل، ص

مزدوج معها، فإذا انفردت الحاسة من زوجها تعطلت وبطل عملها، والحواس الخمس الجسمانية هي الأذن والعين والأنف والفم واليد، فقرين الأذن السمع وقرين العين النظر وقرين الأنف الشم وقرين الفم الذوق وقرين اليد اللمس، فهذه لها بمنزلة الأرواح للأجساد، فكل حاسة إذا فقدت قرينها كانت ساقطة ميتة. ألا ترى الأَصْم إذا عدم السمع لم تنفعه أذنه شيئاً، وكذلك الأعمى إذا فقد النظر لم تنفعه عينه شيئاً، والفم إذا عارضه غلة لم يجد طعم الأشياء بالحقيقة، فوجد الحلو مرأً والعذب مالحاً، وكذلك الأشم إذا فقد الشم لم ينفعه أنفه شيئاً، وكذلك المفلوج إذا عدم اللمس لم تنفعه يده، فهذه الحواس المزدوجة المعروفة إنما تدرك الأشياء باقترانها.

والبارئ جل وعز لا قرين له فيعرف به، ولا نظير له فيقاس عليه، ولا تقع عليه الحواس الخمس، وإنه ﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾ [٤٢: ١١] ﴿وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾ [٥: ١٢٠ وغيرها]. فالأشياء لا تدرك مشيئها وهو يدركها، فلذلك قال عز وجل: ﴿لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ﴾ [٦: ١٠٣]، فذهبت العامة إلى أن الأبصار هي أبصار الأعين وأنه لا يدرك بالأعين، وليس كما ظنوا، وإنما عنى جل اسمه أبصار الحواس الخمس المتفرقة الأعمال التي تدرك بها معرفة الأشياء كلها وأن الأشياء كلها لا تخلو من خمس معانٍ وهي الأصوات والألوان والطعوم والأجساد والأرواح، والبارئ ليس بصوت ولا لون ولا ريح ولا طعم ولا جسد، بل هو خالق لهذه الأشياء بائن عن صفاتها.

فإن قال قائل: إن القلب حاسة سادسة وإن البارئ يدرك بالقلب، قلنا له: إن القلب هو مدبّر الحواس وهو الحاكم عليها، والحواس بمنزلة الاستقصات وهي الأمهات، فما أدركته الحواس دبره القلب وقاسه بقرينه واستدل عليه بشكله. والقلب لا يدرك إلا ما دلت عليه الحواس الخمس ولا يعرف إلا ما شاهده، وهو غير منفرد بذاته، بل هو زوج مقرون بما هو ألطف منه وهو محتاج إليه وهو العقل، فالعقل من القلب بمنزلة الروح من الجسد والقلب للعقل بمنزلة الجسد للروح، وكل قلب لا عقل له فهو ساقط ميت مثل قلب البهائم. فإنما خلق الله الأشياء مزدوجة مقرونة مفناة لأنه لو خلق واحداً لساواه، أو فرداً غيره^١ لكان ذلك الفرد قريباً له في فردانيته

^١ شيئاً: بشيء، ص

^٢ معان: معاني، ص

^٣ والألوان: والأنوار، ص

^٤ فرداً غيره: فرداً أو غيره، ص

ثم إن كل شاهدٍ وغائب لا يخلو من معين، كثيف ولطيف، وكل كثيف ولطيف لا يخلو من نوعين، حيوان وموتان^١، أحدهما ضد الآخر وقرين له وزوج له، وكل الأشياء قائمة بازواجها واقترانها وتضادها محتاجة بعضها إلى بعض ودليلاً بعضها على بعض ليستدل بالزوج على زوجه وبالضد على ضده وبالشكل على شكله، وكل قرين لا يعرف إلا بقرينه ولا يعرف أحدهما إلا بالآخر، مثل السماء والأرض، والمشرق والمغرب، والليل والنهار، والنور والظلمة، والسود والبياض، والبر والبحر، والسهل والجبل، والقريب والبعيد، والطويل والقصير، والعريض والعميق، والعلو والسفل، والحسن والقبح، والطيب والمُنْتِن، والحلو والمر، والعذب والمالح، واللين والخشن، والرطب واليابس، والخفيف والثقيل. وهذه الأشياء المتضادة المتشاكلة المعروفة المزدوجة الدالة على بعضها ببعض تشاكلها وتضادها^٢ وازدواجها وافتراقها، تدل بهذه^٣ الصفات اللازمة لها على وحدانية خالقها وفردانيته، وعلى أنه بخلافها من جميع الجهات، وأنه لا يدرك بعقد ضمير، ولا بإحاطة تفكير، ولا يقال هو هو إشارةً ولا توهماً^٤ ليكون فرقاً بين الخالق والمخلوق، والرب والمربوب، والصانع والمصنوع.

فلما ثبت أن الخالق مخالف من جميع الجهات كانت شيعته^٥ جل ذكره مخالفة لجميع المخلوقات، إذ كان المخلوق لا يخلو أن يكون جسمانياً فقد أدركته الحواس الظاهرة، أو أن^٦ يكون روحانياً فقد أدركته الحواس الباطنة، فإذا ثبت أن المخلوق، كائناً ما كان، يدرك بالحواس الظاهرة أو بالحواس^٧ الباطنة، فقد ثبت أن الخالق لا يدرك بشيء من مخلوقاته بحال ولا بحيلة، ولا بلفظة تحمله^٨ ولا تقع عليه إشارة ولا توهم، ولا يُضرب له فيه الأمثال، ولا يحيط به سافل ولا عالٍ، فالأشياء المدركة بهذه الحواس التي قدمنا ذكرها إنما^٩ أدركتها باقترانها، وميّزتها بازواجها، وهي في ذاتها مقترنات غير مفردات، فما من حاسة تدرك شيئاً من المحسوسات إلا بقرين

^١ حيوان وموتان: حيوات وموات، ص

^٢ وتضادها: وتضادها، ص

^٣ تدل بهذه: يدل على هذه، ص

^٤ توهماً: توهم، ص

^٥ شيعته: نسبته، ص

^٦ أو أن: وإن، ص

^٧ أو بالحواس: وبالحواس، ص

^٨ تحمله: يحمله، ص

^٩ إنما: وإنما، ص

المرتادين معرفة الله جل ذكره، ثم معرفة رسله، ثم معرفة ولاية الأمر وإقامة الطاعة لهم، قال الله عز وجل: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ﴾ [٤: ٥٩]. واعلم علمك الله الخير أن أعمال العباد كلها مضافة إلى الله جل وعز ومستخلصة بما يصل^١ إلى حقيقة توحيده، فمن عرف الله حق معرفته ووحده حق توحيده زكا عمله وطاب سعيه، ومن جهل ذلك ضل سعيه وخبت عمله، وكان جزاؤه من الله كما قال الله عز وجل: ﴿وَقَدِمْنَا إِلَى مَا عَمِلُوا مِنْ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ هَبَاءً مَثُورًا﴾ [٢٥: ٢٣]، وقال أمير المؤمنين علي صلوات الله عليه في بعض خطبه: «إن أول الديانة معرفة الله، وكمال معرفته توحيده، ونظام توحيده نفي الصفات عنه بشهادة العقول أن كل صفة وموصوف مخلوقان وبشهادة الموصوف أنه غير الصفة وشهادتهما جميعاً بالتثنية على أنفسهما، لا يقوم أحدهما إلا بالآخر، وشهادة التثنية على نفسها بالحدث الممتنع من الأزل». فهذه كلمات تشتمل على معاني التوحيد لمن عرفها وأبصر حقائقها وعلم مجاري حدودها.

واعلم وفقك الله للمصالحات أن حقيقة معرفة الله عز وجل أن تصفه بالوحدانية وتعرفه بالفردانية، وأنه خالق واحد لا ضد له ولا نظير ولا قرين ولا زوج، وأنه لا يُدرك بوجه من الوجوه ولا بسبب من الأسباب، وإنما تدرك أسمائه، فأسماءه وصفاته غيره، وكل ما سواه مخلوق مزدوج مقرون مُشاكل وموصوف مدرك ممكن مُوقف [عليه] مصور مشار إليه، وكل مخلوق، وإن كان اسمه واحداً، لا يخلو من معنيين يقوم أحدهما بشكله وزوجه، مثل الإنسان الذي هو لمعنيين روح وجسد، فقوام الروح بالجسد، وقوام الجسد بالروح، لا يقوم أحدهما إلا بصاحبه، والجسد في ذاته مركب من^٢ طبيعتين وهما البرودة واليبوسة، وكذلك الروح مركبة من طبيعتين وهما الحرارة والرطوبة، والدليل على ذلك أنك ترى الإنسان حاراً رطباً وأن الحرارة والرطوبة من جوهر الروح، فلما فازقت الروح الجسد صار الجسد إلى جوهره. وكذلك كل شيء في العالم لا يخلو من أن يكون فيه جوهران، إما حار رطب أو حار يابس أو بارد رطب أو بارد يابس، لأن الله عز وجل أبدع هذا العالم من الطباع الأربع، فما من شيء إلا وقد اجتمع^٣ فيه جوهران مركبان يقوم أحدهما بصاحبه.

^١ الله: لله، ص

^٢ بما يصل: بأصول، ص

^٣ من: على، ص

^٤ اجتمع: اجتمعت، ص

كتاب الرسوم والازدواج والترتيب

تأليف أبي محمد عبدان رحمه الله

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم وبه نستعين في جميع الأمور

الحمد لله الذي جعل في كل فترة بقايا من أهل العلم يُخرجون الناس من الظلمات إلى الهدى، ويصبرون منهم على الأذى، يُحيون بكتاب الله الموتى، ويصِّرون بنور الله أهل العمى، فكم من قتيل لإبليس قد أحياه، وكم من ضال تائه قد هدوه، فما أحسن آثارهم على الناس، وما أقبح آثار الناس عليهم، ينفون عن كتاب الله تحريف الغالين، وانتحال المبطلين، وتأويل الجاحدين الذين عقدوا ألوية البدعة، ونصبوا الأقدام على محاجِّ الهلكة، وتنكبوا [عن] طرق الهداية، وجروا في الجهل إلى أبعد غاية، انتهكت بهم الحرمات، واستبيح بتأويلهم المحظورات، فضلوا عن سواء السبيل، يقولون على الله في كتابه بغير علم به، ويتخالفون عن معارفه، فنعوذ بالله من فتنة المضلين، وأهواء الزائغين، وحمية الجاهلين، الذين على الله يفترون، وعلى أوليائه يجترئون، والحمد لله رب العالمين المتوحد بالفردانية، المتفرد بالوحدانية، الأول الذي لم يزل، والآخر الذي لا يزول، مبتدع الخلق ومفنيه، ومعيده ومُبدئه، الممتنع من الصفات، الذي لا يوصف بالذات، ولا تحويه^٢ المشاعر، ولا تبلغه الخواطر، وَلَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ [٦: ١٠٣].

وصلى الله على المصطفى والمرضى من أنبيائه، المنتجب من رسله، المبعوث إلى الجن والإنس بشيراً ونذيراً لإكمال الدين، وإتمام سنن المرسلين، بتبليغ الحجة، وإيضاء المحجة، صلاة تامة زاكية نامية غادية عليه ورائحة، وعلى الطيبين من عترته والصالحين من أمته والمتقين من أتباعهم وسلم تسليمًا.

واعلم أَلْهَمَكُ الله الرشد، وأرشدك للصواب، أن أول ما يجب على جميع

١ العلم: العالم، ص
يجترون: يجتزون، ص
تحويه: تحويه، ص

Abū Tammām on the Mubayyiḍa¹

Patricia Crone

In 1998 Wilferd Madelung and Paul Walker published a heresiographical chapter from a work by Abū Tammām, an Ismaili missionary active in the first half of the fourth/tenth century.² The section on the anthropomorphists in this heresiography includes an important account of the beliefs of the ‘White-clothed ones’ (Mubayyiḍa), identified as the followers of al-Muqannaʿ. In what follows, I examine this account, discussing its provenance, the light it throws on the beliefs of the sectarians in question and its importance for the later heresiographical tradition. Its importance is indicated by the fact that now that we have Abū Tammām’s text, the testimonies of al-Baghdādī (d. 429/1037), al-Isfarāʾīnī (d. 471/1027) and al-Shahrastānī (d. 54/1153) can be discarded.

Abū Tammām’s account falls into three distinct parts based on different sources. As will be seen, the third part reappears in slightly different forms in *al-Badʿ waʾl-taʾrīkh* by the Muʿtazilī al-Maḡdisī (wr. 355/966), as well as in the additions made to Narshakhī’s *Tārīkh-i Bukhārā* (compiled in Arabic in 332/943, but now lost) by Qubāwī when he translated it into Persian (in 522/1128), while both the first and the third part seem to have been known to al-Baghdādī (d. 429/1037) and al-Isfarāʾīnī (d. 471/1027). All these scholars were non-Ismailis, or even enemies of Ismailism. Are we to envisage them as sharing a source with Abū Tammām or did they draw on Abū Tammām himself? At first sight, the former possibility seems the more likely. Who, in that case, might the shared source have been? An obvious guess would be Abuʾl-Qāsim al-Balkhī (d. 319/931), also known as al-Kaʿbī, a Muʿtazilī theologian and heresiographer, whose *Maḡālāt* the editors hold to be the main source behind Abū Tammām’s heresiography as a whole.³ But in fact, al-Balkhī does not seem to be the source for the

Mubayyiḍa. Unfortunately, it is not possible to say for sure, for although two manuscripts of al-Balkhī's *Maqālāt* are extant and under preparation for publication in Jordan, they are not publicly accessible. However, Hüseyin Hansu, a specialist in al-Balkhī who has seen these manuscripts, kindly tells me that he does not recall encountering the Mubayyiḍa in them and that there is no entry on them in the table of contents, of which he has a copy. Further, neither al-Ash'arī nor Nashwān al-Ḥimyarī, who made extensive use of al-Balkhī's *Maqālāt*, mentions al-Muqanna' or the Mubayyiḍa. Nashwān does quote al-Balkhī as making a passing comment on sectarians of the same type as the Mubayyiḍa, but the comment does not fit Abū Tammām's account.⁴ In addition, Abū Tammām's opening paragraph would seem to rule out the possibility that he was drawing on al-Balkhī (see below, Part I (a)); and finally, the first authors outside Khurāsān to discuss al-Muqanna's doctrine, as opposed to his revolt, appear to be al-Maqdisī and al-Baghdādī, the very authors who share information with Abū Tammām. Since Abū Tammām was certainly known in 'Iraq, and apparently read there too, if not always with relish,⁵ the most economical solution is that the non-Ismaili scholars were drawing directly or indirectly on Abū Tammām himself.

Part I

(a) *God and His messengers (Madelung and Walker, 76f = 74–76)*

Abū Tammām starts by telling us that the Mubayyiḍa are the followers of al-Muqanna' (d. probably 163/779), of whom he observes that he claimed to be the Mahdī and that his real name was Hishām (not, as more commonly said, Hāshim) b. Ḥakīm al-Marwazī. This is all he says about al-Muqanna' himself. Of the Mubayyiḍa, however, he tells us that in their view, 'God is a subtle body (*jism laṭīf*) with length, breadth and depth', and 'all of the prophets are gods whose bodies are the messengers of God and whose spirits are God himself' (*inna'l-rusul kullahum āliha ajsāduhum rusul Allāh wa-arwāḥuhum nafsuhu*). 'Whenever God wants to speak to corporeal creatures, He enters the form (*ṣūra*) of one of them and makes that person a messenger to them, so that the latter may order them (to do) what He desires and wants, and forbid them (to do) what He does not want and what He is angered by.' In support of this view, the Mubayyiḍa will adduce Sura 53. Further, they say that God will only incarnate Himself at long intervals. He entered Adam when He created Him, then caused him to die and returned to His throne in the heavens. Later He created Noah and descended into his form, to return to His throne when he died.

The same happened with Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muḥammad, Abū Muslim and al-Muqannaʿ. Of each one of them we are told that first God descended into his form (*ṣūra*), then He caused him to die (*qabaḍahu*) and returned to His throne. Now the Mubayyiḍa are expecting His (God's, not al-Muqanna's) return and incarnation (*hulūl*) in the form that they are waiting for, so that He may make their religion manifest.

There are several new points here. That al-Muqannaʿ claimed to be the Mahdī is not mentioned elsewhere, but certainly fits in with what we know about him. One is more surprised to learn that the Mubayyiḍa described God as a subtle, three-dimensional body (*jism*), if only because it takes us into the technical language of *kalām*. The Mubayyiḍa normally come across as uneducated villagers. Of course, they could have had *mutakallims*, but the fact that al-Muqanna's name is given as Hishām is suspicious: the Shiʿi *mutakallim* Hishām b. al-Ḥakam (d. ca. 185/800) is well known to have held that God was a three-dimensional body.⁶ Did the author of this section confuse Hāshim b. al-Ḥakīm with Hishām b. al-Ḥakam? If so, he cannot be al-Balkhī, or for that matter Abū Tammām himself.⁷

The view that God's spirit incarnates itself in the human bodies (*ajsād*) of messengers, identified as bearers of God's commands, is familiar from other accounts of al-Muqannaʿ, but it is stated here with unexpected precision, and this is the first time we learn that the Mubayyiḍa would invoke the Qur'an in its support.⁸ Sura 53 famously describes a vision of a divine being, sometimes taken to be an angel and sometimes God, and the Mubayyiḍa took it to describe the very act of incarnation: when the Qur'an says that the one *terrible in power and very strong* stood poised, then drew near and *let himself down*, to stand *two bows length away*, they understood it as saying that the divine being came to be closer to Muḥammad than his own brain and heart; and when the Sura continues that the divine being *revealed to him what he revealed*, they held it to mean that it inspired (*alḥama*) Muḥammad to the point of entering his form (*dakhala fī ṣūratihī*).

The names of the men in whom God had manifested Himself according to al-Muqannaʿ are also familiar from other sources.⁹ It is often called a doctrine of *tanāsukh*,¹⁰ but what is being postulated is a doctrine of periodic divine incarnation, not of the migration of souls, or of the spirit of God, from one body to another: God returns to His throne after each incarnation, and the spirit always goes directly from Him to the human being selected. The Mubayyiḍa may well have believed in the transmigration of human souls as well, but on that subject our account is silent.

The men in whom God incarnates Himself are identified as messengers and implicitly seen as bringing a new revelation. The first six – Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muḥammad – are unproblematic. One expects al-Muqannaʿ to appear as the seventh and last, presiding over the end of times as the Mahdī. Instead, the seventh incarnation is Abū Muslim, with al-Muqannaʿ as the eighth. ʿAlī is not in the sequence, nor would one expect him to be, but one would not expect Abū Muslim to be in it either. Why should al-Muqannaʿ have cast Abū Muslim as a bringer of new revelation, only to abrogate it straightaway as the bringer of a new one himself? The Mubayyiḍa explicitly said that there were long periods in between the divine incarnations.

There is, of course, no reason to doubt that Abū Muslim mattered greatly in al-Muqannaʿʼs preaching. An undated coin from eighth-century Transoxiana identifies itself as struck by ʿHāshim, *wly Abā Muslim*, presumably to be read *walī Abī Muslim* (ʿAbū Muslimʼs friend/avenger, as the editor reads it, without discussing the unexpected accusative).¹¹ This Hāshim must be al-Muqannaʿ, who was known in some circles to have preached vengeance for Abū Muslim,¹² though Ibn Ḥazm seems to be the only heresiographer to mention it.¹³ Al-Muqannaʿ undoubtedly regarded Abū Muslim as divine as well. According to al-Thaʿālibī, he held the divine spirit to manifest itself in prophets and kings alike, including Abū Muslim,¹⁴ and Abū Muslim was a prophet according to the Rāwandīyya, who deified the ʿAbbasid caliph al-Manṣūr (r. 136–158/754–775) as the seventh and last imam.¹⁵ Not every prophet or king was an inaugurator of a new cycle, however. Abū Muslim appears in all complete versions of al-Muqannaʿʼs sequence of divine messengers, but the chances are that they all go back to a single source. Al-Baghdādī undoubtedly has his version from Abū Tammām, for he too gives al-Muqannaʿʼs name as Hishām.¹⁶ Most probably, then, Abū Muslim should be removed from the list.

It is of course also possible that it is al-Muqannaʿ himself who should be removed: he could have believed Abū Muslim to be the seventh and the last. This would fit the information in Ibn al-Athīr and Mīrkhwānd (ultimately perhaps from Sallāmī)¹⁷ that al-Muqannaʿ regarded Abū Muslim as more meritorious than Muḥammad: the import would be that Abū Muslim had brought the final revelation.¹⁸ In this interpretation, al-Muqannaʿ would have been Abū Muslimʼs *walī* and successor, still divine perhaps, but not the bringer of a new revelation, and not the Mahdī either, merely the imam and executor of Abū Muslimʼs abrogation of Muḥammadʼs revelation. But the information in Ibn al-Athīr and others is plucked from an unknown

context, and the sources are more likely to have misunderstood the role of Abū Muslim, about whom many widely different claims were made at the time, than that of al-Muqanna' himself. That they did in fact misunderstand the role of Abū Muslim in al-Muqanna's system is suggested by the information given in Abū Tammām's Part III (b), as will be seen.

Abū Tammām's account of the divine incarnations is unsophisticated: God actually leaves His throne in order to incarnate Himself in a human body. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya was later to say the same in connection with the Christian doctrine of divine incarnation, presumably to highlight the absurdity of the claim.¹⁹ Even so, Abū Tammām's account is interesting, but a full treatment of its implications must await another publication.

(b) *Laws and customs (Madelung and Walker, 77 = 76)*

By way of conclusion to the first section Abū Tammām tells us something about the laws of the Mubayyiḍa: they do not believe in exclusive sexual access to women, but hold them to be lawful for all of them (*istaḥallū fīmā baynahum al-nisā'*); and they also deem it lawful to eat carrion, blood, pork and other things,²⁰ claiming that God did not prohibit such things; rather, the words for the things seemingly prohibited are the names of men with whom it was forbidden to have social and political relations (*walāya*); conversely, the religious obligations (*farā'id*) were simply cover names for men with whom it is obligatory to have *walāya*. The identity of the men in question is not disclosed. Again, however, we are given snippets of their interpretation of the Qur'an. They would adduce Q. 5:93: *there is no fault in those who believe and do deeds of righteousness for what they ate*, and Q. 7:32: *who has forbidden the beautiful things (zīna) of God which He brought forth for His servants and the good things of sustenance (al-ṭayyibāt min al-rizq)?*

That the Mubayyiḍa rejected the idea of exclusive marital rights over women is what we are commonly told about all the sectarians subsumed under the label of Khurramīs. I shall come back to it below (Part II (a)). As regards their views on food, Abū Tammām's passage is notable for not mentioning vegetarianism, or more precisely the prohibition of killing living beings, which is attested for Mazdak and the western Khurramīs alike, but it should perhaps be seen as implied by the permission to eat carrion. At all events, the permission was not academic. Al-Mas'ūdī had seen 'a kind of Mazdakī Zoroastrians who have a village outside Rayy inhabited only by them'; when cattle died in Rayy or Qazwīn, one of them would come with his ox, load the dead animal on to it, and take it back

to their village, where they would eat it; most of their food, and indeed of their cattle, was fresh or dried meat of such animals, and they would use their bones in the construction of buildings.²¹ They must have been skilled in the art of judging what was and was not fit for consumption, and how to cook it, for this to be possible. That the 'Mazdakīs' in the countryside of Rayy would eat carrion is also mentioned in a letter by Maḥmūd of Ghazna (d. 421/1030) to the caliph al-Qādir bi'llāh (r. 381–422/991–1031) in 420/1029.²²

The allegorical interpretation of the dietary (and, one assumes, sexual) laws of the Qur'an and the term *walāya* are interesting for sounding vaguely Shi'i. The same interpretation is reported for other *ghulāt*, and all the reports may originate in one and the same source, which was not necessarily concerned with the Mubayyiḍa.²³ However this may be, there is no indication in this material that the Mubayyiḍa were Shi'is in the broad sense of being concerned with 'Alī and the Prophet's family. One tends to think of them as such because it was in Shi'ism that the idea of periodic manifestation of the deity was to surface as a Muslim phenomenon, along with features such as Mahdism, antinomianism (or anomianism), and allegorical interpretation of the scripture. All these features are present here, but it is with reference to Muḥammad and the Qur'an that the Mubayyiḍa are trying to Islamise them, not 'Alī or the imamate.

(c) Overall assessment

Leaving aside the apparent confusion with Hishām b. al-Ḥakam and the inclusion of Abū Muslim in the list of divine incarnations, Part I is a well-informed account by an author who may have been a Transoxianan himself. He seems to have taken an interest in sectarian use of the Qur'an, and since Qur'anic interpretations are quoted both at the beginning and the end of the section, he is likely to be responsible for all of it. Unfortunately, he cannot be securely identified. Al-Bīrūnī mentions Persian accounts (*akhbār*) of al-Muqanna' which he had translated into Arabic in his lost *Akḥbār al-Mubayyiḍa wa'l-Qarāmiṭa*, but exactly what he translated is hard to tell.²⁴ If we take al-Bīrūnī to be referring to a book called *Akḥbār al-Muqanna'*, the work he translated was perhaps the *Akḥbār al-Muqanna'* by a certain Ibrāhīm which is cited as a source in the *Tārikh-i Bukhārā*.²⁵ This fits the fact that al-Bīrūnī shares a source with the *Tārikh-i Bukhārā* in his *Āthār*.²⁶ The Ibrāhīm in question is probably Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad, known to Ibn al-Nadīm as an authority on Ishāq al-Turk. Ibn al-Nadīm says that he was 'learned about the Muslimiyya'.²⁷ This Ibrāhīm is most

likely to have written in Arabic, but his work could have been translated into Persian by the time al-Bīrūnī read it and translated it (back?) into Arabic. Unfortunately, however, Ibrāhīm's book is also lost and he himself is otherwise unknown.²⁸ Ibn al-Nadīm knew of him only because he had read an apparently anonymous history of Transoxiana²⁹ which does not seem to have been widely disseminated.³⁰ But if Ibrāhīm is the source behind both the *Tārikh-i Bukhārā* and Part I of Abū Tammām, all the extant lists of the divine incarnations in al-Muqanna's system go back to him.³¹

Part II

(a) *First-hand observations (Madelung and Walker, 77f = 76f)*

Abū Tammām continues with a section written in the first person singular, starting 'I have seen a great number of them and have disputed with them.' One assumes this to be Abū Tammām speaking, but it cannot be taken for granted since mediaeval authors would readily copy statements in the first person singular from other sources. Whoever he is, the speaker proceeds to report that,

none of them has much understanding of any of the principles of their faith nor are they acquainted with al-Muqanna' and his era, except the learned among them. All there is to it is neglect of prayer, fasting and washing for major ritual impurity. They practise dissimulation and do not admit outsiders into their ranks or intermarry with them, though they live interspersed with Muslims.

To some extent, all this is in accordance with expectation: that the Khurramīs and related sectarians ignored the ritual precepts of Islam is widely stated in other sources, and it fits the information on the sexual and dietary habits of the Mubayyiḍa in Part I. That they practised dissimulation is also widely noted, and their refusal to intermarry with outsiders makes sense. But in Part I al-Muqanna' figures prominently in their religious system; here, they do not remember him, except for the learned among them. How is this to be explained?

If the same author is responsible for Parts I and II, he could simply be describing the views of the learned in Part I and the ignorant laity in Part II; but al-Muqanna' can hardly have been crucial to the religious leaders without the laity knowing about him too. More probably, Part I is excerpted from an earlier source, the putative Ibrāhīm, whereas Part II is based on the author's personal observations. Who was the author?

If he is al-Balkhī, he would have made his observations in the region of Balkh and added them to an account of al-Muqanna's followers on the assumption that all sectarians of this type were the same: if so, they would indeed know nothing about al-Muqanna', except insofar as the learned among them had read about him in other people's works, for the Balkhīs did not participate in his revolt. But it does not seem to be al-Balkhī who is speaking here. Both Nashwān al-Ḥimyarī and Ibn al-Nadīm quote him as calling sectarians of this type Muslimiyya; Ibn al-Nadīm has him add that some people call them Khurramdiniyya, but neither credits him with use of the term Mubayyiḍa. Further, Nashwān quotes him as saying, 'Here with us in Balkh there is a group of them who permit unlawful things according to what has reached me about them',³² while Ibn al-Nadīm has him say, 'It has reached me that here with us in Balkh there is a group of them in the village called Kharsādwiljānī/Khurramābād.'³³ The information accords with our account, of course, but the wording is not suggestive of Abū Tammām, nor does al-Balkhī sound here like a man who had personally disputed with the people in question.

Most probably, it really is Abū Tammām who is speaking here. An Ismaili missionary, he will have toured the countryside disputing with the locals in an effort to win converts, shocked by, and seeking to rectify, their religious ignorance. We know the Ismailis were at work among the same type of Khurramī villagers at a later time in western Iran.³⁴ Abū Tammām came from Nishāpūr (judging from his *nisba*) and was patronised partly by Muṭarrif b. Muḥammad, a vizier of Mardāwīj (d. 323/930) in western Iran, and partly by the Saffarid Abū Ja'far Ibn Bānū (d. 923/963) in Sīstān;³⁵ whether he was ever in Transoxiana we do not know. If it was in Rayy or Sīstān that he disputed with Khurramīs, it would once again be unsurprising that they knew nothing about al-Muqanna', who had nothing to do with them. The one Ismaili missionary who certainly knew the area which had been involved in al-Muqanna's revolt is al-Nasafī (d. 331/943 or later), a native of Nasaf who converted the Samanid Naṣr II and his court at Bukhārā to Ismailism.³⁶ He was learned about Iranian religion, too, and Abū Tammām could in principle have extracted Part II, including the first-person formulation, from a work of his. But there is nothing to show that he did,³⁷ so it is simpler to accept that Abū Tammām is giving us his own observations.

The report on the dire religious state of the Mubayyiḍa also appears in the *Tārīkh-i Bukhārā*. Here the Persian translator Qubāwī starts with a comment of his own: 'Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Naṣr [Qubāwī] says, "Those people still remain in the districts of Kish and Nakhshab and

some of the villages of Bukhārā, such as the castle of ‘Umar, the castle of Khākhushthuwan and the village of Zarmān.” This probably represents his own observation, since he lived in Bukhārā, gives us the names of villages in the Bukhārā region, and later reports his conversation with the elders of one such village. But he proceeds without any indication of change of source to the statement ‘their religion is that they do not pray, fast, or perform major ritual ablution. But they are trustworthy (*biḥ-amānat bāshand*). All this they conceal from the Muslims, claiming to be Muslims.’ One thinks that this is Qubāwī quoting his observations in the villages of Bukhārā, but in fact it is Qubāwī quoting Abū Tammām. The latter has, ‘All there is to it [their religion] is neglect of prayer, fasting and washing for major ritual impurity. They practise dissimulation...’, later adding, however, that they are trustworthy (*lahum ma’a hādhā kullih amāna*, see below, (c)).³⁸ Qubāwī could be suspected of deliberately trying to disguise the fact that he is using an Ismaili author. In any case, he is moving Abū Tammām’s observations from Rayy, or wherever they were made, to the Bukhārā region, which had indeed been involved in al-Muqanna’s revolt, but which probably was not where Abū Tammām had been active.

Abū Tammām goes on to say that the Mubayyiḍa regard sharing women among themselves as lawful. He has made this point already in Part I, but here it seems to be based on first-hand information, for, he explains,

They say that a woman is like a fragrant herb (*rayḥāna*) that is not diminished by the one who smells it. If one of their men desires to be alone with a woman belonging to another of them, he enters that man’s house and puts a marker (*‘alāma*) on the door, showing that he is inside. When her husband comes back and recognises the marker, he does not go in, but leaves until the other has satisfied his desire.

To this he adds a piece of information from ‘Amr b. Muḥammad from a shaykh from Bukhārā: ‘Every group of these Mubayyiḍa have a chief (*ra’īs*) who is appointed to deflower their women on the night of the marriage procession. That I have not verified myself. Only God knows for sure.’ The author’s careful insistence that he has no first-hand knowledge of this reinforces the impression that the preceding information he had gathered for himself.

There is every reason to believe these observations: like other Khurramīs, the Mubayyiḍa did share women in some sense. But Abū Tammām’s claim that a man visiting a woman would leave a mark by the door suggests that what he is talking about is the institution known to

anthropologists as polyandry, well attested (*inter alia*) in its fraternal form in Tibet up to modern times: brothers would leave the family property undivided and share a wife, to whose sons the family property would pass undivided in its turn; if there were no sons, the property would pass to the eldest daughter, who could take as many husbands as she liked. In essence it was a system in which it did not matter who sired the future heirs as long as either their mother or their father was a transmitter of the family property. The men could have other wives on the side, but their children would not inherit, unless the men split up and divided the property, which was strongly resisted.³⁹ The system 'is really a sort of family communism in wives', as an Indian High Court judge noted in 1954 with reference to that current in his own district; 'it is a joint family both in property and in wives'.⁴⁰ Where this system (and/or its non-fraternal counterpart) has been practised, there tend to be stories of hats, spears, shields or other markers being left by the door, though it is not clear what basis this has in reality.⁴¹ The existence of such family communism in Iran is attested in Chinese reports, in recently published Bactrian documents,⁴² and in al-Bīrūnī on the region from northern Afghanistan to Kashmir.⁴³ It is attested well before Mazdak,⁴⁴ to whose ideas it is undoubtedly relevant. Whether it can account for all the reports of Khurramī views on women is another question which I shall once more have to defer to another publication.

The passage on the peculiar marital system of the Mubayyiḍa also appears in the *Tārikh-i Bukhārā*, complete with the sweet-smelling flower and the marker by the door, but Qubāwī adds an interesting observation of his own, not about the wife-sharing, but rather about the custom of having a chief deflower the bride on the night before the wedding, which Abū Tammām had quoted on the authority of a Bukhāran. 'Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Naṣr (Qubāwī) says: "I asked the elders of the village what was the sense of allowing such great pleasure to this one man, while the rest were deprived of it." The answer he received was not that a chief claimed *droit de seigneur*, as one might have expected, but rather that he was collecting payment for services he had rendered to the grooms: 'Their rule was that every youth who reached maturity should satisfy his need with this person until he should marry a woman. His repayment for that was that the wife should stay with him for the first night.' Qubāwī adds that when the man became old, another would be appointed in his place and that the local name for such a person was *tkāna* (or *thkhāna*). Incongruously, he retains Abū Tammām's cautionary remark: 'I do not know whether this is true', only to repeat, 'I heard this story from the

elders of the village, and from the inhabitants who live in these villages.’⁴⁵

What is interesting about this, apart from Qubāwī’s desire to get to the bottom of things, is that the Bukhāran *shaykh* quoted by Abū Tammām had heard of this institution at least a century and possibly two before Qubāwī went out to ask about it: the village elders nonetheless recognised it and provided a name and a rationale for it. So the institution was both real and long-lived, odd though it sounds. It is a pity that it was only the sensationalist aspects of rural life that could induce the townsmen to do field work of this kind.

(b) *Later confusion*

Abū Tammām continues by noting that despite their lack of legal observance, the Mubayyiḍa are trustworthy (*lahum ma’a hādihā amāna*): they do not cheat or steal or harm people in any way. As we have seen, the *Tārīkh-i Bukhārā* reduces this to the statement that they are trustworthy (*bih amānat bāshand*) and inserts it in the account of their antinomianism. Shahrastānī must have read this, for after telling us (on the basis of al-Baghdādī) that al-Muqanna’ began as an adherent of the Rizāmiyya and that his followers are the Mubayyiḍa of Transoxiana, he adds that they ‘believe in omitting the legal precepts, saying that religion consists in knowledge of the imam alone; some of them say that religion consists of (just) two things: knowledge of the imam and faithfully discharging trusts (*adā’ al-amāna*)’.⁴⁶ The imams have presumably been imported from the Muslimiyya, of whom the Rizāmiyya were supposed to be a subdivision: it was the Muslimiyya who allegedly held knowledge of the imam to be the only obligation, since it would cause all the religious precepts to fall away.⁴⁷ The rest is a confused version of Qubāwī translated back into Arabic. In the *Tabṣirat al-‘awāmm*, compiled by an unknown author of the first half of the seventh/thirteenth century and attributed to Ḥasanī Rāzī, Shahrastānī’s account has turned into a claim that, for al-Muqanna’’s followers, ‘religion consists of two things, first knowledge of the imams and secondly, regard for the imamate (*imāmat nigahdāshtan*)’.⁴⁸

Part III

(a) *Mahdism and other beliefs* (Madelung and Walker, 78f = 77)

Abū Tammām now returns to a written source, which cannot be identical with that in Part I, partly because the information does not accord with it and partly because the author reflected in Part III had a predilection for

rhctorical repetition which is not found in the first two parts.⁴⁹

After telling us about the trustworthiness of the Mubayyiḍa, Abū Tammām continues that they will avoid bloodshed when they are at peace, but allow it when they raise the banner of revolt. In every locality (*balad*) they have a chief whom they call *farmānsālār* and with whom they meet in secret. They maintain that the Mahdī who will arise at the end of times is al-Mahdī b. Fīrūz b. ‘Imrān and that he is a descendant of Fāṭima, the daughter of Abū Muslim. They also have messengers (*rusul*) and ambassadors (*sufarā’*) who move about among ṭhēm and whom they call *firishtagān*, that is to say *malā’ika*, angels. ‘They do not rise in the morning except upon the promise of moving this day’, presumably meaning that they expect the appearance of the Mahdī any moment. They also believe in the *raj’a*, but we are not told exactly what they mean by it.

There is no trace of this section in the *Tārīkh-i Bukhārā*, but in al-Maqdisī we also read that the Khurramīs will avoid bloodshed except when they tie the banner of revolt, and that they have messengers (*rusul*) whom they call *firishtagān*. Al-Maqdisī does not mention their *farmānsālār*, merely that they have imams to whom they refer in matters of *ahkām*. But he too says that they make much of Abū Muslim and curse al-Manṣūr for having killed him, and he too identifies the Mahdī who will rise at the end of times as al-Mahdī b. Fīrūz, a descendant of Fāṭima, daughter of Abū Muslim. Their belief in the *raj’a* is also mentioned, again without specification of what they meant by it. Since Abū Tammām is describing the Mubayyiḍa of Transoxiana, whereas al-Maqdisī knew the Khurramīs from visits to the Jibāl, one initially thinks al-Maqdisī is shifting information from an eastern to a western locale. But as will be seen (below, (b)), it is more likely to be Abū Tammām who was doing so.

Al-Maqdisī adds some observations on their attitude to wine and their religion as rooted in light-darkness dualism, whereupon he continues:

Those whom we have seen in their homes in Māsābadhān and Mihrijānqadhaq we found to be exceedingly attentive to cleanliness (*nizāfa*) and purity (*ṭahāra*), and very friendly and helpful to people. We found some who believed in holding women in common, with the women’s consent, and in deeming lawful everything which the self delights in and desires by nature, as long as nobody is harmed by it.⁵⁰

Once again, we find that a scholar has tried to get to the bottom of things by going to hear for himself, in his case in Khurramī villages in the Jibāl. That the Khurramīs do not observe the ritual precepts of Islam seems to be taken for granted: what al-Maqdisī stresses is that they were

an extremely clean people, perhaps in tacit polemic against a supposition that they must be filthy; and his insistence that they were exceedingly kind people could perhaps be seen as directed against Abū Tammām's description of them as secretive and inward-turned. He confirms that some of them believed in sharing women, with the women's consent (which is not suggestive of fraternal polyandry), but here too the nuanced tone in which he reports suggests a desire to correct stereotypes.

(b) *Imams (Madelung and Walker, 78f = 77)*

Abū Tammām continues:

These people claim that when God returned to His throne after His departure from the body (*qālab*) of Muḥammad, He sent His spirit to 'Alī, on whom be peace, and after him to Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya, and then after him to his son Abū Hāshim, and so on (*wāḥidan ba'da wāḥid*) until God incarnated Himself in the shape of Abū Muslim. But then He returned to His throne after leaving the shape of Abū Muslim. Next He sent His spirit to Abu'l-Muḍar (*sic*), who went to Byzantium. Al-Mahdī b. Firūz will come forth from Byzantium at the end of time according to their claims.

This is strikingly different from the doctrinal summary given in Part I. Most obviously, the divine incarnations are no longer messengers who appear at long intervals from Adam onwards, bringing new revelations, but rather imams who take over from Muḥammad and follow one another in an uninterrupted sequence down to the Mahdī at the end of times. In line with this, the focus is now on the Prophet's family, which does not figure in Part I at all: the divine spirit here passes from Muḥammad to 'Alī, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya, Abū Hāshim, and so on down to Abū Muslim, and from there to a certain Abu'l-Muḍar (a mistake for Abū Muḍar or a corruption?). Further, the orientation is western: we move from Abū Muslim to Abu'l-Muḍar, of whom we are told that he went to Byzantium; and it is from Byzantium that the descendant of Abū Muslim will come forth as the Mahdī at the end of times. Finally, al-Muqanna' himself has disappeared from the list.

The imamic sequence from 'Alī via Ibn al-Ḥanafīyya to Abū Hāshim is famous due to the claim that Abū Hāshim bequeathed the imamate to the 'Abbasids. In the sequence described by Abū Tammām, it is not to the 'Abbasids that the imamate is transferred, but rather to Abū Muslim via an undisclosed sequence of imams in between – *wāḥidan ba'da wāḥid*, as

we are told, despite the brief period involved – and from Abū Muslim it continues in the descendants of the latter's daughter Fāṭima, as a non-Arab counterpart to the imamate in the descendants of Fāṭima, the daughter of Muḥammad. The message is that Abū Muslim is the true heir of the Prophet, not the 'Abbasids, who had simply usurped a bequest made to Abū Muslim, and not the 'Alids either, since their rights had passed from Abū Hāshim to Abū Muslim. This elevation of Abū Muslim to the position of true, and indeed divine, imam over and above the entire Hāshimī family undoubtedly represents a response to Abū Muslim's murder, quite possibly in Khurāsān, among Iranians who would later be known under labels such as Muslimiyya, Khurramiyya and Mubayyiḍa. The question is what, if anything, it has to do with al-Muqanna'.

In principle, widely spaced bringers of revelation are perfectly compatible with continuous sequences of imams: the two conceptions were brilliantly combined in Ismailism (with both the bringers of revelation and the imams shorn of their divinity). But if Abū Muslim received the imamate from the 'Alids to start a line of divine Iranian imams, what was al-Muqanna' doing as a messenger bringing a new revelation immediately thereafter? Differently put, the idea of Abū Muslim as imam rested on acceptance of the continuing validity of Muḥammad's revelation: the claim was only that Iranian leaders of a divine nature knew better than anyone else what its real meaning was. By contrast, al-Muqanna' was a messenger who abrogated Muḥammad's revelation, or conceivably he cast Abū Muslim in that role (as discussed above, Part I (a)): either way, the imamic claims transmitted from Muḥammad's family were irrelevant. There are no imams in eastern sources such as Narshakhī, Abu'l-Ma'ālī, Gardīzī, al-Bīrūnī, or Abū Tammām's Part I because there is no room for them; and when sources displaying familiarity with Abū Tammām's Part III try to combine the two conceptions, the result is always apparently confusing.

There is an example of this in al-Maqdisī, who tells us in his account of al-Muqanna's revolt that al-Muqanna' held the divine spirit to have manifested itself in Adam, Seth, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muḥammad, 'Alī, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya and al-Muqanna' himself.⁵¹ Here, Seth seems to have been added to make Muḥammad the seventh lawgiver, for what follows is an imamic sequence: the imams are 'Alī, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya and al-Muqanna', who thus takes the place of Abū Hāshim.⁵² No doubt this is why the list of divine incarnations in Abu'l-Ma'ālī culminates in al-Muqanna' under the name of *Abū Hāshim*.⁵³ But if al-Muqanna' saw himself as an imam, he must have seen himself as taking over from

Abū Muslim, and here Abū Muslim has disappeared, both as a messenger *and* as a recipient of the imamate from Abū Hāshim. In Abū Tammām, Part III, where Abū Muslim takes over the imamate from Abū Hāshim, it is al-Muqanna' who has disappeared. The most obvious explanation is that the imamic sequence did not originally have anything to do with al-Muqanna' at all, and that al-Maqdisi's attempt to combine them reflects the problem posed by Abū Tammām's strangely contradictory material: he reported both, without any attempt to show how they went together.

Al-Baghdādī, who reveals his dependence on Abū Tammām's Part I by giving al-Muqanna's name as Hishām b. Hakīm, also does his best to reconcile the information: he gives us the standard sequence of messengers from Adam to al-Muqanna', but inserts 'Alī into it, undoubtedly because he also knew Part III.⁵⁴ Similarly, al-Isfarā'inī, whose account shares the name Hishām and other information with Abū Tammām's, inserts 'Alī and his descendants into the sequence of divine messengers, yet continues it with Abū Muslim and al-Muqanna'.⁵⁵

We do not know how al-Muqanna' envisaged the transmission of religious guidance in between the periodic incarnations of God's spirit in the lawgiving messengers, and since the only period for which the question was relevant was that of Islam, he may not even have thought of it, for he was the last divine incarnation, the Mahdī. What Abū Tammām's material does allow us to see is that the inclusion of Abū Muslim in the standard list of messengers is most likely to represent an addition caused by the confusion of al-Muqanna' with other Khurāsānīs, who saw him as the heir to Abū Hāshim. To outsiders, all those who talked about both Abū Muslim and manifestations of the divine spirit on earth had to be the same.

Where, then, did Abū Tammām find his imamic sequence in Part III? Though it may have originated in Khurāsān, it is in western Iran that we encounter it: by the later third/ninth century, Abū Muslim had come to be identified as the progenitor of Bābak via his daughter Fātima and her real or alleged son, Muṭahhar.⁵⁶ The Khurramīs of the Jibāl were Muslimiyya, Ja'far b. Ḥarb tells us,⁵⁷ and Bābak's people were Fātimiyya Khurramīs, al-Mas'ūdī says.⁵⁸ It is in connection with the Khurramīs of the Jibāl that al-Maqdisi reports the expectation of Mahdī b. Firūz, a descendant of Fātima, daughter of Abū Muslim.⁵⁹ It is in connection with the Khurramī revolts in the Jibāl that Nizām al-Mulk reports the same (though given his view that Khurramīs and all other sects remotely like them were essentially the same, this may be more by accident than design).⁶⁰ The Ismaili chronicler Dihkhudā reports that the 'Mazdakīs' of

Azarbayjan who accepted Ismailism in the time of Ḥasan-i Šabbāḥ, only to repudiate it in 536/1141, believed the imamate to have passed from ‘Alī via Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya, Abū Hāshim and the ‘Abbasid Ibrāhīm al-Imām to Abū Muslim and his daughter, after which the imam went to Byzantium, from whence he would return.⁶¹ Of the Qarāmiṭa, too, we are told that they believed their Mahdī, Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl, to have gone to Rūm.⁶² In 218/833, when a major Khurramī revolt in the Jibāl was bloodily suppressed, one of the rebel leaders had escaped to Byzantium with a large number of followers;⁶³ it could be the memory of this man which lies behind the story of the Mahdī who would come from Byzantium.

In short, Abū Tammām seems to have incorporated an account of Khurramīs based on information relating to the Jibāl and Azarbayjan (and perhaps Rayy as well) into an account of Transoxianan sectarians of the same type on the common assumption that their beliefs will have been the same. One did not have to share Niẓām al-Mulk’s outlook to think that this was a legitimate procedure. Where Abū Tammām may have found it I do not know. He did make a slight attempt to harmonise it with the information in Part I by using the distinctive phrase ‘when God returned to His throne’ in Part III as well. But he left the word for ‘form’ as *qālab* instead of changing it to *ṣūra*, the word consistently used in Part I, and above all he left the two sequences as they were, in all their blatant incompatibility. One is grateful for that. Had he tried to harmonise them, it would probably have been impossible to unravel them.

In conclusion, the main findings may be summarised as follows: Abū Tammām’s three parts appear to be based on a book by a certain Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad (wr. before the mid-fourth/tenth century), his own observations, and an unknown account relating to Khurramīs in western Iran respectively. The Muqanna‘iyya (reflected in Part I) and the Muslimiyya (reflected in Part III) adhered to different doctrines, however closely connected these groups may have been on the ground. The inclusion of Abū Muslim in al-Muqanna‘’s list of divine incarnations is probably a mistake. And heresiographical accounts of al-Muqanna‘ written after Abū Tammām, notably al-Baghdādī and Shahrastānī, can be regarded as irrelevant to this enquiry.

Notes

1. I should like to thank Michael Cook for his most useful comments on this chapter.
2. Wilferd Madelung and Paul E. Walker, ed. and tr., *An Ismaili Heresiography*:

- The 'Bāb al-shayṭān' from Abū Tammām's Kitāb al-shajara (Leiden, 1998), 76–79 = 74–77. In what follows, I use their translation, but not always exactly as it stands. Where figures are given in the form 107 = 57, the first figure refers to the text and the second to the translation.
3. Madelung and Walker, *Heresiography*, pp. 10ff. Van Ess suggests that Abū Tammām's source might be al-Nāshī' al-Aṣghar, though the latter died in 365/975 or 366/976, after Abū Tammām's presumed floruit (Joseph van Ess, 'Le Mi'rāḡ et la vision de Dieu', in Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, ed., *Le Voyage initiatique en terre d'Islam*, Louvain and Paris, 1996, pp. 27–56).
 4. Cf. below, notes 32f.
 5. Al-Ḥarīrī/Jarīrī mentions him in his famous outburst against attempts to combine *sharī'a* and *falsafa*, characterising him as a Shi'i and briefly identifying his approach as having been similar to that of his contemporaries, the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' and Abū Zayd al-Balkhī (d. 322/934); see Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawhīdī, *Kitāb al-Imtā' wa'l-mu'ānasa*, ed. Aḥmad Amīn and Aḥmad Zayn (Beirut, 1939–1944), vol. 2, pp. 15. My thanks to Omar Alī-de-Unzaga for reminding me of this passage.
 6. Cf. al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, ed. Hellmut Ritter (Istanbul, 1929–1933), pp. 31f; translated with further references in Joseph van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. jahrhundert hidschra* (Berlin and New York, 1991–1997), v, pp. 72f; discussed at i, pp. 358ff.
 7. Abū Tammām was well informed about Hishām b. al-Ḥakam, whose position he reports in a long section on the Hishāmiyya (Madelung and Walker, *Heresiography*, 56 = 59).
 8. Later sources, however, know the Mubayyiḍa to have adduced God's command to the angels to worship Adam as proof of Adam's divinity; see Ibn Khallikān, *Wafāyāt al-a'yān wa anba' abnā' al-zamān*, ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās (Beirut, 1978), vol. 3, p. 263; Mīrkhwānd, *Tārikh-i rawḍat al-ṣafā'*, ed. Jamshīd Kiyānfār (Tehran, 1380 Sh./2001), vol. 3, p. 2573.
 9. The complete list is given in Narshakhī, *Tārikh-i Bukhārā*, Persian tr. Abū Naṣr Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Naṣr al-Qubāwī (d. 522/1128), ed. Charles Schefer (Paris, 1892), pp. 64f; ed. Muḥammad Taqī Mudarris Raḍawī (Tehran, 1351 Sh./1972), p. 91; tr. Richard N. Frye, *The History of Bukhara* (Cambridge, MA, 1954), p. 66; Abu'l-Ma'ālī, *Bayān al-adyān*, ed. Ḥāshim Riḍā (Tehran, 1342 Sh./1964), p. 58; Gardizī, *Tārikh-i Gardizī*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥayy Ḥabībī (Tehran, 1363 Sh./1984), p. 278, the last with some of the same wording as in Abū Tammām. Many others have the list in an abbreviated form. For divergent versions, see below, Part III (b).
 10. For the earliest examples, see al-Jāhīz, *Kitāb al-Bayān wa'l-tabyīn*, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Ḥārūn (2nd ed., Cairo, 1380/1960–1961), vol. 3, pp. 102f; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh al-rusul wa'l-mulūk*, ed. M. J. de Goeje et al. (Leiden, 1879–1901), vol. 3, p. 484; al-Maqdisī, *Kitāb al-Bad' wa'l-ta'rikh*, ed. and French tr. Clément Huart as *Le livre de la création et de l'histoire* (Paris, 1899–1919), vol. 6, p. 97.

11. Boris Kochnev, 'Les monnaies de Muqanna', *Studia Iranica*, 30 (2001), pp. 143–150.
12. Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 3, p. 773; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi'l-ta'rikh*, ed. Carl Johan Tornberg (Beirut, 1965–1967), vol. 6, p. 224 (year 193); Muḥammad b. 'Abdūs al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-Wuzarā' wa'l-kuttāb*, ed. Muṣṭafā al-Saqqā et al. (Cairo, 1938), p. 277 ult.
13. Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Faṣl fi'l-milal wa'l-ahwā' wa'l-niḥal* (Cairo, 1317–1321/1899–1903), vol. 4, p. 187.
14. Al-Tha'libī, *Ādāb al-mulūk*, ed. Jalīl al-'Aṭiyya (Beirut, 1990), p. 37 (drawn to my attention by Hassan Ansari); for further discussion, see Patricia Crone, *The Nativist Revolts of Early Islamic Iran and Regional Zoroastrianism*, ch. 6 (forthcoming).
15. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Kitāb Firaq al-Shi'a*, ed. Helmut Ritter (Istanbul, 1931), p. 47; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam fi ta'rikh al-mulūk wa'l-umam*, ed. Fritz Krenkow (Hyderabad, 1357–1362/1938–1943); ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā' and Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā' (Beirut, 1992), vol. 8, pp. 29f. (year 141).
16. Al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq bayn al-firaq*, ed. Muḥammad Badr (Cairo, 1328/1910), p. 243 ult.
17. C. Edmund Bosworth, 'al-Sallāmī', *EI2*, vol. 8, p. 996.
18. Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, vol. 6, p. 39 (year 159); Mirkhwānd, *Ta'rikh-i rawḍat al-ṣafā'*, vol. 3, p. 2573.
19. Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, 'Some Neglected Aspects of Medieval Muslim Polemics against Christianity', *Harvard Theological Review*, 89 (1996), p. 81, with reference to Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Hidāyat al-ḥayārā*, ed. Sayf al-Din al-Kātib (Beirut, n.d.), p. 191.
20. Reproduced in al-Isfarā'īnī, *al-Tabṣīr fi'l-dīn wa tamyīz al-firqa al-nājiya 'an al-firaq al-hākilīn*, ed. Kamāl Yūsuf al-Ḥūt (Beirut, 1983), 132.4 (*yastahillūna akl al-mayta wa'l-khinzīr*).
21. Al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab, wa ma'ādin al-jawhar*, ed. Charles Pellat (Beirut, 1966–1979), vol. 2, §868; ed. and French tr. Charles Barbier de Meynard and Abel Pavet de Courteille as *Les paires d'or* (Paris, 1861–1877), vol. 3, p. 27.
22. Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, Hyderabad ed., vol. 8, pp. 39f (year 420).
23. Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, pp. 6, 10, on the followers of 'Abd Allāh b. Mu'āwiya and the Maṣṣūriyya, in similar wording and Q. 5:93 (but without 7:32); al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq al-Shi'a*, pp. 38, 39, on the Khaṭṭābiyya, in different wording and Q. 4:28 (not adduced by the Mubayyiḍa).
24. Al-Birūnī, *al-Āthār al-bāqiya 'an al-qurūn al-khāliya*, ed. Eduard Sachau (Leipzig, 1878, repr. 1923), p. 211; tr. Eduard Sachau as *The Chronology of Ancient Nations* (London, 1879).
25. Narshakhī, *Tārīkh-i Bukhārā*, ed. Schefer, pp. 64, 72; ed. Raḍawī, pp. 90, 101; tr. Frye, pp. 65, 74. This was first suggested by Gholam Hossein Sadighi, Persian tr. as *Junbishhā-yi dīnī-yi Irānī dar qarnhā-yi duwwum wa siwwum-i hijra* (Tehran, 1372/1993), p. 210 (originally published in French as *Les*

- mouvements religieux iraniens au II^e et III^e siècle de l'hégire* in Paris, 1938); similarly Tūraj Tābān, 'Qiyām-i Muqanna', *Īrān Shināsī*, 1 (1989), p. 533; see also M. Rawshan's notes to his edition of the Persian translation by Bal'amī of Ṭabari's *Ta'riḫ*, *Tāriḫ-nāma-yi Ṭabari*, Persian tr. attributed to Abū 'Alī Muḥammad Bal'amī (d. 363/974), ed. Muḥammad Rawshan (Tehran, 1366 Sh./1987), vol. 3, p. 1593.
26. Both give the duration of al-Muqanna's revolt as fourteen years, and both have an unusual date for the end of the revolt which is probably one and the same: the year 167^{AH} in the *Tāriḫ-i Bukhārā*, *ibid.*, and 169^{AH} in Birūnī's *Āthār*, p. 211. Examples of *sab'a* being read as *tis'a* are legion.
 27. Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, p. 408.
 28. Al-Ṭabari, *Ta'riḫ*, vol. 3, pp. 652, 654, 1809, cites two authorities by the name of Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad, but they are reporting different kinds of events and unlikely to be relevant.
 29. Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, p. 408. He refers to the author as *ṣāhib Kitāb Akhbār Mā Warā' al-Nahr min Khurāsān*; cf. *ḥākī hādha'l-khabar* a few lines above. One suspects that the manuscript had lost its frontispiece.
 30. Iṣḥāq al-Turk is known only from Ibn al-Nadīm.
 31. Both Abu'l-Ma'ālī and Gardīzī (above, note 9) are clearly dependent on Narshakhī.
 32. Nashwān b. Sa'īd al-Ḥimyarī, *al-Ḥūr al-'īn*, ed. Kamāl Muṣṭafā (Baghdad and Cairo, 1948), p. 160.
 33. Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, p. 408. Khurramābād is the reading of Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm*, p. 824, presumably of what I have rendered as Kharsād (all readings are conjectural). Tajaddud's edition suggests two names, though the text only speaks of one village.
 34. Wilferd Madelung, *Religious Trends in Early Islamic Iran* (Albany, NY, 1988), pp. 9ff (mid-sixth/twelfth century).
 35. Al-Tawḥīdī, *Imtā'*, vol. 2, p. 15; Joel Kraemer, *Philosophy in the Renaissance of Islam: Abū Sulaymān al-Sijistānī and His Circle* (Leiden, 1986), pp. 17f.
 36. For al-Nasafi's death date, see Patricia Crone and Luke Treadwell, 'A New Text on Ismailism at the Samanid Court', in Chase F. Robinson, ed., *Texts, Documents and Artefacts: Islamic Studies in Honour of D. S. Richards* (Leiden, 2003), p. 47.
 37. Cf. Samuel M. Stern, 'Abū Ḥatīm al-Rāzī on Persian Religion', in his *Studies in Early Ismā'īlism* (Jerusalem, 1983), ch. 2. Neither al-Muqanna' nor the Mubayyiḍa are mentioned here.
 38. Narshakhī, *Tāriḫ-i Bukhārā*, ed. Schefer 73.13, ed. Raḍawī, 103.6. Frye translates 'Still, they remain in safety', understanding the statement in the light of the new context it has been moved to (*The History of Bukhara*, p. 75).
 39. For a minutely detailed account of all known cases with special reference to field work conducted in Tibet in 1938–1939, 1949 and intermittently between 1950 and 1957, see Prince Peter of Greece and Denmark, *A Study of Polyandry* (The Hague, 1968).

40. Quoted in Peter, *Polyandry*, p. 83.
41. See Peter, *Polyandry*, p. 60 (Strabo's Yemen), p. 94 (Nayars), p. 99 (Ceylon), p. 314 (Tibetans who thought that such markers had been used in the past), pp. 314, 375, 451 (Tibetans who found the idea hilarious).
42. Kazuo Enoki, 'On the Nationality of the Hephtalites', *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko*, 18 (1959), pp. 51ff; Nicholas Sims-Williams, ed., *Bactrian Documents from Northern Afghanistan: I, Legal and Economic Documents* (Oxford, 2000), documents A, X, Y, which were drawn up in 343, 760 and 782 AD or, ten years earlier, according to François de Blois, 'Du nouveau sur la chronologie bactrienne post-hellénistique: l'ère de 223–224 ap. J.-C.', *Compte rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* (April–June, 2006), pp. 991–907. My thanks to Kevin van Bladel for putting me on to this material.
43. Al-Bīrūnī, *Tahqīq mā li'l-Hind*, ed. Eduard Sachau (London, 1887), p. 52; tr. Eduard Sachau as *al-Beruni's India* (2nd ed., London, 1910), vol. 1, pp. 108f.
44. See the document drawn up in 343, above, note 42.
45. Narshakhi, *Tārikh-i Bukhārā*, ed. Schefer, pp. 73f; ed. Raḍawī, pp. 103f; tr. Frye, pp. 75f.
46. Al-Shahrastānī, *Kitāb al-Milal wa'l-nihāl*, ed. William Cureton (London, 1842–1846), p. 115; French tr. Daniel Gimaret and Guy Monnot as *Livre des religions et des sectes* (Louvain and Paris, 1986), vol. 1, pp. 454f, with well-justified expression of puzzlement in note 121.
47. Cf. al-Nāshī' al-Akbar (attrib.), 'Masā'il al-imāma', par. 48, in Joseph van Ess, ed., *Frühe mu'tazilitische Häresiographie: zwei Werke des Nāshī' al-Akbar (gest. 293H)* (Beirut, 1971), p. 32; al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq al-Shī'a*, p. 42.
48. Murtaḍā b. al-Dā'ī Ḥasanī Rāzī (attrib.), *Tabṣirat al-'awāmm fī ma'rifat maqālāt al-ānām*, ed. 'Abbās Iqbāl (Tehran, 1313 Sh./1934), p. 179.
49. Madelung and Walker, *An Ismaili Heresiography*, p. 78 = 77: they permit bloodshed 'only when they tie themselves to the banner of rebellion (*rāyat al-khilāf*) and when they agree on going to war to seek revenge (*ṭalab al-tha'r*) (III (a)); they have a chief 'with whom they meet clandestinely (*khafiyyan*) and with whom they confer in secret (*sirran*)'; and 'They do not rise in the morning except upon a promise of moving on this day (*tawa'ud bi'l-ḥaraka min yawmihim*) [and they do not enter the evening] except in anticipation of going out in the morrow (*taraqquḥ li'l-khurūj fī ghaddihim*) (III (b)).
50. Maqdisī, *Bad'*, vol. 4, p. 31.
51. Maqdisī, *Bad'*, vol. 6, p. 97. Note that at 98.1 he uses the word *qālab*, also used by Abū Tammām in III (b), for the shape in which al-Muqanna' will reappear.
52. In his account of the Khurramīs, al-Maqdisī merely says in more abstract terms that the Khurramīs hold all the messengers to come from the same spirit despite the different nature of their laws, clearly with reference to their sequence of widely spaced bringers of revelation, and that in their view reve-

- lation (*al-wahy*) will never be cut off, perhaps meaning that it continues in their imams (Maqdisī, *Bad'*, vol. 4, p. 30).
53. Abū'l-Ma'ālī, *Bayān*, p. 58. It looked much more meaningful before the discovery of Abū Tammām, cf. 'Abbās Zaryāb Khu'ī, 'Nukātī dar bāra-yi Muqanna', in *Haftād maqāla: armaghān-i farhangī bih duktur Ghulam Ḥusayn Ṣadiqī*, ed. Yahyā Mahdawī and Īraj Afshār (Tehran, 1369–1371 Sh./1990–1992), pp. 85f (my thanks to Masoud Jafari Jazi for drawing this article to my attention).
 54. Baghdādī, *Farq*, p. 243.
 55. Isfarā'īnī, *Tabṣīr*, p. 131. For the other shared information, see above, note 20.
 56. Al-Dinawarī, *al-Akhbār al-ṭiwāl*, ed. Vladimir F. Guirgass (Leiden, 1888), p. 397; for this daughter of Abū Muslim's, see al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rikh Baghdād* (Cairo, 1931), vol. 10, p. 207 (where she is said to have died without descendants).
 57. Nāshī, 'Masā'il al-imāma', par. 52, in van Ess, *Frühe mu'tazilitische Häresiographie*, p. 35; cf. W. Madelung, 'Frühe Mu'tazilitische Häresiographie: das Kitāb al-uṣūl des Ġa'far b. Ḥarb?', *Der Islam*, 57 (1980), pp. 220–236; repr. in his *Religious Schools and Sects*, article VI.
 58. Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, ed. Pellat, vol. 4, §2398; Paris ed., vol. 6, p. 187.
 59. Maqdisī, *Bad'*, vol. 4, p. 31; cf. also vol. 6, p. 95.
 60. Nizām al-Mulk, *Siyar al-mulūk (Siyāsatnāme)*, ed. Hubert Darke (Tehran, 1364 Sh./1985), p. 320; tr. Hubert Darke (on the basis of his earlier edition), (London, 1960), p. 244 (ch. 47, §14).
 61. Dihkhudā in Kāshānī, *Zubdat al-tawārikh, bakhsh-i Fāṭimiyān wa-Nizāriyān*, ed. Muḥammad Taqī Dānishpazhūh (2nd ed., Tehran, 1366 Sh./1987), pp. 187, 189; in Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Jāmi' al-tawārikh: qismat-i Ismā'īliyān wa-Fāṭimiyān wa Nizāriyān wa dā'iyyān wa rafiqān*, ed. Muḥammad Taqī Dānishpazhūh and Mudarissi Zanjānī (Tehran, 1338 Sh./1959), pp. 150, 153 (cf. 151, where the Khurramīs are explicitly placed in Azarbayjan); cf. Madelung, *Religious Trends*, pp. 9f.
 62. Al-Nawbakhti, *Firaq al-Shī'a*, p. 62 (drawn to my attention by Michael Cook).
 63. See Warren Treadgold, *The Byzantine Revival 780–842* (Stanford, CA, 1988), pp. 282f; Mohamed Rekaya, 'Mise au point sur Théophobe et l'alliance de Bābek avec Théophile', *Byzantion*, 44 (1974), pp. 41–67; John Rosser, 'Theophilus' Khurramite Policy and its Finale', *Byzantina* (1974), pp. 263–271; Salvatore Cosentino, 'Iranian Contingents in Byzantine Army', in *La Persia e Bisanzio: convegno internazionale (Roma, 14–18 ottobre 2002)* (Rome, 2004), pp. 245–261.

The Ikhwān al-Ṣafā': Between al-Kindī and al-Fārābī¹

Abbas Hamdani

I

The *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*,² popularly translated as the *Epistles of the Brethren of Purity*, a celebrated early mediaeval Islamic encyclopaedia, has been the subject of research by modern scholars for the last two centuries, particularly in respect of its *madhhab* and its time of composition and authorship. Two dominant views among scholars have connected it either to the Mu'tazila or the Shi'a of various denominations. G. Flügel (1859),³ F. Dieterici (1859 to 1872),⁴ S. Lane-Poole (1883),⁵ T. de Boer (1903),⁶ I. Goldziher (1910),⁷ A. Zakī (1928)⁸ and A. Awwa (1948)⁹ considered the *Rasā'il* to be Mu'tazilī and composed by a group of authors contemporary with Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī (ca. 320–414/932–1023) and mentioned by him in 373/983.¹⁰ The seventeenth-century historian of al-Andalus and North Africa, Shihāb al-Dīn al-Maqqarī, in his voluminous work *Nafh al-ṭib*, reports that the great Andalusī mathematician, Abū'l-Ḥakam 'Umar b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Kirmānī (d. 462/1070), visited the Sabian city of Ḥarrān and from there brought back with him copies of the *Rasā'il* to Saragossa. Maqqarī's translator, P. de Gayangos,¹¹ says that it was actually Maslama b. Aḥmad al-Majrītī (d. sometime before 398/1008) who introduced the *Rasā'il* to al-Andalus, basing himself on Hājji Khalifa's entry for the year 395/1004.¹² J. Ṣaliba, who edited *al-Risāla al-Jāmi'a*, also accepts the attribution of authorship of the *Rasā'il* to Majrītī.¹³ Most of the scholars mentioned above have rejected this view. The introduction of the work in al-Andalus either by Majrītī or by Kirmānī does not prove authorship.

In 1848 A. Sprenger described the *Rasā'il* after seeing a manuscript of the work.¹⁴ He noted that Shahrazūri had provided a brief mention¹⁵

on the authorship which is a variation of the one given by Ibn al-Qiftī,¹⁶ which in turn is derived from Abū Ḥayyān.¹⁷

The first modern author to notice an Ismaili tendency in the *Brethren of Purity* was S. Guyard (1874).¹⁸ P. Casanova confirmed this in 1898 by his discovery of *al-Risāla al-Jāmi'a* and in 1915 by establishing the relationship of this *Risāla* to the main corpus of the *Rasā'il*.¹⁹

Following the opening up of modern Ismaili studies in the 1930s, H. Hamdani pointed out in 1932 the acceptance of the *Rasā'il* in the Fatimid Ṭayyibī *da'wa*.²⁰ S. M. Stern, in two articles (1946 and 1964), was in agreement as to the *Rasā'il*'s Ismaili character, also accepting at the same time Abū Ḥayyān's report about their authorship.²¹

There are other theories advanced by A. L. Tibawi and S. H. Nasr about the *Rasā'il*'s Shi'i Sufi character; by Suzanne Diwald about the work being just Sufi; by Z. Ali and W. Madelung, who consider it to be Qarmaṭī; and by I. R. Netton and L. E. Goodman who consider it just Neoplatonic and produced by an inter-religious brotherhood. A. Bausani and C. Baffioni emphasise the Neoplatonic roots of the *Rasā'il* but admit its Ismaili persuasion. They have not addressed themselves to the time of the *Rasā'il*'s composition, which by default means that they consider it a late tenth-century work.²²

Y. Marquet, who devoted a lifetime to the study of the *Rasā'il*, maintained its Fatimid connection, dating its composition over a long period – from about 290/903 to 370/980, considering volume 4 of the work to be pre-Fatimid and the other three volumes to have been written later at different times in the fourth/tenth century.²³

In several of my own studies I have regarded the *Rasā'il* as a manifesto of a secret society preparing an intellectual movement for the establishment of the Fatimid caliphate in 297/909, all of it written in the late third/ninth century in the order in which it appears in its four volumes. Thus I have rejected Abū Ḥayyān's supposed authors and the work's late tenth-century composition.²⁴ Two scholars have now come closer to my point of view: Marquet, who in his last work thought that I might be right, but that I need to assemble all my studies in a comprehensive volume,²⁵ and I. Poonawala, who, in a forthcoming article, rejects Abū Ḥayyān's story and considers the *Rasā'il* to be a pre-Fārābī work.²⁶

II

Before I make my case for placing the *Rasā'il* between the time of the philosophers Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb b. Ishāq al-Kindī (185–252/801–866) and

Abū Naṣr Muḥammad b. Tarkhān al-Fārābī (Alfarabius or Avennasar, d. 339/950), I must state the methodology that I have adopted – *placing the Rasā'il within a certain time-layer of ideas in all the fields they cover*. It is possible that a certain idea that belongs to an earlier period can be reported at a later time. However, if there is evidence that *all the ideas* in *all the fields* that the encyclopaedia covers – whether theology, philosophy, music, arithmetic, geometry, political theory and so on – belong to the earlier period of al-Kindī and his disciples and not to a later period of al-Fārābī, then we can conclude that the time-layer of the composition of the *Rasā'il* belongs to an earlier and not to a later period. For example, if all the philosophical ideas expressed are of the period of al-Kindī and not of al-Fārābī, or all the theological ideas are of the period of the *Muthbita* (or *ahl al-ithbāt*) and not of Abu'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī (d. 324/935–936), or the scientific or musical theories derived from Greek sources such as Pythagoras and Nichomachus are as stated by the translators, commentators and summarisers such as Ḥunayn b. Isḥāq (d. 260/873), Thābit b. Qurra (d. 289/901) or Ibn Khurdādhbih (d. 299/912) and not by the philosophers such as al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna, d. 429/1037), or if even the Persian verses²⁷ cited belong to the pre-Firdawsī poets – the earliest ones such as Shahīd al-Balkhī (d. 315/927) and Rūdakī (d. 329/940), then an earlier time period is indicated as there is an earlier time-layer in all fields, i.e. the late third/ninth and not the late fourth/tenth century. In the limited space of this article, it is not possible to demonstrate this in all the fields, so I shall restrict myself here only to a discussion regarding philosophical theology and political theory.

There is another consideration: being a secret revolutionary group, the authors of the *Rasā'il* cloud their identity by purposely making apparently contradictory statements, although if we examine the totality of their thought, they are not contradictions at all. For example, there is a statement against the theologians (*mutakallimūn*) and yet they have a *kalām* of their own. What they are really opposed to is *jadāl* (recriminatory debate).²⁸ Sometimes they extol the number seven and yet they criticise the Seveners. What they mean is that in their concept of numerology there is an important place for the number seven, but they oppose the superstitious use of that number.²⁹ When they criticise the philosophers, they are only referring to the pseudo-philosophers (*mutafalsafīn*), as they have a philosophy of their own.³⁰ They praise the *ahl al-bayt* and 'Alī and speak with emotion about 'Īd Ghadīr al-Khumḥ and the 'Īd al-muṣība (the tragedy of Karbalā'), and yet they have good words for al-Ṣiddīq, al-Fārūq and Dhū'l-Nūrayn (the first three caliphs), which is in keeping with their

religious tolerance.³¹

A third consideration – that of the eclectic nature of their work – should be mentioned before we proceed with analysing their philosophical theology and political theory in order to place the Ikhwān's thought in a proper context, and not be carried away by one aspect of their thinking or the other. The Epistles are written with an eclectic sweep of Pythagorean and Nichomachean arithmetic, numerology and music, Hermetic and Indo-Persian magic and astrology, Aristotelian physics and logic, Gnostic esotericism, Neoplatonic cosmology, theory of emanations and metaphysics, Biblical and Qur'anic prophetology, Platonic concepts of law and leadership, and Buddhist, Zoroastrian and Manichaean wisdom and allegory. This synthesis, and the Ikhwān's preference for a descendant of 'Alī as the leader of the community indicate generally a Shi'i and more particularly an Ismaili or Fatimid affiliation. They not only depend heavily on Qur'anic verses and the stories of prophets (*qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*), but quote also from the Torah, the Psalms of David, from the Old and New Testaments, the Midrash and the Talmud; from Greek, Persian and Indian literature and have a great respect for Zoroaster, the Jewish Prophets and Jesus.³² Although they call themselves *rabbāniyyūn*, *aḥbār* and *ḥunafā'*, suggesting Jewish, Christian and Sabian sympathies, they at the same time declare that these are names applied to the Muslims: 'These are [the names] of the community of our father Abraham and by them we refer to the Muslims from before [Islam]' (*wa hiya millatu abinā Ibrāhīm wa-bihi sammānā al-muslimīna min qabl*).³³

III

Let us now consider the Ikhwān's philosophical theology.³⁴ It is not my intention to compare all aspects of the Ikhwān's theology and philosophy with all aspects of al-Kindī's and al-Fārābī's ideas or the ideas of other theologians. That is a task for a large volume. Here I shall restrict myself to such ideas that are relevant to the understanding of the *Rasā'il*'s time of composition.

The Ikhwān say that God knows things before He brings them from non-existence to existence 'and this is the opinion of some old and some contemporary theologians' (*wa-hādhā ra'y ba'd al-qudamā' wa ba'd mutakallimī ahl hādhā'l-zamān*).³⁵ The reference is probably to a group of early Mu'tazili scholars such as Abu'l-Hudhayl (d. 226/841). He forcefully asserted that God's knowledge is identical to his essence.³⁶ So did Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Nazzām (d. 221/836) hold that 'the meaning of the

word "knowledge" is the affirmation of His essence (*dhāt*) and the denial of His ignorance'.³⁷ According to Ibn Kullāb (d. 240/854), the essential attributes (*ṣifāt al-dhāt*) as distinguished from the active attributes (*ṣifāt al-fi'l*) are not created. His formulation is 'God is knowing by knowledge, powerful by power and living by life'.³⁸ Probably the Ikhwān were referring to this group of Mu'tazilī thinkers of the mid-ninth century who are described by them as 'some old and some contemporary theologians' (*ba'd al-qudamā' wa ba'd mutakallimī ahl hādihā'l-zamān*). This statement would indicate the time of the *Rasā'il*'s composition to be the middle to late ninth century.

The Ikhwān reject the idea of the creation of the Qur'an (*khalq al-Qur'ān*). They speak of *ibdā' al-Qur'ān* (the origination of the Qur'an).³⁹ They say that if by *khalq al-Qur'ān* is meant the recitation of its words and sounds, then the Qur'an is created (*makhlūq*), but if these words and sounds are only the tools of expressing what is in 'the meaning and the thoughts of souls' (*al-ma'ānī allātī fī afkār al-nufūs*), then the Qur'an is not *makhlūq*.⁴⁰ Compare this with the view of the Shī'i theologian Hishām b. al-Ḥakam (d. 187/803) who considered the Qur'an to be an essential attribute of God; hence not *makhlūq*, resembling the *ibdā'* of the Ikhwān;⁴¹ also with the opinion of Ḍirār b. 'Amr (d. ca. 200/815) that the Qur'an is a recitation by a person but originated by God.⁴² The Ikhwān state that because *khalq* is the creation of a thing from another thing (*ijād al-shay' min shay' ākhir*) and *ibdā'* is creation *ex nihilo* (*ijād al-shay' min lā shay'*), the Qur'an is not *makhlūq* but *mubda'*. Thus the Ikhwān imply a position on the Qur'an's origination by God unlike the Mu'tazilīs, but not quite in a later Ash'arī manner.

In a section entitled 'On the question of predetermination' (*Faṣl fī mas'alat al-jabr*),⁴³ the Ikhwān define the terms predetermination (*jabr*) and human free will (*qadr*) and finally take a stand against both. The Ikhwān have this formulation: 'The power that is created in the tongue of a speaker for speech is exactly the power with which he can remain silent' (*al-quwwa allātī ju'ilat fī lisān al-mutakallim 'alā'l-kalām fa-huwa bi-tilka'l-quwwa bi-'aynihā yaqdiru 'alā'l-sukūt*). Such a bestowal of power (*iqdār*) cannot be *jabr*, if with that very power he can do the opposite. This dual approach was typical of the *Muthbita*⁴⁴ who served as a bridge that crossed from the complete free will of the Mu'tazilīs to the deterministic theory of acquisition (*iktisāb*) of Ash'arī and his followers. This is also reflected in the typical Shī'i formula '*lā jabr wa-lā tafwīd*'.⁴⁵

The Ikhwān are close on this point to Hishām b. al-Ḥakam, who considered an act as both man's choice (*ikhtiyār*) and God's creation, because of

the need of an additional efficient cause.⁴⁶ Consider ʿAṣṣar b. ʿAmr, according to whom there are two active agents to an action: God who creates it and man who acquires it, and that man's capability (*istiṭāʿ*) for acting exists before the action and during it.⁴⁷ It is actually on this question that ʿAṣṣar parted company with the Muʿtazilis;⁴⁸ So also do the Ikhwān. Their *Rasāʾil* do not reflect any truly later theories such as the atomistic view of Nature as in Abu'l-Qāsim al-Balkhī, also known as al-Kaʿbī (d. 319/931), and Ashʿarī. No Ashʿarī ideas of the vision of God and God willing evil are found in the *Rasāʾil*.

As for the Ashʿarī notion of *iktisāb*, the Ikhwān do not have it for two reasons: Ashʿarī *iktisāb* is a human will which is itself predestined and in every separate action it represents an act of God, whereas for the Ikhwān human will is initially granted by God, but is free to achieve a purpose opposite to the one for which it was granted. The second reason is that the Ikhwān are unaware of the technical meaning of the term *iktisāb* as it came to be understood in the Ashʿarī school. To the Ikhwān, *iktisāb* represents the orders derived from the *Namus* (Lawgiver), comprised of five categories: (i) science and knowledge, (ii) morals and manners, (iii) ideas and beliefs, (iv) sayings and propositions, and (v) actions and movements.⁴⁹ Ideologically the Ikhwān cannot be placed after the time of the Ashʿarī school.

In a section on the Divine Decree (*al-qadāʾ wa'l-qadar*) in *al-Risāla al-Jāmiʿa*, the Ikhwān state that God's *iqdār* to man is not the cause of evil, but is the process of emanation (*inbiʾāth*) from the Creator (*Mubdiʿ*) to the Intellect (*ʿaql*) – then from the Intellect to the Soul (*nafs*), then from the Soul to Nature (*ṭabīʿa*) – which creates a distance from God that gives rise to evil, and man's only recourse is to ascend (*yaraqqi*) towards God in order to remove his evil.⁵⁰ This progression is typically the Ismaili theme of 'beginning and return' (*al-mabdaʾ wa'l-maʾād*), repeated in early and later Ismaili writings.

In a section on philosophical views, the Ikhwān say that these are of two kinds: 'of an eternal world (*dahriyya*⁵¹ *azaliyya*), and a created, caused world (*muḥdatha muʿallala*)', and add:

We say: Know that the other philosophical views and their teachings grew out of these two. Let us begin with the *Dahriyya*⁵² by saying: These were the people (*aqwām*) who had a certain amount of understanding and discrimination. They examined particular existents which are subject to sense perceptions. They contemplated them and considered their condition and found four causes for every created object (*masnūʿ*) – the material cause (*ʿilla hayūlāniyya*), the formal cause (*ʿilla ṣūriyya*), the efficient

cause ('illa fā'iliyya) and the final cause ('illa tamāmiyya). When they pondered the creation of the world, they sought in it these four causes. They investigated them thus: Who made it? From what was it made? How was it made? Why was it made? And also when was it made? This they could not understand. They could not conceive it, as their souls (or minds, *nufūs*) fell short of understanding the subtlety of its meaning.⁵³

The Ikhwān's terminology for four causes (material, formal, efficient and final) is taken entirely from the terminology of al-Kindī's *Rasā'il*⁵⁴ or from a source common to both.⁵⁵ The Ikhwān also share with al-Kindī the doctrines of the origination and destruction of the world by God, the resurrection and the validity of the Prophetic revelation, all general Islamic doctrines imbedded in their philosophic thinking.⁵⁶

This is an indication that the composition of the *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'* took place near al-Kindī's time. The following words of de Boer are apt in this connection: 'Quotations in the *Rasā'il*, as far as they have been identified, are mainly taken from the literature of the eighth and ninth centuries AD. The philosophical position is that of the older eclectic translators and collectors of Greek, Persian and Indian wisdom. ... It is not impossible, however, that they had literary connections with al-Kindī and his school.'⁵⁷ De Boer also studied this school,⁵⁸ which included such people as Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Ṭayyib al-Sarakhsī (d. 286/899) and Abū Ma'shar Ja'far b. Muḥammad al-Balkhī (d. 272/885).

Let us now consider these disciples of al-Kindī. A well-known work on logic in mediaeval Europe, *Liber Introductorius in artem logicae demonstrationis, collectus a Mahometh discipulo Alquindi philosophi*, by an anonymous translator from Arabic into Latin, was edited by Albino Nagy in 1897.⁵⁹ Nagy interpreted the reference to this Mahometh, 'the disciple of the philosopher al-Kindī', in the title of the work as a reference to al-Fārābī, given that his first name was Muḥammad. Nagy based his opinion on Ibn Rushd's mention of the *Book of Demonstration* by 'Abunazar' (Abu'l-Naṣr, i.e. al-Fārābī).⁶⁰ However, the *Liber Introductorius* has in fact been shown to be a verbatim translation of the Ikhwān's Epistle 'On the Second Analytic on Logic' (*Fī Anūlūṭīqā al-thāniya fī'l-mantiq*).⁶¹ It also contains a brief passage on music (vol. 1, pp. 431.17–23) that is cross-referenced in a chapter 'On the principles and rules of melodies' (*Fī uṣūl al-alḥān wa qaqanīnihā*) in the Epistle 'On Music' (vol. 1, pp. 196.ult–197.1–5).⁶² This passage was discussed by the famous specialist in Arabian music H. G. Farmer, who gave a new twist to the authorship of the passage of the *Rasā'il*.⁶³ According to him, 'Mahometh, disciple of al-Kindī,' was not al-Fārābī as claimed by Nagy, but was Abū Sulaymān Muḥammad b.

Ma'shar al-Bustī al-Maqdisī, a contemporary of Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī (d. 414/1023) and allegedly identified by the latter as one of the authors of the *Rasā'il*. But the snag in both Nagy's and Farmer's theories is the time. There was a period of about eighty years between the time of al-Kindī (d. 252/866) and that of al-Fārābī (d. 339/950) or Maqdisī (even later). Even if we allow a certain overlap, there would still be a whole generation in between them. Neither al-Fārābī nor Maqdisī could have been a disciple of al-Kindī, unless we interpret the matter purely intellectually; but this does not seem to be the case. De Boer, writing as early as 1900, was on the right track when he pointed out that the only actual disciple of al-Kindī who had written about the Second Analytic was al-Sarakhsī (d. 286/899). De Boer, however, adds: 'But he is called Ahmad b. Muhammad; but it is not impossible that the Latin translator made him into Mahometh.'⁶⁴ If this is the case, then the authors of the *Rasā'il* would have been active very close to the time of al-Kindī's disciples.

Let us now turn to the other disciple of al-Kindī, Abū Ma'shar al-Balkhī (d. 272/885).⁶⁵ The authors of the *Rasā'il* only cite the ancient writers or early Arab poets by name. No contemporary individual is named, except that there is a reference to 'Abū Ma'shar al-Munajjim'. Mentioning him, the Ikhwān say: '*thumma qad ḥakā Abū Ma'shar Ja'far b. Muḥammad al-Munajjim, qāla fī Kitāb Mudhākaratihi li-Shādib b. Baḥr*'.⁶⁶ If we read this sentence as, 'then Abū Ma'shar Ja'far b. Muḥammad, the astronomer, related (*ḥakā*) [to us] what he said (*qāla*) in his diary about Shādib b. Baḥr', it would mean that the Ikhwān were contemporaries of Abū Ma'shar who died in 272/885.

Further, there was a Jewish philosopher and medical man living at the time of the disciples of al-Kindī and much influenced by him: Abū Ya'qūb Ishāq b. Sulaymān al-Isrā'īlī (Isaac Israeli), a native of Egypt. He began as an oculist, then emigrated to Qayrawān, where he became a companion of the physician Ishāq b. 'Imrān (d. 295/908) in the court of the Aghlabid amir Ziyādat Allāh III (r. 290–296/903–909); he later became a physician in the court of the first Fatimid imam-caliph 'Abd Allāh al-Mahdī (r. 297–322/909–934) and died ca. 343/955 at an extremely advanced age, being over a hundred years old.⁶⁷ Writing about him, S. M. Stern says: 'One would like to know the way in which Israeli acquired his knowledge of al-Kindī's philosophy. Was it through the perusal of al-Kindī's works, or more likely through personal contact with some of al-Kindī's disciples, we cannot say.'⁶⁸ The last two chapters of Stern's work ('The Role of Philosophy' and 'The Role of Prophecy') are replete with quotations from the *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*, showing the similarity of Isaac Israeli's

thought to that of the Ikhwān. Both define philosophy as knowing oneself (man is a microcosm of the Universe, which is the macrocosm). Both use the terms *ikhtirā'* and *ibdā'* as synonyms for 'origination'; both define corporeal substance (*jism muṭlaq*) in the same way; both have in common with al-Kindī the three stages of the soul's ascent (*ta'thīr*, *ināra* and *ilhām*); both have the same concept of the ascent of the soul to higher existence (heaven) or the descent of the soul into base matter (hell); both consider the souls of philosophers similar to the souls of the prophets. Both consider philosophy an 'assimilation' to the Creator,⁶⁹ and so on.

Having followed Abū Ḥayyān's story about the Ikhwān and having considered their *Rasā'il* a late tenth-century work, Stern cannot concede the possibility of Isaac Israeli having been influenced by the Ikhwān. So he has to say about the Ikhwān that 'though later than Israeli, they may be justifiably used for an elucidation of his thought, seeing that they drew on many Neoplatonic texts which were in circulation in his own period. In fact, they are nearest to Israeli as far as their spiritual outlook is concerned.'⁷⁰

In rejecting the Ikhwān as a source for Isaac Israeli, Stern needed to explain where the latter derived his ideas from, so he studied a thirteenth-century scholar, Abraham Ibn Ḥasday (d. 638/1240), and came up with the theory that the similarity between the thinking of Ibn Ḥasday and Isaac Israeli was due to the fact that they both drew on an unknown early Neoplatonic scholar whom he called 'Ibn Ḥasday's Neoplatonist' (Stern's construct).⁷¹ The book in question is Ibn Ḥasday's *The Prince and the Ascetic*, a Hebrew adaptation of the Arabic book *Bilawhar wa Budhāsaf*, a Buddhist Sanskrit tale that had been translated to Arabic via middle-Persian, then translated into Greek and Latin and eventually into other European languages. The lecture given by the ascetic to the prince is based on the Neoplatonic version of the journey of the soul after death, as found in the longer version of the 'Theology' of Aristotle. Isaac Israeli's version, we are told, is similar to Ibn Ḥasday's and both, we are told, have derived it from an early unknown Neoplatonic writer. The argument becomes further convoluted when we are told that if in one respect Isaac Israeli draws from this Neoplatonist, then in other matters too he must have drawn from him.⁷² What is implied is that all the similarities in the thinking of Isaac Israeli and the Ikhwān are due to that unknown Neoplatonist. Therefore Isaac Israeli owes nothing directly to the Ikhwān. Incidentally, the *Rasā'il* contain two explicit references to Bilawhar and four passages from the story.⁷³

Coming to the later time of Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawhīdī, we find that in

his work *Kitāb al-Imtā' wa'l-mu'ānasa*, where the alleged authors of the *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'* are mentioned, there is also a dialogue between a Zoroastrian and a Jew, reported directly to Abū Ḥayyān by the Qāḍī al-Zanjānī (one of the authors of the *Rasā'il* according to Abū Ḥayyān).⁷⁴ This report is found verbatim in the *Rasā'il*.⁷⁵ Stern's conclusion⁷⁶ is that: (a) Abū Ḥayyān was personally acquainted with Zanjānī, and (b) Zanjānī was one of the authors of the *Rasā'il*. The first part of his conclusion is possible because there is a direct report of Zanjānī to Abū Ḥayyān ('he told me', *ḥaddathanī*). The second part is not correct. Stern explains that Zanjānī, in his long verbal report, was refreshing his memory from a manuscript copy of his own work, namely the *Rasā'il*. To relate word for word a three-page written story is not possible. It only proves that the *Rasā'il* already existed; Abū Ḥayyān picked up a story from it and connected it to Zanjānī.

Abū Ḥayyān was not above the art of fabrication. We know of his having fabricated the message of Abū Bakr to 'Alī which was taken from Abū Ḥayyān and copied by Ibn Abī'l-Ḥadīd in his *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāgha*.⁷⁷ Ibn Abī'l-Ḥadīd later exposed Abū Ḥayyān's tendency to fabricate in his *Sharḥ*, which, he says, is also evident in Abū Ḥayyān's *Kitāb al-Baṣā'ir*.⁷⁸

Leaving the Ikhwān's proximity to al-Kindī, I would now like to consider their distance from al-Fārābī (d. 338/950) in respect to two distinct topics, namely the question of the ten Intelligences and the qualifications of the ideal ruler, which are the only two aspects of their general philosophical structure that are relevant to the controversy of the *Rasā'il*'s time of composition.⁷⁹

A very important contribution of al-Fārābī to Muslim thought is the introduction of the Neoplatonic theory of several intelligences (*al-'uqūl al-ashira*) or the secondary existents (*al-mawjūdāt al-thawānī*) emanating from the One. In his *Kitāb al-Siyāsa al-madaniyya*, the description of these 'uqūl is dispersed.⁸⁰ In another of his works, *Kitāb al-Ḥurūf*, al-Fārābī states the interrelationship of the 'secondary intelligibles' (*al-ma'qūlāt al-thawānī*) without enumerating them.⁸¹ But the clearest statement of the ten intelligences is contained in his *al-Madīna al-fāḍila*.⁸² Al-Fārābī's works were written around 330–333/941–944. So far as we know, al-Fārābī was the first Muslim philosopher to use the theory of ten intelligences. In Fatimid literature, it was first adopted by the *dā'ī* Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī (d. ca. 411/1020) in his *Kitāb Rāḥat al-'aql*,⁸³ of course with variations. After Kirmānī, the theory was continuously used in Fatimid doctrinal and philosophical (*ḥaqā'iq*) literature. When a systematisation of the emanations from the Creator different from Kirmānī's and

al-Fārābī's is found in an Ismaili work, that work can safely be dated to the period before these authors, as is the case with the *Rasā'il*. The cosmological hierarchy of the *Rasā'il* is also totally different.⁸⁴ The likelihood of the *Rasā'il*'s composition being prior to al-Fārābī's works, therefore, is highly accentuated. The top three levels of the hierarchy as given by the Ikhwān – the Creator, the Intellect and the Soul – are common among the earliest Fatimid authors, such as Muḥammad al-Nasafī and Abū Ya'qūb al-Sijistānī.⁸⁵

Coming now to the qualifications of the 'First' Ruler or the imam, we find them enumerated in al-Fārābī's *al-Madīna al-fāḍila*, thus:⁸⁶

1. Soundness of body and its limbs, which facilitates work.
2. Soundness of understanding and imagination that can grasp quickly what is said.
3. Good memory, which retains what is heard without forgetting anything.
4. Sharpness of nature and intelligence that grasps the correct meaning of an argument.
5. Good expression and clear utterance.
6. Love of knowledge and its ready acceptance.
7. Avoidance of appetites in food, drink and sex; avoidance of the vices and pleasures attendant on these appetites.
8. Love of truth and the truthful; abhorrence of falsehood and the false.
9. Largeness of heart, love of generosity and disposition towards high aspiration.
10. Absence of craving for money and all that it involves.
11. Natural love of justice and the just; natural repugnance of injustice and oppression and of the unjust and the oppressor.
12. Determination and boldness without fear and faint-heartedness.

We find the same list of qualifications in the *Rasā'il*.⁸⁷ Even the number, order and substance of this list are the same in the *Rasā'il* and the *Madīna*. The only difference is the interchange of the seventh and eighth qualifications and a slightly elaborated wording in the *Rasā'il* and a pithy expression in the *Madīna*. This remarkable identity led R. Walzer to speak of al-Fārābī's 'impact' upon the *Rasā'il*⁸⁸ and has led S. Pines to accuse the Ikhwān of plagiarising al-Fārābī.⁸⁹ That accusation would hold true only if we were to assume that the *Rasā'il* were written after al-Fārābī's *Madīna*. Yves Marquet on the other hand thinks that the similarity is caused by a common oral source.⁹⁰ An oral source, however, would not explain such a

similarity of presentation. My contention is that the Ikhwān and al-Fārābī must have used a common written source, probably Plato's *Republic*⁹¹ as commented upon by Ḥunayn b. Isḥāq (d. 260/873). We have evidence for the fact that Ḥunayn did write such a commentary in the *Fihrist* of Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 380/991).⁹² It is probable that Ḥunayn's commentary was based on the commentary composed by Galen.⁹³ It is noteworthy that the Ikhwān make several references to Plato in their *Rasā'il*.⁹⁴

In the absence of Ḥunayn's complete work, we have, however, collateral evidence in the form of a commentary on Plato's *Republic* by the famous philosopher Abu'l-Walīd Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Ibn Rushd (d. 595/1198), known as Averroes, which tends to follow the systematisation of al-Fārābī and the Ikhwān and, in turn, probably of Ḥunayn with slight variations.⁹⁵ It is worthwhile comparing the qualifications of the Ideal Ruler as given by the Ikhwān, al-Fārābī and Ibn Rushd with the ones in Plato's original work as follows:

The qualifications of the Ideal ruler according to al-Fārābī, the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', Ibn Rushd and Plato's *Republic*

al-Fārābī (variations in the <i>Rasā'il</i> noted)	Ibn Rushd	Plato's <i>Republic</i> (Jowett's translation; Stephanus' pagination)
no. 1	no. 11	—
no. 2	no. 1	[no. 1] 485 ab
no. 3	no. 2	[no. 4] 485 cd
no. 4	no. 10	[no. 9] 487c, 488
no. 5	—	—
—	no. 12	[no. 10] 487 de
no. 6	no. 3	[no. 2] 485 b
no. 7 (no. 8 in the <i>Rasā'il</i>)	no. 5	[no. 5] 485 d
no. 8 (no. 7 in the <i>Rasā'il</i>)	no. 4	[no. 3] 485 c
no. 9	no. 7	—
no. 10	no. 6	[no. 6] 485 e
no. 11	no. 9	[no. 8] 487 a
no. 12	no. 8	[no. 7] 486 b

Al-Fārābī's and the *Ikhwān's* nos 4 and 5 seem to be combined in Ibn Rushd's no. 10 and are not found in Plato. To offset this combination, Ibn Rushd adds two qualifications which are not in al-Fārābī and the *Ikhwān* but are present in Plato, namely 'perfection of philosophy under the philosopher-king' (487 de) and 'wisdom' (487 c, 488). It is interesting to note that while paraphrasing and rearranging Plato's ten qualifications, all the three Muslim sources come up with a total of twelve qualifications. One can assume the dependence of all these three Muslim sources on a common Arabic paraphrase of the *Republic*, most probably that of Ḥunayn b. Isḥāq. It must be mentioned here that Ḥunayn was the *Ikhwān's* source in other fields, too, such as music.⁹⁶

In conclusion, I maintain that the *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*, both from the point of view of the *time-layer* of ideas and from specific internal references, belong to the late third/ninth century, more specifically between 260/873, when the last Twelver Shi'i imam disappeared creating Messianic expectations, and 297/909, when the Fatimid caliphate was established in fulfilment of those expectations. That was the time of al-Kindī's school. They do not belong to the post-Fārābī period, as asserted by Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī (the only source) by falsely naming the heretics of Baṣra as the authors of the work. What he was trying to do was to malign Zayd b. Rifā'a, a courtier of Ibn Sā'dān, the vizier of the Buyid amir Ṣamṣam al-Dawla (r. 372–376/983–987), with heresy by associating him with certain known men of Baṣra and proving their heresy by saying that they had composed that heretical work, the *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*, which had already been around for a very long time. What lent credence to Abū Ḥayyān's story was the fact that the *Ikhwān* kept their identity secret. I maintain that this secrecy was because they constituted a secret think-tank for propagating the overthrow of the 'people of evil' (*ahl al-sharr*), i.e. the 'Abbasid caliphate, and bringing in the rule of the 'people of goodness' (*ahl al-khayr*), i.e. the establishment of the Fatimid caliphate.⁹⁷ There is plenty of internal evidence for this, but this is not the occasion to expound it here in detail. The period of eighty years between the death of al-Kindī in 257/870 and al-Fārābī in 338/950, particularly the earlier part of it, saw intense activity by Ismaili *dā'īs* and their fellow travellers, both Shi'i and *tafḍīlī* Sunnis (those who accepted the first three caliphs but believed that 'Alī would have been preferable as a leader), to establish an 'Alid caliphate, and the *Ikhwān* were a part of that movement.⁹⁸

Notes

1. This is a revised and expanded version of a paper given at the 218th Meeting of the American Oriental Society at Chicago on 15 March 2008. I dedicate it to Yves Marquet (d. 2006), who devoted a lifetime to the study of the *Rasā'il*. I am grateful to my friends and colleagues: Paul Walker for having given me several leads in an earlier partial draft of this paper, Charles Butterworth for drawing my attention to Ibn Rushd's qualifications of the ideal ruler, Carlos Galvao-Sobrinho for translations from Latin and to the editor of this volume, Omar Alí-de-Unzaga, for many additions he made to my notes.
2. The first piece of the *Rasā'il* to be printed was the Hebrew translation of the Debate between Man and the Animals by Qalonymos ben Qalonymos (d. after 1328) entitled *Igeret Ba'ale Hayim*, first published in Mantua in 1557, and then republished many times and translated into Judeo-German, Judeo-Spanish, German and finally English. In the nineteenth century, editorial and translation work of the *Rasā'il* began with (a) *Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*, *Tarjumah tuhfah-i Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'* an Urdu translation of the Epistle 'On Animals' by Ikrām 'Alī (Calcutta, 1810), with a second ed. revised later by Duncan Forbes and Charles Rieu (London, 1861); (b) the same epistle was edited as *Tuhfat Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'* by Shaykh Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Yamanī with an English preface by Thomas Truebody Thomason (Calcutta, 1812); this edition was analysed later by Karl Nauwerk, *Notiz über des arabische Buch: Tuhfat Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', d.h. gabe der aufrichtigen Freunde nechts Proben desselben, arabisch und deutsch* (Berlin, 1837), repr. in Fuat Sezgin et al., *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' wa-khullān al-wafā' (2nd half 4th/10th cent.): Texts and Studies* (Frankfurt am Main, 1999), vol. 1, pp. 35–192; (c) Volume 1 of the *Rasā'il* was edited by Shaykh 'Alī Yūsuf (Cairo, 1306/1888) with an introduction based on Ibn al-Qiftī's account, which in turn was based on Abū Hayyān al-Tawḥīdī, without acknowledgement; (d) the first complete edition was *Kitāb Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' wa khullān al-wafā'*, ed. Nūr al-Dīn Jiwā Khān (Bombay, 1888). The work bears the author's name as Imam Aḥmad b. 'Abd Allāh, one of the hidden Ismaili imams of the pre-Fatimid period; (e) *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*, ed. Khayr al-Dīn al-Zirikli (Cairo, 1928), with two separate introductions by Tāhā Ḥusayn and Aḥmad Zakī Bāshā; (f) *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*, ed. Buṭrus al-Bustānī (Beirut, 1957). In this article volume and page numbers are from this edition, referred to as *Rasā'il*; (g) *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*, ed. Ārif Tāmīr (Beirut, 1995), 5 vols. The fifth volume contains the texts of the separate concluding epistle; (h) *al-Risāla al-Jāmi'a*, which had been written alongside the main corpus of the encyclopaedia, but not as a part of it; and (i) a *Risālat Jāmi'at al-Jāmi'a*, a much later summary found in Syrian Nizārī collections; (j) the *Jāmi'at al-Jāmi'a* had been previously edited by Tāmīr separately with an introduction (Beirut, 1959); *al-Risāla al-Jāmi'a* was also edited by (k) Jamīl Ṣaliba, *al-Risāla al-Jāmi'a al-mansūba li'l-ḥakīm al-Majrītī, wa hiya tāj Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' wa khullān al-wafā'* (Damascus, 1949–1951), who considered the attribution of

this work to al-Majrīṭī valid; and by (l) Muṣṭafā Ghālib as *al-Risāla al-Jāmi'a: Tāj Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' wa khullān al-wafā': ta'lif al-imām al-mustawda' Aḥmad b. 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Ismā'il b. Ja'far al-Ṣādiq* (Beirut, 1974); (m) an annotated edition in German translation of the third volume of the *Rasā'il* was made by Suzanne Diwald, entitled *Arabische Philosophie und Wissenschaft in der Enzyklopädie Kitāb Iḥwān aṣ-ṣafā' (III): Die Lehre von Seele und Intellekt* (Wiesbaden, 1975).

There exists only a small concordance of the titles of the 52 *Rasā'il* and their page numbers in the Bombay, Cairo and Beirut editions along with an index of poetical references by David R. Blumenthal, 'A Comparative Table of the Bombay, Cairo and Beirut Editions of the *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*', *Arabica*, 21, ii (1974), pp. 186–203.

None of the complete editions are fully collated, annotated and translated with proper indexes. A complete Arabic critical edition and English translation in the 'Epistles of the Brethren of Purity Series' is being published by The Institute of Ismaili Studies, London, in association with Oxford University Press, with multiple contributions by editors and translators. In future, references to the *Rasā'il* would have to be made to this edition. The volumes published so far are: *On Music* (Epistle 5), ed. and tr. Owen Wright (Oxford, 2010); *On Logic* (Epistles 10–14), ed. and tr. Carmela Baffioni (Oxford, 2010); and *The Case of the Animals versus Man Before the King of the Jinn* (Epistle 22), ed. and tr. Lenn E. Goodman and Richard McGregor (Oxford, 2010).

3. Gustav Flügel, 'Über Inhalt und Verfasser der arabischen Enzyklopädie', *Rasā'il Ikhwān aṣ-ṣafā'*, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 13 (1859), pp. 1–43.
4. Friedrich Dieterici, *Die Abhandlungen der Ichwān es-ṣafā' in Auswahl zum ersten mal aus arabischen Handschriften herausgegeben* [= *Khulāṣat al-wafā' bi'khtishār Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*] (Leipzig, 1883–1886; repr. Hildesheim, 1969).
5. Stanley Lane-Poole, chapter on 'The Brotherhood of Purity' in his *Studies in a Mosque* (Cairo, 1883; repr. Lahore, 1960).
6. Tjitze J. de Boer, *The History of Philosophy in Islam* (London, 1903; repr. New York, 1967), pp. 81–96; and his article 'Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', *EI*.
7. Ignaz Goldziher, 'Über die Benennung der "Ichwan al-Ṣafā"', *Der Islam*, 1 (1910), pp. 22–26; repr. in Sezgin et al., *Rasā'il Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā'*, vol. 2, pp. 122–126.
8. Aḥmad Zakī, 'Faṣl fī Rasā'il Ikhwān al-ṣafā', in Aḥmad Zakī, *Mawḍū'āt al-'ulūm al-'Arabiyya wa baḥth 'alā Rasā'il Ikhwān al-ṣafā'* (Bulāq, 1889/1308; repr. Cairo, 1983); repr. in *Rasā'il*, ed. Ziriklī, vol. 1, pp. 17–44.
9. Adel Awwa, *L'esprit critique des "Frères de la Pureté": encyclopédistes arabes du IV/X siècles* (Beirut, 1948).
10. Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī, *Kitāb al-Imtā' wa'l-mu'ānasa*, ed. Aḥmad Amīn and Aḥmad Zayn (Beirut, 1939–1944; 2nd ed., Beirut, 1953), 3 vols in one;

contains at the end two lists of observations and criticisms by Mustafa Jawad and Paul Kraus. The authors mentioned by Abū Ḥayyān are:

Abū Sulaymān Muḥammad b. Ma'shar al-Bustī, known as al-Maqdisī
 Abū'l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Hārūn al-Zanjānī
 Abū Aḥmad al-Nahrajūrī, and
 al-'Awfī (or al-'Awqī).

These, according to him, are the heretics of Baṣra, and a courtier of the Buyid vizier Abū 'Abd Allāh Ibn Sa'dān (r. 372–375/983–985), Zayd b. Rifā'a, was associated with them. For further details on these individuals, see Samuel M. Stern, 'The Authorship of the Epistles of the Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā', *Islamic Culture*, 20, iv (1946), pp. 367–372; idem, 'Additional Notes to the Article: "The authorship of the Epistles of the Ikhwān-aṣ-Ṣafā"', *Islamic Culture*, 21, iv (1947), pp. 403–404; and idem, 'New Information about the Authors of the "Epistles of the Sincere Brethren"', *Islamic Studies*, 3, iv (1964), pp. 405–428.

In several of my own studies mentioned in note 24, I have not accepted the report of Abū Ḥayyān, which I maintain is tendentious – meant to malign Zayd b. Rifā'a by stating that he is associated with the known heretics of Baṣra, whose heresy is proved by their authorship of a known heretical work, the *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*. Those modern scholars who accept Abū Ḥayyān's story, the so-called 'textual evidence', have the burden of two centuries of scholarly opinion *without investigation*, and it is difficult for them to shake off that burden. As will be noted in this article, the authorship was a well-guarded secret and will never be known, but the time of the composition of the *Rasā'il* can be deduced from internal evidence to the late ninth century, approximately a century before what Abū Ḥayyān would have us believe.

11. Pascual de Gayangos, tr., *The History of the Muhammadan Dynasties in Spain, Extracted from the Nafhu-t-tib min ghosni-l-andalusi-r-rattib wa Tārīkh Lisānu-d-dīn Ibnī-l-Khattīb* (London, 1840–1843), pp. 427–429.
12. Ḥājī Khalīfa (Kātip Çelebi), *Kashf al-Zunūn 'an asām al-kutub wa'l-funūn*, ed. Muḥammad Sharaf al-Dīn Yaltaqaya and Rif'at Bilgah al-Kilisī (Istanbul, 1941–1943), vol. 1, pp. 843, 925.
13. Judging by the title: Jamīl Ṣaliba, ed., *al-Risāla al-Jāmi'a al-mansūba li'l-hakīm al-Majrīfī*.
14. Aloys Sprenger, 'Notices of Some Copies of the Arabic Work Entitled Rasāyil Ikhwān al-Ḥafā', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 17 (1848), pp. 501–507; (1848), pp. 183–202.
15. Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd al-Shahrazūrī (eighth/fourteenth century), *Nuzhat al-arwāḥ wa rawḍat al-afrāḥ fī ta'rīkh al-ḥukamā' wa'l-falāsifa* [usually known as *Ta'rīkh al-Ḥukama'*], ed. Sayyid Khūrshid Aḥmad (Hyderabad, Deccan, 1367/1937), vol. 2, p. 20.
16. 'Alī b. Yūsuf Ibn al-Qiftī (d. 642/1244), *Ta'rīkh al-ḥukamā'*, ed. Julius Lippert (Baghdad and Leipzig, 1903), pp. 82–88.

17. There are several good studies on the author, the best being by Marc Bergé, *Essai sur la personnalité morale et intellectuelle d'Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī* (Paris, 1974) which is also the most exhaustive.
18. Stanislas Guyard, ed. and tr., 'Fragments relatifs à la doctrine des Ismaélis', *Notices et extraits des manuscrits*, 22 (Paris, 1874), pp. 177–428; also published separately in Paris, 1874.
19. Paul Casanova, 'Notice sur un manuscrit de la secte des Assassins', *Journal Asiatique*, 9th series, 11 (1898), pp. 151, 159 and 'Une date astronomique dans les Épîtres des Ikhwān as Ṣafā', *Journal Asiatique* (1915), pp. 5–17.
20. Husayn F. al-Hamdānī, 'Rasā'il Ikhwān as-Ṣafā' in the Literature of the Ismā'īlī Ṭayyibī Da'wat', *Der Islam*, 20 (1932), pp. 281–300, revised in his *Baḥth ta'rikhī fi Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' wa 'aqā'id al-Ismā'īliyya fihā* (Bombay, 1935); both repr. in Sezgin et al., *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*, vol. 2, pp. 129–148; also repr. Ma'dikarib al-Hamdānī (Ṣan'ā, n.d.).
21. For Stern's two articles, see note 10.
22. See Abdul Latif Tibawi, 'Ikhwān as-Ṣafā' and their Rasā'il: A Critical Review of a Century and a Half of Research', *Islamic Quarterly*, 2 (1955), pp. 28–46; Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines: Conceptions of Nature and Methods used for its Study by the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', al-Bīrūnī and Ibn Sīnā* (Cambridge, MA, 1964; 2nd revised ed. London, 1978; 3rd revised ed., Albany, NY, 1993); Susanne Diwald, *Arabische Philosophie und Wissenschaft in der Enzyklopädie Kitāb Iḥwān as-ṣafa' (III): Die Lehre von Seele und Intellekt* (Wiesbaden, 1975); Alessandro Bausani, 'Scientific Elements in Ismā'īlī Thought: The Epistles of the Brethren of Purity', in Seyyed Hossein Nasr, ed., *Ismā'īlī Contributions to Islamic Culture* (Tehran, 1977), pp. 123–140; Carmela Baffioni has innumerable studies on the *Rasā'il*, but the two relevant ones for this article are: 'Al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah in al-Fārābī and in the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā': A Comparison', in Stefan Leder, ed., with Hilary Kilpatrick, Bernadette Martel-Thoumian and Hannelore Schöning, *Studies in Arabic and Islam. Proceedings of the 19th Congress, Union européenne des arabisants et islamisants, Halle 1998* (Leuven, 2002), pp. 3–12 and 'Gli Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' e la filosofia del kalam', *Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli*, 54 (1994), pp. 464–478; Zāhid 'Alī, *Ta'rikh-i-Fāṭimiyyīn-Miṣr* (in Urdu) (Hyderabad [Deccan], 1948); Wilferd Madelung, 'Ḳarmaṭī', *EI2*, vol. 4, pp. 660–665; Ian R. Netton, *Muslim Neoplatonists: An Introduction to the Thought of the Brethren of Purity* (London, 1982; 2nd. ed. Edinburgh, 1991; repr. London, 2002) and Lenn E. Goodman, *The Case of the Animals versus Man before the King of the Jinn: A Tenth-Century Ecological Fable of the Pure Brethren of Basra* (Boston, MA, 1978).
23. Yves Marquet, 'Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', *EI2*, vol. 3, p. 1071; *La philosophie des Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'* (Algiers, 1973; revised ed., Paris and Milan, 1999); 'Iḥwān al-Ṣafā', *Ismā'īliens et Qarmates*, *Arabica*, 24 (1977), pp. 233–257, and '910 en Ifrīqiya: un épître des Iḥwān as-Ṣafā', *Bulletin d'Études Orientales*, 30

- (1978), pp. 61–73. See also note 25.
24. Abbas Hamdani, 'Abu Ḥayyān al-Tawḥidī and the Brethren of Purity', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 9 (1978), pp. 345–353; 'An Early Fatimid Source on the Time and Authorship of the *Rasā'il Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'*', *Arabica*, 26, i (1979), pp. 62–75; 'The Arrangement of the *Rasā'il Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'* and the Problem of Interpolations', *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 29, i (1984), pp. 97–110 (revised repr. in El-Bizri, ed. *The Epistles of the Brethren of Purity*, pp. 83–100); 'Time According to the Brethren of Purity', *Alif (Journal of Comparative Politics)*, 9 (1989), pp. 98–104, and 'Brethren of Purity, a Secret Society for the Establishment of the Fatimid Caliphate: New Evidence for the Early Dating of their Encyclopaedia', in Marianne Barrucand, ed., *L'Égypte fatimide, son art et son histoire* (Paris, 1999), pp. 73–82 – these among several other contributions of mine to the study of the *Rasā'il*. I have two further articles which are relevant to the present: 'Religious Tolerance in the *Rasā'il Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'*', in Y. Tzvi Langermann, ed., *Adaptations and Innovations: Studies on the Interaction between Jewish and Islamic Thought and Literature from the Early Middle Ages to the Late Twentieth Century, Dedicated to Professor Joel L. Kraemer* (Leuven, 2007), pp. 137–142 and 'The Relation between the Persian Authorship of the *Rasā'il Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'* and the Time of its Composition', in *A Festschrift Honoring Mohammed Mohammed Aman*, ed. Sha'ban A. Khalifa, Sayeda M. Rabie and Elsayed E. Al-Nashshar (Alexandria, 2009), pp. 69–78; see also note 10.
 25. Y. Marquet, *Les "Frères de la pureté", pythagoriciens de l'Islam. La marque du pythagorisme dans la rédaction des Épitres des Iḥwān aṣ-Ṣafā'* (Paris and Milan, 2006), pp. 370–372.
 26. Ismail K. Poonawala, 'Humanism in Ismaili Thought: The Case of the *Rasā'il Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'*', paper presented at the 18th Giorgio Levi della Vida Conference held at the University of California, Los Angeles (10–12 May 2007) on the subject of 'Universality in Islamic Thought' (forthcoming).
 27. I have discussed this in my articles 'Religious Tolerance in the *Rasā'il Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'*' and 'The Relation between the Persian Authorship of the *Rasā'il Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'* and the Time of its Composition' (see note 24).
 28. *Rasā'il*, vol. 3, pp. 498, 535.
 29. *Rasā'il*, vol. 1, pp. 58, 217. See also Bernard R. Goldstein, 'A Treatise on Number Theory from a Tenth Century Arabic Source', *Centaurus*, 10 (1964), pp. 129–160; repr. in Seyyed Hoseyn Nasr and Mehdi Aminrazavi, ed., *An Anthology of Philosophy in Persia* (Oxford, 1999–2001), vol. 2, pp. 225–245.
 30. *Rasā'il*, vol. 4, pp. 136, 180–181 (criticising the pseudo-philosophers). The Iḥwān's own philosophy is scattered throughout the four volumes, particularly Part 1, vol. 1, pp. 390–403 (Isagoge), pp. 404–413 (Categories), pp. 414–419 (Peri Hermenias), pp. 420–428 (Prior Analytics), pp. 429–452 (Posterior Analytics); Part 2 on 'Physics' has discussion of the categories of Matter, Form, Place, Motion and Time; Being and Nature, evolution of vegetable, animal and human existence; human anatomy, senses, birth and

the influence of stars on the newborn. Part 3 on 'Psychology' deals with the correspondence between Man, the microcosm and Universe, the macrocosm; the cultivation of souls, the will of man; the mystery of death, the multiplicity of languages; the intelligible things; celestial cycles and ages, love; causes and effects; definitions and formulas. Part 4 on 'Religion and Politics' contains a discussion on whether the world is eternal or created, and the general principles of the Ikhwān's faith. It is in this last Part that the Ismaili character of the *Rasā'il* is most visible.

31. *Rasā'il*, vol. 1, p. 213; vol. 2, p. 377; vol. 3, p. 211; vol. 4, pp. 269, 315, 408 and 489. Also in *al-Risāla al-Jāmi'a*, ed. Ghālib, p. 520; see Abbas Hamdani, 'Shades of Shi'ism in the Tracts of the Brethren of Purity', in Peter Slater and Donald Wiebe, ed., *Traditions in Contact and Change* (Waterloo, Ontario, 1983), pp. 447–460 and 726–728, and idem, 'Religious Tolerance in the *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'* (note 24).
32. See Looft Levonian, 'Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' and Christ', *Muslim World*, 35 (1945), pp. 27–31; repr. in Sezgin et al., *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*, vol. 2, pp. 237–241; Yves Marquet, 'Les Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' et le christianisme', *Islamochristiana*, 8 (1982), pp. 129–158; on the uses of literature and Biblical material in general see Netton, *Muslim Neoplatonists*, pp. 53–94.
33. *Rasā'il*, vol. 4, p. 126; vol. 3, p. 454.
34. On this subject, see a detailed statement by Carmela Baffioni in her article 'Gli Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' e la filosofia del *kalam*', based on her paper 'Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' and the Philosophy of the *kalam*', presented at the International Medieval Congress at Leeds (4–7 July, 1994). See also the study by Richard Frank, *Beings and their Attributes* (Albany, NY, 1978). Baffioni has identified more than sixty passages of the *Rasā'il* that describe the Ikhwān's theological ideas, and has compared them with the ideas of many *mutakallimun*, early and late, with remarkable erudition. Her conclusion is that although the Ikhwān's thought shows Shi'i inclination, it does not betray their Ismaili identity. What I discuss here is how the enunciation of their views, by comparison with those of other theologians, indicates the time of the composition of their work.
35. *Rasā'il*, vol. 3, pp. 517–518.
36. Abu'l-Hasan 'Alī b. Ismā'il al-Ash'arī, *Maqālat al-Islāmiyyīn*, ed. Helmut Ritter (Wiesbaden, 1963), p. 165; see also Richard Frank, 'The Divine Attributes According to the Teaching of Abū l-Hudhayl al-'Allāf', *Museon*, 82 (1969), pp. 451–506.
37. Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, p. 486. See W. Montgomery Watt, *The Formative Period*, pp. 245–246.
38. Ibid., pp. 169–173, 584. After Ibn Kullāb's time, the Sunni Ash'arīs identified seven attributes – knowledge, power, will, life, speech, hearing and seeing – as the essential ones. See Watt, *The Formative Period*, p. 287.
39. *Rasā'il*, vol. 3, pp. 517–518.
40. See I. K. Poonawala, 'The Qur'ān in the *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*', in Anthony

- H. Johns, ed., *International Congress for the Study of the Qur'an*, Australian National University, Canberra, 8–13 May, 1980 (Canberra, 1980), pp. 51–67; and Paul E. Walker, *The Wellsprings of Wisdom, a Study of Abū Ya'qūb al-Sijistānī's Kitāb al-Yanābī' including a complete English translation with commentary and notes on the Arabic text* (Salt Lake City, UT, 1994), pp. 187–189.
41. Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, p. 582. See also W. Madelung, 'Hishām b. al-Ḥakam', *EI2*, vol. 3, p. 496, and 'Abd Allāh Nī'ma, *Hisham b. al-Ḥakam: rā'id al-ḥaraka al-kalāmiyya fi'l-islām wa ustādh al-qarn al-thānī fi'l-kalām wa'l-munāẓara* (Beirut, 1985).
 42. Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, p. 594; see also Joseph van Ess, 'Ḍirār b. 'Amr und die "Cahmīya": Biographie einer vergessenen Schule', *Der Islam*, 43 (1967), pp. 241–279 and 44 (1968), pp. 1–70.
 43. *Rasā'il*, vol. 3, pp. 498–500.
 44. Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, pp. 487–488, 538, 540–541.
 45. J. van Ess, 'Qadariyya', *EI2*, vol. 4, p. 368. This has been well explained by W. Madelung, 'The Shi'ite and the Kharijite Contribution to Pre-Ash'arī *kalam*', in *Islamic Philosophical Theology*, ed. Parviz Morewedge (Albany, NY, 1979), pp. 120–139, particularly p. 124: 'The doctrine of the Imāmī *mutakallimūn* thus indeed offered an intermediate position between the Jahmite thesis of constraint (*jabr*) and the Mu'tazili thesis of empowerment (*tafwīd*), as supported by a famous statement of Imam Ja'far.'
 46. See note 41.
 47. Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, p. 281. See J. van Ess, 'Ḍirār b. 'Amr und die "Cahmīya"', particularly (1967), p. 270 and (1968), p. 170; see also Watt, *The Formative Period*, p. 193.
 48. Watt, *The Formative Period*, p. 189; see also J. van Ess, *ibid.*
 49. *Rasā'il*, vol. 3, p. 161.
 50. *Al-Risāla al-Jāmi'a*, ed. Ghālib, pp. 45–50.
 51. The Beirut edition has the spelling 'Duhriyya'.
 52. See the article in *EI*, I. Goldziher, 'Dahriya', vol. 2, p. 95.
 53. *Rasā'il*, vol. 3, p. 455.
 54. Ya'qūb b. Ishāq al-Kindī, *Rasā'il al-Kindī al-falsafiyya*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Hādī Abū Riḍā (Cairo, 1950), in the epistle of al-Kindī to the caliph al-Mu'taṣim bi'llāh about the First Philosophy, pp. 97–105. See also Soheil Afnan, *A Philosophical Lexicon in Persian and Arabic* (Beirut, 1968), pp. 186–187; and my article 'Time According to the Brethren of Purity', pp. 98–104, and note 24.
 55. The common source could have been one of the several translators of Greek works, given that we know that the discussions in al-Kindī and the Ikhwān on the accidental nature of numbers are derived from a paraphrase made by a pupil of al-Kindī, Abū Sulaymān Rabī' b. Yahyā, of Nicomachus of Gerasa's *Introduction to Arithmetic*; see Alfred L. Ivry's *al-Kindī's Metaphysics: A Translation of Ya'qub ibn Ishāq al-Kindī's Treatise 'On First Philosophy'* (Fī

- al-Falsafah al-Ūlā*) (Albany, NY, 1974), pp. 20 and 21 with their notes. There is a discussion of this in al-Kindī's *Rasā'il*. See also Gerhard Endress, 'The Circle of al-Kindī', in Gerhard Endress and Remke Kruk, ed., *The Ancient Tradition in Christian and Islamic Hellenism* (Leiden, 1997), pp. 43–76. This article is not about al-Kindī's disciples or his school but about the translators that he patronised and who worked for him, and about the determination of the Arabic philosophical terminology.
56. Majid Fakhry, *A History of Islamic Philosophy* (New York, 1983), p. 69.
 57. De Boer, 'Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', *EI*, vol. 2, pp. 459–460.
 58. De Boer, 'Zu Kindi und seiner Schule', in *Archiv für Geschichte Philosophie*, 13 (1899), pp. 153–178.
 59. Anonymous Latin translation, 'Liber Introductorius in artem logicae demonstrationis, collectus a Mahometh discipulo Alquindi philosophi', ed. Albino Nagy in his *Die Philosophischen Abhandlungen des Ja'qub ben Ishāq al-Kindī* (Münster, 1897), pp. 41–64; tr. John Longeway, 'Introduction to the Art of Demonstration by al-Kindī' (typescript in the Department of Philosophy, Oklahoma State University, n.d.); also available online: <http://homepages.uwp.edu/longeway/Al%20Kindi.htm>.
 60. Nagy, *Die Philosophischen Abhandlung*, p. xi.
 61. 'Fī Anūlūtiqā al-thāniya fi'l-mantiq', vol. 1, pp. 429–451.
 62. See *Rasā'il*, vol. 1, p. 431.17–23 and vol. 1, pp. 196.ult.–197.1–5. For a complete English translation with notes and a critical introduction see Amnon Shiloah, *The Epistle on Music of the Ikhwān al-Safā'*, Baghdad, 10th Century (Tel Aviv, 1978), repr. as 'The Epistle on Music of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', in his *The Dimension of Music in Islamic and Jewish Culture* (Aldershot, 1993), pp. 3–73.
 63. Henry G. Farmer, 'Who was the Author of *Liber Introductorius in Artem Demonstrationis*?', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1934), pp. 553–556.
 64. See de Boer 'Zu Kindi und seiner Schule', p. 177. For al-Sarakhsi's works, see Franz Rosenthal, *Ahmad b. al-Tayyib al-Sarakhsi* (New Haven, CT, 1943), particularly p. 54.
 65. On Abū Ma'shar al-Balkhī, see David E. Pingree, *The Thousands of Abu Ma'shar* (London, 1968). Abū Ma'shar's *Kitāb al-ūlūf* was composed between 226/840 and 246/860. See also A. Hamdani, 'A Critique of Paul Casanova's Dating of the *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*', in Farhad Daftary, ed., *Mediaeval Isma'ili History and Thought* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 142–152.
 66. *Rasā'il*, vol. 4, pp. 288–289.
 67. For a detailed study of his life and work, see Alexander Altmann and Samuel M. Stern, *Isaac Israeli: A Neoplatonic Philosopher of the Early Tenth Century* (London, 1958).
 68. *Ibid.*, p. xxiii.
 69. *Ibid.*, pp. 73, 182, 186, 192, 193, 196–217.
 70. *Ibid.*, p. 150.
 71. S. M. Stern, 'Ibn Ḥasdāy's Neoplatonist: A Neoplatonic Treatise and its

- Influence on Isaac Israeli and the Longer Version of the Theology of Aristotle', *Oriens*, 13 (1960–1961), pp. 58–120.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
 73. For a full discussion and references see Netton, *Muslim Neoplatonists*, pp. 89–92.
 74. Al-Tawḥīdī, *al-Imtā'*, vol. 2, pp. 157–160.
 75. *Rasā'il*, vol. 1, pp. 308–310.
 76. Stern, 'The Authorship of the Epistles of the Ikhwān-al-Ṣafā', p. 370.
 77. 'Abd al-Ḥamid b. Hibat Allāh Ibn Abī'l-Ḥadid, *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāgha*, ed. Ḥasan Tamim (Beirut, 1963–1964), vol. 3, pp. 556–566.'
 78. *Ibid.*, pp. 564–566. Cf. Stern, 'Abu Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī', vol. 1, p. 126; Bergé, *Essai*, vol. 1, p. 21.
 79. See G. Widengren, 'The Pure Brethren and the Philosophical Structure of their System', in Alfred T. Welch and Pierre Cachia, ed., *Islam: Past Influence and Present Challenge. In Honour of William Montgomery Watt* (Edinburgh, 1979), pp. 57–69; also Emil L. Fackenheim, 'The Conception of Substance in the Philosophy of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' (Brethren of Purity)', *Medieval Studies*, 5 (1943), pp. 115–122.
 80. Abū Naṣr Muḥammad al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-Siyāsa al-madaniyya*, ed. Fauzi M. Najjar (Beirut, 1964); there is an ongoing description of the intellects throughout the early part of the book.
 81. Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-Ḥurūf*, ed. Muhsin Mahdi (Beirut, 1970).
 82. Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb Āra' ahl al-madīna al-fāḍila*, ed. Albert N. Nader (2nd ed., Beirut, 1968), pp. 61–62. Cf. Kamāl al-Yāziji and Anṭūn Ghaṭṭās Karam, *A'lām al-falsafa al-'Arabiyya* (2nd ed., Beirut, 1964), p. 452, where al-Fārābī's ten intelligences are explained in a tabular form.
 83. Ḥamid al-Dīn Aḥmad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Kirmānī, *Kitāb Rāḥat al-'Aql*, ed. Muḥammad Kāmil Ḥusayn and Muṣṭafā Ḥilmī (Cairo, 1953), pp. 95–146. See Daniel de Smet, *La Quiétude de l'intellect: Néoplatonisme et gnose ismaélienne dans l'oeuvre de Ḥamid ad-Dīn al-Kirmānī (X^e/XI^e s.)* (Leuven, 1995), in which several comparisons have been made between the thought of Kirmānī and that of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', which belies the assertion by some authors (such as Ivanow) that the *Rasā'il* were not known in the Fatimid *da'wa* and were only introduced later by the Nizārī and Ṭayyibī *da'was*.
 84. Nasr, *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines*, pp. 51–74.
 85. For the development of early Ismaili thought prior to Kirmānī, see Paul E. Walker, *Early Philosophical Shiism: The Ismaili Neoplatonism of Abū Ya'qūb al-Sijistānī* (Cambridge, 1993).
 86. al-Fārābī, *al-Madīna al-fāḍila*, pp. 127–130.
 87. *Rasā'il*, vol. 4, pp. 129–130.
 88. Richard Walzer, 'al-Fārābī', *EI2*, vol. 2, p. 788.
 89. Sholomo Pines, 'Some Problems of Islamic Philosophy', *Islamic Culture*, 11, i (1937), p. 71.
 90. Y. Marquet, 'Imamat, résurrection et hiérarchie selon les Ikhwān as-Ṣafā',

Revue des études islamiques, 30 (1962), p. 50, n.2.

91. Plato, *The Dialogues of Plato*, tr. Benjamin Jowett (Oxford, 4th ed., 1953), vol. 2, pp. 1–62 (translator's introduction), pp. 163–499 (trans. of the *Republic*). Book VI of the *Republic* (Stephanus text, 484a to 511d) contains the qualifications of the philosopher-king.
92. Muḥammad b. Ishāq Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, tr. Bayard Dodge (New York and London, 1970), vol. 2, p. 592.
93. R. Walzer, 'Aflātūn', *EI2*, vol. 1, pp. 232–236, states that Galen's eight-volume lost Greek original commentary on Plato's *Dialogues* was available in a Latin synopsis. A fragment from that or from the Greek original seems to have been translated by Hunayn b. Ishāq as *Risāla ilā 'Alī b. Yaḥyā fī dhikr mā turjima min kutub Jālīnūs bi-'ilmīhi wa-baḍ mā lam yutarjam*, ed. and tr. Gotthelf Bergsträsser, 'Über die syrischen und arabischen Galen-Übersetzungen', *Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, 17, ii (1925) and 'Neuen Materialien zu Hunain b. Ishāq's Galen-Bibliographie', 19, ii (1932). This *Risāla* contains (i) a summary of the whole of Plato's *Timaeus*; (ii) a fragment of his paraphrase of the *Republic*; (iii) a fragment of his summary of the *Laws*; and (iv) a reference to his summary of *Parmenides*. This proves that Hunayn b. Ishāq's commentary of Plato's *Republic* was based on Galen's paraphrase.

Paul Kraus and Richard Walzer, in their edition of *Plato Arabus. Vol 1: Galeni Compendium Timaei Platonis aliorumque dialogorum synopsis quae extant fragmenta* (London, 1951), pp. 2 and 18 confirmed that Hunayn's commentary of Plato's *Republic* must have been based on Galen's paraphrase or summary. They also say (p. 18) that a disciple of Hunayn had noted that Hunayn had translated everything from Galen's compendium.

The fragment preserved does not contain Plato's ten qualifications for the philosopher-king, but that does not matter, as it is only a fragment. The full commentary would have contained it.

Fuat Sezgin edited a collection of articles entitled *Hunain b. Ishāq (d. 260/873): Texts and Studies* (Frankfurt am Main, 1999). The book does not contain Bergsträsser's work.

94. *Rasā'il*, vol. 4, pp. 35, 287, 288, 295 and in *al-Risāla al-Jāmi'a*, p. 254. The one in pp. 287–288 seems to be a direct quote; see also Netton, *Muslim Neoplatonists*, pp. 16–19.
95. The Arabic original of Ibn Rushd's commentary is lost, but it has survived in a Hebrew translation by Samuel ben Yehuda from which we have two English translations, one by Erwin I. J. Rosenthal (with the Hebrew text), *Averroes' Commentary on Plato's Republic* (Cambridge, 1956; repr. with corrections in 1966 and 1969) and another by Ralph Lerner (without the Hebrew text), *Averroes on Plato's Republic* (Ithaca and London, 1974). The second is used here. The qualifications for the Ideal Ruler occur on pp. 73–75.
96. Concerning the aphorisms of the philosophers on music in the last two

sections of the Ikhwān's '*Risala fi usul al-alhan wa qawaniniha*' (vol. 1, pp. 196–202), Shiloah in 'The Epistle on Music', p. 10, states 'As far as our epistle is concerned, it can be assumed that the Ikhwān drew the idea of including this chapter from al-Kindī and Ḥunayn b. Ishāq and adapted it to their purpose.' The reference is to al-Kindī's work *Risāla fi ajzā' khabariyya fi'l-mūsīqā*, in Zakariyyā Yūsuf, ed., *Mūsīqā al-Kindī: mulḥaq li-Kitāb Mu'allafāt al-Kindī al-musīqiyya* (Baghdad, 1962), and ed. Salīm al-Ḥilw in his *Ta'rikh al-mūsīqā al-sharqiyya* (Beirut, 1974), pp. 262–273. Ḥunayn b. Ishāq's work referred to is *Adab al-falāsifa*, which was translated into Hebrew by Judah b. Solomon al-Ḥarizī (d. 633/1235) under the title *Sefer Mūsre ha-filōsōfim*, ed. and tr. Abraham Löwenthal (Frankfurt am Main, 1896).

Concerning the topics included in the Ikhwān's epistle on music, Shiloah 'The Epistle on Music', p. 5, thinks that they are based on 'Ubayd Allāh b. 'Abd Allāh Ibn Khurradādhbih's (d. 299/912) *Kitāb al-Lahw wa'l-malāhī*, ed. Ignatius 'Abduh Khalifa, *Mashriq* (1960), pp. 125–155; also published separately as *Mukhtār min Kitāb al-Lahw wa'l-malāhī* (Beirut, 1961).

97. See e.g. *Rasā'il*, vol. 4, p. 187.

98. I have discussed this in many of my studies on the *Rasā'il* referred to in note 24.

Ibdāʿ, Divine Imperative and Prophecy in the Rasāʿil Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʿ

Carmela Baffioni

I

This paper examines a difficult and ambiguous passage on Intellect,¹ in the *Rasāʿil Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʿ* (*Epistles of the Pure Brethren*, henceforth *Rasāʿil*), taken from Epistle 35, 'On the Intellect and the Intelligible':

The Intellect (*ʿaql*) has a sole active cause (*illa wāhida fāʿila*), namely the Creator – be He exalted and glorified –, who emanated (*afāda*) onto it existence (*wujūd*), perfection (*tamām*), permanence (*baqāʾ*) and completeness (*kamāl*), all at once, outside time (*dafʿatan wāḥidatan bilā zamān*). By 'active cause' we mean that He originated it (*abdaʿahu*) with no intermediary. And it is this Intellect that [God] referred to when He said in His Book through the language (*ʿalā lisān*) of His Prophet Muḥammad – God bless him and give him peace –, *Our commandment is but one word, as the twinkling of an eye or nearer* [combination of Q. 54:50 and Q. 16:77].² He hinted at it saying – praise be to Him –, *They will question thee concerning the Spirit (al-ruh). Say: The Spirit is of the bidding of my Lord (min amri rabbī). You have been given of knowledge nothing except a little* [Q. 17:85]; and said, *Verily, His are the creation (khalq) and the command (amr). Blessed be God, the Lord of all Being* [Q. 7:54]. The 'creation' are the corporeal objects (*umūr*), while the 'command' are the spiritual substances.³

In this passage, as is often the case in the *Rasāʿil*, the Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʿ say that the Intellect is caused by God, who provided it with existence, perfection, permanence and completeness. In order to clarify the way in which the Intellect was originated by God in the derivative process of hypostases, they use the fourth form of the verb *badaʿa* (to originate).

The term *ibdāʿ* indicates primordial direct origin from the Creator. The

Ikhwān usually use this term to indicate the created world – that which is produced by God – in order to deny that any existence is independent of Him. To achieve this, they explain the result of creation as *ibdāʿ*, comparing it with a word, in that it is actually an invention (*ikhtirāʿ*) from nothing. The word ceases when the speaker is silent, unlike a house that, once built, has an existence separate from that of the builder because it is a composition (*tarkīb*) and an aggregation (*taʿlīf*) of already existing things such as earth, water, stones, bricks, gypsum and wood. In this sense, the house is like writing, which continues to exist even when the scribe stops writing.⁴

The formation (*wujūd*) of the world by the Creator is also compared to light,⁵ which exists as long as the lamp is lit or until the sun sets. As light is an emission from a source, and not a part of it, so the formation of the world by the Creator is not a part of Him but a superabundance of His goodness. It is surprising, however, that the Ikhwān use the metaphor of light: if the ray of light is not endowed with its own substantiality and autonomy, it must depend on the existence of its source, so it is also true that it *necessarily* emanates from that source.⁶ To avoid such a paradox, which compromised one of the basic tenets of revelation, the text has to state immediately afterwards that *ibdāʿ* keeps the qualities of light only in part. The Ikhwān say that one should not believe that the world comes from God ‘by nature’ (*ṭabʿan*) and without any choice by Him, as is the case of light, the emission of which is part of the nature of its source. Creation is ‘an act He accomplishes whereas previously it was not accomplished, as the speaker displays his speech whereas previously he did not speak’,⁷ and for this reason the speech is an act of the speaker. The will and choice to accomplish or not to accomplish such an act are at the basis of creation and the effusion of divine goodness, ‘as if it were a work (*ṣanʿan*)’.⁸

These comparisons allow the Ikhwān to deny the independent existence of the world with regard to God and at the same time to state its otherness from Him. If this understanding is legitimate, it shows that they consider the world to have been originated by an act of divine Will – the will to *speak*. Hence the choice of comparison with a ‘word’ puts the Ikhwān in full accord with theological orthodoxy, which places the divine attributes of the Will and the Word at the basis of creation.⁹ This double comparison is used to reinforce the idea that the entire created world has no separate existence from the Creator since it is an act willed by the originator (it came, the text says, ‘from nothing’ *baʿd an lam yakun*), hence *ibdāʿ* coincides with the world.

Although it is consistent with Ashʿarī theology, which links the world

continuously to God, this idea is a direct consequence of Neoplatonic ontology, in which all subsequent hypostases have their foundation in the One. According to the Ikhwān, God is coexistent with His creation, as is clarified in the comparison of God to the number one: if any other number is subtracted, the one remains; but if the one is removed, any other number disappears.

In this vision, in that it is the act of God, *ibdā'* has no existence in itself but is contained in the Agent. The ancient Neoplatonic hypostases – Active Intellect, Universal Soul, First Matter and abstract forms – are considered to be the product of emanation (*fayḍ*) caused by God, and their origin is said to occur instantaneously and from nothing, outside time, space and matter, by divine *fiat*,¹⁰ the divine Command that, according to the Qur'an, is at the origin of the world. In the passage from Epistle 35 cited above, only the Intellect is regarded as coming into existence instantaneously, outside time and without intermediaries. This presentation of the Intellect, which is different from the usual way in which the Ikhwān elaborated this Neoplatonic concept, is supported by the quotation of certain Qur'anic verses.

Though the verses should be allegorically interpreted by *ta'wīl* – the science of tracing a word to its origin – these quotations are apparently inconsistent in themselves. The fusion of verses, Q. 54:50 and Q. 16:77, quoted first, should give a better sense of the way in which the Intellect is given existence by God. But the text turns out to be ambiguous, because if we take the words 'and it is this Intellect that [God] referred to when he said in His Book ...' (*fa-hadhā'l-'aqlu huwa'l-ladhī ashāra ilayhi bi-qawlihi fī Kitābihi*) literally, we must infer that the divine Command (*amr*), i.e. the creative *kun* ('be'), coincides with the Intellect. However, that is surely not the case, since these verses refer to the *amr* as being 'like the twinkling of an eye' (*ka-lamḥi'l-baṣar*). A more suitable hypothesis might then be that the Ikhwān want to state that the divine Command coincides with the act that creates the Intellect, expressed, as we saw, by the verbal form *abda'a*; that is to say, that it coincides with the *ibdā'*. In this case, however, the immediacy of the origination of the Intellect by God as asserted above would be questioned: the only way to escape such a contradiction is to understand that *amr* – and hence *ibdā'*, which is considered similar to it – has no hypostatic autonomy, so that God can still be considered as the *direct* source of the Intellect and, through the Intellect, as the *indirect* source of other existing beings.

This would be also in line with the interpretation that can be inferred from the second quotation, Q. 17:85, where the Intellect is considered

similar to 'spirit'. The idea of 'proceeding', introduced here solely by the particle *min*, seems to confirm that God is not the *direct* source of the Intellect, unless one denies self-subsistence from the divine Command, as noted earlier.

It would seem that in the passage from Epistle 35, in contrast to the texts from Epistles 40 and 39 recalled above, the Ikhwān consider the *ibdā'* as something different from creation. If the *ibdā'* no longer coincides with creation, the question of the act of creation – an independent existence or an indissoluble link with God – is left open. To put it another way, we might ask whether the *ibdā'* has in some manner or other an autonomous status for the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'.

The third quotation, Q. 7:54, brings us back to the position of the texts from Epistles 39 and 40. In fact *amr* no longer seems to indicate the divine Command because it is placed at the same level as *khalq* (Creation); immediately afterwards, the Ikhwān explain that the *khalq* consists of physical objects and the *amr* of spiritual substances. The *amr* therefore seems to be identified not with the created world in its entirety, but with a multiplicity of entities that we infer come from God. These could be the Neoplatonic hypostases: because they originate instantaneously from Him, they can be said to be His *ibdā'*. But the doubts expressed above still remain; it is not clear of what God is the direct source, nor is it clear whether the *ibdā'* is due to the divine Will.

II

The combination of the *ibdā'* and divine Command is rare in the Ikhwān. I shall try to show how the apparently paradoxical passage from Epistle 35 can be understood in the light of the contents of Ismaili philosophy.

The Ismaili thinkers identified the divine Command (*amr*) with the *ibdā'* or the 'primordial origination' of all existing beings. In Ismaili literature, the *ibdā'* assumes an intermediate function between God – who is *a posteriori* called 'the Originator' (*al-mubdi'*) – and the 'First originated' (*al-mubda' al-awwal*), which is the Intellect of the Neoplatonic hierarchy adopted in most Muslim cosmologies and, as is believed, was first introduced by the Ismaili thinker and *dā'ī* Muḥammad al-Nasafī (fl. third–fourth/ninth–tenth centuries).¹¹

Though assimilated into the concept of the creative word of God, the status of the *ibdā'* is variously presented by the different Ismaili *dā'īs*. For Abū Ya'qūb al-Sijistānī (d. after 361/971), a contemporary of the Ikhwān, the *ibdā'* might have its own autonomy but, because the Intellect was

originated first, it is also said to be 'non-beingness' (*laysīya*), not in itself but with regard to what it came from.¹² In contrast later, Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī (d. after 411/1020–1021), who worked for the imam-caliph al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh (r. 386–411/996–1021), considered it only an 'attribute' of the First Intellect, which contains in itself the whole of reality.¹³

Ismaili philosophers consider the Intellect to be the first product of the *ibdā'*: it is created first, starting from the Command, and from it comes the world. In this sense, the world is only an *indirect* product of the *ibdā'*. In fact, the Universal Soul – the successive hypostasis of the Neoplatonic hierarchy – is said to proceed (*munba'th*) from the Universal Intellect; movement and, hence, time depends on the Soul, and we can deduce that the whole sublunar world does so too. For al-Sijistānī, the Intellect is called the 'One who precedes' (*sābiq*) and the Soul the 'One who follows' (*tālī*).¹⁴ However, though the Ismailis also borrow the hierarchy of beings from Neoplatonism, unlike the *falāsifa* (the philosophers inspired by the Greeks) and the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', their starting point is not God but, in fact, the *ibdā'*, identified with the divine Command.

According to Ismaili philosophy, the natural world was created third, through the Soul's desire to attain the learning of the Intellect, though it did not achieve its purpose.¹⁵ The fact that many living beings possess a soul but not the rational faculty that distinguishes man demonstrates, in turn, that the Soul is preceded by a nobler substance, i.e. the Intellect, which bestows its nobility on the Soul. The Intellect is first derived by divine Command or *ibdā'*, because there is nothing nobler than it.

Do the Ikhwān also aim to establish the *contingent* nature of the *ibdā'* as divine Imperative? Do they mean that the nature of the *ibdā'* as an 'act' is distinct from that of the agent and that of the world? And do they mean that as an act, the *ibdā'* becomes the direct cause of the world? For later Ismaili thinkers, the created world – that which results from the *ibdā'* – seems to be endowed with its own autonomy with regard to the Creator,¹⁶ but this is not yet clear from the use that the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' made of the image of 'writing'.

They say that the world will last as long as emanation from God lasts, just as light exists as long as the sun shines.¹⁷ For them it would seem that Creation could in no case be conceived as coming from pre-existing elements such as those that constitute a house, because such a final product cannot be reconciled with *creatio ex nihilo*. Besides, the image of God as a manufacturer (*ṣāni'*) and of the created world as a manufactured thing (*maṣnū'*), quite frequent in Muslim thought, including Ismailism,

had been introduced for the first time by Abū Bakr al-Rāzī (d. 313/925), who followed Plato's *Timaeus* and denied the concept of *creatio ex nihilo*.¹⁸ On the other hand, the divine Word has actually become a Book – something that, according to the comparisons above, exists by itself. Ismaili thinkers as well as the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' share the view that God wrote two books: the Qur'an, the book to be listened to, and the world, a book to be contemplated and investigated. According to a well-known idea, the *ayāt* (verses) of the divine Book correspond to the 'signs', also called *ayāt*, that we see in the universe as God's work.¹⁹ Writing is the visible manifestation of that which is in the spirit of the scribe. If the divine Command at the origin of the world coincides with the *kun*, a word made of two letters, the primordial being is both the Command and the Word, and *kāf* and *nūn*, in that they are the visible manifestation of the divine Word, symbolise for Ismailism the two first hypostases of the Neoplatonic hierarchy.²⁰ To come back to the comparison presented by the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', the divine act should be compared to the scribe's writing, too.

III

The link between the passage from Epistle 35 and Ismaili ideas is further emphasised by *Risāla al-jāmi'a* ('The Comprehensive Epistle' = *J*) and the *Risāla jāmi'at al-jāmi'a* ('The Supercomprehensive Epistle' = *JJ*). In these companions to the encyclopaedia of the Ikhwān there are two passages almost identical to each other and to a passage from Epistle 35.²¹ All three texts begin by discussing the four (Aristotelian) causes common to all existing beings: the efficient (*fā'ila*), the formal (*muṣawwira*), the final (*mutammima*) and the material (*hayūlāniyya*). The Ikhwān cite as examples a bed and a knife; *J* and *JJ* cite a chair, the efficient cause of which is the carpenter, the formal cause is its squared shape, the final cause is the act of sitting, and the material cause is wood.

Later, *J* says that the Absolute Body (*al-jism al-muṭlaq*) also has four causes. The First Matter (*al-hayūlā al-ūlā*) has only three: the efficient, the formal and the final. The Universal Soul (*al-naḥs*) has two: the efficient – God – and the formal – the Active Intellect. The text continues as follows, almost identical to the text in Epistle 35:²²

The Intellect has a sole cause, namely the Creator – be He exalted and glorified – who emanated onto it existence, permanence, perfection and completeness all at once, outside time. It is the Intellect that [God] referred to when He said in His book through the language of His Prophet Muḥammad – God bless him and give him peace, saying *Our command-*

ment is but one word, as the twinkling of an eye,²³ but He is nearer. He hinted at it saying, *They will question thee concerning the Spirit. Say: The Spirit is of the bidding of my Lord. You have been given of knowledge nothing except a little*, meaning that the Spirit with respect to which all things begin to depart (is that) to which they come back and from which they go away, from which is their beginning and to which is their return (*alladhī rāḥat al-ashyā' kulluhā ilayhi munṣarifa, fa-ilayhi ruwāḥuhā wa minhu 'awdatuhā, minhu mabda'uhā wa ilayhi ma'āduhā*); and He said, *Verily, His are the creation and the command*', which are the spiritual substances (*al-jawāhir al-rūḥāniyya*); all of them belong to God – be He exalted and glorified: by His command (*amr*) they rose (*qāmat*) and by His will they existed (*kānat*).²⁴

After the example of the chair, *JJ* differs from *J* in that it says that the Absolute Body has only three causes: the material, the efficient and the formal. The First Matter has also three causes: the efficient, the formal and the final. The Soul is said to have two. From this point the text continues as follows:

[One cause is] the Creator – be He exalted and glorified – who emanated generosity (*al-jūd*),²⁵ permanence, perfection and completeness onto the Intellect all at once, outside time. To the Intellect He had referred saying in His book through the language of His Prophet and Messenger (*rasūlihi*) Muḥammad, God bless him and his family: *Our commandment is but one word, as the twinkling of an eye, but He is nearer*.²⁶ He hinted at it saying, *They will question thee concerning the Spirit ...* [till the end of the] verse²⁷). The meaning is that the Spirit from which all things begin to be divided (*mansūfa*) [is that] to which they come back and from which they go away, from which is their beginning and to which is their return. And He said, *Verily, God's are the creation and the command, blessed be God, the Lord of the worlds*. The creation is of the corporeal forms (*li'l-ṣuwar al-jismāniyya*), while the command [corresponds to] the spiritual substances; all of them belong to God – be He exalted and glorified; by His command they rose and by His will they existed. Many people who did not possess the knowledge of spiritual entities have thought that the existing (beings) belong to God only (*laysat illā li'llāh*) – be He exalted and glorified – and [so] the body (*al-jism*) and that whose place is earth; but you know this and be guided.²⁸

There seems to be an omission in this text. It could be read as '[One cause is] the Creator ... who emanated ... all at once, outside time, onto the Intellect, which is its second cause'. The translation given above depends on adding an expression such as 'and Intellect, which is its second cause' (*wa'l-aql, fa-huwa 'illatuha al-thāniya*) after 'time' (*zamān*). In that case,

the sense would easily coincide with that of *J*, even if the fact that the Intellect has only one cause were not stated explicitly. With regard to the similarity which it is asserted exists between the Absolute Body and the First Matter, which is that they both have three causes, the difference with respect to *J* can be explained recalling further developments of Ismaili philosophy. The statement in *JJ* presupposes that *al-jism al-muṭlaq* and *al-hayūlā al-ūlā* represent the same hypostasis, which means that they make a unity: the material, the efficient and the formal causes are related to the Absolute Body, which constitutes ‘matter’ for the First Matter. The efficient, formal and final causes are related to the First Matter in that it has to give origin to natural bodies. On this point *JJ* and *J* agree: both know that the First Matter does not need any material cause, because it is itself matter, in that it becomes identified with the Absolute Body. This coincidence becomes clearer when we recall that, some decades later, al-Kirmānī spoke of a ‘First Matter’ (*al-hayūlā al-ūlā*), which he also called the ‘Absolute Body’ (*al-jism al-muṭlaq*), and of a ‘Second Matter’ (*al-hayūlā al-thāniya*), which corresponds to the ‘First Matter’ of the Ikhwān.²⁹ This interpretation might also be confirmed by the mention in the second part of the passage of ‘the body’, which might indicate the Absolute Body, considered to be at the basis of ‘terrestrial’, in other words material, beings.

The second part of the passage from *JJ* is especially important in that it allows us to read the text in Epistle 35 in the light of Ismaili philosophical ideas. The explanation of the nature of the Intellect both in *J* and *JJ* shows that it is regarded as immediately originated by God, and allows us to infer that it *coincides* with the divine *ibdāʿ*. From *J* and *JJ* we learn that the Intellect also coincides with the divine Spirit, because everything comes from the Intellect, and everything will return to it. Although the terminology is not Qurʾanic, the Intellect is to some extent considered ‘the First and the Last’ since it possesses qualities proper to the Qurʾanic God,³⁰ as later occurred in the writings of al-Kirmānī.³¹ *JJ* also speaks of corporeal ‘forms’ rather than of ‘objects’, as if the word meant the forms that are commonly stated to be found in the mind of God. According to *JJ*, ‘all of them belong to God’; that is, they come from God through His Command and Will. *JJ* clarifies the shorter corresponding expression in *J*; from *JJ* we also realise that this is the ‘exoteric’ truth – that is, the truth understood by those who lack true knowledge of spiritual objects. True, esoteric knowledge would instead make clear that the first of these objects – the Intellect – is the real origin and the real end of everything existing in the physical terrestrial world.

IV

This brings us to the final reference to the 'Prophet's language' in the Ikhwanian passage. The mention of the language (*lisān*) of the Prophet Muḥammad seldom occurs in the *Rasā'il* together with Qur'anic quotations, but it is found in problematic passages such as the one under discussion.

For the Ismaili Neoplatonist thinkers the 'extremes' of creation are the Command, which coincides with the *ibdā'*, and mankind. Just as the *ibdā'* is the principle of everything, man 'completes' with his perfection the series of created beings in the physical world: man is a rational and speaking soul and a critical intelligence. Because of this, he can give his consent to the divine Word, which is addressed to him. Man has a link with Intellect because the origin of all beings is the *ibdā'* that makes 'a sole thing' with the Intellect, and because the Intellect is that which supports the prophets. The Prophet has a personal responsibility of his own in the delivery of the Sacred Book: note that al-Sijistānī, for instance, attributes to him the act of the aggregation (*ta'līf*) of letters that produces the Qur'an and corresponds to the composition (*tarkīb*) of elements by Nature that produced the existing beings. Through this comparison, al-Sijistānī is very close to the Ikhwanian passages seen above.

These considerations can also help to explain two other controversial passages by the Ikhwān found in Epistle 31, 'On the Causes of the Diversity of Languages'. Of the Prophet's miracles (*mu'jizāt*) and superiority (*faḍl*) is that he spoke to people about what they could understand and according to what they could conceive and their intellects could grasp.³² Because of this *mu'jiza*, traditions differed, religious schools multiplied and people disagreed about who the Messenger's successor should be; that was one of the main causes of disagreement in the community 'until the present time', the Ikhwān said. According to them, the Prophet used his own idiom (*lughatihi*) to answer the questions put to him by those of his community, assigned them tasks and spoke to them in his language (*bi-lisānihi*). To others he spoke in their speech (*bi-kalāmihim*), because he had been sent (*mab'ūth*) to them and dwelt with them. He taught and guided them, made expressions easy and created meanings (*ḍaraba [...] al-ma'ānī*) for them, and treated them amicably, so that they should understand religion and learn the Qur'an in a pure language (*lisān faṣīḥ*) in which nobody could be mistaken and which nobody could alter or change provided they had a good memory and perfect direction (*talqīn*).³³

I would not wish to disavow the explanation I have given elsewhere of

these enigmatic passages,³⁴ but another interpretation might be added here thanks to the text in *JJ* discussed above. As the relation between God, the *ibdā'* and the Intellect is clarified through an esoteric interpretation of the Qur'anic verses quoted, the two passages from Epistle 31 might also hint at the *zāhiri* (exoteric) and *bāṭinī* (esoteric) aspects of prophetic language, since the Prophet has a knowledge of the *bāṭin* meaning of the Qur'an, but he only transmits the *zāhir*, because of the abilities of his listeners.

Support for this type of explanation may be found in a passage in Nāṣir-i Khusraw's *Jāmi' al-ḥikmatayn*.³⁵ If the Prophet is he who announces the fact of God to the created world through that which is written in His Book; and if the Messenger is the intermediate between the spiritual and the material worlds, it is not possible to say that the divine Word has a single aspect. Rather, a part of it, the clear one, must necessarily resemble bodies, and the other part, the ambiguous one, must necessarily resemble spirits, so that the obscure (*mutashābih*) can be demonstrated by that which is clear (*muḥkam*); the parables (sing. *mathal*) in the Book are like bodies and the meanings (*ma'ānī*) like spirits.

These words echo the 'clear and obscure verses' (*ayāt muḥkamāt, mutashābihāt*) of Q. 3:7, which was the basis for the legitimisation of philosophy in the *Faṣl al-maqāl* of Averroes, written in the sixth/twelfth century.³⁶ But the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' had already quoted the same verse, urging the allegorical interpretation of the Book by those who are able to provide this sort of interpretation.³⁷

The last part of the passage from Epistle 35, with the quotation of Q. 7:54, seems also to refer to the physical and the spiritual worlds: they correspond to each other in that the former derives from the divine Command as the word *kun* and the latter from divine Command as the *ibdā'* – that is from the Intellect. The reference to the Prophet's language might then show that true knowledge can be attained by man only through the divine Word. In the Qur'an Sura 2 verse 30 Adam is described as the direct vicegerent of God on His earth which can be read as meaning that above man there is only the Creator. To continue the parallel with al-Sijistānī's ontology, the Universal Soul needs an individual to be enabled to receive the effusion from the Intellect in its completeness.³⁸ The Intellect being a principle for the Soul would also correspond to the Prophet who is a principle for the Legatee (*waṣī*).³⁹ In identifying the *amr* with 'spiritual substances', the Ikhwān might have had in mind a kind of embryonic Ismaili hierarchy. The world of the *ibdā'* might even foreshadow al-Kirmānī's world of religion (*ālam al-dīn*, where *dīn* indicates the divine hierarchy of propagandists).

I have already attributed Ismaili or para-Ismaili conceptions to the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', especially in politics.⁴⁰ The similarities remarked on in this article can further contribute to the hypothesis that the Pure Brethren were close to Ismailism, particularly in view of the links established through *J* and *JJ*. More precisely, one might say that the *Rasā'il* contain in embryo several ideas stated in contemporary Ismailism, for instance by al-Sijistānī, and which were further developed by other Ismaili thinkers only a few decades later. In particular, at the end of the fourth/tenth century Ismailism was debating about the issue of the *ibdā'* without being able to reach a firmer position, such as the one that was arrived at some decades later.

Notes

1. That is, the Active Intellect of the well-known Neoplatonic hierarchy, adopted by the Ikhwān. This text does not seem to be considered in Daniel De Smet, *La Quiétude de l'intellect. Néoplatonisme et gnose ismaélienne dans l'œuvre de Ḥamīd ad-Dīn al-Kirmānī* (X^e/XI^e s.) (Leuven, 1995), p. 115, where the relation between the *ibdā'* and the Intellect is dealt with.
2. Translations from the Qur'an by Arthur J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted* (London, 1955).
3. Epistle 35, 'On the Intellect and the Intelligible', *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' wa khullān al-wafā'*, ed. Buṭrus al-Bustānī (Beirut, 1377/1957), vol. 3, pp. 238.13–21. I indicate the volume, page(s) and line(s) of each quotation or reference.
4. Cf. e.g. Epistle 40, 'On Causes and Effects', *Rasā'il*, vol. 3, pp. 350.19–351.18 *passim*, where the final part of Q. 55:29, *every day He is upon some labour (sha'n)*, is quoted.
5. The choice of this image can then be connected to the cosmological visions that draw their inspiration from the famous 'verse of Light' (*āyat al-nūr*, Q. 24:35); the comparison with 'word' appears to be much more suitable.
6. This was the cause of the harsh criticism of emanationism on the part of those orthodox theologians and philosophers who saw in it a denial of the autonomous will of God.
7. Cf. Epistle 39, 'On the Kinds of Movement', *Rasā'il*, vol. 3, p. 338.2–3.
8. Cf. Epistle 39, *Rasā'il*, vol. 3, pp. 337.9–338.13 *passim*; the final part of Q. 55:29 is also quoted on p. 338.16.
9. In other passages, such as in Epistle 42, 'On Opinions and Religions', *Rasā'il*, vol. 3, pp. 470.18–471.9, the Ikhwān openly incline towards the philosophical thesis that God created by means of *science/learning/knowledge* ('ilm) and that His will is at most a necessary consequence of 'ilm: because God knew He would create the world, not to create would have been contrary to science, and hence God would be ignorant; creation of the world is a

manifestation of wisdom, which is necessary for the wise, who otherwise would not be so. Thanks to science the Creator gives figure and form to the body; that this work is based on science is the proof that He is wise (*ḥakīm*; there are almost one hundred Qur'anic verses containing this divine attribute, associated with 'azīz or 'alīm or, rarely, with *khābīr*, *ḥamīd* or 'alīy).

10. Cf. e.g. Epistle 40, *Rasā'il*, vol. 3, p. 352.13–20.
11. Cf. e.g. Paul E. Walker, *Abu Ya'qub al-Sijistani: Intellectual Missionary* (London and New York, 1996), p. 18.
12. Cf. Paul E. Walker, *Early Philosophical Shiism. The Ismaili Neoplatonism of Abū Ya'qūb al-Sijistānī* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 84.
13. Cf. e.g. De Smet, *La Quiétude de l'intellect*, pp. 115, 119, 129, 135, 149. According to De Smet, p. 115, it seems that there is no distinction between *ibdā'* and Intellect, even in the Ikhwān.
14. Cf. e.g. Walker, *Abu Ya'qub al-Sijistani: Intellectual Missionary*, p. 36.
15. Cf. Walker, *Abu Ya'qub al-Sijistani: Intellectual Missionary*, p. 40; for the Ikhwān, see e.g. Epistle 40, *Rasā'il*, vol. 3, p. 353.3–16; see also Carmela Baffioni, 'Antecedenti greci nel concetto di "natura" degli Iḥwān al-Ṣafā', in Maria Barbanti, Giovanna R. Giardina and Paolo Manganaro, ed., *ENOSIS KAI FILIA. Unione e amicizia, Omaggio a Francesco Romano* (Catania, 2002), pp. 545–556; eadem, 'The Concept of Nature in Yaḥyā b. 'Adī (A Comparison with the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā)', in Ebiad Rifaat and Hermann Teule, ed., *Studies on the Christian Arabic Heritage, Offered in Honour of Father Samir Khalil Samir S.I., at the Occasion of his 65th Birthday* (Leuven, 2004), pp. 199–204.
16. Cf. e.g. Walker, *Early Philosophical Shiism*, p. 83.
17. Cf. e.g. Epistle 40, *Rasā'il*, vol. 3, p. 350.9–18.
18. The Ikhwān have an aporetic vision of God as a craftsman: it is always linked to the negation of the *creatio ex nihilo*, but on the other hand God is denied any direct responsibility for events in the created world; these are attributed to His intermediaries (cf. Epistle 19, 'On Minerals', *Rasā'il*, vol. 2, p. 128.15 ff., where Q. 16:40 and Q. 54:50 are quoted).
19. In a larger sense, we thus have a further confirmation of the Ismaili concern with encyclopaedism and an explanation for why Ismaili works are often structured as encyclopaedias, given that they saw the universe as an ensemble of divine 'signs', and so considered the encyclopaedic structure as the most suitable for philosophical works in order to explain the nature of the Divine in a comprehensive manner.
20. A similar idea was later expressed by the Ismaili thinker and poet Nāṣir-i Khusraw (AD 1004–1074). Cf. Nāṣir-i Khusraw, *Kitāb Jāmi' al-ḥikmatayn*, ed. Henri Corbin and Muḥammad Mu'in as *Kitab-e Jami' al-Hikmatayn. Le livre réunissant les deux sagesse ou Harmonie de la philosophie grecque et de la théosophie ismaélienne* (Tehran and Paris, 1953), p. 77.10–11. French tr. Isabelle de Gastines, *Le Livre réunissant les deux sagesse (Kitāb-e Jāmi' al-ḥikmatayn)* (Paris, 1990).

21. Epistle 35, *Rasā'il*, vol. 3, pp. 237.16–238.21. Cf. *al-Risāla al-Jāmi'a*, ed. Muṣṭafā Ghālib (2nd ed., Beirut, 1404/1984), pp. 374.4–375.10; *Jāmi'at al-Jāmi'a: min turāth Ikhwān al-ṣafā'*, ed. 'Ārif Tāmīr (Beirut, 1390/1970), pp. 202–203.
22. When the Arabic is the same, I have not reported it.
23. The quotation is followed by the words *bal huwa aqrab*, instead of *aw huwa aqrab* in Q. 16:77; these words are missing in one of the two MSS on which the edition is based.
24. *Al-Risāla al-Jāmi'a*, p. 375.2–10.
25. See note 29.
26. The reading here is *aw huwa aqrab*; but these words are not indicated by Tāmīr as a part of Q. 16:77.
27. This word indicates an incomplete quotation from the Holy Book.
28. *Jāmi'at al-Jāmi'a*, pp. 202.17–203.11.
29. Cf. De Smet, *La Quiétude de l'intellect*, pp. 315–318. The only corruption in the text might then be the word *jūd* instead of *wujūd*, unless we understand *jūd* as a further quality of Intellect in addition to perfection, permanence and completeness. The occurrence of such terminology should of course be checked in Ismaili texts; the reading *jūd* instead of *wujūd* is also found in one of the two MSS of *J*.
30. Cf. e.g. Q. 57:3 and Q. 10:4.
31. Cf. De Smet, *La Quiétude de l'intellect*, p. 196.
32. Epistle 31, *Rasā'il*, vol. 3, p. 153.5–7.
33. Epistle 31, *Rasā'il*, vol. 3, p. 167.2–7.
34. Cf. 'The "Language of the Prophet" in the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā', in Daniel De Smet, Godefroid de Callatāy and Jan M. F. van Reeth, ed., *Al-Kitāb. La sacralité du texte dans le monde de l'Islam. Actes du Symposium International tenu à Leuven et Louvain-la-Neuve du 29 mai au 1 juin 2002* (Brussels; Louvain-la-Neuve; Leuven, 2004), pp. 357–370.
35. Nāṣir-i Khusraw, *Jāmi' al-ḥikmatayn*, pp. 78.14–79.1.
36. See, e.g. Ibn Rushd, *Kitāb Faṣl al-maqāl*, ed. Georges F. Hourani (Leiden, 1959), p. 17.
37. Cf. my article 'Antecedenti "orientali" per la legittimazione del *ta'wīl* dei filosofi in Averroè?', in Anna Maria Di Tolla, ed., *Studi Berberi e Mediterranei. Miscellanea offerta in onore di Luigi Serra, Studi maghrebini*, 4 (85) (2006), pp. 131–139.
38. Cf. Nāṣir-i Khusraw, *Kitāb Jāmi' al-ḥikmatayn*, pp. 121.18–122.1. These ideas recall well-known Sijistani contexts that are widely echoed in the cosmology of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'.
39. Nāṣir-i Khusraw adds also that 'The Soul, derived with regard to Intellect, is a principle for the imam and the *jadd*' (cf. *Kitāb Jāmi' al-ḥikmatayn*, p. 155.5–9).
40. Cf. my articles '*Al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah* in al-Fārābī and in the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā': A Comparison', in Stefan Leder with Hilary Kilpatrick, Bernadette

Martel-Thoumian and Hannelore Schöning, ed., *Studies in Arabic and Islam. Proceedings of the 19th Congress, Union européenne des arabisants et islamisants, Halle 1998* (Leuven, 2002), pp. 3–12; ‘Ideological Debate and Political Encounter in the *Iḥwān al-Ṣafā*’, in Antonino Pellitteri, ed., *Maḡāz. Culture e contatti nell’area del Mediterraneo. Il ruolo dell’Islam. Atti del XXI Congresso, Union européenne des arabisants et islamisants, Palermo, 27–30 settembre 2002* (Palermo, 2003), pp. 33–41; ‘Temporal and Religious Connotations of the “Regal Policy” in the *Ikhwān al-Ṣafā*’, in Emma Gannagé et al., ed., *The Greek Strand in Islamic Political Thought. Proceedings of the Conference held at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, 16–27 June 2003*, *Mélanges de l’Université Saint-Joseph*, 57 (2004), pp. 337–365; ‘The “History of the Prophet” in the *Ikhwān al-Ṣafā*’, in Binyamin Abrahamov, ed., *Studies in Arabic and Islamic Culture II* (Ramat-Gan, 2006), pp. 7–31; ‘History, Language and Ideology in the *Ikhwān al-Ṣafā*’ View of the Imāmate’, in Barbara Michalak-Pikulska and Alexander Pikulski, ed., *Authority, Privacy and Public Order in Islam. Proceedings of the 22nd Congress, Union européenne des arabisants et islamisants* (Leuven, 2006), pp. 17–27.

Some Aspects of the External Relations of the Qarāmiṭa in Baḥrayn¹

István Hajnal

I

The radical dissidents of the Ismaili movement, the Qarmaṭīs (*Qarāmiṭa*) of Baḥrayn, acquired a particularly terrifying reputation in both the eastern and the western lands of the 'Abbasid empire. This was due, first of all, to their military forces, which represented, at that time, the most dreadful and effective army in the whole of the Muslim world, and, secondly, to their constant raids and devastating marauding campaigns against the caravan routes of southern 'Iraq and the urban centres of the region. Their military presence posed a permanent threat to the whole area, and it became one of the principal contributing factors in the disintegration of the caliphate. In 316/928, Baghdad narrowly escaped the Qarmaṭī occupation, unlike Mecca which suffered hugely from their invasion in 319/930.

The Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn and other dissident eastern Ismailis refused to recognise the Fatimid caliphs as their imams, continuing to adhere to their previous doctrine after the establishment in 297/909 of the Fatimid caliphate, and thus were still awaiting the appearance of their hidden imam, Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl, as the Mahdī who would initiate the final religious epoch.² They based their legitimacy and their policies, opposing Sunni Islam and the 'Abbasid caliphate, on the representation of this theocratic and charismatic leader, the Imam-Mahdī.

Well aware of their own military power, and regardless of the fact that it was one of their primary political instruments, they also utilised a wide range of diplomatic means to develop partnerships with other powers, displaying an amazing flexibility not usually associated with sectarian attitudes, as well as political manoeuvring that astonished their

contemporaries no less than it has modern researchers.

The main concern in this study will be to shed light on some of these efforts and the motivations behind them, and military events will be discussed only insofar as they are relevant to a clarification of such motivations.

The Ismaili mission (*da'wa*) appeared in Baḥrayn, in the coastal region of eastern Arabia, to the south of 'Iraq, in 281/894 or perhaps even earlier in 273/886. In the early Islamic period, the term Baḥrayn applied to the mainland areas of al-Ḥasā province of today's Saudi Arabia as well as to the island nowadays called Baḥrayn, which was then known as Uwāl.

Baḥrayn was near the centre of the 'Abbasid empire and was situated on the main commercial sea route running from India, China and Africa to 'Iraq. It was therefore the principal channel for commerce in the Persian Gulf. The merchants of Baṣra, Sīrāf, Baḥrayn and 'Umān used this channel to transport various commodities, such as precious stones, ivory, timber, spices and metals. Baḥrayn's territory was bounded on three sides by flourishing centres of trade: Baṣra to the north, 'Umān to the south and Sīrāf, Sīnīz and Jannāba on the coast of Persia. The territory itself was inhabited by a heterogeneous population, with villagers of Nabaṭean origin in the oases and craftsmen and merchants of Persian and/or Jewish origin travelling through the Persian Gulf to ports such as Baṣra and Sīrāf. The towns of Baḥrayn had an interest in increasing their share in the great Indian trade passing through the Persian Gulf. In the countryside and desert areas there were the poor transhumant bedouin tribes who had a low opinion of the rich sedentary population.

The governors of this region, appointed by the central authorities in Damascus, and later in Baghdad, never settled in Baḥrayn. The absence of a strong effective authority, as well as the strategic location, made Baḥrayn a suitable breeding ground for rebel groups. Formerly, the province had served as a stronghold for the Khawārij, and again later for the slave revolt of the Zanj. There were Shi'i communities in its towns and the hostility between the province and wealthy Baṣra was intense.³

II

By 286/899 Abū Sa'īd al-Jannābī, one of the founding fathers of the Ismaili mission (*da'wa*) in Baḥrayn, had made numerous converts among the nomadic tribes and the townspeople alike, and he married into one of the leading local trading and landowning families, that of the Banū Sanbar. He also looked for allies from the bedouins of the desert and found them

mainly among the Banū Kilāb and Banū ‘Uqayl tribes.⁴

With the support of the nomadic tribes, Abū Sa‘īd conquered a large part of Baḥrayn and also the town of Qaṭīf in the coastal region of eastern Arabia. Within a short while, his troops were in control of the territories around Hajar, the capital of Baḥrayn, and were drawing close to Baṣra.⁵ The alliance between Abū Sa‘īd’s *da‘wa*, its followers among the settled population and the bedouin was to prove extremely effective, and the developing Qarmaṭi community became a menacing presence for their neighbours.

In 287/900 the Qarāmiṭa were in control of the suburbs of Hajar, and after a long siege the seat of the ‘Abbasid governor was taken, and al-‘Abbās b. ‘Amr al-Ghanawī, who had been appointed by the caliph al-Mu‘taḍid (r. 279–289/892–902), was captured, but later released with a letter for the caliph.⁶ In his message, declaring his disapproval of the presence of the ‘Abbasid authorities in the area and warning the caliph to leave him in peace and not to intervene in the affairs of Baḥrayn again, the Qarmaṭi leader declared clearly his authority over the region:

Why do you [have to] violate your dignity (*li-ma takhruqu haybatak*) and let your soldiers be killed and give reason to your enemies to hope [for your defeat], sending armies in my pursuit? I am a man dwelling in the desert, where there is neither agriculture nor animal husbandry, and yet I have taken pleasure in this rough life. ... Look [and you will see] that I have not, by use of force, deprived you of any land that belonged to you (*mā ghaṣabtuk baladan kāna fī yadik*), nor have I caused your power to cease in any territory (*wa lā azaltu sulṭānak ‘an ‘amal*).

Abū Sa‘īd al-Jannābī proceeds to observe that even in the case of a possible assault by the ‘Abbasid armies, the attackers would have little or no chance of winning against him, since he was completely at home in those remote desert lands. Apart from his effective military advantage in that sort of natural environment, his confidence was further strengthened by the fact that he was head of a messianic movement in the ascendant and felt no need of any legitimisation through appointment by the caliph, unlike many of the warlords of the period.

Shortly afterwards, the Qarāmiṭa decisively defeated an ‘Abbasid army and Baṣra began to feel threatened again, although there would be no second attack on the city. The city was extremely important to the ‘Abbasid government for controlling the trade in goods from India and the Persian Gulf. However, the Qarāmiṭa failed in their attempt to take control of the trade route to Baṣra.⁷ Then they tried to extend their

authority to the adjoining regions including Yamāma and in particular to ‘Umān, which occupied a key position in the Persian Gulf as regards maritime commerce with the Far East.⁸ Eventually Abū Sa‘īd established his headquarters near Hajar at al-Aḥsā’, which later became the capital of the Qarmaṭī state in Baḥrayn in 314/926.

Abū Sa‘īd, like other Qarmaṭī missionaries, gave expression to his firm belief in the imminent appearance of the Mahdī on several occasions and claimed to be acting on behalf of the awaited Mahdī who had been expected to appear in 300/912. The unfulfilled expectations of the adherents quite probably caused frustration within the *da‘wa*, which may have been a factor in the murder of the head of the nascent Qarmaṭī principality, that is to say, Abū Sa‘īd al-Jannābī, and other leaders of the movement in 300/913–914.⁹

III

Abū Sa‘īd was succeeded by the eldest of his seven sons, Abu’l-Qāsim Sa‘īd, who governed with a council of notables (*al-‘iqdāniyya*) in the following years.¹⁰

During the rule of Abu’l-Qāsim Sa‘īd, who was a leader of peaceful character, the Qarāmiṭa refrained from troubling the territories of the caliphate and maintained good relations with the ‘Abbasid government, being in fact engaged in extensive negotiations with the famous ‘Abbasid vizier ‘Alī b. ‘Īsā b. Jarrāḥ (d. 334/946) regarding his peace initiatives. The ‘Abbasid vizier, after assuming office in 301/913 and again in 303/916, dispatched embassies to the Qarāmiṭa. In 301/913 ‘Alī b. ‘Īsā advised the caliph al-Muqtadir (r. 295–317/908–929) to communicate with the Qarmaṭī leader Abū Sa‘īd to establish better relations, and he wrote a letter in the caliph’s name admonishing and rebuking the Qarāmiṭa and summoning them to obedience. However, Abū Sa‘īd died before the message reached the Qarāmiṭa, and his successors sent a conciliatory reply to the ‘Abbasid court releasing, as a gesture, the captives whose cause the messengers had pleaded.

In one of his letters written to the vizier ‘Alī b. ‘Īsā, the Qarmaṭī leader Abu’l-Qāsim Sa‘īd says:

Regarding what he mentioned about us, namely our secession (*infirād*) from the community, [I can state that] – may God give you support – we have not seceded from either obeisance or the community, but have been forced to separate from it, leave our homelands, and it has been deemed licit [to spill] our blood. ... Originally, we were seen as honourable and we

busied ourselves with our trade and our livelihood, keeping aloof from all manner of sins, and observing all the religious obligations. However, some impudent and shameless people, not known for their piety, made hateful [rumours] against us, and they kept besmirching our reputation with [claims of] communism (*bi'l-sawīyya*) [of women] among us, and not observing what is licit and illicit. Therefore we had to flee, and whoever stayed behind was captured with ropes and chains; and thus we had to seek refuge in a [distant] land [lit. 'island', *jazīra*]. Then we sent [envoys] to get back our properties and womenfolk, but they would not let us, deciding to go to war against us instead. So we could not but seek redress in combat [*ḥākamnāhum ilā'l-sayf*].¹¹

Such statements on the part of the Qarmaṭī leader strongly suggest that it was external pressures and political circumstances that forced the Qarāmiṭa to go into isolation and take up defensive positions. This conclusion is further buttressed by some specimens of their correspondence, in which the Qarāmiṭa declared that they considered themselves to be faithful Muslims, even though their opponents would accuse them of being infidels and brand their beliefs as heretical deviations. All the while, they also asserted that they were opposed to the rule of the 'Abbasids and their supporters, who led a luxurious life and committed acts prohibited by the sacred law of Islam (*sharī'a*).¹²

Presumably the Qarāmiṭa's decision to develop Baḥrayn's commercial relations with the other regions of the Persian Gulf was due to their favourable geographical situation, and they seem to have sought trading opportunities from the 'Abbasid government. Their approach was accepted by 'Alī b. 'Īsā, who was known as the 'Good Vizier', in the hope that, by allowing them to develop their trade, he would avert a Qarmaṭī invasion of southern 'Iraq. As long as 'Alī b. 'Īsā held power in the 'Abbasid government, this policy of 'peace for privileges' prevailed, and before being dismissed from the vizierate in 303/915–916 he allowed money and weapons to be sent to the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn and granted them prerogatives such as the use of the port of Sīrāf and the right to trade freely in it.¹³

IV

In 311/923–924 or probably even earlier, Abu'l-Qāsim Sa'īd was forced to resign by his younger, much more militant brother Abū Ṭāhir Sulaymān, and in the same year the 'Abbasid vizier 'Alī b. 'Īsā lost power to his main rival, the Shi'i Ibn al-Furāt (d. 312/924), who was less inclined to take a conciliatory attitude towards the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn. As a result, they

ended their temporarily peaceful relations with the 'Abbasid government and took this occasion for reopening hostilities against the caliph's empire.¹⁴

A few days after the change of viziers in the court of the caliph, the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn started a series of raids on the main towns of southern 'Iraq and thenceforth continued pillaging the pilgrim caravans over a period of almost half a century.

Shortly after looting Baṣra in 311/923, they attacked a pilgrim caravan returning from Mecca to Habir, and captured many distinguished pilgrims, among them the Hamdanid amir Abu'l-Hayjā', who in 311/923–924 had been given the responsibility of ensuring the security of the pilgrimage route by the 'Abbasid government.¹⁵ Abu'l-Hayjā' was able to negotiate not only his own release but that of other captives as well. This apparently close relationship with the Qarāmiṭa, who usually put their prisoners to death, was seen by the French historian M. Canard as a sign of sympathy between the Ismaili Qarāmiṭa and the Shi'i Hamdanids. But according to H. Kennedy, the occasional signs of cordiality between them were probably the result of momentary convergences of political interests rather than of any lasting religious sympathy.¹⁶

Later, during the crisis of 315/927–928, Abu'l-Hayjā' played a key role in defending 'Iraq when the Qarāmiṭa had reached 'Ayn al-Tamr near Anbār on the Euphrates and presented a serious threat to Baghdad. Abu'l-Hayjā' as well as his three brothers were part of the army sent to keep the Qarāmiṭa in check.

Whereas his father, Abū Sa'īd, had been supported at the beginning of his mission mainly by bedouins, Abū Ṭāhir al-Jannābī pursued a broader external policy by which his nomadic military troops acted to promote the interests of the merchants, the most important stratum of the townspeople of Baḥrayn. Their interests were, from then on, a decisive factor in his policy, determining both the internal conditions of the developing Qarmaṭī statehood and its external policy. The successive changes of this policy are clearly indicated by the accounts of the chroniclers.

Amid these political changes, an independent Qarmaṭī principality developed out of what had been simply a radical messianic movement, legitimised by the representation of the theocratic leader of the Imam-Mahdī, and this state effectively enforced the measures of a militant external policy in defence of its local, mainly commercial interests.

As mentioned above, the Qarāmiṭa had previously been granted trading rights in Sirāf by the 'Abbasid government in 303/915, but they had soon come to realise that due to their regional location it was not suffi-

cient. Perceptibly, their purpose was to secure a share in the profits of the trade of the Persian Gulf and the Syrian–‘Iraqi and Arabian deserts. Thus they proceeded to occupy the ports of ‘Umān, and so came to dominate the Persian Gulf’s southern Arabian coast. Afterwards, they tried to establish points of control on the Persian side of the gulf. Their attack on Baṣra was enough to frighten trade away from this flourishing port and divert it to their own ports where they imposed and collected their own taxes.¹⁷ For the land routes, they first turned to the pilgrim caravans, which were also important trade vehicles. Then they turned to the north–south trade route bordering the Syrian–‘Iraqi desert, and tried to attack and dominate the marketplaces along this route. Later, their intention was to seize what they considered to be taxes and what their opponents preferred to call ‘protection money’ (*khifāra*).¹⁸

When, some time later, Abu’l-Hayjā’ and other prisoners of the first attack on the pilgrim caravans were released, they arrived in Baghdad as delegates from Abū Ṭāhir, demanding that Ahwāz, Baṣra and even other territories be ceded to the Qarmaṭis.¹⁹ But the demand of the Qarāmiṭa was rejected and in 312/924–925 the pilgrims were attacked again and Kūfa was sacked.²⁰ The pilgrimage (*hajj*) of 313/926 was allowed to proceed in peace only after the payment of a considerable sum.²¹

It was under such circumstances that the ‘Abbasid caliph al-Muqtadir recalled to ‘Iraq the ruler of Azarbayjan and Armenia, the amir Ibn Abi’l-Sāj, in order to keep the Qarmaṭi threat in check.²² After further plundering of Kūfa by the Qarāmiṭa and when Baghdad itself was threatened, the vizier al-Khaṣībī (r. 313–314/925–927) sent Ibn Abi’l-Sāj additional military forces. The latter had been camping in Wāsiṭ to prepare himself for the forthcoming battle with the Qarāmiṭa. ‘Alī b. ‘Īsā was recalled and appointed as vizier after the dismissal of al-Khaṣībī in 314/926. He carried out an investigation into al-Khaṣībī’s impractical decision to employ Ibn Abi’l-Sāj’s forces that were accustomed to fighting mainly in mountainous terrain. ‘Alī b. ‘Īsā, realising that Ibn Abi’l-Sāj would not be successful, suggested that it would be better to employ the bedouin Banū Asad to guard the pilgrimage and the Banū Shaybān to attack the Qarāmiṭa. His advice was not accepted. At any rate, this idea was put forward too late to be acted on. The caliph’s troops were again defeated and Ibn Abi’l-Sāj himself was captured and later killed in 315/928.²³

Thereupon the Qarāmiṭa advanced as far as the banks of the Euphrates, seized Anbār and crossed the river with the intention of entering Baghdad. The capital was alarmed at these developments but their progress was halted, temporarily, by the army of Mu’nis al-Khādim (d. 321/933), the

‘Abbasid commander-in-chief, who had earlier defended Egypt against the Fatimid troops.²⁴ Apart from that, the ‘Abbasid government was incapable of handling the situation.

The presence of the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn in the region, lasting for almost two years, incited their coreligionists from southern ‘Iraq, who were concentrated in the surroundings (*sawād*) of Kūfa, to rebellion.²⁵ The bedouin tribes roaming the steppe region of Junbulā’ and Tall Fakhkhār between the Euphrates and Wāsiṭ – the Banū Rifā’a, Banū Dhuhl and Banū ‘Abs and Banū ‘Ijl – among whom the Ismaili mission’ (*da’wa*) had been active for more than fifty years, now became reinvigorated and decided to establish the ‘realm’ (*balad*) of the Mahdī.²⁶ However, the troops of the Qarāmiṭa withdrew all at once to the western bank of the Euphrates, and returned to Baḥrayn because of the confused state of their internal affairs.²⁷

According to the sources, the intensive military actions of the Qarāmiṭa during this time were accompanied by increased eschatological expectations. Abū Ṭāhir, like other Qarmaṭī missionaries (*du’āt*) of the eastern territories, was at that time predicting the imminent arrival of the Mahdī on the basis of astrological calculations following the conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in the year 316/928. This occurrence, according to Qarmaṭī tenets, was expected to end the era of Islam and initiate the final religious epoch. For the reception of the Mahdī they had completed the construction of a fortified refuge, an ‘abode of migration’ (*dār al-hijra*) near al-Aḥsā’.²⁸

There is a letter attributed to Abū Ṭāhir, originating from around 313/925, which has been preserved by the Yemeni scholar of the fifth/eleventh century, Muḥammad Ibn Mālik al-Ḥammādī.²⁹ According to François de Blois, the author of the letter, that is Abū Ṭāhir, presents himself in rhyming prose as a defender of the purity of the faith, and the puritanical attitude palpable in the letter’s text is a powerful proof of its authenticity. Abū Ṭāhir redirects all the accusations voiced previously by the caliph back towards the caliph himself. Abū Ṭāhir accuses the caliph of being a morally corrupt person surrounded by an equally corrupt entourage, referring to him by the title ‘prince of the corrupt’ (*amīr al-fāsiqīn*). His own destructive and deadly rampages he justifies by claiming that he had previously ascertained his victims’ obvious sinful and deplorable conduct (*mā fa’altu dhālik illā ba’d wuḍūḥ al-ḥujja ka-īḍāḥ al-shams ... wa-mu’āyanatī minhum akhlāq al-fujjār*). All these charges are phrased by Abū Ṭāhir in the rigorous parlance of a radical Shī’i heir to the most severe Khārijī mentality, who completely rejects any reliance

on the standard Sunni authorities by referring to the caliph as 'one who lies about God Almighty and about His Messenger – God bless him and his family – supported by chains of tradition on the authority of sinful shaykhs (*bi-asānīd 'an mashāyikh fajara*)'. Abū Ṭāhir's declarations in the letter are to be understood in the context of the contemporary atmosphere of strong and widespread messianic expectations, reflected in the following phrasing of Abū Ṭāhir '... The Expected Imam [i.e. the Mahdī] has risen, like a ferocious lion, all garbed in victory, girded with the sword of wrath, with no need for the support of the bedouin [*al-'arab*]. In his efforts in God's cause, no blame can be attached to him.' It is my emphatic opinion that, in contrast to de Blois's view, Abū Ṭāhir does not claim here to be the expected Mahdī himself, a declaration that would be quite inconsistent with the pseudo-Mahdī intermezzo that took place not much later. I find the suggestion of such a quick turnaround in Abū Ṭāhir's policy and declarations very improbable, all the more so as the Qarmaṭi plans to attack Mecca must have been already hatched in their circles.³⁰

It was in such circumstances that in the year 317/930 the troops of Abū Ṭāhir made a surprise attack on Mecca during the pilgrimage season, massacred the pilgrims and carried away the Black Stone to demonstrate the end of the era of Islam. Their unprecedented act shocked the Muslim world, and most of our sources relate that, shortly afterwards, the Fatimid caliph 'Abd Allāh sent a letter to Abū Ṭāhir reproving him and requesting him to return the Black Stone. But his commands, like some similar demands put to him by the 'Abbasids, were of no concern in Baḥrayn.³¹

In 318/930, with the conquest of 'Umān, the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn acquired hegemony over the region and thus became an imminent danger to their neighbours. Now they were finally in a position to reattempt the invasion of southern 'Iraq. In 319/931 they advanced, however, only as far as Kūfa, which they plundered again.³²

Their irresistible advance was checked only by internal troubles developing in the Qarmaṭi community in Baḥrayn. During the month of Ramaḍān 319/931, Abū Ṭāhir, who had been expecting the coming of the Mahdī since 316/929, transferred rule to a young Persian prisoner of war from Iṣfahān in whom he recognised the expected Mahdī, and declared the establishment of the final religious era, that of Paradise on Earth. But events took a very different turn from what had commonly been expected by the dissident eastern Qarmaṭis for the advent of the Mahdī, who would reveal the truths concealed in the scriptures of the Prophets of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and put an end to the era of Islam. However, in his short reign, the Iṣfahānī declared all previous religions to be invalid, and

ordered the damnation of all prophets. Then he allowed various extreme forms of behaviour, and even ordered that prominent Qarmaṭī leaders be put to death. Abū Ṭāhir was finally forced to execute him and acknowledge that he had been deceived by a false Mahdī.³³

This unfortunate attempt at a theocratic statehood headed by the Mahdī shows that the expectation of the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn for the advent of Mahdī was not related to the physically visible Fatimid imam-caliphs, though the underlying motives of the events are extremely complex. On the other hand, the episode of the pseudo-Mahdī severely demoralised the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn and weakened their influence over other dissident Qarmaṭīs in the east. Many of their adherents, mainly of the Ājamīs of 'Iraq and the tribal Arab chiefs, left Baḥrayn and came to offer their services to the armies of Sunni rulers during the following decades.³⁴

After the rejection of the pseudo-Mahdī, the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn appear to have returned to their former beliefs and claimed to be acting on the orders of the hidden Mahdī. However, in the years following the desecration of the sanctuary in Mecca and the intermezzo of the pseudo-Mahdī, eschatological expectations perceptibly decreased among them, and commercial interests again became the primary factor influencing Qarmaṭī policy. There was a revival of the 'peace for privileges' principle that gave priority to economic interests over ideology, a policy that had already proved successful in the time of the early *da'wa* under the leadership of Abu'l-Qāsim Sa'īd, the eldest son of the community's founder, Abū Sa'īd al-Jannābī.

In the spirit of this pursuit, the Qarāmiṭa sought more advantageous destinations for raiding expeditions. They set out from their port of Qaṭīf to cross the Persian Gulf to the opposite region of the Iranian coast. Two coastal towns in Fārs suffered at their hands – Sīnīz in 321/933 and Tawwaj in 322/934.³⁵ Their purpose was clearly to ruin any centres of textile manufacture which could compete with al-Aḥsā'. They carried out further raids on southern 'Iraq and the south of Persia, and continued to block the pilgrim caravan routes. From 317/929 to 327/939 no pilgrim caravans left 'Iraq and the eastern provinces for fear of the Qarāmiṭa, except on two occasions when they were given permission by the latter.³⁶

Since the pilgrimage had become impossible for years and the military actions of the Qarāmiṭa were continuing, the chamberlain (*hājib*) of the new 'Abbasid caliph al-Rāḍī (r. 322–329/934–940), Muḥammad b. Yāqūt, entered into negotiations with Abū Ṭāhir in 322/934 for the recognition of the authority of the caliphate, to put an end to the latter's interference with pilgrimages, and for the returning of the Black Stone. In exchange, Abū

Ṭāhir would receive official authorisation for ruling the regions which he *de facto* possessed or had conquered. The Qarāmiṭa refused again to restore the Black Stone to its original place but agreed to stop obstructing the pilgrimage routes and offered to have Friday prayer (*khutba*) read in the name of the 'Abbasid caliph if they were allowed to obtain provisions from Baṣra and use its port freely – clearly a vital need for the oasis region of Baḥrayn.³⁷ However, Abū Ṭāhir did not keep his promise to cease obstructing the *hajj*, since the Qarāmiṭa attacked the pilgrim caravans the following year. As a result, most of the pilgrims returned to Baghdad without completing the pilgrimage.³⁸

Despite their rejection of the offer of the caliphal court of Baghdad, the willingness of the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn to agree to a peaceful settlement marked a step towards the renewal of their former policy of 'peace for privileges'.³⁹ Nevertheless they again attacked the pilgrimage route, defeated the troops of the caliph between Kūfa and Qādisiyya and occupied the town of Kūfa itself for several days before returning to Baḥrayn.⁴⁰ In 325/937, Abū Ṭāhir again entered Kūfa, and carried on further negotiations with the recently appointed 'Abbasid 'overlord' (*amīr al-umarā*), Ibn Rā'iḳ. In reply to the demand of the Qarāmiṭa, who wanted the caliph to give them 120,000 dinars a year in silver and supplies, Ibn Rā'iḳ proposed that Abū Ṭāhir and his troops should consider themselves to be enrolled in the service of the caliph and that this sum be regarded as a form of salary. However, no agreement was achieved.⁴¹

Finally, after prolonged negotiations in 327/938–939, the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn made peace with the authorities in Baghdad, and a working agreement was reached between Abū Ṭāhir and the 'Abbasid government through the efforts of Abū 'Alī Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā, an 'Alid from Kūfa and a friend of the Qarmaṭī leader. Under this agreement, the Qarāmiṭa promised to protect the pilgrims in return for an annual tribute of 120,000 dinars from the 'Abbasid treasury.⁴² 'Abd al-Jabbār al-Hamadḥānī confirms in his account of the events that in this agreement, it was Abū Ṭāhir who took the initiative. 'Abd al-Jabbār attributed this to the role of the tribal allies in forcing the Qarmaṭī leader to reach a settlement after the disastrous false Mahdī intermezzo.⁴³ He also relates that Abū Ṭāhir apologised to the caliph al-Rāḍī for the earlier aggressive behaviour of his followers and condemned their tribal allies who lived off his beneficence yet disobeyed him.⁴⁴ To be sure, the agreement made a significant contribution towards restoring the prestige of the Qarmaṭī leader, which had been undermined by the episode of the pseudo-Mahdī.

As regards the pilgrimage caravan, taxes were imposed on each person

and each load of goods. In return for this protection fee (*khifāra*), to be paid by the pilgrims from then onwards, the Qarāmiṭa themselves took over the leadership of the caravan, and made sure that it proceeded unmolested. This arrangement held up to 335/947, when the caravan was again unable to proceed in safety, as a result of initial difficulties that the Buyid amir Mu'izz al-Dawla (r. 334–356/945–967) experienced in dealing with the Qarāmiṭa. Safe conduct for the pilgrimage caravan was re-established in 339/951 and this state of affairs continued without interruption until 364/974, when troubles in 'Iraq impeded the merchants of Baghdad from joining the Khurāsānīs, who completed the pilgrimage without any hindrance.⁴⁵

V

After the death of Abū Ṭāhir in 332/944, power came to be held collectively by his brothers, the 'leading masters' (*al-sāda al-ru'asā'*), who continued his recent peaceful policy. Thus the pilgrimage went on undisturbed again, but the Black Stone was still kept in al-Aḥsā'. Of Abū Ṭāhir's brothers, Abu'l-Qāsim Sa'īd (d. 361/972) and Abū Maṣṣūr Aḥmad (d. 359/970) were the ones who took over leadership in the Qarmaṭī principality; the son of the latter, Abū 'Alī al-Ḥasan (d. 366/977), also known as al-A'ṣam, served as the commander of the army. On the other hand, the seven surviving sons of Abū Ṭāhir – the eldest being called Sābūr (d. 358/969) – were definitively put aside. But the greatest influence, according to the report of Ibn Ḥawqal, was wielded by the shaykh of the Banū Sanbar, Abū Muḥammad Sanbar, the individual who in 339/951 returned the Black Stone, which had been stolen from the sanctuary of the Ka'ba by the Qarāmiṭa, to Mecca.⁴⁶

In the mid-fourth/tenth century, the 'Abbasid caliphs were in the hands of a series of Turkish or Iranian warlords, who, with the title of *amīr al-umārā'*, had actual control of the state, albeit usually only for a brief period of time each. In the year 334/945, the title was conferred on a member of the Buyid family, and the Shi'i Buyid amirs took possession of Baghdad and became the real protectors of the 'Abbasid empire for over a century. As masters of 'Iraq and all of western Iran, the Buyids also sought to win back control of the Persian Gulf, both coastlines of which had been lost to the 'Abbasids. Thus they were bound to confront the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn. Dominating the Iranian plateau and expanding into 'Iraq, the Buyids were in a favourable position and could control most of the east–west and north–south trade routes, and control of the southern

coastline of Persia enabled them to participate in Indian Ocean trade.⁴⁷

Before the Buyid period, the slow collapse of the military and administrative structure of the caliphate had brought raids by Arab tribes, but these were limited first to those by the Qarāmiṭa in the south, and those by the nomads whom the Hamdanids joined with in the north. However, Mu'nis al-Khādim had been careful to keep the Arabs from supporting Hamdanid ambitions after the threat of the Qarāmiṭa had subsided. But with the office of *amīr al-umārā'*, the Arabs became a source of manpower for the small armies led by any contender for power. The Qarāmiṭa, and the Banū Tamīm, Qushayrī and Numayrī tribes, were all made use of by the various military alliances in 'Iraq.⁴⁸

To the south, the Qarāmiṭa were given the right to protect the pilgrim caravans throughout the period 324–334/936–945, much to their satisfaction. A tax imposed on the people and goods departing from 'Iraq assured their safe passage to Medina and Mecca. In these circumstances assigning military forces to ensure the safety of the main routes was unnecessary, their function now being carried out partly by the Hamdanids and the Qarāmiṭa.⁴⁹

The early Buyid amirs in 'Iraq, Mu'izz al-Dawla and Bakhtiyār 'Izz al-Dawla (r. 356–366 or 367/967–977 or 978), continued to leave the north and the east to the Hamdanids. The Khurāsān route was entrusted to the Kurds in the area of Ḥulwān. The Qarāmiṭa, however, had no place in the arrangements of Mu'izz al-Dawla. They were denied their old privileges which they phrased in terms of ownership of the desert to the west of Baṣra. Their power had waned, and Mu'izz al-Dawla was able to supply sufficient protection for the pilgrimage caravan himself. The situation changed under Bakhtiyār, whether due to a resurgence of Arab power in the south, or to his own negligence, and he felt the need to conciliate the Qarāmiṭa by granting them an *iqṭā'* at Saqy al-Furāt in order to ensure the free passage of pilgrims.⁵⁰

Soon after occupying Baghdad, the Buyids set out to capture Baṣra, which had been in the hands of the Barīdīs, a very wealthy and influential Shi'i family of tax farmers, since the last years of effective central government. Abu'l-Qāsim, the last of the Barīdī family, was held in check for two years through the grant of a contract for the farming of tax arrears in Wāsiṭ to the value of 1,600,000 dirhams. But once a settlement with the Hamdanid amir Nāṣir al-Dawla (r. 317–357/929–968) had been secured, Mu'izz al-Dawla turned his attention to Baṣra and in 336/948 completely overcame al-Barīdī. With this the main centres in 'Iraq were under Buyid control and the most important port in the gulf was in their hands. Abu'l-

Qāsim al-Barīdī was forced to flee to the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn at Hajar.⁵¹

For their part the Qarāmiṭa had not undertaken any attack against Baṣra during the period of Barīdī control and this indicates that they had amicable relations with them. This was manifested in the dispatch of valuable presents by Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Barīdī to Abū Ṭāhir on the occasion of the birth of his son in 331/942. The good relations between the Barīdis and the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn encouraged trade through Baṣra with the two parties sharing the benefits thereof. Evidently this situation was disadvantageous for the Buyids and the merchants of 'Umān alike.

Nevertheless, having established themselves in Baṣra, the Buyids attempted to come to an understanding with the Qarāmiṭa. Although the Qarāmiṭa seem to have accepted these Buyid initiatives, there were serious differences between them because of attempts by the Qarāmiṭa to establish control over the Persian side of the gulf.⁵² In order to assert their authority, the Qarāmiṭa sent a letter to Mu'izz al-Dawla declaring they disapproved of his proceeding through the region which they considered to be theirs, without first seeking their consent. The Buyid amir disregarded their message telling the messenger that one of his aims in taking Baṣra was to prevent them gaining any more power.⁵³

The 'Umānīs, who had made every effort to preserve their interests, aware of the disagreement between the Buyids and the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn, sought the cooperation of the Qarmaṭīs against the Buyid amirs in Baghdad.⁵⁴ According to Mas'ūdī the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn had been interested in 'Umān and had a military base there which enabled them to have a significant influence over the affairs of the region.⁵⁵ For the time being the Buyids ignored the role of the Qarāmiṭa and directed their action solely against the 'Umānīs.⁵⁶ The final occupation of 'Umān, that is of the vital strategic coastal areas of the region, by the Buyids whether of Fārs or of 'Iraq, was obviously related to considerations of economic security. However, it should also be said that the Qarāmiṭa were no longer able to assert their influence in the area.⁵⁷

In order to deflect the imminent threat of the Qarāmiṭa, Mu'izz al-Dawla sought to reach a peaceful agreement with them. Eventually in 336/948 an agreement based on their common interests was reached by the two sides, thus enabling them to live in peace with each other. The Buyids allowed the Qarāmiṭa to have their own customs house for goods taking the overland route from Baṣra and 'Iraq to Baḥrayn alongside theirs by the gates of Baṣra.⁵⁸ They also had another customs post on the island of Uwāl, which lay on the route taken by merchant ships inward bound for Baṣra and 'Iraq or outward bound for 'Umān, Sīrāf, India,

China and Africa. The agreement was supplemented by a specified duty on the important pilgrimage land routes from Baghdad, Kūfa and Baṣra. The Buyids were willing to go to some lengths to win over the Qarāmiṭa, and ready to restrict their trading with the port of Sīrāf and divert all trade to Baṣra, where both parties could share in the benefits.⁵⁹

Under these conditions of almost cordial relations, the Qarāmiṭa continued to adhere to their peace agreement with the court in Baghdad of their own free will, and finally returned the Black Stone to the Ka'ba in 339/950–951 but not, as some scholars have maintained, in response to the request of the Fatimid caliph al-Manṣūr (r. 334–341/946–953). The al-Jannābī brothers sent a letter to Baghdad, declaring their intention to restore the sacred relic. The most powerful man in Baḥrayn at that time, Abū Muḥammad Sanbar, entered Mecca, accompanied by the governor of the Holy City, bringing with him the Black Stone. He set the Stone in its place with his own hand, and a craftsman fixed it in its rightful position. Ibn Sanbar announced to the governor of Mecca that they had returned it without obligation, and only for the sake of the pilgrims who felt that the pilgrimage was not complete without the Black Stone. On the restoration of the Stone he said: 'We took it by God's omnipotence ... and we give it back by the will of God' (*akhadhnāhu bi-qudrat Allāh wa radadnāhu bi-mashī'atihi*).⁶⁰

The death of Abū Ṭāhir in 332/944 and the restoration of the Black Stone to Mecca in 339/951 represent a turning point in the development of the Qarmaṭī state in Baḥrayn: the Qarmaṭī community, which legitimised itself by claiming to represent the Imam-Mahdi, had secured recognition from its neighbours in the course of promoting its economic or, more precisely, its commercial interests, initially by pursuing a militant expansionist external policy and later by concluding agreements with various partners, on the basis of 'peace for privileges'. Thus the Qarmaṭī community had established its state and finally attained legitimisation by integrating and assimilating into the political order of the day.

After returning the Black Stone to Mecca, the Qarāmiṭa stopped their raids into 'Iraq and their attacks on the pilgrim caravans. The chroniclers do not record any military activity on their part for over a decade. On the other hand, they served the pilgrims as an armed escort. What is more, even in Baghdad itself one finds Qarmaṭīs in the entourages of certain amirs.⁶¹ The Qarāmiṭa treated Baṣra as part of their zone of influence and therefore they held that all the coastal lands of the Persian Gulf stretching from 'Umān to the island of Uwāl and to Baṣra were under their control. Their power ranged over all the northern areas of the Arabian peninsula

up to the frontiers of Palestine and Syria (al-Shām); in this region the Qarāmiṭa, who had been regarded as mere robbers, were now honoured as a respectable force which kept law and order and preserved the peace. When in the year 355/966 the bedouins of the Banū Sulaym pillaged the pilgrim caravan coming from Egypt and Syria, it was the Qarmaṭīs who forced the robbers to return the spoils which belonged to the Egyptians to the Ikhshidid ruler of Egypt, Kāfūr, for the Qarāmiṭa were now the unlikely protectors of the pilgrims and therefore they had to prevent acts of robbery and plunder.⁶²

Later they maintained good relations with the Buyid rulers, who were never able to control them, however. Bakhtiyār 'Izz al-Dawla was already on good terms with the Qarāmiṭa, having offered aid to al-Ḥasan al-A'ṣam in 359/970 when he was marching against the Fatimids in Syria.⁶³ Under Bakhtiyār they were given an *iqṭā'* worth 400,000 dirhams. When Bakhtiyār was caught up in the conflict between his Turkish and Daylamī military forces in 363/973–974 in Baghdad, he wrote letters asking for support from the Hamdanids and the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn against his chamberlain, Sabuktigīn (Sebüktegin).⁶⁴ Later Abū Shujā' 'Aḍud al-Dawla (r. 367–372/978–983) brought the Qarāmiṭa over to his side, thus ending their allegiance to Bakhtiyār, his cousin and rival. Thus in 366/977, when the armies of Shīrāz set out to march on 'Iraq, the Qarmaṭī Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Shāhawayh came to Kūfa and read the Friday prayer in the name of 'Aḍud al-Dawla and the 'Abbasid caliph al-Ṭā'i' (363–393/974–1003).⁶⁵ Ibn Shāhawayh remained at the court of 'Aḍud al-Dawla as the official representative of the Qarāmiṭa and appears to have had a voice both in his council and in that of his successor. In 'Iraq and the north 'Aḍud al-Dawla was concerned with the safety of the commercial routes, as he had been in Fārs and Kirmān, so he continued to use the Qarāmiṭa. And they in fact enjoyed the privilege of having a representative in the capital and an *iqṭā'*, but it seems that they were deprived of the right to exact taxes from the pilgrim caravans.⁶⁶ The accounts repeatedly refer to their friendly partnership with the Buyids based upon common interests. The Qarāmiṭa actively supported the Buyids in their struggle against the Samanids (204–395/819–1005) over their control of Rayy, and twice made an effort to help their allies.⁶⁷ Presumably, they were interested in retaining their own access to Rayy, an important place on the east–west trade route through Persia and Central Asia. They had been given *iqṭā'*s in the area of Kūfa and Wāsiṭ under Bakhtiyār and 'Aḍud al-Dawla.⁶⁸ When the Qarmaṭī leader Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf died in 367/978, 'Aḍud al-Dawla wrote a letter of condolence and the *sūqs* in Kūfa were closed for three days.⁶⁹

These close contacts between the two sides only deteriorated after 'Aḍud al-Dawla's death in 382/983, when his son Abū Kālījār Ṣamṣām al-Dawla (r. 372–376/983–987) seized the Qarmaṭī representative in Baghdad, thus provoking a Qarmaṭī attack on Kūfa.⁷⁰ Later, in 374/985, the Banū Khafāja were given protective rights in the area of Kūfa as a counter to the Qarāmiṭa. Afterwards, in 378/988, al-Aṣfar, the chief of the Banu'l-Muntafiq, further reduced the power of the Qarāmiṭa and demanded for himself the rights which they had had over the *hajj* caravans.⁷¹

VI

The militant attitude of the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn had a remarkable final manifestation in reaction to the Fatimid conquest of Egypt, and above all the Fatimid advance into Syria in 360/971. The Qarāmiṭa had, as has been seen, demonstrated their political interests in this region in previous years by maintaining good relations with the rulers of the Fertile Crescent, the Hamdanids and the Ikhshidids.⁷²

Since the fourth/tenth century, the borderlands between the Islamic lands and the Byzantine empire were under the control of the indigenous Arab nomads of northern Mesopotamia, especially the Banū Taghlib, and their princes, the Hamdanids, who as amirs with their seat first at Mosul, then at Aleppo, ruled in the name of the caliphs of Baghdad.

The Ikhshidids (323–358/935–969) succeeded the Tulunids (254–292/868–905) as rulers of Egypt, southern Syria and the Ḥijāz after a brief interval of direct control from Baghdad. These lands were governed mostly by Turkish officers, who left Baghdad to seek their fortunes elsewhere and were distinguished by recognising 'Abbasid suzerainty and treaty arrangements with the caliphs. Thus they were legitimised by the 'Abbasid caliph and accepted by their Buyid overlords in Baghdad. The Ikhshidids, aware of the increasing threat to their rule from the growing power of the Fatimids to the west in North Africa, and in order to avoid the danger of any confrontation with the Byzantines, left the troubled northern lands of Syria to their rivals the Hamdanids to deal with. They also paid the Qarāmiṭa a sum of 300,000 dinars a year, with the aim of securing the safety of the caravans travelling on the land routes from Egypt and Syria to the Ḥijāz.⁷³

For the first time, in 352/963, the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn extended their raids as far as Palestine and pillaged Ṭabariyya. This attack was led by al-Ḥasan al-Aṣam, who was promoted from being a member of the collective leadership of the Qarmaṭīs to commander of the Qarmaṭī army and

on several later occasions also commanded Qarmaṭī expeditions. The attack may have been intended to secure an increase in tribute from the Ikhshidid government, and certainly also to extend their authority over southern Syria and to control the route from there to Mecca.⁷⁴ It is an indication of their standing that when the Qarāmiṭa asked their allies to send them iron to make weapons in preparation for this attack, the Hamdanid amir of Aleppo, Sayf al-Dawla (r. 333–356/944–967), took down the iron gates of Raqqa and collected the weights used by the merchants of Diyār Muḍar and sent them to Hajar.⁷⁵

Immediately before the Fatimid conquest of Egypt in 358/969, the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn took advantage of the disorder in Egypt to exert control over Palestine and extend their area of influence as far as the shores of the Mediterranean. Although the Ikhshidids had never been hostile to them, the Qarāmiṭa sent an expedition against Syria which dealt a heavy blow to al-Ḥasan b. ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Ṭughj, the Ikhshidid governor of Syria. Then they took Damascus and sacked Ramla. Afterwards they received a considerable amount of tribute from the inhabitants of the town before returning to Baḥrayn.⁷⁶ In 358/969, three months after the Fatimid army had occupied Egypt, Qarmaṭī troops under the command of al-A‘ṣam’s cousins, Kisrā and Ṣakhr, again attacked and defeated al-Ḥasan b. ‘Ubayd Allāh. After this a peace treaty was concluded between the two sides under which the Ikhshidid governor promised to pay the Qarāmiṭa an annual tribute in return for their active support against the Fatimid army which was already in control of Fustāt and poised to move into Syria.⁷⁷ The Qarmaṭīs were able to conquer the main town of Palestine, Ramla, and for a short period even appointed a governor, Abu’l-Munajjā, to rule Damascus. However, this campaign was only successful insofar as they had taken booty and captives, since it did not bring them any lasting territorial gains. However, since the Qarāmiṭa had pressed into Syria and had now made the western pilgrimage route unsafe also, pilgrims were staying away from the Hijāz.

Once the commander-in-chief, Jawhar al-Ṣiqillī, had established Fatimid rule over Egypt, he made great efforts to conquer the rest of Ikhshidid territory. He sent the amir Ja‘far b. Falāḥ to Syria to defeat the remaining Ikhshidid forces there.⁷⁸ The main Qarmaṭī forces withdrew to Baḥrayn, leaving only a small contingent in Syria, and it was defeated together with the combined remaining Ikhshidid forces by the Fatimid army in 359/969.

The Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn could hardly bring themselves to accept Fatimid dominion over Syria, since this endangered the payment of the

annual protection money of 300,000 dinars due to them in return for guaranteeing the security of the Syrian and Egyptian pilgrimage caravans.⁷⁹ The authorities in Baghdad were extremely worried about the Fatimid advances in Syria, and it was these circumstances that were instrumental in creating an unlikely alliance between the Buyid amirs in Baghdad, and the Qarāmiṭa. The government in Baghdad promised them 1.4 million silver dirhams, about 100,000 gold dinars, as well as arms for their warriors once they arrived in Kūfa. The Hamdanid ruler of Mosul, Abū Taghlib 'Uddat al-Dawla al-Ghaḍanfar (r. 356–369/967–979), also sent money and troops, these latter consisting mostly of what was left of the Ikhshidid forces.⁸⁰

In 360/971 al-Ḥasan al-A'ṣam, who had assumed the leadership over the Qarmaṭī state, left al-Aḥsā' with his troops, marching northwards to Kūfa to collect the armaments provided for him by the government in Baghdad. Some 1,000 armoured warriors formed the core of his army, which also included contingents from the bedouin tribes of the Syrian desert, namely the Banū 'Uqayl, and the Banū Kilāb.⁸¹ From 'Iraq the Qarmaṭī troops marched to Damascus, carrying the black flags of the 'Abbasids displaying the name of the caliph al-Muṭī' (r. 334–364/946–974) and their slogan, 'the masters who return to the Truth/God' (*'al-sāda al-rāji'ūn ilā'l-ḥaqq*) in order to win the support of the local people.⁸² After acquiring the support of the Buyids and the Hamdanids of Mosul, the Qarāmiṭa also managed to reach an agreement with local leaders such as the Jarrahid family of the Banū Ṭayyī' in Palestine as well as in the north Arabian desert.⁸³ With assistance from all sides, the Qarāmiṭa, under the command of al-Ḥasan al-A'ṣam, were overwhelmingly victorious outside Damascus against the Kutāma Berbers who then made up the army of the Fatimids. The defeated general Ja'far b. Falāḥ was killed in the course of the battle. For the moment, the Fatimid invasion of Syria was halted.⁸⁴

To demonstrate their unambiguous rejection of the Fatimids, the Qarmaṭī leader proclaimed the establishment of 'Abbasid authority in the areas they captured and cursed the Fatimid caliph al-Mu'izz in the mosques. Al-Ḥasan al-A'ṣam made sure that the Friday sermon was read in the name of the caliph of Baghdad, al-Muṭī', and coins struck also bore the 'Abbasid caliph's name. In the Great Mosque of Damascus, al-A'ṣam ascended the pulpit himself in order to deny the 'Alid descent of the Fatimid caliphs.⁸⁵

The Fatimid advance into Syria changed the pattern of political arrangements in the region from one based on dealings between a number of quarrelling groups to a conflict between two powers and their allies,

the Fatimids on one side, allied with the Hamdanids of Aleppo and some Arab tribes such as the Banū Fazāra and Banū Murra, and the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn on the other side, allied with the Buyids, the Hamdanids of Mosul and Arab clans such as the 'Uqaylids and the Jarrahids.⁸⁶

Qarmaṭi attacks on Syria and Egypt continued, and they reoccupied Ramla in 361/972, defeating a strong contingent of Fatimid military. Then they marched towards Egypt and laid siege to the newly founded capital of Cairo. But the defence mounted by the Fatimid general Jawhar and the defection of some of their allies such as the Banū 'Uqayl and Banū Ṭayyi', who were bought off by the Fatimids, forced the Qarāmiṭa to retreat. Furthermore, internal problems in Baḥrayn necessitated their return to al-Aḥsā'. Nevertheless, Damascus remained in their hands.⁸⁷

After the arrival of the Fatimid caliph al-Mu'izz in Cairo in 362/973, an imminent Qarmaṭi invasion was the most alarming and impending danger. Under these circumstances the caliph sent a long threatening letter to the Qarmaṭi leader, al-Ḥasan al-A'ṣam, which was preserved by Sharīf Akhū Muḥsin, writing shortly after 372/982.⁸⁸

As W. Madelung has explained, the letter was sent essentially for political purposes.⁸⁹ It does not reveal any secrets, but rather the opponent was to be frightened with arguments designed to make the strongest possible impression on him. For his part, H. Halm⁹⁰ regarded it as an important document since it provides evidence of the Fatimid caliphs' awareness of themselves and their role, and also of their evaluation of their relationship with the Qarmaṭis, since both groups had originated in common beliefs.

In his letter, a significant proportion of which is given over to an introductory address which sets out the position of the Fatimid imams in the context of Ismaili hierohistorical worldview, al-Mu'izz established himself firmly in the line of the Shi'i imams: 'There is no region or clime on the earth save therein are for us *ḥujjas* and *dā'īs* summoning on our behalf and guiding [the people] towards us' (*fa-mā min jazīratin fi'l-arḍ wa-lā iqlimin illā wa-lanā fīhi ḥujaj wa du'āt yad'ūna lanā wa yadullūna 'alaynā*). According to the statements of the Fatimid caliph the forebears of al-A'ṣam, the leaders of the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn, Abū Sa'id and Abū Ṭāhir al-Jannābī, mentioned by name in the letter, had been faithful followers of the imam. However, the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn had never actually recognised the Fatimid caliphs as their imams. In his letter al-Mu'izz also recalled that the earlier leaders of the Qarāmiṭa were implacable enemies of the 'Abbasids, while their successor al-A'ṣam allied himself with these usurpers and enemies of God. The caliph reproached him for having forsaken the Fatimid cause, condemning him as a traitor and a

deserter (*al-ghādir al-khā'in*) from the true religion, as 'the one who has broken away and separated from the guidance of his fathers and his forefathers, the one who has cast himself off from the religion of his ancestors and his likes, the one who is the kindler for the fire of discord/temptation' (*al-nākith al-bā'in 'an hudā ābā'ihī wa ajdādihi, al-munsalikh min dīn aslāfihi wa andādihi, al-muwaqqid li-nār al-fitna*). The Qarmaṭīs are thus urged to abandon their rebellion against their rightful masters, to return to supporting the Ismailī *da'wa* (which, though successful, must have been seeking to attract an increasing number of supporters) and thus help bring back the halcyon days of the early *da'wa*. Al-Mu'izz was expounding on certain eschatological visions when he claimed that it was high time for a return to the past, as the days of the caliphate in Baghdad were in his view numbered.⁹¹ The caliph argued that only immediate submission to the true imam could now save the traitor from the wrath of God. This, said the Fatimid caliph, offered three possibilities to the Qarmaṭī leader: he ought either to pay the blood money for every single Fatimid warrior killed in Syria and return all booty that had been taken – or to resuscitate all the dead – or else he should consider fleeing with all his adherents, although in this latter case the caliph threatened him with the most terrible punishment.

Al-Ḥasan al-A'ṣam sent him a short but extremely impertinent reply, which runs as follows: 'We have received your letter which is full of detail (*kathura tafṣīluhu*), but empty of sense (*wa qalla taḥṣīluhu*). We shall follow immediately after it. Peace be with you', and in 363/974 he proceeded to attack Egypt by land and sea, whilst an 'Alid ally invaded Upper Egypt.⁹² The Qarāmiṭa besieged Cairo for the second time but were betrayed by their Jarrahid ally and were eventually defeated by Fatimid forces under the command of the son of al-Mu'izz, the future caliph al-'Azīz.⁹³

Some Qarmaṭī contingents who had stayed in Syria joined forces with the Turk Alftakīn (Alptegīn), a Buyid officer who had fallen out of favour with his patrons and fled Baghdad. The inhabitants of Damascus, unhappy at the prospect of Fatimid rule, welcomed him and urged him to save their city from falling into the hands of the 'Westerners' (*maghāriba*). Then he pacified Damascus and cleared the *maghāriba* from its surroundings. However, a Fatimid army commanded by Jawhar arrived outside Damascus in 365/976. Alftakīn and the inhabitants of the city appealed for help to al-Ḥasan al-A'ṣam, whose arrival from Baḥrayn obliged the Fatimid troops to retreat. Pursued by the Qarāmiṭa and the Turks, Jawhar abandoned Ramla, then 'Asqalān. Then al-'Azīz, who had been caliph since 365/975, took the field against the enemy himself,

and inflicted a severe defeat on the Qarāmiṭa, who returned to Ramla. Although the fugitive Alftakīn was soon captured, al-Ḥasan al-A'sam reached Lake Tiberias with his troops, and there he received an emissary from the Fatimid caliph. Al-Ḥasan al-A'sam's demand for the payment of the tribute formerly paid to them by the Ikhshidids was successful.⁹⁴ As a result, the Qarāmiṭa made peace on the condition that the Fatimid caliph send them an annual tribute of 30,000 dinars, paying it in advance for the current year. Thereupon the Qarmaṭī troops returned to Baḥrayn once and for all. These sums continued to be paid until the death of al-'Azīz in 386/996.⁹⁵ Every year, a Qarmaṭī representative would appear in Cairo to collect the sum; in return, the Qarāmiṭa would not intervene in the affairs of Syria.⁹⁶ Al-Ḥasan al-A'sam, for his part, died in 366/977 before he could return to al-Aḥsā'.⁹⁷ Apart from a brief occupation of Kūfa later on, these events marked the end of the Qarmaṭī threats to the lands bordering their territories.

It should be pointed out that behind the serious state of hostility and the bitter armed conflicts between the Fatimids and the Qarāmiṭa lay political and economic, but not ideological, considerations, and these had not resulted from an internal crisis among the Qarāmiṭa themselves but derived mainly from the role of the Arab tribes. It was clearly the appearance of the Fatimids in southern Syria which resulted in a conflict of interests leading to hostility and war between the two parties. Furthermore there is no accurate information in the sources to support the view that the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn had been in the service of the early Fatimids and then broke off relations with them.⁹⁸ In their willingness to reach an agreement with the Fatimids they had simply applied, with good results, their long-established 'peace for privileges' principle.

Having lost the allegiance of their bedouin allies who had supported them, the Qarāmiṭa were reduced to the status of a local power restricted to Baḥrayn. In 378/988 the tribal chief from the Muntafiq branch of the Banū 'Uqayl turned against them and pillaged al-Aḥsā'.⁹⁹ After this, the Qarāmiṭa could no longer levy imposts along the commercial routes of the north Arabian and Syrian desert; and it was the tribal leaders who took over this role.

Hugh Kennedy draws attention to the fact that the presence of the Qarāmiṭa had profoundly affected the balance of power among the bedouin tribes in the north Arabian and Syrian deserts in the second half of the fourth/tenth century.¹⁰⁰ In the main, it was tribes which had been involved in the movement which came to dominate the area, not, however, in the name of religious ideals but for their own interests, and they were

now led not by missionaries from the settled peoples but by their tribal leaders (*shuyūkh*).

VII

The later prosperity of the Qarmaṭī state in Baḥrayn – which as existing in 350/960 was described by the famous fourth/tenth-century geographers Muqaddasī (writing about 375/985) and Ibn Ḥawqal (d. 380/990), and was later reported on again, after many changes in its internal affairs, in 444/1052, by the Ismaili *dāʿī* and traveller Nāṣir-i Khusraw (d. after 462/1070) – was based on their early violent militant policy developed for the protection of their local economic interests. Thus the privileges they had gained from their neighbours laid the basis for their later welfare. Ibn Ḥawqal, who visited Baḥrayn, possibly as a Fatimid *dāʿī*,¹⁰¹ writes in his report of the 30,000 dinars of revenue received by the masters of Baḥrayn every year; they derived from the yields of the leased domains of the oases, with their date palms, fruit farms and grain fields; the tithes and the customs duties on the caravans between ʿIraq and Mecca, as well as on the ships mooring in the port of Uwāl; the protection fee given by the *ḥajj* pilgrims, the tribute from ʿUmān, the spoils of war, and other sources.¹⁰²

Nāṣir-i Khusraw in his eyewitness account relates an interesting detail, with which for the most part Abu'l-ʿAlā al-Maʿarrī (d. 449/1057) agrees, that the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn continued to await the return of the *sharīf* Abū Saʿīd from the dead, as he himself had promised.¹⁰³

It appears that in the course of about a century the previous concept of the Mahdī had been transformed into a local myth, and some of the theocratic attributes of the Imam-Mahdī had been transferred to the founder of the Qarmaṭī *daʿwa* in the region, as occurred in other areas and times in a Shiʿī milieu.¹⁰⁴

Notes

1. A previous version of this paper was published as 'The Background Motives of the Qarmaṭī Policy in Baḥrayn', *The Arabist: Budapest Studies in Arabic*, 8 (1994), pp. 9–31. I would like to thank my colleagues Saber el-Adly and Zoltán Szombathy for reading the earlier draft of this essay and giving their valuable suggestions that have helped me to clarify certain issues.
2. On the early Ismailis, on their doctrine and on the division of the movement see Farhad Daftary, *The Ismāʿīlīs: Their History and Doctrines* (2nd ed., Cambridge, 2007), pp. 87–116; idem, 'A Major Schism in the Early Ismāʿīlī Movement', *Studia Islamica*, 77 (1993), pp. 123–139. Cf. Wilferd Madelung,

- Religious Trends in Early Islamic Iran* (Albany and New York, 1988), pp. 95–98.
3. On the region of Baḥrayn, see George Rentz and William E. Mulligan, 'al-Baḥrayn', *EI2*, vol. 1, p. 941. On its inhabitants and their occupation of the region, see 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Najm, *al-Baḥrayn fī ṣadr al-Islām* (Baghdad, 1973), pp. 41–78, 81–98, 127–144.
 4. See Abū Bakr b. 'Abd Allāh Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar wa jāmi' al-ghurar*, ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid (Cairo, 1961), vol. 6, p. 56; Cf. 'Alī b. al-Husayn al-Mas'ūdī, *al-Tanbīh wa'l-ishrāf*, ed. Michael J. de Goeje (Beirut 1965), pp. 392–394.
 5. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh al-rusul wa'l-mulūk*, ed. Michael J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1879–1901), series 3, pp. 2188, 2192–2193.
 6. The message of the Qarāmiṭa and the caliph's reaction to it are reported in Ghanawī's name by al-Muḥassin b. 'Alī al-Tanūkhī, *Nishwār al-muḥādara wa akhbār al-mudhākara*, ed. 'Abbūd al-Shālījī (Beirut 1973), vol. 2, pp. 130–132. Another version is given by Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, series 3, p. 2197; 'Alī b. Muḥammad Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, ed. and tr. Henry F. Amedroz and David S. Margoliouth (Oxford, 1921), vol. 5, pp. 13–16; 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Alī Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam fī ta'rikh al-mulūk wa'l-umam*, ed. Fritz Krenkow (Hyderabad, 1938), vol. 5, pp. 133ff.; [Anonymous] *al-'Uyūn wa'l-hadā'iq fī akhbār al-haqā'iq*, ed. 'Umar Sa'idī (Damascus, 1972–73), vol. 1, pp. 94f. A different version is found in Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz al-ḥunafā' bi-akhbār al-a'imma al-Fāṭimiyyīn al-khulafā'*, ed. Jamāl al-Dīn al-Shayyāl (Cairo, 1967), vol. 1, pp. 163f. see also Shainool Jiwa tr., *Towards a Shi'i Mediterranean Empire: Fatimid Egypt and the Founding of Cairo, the Reign of the Imam-caliph al-Mu'izz from Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Maqrīzī's Itti'āz al-ḥunafā' bi-akhbār al-a'imma al-Fāṭimiyyīn al-khulafā'* (London, 2009), p. 136.
 7. There is considerable disagreement among the sources as to the date of the Qarmaṭī attack on Baṣra in 301/913. See al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab wa ma'ādin al-jawhar*, ed. Barbier de Meynard and Abel Pavet de Courteille (Beirut, 1974), vol. 5, p. 206; 'Alī b. Muḥammad Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī'l-ta'rikh*, ed. C. J. Tornberg (Beirut, 1965–1967), vol. 8, p. 49; Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 1, pp. 33ff.; 'Arīb b. Sa'd al-Qurṭubī, *Ṣilat Ta'rikh al-Ṭabarī*, ed. Michael J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1965), p. 38; Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Malik al-Hamadhānī, *Takmilat Ta'rikh al-Ṭabarī*, ed. Albert Yūsuf Kan'ān (Beirut, 1961), p. 41. Ibn Khaldūn's account in his *Kitāb al-'Ibar wa diwān al-mubtada' wa'l-khabar*, ed. Yūsuf As'ad Dāghir (Beirut, 1956–1961), vol. 4, pp. 181–195 differs from other sources in some important respects, but he does not seem to be reliable on this matter. Cf. Wilferd Madelung's reassessment of de Goeje's view on the question, in his 'Faṭimiden und Baḥrainqarmaṭen', *Der Islam*, 34 (1959), pp. 46–50; tr., 'The Fatimids and the Qarmaṭīs of Baḥrayn', in Farhad Daftary, ed., *Mediaeval Isma'ili History and Thought* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 36–40.

8. Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab fi funūn al-adab*, ed. Muḥammad Jābir 'Abd al-'Āl al-Ḥinī (Cairo, 1984), vol. 25, p. 238; Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz al-ḥunafā'*, vol. 1, p. 162; Mas'ūdī, *al-Tanbih wa'l-ishrāf*, p. 394.
9. On Abū Sa'īd's predictions regarding the Mahdī see 'Abd al-Jabbār al-Hamadhānī, *Tathbit dalā'il al-nubuwwa*, ed. 'Abd al-Karīm 'Uthmān (Beirut, 1966), vol. 2, pp. 379, 381. About the circumstances of his death, see Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz al-ḥunafā'*, vol. 1, p. 164; Mas'ūdī, *al-Tanbih wa'l-ishrāf*, p. 394. Cf. Heinz Halm, *Das Reich des Mahdi. Der Aufstieg der Fatimiden 875–973* (Munich, 1991), p. 225; tr. Michael Bonner as *The Empire of the Mahdī: The Rise of the Fatimids* (Leiden, 1996), p. 250.
10. On the succession of the Qarmaṭī leadership, see Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz al-ḥunafā'*, vol. 1, p. 165, Jiwa partial tr. as *Towards a Shi'i Mediterranean Empire*, pp. 138–139; Thābit b. Sinān al-Ṣābi', *Ta'rikh akhbār al-Qarāmiṭa*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār, in *al-Jāmi' fi akhbār al-Qarāmiṭa* (Damascus, 1987), vol. 1, p. 211; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 7, p. 527; Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 1, p. 33. Cf. George T. Scanlon, 'Leadership in the Qarmaṭian Sect', *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale*, 59 (1960), pp. 29–48.
11. Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 5, p. 122.1–10. Quoted by 'Alī Nashshār, *Nash'at al-fikr al-falsafī fi'l-Islām* (Cairo, 1977), vol. 2, p. 331.1–10. While Ibn al-Jawzī does not mention women in this text, 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Tathbit*, vol. 2, p. 380.12–15, does, viz. *ishtaraknā fi azwājīnā*.
12. 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Tathbit al-dalā'il*, vol. 2, p. 380.12–15, quotes some details of the letter as follows: 'The people of Baḥrayn mistreated us, acted treacherously towards us and slandered us, saying that we shared our women-folk amongst ourselves and regarded all things licit without regard for the *shari'a* (*narā'l-ibāha wa ta'til al-shari'a*). However, they have lied [in these claims], for we are a Muslim group and do not absolve those who accuse us of [embracing] anything other than Islam.' On the exchange of letters, see also Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 1, p. 34; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, p. 84; Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, vol. 25, p. 276; Thābit b. Sinān, *Ta'rikh*, p. 211; cf. Harold Bowen, *The Life and Times of 'Alī ibn 'Isā 'The Good Vizier'* (Cambridge, 1975), pp. 136–137; Halm, *Das Reich des Mahdī*, p. 225; English tr., pp. 250–251.
13. See 'Arīb b. Sa'd, *Takmila*, p. 59; Hilāl b. al-Muḥassin al-Ṣābi', *Kitāb al-wuzarā'*, ed. Henry F. Amedroz (Leiden, 1904), pp. 292–293.
14. 'Alī b. 'Isā, who was known for his anti-'Alid attitude, was called a Qarmaṭī by his personal enemies and also an explanation of his policy towards the Qarāmiṭa was demanded of him at the court. As a result, he was forced to leave his office. See 'Arīb b. Sa'd, *Ṣila*, p. 59; Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 1, pp. 105–121; Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, vol. 25, pp. 276–277.
15. Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 1, pp. 104–105, 120–121; 'Arīb b. Sa'd, *Ṣila*, 110–111; Thābit b. Sinān, *Ta'rikh*, pp. 212 ff; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, p. 155; Ibn Taghribirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira fi mulūk Miṣr wa'l-Qāhira*, ed. Muḥammad Shaltūt and Muḥammad Aḥmad Khātim (Cairo, 1963–1972),

- vol. 3, p. 211; cf. Aḥmad 'Adwān, *al-Dawla al-ḥamdāniyya* (Tripoli, 1981), pp. 122–125.
16. See Marius Canard, *Histoire de la dynastie des Hamdanides de Jazira et de Syrie* (Paris, 1955), vol. 1, pp. 632ff.; Hugh Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates* (London, 1989), pp. 269–270.
 17. The exact date of the conquest of 'Umān by the Qarāmiṭa is not clear. New 'Umānī sources support the view that Abū Sa'īd al-Jannābī was increasingly successful in bringing over the frontier nomads of northern 'Umān, and he received a considerable support from the chief of the Ḥuddānī tribe. See Abu'l-Qāsim b. 'Alī Ibn Ḥawqal, *Kitāb Šūrāt al-ard* ed. Johannes Hendrik Kramers (Leiden, 1938); *ibid.* (Beirut, 1979) p. 33; Mas'ūdī, *Tanbih*, p. 393; Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 1, pp. 139, 284. Cf. John Craven Wilkinson, 'Frontier Relationships between Bahrain and Oman', in Shaykh 'Abdallāh ibn Khālīd al-Khalifa and Michael Rice, ed., *Bahrain through the Ages: The History* (London, 1993), pp. 556–560.
 18. See Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 1, pp. 145–146, 173–182, 201.
 19. According to Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, pp. 155ff., 'Abū Ṭāhir set free the captives that were in his hands ... and sent [a message] to al-Muqtadir, demanding Baṣra and Ahwāz for himself. However, [the caliph] did not grant him that, so he marched out from Hajar against the pilgrims.' See also Ibn Miskawayh, *Tajārib*, vol. 1, p. 139; *al-'Uyūn wa'l-ḥadā'iq*, vol. 1, p. 236; Ibn Taghribirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, vol. 3, p. 212. Cf. 'Adwān, *al-Dawla al-ḥamdāniyya*, pp. 122–124.
 20. See Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 1, pp. 145–146.
 21. See *al-'Uyūn wa'l-ḥadā'iq*, vol. 1, p. 226.
 22. 'Arib b. Sa'd, *Šila*, p. 128; Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 1, pp. 147–148.
 23. Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 1, pp. 172–177. Neither of these tribes were involved in the Ismaili movement and both could be expected to oppose the Kilābis and 'Uqaylis who fought for the Qarāmiṭa.
 24. Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 1, pp. 178–181.
 25. It concerns the Baqliyya revolt, and its centre was the village of Ājam in the Sawād. They are called therefore 'Ājamīs' in the army of Abū Ṭāhir and later in Baḥrayn. On the revolt itself see 'Arib b. Sa'd, *Šila*, pp. 132ff., 137, 162; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, pp. 124ff., 132, 136, 200; cf. Halm, *Das Reich des Mahdi*, p. 228 and n.399, p. 236 and n.419; English tr. pp. 254 and 263.
 26. 'Arib b. Sa'd, *Šila*, p. 137.
 27. On the Qarmaṭī raid against Baghdad see Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 1, pp. 182–187. As regards the motives for their sudden return to Baḥrayn, these are perhaps connected with their increased eschatological expectations which culminated later in the announcement of the advent of the Mahdī.
 28. On the prophecies of Abū Ṭāhir, see 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Tathbit*, vol. 2, p. 381; 'Abd al-Qāhir b. Ṭāhir al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq bayn al-firaq*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyi'l-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamid (Beirut, 1995), p. 287; cf. Michael J. de Goeje,

Mémoire sur les Carmathes du Bahraïn et les Fatimides (Leiden, 1886), pp. 112ff. The expectation of the Mahdī is also reflected in a propagandistic poem by Abū Ṭāhir. In it, he designates himself as the one who summons to obey the Mahdī. For some fragments of the poem, see Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Bīrūnī, *Kitāb al-āthār al-bāqiya ‘an al-qurūn al-khāliya*, ed. Eduard Sachau (Leipzig, 1878), p. 214; Baghdādī, *al-Farq*, p. 287; cf. de Goeje, *Mémoire sur les Carmathes*, pp. 113–115; Madelung, ‘Baḥrainqarmaten’, pp. 79ff.; tr. 48ff.; ‘Alī Nashshār, *Nash‘at al-fikr*, vol. 2, pp. 341–342; Halm, *Das Reich des Mahdi*, p. 229; English tr., p. 255. For the reconstruction of Abū Ṭāhir’s poem and its detailed explanation see François de Blois, ‘Abū Ṭāhir’s Epistle to the Caliph al-Muqtadir’, *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies*, 17 (1987), pp. 31–35.

29. For the complete letter, see Muḥammad b. Mālīk al-Ḥammādī, *Kashf asrār al-bāṭiniyya wa-akhbār al-Qarāmiṭa* in Suhayl Zakkār, ed., *al-Jāmi‘ fi akhbār al-Qarāmiṭa* (Beirut, 1987), vol. 2, pp. 372–374. For the reconstruction of the document and its authenticity and contents, see the commentary by de Blois, ‘Abū Ṭāhir’s Epistle to the Caliph al-Muqtadir’, pp. 23–25, 30.
30. See the letter in the original Arabic in de Blois, ‘Abū Ṭāhir’s Epistle to the Caliph al-Muqtadir’, pp. 26–27, and the English translation *ibid.*, pp. 28–30. I have relied on de Blois’s text in my own translation, but I have introduced some changes to his version. See also Jiwa, *Towards a Mediterranean Empire*, pp. 167–180.
31. On the events in Mecca, see ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Tathbūt*, vol. 2, pp. 384–386; on the different opinions about them: Muhammad Abdulhayy Shaban, *Islamic History A.D. 750–1055 (A.H. 132–488): A New Interpretation* (Cambridge, 1976), vol. 2, pp. 167ff.; ‘Alī Nashshār, *Nash‘at al-fikr* vol. 2, pp. 339–340; and Suhayl Zakkār, ‘Madkhal ilā ta’rikh al-Qarāmiṭa’, in Suhayl Zakkār, ed., *al-Jāmi‘ fi akhbār al-Qarāmiṭa* (Damascus, 1987), vol. 1, p. 153; See in particular Halm’s careful reconstruction of the events: *Das Reich des Mahdi*, pp. 229–230, 235–236; English tr., pp. 255–257, 263–264. On the caliph ‘Abd Allāh’s letter to the Qarāmiṭa after removal of the Black Stone see Thābit b. Sinān, *Ta’rikh*, p. 224; Maqrīzī, *Itti‘āz al-ḥunafā’*, vol. 1, p. 185; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, p. 208; The most complete variant of the above letter is preserved, however, in an Ismaili source still in MS, in the *Fuṣūl wa akhbār*, quoted by ‘Arif Tāmīr, *Ta’rikh al-Isma‘īliyya, al-da’wa wa’l-‘aqida* (London, 1991), vol. 1, p. 176, and it runs as follows:
‘To the leader of the Qarāmiṭa, Sulaymān b. al-Ḥasan Abī Ṭāhir al-Jannābī. We have been informed of the aggressive assault of your men against the caravans of the Muslim pilgrims, of their [indiscriminate] killing of women, the elderly and children, and their abominable treatment of the victims’ corpses and their plundering of whatever the victims had on them. We have also been informed of the destructive acts that your men have committed in the holy places, such as their removing the covering of the Ka’ba (*kiswa*), destroying the well of Zamzam and carrying away the Black Stone to Hajar.

You have, by virtue of these shameful acts, left a black mark in history which neither the nights nor the days will ever erase, and you have besmirched our state and mission (*dawlatinā wa da'watinā*) with the name of unbelief, heresy and godlessness (*al-kufr wa'l-zandaqa wa'l-ilhād*) by all the iniquitous deeds you committed against all our principles and doctrine. That is why I demand that you ... return to the people of Mecca all their belongings, property and jewellery, and to the pilgrims whatever you have stolen from them, and that you return the *kiswa* to the honourable Ka'ba. Failing that, I will march against you with armies that you have no power [to resist]. We declare we have nothing to do with you (*natabarrā'u minka*) just as we have nothing to do with the accursed Satan, neither in this world nor in the next, and we seek refuge with God from evil deeds that no one except God's enemies dare commit. Should you fail to do what I have ordered you to, nothing will remain between us but the sword and utter disavowal in front of witnesses (*al-barā'a minka 'alā'l-ru'ūs al-ashhād*).'

But according to a personal communication from Prof. Madelung the authenticity of this document is uncertain. Furthermore, Madelung, 'Baḥrainqarmaṭen', pp. 46f.; tr. pp. 36f., denies that there was any kind of collaboration between the Fatimids and the Qarāmiṭa, and maintains that the above-mentioned letter to Abū Ṭāhir is no proof of an alliance between the two parties.

32. For the Qarmaṭi invasion of South 'Irāq, see 'Arib b. Sa'd, *Ṣila*, pp. 162–163; Ibn Taghribirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, vol. 3, p. 228.
33. On these events see István Hajnal, 'The Pseudo-Mahdī Intermezzo of the Qarāmiṭa in Baḥrayn', *The Arabist: Budapest Studies in Arabic*, 19–20 (1998), pp. 186–201; cf. Madelung, 'Baḥrainqarmaṭen', pp. 75–85; tr. pp. 46–51; Madelung, *Religious Trends*, pp. 96–100; Halm, *Das Reich des Mahdi*, pp. 225–236; English tr., pp. 250–264; François de Blois, 'The Abū Sa'īdīs or so-called "Qarmaṭians" of Baḥrain', *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies*, 16 (1986), pp. 18ff.
34. 'Arib b. Sa'd, *Ṣila*, pp. 163, 168; 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Tathbīt*, vol. 2, pp. 392–393. On the attempts at conciliation by the Qarmaṭi leadership with the tribal allies, see: *ibid.*, pp. 388–389. On the Ājamīs see note 24.
35. 'Uyūn al-akhbār, vol. 1, p. 228; Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 2, pp. 284ff.; cf. Heribert Busse, *Chalif und Grosskönig: Die Büyiden im 'Irāq, 945–1055* (Beirut, 1969), pp. 337–338.
36. Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abi Bakr al-Suyūṭī, *Ta'riḫ al-khulafā'*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyi'l-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd (Beirut, 1987), p. 391.
37. With reference to these events Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, vol. 8, pp. 294–295, says the following: 'In this year Muḥammad b. Yāqūt, the caliph's chamberlain (*hājib*), sent a messenger to Abū Ṭāhir the Qarmaṭi, calling on him to obey the caliph, that [the latter] should accept his dominion over the lands [already] under his control and appoint him over whatever lands he chose [to put under his governorship], and award him, and ask him to leave all the

pilgrims in peace and return the Black Stone to its proper place in Mecca. Abū Ṭāhir consented not to interfere with the pilgrims or do any harm to them, but he did not accede to returning the Black Stone to Mecca. He asked that provisions from Baṣra be given over to him so that the sermon should be said in the caliph's name in the districts of Hajar. The pilgrims went to Mecca and returned without the Qarmaṭis doing anything to them.' Cf. Daftary, *The Ismā'īlīs*, 2nd ed., p. 151.

38. Thābit b. Sinān, *Ta'rikh*, pp. 224–225; Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 1, p. 330; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, p. 311.
39. As an obvious result of the negotiations, the pilgrimage in 322/934 passed untroubled. See Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, p. 395.
40. See Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 1, p. 367; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 6, pp. 208–210; Mas'ūdī, *al-Tanbih wa'l-ishrāf*, p. 337.
41. The account in the *'Uyūn al-akhbār*, vol. 1, p. 299, says: 'In this year [323/935] Abū Ṭāhir the Qarmaṭi headed for Kūfa [and entered it]; and Ibn Rā'iq left Baghdad, pitched camp at Yāsiriyya and dispatched a message to the Qarmaṭi. Abū Ṭāhir asked that the caliph should send him goods and food-stuffs to the value of 120,000 dinars so that he stayed in his land, and Ibn Rā'iq granted him that he would be given whatever he had asked for by way of provisions to his people, and a register [of those grants] would be established in the state bureau, and they would obey [the caliph's orders] and become his employees. Negotiations took place between the two of them, and [finally] Abū Ṭāhir [went away] to his land with this promise, but no concrete agreement was concluded.' See furthermore Miskawayh, *Tajārib*, vol. 1, pp. 367ff.; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 6, pp. 208–210.
42. On the agreement between the two parties, the report of 'Abd al-Ḥayy b. Aḥmad Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab fī akhbār man dhahab*, ed. Muḥammad al-Qudṣī (Cairo, 1931), vol. 2, p. 308, runs as follows: 'So Abū 'Alī Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-'Alawī wrote to the Qarāmiṭa, who were fond of him, that they should guarantee [the safety of] the pilgrims so that he could bring them [to Mecca], and he would give them [i.e. the Qarāmiṭa] five dinars for every camel and seven dinars for the ornamented litter [of the leading camel]. So they gave them their guarantee, and the people went on their pilgrimage. This was the first year the pilgrims had to pay a tax [to the Qarāmiṭa].' See moreover Ibn Taghribirdī, *Nujūm al-zāhira*, vol. 3, p. 264; Suyūṭī, *Ta'rikh*, p. 363; Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-Ṣūlī, *Akhbār al-Rādī wa'l-Muttaqī min kitāb al-awraq*, ed. James Heyworth-Dunne (London, 1935), p. 119; Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *Ta'rikh al-Islām*, ed. 'Umar 'Abd al-Salām al-Tadmūrī (Beirut, 1994), vol. 34, p. 55; another important account concerning these events can be found in the *'Uyūn al-ḥadā'iq*, vol. 2, p. 233: 'In this year [327/938] al-Ḥusayn b. al-Mu'ammār, Jannābī's companion, took a protection fee from the pilgrims. Staying in Zubāla, he took three dinars for every camel litter, two dinars for a camel, and one dinar for a saddle-horse. And letters were forthcoming from the pilgrims

[with the information] that the pilgrims were safe and thankful to him.'

43. 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Tathbīt*, pp. 388–389, 393.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 167.
45. Sūli, *Akhhbār*, p. 205; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 7, pp. 76, 367; otherwise in 361/971 the pilgrims from Baṣra and the Khurāsān had been intercepted by bedouins on their return, *ibid.*, p. 57.
46. Ibn Ḥawqal, *Ṣūrat al-ard*, p. 33 and *al-Mamālik wa'l-masālik*, ed. Michael J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1873), p. 21.
47. See the details in 'Abd al-Jabbār Nājī, 'Trade Relations between Bahrain and Iraq in the Middle Ages', in al-Khalīfa and Rice, ed.; *Bahrain through the Ages: The History*, pp. 423–443.
48. Sūli, *Akhhbār*, pp. 148, 253; Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 1, p. 405; vol. 2, pp. 24, 91; cf. John J. Donohue, *The Buwayhid Dynasty in Iraq 334/945–403/1012* (Leiden, 2003), p. 218.
49. Sūli, *Akhhbār*, pp. 142, 205, 243, 264, 269; Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 1, p. 408; Hamadhānī, *Takmila*, p. 132.
50. Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 2, pp. 108, 112, 155; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 9, p. 235. Cf. Donohue, *The Buwayhid Dynasty in Iraq*, p. 219. Saqy al-Furāt is the fertile irrigated area around the Euphrates; see Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 7, p. 126, Abū Shujā' Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Rūdhrawārī, *Dhayl Tajārib al-umam*, ed. H. F. Amedroz (Oxford, 1921), vol. 3, p. 109.
51. Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 2, pp. 88, 112; Hamadhānī, *Takmila*, p. 160.
52. Cf. Busse, *Die Būyiden im Iraq*, pp. 37–38; Shaban, *Islamic History*, vol. 2, p. 162.
53. In 336/947 the Qarāmiṭa complained to Mu'izz al-Dawla that he had entered the desert without their leave, see Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 2, p. 112; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, p. 469.
54. Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 2, p. 144; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, p. 496.
55. Mas'ūdī, *Tanbīh*, p. 394.
56. Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 2, pp. 46, 143–144, 196, 213–218.
57. On the details see Wilkinson, 'Frontier Relationships between Bahrain and Oman', pp. 556–560.
58. See 'Arib b. Sa'd, *Ṣila*, pp. 132, 137, 163; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 6, p. 208; Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsim fī ma'rifat al-aqālīm*, ed. Michael J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1906), p. 133.
59. See Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 2, pp. 46, 117, 129, 143–144, 196, 213–218, 300–331; Ibn Ḥawqal, *Ṣūrat al-ard*, p. 54; Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsim*, p. 426.
60. See Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz al-ḥunafā'*, vol. 1, p. 183. The events are described by Ibn al-'Imād, *Shajarāt*, vol. 2, p. 348, as follows: 'In this year [339/951] the Qarāmiṭa returned the Black Stone to its proper place. For returning

- it, Bajkam had paid them fifty thousand dinars, and yet they would not, saying: "We have taken it under orders; we will only return it if an order is forthcoming." Then they returned it and said: "We have now returned it under the orders of him who had [previously] ordered us to take it away, so that the rituals of the people [on pilgrimage] should be complete." This last statement may reflect their religious conviction rather than the orders of one concrete personality. See also Miskawayh, *Tajārib*, vol. 2, p. 127; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, p. 367; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 6, p. 367; Ibn Taghribirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, vol. 3, p. 101.
61. See 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Tathbīt*, vol. 2, pp. 392–393; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, p. 333; 'Arib b. Sa'd, *Šila*, pp. 163, 168; Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 1, pp. 365, 405, 408.
 62. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 215; Ibn Taghribirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, vol. 4, p. 11; Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Kindī, *Wulāt Miṣr*, ed. Ḥusayn Naṣṣār (Beirut, n.d.), p. 314. Cf. Heinz Halm, *Die Kalifen von Kairo. Die Fatimiden in Ägypten 973–1074* (Munich, 2003), pp. 93–95.
 63. Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, p. 203.
 64. The complete letter of Bakhtiyār was preserved by Ibrāhīm b. Hilāl al-Šābi', *al-Mukhtār min Rasā'il Abī Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. Hilāl b. Zahrūn al-Šābi'*, ed. Shakīb Arslān (Beirut, n.d.), pp. 360–363. Cf. Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 2, pp. 329–332.
 65. Hamadhānī, *Takmila*, p. 233; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 7, p. 83.
 66. Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, p. 203; Hamadhānī, *Takmila*, p. 233; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 7, pp. 83, 85, 126; Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 2, p. 407; Abū Shujā' Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Rūdhrawārī, *Dhayl*, vol. 3, pp. 102, 109f.
 67. Miskawayh, *Tajārib*, vol. 2, pp. 117, 129.
 68. Abū Shujā' Rūdhrawārī, *Dhayl Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 3, p. 109; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 7, p. 126.
 69. Ibid., p. 86.
 70. When out of favour in the Buyid court, Ibn Sa'dān, Šamsām al-Dawla's first vizier, was arrested. Among his associates Ibn Shāhawayh, the Qarmatī representative, was also seized. See Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 9, pp. 42. Cf. Busse, *Die Būyiden im Iraq*, p. 65; Shaban, *Islamic History*, vol. 2, pp. 165–168.
 71. Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 9, p. 42; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 7, p. 170; Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz al-hunafā'*, vol. 1, p. 207.
 72. Ibn Ḥawqal, *Šurat al-arḍ*, p. 35, reports that there was a secret agreement between the Hamdanids and the Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn, which was reached through the mediation of al-Qāḍī Ibn 'Arafa. Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, p. 600, relates that in the year 358/968 the Hamdanids sent to the Qarāmiṭa in Hajar a gift worth 50,000 dirhams.
 73. See Thābit b. Sinān, *Ta'rikh*, p. 226; Abū Ya'lā Hamza Ibn al-Qalānisi, *Dhayl ta'rikh Dimashq*, ed. Henry F. Amedroz (Leiden and Beirut, 1908), p. 1; Ibn

- al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, pp. 614–615.
74. Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Mawā'iz wa'l-i'tibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa'l-āthār*, ed. Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid (London, 2002), vol. 2, p. 121; Ibn Taghribirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, vol. 3, p. 326. Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam*, vol. 2, p. 203; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, p. 452; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 7, p. 19; cf. Busse, *Die Büyiden im Iraq*, p. 55; 'Adwān, *al-Dawlat al-ḥamdāniyya*, pp. 274–275, 309; Kennedy, *The Age of the Caliphates*, p. 320.
 75. Miskawayh, *Tajārib*, vol. 2, p. 203; Hamadhānī, *Takmila*, p. 187; Ibn Taghribirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, vol. 3, p. 336.
 76. On the campaign in Syria see Hamadhānī, *Takmila*, p. 201; Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā al-kabīr*, ed. Muḥammad al-Ya'lawī (Beirut, 1987), p. 323; Ibn Taghribirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, vol. 4, p. 23. Cf. Madelung, 'Baḥrainqarmaṭen', pp. 55–56; tr. pp. 34–35. In the background of the Qarmaṭī expeditions to Syria, there emerged a disagreement between the descendants of Abū Ṭāhir, involving mainly his son Sābūr and his uncle Abū'l-Manṣūr Aḥmad, and later his cousin, Aḥmad's son, al-Ḥasan al-A'ṣam, a conflict that led to a final, if not widely known, split within the Qarmaṭī community in Baḥrayn. On the developments of the conflict, see Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, p. 600; Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Ibar*, vol. 4, p. 192; Ibn Taghribirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, vol. 4, pp. 27, 63; Hamadhānī, *Takmila*, p. 210; Ibn Ḥawqal, *Ṣūrat al-arḍ*, p. 35.
 77. The Qarmaṭī leader even entered with Ibn Tughj into a marriage contract upon concluding the peace agreement, see Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz al-ḥunafā'*, vol. 1, p. 186. Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, p. 452; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar*, vol. 6, p. 122.
 78. For the Fatimid advance to Syria, see Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar*, vol. 6, pp. 126–129. Cf. Halm, *Die Kalifen von Kairo*, pp. 95–96.
 79. Qalānisī, *Dhayl ta'rīkh Dimashq*, p. 1; Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz al-ḥunafā'*, vol. 1, p. 187; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar*, vol. 6, p. 132; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, p. 615. Cf. Madelung, 'Baḥrainqarmaṭen' pp. 56–57; tr. pp. 35–36.
 80. Jamāl al-Dīn 'Alī Ibn Zāfir, *Akhbār al-duwal al-munqaṭi'a*, ed. André Ferré (Cairo, 1972), pp. 24–25; Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz al-ḥunafā'*, vol. 1, pp. 127, 186–187; Ibn Taghribirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, vol. 4, pp. 58–59.
 81. Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, pp. 614–615; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar*, vol. 6, pp. 134–135.
 82. Thābit b. Sinān, *Ta'rīkh*, p. 239; 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Tathbīt*, vol. 2, p. 607; Ibn Taghribirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, vol. 4, p. 74.
 83. Abū'l-'Abbās Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-a'shā fī ṣinā'at al-inshā'*, ed. Muḥammad 'Alī Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 1913), vol. 1, p. 320; Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *al-'Iqd al-farīd*, ed. Aḥmad Amīn (Cairo, 1952), vol. 3, p. 399.
 84. For the events of the military expedition of al-Ḥasan al-A'ṣam to Syria the main source is the contemporary Sharīf Akhū Muḥsin who is quoted by Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, vol. 25, pp. 304ff.; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz*

- al-durar*, vol. 6, pp. 132ff.; Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz*, vol. 1, p. 186–188, and *al-Muqaffā*, pp. 263–264. Cf. Halm, *Die Kalifen von Kairo*, pp. 95–96.
85. Thābit b. Sinān, *Ta'rikh*, p. 239; 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Tathbit*, p. 189; Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz*, vol. 1, p. 189.
 86. See Halm, *Die Kalifen von Kairo*, p. 101.
 87. Ibn Qalānisi, *Dhayl*, p. 2; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar*, vol. 6, 143; Ibn Taghribirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, vol. 4, p. 62.
 88. The letter of al-Mu'izz survived in Akhū Muḥsin's lost writing, but its fragments are quoted by Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, vol. 25, pp. 308–311; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar*, vol. 6, pp. 148–156; and the complete letter is cited by Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz*, vol. 1, pp. 189–202.
 89. Madelung, 'Baḥrainqarmaṭen' pp. 85–88; tr. 51–54.
 90. Halm, *Die Kalifen von Kairo*, pp. 97–98.
 91. Some of these phrases are reminiscent of the Qur'an, e.g. Q. 21:104, Q. 101, and the famous *ḥadīth* on the Hour being when the sun rises from the West (a reference used by the Fatimids to their having arisen in Ifrīqiya).
 92. Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar*, vol. 6, pp. 159–161.
 93. Ibn al-Qalānisi, *Dhayl*, pp. 3, 15; Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz*, pp. 150, 205; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar*, vol. 6, p. 143; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, pp. 638–640.
 94. For the events of the campaign of the caliph al-'Azīz in Syria, see Thābit b. Sinān, *Ta'rikh*, pp. 241–244; Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz*, pp. 238–241; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar*, vol. 6, pp. 144, 175–177; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, pp. 656–661; Hamadhānī, *Takmila*, pp. 226–227.
 95. Ibn Qalānisi, *Dhayl*, pp. 16–18, 20–21.
 96. See Ibn al-Qalānisi, *Dhayl*, pp. 20, 20–21.2; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 8, p. 661.
 97. Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā*, p. 266; Ibn Taghribirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, vol. 4, p. 128.
 98. See Shaban, *Islamic History*, vol. 2, p. 204; Kennedy, *The Age of the Caliphates*, pp. 291–292; Daftary, *The Ismā'īlis*, 2nd ed., p. 152, and n.16.
 99. Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 9, pp. 58–59; Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz*, vol. 1, p. 207.
 100. Kennedy, *The Age of the Caliphates*, pp. 292f.
 101. See Halm, *Das Reich des Mahdi*, p. 208; English tr. p. 231.
 102. Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm*, p. 94; Ibn Hawqal, *Ṣurat al-ard*, pp. 33–35; Nāṣir-i Khusraw, *Safar-nāma*, ed. Charles Schefer (Paris, 1881), pp. 82–85; tr. Wheeler M. Thackston, Jr. as *Book of Travels* (New York, 1986), pp. 86–90.
 103. Nāṣir-i Khusraw, *Safar-nāma*, ed. Schefer, pp. 82.13–15, 83.16–21; Abu'l-'Alā al-Ma'arri, *Risālat al-Ghufrān*, ed. Kāmil Kilānī (Cairo, 1939), vol. 3, p. 235, reports as follows: 'It was said to me that the Qarāmiṭa had a house in al-Aḥsā' from which their Imam would come out. So they put a horse with saddle and bridle in front of that house. They used to say to the masses: "This horse will be mounted by the Mahdī. He will sit on it when he appears."'
 104. In my view this is in the nature of theocratic movements in general; one

observes similar developments and claims in, for instance, the episode of Abu'l-Khaṭṭāb, the disciple of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (as recounted in al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq al-Shi'a*, ed. Helmut Ritter (Istanbul, 1931), pp. 59–61) – and more generally in the Shi'i *ghulāt* circles.

A Distinguished Slav Eunuch of the Early Fatimid Period: al-Ustādh Jawdhar

Hamid Haji

In the year following the flight of the last Aghlabid amir, Ziyādat Allāh III (r. 290–296/903–909), to the East, the Fatimid imam-caliph al-Mahdī bi'llāh (r. 297–322/909–934) entered Raqqāda, in triumph on 20 Rabī' II 297/6 January 910, and settled in his palace in the former Aghlabid capital. The military exploits of his *dā'i*, Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Shī'i (d. 298/911), had subdued for him vast regions of the Maghrib as well as the former Aghlabid domains in Sicily. He inherited everything that belonged to the Aghlabids, including their slaves. Among them was al-Ustādh Jawdhar, a eunuch of Slavic (*ṣaqlabī*, pl. *ṣaqālība*) origin who subsequently served all four Fatimid imam-caliphs in Ifrīqiya and rose to become the most eminent statesman of the early Fatimid period. *Ṣaqālība* eunuchs, who had gained prominence in Ifrīqiya during the Aghlabid period, originated mostly from the Balkans. Being cut off from their land of origin, without any relatives in their new abode, made them very dependent on their patrons and also loyal to them.¹ Jawdhar's life of service to the Fatimids for over sixty years and his exemplary loyalty to his patrons is thoroughly documented in his biography, which was compiled by his private secretary, Abū 'Alī Maṣṣūr al-'Azīzī al-Jawdhari, who served him diligently from 350/961 until Jawdhar's death in 362/973.² His work brings together oral statements and archival material from the reigns of the first four Fatimid imam-caliphs which allow us to follow the stages of Jawdhar's life, from his entering the service of the Fatimids until the final days of his life under the reign of al-Mu'izz li-Dīn Allāh (r. 341–365/953–975), the last Fatimid imam-caliph to rule in Ifrīqiya, and the first one of the dynasty to rule in Egypt.

Jawdhar was still a boy when al-Mahdī entered Raqqāda. He was among

the slaves of the old order who were assembled before al-Mahdī. The new ruler apportioned them to their tasks in his administration. Jawdhar was selected by al-Mahdī to serve his heir apparent al-Qā'im bi-Amr Allāh (r. 322–334/934–946). He impressed al-Mahdī with his austerity and was favoured, from the very beginning, by al-Mahdī, who predicted that he would be pious and diligent in his service. Jawdhar began his career as the head servant of al-Qā'im's palace during al-Mahdī's reign, and he was left in charge of al-Qā'im's palace while the latter was away on a military expedition.³ Upon his return from the expedition, al-Qā'im praised his services and increased his favours to him. Subsequently Jawdhar also accompanied al-Qā'im on at least one of his expeditions to the east,⁴ for the *Sīra* relates that al-Qā'im, annoyed at the behaviour of his soldiers who frequently pillaged the belongings of those who had sought protection, instructed Jawdhar to eat only meat that he provided to him from his own kitchen so that it would not contain anything impermissible.⁵

After al-Mahdī's death, al-Qā'im, reigning as the new Fatimid imam-caliph, entrusted the affairs of the Treasury to Jawdhar, as well as the warehouses of textiles and garments. He made him an intermediary between himself and his followers, and all his slaves. The extent to which Jawdhar had won the confidence of his master was such that when al-Qā'im was about to bury al-Mahdī, he called Jawdhar aside and made him privy to the designation of his son Ismā'īl, the future imam-caliph al-Manṣūr bi'llāh (r. 334–341/946–953), as his chosen heir apparent. He exacted a promise from Jawdhar to pledge allegiance to the heir apparent and observe complete secrecy about his status until he himself made the appointment public. Accordingly, Jawdhar kept the matter secret for seven years.⁶ Already during the reign of al-Qā'im, al-Manṣūr had great sympathy and concern for Jawdhar. He would often stop at Jawdhar's house to visit him. The *Sīra* has preserved an interesting letter from al-Manṣūr when he was heir apparent to Jawdhar on the subject of controlling one's anger, in which he cites Galen's advice.⁷

Jawdhar had the authority to punish those under him. It happened one day that he punished and imprisoned some young Slav eunuchs for an offence they had committed and for which they deserved to be disciplined. They implored the heir apparent, al-Manṣūr, and sought his intercession on their behalf. Jawdhar was unaware of this until he received the letter in which al-Manṣūr conveyed to him that he had somewhat exceeded his limit and that he should be compassionate towards those whom he punished.⁸ Subsequently, after they had been set free, these Slav eunuchs gave outstanding service to the Fatimids under al-Manṣūr and later under

al-Mu'izz. Among them, however, were Qayṣar and Muẓaffar who were executed in 349/960 in the reign al-Mu'izz because they had become too powerful.⁹ Muẓaffar's domains came under Jawdhar's administration. The money that they raised was allocated to the bureau of al-Manṣūriyya and was separate from revenues derived from properties which Jawdhar managed at al-Mahdiyya and which was used to provide for the maintenance of slaves under his authority. When Jawdhar needed additional funds for the maintenance of slaves, he was allowed by al-Mu'izz to use the revenues from Muẓaffar's domains.¹⁰

During the last two years of al-Qā'im's reign and the early part of the reign of al-Manṣūr, the Khārijī rebel Abū Yazīd (d. 336/947)¹¹ acquired a large following among the Ibādī Berbers of the Awrās mountain region (now between north-eastern Algeria and western Tunisia) and began his rebellion against the Fatimid state in 332/943. He conquered all of southern Ifriqiya, including al-Qayrawān, and laid siege to al-Mahdiyya. Such was the extent of his rebellion that Fatimid writers identify him with 'the Deceiver' (*al-dajjāl*), an apocalyptic figure in Muslim tradition similar to the Antichrist.¹² When al-Qā'im was on his deathbed, during the course of the rebellion, he summoned al-Manṣūr and made special recommendations for the protection of Jawdhar.¹³

With the beginning of the reign of al-Manṣūr, Jawdhar assumed greater eminence. When al-Manṣūr set out in pursuit of Abū Yazīd, he invested Jawdhar with authority over the palace and the entire country and left him in charge of the safes of the Treasury. Jawdhar thus became the third most important person in the Fatimid state, after the imam and the heir apparent. In 336/947, Abū Yazīd was finally defeated by al-Manṣūr, who had kept secret the news of his father's death till then.¹⁴ After this victory, al-Manṣūr manumitted Jawdhar and, to honour him, designated him 'Client of the Commander of the Faithful' (*mawlā amīr al-mu'minīn*), and instructed him on the protocol to follow in correspondence, which confirmed him in the highest rank after the heir apparent.¹⁵ Al-Manṣūr honoured Jawdhar by having his name inscribed on the *tirāz* bands of embroidered fabrics and carpets manufactured at al-Mahdiyya; he clad him in robes of honour and gave him mounts to ride. On al-Manṣūr's return to the palace after his victory, when food was served, he ordered Jawdhar to sit at the table with him. This was the first time that he had the honour of sitting at the same table as the imam. Al-Manṣūr founded his new residential capital, 'al-Manṣūriyya', near al-Qayrawān, to mark his victory. When he was presented with the first minting of coins bearing his name,¹⁶ he sent 1,000 dinars of these as a blessing to Jawdhar who

continued for some time to operate from al-Mahdiyya.

Al-Manṣūr used to collect the finest treasures of all kinds. He considered the books of his ancestors to be his richest treasure.¹⁷ One day he sent a selection of them to Jawdhar for safekeeping and transcribing, including *Kitāb al-Īdāh* by al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān and the sermons given by himself and al-Qā'im.¹⁸ On another occasion, in the year 341/953, the Byzantine emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (r. 945–959) sent a monk as an ambassador, bearing precious gifts, to the court of al-Manṣūr at al-Manṣūriyya. The purpose of the embassy was to establish friendly and peaceful relations with the Fatimid sovereign, following a truce established after Byzantine forces suffered a humiliating defeat in Sicily and southern Italy at the hands of the Fatimids. The ambassador was impressed by the majesty of the Fatimid sovereign and the pomp surrounding him, the like of which he had not seen in his own land. As a result, in return al-Manṣūr wanted to send gifts that were more beautiful and lavish than those he had received. Therefore he wrote to Jawdhar, with orders that he should bring from the treasure stores of which he had the care items which he described to him and which were suitable to be sent to kings.¹⁹

During his last illness, al-Manṣūr instructed his heir apparent al-Mu'izz to respond to Jawdhar's letters. Then, sometime after his accession to the imamate in 341/953, al-Mu'izz summoned Jawdhar to al-Manṣūriyya and lodged him near himself in his palace complex. Jawdhar needed exquisite mats to furnish his new home and, even though the mat makers were under his authority, he asked the imam that he be allowed to have mats made, adding that he would himself bear the expenses incurred. The imam instructed him to have the best mats of finest craftsmanship made, which he would offer to him as a personal gift.²⁰ In al-Manṣūriyya, Jawdhar became responsible for conveying to the imam any letters or pleas addressed to him. He received from the imam a reply indicating the decision he had to implement, the advice to give to the correspondent and the manner in which he should write to him. Jawdhar would receive letters from his subordinates whom he had left behind in al-Mahdiyya, as well as others in the service of the state. They corresponded with him to let him know what they needed, consulted him for advice and kept him informed. He extracted from their letters those passages that contained points on which advice was sought, leaving a blank on the roll of paper between every two extracts. Then, under each extract, al-Mu'izz wrote the reply in his own hand, advising what action to take. The letters and directives of al-Mu'izz addressed to Jawdhar, preserved in his biography, reveal with what care the imam attended to matters addressed to him and how closely

Jawdhar was involved in dealing with all matters: these ranged from the defence of the realm, to financial administration, to the affairs of Sicily (where the Kalbid dynasty was ruling semi-independently under Fatimid suzerainty), to the construction and equipping of the Fatimid fleet, and to preparations for the final departure for Egypt, preparations that lasted from about 349/960 until the conquest of Fuṣṭāṭ in 358/969 by the Fatimid commander Jawhar al-Ṣiqillī (d. 381/992). Among the matters referred to al-Mu'izz were: disputes relating to land and grazing pastures, complaints against officials, the drunkenness of a secretary, the apostasy of slaves and rivalry between his allies in the Maghrib. He personally ordered a prayer mat for a Slav prisoner, and a shroud for the son of an official.²¹ He was caring towards those who served him and gave orders to look into the welfare and education of the children of officials in order to prepare them to serve the Fatimid state.²² When Jawdhar made him aware of the dire financial situation of the eminent *dā'ī* Ja'far b. Maṣṣūr al-Yaman (d. after 346/957), al-Mu'izz rescued him from his predicament.²³ Among al-Mu'izz's greatest personal concerns was the conduct of his relatives, and in particular his eldest son Tamīm (d. 374/985).

Indeed, the imam also received letters from individuals directly, not channelled through Jawdhar. The latter, on the other hand, often took the initiative to write to the imam to inform him or seek an opinion or an order from him, without reference to anyone else's correspondence. He also wrote to the imam to inquire about his health and well-being. Similarly, the imam himself also wrote to Jawdhar on his own initiative to express his concern for his health and well-being or to send him a memento. Once, when Jawdhar became ill, al-Mu'izz wrote to him to recommend a theriac produced by his physician, and sent him some with instructions on how to use it.²⁴ On another occasion, he sent him a pair of leggings which were worn by al-Manṣūr and then by himself, because Jawdhar liked to wear leggings.²⁵

Jawdhar knew the family of Banū Abī'l-Ḥusayn al-Kalbī, the Kalbids, very well; they gave outstanding military service to the Fatimids and ruled Sicily on their behalf. This family adopted the Fatimid cause early and was in favour from the reign of al-Mahdī. 'Alī b. Abī'l-Ḥusayn al-Kalbī, son-in-law of Sālim b. Abī Rāshid, governor of Sicily (313–325/925–936), was killed in 326/938 during the siege of Jirjent (Agrigentum, Girgenti) while fighting for the Fatimids against local rebels. While he was away fighting, Jawdhar had two of 'Alī's sons in his care on the orders of al-Qā'im.²⁶ One of them, Abu'l-Ghanā'im al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī (d. 354/965), then played a leading role in the military campaigns waged by al-Qā'im and al-Manṣūr

against Abū Yazīd, and he was sent in 336/948 to Sicily as the governor to restore order and reassert Fatimid authority on the island following a rebellion there. He became the first of a succession of governors of Sicily who came from the Kalbid family. A document in the *Sīra* yields details on the rebellion put down by al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī, which complements the account of these events by Ibn al-Athīr.

Jawdhār possessed domains, including one granted to him by al-Mahdī in Jazīrat Sharīk,²⁷ a fertile peninsula to the east of Tunis, whose farthest point in the north is the nearest point of Africa to Sicily. His chief source of income, however, was not these but his mercantile enterprises in Sicily. He owned ships and conducted business in his private capacity with the island, notably the importing of wood which he offered sometimes as a gift to the imam for his naval shipyard for the construction of warships.²⁸ Once, when his ship brought him a large consignment of wood from Sicily, and the imam's arsenal needed wood, he offered it to the imam desiring him to accept it.²⁹ Jawdhār's close ties with the ruling family of Sicily meant that he was able, with the approval of al-Mu'izz, to borrow funds from the Treasury in Sicily for his mercantile transactions, and then reimburse the Treasury in al-Manṣūriyya with the sum that he had borrowed. The imam held that his wealth was Jawdhār's too.

Shipping was not without its hazards and Jawdhār suffered losses at sea. Once, when al-Mu'izz learned that one of Jawdhār's ships had sunk with all its cargo while coming from Sicily, he wrote to him, on his own initiative, to commiserate with him for his loss.³⁰ On another occasion when Jawdhār's ship was lost at sea, and he could not find another to buy to transport his cargo to the east, he asked al-Mu'izz to grant him one of two ships that had been purchased for the imam from the Byzantines. He feared, out of respect, to make this request, but the imam asked him to take any ships that he needed, for he did not consider his own goods to be other than Jawdhār's.³¹

Jawdhār was well aware of matters in the Fatimid family, including certain disputes on which general historical sources remain silent. In fact al-Mu'izz considered him to be part of his family and allowed him to visit him whenever he wanted.³² He was informed of the salaries and allowances of the inhabitants of the palace in general and of those of the imam's harem and his entourage in particular. We learn from his biography that the sons of al-Mahdī and al-Qā'im, who resided in al-Mahdiyya in the palaces of al-Mahdī and of al-Qā'im respectively, refused to acknowledge al-Manṣūr's excellence and denied his right to the imamate. They were also making false accusations against Jawdhār. They demanded

that they be able to pass freely through the markets with the common people, whereas Jawdhar forbade this and prevented them from so doing because of their shameful behaviour. In connection with this, al-Manṣūr wrote a letter to his heir apparent al-Mu'izz in which he calls the sons of al-Mahdī and al-Qā'im 'the Cursed Tree in the Qur'ān' (Q. 17:60), because, like the Umayyads earlier, they had refused to recognise him. Al-Manṣūr promised to send him a book he had composed on the matter to guide the believers and end the doubt in their minds.³³ The origin of all the disputes in the family is al-Qā'im's son, Qāsim, who is blamed in particular by al-Manṣūr for provoking a dispute between al-Mahdī and al-Qā'im.³⁴ The *Sīra* does not elaborate on what Qāsim did, but Ibn 'Idhārī reports that in 316/928, while al-Qā'im was conducting operations against Berber tribes in the Maghrib, in a letter that he received from his son Qāsim he learnt that rumours were being spread about al-Mahdī having designated his son Abū 'Alī Aḥmad (382/993) as the heir apparent, and that the latter had led the prayer on 'Id al-fiṭr and on 'Id al-aḍḥā. This troubled al-Qā'im, who returned immediately to al-Mahdiyya without engaging the enemy.³⁵ Then Qāsim's sons, who resided in al-Mahdiyya, continued to display animosity towards al-Manṣūr and al-Mu'izz. The threat posed by them was such that Jawdhar was authorised by al-Mu'izz to intercept correspondence from the inhabitants of the two palaces in al-Mahdiyya. He had previously submitted to al-Mu'izz the idea of seizing correspondence exchanged between the two palaces and the house of Tamīm, al-Mu'izz's own son, but the imam had been reluctant to agree. Eventually al-Mu'izz himself wrote to Jawdhar agreeing with his suggestion and authorising the interception of correspondence.³⁶ Jawdhar's deputy in al-Mahdiyya also wrote to him enclosing notes from two of Qāsim's sons that he had intercepted and that contained offensive material, which Jawdhar relayed to the imam to keep him informed.³⁷ Abū 'Alī Aḥmad was still alive when al-Mu'izz was preparing to leave Ifriqiya permanently for Egypt. The imam's great-uncle was accused of making slanderous remarks. It was said of him that he intended to remain behind and put off leaving with al-Mu'izz. Jawdhar sought information about Aḥmad from his deputy Nuṣayr, governor of al-Mahdiyya, and reported to the imam what was being said.³⁸

Some time after the conquest of Egypt, just as al-Qā'im had made Jawdhar privy to the designation of al-Manṣūr as heir apparent, al-Mu'izz made him privy to the designation of his second son 'Abd Allāh (d. 364/975) as his heir apparent, at a time when it was generally expected that al-Mu'izz's eldest son Tamīm would be granted that status. Jawdhar

kept 'Abd Allāh's appointment secret for seven months.³⁹ 'Abd Allāh was designated heir apparent, rather than Tamīm, because the latter was in touch with his cousins, the sons of Qāsim, who had intrigued against the imam. Moreover, Tamīm had no posterity and, it seems, led so dissolute a life that the amir Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan al-Kalbī wanted to kill his own son Ṭāhir when he learnt that he was a companion of Tamīm.⁴⁰ He consulted Jawdhar on the matter and sought his advice. Jawdhar alerted the imam, who advised him to intercede with Aḥmad so as to prevent any harm to his son.⁴¹

Jawdhar paid his respects to 'Abd Allāh, and the prince visited Jawdhar when the latter was ill. After the prince's visit, he wrote to al-Mu'izz expressing how honoured he felt by the visit of the heir apparent. He followed this with the dispatch of a precious rug and asked the imam to allow the prince to accept it.⁴² When al-Mu'izz decided to leave for Egypt, there was an exchange of letters between Jawdhar and 'Abd Allāh in which the prince expressed his consideration for Jawdhar.⁴³

When preparations were being made to leave for Egypt, it was even rumoured that Jawdhar would be left behind to govern Ifriqiya. When he heard this, he wrote to al-Mu'izz asking him not to leave him behind, because his happiness lay in being at the side of the imam. The imam replied, assuring him not to worry about unfounded rumours, for he had not thought of leaving him behind for several reasons.⁴⁴ Moreover, he had to try to reconcile his two ambitious allies in the Maghrib, Yūsuf Bulukkīn b. Zīrī (373/984),⁴⁵ chief of the Ṣanhāja Berbers, and his bitter rival Ja'far b. 'Alī b. Ḥamdūn (372/983),⁴⁶ who had sided with their enemies, the Zanāta Berbers.⁴⁷ Subsequently al-Mu'izz gave Yūsuf b. Zīrī charge of governing Ifriqiya, while Ja'far b. 'Alī, who was governor of the district of al-Masīla, switched his allegiance to the Umayyads. Ja'far and his brother Yaḥyā had been brought up at the Fatimid court, and their father 'Alī had played an important role in 315/927 in the founding of the city of al-Masīla which al-Qā'im had charged him to construct. Ja'far was particularly close to Jawdhar. When provincial governors were seeking to take over Ja'far's governorship by offering to raise more revenue for the Treasury, al-Mu'izz turned down their bids out of consideration for Jawdhar's friendship with Ja'far. Jawdhar, however, was troubled that the imam had considered him to the detriment of the Treasury. He besought the imam to disregard his friendship for Ja'far and dismiss him from his governorship and accept a rival bid so as not to deprive the Treasury of higher revenues, but the imam would not withdraw a favour once it was granted.⁴⁸

Jawdhar himself was actively engaged in the preparations for the depar-

ture to Egypt. Members of the Kalbid family had arrived in Ifrīqiya in order to set out with al-Mu'izz and his entourage. Jawdhar became aware of disputes between some members of the Kalbid family. He refrained from appearing to take sides so as not to expose himself to blame, and he informed the imam about his decision.⁴⁹ On al-Mu'izz's instructions, he helped them to secure their travel permits from Jawhar al-Šiqillī, the Fatimid commander.⁵⁰ At that time al-Mu'izz was busy with dispatching troops to the east and had to incur expenses. Jawdhar mentioned that he had assembled funds following a successful venture selling goods from the state warehouses and securing outstanding taxes to which he had added some of his own fortune, which he offered as a gift to al-Mu'izz.⁵¹

Jawdhar had previously dealt with Jawhar, regarding a share in a property that Jawhar had asked to be granted and a share in a domain he wished to purchase.⁵² Correspondence was exchanged between the two after Jawhar had conquered Egypt and had been manumitted by al-Mu'izz. When Jawdhar sought al-Mu'izz's advice on how to address Jawhar after the latter was manumitted, the imam established a pact of brotherhood between the two former slaves, invoking the pact of brotherhood established by the Prophet between his Companions, and he advised Jawdhar on the protocol to follow in his correspondence with Jawhar in order to reflect this pact of brotherhood.⁵³

When al-Mu'izz left for Egypt, Jawdhar, who was now frail, also set out at the same time. He was aware of his condition, and wrote to the imam asking for an item of his clothing which could serve him as a shroud and a blessing when he died. In response, al-Mu'izz wished him a long life so that he would witness further bounties, and he sent him items from his own wardrobe as well as from the wardrobes of his father, grandfather and great-grandfather (i.e. imams al-Manšūr, al-Qā'im and al-Mahdī).⁵⁴ When Jawdhar and his party arrived at Ajdābiya, in Cyrenaica, he wanted to see al-Mu'izz. As he was too weak, he was brought to al-Mu'izz's tent in a litter. The imam leaned into the litter and hugged him and comforted him. This was the last time they met. Then, as Jawdhar was approaching Barqa, he grew much weaker. The following morning the death agony began, and he died at the time of the midday prayer. That night, his body was carried from the town of Barqa to the palace where al-Mu'izz had set up camp, at a place called Mayāsir. The imam ordered that the body be washed. This ritual was carried out by the illustrious al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān (d. 363/974), Muḥammad b. 'Uthmān, the Secretary, and Manšūr al-'Azīzī al-Jawdhārī, the compiler of the *Sira*.⁵⁵ The imam recited the prayer over Jawdhar the following day and he was buried there in a local mosque in Barqa.⁵⁶

Jawdhar's name is still preserved in a quarter of Cairo, al-Jūdariyya (al-Jawdhariyya), established by a group of individuals who bore the *nisba* al-Jawdhari, among them the compiler of the *Sīra*.⁵⁷

Notes

1. On eunuchs and terms used for them in the sources, see David Ayalon, 'On the Eunuchs in Islam', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 1 (1979), pp. 67–124; repr. in his *Outsiders in the Lands of Islam: Mamluks, Mongols and Eunuchs* (London, 1988), article III.
2. Abū 'Alī Maṣṣūr al-'Azizī al-Jawdhari, *Sīrat al-ustādh Jawdhar*, ed. Muḥammad Kāmil Ḥusayn and Muḥammad 'Abd al-Hādī Sha'ira (Cairo, 1954); French tr. Marius Canard, *Vie de l'Ustadh Jaudhar* (Algiers, 1957); new critical edition and English translation, Hamid Haji, *Glimpses from Early Fatimid Archives: The Biography of al-Ustādh Jawdhar* (London, forthcoming).
3. The first time al-Qā'im led an expedition to the Maghrib, after al-Mahdī assumed power in Raqqāda, was when al-Mahdī dispatched him at the head of troops to fight those Kutāma who had rebelled following the killing of the Ismaili *dā'i* Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Shī'i in 298/911. See al-Qāḍī Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, *Iftitāḥ al-da'wa*, ed. Wadād al-Qāḍī (Beirut, 1970), p. 273, tr. Hamid Haji, *Founding the Fatimid State: The Rise of an Early Islamic Empire* (London, 2006), p. 227; and Taqī al-Dīn al-Maqrizī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffā al-kabīr*, ed. Muḥammad al-Ya'lāwī (Beirut, 1411/1991), vol. 4, p. 561.
4. Al-Qā'im conducted two expeditions to Egypt, in 301/913 and in 306/918, during al-Mahdī's reign; see 'Izz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi'l-ta'rikh*, Carl. J. Tornberg (Beirut, 1387/1967), vol. 6, pp. 147, 149–150, 161; and al-Maqrizī, *Itti'āz al-ḥunafā bi-akhbār al-a'imma al-Fātimiyyīn al-khulafā*, ed. Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Shayyāl and Muḥammad Ḥilmī Muḥammad Aḥmad (Cairo, 1967–1973), vol. 1, pp. 68–69, 71–72.
5. Jawdhari, *Sīra*, p. 43.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
7. Jawdhari, *Sīra*, pp. 41–42. No work is cited, but the passage alluded to in the letter is found in Galen's work ΠΕΡΙ ΔΙΑΓΝΩΣΕΩΣ ΚΑΙ ΘΕΡΑΠΕΙΑΣ ΤΩΝ ΕΝ [ΤΗ] ΕΚΑΣΤΟΥ ΨΥΧΗ ΙΔΙΩΝ ΠΑΘΩΝ, [*Peri diagnōseōs kai therapeias tōn en [tēi] hekastou psychēi idiōn pathōn* = *De Propriorum Animi Cuiuslibet Affectuum Dignotione et Curatione*], ed. Wilko de Boer, *Corpus Medicorum Graecorum* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1937), vol. 5 (4,1,1), pp. 13–15; tr. as *The Diagnosis and Cure of the Soul's Passions* in Paul W. Harkins, tr. *On the Passions and Errors of the Soul* (Columbus, OH, 1963), pp. 39–41. This work was known in Arabic as *Fī ta'arruf al-insān 'uyūb nafsih*.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 41–42.

9. Ibn Khaldūn, *Kitāb al-'Ibar wa diwān al-mubtada' wa'l-khabar fī ayyām al-'arab wa'l-'ajam wa'l-barbar wa man 'ašarahum min dhawī al-sultān al-akbar*, ed. Yūsuf As'ad Dāghir (Beirut, 1956–1961), vol. 4, p. 98; and Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz*, vol. 1, p. 101.
10. Jawdhārī, *Sīra*, p. 116.
11. On him see al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Iftitāḥ*, p. 272 (tr. Haji, *Founding the Fatimid State*, p. 225); Samuel M. Stern, 'Abū Yazīd al-Nukkārī', *EI2*, vol. 1, pp. 163–164; and Roger Le Tourneau, 'La révolte d'Abū Yazīd au X^e siècle', *Les cahiers de Tunisie*, 1 (1953), pp. 103–125.
12. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Iftitāḥ*, p. 272; tr. Haji, *Founding the Fatimid State*, p. 225.
13. Jawdhārī, *Sīra*, p. 44.
14. Al-Qā'im died on 13 Shawwāl 334/17 May 946. See Ibn 'Idhārī, *Kitāb al-Bayān al-mughrib fī akhbār al-Andalus wa-al-Maghrib*, ed. George S. Colin and Évariste Lévi-Provençal (Leiden, 1948–1951), vol. 1, p. 208. However, al-Mansūr did not style himself 'Commander of the Faithful' (*amīr al-mu'minīn*), and kept his death secret for a year and three months because of Abū Yazīd's rebellion. It was only in Muḥarram 336/August 947, after his victory over Abū Yazīd, that he announced his father's death and styled himself 'Commander of the Faithful'. See Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā*, vol. 2, pp. 130, 148, 159, vol. 6, p. 179; Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz*, vol. 1, pp. 82, 86; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 6, p. 317; and Ibn Ḥammād, *Akhbār mulūk Banī 'Ubayd wa sīratuhum = Histoire des rois 'obaïdides*, ed. and French tr. M. Vonderheyden (Algiers and Paris, 1346/1927), pp. 21, 36 (tr., pp. 37, 57).
15. Jawdhārī, *Sīra*, pp. 51–52.
16. After the death of al-Qā'im on 13 Shawwāl 334/18 May 946, al-Manšūr made no change in the coinage until after the end of Abū Yazīd's revolt in 336/948. Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, vol. 6, p. 317; Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā*, vol. 2, p. 1630; Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz*, vol. 1, p. 80. See specimens of dinars minted in al-Qā'im's name after his death in J. Farrugia de Candia, 'Monnaies fatimites du Musée du Bardo', *Revue tunisienne*, 27–28 (1936), pp. 354–355.
17. Jawdhārī, *Sīra*, p. 53. Among these books was al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān's *Kitāb al-Īdāḥ*, ed. Muḥammad Kāzīm Raḥmatī (Beirut, 2007), and collections of sermons by al-Qā'im and al-Manšūr himself; some of these have been edited and translated by Paul E. Walker, *Orations of the Fatimid Caliphs: Festival Sermons of the Ismaili Imams* (London, 2009); on the *Kitāb al-Īdāḥ* see Wilferd Madelung, 'The Sources of Ismā'īlī Law', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 35, i (1976), pp. 29–40.
18. Jawdhārī, *Sīra*, p. 53.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 60–61; Alexander Alexandrovich Vasiliev, *Byzance et les Arabes* (Bruxelles, 1935–1968). vol. 2, pt. 1, pp. 369–370, and vol. 2, pt. 2, pp. 159–160.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 100.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 88, 103.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 97, 119–120, 126.

23. Ibid., pp. 126–127.
24. Ibid., p. 108.
25. Ibid., p. 113.
26. Ibid., p. 131.
27. Ibid., p. 99.
28. Ibid., p. 119.
29. Ibid., p. 121.
30. Ibid., pp. 136–137.
31. Ibid., pp. 127–128.
32. Ibid., pp. 124–126.
33. Ibid., pp. 61–64. The work in question is apparently *Tathbīt al-imāma*; see Ismail K. Poonawala, *Biobibliography of Ismā'īlī Literature* (Malibu, CA, 1977), pp. 44–45. A manuscript of the work, MS no. 1120 (Zāhid 'Alī Collection), is preserved in the Library of The Institute of Ismaili Studies, London. See Delia Cortese, *Arabic Ismaili Manuscripts: The Zāhid 'Alī Collection in the Library of The Institute of Ismaili Studies* (London, 2003), p. 180. For a detailed description of the work see Wilferd Madelung, 'A Treatise on the Imamate of the Fatimid Caliph al-Manṣūr bi-Allāh', in Chase F. Robinson, ed., *Texts, Documents and Artefacts: Islamic Studies in Honour of D. S. Richards* (Leiden, 2003), pp. 69–77.
34. Jawdhārī, *Sira*, p. 115.
35. Ibn 'Idhārī, *al-Bayān*, vol. 1, p. 193. It is interesting to note that subsequently, on 3 Rabi' I 404/12 September 1013, al-Mu'izz's grandson al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh (r. 386–411/996–1021) appointed as heir apparent 'Abd al-Raḥīm b. Ilyās who was a descendant of Abū 'Alī Aḥmad. See Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz*, vol. 2, pp. 100–101.
36. Jawdhārī, *Sira*, pp. 99–100.
37. Ibid., p. 98.
38. Ibid., pp. 105–106.
39. Ibid., pp. 139–140. 'Abd Allāh was the second son of al-Mu'izz, the others being Tamīm the eldest son, Nizār, the future caliph as al-'Azīz bi'llāh (r. 365–386/975–996), and 'Aqil.
40. According to Maqrīzī (*al-Muqaffā*, vol. 2, p. 588), al-Mu'izz first appointed Tamīm heir apparent. Then, after Jawhar's conquest of Egypt, al-Mu'izz wrote to Jawdhar and confided to him that he had revoked Tamīm's designation in favour of 'Abd Allāh. What prompted al-Mu'izz to revoke Tamīm's designation was that Tamīm had no posterity and led a dissolute life. 'Abd Allāh died in Cairo during al-Mu'izz's reign. Then al-Mu'izz appointed Tamīm's younger brother Nizār. See also Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz*, vol. 1, pp. 217, 235; Ibn Ḥammād, *Akḥbār*, p. 47 (tr. p. 71); Ibn Muyassar, *Akḥbār Miṣr*, ed. Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid as *al-Muntaqā min Akḥbār Miṣr* (Cairo, 1981), pp. 165–166; Ibn Zāfir, *Akḥbār al-duwal al-munqaṭi'a*, ed. André Ferré (Cairo, 1972), pp. 26, 31. Cf. Idrīs 'Imād al-Dīn, *Uyūn al-akhbār wa funūn al-āthār fī faḍā'il al-a'imma al-āthār*, vol. 5, ed. Muḥammad al-Ya'lāwī as *Ta'rikh*

al-khulafā' al-Faṭimiyyīn bi'l-Maghrib: al-qism al-khāṣṣ min Kitāb 'Uyūn al-akhbār (Beirut, 1985), p. 702.

41. Jawdhārī, *Sīra*, p. 120.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 136.
43. *Ibid.*, pp. 141–142.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 109.
45. On him see Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā*, vol. 1, p. 656, vol. 2, p. 385, vol. 3, p. 762, vol. 5, pp. 638, 730; and Hady Roger Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zirīdes, Xe-XIIe siècles* (Paris, 1962), pp. 41–61.
46. On the Banū Ḥamdūn see Ibn Khaldūn, *al-'Ibar*, vol. 4, pp. 175–180; and Marius Canard, 'Une famille de partisans, puis d'adversaires, des Fatimides en Afrique du Nord', in *Mélanges d'histoire et d'archéologie de l'Occident musulman II: Hommage à Georges Marçais* (Algiers, 1957), pp. 33–49.
47. Jawdhārī, *Sīra*, pp. 100–101.
48. *Ibid.*, pp. 129–131.
49. *Ibid.*, pp. 114–115.
50. *Ibid.*, pp. 109–110.
51. *Ibid.*, pp. 92–93.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 122.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
54. *Ibid.*, pp. 138–139.
55. After Jawdhār's death, al-Mu'izz appointed Maṣṣūr to succeed Jawdhār. Maṣṣūr wrote the *Sīra* during the time of al-Mu'izz's successor, al-'Azīz bi'llāh, and he lived up to the time of al-Ḥākim, and held several important offices, including the office of director of endowments (*waqf*) and market inspector. Then, his son Jābir (d. after 390/1000) also held some of these offices during the reign of al-Ḥākim; see al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā*, vol. 3, p. 9.
56. Jawdhārī, *Sīra*, pp. 143–146.
57. Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir, *al-Rawḍa al-bahiyya al-zāhira fī khitāṭ al-Mu'izziyya al-Qāhira*, ed. Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid (Cairo, 1996), p. 54.

Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān and his Refutation of Ibn Qutayba

*Ismail K. Poonawala*¹

Al-Qāḍī Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad b. Maṣṣūr b. Aḥmad b. Ḥayyūn al-Tamīmī, generally known as al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān (henceforth referred to as Nu'mān),² came from a learned Ismaili Shī'i family in Qayrawān.³ However, beginning with Ibn Khallikān's (d. 681/1282) account in his *Wafayāt al-a'yān*,⁴ contemporary scholars of Ismailism⁵ have propounded the view that Nu'mān was initially a Mālikī who eventually became an Imāmī before finally adopting the Ismaili faith. In my previous study entitled 'A Reconsideration of al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān's *madhhab*',⁶ I demonstrated how and when the theory of al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān's conversion originated. I argued that Ibn Khallikān's statement about al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān's conversion probably arose as a result of the misappropriation of the identity of the person who was converted. It was al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān's father, not Nu'mān himself, who converted from the Mālikī school to the Ismaili faith. The notion, therefore, must have originated either with Ibn Khallikān or his source(s).

It has been ascertained that Ibn Shahrāshūb (d. 588/1192) was the first Imāmī author to include Nu'mān in a bibliography, his supplement to the bibliography of *shaykh al-tā'ifa*, Abū Ja'far al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067). He acknowledges several works of Nu'mān, for example *Sharḥ al-akhbār fī faḍā'il al-a'imma al-aṭhār* and *Kitāb Manāqib banī Hāshim wa-mathālib banī Umayya*,⁷ but claims Nu'mān was not an Imāmī. His assertion supports the assumption that in some Imāmī circles Nu'mān was considered an Imāmī almost a century before Ibn Khallikān reported the story of his conversion. Let us follow the trail of Ibn Shahrāshūb and examine the relationship between the Ismailis and the Imāmīs. When the pre-Fatimid Ismaili movement cropped up as a secret revolutionary

organisation conducting vigorous missionary activities in several parts of the 'Abbasid empire during the second half of the third/ninth century, it was well organised and promised to put forward an 'Alid claimant to the caliphate who would bring justice and equity. The rise of the Ismaili movement coincided with the death of Ḥasan al-'Askarī, the eleventh Imāmī imam, in 260/874. Following this event the Imāmī Shi'is were thrown into confusion and fragmented into a number of groups. Ismaili missionaries took advantage of the situation and aimed their activities in particular at the Imāmīs.⁸ The Ismaili movement seems to have drawn a certain number of Imāmīs into its fold. It is well known that several of the prominent figures in the pre-Fatimid Ismaili movement, such as Maṣṣūr al-Yaman,⁹ 'Alī b. al-Faḍl,¹⁰ and Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Shī'ī,¹¹ were originally of Imāmī persuasion and were subsequently converted by the Ismaili *da'wa* (religio-political organisation). Even Ḥasan-i Ṣabbāḥ, the founder of the Nizārī movement, was initially an Imāmī. With the decline of Buyid power in 'Iraq and the capture of Baghdad by Tughril Beg in 447/1055,¹² the Fatimid capital of Cairo became a refuge for Imāmīs. Their significant presence in Cairo is demonstrated by the proclamation of the Imāmī faith (in the name of their hidden twelfth imam al-Mahdī) as the official creed instituted by the military vizier, Abū 'Alī Aḥmad, nicknamed Kutayfāt, the grandson of Badr al-Jamālī, in the year 524/1130. Fatimid historians, such as Ibn Muyassar and al-Maqrizī, as well as Ibn Khallikān, state that the aforementioned vizier was himself an Imāmī who deposed the Fatimid caliph-imam and appointed an Imāmī *qāḍī*, along with three others who belonged to three of the Sunni schools of jurisprudence. Kutayfāt remained in power for a little over a year until he was killed. With his death the Imāmī faith was revoked and the Ismaili faith restored as the state religion. The present author opines that such a group of Imāmīs living in Cairo may have been instrumental in introducing Nu'mān's works to the Imāmī community and characterising him as an Imāmī.¹³

Al-Qāḍī Nūr Allāh Shūshtarī (d. 1019/1610), the famous Imāmī jurist, was the first to state, on the authority of Ibn Khallikān, that Nu'mān was originally a Mālikī and then became an Imāmī.¹⁴ Most of the later Imāmī scholars followed Shūshtarī in their assumptions and maintained that Nu'mān was one of their co-religionists. Three prominent Imāmī savants stand out in this respect. The first is Muḥammad al-Bāqir al-Majlisī (d. 1111/1699), the foremost Imāmī scholar of his time who was held in high respect by the Safavid monarch Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn. He used Nu'mān's *Da'ā'im al-Islām* and *al-Manāqib wa'l-mathālib* as sources for his *magnum*

opus, *Biḥār al-anwār*. Refuting the claim that the *Da'ā'im* was written by Ibn Bābūya (d. 381/991), also known as al-Shaykh al-Ṣādiq, he states:

Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān was at first a Mālikī, then he was led to the right path and became an Imāmī. Most of the traditions he reported in the *Da'ā'im* are in conformity with the ones found in our celebrated books. He did not, however, identify reports from any imam after [Ja'far] al-Ṣādiq because of his fear of the Ismaili caliphs. He, thus, reported the truth by practising *taqiyya* [the precautionary dissimulation of one's faith under duress].¹⁵

The second is Mīrzā Ḥusayn al-Nūrī (d. 1330/1912), whose voluminous work *Mustadrak al-wasā'il* utilises both the *Da'ā'im* and the *Sharḥ al-akhbār* as sources. He also devotes almost ten pages to an interesting polemic regarding whether Nu'mān was an Imāmī or not. Constructing his argument on the aforementioned two books of Nu'mān, he asserts that the latter had nothing in common with the Bāṭiniyya (a derogatory term referring to the Ismailis), who held extremist doctrines concerning their imams.¹⁶ The third is Āghā Buzurg-i Tihirānī (d. 1389/1969), the author of *al-Dhari'a ilā taṣānif al-Shi'a*, a well-known and extensive bibliography of works written by Shi'i authors from the earliest times to the present. Despite his familiarity with contemporary writings on Ismailism (i.e. Wladimir Ivanow and Muḥammad Kāmil Ḥusayn), he not only affirms that Nu'mān was an Imāmī, but, following in the footsteps of his predecessors, al-Majlisī and al-Nūrī, he states:

It is true that al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, because of his fear of the Ismaili caliphs whom he served, did not explicitly narrate traditions from any imam later than Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. However, he did it implicitly with indirect allusions – the *kunya* Abu'l-Ḥasan implied imam ['Alī] al-Riḍā [the eighth imam] while the *kunya* Abū Ja'far implied imam [Muḥammad al-Taḳī] al-Jawād [the ninth imam].¹⁷

It is probably because of this long history of confusion that the editor of Nu'mān's *Sharḥ al-akhbār* placed brackets around certain headings in the third volume to indicate that Nu'mān was an Imāmī. Similarly, Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ḥusaynī al-Jalālī, who wrote a long introduction to this edition, contends that Nu'mān was an Imāmī since he practised *taqiyya* in the presence of the Fatimid caliphs whom he served.¹⁸

In 'The Sources of Ismaili Law', Wilferd Madelung also asserts that Nu'mān was originally a Sunni and apparently never received formal training in Shi'i *ḥadīth* and *fiqh*.¹⁹ However, in the introduction to *Kitāb al-Iqtīṣār*, Nu'mān states that during the reign of the first Fatimid caliph-

imam, al-Mahdī bi'llāh, he began collecting traditions transmitted from the family of the Prophet (*ahl al-bayt*) that dealt with customary practices, legal provisions and precepts, and formal legal opinions on what is permitted and prohibited, by scrutinising the sources available to him by way of *samā'*,²⁰ *ijāza*,²¹ *munāwala*²² or *ṣaḥīfa*.²³ These terms, however, clearly indicate that Nu'mān had received a formal Shī'i education. Therefore, Madelung's contention is disputable.

Nu'mān is considered the most illustrious Fatimid jurist and is correctly regarded as the founder of the Ismaili school of jurisprudence. He was a prolific author who wrote more than forty books, some consisting of several volumes in various disciplines which always defended the cause of the family of the Prophet.²⁴ In his *magnum opus*, the *Da'ā'im*, he dedicated a brief section to refuting the legal views of Abū Ḥanīfa, Mālik and Shāfi'i.²⁵ *Kitāb Ikhtilāf uṣūl al-madhāhib*, on the other hand, is exclusively devoted to expounding the Ismaili position which he identifies as the *madhhab ahl al-ḥaqq* (the rite of the people of the truth) and refuting various groups that, he says, have deviated from the right path.²⁶ It begins with a scrutiny of the events that led to disagreements and dissension within the Muslim community immediately following the Prophet's death. The discussion then proceeds to the issue of *aḥkām al-dīn* (religious laws),²⁷ particularly in regard to whether there is an explicit text, either in the Qur'an or in the *sunna* of the Prophet, that refers to the issue in question. Nu'mān states that it was this very issue that led people to speculate and advocate various principles, such as *taqlīd* (the unequivocal acceptance of the rule of law enacted by the Companions of the Prophet, or the acceptance of doctrines from the established schools/authorities),²⁸ *ijmā'* (the consensus of the jurists/the community within a specified period of time),²⁹ *naẓar* (rational, discursive thinking),³⁰ *qiyās* (judicial reasoning by analogy),³¹ *istiḥsān* (a principle which disavows the use of strict analogy, preferring the use of necessity based on differing situations or contexts),³² *istidlāl* (inference),³³ *ijtihād* and *ra'y* (a legal decision arrived at by one's own judgement in the absence of textual reference or in ignorance of a traditional ruling).³⁴ The remainder of the book is devoted to refuting the personalities and schools that championed the above doctrines.

In addition to these works, according to Ibn Khallikān, Nu'mān wrote a number of refutations against the views of the founding figures of the Sunni schools of jurisprudence and their celebrated jurists, such as Abū Ḥanīfa, al-Mālik, al-Shāfi'i³⁵ and Ibn Surayj, a famous Shāfi'i jurist, theologian and polemicist who died in 305/917–918.³⁶ In another work, entitled *Ikhtilāf al-fuqahā'*, which is lost, Nu'mān defends the views of the family of

the Prophet. Idrīs 'Imād al-Dīn (d. 872/1468) adds two more refutations to the list of Nu'mān's works. The first is entitled *Dāmigh al-mūjaz fi'l-radd 'alā al-'Utbī*.³⁷ The object of his ire, Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-'Utbī (d. ca. 254/868), was an influential Mālikī jurist of al-Andalus.³⁸ According to Idrīs, this refutation was of a considerable size, comprising four parts (*ajzā'*). Thus we find that Nu'mān wrote two separate refutations of the Mālikīs: one against the founder of the school and the other against its renowned jurist in Islamic Spain. No doubt they were very hostile towards the Fatimids considering that they had made a common cause with Abū Yazīd Makhlad b. Kaydād,³⁹ the leader of a Khārijī revolt against the Fatimids which brought the nascent dynasty almost to the brink of collapse, only eventually to be suppressed by the third caliph, al-Manṣūr.⁴⁰ The second, a refutation of Ibn Qutayba (d. 276/889),⁴¹ is entitled *Risāla Dhāt al-bayān fi'l-radd 'alā Ibn Qutayba* ('The treatise in explanation [of confused and vague language] concerning the refutation of Ibn Qutayba').⁴²

Unfortunately all these refutations, except the last, are now lost; hence it is the focus of our present study. As far as I have been able to ascertain, half a dozen copies of this work are preserved in the private collections of various Bohra families in the Indian subcontinent. For the purpose of this study, I have consulted the copy of the *Risāla Dhāt al-bayān* present in the Zāhid 'Alī Collection which is now kept at the Library of The Institute of Ismaili Studies in London.⁴³ Let me fully describe the manuscript since the description given by Delia Cortese, who catalogued this collection, is brief and occasionally incorrect. Firstly, it has not been preserved intact. It appears that at least a page or two is missing from the beginning since it is without the usual *basmala* and *ḥamdala*. It should be noted that a very short formula of *basmala* and *ḥamdala* was subsequently added by the late Zāhid 'Alī in his own hand.⁴⁴ There are some corrections in the margin by Zāhid 'Alī. The most obvious correction is on the very first page where the scribe had misspelled the title of Ibn Qutayba's work as *Kitāb ādāb al-kuttāb*, instead of *Kitāb adab al-kātib*. This correction is followed by Zāhid 'Alī's notation in the margin that the latter work has been published. At the top corner of the second page there is a seal of possession, either overlooked or ignored by Cortese, which reads (as far as can be ascertained from a Xerox copy available to me): 'Abd Dā'ī Allāh al-'Izz al-'Aliyy 'Abd al-'Aliyy ... Fayḍ Allāh al-Shaykh.'

On the title page the following title is written in black ink: *Risāla Dhāt al-bayān*. It appears that the words which indicate the original ownership of the manuscript located on the first page have also been scratched out;

however, I was able to partially decipher it: ‘*min-mā manna’llāh bihi ‘alā ‘abdi waliyyihi* [scratched word] *bin al-Shaykh al-Hājj al-Ajall Ḥabibu’llāh ... huwa*’.

A part remains of another declaration of possession written in Gujarati (with Arabic script) which states: ‘*ā kitāb Mullā ‘Abd al-‘Alīyy* [scratched word]’ (‘This book is owned by Mullā ‘Abd al-‘Alī etc.’ For the Arabic text of the colophon see Appendix, colophon.)

The name of the copyist is not given, but the colophon states that the manuscript was transcribed during the *dars* (lessons’ taught by a shaykh/teacher to a small number of students) by the forty-fourth Dā’ūdī dā’ī Muḥammad ‘Izz al-Dīn who died in 1236/1821 in Surat, India. Thus it is obvious that the manuscript had travelled from Surat to Hyderabad (in southern India) and had passed through several owners. The seal of possession (and its resemblance to the seals of possession on some manuscripts of the Hamdani Collection) makes me think that this manuscript might have once been in the possession of the Hamdānī family in Surat. Although it has been said that only the first half of the book is preserved, towards the end of the manuscript Nu’mān writes: ‘This, then, is the last issue mentioned by Ibn Qutayba’ (*fa-hādḥā ākhir al-masā’il allatī dhakarāhā Ibn Qutayba*), which demonstrates that the manuscript, constituting nine sections, is complete.

Explaining the reason for his compilation, Nu’mān states in the introduction that he was approached by a dignitary in the Fatimid administration to elucidate the meanings of a number of legal maxims expressed in the form of the traditions of the Prophet and quoted by Ibn Qutayba in his book *Adab al-kātib*. After Nu’mān had furnished the inquirer with oral explanations, the latter solicited him to put those clarifications in writing so that they could be preserved for future reference. The manuscript begins abruptly as follows:

May God make you happy in obedience to Him, employ you [in the service] for His gratification, grant you success in attaining His pleasure and the pleasure of His Friend, grant you satisfaction, and commission you in His service! May God grant you good fortune for drawing [my attention] to the book of ‘Abd Allāh b. Muslim Ibn Qutayba, which he composed to correct the [usage of the Arabic] language, writing (orthography) and vocalisation, and entitled it *The Book of Rules for the Scribe (Adab al-kātib)*.⁴⁵ You [also] mentioned to me that you [i.e. the dignitary] advised the noble princes, the scions of the Commander of the Faithful, our Master [i.e. the caliph/imam], blessings of God be upon him, to memorise the disciplines and learnings that it contains. You confirmed the manual’s overall validity, clarified its difficulty and unlocked its

[treasures] so that they can better comprehend [the book]. [Then,] you [i.e. the dignitary] paused at a section, which contains sayings in general about jurisprudence. You [i.e. the dignitary] asked me about their meanings so that you could explicate their implications to them [the princes] as I explained to you, and affirm their authenticity as I affirmed ...

You [i.e. the dignitary] read a section of that book with me and I responded to whatever you asked for clarification. I explained its meaning and called your attention to what is sound and unsound [in that section]. Then you asked me to put it down in writing in the form of a book so that it would be more durable for preservation, more obvious in explanation, and safer from additions and omissions. Hence, I saw it fit to put in writing as you requested, so that it would be farther reaching in knowledge and the princes would benefit from it.⁴⁶

Before proceeding further it should be noted that the role of the *kuttāb*,⁴⁷ since the rise of the 'Abbasid dynasty, had grown immensely and acquired greater prestige. Moreover, the training of the *kuttāb* not only involved a long apprenticeship, but also the acquisition of a large body of knowledge known as *adab* that consisted of Arabic philology, poetry, oratory, rhetoric, grammar and metrics, etc.⁴⁸ It was at this point that a distinct chancery style called *inshā'*, the art of drafting official letters and documents, began to evolve. It is well known that the manuals of *kitāba*, i.e. treatises for the training and guidance of secretaries that concentrated on correct grammatical and linguistic usage, experienced their finest hour during Fatimid rule in Egypt.⁴⁹ In his *al-Mawā'iz wa'l-i'tibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa'l-āthār*, al-Maqrīzī states that the position of the chief *kātib* in the *diwān al-inshā' wa'l-mukātabāt* was reserved for the most eloquent writer. He would be addressed as '*al-shaykh al-ajall*' ('the sublime shaykh'), and the caliph frequently consulted him. Maqrīzī then describes the privileges that he enjoyed.⁵⁰ Unfortunately the sources at our disposal do not provide us with information about the *kuttāb* for the North African era of the Fatimids. Nu'mān's refutation is, therefore, first-hand evidence that Ibn Qutayba's manual for the secretaries, *Adab al-kātib*, had already acquired an exalted position in the profession and that it was used for the training of the *kuttāb* in the Fatimid chancery. Moreover Nu'mān indicates that it was used to educate the princes, which corroborates a previous argument of mine that the early Fatimid caliphs received a comprehensive education.⁵¹

Quoting a long paragraph from Ibn Qutayba's book which deals with brief citations from the traditions of the Prophet concerning legal matters, Nu'mān states:

Ibn Qutayba mentioned in this book that the seeker of knowledge and culture ought to commit himself to memorising and studying [certain basic skills]. Then he reported a number of sciences/disciplines. Moreover, he said that it is inevitable for [the seeker of knowledge] to examine the legal maxims and recognise its principles from the traditions of the Messenger of God (may God bless him, his progeny and his Companions), such as, [the burden of] proof lies on the plaintiff, and the defendant has to take the oath;⁵² the revenue derived [from the slave that is the property of the purchaser because] of the responsibility [which he has borne for him];⁵³ no retaliation is payable for a wound caused by a dumb animal [if it gets loose and is not at the time under anyone's charge];⁵⁴ the pledge shall not remain in the hand of its receiver when its depositor is able to release it;⁵⁵ a *minḥa* [female camel lent for a time for milking, though the term can be used for other things which are intended for specific purposes] must be returned;⁵⁶ the thing loaned as *'āriya*⁵⁷ must be returned;⁵⁸ the surety (guarantor) is fully responsible (*al-za'im ghārim*);⁵⁹ there shall be no bequest to an heir;⁶⁰ the hand is not to be cut off [as punishment] for taking [without the owner's permission] fruit or the pith of the palm-tree [from a garden];⁶¹ no retaliation is due unless one is wounded by a weapon; the blood money payable by the agnatic relations for a slain woman is one-third that for a man; the agnatic relations shall not pay compensation for an intentional act [of slaying], for [the slaying] by a slave, for a compromise [reached by the assailant], or for admission of guilt [by the assailant];⁶² there is no divorce in a case of constraint;⁶³ the two parties to a contract of sale have the option [to agree or to annul it] so long as they have not separated;⁶⁴ the neighbour has the best claim by reason of his being near;⁶⁵ [granting] divorce is [in the hands] of men while the waiting period is for the women [to observe] (*al-ṭalāq li'l-rijāl wa'l-'idda li'l-nisā'*);⁶⁶ and likewise [the Messenger of God] forbade *mukhābara* (renting land for a third and a quarter of the produce), *muḥāqala* (selling a sown field for a hundred *faraqs* [i.e. three *ṣā's*, a cubic measure of varying magnitude] of wheat), *muzābana* (selling the fruit from a garden, which is still on the trees, if it consists of palm-trees, for dried dates by measure; or if it consists of grapes, for raisins by measure, etc.),⁶⁷ *mu'awama* (selling a year's harvest before the crop has grown, or selling the fruit on palm-trees two or three years in advance) and *thunyā* ('exception', the amount of which is not accurately known from the above transactions);⁶⁸ [he also said that] the profit arising from something which is not in one's possession is not allowable, nor selling what is not in one's possession;⁶⁹ it is neither permitted to have two transactions combined into one,⁷⁰ nor to have two conditions relating to one sale;⁷¹ [he] forbade a sale in which [the vendor] makes an advance;⁷² [he also] forbade a sale which involves some uncertainty (*bay' al-gharar*);⁷³ [he] forbade the mode of selling in which one describes to a man an article of merchandise not present with

him;⁷⁴ [he] forbade selling a debt to be paid at a future date for another;⁷⁵ [he] prohibited [the people from going out of the town] and meeting riders⁷⁶ [to make purchases or sales with them before their arrival in the town]. [There are many similar examples. When one memorises them and understands their implications, with God's permission, it will relieve him, to a large extent, from the long-windedness of the jurists].⁷⁷

In fairness to Ibn Qutayba, it should be noted that *Adab al-kātib*, composed a little before 236/850 for his patron Abu'l-Ḥasan 'Ubayd Allāh b. Khāqān, the vizier of the 'Abbasid caliph al-Mutawakkil (r. 232–247/847–861), was primarily a manual of stylistics for secretaries.⁷⁸ Ibn Qutayba's goal is to provide basic knowledge of certain things needed in that profession. He does not expect them to be experts either in grammar or jurisprudence as is the case with the grammarians or the jurists.⁷⁹ The book itself, in addition to a very long preface/introduction, is divided into four distinct parts: *kitāb al-ma'rifa* (book of knowledge);⁸⁰ *kitāb taqwīm al-yad* (orthography);⁸¹ *kitāb taqwīm al-lisān* (orthoepy/correct pronunciation); and *kitāb al-abniya* (lexicography).⁸² The purpose of Ibn Qutayba's inclusion in the preface of some of the legal maxims expressed in the traditions of the Messenger of God and his admonition to the secretaries for memorising them, as he himself states, was to relieve them from worrying about unnecessary details. In his other book entitled *Uyūn al-akhbār*, referring to *Adab al-kātib*, he states that the secretaries should memorise well-known traditions so that they can insert them in the appropriate places in their documents. Furthermore they could also resort to these famous traditions in their conversations for precise and befitting words and the ideal meanings that they contain.⁸³ Therefore Ibn Qutayba's objective in this book is not to expound juristic doctrine, but simply to demonstrate that the secretaries of the 'Abbasid caliphate should not overlook some of the famous legal traditions of the Prophet.⁸⁴

In his biography of Ibn Qutayba, Ibn Khallikān cites a well-known critique of *Adab al-kātib*. He states that most learned men of that time called *Adab al-kātib* 'a preface without a book', while referring to the *Iṣlāḥ al-manṭiq* as 'a book without a preface.'⁸⁵ Ibn Khallikān adds that the above observations reveal a certain degree of prejudice against Ibn Qutayba, since *Adab al-kātib* contains a variety of information presented under various topics. He continues by adding: 'I am convinced that their only motive for saying so was because its preface is very long, while the *Iṣlāḥ al-manṭiq* has none at all.'⁸⁶ It should be noted that there exists a number of commentaries on *Adab al-kātib*. The most famous was written by Abū Muḥammad ibn Sīd al-Baṭalyawsī (d. 521/1127), a celebrated

Andalusian grammarian and philosopher.⁸⁷

Ibn Qutayba studied under various teachers, but three of them exercised the greatest amount of influence on the development of his thought. They are: Ibn Rāhwayh (d. ca. 237/851),⁸⁸ Abū Ḥātim al-Sijistānī (d. ca. 250/864)⁸⁹ and al-ʿAbbās al-Riyāshī (d. 257/871). The first was a Sunni theologian, a disciple of Ibn Ḥanbal, and a protégé of the Tahirids of Nishāpūr where he had established his school. The second was a Sunni philologist and traditionist, while the third was a philologist and the transmitter of the works of al-Aṣmaʿī⁹⁰ and Abū ʿUbayda.⁹¹ When Ibn Qutayba embarked on his career, a major shift had taken place in the official ʿAbbasid ideology. Al-Mutawakkil and his henchmen, particularly the vizier Ibn Khākān, abandoned the Muʿtazilite doctrine, which had been the official ideology of the ʿAbbasid government since al-Māʾmūn (r. 198–218/809–833). In 234/848 al-Mutawakkil revoked it and introduced a new creed stressing adherence to the doctrines of the Ḥanbalis and other Traditionists. Ibn Qutayba found favour with the vizier to whom his *Adab al-kātib* was dedicated and was appointed the *qāḍī* of Dīnawar in 236/851. He held this office for twenty years until 256/870. He put his literary talents at the service of the ʿAbbasids who had undertaken the restoration of Sunnism. This implies that a number of his works were intended to expound a politico-religious doctrine represented by Ibn Ḥanbal and Ibn Rāhwayh. Ibn Qutayba's politico-religious orientation becomes quite obvious to the reader in the introduction to his *Adab al-kātib*.⁹² To use Lecomte's words: 'It was a politico-cultural profession of [his] faith.'⁹³

Hence, Nu'mān seizes the first opportunity to attack Ibn Qutayba's religious affiliation and anti-Shi'i proclivity and to repudiate his authority as a legal expert. Nu'mān, therefore, states that although Ibn Qutayba is regarded as an authority by the philologists for his excellent compositions in that field, he is neither considered an authority nor a trustworthy witness by the jurisconsults.⁹⁴ Nu'mān, then, brands him an enemy of God and his friends (i.e. the imams of the family of the Prophet) who shows open animosity to truth and the 'People of Truth'. Nu'mān does not hesitate to label him a Ḥashawī,⁹⁵ an individual who believes in anthropomorphism, rejects the imamate of the family of the Prophet and supports the caliphate of the latter's enemies (i.e. the ʿAbbasids).⁹⁶ Furthermore he believes that Ibn Qutayba went too far in his book, entitled *Kitāb al-Maʿārif*, when stating that Abū ʿAbd Allāh Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī rebelled against Yazīd. Consequently ʿUbayd Allāh b. Ziyād, the governor of Kūfa, sent ʿAmr b. Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ [with an army] to suppress the uprising and had Ḥusayn killed.⁹⁷ Thus Nu'mān succeeds in destroying Ibn

Qutayba's credibility, especially for his Shi'i readers. Let us now scrutinise Nu'mān's charges against Ibn Qutayba by examining what the latter states in his own works.

In his *Kitāb al-Ma'ārif*, Ibn Qutayba, under the sub-heading 'akhbār 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib' ('An account of 'Alī'), states:

Al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, who was known by his *kunya*, Abū 'Abd Allāh, left [Mecca] for Kūfa. Hence, 'Ubayd Allāh b. Ziyād sent [an army under the command of] 'Amr b. Sa'd b. Abī al-Waqqāṣ and Sinān b. Abī Anas al-Nakha'i killed him in the year 61 [/680] on the day of 'Āshūrā'.⁹⁸

In another passage, under the heading 'Names of the Caliphs' and the sub-heading 'Yazīd', he states:

Yazīd b. Mu'āwiya, who was known by his *kunya*, Abū Khālid, took charge of the caliphate while al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī, may God be pleased with both, advanced towards Kūfa where 'Ubayd Allāh b. Ziyād was the governor on behalf of Yazīd. So, 'Ubayd Allāh dispatched 'Amr b. Abī Waqqāṣ and he fought against him and Ḥusayn was killed.⁹⁹

Notice Ibn Qutayba's clever wording. In the first account, he uses the verb *kharaja* without the preposition 'alā because *kharaja 'alā* would imply to rebel/revolt against. In the second report, he uses the verb *aqbala* (to turn forward, to approach, to go to). In both instances he states *yuridu al-Kūfa* (lit. 'intending Kūfa'), but avoids giving the reason for his departure for Kūfa or that he had received an invitation from the Kūfans and that thousands had pledged their support to Muslim b. 'Aqīl, Ḥusayn's cousin and envoy to Kūfa. In order to exculpate Yazīd from the charge of slaughter at Karbalā', he simply states, 'Ḥusayn went forth [in battle] intending Kūfa' ('*kharaja'l-Ḥusaynu yuridu'l-Kūfa*'), thereby shifting the blame for the massacre from Yazīd to 'Ubayd Allāh b. Ziyād because the latter was the governor of Kūfa. According to Abu'l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, several people participated in the killing of Ḥusayn while Sinān b. Abī Anas al-Nakha'i was responsible for severing his head from his body.¹⁰⁰

While refuting the Shi'a in his treatise *al-Ikhtilāf fi'l-lafẓ wa'l-radd 'alā'l-jahmiyya wa'l-mushabbiha*, Ibn Qutayba presents a very strange and perverse argument. He states that the Shi'a had removed the name of the third caliph, 'Uthmān, from the list of *a'immat al-hudā* (the imams of guidance) and placed him among the *a'immat al-fitan* (the imams of sedition or civil strife), thereby removing the title of caliphate from him while they attached the latter title to Yazīd b. Mu'āwiya. He then argues that this

change implies that the Shi'is had made Husayn b. 'Alī a rebel according to the tradition of the Messenger of God which states: 'Who rebels against my community, while it is unanimous, then kill him, whomsoever he might be.'¹⁰¹ Such a perversion shocks one's sensibilities. In his study entitled *The Life and Works of Ibn Qutayba*, Ishāq Huseini states that Ibn Qutayba emphasised in his books the point that the imam (i.e. the ruling caliphal authority) must not be disobeyed. He went even further and condoned the Umayyads.¹⁰² Nu'mān's charge, therefore, seems correct.

It should be noted that Nu'mān was not alone in his criticism of Ibn Qutayba's apparent anti-Shi'i bias. Abū'l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. 'Umar al-Dāraquṭnī (d. 385/995),¹⁰³ the author of the *Sunan*, which is recognised as one of the most reliable compilations of *ḥadīths* after the six Sunni canonical collections, also criticises Ibn Qutayba for the same reasons. He states:

Ibn Qutayba was favourably disposed to describing God with human characteristics while he was ill-disposed towards the family of the Prophet. His writing bears witness to it.¹⁰⁴

Another eminent traditionist, al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī (d. 405/1014),¹⁰⁵ charges Ibn Qutayba with lying.¹⁰⁶ The reason for such a serious charge might be that in his *Ta'wīl mukhtalif al-ḥadīth*, one cannot fail to notice that in order to reconcile contradictory traditions, Ibn Qutayba resorts to finding a way out. He seeks recourse either to *ta'wīl* (interpretation) or to other means in order to reconcile contradictory traditions rather than admit that the tradition in question is false or fabricated. Ishāq Huseini also criticises Ibn Qutayba for his inability to determine sound and weak traditions. He adds that Ibn Qutayba does not even distinguish between a tradition derived from the Prophet, the Companions or a transmitter (*rāwī*). Furthermore he rigidly followed his master's (i.e. Ibn Rāhwayh's) instructions and firmly believed in the authenticity of an enormous body of traditions.¹⁰⁷ Another esteemed *muḥaddith* (traditionist), Abū Bakr Aḥmad al-Bayhaqī¹⁰⁸ (d. 458/1066), also criticises Ibn Qutayba and states:

Ibn Qutayba shares his views with those held by the Karrāmiyya.¹⁰⁹ There is not much difference between the Mutashabbihā [the anthropomorphists] and the Karrāmiyya. The latter were the followers of Muḥammad b. Karrām, who believed in *tajsīm* [ascription of corporeality to God] and *tashbīh* [attribution of human characteristics to God]. Ibn Qutayba reproached 'Alī for what happened to 'Uthmān.¹¹⁰

Returning to the main subject of refutation, Nu'mān rebukes Ibn Qutayba for stating that mere memorisation of those maxims could substi-

tute for the proper knowledge of a particular branch of learning, such as jurisprudence. He stresses that Ibn Qutayba should have started his book with the obligatory knowledge required of a person. He then argues that religious knowledge, i.e. knowledge about the fundamental principles of Islam, should have been the first and foremost topic of his work. He cites a number of examples where some of the prominent figures in Islamic history lacked adequate knowledge of what was lawful and unlawful according to Islamic jurisprudence. One example that he identifies is Abū Bakr's (the first caliph) ruling that the hand of the guest who steals must be cut off. Rather, Islamic jurisprudence indicates that the guest is not the recipient of such punishment. Another example is when 'Umar (the second caliph) ordered that a pregnant woman guilty of committing adultery should be stoned to death. However, the law states that the punishment should not be executed until after she delivers her baby. A third example is when Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Shī'ī, the founder of the Fatimid empire in North Africa, entered the city of Qayrawān and asked a Mālikī *qāḍī* about his method for reaching a legal decision. He replied: 'I decide according to the *sunna* (customary practice sanctioned by tradition).' ¹¹¹ Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Shī'ī asked: 'What is the *sunna*?' The *qāḍī* replied: 'The Qur'an is the Word of God, and it is not created.' Abū 'Abd Allāh and his company laughed. The *qāḍī* was embarrassed and became the laughing-stock of the town. Nu'mān concludes this section with the Qur'anic verses that state: *God will raise up, by many degrees, those of you who believe and those who have been given knowledge* (Q. 58:11); *How can those who know be equal to those who do not know?* (Q. 39:9)

Following these introductory remarks (fols 1r–7r), the rest of the book (fols 7r–87r) is devoted to a detailed exposition of all the aforementioned legal maxims. Space does not permit me the opportunity to address them all; therefore I will analyse one precept. Nu'mān points out from the outset that Ibn Qutayba's statement, 'When one memorises those legal maxims and understands their implications, it will relieve him, to a large extent, from the long-windedness of the jurists', is wrong. It is unwise to be hasty with such a sweeping generalisation because the propositions of the Messenger of God are based on specific examples. However, Nu'mān states that while the Messenger of God's statement, 'The burden of proof lies on the plaintiff, and the defendant has to take the oath', is sound, its application is limited to financial claims. For example, if a person files a claim against another person for an amount of money that he owes and the latter denies the claim, the plaintiff has to produce evidence in support of his claim. If he does, the defendant has to rebut such evidence

or disprove it. If the latter is successful, then the claim against him is annulled. However, if the defendant is unable to disprove it, the *qāḍī* can rule against him, or, if he wishes, can ask the plaintiff to take an oath in addition to the evidence. If the plaintiff takes an oath in support of the evidence, then the *qāḍī* should rule in his favour. However, if the plaintiff refuses to take an oath, the *qāḍī* should not rule in his favour, except in certain cases when the plaintiff is not obliged to take an oath unless he is demanded to by the defendant. Nu'mān has identified some of those exceptional cases. In all those cases, the plaintiff is required to swear that he will tell the truth and if he refuses, the judge should not rule in his favour.

Nu'mān affirms that what he has described above is the teaching of the family of the Prophet and many Sunni jurists agree with their position. In those cases, on the basis of the *prima facie* evidence, it is the plaintiff who must take the oath and not the defendant, when, in fact, all the defendant has to do is to debunk the claim against him.

The principle outlined in the Messenger of God's words – that evidence is to be presented by the plaintiff – is a general rule.¹¹² It implies that the burden of proof is on the plaintiff if he wants to prevail against the defendant. However, it is not always necessary for the plaintiff to present the proof and the *qāḍī* is not required to demand it. In other words, presenting evidence in support of one's claim is not an absolute requirement. All the jurists agree on this point and there are no differing opinions within the Muslim community. However, some ignorant *qāḍīs* and governors, whenever they mention the plaintiff and his claim in their court records and orders, write: 'I ordered him to present the evidence for what he claimed.' Nu'mān asserts that this procedure is entirely incorrect because a directive of the *qāḍī*/governor only amounts to a legal decision that is not vital for the case unless it is indispensable. Similarly, when the defendant denies the claim against him, the *qāḍī* addresses the plaintiff (during the court session) and orders him to present the evidence. According to Nu'mān this procedure is also incorrect. He adds that the proper procedure is to first ask the plaintiff: 'Do you have any evidence to support your claim?' If he answers in the affirmative, he should be told: 'Present it, then, if you wish', or if he says: 'I will present it', he should then be permitted to do so and it should be duly noted in the court records.

These remarks demonstrate the attentiveness of Nu'mān to proper court procedure, particularly how to document in the court records when a person brings a charge against another and how the *qāḍīs* should record their judgements. Furthermore, Nu'mān reiterates that the Messenger of

God's words indicate that the issue of the burden of proof lies with the plaintiff. The defendant is not responsible for taking an oath in all cases. He then provides an example of a person who brought a charge against another concerning a false accusation made against him regarding illicit sexual intercourse with a woman. Nu'mān says that in situations where the defendant is convicted and could face a *ḥadd* punishment,¹¹³ a *ta'zīr* punishment¹¹⁴ or simply a disciplinary punishment, the plaintiff has the right to demand an oath from the defendant, even if the plaintiff has no evidence of the defendant having committed a crime. In such a case, the defendant is not bound to take an oath, which allows him to evade the *ḥadd* punishment.

Nu'mān adds that on the authority of the imams from the family of the Prophet, the Messenger of God prohibited both the taking and extracting of oaths in all cases involving the *ḥadd* punishments. 'Alī said that oath taking is not allowed in cases pertaining to *ḥadd* punishment. He also said that retaliation is not permitted in cases resulting in the fracture of a bone, rather blood money or compensation is sufficient.¹¹⁵ Similarly, the cases that involve *ḥadd* punishment cannot be decided by the testimony of one witness versus another, or on the basis of an epistle received from another judge. There is disagreement among Sunni jurists regarding the above position even though it was practised by the family of the Prophet.

Another issue unequivocally specified by Nu'mān concerns homicide cases where the burden of presenting evidence rests on the defendant while the plaintiff has to take an oath. However, if the slain man has said (just before his death), 'So-and-so has killed me', it amounts to an accusation; hence *qasāma* (an oath pronounced fifty times in a penal procedure) will be necessary (on behalf of the accused).¹¹⁶ In corroboration with his argument, Nu'mān cites a report where the Messenger of God decided a case by *qasāma*. The report indicates that a man from the Anṣār was killed in the palm gardens of Khaybar. Consequently, the closest relatives of the slain man went to the Messenger of God and reported that the Jews of Khaybar had killed their brother. The Messenger of God inquired about it and the Jews denied the claim. Therefore God's Messenger asked the Anṣār: 'Do you have a witness to support your claim?' They replied: 'How can we have a witness when they killed him surreptitiously?' The Messenger of God said: 'Can you swear fifty oaths against the person who killed him while I will bring before you the entire group of [the accused] Jews?' They responded: 'How can we swear against a person whom we neither saw nor witnessed [committing the crime]?' The Messenger of God replied: 'Then, let the Jews whom you accuse swear [fifty oaths].' They said: 'O Messenger

of God, they are Jews and do not attach any significance to what they swear.' The Messenger of God, therefore, said that there was nothing else he could do and provided the blood money from the public treasury of the Muslims to demonstrate that the taking of Muslim life cannot occur without compensation.¹¹⁷

Nu'mān then cites two Qur'anic verses: *Call in two male witnesses. If two men are not available, then call one man and two women out of those you approve as witnesses* (Q. 2:282), and *Call two just witnesses from your people [and establish witness for the sake of God]* (Q.'65:2). The Qur'anic injunction, therefore, implies that two witnesses are obligatory before pronouncing a judgement in any claim. But the imams from the progeny of the Prophet related that the Messenger of God decided cases of financial claims by one witness and the swearing of an oath by the plaintiff. 'Alī did likewise. Hence, some Sunni jurists agreed with the views held by the family of the Prophet while others disagreed.

Now, Nu'mān argues on the basis of the Qur'anic verses and injunctions that it is obligatory for Muslims to follow the *sunna* of the Prophet. Elaborating his reasoning, Nu'mān states that certain commands in the Qur'an were revealed in general terms while the Messenger of God explained their precise meaning. This is what is implied when God says in the Qur'an, *We have sent down the message to you [i.e. Muḥammad] too, so that you can explain to people what was sent to them* (Q. 16:44). Therefore, it is the Messenger of God who makes the message of God clearer. Nu'mān reiterates that the Prophet does not use his own subjective opinion in explaining God's message; rather he is inspired and guided by God. To defend his position, Nu'mān cites the Qur'anic verse: *By the setting star! Your companion has not strayed; he is not deluded; he does not speak from his own desire. The Qur'an is nothing less than a revelation that is sent to him* (Q. 53:1–4). The Book of God also commands Muslims to follow the Prophet when it states: *Whatever the Messenger of God gives you, accept it. Whatever he forbids you to have, leave it alone* (Q. 59:7). It also states: *O you who believe, obey God and the Messenger of God, and those of you who have authority* (Q. 4:59). The ones who have authority, Nu'mān asserts, are the imams descended from the family of the Prophet.¹¹⁸

Next, Nu'mān clarifies that an oath must be taken in the name of God. Other customs of oath-taking prevailing amongst the masses, he asserts, are invalid. Testimony must also be given by a witness who possesses the characteristics of being just and has other qualifications required for such a duty.¹¹⁹

Before closing this discussion let me cite Ibn Rushd (d. 595/1198), a

theologian and philosopher who was also the *qāḍī* of Seville. In his important work on jurisprudence entitled *Bidāyat al-mujtahid wa-nihāyat al-muqtaṣid*, he affirms that there is a great deal of disagreement among the jurists of various legal schools about the exact meaning of the Messenger of God's words regarding the evidence/testimony that is to be produced by the plaintiff and the defendant who denies the claim against him. First, he points out that they disagree about whether the Prophet's tradition is a universal rule to be applied to all plaintiffs and defendants, or whether the plaintiff is always required to present evidence and the defendant must always take an oath since the plaintiff usually has a weaker *prima facie* case than the defendant.

Those who claim, Ibn Rushd adds, that this rule is applicable to all defendants and plaintiffs, and that the general meaning of the tradition is not restricted, state that a claim cannot be established with an oath, or an established claim can be annulled through it. Those who maintain that the defendant alone has been given this ruling on the basis that he has a stronger *prima facie* case, assert that if there appears to be a case where the position of the plaintiff, at face value, is stronger, his statement should be accepted. For example, if the plaintiff claims that a deposit entrusted to him was destroyed, in similar cases, his claim is to be accepted with an oath.

I would like to conclude that Nu'mān, who had embarked on a career of collecting legal traditions in a book entitled *Kitāb al-Īḍāḥ*, comprising some 3,000 folios, was well versed not only in the precise details of each legal maxim but also about the points of agreement and disagreement between the various schools of jurisprudence. The latter work did not survive except for a small portion from the chapter on prayer (*ṣalāt*).¹²⁰ As far as I am able to ascertain, most of the issues addressed in this refutation are touched upon in the *Da'ā'im* and other works, but never fully elaborated. Hence this refutation is a significant work of Nu'mān on jurisprudence and deserves to be critically edited.

It should be noted that Nu'mān criticised Ibn Qutayba for his explanation of the meaning of the term *al-qaḍā'*, since it occurs in the Qur'an several times with various meanings, according to the context in which it appears. In his *Ta'wīl mushkil al-Qur'ān*, Ibn Qutayba states that the original meaning of the verb *qaḍā* is *ḥatama* (i.e. he decreed it, ordained it).¹²¹ Ibn Qutayba's assertion that the root meaning of *qaḍā* is 'to decree something', Nu'mān argues, cannot be uniformly applied to all verbal forms of *qaḍā* that occur in the Qur'an. He contends, rather, that its real meaning is that of *bayān* (i.e. to make a thing distinct, manifest), and supports

his contention with examples from the Qur'an. Nu'mān also criticised al-Khalil b. Aḥmad for saying that *qaḍā* means *ḥakama* (to decide) in his famous book *Kitāb al-'Ayn*.¹²² However, in his *Kitāb al-Majālis wa'l-musāyarāt*, Nu'mān affirms that Ibn Qutayba is incorrect.¹²³

Nu'mān further adds that he was inspired in this inquiry by al-Mu'izz's suggestion in a private gathering. It is also notable that Nu'mān faithfully quoted a long passage from Ibn Qutayba's book mentioned above without citing its title.

Both Ibn Qutayba and Nu'mān were polymaths.'One was defending the new reactionary Sunni ideology advocated by the 'Abbasid caliph al-Mutawakkil and his successors, while the other was defending the Ismaili Shi'i doctrines supported by the Fatimids. Both dynasties were vying with one another for supremacy of the Islamic world.

Finally, it should be noted that Ibn Qutayba is known as the third great writer of Arabic prose after Ibn al-Muqaffa' (d. ca. 139/756) and al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/868–869). His reputation is chiefly based on his *adab* works and as a writer of that genre. Both Ishāq Huseini and Gérard Lecomte have, therefore, devoted several pages to 'Ibn Qutayba and *adab*', and have raised the issue as to whether he could be regarded as 'a secular humanist'. The conclusion they have reached is quite the opposite. Huseini states that Ibn Qutayba was influenced by a strong religious motive, and that he used his literary capabilities simply as a tool to defend his fanatical religious views.¹²⁴ Lecomte states that Ibn Qutayba's religious position and his attitude as a defender of the *sunna* clearly proves that in his mind there is no difference in kind, but simply in degree, between the religious and the secular aspects of his educational work.¹²⁵ It will not be out of place to quote a brief paragraph by Lecomte where he states:

C'est dire que l'*adab* d'Ibn Qutayba, bien qu'il contienne en germe par l'abondance et la mise en forme des citations une conception de la 'littérature', ne consiste pas seulement dans une culture littéraire, mais n'est pas davantage un humanisme philosophique où l'homme trouverait en soi sa propre fin et se constituerait l'objet de toutes ses entreprises. L'*adab* d'Ibn Qutayba est déjà mieux défini par Husaynī en ces termes: 'C'est l'étude des sciences religieuses d'un point de vue littéraire et linguistique.' Cette définition est certes exacte, mais en tout cas incomplète. On le voit pour notre part comme un 'humanisme religieux' faisant de l'homme un réceptacle de culture et la cause instrumentale d'un idéal éthique, pour son propre bonheur sur la terre, mais aussi pour la plus grande gloire de Dieu. Est-il besoin de dire que c'est nous qui distinguons? ¹²⁶

Nu'mān's reputation, on the other hand, is based entirely on the doctrinal

works he composed in defence of the Ismaili Shi'i cause. For him, religion is comprehensive.¹²⁷

Notes

1. I would like to thank my student Eric Bordenkircher for reading the final draft, his valuable comments and polishing its rough edges.
2. It should be noted that there is no mention of his *kunya* (surname consisting of *abū* or *umm* followed by the name of the son) 'Abū Ḥanīfa', in his works. He is generally identified through his first name, al-Nu'mān, which is preceded by the title of his occupation al-Qāḍī (the judge). We do not know why and how he was given that *kunya*, but we are told that because of the resemblance of his *kunya* and his first name with that of the founder of the Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence, imam Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu'mān, he is known simply as al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān.
3. Farhat Dachraoui, 'al-Nu'mān', *EI2*, vol. 8, pp. 117–118.
4. Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān wa anbā' abnā' al-zamān*, ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās (Beirut, 1968–1972), vol. 5, pp. 415–416; English tr. William MacGuckin de Slane, *Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary* (Paris, 1842–1871), vol. 3, pp. 565–567.
5. See Asaf A. A. Fyzee, 'Qadi an-Nu'man: The Fatimid Jurist and Author', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1934), p. 8; Wladimir Ivanow, *A Guide to Ismaili Literature* (London, 1933), p. 37; 2nd amplified ed. *Ismaili Literature: A Bibliographical Survey* (Tehran, 1963), p. 32; and Farhad Daftary, *The Ismā'īlīs: Their History and Doctrines* (2nd ed., Cambridge, 2007), p. 168.
6. Ismail K. Poonawala, 'A Reconsideration of al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān's *madhhab*', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 37 (1974), pp. 572–579.
7. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Sharḥ al-akhbār fī faḍā'il al-a'imma al-aṭḥār*, ed. Muḥammad al-Ḥusaynī al-Jalālī (Qumm, 1409–1412/1988–1992); idem., *al-Manāqib wa'l-mathālib*, ed. Mājid b. Aḥmad al-'Atiyya (Beirut, 1423/2002).
8. Heinz Halm, *Die Schia* (Darmstadt, 1988), pp. 199–200; English tr., Janet Watson, *Shiism* (Edinburgh, 1991), p. 166.
9. Nu'mān, *Ifṭitāḥ al-da'wa*, ed. Farhat Dachraoui (Tunis, 1975), p. 4; Ḥusayn F. al-Hamdānī, *al-Sulayhiyyūn* (Cairo, 1955), p. 30; Wilferd Madelung, 'Manṣūr al-Yaman', *EI2*, vol. 6, p. 438.
10. Nu'mān, *Ifṭitāḥ al-da'wa*, p. 9; al-Ḥammādī, *Kashf asrār al-bāṭiniyya wa akhbār al-Qarāmiṭa*, ed. 'Izzat al-'Aṭṭār (Cairo, 1939), p. 21; Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb al-Janadī, *al-Sulūk*, ed. and tr. as 'An Account of the Karmathians of Yaman', by Henry C. Kay in *Yaman, its Early Medieval History* (London, 1892), p. 139 (Arabic pagination) (repr. Mansfield, CT, 2005).
11. Ibn Khaldūn, *Kitāb al-Ibar*, ed. Yūsuf As'ad Dāghir (Beirut, 1956–1961), vol. 4, p. 65; Ḥasan Ibrāhīm Ḥasan, *Ta'rikh al-dawla al-fāṭimiyya* (Cairo, 1958), p. 47; Samuel M. Stern, 'Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Shi'i', *EI2*, vol. 1, p. 103.

12. Claude Cahen, 'Buwayhids or Būyids' [in Iraq from 334/945 to 447/1055], *EI2*, vol. 1, p. 1350; C. Edmund Bosworth, *The New Islamic Dynasties: A Chronological and Genealogical Manual* (Edinburgh and New York, 1996), pp. 154–157.
13. For details see Poonawala, 'A Reconsideration'.
14. He left his native place Shūshtar for India and settled in Lahore where he was appointed *qāḍī* by the Mughal Emperor Akbar. He was executed by the order of Jahāngīr; see M. Hidayet Hosain, 'Nūr Allāh', *EI2*, vol. 8, p. 123 and Nūr Allāh b. 'Abd Allāh Shūshtārī, *Majāliṣ al-mu'minīn* (Tehran, 1956–1957), vol. 1, pp. 538–539.
15. Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār: al-jāmi'a li-durar akhbār al-a'imma al-aḥbār* (Tehran, 1956–1957), vol. 1, pp. 38–39.
16. Mirzā Husayn al-Nūrī, *Mustadrak al-wasā'il* (Tehran, 1900–1903), vol. 3, pp. 292, 313–322.
17. Āghā Buzurg al-Ṭihirānī, *al-Dharī'a ilā taṣānīf al-Shī'a* (Najaf and Tehran, 1936–1970), vol. 1, p. 60.
18. See my review of Jalālī's edition of Nu'mān's *Sharḥ al-akhbār* in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 118 (1998), pp. 102–104.
19. Wilferd Madelung, 'The Sources of Ismā'īlī Law', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 35, i (1976), p. 30; see also Ismail K. Poonawala, 'Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān and Ismā'īlī Jurisprudence', in Farhad Daftary, ed., *Mediaeval Ismā'īlī History and Thought* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 136.
20. *Samā'* constitutes 'hearing', and 'that which is heard' directly from a teacher. As a term in Islamic education it means a 'certificate of hearing, authorisation, or licence' to transmit from a teacher. Rudolph Sellheim, 'Samā', *EI2*, vol. 8, p. 1018.
21. *Ijāza* constitutes authorisation or licence. It means that an authorised guarantor of a text or of a whole book (whether it is his own work, or a work received through a chain of transmitters going back to the author) gives a person the authorisation to transmit it; see Georges Vajda, 'Idjāza', *EI2*, vol. 3, p. 1020.
22. *Munāwala* means that a transmitter of Prophetic traditions who has collected those traditions hands over his collection/book to his student with permission to transmit. The *munāwala* (i.e. handing over the book) is considered a superior method of transmission to that of *ijāza*; see Zamakhsharī, *Asās al-balāgha: Mu'jam fi'l-lughā wa'l-balāgha* (Beirut, 1996), s.v. n-w-l.
23. *Ṣaḥīfa* literally means a plaque or a leaf on which either the fragments of the Qur'an or the *ḥadīths* are written; see Ameer Ghédīra, 'Ṣaḥīfa', *EI2*, vol. 8, p. 834. See also Mohammad Mustafa Azmi, *Studies in Early Ḥadīth Literature: With a Critical Edition of Some Early Texts* (Beirut, 1968), pp. 188–199.
24. For a complete list of his works and the sources see Ismail K. Poonawala, *Biobibliography of Ismā'īlī Literature* (Malibu, 1977), pp. 48–68. I am presently working on a revised edition.
25. See the section entitled 'Account of those from whom knowledge should be

- acquired, and those from whom it should be loathed and whose pronouncements should be rejected', in al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *The Pillars of Islam*, vol. 1, *ʿIbādāt: Acts of Devotion and Religious Observances, Daʿā'im al-Islām of al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān*, tr. Asaf A. A. Fyze, completely revised and annotated by I. K. H. Poonawala (New Delhi, 2002), pp. 104–122.
26. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Ikhtilāfuṣūl al-madhāhib*, ed. Sham'ūn T. Lokhandwalla (Simla, 1972).
 27. Joseph Schacht, 'Aḥkām', *EI2*, vol. 1, p. 256.
 28. Norman Calder, 'Taḳlīd', *EI2*, vol. 10, p. 137.
 29. Monique Bernard, 'Idjmā', *EI2*, vol. 3, p. 1023.
 30. *Naẓar* was felt to be an innovation like *ra'y* and *qiyās* in *fiqh*. Hans Daiber, 'Naẓar', *EI2*, vol. 7, p. 1050.
 31. Monique Bernard, 'Kiyās', *EI2*, vol. 3, p. 1023.
 32. A principle used by the Mālikis and the Ḥanafis. Rudy Paret, 'Istiḥsān', *EI2*, vol. 4, p. 255.
 33. Roger Arnaldez, 'Manṭiq', *EI2*, vol. 6, p. 442.
 34. Joseph Schacht, 'Aṣḥāb al-Ra'y', *EI2*, vol. 1, p. 691.
 35. According to Idrīs 'Imād al-Dīn, it was entitled *al-Risāla al-miṣriyya fi'l-radd 'alā'l-Shāfi'i* and consisted of two large parts (*juz'ān kabīrān*); see Idrīs 'Imād al-Dīn, *ʿUyūn al-akhbār*, ed. Muḥammad al-Ya'lāwī in *Ta'riḫh al-khulafā' al-Fāṭimiyyīn bi'l-Maghrib: al-qism al-khāṣṣ min Kitāb 'Uyūn al-akhbār li'l-dā'i Idrīs 'Imād al-Dīn* (Beirut, 1985), p. 565 (henceforth referred to as Idrīs, *ʿUyūn al-akhbār*).
 36. His full name is Abu'l-'Abbās Aḥmad b. 'Umar b. Surayj al-Baghdādī. He is considered the most prominent Shāfi'i jurist after Shāfi'i's own companions and he has been ranked higher than Muzanī, a pupil of Shāfi'i, who died in Egypt in 264/878. Ibn Surayj is credited with the authorship of more than 400 titles, but none of them has survived; see Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, ed. Riḍā Tajaddud (Tehran, 1971), p. 266; tr. Bayard Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm* (New York, 1970), vol. 1, p. 523; Joseph Schacht, 'Ibn Suraydj', *EI2*, vol. 3, p. 949. This refutation is also mentioned by Idrīs, *ʿUyūn al-akhbār*, p. 565, and states that it consisted of two parts.
 37. In his edition of the *ʿUyūn al-akhbār*, Muḥammad al-Ya'lāwī has preferred the reading '*al-'Ataqī/al-'Itaqī/al-'Utaqī*', without vocalising it, while Muṣṭafā Ghālib's edition (repr. Beirut, 1984), vol. 6, p. 48, retains the same reading, without vocalising it, but replaces the letter *qāf* with *kāf*. In their edition of the *ʿUyūn* (Damascus, 2007), vol. 6, p. 64, Maḥmūd Fākhūrī and Muḥammad Kamāl have retained the reading of al-Ya'lāwī and have vocalised the word to read '*al-'Utaqī*'. They have also copied the note from al-Ya'lāwī's edition without acknowledgement. However, the credit for the correct reading '*al-'Utbī*' goes to Lokhandwalla, in his edition of Nu'mān's *Ikhtilāf uṣul al-madhāhib*, p. 41. The title of Idrīs 'Imād al-Dīn's work is generally read as *ʿUyūn al-akhbār wa funūn al-āthār fī dhikr al-nabī al-muṣṭafā al-mukhtār wa waṣīyyihi wa ālihi*. I think the correct reading

should be 'Uyūn al-akhbār wa ṣaḥīḥ al-āthār. *Funūn al-āthār* does not make any sense in this context.

38. Among al-'Utbi's teachers in al-Andalus was the famous scholar Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā al-Laythī (d. 234/848), transmitter of Mālik's *Muwatta'* in North Africa and al-Andalus. During the course of his journey to the East, he also studied with Saḥnūn (d. 240/854), the author of the *Mudawwana*, a major text responsible for the spread of Mālikī doctrine in the mediaeval Muslim West. Ana Fernández Félix, 'al-'Utbi', *EI2*, vol. 10, p. 945.
39. Samuel M. Stern, 'Abū Yazīd Makhḥad b. Kaydād al-Nukkārī', *EI2*, vol. 1, p. 163.
40. Farhat Dachraoui, 'al-Manṣūr Bi'llāh, Ismā'il', *EI2*, vol. 6, p. 434.
41. Ibn Qutayba was a well-known writer of *adab* and a Sunnī theologian. See Gérard Lecomte, *Ibn Qutayba (mort en 276/889): L'Homme, son oeuvre, ses idées* (Damascus, 1965); idem, 'Ibn Qutayba', *EI2*, vol. 3, p. 844.
42. The Arabic word *bayān* carries many nuanced meanings. It occurs on three separate occasions in the Qur'an: Q. 3:138, Q. 55:4 and Q. 75:19. It signifies the means by which one makes a thing apparent. This is of two kinds: one is circumstantial evidence, while the other is verbal evidence, either spoken or written; see Edward Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon* (Cambridge, 1984; a lithographic reproduction of the 1863 original), s.v. b-y-n.
43. MS 1164 (Ar I, ZA), Zāhid 'Alī Collection, Library of The Institute of Ismaili Studies, London. The late Dr. 'Ābid 'Alī, son of Zāhid 'Alī, gave me permission to make a copy for my own use. For its description see Delia Cortese, *Arabic Ismaili Manuscripts: The Zāhid 'Alī Collection* (London, 2003), pp. 156–157 (no. 140). There is an error in the Incipit reproduced in the catalogue. The correct Arabic word is *bi-marḍātihi* and not *bi-riḍātihi*.
44. For the Arabic text, see Appendix, n.44.
45. Ibn Qutayba, *Adab al-kātib*, ed. 'Alī Fā'ūr (3rd ed., Beirut, 2003). The title can also be translated as *The Writer's Guide*, or *Manual of Stylistic*, or *Manual for the Use of the Secretary*. It has received much attention and wide circulation from the fourth/tenth century onwards. See Ishāq Mūsā Huseini [=Ḥusaynī], *The Life and Works of Ibn Qutayba* (Beirut, 1950), pp. 77–78. It was the first comprehensive study of Ibn Qutayba in English. Lecomte, *Ibn Qutayba*, pp. 102–107; Lecomte listed the manuscript copies of *Adab al-kātib*, its commentaries, and partial translations.
46. Nu'mān, *Risāla Dhāt al-bayān*, fol. 1 (r-v), for the Arabic text see Appendix, n.46.
47. It is the plural of *kātib* which means writer, scribe, or secretary. The *kuttāb* were highly trained in the art of writing and formed a special class of scribes in charge of drafting official documents and correspondence on behalf of the ruling authorities. For more details and Arabic sources, see Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418), *Ṣubḥ al-a'shā fī ṣinā'at al-inshā'*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Shams al-Dīn (Beirut, 1987), esp. vol. 1. For various categories of the *kuttāb* see Baṭalyawsī, *al-Iqtidāb fī sharḥ Adab al-kuttāb*, ed. 'Abd Allāh al-Bustānī

(Beirut, 1901), pp. 66–82.

48. The concept of *adab* is very rich and complex. The content of *adab* or Arab *humanitas*, widened into *humanitas*, with the inclusion of non-Arab sciences during the early 'Abbāsīd period. Jāḥiẓ, Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī and Tanūkhī are described as the true creators of this enlarged conception of *adab*. From its meaning of the 'necessary general culture' expected of any man of superior education, it took on the specific meaning of 'the knowledge necessary for given offices and social functions'. Thus one could speak of an *adab al-kātib* or culture required for holding the office of secretary, etc. See Francesco Gabrieli, 'Adab', *EI2*, vol. 1, p. 175.
49. C. Edmund Bosworth, 'Administrative Literature', in Michael J. L. Young et al., ed., *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Religion, Learning and Science in the 'Abbasid Period* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 155–167.
50. Al-Maqrīẓī, *Kitāb al-Mawā'iz wa'l-i'tibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa'l-āthār*, ed. Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid (London, 2002), vol. 2, p. 336.
51. Al-Mu'izz li-Dīn Allāh, Abū Tamīm Ma'add, *Ad'iyat al-ayyām al-sab'a: Supplications for the Seven Days of the Week*, ed. Ismail K. Poonawala (Beirut, 2006), Arabic introduction.
52. Tabrīzī, *Mishkāt al-maṣābiḥ*, ed. Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī (Damascus, 1961), vol. 2, pp. 341, 343; English tr. James Robson, *Mishkat al-Masabih* (Lahore, 1975), vol. 1, pp. 800, 802. Muslim and Tirmidhī transmitted it. The variant version in Muslim states: 'The proof lies on the plaintiff and the oath must be taken by him who rejects the claim.' See also Nu'mān, *The Pillars of Islam: Laws Pertaining to Human Intercourse*, tr. Asaf A. A. Fyzee, completely revised and annotated by Ismail K. Poonawala (New Delhi, 2004), vol. 2, pp. 525–530.
53. The tradition could also be translated as: 'After a sale any profit which accrues belongs to the buyer.' The tradition reported by al-Baghawī in his *Sharḥ al-sunna*, and recounted by Tabrīzī. states: 'Makhlad b. Khufāf said: "I bought a slave and made him earn something for me, but afterwards I found a defect in him and so I brought a case regarding him before 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, who decided in my favour that I should return him, but [ruled] against me that I should return what he had earned. I therefore, went to 'Urwa and informed him, and he replied that he would go that evening to him ['Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz] and tell him he had been informed by 'Ā'isha that God's Messenger had given judgement in a similar case that any profit goes to the one who bears responsibility. 'Urwa went to him, and he gave judgment in my favour that I should receive the profit from the one for whom he had given the decision against me.'" Tabrīzī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, p. 102; English tr., vol. 1, p. 615. See also Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v. kh-r-j.
54. Tabrīzī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, p. 274; English tr., vol. 1, p. 747. Both Bukhārī and Muslim transmitted this tradition. See also Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v. j-b-r.

55. Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib reported the Prophet Muḥammad as saying: 'A pledge does not become lost to its owner when he does not redeem it in time. Any increase in its value goes to him and any loss must be borne by him.' Tabrizī comments that Shāfi'ī transmitted this *ḥadīth* in *mursal* form (i.e. one where the name of the companion of the Prophet who supposedly transmitted it does not appear in the chain of transmission). See Tabrizī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, p. 105; English tr., vol. 1, p. 617; Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v. r-h-n.
56. Tabrizī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, p. 122; English tr., vol. 1, p. 632. Tirmidhī and Abū Dāwūd transmitted it.
57. *Āriya* means a loan or the act of putting one in possession of the use of a thing without anything given in exchange. The returning of such a thing is obligatory when the thing itself remains in existence; and if has perished, then one must be responsible for its value. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v. '-w-r.
58. Tabrizī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, p. 122; English tr., vol. 1, p. 612. Abū Dāwūd's version has: '*al-āriya maḍmūna*', meaning a loan is guaranteed for its return.
59. This phrase could also be translated as: 'One who stands surety is held responsible.' Tabrizī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, p. 122; English tr., vol. 1, p. 632. Tirmidhī and Abū Dāwūd transmitted this tradition.
60. Tabrizī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, p. 156; English tr., vol. 1, p. 656. Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Māja and Tirmidhī transmitted this tradition.
61. Tabrizī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, pp. 297-298; English tr., vol. 1, p. 766. Mālik, Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Māja, Tirmidhī, Nasā'ī and Dārimī transmitted this tradition.
62. Nu'mān, *Pillars*, vol. 2, p. 415.
63. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v. gh-l-q.
64. Tabrizī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, pp. 84-85; English tr., vol. 1, pp. 600-601. Both Bukhārī and Muslim transmitted this tradition. Nu'mān, *Pillars*, vol. 2, pp. 31-32.
65. Tabrizī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, p. 124; English tr., vol. 1, p. 633. Bukhārī transmitted this tradition.
66. Mālik b. Anas, *Kitāb al-Muwatta'*, ed. Fārūq Sa'd (Beirut, 1981), p. 483; see also Arent J. Wensinck, *Concordance et indices de la tradition musulmane* (Leiden, 1962), s.v. ṭ-l-q.
67. Nu'mān, *Pillars*, vol. 2, p. 13. According to both Bukhārī and Muslim, *muzābana* is forbidden.
68. Muslim transmits the whole tradition cited above. Tabrizī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, pp. 92-93; English tr., vol. 1, pp. 607-608.
69. Tabrizī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, pp. 98-99; Robson, English tr., vol. 1, p. 612, adds: 'An article belongs to the seller until the transaction is complete. So long as it is still in his possession he is the one who gains any profit on it or bears any loss. The buyer cannot claim profit till he is in possession of the article.' Tirmidhī, Abū Dāwūd and Nasā'ī transmitted this tradition.
70. Tabrizī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, p. 98; English tr., vol. 1, p. 612. Mālik, Tirmidhī, Abū Dāwūd and Nasā'ī transmitted this tradition.

71. Tabrizī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, p. 98; English tr., vol. 1, p. 612. Tirmidhī, Abū Dāwūd and Nasā'ī transmitted this tradition. See also Nu'mān, *Pillars*, vol. 2, p. 19.
72. Nu'mān, *Pillars*, vol. 2, p. 20; Tabrizī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, p. 98; English tr., vol. 1, p. 612. Tirmidhī, Abū Dāwūd and Nasā'ī transmitted this tradition.
73. *Bay' al-gharar* means the sale of hazard, that which is unknown whether the thing will be delivered or not, such as the sale of fish in water. Nu'mān, *Pillars*, vol. 2, p. 9; Tabrizī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, p. 98; English tr., vol. 1, p. 611. Abū Dāwūd transmitted it.
74. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v. r-w-ḍ.
75. Nu'mān, *Pillars*, vol. 2, p. 20; Tabrizī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, p. 97; Robson, English tr., vol. 1, p. 611, adds: 'This is allowing a man, who cannot pay a debt when it is due, to have an extension of the period in return for an additional sum; or when a man agrees to sell an article which someone owes him for money which someone else owes to the buyer.' Dāraqūṭnī transmitted this tradition.
76. Nu'mān, *Pillars*, vol. 2, p. 19; Tabrizī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, p. 94; English tr., vol. 1, p. 608. Both Bukhārī and Muslim transmitted this tradition.
77. Nu'mān, *R. Dhāt al-bayān*, fols 1 (v)-2 (r-v); for the Arabic text see Appendix, n.77. The citation from Ibn Qutayba concides with the printed edition of *Adab al-kātib*, pp. 15-16, with minor variants. Additions within square brackets both in the Arabic text and the English translation are from the printed edition of *Adab al-kātib*.
78. Ibn Qutayba composed *Adab al-kātib* when he was about 23 years old. See Huseini, *Life and Works*, p. 40, and Lecomte, *Ibn Qutayba*, pp. 32-33, 85-86. However, al-Sayyid Aḥmad Ṣaqr, editor of Ibn Qutayba's *Ta'wīl mushkil al-Qur'ān* (3rd. ed., Beirut, 1981), pp. 40-42, contends that although the *Adab al-kātib* was dedicated to the vizier Abū'l-Ḥasan 'Ubayd Allāh b. Khāqān, it was composed during the reign of al-Mu'tamid, who ascended to the caliphate in 256/870. He further adds that the Tahirids were the initial patrons of Ibn Qutayba. It suffices to say that this controversy is beyond the limits of the present study. 'Abd al-Ḥamid al-Jindī, *Ibn Qutayba: al-ālim, al-nāqid, al-adīb* (Cairo, 1963), pp. 147-148, enumerates *Adab al-kātib* as the tenth book (after *Kitāb al-Shi'r wa'l-shu'arā'* and before *Kitāb 'Uyūn al-akhbār*) compiled by Ibn Qutayba. However, al-Jindī's chronology of Ibn Qutayba's works is neither properly documented by internal evidence nor supported by independent external witness. The book was originally submitted as a Ph.D. dissertation in Egypt in 1954. It should be stated in fairness that the author defends Ibn Qutayba's religious views as an upholder of the tenets of *ahl al-sunna wa'l-jamā'a*. His treatment of Ibn Qutayba's literary aspects, on the other hand, is quite balanced.
79. This point is stressed by one of the commentators of *Adab al-kātib*, Baṭalyawsi, *al-Iqtidāb*, p. 67.
80. It deals with the correct use of language, words, phrases and idioms. It covers

a wide range of subjects, such as animals, birds, insects, plants, human beings, food, drink, dress, weaponry, etc. At times it includes instructions for their proper use.

81. It contains rules of orthography and morphology, such as the omission of certain letters, the usage of some particles, etc.
82. Reynold A. Nicholson, *A Literary History of the Arabs* (Cambridge, 1953), p. 346; Huseini, *Life and Works*, p. 79; Lecomte, *Ibn Qutayba*, p. 106.
83. Ibn Qutayba, *Uyūn al-akhbār*, ed. Aḥmad Zakī al-'Adawī (Beirut, n.d.; reprint of Cairo, 1925), vol. 1, pp. ṭā', yā'. For the Arabic text of what the author's remarks in the introduction see Appendix, n:83.
84. Ibn Qutayba's disgust is not only with the secretaries, but also with the educated class of his time which is quite apparent from the introduction. For the Arabic text of his remarks after the *basmala* and *ḥamdala*, see Appendix, n.84.
85. This refers to the work by Ibn al-Sikkīt (d. ca. 244/858), a celebrated Arabic philologist and lexicographer, *Iṣlāḥ al-manṭiq* ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir and 'Abd al-Salām M. Hārūn (Cairo, 1949); see Ed(s), 'Ibn al-Sikkīt', *EI2*, vol. 3, p. 940.
86. Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, vol. 3, p. 43; English tr., vol. 2, p. 23; for the Arabic text see Appendix, n.86.
87. In *al-Iqtidāb*, Baṭalyawṣī explained the difficulties in Ibn Qutayba's book in the most meticulous manner and pointed out the mistakes into which the author fell. In all, there were no less than ten commentaries written on *Adab al-kātib*. See Huseini, *Life and Works*, pp. 77–78, and Aḥmad Ṣaqr's introduction to Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wīl mushkil al-Qur'ān*, pp. 21–23; Lecomte, *Ibn Qutayba*, pp. 104–106; see Évariste Lévi-Provençal, 'al-Baṭalyawṣī', *EI2*, vol. 1, p. 1092.
88. Joseph Schacht, 'Ibn Rāḥwayh', *EI2*, vol. 3, p. 902.
89. Bernhard Lewin, 'Abū Ḥātim al-Sidjistānī', *EI2*, vol. 1, p. 125.
90. Abū Sa'īd 'Abd al-Malik b. Qurayb al-Aṣma'ī (d. 213/828) was a philologist; see Bernhard Lewin, 'al-Aṣma'ī', *EI2*, vol. 1, p. 717.
91. Abū 'Ubayda Ma'mar b. al-Muthannā al-Taymī (d. 209/824–825) was a philologist; see Hamilton A. R. Gibb, 'Abū 'Ubayda', *EI2*, vol. 1, p. 158.
92. For a critical evaluation of Ibn Qutayba's life and thought see Huseini, *Life and Works*, and Gérard Lecomte, *Ibn Qutayba*.
93. Gérard Lecomte, 'Ibn Qutayba', *EI2*, vol. 3, p. 844.
94. Nu'mān, *R. Dhāt al-bayān*, fol. 2v; for Arabic see Appendix, n.94.
95. A contemptuous term used by Nu'mān and other Ismaili authors for the *aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth*, the anthropomorphists; see Ed(s), 'Hashwiyya', *EI2*, vol. 3, p. 269.
96. Nu'mān, *R. Dhāt al-bayān*, fol. 2v. for Arabic see Appendix, n.96.
97. Nu'mān, *R. Dhāt al-bayān*, fols 2v–3r; for Arabic see Appendix, n.97.
98. Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb al-Ma'ārif*, ed. Tharwat 'Ukāsha (2nd ed., Cairo, 1969), p. 213. for Arabic see Appendix, n.98.

99. Ibid., p. 351; for Arabic see Appendix, n.99.
100. Abu'l-Faraj al-Isfahānī, *Maqātil al-Tālibiyyīn* (2nd ed., Najaf, 1965), p. 79.
101. Ibn Qutayba, *al-Ikhtilāf fi'l-lafz wa'l-radd 'alā al-jahmiyya wa'l-mushabbīha*, ed. Maḥmūd 'Umar b. Abī 'Umar (Riyadh, 1991), p. 54. For Arabic see Appendix, n.101.
102. Huseini, *Life and Works*, pp. 17, 89; see also Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wīl mukhtalaḥ al-ḥadīth*, ed. Ismā'īl al-Khaṭīb al-Salāfi (Cairo, 1908), pp. 192–193, 319.
103. Muḥammad Zubayr Ṣiddīqī, *Hadīth Literature: Its Origin, Development, Special Features and Criticism* (Calcutta, 1961), pp. 116–118. Ibn Qutayba had his admirers as well as detractors. Aḥmad Ṣaqr, in his edition Ibn Qutayba's *Ta'wīl mushkil al-Qur'ān* (pp. 37–59), devoted more than twenty pages to this discussion defending the author.
104. For Arabic see Appendix, n.104; as cited by Tharwat 'Ukāsha in the Introduction to his edition of Ibn Qutayba's *al-Ma'ārif*, p. 58, and by Aḥmad Zakī al-'Adawī, in his edition of Ibn Qutayba's *'Uyūn al-akḥbār*, vol. 4, p. 17. In *Ta'wīl mukhtalaḥ al-ḥadīth*, pp. 258–284, Ibn Qutayba tries to defend himself and his partisans, the traditionists (*aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth*), against the charge of *tashbīh* (anthropomorphism or ascribing all human attributes to God); he argues that *ru'ya* (vision) means *'ilm* (knowledge), only to affirm later that God will be seen in the Afterlife. Ibn Qutayba's defenders point out that he composed a treatise against the *mushabbīha* (the proponents of *tashbīh*). While this is indeed the case, even there he affirms the Qur'anic use of symbolic anthropological language in a way similar to al-Ash'arī's *bi-lā kayf* theory (without qualifying God in a way to be applied to His creation). For the Arabic text of Ibn Qutayba, *al-Ikhtilāf fi'l-lafz wa'l-radd 'alā'l-jahmiyya wa'l-mushabbīha*, p. 53, see Appendix, n.104. Lecomte, *Ibn Qutayba*, p. 220, has summed up Ibn Qutayba's position on this issue precisely: 'Le mot *ṣifa* lui-même ne figure dans les ouvrages d'Ibn Qutayba que très exceptionnellement. Encore est-il évident qu'il ne lui donne que plus rarement encore une valeur technique. Il le prend normalement dans son sens courant de "qualificatif," sauf peut-être dans *Lafz* où le mot *ṣifāt* est appliqué à des *maṣdar*-s (*qudra*, *ḡalāl*, *'awf*...) ce qui représente une démarche confinant déjà au raisonnement théologique. Il est vrai que ce passage réfute précisément l'*ibtāl al-ṣifāt*, c'est-à-dire le rejet des attributs professé par les Mu'tazilites et les Ḡahmiyya.' For *ru'ya* and *tashbīh* see Daniel Gimaret, 'Ru'yat Allāh', *EI2*, vol. 8, p. 649 and Joseph van Ess, 'Tashbih wa-Tanzih', *EI2*, vol. 10, p. 341.
105. On him see James Robson, 'al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī', *EI2*, vol. 3, p. 82.
106. Aḥmad Zakī al-'Adawī's introduction to Ibn Qutayba, *'Uyūn al-akḥbār*, vol. 4, p. 17. For Arabic see Appendix, n.106.
107. Huseini, *Life and Works*, pp. 29–39, 89, states that many of the traditions Ibn Qutayba received from his teachers were false, but that he accepted them without question. See also Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wīl mukhtalaḥ al-ḥadīth*.
108. James Robson, 'al-Bayhaqī', *EI2*, vol. 1, p. 1130.

109. The Karrāmiyya was a sect that flourished from the third/ninth century until the era of the Mongol invasions, especially in the Iranian regions. They were literalists and anthropomorphists. See C. Edmund Bosworth, 'Karrāmiyya', *EI2*, vol. 4, p. 667. As cited by Tharwat 'Ukāsha in the Introduction to his edition of Ibn Qutayba's *al-Ma'ārif*, p. 58.
110. For the Arabic text see Appendix, n.110. See also Aḥmad Zakī al-'Adawī's introduction to his edition of Ibn Qutayba's *Uyūn al-akhbār*, vol. 4, p. 17. Of course, there were others who defended Ibn Qutayba, such as Ibn Taymiyya and al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī.
111. Gautier H. A. Juynboll, 'Sunna', *EI2*, vol. 9, p. 878. "
112. This rule is complicated even when a buyer disagrees with the vendor. For details see Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Naṣr al-Marwazī, *Ikhtilāf al-fuqahā'*, ed. Muḥammad Ṭāhir Ḥakīm (Riyadh, 2000), pp. 536–539.
113. *Hadd* (pl. *ḥudūd*) has become the technical term for the punishments of certain acts which have been forbidden or placed under sanction with fixed punishments in the Qur'an, such as theft, highway robbery, adultery, defamation, wine drinking, apostasy and rebellion; see Carra de Vaux and Joseph Schacht, 'Hadd', *EI2*, vol. 3, p. 20.
114. These are discretionary punishments. Neither the Qur'an nor the *sunna* prescribe a specific penalty for these offences, hence it is left to the discretion of the judge. Willi Heffening and Izzi Dien, 'Ta'zīr', *EI2*, vol. 10, p. 405.
115. Nu'mān, *Pillars*, vol. 2, p. 420; Ibn Rushd, *Bidāyat al-mujtahid wa-nihāyat al-muqtaṣid*, ed. Muḥammad al-Amad (Beirut, 1996), vol. 2, p. 421; English tr. Imran Ahsan Khan Nyazee, *The Distinguished Jurist's Primer* (Reading, 2000), vol. 2, pp. 512–513.
116. Johannes Pedersen and Yvon Linant de Bellefonds, 'Ḳasam', *EI2*, vol. 4, p. 687.
117. Tabrīzī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, pp. 279–280; English tr., vol. 1, p. 751; Bukhārī, Muslim and Abū Dāwūd transmitted this tradition. All these sources state that the Messenger of God himself paid the blood money. Nu'mān, *Pillars*, vol. 2, pp. 427–428; here Nu'mān also states that the Messenger of God gave the blood money from his own property. For more details see Ibn Rushd, *Bidāyat al-mujtahid*, vol. 2, pp. 423–427; English tr., vol. 2, pp. 515–521.
118. Of course, there is no unanimity as to the identity of 'those of you, who have authority (*ulu'l-amr minkum*)'. According to the Shi'is they are the imams; see Nu'mān, *Pillars*, vol. 1, p. 27; additional sources are indicated there.
119. For a detailed discussion of these matters see 'The Book of *Aqdiyya* (Judgments)', in Ibn Rushd, *Bidāyat al-mujtahid*, vol. 2, pp. 455–470; English tr., vol. 2, pp. 553–572. 'The Book of Judgments' deals with the following issues: identification of persons whose judgements are permitted; identification of matters in which judgement is valid; identification of the basis for the judgement (it is subdivided into (i) testimony, (ii) oaths, (iii) defendant's refusal to an oath); the method of rendering judgement; and the time of rendering judgement.

120. Nu'mān, *Kitāb al-Īdāh*, chapter on *ṣalāt*, ed. Muḥammad Kāzim Raḥmatī in *Mirāth-i ḥadīth-i Shi'a*, ed. Mahdī Mīhrizī and 'Alī Ṣadrā'i Khū'i (Qumm, 2003), vol. 10, pp. 35–218.
121. Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wīl mushkil al-Qur'ān*, pp. 441–442.
122. Khalīl b. Aḥmad, *Kitāb al-'Ayn*, ed. Dāwūd Sallūm et al. (Beirut, 2004), p. 679.
123. Nu'mān, *Kitāb al-Majālis wa'l-musāyarāt*, ed. al-Ḥabīb al-Faqī, et al. (Tunis, 1978), pp. 159–164.
124. Huseini, *Life and Works*, p. 83.
125. Lecomte, *Ibn Qutayba*, pp. 421–477.
126. *Ibid.*, pp. 476–477.
127. This article was written and completed in June 2008.

APPENDIX

n. 44	بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم. الحمد لله رب العالمين، وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وآله الأكرمين.
colophon	قد وقع الفراغ من هذه النسخة الشريفة بعون الله وحسن توفيقه، ومادة وليه في أرضه، سلام الله عليه، وداعيه داعي الدعاة، ومنبع البركات، الشيخ محمد عزّ الهدى والدين، خلد الله بقاءه أيد الأبدين ودهر الداهرين بمحمد وآله أجمعين، في اليوم الثالث عشر من شهر رجب الأصب من سنة ١٢٣٣ في درس الداعي المذكور، حفظه الله تعالى، في بلدة سورت بندر، حفظها الله تعالى.
n. 46	أسعدك الله بطاعته، واستعملك بمرضاته، ووفّقك الله لما يُرضيك ويُرضي وليه، وأعانتك على ما استكفأك، وأقامك له. كنت أحضرتني، وأحضرك الله التوفيق، كتاب عبد الله بن مسلم بن قتيبة الذي ألقه في تقويم اللسان واليد والإعراب، وسمّاه كتاب أدب الكاتب [كما صحّ زاهد علي في الحاشية، وفي الأصل: آداب الكتاب]، وذكرت لي أنك أخذت الأمراء السادة، وُلد أمير المؤمنين مولانا وسيدنا صلوات الله عليه بحفظه لما فيه من فنون العلم والمعرفة، وأثبتّ لهم مجمله، وأوضحت لهم مشكله، وفتحت لهم مقفله ليفهموه، وليعلموا علم ما فيه. وإنك وقفت منه على فصلٍ فيه ذكرُ جمل من القول في الفقه. سألتني عن معانيها لتبين لهم ذلك فيما أبتئه، وتثبتّ لهم فيما أثبتّه حَسَبَما صنعتُ من ذلك فيما وقفتُ عليه وعرفته. وقرأت عليّ الفصل من الكتاب، وأجبتك عمّا سألت عنه من بيان ما فيه، وشرحتُ لك معانيه، وأوقفتك على الصحيح من غير الصحيح منه. فسألت بسط ذلك لك في كتاب ليكون أثبت للحفظ، وأوضح في البيان، وأسلم من الزيادة والنقصان. فرأيتُ بسط ذلك كما سألت ليكون أبلغ في معرفة ما يستفيدة الأمراء.

n. 77	ذكر ابن قتيبة في هذا الكتاب ما ينبغي لطالب العلم والأدب أن يعلمه، ويأخذ نفسه بحفظه وتعلّمه. فذكر وجوهاً من العلوم، ثم قال: ولا بُدَّ له [- مع ذلك -] من النظر في جُمَلِ الفقه، ومعرفة أصوله من حديث رسول الله صَلَّى الله عليه وعلى آله [وسلم] وصحابته، كقوله: البَيِّنَةُ عَلَى الْمُدَّعِي وَالْيَمِينُ عَلَى الْمُدَّعَى عَلَيْهِ؛ وَالْخَرَجُ بِالضَّمَانِ؛ وَجَرْحُ الْعَجَمَاءِ جُبَارٌ؛ وَلَا يَغْلُقُ الرَّهْنُ؛ وَالْمَنْحَةُ مَرْدُودَةٌ؛ الْعَارِيَّةُ مُؤَدَّاةٌ؛ وَالزَّرْعُ غَارِمٌ؛ وَلَا وَصِيَّةٌ لَوَارِثٍ؛ وَلَا قَطْعٌ فِي ثَمَرٍ وَلَا كَثْرٍ؛ وَلَا قَوْدٌ إِلَّا بِحَدِيدَةٍ؛ وَالْمَرْأَةُ تُعَاقِلُ الرَّجُلَ إِلَى ثُلْثِ [الدية] دَيْتِهَا؛ وَلَا تَعْقِلُ الْعَاقِلَةُ عَمْدًا، وَلَا عَبْدًا، وَلَا صِلْحًا، وَلَا اعْتِرَافًا؛ وَلَا طَلَاقٌ فِي إِغْلَاقٍ؛ وَالْيَبْعَانُ بِالْخِيَارِ مَا لَمْ يَتَفَرَّقَا؛ وَالْجَارُ أَحَقُّ بِصَقْبِهِ؛ وَالطَّلَاقُ بِالرِّجَالِ؛ وَالْعِدَّةُ بِالنِّسَاءِ؛ وَكَتْهِهِ فِي الْبَيْعِ عَنْ الْمُخَابَرَةِ، وَالْمُحَاقَلَةُ، وَالْمُزَابَنَةُ، وَالْمُعَاوَمَةُ، [وَالثَّنْيَا]؛ وَعَنْ رِبْحٍ مَا لَمْ يُضْمَنْ؛ وَعَنْ بَيْعٍ مَا لَمْ يُقْبَضْ؛ وَعَنْ بَيْعَتَيْنِ فِي بَيْعَةٍ؛ وَعَنْ الشَّرْطَيْنِ [شرطين] فِي بَيْعٍ؛ وَعَنْ بَيْعٍ وَسَلْفٍ؛ وَعَنْ بَيْعِ الْغَرَرِ؛ وَعَنْ بَيْعِ الْمُوَاصَفَةِ؛ وَعَنْ الْكَالِيَةِ بِالْكَالِيَةِ؛ وَعَنْ تَلَقِّي الرُّكْبَانِ، [فِي أَشْبَاهِ لِهَذَا كَثِيرَةٌ، إِذَا هُوَ حَفَظَهَا، وَتَفَهَّمْ مَعَانِيهَا وَتَدَبَّرَهَا، أَغْنَتْهُ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَنْ كَثِيرٍ مِنْ إِطَالَةِ الْفُقَهَاءِ].
n. 83	وَإِنِّي كُنْتُ تَكَلَّفْتُ لِمُغْفَلِ التَّادِيْبِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ كِتَابًا فِي الْمَعْرِفَةِ وَفِي تَقْوِيمِ اللِّسَانِ وَالْيَدِ... وَشَرَطْتُ عَلَيْهِ مَعَ تَعَلُّمِ ذَلِكَ تَحْفَظَ عَيُونَ الْحَدِيثِ لِيُدْخِلَهَا فِي تَضَاعِيفِ سَطُورِهِ مِمَثَّلًا إِذَا كَاتَبَ، وَيَسْتَعِينُ بِمَا فِيهَا مِنْ مَعْنَى لَطِيفٍ، وَلَفْظٍ خَفِيفٍ حَسَنِ، إِذَا حَاوَرَ.
n. 84	فَإِنِّي رَأَيْتُ أَكْثَرَ أَهْلِ زَمَانِنَا هَذَا عَنْ سَبِيلِ الْأَدَبِ نَاكِيبِينَ، وَمِنْ أَسْمِهِ مُتَطَيِّرِينَ، وَأَوَّلُهُ كَارِهِينَ. أَمَّا النَّاشِئُ مِنْهُمْ فَرَاغَتْ عَنْ التَّعْلِيمِ، وَالشَّادِي تَارِكٌ لِلزَّادِيادِ، وَالْمَتَادِبُ فِي عَنَفْوَانِ الشَّبَابِ نَاسٍ أَوْ مُتَنَاسٍ... فَالْعُلَمَاءُ مَغْمُورُونَ، وَبِكُرَّةِ الْجَهْلِ مَقْمُوعُونَ حِينَ خَوَى نَجْمُ الْخَيْرِ، وَكَسَدَتْ سَوْقُ الْبَرِّ، وَبَارَتْ بِضَائِعُ أَهْلِهِ، وَصَارَ الْعِلْمُ عَارًا عَلَى صَاحِبِهِ، وَالْفَضْلُ نَقْصًا...

n. 86	والناس يقولون: إِنَّ أَكْثَرَ أَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ: إِنَّ أَدَبَ الْكَاتِبِ خُطْبَةٌ بِلاَ كِتَابٍ، وَإِصْلَاحُ الْمُنْطَقِ كِتَابٌ بِلاَ خُطْبَةٍ. وَهَذَا فِيهِ نَوْعٌ تَعْصَّبَ عَلَيْهِ، فَإِنَّ أَدَبَ الْكَاتِبِ قَدْ حَوَى مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ، وَهُوَ مَفْنَنٌ، وَمَا أَظَنَّ حَمَلَهُمْ عَلَى هَذَا الْقَوْلِ إِلَّا أَنْ الْخُطْبَةُ طَوِيلَةٌ.
n. 94	إِنَّ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مُسْلِمٍ بَنَ قُتَيْبَةَ وَإِنْ كَانَ عِنْدَ أَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ بِاللِّسَانِ ثِقَةً فِيمَا رَوَاهُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ عَنْ الْمُتَقَدِّمِينَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ بِهِ، وَحَسَنَ التَّأْلِيفِ فِيمَا جَمَعَهُ وَأَلَّفَهُ مِنْهُ، فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ بِالثَّقَةِ وَلَا بِالْمَأْمُونِ عِنْدَ الْعُلَمَاءِ بِالْفَقْهِ، وَلَا هُوَ مِنْ أَهْلِهِ.
n. 96	وَهُوَ مَعَ ذَلِكَ عَدُوٌّ مِنْ أَعْدَاءِ اللَّهِ، وَأَعْدَاءُ أَوْلِيَائِهِ، شَدِيدُ النِّصْبِ وَالطَّعْنِ عَلَى الْحَقِّ وَأَهْلِهِ، حَشَوِيٌّ عَامِيٌّ يَذْهَبُ إِلَى التَّشْبِيهِ، وَيُدْفَعُ إِمَامَةَ أَهْلِ بَيْتِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَيْهِمْ، وَيُثَبِّتُ إِمَامَةَ أَعْدَائِهِمْ.
n. 97	وَيُخْرِجُ فِي ذَلِكَ عَنْ حُدُودِ أَكْثَرِ الْعَامَّةِ، حَتَّى أَنَّهُ ذَكَرَ فِي كِتَابِهِ الَّذِي سَمَّاهُ كِتَابَ الْمَعَارِفِ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ صَلَوَاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمَا، فَقَالَ: وَأَمَّا حُسَيْنٌ، فَكَانَ يُكْنَى أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، خَرَجَ عَلَى يَزِيدَ، فَوَجَّهَ إِلَيْهِ عُبَيْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ زِيَادٍ عُمَرَ بْنَ سَعْدٍ بَنَ أَبِي وَقَّاصٍ، فَقَتَلَهُ سَنَانُ بْنُ قَيْسٍ النَّخْعِيُّ.
n. 98	وَأَمَّا الْحُسَيْنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ، فَكَانَ يُكْنَى: أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، وَخَرَجَ يُرِيدُ الْكُوفَةَ، فَوَجَّهَ إِلَيْهِ عُبَيْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ زِيَادٍ عُمَرَ بْنَ سَعْدٍ بَنَ أَبِي وَقَّاصٍ، فَقَتَلَهُ سَنَانُ بْنُ أَبِي أَنْسٍ النَّخْعِيُّ سَنَةَ إِحْدَى وَسِتِّينَ، يَوْمَ عَاشُورَاءَ.
n. 99	وَأَمَّا يَزِيدُ بْنُ مَعَاوِيَةَ، فَيُكْنَى أَبَا خَالِدٍ، وَلَّى الْخِلَافَةَ، وَأَقْبَلَ الْحُسَيْنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ، رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُمَا، يُرِيدُ الْكُوفَةَ، وَعَلَيْهَا عُبَيْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ زِيَادٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ يَزِيدَ، فَوَجَّهَ إِلَيْهِ عُبَيْدُ اللَّهِ عُمَرَ بْنَ سَعْدٍ بَنَ أَبِي وَقَّاصٍ، فَقَاتَلَهُ، فَقَتَلَ الْحُسَيْنُ، رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَرِضْوَانَهُ.

n. 101	وأخرجوه [عثمان] بجهلهم من أئمة الهدى إلى جملة أئمة الفتن، ولم يوجبوا له اسم الخلافة لاختلاف الناس عليه، وأوجبوا ليزيد بن معاوية لإجماع الناس عليه... وجعلوا ابنه الحسين عليه السلام خارجياً... حلال الدم لقول النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: من خرج على أمتي وهم جميع فاقتلوه كأننا من كان.
n. 104	وكان ابن قتيبة يميل إلى التشبيه: منحرفاً عن العترة، كلامه يدلّ عليه. [مجمل اعتقاد السلف في الصفات]. وعدل القول في هذه الأخبار أن نؤمن بما صحّ منها بنقل الثقات لها، فنؤمن بالرؤية والتجلي، وأنه يعجب وينزل إلى السماء الدنيا، وأنه على العرش استوى، وبالنفس واليدين من غير أن نقول في ذلك بكيفية أو حدّ أو أن نقيس على ما جاء ما لم يأت. فنرجو أن نكون في ذلك القول والعقد على سبيل النجاة غداً، إن شاء الله تعالى.
n. 106	ونقل السيوطي والداودي عن الحاكم [النيسابوري] قوله: أجمعت الأئمة على أنه [أي ابن قتيبة] كذاب.
n. 110	كان ابن قتيبة يرى رأي الكرامية، ليس بين المشبهة والكرامية كبير فرق. فالكرامية هم أتباع محمد بن كرام، وكان يذهب إلى التجسيم والتشبيه، وينعى على عليّ صبره على ما جرى لعثمان.

The *Risāla al-Mudhhiba* Attributed to al-Qāḍī al-Nu‘mān: Important Evidence for the Adoption of Neoplatonism by Fatimid Ismailism at the Time of al-Mu‘izz?

Daniel De Smet

The *Risāla al-Mudhhiba*, a problematic work

In 1956 ‘Arif Tāmīr (1921–1998), a member of the small Muḥammad-Shāhī (or Ja‘farī) Nizārī community in Syria,¹ published a collection of five Ismaili treatises in Salamiyya bearing the title *Khams rasā’il Ismā‘īliyya*. Among them one finds the *Risāla al-Mudhhiba*, whose author is said to be the famous al-Qāḍī al-Nu‘mān (d. 363/974).²

Now, no preserved work by al-Nu‘mān refers to this text nor – to my knowledge at least – has it ever been cited by later Ismaili authors. Moreover, it does not seem to have been transmitted by the Bohras: it is not listed in the *Fihrist* by al-Majdū‘ (d. ca. 1184/1771) and no manuscript of this work has been catalogued in a Ṭayyibī library.³ Furthermore, the contents of the epistle prove to be unlike the issues of law that so typify most of al-Nu‘mān’s work. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that serious doubts have been expressed regarding its attribution to him.⁴

Nevertheless, eminent specialists of Ismailism such as Wilferd Madelung, Heinz Halm, Farhad Daftary and, with much less reserve, Yves Marquet (who at no point seems to have questioned its authenticity) have drawn extensively – though with great care – from this treatise. The interest of these scholars in the *Mudhhiba* stems partly from the question of the introduction of Neoplatonic philosophy into what might be called ‘western’ Fatimid Ismailism (the *da‘wa* in North Africa and Egypt) in the reign of al-Mu‘izz.

Around 1960, on the basis of newly edited texts, Samuel Miklos Stern and Wilferd Madelung developed a theory that maintained that Neoplatonism was adopted in Iran and Central Asia from the beginning