

Extremist Shiites

The Ghulat Sects



Matti Moosa


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To
Hans, Mark, Petra, and Jessica
With Love

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The Ghulat's "Trinity"

CONTEMPORARY GHULAT, or extremist Shiites, especially the Bektashis, the Kizilbash or Alawis, and the Shabak, deify the Imam Ali. The Shabak and some others deny that they do so, but as shall be seen later, there is ample evidence in their prayers and rituals to demonstrate this deification of Ali. They believe in a trinity consisting of God, Muhammad, and Ali as a composite, which they claim to be one person. This trinity is symbolized by the letters of the Arabic alphabet which begin their names: *alif* for Allah (God), *mim* for Muhammad, and *ayn* for Ali. They ascribe to Ali divine attributes, such as the creation of the world and the dispensation of the livelihood of his creatures. In a word, they consider Ali to be coequal and coeternal with God. Ali is also coequal with Muhammad in this trinity. This is manifested in a Shabak hymn in which both Ali and Muhammad are addressed as God: "My heart tells me that Ali is God, and he is also Muhammad."¹ In this regard, these Ghulat differ from another Ghulat group, the Nusayris of Syria (to be discussed later), whose trinity is denoted by *ayn* for Ali, *mim* for Muhammad, and *sin* for Salman al-Farisi (one of the companions of Muhammad).² To the Nusayris these initial letters represent the secrets of the trinity.³

In Bektashi literature, Ali and Muhammad are considered to be two names of the same person. They are identified with God as the Divine Reality.

God, Muhammad, Ali are all one God.
The Divine Reality, Muhammad, Ali is true.
If you ask what I have in this world,

My answer is that
 Muhammad and Ali is the one God I have.
 God forbid that anyone should see them
 as separate from one another.
 Muhammad is Ali, Ali is Muhammad, and
 with God they are but one God.⁴

This trinity is associated by the Bektashis with the Christian concept that God is love (1 John 4:8), as the following poem by Kul Himmet demonstrates:

There is no God but God is love.
 Muhammad the Prophet of God is love.
 Ali, the Prince, Saint of God is love.
 Three names, in meaning one, love—
 Love is the light which Gabriel saw
 In the midst of God Muhammad Ali.⁵

The sacred book of the Shabak, the *Buyruk*, contains the hadith (tradition) of Muhammad, "I am the city of knowledge, and Ali is its gate."⁶ Birge cites this same tradition in his discussion of the Bektashi trinity. He states that this tradition seems to make Muhammad more important, but that the Bektashis feel that Ali is preeminent. Birge further explains that, according to the Bektashis, "the first radiance emanating from the undifferentiated Godhead is called the Light of Muhammad." This Light is manifested in Muhammad as well as in the Quran, which contains the divine revelation of this Light. This is the Light of divine religious knowledge, which can only be acquired through Ali, who is the doorway leading to it.⁷ This concept harmonizes perfectly with other traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, who is reported to have said, "I and Ali are of one Light," a statement immediately following the tradition cited above in the *Buyruk*.⁸

So important is the tradition, "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate," to both extremist and moderate Shiites, that it has become part of the lore woven around Muhammad and Ali to show that Ali is coequal with Muhammad in every aspect except the prophethood, which belongs exclusively to Muhammad.

Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi (d. 1699) relates, on the authority of the eleventh Imam al-Hasan al-Askari (d. 873), that one day some Jews came to Muhammad to discuss religious matters with him. Before he answered their questions, a wandering Arab appeared and asked Muham-

mad a question. Muhammad told the Arab to wait until he had answered the questions of the Jews, because they had been there before him. Futhermore, he told the Arab that he suspected him of being a conniver who had planned with Jews to ask him questions in order to deceive him. The Arab became angry and told Muhammad that he did not believe that Muhammad was a prophet. If he really were a prophet, the Arab went on, then he should prove his claim with a miracle. At this point, Muhammad called Ali to him. When Ali appeared before Muhammad, the Arab asked why Muhammad had called Ali into his presence. Muhammad told the Arab that if he wanted an answer to his question, Ali would be the only one who could provide it, "I am the city of knowledge, and Ali is its gate. Whoever seeks wisdom must enter this gate." Muhammad added, "Let him who pleases to look up to Adam and other Biblical patriarchs like Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Moses for their faith, nobleness, devotion, fidelity, and struggle against the enemies of God, and who looks to Jesus for his love, finally look to Ali."⁹ This story clearly shows that Ali and Muhammad are coequal regarding divine knowledge, and that their strengths are complementary.

Al-Haqiqa al-Muhammadiyya: Muhammad, the Ultimate Reality

The concept of *al-Haqiqa al-Muhammadiyya*, or Muhammad as the Ultimate Reality and a member of the Ghulat's trinity, dates back to Muhammad's own lifetime. According to one tradition, the Prophet is reported to have said, "The first thing God created was my light."¹⁰ This concept is also expressed in a poem composed by Muhammad's uncle, al-Abbas, praising Muhammad's feat of capturing Tabuk in northern Arabia on the Syrian Byzantine border in 630 A.D. The poem also contains a hyperbolic description of Muhammad as the "Light" which existed in the loins of Adam in Paradise and remained with him after Adam was expelled from Paradise to labor on earth. This Light was transmitted from Adam to the loins of succeeding patriarchs, from generation to generation, until it shone throughout the world in the person of Muhammad at his birth.¹¹ The hadith "I and Ali are of one Light" may well be based on the concept of the Light of Muhammad contained in this poem.

Al-Shahrastani (d. 1153) relates a similar tradition of Ali, who is reported to have said, "I and Ahmad [Muhammad] are of one Light. The only difference between my light and his is that one preceded the other in

time."¹² Another version of this tradition of Ali is related by the Shiite Fatimi Dai (propagandist) Tahir Ibn Ibrahim al-Harithi al-Yamani (d. 1188), as follows: "I and Muhammad are of one light, which by God's command was split in two halves. To the one half God said, 'Be Muhammad,' and to the other, 'Be Ali.'"¹³ It is evident from this tradition that the Prophet and Ali are coequal in this "divine Light," consequently, the office of prophethood, occupied by Muhammad, and the office of the *walaya* (vicegerency, mastership) occupied by Ali enjoy the same dignity and status.¹⁴ This concept was expressed from the eighth century onward by Shiite writers, who considered the Imam Ali homologous to, if not above, the Prophet of Islam and believed him worthy of the office of the imamate (leadership) of the Muslim community, an office assigned exclusively to Muhammad, as Prophet-king, in his lifetime. The emanation of Ali and Muhammad from the same divine light is central to the Shiites' concept of the imamate, be they Ghulat (extremists) or moderate like the *Ithnaasharis* (Twelvers).

The divine Light passed from Ali to his descendants, the Imams, generation after generation. Behind this divine Light of the Shiites is their belief in the necessity of the existence of an Imam who will lead the community of Islam in every age. In fact, Shiites aver that he who dies without knowing the Imam of his time dies an unbeliever.¹⁵ This Imam is not a mere *khalifa* (caliph), that is, a successor of the Prophet charged with leading the *umma* (community) of Islam and carrying out the principles of the *Sharia* (Islamic law). He is, as Shiites see him, a *wali* (master), a supreme Pontiff, the vicar of God on earth, and an incarnation of the Divine Light, possessing spiritual powers surpassing those of a mortal being. Unlike the caliph, the Imam combines both earthly and spiritual powers through the Divine Light, which he has received by succession from eternity. In this sense, Shiite commentators interpret Quran 24:35, "God is the light of the heavens and the earth . . . Light upon Light; God guides to His Light whom He wills," to mean that Imam after Imam (i.e., generation after generation), God will guide those whom He wills to the light of the Imams.¹⁶ This spiritual status of the Imam is a fundamental Shiite dogma. In the words of the Imam Ayatollah Ruhallah Khomeini:

The spiritual status of the Imam is the universal vicegerency that is sometimes mentioned by the Imams (peace be upon them). It is a vicegerency pertaining to the whole of creation, by virtue of which all the atoms in the universe humble themselves before the holder of authority. It is one of the essential beliefs of our Shi'i school, and no

one can attain the spiritual status of the Imams, not even the Cherubim or the Prophets. In fact, according to the traditions that have been handed down to us, the Most Noble Messenger (Muhammad) and the Imams existed before the creation of the world in the form of lights situated beneath the divine throne; they were superior to other men even in the sperm from which they grew and their physical composition.¹⁷

Here, then, we have the concept of *al-Haqiqa al-Muhammadiyya*, Muhammad as the "ultimate reality," the "essential idea," the "Light," and the "divine spirit," which God breathed into Adam and which became the essence of the universe, the source of life for all things, and the only means of association between God and man.¹⁸ Briefly, then, Muhammad holds the same position as the Logos in the Christian dogma. Thus, according to the Shiites and to many Sufis as well, Muhammad existed before Adam was created. A famous hadith cited in the Shabak's sacred book, the *Buyruk*, states that Muhammad existed when "Adam was still between the water and the clay," that is, before Adam was formed.¹⁹

It should be pointed out at this juncture that the concept of the preexistence of Muhammad or of his being "the ultimate reality," is not an orthodox Islamic dogma. There is nothing in the Quran to indicate that Muhammad was preexistent, or that he was more than mortal, subject to sin and constantly in need of God's forgiveness.²⁰ This concept was rather the outgrowth of the teachings of both Shiites and Sufis, who considered the prophethood of Muhammad as the culmination of the spiritual office of the prophethood, which began with Adam, was transmitted through the Hebrew prophets, and ended with Muhammad, who is considered by Muslims as the seal of the Prophets.²¹ Hence came the tradition cited above, in which Muhammad said, "I was a Prophet while Adam was still between the water and the clay."

This tradition was rejected by such Muslim traditionalists as Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328), as false and invalid.²² Ibn Taymiyya even branded those who transmitted this tradition as "street preachers."²³ Moreover, this tradition has reached us in different versions, thus casting a shadow of suspicion on its authenticity. In one of these versions, related by Qatada of al-Basra, the Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said, "I was the first man in the creation and the last one in the Resurrection,"²⁴ which brings to mind the words of Christ in the Book of Revelation 22:13, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

The concept of the preexistence of Muhammad is maintained by both Shiites and Sufis, but to the Shiites it is of special dogmatic and political importance. It is through this tradition, that they impute divine offices and preexistence to the members of the family of the Prophet (Ahl al-Bayt), that is, the Imam Ali; his wife Fatima (daughter of the Prophet); and their sons al-Hasan and al-Husayn; and all the other Imams. The Light of Muhammad, thought to be created before Adam, became incarnate in Adam and passed from Muhammad to Ali, and from Ali to his descendants, the Imams. The tenth century Shiite scholastic writer and jurist al-Kulayni (d. 939) cites a tradition on this subject transmitted by one of the Imams:

The Almighty God said, "Muhammad, I have created you and Ali, a spirit without body, before I created the heavens, the earth and my Throne, and you never ceased to glorify me. Then I gathered the souls of both of you and made them one soul, and you continued to hallow and magnify me. I divided your one soul into two and the two into yet another two, and they became four souls: one became Muhammad, one became Ali, one became al-Husan, and the last became al-Husayn." Then God created Fatima from the Light and spirit without body. Then God rubbed the Imams with His right hand, and His Light shone through all of us [the Imams].²⁵

This concept is further elaborated by the historian Abu al-Hasan al-Masudi who cites a tradition related by the Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (d. 765), who in turn ascribes it to Ali. The tradition corroborates many of the essential points in al-Kulayni's statements, but differs slightly from it in detail. According to this tradition, when God wished to bring the creation into being, He first formed it of tiny particles. Then God sent a ray from His splendor and scattered it in the midst of these particles, and from the union of His Light with the invisible particles, He created the Prophet Muhammad. God told Muhammad that he was the chosen one to whom He trusted His light and guidance. God also informed Muhammad that, for his sake, He would raise the heavens, cause water to flow, punish and reward, and assign men to Paradise or to the fire of Hell. God also assured Muhammad that He would designate the members of his family, that is, the Imams, as guides for the believers, and make known to them the mysteries of His divine knowledge, keeping no truth or secret from them. God further promised to make the Imams a sign to mankind, and gave them authority to admonish men of His power and remind them of His unity. Having done this, God caused mankind to recognize

that He had chosen Muhammad and the members of his family, and decreed that guidance of the Muslim community should be through the divine Light of Muhammad. Thus, God established the office of the imamate (leadership of the Muslim community) through Muhammad and his family alone.

Afterwards God created Adam, a noble being, and asked the angels to prostrate themselves before him and to recognize him as their Imam. Adam was highly favored by God because he had been endowed with God's Light, but this Light was hidden under the veil of time until Muhammad was exalted in holiness. The Light descended upon and shone through the Imams, who became the Light of the heavens and earth. Because of their endowment with this divine Light, the Imams were entrusted with the salvation of mankind and became the repositories of secret sciences and the ultimate goal which people endeavored to attain. The Mahdi, the last and hidden Imam, was the final proof, the seal of the Imams, and the source of all goodness. Briefly, then, through this divine Light, the Imams became the noblest of mankind, the most exalted beings, and the manifestation of God's creation. Those who adhere to the Imam will receive blessings in this world and great support at the hour of death.²⁶ The Imam Jafar al-Sadiq is reported to have said that the first being God created was the Light of Muhammad; the first of His created beings was the posterity of Muhammad, and the first thing that the divine pen wrote down was, "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is His Apostle."²⁷

Here, then, we have the "divine" source of the exaltation of the imamate (leadership of the Muslim community) cherished by the Shiites. This established the preexistence of Muhammad as the "divine light," and, through this Light the imamate became a divine office, to be held by the Imams, who were designated to rule through God and the divine authority God had given them. Thus, the Imams were designated to rule the Muslim community not through an earthly political process but through the divine Light of God. Here the divine right of the Imams stands supreme.

This concept of the "divine Light" was later emphasized by Shiite writers, who found in it great support for their belief that the members of the family of the Prophet were an integral part of a divine process in which Muhammad preexisted as divine Light and the Imams were the incarnation of that Light. It is no surprise that Muhammad's daughter, Fatima, was included in the divine process of the Imams. Since Muhammad left no male heir to succeed him as Imam, it was necessary that Fatima should become an integral part of his succession of emanations of

Muhammad as divine Light, an incarnation of this Light to establish divine legitimacy for the Imams. Since she could not become an Imam, she became a Light unto herself and is considered by Shiites as the only channel through which the Imams descended from the Prophet. Hence came the Shiite tradition, related by the Prophet, that God created Fatima of the same Light from which He created Muhammad and Ali.²⁸

A later Shiite writer who emphasized this same concept was Baha al-Din al-Amuli (d. 1392). In discussing *al-Haqiqah al-Muhammadiyah* (Muhammad as the Ultimate Reality), al-Amuli not only considered Muhammad and the members of his family as "One Soul" and "One Reality," but also considered Ali and Muhammad as one and the same person.²⁹ To demonstrate the preexistence of Ali and his coeternal oneness with Muhammad, he cites the hadiths, "I and Ali are of one Light," and, in a slightly altered form, "I was a Wali [vicegerent of God] while Adam was yet between the water and the clay."

Al-Amuli associated the concept of Muhammad as the "ultimate reality" with the concept of *al-Insan al-Kamil* (the perfect man) and considered Ali the archetype of this perfect man. He did so on the basis of the speech called Khutbat al-Bayan (The manifestation speech), attributed to Ali, in which Ali said, "I am the Face and the Side of God, I am the Beginning and the End, I am the Dahir [outward] and the Batin [inward]," and claimed many other divine attributes, indicating that Ali was the perfect manifestation of God.³⁰ Al-Amuli preceded Abd al-Karim al-Jili (d. 1402), who devoted a whole book to the concept of the perfect man.

In his book, *Hayat al-Qulub* (Life of hearts), the Shiite writer Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi (d. 1699) relates several hadiths that demonstrate the simultaneous eternal creation of Muhammad with Ali, Fatima, and their two sons, al-Hasan and al-Husayn. According to one of these traditions, the Prophet is reported to have said that God created him, Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan and al-Husayn before He created Adam and did so before there were heavens and earth, darkness and light, sun and moon, Paradise and Hell. Then God uttered a word from which He formed Light. With another word he created spirit. Then God tempered the spirit with the Light and created Muhammad, Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn. When God willed the universe into existence, He expanded Muhammad's Light, and from that Light He created the empyrean. Muhammad is more excellent than the empyrean, because the latter was formed from his Light. The hadith continues that God then expanded the Light of his "brother," Ali, and from it He formed the angels. Thus, Ali became more excellent than the angels. Then God expanded the Light of

the Prophet's daughter, Fatima, and from it He created the heavens and the earth, and Fatima became more excellent than both the heavens and the earth. Afterwards, God expanded the Light of the Prophet's grandson, al-Hasan, and from it He fashioned the sun and the moon. From the Light of Muhammad's other grandson, al-Husayn, He formed Paradise and the black-eyed *huris* (nymphs), and al-Hasan and al-Husayn became more exalted than all that God had created from their Lights.³¹

Another tradition, related by al-Khasibi (d. 957), reveals even more clearly the transmission of the divine Light through Adam to Muhammad and Ali and the association of Muhammad and Ali as one eternal Light. According to this tradition, Muhammad is reported to have said that he and Ali were created of one Light, and that they began praising God while standing on the right side of the empyrean, two thousand years before Adam was created. When God created Adam, he fixed the Light in his loins, and both Muhammad and Ali were with him in Paradise. They were also with Noah in the Ark, and with Abraham when he was cast into the fire by Nimrud. From age to age God transmitted this Light from Adam's loins to undefiled wombs, until Muhammad and Ali reached the loins of Abd al-Muttalib, their grandfather. In Abd al-Muttalib, the Light was divided into two portions; one rested in the loins of his son, Abd Allah, who begat Muhammad, and the other rested with Abu Talib, who begat Ali.³²

From what has been said so far, it is obvious that both Shiites and Sufis maintain that Muhammad is the divine Light and that his descendants, the Imams, are celestial lights emanating from him. According to al-Kulayni and later Shiites like al-Hafiz Rajab al-Bursi (d. 1411) and al-Majlisi, this Light was manifested in Ali and his family. In essence, Muhammad and the members of his family are inseparable. The divine origin bestowed on him was bestowed on them as well. It is only in this sense that we can understand the tradition, "I and Ali are of one Light."³³ To this tradition the Shiite writer al-Hajj Masum Ali al-Shirazi (d. 1926) adds another, in which Ali says, "I am Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus, assuming different forms, however I will. He who has seen me has seen them all."³⁴ This echoes the saying of Christ, "He that has seen me has seen the Father." It puts Ali in the place of the Logos, a position such as al-Husayn Ibn Mansur al-Hallaj (d. 922), Ibn Arabi (d. 1240), and Abd al-Karim al-Jili (d. 1402) later attributed to Muhammad, and it identifies him with the highest type of humanity, the perfect man.³⁵ Al-Hallaj is probably the first Sufi to speak of an Islamic Logos and to attribute divinity and preexistence to Muhammad. He maintains that Muhammad existed before the creation of the world, and that he was

known before substance and accident, and that his name was eternal before the Pen, that is, before God recorded the Quran with His divine pen. In fact, to al-Hallaj, Muhammad was the "infinite Light," more brilliant and more eternal than the pen.³⁶

Furthermore, both Shiites and Sufis utilized the Biblical passage, "God created man in His own image," (Genesis 1:27) which became fundamental to their philosophy. This concept was utilized by al-Hallaj, who said, "God, who in essence, is love, created man after His own image, to the end that His creature, loving Him alone, may suffer a spiritual transformation, may find the divine image in himself, and may thus attain to union with the divine will and nature."³⁷

Such transformation keeps occurring until man's humanity vanishes and he becomes "incarnated through the spirit of God, of which Jesus was the Son of Mary."³⁸ What al-Hallaj means is that God manifested Himself in Adam as He did in Jesus. Like Jesus, Adam combined in himself both natures, the divine and the human. This obviously Christian concept was later elaborated by such theosophists as Ibn Arabi and al-Jili, who replaced Adam with Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, maintaining (as has been said earlier) that Muhammad's existence preceded that of Adam. According to Ibn Arabi, when God wanted to create the spirits to operate the visible (physical) world, He created first the "dispensational spirit," Muhammad. Then He created the spirits which existed in the invisible world. Having done this, God proclaimed to Muhammad the good news that he was a Prophet before all the prophets, who were only his deputies and harbingers of his advent. In essence, according to Ibn Arabi, Muhammad was the "dispensational spirit" whom God created before time and who became the source of all spirits, that is, the spirit of the whole creation.³⁹ It is in this sense that Ibn Arabi considers Muhammad the seal of the Prophets, the perfect man, and "the Spirit of which all prophetic and apostolic missions are but a manifestation."⁴⁰

As the seal of the Prophets, Muhammad is the source from whom all the prophets derive their divine message; although his is physically and temporally the last manifestation, yet it has always existed. Muhammad's mission is eternal, existing when "Adam was still between the water and the clay;" other prophets began their mission only when God in time chose them and sent them to carry out their mission. In essence, to Ibn Arabi, Muhammad becomes the universal Logos, whose activities and perfection are manifested in other prophets. He symbolizes the wholeness of divine reality. He is the *nous* (first intellect) and the *Barzakh* (intermediary between God and the phenomenal world). He is perfect in

every respect, as his name Ahmad (the praised one) indicates. He is the wisdom of singularity because he is the perfect creation. He is the clearest evidence of God, and God has given him the totality of the divine word. Briefly, then, he is the intermediary between the eternal and the temporal, between God and the cosmos.⁴¹ In light of these supernatural characteristics attributed to Muhammad, we may deduce that Ibn Arabi has supplanted Jesus Christ with Muhammad.

Another Sufi, Abd al-Karim al-Jili, considers Muhammad the First Intellect, from whose essence God created the angel Gabriel as well as the whole universe. To al-Jili, "the essence of Muhammad is the *dhat* [essence] of God." In this sense al-Jili portrays Muhammad as the absolutely perfect man and the archetype of all created beings.⁴² This, of course, is a concept of the Islamic Logos, which brings Muhammad in some respects close to the Logos of the Fourth Gospel and of the Pauline Epistles.⁴³ We have already seen this concept with al-Hallaj and Ibn Arabi. Reynold Nicholson, however, sees a sharp difference between this Islamic concept of the Logos and that of the Fourth Gospel. He states:

The Fatherhood of God, the Incarnation, and the Atonement suggest an infinitely rich and sympathetic personality, whereas the Muhammadan Logos tends to identify itself with the active principle of revelation in the Divine essence. Muhammad is loved and adored as the perfect image or copy of God: "He that has seen me has seen Allah," says the Tradition (borrowed from St. John 14:9). Except that he is not quite co-equal and co-eternal with his Maker, there can be no limit to glorification of the Perfect Man.⁴⁴

We may add here that the concept of the Logos has no foundation in the Quran or tradition. It is totally alien to the letter and spirit of Islam.

There is no evidence that al-Jili had read the Nicene Creed or knew about the Homousion, or the controversy connected with it. But to all intents and purposes, al-Jili, like al-Hallaj and Ibn Arabi, attributes to Muhammad the function of the Logos, which, according to Christian dogma, is one being with the Father and His perfect image, through whom and for whom God created the whole world. At the very least, we can detect in the ideas of al-Hallaj, Ibn Arabi, and al-Jili traces of Gnostic and Neo-Platonic philosophies.⁴⁵

Some traditions attributed to Muhammad show that he was aware of his preexistence as the "primal element." According to these traditions, Muhammad is reported to have said, "The first thing which God created was my soul," and, "My soul was the Primal Element."⁴⁶ This

primal element, as E. H. Palmer has shown, combines both the saintly and prophetic offices held by Muhammad. Sufis maintain that Muhammad was a primal saint who existed before all saints and prophets. This view would be in harmony with the tradition, cited earlier, quoting Muhammad as saying, "I was a Prophet while Adam was still between the water and the clay."⁴⁷ Ibn Arabi particularly elaborates on the sainthood, or state of sanctity predicated on the concept of the Light of Muhammad, which he considers a manifestation of the prophethood of Muhammad. To him Muhammad is not only a prophet but also a saint, and his sainthood is all-inclusive, universal, and without end. This sainthood is directly associated with the divine Truth; that is, God. Ibn Arabi avers both that Muhammad is the seal of the Prophets, after whom no prophet or apostle will ever be commissioned by God to deliver divine law, and that no community will exist after that of the Muslims to receive such a law. Yet Ibn Arabi also adds that sainthood transcends prophecy and, by its very nature as a theophany of God, is continuous and extends to other members of the Muslim community as *awliya* (saints), while prophethood is the exclusive function of Muhammad. Ibn Arabi sees sainthood as one of the divine names of God. He maintains that God Himself is not called "prophet" or "apostle," but calls himself "friend," the literal meaning of *wali* (saint). Ibn Arabi quotes the passages from the Quran, "God is the friend of those who believe," and "He is the friend of the Praiseworthy," to support his view.⁴⁸

In this sense, Ibn Arabi could claim that he himself was the seal of Muhammadan Sainthood.⁴⁹ But let us not forget that, although to Ibn Arabi sainthood is universal and continuous and the Muslim *abd* (servant) can become the "friend" or *wali* of God, that same servant could not equal Muhammad in his office as a "Prophet-Saint." For to Ibn Arabi, Muhammad is the eternal Light from which God created the saints. And although these saints are the theophany of the Light of Muhammad, yet they stand second to the majesty of him [Muhammad] "whom the Truth that is God has chosen and made the repository of His majesty and the executor of His command."⁵⁰ Thus, in a fundamental sense, Muhammad becomes the universal Logos, whose activities and perfection are manifested in other prophets. We have recourse here also to the concept of *al-Haqiqah al-Muhammadiyah*, on which Ibn Arabi built the principle of the Light of Muhammad, which became the central point of his theosophic teaching. This concept, to be sure, was not original with Ibn Arabi, but was developed earlier by Shiite writers, who predicated it on the principle of the Light of Muhammad.⁵¹

In a fundamental sense, Ibn Arabi is no different from the Shiites

who maintain that the sainthood is superior to the prophethood, because prophethood indicates only an external transmission of God's revelation, while the sainthood comprehends the very essence of this revelation.⁵²

Shiite writers maintain that Muhammad was the first creation of God, but that at the same time God created the Imams, who are His descendants and heirs. Thus, the divine dispensation of God extends to these Imams, and through them to the whole Shiite community.⁵³ In this regard, one is tempted to observe that such a belief was fashioned after the Christian concept of the church, the community of believers, as the body of Christ.

Reynold Nicholson observes that, according to this belief, the eternal existence of Muhammad appeared in the person of Ali and other members of Muhammad's family, the Imams.⁵⁴ In essence, the Shiites maintain that Muhammad was the Prophet par excellence, and that his prophethood was the first component of the primal element, while the Imams, especially the last one, the Mahdi, who will reappear at the end of time, are the true exponents of the saintly office constituting the second component of the primal element.⁵⁵

However, there is a significant difference between the Shiites' and the Sufis' understanding of the terms *walaya* (sainthood) and *wali* (saint), when applied to Ali and the Imams. The Shiites maintain that as one who holds the *walaya* Ali is more than a saint, or friend of God, which the term *wali* means in Arabic. As a member of Ahl al-Bayt (the family of the Prophet), whom God (according to Quran 33:33) has sanctified, Ali is not only infallible, a saint, and the friend of God, but also a vicar, deputy, vicegerent, and heir of the Prophet in ruling the Muslim community, which is God's community. This may be deduced from the Imam Ali himself, who, in one of his speeches, stated that the members of Al Muhammad (the family of Muhammad) are so preeminent that no one in the whole community of Islam can measure up to them. They are, he says, "the foundation and straight path of religion and the exemplaries of the believers. They possess the right of the Wilaya or Walaya and the Wasiyya [testamentary trust], and of being heirs [to the Prophet]."⁵⁶

Furthermore, Ali is the "Master" of the Muslim community, whom the Prophet had designated to lead after him. It is in this sense that Ali is called *wali* or *mawla*. It is of great significance that, according to the Shiites, Muhammad appointed Ali as his successor not by his own command, but by divine command. This is made clear by the fifth Imam, al-Baqir, who is reported to have said that obedience to Ali is as essential a religious duty as obedience to the Prophet. Al-Baqir further states that, just as the Prophet is the only gate leading to God, so Ali, the

Commander of the Faithful, is the same gate leading to God.⁵⁷ Al-Bursi explains that *walaya* means possession, governance, mastery, and deputization. He says that the phrase "Malik Yawm al-Din" in Quran 1:4 means "the possessor or master of the Day of Judgment," who is no other than the Almighty God. But, al-Bursi continues, since Ali was appointed by God as the master of His Prophet Muhammad, Ali becomes the possessor and master of the Day of Judgment as God's deputy. Thus, Ali's mastery or vicegerency becomes indispensable, uncircumscribed, and eternal. Al-Bursi concludes that anyone who rejects the *walaya* of Ali—his specific authority to rule the Muslim community in this life and the life to come—is an infidel.⁵⁸ Indeed, the *walaya* of Ali was, and still is, the cornerstone of Shiite belief, affirmed by Shiite writers and *ulama* (learned religious men).

A modern Shiite writer, Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr (d. 1980), wrote a penetrating treatise on this subject entitled *Bahth Hawl al-Walaya* (A treatise on the *walaya*). After presenting several arguments showing that it was incredible and illogical that a religious and political leader like the Prophet Muhammad should leave the Muslim community without a successor to continue his guidance of that community, al-Sadr avers that the Prophet had trained and prepared Ali to be his *wali*. Al-Sadr maintains that the Prophet chose Ali for this task not by his own will, but by God's command, the very God who had sanctified and purified Ahl al-Bayt (the family of the prophet) and by His providence entrusted the members of this family to rule his community.⁵⁹ Al-Sadr is, in fact, reiterating and reaffirming an ancient belief of the Shiites, that the *walaya* did not originate on earth, but in heaven.⁶⁰ In other words, the *walaya* of Ali is ordained by God.

According to another contemporary Shiite, Murtaza Mutahhari (d. 1979), the *walaya* is the divine authority by which the *wali* or the Imam, who holds it, is entrusted with the ruling of the Muslim community. Mutahhari explains that from the Shiite point of view, the *walaya* has three natures: it is political, pertaining to the leadership of the Muslim community; it is religious, falling to the person who possesses the divine knowledge needed to govern that community according to the laws of the Quran; and finally, it is ideological, in the sense that the leadership of the Muslim community is essential to the well-being and operation of that community, and that it is imperative that in every age there should be a perfect man who possesses supernatural influence over the world and has control of the hearts and souls of all Muslims. In this sense, Mutahhari believes that the *walaya* and the *imamate* are inseparable, and that Ali and his descendants, the Imams, are the only Muslims who possess

the qualities required to be the exclusive rulers of the Muslim community.⁶¹

As Ali is inseparable from the divine Light, held by Shiites and Sufis to be Muhammad, in accordance with the tradition, "I and Ali are of one Light," so too is he inseparable from Muhammad's "Divine Knowledge," as is clear from the tradition, "I am the city of knowledge, and Ali is its gate." Both Shiites and Sufis aver that this tradition means that Ali not only received divine knowledge from Muhammad, but also possessed a great knowledge of the religious sciences of Islam. In other words, Ali had the knowledge of every outward and inward aspect of these sciences, especially the science of expounding the Quran, which is the source of these sciences.⁶² Shiites and Sufis, maintain, moreover, that of all the companions of Muhammad, Ali was the only one who possessed exclusively the two distinguished qualities of *iman* (faith) and *ilm* (knowledge). This is supported by the tradition related by al-Tabarsi, in which Ali is reported to have said, "Ask me before you lose me. For by Him who created mankind and the soul of man, if you ask about any verse [of the Quran], whether revealed at Mecca or Medina, and the reason for its revelation, I will tell you about it."⁶³ This is further affirmed by the Imam Jafar al-Sadiq, who is reported to have said, "Ali is the Sirat [Straight Path of God] whom God entrusted with the knowledge of everything in heaven and earth. He is God's Wali over the people and the Trustee of His Truth."⁶⁴

Abu Nasr al-Sarraj al-Tusi (d. 988) relates a tradition ascribed to Ali, who said that the Prophet had taught him seventy disciplines of knowledge which He had taught no one else.⁶⁵ From this tradition we may deduce that, although al-Sarraj distinguished between the knowledge of Muhammad and that of Ali, he seems to accord Ali a position no other companion of the Prophet Muhammad ever attained. Another writer, Baha al-Din al-Amuli (d. 1392), states that of all the saints, Ali is the only one who possessed *al-Ulum al-Laduniyya* (divine sciences) and *al-Haq'iq al-Ilahiyya* (divine truths).⁶⁶ Be that as it may, it is certain that the Sufis and Shiites agree that Ali's knowledge of the inward and outward aspects of the religious sciences derives from his spiritual compatibility with the Prophet of Islam.

Some Sufis, including Abu al-Qasim al-Junayd (d. 910), emphasize the importance of Ali's knowledge and its effect on the Sufis' teaching, but assert that such knowledge would have profited them much more if it had not been for the fact that Ali was constantly engaged in warfare.⁶⁷ The reason for this emphasis is their belief that the source of Ali's knowledge was not any personal endeavor on his part, but "divine

providence." In this sense, al-Junayd equates Ali with the Muslim mythological character, the Khidr (more correctly, al-Khadir), who is said to have received divine knowledge inspired directly by God through mystical intuition.

Al-Junayd interprets Quran 18:65, "One of our servants . . . whom We had endowed with knowledge of the Quran," to mean that God had bestowed His knowledge on his servant, Ali. In fact, al-Junayd is attempting to establish that Ali's engagement in warfare prevented him from providing a wealth of religious interpretation and various kinds of knowledge which otherwise would have profited the Sufis, because the essence of Ali's knowledge was identical with that of the Sufis. Thus, Ali is considered the "head of the Sufis," although his leadership over them was not total.⁶⁸ Later Sufis, like the mystical poet Ibn al-Farid (d. 1235) in the celebrated ode "al-Ta'iyya al-Kubra," attributed to Ali the ability, through inward or esoteric religious knowledge, to interpret passages of the Quran and other spiritual problems because of the testamentary trust that Muhammad had bequeathed to him.⁶⁹ Other Sufis, such as Jalal al-Din Rumi (d. 1273), consider Ali as the outward and inward mystery of the whole world.⁷⁰ According to Reynold Nicholson, the Sufis intend that "they are the legitimate heirs and true interpreters of the esoteric teaching of the Prophet."⁷¹

But why should the mystic Sufis utilize an exclusively Shiite concept (in this case that of the testamentary trust giving Ali the authority to interpret problematic passages in the Quran) to confirm the belief that Ali is the spiritual heir and executor of the testamentary trust of the Prophet of Islam? Goldziher answers that although the Sunnites, including their own Sufis, deny both that Ali was the Imam (head) of Islamic Sufism, par excellence, and that the Prophet neither concealed any secret from his community nor imparted the inward knowledge of the Quran to anyone, yet the Sunnite Sufis sought to give the interpretation of the inward knowledge of the Quran a "Sunnite touch" from their overall Islamic point of view.⁷²

The Miraculous Attributes of Ali

THE GHULAT of extremist Shiites attribute to Ali miracles of which only the divine Being is capable. To them Ali was a miraculous person from childhood. In common with the mainstream Twelver Shiites, these sects ascribe to Ali miracles ranging from the superhuman to the divine. In fact, they consider the very birth of Ali a miracle.

A modern Shiite writer, Sayyid Muhammad Kazim al-Qazwini, describes the miracle of Ali's birth as follows. Ali's mother, Fatima bint Asad, wanted Ali to be born in the holy shrine of the Kaba. When the time came to deliver him, she went to the Kaba, but found the door locked. Fatima implored God to give her an easy delivery. Instantly, the wall of the Kaba split; Fatima entered, sat on a red slab, and delivered Ali without suffering any of the usual throes of labor. Fatima's husband, Abu Talib, and some of his friends rushed to the Kaba intending to open the door and let in some women to help Fatima deliver. The door would not open, however, and they realized that this was a sign from God that Fatima should deliver her child unaided by women. After three days the door opened. Fatima came out carrying a newborn child as beautiful as the moon: Ali.

Muhammad, who had not yet received God's revelation to preach Islam, went to see the newborn child. As he entered the house, the baby Ali smiled broadly and spoke, reciting from Quran 23:1-10, where God says, "Successful are those believers who humble themselves in their prayers . . . and they will be the heirs." Muhammad turned to Ali and said, "Surely the believers have become successful through you." This was Ali's first miracle: speaking in the cradle like Jesus and, through divine revelation, reciting a portion of the Quran, even though God had

not yet chosen Muhammad as His Messenger. Ali had the knowledge that the Quran existed eternally with God.¹

According to Shiite tradition, the miraculous birth of Ali was foretold by a Christian monk, al-Mutharram Ibn Ruayb Ibn al-Shayqanah. This monk, it is reported, had worshipped God for 190 years without asking a single favor of him. One day he asked God to show him one of his vicegerents, and, in answer to his prayer, God sent him to Abu Talib. When the monk saw Abu Talib, he kissed him and thanked God, who had finally answered his request to see one of God's vicegerents before his death. Surprised by the monk's behavior, Abu Talib asked him for an explanation. The monk answered that God had revealed to him that Abu Talib would have a child named Ali who would be the vicegerent of the Prophet Muhammad and the Imam of pious men. Abu Talib said he would not believe this unless he was given a sign supporting the monk's claim. Abu Talib asked for a basket full of the fruits of Paradise. The monk began to pray and, behold, a basket laden with the fruits of Paradise suddenly appeared! Overcome with joy, Abu Talib picked a pomegranate from the basket; it instantly changed to semen in his loins. That night his wife, Fatima bint Asad, conceived a child: Ali. No sooner was Ali conceived, however, than the whole earth began to shake. Frightened, the people of the tribe of Quraysh rushed to the top of Mount Qubays near Mecca, asking their gods to stop the earthquake. But the gods of Quraysh could not stop the earthquake, and one after another, they began to succumb to the glory and power of the fetus that had been formed in the womb of Fatima bint Asad.

Seeing this miracle, Abu Talib told the people of Quraysh that if they did not believe in the imamate of one whose conception had caused the whole earth to shake, they would be lost. They listened and believed, and their belief made Abu Talib cry for joy. When Fatima bint Asad was ready to deliver Ali, four women dressed in white silk went to her to alleviate her throes in childbirth. When Ali was born, he shone like the bright sun. He stood up and then prostrated himself on the ground, saying, "I bear witness that there is no God but Allah, that Muhammad is His Prophet, and I am His vicegerent. I am the 'Commander of the Faithful and the Seal of the Vicegerents of God, as Muhammad is the Seal of His Prophets.'" The four women took the babe Ali, and each in turn placed him on her lap. One of the women was Eve, and another was Maryam bint Imran (the Virgin Mary), mother of Isa (Jesus). When Mary placed the babe Ali on her lap, he looked at her saying, "Truly, this is the Virgin Mary and Jesus is my uncle." The other two women were the mother of Moses, Ibn Imran, and Asiya bint Muzahim.

When the monk al-Mutharram saw and heard all these things, he wept and worshipped God. Then he stretched out on his bed and died. For three days, Abu Talib waited in vain to see whether he would return to life. While he waited, a *hitan* (big fish) emerged and told Abu Talib that the monk was dead, and that he should go to Mecca to take care of his newly born son.²

In his *Kitab al-Irshad* (Book of Guidance), al-Shaykh al-Mufid (d. 1022) devotes an entire chapter to the various miracles of the Commander of the Faithful, Ali. One of these miracles, when Ali was a child of seven, was the perfection of his intellect and of his ability to acknowledge God and His apostle Muhammad when the latter invited him to profess Islam. This, al-Mufid states, is an “illustrious sign from God which transcends normal human behavior.”³ It indicates that Ali was chosen by God as His proof to mankind and that he was nurtured by God to succeed Muhammad as the sole Imam of the Muslim community. In this context, al-Mufid likens Ali to Jesus Christ—who, according to Quran 19:21, became while yet a child a sign to the people of God’s mercy—and to John the Baptist—who, according to Quran 19:12, was given wisdom while still a boy. Al-Mufid also discusses such other miraculous gifts of Ali as his military prowess, and his knowledge of the secrets of the heart, and of the future.⁴ Al-Mufid describes not only Ali’s gifts, but also his miraculous feats: how he pulled away the gate of the fortress of Khaybar, which many men together had been unable to move; how he moved the rock and found water under it; how he defeated a group of unbelieving jinn who had plotted to kill Muhammad and his men on their march against the Jewish tribe of the Banu al-Mustaliq; and how he spoke to the fish and caused the waters of the Euphrates to recede at his command, to save the people of al-Kufa from drowning. When on this last occasion, the waters of the Euphrates abated by his order and the fish of the bottom appeared, the people who had watched Ali were amazed that all the fish greeted him with the title, Commander of the Faithful—all, that is, except the eels and the scaleless fish, which kept silent. When the people asked why these fish did not greet him, Ali answered that God had given those fish that were ritually pure the ability to speak to him, but had kept the impure fish silent. Consequently, eels and scaleless fish are forbidden food to the Shiites. Finally, al-Mufid relates that on two occasions, Ali moved the sun from west to east.⁵

Birge relates a story about young Ali taken from the *Tariqatnama* (Book of the way), attributed to Eşrefoglu Rumi, a popular Bektashi poet. A giant once caught a man behind Mount Qaf, a mythological mountain believed by Muslims to surround the terrestrial globe. But

before the giant could devour his victim, a boy in the form of a lion appeared and bound the giant's hands around his neck with palm leaves. The giant appealed to all the prophets, beginning with Adam, for his release, but they were unable to release him. Finally, he appealed to Muhammad, who asked the giant whether he could recognize the boy who had bound him. When the giant answered that he could, Muhammad had Ali and his companions file before the giant so that he could pick out his captor. The giant trembled when he saw Ali and, pointing to him, said that this was the one who had bound him. Ali confessed to the Prophet Muhammad that he had bound the giant, but refused to release him until the giant professed Islam. When the giant declared his conversion to Islam, Ali, with a gesture of his finger, untied the giant and set him free.⁶

An almost identical story was related in person by a member of the Shabak community to the Iraqi writer Abd al-Munim al-Ghulami. According to this story, the Imam Ali existed before Adam and, at one time, became incensed against an *ifrit* of the jinn (celestial beings who acted as intermediaries between angels and men) for his *kufi* (unbelief) and bound the ifrit in chains. When God created Adam, the ifrit appealed to Adam for his release, but Adam could not free him. The ifrit then appealed to Noah and to all the succeeding prophets to release him, but they could not do so either. Finally, the Prophet Muhammad took the ifrit to young Ali. The ifrit pointed to Ali and shouted that this was the one who had bound him in chains. Muhammad implored Ali to release the ifrit and Ali agreed, on the condition that the ifrit should confess Islam. When the ifrit became a Muslim, Ali instantly shattered the iron chains and set him free.⁷

One of the greatest miraculous gifts the Shabak attribute to Ali is his power to cause the clouds to move. They also believe that thunder is his voice, and lightning the radiance of his whip. Therefore, whenever thunder and lightning appear, the Shabak shout, "Jan, Ali Jan."⁸ The belief that Ali voices his power through thunder is common. Such beliefs are not the invention of the shabak; they are common among the Shiites of Persia,⁹ dating back to the early centuries of Islam, when the highly controversial Abd Allah Ibn Saba, a Jewish convert to Islam and a contemporary of Ali, first ascribed divinity to him. Ibn Saba preached that Ali would one day return in the clouds, with thunder as his voice, and lightning as the radiance of his whip. Ali resented the followers of Ibn Saba, who came to be known as Sabaiyya, and their belief in his deity; he had them cast into fire, banishing Ibn Saba to Ctesiphon (al-Madain) in Iraq. Ibn Saba and his followers never ceased to deify Ali,

however. When Ali was assassinated in 661, they did not acknowledge his death, but preached that he would return one day in the clouds.¹⁰

Bayan Ibn Siman al-Nahdi (also called al-Tamimi), who was burned to death in 737 for his extreme beliefs, was the founder of an extremist Shiite sect called, after him, the Bayaniyya. He, like Ibn Saba, preached the apotheosis of Ali. To support this deification of Ali, he interpreted Quran 2:209, "Are they waiting for God, to come down to them in the shadow of a cloud?" to mean that God is Ali, and that thunder is his voice, and lightning his smile.

One ancient extremist Shiite sect, the Alyaiyya (named after Alya Ibn Dhira al-Dawsi), disparaged the Prophet Muhammad. This sect was therefore also called Dhamiyya (from the Arabic verb *dhamma*, "to disparage").¹¹ The Dhamiyya maintain that Ali is God and that he sent Muhammad to proclaim His divine message to mankind, but that Muhammad instead claimed the prophethood for himself.¹² The Shabak believe that God chose Ali to be His messenger, but that the angel Gabriel delivered the message to Muhammad instead of to Ali. For this reason that Shabak call Gabriel the "betrayers of the Faithful One," that is, Ali.¹³ This belief is also held by other Shiite sects.¹⁴

Other extremist Shiites believe that God originally sent Muhammad, not the angel Gabriel, to deliver His divine message to Ali, but that Muhammad, seduced by pride and ambition, claimed the prophethood for himself. Even many Shiites who do not deify Ali, do not deny that he could have been divine. There is a common saying in Persia: "Though I do not believe Ali to be God, I believe that he is not far from being so."¹⁵ Addressing Ali, a Persian poet said, "If I call you God, that would be a sacrilege, but if I give you another name, that would be an alteration of your nature."¹⁶ Some Ali Ilahis of Persia deify Ali; others maintain that, although Ali is not God, yet he is not separate from God and not different from Him.¹⁷ On the surface, this view may seem compatible with the faith of those Shiites who do not deify Ali, but in fact it indicates that the Ali Ilahis consider Ali to be as divine as God.

According to the Shabak, the miraculous attributes of Ali extend to his sword, known as *Dhu al-Faqar* (that which has miraculous piercing power). This Shiite belief is not new and may date back to a very early period of Islamic history. According to a tradition related by the tenth-century Shiite writer al-Kulayni, Ali's sword, sheathed in a silver scabbard, was brought down from heaven by the angel Gabriel and passed from one person to another until finally it came into the possession of the eighth Imam, Ali al-Rida (d. 818).¹⁸ Earlier, in 624, this sword was captured by the followers of Muhammad from its owner, al-Asi Ibn

Munabbih, at the skirmish of Badr and was presented by the Prophet Muhammad to Ali in gratitude for his heroic fight for the cause of Islam against the tribe of the Quraysh, unbelievers. The Shabak also believe that Ali's sword descended from heaven, and that Ali was miraculously able to shorten or lengthen it according to need.¹⁹ In 1911, Captain L. Molyneux-Seel traveled through the district of Dersim in the upper Euphrates valley, where the majority of the inhabitants are Shi'ite Kizilbash. He reports seeing a rock split in two, the upper portion bearing a striking resemblance to a head surmounted by a fez, which the Kizilbash believe was the head of a hated Turk split by the mighty sword of Ali.²⁰ In a splendid ode, the celebrated Sufi Jalal al-Din Rumi ascribed divine attributes to this sword of Ali and portrayed it as the incarnation of the *Haqq* (Truth): that is, God. Here is the ode, as translated by Reynold Nicholson:

Every moment the robber Beauty rises in a different shape, ravishes
the soul, and disappears.
Every instant that Loved One assumes a new garment, now of eld,
now of youth.
Now He plunged into the heart of the substance of the potter's
clay—the Spirit plunged, like a diver.
Anon He rose from the depths of mud that is moulded and baked,
then He appeared in the world.
He became Abraham and appeared in the midst of the fire, which
turned to roses for His sake.
For a while He was roaming on the earth to pleasure Himself,
Then He became Jesus and ascended to the dome of Heaven and
began to glorify God.
In brief, it was He that was coming and going in every generation
thou hast seen,
Until at last He appeared in the form of an Arab and gained the
empire of the world.
What is it that is transferred? What is transmigration in reality? The
lovely winner of hearts
Became a sword and appeared in the hand of Ali and became the
Slayer of the time.
No! no! for 'twas even He that was crying in human shape, "Ana 'l-
Haqq."²¹

Thus, Ali's sword was transformed from the corporeal into the incorporeal, becoming the essence of divine truth, to corroborate the Shi'ite belief in the spiritual supremacy of Ali as the vicegerent of God.

The anonymous author of the enigmatic *Umm al-Kitab* (Mother of the book), an eighth-century proto-Ismaili source, attributes to the fifth Shiite Imam, Muhammad al-Baqir, the interpretation of many Shiite dogmas. The work is written in interlocutory form: three disciples question al-Baqir on different religious subjects, and al-Baqir answers. In one of the answers, al-Baqir explains the mystical meaning of the sword of Ali and the metamorphosis by which it has become not only a Shiite spiritual symbol, but the epitome of Islamic beliefs. Al-Baqir explains that Ali's sword is an incorporeal spirit and everlasting. It is as serene and luminous as the bodies of angels. It represents not only faithfulness, but also the Lord of the faithful. It has a sacred function among the faithful, standing as a compassionate guardian of the downtrodden, the needy, and the poor. It is the protector of solid justice. It is resolute; it is deep as the sea; and it is the supreme spirit. It is subtle and discreet, sublime and knowledgeable. Al-Baqir goes on to say that Islam is constituted of all these sublime principles. The sword of Ali epitomizes all that is worthy, including the spirit of Islam. This characterization of Ali's sword accords with what the Prophets have said: that all things are accomplished by order of God, and nothing can be done without His command.²² Thus, the spiritual power of Ali's sword was established by God's command and became part of His power foretold by the Prophets of old. It epitomizes the spirit of "true" Islam, as does the mastership of Ali.

Some Shiite sources relate that in warfare Ali, while mounting his horse, could cut off heads with great ease and even slice the bodies of his opponents in two; one half remaining on the horse's back, the other rolling to the ground. Sometimes Ali waited for his enemies to attack and then extended his arm, decapitating with his sword as many as thirty-three attackers in one blow.²³ In the campaign against the Khaybar, a Jewish tribe, Ali pulled down the gate of the fortress of Khaybar, called al-Qamus. This gate was made of solid rock in the shape of a millstone with a handle in the middle, and was eighteen cubits in diameter. Ali held the gate in his hand and continued fighting until God offered him victory. Then he threw it to the ground. Forty strong men who were eyewitnesses to this incident tried to move the gate, but could not. Some say it took seventy men to return the gate to its original position. Others say that Ali used the gate of the fortress as a buckle for his belt.²⁴ Abu Jafar Muhammad al-Tabarsi, a thirteenth-century Shiite writer, relates in his book, *Bisharat al-Mustafa li Shi'at al-al-Murtada* (the annunciation of the Chosen One, Muhammad, to the partisans of the one with whom God is pleased—Ali), that Ali wrote to Sahl Ibn Hanif, "By Allah! I have pulled out the gate of the Khaybar fortress and hurled it forty feet away not

through physical power, but through divine power and the Light of God, for I am in relation to Muhammad as the relation of Light to Light.²⁵

When the Prophet defeated the Jewish tribe of Khaybar and captured their fortress, he saw among the captives a beautiful young woman, Safiyya, the daughter of Huyayy, a Jewish leader. Fascinated by her beauty, Muhammad wanted her for a wife and ordered that she be brought to him. When she appeared before him, he noticed a cut on her face. He asked her how her face had been cut, and she answered that when Ali pulled out the gate of the fortress of Khaybar, the fortress collapsed, and all those who were inside fell to the ground. Safiyya said that at that moment she was lying in bed, and when the fortress collapsed, she fell and hit her face against the bed and cut it. The Prophet said, "Safiyya! Ali is most favored with God. When he pulled out the gate of the fortress of Khaybar, the fortress shook, and with it the seven heavens and the seven earths shook; even the throne of the Merciful shook in support of Ali."²⁶ On that day Umar Ibn al-Khattab, who later became caliph, asked Ali how he could have pulled down the gate of Khaybar, inasmuch as he had been fasting for three days. Ali answered that he did so through the aid of divine power.²⁷

During the attack against the Jews of Khaybar, Ali, with one blow of his sword, split into two halves the head of an enemy named Marhab, to the utmost surprise of the angel Gabriel. The Prophet asked the angel Gabriel why he was so surprised. Gabriel said that when he was ordered by God to destroy the people of Lot (the people of Sodom and Gomorrah), he carried the seven cities in which these people dwelt on one feather of his wing, from the seventh nether world to the seventh upper heaven.²⁸ Gabriel carried these cities until the morning, awaiting the verdict of God regarding their fate. Gabriel then said that when Ali began to strike with his sword, God ordered him to hold the tip of the sword lest it fall and split the earth, reaching the bull on whose horns the earth stood and dividing him in two. If this had happened, Gabriel said, the bull would have lost its balance, and the earth would have turned over with all its inhabitants. Gabriel admitted that, despite the support given his arm by the two angels Israfil and Mikhail, the tip of Ali's sword was heavier than the seven cities of the people of Lot that he carried on one feather of his wing.²⁹

Another writer, Ibn Shadhan (d. 1361), relates the following miracle connected with the sword of Ali. He states that Mohammad's companion, Ammar Ibn Yasir (d. 657), said that one day, while he was in Ali's presence in the city of al-Kufa (in present-day Iraq), he and Ali heard a voice crying outside the house. Ali said, "Ammar, go and fetch me my

sword, Dhu al-Faqar, which cuts lives short." Ammar continued, "I brought him the sword, and he told me, 'Go out and order the man to stop molesting the woman. If he obeys, leave him alone. If he does not, I will go out and stop him with my sword.'" Ammar went out and saw a man holding onto the reins of a camel, shouting that the beast belonged to him. Challenging him was a woman claiming that the camel was hers. Ammar told the man, "The Commander of the Faithful, Ali, orders you to stop molesting the woman." The man answered, "Let Ali mind his own business and wash his hands from the blood of the Muslims he killed in the city of al-Basra. Now he wants to take my camel and give it to this lying woman." Ammar said that he returned to Ali, who left the house with an angry face. Ali walked up the man and said, "Woe unto you, leave the camel of this woman alone." The man said, "It is my camel." Ali replied, "You lie, you accursed one." The man said, "Ali! Who would testify that the woman is telling the truth?" Ali said, "One whom no one in al-Kufa could accuse of falsehood." The man said, "If a witness will come forward to testify that the woman is telling the truth, I will hand the camel to this woman." Ali, turned to the camel and said, "Camel! Speak up. To whom do you belong?" The camel answered in an eloquent tongue, "O, Commander of the Faithful, I have belonged to this woman for nineteen years." Ali turned to the woman and said, "Woman, take your camel." Then he turned to the man and with one blow of his sword split him in two.³⁰

In one of his miracles, Ali invoked the powers of heaven in the Syriac language to cause water to gush out of the ground. During the battle of Siffin, which Ali fought against the Syrian governor, Muawiya Ibn Abi Sufyan, Ali's army camped near a village called Sandudya. One of Ali's men told him that the ground where the army had camped was unsuitable because it had no water. Ali told his men to dig in the ground for water; they did so, and found a huge black stone, to which was attached a silver ring. One hundred men tried to move the stone, but failed. Ali asked them to step aside and, raising his eyes to heaven, spoke in the Syriac language, repeating his words in Arabic: "Thou art gracious, O Lord of the worlds, the Lord of Moses and Aaron." (As cited by Muhammad Ibn al-Fattal al-Nisaburi (d. 1114). The original words were, "Tab Tab Marya Alam Taybutha. Mabutha Shtmayya Kutha Hamutha Tawditha Barjuna." It should be noted that some of them are so distorted that they make no sense in Syriac.) Ali then pulled the stone toward himself and hurled it forty cubits away. Immediately a very sweet and cold spring gushed out of the ground.

The whole army drank from the spring. Then Ali returned the rock

to its place and ordered his men to cover it with earth. When the army departed, Ali asked his men whether they would be able to detect the place of the spring if they returned to it. They said that they would, but when they returned to the spot, they could not find the spring; the place was hidden from their eyes. Meanwhile, a monk who had left his cell came walking toward Ali and his company. When Ali saw him, he greeted him and asked "Are not you Simon?" The monk said that Simon was his special name, which his mother had given him at birth. He added that no one knew that his name was Simon except God and Ali. Ali said to the monk, "And what do you want, Simon?" The monk answered, "I want this spring of water." Ali said, "This spring is of Paradise. Three hundred prophets and thirteen wasis [testators] of whom I am the last, draw from it." The monk said that this was true because he had found it in the gospel; a monastery was built up on that rock, and the water of the spring flowed under the monastery. He added that no other mortal knew the story of the monastery and the spring except himself. As a result of this miracle, the monk embraced Islam.³¹

This story may remind us of the time Moses struck the rock and twelve springs gushed forth from it. It is simple enough to tell us that the Shiites have gone beyond reasonable bounds in ascribing to Ali miracles rivalling those of the prophets of Israel. But the interesting part of this miracle is that Ali invoked God's help in the Syriac language, using the Eastern (Nestorian) dialect. This may be explained by the fact that the Nestorians were living in almost every part of Iraq, especially in al-Hira and al-Kufa. Also, there is no doubt that many Nestorians had supported Ali and enlisted in his army for his war against Muawiya.

Convincing evidence that the Ghulat are a batini sect lies in their interpretation of some passages of the Quran and their application of the inward (batin) meaning of those passages to Ali and his descendants. For example, they interpret Quran 78:1, "Al-Naba al-Azim" to mean "Great Ali," and Quran 95:1-2, "The Tin and Zaytun" to mean al-Hasan and al-Husayn, the sons of Ali. They also take Quran 52:44, "And if they see a fragment of heaven falling down upon them, they say it is but a thick cloud," to mean that the "fragment of heaven" is Ali, who has descended from heaven to earth. Of Quran 55:17-22, "He has let the two seas; they meet one another. Yet between them stands a Barzakh (barrier) which they cannot overrun . . . pearls and corals come from both," they say that the two seas are Muhammad and Ali, and the pearls and corals which come forth from them are the Imams, who are the descendants of Ali and Fatima, daughter of Muhammad. Furthermore, they interpret Quran 9:18, "He was also merciful to the three who had been left behind," to

mean the first three caliphs, Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman, who were "rejected" by the Shiite Muslim community.³² In fact, the majority of Shiites denounce the first three caliphs as usurpers of the office of the caliphate, which they believe Ali should have been the first to fill. These interpretations of the Quran have been used by Shiites to support their belief in the "transcendentalism" of the members of the family of the Prophet. Abu Ali al-Fadl al-Tabarsi (d. 1154), in his *Majma al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an*, (the confluence of eloquence in interpreting the Quran), relates on the authority of the Prophet's companion Salman al-Farisi, that the two seas in the passage cited above mean Ali and Fatima, that the Barzakh between them signifies Muhammad, and that the pearls and corals represent al-Hasan and al-Husayn, the sons of Ali by Fatima.³³ The same interpretation of this passage of the Quran is also reported by the traditionalist and companion of the Prophet, Anas Ibn Malik (d. 709 or 711).³⁴

Finally, in order to defend their belief in the divine mission of Ali, the Ghulat, like many other Shiites, accuse the two caliphs, Abu Bakr and Umar, of burning ten *ajza* (sections) of the Quran because they did not harmonize with their intentions and beliefs.³⁵ They claim the caliphs deliberately eliminated those portions of the Quran that favored Ali and his descendants as the legitimate successors of the Prophet and leaders of the Muslim community. The author of *Dabistan al-Madhahib* (School of manners), however, attributes the burning of portions of the Quran not to Abu Bakr and Umar, but to the third caliph, Uthman. Fani produces a whole *sura* (chapter) of the Quran that he maintains was eliminated by Uthman when he had the Quran codified in its present form. This *sura*, entitled The *sura* of the two lights, begins with an exhortation to those who believe in the "Two Lights," that is, Muhammad and Ali, whom God has sent as His messengers to all mankind.³⁶ The obvious implication is that Ali is coequal with Muhammad as the "divine Light" and shares with him the divine message: the Quran. Such a belief fits perfectly with the tradition cited earlier: "I and Ali are of one Light."³⁷

The Family of the Prophet

ALL SHIITES, whether extremist or moderate, hold in utmost veneration the five members of the family of the Prophet—the Prophet Muhammad, his daughter Fatima, her husband Ali, and their sons al-Hasan and al-Husayn. These five are commonly known as Ahl al-Aba or Ahl al-Kisa, both of which literally mean “the people of the mantle.” The names Ahl al-Aba and Ahl al-Kisa derive from an incident that occurred at the house of Umm Salama, one of Muhammad’s wives. The Prophet called Ali, Fatima, and their two sons to him there, covered them with his *Khaybarite Aba* (mantle), and began to recite Quran 33:33, “For God wishes to remove abomination from you, ye members of His Family, and make you spotless.” Then Muhammad began to plead, “O God, these are the members of my household whom you have promised me. Remove from them uncleanness and purify them.” Umm Salama asked, “Am I one of them, O Prophet of Allah?” Muhammad answered, “Be of good cheer, Umm Salama. You are well off, but these are Ahl Bayti [my family].”¹ Hence came the tradition of the Mantle.

According to another tradition, known as Hadith al-Thaqalayn, the Prophet is reported to have said, “I am leaving you two important things, such that if you adhere to them, you will never go astray—the Book of God [the Quran] and Ahl Bayti [my family], and the twain shall not be separated.”² It could be argued on the basis of his answer to Umm Salama that these statements include the wives of Muhammad as part of his family. It could also be argued that the Family of the Prophet does not necessarily mean the four members of his immediate family; that is Ali, Fatima, and their two sons, al-Hasan and al-Husayn, but all believing Muslims. Abu al-Qasim Abd al-Karim al-Qushayri (d. 1072), relates a

tradition pertaining to the Prophet who when asked, "Who are the family of Muhammad," answered, "they are every pious [Muslim]." ³

Some writers, like Abd al-Qadir al-Jili (d. 1164) and Muhyi al-Din Ibn Arabi (d. 1240), maintain that the term *Ahl al-Bayt* includes the wives of the Prophet. ⁴ Al-Jili includes within *Ahl al-Bayt* not only the wives of the Prophet, but other relatives, such as the Prophet's uncles and their descendants. (The sons of Muhammad's uncle al-Abbas established the Abbasid dynasty in 750). Al-Jili divides the family of the Prophet into four categories: Ali, Fatima, and their sons, al-Hasan and al-Husayn, as the Prophet's relatives of the first degree; the Prophet's wives, as those of the second degree; the descendants of al-Hasan and al-Husayn as those of the third degree; and all other relatives of Muhammad as those of the fourth degree. ⁵ Certain traditions concerning the Prophet and Ali are relevant to any discussion of the scope of *Ahl al-Bayt*. Both the Prophet and Ali considered Salman al-Farisi, a Persian convert to Islam and a companion of the Prophet, to be a member of *Ahl al-Bayt*. The Prophet is reported to have said, "Salman is one of us, *Ahl al-Bayt*." ⁶ Another tradition indicates that the Prophet did not consider his wives to be members of *Ahl al-Bayt*. ⁷ But Shiites and some Sunnite writers maintain that the terms household or family of the Prophet refer exclusively to Ali, Fatima, and their two sons, because they are the Prophet's relatives in the first degree. ⁸ Shiites frequently support this view by citing Quran 3:61-62: "This revelation, and this wise admonition, we recite to you. Jesus is like Adam in the sight of God. He created Him of dust and said to Him, 'Be,' and He was. This is the truth from your Lord; therefore, do not doubt it. To those who dispute with you concerning Jesus after the knowledge ye have received, say, 'Come, let us gather our sons and your sons, our wives and your wives, our people and your people. We will pray together and call down the curse of God on the ones who lie.'" ⁹

Muslim commentators on the Quran call this verse the *Mubahala* (the imprecation, or calling down of God's curse on the liar). The revelation of this portion of the Quran took place during a meeting between Muhammad and the Christians of Najran in the southern part of present-day Saudi Arabia. In the year 631, a Christian delegation from Najran, numbering seventy men, went to Medina to debate religious matters with Muhammad. Muhammad censured the Christians for believing that Jesus was divine and asked them to embrace Islam, on the grounds that Islam is the only "true" religion of God which considers Jesus a created being like Adam. The debate between the two parties became so heated that Muhammad, reciting the aforementioned verse of the Quran, challenged the Christian party to appear on the next day, 15

January 631, for a Mubahala, so that the disputing parties could ask God to determine the truth of their beliefs concerning the divinity of Jesus, and call down God's curse on the party not telling the truth.

The Christian party seriously considered Muhammad's challenge. When they went to meet Muhammad the next day, they found that he was already on his way to the appointed place of the Mubahala. He was wearing a garment made of black hair and was carrying his grandchild, al-Hasan, on his shoulder while leading his other grandchild, al-Husayn by the hand; Ali and Fatima were walking behind him. When the leader of the Christian party saw Muhammad with the members of his family, he turned to his men, saying that he saw faces whose prayers could move mountains. He implored them not to accept Muhammad's challenge, because, if they did, they would certainly perish and their children would not live long. Therefore, the Christians of Najran rejected Muhammad's challenge and instead agreed to a directive imposed on them by Muhammad, that they retain their religion, but that they be willing to pay Muhammad tribute, including expensive garments, pieces of silver, lances, shields, horses, and camels. They also agreed to place themselves under the *dhimma* (protection) of the Muslims, and to extend hospitality for one month to any delegation Muhammad might send to them in the future. The Christians had no choice but to accept Muhammad's conditions, knowing that they were but a powerless few pitted against the determination of Muhammad and his followers to subjugate them.¹⁰

Another version of the revelation of the Mubahala is related by Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahani (d. 966) in his *Kitab al-Aghani* (Book of songs). According to this version, forty Christian dignitaries from Najran, including a bishop, went to see Muhammad to debate with him on religious matters. Addressing Muhammad as Abu al-Qasim (father of al-Qasim, a son of Muhammad who died in infancy), the bishop asked him, "Who is the father of Moses?" Muhammad answered, "Imran." The bishop asked, "Who is the father of Joseph?" Muhammad answered, "Jacob." "Who is your father?" The bishop asked. Muhammad answered, "My father is Abd Allah, son of Abd al-Muttalib." Finally, the bishop asked, "Who is the father of Isa [Jesus]?" Muhammad did not reply. Instantly, the angel Gabriel appeared to Muhammad, saying, "Isa is like Adam, whom God created from dust." [Quran 3:59]. The apostle of Allah recited this verse, transmitted by the angel Gabriel, and at that, the bishop collapsed in a dead faint. When the bishop regained consciousness, he raised his head to look at the Prophet and said, "You do believe that God revealed to you that Isa was created of dust, don't you? But we find no evidence of what has been revealed to you in what has

been revealed to us [the New Testament]. Nor do we find evidence in what has been revealed to the Jews [the Old Testament].” At this point, God said to Muhammad, “To those who dispute with you concerning Jesus after the knowledge ye have received, [i.e., that he was created of dust like Adam] say, ‘Come, let us gather our sons and your sons, our wives and your wives, our people and your people. We will then pray and call down God’s curse on the liars.’” The next day, Muhammad went to meet the Christians at the place of the Mubahala, taking with him Ali, Fatima, and their two sons, but none of his wives. The Christians decided not to take part in the Mubahala because, so al-Isfahani relates, they believed that Muhammad was a prophet and feared that if they challenged him, they might perish. When he saw that they declined to challenge him, Muhammad said, “I swear by Him [God] who sent me in truth, if you had performed the Mubahala with me, no Christian man or woman on this earth would have escaped death.” This account does not specify any conditions imposed by Muhammad on the defeated Christian party.¹¹

Al-Shaykh al-Mufid also relates the affair of the Mubahala and includes a statement concerning Ali not found in the preceding accounts. He states that when the Christian bishop, Abu al-Haritha, saw the Prophet, Ali, Fatima, and their children on their way to the place of the Mubahala, he asked who they were. He was told that the young man was Ali, Muhammad’s son-in-law and cousin, that the lady was Fatima, Muhammad’s daughter; that the two boys were the Prophet’s grandchildren; and that all of them were to him the dearest, most beloved, and closest to his heart. When the bishop saw that the Prophet had brought his family especially to perform the Mubahala, he knew the Prophet was sure that truth was on his side. Muhammad would not have brought those dearest to him, the bishop told his men, were he not sure that the evidence would favor him. The bishop then advised his men to yield to Muhammad and conform to his view.¹²

As we shall see shortly, al-Mufid makes the best of the Mubahala episode to demonstrate the merits of Ali and his equality with the Prophet. It is important to note that Imad al-Din Ibn Kathir, who relates yet another version of the Mubahala, never mentions Ali’s accompanying Muhammad to the site. He names only al-Hasan, al-Husayn, and Fatima, adding that Fatima was walking closely behind Muhammad.¹³

We find in more than one source specific mention of the family of the Prophet as including Muhammad’s immediate blood relatives—Fatima, Ali, and their two sons—but not his wives. However, the theosophist Ibn Arabi is of the opinion that the terms household and family

of the Prophet should extend to all his relatives and wives. He maintains that Ali's sons by Fatima, al-Hasan and al-Husayn, and their descendants, the Imams, are infallible because "God has purified them and removed from them uncleanness, not by their action or merit, but by a preordained Providence of God. This is an excellence which God confers upon those whom He will, and certainly God is the greatest source of excellence." In fact, Ibn Arabi asserts, the Prophet Muhammad and the members of his family are indivisible, and whoever betrays one of them betrays the Prophet himself.¹⁴

The majority of Shiites maintain that the terms *Ahl al-Aba* and *Ahl al-Kisa* refer exclusively to Fatima, Ali, and their two sons, al-Hasan and al-Husayn. These four, with Muhammad, are exalted above the whole community of Islam, and no one in that community is equal to them in position or stature. They are regarded by the Shiites as the pillars of religion and the stronghold of the Islamic faith. Most significantly, only they, of all Muslims, are by right heirs of the Prophet in leadership of the Islamic community.¹⁵ In this sense, they form a religious hierarchy not found in Sunnite Islam.

But why should the Shiites consider Ali, who is only a cousin of Muhammad and his son-in-law, a member of the Prophet's family, and exclude, for example, al-Abbas, the Prophet's uncle, who was a closer blood relation than Ali? What is it that makes Ali so significant in the eyes of the Shiites, who place him on a par with Muhammad? It is that the Shiites look upon Ali as a person who has been favored by God—not as a prophet, for the prophethood is the exclusive office of Muhammad, but as God's saint or beloved, and more specifically, his deputy to whom God has entrusted the *imamate* (leadership) of the Muslim community after Muhammad. In other words, Ali enjoys the same spiritual favor and position that God conferred on Muhammad. Therefore, to the Shiites, there is no difference in the spiritual status of Ali and Muhammad, except that Muhammad was entrusted with the office of prophethood, while Ali was favored with the office of vicegerent or saint and also with the *imamate*, which is a spiritual office ordained by God. Indeed, the sainthood is superior to the prophethood, because prophethood indicates only a mechanical transmission of God's revelation, while sainthood encompasses the hidden meaning of this revelation. For this reason the Shiites regard Ali as the "brother" of Muhammad, who shares with him the divine favor of God.

Al-Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet, did not receive any favor or spiritual office from God and therefore cannot be considered a member of the Prophet's family.¹⁶ Briefly, he was not ordained by God as part of the

spiritual hierarchy; Ali was. In fact, one modern Shiite writer devoted an entire book, *The Brother of the Prophet Muhammad*, to show the equality of Ali with the Prophet of Islam.¹⁷ To demonstrate the spiritual position Ali enjoyed, the Shiite jurist, al-Kulayni, cites a tradition in which Ali says, "I am God's division between heaven and hell. I am the Scepter and the Sign. All angels and the spirit [probably the Holy Spirit] have recognized my attributes as they did those of Muhammad."¹⁸

Commenting on the tradition of Ali, the fifth Imam, al-Baqir, states that Ali was endowed with the same excellent qualities as the Prophet, and that obedience to Ali is as imperative as obedience to the Prophet. Al-Baqir states further that as the Prophet is the gateway leading those who enter it to God, so too, are Ali and the Imams after him.¹⁹

Al-Shaykh al-Mufid sees in the Mubahala evidence of the supremacy of the family of the Prophet and the equality of Ali with the Prophet. He states that in the episode of the Mubahala, God made Ali, his wife Fatima, and his two children, al-Hasan and al-Husayn, a proof that Muhammad was His Prophet and a testimony for His religion, Islam. He goes on to say that God gave judgment in the Quranic verse of the Mubahala that Ali should enjoy outstanding merit and equality with the Prophet. Through the verse, that is, God has purified the members of the family of the Prophet, who became not only infallible, but also God's proof against the Christians of Najran. This, as al-Mufid sees it, is "a merit which no other member of the Muslim community can share with them, or even approach their position."²⁰

The spiritual equality of Ali with Muhammad, except for the prophethood, is further demonstrated by the episode of Muhammad's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem. According to one tradition concerning the episode, Muhammad says that on the night journey, the angel Gabriel asked him, "Where is your brother Ali?" The Prophet answered, "I left him behind." Gabriel said, "Ask God that He may bring him to you." Muhammad did so and immediately saw the likeness of Ali in his company.²¹ When Muhammad reached the seventh heaven, which led to the Throne of God, God called him, saying, "O Muhammad, you are my servant, and I am your Lord. Obey me, worship me, and depend completely on me, for I am pleased to have you as my servant, beloved, and apostle, and I am also pleased to have designated Ali as your successor and a gateway. He is my proof and my pact with my creation. In him my religion [Islam] shall be upheld, my laws observed and executed, and my lovers distinguished from my enemies. Through his descendants [the Imams] I shall have compassion upon my creation. And through the Mahdi I shall fill the earth with my praise, worship, and glory; purify it

from my enemies; give life to my servants [the Shiites]; expose my treasures, reveal my mysteries; support him by my saints and angels and lead him to his final triumph, for he is truly my Wali [vicegerent] and the true Mahdi [guide] of my creation."²² Muhammad also says that during his ascent to heaven, the angel Gabriel inquired of him about Ali, which led him to believe that Ali was better known in heaven than Muhammad was. When Muhammad reached the fourth heaven, he saw the angel of death, who told him that he had been charged by the Almighty to take the souls of all creatures except Muhammad and Ali. Their souls would be taken by God alone. When Muhammad came under the empyrean, he saw Ali standing there. He said to him, "How did you get here before me?" The angel Gabriel was present and asked Muhammad whom he was addressing. Muhammad said, "I am addressing my brother Ali." Gabriel said to Muhammad that the person he was addressing was not Ali, but an angel whom God had created in the likeness of Ali, and that those Prophets who were favored by God and wished to draw near and behold Ali had to visit this angel first.²³

From this tradition we may deduce that, according to the Shiites, Ali is truly the "brother" of Muhammad, because the Prophet said so, and is his only heir and successor. He is, as Abu Jafar al-Tusi, (d. 1067 and known as Shaykh al-Taifa) says, "the brother of Muhammad, the sword of God against the infidels, the confidant of the Prophet, and the source of the Prophet's knowledge."²⁴

When Shiite pilgrims visit the tomb of Ali at al-Najaf in present day Iraq, they greet his remains, saying, "Peace be upon the exalted essence of God. Peace be upon the Manna and the Quails."²⁵ Here Ali is depicted as food and sustenance for the believers, just as manna and quails were sent by God as food and sustenance for the children of Israel in Sinai. Ali is also the "essence" of God formed of the same substance as God; divine. This, of course, is hyperbole which the Ithnaashari Shiites do not accept, but it must have been accepted and used by other Shiites since the early period of Islam. In fact, in the year 420/1029, during the Friday prayer, a Shiite preacher in Baghdad would say after praising the Prophet, "And peace be upon the brother of Muhammad, the Commander of the Faithful, Ali, the human yet divine, who spoke to the skull, raised the dead, and upon the divine tidings talked to the People of the Cave [the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus]."²⁶ Whether this hyperbole is accepted or rejected, Ali remains the center of Shiism, and without him the whole Shiite theological system would collapse; to the Shiites, the tradition of the Prophet is very clear: to love Ali is to love God, and to hate him is to hate God.²⁷ To die for the love of Ali is martyrdom. Ali then becomes

the redeemer and the hope of salvation of Shiites.²⁸ For all intents and purposes, the relationship of Ali to God is similar to that of Jesus to God. In fact, some Shiites equate Ali with Jesus, while others exalt him above Jesus.

In his commentary on the Quran, Ali Ibn Ibrahim (al-Qummi, d. 920) relates the following anecdote, on the authority of Salman al-Farisi, a companion of the Prophet. One day, while the Prophet was sitting with some of his companions, he said to them that someone like Jesus, the son of Mary, would enter upon them immediately. Behold, Ali Ibn Abi Talib entered the room. Some of those present were not pleased with what the Prophet had said. One of them retorted, "Is not Muhammad well pleased with us, that he honored Ali more than us and likened him unto Jesus, the son of Mary? By God, the idols which we worshipped in the Jahiliyya [pre-Islamic] period are much better than he [Ali]."²⁹

The exaltation of Ali above Jesus is demonstrated by the following verse:

If it is said that Christ is God
And Muhammad is the beginning and the end,
It should also be said that our Lord Ali,
Who is the spirit of Muhammad,
Is more worthy of this attribute [divinity]
Than Christ or anyone else.³⁰

Shiite literature is replete with traditions showing the "oneness" of the Imams with the Prophet of Islam, and their participation in all the divine privileges God has conferred upon him. One of these traditions is related by Muhammad's companion, Abu Hurayra, who heard him say to Ali, "I, you, Fatima, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn were created of the same clay, and our partisans [the Shiites] were created from the remainder of that clay."³¹ A different tradition is related by another companion of the Prophet, who heard him say, "I am a tree whose main branch is Fatima, whose pollen is Ali, whose fruit is al-Hasan and al-Husayn, and whose leaves are the partisans [Shiites] and lovers of my community."³²

The members of Ahl al-Bayt (the family of the Prophet) occupy a unique position in Shiite dogma. They are believed to be preexistent and sinless, and to serve as intercessors on behalf of those Shiite believers who seek their divine help. They are also believed to be miracle workers, and, of all the community of Muslims, the only ones highly favored by God. According to a commentary on the Quran ascribed to the eleventh Imam, al-Hasan al-Askari, God, when He created Adam, established

Muhammad, Fatima, Ali, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn as celestial beings in Adam's loins. The Imam al-Askari goes on to say that God then ordered the angels to prostrate themselves before Adam, whom He had exalted above all His creation, because Adam was the dwelling of these celestial beings. The angels obeyed the order of God and prostrated themselves before Adam, all except Iblis (Satan), who refused to obey God's order. Afterwards, God told Adam to raise his eyes to the summit of His throne. Adam did so and saw the *ashbah* (images or likenesses) of the celestial beings who were established in his loins inscribed on the throne of God, as the face of a man appears on the surface of a clear and shining mirror. Adam exclaimed, "What are these beings?" God answered, "They are the images of Muhammad and his family—the best of my creation."³³

According to Ignaz Goldziher, the inscription of images on the throne of God is a Jewish concept found in the Haggadah and based on the prophecy of Ezekiel. In Ezekiel 1:26, we find a vivid description of a heavenly chariot which Ezekiel saw in a dream while he was captive near the river Khabur in northern Mesopotamia [present-day Iraq]. Ezekiel states that he saw "the likeness of a throne, and upon it was the likeness as the appearance of a man." Although Ezekiel [1:28] clearly states that "this was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord," the Jewish Haggadah holds that this "appearance of man" was that of Jacob, the father of the Twelve Tribes of Israel.³⁴

From this episode related by Goldziher, we can see how striking the analogy is between the Jewish and Shiite concepts of images. Both ascribe to their respective progenitors a divine preexistence proven by the inscription of their "images" on the very throne of God.³⁵ In Shiite belief it should be noted, however, that only the "images" of the five who constitute the immediate family of the Prophet were inscribed on the throne of God. Indeed, a sect of Ghulat Shiites called the Mukhammisa (Fivers) emphasized, as their name indicates, the concept of images. These Fivers believed that God Himself was Muhammad and that He appeared in five different images—as Muhammad, Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn.³⁶

The Ghulat Shiites deify the members of the family of the Prophet and believe them to be equally incarnated. Of these Ghulat, the followers of al-Shurayi maintain that Muhammad, Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn are gods because God was incarnated in every one of them. In order to demonstrate the truth of the incarnation of these five and their excellence over mankind, the followers of al-Shurayi believe that these five have five *addad* (adversaries directly opposite to the five). These

opposite adversaries are the caliphs Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Muawiya, and the army commander Amr Ibn al-As, a staunch supporter of Muawiya in his struggle for the caliphate with Ali and his son, al-Hasan.³⁷ The significance of posing these latter five as adversary opposites of the five members of the family of the Prophet is that they were willfully instrumental in usurping the right of the imamate (leadership of the Muslim community) from Ali and his sons, whom Shiites believe are the only legitimate khulafa (caliphs, or successors to the Prophet) because the Prophet appointed Ali as his successor in leading the Muslim community. Those Shiites believe that whoever held the office of the imamate before and after Ali were usurpers of that divine office. Thus the family of the Prophet has been apotheosized to show that although Ali's descendants lost their bid for the caliphate, they gained immortality, becoming the divine protagonists of the Muslim community.

Some Ghulat consider Fatima as equal with the male members of the family of the Prophet. In his *Kitab al-Zina*, Abu Hatim Ahmad Ibn Hamdan al-Razi [d. 934], an Ismaili (Fatimi) propagandist at Daylam; states that some Ghulat claimed that Fatima was not a woman, and that they abhorred addressing her by the feminine name Fatima. Instead they called her Fatim, as the translation of following verse shows:

According to my doctrinal belief I have loved Five after God—
A Prophet [Muhammad], his two grandsons, A Shaykh [Ali]
And Fatim [Fatima].³⁸

The implication in this verse is that, since all the other members of the family of the Prophet are male, Fatima must be considered "not female" in order to become homologous with the rest, and to be considered a celestial being and part of the economy of God's providence.

The devotion of Shiites to the members of the family of the Prophet is universal and dates back to an early period of the Islamic community. To show their devotion to Fatima, a group of Shiites who succeeded in establishing a state in Egypt in the tenth century called their state the Fatimi state. Another Shiite dynasty was established in the same century in Baghdad by the Buwayhis, who controlled the Abbasid state and Abbasid caliphs until the year 1055. It is reported that in 341/952, in the time of Muizz al-Dawla Ibn Buwayh (a Shiite), a young man and a woman in Baghdad were caught and beaten, the young man because he believed that the spirit of Ali dwelt in him, the woman because she believed that the spirit of Fatima dwelt in her. When they were taken to Muizz al-Dawla, however, he ordered their release because they appealed

to Ahl al-Bayt (the family of the Prophet) for intercession on their behalf.³⁹ Some Shiites liken Fatima to the Virgin Mary and, in fact, call her the Virgin Fatima and Maryam al-Kubra (great Mary). They refer to a tradition in which the Prophet, when asked, "What is a virgin?" answered, "A virgin is one who is not subject to menstruation because menstruation cannot happen to the daughters of prophets."⁴⁰ What Muhammad meant in this context was that his daughter, Fatima, unlike other women, was free from menstrual periods because she was his daughter.

In Iran the Ghulat as well as Sufis believe that the five members of the family of the Prophet are the cause of the universe, the mystery of existence and the source of subsistence, help, and blessing. They consider an oath taken by "the truth of the Five members of Ahl al-Aba" to be very binding.⁴¹ Several references to Ahl al-Aba or Ahl al-Kisa can be found in Bektashi hymns especially among those recited by religious pirs during the ceremony of the initiation of a novice into the Bektashi order. In these hymns, the religious leader invokes the divine help of the family of the Mantle and seeks their intercession. Birge, who has translated hymns containing supplication for the divine intercession of the family of the Prophet, does not seem to identify the family with the five. However, in a footnote to a hymn which refers to the five, he states that "the Five" may denote the family of the Prophet. It certainly does.⁴²

Summing up, the devotion of the Shiites to the Ahl al-Aba, or Ahl al-Kisa (family of the Prophet or family of the Mantle), is not merely part of the Shiite belief, but is, in fact central to their theological system. It may also have been a part of the ritual of some dervish orders. The seventeenth century traveler Evliya Efendi relates that he saw in Elbasan, in Albania, a dervish lodge still following the order of Ahl al-Aba.⁴³

Religious Hierarchy

AMONG THE BEKTASHIS, Kizilbash, and Shabak, the number seven appears to represent the seven degrees of their spiritual hierarchy, corresponding to the stages of the mystical order. According to al-Sarraf, the hierarchy consists of seven degrees; according to al-Ghulami, it has only five degrees. It is most likely that the Shabak hierarchy originally had seven degrees, but that through the years distinctions were blurred and the structure was altered.

The seven degrees of the Shabak's religious hierarchy, from the lowest to the highest are described below.

1. The *muntasib* or *talib* (seeker, or neophyte) is attracted by the sufistic or mystical aspect of the order, but has not taken a definite step to join it. In Bektashism, the talib is a person not committed to the order, usually called an *ashiq* (passionate lover) of Sufi life. He is in love with the order, fascinated by its rules and by the conduct of its members, but he is not ready to join the order;

2. The *murid* (willing one) has shown willingness to join the order, but is still a neophyte. He receives instruction from a *murshid* (spiritual guide), who trains him in the ascetic life of the order and its requirements of solitude, prayer, fasting, and control of both physical and mental desires. In Bektashism, a person at the second degree is called a *muhib*, which, like *ashiq*, means passionate lover. Technically, the muhib is one who has made up his mind to take the vows of the order and has been initiated into the order. The initiation is a ceremony open to both sexes in which the *muhib* makes an *iqrar* (statement or profession of his faith);

3. The *dervish* has completed the period of trial at the convent and has obtained a high degree of piety and spiritual knowledge. The third degree is the same in Bektashism;

4. The Pir, or Murshid (spiritual guide), is usually a shaykh (elder), whose duty is to administer the convent or lodge. He has the highest spiritual authority in religious matters. He heads and conducts circles or *dhikr* (constant praise of God and invocation of His name), usually held on Friday evenings. He organizes the mourning ceremony commemorating the martyred Imam al-Husayn and the other Imams, held during Ashura (the first ten days of the month of Muharram in the Islamic calendar). He also receives confessions from the dervishes and other members of the community and grants them absolution. The degree is the same in Bektashism, except that the person who holds it is called the *baba* (equivalent to papa). It is his duty to exercise religious authority over the community, as the pir does among the Shabak;

5. The *qalandar* is not bound by religious duties or the legal restrictions of the Sharia (Islamic law). Because of his profound piety, purity, selflessness, ascetic life, and avoidance of the defilement brought about by worldly pleasures, and most of all because of his unceasing search for truth, the qalandar is considered by the community an exemplar of sanctity and perfection, a man distinguished not by the performance of supererogatory religious duties and rituals, but by the attainment of heavenly favors, especially the state of spiritual ecstasy and illumination;

6. *Al-Rind* is characterized by utmost purity of heart and a higher attainment of the divine mysteries. Like the qalandar, he is not bound by religious rules and traditions;

7. The *qutb* (pole, axis), who the highest spiritual authority, and is also called *pir piran* (exalted). He is considered the Star of Wisdom and the embodiment of the divine mysteries and teachings of the order. From him the dervishes receive blessing and guidance. The Shabak believe that he has *karamat* (miraculous gifts), and that he alone has the power to unravel the divine mysteries. He is not only the way which leads to the truth, he is the truth.¹

This belief that the *qutb* is the truth is manifested in the following verse:

My shaykh, my way, my director and my guide,
Through you I have attained to the Truth,
O Truth who hast shown me the Truth.²

In Bektashism, the *qutb* is referred to as the *murshid*. He is the only member of the hierarchy who knows the mysteries of the order, and without his help no member of the order can attain the truth. In this capacity, the *Murshid* becomes the only way that leads to God, the ultimate reality:

He who has not attained the Murshid cannot know God;
The Heart, the Soul of the Murshid derive from the
breath of the Ultimate Reality.³

Al-Ghulami lists only five degrees in the Shabak's hierarchy. At the top is the *gha*, who is usually a secular leader. The term *gha* is of Kurdish origin and shows the Kurdish influence on the Shabak, which came from the social contact between the two peoples. Below him are the *pir* (spiritual guide), the *rahbar* (guide), the *murid* (neophyte), and the *mulla*, who is in charge of teaching the Quran, but has no specific religious authority. Al-Ghulami states that the Shabak previously had the rank of *qalandar*, which carried great spiritual power, but that this rank no longer exists.⁴

The spiritual leader enjoys a prominent position among the Bektashis, the Kizilbash, and the Shabak, who treat him with the utmost respect and reverence and seek his blessing. They kiss his hand, in conformity with a Middle Eastern custom practiced by both Muslims and Christians toward their religious leaders. They also kiss him on the mouth after he has had a meal, a custom not known among other peoples, such as the Sunnite Muslims and Christians.⁵ Because they believe that they are Alawi—the religious leaders of the Sayyids (descendants of the Imam Ali)—the religious leaders of the Shabak consider themselves a separate caste, and avoid intermarriage with the laity. Barnum writes that the "priesthood" among the Kizilbash follows a distinct line of succession, as in the Levitical office of old, and these religious teachers are highly respected by the Kizilbash Kurds.⁶ G. E. White writes that the *dedes* who are the priests of the Alawi Turks (Bektashis and Kizilbash) are held in high esteem. They visit their parishes, holding meetings usually at night, and are guarded by utmost secrecy when the ceremony of a sacramental meal is celebrated. The *dedes* rule their congregations with an iron hand, and disobedient members are disciplined, sometimes by excommunication. In this extreme case, the offender becomes a social outcast, and no member of his community will have anything to do with him.⁷

Grenard writes that the Kizilbash "priests," called *dede*, are considered intermediaries between God and man, while the "bishops" or *pirs* are invested with powers of a divine nature. These *pirs* are believed to be descendants of Ali, and in this capacity, are the trustees of God.⁸ We shall see in the following chapters that the Ahl-i Haqq, or Ali Ilahis, consider their sayyids to be divine, and that the Nusayris hold their sayyids in high esteem, believing that they have the power to foretell the future.

For their livelihood, the religious leaders of the sects depend mostly on donations and alms received from their parishioners during certain seasons of the year.⁹ In order to facilitate the collection of donations, the religious leaders usually divide the village congregations among themselves; no religious leader has the right to collect alms or donations from the congregation of a village not assigned to him.¹⁰ There is a similar practice among the Alawis of eastern Turkey, especially in the village of Çiplaklar, where the villagers collect donations for the pir from every household, and the donated amounts are usually kept secret.¹¹

The Twelve Imams

THE NUMBER TWELVE, which occurs often in the prayers and rituals of the contemporary Ghulat (especially the Bektashis, the Kizilbash, and the Shabak), signifies the twelve Imams. They are (1) Amir al-Muminin (Commander of the Faithful) Ali Ibn Abi Talib, the blood cousin of Muhammad and his son-in-law, assassinated in 661; (2) Ali's son, al-Hasan, who abdicated his right to the caliphate to the Umayyad Muawiya Ibn Abi Sufyan. Shiites maintain that al-Hasan was cheated and coerced by Muawiya into relinquishing his right to the caliphate. He was poisoned in 670 by a member of his household at the instigation of Muawiya; (3) Ali's second son, al-Husayn, known as Sayyid al-Shuhada (the lord of martyrs), murdered at Karbala, Iraq, along with seventy-two of his followers on 10 October 680; (4) Ali Ibn al-Husayn, known as Zayn al-Abidin (the ornament of pious men) and al-Sajjad (the worshipful), poisoned in 713 by al-Walid Ibn Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwan; (5) Muhammad Ibn Ali, known as al-Baqir (the investigator) because of his profound knowledge of the religious sciences of his time, poisoned in 732 by Ibrahim Ibn al-Walid Ibn Abd al-Allah, the nephew of the Umayyad Caliph Hisham; (6) Jafar al-Sadiq, considered outstanding in his knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence, and said to have been poisoned by the Abbasid Caliph al-Mansur in 765; (7) Musa al-Kazim (the patient), who is reported to have been poisoned while imprisoned by the Abbasid Caliph Harun al-Rashid; (8) Ali al-Rida, the son-in-law of the Abbasid Caliph al-Mamun (d. 833), who had al-Rida poisoned in 818; (9) Muhammad Ibn Ali, known as al-Taqi (the pious one) and al-Jawad (the benevolent), poisoned by his wife, Umm al-Fadl (daughter of the Abbasid Caliph al-Mamun), at the instigation of the Abbasid Caliph al-

Mutasim in 835; (10) Ali Ibn Muhammad, known as al-Hadi (guide to the right path) and al-Naqi (the pure), poisoned in 868 by the Abbasid Caliph al-Mutazz; (11) al-Hasan Ibn Ali, known as al-Askari because he lived in the Askar district of Samarra, Iraq, poisoned in 873, at the age of twenty-seven or twenty-eight, at the instigation of the Abbasid Caliph al-Mutamid; and (12) Muhammad al-Hasan, commonly known as al-Mahdi (the guided one). Shiites believe that in 874, when al-Mahdi was five years old, he miraculously disappeared from the cellar of his home in the city of Samarra in what is now Iraq. Shiites believe al-Mahdi, like the Messiah, is still living and will continue to live, though in disguise, until the end of time. They believe he communicates with people incognito, walking among the multitudes of pilgrims who flock to Mecca every year. He shall appear at the end of time as the the Guided One and, together with Jesus Christ, shall fill the earth with the knowledge of God and justice, even as it has been filled with iniquity and idolatry. Therefore, Shiites call this twelfth Imam "Sahib al-Zaman" (master of the age and time); "al-Hujja" (the proof of God to mankind); "Sahib-al-Sayf" (lord of the sword); "al-Qaim bi al-Haqq" (upholder of the Truth); "al-Qaim bial-Amr" (upholder of the divine Authority, that is, the office of the imamate; and "al-Muntazar" (the awaited one).¹ How serious Shiites are about the advent of the Mahdi is shown by the fact that the Safawi shahs of Iran, who styled themselves the "Slaves of the Master of the Age," always kept two horses ready saddled and groomed in their royal stables, one for the Mahdi and the other for Jesus Christ, who it is believed will accompany him when he comes again.²

Shiite writers see a strong similarity between the Mahdi and Jesus Christ, especially since the mother of the Mahdi was a Christian bondswoman, called Narjis. Abu Jafar Muhammad Ibn al-Hasan al-Tusi, known as Shaykh al-Taifa, emphasizes the connection between the Mahdi and Jesus, noting that the Mahdi's mother was not only a Christian, but a descendant of kings and of the Hawaris (apostles of Jesus).³ Al-Tusi does not name the kings and apostles to whom Narjis was related, but a Nusayri writer, Yusuf Ibn al-Ajuz al-Nashshabi, states that her father was a Byzantine emperor, and her mother a descendant of the Apostle Simon Cephas (St. Peter).⁴

According to Shiite tradition, the return of the Mahdi was foretold by the Prophet Muhammad. The Shiite writer al-Shaykh al-Mufid relates a tradition in which the Prophet is reported to have said, "The days and nights will never end until God sends a man from my House, whose name will be the same as mine. He will fill the earth with Justice, as it was filled with oppression and tyranny."⁵

Another Shiite writer, Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi, relates another tradition, in which Muhammad says, "I am the Prophet and Ali is my heir, and from us will descend the Mahdi, the Shah of the Imams, who will vanquish all other religions and take vengeance on the wicked. He will be the Elect and Chosen One of God and the heir to all divine knowledge."⁶

The Shiites believe in the Imams and the Imamate is central to their religious doctrine. It is the Imamate, more than any other Islamic concept or institution, that separates them from the Sunnites. According to al-Shahrastani, swords have never been so viciously used over any religious matter as over the Imamate.⁷ It is a concept on which no Shiite will compromise. What, then, is this Imamate, and why is it so important to the Shiites? Literally, the Imamate means leadership of Muslim worshippers in prayer. Whoever leads a group of Muslims in prayer, regardless of his social status, is called Imam (leader). In this sense, all Muslims could become Imams. But in a more fundamental sense, the Imamate means leadership of the Muslim umma (community). In his lifetime, the Prophet Muhammad was the Imam par excellence, or leader of the Muslim community, because he was the messenger of God and His Prophet. The Shiites look upon the leadership of the community by the Prophet as an integral part of his religious message. Thus, the Imamate is not a temporal office, but a religious one. For this reason the Shiites consider the Imamate as one of the *arkan* (pillars and religious duties of Islam).⁸

As a religious office, the Imamate could be transmitted by the Prophet to only one person, the person he considered fit to lead the community of Islam after his death. But did the Prophet designate anyone as his successor, the Imam (leader) of the Muslim community? This is the vital question that has divided the body of Islam into Shiites and Sunnites (commonly called orthodox Muslims by Western scholars) to this day.

When the Prophet died in A.D. 632, a controversy arose among his followers over who should succeed him. After some debate, the Muslim community chose an old man, Abu Bakr, a companion of the Prophet and his father-in-law, to lead the community; he was called the khalifa, or successor, to the Prophet of Allah.⁹ Thus began the office of the khilafa (caliphate) and the succession of temporal heads of the Muslim community.

Another group, not satisfied with the election of Abu Bakr, held the opinion that Ali, the Prophet's blood cousin and son-in-law, should have been chosen as his successor. This group came to be known as shia or

Shiites, that is, supporters of Ali as the worthiest person to succeed the Prophet as Imam of the Muslim community.¹⁰ To Shiites, Shiism was not an accidental phenomenon brought about by the fact that the Prophet died without naming a successor, but a spiritual phenomenon first manifesting itself during the Prophet's lifetime, at the moment that Ali professed his belief in Islam.

Traditions do exist indicating that there were men during the Prophet's lifetime known as the companions and supporters (Shia) of Ali. According to one such tradition, Muhammad said, "Ali! you and your companions will be in paradise."¹¹ Another tradition has several variations: "By Allah, in whose hand is my soul, this [Ali] and his shia [supporters] are the victorious ones on the Day of Resurrection;" "You [Ali] and your shia will be most blessed on the Day of Resurrection," and "You [Ali] and your shia will approach God [on the Day of Resurrection] well pleased and delighted."¹²

A modern Shiite, Shaykh Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr (d. 1980), argues that it is incredible that the Prophet Muhammad, after leading the greatest movement in history, a movement altering the values and way of life of pre-Islamic society, and transforming the heathen Arabs into a community of God, and causing them to carry the torch of their new Islamic faith to other peoples throughout the world, would leave his community without a guide or a leader. Al-Sadr concludes that, of all Muslims, Ali was the only one groomed by the Prophet to assume the leadership of the new community of Islam after him. He reasons that Ali was the first Muslim and the first *mujahid* (combatant) for the cause of Islam, and that he was raised and nurtured by the Prophet, who spent so much time teaching Ali the mysteries of the divine message, that finally the career, knowledge, and personality of Ali could no longer be separated from those of the Prophet. Al-Sadr then relates many Islamic traditions showing Ali's lofty position in the Muslim community and the unique relationship with the Prophet that qualified him to be Muhammad's heir apparent.¹³

From the foregoing evidence we may conclude that Shiism (the support of Ali) existed in the lifetime of the Prophet as a nascent movement, whose proponents were honest Muslims convinced that Ali was the spiritual heir of the Prophet and the leader of the Muslim community: the only member of Ahl al-Bayt (the family of the Prophet) who possessed spiritual traits distinguishing him from all other Muslims.¹⁴

Shiites maintain that the Imams alone, as members of the family of the Prophet, are the Prophet's rightful heirs according to God's promise to Ishmael, Abraham's son by his bondswoman Hagar, considered to be

the primogenitor of the Arabs. This promise, they hold, was given by God in Genesis 17:20: "And as for Ishmael I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation." The Shiites believe that the twelve princes of this verse are the twelve Imams, who alone compose the family of the Prophet, and the "great nation" is the body of Shiites who follow these Imams.¹⁵ In this sense, the Imams are the only rightful caliphs.

In maintaining their central belief that Ali, was the only Muslim worthy to be the Prophet's successor and the Imam (leader) of the Muslim community, the Shiites do not cite Ali's remarkable traits, magnificent conduct, or even the high esteem in which the Prophet held him but instead upheld his right to the imamate solely on the grounds that the Prophet specifically designated Ali as his successor and vicegerent. Thus all Shiites reject the principle of election of the Imam by the people and, except for the Zaydis (a group of Shiites presently found in Yemen), accept as the Prophet's successor no other Imam or Caliph but Ali.¹⁶

The earliest Shiite writers, Ali Ibn Ibrahim (d. 920), Abu Hatim al-Razi (d. 934), and al-Kulayni, related many traditions concerning the Prophet's designation of Ali as vicegerent. One of the most common of these traditions is that of Ghadir Khumm (the Khumm Pond), near Medina. Muhammad, stopping there with his companions, gave a speech and then asked, "Who is the most worthy to be your Wali [Master]?" The companions answered, "Allah and his Prophet," The Prophet then called Ali to him and said three times, "Hence, he who recognizes me as his Master, for him, too, Ali is Master. May Allah love those who love him and be the enemy of those who hate him."¹⁷

Al-Shahrastani (d. 1153) states that the Shiites who believe in the twelve Imams interpret this tradition as an explicit designation by the Prophet of Ali as mawla (master). Moreover, these Shiites maintain that the companions of the Prophet interpreted this tradition in the same way. Umar Ibn al-Khattab (d. 644), for example, is held to have told Ali, "Blessed are you, Ali, because you have become the Mawla of every believing Muslim man and woman."¹⁸

According to another tradition, related by Yahya Ibn al-Husayn (d. 971) (a descendant of Ali), the Prophet called Ali his khalifa. In the year 630, the Prophet led an expedition against Tabuk, near the Syrian border. Before leaving Medina, he appointed Ali as governor of that city. Some people of Medina were displeased with Ali's appointment as their governor. When Ali saw their dissatisfaction, he followed Muhammad to Tabuk to explain the situation and to excuse himself from returning to

Medina. But the Prophet said to him, "Brother, return to your post, because Medina will never be ruled better than by you." The Prophet also said, "You are my *khalifa* among my own family in the city to which I emigrated and among my own people. Are not you satisfied that you are in the same position to me as Aaron was to Moses, except that there will be no prophet after me?"¹⁹

Another version of this tradition is set at the storming of the Jewish fortress of Khaybar, during which Ali, so it is said, lifted the gate of the fortress, which was like a millstone, with his left hand and used it as a shield before hurling it to the ground. When the Prophet saw Ali's heroic deed, he said to him, "Were it not for the fact that I fear some sects of my community will say of you what the Christians said of Jesus [that is, that Jesus was divine and the Son of God], I would say something about you, so that you would pass no company that would not gather the dust on which you trod and use the water left over from your ablutions for their healing. But it is sufficient for you to be to me as Aaron was to Moses, except that there will be no prophet after me. You will be my heir and the first of my followers to enter the garden [paradise]. Your warfares will be my warfares, and your sons are my sons. The truth is with your flesh and blood as it has mingled with my own flesh and blood." Upon hearing these words, Ali fell worshipfully to the ground and said, "Praise be to Allah, who has favored me with the faith of Islam, taught me the Quran, and endeared me to the most exalted being, the Seal of the Prophets." The Prophet turned to Ali and said, "If it were not for you, no one would know the believers after I have departed this life."²⁰

There is also evidence that the Prophet called Ali his *wazir* (helper, supporter, or deputy). In one of his speeches, Ali relates his close association with the Prophet and tells how he and the Prophet's wife Khadija were the first Muslims to witness God's revelation to Muhammad and choice of him as Prophet to deliver His message, the Quran. Ali relates that when God revealed the Quran to Muhammad, he heard Satan emit a terrible cry. He asked the Prophet the reason for Satan's outcry, and Muhammad answered that it was because of Satan's despair over his fallen state. Muhammad went on to say to Ali, "You can hear what I hear and see what I see, but you are not a Prophet; you are a *wazir* and you are well off."²¹ It is this and similar pronouncements by the Prophet, like the one made at Ghadir Khumm, that confirm the Shiites' belief that the Prophet appointed Ali as his vicegerent.

It is also in this sense that the Shiites recognize Ali and his descendants, the twelve Imams, as the only rightful successors and heirs of the Prophet and as the only Muslims possessing the spiritual authority to

lead the Muslim community. To the Shiites, the Imams are not mere caliphs but, like the Prophet, are divinely inspired; to recognize them is to recognize God. As belief in God is considered one of the pillars of Islam, so is recognizing the Imam, submitting to his will, and obeying his commands. According to a tradition attributed to the fifth Imam, al-Baqir, the *walaya* (that is, love of and allegiance to the Imams as possessors of divine authority) is the greatest of the pillars of Islam and leads to the rest of the pillars.²² Thus, to the Shiites, the *imamate* becomes the essence of Islam. Or, as al-Baqir's son, the Imam Jafar al-Sadiq, is reported to have said, "The obedience of Ali is the last religious duty of Islam, by which God completed His grace and perfected Islam."²³ The Shiite writer Ibn Shahr Ashub (d. 1192) asserts that Ali is not only al-Sirat al-Mastaqim (the straight path), al-Urwa al-Wuthqa (the insoluble bond), Nur Allah al-Hadi (the guiding light of God), but also al-Imam wa al-Islam wa al-Sunna wa al-Salam (the very faith of Islam, the tradition of the Prophet, and peace). Ashub also affirms the importance of the *imamate* as the divine office and prerogatives of Ali and his infallible descendants, the Imams.²⁴

So central is the position of the Imam to the Shiite doctrinal system that any member of the Shiite community who does not know or recognize the Imam in his lifetime is regarded as having died in ignorance or unbelief; that is, he perishes. All Shiites, except the Zaydis, attribute *isma* (infallibility and sinlessness) to the Imams and consider them to be the embodiments of faith and religious precepts and the possessors of divine knowledge, attributes placing them above ordinary people.²⁵

In short, the Shiites consider the Imams the rulers of the Muslim community par excellence, by God's providence and dispensation. They believe that the twelfth Imam, the Mahdi, has continued since his disappearance to rule the world in his hidden state through the Imams of the Shiite community in every age. These Imams are *mujtahids*, men well-versed in the knowledge of the Sharia (Islamic law), and have the spiritual prerogative to interpret this Sharia for the proper guidance of the Shiite community. These *mujtahids* are not mere legists, jurists, or religious pedants; they are the spokesmen of the hidden Imam, the Mahdi, and their interpretation of the Sharia is inspired by him. Because they are representatives of the Mahdi, and the embodiment of his divine authority, their interpretation of the Sharia becomes binding on the Shiite community. Thus, the Shiites of every generation have one Imam who holds the highest authority and rules the Shiite community on behalf of the Mahdi. This divine authority of the Imam is called *Wilayat al-Faqih*, and most Shiites accept the Ayatollah Khomeini as its present-day holder:

the Faqih (representative) who rules the Shiite community on behalf of the Mahdi. Recognizing him in this capacity is an acknowledgment of the divine authority of the Imams. Indeed, the concept of Wilayat al-Faqih is so essential to the present theocratic Shiite state in Iran that it has been incorporated into the first two articles of the constitution of the Islamic state of Iran.²⁶ The divine authority of Khomeini is also confirmed by the general prosecutor, Muhammad Gilani. Gilani, one of Iran's ayatollahs, hosts a television show; each time, he begins the show by praising God and his Prophet Muhammad, and then adds, "Peace be upon our leader and guide, the Mahdi and his representative and Wali al-Amr [ruler, or man in charge], the Imam, Khomeini."²⁷ At one time Khomeini called himself Sahib al-Zaman (master of the time), an epithet exclusively used by Ithnaashari Shiites for the twelfth Imam, the Mahdi. Indeed, even the call to prayer which constitutes the Islamic profession of faith, "I testify that there is no God but God and Muhammad is the apostle of God," was changed to suit Khomeini's concept of Wilayat al-Faqih. When the muezzins in Iran call the people to prayer they cry out, "Allah Akbar, Allah Akbar! Khomeini is Rahbar, Khomeini is Rahbar" (God is most great; God is most great! Khomeini is the religious guide; Khomeini is the religious guide), thus placing Khomeini before the testimony of faith that "There is no God but God and Muhammad is the apostle of God." Many religious men in Iran rejected the new formula of the call to prayer and were forced to pray at home because the religious authorities prevented them from praying at the mosques.²⁸

According to the Shiite writer Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi, most Shiite scholars agree that the Imams are free from all sin, venial or mortal, intentional or accidental, from the beginning to the end of their lives. Only a few scholars, like Ibn Babawayh and Muhammad Ibn al-Walid, have reservations about the sinlessness of the Imams. They maintain that the Imam is sinless only when he is holding the office of the imamate. When the Imam interprets principles of faith, these scholars believe, he can make no error.²⁹

Al-Kulayni states that the Imam is free from sin and faults; he is masum (infallible) and is immune from the commission of sin because God has chosen him as the progeny of the prophets: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, and Muhammad.³⁰ To al-Shaykh al-Mufid, the infallibility of the Imams is the highest degree of *kamal* (perfection), since the Imams occupy the same spiritual position as the prophets in executing judgments and legal punishment, preserving laws, and disciplining the people. In performing their duties, the Imams, like the prophets, are not subject to forgetfulness or negligence in matters of religion or legal

judgments. The Imams are not only infallible but omniscient. Al-Mufid says that the Imams know the secrets of all arts and languages because God has perfected their intellects.³¹ We may then deduce that the Shiites' dogma of the sinlessness of the Imams derives from their belief in the sinlessness of the Prophets; since the Imams are the successors of the Prophets, they too are sinless. Dwight Donaldson, who has elaborated on the origin of the infallibility of the Imams, concluded that this "sinlessness of the Imams is a unique Shiite dogma, without a trace of Jewish or Christian influence."³²

We have seen in chapter 5 that the Shiites believe that their Imams transcend God's creation of the heavens and the earth. They were created from the divine light of God, and their names are inscribed on the throne of God. The Shiites interpret many passages in the Quran as showing the transcendentalism of the Imams.

In his commentary on the Quran, Ali Ibn Ibrahim relates that the fifth Imam, al-Baqir, interpreted Quran 14:24-25—"Seest thou not how God sets forth a parable? A goodly word like a goodly tree, whose roots are firmly fixed, and its branches reach to the heavens. It brings forth its fruit at all times by the leaves of its Lord"—to mean that the tree is the Prophet of Allah; its roots are firmly fixed in the Banu Hashim; its branches are Ali Ibn Abi Talib; its fruit is Fatima and the Imams (the descendants of Ali and Fatima); and its leaves are the Shiites, the partisans of Ali. Ibn Ibrahim interprets Quran 6:96—"It is He that has created for you the stars, so that they may guide you in darkness"—to mean that the stars are the members of the family of the Prophet. He further interprets Quran 95:1-3—"By the fig and the olive and the Mount of Sinai, and this City of Security"—to mean that the fig is the Prophet, the olive is Ali, Mount Sinai is al-Hasan and al-Husayn, and the City of Security represents the Imams.³³

In a similar vein, an interpretation of Quran 28:5—"It is our will to favor those who were oppressed in this earth and to make them Imams and heirs"—related by Abu Jafar al-Tusi and attributed by him to the Imam Ali, says that the heirs in this verse are the members of the family of the Prophet (the Imams), from whom shall come the Mahdi.³⁴

When Ali was asked about the meaning of Quran 33:23—"Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with God; of them some have died and some are still waiting, but they have not changed their determination in the least"—he answered, after asking God's forgiveness, that this revelation was intended for him, his uncle Hamza, and his cousins, Ubayda Ibn al-Harith and Abd al-Muttalib. He went on to say that he was still waiting, and that his beloved Abu al-

Qasim (an epithet of the Prophet Muhammad) had entrusted him with his covenant.³⁵

Shiites consider the Imams to be the "straight path" [Quran 1:6], the "insoluble bond," and the "pillars of Islam."³⁶ Moreover, according to the Imam Jafar al-Sadiq, the Imams are the "nation justly balanced" and "God's witness against mankind," as mentioned in Quran 2:132. Al-Sadiq says that even the births and deaths of the Imams transcend those of ordinary human beings, being more allegorical than real.³⁷

From this evidence we reach two significant conclusions. First, the Shiites believe that the transcendentalism of the Imams is ordained by God, as delineated in the Quran. This transcendentalism is manifested in the miraculous actions of the Imams, surpassing those of the Hebrew prophets. It is reported by the eleventh Imam, al-Hasan al-Askari, that Moses was unable to part the sea to allow the children of Israel to cross onto dry land until he shouted, "O Lord, for the sake of Muhammad and his exalted family, do Thou split the sea," and the sea was split.³⁸

A nineteenth-century Iranian writer, Nur Allah Khan, relates the following episode as further affirmation of the transcendentalism of the Imams. He states that the eighth Imam, al-Rida (whose shrine is in the city of Mashhad in Iran), was still living in his time and could respond to people's questions and supplications. He relates that Nasir al-Din, shah of Iran (reigned 1848-96), installed a telegraph line between the capital and Mashhad and sent the first message to the Imam al-Rida, who "graciously vouchsafed a reply."³⁹

The second conclusion we reach from the foregoing evidence is that the imamate is the core of the Shiites' religious doctrine, and that they regard it as more than a temporal political office. To the Shiites, it is a divine office ordained by God and ranking equally with the prophethood; its occupants, the Imams, although not prophets, are almost like prophets. They have the divine right to deliver the message of the Prophet Muhammad to mankind and to propagate his teachings because they are his rightful heirs. Briefly then, the imamate is a divine hereditary office which the Imams received from Muhammad, who, in turn, received it from the prophets of the Old Testament, who received it from God. This divine transmission of the imamate from God through His prophets to Muhammad, and from him to Ali, was not arbitrary, but was passed through a *wasiyya* (testamentary trust) from generation to generation until it reached Ali, the only Imam to whom Muhammad delivered this trust. Therefore, the Shiites accept Ali and his descendants as the legitimate Imams and consider such caliphs as Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman to be usurpers.⁴⁰

Extremist Shiites

Extremist Shiites believe in the twelve Imams and attribute to them infallibility and divine authority.⁴¹ They seek the Imams' intercession and divine help, which they believe ward off calamities. The Shabak and related sects in Iraq commemorate the Imams on certain days of the year by visiting shrines built in their names and offering sacrifices to them. They name their sons after the Imams, believing that a child named after a member of the family of the Prophet will bring wealth and blessings to their homes and protect them and their neighbors from misfortune. The names most frequently used are Ali, al-Hasan, al-Husayn, Jafar, Sadiq, Mahdi, Fatima, Zaynab, and Kulthum. Male children are never named after the first three caliphs, Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman, whom the Shiites loathe and curse. To show their disrespect, especially for the Caliph Umar, they distort his name to Amruk; they also distort the name of Aisha, one of the Prophet's wives, to Ashasha.⁴²

In this respect, the Shabak are no different from the other Shiites, moderate and extremist, especially the Kizilbash of the district of Dersim in Turkey, with whom they share a common religious heritage.⁴³ The Bektashis and the Kizilbash, along with the Shabak attribute divine dispensation to Ali and the rest of the Imams through the Mahdi, the last Imam. Birge reproduces a Bektashi hymn set to music by Baba Gunci, which has a parallel in the Shabak's literature. The Bektashi hymn says:

Muhammad Ali establishes this Way. This is the rite
of the Divine Reality for him who knows Reality.

Without saying yes, Deniers cannot enter it.
The Faithful enter. It is the place of the hero.

This is what Hasan and Husayn loved,
This is what Zayn al-Abidin saw.

This is what Imam Baqir showed,
This is the faith of Jafar al-Sadiq.

A King separated himself from Musa al-Kazim;
His last fruit was my Patron Saint Bektash.

It is he who guided Rum aright, that rose-faced moon.
He is the King of the Ayin-i Cem [religious assembly].

Imam Ali handed it to al-Taqi and al-Naqi;
 Ali al-Naqi made it known to al-Askari.

Muhammad al-Mahdi also attained this secret;
 This is the rotation of Muhammad Ali.⁴⁴

Here is a similar hymn chanted by the Shabak, praising and describing each of the Imams:

Muhammad is the remedy of the world's ailments;
 Ali is the example of mankind.
 Al-Hasan is the delight of the eye of the Prophet;
 So is al-Husayn, who is the purity of souls.
 He who does not love Zayn al-Abidin, may calamity never leave
 him.
 The Baqir is the light of God manifested to Jafar.
 As for the Imam Musa al-Kazim, he is the descendant of Haydar [a
 name for Ali]

Al-Rida is the Beloved Wali [saint] in his own right.
 Al-Taqi and al-Naqi are rebels.
 The soil trodden by the feet of Hasan al-Askari is kuhl [pulverized
 antimony] for my eyes.
 As for the disappearing Imam al-Mahdi, he will reappear one day
 holding in his hand the chosen banner [of the Prophet
 Muhammad].⁴⁵

The Portrayal of the Imams in the *Buyruk*

No source portrays the heavenly favor and the divine state of the Imams as vividly as the *Buyruk*, the holy book of the Shabak. According to the *Buyruk*, God created the whole universe for the sake of the Imams, and because of their transcendental origin, the manifestation of divine favor, they became the refuge of the weak and the oppressed. The *Buyruk* contains a tradition of the Prophet showing the sinlessness of the twelve Imams and their divine power of intercession for those who seek their help. This sinlessness, ordained by God, was transmitted by Him as a testamentary trust to Adam and the rest of the biblical patriarchs, and from them to Fatima, daughter of the Prophet, and from Fatima to the Imams.⁴⁶ It is significant that this line of divine transmission bypasses the

Prophet Muhammad and ends with his daughter Fatima, for she and her husband Ali are considered by Shiites to be the legitimate progenitors of the Imams. Indeed, this tradition is so important that we find it necessary to translate it in full:

It is reported that when the Chosen One of God, Adam (peace be upon him), was wandering through the garden of Paradise, he saw an emerald dome glittering with green light. The Huris [nymphs whom Muslim men believers will marry in paradise] and Ghilman [cupbearer] walked about and received light from the dome. Adam stopped at the dome, perplexed. He began walking around it trying to find its entrance, but could not. He asked the Lord God, saying, "Lord, by the sanctity of your power and might, would you not tell me the secret of this dome?" God answered, "Adam, this dome consists of several compartments. Each has its own private door, and on each door is inscribed the following, 'Read this inscription and ask for intercession, and the door will open for you to enter and see the light.'" When Adam heard God's words, he said, "Lord, no sooner said than done." Instantly, Adam saw before him a door. Written on its lintel was "I am Hamid, Majid, Ahmad, Mahmud, and we have sent you a mercy to the world." Another door was opened, on the lintel of which was this inscription: "I am the most sublime Ali. There is no majesty and power but in God. This is Ali, the Wali [vicar] of Allah." The door opened and Adam entered, only to see another door with the inscription, "Creator of heaven and earth, this is Fatima al-Zahra [Fatima, the Fair One]. May God be pleased with her." The door opened, and behind it was another, inscribed, "I am the best of the benevolents. Blessed are they, and blessed is their happy end." The door opened, and Adam saw still another door, inscribed, "I am the Prophetess of the shepherds. I am the best of the benevolent ones at this time." When Adam read the inscription, the door opened and he entered the dome.

Inside the dome Adam saw twelve corners and a lofty throne, on which sat a Sultana [queen], girded with a sash of light, and wearing a crown ornamented with gems, and earrings made of light. Adam drew near and greeted the queen, who rose and welcomed Adam with great reverence, saying, "Father, do you know me?" Adam remained silent because he was utterly bewildered. The queen spoke again, "Father, I am Fatima al-Zahra, daughter of your son the Prophet of the last days, Muhammad (peace be upon him), for whom God created the heavens, the earth, the celestial spheres, the throne, the pen and the tablets. The crown you see on my head belongs to the Seal of the Prophets, Muhammad, and the twelve windows in this dome overlooking the Garden of Eden and provid-

ing its light are my sons, the twelve Imams. The whole universe, space and place, indeed, all beings were created for them. My posterity shall not cease to exist, and my descendants shall be the intercessors of sinners until the Day of Judgment. Did not the Prophet say that Fatima al-Zahra is from his family? Therefore, Father Adam, my son the Mahdi, the last of the Imams, shall appear at the end of time to fill the earth with justice. And my sons, the Imams, shall answer the call of help from the oppressed and the wronged among their followers."

Adam was greatly astonished. To dispel his astonishment, the angel Gabriel instantly descended from heaven carrying a message of peace. He said, "Adam, if you want your body to be immaculate and pure white, fast on the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth days of every month, and your desire will be fulfilled." When Adam fasted on the thirteenth day of the month as the angel advised, he noticed that his legs had become white. When he fasted on the fourteenth day, he saw that his body, up to his chest, had become white. And when he fasted on the fifteenth day, he noticed that his entire body was white, and thus he became free from sin and human error, through the blessing of the names of the Imams. For to the Lord of Lords, these names are like red sulphur and the greatest antidotes. When Adam saw this miracle, he delivered it as a testamentary trust to his son, Seth, saying, "Son, do not be lax or remiss in honoring the sanctity of these names, because they are the means of intercession and fulfillment of desires." Seth accepted his father's instructions and, in turn, transmitted the trust to Idris [Enoch], who transmitted it to Noah, who transmitted it to Shem, who transmitted it to Salih, whose miracles overwhelmed the people of Thamud. Salih transmitted it to Abraham, and thereafter it was transmitted from one prophet to another, until the testamentary trust reached Abd al-Muttalib, who transmitted it to his son, Abd Allah. Abd Allah transmitted it to the great apostle [Muhammad], who transmitted it to Fatima al-Zahra. Then the light of the Imams shone like the sun and filled the whole world and will remain so until the Imam al-Qaim Muhammad al-Mahdi reappears and establishes the Muhammadan state."⁴⁷

Although the twelfth Imam, the Mahdi, had not yet reappeared or established a state, the implication of the foregoing tradition is unmistakable: the Imams are not mere religious leaders; through their descent from Ali, they occupy a prominent place in the divine scheme, which culminates in the belief that God created all things for their sake. In other words, the Imams were the reason for creation, and their transcendence was divinely transmitted through the prophets and pa-

triarchs to Muhammad, and to his descendants through his daughter Fatima. This is the epitome of the religious doctrine of the Twelver Shiites, so called because of their belief in the twelve Imams.

Like the Twelvers, the Shabak believe in the spiritual transcendence of these Imams, who stand above the prophets and patriarchs of old. According to the *Buyruk*, Joseph was rescued from his brothers, who had cast him into a well, through the blessing of the Imams.⁴⁸ However, nothing portrays the divine power and position of the Imams as vividly as the story of the legendary figure of al-Khadir, called by Middle Easterners, both Christians and Muslims, the Khidr, or Khidr Elias, the Prophet Elijah, mentioned in Quran 6:85. In Muslim tradition, he appears as a Muslim named Abu al-Abbas. The Khidr occupies a prominent place in Islamic hagiography as a raptured saint who was taken up to heaven, where, it is believed, he was permitted to drink from the fountain of life, thereby becoming immortal. The name al-Khadir (ever verdant) signifies his immortality.⁴⁹

The *Buyruk* tells us that when Elias was suffering the agony of death and the angel of death (called Azrail by Muslims) came to take his soul, Elias moaned and cried at the thought of departing life. God expostulated with him, saying, "Do you loathe so much departing this life and coming to me? I swear by my power and majesty that I will remove your name from the record of the Prophets." Elias answered, "Lord of the world! How can I, your servant, refuse to be with you when the names of the twelve Imams, the sons of your chosen Prophet, Muhammad, have become the means of intercession through which the Prophet Noah was saved from the great flood, Abraham was saved from fire, and even Jesus, whom you call your Spirit, was saved from crucifixion and was lifted up by you to heaven? I am your wretched servant, asking only for your charity and benevolence to extend my days."

God said, "Elias, I have offered you long life, long enough for you to witness the advent of my Messenger, Muhammad, and to behold with your own eyes the light of his twelve sons, the Imams. Also, I have allowed you to meet and serve them, and to proclaim the duty of loving them so that men may recognize their position and honor with me."⁵⁰

Al-Kulayni reports a tradition intending to show that the Khidr had prophesied the eternal existence of the Imams.⁵¹ From this tradition, we may deduce that the Shabak believe the twelve Imams to be the repositories of the spiritual authority that originated with Adam, the first created of mankind. In this regard they are no different from the Twelver Shiites, or indeed, from other extremist Shiite groups, such as the Bektashis. This belief is manifested in the Bektashis' tradition of the girdle.

According to this tradition, a girdle on which was inscribed the formula of the Shiites' profession of faith—"There is no God but Allah, Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah, and Ali is the Wali [vicar] of Allah"—was delivered by God to the Prophet Muhammad through the angel Gabriel. Adam was the first to wear this girdle, and after him it passed on in succession to sixteen of his descendants, including Seth, Noah Idris (Enoch), Shuayb (Jethro, the Priest of Median), Job, Joseph, Abraham, Hosha (Hosea), Yusha (Joshua), Jirjis (St. George), Jonah, Salih, Zechariah, Khidr Elias, Jesus, Muhammad, and Ali, and thence to the twelve Imams.⁵²

In the tradition of the Shabak, the function of Elias was to be a harbinger of the Imams, proclaiming to mankind the religious duty of loving and recognizing them. Perhaps this tradition had its origin in the gospel, where John the Baptist is considered to be Elijah (Matthew 11:10-15), who came to proclaim the coming of the Messiah.⁵³

The transmission of spiritual authority from God to the Imams through this process of succession, as described in the Shabak tradition, is affirmed by another extremist Shiite sect, the Ismailis. The Ismailis break down the process of succession into seven historical periods. The first period begins with Adam and ends with Noah at the time of the great flood. The second extends from the flood to Abraham, the third from Abraham to Moses, the fourth from Moses to Jesus, the fifth from Jesus to Muhammad, the sixth from the time of Muhammad to the appearance of the Mahdi and the end of time, and the seventh and final period, which will be ushered in by the appearance of the Mahdi, is yet to come.⁵⁴ One branch of the Ismailis, the followers of Aga Khan, divides the first six periods into sub-periods, including the present one, in which they believe the spiritual authority of the Imams is invested in their present Imam, Karim Ali Khan.⁵⁵

The belief of the contemporary Ghulat, and indeed of all Shiites, in the transcendence of the Imams has its parallels in Christianity, although it has not been established that the Shiites received this belief directly from Christianity. The Shiites consider the Imams to be as divine as Christians consider the members of the Trinity. They maintain that the Imams are an indispensable part of God's economy, and that the existence of the whole universe depends on them. Because the Imams are transcendent, the Shiites believe in the efficacy of their intercession. For this reason they devote a certain hour of the day to each of the Imams. The first hour on Sunday is usually devoted to prayer for Ali and Fatima; the second hour of each of the following days is devoted to al-Hasan, the third hour to al-Husayn, the fourth to Ali Zayn al-Abidin, the fifth to Muhammad al-Baqir, the sixth to Jafar al-Sadiq, the seventh to Musa al-

Kazim, the eighth to Ali al-Rida, the ninth to Muhammad al-Jawad, the tenth to Ali Hadi (al-Naqi), the eleventh to al-Hasan al-Askari, and the twelfth to Muhammad al-Mahdi.⁵⁶

It is interesting to note, in this context, that W. Ivanow detected a similarity between the theological ideas of the Adoptionists of early Christianity and the Ismaili concept of the imamate, which prompted him to state that "the Adoptionists' idea underlies this Imamate."⁵⁷ The Adoptionists were those early Christians who maintained that Jesus Christ was born a mere man, but received divinity at the time of his baptism and through his righteous life and deeds, which qualified him to become the Adopted Son of God.⁵⁸ Ivanow maintains that, according to Ismaili belief, each Imam is born an ordinary man, but the *nur* (light) of the imamate descends upon him (as the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus during baptism) the moment his father dies.⁵⁹

The Ismailis are, however, only a splinter group of the Shiites. To the majority of Shiites, both moderate and extremist, the Imams are divine figures who, together with the Prophet Muhammad, were affixed from eternity as shining substances in the loins of Adam when God created him. Therefore, this light was divinely inherent by the Imams, who became an incarnation of the divine Light of God before the creation of heaven and earth. It did not descend upon them individually.⁶⁰ Ivanow's analogy gains significance, however, when considered together with the similarity between the beliefs of the Kizilbash Kurds, who are related to the Shabak and live in the upper Euphrates Valley, and those of the Christian Armenians of that same region. This will be discussed later.

Before closing this chapter, we should mention the fact that the Shabak add the Prophet Muhammad and his daughter Fatima to the twelve Imams and call them *Chaharda Masum* (the infallible fourteen).⁶¹ The Bektashis have their own fourteen whom they call *Dort Masum Pak* (the pure and innocent fourteen). In the Bektashi tradition, these fourteen are not the Imams, however, but children who either died in infancy or were martyred with al-Husayn at Karbala. Bektashi sources quoted by Birge give the names of the fourteen innocents, the names of their fathers, the circumstances under which they were killed, who killed them, and where they are buried. However, these sources are not in conformity regarding this information. Although they died or were martyred in their youth, these fourteen Innocents are inseparable, in the Bektashi belief, from their parents, the Imams, who are the family of the Prophet. Together with the Prophet, the Imams, Fatima and even Khadija, the first wife of the Prophet, they are believed by the Bektashis to be epiphanies of God. This belief is also shared by such cognate groups as the Hurufis, the *Nimat Ilahis*, the Shabak, and others.⁶²

In modern times, the Shaykhis, an offshoot of the Twelver Shiites, maintain an extreme belief in the infallible fourteen. The Shaykhis derive their name from Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsai (d. 1830), who taught that the infallible fourteen are the cause of the universe, in whose hands are life and death and the livelihood of men. Al-Ahsai seems to justify this belief by explaining that God is too transcendent to operate the universe personally, and therefore deputized the infallible fourteen to operate the universe on His behalf.⁶³ Al-Ahsai further maintains that when a believer has achieved a high degree of purity and righteousness, he will be able to receive from these fourteen divine knowledge through sufic trances or dreams. He claims that he personally received divine knowledge from the fourteen, especially from the Imam al-Hasan. Al-Ahsai relates that once he saw al-Hasan in a dream and asked him some esoteric questions. Al-Hasan placed his mouth on that of al-Ahsai and emitted into it saliva which tasted sweet, like honey. Thus, al-Ahsai received divine knowledge from the Imam al-Hasan.⁶⁴

The Abdal

IN THE RITUALS of the Ghulat, and in fact of the majority of Shiites and Sufis, the number forty signifies the forty Abdal, or budala (substitutes), also known as wasilun (those who have attained divine knowledge).¹ The Bektashis call them Erenler, which in Turkish has the same meaning. The term *abdal* derives from the Arabic verb *badala* (to change or substitute), and in the language of the Sufis it means those who possess the power to change from physical to spiritual forms.² Ibn Arabi states that such a being is called a badal because when he departs his domicile, he leaves in his place a *badal* or, more correctly, *badil* (substitute) exactly like him. Ibn Arabi says that anyone having this power is a badal.³ Another writer, al-Jurjani (d. 1414), maintains that a badal is anyone who can substitute a replica so exactly like himself in form and action that no one can distinguish the replica from the real person.⁴

The concept of the abdal is supported by the tradition of the Prophet, although some Muslim writers, such as Abdal-Aziz Ibn Abd al-Salam (d. 660/1261), deny that such beings exist.⁵ The majority of Muslim writers, however, believe in the existence of the abdal and produce a host of sayings of the Prophet to show that such beings are part of Muslim tradition. Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (d. 911/1505) wrote a treatise, based on the traditions of the Prophet, to prove that the abdal exist, along with other ranks of the Sufic hierarchy. The abdal are usually males; only one tradition produced by al-Suyuti mentions women as abdal.⁶

To the Sufis, the abdal are Rijal al-Ghayb (men of the unseen spiritual realm): "Men of God," and "Hosts of God."⁷ They belong to the hosts that form the unseen spiritual kingdom and determine the dispensation of the physical world.⁸

At the top of this spiritual realm stands the qutb (pole), considered the embodiment of saintliness, who presides over the congregation of the awliya (saints). Because he is endowed with thaumaturgic gifts, the qutb is also called the ghawth (refuge of those who seek divine help).⁹ The qutb, whose domicile is in Mecca, enjoys a favorable position with God. Al-Jurjani states that the qutb is the patron of God in every age, to whom God has given the great talisman. He traverses the universe with his visible and invisible hosts as the spirit runs through the body. In his hand he carries the balance of divine bounty, knowledge, truth, and mystery.¹⁰ In this sense, Adam Mez (d. 1917) sees the qutb as the "heir of the gnostic Demiurges."¹¹ Ibn Arabi sees him as the Imam or the Logos.¹²

The qutb occupies the same position with the Sufis as the Imam does with the Shiites.¹³ Therefore, we can safely deduce that in the Shiite system, the Imam—and in an exclusively Shiite sense, the Imam Ali—is the Logos. Such an observation becomes more significant when we realize that the concept of the qutb has its origin in a public speech by the Imam Ali, known as "al-Khutba al-Shiqshiqiyya. In this speech, Ali refers to himself as the qutb in relation to the office of the caliphate or the imamate, claiming that he, rather more than the first caliph, Abu Bakr, was the rightful occupant of that office. He states, "By God, he [Abu Bakr] has secured it [the caliphate] while knowing that my position regarding it is like the position of Qutb al-Raha [the pivot of the water-mill], which allows the water to gush through it."¹⁴ Thus the Imam Ali becomes the exclusive head of the spiritual realm for both Shiites and Sufis. Except for the office of prophethood, which is exclusively Muhammad's, Ali's position is equivalent to, if not more exalted, than Muhammad's. He is the wali (vicar of God) par excellence, and head of the awliya, the congregation of saints.

Below the qutb in this spiritual realm or congregation of saints stand other dignitaries, of whom al-Hujwiri lists three hundred akhyar (good), forty abdal (substitutes), seven abrar (righteous), four awtad (supports) and three nujaba (overseers).¹⁵ This Sufi hierarchy also includes two Imams, one standing on the right hand and the other on the left hand of the qutb, acting as his lieutenants; twelve nuqaba, whose number corresponds to the twelve signs of the zodiac, each one having been assigned a sign of the zodiac with its mysteries; one hawari (disciple) who, in defending the religion of Islam, combines both the sword and religious authority; five hundred asib (troops); and forty rajabiyyun, whose name derives from the month of Rajab in the Islamic calendar and whose duty is to affirm the glory of God, which can be done only in the month of Rajab.¹⁶

In Shiite tradition, the forty abdal were Shiites, or supporters of Ali, in the time of the Caliph Umar Ibn al-Khattab. They stood with Ali as well as with the rest of the Imams after him. According to the Imam Jafar al-Sadiq, the forty abdal were the "messengers of the Imam;"²⁰ they constituted a significant part of the Shiite spiritual tradition. Jafar al-Sadiq describes them as those men who are near to God and through whose favor with God the prophets deliver their message; without them, the earth would overturn with its inhabitants. The abdal never leave the company of the Imam. They are the door leading to the Imam, through which God wards off calamities. Twenty-eight of these abdal are nujaba and twelve are nuqaba in every time and age. Their number does not increase or decrease, but stands always at forty. They possess divine knowledge, and, for their righteousness, God has relieved them of such human needs as eating and drinking. Al-Sadiq states further that "the Abdal are visible to me. I see them and dispatch them to the nations of the earth."¹⁷

These celestial beings roam the physical world each night in response to the prayers of people in distress. It is their duty to watch over every part of the earth to find those mortals needing help. Any region that they fail to visit becomes plagued with adversity. Each day, one of them, the awtad, reports to the qutb any region they failed to visit, and through the prayer of the qutb the adversities of that region are remedied.¹⁸ God gave the abdal in particular power to heal the sick, and to rush to the aid of the wronged and the oppressed. God operates the world through them and will end it through them. Their death will signify the coming of the hour of Resurrection.¹⁹

Muslim sources differ on the exact number of the abdal. The tradition of the Prophet reproduced by al-Suyuti indicates that the number of the abdal is twenty, forty, or sixty. According to Ibn Arabi, there are seven Abdal, through whom God sustains the seven regions of the earth.²⁰ But most traditions fix the number of the abdal at forty.²¹ As we have just seen, the Imam Jafar al-Sadiq states that there are forty abdal, a number that neither increases nor decreases. "Neither the five hundred nor the forty shall decrease, for whenever one of the five hundred dies, God replaces him with one of the forty."²² The primary home of the abdal is al-Sham (Syria), although some live in Iraq, some in Lebanon, some in Egypt, some in Antioch, some in al-Massisa, and others live throughout the rest of the world.²³

It is interesting to note that the number forty occurs constantly in both Christian and Muslim religious lore. F W. Hasluck has meticulously elaborated on this subject, and we need not repeat his work here, but of

all the examples he provides that of the forty martyrs of Sebaste (Sivas) comes closest to the forty abdal.²⁴ Both groups have prominent positions in the lore of the Middle East. The martyrs of Sebaste are still honored by Middle Eastern churches, especially those of Syria and Armenia, for dying for their faith. As new converts to Christianity, they defied Roman authority, and were thrown in the dead of winter into a lake near Sebaste. The forty abdal also continue to be honored for their spiritual mission, especially their aid to people in distress. However, the martyrs of Sebaste, although they died for their faith, were simply men, playing no role in the lives of other men on earth. The abdal are considered to be spiritual beings more prominent than the angels, part of God's economy and providence.²⁵

As for Syria being the home of the forty abdal, it is possible that a clandestine Shiite community existed in Syria not known to the Syrians. It is believed that despite the enmity of the Umayyad Caliph Muawiya Ibn Abi Sufyan toward the Imam Ali and his Shiite supporters in Syria (the center of his power), he was unable to prevent the abdal from giving providential assistance to these Shiites. The primary task of these abdal was to spread the Shiite message and encourage the oppressed Shiites in Syria to resist the tyranny of the Umayyad rule.²⁶ Supporting this Shiite opinion—that the purpose of the abdal presence in Syria was to fight the tyranny of the Umayyad caliphs—is the tradition related by Ibn Asakir (d. 1176), in which the Imam Ali says that the abdal will support the Mahdi of the Muhammadan community when he appears.²⁷

Indeed, Ali refused to curse the people of Syria who supported Muawiya against him because the abdal lived in that country. It is said that Ali told his supporters not to curse the people of Syria, but rather to curse their oppressors.²⁸ These oppressors were the Umayyads, whose leader, the Caliph Muawiya, was Ali's arch enemy. Muawiya outmaneuvered Ali at Siffin and later succeeded in convincing Ali's son, al-Hasan, to abdicate the caliphate in his favor. Tradition says that the abdal were among those oppressed by the Umayyads because of their role as the Shiite supporters of Ali.

According to Ibn Arabi, the abdal form a spiritual realm more eminent than the angelic host. He states that the world is divided into seven territories, each supremely ruled by one of the abdal, and presented through their governance by God. The abdal understand the mysteries of the movement of the planets and their arrival at the individual positions determined for them by God. So eminent is their spiritual station that to Ibn Arabi, their names signify the attributes of God.²⁹ The abdal are part of the divine Reality; through their intercession, God sends rain,

wards off plagues and floods, and gives the Muslims victory over their enemies.³⁰

Their eminence does not mean that the *abdal* are celestial beings like the angels, inhabiting only the unseen spiritual realm. The body of tradition on the *abdal* indicates that they are *siddiqun* (righteous) and *awliya* (saints): men who have attained the highest degree of spirituality, not only by observing religious rituals and ordinances such as fasting, prayers, or charity, but by practicing purity of heart, kindness, humility, and innocence, and by offering sound advice to other Muslims. They are the elite of the Muslim community who, through their exemplary spiritual behavior, have gained most favor with God, thereby preserving the world from utter destruction by Him. Only those who attain these qualities can be counted among the *abdal*, and because this attainment is so difficult, the Prophet once told Ali that among his community, the *abdal* "are dearer than red sulphur."³¹

The *abdal* are God's friends; God Himself said, "Behold! Verily, on the friends of God there is no fear, nor shall they grieve (Quran 10:62). God has chosen them to rule his kingdom, granting them the gift of performing miracles. "God," says al-Hujwiri, "has purified them from human passion, corruption, and preoccupation with worldly concerns, so much so that God alone fills their minds and souls. This has been the case from generation to generation since the world began, because God has exalted the Muslim community above all others and promised to preserve the religion of Muhammad. The proof of God's promise is manifested in the saints, who are the elect of God."³²

As the elite whom God has chosen through his foreknowledge, the *abdal* are the heirs of the prophets, from Adam to Muhammad. Some of them follow Noah, Moses, Abraham, or David, and others follow Jesus.³³ Such a concept is in perfect harmony with the Islamic belief that Muhammad is the seal of the Prophets and the perfecter of Islam, which is the religion of Abraham [Quran 2:132, 4:124, 5:4, 6:161, 22:78, and 33:4]. Since the office of prophethood from Abraham to Muhammad forms one continuous chain, it follows that the only religion established by God is Islam [Quran 3:19, 5:4, 39:11, 48:29 and 84]. Likewise, the *walaya* (sainthood) forms a continuous chain, and the *abdal*, who are simply a group of saints, are necessarily Muslims. A tradition related by Ibn Abi al-Dunya (d. 281/894) states that when the prophets, who are also the supports of the world, ceased to exist after Muhammad, God chose forty men called the *abdal* from the community of Muhammad to succeed them.³⁴ Al-Hakim a-Tirmidhi (d. 898), who also relates the

tradition, adds that the abdal, as the heirs of the prophets, are the party of God and the successful ones.³⁵

To al-Hujwiri, the saints, by whom he means men of the unseen spiritual realm including the abdal, are evidence that the office of prophethood has remained to the present, in order that "the signs of the Truth and the proof of Muhammad's veracity may continue to be clearly seen."³⁶ They are God's lieutenants, who rule the universe and have complete authority over nature. Some of them are visible, but many are invisible to humankind. The abdal, however, who are among the host, who are the officers of the divine court, and who loose and bind, know one another and act in concert with the other hosts constituting the spiritual hierarchy.³⁷ Thus the abdal are Islamic saints who, through God's favor and bounty, were granted spiritual power and endowed with the gift of metamorphosis from a physical to a spiritual state in order to help God's community, the community of Islam.

Some Muslim authors maintain that the abdal possess the miraculous power of guiding people in their travels. When a Muslim believer sets out on a journey, he should first turn to the place of the abdal and ask their help, saying, "Peace be upon you, Oh Rijal al-Ghayb [men of the spiritual realm hidden from mortals], peace be upon you, Oh holy spirits. Give me your help and watch over me, Oh, Guardians, Excellent Ones, Overseers, Substitutes, Supports, Oh Qutb." The supplicant may recite this petition in any language, and his desire shall be fulfilled.³⁸

The forty abdal occupy a prominent place in Shabak ritual. They are commemorated in a tradition called *Hadith al-Arbain* (tradition of the forty) as well as in a hymn, as shall be seen later in the ceremony of initiation. In both, the Imam Ali is exalted above the Prophet Muhammad.

According to the tradition of the forty, the abdal, headed by Ali, met every Monday and Friday evening in a cave near the town of Sinjar, north of the city of Mosul in northern Iraq. The only other of these abdal known by name is Salman al-Farisi, one of the Prophet's companions. One evening, when the abdal were assembling, the Prophet Muhammad went to the place of their assembly and knocked on the door. "Who is it?" asked a voice from inside. "I am Muhammad," the Prophet answered, but no one opened the door. The Prophet knocked again and again the voice asked, "Who are you?" Muhammad answered, "I am the Messenger of Allah," but the door remained closed. Yet a third time, Muhammad knocked and was challenged. This time, Muhammad answered that he was the poorest of the poor. Upon hearing this answer,

Ali ordered Salman al-Farisi to open the door. When the door opened, Muhammad saw thirty-nine Abdal headed by Ali, with Salman al-Farisi sitting next to him. Turning to al-Farisi, Ali asked him to bring him a cluster of grapes, which al-Farisi did. Ali squeezed the grapes into juice, drank some, and gave the rest to the Abdal to drink. When they drank the juice, blood gushed from their arms. Ali turned to the Prophet and said, "Are you satisfied now with our tariqa [religious order]?" The Prophet replied, "Yes, I am satisfied." From that moment, Muhammad was counted among the forty abdal.³⁹ The Kizilbash also venerate forty personages, including Salman al-Farisi.⁴⁰

The Bektashis have an almost identical tradition regarding the Abdal, whom they call Kirklar (the forty). According to this tradition, the Kirklar met regularly in the house of Fatima to receive spiritual nourishment from Ali. Once, when the Kirklar were meeting, the Prophet knocked at the door. Someone inside asked, "Who is it?" The Prophet answered, "Muhammad." "There is no room for Muhammad," said the voice. The Prophet knocked again and this time, when asked his identity, answered, "I am the poor one." At this the door opened, and Muhammad was admitted into the religious assembly. Ali, who was distributing grape juice to the Kirklar, gave some also to Muhammad. When Muhammad drank the juice, his eyes opened wide and, looking at Ali, he realized that Ali was the manifestation of the divine reality and offered him homage. Before this meeting, in which Muhammad became one of the Kirklar, the prophethood was manifested in Muhammad alone, but after he was admitted and saw Ali as the "true manifestation of the Divine Reality," Ali became the possessor of the *sirr* (mystery of sainthood).⁴¹

A similar tradition about the abdal concerns the episode of the Miraj (the Prophet's night journey). This tradition states that on the night Muhammad ascended into heaven, he was commanded by God to take in his company a *rahbar* (spiritual guide). On the way to heaven the Prophet met a lion, which frightened him greatly. God told him not be frightened, because the lion merely wanted some object from him as a token; Muhammad gave the lion a ring. When Muhammad arrived in God's presence, God told him that behind a curtain were ninety thousand mysteries. Muhammad asked God to raise the curtain; God did so, Muhammad saw Ali sitting behind it. Before Muhammad departed heaven, God handed him a cluster of grapes and asked him to deliver it to his grandchildren, al-Hasan and al-Husayn. Salman al-Farisi, who was in Muhammad's company, asked Muhammad for grapes, and Muhammad gave him some of the grapes God had given him. On his way down to

earth, Muhammad met a group of forty men, but when he counted them, he found to his surprise that there were only thirty-nine. At that moment, Salman al-Farisi arrived, making the group complete. While the forty talked, an invisible hand squeezed the grapes that al-Farisi held in his hand and then gave the forty the juice to drink. When they drank the grape juice, they became intoxicated and began to dance and shout, "Hu, Hu! [Sufi for He: God]." In the meantime, Ali, who was more overcome with ecstasy than the rest of the forty, took from his mouth the ring that Muhammad had given the lion in heaven as a token. When Muhammad saw the ring, he immediately recognized the sublime position of Ali and understood his true nature. He realized that he had attained knowledge of the divine reality.⁴²

Another version of the episode appears in the religious literature of different group of extremist Shiites, the Ahl-i Haqq (truth-worshippers), also known as the Ali Ilahis (deifiers of Ali), found primarily in western Iran. The episode is incorporated in an epistle written by a dervish from Nishapur named Nur Ali (d. 1920) and reproduced in the religious book of the Ahl-i Haqq, *Tadhkira-i A'la*. According to Nur Ali, the forty are called Chihiltan-i Nur (forty men of light) meaning the Light of our Lord Ali). The first of these forty was Sultan Mahmud Patili, and the last was Salman, probably Salman al-Farisi.⁴³

The episode recounted by Nur Ali begins with the Prophet's night ascent to heaven. At the end of his journey, Muhammad reached a dome made of emerald. He knocked at the door, and was asked to identify himself. When he said that he was the Prophet Muhammad, however, no one opened the door. Muhammad was denied admission because he lacked knowledge about the dome, the nature of the persons meeting in it, and the conditions required to join the group. The Angel Gabriel appeared, however, and taught Muhammad the secrets of the dome and everything associated with it. Gabriel explained that each part of the dome signified a member of Ahl-i Haqq community, dervish who had attained knowledge of the Ultimate Reality. The dome itself signified Dede Rashwan Ali, the door signified Lal Shahbaz Qalandar, and the door's handle, Jani; the custodian was Nur-i Nihal, and the owner of the house was Mir Shir Shah Sayyid Jalal Bukharai. Upon receiving this information, the Prophet realized that he had to act humbly if he desired admission to this divine assembly. This time, when Muhammad knocked on the door and was asked to identify himself, he answered humbly, "I am the servant of the poor." The door immediately opened, and the Prophet was admitted. He looked around and saw that all those assembled were naked. When he asked why they were naked, he was told

that they were *faqirs* (mendicants). Upon hearing this, the Prophet took his turban, tore it into pieces, and gave a piece to each faqir to wrap around his waist. The first piece went to Sultan Mahmud-i Patili, who headed the forty.⁴⁴

A similar version of this legend was related to Vladimir Minorsky in 1912 by a member of the Ahl-i Haqq community. In this version, on the night of his ascension to heaven, the Prophet saw a building with a dome. He knocked on the door and someone inside asked who it was, to which Muhammad answered, "The Prophet." He was not admitted, so he knocked again, and was again asked his identity. This time he answered, "The Messenger of God." Still he was denied admission. Muhammad prayed to God to tell him what to do. God inspired him to say, "I am the Master of the people and the servant of the poor." Immediately the door opened, and Muhammad entered the dome. He saw forty people sitting down. All were God. One of them got up and asked Muhammad what present he had brought with him. Embarrassed, Muhammad searched his clothes and found a dry grape, which was the pure wine mentioned in the Quran. He was given water to add to the grape, which made enough juice for himself and all forty to drink.

A barber appeared from the world of the Invisible to reveal to Muhammad the essence of the forty, one of his assistants bled and soon blood gushed from everyone's arms. the unity of God was manifested through those who looked outwardly like the forty. A list was produced with the names of the forty, not including the name of Ali. The list contained the names of persons believed to be the incarnation of some of the twelve Imams, including al-Hasan, al-Husayn, Zayn al-Abidin, and Jafar al-Sadiq. The fifth Imam, Muhammad al-Baqir, appeared on the list as the legendary figure al-Khadir (Khidr). The last of the forty was Muhammad the Mahdi, described as Sahib-Karam (the master of generosity). Minorsky states that the member of the Ahl-i Haqq who produced this information was very proud to be the possessor of the list of the forty saints, which he had received from a dervish, Akhund Mulla Tasoutch, called the Demi-God.⁴⁵ It should be noted that the list of the forty given by Minorsky differs from that of Nur Ali.

The tradition of drinking grape juice, practiced among the Bek-tashis in association with the forty Abdal, is also a part of the circumcision ceremony of the Ahl-i Haqq. Samuel Graham Wilson, an American missionary who spent many years in Persia toward the end of the nineteenth century, relates that he once attended such a ceremony. A lamb was sacrificed to Ali for the occasion, cooked, blessed, and then distributed by the Pir to those present, who ate it with bread, with the

utmost reverence. The meal also included nuts and raisins, as a thanks offering for the harvest. Sherbet made from grapejuice was also served, diluted when served as a drink. The people who attended the ceremony told Wilson that their sect had originated with forty persons, one of whom was Ali. They believed that God had sent them a grape from heaven which Ali pressed, giving the juice to the forty, who drank it. Hence came their custom of drinking the sherbet.⁴⁶ Some of the Ahl-i Haqq consider the forty to be deities.⁴⁷

In modern times, the term *abdal* has become more a term of contempt than one of spiritual honor. It is applied to the poor and wretched Sufi wanderers whose lives, like those of the old mendicant holy men dedicated to a spiritual (Sufi order), have become an anachronism in our materialistic world. The name of the Alawi village of *Çiplaklar* (the naked ones) may be a description of the condition of the Sufis' wandering *Abdal*.⁴⁸

Rituals and Ceremonies

IN THE EARLY CHAPTERS of this book we have shown that the Bektashis and Kizilbash (Alawis) are one and the same sect, except that the village and peasant Bektashis are called Kizilbash. We have also shown that the Shabak are identical with the Bektashis and Kizilbash, holding common beliefs and sharing common rituals, ceremonies, and practices with them. A few practices may vary among these groups, but the differences are very slight, as will be demonstrated in this and the following chapters.

Prayer

The Bektashis, Kizilbash, and Shabak have a total disregard for such Islamic religious duties and obligations as prayer, fasting, zakat (alms tax), and pilgrimage to Mecca.¹ They believe that prayer is not a religious duty because the Imam Ali was assassinated while on his way to the mosque to pray.² However, they do perform a group prayer every Friday night, not in a mosque, for they have no mosques, but in the house of the Pir or of the twelve persons representing the twelve Imams.³ Children are not allowed to attend this group prayer until they are seven years old.

According to Shabak custom, when a child (boy or girl) reaches the age of seven, the parents take the child to the pir, or baba. After the child kisses the pir's hand three times, the pir girds the child with a belt of seven folds and dismisses him. Three days later the parents take the child back to the pir, who unfastens the seven folds of the belt. The child then

offers to the pir forty coins and forty eggs, symbolizing the forty abdal, including Ali, who are believed to worship in a cave in the town of Sinjar, near Mosul. The initiation to group prayer ends with a special hymn.⁴ Those attending the prayer prostrate themselves in a circle while the Pir chants the following hymn:

May the tawalli [love for those who love the holy family of the Prophet] and tajalli [theophany or a mystery revealed to the heart] be acceptable. May their attainment be made easier. May good prevail in the evening and evil vanish. Hu [He, God] is for the truthful, and may those who hold falsehood perish. Hu is for those who made mystery, the mystery of Haji Bektash Wali and the Shaykhs of the Kizil [Kizilbash] and the Erenler [those who have attained full understanding of the Divine Reality], who came from Ardabil [the Safawi Shaykhs], and who set for us this tariqa [order]. Let us say Hu for those Erenler, God, Muhammad, Ali. Truth is beloved, the Pir is beloved, and falsehood is rejected.⁵

The Bektashi-Kizilbash elements in this prayer are obvious. The "Truth" here is that taught by the Bektashis and the leaders of the Kizilbash from Ardabil, who are none other than the Safawis. The Bektashi trinity of Allah, Muhammad, and Ali is also unmistakable.

Birge reports various Bektashi prayers, including morning and evening prayers. The Shabak also have morning and evening prayers, and it is interesting to note that the Bektashi prayer contains passages similar to the Shabak prayer cited above, as in this excerpt from the Bektashi prayer.

May the morning be prosperous; may good be victorious; may evil be warded off; may unbelievers be defeated; may the believers attain their wishes; may hypocrites be ruined; may the believers be happy; may God, Muhammad, Ali be our intercessor; may our Lord the patron Saint [Haji Bektash Wali] shame the unbelievers; for the reign of the true Erenler.⁶

Fasting

Unlike Orthodox Muslims, the Bektashis, Kizilbash, and Shabak do not fast during the month of Ramadan. They fast during the first ten days of

the Arab month of Muharram to express their passion for al-Husayn, son of the Imam Ali, who was killed in Karbala on the tenth of Muharram (10 October 680).⁷ Some Bektashis abstain totally from food and water during these ten days, but the majority do so only from the evening of the ninth to the afternoon of the tenth day.

The reason for this is that water was cut off from al-Husayn and his camp at Karbala from the evening of the ninth till the tenth of Muharram, when he and his men were struck down.⁸ Some Shabak break their fast by drinking water mixed with dust collected from a spot near the tomb of al-Husayn.

If a Bektashi desires to fast throughout the month of Ramadan, he may do so; such fasting is considered a commendable human practice rather than a religious duty, however.⁹

The Shabak excuse themselves from fasting during the month of Ramadan on unusual grounds. They claim that Ramadan was reincarnated in the form of a man who drove a donkey. One day, as they walked along the highway, the donkey sank into a muddy hole and the driver, Ramadan, tried to pull the beast out. Some passersby saw Ramadan struggling to rescue the donkey and helped him pull the animal free. Ramadan thanked them and revealed his true identity. As a reward for their help, he excused them from the religious duty of fasting in the month of Ramadan.¹⁰ Another reason given by the Shabak for not fasting in Ramadan is the fact that Ali was killed during this month.¹¹

Zakat: Islamic Religious Tithe

Unlike all other Muslims, the Shabak do not tithe. They do, however, give one-fifth of their crops to the Sayyids, whom they believe to be the descendants of the Prophet through his daughter Fatima.¹²

Pilgrimage

The Bektashis, Kizilbash, and Shabak do not perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, going instead to the Shiite holy shrines in Baghdad, al-Najaf, and Karbala. Not many Bektashis and Kizilbash can afford the pilgrimage to their shrines in Iraq, so they visit the tomb of H^{aj}i Bektash at Kir^{se}hir or the shrines of their saints, such as the sanctuary of Shaykh Khubayr,

northeast of Sivas. They believe that such a pilgrimage must be made seven times in order to be religiously valid.¹³

The Drinking of Wine

The Bektashis, Kizilbash, and Shabak do not consider the drinking of wine to be a religious taboo. Al-Ghulami reports that while he was in a crowd of Shabak, one of the elders told him that the Quran did not forbid wine as it did pork; it decreed only that wine be avoided. The elder maintained that there is a great difference between these strictures.¹⁴ It is interesting that while the Shabak justify their drinking of wine by claiming that the Quran does not expressly forbid wine, the Bektashis instead invoke Quran 76:21, "And drink of pure beverage shall their Lord give them," for the same purpose.¹⁵ Whatever their justification, the Bektashis, Kizilbash, and Shabak all use wine in their rituals; the Shabak close some of their religious ceremonies with dancing and the drinking of wine,¹⁶ and some Bektashis drink wine to the health of the Virgin Mary.¹⁷

Celebration of the New Year

The Bektashis, Kizilbash, and Shabak celebrate the New Year on the evening of 1 December; the reason they do so on this particular day is not known. The celebration usually begins in the afternoon and continues until midnight. It is a sacred celebration that cannot be performed without the presence of twelve men representing the twelve Imams. In the Shabak ceremony, these men are (1) the *pir*, who holds the highest position in the Shabak religious hierarchy; (2) the *rahbar* (guide), who assists the *pir* in performing religious rituals; (3) the *Çiraci* (candle lighter), who lights and puts out the candle during the celebration; (4) the broom bearer, who sweeps and cleans the *Pir's* house, where the ceremony is usually performed; (5) the water carrier, who brings drinking water to those assembled (saying to each person, "May Yazid [the Umayyad caliph responsible for murdering al-Husayn and his men at Karbala] be accursed," and receiving the answer, "May he be accursed"); (6) the butcher, who slaughters the animals or fowl—usually roosters—for sacrifice; (7) the first attendant, who receives the food brought to the

pir's house by the celebrants; (8) the second attendant, who unfolds the cloth in which the food is wrapped; (9) the third attendant, who breaks a piece from every loaf of bread, which he then ties to the cloth in which the food of every donor is wrapped; (10) the fourth attendant, who returns the empty dishes and cloths to their owners; (11) the first doorman, who guards the outer door of the house to prevent entry by strangers; and finally (12) the second doorman, who guards the door of the room where the celebration takes place and is always ready to answer the pir's commands.¹⁸

On the day they celebrate the New Year, villagers of both sexes assemble at the house of the pir. Those who attend bring with them a cock, a jug of wine, and three loaves of bread. They hand them to a member of the twelve, whose duty it is to prepare them for the ceremonial meal. Before entering the hall of the celebration, each of the faithful kneels reverently and kisses the threshold. (This kissing of the threshold is also customary among the Bektashis.¹⁹) Then the villagers are ushered into a room where the Pir sits, surrounded by groups of ten people. When all have assembled in the room, they turn their faces toward a candle placed in a corner of the room, and prostrate themselves in solemn adoration. After they worship the candle, the Rahbar asks the villagers to prostrate themselves before the pir. If space is limited, they may do so in a circle around the pir. When all are prostrated, the pir touches the back of each one with his hand and chants several prayers containing constant references to the twelve Imams. When he finishes the prayer, he rubs the backs of the worshippers and recites, "Alif, Allah, Mim, Muhammad, Ayn, Ali, the Yellow Path [Order] of Sayyid Qasim. Heaven and earth shall change and this Path [Order] shall not. O Ali al-Murtada [with whom God is pleased], O Husayn, the Martyr in Karbala, do not separate us from you. O God, sin generates from us, and forgiveness from you. Of the mystery of the religion of Ali is the saying, 'No chivalrous youth except Ali, and no sword but Dhu al-Faqar [Ali's sword].'"

This ceremony takes place in the afternoon. At nightfall, the butcher, who holds the "holy knife," slaughters the cocks. He alone may do so; otherwise the slaughter is unlawful, and the cocks are considered unclean and cannot be eaten. The cocks are roasted and served with wine to the worshippers. After the meal, the company dances and celebrates until midnight. Finally, each worshipper kisses the pir's hand and takes his leave. Only those who have participated in this New Year celebration are entitled to attend the Friday night prayer. Moreover, people who have not attended may be shunned by those who have.²⁰

Ashura

Like all other Shiites, the Bektashis, Kizilbash, and Shabak commemorate the massacre of al-Husayn during the first ten days of the month of Muharram. This period is known as the Ashura (ten). Some wear black as an expression of grief over the death of al-Husayn. The majority, however, fast for three days and then abstain from meat for another thirty days. On the tenth day of Ashura, the rich among the Shabak usually prepare food for the poor of their community.

The lamentation over the death of al-Husayn culminates on the tenth day of Ashura, when Shabak men, women, and children assemble in the village square or in one of their holy shrines, weeping and beating their breasts. Al-Sarraf reports that he attended the commemoration of Ashura in 1938 at the Shabak village of Bir Hillan, north of Mosul, and heard the pir chanting in Turkish to the mourners, "I have renounced Yazid from the depth of my soul. My heart has also renounced the Kharijiites; thus it has become a shining mirror. I am Husayni, Husayni, Husayni [the follower of al-Husayn]."

The mourners then slap their faces in lamentation, chanting in return, "I am Husayni, Husayni, and I do curse Yazid."

The Pir continued: "In Karbala, al-Husayn is my king. He is the Abdal who supports me. Ali is my God, my God, my God. I am Husayni, Husayni, Husayni."²¹

This ceremony illustrates the height of the Shabak doctrinal extremism by identifying Ali as God, as well as a member of a trinity along with God and Muhammad. It also demonstrates their passionate hatred of the Umayyads, particularly the Caliph Yazid, and their view of the Umayyads as enemies of the family of the Prophet. As shall be seen later, the cursing of Yazid is an integral part of Shabak rituals.

Confession of Sins and Communion

It is the religious duty [perhaps of only the male members] of the Shabak to individually confess their sins to the pir, who alone has the right to hear confessions. (There is also a public confession service, which will be discussed later.) Private confessions are usually made in the house of the pir during the Friday night prayer meeting or during the New Year's celebration. They may also occur on the Night of Forgiveness of Sin, when the public confession takes place. The ceremony is attended by

both sexes. As in the New Year's celebration, the worshippers bring with them cocks, bread, and wine, which are prepared and served in exactly the same way, as a kind of communion.²² After confessing their sins to the Pir and receiving absolution, the worshippers dine on the roasted cocks, bread, and wine, and spend the rest of the evening in singing and dancing.

Rev. G. E. White describes a similar but secret ceremony observed by the Kizilbash in Turkey. He states that once or twice a year the Kizilbash (whom he calls "Red Head") Dede (religious leader) makes a pastoral visit to his parish. The visit ends with a ceremony conducted at midnight in a common house, in great secrecy. Guards are posted around the house to prevent intruders from gaining entrance. A table is set with sacramental food and wine for the worshippers. After the communion, the Dede preaches a sermon; this is followed by a religious dance performed by both men and women. White remarks that such ceremonies, are viewed as scandalous, or at least suspicious, in the East. Although White calls this ceremony "a debased form of the Lord's Supper," he is not convinced that it has the same origin.²³

According to Ziya Gökalp, this sacrificial ceremony is very old, being practiced by the Turks of Central Asia before they embraced Islam. These ancient Turks held a meeting, the *Ayin-i Cem*, at which they sacrificed animals, ate meat and bread, and drank alcoholic beverages, singing and dancing throughout. After accepting Islam, says Gökalp, they continued to hold this pagan ceremony, introducing it into the Islamic religion, where it became the high point of the Bektashi-Alawi or Kizilbash *cem* (religious assembly).²⁴

Georg Jacob attempts to trace the Bektashi "ritual meal," which he considers a Semitic element, to such religions as Mithraism, predating Christianity.²⁵ However, Grenard maintains that this religious ceremony of the Kizilbash is "basically nothing other than the Christian Mass, slightly changed in form." Grenard was told by a Kizilbash Kurd that at this ceremony, after the congregation makes a public confession of sins, a sheep is sacrificed and pieces of it, called *luqmas*, are distributed by the "priest" with bread and wine to those who have been absolved of their sins.²⁶

A similar ceremony is known to be performed by the Bektashis. According to Ishaq Efendi, in *Kashif al-Asrar wa Daft al-Ashrar*, Bektashi men and women meet in a certain hall, always in the morning. When the pir enters the hall, he is received with cheers. In the meantime, bread, wine, and cheese have been made ready, and the pir hands them to an attendant, who distributes them to the worshippers. After eating and

drinking, the worshippers engage in ceremonial dancing. Although men and women participate in this ceremony, Ishaq Efendi maintains that he has found no evidence of immorality or lewd behavior by the worshippers.²⁷ A recent witness to this ceremony is Nur Yalman, who visited the Alawi (Kizilbash) village of Çiplaklar in eastern Turkey in the 1960s. Yalman states that the Alevis are greatly annoyed by the allegations of sexual intercourse and incest in their night ceremony. In defense against such accusations, they tell the story of a Sunnite who attended one such night ceremony hoping to indulge in the alleged orgy and was struck dead by God.²⁸

Captain L. Molyneux-Seel also reports a ceremony resembling the communion, which the Kizilbash celebrate on the night of January 1 at the house of their sayyid (religious leader). At this ceremony, bread is blessed by the sayyid and offered to the communicants, two at a time.²⁹

The Shabak regard confession as a religious duty that no member of their community should neglect.³⁰ The significance they give this duty is evident from several of their hymns, which promise not only heavenly reward for those who confess, but also retribution against those who do not. The pir is the only member of the religious hierarchy to whom the Shabak confess their sins, and only he has the power to offer them absolution after confession, as this prayer, which is recited before confession, illustrates.

The talib [neophyte] never says "no" to his Shaykh or tells his secret to any person other than him.

The talib who does not tell his secret to this Shaykh is a hypocrite and is counted as one of the "Jews of Khaybar."³¹

The talib who keeps his secret from his Shaykh will be deprived of the garden of Allah [paradise] and would be behaving badly. He is also ignorant of knowledge and truth,

which is, "You who seek after the truth serve your Shaykh, for he is the balm for your heart's wounds."³²

The following prayer, usually recited by the penitent during confession, is addressed to the pir.

I have sinned, my Pir; forgive my sin by the truth of God and Muhammad.

I confess that my sin has extended the limit, so forgive me my sin by the truth of Ali al-Murtada.

Al-Hasan has entered the arena of Ishq, so forgive my sin by the truth of al-Husayn.

Forgive my sins by the truth of Zayn al-Abidin, al-Baqir, Jafar al-Sadiq, Musa al-Kazim, and Ali al-Rida.

I have reached the path of al-Taqi and al-Naqi, so forgive me my sins by the truth of Hasan al-Askari.

The twelve Imams are of one light, so forgive

Khatai by the truth of the Mahdi Sahib al-Zaman [Master of the Age].³³

The mention of Khatai in this prayer is important because it shows that the Shabak must have been Kizilbash followers of the Safawis. Khatai is the pen name of Shah Ismail al-Safawi, who was famous as a great poet composing not in Persian, but in Turkish.

A hymn in the form of an interlocution between a neophyte and his dede, or pir, demonstrates the devotion of the Shabak to their faith and their adoration of the twelve Imams, but most of all, their passionate hatred for the enemies of the family of the Prophet, particularly the Umayyad Caliph Yazid, son of Muawiya, who was responsible for the killing of al-Husayn. What is interesting in the following hymn is that the neophyte, the interlocutor, is none other than Yazid, implying that Yazid has become conscious of the crime he committed against al-Husayn and desires to atone for his sin by seeking initiation into the order. He wants to believe, as the Bektashis and Kizilbash do, that Ali and the rest of the Imams are the manifestations of the divine Reality, but he is completely rebuffed and denied admission to the order. Despite Yazid's pleas and his claim that he recognizes the names of the Imams and is willing to sacrifice his life for them, his supplication is considered by the pir as no more than the barking of a dog. Here is the hymn in its entirety:

Talib or Neophyte: In the early morning I passed by the Shaykh.
I asked, "Shaykh, would not you ordain me a talib?
Forgive my my iniquity, and look not upon my sin.
O Shaykh! Would not you ordain me a talib?"

Dede: Go away, Yazid, and do not come close to us.
We proclaim our renunciation of you.
Are you Ashiq [passionate lover] of a bride or a maiden?
Go away, Yazid, for you will never become a talib.

- Neophyte: The Almighty God is powerful over us.
 May the place in which Yazid stands be rekindled with
 fire.
 May my eye become blind if I am in love with a bride
 or maiden.
 Shaykh! Would not you ordain me a talib?
- Dede: Yazid! Do you know the three and the five?
 Don't you know that when a broiled meat shrinks, the
 spit becomes burned?
 Barking is Yazid's custom.
 Turn away, Yazid, for you will never become a talib.
- Neophyte: I am content with the might of the truth.
 I even know the names of the twelve and could even
 write them.
 I give my life for the believers.
 My Shaykh, would not you make me a talib?
- Dede: Yazid! What is the reason for your running away from
 your Shaykh?
 You have hurt your father and relinquished his path.
 You have separated yourself from us and deserted us.
 Away with you, Yazid, for you cannot become a talib.
- Neophyte: Say, my Shaykh, that this is also of my misfortune:
 I swam through the sea, leaving my crown and my
 throne.
 If I were passionately in love with a bride or a maiden,
 this is also my misfortune.
 My Shaykh! Would not you make me a talib?
- Dede: The Dervish Ali swears by God, yes, by God, that
 there is no disagreement in our tariqa [order].
 God knows that Yazid will never become a talib.
 Go away, Yazid, for you will never become a talib.³⁴

Another hymn is characterized by symbolism common to the Sufi (mystical) orders. It is intricate in form and rhapsodic in content.

If it were not for the mighty lions who live in this transient world, darkness would have prevailed.

Even if the mourners smile, darkness would
prevail and light of the day disappear.
If the Ashiqun [passionate lovers] did not find
their beloved ones, they would become insane.
Rob me of my senses and swing with delight,
my love, for you alone know who is the beloved.
Even if the leaves of the roses which I plucked
by my own hands did not wither,
My path leads to the truth, and the Truth
shall not mislead anyone.
Separation and death:
If it were not for the command of the
Truth I would have rid myself of both
separation and death.⁴⁰

The following hymn, replete with mystical symbolism, is most probably one of the poems of Shah Ismail. The penultimate line begins with his pen name, Khatai; unfortunately, the rest of the line is missing.

Erenler [those who have attained spiritual mystery] and
companions,
All of you behold and ask where I have been:
I was drowned in that great ocean
In which those who drown have done
what is true and correct.
From the depth to depth, I was hidden like a mystery;
I was a martyr with al-Husayn.
On the Mount of Qaf I fought with Hamza,
and with Musa Ibn Imran [the Prophet Moses] I
reached the Tur [Mount Sinai].
I was with Noah in the Ark and witnessed
the flood.
He [Abraham] pulled the knife and struck with it the neck [of
Isaac], but the knife did not harm it.
Truth has made him [Isaac] free; I was with
his ram which became his Qurban [sacrifice].
I was with the Khalil [friend of God] Abraham in
the fire, with Jacob in his sorrows, with Joseph in
the well, and with Mansur al-Hallaj in his crucifixion.
Khatai . . .
I was on earth and in heaven
the Truth.³⁶

If this poem is indeed Shah Ismail's, we may assume that he attributed to himself spiritual preexistence. There is evidence that Shah Ismail believed himself to be infallible, with no dividing line between him and the Mahdi, and also believed that he was the same Ismail meant by the Quranic verse, "Remember also Isma'il in the Book [Quran], for he was true to his promise, and he was an apostle and a prophet. And he commanded his family to observe prayer and to give alms, and he was acceptable unto his Lord" [Quran 19:54-56]. For this reason he was described as al-Murshid al-Kamil (the perfect guide), whose authority derived from Khatm al-Nubuwwa (the seal of prophethood) and Kamal al-Walaya (the perfection of sainthood).³⁷ There is also evidence that the followers of Shah Ismail considered him to be divine and worshipped him in his presence.

A Venetian merchant who was in Persia during the time of the Safawi Shah Ismail, calls him a Sophy (Sufi Mystic) who was loved and revered by his people, and especially by his soldiers, as a god. The merchant remarks, in fact, that in Persia the name of God is forgotten, while the name of Ismail is remembered. Ismail's name was even included in the Muslim profession of faith: "There is no God but God. Muhammad is the Prophet of God and Ismail is the Vicar of God." However, this Venetian merchant states that he had heard that Ismail was not pleased at being called a god or a prophet.³⁸

Another hymn abounding with mystical symbolism. It is apparently composed by Hilmi, a Bektashi poet; this again betrays the Bektashi origin of the Shabak:

Heart! How astonishing!
 What has happened that made you set
 a funeral ceremony and lamentation?
 If you kept moaning day and night, where,
 then, are your prayer and dhikr [constant mention of God's name]?
 Recite your dhikr always, O heart, and drink
 from the cup of your hal [state of religious ecstasy].
 In your sides you have a garden of roses
 whose thorns have pricked you.
 The pretty ones whom you passionately love
 have no faithfulness.
 If you are satisfied with beholding the face [of your beloved],
 why turn to another?
 Many are the black hairs on the temples,
 but they have no fidelity;

the winking of their eyes is like targeted arrows.
 What, then, is the barrier you have set before them?
 Who founded this world, and who heard
 and beheld? Why, then, are there beams of light in your eye?
 Look at the universe; it was all created for you.
 What has emanated from the "Truth" is truth, so why
 this behavior and mien?
 If the Sufi achieved union [with God],
 he is no more deceived by plenty of talk.
 You are a slave to the Lord of Glory. Why, then,
 this changing behavior, and why this pride?
 Come, enter the quarter of Reality, in order to
 be introduced to the Truth.
 Place the remembrance of the Truth on your
 tongue; what more do you want from the
 Truth other than the Truth is . . .
 Do not forsake the Truth for one breath.
 God alone is all that is, the rest is foolishness;
 so why this baser self [that is lured to evil]?
 Seek support in God in all actions, and relinquish
 hatred and deception.
 The murshid [guide] will correct your error,
 for the existence of the murshid is necessary
 to lead you to this state [righteousness].
 He who does not participate in Ayin-i Cem
 or the ceremonies of cem no one will know
 his confession of faith.
 Hilmi! I am awaiting the Truth. I know
 wisdom, listen to the Truth, and proclaim the
 Truth. So ascetic, what is it that you deny?³⁹

The Night of Forgiveness

Once a year, the Shabak conduct a service for the forgiveness of sins a kind of public service of repentance, during which those who have borne a grudge or hatred are to reconcile with one another and apologize for the sins they have committed against their neighbors.⁴⁰ The service of forgiveness of sin is usually conducted on a Friday night at the house of the Pir. The ceremony, which begins one hour after sunset, is not conducted unless the twelve persons representing the twelve Imams, previously described in the section on the celebration of the New Year, are present.⁴¹

On the appointed night, each Shabak believer attending the ceremony brings whatever food he can afford to the house of the pir. Upon entering the house, he greets those present, saying, "We have seen you in your gladness." Those present answer "Welcome." Still carrying his food, he stands before the pir, places the big toe of his right foot on the big toe of his left foot,⁴² and says, "God, yes, by God." The pir responds, "May the love of the family of the Prophet and the mystery revealed to the heart be acceptable. May good prevail in the evening and evil be repulsed. Hu, [God] is for the truthful and the believer, O Ali."⁴³

When the prayer is over, one of the twelve takes the food, and the worshipper joins the others sitting in a circle around the pir. Then the candle bearer gets up and, turning to the pir, greets him three times, after which the pir recites,

The lit candle is the pride of the Dervişler.
 Seek spiritual ardor from the Erenler.
 Pray upon our Lord Muhammad and the family of Muhammad.
 He who lit the lamp is in Ishq [passionate love]
 with the chosen one, Muhammad, and the elect one, Ali.

When the pir finishes this prayer, the candle bearer puts the candle or lamp in its proper place kisses the pir's hand, and returns to his place. He is followed by the broom bearer, who places a broom (preferably new and long-handled) on the threshold of the room. He prostrates himself over the broom three times and before the pir three times, and says, "Ask."

The pir turns to those present and asks loudly, "Is there one among you who is angry or hurt?" If anyone is angry or has for some reason harbors hatred against another person, he stands and explains his feelings, naming the person toward whom he feels angry. The pir then tells him, "Reconcile," and the two people who have been at odds approach the pir and kiss each other. If the object of the complainant's ill will is not present, the pir asks the complainant to seek him out and reconcile with him. This person then leaves the ceremony, taking with him as a witness another believer, in search of the man with whom he has been angry. Wherever they find this person, whether in his house or in his field, the confessor of angry feelings asks forgiveness. If reconciliation between the two cannot be accomplished promptly, the broom bearer remains standing; he will not sit down until all are reconciled with one another. When reconciliation is achieved, the broom bearer begins sweeping the room

where the ceremony is conducted. Whenever he comes near a neophyte who is seeking initiation into the Sufi order, he bows down to him, saying, "My brother Sufi," and the neophyte answers, "May the head which bows down for worship be free from pain."

When the sweeping is done, the broom bearer makes three lines with the broom on the floor, saying, "Alif, Allah, Mim, Muhammad, Ayn, Ali [an affirmation of the Shabak's trinity]." Then he stands before the pir while the pir recites, "May the service of good be acceptable; its attainment is ready." The broom bearer gathers what he has swept up, and hides it under a seat saying "God is for the home of the one who upholds the divine mystery. The pir shouts, "Get ready for prayer!" and the worshippers remove their headgear and kneel, then the pir begins "May the heads that bow down in worship never ache."

All the worshippers prostrate themselves, and the pir continues:

Allah, Allah, O Muhammad, O Ali, May the Twelve Imams and the Fourteen Innocents be our beloved and help, and may they ward off from us fate [decreed by God] and calamity, in order that the Muslim believers shall not be separated from each other. Let him who casts a stone at us strike his head with one. May all the Twelve [Imams], the forty [Abdal] and the Seven [those who occupy the seven degrees of the spiritual hierarchy] intercede in our behalf.⁴⁴

After the pir finishes this prayer, the worshippers lift their heads and kiss each other on both sides of the foreheads. Then the water carrier brings a bowl filled with pure water, assisted by another person who carries an earthenware jar. The water carrier faces the pir, who recites the following prayer:

I have given up my head and earthly possessions for the Ishq [passionate divine love], for the sake of the Erenler of the Rum, and for the sake of those who always behold and love the truth. And for the sake of those who sacrificed their lives, in the mournful desert of Karbala, I shed my tears and cry, O Water Carrier of al-Husayn.⁴⁵

Those sitting respond, "The peace of God be upon al-Hasan and al-Husayn, who are in paradise."

At this point the water carrier walks toward the Pir and hands him the bowl of water. Before taking a sip, the pir says, "More." The worshippers respond "May God's curse be upon Yazid." the water carrier

then hands the bowl to those present, and each takes a sip. Following the offering of the water, plates are placed on carpets spread on the floor. The food brought by the worshippers, wrapped in the customary kerchief, is now unwrapped. A piece of bread is broken off and placed on each plate. The worshippers recite the blessing traditionally said before meals, "May it become a lawful food."

The *pir* continues, "May the morsel become a provision. May abomination perish. Light for those who partake of it, and may it become a guide for those who supplied the food. God is for the truthful, for the believer, O Ali."

Then the rest of the food is put out, and the worshippers eat. After the meal, they remain in place, and say, "Open the path for us." The *Pir* answers, "Let the eyes of those old and young, whether standing or sitting, be directed towards those who possess divine knowledge. [God] is for the truth. Blessed is the house whose owner coughs or sneezes three times at the front door [a sign of alerting the people inside that there is someone at the door, Turkoman houses having no knockers]. For him who wants to leave, the door is open and for him who wants to stay, this home is considered as his own."

After this prayer, the worshippers rise and kiss the hand of the *Pir*, ending the prayer session.⁴⁶

It is reported that the *Baktashis* and *Kizilbash* also confess their sins publicly once a year, on a night called the night of the forgiveness of sins. Reconciliation is urged among antagonists, but if the offense is too serious for that, the religious leader, or *Baba*, may impose a penalty on the guilty party, such as pilgrimage to Mecca or to the Shi'ite holy shrines at al-Najaf and Karbala in Iraq. The *Bektashi* community takes these penalties so seriously that the guilty party is regarded as dead until he performs his assigned penance, thereby achieving absolution.⁴⁷

Based on accounts by *Kizilbash*, Grenard relates that the *Kizilbash* celebrate a nocturnal ceremony very similar to a Christian mass. The *pir*, or *dede*, whom Grenard calls a priest officiates, chanting prayers in honor of Ali, Jesus, Moses, and David. (David is particularly venerated. Portions of his psalms have been translated into the Turkish language and are chanted at services.) The *pir* carries a willow branch, which he dips into a bowl of water while he is saying prayers, thereby consecrating the water in the bowl. The consecrated water is then distributed to all households.

During the ceremony, the assistants publicly confess their sins in a manner similar to that of Christians. All lights are then extinguished, and the congregation mourn their sins in darkness. After a prescribed time, the lights are turned on, and the *pir* offers the congregation absolution.

Then he takes a slice of bread and a cup of wine, solemnly blesses them, dips the bread into the wine, and distributes pieces of it to the assistants who have confessed their sins and received absolution.⁴⁸

G. E. White, who gives a similar account of the ceremony, states that the congregation partakes in a kind of communion, generally consisting of a morsel of a sacrificed lamb, or bread and wine. In some cases, the *pir*, or *dede*, asks those who have committed grave sins to atone for them by giving a sum of money to the poor.⁴⁹ This ceremony does indeed appear similar to a Christian celebration, but Ivanow is of the opinion that the Kizilbash ceremony may have had its origins in Zoroastrianism and Mithraism, resembling particularly the *Yasne* (sacrifice) ceremony celebrated by the Zoroastrian priests. It is not unlikely that this ancient custom, connected with a religious sacrifice, passed into the Dervish orders of Asia Minor, whose members originally came from Turkestan and Persia, the base of Zoroastrianism.⁵⁰

The Extinguishing of Light Ceremony

Associated with both the commemoration of the tenth day of the Muharram (Ashura), the day on which al-Husayn, son of the Imam Ali, was killed at Karbala, and the Night of Forgiveness of Sin, is the Extinguishing of Lights ceremony. During the night of the tenth of Muharram, the Shabak, and kindred sects such as the Bajwan and the Sarliyya or Kalkaiyya, extinguish all lamps or candles, take off their shoes, and spend the entire night mourning the killing of al-Husayn at Karbala, just as they do during the Night of the Forgiveness of Sins. When the lamps or candles are relit, the penitents are absolved of their sins by the religious leaders.⁵¹ This practice is also known among the Kizilbash.⁵² This lamentation of the death of al-Husayn on the tenth night of Muharram is not peculiar to the Shabak or the Kizilbash, being practiced by the great majority of Shiites in the city of Karbala in Iraq, where the people adhere so strictly to the rule of extinguishing all lights that an eye-witness, al-Sarrafi, states that not one dares even to light a match.⁵³

The secrecy surrounding these ceremonies and the exclusion of non-communicants have raised calumnious rumors regarding the moral behavior of the congregation during these ceremonies. Communicants are accused of promiscuous behavior and even participation in sexual orgies because the ceremonies are conducted in complete darkness. Rev. Anastase al-Karmali accuses the Shabak of such sexual orgies. He states that the Shabak have an obnoxious religious custom whereby, on a

certain night each year, men and women meet at the mouth of a large secret cave and spend the night in eating, drinking, and revelry. Al-Karmali calls this night *Laylat al-Kafsha*, a name also used by the Sarliyya. He claims that the Shabak conclude the night's activities by "committing the most heinous immoralities."⁵⁴ Al-Karmali also claims that the term *Kafsha* drives from *Kafasha*, a colloquial term meaning "to grab," used by many people in Iraq, especially in the north; he adds that the reason for this appellation is obvious.⁵⁵

In fact, the word *Kafsh* is of Persian origin and means "slippers" or "shoes." Perhaps the night of the *Kafsha* is so called because the mourners of al-Husayn usually take off their *Kafshs*, or slippers, and should really be called "The Night of [Removing] The Slippers."⁵⁶ Be that as it may, most writers reporting on the alleged immoralities committed on the "Night of the *Kafsha*" maintain that the charges are the products of overactive imaginations and have no truth to them.⁵⁷ While it is difficult to ascertain the truth about such practices, a member of another esoteric sect, the Yezidis, who live in villages close to those of the Shabak, has stated that the Yezidis do practice night orgies. Behnam, a Yezidi convert to Catholicism who became a Syrian Catholic monk at the Sharfa Monastery in Lebanon, states that it is true that in observance of *Laylat al-Kafsha*, men and women engage in sexual acts. He attended a *Laylat al-Kafsha* ceremony in the village of *Bashiqa*, near Mosul, Iraq.⁵⁸

Hasluck cites other writers to show that ignorant Sunnite partisans pin the names *Zarati* and *Mümsöndürun* (candle extinguishers) on the *Kizilbash*, but comments that this is generally thought to be done maliciously. He also reports that similar accusations of incest and promiscuity were made by Benjamin of Tudela against the Druzes in the twelfth century and by the Arabs against the Druzes in modern times, as well as by the Turks against the Crypto-Jews of Salonica.⁵⁹

Van Lennep remarks that the *Kizilbash* of Asia Minor have "mysterious and obscene rites, in which the initiated alone take part." He says further that their worship consists of dances in which both sexes participate, and that the "Turkish authorities have succeeded in falling upon them and disbanding them in the midst of their Saturnalian nightly orgies."⁶⁰

T. Gilbert gives a similar account of this *Kizilbash* practice. He writes that once a year, the *Kizilbash* meet in an isolated spot to celebrate a ceremony that leaves far behind in its shameless rites those of the Oriental *Bona Dea* at Rome. After prayer, Gilbert says, the lights are extinguished, and the sexes intermingle without regard to age or the ties of kinship.⁶¹

According to Felix von Luschan, a similar ceremony is performed

by the Takhtajis (woodcutters) of Turkey, who have great religious affinity with the Bektashis. Felix von Luschan states that the Takhtajis conduct their religious meeting in the evening, but does not mention a celebration of communion. He says only that those present dance and sing until midnight, and then fall into a mood of depression. Some of the participants show signs of hallucinations or hypnotic trances. During the ceremony, the religious leader offers his opinion on a variety of questions, religious and secular, even predicting the next rainfall. He also performs healing and other miracles. Then the participants confess their sins while the leader wraps a stick with rags, in the belief that the sins of the congregation are transferred to the stick with the rags. The leader then burns the stick and casts the ashes onto a river or stream, signifying that the communicants have received absolution for their sins.⁶² The same Takhtaji ceremony is reported by Sir W. M. Ramsay, who states that the Takhtajis hold secret meetings during which they commit immoral sexual acts and "scandals with regard to Oedipal union and harried orgies."⁶³

A modern writer, Nur Yalman, reports similar accusations made against the Alawi inhabitants of the village of Çiplaklar, in eastern Turkey. Yalman says that the Alawis' have a rite called Müm Söndü (candle extinguishing), source of "the myth of communal sexual intercourse and incest" that causes great annoyance to them.⁶⁴

It seems that many secretive groups have been accused of nocturnal orgies and sexual license. Since these ceremonies sparking the rumors are conducted at night and in the utmost secrecy, it is difficult to ascertain whether the accusations are myth or reality. However, this practice of night ceremonies does seem to be universal in Middle Eastern society. Professor Robert L. Canfield, who has done research in Afghanistan, contributed a paper on the subject to the Conference on Symbols of Social Differentiation (1978), in which the author was a participant.⁶⁵ And as far back as the tenth century, Abu al-Hasan al-Shabushti (d. 998), in his book *al-Diyarat* (Monasteries), related that on a night called the "Night of the Mashush," a feast in the Convent of Ukbara near Baghdad, Iraq, men and women mingled, and no one denied the other anything.⁶⁶

The Ceremony of Initiation

Like the Bektashis, the Shabak have a rather elaborate initiation ceremony which is conducted in absolute secrecy. A person desiring

admission to the Shabak community must be married. He must find and befriend another married couple who intend to enter the same order. (This is similar to the Kizilbash tradition requiring that admission be open only to married persons who each have a companion of the opposite sex.⁶⁷ The two couples must live together for forty to seventy days, in accordance with the injunction of Saykh Safi al-Din (from whom the Safawis take their name), who said, "The spirit is one, the body is one, the four are one, and the mystery is one."⁶⁸ In other words, one couple represents the spirit, and the other the body. During this probationary period the seeker of admission and his wife associate closely with the other person and his spouse. The four live, eat, and pray together. At the end of the probationary period, they go to the *pir*, taking with them a sheep that is three years old and free of physical blemishes. They also bring forty or more bottles of wine. The *pir* then orders forty Sufi couples to attend the ceremony of initiation. In the meantime, an ox has been selected; both the sheep and the ox will later be slaughtered. While the flesh of the ox may be eaten by all the villagers, the sheep may be consumed only by the Sufis. This is in accordance with the teaching of Saykh Safi, who stated, "He who eats of the flesh of this sheep is in fact eaten the flesh of al-Husayn."⁶⁹ It is interesting to note that the ceremony is not considered authentic unless a sacrificial sheep is available at the time the meeting takes place.

The *pir* then sits in the place of honor in the hall, and on a lower level sit the eighty Sufis. The four initiates, the couple representing the spirit and the couple representing the body, enter the hall carrying wine, yogurt, and honey, which they place in a large container. They also bring four small cups. The couples then stand in the prescribed order: the wife representing the spirit facing the husband representing the body, and the husband representing the spirit facing the wife representing the body. The *pir* fills the cups and hands them to the guide, who in turn hands them to the four initiates. The *pir* then recites three times the following confession, called *Iqrar Tulusi* (complete confession):

"Spring water. And their Lord caused them to drink pure water" (Quran 76:21). "May this drink become a light to the drinker and a direction to the cup bearer".⁷⁰ The *pir* concludes by saying: "He who renounces this confession may be counted as a hypocrite and become like Yazid, son of Muawiya."

The *pir* then asks the four initiates to prostrate themselves—the "spirit" husband next to the "body" wife and the "body" husband next to the "spirit" wife. The four are covered with a blanket and the guide holds the Staff of Arkan (rituals) over them. The *pir* recites three prayers,

rubbing the backs of the four at the end of each, and the guide touches their backs with the ritual staff, saying, "Alif, Allah, Mim, Muhammad, Ayn, Ali." Then the "spirit" husband crawls behind the "body" wife and the "spirit" wife crawls behind the "body" husband, and the couples kiss all the Sufis in the room, probably as a kind of "kiss of peace." Everybody stands while the pir offers a supplicatory prayer, and genuflects three times when he is finished, kissing the ground and saying, "Alif, Allah, Mim, Muhammad, Ayn, Ali." They also rub their chests with their hands and say, "The truth is beloved, the pir is beloved. The truth is Sultan. Away with falsehood." The guide then holds the staff while the pir approaches and worships it, kissing it at both ends and in the middle. The pir embraces the guide, placing his head on the guide's chest, and the guide rubs the pir's back three times with the staff and then does the same for each of the worshippers. The "spirit," the "body," and their wives stand before the pir, who recites, "May this place become a Hajj [pilgrimage] to those who attend; may it become a Miraj, and may their vows and supplications attain to the truth."⁷¹

After this prayer, the sheep is slaughtered in a trench dug in the meeting hall and the ox is slaughtered too. The villagers eat the ox, and the Sufis eat the lamb and drink wine. In the meantime, the pir recites the following hymn:

I have roamed the seven territories and the four corners [of the earth] and found no one as exalted as Ali. Ali is the one who created eighteen thousand worlds. He is rich and able to provide daily bread. One of his names is Ali, the other is God; praise and thanks be to God. I have not seen an exalted one except Ali. No man came to this world like Ali. Truth has been revealed by his pen, which wrote on the tablet and filled the whole world with its light. Would anyone, I wonder, who calls on Ali remain deprived? I have dived into the depth of the sea and counted the hair of the yellow bull and its company, and ascended to earth and into heaven, and found no exalted one except Ali. The high gate, wells and chambers of the Garden [paradise] are made of garnet and pearls, are under the feet of Ali. Pir! Sultan! Ali is the head of the forty and one of the Abdal. Thus, my heart tells me that Ali is God and is also Muhammad.⁷²

This hymn is a clear testimony that the Shabak are Ghulat (extremists) who deify Ali. It also demonstrates their trinity of God, Ali, and Muhammad, and shows that the Shabak share with other Ghulat the

belief that Ali is the provider of daily bread, and that he is the "face of God," the "hand of God" and the "Gate of God."⁷³

After reciting this hymn, the pir orders the door of the meeting hall to be opened, allowing the villagers who have been waiting outside to come in. The villagers enter the hall and congratulate those who have become Sufis, or members of the order. They kiss the hand of the pir and then drink wine, as the pir sings a song and plays the *tunbur* (musical instrument).

The ceremony of initiation ends with the collection of offerings. A member of the congregation ties a black kerchief around his neck and asks for gifts. Everyone puts whatever he can afford into the kerchief.⁷⁴

Another Ghulat sect, the *Ahl-i Haqq* (or *Ali Ilahis*) of western Iran, who shall be discussed later, have as part of their tradition a covenant of confraternity, according to which persons make covenants among themselves to live in complete harmony in this life and share sins and virtues on the Day of Resurrection.

Al-Ghulami describes another version of the ceremony of initiation among the *Shabak* and other related groups. According to his account, the pir visits the villages, preaching the way of the Sufis, and through the power of his preaching, convinces some people to become *talibs* (seekers) as a preliminary step toward joining the Sufi order. The chosen neophytes then meet with the pir at the home of one of them, always on a Friday night. Food and wine are provided for the meeting and the pir sits in the place of honor, surrounded by the worshippers. Then the *talibs* approach him one by one; placing their right big toe on the left one and bowing solemnly, they say, "By God, yes by God, *Birim*." Afterwards, the pir rises and girds each of them with a sash, placing his right hand on each seeker's back and pressing it tightly, while saying, "*Alif, Allah, Mim, Muhammad, Ayn, Ali*." Al-Ghulami states that the *Shabak* and related groups believe that the image of the pir's hand will appear on the backs of the initiates on the Day of Resurrection, being the only sign entitling the initiate to enter Paradise.⁷⁵ When these ceremonies are over, the villagers waiting outside enter the house, congratulate the new initiates and kiss the hand of the pir. Then they drink wine, doing so until some of them lose consciousness. In the meantime, the pir, accompanying himself on his *tunbur*, sings the song previously mentioned.⁷⁶

Obviously, the *Shabak* ceremony of initiation differs in some particulars from those of the *Bektashis* and the *Kizilbash*. However, there are some similarities between the *Bektashis'* ceremony of initiation and the *Shabak* ceremony of the Night of Forgiveness, such as the lighting of the

lamp or candle, the sweeping of the meeting hall, and the offering of water by a cupbearer to the worshippers.⁷⁷ There is also the sacrificial cock or lamb, as reported by Brown and Garnett.⁷⁸ The Shabak ceremony of initiation, when compared with that of the Bektashis, reveals a Bektashi origin.

Holy Shrines of the Shabak

We close this chapter with a discussion of the holy shrines that signify the Shabak's attachment to and honor for the Imams. It should be noted that these shrines are not mosques or places of worship in private homes; they are instead the monuments of Shabak faith, which the Shabak visit during the two major Muslim festivals. Their distinctive conical domes, with twelve triangular sections rising above the shrines, betray their Kizilbash origins, resembling the Kizilbash *taj* (cap), which has twelve folds representing the twelve Imams. No other religious group in northern Iraq (except for the Yezidis) has shrines with domes like those of the Shabak.⁷⁹

The Shabak have several holy shrines that testify to their Kizilbash origin. One of these shrines, called Ali Rush, is in the village of the same name. The second, called al-Abbas, is in the village of al-Abbasiyya, situated on al-Khosar, a small tributary of the Tigris River, near the ruins of ancient Nineveh. Al-Ghulami states that the Shabak do not know who this Abbas was.⁸⁰ Ali Rush is Ali, son of al-Husayn, nicknamed Zayn al-Abidin and al-Sajjad (worshipper of God) because of his extreme piety.⁸¹ It is perhaps because he always dressed in black that the Shabak call him Ali Rush, Kurdish for "black." The Shabak usually visit this shrine on the first and second days of the two Muslim feasts of al-Fitr and al-Adha.⁸² But why do the Shabak have a shrine for this son of al-Husayn at Ali Rush, when he died and was buried at al-Baqi in al-Madina? Perhaps the reason is that it was difficult for them to visit al-Madina; perhaps (and this is more plausible) it was because Ali Zayn al-Abidin represents the peak of Sufism, which has become an integral part of Shiism.⁸³

The other shrine of the Shabak is that of al-Abbas, whom (according to al-Ghulami) the Shabak fail to identify. In fact, al-Abbas is a son of the Imam Ali and brother of al-Husayn. He was the Banner Bearer of al-Husayn and, like al-Husayn and many other members of his family, was killed and mutilated at al-Taff in Karbala. (His palms were cut off.) Although the Shabak do not know the identity of al-Abbas, they perform

some rituals that obviously pertain to him. Al-Ghulami reports that during certain religious festivals, Shabak leaders visit their villages, carrying a bronze palm and exhibiting it to the people, who kiss it with great reverence. They receive a blessing for this act.⁸⁴ The only explanation of this bronze palm is that it represents the palm of al-Abbas, which was cut off at Karbala.⁸⁵

Allegedly connected with the episode of the massacre at Karbala is the grave site of Ubayd Allah Ibn Ziyad, whom the Umayyad Caliph Yazid I appointed a governor of al-Kufa in Iraq in order to eliminate al-Husayn and his entourage.⁸⁶ Every year the Shabak visit Ubayd Allah's grave, which is twenty kilometers east of Mosul, Iraq, and cast stones at it, all the while cursing Ubayd Allah, who was directly responsible for killing of al-Husayn and his men. As time has passed, these stones have grown into a huge mound that attracts the eye of any passerby.⁸⁷

The Shabak have another shrine called Hasan Fardosh, near the village of al-Darawish, on the road between Mosul and Bashiqā. The Yezidis in the area also venerate this shrine, and they and the Shabak meet once a year on a Friday, known as Tawwafa Friday. Both men and women spend the day dancing to the sound of musical instruments.⁸⁸ The important thing about these shrines is their domes which are of uniform conical shape, resembling the Kizilbash taj (cap), which consists of twelve strips to commemorate the twelve Imams.

Social Customs

IN MIDDLE EASTERN SOCIETIES, religion and religious affiliation play a fundamental role in the lives of the people. Identification with a religious sect is generally permanent; in the rare instances when a switch is made from one denomination to another, it is usually either the result of oppression or is undertaken out of self-interest. The American practice of "shopping for a religion" is unknown in the Middle East. A person born into a certain religious denomination will almost certainly live out his life within it. This religious striation shapes almost every aspect of life and social custom in the Middle East. Although it has been argued that advances in knowledge and education have weakened this religious rigidity, such thinking, on the whole, is fantasy. Religious striation tends to be especially rigid among the minority sects, whose social ethos and identity are bound up with their religious beliefs. Members of these sects may be loyal to their country and would certainly defend it, but their first allegiance is to the sect with which they identify.

Extremist Shiite sects, including the closely related Bektashis, Kizilbash, and Shabak, are no exception. For generations they have preserved their characteristic beliefs, customs, and way of life. A rural people, they have retained such tribal characteristics as a close sense of community, a system of patriarchal authority, and a cohesive family structure. Some extremist Shiite sects in Turkey, such as the Çepnis and Takhtajis, are nomads who make a living by cutting and selling wood. But most of these sects are permanently settled, living in towns and villages and working as farmers, herdsmen, and small businessmen. A great number of the educated new generation, however, have left their villages to seek greater employment opportunities in the cities.

Like other religious and ethnic groups in the Middle East, these sects keep to themselves intermarrying with those of their own faith. It is easy to identify these sectaries by their villages. When the author began his law practice in Mosul in 1946, he had many clients from the outlying villages. Most of these villages were notably homogeneous in character. Some were inhabited almost entirely by the Shabak, others almost entirely by Sarliyya. A few comprised members of two sects: for example, the Shabak and the Yezidis, or so-called devil worshippers. But even in villages with more than one sect, each sect retained a distinctive culture and community.

The Shabak are generally peaceful and hospitable, having amicable relations with most other people, be they Arab or Turkoman. Their men pride themselves on their long beards and mustaches, although the new generation is forsaking this custom. Rev. Anastase al-Karmali reports, on the authority of a resident of Mosul with firsthand knowledge of Shabak customs, that when the Shabak man eats, he uses his left hand to hold his mustache out of the way so that it does not become soiled while he is eating with his right hand.¹ This custom, especially common among Shabak religious leaders, is also prevalent among the Turkomans and may indicate the Turkoman origin of the Shabak.

It is interesting that other extremist Shiite groups, such as the Sarliyya (or Kakaiyya) and the Ahl-i Haqq (truth-worshippers)—also called Ali Ilahis (deifiers of Ali)—associate the growing of mustaches with the Imam Ali. The Sarliyya claim that when the Prophet Muhammad died, Ali washed his body before burial, following Muslim custom. During the course of the ablutions, Ali drank the water that filled the Prophet's navel. This caused Ali's mustache to remain long, growing out immediately even when he cut it. This is why the Sarliyya do not shave off their mustaches.³

The Ahl-i Haqq also wear long mustaches that are not trimmed or tampered with in any way. According to their religious book, *Tadhkira-i A'la*, the mustache is considered an emblem distinguishing the Ahl-i Haqq from other people. The practice of wearing a long mustache is said to date back to the time of the Imam Ali, who is believed to have stated that whoever loved the Ahl-i Haqq ought not to clip his mustache. Thus, any attempt to alter a mustach is taboo, and the fully grown mustache is the badge of membership in the Ahl-i Haqq community. More important, the mustache is associated with Ali, who is more than a mere man to the extremist Shiite sects.⁴

The growing of beards and mustaches is also a Kizilbash-Bektashi custom. M. F. Grenard writes that the Kizilbash in Turkey are dis-

tinguished from Sunnite Muslims only by their beards and hairstyle. They do not shave their beards, but allow them to grow full and free.⁵

While the Sunnite Muslims clip their mustaches in imitation of the Prophet, who they believe clipped his, extremist Shiites refuse to clip their mustaches, in imitation of their spiritual leader Ali.⁶ The point is clear. What is "true" of the Prophet is also "true" of Ali, who is considered at least equal with, if not higher than, the Prophet.

The Birth of a Child

Seven days after a male child is born to a Shabak family, the parents take him to the *pir* to be blessed. They take along with them a lamb, bread, and wine. After the *pir* recites the blessing prayers over the child, the lamb is slaughtered, cooked, and served to all those in the ceremony. The guests eat, drink, and dance. The dance is performed in a semicircle, and is known among the villagers as the *chopi*.⁷

Marriage and Divorce

The Shabak hold women who are descendants of the Imam Ali in high esteem. They insist that only men and women descendents of Ali should intermarry, believing that a marriage with an outsider is ill-fated.⁸ Al-Ghulami states that in conversations with leaders of the Shabak, he tried to explain to them that Islam does not forbid marriages with outsiders, pointing out that the second caliph, Umar Ibn al-Khattab, married Umam Kulthum, the daughter of the Imam Ali, even though he was not of Ali's family. Al-Ghulami says that his efforts were in vain, however; the Shabak remained convinced that their prohibition was necessary. A similar custom exists among the Zaydis, a moderate Shiite group. They believe that only a Fatimi man may marry a Fatimi woman, since both are descendents of Fatima, daughter of the Prophet and wife of the Imam Ali.⁹

The Shabak hold marriage sacred. A Shabak husband seldom deserts or divorces his wife, even when she is unable to fulfill her wifely duties. To the Shabak, divorce is detestable. If a Shabak husband does divorce his wife, he must pay dearly, fulfilling certain requirements before the divorce is final. First, he must sell all his major belongings—his home, land, his cattle. Dividing the proceeds into twelve shares, he

must donate eleven shares to the Pir, retaining one share for himself.¹⁰ He must travel then to Karbala, accompanied by two witnesses. In Karbala, at the tomb of al-Husayn, he must proclaim that he has divorced his wife. Upon returning to his village, he must buy forty bottles of *arak*, a licorice-flavored alcoholic beverage known in the United States as ouzo, and, along with the two eyewitnesses and other members of the community, he must proceed to the house of the pir. There a fire is built, and when the flames die down to ashes, the pir orders the man to stand on the hot ashes, with two stones tied around his neck, as a punishment for divorcing his wife. Then the pir turns to those present and asks "Are you pleased with this slave?" The answer: "If the Erenler are pleased with him, we are pleased, too." The pir replies, "The Erenler are benevolent." At this point, the divorce becomes final.

Commenting on this procedure, al-Sarraf indicates that the husband alone must bear the enormous burden entailed in divorcing his wife.¹¹ This practice is completely different from the standard practice of Islam, whereby a man may divorce his wife simply by saying that he is doing so.

The Kizilbash are generally monogamous, although polygamy is permitted if a first wife is barren, has become insane, or is incapable of performing her wifely duties, or if the husband is financially capable of supporting more than one wife. Divorce is forbidden.¹²

The Kizilbash seem to hold women in great respect, maintaining that, in spirit and love, women are equal to men. They believe in educating their daughters and permitting women to go about with their faces uncovered. Women are also free to become acquainted with men, especially Christian men.¹³ Like many village women in the Middle East, the Kizilbash women assist their men in the fields, in addition to performing household chores and caring for the children.

Although it may be understood from the above that the woman has a special position in society, there is another side to this position, owing to the concept of *Ird*. Literally, *Ird* means a special kind of honor, associated with the protection of the female's virtue, whether she is a virgin or not. Any woman who indulges in illicit sexual acts outside wedlock may be put to death, for such behavior is believed to destroy the family's *Ird*. Thus, when a man in Middle Eastern society swears by his *Ird*, this is a very serious oath; he is swearing that all the female members of his tribe or family are sexually pure and have committed no illicit acts. This concept of *Ird* is not peculiar to the Extremist Shiites. It is universal in Middle Eastern societies, regardless of their ethnic or religious composition, their social status or their degree of sophistication.

In Iraq, the killing of a woman for an illicit sexual act is called *Ghasl*

al-Ar, literally, "the washing of dishonor." This practice is highly esteemed throughout the Middle East, but it is especially prevalent among the rural tribal inhabitants of Iraq, including the Shabak and other related groups.¹⁴ In fact, Article 216 of the Iraqi Penal Code, which the author studied and practiced in the courts of Iraq, states that if a man finds his wife or any close female relative in bed with a man and kills her instantly, he will be sentenced to only three years imprisonment, not death. Usually such a killer reports the incident to the police himself, proudly presenting the weapon he used in killing his victim and saying that he did it as *ghaslan li al-Ar*. In most cases, he becomes a hero, respected and honored in his community.¹⁵

Al-Sarraf states that the Shabak are "very protective of their Ird, and abstain from vice, adultery and whoredom."¹⁶ He notes, however, the very different treatment given erring men and erring women. A Shabak man who is immoral or profligate is punished with a kind of excommunication. He is totally ostracized, cast out from the social and religious circles of his community. Unless he mends his ways, no member of the Shabak community will ever give his daughter to him in marriage. But a Shabak woman, married or single, who is even suspected of indulging in illicit sex or of indecorous conduct, will be slain.¹⁷

A leader of the Sarliyya, Khattab Agha, told al-Ghulami that outsiders, speaking from ignorance, accuse his sect of committing immoral sexual acts at the Çırağı Söndürün (extinguishing of lights). To defend his people's honor against such accusations, Khattab Agha cited many instances in which women who had committed adultery were "drowned in either the Khazir or Zab rivers [tributaries of the Tigris], or strangled, or had sharp daggers plunged into their bodies." Khattab Agha concluded with great pride that if this is the manner in which his people defend their honor, "How could anyone accuse us of meeting privately to commit what is abominable?"¹⁸ It should be remembered that the concepts of Ird and Ghasl al-Ar apply only to women: not to men, who are equally guilty of unlawful sexual acts. This one-sided moral code can be understood only if one realizes that, almost without exception, Middle Eastern societies are male oriented.

Death

When a member of the Shabak dies, the pir goes to the house of the deceased and reads certain hymns over the corpse. The body is then

washed, according to universal Muslim custom. Members of the family grieve over the body, wailing loudly. After the burial, the family usually prepares a meal which is distributed to the poor people of their villages.¹⁹

Drinking of Wine

Both men and women among the Shabak drink wine, claiming that, unlike pork, it is not forbidden by the Quran. Wine is considered by the Shabak to be one of the niceties of this life, and they imbibe it in quantity at their religious meetings and festivities. It is even used to treat the common cold. The drinking of wine or arak is so firmly associated with their religious belief that to the Shabak, "He who does not drink arak has no faith or religion."²⁰ Sometimes, the Shabak even give it to their horses as the treatment for certain diseases.²¹ The drinking of wine is also allowed by the Bektashis, the Kizilbash, and other extremist Shiite sects.²²

The Eating of Meats

Like orthodox Muslims, the members of the extremist Shiite sects do not eat pork. The Bektashis and Kizilbash, however, have an additional prohibition whose origin is unknown: they avoid eating or even touching hare. One explanation offered for this rather peculiar custom attitude of the Bektashis is that a companion of the Prophet Muhammad had a cat that turned into a hare. Another is that the Bektashis believe that after a hare is cooked, all that remains is a little blood, and blood is associated with the Umayyad Caliph Yazid, who was responsible for the unjust killing of al-Husayn at Karbala. Yet another explanation concerns the wife of a certain dervish. This woman tried to wipe clean a soiled soft spot with her veil and then hid the veil in a tree. Some of her inquisitive neighbors, who wanted to know what she had hidden in the tree, went to look and, behold, a hare jumped out of the tree.²³ It is most likely that this custom is an ancient one, dating back to the pagan practices of Turkish tribes.²⁴

It is also peculiar that the Takhtajis (woodcutters), another extremist Shiite sect related to the Bektashis, consider the bear to be taboo. They avoid looking at bears and even touching bearskins. In fact, they

never even use the word "bear," calling this animal "big son."²⁵ This aversion to the bear also derives from a tribal custom of the ancient Turks, associated with the belief of "Oncun," which forbids the eating of certain animals.²⁶

Folk Medicine

Like other villagers and even some town dwellers in Iraq, the Shabak hold many superstitions, and practice folk medicine and faith healing. This does not mean that they shun medical advice and treatment, but the majority of the Shabak are illiterate and ignorant, and most of their villages have no doctors or treatment facilities. Moreover, it is difficult for them to transport their sick to Mosul, and in many cases, they fear that the sick could not stand the trip. Also, because of their religious and ethnic idiosyncrasies, they have developed their own habits, of which folk medicine is a part.

One common treatment given the sick is a soup called *Tarshok* (sour), made by boiling grain with the juice of edible sumac and lemon.²⁷ When someone becomes seriously ill, he is taken to a holy shrine or the house of the *pir*, or the *pir* is asked to visit the patient at home to recite certain prayers for him.

For boils on the face, two flintstones are struck together, producing sparks which are directed at the offending boils, and which the Shabak believe will cure them. For a stomach ache, the belly is lightly struck with an arrow.²⁸ Another treatment for stomach ache is bleeding and cauterization.

Trachoma is treated by applying to the infected eye a sticky substance extracted from the backs of frogs. This treatment is very painful, with the pain lasting as long as twenty-four hours, but the Shabak claim that it is effective.²⁹

When a person suffers from a crooked jaw, perhaps resulting from a seizure or stroke, he is to be taken to the shrine of a saint, where he remains for seven days, the period assigned for his recovery. If he does not recover by the end of seven days, the *pir* or someone else strikes his jaw with his shoe to straighten it.³⁰

Even more peculiar is the treatment of intermittent fever, probably due to malaria. The right arm of the sufferer is wrapped with a piece of cloth, which is left on until the fever is gone. A thread blessed by the *Pir* and tied around the patient's wrist is also used to treat a fever. Still

another method of treating fever is to have the sick person take with him an onion, a jug of water, and a loaf of bread, and go to a special place outside the village. With the provisions beside him, the patient lies on his back on the ground, awaiting the full assault of the fever. When the fever has left him, the patient returns home, leaving behind the onion, the jug of water, and the loaf of bread.³¹

These treatments all pertain to fevers that strike in the daytime. A fever that comes on at night requires different treatment. Before sunset, a person from a family known for its hereditary medical tradition stands on the top of the village dunghill, holding a loaf of bread in his hand and shouts in the Kurdish language:

Bastards! the fever attacks him
 [the patient] at night and leaves
 him in the daytime.
 Alongside the village, the riders of
 the brown horses gallop, stirring up
 dust.
 One comes from the village of Shamsi, and
 the other from the village of Zengana.
 What is the treatment of this night fever?
 Hu, Hu, Hu [He, i.e., God].

After he finishes, a man from the village who has at least two wives answers the question in the chant by saying the treatment requires two, three, or four sheep. Then the villagers shout, "Hu, Hu, Hu."

As a sign of great jubilation, the two wives at this point utter a long, drawn-out trill. Then the person who initiated this treatment ceremony calls the village dogs, which run to him. He throws the loaf of bread to the first dog reaching him. The dog, usually starved, eats the loaf of bread, and according to Shabak belief, the patient's fever is transferred to the dog. After this, the patient is required to provide the number of sheep mentioned by the man initiating the treatment. The sheep are slaughtered and cooked in the patient's home and distributed to the villagers after the patient and his family have enjoyed their share of the meal.³²

Religious Books

EXTREMIST SHIITES do not have a religious book exclusively their own with a divine message like the Bible or the Quran. Rather, their religious or sacred books are treatises primarily concerned with Sufi ethics and traditions. Some of these books, such as the *Saranjam* or *Tadhkira-i A'la* of the Ahl-i Haqq, do contain such theological concepts as cosmogony and the appearance of God in seven theophanies. But their cardinal beliefs—in the preexistence, divine powers, and infallibility of the Imam—at least in the case of the Bektashis, are based on *Khutbat al-Bayan* (the sermon of eloquence or explanation), attributed to Ali.

Another sect, the Sarliyya or Kakaiyya, who shall be discussed later, hold *Khutbat al-Bayan* in higher esteem than the Quran. Such beliefs are also based on the many *Nefeses* (literally, “breaths,” but in fact poems “breathing” the doctrines and practices of the Bektashis), composed by many Bektashi poets). These poems survive in many collections; Sadettin Nuzhet Bey’s *Bektaşi Şairleri* is reported by Birge to contain the most cherished Shiite doctrinal poems.¹ Among those most revered by the Bektashis and Kizilbash of Turkey are those composed by Shah Ismail Safawi of Persia. Shah Ismail was defeated by the Sunnite Ottoman Sultan Selim I at Chaldiran in 1514, in a battle fought because the Sultan feared the spread of ultra-Shiism among the Bektashis and Kizilbash of Turkey. But, in the words of Baha Sait Bey, the real victor was Shah Ismail, for his pen was mightier than the sword of Selim I.²

The poems of Shah Ismail, preserved in *Divan Khata'i* (The anthology of Khatai [the pen-name of Shah Isma'il]), are a source of inspiration and pleasure for the Bektashis, Kizilbash, and Takhtajis of Turkey. His poem “Duwazdeh Imams,” which praises and exalts the

twelve Imams, is especially popular in the Takhtaji villages around Smyrna.³ The religious book of the Shabak, the *Buyruk*, also contains a poem by Khatai.

If there is any religious book common to the different extremist sects, especially to the Kizilbash, Shabak, Ibrahimiyya, and Sarliyya or Kakaiyya, it is the *Buyruk*. J. G. Taylor, writing in the 1860s, noted that the Kizilbash of Dersim (present day Tunceli), in the upper Euphrates valley, had a book called the *Booywick* [Buyruk], a copy of which fell into his hands. Unfortunately, he fails to describe this book, commenting only that he has examined it and found that the Kizilbash's respect for the Prophet Muhammad "is simply a blind to deceive the Muslims, for they have nothing in common with them; no obligatory fasts, formal prayers, ablutions, or belief in the Koran."⁴ The *Buyruk* is also mentioned by the American missionary Dunmore, who visited a village of Kizilbash Kurds in 1857. Dunmore states that the Kizilbash there had a large book called the *Buyruk* [he spells it Bouyouruk], which, as nearly as he can learn, "is an eclecticism from the Old Testament Scriptures, interspersed with their own traditions." Dunmore also mentions another book of these Kizilbash, called *Yusuf Kitab* (The book of Joseph), which he was assured contained portions of the New Testament.⁵ Finally, writing in 1901, M. F. Grenard states that the Kizilbash told him that they do have a special book, but he could not obtain a copy or even discover its title.⁶ We may then assume that the *Buyruk* is the religious book common to the greatest number of extremist Shiite sects, and therefore deserves full attention.

The chief religious book among the Shabak is *Kitab al-Manaqib* (The book of exemplary acts, commonly known as *Burkh*), which is a distortion of the Turkish *Buyruk* (Commandments). In 1938, Al-Sarraf became the first to obtain a copy of this book; he was given it by the Shabak leader Ibrahim, nicknamed al-Pasha. Al-Sarraf translated whole sections of it into Arabic, summarized other parts, and published it in his book *al-Shabak*. Al-Sarraf states that the copy of the *Buyruk* given to him by Ibrahim al-Pasha was written in Azeri Turkish. The handwriting was poor, and many parts were illegible. He hoped to find another and better copy to shed some light on the one he had. Fortunately, one of his friends, Sadiq Kammuna, an attorney, had obtained a copy of the *Buyruk* used by another extremist Shiite group, the Ibrahimiyya, whose members live mainly in the town of Tallafar, north of Mosul. When Al-Sarraf studied this copy, he determined that its language is the same as that of his own, but found that the Ibrahimiyya version contained a brief biography of Shaykh Safi al-Din and some hymns composed by Kizilbash poets and by the Safawi Shah Ismail, not found in his Shabak copy. Further-

more, in some parts the Ibrahimayya version was more detailed than the Shabak *Buyruk*. For example, it described several disciplinary measures that the religious guide can inflict on a neophyte seeking admission to the Sufi order. These included reprimand, imprisonment, whipping, and even attachment of a millstone around the seeker's neck for more stringent discipline.⁷

The full title of the copy belonging to Kammuna is *Manaqib al-Awliya aw al-Buyruk* (Exemplary acts of the saints, or commandments). It may now be found in the Iraqi Museum Library (Turkish MS. 14760/1) and bears Kammuna's private seal, dated 1975. It consists of two parts. The first part, 111 pages, contains the biography, divine acts, and Sufistic instructions of Shaykh Safi al-Din. The second part, 50 pages, contains a collection of Turkish poems in praise of the twelve Imams. We learn from a colophon at the end of the manuscript that "this is the book in which the Sufis of Tallafar believe." Written in blue ink, this transcription was completed on 28 December 1953, but the identity of the person who made the transcription is not given.⁸

The fact that both versions of the *Buyruk* are anonymous gives rise to speculation regarding its authorship. Consulting the book *Kashf al-Zunun* by Haji Khalifa (d. 1076/1656), al-Sarraf found that Khalifa mentions a work which he calls *al-Manaqib* or *Safwat al-Safa*. Written in Persian by the dervish Ismail Tawakkuli Ibn Bazzaz (d. 1350), it contains a biography of Shaykh Safi al-Din, presenting his religious acts and Sufistic principles. In light of this information, al-Sarraf concludes that the *Buyruk* given him by Ibrahim al-Pasha is not the one described by Haji Khalifa. He reasons thus because Khalifa's *al-Manaqib* is written in Persian, while Ibrahim al-Pasha's copy of the Shabak book is written in Azeri Turkish and does not contain the biography or acts of Shaykh Safi al-Din. In sum, al-Sarraf cannot determine who wrote the Shabak *Buyruk*. He is not sure whether the author was Shaykh Safi al-Din; his son, Shaykh Sadr al-Din; Shah Ismail, or one of the followers of the Safawi Sufi order. However, judging by the style of the book, which is written in the form of interlocution between Safi al-Din and his son, Sadr al-Din on different religious matters, and particularly on the life and principles of the Sufi order, al-Sarraf concludes that his Shabak *Buyruk* was written by a great Kizilbash religious guide, a contemporary of Shaykh Sadr al-Din and one of his disciples.⁹

This conclusion is faulty; the *Buyruk* could not have been written by a Kizilbash contemporary of Shaykh Sadr al-Din because the followers of the Safawis were first called Kizilbash in the time of Shaykh Haydar Ibn Junayd, who died in 1488, while Shaykh Sadr al-Din died in

1391, almost a century earlier. Furthermore, the copy of the *Buyruk* published by al-Sarraf contains poems composed by Shah Ismail under the pseudonym "Khatai," indicating that the *Buyruk* must have been compiled in the time of Shah Ismail (d. 1524) or shortly thereafter.¹⁰

A study of the book *Safwat al-Safa* may shed some light on the origin of the *Buyruk*. This book was written by the dervish Ismail Tawakkuli Ibn Bazzaz at the behest of Shaykh Sadr al-Din, who in 1334 succeeded his father as head of the Safawi order, holding that office until 1391. *Safwat al-Safa* contains a biography of Shaykh Safi al-Din, an account of his miraculous acts and spiritual instructions, and the principles of the Safawi Sufi order, together with Safi al-Din's interpretation of some Quranic verses. It does not contain (as the *Buyruk* does) a dialogue between Safi al-Din and his son Sadr al-Din, or Sufistic poems composed by Shah Ismail. However, from its general content we may deduce that *Safwat al-Safa* was probably the basis of at least parts of the *Buyruk*, especially those dealing with the life of Shaykh Safi al-Din (as included in the Ibrahimiyya version obtained by Sadiq Kammuna), and with the spiritual principles of the Safawi Sufi order, as included in the Shabak version obtained and published by al-Sarraf.¹¹

Further light is shed on the origin of the *Buyruk* by Abbas al-Azzawi. Among the several religious books of the Kakaiyya, al-Azzawi cites two of great importance to our study. One of these is *al-Mawahib al-Saniyya fi al-Manaqib al-Safawiyya* (The splendid gifts of the Safawi exemplary acts), which he states is none other than the book *Safwat al-Safa*, by Ismail Tawakkuli Ibn Bazzaz, already mentioned.¹²

The other book is the *Buyruk* itself. Al-Azzawi maintains that this book is no different from *Safwat al-Safa* except that it is shorter—in other words, a compendium. This compendium contains the biography and Sufi teachings of Shaykh Safi al-Din, thus resembling the Ibrahimiyya version of the *Buyruk*, rather than al-Sarraf's Shabak version. Therefore, we may safely assume that whoever wrote Kammuna's copy of *al-Manaqib* must have used the book *Safwat al-Safa*, by Ibn Bazzaz, as his major source. When later copies were made, the compilers for some reason dropped the biography of Shaykh Safi al-Din contained in *Safwat al-Safa* and interpolated poems by Shah Ismail to further confirm the dignity and spirituality of the Safawi order. It is likely that the interpolator was a contemporary of Shah Ismail. The significance of the Shabak copy of the *Buyruk* is that it serves as a link between the Shabak and the Kizilbash, both of whom are adherents of the Safawi order.¹³

So far we have information about three versions of the book called *Buyruk*. All deal in one way or another with aspects of the Safawi order.

They are used by such different religious groups as the Shabak, the Ibrahimiyya Sufi order of Tallafar, and the Kakaiyya, in and around the city of Kirkuk. But other versions bearing the title of *Buyruk* exist, used by the Kizilbash of Turkey, including these obtained by the two nineteenth-century men mentioned earlier; the Protestant missionary Dunmore,¹⁴ and J. G. Taylor, the British Consul for Kurdistan.¹⁵ All these different copies must have had a common origin, most likely *Safwat al-Safa*, but in the course of time, interpolations were made by different compilers to suit the religious idiosyncrasies of their particular groups.

The Shabak copy of the *Buyruk*, the focus of this study, contains the commandments of Shaykh Safi al-Din—who is described as Qutb al-Arifin (the pole of the Gnostics, or he who has tasted the joy of the divine mystery)—addressed to his son, Sadr al-Din. The purpose of these commandments is to demonstrate the relation between the shaykh (head) of the Sufi order founded by Shaykh Safi al-Din and the seeker or neophyte who desires to join the order.¹⁶

We learn at the beginning of the *Buyruk* that these commandments are not Safi al-Din's own creation, but were approved by God and delivered through the medium of the angel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad. They are divinely inspired and therefore constitute an essential part of God's message to the Prophet Muhammad and of the Sharia (law) of Islam. We learn further that these divine commandments were handed down by the angel Gabriel to Muhammad, through him to Ali, and then to his descendants, the Imams. Finally, they were entrusted to Shaykh Safi al-Din, who honored them and taught them to his disciples and dervishes to guide them to the love of the saints of the order. Thus, the legitimacy of the spiritual authority of Shaykh Safi al-Din and his Sufi order, through the Prophet Muhammad, Ali, and the Imams, is established. This authority, we are told in the *Buyruk*, must be respected and obeyed by the neophyte without argument or question, for the simple reason that these commandments contain the power to protect the neophyte from fear in this world and the world to come. Likewise, the neophyte who shuns or violates these commandments will be rejected by God, His Prophet, the saints, and the angels.¹⁷

In essence, the *Buyruk* contains the necessary ethical principles for training the character of the disciples of the Sufi order, stressing the importance of patience, total obedience, abstinence, charity, and altruism. From the Shiite point of view, it emphasizes the *tawalli* (love of the family of the Prophet, and specifically of Ali, his wife Fatima, and their descendants, the Imams), the profession of their *isma* (infallibility), and *tabarri* (renunciation of those who dishonor or hate the Imams).¹⁸

The *Buyruk's* presentation of the commandments of Shaykh Safi al-Din to his son, its affirmation of their legitimacy as part of the message of the Prophet of Islam, handed down through divine dispensation through Ali and the rest of the Imams, and its emphasis on the concepts of tawalli and tabarri, seem to indicate that Shaykh Safi al-Din was a Shiite and in fact, the originator of Shiism among his adherents and descendants, the Safawis. It is an established fact that Shaykh Safi al-Din was a Sufi (mystic) who had many Sufi followers; however, as we have shown in chapter three, evidence that he was a Shiite is lacking. It was in Ardabil that he began to claim descent from Ali and to call himself Alawi, but no member of his family, not even his wife, had any idea that he was a descendant of Ali. Even his son, Sadr al-Din, could not determine whether Safi al-Din was descended from al-Hasan or al-Husayn, and this cast doubt on his father's claim to descent from Ali. Furthermore, in his interpretation of many Quranic verses, Shaykh Safi al-Din cites the opinions of Sunnite writers and expositors, which one does not find in Shiite writings.¹⁹

Turning to the commandments of Shaykh Safi al-Din as contained in the Shabak *Buyruk*, we find no traces of either moderate or extremist Shiite doctrine. The interlocation between Shaykh Safi al-Din and his son is of a totally Sufistic nature. The *Buyruk* which al-Sarraf published is divided into fifty-two sections. Sections 1-6 consist of an introduction and a summary of the commandments, with an account of their divine inspiration and transmission by the angel Gabriel to Muhammad, Ali, and the rest of the Imams, and finally to Shaykh Safi al-Din. It should be noted that Safi al-Din had nothing to do with this account of divine transmission and succession. In fact, it stands separate from the main body of the commandments, which are presented in sections 7-36.²⁰

It must have been written by a much later Safawi adherent, perhaps toward the end of the fifteenth century, when the Safawis adopted Shiism. In fact, each section of the commandments except section 34, which contains a poem by a Kizilbash poet, and section 36, which contains a poem by Khatai (Shah Ismail), begins with the words, "Shaykh Safi al-Din says," or "Shaykh Safi al-Din explains." We may assume that these sections contain the "genuine" Sufistic teaching of Shaykh Safi al-Din. In sections 37-52, however, the name of Safi al-Din does not appear. We are tempted to conclude that the *Buyruk* was compiled by an extremist Shiite in the time of Shah Ismail.

In section 37, the compiler of the *Buyruk* examines the succession of the Khilafa (caliphate) from the Prophet of Islam. He also discusses briefly the attributes and the qualifications of the caliph. The true Shiite

opinion of the caliphate does not appear until the following section, when Ali and his eleven descendants, comprising the twelve Imams, are said to be the "only successors to the Prophet Muhammad."²¹ Sections 39 through 42, with the exception of section 41, which contains a poem by Shah Ismail, present in detail the qualifications and attributes of the Khalifa (caliph).²² Sections 43 through 46 describe the qualifications of the Sufi guide, or instructor. Sections 47 and 48 are of great significance, because they relate the tradition of Ghadir Khumm (the Khumm Pond), in which Shiites maintain that the Prophet Muhammad designated Ali as his legatee and successor. These sections also contain the traditions, "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate," and "I and Ali are of one light."²³ Section 50 contains a narrative about Najm al-Din Kubra (d. 1221), a Sufi who states that if one offers his prayer to God in the name of Muhammad, Ali, and the twelve Imams, asking God to take care of his needs, God will answer his prayer.²⁴ The last sections, 51 and 52, affirm the spiritual transcendence of the family of the Prophet—Fatima, Ali, and their descendants the Imams—and their power of intercession representing all the prophets and patriarchs from the time of Adam. Their transcendence and favor with God are demonstrated by the fact that God created everything for them. In short, the Imams take the place of the Logos. In these two sections, Shiite hyperbole reaches its highest point.²⁵

A final observation on section 49 may shed some light on the composition of the *Buyruk*. Several lines are missing in this section, making it difficult to ascertain an intelligible overall meaning. However, it contains the following statement, which seems to have no connection with the preceding sections: "I, the weak and poor Firishta Ibn Abd al-Majid, have translated the Khutba [the public speech of the Prophet Muhammad designating Ali as his heir and successor] from Arabic into Turkish."²⁶ This Firishta, whose full name is Abd al-Majid Ibn Firishta Zadeh (d. 1459), is a Bektashi writer, whose book, *Akhiratnama*, written in Turkish, contains the Bektashi doctrine of eschatology. He is also the one who introduced the doctrine of Hurufism into Anatolia.²⁷ Ibn Firishta's statement in the *Buyruk* is strange indeed, because there is no evidence that he was its compiler. It is obvious that the compiler, whoever he was interpolated into the *Buyruk* poems written by Shah Ismail under the pen name of Khatai and by other Kizilbash poets, along with Ibn Firishta's translation of the Khutba, in order to substantiate his extremist Shiite views and to legitimize the association of the Safawis with the "infallible" Imams. In this way he confirms the spiritual power of the Safawis over their adherents by combining Sufism and Shiism in the tenets of their order. This is borne out by the fact that Ibn Firishta

himself was a Bektashi, whose extremist Shiite doctrine is not very different from that of the Kizilbash and the Shabak.

In the summer of 1984, I was in Iraq, doing research on the Shabak and other Ghulat sects. I learned through a friend that the Iraqi writer Shakir Sabir al-Zabit had in his possession manuscripts on the religion of the Shabak hitherto unknown to scholars. I visited al-Zabit twice at his home, and he told me that he did have two manuscripts which he had translated into Arabic. Al-Zabit was kind enough to let me read his translations of the manuscripts, but he refused to show me the originals. He also handed me his commentary on these manuscripts and told me that he intends to write a book on some extremist Shiite sects in Iraq, and that his commentary was just the beginning of his project. The commentary, together with other information, mostly on the Shabak, constituted forty-one typed pages, double-spaced on foolscap.

I perused the translation and commentary, making many notes. Since al-Zabit is a Turkoman from Kirkuk, and well-versed in the Turkish language as well as in the religious and social practices of his own people, his translation and commentary should be of interest to scholars.

Toward the end of July, before my departure from Baghdad, I met with al-Zabit again at his home, accompanied by my brother Akram and Adnan Sabri Yusuf. This time, al-Zabit insisted that I take no notes at all but only read the translation of the manuscript and ask him questions if I needed something clarified. He would not even let me hold a pen in my hand. I spent two hours reading the manuscript, satisfying myself that there was no more significant information to add to the copious notes I had already taken at my first reading of the manuscript.

Both manuscripts are very brief and both are anonymous. The first one is entitled *Kitab Shah Safi, known as Buyruk aw Kitab al-Manaqib* (Book of Shah Safi, known as the book of commandments, or the book of the exemplary acts of saints). A subtitle reads, *The Book of Shah Safi on Perfect Knowledge, as He Described it to Shaykh Sadr al-Din*.

The manuscript contains the Sufi teaching of Shaykh Safi al-Din as imparted similar to that of al-Sarraf's copy of the *Buyruk*, suggesting that they have a common origin. The only difference is that while al-Sarraf's *Buyruk* is written in the form of an interlocution, al-Zabit's manuscript is written as a discourse. My conclusion is that both works belong to the early Safawi period, perhaps the 1500s. To show his Shiite belief, the anonymous author of al-Zabit's copy inserted in the discourse traditions of the Prophet usually cited by the Shiites, such as, "Ali and Muhammad are of one light," "I am the city of knowledge, and Ali is its gate," and "Ali is the Wali of God and God is the upholder of Ali."

Al-Zabit's second manuscript, entitled *Sunbula Nama* (The book of the ear of corn), is written in the Chaghatai Turkish used in Turkistan. Al-Zabit claims that the manuscript is unique and clearly dates back to the twelfth century, because it contains the Sufic teaching of Ahmad Yasawi (d. 1166). A careful study of the manuscript, however, shows that it cannot have been written before the first half of the fifteenth century, because it contains teachings of Hurufism, whose founder, Fadl Allah al-Astrabadi, died in 1401. It was probably compiled by a fifteenth-century Bektashi-Hurufi author, who drew a variety of elements suitable to his Shiite views from the teachings of the both Bektashis and the Hurufis and tied them together.

What is interesting about the *Sunbula Nama* is that its author associates it with Salman al-Farisi, a companion of the Prophet, and one of the first to rally behind the Imam Ali and support him as the one designated to succeed the Prophet.²⁸ The manuscript quotes Salman al-Farisi as saying that this *Sunbula Nama* is the genealogy of the family of the Prophet. Because the members of the family of the Prophet (Ali, his wife Fatima, his two sons, al-Hasan and al-Husayn, and the rest of the Imams) are fixed to the stem of the Prophet as grains of wheat are fixed to the stem, the compiler chose the term "Sunbula" (ear of corn) as the title of the manuscript. What is peculiar about the *Sunbula Nama* is that the Imam Ali supposedly foretold its creation and transmission from Khurasan to the land of the Rum (Asia Minor), the home of many extremist Shiite dervish orders, including the Bektashiyya, whose founder came from Khurasan to Asia Minor. This foreshadowing betrays the Bektashi origin of the *Sunbula*. We read in the *Sunbula* that the Imam Ali, speaking in Persian, said that when those who attained the spiritual mystery, (i.e., those initiated into the Bektashi order) came from Khurasan to the land of the Rum, they translated this *Sunbula Nama* from Persian into Turkish. Therefore, the *Sunbula* is the essence of this order (which most likely means the Bektashi dervish order).

Another indication of the Bektashi origin of the *Sunbula Nama* is the association of later Shiite writers like Nasir al-Din al-Tusi (1201–74) with the early companions of the Prophet and of the Imam Ali. The *Sunbula Nama* reports for example, a tradition about Ali related by Salman al-Farisi. This tradition says that the Commander of the Faithful and "Sultan of the Walaya," Ali, was in the company of seven devoted adherents of the Bektashi order, namely Ibn Siman, Ammar Ibn Yasir, Nasir al-Tusi, Suhayb al-Rumi, Baba Umar, Salman al-Farisi, and Qanbar Ali. These men loved and supported Ali passionately, enough to sacrifice themselves for him.

One of them, Ammar Ibn Yasir, asked the Imam Ali if those who believed in him should follow after him. The Imam Ali answered that they should follow his sons, the Imams. Ali then made a Hurufi statement in which he applied the *huruf* (numbers) seven, fourteen, thirty-two, and seventy-two to his descendants, the Imams, and to those who would follow him. Ali concluded that everything in existence is connected with these numbers.

Al-Zabit did not identify the men discussed in the manuscript. However, Ibn Siman must be Bayan Ibn Siman al-Nahdi, also called al-Tamimi (d. 737), who was an extremist Shiite; Umar Baba must be Amr Ibn Umayya al-Dumari, who, together with Salman al-Farisi, al-Miqdad, Ammar Ibn Yasir, and Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, is considered by the Ghulat one of the deputies entrusted by the "God Ali" to supervise the affairs of this world.²⁹ Among these deputies is also included Nasir al-Din al-Tusi, already mentioned, who spread the Shiite teaching in Persia. It is interesting that al-Tusi is mentioned in a poem entitled "Fadilat Nama," composed in 1519 by the Bektashi poet, Yemini Baba, in honor of Ali.³⁰

Further evidence that the *Sunbula Nama* is of Bektashi origin is its discussion of the fourteen Pure Innocents. Moderate Shiites and some extremists like the Hurufis believe that the twelve Imams, the Prophet Muhammad, and his daughter, Fatima are infallible. But the Bektashis believe, in addition, in the infallibility of the fourteen children of the Imams who died in their infancy, beginning with Ali and ending with the Imam al-Hasan al-Askari. They maintain that the recognition of the infallibility of these fourteen infants is essential to the perfection of the Bektashi dervish. The *Sunbula Nama* produces the names of the fourteen Pure Innocents, as does Birge in his book, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*.³¹

Finally, the *Sunbula Nama* contains twelve Sufi principles, attributed to Salman al-Farisi, that man must follow. The principles are (1) penitence, (2) shunning of objectionable deeds, (3) overcoming whims, (4) shunning lusts, (5) subjugating the soul, (6) being friendly with companions, (7) removing doubts. (8) readiness to serve others, (9) spending money generously for the cause of belief, (10) not treating others with contempt, (11) showing humility and reconciliation, and (12) total reliance on God, for God loves those who rely on Him.

The compiler of the *Sunbula Nama* states that these principles are required conditions and duties of the Sufi order, and that they are the path leading to Ishq (passionate love for God) and peace. These requirements for Sufi living are attributed to Salman al-Farisi who according to tradi-

tion, was considered to be a member of the family of the Prophet and was honored as the first to recognize the qualities and right of Ali as a successor to Muhammad. He is also considered to be one of the earliest Zuhhad ascetics or Sufis in Islam and a bridge over which Sufism crossed from Zoroastrianism to Christianity, and then to Islam.³² We shall have more to say on Salman al-Farisi in our discussion of the Nusayris' religion.

The Bajwan and Ibrahimiyya

ANOTHER EXTREMIST SHIITE sharing many religious beliefs and social customs with the Shabak are the Bajwan. Most of the Bajwan live in rural villages north of Mosul and in the basin of the Khosar, a tributary of the river Tigris. Some of them live in Zohab and northern Luristan. In the seventeenth century, the Ottoman Sultan Murad IV (reigned 1623–40) ousted the Kalhur tribes from Zohab and gave their land to these Bajwan, or Bajilan, whom he brought from Mosul.¹ Like the Shabak, they are mostly farmers and herdsmen.

Their name, like that of the Shabak, is a subject of controversy. According to Rev. Anastase al-Karmali, they are called Bajoran, which he writes in French as “les Badjoran.” No other writer has identified them by this name, however; they call themselves Bajwan, and are so called by outsiders who live or deal with them. Their language, al-Karmali states, is a mixture of Kurdish, Turkish, Persian, and Arabic, although Persia was their place of origin.² Dawud al-Chalabi states that the name Bajwan derives from the word Bajilan, but does not explain the etymological link between them. He maintains that the Bajwan are Sunnites who display great love for Ali as a courtesy to the Shabak, among whom they live.³ Al-Azzawi maintains that the word Bajwan is a Kurdish compound of *Baj*, a distortion of *Baz* (falcon) and *ilan* (place). So Bajilan, or more correctly Bazilan, means the “home of falcons.”

Al-Azzawi goes on to state that this Kurdish name is of no significance in determining the origin of the Bajwan sect. He avers that the Bajwan are Turks (i.e., Turkomans), whose language is interspersed with Kurdish, Persian, and Arabic words because they have lived with people who speak these languages.⁴

Another writer, Abd al-Munim al-Ghulami presents an explanation of their origin given by some of the Bajwan themselves. They maintain that they are Arabs who belong to the tribes of al-Jubur and Tayy. Several clans of the Tayy tribe lived in the village of Bajwaniyya, near the town of Hammam al-Alil, south of Mosul, Iraq. Members of these clans claim that one day they were raided by other clans from the tribe of Tayy and were forced to move to the district of Diyala, where they became known as Bajilan, the name mentioned by al-Azzawi. In time, some of these Bajilan moved again, to the area north of Mosul, where they lived among the Shabak and other Turkoman groups. There they became known as Bajwan, and gradually absorbed aspects of the Shabak language, traditions, and beliefs until many of them became identified with the Shabak. Al-Ghulami does not seem convinced by this explanation, however, he tends to support al-Azzawi's belief that the Bajwan are of Turkish origin, stating that they emigrated from their village (which he calls Baljwan), east of the city of Bukhara in Turkestan, to northern Iraq. Al-Ghulami further states that Baljwan is the village near which Enver Pasha, minister of war in the government of the Young Turks, was killed in 1922 while attempting to establish an Islamic state.⁵

In addition to controversy over their name and their origin, dispute abounds over the nature of the Bajwan sect and its beliefs. It is clear that most Bajwan share a large body of religious beliefs, traditions, rituals, and festivals, as well as many social customs, with the Shabak and the Kizilbash.⁶ But al-Ghulami, writing in the late 1940s, reported that the Bajwan inhabitants of the village Umar Kapçi had begun to observe Sunnite tradition, and that, unlike the Shabak, they had a mosque in which both prayers and the Friday Khutba (sermon) were conducted according to Sunnite beliefs. Al-Ghulami also wrote that, in conformity with Sunnite tradition, the late Mukhtar (village headman) of the same village, Abd Allah al Tayyar, made the pilgrimage to Mecca rather than to Karbala.⁷

According to al-Karmali the Bajwan [he writes it "Bajoran"] have a "private religion which they call Allahi."⁸ In fact, he is referring here to the Ali Ilahis (those who deify Ali), also known as Ahl-i Haqq (worshippers of the truth), who live in western Iran.⁹ Al-Karmali goes on to say that the essence of the Bajwan religion is upholding the unity of God and love of the Prophets, although they "glorify Ismail more than any other Prophet."¹⁰ But he does not identify this Ismail. Al-Shaibi is of the opinion that Ismail mentioned by al-Karmali is not the Biblical figure whom the Arabs consider their progenitor, but Ismail al-Safawi (Shah Ismail), who claimed that his Sufi leadership emanated from the "Seal of

Prophethood and the Perfection of Walaya.”¹¹ This means that Ismail considered himself to be the epitome of extreme Shiism and in this sense he was glorified by the Shabak and not the Bajwan as stated by al-Karmali.¹²

The religious and social practices and customs of the Bajwan are not too different from those of the related sects among whom they live. They do not pray or fast during Ramadan, like the rest of the Muslims, and they consider the drinking of wine religiously lawful. However, they are not as stringent about divorce as the Shabak.¹³

The Bajwan have religious and social practices that are peculiar to their community. One of these is their method of supporting leaders. Six or seven families are responsible for providing a living for each of the Bajwan religious leaders. On a given festival day, the religious leader pays a visit to these families to celebrate the festivities. The head of each family under the jurisdiction of the leader chooses a seven day-old egg and has it boiled. Then the head of each family brings his boiled egg to the house in which the leader is staying. The religious leader peels the eggs, slices each one into seven pieces, and places the pieces on a dish. He blesses the eggs, saying, “These eggs are the sacrifice of Ismail, which no one of you dares to receive until he openly confesses his sins.” After he finishes this prayer each member of the congregation begins to confess his sins. Then the congregation sits to eat a meal and drink wine.

Like the Shabak, the Bajwan commemorate the killing of al-Husayn during the first ten days of the Arab month of Muharram. They observe a unique custom, associated with their lamentation over al-Husayn’s death. They choose several boys, cut their arms above the elbow with a knife, and then take them from one house to another to remind the people of the sorrows of al-Husayn. The villagers usually offer to these boys and to the religious leader food or grain which they have gathered and kept in one of the homes. On the ninth day of Muharram, the food that has been gathered is cooked. This meal called Sash, is distributed to all the Bajwan homes in the village.¹⁵

The Ibrahimiyya

Another Ghulat group whose religious beliefs are the same as those of the Shabak is the Ibrahimiyya. Its members live mostly in and around the town of Tallafar, northwest of Mosul, Iraq. Ethnically they are Turkomans, and, like the Shabak, they speak the Turkoman language. Also

like the Shabak, they have a sacred book called the *Buyruk*; their version is very different from the *Buyruk* used by the Shabak, however.¹⁶ Like the Shabak and the Kakaiyya, the Ibrahimiyya cherish a tradition concerning Ali and the forty Abdal. According to this tradition, when the Prophet Muhammad made his Miraj (night journey) to heaven, guided by the angel Gabriel, he met and conversed with Adam, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and Jesus. But when he drew close to the presence of God, he saw a great lion with its mouth open wide, as if intending to swallow him. To pacify the lion, Muhammad took the ring off his finger and threw it into the lion's mouth, and the lion retreated immediately. When the Prophet descended from heaven and met with the forty abdal, he saw his ring on Ali's finger. He recognized that the lion which had confronted him in heaven was Ali. This is why Ali is called "the Lion of God."¹⁷

In essence, this anecdote is of Bektashi-Kizilbash origin and demonstrates that, like the Shabak, the Ibrahimiyya have a strong affinity with those groups.¹⁸ Further evidence linking the Ibrahimiyya with the Bektashis and Kizilbash is the book, *al-Manaqib* (the *Buyruk*), which, as previously mentioned, is different from the version used by the Shabak. The fact that the Ibrahimiyya version of the *Buyruk* contains the biography, teaching, and miraculous gifts of Shaykh Safi al-Din is sufficient proof that the Ibrahimiyya are a remnant of the Safawi Sufi order. In other words, they are Kizilbash. Furthermore, the Ibrahimiyya *Buyruk* treats Haji Bektash and other Bektashi shaykhs as awliya (saints) and pillars of Sufism.¹⁹ Since members of the Ibrahimiyya community, like the Shabak, speak Turkish and are ethnically Turkomans, it is not far-fetched to assume that they settled in northern Iraq as a result of the wars between the Safawis and the Ottoman Turks. It would be difficult to explain, otherwise, the presence of these Ibrahimiyya as the only extremist Shiite sect in a territory northwest of Mosul predominantly inhabited by Sunnites. There is evidence that the Ibrahimiyya have ties with the extremist Ali Ilahis and Nusayris, both of which groups deify Ali. The Ibrahimiyya hold two legendary figures, Moses and Reuben, in high esteem. These same two are also venerated by the Ali Ilahis and the Nusayris, who have shrines for them at Kerind in Iran, the center of these two sects. In fact, they consider Moses and Reuben as the Ghilman (men most favored by the Imam Ali) and believe that they were killed by the Zoroastrians at the time of the Arab conquest of Persia.²⁰

Along with the Shabak and the Bektashis-Kizilbash, the Ibrahimiyya believe in a trinity comprised of Allah, Muhammad, and Ali.²¹ But their leader, Muhammad Yunus (who represented Tallafar in the Iraqi parliament under the monarchy), denied that his people were

extremist Shiites when confronted by al-Sarraf.²² Al-Sarraf reports that during a visit to Kerind, Kermanshah, Sahna, and Kengavar in Iran, where the inhabitants are mostly Ali Ilahis, some people there asked him about the affairs of Muhammad Yunus. But when he asked them about their connection with Yunus, they gave no answer. Upon returning to Iraq, al-Sarraf happened to meet with Yunus and told him that some people in Iran had inquired about him. Al-Sarraf says that Yunus smiled and said that he was not an extremist Shiite, but instead followed the moderate belief in the twelve Imams, as do the Ibrahimiyya Shiites. He even denied that the Ibrahimiyya have a sacred book. Evidence supporting a strong religious connection between the Ibrahimiyya and the Ali Ilahis of Iran, however, is that an Iranian writer, Abd al-Hujja a-Balaghi, classifies the Ali Ilahis into four groups, one of which is the Shah Ibrahimiyya, most likely the same Ibrahimiyya discussed above.²⁴ When told by al-Sarraf that, like the Shabak and the Kakaiyya, the Ibrahimiyya are Ghulat (extremist Shiites), Yunus told him, "Our tariqa [order] sanctifies the attributes of the Imam [Ali], while you consider this sanctification as ghuluw (extremism)."²⁵ However, Yunus did not explain what he meant by the "sanctification of Ali's attributes."

The Sarliyya-Kakaiyya

THE SARLIYYA Kakaiyya are two subgroups of a single Ghulat sect that, like other sects already discussed, deify Ali. Ethnically, some members of this sect are Kurdish and others Turkoman in origin, inhabiting many villages and urban centers, especially in the north and northeast sections of Iraq, in the provinces of Mosul, Arbil, and Kirkuk. Many of them are also found in Iran, especially in Tehran, Tabriz, Hamadan, Kermanshah, Sahna, and Kerind. Judging by their religious beliefs, they are more akin to the Ahl-i Haqq or Ali Ilahis of Iran than the other Ghulat sects. Members of this sect who live in the villages in the province of Mosul are known as Sarliyya, while others who live in and around the city of Kirkuk, to the southeast of Mosul, are known as Kakaiyya.

The Sarliyya, especially those living in villages on the banks of the Diyala and Zab, tributaries of the Tigris river, are farmers and fishermen. They once lived in mud huts, but when I passed through their area in the summer of 1984, I noticed that many of them are building new homes, using cement blocks finished with plaster. The Iraqi government has extended electricity and water to their villages, and it is not unusual to see television antennae sticking out of the rooftops of the new houses.

The Kakaiyya tend to be more urbanized than the Sarliyya, and more culturally advanced. This may be because they live in and around the city of Kirkuk, which, under the Ottomans, was the center of a lively Turkish literary movement and the main source of civil servants for the Ottoman state.¹ Though some of the Kakaiyya are farmers and herdsman, like the Sarliyya, many are small-businessmen, merchants, and government employees. Others, those with higher education, have gone into the professions, becoming doctors, lawyers, and teachers. The

relative advancement of the Kakaiyya over the Sarliyya may be changing, however especially since the present Baath Party government of Iraq has extended educational and social facilities to provinces of Sulaymaniyya, Kirkuk, and Mosul, where the Sarliyya and Kakaiyya live.

Kakaiyya is a Kurdish term meaning "brotherhood" and is derived from the word *kaka* (brother). The Kakaiyya are also known to the Arabic-speaking people of the region as Akhiyya (brotherhood), a name derived from the Arabic term *akh* (brother). While the derivation of the name Kakaiyya is clear, the name Sarliyya poses a problem, and various theories have been advanced to explain its etymological origin.

According to one such theory, Sarliyya is an Arabic term deriving from the verb *sara* (to become), and its use is based on a tradition associated with the selling of sections of paradise. According to this tradition, any member of the Sarliyya, while in this life, can buy a piece of ground in paradise and then claim "The Garden of Paradise has become [*sarat*] mine by purchase." Hence, they are called Sarliyya. Al-Karmali, who relates this anecdote, believes that this explanation of the name Sarliyya is erroneous since it assumes that the name is Arabic when the Sarliyya are not Arabs.²

Another theory refers to the same tradition in a different way. It states that when Abd al-Rahman Ibn Muljam assassinated the Imam Ali in A.D. 661, he asked the fallen Imam how he thought Ibn Muljam should escape. Ali answered, "Itaff." This is an Arabic verb meaning "to wrap," which translates as *sar* in Turkish. By this Ali meant, "Wrap yourself [with a reed mat], and you will be safe." Hence, the argument runs, the name Sarliyya was derived from the Turkish word *sar* (to wrap).³

Still another account of the origin of the name Sarliyya is given by Khattab Agha, a former leader of the Sarliyya in Mosul. According to Khattab Agha, when the Prophet of Islam invited people, especially the Arabian tribes, to accept his message, many of them responded and embraced Islam. In order to corroborate their new faith, they began to attach themselves to the companions of the Prophet. Some of these Arabians were unable to do this, however, since there was no companion left who had not already accepted Arabians as his protégés. Ali called these people to come to him and said, first in Kurdish ("Banim Baymiz") and then in Arabic "Saru li," "They have become mine." Since then the Sarliyya have been called by this name.⁴

Though the Sarliyya continue to relate these theories about the origin of their name, they are more fiction than history. According to historical sources, the Sarliyya were originally a Turkoman tribe, known as Sarlu. They are mentioned by Abd Allah Ibn Fath Allah al-Baghdadi

al-Ghiyathi (d. 833/1478) in his *al-Tarikh al-Ghiyathi* (History of al-Ghiyathi), in which he discusses the historical events of the late fourteenth century in connection with the conquests of the Mongol, Timur Lang (Tamerlane, d. 1405). He states that after occupying Isfahan and Hamadan in 795/1392, Timur Lang fell upon the Sarlu Turkomans, plundering and killing many of them, while others escaped.⁵

We have already mentioned that the word Kakaiyya is of Kurdish origin and means "brotherhood." Its use as the name of the sect is also explained by legend. It is said that one of the founders of the Kakaiyya, a sayyid from the village of Barzanja, near the city of Sulaymaniyya in northern Iraq, built a lodge for his people. He planned to use poles to support the roof of the building, but when the poles were installed, they were found to be too short. The sayyid founder then told his brother, who was helping him, "Kaka [brother], extend the poles," and behold! the wooden poles became longer because of the miraculous gifts of the founding sayyid; hence the name Kakaiyya.⁶ Another theory suggests that the name Kakaiyya may show Christian influence. W. Ivanow speculates that it may have been borrowed from the Christian custom of calling monks "brother" or "friar." This is an interesting opinion, but because of lack of evidence it remains sheer speculation.⁷

Some writers consider the Kakaiyya to be a tribe under the jurisdiction of the Barzanja sayyids.⁸ In fact, the Kakaiyya are a religious sect rather than a tribe. The sect appeared in the waning days of the Seljuk state in Anatolia. Originally, its members were Sufi dervishes preaching brotherhood and cooperation among themselves and with other people. They were a very cohesive and secretive group, always helping one another. Some groups of these Sufis, however, took advantage of the decline of the Seljuk state toward the end of the thirteenth century and established petty states of their own in the vicinity of Angora and Sivas. Finally, the Ottoman Sultan Murad I (d. 1389) conquered these Sufis and annexed their states to his growing empire.⁹

Some historical sources call the Kakaiyya by their Arabic name, Akhiyya, and associate them with the ancient Arab order of the Futuwwa.¹⁰ This concept of Akhiyya (brotherhood) is inherent in Islam for all Muslim believers are considered brothers in accordance with the Quranic verse 49:10, "The believers are brothers." The concept of Akhiyya was from the beginning associated with the concept of Futuwwa (the chivalrous or noble qualities of man's nature). This quality of Futuwwa was attributed particularly to the Imam Ali, considered by many to be the "exemplary and perfect man" because of his sublime human qualities. Hence came the saying, "no chivalrous youth except

Ali."¹¹ Thus, to the Shiites, Ali became the fountainhead of the Futuwwa.¹² Through the passage of time, however, the noble traits of brotherhood—doing good, shunning evil, and helping one another—became the rules of an organized tariqa (order) whose members, like the Shriners of our time, wore special trousers called "Sarawil al-Futuwwa." The members of Sufi orders who advocated human brotherhood and the attainment of an exemplary life praised and perhaps adopted the qualities of the Futuwwa, with whom they became identified.¹³ It is no surprise that these traits of the Futuwwa survived in some Shiite-Sufi orders, including the Kakaiyya, whose contemporary designation, although Kurdish, signifies the ancient traits of the Akhiyya and the Futuwwa. In time, the Futuwwa organization degenerated; its members lost the noble traits that their predecessors had adopted and cherished, becoming as a result, a menace to society. This chaotic condition of the Futuwwa came to an end when the Abbasid Caliph al-Nasir li Din Allah (d. 1225) reorganized the Futuwwa order and restored its original fundamental and noble principles. Al-Nasir's intention in rejuvenating the Futuwwa was, perhaps, to challenge the authority of the Seljuk sultans who controlled the Abbasid state.¹⁴ Whatever his intention, from the time of the Caliph al-Nasir on, "there was a convergence of the popular Futuwwa and the Futuwwa of the Sufis."¹⁵ The Sufi Abu Haf's Umar al-Suhrawardi (d. 1234), advisor of the Caliph al-Nasir, played a great role in this convergence. Thus the ideals of the Futuwwa were absorbed into the Sufi orders, a process which, to quote Claude Cahen, "from the Middle Ages to our time has characterized such large sectors of social evolution in Muslim countries."¹⁶ This convergence of popular Futuwwa and Sufism in the first quarter of the thirteenth century may have been carried by many Turkoman Sufis into Anatolia when Hulago, the grandson of Genghis Khan, occupied Iran in 1256 and captured, among other sites, the Alamut Castle of the Ismaili Assassins.¹⁷ Many of the dervishes who fled Khurasan and other countries adjacent to Anatolia were Shiite (Al-awi) mystics absorbed by the ideals of the Futuwwa and Akhiyya.¹⁸

In the fourteenth century, when the traveler Ibn Battuta visited Asia Minor, the Akhiyya must have been dispersed widely among the Turkomans of every district, city, and village of that country. Ibn Battuta speaks highly of the noble traits of the Akhiyya, of their hospitality and chivalry, of the hospices they built and their succor of strangers, and of their struggle against the tyranny of the authorities and their ruffian associates. Ibn Battuta states that the Akhiyya were also called Futuwwa, and that nowhere in the world were there people who could match their chivalry.¹⁹ The Kakaiyya, or those who lived among the Shabak and

were called Sarliyya, may have been Turkomans who had fled to Anatolia. They may have formed those village groups of the Bektashis who, as was noted at the beginning of this study, became followers of the Safawis in Iran. There is evidence that in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Akhis, including the Kakaiyya, flourished in both Iran and Anatolia. Some of them, living in Iran, became followers of the Sufi order of Shaykh Safi al-Din, ancestor of the Safawi shahs.²⁰ The followers of the Safawis in Iran and Anatolia came to be known as Kizilbash (redheads), as noted earlier. The Sarliyya-Kakaiyya, especially those with Anatolia, may have been the groups that joined Shah Ismail in his struggle against the Ottomans. And when the shah met Sultan Selim I in battle at Chaldiran, many of these Sarliyya-Kakaiyya, fearing persecution by the Ottoman Sultan, did not return to their country, but remained in Iraq.²¹

Like the Shabak, the Sarliyya-Kakaiyya are extremist Shiites, but they do not consider the Shabak to belong to their sect, claiming that the Shabak have adulterated their religion with alien beliefs, although it is not certain what they mean by this charge. For this reason they do not give their women in marriage to Shabak men, although they do allow their men to marry Shabak women.²² They are very secretive about their beliefs and decline to discuss them. They also refuse to discuss their religious books. However, study of the beliefs, hagiology, and religious books of the Sarliyya-Kakaiyya indicates that, except for minor variations, their sect is identical with the Ahl-i Haqq or Ali Ilahis of western Iran, whom we will discuss in the following chapters.²³

Religious Dogmas

According to the Sarliyya-Karkaiyya, God is incomprehensible, unknowable, and indescribable. There is no way for man to communicate with or approach God. However, in His infinite mercy, God condescended to reveal Himself through *hulul* (incarnation, or indwelling) in men. This incarnation is done in successive manifestations or cycles (Adwar al-Duhur). Since God is an incomprehensible light, it is necessary that He use the bodies of men for His incarnations. The fundamental point in this dogma is that God manifested Himself not "only and specifically" in Ali, but in many persons before and after Ali.²⁴ This dogma is no different from that held by the Nusayris and Ahl-i Haqq, as shall be seen in later chapters. Perhaps because they share this dogma

with the Nusayris, some unsympathetic writers accuse the Sarliyya-Kakaiyya of being "atheists." In his book *Jami al-Anwar*, Murtada Nazmi states:

It should be known that a stray group of atheists [the Sarliyya and Nusayriyya] which sprang from the seventy-three sects say that Buhlul is God, and that Ali Ibn Ali Talib is God, too. They have reprehensible dogmas, one of which is that God must manifest Himself or dwell (yahull) in human form in a corporeal body. In every generation when this body dies or perishes, God sheds it and enters another one. In the time of Moses, God dwelt in Moses. What is even more repugnant in the decreeing of some of these atheists that God dwelt in Pharaoh and in Yazid Ibn Mu'awiya [the Umayyad Caliph]; in the time of Isa [Jesus], God dwelt in Isa, and in the time of Buhlul, he dwelt in Buhlul. May God rise above what the transgressors say. They also believe that Satan is the angel Gabriel, and that he and his host dwell in human bodies in every age; that they accompany God, who also dwells in a human body; and that every one of them has a name by which he is known. Some of them believe that our Prophet [Muhammad], in fact, every prophet, is one of the angels in the company of Satan, and that he has dwelt in a human body. Others, however, attribute misguidance and deception to the Prophets (May God forgive them.) They say that these prophets have come on their own [not sent by God]. They also believe that the Qur'an was composed by the Prophet for memorization.²⁶

Although we cannot establish the validity of most of what this author says about the Sarliyya and the Nusayris, he is correct about the dogmas of incarnation held by these sects.

Pantheism

Like many Sufis and Batinis, the Sarliyya-Kakaiyya maintain that the universe and all that is in it is God, and that every being in existence shall return to him.²⁷

Metempsychosis

Metempsychosis is one of the major dogmas of the Sarliyya-Kakaiyya. They maintain that the soul becomes purified by passing through 1,001

incarnations, and after that it becomes a manifestation of the deity. The soul may achieve purification before the final incarnation, and this is demonstrated by performing miracles. However, it will never achieve theophany unless it completes the 1,001 cycles of incarnation. In light of this dogma, a man who passes through all the 1,001 stages of incarnation then becomes God.²⁸ This is very similar to the dogma maintained by the Ahl-i Haqq, who will be discussed in the following chapter.

Metempsychosis is not an Islamic dogma, and was most likely borrowed from Buddhism. According to Ignaz Goldziher, metempsychosis is the chief doctrine of the Sumaniyeh and was espoused by some Muslim philosophers. But why would Muslim philosophers believe in a dogma alien to the Quran? Goldziher speculates that this dogma may have provided the answer to the painful question of how a just God could inflict severe punishment on pious men. The answer is that God does so because the soul of a pious man has previously dwelt in the body of a sinful man. Goldziher concludes that this dogma is equivalent to the "Buddhist Karma."²⁹

The Quran and the Prophet

The Sarliyya-Kakaiyya maintain that the Quran is the work of Muhammad and was collected by the Caliph Uthman. Therefore, they recite or quote it only to substantiate their own beliefs. In fact, they hold some of their own religious literature, as well as the Khutbat al-Bayan attributed to Ali, in higher esteem than they do the Quran. They do, however, believe that the Prophet Muhammad was great because he acquired his learning from Ali. But they add that Muhammad emphasized the outward meaning of the Quran, while overlooking its more essential inward meaning, because he could not comprehend or fathom its mysteries or the intentions of the Imam Ali.³⁰

Eschatology

Their eschatology is based on the belief that on the Last Day, God will manifest Himself in a person whom they call Sahib al-Duhur (the master of theophany). Perhaps this is Sahib al-Zaman (the master of the age and time, the Mahdi), whose advent is awaited by moderate and extremist Shiites. The significance of the theophany of God and His dwelling in a person is that knowing God is like experiencing another life. From this

we may assume that the knowledge of this incarnated God is sufficient to lead one to Paradise. This is probably why the Sarliyya-Kakaiyya do not recite over the deceased the formula of the profession of faith, as orthodox Muslims do.³¹ They do, however, address their dead before burial as follows: "If Munkar and Nakir [two angels believed to test the true faith of departed Muslims] approach you, tell them, 'I have such and such a quantity of wheat and barley stored in barns.' If they are not satisfied, give them a bowl of lentils and a cup of wine. If they refuse to accept, then tell them, 'I am a Kaka'i. Depart from me and go to someone else.' With this they will leave you, and you will go to paradise."³²

The belief that a soul goes to paradise as a final abode appears contradictory to the dogma of metempsychosis. Be that as it may, the Sarliyya-Kakaiyya do not grieve or weep over their dead, although they do carry them to their graves to the beating of drums.

Religious Practices

The Sarliyya-Kakaiyya do not pray five times a day like orthodox Muslims, nor do they hold worship services. Instead, their leaders recite supplications and canticles at sunrise and sunset, at certain ceremonies, and on such occasions as praying for the sick or blessing food.³³ They call Muslims who perform prayer five times daily the people of Namaz. They, like Ahl-i Haqq, consider themselves to be the people of Niyaz (people of the offerings and sacrifices). This is manifested in their celebration of a ceremonial meal, to be described shortly.³³

They do not make the pilgrimage to Mecca made by orthodox Muslims. Neither do they make the pilgrimage to the Shiite holy shrines in Karbala, as the Shabak do. Instead they visit the graves of some of their prominent leaders (the Sayyids, descendants of the Prophet through his daughter Fatima and her husband Ali), or of the men whom they believe to be the theophany of God.³⁴

They do not fast during the Muslim month of Ramadan, although some are reported to fast on the twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth and the twenty-ninth days of that month, holding a festival on the next day. Others are said to observe the tenth and fifteenth days of January by the Eastern calendar as days of fasting.³⁵ It is also reported that they mark the "Fast of Acceptance" on the eleventh of January each year, but it is not clear whether this day falls within the period of fasting observed in the month of January by the Eastern calendar.³⁶

Like the Yezidis, the Sarliyya-Kakaiyya are said to honor Satan. They never curse him. They do not spit on the ground, lest they be thought to have spat on the devil.³⁷ The reason they give for this restraint is that since God, the Creator, has cursed Satan, it would be presumptuous of them to do likewise. Because they do not curse Satan, the Shabak accuse them of venerating the devil. They answer this accusation by stating simply that it is ludicrous to think that they would venerate Satan, a creature the Yezidis respect. Perhaps the reason the Sarliyya-Kakaiyya do not curse Satan is that their faith enjoins them to respect all religious beliefs, even those honoring the devil. Their religious ethics forbid them to criticize or inveigh against other faiths or the people who embrace them.³⁸ Such a principle is perhaps inherent in their faith, with its advocacy of human brotherhood, from which comes their name, Kakais (brothers). They are a peaceful people who expect compassion and understanding from others in return for their own tolerance. This is manifested in their saying, "May the arm of him who casts a stone at us be paralyzed."³⁹ They also seem to emphasize the group rather than the individual, as demonstrated by their saying, "He who says 'I' is not from us."⁴⁰

An uncorroborated report by Rev. al-Karmali states that the Sarliyya-Kakaiyya buy and sell places in paradise. Usually the sale of these places is conducted by a shaykh (leader), who has the exclusive hereditary right to handle such transactions. The place is measured in cubits, and the price varies according to the place desired by the buyer. The transactions are usually made during the harvest season, when the shaykh visits the members of the community and offers to sell them plots in paradise. Those interested may buy two or more cubits of property in paradise, depending on their financial resources. When a transaction is completed, the shaykh is paid in cash and draws up a deed stating that he has sold the buyer so many cubits in Paradise and has received payment in cash. Then he fixes his seal on the deed and gives it to the buyer. If the buyer wants to extend his property in Paradise, he may do so, provided that he enters into a new deal during an ensuing harvest season. Terms are always cash—no credit is accepted. On his part, the buyer must keep and protect the deed all his life. At the time of his death, the deed is placed in his shroud, to be presented to Ridwan, considered by the Muslims as the guardian angel of Paradise. Upon receiving the deed, Ridwan immediately admits the owner to Paradise and leads him to the property he purchased on earth."⁴¹ Al-Karmali reports such an anecdote about the Sarliyya in the vicinity of Mosul; it may also be true of the Kakaiyya of the Kirkuk area.

The ceremonial meal of love

Reported among the religious practices of the Sarliyya-Kakaiyya is a ceremonial meal of love, an agape observed on the New Year's day of the lunar calendar. On this day the shaykh visits his congregation to celebrate the New Year. Every married man in the congregation whose wife is still living slaughters a white cock, cooks it with rice or wheat (not in a soup), and brings it to the shaykh. The shaykh places all the cocks he receives on a table. When all the married men have arrived with their offerings, the believers sit at the table, the men facing their wives. The shaykh preaches to the congregation and then prays over and blesses the food. When the meal is over, the shaykh tells the congregation that this is a great night for love, and that if any married couple has intercourse and conceives a child, that child will be honored and loved by God.⁴² This anecdote is related by al-Karmali, who adds that after the ceremonies, all the lights are extinguished in the hall where the men and women have gathered, and then "abominable things happen between them, things which the pen disdains to record."⁴³ This night is the Laylat al-Kafsha previously mentioned.⁴⁴ Al-Karmali states that the Sarliyya claim that such accusations are false and calumny.⁴⁵

We have already discussed the allegations regarding Laylat al-Kafsha, showing that many sensible writers believe them to be false and slanderous. Some writers, however, connect this night with the celebration of the ceremonial meal of love and accuse the Kakaiyya of sexual orgies. One such writer, Muin al-Din Ashraf Ibn Abd al-Baqi, known as Mirza Makhdum (d. approximately 1580), attacks the Shiites in his book *al-Nawaqid li Bunyan al-Rawafid*. He asserts that on a designated night, the Kakaiyya men and women in a certain place lock the doors and put out the lights. Then each man takes hold of whatever woman is nearest, be she his wife, sister, daughter, or neighbor, and proceeds to have sexual intercourse with her. This orgy is followed by a meal, in which semen collected from the men is put into the food for a blessing.⁴⁶ The foregoing account must be regarded with extreme caution, as there is no concrete evidence to support it.

Religious Hierarchy

At the top of the religious hierarchy of the Sarliyya-Kakaiyya are the sayyids, who come mostly from Kirkuk and Iran. They are the "princes"

of the community, combining religious and secular leadership. Because of their noble descent from the Prophet Muhammad through his daughter Fatima and his cousin Ali, the sayyids are believed to have the spiritual power to heal the sick. The "princes" are held in such high esteem that the villagers kiss their hands. One of the sayyids is designated *pir*; this man is accorded even more respect and given even greater obedience than the others, who are considered secondary to him. The Kakais obey the *pir* blindly, executing his commands without questioning their validity or purpose. A Kakai is not permitted to disobey the *pir*.⁴⁷ Such reverence for the *pir* and the sayyids, reaching the point of worship, is also reported of the Ahl-i Haqq, whose beliefs are very similar to those of the Kakais. The sayyids of the Ahl-i Haqq, usually known as Ujaqs, are considered to be incarnations of the Deity.⁴⁸

The *pir* and the sayyids do not accept gifts or donations, but they have the right to collect money from all the Kakais.⁴⁹ The money collected is used in the public interest and for the needs of the community, and not for the personal gain of the *pir* or the sayyids.⁵⁰

The *pawas* or religious leaders (sources indicate that the *pawas* are unknown outside the Sarliyya community) are believed by the Sarliyya to possess the power to heal people suffering from the stings of scorpions and the bites of snakes and rabid dogs. The Sarliyya also believe that the *pawas* have the power to heal the insane; the patient is lodged in the house of a *pawa*, where he is cared for by the *pawa*'s family until he is cured.

Among the Kakais of Kirkuk, the *pawas* are known as *dedes* and are considered to be the learned men of the Kakaiyya community. They perform religious ceremonies and recite hymns like those of the Bek-tashis. They are extremely secretive about their beliefs, refusing to reveal them to even their closest friends.⁵²

The *mams*, according to the Sarliyya, have a monopoly on the curing of persons suffering from night fevers. Among the Kakaiyya, the *mam* is also known as the *murshid* (guide or instructor).

The *klaynatis* are known only among the Sarliyya in the vicinity of Mosul. The Sarliyya believe that the *klaynatis* are descendants of Solomon, the Hebrew king and prophet. Presently, the office of the *klaynati* is restricted to two families, one residing in the village of Safiyya in the district of Arbil, and the other in Mosul. The *klaynatis* specialize in healing impotent men, whom they call *mamsuks* (those who cannot perform the sexual act). The *mamsuks* are usually brought to the house of the *klaynati*, who recites certain prayers to release them from impotence. In return, the *klaynati* receives a fixed amount of money, paid in

advance. It is interesting that the klaynatis believe that if they eat the meat of a hornless goat, they will die.⁵³ The Yezidis also believe in the healing power of the klaynatis and take their sick to them for healing.

The mullas also are known only among the Sarliyya near Mosul. The mullas teach the children of the community to read and write, but they have no spiritual authority.⁵⁴ Finally, at the base of the Sarliyya-Kakaiyya hierarchy, are the lay people, known as Sarliyya in the villages near Mosul, and as Kakaiyya in and around Kirkuk.

Religious Books

We have noted earlier that the Sarliyya-Kakaiyya do not recite or quote the Quran, as orthodox Muslims do.⁵⁵ We may thus assume that they do not consider the Quran to be their sacred book. Because of the eclectic nature of their faith, they, like the Bektashis, accept and cherish several works, including the anthologies of some extremist Shiite authors, as their religious books. Abbas al-Azzawi discusses several books held sacred by the Kakaiyya. They include:

Khutbat al-Bayan (the sermon of eloquence or explanation)

This Khutba, attributed to the Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib, is cherished by the Shiites, although it is not recorded in their books of hadith (tradition). The Khutba is associated with the Khilafa [caliphate, or imamate, the succession from Muhammad and leadership of the Islamic community], over which much blood has been shed. One day Ali wanted to ask the Prophet Muhammad who would be his successor as leader of the community of Islam. But, hesitant to ask Muhammad personally, Ali instead asked Muawiya Ibn Abi Sufyan to inquire about the matter. Muawiya agreed and asked the Prophet who would be his successor. The Prophet answered that Abu Bakr would succeed him, followed by Umar, who would be followed by Uthman. At this point the Prophet stopped, leading Muawiya to believe that these would be the only men succeeding the Prophet. Muawiya continued, pressing the Prophet to tell him who would succeed these men. The Prophet answered that the man who would succeed them was the one who had asked the question. Muawiya

thought that since he had asked the question, he was to be that successor, but Ali rejected this since it was Ali who had initiated the idea of questioning the Prophet. Ali also contended that God had bestowed more virtues and excellence upon him than upon other men, and that God would bestow the same excellence upon his eleven descendants, the Imams. Muawiya, dissatisfied with Ali's reasoning, asked for proof. Ali then began to elaborate on his virtues in a Khutba (sermon) which came to be known as Khutbat al-Bayan.⁵⁶

Khutbat al-Bayan contains seventy phrases reportedly used by Ali to describe his excellence, describing attributes worthy only of the Deity. In his *Kashf al-Zunun* (1: 360), Haji Khalifa refers to these phrases as "seventy words of falsehood." In Khutbat al-Bayan, Ali claims to be the one who possesses the keys to the unknown; the master of the two worlds; the judge of all creatures; the heart of God; the sanctuary and refuge of God; the creator of the clouds; the upholder of heaven; the friend of Job, whom he tested and then healed; and the divine light which Moses received for right guidance.

Ali goes on to say that he is sinless; that he is the evidence of everything in the heavens and on earth; that he is the first and the last trumpet, which will sound before the resurrection; that he is the face of God, the side of God, the beginning and the end, the dahir (outward knowledge) and the batin (inward knowledge); and that he is the creator of beings; and that he is the source of divine commands.⁵⁷ Furthermore, this Khutba contains statements making Ali homologous with Muhammad, such as the tradition in which Muhammad says, "I am the city of knowledge, and Ali is its gate," often quoted by moderate and extremist Shiites to prove that Ali is not only the rightful successor to Muhammad, but, because of his spiritual qualities, the rightful expositor of the true faith of Islam.⁵⁸ Later, we shall see that Nusayris, another extremist Shiite sect, consider Khutbat al-Bayan part of their dogma and quote it in their books.⁵⁹

The Jawidan

This is the principal book of the Hurufi sect founded by Jalal al-Din Fadl Allah al-Astrabadi (d. 1401). Its full title is *Jawidan Nama Kabir*, and it is contained in Persian MS. at Cambridge University.⁶⁰ Like the Hurufis, the Kakaiyya consider the *Jawidan* one of their major books and follow its teachings and ideas.⁶¹

The Furqan al-Akhbar and Saranjam
(*The book of accomplishment and the final word*)

The *Furqan al-Akhbar* and *Saranjam* are two sacred books of the Ahl-i Haqq also considered sacred by the Kakaiyya. Both books have been described by Vladimir Minorsky in his article "Ahl-i Hakk" in *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (1: 260–63). Beliefs shared by the Kakaiyya and Ahl-i Haqq, notably that of the 1,001 theophanies, have already been discussed. We may add here that *Saranjam* contains a collection of anecdotes following the order of the human manifestations of the Deity.⁶² This collection gives the chief human manifestations of God, including that in the person of Ali al-Murtada [the Imam Ali].⁶³ More information about the *Saranjam* will be found in the chapters on the Ahl-i Haqq.

The Zabur (Psalms) of Dawud (David)

The Zabur of David is considered by the Kakaiyya to be the only true book of Psalms, other Zaburs (by which they perhaps mean the Biblical book of Psalms) being but distortions.⁶⁴

Among the other books esteemed by the Kakaiyya are anthologies of Bektashi and Shiite Sufi poets, including the poems of the Iraqi Turkish poet, Fuduli al-Baghdadi (d. 1555).⁶⁵

Holy Shrines

The Sarliyya have several shrines, the most famous being that of Shah (Sayyid) Hayyas, in the village of Wurdak, situated near the confluence of the Khazir and the Upper Zab, tributaries of the Tigris River. The Sarliyya greatly venerate this Hayyas, offering animal sacrifices to him, and burying their dead near his shrine. He is considered to be so holy that the Sarliyya never take an oath in his name.⁶⁶

Another shrine is that of Shaykh Umar Mandan, in the village of Kanhash. It consists of three parts, and is situated on the right bank of the Upper Zab.⁶⁷ Two other shrines named after Umar Mandan are venerated by the Kakais; one is in the town of Kufri, near Kirkuk, and the other on the Kirkuk–Arbil highway. Other shrines considered sacred by the Kakaiyya include the following:

1. The shrines of Sultan Sahak (Isaac), commonly known as Sahak. The name Sahak is Armenian rather than Arabic or Turkoman, and this fact may shed some light on the influence of Armenian Christianity on Shiite extremist groups. There are two shrines named for Sahak. One is in the Hawraman Mountain near the town of Sahna, the other in the village of Shaykhan in western Iran. Like the Ahl-i Haqq, the Kakaiyya greatly venerate Sultan Sahak and visit his shrines every year in the spring. They consider him to be one of their most prominent holy men and the first manifestation of God after the Imam Ali.⁶⁸ We shall hear more about Sultan Sahak in chapters 16 to 21 on the Ahl-i Haqq.

2. The Sayyid Ibrahim shrine, in the city of Baghdad. Sayyid Ibrahim, like Sultan Sahak, was God's theophany but Sayyid Ibrahim had six metempsychosis manifestations. The Kakaiyya are still waiting for his seventh appearance. They venerate him greatly, believing him to be the Mahdi who will appear at the end of time to establish justice and destroy evil.⁶⁹

3. Dukkan Dawud, literally, David's Shop, a shrine in a cave on a high mountain between Sarbil and Pai Haq in western Iran, near Hamadan. Dawud (David) is considered the successor to Sultan Ishaq, and to the Kakaiyya he is a murshid (religious guide). They tell stories about his legendary powers, among them his ability to twist iron objects. They venerate him more than they do the Prophet Muhammad because they believe he is one of the theophanies of God, while Muhammad is not. For this reason the Kakaiyya never take the name of this Dawud in vain, and once they take an oath in his name, they will never tell a falsehood.⁷⁰ Dawud is also greatly venerated by the Kizilbash Kurds of the district of Dersim, in the upper Euphrates valley who confuse him with the King David of the Bible. Ellsworth Huntington says that a Kizilbash chief told him that the Kizilbash believed in four prophets, Adam, Moses, Dawud (David), and Jesus, and hold Jesus to be the greatest of them. It is significant that this extremist Shiite chief did not include the Prophet Muhammad among the four. When Huntington tried to talk about the Prophet Muhammad, the chief avoided the subject.⁷¹ Dawud shall be discussed further in the chapters on the Ahl-i Haqq.

4. The shrine of Zayn al-Abidin, named for the grandson of the Imam Ali. Originally a Nestorian church in the village of Daquq near Arbil, Iraq, it was converted into a Kakaiyya shrine. In the fifth century the Nestorian church began to spread into Persia, including Iraq, but its advance was halted by the Islamic conquest of Iraq and Persia at the beginning of the seventh century.

5. The shrine of the saint Hajj Ahmad Virani Sultan, of Bektashi origin, who was venerated by the Bektashis during the Ottoman era. This saint is worshipped by the villagers of Daquq, Tuz Khurmatu, and Tisin, in the province of Kirkuk. They believe that he was a resident of the Bektashi lodge in the Shiite city of al-Najaf, and that he ascended into heaven and was transformed into a lion. They also believe that before his ascension into heaven he left his cap, which is still in his room in the lodge in al-Najaf. When they visit this lodge, they reverently kiss the place where the saint worshipped and from which he ascended into heaven.⁷²

6. The shrine of Imam Ismail, near the town of Kizlibat in the province of Kirkuk. The Kakaiyya revere Imam Ismail for his miraculous gifts. They believe that swearing falsely by Imam Ismail will cause a person's jaw to become twisted. Conversely, a person with a twisted jaw, swearing truthfully by this Imam, will have his jaw healed.⁷³

Other shrines of the Kakaiyya include those of Imam Ahmad in Kirkuk; Pawa Yadegar in Maydasht in Iran; Pawa Haydar in Iran; Sultan Saqi, Imam Qasim, Hawash, Shah Hayyas, and finally Shib (Shihab) al-Din al-Suhrawardi, who, despite being in a sleeping state, is believed to control the rain, as a kind of rain god.⁷⁴

Social Practices

Marriage among the Sarliyya and the Kakaiyya does not require complicated ceremonies. However, the two groups have somewhat different methods of finalizing the marriage contract. Among the Sarliyya, the woman has no right to choose her husband. Usually he is chosen by her legal guardian, who receives a predetermined sum of money from the new husband. Furthermore, the woman has no right to demand inheritance from her husband or from any other legal heir.⁷⁵

Among the Kakaiyya, marriage depends on the personal consent of both the man and the woman intending to marry, regardless of the wishes of the guardian or relatives. Weddings are usually celebrated on Mondays or Fridays, for these two days are considered holy by the Kakaiyya.⁷⁶ It is understandable that Friday should be considered a holy day, since it is a holy day for all Muslims, but the writer has been unable to discover why the Kakaiyya regard Monday as a holy day.

According to their religious rules, polygamy is not allowed by the Kakaiyya, but many Kakais have violated this rule. A murid (neophyte)

of the Kakaiyya may not marry the daughter of his shaykh because she is considered his spiritual sister. By the same token, the shaykh is not allowed to marry the daughter of his murid.⁷⁷

Among the Kakaiyya, divorce must be mutually agreed to by husband and wife; since marriage is contracted with the consent of both parties, it cannot be dissolved without the consent of both.

Abduction of a woman for marriage is common among the Sarliyya-Kakaiyya, as it is among most of the villagers of northern Iraq, being considered a sign of strength and manliness.⁷⁸ It is believed that a woman with many good qualities, especially beauty, will be desired as a wife by many men; therefore the most valiant man must hurry to make her his own by abducting her before a rival succeeds in taking her away.

A curious social custom of the Sarliyya is the growing of long beards by their shaykhs, or religious leaders. In fact, the shaykhs grow their beards so long that when they travel, they must stow their beards in a bag, taking them out only when they have reached their destination.⁷⁹

One of the most remarkable characteristics of these people is the bond of brotherhood among them. The Kakais consider each man of the community to be a brother, and each woman a sister. A man is careful not to covet his "brother's wife;" therefore, when his wife or any other immediate female relative is seen in the company of another Kakai man, he does not suspect her of infidelity. It is even said that a Kakai man may sleep in one room with any Kakai woman without being suspected of wrongdoing. Therefore, a Kakai guest may enjoy full freedom in the home of his Kakai host, because they are "brothers."⁸⁰

The drinking of wine is forbidden among the Kakais, and those who do drink are considered "disobedient." However, many of them do not observe this rule.

It is also reported that the Kakais consider it taboo to swear by the kazard (yellow cow) or by Pir Khawa (shaykh of the east), but no explanation is offered for such practices.⁸¹ The Kakais' most prominent characteristic is their secretiveness in matters relating to their faith. This secretiveness is considered a religious duty. They are so secretive that their neighbors call anyone who keeps a secret a Kakai.⁸²

50. Eröz, *Türkiye' de Alevilik-Bektasilik*, 52, 64 n. 4.
51. F W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 1:162.
52. Grenard, "Une Secte Religieuse, 514.
53. Feridun Bey quoted in Browne, *Literary History*, (Cambridge, 1959), 4: 67-68.
54. F W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 1:169-72; Browne, *Literary History*, 4:70-72; Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 66; and Stanford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 1:78.
55. Browne, *Literary History*, 4:72-74.
56. Richard Knolles, *The Turkish History: from the origin of that nation, to the growth of the Ottoman Empire with the lives and conquests of their princes and emperors*, 6th ed. with continuation by Sir Paul Ricaut (London: printed by Charles Browne, 1687-1700), 1:315; and Browne, *Literary History*, 4:70.
57. Knolles, *Turkish History*, 1:316-24; Von Hammer-Purgstall, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*, 90-95.
58. Browne, *Literary History*, 4:67-69; and al-Tawil, *Tarikh al-Alawiyyin*, 403.
59. Edward W. Creasy, *History of the Ottoman Turks* (Beirut: Khayat, 1961), 131-32; and Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire*, 1:67-68.
60. Von Hammer Purgstall, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*, 3:255, 5:95; F W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 1:163-74.
61. See Eugenio Albèri ed., *Relazioni degli ambasciator veneti al Senato*, 3rd ser., (Firenze: Societa Editrice Fiorentina, 1839), 1:338; J. W. Zinkeisen, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches in Europa*, (Gotha: F A. Perthes, 1855), 567; F W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 1:174; and Knolles, *Turkish History*, 1:324.
62. Al-Shaibi, *al-Tariqa al-Safawiyya*, 46-49.
63. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 50, 54-55.
64. See Dawud al-Chalabi's letter in al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 8.
65. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 95.
66. Charles Wilson, *Handbook for Travellers*, 68.
67. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 45-48, and 103-4.
68. *Ibid.*, Introduction 3-7; al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 44-46, 51; and al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 44.
69. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 45-48, 103-4.
70. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 210-11.
71. F W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 2:570.
72. On this point, see G. E. White, "Saint Worship in Turkey," *The Moslem World* 9 (1919): 8-18.
73. F W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 2:569.
74. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 210-11.
75. *Ibid.*, 73.
76. *Ibid.*, 198.
77. Brown, *The Darvishes*, 202.
78. Yalman, "Islamic Reform," 52.

5—The Ghulat's "Trinity"

1. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 57, 100, 104, 112, 114, 118. For evidence of the deification of Ali by the Bektashis, see Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 132-40, 54. On the Bektashi "Trinity," see Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 132-34.

2. See this book chapter 18. See also René Dussaud, *Histoire et Religion des Nosairis* (Paris: Librairie Émile Bouillon, 1900), 64–65; and Rev. Canon Sell, *The Cult of Ali* (London: The Christian Literature Society for India, 1910), 28.

3. Wilson, *Handbook for Travellers*, 66.

4. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 132.

5. *Ibid.*

6. See the *Buyruk* in al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 148 of the Turkish version and 193 of the Arabic translation. In *Mishkat al-Masabih* (Niche of lamps), this tradition is related as follows: "I am the house of wisdom and Ali is its door." The compiler of the *Mishkat* states that this tradition is transmitted by Tirmidhi on the authority of Sharik. See Abu Muhammad al-Baghawi, *Mishkat al-Masabih*, trans. James Robson, (Lahore: Ashraf Press, 1975), 2; Book 26, 1341. According to the tenth-century Shiite authority Muhammad Ibn Yaqub al-Kulayni, this hadith is related as follows: "I am the city and Ali is its gate." See Abu Jafar Muhammad Ibn Yaqub Ibn Ishaq al-Kulayni, *al-Usul min al-Kafi*, 3rd ed. (Tehran: Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiyya, 1388/1968), 2:239. See also the entire book of al-Imam Ahmad Ibn Muhammad al-Siddiq al-Maghribi, *Fath al-Malik al-Ali bi Sihhat Hadith Bab Madinat Ali* (Cairo: al-Marbaa al-Islamiyya, 1354/1935), and Ibn Babawayh, *Ma'ani al-Akhbar*, 58.

7. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 134. See also *Maqalat Haji Bektash* in E. G. Browne Papers, Turkish MS. 20, fol. 79, Cambridge University.

8. See the *Buyruk* in al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 148, 193; for elaboration on the belief that Muhammad and Ali are of one light, see al-Hafiz Rajab al-Bursi, *Kitab Mashariq Anwar al-Yaqin fi Asrar Amir al-Mu'minin*, 10th ed. (Beirut: Muassasat al-Alami, n.d.), 39–41, 160–61; and Mutahhar Ibn Tahir al-Maqdisi (late tenth century), in *al-Bad wa al-Tarikh*, ed. Clement Huart (Paris: E. Leroux 1899–1919), 150.

9. Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi, *Hayat al-Qulub* (Life of Hearts), trans. Rev. James L. Merrick (Boston, Phillips, Sampson, 1850; reprinted, San Antonio, Texas: Zahra Press, 1982), 170–71.

10. Al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* (Oceans of lights), (Tehran: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 1376/1966), 1:97.

11. For this poem, see al-Masudi, *Muruj al-Dhahab*, 2:48–49. See also al-Qasim Ali Ibn al-Hasan Ibn Hibat Allah Ibn Asakir, *Tarikh Dimashq* (History of Damascus), ed. Salah al-Din Munajjid (Damascus: al-Majma al-Ilmi al-Arabi, 1371/1951), 1:149; *idem*, *Tahdhib al-Tarikh Ibn Asakir* (Revision of the history of Ibn Asakir), ed. Abd al-Qadir Ahmad Badran (Damascus: Rawdat al-Sham, 1329/1911), 1:348; Kamal al-Din al-Damiri, *Hayat al-Hayawan al-Kubra* (The greater life of animals) (Cairo: Matbaat al-Istiqama, 1383/1963), 2:350; Abu Abd Allah Ibn Muslim Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wil Mukhtalif al-Hadith*, ed. Muhammad Zuhdi al-Najjar (Cairo: Maktabat al-Kuliyat al-Azhariyya, 1966), 88–89; and Kamal Mustafa al-Shaibi, "al-Wahi lada al-Samiyyin wa al-Islamiyyin," *Bayn al-Nahrayn* 10, nos. 37–38 (1982): 38. For more information on al-Haqiq al-Muhammadiyya, see Corbin, *En Islam iranien: Aspects spirituels et philosophiques* (Gallimard Edition; 1978), 1:53, 187–218, 278–79, 3:209, 295–347, and 4:70–71, 207–14, 328; and Tor Andrae, *Die Person Muhammads In Lehre Und Glauben Seiner Gemeinde* (Stockholm: Kngl-Boktryckeriet, P. A. Norstedt & Söner, 1918), 333–57.

12. Abu al-Fath Abd al-Karim al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal wa al-Nihal*, printed on the margin of Ibn Hazm, *Kitab al-Fisal fi al-Milal wa al-Ahwa wa al-Nihal* (Cairo: Muassasat al-Khanji, 1321/1903), 2:26. Cf. Sell, *The Cult of Ali*, 5; and Ata Muhy-Ud-Din, *Ali the Superman*, 2nd ed. (Lahore: Muhammad Ashraf Press, 1980), 324.

13. Sayyiduna Tahir Ibn Ibrahim al-Harithi al-Yamani, *Kitab al-Anwar al-Latifa*, in Muhammad Hasan al-Adami, *al-Haq'iq al-Khafiyya an al-Shi'a al-Fatimiyya wa al-Ithnay*

'ashariyya (Cairo: al-Haya al-Misriyya al-Amma li al-Talif wa al-Nashr, 1970), 75–182. The reference here is to 127.

14. Al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal*, 2:26.

15. Abu Jafar Muhammad Ibn Yaqub Ibn Ishaq al-Kulayni, *al-Usul min al-Kafi*, 1:376–77; and Muhammad Baqir al-Khwansari, *Rawdat al-Jannat fi Ahwal al-Ulama wa al-Sadat*, 2nd ed., ed. Muhammed Ali Hawzati (Tehran: 1367/1947), 703.

16. Ali Ibn Ibrahim (al-Qummi), *Tafsir Ali Ibn Ibrahim*, (Commentary on the Quran), (lithographed Tabriz: 1315/1897), 270; and al-Shaibi, *al-Sila bayn al-Tasawwuf wa al-Tashayyu*, 2nd ed. (Cairo: Dar al-Maarif, 1969), 423; Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 165–67.

17. *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini*, trans. Hamid Algar (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1981), 64–65.

18. R. A. Nicholson, *The Idea of Personality in Sufism* (Reprint, Lahore: Ashraf Press, 1970), 81, and idem, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1921), 106–7.

19. See the litany at the end of the *Buyruk*, in al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 189. Cf. Nicholson, *The Idea of Personality in Sufism*, 80.

20. Quran Suras 4:105, 17:93, 18:110, 40:55, 41:6, 47:18, and 48:1–2.

21. Goldziher, "Neuplatonische und gnostische Elemente im Hadit," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 22 (1921): 323. Cf. Sayyid Hussein Nasr, *Ideals and Realities of Islam* (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1967), 88.

22. Taqi al-Din Abu al-Abbas (Shaykh al-Islam) Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmu Fatawa Shaykh al-Islam Ahmad Ibn Taymiyya*, 1st ed., (Beirut: Dar al-Arabiyya, 1398/1977), 17:369–70; and al-Hasan Ibn Yusuf Ibn al-Mutahhar al-Hilli, *Kitab Minhaj al-Karama fi Ma'rifat al-Imama*, printed together with Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhaj al-Suna al-Nabawiyya, fi Naqd Kalam al-Shi'a wa al-Qadiriyya*, ed. Muhammad Rashad Salim, (Cairo: Matbaat al-Madani, 1962), 1:77, 202.

23. Goldziher, "Neuplatonische und gnostische," 323, quoting Ibn Taymiyya.

24. For different versions of this tradition, see *Ibid.*, 324–26.

25. Al-Kulayni, *al-Usul min al-Kafi*, 1:440; and Abu Jafar Muhammad Ibn al-Hasan al-Tusi (Shaykh al-Taifa), *Talkhis al-Shafi fi al-Imama* (al-Najaf: Matbaat al-Adab, 1383/1963), passim; and al-Bursi, *Kitab Mashariq*, 39–42.

26. Al-Masudi, *Muruj al-Dhahab*, 1:22–24; Dwight M. Donaldson, *The Shiite Religion A History of Islam in Persia and Irak* (London: Luzac, 1933), 137–39; and Sell, *The Cult of Ali*, 4–5.

27. *Kitab al-Haft al-Sharif*, ed. Mustafa Ghalib (Beirut: Dar al-Andalus, 1964), 92–93, 221–22.

28. L. Veccia Vaglieri, "Fatima," *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden and London: J. Brill, 1965), 845–50. For more on Fatima, see Ali Shariati, *Fatima is Fatima*, trans. Laleh Bakhtiar (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Muslim Students Council, n.d.).

29. Baha al-Din Haydar Ibn Ali Haydar al-Ubaydi al-Amuli, *Jami al-Asrar wa Manba al-Anwar*, Arberry Arabic MS 1349, fol. 5a, Indian Office, London. For detailed account of the religious concepts of al-Amuli, see Corbin, *En Islam iranien: Aspects spirituels et philosophiques*, London: Routledge Kegan Paul, Gallimard edition, 1978), 3:147–213; and al-Shaibi, *al-Fikr al-Shi'i*, 120–33.

30. Al-Amuli, *Jami al-Asrar*, 1349, fols. 5a; and al-Shaibi, *al-Fikr al-Shi'i*, 120–33. For an analysis of "*Khutbat al-Bayan*," see Louis Massignon, "L'Homme Parfait en Islam et Son Originalité Eschatologique," *Eranos Jahrbuch* 15 (1947): 311–14; and the Arabic translation of the same in Abd al-Rahman Badawi, *al-Insan al-Kamil fi al-Islam* (The perfect man in

Islam) (Kuwayt: Wakalat al-Matbuat, 1976), 133–38, and 139–42, which contains the Arabic text of “*Khutbat al-Bayan*.” See also Corbin, *En Islam Iranien*, 4:166–67, and John Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 140–45. Birge gives a detailed analysis of this speech. On the concept of the Perfect Man, see R. A. Arnaldez, “al-Insan al-Kamil,” *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971), 3:1239–41.

31. Al-Majlisi, *Hayat al-Qulub*, 4. Cf. Muhammad Ibn al-Fattal al-Nisaburi, *Rawdat al-Wa’izin wa Basirat al-Mutta’izin*, (al-Najaf: al-Matbaa al-Haydariyya, 1386/1966), 1:77; and W. A. Rice, “Ali in Shi’ah Tradition,” *The Moslem World* 4, no. 1 (January 1914):29.

32. Abu Abd Allah al-Husayn Ibn Hamdan al-Khasibi, *Kitab al-Hidaya al-Kubra* in Hashim Uthman, *al-Alawiyyun bayn al-Ustura wa al-Haqiqa* (Beirut: Muassasat al-Alami, 1980), 237; al-Majlisi, *Hayat al-Qulub*, 4–5; Ibn Babawayh, *Ma’ani al-Akhhbar*, 56; and Rice, “Ali in Shi’ah Tradition,” 29–30.

33. Al-Hajj Masum Ali, *Tara’iq al-Haqa’iq*, (Tehran 1319/1901), 7:43.

34. *Ibid.*, and al-Bursi, *Kitab Mashariq*, 161–62.

35. For the concept of the Perfect Man, see al-Shaykh Abd al-Karim Ibn Ibrahim al-Jili, *al-Insan al-Kamil fi Ma’rifat al-Awakhir wa al-Awa’il* (The perfect man in knowing the first and last things), 4th ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1975); Nicholson, *Islamic Mysticism*, 68–141; and Badawi, *al-Insan al-Kamil fi al-Islam*.

36. Abu al-Mughith al-Husayn Ibn Mansur al-Hallaj, *Kitab al-Tawasin*, ed. Louis Massignon (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1913), 9, 11–12. Cf. A. E. Affifi, *The Mystical Philosophy of Muhyid Din-Ibnul Arabi* (1938; reprint, Lahore: Ashraf Press, 1964), 86.

37. Al-Hallaj, *Kitab al-Tawasin*, 130–34; and Nicolson, “Mysticism,” in *The Legacy of Islam*, ed. Thomas Arnold and Alfred Guillaume (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1931), 216.

38. Al-Hallaj, *Kitab al-Tawasin*, 136.

39. Muhyi al-Din Ibn Arabi, *al-Futuhat al-Makkiyya* (The Meccan revelations), (Cairo: Bulaq al-Matbaa al-Amiriyya, 1293/1876), 1:114, 186.

40. Muhyi al-Din Ibn Arabi, *Fusus al-Hikam* (The bezels of wisdom), trans. R. W. I. Austin (New York: Paulist Press, 1980), Introduction: 38, and 66–68; and Affifi, *Mystical Philosophy*, 66–92.

41. Ibn Arabi, *Fusus al-Hikam*, 97, 167, 200, 272, 284; and Affifi, *Mystical Philosophy*, 66–92, especially 73–74.

42. Al-Jili, *al-Insan al-Kamil fi Ma’rifat al-Awakhir wa al-Awa’il*, 2:29–30, 59–60, entire chapter 60. Cf. Arnaldez, “al-Insan al-Kamil,” 3:1240–41.

43. Nicholson, *Islamic Mysticism*, 87. cf. Tor Andrae, *Die Person Muhammads in Lehre Und Glauben Seiner Gemeinde*, 335–57.

44. Nicholson, *Islamic Mysticism*, 87–88.

45. Affifi, *Mystical Philosophy*, 59–145, *passim*.

46. E. H. Palmer, *Oriental Mysticism* (London: F Cass, 1969), 43.

47. *Ibid.*, 43–44

48. Ibn Arabi, *Fusus al-Hikam*, Introduction: 38, and 168; and Affifi, *Mystical Philosophy*, 92–103. The verses cited are Quran, 2:257 and 42:28 respectively.

49. Ibn Arabi, *al-Futuhat al-Makkiyya*, 1:318–19; *idem*, *Fusus al-Hikam*, Introduction: 38; and Affifi, *Mystical Philosophy*, 92–102.

50. Muhyi al-Din Ibn Arabi, *Anqa Maghrib fi Khatm al-Awliya wa Shams al-Maghrib* (Cairo: n.p., 1954), 42; and Affifi, *Mystical Philosophy*, 72–77.

51. Al-Shaibi, *al-Sila bayn al-Tasawwuf wa al-Tashayyu*, 376–77.

52. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 253, under Alevi.

53. Al-Kulayni, *al-Usul min al-Kafi*, 1:441.

54. Nicholson, *Islamic Mysticism*, 159–61.
55. Palmer, *Oriental Mysticism*, 44, including n. 1.
56. *Nahj al-Balaqha*, ed. Muhyi al-Din Abd al-Hamid with comments by Muhammad Abduh, (Cairo: Matbaat al-Istiqama, n.d.), 1:24–25; and Ali Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, 281, quoting the Imam Jafar al-Sadiq; and Ibn Babawayh, *Ma'ani al-Akhbar*, 35–103.
57. Al-Kulayni, *al-Uswul min al-Kafi*, 1:443.
58. Al-Bursi, *Kitab Mashariq*, 144–45.
59. Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, *Bahth Hawl al-Walaya* (A treatise on the Walaya), 2nd ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Tarif bi al-Matbuat, 1399/1978), 1–96.
60. Al-Kulayni, *al-Uswul min al-Kafi*, 1:443; and al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal*, 1:195.
61. Murtaza Mutahhari, *Master and Mastership*, 2nd ed., trans. Mustajib A. Ansari, (Tehran: Foreign Department of Bethat Foundation, 1982), 40–48.
62. Abu Nuaym al-Isfahani, *Hilyat al-Awliya* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khanji, 1351/1932), 1:79; Muhammad Ibn Ali Abi Talib, *Qut al-Qulub fi Mu'amalat al-Mahbub* (Cairo: Mustafa al-Babi al-Halabi, 1933), 1:134; Abu al-Qasim Ali Ibn al-Hasan Ibn Hibat Allah Ibn Asakir, *Tahdhib Tarikh Ibn Asakir*, ed. Abd al-Qadir Ahmad Badran (Damascus: Rawdat al-Sham, 1329/1911), 4:83.
63. Abu Mansur Ahmad Ibn Ali al-Tabarsi, *al-Ihtijaj* (al-Najaf: Matbaat al-Numan, 1386/1966), 1:384–85; Ali Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, 327.
64. Al-Bursi, *Kitab Mashariq*, 140.
65. Abu Nasr al-Sarraj al-Tusi, *al-Luma*, ed. R. A. Nicholson (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1914), 378.
66. Al-Amuli, *Jami al-Asrar*, MS 1349, fols. 108b–109a; and al-Shaibi, *al-Fikr al-Shi'i*, 123.
67. Al-Sarraj, *al-Luma*, 129.
68. *Ibid.*, 129–132.
69. See *Diwan Ibn al-Farid* (Anthology of Ibn al-Farid), 2nd ed. (Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Husayniyya, 1352/1933), 60.
70. See *Kuliyat Shams-i Tabrizi: Diwan-i ghazaliyyat* (Tehran: Amir Kabir, 1336/1957), 372–74.
71. Nicholson, *Islamic Mysticism*, 11.
72. Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 251–53 and the Arabic translation of the same: idem, *al-Aqida wa al-Shari'a fi al-Islam*, 2nd ed., trans. Muhammad Yusuf Musa et al. (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Haditha, 1959), 157–58. Cf. al-Shaibi, *al-Sila bayn al-Tasawwuf wa al-Tashayyu*, 46; and al-Bursi, *Kitab Mashariq*, 155–62.

6—The Miraculous Attributes of Ali

1. Sayyid Muhammad Kazim al-Qazwini, *Ali min al-Mahd ila al-Lahd*, 7th ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Turath al-Arabi, n.d.), 18–25.
2. This episode is related in Muhammad Ibn al-Fattal al-Nisaburi, *Rawdat al-Wa'izin wa Basirat al-Mutta'izin* (al-Najaf: al-Maktaba al-Haydariyya, 1966), 1:76–81. For more on the miracles of Ali see Rice, "Ali in Shi'ah Tradition," 30–36.
3. Al-Shaykh al-Mufid Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn al-Numan al-Baghdadi al-Karkhi al-Ukbari, *Kitab al-Irshad ila Fada'il al-Amjad*, trans. I. K. A. Howard, (New York: Tahrike Tarsile Quran, Inc., 1981), 229–67, quotation in 230.
4. *Ibid.*, 231–32, 235–50; and *Sharh Nahj al-Balagha*, ed. Izz al-Din Abd al-Hamid

(known as Ibn Abi al-Hadid), (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr li al-Jami, 1388/1968), 1: 207–8 and the Cairo edition, Dar al-Kutub al-Arabiyya, 1329/1911.

5. Al-Mufid, *Kitab al-Irshad*, 1, 251–58, 261–63; and Ibn Asakir, *Tarjamat al-Imam Ali min Tarikh Dimashaq*, ed. al-Shaykh Muhammad Baqir al-Mahmudi (Beirut: Muassasat al-Mahmudi li al-Tibaa, 1980), 2:287.

6. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 136–37.

7. See al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 35–36.

8. *Ibid.*, 33.

9. S. G. Wilson, *Persian Life and Customs* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1900), 213.

10. Al-Shaykh Abu Hatim Ahmad Ibn Hamdan al-Razi, *Kitab al-Zina*, part 3, edited and appended by Abd Allah Sallum al-Samarrai to his *al-Ghuluw wa al-Firaq al-Ghaliya fi al-Hadara al-Islamiyya* (Baghdad: Dar Wasit li al-Nashr, 1982), 247–312; the reference here is to 305–6; al-Nawbakhti, *Firaq al-Shi'a*, 4th ed. (al-Najaf: al-Matbaa al-Haydariyya, 1969), 40–41; Abd al-Qadir al-Baghdadi, *al-Farq Bayn al-Firaq*; 234; Ibn Hazm, *Kitab al-Fisal fi Milal wa al-Ahwa al-Nihal* (Cairo: 1321/1903), 4:176, 180; al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal* 2:11, and M. G. S. Hodgson, "Abd Allah B. Saba," *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden and London: E. J. Brill, 1960), 1:512 and the bibliography on Ibn Saba.

11. Al-Razi, *Kitab al-Zina*, part 3, 297, 307; al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal*, 1:204, 2:12–13; al-Nawbakhti, *Firaq al-Shi'a*, 50–51. For more information, see Muhammad Jabir Abd al-Al, *Harakat al-Shi'a al-Mutatarrifin* (Cairo: Matbaat al-Sunna al-Muhammadiyya, 1954), 33–36; and M. G. S. Hodgson, "Bayan b. Sam'an al-Tamimi," *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden and London: E. J. Brill, 1960), 1:146–47. Cf. al-Imam Abu al-Hasan Ali Ibn Ismail al-Ashari, *Kitab Maqalat al-Islamiyyin wa Ikhtilaf al-Musallin*, 3rd ed., ed. Hellmut Ritter (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1980), 14. Al-Ashari does not mention the extremist Shiite sect that he says "insults the Prophet," 123–25.

12. Al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal*, 2:13; al-Baghdadi, *al-Farq Bayn al-Firaq*, 234; Ibn Hazm, *Kitab al-Fisal*, 4:176, 180; and al-Imam Abu al-Hasan Ali Ibn Ismail al-Ashari, *Maqalat*, 14.

13. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 34.

14. Jamal al-Din Abu al-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzi, *Talbis Iblis* (The devil's delusion), (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 1368/1948), 22, 98.

15. W. C. Taylor, *The History of Muhammedanism and its Sects* (London: John W. Parker, 1834), 198–99; and Southgate, *Narrative of a Tour*, 1:43.

16. *Le Cabous-Name ou Livre de Cabous*, trans. A. Querry (Paris: E. Leroux, 1886), 5; and Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Sect des Ahlé-Haq*, 17.

17. Haji Zayn al-Abidin Shirvani, *Bustan al-Siyaha*, ed. Ali Asghar Khan Atabeg (Tehran: printed at the expense of Sayyid Abd Allah Mustawfi, 1315/1897), 378–79; and F. M. Stead, "The Ali Ilahi Sect in Persia," *The Muslim World* 22, no. 2 (April 1932), 184. On the deification of Ali by the Ali Ilahis, see S. G. Wilson, *Persian Life and Customs*, 239–40, and chapter 21 of this book.

18. Al-Kulayni, *al-Usul min al-Kafi*, 1:234. For more information on Ali's sword, see E. Mittwoch, "Dhu l'Fakar," *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden and London: E. J. Brill, 1965), 2:233.

19. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 33.

20. Molyneux-Seel, "Journey in Dersim," 52.

21. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam* (New York: Schocken Books, 1975), 153.

22. *Umm al-Kitab*, ed. Ivanow in *Der Islam* 223 (1936): 61–62 of the original Persian text and 46–47 of the periodical. Cf. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 49. For information and

analysis of *Umm al-Kitab*, see Ivanow, "Notes sur l' Ummu'l-Kitab," *Revue des Études Islamiques* (1932): 419–82; and Corbin, *Cyclical Time and Ismaili Gnosis*, 168–73.

23. Donaldson, *The Shi'ite Religion*, 44.

24. Al-Mufid, *Kitab al-Irshad*, 86–87; Donaldson, *The Shi'ite Religion*, 44; al-Majlisi, *Hayat al-Qulub*, 275; Ibn Shahr Ashub, *Manaqib Al Abi Talib* (al-Najaf: al-Matbaa al-Haydariyya, 1376/1956), 1:125–28; al-Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin, *Siyar al-A'imma* (Beirut: Dar al-Taaruf, 1980), 1:239–46; and al-Qazwini, *Ali min al-Mahd ila al-Lahd*, 137–44.

25. Abu Jafar Muhammad Ibn Ali al-Tabari, *Bisharat al-Mustafa li Shi'at al-Murtada*, 2nd ed. (al-Najaf: al-Maktaba al-Haydariyya, 1963), 191; and al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal*, 2:25–26.

26. Al-Bursi, *Kitab Mashariq*, 110; and al-Majlisi, *Hayat al-Qulub*, 273–76.

27. Al-Bursi, *ibid.*, al-Majlisi, *ibid.*, and al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal*, 1:204, 2:25.

28. Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, 63. According to a tradition related by al-Shaykh al-Mufid in his book, *Kitab al-Irshad*, 58, an angel called Ridwan was the one who shouted "No chivalrous youth but Ali and no sword but Dhu al-Faqar." For the killing of Marhab see al-Mufid, *Kitab al-Irshad*, 87–88.

29. Al-Bursi, *Kitab Mashariq*, 110.

30. Abu al-Fadl Sadid al-Din Shadhan Ibn Jabrail ibn Ismail Ibn Abi Talib al-Qummi known as Ibn Shadhan, *al-Fada'il* (Exemplary acts), (al-Najaf: al-Matbaa al-Haydariyya, n.d.), 64–65.

31. Al-Khasbi, *Kitab al-Hidaya*, 274–75; Ibn Shahr Ashub, *Manaqib Al Abi Talib*, 2:123–24; al-Nisaburi, *Rawdat al-Wa'izin*, 1:114–15.

32. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 33, states that he tried very hard to explain to the Shabak and others who held the same belief that the "three in this Quranic verse meant Kab Ibn Malik, Hilal Ibn Umayya and Marar Ibn al-Rabi who tarried in joining the Prophet in his raid against Tabuk and not the three Caliphs who were first to join the forces of the Prophet in that skirmish."

33. Abu Ali al-Fadl Ibn al-Hasan al-Tabarsi, *Majma al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an*, ed. Ahmad Arif al-Zayn (Sayda: Matbaat al-Irfan, 1333/1914), 5:201.

34. Al-Shaykh Mumin Ibn Hasan al-Shabalanji, *Nur al-Absar fi Manaqib Al Bayt al-Nabi al-Mukhtar*, (Baghdad: Maktabat al-Sharq al-Jadid, 1984), 112.

35. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 35.

36. Shaykh Muhsin Fani, *Dabistan or School of Manners*, trans. David Shea and Anthony Troyer 2 (Paris: Allen & Co., 1843), 368–69; W. St. Clair Tisdall, "Shi'ah Additions to the Koran," *The Moslem World* 3, no. 3 (July 1913), 227–41; and Abd al-Aziz al-Dihlawi, *Mukhtasar al-Tuhfa al-Ithnay 'ashariyya*, 2nd ed., ed. Mahmud Shukri al-Alusi (Cairo: al-Matbaa al-Salafiyya, 13878/1967), 30–32.

37. Al-Mufid, *Kitab al-Irshad*, 256–58; and Mutahhar Ibn Tahir al-Maqdisi, *Kitab al-Bad wa al-Tarikh*, ed. Clement Huart (Paris: E. Leroux, 1899), 1: 150.

7—The Family of the Prophet

1. Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, 304. See also, al-Kulayni, *al-Usul min al-Kafi*, 1:287; Abu al-Husayn Ibn al-Hajjaj Muslim, *Sahih Muslim* (Collection of traditions by Mulsim) (Cairo: Maktabat Muhammad Ali Sabih wa Awladihi, 1334/1915), 8:121, 130; and Abu al-Abbas Shihab al-Din Ahmad Ibn Hajar al-Haythami, *al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqa fi al-Radd ala Ahl al-*

Bida wa al-Zandaqa, 2nd ed., ed. Abd al-Wahhab Abd al-Latif (Cairo: Sharikat al-Tibaa al-Muttahida, 1965), 143.

2. Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, 93; and Ibn Babawayh, *Ma'ani al-Akhbar*, 90–3. See also Abu al-Husayn Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, 7: 123; and Abu Muhammad al-Baghawi, *Mishkat al-Masabih*, trans. James Robson, 1:47.

3. Abu al-Qasim Abd al-Karim Ibn Hawazin al-Qushayri, *al-Risaia al-Qushayriyya*, ed. Abd al-Halim Mahmud and Mahmud al-Sharif (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Haditha 1966), 1: 277; Sayyid Muhammad Taqi al-Hakim, *Ahl al-Bayt wa Mawadi Ukhra* (Beirut: Dar al-Zahra, 1978), 21; and al-Shabalanji, *Nur al-Absar*, 111–12.

4. Abd al-Qadir al-Jili, *al-Fath al-Rabbani wa al-Fayd al-Rahmani* (Beirut: Dar Sadir, 1972), 218; and Ibn Arabi, *al-Futuh al-Makkiyya*, 2:126.

5. Abd al-Qadir al-Jili, *Kimya al-Sa'ada*, Arabic MS. Add. 422, fol. 229, Cambridge University; al-Shaibi, *al-Sila bayn al-Tasawwuf wa al-Tashayyuf*, 351–52; al-Shabalanji, *Nur al-Absar*, 110; and al-Shaykh Ahmad al-Sabban, *Is'af al-Raghbin fi Sirat al-Mustafa wa Fada'il Ahl Baytihi al-Tahirin*, printed on the margin of al-Shabalanji, 104–108.

6. Jamal al-Din Abu al-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzi, *Sifat al-Safwa*, ed. Muhammad Fakhuri (Halab: Dar al-Wai, 1969), 1:535, 546; and Ibn Arabi, *al-Futuh al-Makkiyya*, 2:167. See also the tradition concerning the fifth Imam al-Baqir by Jabir Ibn Zayd al-Jufi in Corbin, *Cyclical Time and Ismaili Gnosis*, 144.

7. Abu al-Husayn Ibn al-Hajjaj Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, 1:123.

8. See sources in note 1 of this chapter. See also Ibn Hajar al-Haythami, *al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqa fi al-Radd ala Ahl al-Bida wa al-Zandaqa*, 144; al-Shabalanji, *Nur al-Absar*, 110–11; al-Sabban, *Is'af al-Raghbin*, 104–6; and Ihsan Ilahi Zahir, *al-Shi'a wa Ahl al-Bayt* (Lahore: Idarah Tarjuman al-Sunna, 1982), 16–19.

9. Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, 56. See also Abu Jafar Muhammad Ibn Abi al-Qasim al-Tabari, *Bisharat al-Mustafa li Shi'at al-Murtada*, (al-Najaf: al-Matbaa al-Haydariyya, 1383/1963), 16; and Ibn Shadhan, *al-Fada'il*, 95; 155–56.

10. For the episode of *al-Mubahala*, see Abu Jafar Muhammad Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, *Jami al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an* (Commentary on the Quran) (Cairo: al-Matbaa al-Maymaniyya, 1322–30/ 1904–11), 192–93; Nizam al-Din Hasan Ibn Husayn al-Qummi al-Nisaburi, *Ghara'ib al-Qur'an wa Ragh'a'ib al-Furqan*, printed on the margin of al-Tabari, *Jami al-Bayan*, 192–93; Abu al-Rayhan al-Biruni, *al-Athar al-Baqiya an al-Qurun al-Khaliya*, ed. C. Edward Sachau (Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1923), 333; and Massignon, *Le Mubahala Étude sur la Proposition d'ordalie faite par le Prophète Muhammad aux Chrétiens Balharith du Nejrân en l'an 10/631 à Médine* (Melun: 1944).

11. Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahani, *Kitab al-Aghani*, (Cairo: Bulaq, 1285/1868), reprint, Beirut: Dar al-Fikr li al-Jami, 1970), 10:144.

12. Al-Mufid, *Kitab al-Irshad*, 116–18.

13. Imad al-Din Ibn Kathir, *al-Bidaya wa al-Nihaya* (Cairo: Matbaat al-Saada, 1351–58/1932–39), 5:54. This episode of the Mubahala is reproduced in Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, *Mukhtasar Sirat Rasul Allah* (Riyad: Maktabat al-Riyad al-Haditha, 1375/1956), 442–48. For a Nusayri version of the Mubahala, see chapter 34 of this book.

14. Ibn Arabi, *al-Futuh al-Makkiyya*, 1:256, 2:126, 4:139.

15. *Nahj al-Balagha*, ed. Muhammad Muhyi al-Din Abd al-Hamid with comments by al-Shaykh Muhammad Abdhu (Cairo: Matbaat al-Istiqaama, n.d.), 24:25; Abu Jafar Muhammad Ibn Ali al-Qasim al-Tabari, *Bisharat al-Mustafa*, 49.

16. Al-Shaibi, *al-Sila bayn al-Tasawwuf wa al-Tashayyuf*, 59.

17. Muhammad Jawad Cherri, *The Brother of Muhammad* (The Imam Ali) (Detroit,

Michigan: Islamic Center, 1979). See Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, 63, where it is stated that a voice from the throne of God said that Ali was the brother of Muhammad.

18. Al-Kulayni, *al-Usul min al-Kafi*, 1:196–98.

19. *Ibid.*, 1:196.

20. Al-Mufid, *Kitab al-Irshad*, 119. The verse of the *Mubahala* is found in Quran 33:33. For more information on this episode, see note 4 of this chapter.

21. Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, 342.

22. Al-Bursi, *Kitab Mashariq*, 60–61.

23. Al-Majlisi, *Hayat al-Qulub*, 203; and Donaldson, *The Shi'ite Religion*, 52.

24. Abu Jafar Muhammad Ibn al-Hasan al-Tusi, *Kitab al-Ghayba* (al-Najaf: Matbaat al-Numan, 1385/1965), 2–3; and al-Suyuti, *Tarikh al-Khulafa*, (Baghdad: Matbaat Munir, 1983), 170. Al-Suyuti describes a tradition in which the Prophet tells Ali, "You are my brother in this life and the one to come."

25. Al-Hajj Masum Ali (al-Nimat Ilahi al-Shirzal), *Tara'ia al-haqaiq*. (Tehran: 1319/1901), 1:211.

26. Abu al-Faraj Abd al-Rahman Ali Ibn al-Jawzi, *al-Muntazam fi Tarikh al-Muluk wa al-Umam* (Haydarabad al-Dakan: Matbaat Dairat al-Maarif al-Uthmaniyya, 1357–61/1938–42), 6:370–71; Adam Mez, *Die Renaissance des Islams* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1922), 59; and the English translation, *idem*, *The Renaissance of Islam*, trans. Salahuddin Khuda Bakhsh and D. S. Margoliouth (London: Luzac, 1937), 62–67.

27. Al-Bursi, *Kitab Mashariq*, 151–52. Cf. Rev. S. G. Wilson, *Persian Life and Customs*, 213.

28. Al-Suyuti, *Tarikh al-Kulafa*, 173.

29. Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, 328.

30. This verse is cited in al-Shaibi, *al-Sila bayn al-Tasawwuf wa al-Tashayyu*, 61.

31. Muhammad Ibn al-Fattal al-Nisaburi, *Rawdat al-Wa'izin*, 101–2; and Abu Jafar Muhammad Ibn Ali al-Qasim al-Tabari, *Bisharat al-Mustafa*, 20, 24, 96.

32. Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, 222; and al-Tabari, *Bisharat al-Mustafa*, 40, 63.

33. Al-Hasan al-Askari, *Tafsir al-Imam Hasan al-Askari*, printed on the margin of Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, 73–74; and Goldziher, "Neuplatonische und gnostische," 327. Cf. Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, 19, 21; and al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal*, 2:26.

34. Goldziher, "Neuplatonische und gnostische," 327.

35. *Ibid.*

36. Abu Hatim Ahmad Ibn Hamdan al-Razi, *Kitab al-Zina*, part 3, 307; Saad Ibn Abd Allah al-Aashari, *al-Maqalat wa al-Firaq*, ed. Muhammad Jawad Mashkur (Tehran: Matbaat Haydari, 1963), 56. Cf. al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal*, 2:13, 26.

37. Abu al-Hasan al-Ashari, *Kitab Maqalat al-Islamiyyin*, 14–15; and al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal*, 2:13.

38. Al-Razi, *Kitab al-Zina*, 307; and al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal*, 2:13. Cf. similar verses related in Mumin al-Shabalanji, *Nur al-Absar*, 113, 115. On al-Razi and his book *Kitab al-Zina*, see Ivanow, *A Guide to Ismaili Literature* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1933), 32–33.

39. Abu al-Faraj Abd al-Rahman Ali Ibn al-Jawzi, *al-Muntazam fi Tarikh al-Muluk wa al-Umam* (Haydarabad: Matbaat Dairat al-Maarif al-Uthmaniyya, 1357/1938), 6:370–71; Mez, *Die Renaissance des Islam*, 58; and *idem*, *The Renaissance of Islam*, 62, and al-Suyuti, *Tarikh al-Khulafa*, 399.

40. Ibn Babawayh (al-Qummi), *Ilal al-Shara'i*, introduced by M. S. Bahr al-Ulum (al-Najaf: al-Matbaa al-Haydariyya, 1383/1963), 1:181; and *idem*, *Ma'ani al-Akhbar*, 63;

Mez, Die Renaissance des Islam, 59; and idem, *The Renaissance of Islam*, 63 n. 2. On Fatima as Maryam al-Kubra (the Great Mary), see al-Yaman, *Kitab al-Kashf*, 97–98; Corbin, *Cyclical Time and Ismaili Gnosis*, 183; and Mahmud Ayoub, *Redemptive Suffering in Islam: A Study of the Devotional Aspects of Ashura in Twelver Shi'ism* (The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1978), 35.

41. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 56.

42. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 187 n.1, 193, 195, 197, 198.

43. Evliya Efendi, *Siyahatname* (Istanbul: Devlet Matbaasi, 1357/1938), 8:740. Cf. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 71.

8—Religious Hierarchy

1. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 52–55; and Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 162–65. For the degrees of the Bektashi order, see Baba, *al-Risala al-Ahmadiyya*, 69–70. For more information on the *qalandar*, see Gibb, *History of Ottoman Poetry* (Leyden: E. J. Brill, 1900), 1:357; and Brown, *The Darvishes*, 169–72, especially the note by H. A. Rose.

2. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 55. For further information on the *Qutb* in the different Dervish orders, see Rev. Edward Sell, *The Religious Orders of Islam* (London: Sympkin, Marshall, Hamilton and Kent Co., 1914), 23.

3. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 97.

4. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 30–31.

5. *Ibid.*, 31, and Saad Ibrahim al-Adami, *al-Aqaliyyat al-Diniyya wa al-Qawmiyya* (n.p., 1982), 108–11.

6. See Barnum, report dated 22 July 1863, *Missionary Herald* 59 (1863), 310.

7. White, "Alevi Turks," 695–96; idem, "The Shia Turks," 231; and idem, "Some Non-Conforming Turks," 245.

8. Grenard, "Une Secte Religieuse," 518.

9. White, "Some Non-Conforming Turks," 245.

10. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 31–32.

11. Nur Yalman, "Islamic Reform," 54.

9—The Twelve Imams

1. For the most comprehensive Shiite source on the twelve Imams, see al-Mufid, *Kitab al-Irshad*, trans. I. K. A. Howard (New York: Tahrike Tarsile Quran, Inc., 1981); al-Bahrani, *Ghayat al-Maram wa Hujjat al-Khisam fi Ta'yin al-Imam min Tariq al-Khass wa al-Amm* (Tehran: 1321/1903); al-Kulayni, *al-Usul min al-Kafi*, 1:286–553; and Hashim Maruf al-Hasani, *Sirat al-A'imma al-Ithnay'ashar*, 2 vols. 2nd ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Qalam, 1398/1978).

2. W. C. Taylor, *History of Muhammedanism*, 218.

3. Abu Jafar Muhammad Ibn al-Hasan al-Tusi, *Kitab al-Ghayba* (al-Najaf: Matbaat al-Numan, 1385/1965), 3–4; and al-Mufid, *Kitab al-Irshad*, 524.

4. See al-Shaykh Yusuf Ibn al-Ajuz al-Halabi (known as al-Nashshabi), *Munazara* (Debate), in Arabic MS. 1449, fol. 120, Bibliothèque Nationale.

5. Al-Mufid, *Kitab al-Irshad*, 525.

6. Al-Majlisi, *Hayat al-Qulub*, 305; Donaldson, *The Shi'ite Religion*, 229; and Hus-

ayn Ibn Muhammad Taqi al-Tabarsi al-Nuri, *Kashf al-Sitar an Khabar al-Gha'ib an al-Absar* Tehran: 1318/1900).

7. Al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal*, 1:22.

8. Al-Kulayni, *al-Usul min al-Kafi*, 1:199; Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, 211, 306–7; Abu al-Hasan al-Ashari, *Maqalat*, 2–3; and W. Madlung, “Imama,” *The Encyclopedia of Islam* 3 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971):1163–69.

9. Al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal*, 1:22; Abd al-Rahman Ibn Khaldun, *al-Maqaddima* (Cairo: Matbaat Mustafa Muhammad, n.d.), 9; H. R. Gibb, “Constitutional Organization,” in *Law in the Middle East*, ed. Majid Khadduri and Herbert J. Liebesny (Washington D.C.: The Middle East Institute, 1955), 1:4.

10. Al-Ashari, *Maqalat al-Islamiyyin*, 5; al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal*, 1:195; Abu Muhammad al-Hasan Ibn Musa al-Nawbakhti, *Firaq al-Shi'a* (Shiite Sects), 4th ed. (al-Najaf: al-Matbaa al-Haydariyya, 1969), 22.

11. Muhammad Ibn al-Fattal al-Nisaburi, *Rawdat al-Wa'izin*, 2:293–94; al-Haythami, *al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqa*, 161.

12. For this tradition, see al-Shaykh al-Saduq Ibn Babawayh (al-Qummi) *Amali al-Sudug* (al-Najaf: al-Matbaa al-Haydariyya, 1389/1969), 79, 84–85; and Muhammad al-Husayn Al Kashif al-Ghita, *Asl al-Shi'a wa Usuluha*, 3rd ed. (Beirut: Muassast al-Alami li al-Matbuat, 1397/1977), 43–44.

13. See Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, *Bahth Hawl al-Walaya*, 9–96; and idem, *Dawr al-A'imma fi al-Hayat al-Islamiyya* (Tehran: al-Maktaba al-Islamiyya al-Kubra, 1400/1979), 3–16; *Nahj al-Balaqha*, ed. Muhyi al-Din Abd al-Hamid with comments by Muhammad Abduh, 2:82. Cf. Muhammad Jawad Mughniya, *Falsafat al-Tawhid wa al-Walaya* (Qumm: Dar al-Tabligh al-Islami, 1971), passim.

14. See the Ismaili writer Hamid al-Din Ahmad al-Kermani (Hujjat al-Iraqayn), *Rahat al-Aql*, ed. Mustafa Ghalib (Beirut: Dar al-Andalus, 1967), 574–76; and al-Shaibi, *al-Sila bayn al-Tasawwuf wa al-Tashayyu*, 55–68.

15. Al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal*, 2:51; Horatio Southgate, *Narrative of a Tour*, 2:304, and appendix 8.

16. Al-Kulayni, *al-Usul min al-Kafi*, 1:292–93; al-Nawbakhti, *Firaq al-Shi'a*, 36–37; al-Ashari, *Maqalat*, 16, 17, 24, 26, 30, 64, and 67–69; al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal*, 1:195, 218–19. Regarding the imamate, the Zaydis maintain that although a descendant of Ali and Fatima should have priority in becoming an Imam, the public interest of the Muslim community demands that other Muslims also be able to become Imams. For this reason the Zaydis accept Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman as lawful caliphs or Imams,

17. Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, 94; al-Bahrani, *Ghayat al-Maram*, 28–92; al-Razi, *Kitab al-Zina*, part 3; Ibn Babawayh, *Ma'ani al-Akhbar*, 67–74.

18. Al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal wa al-Nihal*, 1: 220–21.

19. Yahya Ibn al-Husayn, *Kitab al-Ifada fi Tarikh al-A'imma al-Sada*, Arabic MS. 1647, fols. 55a and b, Leiden University Library. See also al-Mufid, *Kitab al-Irshad*, 108–9; Abu al-Husayn Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, 7:120–21; *Sahih al-Bukhari*, trans. Muhammad Assad (Gibraltar: Dar al-Andalus, 1981), 65; Ali Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, 159 and 282; and Ibn Babawayh, *Ma'ani al-Akhbar*, 76–9.

20. Al-Nisaburi, *Rawdat al-Wa'izin*, 1:112–13. Cf. Rice, “Ali in Shi'ah Tradition,” 32.

21. See this sermon in *Nahj al-Balaqha*, ed. Muhyi al-Din Abd al-Hamid with comments by al-Shaykh Muhammad Abduh, 2:182–83.

22. Al-Kulayni, *al-Usul min al-Kafi*, 1:181–85. See also Abu Hanifa al-Numan Ibn Mansur Ibn Ahmad Ibn Hayyan al-Tamimi al-Maghribi, *Da'aim al-Islam wa Dhikr al-Halal*

wa al-Haram wa al-Qadaya wa al-Ahkam an Ahl Bayt Rasul Allah, ed. Asaf A. A. Fayzi (Cairo: Dar al-Maarif, 1951), 1:3; Sami Nasib Makarem, *The Doctrine of the Ismailis* (Beirut: The Arab Institute for Research and Publishing, 1972), 15.

23. Al-Razi, *Kitab al-Zina*, 257.
24. Ibn Shahr Ashub, *Manaqib Al Abi Talib*, 1:212 and 2:290–92; Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, 327; Ibn Babawayh, *Ma'ani al-Akhbar*, 96–103 especially 97–98; and Sell, *The Religious Orders of Islam*, 2.
25. Al-Kulayni, *al-Usul min al-Kafi*, 1:202, 269–74; al-Bahrani, *Ghayat al-Maram*, 152–613; Donaldson, *The Shi'ite Religion*, 347–56, E. Tyan, "Isma," in *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden and London: E. J. Brill, 1973), 4:182–84; and Muhammad Rida al-Muzaffar, *Aqa'id al-Shi'a al-Imamiyya* (al-Najaf, Matabi al-Numan, 1381/1961), 53–54 and 76.
26. For a thorough analysis of Wilayat al-Faqih according to the Iranian Constitution, see Ali Ahmad Matlub, et al., *Nahj Khomeini fi Mizan al-Fikr al-Islami* (Baghdad: Dar Ammar, 1985), especially the first three chapters. See also articles 5, 57 and 107 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. For a pioneering study of Wilayat al-Faqih see al-Shaykh Ali Al Kashif al-Ghita, *al-Nur al-Sati fi al-Fiqh al-Nafi* (al-Najaf: Matbaat al-Adab, 1381/1961), 1:340–407.
27. See "Gilani Shaw," *al-Dustur, The International Arab Weekly*, No. 340, 28 November 1983, London, 19.
28. Abd al-Jabbar Mahmud al-Umar, *al-Khomeini bayn al-Din wa al-Dawla* (Baghdad: Dar Afaq Arabiyya, 1984), 6, 50–51.
29. Al-Majlisi, *Hayat al-Qulub*, 3:23–24; Tyan, "Isma," in *The Encyclopedia of Islam* 4 (Leiden and London: E. J. Brill, 1974):183–84; and al-Muzaffar, *Aqa'id al-Shi'a al-Imamiyya*, 65–67.
30. Al-Kulayni, *al-Usul min al-Kafi*, 1:199–200, 203–5; and al-Bahrani, *Ghayat al-Maram*, 270–73.
31. Al-Mufid, *Awa'il al-Maqalat fi al-Madhahib wa al-Makhtarat* (Tabriz: Matbaat Ridai, 1371/1951), 35, 37–39; and idem, *Kitab Sharh Aqa'id al-Saduq aw Tashih al-P'tiqad* (Tabriz: Matbaat Ridai, 1371/1951), 60–62.
32. Donaldson, *The Shi'ite Religion*, 330–38.
33. Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, 115, 222, 368.
34. Al-Tusi, *Kitab al-Ghayba*, 119.
35. Al-Haythami, *al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqa*, 134–35.
36. Al-Bahrani, *Ghayat al-Maram*, 224–50.
37. Al-Kulayni, *al-Usul min al-Kafi*, 1:190–92; and *Kitab al-Haft al-Sharif*, 92–93, 114.
38. Hasan al-Askari, *Tafsir*, 82–3.
39. See P. M. Sykes, ed. and trans., *The Glory of the Shia World: The Tale of a Pilgrimage* (London: Macmillan, 1910), 240. Cf. Petrushevsky, *Islam in Iran*, trans. Hubert Evans (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985), 227.
40. Al-Kulayni, *al-Usul min al-Kafi*, 1:198–206, 292–97; al-Ghita, *Asl al-Shi'a wa Usuluha*, 65–71; and Muhammad al-Husayn al-Adib, *al-Mujmal fi al-Shi'a wa Mu'taqadatihim*, 3rd ed. (al-Najaf: Matbaat al-Numan, 1381/1961), 38–39.
41. See al-Mufid, *Kitab al-Irshad*, passim, and the religious book of the Shabak, the *Buyruk*, in al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 214–17.
42. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 108, 115, 126, 127; and al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 36.
43. J. G. Taylor, "Journal of a Tour," 319.
44. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 145–46.
45. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 138–39.
46. *Ibid.*, 183–88.

47. Ibid., 183–88. There is some resemblance between this account and that of Fatima seated on a throne in the proto-Ismaili source, *Umm al-Kitab*, 211.

48. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 153–88.

49. Muslims usually confound the Prophet Elijah or Elias with a legendary figure al-Khadir or Khidr, and consider him the Chief Saint or Qutb, that is, pole or highest degree in the Sufi hierarchy. They claim that the Khadir is immortal because he drank from the fountain of life. On the Khadir, see Abu al-Husayn Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, 7:103–8; Ibn Kathir (d. 774/1372) treats al-Khadir and Elias as two different persons. See Ibn Kathir, *al-Bidaya wa al-Nihaya*, 1:321–26, 355–67, and 367–76; and idem, *Qisas al-Anbiya*, (Baghdad: Matbaat al-Wisam, 1983), 449–71. See also Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i al-Zuhur fi Waqa'i al-Duhur* (Baghdad: Matbaat Hisam, 1983), 205–11; and A. J. Wensinck, "al-Khadir (al-Khidr)," in *The Encyclopedia of Islam 2* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1927): 861–65; P. N. Boratav, "Khidr-Ilyas," in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1979), 5:5.

50. See the *Buyruk* in al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 188–89 and 216–17.

51. Al-Kulayni, *al-Usul min al-Kafi*, 1:525–26.

52. Brown, *The Darvishes*, 173–75, especially the lengthy footnote by H. A. Rose.

53. See the Gospel according to St. Matthew 11:10–15; and Brown, *The Darvishes*, 175 n. 10 by H. A. Rose.

54. Sami Nasib Makarem, *The Doctrine of the Ismailis*, 27–28; and Arif Tamir, *al-Imama fi al-Islam* (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-Arabi, n.d.), 145–55.

55. For these sub-periods, see Tamir, 156–61.

56. Joseph Arthur Comte de Gobineau, *Les Religions et les Philosophie dans l'Asie Centrale* (Paris: Dedier, 1865), 60.

57. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1953), 52.

58. On the Adoptionists' views, see Adolph Harnack, *History of Dogma* (New York: Dover, n.d.), 1:120, 191–97, as well as the rest of the volume in passim.

59. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 52. Cf. Corbin, *Cyclical Time and Ismaili Gnosis*, 102–17; and idem, *The Man of Light in Iranian Sufism*, 131–38.

60. See chapter 5 of this book, especially the discussion of the concept of al-Haqiqa al-Muhammadiyya.

61. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 50.

62. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 147–48, 150–51; and al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 51.

63. For a detailed account of the Shaykhis, see Corbin, *En Islam iranism*, 4:205–300; Ali al-Hairi, *Aqidat al-Shi'a* (Karbala: 1348/1964), 9–11; Ali al-Wardi, *Lamahat Ijtima'iyya min Tarikh al-Iraq al-Hadith* (Baghdad: Matbaat al-Irshad, 1971), 130–31.

64. *Sirat al-Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsa'i*, ed. Husayn Mahfuz (Baghdad: Matbaat al-Maarif, 1957), 17–19; and al-Wardi, *Lamahat Ijtima'iyya*.

10—The Abdal

1. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 51.

2. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 251; Brown, *The Darvishes*, 199 n. 2; and Sell, *The Religious Orders of Islam*, 24–25. For more on the Abdal, see al-Shaibi, *al-Sila bayn al-Tasawwuf wa al-Tashayyu*, 458–61; Muhammad Husayn Sulayman al-Alami, *Da'irat al-Ma'arif al-Musammata bi Muqtabis al-Athar wa Mujaddid ma Duthir*, (Qumm: Matbaat al-Hikma, 1375/1957), 2:275–77; and Goldziher, "Abdal," in *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden and London: E. J. Brill, 1960), 1:94–95.

3. Ibn Arabi, *al-Futuhāt al-Makkiyya*, 2:9; and al-Karmali, "al-Abdal," *al-Mashriq* 12 (1909): 197, in which the author states that Abdal is the plural of *badil*.

4. Abu al-Hasan Muhammad Ibn al-Husayni Ibn Musa al-Alawi (known as al-Sharif al-Jurjani), *al-Ta'rifat* (Cairo: al-Babi al-Halabi, 1357/1938), 37.

5. Abd al-Aziz Ibn Abd al-Salam, *Risala fi al-Radd ala man Yaql bi Wujud al-Abdal*. This treatise is probably lost but is mentioned under *Abdal* in Abu al-Fayd Muhammad al-Murtada al-Zubaydi, *Taj al-Arus min Sharh Jawahir al-Qamus*, 10 vols. (Cairo: al-Matbaa al-Khayriyya, 1306–7/1888–89).

6. Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, "al-Khabar al-Dall ala Wujud al-Qutb wa al-Awtad wa al-Nujaba wa al-Abdal," edited with extensive footnotes by Miqdad Mansiyya, and published in *al-Nashra al-Ilmiyya li al-Kuliyya al-Zaytuniyya li al-Shari'a wa Usul al-Din*, no. 5 (Tunis: The Tunisian University, 1979), 319–91. Cf. al-Karmali, "al-Abdal," *al-Mashriq* 12 (1909): 194–204, in which al-Karmali made use of al-Suyuti's treatise.

7. Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmu'at al-Rasa'il wa al-Masa'il*, ed. Muhammad Rashid Rida (Cairo: Matbaat al-Manar, 1341–49/1923–30), 1:51; al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 51; Brown, *The Darvishes*, 91–93, 202–3; and Lucy M. Garnett, *Mysticism and Magic in Turkey* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), 37. See also the introduction by Miqdad Mansiyya to al-Suyuti, "al-Khabar al-Dall," 319–23; and Goldziher, "Abdal," 1:94.

8. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, 123–24. Al-Sarraf gives another variant of this Sufi hierarchy. See al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 51.

9. Al-Arif bi Allah Sayyid Afif al-Din Abd Allah Ibn Asad al-Yafii, *Kifayat al-Mu'taqid fi Nikayat al-Muntaqid aw Nashr al-Mahasin al-Ghaliya fi Fadl Mashayikh al-Sufiyya*, printed on the margin of Yusuf Ibn Ismail al-Nabhani, *Jami Karamat al-Awliya* (Cairo: al-Matbaa al-Maymaniyya, 1329/1911), 275–76, 336–37, and 338–39; Muhammad Amin Ibn Umar (known as Ibn Abidin), "Ijabat al-Ghawth bi Bayan Hal al-Nuqub wa al-Nujaba wa al-Abdal wa al-Awtad wa al-Ghawth," in idem, *Rasa'il Ibn Abidin* (al-Asitana, Constantinople: Muhammad Hashim al-Kutubi, 1325/1907), 2:214, 274; Abu al-Hasan Ali Ibn Uthman al-Julabi al-Hujwiri, *Kashf al-Mahjub*, trans. R. A. Nicholson (1911 reprint, Lahore: Islamic Book Foundation, 1974), 214; al-Jurjani, *al-Ta'rifat*, 155; and Sell, *The Religious Orders of Islam*, 22.

10. Al-Jurjani, *al-Ta'rifat*, 155; Ibn Abidin, "Ijabat al-Ghawth," 2:269 and 274; al-Hujwiri, *Kashf al-Mahjub*, 214; and Sell, *The Religious Orders of Islam*, 22.

11. Mez, *Die Renaissance des Islam*, 281; and idem *The Renaissance of Islam*, 294.

12. Affifi, *Mystical Philosophy*, 89–92.

13. Al-Shaibi, *al-Sila bayn al-Tasawwuf wa al-Tashayyu*, 463.

14. For this speech, see *Nahj al-Balagha*, ed. Muhyi al-Din Abd al-Hamid with comments by Muhammad Abduh, 1:25–33. Cf. Ibn Babawayh, *Ma'ani al-Akhbar*, 361.

15. Al-Hujwiri, *Kashf al-Mahjub*, 214; al-Suyuti, "al-Khabar al-Dall," 368–69; Sell, *The Religious Order of Islam*, 23–25; and Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, 123–24.

16. Ibn Arabi, *al-Futuhāt al-Makkiyya*, 2:2–16; al-Suyuti, "al-Khabar al-Dall," passim, and Goldziher, "Abdal," 1:94–95.

17. See *Kitab al-Haft al-Sharif*, 137–38.

18. Al-Hujwiri, *Kashf al-Mahjub*, 214; *Kitab al-Haft al-Sharif*, 137; and Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, 124.

19. Ibn Arabi, *Muhadarat al-Abrar wa Musamarat al-Akhyar fi al-Adabiyat wa al-Nawadir wa al-Akhbar* (Damascus: Dar al-Yaqza al-Arabiyya, 1388/1968), 1:418–19; and al-Suyuti, "al-Khabar al-Dall," 344, 372.

20. Ibn Arabi, *al-Futuhāt al-Makkiyya*, 2:9.

21. Al-Suyuti, "al-Khabar al-Dall," *passim*.
22. Abu Nuaym al-Isfahani, *Hilyat al-Awliya*, 8–9; al-Suyuti, "al-Khabar al-Dall," 343; Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Husayn al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi, (d. 898) *Nawadir al-Usul fi Ma'rifat Akhbar al-Rasul* (Beirut: Dar Sadir, 1972), 69–71; Ibn Asakir, *Tarikh Dimashq*, ed. Salah al-Din al-Munajjid (Damascus: al-Majma al-Ilmi al-Arabi, 1951), 1:278; and al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar*, 13:402.
23. Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmu'at al-Rasa'il wa al-Masa'il*, 1:51; al-Suyuti, "al-Khabar al-Dall," 372; al-Hujwiri, *Kashf al-Mahjub*, 213; and al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar*, 13:402.
24. F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 2:391–93.
25. See William Francis Ainsworth, *Travels and Researches in Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Chaldea and Armenia* (London: John W. Parker, 1842), 2:12; Afram Barsoum, *al-Lu'lu al-Manthur*, (Halab: n.p., 1956), 179; and F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 2:393, 394, especially 393, n.8.
26. Al-Shaibi, *al-Sila bayn al-Tasawwuf wa al-Tashayyu*, 460.
27. Ibn Asakir, *Tarikh Dimashq*, 1:278, 322; al-Suyuti, "al-Khabar al-Dall," 337, 339.
29. Ibn Arabi, *al-Futuh al-Makkiyya*, 2:9.
30. Al-Suyuti, "al-Khabar al-Dall," 334–47, 349, 358, 365–66; *idem*, *al-Jami al-Saghir fi Ahadith al-Bashir al-Nadhir* (Cairo: al-Matbaa al-Khayriyya, 1306/1888), 1:103, 106; Ibn Asakir, *Tarikh Dimashq*, 1:285; *Kitab al-Haft al-Sharif*, 137–38; and Goldziher, "Abdal," 1:95.
31. Al-Suyuti, "al-Khabar al-Dall,," quoting Abu Muhammad al-Khاللall, *Karamat al-Awliya*, 334–35, 345–46 and 359–60.
32. Al-Hujwiri, *Kashf al-Mahjub*, 213; Ibn Asakir, *Tarikh Dimashq*, 1:885; al-Suyuti, "al-Khabar al-Dall," 365; and al-Karmali, "al-Abdal," 195, where the author quotes al-Tayyibi, *Sharh al-Mishkat*, as saying that the Abdal are the Awliya (saints) and the Ubbad (worshipful).
33. Al-Suyuti, "al-Khabar al-Dall," 348, 350, 353, 368–69.
34. *Ibid.*, 369 where al-Suyuti mentions this tradition without giving a source. This tradition is reproduced on the authority of Ibn Abi al-Dunya in Ibn Asakir, *Tarikh Dimashq*, 1:291.
35. Al-Tirmidhi, *Nawadir al-Usul fi Ma'rifat Akhbar al-Rasul*, 69–71.
36. Al-Hujwiri, *Kashf al-Mahjub*, 213.
37. *Ibid.*
38. Al-Alami, *Da'irat al-Ma'arif*, 2:275–76.
39. For this tradition of the forty, see al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 50, 126.
40. M. F. Grenard, "Une Secte Religieuse," 516.
41. For this tradition see Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 266.
42. *Ibid.*, 137–38.
43. *Tadhkira-i A'la*, in Ivanow, *Truth Worshipers*, 165.
44. *Ibid.*, 62 and 165. On Sultan Mahmud Patili, see Hajj Nimat Allah (Mujrim) Mokri, *Shah Nama-ye Haqiqat*, ed. Muhammad Mokri, (Tehran: Departement D'Iranologie De L'Institute Franco-Iranien; Paris: Librairie D'Amerique et D'Orient Adrien-Maison-neuve, 1966), 1:232–35.
45. Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahle-Haqq*, 14–15. For the names of the forty, see 15–16.
46. Samuel Graham Wilson, *Persian Life and Customs*, 241.
47. M. H. Adjarian, "Gyorans et Thoumaris," trans. Frédéric Macler, *Revue De*

L'Histoire Des Religion 93, no. 3, (May-June 1926): 296-97.

48. H. J. Kissling in his postscript to Goldziher, "Abdal," 1:95; and Nur Yalman, "Islamic Reform," 49.

11—Rituals and Ceremonies

1. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 97-98. Haji Bektash was not fully obedient to the Islamic religious law (Sharia). For example, he was criticized for not performing formal prayer as a religious duty. See also, al-Aflaki, *Manaqib al-Arifin*, 381; Dunmore, report dated 24 October 24, 1854 in *Missionary Herald* 51 (2 February): 56; Perkins letter 30 May 1855 in *Ibid.*, 297; and Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 42, 49.

2. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 32. The Caliph Ali was struck on the forehead with a poisoned sword by his assassin the Kharijite Abd al-Rahman Ibn Muljam while he was on his way to pray at the mosque in al-Kufa. He was buried in al-Najaf, Iraq where a magnificent shrine was built over his remains.

3. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 96. The Kizilbash have no mosques but pray at the house of a Sayyid (pir) on Fridays. See Molyneux-Seel, "Journey in Dersim," 66; and White, "Some Non-Conforming Turks," 246-47.

4. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 96-97.

5. *Ibid.*, 96. Although the term *Hu* in this and other prayers means "He," that is, "God," yet generally it is used as an expression of adoration and intercession. It is one of the most common expressions used by the Bektashis. See Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 167.

6. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 168.

7. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 32, and al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 97.

8. F W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 2:559; and Grenard, "Une Secte Religieuse," *Journal Asiatique*, 10th ser., 3 (1904): 514.

9. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 169; and Donaldson, *The Shi'ite Religion*, 91.

10. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 32; and al-Sarraf, *al-Shabbak*, 97.

11. This is reported in al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 97.

12. *Ibid.*

13. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 32; and al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 97. For the Bektashi-Kizilbash pilgrimage see Molyneux-Seel, "Journey in Dersim," 66; and Grenard, "Une Secte Religieuse," 519.

14. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 33.

15. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 91-92.

16. al-Karmali, "Tafkihat al-Adhhan fi Ta'rif Thalathat Adyan," *al-Mashriq* 5 (1902): 582; al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 38, 43; and al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 11, 104.

17. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 72.

18. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 98, 101-3.

19. See Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 173-74. The "reverence of the threshold" is a Bektashi custom. One explanation of this custom is that given by Birge: "Since Ali is considered the Gate or Door of the city of knowledge, any doorway is symbolic of Ali's spiritual significance." The "reverence of the threshold" probably originated as an old Semitic custom. The author has often observed that members of the Syrian churches in the Middle East, whether Nestorians, Chaldeans, and Syrian Orthodox (especially in the villages north of Mosul), kiss both portals and the threshold of the church before entering to worship.

20. For the Shabak celebration of the New Year's day see al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 99-100.

21. For the commemoration of Ashura by the Shabak and their mourning of al-Husayn, see al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 117–18. Cf. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 169.
22. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 118–20.
23. White, “The Shia Turks,” 231; idem, “Survival of Primitive Religion Among the People of Asia Minor,” *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute* 39 (1907): 161; and Eröz, *Türkiye de Alevilik-Bektaşilik* (Istanbul, n.p. 1977), 115.
24. For an elaboration of Gökalp’s opinion, see Eröz, *Türkiye de Alevilik-Bekasilik*, 292–104; and Erisen and Samancıgil, *Hacı Bektaş Veli Bektaşilik ve Alevilik Tarihi* (Istanbul: Ay Yayınevi, 1966), 21.
25. G. Jacob, “Fortleben von antiken Mysterien und Alt-Christlichen im Islam,” *Der Islam* 11 (1911): 232; and F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 1:151, who follows Jacob. For the Bektashi “ritual meal,” see Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 169.
26. Grenard, “Une Secte Religieuse,” 517, 518.
27. Georg Jacob, “Beiträge zur Kenntnis,” 9:88–90; and idem, “Fortleben von Antiken Mysterien,” 232.
28. Yalman, “Islamic Reform,” 54–55.
29. Molyneux-Seel, “Journey in Dersim,” 66; and F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 1:148. For the sacrament celebrated by eastern Kizilbash, see White, “Alevi Turks,” 696.
30. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 118. Among the Kizilbash, neglect of confession of sins is punishable by fines; F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 1:148–49.
31. According to Islamic sources, the Jews of Khaybar made an alliance with Muhammad to withhold support from his enemies of the Quraysh tribe. It is reported that the Jews violated this alliance and were considered by Muslims to be hypocrites. See Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, 117, 169.
32. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 119.
33. Ibid., 119–20. For a similar prayer, see Brown, *The Darvishes*, 100. *Ishq* is an Arabic term meaning “passionate love.” But to the Bektashis or Kizilbash and to other dervish orders, it means a passionate yearning for God. It is probably in this sense that it is used in this hymn. Khatai is the pen name of Shah Ismail al-Safawi, who signed his poems with it; why he chose it as a pen name is not known.
34. For this hymn, see al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 131–34.
35. Ibid., 134–35, especially 134 n. 1.
36. Ibid., 135–36.
37. *History of Shah Isma’il*, fols. 22b and 71a; al-Shaibi, *al-Fiker al-Shi’i*, 413; and Said Amir Arjomand, “Religion, Political Action and Legitimate Domination in Shi’ite Iran: fourteen to eighteenth centuries,” *European Journal of Sociology* 20 (1979): 79–80.
38. The learned Shaykh Ali Ibn Abd al-Ali al-Karaki (d. 1534) wrote a treatise in which he stated that it was permissible to worship the *abd* (man) in order to justify the worship of Shah Ismail by his followers. See Mirza Makhdam, *al-Nawaqid li Bunyan al-Rawafid*, Arab MS. Or. 7991, fol. 98b, British Museum; *A Narrative of Italian Travels in Persia in The Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* trans. Charles Grey (London: Hakluy Society, 1873), 206; and Arjomand, “Religion, Political Action, and Legitimate Domination,” 59–109.
39. For this hymn, see al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 136–38. From the name Hilmi, we may assume that it was composed by the Bektashi poet Hilmi; see al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 129. The term Ayin-i Cem refers to the principal ritual ceremonies of the Bektashis and Kizilbash.
40. For the Shabak “Night of Forgiveness,” see al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 98, 103–10. For the Bektashi Forgiveness of Sins, see Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 170.

41. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 101-3.
42. The practice of placing the big toe of the right foot over the big toe of the left foot is reported by al-Ghulami as part of the Shabak's ceremony of initiation. See al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 42. This practice is also part of the Bektashi ceremony of initiation; see Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 184.
43. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 105.
44. *Ibid.*, 107, 108.
45. *Ibid.*, 108. The Erenler of the Rum means those Bektashi or Kizilbash spiritual guides who have attained a complete understanding of the Divine Reality (God), and who originally came from Rum (Anatolia or Asia Minor).
46. For the whole ceremony of the Night of the Forgiveness of Sins, see al-Sarraf, *ibid.*, 103-10.
47. See Ziya Bay's account of the Bektashi *Maghfireti Zunub* (forgiveness of sins) in Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 170.
48. Grenard, "Une Secte Religieuse," 17; White, Alevi Turks," 696; Hugo Grothe, *Meine Vorderasiensexpedition 1906 and 1907* (Leipzig: Hiersimann, 1911-12), 155; F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 1:148-49; al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 109-10; and H. J. Van Lennep, *Travels in Little-Known Parts of Asia Minor* (London: John Murray, 1870), 1:293, 295.
49. Grenard, "Une Secte Religieuse," 517.
50. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 64-65.
51. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 140-41.
52. F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 1:149; and Grenard, "Une Secte Religieuse," 516-17.
53. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 141.
54. al-Karmali, "Tafkihat al-Adhhan," 579, 582; al-Azzawi, *Al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 68-69, 74; al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 18; al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 104, 140-41; and Minorsky, "Shabak," *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden and London: E. J. Brill, 1934), 4:238-39, who follows al-Karmali.
55. Al-Karmali, "Tafkihat al-Adhhan," 579.
56. Al-Shaibi, *al-Tariqa al-Safawiyya*, 55.
57. See particularly al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 140-41. See al-Shaibi, *al-Tariqa al-Safawiyya*, 54 n. 191.
58. Al-Rahib (Monk) Behnam al-Mawsili al-Suryani, "Maqala fi al-Yazidiyya," *al-Mashriq* 46 (1952): 38 and n. 1. This article, which appeared in *al-Mashriq* in two parts; vol. 45 (1951); 533-48 and vol. 46 (1952): 29-40, is—except for the statement that Behnam personally attended the night of the Kafsha at the village of Bashliqa—a verbatim copy of Rev. Anastase al-Karmali's article "al-Yazidiyya," *al-Mashriq* 2 (1899), beginning on 32.
59. F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 1:153. See *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela*, trans. Marcus Nathan Adler (New York: Phillipp Feldheim, 1907), 18.
60. Van Lennep, *Travels in Little Known Parts of Asia Minor*, 1:293-95.
61. Gilbert, "Notes Sur Les Sectes Dans le Kurdistan," 393-95. Gilbert's article is summarized in Driver, "The Religion of the Kurs," 196-213, especially 198.
62. Felix von Luschan, "Die Tahtadji und andere Reste der alten Bevölkerung Lykiens," *Archives für Anthropologie* 19 (1892): 31-53; idem, "Early Inhabitants of Western Asia," 230; E. A. H. Peterson and Von Luschan, *Reisen in Lykien* (Wien: Gerold, 1889), 198; Crowfoot, "Survivals Among the Kappadokian Kizilbash," 312; and Jacob, "Fortleben von Antiken Mysterien," *Der Islam* 2 (1911):232-34.
63. Ramsay, *Impressions of Turkey*, 268; and Theodore Bent, "The Yourouks of Asia Minor," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 20 (1890-91): 270.

64. Yalman, "Islamic Reform," 55.
65. Robert L. Canfield, "What They Do When The Lights are Out: Myth and Social Order in Afghanistan" (Paper presented to the ACLS/SSRC Joint Committee on the Near and Middle East Conferences on Symbols of Social Differentiation, Baltimore, Maryland, 25-28 May 1978).
66. Abu al-Hasan Ali Ibn Muhammad al-Shabushti, *al-Diyarat*, ed. G. Awwad (Baghdad: Matbaat al-Maarif, 1966), 983; and al-Karmali, "Laylat al-Hashush wa al-Mashush," *Lughat al-Arab* 8 (1930): 368-73.
67. Baha Sait, "Türkiyede Alevi Zumreleri," *Türk Yurdu* 22 (1926-27): 332-55; and Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 182 n. 3.
68. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 111.
69. *Ibid.*, 111-12.
70. According to Muslims, *Salsabil* is the name of a spring in paradise. *Zanjabil* is a ginger drink. I don't see the significance of *Zanjabil* in this context except for the rhyme with *Salsabil* and the fact that it is a pleasant and refreshing drink.
71. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 112-13.
72. *Ibid.*, 114.
73. For the beliefs of the *Ghulat* and their refutation, see a summary of the book *Aqa'id al-Shi'a*, by Ali Akbar Ibn Ali Asghar (which he wrote in the time of the Qajari Shah Muhammad) in Browne, *Literary History*, 385.
74. For the whole ceremony of initiation see al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 111-15.
75. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 42-43.
76. This song was first reported by al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, and later by al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*.
77. For an elaboration of the ceremony of initiation, see Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 175-102. Cf. Brown, *The Darvishes*, 206-7; Garnett, *Mysticism and Magic in Turkey*, 97-102; and al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 104-10.
78. Brown, *The Darvishes*, 208; and Garnett, *Mysticism and Magic in Turkey*, 98. Cf. al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 111.
79. See chapter 3 n. 37 and 38 of this book for more information on the Kizilbash cap.
80. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 40-41; and al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 115-16.
81. For an account of Ali Zayn al-Abidin and his poetry, see al-Shaibi, *al-Sila bayn al-Tasawwuf wa al-Tashayyu*, 147-62.
82. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 116.
83. Al-Shaibi, *al-Tariqa al-Safawiyya*, 51.
84. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 38, 40.
85. Al-Shaibi, *al-Tariqa al-Safawiyya*, 51.
86. Al-Tabari, *Tarikh al-Umam wa al-Muluk*, 4:258; al-Masudi, *Muruj al-Dhahab*, 3:6.
87. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 42; and al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 117. Ubayd Allah Ibn Ziyad was killed by Ibrahim Ibn al-Ashtar in the year 67/686 near the lower Khazir, a tributary of the Tigris near Mosul in a battle called Ayn al-Warda. See al-Tabari, 4, 555; and al-Masudi, *Muruj al-Dhahab*, 3:41.
88. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 40; al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 116.

12—Social Customs

1. Al-Karmali, "Tafkihat al-Adhhan," 582; and al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 95.
2. Vital Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie, géographie, administrative, statistique, descriptive, et*

raisonnée de chaque province de l'Asie Mineure (Paris: E. Leroux, 1890-95), 2:767, and al-Shaibi, *al-Tariqa al-Safawiyya*, 49.

3. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 70-71; and al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 12.
4. *Tadhkira-i Ala*, quoted in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 97-98, 161.
5. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 71; Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqi*, 124 n.3; and Grenard, "Une Secte Religieuse," 511.
6. *Tadhkira-i Ala*, quoted in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 98.
7. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 121.
8. *Ibid.*, 123.
9. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 32.
10. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 122.
11. For the procedures of divorce see al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 122-23.
12. White, "The Shia Turks," 228; *Idem*, "Some Non-Conforming Turks," 224; *idem*, "Alevi Turks," 692; Trowbridge, "The Alevis, or Deifiers of Ali," 348; Grenard, "Une Secte Religieuse," 518.
13. Trowbridge, "The Alevis or Deifiers of Ali," 348; and White, "Some Non-Conforming Turks," 245.
14. For more on this topic, see al-Wardi, *Dirasa fi Tabi'at al-Mujtama al-Iraqi* (Baghdad: Matbaat al-Ani, 1965), 213-21; *idem*, "al-Faradiyyat al-Thalath Hawl al-Mujtama al-Iraqi," *al-Qadisiyya* 1868 (29 June 1968): 5.
15. See *Qanun al-Uqubat al-Iraqi*, ed. Kamil al-Samarrai (Baghdad: Matbaat al-Maarif 1957), 133.
16. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 139. For article 216 of the Iraqi Penal Code, see *Qanun al-Uqubat al-Iraqi*, 133.
17. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 139.
18. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 18.
19. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 123.
20. *Ibid.* See also Saad Ibrahim al-Adami, *al-Aqaliyyat al-Diniyya*, 110-11.
21. al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 27.
22. Grenard, "Une Secte Religieuse," 512; White, "Some Non-Conforming Turks,"
244. See also Eröz, *Türkiye' de Alevilik-Bektaşilik*, 60, 95-97, 304, where the author relates the opinion of Ziya Gökalp that the Bektashi-Kizilbash custom of drinking wine is an ancient custom dating back to the time when the Turks were pagans.
23. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 172-73; White, "Some Non-Conforming Turks," 245; Ihsan Mesut Erisen and Kemal Samancıgil, *Haci Bektaş Veli: Bektaşilik ve Alevilik Tarihi* (Istanbul: Ay Yayınevi, 1966), 20.
24. Erisen and Samancıgil, *Haci Bektaş Veli*, 20.
25. *Ibid.*, and Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 173.
26. Erisen and Samancıgil, *Haci Bektaş Veli*, 20.
27. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 27.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Ibid.*
30. and al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 125, following al-Ghulami.
30. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 20.
31. *Ibid.*, 28-29.
32. *Ibid.*, 30.

13—Religious Books

1. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 68, and chapter 3, 87-161, on Bektashi doctrines and beliefs.

2. *Ibid.*, 68, and Baha Sait in *Türk Yurdu* (Istanbul: 1926–27) 28:320 quoted in Birge, 68.
3. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 68.
4. J. G. Taylor, "Journal of a Tour," 320.
5. See Dunmore, report dated 22 January in *Missionary Herald* (1857): 219–20.
6. M. F. Grenard, "Une Secte Religieuse," 514 n. 1.
7. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 3–6, 141–43, 144 n.1, 146–91.
8. In the summer of 1981, the author obtained a copy of this manuscript which had been deposited in the Iraqi Museum Library as Turkoman MS 14706/1. It bears the private seal of the attorney Sadiq Kammuna dated 1975. The manuscript is entitled *Manaqib al-Awliya aw Buyruk* (Exemplary acts of saints of commandments). It consists of two parts, the first containing the biography of Shaykh Safi al-Din and an account of his acts and religious instructions, and the second containing collections of Turkish poems and hymns in praise of Ali and the rest of the Imams. It is written in blue ink and was completed at Tallafar on 28 December 1953. A colophone reads, "This is the book in which the Sufis of Tallafar believe."
9. *Ibid.*, 142–43.
10. Al-Shaibi, *al-Tariqa al-Safawiyya*, 52.
11. Ibn Bazzaz, *Safwat al-Safa*. For a detailed description of this book, see Basil Nikitin, "Essai D'Analyse du Safvat-us-Safa," *Journal Asiatique*, 5th ser., 245 (1957): 385–93; and Browne, *Literary History*, 32–34.
12. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 89–90.
13. *Ibid.*, 49, 90–91.
14. Dunmore, report dated 22 January 1857, 219–20.
15. J. G. Taylor, "Journal of a Tour," 320.
16. See the introduction to the *Buyruk* in al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 146 and 192.
17. *Ibid.*, 192, 193.
18. *Ibid.*, 209. For the connotations of these two terms, see Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 270.
19. Ibn Bazzaz, *Safwat al-Safa*, 11, 140, 146, 152.
20. For sections 7 to 35 of the *Buyruk*, see al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 149–68 of the Turkish text and 194–206 of the Arabic translation.
21. For sections 37 and 38 of the *Buyruk* see *ibid.*, 169–71 of the Turkish text and 207–8 of the Arabic translation.
22. For sections 39 to 42 of the *Buyruk*, see *ibid.*, 171–75 of the Turkish text and 208–11 of the Arabic translation.
23. For the anecdote of *Ghadir Khumm* in the *Buyruk*, see *ibid.*, 177–81 of the Turkish text and 211–13 of the Arabic translation.
24. For section 50 of the *Buyruk*, see *ibid.*, 181–82 of the Turkish text and 213–14 of the Arabic translation. On Najm al-Din Kubra, see notes by H. A. Rose in John P. Brown, *The Darvishes*, 2nd. ed. (London: Cass, 1968), 423–24; Browne, *History of Persian Literature*, 11:491–94, 579; Trimmingham, *Sufi Orders*, 55–57; and Corbin, *The Man of Light in Iranian Sufism* (Boulder and London: Shambhala, 61–97).
25. For sections 51–52 of the *Buyruk*, see al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 182–91 of the Turkish text and 214–17 of the Arabic translation.
26. For this statement in section 49 of the *Buyruk*, see al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 180–81 of the Turkish text and 213 of the Arabic translation.
27. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 63; and al-Shaibi, *al-Fikr al-Shi'i*, 225.
28. Al-Hajj Masum Ali, *Tara'iq al-Haqa'iq* (Tehran: 1319/1901), 2:2; and al-Shaibi, *al-Sila bayn al-Tasawwuf wa al-Tashayyu*, 23.

29. Al-Shaibi, *ibid.*, 11, 109; Massignon, *Salman Pāk et les premices de l'Islam iranien* in Abd al-Rahman Badawi, ed., *Shakhsīyyat Qaliqa fi al-Islam* (Cairo: Dar al-Nahda al-Arabiyya, 1964), 49 n.1; and al-Shaibi, *al-Sila bayn al-Tasawwuf wa al-Tashayyu*, 32.

30. Yamini Baba, *Fadilat Nama*, in Browne Papers, Turkish MS. 16, fols., 102-4b and 107b, Cambridge University; and al-Shaibi, *al-Fikr al-Shi'i*, 383.

31. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 147-48.

32. On Salman al-Farisi see Ibn al-Jawzi, *Sifat al-Safwa*, 1:523-56; Massignon, *Salman Pāk et les premices de l'Islam iranien*, 3-58; Abd Allah al-Subayti, *Salman al-Farisi*, 2nd ed (Baghdad, Matbaat al-Azhar, 1969). On the conversion of Salman to Islam, see Muhammad Ibn al-Fattal al-Nisaburi, *Rawdat al-Wā'izin*, 2:275-78. For the spiritual position of Salman al-Farisi, see *Umm al-Kitab*, 132, 138-39, 170-74, and 179; and Corbin, *Cyclical Time and Ismaili Gnosis*, 72-76, 124-25 and 142-144.

14—The Bajwan and Ibrahimīyyap

1. Minorsky, "The Guran," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* (1943): 85.

2. Al-Karmali, "Tafkīhat al-Adhhan," 580.

3. Al-Chalabi, letter in al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 9.

4. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 95-96. Cf. Minorsky, "The Guran," 76, 85.

Minorsky uses the name Bajilan for these people, and states that they speak a dialect similar to the Gurani.

5. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 15, 24, 27.

6. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 98.

7. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 46-47.

8. Al-Karmali, "Tafkīhat al-Adhhan," 580. For the source of his information about the Bajwan and related groups see page 578.

9. Minorsky, "Ahl-i Hakk," in *The Encyclopedia of Islam* 1 (Leiden and London: E. J. Brill, 1960):260; and Stead "The Ali Ilahi Sect."

10. Al-Karmali, "Tafkīhat al-Adhhan," 580.

11. Al-Shaibi, *al-Tariqa al-Safawiyya*, 31-32.

12. *Ibid.*, 50. Al-Shaibi's intention in quoting al-Karmali is to show that by glorifying Ismail the Shabak as a sect reflect the "Safawi order under Shah Isma'il."

13. Al-Karmali, "Tafkīhat al-Adhhan," 580-81.

14. *Ibid.*, 581.

15. *Ibid.*

16. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 283.

17. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 51. This story has been confirmed as a part of the Ibrahimīyya tradition by Tawfiq Wahbi, an Iraqi statesman who has served several times in the Iraqi Cabinet. Cf. *Mathnawi of Jalalu'ddin Rumi*, ed. and trans. Reynold A. Nicholson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1926; reprinted 1977), 1:161 and 2:108, when Muhammad Himself calls Ali "the Lion of God."

18. See chapter 10 of this book on the Abdal.

19. *Manaqib al-Awliya aw Buyruk*, passim, especially 8 and 24.

20. Husayn Ali Razmara, *Farhang Gughrafiya-i Iran* (Geographical Dictionary of Iran) (Tehran: Chap Khanah Artish, 1331/1952), 5:362, and al-Shaibi, *al-Tariqa al-Safawiyya*, 60.

21. *Manaqib al-Awliya aw Buyruk*, 14, 25, and 34.

22. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 55.

23. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 33–34, 39–40.
24. Abd al-Hujja al-Balaghi, *Maqalat al-Hunafa fi Maqamat Shams al-Urafa* (Tehran: Chap Khanah Mazahri, 1327/1948), 197; and al-Shaibi, *al-Tariqa al-Safawiyya*, 61.
25. Al-Sarraf, *al-Shabak*, 55.

15—The Sarliyya-Kakaiyya

1. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 45–46.
2. Rev. Anastase al-Karmali, "Tafkihat al-Adhhan," 579; Minorsky, "Shabak," 4:238–39, who follows al-Karmali; al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 32, 78; Saad Ibrahim al-Adami, *al-Aqaliyyat al-Diniyya*, 117–22.
3. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 78.
4. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 12.
5. *Al-Tarikh al-Ghiyathi: al-Fasl al-Khamis min Sanat 656 to 689/1258 to 1290*, ed. Tariq Nafi al-Hamdani (Baghdad: Asad Press, 1975), 184–85.
6. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 4.
7. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 66.
8. Taha al-Hashimi, *Mufasssal Jughrafiyyat al-Iraq* (Elaborate Geography of Iraq), quoted in al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 7.
9. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 8.
10. *Ibid.*, 9. On the *Akhiyya* or *Akhi*, see Fr. Taeschner, "Akhi," in *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden and London: E. J. Brill, 1960), 1:321–23 and 966–69. For Futuwwa, see Corbin, *En Islam iranien* 4:410–60; and Cahen, "Futuwwa," in *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden and London: E. J. Brill, 1965), 2:961–65.
11. Ibn Babawayh, *Ma'ani al-Akhbar*, 119; and Cahen, "Futuwwa," 2:961. For the noble qualities of the Futuwwa, see al-Qushayri, *al-Risala al-Qashayriyya*, ed. Abd al-Halim Mahmud and Mahmud Ibn al-Sharif (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Haditha, 1966), 2: 472–79.
12. Ibn Babawayh, *Ma'ani al-Akhbar*, 119; and al-Hasan Ibn Yusuf Ibn al-Mutahhar al-Hilli, *Kashf al-Haqq wa Minhaj al-Sidq* (Revelation of the truth and path of truthfulness), Arabic MS. 437, fol. 78b, The India Office, Loth, London.
13. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 24–25.
14. See Ahmad Ibn Elias al-Naqqash (of Khartbart), *Tuhfat al-Wasaya*, Arabic MS. 2049, Hagia Sophia, in which the author discusses al-Futuwwa and its rejuvenation by the Abbasid Caliph al-Nasir; Cahen, "Futuwwa," 2:946–65; and al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 14–17.
15. Cahen, "Futuwwa," 2:964; and al-Shaibi, *al-Fiker al-Shi'i*, 66–67.
16. Cahen, "Futuwwa," 2:964; and Bernard Lewis, *The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam* (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1967), 91.
17. Köprülü, *Türk Edebiyatında*, 231; Lewis, *The Assassins*, 91.
18. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 20–22.
19. *The Travels of Ibn Battuta A.D. 1325–1354* trans. H. A. R. Gibb from the Arabic text edited by C. Defrémery and B. R. Sanguinetti (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 2:418–21, and Köprülü, *Türk Edebiyatında*, 237.
20. Fr. Taeschner, "Futuwwa, Post Mongol Period," *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2:966–67.
21. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 21–22. For the distribution of the *Kakaiyya*, see pages 31–40, and for the distribution of the *Sarliyya*, see pages 32–33; See also al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 13–14.

22. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 45–46.
23. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 31; and al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 17.
24. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh* 33, 40, 51–55, 89.
25. *Ibid.*, 56.
26. On the dogma of the Nusayris, see chapters 26 to 35 of this book and René Basset, "Nusairis," *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* ed. James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribners, & Son, 1917), 9:417–19. For more on the Ahl-i Haqq, see Minorsky, "Ahl-i Hakk," 1:260; and the religious book of Ahl-i Haqq entitled *Tadhkira-i A'la* in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 102. According to *Tadhkira-i A'la*, the creator first created a pearl (*durr*) in which were manifested five images in his image. Thereafter 1001 persons (*surat*) manifested themselves and formed an assembly (*jam*). See also al-Azzawi, *Tarikh al-Iraq*, 2:18 and 3:151 and 153.
27. Murtada Al Nazmi, *Jami al-Anwar*, quoted in al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 77.
28. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 60–61.
29. *Ibid.*, 58–59.
30. I. Goldziher, "The Influence of Buddhism Upon Islam," trans. T. Duka, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (January 1904): 127–28. Goldziher also associates metempsychosis with the Islamic concept of fatalism.
31. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 62.
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Ibid.*, 62. For the tradition of Munkar and Nakir, see Abu Muhammad al-Baghawi, *Mishkat al-Masabih*, trans. James Robson (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf Press, 1975), 35–37. It is interesting that the Yezidis have a similar burial tradition, except that the Faqir (a religious rank) tells the deceased person that if Munkar and Nakir are not satisfied with an offering of bread and cheese, the deceased person should beat them with the Faqir's *gopal*; (stick). See W. B. Heard, "Notes on the Yezidis," *Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 41 (1911): 211.
34. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 73, 88, and 273; al-Karmali, "Tafkihat al-Adhhan," 578; and Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 85–86. Cf. Minorsky, "Ahl-i Hakk," 261.
35. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 73; and al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 18.
36. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 68 and 73–74; and al-Karmali, "Tafkihat al-Adhhan," 578, who states that only the Sarliyya do not fast.
37. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 67.
38. *Ibid.*, 67; and al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 17.
39. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 67, 69; and al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 16–18.
40. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 69.
41. *Ibid.*
42. al-Karmali, "Tafkihat al-Adhhan," 578–79.
43. This ceremonial Meal of Love is related by al-Karmali, *ibid.*, 579; and by al-Azzawi *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 72–73 with slight differences.
44. Al-Karmali, "Tafkihat al-Adhhan," 579.
45. See chapter 11 of this book.
46. Al-Karmali, "Tafkihat al-Adhhan," 579, and *idem*, "Laylat al-Hashush," 241, 368.
47. Mirza Makhdum, *al-Nawaqid li Bunyan al-Rawafid* quoted in al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 76.
48. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 66; and al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 15.

49. *Tadhkira-i A'la*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 125–27.
50. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 71. Cf. FM. Stead, "The Ali Ilahi Sect in Persia," *The Moslem World* 22 (April 1932): 186–87 where the author mentions the custom of the Ali Ilahi shaykhs of collecting donations.
51. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 15; and Stead, "The Ali Ilahi Sect," 186.
52. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 15; and Stead, "The Ali Ilahi Sect," 186.
53. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 44.
54. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 15–16.
55. *Ibid.*
56. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 62.
57. For "Khutbat al-Bayan," see Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 140–45. For more on the origin of Khutbat al-Bayan, see Massignon, "L'Homme Parfait en Islam," 309–14; Badawi, *al-Insan al-Kamil fi al-Islam* (Kuwayt: Wakalat al-Matbuat, 1976, 131–38 and portions of "Khutbat al-Bayan," are found in a Nusayri source still in manuscript form: Arab MS. 5188. Bibliothèque Nationale.
58. Birge, *Bektashi Order*, 141–45; and Badawi, *al-Insan al-Kamil fi al-Islam*, 135–38.
59. See the lengthy ode entitled *al-Ta'iyya al-Kubra*, composed by the Egyptian Sufi Umar Ibn al-Farid, in *Diwan Ibn al-Farid*, 60, where Ibn al-Farid states that through the Wasiyya (testamentary trust) of Muhammad, Ali had the authority to interpret problematic questions of the Islamic faith.
60. See for example René Dussaud, *Histoire et Religion des Nosairis* (Paris: Libraire Émile Bouillon, 1900), 162.
61. On the Hurufis and their doctrine, see Browne, "Some Notes on the Literature and Doctrines of the Hurufi Sect," 16–94; *idem*, "Further Notes on the Literature of the Hurufis," 533–81; Clement Hurat, *Textes Persans relatifs a la secte des Houroufis* in E. G. W. Gibb Memorial Series 9 (1909): 1–41. See also al-Shaibi, *al-Fiker al-Shi'i*, 179–244.
62. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 53.
63. Minorsky, "Ahl-i Hakk," 262.
64. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 54. Al-Azzawi states that the book of *Saranjam* has been translated into Arabic by Baha al-Din Nuri but that the translation has not been published.
65. *Ibid.*, and al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 16.
66. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 53, 57. On Fuduli al-Baghdadi, see Husayn Mujib al-Misri, *Fi al-Adab al-Islami: Fuduli al-Baghdadi Amir al-Shi'r al-Turki al-Qadim* (On Islamic literature: Fuduli al-Baghdadi, the prince of ancient Turkish poetry) (Cairo: Dar al-Fikra li al-Tab wa al-Nashr, 1966).
67. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 19; and al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 43.
68. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 19.
69. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 41, 43; and Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé Haqq*, 24. See also chapters 16–21 of this book on the Ahl-i Haqq or Ali Ilahis.
70. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 41. This must be the same Ibrahim Shah of Ahl-i Haqq. Cf. *Tadhkira-i A'la*, in Ivanow, *Truth Worshippers*, 7 and 164; and Mokri, *Shah Nama-ye Haqiqat*, 1:514–24.
71. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 41–42. See also chapters 16–21 of this book on the Ahl-i Haqq or Ali Ilahis.
72. Huntington, "Through the Great Canyon," 43.
73. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 42, 43.
74. *Ibid.*
75. *Ibid.*

76. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 12.
 77. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 70.
 78. Ibid.
 79. Ibid.
 80. Ibid.; al-Karmali, "Tafkihat al-Adhhan," 579; and al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 12.
 81. Al-Ghulami, *Baqaya al-Firaq*, 12; and al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 70-71.
 82. Al-Karmali, "Tafkihat al-Adhhan," 579-80.
 83. Al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh*, 71-73.

16—The Ahl-I Haqq (Ali Ilahis): Origin and Identity

1. For these names and the authors who used them, see Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 60-84; idem, "Ahl-i Hakk," 1:26-283; *Tadhkira-i A'la* in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 136, 137, and 168-69; Stead, "The Ali Ilahi Sect," 184; Wilson, *Persian Life and Customs*, 239; and Clement Huart, "Ali Ilahi," in *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden and London: E. J. Brill, 1913), 1:292-93.

2. Mirza Karam, "The Sect of the Ali Ilahis or the Ahl-i Haqq," *The Moslem World* 29, no. 1 (January 1939): 73; and the note by Rev. James L. Merrick in his translation of Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi, *Hayat al-Qulub*, 440, where Merrick mentions the Lak as Ali Ilahis.

3. De Gobineau, *Trois ans en Asie, 1855 à 1858* (Paris: Librairie de L. Hachette, 1859), 337-70. Cf. Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 8.

4. For this legend, see *Shah Nama-ye Haqiqat*, 1:236-39; al-Majlisi, *Hayat al-Qulub*, 44; Karam, "Sect of the Ali Ilahis," 74-75; Bent, "Azerbeijan," *The Scottish Geographical Magazine* (1890), 6:81-82, where the author writes the name Nusayr as Nazeyr; Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 8; and S. G. Wilson, *Persian Life and Customs*, 239. See also Charles R. Pittman's translation of a version of *Saranjam*, entitled "The Final Word of Ahl-i Haqq," *The Moslem World* (1937), 27:161; and Ivanow, *Truth Worshippers*, 2; Southgate states that the common name of the Ali Ilahis is Nesouri. See Southgate, *Narrative of a Tour*, 2:141.

5. Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 8; and idem, "Ahl-i Hakk," 1:260.

6. De Gobineau, *Trois ans en Asie*, 339-41.

7. See the section entitled "Haqiqat" in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 155-56; and al-Majlisi, *Hayat al-Qulub*, 440.

8. Gobineau, *Trois ans en Asie*, 342-44. Gobineau states that by Ahl-i Tariqa the Ahl-i Haqq mean those whose are different from them and who reject their dogma.

9. Al-Shahrestani, *Kitab al-Milal*, 2:31, where al-Shahrestani discusses the beliefs of the Ismailis; von Hammer-Purgstall, *The History of the Assassins*, trans. Oswald Charles Wood (London: Smith and Elder Cornhill, 1840), 108-9; Hodgson, *The Order of Assassins* (The Hague: Mouton, 1955), 148-59 and 299-304; Corbin, *En Islam iranien*, 1:77-78 and 2:187; idem, *Cyclical Time and Ismaili Gnosis*, 117-18; Lewis, *The Assassins 71-74*; Azim Nanji, *The Nizari Isma'ili Tradition in the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent* (Delmar, New York: Caravan Books, 1978), 108-10 and Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 70.

10. Von Hammer-Purgstall, *History of the Assassins*, 109; Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, and idem, *Studies in Early Persian Isma'ilism*, 2nd ed. (Bombay: Ismaili Society, 1955), 110.

11. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 71.

12. De Gobineau, *Trois ans en Asie*, 339; Charles Wilson and H. C. Rawlinson,

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