

Kashī, Kulīnī and Ibn Bābūya (*K. at-Tawhīd*) very often refer to *zindīqs*. There is even a well-known tradition, touching on dogmatic matters, in the form of a real or imaginary dispute between a heretic and Imam Ja'far concerning the proofs of the existence of God,—it is even called "*ḥadīthū'z-zindīq*", and is quoted in *al-Kāfī* and *K. at-Tawhīd* of Ibn Bābūya; references to it reappear now and then. It is related by Hishām b. al-Ḥakam, that specialist on heretics and theological questions. The most interesting portion is its introduction: "There was in Miṣr (Egypt, or its capital)²³ a *zindīq*, Abū 'Abdī'l-lāh 'Abdu'l-Mālik by name, whom the news about the great wisdom of Imam Ja'far reached. (Being anxious to see the Imam) the *zindīq* went to Medina, and, not finding the Imam there, for he was at the time in Mekka, he travelled to the holy city. He found the Imam performing the ceremony of the *ṭawāf*, or circumambulation".

In the story we see that, firstly, the heretic bears an Arab name; secondly, he moves freely in Medina and Mekka, and, thirdly, that the Imam politely addresses him as "the brother of the people of Egypt" (*yā akhā ahl Miṣr*). It looks as if he was an Arab Christian, probably belonging to one of the gnostic sects.

Ibn Bābūya in his *K. at-Tawhīd* (214) shows quite a clear idea of the doctrines of Mani and "Ibn Dayṣān", as he correctly calls him. He mentions them together, referring to "the nonsense which they talk about the mixing (of light and darkness), and which the Majūs, *i.e.*, Zoroastrians, approach in their theories of Ahrīman".²⁴ Thus, by calling Abū Shākīr a *zindīq*, he could not pretend to take him for a harmless "free-thinker", because he knew that the heretic was a Bardesanian, and the doctrine of "Ibn Dayṣān" was closely related to that of Mani.

As far as it is possible to ascertain, the names of Abū Shākīr ad-Dayṣānī and 'Abdu'l-lāh ad-Dayṣānī are the only Dayṣānite names mentioned both in *al-Kāfī* and *K. at-Tawhīd* of Ibn Bābūya. It is quite possible, however, that in reality both these names refer to one and the same person, Abū Shākīr 'Abdu'l-lāh ad-Dayṣānī, and the fact that they appear as two different names depends on their being quoted in this or that form in different traditions. It would be strange that both these Dayṣānites would have been so uniformly interested in theological matters. As we have seen above, ar-Riḍā describes Hishām b. al-Ḥakam as a disciple of Abū Shākīr, the *zindīq*, who apparently was converted

and later on treated as one of the *mutakallimīn* (suspected, according to Ibn Nadīm). Of course, Abū Shākīr was only his *kunya*, and it is quite possible that his real name was 'Abdu'l-lāh.

The relation of Hishām b. al-Ḥakam with a Dayṣānite or Dayṣānites, is a matter worthy of note because it provides a documentary proof of a connection between early Shi'ism and gnostic circles. Hishām b. al-Ḥakam (whom Shahrastānī²⁵, apparently wrongly, describes as a heretic and the founder of a heretical sect), was a prosperous merchant in Kūfa, a *maḥlā* of Banū Kinda (although he was actually connected with and resided amongst Banū Shaybān; his shop was near Bābu'l-Karkh).²⁶ Mūsā b. Ja'far lent him a capital (*ra'su'l-māl*), of 50,000 dirhems. In his youth he was a brilliant and enthusiastic student, follower of Imam Ja'far, taking special interest in philosophical and theological problems. These interests he apparently did not relinquish in the later period of his life. Najāshī (304-305) mentions many books composed by him; amongst these controversy plays a prominent part: refutation of the doctrines of dualists (Manichees?), of *zindīqs* (gnostics?), of the Mu'tazilites, of Aristotle, of Hishām al-Jawālīqī, of the "naturalists", etc. All these works are apparently lost, but it looks as if the numerous traditions related by later compilers on his authority are mostly quoted from his compositions because all such traditions are long, and exhibit signs of literary, not oral, origin. The severe opinion concerning his orthodoxy expressed by ar-Riḍā in the tradition mentioned above, may perhaps be the result not so much of really heterodox inclinations on his part as of some misunderstanding in financial relations. Such things did happen.

It appears that his position was more important in Kūfa than that of an ordinary merchant. He was on excellent terms with the Barmakid family, and obviously their protection permitted him to satisfy his curiosity by keeping in contact with various non-Muslim elements, Nestorians, Jews, Dayṣānites, *zindīqs*, etc., who so often figure in the traditions related by him. His position and learning undoubtedly provoked envy in certain circles: Kashī (173-176) refers to allegations as to his complicity in the misfortunes which befell Mūsā b. Ja'far. In 199/815 for some reason he undertook a journey to Baghdad and died there in the same year.²⁷

Such explicit and indisputable proof of the fact that an important representative of Shi'ite circles under Imam Ja'far and his successors was in contact with gnostics and cognate communities, serving even as an intermediary between these, touches a matter of outstanding importance in the history of Shi'ism and Sufism. Hishām was, surely, not alone in his position, and there were probably many persons of inferior talent and standing who, nevertheless, also served as instruments of the same cultural process.

In his extremely important works, "Der Ursprung des Islams und das Christentum"²⁸ and "Mohammad, the Man and his Faith"²⁹, the late Tor Andrae has shown to what extent Islam in its original form depended on the ideas of the Syrian church. The point at which such ideas mostly penetrated the Arabian masses was Hīra, the capital of the Lakhmid principality, which after the beginning of the Arab conquests was replaced by Kūfa, three miles to the North. One might expect that for a long period of time, before the whole of the local population embraced Islam, such influences continued at work.

The reference to the contact between Shi'ite circles and the remnants of Christian gnostic sects, as in the case of Hishām b. al-Ḥakam, in addition to the indubitable contact with the Nestorians, is a very valuable addition to the information concerning the ways by which gnostic ideas and influences penetrated Shi'ism or Sufism, it may be, in fact, long before the period of officially encouraged translations.

An interesting example may be quoted. In my studies of the *Ummu'l-kitāb*, a sacred book of the Pamir and Hindukush Ismailis, which by itself, however, is probably of a pre-Ismaili origin³⁰, I had always been puzzled by a passage at the beginning of the work. It is undoubtedly an adaptation of the apocryphal Gospel of Infancy to Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir, who, while still a child, reveals to his astonished teacher various mysteries of creation and cosmogony. Having explained the Kabbalistic implications of the letter *alif* and then *bā*, he proceeds suddenly with the question: "what is bigger: an *alif* or a camel (*ushtur*)?"³¹ Why *camel*? In 1942, in his very erudite work on Jābir b. Ḥayyān,³² Dr. P. Kraus has suggested that the word *ushtur* stands here instead of the word *jamal* of the Arabic original, and the latter is merely a misunderstanding for *gimel*, the name of the third letter of the Semitic alphabet, i.e., the Arabic *jim*.

This seems to me a very clever suggestion which may be unreservedly accepted. It would tend to prove that the gnostic works written originally in Syriac were sometimes adopted by people so unsophisticated that they could not replace *gimel* by the Arabic *jim*, but simply transcribed it as *j-m-l*, which the Persian translator read as *jamal*, and rendered as *ushtur*.

The toponymy of the *Ummu'l-kitāb* shows that it must have been composed in the Middle East, or Mesopotamia, as it shows a close knowledge of Syrian and Mesopotamian cities, but does not mention any of the Eastern capitals such as Ray, Nīshāpūr, Bukhārā, etc. The most interesting feature, however, is the absence of any mention of Baghdād.³³ As it may be now regarded as proved that the present version is a translation, the silence about Baghdad may suggest that the original Arabic version may have been completed *before* Baghdad was either founded or became generally known as the capital of the Abbasids, i.e., in the *first half* of the second/eighth c., in other words towards the end of the time of Imam Mḥd al-Bāqir and the beginning of the Imamāt of his son Ja'far. It is not impossible that originally there were many other specimens of early Muslim gnosticism directly inspired, as seems now to be proved in the case of the *Ummu'l-kitāb*, by Syriac prototypes.

We may now return to the alleged heretics, Maymūn al-Qaddāh and his son.

We have seen that in early Shi'ite tradition two Daysānite names, or more probably one name in two forms, are mentioned. When compared with the names of Maymūn and his son, as they appear in anti-Fatimid works mostly ascending to Ibn Razzām or his sources, they reveal a resemblance which certainly cannot be fortuitous:

'Abdu'l-lāh ad-Daysānī and 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn ad-Daysānī.

Abū Shākir ad-Daysānī and Abū Shākir Maymūn ad-Daysānī.

From what has been mentioned above it is clear that even if Maymūn and his sons were originally Daysānites, they could not be Christians and at the same time Muslims, who were devout followers of the Imam. Moreover, if we suppose that it was they who appear in the stories related by Hishām b. al-Ḥakam about the Daysānites, we must at once give up the theory for chronological reasons. In the traditions quoted above Maymūn is called the *maḥlā* of Muḥammad al-Bāqir, he relates traditions from that

Imam, his son Abān recites the Coran before that Imam, and even his son 'Abdu'l-lāh relates a tradition from him. Thus Maymūn and his sons must have been converted to Islam already in the first/seventh c.; of this there cannot be any doubt. But the stories of the conversion of the Daysānites (or really one Daysānite), related by Hishām, obviously and unequivocally refer to the end of the period of Imam Ja'far. Hishām, as we have seen, died in 199/815, and certainly could not have been an adult a century earlier. Thus the identity of Maymūn and his son on the one side, and the two Daysānites on the other hand, is out of the question.

It appears, nevertheless, that the remarkable coincidence in the names, pointed above, clearly suggests the possibility of a conscious attempt at falsification by identifying them. To me the process of the "discovery" of such identity appears to be based on a number of presumptions, perhaps on a repeated search for something discreditable to the newly established dynasty of the Fatimids. When it became known that they claimed their descent from the early Imams through 'Abdu'l-lāh, the son of Muḥammad b. Ismā'il b. Ja'far, who himself (perhaps really born in exile) remained unknown to wide Shi'ite circles, it may be that someone with some knowledge of Shi'ite tradition was tempted to identify this 'Abdu'l-lāh with the heretic, the Daysānite 'Abdu'l-lāh. As there was yet another Daysānite name, or part of a name, Abū Shākir, this was used for the father of this 'Abdu'l-lāh. Perhaps another ingenious guess was the identification of Maymūn al-Qaddāh with a mysterious Maymūn, the eponym of the heretical sect of the Maymūniyya.³⁴ Then both were combined into a family, as father and son. Perhaps, as we shall see in the next section, the combination of names, 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn, was suggested by a different circumstance, and this was grafted on to 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn al-Qaddāh.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER V

¹ It is not clear whether he really was called the "son of Daisan" (which is the meaning of *Bar Daysān*), or whether he had some other name, which was forgotten, while his patronymic alone was preserved. The first alternative seems more likely because in Islamic

times we have a parallel in the case of Ibn al-Furāt, "the son of the Euphrates", a name which belonged among others to the famous wazir of the Abbasids. Tabari mentions at least seven persons who had names connected with Furāt, including Ibn Ab'l-Furāt and Banū'l-Furāt. Possibly naming after a river was connected with some superstition. It would be interesting to find names connected with other rivers.

² Cf. Introduction to Cureton's "Spicilegium Syriacum" (Lond., 1855) and E.I., III, 993. Also H. L. Mansel, "Gnostic Heresies" (Lond., 1875), pp. 138-143.

³ It is interesting that in the Greek version of the text, preserved by Eusebius, who calls it *Peri heimarménes diálogos*, one of the participants is called, if the Greek letters are literally transcribed, Abeida, which is in Syriac pronounced Avida. One would like to know whether this renders the Arabic 'Ubayda?

⁴ See F. C. Burkitt, "The Religion of the Manichees" (Cambr., 1925), pp. 76-77.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 84-86.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 80: . . . "we see from the numerous referenes . . . that the Marcionites were a real force among the Christians of Mesopotamia at least till the 5th century".

⁸ Cf. *Fihrist*, 472.

⁹ It is a pity that although there is no lack in mediaeval Islamic works of materials concerning the distribution and history of various Christian sects in Muslim countries, we still possess no comprehensive study of the matter, suitable for easy reference. The painstaking study of J. Labourt, "Le Christianisme dans l'Empire Perse" (Paris, 1904), is not concerned with Islamic times. Works such as those of Nau, Moberg, Lammens, etc., deal only with fragments of the whole problem. With regard to the persistence of certain gnostic sects, an interesting reference is supplied by Epiphanius (bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, who wrote in 374 A.D.). He professes to give an account of the Ebionites and Elkesaites (whom he calls *Sampsaiot*, —Shamsis?) as they existed in his own day in Southern Syria and adjacent countries (H. L. Mansel, *op. cit.*, p. 236). If they endured for over two centuries after the time of their first appearance and were then widespread, it is quite possible that with the slow tempo of life at that period they carried on well into Islamic times.

¹⁰ Cf. *Guide*, pp. 32-3. He flourished under the Fatimid caliph al-Qā'im bi-amrill-lāh (322-334/934-946), but almost nothing is known of his biography.

¹¹ Sayyid-nā Idrīs in the fifth vol. of his *'Uyūnu'l-akhbār* mentions the opinion of Imam al-Mu'izz li-dīnill-lāh concerning the *Kitābu'z-*

-Zīna : "It is an exoteric book (*ẓāhir*), glorifying the Arabic language, the advantages of poetry and what poetry contains, the derivation of the epithets of God, etc The author carried all through it the principle (*aṣl*) at which he aimed, and followed it, masking it, however, in separate articles in such a way that none would notice it except those who (already) possess the matter which is displayed for sale" (. . . . *lā yaqif 'alay-hi illā ṣāhibi'l-māl alladhī kānat biḍā'atū-hu fī yad dā'i-hi* . . .)

12 Extracts from the *A'lōmu'n-nubuwwat* have been edited by Dr. P. Kraus in his "Razinana II", in "Orientalia" (Rome, 1936), pp. 35-56 and 358-378.

13 On *Kitābu'l-Iṣlāḥ* by Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī, cf. W. Ivanow, "Studies in Early Persian Ismailism" (sec. ed., Bombay, 1955), *An Early Controversy in Ismailism*, pp. 91-94.

14 Apparently his contact with Christianity had something to do with Armenia (which he mentions several times) and with the *Batriqu'l-baṭāriqa*, i.e., the Katholikos. It is quite possible that his activities as a *dā'i* in what is now NW Persia brought him into contact with Armenian circles.

15 As is well-known, the Khazar kingdom rose and fell within the tenth c. A.D., leaving but slight traces in popular memory. It seems therefore that references to Khazars may serve as reliable indications of the age of the works in which their name is mentioned.

16 As he says: . . . *'ammāt bilādi'sṣin wa Māšim-him 'alā madhhab Mānī, yasta'malūn shar'ata-hu wa yudarrisūn kutuba-hu wa yataqarrabūn ilā'l-lāh Ta'ālā bi-dīni-hi alladhī waḍa'a-hu fī-him*. Note that Mānī's religion is called *shar'at*, and that the Manichees "approach Allāh the All-High".

17 Published in Cairo, 1928.

18 Cf. Burkitt, *op. cit.*, p. 46. *Zaddiqā* means "righteous", Arabic *ṣiddiq*.

19 Neither Tabari nor Ibn al-Athīr mention anything about the *zindīqs* under years 127, 128, 129.

20 Abū Naṣr Mḥd b. Mas'ūd b. Mḥd b. 'Ayyāsh as-Sullamī as-Samarqandī al-'Ayyāshī, the famous Shi'ite theologian of the Khorasani school, one of the chief *rāwīs* of Kashī, was originally a learned Sunnite traditionist, but later joined the Shi'ites. He corresponded with al-Faḍl b. Shādhān of Nishāpūr (Kashī, 224), and evidently flourished about the middle of the third/ninth c. If ar-Riḍā knew him, as mentioned in this tradition, he must have been at the time quite a young man. Cf. Tūsī, no. 690; Najāshī, 247-250; Ibn Nadīm, 274-277; and *Majālisu'l-mu'minin*, 181.

21 Here *ghulām*, in the sense of "disciple", is obviously applied to an adult: 'Ayyāshī was already a Sunnite theologian when he became a student of Shi'ism.

22 Yūnus b. 'Abdi'r-Rahmān, a *mawlā* of Banū Yaḳīn, the son of Mūsā, a *mawlā* of Banū Asād, was born at the time of Hishām b. 'Abdi'l-Malik (the Omayyad caliph, 105-125/724-743), and as a young man saw Imam Ja'far. He developed into a very learned man, author of many books. Reports about him are contradictory, comprising both praises and condemnation. Kashī has much to say about him. Cf. also Tūsī, no. 803; Najāshī, 311 sq.

23 It may be recalled that Egypt was the home of many gnostic schools, and the movement persisted there longer than in any other country.

24 It is not impossible that the later Bardesians widely deviated from Bar Daisan, approaching Zoroastrianism.

25 Cf. p. 86 of the Bombay printed ed. 1314. He apparently confuses this Hishām with Hishām al-Jawāliqī.

26 Cf. Ibn Bābūya's *Kitābu't-Tawḥīd* (p. 216) : . . . Hishām said to me : "While I was sitting in my shop, near the Bābu'l-Karkh, and people (disciples) were reciting the Coran to me" . . .

27 References to him are quite numerous, but Kashī's give more biographical material than others. See also *EI*, II, 318; Ibn Nadīm, 249, and App., p. 7; Tūsī no. 771; Najāshī, 304 sq.

28 Uppsala, 1926, repr. from the "Kyrkohistorisk Arsskrift," 1923 (pp. 149-292) and 1925 (pp. 45-112). Special pagination in the reprint.

29 Transl. by Menzel, London, 1936.

30 See W. Ivanow, "*Ummu'l-kitāb*" in "Der Islam", vol. XXIII, 1936, pp. 1-132, and a preliminary note, "Notes sur l'*Ummu'l-kitāb*", in the "Revue des Etudes Islamiques", 1932, pp. 419-482.

31 See paras. 20, 23.

32 Paul Kraus, "*Jābir ibn Ḥayyān*", vol. II. "Jābir et la Science Grecque", in the "Mémoires présentés à l'Institut d'Égypte". Cairo, 1942, p. 263, note 8.

33 Three ethnic names Khazars, Saqlabiyya, and Rūs, clearly suggest at least the fourth c. A.H., especially the last mentioned. The mention of Baṣra or Kūfa, of course, prove nothing, but the presence of such little known names as Nisibin, Malatiya, Tartus, Aṣcalon, and Barqa, is significant.

34 It is discussed in the next chapter.

VI

THE ALLEGED IMPIOUS DOCTRINE

1. *The Maymūniyya and Mubārakiyya*

We have seen in the preceding chapter that the alleged Daisanism of Maymūn and his son must obviously be a crude fabrication. The same applies to their alleged connection with Khattabism. This appears to be an essential layer of the myth, and it deserves careful investigation, because it is probably here that we should seek for the prototype of the impious doctrine supposed to have been invented by the heretic.

Early Shi'ite tradition knows nothing of this connection. Early Ithna-'ashari authors already show a definitely hostile attitude towards Ismailism, and also towards the dreadful Qarmatians with whom the Ismailis were intentionally confounded. They would not have for any reason kept silence had they known that Ibn al-Qaddāh really was the founder of the dangerous movement. In reality we see, however, that their hostile attitude has for its object Ismā'il and his son, Muḥammad, whom they obviously regard as the founders of the sect, and not Maymūn al-Qaddāh with his son, whom they completely leave aside. The activity of these two worthies is supposed to have been carried out in the very centre of Shi'ism, and tradition could not have neglected such acts of impiety as that of "posing as a prophet", etc., which non-Shi'ite sources impute to 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn. It may therefore be safely assumed that these early Shi'ite traditionists found no reference to such charges in their original sources which must have been almost contemporary with Imam Ja'far, or his immediate successors.

Non-Shi'ite sources, as mentioned above, at once make us to come upon masses of sensational information. We find that, by a strange reversal of the natural process, each later author possesses a memory more replete with exciting details than his predecessor's. Ibn Razzām in his refutation of Ismailism quoted in the *Fihrist* (264) (apparently, as mentioned above, the earliest non-Shi'ite work referring to Maymūn and his son as the founders

of Ismailism), refers to the fact that Maymūn was the founder of a certain, obviously heretical, sect, which was named after him al-Maymūniyya. This sect (whether from its foundation, or at a later period, is not clear) recognized Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb as its head (*aḡharat iḡbā' Abī'l-Khaṭṭāb*). Why and how this came about, we are not told. Unfortunately for our quest, references to this sect are very rare.

In his "Mémoire" (p. 14) de Goeje rejects this statement as "pure invention", it seems without any sound reason.¹ The author of *al-Farq bayna'l-firaq* (222-223), 'Abdu'l-Qāhir al-Baḡhdādī, refers to a certain sect as al-Maymūniyya; he gives no details as to its doctrine, but includes the name of this sect, together with the Bāṭiniyya, in a list of sects which believed in metempsychosis (*aḡḡābu't-tanāsukh*). On p. 267, however, he says that the Qarmatians of the province of Fārs belong to the sect al-Ma'mūniyya, so named "after Ma'mūn, the brother of Ḥamdān Qarmaṭ". This looks like a mistake for al-Maymūniyya, with a consequential introduction of a reference to a suitable eponym. Ibn 'Inaba (d. 825/1422) in his work on the genealogy of the Alids, *Umdatul-tālib* (lith. Bombay, 1318, p. 208), quotes a genealogist of the vi/xii c. (of pro-Fatimid inclinations), Shaykh Sharaf 'Ubaydallī who says that Muḥammad b. Ismā'il b. Ja'far was "the Imam of the Maymūniyya".

These allusions are deplorably brief. Ibn Razzām undoubtedly implies that the sect was heretical: the fact that Maymūn was the founder of this sect forms in his account the basis of the statement that Maymūn himself was a heretic. Nothing is said by Ibn Razzām as to whether 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn also belonged to this sect (although this perhaps would go without saying); but he further states that both father and son were Daisanites, and then passes on to the impieties of the son. Ibn Shaddād, quoted by Ibn'l-Athīr (under year 296 A. H.), adds the information that both father and son were Khaṭṭābites².

If Maymūn with his sect expressed submission to Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, this could have been only while the latter was still living, i.e., before 145/762, the most probable date of the execution of the heresiarch, and thus before the death of Imam Ja'far. The Imam would have excommunicated him with others. Such a fact could surely not have remained unknown, and even if he, or his son,

had later on returned to orthodoxy, a trace of this would have remained³.

However, even though Maymūn's rôle as the founder of a heretical sect is a fiction, it does not follow that the sect itself, al-Maymūniyya, is a mere invention. It may be that the basis of the imputation is a genuine misunderstanding. It is quite conceivable that someone who knew of the existence of a heretical sect al-Maymūniyya, later on treated as Khaṭṭābiyya, sought for a person named Maymūn in the entourage of Imam Ja'far to serve as the eponymous founder of the community, and, finding nobody of any prominence with the name, saddled the pious Maymūn al-Qaddāh with its foundation⁴.

The imputation of being followers of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb may imply much more than appears on the surface. Ibn Razzām's story of 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn's "posing as a prophet or imam", the rather confused and confusing details as to his relations with Ismā'il b. Ja'far and his son Muḥammad, of his having started a new doctrine, etc., all vividly recall the activities attributed to Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb⁵.

There can be little doubt that the latter's biography, or legend, is at the bottom of the story of the malicious son of Qaddāh, which has been embellished and developed by later fictions.

The student in search for information as to the general trend or spirit of religious life at that remote period is confronted with almost unsurmountable obstacles not only in the form of the religious mentality of mediæval authors, with their varying scale of veracity when treating friends or foes, but also on account of their vague terminology and their views concerning the duties of historian. The Arabic term *firqa* which in a religious context is usually translated by "sect", has a wider and more general meaning, of any subdivision, branch, group, etc., not necessarily differing substantially in essential doctrines. Every student who has had experience with Islamic heresiological or controversial literature is well aware how much confusion reigns in this matter. Veracity and elementary accuracy are here conspicuous only by their absence. The authors may either inflate the number of *firqas*, to suit their theological theories, or may arbitrarily combine several into one. There are sects with apparently identical doctrines but different names, and others with similar names, as given by different authors, but obviously different doctrines.

In the case of some sects the doctrine is known, but nothing is known as to the founder. In other sects the name of the sect is all that is remembered, and from this the author glibly reconstructs the name of the founder, or the doctrine. The case of the sect mentioned above, al-Maymūniyya, is one of the numerous examples of this process.

The group of sects to which the Maymūniyya, Khaṭṭābiyya, the alleged heresy of the son of Maymūn, and many other cognate doctrines belonged, well illustrates this point. Nawbakhtī's materials are especially valuable for the study of the matter, and their analysis is particularly instructive.

At the top of p. 58 in his book Nawbakhtī discusses a sect named al-Ismā'iliyya *al-Khāliṣa*, without any reference to its founder. A few lines further on he mentions another sect, apparently, with quite similar tenets, namely al-Mubārakiyya. Probably by conjecture from the name of the sect, he adds that it was so named after its head (*li-rā'is la-hum*), a certain Mubārak (probably?) a *mawlā* of Ismā'il b. Ja'far. Surprisingly enough, Shi'ite tradition knows absolutely nothing of such a person who, as the founder of a sect, must have been prominent. He certainly would have been in contact with the father of Ismā'il, Imam Ja'far, whose *rāwīs* have been well catalogued and scrutinized⁶.

A few lines further on, at the bottom of the page, it is stated that the Ismā'iliyya are in fact Khaṭṭābites. It is not clear whether they are the same people as al-Ismā'iliyya *al-Khāliṣa*. Two pages further, 61, it is said that the Mubārakiyya are also Khaṭṭābiyya. It is not certain whether all these were independent sects, recognizing the Imamate of Ismā'il, or were branches of the Khaṭṭābiyya. Such confusion indicates the scantiness and uncertainty of information which must have been based on scraps of hearsay reports, on conflicting and contradictory statements, and, we may presume, on a great deal of personal conjecture of an unsympathetic kind, even in the case of the best informed authors such as Nawbakhtī.

However much we may feel justified in distrusting these reports, one fact may be safely relied upon, namely, the existence of some close connection between these early sects, or religious groups, known under the names of Ismā'iliyya, Mubārakiyya, Maymūniyya, Khaṭṭābiyya, etc. It is from these circles that the

alleged impious doctrine of 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn would have originated (although he is not mentioned by such a competent author as Nawbakhtī).

Al-Mubārak and al-Maymūn.

Two enigmatic names may particularly attract the attention of the student: al-Mubārakiyya and al-Maymūniyya. There is a striking correspondence between them and the equally enigmatic epithets of Ismā'il b. Ja'far, or probably of Ismā'il and of his son, Muḥammad, which are preserved in certain esoteric Ismaili works. Although their original implications had been forgotten at an early period, religious conservatism never gave them up entirely. Apparently the earliest reference to them is found in the epistle of the Fatimid caliph al-Mu'izz *li-dīni'l-lāh* (341-365/953-975) to the chief *dā'i* of Sind, quoted by Sayyid-nā Idrīs in his '*Uyūnu'l-akhbār*'. The caliph denies his descent from Maymūn al-Qaddāh and explains that his real ancestor, 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Mḥd b. Ismā'il, was sometimes eulogistically called 'Abdu'l-lāh b. *Maymūni'n-naqibat*, i.e., "son of the Divinely blessed with success in his affairs". This epithet referred to Mḥd b. Ismā'il, in allusion to the exalted position which he occupies in the esoteric Ismailī doctrine⁸.

It is difficult to ascertain when the well-known surnames of the early Shi'ite Imams were introduced, and whether they originally were esoteric designations of the Imams, used only in the narrow circle of devotees. In *al-Kāfi*, which obviously is the most reliable mirror of early Shi'ite usage, these surnames, except for that of 'Alī b. Mūsā b. Ja'far, *ar-Riḍā*, are never (or at most very rarely) used. It is easy to understand why this particular surname became so popular: the real name and the *kunya* of ar-Riḍā, Abū'l-Ḥasan 'Alī, was too easily confounded with that of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. The Imams, after the Arab fashion, are called by their *kunyas*, and in the case of those whose *kunyas* repeat the *kunyas* of their ancestors, as Abū'l-Ḥasan, the words "the second" or "the third" are added.

It would be reasonable to expect that the sect, or sects, which recognized Ismā'il b. Ja'far and his son, Muḥammad, as their Imams, would have conformed to this custom, and that these enigmatic epithets al-Mubārak and al-Maymūn were their respective surnames. Although so far I have not been able to establish

this fact as regards the epithet al-Maymūn decisively and unequivocally, I have happened upon such clear and unequivocal testimony concerning al-Mubārak. The fact that it was in reality the surname of Ismā'il b. Ja'far is revealed in at least four different passages in the early Ismaili esoteric work, *Sullamun-najāt* (cf. *Guide*, no. 31), by (as is treated by tradition) Abū Ya'qūb as-Sijistānī (d. in the end of the fourth/tenth c.). His words are quite unequivocal: *al-Mubārak 'alay-hi's-salām sādīs A'immat dawr Muḥammad*.

Here are the passages in which the name is referred to:

ابن المبارك عليه السلام سادس ائمة دور محمد صلعم ...
 وكان المبارك علا وجل شديدا منهم وفي تقيه وستر على نفسه وولده...
 ... ما يسهو الله للمبارك وولده عليهما السلام من نشر العلم والحكمة في العالم...
 ... ان الاضداد لما يشعرون بالظفر بالمبارك وولده وايقنوا ان دعوتهم قد
 انتشرت في البلاد...

These references finally solve the mystery concerning the sects al-Mubārakiyya and al-Maymūniyya. It can be taken now as almost certain that al-Mubārakiyya, and later on al-Maymūniyya, were the original names of the sect, or sects, which recognized Ismā'il, and later on his son Muḥammad, as their Imams. Quite possibly the sect which later on was damned with the contemptuous name of Khaṭṭābiyya, taken from the excommunicated and accursed heretic, Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, originally bore that name. It seems to me that the "sect" called *Ismā'iliyya*, or more particularly *al-Ismā'iliyya al-khāliṣa*, had no historical reality, and is only a learned and conventional designation for real or hypothetical non-heretical supporters of the rights of Ismā'il b. Ja'far, invented by the heresiologists to fit into their scheme of early sects. This is merely an indirect reflection, or byproduct of the myth of Ibn al-Qaddāh.

This is the real implication of the laconic reference of Ibn Razzām to al-Maymūniyya, who *aḥḥadāt itbā' Abī'l-Khaṭṭāb*.

If and when we find (as quite probably we may) in early Ismaili literature a plain and unequivocal indication, as in the case of the equation al-Mubārak = Ismā'il b. Ja'far, that his son really bore the epithet al-Maymūn, the millennial hoax, the myth of the malicious son of Qaddāh, will be automatically solved. The Fatimids claimed descent from 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Mḥd b. Ismā'il,

Since, however, the *esoteric* surname of Mḥd b. Ismā'il was al-Maymūn, he was probably referred to in sectarian circles as 'Abdu'l-lāh b. al-Maymūn. Enemies of the Fatimids, or traitors, who knew this, have fraudulently identified this name with that of 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn al-Qaddāh, attributing to a wholly innocent man unbelievable crimes and vices. This was probably the first step which was followed by the further identification of the worthy with a Christian sectarian, 'Abdu'l-lāh ad-Daysānī of Kufa. The *kunya* of this person, Abū Shākir, was thrust upon Maymūn al-Qaddāh (who could not have had any *kunya*), so that he also became a Bardesanian; and ultimately the story of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb and his impieties was adjusted to the requirements of anti-Fatimid propaganda, which gradually developed it into the "epic of impiety" as we know it.

2. *Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb and his Doctrine.*

Although references to Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb frequently appear in works of various authors, no attempt has been made so far to sift and synthesize the fragmentary information available about him in heresiological and Shi'ite works.

His full name is variously given as Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb Mḥd b. Abī Zaynab Miqlāṣ al-Asadī al-Kūfī, or, as Kashī (187) calls him, Mḥd b. Abī Zaynab Miqlāṣ *Ibn* Abī'l-Khaṭṭāb al-Barrād al-Ajda' al-Asadī al-Kūfī. His usual surname, Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb (which was quite common at his time), might thus have been an abbreviation of *Ibn Abī'l-Khaṭṭāb*, while his real *kunya* (often referred to in Shi'ite works) was either Abū Ismā'il⁹, or Abū'z-Zubayn. He was apparently a well-known man in his native Kūfa, a pure Arab, not a *mawla*.¹⁰ When and how he came in contact with Imam Ja'far, we do not know. Shi'ite tradition rarely refers to him before the conflict was well developed. The new devotee appears at first to have made a great impression on the Imam. Later, however, their relations became strained, the Imam excommunicated him about 138/755, and, after a massacre of his followers in Kūfa, he was executed by the Abbasid government about 145/762 (all the dates being by no means reliable).¹¹

By attempting to piece together the fragments of traditions preserved chiefly by Kashī, we can discern the features of a really extraordinary personality. Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb was one of those strong

individualities which mediæval religious life, not only in Islam, but also in other communities, not rarely produced. He was the perfect type of a fanatic, a monomaniac, not unlike many famous Sufis, or persons like Ibn Taymiyya. He appears as a man of undoubtedly strong will (or rather of notable obstinacy), of exuberant piety and restless energy, profoundly superstitious. He was capable of working himself into hallucinations (according to Kashī, 195, he saw the devil in the mosque, or Satan himself, standing on the wall and murmuring: "we shall win, we shall win"). A typical mystic by nature, he possessed that narrow, childlike, undeveloped mind, incapable of synthesizing the complexity of life. His mentality exhibits that linear, infantile logic, consistent in itself, but inapplicable to a broad perspective. Such a monomaniac mentality can make a saint, or a criminal, depending on the object to which it is directed. In both cases, if accompanied by strong personal magnetism, it may make a strong appeal to the mob and to unsophisticated and ignorant people, to whom it appears as the sign of absolute inner honesty, or the "call from above". Examples of this are numberless in the history of the religious life of mankind. We may fully accept the story that a crowd of his followers, armed only with sticks and knives, really fought to the death against well armed troops, in the belief that swords and spears were powerless against them because they were under special Divine protection.¹² Kashī (225-6) preserves a tradition which reveals that at least some of his fanatical supporters were not educated people: one of them was a camelman by profession.¹³

It is impossible to doubt either the sincerity or ardent devotion of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, which was the sincerity of a monomaniac. The Imam was apparently so much impressed at first with his qualities that he gave him a position of special trust. Kashī (188) quotes a tradition in which a certain 'Anbasa b. Muṣ'ab relates that Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb himself revealed to him that the Imam once put his hand on his, Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb's breast and said: "Do not forget (or) may thou be smitten by plague! Thou knowest the mystery (*ghayb*)".¹⁴ This perhaps may be linked with Nawbakhtī's (37-38) story that the Imam revealed to him *al-Ismu'l-A'zam*. The Imam called him the "depository of our (=Alid) knowledge, the place of concealment of our secrets, the one who is trusted with our people's life and death".¹⁵ When questioned

by others as to whether all this was true, the Imam denied having said this. It would obviously be only natural for Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb and his supporters to exaggerate such statements, or interpret these in their own favour. There is, however, no doubt, as many traditions indicate, that the Imam really did originally show him much favour.

Soon, however, the Imam began to realize that his devout disciple was stupid (*aḥmaq*)¹⁶, that he never repents¹⁷, *i.e.*, admits his own errors and accepts a compromise. The Imam particularly disliked his habit of never transmitting intact and unaltered the traditions which he heard: the devotee could never resist the temptation to develop an idea to its full limits by "always adding something from himself"¹⁸. Gradually he, and probably also his fanatical followers, became a real source not only of embarrassment, but also of great danger to the Imam and his community.

We must not forget the historical background of these events. The end of the Omayyad rule was approaching, with the Shi'ite movement as the main force in the coming revolution. Despite his good relations with the doomed dynasty,¹⁹ Imam Ja'far was one of the most prominent Alids, and was therefore compelled to act with great circumspection and much tact if he wanted to avoid trouble.²⁰ After the installation of the Abbasids and the general disappointment in the masses, persecution of the Shi'ites began with unprecedented severity. Nothing at such a time could be more dangerous to the Imam, his family and community than that a mad fanatic, a preacher of insane mystical theories, offensive to the orthodox mentality, should be known as one of the most trusted disciples of the head of the Shi'ite organisation. It is easy therefore to accept as true the tradition (Kashī, 187) in which the Imam, cursing Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, says that the latter is a continuous source of fear to him: "I dread him always, whether I stand, or sit, or lie in my bed".

We may to some extent form an idea as to the date of the rupture between Imam Ja'far and his disciple. Kashī (191) preserves an interesting tradition with the rare peculiarity that it records the date when the conversation was held: "...Ḥannān b. Sudayr narrated that once he was present (with some other people) at the Imam's house ... and we were in the year 138 ... when a certain Muyassir (?), a dealer in Zuttī cloth (*bayyā'u's-Zuttī*),²¹ addressing the Imam, said: "I wonder why the people

who used to come along with us to this place are now untraceable." The Imam asked: "And who were they?"—I (the narrator) answered: "Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb and his followers"... Thus the rupture occurred in or not long before 138/755.²²

Some other traditions indirectly support this date. In a tradition quoted by Kashī (191) a certain 'Isā Shalqān mentions his conversation with Mūsā b. Ja'far, when the latter "was still a boy (*ghulām*) who had not yet reached the age (*qabl awān bulūghihī*)". The conversation was on the same subject of the excommunication of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, which was obviously the sensation of the day. The exact date of the birth of Mūsā is unknown, but his age at the time of the death of his father is usually given as between 18 and 20. Thus he was probably born sometime between 128 and 130/746-8, and in 138/755 would have been between eight and ten, which would be about the age referred to in the tradition, of which the purpose is to emphasise his cleverness at such an early age. It is very likely therefore that the excommunication really took place in or about the year 138/755.²³

The formal cause of the excommunication is unknown, but probably it was not so much a particular error committed by the heretic as the gradual accumulation of misunderstanding and dislike between the parties. For the primitive mind of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb it was probably not easy to distinguish between those utterances in which the deified Imam spoke plainly and those where he spoke symbolically, or under the *taqiyya*, while the diplomatic and peace-loving nature of the Imam could not endure the restless exuberance of sentiment in the unbalanced mystic who lived in his inner world only, ignoring the hard realities of existence.

All available accounts of the doctrines which were preached by Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb are meagre and as usual only deal with isolated points which they present in such a way as to evoke the maximum of pious indignation in the orthodox reader. In addition, these accounts possess a special feature: it is never possible to be quite sure as to where the doctrine of the heresiarch himself ends, and where the later supplementary developments introduced by his numerous followers begin. In many cases the latter, most probably, deviated substantially from Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb's own ideas. Of all the known accounts, it seems that only those by Nawbakhtī and Kashī supply interesting details. Nawbakhtī's account, how-

eyer, is too schematised; it is obviously based on several sources which in reality refer to different branches and different periods in the evolution of the sect. Kashī, on the contrary, gives only disjointed and apparently haphazard anecdotes. To my mind, however, these are incomparably more valuable: however disjointed, they are, nevertheless, all so consistent in their inner style that they can hardly be a forgery.²⁴

Everything that we know about Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb shows that he was no philosopher or thinker, and it seems doubtful whether he ever invented any consistent theories or dogmas. His "force" apparently consisted in his stupendous superstitiousness, his "childlike" faith, and his inability to pause in his crude speculations until he had reached the limits of the absurd and grotesque. In his religious outlook he took everything in dead earnest, being incapable of any compromise, concession, or revision of his ideas.

The pivot on which Shi'ite esoterism turns is the idea of the mysterious super-knowledge of the Alids, the still unrevealed Divine wisdom which the Prophet received from God, but which, as humanity was still unfit to understand and follow it, he entrusted it to his direct descendants, the Alids, for gradual revelation to the world. Logically, the reason for which this unrevealed portion of the Divine revelation was not revealed is that it was far more difficult and important than the already revealed portion, that is to say, the Coran as we know it. Thus the knowledge of such secret wisdom was a privilege depending on a special Divine blessing conferred only upon a special race, a kind of supermen, whose psychical organization substantially differed from that of ordinary man, i.e., the Alids.

Kulīnī, with all his moderation, nevertheless, devotes in *al-Kāfi* a chapter to the traditions referring to this matter, the *rūhs*, that is to say "spirits", or rather "spiritual faculties" with which the Imam's spiritual organization was endowed.²⁵ The importance of their esoteric 'ilm, or wisdom, is emphasised by tradition on innumerable occasions, and it appears that Imam Ja'far was particularly fond of impressing this truth on his followers. In localities such as Kūfa, and generally throughout Southern Mesopotamia where centuries of the domination of Christianity, with a strong admixture of gnostic sects, had left particularly favourable soil, saturated with old and half forgotten ideas, unsophisticated fanatics could very easily pass from the idea

of possession of certain Divine faculties to that of the Imams being themselves Divine. The old gnostic theory of the Supreme God, and the Demiurge, God the Creator, which apparently underlies the well-known verse of the Coran, XLIII, 84,²⁶ could easily in the minds of these unsophisticated devotees grow into a belief in the Imam as "God on earth", a sort of a representative of God in Heaven. In Kūfa certain fanatics even pronounced the formula *labbay-ka*, which must be addressed to God, intending it for Imam Ja'far.²⁷ Not all of them, of course, were madmen or imbeciles. Such beliefs were simply the product of the crude and childish reasoning of primitive and unsophisticated minds, unaccustomed to abstractions.

From what we read of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, we can easily believe that he pushed the idea of the Alid superior knowledge to absurd lengths. Kashī (193) quotes a tradition in which he taught that "they (the Imams) know the number of the drops of the rain, the correct number of stars in the skies, of leaves on all trees, etc." Every word of the infalible Imam was an event of cosmic importance which could neither be altered, cancelled, nor revoked. Perhaps the fact of the Imam's incidentally using an allegory in the discussion of religious matters led the heretic to turn the whole system of religious law into a meaningless allegory, with everything personified or hypostatized in certain persons (Kashī, 188).

A similar straightforward faith in the unalterable word of the Imam would equally explain why Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb espoused the cause of Ismā'il b. Ja'far, with his usual exuberance. We have seen that the eldest son of Imam Ja'far, 'Abdu'l-lāh, was a half-wit, and therefore, in the ordinary course, in accordance with the ideas of the time, the second son, Ismā'il, was the proper successor to the father. It is easy to believe that Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb heard some confirmation of this idea from the Imam himself. Thereupon, on the principle that every word of his master was final and irrevocable, he adopted the succession of Ismā'il as an unalterable religious dogma, which even the death of the Imam-designate could not modify. That event would merely transfer the allegiance of the believers to Ismā'il's eldest son, Muḥammad. Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb was incapable of revising or reversing a belief once chosen, or accepting a practical decision in unexpected situation. Kulīnī preserves a lengthy tradition in which Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, still

before his excommunication, discusses the question of those who do not recognize *hadhā'l-amr*, i.e., are not Shi'ites, sharing his ideas, and comes to the conclusion that they, even if Muslims, are *kāfirs*, i.e., unbelievers. Imam Ja'far condemns such rigorism, regarding it as too Kharijite in spirit.²⁸

Reform of the Ritual.

In his perfectionist exuberance Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb sought even to introduce certain improvements in the Muslim ritual. Apparently to the very great indignation of the faithful, including the Imam himself, he succeeded in persuading his fellow townsmen, the inhabitants of Kūfa, to begin the *maghrib* prayer only when the stars begin to be visible. Although he himself insisted that this had been done at the command of the Imam himself, this small alteration apparently evoked more anger than all his wild fancies (Kashī, 149, 187-189). Imām Ja'far qualified this as having led into depravity (*afsad*) the people.

In all this there was more of temper and obstinacy than of any consistent mystical theories. How high his temper could run sometimes, may be seen from an anecdote, narrated by Kashī (190) on the authority of a certain Mu'āwiya b. Ḥakīm. When the Imam was once asked in the presence of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb whether certain matters, related by the latter, had really been told to him by Imam Ja'far himself, and the latter (probably for the sake of *taqiyya*) denied the fact, the temperamental heretic became so infuriated that, forgetting himself, he caught Imam Ja'far by the beard, and it was not easy to pacify him. The traditionists, horrified at such a monstrous act of sacrilege, argue for the rejection of the tradition as untrue. But it may be regarded as tallying well with what we know of the heretic.

In discussing the theories of these early Shi'ite sects we have to take special care not to be misled by their crude terminology, which at the time was only developing gradually. Arabic is not a language which easily lends itself to use as the medium of precise philosophic speculation, and we can well realize what difficulties it presented to those early pioneers. Numerous terms, such as *vūh* or *nūr*, or others which figure so often in these speculations, must in many cases be rendered very freely if we seek to follow the thread of their users' reasoning. It can often be clearly seen

that the attacks of mediæval controversialists on the seemingly impious beliefs of sectarians are simply due to a misunderstanding, deliberate or innocent, of the spirit in which the terms are used.

Turning to the most detailed account of the doctrine of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, that of Nawbakhtī, we must realize, first, that it does not in the least sum up the *whole* of his system, but only refers to the points which the orthodox regarded as particularly offensive. In view of Nawbakhtī's silence concerning the greater mass of the religious beliefs, we may with a fair amount of safety presume that on the whole they did not differ from those held by the main Shi'ite community, i.e., "Shi'ite orthodoxy". Secondly, as has been mentioned above, the account bears clear traces of being compiled from several different sources; obviously referring to different branches of the movement, at different phases of its existence.

Earlier Khattabite Doctrine.

What seems to be one of the oldest versions of the doctrine, is mentioned by Nawbakhtī on pp. 37-38. Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, to whom Imam Ja'far confides the secret knowledge and the "Greatest Name of God"²⁹, is appointed by him as his deputy or executor of his will (*qayyim* and *waṣī*).³⁰ Here apparently something is implied similar to the later Ismaili office of a *dā'ī* or perhaps even *hujjat*, of Kūfa, or even the whole of the Southern *Mesopotamia*.³¹ This conclusion is indicated by Kashī (210) where it is stated that on the excommunication of the heretic, the Imam, at the request, obviously of those his former charges who did not share his extremist views, appointed al-Mufaḍḍal b. 'Umar aṣ-Ṣayrafī, a former follower of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb who later on "repented". His duties were those of a religious teacher: "listen to what he teaches, and learn from him. Verily, he will not teach you concerning God, or myself, anything except what is true". (The expectations, however, were not fulfilled, and "it was not long before they began to report unpleasant things about him, i.e., al-Mufaḍḍal b. 'Umar, and his close associates, saying that they did not offer prayers regularly, drank *nabīdh*, that generally they were *aṣḥābu'l-humām*, that is to say, members of brigand gangs, and committed robberies, and that he, al-Mufaḍḍal, was in close touch with them and directed their

activities"). It is interesting (but uncertain how far it is true) that, according to 'Abdu'l-Qāhir al-Baghdādī (*Farq*, 236), who apparently refers to the same appointment, although al-Mufaḍḍal and his charges broke with Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, they, nevertheless, retained the dogma of the deification of Imam Ja'far. Thus it is possible that Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb not only *pretended* to be the *qayyim*, *i.e.*, deputy, of the Imam in Kūfa, but really did occupy this post, with the consent of his master, and by his order. According to Nawbakhtī, however, the heretic, not content with his usual tendency to carry everything to absurd lengths, claimed by degrees to be a prophet³², then a great prophet (*rasūlul-lāh*), then an angel, the messenger of God to people on earth, and His "proof".³³

The same matters, but taken from a different source, and seen from a different point of view, appear to be related by Nawbakhtī on p. 61. Here the reference is to the Mubārakiyya sect, which, as has been suggested above, was perhaps the original name of the community before it was finally ousted by the contemptive "Khaṭṭābiyya". It is therefore probable that the ideas also refer to an early phase. The sectarians believed, according to this passage, that the *rūh*, spirit, probably to be understood in the sense of special spiritual "fullness", wealth, wisdom, etc., was transferred from Imam Ja'far into Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, and on the death (*ghayba*)³⁴ of the latter passed into Muhammad b. Ismā'il, from whom it passed to his direct descendants and successors.³⁵ Nawbakhtī traces the origin of Qarmatian sect from this stage, because the new sect did not believe in the continuation of the Imamāt, but accepted Muhammad b. Ismā'il as the "seventh", and therefore at the same time the Great Prophet, the seventh *Nāṭiq*, the expected Mahdī, who is immortal and will return at the predestined time in full glory.³⁶

What was the true rôle of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb in this new doctrine, is not mentioned. It is probable enough that the real Qarmatian doctrine belonged to such a "*wāqifa*" type. It is not, however, certain whether Nawbakhtī is speaking here from facts, and really has in view the Qarāmiṭa of Bahrayn, or is simply theorizing and enunciating a theory which might allude to the proto-Isma'ili doctrine, as it was just before the Fatimid movement, in the middle of the third/ninth c. It is quite probable that the latter in its earlier stages laid great stress on the cult of Muhammad

b. Ismā'il, before it openly adopted the doctrine of the ever continuing Imamate.

In both these versions, which seem to be the earliest, nothing is said about the deification of Imam Ja'far. The deification, however, appears in the account given on p. 38, in which the part of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb is that of the *nabī mursal*, *i.e.*, apostle, or great prophet. Nothing further is said concerning the theological system, but the usual stereotyped accusations of depravity, licentiousness, abandonment of worship, etc., are added, probably to make the account more impressive and mask the scarcity of reliable information.

Later Khattabite Doctrine.

Apparently of still later origin are those versions in which rivals of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, or continuators of his work, are mentioned. On p. 38, Nawbakhtī mentions a certain Bazīgh³⁷ who also claimed to be a *rasūl*, or apostle, sent by the deified Imam Ja'far. He with his associates, were generous enough to offer recognition to Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb (probably on the basis of reciprocity), but the offer was turned down.

Still further on (p. 39) a similar position is claimed for a certain as-Sarī, or as-Sirri (the mysterious?),³⁸ who bears the epithet of "the robust and trustworthy Moses" (*Mūsā'l-qawf al-amin*), cf. Coran, XXVII, 39. May not this have been a pseudonym of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb himself, mistaken later on for a new heretic? There is a certain flavour of Judaism in the ideas of this branch. In addition to the "robust Moses", these people regarded themselves (as Jews did, according to the Coran, XV, 5) as "the sons of God", for the followers of the sect claimed to be the "sons of Islām". The latter word, according to their interpretation, was an equivalent of *Salām*, or really *Salām*, which was supposed to mean God, who was (on the earth) Imam Ja'far, and whose *rūh* inhabited as-Sarī or as-Sirri. These tricky speculations are based on a certain tradition in which the Prophet called Salmāni Fārsī—*Ibnul-Islām*.³⁹ What Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb had to do with all this, is not apparent, unless we suppose that it was he himself who here appears under the name of as-Sarī or as-Sirri.

Mu'ammir.

Another branch, or perhaps the same branch in a later phase

of evolution, believed in the *nūr*, "light", obviously a variant of the *rūh*, "spirit", mentioned above, probably to be understood as an "illuminating Divine act" which "enters the bodies of saints, *awṣiyā*".⁴⁰ Such a *nūr* lodged in Imam Ja'far, but later passed into Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb. It afterwards left him, and entered a certain Mu'ammir.⁴¹ An associate of the latter, a certain Ibn Labbān, was so enthusiastic about this worthy that he started to preach that he was Divine. In this theory, apparently, the persons in whom the *nūr* had once resided, but whom it had afterwards left, were regarded as "angels".⁴² These speculations even went so far as to teach that both Imam Ja'far and Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, obviously after their abandonment by the *nūr*, were in their physical bodies merely devils dissembling themselves. In reality both had become great angels of the (Supreme) God in the heavens, while Mu'ammir was the God on the earth, subordinate to the Supreme Heavenly God.⁴³ They developed a historico-philosophical scheme, not unlike that which was much later on accepted by some branches of the Ismailis, concerning the uninterrupted succession of the manifestations of this *nūr* in human form, or rather its temporary lodgment in certain saints, such as 'Abdu'l-Muṭṭalib, Abū Ṭālib, the Prophet Muḥammad, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, and so forth, down to Mu'ammir.⁴⁴

3. *Ismailism and Khattabism.*

We may sum up what has been said above: No genuine early Shi'ite work contains any allusion to either Maymūn al-Qaddāh, or his son 'Abdu'l-lāh having laid foundation to the Ismaili doctrine, or generally to any sectarian movement. Nor is there any indication of either of these being followers of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, introducing his ideas into early Ismailism. Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb was condemned, with his ideas, and excommunicated. What we see in genuine Ismaili literature appears to be quite alien, both in spirit and letter, to the fancies of the worthy. In fact, it appears that the only point in common between both was recognition of the Imamate of Ismā'il b. Ja'far and his successors in preference to any other line. But Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb was not alone in this, and there were quite orthodox Shi'ites, as Nawbakhti's *al-Ismā'īliyya al-khāliṣa*, who had nothing to do with him, and yet recognised Ismā'il as an Imam.

It is deplorable to see the obstinacy with which certain circles persist in their attempts to represent Ismailism as a kind of mysticism or gnosticism. Mystical elements are inseparable from any religion. But *real* mysticism, as the term is generally understood, is something different. It better comes under the definition of *obsession with mystic ideas*, and this would be quite wrong in application to Ismailism which was so often equated by mediæval experts in theology with obnoxious materialism, akin to the philosophy of the Dahrites, and so forth. Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb was a mystic, as has been pointed out above. But there is no trace whatever of anything in the Ismaili doctrine similar to his experiences.

Similarly, the term *gnosis*, gnosticism, is inapplicable to Ismailism. Real gnosis, as it developed in early Christianity, both the orthodox variety, "real *gnosis*" of Clemens of Alexandria, Origen and others, as also heretical gnosticism, "gnosis falsely so called" according to the orthodox writers, was not merely a fashion for invention of fanciful cosmogonies. It was entirely based on the obsession with the basic moral problems, such as the origin of evil and sin, especially innate sin of man, its expiation, atonement, etc. Of all this we find little in Ismaili theosophy. Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb had nothing to do with Neo-Platonic schemes, or with theories of Ptolemy, which form the basis of the *ḥaqā'iq* speculations. We may realise that however fanciful such ideas appear to us, they were science for intellectuals a thousand years ago. The spirit of sanity, sobriety and realism which Ismailism cultivated were true products of the period when Islamic civilisation had attained its climax, namely the tenth c. A.D. All this had nothing to do with unbalanced fancies of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, with his angels, spirits, vision of the Satan, fifty prayers in the course of the day, and so forth.

In the works of the foremost representatives of Ismaili thought of the Fatimid period we find genuine tendency to rationalism which is restricted by the general principle, tactical rather than philosophical, of giving precedence to the elements of the positive religion of Islam. All through Ismaili theosophy one can see that the idea was always emphasised that Ismailism is Islam first, and its theosophy or philosophy second. These had to strengthen purely Islamic principles, and neither to cancel nor modify them

under the pretext of revealing their inner, deeper sense. Whenever a conflict arose, traditional Islamic dogma had to triumph. It is probably exactly this inherent struggle in the system which exposed it to continuous attacks by their rivals and enemies.

All kinds of alleged impieties imputed to Ismailism produce the impression of ready made standard accusations which were raised against every sectarian movement disliked by orthodox theologians. They usually display "angry mood" in which abuse is poured in excitement, at the highest pitch, without any regard to facts and possibility of documentation. We read charges of atheism, libertinism, *ibāhatu'l-mahārīm*,⁴⁵ *ghuluww*, i.e., deification of Imams, dualism, belief in metempsychosis, etc. But it is really remarkable that no concrete individual instance of the offence is cited. I have already drawn the attention of readers to the significant fact that great indignation was evoked in the contemporaries of 'Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb by his attempt to delay the evening prayer till the time when stars become visible. I may again put the question: if such a trivial instance in tinkering with the ritual evoked such anger, why the whole of anti-Fatimid or anti-Ismaili literature had never offered details of the more serious offences?

A sensible answer to all kinds of charges has been given as early as in the tenth c. A.D., by a clever *dā'i*, al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Mayhadī (?), in his "open letter" to the inhabitants of Ray⁴⁶. Referring to such accusations, he writes: "I cannot deny that there are in our community persons who commit such errors and sins. But it would be unfair to generalise, sweepingly attributing such vile and mean acts, committed by one in a thousand, to the whole community". He proceeds pointing out the fact that such vile individuals exist not only in Ismailism but also amongst other communities of Islam.

On the whole, on a careful examination of available material, it appears as if facts and information which may be relied upon make it possible to adopt the standpoint that the stories of the alleged impieties of the Ismaili doctrine contain as little of historical truth as the myth of their initiator, the wicked son of al-Qaddāh.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER VI

¹ The rejection may be due to the absence of any reference to this sect in the work of Shahrastānī (which was much admired in de Goeje's time). The latter, probably following 'Abdu'l-Qāhir al-Baghdādī (*Farq*, 221, 264), mentions a *Kharijite* sect with the same name. Of course, the names of sects were not patented, and there could have been any number of sects called Maymūniyya. It may be added that at as early a period as the second/eighth c., sects seem *never* to have been named after their founders' *personal names*. The early names are such as Mamṭūra, Wāqifa, Qiṭ'iyya, Faṭḥiyya (not as later on "Aṭḥiyya"), Surḥūbiyya, 'Uyā'iyya, and so forth, derived from the *surnames* of the founders, or other considerations. This is entirely logical and sound, because, with the limited choice of Muslim names, such designations as Muḥammadiyya, Ḥasaniyya, etc., would always require some additional definitions. It would be difficult to derive a name such as Maymūniyya from the name of Maymūn al-Qaddāh at that early time. It would have been almost for certain Qaddāhiyya. Only much later, when the process of the formation of these sects was a matter of remote past, we find in various heresiological works designations such as Mūsawiyya, Ja'fariyya, Ismā'īliyya, etc. It would be difficult to believe that in the time of Ismā'il b. Ja'far his sect would have been called Ismā'īliyya: they would have had a different name.

² In Ibn Razzām's account the leading part, or the initiative in the foundation of the heretical movement, obviously belongs to the father, not to the son. It would be interesting, for the study of the growth of myths, to follow the gradual fading out of the part of Maymūn simultaneously with the growth of that of his son.

³ Shi'ite *riḡāl* literature contains references to such cases of "repentance" of various *rāwīs* who originally were Zaydis, or belonged to small sects, such as the Wāqifa, Faṭḥites, a few Kaysānites, and even some ex-Khaṭṭābites (as in the case of al-Mufaḍḍal b. 'Umar, Abū Khadija, etc.). It is remarkable that many of the most eminent *rāwīs* were originally connected with such unorthodox movements.

⁴ The name Maymūn was quite popular at the time of Maymūn al-Qaddāh, and *al-Kāfi* amongst early Shi'ite *rāwīs* often refers to a certain Maymūn al-Bān al-Kūfi. Ibn Ḥajar (*Tahdhīb*, X, 387-396) mentions no less than 18 *rāwīs* with the name of Maymūn, including Maymūn b. Siyāh and a certain Maymūn al-Makkī.

⁵ Apparently the person who first "discovered" that the real progenitor of the Fatimids was the malicious 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn

fully realised the necessity of making his father into a heretic also. This is the reason why, later on, from being a follower of Daisanism, he was turned into the "son" of Bardesanes. For exactly the same reason, when centuries later the myth of al-Qaddāh had been incorporated into late post-Fatimid Ismailism, crude attempts (as by Sayyid-nā Idrīs, or his authority) were made to rehabilitate that worthy and connect him by faked genealogy with Salmāni Fārsī (cf. *Zahrū'l-ma'āni* in the "Rise of the Fatimids", p. 233=text p. 47).

6 The index of the *rāwīs* in *al-Kāfi* (supplied by the author of the *'Aynu'l-ghazāl*), mentions no early *rāwī* with that name. Amongst the *rāwīs* of a later period six Mubāraks are mentioned, two Arabs, and four *mawlās*, one of Banū Asad, of Ismā'il al-'Abbāsī, of Šabbāh al-Madā'inī, and of 'Alī ar-Riḡā (p. 55). Obviously none of these meets the case.

7 Cf. my paper, "Ismailis and Qarmatians", JBRAS, 1940, p. 75.

8 In view of the indubitable ties of Khattabism with the remnants of Christian mystic sects, it may not be useless to draw the attention of students to the fact that Mubārak is an equivalent of the epithet Makarios, not rarely connected with certain speculations in some gnostic systems. We should not be surprised if the name of the seventh Imam and *Nāfiq*, al-Maymūn, the *Maymūnū'n-naqibat*, might perhaps have been intended to render some idea resembling "Paraclete", although the latter term cannot be properly translated by "Maymūn".

9 Prof. L. Massignon ("Salmān Pāk", p. 19) connects this *kunya* with his theory of "adoption spirituelle", and is obviously prepared to regard Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb as the "spiritual father" of his own Imam! The other *kunya* is totally disregarded. I am sorry to confess that this is too strong a dose of mysticism for me. It is known, however, that the heretic really did have children, in fact, at least a daughter. Her burial is mentioned by Kashī, 233.

10 Prof. L. Massignon ("Salmān Pāk", p. 19) also mentions that Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb was originally "surnamed a *mawlā* of Banū Hāshim", and refers to Dhahabī's *Misānu'l-ṣiḡād*, vol. III, p. 64, to support this statement. There must be, however, an error. Dhahabī says that the surname of the *mawlā* of Banū Hāshim belonged to a certain Mhd b. Sa'īd, a Syrian, who was hanged on a charge of *zandaqa*. He obviously belonged to a later period than Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, and had nothing to do whatever with the latter.

11 Najāshī mentions at least three early works dealing with the career of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb which were probably the sources of information contained in the works of later heresiologists: *Kitāb maqāt Abī'l-Khaṭṭāb* and *Manāqib Abī'l-Khaṭṭāb*, by the author of the third/ninth c., Mhd b. 'Abdī'l-Jāh b. Mīhrān al-Karkhī (247), and

another author of the period, Ahmad b. Mhd b. 'Alī b. 'Imrān b. Rayyāh al-Qallā as-Sawwāq. *Mā ruwī fi Abī'l-Khaṭṭāb Mhd b. Abī Zaynab* (67). There were probably also some other works, and, of course, he was not overlooked in the numerous works *fi radd'l-ghulāt*.

12 The story of the slaughter of his seventy followers in a mosque at Kūfa is narrated by Nawbakhtī (59 sq.) and referred to by Kashī (189, 225), both possibly deriving the details from the *Kitāb maqāt Abī'l-Khaṭṭāb*, mentioned above.

13 This is a certain Abū Salma (or Maslama) Sālim b. Mukram, surnamed Abū Khadija, a man from Kūfa. He was amongst the seventy Khaṭṭābites who were attacked, was badly wounded, and left for dead. Regaining consciousness, he escaped, and later on, when he recovered, he apparently "repented". Despite his early associations, he is treated as a *thiqa*, and a popular *rāwī*. He once carried Imam Ja'far on his camels from Mekka to Medina.

14 I really cannot understand how Prof. Massignon ("Salmān Pāk", 44) finds it possible to attach to this event the significance of a "formula of consecration". Why not simply a warning to be cautious? Why should not the words and gesticulation used on that occasion have been purely individual? Also why is 'ih made to mean "know"? The verb '-w-h means "to be seized by plague or other great illness or calamity", and its imperative should be 'uh, not 'ih. Popular Sufism possesses any amount of "formulas" and symbolic actions believed to be repetitions of some original "prototype" act of great religious importance. As far as I know, however, neither the words, nor the gesticulation described here appear to be mentioned in the accounts of any sect.

15 Not, of course, because he was to rule over them or anything of that kind, but obviously because by divulging the knowledge that was entrusted to him he might expose the Alids and Shi'ites to cruel persecution.

16 Kashī, 191.

17 Kashī, 197.

18 Kashī, 191.

19 In the story of the execution of a *mawlā*, Mu'allī b. Khumays, it may be inferred from the accusations raised against Imam Ja'far that one of his daughters, probably the eldest, was married to an Omayyad prince (Kashī, 241).

20 In the fourth vol. of the *'Uyūnū'l-akhbār*, Sayyid-nā Idrīs quotes a story that once when a messenger arrived at night from Abū Muslim Khurāsānī to invite Imam Ja'far to head the revolt, the Imam quietly read the letter and then burnt it over the lamp before him. As an answer he told the messenger to tell his master what

he had seen. This is a well-known folk-lore motif, and is obviously a fabrication, but it well sums up the Imam's attitude.

21 The people called Zuffī (cf. P. Schwarz' "Iran im Mittelalter", 344, 416, 418, 688, 866) were an aboriginal tribe, probably of Dravidian origin, which migrated from their original seat in Makrān to different places, and in the second/eighth c. were already settled in some districts of Southern Mesopotamia, and even as far North as Khāniqīn. They were particularly inclined to Shi'ite beliefs. Here Zuffī must be the name of probably some kind of crude home spun, just as the expression *bayyā'u's-Sābirī* means the dealer in the Persian silk cloth which was manufactured in Sābur (Shāpūr, in Fārs).

22 This date seems to be the only one available in connection with the excommunication of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb. A modern specialist in Shi'ite tradition, the author of the *Mustadrak* (III, 706), refers to the same tradition of Kashi, apparently being unable to add any other source. I am sorry to confess myself unable to understand the implications of the words of Prof. L. Massignon ("Salmān Pāk", 19) in connection with this date that Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb *revendiqua . . . ce rôle de Sîn, de démiurge inspiré . . .* The author refers to Dhahabī, *Mizān*, III, 64, the passage which, as already mentioned, has no connection whatever with Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb. Most probably there is a mistake in the reference.

23 It is interesting that Ismaili tradition substitutes in this story (as does Sayyid-nā Idrīs) the name of Ismā'il for that of Mūsā, without any regard to the anachronism which thus arises. Ismā'il could not be a child in 138/755 because, as we have seen, he was already an adult in 133/750.

24 In his note on the Khaṭṭābiyya (*EI*, 931-2) the late Prof. D. S. Margoliouth praises Nawbakhtī, but regards Kashi as "too untrustworthy to use". It is not easy to see what shocked Prof. Margoliouth so much in Kashi's book. Nawbakhtī very often either quotes him, or uses the same sources. The difference is only that while Nawbakhtī generally abbreviates them, Kashi apparently makes additions from elsewhere. Kulīnī apparently does not refer to him, but Ibn Bābūya, a representative of the Khorasani school, does this fairly frequently, usually with one link between. As mentioned above he uses the archaic form of his *nisba*, al-Kaḥlī obviously for al-Kashī, instead of al-Kashshī. This fact may probably indicate that Kashi's book was already popular in Khorasan by about the end of the third/ninth c. His *Rijāl* is treated as a classic work in the *Mustadrak*, although it is admitted, by Najāshī and Tūsi, that he "related from weak *rāwīs*, and committed many errors". Translated into modern language, this means that he did not always con-

form to the tendencies which were cultivated in highly orthodox circles, probably touching on the matters which they preferred to pass over in silence, and probably basing his information chiefly on sources current in Khorasan, which may have differed from those used in Qum. It is difficult to ascertain how much mutilation or abbreviation his *Rijāl* met with at the hands of Tūsi, who probably resented Kashi's outspokenness. It may be noted that Kashi composed several other works, and often refers to his *Fihrist*, which is apparently lost.

25 Cf. *al-Kāfi* (I, 65-67) : *Dhikru'l-arwāh allatī fi'l-A'imma*, and *Bābu'r-rūh allatī yusaddidu'l-lāh bi-hāl-A'imma*. It is interesting to note the *rāwīs* : Jābir al-Ju'fi (one tradition from Imam Ja'far, and one from al-Bāqir), al-Mufaḍḍal b. 'Umar, Abū Baṣīr (al-Asadī? — Cf. Kashi, 155), one of the *fuqahā'* of Imam Ja'far's time, and some others. In the Imams there are five *rūhs* : *rūh al-quds*, *rūh al-īmān*, *rūh al-quwwa*, *rūh ash-shawa*, and *rūh ul-mudarrīj*. Ordinary *mu'mīns* have only four *rūhs*, which are those mentioned above *minus* the *r. al-quds*. In Imam al-Bāqir's version after *r. al-īmān* follows *r. al-ḥayāt*, and the next two, but there is no *r. al-mudarrīj*. The whole matter is dealt with very briefly; it is stated that *rūh min amr Rabbī*, and that the *rūh* which is the privilege of Imams (and prophets) is neither Jabrā'il, nor Mikā'il, etc. It is remarkable that on the very same page, in the last *ḥadīth* in the *Bāb fi anna'l-A'imma . . . bi-man yushabbahūn*, etc., Imam Ja'far explains to Muḥammad b. Muslim that the Imams occupy exactly the same position as the Apostle of God (*Rasūlu'l-lāh*), the only difference being that they are not prophets and are subject to the ordinary *sharī'at* restrictions as to the number of wives whom they can marry. *Mā khalā dhālik fa-hum bi-manzilāt Rasūli'l-lāh*.

26 Cf. above Chapter V. The verse by itself may imply the refutation of a gnostic idea which among other similar matters could have been known to the Prophet.

27 Nawbakhtī (39) and Kashi (192). The formula, as is well-known, is used in the *ḥajj* ceremonies. Although tradition is silent on the point, it seems quite probable that the cries of "*Labbay-ka Ja'far*" were uttered in the presence of Imam Ja'far himself, possibly on one of his visits to Kūfa.

28 Kulīnī, *al-Kāfi*, vol. I, 240 (*Kitābu'l-īmān*, *Bābu'd-dālāl*).

29 As is well-known, in magic systems the knowledge of the "secret name" of anything, and the naming of it by that name, subjugate it to him who is in possession of such knowledge. Such ideas are strong in Muslim occultism. To make a prayer effective one must appeal to God, mentioning the proper "names". The secret "Greatest Name" of God possesses therefore immense thaumaturgical

force, extending even to a cosmic scale (like the Valentinian gnostics' Iao, etc.).

30 Note the strange use of the term *waṣī*, which in Ismailism is applied to 'Alī, and generally to Imams in relation to Prophets. It is quite possible that in this case the term *waṣī* means nothing but "agent", "administrator", not the executor of a will. According to *al-Kāfi* (I, 77), Imam Ja'far appointed as the executors of his will five persons: Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr, Mḥd b. Sulaymān, a certain 'Abdu'l-lāh, Mūsā and Ḥamīda (a slave concubine of the Imam, the mother of Mūsā b. Ja'far, cf. *'Umdat-ṭ-ṭālib*, 174). In another version of the tradition Mḥd b. Ja'far is mentioned instead of Mḥd b. Sulaymān and it is added that he was a *mawlā* of the Imam. The tradition is related from Mūsā b. Ja'far. What does this mean? Were these people appointed to help him, or to control him during his minority?

31 We must bear in mind that the terminology of the Shi'ite hierarchy shows great fluidity. Kulīnī freely uses the word *Imām* in application to the members of the holy dynasty, but he either avoids term *imāmat* or else it seems that it had not yet come into use. The book on the *imāmat* in *al-Kāfi* is called *Kitābu'l-hujjat*, apparently in the sense of *al-hujjat min āl Muḥammad*. The same in Kashī (10, 264, 265): *lā yuḥaddith 'anī'l-lāh illā'l-hujjat*. The term *dā'i* apparently carried certain undesirable associations; it is never applied to those who preached in favour of the Ithna-'ashari Imams but it is applied (cf. Kashī, 328) to the propagandists of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb's doctrine. Kashī (316) uses, however, the expression *ad-Dā'i illā dīnī'l-lāh* in the sense of the Imam. The term *bāb* (Kashī, 322), which is used in the later Ismaili doctrine, was apparently already in existence in the middle of the third/ninth c. A certain extremist, 'Alī b. Ḥaska, posed as the "bāb and prophet" of 'Alī al-'Askarī, although the implications of his rank of *bāb* cannot be ascertained. After the discontinuation of the Ithna-'ashari line of the Imams in 260/874 the terms *saḥīr*, or "envoy", and *wakīl*, or "trusted agent" (of the "concealed Imam") make their appearance. These terms, however, are never used in the Ismaili system.

32 This obviously refers to the minor prophets those who merely possess the gift of foreknowing the future, as opposed to the "great prophet", the founder of a religion.

33 The idea of "angel" in early Shi'ism seems to have varied implications, ranging from that of the usual winged celestial saint, as painted in miniatures, to that of gnostic aeon, or, in later Ismailism to that of a cosmic force such as controls the rotation of the heavenly spheres. But what is the following (*al-Kāfi*, I, 122)? ... 'Alī said: "Once the Apostle of God was sitting when an angel

with 24 faces entered the room. The Prophet asked: My dear Jabrā'il, why do I see thee in a form such as this? The angel replied: I am not Jabrā'il" ... etc. How valuable it would be for the study of the history of Islamic civilization to investigate the demonological, angelological, and other similar elements in a work such as *al-Kāfi*.

34 The application of this term to Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb is worth noting. If it is original, and is taken by Nawbakhtī from genuine sources, it evidently implies a belief in the immortality, and perhaps the expectation of the "return", of the heretic.

35 The high magic knowledge, the possession of which endows one with supernatural powers, is apparently conceived as an immaterial substance which is "active" by nature, and must be passed on in turn to those who deserve to possess it, or anyhow must be given a chance to manifest itself. It cannot be discarded or left unused. There is in it a certain parallel with the Coranic verse V, 71: *balligh mā unzila ilay-ka*, etc., i.e., "spread the revelation given to thee as otherwise thy mission will be null and void". The *rūḥ* which was entrusted to Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, i.e., the power of conveying a certain doctrine, must have been delivered, handed to others, it could not simply die with its "bearer". Therefore it appears that the *rūḥ* on the death of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb passed into Mḥd b. Ismā'il may be a means of face saving. If Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb received, so-to-speak, the whole *rūḥ* from Imam Ja'far, then it follows that Ismā'il b. Ja'far received nothing, and was not an Imam. Thus the spiritual genealogy would be: Imam Ja'far — Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb — Mḥd b. Ismā'il. If, however, Ismā'il was an Imam, and was really recognized as such by the sect, then the *rūḥ* and the mysterious knowledge and powers of an Imam are two different things, one independent of the other. In such a case Mḥd b. Ismā'il, as the possessor of a superior rank, might have served as an appropriate repository for such *rūḥ*, or *nūr*, which Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, suddenly seized and executed by the authorities, had no time to transfer to a deserving successor.

36 For prophetic traditions accepted by the Ismaili system, see my "Rise of the Fatimids", pp. 95-125. Lower Mesopotamia, with Baṣra as its main port, always was in close touch by sea with Persian ports further South, and it would be nothing improbable in the theory that Khattabism could spread to Fārs by these routes. If it did, it would be quite possible that the sect retained its original appellation, such as Maymūniyya. There are certain indications in the history of the Qarmatians of Baḥrayn that some of their leaders, as Abū Ṭāhir, came from Jannāba, the chief port of Fārs, and thus could import the doctrine from there. It must be noted, however, that these events took place more than a century after

the period of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, and it seems doubtful whether the sect living so intense religious life as the Khattabites were, would last for over a century and be still vigorous enough to start a proselytising campaign with such success. However tempting it would be to establish a direct connection between Khattabism and Qarmatianism, suggested by Nawbakhtī, we have still very little material to raise the question.

37 From Kashī, 197, it appears that this Bazīgh was killed (or executed) as early as the time of Imam Ja'far who was glad to hear the news of this. Nothing is mentioned, however, whether this happened before or after the execution of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb.

38 Kashī, 197, mentions him together with Bazīgh and other heretics, without giving any details.

39 Najāshī, 180, mentions a work, *ar-Radd 'alā'sSalmaniyya* (although perhaps it may be read Sulaymaniyya), by 'Alī b. al-'Abbās al-Khurādhīnī ar-Rāzī. It looks as if the refutation is concerned with this sect.

40 Again *awṣiyā*. Cf. above, note 30.

41 Kashī, 197, mentions his name together with other heretics, without giving any details. He is different from a much later *rāwī*, referred to by Kashī (312, 313, 338, 339) and Najāshī, 298-9, Mu'ammir b. Khallād (b. Abī Khallād) who lived in Baghdād in the third/ninth c. Najāshī, 300-1, mentions yet another Mu'ammir, "decidedly an Arab", Mu'ammir b. Yahyā b. Sām al-'Ijlī, who lived in Kūfa in the first half of the second/eighth c. He is, however, supposed to be a *thiqa*, absolutely reliable *rāwī*, and nothing is said about his following any heretical doctrines.

42 The term "angel" is so often here used, obviously in varied senses (cf. note 33). It is possible that this is due only to the poverty of the philosophical or theosophical lexicon available to the theologians of the time, probably also combined with the fear of introducing new terms which might lead to charges of heresy. It seems obvious that the authors did not mean that such great saints after their death were promoted to the post of a kind of celestial flying peon, rushing about with Divine messages. Possibly "angel" here means something like the gnostic aeon.

43 Such ideas are by no means rare in Islam, representing heretical inventions. As is known, Islam believes that Jesus was not crucified, and something like a demon was in fact affixed to the cross (Coran, III, 48). As is well-known, certain Shi'ites believed that instead of 'Alī a demon in his shape was mortally wounded. Imam Ja'far, a great expert in demonology, several times refers in *al-Kāfī* to *al-mukawwīn*, the evil spirit which assumes the shape of various people. Here the word "devil" seems to be stronger than

would have been used if a fuller set of terms have been available.

44 Such ideas again belong to basic notions in Islam, the difference being constituted only by the use of varying names. The Islamic idea of the periodicity of revelation, and the theory of the great Apostles of God, belong to the same ancient and ever-recurring theories. They are quite common both in Christian and Islamic gnostic sects. It may be instructive to offer here some quotations from the Clementine Homilies (second c. A.D.): ... "The purpose of God's dealing with men is declared to be to instruct them in the truth of things as they are (Hom. ii, 15); and it is for this purpose that revelations have been given through the instrumentality of the true prophets. The true prophet knows all things, past, present and to come, and even the thoughts of all men; he is without sin and the only authorised guide to truth" (Hom. ii, 6, 10; iii, 11). "This knowledge he has by the innate and perpetual dwelling in him of Divine spirit" (Hom. iii, 12). Eight different persons are named in whom the Spirit has successfully manifested himself, namely, Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses who are called "the sure pillars of the world" [which recalls the "strong and sure Moses" of the Khattabites] (Hom. xviii, 14) and finally Jesus (Hom. xvii, 4; xviii 13). "The doctrine taught by all these is one and the same; indeed the teachers themselves are but re-appearances of one and the same teacher, Adam, the first son of God, manifested in various forms at subsequent times, whenever the revelation given by him became corrupt and was in need of renovation" (Hom. iii, 20). See Mansel, "The Gnostic Heresies", 229-230. This could with very little adjustment appear as a summary both of general Islamic and Ismaili doctrine.

45 This is obviously based on the abhorrence of unnatural practices of Zoroastrianism which not only never prohibited, but even recommended marriages between brother and sister, etc., out of "religious idealism". It was the Avestan *khwaētvadatha* (Pehlevi *khwētūk-dasīh*, particularly popular during the later periods, from the sixth to the tenth c. A.D.)

46 See my "Studies in Early Persian Ismailism" (sec. ed. 1955), p. 135.

VII

IBN AL-QADDAH AS THE PROGENITOR
OF THE FATIMID CALIPHS

We are not concerned in this study with the question of the true genealogy of the Fatimids. In such intimate matters as family relations no legal or historically indisputable proof can exist. It may be very interesting for us to know the truth, and very important from the religious point of view for those who recognize the Fatimids as their Imams. For the historian, however, all that matters is that the masses of their followers firmly believed in their genuine Fatimid descent which was beyond dispute for them. We may therefore add here only a few notes clarifying the confusion which some belated attempts to mend and refloat the myth have introduced.

The aim of the Abbasid, or generally anti-Fatimid propaganda, was to deliver a shattering blow against their Messianic claims based on the idea that only a genuine descendant of the Prophet and 'Alī can be the supreme guide and ruler of the Islamic world, the Imam or caliph (which in Shi'ite speculations is one and the same thing). As is known, there were many alternative versions of the Fatimid genealogy invented for that purpose. The story of 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn caught the imagination, however, owing to its romantic value. It was a real "epic of swindling and impiety", fantastic and improbable from the point of view of commonsense but just the thing to suit that really almost supernatural event of the rise of the Fatimids, who appeared from nowhere, and became kings overnight. Even if the most reliable and authentic, but plain and unromantic, narrative had been preserved as to how they had done this, it is quite certain that, nevertheless, popular creative imagination would have produced its own legendary version.

There is ample evidence that no sensible mediæval historian ever took it seriously. Almost every one of them, after quoting it, mentions tentatively other versions of the Fatimid genealogy. The known versions alone exceed two hundred; and how many were there which remain unknown? It is not easy to understand

why and how early Orientalists accepted it so credulously and introduced it into historical literature. Surely, such highly educated and intelligent people as Hammer, Dozy, de Goeje and others ought not to have failed to notice the numerous self-contradictory elements and absurd situations which the story contained. Take the well-known "Literary History of Persia" by the late Prof. E. G. Browne, in the portions devoted to the history of the Ismailis. It is not easy to comprehend how such an intelligent author could have found it necessary to repeat such silly tales. Yet generations of students swallow this nonsense as if it were the truth itself.

Maymūn, his Son and the Imams.

As far as I can see, early Shi'ite literature contains no reference to Maymūn and his son's being in touch either with Ismā'il b. Ja'far, his son Mḥd b. Ismā'il, or with Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb.

However little we know about the chronology of the holy family, it is, nevertheless, impossible to admit the possibility of any such contacts. Imam Ja'far was born some time between 80 and 83/699-702, and died some time between 146 and 149/763-766. Kulīnī places his death in the month of Shawwāl 148/Nov.-Dec. 765. He was apparently at an early age married to an aristocratic Alid lady (cf. "Rise of the Fatimids", 306; Nawbakhtī, 58; 'Umdatul-Ṭālib, 208), and had by her at least two sons and one daughter. The eldest son, 'Abdu'l-lāh al-Aftah, was apparently weakminded. Therefore the second son, Ismā'il b. Ja'far, was generally regarded as the prospective successor of his father. Kashī (239-242) actually relates an occasion on which, in the absence of his father from Medina, he acted on his behalf as the head of the family.¹ In the same story there is an allusion to a daughter of Imam Ja'far having married one of the Omayyad princes.

By a chance it is possible to establish that the incident took place in 133/750. In the story Ismā'il appears as already an adult. Mūsā, his eldest half-brother by a Negro concubine, was born about 128-130/745-747, and the oft-repeated tradition emphasises that Imam Ja'far never took a second wife or a concubine so long as his first wife was alive, obviously implying the long duration of such pious self-restraint. It is quite possible, therefore, that Ismā'il was born in the opening years of the second/eighth c.

The only apparently unshakeable fact in Ismā'il's biography is that he predeceased his father, although there always was a general belief in certain Ismaili circles that his death was merely a precautionary ruse. Such beliefs persist even now. In the story of his burial at which Imam Ja'far took extraordinary precautions to collect numerous witnesses of his son's death, the name of the reigning Abbasid caliph is usually given as al-Manṣūr (who ascended the throne in Dhū'l-ḥijja 136/June 754). It may be possible, therefore, that such precautions were necessitated by the fears of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb's spreading some absurd rumours.² As we have seen above, this heretic was excommunicated about 138/755, and it is not impossible that the death of Ismā'il occurred about that date.³

The date of the birth of Ismā'il's eldest son, Muḥammad, is also unknown. Only two facts about his biography seem to be historical, namely, that while still residing in his native Medina he had two sons, Ismā'il and Ja'far (who, however, played no part in the Shi'ite movement), and that he emigrated to the East. Nothing definite is known as to when his emigration took place. Both Ithna-'ashari and Ismaili legends connect him with the Abbasid caliph Hārūn ar-Rashīd (170-193/786-809), obviously because this hero of the Arabian Nights always remained the most popular name in the Abbasid dynasty. The Ithna-'ashari authors, hostile to the memory of Mḥd b. Ismā'il, make him leave Medina for Baghdād in the reign of Hārūn, that is to say, after 170/786, or more than 22 years after Imam Ja'far's death.⁴ The Ismaili legend puts his departure even after the death of Mūsā b. Ja'far, *i.e.*, after 183/799.⁵ All this, most probably, has nothing to do with history and is dictated by the desire to vindicate certain theories of their own. It is far more probable that Mḥd b. Ismā'il either left Medina soon after the execution of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb with his followers in 145/762, or soon after the death of Imam Ja'far (148/765).

The latter event, as is known, was followed by an upheaval in the family of the deceased Imam. Mūsā's brothers fiercely contested his succession. The eldest son of Imam Ja'far, 'Abdu'l-lāh al-Aṭṭāḥ, claimed his right of primogeniture, and found much support. Although he apparently died very soon without leaving any posterity, his party, or sect, al-Faṭḥiyya, persisted for many decades after him, entertaining various fantastic beliefs as to his

"return". Mūsā's younger brother, Muḥammad ad-Dibāj, also finding support, rose in rebellion in Mekka, "unsheathing his sword in the sacred place at the sacred month", to the horror of the pious. He was overpowered, however, and sent to Persia where he died in Jurjān.⁶ Ithna-'ashari tradition is silent about Mḥd b. Ismā'il, so that we may be sure that he did not participate in any rebellion. But it is not impossible that he also decided to try his luck in claiming his rights, and departed to Southern Mesopotamia or Khūzistān where the *dā'īs* of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb might have prepared the ground in his favour. It is not impossible that the amazingly detailed information as to the birthplace and the style of living of Maymūn and his son, 'Abdu'l-lāh, in Ahwāz, and so forth, preserved by Ibn Razzām, may really refer to al-Maymūn, *i.e.*, Mḥd b. Ismā'il, and his son, 'Abdu'l-lāh, if there generally is any truth in them.

The date of the death of Mḥd b. Ismā'il remains unknown as also the place in which he found refuge. Ithna-'ashari tradition makes him die in Baghdād where he came from Medina to betray his uncle, Mūsā, to Hārūn. It is filled with absurd situations, and undoubtedly is a product of imagination. Ismaili legends make him travel to Persia, and live a long life, while some versions mention his going as far as India.⁷

As was already mentioned above, Ithna-'ashari tradition is definitely hostile to Ismā'il b. Ja'far, and still more to his son Muḥammad. This is really remarkable in so far as the myth of Ibn al-Qaddāh is concerned, because the latter's memory seems to be unaffected by any prejudice. If there were any foundation of fact beneath the myth, it would be natural to expect that the attitude of the Ithna-'ashari opinion would have been reversed, and Ismā'il and his son would be represented as victims of the malicious heretic. Actually, however, we find a perceptible current of animosity against Ismā'il which is not permitted to burst into open vilification only on account of his connection with Imam Ja'far. Various allusions, however vague, are scattered in works on tradition. Kashī, 294-5, mentions that Ismā'il was addicted to drink. Kulīnī devotes a whole length chapter to the traditions relating to the *naṣṣ* of Mūsā from his father (I, 77), and in one of these, related from al-Mufaḍḍal b. 'Umar, mentions that Imam Ja'far added on the occasion in question: *lā tajaḥḥū Ismā'ila, i.e.*, "do not wrong Ismā'il". All this, of course, is a

kind of retaliation for the Ismaili attitude towards Mūsā b. Ja'far whom the Ismailis do not recognize as a legitimate successor of his father.

Ismaili tradition, so far as accessible, is of much too late an origin (as preserved by Sayyid-nā Idrīs in his *'Uyūnu'l-akhbār*), comes from an obscure source, and seems to be quite unreliable, although it may perhaps contain grains of truth. It is easy to discern in it layers of gradual falsification, on the top of which comes the poisonous influence of the myth of Ibn al-Qaddāh. On the one hand succession is claimed for Muḥammad b. Ismā'il for the reason that he was *senior* to Mūsā, in fact the eldest male member of the family, except for 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Ja'far, who was a half-wit. In accordance with the early ideas of Imamāt which prevailed at the time, his right was, therefore, quite indisputable. At the same time, however, the "iconographic cliché", which was introduced at a much later period, apparently in the Yaman, produces in the tradition a touching picture of the dying Imam (*i.e.*, Ismā'il b. Ja'far) on his deathbed entrusting his helpless infant son and successor to the care of his most trusted follower, 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn, who brings up the baby in an atmosphere of impenetrable mystery, protecting him against plotters, amongst whom the vilest is Mūsā b. Ja'far, who, as we have seen, was six to eight years *junior* to the baby. Strangely, Ismā'il on such an occasion ignores his own father, Imam Ja'far. In addition, historical information, which seems to be perfectly reliable, mentions the fact that Mḥd b. Ismā'il lived openly in Medina, and had a family. If he was 26 at the moment of Imam Ja'far's death (as Ismaili tradition claims), and as is quite possible from chronological considerations, he would have been born about 122/740. Thus if his father, Ismā'il, died about 138/755, he would have been at the time of his death an "infant" over fifteen years old.

Popular fantasy in its falsifying work does not stop at this, however. The same *cliché* is applied to Ismā'il himself, whom Imam Ja'far, for some inexplicable reasons, in a similar way entrusts on his birth to the faithful Maymūn, also for protection against hostile plotters. All this is nothing but the play of popular imagination belonging to a period of time far removed from the real events. Down to the end of the fourth/tenth c. orthodox

Ismaili tradition knows nothing of Maymūn and his son, and later on it systematically denies any connection with them.

The Myth of Salmān.

In his very interesting pamphlet, "Salmān Pāk et les Premières Spirituelles de l'Islam Iranien" (Société des Études Iraniennes, no. 7, Tours, 1934), Prof. L. Massignon sums up what little knowledge is available concerning the biography of Salmāni Fārsī, and analyses the legend which has grown up around his name and the cult which arose in connection with it.

It is easy to see that the legend of Salmān is a kind of a positive which answers to the negative myth of Ibn al-Qaddāh, perhaps better than any other creation of this kind. Both names, taken from the early history of Islam, are nothing but hollow repositories—in the case of Salmān for every kind of superhuman virtue, wisdom and piety, and in the case of Ibn al-Qaddāh for the vilest impiety and crime. By the caprice of popular fantasy, the one is turned into a great saint, an angel, Gabriel, a demi-god, the Demiurge, etc., and the other almost into Satan himself. The one builds up Islam, the other schemes to destroy it. To both are attributed superhuman longevity, supernatural attainments, etc., but, in a remarkable way, both figures, belonging to Shi'ism, are made out to be connected with Christianity and with Persia, although there is no historical proof in support of this. Both myths develop spontaneously over a long period, and while the myth of Salmān is generously used in religious legends and aetiological theories, the myth of Ibn al-Qaddāh is used chiefly in religious and political controversy. Both, however, in the course of their development accumulate the most heterogeneous and surprising precipitations and influences from every possible source.⁸ To both the official tradition refers with marked restraint. Early Shi'ite authors such as Kashī, Kulīnī, or Ibn Bābūya, plainly disregard the exciting stories of Ibn al-Qaddāh, just as they show no special enthusiasm for Salmān.⁹ The same applies to Ismaili tradition as preserved in the works of Qāḍī Nu'mān, with the difference only that Ibn al-Qaddāh is not mentioned at all.

If the original, Arabic, version of the *Ummu'l-kitāb* was really composed (as seems quite probable) at the beginning of the

second/eighth c., then the myth of Salmān would have taken about a hundred years to develop to its extreme limits. The myth of Ibn al-Qaddāh, assuming its author to be Ibn Razzām, was only born about two centuries after the death of its hero. Later on its development proceeds at a similar pace. The text of the *Ummu'l-kitāb* leaves no doubt whatever as to fact that Salmān's mere name, as that of an exceptionally devout follower of the Prophet and a partisan of 'Alī, was all that was used, and not any records concerning him as a living, historical person. Similarly, in the case of Ibn al-Qaddāh probably a bare coincidence of names formed the foundation of the myth.

"Spiritual Adoption".

In connection with the cult of Salmān, which was particularly strong in certain sects, while many other sects were indifferent to it, Prof. L. Massignon advances a theory that "ever since 128/745" the expression used in a *hadīth* where the Prophet says to Salmān: *anta min-nā ahlu'l-bayt* (thou art one of us, a member of our family) "has acquired the force of the ritual formula of spiritual adoption". The date mentioned above refers to the occasion on which Ibrāhīm, the Abbasid claimant, the brother of the first two caliphs, "solemnly addressed it" to the famous Abū Muslim Khurāsānī ("Salmān Pāk", 18).

Was it so, and was the expression meant as a "ritual formula"? I regret to say that I cannot find any confirmation of this whatever. Careful search for instances of the application of the supposed "formula" produces only the impression that it was a mere customary, hackneyed expression which various highly placed Alids would use to pay a compliment to their subordinates or people of inferior standing, chiefly of Persian origin, whose outstanding services or piety they intended thereby to acknowledge. The reception of this compliment would no more imply any adoption than being called "generous as Hatim Tay" would entitle the recipient to claim membership in Hatim's tribe. It constituted only a traditional form of highly flattering compliment, of comparison with such a holy person as Salmān, and was based on two associations, namely the selfless devotion of Salmān, and his Persian origin.

Instances of the use of the compliment are numerous, and vary with the occasion. For instance, Najāshī (83) mentions that

Imam Ja'far said once about a devout and pious *rāwī*, a *mawlā* from Kūfa, Abū Ḥamza Thābit b. Abī Ṣafīyya Dīnār ath-Thamālī (d. 150/767), that this worthy "was in his time like Salmān in his own time" (*Abū Ḥamza fī zamāni-hi mithl Salmān fī zamāni-hi*). Here, certainly, no ceremonial use of the formula can be traced.

When the death of another pious man, al-Fuḍayl b. Yasār, was reported to Imam Ja'far, the latter, in expressing his regret, said that "he was one of us, a member of the family" (Kashī, 140).

Again, on pp. 213-214, Kashī narrates that the Imam paid the same compliment to two wealthy brothers, Persians from Qum, 'Imrān and 'Isā, sons of 'Abdu'l-lāh. While the Imam was performing the ritual of the pilgrimage, he arrived with his women-folk at the camping ground at the Minā hill, and there found that someone else had pitched tents on the place reserved for him and his family. He inquired as to the meaning of this and received the answer that the tents had been pitched for him by 'Imrān b. 'Abdu'l-lāh. The latter, making his appearance, out of devotion, asks the Imam to accept these as a present. Touched by his sentiment, the Imam shakes hands with him, and warmly thanks him. Later on, in Medina, the Imam receives the donor with such exceptional signs of friendliness and affection that those present ask in astonishment, who he is. The Imam replies that the person is "*min ahlu'l-bayt*". The same compliment is repeated in another story concerning the same devotee, and in yet another the same "formula" is applied to his brother, 'Isā. In all these instances there is obviously no implication of ritual significance or special solemnity. Kashī, who should have been aware of any special implications of the phrase, treats it simply as a high compliment, proving the piety of those concerned, and thus their trustworthiness as *rāwīs*.

He also quotes yet another story (p. 212) which is particularly interesting because the narrator is himself the recipient of the honour. It is difficult to rid oneself of the impression that the narrative has a tinge of irony. It is said that Imam Ja'far once remarked to a certain *mawlā* of the Thaḳīf tribe, 'Umar b. Yazīd, a dealer in Saburi cloth (*bāyyā'u's-Sābirī*):¹⁰ "Thou art, by God, one of us, a member of our family". 'Umar himself relates that he asked the Imam: "Really, from the descendants of Muḥammad?"—The Imam replied: "Yes, by God, from them—

selves (*min anfusi-him*)". 'Umar asked again: "Really, from themselves?"—The Imam said: "Yes, really from themselves! Hast not thou read, 'Umar, in the Coran (iii, 61): Verily, the people most worthy of Abraham are those who follow him and His Prophets, and those who believe. God is the patron of the believers."

There is obviously not the slightest trace of the phrase having any ritual meaning, or of its having been recognized as anything more than a highly flattering compliment. There was, in actual fact, another phrase with which most probably a certain mystical meaning was associated. It was *anta min-ni bi-manzilāt Hārūn min Mūsā*, i.e., "thou art with regard to me as Aaron was with regard to Moses", used in the stories of the appointment of an Imam by his predecessor. But this is a totally different matter.

The *ḥadīths* such as that in which Prof. L. Massignon sees his ritual formula of spiritual adoption, or the one which reads "Salmān is the son of Islām", may have been of a very early date, put into circulation by the associates and admirers of the historical Salmān, indubitably aimed at parrying contempt of him caused by his solitary position, without relatives or association with any Arab tribe. *Ahlu'l-bayt* of the Prophet indubitably were not confined to himself, 'Alī, Fāṭima, and her two sons. Surely, the Prophet's wives, other daughters, relatives, relatives of 'Alī, servants, slaves, etc., all were *ahlu'l-bayt*. It is obvious, however, that in the speculations of various mystics those others, not belonging to the holy Pentad, were completely disregarded.

To sum up, expressions such as "spiritual parentage", "spiritual adoption", "spiritual birth", etc., are, of course, universal and as old as the hills. They are everywhere used to symbolize the idea of acquiring knowledge or education, especially in religious and mystical matters, and Muslim literature forms no exception to this universal rule. In Sufism, and especially in its later Shi'ite phase, such "spiritual parentage" is plainly recognized and emphasised. There is however, no example of physical parentage being regarded as superseded by spiritual, or *vice versa*. The two things belong to different spheres. This particularly applies to the parentage of Shi'ite Imams, the *'itrat* or *dhurriyya* of the Prophet.

Mustawda' Imams.

One of the numerous versions of the story of how the malicious

heretic Ibn al-Qaddāh succeeded in becoming the progenitor of the Fatimid caliphs is the legend that either 'Abdu'l-lāh, or even before him his father Maymūn, when entrusted with the education of their infant charges (as mentioned above) were also appointed as *mustawda'* Imams, i.e., substitutes for a legitimate Imam, legitimately empowered to act on behalf of the legitimate Imam during his minority. Having thus become an Imam, 'Abdu'l-lāh transferred his authority to his own descendants, whose descendants the Fatimids were. Such succession, in a sense, was, perhaps, recognized in certain Druze works.¹¹

In this matter the swindle is effected not by the malicious heretic but by those enthusiasts, early and modern, who try to manipulate words without any knowledge of the ideas which these words and terms connote. Druze literature requires careful re-examination in the light of new materials coming from Ismailism. The classic work by de Sacy has long ago become antiquated and insufficient, based on preconceived theories, etc. The Druze doctrine recognizes *incarnation* of God in human form. "Our Lord 'al-Ḥākīm *bi-amri'l-lāh* was never born, and never gave birth to any one", as they say. If they include 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn al-Qaddāh in the genealogy of their Imams, we must first ascertain *whom* they really have in view, whether 'Abdu'l-lāh b. al-Maymūn (=Mḥd b. Ismā'il), or really the *marwā* of Imam Ja'far, 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn. It is quite possible that at the end of the fourth/eleventh c. the difference was still quite clear, and the esoteric designation of Mḥd b. Ismā'il not entirely forgotten. Besides, "Our Lord", of course, could be incarnated in any one, as he pleases.

Returning to Ismailism, we find that even an elementary acquaintance with the history and theory of the idea of "*mustawda'* imams" makes all such stories quite absurd. The first principle which governed the appointment of a *mustawda'* imam, was that he holds the office *temporarily, and in no circumstances can he transfer it to his own posterity*. He could do this only by usurpation, swindling, etc., in the same way as any other usurper, and his holding the office of the *mustawda'* imam did not put him in any privileged position as compared with others. Even if, by any extraordinary chance, 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn al-Qaddāh had been appointed a *mustawda'* imam, he would have had to

resign his office on the attainment of majority by Mḥd b. Ismā'il, who, as we have seen, had at least two sons, and thus ceased to be a minor.

The fact is, however, that neither Maymūn nor his son could have been appointed "mustawda" imams for the simple reason that such an institution did not exist in their time. In dealing with history the student must proceed critically on the basis of the available materials, and should not naïvely accept the testimony of religious dogmas introduced a long time after the events. The succession of the Imams is not such a simple matter as it appears in dogmatic theories. From the historical point of view all such dogmas crystallize only at a very late period. However objectionable the idea may appear to the religious mind, it is clear that at the earliest period there were no other principles of succession except that of the eldest male member of the family. There are any number of proofs in tradition, but it would take too long to quote them here.¹² The clear-cut rules and customs concerning the *naṣṣ*, which developed at a much later period, did not exist in the ii/viii'c.

With the succession of the eldest male member of the family the question of succession by a minor could not arise. In the Twelvers' line we do not meet with any case of succession by a minor until the premature death of 'Alī ar-Riḏā (about 203/818). Tradition, which seems to attempt to make his son and successor older than he was in reality, mentions his (Muḥammad al-Jawād's) date of birth as 195/811. Thus he would have been not more than seven years old when he succeeded his father. Nevertheless, there is no reference whatever to the existence of anything like the institution of "regency".

In Ismailism itself the first historical instance of succession by a minor occurred at the accession of al-Ḥākim *bi-amrī'l-lāh* in 386/996, at the age of ten or eleven. Yet, even at so late a date, no *mustawda* imam was appointed to act during his minority. The same was the case on several subsequent occasions, at the accession of several other Fatimid caliphs.

The truth about the theory of the *mustawda* Imām is quite plain. It never was anything like a living practice, and was invented, most probably, not before the second half of the fourth/eleventh c., to be applied *retrospectively* to the history of the Imams in order to explain and rectify certain cases of succession

which did not conform with the theories accepted by the later Fatimids and thus appeared as irregular. Apparently in a similar way it was at a later date exploited by the Nizārīs of Persia. From the point of view of history it would be absurd to apply this theory to the events of the middle of the second/eighth c.

The same theory was also used in combination with another doctrine, that of *ḥijāb*, or "screen", *i.e.*, a devout follower of the Imam who assumed his name and posed in his place in order to "screen" the real Imam from persecutors. All this refers to that mysterious period of "*satr*", or occultation, when the ancestors of the Fatimids lived in impenetrable mystery. We know absolutely nothing about that period, about any historical instance of the working of this institution, and therefore it would be futile to discuss it.

The Verb istawda'.

A great amount of confusion, not only for the student, but also for the Ismailis themselves, is created by the indiscriminate use of the verb *istawda'* from which the term *mustawda'* is derived. Modern legal theory distinguishes various legal acts or relations, such as bailment, trust or agency, and the rights and powers thereby conferred. Shi'ite mediæval authors, however, do not go into such details, applying the same verb to everything.

For instance, this verb is used in reference to such matters as God's deposit of faith in the hearts of the faithful and His subsequent withdrawal of it on account of their wickedness. In one tradition, Mūsā b. Ja'far (apparently quoting an early *ḥadīth*) says: *wa fi-him mustaqarr wa mustawda'*,¹³ referring to this. Of some people, again, it is said: *kān mustawda'an imāna-hu*, in the sense that "he had faith only temporarily (losing it afterwards)".

Another instance of the use of the same verb shows it in a different sense, that of "leaving in custody". In this sense it very often appears in *al-Kāfi* and other Shi'ite works. A very typical example is found in a tradition in *al-Kāfi* (I, 149) where the meaning is quite clear: "Verily, al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī, leaving for 'Irāq, *istawda' al-kitāb wa'l-waṣiyya* (*i.e.*, entrusted the book and his will) to Umm Salma (widow of the Prophet); and when (his son) 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn (Imam Zaynu'l-'ābidīn) returned (to Medina), she handed these over to him".

In this instance Umm Salma, the widow of the Prophet, surrounded with a halo of saintliness, is nothing but a living "safe", keeping very important documents which personally to herself would be perfectly useless. This would be quite different from the case of a *mustawda'* Imam who enjoyed certain rights and privileges during the tenure of his office.

It may be reiterated that according to Ismaili theories the *mustawda'* Imam could only be appointed from amongst the close relatives of the minor Imam-designate, who himself was not eligible to the office under the usual customary ideas and religious theories. In the history of the Fatimids there are cases of certain state documents entrusted to particularly trustworthy servants, as in the case of Ustādh Jawdhar, a eunuch clerk in charge of the palace at the time of al-Manṣūr.¹⁴ There would be nothing in the least extraordinary in the fact that either Maymūn, or his son, as devout and trusted servants of the family of the Imams, were entrusted with the custody of certain family documents, wills, etc., especially during the absence of their masters from Medina, or in a case such as of Mḥd b. Ismā'il's emigration to the East. We have, however, no indication that such a thing ever really happened. In any case, the custody of important documents, however flattering a sign of confidence it may constitute, had obviously nothing to do with any functions of the Imam-regent. It may be noted that the original expression applied to Ustādh Jawdhar, *mustawda' amr'il-Imāmat, i.e., "entrusted with the will concerning the succession of the Imam"*, often becomes abbreviated into *mustawda' al-Imāmat*, or even *mustawda' Imām*, which is plainly false.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER VII

¹ The story is also narrated by Sayyid-nā Idrīs in the fourth vol. of the *'Uyūnu'l-akḥbār*. A wealthy Persian, Mu'allī b. Khunays, a *mawla* of Imam Ja'far and a well-known *rāwī*, was murdered and his property looted by the order of the Abbasid governor, Dā'ūd b. 'Alī who, according to Ṭabari, III, 73, occupied the post only for three months when he died suddenly in Rab. I 133/October 750. In the tradition Ismā'il interferes on behalf of his father, and it is obvious from the context that he could not have been a child at the time.

² Apparently the most elaborate version, obviously much coloured, is found in the *Asrāru'n-nuṭaqā* of Ja'far b. Manṣūrī'l-Yaman. See the "Rise of the Fatimids", p. 301, and texts, p. 103.

³ An apparently rare tradition referring to Ismā'il's death is quoted in the *Tahdhīb* of Ṭūsī (I, 82) : Sa'd b. 'Abd'l-lāh—Ya'qūb b. Yazīd—Mḥd b. Shu'ayb—Ibn Kahmash, who said : I was present at the deathbed of Ismā'il while Imam Ja'far was sitting near it. When Ismā'il expired, the Imam firmly grasped his own beard. Then he spread a cover over the dead body, then ordered to prepare it for the burial. When he finished with this, he gave orders to bring a shroud, and wrote on its borders : "Ismā'il testifies that there is no deity except God".

⁴ Kashī, 171, and Kulīnī, I, 131, quote a lengthy story of how Mḥd b. Ismā'il tried to arrange a reconciliation with his uncle Mūsā on the eve of his leaving for Baghdad, etc. It is quite probable that both authors took it from one and the same earlier book, as the text coincides in every word. The story, however, is full of extraordinary and unbelievable situations, and is certainly a legend, not a real fact recorded by some one at an early date.

⁵ The story narrated by Sayyid-nā Idrīs in his *'Uyūnu'l-akḥbār*, vol. IV, is summed up in my paper, "Ismailis and Qarmatians", JEBRAS, 1940, pp. 43-85. Various details of it inspire a grave doubt as to its having anything with real facts, and not being fiction, introduced centuries later.

⁶ As is well-known, he took part in the insurrection of Abū's-Sarāyā and Mḥd b. Ṭabāṭabā in Southern Mesopotamia, and later claimed authority for himself. His grave in Gurgān was still shown a long time after his death. It is interesting that despite of his exploits he occasionally appears as a *rāwī*, together with some other relatives of Mūsā, while I have so far never seen traditions related by Mḥd b. Ismā'il.

⁷ As is known, the Indian Nizari Ismailis and Satpanthis believe that he lies buried in Navsari, north of Bombay, under the name of Sat Gur Nūr.

⁸ While in the *Ummu'l-kitāb* the part of Salmān as the Demiurge with the other six famous Shi'ites entirely corresponds with early gnostic cosmogonical ideas about "angels" and the Jewish God as the head angel and creator of the world, etc., the motifs of the fight against the forces of evil and creation of the material world out of the dead bodies of the evil spirits is undoubtedly Manichæan. Here Salmān=Manichæan Hormuzta is superimposed upon Salmān as the early gnostic Demiurge. It is unfortunate for us that we cannot find out whether such superimposition occurred in the original Arabic text, or was introduced in the translation. A detailed study

of the work may perhaps reveal other details in the story derived from other religions.

9 Ibn Bābūya, however, as is known, wrote a book on Salmān, *Ā. akhbār Salmān* (Nijāshī, 278).

10 Tūsi (*Tahdhīb*, I, 239) quotes a tradition in which Imam Ja'far is asked about the lawfulness of wearing a dress prepared from the Šābirī cloth "which is manufactured by the Majūs" (*i. e.* Zoroastrians). Šābirī is an Arabicized form for Sāburī or Sābūrī, *i. e.* Shāpūrī, after the town in Fārs, north of Kārizūn.

11 Cf. the "Rise of the Fatimids", pp. 146-151.

12 Kashī, 102, 165, 283, repeatedly mentions the principle of *al-Imāmat fī'l-akbar min waladī'l-Imām* which the supporters of 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Ja'far used as the basis of their claims to the recognition of this worthy as the successor of his father.

13 See *al-Kāfi*, I, 477 (in the edition of 1281). I also remember having seen this expression elsewhere, but I cannot remember where. The tone of the quotation is as if it were taken from the Coran, but it does not occur there. Both words are met with in the nominative case only in VI, 98, but there is no "*wa fī-him*".

14 Cf. the "Rise of the Fatimids", pp. 233, 273-4 (the case of Ustādh Jawdhar).

APPENDIX.

With all that has been said, one important question still remains unanswered: how and why has it happened that such an indubitable fiction as the myth of 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn al-Qaddāh has to some extent found acceptance in certain genuine Ismaili works where it re-appears in a toned-down form, making the worthy a high dignitary in early Ismailism? Instances from several such works are collected in my "Rise of the Fatimids", pp. 140-156. A study of the post-Fatimid Yamanite Ismaili literature provides some additional material which presents the whole matter in a somewhat different light, pointing out the direction in which a possible solution of the riddle may be sought.

Southern Arabia, and Southern Arab tribes, as is known, formed the earliest centre of Shi'ism. From there it spread Eastward to Iran, Central Asia, Sind, and Westward, up to Morocco. It was always a favorite method of the Ismaili *da'wat* to mobilise ready Shi'ite sentiment, and an excellent instance of this is attested to as early as 266/879, when Ibn Ḥawshab was sent on his mission to Aden.

An isolated corner of the world of Islam, the Yaman, with its ancient local culture, later dominated by Christianity for a long time, could be expected to retain relics of these in Islamic times. And so it really was, — there were many local peculiarities in the way of life, the general outlook, even in the fact of the popularity of the Shi'ite ideals. In Ismaili works produced there, much difference is observed in the spirit, tone and even terminology, compared with the Fatimid literature composed elsewhere.

The version of Ismailism patronised and encouraged by the Fatimid Imams themselves, "orthodox", as it had to be called, also deserved the name of "Persian" because amongst the most prominent authors in early Fatimid literature the names connected with Iran formed the majority. Persia was then passing through the climax period of her cultural development, — it was the age of Biruni, Avicenna, and a host of brilliant talents in all walks of cultural life, — the tenth c. A.D. In what has been preserved of the Fatimid literature of the period the Yamanite tradition is

represented with the solitary name of Ja'far b. Maṣūri'l-Yaman, a shadow figure of whom no biographical details can be ascertained.

As it appears, the two books, studied by me, the *Kitaab al-Rushd wa'l-Hidāyat*, and *Kitāb al-'Alim wa'l-Ghulām*,¹ should undoubtedly be regarded as very early literary productions of Ismailism. And yet they clearly have much in common, with regard to terminology and ideas, with the works of Ja'far b. Maṣūri'l-Yaman, mentioned above. The antiquity of these two books is confirmed by the fact that the Ismaili doctrine described in the earliest anti-Fatimid works is undoubtedly connected with that which these books explain. Thus the inference may be accepted that their archaic features may possibly belong not merely to these two individual works, but to the Yamanite school in general. This to an extent finds support in some peculiarities of the Post-Fatimid literature of the Yaman.

Thus we can speak of at least two schools of Ismailism: the Yamanite, with a higher content of archaic elements, and the "orthodox", or Persian, much more advanced. The difference between them lies not merely in terminology, but in the whole tone. The Persian school cultivates sobriety of outlook, rationalism, realism, commonsense, intellectualism, dreaming of "worship in spirit", although uncompromisingly retaining the *ẓāhir*, the letter of the injunctions of the *shari'at*, said to be as inseparable from the *bāṭin* as body and soul. The *ḥaqā'iq*, which the Persian school cultivated, was the philosophy of the time expressed in Neo-Platonic terms, obviously derived from Christian, more particularly Patristic sources. It was intended to strengthen and to approfondate the dogmatic theosophy of Islam. Surely, this school accommodated a great deal of elements of mysticism, as Islam and every religion does. But it strictly differentiated between the "necessary minimum" of mystic content, and plain superstition.

Contrary to this, the Yamanite school shows a more archaic, backward outlook, a predilection to cabalistic speculations and Hurūfi-like ideas. It shows a superstitious craving for miracles and generally an element of the supernatural, has not much to do with Neo-Platonic theories, and bears the stamp of clear obscurantism. And it is noteworthy that the "adoption" of the myth of Ibn al-Qaddāh, in however modified a form, entirely

belongs to the works of the Yamanite school. We may try to find out why it was so.

The differences between these two schools of Ismailism are here merely hinted at. If the peculiarities were carefully studied, a comparative analysis might possibly reveal the origin of many "troubles" in the Ismaili community which still remain enigmatic to us, beginning perhaps with the developments such as the rebellion of 'Abdān and other *dā'īs* in Mesopotamia, the cause of the "Qarmatian" invasion of Syria, and the troubles which arose between Ibn Ḥawshab in the Yaman and Firūz, most probably representing the Persian school, sent ahead by al-Mahdī when he intended to take refuge there, but later had to give up the idea. It may perhaps explain the real cause of the "troubles" with Abū 'Abdī'l-lāh ash-Shī'i who was executed, and give a reason for the strange "loss" of such an important work as the *Sirat* of Ibn Ḥawshab. We might learn more of the troubles with the *dā'īs* in Sind (who most probably came from the Yaman) at the time of Imam al-Mu'izz li-dīni'l-lāh, and many other similar events. Perhaps even the story of the "concealed Imam", the infant at-Ṭayyib, has an explanation connected with this.

It may be added that the "orthodox" and the Yamanite schools of Ismailism were the principal currents which divided the community. But there was, for certain, a local school in Syria, and another in Mesopotamia, although they did not play a leading part.

As to the myth of 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maẓmūn, it is easy to see that the "orthodox" school systematically disowned him. So did Imam al-Mu'izz (341-365/953-975) in his epistle to an erring *dā'i* in Sind (cf. my "Ismailis and Qarmatians", JBBRAS, 1940, pp. 74-76), suggesting that Ibn al-Qaddāh's name was confounded with that of 'Abdu'l-lāh b. al-Maẓmūn (i.e., Imam Muḥammad b. Ismā'il) who, apparently, had a sobriquet of *al-Qaddāh*, "the flint", which is quite possible, as is explained further on.

The next work in which the myth is referred to is not Ismaili at all, but written by a Zaydi Imam, Abū'l-Ḥusayn al-Mu'ayyad bi'l-lāh Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn b. Ḥārūn al-Buḥānī (born 333/944, d. 411/1020). He attacks Imam al-Ḥākim *bi-amri'l-lāh*, denying his descent from 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, and saying that he really descended from Ibn al-Qaddāh. The work is most probably

entitled *Siyāsatu'l-murtaddīn*, as has been suggested above (see note 5 on p. 7 above). In his answer, Sayyid-nā Ḥamīdu'd-dīn al-Kirmānī (d. ca. 412/1021) in his opusculum *al-Kāfiya fī'r-radd 'alā'l-Hārūnī al-Ḥasanī*, flatly rejects the theory.²

About the same time the myth is referred to in the scriptures of the Druzes. We shall discuss this matter further on.

Over a hundred years later the myth, in a compromise form, re-appears in the Yaman, and this time there is a tendency to accept it. In my "Rise of the Fatimids" (pp. 20-23 and 153-155) I have already discussed the matter. The myth appears in the enigmatic booklet entitled *Ghāyatū'l-mawālīd*, supposed to be the work of al-Khaṭṭāb, a *dā'ī* in the Yaman, who died in 533/1138. As I have said in the "Rise of the Fatimids" the matter is highly suspicious. If the *Ghāyatū'l-mawālīd* was really composed by al-Khaṭṭāb, it may have been a political pamphlet, an apologetic treatise serving the needs of the day, and, as with all propaganda pamphlets, probably ready to sacrifice truth to political gain. Personally, however, I feel inclined to regard it as of much later origin, perhaps composed either by Idrīs b. al-Ḥasan (d. 872/1468) or even after his time.

Amongst many erroneously recorded historical events connected with Ismailism there was until recently one universally accepted in the West (I also regarded it as a truth), about the "transfer of the centre of the Fatimid *da'wat* administration" from Cairo to the Yaman soon after the assassination of al-Āmir (524/1130). In reality, as far as is possible to see from available sources, this is yet another fiction: nothing of the kind had taken place. There is no record of any recognised dignitary shifting and bringing with him his files, his staff, and reopening office.

The Yaman never was a seat of central *da'wat* organisation for the simple reason that on the death of Imam Nizar and the usurpation of the throne by the puppet caliph al-Musta'li, Egypt was entirely isolated from Asia except for the Yaman which lived its own provincial life. This life resembled very closely the picture of the dark Middle Ages in Catholic Europe when feudal barons, of whom many held high ranks in the hierarchy of the church, lived in an atmosphere of unceasing squabbles, quarrels, feuds and murderous campaigns.³ Some local "barons", or shaykhs, claimed to be *ma'dhūns*, some were *dā'īs*.

It is difficult to say whether the Yaman formed a separate *jazīra*, headed by a *hujjat*, — most probably not. With the disappearance of the sources of *da'wat* hierarchy, the Imam, great problems emerged in local *da'wat* affairs, as, surely, no provision for an emergency had been made. It was then that the myth of the infant son of the caliph al-Āmir being sent to the Yaman came into existence. The story was cleverly designed: al-Āmir, foreseeing danger for his son and heir in Cairo, sent him to *al-Hurraṭ al-Malika*, the widow of one of the principal "barons" in the Yaman. It was quite natural to entrust an infant to a woman. Besides, by virtue of her sex, she could remain neutral in the feuds of the local shaykhs, and therefore comparatively immune from treacherous attack. But the fact remains that the infant disappeared without leaving any trace.

The *Ghāyatū'l-mawālīd* shows typical features of a political pamphlet. Its central point is the argument that a woman is eligible for the rank of *hujjat*. It casually refers to the disappearance of the heir to the throne in vague expressions as if the matter belongs to a remote past. It may be that the author knew the truth, but evaded delicate and probably awkward explanations. But the act of al-Āmir, in entrusting the imam designate to the care of the widow, had to be understood as something equivalent to her recognition as a *hujjat*. This apparently enabled her and her party to introduce into the local *da'wat* organisation the practice of being governed by a chief *dā'ī* who could appoint his successor by a *naṣṣ*, as heretofore only the Imams were entitled to do.⁴

It is apparently because of the novelty of the situation, and the theory being not quite convincing to many, that a detail of the myth has received special attention: the motif of "tutorship" in what may be called "religious precedents". As is known, mediaeval Ismailis were particularly fond of distributing *da'wat* ranks to the Biblical, New Testament and Coran worthies, and also, however cautiously and sparingly, to early Shi'ites in Islam. This is why the *Ghāyatū'l-mawālīd* and the *Zahrū'l-ma'ānī*, by Idrīs b. al-Ḥasan, lay much stress on legends of this kind. Probably reviving the old Yamanite idea that Ibn Ḥawshab was the *manṣūru'l-Yaman*, i.e., the local Mahdī, and regarding that there could not have been two Mahdīs at one and the same time, the legend made al-Mahdī, the Fatimid Imam, merely a substitute

for the supposed Imam, the mysterious 'Alī, the real father of al-Qā'im, of whom nothing is known in history and who probably never existed. Thus a big collection of such persons to whom a future Imam was entrusted came into existence: Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya, the son of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, who nursed Iman Ḥusayn, his elder half-brother; 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn al-Qaddāh, who was the tutor of Imam Muḥammad b. Ismā'il; al-Mahdī bi'l-lāh, who was the tutor of al-Qā'im, etc.

It is probably as an echo of such revelations that the younger contemporary of al-Khaṭṭāb, the second Yamanite *dā'i*, Ibrāhīm b. al-Ḥusayn al-Ḥamidī (d. 557/1162), in his *Kanzu'l-walad*, vaguely refers to Ibn al-Qaddāh as 'Abd b. Maymūn "said to be the tutor" of Muḥammad b. Ismā'il.

Still later comes the *Zahru'l-ma'ānī* of Idrīs b. al-Ḥasan (d. 872/1468). Its story is very close to that of the *Ghāyatu'l-mawālīd*, so much that it is tempting to regard it as a work by the same author. But it would not be surprising if the *Ghāyatu'l-mawālīd* was written on the basis of the *Zahru'l-ma'ānī* at a much later date, perhaps even in India, anyhow in connection with one of the recurring disputes in the succession of head *dā'is*. It seems a significant fact that it is not mentioned in the *Fihristu'l-Majdū'*, and is apparently never cited in *da'wat* literature of the Yaman.

In conclusion, it is necessary to refer to the mention of Ibn al-Qaddāh in Druze scriptures. As already mentioned in the "Rise of the Fatimids" (pp. 148-151), the "son of Qaddāh" is here offered in triplicate: he is (1) the *asās*, i.e., the founder of the line of the Imams, who are his descendants, of Muḥammad b. Ismā'il, who himself is regarded as the Seventh *Nāṭiq*.

(2) He is an Imam later on.

(3) He is the *asās* of al-Mahdī, the Fatimid Imam, who was also the "second Seventh" *Nāṭiq*.

Ḥamza, the author of the books from which this information is taken, as also later on Muḥtanā, were not helpless dreamers, — both were highly educated men who could not talk such absurdities even in a fit of mysticism. It is quite probable therefore that in this confusion we have to suspect someone's unskilled "correction" which remained to stay in the sacred text. It is therefore most likely that the first 'Abdu'l-lāh came in by "pressure of public opinion", the wide popularity of the myth. The second

is a merely the "detached" and hypostatized own name of al-Mahdī, — 'Abdu'l-lāh or 'Ubaydu'l-lāh. The next names in the Druze list, of the Imams: Ismā'il, Muḥammad, Aḥmad, appear to be simply repetitions, perhaps introduced for some cabalistic reason. Remarks accompanying some names: "of the stock of al-Qaddāh", or the same *plus* "and of Ḥusayn", can by no means only refer to Ibn al-Qaddāh. If we trust the statement of the epistle of al-Mu'izz, mentioned above, it seems probable that the son of Muḥammad b. Ismā'il could really have had the sectarian "code name" *al-Qaddāh* ("flint"), spreading "sparks" (of Divine light or wisdom, etc.). It may be reasonably expected that if he really had such a surname, it was later on carefully expunged in all Ismaili books for the sake of the "undesirable associations" with the myth.

All this is offered as a suggestion, not as a "theory". Only by a careful study of early and Yamanite literature will it be possible to evolve satisfactory and reliable answers to the numerous questions which arise concerning these matters.

FOOTNOTES TO THE APPENDIX

1 See "Studies in Early Persian Ismailism" (sec. ed., Bombay, 1955), the articles "The Book of Righteousness and True Guidance" (pp. 29-59) and "The Book of the Teacher and the Pupil" (pp. 61-86). The text of the *Kitābu'r-Rushd* was edited by Dr. M. Kamil Hussein in the "Collectanea I", 1948, pp. 185-213.

2 Prof. M. Kamil Hussein, of the Cairo University, is editing the *ur-Risālat al-Kāfiya fir-radd 'alā'l-Hārūnī al-Ḥasanī*, which is expected to come soon out.

3 For instance, the same al-Khaṭṭāb, collecting some three hundred cut-throats, attacked and killed his own brother, who could muster only two hundred men.

4 As is known, nothing was so much kept in secret by the Ismailis as details of the *da'wat* organisation, as it was in fact, and not in theory. Anyhow, as far as I can see, there is no trace of the principle that a dignitary could alone appoint his successor, of equal rank, by *naṣṣ*. Although such appointments were not exactly the same as ordination in the Christian church, yet there may be little doubt that normally only a dignitary of a superior rank could promote a subordinate. In any case the proceedings in the Yaman were opposed by a considerable party of the *mu'tariḍīn*, dissenters.

GENERAL INDEX

Important:

Exceptions

from the alphabetical arrangement of the entries:

Abū, b. (bin), Ibn, *Eanū*, *K.* (*Kitāb*), *R.* (*Risāla*), the Arabic definitive article *al-*, prepositions, and words within parentheses ARE NOT TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT in the alphabetical arrangement of the entries of this index.

- Abān b. Maymūn al Qaddāh, 61, 62, 69, 88
- 'Abbād b. Kathīr ath-Thaqafī al Baṣrī, 25-27, 44, 59, 67
- 'Abbās Iqbāl, 15
- Abbasid propaganda, 120
- Abbasids, 87, 89, 98
- 'Abd b. Maymūn, 140
- 'Abdān, *dā'i*, rebellion of, 137
- 'Abdu'l-'Aziz b. Shaddād al Ḥimyarī, — see under Ibn Shaddād.
- 'Abdu'l-lāh, *waṣī* of Imām Ja'far, 116
- 'Abdu'l-lāh or 'Ubaydu'l-lāh al Mahdī, 141
- Abū 'Abdi'l-lāh 'Abdu'l-Mālik, *zindāq*, 84
- 'Abdu'l-lāh al Aftāh, see under 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Ja'far.
- 'Abdu'l-lāh ad Dayṣānī, 80, 82, 84, 85, 87, 88, 98
- 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Ja'far, al Aftāh, 65, 66, 103, 121, 122, 124, 134
- 'Abdu'l-lāh (Abū'l Abbās) b. Ja'far b. al Ḥusayn b. Mālik al Ḥimyarī al Qummī *rāwī*, teacher of Ibn Bābūya's father, 16
- 'Abdu'l-lāh b. al Maymūn, 88, 129, 137
- 'Abdu'l-lāh b. *Maymūnī'n naqibat* 96
- 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn ad Dayṣānī, 87
- 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn al Qaddāh (sometimes Ibn al Qaddāh, Abū'l Qaddāh, 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn), abbr. AMQ, 1, 3-6, 18-20, 24-27, 62, 69, 75, 88, 93, 96-98, 108, 110, 120, 123-126, 129, 131, 132, 135, 137, 140; —biography of, 56-74;—born end of i/vii c., 63;—his book, 66;—his hereticism, 67;—he and his father servants to the Imam, 57-58;—alleged founder of Ismailism and progenitor of Fatimids, 5, 6;—no *kuṣya* or descendants mentioned, 62;—as a *rāwī*, 4;—his Bardesanism, 111, 112
- 'Abdu'l-lāh b. al Mughīra al Bajalī, AMQ's *rāwī*, 64
- Abū 'Abdi'l-lāh Mhd b. 'Alī Ibn Razzām aṭ Ṭā'i al Kūfī, 2 (see under Razzām).
- 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Mhd b. Ismā'il b. Ja'far (cf. 'Abdu'l-lāh b. al Maymūn), 88, 97, 123

- 'Abdu'l-lāh (Abū Mūsā) b. Qays al Ash'arī, 12
- 'Abdu'l-lāh (Abū Ṭālib) b. aṣ Ṣalt, *rāwī*, 65
- Abū 'Abdi'l-lāh ash Shī'ī, 137
- 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Ṭāhir, Ṭāhirid, 22
- 'Abdu'l- Muṭṭalib, 108
- 'Abdu'l-Qāhir al Baghdādī, 2, 93, 106, 111
- Abgar IX, king of Emessa, 75
- Abraham, cf. Ibrāhīm, 77, 78, 119;—people of, 128;—religion of, 79
- Abū Ja'far for Mhd al Bāqir, 26, 27
- Abū'l Qaddāh, for Ibn al Qaddāh, 30, 31
- Abū 'Ubayda al Khadhhdhā, *rāwī*, 27
- Ādam, son of God, 119
- Āden, 135
- Ibn 'Adī, traditionist, 67
- adoption, spiritual, 126, 128
- adulterer, punished, 40
- adultery, condemned, 49
- Afghanistan, S. E., 78
- Afrēm (St. Ephraim), 76
- al Afṭah, 66 (see 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Ja'far).
- ahlw's samā'*, 30, 32, 53
- Aḥmad b. 'Abdi'l-lāh al Khazrajī, 67
- Aḥmad b. 'Aṣīm al Kūfī, *rāwī*, 16
- Aḥmad b. Burd al Anṭāqī, 68
- Aḥmad (Abū 'Alī) b. Idrīs al Ash-'arī al Qummī, *rāwī*, 15
- Aḥmad b. 'Isā, *rāwī*, 29
- Aḥmad b. Ishāq b. 'Abdi'l-lāh, *rāwī*, 65
- Aḥmad b. Mhd, *rāwī*, 24, 31, 79
- Aḥmad b. Mhd b. 'Alī b. 'Imrān b. Rayyāh al Qallā as Sawwāq, 113
- Aḥmad b. Mhd al 'Aṣīmī, *rāwī*, 16
- Aḥmad b. Mhd b. 'Isā, 17
- Aḥmad (Abū Ja'far) b. Mhd b. 'Isā al Ash'arī, 65
- Aḥmad b. Mhd b. Sa'īd b. 'Abdi'r Raḥmān al Hamdānī, Ibn 'Iqda, 15-16
- Aḥmad b. Shaybān ar Ramlī, *rāwī*, 68
- Ahriman, 84
- Ahwāz, 123
- K. akhbār Salmān*, by Ibn Bābūya, 134
- Ibn Akhī Abī Shākir, 83
- Akhū Muḥsin, Abū'l Ḥusayn Mhd b. al 'Ābid ash Sharīf ad Dimashqī 2
- K. A'lāmū'n Nuburcwāt*, 77, 78, 90
- 'Alawīs among Kulīnī's *rāwīs*, 14
- 'Alī, mystery Imam, alleged father of al Qā'im, 140
- 'Alī, *rāwī*, 26
- 'Alī b. al 'Abbās al Khurādhīnī ar Rāzī, 118
- 'Alī b. 'Abdi'l-lāh b. 'Imrān al Qurashī al Makhzūmī, al May-mūnī, 62
- 'Alī b. Aḥmad al Kūfī, 8
- 'Alī al 'Askarī, 116
- Abū 'Alī al Ash'arī, *rāwī*, 26
- 'Alī b. Faḍḍāl, *rāwī*, 20, 66
- 'Alī b. Ḥaska, "bāb and prophet" of 'Alī al 'Askarī, 116
- 'Alī b. al Ḥusayn (Zaynu'l 'ābi-dīn), 131
- 'Alī (Abū'l Ḥasan) b. al Ḥusayn, Ibn Bābūya's father, 16
- 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm, *rāwī*, 24, 28, 31, 80, 81
- 'Alī b. Mhd, *rāwī*, 24, 25
- 'Alī (Abū'l Ḥasan) b. Mhd as Samirī, *wakīl* or *safīr* of the concealed xii-th I.A. Imam, 10
- 'Alī b. Mūsā ar Riḍā, see under Riḍā.

- 'Alī b. Sa'īd b. Razzām al Qāsānī, *rāwī*, 7
- 'Alī b. Abī Sahl al Qazwīnī, 8
- 'Alī b. Abī Šāliḥ Bazraj al Kūfī, 73
- 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, 80, 96, 116, 120, 128, 137, 140;—his daughter Umm Kulthum, 53
- 'Alī b. Yaḡṡīn b. Mūsā, 72
- Alids, their supernatural knowledge, 102
- 'ālim, meaning of, 53
- K. al 'Ālim wa'l ghulām*, 136
- alms, family's claim, 39;—to be given in secret, 35
- 'amal, 25
- al Amir, Fatim. caliph, 138, 139
- 'Amīr al Ash'arī Abū 'Abdi'l-lāh al Ḥusayn b. Mhd b. 'Imrān al Qummī, *rāwī*, 16
- Amīru'l mu'mīnīn* ('Alī), 26, 28, 29, 31, 32
- AMQ abbreviation for 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn al Qaddāh.
- 'Amrw b. Dīnār, 46
- 'Anbasa b. Muṣ'ab, *rāwī*, 99
- Andrae, Tor, 86
- angel, —s, aeon? 118;—idea of, 116;—Abū'l Khaṭṭāb, 108;——"of a superior rank", 27;—with 24 faces, 116-117;—30 angels of God appointed to guard a sleeper, 31;—prayer for Muḥammad and angels of God, 30;—present at the recitation of the Coran, 32;—spread wings under the feet of scholars, 24
- anger should be suppressed, 32
- "*anta min-nā ahlw'l Bayt*", 126
- anti-Fatimid propaganda's Shu-'ūbiyya bogey, 6
- Apost'es of God, 119
- K. al arā' wa diyānati'sh Shī'at*, 15
- al-'Arāyā (near Medina), 40
- K. al Arq*, 16
- Aristotle, 85
- Armenia, 90
- arrogance will be punished, 28
- Banū Asad*, 72, 91
- Ascalon, 91
- asceticism, not encouraged by the Prophet, 39
- 'Ashūrā, fast of, 52
- K. Asmā'ir rijāl*, by Ibn 'Iqda, 15-16
- K. Asrārū'n Nuṭaqā'*, 133
- Astarābādī, traditionist, 73
- Aswad, Maymūn's father, 60
- Atergatis, goddess, 75
- Ibn al Athīr, see under Ibn.
- 'Aṭṭār, Mhd b. 'Abdi'l Ḥamīd, 17
- K. al Awā'il*, 16
- awṣiyā* (Khatabite term), 108, 116
- āyatw'l Kursī*, efficacy of, 31
- '*Aynu'l ghazāl (fī fihris asmā'ir rijāl)*, 14-16, 21, 112
- 'ayyārs 19
- 'Ayyāshī, school of, 12, 73, 83, 90, 91
- Abū'l Azhar, *rāwī* 68
- Bāb*, term expl., 116
- Ibn Bābūya, Mhd (Abū Ja'far) b. 'Alī b. al Ḥusayn b. Mūsā b. Bābūya al Qummī, 1, 3, 18-21, 77, 82, 91, 114, 125;—his father, 'Alī b. al Ḥusayn, 16;—his journeys and *rāwīs*, 12 14
- Badr, *rāwī*, 25
- Baghdād, 10, 19, 85, 87, 123, 133
- Bahrāmīs, 79
- Baḥrayn 117;—island, 54;—Qarmatians of, 106
- Balkh, 19
- Bandaqī, to read Bayhaqī? 15
- al Bāqir, Mhd, see under Mhd al Bāqir.
- Barahūt, water of, 34, 43

- Bar Daysān, 75, 88, 91; see also Bardesanes.
- Bardesanes, 6, 75, 76, 78, 79, 112
- Bardesanians, 75, 77, 79, 80, 84, 91, 98; see also Daysanites, Daysāniyya.
- Bardesanism of Maymūn al Qad-dāh, 70, 71
- barley soup, eaten by 'Alī, 51
- Barmakid family, 85
- Barqa, 91
- K. Baṣṣā'iru'd daraġāt*, by aṣ Ṣaffār, 16, 17
- Basra, 25, 59, 81, 117
- Bāṭiniyya, 93
- Bayhaq, 15, 22
- Bazigh, Khattabite *rasūl*, 107, 118
- Bible, 77
- Bihāfarid, 78
- K. Bihāru'l maqāl*, 62
- blanket, yellow, property of the Prophet, 44
- "blowing up Islam from within", 3
- Bombay, 133
- Bukhārā, 9, 11, 67, 74, 87
- al Buṭhānī, al Mu'ayyad bi'l-lāh Aḥmad b. al Ḥusayn, 2
- Buyid dynasty in Iran, 11
- Camel's hump conceals a devil, 46
- Central Asian Chinese, 77
- Centre of Fatimid da'wat transferred to Yaman, 138
- Ceylon, 19
- challenge to fight, 36
- chastity is the most meritorious form of worship, 28
- China, 78;—and Khorasan, 77
- Christ, 79
- Christian Arabs, 60
- Christians in Mesopotamia, 78, 102
- church, Syrian, 86
- claims presented at night time, 53
- clay (*fin*), eating of, condemned, 14
- Clement of Alexandria, 109
- Clementine Homilies, 119
- cock's crowing is his prayer, 47
- "Compendium of heretical fables", by Theodoret of Cyrus, 7
- "concealed Imam", 137
- concubines, slave, commended, 38
- conversion to Ismailism, 8
- Coran, 81, 88, 102, 129;—angels present at its recitation, 32
- covenant of God, 38
- "*Dabbat Shubayb*", or *Nawādiru't hikmat*, 21
- Dahrites, 109
- dā'i*, term avoided in use, 116
- Dā'i*, chief, 139
- ad Dā'i ilā dīni'l-lāh*,—Imam, 116
- Daisanism, 75, 76, 92, see also Bardesanism
- K. Dastūru'l munajjimīn* 8
- dates (*'ajwa*, *lawṇ*, *liqāt*), 25-26;—for breaking fast, 35;—bunch of, in the story of Maryam, 25;—with water melon, admired by the Prophet, 42
- Dā'ūd b. 'Alī, Abbasid governor, 132
- Dā'ūd b. Kūra al Qummī, *rāwī*, 16
- Dā'ūd, father of Maymūn al Qad-dāh, 60
- day, new, greeted, 30
- Daylam, 77;—*Ṣāhib* of, Zaydite ruler of, 22
- Daysān, river, 75
- Ibn Daysān, 84
- Daysānī, cf. Bardesanians, 81, 84, 85;—meaning of term—*zindīq*, 79
- Daysānites, cf. Bardesanians, Daysāniyya, 75, 79, 80, 81, 87, 88, 93

- Deification of Imams 103, 106;—of Imam Ja'far, 103, 107
- Demourge, Creator, 103;—Sal-mān, 125, 133
- demon, in the shape of 'Alī, 118
- devils, in Khattabism, 108;—unruly, warded off by two shaytans, 31
- devotion is self restraint, 26
- Dhahabi, traditionist, 7, 68, 72, 114
- dhikr*, in prayers, may be prolonged, 30
- dhurriyya* (of the Prophet), 128
- dreams with pollution, 31
- drinking water, ways of, 43, 48;—prayers to be recited before, 43
- Druze, literature, 129, 138, 140;—list of Imams, 141
- dualists, 85
- Dustūru'l munajjimīn*, 8
- dwellers of the skies (*ahlu's samā'*), 53
- Eating in society, manners of, 41
- Ebionites, 89
- eclipse, solar, 51
- Edessa,—Urfa,—Orhai, 75
- Egypt, 68, 84, 91
- Elkesaites, 89
- Enoch, 119
- "envy of every envying", protection against, 31
- Ephraim, St. (Afrēm), 76
- Epiphanius, 89
- Epistle of al Mu'izz bi'l-lāh to the *dā'is* of Sind, 137
- Eusebius, 89
- evil acts, 28
- evil and sin, origin of, 109
- eye, starring, evil of, warded, 31
- Ibn Faḍḍāl, 'Alī, 20, 66
- al Faḍl (Abū Mhd) b. Shādhān b. al Jalīl al Azdī an Naysabūri, 8, 12, 15, 22, 65, 90
- Faḍlu'l-lāh b. Shamsu'd-dīn' al Ilāhī, 9
- Faraju'l-lāh al Ḥuwayzāwī, 62
- Farghānī, 19
- Fāris b. Ḥātim b. Māhūya al Qazwīnī, 8
- K. al Farq bayna'l firāq*, 93
- Farrukh, grandfather of Mhd b. al Ḥasan b. al Walīd, *mawlā* of 'Isā b. Mūsā al Ash'arī, 17
- Fārs, 117, 134
- fast, interruption of, 52;—during the *ḥajj*, 52
- K. Faṣād aqāwūl al Ismā'īliyya*, 8
- Faṭhites, 3, 65, 66, or al Faṭhiyya, 122
- Fāṭima, daughter of Prophet, 3, 79, 80
- Fatimid caliphs, or Imams, Fatimids, 88, 97, 98, 111, 129 130-132;—their origin and messianic claims, 120;—descent, theories of 6;—genealogy never published, 4, 5;—alleged descent from Ibn al Qad-dāh, 6
- Fatimid, literature, 135;—movement, 106
- feeding the hungry, meritorious act, 28
- K. Fihrist*, by Kashī, 115
- K. Fihrist al kutūb*, by al Majdū', 140
- K. al Fihrist*, by Ibn Nadīm, 2, 4, 7, 13, 70, 72, 76, 77, 79, 83, 85, 92
- firqa*, term explained, 94
- Firūz, *dā'i*, 137
- al Fuḍayl b. Yasār, 127
- Furāt, Euphrates, 89
- Ibn al Furāt, 89
- Fyzee, A.A.A., 7, 18

Gabriel (Salmān), 125
K. Ghāyatul-mawālīd, 138-140
ghayba, 11, 106
ghulām and *mawlā*, discussed, 58;
 —Maymūn al Qaddāh is called
mawlā, 26
ghulāt al Majūs (Bihāfaridis), 78
ghulūw, 17, 110
 gluttony and lust condemned, 40
 gnosis, gnosticism, gnostic circles
 and Ismailism, 85, 86, 109
 gnostic sects, Christian, 86;—in
 Egypt, 91;—works in Syriac,
 87
 God on earth, 103;—on the Last
 Day, 28;—Supreme God and
 Creator, 82
 de Goeje, M., 5
 good actions rewarded after death,
 28
 Gospels, 77;—of Infancy, 86
 Greatest Name (*al Ism al A'zam*),
 115
 Gurgān, grave of Mhd ad Dibāj
 b. Ja'far in, 133
Ḥabrā cloth, 25
ḥadīth az zindīq, 84
 Ḥaḍramawt, 34, 43
 al Ḥā'ir, 16
ḥajj by proxy, 35
 Ibn Ḥajar, traditionist, 7, 68, 72,
 111
 al Ḥākim bi-amrī'l-lāh, 129, 130,
 137
 al Ḥākim, Mhd b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b.
 Mhd an Naysābūrī, *rāwī*, 67
 Ḥamadān, 18, 19
 Ḥamdān Qarmaṭ, 93
 Ḥamīdu'd dīn al Kirmānī, 7, 71, 138
 Ḥamīd b. Ziyād from Ninwā, al
 Ḥā'irī, 16

Ḥamīda, mother of Mūsā b. Ja'far,
 116
 Ḥammād b. 'Isā al-Juhnī, *rāwī*,
 24, 64
 Ḥammād b. 'Uthmān, *rāwī*, 79
 Ḥamza, name most liked by the
 Prophet, 41
 Ḥamza (Druze), 140
al ḥanaḥīyya, true religion, 39
 hand, stretched out to God, pres-
 sed to face and head, 29
 Ḥannān b. Sa'īd b. Jannāh, 73
 Ḥannān b. Sudayr, *rāwī*, 100
ḥaqā'iq speculations, 109
 al Ḥārith b. Abī Rabi'a al Makh-
 zūmī, 72
 Harmonios, son of Bar Dayṣān, 76
"Ḥārūn min Mūsā", 128
 Ḥārūn ar Rashīd, 122, 123
 Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, mentioned in
 prayers, 31
 al Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Faḍḍāl, 29,
 64-66
 Ḥasan 'Askarī, I.A. Imam, 52
 al Ḥasan al Baṣrī, 72
 al Ḥasan (Abū Mhd) b. Mūsā an
 Nawbakhtī, 15
 al Ḥasan b. Mhd al Mayhadhī (?),
dā'ī, 110
Banu Hāshim, 72
 Abū Ḥātim (traditionist), 61
 Abū Ḥātim ar Rāzī, 'Abdu'r Raḥ-
 mān b. Ḥamdān, *dā'ī*, 15, 61,
 77, 78, 90
 Abū Ḥātim ar Rāzī (Mhd b. Idrīs
 al Ḥanzalī), *rāwī*, 15
 Ibn Ḥawqal, 8
 Ibn Ḥawshab, 135, 137, 139
 Hebron, 16
 Hell, entrance to, in Ḥaḍramawt,
 34
 heretics as *rāwīs*, suspected, 3
 Ibn Ḥibbān, traditionist, 67
ḥijāb, term expl., 131

al Ḥijāz, 82
 Ḥillī, 73
 Hind, 78
 Hindukush, Ismailis residing in, 86
 Ḥira, 86
 Hishām b. 'Abdī'l-Malik, Omayyad,
 91
 Hishām b. al Ḥakam, 80-88, 91
 Hishām al Jawālīqī, 85, 91
 Hishām b. Mhd as Sā'ib, 72
 Homilies, Clementine, 119
 hot, eating it condemned, 42
 Hudhayfa, 27
ḥujjat for *Imāmat*, 53
ḥujjat, the rank of, whether it
 can be held by woman, 139
al ḥujjat min al Muḥammad, 116
K. al ḥuqūq, 16
 al Ḥurraṭ al Malika, 139
 Ḥurūfī-like theories, 136
 al Ḥusayn b. 'Alī, Imam, 36, 140
 al Ḥusayn b. al Faḍl b. Zayd al
 Yamānī, 8
 al Ḥusayn b. al Ḥasan b. Yazīd,
rāwī, 25
 al Ḥusayn b. Mansūr an Naysā-
 būrī, *rāwī*, 68
 al Ḥusayn (Abū 'Abdī'l-lāh) b.
 Mhd b. Imrān b. Abī Bakr al
 Ash'arī al Qummī, surn. 'Amir
 al Ash'arī, *rāwī*, 16
 al Ḥusayn b. Sa'īd (b. Ḥammād)
 b. Mihrān al Ahwāzī, *rāwī*, 20
 al Ḥusayn b. 'Ubaydī'l-lāh, 22
 hypocrisy, 27, 28
Ibāḥūt al maḥārīm, 110
K. Ibīs wa junūdi-hi, 16
 Ibn al Athīr, 2, 4, 72, 93
 Ibn Ḥajar, 7, 68, 72, 111
 Ibn Ḥawshab, 135, 137, 139
 Ibn 'Inaba, 93
 Ibn 'Iqda, Aḥmad b. Mhd b. Sa'īd
 b. 'Abdī'r Raḥman al Ḥamad-

ānī, *rāwī*, 15-16
"Ibnū'l Islām",—Salmān Fārsī, 107
 Ibn Nadīm (cf. also *K. al Fihrist*),
 2, 4, 13, 70, 72, 76, 77, 79,
 83, 85, 92
 Ibn al Qaddāh for AMQ, 2, 27, 28,
 31, 32
 Ibn Razzām, or Rīzām, Mhd (Abū
 'Abdī'l-lāh) b. 'Alī al Kūfī aṭ
 Ṭā'ī 2, 4, 5, 70, 75, 87, 92-94,
 97, 111, 123, 126
 Ibn Shaddād, 'Abdu'l-'Azīz b. Shad-
 dād al Ḥimyarī, 2, 70, 93
 Ibrāhīm, 'Abbasid, 126
 Ibrāhīm, Abraham, 31
 Ibrāhīm b. Hāshim al Qummī,
rāwī, 64, 65
 Ibrāhīm b. al Ḥusayn al Ḥamīdī,
dā'ī, 140
 Ibrāhīm (or Abān?) b. Maymūn al
 Qaddāh, 61, 69
 Ibrāhīm, son of the Prophet, 34, 54
'idda min aṣḥābī-nā 'an ..., expl.
 17, 22-28, 31, 32;—disciples
 of Sahl b. Ziyād, 16
 idols, *ṣuwar*, to be destroyed, 46
 Idrīs b. al Ḥasan, 'Imādu'd dīn,
dā'ī, historian, 89, 96, 112, 124,
 132, 133, 138-140
iḥrām must be of two pieces, 36;
 —for women, 36, 48
K. al Ihtijāj, 16
 Ikhwānu's ṣafā, 79
'ilm, 24, 25;—of 'Alī 103;—of
 Imams, 102;—of the Prophet
 remains in his progeny, 26
 Imām and caliph, use of terms, 120
 Imamat, continuous, 107
 Imams, biographies of their asso-
 ciates, 3;—their surnames, 5;
 —I.A. the X-th and XI-th, 5,
 12, 16, 17, 18
 importers of goods, 37
 'Imrān b. 'Abdī'l-lāh, 127

in *shā'a'l-lāh*, necessity to add it, 48
 incarnation of the Deity, Druze ideas of, 129
 India, 123
 inhabitants of the sky, to shine, 30, 32, 53
 intercourse, sexual, should not be hurried; prayer before it, 39
 'Trāq, 131
 'Isā b. 'Abdī'l-lāh, 127
 'Isā b. Mūsā al Ash'arī, 17
 'Isā Shalqān, 101
 Ishāq, son of Abraham, 31
K. al Iṣlāh, 77, 90
 Islām, son of (Salmān), 128
al Ism al A'zam, 99;—confided to Abū'l Khaṭṭāb, 105
 Ismā'il, Biblical, 31
 Abū Ismā'il, *kunya* of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, 98
 Ismā'il b. 'Amrw b. Sa'īd b. Umayya, *rāwī*, 67
 Ismā'il b. Ja'far, Imam, 92, 94-97, 103, 108, 111, 114, 121, 123, 124, 132, 133
 Ismā'il b. Khālid al Muqaddasī, 68
 Ismā'il b. Mhd. b. Ismā'il b. Ja'far aṣ Ṣādiq, 122
 al Ismā'iliyya, 97;—*al khāliṣa*, 95, 97, 103
isnāds, early, refer to perusal of written information, 13
istabrāq cloth, 40
istimā', 25
K. Ithbāt an Nubuwwāt, 78
 'itrat of the Prophet, 128
 Jābir al Ju'fī, 115
 Jabrā'il, 48, 117;—commends the use of toothbrush, 46;—and Mikā'il, 115
 Jacobites, 79
 Abū Ja'far al Manṣūr, *waṣī* of

Ja'far aṣ Ṣādiq, 116
 Ja'far b. Manṣūrī'l Yaman, 133, 136
 Ja'far b. Mhd al Ash'arī, 20, 31, 64-66
 Ja'far b. Mhd b. Ismā'il b. Ja'far aṣ Ṣādiq, 122
 Ja'far b. Mhd b. 'Ubaydi'l-lāh al Ash'arī al Qummi *rāwī*, 65
 Abū Ja'far Mhd b. Ya'qūb b. Ishāq al Kulīnī ar Rāzī, see under *Kulīnī*.
 Jam, Yaṣma, 78
 Jannāba, 117
 Jārūdī, a branch of Zaydis, 15
 Jawdhar, Ustādh, 132
jazīra, term expl., 22;—of Qum, province? 12
 Jesus, 79, 118
 Jewess poisoned the Prophet, 42
 Jewish God is chief angel, 133
 Jews, 48, 85
 joking, condemned, 33
 Judaism, 107
 Jurjān, Gurgān, tomb of Mhd ad Dībāj in, 123
 Ka'ba, entering it, 36
 Kach, Kaj, Kash, early name of Shahrīsabz, 19
K. al Kāfi fī 'ilmīd dīn, passim;—arrangement of 10-11;—editions, 9-10
R. al Kāfiya fī'r raḍd 'alā'l Hārūmī al Hasanī, 7, 138, 141
 Ibn Kahmash, *rāwī*, 133
 Kamil Hussein, Dr. M., 140
K. Kanzul-watād, 140
 Karbala, 16
 Kashī, Abū 'Amrw Mhd b. 'Amrw b. 'Abdī'l 'Azīz, *passim*;—his *rāwīs*, 12;—his book, "*Rijāl*", 1
 Ibn Kathīr, 'Abbād (or 'Ubad?) al Baṣrī, 25-27, 44, 59, 67

Kaysanites, 111
 Kāzīrūn, 134
 Abū Khadija, Sālim b. Mukram al Kūfī, *rāwī*, 3, 111
K. Khāndān-i Nawbakhtī, 15
 Khāniqīn, 114
 Khārijites, 22
 al Khaṭṭāb, *dā'i*, 138, 140
 Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, Mhd b. Miqlāṣ al Asādī al Kūfī, 3, 6, 93, 94, 97-110, 112, 114, 116-118, 121-123
 Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb Ziyād b. Yaḥyā b. Ziyād b. Ḥassān an Nakrī, *rāwī*, 68
 Khattabism, 92, 117;—and Christianity, 112;—and Qarmatianism, 118
 Khattabites, *Khaṭṭābiyya*, 93-95, 97, 106, 114, 118;—as *rāwīs*, 3;—“sons of God”, 107
 Khazar kingdom, Khazars, 78, 90, 91
 Khorasan, 19, 22, 77, 114, 115;—Persia generally, 61;—and China, 77;—school of traditionists, Shi'ite, 12, 15, 90;—independent of Qum, 12
K. Khulāṣat Tahdhībī'l Kamal, 67
 Khurramīs, 79
Khuṣṣa of marriage, 38
 Khuttalān, traditionists of, 12
 Khūzistān, 123
Khwaetwadūtha, Pehl. *khwetūk dasih*, 119
Kidhb, 17
 Banū Kinda, 85
 kindness and alms, 35
 Kirmān, 68
 Kīsrā, mule presented to Prophet by, 49
 knowledge, 'ilm, search for 24;—magic, 117;—of the secret name, 115
 Kūfa, 19, 20, 61, 65, 66, 77, 81, 85,

86, 98, 102-106, 113, 118, 127;—in touch with Qum, 12
 Kulīn, Kalīn, Kilīn, Kulān, Gilīn, Arabicised into Kulayn, 10, 21
 Kulīnī, Abū Ja'far Mhd b. Ya'qūb b. Ishāq ar Rāzī, 1, 3, 5, 9, 17-23, 70, 71, 79, 84, 102, 103, 114, 116, 121, 123, 125, 133;—biography of, 10-11;—his *rāwīs*, 14-18;—his *'idda*, 17, 22-28, 31, 32
 Ibn Labbān, Khattabite, 108
Jabbay-ka, addressed to Imam Ja'far, 103
 Lakhmid state, 86
 latrine, rules for using it, 50
 laziness condemned, 37
 Letter, open, to the people of Ray, from *dā'i* Ḥasan, 110
 locusts, fried, liked by the Prophet, 43
 loneliness condemned, 46
K. Mā ruwī fī Abī'l Khaṭṭāb, 113
Mā warā'a'n Nahr, traditionists of, 12, 83
K. Mab'athū'n Nabī wa akhbāruhu, 63
 Macedonia, 75
 Madhḥij, Arab clan, 12
 Madīna, in touch with Qum, 12;—cf. Medina.
 Magians, Majūs, 3, 84, 134
 al Maḥdī, Faṭimid, 106, 139-141;—second seventh *Nāfiq*, 140, 141
 Maḥdī called Manṣūr in Yaman, 139
K. Majālisū'l mu'minīn, 10, 18, 19
K. Majma'u'l ash'ār fī madh'ī'l A'immat, by Kulīnī, 11
 Majūs, 84, 134;—*ghulātū'l*—, 78 (Bihāfarīdis, q. v.)

- Makarios and *Mubārak*, 112
Banū Makhzūm, 59, 70, 72, 75
 Makka, *faqīh ahl Makka*, 25;—
 see under *Mekka*.
 Makrān, 114
 Malāṭiya, 91
 Malkānī (Christians), 79
 al Ma'mūn, Abbasid caliph, abdicates in favour of ar Riḍā, 11
 Ma'mūn, brother of Ḥamdān Qarṣat, 93
 Ma'mūniyya, sect, 93
K. Man lā yuḥḍuru-hw'l faqīh, 1, 18, 19;—mentions AMQ, 1
K. Manāqīb Abī'l Khaṭṭāb, 112
 Mānawī, cf. Manichee, 79
 Mani, 76-79, 84, 90;—his books, 76
 Manichaeans, Manichees, 76, 82, 90
 Manichaeism, 76, 77, 79, 133
 manifestation of Divine Nūr in uninterrupted succession of Imams, 108
 al Maṣṣūr, Abbasid caliph, 122
 al Maṣṣūr, Fatimid Imam, 132
 Maṣṣūru'l-Yaman, 139
K. Maqṭal Abī'l Khaṭṭāb, 112, 113
 Marcion, 76, 78
 Marcionites, 89
 Maṣṣūn (Marcion), 78, 79
 marriage, recommended, 38
 Marw, 19;—cloth of, 44
 Maryam, tree of, 25
K. al Maṣāḥāt wa'l bulḍān, 16
K. Maṣḥaf Fāṭima, 79
 maturity, sexual, in children, 49
mawlā and *ghulām*, terms discussed, 58, 59
 Maymūn, popular name in early Islam, 111
 Maymūn, founder of the Maymūniyya sect, 88
 al Maymūn, i.e. Mhd b. Ismā'il b. Ja'far, 96-98, 112, 123;—the VII-th *Nāṭiq*, 112
 Maymūn al Bann al Kūfī, 111
Maymūnū'n naqībat, Mhd b. Ismā'il b. Ja'far, 112
 Maymūn al Qaddāh, 1, 73, 75, 87, 88, 92-96, 98, 108, 111, 121, 123-125, 129, 130, 132;—*mawlā* Abī Jafar (Mhd al Bāqir), 25, 58;—*mawlā Banī Makhzūm*, 59;—a Bardesanian, 6;—a Khattabite, 6;—*ghulām* of Imam Ja'far, 26, 58;—as a *rāwī*, 26;—his books, 71;—his sons, 69;—his *kunya*, 70
 Maymūn b. Siyāh al Baṣrī, 72, 111
 Maymūniyya, sect, 88, 93-97, 117
maysir, 60, 61
K. al Maysir wa'l qidāh, 72, 73
 Māzandarān, 19
 Mazdakīs, 78, 79
 Mazdūq, i.e. Mazdak, 78
 measuring of sight by 'Alī, 49
 meat-eating, commended, 42
 Medina (Mādīna), 12, 39, 40, 62, 84, 113, 121-124, 127, 131, 132
 Mekka (Makka), 46, 59, 60, 62, 69, 84, 113, 123;—*wādīs* in 52;—Imams' property in, 69
 mercy, acts of, bring early reward, 27
 Mesopotamia, 87, 89, 137;—Northern, 75;—Southern, or Lower, 77, 105, 114, 117, 123, 133
 Mesopotamia, Cristianity in, 102;—*dā'īs* in, their rebellion, 137
 metempsychosis, 93, 110
 Mikā'il, angel, 115
K. Minhājū'l maqāl, 73
 Miṣr, 84
K. Miṣān, 114
al Miṣān fī nuṣratīz zandaqa, 71
K. Miṣānu'l-ī'tidāl, 112
 Moses Bar Kepha, 76
 Moses, "robust", 107, 119

- Mu'allī b. Khunays, *rāwī*, 72, 113, 132
 Mu'ammil b. Aḥāb al 'Ijlī al Kūfī, *rāwī*, 68
 Mu'ammir, Khattabite, divinised, 108
 Mu'ammir b. Khallād, *rāwī*, 118
 Mu'āwiya b. Ḥakīm, *rāwī*, 104
 al Mu'ayyad bi'l-lāh Abū'l Ḥusayn Aḥmad b. al Ḥusayn b. al Ḥasan al Buṭḥānī, 2, 137
 Mubārak,—Makarios, 112;—*maw-lā* of Ismā'il b. Ja'far aṣ Ṣādiq, 95
 al Mubārak (Ismā'il b. Ja'far aṣ Ṣādiq), 96, 97
 Mubārakiyya, sect, 95, 96, 106
 al Mufaḍḍal b. 'Umar aṣ Ṣayrāfī, 3, 105, 106, 111, 115, 123
 Muḥammad the Prophet, 97, 127
 Mhd (Abū Ja'far) b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Ja'far b. al Ḥusayn al Ḥimyarī al Qummī, *rāwī*, 16
 Mhd b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Mihrān al Karkhī, 112
 Mhd b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Mhd an Naysābūrī, al Ḥākīm, *rāwī*, 67
 Mhd b. 'Abdī'l-Ḥamīd al 'Aṭṭār, 17
 Mhd b. 'Abdī'l-Jabbār, *rāwī*, 26
 Mhd (Abū'l Ḥusayn) b. al 'Ābid ash Sharīf ad Dimashqī, "Akhū Muḥsin", 2
 Mhd b. Aḥmad b. Yahyā b. 'Imrān b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Sa'īd b. Malik al Ash'arī al Qummī, *rāwī*, 21
 Mhd (Abū Ja'far) b. 'Alī b. al Ḥusayn b. Mūsā Ibn Bābūya al Qummī, 18 (see under *Ibn Bābūya*)
 Mhd b. 'Alī b. Maḥbūb al Ash'arī al Qummī, *rāwī*, 21
 Mhd (Abū 'Abdī'l-lāh) b. 'Alī Ibn Razzām aṭ Ṭā'ī al Kūfī, 2 (see under *Ibn Razzām*).
 Mhd (Abū Ja'far) al Bāqir, Imam, 25, 30, 58, 69, 73, 86-88
 Mhd ad Dībāj b. Ja'far aṣ Ṣādiq, 123-124
 Mhd Ibn al Ḥanafīyya, 140
 Mhd b. al Ḥasan, *rāwī*, 24
 Mhd (Abū Ja'far) b. al Ḥasan b. 'Alī aṭ Ṭūsī "*Shaykhū't Ṭā'ifa*", 1, 20 (see under *Ṭūsī*).
 Mhd b. al Ḥasan b. Abī Jahm b. Bukayr b. A'yan ash Shaybānī, *rāwī*, 64
 Mhd b. al Ḥasan b. al Walīd, 17
 Mhd b. Ibrāhīm b. Ja'far al Kātib an Nu'mānī, 8
 Mhd b. Ishāq al Khaffāf, *rāwī*, 80
 Mhd (Abū'l Ḥasan) b. Ismā'il al Bandaqī (Bayhaqī?) an Naysābūrī, *rāwī*, 15
 Mhd b. Ismā'il Ibn Bazīgh, 15
 Mhd b. Ismā'il b. Ja'far aṣ Ṣādiq, 92, 103, 106, 107, 117, 121-124, 129, 130, 132, 133, 137, 140, 141;—seventh *Nāṭiq*, 140;—Imam of the Maymūniyya, 93, 94, 96
 Mhd b. Ismā'il an Naysābūrī, *rāwī*, 15
 Mhd b. Ismā'il ar Rāzī, 15
 Mhd b. Ismā'il Ibn Abī Sa'īd az Zayyāt, *rāwī*, 15
 Mhd b. Maḥbūb, *rāwī*, 21, 65
 Mhd b. Mhd b. 'Iṣām al Kulīnī, *rāwī*, 19
 Mhd b. Mūsā al Kātib al Qazwīnī, 8
 Mhd b. Muslim, *rāwī*, 115
 Mhd b. Sa'īd, 112
 Mhd b. Salma al Yashkūrī, 73
 Mhd b. Sulaymān, *waṣī* of Imam Ja'far, 116
 Mhd b. Ṭabāṭabā, 133
 Mhd b. Yahyā, *rāwī*, 24, 29, 65

- Mhd (Abū Ja'far) b. Ya'qūb b. Ishāq al Kulīnī ar Rāzī, 1, 9, 20 (see under *Kulīnī*).
- Mhd b. Abī Zaynab Miqlās Ibn Abī'l Khaṭṭāb al Barrād al Ajda' al Asādī al Kūfī, Abū'l Khaṭṭāb, 98 (see under Abū'l Khaṭṭāb).
- al Mu'izz li-dīnī'l-lāh, Fatimid, 89, 96, 137, 141
- mūkawwīn*, evil spirit, 118
- Muqtanā (Druze author), 140
- Mūsā, *waṣī* of Imam Ja'far, 116
- Mūsā b. Ja'far aṣ Ṣādiq, 63, 64, 69, 85, 101, 114, 116, 121-124, 131, 133
- Mūsā'l qawī al umīn*, 107
- Abū Muslim Khurāsānī, 78, 113, 126
- K. Mustadrak*, 4, 19, 20, 21, 22, 114;—AMQ's *rāwī*, 64
- al Musta'in, Abbasid caliph, 58
- al Musta'li, Fat. caliph, 138
- mustaqarr wa mustawda'*, 131
- mustawda' amrīl Imāmat*, 132
- mustawda' Imāms*, 128-132
- Mu'tazilites, 85
- Muyassir, *rāwī*, 100
- mysticism, gnosticism and Ismailism, 109
- myth of Salmān, 126
- Nabī mursal*: Abū'l Khaṭṭāb, 107
- Ibn Nadīm, 2, 4, 13, 70, 72, 76, 77, 79, 83, 85
- Nahru'l Kut, river (Daysān), 75
- nails, clipping of, 45
- Najāshī, 7, 17, 21, 22, 70, 72, 73, 85, 112, 114, 118, 126;—his *K. ar Rijāl*, 7, 8
- Ibn an Najjār, his book, 67
- name of the Prophet, to mention in prayers, 30
- names, great, of God protect from crawling creatures, 31
- names, personal, of Imams, should not be pronounced, 5, 8
- an Nasā'i, traditionist, 67
- nashru'l-'ilm*, 25
- naṣṣ* in appointments of *dā'īs*, 139, 141
- naṣṣ* to Mūsā b. Ja'far, 123
- Nāṭiq*, Seventh, Mhd b. Ismā'il, 106
- Navsari, 133
- K. an Nawādir*, by Aḥmad b. Idrīs al Qummī, 15
- K. an Nawādir*, by 'Amir al Ash'ari, 16
- K. an Nawādir*, by Sahl b. Ziyād, 17
- K. Nawādiru'l hikmat*, by Mhd b. Aḥmad al Qummī, 21
- Nawbakhtī, al Ḥasan b. Mūsā, 95, 96, 99, 101, 105, 108, 113-115, 117, 118, 121
- an Naysābūrī, Mhd b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Mhd al Ḥākim, *rāwī*, 67
- Neo-Platonic theories, 109, 136
- Nestorians, 79, 85, 86
- Nishapur, 19, 22, 87, 91;—centre of Shi'ite learning, 12;—Kulīnī's *rāwīs* from, 14
- Nizāmu'l-Mulk, 72
- Nizār, Imam, 138
- Nizārīs of India, 133;—of Persia, 131
- Noah, 119
- K. an Nujūm*, by Aḥmad b. Mhd al 'Aṣimī, 16
- Nu'mān, Qāḍī, 125
- nūr* and *rūh* (Khattabite), 108
- Nūru'l-lāh Shushtarī, 10, 18
- K. an Nusrat*, by Sijistānī, 71
- Oath, swearing of, 47;—revocation of, 47
- olive, blessed tree, 42
- olives and olive oil, commended, 42

- Omayyads, 48, 100;—and Imam Ja'far, 121
- "On the laws of the countries", by Bardesanes, 76
- Orhai, Urfa, Edessa, 75
- Origen, 109
- Orrhoene, Osrhoene, Upper Mesopotamia, 75
- orthodox Fatimid school of Ismailism, "Persian", 135, 137
- Osrhoene, Orrhoene, 75
- Pamirs, Ismailis of, 86
- Paradise, entering of, 32
- patience in sorrow, 26
- Patrist literature, 136
- pederasty condemned, 40
- peeling fruits, 42
- Pen, Divine, 49
- persecution of Shi'ites in Qum, 22
- Persia, 123;—Western, 77
- Persian Gulf, 54
- pollution of dress, unwitting, 50
- pomegranates, commended, 42
- prayers, before battle, 37;—evening. for children, 41;—for dead, 29, 51;—over the dying, 33;—before sleep, 31;—of married man, 38;—to be increased, 34;—please God, 28;—shield believer, 29;—neglect in, condemned, 29;—must be insistent, 29;—name of the Prophet should be mentioned in, 30;—also angels, 30;—recited by 'Alī in Ramaḍān, 55
- profiteers, cursed, 37
- progeny of Prophet, blessings to be invoked, 30
- propaganda, Abbasid, 120
- Prophet (Muḥammad), 102, 107, 115, 126, 128, 132, and *passim*;—objected to be called by name, 8
- prostration for expiating errors in prayer, 50
- proto-Ismaili doctrine, 106
- Ptolemy, system of, 109
- puberty, separation of children at, 41
- punishment after death, 28
- Qaddāh*, meaning of, 60-61
- al Qaddāh*, flint, symbol of Imam, 137
- al Qaddāh, simply, for Maymūn al Qaddāh, 6, 24, 31, 141
- al Qā'im, Fatimid, 89, 140
- Qanbar, *mawla* of 'Alī, 57
- Qarāmiṭa of Baḥrayn, 106, 117
- Qarmatian doctrine based on the *Wāqifa* principle, 106;—invasion of Syria, 137
- Qarmatians of Fārs, 93;—(implied Ismailis) refutations of, precautionary, 3
- Qāsān, Sawād of, 7
- al Qaṭr, 54;—cloth made there, 44
- Qawsīn, distr. of Ray, 21
- qayyim*, term explained, 105;—in Kūfa, Abū'l Khaṭṭāb, 106
- qidāh* and *maysir*, 60
- K. al Qidāh wa'l maysir*, 72
- Qum, 10, 17, 22, 66, 115, 127;—centre of Shi'ism, 14;—its school of Shi'ite tradition, 11, 12
- Qumīs in the entourage of Imam Ja'far, 12;—*rāwīs* of Kulīnī, 14
- K. fi Radd'l Ismā'iliyya*, by Ibn Razzām, 2
- K. ar Radd 'alā'l Ismā'iliyya*, by 'Alī b. Aḥmad al Kūfī, 8
- K. ar Radd 'alā'l Ismā'iliyya fī'l ma'ād*, 8
- K. fi Radd 'alā'l Qarāmiṭa*, by Kulīnī, 11

- K. ar Radd 'alā'l Qarāmiya*, by 'Alī al Qazwinī, and another by al Faḍl b. Shādhān, 8
- K. ar Radd 'alā's Salmāniyya* (or *Sulaymāniyya*?), 118
- K. ar Raḥma fī'l wuḍu'*, 16
- Ramla, 68
- K. Rasā'il al A'imma*, by Kulīnī, 11
- Rashīdū'd-dīn, historian, 72
- rasūl*, Khattabite, Bazigh, 107
- rasūlū'l-lāh*, Abū'l Khaṭṭāb, 106
- rationalism, 109
- rwā'ā* 'an-hu, implications of, 68
- rāwīs*, biographies of, 3
- rāwīs*, "specialisation" of, 56
- Ray, 10, 17-19, 21, 87;—inhabitants of, addressed, 110
- Ibn Razzām (or Rizām), 2, 4, 5, 70, 87, 92-94, 97, 111, 123, 126
- refutation of Ismailism, precautionary, 3
- religion, neglect of, condemned, 37
- respect, personal, 32
- respectable man, greeting of, 33
- Resurrection, testifying at, 30, 31
- "return" after death of 'Abdū'l-lāh al Aftāh, 122-123;—of Abū'l Khaṭṭāb, 117;—of Mūsā b. Ja'far aṣ Ṣādiq, 123
- ar Riḍā, 'Alī b. Mūsā, 11, 64-66, 83-85, 90, 96, 130
- riding astride, prohibited to women, 39
- K. ar Rijāl*, by Kashī 1, 114;—another, by Kulīnī, 11
- ring, wearing it, 45
- K. ar Riyāq*, by al Kirmānī, 71
- "rūh", entrusted to Abū'l Khaṭṭāb, 117;—transferred, 106
- rūḥū'l-īmān* in Imams, 115
- rūḥū'l-ḥayāt*, 115
- ar rūḥ al mudarrij, 115
- rūḥ al quds*, 115;—*al quwwa*, 115;—*ash shahwat*, 115
- ar Rūḥa, or ar Roḥa, 75
- rūḥs*, five, in Imams, 102, 115
- Ruknu'd-dawla, Buyid, 19
- Rūs, 91
- K. ar Rushd wa'l hidāyat*, 136, 141
- Rustam, *wilāyat* of, 15
- Rūyān, 19;—Rūyānī, 19
- Sabeans, 78
- Sābirī, or Sāburī, cloth, 127, 134
- Sābur (Shāpūr), in Fārs, 114
- Sacy, S. de—, 129
- Sa'd (Abū'l-Qāsim) b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Abī Khalaf al Ash'arī al Qummī, *rāwī*, 15
- aṣ Ṣaffār, Mhd b. al Ḥasan al Qummī (one of the 'idda), 16, 20
- safir*, term expl., 116
- Ṣaḥāriyya* cloth, 25
- Ṣaḥibu'd Daylam, 22
- K. Ṣaḥīḥ* (by Bukhārī), 9
- Sahl b. Ziyād (Abū 'Alī) al Ādamī, founder of 'idda, 16, 17, 20, 22, 24-28, 31, 32, 65
- Sa'īd (or Sa'd) b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Abī Khalaf al Ash'arī al Qummī, *rāwī*, 21
- Sa'īd b. Sālim al Qaddāh al Makkī, 61
- Salam — Salām — God — Imam Ja'far, 107
- "salām 'alay-kum" to be said loudly, 32
- Salām, Abū 'Alī, al Khurāsānī, 25
- Salām b. Sa'īd al Makhzūmī, *rāwī*, 25, 58
- Ṣāliḥ (Abū Khālid), b. Sa'īd al Qammāt al Asadī, *rāwī*, 65
- Sālim (Abū Salma) b. Mukram, Abū Khadija, *rāwī*, 113
- Salmān Fārsī, 112, 125-128;—Manichaean Hormuztā, 133;—

- Ibnū'l Islām, 107, 128;—myth of, 126
- Salmāniyya (Sulaymāniyya?) sect, 118
- K. as Samā'*, 16
- Samarqand, centre of Shi'ite learning, 12
- Samarra, 16
- Samsaioi (Shamsis?), 89
- sandals, taking off when entering mosque, 51;—putting on, 45, 51
- Saqlabiyya, 91
- Sarandībī, 19
- Abū Sarāyā, 133
- as Sarī or as Sirrī, Khattabite *rasūl*, 107
- Sat Gur Nūr, 133
- Satan, vision of Abū'l Khaṭṭāb, 99, 109, 125
- Satpanthīs, 133
- Satr*, period of, 131
- scholars, heirs of prophets, 25;—surpass in merit devotees, 24, 25
- schools of Shi'ite tradition, Khorāsani, 18, 19;—Qumī, 18, 21
- schools of Ismailism, Persian and Yamanite, 136
- Seleucids, 75
- self-control commended, 26;—self restraint, 40
- Shaburqān*, Mani's book, 77
- Ibn Shaddād, 70, 71, 93
- Shahrastānī, 73, 85, 111
- Shahrisabz, 19
- shake hand, advised, 27
- Abū Shākir, 84, 85;—name applied to Maymūn al Qaddān, 70, 98;—ad Dayṣānī, 81-84, 87, 88;—Maymūn ad Dayṣānī, 83;—*zindīq*, 83
- Shamsis, 79, 89
- Shāpūr, in Fārs, 134
- Sharaf 'Ubaydallī, 93
- Banū Shaybān, 85
- Shaykhu't Ṭā'ifa*, Ṭūsī, q. v., Mhd b. al Ḥasan b. 'Alī, 20
- shayṭān*, keeping him away during sex. intercourse, 39
- shayṭāns*, flee from recitation of the Coran, 32;—from *dhikr*, 30;—two sent to ward off unruly devils, 31;—tricks of, 31
- sheep's tigh, liked by the Prophet, 42
- Shi'ite literature, early, scarcity of, 13
- Shi'ite sentiment mobilised by the Ismailiīs, 135
- shroud of the Prophet, material of, 24
- Ibn Shurayḥ, *faqīh ahl Makka*, 25, 26
- Ibn Shurayḥ, Abū Mhd Mu'āwiya b. Maymūn Ibn Shurayḥ al Kindī, 59, 60
- Ibn Shurayḥ Mhd b. Shurayḥ al Ḥaḍramī, 60
- Shu'ūbiyya, 6
- K. Ṣifāt al Jannat wa'n Nār* (by AMQ?), 63, 73
- K. Ṣifāt*, 73
- Ṣiffin, battle of, 52
- K. Sifru'l-asrār*, 76
- Ṣīn wa Māṣīn, 78
- Sīnd, 78, 137;—*dā'īs* in, 96, 137
- K. Sirat Ibn Ḥawshab*, 137
- as Sirrī, or as Sarī, Khattabite *rasūl*, 107
- sitting on the *minbar*, Prophet's, 50
- K. Siyāsat Nāma*, 72
- K. Siyāsatu'l-murtaddīn*, 7, 138
- slave concubines, commended, 38
- sleeping believer is guarded by 2 *shayṭāns* and 30 angels of God, 31

- sleeve, carrying things in, 37;—
shortened by 'Alī, 45
sneezing, magic of, 32, 54
sociability recommended, 26
Solomon, 78
sons of God, Khattabites, 107
sons of Islam, 107
"spiritual adoption", 126, 128
"stock of al Qaddāh", 141
stories, obscene, condemned, 39
subḥānā-l-lāh, formula, in prayer,
50
Sufism, history of, 86
Sughdī, 19
K. Sullamū'n najāt 70, 97
Supreme God and demiourge, 103;
—of Khattabites, 108
Syria, school of Shi'ite trad., 137;
—of Ismailism, 137
Syriac literature, 75
Ṭabarī, history of, 15, 89
Ṭabaristān, Zaydite rulers of, 22
K. fi Ṭabīrī'r ru'yā', by Kulīnī, 11
Ṭabūk, war of, 43
K. Tahdhībū'l aḥkām, by Ṭūsī, 18,
20-23, 50, 133, 134;—mention
of AMQ, 1
K. Tahdhīb at Tahdhīb, by Ibn
Ḥajar, 68, 72
Abū Ṭāhir, Qarmatian, 117
Ṭāhirids, 15
Ṭā'if 40
Ṭalḥa b. 'Arw b. 'Uthmān al
Makkī, *rāwī*, 67
Abū Ṭālib, 108
tanāsukh, cf. metempsychosis, 93
K. Taqrīb at Tahdhīb, 68
K. at Ta'rikh, by Ibn 'Iqda, 15
Tartus, 91
tarwiya, ceremony of, 52
tashrīq, 52
taslīm, formula of, 50
ṭawāf before *hajj*, 36
K. at Tawḥīd, by Ibn Bābūya
(refers to AMQ), 1, 18, 47, 77,
82, 84, 91
K. at Tawḥīd, by Sahl b. Ziyād, 17
Ṭayba (place), 46
aṭ Ṭayyib, son of al Āmir, 137
teeth, cleaning recommended, 33
Ṭhābit (Abū Ḥamza) b. Abī Ṣafī-
ya Dīnār ath Thamālī, *rāwī*,
127
Thanawīs, cf. dualists, 79
Thaqīf tribe, 127
thard and *tharīd* (or *thurayd*?), a
kind of cheese, 42
Theodoret of Cyrus, bishop, 7
ṭin, clay, eating of, condemned, 41
Tirmidhī, traditionist, 67
Toosy, "List of Shy'ah Books", 20
toothbrush, use of, pleases God, 46
toothpick recommended, 43
tradition, books on,—*isnāds* attest-
ing their existence, 13
tradition, Shi'ite, early studies in,
13;—the Qum school, 11
turban must be put on at prayer,
29
Turfan, excavations in, 76
Turkestan, 77
Turks, infiltration into Turkestan,
12
"turning Qarmatian", conversion
alleged, 8
ṭurūq, in *ḥadīths*, 19
Ṭūsī, "Shaykhū't-Ṭā'ifa", Mhd b.
al Ḥasan, 17, 20-22, 50, 72, 73,
114
Ṭūsī's "List", 7, 20
"tutorship" motive in religious pre-
cedents, 139
'Ubaydu'l-lāh b. 'Amrw b. Ḥafṣ al
'Adawī *rāwī*, 67
'Umar, caliph, altered *wādis* in
Mekka, 52

- 'Umar b. 'Abdī'l-'Azīz, *rāwī*, 79
'Umar b. Yazīd, 127, 128
Ibn Abī 'Umayr, *rāwī*, 81
K. 'Umdatū't Ṭālib, 93
K. Ummū'l Kitāb, 86, 87, 125, 126,
133
Umm Kulthum, daughter of 'Alī,
53
Umm Salma, 131, 132
"unveiling those whom God has
veiled", sin of, 5
Urfa—Edessa, 75
'Uthmān b. al Aswad b. Mūsā b.
Bādhān, *rāwī*, 67
'Uthmān b. Maḡ'ūn, 34, 53;—his
wife complaining on his
abstinence, 38, 39
K. 'Uyūnū'l-akḥbār, 86, 89, 113,
124, 132, 133
Wakīl, of the concealed Imam,
discussed, 116
Wāqifa type of Shi'ite sects (also
Qarmatians), 106
Wāqifites as *rāwīs*, 3
waṣī, Khattabite term, discussed,
105, 116
Water of Zamzam, 43, 44
water-melon with dates liked by
the Prophet, 42
wedding ceremony, shortened, 38
whale in the sea, 24
white colour recommended for
dress, 44
wife, ideal, described, 37
wudu', opening of prayer, 33
Yaḥyā b. 'Abdī'l-lāh Abī'l Ḥasan
Ṣāhibī'd Daylam, 22
Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al Anṣārī, 67
Yaman, 124, 135, 137-139;—school
of Ismailism in, 136, 137
Banū Yaḡṭīn, 91
Ya'qūb b. Ḥamīd b. Kāsib al
Madanī, *rāwī*, 68
Abū Ya'qūb as Sijistānī, 71, 78, 79,
97
Yellow, *mu'asfar*, dress is not pro-
hibited, 44
Yūnus b. 'Abdī'r Raḥmān, Abū'l
Ḥārith, 72, 83, 91
Zaddīqā (Syriac), expl., 79
K. Zahru'l-ma'ānī, 112, 139, 140
zakāt on raw products, 51
Zamzam, water of, 43, 44
zanāḡa, 112
Zayd b. 'Umar b. al Khaṭṭāb, 53
Zaydī rāwīs, 22
K. az Zīna, 15, 61, 77, 90
zindīq, Plur. *zanādiqa*, term expl.
79;—80-85
Zoroaster, 78
Zoroastrianism, 77, 78, 91, 119
Zoroastrians, 77, 84, 134
Abū'z Zubayān *kunya* of Abū'l
Khaṭṭāb, 98
Abū Zur'a, traditionist, 67;—on
Ibn Kathīr, 60
Zuṭṭ, cloth made by, 114

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	xi
I. The Myth of 'Abdu'l-lāh b. al-Qaddāh	1
II. Al-Kāfi and its Author	9
III. Traditions related by Ibn al-Qaddāh	24
IV. The Biography of Ibn al-Qaddāh	56
V. Daisanism of Maymūn and his son	75
VI. The alleged impious Doctrine	92
VII. Ibn al-Qaddāh as the Progenitor of the Fatimid Caliphs	120
Appendix	135
General Index	143

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