

## THE CLERGY AND PRIESTHOOD OF ISLAM

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According to the Century dictionary a priest is primarily "one who is duly authorized to be a minister of sacred things; one whose stated duty it is to perform on behalf of the community certain public religious acts, particularly religious sacrifices". And, in a secondary sense, "a priest is one who is ordained to a pastoral or sacerdotal office; a presbyter; an elder" (so also the Encyclopædia Britannica, xiv ed., Art. *Priest*).

As for the word clergy, it derives from *clerk* and although used now, in distinction from the laity, for a body of men set apart for the public worship of the Church, its original meaning was a cleric or clerk, a learned man, one who could read (Chaucer). In fact, Webster defines clergy, "The priesthood or body of adepts of *any* religion". He defines *Imam* as "The priest who performs or leads the regular service in a Mohammedan Mosque". So much for etymology.

Every religion has had its clergy or priesthood by whatever name called; no one denies that there were Jewish priests and Levites, or that there are Hindu priests and Buddhist priests. But in the case of Islam a curious opinion to the contrary has arisen. Dr. Zaki Ali, an Egyptian Moslem, writes: "Islam has no clergy nor Church organization, and the office of priesthood is rejected altogether. Any Muslim may suffice to conduct the ritual, and none is invested with sacred character. The theologians are merely those who know the Divine Law; they do not compose a clerical caste".<sup>1</sup> Another, writing of Persia, states: "The mosque is tended by no sacred priesthood as are the temples farther east, and to a less extent, the churches of the west".<sup>2</sup> Still more definite is the recent statement of Professor Thomson: "Unlike Christianity, then, Islam did not found a church with an independent constitution and a recognized relationship to the

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<sup>1</sup> *Islam in the World*, p. 21. So also the Sheikh-al-Islam to Dr. Dwight, *Constantinople and Its Problems*, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> Elgin Groseclose in *The Persian Journey of Rev. Ashley Wishard*, p. 118.

state. . . . And it devised no interpretative authority. . . . Like [modern] Judaism, if for a different reason, Islam has no priesthood. A class of religious officials arose, indeed, as a result of a felt need, preaching sheikhs, Koran reciters, Imams, or leaders in prayer, and muezzins. But these officials do not form a closed profession. They have no especial obligations. They are not guides and keepers of the public conscience. They are seldom teachers of the young. Their functions can be performed by any other Muslim just as well, and they themselves are free to adopt any other business or profession. For there is no bond of consecration, no ordination that joins them with the founder of their faith in a spiritual union. All believers are equally priests, or there are none."<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Thomson's statement is true in the sense that Islam has no priests "who have authority to administer sacraments or pronounce absolution" (Oxford Dict. definition). The clergy in Islam and its priesthood are Protestant rather than Roman Catholic in their authority and function. Since Islam denies the Crucifixion and the Atonement, it has no altar or mass, yet the *mihrab* in every mosque is an imitation of the altar niche in churches. (Becker, *Islam Studien*, p. 493). How then, we ask, did Islam become totalitarian? "Church and state are so completely identified that the religious life is made subject to the supervision of the courts of law; and the constitution of society and the government is supposed to be the result of a series of Divine enactments. All spiritual development is treated as a crime against society and punished accordingly."<sup>4</sup> In fact, Osborn's careful study of early Islam is even entitled, *The Church of Islam*, and he devotes two chapters to an account of "this inflexible theocracy". That Islam is totalitarian was pointed out in the pages of our quarterly by Dr. Charles R. Watson and Dr. E. E. Calverley.<sup>5</sup>

But a totalitarian system needs an Ogpu or a Gestapo to enforce its claims. We hold that from the days of Omar at

<sup>3</sup> THE MOSLEM WORLD. Vol. xxxiii, pp. 101, 102.

<sup>4</sup> Osborn, *Islam under the Caliphs of Baghdad*, p. 71. So also H. Lammens in *Islam: Beliefs and Institutions*, p. 94. "The 'Ulema are the heirs of the prophets." They decide spiritual issues. "The masses have nothing to do with these questions."

<sup>5</sup> THE MOSLEM WORLD. Vol. xxviii, pp. 6-21.

Medina to those of Al Azhar in modern Cairo, it is the clergy, the priesthood of Islam that have been the legislative, judicial and executive departments of this church-state—of what some have even called the democracy of Islam. Let us go back to the beginnings.

Among the nomadic Semites there was no developed priesthood. With the beginning of a settled state, however, the local sanctuaries (*bethels*) rose in importance and at these shrines there was not only sacrifice but an oracle. The Canaanite-Phoenician name for priest is, in fact, identical with the Arabic *kahin*, a soothsayer (Hebrew, priest). According to Wellhausen, the early Arabian *kahins*, or priests, not only were custodians of the sanctuaries, e.g., at Mekka, but gave out oracles in rhymed prose similar to the short chapters of the Koran. The *kahins* were soothsayers; they gave imprecations and benedictions; they alone offered special prayers for rain (*istisqa*) with peculiar ritual; their garments and saliva had healing power; their hair was sacred and potent. In all these respects Mohammed, even during his lifetime, was a *kahin* (priest) as well as prophet. It was he who took the pagan-sacrificial ritual of Mecca and made it the central feast of Islam. This was the act of a *kahin*. After giving a list of these pre-Islamic *kahins* (priests), Wellhausen goes on to show at some length that Mohammed himself unwillingly followed in their footsteps: "*Muhammad wollte zwar kein Kahin sein konnte aber doch nicht von ihrer Art lassen.*"<sup>6</sup> He would not be a *kahin* but could not forsake their art.

So far as "the idea of priesthood being abhorrent to Islam", Mohammed met Christian monks and priests (*ruhban*, *ḳissīs*, *ahbar*) and received from them directly or indirectly some of his "revelations". (Tor Andrae and Margoliouth). In the Koran there is a beautiful tribute to them and it is the *only* reference to the Christian clergy of his day: "Thou wilt find the nearest in love to those who believe to be those who say, We are Christians; that is because there are among them priests and monks, and because they are not

<sup>6</sup> *Reste Arabischen Heidentums*. Berlin, 1897. pp. 137-140. Cf. also Ignaz Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, Vol. 1: 237-260. The facts he cites are a remarkable commentary on this statement of Wellhausen. At any rate priest (*kahin*) and (*nabi*) prophet were closely related. One is reminded of the lines in Milton's sonnet: "New presbyter is but old priest writ large". Priest, presbyter, elder, sheikh, are really synonyms for types of clergy.

proud" (Surah 5: 85; and compare the comment of Zamakhshari, Vol. I, p. 262). Wensinck says that the title *rāhib* was given to various pious individuals in the earliest history of Islam, and Goldziher tells of one, Abu Bekr al-Mahzumi, who had the title, *rāhib-Quraish*—the Quraishite Monk—because of his constant devotions (II: 394).

The pre-Islamic poets refer to the *rāhibs'* hospitality and their light which guides the wayfarer by night. There is, it is true, a late and un-orthodox tradition, "*La rahbāniya fi'l Islam*"—There is no monasticism in Islam. *But this does not occur in the canonical collections.* And Surah 57: 27, which speaks of monasticism; *should* read, according to the older exegesis and the context: "We put in the hearts of those who followed Jesus, compassion and mercy and the monastic state. They instituted the same only out of a desire to please God, etc." (So Massignon, in the article *Rahbāniya*, Encyc. of Islam). "This older exegesis calls monasticism a divine institution; the younger one expresses a feeling hostile to monasticism and coined the tradition, no *rahbāniya* in Islam" (*idem*).

The borrower is servant to the lender. Mohammed himself borrowed Koran material from his Christian and Jewish neighbors and the researches of Goldziher, Caetani and Lammens only emphasize the fact pointed out by Horowitz: "The Prophet had to enter into the heritage of his predecessors and wrap himself round with their mantle of saintship. His erstwhile heathen countrymen transferred to him the powers which they had formerly ascribed to their *Kahins*; the new converts from the old (Christian) civilizations assigned to him the attributes of their former saints" (THE MOSLEM WORLD, Vol. 12: 312). Such were the swaddling-clothes of the new religion. As for Mohammed himself, Michel d'Herbigny has thrown new light on his career in a remarkable study, *L'Islam Naissant; Notes Psychologiques* (Rome, 1929). How even the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice, rejected in the Koran, became the chief corner-stone of popular Islam in Persia is told by William A. Shedd and S. G. Wilson.<sup>7</sup> The blood of Hussain at Kerbela took the place of

<sup>7</sup> *Islam and the Oriental Churches*, by W. A. Shedd, pp. 75, 76 and *The Atoning Saviour of the Shiah*, by S. G. Wilson in the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, XIII: 51 ff.

the Kaaba blood of sheep and camels, to atone for sin, in the annual festival.

Now where did authority rest when Islam, under the first four caliphs, sprang from its cradle in Medina? Who instituted the *masjid* and the *minbar*? Who appointed the first *muezzins*, *khatibs*, *imāms* and *qādhis*? What is the origin of the Islamic hierarchy and of its monastic orders of dar-wishes? When did the royal Quraish family first assert its prerogative of hereditary prestige, perpetuated to this very day in ten thousands of *Seyyids* and *Sherifs*?

Priesthood is not a matter of etymology (priest, presbyter, sheikh, elder) but of actual spiritual and temporal power over those who acknowledge its function. The religious and political development in Islam went hand in hand. In the course of the first century, the Koran readers (*qāris*) arose, and these were succeeded by the men of tradition (*ahl-al-hadith*), by canonists (*faqīhs*) and other learned men who held office. "They laid claim to an interpretative authority concerning the divine law which bordered upon supreme legislative power; their *Ijma'* (agreement) was that of the infallible community."<sup>8</sup> "The four earliest caliphs", says Macdonald, "were very happily called *ein Mönchischen Imperium*, by Sachau. After this original 'monkish empire' the first Abbasid Caliph appointed his first *vizier* or helper; as Aaron, the priest, in the Koran is called the vizier of Moses" (*Mohammedan Institutions* in Ency. Brit., 11th edition). Again and again Dr. Macdonald in this article speaks of the Church of Islam. In this church, religious endowments, *waqf* (mortmain) waxed larger and tended to absorb the greater part of the national wealth. The power of the Caliphate went further in its religious control and domination, until even an Inquisition (*Miḥna*) existed for nearly two decades under Al Ma'mun in Baghdad, with torture and capital punishment for those who denied the creation of the Koran! (W. M. Patton: *Ahmad b. Hanbal and the Miḥna*. Leyden, 1897).

On the power of the '*Ulema* (clergy) in general, D. B.

<sup>8</sup> Hurgronje, *Mohammedanism*, p. 97. Cf. Juynboll, *Handbuch d. Islam. Gesetzes* Vol. I. p. 84.

Macdonald says, "It is plain that their organization was the solid framework of permanent government behind the changing dynasties [in the history of Islam]. They had the ultimate decision on all questions of constitution, law and theology." (Art. *Ulema* in Encyc. of Islam).

A very able and extensive article on the *Masjid* (Mosque) in the Encyclopaedia of Islam, by Joh. Pedersen, devotes an entire section to the *personnel* of the mosque. This alone would be a perfect reply to those who say there is "no priesthood in Islam"; for the list of mosque personnel is a regular hierarchy. Here are some of the "clergy":

1. *The Imam*. Each mosque throughout the vast world of Islam has its *Imam*.<sup>9</sup> The word goes back to the Koran itself, where it signifies a pattern or leader in religion (Surah 2: 118; 17: 73; 25: 74). It was used in early days for the *Imam* or *Khalifah* of the Moslem people. Later it was used of a patron saint or theologian, e.g., Abu Hanifa and the other three *Imams* of orthodox Islam. The Shiahs speak of their twelve *Imams*—a hierarchy of religious leaders far more sacred to them than the Twelve Apostles of the early Church were to Christendom.

But here we speak of the ordinary *imam*. In the earliest days he was *imam* in holy war as well as in prayer. The Friday service could only take place under those qualified to conduct it; who could punish and impose duties (Makrizi iv, p. 7). He was appointed and paid by the local governor out of the mosque-treasury (*Bayt-al-māl*). He had to maintain order and was in charge of the divine services daily, but especially on Fridays (Pedersen). In India, we are told that sometimes the *maulāwi* and *imam* are combined in one, "and the *maulāwi* who possesses the mosque pays the *imam* as his curate" (Hughes, *Dict. of Islam*, p. 329). Hughes goes

<sup>9</sup> Hughes, Dictionary of Islam, p. 204. For example, in South Africa:

"As the outcome of the Cape Malay Association Conference, recently held at Cape Town, one of the resolutions agreed to was that the general executive be instructed to approach the Minister of the Interior with a view to getting his recognition to the appointment of a Chief and a Deputy Chief Priest for the Union. A deputation waited on Dr. Malan, who said that he was prepared to recognize such appointments if the names of the priests appointed were submitted to him.

"In order to get the opinion of the Emaums on this question, the general executive summoned a meeting of all the Emaums in the Peninsula last Sunday in the Trades Hall, Plein-street, Cape Town. Forty-one Emaums attended."

*Cape Times*, July 29, 1925.

on to say, "The Imam or priest of the mosque is supported by endowments (*waqf*). In towns or villages there is a parish allotted to each mosque, and the people within the section can claim the services of their *imam* at marriages and funerals." It is true that a religious ceremony is not obligatory for marriage, but it is usual in Arabia, Egypt and India. It consists of a confession (*istighfār*) by the *Imam*, repetition of the creed, the joining of hands and a closing prayer. (L. Bevan Jones, *Woman in Islam*, p. 82; Hughes, Dict., p. 318). What more does a Christian priest do at a marriage ceremony?

Those who doubt the existence of clergy or priesthood in Islam should read Westermarck's two volumes on *Ritual and Belief in Morocco*. A reference to the index alone would show that even the Moslem schoolmaster (*faqīh*) stands apart from the laity, receives the first-fruits, washes the dead, presides at funerals, performs the first sacrifice at the Great Feast, and inculcates the principles of Islam. All education is in his hands and all education is religious. Secular education came only after the French occupation. It is from such an exhaustive study as Westermarck's (see index for *Scribes and Shereefs*) that we learn how priest-ridden Morocco was.

While the *imam* conducts the marriage ceremony, it is the *qādhi* who leads prayers at funerals. (Hughes Dict., p. 58). The offices of *imam* and *qādhi* are not necessarily hereditary, but it is usual in Mohammedan countries for them to pass from father to son. (*idem*). In China the *imam* is called *ahung*, i.e., religious teacher.

The importance and special functions of the *imam* of a mosque are indicated in scores of traditions. He must be the best Koran reader, an elder or presbyter (*sheikh*), must not assume office against the will of the people (parish); but, once chosen, his authority is clear. People must not even leave the mosque before he does.<sup>10</sup> The *imam* has the power not only to receive converts into Islam and welcome them, as is the case in Arabia and Egypt today, but also exercises the power of excommunication. As in Judaism, the apostate

<sup>10</sup> Wensinck, *Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition*, pp. 109, 110.

is "cast out of the synagogue" and it is the priesthood which cast him out. Klein, who resided in Egypt for many years, writes: "A Muslim who apostasizes is to be brought before the *Imam* and called upon by him to give up his unbelief and return to Islam. If he does not recant he is to be killed."<sup>11</sup>

At the two great religious festivals of Islam, the *imam* or *qādhi* presides at the public services and initiates the sacrifice and the proper prayer ritual (Juynboll, *Islamisches Gesetz*, p. 127; Herklot's *Qanoon-e-Islam*, pp. 261-269).

The ceremony of the *Hajj* at Mecca opens with a sermon at the great mosque, by the *imam*, which all pilgrims must attend. In how many ways the laity are instructed and led through the perplexing ritual of the *Hajj* by the Moslem clergy (*muqaddam*), one may learn from Hurgronje's *Mekka* or Burton's story of his pilgrimage.

In Morocco and elsewhere, at the 'aqiqa sacrifice for the new-born child, it is the *faqîh* (*mullah*) who presides, slays the victim, offers an extraordinary *vicarious* prayer and receives his fee (*Ritual and Belief* in Morocco, Vol. II, pp. 391-397). At circumcision, the *imam* has an important place in Turkey, Egypt and among the Achinese (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*, *Khitan*, p. 958). He offers prayers and takes part in the procession and the family feast. The rite of circumcision is considered the act of reception into the religious community (Lane's *Modern Egyptians*).

2. The *Qādhi* (or Judge) holds a religious-political office and often exercises the functions of *imam* as well. In some Moslem lands he is appointed by the secular power. Even as is the case in some State Churches of Europe. He alone is competent to give decisions in matters of *fiqh* (canon-law). He also determines the punishment in every case.<sup>12</sup> Every Moslem village from Morocco to China offers abundant illustration. The local *qādhi* is the court of appeal, even for non-Moslems in case of trouble. If he is friendly, many a Jew and Christian in the Near East has

<sup>11</sup> Klein, *Religion of Islam*, p. 181. Cf. Zwemer's *Law of Apostasy*, ch. II and VI.

<sup>12</sup> Doughty, *Arabia Deserta*, Vol. I. p. 145.

escaped mob fanaticism. Those who say there is no priesthood in Islam should read Doughty, or go out as pioneer missionaries or travellers to Arabia, Morocco or Central Asia. There they would soon experience the power of the priesthood. Let a paragraph from Doughty suffice: "The Imam's mind was somewhat wasted by the desolate Koran reading. I heard in his school discourse, no word which sounded to moral edification! He said finally—looking towards me!—'And to speak of Aysa bin Miriam,—Jesu was of a truth a Messenger of Ullah; but the Nasara walk not in the way of Jesu,—they be gone aside, in the perversity of their minds, unto idolatry!' And so rising mildly, all the people rose; and every one went to take his sandals. The townspeople tolerated me hitherto,—it was Zamil's will. But the Muttowwa, or public ministers of the religion, from the first, stood contrary; and this Imam (a hale and venerable elder of threescore years and ten) had stirred the people, in his Friday noon preaching, in the great mesjid, against the Nasrany. 'It was, he said, of evil example, that certain principal persons favoured a misbelieving stranger: might they not in so doing provoke the Lord to anger? And all might see that the seasonable rain was withheld?' (Vol. II: p. 369).<sup>13</sup>

Dr. Duncan B. Macdonald gives the duties of the *qādhi* as follows: "He examines into disputes brought before him and enforces his judgments; he names administrators of the estates of minors, the insane, etc.; he supervises the *waqf* property of mosques and schools in his district and inspects highways and public buildings; he watches over the execution of wills; he inflicts the due legal penalties for apostasy, neglect of religious duties, refusal to pay taxes, theft, adultery, outrages, murder; he can inflict the penalties of imprisonment, fines, corporal punishment and death." (Encyc. Brit., *Islamic Institutions*, Vol. 12, p. 713). For ten years, while I was a missionary in Bahrein, East Arabia, my friend and neighbor, the Qādhi, Sheikh Jasim, exercised each and

<sup>13</sup> A similar experience is related by H. F. Ridley in N. W. China, where an *Ahung* cursed him publicly in 1929. *Friends of Moslems*, Vol. III, No. 4.

all of the above functions. I witnessed the amputation of hands for theft, the public execution of a murderer, corporal punishment for adultery, imprisonments and high-handed appropriation of property at his behest. The *qādhī* of every Arabian village and city is feared above all other men because of his religious authority. It is true that when the ordinary, illiterate Moslem stands before God he is conscious of a personal relationship. For him, as for the average Protestant, "there is no priesthood" to intercede or offer sacrifice. But in his daily life and relation to society—a totalitarian society of Islam—he knows the power of the *qādhī* to make life intolerable, because of his learning, his multitudinous functions and his popular religious prestige. Even as the Roman Catholic priest in the confessional, so the *qādhī* in his daily *majlis* learns the secrets of the common people. He has the power of attorney over orphans and imbeciles; he confirms or forbids marriage and divorce. For details one may consult L. Bevan Jones, *Woman in Islam* (1941) where we learn how the *mulla*, the *pīr* and the *qādhī* dominate women's life in India (pp. 56, 82, 83, 96, 155, etc.) Dr. J. Christy Wilson, who spent many years in Persia, writes:

"In Iran, the Mullahs are known by the white turban they wear. The size of this is increased according to their rank until a Mujtahid of high rank wears a turban that makes him stoop shouldered. These men are educated in certain schools and when they complete their education and are inducted into the office they have the white turban placed upon their head. I think it is quite the same as the special clothing worn by a priest. (See illustration.)

"The number of priests who are allowed to wear the white turban, the old Abba or cloak, and the distinctive dress of this office was recently limited by government order and the number was very largely reduced, others were forced to conform to the new European dress. The priests who were acknowledged for a certain district or village were allowed to continue to wear the tunic, or long inner garment, the Abba or outside cloak and the white turban. Others not ac-

known by the government as holders of this office were not allowed to wear this dress and these men like doctors were required to show proof of where they had been educated and how they could claim the office of Mullah.

“Furthermore the government maintains a school of theology in Teheran which has been visited by the Shah and which prepares men for the priesthood. It is a regular part of the government educational system and is called a College of Theology ‘*Ilm Ilāhi.*’ As to preparation, distinctive dress and functions it seems to me the Shiah’ clerics of Iran are quite as much priests or clerics as those of the various forms of Christianity.”

3. The *Khatīb* is the preacher of the Friday sermon. Frequently in smaller mosques he is the same as the *imam*. But, as Pedersen points out, his office is higher. The Prophet himself had a *khatīb*, namely, ‘Utārid b. Hādjib.

He preaches and pronounces a prayer for the temporal ruler or *Khalīfa*. He has high honors, often high emoluments. In Mecca he was once a very imposing figure, ascending the pulpit in black robe trimmed with gold and a tasseled turban; and accompanied “by two servants who carried banners, and one who walked before him cracking a whip. After he had kissed the Black Stone, the chief Muezzin went quickly in front of him with the sword with which he girded him on the *minbar* (pulpit).<sup>14</sup> A preacher with whip and sword and a pulpit at Mecca and yet—“there is no priesthood in Islam”! It is not generally known that in every mosque, according to orthodox tradition, from West Africa to Western China, a sword, or staff, is kept near or in the *minbar*, and it is required that the *Khatīb* hold it when preaching the Friday sermon. In some cases it is made of wood—but the symbol is always present. Balādhuri explains its use in a short but weighty sentence: “Every land or district was conquered by the sword except Medina, which was won by preaching.”<sup>15</sup> Dr. C. H. Becker made a careful study of the pulpit (*minbar*) in Islam, and concludes that in Mohammed’s time and by his own example, the earliest

<sup>14</sup> Quoted from *Ibn Battuta* by Pedersen, *Encyc. of Islam*, p. 372.

<sup>15</sup> *Futuḥ-al-Buldān*—Opening chapter.

mosque pulpits were intended for seats of authority, not primarily for preaching; for judgment, where the *Imam* sat and exercised rule.<sup>16</sup> The pulpit and the staff went together. From the year 7 A.H. to the present day, the *minbar* of every great mosque in the world of Islam is "the seat of the mighty". From such *minbars* the *Khatib* has exercised the power of eloquence, roused the multitudes to new fervor, or even *jihad*, and pulled down princes from their thrones. The history of al Azhar University in Cairo for a thousand years offers many examples. Lord Cromer knew the power of the Moslem clergy in his day;<sup>17</sup> and the mosques of Achin in Sumatra or of Turkey, even in the days of Abd-ul-Hamid, could tell the same story of the enormous power of the '*ulema* (clergy) in Islam. They are indeed a "royal priesthood, a peculiar people".

4. *Qaşş* and *Qāri*. These also belong to the personnel of the Mosque (Pedersen). Sermons were not only delivered on Fridays by the *Khatib*, but there were Koran-readers who chanted and had special seats in the mosques. In Baghdad, we are told, one mosque had twenty. (Ibn Djubair, pp. 219-222). There were also clerics "lay-preachers" (*Quşşās*); these were appointed to deliver edifying addresses or tell popular religious stories both in mosques and elsewhere (Goldziher, *Muh. Studien*, II.: 161). Macdonald gives a lengthy account of their origin and their religious influence: "The *Quşşās* gave to Islam its permanent type as one knows it today. Their spontaneous movement, preaching to the populace directly in rhymed prose, pointed with religious legend, was the first apologetic and catechetical of Islam". . . . "In Ramadhan the daily preaching in the mosques is still of this character." (Art. *Kiṣṣa*, Encyc. of Islam, p. 1043-1044).

5. *The Muezzin*. This office was instituted by the Prophet in the second year of the Hegira, when Bilāl was appointed to call believers to prayer. His apostolic succession covers three continents and thirteen centuries! "About the year 1900, there were in the Mosque of the Prophet at

<sup>16</sup> *Islam-Studien*, pp. 450-470.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. K. Vollers article *Al Azhar* in Encyc. of Islam. Especially the history of what took place in 1884, 1909 and 1914.

Medina fifty muezzins and twenty-six assistants" (Pedersen).

In the earliest period they were assistants of the ruler. Their function was threefold: the assembling of the people, the summons to the *imam* for prayer, and the *iqamah* or announcement that prayer was about to begin. The mosque in the early centuries was also the training ground for *jihad* warriors (Margoliouth, *Mohammedanism*, p. 76). Those who refused to hear the muezzin's call were whipped (*Al Madkhal* 111: 4); as was still the case at Zubair, Arabia, in 1902. This special whip, kept by the muezzin or other servant of the mosque, is called *dirrah*, also *ṣaut* or *jaldah*. Hughes' Dictionary (p. 85) gives an illustration of the one used at Peshawar. I have a specimen of one used in a mosque at Hankow in 1933, (Princeton Museum). The muezzin is also the *muhtasib* or public censor of morals (Pedersen). Dr. M. T. Titus specifies his duties in the organization of Sunni Islam. "He was clothed with authority to put down heretical teaching and to punish Muslims who neglected the five daily prayers or the fast of Ramadhan." (*Indian Islam*, pp. 69, 70). The *muezzins* also summoned to night-prayers and special litanies (*Zikr*). They repeated the words of the *imam* from raised platforms, called *dikkas*, in all the large mosques of Syria and Egypt. "In other ways also", says Pedersen, "the *muezzins* could be compared to deacons at the service. The *khatib*, on his progress to the *minbar* at Mecca, was accompanied by them and girded by them with the sword." The office was sometimes hereditary. They had guilds and received their regular pay from the religious treasury (*waqf*). The position they still occupy can be seen from the part they play in public processions (Hurgronje's *Mekka* II: 322, and Lane's *Modern Egyptians*).

Most astonishing of all is that these "deacons" in the Church of Islam were at the outset acolytes to carry incense! The Prophet had incense burned in the mosque at Medina (Lammens' *Mo'awiya*, p. 367, note 8). 'Omar followed his example, and his client 'Abdullah carried the censer to the mosque in the month of fasting. In Fustat, Egypt, incense was used in consecration of the Sakhrah mosque. The con-

sumption of incense in the mosques became very large, especially at festivals (Pedersen). There were artistic brass vessels used as incense burners. In Java and China such incense-pots with Arabic inscriptions are still a part of the regular mosque furniture, and are in charge of the *muezzins*. I have specimens from China dating from the Ming dynasty (1490). (See illustration.)

6. *Shaikh-al-Islam and Muftis*. The former honorific title, for a spiritual office, appears in the second half of the fourth century A.H. Other honorific titles compounded with Islam are many, but often relate to secular offices; *this* has always been reserved for the *'ulema* and *mystics* (Encyc. of Islam). It was given in Syria and Egypt to canon-lawyers of the highest rank who had attained fame or the approval of other jurists. In Egypt and Russia, to the present day, *muftis* (canon-lawyers) of importance may be given the title. It gained most glory, however, when applied to the *mufti* of Constantinople, a religious and political importance without parallel. In the reign of Suleiman, the Sheikh-al-Islam acquired undisputed authority over all the *'ulema* of the empire. This was possibly in imitation of the Christian hierarchy under the Ecumenical patriarch (Kramers). His high position was indicated by special ceremonials of installation, dress and the exercise of political as well as of spiritual functions. It was the Sheikh-al-Islam who authorized the drinking of coffee in Turkey by *fatwa*, and also the establishment of a printing-press in 1727. Coffee as beverage had been under suspicion for a long time (see *Kahwah*, Encyc. of Islam). On the functions and prerogatives of all *muftis*, see Juynboll *Islamischen Gesetzes*, Vol. I, pp. 54-56.

When we read the history of the Sheikhs-al-Islam in Constantinople (the biographies of 124 are carefully recorded), it is no wonder that western travellers of the sixteenth century (Ricaud, Volney and other writers) compare them to the Popes as representatives of the spiritual power of the whole Moslem world (Kramers in the Encyc. of Islam, p. 277). A full description of the powers of this high official in the world of Islam is found in the *'Ilmiye Salnamesi*, pub-

lished in 1916 at Constantinople. They included even the superintendence of the printing of the Koran and religious books, the department of religious education, of archives and of religious endowments. The office was eliminated about the time when the Caliphate was abolished, March 3, 1924. But the history of the office is a striking witness to the absolute power of the Moslem clergy over the laity, in a totalitarian religion, through many centuries. It was the *nihil obstat* of this official that first permitted the free circulation of the Bible in Turkey; and such statement appeared on the title page of every copy sent from the Beirut press before the Turkish Revolution.

7. *The Darwish Orders. (Ṭarîqa)*. "Islam like Christianity", says Dr. M. T. Titus, "has its monastic orders and saints, the underlying basis of which is the mystic interpretation of the religious life known as Sufism. No matter where one goes in India one finds their influence powerful and active." These "Confrères Mussulmanes" (Coppolani) are found in every part of the world of Islam. They have their organizations (*Ṭarîqas*), hierarchies, special dress, initiation-ceremonies, rituals, (*zikr*) and monasteries (*zāwiya*). "Their home is the mosque, and there they gather the circles who hang upon their words. In the fourth and fifth centuries of Islam, oratories are built for them. Their sanctity becomes an asset to the community; living or dead, their presence is a protection; whom they bless, prosper; whom they curse, are doomed" (Margoliouth, *Mohammedanism*, p. 199). The Lives of these Saints form a vast, popular library and their miracles before and after death are manifold. To become a Sufi is the Islamic equivalent of entering the monastic life. We are not concerned here with their origin, teaching or mysticism, but with the fact that there are such religious orders in Islam, and of Islam, as powerful and numerous as the various orders of Monks in the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>18</sup> Dr. Macdonald says that the parallel between Romanism and Islam in "the way" of salvation "could

<sup>18</sup> M. T. Titus, *Indian Islam*, pp. 110-130.

be worked out". (*Religious Life and Attitude in Islam*, p. 219). I have attempted it thus:

<i>Popular Romanism</i>	<i>Sufi Islam</i>
The Pope	Khalifa-Mahdi-Qutb
Religious Orders	Darwishes
Pilgrimage	Pilgrimage
Rosary	Rosary (Wird)
Prayers and fasting	Prayers and fasting
Miracles of Saints	Miracles (Karamât)
Saint-worship	Saint-worship
Salvation by works	Salvation by works
New Mediators (Mary and Saints)	New Mediators (Mohammed and Saints)
Spiritual Hierarchy	Spiritual Hierarchy

Different hierarchies belong to different systems; the lowest rank of one of these consists of three hundred "heroes", while the "Pole of Poles" constitutes the head (Margoliouth, p. 206).

The Encyclopaedia of Islam lists over one hundred and fifty orders and sub-orders of these Islamic fraternities, who live in monasteries, wear special dress and are initiated into the order as brethren. The principal orders number thirty-two. Massignon gives an extensive bibliography on these Religious Orders (*Tarîka*, Encyc. of Islam), and the curious reader will find in the beautifully illustrated work of Dupont-Coppolani (Algiers, 1897) many parallels to the religious orders of the Roman Catholic Church. If these saints and darwishes are not "clergy and priests", what are they? Goldziher devotes one hundred pages to saint-worship in Islam. He traces its origin to the first century, portrays its character, extent, its extravagances, its strange hierarchical nature, in the "state-church" of Islam, so as to create "a bridge of mediators for intercession". (*Muh. Studien*, Vol. II, pp. 285 ff.).

From the seventh century these orders were gathered in monasteries or convents called *khanakas*, *tekkes* or *zāwiyahs*. There were convents even for women, in Syria, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Every Order included a Grand-Master or *Pîr* who had absolute authority over the other members. They were sworn to be as inert in his hand

“as the corpse in the hands of those who wash the dead”.<sup>19</sup> And it is interesting that Louis Rinn in his standard work on the *Marabouts et Khouan* of Algeria entitled his second chapter, “Clergé investi et salarié, Mofti et Imam”. He writes: “La première catégorie, comprend le clergé musulman, investi et salarié au même titre que celui des autres cultes reconnus par les lois françaises. La seconde catégorie, marabouts, exerçant les devoirs du sacerdoce . . .”.

George Swan, writing on Saintship in Islam (THE MOSLEM WORLD, Vol. V., pp. 232 ff.) gave a complete table of the spiritual hierarchy of the Sufi orders, their grades, functions and spiritual attainments. In regard to saint-worship, E. Montet, Professor in the University of Geneva, wrote (THE MOSLEM WORLD, July, 1913): “The worship of saints, often described by the terms *marabouts* in North Africa, is a generally established practice in Islam. Wherever this religion exists, there saints are honored and invoked as mediators. Without doubt this form of religious expression is more advanced in North Africa than elsewhere, and the farther one travels toward the west of the continent the greater becomes the number of saints and the more zealous their devotees, until in Morocco we find the most highly developed belief in the power of *marabouts*.”

And it was from these societies especially that there arose the *walîs*, the “friends of Allah”. That they are chosen of God above their fellow men appears from manifest tokens of a miraculous nature (*karamât*). Their prayers can heal the sick, their blessings brings happiness for time and eternity, and their curse, misery. These influences are believed to issue from their graves after their death; hence vows are made at, and presents brought to their holy tombs.

In the popular belief, their mediation with Allah (who is of course too exalted to occupy himself with the small wants of his creatures), is almost indispensable, and the request for their good offices differs little from a prayer. (*The Achenese*, p. 154).

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<sup>19</sup> Henri Massé, *Islam*, p. 212, 213 and L. M. J. Garnett, *Mysticism and Magic in Turkey*, ch. vi and viii. According to Westermarck (Vol. II, p. 57) it is at the shrines of these saints that *istikhâra*, divination, is asked by dream or rosary. Like the Urim and Thummim of the Jewish priest.

The *Wali* (plural. *auliya*) is fully treated by Goldziher in Vol. II of his *Muhammedanische Studien* (pp. 287-295). The word is used in the Koran in the sense of "friend of God". The title was given to the Prophet and even to God himself in the list of ninety-nine names. It is almost a synonym of the Hebrew *goel*, redeemer, so writes Goldziher. Today the word signifies a Moslem saint. Not only, as Hudjwiri says, "has he influence with God, he can bind and loosen, but he also has the gift of miracles (*karamāt*). He can transform himself (*tatawwur*), transport himself to a distance, speak diverse tongues, revive the dead, exercise levitation." Hudjwiri even goes so far as to say that the *auliya* govern the universe, bring rain from heaven and influence the tide of battle (Encyc. of Islam, *Wali*, by Carra de Vaux). Goldziher mentions instances of all these spiritual powers on the part of the *wali*, under twenty categories, in such saints as Ahmad-al-Bedawi of Tanta, Ibrahim-al-Dasuki and several others in North Africa and the Near East. "As in Roman Catholic worship, saints are patrons of towns, villages, trades and corporations". While living, the *wali* blesses, intercedes, heals and helps. When dead, his grave becomes a shrine that often rivals Mecca in its annual pilgrimage. Goldziher states (p. 290) that "soon in the circles of saint worship the *walis* received higher rank than the prophets." The orthodox theologians naturally opposed this teaching but saint-cult waxed stronger down the centuries. Even oaths were sworn *by the saints*, as by Allah (p. 339); intercession and forgiveness were sought at their shrine (p. 309), the reliques of the saints worked miracles (p. 356); and most astonishing of all, this saint-worship, by the dogma of *Ijmā'*, finally received the stamp of approval even of Al-Ghazali in orthodox Islam (p. 368-377). So everywhere, from Morocco to China, from Turkey to Capetown, it is the *wali*, alive or dead, who exercises such priestly functions between Allah and the Moslem laity, of whom *ninety per cent are illiterate*. (Lammens, *Islam: Beliefs and Institutions*, p. 222). "Every Moslem village, nearly, has its patron saint; every country has its national saints; every province of

life has its own human rulers *who are intermediate between the Creator and common mortals*" (Hurgronje, *Mohammedanism*, p. 79).

8. *Sharîfs and Seyyids*. From the first century of Islam, there arose a special veneration for the descendants of the Prophet (*Ahl-al-bayt*), Surah 33: 33). To be able to show kinship with the Prophet was an important claim to *Sharf*; and this made one a member of a spiritual aristocracy.<sup>20</sup> The word *Seyyid* was an alternative term for the same genealogical honor. 'Ali was called "Sayyid of this world and the next" (Encyc. of Islam, *Sharîf*, by Van Arendonk). Later on, the terms were applied not only to the descendants of Hasan and Husain, but to all who could claim even indirectly to be of the *Ahl-al-bayt*. Special religious officials (*naqîb*) were appointed by the Abbasids to keep registers of this nobility. The chief *Naqîb* had other religious duties and honors; this is true even today. The *Sharîfs* wore green turbans or badges and distinctive dress, because green was the color of the garments of paradise (Koran 18: 30; 76: 21). In Persia and India they also wear distinctive dress. "The sharing in the *şadaqa* is forbidden them." That is, they are immune from payment. A *sharîf* should marry only a *sharîfa*. None of the descendants of the Prophet will suffer the punishment of hell; they *all* are included in the *âl-Mohammed* who receive a benediction in daily prayer; and it is expressly laid down that one should treat them with the same distinction as a governor, and give them anything they wish, even a daughter in marriage without dowry (Van Arendonk, quoting from al-Sha'rāni). It is simply impossible to read of the religious prestige of this class of hereditary saints and deny that they are "priests" among the common people.

Hurgronje traces their origin and growth (*Mohammedanism*, pp. 93, 94). They ruled Morocco for nearly a thousand years, and Mekka for centuries. "In practice it may be said that the Achenese fear the *sayyid* more than the Creator. This is due to his believing that Allah reserves his

<sup>20</sup> Cf. George Percy Badger, *History of the Imams and Seyyids of Oman by Salih Ibn Razik from A.D. 661-1856*. Translated with introduction and notes (London, 1871).

punishments for the hereafter and is illimitably merciful in the enforcement of his law against the faithful, whereas the curse of the *sayyids* takes effect here below without any hope of mercy. No Achenese will readily so much as lift a finger against a *sayyid*; one who would dare to take a *sayyid's* life would not hesitate to cut his father's throat."<sup>21</sup>

Genealogical tables can be manipulated and extended. Today there must be tens of thousands of *Sharîfs* and *Seyyids* in the world of Islam. A perfect, up-to-date illustration is given (1943) by Major R. A. B. Hamilton from Aden, Arabia: "We next come to the holy classes. The first of these are the Sharîfs and Seyyids, the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. They live in settlements and elect among themselves in each family a head-man. They have great influence in the community, but it varies, of course, with the amount of their riches. Most Seyyids—the only Sharîfs are those in Beihan—do not bear arms and take no part in tribal warfare. They are peacemakers, and derive considerable income as such, and as dispensers of the Sharia or holy law of Islam. They are treated with veneration and respect and, after death, are frequently treated as saints. They marry tribeswomen and the daughters of Chiefs, and many own land and are given tithes of other land by ancient right."

"The other holy class is that of the descendants of the saints, for so they claim to be. Almost every village in the territory has its saints' tomb, a white rectangular building with one or more domes. Each shrine is maintained by public subscription, in the form of tolls on travellers and gifts to reinforce prayers. Many shrines also own land or receive tithes from land. They are guarded by families who use the title *Sheikh* and who claim descent from the original saint. The best description for these families is that of 'Holy Sheikh'! In most cases the saint is considered a miracle worker, and this power may descend upon the Holy Sheikhs as well. This fact in itself is sufficient to give the Holy

<sup>21</sup> Hurgronje, *The Achenese*, p. 158. There are over three score references to the functions and spiritual powers (*baraka*) of the *Sharîfs* in Westermarck's *Ritual and Belief in Morocco*.

Sheikhs considerable influence, and they inspire respect and fear. I would stress the question of fear, for it is important. The buried saint, and, to a certain degree, his supposed descendants are credited with the power of doing bodily and personal harm, such as depriving of sanity, striking with blindness, destruction of crops and the like. They are, in effect, witch-doctors, and are feared more than are the Seyyids, since they are considered to be dangerous men."<sup>22</sup>

Are such pedigreed-saints in Sumatra and Arabia and everywhere, who are so holy that they inspire fear, and so powerful that they exact tithes (Melchisedek), not "priests" in every ordinary sense of the word? (Cf. Gen. 14: 18; Heb. 7: 1).

And Harold Ingrams remarks (*Arabia and the Isles*, London, 1943, p. 177): "Before the Seiyids came in to Hadhramaut the Sheikhs were the principal *ecclesiastical* influence, and they probably took the place of an earlier hierarchy formed by the *priesthood* of the old religion. Nowadays they take precedence after the Seiyids, but they have much the same privileges." The italics are ours and call attention to the use of such terms by one who knows Arabia and Islam thoroughly and practically.

In every Moslem land there are these saints, *walis* and *sayyids*, with shrines and tombs. "In Persia a visitor to a shrine will kiss the lock of the door and put his forehead to other parts of the building", wrote Miss Holliday. "He gives salaams to the saint and speaks of him *as if he were alive*. Tablets containing prayers to the saint are hung on the walls; if the pilgrim can read, he reads these audibly; if not, someone else will read them to him. They burn votive lights. They ask permission to enter or leave the shrine of the saint. In common life they are always calling on the saints for help and blessing. Akin to this are the superstitions connected with their *holy living men and their families of which I have seen most among the 'Ali Illahis who consider their sheikhs as mediators between them and God, and of a race set apart.*"

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<sup>22</sup> *The Social Organization of the Tribes of the Aden Protectorate* in the Royal Asiatic Society Journal, May, 1943.

We omit the detailed mention of the strange periodic appearance in the history of Islam of religious leaders who arrogated *still greater* powers and authority in things spiritual than all the classes mentioned. The *Mahdis* of both Shiah and Sunni Islam are striking examples. So also is the Agha Khan, spiritual head of the Khojas of India, who poses as an *avatar* or incarnation and receives enormous tribute (THE MOSLEM WORLD xx: 407). The Babi-Behai movement, whatever else it be, was undoubtedly the exaltation of the Bab and his successors above the laity. The Ahmadiya Movement, with its new Messiahs both at Qadian and Lahore, is based, not upon the parity of all believers before Allah, but upon *soi-disant* high-priests and prophets of a new Islamic dispensation. All of these spiritual leaders came from Islam and claim to be Moslems.

Thus in life and in death these *mahdis*, *seyyids*, *'auliyā*, *imāms*, *faqîrs*, *pîrs*, *ahungs*, *mullahs*, etc., exercise a ministry of intercession and authority in religion, constitute a special class and have spiritual prestige above the laity.

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In conclusion, this is not a strife about words, but correction of a too common misunderstanding, sometimes due to an attempt at idealizing Islam. Islam was from the outset a military, totalitarian church-state. "In the main, then", says Margoliouth, "the original Moslem system was to make its adherents soldier-priests, i.e., to combine the sacerdotal with the warrior caste."<sup>23</sup> An Indian missionary writes: "While it is true that Islam's priests and clergy have not been consecrated or ordained in the spiritual succession of the founder, none the less they are authorized, appointed or set apart to perform the same or similar functions in a way or manner peculiar to Islam. Since, therefore, these recognized religious functionaries perform the same duties as the priests and clergy of the Church . . . we may well hold that the old formula that things equal to the same thing are equal to each other, holds here as well as in mathematics!"

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<sup>23</sup> *Mohammedanism*, pp. 76-79.

Although Islam never developed any institution *entirely* similar to the clergy of Christianity, it had from early days and has now three religious classes quite comparable to "priests" and "clergy". The one class, as we saw, are appointed for public worship and preaching. The second are theologians and masters of canon-law. The third class are hereditary saints and Holy-men. All have prestige, receive honors, and their emoluments are from the religious treasury. No priest or clergyman in Christendom is more duly "authorized to be a minister of sacred things or perform on behalf of the community certain public religious acts", or has more power over the laity.

Of course the Caliphate, as Hurgronje has shown, is in no way to be compared to the Papacy. Islam never regarded the Caliph as its *spiritual* head. So the disappearance of the Caliphate after the Turkish revolution was a blow to Islam's temporal power, not to its spiritual heritage. "The spiritual authority in Catholic Islam reposes in the legists, who in this respect are called in a tradition, 'the heirs of the prophets'. Since they could no longer regard the Caliphs as their leaders, because they walked in worldly ways, *they have constituted themselves independently beside, and even above them.*"<sup>24</sup>

Therefore, the political decay of Islam, the increasing number of Moslems under foreign rule, the rise of a secular Nationalism and Modernism only serve to emphasize the fact that "the clergy and priesthood" are the custodians of whatever remains of the spiritual essence of Islam.<sup>25</sup> It is, therefore, the clergy and the priesthood of Islam that demand the respect and loving approach of all those who would preach good tidings in the Moslem world. It is from this very class that some of the strongest and most distinguished Christian converts have come, both in the Near East and India, since the days of Henry Martyn.

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<sup>24</sup> Hurgronje's *Mohammedanism*, p. 113.

<sup>25</sup> *Idem*, p. 116. Cf. Lammens' *Islam: Beliefs and Institutions* on the present crisis in Islam (pp. 205-225) and the "Ulema of the future."

## THE SAMANIDS: A LITTLE-KNOWN DYNASTY

This dynasty, which ruled Transoxania for a period of one hundred ten years, 279-389 (892-999), according to the historian Qazwini, claimed descent from a noble family of the Sassanian court.<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to trace the genealogy of the Samanids before Saman-i Khudat, the grandfather of Isma'il, for the genealogical trees given by later Muslim historians conflict in many instances. Ibn al-Athir claims Baḥram Jashnash, or Gushnasp, the marzban of Azarbaijan under Chosroes Anushirvan, as the ancestor.<sup>2</sup> Most authors consider Saman the founder and ruler of the village of the same name in Balkh province, although others place the village of Saman in the vicinity of Samarqand.<sup>3</sup> The story of Saman is told by various Muslim authors in much the same guise. It seems he fled to the Arab governor of Khurasan, Asad ibn 'Abdallah al-Qushairi (or Qasrī), who, recognizing his noble rank and ability, appointed him governor of Balkh. Saman, from gratitude towards his protector, adopted Islam and named his son Asad.<sup>4</sup>

It is only through his four sons that we know anything of Asad, although Qazwini says he served under Ṭāhir Dhū'l Yamīnain.<sup>5</sup> It is probable that Asad gained the attention of the caliph al-Ma'mūn, when the latter was sojourning at Merv.<sup>6</sup> When the caliph returned to Baghdad he appointed a new governor of Khurasan, Ghassān ibn Abbād, in 204/819-20, about the same time Asad died. Ma'mūn then directed his governor to give the four sons offices in the government. They may have been active in the service of the caliph prior to this time in the army of Harthama, when he suppressed the revolt of Rāfi' ibn Layth in 810.<sup>7</sup> Nuḥ, the eldest, received the governorship of Samarqand; Aḥmad

<sup>1</sup> Gantin, J., *Tarikhe Gozide* par Qazwini, Paris, 1903, 21.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fī'l-Ṭārīkh*, ed. Tornberg, C. J., Leyden, 1865, v. 7, 192.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Narshakhi, *Description de Boukhara*, ed. Schefer, C. Paris, 1892, 57.

<sup>5</sup> Gantin, *op. cit.*, 23.

<sup>6</sup> Defrémery, C. M., *Histoire des Samanides* par Mirkhond, Paris, 1845, 113.

<sup>7</sup> Narshakhi, *op. cit.*, 74; Tabari III, 775.

ruled Farghana; Yahya had Shash, while the youngest, Ilyas, went to Herat.<sup>8</sup>

In 822 Ṭalha ibn Ṭāhir succeeded his father as governor of Khurasan, and confirmed the Samanid brothers in their posts. The governorship of Khurasan passed from hand to hand, but the subordinate posts were more stable. When Nuḥ ibn Asad died, Ṭalha gave the government of Samarqand to both Yahya and Aḥmad, although the latter was the more aggressive of the two.<sup>9</sup> Almost nothing is known of Ilyas, although Ibn al-Athir claims that his son, Muḥammad succeeded him in 242/856.<sup>10</sup> Yaḥya died in 855, and the administration of Shash was assumed by Aḥmad, who placed his eldest son, Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb in power.<sup>11</sup> His second son Naṣr ibn Aḥmad was placed over Samarqand, and was confirmed by the Ṭāhirid governor of Khurasan. In 261/874 the caliph Mu'tamid conferred the governorship of all of Transoxania on Naṣr ibn Aḥmad, setting a precedent in removing Transoxania from the direct jurisdiction of the governor of Khurasan.<sup>12</sup> In the same year Naṣr appointed his brother Isma'il governor of the territory of Bukhara.

Friction soon developed between the two brothers. We are uncertain whether it was Isma'il's attempt to incite the aristocracy against Naṣr,<sup>13</sup> or the friendship between Isma'il and Rafi' ibn Harthama, the representative of the Ṭāhirids in Transoxania, which initiated the rift.<sup>14</sup> Rafi' was able to reconcile the brothers, however in 275/888 Naṣr again marched on Isma'il, but was defeated and captured.<sup>15</sup> The conduct of Isma'il towards his brother was a rare example of kindness, for he gave high honors to Naṣr who returned to Samarqand, while Isma'il remained governor of Bukhara under the jurisdiction of his brother. Naṣr died in 279/892, leaving sole dominion to Isma'il, and it is with the latter that Muslim historians date the real beginning of the Samanid dynasty.

<sup>8</sup> Defrémery, *op. cit.*, 213.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

<sup>10</sup> Ibn al-Athir, *op. cit.*, v. 7, 193.

<sup>11</sup> Narshakhi, *op. cit.*, 80-1.

<sup>12</sup> Gantin, *op. cit.*, 23; Tabari III, 1889, 11.

<sup>13</sup> Narshakhi, *op. cit.*, 80.

<sup>14</sup> Defrémery, *op. cit.*, 115.

<sup>15</sup> Narshakhi, *op. cit.*, 81.