

IVANOW

TOMBS OF SOME PERSIAN ISMAILI IMAM.

ENG1

0711

NODE

29315

ISMAILIA ASSOCIATION

(Pakistan)

Library

Accession No. _____

Call No _____

Date _____

TOMBS OF SOME PERSIAN ISMAILI IMAM.

REFERENCE BOOK

(FOR USE IN LIBRARY ONLY)

IVANOW

17A

TOMBS OF SOME PERSIAN ISMAILI IMAMS

By W. IVANOW

Soon after the fall of Maymūn-diz (i.e. the last day of Shawwāl 654 A.H., or the 19th Nov. 1256), the chief fortress of Alamūt, other Ismaili strongholds were captured and ruined by Mongols, and,—as is well known,—their inhabitants were brutally slaughtered. The last ruler of Alamūt, the Ismaili Imam Ruknu'd-dīn Khūrshāh, perished on his way to Mongolia, and his relatives were put to death. In all historical works after this no indication is found relating to the continuation of the family of the Imams, and even Ismailis in general are referred to only during the earliest subsequent period. Later on the term *mulhid*, or 'heretic', which was applied to the sectarians, becomes increasingly vague, and for about six hundred years the sect almost disappears from history's pages. For all these reasons it was regarded in Orientalistic circles as almost an established fact that the family of the Imams was annihilated by the Mongols, and that practically no Ismailis remained in Persia.

Thus, when during the last two decades, or so, genuine Ismaili works became accessible to students, and when it was found that they contained numerous references to the Imams who flourished after the fall of Alamūt, this information was met with much suspicion and distrust. But the gradual study of these new documents left no room for doubt as to the fact that at least many of the Imams, whose names are preserved by oral tradition, really existed. Every student of Islam in mediæval Persia, and of her spiritual evolution, would be tantalized to know more about this mysterious movement which had enough latent force and vitality to survive six hundred years of 'underground' existence. Unfortunately, however, there is very little historical information available. The reasons are many: the precarious existence of the community did not produce the people of superior education and literary tastes who could take up the subject. Ismailis were living in isolated groups, or 'nests', which had little to do one with the other. Their Imams were usually living in the guise of Sufic shaykhs, of whom at that time there was a large number in all Islamic countries. Many of them, especially under the Safavids, held high posts, intermarried with the royal house, etc. References to them *are* really found in the general literature, but the difficulty is that they were known in their public life under quite different names, which the sectarian tradition did not preserve, and now it is not easy to identify them.¹ Their

¹ The well known instance is that of Hasan 'Alī Shāh, who came over to India, and settled in Bombay. He was known to the general public simply as the Agha Khan, while on official occasions he was also called Muḥammad Husaynī.

Indian followers who periodically used to undertake long and very difficult journeys for paying homage to their Imams, also left very little historical materials. History was never a fancy of the Indian mind; Indian pilgrims were coming to see miracles, to adore their *Guru*; they possessed neither the necessary command of language, nor interest in the history of the country of their spiritual heads. An eminent Indian Ismaili teacher, a man undoubtedly of exceptional abilities, Imām-Shāh, who visited Persia towards the close of the IXth/XVth c., left a book about his experiences.¹ But, to our disappointment, in his work there is not a word about the places which he visited, nor of the village which was the place of the residence of the Imam. His book is entirely devoted to the account of his visit to Paradise, to which he was admitted by the Imam, and his conversations with the ancient saints and his own deceased father whom he met there.²

Persian Ismaili works very often contain mention of this or that Imam; but those works which are known are either dogmatic, or controversial, or poetical in their contents, and therefore do not care about dates. Therefore not much could be expected from purely literary research, and I always dreamt of a possibility of visiting the localities in Persia and elsewhere, in which the Ismailis still live, in order to collect oral tradition, and, if available, survey the remains, such as tombs and other monuments. Such opportunity was at last given to me by some of my friends, in 1937, and I was able to investigate the matter on the spot. It appears that there is no oral tradition worthy of record; but, to my great surprise, there were several monuments of great value in the form of tombstones on the graves of several early Imams. This paper gives a brief account of my finds, which furnish several reliable dates,—so far all that is available. With the help of these, research in Persian mediæval history may elucidate different references and allusions in historical works which without this information would remain obscure.

It is a great pity that the custom, or 'fashion', in designs of tombstones followed fanciful rules which would appear to us utterly illogical. Inscriptions on the tombs of humble and poor people would indicate, e.g., that under it lies a certain Fatima, daughter of so-and-so, of such-and-such village, who died on such-and-such a date, i.e. all particulars about the date and the name of a person, of no importance whatever. But on the tombs of very important people, with their costly and highly elaborate stones, the matter is quite different: the inscription is invariably in the form of an elegy, in which, according to the custom, the name of the person buried there is mentioned in the shortest possible way. No

¹ For details about him cf. W. Ivanow, *The Sect of Imam Shah in Gujrat* (J.B.B.R.A.S., XII, 1936, pp. 39-43). On p. 42, line 8 of that article the name of the village is to be read *Kahak*, instead of *Kakk*, or the suggested *Kākhak*.

² This work, *Jannat Puri*, was printed in Bombay in the original Guj-rati, in 1926.

name of the father, no surnames, etc., are usually mentioned. Even the date of the death is not infrequently given in the form of a poetical chronogram, which may be ambiguous or not quite clear. It is a great disappointment indeed to find instead of the possible precious documental record nothing but the verses from the Coran, precautionary invocations of blessings upon the 'fourteen *ma'zūms*',¹ and a few versified pious platitudes about the frailty of the world, etc.

Before coming to Persia I visited Kerbela and Najaf, in a hope of finding information about the Imams who were buried there. The results were rather disappointing: the cemeteries both in Kerbela and Najaf are run on business lines, and if relatives of those who are buried there cease to take interest, the grave disappears. Walking amongst the tombs I rarely saw any dated inscription earlier than fifty years ago. The majority were quite new, a few years old. It was impossible for me to enter the sacred compounds, and it was also impossible to find a reliable and intelligent man who could go there for me and bring complete information. But it appears from all my inquiries that no Persian Ismaili Imam was buried in Kerbela. In Najaf there are only the graves of Shāh Khalīlū'l-lāh (murdered in Yazd in 1233/1818), and 'Alī Shāh (died in Bombay in 1302/1885),—with their relatives.²

In the valley of Alamut, where one may expect to find the graves of some of the Imams who resided there, no tombs are known. It is quite possible that the contemporaries of the Imams of Alamut, knowing how precarious was their own position, buried their Imams secretly, leaving no outward signs. But it is also possible that such graves existed, but were ruined by the Mongols. In Persia practically every old village always has an *Imām-zāda*, as it is briefly called, really *maqbara'i Imām-zāda*, or a grave of a descendant of the Imams. In Alamut there also are sacred graves of this kind. And it is quite possible that some of them may really contain not the remains of one of the innumerable sons of Imam Riḍā of

¹ The fourteen *ma'zūms*, as is known, are the Prophet, his daughter Fātima, and the twelve Imams of the Ithna-'asharis. As is also known, the Ismailis do not recognize as Imams all the Ithna-'ashari Imams after Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq. The appearance of their names is entirely due to the *taqiyya* principle, because it was, and still is, the general practice in Persia to mention these names on all tombs of importance.

² Although the Iraqi government widely advertise the 'attractions' of their country, in the form of its places of antiquarian interest, I found to my expense that the police of Najaf made a point to harrass the visitors. Under the pretext of 'safeguarding' the visitor from the imaginary danger of attack by 'fanatics', they completely prevent the student from coming in touch with the local population. The few with whom an inexperienced stranger may try to have a talk are harrassed by being summoned to the police station, questioned, etc. Those who intend to see not only the outer aspect of Najaf, but would also like to have a talk with some of the numerous Shi'ite scholars residing there, would do well if they secure beforehand unequivocal orders from the central government to the Najaf police to leave them alone, and not to molest their local friends.

Mashhad,—to whom such graves are invariably attributed,—but of some of the Isma'ili Imams.

According to Isma'ili tradition, the last Imam of Alamut, Rukn-u'd-din Khurshah, anticipating the catastrophe, sent his son and heir designate, Shamsu'd-din Muhammad, to a safe place, and was succeeded by him after his death. There is no direct indication as to the locality in which the Imams were living at that dangerous time. Perhaps the only indirect, and rather elusive testimony is that which can be derived from the intentionally obscure references scattered in the works of the famous Persian poet, Nizari Qubistani, who flourished towards the end of the VIIth/XIIIth c., and in the beginning of the next. In his work, *Safar-nama*, in *mathnawi* verse, he gives his route from his native Khusp and Birjand to the present Southern provinces of Caucasus.¹ It is possible to conclude from what he says that it was there that he met with the Imam. Nothing so far is known as to whether there are any graves of the Imams in that locality.²

How long, and where exactly the early Imams were residing in Adharbayjan,—remains unknown; but it appears that probably about two hundred years later, i.e. by the middle of the ix/xv c., they were settled in the arid and hilly track of the territory lying between Qum and Sultanabad, NW from Isfahan, in the districts of Farahan and Mahallat. The locality is, and always was, very thinly populated, partly occupied by predatory nomad tribes; all this made it suitable for the residence of those who had reasons to avoid much publicity.

The locality is a labyrinth of rocky chains and arid valleys bearing the traces of extensive primæval volcanic activity. The main valley, along the salt river which ultimately reaches Qum, has many large villages, such as Mahallat, Nimawar, Diljun, etc. Towards the North-Western side lies a great plain, a depression between different mountainous regions, the *judgha* of Sultanabad, which in remote past most probably was a great lake. The lowest parts of it are still occupied by a salt marsh. In one of the 'bays' of this ancient lake, in the South-Western corner, at the foot of a steep though not very high range, stands the ancient village of Anjudan,³ which probably was the first place of residence of the

¹ Apparently a unique copy of this work is found in the excellent MS. of the *Kulliyat* of the poetical works of Nizari in St. Petersburg (now Leningrad). It still remains unpublished. Cf. W. Ivanow, *A Guide to Isma'ili Literature*, p. 105. In his poems he glorifies "Shamsi din Nimiruz 'Ali", i.e. obviously Shamsu'd-din. Apparently the same person is elusively alluded to in his other poems under the name of *Sharafu'd-din hakim-i vaqr*.

² It is interesting that still under the Timurides some obscure ties connected Ismailism with Adharbayjan. Every student knows the story of the famous poet of that period, Qasimi Anwâr, whose real name was Mu'au'd-din 'Ali (d. 835-7/1431-4). He was a native of that province, and was suspected in being connected with the Ismailis. Unfortunately, the usual biographies are so hopelessly poor in details.

³ On the Survey of India map (16 miles to an inch, ed. 1917), it is called *Injodan*. It is unfortunate that even for those localities which were surveyed

Ismā'īlī Imams in this locality, by the end of the Timuride period. How they spread their influence over other parts of the district, still remains dark. But later on, towards the end of the Safavid period, they most probably resided further East, in Kahak.¹ The latter is at present a small village, occupying a narrow gorge which emerges on the same Sultanabad plain. There is a very difficult rocky path between the two villages, forming a short cut; but ordinarily a circuitous road is used, via Shahwa² or Shāh-sawārān,³ then to Ibrāhīmābād, all three lying on the new Qum-Sultanabad motor road. From Ibrāhīmābād there is about half a day's riding distance to Kahak. From Anjudān to Sulṭānābād it is about 25-30 miles. To Kahak—about 35-40. A similar distance to Maḥallāt, and from the latter to Kahak—about 25 miles. All these distances are in reality much smaller, if straight lines are considered.

The village of Maḥallāt is a modern place, and apparently has become connected with the Imams during only the latest period, namely the XIXth c.

Anjudān apparently was a large village even long ago, as can be seen from the numerous ruins, especially on the upper part of the slope which it occupies. It has an old mosque, and three mausoleums. Two of them are Ismā'īlī, and one is supposed to be Ithnā-'ashari; the latter seems to be the most modern of these. It has about twenty graves inside, but none of them bear any inscriptions. It is quite possible that it also was a place of burial of Ismā'īlīs, but later on was turned into an "Imām-zāda". Cf. Plate III.

Apparently the oldest mausoleum is an imposing octagonal building with a dom which from outside appears as conical. There are no old graves outside of it. Inside it is whitewashed, and there are no inscriptions. It is popularly called 'Shāh Qalandar';—why 'qalandar',—no one could explain. It contains the grave of Shāh Mustanṣir bi'l-lāh the *Second*, well known in the history of the Ismā'īlī propaganda in India. In the middle of the chamber there is a wooden coffer-like 'box', exquisitely carved. Most probably it was painted when new, but now it is in a poor state of repair, the colours are gone, and the letters or ornamentation are obliterated in

recently, the information is not made public (if it is utilized at all for those maps which remain confidential). The new editions of maps of Persia not only retain all the mistakes, omissions, and perversions of the old ones, but augment these errors by adding to them 'scholarly' appearance, through the introduction of accents on the names. This is apparently done by completely unqualified clerks possessing not even an elementary knowledge of Persian language, grammar, or the geography of the country.

¹ On the same map—Kiagrak (!). Both here and in the vicinity of Anjudān the direction of the hills, etc., are pure fantasy. As usual, many quite large and important villages are omitted. For instance, on the way from Maḥallāt to Kahak there is a large village War, which is much bigger than Kahak. And yet there is no trace of it on the map.

² Shāhveh on the map.

³ Shāh-zavārān on the map. The topography of the locality is rather fantastic.

many places. On the top is written: '(this is) the pure, sacred and luminous grave of Shāh Mustanşir bi'l-lāh. By the order and care of 'Abdu's-salām'.¹ From this one would have full right to conclude that this wooden box was erected by the order of Shāh 'Abdu's-salām, the son of Mustanşir, over the grave of this father. A broad panel at the top edge on all sides is beautifully carved with the text of the chapter Yā-sin from the Coran. At the short side, bottom, there is written: 'wrote this the humble slave 'Abdu'l-Jalil . . . (illegible) in 885 (A.H., i.e. 1480)'.² Thus it would be reasonable to infer that this box was erected in 885/1480, most probably soon after the death of Imam Mustanşir, on his grave, by the order of his son and successor.

Not far from the mausoleum of 'Shāh Qalandar', behind the old mosque, there is an old burial ground situated in a garden in the middle of which stands the mausoleum of 'Shāh Gharib', as it is locally called. The place presents the sight of utter desolation and neglect. Excellent carved marble tombstones, some of which are more than three hundred years old, are lying about unprotected from elements, upset, moved from their original places, many of them broken. The mausoleum itself, an octagonal domed structure of the usual pattern, is in a precarious state. Cf. Plate III.

In addition to the grave of Shāh Gharib there are five more graves inside of the building, and several outside, partly in a special adjoining structure, now lying in ruins, and partly just at the sides. Tombstones are fixed in the walls, in a standing position, which better preserves the stones than the usual horizontal one. The central grave has no tombstone, but is covered, as in the mausoleum of Shāh Qalandar, with a *şundūq*, of carved wood. So closely it resembles the first that there can be little doubt that both are the work of one and the same artist. The carvings contain the usual *sūra* Yā-sin, an invocation of blessings upon the fourteen *ma'sūms*, and rhythmically repeating ornament with square svastica-like combination of four words, 'Alī. In one place it is clearly written: 'this is the box (*şundūq*) of Shāh Mustanşir bi'l-lāh, the son of Shāh 'Abdu's-salām. Written on the 10th of Muḥarram 904' (i.e. the 29th August, 1498).³ The name of Shāh Gharib (which, by the way, undoubtedly is a surname, not a proper name of a person), does not appear anywhere. As there cannot be much doubt about the local

¹ Cf. Plate II and Plate III. 3.

(هذا) مرقده مطهر مقدس منور حضرت شاه مستنصر باقده موجب امر

و اهتمام حضرت عبد السلام

² ... حرره العبد الضعيف عبد الجليل ... ساپورى تاريخ سنه خمس

و ثمانين و ثمانمائة

³ هذا صندوق حضرت شاه مستنصر ابن شاه عبد السلام الحسينى

tradition attributing this grave to Shāh Gharīb, the only possible inference is that Mustanşir bi'l-lāh b. 'Abdi's-salām and Shāh Gharīb are one and the same person. This is the most probable, but, of course, it is also possible that either this Mustanşir the *Third*, although he was an Imam, is omitted in the traditional pedigree; or that he was the son of Imam 'Abdu's-salām, but not an Imam himself. Personally I would be inclined to accept the identity of Shāh Gharīb and Mustanşir III.

The traditional version of the sequence of the Imams after Shāh Gharīb is: Nūru'd-dīn (also called Bū Dharr 'Alī), Murād Mirzā, Dhū'l-ḥijāh 'Alī, Nūru'd-dahr 'Alī, Khalīlu'l-lāh, and Nizār. As the *ṣundūq* on the grave of Shāh Gharīb is dated the 10th Muharram 904, we may believe that he died towards the end of 903/1498. The last Imam, Nizār, as we will see presently, was buried in Kahak, in 1134/1722. Thus we have six generations for about 230 years.

The grave of Shāh 'Abdu's-salām, the son of the first Mustanşir bi'l-lāh, is not known. There are several more graves of different persons in the same mausoleum, but, very unfortunately, their names are given in the same 'poetical' way, isolated, and, certainly, none of them contains any direct indication of the person's being regarded as an Imam. Inside of the mausoleum, beginning from the right corner, opposite the entrance, there are five graves, the tombstones of which are inset in the wall: Mirzā Bāqir (d. 1043/1632-3); *Amīri a'zam akram* Hisāmā (?) Khalīlu'l-lāh *Miri khāsh khaṣā'il*, who died at the age of 68 on the 2nd of Ramaḍān 1043/2-3-1634; Nūri Dahr (d. at the age of 63 in 1069/1658-9); Shāh Khalīlu'l-lāh the *Second* (d. 3rd Dhī'l-ḥijja 1090/5-1-1680); and Mahmūd Mirzā (d. 6th Shawwāl 1081/16-2-1671). Behind the mausoleum, in an additional chamber, now in ruins, there are graves of a certain Ibrāhīm (d. 1069/1658-9) and Nūru'd-dahr Khalīlu'l-lāh (d. the 8th Rajab 1082/10-11-1671). Cf. Plate I, 1.

It is quite obvious that all these persons were members of one and the same family, and that they were descendants of Mustanşir bi'l-lāh (III), who died just before the beginning of 904/1498. It is strange therefore that nobody was buried here for nearly 140 years, which roughly coincide with the rise of the Safawids, the long reign of Tahmāsp, and the brilliant period of 'Abbās I. Most probably the leading members of the family were living elsewhere,—perhaps in the province of Kerman?

Of the names which are found in the traditional pedigree we find here two only,—Nūru'd-dahr and Khalīlu'l-lāh, two times the former, and three times the other. The most valuable is the expression 'Shāh Khalīlu'l-lāh the *Second*' (who died in 1090/1680). If he was the *second*, this clearly implies two things, namely that he was the second in a certain line, and that there was another Khalīlu'l-lāh who was the *first*. Thus it is perfectly certain that he was an Imam. But who was the *first* Khalīlu'l-lāh,—the one who is here called *Amīri a'zam* (d. at the age of 68 in 1043/1634), or Nūru'd-

dahr Khalilu'l-lāh (d. 1082/1671) ?—It seems probable that the last one should be preferred: whenever the father and the son in Persia bear one and the same name, they are often distinguished one from the other by the addition of the words '*buzurg*', or the elder, and '*kūchik*', the younger. In the case of the Imams it would easily be replaced with the terms 'first' and 'second'. It seems more likely that Khalilu'l-lāh (d. 1043/1634) really is *the first*. In this case he may be the same as the Imam called Dhū'l-fiḡār 'Alī, because this expression most probably is not an original name, but a honorific surname. If so, he was born about 975/1567. Therefore only about 70 years (from 903/1498) remain for the period of two Imams,—Bū Dharr and Murād Mirzā. It may be added that Imām-Qulī Dizbādi, who used the *takhalluṣ* Khākī, in his poems refers to Imām Nūru'd-dahr, whom he calls the son of Dhū'l-fiḡār (314), but in another place—the son of Khalil (274). From this it is quite obvious that Imam Dhū'l-fiḡār's original name was really Khalilu'l-lāh. The same poet, who was a contemporary of these Imams, alludes to Anjudān as their place of residence (88).¹ In my introduction to the edition of Imām-Qulī's *Diwān* (p. 13), I suggested that according to the text of the poems it is possible to conclude that Shāh Nūru'd-dahr succeeded to his high office *soon before* 1050/1640. The dates on the graves thus completely agree with this assumption.

There are many old graves in the compound, but the oldest of these seems to be that of a certain Zaynu'd-dīn 'Alī ibn Husayn ibn Khūshnām Angawānī (i.e. Anjudānī), who died on the 1st Rab. I 961/4-2-1554. How excellent it would be if the tombstones on the graves of the Imams would be as precise in their indications as to the name of the person buried there!

There are in Anjudān apparently no other buildings associated with the memory of the Imams. Their palaces are gone long ago, although their site is still shown. At present it is occupied with houses of peasants. Some tanks with borders of hewn stone, and some water channels, are attributed to the activity of the Imams. But, in fact, there are no inscriptions, and it is a common thing in Persia (and elsewhere) that every building of note, the real founder of which is forgotten, is attributed to quite a different person who, for some reason, impressed popular memory much more than the real builder of the monument.

The people of Anjudān, who are Persians, at present have very little connection both with Kabak and Maḡallāt. Their chief market is Sultanabad, or even Qum, with which communications (by motor car) are much easier than with the former two villages, situated behind several chains of hills.

Passing to Kabak, one finds it to be a very poor and small village of twenty or twenty-five houses. There are signs, however,

¹ *Diwan of Khaki Kharasani*, ed. by W. Ivanow, Bombay, 1933. The figures refer to the verses, which are numbered from the beginning to the end of the edition.

that formerly it was much bigger. Quite a surprising feature for such a small village is an old caravanserai of the usual Persian type, solidly built, and still in quite good condition. Its presence here is explained by the fact that long ago the Isfahan-Sultanabad road touched Kahak, and thus it was not so completely isolated as it is at present. Cf. Plate V.

Just near it, at the Western end of the village, stands the mausoleum of Shāh Nizār, as it is locally called. The building is of the usual Persian mausoleum type, being composed of several chambers, each containing several graves. Quite an exceptional feature of this small necropolis is the presence of inscriptions in Khojki Sindhi characters, obviously on the graves of the Indian pilgrims who died here,—an exceptionally rare form of link with India. Cf. Plate IV.

As one enters the garden by a rustic looking gate, he finds himself in a compound with several quite modern graves. The building stands on a sort of a platform, erected on the slope of the hill, so that its further side rises some ten feet above the level of the garden. As may be seen on the plan, the building consists of several chambers, as is the usual case with Sufic mausoleums all over Persia. The chambers are open towards the garden, and only a wooden lattice serves as the outer wall. The main chamber,—domed,—in which Aqā Nizār himself is buried, is the one marked with 'B' on the plan. It is whitewashed, and contains no inscriptions. In some niches in the wall there are different objects often found in similar mausoleums, such as a large *pīh-sūz*, or a sort of 'candle stick' of monumental dimensions, in which sheep's fat is burnt; loose leaves of the Coran; a few white stones; a looking glass; and some legs of a wooden camp cot, obviously of an Indian origin.

In the *qibla* wall there are two slabs with inscriptions inset about two feet above the ground. The left one is that of Shāh Nizār himself. In a Persian elegy which is carved on it it is stated that he died on Wednesday the 4th of the month of sacrifice, i.e. Dhū'l-hijja 1134, i.e. the 15th (or really the 14th evening) of Sept. 1722. Unfortunately, no other details are given. In the right corner of the chamber there is another slab, on which it is said that it refers to Mirzā Shāh Khalīlu'l-lāh who died in 1155/1742. Most probably he was the son of Aqā Nizār, but not an Imam, because there is no Imam with that name until the beginning of the XIII/XIXth c. Cf. Plate I, 2.

It is worth noting that the wooden doors which are still in fairly good condition in this chamber, are artistically carved, and dated 1139/1726-7.

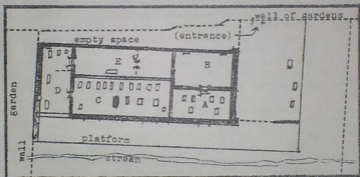
The ante-chamber of this room, through which one enters the mausoleum of Shāh Nizār ('A' on the plan), contains six graves out of which four are covered with tombstones bearing inscriptions: Murtaḍā 'Alī Akbar (d. 1126/1714); Mirzā Tālibā (d. 1122/1710); Sayyid Qabbāl (?) (d. 1111/1699); and Mirzā Šālih (d. 1117/1705). It is quite possible that these are the tombs of some relatives of Aqā Nizār who died in his lifetime.

The next chamber, the largest, contains about 15 graves, the majority having no inscriptions. Those on which the names of the persons who are buried there are mentioned, are mostly ladies or children, most probably also relatives of the Imam: Fāṭima Sultān Begum, the daughter of *naqībī 'alī-jāh* Sayyid Hasan Bangā (or Yangā ?),—she died on the 26th Rab. II 1165, i.e. 13-3-1753; an anonymous Sayyida, d. 1115/1703; Shamsa, d. the 18th Sha'bān 1139/10-4-1727; Sayyid Ibrāhīm, d. in the same year; two other graves, of children, are dated 1114/1702 and 1129/1717.

Behind this chamber there is a small one, which contains an open grave, covered with a sort of a plain wooden box. A piece of an inscribed tombstone is inset near it in the wall. The fragment does not contain the name of the person, but the date is given as 1155/1742.

The last chamber (D) is a sort of a porch, and is partly divided into two. There are several graves, with and without inscriptions, apparently of servants of the Imams, and not members of their

*Approximate plan of the mausoleum of Shāh Nizār in Kahak.
road*



garden

family. Some of them belong to Indian followers who most probably died here while on a pilgrimage. Such are those of Aqā Nihāl, dated the 19th Šafar 1135/29-11-1722; Kāmāḍiyā Muḥammad, d. 1209/1794-5; Kāmāḍiyā Dātardīnā Wandānī of the Dar-khāna *jamā'at*, d. 1217/1803.¹ Also the graves of a certain Khwāja

¹ As Khojki type is not available, and, apart from this, very few students can read it, I give these inscriptions in the Nagari transliteration, which was prepared for me, and the quotation translated into English, by my Khoja friends to whom I acknowledge my indebtedness:

धरखाने: जोमेजे खीजमतमे कामरीओ: दातारहीनु भाइ बंदाजी सं.
१८५९ ई: सन १२१७ मी: आषाड ११ थावर रात

Almās, perhaps a negro slave, who died in 1155/1742, and of a man who was killed by the Afghans in 1137/1725, etc.

There are several inscribed slabs, placed at the edge of the platform on which the building stands. Most probably they are brought here from their original sites elsewhere. They are in a very bad state of preservation. One of them is in Khojki Sindhi: 'Rai Pareo Janguani (died) on the 1st of Posh 1866 (of the Samvat era)', —i.e. 1810.¹

Local inhabitants show the gardens which belonged to the house of the Imam, in which there is a stone platform, made in the form of a large table. It stands in a depression, which, as they say, was on different occasions filled with water so that the *takht*, or platform, would form an island. Aqā Nizār used to sit on it while receiving his guests, who were seated on the other side of the water, amidst flower beds. Cf. Plate V, 2.

On the top of a hill spur which dominates the village on the South, there is an old dilapidated fortified enclosure, of the usual type, originally built of raw stone with clay. Now the clay is washed away, and stones lie in irregular heaps. No inscriptions or any objects of historical interest are found on the spot. It is possible, when looking from the fort down upon the village, to distinguish traces of old foundations. At the entrance of the village there is still a typical 'country gentleman's house', now abandoned and uninhabited, in which until two decades or so ago some relatives of the first Agha Khan were living.

It is obvious that the misfortunes which overtook Persia in the second quarter of the XII/XVIIIth c. and later, and which have thrown the country into a state of prolonged chaos, badly affected the life of the Ismaili community in Kahak and elsewhere. For about seventy years after Aqā Nizār, or even later, the Imams evidently did not reside in these localities. This circumstance most probably explains the fact that although the memory of Aqā Nizār is still preserved by the local inhabitants, they are quite unable to give any particulars about the Imams after him, until the time of Ḥasan 'Alī Shāh, the first Aqā Khān. They know that the father of the latter was Shāh Khalīlu'l-lāh, who was murdered in Yazd. But nobody could tell me what was the name of the father of this Shāh Khalīlu'l-lāh.

The Imams of the subsequent period so far remain rather shadowy figures. Most probably they occupied the office only for short periods of time, and were not settled at some particular place.

i.e. 'Kamadia Datardina Wandani of Darkhana *jamā'at* reached the presence of the Pir on Thavar night (=Friday) of the 11th Ashad, 1859, according to the Samvat era, or 1217 Hijri'.

¹ राइः पारेओः जांगुआणीः संः १८६६ः मीती पोडोजी

i.e. 'Rai Pareya Janguani (died) on the 1st Posh 1866 according to the Samvat era'.

Nizār's son and successor appears under the name of Sayyid 'Alī. He was succeeded by Hasan Beg, or Hasan 'Alī Shāh. Tradition makes him an associate of Nādir (1148-1160/1736-1747), and a participant of the famous raid on India (1151/1738). Although this is possible chronologically, the story sounds rather doubtful. He was followed by Qāsim-Shāh, or Qāsim 'Alī Shāh, who in his turn was succeeded by Abū'l-Hasan, or Sayyid Hasan 'Alī.

Some information about the latter can be found in different historical works. Sayyid Abū'l-Hasan Kahakī, as he was called, was for some time the governor of Kerman. I have not so far been able to ascertain the exact dates of his occupation of this post, but it is obvious that this was approximately the last quarter of the XII/XVIIIth c. Indian tradition gives as the date of his death 1194/1780, and this may be near the truth.

In the Mushtāqiyya in Kerman, which is the mausoleum of the famous Sufi, Sayyid Mushtāq 'Alī, and is a conspicuous landmark in the city, there is an anonymous grave which is supposed to be that of Sayyid Abū'l-Hasan. As is known, Sayyid Mushtāq 'Alī was murdered by fanatical mullas in 1204/1790, for his alleged heretical utterances. The place is a small necropolis, of the usual Persian type, with a garden and rooms for darwishes inside. In the same chamber in which Mushtāq is buried there are several graves, amongst which the most prominent is the tomb of Hāji Mirzā Muḥammad Husayn Khān, the governor of Kerman, who died in Sha'bān 1202, i.e. May 1788. The grave attributed to Sayyid Hasan is situated on the left side from this, nearer to the entrance. It is covered with a greenish marble slab, bearing no inscriptions. It is impossible, indeed, to be quite certain about this half forgotten tradition, which, however, seems to be probable.

It is quite possible that Sayyid Abū'l-Hasan Kahakī was the governor in and about 1175/1761. There is another building in Kerman which apparently is also associated with him. About a hundred yards from the Mushtāqiyya, which stands on the ground which formerly was an extensive cemetery just outside the ancient city walls, there is amongst other graves an octagonal mausoleum, of the usual Persian type. Originally quite imposing, it is now in an utterly neglected condition. Inside below the cornice there is a wide panel containing an elegy in Persian verse, from which it is possible to determine that it was built in 1173/1759-1760, over the grave of Fakhru'z-zamān, the daughter of Sayyid Abū'l-Hasan, who died in 1170/1756-7 in her early youth. Some other people, apparently members of the same family, were later on buried in the same mausoleum. It is really sad to see the condition in which this monument is at present: the graves are desecrated, bones thrown about, the earth dug up, the walls damaged and ready to collapse; and the place is used as a latrine by passers-by. Inquiring into the reason for such a state of things, I found that the municipality (*baladiyya*), in their zeal for 'improvements,' decided to use this 175 years old domed structure for *zūr-khāna*, or training room

for wrestlers. In accordance with their decision, they proceeded with its intended rebuilding; but, after having utterly ruined it, they, about two years ago, abandoned it, and left the mausoleum to the final destruction by the elements.¹

According to oral tradition it appears that while occupying the office of the governors and other high officials in the city and province of Kerman, the family of the Imams owned some landed properties in the city of Kerman, and also in the towns and districts of Shahri Bābak and Sirjān. Visiting these places in December 1937, I found that although in several villages in the vicinity of Shahri Bābak some two hundred families of the Ismailis are still living, there are no monuments or identifiable traces of the time of the Imams, although only 150 years have elapsed. In the town a spacious area is shown which according to oral tradition was the property and the place of residence of the Imams. At present all the houses are gone, and the place is occupied by many families of peasants. A *Husayniyya*² and a mosque are shown. They are supposed to be associated with the Imams, and apparently long ago were quite imposing buildings. At present only the mosque is to some extent preserved; bundles of votive rags tied to some parts of wooden lattice show that in the eyes of the local inhabitants the place still preserves some vestige of sacredness.

No graves of the Imams or members of their families are known in either of the districts, Shahri Bābak and Sirjān. It is quite possible that some of the Imams were buried in Najaf, because this was a gradually growing custom of the time. As is known, the body of Shāh Khalīlu'l-lāh, who was killed in Yazd in 1233/1818, was taken to Najaf. His son, the first Agha Khan, Hasan 'Alī Shāh, as is known, is buried in Bombay, but his grandson, 'Alī Shāh, is also buried in Najaf.

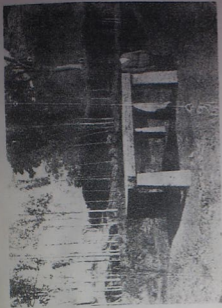
One of the most interesting parts of Persia, connected with the early period of Ismailism, is Khorasan, and especially Qā'in. Many graves dating from five and more centuries are found in the vicinity. A proper survey of these, before they are destroyed by man and time, perhaps may bring to light some links with the early Imams.

¹ The amount of ruin of the ancient and old buildings in Persia, resulting from the official enthusiasm of the different municipalities, is really appalling. These gentlemen have no sense of proportion, no mercy, no respect for the memory of the historical past. Tombstones from old cemeteries are regularly used for pavements, bricks of ancient monuments are used for municipal buildings, the general appearance and style of the old cities is mercilessly defiled. Only rare exceptions amongst the much boasted 'improvements' are not the vilest forms of destruction. The 'archæological department', headed by European scholars, do their best to save some monuments, but this can be done only with regard to very few buildings. If the 'progress and improvement' policy goes on unchecked for some years, practically all antiquities and buildings of artistic value will be wantonly destroyed in Persia.

² The *Husayniyya* is what in India is called Imambara, i.e. a public open hall, or compound, in which the Shi'ites congregate for witnessing the Muharram memorial plays, and for preaching.



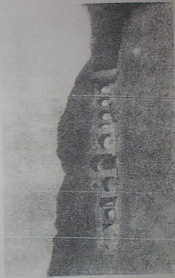
No. 1. General view of Kishak, from the old fort. The building in the right corner, front, is the necropolis.



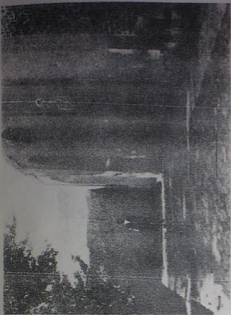
No. 2. The tomb, or stone platform, in the garden of Shah Nizâr, Kishak.



Old caravanserei, Kishak



No. 3. Old caravanserei, Kishak.



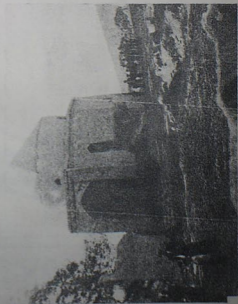
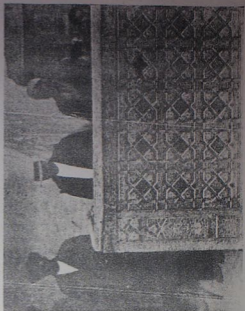
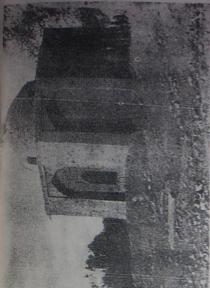
No. 1. Necropolis of Aqū Nizār, Kahak, outside.

No. 2. Necropolis of Aqū Nizār, Kahak, from inside.

No. 3. Grave covered with a box, Kahak necropolis.

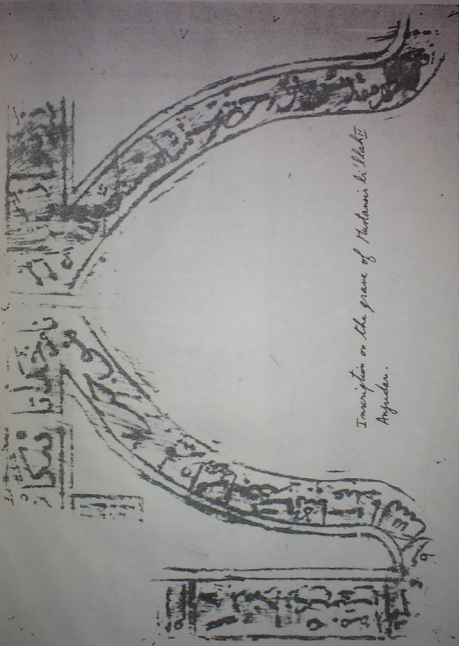
No. 4. Graves in the chamber in front of the grave of Shāh Nizār. Note the old carved door.





No. 1. General view of Anjudân, from the West.
 No. 3. Mausoleum of 'Shâh Qalandar', i.e. Mustanşir II, Anjudân.

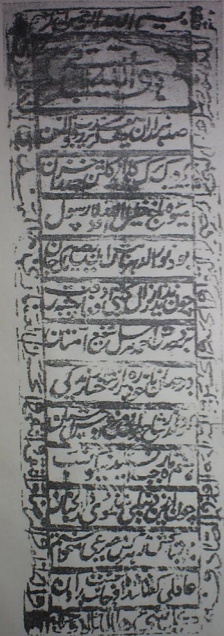
No. 2. Mausoleum of Shâh Gharib, Anjudân.
 No. 4. The *qundûq* on the grave of Shâh Gharib.



*Inscription on the grave of Mustansir bi'illah II, Anjudan.
Anjudan.*

Inscription on the wooden *standing* on the grave of Mustansir bi'illah II, Anjudan.

(The photograph was taken from a carbon impression of the inscription. In the center of the arch there is a wooden bar, passing through the center of the cover. The surface is very uneven due to numerous cracks and holes.)



No. 1. Inscription on the tomb of Nūru'd-dahr
Khalīlū'l-lāh, Anjudān.



No. 2. Inscription on the tomb of Aqā Nizār, Kahal

(The photographs were taken not from the tombs directly, but from carbon impressions, taken from them)

The ancient Ismaili castles, situated immediately South of Qā'in, and further on, on a spur of Kūhi Rich, in the vicinity of Khūsp, preserve no inscriptions, just as similar castles elsewhere,—Alamūt, Shfr-Kūh, Girdkūh (near Damghān), etc. All these castles were not meant for permanent habitation, but only for use in the hour of danger.

TAJDIN¹ /

