

IVANOW NODE
YEARLY SAITE MOVEMENTS 28893
ORGANIS. OF THE FATIMID PROPAGANDA.

ENG
0712



JOURNAL
OF THE
ROYAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

Volume 10
Part 1
1910

The first part of the volume contains a paper by the late Sir John Lubbock, F.R.S., on the 'The Dawn of Civilization'. This paper is a reprint of an address delivered at the Royal Society on 10th July 1910. It deals with the early stages of human development, from the earliest forms of life to the appearance of man. Sir John Lubbock's theory of the 'four ages' of man—Stone, Bronze, Iron, and Copper—is discussed in detail. He argues that the Stone Age is the most important, as it is the period when man first began to use tools and to live in organized societies. The paper is illustrated with numerous drawings of primitive tools and weapons.



4213



JOURNAL
OF THE
BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

Vol. 17

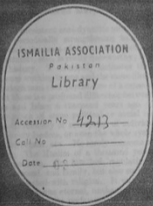
1941

EARLY SHI'ITE MOVEMENTS

By W. IVANOW

So far there is no comprehensive study of the whole of the early Shi'ite movement which manifested itself in a long series of sectarian formations, and especially Shi'ite risings, led by hundreds of different members of the gradually increasing family of 'Ali b. Abi Talib. There was always too much of a tendency in the works of historians to treat Shi'ite sectarian movements as purely religious developments created by the influence of pre-Islamic religions on Islam newly introduced among the masses. And the risings of different Alids are usually attributed to the ubiquitous "Alid intrigue", isolated subversive activities of factions pursuing entirely secular political aims. The works which touch on this subject are inadequate. The latest among these are: the monograph by J. Wellhausen, "Die Religions-politischen Oppositions-parteien im alten Islam" (Berlin, 1901), which is chiefly concerned with the rivalry of different groups of Arab tribes; or G. van Vloten's "Recherches sur la Domination Arabe et Chi'itisme" (Amsterdam, 1894), which is very superficial, indeed.

All such references to Shi'ite movement are almost invariably derived from non-Shi'ite authors; and, generally speaking, non-Shi'ite usually means anti-Shi'ite, with all the implications of a rabidly hostile attitude. Shi'ite sources are very few, not easily accessible, and require a considerable amount of preparatory work. But their study well repays the labour, because it offers a more correct idea of the subject. Taken from their angle of vision, there was not much difference between what is treated as "sects" and "political" risings. As is known, historians usually have two formulae for introducing these; the first, sectarian movements,



ISMAILIA ASSOCIATION
Pakistan
Library

Accession No. 4213

Call No. _____

Date. 08

usually have the following scheme: so-and-so proclaimed himself an incarnation of the Deity (or the prophet, or Imam, as the case may be), and began to preach such-and-such impious doctrines. Sectarial developments of this kind are chiefly dealt with in the works of different heresiologists, who usually pay little attention to their political aims and activities. The other group has the following scheme: rose so-and-so, and began to call people (to support his claims to supreme authority) for himself,—*qim fulân wa da'd úd safrî-hî*. As I have already endeavoured to emphasise in my preceding paper, "Isma'is and Qarmatians" (*JBERAS*, 1940, pp. 43-85), such difference in the majority of cases was illusory, due to inaccuracies of reports, and their implied tendencies. Neither were sectarial movements so impious as they are painted, nor were the "political" risings free from religious basis. Most probably the real case was that Shi'ism in general, as a religion, differed very little, even in the cases of the most "impious" sects, from the religion of their "orthodox" opponents. Freakish beliefs, reported by heresiologists, probably occupied only a secondary position, just as the different forms of superstition occupy even now. And certain political aspirations always formed an inseparable part of the doctrine.

The sight of the persistent anti-dynastic movement spread over several centuries, periodically strengthening to the extent of a grand revolution, as in the cases of the movement of Abû Muslim, of the rise of the Fatimids, etc., is really noteworthy; it is apparently quite unique in history. It decidedly indicates the presence of one continuous cause working in one and the same direction through ages. To the modern man such persistence of a cause would appear quite strange, but there is a profound difference between the outlook of modern times and Islam a thousand years ago. The modern man, feeling the pinch of some political or social inconvenience, would blame the inefficiency or corruption of individual agents of the government, party leaders, or even the whole system, the laws, made by legislative organs, etc. He rarely connects all this with a dynastic question. The Muslim of a thousand years ago was in quite a different position. For him law, regulating every aspect of life, not only personal, and family, but also social and political, was inseparably connected with religion. It was based on Divine Revelation, and as such was eternal, unchangeable, and, in itself, perfect, guaranteeing complete perfection of the state of affairs if applied to life as thoroughly as it should be. It was beyond criticism, beyond any idea of improvement, or being perfected. The extortionate revenue officer, or corrupt judge, or even the governor, or sultan himself, who, prompted by necessities of the state, would introduce additional legislation, not supported by the religious code, were not only unjust, corrupt, or tyrannical in the eyes of the Muslim subjects, but also sinful, impious, anti-religious, enemies of God, disobedient to His dictates as revealed through His Apostle. Therefore the struggle had to be carried on not as in modern times

for this or that system of social or state legislation, but for or against the person of the ruler. Law was perfect, but those who applied it were bad.

That Muslim law could secure ideal conditions was perfectly clear for every Muslim from the picture of the earliest period of Islam, under its Founder,—the picture which in the course of time was more and more coloured by legend, and idealised. It was that Golden Age when all were pious, brotherly, and kind to each other. This was because the Prophet was the mouthpiece of God Himself, who ruled His own people, guiding them in everything. And if He did this at that early time, it would be inconsistent with His mercy and justice to abandon them completely to their own efforts, leaving them at the mercy of the voracious and vile dictators and usurpers. As expressed in some "prophecies", voicing popular sentiment of a much later period than the Prophet's,—"they will oppress you, pounding and grinding you as if under a mill stone, until you will begin to say: o, if only we could have as our ruler a man from the progeny of the Prophet,—verily he would take mercy on us". Piety, i.e. respect to religion, active and unflinching, might be, it is true, found in different individuals. But experience shows that an individual in his private capacity may behave quite differently when authority is placed in his hands. Some guarantee was demanded by popular sentiment, and such a guarantee could only be found in descent from the Prophet, hereditary pre-disposition to piety. Surely, a son, grandson, and so on, of the Prophet himself could not be an impious person. This belief was shared even by non-Shi'ites. Therefore a whole cycle of messianic expectations, of different legends, prophecies, etc., was in circulation, demanding a ruler from the house of the Prophet, who would surely fill the earth with justice and equity to the same degree as it was filled with injustice, oppression and tyranny.

The demand inevitably created the supply, and an enormous series of Alids, or even semi-Alids, i.e. descendants of 'Abbâs, and Ja'far b. Abî Tâlib, offered their good services to this end, all over the vast territory of the Omayyad and Abbasid empire, from Daylam and Tabaristan to the Yaman, and from the confines of China to the Atlantic coast. Many of such risings, led by different Alids, were purely local affairs, revolts against some particularly oppressive local authorities. Quite naturally, they were most frequent in the immediate proximity of the capital of the caliphate, in Mesopotamia itself, within easy reach of the numerous officials of the rapidly decaying Abbasid government. Troubles of this kind seem to have been endemic in Kufa, Basra, and their dependencies. In great majority of cases such risings were small, futile adventures or escapades, without any serious organisation, thoughtless, very injurious to the movement. The insurgents were, according to an aphorism attributed to Imam Muhammad al-Bâqir, "like young birds, jumping from their nests before their wings were sufficiently strong to fly. They could only jump once or twice before being

caught by children, who would make them their toys, and kill them".

In the great scarcity of Shi'ite sources for the study of the movement every work containing information of this kind is precious. A work such as the *Sharḥ al-akḥḥār* of Qāḍī Nu'mān is doubly interesting; it is a work of Ismaili origin, and a very early one, compiled about 350/961 from early sources of which many are possibly lost. It therefore well deserves to be properly noticed in this short paper so as to attract the attention of possible students of the subject.

The *Sharḥ al-akḥḥār fī faḍl 'il-'A'immat al-athār*, by the most brilliant jurist, theologian, and historian of the Fatimid dynasty, Abū Ḥanīfa an-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad b. Maṣūb b. Ahmad b. Ḥayyūn at-Ta'mīm of Qayrawān (d. 363/974),—cf. W. Ivanov, *Guide to Ismaili Literature*, no. 68,—is an epitome of the earlier works of the author. It contains much new material, but also substantial extracts, paraphrased from the *Iftitāḥ al-da'wa* (*Guide*, 103), *Ma'ālim al-Mahdī* (*Guide*, 101, lost), *al-Mandqib li-ahl bayt Rasūlil-lāh* (*Guide*, 102), etc. Its subject is tradition about the Prophet, 'Alī, and the Imams up to al-Mahdī. The work is divided into 16 parts (*juz'*); in this paper we are concerned with the XIVth which deals with information regarding Imam Muḥammad b. 'Alī (al-Bāqir), Imam Ja'far b. Muḥammad (as-Ṣādiq), and then, instead of the expected information about his successors in the Imamāt, with the numerous Alids (and semi-Alids) who were the predecessors of al-Mahdī in his claims to the caliphate. According to the author, they failed, and were bound to fail, because they claimed what really was not intended by God for them, but what was the mission of him whose advent was predicted in many different revelations by the Prophet, in the Coran and in additional utterances,—al-Mahdī, the founder of the Fatimid dynasty, proclaimed as caliph in Raqqāda in 297/909.

From other works of Qāḍī Nu'mān, especially his *al-Mandqib li-ahl bayt* (*Guide*, 102), it is obvious that in addition to his theological and legal studies, he was well versed in history, especially the history of the period of the Omayyads. It is rather disappointing that although he always mentions his own works when he quotes them, he does not mention his sources of historical information. It is doubtful whether he had the Annals of Tabari at his disposal; in any case he refers to many names which are not mentioned in Tabari's work. As is known, the latter gives many details concerning Shi'ite risings near the beginning of the Abbasid caliphate, but his information concerning the third c. A.H. is rather insufficient in this respect. Qāḍī Nu'mān similarly quotes many details in regard to such early risings, but for the subsequent period he usually gives nothing but the bare names of the Alid insurgents. Thus it is clear that both had at their disposal some detailed sources for an earlier period, and it would be interesting to identify these. I cannot attempt to do this by reason of insufficient library material

at my disposal. It may be noted that the account of Shi'ite risings forms only a side subject in Qāḍī Nu'mān's work; therefore his brevity may be in some cases intentional, although in the majority of cases he probably could not discover much information about the events.

As the text of the *Sharḥ al-akḥḥār*, in the portion with which we are here concerned, chiefly consists of names, it would serve no special purpose to edit the original here. Moreover, students in Europe can refer to the copy which is in the possession of the library of the School of Oriental Studies, London.¹ The work, in any case, is one of the most interesting sources for the study of early Shi'ism, and therefore well merits a complete edition.

It may be added here that a substantial portion of the XIVth part of the *Sharḥ* has been incorporated in the fourth volume of the great compendium of the Ismaili tradition and history, by Sayyid-nā Idrīs (d. 872/1468), his '*Uyūn al-akḥḥār* (completed in 842/1438; cf. *Guide*, no. 258). His purpose was quite different: he mentions early risings amongst the events contemporary with the Imams: Ja'far, his son Ismā'īl, and grandson—Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl. He therefore quotes, literally, the portion of the XIVth *juz'* from its beginning to the events ending with the death of 'Alī b. Mūsā ar-Riḍā, in 203/818. He adds information derived from other sources, such as Shahrasṭānī, 'Ukbarī, *Kutūb al-r-ri'as* of Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī (beg. IV/Xth c., cf. *Guide*, no. 18), and apparently some other works which cannot be identified. On one occasion he even refers to Tabari.

As the details of the earlier risings are well-known, the story is condensed here. In the references to the movements of the III/LXth c. many names are mentioned which cannot be traced even in the '*Umdat al-salīb* of Ibn 'Inaba (d. 825/1422), who usually is remarkably well informed. It is possible that Qāḍī Nu'mān collected these from works which are no longer accessible.

We may first take up the movements which come under the definition of "rising", i.e. armed struggle.

The earliest movement mentioned by the author is that of a certain Kayṣān, a *mawlā* of 'Alī, an associate of al-Mukhtār, who rose in a rebellion intended to avenge the murder of al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī, and supported the rights of Muḥammad [I] b. al-Ḥanāfiyya, a son of 'Alī b. Abī Talīb. The latter was arrested in Mekka, with fifteen followers, by Ibn Zubayr, the governor, and kept in prison, from which al-Mukhtār made an attempt to release him.² Different

¹ See A. S. Tritton (and P. Kraus), "Notes on some Ismaili Manuscripts", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, vol. VII (1933), p. 34.

² As is known, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanāfiyya usually appears in non-Shi'ite histories as playing a purely passive part in all such movements. He died in 817/904 in Medina. Cf. an article on him in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (by F. Buhl), vol. III, p. 671, where references to Tabari and other early sources are given. It may be added that according to the '*Umdat al-salīb*, a Shi'ite genealogical work by Ahmad b. 'Alī, known as Ibn 'Inaba (d. 825/1422 or 828/1425) (Ith. Bombay, 1318/1906), p. 319 sqq., he left

branches of the Shi'ites supported the rights of Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya. Some of them considered that Imam was transferred to al-Hasan, then to al-Husayn, and after him to Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya, but others believed that the latter was the only real Imam after his father, 'Alī. Some believed that he never died, others that he died, and appointed in place of himself Abū Hāshim [2] 'Abdu'l-lāh, his eldest son, who also died,¹ but who will return as the promised Mahdī to fill the earth with justice. Others again believed that he appointed in place of himself his brother 'Alī [3] b. Muḥammad, and the latter, in his turn, his own son al-Hasan [4], and the latter his own son, 'Alī [5]. They believed that the Imam remained in the descendants of Muḥammad b. al-Hanafiyya, and could not be transferred to others, and that the Mahdī will come from their house. Another branch of these thought that Abū Hāshim, mentioned above, died, and appointed 'Abdu'l-lāh [6] b. Mu'āwiya b. 'Abdi'l-lāh b. Ja'far b. Abi Tālib,² then a child, after him, in charge of a certain Sāliḥ b. Mudrik (acting as a temporary Imam); the latter handed over the authority to his charge on the latter's attainment of majority.³ He became the ruler (*adhib*) of Isfahan, was imprisoned by Abū Muslim, and ultimately executed. But certain of his followers believed that he was not dead, but was concealed somewhere in the hills near Isfahan, that he was the promised Mahdī, predicted by the Prophet, and that he would not die until he had filled the earth with justice.

Another branch admitted that he died without having appointed anyone to succeed him; they believed in their headmen being their Imams.⁴

A certain branch believed that Abū Hāshim [2], the son of Muḥammad b. al-Hanafiyya, appointed after himself Muḥammad [7] b. 'Alī b. 'Abdi'l-lāh b. 'Abbās,⁵ and the latter, in his turn, appointed his own father, 'Alī [8] b. 'Abdi'l-lāh b. 'Abbās, when dying in

24 children, of whom 14 were males. By the time of Ibn 'Inaba all the lines except two were extinct, and only a small number of his descendants were known in Kufa, Persia, and Egypt, from his sons Ja'far and 'Alī.

¹ Cf. *Enc. of Islam*, vol. I, p. 91. He died in the reign of Sulaymān b. 'Abdi'l-Malik (96-99/715-717) in Humayna, South of the Dead Sea, where he was living in exile.

² He rose in Kōfa in Muharram 127/Oct. 744, was defeated, but was able to withdraw to Persia (cf. his story further on). See *Enc. of Islam*, vol. I, pp. 26-27; Tabari II, 1879-87, 1947-8, 1976-80. Cf. also *Urosh*, p. 21-22. He was ultimately overpowered by Abū Muslim, imprisoned in Herat, in 129/746-7, and was either executed, or, as the author of the *Urosh* says, was kept in the prison till 183/759, when he died. His grave was still shown in Herat in 776/1374-5, when the author visited it.

³ Tabari, III, 2183, 2191-2, refers to a Sāliḥ b. Mudrik, but this is quite a different person, who lived more than a century later.

⁴ This sounds very interesting; has this something to do with the Qarmatians of Bahrayn?

⁵ It is usually considered that Muḥammad succeeded his father, 'Alī, as the head of the house. The latter died in 117/735-6, or in the next year, in Humayna, in the same province of ash-Sharḥ. Cf. *Enc. of Islam*, vol. I, pp. 282-3. Tabari refers to these on many occasions.

and Sharḥ in Syria,¹ while still very young. But another branch asserted that he appointed after himself his own son, Ibrāhīm [9], in whose favour Abū Muslim was carrying on propaganda, stating that the Imam was handed to his father, Muḥammad b. 'Alī, by Abū Hāshim, and that this Muḥammad b. 'Alī transferred it to the Abbasids.²

The author then refers to the Zaydis, and their doctrine of the Imamate. As is known, this branch originally recognised as their Imams: Hasan, Husayn, 'Alī (Zaynu'l-'ābidīn), his son Zayd [10], then Yahyā [11] b. Zayd, and then Muḥammad [12] b. 'Abdi'l-lāh b. al-Hasan b. al-Hasan b. 'Alī b. Abi Tālib, and thereafter many others, demanding only unimpeachable Ahd genealogy from the candidates, whether of the Hasanid or Husaynid lines.

Zayd [10] b. 'Alī was killed,³ and his son, Yahyā [11] b. Zayd, who was related to the line of Muḥammad b. al-Hanafiyya, through his mother, Rayṭa bint Abi Hāshim 'Abdi'l-lāh b. Muḥammad,⁴ fled to Persia (Khurāsān) in the reign of al-Walīd b. 'Abdi'l-Malik, the Omayyad (88-98/705-715); he was intercepted by Naḡr b. Sayyār before he succeeded in crossing the river (Amū-Daryā), was attacked, and killed in the skirmish; his head was sent to the local governor, Yūsuf b. 'Umar, through Qays b. Zayd al-Hanāfilī,⁵ and the latter forwarded it to al-Walīd, who sent orders to exhumate his body and to burn it.⁶

Abū Hāshim [2] 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Muḥammad b. al-Hanafiyya, when he presented his claims to the caliphate (= Imamate), was poisoned by Sulaymān b. 'Abdi'l-Malik, the Omayyad (96-99/715-717), who summoned him to his capital. Muḥammad [7] b. 'Alī b. 'Abdi'l-lāh b. al-'Abbās, who was also at that time in the palace, was summoned to him while he was dying, and some say that he was appointed to succeed Abū Hāshim.⁷

'Abdu'l-lāh [6] b. Mu'āwiya b. 'Abdi'l-lāh b. Ja'far b. Abi Tālib, one of those of whom it was said that they were appointed

¹ A province South of the Dead Sea. Here in the text it appears as ash-Sharḥ, but this is an obvious mistake (the latter is the name of the hills along the Red Sea in Southern Arabia). Cf. the preceding footnote.

² This Ibrāhīm was the brother of the first two Abbasid caliphs, born in 82/701-2, lived in Humayna, was captured by Marwān II in 129/747, and murdered in Harrān. Cf. *Enc. of Islam*, vol. II, p. 426. The story of the "transfer" of the claim to the Imamate from the descendants of Muḥammad b. al-Hanafiyya to the descendants of 'Abbās is generally a highly suspicious matter, probably a legend started and cultivated in Abbasid circles at a much later date.

³ See *Enc. of Islam*, vol. IV, p. 1193 sq. (art. by R. Strothmann). He was killed in a rising in Kōfa in 122/749. Tabari has an interesting account of these events, in II, 1667-88 and 1698-1716.

⁴ She is not mentioned by Tabari. Cf. Nawbakhtī, *Firoz ash-Sharḥ*, p. 51.

⁵ Not mentioned by Tabari.

⁶ See the art. by R. Strothmann in *Enc. of Islam*, IV, 1151-2, where bibliography is given. He was killed in 125/743 in Gūgūla. According to Yaḡūbī, his body was left hanging over the city gate until the followers of Abū Muslim occupied the place, and buried it.

⁷ About them see above, p. 6.

by Abū Hāshim as his successors, rose in Kūfa, in 127/745, collecting a number of followers; in accordance with the advice of his friends he went to Fārs, and on his way there, to Isfahan, where he had much success, bringing under his authority both this province, and also Fārs. He appointed his brothers al-Ḥasan [13] to Isfakhr, Yazīd [14] to Shīrās, 'Alī [15] to Kirmān, and Šālib [16] to Qum. Many Hashimites joined him including Abū'l-'Abbās and Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. 'Abbās, to whom he assigned (the governorship of) certain districts.

This 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Mu'awiyā was attacked in Isfakhr by the forces of the Omayyads, as described here in detail, fled, but was caught with his associates by Mālik b. al-Haytham, who handed him over to Abū Muslim, and the latter executed him together with some of his brothers, while some of them were set free.¹

Muḥammad [12] b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Tālib,² the Zaydī Imam, mentioned above, started secret propaganda in his own favour, giving himself out as the expected Mahdī. As such he was already proclaimed by his father from his birth, on account of the prophecy: the Mahdī had to be called by the same name as the Prophet, i.e. Muḥammad b. 'Abdī'l-lāh. He rose in the concluding years of the Omayyad period, finding strong support in many other Hashimites (names are mentioned by the author). A long account is given of how the rising of Abū Muslim and the Abbasids caused him and his brother Ibrāhīm to flee. His father, 'Abdu'l-lāh [17], was left unmolested; but later on, the second Abbasid caliph (136-158/754-775) caused Muḥammad b. 'Abdī'l-lāh, together with his father and brothers [18] Ibrāhīm, [19] al-Ḥasan, and [20] Dā'ūd, to be arrested, cast into chains, and imprisoned. Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm, however, succeeded in escaping in the desert while being conveyed. He suddenly appeared in Madīna on the 1st of Rajab 145/25-X-762; a large following joined him, he overthrew the local authorities in Mekka, and even Bagra, where his brother Ibrāhīm [18] received much support. The

¹ For references see above, p. 6.

² Tabarī has many references to him—III, 66, 143-285, etc. Cf. F. Buhl's art. in *Enc. of Islam*, III, 665-6. It appears that for some reason he commanded such prestige that he was regarded as the head of the Alid family, completely eclipsing Muḥammad al-Bāqir, and his son Ja'far as-Šādiq. His claims were officially recognised by the majority of the Alids and others, including the future Abbasid caliph, Abū Ja'far al-Dawāniqī (ascended in 136/754). Cf. also *Umda*, pp. 79 sq. He was named *Dhī'n-nafīs' e-zakiyya*. Legends are preserved about him: his mother was pregnant four years with him before he was born in the year 100/718 (in accordance with the expectations of the Mahdī by that time); he had a mole of a peculiar shape between his shoulders, etc. (*Umda*, 80); Abū'l-Faraj al-Isfahānī narrates (in his book *Masā'il* p. 72) that Imam Ja'far as-Šādiq himself on one occasion held the stirrup for him while he was mounting his horse. When he was asked by his followers about this, he said: "He is our Mahdī, from the house of the Prophet" (*Umda*, 81). His son, after the death of his father, fled to India, but was killed in the hills near Kābul.—his name was 'Abdu'l-lāh al-Astar. He left a son in Sindh.

famous general 'Isā b. Mūsā was sent against him with a considerable force. The insurgents dispersed, and Muḥammad b. 'Abdī'l-lāh was easily overcome, and killed in battle in the middle of Baḥasān of the same year, 145/762. His brother Ibrāhīm who had already been for two years in Bagra, was also defeated by 'Isā b. Mūsā, and killed on the 25th Dhū'l-biḥja 145/16-III-763. His head was sent to al-Manṣūr who was then in Kūfa.³

The son of Muḥammad b. 'Abdī'l-lāh, also 'Abdu'l-lāh [21], was killed in Tabaristan; his brother Mūsā [22], who preached in Syria, came to Anbar, near Bagra, after the death of Muḥammad, was caught there, and died in prison.⁴

Another Alid, the governor of Madīna, al-Ḥasan [23] b. Zayd b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Tālib, who helped Muḥammad b. 'Abdī'l-lāh, intended to rise against al-Manṣūr, but was arrested and imprisoned, with his son 'Alī. The son died in prison, but the father was set free by the next caliph, al-Mahdī, after his accession in 158/775, together with some other Hashimites.⁵

Another Alid, al-Ḥusayn [24] b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥasan,⁶ the one who was killed at Fakhkh, lived in Baghdad deprived of the right to leave the city. Later on al-Mahdī (158-169/775-785) permitted him to settle in Jurjān (Gurgān). He, however, later on, at the end of 167/784, found himself in Madīna, where strong support was given to him. He moved to Mekka, but was met at Fakhkh by a strong force (details are given), was defeated, and fell in battle, on the 1st Muḥarram 169/14-VII-785. Several other Alids perished in the same battle, others surrendered and lived for some time, as al-Ḥasan [25] b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Tālib,⁶ who was later killed, and some others.

Yahyā [26] b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥasan⁷ fled to Daylam, where he collected a force, and started a serious rebellion in the reign of ar-Rāshid (170-193/786-800). Strong forces were

³ His surname is "Qaṭīl Bākhmarā", after the place at which he fell in battle against 'Isā b. Mūsā, while advancing against Kūfa. Cf. *Enc. of Islam*, II, 432, and *Umda*, p. 85, where he is described as a man of exceptional physical strength, and great learning. The date of his death is given by F. Buhl as the 13th Dh. Qa'ds 145/14-2-763.

⁴ As we have seen above, according to the *Umda*, he was killed near Kābul on his way to Sindh.

⁵ He is referred to in Tabarī III, 215-217, 256, 257, 260-2. In *Umda*, p. 88, it is stated that his surname was of *Jawān* ("white")—he was black, of negroid type, and his mother has given him this surname as an euphemism. He was a poet, and apparently had nothing to do with politics. The author of the *Umda* does not mention anything about his rising or dying in prison, and there is a note of buffoonery in the episodes in which he makes his appearance.

⁶ See about him *Enc. of Islam*, II, 277. He was the governor of Madīna in 150-153/767-772, and died, according to the *Umda* [26], 48, in 168/784. As the author adds, he was the first amongst the Alids who introduced the custom of wearing black garments, and who attained the ripe age of eighty.

⁷ Cf. *Umda*, 101. The *Uyūn* al-akābir gives a long story about him.

⁸ Apparently not mentioned either by Tabarī or in *Umda*.

⁹ Cf. Tabarī, III, 592-4, 564, 612-624, 669-672, and *Umda*, 80, 134.

mobilised against him under al-Faḍl b. Yahyā.¹ Apparently owing to the support of different parties at the court, he was dealt with leniently, and generous terms were offered to him for surrender. He was taken to Baghdad, and later on to Mādīna, where he died in prison; some say that he was killed, others that he was imprisoned in a well, and was found dead there.

Idris [27] b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Tālib² participated in the battle of Fakhkh, mentioned above. He escaped to Egypt whence he went to Maghrib, and here found great support amongst the Berbers. He was poisoned by an agent of ar-Rashīd, but his dynasty continued to rule there.

Ahmad [28] b. Isā b. Zayd b. 'Alī b. al-Husayn b. 'Alī b. Abī Tālib³ found refuge in 'Abādān, near Baḡra. In 185/801 it was reported that he prepared a rebellion in the provinces of Baḡra, Ahwāz, etc. 'Isā ad-Dawrā', a local governor, marched to Ahwāz, ostensibly to punish some "heretics" (*ẓanādiqa*). Ahmad b. 'Isā acted in accord with [29] Ibn Idrīs (apparently the same who went to the Maghrib)⁴ through certain Berbers (as narrated in detail). The governor, under the guise of a friend, and on the pretext of helping them to escape to the Maghrib via Wāsiṭ and Kūfa, lured them into boats, and took them directly to Baghdad, where they managed to escape, and came to Baḡra, where they concealed themselves till the death of Ahmad. He left two sons, [30] Muḥammad and [31] 'Alī.⁵ This Muḥammad died in Syria in 255/869.⁶ Cf. no. 77.

A certain Abū's-Sarāyā al-Ḥasan b. al-Manṣūr b. Rabī' started in 199/814 preaching in favour of Muḥammad [32] b. Ibrāhīm Ṭabāṭabā.⁷ He summoned people to follow the ruler (*naṣi*) from the house of the Prophet, his Book, and his example (*ṣunna*). This Abū's-Sarāyā was an officer in the forces of Huḡayma b. A'yan. When the pay of his men fell into arrear, he mutinied, came to Anḅar, defeated the local governor, and picked up Ibn Ṭabāṭabā, who is mentioned above. The latter was imprisoned during the reign of ar-Rashīd, but released during the anarchy which accompanied the struggle between his successors. There was with him Muḥammad [33] b. 'Alī b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Ja'far (b. Abī Tālib).⁸

¹ One of the Barmakid family.

² Cf. Tabari, III, 257, 554, 561, and 'Umda, 80, 158.

³ Cf. Tabari, III, 1532, 1533, 1585, 1626, and 'Umda, 259.

⁴ Apparently this is the same person as Idrīs b. Idrīs, who died in 240/854, according to 'Umda, 138.

⁵ Cf. 'Umda, 260.

⁶ According to 'Umda, 261, this Muḥammad was the ancestor of ʿĀḡhibū'z-Zanj (cf. E.J., IV, 1213), who was, or pretended to be, 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. Ahmad.

⁷ As to this insurrection see Tabari, III, 976-980.

⁸ According to the 'Uyūdī'at-tāḡīb, vol. IV, his full name was: Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm Ṭabāṭabā b. Ism'īl b. Ibrāhīm b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Tālib. 'Umda, 142, 218.

⁹ Not mentioned by Tabari. Obviously not a descendant of aṣ-Ṣādiq.

who also started preaching in his own favour, but soon died. Ibn Ṭabāṭabā had little success, went to Kūfa, where he hid himself until he was found by Abū's-Sarāyā, who swore allegiance to him, and organised propaganda. This met with great success. They occupied Wāsiṭ and Kūfa, and advanced as far as Naḡr Saḡar, where they met with forces sent out by the government against them. These forces could not effect much, and al-Ḥasan b. Saḡd, the commanding officer, asked support from Huḡayma, who was camping in Ḥulwān, intending to move into Persia to join al-Ma'mūn. The support was given, the rebels were attacked, put to flight, pursued up to Naḡr Ibn Huḡayra, and fled to Kūfa, where Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm Ṭabāṭabā al-'Alawī died. The energetic Abū's-Sarāyā took up an Alid boy, Muḥammad [34] b. Muḥammad b. Zayd b. 'Alī b. al-Husayn,¹ instead of the deceased Ibn Ṭabāṭabā, and preached in his favour. He was defeated by Huḡayma, fled from Kūfa, which Huḡayma occupied for some time before he went to Persia, to join Ma'mūn. Abū's-Sarāyā was caught and executed; the 'Alid boy was sent to Ma'mūn in Persia; he was also executed later on.

Another Alid who participated in the battle of Fakhkh was 'Abdu'l-lāh² [35] b. al-Ḥasan surnamed al-Aṭṭas (i.e. "flat-nosed") (b. Zayd) b. 'Alī (Zaynī'l-'Abidin).³ He surrendered, was imprisoned, and executed by Ja'far b. Yahyā al-Barmakī under ar-Rashīd. Also al-Ḥasan [36] b. al-Ḥasan b. Zayd b. 'Alī (Zaynī'l-'Abidin), who was executed with Abū's-Sarāyā.⁴

Also Zayd [37] b. 'Abdī'l-lāh (al-Mabḍ).

Also 'Alī [38] b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Muḥammad b. 'Abdī'l-lāh (al-Mabḍ).

And 'Alī [39] b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Ja'far b. Abī Tālib.⁵ The latter was killed in the Yaman, together with Ibrāhīm [40] b. Mūsā (b. Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq).⁶

In the year 200/815-6 a number of Alids rose in rebellion against al-Ma'mūn: Muḥammad [100] b. Ja'far (aṣ-Ṣādiq),⁷ in Makka, where

¹ Cf. Tabari, III, 978, 981, 985, 1015.

² According to 'Umda, 311, some call him 'Abdu'l-lāh b. al-Husayn, not Hasan. As a general rule there is much confusion in the genealogies of the two Zayds.—Zayd b. al-Ḥasan and Zayd b. 'Alī b. al-Husayn.

³ 'Umda, 311. It is not certain whether the same man is referred to in Tabari, III, 2638.

⁴ Apparently not mentioned by Tabari, just as the others.

⁵ Cf. Tabari, III, 2935. The pedigree is suspiciously short.

⁶ Obviously the same person is referred to by Tabari, III, 987, 995, 1029.

⁷ He was the son of Imam Ja'far, brother of Mūsā, often referred to in Ismā'īlī works ('Uyūdī'at-tāḡīb, Zaynī'l-'alawī, Zaynī'l-'alawī). They condemn him for his "having drawn his sword in a sacred place, at a sacred season". In 'Umda, 218, it is stated that he was surnamed ad-Dihāḡ (gold embroidery) "because of his being very handsome" (this sounds rather strange,—he was negroid in appearance). He had another surname,—al-Ma'mūn. His insurrection is connected with the adventures of Abū's-Sarāyā and Muḥammad b. Ṭabāṭabā, referred to above. He was acting as ṣaḡī to Ibn Ṭabāṭabā and when the latter died, began to preach in his own favour. He was supported in Mokka, but later on was overpowered, and sent to al-Ma'mūn in Persia. As mentioned in Zaynī'l-'alawī, he

a considerable number of followers from Hijāz and Tihāma swore allegiance to him as caliph. These were people who had never so far done this for any descendant of 'Alī. He proclaimed himself the Qā'im. Considerable forces were sent against him, many of his supporters were killed, and he himself surrendered, relinquished his claims, was sent to Persia to al-Ma'mūn, and died there.

His son, 'Alī [42] b. Muḥammad b. Ja'far¹ rose in Baḡra, together with al-'Abbās [43] b. Muḥammad b. 'Isā b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Ja'far b. Abī Tālib;² they were later on joined by Zayd [44] b. Mūsā b. Ja'far b. Muḥammad, who took the leading part amongst them.³

In the Yaman there rose Ibrāhīm [40] b. Mūsā b. Ja'far. All these were overpowered, sent to al-Ma'mūn, who pardoned them, and they remained in Persia.⁴

Here follows a detailed account of the proceedings with 'Alī b. Mūsā b. Ja'far [45], his summons to al-Ma'mūn, and his experiences, ending with his death, on 27 Safar 203/3-9-818.⁵

In the third century A.H. Alid genealogies become so long that it seems advisable to introduce a few abbreviations for the names of the earliest ancestors, continually repeated here. It may be noted that different surnames which in later Iḥnā'ī ashari works came into common use, such as aṣ-Ṣādiq, or al-Bāqir, etc., are very rarely mentioned by Qādī Nu'mān, who persists in tracing all genealogies in full, up to Abū Tālib. Therefore it is emphasised that abbreviations are here introduced only as a space saving device. We may use AT for Abū Tālib; AAT for 'Alī b. Abī Tālib; JAT for Ja'far b. Abī Tālib; 'AbdJAT = 'Abdū'l-lāh b. Ja'far b. Abī Tālib; Zaynu'l-'ābidīn = 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. Abī Tālib; ZHAAT = Zayd b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Tālib; al-Mahdī = 'Abdū'l-lāh b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Tālib.

In the time of *al-Mu'tasim* (218-227/833-842) there rose in Tāliqān (in the hills between Qazwīn and Mīzandarān in Persia)—

was made to renounce publicly his claims in every town through which he was taken. He died in Jurjān, leaving a large posterity.

¹ Tabari, III, 990-994. *Umda*, 219; his surname was, al-Khādirī; he was in Baḡra at the time of Abū's-Sarīḡ, but apparently did not take direct part in the insurrection. When later on Zaydū'n-Nār b. Mūsā b. Ja'far came there, he joined him. Abū Naṣr al-Bakḥārī says that he acted in accord with his father, Muḥammad ad-Dihāq, who was in Mekkā. He had to make a proclamation in Ahwāz in 200/813-6, helped by al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. Abī Tālib, and Zayd b. Mūsā. But when his father was overpowered in Mekkā, he rose in Baḡra, was also overpowered, and died in Baḡhdād.

² Not mentioned by Tabari, or in *Umda*.
³ Tabari, III, 668, 999. *Umda*, 175, 196. He was surnamed Zaydū'n-Nār, i.e. "fiery", because he burnt Baḡra when he seized it, after making his appearance in Ahwāz.

⁴ Tabari, III, 987, 993, 1029; *Umda*, 173, 178. He was surnamed al-Jazzār. He became a Zaydī Imam. As other sons of Mūsā, he was regarded in appearance.

⁵ The story is well-known. I would only add a reference to Nawbakht, 73.

Muḥammad [46] b. al-Qāsim b. 'Alī b. 'Uthmān ('Umar?) b. Zaynū'l-'ābidīn (he had no son called 'Uthmān, surnamed aṣ-Ṣafī.) He gained a large number of supporters for his claims, but later on was caught by 'Abdū'l-lāh b. Tāhir (a member of the Tāhirid dynasty in Khurasān, 213-230/823-844), and sent to al-Mu'tasim in Baḡhdād in 219/834. He was imprisoned, but succeeded in escaping.⁶

About the same time there rose 'Abdū'l-lāh [47] b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Ismā'īl b. 'AbdJAT. He was caught, imprisoned, escaped, was again caught, and died in prison.⁷

In the reign of *al-Mutawakkil* (232-247/847-801) there rose al-Ḥasan [48] b. Zayd b. Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl b. al-Ḥasan b. ZHAAT.⁸

In Ray there rose 'Ahmad [49] b. 'Isā b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. Zaynū'l-'ābidīn.⁹

Also Hārūn [50] b. al-Ḥusayn surnamed al-Karkī⁶ b. Ahmad b. Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl b. Muḥammad al-Arḡṣ b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Zaynū'l-'ābidīn.

In Hijāz there rose Ismā'īl [51] b. Yūsuf b. Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā b. 'Abdī'l-lāh al-Mahdī.⁷ He was only twenty years of age; after him there rose his elder brother Muḥammad [52] b. Yūsuf al-Abḡar, who was twenty years older than his brother. Another insurrection was led by 'Abdū'l-lāh [53] b. Mūsā.⁸

In the reign of *al-Mu'tasim* (248-251/862-866) there rose in Kūfa Yahyā [54] b. 'Umar b. Yahyā b. al-Ḥusayn b. Zayd b. Zaynū'l-'ābidīn.⁹

In Ray—Muḥammad [55] b. Ja'far b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. 'Umar (sic) b. Muḥammad al-Bāqir. (There must be a mistake—al-Bāqir apparently had no son called 'Umar), cf. *Umda*, 173; cf. also further on no. 89.¹⁰

With him there rose in Ray 'Abdū'l-lāh [56] b. Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. 'AbdJAT, and also Salīm [57] and Ibrāhīm [58], sons of 'Uthmān b. al-Mahdī.¹¹

In the reign of *al-Ju'fazz* (251-255/866-869) there rose:

¹ Tabari, III, 1163-6; *Umda*, 272. He really had the surname aṣ-Ṣafī. Later on, nevertheless, he was caught again, and executed in Baḡhdād, dying at the age of 53 years.

² Not mentioned either by Tabari, or in *Umda*.

³ Cf. *E.I.*, II, 277-8; *Umda*, 43.

⁴ Cf. Tabari, III, 1332-3. *Umda*, 280.

⁵ Perhaps better to read al-Kawakibi, cf. *Umda*, 226.

⁶ Obviously the same as in Tabari, III, 1644, 1643, 1686, where the thing is placed in 231/866.

⁷ Not mentioned by Tabari.

⁸ Cf. Tabari, III, 1315-1324, 1609, 1626, 1745, where the rising is mentioned under 250/865.

⁹ This, and the following are not mentioned by Tabari.

¹⁰ Cf. *Umda*, 226.

'Isā [59] b. Ismā'il b. Ja'far b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Mabḏ.¹ (The same as 71 f)

Ahmad [60] b. Muḥammad b. Yahyā b. al-Mabḏ.²

In the reign of al-Muḥaddī (255-256/869-870) there rose:

Yahyā [61] b. 'Abdī'r-Rahmān b. al-Qāsim b. al-Ḥasan b. ZHAAT.

Muḥammad [62] b. al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. 'Abdī'r-Rahmān b. al-Qāsim b. al-Ḥasan b. ZHAAT.

Muḥammad [63] b. al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. al-Ḥasan b. Zayd [b. al-Ḥasan b. Zayd] b. Zaynī'l-'Abidin (in the MS there seem to be a mistake).

Ahmad [64] b. Zayd b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Isā b. Zayd b. Zaynī'l-'Abidin.

Ja'far [65] b. Ishāq b. Mūsā b. Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq.

Mūsā [66] b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Mūsā b. al-Mabḏ.

the son of the latter, Idrīs [67] b. Mūsā.

the nephew of the former, Muḥammad [68] b. Yahyā b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Mūsā.

Ibrāhīm [69] b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. al-Ḥasan b. Ibrāhīm b. al-Mabḏ.

Muḥammad [70] b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Ismā'il b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. 'AbdJAT.

'Isā [71] b. Ismā'il b. Ja'far b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. 'AbdJAT. (The same as no. 59 f).

In the reign of al-Mu'ṭadī (256-279/870-892) there rose:

Muḥammad [72] b. Ahmad b. Mūsā b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. 'Amr b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. AAT.

Ahmad [73] b. Muḥammad b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Ibrāhīm Tabātibā b. Ismā'il b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥasan b. AAT, surnamed Na'thal.

Hariza [74] b. al-Ḥasan (or al-Ḥusayn f. 85) b. Muḥammad b. Ja'far b. al-Qāsim b. Ishāq b. 'AbdJAT.

Muḥammad [75] b. Ja'far b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī (?) b. Muḥammad al-Bāqir (who had no son 'Alī,—apparently a mistake in the MS; cf. nos. 55, 89).

'Abdī'l-lāh [76] b. 'Alī b. 'Isā b. Yahyā b. Zayd b. Zaynī'l-'Abidin.

Muḥammad [77] b. Ahmad b. 'Isā b. Zayd b. Zaynī'l-'Abidin. The same as above, no. 30.

'Alī [78] b. Ja'far b. Hārūn b. Ishāq b. al-Ḥasan b. Zaynī'l-'Abidin (?)

al-Ḥasan [79] b. Muḥammad b. Ja'far b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Zaynī'l-'Abidin (?).

al-Ḥasan [80] b. Ibrāhīm b. 'Alī b. 'Abdī'r-Rahmān b. al-Qāsim b. al-Ḥasan b. ZHAAT.

Muḥammad [81] b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Zayd b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. al-Ḥasan b. ZHAAT.

al-Ḥusayn [82] b. Ahmad b. Muḥammad b. Hamza b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. al-Ḥusayn b. al-Qāsim b. al-Ḥasan b. ZHAAT.

Muḥammad [83] b. Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā b. Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā l. aṣ-Ṣādiq.

'Alī [84] and 'Abdī'l-lāh [84a] sons of Mūsā b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Mūsā b. aṣ-Ṣādiq.¹

Hamza [85] b. al-Ḥusayn (or al-Ḥasan, cf. no. 74) b. Muḥammad b. Ja'far b. al-Qāsim b. Ishāq b. 'AbdJAT. (Apparently, by mistake the same person as no. 74).

Muḥammad [86] b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Ja'far b. Muḥammad b. 'Abdī'r-Rahmān b. Ja'far b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. 'AbdJAT.

Idrīs [87] b. Mūsā b. al-Mabḏ. The pedigree is too short for the period,—apparently a portion is omitted by mistake in the MS.

'Abdī'l-lāh [88] b. al-Ḥasan l. Ibrāhīm b. al-Mabḏ.

Ahmad [89] b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Muḥammad b. 'Umar b. 'Alī b. 'Umar b. Muḥammad al-Bāqir. (Cf. above, no. 55.)

In the reign of al-Mu'ṭadī (279-289/892-902) there rose:

Muḥammad [90] b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Muḥammad b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim b. Hamza b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. al-'Abbās.

Muḥammad [91] b. Zayd b. Muḥammad b. Ismā'il b. al-Ḥasan b. ZHAAT, with his son Muḥammad [91a].

In the reign of al-Muḥaddī (289-295/902-908) the risings of two Aḷis are reported:

Muḥammad [92] b. 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. al-Mabḏ, and

Muḥammad [93] b. Hamza b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. al-'Abbās b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Abdī'l-lāh b. al-'Abbās.

Most probably there were also others, but Qādi Nu'mān could trace only these in the sources accessible to him, as may be inferred from his cautious statement already referred to above:

These are the names of those descendants of Abū Tālib (Tālibiyyūn) who rose to claim the Imamāt for themselves before al-Mahdī bil-lāh rose... Many of these were slain, and others thrown into prison, where they died; others again were overpowered, and saved their lives by flight, living in disguise, continually trembling for their lives. Such is the lot of those in the world who demand by false pretences what is not due to them, who try to snatch what God has decreed and destined for others (i.e. al-Mahdī).²

In addition to the account of what may be formally styled as open Shi'ite insurrections against the Omayyads and Abbāsids, which were all earlier or later suppressed, and ended disastrously for the participants, there were also many movements which did not

¹ Henceforward there are apparently no references in Tabari's *Annals* to these Aḷid insurgents. The 'Umda also does not trace genealogies of far. There are apparently many mistakes in the genealogies which are not easy to correct.

² Apparently not mentioned in 'Umda (cf. p. 96).

reach the stage of open revolt. Some of these took the form of sectarian associations, as already mentioned above, but their aims, after all, were the same as those of the groups which may be called "activist".

Among such movements still in a "latent" phase, awaiting their chance, the most important were those which centred round the descendants of Imam Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq, namely the Isma'ili, which brought the Fatimids to the thrones of the caliphs, and also the movement which later on became known as the sect of the "Twelve Imams". We have dealt with the Isma'ili line elsewhere; here we may confine ourselves to matters concerned with the Ithna-'ashari.

Whatever may be the truth about the Isma'ili concealed Imams, there is not the slightest doubt from the point of view of history that the sect carried on a powerful and widespread propaganda. Leaving aside the mythical figure of 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn al-Qaddāb, we have sound historical testimony about many eminent and really talented propagandists who worked on their behalf in different corners of the Islamic world.—Ibn Hawshab, Abū 'Abd'l-lāh ash-Sh'fī, Abū Ya'qūb as-Sijistānī, Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī, and many others.

We find quite a different picture when we look into the evolution of the Ithna-'ashari group. The Imams of this line appear always to have lived under the strict supervision of the Abbasids; their sect produced no great missionaries, and even serious theologians only began to appear long after the extinction of this line of the Imams. And yet, with all this, there is no doubt that they had many adherents in different provinces of the Abbasid empire, and presented a force so strong as to justify al-Ma'mūn's strange experiment with 'Alī b. Mūsā's entrenchment. It is difficult to find out whether the propaganda work was carried on very skillfully, in a perfect conspiracy, or whether there was no organised propaganda work at all. The latter seems more probable, and it looks as if the Ithna-'ashari Imams after Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq were living as *rentiers*, on the religious capital inherited from their ancestors: 'Alī, the nearest associate of the Prophet, al-Husayn, the greatest martyr of Islam, and Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq, the founder of Shi'ism as a theological school of Islam. This religious capital seemed to be inexhaustible; it could not be even squandered by the immediate successors of Ja'far, and when they were gone, and their true nature had become transmuted by legend, the sect, after a serious set back, again began to flourish.

Ithna-'ashari sources, quite naturally, give very little reliable information concerning the real state of affairs amongst the successors of Mūsā b. Ja'far; general historians take little interest in them, and are obviously prejudiced against them. The most valuable therefore are Isma'ili sources; as Shi'ites themselves, their authors better understood the affairs of the sect, and, at the same time, except for some feeling of rivalry, had no reason to be much prejudiced.

It is therefore worth while to examine what Qāḍī Nu'mān has to tell about the long agony of the decay of this saintly house, and its final extinction, which in itself was a very important event, the whole significance of which, especially for the rise of the Fatimid caliphate, is still quite insufficiently realised. As is known, a very good account of the different currents in the sect, exposing the extent of the chaos and confusion which reigned in the circles of its adherents, is given by Nawbakhtī (*Firaq ash-Shā'ite*, pp. 74-94). Qāḍī Nu'mān's testimony is also very interesting, as he undoubtedly derived it from very early Shi'ite sources.¹ It would also be useful to add here the information preserved in the work of another very early author, a contemporary of Nawbakhtī, who wrote within some fifty years after the events,—Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī, his *Kiṭāb al-'azīza* (cf. *Guide*, no. 18). Some interesting allusions are also scattered in the esoteric work, *Aḥḍarū'n-nuṭuq*,² by Ja'far b. Manṣūrīl-Yaman (composed about 380/990), cf. *Guide*, no. 43. Sayyid-nā Idrīs in his *Uyūnū'l-akhbār*, mentioned above, derives his information from all these works, and gives nothing in addition.

We are not concerned here with the two elder sons of Imam Ja'far,—'Abdu'l-lāh [94] al-Aḥḍab and [95] Ismā'īl. The former was the elder, and died in 148/765 within about three months of his father's death, leaving no male posterity. The second son, Ismā'īl, as is known, died before his father, leaving two sons, Muḥammad [96] and 'Alī [97]. The former at the moment of Imam Ja'far's death, was the eldest of the family, except for 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Ja'far. This is explicitly stated both by Abū Ḥātim and Qāḍī Nu'mān. Sayyid-nā Idrīs, from some unknown source, states that he was 26 years old, while his brother 'Alī was 18.³

Other sons of Imam Ja'far, all by a Negro concubine, were [98] Mūsā, [99] Isḥāq, [100] Muḥammad and [101] 'Alī.⁴ Qāḍī Nu'mān briefly reviews the parties who supported Mūsā, and entertained various freakish beliefs about him or his descendants. Some of these believed that he would never die; others that he would die, but return, and fill the earth with justice. Others, called the Qit'iyya, recognised his death, and accepted his son 'Alī [45] b. Mūsā as his successor in the Imamate. On the death of the latter some believed that he had not left any male posterity, but others recognised as his successor Muḥammad [102] b. 'Alī, his infant son, who naturally could not inherit any knowledge of his father.

¹ As may be seen further on, he chiefly derived his information from the *Kiṭāb al-'azīza* of Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī. But his own account often differs in details, partly because he abbreviates his original, partly because, most probably, he derives additional information from other sources.

² This is very important, because in later esoteric Isma'ili works there is a tendency to make Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl a helpless infant whom Imam Ja'far entrusts to the mythical 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Maymūn al-Qaddāb.

³ So also in *Uṣūl*, 173-4; the author rejects the reality of a certain Nāsir, who was regarded as one of the sons of Imam Ja'far, quite erroneously; some families in Herat and Isfahān, apparently in the author's own time (end of the VIII/XIV—beg. IX/XVth c.), traced to him their pedigrees.

Another party, however, recognised him as an Imam, under the name of Muḥammad at-Taḥī; they also recognised his son [103] 'Alī an-Nāḥī (usually an-Naḥī), and grandson, [104] al-Ḥasan, surnamed al-Faḥīl (usually al-'Askarī). He (al-Ḥasan) died without leaving any male issue. After him the community split: some recognised as the Imam his brother, [105] Ja'far b. 'Alī, cancelling his own recognition: al-Ḥasan was found not to be in possession of the knowledge of the Imam, and his childless death has proved the falsity of his claims. There was a dispute about the division of the inheritance, and some insisted that the heir was a child [106] expected to be born by a concubine, who was pregnant; this created talk and attracted the attention of everybody to the question of the succession. A section recognised Ja'far [105] b. 'Alī as the Imam, as mentioned above, and after him his son [107] 'Alī and daughter [108] Fātima. Others recognised only his son 'Alī. Later on, when both these died, some followers introduced extremist beliefs about them, regarding them as deities; others regarded them as Prophets, who knew the hidden things. Such superstitious beliefs spread and multiplied.

Those who remained faithful to al-Ḥasan [104] regarded him as immortal, eternally living; he could not have died without having left a successor, because the earth cannot remain without an Imam. They believed that there would be two periods of *ghayb*, or concealment of the Imam: he was expected to manifest himself, and to be recognised; then he was to disappear again.

A section believed that al-Ḥasan [104] had died, but would be resurrected, as the Qā'im, "One who ariseth". They said that the meaning of the word *qā'im* is one who arises from the dead. Some believed that he really died, leaving no issue, but would return to life. Some regarded Ja'far [105] as the successor of his brother al-Ḥasan [104]. Some declared the Imam to be his, and Ja'far's brother [109] Muḥammad, who died before the death of his father. The appointment of al-Ḥasan was recognised as an error, because he left no issue, and Ja'far did not deserve to be an Imam on account of his depravity (*fiṣq*):¹ al-Ḥasan was not much better. As they thus could not be the Imams, it is obvious that Muḥammad [109] was the Imam, appointed by his father. He is the expected Qā'im and Mahdī.

Another party believed that al-Ḥasan [104] had a son [106], born two years before his death, but concealed on account of the menace of Ja'far and others. Others again believed that he, al-Ḥasan, had a son, born to him eight months after his death, and that this was the same child whom others regarded as born two years before the death of his father; and that a child, if it existed,

could not have been concealed.¹ Others again did not believe that al-Ḥasan had any children. They asserted that they had carefully searched, and found none, and that the story of a son was a fraud. Others again believed that Ḥasan died and left no successor, and that there is no Imam as there was none before the Prophet. But many believed that anyhow there must be an Imam, whether a descendant of al-Ḥasan or not, concealed at present, but returning as the Qā'im.

We may now sum up the information offered by Abū Ḥatīm ar-Rāzī in his *Kutūb al-zina* (completed in the beginning of the IV/Xth c.). He refers to al-Wāqifa and al-Mamṭūra, who believed in the immortality of Mūsā [98] b. Ja'far, and in his being the Qā'im; they rejected the Imamate of his son 'Alī [45] ar-Riḍā. Contrary to the usual prophecies about the Qā'im having the same name as the Prophet, they believed that the Qā'im must have the name of the *ghayb*'-*Tawrāt*, i.e. Moses; he must be the Seventh in succession (as Mūsā was, if we include both 'Alī and al-Ḥasan),— he "who is the Sabbath of the sabbaths, the Sun of the Ages, the Day of Manifestation, he who never plays or amuses himself, the Seventh amongst you", etc., as Imam Ja'far said about him (*Sabtu's-sabūt wa Shamsu'd-dahūr wa Yaḥyā'u'ah-shukūr*, etc.). When he died some expected his return.

The Qat'ā party believed in the death of Mūsā [98] and the Imamate of his son 'Alī [45], with his successors, up to 'Alī [103] b. Muḥammad al-'Askarī. They were doubtful about Muḥammad [102] b. 'Alī, i.e. the father of the preceding, on account of his having succeeded his father in infancy. Others accepted him as the Imam, but split after his death. Some recognised as the Imam Mūsā [110] b. Muḥammad, others 'Alī [103] b. Muḥammad. After his death some recognised as the Imam Muḥammad [109] b. 'Alī b. Muḥammad, who predeceased his own father. Others recognised Ja'far [105] b. 'Alī al-'Askarī, while some preferred his father, 'Alī. Those who recognised Ja'far (b. 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Mūsā) as the Imam received the name of at-Tājīyya, or at-Tājīyya, — not mentioned by Nawbakhtī, after their leader 'Alī, son of so-and-so, at-Tājībī (or at-Tājī), a learned theologian who espoused the cause of Ja'far, canvassing for him among people, and was helped by Fāris b. Ḥatīm b. Māhūya (not mentioned by Tabarī), and his sister. These people rejected the Imamate of al-Ḥasan [104], saying that they had examined him, and found him ignorant. They had such a low opinion of him that they called his followers *Himāriyya*, i.e. followers of an ass. Others again rejected al-Ḥasan [104] because he died leaving no male posterity, thus demonstrating the futility of his claims. When he died, his brother Ja'far [105] claimed his property, while another party demanded attachment of

¹ Cf. Nawbakhtī, 83-4. The author of the 'Umda, 178-7, attributes learning and piety (*ʿāla wa ṣādīq*) to al-Ḥasan, while styling Ja'far— al-Kadiṣhāb ("liar"). He had no less than 120 children, who had the surname ar-Riḍawīyyūn, i.e. the descendants of ar-Riḍā.

¹ The subject is well-known; cf. also the article "Mahdī" in the E.J., III, 111-113 (rather unsatisfactory). In the Umda (178) the official Bihār theory is summed up as follows: al-Ḥasan had a son, Muḥammad, the expected Qā'im; his mother was a concubine, called Narjis (Narcissus).

it under the plea of the pregnancy of one of his concubines, until her delivery. This litigation caused complete scandal in the eyes of the authorities and the public (*inshag' amru-hum 'inda's-sulfin wa'r-ra'g'ut wa kha'adag'g'a-n'da wa 'adimmi-him*). The party of Ja'far [105], anyhow, succeeded in attracting a considerable following from among the supporters of al-Hasan [104], especially under the leadership of al-Hasan b. 'Ali b. Faḍlāl (not mentioned either by Nawbakhti or Tabari) a learned theologian, jurist and traditionist. These people recognised as Ja'far's successors his son 'Ali [107] b. Ja'far and his daughter Fātima [108], spreading different extremist beliefs, similar to those of Abū'l-Khatṭāb (as mentioned above by Qāḍī Nu'mān).

The supporters of the Imamāt of al-Hasan [104] against his brother Ja'far [105] b. Muḥammad split after his death into eleven parties, or sects. One believed in the immortality of al-Hasan, and his being the expected Qā'im; he had to pass through two *ghayb* periods, and this was the first. He was expected to reappear shortly, and then to disappear for a longer time.

Others believed that he died, but would return to life (etc., as mentioned by Qāḍī Nu'mān, see p. 18).

Others believed that he died and transferred the Imamāt to his brother Ja'far [105]. Others added that al-Hasan's death without leaving posterity proved the futility of his claims.

Others rejected both al-Hasan and Ja'far, and regarded the third brother, Muḥammad [109] (b. 'Ali an-Naqī b. Muḥammad at-Taḳī b. 'Ali ar-Riḍī) as the real Imam, although he had died before his father. They rejected the rights of al-Hasan [104] because of his having left no posterity, and of Ja'far [105] because of his having been a bad character (*fi-hi min al-fiaq aq-pāhir*). His brother al-Hasan was really no better in his behaviour, but was not so ostentatious.

Others believed that al-Hasan [104] had a son, Muḥammad [106] by name, born to him two years before his death, etc. Qāḍī Nu'mān almost literally copies the end of Abū Hātim's account (cf. above, p. 19).

This was the atmosphere in the family of the descendants of Imam Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq, the line of his son Mūsā, who lived in the full light of publicity at the court of the Abbasids. It is therefore easy to understand that many of their devout supporters might easily lose all respect for them, and come over to support the elder line, of Ismā'īl b. Ja'far, who lived in the impenetrable mystery of concealment, and about whom the public could know only what their *dā'īs* were authorised to tell them.

Bombay, 21-3-1941.

INDEX

Note. For the facilitation of references to this paper the names of the *Abā* referred to here have been numbered consecutively (in heavy type), and an index is here appended. Figures in heavy type refer to this numeration, and in ordinary type—to the pages of this paper.

Abbreviations: A = Ahmad; AAT = 'Alī b. Abī Tālib; 'Abd. = 'Abdu'l-lāh; 'AbdJAT = 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Ja'far b. Abī Tālib; 'AR = 'Abdu'r-Rahmān; AI = Abī Tālib; Bāqir = Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. Abī Tālib; D = Dā'ūd; Ha = Hasan; Hus = Husayn; Ibr. = Ibrāhīm; Ism. = Ismā'īl; J = Ja'far; JAT = Ja'far b. Abī Tālib; JS = Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq; M = Muḥammad; al-Mabḍ = 'Abdu'l-lāh b. al-Hasan b. al-Hasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Tālib; Z = Zayd; Zaynū'l-'Abidin = 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'AR b. Abī Tālib; ZHAAT = Zayd b. al-Hasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Tālib.

In the index dash (-) is used instead of the word *and*.

The figures in this index, both in heavy and light types, refer only to the portions of the paper corresponding with the text of the *Sharḥ al-Abā* and *Kātib's* *rima*, summed up in this article, and not to comments or footnotes.

1. Lines of the *Abā* referred to in this paper.

Descendants of 'Alī b. Abī Tālib, through:

1. al-Hasan b. 'Alī;

(a) 'Abdu'l-lāh b. al-Hasan b. al-Hasan b. 'Alī (= al-Mabḍ) 17, 12, 18, 19, 20, 20, 37, 27, 29, 37, 21, 22, 27, 33, 38, 38, 60, 53, 51, 66, 67, 68, 69, 69, 92.

(b) Zayd b. al-Hasan b. 'Alī: 23, 61, 62, 80, 82, 81, 48, 91, 91a.

(c) 'Alī b. al-Hasan b. 'Alī: 72.

(d) al-Hasan b. al-Hasan b. 'Alī: 32, 73.

(e) al-Ḥusayn b. al-Hasan b. 'Alī: 24.

(f) Muḥammad b. al-Hasan b. 'Alī: 25.

2. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī;

(a) 'Alī Zaynū'l-'Abidin b. al-Ḥusayn: through Zayd b. 'Alī: 10, 11, 76, 34, 23, 30, 31, 64, 77, 33, 63, 54; through others: 78, 79, 50, 26, 46, 49.

(b) Muḥammad al-Bāqir (all suspicious); through 'Alī (?)-75; through 'Umar (?): 55, 89.

(c) Ja'far b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn (aṣ-Ṣādiq): (older lines) 94; 95, 96, 97. (through Mūsā b. Ja'far): 98, 43, 84, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110; 40, 83, 44, 65, 84o, 102. (through others): 101, 99, 100, 42.

3. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasanāyya: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Descendants of Ja'far at-Tayyār b. Abī Tālib:

(through 'Abdu'l-lāh b. Ja'far): 6, 15, 13, 16, 14, 33, 43, 56, 70, 86, 20, 71, 47, 85, 74.

Descendants of 'Abdu'l-lāh b. 'Abbās: 7, 8, 9, 90, 93.

II. Names of Persons.

'Abbās-M-Tal-M-'Alī-'AbdJAT
43, 12

Abū'l-'Abbās (Abbasid) 8

'Abd-'Alī-'Tal-'Yahyā-Z-Zaynū'l-

'Abidin 76, 14

'Abd-'Has. (al-'Aḥas)-(Z)-Zaynū'l-

'Abidin 35, 11

'Abd-'Has.-'Abd-'Ism.-'AbdJAT
47, 13

'Abd-'Has.-'Has.-AAT (= al-Mabḍ)

17, 8

'Abd-'Has.-Ibr.-Mabḍ 88, 15

'Abd-'Ism.-Ibr.-M-'Alī-'AbdJAT

56, 13

'Abd-JS (= al-Fahā) 94, 17
 'Abd-Mu'awiya-'AbdJAT 6, 6, 7, 8
 'Abd-M = Ibn al-Hanafyya', Abū
 Ḥashim 2, 6, 7, 8
 'Abd-M-Mahd 21, 9
 'Abd-Mūsā-'Abd-Mūsā-JS 840, 15
 'Abd-Ṭāhir (Ṭāhirid) 13
 A-'Abd-M-'Umar (?)-'Al-'Umar-
 Bāqir 89, 15
 al-Ḥas, cf. 'Abd-Ḥas-Z-'Al 35,
 11
 A-'Isā-'Al-Ḥus-'Zaynu'l-'Abidin
 49, 13
 A-'Isā-Z-Zaynu'l-'Abidin 28, 10
 A-M-'Abd-'Ibr. Tabṭabā-'ism-
 Ḥas-Ḥas-'AAT 39, 11
 A-M-Yahyā-Mahd 60, 14
 A-Z-'Hus-'Isā-Z-Zaynu'l-'Abidin
 64, 14
 'Ab-'Abd-'Abbās 8, 6
 'Al-'Abd-M-'AbdJAT 39, 11
 'Al-'AT 6
 'Al-A-'Isā-Z-'Zaynu'l-'Abidin 31,
 10
 'Al-Ḥas-'Al-M-'al-Ḥanafyya 5, 6
 'Al-'ism-JS 97, 17
 'Al-J-'Ab-M-'Al-Mūsā-JS 107,
 18, 20
 'Al-J-'Hārūn-'Isāq-Ḥas-'Zaynu'l-
 'Abidin (?) 78, 14
 'Al-'JS 101, 17
 'Al-Mu'awiya-'AbdJAT 15, 8
 'Al-M-'Al-Mūsā-JS 103, 18, 19
 'Al-M-'al-Ḥanafyya 3, 6
 'Al-M-JS 42, 12
 'Al-Mūsā-'Al-Mūsā-JS 84, 15
 'Al-Mūsā-JS 45, 12, 17, 19
 'Al ar-Ridd, cf. 'Al-Mūsā-JS (45),
 12, 17, 19
 'Al Ṭāhir, or Ṭāhir 19
 'Al Zaynu'l-'Abidin 7
 DE al-'Mahd 20, 8
 Fāḍl = 'Askari, Ḥas. 18
 Fuḍl-Yahyā al-Barmakī 10
 Fāris-Ḥātim-Māhūyā 19
 Fātima bint J-'Al-M-'Al-Mūsā-
 JS 108, 18, 20
 Ḥanasa-Ḥas. (Ḥus.)-M-J-Qāsim-
 Isāq-'AbdJAT 74, 85, 14, 15
 Ḥārūn-Ḥas.-A-M-'ism-'Abd-
 Zaynu'l-'Abidin 50, 13
 Ḥas-'Al-Fuḍl 29
 Ḥas-'Al-M-'al-Ḥanafyya 4, 6
 Ḥas-'Al-M-'Al-Mūsā-JS 104, 18-
 20
 Ḥas-Ḥas-Z-Zaynu'l-'Abidin 36, 11
 Ḥas-'Ibr.'-'Al-'Ar-Qāsim-Ḥas-
 ZHAAT 80, 14
 Ḥas-'Mahd 19, 8
 Ḥas-Mu'awiya-'AbdJAT 13, 8
 Ḥas-M-Ḥas-'AAT 25, 9

Ḥas.-M.-J-'Abd-'Zaynu'l-'Abidin
 (?) 79, 14
 Ḥas-'ZHAAT 23, 9
 Ḥas.-Z-M-'ism-Ḥas-'ZHAAT 48,
 13
 Abū Ḥāshim 'Abd-M-'al-Ḥanafyya
 2, 6-8
 Ḥumārīyya 19
 Ḥus.-A-M-'Ḥanasa-'Abd-Ḥas-
 Qāsim-Ḥas-'ZHAAT 82, 15
 Hus-'Al-Ḥus-Ḥas-'AAT 24, 9
 Hurayra-'A'yun 10, 11
 Ibr-'Abd-Ḥas-'Ibr-'Mahd 69, 14
 Ibr-'Mahd 18, 8
 Ibr.-M-'Al-'Abd-'Abbās 9, 7
 Ibr.-Mūsā-JS 40, 11, 12
 Ibr.-'Uthmān-Mahd 58, 13
 Idris-Mahd 27, 10
 Ibn Idrīs (Idrīs-Idrīs-Mahd ?) 29, 10
 Idrīs-Mūsā-'Abd-Mūsā-Mahd 67,
 14
 Idrīs-Mūsā-Mahd 87, 15
 'Isā ad-Dawrā' 10
 'Isā-'ism.-J-'Ibr.-M-'AbdJAT (cf.
 59) 71, 14
 'Isā-'ism.-J-'Ibr.-M-'Al-'Mahd (cf.
 71) 59, 14
 'Isā-Mūsā 19
 Isāq-JS 99, 17
 Ism.-JS 95, 17
 Ism.-Yūsuf-'Ibr.-Mūsā-Mahd 51, 13
 J-'Al-M-'Al-Mūsā-JS 103, 18-20
 J-'Isāq-Mūsā-JS 65, 14
 J-Yahyā al-Barmakī 11
 Abū J M-'Al-'Abd-'Abbās-
 Kaykān 5
 Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb 20
 al-Mahd = 'Abd-'Has-Ḥas-'AAT
 17, 8
 Mahd (Abbasid) 9
 Mālī-al-Haytham 8
 Māmūn (Abbasid) 11, 12
 Manṣūr (Abbasid) 9
 Moses 19
 M-'Abd-'ism.-'Ibr.-M-'Abd-'M-
 'Al-'AbdJAT 70, 14
 M-'Abd-J-M-'AR-J-'Ibr.-M-'Al-
 'AbdJAT 86, 15
 M-'Abd-M-'Abd-M-Qāsim-Ḥana-
 sa-Ḥas-'Abd-'Abbās 90, 15
 M-'Abd-Z-'Abd-'Ḥas-'ZHAAT
 81, 15
 M-A-'Isā-Z-Zaynu'l-'Abidin 30, 77,
 10, 14
 M-A-Mūsā-Ḥas-'Al-'Amr-'Al-
 Ḥas-'AAT 72, 14
 M-'Al-'Abd-'Abbās-JAAT 7, 6, 7
 M-'Al-'AbdJAT 33, 10
 M-'Al-'Ibr.-M-Ḥas-M-Mahd 92,
 13

M-'AS-M-'Al-Mūsā-JS 109, 18, 20
 M-'AR-Mūsā-JS 162, 17
 M-'Ḥanasa-'Abd-'Abbās-Ḥas.-
 'Abd-'Abbās 93, 10
 M-'al-Ḥanafyya 1, 5, 6
 M-'Ḥas-'Al-'M-'Al-'Mūsā-JS
 (Mahd) 106, 15, 20
 M-'Ḥas.-M-'AR-Qāsim-Ḥas.-
 ZHAAT 62, 14
 M-'Ḥas.-M-'Ibr.-Ḥas-Z-'Ḥus-Z-
 Zaynu'l-'Abidin 63, 14
 M-'Ibr.-Mūsā-'Ibr.-Mūsā-JS 83, 15
 M-'Ibr. Tabṭabā-'ism-'Ibr-'Ḥas-
 Ḥas-'AAT 32, 10, 11
 M-'ism-JS 96, 17
 M-'JS 100, 11, 17
 M-J-'Ḥas-'Al-'Bāqir (?) 75, 14
 M-J-'Ḥus-'Al-'Umar-'Bāqir (?) 55,
 13, 15
 M-Mahd 12, 7, 8, 9
 M-M-Z-M-'ism-Ḥas-'ZHAAT 910,
 15
 M-M-Z-Zaynu'l-'Abidin 34, 11
 M-Qāsim-'Al-'Uthmān ('Umar ?)
 Zaynu'l-'Abidin 46, 13
 M-Yahyā-'Abd-Mūsā-Mahd 68, 14
 M-Yūsuf-'Ibr.-Mūsā-Mahd 53, 14
 M-Z-M-'ism-Ḥas-'ZHAAT 91, 15
 Muḥtad (Abbasid) 14
 Mukhtār 5
 Mukṭaf (Abbasid) 15
 Mūsā-'Abd-'Mūsā-Mahd 66, 14
 Mūsā-JS 98, 17, 19
 Mūsā-M-'Al-Mūsā-JS 110, 19
 Mūsā-M-Mahd 22, 9
 Abū Muḥim 6, 7
 Musta'in (Abbasid) 13

Mu'tafid (Abbasid) 15
 Mu'tamid (Abbasid) 14
 Mu'tasim (Abbasid) 12, 13
 Mutawakkil (Abbasid) 13
 Mu'tazz (Abbasid) 13
 Nāḥi = Naḥ, 'Al 18
 Nāḥi = Sayyār 7
 Naḥ, see A-M-'Abd-'Ibr. 73, 14
 Qat' 19
 Qays-Z-'al-Ḥanān 7
 Qay'iyā 17
 Raḥim (Abbasid) 9-11
 Rayḥa bint Abī Ḥāshim 'Abd-M-'al-
 Ḥanafyya 7
 Sāhib-Mu'awiya-'AbdJAT 8
 Sāhib-Madrīk 6
 Sāhib-'Uthmān-Mahd 57, 13
 Abū's-Sarḥā' (Ḥas.-Manṣūr-
 Raḥ'a) 10, 11
 Sulaymān-'Abd'l-Malik (Omeyyad)
 7

Ṭājiyya, or Ṭājiya 19
 Wālid (Omeyyad) 7
 Yahyā-Mahd 26, 9
 Yahyā-'AR-Qāsim-Ḥas-'ZHAAT
 61, 14
 Yahyā-'Umar-Yahyā-Ḥas.-Z-
 Zaynu'l-'Abidin 54, 13
 Yahyā-Z-Zaynu'l-'Abidin 11, 7
 Yaḥyā-Mu'awiya-'AbdJAT 14, 8
 Yūsuf-'Umar 7
 Zaynu'l-'Abidin 37, 11
 Z-Mūsā-JS 44, 12
 Z-Zaynu'l-'Abidin 10, 7
 Zayḍ 7
 Ibn Zubayr 5

III. Names of Places.

Jurjān (Gurgan) 9	Ray 13
Khurāsān 7 (and pasargid)	ash-Sharḥ (in Syria) 7
Kirmān 8	Shirāz 8
Kūfa 8, 13	Syria 7, 9, 10
Mādīna 8, 9, 11, 13	Tabaristān 9
Maghrīb 10	Ṭāliqān 12
Makla 5, 8, 9, 11	Tihāna 12
Nahr Barzaj 11	Wasṭ 10, 11
Qasr Ibn Ḥubayra 11	Yaman 12
Qum 8	





JOURNAL
OF THE
BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

Vol. 15

1939

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE FATIMID PROPAGANDA

By W. IVANOW

I. THE DĀ'Ī AND THE CAUSES OF HIS SUCCESSSES.

The Bāṭinī (i.e. Ismailī) *dā'ī* already at an early date becomes a prominent figure in the annals of Islam.¹ As elusive and omnipresent as the 'Scarlet Pimpernel', as malicious, ruthlessly cruel, and unscrupulous in far-fetched diabolical schemes as the leader of a criminal gang in any detective best seller, as superhumanly clever, brave, persevering, and daring as any detective hero of the best American cinema film,—the *dā'ī* appears as the chief 'villain of the plot', responsible for many failures and defeats which the corrupt and incapable Abbasid administration had to suffer. He was at the bottom of every political murder, of every uprising, every manifestation of popular discontent, as seen through official eyes, discussed in bazar rumours, and recorded by the authors of many historical works, who surrounded him with a halo of mystery, romance, and, above all, of the fame of extraordinary organizing talent. And such is the power of 'wide publicity', of advertisement, that by the mere fact of the continuous repetition this obviously exaggerated and mythical figure has for ever acquired

¹ It would be interesting if students of the history of Islam could definitely ascertain the first date at which this term is used. It would also be interesting to find out in how far the same term *dā'ī* was applied to the propagandists of other Shi'ite sects, especially the Ithnā'ashari. As is known, the Zayidis freely used it. In the case of the Ismailis a great deal of confusion is inevitable due to their being always mixed up in the non-sectarian annals with the Qarmatians.

ISMAILIA ASSOCIATION

Pakistan

Library

Accession No. _____

Call No. _____

Date _____

historic reality, completely obscuring the real Ismaili propagandist and teacher. Even now, with more developed sense of proportion and critical methods of research, this fictitious figure is often taken as true and real. Such eminent Orientalists as the late Prof. de Goeje and E. G. Browne may serve as good examples: they apparently accepted the story, and unreservedly believed in it.¹

The difficulty of verifying this traditional version arises from the complete absence of impartial records, and also the great scarcity of information coming from the sectarian sources which, although not impartial, can to some extent help us to check the facts. Such information is only available about very few *dā'īs*: the one who laid the foundation of the Fatimid empire, Abū 'Abdī'l-lāh ash-Shī'ī, about Rāshidū'd-dīn Sīnūn, and,—very little,—about the Mansūru'l-Yaman, or Hasan b. aṣ-Ṣabbāh. These, of course, were extraordinary men, giants as compared with the ordinary, rank and file, *dā'ī*. They appear first of all as born leaders, talented generals, men of iron will, of unflinching devotion and high religious enthusiasm, and yet broadminded, with plenty of common-sense, and strong creative intellect. They apparently had nothing in common with the 'classic' figure of the *dā'ī*, as it appears in general literature,²—a lurking preacher of sedition, atheism and looseness. We can firmly believe that these outstanding men did not represent a class entirely different from the ordinary *dā'ī*. It only was that their towering personalities presented on a gigantic scale the features which certainly existed, although on a much smaller scale, in the character of every one of their subordinates and less outstanding colleagues.

But if we disbelieve legend, and 'uncrown' the romantic figure of the *dā'ī*, we have to seek elsewhere for a reliable explanation for the indubitable historical fact of his extraordinary successes, almost bordering upon the miraculous. The immense success of the Ismaili propagandists, from the Atlantic to innermost Asia, is a fact which is beyond dispute. The solution of this problem obviously lies in the psychology of the masses under the Omayyad, and later on the Abbasid rule. Continuous unrest, economical distress, and dissatisfaction with the conditions of life, laid enormous stress on the possibilities which in popular ideas would be offered by the theoretical organization of the state, on the lines of the Shī'ite ideal. This explains the astounding number of almost completely hopeless Shī'ite risings all over the Islamic world, which was full of Messianistic expectations, longing for the ruler, Imam, 'who will fill the earth with justice and equity just as much as it is filled with injustice and oppression of one by the other'.³

¹ E. G. Browne's views are summed up in his well-known *Literary History of Persia* (Vol. I, pp. 391-415), where he endorses the similar views of de Goeje and Dary (p. 394 sq.).

² So E. G. Browne visualized him from his observations of the Bahā'ī missionaries whom he met with in Persia. Cf. his *Literary History of Persia*, Vol. I, p. 410.

It seems quite obvious therefore that the supernatural success of the *dā'īs* is nothing but illusion, the same aberration of the vision as the rapid movement of the landscape seen from the window of a rapidly moving train: not that the *dā'īs* were seducing the masses, but the masses were waiting for someone to organize the movement which already was widespread and general, and only required co-ordination of effort and linking together of the isolated groups.

We know quite well the peculiar mentality of the decaying and no longer popular régimes everywhere: to the last moment, when they are overthrown, and even after this, their heads and supporters can never understand and realize their own failure. They would continually and blindly believe that their subjects love, even worship them; that they are only too willing to sacrifice everything to please them. That their administration, even if not perfect, nevertheless is all that is wanted. And that if there are signs of discontent and opposition, this is the work of the enemies of the state, spies, conspirators, of those who sow sedition and trouble, seducing the poor simple people who otherwise would never be able to feel discontent, or complain on anything, without the incitement of such villains. No, they would be only too glad to obey their government, and believe in God according to the rules prescribed by the religion, approved and recommended by the state. How many terrible catastrophes and explosions, accompanied by enormous sufferings of millions, would have been avoided in history by timely realization, and doing the needful, on the part of those concerned. But usually all their energies become devoted to the extermination of the 'mischief mongers', while very little is done to alter the conditions of the masses in such a way as to paralyse the effect of the mischief makers from inside.

The Abbasids were no exception to this rule,—which perhaps is the only rule that knows no exceptions generally,—and persecuted all sorts of sectarians, especially the Shī'ites, attributing to them all kinds of fantastic schemes to uproot Islam and turn the people to atheism, or to the ancient religion of the Persians.⁴ But this only could drive the popular discontent under ground, making

⁴ Tremendous amount of speculation is found in the different works of some Orientalists about the 'typically Persian' nature of Islamism, of its 'Persian' mentality, dogmas, etc. All this completely defies my comprehension. The exoteric doctrine of Islamism is the strictest form of Islam, while its esoteric system is entirely built up from Greek elements. Surely, Islam itself, in its most orthodox form, contains many Christian, Jewish, Zoroastrian, and other elements; and they are not a wit more prominent in Islamism, as it was under the Fatimids. The aberration of judgment is obviously based on the fact that before genuine Ismaili literature became accessible, the information offered by the anti-Ismaili authors was extremely misleading. It completely distorted the picture by withholding all mention of what Islamism had in common with other Islamic schools, and by laying absurdly exaggerated stress on the few ill-understood, or deliberately perverted tenets calculated to serve as food for accusations.

it still more dangerous and subversive, because it not only remains beyond the control, but also out of the vision of the officials, and thus may at any time strike an unexpected blow.

With the ground prepared in this way, the Fatimid propaganda was able to achieve its wonderful successes mainly through one of its most peculiar features.—the complete decentralization of its agents. From the original Ismaili document, which is summarized in this paper, and which dates from the period at which the power of the Fatimids attained its culminating point, we can see how carefully the candidates for the post of *dhī* were selected, how high standard of ability was expected from them, and how difficult was it to satisfy the demands. The responsibilities of the *dhī* were tremendous, and the candidate had to possess exceptional talents to be fit for the duty. But once he was appointed, he was given full authority. It is really astonishing to see how independent was he expected to be in his work: the *dhī* was not encouraged to bother the Imam and the central government with trivial and routine matters. He had to use his own discretion, conforming with the general tendency and spirit of his mission. 'Just as when the husband deposits his sperm into the womb of his wife, and she conceives, he does not interfere with the development of the embryo, etc., but merely feeds and protects his wife, so the Imam, having sent his *dhī* to a certain community, does not interfere with his work, and only gives general directions and guidance to his people.' And the *dhī* takes the whole responsibility upon himself. 'If God asks the Imam to account for the welfare of the community, the Imam refers Him to the *dhī* in charge, who takes upon himself the whole responsibility for this.'

The results of this policy we can see from history: decentralization, coupled with the selection of the right type of men,—the virtue of princes, which the earlier Fatimids possessed, especially the great statesmen like Mahdi, Qā'im, and Mu'izz,—helped to build a great empire. It seems that the increase of centralization always indicates a certain distrust of rulers in their subjects. It is a fact that the most unpopular or even hated regimes always are the most centralized,—we have an ample opportunity to see this now for ourselves. And if the supreme ruler, especially semi-Divine, as the Ismaili Imam, instead of keeping himself far above the squabbles of his subjects, and the imperfect working of the administrative machine, himself takes up the *dreidger* of practical government, making himself directly responsible for all its wrongs,—as the last Fatimid caliph-Imam al-Amir bi'l-*lāh* did,—then the play is finished, and the curtain falls. What invariably happens, is rapid decay, and final rot. This is why the Musta'lian community could survive the catastrophe only in remote Yaman, under the rule of an autonomous *dhī*.

Such were the two important causes which contributed to the success of the Fatimid propagandists, helping it to achieve its almost miraculous results. Instead of the ridiculous and childish pictures

drawn by the authors of the anti-Ismaili camp, we can easily visualize a far more convincing state of affairs. Suffering population, longing for peace, a change towards more normal and human conditions, dreaming about the righteous ruler from the house of the Prophet, receives the *dhī*, a specially selected and trained man of outstanding abilities, strong character, an enthusiast in his devotion, ambitious, hard working, a man of wide education, of broad vision, acute and shrewd. It is difficult to believe the stories that such a man would drop from the sky. Surely, the ground was always prepared for him, in some way or other. And when he gets into a commanding position, and really knows his people, helping them, ruling them justly, etc., his success, and the success of his mission, are sure. This is apparently the typical course of the *dhī*'s career: from such individual local successes, under the able supervision of a born ruler, the Fatimid empire was built.

2. THE DOGMA OF THE ḤUḌŪD-D-DĪN.

As mentioned above, Ismaili literature contains very few materials which would permit us to form an idea about the organization of the propaganda under the Fatimids. This is particularly sad, because rarely any Ismaili dogmatical or esoteric work omits to deal with a peculiar abstract theory of priesthood and its hierarchy, *ḥuḍūd-d-dīn*, which was evolved and emphasized by the doctrine of Ismailism.

As is known, the Sunnite majority in Islam has at a fairly early date adopted the belief that the Prophet left for the guidance of his newly founded religious community the Coran (which was at that time not yet collected and codified), and his own example (which was only known in full to very few among his closest associates). The Shi'ites (and especially, later on, the Ismailis), tried to preserve the original theoretical system of the Islam state, as it was under the Prophet himself. In his absence they accepted as the supreme secular and religious head of Islam his lineal descendant, the Imam, who was believed to be the repository of special and higher religious knowledge, which was his exclusive hereditary property, bequeathed by the Prophet to his, the Imam's, progenitor, 'Alī ibn Abī Tālib; the latter was the closest associate, cousin, and son-in-law of the Founder of Islam, who treated him as his brother. This knowledge, both exoteric and esoteric, made the Imam the only person fully competent to interpret, explain, and apply the doctrine of the Coran and religious institutions to the requirements of daily life, in a correct way.

Thus the Imam not only had to inherit the Prophet's secular functions, as the head of the state, but also his most important

¹ Through his daughter Fātima, as is well known. Although the Fatimids emphasized this point, many Shi'ite sects endorsed 'Alī ibn Abī Tālib with much greater religious importance, so that they even followed the line of his descendants who were the children of 'Alī by his other wife, Hānāfiya.

religious function, the preaching of the Divine Revelation. For this reason the idea of religious teaching and preaching always was so strong in Ismailism that it outweighed many other sides in its system. Before the political successes of Ismailism detracted the attention of its enemies from its religious doctrine, the Ismailis usually were referred to under the name of the *Ta'limiyya*, i.e. 'the sect of teaching', *ta'lim*. And later on they themselves adopted the term *da'ud*, 'call', i.e. preaching, as the description of their religion.

The Imam, the theoretical ruler of Islam, and its Great Pontiff, supreme religious authority, as he should be, obviously could not impart his precious and all important knowledge to all his subjects personally. Therefore a new institution was brought into existence which was unknown to the earliest patriarchal phase of Islam,—the institute of priests, as intermediaries between the Imam and his subjects, and his accredited agents.

It is quite possible that this new development (as it can be traced in the earliest available sources), started from the same idea as in all other Islamic schools, i.e. from the functions of a religious teacher, *'alim*; he, being versed in the difficult knowledge of the prescriptions of the religion and law, acted as the leader of congregational prayers, a teacher, and a judge. With gradual differentiation of the society and the advance of civilization, obviously more complex system became necessary, with an elaborate hierarchy of ranks, special duties assigned to each, etc.

But the most important difference which was introduced by Ismailism, as compared with Sunnism, was the idea of the *priest*, in approximately the same sense as it is in Christianity and some other religions.¹ As is known, Muslim *mulla* cannot be called a priest, in the real sense of the word, because he is not *ordained*. He acquires his position by virtue of his own learning, talents, piety, and by the consent of the congregation. This applies even to the great doctors, supreme authorities in legal matters, the *imams* in the Sunnite sense. All of them are merely specialists or experts in religious matters, just as there are expert medical men, engineers, astronomers, etc.

The Ismaili *da'i*, i.e. accredited agent of the Imam, is *ordained*. In addition to the position of ordinary Islamic *mulla*, he has spiritual authority, commission, received either directly from the source of the religious authority, the Imam, or indirectly, through those who themselves received it from him, together with the right of transferring it to others. The sacrament which he is commissioned to perform is not only teaching, i.e. distributing the sacred wisdom of the Imams, but also accepting, on their behalf, the oath of allegiance of the followers.

¹ The author of *al-Majma'at'l-Khamsa*, as may be seen further on, plainly compares the Ismaili *da'i* with the priests in the three main religions known to him,—Zoroastrian, Jewish, and Christian, although it is not clear to what extent he realizes the implications of such comparison.

This is quite different from the state of things in Sunnism, although it cannot be regarded as a heretical practice, *bid'a*, for the simple reason that it is respected and sanctified by Sunnism in its *Sufic* form. As many other ideas and institutions, this one has a complete parallel in the Sufic theory of the 'chains' of permissions, by which accredited spiritual teachers, *murshids*, receive their authority ultimately from the Prophet himself, through a long succession of similar commissioned priests. Just as the Sufic *murshid* without a genuine *ijaza*, *khirqa*, or other certificate of his commission, is an impostor, however pious and learned he may really be,¹ so the *da'i* is a *da'i* only in so far as he is commissioned by the Imam, in whose name he accepts the oath of allegiance from his converts.

The importance of this institution was apparently appreciated from the outset, in the conditions which accompanied the earliest history of the Ismaili movement. Not only did it permit of the unification and standardization of the dogmatical and other sides of the religion, but also provided a kind of an automatically working mechanism of propaganda, which could function even in the absence of the visible head, the Imam, who often had to live in the strictest disguise, being known only to a few amongst the most trusted devotees. This is why no effort was spared by the Ismaili dogmatists to build a sound foundation for this new institution, both from the arguments derived from the *qadair*, i.e. the Coran and tradition, by the selection of appropriate quotations, etc., and in the *batin*, or the symbolical and abstract theory of the religion, by philosophical speculations. Everything was mobilized for this purpose, and the tradition was established of attaching enormous importance to the theory.

From what apparently was the earliest scheme: Imam—*da'i*—ordinary initiated follower,—the theory grew into a complex, mystic and philosophic, symbolical system, based on the fundamental 'rhythm of the universe', observed in some coincidences of different numbers, their mystical values, etc. Childish as these speculations may appear to modern man, they appealed to the mentality of the time; profound mysteries were sincerely sought in them; and it is such material that constitutes the greatest secrets of the ancient Ismaili wisdom which was so zealously guarded from the profane eye.

There is, however, nothing original in these speculations, as all of them are derived from different mystical theories of Neo-Pythagoreans, from Neo-Platonism, and Plotinian philosophy, just as in the case of Sufic speculations, based on imperfect knowledge of the original systems, and their arbitrary amalgamation. As the matter of the most fundamental importance in the religious life,

¹ Obvious autodidact and self-made *murshids* had to declare that they had received their *khirqa* either from Khidr, or from a certain famous saint during their sleep, in a dream. This sort of pious fraud was apparently condoned by the public at the period of the gradual decline of Sufism, but was impossible during its flourishing early phase.

the hierarchy of the *ḥudūdū'd-dīn* had to be based on the same scheme as the physical universe, and the world of the spirit. The process of perfecting these parallels, and making them convincing to the student, chiefly occupied the philosophic thought of the sect ever since the philosophical interpretation of Islam was introduced.

The original simple and natural scheme was tremendously complicated. The hierarchy of the *ḥudūdū'd-dīn* had to comprise everything in the religious sphere. It begins with God, followed by the Prophet (*Nabi*), *Asā* (or *Sāmit*, or *Wasi*), *Imān*, and a large set of different ranks of *dā'īs*: *bāb*, *ḥujjat*,¹ three kinds of *dā'īs* in the narrower sense, two ranks of *ma'dhūn*, *mubteir*, and *mustajib*, each rank being treated as a 'cosmic category',—contrary to the practice, in which all these dignitaries more or less regularly were called *dā'īs*. Such an elaborate scheme was required to bring the hierarchy into agreement with the Ptolemaic system of the universe which was universally accepted at the time. As is known, it taught that around the earth there are several concentric transparent spheres, each rotating under its own laws. The fixed stars, the sun and moon, and different planets were affixed to these, and moved together with the spheres. According to pre-Islamic speculations, the forces which produce the rotation of the spheres were associated with the different emanations of the Divine Source of Being. In these abstruse speculations the highest sphere was associated with God Himself, the next with the 'Logical Principle of the Universe', which is usually in a vague way called 'Universal Reason', and so on. Speculations with all these cosmic entities appeared as convincing and plausible to the people a thousand years ago as similar speculations about electrons, protons, neutrons, etc., appear to us now. Therefore it was 'quite scientifically' proved that the religious sphere, and its organization, fully coincides in its structure with the cosmos and the world of the Divine Spirit, *al-ḥudūdū's-samāwiyya* (or *al-tabi'iyya*), and *al-ḥudūdū'l-'alwiyya* (or *ar-rūḥāniyya*).

Such speculations again do not form an exclusive feature of Ismailism. Apparently there was a wide psychological demand for them, so that they even found their way, in a simplified form, into folklore, and became a part of the popular superstition of the Muslim masses, as the belief in *chihil-tan*, or the *rijālū'l-ghayb*, *abdāl*, etc. This theory of the invisible holy ascetics who tour the world, and guard its religious purity, is also built in the form of a hierarchy, which strikingly reminds the Ismaili scheme of the *ḥudūdū'd-dīn*.

Rarely a dogmatic or esoteric work in Ismailism omits this important subject. But apparently without a single exception these speculations are only speculations, abstruse and foggy, having

¹ I preserve this Persian way of pronunciation of this word, and do not use instead of the Arabic *ḥujja* and *da'wa*, which are somewhat unfamiliar to readers in India and in Persia.

the slightest connection with real life and real organization of the priestly apparatus of the Fatimids. Therefore, although it is impossible to pass over in silence such important and fundamental doctrine, directly connected with the organization of the *dā'īs* under the Fatimids, we are not in the least benefited by it in our efforts to reconstruct this detail of the history of Ismailism.

3. THE EVOLUTION OF THE ORGANIZATION.

For the reasons mentioned above nothing but rare allusions in different works can be used for forming an idea about the *dā'ī*. Fortunately, there are in Ismaili literature a few works which, dealing with the ideal virtues of the ideal *dā'ī*, permit us to read between the lines something about the real conditions.

One of the greatest difficulties of this difficult subject is the great confusion in terms, used both in Ismaili and non-Ismaili works. The term *dā'ī* apparently came into general use as late as about the end of the IIIrd/IXth century, the period of the great expansion of the Fatimid propaganda. It means 'one who calls' (to the true religion, or to the true sovereign of the Muslim state, etc.). Apparently before this, when the functions of the Ismaili priests were more those of teachers rather than propagandists, they most probably were known under the name of *ḥālim*, teacher, also used in other sects of Islam. Such terms as *ḥijāb* (Plural *ḥujūb*), *naqib*, etc., were also met with in the accounts of the real or supposed to be Qarmatians, and preserved at a much later period in the works of the Druzes, of Syrian Nizāris, etc. The term *ḥijāb* most probably disappeared under the Fatimids when it was no longer required. At the earlier periods the term was applied to a specially reliable and devoted head priest, directing propaganda in a certain province, who, for the purpose of 'screening' the Imam, who always lived under threat from the vigorously searching Abbasid agents, would assume the title of the Imam and his name, to receive, on the latter's behalf, the oath of allegiance of the followers, while the real Imam would live in strict disguise, known only to the trusted few. With the installation of the Fatimids on the throne of their empire such necessity disappeared.

It is possible that the *ḥijāb* roughly corresponded with the *bāb*, or the *dā'ī-in-chief* of the Fatimid period. But it is not quite clear who the *naqib* was,—was he the same as the *ḥujjat*, or the *bāb*? Or all three were the same!

In any case there is no doubt that the term *dā'ī* during the Fatimid period meant priests in general, particularly 'commissioned' ranks in the religious hierarchy.¹ The author of *al-Majāzatu'l-*

¹ As may be seen further on, from the summary of *al-Majāzatu'l-Kāfiyya*, the idea of the 'commission', in its real sense, could apply only to the *dā'īs* occupying an independent position, residents in different smaller or larger dioceses. The lower ranks were simply employees in the *da'wa* service; in case of dissatisfaction with their work they could be dismissed by the *dā'ī*.

Kāfiya (see further on) plainly says in his discussions of the duties of the *dā'i* that these apply not only to the *dā'i* in the narrower, technical sense, but also to every rank in the hierarchy, 'because every rank acts as a *dā'i* with regard to the rank immediately below him'. In quotations from the books of different authors who are well-known as the possessors of high ranks, of *ḥujjat*, etc., they are very often referred to simply as *ḥajjīd-nā' ad-dā'i* *quddassū* *l-lāh* *ḥirra-ḥu*. The term of *dā'i* is applied to the religious heads of huge provinces,—as the great Abū 'Abd'l-lāh ash-Sh'ī, the founder of the Fatimid empire,—as equally to quite petty priests.

It is difficult to follow the evolution of the hierarchy. It appears that such terms as *ḥujjat* and *ḥab* were introduced only at a fairly late period. Was there only one *ḥab*, a sort of 'minister for religion' at the court of the Fatimids, or were there several *ḥab*s? Anyhow, in the honorific titles of some saints there appears the expression *ḥabū* *l-abnūb*; this, however, apparently was not an official title.¹

There is little doubt that the *ḥujjat* was the chief *dā'i* in the province or district, a sort of archbishop.¹ But everything beyond this seems doubtful: at the period of great successes of the Fatimid propaganda there were 24 *ḥujjats*, twelve 'of the day', and twelve 'of the night'.² It is not at all clear what were the differences in their duties. Moreover, there is yet another question. The *ḥujjat* was supposed to be the spiritual head of a *ja'ira*. This expression originally means an island, but it is also applied to large provinces. The traditional geography mentions 'twelve' *ja'iras* (although their names vary in different works). It appears that in the Ismaili sense of the Fatimid period this term was applied to what would better be described as 'religious colony', i.e. Ismaili community in a country which politically was not under the Fatimid sovereignty. Thus there were 12 *ja'ir* *ir*: at the head of each stood a *ḥujjat*. But I so far have never been able to find the names of these *ja'iras*. Apparently they did not coincide with the geographical *ja'iras*, and all were lying outside of the political boundaries of the Fatimid empire. The only *ja'ira* which is always mentioned by name in Ismaili literature, is the Yaman.³ But, however

strong, its head priest apparently is never called *ḥujjat*,—from the time of the great founder of the Ismaili community there, in the end of the IIIrd/LXth c., the Manṣūr'l-Yaman, to the post-Fatimid time.

After the *ḥujjat* in the Fatimid hierarchy follows a set of three different *dā'i*s: the *dā'i* *l-baligh*, *ad-dā'i* *l-muḥlag*, *ad-dā'i* *l-mahṣūr*. It is not at all clear what the differences in their functions were. The second probably connoted what the *dā'i* should be according to the earliest ideas,—the head of a diocese. The third, obviously, was his deputy or assistant. But it is very difficult to find out what the first was: was he the priest specially in charge of the missionary activities, or had he some other functions?¹ It is also not clear whether all these ranks were functioning not only in the 'religious colonies', but also within the limits of the Fatimid state.

Again there not everything is clear about the lower ranks of the priesthood. Immediately below the *dā'i* there were: two *ma'dhūns* and *mukdīrs*. The *ma'dhūns* (i.e. the licenced ones), were the 'greater' (*akbar*), or *muḥlag* (absolute), and 'smaller' (*aṣḥar*), or *mahṣūr* (limited).² They, as also *mukdīrs* ('one who breaks the arguments of the opponents',—apparently in the disputes), were assistants of the *dā'i*, in charge of different departments of his administrative machine. And it is interesting that in our principal source of information, *al-Ma'jma'at* *l-Kāfiya*, referred to above, the expression is often used: the *ma'dhūn* and *ma'min*. Thus obviously the term *ma'min* implies a separate rank of the priesthood. At a later date apparently the term *ma'min* was generally applied to Ismailis as opposed to all other *musulmans*. But it is doubtful whether even *ma'sūbiy*, i.e. initiated Ismaili, is here regarded as a *ma'min*.³

Khuzistan, Irāq, and India (Sind), i.e. nine altogether, excluding Syria, which for the most part was incorporated into the Fatimid empire. Nothing is known to me about the existence of similar *ja'iras* in the Maghrib, or within the limits of the Byzantine empire.

¹ It seems that this rank appears only at the latest Fatimid period, and probably was quite an artificial title bestowed upon the more distinguished *dā'is*.

² This also seems to be a shadowy rank, most probably invented, as that of the *dā'i* *l-baligh*, to bring the hierarchy to the required mystical number.

³ In this paper I have deliberately avoided the question as to the 'degrees of initiation', so inevitably described in every work dealing with Ismailism. From what I have seen of the genuine Ismaili works, I believe that the idea is simply based on a misunderstanding of the hierarchy of the priests, and that there really never was anything as a division of the Ismailis into strictly defined groups of progressive 'initiation', similar to that of the *massons*, etc. In reality, most probably, there were groups with different educational qualifications, as in every religious community: uninitiated, initiated, but not learned, well-educated, and experts. Although there are no clear indications, it seems that the title *ma'min*, referred to here, had much to do with this, and perhaps was applied to a well-educated (in religious sense) Ismaili, who was not regularly employed in the *da'wat* service, and

¹ It is really remarkable that in a work such as *al-Ma'jma'at* *al-Kāfiya*, specially dealing with these matters, there is not a single allusion to the duties of the *ḥujjat*, or the *dā'i*'s being under his control. The title *dā'i* *l-dā'it*, now and then met with in some works, apparently was not an official title, and it is difficult to determine whether it was applied to the *ḥujjat*, or the *ḥab*. The latter seems more probable.

² It is generally regarded by the Ismailis at present that the *ḥujjats* 'of the night' were superior to those 'of the day'. Personally I have not yet found anything about this in the works which I have had occasion to see, and no explanation of the implications of the title.

³ Utilizing historical information about the distribution of the Ismailis, it is possible to think that in addition to the Yaman there were *ja'iras* in Khuzistan, Mawarannahr, Badakhshan, Ray (with Isfahan), Kerman,

As mentioned above, Ismaili literature apparently has not preserved any works specially devoted to the technique of the organisation of the priesthood, and even incidental references seem to be exceedingly rare. Apparently nothing on this point can be found in the great religious encyclopaedia of Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī, the exceptionally erudite theologian and philosopher of the beginning of the IVth/Xth century—his *Kitābu'l-Zīna*.¹ This work apparently was intended for the public at large, and not only for the Ismailis; therefore it avoids such technical matters.

The works of his contemporary, Abū Ya'qūb as-Sijst (d. in 331/942) usually are intended for the initial education of the members of the community in religious matters, and do not apparently touch on the subject.

Very interesting theoretical speculations on the ideal virtues of the *dā'īs* are contained in the treatise by the famous *qāḍī*, Abū Ḥanīfa an-Nu'mān (d. 363/974)² the author of the great legal code of Ismailism, the *Du'ā'ima'u'l-Isām*. In his work *Kitābu'l-Himma fi adab at-tā'ī'l-A'imma*,³ he deals, in the first half, with ethics in general, and especially the virtues which are expected from the Ismailis. In the second half of his book he explains the rules of conduct and etiquette prescribed to the followers of the Imams when they come in personal contact with their lords: how to stand before the Imam, how to sit in his presence, how to address him, etc. The last chapter of his book is devoted to the duties of the *dā'īs*: 'How the *dā'īs* of the Imams should act in their preaching in the Imams' favour.' It contains much interesting information, and a great portion of it is summed up further on.

An interesting document, although it does not deal with the organization of the *dā'īs*, may also be referred to in this connection, to serve as an excellent specimen of what was the doctrine preached by the *dā'īs* in reality. It is an epistle to the people of Ray (the ancient Rhagae, near Tehran), by a *dā'ī* Hasan, or Muhsin, or Muḥassin b. Muḥammad al-Mahdī (or Mahbūdī, etc.),⁴ written at the time of al-'Azīz bī'l-lāh. From the letter itself it appears that the author, coming to Ray for propaganda, was received as a heretic, and narrowly escaped death. His opuscle forms a really classic elementary exposition of Ismailism as it was preached in his time, written with extreme lucidity and conciseness. It is therefore included into his famous chrestomathy of standard Ismaili

had no official rank, although by his educational qualifications he was eligible for a fairly high post.

¹ Cf. W. Ivanow, *Guide to Ismaili Literature*, No. 18. The fact that the work was known to Ibn Naḍīm, and is mentioned in his *Fihrist*, may indicate that it was quite popular in his time, and was not, anyhow, kept secret.

² On his biography and works cf. A. A. A. Fryze's article in the J.R.A.S., 1934, pp. 1-32.

³ Cf. W. Ivanow, *Guide*, No. 85. The original text of this work is being prepared for publication by Prof. M. Kāmil Ḥusayn of Cairo. Therefore in the translation given further on the original text is not edited.

⁴ Cf. *Guide*, No. 110.

works, by Sayyid-nā Muḥammad b. Tāhir (d. 584/1188),¹ and later incorporated in the third volume of *al-Azhār*.²

The author who has left us the fullest information so far available.—Sayyid-nā Ahmad b. Ibrāhīm (or Muḥammad) an-Naysābūrī, apparently belongs to the first half of the Vth/XIth century. He composed the most interesting work, *ar-Riḍā al-Mūjintu'l-Kāfiya fi Shurūḍi'd-De'wā'i'l-Hādīya*.³ Only a portion of it, apparently the main part, is preserved, being incorporated into the much later work by the third Yamanite *dā'ī*, Ḥātim b. Ibrāhīm (d. 596/1199), his *Tuhfatu'l-qulūb wa farjatu'l-makrūb* (which is described further on). The work of an-Naysābūrī is somewhat chaotic in arrangement. Therefore, further on, its contents are summed up, as closely to the original text as possible, in a re-arranged and systematized form.

To the same author belongs another interesting work, of more or less historical contents, dealing with the events which accompanied al-Mahdī's escape from Syria, and the beginning of his adventures which ultimately brought him to the throne. This work contains some valuable allusions to the *dā'īs* of that early time. It is the *Islāḥu'l-Imān*, which was edited by me in the 'Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts of the Egyptian University', Cairo (1936/1939, Vol. IV, pp. 89-133. I am also preparing an English translation of this work).

Most probably when Ismaili literature of the Fatimid time is properly studied, many interesting references will be found scattered in different early works. But it seems that as early as the period immediately following the fall of the Fatimid empire no other works on the subject were known, as may be seen from the statement of the author of the *Tuhfatu'l-qulūb*, in the concluding passages of his work. This certainly means that no other such work was known in the Yaman. But as everywhere outside this province Ismaili literature has perished, we have to be content with this.

The next work, in chronological sequence, dealing with the subject, is the *Tuhfatu'l-qulūb wa farjatu'l-makrūb*, referred to above. It belongs to the post-Fatimid period, and was compiled by the third Yamanite *dā'ī*, Sayyid-nā Ḥātim b. Ibrāhīm (d. 596/1199).⁴

The author's purpose, as explained in his preface, was to satisfy those of his friends who were interested to have reliable information about the history of the *dā'īs* in the Yaman. To this

¹ Cf. *Guide*, No. 195.

² Cf. *Guide*, No. 273; *Kitābu'l-Azhār wa ṣulūḥu'l-ṣulḥ*, by Ḥasan b. Nūb b. Yūsuf al-Bharīdī (d. 539/1333). The work is in seven volumes; the last three are exceedingly scarce.

³ Cf. *Guide*, No. 113.

⁴ Cf. *Guide*, No. 297. The work mentioned under a slightly different title as No. 278 is the same as the preceding. The fault lies with the author himself, because he gives its title in two different forms at the beginning and the end of the work.

subject the author devoted only twenty pages out of 240.¹ His information, anyhow, is extremely valuable, and all later works on the history of Ismailism are based on it. He deals with the story of how the administrative centre of the Musta'liian branch of the Ismailis was after the assassination of al-Amir transferred to the Yaman. His narrative is very concise, even meagre; but, in the absence of anything else, even this is precious.

All other 220 pages out of 240 are occupied with the 'allied subjects'. Although compiling a treatise on such special subject, the learned Sayyid-nā cannot withstand the temptation of starting *ab ovo*, and giving a very simplified general account of Ismaili theology and theosophy. In the most boring way he starts with the doctrine of unity of God, creation, universe, prophets, Imam, man and his soul, etc., etc. With all this, as he says himself, he had already dealt with in another work, *ar-Risāla al-Jachara*, which apparently is not preserved. After this he continues his ruminations about the theory of the *ḥudūd*-*al-dīn*, and ultimately inserts the text of *al-Majāz* of an-Nayyābūrī. This, and the historical references about the *dā'wat* in the Yaman, mentioned above, occupy roughly one-third of the work, and make it extremely valuable. There would be one more exceedingly valuable item in his book, namely his frequent controversial references to the 'ghulāt', i.e. an extremist branch of the Ismailis, or generally Shi'ites. But in the most irritating manner of all the Ismaili controversialists, the author enlightens his reader about all sorts of nasty things attributed to these heretics, and their perversion of the original doctrine, but he deliberately remains silent on one point: the name of the sect. Who are they: Nizāris? Druzes? Nusayris? or some other sect which exists no longer! Thus what would be priceless information, remains completely wasted.

Amongst the still later works, touching indirectly on the same matters, we may also mention the *Zakru'l-ma'āni* by Sayyid-nā Idrīs, the 19th Yamanite *dā'i* (832-872/1428-1468).² In his 19th chapter he deals with the *ḥudūd*, and the guidance which they impart to the community. This is still more boring than the ruminations of the preceding author. The account is filled with superstitious speculations, fantastic parallels, theosophical deductions, etc., quite depressing reading which invariably raises the question whether this could be written by the same man who wrote the well-known historical work, the *Uyūnu'l-akḥbār*, and if he really did, what can be the value of such a history for research!

This is all that may be considered in this paper. But however little it is, we must be grateful to those ancient authors who recorded these ideas, and those people who preserved their works.

¹ In my copy, of course. The number of pages is merely given for showing the proportions.

² Cf. *Guide*, No. 260.

4. VIRTUES OF THE DĀ'I ACCORDING TO AL-HIRĀ.

What the dā'is of the Imams should do in their preaching!

The people who are the subject of this chapter first of all should take great care about the righteousness of their souls (*salāt ṣalwāt-him*), in the ways which we have already described in the preceding chapters. And not only this, but they must do this in all sincerity and without any reserve, abiding in such state of full self resignation, zealously guarding it. As the people whom they call to God and His Saints follow their example, and judge by what they see in the *dā'is* about their religion, they must be particularly punctilious in the cultivation of piety, righteousness, fear of God, chastity, doing good, and abstaining from doing bad. This chapter more particularly deals with the (initiated) devotees, *mu'mins*, just as the preceding chapters equally apply to Muslims in general.

(The author refers to the words of Imam Ja'far, who called his followers to be 'silent *dā'is*', i.e. the people whose example is a sufficiently eloquent advertisement of the superiority of their religion.) By acting righteously the *mu'mins* increases the influence of his Imam. But every one must do the proper thing. He must do neither more nor less of what he is expected to do. The highest virtue of those who carry on propaganda in favour of the Saints of God (i.e. the Imams), their greatest work, and the highest attainment—is their own righteousness based on sincere devotion, self-control based on religious feeling, convincing preaching, soul healing admonitions.

The *dā'i* must carefully study the ideas which he preaches, must personally know every member of his community, know their affairs, their aspirations. With this knowledge at his disposal he must gradually deliver his call to God and His Saints, in such a way as not to overtax the intelligence and the patience of his audience. When he has explained to his followers what he wanted to teach them, he must know how to handle them. He must learn to observe the people, recognize the state of their minds, their abilities, extent of their endurance. This is the most important knowledge needed by the *dā'i* for the organization and training of his followers. Ignorance of such matters tremendously affects his work, and the community (*dā'wat*) suffers from this.

Calamities befall those *dā'is* who permit themselves to slacken their efforts in the discharge of their duties. The number of their defects grows as time goes on, and ultimately these become so numerous and far reaching that it would be too long to describe them.

The *dā'i* must completely free himself from such defects; he must more than any one of his followers stick to the rules and principles which he preaches to others, strictly observing these under any circumstances. He must follow all such rules with perfect sincerity, always show unshakable determination to abide by them. He must always be moderate in his needs, must possess

an active mind, sincere faith, broad vision, must know how to control his temper, and always resolutely to go ahead with his duties, heedless of whether this brings him profit and respect of people, or not. He must persevere in his work both when this enhances his importance, his reputation in the eyes of everybody, or, on the contrary, leads to his humiliation. The position, of course, is different in case he specially needs (for the success of his mission) to acquire high regard amongst those in authority, whose ideas and opinions in such matters he must not disregard. In such cases his real merits are not affected by the (apparent) efforts at self aggrandizement,—if he really needs to associate himself with such people, outwardly complying with the standards and ideals, accepted amongst them, of virtue and merit. This obviously cannot be regarded as his own and personal desire of seeking position and importance.

Association with the people in whose hands authority is concentrated in religious matters, and the respect which the *da'i* may acquire amongst them for his complying with their ideas of piety, etc., creates the atmosphere of friendliness and goodwill, which greatly facilitate the chances of this people's collaboration and of their becoming converted, when they see him making great progress in what they regard with esteem and respect.

Human nature is inclined to jealousy, and the majority of those who desire to acquire learning or piety start being prompted by the feelings of jealousy, or rivalry with their friends and associates: their primary aim is to acquire high status. Only later on, when they get into the spirit of their work, those amongst them who pray God attain real success and genuine taste in their task. This is why some one rightly said: by God! at first we do not study for the acquisition of learning for the sake of God; but gradually knowledge which we acquire works upon us in such a way that we ultimately turn to Him.

The *da'i* must inspire respect of himself amongst his converts; they must feel fear before him. He must strictly observe his own actions so as not to give any reason to them to treat him lightly, or lose respect to his orders. The more respect he inspires in them, the more spiritual advantage they derive from his instruction, and the more virtuous they become. But his imposing manners should be accompanied by a real attitude of goodwill, quiet dignity, kindness to everyone, inviting address and pleasant companionship. There must be no sign of pressing his importance upon any one, of haughtiness in his treatment of others. No, modesty in appearance, combined with dignity of thought, should be his usual attitude.

Imam Ja'far said: study in order to acquire learning, and to adorn yourself with it: cultivate dignity and goodwill; treat with respect those who teach you, and those whom you teach. Do not make your learning oppressive to anyone, and do not permit your vanity to destroy the effects of what is really good in you.

The same Imam also said: those who acquire learning merely for the purpose of opposing the learned, or testing fools, or attracting the attention of the public and of showing their own superiority over others,—such people shall be punished after death, because religious leadership should belong only to those who really deserve it. The *da'i* should inspire respect in others quite naturally, simply by his behaviour, without any special effort or attempts at pressing his own importance on others, without showing vanity. He must be sympathetic to the weak and those in inferior position, because by doing so he enhances his influence, makes his position firm, achieves his aims, and organizes his community, thus preparing his work to bear fruit. He must treat nicely those who do their best, giving them the position which they deserve according to their behaviour, never leaving them without his supervision. But he must punish those whose behaviour is not good, and of whose evil actions he comes to know.

Those *da'is* who have firmly established their authority, must train their followers in different disciplines. They must excommunicate the sinners, making all their followers to boycott them, speaking not a word to them, never approaching them, so that they should live in isolation amongst their own people, out of touch with them and their heads, until life becomes misery to them, and they would request the *da'i* to accept their repentance, and to re-admit them to their community after the necessary testing of their sincerity in whichever way he pleases. He may either punish or fine them in case he sees something wrong on their part in the course of time, after their re-admission.

The *da'i* tests some by giving them high posts, others by reverting them in their position. He may order some to be fayed alive, others to be executed in some other way for their mischief. He may test the loyalty of his nearest associates by ordering one to kill his own brother, or some other relative. Those who are sincerely devoted must do this, however hard such orders may be for those who receive such commands. And if they do not comply with the order, the *da'i* should excommunicate them. Those who sincerely obey such test orders, receive great blessing. The *da'i* should punish his followers for every error, leaving nothing neglected or overlooked. In this way he disciplines them....

Da'is and residents (*walā'at*) must make themselves acquainted with what is explained in this book. They should comply with those principles, and believe in them, not only ostensibly, in words, but sincerely, proving this by their acts, in their religious beliefs, and in their ideals....

(Here follow different sayings attributed to 'Ali b. Abi Talib and some other Imams, chiefly dealing with the question of the capital punishments, *hadd*, prescribed in the *shari'at*.)¹

¹ In his account of the *da'is*' virtues and duties the author, Qāḍī Nu'mān, as usual, carefully avoids touching on the matters connected with ecsterc

5. THE DĀ'Ī AND HIS DUTIES ACCORDING TO AL-MUĤĪZA.

As mentioned above, *al-Muĥizatu'l-Kāfiya*, by Sayyid-nā Ahmad an-Naysābūrī, is the most detailed work available in Fatimid literature on the subject of *dā'ī*. It was composed, most probably, early in the fifth/seventh century, and is known only from the extract incorporated in the later work, the *Tuhfatu'l-qulūb*, by Hātim b. Ibrāhīm, described above; from there it was repeated in the chrestomathy called *al-Azhar*.¹ An abbreviated English translation of it was published about 1920 in a work devoted to the controversy between the progressive and the reactionary parties in the Indian Bohora community, supporting the views of the anti-Mullaji camp. Its title is: *Guides Daudi For The Bohoras of India. A short note on the Bohoras of India, their 21 Imams and 51 Dais, with their customs and tenets*. Compiled and Published by Mian Bhai Mulla Abdul Hussain, B.A., K.H.M., P.C.S., Burhanpur. Printed (500 copies) at the 'Amarsinhji' P. Press, Ahmedabad. (No date, apparently 1920.)

The book is out of print long since. It is one of the numerous outcomes of the present flood of litigation within the sect which seems to be the principal form of the activities of its headquarters. The purpose of the work is controversy; the author is technically helpless, and the monstrous misprints, which adorn the book, make its use for references very difficult. In any case, the translation needs careful revision.

The language of *al-Muĥizatu'l-Kāfiya* shows that its author was in all probability a Persian, and this explains its business-like tone, and the simple and intelligent treatment of the subject. Arabs rarely can stand the temptation of sacrificing every thing to form: rhymed prose, stuffed with rare words, and stilted vague verbiage very often obscure what little originality is left in their ideas.

As it has already been mentioned above, the author uses the term *dā'ī* in a broad sense, as generally a member of the priestly hierarchy. As a proof of his having written his work under the Fatimids, he always refers to the Imam as *Amīru'l-mu'minin*, the title which was only given to the caliphs. Great difficulty is presented to the translator by his rather confusing use of the terms *din* and *dā'wat*. Sometimes they are obviously the same. Sometimes the first, *din*, means religion, piety, as it etymologically should; but occasionally it is difficult to translate it in any other way than the congregation, community, diocese, or even the religious interests and welfare of the Ismaili community. The term *dā'wat* is used not only in the sense of preaching, religious instruction, but also in the sense of the *dā'ī-ship*, the profession of the *dā'ī*; some-

doctrine. This is the most prominent feature of all his works, and it is not yet clear what the reason was for this policy.

times, like *din*, it implies the Ismaili community in general, or a local 'diocese'.

The author describes the moral, religious, educational, personal, social, and other qualifications required from the ideal *dā'ī*, his duties towards the community, towards the Imam, his assistants; his methods of work, tactics with the outer world, etc. All this is arranged somewhat chaotically and contains many repetitions; there is no division into chapters. Therefore all his statements, except the numerous quotations from the Coran or of tradition, are here translated, either literally or freely, and re-arranged according to the subject with which they deal. Nothing is left out, except for the formula of the '*ahd*, or *mithāq*, i.e. the oath of allegiance and a concise creed, which really belongs to the dogmatical side of the religion.²

1. *The meaning of the words dā'ī and dā'wat*.—The *dā'wat* is God's own call of humanity to righteous ways of life as demonstrated by prophets,—*sunnatu'l-ambiyā'*. It is an explanation of the signs and indications of the will of God. Its aim is to call humanity to stick firmly to monotheism, and strive to enter the Abode of Salvation, *Dāru's-salām*, i.e. to build the ideal Divine theocratical state, the Church, which can never perish nor decay, which saves those who join and enter it, offering them shelter and protection from the injustice and oppression of the sinful world.

The title *dā'ī* is a great distinction. The Prophet himself applied this name to his own mission, and it can only be applied to 313 *rasūls*, or great Prophets; whom God has sent in the course of history to different nations to preach true religion. Ordinarily the *dā'ī* is the Ismaili priest, just as there are priests in Zoroastrianism, in Judaism, and in Christianity.³

The *dā'wat*, which the *dā'ī* is commissioned to carry on, is the guidance of mankind by the *ihām*, or inspiration, and *tafsiq* or Divine guidance (by the Imam) which the *dā'ī* broadcasts by persuasion and instruction in his preaching. The *dā'wat* is concerned with and comprises all forms of religious life and thought. Therefore it is the most important thing in everyone's life, all other matters being only secondary.

2. *The position of the dā'ī in the community*.—Just as man cohabiting with his wife, deposits his sperm into her womb, and when she conceives, he does not in any way interfere with the development of the embryo, and the birth of the child, but only

¹ About this cf. W. Ivanow, *A Creed of the Fatimids* (Bombay, 1936), pp. 13-17.

² As already mentioned above, it is doubtful whether the author takes into consideration all the implications of this parallel. Most probably his parallel does not go beyond the fact that the *dā'ī* are the servants of religion in the same way as all other priests are servants of their respective religions. It is noteworthy, however, that he does not mention the Sunnite *madras* in this connection.

protects and feeds his wife,—so the *dā'i*, being commissioned by the Imam, is left to work autonomously in his diocese. The Imam only gives general guidance to his *dā'is* and the Ismaili community as a whole; he is not to be bothered by references in routine work. The *dā'wat*, as already Imam Ja'far expressed, is an extraordinarily difficult task, implying tremendous responsibilities which none can take but a great prophet, an angel of high rank, or a faithful whose heart and sincere devotion have been thoroughly tested.

(In view of such tremendous responsibilities only those candidates can be selected for this task who possess the necessary intellectual abilities, education, religious and moral qualities, political and social tact, and innate character and qualities of a leader.) This applies to all ranks of the hierarchy, from the *bāb* to the *mukdair*, because every higher rank is the *dā'i*, or teacher, of those below him.

For this reason the *dā'i* must combine in himself all the ideal qualities and talents which may separately be found in the people of different professions and standing. He must possess the good qualities of an expert lawyer (*faqih*), because he often has to act as a judge; he must possess tact (*sabr*), good theoretical education (*ilm*), intelligence, psychological insight, honesty, high moral character, sound judgement, etc. He must possess the virtues of leaders, such as strong will, generosity, administrative talent, tact, tolerance. He must be in possession of high qualities of the priest, because he has to lead the esoteric prayer of his followers. He must be reproachlessly honest and reliable, because the most precious thing, the salvation of the souls of many people, is entrusted to him. He should be a real *mujāhid*, a warrior for the religious cause, in his heart, ready to sacrifice his life and everything for the religion. He must have the virtue of the physician, who delicately and patiently treats the sick, because he himself has to heal sick souls. Similarly, he has to possess the virtues of an agriculturist, of a shepherd, of the captain of a ship, of a merchant, etc.—developing in himself the good qualities required in different professions.

3. *The dā'i's learning and education.*—The *dā'i* must be well-educated, so that he may carry the light of religious knowledge to his followers. With regard to the Ismaili religion he must be well conversant both with the *zāhir* and the *bā'in* subjects. His learning must be sufficiently wide so that he could not be placed at an awkward position by any question put to him by his pupils.¹ The *zāhir* subjects are: *fiqh*, or jurisprudence; *ḥadīth*, *akḥbār*, *riwāyāt*, *isnāds*, i.e. all branches of tradition; the *Coran*, its *tafsīr*, or philological interpretation, and *ta'wīl*, or allegorical meaning; theory of preaching, arguing, religious stories; and the art of con-

¹ As just mentioned above, the author refers to all ranks of the *dā'is*, i.e. religious functionaries, equally, from *bāb* to *mukdair*. Thus it is very interesting that he demands from the ideal *dā'i* good knowledge of the *bā'in*, making not the slightest allusion to the 'degrees of initiation', which should be the limits assigned to every rank.

troversy and dialectics (*jadāl* and *ḥidāim*). He must be acquainted with the teachings of different sects, heretics, *zindīq*, *dahrites*, etc.²

His equipment with regard to the *bā'in* subjects must include the knowledge of everything that pertains to the physical (*māshū'at*) world, i.e. cosmogony, physics, branches of natural history, etc. And also disciplines dealing with abstract matters, such as philosophy, logic, etc. To this must be added profound learning in *ta'wīl* matters, in *afāq wa anfas* (i.e. parallelism of the universe with human organism), *al-ḥudūd*'-*al-ʿulūgiyya*, or philosophy of emanations, and generally *al-ʿilm*'-*rūḥānī*, spiritual subjects, or religious philosophy.

He must also know the biographies of the Imams, and have some idea about the activities of the former (famous *dā'is*).

Generally speaking, he must be encyclopaedically educated, so that not to be lost at any question. He must be able to write well, and to be able to operate correctly with abstractions. At the same time, he must have good knowledge of things belonging to secular education, *adab*, because only theological learning (*ilm*), not accompanied by *adab*, deprives the man of the necessary polish, *raḥmān*, which evokes admiration, and attracts people.

The *dā'i* generally must be a man of high intellectual culture, capable of handling the subjects connected with spiritual life and experience. He must be a man fond of learning and learned conversation. He must associate himself with the people who can carry it on. He must patronise learning and students, always showing respect and courtesy to the learned, *akḥbār*'-*ilm*, even if they are poor, and shabbily dressed.

4. *Moral and religious virtues of the dā'i.*—The *dā'i* must be a strict monotheist. This means that he should never attach so much importance to anything that it should interfere with his discharge of his duties to God. His faith must be unshakeable. He must be a man of sincere and profound devotion (*ʿabd*), offering his usual and esoteric (*zāhir* and *bā'in*) prayers to God.³ He must not be the man who only preaches religion, but also the man who sincerely follows the principles which he teaches. An ignorant, impious, or insincere man cannot be a *dā'i*. He must firmly know what is right and what is wrong, and make his followers also to know this.

On no account should he make for himself exceptions from the rules which are laid by the Imams for ordinary followers of the religion. In his behaviour and religious life he must be an example to others, so that to him may be applied what Imam Ja'far said about 'silent *dā'is*', i.e. those people who by the mere behaviour

² This is exactly the scope of the religious encyclopaedia of Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī, the *Kātib*'-*Zān*, referred to above. For this reason it may well be regarded as a manual in the *dā'ir* for the *dā'is*.

³ Apparently these 'exoteric and esoteric prayers' are what in other, especially later works, are styled *al-ḥudūd*'-*amalīyya* and *al-ḥudūd*'-*ʿulūgiyya*. These expressions, however, do not appear in this work at all.

in life make their religion so attractive to others that they begin to feel the desire to join it.

There are several religious virtues which the *ḏī*'s should possess: *taqwa*, or fear of God, or conscience, honesty before one self. It should be the basic tone of the whole of his life and activity, religious and private, of his knowledge, faith, and actions; it should be inseparable from the fundamental commandments of the Coran. This sense must be cultivated by careful study of religion. But this should not remain as some sort of theoretical knowledge, because it is worthless if it is not always and systematically applied to life.

Self-discipline, *as-siyāqat* 'l-*ḥāḡya*, is also extremely important. Before educating and disciplining others, the *ḏī*'s should himself possess the necessary mental and religious discipline, i.e. mastery over his own emotions and desires of doing what is condemned by religion, restraining himself from what is regarded as bad habits or actions, undesirable passions, or lust.¹ Restraining himself from these, he must, at the same time, cultivate positive or laudable qualities, such as punctiliousness in the obligatory forms of religious worship (*ḡarā'iq*), mastering his evil passions. He must cultivate that spirit of gratitude to the Creator for the most precious gift granted by Him to man,—life, and the possibility to behold His greatness. By sustained effort at self-training the *ḏī*'s should develop that clean and balanced mentality which should by itself impress his subordinates and pupils, and make them to covet it, in the same way as the words of Imam Ja'far about 'silent *ḏī*'s' imply. He must know it firmly that none can rule others (properly) who cannot rule himself, and that one must master himself before others will follow and obey him.

Self-discipline and conscience have the greatest importance in religious life, in the mastering of both the formal side of the religion, *ḡāḡir*, and its spirit, inner meaning, *ḡāḡin*. They give man that fundamental sense of the idea of God being above all, all-important and overpowering everything else, making impossible *shirk*, i.e. regarding anything as of equal importance with it, or attributing disproportionate importance to some aspects of the idea of Deity, on the lines on which one thinks about His creations.

The same two qualities make one obey sincerely those in the religious organization, who are placed above him, or to be modest and friendly with those of equal standing.

Devotion, *ḡia*, or sincere attachment to the religion which he preaches, unshakeable faith in its teaching, without any reserve or

doubt, must be a fundamental quality of the *ḏī*'s, just as sound learning, and punctiliousness in formal worship. But at the same time the *ḏī*'s must be an intelligent and shrewd man of sound and critical reason, *aqil kīmin* 'l-*aqil*. Learning in a fool often becomes a dangerous and destructive thing.

In addition to the complying with the recognized expressions of piety, *ḡara'*, the *ḏī*'s must be a man of strictly moral life (*ḡifā*). He must be a man of sympathetic attitude to others (*shāḡḡa*), merciful and condescending to human weaknesses. Man is normally inclined to mischief and disobedience, and God punishes him for this. But the *ḏī*'s must not be rigidly formal and pitiless. He must be friendly and helpful to his followers and subordinates. He must especially keep away from haughtiness, arrogance, swollen-headedness with those who are in his charge. He must be modest and accessible, must have the sense of shame (*ḡaya'*), which is one of the chief qualities of a religious man, keeping him away from committing unfair things, which offend religion, and ruin the congregation.

He must always be honest with his followers, as otherwise he would lose all credit in their eyes, and nobody would trust him. And he must be particular to keep sacredly his word. Piety is nothing without *ḡaḡf*, i.e. faithfulness to one's promise or oath. The community is ruined by nothing so much as by treachery and fraud.

Penny-wisdom and misery ruin the cause of the *ḏī*'s, because they encourage fraud and 'charging extra' (*inḡāḡ*) in the *ḏī*'s subordinates, who have to resort to these to counteract their evil effects. Therefore the *ḏī*'s should be generous, *shāḡī*, and must possess *murūḡa*, i.e. unselfishness and broadmindedness.

The *ḏī*'s must know how to keep secrets entrusted to him; if he does not possess the necessary ability of *kīḡān*, i.e. preserving confidential matters unrevealed, he may cause grave calamity to his followers, and ruin the cause of the community.

He must possess *ra'y*, i.e. sense of discretion and clear thinking, tact, coupled with *ḡilm* and *ḡabr*, i.e. sympathetic attitude and patience. He has to deal with people of different status, education, intelligence, etc., who come to him with their needs and requests. If he treats them harshly, losing his temper and feeling irritated, he will soon become unpopular, and his mission will suffer. Therefore he must particularly cultivate a friendly manner in dealing with such people, necessary self-control and patience, being *ḡayyib* 'l-*ḡalā*, i.e. polite and friendly with everybody and his subordinates, never showing contempt of them, or humiliating them. He must preserve the best relations with the people amongst whom he lives and works, carrying on with them, whatever they may really be. As Imam Ja'far said: 'live (friendly) with people, even if they have bad manners, and do not tell them bluntly that they are pigs'. He must be polite with every one, although preserving his dignity, not talkative. If he speaks, he must touch only on serious

¹ As is known, Islamism completely rejects ascetic practices, mortification of flesh, celibacy, and all other similar ideas. It professes that the body must be as sound as the soul: the former is the riding animal of the latter. If one weakens his *ḡarḡā*, while travelling in this world, he would not be able to cross the desert of human life, and may perish before he reaches his destination. Therefore the self-discipline which is referred to here is simply what may be in a more modern term called 'building up character'.

matters, or learned subjects, as otherwise respect to him may be affected.

He must always keep up his spirits and cheer up his followers. In their bereavement, misfortune, sickness, he must show them his compassion and sympathy, visiting them, or sending someone to convey his kind word, offering a prayer for them. Similarly, on an auspicious occasion, or festivity, he must send to the people his congratulations and greetings, acting as a loving brother with his co-religionists.

The door of his house must be open to every member of the community, both to his supporters and to those who may oppose him. He should not keep aloof from his followers, so that an estrangement may not arise between him and them. He must not accustom himself to suspect them in evil things, or distrust them, because distrust and suspicion lead to fraud.

The *dā'i* must possess a powerful personality (*waqār*), and inspire great respect (*hayb*) in his followers and subordinates. But he must not develop greed for authority and domination of others. He must realize the responsibility which authority implies, and must make himself worthy of it. If he only thinks of self-aggrandizement (being not worthy of his high position), this is nothing but false pretence, or lie,—and he is the source of all vices, of misery, hatred, and calamity, which ruin piety and righteousness.

The *dā'i* must not be licentious or loose, sensuous or lustful, because this leads to his spiritual degradation and loss of respect in the eyes of his people.

He must especially avoid greed, *ḥama'*, which leads to the practice of bribes, illegal gratification. This is contrary to the oath of allegiance (*'ahd*) to which he is expected to be faithful. And if he violates it, it means that his religious sincerity (*dīn*) is gone: such a man is lost for the *dā'wat*. Even if he repents, and his oath is accepted again, he still remains a great offender, just as a man who has committed murder or rape.

The *dā'i* must not develop the manner of turning everything into a joke, treating things lightly. This leads to the loss of respect for him, and even hostility and contempt for him on the part of his followers.

5. *Special qualifications of the dā'i.*—He must be a clever and intelligent man, learned, and a born orator and preacher. He must know the local language of the province in which he works, just as he must know the local religions, and be up to the standard of the local cultured society, so that he may have a common language when addressing them. But above all he must be shrewd psychologist, possessing sufficient insight to recognize at once the real value of the man whom he meets, and anticipate the attitude of the people with whom he deals. He must develop the understanding of human psychology, observe the words and the actions of his associates. He must correctly judge about their intelligence. An experienced *dā'i* can at once see how far his pupil may be per-

mitted to learn abstract doctrines without the danger of being left in confusion.

He must have the talent of an organizer, which is the chief virtue of a ruler. He must strengthen the organization of his community, both secular and religious (*bi-siyāsa millīyya wa shar'īyya*) before he becomes their real spiritual head, who rules their souls by the authority of learning (*bi-rīqā'a 'ilmiyya*), so that the purpose of his mission (*dā'wat*) can be attained.

6. *The mission of the dā'i.*—The *dā'i* can only be made by *idā'a*, i.e. permission, or commission (of the Imam, directly or indirectly, through intermediary authorities).¹ One who has not got such permission (but calls himself a *dā'i*), is an impostor and traitor, messenger of evil. (The object of his mission, *dā'wat*, his learned and personal qualifications, are explained above.)

He brings (new) life into the souls of the initiated by imparting to them his knowledge and wisdom, delivering to them his spiritual knowledge (*al-'ilmu'r-rūḥānī*), revealing to those amongst them who have stood the test of their sincerity, the secret meaning of their religion. He teaches them both the formal side of the religion, *shā'r*, and its abstract, or hidden side, the *bīḥān*.

He also accepts, on behalf of the Imam, the oath of allegiance from them (*'ahd*, or *mīthāq*). His mission has three main points: imparting the (true religious) knowledge, raising the spirit of fear of God, and organizing (*siyāsa*) the community.

7. *Management of the community.*—The *dā'i* must entirely devote himself to the affairs of his mission (*dā'wat*), and the community which he manages on behalf of the Imam, from whom he holds his commission. He must always attach the greatest importance to the interests of the mission, encouraging those who are loyal to it. He must never miss a chance for proving the greatness of the religion, and add to its respect in the eyes of his followers, or to denounce its enemies, exposing their weak points.

He must at every opportune moment impart instruction to his followers, teaching them to appreciate religious knowledge and learning, which should bring them many advantages. He must emphasize the spiritual reward which they may gain by this. All this helps the community to keep up their spirit at the time of

¹ In the work of the same author, the *Intisāb al-Imām*, a special expression is used for the idea of commissioning a *dā'i*,—*al-khāṭa 'alay-hi*: he (the Imam) accepted from him the oath (*al-'ahd*, which is here implied). As every initiated Ismaili had to swear allegiance to the Imam, and as obviously non-initiated would not be admitted into the secret propaganda service, it is clear that there was a special oath which the *dā'i* had to take to the Imam in addition to the usual initiation oath. In the *Siya al-Ḥafīz al-Ḥajjī* (*Biography of the Faculty of Arts of the Egyptian University*, Vol. IV, p. 112) it is narrated how the Imam (al-Mahdi), being in a dangerous situation, at the mercy of his *dā'i*, renews the latter's oath (*'ahd*). It may be added that the term *idā'a*, mentioned here, perhaps was only used at an earlier period. Anyhow, in the post-Fatimid period the term which is used is now, which originally was only applied to the Imam's appointment to his position by his father.

difficulties. When he preaches, he is not compelled to answer every question put to him by his followers. He must first make sure whether the question is asked out of sincere desire for the guidance, or out of vain curiosity. It is, however, not advisable to refuse to reply in any case.

After he has finished his admonitions, he must leave the pupils alone to think over and to 'digest' his instruction.

He must keep himself well-informed, and must always look for fresh information (to keep himself up-to-date). He must not shun the discomforts and hardships of travelling for the inspection of his diocese, and acquiring first hand knowledge of the people, and their needs, or for preaching to them.

When a messenger, or a convert escaping from his original co-religionists (*mushjir*) arrives, the *da'i* must receive him as he should according to his position and status, giving him encouragement, and strengthening his heart. And if he himself sends a messenger to a town or province, he must select for this purpose a suitable, reliable, conscientious and honest man, because he will be questioned (in addition to the message which he conveys) by the people to whom he is sent. He must know how to answer their questions in a light favourable to the community, and not to harm its interests. He also should be able to tell honestly what he has seen and heard on his tour, when he comes back.

The *da'i* must dispense justice to his followers, satisfying their just demands, seeing to it that no one should be wronged. He must settle their disputes, if asked, and must collaborate with the secular authorities on the spot, helping them to maintain law and order, in so far as his collaboration in religious sphere may prove effective. If the dispute arises between different parties of the initiated, *mu'mins*, i.e. members of the sect, the *da'i* should persuade them to settle their dispute before him, without referring the case to secular authorities. They should not go before the *sulṭān*, or *qādī*, because their own *da'i* is their immediate authority. Those who disregard this principle, sin; those who deliberately oppose it, deserve condemnation; and those who (really!) do this, invoke the condemnation of all Saints of God (i.e. Imams). The disputing parties must come to a settlement (normally) only with his consent.

It is generally the duty of the *da'i* to preserve peace between his followers, and reconcile their disputes, leading them toward friendly co-operation, affectionate relations, and mutual help. He must dissuade them from envy, hatred, intrigues, enmity, concealment of truth, etc. One must not wish for others what he does not wish for himself.

If anyone starts oppressing his brother *mu'min*, the *da'i* must take steps to put a stop to this, and punish him. If the offender persists, the *da'i* must make his offence public, and excommunicate him until he comes to his senses.

In case anything untoward happens in the community, corruption or offence against the spirit of religion, if cases of

treachery occur, or renegacy spreads, or discontent or rebellion are started, the *da'i* must have information at once, and take necessary measures for putting things right. If he leaves the things to worsen, by neglect or deliberately, by an error, or out of laziness, or incapability, he becomes responsible for the crime, and must be punished. (The responsibility for the affairs of the community lies with him entirely.) If God asks the Imam to account for the condition of the community, its preservation or obedience, the Imam may lay responsibility for these on the shoulders of the *da'i*, who takes it upon himself, volunteering to guarantee the welfare of the congregation, and has to account for this. If he feels himself unfit to carry out his obligations, he must inform the Imam at once, and resign from office, so that another man, fit to fill the post, may be appointed instead of him.

In his instruction to the community the *da'i* must always urge his followers to be obedient to the Imam, and to be affectionately devoted to him, carrying out all his orders, and offering their own selves and their property to propitiate him, and to be ready even to sacrifice their lives if required. One pleases God by pleasing the Imam, and obeys God by obeying him. The *da'i* must make it clear to his followers that the Imam is not obliged to do anything for any one. And if he grants the wishes of his people, giving them things of this world, or learning, he does this not for necessity, but out of his generosity.

8. *The da'i and his assistants and immediate subordinates.*—No *mu'min* deserves the name of *mu'min*, unless he prepares and educates another *mu'min* like himself.¹ It is therefore the duty of the *da'i* to train his subordinates in their work by teaching religious subjects, imparting to them general information, disciplining them, and testing their abilities. He must train them to carry out his instructions, and take into consideration the individual abilities of every one amongst them. He must train his *mu'dabbin* how to handle those who are in his charge. Similarly, he must give proper education to other ranks, in religious subjects and in the technique of their work, so that they may gradually rise to being eligible for the Imam's commission (*ḥaddū'l-idhān*).² Similarly, he must educate the ordinary initiated (*muṣṭafīn*), organizing them, and instructing them in all subjects that they should know, as far as they are capable of understanding them.

He also should not neglect the uninitiated (*ahlu'l-zuhūr*), making them live in peace, conducting discussions with them on religious subjects. The low and noble, Muslims and non-Muslims, must equally receive his attention and thought, his instruction and his care about their safety, in the spirit of honesty, justice, and tolerance.

¹ These are supposed to be the words of al-Mu'izz bi'l-Ishāq himself.

² Cf. note 3 on p. 25, in which the question of the selection of the candidates to the post of the *da'i* is discussed.

The *dd'i* should not select his assistants (and candidates to priesthood) out of consideration of their material affluence, personal friendship with him, those who are under his protection,¹ or are subservient to him, etc., because such practices lead to the ruin of the community in the eyes of everybody, just as the messengers who cheat and betray their religion by praising those who bribe them, and reviling those who do not satisfy their greed.

The *dd'i* must look after the *mu'min* and *ma'dhūn*, and those who are appointed to teach them, making them observe the precepts of the *shari'a*, and understand the doctrine of *ta'wil*, which they should learn consciously, sensibly, and seriously. He must give them necessary explanations (if they ask for these), test their intelligence in various ways, in the sphere of religion or in other matters, thus acquiring a complete idea of what they really are. When he finds them fit and suitable (for his work), he raises them to the position of *dd'is*. He tests them by giving them charge of the education of *mustajibs*, under his own supervision. If they pass the test, he promotes them further, and appoints them as (deputy) *dd'is* in some localities, controlling them closely in their work. Thereafter he promotes them further, until they reach the position of being in charge of a district, or even a province. He continues testing and trying them all the time until he knows them thoroughly.

If such candidate to *dd'i*-ship shows great zeal, making great progress in his training, and the *dd'i* sees that he will make a good assistant to himself, or will be fit to take over his own duties, he has no excuse for not making him a *dd'i*, although the man may be only a *mu'min* by his rank.²

(But) the *dd'i* should not trust any man who is not properly tried and tested by him, whose sincerity is not proved, and who does not comply with the regulations of the *da'wat*. He can rely on him only after he has served for some time, proving his ability, and giving a satisfactory account of himself. If some people approve of him, but others object to him, the *dd'i* should not employ him, because objection overrules the approval.³ This is

¹ This apparently refers to 'clients', i.e. the people who for various reasons were associated with a tribe or family, although they did not belong to it originally.

² This apparently implies the case in which the successful candidate does not possess the rank of the *ma'dhūn*. As already discussed above, it is not clear what really was the distinction between the *ma'dhūn*, *walid*, and *mustajib* on the one side, and the *mu'min* on the other, in this sense. One may well think that he was a well-educated layman, privately employed by the *dd'i*, not an official member of the *da'wat* service.

³ It is not quite clear what this and the following sentences really have in view: does this mean that ordinary members of the community also had the right to be consulted in the appointment of a new *dd'i*? Or does it mean that those who were consulted, or had the right to dispute the nomination, were other *dd'is*, of subordinate rank? Anyhow, it appears that the *dd'i*, i.e. in this case the *hujjat*, or some other kind of a chief *dd'i*, had no right to appoint any one independently. As mentioned by the author, he had to

because those who trust in him, believe only in what is good and sensible in him that they have seen. But those who oppose had the chance to see in him what was not good. Even if a thousand people testify to his being eligible for the work, and only two oppose, pointing out some defects in his character, and four other men point out some other shortcomings, the *dd'i* must accept the opinion of those who are against him. (Popular) accusations of *dd'is*, just as of witnesses, judges, or trustees, usually cannot be treated as seriously as real accusations in some offence, proved by reliable evidence. Many of such charges are based on hearsay, repetition of rumours, stories of 'trusted men'; but even if in case of the candidate to *dd'i*-ship different allegations are not supported by proper evidence, and do not imply any serious offence (*hadd*), it would nevertheless be better to get rid of him, because later his position may become difficult.

But what to do in the event that all agree in trusting the man as good, and he proves to be a deceiver? And what to do with the man who is generally regarded as bad? In any case, if two respectable *mu'mins* swear and prove that so-and-so is unfit to be employed as a *dd'i*, the *dd'i* must not employ him in the *da'wat* service. If notwithstanding this the *dd'i* endangers the life and property of the faithful (by employing such a man), he commits a crime, and it is treachery not only against the property, but also the existence of the congregation of his province, which may be ruined by dishonesty or lack of administrative talent on the part of the (new) *dd'i*. This happens from time to time through greed of some *dd'is*, their impiety, ignorance, etc.

The *dd'i* must manage his community with determination and energy, keeping himself well informed, especially in the provinces which are under the hand of tyrannical and hostile rulers. Therefore a man should not be appointed as a *dd'i* (without proper qualifications) simply in the course of ordinary promotion, in fulfilment of a promise, out of favoritism, nepotism, friendly relations, protection, for consideration of some material interests, out of respect, or under a threat, etc. All such reasons are contrary to the spirit of religion, justice, trust, and word of God and His Prophet. A great deal of corruption may be introduced into the community by permitting such irregular practices.

If a *dd'i*, (satisfactorily) working for some time, does something that angers his superior, and is concerned with purely personal matters, such as not rendering a (personal) favour, etc., the superior *dd'i* should not dismiss him from his post. He must do this (only) in case of his subordinate's treachery against religion. The *dd'i* may employ one if he sees that the candidate has sufficient religious qualifications (*din*), even if he does not like him personally, or is

Prepare the candidate to be eligible for the post. And then the matter was not decided simply by the *dd'i's* (or the *hujjat's*) recommendation to the Imam, but some additional procedure was to be followed,—asking the consent either of the community, or of fellow-*dd'is*, as it seems.

personally against him. But if the subordinate *dā'i* strays from the right path, or misappropriates religious funds, etc., he becomes a criminal, a trespasser of the law, and his oath of allegiance is annulled.

If the *dā'i* notices that a *mu'min* or *ma'dhūn* commits treachery, or misbehaves himself, he must admonish him to repent. But if the sinner persists, despite his admonition, and if his actions affect the interests of the community, or create dissension in the people, the *dā'i* must severely reprimand him, and even, if this does not suffice, he must make his offence known to the whole of the community, and dismiss him, sending some one to take over his post. In case, however, his mistakes do not seriously affect the community, and are merely the sins for which he is only responsible before God, then the *dā'i* should not give the matter wide publicity.¹

Whenever the behaviour of the subordinate *dā'i* affects the interests of the community, the superior *dā'i* must warn his followers against him, so that his example should not be followed, and there would be difference between those who act rightly, and those who act wrongly.

If the *mu'min* or *ma'dhūn* shows his righteousness, trustworthiness, loyalty, high moral standard, and learning, it is necessary, that the superior *dā'i* should encourage him, showing more confidence in him, raising his position above that of others, so that his enthusiasm may increase. Other subordinate *dā'is*, seeing his example, may desire to emulate it, bettering their work. If there should be no difference between good and bad, and a bad worker should not suffer disadvantage, then nothing would stop corruption and decay spreading in the community, and there would be no incitement to any one to do good. This would lead to the ruin of the people, increasing their deterioration and disorderliness.

The *dā'i* must educate his *mu'mins*, improving their manners, so that they may become fit to appear before the Imam, and answer sensibly and politely his questions, without feeling confused; or ask him about necessary things in proper language and manner, at the proper time, what is really needed.

The *dā'i* is must not enrich themselves with the Imam's money, or demand more than is really needed. And if they ask, and their request is not granted, they should not at once bear a grudge against the Imam, or let their devotion to him become undetermined.

The *dā'i* should not criticise or disagree with any act of the Imam; he must obey all his orders or restrictions, and rules laid by him. He must accustom his followers not to demur to anything coming from him, and to be certain that all the actions of the Imam are based on a higher wisdom, and special reasons (which remain

¹ This again sounds as if implying the *dā'i's* consulting the community concerning the offence of his subordinate. And again it is dark whether only members of the service, or also laymen are consulted.

unknown to them). If they do not know his motives at present, they perhaps will know them later.

If they recognize the Imam as the wisest man of the time (*hakimu'l-umma*), they must realize that all that he does is based on his supreme wisdom. If they fail to understand this, this is because they are incapable of understanding the superior substance of the Imam.

The *dā'i* must properly train and curb his followers; and when he employs them in the *dā'wat* service, or sends them on any religious or political mission, he must properly instruct them as to their duty. He must carefully explain everything to them, what they are expected to do, warning them against dishonesty or deliberate attempts at wrecking the work, or neglect, or cowardice on their part. And if his agent commits one of such offences, he (the agent) becomes responsible for these before the religion, his allegiance is broken, and he becomes covered with eternal shame, in this world and in after life, so that he would deplore his behaviour, losing all his reward which was otherwise due to him.

If any of his assistants cheats or swindles him, the *dā'i* must punish him severely, reduce him in rank, so that his case may serve as an example for others. On the contrary, seeing his devotion and enthusiasm, the *dā'i* should reward him, and promote him to a higher position.

The *dā'i* should properly instruct his assistants and followers that in case any one of them notices that some one is betraying the interests of the Imam, in the religious or secular sphere, or tampering with the administration of the community, he must at once interfere, suppressing the offender. And if he cannot do this, he must at once report the matter to the Imam (or his accredited representative), as otherwise great calamity may be caused to the community, leading God knows to what.

9. *The dā'i and the mustajīb.*—The *dā'i* must select as his *mustajibs*, i.e. initiated followers, people of good appearance (i.e. physique), and sound faith. These indicate general soundness in a man, and sound health indicates that he is living an orderly life, and has a good disposition. He must be free from bodily defects such as deafness, absence of one of his limbs, manginess, lameness, etc. Similarly he must be free from blemish in his religious beliefs, e.g. from *ghulwāt*, or Shi'ite extremism. The *dā'i* must carefully study the candidate, detecting all his blemishes, and reject those who are unfit to be admitted. It sometimes happens that through the *dā'i's* neglect or carelessness unfit persons are permitted to join, and swear the oath of allegiance; but later on decay and corruption creep into the community through this.

The *dā'i* is responsible for the proper choice of his *mustajibs*. When the man of the right type is selected, the *dā'i* must make it certain whether he takes the oath of allegiance quite sincerely, and has no hidden motives, such as greed, coveting a position, or whatever it may be.

The *dā'i* should not accept initiates (*mustajīb*) for the consideration of money, or other interest, but only after ascertaining the candidate's sincere devotion. This can only be done gradually. If the candidate has some ulterior motive in his conversion, he must not be accepted. But if everything is all right with him, the *dā'i* must dispell all his doubts as to his former religion being wrong, so that no prejudice against his new persuasion may be left in his mind. Then he takes from him the oath of allegiance (on behalf of the Imam); and he begins to teach him only after this the (Isma'ili) doctrine, gradually, not revealing much at a time, in order not to make him confounded, as this may cause him much harm. This must be done by special lectures, for which the *dā'i* should reserve specified hours, when his pupils can ask him different questions. Non-initiated should not be present at such conversations.

10. *The dā'i and the religious funds.*—(The question of the control of religious funds, trusts, and property has not received much attention in *al-Majālis*); the *dā'i* must not misappropriate the Imam's property (i.e. religious funds) when using these for the purposes sanctioned by his authority. The Imam needs money and property in order to increase the might of his community, and strengthen the foundations of the religion: money guards religion.

If, however, the *dā'i* conceals for his own use something from the religious funds in his hands, this amounts to a very great sin against the *dā'wat*, or religion. And if the *dā'i* disregards the prescriptions of his religion, he must be punished even more severely than the ordinary man under similar circumstances.

In his routine *dā'wat* expenses he must keep within the limits of what is sanctioned; but at the same time he must not bother the Imam with asking for special sanction for every trivial item, or delay payments, making his work suffer.

11. *The dā'i and the policy towards the world outside the community.*—The *dā'i* should realize that *mulk*, state, is the guardian of religion and the people who profess it. The empire of the Imams is based on religion (*dīn*). The spread of the religion (*dīn*), and the success of the *dā'wat* (Fatimid domination) strengthen the empire, removing obstacles and difficulties in the way of its progress. All the subjects of the Imam may then become his devotees, residing either within the limits of the empire (*fi hafrati-hi*), or in different *jarīras*, i.e. religious colonies, where they form his *jund*, vanguard, or his auxiliaries, or supporters who should never betray the interests of the Imam, or revolt against him.

But everybody would become dissatisfied, and develop a hostile and disloyal attitude towards the Imam, if mistakes are perpetrated in the religious administration (*dīn*). If his *dā'is* are inefficient and worthless, incapable of carrying on the administrative work, ignorant and impious, the religious spirit of the masses is bound to deteriorate. (Losing interest and trust in it) they may begin to apostatize, returning to the fold of the religion which they

professed before their conversion (to Ismailism); or many may become atheists (*dakrīyya*), or join some heretical sectarian movement. They would resent the miserable state of things in their community (*dīn*), their souls would be affected with grief; discontent, rebellion, factional fights, splits would spread, dishonesty, violence, etc., would become common, and the community would become engaged in self-destruction.

This is the picture of what would happen if mistakes are permitted to accumulate in the religious management of the community. The unrest would necessarily spread to *jarīras*, or religious colonies, and this would be the end of the religion, as the people would be reduced to the state of wild beasts.

There are three principles on which the policy of the *dā'wat* should be based, and they sum up everything: enlightenment (*ilm*), conscientious attitude towards one's duties (*taqīd*), and (sound) organization (*siyāsa*). The duty of the *dā'i* (with regard to the population which is not yet converted) is to introduce good secular administration, based on strict observance of law (*siyāsa milliyya shar'iyya*). He should dominate them by his enlightened intellectual superiority (*siyāsa 'ilmiyya*), and then he would succeed to dominate their souls, and thus complete the aim of the *dā'wat*—their conversion.

The true guidance of the people (*as-siyāsa-tal-ūmma*) in charge of the *dā'i* means to educate them in strict respect for law, and social advancement (*al-dīb millī*). The *dā'i* should train them in obedience to law, discourage them from infringing its prescriptions, and introduce in them admiration for moral virtues (*ja'ā'id ilī*). Those who do not obey him, must receive appropriate punishment.

The *dā'i* therefore should attach special importance (*himmah*) to the correct discharge of his administrative duties, both religious and secular, because only such policy helps the Imams to acquire mastery over the world. The man who is unfit to control himself, his relatives and servants, cannot rule others, and therefore cannot be appointed as a *dā'i*.

12. *The dā'i and society.*—Only men of good families should be appointed *dā'is*, because good birth (*wasab fi qawm*) gives good standing in society. The people would not so willingly associate themselves with the *dā'i* who is of a low origin, or accept his tuition, treating him with contempt. I myself (says the author of *al-Majālis*) saw many people who did not like to join the religion only because the *dā'i* (who wanted to convert them) was a man of low birth, or because he had been in jail, or suspected of something disreputable. For these reasons only people of good and respectable families should be appointed to commanding positions in the community, because noble origin adds respect in the eyes of one's subordinates.

The *dā'i* must possess good bearing and manners, must dress properly. He must know how to treat people who come in contact with him. He must be circumspect, kind to everybody, but

must not degrade himself by lengthy chats with the people undervaluing this. Nor should he be abrupt and rude with any one. Mistakes in etiquette create ill feelings. In social functions every one should be given the place to which he is entitled, and every one must treat each other with respect and courtesy.

(In his private life) the *dā'i* should prefer the company of learned people (as mentioned above). He must also treat with respect ascetics and devotees (of other religions). And he must keep away completely from the people of doubtful reputation and bad character.

13. *The dā'i in his family life.*—Orderliness in family life (*as-siyāsa'u'l-hēmma*) must be strictly adhered to by the *dā'i*. He must make all his relatives observe discipline and decency, respect virtue, and avoid committing mischief. If they commit errors, he must punish them. Every man preserves in his family the spirit or tradition which he leaves as a legacy to his progeny. The *dā'i* must make learning, high morals, and good manners a family tradition, so that his children, being brought up in this spirit, may acquire salvation. He must make a point of compelling every member of his family to be punctual in offering the prescribed prayers, paying *zakāt*, etc. If he is unable to keep his family life running in an orderly way, how can he be entrusted with the guidance of others in religious and general matters?

The *dā'i* should not employ as servants young boys, or any one who may give food to suspicions as to his good morals. This would inevitably become the subject of talk everywhere, and the prestige of the *dā'i* might be ruined. His servants must take special care about their own reputation, as its ruin may ruin that of their master's. The *dā'i* should not tolerate any drunkard near himself, or a man suspected of something bad, as this endangers his own reputation. His domestic servants (*hāshiyā*) must be initiated members of the religion (*mu'min*), modest men, devoted to the work of religion and their community. As in the house of the *dā'i* discussions may often be carried on of different doctrinal and theological matters (which may be secret), such things must not reach the hearing of the uninitiated. Therefore the servants must be trusted and reliable. They must be of good character also because wives and children of the *dā'i*'s followers often enter his house, and they should be safe from anything undesirable. The women whom he employs in his family, must be either relatives whom he cannot marry according to the rules of the *shari'a*, or his wives, or slave-wives.

In his private life the *dā'i* must keep, as far as possible, indoors, discussing important questions with decent, respectable and learned people. They also may occupy themselves with recitations of the Coran, offering prayers at the prescribed times, etc. In such conversations with his personal friends the *dā'i* should see that the people behave themselves decently, do not utter indecent jokes,

or use obscene and rude language, as this may (become known, and) ruin his prestige.

14. *The personal staff of the dā'i.*—The secretary (*hātib*) of the *dā'i* must be a modest and unpretentious man. By his profession he has to know his master's and the community's secrets and confidential matters; therefore only a *mu'min*, or initiated member of the sect, may be employed for this work. It is said that the secretary is the trustee (*sokūf*) of his master's knowledge, or his master's reasoning (*manāfiq*). Therefore it is absolutely impossible to tolerate having a man in such a position who may happen to be a bad character (*fāsiq*), dishonest, corrupt, or rapacious. Such a man could cause incalculable damage to the *dā'i*'s work.

Similarly, the *dā'i*'s major-domo, or chamberlain, *hājib*, also should be an intelligent man, of good manners, polite, of good address, modest and not venal. Being in charge of the management of the house, he is in this respect the lieutenant of his master. It is known that by one's chamberlain one may judge what his master is, and what are his habits, just as by one's servant the people judge about his respectability. Nothing can ruin the prestige of a master so much as corruption shown by his servant.

The *dā'i* must keep a reliable porter, *hawwāb*, a trusted man, belonging to his community. He should be polite and considerate to the people who call on his master. If they come at reception time he must admit them in a courteous manner. And if someone calls at an unusual time, the porter should politely ask him to wait, report to his master his arrival, and ask whether the guest should be admitted. As wives and children of the members of the community have often to call at the *dā'i*'s house, the porter must be selected from amongst reliable men of irreproachable character.

Bombay, the 1st June, 1939.



