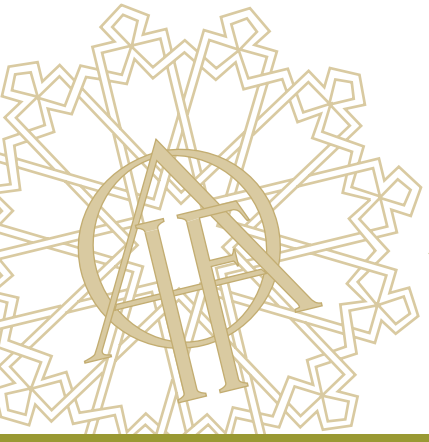
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Pieter Smoor

# ‘Umâra’s odes describing the Imâm.

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Pieter SMOOR

# ʿUmâra's odes describing the Imâm

## I

Whilst living in Egypt during the period of the Fâṭimid dynasty, the poet ʿUmâra al-Yamanî[1] wrote several poems for different occasions. However, he also produced a significant number of laudatory odes. These odes were dedicated to the Viziers belonging to the dynasty of the Armenian Ruzzîk clan, but frequently his verses were simultaneously directed towards the Fâṭimid Imâms, who also resided in Al-Qâhira.

Le système de transcription utilisé par l'auteur a été respecté.

1 ʿUmâra, Najm al-Dîn, Abû Ḥamza, ibn Abî l-Ḥasan ʿAlî b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Zaydân al-Ḥakamî, Al-Faqîh al-Yamanî, of the tribe Saʿd, of the tribal conglomeration Madhḥij, an author of Arabic poetry and prose, born 515/1121 in Murṭân in the Wâdî Wasâʿ in Yaman, was executed in 569/1174 in Cairo, by order of Ṣalâḥ al-Dîn (Saladin) b. Ayyûb. In 531/1136-37 ʿUmâra's father took him to the town of Zabîd in the Tihâma region, in order to let him study Shâfiʿite *fiqh* under the supervision of the Shâfiʿite *faqîh* ʿAbd Allâh b. al-Abbâr.
Having finished his studies, ʿUmâra began to work as a teacher and a jurisprudent giving *fatwâ*s, but he was also a trader and merchant and used to travel with some regularity between his home town Zabîd and the town of ʿAdan in Southern Yaman. In Zabîd the reigning dynasty consisted of the Banû Najâḥ of Ethiopian origin. The state power over ʿAdan had fallen into the hands of Muḥammad b. Saba' (of the Ḥâfiẓî *Daʿwa* of Egypt) one of the Shîʿite overlords of the Zurayʿid dynasty. It was in this period that ʿUmâra, by now a Shâfiʿite *faqîh*, could unravel (not without the secret support of a nearly senile specialist in these matters) the intricacies of an inheritance problem for the family of a deceased general Ruzayq al-Fâtikî, whose estate had remained undivided for a long stretch of time. In reference to this activity, the Zabîd people gave him the *laqab* Al-Farḍî.

During one of his pilgrimages to Mecca, ʿUmâra succeeded in becoming acquainted with an influential queen, the lady, *Al-malika al-ḥurra* ʿAlam Umm Fâtik (the mother of Fâtik II of a dynasty of Abyssinian slaves, the Najâḥids). She lived in Zabîd and had considerable influence in the affairs of the Banû Najâḥ, as she was the widow of Al-Manṣûr al-Najâḥî. Notwithstanding her humble origins as a songster and slave girl, she had become free as a *umm walad* in consequence of the birth of her son Fâtik II. She was often accompanied by the *wazîr* and general, Abû Muḥammad Surûr al-Fâtikî, who was originally an Ethiopian slave and later became one of ʿUmâra's acquaintances in Zabîd. However, ʿUmâra's trading and regular visits to the Shîʿite *Dâʿî* of ʿAdan, the Muḥammad b. Saba' just mentioned, were not appreciated by the people in his home town.
ʿUmâra became increasingly involved in the intrigues between these two towns; and his dealings with a certain ʿAlî b. Mahdî of the dynasty of the Mahdids who was an enemy of the Najâḥids complicated the situation further. It is also useful to note that the *Dâʿî* of ʿAdan was not only interested in ʿUmâra's trading activities but also in his talents as a poet of praise. It was on the invitation of this *Dâʿî* that ʿUmâra had been obliged to try and compose what must have been some of his earliest laudatory poetry. Also for the sake of other high officials in and around ʿAdan, ʿUmâra had to operate as both a poet and a commercial dealer. Within his *Dîwân* we can find a few of his juvenile poems which have as





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The identity of the Imâms in these odes is not always obvious. In one poem though, a reference is definitely made to Imâm Al-Ẓâfir: we are told that the poet arrived too late. As Al-Ẓâfir had died a few months earlier, the poet was unable to pay him his respects. After Al-Ẓâfir, the Fâṭimid dynasty witnessed only two more Imâms ascending the throne before it ended: the poet would have met both of these Imâms and, in some of his poems, he would have addressed them. Indeed he dedicated at least one poem to Imâm Al-Fâ'iz and several to Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid.

In these poems, we do find a semi-anonymous Imâm being praised. According to ʿUmâra, the one being praised, who is at this moment the Imâm, has all the stereotypical characteristics essential in an Imâm, namely his descent from the radiant Fâṭima, appearance in a godly light, association with certain Koranic verses and, at the same time, poems in which the Imâm – any Imâm – is the object of discussion.

The Imâm being praised is more than simply the bearer of authority. The prostration in the dust of the carpet at the foot of the throne by ordinary mortals and the links to heavenly spheres and angels who come from above and push each other aside at the palace gates, as well as the noble parasol raised above the countenance of the Imâm, all combine to make his person an Exalted Being, a *ʿUlâ*. In his palace in Al-Qâhira, the Imâm's cheek, in particular the last Imâm's, is like a black stone, in fact *the* Black Stone, and his inner courtyard is the courtyard around the Kaʿba. The entire land of Egypt has been made safe by the good government of the Viziers and is, as a result of its guarantee of safety, equal to a hallowed and sacred space: the *ḥaram*.

The poet's representation of events in this way is, in the light of the actual political situation of unrest and confusion around the Imâms and their Viziers, more a reflection of the poet's idealistic conception in respect of the Imamate. His poems reflect a virtual fantasy: a smiling throne as opposed to the reality of murders, both successful and unsuccessful, and decapitations of highly placed people.

By becoming acquainted with the historical situation and also the contemporary poetry of ʿUmâra al-Yamanî, the reader is able to form an image of the Imâm and his times. In the poems, the monotonous reality of the prose texts from historical sources and chancellery reports is brightened by the ideological optimism of a Godly Light and a Powerful Arm, an emanation which, at the end of the Fâṭimid Era, eventually emerges in the figure of Al-ʿÂḍid.

their subject a description of the excellent qualities of the local amîr Yâsir b. Bilâl. There must have been other poems composed in honour of Muḥammad b. Saba' and his son ʿImrân b. Muḥammad, but these have all disappeared from the *Dîwân* as it is known to us at present.

Finally, in connection with some threats on his life, ʿUmâra had to leave his "university" and home town Zabîd precipitately. He took refuge in Mecca, where he was able to remain under the protection of its newly installed *Amîr*, al-Qâsim b. Hâshim b. Fulayta. In 549/1155, on behalf of this *Amîr*, he started travelling to the Egypt of the Fâṭimids as an ambassador from Mecca. He arrived at his destination in Cairo just after the murder of Al-Ẓâfir billâh, the Fâṭimid Imâm, and during the beginnings of the nominal authority of the newly installed child Imâm Al-Fâ'iz (lived 544-555/1149-1160). Real authority was at that time in the hands of an Armenian general Ṭalâ'iʿ b. Ruzzîk of Twelver Shîʿite sympathies, who was to act as regent (*kâfil*, or *kafîl*) for the child Imâm whose official religious persuasion was Ismâʿîlî, thus adhering to the Sevener Shîʿa. (See the article "ʿUmâra" [P. Smoor, shortened by the editor], *EI*, new edition.)

## 1.1

ʿUmâra's career began in the Yemen. His book *Târîkh al-Yaman*[2] and his memoirs *Al-nukat al-ʿaṣriyya*[3] give us some insight into his life there. However, particulars of his life, some of which I will mention at the beginning of this story, rarely appear in his poetic works. There is, in fact, no reference in his poems to the contact he had with either the influential Queen ʿAlam Umm Fâtik, a former singing slave, or the general Surûr al-Fâtikî, a former Ethiopian slave who had worked himself upwards from the lowest social class. Both of these people, who were highly placed in his father's city of Zabîd, did not belong to the Shîʿa group. On the contrary, being Sunnites and probably also supporters of the Shâfiʿî law school, which inclined towards the Sunnî school of thought, they had little respect for the Shîʿa. Although ʿUmâra had benefited from sufficient education in Zabîd to obtain the Shâfiʿî qualification of *faqîh*, and had also studied the laws of inheritance, he nevertheless indulged his interest in the Shîʿa elsewhere. He did this by trading and travelling to and from ʿAdan, where a Shîʿî Dâʿî was in power.

Due to his Shîʿa connections, ʿUmâra was obliged to flee from Zabîd and, through his contacts, he eventually arrived in Mecca. In 549 Hijra we find him travelling to Egypt via ʿAydhâb (on the Red Sea coast of Egypt), as the ambassador of the Sharîf of Mecca. Apart from a couple of poems written for a South Yemenite, Amîr Yâsir b. Bilâl, ʿUmâra had at that point not yet written anything about his circumstances and encounters. Or at least, if there was any other poetry it never reached our time. Naturally his memoirs provide us with a summary of his previous and later life, but not until 549 H do we learn more about him through his own poetry. Once this ambassador and Yemenite becomes active in Egypt his poetry begins to play a more important role.

[2] Najm ad-Dîn ʿOmârah al-Ḥakamî, *Yaman its Early Mediaeval History. Also the Abridged History of its Dynasties by Ibn Khaldûn and an Account of the Karmathians of Yaman by Abu ʿAbd Allah Baha ad-Dîn al-Janadî*, ed. Henry Cassels Kay, London 1892.

[3] The Memoirs and part of the poetry by ʿUmâra were edited by Hartwig Derenbourg: *ʿOumâra du Yémen sa vie et son œuvre*, vol. I (*Autobiographie et récits sur les Vizirs d'Égypte. Choix de poésies [Fîhi al-Nukat al-ʿaṣriyya fî akhbâri l-wuzarâ'i l-Miṣriyya]*), Paris 1897; vol. II (Partie arabe - *Poésie, épîtres, biographies, notices en arabe par ʿOumâra et sur ʿOumâra [Fîhi Takmilatu dîwân shiʿri ʿUmâra al-Yamanî wa-nubadhun min tarassulâtihi wa-tarâjimihi wa muntakhabâtun li-ʿUmâra al-Yamanî wa-fî sîratihi wa-fî akhbâri zamânihi wa-muʿâṣirîhi wa-fihristu asmâ'i l-rijâli wa l-nisâ'i wa l-duwali wa l-kutubi wa-ayḍan fihristu l-buldâni wa l-umami wa l-qabâ'ili wa l-milal]*), Paris 1902 (edition of the Arabic text of ʿUmâra's Memoirs in full, the Arabic text of the *Dîwân*'s poems only in part and his prose work); vol. II (Partie française –*Vie de ʿOumâra du Yémen*), Paris 1904 (study in French of the Memoirs and incidentally a partial translation of some poems). Vols. I and II (Arabic) and Vol. II (French), which are being referred to, form a part of the Publications de l'École des langues orientales vivantes, IV[e] série - X, XI (partie française), Paris 1897, 1904. - Henceforward these volumes will be referred to as *Nukat-Diwan* and *Nukat-Diwan (French)*.
For the poetical text quoted in this article the present author used, in particular, the manuscript D of Saint Petersburg. This manuscript will be referred to as *Ms D*. Another manuscript used was the Manuscript photocopy 1551 Adab, see *Fihrist al-makhṭûṭât al-muṣawwara*, I, *Al-Adab, qism* III, Cairo 1980, p. 164: a photocopy of the *Dîwân ʿUmâra al-Yamanî* which derives originally from a manuscript in the Khizânat al-Ustâdh Muḥammad al-Manûnî, Rabat. This will be referred to as *Ms Rabat*.



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## 2

The Fâṭimid Imâm, whom the poet ʿUmâra encounters for the first time at his residence in Cairo in Rabîʿ I, in the year 550 H, is the five-year-old Al-Fâ'iz who proves unable to recover from the tragic circumstances surrounding his family. On the morning of his inauguration, the young Al-Fâ'iz witnessed two of his uncles and a cousin being murdered by a blackguardly foreigner, a Zîrid from Al-Mahdiyya (in present day Tunisia). This foreigner was Prince ʿAbbâs of the Berber tribe Ṣanhâja. After he had climbed his way up to the position of Vizier in Egypt, ʿAbbâs, together with his son Naṣr, conspired against the Imâm Ẓâfir who was eventually assassinated as a result of their actions.[4] Ẓâfir's son,

[4] S.B. Dadoyan in *The Fatimid Armenians Cultural and Political Interaction in the Near East*, Leiden 1997, p. 143-144 and note 170, seems to suggest that the Vizier ʿAbbâs and his son Naṣr were both of Armenian descent. ʿAbbâs was descended from a forefather named Bâdîs. Dadoyan says (p. 143-144): "According to Ibn Muyassar, the *mamlûk* Yânis was a present to Al-Afḍal from his original owner Bâdîs, the grandfather of ʿAbbâs, Vizier of Caliph Al-Ẓâfir bi-Amr Allâh (...)" and (note 170): "To the present, the name Bâdîs is a distorted transliteration of the Armenian name Avedis. Armenian historians consider this figure and ʿAbbâs (as) Armenians. ʿAbbâs is mentioned as the "stepson" (F. Daftary, *The Ismâʿîlîs*, p. 270) of the Vizier Al-ʿÂdil b. Sallâr, the governor of Alexandria. From 1150-1154 he was the Vizier of Caliph Al-Ẓâfir bi-Amr Allâh (1149-1154), a son of Al-Ḥâfiẓ."
As a comment on this I would like to give some more details of the origins of the "stepson" ʿAbbâs as being from a Berber family (not Armenian). Being a Berber, he would be an exception to the rule that Armenians reign over Egypt as was the case with the clan of the Âl Ruzzîk. On the basis of Al-Maqrîzî, *Ittiʿaẓ*, III, p. 196, we find that in 543 H, the fortified harbour of Mahdiyya (present-day Tunisia) was captured by the Franks. For a long time the city had been besieged and, during this period, it was ruled by an ancestor of ʿAbbâs, Al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlî b. Yaḥyâ b. Tamîm b. al-Muʿizz b. Bâdîs. In the same year, the *sayyida* Bullâra fled from Mahdiyya, accompanied by her husband Abû l-Futûḥ b. Yaḥyâ b. Tamîm and their son ʿAbbâs. The husband died shortly after the refugees had arrived in Alexandria. There the widow, Bullâra, was remarried, this time to the Governor of Alexandria. ʿAbbâs became a *rabîb*, a stepson, and was raised as a son by ʿAlî b. al-Salâr, the Governor. In *Ittiʿâẓ*, III, p. 188 there is a reference to a lineage: ... b. Bâdîs b. Zîrî b. Munâdî. On the basis of the information of *Ittiʿâẓ*, III, p. 187-188, it is apparent that ʿAbbâs and his son Naṣr descended from the Zîrids, "There were nine members of the Banû Bâdîs b. Zîrî b. Munâdin who became kings and they ruled from the year 361 until 543 H."
In his poem (to rhyme *maṣʿadu*) our poet, ʿUmâra, mentions ʿAbbâs as one who was descended from a royal line. This poem was written in praise of Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid and Ruzzîk, who became Vizier after Ṭalâ'iʿ, in 556 H, whilst the latter is recalled as one who brought an end to the injustice of Vizier ʿAbbâs and his son Naṣr, verses 41-43, "Al-Ṣâliḥ al-Hâdî, the Just Leader, who supported Just Leadership (scil., the Imâm) in the midst of a race which did not allow his radiance to lead it into just ways. / His pure justice caused the injustice of the Banû Munâdin to cease and his insight reformed that which they, in their wickedness, had brought about. / He rescued the sworn treaties from their hands with a hand which was effective in all its pious deeds." (For the poem to rhyme *maṣʿadu*, see Appendix.)
Elsewhere in a poetical reflection (to rhyme *râ'imu*) on the misdeeds of ʿAbbâs and his son Naṣr, which is addressed to Ṭalâ'iʿ, we can hear the words of the palace Chancellor Al-Qâḍî al-Jalîs. He emphasises the fact that the evil Vizier ʿAbbâs is not descended from any Arabic line, verses 1-2, "When the Berber, in his ignorance, involved himself in a murder, something which until then no ambitious person had ever aspired to, / You rode to him on the back of Your decision, which is so effective that enormous disasters are confronted by one such as it. (...)" (Al-ʿImâd al-Iṣfahânî al-Kâtib, *Kharîdat al-qaṣr wa-jarîdat al-ʿaṣr, qism shuʿarâ' Miṣr*, ed. Aḥmad Amîn, Shawqî Ḍayf, Iḥsân ʿAbbâs, Cairo 1951, vol. I, 190; Shihâb al-Dîn ʿAbd al-Raḥmân b. Ismâʿîl b. Ibrâhîm al-Maqdisî al-Dimashqî known as Abû Shâma, *Kitâb al-Rawḍatayni fî akhbâr al-dawlatayni l-Nûriyya wa l-Ṣalâḥiyya*, edition Ibrâhîm al-Zaybaq, Beirut 1997, II, 8 (ed. Cairo 1288 H., vol. I, 141).
For more on the Vizier ʿAbbâs and his murderous son Naṣr, see Ṣalâḥ al-Dîn Khalîl b. Aybak al-Ṣafadî, Al-Wâfî bi l-wafayât IX ed. Josef van Ess, Wiesbaden 1974, p. 151-153, dealing with "Al-Ẓâfir Ṣâḥib Miṣr Ismâʿîl b. ʿAbd al-Majîd, who is Abû l-Manṣûr al-Ẓâfir b. al-Ḥâfiẓ"; *op. cit.*, vol. XVI ed. Wadâd al-Qâḍî, Wiesbaden 1982, p. 646-648, dealing with "Al-ʿAbbâs b. Abî l-Futûḥ b. Yaḥyâ b. Tamîm b. al-Muʿizz b. Bâdîs, Vizier of Al-Fâ'iz ʿÎsâ al-ʿUbaydî", who arrived in Al-Qâhira accompanied by his mother, Bullâra (Ballâna, Balârima, Ballâza, according to other manuscripts); *op. cit.* , vol. XXI ed. Muḥammad al-Ḥujayrî, Wiesbaden 1988, p. 138-139 dealing with "ʿAlî b. al-Salâr the Vizier Abû l-Ḥasan al-mulaqqab bi l-ʿÂdil al-Kurdî al-ʿUbaydî Sayf al-Dîn, the Vizier of Al-Ẓâfir Ṣâḥib Miṣr."

Al-Fâ'iz, was a child Imâm and is introduced to us as a child who is both constantly crying and afflicted by epileptic attacks. However, fortunately for him, he is taken under the protective wings of a powerful Armenian, the "good" Vizier Ṭalâ'iʿ b. Ruzzîk. The murderers, the "wicked" Vizier ʿAbbâs and his son Naṣr, were killed. In fact, Naṣr was placed in an iron cage and offered meat to eat which some ladies-in-waiting or sisters of the murdered Imâm had torn from his own body with iron tongs. Apparently there was a feeling of great animosity towards ʿAbbâs and his son.[5]

**2.1**

The new Vizier Ṭalâ'iʿ developed himself into a protective patron. Furthermore, it was Ṭalâ'iʿ who offered ʿUmâra such an attractive lifestyle that the poet eventually decided to settle in Cairo permanently.

The new dynasty in Cairo were, therefore, the Banû Ruzzîk. Initially it appeared that this dynasty of Viziers would enjoy a long reign. The first important man who founded and established the dynasty, displayed a great interest in both poetry and literature. He must have seemed very attractive to ʿUmâra because he greatly valued Odes, particularly in a financial sense. One fact that is certain is that the first Vizier, Ṭalâ'iʿ, displayed strong sympathies towards the creed of the Twelver *Imâmiyya*. In that sense he did not fit closely into the framework of the Fâṭimids' *Ismâʿîlî* Imâm. However, in ʿUmâra's odes there is little obvious sympathy for the Twelver *Imâmiyya* belief.

In the *Dîwân* we come across a number of odes which were intended for the Banû Ruzzîk. What is noticeable, however, is that the praise is almost always divided between the Vizier (one of the clan of the Banû Ruzzîk) and the Imâm (initially Al-Fâ'iz, but latterly Al-ʿÂḍid), who served as the last Imâm, the last of the long line of Fâṭimids.

As we read through the *Dîwân*, we can see how certain images which depict the relationship between the Vizier and the Imâm constantly recur. In actual fact these images relate to the relationship between the Banû Ruzzîk clan and their Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid.

[5] Regarding the outcome of the revenge attack organised by the sister of the murdered Imâm Al-Ẓâfir from the palace in Al-Qâhirah and what became of ʿAbbâs and his son Naṣr, see Abû l-ʿAbbâs Shams al-Dîn b. Khallikân (who lived from 608 to 681 H.), *Wafayât al-aʿyân wa-anbâʾ abnâʾ al-zamân*, edition Iḥsân ʿAbbâs, Beirut 1968, III, p. 493.
Taqî al-Dîn Abû l-ʿAbbâs Aḥmad b. ʿAlî al-Maqrîzî (who died 845 H) in his *Ittiʿâẓ al-ḥunafâ bi-akhbâr al-aʾimmati l-Fâṭimiyyîn al-khulafâʾ*, edition Muḥammad Ḥilmî Muḥammad Aḥmad, Cairo 1973, III, p. 220-221, describes the action the women from the palace took in order to gain revenge in respect of the son of ʿAbbâs's, Naṣr b. ʿAbbâs: On 27 Rabîʿ I, 550 H, Naṣr arrived at the palace in Al-Qâhira; he was carried, imprisoned in an iron cage which the Franks (scil., the Crusaders) had made for him. On 18 Rabîʿ II, already dead, he was transported from the palace, having been tortured and having had his right hand hacked off. When Naṣr arrived in Al-Qâhira he apparently quoted a single line of verse, "Indeed, we were once as one amongst the inhabitants, but the changing of the nights destroyed us, together with the stumbling steps of fortune." (For further details see *Ittiʿâẓ*, III, p. 220.)

*2.1.1*

In the Banû Ruzzîk period, I could find few odes which appeared to be especially intended for the Imâm Al-Fâ'iz, the child Imâm who suffered from crying fits and epileptic attacks. However, I do want to pay attention to a poem to rhyme *ṭalabi* which strangely enough makes absolutely no reference to the Imâm.[6] This poem is mainly a description of Ṭalâ'iʿ, who is referred to as Kâfil or Kafîl, the Regent of the Imâm. But the Imâm is neither mentioned by name nor does he appear in an abstract sense. The poem itself is about the violence of war. There is an immediate allusion to, or rather an imitation (*muʿâraḍa*) of, Abû Tammâm's well-known comparison of the "sword" and the "pen".[7] Thus we find ʿUmâra recalling the style of this previous poet,

١ إذا قَرّرْت على العَلْياءِ بالغَلَبِ فلا تُعَرِّجْ على سَعْيٍ ولا طَلَبِ
٢ واخْطُبْ بألسنة الأغمادِ ما عَجَزت عنْ نيله ألسُنُ الأشعارِ والخُطَبِ
٣ فما استَوى الخَطُّ والخطّيُّ في وَهَجٍ ولا الكَتائبُ يومَ الروْعِ كالكُتُبِ

1 When You decide to attain Sublimity by overwhelming force, lean neither on (diplomatic) effort nor on petition.
2 Ask with the tongues of scabbards for what the tongues of poems and speeches cannot grasp.
3 Because the script (*al-khaṭṭ*) and the spear (*al-khaṭṭî*) are not equal in fiery heat, nor are squadrons (*katâ'ib*) the equal of books (*kutub*) on the day of terror.

This appears to be followed by an allusion to the long night of Imru'u l-Qays which with its huge bulk slowly passes by in the manner of a slowly moving camel. Now however, Ṭalâ'iʿ has such a torso and Time is crushed by it, as a consequence of which Time is no longer able to be crafty in its treatment of humankind.

١٤ ألْقَى الكفيلُ أبو الغاراتِ كَلْكَلَه على الزمانِ وضاعَتْ حيلةُ النُوَبِ

[6] ʿUmâra's poem to rhyme *ṭalabi*, a poem of 78 lines of verse, according to *Ms D*, folio 9 verso - 11 verso, and *Ms Rabat*, p. 40-44. This poem in metre *basîṭ* has been partially edited by Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan*, p. 46 (=verse 33), p. 58-59 (=verses 18, 20-22, 36, 39-41, 43), p. 164-165 (verses 1-2, 14-23, 35-37). The following lines of prose form an introduction, *Ms D*: "In honour of Al-Malik al-Ṣâliḥ, he also said the following..." and *Ms Rabat*: "In honour of him, he also said the following...".

[7] Abû Tammâm's poem to rhyme *wa l-laʿibi*, dedicated to the ʿAbbâsid Caliph Al-Muʿtaṣim, where it reads (verse 4): "Verily, the sharpness of the sword is a better cure for one who is sick, than all the benefits offered by letters and books." Thus on the occasion of the capture of the Byzantine capital city ʿAmmûriya, see *Dîwân Abî Tammâm*, ed. ʿAzzâm, Cairo 1964, I, p. 40-74, poem of 71 lines in metre *basîṭ*. There is an allusion to this identical poem in poetry composed (more than two centuries previous to ʿUmâra) by the Fâṭimid Al-Qâsim b. al-Mahdî, see P. Smoor, "Al-Mahdî's Tears: impressions of Fâṭimid court poetry", *in* U. Vermeulen, D. De Smet (ed.), *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras*, II, (=Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 83), Leuven 1998, p. 159-166.

14 Abû l-Ghârât, the Regent, threw his heavy bulk upon Time, whereat the craftiness of the disasters was banished.

There then follows some digression concerning a revolt which is, of course, put down by the overpowerful Vizier. The swords cause the bodies to fall to the ground bereft of their souls:

٤٣ كأنّ لَمْعَ المواضي في أكُفِّهِم صَواعقُ في الوغَى تَنْقَضُّ مِن سُحُبِ
٤٤ فما تروحُ بها الأرْواحُ في صَعَدٍ إلاّ وتَغْدو بها الأجسامُ في صَبَبِ
٤٥ رقّاهمُ الرُتْبَةَ العُلْيا أخو همَمٍ لمْ يَأْخذِ المُلكَ بالتدْريجِ في الرُتَبِ
٤٦ يُلَقّبُ الصالح الهادي وليسَ به معَ صِدْقِ أفْعالِهِ فَقْرٌ إلى لَقَبِ

43 [It is] as though the brilliance of the swords in their hands is made from thunderbolts, which have allowed themselves to fall from the clouds in a single stroke.
44 No sooner do the spirits pass through the nights in an upward movement than the bodies pass through the days in a downward movement.
45 A man of ambition allows them to rise to the highest rank, a man who did not reach kingship with little steps.
46 He received the honorary title of "Al-Ṣâliḥ al-Hâdî", although, given the truthfulness of his deeds, he had no need of it.

### *2.1.2*

One problem which confronts the poet is the fact that Ṭalâ'iʿ was an Armenian, a *mamlûk*, who had arrived with the Armenians during the regime of the Vizier Badr al-Jamâlî, many years before. Even in the days of Al-Afḍal the son of Badr al-Jamâlî, this Armenian lineage was still a sensitive issue and not one which could be treated in jest. When, during the time of the Fâṭimid Imâm Al-Mustanṣir, Al-Afḍal once rode unceremoniously into the Imâm's palace on horseback, Mustanṣir's appointed successor, Nizâr, rebuked – in fact insulted – him with the words: "Get down from your horse, oh carrier of misfortune, oh Armenian!" Thus يا نَحْسُ يا أرْمنيُّ, according to Al-Maqrîzî (in the *Ittiʿâẓ*), but according to Ibn Taghrî bardî (in *Al-Nujûm al-zâhirah*) the words were different, not *yâ naḥsu*, but *yâ najisu*: "… Oh unclean person, oh Armenian!", يا نَجِسُ يا أرْمنيُّ, which is less probable between Muslims.

The historian added: "Al-Afḍal, therefore, bore a grudge against him, and each one loathed the other."[8]

[8] Al-Maqrîzî, *Ittiʿâẓ*, III, p. 11-12, and Jamâl al-Dîn Abû l-Maḥâsin Yûsuf b. Taghrî Bardî al-Atâbakî (who lived from 812 to 874), *Al-nujûm al-zâhira fî mulûk Miṣra wa l-Qâhira*, photo copied edition, Dâr al-kutub Cairo, V, p. 142, sub anno 488 H (sic). On the incident between Al-Afḍal b. Badr al-Jamâlî and Nizâr, see also S.B. Dadoyan, *The Fatimid Armenians*, p. 128-129.

Indeed, due almost certainly to this incident, the grudge which the abused Vizier bore was so great that he successfully blocked the appointment of Nizâr.[9]

It is true that among the subsequent Viziers, the Vizier Ṭalâ'iʿ did become the Client of the Arabian tribe of Ghassân, but he remained just as sensitive about his Armenian origins as his distant relative Al-Afḍal. As far as our poet ʿUmâra is concerned, he was himself of pure Arabian descent and, therefore, felt obliged to justify Ṭalâ'iʿ's distressing lack of Arabian lineage: firstly, his outstanding skill with a sword should on its own ensure that the Vizier be identified as an Arab; secondly, his position is so high that his genealogical tree should need no examination.

٤٧ مُتَوَّجٌ من بني رُزّيكَ تنسَبُهُ بيضُ المساعي إلى جُرْثومةِ العرَبِ
٤٨ زاكي العَرومةِ إلاّ أنّ مَنْصِبَهُ في المجدِ أعظَمُ أنْ يُعْزَى إلى نَسَبِ

47 [He is] one of the crowned Banû Ruzzîk who is related to the origins of the original Arabian roots through the bright swords of ambition.

48 His origins are pure; however his position in immortality is too high to be reduced to a genealogical tree.

Ṭalâ'iʿ himself makes a great impression as the representative of antithesis: he wears armour which is both "massive" and "silent" (*i.e.*, two meanings of *ṣâmit*), but has a lion's roar which is "speaking" (*nâṭiq*) louder than the neighings of thoroughbreds. His armies march over the landscape, their horses in columns which cause the dust to rise, resembling smoke and flames:

٥٢ أَرْضتْهُ عنْ هَفَواتِ الناسِ قُدْرَتهُ فما يُكَدّرُ صَفْوَ الحلْمِ بالغَضَبِ
٥٣ ذو صامتٍ أعْرَبَتْ عنه زماجرُه بناطقٍ منْ صَهيلِ الخَيْلِ مُصْطَحِبِ
٥٤ كالسَيْلِ والليلِ لا يَنْجو طَريدُهما من المنيّةِ بالإمْعانِ في الهَرَبِ
٥٥ يُزْجيهِ أرْوَعُ من غَسّانَ مُنْذُ رَمَى بعزْمِهِ نُوَبَ الأيّامِ لم تَثِبِ
(...)
٦٩ تُثيرُ نَقْعَ دُخانٍ تحْتَهُ لَهَبٌ إنّ الدُخانَ لَنَمّامٌ على اللَّهَبِ
٧٠ يَحْكي مَجَرُّ عواليها إذا رَحِلت عنْ مَنْزِلٍ مَسْحَبَ الحَيّاتِ في الكثُبِ

52 His power ensured that he renounced the mistakes of man; in this way he did not disturb the purity of his long-suffering patience by an outburst of anger.

[9] Al-Mustaʿlî became the new Imâm after Mustanṣir's death. Al-Mustaʿlî removed any final chance which Nizâr may have had by plastering him behind a wall whilst still alive. On this, see Al-Maqrîzî, *Ittiʿâẓ*, III, p. 14-15 and p. 86-89.

53 He is the possessor of (heavy and) "silent" (*ṣâmit*) armour, his lion-like roars are "speaking" (*nâṭiq*) above the neighing of horses, a sound audible on every side.

54 He is like a torrent (*sayl*) and a night (*layl*), anyone, chased by these two, is unable to escape the fate of death by fleeing far.

55 A Shining person (*Arwaʿ*) from Ghassân urged the army calmly on. Never since he aimed at the disasters of the days with his decision-making power, have they ever attacked him again.

(...)

69 They cause dust clouds to rise, amongst which are flames. Indeed there is no smoke without fire. (The second half is a proverb in Arabic as well as in English.)

70 When they departed from their resting-places, the tracks of their lances resemble the trail of the snakes in the hills.

*2.1.3*

All this violence is of importance, in particular that against the crusaders:

٧٣ لانَتْ صفاةُ عَدُوٍّ أنتَ قارِعُها فاصْلُبْ على مِلّةِ الأوْثانِ والصُلُبِ

٧٤ فَعِنْدكَ الضُمَّرُ الْجُرْدُ الذي عرفوا وفَوْقهنَّ أُسودُ الغابِ لم تَغِبْ

٧٥ تَزورُهم سَرَبٌ إذا ظمِئَتْ لم تَرْوَ إلاّ برِقْراقِ الدَمِ السَرَبِ

٧٦ وما تُحَضُّ على دِينِ الهُدى أبَداً وأنتَ أشْفَقُ مِنْ أُمٍّ لهُ وأَبِ

73 The boulder of the enemy, which you have split with a hammer, has become weak; therefore be strong against the religion of Idols and Crosses.

74 Because beside You are thin camels and short-haired horses who know that the lions of the forest who sit astride them have not disappeared.

75 They (the enemies) have been visited by "a pack of wild animals" (*sarab*) who drink nothing when they are hungry, other than shining blood which is still "flowing" (*al-dami l-sarabi*).

76 And neither shall You ever turn against the religion of the Just Leadership, because You are more loving towards it than either a father or a mother.

Cheered on here by ʿUmâra, the Vizier Ṭalâ'iʿ is as tough as an iron hammer against the rocks of the enemies. However the poet also emphatically draws attention to Ṭalâ'iʿ's sympathetic side. Although the Vizier is an *Imâmî* and thus not an *Ismâʿîlî*, the poet will never criticize the special *Ismâʿîlî* creed which forms the *dîn* of the Imâm. As is always the case, the poet refers to the Imâm vaguely by using the term *hudâ*, "Just Leadership".

### *2.1.4*

In another poem which must come from an early period, Al-Ẓâfir is cited as the addressee. We know, however, that ʿUmâra arrived in Egypt after this Imâm had been assassinated by the wicked Vizier ʿAbbâs and his son Naṣr. It cannot therefore be Al-Ẓâfir who is meant, but Al-Fâ'iz. The poem to rhyme *jimâli* (see Appendix) is so impersonal that we are unable to learn anything about the character of the praised person as an ordinary man in a human situation;[10] but we are given a stereotyped portrayal of an Imâm. Furthermore, both the blackguardedly Vizier and his son Naṣr are mentioned as the "evil" opposites of the "good" Vizier Ṭalâ'iʿ and his "good" son. However, the truth was quite different. Previously Ṭalâ'iʿ had been in the employ of precisely this same "wicked" Vizier ʿAbbâs. Ṭalâ'iʿ was employed by ʿAbbâs as his *muqaddam* in a battle against an aged predecessor Vizier Ibn Maṣâl. In earlier days, therefore, Ṭalâ'iʿ supported ʿAbbâs who at that stage merely aspired to the Vizierate.[11]

The poem to rhyme *jimâli*, which incidentally does not appear in the manuscripts which we have become familiar with and made use of until now, does warrant somewhat more attention. In the first place we see how everything focuses upon the Imâm as a source of Revelation derived from God. But the rhetorical questions in the first verse put this into perspective: maybe it is only a question of a full moon and the desires of camels? In the second verse it is more concretely a question of the position of a "kingdom", or of a "foundation of Compassion". This refers to the cooperation required between the Vizier (Ṭalâ'iʿ) honorific name "Al-Malik al-Ṣâliḥ" (= the Godly King) and the Imâm:

١ أسماءُ قَدْرٍ أمْ سماءُ جلالٍ وضياء بدرٍ أم حنينُ جمالِ
٢ ومَقَرُّ ملكٍ أمْ قَرارةُ رحمةٍ سُقيَ الوحْيُ منها بِنوءِ شَوّالِ

1 Is it a heaven determined by fate (*qadar*) or a heaven of majesty? And the glow of a full moon or the desires of camels?

[10] The poem to rhyme *jimâli*, Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan* does not contain this poem. *Ms D*, on which this edition is largely based, does not contain this poem either. The poem does appear in *Ms Rabat*, p. 171-173! The poem to rhyme *ḥanînu jimâli*, consists of 52 lines. The following lines of prose form an introduction, *Ms Rabat*: "In honour of Al-Ẓâfir and his Vizier Al-Ṣâliḥ, he also said the following ...".

[11] Compare this to Al-Maqrîzî, *Itti'âẓ*, III, p. 197, where we find the following:
"Ibn al-Salâr began to prepare ʿAbbâs and appointed him in charge of a great army. He (ʿAbbâs) marched out quickly, fearful that the people would unite together behind Ibn Maṣâl. Afterwards, he departed for Dilâṣ, accompanied by Ṭalâ'iʿ b. Ruzzîk in the position of one of his generals. Subsequently he lined himself up against Ibn Maṣâl and several battles ensued with varying results. Finally the outcome of the battles was such that on Sunday 19 Shawwâl, both Ibn Maṣâl and Badr b. Râfiʿ, the Bedouin general, were killed. It is said that the numbers killed totalled 17,000. Having been proved the strongest, ʿAbbâs turned back towards Al-Qâhira, bearing the head of Ibn Maṣâl with him. On Thursday 23 Dhû l-Qaʿda, impaled on a spear, this head was carried through Al-Qâhira and Miṣr (Old Cairo). His (Ibn Maṣâl's) wives and children were brought to the palace. A room was cleared for them, and Ibn al-Salâr was awarded honorary robes." (sub anno 544 H., in chapter "Al-Ẓâfir bi-Amr Allâh Abû l-Manṣûr Ismâʿîl b. al-Ḥâfiẓ li-Dîn Allâh Abî l-Maymûn ʿAbd al-Majîd b. al-amîr Abî l-Qâsim Muḥammad b. al-Mustanṣir".)

2 Is it the establishment of a kingdom or the foundation of Compassion, from which the Revelation was watered by rain clouds from *Shawwâl*?

After these somewhat meditative opening lines, the poet hopes to gain favour by expressing his gratitude for his situation at the palace, a situation granted to him by the Vizier and the Imâm.

٤ بَلَّغْتَني هاذا المَقامَ ولمْ يكُنْ لِعَظيمِ هيبَتِه يَسيرُ ببالي
٥ أتَأمّلُ النورَ المُبينَ ودونَهُ سِتْرٌ منَ الإعْظامِ والإجْلال
٦ وأشاهِدُ المهدِيَّ إلاّ أنّهُ في الخَلْقِ مهْدِيٌّ بِبلادِ جُهّالِ

4 You have enabled me to attain this position, one which I would never have aspired to due to its awesomeness.
5 I observe the manifest light, in front of which a veil of esteem and awe hangs down, however.
6 And I behold the *Mahdî*, but he is a *Mahdî* amongst men in the land of ignorant folk.

*2.1.5*

The poet is grateful, he is also grateful that he can see. What does he see? A *mahdî*, but a *mahdî* in the land of ignorant folk. The poet swears that the kingdoms must give their support to him. Then follows a notably ritualistic repetition of the characteristics of the Imâm which is, furthermore, reminiscent of Al-Mu'ayyad fi l-Dîn al-Shîrâzî. This passage goes approximately as follows: "… this is the Light / This is the Message, about which the ʿulamâ' can be proud. / This is the Secret. / This is the clear line of descent. / This is the *Amîr* of the Believers, and the Protector of the *ḥanîfî* (monotheistic) religion, and the *qibla* of the Symbols." In particular the Symbols (the *amthâl*) make the *Ismâʿîlî* approach in this poem clear.

١١ هذا هو النورُ الذي شهِدَتْ لهُ زُهْرُ الكواكبِ من مكانٍ عالي
١٢ هذا هو النَّبا الذي افْتَخَرَتْ به العلماءُ في الدنيا على الجهّالِ
١٣ هذا هو السرُّ الذي لو لم تكنْ في الأرضِ ما أمِنَتْ منَ الزلْزالِ
١٤ هذا هو النسْلُ الجلِيُّ فثِقْ بهِ واستغْنِ عنْ نَظَرٍ واسْتدْلالِ
١٥ هذا أميرُ المؤمنينَ وعصْمَةُ الدينِ الحنيفِ وقِبْلَةُ الأمْثالِ

11 This is the light to whom the shining stars have born witness from a high place.
12 This is the message, as a result of which the *ʿUlamâ'* have taken pride in the *Dunyâ* rather than the Ignorant.

13 This is the secret: and should You never have been on earth, then it would have had no protection against tremors.
14 This is the clear line of descent; so put your faith in it and dismiss all speculation and questions of proof.
15 This is the *Amîr* of the Believers, and the Protector of the monotheistic (*ḥanîfî*) religion and the prayer-direction of the symbols.

Verses 23-24 describe the high regard for Al-Ẓâfir and the Vizirate of Ṭalâʿi', who later bore the title "Al-Malik al-Ṣâliḥ". It is possible that this is a glance back into the past, to the days of Al-Ẓâfir, in the period before ʿUmâra arrived in Egypt. However, it seems more probable that the term "Al-Ẓâfir" (the Victorious) simply refers to the Vizier. The new Vizier gives rise to a paronomastic figure of speech: there is the emergence of Ṭalâ'iʿ, the *ṭulûʿ* of Ṭalâ'iʿ. He was one of the Governors, one who dared to stand up against the bad Vizier ʿAbbâs. And in this manner ʿAbbâs is succeeded by the good Vizier here referred to as Al-Ẓâfir:

٢٣ للظّافرِ الشَرَفُ الذي لمْ يفْتخرْ بنَظيره أهلُ الزمانِ الخالي
٢٤ الصالحِ الملكِ الذي عضدَ الهدى بتحَمُّلِ الأعباءِ والأثْقالِ
٢٥ قامتْ عيونُ الخَلْقِ ملْؤ جفونِها مُذ باتَ يكْلَؤها ونِعْمَ الكالي
(...)
٢٧ وأغاثَ دولةَ آلِ أحمدَ بَعْدَما اضْطربَتْ وآذَنَ ظلُّها بزوالِ
٢٨ لولا طُلوعُ طلايعِ ودفاعُهُ بجلادِ أعدائكمْ وجدالِ
٢٩ لم يَبْقَ في أعْمالِ مِصْرَ كلِّها أحَدٌ لأبناءِ النبيِّ مُوالِي

23 Al-Ẓâfir has so much Honour that no other person from a bygone age could boast of such honour.
24 He (scil., the Vizier Al-Malik al-Ṣâliḥ) is the Pious One, the King (*Al-ṣâliḥi l-maliki*) who supports the Just Leadership by bearing both burdens and heavy things.
25 The eyes of the people have been plunged into deep sleep since he started guarding them by night; and how pleasant is this Guardian!
(…)
27 He helped the dynasty of the Âl Aḥmad, after it had been brought into confusion, and after its shadow had acknowledged that it would soon end.
28 If the emergence (*ṭulûʿ*) of Ṭalâ'iʿ had not taken place, and if he had not defended You by fighting against and disputing with your enemies,
29 Then there would not have been one person left in all the districts of Egypt who would have remained loyal to the sons of the Prophet.



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*2.1.6*

In contrast to theVizier Ṭalâ'iʿ and his son Al-Nâṣir b. Ṭalâ'iʿ, who represent the "goodly", we once again come across the pair who represent "evil", namely the blackguardly Vizier ʿAbbâs and his son Naṣr.[12]

Ṭalâ'iʿ is addressed in the poem with the following words:

٣٤ تركْتَـهُ مِنْ بعْدِ الكرامةِ وابْنَهُ وهما حَليفا ذلَّةٍ ونَكالِ
٣٥ جادتْهُما منْهُ سحائبُ نِقْمَةٍ مُحَمَّرةٍ تَهمِي بِوَيْلٍ وَبَالِ

34 After they had been elevated, since they both became allies of low behaviour and underwent exemplary punishment, You have abandoned him and his son.
35 His (scil., the Vizier's) clouds of Red Revenge throw themselves against the pair of them, filled with Woe and Disaster.

There is an allusion to the moderate *Imâmiyya* background, or at least to the excellent way of life practised by the new Vizier. From the perspective of ever-passing time, he has become an example to his son Al-Nâṣir:

٣٦ إنّ الأجَلَّ الناصرَ اتّبَعَ الذي أوضحْتَ مِنْ سُنّةٍ ومِثالِ
٣٧ وكفاكَ ما اسْتَكْفَيْتَهُ بسياسةٍ لم تُوتَ مِن رَيْبٍ ولا استِعْجالِ
٣٨ زانَ الشَبيبَةَ بالوَقارِ ولمْ يسرْ فينا بسيرةِ مُعْجَبٍ مُخْتالِ
٣٩ لمّا غَدا بخلالِ عَدْلِكَ يَقْتَدي في الخَلْقِ لم يعْلَقْ لهم بِخَلالِ
٤٠ كَفَتْ مَهابَتُهُ الأكُفَّ فَقصَّرَتْ خَطْوَ المظالِمِ بَعْدَ طولِ مَجالِ
٤١ وبَسطتَ راحَتَهُ فامُرْ فَيْضاً وَرَعاً عَنِ الأرْواحِ والأمْوالِ

36 Indeed, al-Ajallu al-Nâṣir (scil., the son of the Vizier) has imitated what you had made clear through Sunna and Example.
37 You should obtain satisfaction from what you have entrusted to leadership (*siyâsa*), unaffected by doubt or haste:
38 He adorned youth with dignity, and when he was amongst us, he did not lead the life of a conceited braggart.
39 When he came amongst the people to imitate the characteristics of your Justice, for their sake, he did not hold tightly to disorder.

[12] The honorific title of ʿAbbâs was *Rukn al-Islâm,* whereas his son owned the honorific *Nâṣir al-Dîn.*

40 Awe of him was sufficient for the hands of his people because, after a protracted period, it restrained injustice.
41 And you have unclosed his palm; command then an abundance of grace in godly fear for the safety of human spirits and riches.

In this poem to rhyme *jimâli*, the first theme is one of religiously orientated praise of the Imâm, followed by a eulogy to the king. It appears that the title *malik* , "king", is of significance to this poem. It may be that the Vizier has recently been appointed "king" by the Imâm.

*2.1.7*

The titles of Ṭalâ'iʿ were given to him by virtue of an honorary missive (*tashrîf*) from Imâm Al-Fâ'iz, on 4 *Rabîʿ* II, in the year 449 H.[13] However in line 47 of the poem cited below (rhyme *jimâli*), ʿUmâra emphasises that not only were ecstatic words said in respect of this Vizier, but also that the deeds of the Vizier were equivalent to the words:

٤٢ ملكٌ إذا اسْتَثْناكَ أصْبحَ يَشْتَكي عَدَمَ النَّظيرِ وقِلّةَ الأشْكالِ
٤٣ ما تُنْكِرُ الأمْلاكُ يومَ تَفاخُرٍ بمناقبِ الأقْوالِ والأمْثالِ
٤٤ إنّ ابْنَ رُزّيكٍ يَتيمةُ دَهْرِه ووَحيدُهُ في الفَضْلِ والإفْضالِ
٤٥ وإنّهُ يومَ الشَجاعةِ والنّدى غيْثُ أنْزالٍ ولَيْثُ نِزالِ
٤٦ تَركوهُ في أسْمائه لا فعْله ما نَفْعُ أسْماءٍ بلا أفْعالِ
٤٧ ملكٌ تقولُ لهُ مَساعِي مَجْده قوْلاً يصرفُهُ لسانُ الحالِ
٤٨ لا تَفْتَخرْ إلاّ بنَفْسكَ وَحْدَها فالدَّهْرُ من حَسَناتِ فعْلكَ حالِ
٤٩ تغْلُو وتَرْخَصُ رِفْعَةً وتَواضُعاً وعَجِبْتُ من شَيْءٍ رخيصٍ غالِ

42 Any king would begin to complain about the absence of an equal or a like minded soul, but You are an exception.
43 On the day that they boasted to each other about the good quality of their words and deeds, the kings themselves did not deny
44 That Ibn Ruzzîk is the unique pearl of his *Dahr* and will be unparalleled in his excellence and charity;
45 And that on the day of bravery and abundant dew, he is a rain cloud of gifts (*ghaythu anzâl*) and a lion on the field of battle (*laythu nizâl*).

[13] For the official proclamation in honour of Ṭalâ'iʿ, see Ibn Taghrî Bardî, *Al-nujûm al-zâhira*, V, p. 311 and Al-Maqrîzî, *Ittiʿâẓ*, III, p. 218.

46 They named him freely, not paying attention to his actions, but what is the use of names without deeds?

47 He is a king, for whom the ambitions of glory speak favourable words, words the Language of Things would like to take charge of.

48 Be proud of nothing but Your soul alone, then the *Dahr* will be ornamented by the pure jewels of your deeds.

49 You are both expensive and cheap, in highness and humbleness; and I was surprised by something which was both cheap and expensive.

In fact Ṭalâ'iʿ (and his son) were not the first to be given the honorary title *malik*, before Ṭalâ'iʿ the Fâṭimid Vizier Riḍwân al-Walakhshî, who was employed by Al-Ḥâfiẓ billâh, had also been honoured with the same title of "King" (see *Ittiʿâẓ* III, p. 218).

Finally, the poem to rhyme *jimâli* ends with the wish that both the Imâm, "The *Amîr* of the Believers", and the King will in the future be able to work together:

٥٠ فاسْلَمْ أميرَ المؤمنينَ مُبَلَّغاً في الصالحِ الهادي أعَزِّ مثالِ
٥١ وتَملَّيا صَرَفَ الحياةِ ولا رأتْ عَيْنُ الهُدَى لكُما زَوالَ ظِلالِ
٥٢ هنيتُما ما شئتُما وَعُلاكُما مَحْروسَةُ الغَدَواتِ والآصالِ

50 Fare thee well, Oh *Amîr* of the Believers, for whom Al-Ṣâliḥ, the Just Leader, has been given (*muballaghan*) as a most noble example.

51 And may both of You enjoy for a long time the high honour of life and may the eye of Just Leadership never see the end of your shadows.

52 May You both be happy for as long as you desire, while your mutual Loftiness is protected in both its morning and its evening hours.

### 2.2

The poem to rhyme *tuntakhabu* is less vague and definitely refers to the child Imâm Al-Fâ'iz, and thus never mentions either Al-Ẓâfir or Al-ʿÂḍid.[14] Al-Fâ'iz must be glorified in combination with the Vizier who has in the meantime been promoted to "King". At the end of this poem the Imâm is addressed. The wish in the very last verse of this poem records the state of the relationship between him and the Vizier: the latter is a good father to the Imâm, who is like a son to him. He is certainly not an angry father who treats his son harshly.

[14] Poem to rhyme *tuntakhabu*, Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan*, p. 170-171, only verses 1 and 17-26 in the edition, *Ms D*, folio 15R-16V. *Ms Rabat* p. 51-53. Total of 50 lines. The poem is introduced by the following words: "He said in praise of the Imâm Al-Fâ'iz bi-Naṣr Allâh, and his Vizier Al-Malik al-Ṣâliḥ...". This poem was problably recited by ʿUmâra on the occasion of the inauguration of Ṭalâ'iʿ in Al-Qâhira, after the departure of the previous Vizier ʿAbbâs with his son Naṣr and their retinue. The poem does, therefore, possibly date from the time *Rabîʿ* II, 449 H., or shortly afterwards, see Ittiʿâẓ, III, p. 219.

٤٩ فاسْعَدْ بأيّامِ ماضيها ومُقْبِلِها ما اسْتَحْقبَتْها على أعْجازِها الحِقَبُ
٥٠ مُمَتّعًا بِبقاءِ الصالح الملِكِ الـــــــــحاني إِذا ما جَفَى ابْناً والدٌ حرِبُ

49 Be happy then both with the days gone by and with those yet to come: those which the aeons allowed to ride on their backs,
50 While you enjoy the existence of Al-Malik al-Ṣâliḥ at a time when any other angry father would have treated his son severely.

*2.2.1*

Nowhere is there any allusion to the poor health of Al-Fâ'iz. There is only light and good fortune.

٦ في صَدْرِهِ فائزٌ بالنصْرِ مُحْتجبٌ بنورِهِ وتاجِ العِزِّ مُعْتَصبُ
٧ مُبارَكُ الوَجْهِ ميمونٌ نَقيبَتُهُ تُجْلى بِطَلْعَتِهِ الأحْداثُ والنُوَبُ

6 On the dais of his throne Fâ'iz bi l-Naṣr (a Conqueror of Victory) is veiled by his own light, and wrapped (in the manner of a turban) by the crown of his might.
7 Blessed with regard to his features, and fortunate in respect of his spirit, while events and misfortunes were unveiled through his countenance.

After this the poet turns immediately to the *mamdûḥ* and, using the figure of speech *iltifât*, addresses his words directly to the Imâm.

١٢ وأنتُمُ العرْوَةُ الوُثْقَى فلا انْفَصَمتْ وحُبُّكم في دُخولِ الجنَّةِ السَبَبُ
١٣ وفي مدائِحِكُمْ فَخْرٌ لِمادِحِكُمْ وفي ولائكُمْ ذُخْرٌ ومُنْقَلَبُ

12 You are the Strong Grip (*al-ʿurwa al-wuthqâ*) which will not be broken whilst love of you is the reason for entering Paradise.
13 In the odes dedicated to you there is glory for the one who praises you; and in loyalty to you lies a treasure chest and a favourable outcome.

*2.2.2*

Moreover discussing their connections to the Koran ʿUmâra says the following:

١٥ مناقِبُ كالنُجومِ الزُّهْرِ قد مُلِئَتْ بِحُسْنِ أوْصافِها الأسْماعُ والكُتُبُ
١٦ جاءَتْ لها سورةُ القُرآنِ مادحَةً وما عسى يتعاطى الشعرُ والخُطَبُ

15 Honourable characteristics such as the Shining Stars, whose beauty has now filled our ears and books.
16 The Sûra of the Koran came to praise these, and what could poetry and speeches still achieve?

The Imamate had been threatened by the previous wicked Vizier, but the Ruzzîk clan had arrived as the new family of Viziers in order to protect this highly placed Imâm who is no less than "a forerunner of the Will of Allah":

١٧ للّهِ في أهْلِ هذا القَصْرِ سابِقةٌ منَ الإرادةِ في أسْرارها عَجَبُ
١٨ لمّا أرادَ ابْنُ باديسَ إزالَتَهمْ والناصِرونَ لأنْوارِ الهُدى غُيَّبُ
١٩ آبَتْ عليْهم يَدٌ إلّيةٌ ويَدٌ تُعْزى إلى آلِ رُزّيك وتَنْتسبُ
٢٠ لولا الوزيرُ أبو الغاراتِ ما خَفَقتْ للنَّصْرِ في القَصْرِ راياتٌ ولا عذَبُ
٢١ ولا اعْتزَى لعَلِيٍّ عنْد نازلةٍ منَ القَبيلَيْنِ لا عُجْمٌ ولا عَرَبُ
٢٢ لمّا جَلَبْتَ إلَيْه الخَيْلَ مُقَرَّبةً لمْ يَحْمِه منكَ إلاّ الشَحط والهَرَبُ
٢٣ أضافَكَ المُلكُ لما جئتَ زائرَهُ كَرامةً ما لها إلاّ الظُبا سَبَبُ
٢٤ وَلّى ويا بئْسَ ما أوْلَى مواليَهُ ولو تَفانيْتُما لم يُنْجه الهَرَبُ
٢٥ وأيَّدَ اللهُ دينَ الحَقِّ منْكَ بِذي يَدٍ لها في الوَغى التَّأييدُ والْغَلَبُ

17 Amongst the inhabitants of this palace Allah has found a forerunner of the Will, in whose secrets there is cause for wonder.
18 When Ibn Bâdîs wanted to remove them (*i.e.*, the inhabitants), whilst the Helpers of the lights of Just Leadership were absent,
19 A revengeful hand was turned against them, a hand which could be traced back to the Âl Ruzzîk and which descended from that clan.
20 Had the Vizier Abû l-Ghârât not been there, then neither banners nor turban-ribbons would have flown to celebrate the victory in the palace.
21 And then neither of the two tribes, Persians nor Arabs, would have recognised him as the son of ʿAlî at the time of disaster.
22 When You (an example of *iltifât*, because here the Vizier is being directly addressed) urged the swift horses on towards him (*i.e.*, ʿAbbâs, the wicked Vizier), he had nothing to protect himself from You apart from great distance and flight.

23 When You visited the monarchy, it bestowed an honour upon You which had its origins only in the sharpness of the sword.
24 He (the wicked Vizier) took to flight, and oh how bad is that which he had bestowed upon his underlings! Even had You two destroyed each other, flight would not have saved him.
25 Through a man with mighty hands, who in the battlefield achieves both support and victory, Allah has supported the *Dîn al-Ḥaqq* for You.

Through the Vizier, Allah subsequently supported the *Dîn al-Ḥaqq* (= verse 25). But once again, the problem of the lowly and non-Arabic (*i.e.*, Armenian) lineage of the new Vizier is raised. His high ambitions and his good deeds concerning the protection he offers to the women at the palace are, however, sufficient to make any questions relating to his ancestry irrelevant.

### *2.2.3*

The situation in the country is so safe that sheep and wolves are able to keep each other company, although by the time the sun goes down the wolves have died from hunger. Naturally, the women are singled out for mention because they were the ones who invited the new Vizier to come and take revenge for the murdered Imâm Al-Ẓâfir. The following poetic passage develops this line of thought:

٢٧ والمَرءُ من هَمٍّ فاستَغْنىَ بهمَّته عَمّا بناهُ لهُ جَدٌّ مَضى وَأبُ
٢٨ حمى حَريمَ المَعالي عزْمُهُ فغَدَتْ أكْنافُهُ كَعَرينِ الليْثِ يُجتَنَبُ
٢٩ يُصاحبُ الذئبَ فيها الشاةُ مُؤْتَمناً على المَغيبِ وإنْ أودى به السَغَبُ
٣٠ فما يُرى الروحُ فيها وهو مُخْتَطَفٌ ولا يُرى المالُ منها وهْوَ مُنْتَهَبُ

27 Man is composed of worries. His ambition means that he no longer needs what his father and forefathers have built for him.
28 His perseverance protects the women in their lofty apartments (*ḥarîm al-maʿâlî*) and so his wings are like the lions' forest which one must avoid,
29 Wherein a sheep is able to accompany a wolf in all safety, although towards sundown hunger causes the latter to perish.
30 Hence her spirit (*i.e.*, the sheep's spirit, simultaneously a metaphor for "woman") can never be stolen, nor can anyone witness her money being turned into booty.

## 3

For a long time the combination of Vizier and Imâm worked well. However, changes begin to occur when, after a period of about five years, the sickly child Imâm dies. A successor is then required and this involves a well-known group of people. Here I refer to Al-Maqrîzî by quoting from his *Ittiʿâẓ* (III, p. 238 and 243):

"Al-ʿÂḍid (…) received the *bayʿa* after the transference of Al-Fâ'iz (the deceased Imâm) and after the time of the *ṣalât*, on Friday, 17 *Rajab* 555 H. ʿÂḍid was at that time nine and one half years and seven days old."

The historian continues, by saying:

"When the Caliph Al-Fâ'iz died, Al-Ṣâliḥ b. Ruzzîk rode to the palace in mourning attire. He summoned Mufliḥ the *zimâm al-qaṣr* (read Persian *zinân dâr*, the Head of the Household) and asked him who in the palace was suitable for the Caliphate.

He answered: 'There is an entire group here!'

He (Al-Ṣâliḥ) replied: 'Introduce me to the oldest of them.' After which the head of the house mentioned one by name.

Ṣâliḥ ordered the one named to be brought. An *Amîr*, called ʿAlî b. Mazîd, arrived and whispered to him: 'Do not allow ʿAbbâs (Al-Ṣanhâjî) to have better vision than You; he chose the youngest and left the oldest to himself, as a result of which he (ʿAbbâs) had absolute power.'

Ṣâliḥ listened to his advice, he said to the *Zimâm*: 'I want a young child from you!'

He said: 'I have here the son of *Amîr* Yûsuf b. al-Ḥâfiẓ, named ʿAbd Allâh, but he is neither mature nor of age (he is not *bâligh*).'

Ṣâliḥ said: 'Let him come!'

He was, therefore, immediately brought to him wearing an attractive turban and cape. He was like a wild animal, brown with large eyes, broad eyebrows, a short nose, broad nostrils and thick lips. Ṣâliḥ had him sit in the fresh air of the air shaft. He was 11 years old. (Previously a different age was mentioned, in the short time that you have been reading this ʿAbd Allâh ʿÂḍid has become one and a half years older. See *Ittiʿâẓ*, III, p. 244). Ṣâliḥ then ordered the Head of the clothing store to bring a simple green cloak. This was the dress of the heir when he was in mourning for the one who had reigned before him. The man arrived and attired him accordingly.

Al-Fâ'iz was prepared for the funeral and when his coffin, his *tâbût* was brought outside, the *ṣalât* was said for him after which he (the deceased) was carried to his tomb. Al-Ṣâliḥ took ʿAbd Allâh by the hand and had him sit next to him, he then ordered the clothes of the Caliphate to be brought to him. The people then dressed him in these and he gave him the *bayʿa* after which they did so, too.

He gave him the honorary name Al-ʿÂḍid li-dîn Allâh. And that was on Friday, 18 *Rajab*, 555 H. His father was one of the two brothers who had been assassinated by the Vizier ʿAbbâs.

Once Al-ʿÂḍid had been given the *bayʿa*, he rode on a horse with the *miẓalla* carried above his head, Al-Ṣâliḥ rode in front of him. He departed from the tomb in the direction of the palace. Now there was, amongst the Caliphs, the following custom: when the messenger arrived at the house of the next of kin of the one who had received the *bayʿa*, he would be given 1000 *dînâr*s. However, when Al-ʿÂḍid received the *bayʿa* and the messenger went to his aunt's, she only gave him a paltry sum. He repeatedly asked her to give him more, but she refused. She was asked to explain her reason, whereupon she said: 'This is the *Qâṭiʿ al-Khulafâ'*, the Destroyer of the Caliphate.' And this happened exactly as she had said."

### 3.1

By the phrase "Qâṭiʿ al-Khulafâ'", the aunt was, of course, referring to the second meaning attached to the word "ʿâḍid", that is "someone who prunes, someone who cuts down". She probably considered the honorary name to be ominous and wanted to have nothing to do with it. The previous quote also makes two things apparent: firstly that there had been no designation, no *naṣṣ*, as to the successor of the child Caliph Al-Fâ'iz, whose original name was in fact ʿÎsâ; secondly ʿÎsâ al-Fâ'iz had no son, which meant that his successor could be an *ibn ʿamm*, someone like ʿAbd Allâh al-ʿÂḍid.

The casual remark made by Ṭalâ'iʿ, regarding the way in which Al-ʿÂḍid was finally selected from the group of sons and nephews, who had, at the request of the Vizier, been brought together by the *zimâm al-qaṣr*, makes it very clear that the choice of the new Imâm was extremely random; indeed the Vizier had been heard to say: "I inspected them in the way one is supposed to inspect small livestock." (*Ittiʿâẓ*, III, p. 249)

### 3.2

In ʿUmâra's poetry which was recited in the entourage of the Vizier and the Caliph, there is, surprisingly enough, not one single allusion to the arbitrary manner in which the succession took place. In fact it is quite the opposite, the representation which ʿUmâra gives is that there was in fact a *naṣṣ* designating Al-ʿÂḍid. One simply needs to read his poetry to appreciate this. However, in his poetry ʿUmâra has to acknowledge the fact that this Caliph, Al-ʿÂḍid, was very young, even younger than ten years old.

#### *3.2.1*

In the year 555 H, Al-Fâ'iz the child Caliph died, and we know that ʿUmâra composed a poem of condolence (to rhyme *jasîmu*); in this poem he mourns the loss of the deceased and congratulates his successor, the new Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid.[15] In his poem ʿUmâra devotes

[15] Poem to rhyme *jasîmu*, Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan*, p. 346-347 and *Ms D* folio 170 recto-171 recto, and *Ms Rabat* p. 220-222. This poem consists of 37 lines. The poem is introduced with the following words: "He said when offering his condolences regarding Al-Fâ'iz and congratulating Al-ʿÂḍid on his ascension to the throne" (In addition *Ms D* reads: "... and congratulating the Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid"). *Ms Rabat* reads the following in the margin: "This belongs to the art of funeral odes and congratulations."

most attention to Al-ʿÂḍid and he opens with a reference to this new child Imâm, only then does he turn his thoughts to the deceased. This sequence was essential, because according to the working of the omen it was undesirable for the first subject of a poem to be a reference to a death,

٣ غدا الدهرُ محمودَ الفعالِ إلى الورى وعَهْدي به بالأمْسِ وهْوَ ذميمُ
٤ وسرَّ قُلوباً بعدَ ما كان ساءها ففي كلّ قلبٍ جَنّةٌ وجحيمُ

3 The *Dahr* has been honourable in his treatment of mere mortals. But I knew him yesterday when he was still contemptuous.
4 He brought happiness to hearts which he had previously treated harshly, so there was in every heart a Paradise and a Hell. (This line is only in *Ms D*).

The *Dahr* does indeed bring pleasure to people, as the arrival of Al-ʿÂḍid means Paradise for their hearts. However, the departure of the unfortunate Al-Fâ'iz meant that previously they had experienced Hell. Al-Fâ'iz departed and journeyed with certainty to Paradise, because the garden was jealous and wanted to keep this Imâm for itself. In other words, according to ʿUmâra, this garden begrudged "us" the paradisiacal closeness of Al-Fâ'iz.

٥ لَئِنْ عَرَضَتْ للفائزِ الطهْرِ نقْلَةٌ فئنَّ أميرَ المؤمنين مُقيمُ
٦ وإنْ حسَدتْنا جَنَّةُ الخُلْدِ قُرْبَهُ فَقُرْبُكَ منّا جَنّةٌ ونَعيمُ

5 Even for the pure Al-Fâ'iz, there is a transition to the Hereafter, while the *Amîr* of the Believers remains.
6 And if the eternal Paradise envied us because he (Al-Fâ'iz) was so close to us, then Your (Al-ʿÂḍid's) proximity is both a Paradise and a benefaction to us.

The preceding lines 5 and 6 from the poem *jasîmu* show us how one Imâm passes on to the Hereafter and how another Imâm is brought in and remains.

### *3.2.2*

This simple reality can be found in a poetic passage by Ibn Munqidh in Syria, where we can sense a polite but almost cynical detachment. Ibn Munqidh had received from Ṭalâ'iʿ the news of the change of Imâm. He wrote to Ṭalâ'iʿ telling him in a few words the extent to which he had been affected by this death. In *Rawḍatayn*, I, p. 124, and quoted in *Ittiʿâẓ*, III, p. 243, we can read the following:

"In that year (= 555 H.) the *mustakhlif* died in Egypt. He who bore the laqab 'Al-Fâ'iz', the son of Al-Ẓâfir b. al-Ḥâfiẓ. After him reigned his *ibn ʿamm* Al-ʿÂḍid b. Yûsuf b. al-Ḥâfiẓ. He was the last of the Caliphs of Egypt. Because of (the Vizier) Al-Ṣâliḥ

b. Ruzzîk, a letter was sent to Ibn Munqidh Usâma concerning this matter. To which the latter wrote the following reply:

١ هناءٌ بنعْمَى قلّ عنْ قَدْرها الشُكرُ وصبْرُ الرُزءِ لا يقومُ به الصَّبْرُ
٢ مضى الفائزُ الطهْرُ الإمامُ وقامَ بـــالإمامةِ فينا بعْدَهُ العاضِدُ الطهرُ
٣ إمامًا هُدىً للّه في نقْلِ ذا إلى كرامته وفي إقامةِ ذا سِرُّ
٤ فعِشْ أبَداً واسْلَمْ يا كَفيلَهُم تُدافِعُ عنهم كلَّ حادثةٍ تعْرُو

1 Congratulations on a benefaction for which every form of gratitude is too small, and perseverance against a disaster which cannot bear perseverance.
2 The Pure Al-Fâ'iz, the Imâm has departed. And following his death the Pure Al-ʿÂḍid has taken the Imamate upon himself in our midst.
3 Allah has a secret: Two Imâms of Just Leadership. He transfers one to His generosity and He allows the other to survive.
4 Live forever and remain safe, Oh Regent of them! Then You will be able to stave off every disaster which may occur."

Although from historical sources we know nothing of a designation, a *naṣṣ*, ʿUmâra calmly declares that such a declaration existed, one in which the dead Imâm plainly indicates that his successor is to be no one other than Al-ʿÂḍid,

٧ وَرِثْتَ الهُدىَ بالنَصِّ منهُ وقَوْلِه أخي وابنُ عمّي إنْ عَدِمْتُ يقومُ
٨ وقد سَنَّ ذاكَ المصطفى في ابنِ عَمِّه فمِنْ شَرَفَيْكُم حادثٌ وقديمُ
٩ حَكَتْ بَيعَةَ الرِضْوانِ بيعَتُكَ التي يصحُّ بها الإيمانُ وَهوَ سَقيمُ

7 You have inherited the Just Leadership through the designation (*naṣṣ*) on his (Al-Fâ'iz's) authority and through his declaration: "My brother, and the son of my uncle (*ʿammî*) will serve when I am no longer here."
8 Al-Muṣṭafâ had already made a precondition regarding the son of his uncle (ʿAlî), and from these two honourable people of Yours appear both the old and the new.
(Mohammad's precondition had apparently to be conceived of as a tradition henceforth to be followed.)
9 The *bayʿa* given to You resembled the *bayʿa* which Riḍwân gave (to the Prophet), as a result of which the Belief which had become sick became healthy again. (See *EI*, Supplement, s.v. *Bayʿat Riḍwân*)

The inauguration (*bayʿa*) which the Vizier Ṭalâ'iʿ gave to the Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid, who was not yet ten years old, resembled the inauguration which the angel Riḍwân had given to the Prophet in the ancient days of Islam. The Poet, therefore, views the Imâm as one who belongs to the ranks of the prophets. As soon as the name Riḍwân was mentioned, ʿUmâra's

listeners must have immediately recalled a Vizier from the period of Al-Ḥâfiẓ. However, it was in fact the comparison to the angel which was intended. We could ask ourselves, whether Ṭalâ'iʿ, who had given the *bayʿa*, indeed resembled an angel such as Riḍwân? What is beyond doubt is that in battle Ṭalâ'iʿ was persistent, a mountain Ṭûd who unshakenly resists the razor-sharp winds.[16]

### 3.3

Concerning the useful combination of Imâm and Vizier, ʿUmâra gives more details in another poem. In the poem to rhyme *ka l-sihâmi*, written in a somewhat later period, he mentions the successor to Al-Malik al-Ṣâliḥ.[17] This successor, the son Al-Nâṣir al-Muḥyî "Abû Shujâʿ", appears as Regent in a *takhalluṣ* between the section describing the Imâm and the section devoted to the Regent (in verse 24 of the poem to rhyme *sihâmi*). Initially the poet describes the moon which is at one moment a sickle but soon becomes a full moon again, and he compares this fluctuating light to the perfection of the Imâm who always remains steady. However at the time this poem was composed, the person of the Imâm had changed: instead of Al-Fâ'iz, the *mamdûḥ* here is Al-ʿÂḍid, whose installation as Imâm had occurred in 555 H. as we mentioned earlier,

١٨ وهل شَهْرُ الصيامِ سوَى هلالٍ يزُورُكَ وافداً في كُلِّ عامِ
١٩ جَعَلْتَ لهُ على شَعْبانَ فَضْلا بتَحْريمِ المُباحِ منَ الطَعامِ
٢٠ وبيْنَكُما على التَحْقيقِ بَوْنٌ بَعيدٌ لا يؤولُ إلى الْتزامِ
٢١ إذا ما تَمَّ أدْرَكَهُ محاقٌ ووَجْهُكَ دائماً بَدْرُ التَمامِ
٢٢ يَعودُ من الكَمالِ إلى انْتقاصٍ ويَصْحَبُكَ الكَمالُ على الدَوامِ
٢٣ ولوْ ذَهَبَ المحاقُ به عَرَفْنا برؤيتكَ الحَلالَ منَ الحرامِ
٢٤ سَمَوْتَ عنِ الهناءِ بِكُلِّ شيْءٍ سِوَى أيّامِ كافِلِكَ الْهُمامِ

18 Is the month of the Fast (the 9th month) anything other than a thin crescent moon which pays You a visit each year?

19 You have given it priority above *Shaʿbân* (the 8th month), by forbidding the food which is normally permitted.

20 And on closer inspection, it appears that between you two a split has occurred which will never be breached.

[16] Compare the poem to rhyme *jasîmu*, verse 17: "But he is the mountain Al-Ṭûd which cannot be shaken by the winds, even if these should blow and become razor sharp."

[17] Poem to rhyme *ka l-sihâmi*, Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan*, p. 341-342, and *Ms D*, folio 164 verso -165 verso. The poem consists of 51 verses in total, also in both manuscripts (*Ms D* and *Ms Rabat*, p. 209-211). In the printed edition verses 1-11, 36-40, and 45 are found. *Ms D* presents the following words of introduction: "He spoke in honour of the Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid and Nâṣir al-Dîn, son of Al-Malik al-Ṣâliḥ, and said the following ..." *Ms Rabat*: "He said also in praise of Al-ʿÂḍid the following ..."

21 When the moon is "full" it is always caught up by darkness (at the end of the month), Your face, however, is always a full moon of perfection.
22 It returns from perfection to imperfection, while You are always accompanied by perfection.
23 And suppose that the darkness (at the end of the month) should cause it to disappear completely, by seeing You, we would still be able to comprehend the difference between the permitted and the forbidden.
24 You had risen too high to be congratulated by anyone apart from the days of Your heroic Regent.

*3.3.1*

Life in the *Dawla* is compared by the poet to a beautiful dream, and according to the dream at least, the Regent watches over the *Dawla* as if it were a sacred area (a *ḥaram*). The Regent is, moreover, characterised by *walâ'* (the legal obligation of loyalty to an Imâm) and *wafâ'* (fidelity to the dynasty). These thoughts appear in the following fragments in which the poet addresses the Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid with the words:

٢٦ لَئِنْ نظمتْ لَيالي المُلْك عِقْداً عَليكَ فإنّهُ سِلْكُ النظامِ
٢٧ وإنْ صَرفَتْ صِفَاتُكَ فَهْوَ منْها بِمَنْزِلَةِ الوفاءِ منَ الذِمامِ [18]
٢٨ وإنْ كَرُمَتْ خِصالُكَ فَهْوَ منْها بِمَنْزِلَةِ الوفاءِ منَ الذِمامِ [19]
٢٩ رَعَى حَرَمَ الخِلافةِ منْه طَرْفٌ طَرِيفٌ عندَهُ خيْرُ الْمَنامِ [20]
٣٠ وحاطَ سَوامَها من كُلِّ خَطْبٍ فيا للّهِ منْ راعِي سَوامِ
٣١ وباشَرَ عنْدَ نُصْرَتِها المنايا مُباشَرَةَ اصْطِلاءٍ واصْطِلامِ
٣٢ وناطَ ولاءَها بعُرَى وَفاءٍ يُصانُ [21] عَنِ انْفِصالٍ وانْفِصامِ
٣٣ جَعَلْتَ زِمامَ أمْرِكَ في يَدَيْهِ فَرُدَّ إِلَيْكَ تَدْبِيرُ الزِمامِ

26 Indeed, should the nights of the monarchy thread a necklace for You (the Imâm) to wear, then he (the Regent) would be the thread for that necklace.
27 And as Your qualities are highly noble, he is in their presence in the position of "fidelity" (*wafâ'*) as opposed to "family honour" (*dhimâm*). (*Ms D*, *Ms Rabat* says: "in the position of the blade as opposed to the sword.")

[18] *Ms Rabat*: بمنزلة الفرِنْد من الحُسام
[19] This line 28 does not occur in *Ms D*, it is only found in *Ms Rabat*.
[20] *Ms Rabat*: طريفٌ عنده خَبَرُ المنام
[21] *Ms Rabat*: تُصانُ

28 (*Ms Rabat* adds:) As Your characteristics are noble, he is in the presence of those in the position of "fidelity" as opposed to "family honour".

29 One glance (*ṭaraf*) from him was enough to protect the *ḥaram* of the Caliphate, for which this message of a dream was extremely rare. (*Ms Rabat*: *khabar al-manâm*, *Ms D* has here *khayr al-manâm*.)

30 He protected her (the Caliphate's) livestock from every disaster, and how excellent he is as a protector of livestock!

31 In assisting the Caliphate he involved himself in death's purpose, like one who warms himself beside a fire, one who uproots something.

32 He hung his loyalty (*walâ'*) to it (the Caliphate) on handles of fidelity (*wafâ'*), ones which were protected against division and destruction.

33 You (the Imâm) have placed the reins of Your command in his hands, after which You were given back the command of these reins (by him who is Your Vizier).

The succession of Vizier Al-Malik al-Ṣâliḥ by his son Al-Nâṣir appears similar to that of the Imâm himself, as there is even at this lowlier level the suggestion of a *naṣṣ* (designation):

٣٧ وأَيَّدَ مُلْكَهُ بأبي شُجاعٍ وذلك مِن تَمامِ الاهْتمامِ
٣٨ فأَسْفَرَ وَجْهُ مُلْكٍ عاضِدِيٍّ يُشارُ به إلى عَضُدِ الإمامِ
٣٩ تَطَلّعت العُلَى منْهُ إلى مَنْ يشرّفُ سامِيَ الرُّتَبِ السَوامِي
٤٠ بَنَى بالنَاصِرِ المُحْيِي مَناراً تَقَطَّعَ دُونَهُ نَفَسُ الكِرامِ
٤١ ولَمْ يَكُ نَصُّ والِدِهِ عَلَيهِ بِذلكَ رَمْيَةً مِنْ غَيْرِ رامِ

37 He (the father: Ṭalâ'iʿ al-Ṣâliḥ) supported his monarchy by means of Abû Shujâʿ, and that has ensured the most complete ambition (*min tamâmi l-ihtimâmi*).

38 Then the countenance of ʿÂḍidic monarchy shone; thereby an allusion was made to the ʿAḍud (the Strong Arm) of the Imâm.

39 From there Loftiness surveyed one who was looking down upon the heights of the higher ranks.

40 Through Al-Nâṣir al-Muḥyî he built a beacon of light (*manâr*), beneath which the breath of the noble was cut off before they could reach it.

41 Due to this the designation of him by his father was not simply a shot without an archer.

A this point it is interesting to note, how ʿUmâra in verse 38 of his poem (*ka l-sihâmi*) publicly contradicts the ominous content of the Imâm's honorific title Al-ʿÂḍid (meaning a Pruner and Cutter instead of a Supporter) by asserting that there is in this name only an allusion to the Imâm as powerful through Al-ʿAḍud, the Strong Arm. However, this Strong Arm might also symbolically refer to the Vizier.

*3.3.2*

The possibility of an identification between the Imâm and the Vizier is so complete that the feats which they achieved were attributed to either one of them, or to the dynasty as a whole, the *Dawla* of the Imâm or of the Vizier. The father, who is still alive and who has made the *naṣṣ* for the succession, is indirectly mentioned in connection with his son as his successor:

٤١ ‹وَلَمْ يَكُ نَصُّ والدِهِ عَلَيهِ بذلكَ رَمْيَةً مِنْ غَيْرِ رام›
٤٢ وذلك رأيُ مُحْتَنَكٍ خبيرٍ يُجلّي رأيُهُ سُدَفَ الظلامِ
٤٣ يَرى الأشْياءَ مِنْ أمَمٍ بِفِكْرٍ يُرِيه كُلَّ خَلْفٍ مِنْ أمامِ
٤٤ تَبيتُ بأمْرِه الأقْدارُ فينا تُوَزَّعُ بينَ عَفْوٍ وانْتِقامِ
٤٥ إذا ما الحِلْمُ خفَّفَ من سُطاهُ [22] مَشَتْ بينَ السَكينَةِ والعُرامِ
٤٦ به طالتْ بنو رُزِّيكَ باعاً على الحيّيْنِ من يَمَنٍ وشامِ
٤٧ مُلوكٌ علّموا هِمَمَ القَوافي تَرَفُّعَها عنِ النَفَرِ اللئامِ
٤٨ أُقَصّرُ عن [23] عنانِ المدْحِ فيهِمْ فَيَغْلِبُني ويَجْمَعُ في اللِّجامِ
٤٩ وأسْتُرُ شُكْرَهُمْ خَجَلاً فيَبْدو وَعَرْفُ المِسْكِ يَنْفَحُ في الخِتَامِ
٥٠ لقدْ حسُنتْ بِدَوْلَتِهِمْ لَيالٍ كأنَّ الناسَ منها في مَنامِ

<41 Due to this the *naṣṣ*, designation, of him by his father, was not simply a bolt from the blue.>

42 That is the opinion, acquired by trial and error, of an experienced person whose opinion draws back the black curtains of darkness.

43 He sees things straight in front of him by means of a way of thinking which enables him to see the reverse side at the same time!

44 At his command predestinations (*al-aqdâr*) are divided amongst us, varying from forgiveness to revenge;

45 When wise insight diminishes his severity, then these *aqdâr* run a course between divine peace (*sakîna*) and uncontrolled violence (*ʿurâm*).

46 Through him the long arm of the Banû Ruzzîk has power over the peoples of Yaman and Shâm.

47 They are Kings who taught the ambitions of the Rhymes how to raise themselves above the lowliest.

48 For them alone, I keep the reins of eulogy short, but this praise has overpowered me and its reins are unruly.

[22] *Ms Rabat*: إذا ما الحِلْمُ خَفّضَ مِنْ سُطاهُ

[23] *Ms Rabat*: أُقَصّرُ من

49 Out of diffidence I hide my gratitude from them. However, it becomes visible because the scent of musk emanates from sealing (this poem).

50 Through their *Dawla* the nights have become beautiful, as if by their presence mankind has found itself in a dream.

### *3.3.3*

Finally in the poem to rhyme *lâmiʿu* (see Appendix), there appears a portrayal of the close cooperation between the Imâm and the Vizier; this is achieved by using comparisons which the poet must have invented for an elite audience assembled by those in power at the time.[24] The content of those passages amounts to the following:

– Ṭalâ'iʿ is the Regent who protects the Islamic dwelling. Verse 28, the Polytheists are humbled by *qaṭâ'iʿu* "feudal property" and by *qawâṭiʿu* "swords" of the Regent's fleet. Verse 29, women or a woman, are unveiled but they greatly loved the sails (According to the present author, this could imply that the women would really like to return to their familiar homes but they have been taken prisoner by Muslims and cannot leave).[25] Al-Nâṣir al-Muḥyî

[24] Poem to rhyme *lâmiʿu*; the edition Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan*, does not contain this poem, because it is absent in *Ms D*. The poem only appears in *Ms Rabat*, p. 128-131 and consists of 47 lines. The introductory lines read: (*Ms Rabat*) "In honour of Al-ʿÂḍid, he says the following...".

[25] For lines 28-29 of the poem to rhyme *lâmiʿu*, see also infra the text and translation of these two verses. We should take into account the many activities of the fleet, *usṭûl*, when it was under the final command of Vizier Ṭalâ'iʿ and his son Ruzzîk. Ibn Muyassar Tâj al-Dîn Muḥammad b. ʿAlî b. Yûsuf b. Jalab Râghib (died 677 H), *Al-muntaqâ min Akhbâr Miṣr, intaqâhu Taqî al-Dîn Aḥmad b. ʿAlî al-Maqrîzî* (died 814 H), ed. Ayman Fu'âd Sayyid Cairo 1981, p. 153, informs us sub anno 550 H, "The fleet (*usṭûl*) put to sea in the direction of Ṣûr (Tyrus) and took it under its control, killing all those who lived there and burning it to the ground. The fleet turned back and made itself the master of not only ships, belonging to both Christian pilgrims and others, but also of a number of prisoners of war and a large booty."
Sub anno 553 H., "in the month of Muḥarram Al-Ṣâliḥ prepared an army of 4000 for an attack on the Bilâd al-Firanj, this army was to be led by Shams al-Khilâfa Abû l-Ashbâl Ḍirghâm and a number of other *Amîr*s. (...) On 5 Shaʿbân, five warships managed to reach the coast of Syria and there they defeated the ships of the Franks, returning on 22 Ramaḍân with both booty and prisoners." During this period in Ṭalâ'iʿ's career, apart from what we can read in contemporary poetry about the developments in connection with the fleet and the cooperation with Nûr al-Dîn Zankî in the year 553 H, we do not know a great deal. One of the contemporary poems is the long poem by Al-Muhadhdhab b. al-Zubayr, to rhyme *al-mîrâni*, in which Ṭalâ'iʿ is praised and in which among other things his fleet of tar-covered warships is described in two lines (38-39):
"Every foaming sea of those whom You fight against, You paint red applying darkly coloured blood. / Until You see that their blood and the green of the waters of the sea have become red anemones strewn over green basil."
There is a fragment of the description of the fleet (verses 40-48): "As though the 'face' of the Byzantium Sea (Baḥr al-Rûm) had been powdered with aromas and as though there were seedbeds for corals there. / When he launched an attack, the fleet arrived with something never never seen before. / How I love galleys of war (*shawâniya* ), whose murderous acts have made their enemies hate them (*walahâ l-ʿudâtu shawânî*). / Their colours make them appear like ravens, but in their destruction they have the power of eagles. / You have burdened them with the tools of war, so that the spears amongst them became a replacement for ropes, / They came to You burdened with booty, including prisoners of war with tightly shackled necks; / A continuing war, which chose You as judge over both first and subsequent battles. / In the month of Shaʿbân, in order that the two nations should cooperate (*kay yatalâ'ama l-shaʿbâni*), You caused the envoys of Ibn Qasîm (scil., Nûr al-Dîn Zankî) to return to him. / Using his name, the omen (*al-fa'lu*) confirmed that Syria should be split into two parts, divided between You both (*yaghdû l-Shâmu wa-hwa ʿalaykumâ qismâni*)."
The following passage, in praise of Nûr al-Dîn, also belongs to this (verses 49-50): "I am of the opinion that, after the *Shahîd*, You are as a father to him, and that You have made him the closest of brothers. / When amongst the enemy, he was the one who did not hesitate to bring about that which was considered impossible." (ʿImâd al-Iṣfahânî al-Kâtib, *Kharîdat al-qaṣr wa-jarîdat al-ʿaṣr qism shuʿarâ' Miṣr*, ed. Aḥmad Amîn and others, Cairo 1951, vol. I, p. 211.)

is the Regent's sword, but he is not alone: other members of the Âl Ruzzîk offer support. He (the Regent) is a star and a friend of the *Amîr al-mu'minîn*, both his *Dhukhr* (Treasure Chest) and his Sword. This friend and the *Amîr* are like a Star and a Full Moon. Both can also be compared to a phenomenon which appears in Arabic grammar: a noun and an imperfect tense who agree with each other.

The tribal federation of Ghassân is easily surpassed by both of them. (Here the Regent and his son are apparently being referred to, because these two members of the clan of Ruzzîk were affiliated to the Ghassân).

However, one might ask what the position of the others was, for example Nahshal and Mujâshi'? Both of these were sub-clans of Dârim, to whom the poet Farazdaq once belonged. And Farazdaq was of pure Arabian lineage.

On behalf of a specific year, congratulations are being offered, and the following is said:

Oh 'Âḍid, oh Supporter of the *ḥanîfî* (monotheistic) religion! May you be congratulated on the year which has gone by. Humankind is now Your wet-nurse.

*'Âmu khamsin* (Year Five) has become a person and is inclining its neck towards You. Oh 'Âḍid, may both You and Your Regent be like a *walî* (loyal friend) to each other and may You remain so for all *Dahr*!

Thus the Imâm and the Regent will continue to support each other. The *Dahr* must be a *waqf*, in order to maintain the Brotherhood for them.

*3.3.4*

The following lines of verse illustrate the above:

٢٦ حَمَى حَوْزةَ الإسلامِ عن كُلِّ طارِقٍ فَلا السرْبُ مَطْروقٌ ولا الشرْبُ ضائعُ
٢٧ وكثَّرَ أعْدادَ الفُتوحِ بعَزْمةٍ تُناضِلُ عنْ دينِ الهُدى وتُماصِعُ
٢٨ ودَوَّخَ صُنَّ المُشركينَ وَبُرَّهُمْ قَطائعُ من اسْطولِه وقَواطِعُ
٢٩ وفي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ تَجْتَلي العَيْنُ منْهُمُ عَقائلَ مَحْبوبٌ إلَيْها قَلائعُ
٣٠ وجَرّدَ منْ ذُخْرِ الأئمّةِ صارماً يُخافُ المَناوِي في حَدِّهِ والمَنازِعُ
٣١ سما الناصرُ المُحْيي إلى الغايةِ التي يُجَدُّ الأماني دونَها والمَطامِعُ
٣٢ فأمْسَتْ لَهُ منْ آلِ رُزّيكَ أُسْرَةٌ هُوَ الكَفُّ عنْد البَطْشِ وَهْيَ الأصابِعُ
٣٣ إذا ركِبتْ منْ حَوْلِه حالَ جَيْشَهُ وبَيْنَ العدى سُدٌّ منَ العزِّ مانِعُ
٣٤ خليلُ أميرِ المؤمنينَ وذُخْرُهُ وصارِمُهُ في حيْثُ تَهْبُو القَواطِعُ
٣٥ مَناقبُ مَجْدٍ لَمْ عَرَتْها كَلالةٌ لَقَدْ جَلَّ مَتْبوعٌ لديْها وتَابِعُ
٣٦ كَأنَّهما في رُقْبَةِ المَجْدِ كَوْكَبٌ وبَدْرٌ وإلاّ اسْمٌ وفِعْلٌ مُضارِعُ
٣٧ إذا ذكرَتْ غَسّانُ يوماً عُلاهُما فَمَنْ نَهْشَلٌ في دارِمٍ ومُجاشِعُ

٣٨ فيا عاضِدَ الدينِ الحَنيفِ وخَيْرَ مَنْ تُشَرَّبُ بالأشْعارِ فيه المسامِعُ
٣٩ لِيهْنِكَ عامٌ لو تَجسّمَ شخْصَهُ بَدا منهُ وَجْهٌ رائقُ الحُسْنِ رائعُ
٤٠ فأقَرَّتْ لهُ الأنامُ ظئراً بفَضْلِه فليسَ لهُ في الفَضْلِ طُرّاً مُنازِعُ
٤١ وما فَضِلَ الأعْوامَ إلاّ كأنّهُ يُؤرّخُ فيه بَعْضَ ما أنْتَ صانِعُ
٤٢ جلَتْ صبْغَ لَوْثَيْ ليلِه ونهارِه وقائعُ مِن أفْعالكُمْ وَصنائعُ
٤٣ فأيّامُهُ الغُرُّ السَعيدةُ أَعْبُدٌ لَكُمْ ولياليه إماءٌ خَواضِعُ
٤٤ ثَنَى عامُ خَمْسٍ جيدَهُ مُتلَفِّفاً إلَيْكمْ إلى أنْ أوْجَعَتْهُ الأخادِعُ
٤٥ وزارَكُمُ العيدُ السَعيدُ مُبشِّراً لكُمْ بِفُتُوحٍ نَصْرُها مُتتابِعُ
٤٦ فَمُتِّعَ كُلٌّ منكُما بوَلِيِّه مَدَى الدهْرِ ما غَنّى الحَمامُ السواجِعُ
٤٧ ولاَ زالَ هذا الدَّهْرُ وَقْفاً عليكُما مُقِيمُ الأواخِيِ ما أقامَ مُتالِعُ

26 He guards the dwelling of Islam against every nocturnal raider; hence neither the herd is attacked nor the drink wasted.
27 He has made the number of his conquests plentiful through a resolution which struggled to defend the religion of the Just Leadership and argued on its behalf.
28 The pride and the anger of the Polytheists was humbled by the divisions (*qaṭâ'iʿu*) and cutting swords (*qawâṭiʿu*) of his fleet.
29 And every day the Eye (of the Conqueror) strips the veils from the well-protected women, for whom the veils are a beloved thing.
30 He drew a Sword, namely his *Dhukhr al-a'imma* (Treasure Chest of the Imâms), the sharpness of which caused his intentions to be feared and his targets to be fearful.
31 Al-Nâṣir al-Muḥyî rose to the challenge, but the wishes and desires of others were aimed at a target far below.
32 The Âl Ruzzîk were a family to him, such that in an attack he was the hand and they were the fingers.
33 When this family rode alongside him, there appeared between his army and the enemy a barricade of defensive strength.
34 He is the Friend of the *Amîr* of the Believers; he is his *Dhukhr* and his Sword, there where the *qawâṭiʿ* have risen on high.
35 With the honourable characteristics of glory which are not unexpectedly weakened, both a leader and a follower are equally majestic.
36 In the sight of glory these two are a Star and a Full moon, or alternatively a noun and an imperfect tense. (They are congruent and the one controls the other.)

37 When, on a certain day, Ghassân announces the Loftiness of them both, what then are people such as Nahshal and Mujâshiʿ (*i.e.*, Farazdaq's clan), among the federation of Dârim ?[26]

38 Oh ʿÂḍid of the *ḥanîfite* religion, the best ever to have had poetry recited about him, poetry which bathes the ears whenever it is recited !

39 Let this year congratulate You, if it chooses to be an embodiment of Your person, then it will appear with a countenance, pure in beauty and brilliance (*râ'iqu l-ḥusni râ'iʿu*).

40 Humankind as his wet-nurse recognised that he achieved excellence, because in all his excellence he had no rival.

41 He only transcended the years by their being chronicled in him that which You were going to do. (Notice the *ʿilm al-ghayb* ascribed to the Imâm here.)

42 Statutes and edicts of Your actions took away the stamp of uncleanliness from its nights and its days.

43 Its shining and happy days are male slaves to your people and its nights are humbled female slaves.

44 Year Five bowed with its neck inclined towards Your people, until the veins in its neck became painful.

45 The Feast of fortune has visited You and Your people with the happy tidings of victories, victories which will be duly continued.

46 Allow each one of the pair of You to enjoy his *walî* (his friend) for the duration of the *Dahr*, and for as long as the cooing doves sing.

47 May this *Dahr* never cease to be a *waqf* for either of You, You who maintain the bonds of brotherhood for as long as the mountain Mutâliʿ continues to stand (near Baḥrayn between Al-Sawda and Al-Aḥsâ').

[26] Ad verse 37 the following:
*Kitâb al-Aghânî* VII, 44 (*Aghânî* 2 VIII, 16) and *Aghânî* X, 3 (*Aghânî* 2 XI, 62) give the following information. First *Aghânî* 2 VIII, 17:
The poet Al-Akhṭal had already pronounced a judgment in which he compared Jarîr's poetry to water scooped out of the sea and Farazdaq's to rocks that had been hewn away. Bishr the Governor considered that this judgment was in Jarîr's favour, although he himself was on the side of Farazdaq who came from the clan Mujâshiʿ which was part of the larger tribe of Dârim. The reference is to a poem by Al-Akhṭal, which had been composed at the request of Governor Bishr b. Marwân. It contains a *hijâ'* against Jarîr, because the latter had insulted the Banû Dârim: *wa-hju hâdha l-kalba lladhî yahjû Banî Dârimin fa'innaka qad qaḍayta ʿalâ Ṣâḥibinâ faqul abyâtan wa qḍi li-Ṣâḥibinâ ʿalayhi fa-qâla l-Akhṭal*:
"Oh Jarîr ! Truly you when you criticise some one (*i.e.*, Farazdaq), are like a female slave who takes vicarious pride in the howdah of a free and well-protected woman (...)"
This *qaṣîda* is long and in it Al-Akhṭal also says:
"Be silent Oh Kulayb ! Mujâshiʿ and Abû l-Fawâris Nahshal are two brothers. / When you descend to the water, then Dârim profits the most and has an easy resting place for the camels. / And when you throw your father onto the scales to balance them, then they are heavier and your scale-pan rises on high."
And *Aghânî* X, 3 (XI, 62), an extra line:
"Be silent Oh Kulayb ! Mujâshiʿ and Abû l-Fawâris Nahshal are two brothers. / They have surpassed your father in glory in every highest valley, by the station of their cavalry. / They are a people who when their tribal chiefs brandish their spears against you, can strike you between the breast and the neck. / And when you place your father on the scales, then the others are heavier and your father's scale rises on high."

*3.3.5*

In the poems of our poet ʿUmâra, there is the suggestion of intense cooperation between an Imâm and a Vizier similar to that between two loyal friends, a *walî* to a *walî*. Moreover in the poems dedicated to Al-ʿÂḍid, the high rank and position of this new Imâm are emphatically placed in a central position. Frequent reference is made to a throne carpet which the more lowly-placed visitor must physically touch. The poet interprets not only the lofty position of Al-ʿÂḍid as the Imâm to whom the Regent must be loyal, but also the prostration which is owed to Al-ʿÂḍid. Thus every visitor, even including a poet who strives to have his poems applauded, receives direction from ʿUmâra as to how he should behave, and how useful it is to become acquainted with the dust of the inner square of the palace in Al-Qâhira.

**3.4**

The visitor must be conscious of the fact that he is truly paying a visit to the Kaʿba: this has been illustrated in verses 5-13 of the poem already quoted above, the one to rhyme *sihâmi*[27]:

٥ أمُلْتَمساً نَوالاً أو ثَواباً تُعدُّهما لفَقْرٍ أو أتامِ
٦ وعلَّ العاضدَ الهادي قَديرٌ على الغُفْرانِ والمِنَنِ الجِسامِ
٧ فألْقِ عَصا الإقامةِ في مَقامٍ كرامتُهُ تَزيدُ على المقامِ
٨ تَرَى الجَبَهاتِ والأقْدامَ فيه تفضّلُ بالسُجودِ والقيامِ
٩ ولولا الحظُّ مِنْ أجْرٍ وفَخْرٍ لَما رغمتْ أُنوفٌ في الرُغامِ
١٠ وسَلِّمْ بالسُجودِ على إمامٍ يَجِلُّ عَن التّحيَّةِ بالسلامِ
١١ وَقَبِّلْ تُرْبَ ساحته فمنْها عرَفْنا حُرْمَةَ الْبَيْتِ الحَرامِ
١٢ وإنْ أذنَتْ جَلالَتُهُ عليْه فَزاحِمْ إنْ قَدَرْتَ على الزِحامِ
١٣ لَعَلّكَ أنْ تَرى في الدَسْتِ وَجْهاً به تشفَى العيونُ من السَقامِ[28]

5 Oh searcher of a gift or a reward, one You prepared out of need or as a condolence!
6 Maybe Al-ʿÂḍid the Just Leader is powerful through his forgiveness and great benefactions.
7 Throw down your staff and reside in one place (*maqâm*), where the rank (*maqâm*) is multiplied even further by his nobility.
8 The prostrations and the standing (during the audiences) demonstrate to you that he favours both foreheads and feet.

[27] For the poem to rhyme *ka l-sihâmi*, compare note 17 above. [28] *Ms Rabat*: شفاءٌ للعيونِ منَ السقامِ

9 Were there not the assigned portion of reward and pride, then the noses would never be forced into the dust.
10 Greet through prostration an Imâm who is too majestic to be greeted by an (ordinary) *salâm*.
11 Kiss the dust of his inner square, because in so doing we became familiar with the respectful position of the Sacred House.
12 And if his majesty permits it, penetrate then – if you can – into the jostling crowd.
13 Perhaps you will see on the throne a face, through which the eyes will be healed from sickness. (= *Ms D*, but *Ms Rabat* reads: "in the eyes of which is healing from sickness.")

That honour is due to Al-ʿÂḍid is a matter of course. However, ʿUmâra emphasises quite plainly that a *sujûd*, a prostration, is not only a requirement during prayers, but also in the presence of the Imâm. This idea of the prescribed *sujûd*, and then definitely a *sujûd* on the carpet before the throne, can undisputedly be found recurring in a number of our poet's *qaṣîda*s. For example in the *qaṣîda* (rhyme *maqbûlu*)[29] the so-called ʿÂḍidic majesty gives rise to the kissing of a carpet:

٢ بَهَرَ الجلالُ العاضديُّ خواطراً خطرُ الخلافة عندهنَّ جَليلُ
٣ عَظُمَتْ مهابَتُنا لموقفكَ الذي يُهدى لَهُ التَعْظيمُ والتجْميلُ
٤ حَرَمٌ نُقابِلُ منْكَ فيه قِبْلةً بفَنائها يَتزاَحمُ التقْبيلُ
٥ تَتَغايرُ الأرْواحُ فوقَ بساطه فكَأنّما هو مَبْسمٌ مغْسولُ

2 The ʿÂḍidic majesty (= *Ms Rabat*, "ʿÂḍidic beauty" = *Ms D*) bewildered souls, amongst whom the importance of the Caliphate was considerable.
3 Our awe was great due to your position on which, furthermore, esteem and distinction were bestowed.
4 A *Ḥaram* wherein we met a *qibla* from you, whilst in the inner square men pushed one another aside in order to kiss it (the carpet).
5 The souls are jealous of one another's position on the carpet. It is as though it (the carpet) is a pure mouth.

[29] Poem to rhyme *maqbûlu*, edition Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan* 305-307, total 48 verses, in this edition there are only the verses 1-2, 9-19, 33-34. *Ms Rabat* p. 159-161 and *Ms D* folio 133 verso - 135 recto. The poem is introduced as follows: "He said in honour of the Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid and his Vizier Al-Ṣâliḥ" (= *Ms D* and then *Ms Rabat*:) "He also said in praise of Al-ʿÂḍid and his Vizier,..."

*3.4.1*

In the poem to rhyme *wa l-ḥijri*,[30] the prostration is even more emphatically emphasised because so long as the Imâm is Lord of the surrounding elements and forms a part of the Kaʿba, he is presented as an object of exceptional honour:

١ سجوداً فهذا صاحبُ الرّكْنِ والحِجْرِ ووارثُ علْمِ النَمْلِ والنَحْلِ والحِجْرِ
٢ وهَمْساً لأصْواتٍ وغَضّاً لأعْيُنٍ تُشاهِدُ أسْرارَ الهُدى وهْيَ لا تَدْرِ
٣ ألا حَبَّذا دَسْتُ الخلافَةِ كُلّما غدا باسِماً عنْ غُرَّةِ العاضِدِ الطُهْرِ
٤ إمامُ هدىً أرْبى على كُلِّ غايةٍ كمالاً وما أرمى سنينَ على العشْرِ

1 Make a prostration, for this is the Lord of the Cornerstone and of the Ḥijr, and the heir to the knowledge of "The Ant", "The Bee" and "Stoneland" (*i.e.*, these are *Sûra* titles, numbers 27, 16 and 15).
2 And ensure the whispering of voices and the casting down of eyes, then you will see the *secrets* of the Just Leadership without them knowing.
3 Oh how pleasant is the Throne of the Caliphate every time these mornings dawn, when It smiles and allows the glow of the Pure Al-ʿÂḍid to be seen.
4 An Imâm of Just Leadership, one whose perfection surpassed every ultimate goal, even though in years he had not, as yet, passed ten.

*3.4.2*

Despite all the respect, the last verse of our quote, i.e, verse 4, which refers to age, makes it quite obvious that ʿUmâra could, in fact, have had a problem with ʿAbd Allâh al-ʿÂḍid's extreme young age, he is not even ten years old. At the same time, as ʿUmâra's poem was written very near to the time of the events surrounding the succession, the uncertainty surrounding his age is settled here, he is not 11 years old, as Al-Maqrîzî could still assume in his *Ittiʿâẓ*, but less than ten. When ʿUmâra, as a Shâfiʿite *faqîh*, mentions the fact of this extreme youth, we must ask ourselves whether this extreme youth would not have been problematic for him, as far as it affected his judgment regarding the legality of the succession. In any event, a normal person at that age is not yet *ʿâqil bâligh*. In Baghdad it was considered that this provided an interesting opening through which the authority of the newly appointed Imâm of Cairo could be challenged, not simply Al-ʿÂḍid, but precisely the even younger Al-Fâ'iz was challenged. According to *Ittiʿâẓ*, III, p. 223 the ʿAbbâsid Caliph Al-Muqtafî wished, for this reason, not to accept Al-Fâ'iz. In his place the ʿAbbâsid wanted to appoint Nûr al-Dîn Zankî as Governor of Egypt.

[30] Poem to rhyme *wa l-ḥijri*, edition Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan*, 235-236, *Ms D*, folio 74 recto - 75 recto, verses 1, 10-18, 25-27, 37-40. Total 40 verses. *Ms Rabat* reads: "He said in praise of Al-ʿÂḍid at the festival of the Canal (*mawsim al-Khalîj*)." *Ms D* reads: "He spoke of the opening up of the Canal, whilst he praised Al-ʿÂḍid in the year 559 (H.)"

The author of *Al-nujûm al-zâhira* considers Al-Fâ'iz far too young, this judgment is also extremely apparent in the way in which Ibn Taghrî Bardî speaks about Al-Fâ'iz, the three-year-old, as "Al-Ṣaghîr" and describes his command and suitability as "amr al-Ṣabî".[31]

As far as ʿUmâra is concerned, in his poem (to rhyme *al-ḥijri*), in which he had in ʿAbd Allâh al-ʿÂḍid established the presence of "perfection, although in years he (ʿÂḍid) had not, as yet, shouldered ten" no further comment regarding his age is made. In the following lines ʿUmâra only makes the superiority of the position of the Imâm clear. This Imâm must be honoured in a Koran of poetry and prose. He is the keeper of a secret about which only the stars can communicate with him. And his palace has never served evil objectives. This palace contrasts favourably with the palaces of an earlier age, which were depicted in another dimension, in the Koran:

٦ ولو قُدرتْ أفْعالُهُ حَقَّ قَدْرِها مَدَحْناهُ بالقرآنِ في النظْمِ والنثْرِ

(…)

٢٠ وخَيَّمْتَ في أكْناف عالية الذُرا تُنيفُ على بُرْجِ السماكَيْنِ والنَسْرِ

٢١ تُخاطِبُها الجوزاءُ سِرّاً وخُفْيةً بمكْنونِ ما للّه فيكَ منَ السرِّ

٢٢ هي الصَرْحُ إلاّ أنَّ هامانَ لمْ يُشَيِّدْ بُناها ولا اسْتَمْطاهُ فِرْعوْنُ للْكفْرِ

6 Supposing that his deeds had been rewarded in a just fashion, then we would have praised him with the Koran in both poetry and prose. (= *Ms D*, *Ms Rabat* says: "with the spoken word in both poetry and prose.")

(…)

20 You put up a *tent* with high shelters which overlooked the constellations of the Two *Simâk*s and the Eagle.

21 The Twins spoke to *it* in secrecy and concealment, about the concealed secret of Allah which is within You.

22 *It* is the palace except that Hâmân has not built up its structures and Pharaoh has not used it as a platform for disbelief (*walâ stamṭâhu Firʿawnu li l-kufri*).

### *3.4.3*

The palace where Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid lives is a sacred precinct. It resembles the Kaʿba and can also stand up to comparison with the physical characteristics of the still extremely youthful Imâm. The poet wants to compare his black forehead and shiny cheeks to the smooth Cornerstone, the Black Stone.



[31] Ibn Taghrî Bardî, *Al-nujûm al-zâhirah* V, p. 310-311.

### 3.5

Finally ʿUmâra compares the people who come to the palace to offer their petition to Pilgrims:

٣٣ شَبَّهْتُ قَصْرَكَ والخَلائقُ حَوْلَهُ تَعْنُو على حُرِّ الجبينِ وخَدِّهِ
٣٤ بالبيتِ والرُكْنُ المخَلَّقُ رُكْنُهُ والوافدينَ إِلى نداكَ بوَفْدِهِ

33 I compare your palace, while the people roundabout it submit themselves to the noble forehead and your cheeks
34 With the House (scil., the Kaʿba), while the smooth corner (of that cheek) was Its (smoothly worn-off) Cornerstone, and those who came for your blessing I compared to Its arriving Pilgrims.

(from the poem to rhyme *bi-ḥamdihi*, dedicated to Al-ʿÂḍid)[32]

#### *3.5.1*

In ʿUmâra's poem *muttasimu* (see Appendix) dedicated to Al-ʿÂḍid, until now an unknown poem,[33] there is once again a description of the Imâm's palace. However, in this description an extra element has been added, that of angels and kings who push and shove one another in order to gain entry and honour. Furthermore, there are heavenly spheres: these are important because those who hold these spheres intact now appear to belong to the Imâm's personnel. Probably it is the angels who are active in this area, they maintain both the heavenly sphere and the Imâm, at least according to the view of our poet:

١٦ وأصبَحَ القَصْرُ مَحْجوجاً ومُنْتَجَعاً كأنّما حلَّ فيه الحِلُّ والحَرَمُ
١٧ قَصْرٌ يُقَبَّلُ بالأفْواهِ تَكْرِمةً والرُكْنُ يُومى إِليه حتّى يُسْتَلَمُ
١٨ قدْ زاد في شرَفِ الأملاكِ بلْ خَطَرِ الأفْـــــــــــلاكِ أنّ قيامَها لكمْ خَدَمُ
١٩ فمِنْ مُلُوكٍ علي أبوابِكم زُمَرُ ومِنْ ملوائكةٍ بالذكرِ تزْدحِمُ

16 The palace has become a place of pilgrimage, and of grazing, as if both the profane and the sacred have been brought together there.
17 Out of respect a palace is kissed by mouths; the corner stone is held in focus until one touches it.
18 The honour of the kings, or rather the importance of the heavenly sphere, is increased because its management consists of Your servants.

[32] ʿUmâra's poem to rhyme *bi-ḥamdihi*, a poem of 39 lines of verse. *Ms D* (Petersburg), folio 44 verso - 45 verso; *Ms Rabat* p. 85-87. This poem has been partially edited by Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan*, p. 201-202 (= vs 1, 11-13). The introduction reads: "He says in praise of the Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid the following:..."

[33] Poem to rhyme *muttasimu*. In the edition Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan* this poem is not included, thus it does not appear in *Ms D*. However, it is in *Ms Rabat*, p. 217-219. The poem is introduced with the words: "In honour of Al-ʿÂḍid he also said the following..."

19 There are groups of kings and angels at your door, groups which push each other aside with the *dhikr*.

This comparison and description fails, however, to make any justification of the existence of an Imâm who is, according to the normal standards applicable to the broad public, decidedly too young.

Fortunately, in ʿUmâra's poem *lâmiʿu*, there is a distinct reasoning based on elements of the Koran.[34] A Prophet stands above the law. It is sufficient to refer to the fate of other Prophets, such as Jesus and Moses. These Koranic Prophets are examples of the receivers of the command, *amr* from Allah, or should we say they are emanations from Allah?

Jesus spoke when he was still a very young child, and the baby Moses was highly intelligent when Pharaoh decided to make all mothers' milk inaccessible to small children. Expressed in poetry we are presented with the following text:

١٣ فَأنتُمْ نَبيَّ الدهْرِ زُهْرٌ منيرَةٌ غَواربُها حتّى المِهادِ طَوالِعُ
١٤ إذا كانَ أمْرُ اللّه وَقْعاً عليْكُمُ فَسيّان كَهْلٌ فيهِ مِنْكُمْ وَيَافِعُ
١٥ وَقَدْ بَذَّ موسى كَيْدَ فِرْعَوْنَ مُرْضِعاً وحُرِّمَ مِنْ خوْفٍ عليهِ المَراضِعُ
١٦ وكَلَّمَ عيسى وهْوَ في المهْدِ قَوْمَهُ بما ذهِلَتْ منْهُ اللُّما والمسامعُ

13 Oh Prophet of the *Dahr*, thus Your people are shining luminous people, whose peaks rise up above even the highest ground.

14 When the Command of Allah descends upon your people, then young and old become as one.

15 Once before, Moses had suppressed Pharaoh's plot by using a wet-nurse (*murḍiʿan*, a woman who gave him her breast when he was still a baby), although the wet-nurses (*al-marâḍiʿu*), for fear of Pharaoh, had become inaccessible. (Cf. Koran concerning Moses, *Sûra* 20, verses 36-40 and Sûra 28, verses 7-13.)

16 Jesus (ʿÎsâ) spoke to his people when he was still in the crib, with something which caused bewilderment to people's lips and ears. (Cf. Koran concerning Jesus, *Sûra* 3, verses 45-49.)

Both early Prophets, predecessors of the Muslim Prophet, are completely capable; they are, therefore, at any rate *ʿâqil*, although maybe not *bâligh*. Jesus was already speaking to his people when he was still a child in a crib, as a result of which Ibn Khaldûn can (an era later) state that there is an adage, "Lâ mahdîya illâ ʿÎsâ" (translate: "there is no *Mahdî* possible until after the arrival of Jesus" or – taking a derivation from another combination of verbal roots – "there is no crib speaker apart from Jesus.").[35]

[34] For poem to rhyme *lâmiʿu*, compare note 24 above.

[35] Ibn Khaldûn, *Muqaddima*, second edition ʿAbd al-Wâḥid Wâfî, Cairo 1965, vol. II, *Al-bâb al-thânî fî l-ʿumrâni l-badawî wa l-umami l-waḥshiyya*, mawḍûʿ (no. 53) *Faṣl fî amri l-Fâṭimî wamâ yadhhabu ilayhi l-nâsu fî sha'nihi wa-kashfu l-ghiṭâ' ʿan dhalika*, p. 916.

When still a very young child, Moses was also a remarkable person, capable of a *muʿjiza*, in a period of time which preceded the well-known miracles as summarised in the Koran. ʿUmâra had the young child Moses act as an adult so as to ensure the presence of a wet nurse !

It is amusing to see how, at the end of this poem (to rhyme *lâmiʿu*), it is said that the whole of humankind must become a foster mother to the newly appointed ʿAbdallâh al-ʿÂḍid.

٤٠ أُقِرّتْ لهُ الأنامُ ظئراً بِفَضْلِه فليسَ لهُ في الفَضْلِ طُرّاً مُنازِعُ

40 Humankind as his wet-nurse recognised that he achieved excellence, because in all his excellence he had no rival.
(See *infra*).

Thus humankind is there for Al-ʿÂḍid and Al-ʿÂḍid is more important than Moses who can only acquire one wet nurse !

In his poem (to rhyme *muttasimu*) dedicated to Al-ʿÂḍid,[36] ʿUmâra pleads that both understanding and wisdom can exist without maturity. According to this poem the Imâm is the "Supporter" of the (monotheistic) *Ḥanîf* religion. And that in a time when the "Handles" had almost been broken off. It is to the cord of Allah that the Imâm Caliph holds on. Then there is the religion which itself holds on to the cord of the Caliph. Finally there is still the light of his *bayʿa*. Formulated in a poetic manner, we encounter a chain of emanation. There is a package of esoteric knowledge that appears to be transferable : from the Prophet Jesus to the ʿÎsâ who died so young, alias Al-Fâ'iz, and then to the surviving ʿAbdallâh al-ʿÂḍid.

٣ العاضدُ عاضدُ الدينِ الحنيف وقدْ كادتْ عُراهُ منَ الإنْشقَاقِ تَنْفَصمُ
٤ خليفَةٌ باتَ دينُ اللّه مُعْتَصماً بِحَبْلِه وبِحَبْلِ اللّه يعْتَصمُ
٥ لمّا أنارتْ لنا أنْوارُ بيعَته تكَشّفَ الظُّلْمُ وانْجابَت الظُّلَمُ
٦ وأشْرقَ الدينُ والدنيا بِبَيْعَتِه والنارُ لو لم تَلُحْ لمْ يُعْرَفِ العَلَمُ

3 Al-ʿÂḍid is the Supporter (*Al-ʿâḍid*) of the *Ḥanîfî* religion, when its handles were almost broken and split.
4 A Caliph whose cord the religion of Allah continues to grasp, while the Caliph holds onto the cord of Allah.
5 Once the lights of his *bayʿa* had given us light, injustice was taken away and darkness vanished.
6 Religion and the *Dunyâ* gave light through his *bayʿa* : if the fire had not appeared the beacon would never have been recognised.

[36] For poem to rhyme *muttasimu*, compare note 33 above.

*3.5.2*

In the presence of the Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid, the poet then makes a happy pronouncement about the Prophet Jesus and the Imâm Jesus (ʿÎsâ) Al-Fâ'iz, using words with the following meaning: "You have inherited from both ʿÎsâ and ʿÎsâ. Jesus, the son of Mary ruled once his arm became strong." However, the Fâṭimids ruled earlier, even before they were weaned (*fuṭimû*). Here a parallel can be drawn to a passage of Al-Qâḍî al-Fâḍil, where this author uses the proper name and its alternative meaning in order to signify that he did not wean himself from writing poetry in praise of the son of Fâṭima.[37]

There is, according to our poet, no difference between the Imâms; and for those in a more lowly position there is good fortune in that they are allowed to kiss the ground; and what is more important in connection with their ages, both the older one and the child are alike. Yes, the child is even entitled to precedence, because "wisdom" comes before "puberty" or "growing up" an adage which ʿUmâra presented for the sake of a paronomastic figure of speech, *ḥilm* as opposed to *ḥulum*,

٧ ورِثْتَ عيسى وعيسى رحْمَةً وَهُدىً كَأنّكمْ بَيّناتٌ بينَها رَحِمُ
٨ سادَ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ لَمّا اشْتَدَّ ساعدُهُ والفاطميّونَ شادوا قبْلَ أنْ فُطِمُ
٩ أئمّةٌ ما عَلِمْنا قَبْلَ رؤيتِهِم أنَّ الحُظوظَ بِلَثْمِ الأرْضِ تُقْتَسَمُ
١٠ قدْ أخْبَرَتْ سُوَرُ الفُرْقانِ أنّهمْ خلائقُ اللّهِ لا فُرْقانٌ بينَهُمُ
١١ الْكَهْلُ والطِفْلُ شَرْعٌ في شريعتِهِمْ ورُبَّ حِلمٍ أتى منْ بعْدِهِ الحُلُمُ

7 From both Jesus (ʿÎsâ) and the other ʿÎsâ, You have inherited mercy and Just Leadership, as though both of them were offspring of the same womb.

8 The Son of Mary only ruled once his arm had become strong; however, the Fatimids ruled even before they were weaned. (Here the present author reads *sâdû* instead of *shâdû*, otherwise the reading would be "they constructed even before they were weaned". Concerning Jesus, cf. Koran *Sûra* 3, verses 45-49.)

9 Before we saw the Imâms, we did not know that portions of good luck were dealt out to those who kissed the ground.

10 The *Sûra*-s from the Koran (*Furqân*) have announced that they are creations of Allah amongst whom no difference (*furqân*) can be made.

11 The elderly person and the young child are alike in their *Sharîʿa*; by the time maturity comes much patiently acquired insight has already been gained.

[37] See P. Smoor, "Fâṭimid Poets and the 'Takhalluṣ' that Bridges the Nights of Time to the Imâm of Time", *Der Islam* 68, 1991, p. 261, where Al-Qâḍî al-Fâḍil is quoted acknowledging his laudation for the Fâṭimid dynasty in poetry in a *takhalluṣ* formula which appears in two lines as follows: "6. Listen only to the speaking of my eye, which is repeated by the words of richly flowing tears. / 7. Because, after your departure (*i.e.*, the loved ones), I have weaned myself from the writing of poetry, with the exception of praises for the son of Fâṭima." (*Dîwân Al-Qâḍî al-Fâḍil*, ed. Aḥmad Badawî and Ibrâhîm al-Abyârî, Cairo 1961, I, p. 302).

Just as in the previous poem, the impression is given in the poem *maghnami* that Al-Fâ'iz had given an indication, a *naṣṣ*, that he was to be succeeded by Al-ʿÂḍid.[38] Al-Fâ'iz had, at least according to ʿUmâra, most certainly done this and in so doing he followed the well-known example of Mohammed. Hence the *naṣṣ* came from ʿÎsâ, as the descendant of Ḥaydar (scil., ʿAlî) and Fâṭima; not from the other ʿÎsâ, namely the son of Mary. The result is not only a play on words, but enables the implication to be made that Fâ'iz's rank is equal to that of the prophets. The *ibn ʿamm* is Al-ʿÂḍid, and, in this context, Al-ʿÂḍid resembles ʿAlî, the *ibn ʿamm* of the first century Hijra who acquired his authority from the Prophet on the Day of the Pool of Khumm. The poet opens his poem with some lines in which he once again stresses the obligation of loyalty toward the reigning Imâm:

١ ولاؤكَ مفروضٌ على كلّ مسلمٍ وحُبُّكَ مفْروط وأفْضَلَ مَغْنَمِ
٢ إذا المرءُ لم يُكْرِمْ بحُبِّكَ نَفْسَهُ غدا وَهْوَ عند الله غيْرُ مُكَرَّمِ
٣ ورَثْتَ الهُدَى عنْ نَصِّ عيسى بْنِ حَيْدَرٍ وفاطمةٍ لا نَصِّ عيسى بْنِ مَرْيمِ
٤ قالَ أطيعوا لابْنِ عَمِّي فإنّهُ أميني على سرِّ الإلاهِ المكَتَّمِ
٥ كذاكَ وَصَى[39] المُصْطفَى في ابْنِ عَمِّهِ إلى مُنْجدٍ يومَ الغَديرِ ومُتْهِمِ
٦ علَى مُسْتَوًى فيهِ[40] قديمٌ وحادِثٌ وإنْ كان فَضْلُ السَبْقِ للمُتَقَدِّمِ

1 Loyalty to You is an obligation for every Muslim, and love of You is in both Abodes the highest gain. (= version *Ms Rabat*).
2 Should humankind fail to make itself noble through its love of You, then Allah shall also not deem it noble.
3 You have inherited the Rightful Leadership on the authority of the *naṣṣ* (a designation) from ʿÎsâ the descendant from ʿAlî (= Ḥaydar) and Fâṭimah, not the *naṣṣ* from Jesus (ʿÎsâ) the son of Maryam. (Al-Fâ'iz was in fact called ʿÎsâ, his full name was Al-Fâ'iz bi-Naṣr Allâh Abû l-Qâsim ʿIsâ b. al-Ẓâfir bi-Amr Allâh Ismâʿîl, see Al-Maqrîzî, *Al-Muqaffâ* VIII, p. 742).
4 He (Al-Fâ'iz) said: "Be obedient unto my 'ibn ʿamm' (Al-ʿÂḍid), because he is my friend unto whom the hidden secrets of the godhead are entrusted."
5 Thus, to all those who went to Najd and the Tihâmah, Al-Muṣṭafâ gave an instruction concerning his "ibn ʿamm" (ʿAlî) on the Day of the Pool.
6 The Earliest and the Latest are on an equal level here, even though the first to arrive has the priority of being earlier.

[38] Poem to rhyme *maghnami*, edition Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan*, p. 339, *Ms D*, folio 162 verso - 163 verso and *Ms Rabat* p. 199-201. In total 48 lines, but in the edition only lines 1-10 are found. This poem is introduced by the following words, (*Ms D*): "Whilst he pronounced eulogies for Al-Fâ'iz, he also said" and (*Ms Rabat*): "He spoke in honour of Al-ʿÂḍid, and as an aside pronounced eulogies for Al-Fâ'iz." The poem is dedicated to Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid as the successor of Al-Fâ'iz to the throne. Its first line points out how important the obligation of loyalty is for the believer: "Loyalty towards You is an obligatory duty for every Muslim, and love of You ensures the highest reward in both abodes." (thus according to the version *Ms Rabat*).

[39] *Ms Rabat*: كذلك أوْصى

[40] *Ms Rabat*: عُلًى يَسْتَوِي منها

*3.5.3*

Unfortunately, the poet tells us, no-one abided by this *waṣîya* (testament), as a result of which the ʿAbbâsids gained the chance to obtain power. If this *waṣîya* had been adhered to there would have been no money, there would not even have been any coins with an inscription in favour of an outsider.

**3.6**

Here the poet acknowledges his preference for the Fâṭimids' coins, the very coins which another poet, namely ʿArqala from Damascus, continued to value, even after the fall of Al-ʿÂḍid, as a stable remnant of the dynasty. A dynasty which he now curses. Indeed, ʿArqala would happily accept *ʿâḍidiyyât* as payment for his odes which were now dedicated to the subsequent dynasty, the Ayyûbids ![41]

*3.6.1*

ʿUmâra knows absolutely nothing about these later developments in his poem *maghnami* and, therefore, we see how, by way of a stylistic feature, he includes in his poem the primordial "covenant" of the Imâm. The word "ʿahd" can mean both "covenant" and "a time period" (think of the Imâm's life span of ten years). The eternal mountains which refused to accept the primordial covenant (*ʿahd*) with God because they found it too heavy, are now set against an Imâm whose short life span (whose short *ʿahd*) forms absolutely no obstacle to the acceptance of the burden of this identical covenant as presented by God. (verses 8-18). Thus, the youthful age of the Imâm is irrelevant, furthermore he is a Light in a bodily shape, not merely a physical body,

[41] ʿArqala al-Dimashqî, poem *dînâri* about Saladin, *Kharîdat al-qaṣr wa-jarîdat al-ʿaṣr, qism shuʿarâʾ al-Shâm*, ed. Shukrî Fayṣal, Damascus 1955, vol. I, p. 179, the additional fourth line is from Ibn al-ʿImâd al-Imâm Shihâb al-Dîn Abû l-Falâḥ ʿAbd al-Ḥayy b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-ʿAkarî al-Ḥanbalî al-Dimashqî (who lived from 1032 to 1089), *Shadharât al-dhahab fî akhbâr man dhahab*, edition Maḥmûd and ʿAbd al-Qâdir al-Arnâʾûṭ, Beirut 1991, vol. VI, p. 365: "Amongst all the words which ʿArqala wrote about him (= Saladin) belong those which now follow. Salâḥ al-Dîn had promised him that he would give him 1000 *dînâr*s when he became king (occupier) of Egypt. ʿArqala came to him and praised him with (inter alia) the following lines of verse:

قُلْ للصلاحِ مُعِيني عندَ إعْساري  يا إِلْف مولايا أيْنَ الألفُ دينارِ
أخْشَى منَ الأسْرِ إنْ حاولْتُ أرْضكمْ  وما تفِي جنّة الفردَوْسِ بالنّارِ
فَجُدْ بها عاضديّاتٍ مُسَطّرةً  من بعضِ ما خلّف الطاغي أبو العارِ
حُمراً كأسيافِكَم غُرّاً كخيلكُم  عُتقاً ثقالاً كأعدائي وأطماري

"1. Say to Al-Ṣalâḥ, my supporter in my poverty: 'Oh friendship of my master! Where have the 1000 *dînâr*s gone? / 2. I am afraid of being imprisoned should I attempt to go to your land (Saladin had been a police chief in Syria), and the garden of Eden is not equal to the Fires of Hell (Egypt is a hot land in comparison to Syria). / 3. Pay in compensation, therefore, *ʿâḍidiyyât* embossed with a script, coins which were left behind by that Tyrant (*Ṭâghî*), the Father of Shame. / 4. (Golden coins) red - like your bloody and shining swords, like your horses (with their blazes), extremely old and burdensome - like my (dead) enemies and my worn-out robes."

٨ وأُتيتَ ميراثَ البَسيطَةِ عنْ أبٍ وجَدٍّ مضَى عنها ولمْ يَتَقَسَّمِ
٩ لكَ الحقُّ فيها دونَ كُلِّ مُنازِعٍ ولو أنّهُ نالَ السِّماكَ [42] بسُلَّمِ
١٠ ولو حَفَظوا فيكَ الوَصيّةَ لمْ يكُنْ لِغيْرِها في أقْطارِها دَوْرُ دِرْهَمِ
١١ فمِنْهم فروعٌ [43] في قُصيٍّ قَصيَّةٍ وأنتَ ابْنُ بنتِ المصطفى [44] حينَ تَنْتَمِ
١٢ وما كُلُّ خَضْرآءِ الغُصونِ بِنَبْعةٍ ولا كُلُّ عيدانِ الفتى بِمُقَوَّمِ
١٣ تَحَمّلْتَ من ثقلِ الخلافةِ ما وَهَتْ قواعدُ رَضْوى تَحْتَهُ ويَلَمْلَمِ
١٤ وجَدّدْتَ من رَسْمِ الشريعةِ ما عفا وأحْيَيْتَ من أعْلامِها كلَّ مَعْلَمِ
١٥ وقُمتَ بعَهْدِ اللهِ بينَ عبادِه أميناً [45] وعَهْدُ العصرِ لمْ يتصرَّمِ
١٦ ليعْلَمِ [46] أنّ اللّهَ جلَّ جلالُهُ أفادَكَ مَعْنى العلمِ قبْلَ التَعَلُّمِ
١٧ وانّكَ نورٌ للهُدى متجَسّدٌ وَلَسْتَ كأجْسادٍ منَ اللحْمِ والدَمِ
١٨ وانّكَ محْروسُ المكانةِ عندَهُ حراسَةَ مَعْصومِ البصيرةِ مُلْهَمِ

8 You were given, in its entirety, the inheritance of the earth which belonged to a father and a forefather who had already departed.

9 To this you are entitled and no-one should dispute that, not even he who has reached the Simâk star with a ladder.

10 If the people had adhered to the bequest (*waṣîya*) of your person, then there would not even have been the circle of a Dirham for anyone else in the region but you.

11 From them ("them" may refer to the ʿAbbâsids) far-reaching roots (= *Ms Rabat*, *Ms D* reads here: "far-reaching branches") extend as far back as Quṣayy, but you are the son of the house (*Ms Rabat*, *Ms D* reads here: "the son of the daughter") of Al-Muṣṭafâ, when you refer to your own ancestry.

12 Not all the green of the branches is Nabʿ wood, and not all the backbones of heroes are upright.

13 You bore that part of the burden of the Caliphate, under which the foundations of the mountains Raḍwâ and Yalamlam would stagger.

14 And You renewed the scribblings of the *Sharîʿa* which had been wiped away: and you have renewed every sign of its marks.

15 You brought the "covenant" of Allah to His worshippers, as a reliable man, and the "time period" of ten years had not even passed by. (Al-ʿÂḍid was not even ten years old.)

16 Be conscious that Allah, may His majesty be exalted, had lent You the theme of scholarship even before your study had begun.

[42] *Ms Rabat*: ولو أنّهُ نالَ السَماءَ.
[43] *Ms Rabat*: فمنهم عُروقٌ.
[44] *Ms Rabat*: وأنتَ ابْنُ بيتِ المصطفى.
[45] *Ms Rabat*: أمناً.
[46] *Ms Rabat*: لتعْلَمْ.



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17 (only in *Ms D* on this position:) And that You are a Light in a bodily form, and differ from bodies of flesh and blood.

18 And that You, in your position, are safely guarded by him, under the care of one who is both innocent of insight yet inspired.

### *3.6.2*

A couple of poems which date from an earlier period make a connection between the Imâm and the eternal primordial covenant, a covenant which, in prehistory, Allah wanted to conclude with the creation. But, according to the Koran, the mountains, to whom it was first offered, found the obligations too onerous. Finally, Allah was to enter into the covenant with humankind. However, according to our poet ʿUmâra, it was in fact with the Imâm that Allah concluded His covenant. The poet includes this idea in certain poems. However, only the relevant passages of these are dealt with here (one passage from a poem to rhyme *maghnami* has already been discussed, see the poem verse 15).

In general terms there is a suggestion of this covenant-relationship in the poem *muttasimu* dedicated to Al-ʿÂḍid. Certain ideas in this poem have already been discussed (see *infra*), that is we hear the poet saying words which mean the following: "A year smiled and look, there is a *Dawla* and the Imâm of the century. ʿÂḍid seems to be the Supporter of the *Ḥanîf* religion, which appears in the Koran as the religion of Monotheism. This idea has already been suggested by Abraham and, therefore, by the Prophet in his own sermons. The Imâm, who arrived on the scene much later, has at his disposal not only the help but also the attention of both kings with their Viziers or Regents, and angels."

On the one side there is a Regent, on the other side there is the Imamate guaranteed by this Regent. The poet seems to view this combination as one entity. Concerning the contemporary situation of ʿUmâra, we learn how the vizierial throne is now occupied by the kingship of Al-Nâṣir, the son of Ṭalâ'iʿ b. Ruzzîk. By the time and date of composition of this poem, Ṭalâ'iʿ (scil. Al-Malik al-Ṣâliḥ) had already died.

### *3.6.3*

At the end of the poem (to rhyme *muttasimu*) we see how ʿUmâra repeatedly enumerates four elements which must confirm the Imamate of Al-ʿÂḍid. Some of these fundamental elements are only of rhetorical value. However, some have either a theological or an actual basis which is of interest.

Not of great interest, however, is the fact that there are Four Subjects which form the foundations of the "morals" of the *Dahr*. With another group of Four Subjects, namely the Victory of Just Leadership and Well-Being next to Sword and Pen, the "council" of the *Dahr* appears to be referred to. The Sword and Pen suggest an area where the Vizier could be helpful.

More important is the following enumeration of Four Subjects which concern the Imâm personally: the enumeration of these subjects a Contract, a Promise, a *Mîthâq* and Family

Honour can of course mean anything. The Contract could, on the basis of another poem (to rhyme *khâlidi*),[47] be seen as a reference to the marriage of Ṭalâ'iʿ's daughter to the Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid. The Promise is unclear but the *mîthâq* is Koranic and means that the Imâm has, since the beginning of time, accepted the burden of the Imamate. Family Honour can refer to the fact that the Imâm was prepared to maintain the family honour of the Banû Ruzzîk, by punishing those who were guilty of the murder of Ṭalâ'iʿ and thus revenging his death. The murder had, in fact, no further consequences for the Vizier's dynasty because the Imâm allowed Ṭalâ'iʿ's son Al-ʿÂdil Ruzzîk to be considered as a successor to theVizierate. Thus, as an Imâm, Al-ʿÂḍid did not let down the Ruzzîk clan.

### *3.6.4*

In reality the situation was totally different because the Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid was, in fact, put under pressure by the Vizier's family. Two aunts had been arrested (and executed) and the Imâm had to refute accusations that he himself had been involved in the conspiracy against Ṭalâ'iʿ.

Concerning the fundamental elements of which there are in total sixteen (including extra elements such as Root, Branch, Morals and Orphanhood), ʿUmâra wrote the following verses (rhyme *muttasimu*).[48] In a poetic sense they are not particularly moving.

٣٠ قادتْ إليهِ زِمامَ المُلكِ أربعةٌ نصرُ الهُدى والندى والسيفُ والقلمُ
٣١ وهَذبتْ منه خلقَ الدَهْرِ أربعةٌ العِلْمُ والحِلمُ والمعرفةُ والكرَمُ
٣٢ وصاحَبَتْ منه قولَ الصدْقِ أربعةٌ العَهْدُ والوَعْدُ والميثاقُ والذمُ
٣٣ وصَدَّقتْ مادِحِيهِ منه أربعةٌ الأصْلُ والفرعُ والأخْلاقُ واليَتَمُ

30 The reins of the kingdom were forwarded to him through four subjects: the Victory (*naṣr*) of Just Leadership, Well-Being, the Sword and the Pen.

31 And, via him, the morals of the *Dahr* were made civilised in four ways: Scholarship, Long-suffering Insight, Eminent Morals and Magnanimity.

32 And, via him, the speaking of honesty was accompanied by four items: a Contract, a Promise, the Primordial Covenant (*al-mîthâq*) and Family Honour.

33 The words of anyone who provides him (the Imâm) with praise, are via him confirmed by four things: a Root, a Branch, Morals and Orphanhood.

[47] Poem to rhyme *khâlidi*, edition Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan*, p. 196-197 (= *Ms D*, vs 1-2, 12, 46-48) and p. 61-62 (= *Ms D*, vs 8-11, 14, 13, 29, 33, 35-36, 40, 44-45). *Ms D*, folio 38 recto-39 recto. A total of 48 lines in *Ms D*. This poem does not occur in *Ms Rabat*.

[48] Poem to rhyme *muttasimu*, compare note 33 above.

*3.6.5*

Verse 33 is particularly interesting because it highlights an aspect of the personal life of Al-ʿÂḍid. He is, on the one hand, seen as a descendant of the line of Mohammed and, thereafter Fâṭima, this idea being suggested by the mention of a Root and a Branch. However, the poet does not forget to mention that as a result of the murder of Yûsuf his father, his orphaned son, ʿAbd Allâh, eventually ascended to the throne of the Imamate as Al-ʿÂḍid.

4

Although the early history of this Imâm was unhappy, the throne is now, at least according to ʿUmâra, very proud of the Imâm's Vizier. The Vizier is prepared as Regent to help the new Imâm, whose relationship with the new King Vizier from the Ruzzîk clan causes this throne (in truth a rank lower than that of the Imâm) to sparkle with pride. Yes, and it is strange, but this throne feels as if it has been elevated above a certain ʿUthmân. Although the poet does not say it in so many words, he must have been thinking about ʿUthmân who was so abhorred by the Shîʿites.

٢٥ تبَسّمَ الدسْتُ منْ رُزّيكَ عن مَلكٍ تَنْحطُّ عن قَدْرِه الأقْدارُ والهِمَمُ
٢٦ مُقابِلٌ في مقامِ المَجْدِ مُقْتبِلَ الأيّامِ لا صِغَرٌ فيها ولا هَرَمُ
٢٧ أصَمُّ أبْلَجُ منْ عُثمانَ زينتُهُ أن ليسَ من شيمَتِه الكبرُ والشَمَمُ
٢٨ يدْنو ويُبْعِدُ في حالَتَيْ نَدىً ورَدىً كالدَهْرِ يُنْعِمُ أحْياناً ويَنْتقِمُ

25 The throne smiled, revealing a king descended from Ruzzîk, against whose honesty fates and ambitions have sunk to the lowest levels.
26 He met in the ranks of fame the still young Days, who were neither contemptible nor elderly.
27 He is superior and radiant, his adornment comes from ʿUthmân who was neither proud nor haughty.
28 Mercy brings him closer, while destruction distances him: just as the *Dahr* who sometimes does good and then revenges himself once more.

Is it the poet's intention that this passage, about ʿUthmân's modesty or imperfections of honour and pride when compared to the superior position of the Imâm, be seen as a concession to the aversion of the Shîʿites? This would be difficult in view of his Shâfiʿite education which taught him to respect ʿUthmân. Or does this statement mean something completely different: is it a positive appreciation of ʿUthmân, although this would be surprising in the environment of the Fâṭimids? [49]

[49] Compare on the question of ʿUthmân, Wilferd Madelung, *The succession to Muḥammad, A study of the early Caliphate*, Cambridge University Press 1997, p. 80, where we find an interesting opinion: "While ʿUthmân was a distinguished, highly successful merchant, he had at no time before his election displayed any qualities of public leadership. Among the six members of the

### 4.1

Another theme which ʿUmâra willingly discusses whenever he describes the Imâm is represented by an object, namely part of the paraphernalia which characterises the Imâm. It concerns the *shamsa* or, in ʿUmâra's words, the *miẓalla*, the ceremonial Parasol which the Imâm has carried above him during his procession in Al-Qâhira.

The *miẓalla* had already been described in the poetry of Ibn Hâni' Al-Andalusî (see my article about a figure of style, known as *takhalluṣ*)[50], however, this object appeared to retain importance even during the latter stages of the Fâṭimids' career. ʿUmâra's passages are, more or less, mutually supportive; and the attention he pays to this ceremonial use implies that it was still functional during processions.

In Maqrîzî's report about the *bayʿa* for Al-ʿÂḍid, which was mentioned previously, we saw how the *miẓalla* was carried round the town when the new Imâm was making his tour: "When Al-ʿÂḍid was given the *bayʿa*, he rode on a horse and the *miẓalla* was carried over his head. Al-Ṣâliḥ (the Vizier) rode in front of him. He left the tomb (where Al-Fâ'iz was buried) and headed towards his palace."

### 4.2

One important poem about the *miẓalla* is ʿUmâra's poem to rhyme *tawḥîdu*.[51] The content of this passage boils down to more or less the following: The *Hudâ*, the abstract of the Just Leadership which belongs to the Imâmate, is supported by Al-ʿÂḍid as the descendant of Mohammad.

The poet addresses the Imâm, using the well-known *iltifât* figure of speech: the (personified) Nights of Fasting dismounted from their horses in order to be with You, Oh Al-ʿÂḍid; they received provisions for the journey which consisted of Your piety during the night session. The month of *Shawwâl* (the month after *Ramaḍân* when Fasting ends) is at the same time a *ʿîd* and a *ʿabd*. This information is only of significance because of the figure of speech *tajnîs al-muṣaḥḥaf*, where, in the case under consideration, the *yâ'* of *ʿîd* is replaced by the *bâ'* of *ʿabd*.

The Imâm is, as we know from earlier passages, the carrier of a secret. The Parasol is linked with both this secret and with the Imâm. The wood of the Parasol witnesses how humankind becomes prostrate in the presence of the Imâm. The Parasol itself becomes glorious when it is a closed circle over the head of the Caliphate.

electoral council, he was the only one who had never been entrusted by Muḥammad or the first two Caliphs with leading a raid or an army. Before the election he had no political ambitions and can hardly even have thought of himself as a potential candidate for the supreme reign. Yet he was chosen by the electors for his weakness and insignificance which they hoped to manipulate, as Wellhausen (...) suggested. Rather, he was put forward as the only strong counter-candidate to ʿAlî. As an intimate and favourite of Muḥammad, twice the Prophet's son-in-law, he could better rival ʿAlî's close kinship ties with the latter than could the rest." See also *op. cit.*, p. 122-123.

[50] P. Smoor, "Fâṭimid Poets..." p. 232-262. In general on the *shamsa*, see H. Halm, "Al-shamsa, Hängekronen als Herrschaftszeichen der Abbasiden und Fatimiden" *in* U. Vermeulen, D. De Smet (ed.), *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras*, *OLA* 73, Leuven 1995, p. 125-138.

[51] Poem to rhyme *al-tawḥîdu*, edition Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan*, p. 198-199 (= vs 1, 19-35, 53-57), total 63 lines. *Ms D*, folio 40 recto - 41 verso, *Ms Rabat*, p. 73-76. The poem is introduced by the words: "In honour of Al-ʿÂḍid he also said the following..."

**4.3**

From above, the parasol is envied by the stars, because it is a cosmic sphere which is opposed to the sun. It is glorious when it forms a closed circle over the head of the Caliphate.

However, it is more likely that the glory and the worship is intended for the Imâm. The poet says something like the following: "eye and neck stretch out to You, Oh Imâm". The Imâm returns their gazes and sees that opposite him there are plants, some of which are ripe enough to be harvested. Those plants are the people. The Caliph is for his part the possessor of the command, the *amr*, and only Allah stands as a law maker above him.

٣ نَزِلَتْ ليالي الصومِ عنْدكَ منزِلاً ما زالَ يعْمرهُ التُقى والجوُدُ [52]
٤ وترحَّلتْ مِنْ بعْد ما زوَّدْتَها برَّ التهجُّد والأنامُ هُجودُ
٥ ولقيتَ عيدَ الفطْرِ منكَ بغُرّةٍ أضْحى ببُهجتِها يُهَنّا العيدُ
٦ شرُفَتْ بكَ الأيّامُ حينَ ملكْتَها فجميعُ أوقاتِ الزمانِ عَبيدُ
٧ شوّالُ عبْدُكَ إنْ رَضيتَ وإنّما تَصْحيفُ عَبْدٍ في الكتابةِ عيدُ
٨ في كلِّ شيءٍ من عُلاكَ إشارَةٌ تُبْدي الخلافةُ سرَّها وتُعيدُ
٩ فَأفدْ أميرَ المؤمنينَ ولم تَزَلْ لعَبيدكَ المُتَفهِّمينَ تُفيدُ
١٠ ما السرُّ في عُودِ المظَلَّة أنّهُ عودٌ صليبُ المتْنِ وهو يَميدُ
١١ ما ذاكَ إلاّ أنّهُ نَظَرَ الورَى وَهُمْ لوَجْهكَ رُكَّعٌ وسُجودُ
١٢ فَصَغَى ولاكنَّ المهابةَ والحَيا سقاهُ مِمّا يَشْتَهي ويُريدُ
١٣ حَسَدتْ مَظلَّتَكَ النجومُ لأنّها فَلَكٌ على شمسِ الضُحَى مَصْدودُ
١٤ وتَبَسّطتَ في طَلَبِ السيادةِ عُذْرَها ومن العجائبِ أنْ يَسودَ حَسودُ
١٥ وتشرَّفَتْ لمّا غَدَتْ رِتاجُها فوق الخلافةِ دائرٌ مسدودُ
١٦ ما فازَ بالتَشْريف إلاّ مُقْلةٌ مُدَّتْ إليكَ لحاظُها أو جيدُ
١٧ تُومي بطَرْفكَ نحْوَهمْ فتَراهمْ كالزَرْعِ منهُ قائمٌ وحصيدُ
١٨ دانوا بحبِّ خليفةٍ ما فوقَهُ في الأمرِ إلاّ الخالقُ المَعْبودُ

3 The nights of the Fast have descended in Your place of sojourn, one which is always occupied by the fear of God (= D, "by riches" = R) and benefaction.

4 While the people slept, they continued their journey after You had supplied them with provisions for the journey, namely the piety of the night watch.

5 You received the feast of the Breaking of the Fast with a shining face, the radiance of which enabled the feast to be congratulated.



[52] *Ms Rabat*: الغَنَا والجُودُ.

6 Through You the days became noble until you claimed them as Yours, because every moment of time is Your slave.
7 *Shawwâl* is Your *ʿabd*, Your slave (= D, "a play on words is made with 'Your *ʿabd*'" = R), if You agree to this because the *taṣḥîf* from the word "*ʿabd*" is, when written, "*ʿîd*".
8 Due to Your exaltation, there is an allusion in everything, the secret of which the Caliphate allowed to come into being in order to recreate it.
9 So be useful, Oh *Amîr* of the Believers, because You were always useful to Your slaves who attempted to understand You by degrees.
10 The secret is not inlaid in the wood of the Parasol (*maẓalla*) in order to make the wood strong, although it still vibrates.
11 Not that, but the fact that it witnessed mankind on bended knees and prostrated at the sight of Your face.
12 Then it was inclined, but respect and fearfulness gave it that which it desired so much to drink.
13 Your Parasol was envied by the stars because it is a galaxy which is ranged against the morning Sun.
14 You have unfolded its excuse in the pursuit of dominion, because it would be surprising if a jealous being were to rule. (The Sun is jealous and does not deserve to rule, the Parasol rules over the Sun.)
15 It became glorious when its great gate formed a closed circle over the head of the Caliphate.
16 But no worship was obtained, apart from an eye which glanced towards You and a neck which stretched out to You.
17 With Your gaze on them, You look suggestively and see them as plants, some of which grow in the field while others form the harvest.
18 They acknowledge the religion of love for the Caliph, above whom there is no-one in the *amr*, apart from the Creator whom they worship.

### 4.4

At the End of *Ramaḍân*, in the shade of the Parasol the sermon is given, and the pulpit is mounted: the wood of the pulpit is sparkling with pride. The sermon causes the "hard of heart" to become weak. The amazing beauty of this sermon causes the skin of the audience to shiver. Through his tongue the *waḥy* speaks and the tremendous impression of the Imâm's words causes even the rocks to split asunder. On such a day, the glory of the Imamate is clearly evident, whilst the angels become the Imâm's soldiers.

Yet, according to ʿUmâra's poem it is, however, necessary for both the Caliph and the Caliphate to rely on the Regent. Now it appears that the first Regent, Ṣâliḥ, has already died. All the honour is subsequently reserved for his successor and son, the Regent Al-ʿÂdil. Hence the one scion of the Banû Ruzzîk succeeds the other, at least according to ʿUmâra, who willingly compares this succession with the end of the reign of the government of David and the new government formed by his son Solomon. Now all the *ḥall* and *ʿaqd* are attributed to the *tadbîr* of the new Regent,

٢١ شَخَصتْ إليكَ نواظرُ الأمم التي ملكْتَهمْ ولكَ بيْعةٌ وعُهودُ
٢٢ حتّى صعدتَ على ذؤابة منْبرٍ لو كان عُوداً ماسَ ذاكَ العودُ
٢٣ بَشّرْتَ بَلْ أنْذرْتَ بالحِكَمِ التي فيهنَّ وَعْدٌ صادقٌ ووَعيدُ
٢٤ لَيَّنْتَ قاسيةَ القُلوبِ بخُطْبةٍ أصْغى إليها المجمعُ المشْهودُ
٢٥ لا مُنْكرٌ أنْ تَستكينَ جوارحٌ لسَماعِها أو تَقْشَعرُّ جُلودُ
٢٦ والوحْيُ ينْطقُ عنْ لسانكَ الذي من دونه يَتَصَدّعُ الجُلْمودُ
٢٧ يومٌ جلتْ فيه الإمامةُ عزّها ولها الملائكةُ الكرامُ جنودُ
٢٨ أمنتْ خلافتُكَ الخلافَ فأبْرَمَتْ بكَفيلها مرَرٌ لها وعُقُودُ
٢٩ بالعادلِ ابْنِ الصالحِ انْتظَمتْ فهَلْ وَصَّى سُلَيْماناً بها داوُودُ
٣٠ أغنى عنِ التَقْليدِ نَصُّ إمامةٍ والنَصُّ يبْطُلُ عندهُ التقْليدُ
٣١ لا شيْءَ من حَلٍّ وعقْدٍ في الوَرَى إلاّ إلى تَدْبيرهِ مَرْدُودُ
٣٢ ملكٌ أغاثَ المُسلمين وحاطَهمْ منهُ وُجودٌ في الزمانِ وَجودُ
٣٣ ورِثَ الكَفالةَ عنْ أبٍ لمْ يَفْترِقْ في عصْرِه نَصْرٌ ولا تَأْييدُ
٣٤ قَسَماً بمَجْد أبي شُجاعٍ إنّهُ قَسَمٌ كما لا يُنْكران شديدُ
٣٥ لقد اسْتقلَّ أبو شجاعٍ بالتي أثْقالُها للحاملينَ تؤودُ
٣٦ واحْتَطَّ منْ شَرَفِ المَساعي غايةً ما فوقَها للطالبينَ مَزيدُ
٣٧ تَداركَ الإسلامَ حينَ تماثلَتْ[53] أطْنابٌ لهُ وعُمودُ
٣٨ وأقَرَّ طائشَةَ القُلوبِ[54] بعَزْمةٍ سكنتْ بها الأطْوادُ وهْيَ تميدُ

21 (in *Ms D* only) All the pupils of the people's eyes, over whom You had become king, stared at You, because You had a *bayʿa* and a contract.
22 Subsequently You rose above the top of a pulpit; were this to be made of wood then that wood would advance swaying proudly.
23 Then You gave happy tidings, or rather, You cautioned wisdom which, without doubt, contained both a truthful promise and a threat.
24 The momentous gathering listened to a sermon in which You caused the hard of heart to become weak.
25 No-one will deny that limbs are reduced to passivity or that skins begin to shiver, when they hear it.
26 Because your tongue delivers a powerful message of revelation (*waḥy*): rocks are split asunder by less.

[53] *Ms Rabat*: حينَ تطاولَتْ.
[54] *Ms Rabat*: طائشةَ العُقول.

27 A day on which the Imamate reveals its glory, while the noble angels become its soldiers.
28 May Your Caliphate remain safe from differences of opinion, and may both the cords and the knots be strengthened by its Regent (*Kafîlihâ*),
29 Al-ʿÂdil b. al-Ṣâliḥ, through whom it could be organised. Has David perhaps entrusted it to Solomon?
30 The *naṣṣ* from an Imamate has no need of the *taqlîd*, because the *taqlîd* is invalidated by the presence of a *naṣṣ*.
31 Among the people there is nothing to bind them together (*ʿaqd*) and nothing to loosen their ties (*ḥall*) except what is derived from his management (*tadbîr*).
32 A king who saved and guarded the Muslims. From him comes existence in time, and philanthropy.
33 He inherited the Regency from a father, during whose century no single victory and no godly support were ever denied.
34 (I swear) that an oath by the glory of Abû Shujâʿ is a strong oath, which neither of them will deny.
35 Abû Shujâʿ arose with the one (the Caliphate), whose burdens weighed heavily on the bearers.
36 He has placed the honour of ambition as a target, above which there was nothing left to strive for.
37 He has corrected Islam when its tent ropes and tent poles wobbled (= R, "acquired pretensions" = D),
38 And has supplied a basis to the imprudent of heart (= D, "the imprudent of understanding" = R), one which brings peace to the ropes when they tremble.

### 4.5

In ʿUmâra's other poem on the same theme, the poem to rhyme *murâdi*[55], the Imâm is originally described in a comparable way: There are religious feasts, which are proclaimed by waxing moons rotating above the heads of the Imâms. The glow from the crown polishes the *ṣadâ* (at least according to the writings of ʿUmâra's days) away, namely the "rust" (*ṣada'un*) of the doubtful and the "thirst" (*ṣadan*) of the yearning.

Subsequently, the Imâm becomes visible in the shade of his Parasol. This *miẓalla* resembles a cosmic sphere (*falak*) and the face below it a sun.

As far as the *miẓalla* is concerned, it would appear to be jealous of the carpet, because that is the place where the feet of the Imâm rest; furthermore, these are feet, the soles of which make everything they touch holy. However, the sky is in turn jealous of the *miẓalla*, because it is not simply a huge parasol but rather a golden cloud, under which the Imâm is like a

[55] Poem to rhyme *murâdi*, edition Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan*, p. 199-199, *Ms D* folio 41 verso - 43 recto (= 48 lines) and *Ms Rabat* p. 77-79. The poem is introduced by the following words (*Ms D*): "In praise of him he also said the following..." and (*Ms Rabat*): "In praise of Al-ʿÂḍid he also said the following..."

mountain, the mountain Jûdî. The Imâm, at the same time identical to the Mountain Jûdî, is mounted upon a race horse, a *jawâd*, an interesting case of alliteration inserted by our poet. In a prehistoric era, Noah's ark is naturally excellent contemplation for the Imâm of Egypt who can, in the same way, bring salvation to his faithful. The Imâm saves humankind.

There is also the fact that the *mizalla* superceded the Imâm in its exaltation. However, this can be explained by the comparison of the Parasol and the Imâm: it is like a sheath which must protect a sword. In this poem to rhyme *murâdi* there is also mention of a sermon which is delivered by the Imâm from a pulpit. Here too, the pulpit is susceptible to the effect of the words, because its crenellated edges appear to be proud. Meanwhile the public are impressed, the tears of the people flow during this address, and even livers became involved in the crying. Those who belong to the "hard of heart" are also cautioned here.

٣ يهني أميرَ المؤمنينَ مَواسِمٌ أوْقاتُهُنَّ إلى اللقآءِ صواد
٤ وتُنيرُ تَحْتَ التاجِ غُرَّتُكَ التي تَجْلو صَدَى[56] المُرْتَابِ والْمُرتادِ
٥ وتَزورُ مَجْلسَكَ المُقدَّس بالهناءِ أُمَمٌ تُراوِحُ لَثْمَهُ وتُغادي
٦ وتلوحُ في ظلِّ المظَلَّة طالعاً كالْبَدْرِ أو كالكوكَبِ الوَقّادِ
٧ وكأنّها فَلَكٌ ووَجْهُكَ شَمْسُهُ لولا اعْتمادُ رِتاجِها بعمادِ
٨ حَسَدتْ بساطَ الأرْضِ فيكَ وما دَرَتْ أنَّ السَّماءَ لها مِنَ الحُسّادِ
٩ نَشَرَ المُديرُ بها عليكَ غَمامةً ذهبيَّةً لَيْستْ بذاتِ عمادِ
١٠ فغَدا الوَرى يَتَعجَّبونَ وقدْ بدا من تَحْتِها الجوديُّ فوقَ جوادِ
١١ قدْ قُلتُ إذْ عَلتِ المظَلَّةُ فوقَ مَنْ يَعْلو مَحَلَّ الأنْجُمِ الأفْرادِ
١٢ لمْ تَعْلُ إلاّ خدْمَةً وصيانَةً وكذا السُيُوفُ تُصانُ في الأغْمادِ
١٣ والقلبُ أشْرَفُ والضُلوعُ تَحوطُهُ والعيْنُ يُحْجَبُ نورُها بسَوادِ
١٤ لمّا بَرَزْتَ إلى المُصلَّى لابساً ثوْبَ الخُشوعِ وهيْبَةَ الآسادِ

(...)

١٨ حتّى إذا وافيْتَ ساحةَ مَجْمعٍ فتُضايقُ الْعَرَصاتِ بالأشْهادِ
١٩ قابَلْتَ محْرابَ الصلاةِ وللْهُدَى قَبَسٌ على قَسَماتِ وَجْهكَ بادِ
٢٠ وقضيْتَ نافلةَ السُجودِ ولم تَزَلْ للّه أفْضلَ قانتٍ وسَجّادِ
٢١ وصَعدتَ ذِرْوَةَ منْبَرٍ أبْقَيْتَ في شُرَفاته شَرَفاً على الأعْوادِ
٢٢ ونَطقْتَ من فَصْلِ الخطابِ بخُطْبةٍ عَوْنُ الإلاه لها منَ الأمْدادِ
٢٣ ذرَفتْ دُموعُ الخَلْقِ عندَ سَماعِها واسْتَنْجَدتْ بمَدامعِ الأكْبادِ
٢٤ ذَكَّرْتَ قاسيةَ القُلوبِ وإنّما نادى رَشادُكَ أهْلَ ذاكَ النادي

[56] *Ms Rabat*: تَجْلو صَدَا.

3 Let the *Amîr al-Mu'minîn* be happy with feasts which give the moments a thirst for the meeting.
4 From under the crown Your glow gives light, a glow which polishes away the rust from the doubtful and the thirst from the yearning. (The figure of speech *tajnîs* with *ṣadâ* is implicit, *ṣadan* = thirst and *ṣada'un* = rust.)
5 Your sacred Salon is visited by people bringing congratulations, both morning and night they come to kiss him.
6 And You are visible in the shade of the *Miẓalla*, already rising like a Full Moon or a Burning Star.
7 Then it is as if it is a galaxy (*falak*) and Your Face one of the accompanying suns – if its *ritâj* had not been supported by a pole.
8 It (the *Miẓalla*) was, as far as You are concerned, jealous of the carpet of the earth, but it did not realise that the sky belonged to the ranks of the jealous because of it.
9 Whoever allowed it to spin round, spread a golden cloud above You, not something held up by a supporting pole (*laysat bi-dhâti ʿimâdi*).
(There is of course an allusion here to the sinful Koranic people of the ʿÂd, Dhât al-ʿImâd, who were to be punished ! The Parasol raised by its standard is not like these people.)
10 Humankind became bemused, because the mountain, Al-Jûdî, became visible mounted on a noble thoroughbred (*fawqa jawâdi*) !

(Compare Koran *Sûra* 11, *Hûd*, verses 44-52 :
"A voice came : 'O earth, swallow up thy water, and cease, O sky' ; and the water subsided, the affair was finished, and it stood firm on Al-Jûdî ; a voice came : 'Away with the wrong-doing people !' (…) 52. To ʿÂd we sent our brother Hûd ; he said : 'O my people, serve Allah ; …'")

11 I said : "When the *Miẓalla* exalts itself above the One Who is exalted over the unique stars,
12 Then it is only so exalted for the sake of servitude and protection. In the same way as the swords are protected by their sheaths.
13 And the heart is the noblest, when it is surrounded by ribs. And the light from an eye is veiled by the black of the pupil."
14 When You appeared in the *Muṣallâ*, carrying the cloak of humbleness and the awe-inspiring rank of lions,
(……)
18 And when You arrived in the square for a meeting, the number of witnesses present caused the square to become too narrow.
19 You were opposite to the *miḥrâb* of the *ṣalât*, while in the features of Your face a flame coming from the Just Leadership became visible.
20 You performed the *sujûd* which is not compulsory, and never ceased to be the most devout performer of the *sujûd* for Allah.
21 You ascended the top of a *minbar*, upon whose gallery You allowed an honour to be conferred, raising it above other wooden pulpits.

22 And You pronounced a *khuṭbah* in an eloquent address, sustained by Help from the Godhead.

23 The tears of the people flowed whilst they listened to it, and they asked for support for the tear ducts of their livers.

24 You have cautioned the "hard of heart" and it was only Your upright conduct which cried to the people at the meeting.

### 4.6

In his poem to rhyme *tushâkiluhu*, the sermon delivered by the Imâm in the open prayer space, the *Muṣallâ*, appears directly as the first theme.[57]

We see how the persona "Fasting" comes to the fore in order to smile. From the light of the shining teeth, which is accordingly created in the middle of darkness, comes the whiteness of the dawn of the breaking of the Fast. Once again, therefore, it is this well-known feast which forms the basis of the poem. Now, however, the theme immediately introduced is the Imâm's address in the open prayer space, the *Muṣallâ*. The public, the crowd, has ears which are on the road and "setting off" to listen to the speaker. The crowd itself would like to fly into the air, and that would have happened, had there not been a certain amount of surveillance in the square. On the other hand there is the Pulpit, which bows and trembles amongst all these yearnings. The sermon appears to be able to polish away all the rust that was in the minds of the public (they appear to be brainwashed). The eyes of the people stare at You, Oh Imâm! (he is again spoken to directly using the *iltifât* figure of speech). Hence the Parasol has a face which sees opposite it another face, namely that of the crowd. The Parasol is not carried by an ordinary person but by a chain of bearers, led by a standard, but this standard is itself borne by the angel Gabriel. On Your forehead, Oh Imâm, is the Light of the Prophets, namely that from the Messenger Mohammad. Allah served a religion and You are the support, the *ʿâḍid* of that religion.

Finally (at the end of the poem *tushâkiluhu*) ʿUmâra determines that Al-Nâṣir is the Vizier and the Protector of the previously mentioned religion.

He makes a point in order to demonstrate the excellence of this Vizier (the son and successor of Al-Malik al-Ṣâliḥ) who is, namely, a "Dispeller" (a *kâshif*) of a disaster which dominates like a darkening "Eclipse" (a *kâsif*). When literally translated this passage reads as such:

٥ صومٌ تبَسّمَ عنْ فِطْرٍ كما ابْتَسَمَتْ عنْ غُرَّةِ الفَجْرِ من ليلٍ غَياطِلُهُ

٦ ودَّعْتَ هذا وداعَ المُحْسنينَ كما قابَلْتَ هذا بِما الرحْمانُ قابِلُهُ

[57] Poem to rhyme *tushâkiluhu*, edition Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan*, p. 310 and *Ms D*, folio 138 verso - 139 verso (total 36 lines), *Ms Rabat*, p. 168. In the edition there is only the first line. The poem is introduced by the words (*Ms D*): "In the year '57, he spoke at the feast of the Breaking of the Fast, whilst he praised Al-ʿÂḍid and his Vizier Al-ʿÂdil b. al-Ṣâliḥ", and (*Ms Rabat*): "He also spoke in praise of Al-ʿÂḍid and his Vizier Al-ʿÂdil b. Ruzzîk, at the feast of the Breaking of the Fast in the year 557 (H.)."

٧ فاسْعَدْ بعامٍ أتاكَ العامُ يَحْمِلُهُ واقْبِلْ من السعْدِ ما يُهْديه نائلُهُ
٨ لّما أظَلَّكَ عيدُ الفطْرِ وافْترَقَتْ أسْماعُ قومٍ إلى ما أنتَ قائلُهُ
٩ زُرْتَ المُصلَّى ولولا ما خَلَعْتَ على رَحابه من رقابٍ خَفَّ آهلُهُ
١٠ واهْتَزَّ شوقاً فلو يسْطِيعُ مِنْبَرُهُ مالتْ أعاليه وارْتَجَّتْ أسافلهُ
١١ حتّى إذا ضاقَ بالأشْهاد واسْتَمَعَتْ فَصْلَ الخطابة من قُرْبٍ مَحافلُهُ
١٢ لمْ يُبْقِ فَضْلُكَ في الأفْهامِ مِنْ صَدَاءٍ إلاّ وعَقْلُكَ في الأفْهامِ صاقِلُهُ [58]

(...)

١٥ تَرْنو إليكَ عيونُ الخلقِ شاخصَةً والأجْرُ والفَجرُ أدْنَى ما تُحاوِلُهُ
١٦ وفي المظَلّة وَجْهٌ لمْ يَزلْ أبَداً بِصْرُ القَبولِ على وجْهٍ يُقابِلُهُ
١٧ ورايةُ المُلْكِ والإسلامِ يَحْمِلُها لكَ اللِّواءُ الذي جَبْريلُ حامِلُهُ [59]
١٨ أشْبهْتَ هُدىَ رسولِ اللّه حينَ بَدَتْ على شَمائلكَ الحُسْنى شمائلُهُ
١٩ وفي جبينكَ نورٌ مِنْ نُبوَّته وشاهدُ الحَقِّ لا تَخْفى دَلائلُهُ
٢٠ قدْ أيَّدَ اللهُ ديناً أنتَ عاضِدُهُ والناصِرُ الذخْرُ كافيه وكافلُهُ
٢١ الكاشِفُ الكَرْبَ لّما عزَّ كاسِفُهُ والفارِجُ الخَطْبَ لّما ضاقَ نازِلُهُ

5 A Fast smiled and had a Fast Breaking appear, just as the radiance of the dawn rises from the confused darkness of the night.

6 You have said farewell to this one (month) as a benefactor, just as You have met the other (month) with that by which the Merciful would accept it.

7 Be happy with a year, which a previous year has brought to You. And accept from happiness that which its gift has given You.

8 When the Feast of the Breaking of the Fast overshadowed You, and the ears of the people set off to You because of what You were to say,

9 You visited the *Muṣallâ* and, were it not for what You had draped over the square for surveillance, the crowd would have flown on high (from happiness).

10 This one (the *Muṣallâ*) shook with yearning and, had its pulpit been able, its top half would have bowed and its bottom half would have trembled.

11 Then, when it became too limited for the witnesses and when the crowd heard the eloquent address from closer by,

12 Your excellency left no room in their understanding for rust as Your power of reason polished it away from their understanding.
(= *Ms D*, *Ms Rabat*: "then your verbal expression left no room for rust in their powers of imagination as Your cautions polished that away from their understanding.")
( ..... )

[58] *Ms Rabat*: لم يُبْقِ لَفْظُكَ في الأوْهامِ من صَدَءٍ إلاّ ووَعْظُكَ بالأفْهامِ صاقِلُهُ. [59] *Ms Rabat*: الذي التَأْييدُ حامِلُهُ.

15 The eyes of the people stare searchingly at You, whilst reward and salvation are the most obvious things which they would want to achieve (*adnâ mâ tuḥâwiluhu*).

16 And the *miẓalla* is a face which is always happily approving towards any face which is turned towards it.

17 The banner of the kingdom and of Islam is borne on a standard, which is, in turn, borne by Jabrîl. (= *Ms D*, *Ms Rabat*: "which subsequently is borne by Godly Support.")

18 You resembled the Just Leadership of the Messenger, when his qualities appeared in contrast to your extremely pure qualities.

19 On Your forehead is the Light of his Prophethood, because indications of evidence of the Truth do not allow themselves to be hidden.

20 Allah had already helped a religion of which You are the Supporter (*Al-ʿâḍid*), whilst Al-Nâṣir the Treasure Trove (*al-Dhukhr*) is its Protector and Guarantor.

21 He who "dispels" (*kâshif*) sorrow, when his Unhappy day "brings darkness through an eclipse" (*kâsif*, however the word in the manuscript is actually *kâshif*); and who disperses disaster when its impact brings anxiety. (The *tajnîs al-taḥrîf* as between *kâshif* and *kâsif* is probably originally intended here.)

### 4.7

In the poem *maqbûlu* the so-called ʿÂḍidic majesty is portrayed, and once again the Parasol is made use of. In this poem the palace is a *Ḥaram*, with a *qibla*, and the carpet is kissed, to such an extent that the carpet itself becomes a pure mouth.[60] The biographical facts about the Imâm were copied from the Koranic suras. As ʿUmâra says, we accept that the biography of the Imâms appears in "our" (*i.e.*, ʿUmâra's) poetry, and in the prose of a text which was supplied by Gabriel. The Messenger is the Father of the Imâm. However, the Imâm is himself a Messenger, too.

Under the *miẓalla* shines the radiance of the Imâm. However, the question is posed, how can the *miẓalla* rise above one who himself gives shade to the whole of mankind? ʿUmâra answers once again as he did in another poem by saying that the Parasol is as an eyelid is to an eye, or a sheath to a sword. In the same way there is a veil for the Kaʿba. This implies, it seems to me, that ʿUmâra is secretly putting the Imâm on a par with the Kaʿba. The following quotation from the poem *maqbûlu* should be considered,

٢١ وجَلوْتَ مِنْ تحْتِ المظلَّة غُرّةً يَبْدو عليها التاجُ والاكْليلُ
٢٢ فتعجَّبَ الراؤونَ كيفَ عَلَتْ على مَنْ ظلُّهُ فوْقَ الأنامِ ظَليلُ
٢٣ فأجبْتُهمْ لا تَعْجَبوُا لِصُعودها فصُعودُها لو تَعْلمونَ نُزولُ
٢٤ والجَفْنُ تَعْلو العينَ تَكرمةً لها وتَصونُ مَتْنَ السَيْفِ وهوَ صَقيلُ

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[60] On the poem to rhyme *maqbûlu*, see note 29 above.

٢٥ وتسْترُ البيْت الحَرام وقَدْرُهُ تَعْلو على أسْتارِه وتَطولُ [61]
٢٦ شَرّفْتَ عيدَ الفِطْرِ حتّى أنّهُ سُحِبَتْ لهُ فوقَ السحابِ ذُيولُ

21 From under the *Mizalla*, You have unveiled a radiance which made both the Crown and the Diadem visible.
22 Those who saw it were amazed at how it (the *Mizalla*) could rise above one whose shadow stretched out over mankind.
23 Then I answered them: "Do not be surprised by its lofty position, because its (the *Mizalla*'s) ascension is, if only you were to know, merely a descent.
24 The eyelid (*jafn*) is precisely above the eye in order to give it honour, and it protects (like a *jafn*, "sheath of a sword", an implied paronomasia) the smooth side of the sword when it is polished.
25 And in this way the Sacred House was covered, although its rank stood out above its veils." (thus according to *Ms Rabat*, but *Ms D* reads differently: "You protected the Sacred House, while You were rising high over the curtains of its measured destiny.")
26 You have honoured the Feast of the Breaking of the Fast, to such a degree that the fringes of it were dragged along above the clouds.

### 4.8

Also interesting in this context is ʿUmâra's pronouncement which compares the stone Kaʿba from Mecca to the "Imâmitic Kaʿba" in Cairo; in his poem to rhyme *rajabu*,[62] verses 13-17, we hear the following:

٤ فإنّما الدينُ والدنيا وأهْلُهما رحىً وأنْتَ إذا دارَتْ لها القُطُبُ
٥ بالعاضد اشْتَدَّ عضدُ الحقِّ وامْتسكَتْ عُرى الهُدى وهْوَ في إمْساكها السَبَبُ
٦ خليفةٌ لو تَراخى عقْدُ بيْعته لَسابَقَتْنا إليْها السَبْعةُ الشُهُبُ
٧ تَدارَكَ اللهُ شَمْلَ المؤمنين به في حيثُ كادتْ عصى الإيمانِ تَنْشَعِبُ
٨ وآلَفَ اللهُ أشْتاتَ القلوبِ على وَلائه فهي عنهُ ليْسَ تَنْقلبُ
٩ عمّتْ رِعايَتُهُ أقْصى رَعيَّته حتّى اسْتوى نازِحٌ منها ومُقْتربُ
١٠ وأصْبحَ الناسُ إخْواناً بنعْمته كأنَّ نعْمَتَهُ أُمٌّ لهمْ وأبُ
١١ قَرّتْ عيونُ الليالي من خلافته بِمَنْ أقَرَّ حَشاها وهْيَ تَضطربُ

[61] *Ms Rabat*: وتُسْتَرُ البيتُ الحَرامُ وقَدْرُهُ يعْلو على أسْتاره ويَطولُ.
[62] Poem to rhyme *rajabu*, editon Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan*, p. 171, and *Ms D* folio 16 verso - 18 recto, and *Ms Rabat* p. 53-56. A poem of 55 lines. In this poem Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid and Al-Nâṣir (the son of Ṭalâʾiʿ) are simultaneously congratulated. This poem is introduced by the following words: "In the beginning of the month of Rajab, he spoke in honour of the Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid and of Al-Malik al-Nâṣir and did so in order to congratulate them both."

١٢ أغَرُّ تَشهدُ لي أنْوارُ غُرَّتِه بِصِدْقِ ما أُودِعَتْ من ذِكْرِهِ الكُتُبُ
١٣ إذا رَأتْهُ عُيُونُ الأمّةِ استَبَقَتْ إلى السجودِ لَهُ الأذْقَانُ والرُّكَبُ
١٤ لا تنْظرنَّ مَجازاً حينَ تنظرهُ فللحقيقةِ سرٌّ عنْكَ مُحتجبُ
١٥ وكَعْبَةُ اللهِ لولا قَدْرُها حَجَرٌ ومنْدَلُ الهندِ لولا عرْفُهُ حَطَبُ
١٦ من دوْحةِ المُصْطَفى الهادي التي كَرُمَتْ فيها المَنابتُ والأغصانُ والشُعَبُ
١٧ أحْيَيْتمُ ذِكْرَهُ فينا وسُنَّتَهُ ولم يمتْ سَلَفٌ أنتُم لهُ عَقَبُ

4 The Religion and the World and the inhabitants of both are simply millstones, when they rotate, then You become the axis (*quṭb*) around which they turn.
5 Through Al-ʿÂḍid the Arm of Justice became strong, and the grip of the Just Leadership gained hold, because he was the cause of their tenaciousness.
6 A Caliph, suppose that the contract of his *bayʿa* were to have become weaker, then the Seven Radiant ones (the planets) would have preceded us in this *bayʿa*.
7 May Allah through him restore the unification of the believers, given that the staff of the belief has almost been split (into a number of branches).
8 May Allah accustom the widely divergent hearts to be loyal to him (scil., the Imâm), so that they no longer turn away from him.
9 His flock is controlled by his extensive care, until one which was far away became the same as one close by in the flock.
10 The people became brothers through his benefaction, as if his benefaction was both a mother and a father to them.
11 The eyes of the night of his Caliphate were coolly comforted by him who cooled their intestines when they became confused.
12 An excellent person, the lights of his excellency confirm to me the truthfulness of what the Books testified about him.
13 When the eyes of the Community see him, chins and knees compete with one another in order to lie prostrate for him, to carry out the *sujûd*.
14 You will surely not see a mere metaphor (*majâzan*) when you look at him, but the deepest essence has a secret which is still hidden from you.
15 Because Allah's Kaʿba would only be stones should there be no appraisal. And the sandal wood from India would be as firewood should there be no heavenly scent.
16 Through the Palm tree of the Just Leader Muṣṭafâ, a tree of which the shoots, the branches and the twigs are noble,
17 You have called into being his Remembrance and his Example, because the ancestry from which you are descended is not dead.

In the passage quoted, it appears as though ʿUmâra has replaced the Kaʿba in Mecca, which is built of stone, by a Kaʿba in Cairo, which is built from *imâmitic* stones.

# APPENDIX TO ʿUMÂRA'S ODES DESCRIBING THE IMÂM

## Text and translation of the newly discovered poems by ʿUmâra al-Yamanî

Poem to rhyme *maṣʿadu*. Edition Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan*, p. 197 (verses 1-3). *Ms D*, folio 39 verso – 40 recto, a total of 24 lines in *Ms D*.

*Ms Rabat*, p. 71-73, consists of 51 lines! The first 17 lines can also be found in *Ms D*, subsequently, after line 45 (numbering *Ms Rabat*), the same poem appears again in *Ms D* (in folio 39 verso). The lines 18-44 (numbering *Ms Rabat*), until the present time unknown, are, therefore, now printed and translated here.

In *Ms Rabat* both the introduction and the first line of the poem are missing. In *Ms Rabat*, there is a lacuna between p. 70 (poem to rhyme *bâ'*) and p. 71, at the top of which the text begins with line 2 of the poem to rhyme *maṣʿadu*.

وقال في العاضد أيضا

١ أسماءُ مُلْكٍ تَحْتَها لكَ مَقْعَدُ أَمْ دَسْتُ نُسْكٍ فَوْقَهُ لك مَصْعَدُ
٢ ورواقُ مَجْدٍ أشْرفتْ حُجُراتُهُ أمْ صَرْحُ عزٍّ بالنجومِ مُمَرَّدُ
٣ وضياءُ وجْهِ العاضدِ بن محمدٍ في التاجِ أمْ نورُ الهُدَى يَتَوقّدُ
٤ القائمُ المَخْصوصُ بالشَرَفِ الذي أبْقَى عَلِيٌّ عِزَّهُ ومُحمّدُ [63]
٥ أبَوانِ أحْسَنْتَ النيابةَ عَنْهما فيما تَقومُ بهِ وما تَتَقلَّدُ
٦ عَمّتْ رِعايتُكَ الرَّعايا فاسْتَوى في قِسط [64] عَدْلِكَ مشركٌ وموحِّدُ
٧ وجَمَعْتَ شَمْلَ المسلمين ببَيْعةٍ حفظتْ نظامَ المُلْكِ وهو مبَدَّدُ
٨ وَسَمْتَ أميرَ المؤمنينَ خلافةً [65] أضْحَتْ تُحلُّ براحَتَيْكَ وتُعْقدُ
٩ وورِثْتَ عن عيسَى بنِ عَمِّكَ مَنْصباً جاءتْ لَيالي المَهْدِ وهْوَ مُمَهَّدُ [66]
١٠ إنّا نَراكَ وما نراكَ وَإنّما أَفْكارُنا للنَّصِّ فيكَ تُقَلِّدُ
١١ حَسَدَتْ جَوارحُنا عليك عُيوناً [67] إنّ العُيونَ على جَلالكَ تُحْسدُ
١٢ نَباءٌ من النبا العظيمِ تَجَسّدتْ [68] أنْوارُهُ والنورُ لا يتجَسَّدُ
١٣ شَرَفٌ تَساوَى فيه مِنْكُم أشْيَبُ كَهْلٌ ومُقْتبلُ الشبيبةِ أمْرَدُ

[63] *Ms Rabat*: علِيٌّ إرْثُهُ ومحمّدُ الذي أبْقى.
[64] *Ms Rabat*: في بسْطِ.
[65] *Ms Rabat*: وَسَمَتْ أمير المؤمنين خِلافةٌ.
[66] *Ms Rabat*: وهْو يُمَهِّدُ.
[67] *Ms Rabat*: عُيونَنا.
[68] *Ms Rabat*: نبا من النَّبَاءِ العظيم تجسّدتْ.

١٤ وسريرةٌ دَرَجَ الزمان وحُكْمُها متنَقّلٌ ما بَيْنَكُمْ مُتَرَدّدُ
١٥ يَهْنِي المواسِمَ أنّ مُطْلَقَ ذكْرِها أضْحَى يُورّخُ باسمِكُمْ ويُقَيَّدُ
١٦ رَجَبٌ من الحُرَمِ التي حرّمْتُم فثلاثةٌ [69] سَرْدٌ وهذا مُفْرَدُ
١٧ لو كان ذا شَخْصٍ إذا لَثِمَ الثَرَى حمداً لما أوْلاهُ جَدُّكَ أحْمَدُ
١٨ ملكْتَ أَرْجابَ الزمان فصرفُهُ لكَ خادمٌ ونجومهُ أسْعَدُ
١٩ لكَ منْ لياليه إماءٌ خُضَّعُ وكذاك منْ أيّامه لكَ أعْبُدُ
٢٠ كما ملكْتَ بياضَهُ وسوادَهُ والاكَ أبْيَضُ أهْلِه والأسْوَدُ
٢١ وقَسمْتَ فيه جميلَ فعْلِكَ قسْمةً أصبحْتَ تعْدلُ بينها وتشرّدُ
٢٢ أملاكُهُ العُلْيَا بشُكْرِكَ تَصْعدُ ومُلوكُهُ السُفْلَى لذكْرِكَ تسجدُ
٢٣ والأمْسِ مَسْرورٌ بما زوّدتَّهُ واليومُ مُغْتَبِطٌ بقُرْبِكَ والْغَدُ
٢٤ شيَمٌ إذا أُسْنِدَتْ أخْبارُكَ عن فَضْلِكمْ فإلى النبوَّة تُسْنَدُ
٢٥ نُظِمَتْ منَ القران غُرُّ صفاتكمْ فسواءٌ القاري فيها والمُنْشِدُ
٢٦ وإذا تناولَت السعادَةُ مادحاً أثْنَى وللْمَمْدوحِ مَجْدٌ مُسْعِدُ
٢٧ يا حُجّةَ الله التي بُرْهانُها كالشمسِ باهِرُ نورِها لايُجْحَدُ
٢٨ أبْقَى لكَ الرَّحْمانُ كافلَكَ الذي أمْسَتْ عُلاكَ به تُحاطُ وتُعْضَدُ
٢٩ هو بابُ رحْمَتِكَ الذي مَنْ لَمْ يَصِلْ منهُ فبابُ الرزْقِ عَنهُ مُوصَدُ
٣٠ وكفيلُ دولتكَ الذي بغنائه وثنائه حَسناتُها تَتَجَدّدُ
٣١ فَوَّضتَهُ في الأمْرِ إلاّ أنّهُ مَعَ ذاك يُصْدِرُ عنْ عُلاكَ ويُورِدُ
٣٢ يعْتَدُّ أمْرُك طاعةً وعبادةً إنْ كانَ دون الله خلْقٌ يُعْبَدُ
٣٣ نَصَرَتْ بنو رُزِّيكَ آلَ مُحَمَّدٍ فاللهُ يَنْصُرُ أمْرَهُمْ ويُؤَيّدُ
٣٤ حَفِظُوا لآلِ الحافظِ الحُرَمَ التي أضْحَتْ بصِدْقٍ ولائِهِمْ تتأكَّدُ
٣٥ قومٌ إذا فعلوا الجَميلَ تَعَمَّدُوا وإذا رَأوا خَطَا المُسيءِ تَغَمَّدُوا
٣٦ شادَ الأجَلُّ الناصرُ المُحْيِي لَهُم عزّاً يَذِلُّ لهُ الأعَزُّ الأصْيَدُ
٣٧ ذُخْرُ الأئمّة بلْ وَلِيُّهُمُ الذي تُثْنَى خَناصِرُهُمْ عَلَيْه وتُعْقَدُ
٣٨ عَضُدُ الإمامِ المُقْتَنِي لفضائلٍ منها السدادُ لدَهْرِه والْسؤدَدُ
٣٩ ليْثٌ يُرِيكَ البَرْقَ في مَتْنِ الضُبَا [70] ماضٍ يُجَرِّدُهُ وطِرْفٌ أجْرَدُ

[69] *Ms Rabat*: فَتَلاتُهُ.

[70] The reading of *Ms Rabat* is unclear: في مَتْنِ الضُبا or في مَتْنِ الصَبا.

٤٠ إنْ قادَ أمْلاكَ الزمانِ وسادَهمْ طُرّاً فوالِدُهُ الأجَلُّ السَيِّدُ
٤١ الصالِحُ الهادي الذي عضدالهُدى من معْشَرٍ بضيائه لمْ يَهْتَدُ
٤٢ وأزالَ جَوْرَ بَني مُنادٍ عَدْلُهُ الصافي وأصْلَحَ رايُهُ ما أفْسَدُ
٤٣ واسْتَنْقَذَ الأيْمانَ منْ أيديهمُ بيَدٍ لَها في كلِّ صالحةٍ يَدُ
٤٤ مَلِكٌ تَقولُ لمَجْده رُتَبُ العُلَى اصْعَدْ فَأنْتَ بها أحَقُّ وأنْجَدُ
٤٥ أثْنَى على آلائه بمَناقبٍ منها القصائدُ والقنا المُتَقصِّدُ
٤٦ لولا حَميدُ فعاله ومقاله ما فازَ بالحَمْد اللسانُ ولا اليَدُ
٤٧ لولا شَريفُ خلاله وجلاله لم يُدْرَ ما مَعْنَى الحجَى والسودَدُ
٤٨ لولا العيانُ وما تَرَى من فَضْله كان الكمالُ حكايةً تُسْتَعْبدُ
٤٩ لم أخْتصِرْ صَرْحَ المَديحِ وانَّما نَفدَ الكلامُ وفَضْلُكمْ لا ينْفَدُ
٥٠ والحَمْدُ أدْنَى خدْمةٍ مَفْروضةٍ لأجَلِّ مَنْ يُثْنى عليه ويُحْمدُ
٥١ وبَقاؤُكُمْ للّه أكْبَرُ نعْمَةٍ إيّاهُ فيها نَسْتَعينُ ونَعْبُدُ

The poem to rhyme *jimâli*, Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan* does not contain this poem. *Ms D*, on which this edition is largely based, does not contain this poem either. The poem does appear in *Ms Rabat*, p. 171-173 ! The poem to rhyme *ḥanînu jimâli* consists of 52 lines. The following lines of prose form an introduction, *Ms Rabat*: "In honour of Al-Ẓâfir and his Vizier Al-Ṣâliḥ, he also said the following…"

وقال أيضا يمْدحُ الظافر ووزيرَهُ الصالحَ

١ أسماءُ قَدْرٍ أمْ سماءُ جلالٍ وضياء بدرٍ أم حنينُ جمالِ
٢ ومَقَرُّ ملكٍ أمْ قَرارةُ رحمةٍ سُقيَ الوحْيُ منها بنوء شَوّالِ
٣ لا ذَمَّ عندي لليالي بَعْدَ ما سمحْتَ بما لمْ يَجْرِ في آمالي
٤ بَلَّغْتَني هاذا المَقامَ ولمْ يكُنْ لعَظيمِ هيبَته يَسيرُ ببالي
٥ أتَأمّلُ النورَ المُبينَ ودونَهُ سِتْرٌ منَ الإعْظامِ والإجْلالِ
٦ وأشاهدُ المهديَّ إلاّ أنّهُ في الخَلْقِ مهْديٌّ ببلادِ جُهّالِ
٧ قَسَماً أميرَ المؤمنينَ بما أرى من رُتْبةٍ علويّةٍ ومعالِ
٨ إنّ المَمالكَ والمُلوكَ بأسْرِها عَوْلٌ على هذا المقامِ العالي
٩ أقْسَمْتُ ما فَوْقَ البسيطة مثْلهُ من ذائقينَ حقيقةً بمَجالِ
١٠ ضَلَّتْ بصيرةُ مَنْ يُوالِي غَيْرَهُ أولائي مَنْ يَشْري هُدىً بضَلالِ

١١ هذا هو النورُ الذي شهِدَتْ لهُ زُهْرُ الكواكبِ من مكانٍ عالي
١٢ هذا هو النَّبا الذي افْتَخَرَتْ به العلماءُ في الدنيا على الجهّالِ
١٣ هذا هو السرُّ الذي لو لم تكنْ في الأرضِ ما أمِنَتْ منَ الزلْزالِ
١٤ هذا هو النسْلُ الجليُّ فثقْ به واستغْنِ عنْ نَظَرٍ واسْتدْلالِ
١٥ هذا أميرُ المؤمنينَ وعصْمَةُ الدينِ الحنيفِ وقِبْلَةُ الأمْثالِ
١٦ لولا الصلاةُ على أبيه وجَدّه لم يَرْضَ منّا صالحَ الأعْمالِ
١٧ يا خَيْرَ مَعْزُوٍّ لخَيْرِ أرُومَةٍ وأجَلَّ مُنْتَسبٍ لأكْرمِ آلِ
١٨ تَهْني الأهلّةَ غُرّة لك لمْ تَخَفْ مَسَّ المحاقِ ولا انْتقاصَ كَمالِ
١٩ رمضانُ مثْلُ سواه إلاّ أنّه أطابَهُ (أغْلاهُ) فَضْلُكم على الأمْثالِ
٢٠ لولا وُجُوبُ صيامِه وقيامِه ما كانَ مُفْتخراً على شَوّالِ
٢١ شَرَفْتُمْ مقْدارَ ليلةِ قَدْرِه عنْ قَدْرِ أيّامٍ بأُهْبَتِه وليالِ
٢٢ وكذاك مَنْ لاحَظْتُموهُ من الورى لَحظَتْهُ عيْنُ السعْدِ والإقْبالِ
٢٣ للظّافرِ الشرَفُ الذي لمْ يفْتخرْ بنَظيرِه أهلُ الزمانِ الخالي
٢٤ الصالحِ الملكِ الذي عضدَ الهدى بتحَمُّلِ الأعباءِ والأثْقالِ
٢٥ نامتْ عيونُ الخَلْقِ ملْؤ جفونِها مُذْ باتَ يكْلَؤها ونعْمَ الكالي
٢٦ زحفتْ سَحابُ ثَوابٍ وعقابٍ بسَحائبِ الأرْزاقِ والآجالِ
٢٧ وأغاثَ دولةَ آلِ أحمدَ بَعْدَما اضْطربَتْ وآذنَ ظلُّها بزوالِ
٢٨ لولا طُلوعُ طلايعِ ودفاعُهُ بجلادِ أعدائكمْ وجدالِ
٢٩ لم يَبْقَ في أعْمالِ مصْرَ كلِّها أحَدٌ لأبناءِ النبيِّ مُوالِي
٣٠ للّه عَزْمَتُهُ التي لمْ تَثْنِها خوفُ الرَدى ومَشُورةُ العذّالِ
٣١ نَصْرُ الأئمّةِ غيْرُ منقَلَبٍ إلى عَدَمِ النّصْرِ وكَثْرةِ الخُذّالِ
٣٢ مُسْتَنْصحاً صِدْقَ النفوسِ حتّى آلَتْ بعبّاسٍ لشَرِّ مَئالِ
٣٣ ضاقتْ عليه بها مذاهبُ رايه والحوْلُ يُظِلُّ حيلَةَ الختالِ
٣٤ تركْتَهُ منْ بعْدِ الكرامةِ وابْنَهُ وهما حَليفا ذلّةٍ ونَكالِ
٣٥ جادتْهُما منْهُ سحائبُ نقْمَةٍ مُحَمَّرةٍ تَهمي بوَيْلٍ وَبالِ
٣٦ إنّ الأجَلَّ الناصرَ اتّبَعَ الذي أوضحْتَ منْ سُنّةٍ ومثالِ
٣٧ وكفاكَ ما اسْتَكْفَيْتَهُ بسياسةٍ لم تُوتَ من رَيْبٍ ولا استعْجالِ
٣٨ زانَ الشَبيبَةَ بالوَقارِ ولمْ يسِرْ فينا بسيرةِ مُعْجَبٍ مُخْتالِ



AnIsl 35 (2001), p. 549-626 Pieter Smoor

٣٩ لّما غَدا بخلالِ عَدْلكَ يَقْتَدي في الخَلْقِ لم يعْلَقْ لهم بخَلالِ
٤٠ كَفَتْ مَهابتُهُ الأكُفَّ فَقصَّرَتْ خَطْوَ المظالمِ بَعْد طول مَجالِ
٤١ وبَسطتَ راحَتَهُ فامُرْ فَيْضاً وَرَعاً عَنِ الأرْواحِ والأمْوالِ
٤٢ ملكٌ إذا اسْتَثْناكَ أصْبحَ يَشْتَكي عَدَمَ النَّظيرِ وقلّةَ الأشْكالِ
٤٣ ما تُنْكرُ الأمْلاكُ يوْمَ تَفاخُرٍ بمناقبِ الأقْوالِ والأمْثالِ
٤٤ إنّ ابْنَ رُزّيكٍ يَتيمةُ دَهْرِهِ ووَحيدُهُ في الفَضْلِ والإفْضالِ
٤٥ وإنّهُ يومَ الشَجاعةِ والنّدى غيْثُ أنْزالٍ ولَيْثُ نزالِ
٤٦ تَركوهُ في أسْمائه لا فعْله ما نَفْعُ أسْماءٍ بلا أفْعالِ
٤٧ ملكٌ تقولُ لهُ مَساعِي مَجْده قوْلاً يصرفُهُ لسانُ الحالِ
٤٨ لا تَفْتَخرْ إلاّ بنَفْسكَ وَحْدَها فالدَّهْرُ من حَسَناتِ فعْلكَ حالِ
٤٩ تغْلُو وتَرْخَصُ رِفْعَةً وتَواضُعاً وعَجبْتُ من شَيْءٍ رخيصٍ غالِ
٥٠ فاسْلَمْ أميرَ المؤمنينَ مُبَلَّغاً في الصالحِ الهادي أعَزِّ مثالِ
٥١ وتَملَّيا شَرَفَ الحياةِ ولا رأتْ عَيْنُ الهُدى لكُما زَوالَ ظِلالِ
٥٢ هنيتُما ما شئتُما وَعُلاكُما مَحْروسَةُ الغَدَواتِ والآصالِ

Poem to rhyme *lâmiʿu*, *Ms D* does not contain this poem. Hence it is absent in the edition Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan*. The poem only appears in *Ms Rabat*, p. 128-131 and consists of 47 lines. The introductory lines read (*Ms Rabat*): "In honour of Al-ʿÂḍid, he says the following…"

وقال أيضاً يمدحُ العاضدَ

١ أجَلُّ كلامٍ أودعَتْهُ المَسامعُ كلامٌ عليْه رَوْنَقُ الحَقِّ لامعُ
٢ وهذا مَقَامٌ لو تركْنا مَديحَهُ لأغْناهُ نُورٌ للأبُوّة ساطعُ
٣ يضيقُ مَجالُ القولِ في مدْحِ غَيْركُمْ وإنْ ذُكرَتْ آلاؤكُمْ فَهْوَ واسعُ
٤ وقَدْ نَطَقَ القُرآنُ فيكَ بكُلِّ ما يُقَصِّرُ دانٍ عنْ مَداهُ وشاسعُ
٥ ولاكنّما نُثْني عليْكمْ تَقَرُّباً إلى اللّه إذْ أنْتُم لهُ الذرايعُ
٦ وللّه فيكُمْ أدْؤرٌ نبويّةٌ وسَيْرٌ هُدىً منْهُ خفيٌّ وذايعٌ
٧ تَراهُ وأسْتارُ المَهابةِ دُونَهُ فلا هو مَكْتومٌ ولا هو شاسعُ
٨ ولولاكم ما باشَرَ الأرْض سائدٌ بوُدٍّ ولا أوْما إلى الأرْضِ ناكعُ
٩ حَلَلْتُم مِنَ الْعَلْياءِ حَيْثُ تَفجَّرتْ سُيُولٌ بِبِيضِ المَكْرُماتِ دوافعُ

١٠ فَلا غَرْوَ أنْ حَلَّقْتَ في جَوِّ سُودَدٍ به طائرُ النَسْرَيْنِ دونَكَ واقِعُ
١١ وأصْبَحْتَ للدُّنيا وللدِّينِ عاضداً بِشَرْعَتِه رُضِيَ الهُدَى والشرايعُ
١٢ خُلِقْتَ لِهذا الدينِ قلْباً وناظراً وغَيْرُكَ لَحْفانٌ لهُ وأضالِعُ
١٣ فَأنتُمْ نَبيَّ الدهْرِ زُهْرٌ منيرَةٌ غَواربُها حتّى المِهادِ طَوالِعُ
١٤ إذا كانَ أمْرُ اللّهِ وَقْعاً عليْكُمُ فَسيّان كَهْلٌ فيهِ منْكُمْ وَيَافِعُ
١٥ وَقَدْ بَذَّ موسى كَيْدَ فِرْعَوْنَ مُرْضعاً وحُرِّمَ منْ خوْفٍ عليه المَراضِعُ
١٦ وكَلَّمَ عيسى وهْوَ في المهْدِ قَوْمَهُ بما ذهلَتْ منْهُ اللُما والمسامعُ
١٧ تَمَلَّ أميرَ المؤمنينَ بدولةٍ لها اللّهُ كافٍ والكفيلُ طلائعُ
١٨ لِواءٌ تَوَلّى اللهُ رَفْعَ مَنارِهِ ولَنْ يَخْفِضَ الأعْداءُ ما اللهُ رافِعُ
١٩ وزيرٌ أقامتْهُ الخلافةُ كافلاً يُفاوِضُها في أمْرِها ويُراجِعُ
٢٠ تَقولُ لهُ مَهْمَى أتَى تَسْتَشيرُها أَجِدْ ما تَرى واصْدَعْ بِما أنْتَ صادِعُ
٢١ وما فَوّضتْ إلاّ إلى رأيِ مُشْفِقٍ يُبادِرُ في أغْراضِها ويُسارِعُ
٢٢ حُسامٌ لهُ سُمْرُ الرِماحِ مخاصِرٌ وبيضُ السيوفِ المُرْهفاتِ يتابِعُ
٢٣ إذا صالَ فالصعْبُ الشكيمةِ مُذْعِنٌ وَإنْ نالَ فالْعاصي القَريحَةِ طايِعُ
٢٤ لهُ ديَما باسٍ جزيلٍ ونائلٍ وفاؤُهما هامٍ مَدَى الدَهْرِ هامِعُ
٢٥ نَدىً ورَحىً في السِّلْمِ والحرْبِ لمْ يَزَلْ لِفَيْضِهما منْ راحَتَيْهِ يَنابِعُ
٢٦ حَمَى حَوْزَةَ الإسلامِ عن كُلِّ طارِقٍ فَلا السرْبُ مَطْروقٌ ولا الشرْبُ ضائعُ
٢٧ وكثَّرَ أعْدادَ الفُتوحِ بعَزْمةٍ تُناضِلُ عنْ دينِ الهُدى وتُماصِعُ
٢٨ ودَوَّخَ صُنَّ المُشركينَ وَبُرَّهُمْ قَطائعُ من اسْطولِه وقَواطِعُ
٢٩ وفي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ تَجْتَلي العَيْنُ منْهُمُ عَقائلَ مَحْبوبٌ إلَيْها قَلائعُ
٣٠ وجَرّدَ منْ ذُخْرِ الأئمّةِ صارِماً يُخافُ المَناوِي في حَدِّه والمَنازِعُ
٣١ سما الناصرُ المُحْيي إلى الغايةِ التي يُجَدُّ الأماني دونَها والمَطامِعُ
٣٢ فأمْسَتْ لَهُ منْ آلِ رُزّيكَ أُسْرَةٌ هُوَ الكَفُّ عنْد البَطْشِ وَهْيَ الأصابِعُ
٣٣ إذا ركِبتْ منْ حَوْلِه حالَ جَيْشَهُ وبَيْنَ العدى سُدٌّ منَ العزِّ مانِعُ
٣٤ خليلُ أميرِ المؤمنينَ وذُخْرُهُ وصارِمُهُ في حيْثُ تَهْبُو القَواطِعُ
٣٥ مَناقبُ مَجْدٍ لَمْ عَرَتْها كَلالةٌ لَقَدْ جَلَّ مَتْبوعٌ لديْها وتَابِعُ
٣٦ كَأنَّهما في رُقْبَةِ المَجْدِ كَوْكَبٌ وبَدْرٌ وإلاّ اسْمٌ وفِعْلٌ مُضارِعُ
٣٧ إذا ذَكرَتْ غَسّانُ يوماً عُلاهُما فَمَنْ نَهْشَلٌ في دارِمٍ ومُجاشِعُ
٣٨ فيا عاضِدَ الدينِ الحَنيفِ وخَيْرَ مَنْ تُشَرَّبُ بالأشْعارِ فيهِ المسامِعُ

٣٩ لِيهْنِكَ عامٌ لو تَجسّمَ شخْصَهُ بَدا منهُ وَجْهٌ رائقُ الحُسْنِ رائعُ
٤٠ فأُقِرّتْ لهُ الأنامُ ظئراً بِفَضْلِه فليسَ لهُ في الفَضْلِ طُرّاً مُنازِعُ
٤١ وما فَضِلَ الأعْوامَ إلاّ كأنّهُ يُؤرّخُ فيه بَعْضُ ما أنْتَ صانِعُ
٤٢ جلَتْ صِبْغَ لَوْثَيْ ليلِه ونهارِه وقائعُ مِن أفْعالِكُمْ وَصنائعُ
٤٣ فأيّامُهُ الغُرُّ السَعيدةُ أَعْبُدٌ لَكُمْ ولياليه إماءٌ خَواضِعُ
٤٤ ثَنَى عامُ خَمْسٍ جيدَهُ مُتلَفِّفاً إلَيْكمْ إلى أنْ أوْجَعَتْهُ الأخادِعُ
٤٥ وزارَكُمُ العيدُ السَعيدُ مُبشِّراً لكُمْ بِفُتُوحٍ نَصْرُها مُتتابِعُ
٤٦ فَمُتِّعَ كُلٌّ منكُما بوَلِيِّه مَدَى الدهْرِ ما غَنّى الحَمامُ السواجِعُ
٤٧ ولاَ زالَ هذا الدَّهْرُ وَقْفاً عليكُما مُقِيمُ الأواخِيَ ما أقامَ مُتالِعُ

Poem to rhyme *muttasimu*; does not appear in *Ms D*, therefore it is not included in the edition Derenbourg, *Nukat-Diwan*. However, it is in *Ms Rabat*, p. 217-219. The poem is introduced with the words: "In honour of Al-ʿÂḍid he also said the following…"

وقال أيضاً يمْدَحُ العاضِدَ

١ عامٌ عنِ السَعْدِ والإقْبالِ مُبْتَسِمُ وموسِمٌ بدَواحِ العِزِّ مُتَّسِمُ
٢ ودولةٌ فَضْلُها في الخَلْقِ مُنْتشِرٌ وشَمْلُها بإمامِ العَصْرِ مُنتظِمُ
٣ العاضِدُ عاضِدُ الدينِ الحنيفِ وقدْ كادتْ عُراهُ منَ الإنْشقاقِ تَنْفَصِمُ
٤ خليفَةٌ باتَ دينُ اللّهِ مُعْتَصِماً بحَبْلِه وبحَبْلِ اللّهِ يعْتَصِمُ
٥ لمّا أنارتْ لنا أنْوارُ بيعَتِه تكَشّفَ الظُّلْمُ وانْجابَتِ الظُّلَمُ
٦ وأشْرقَ الدينُ والدنيا ببَيْعَتِه والنارُ لو لم تَلُحْ لمْ يُعْرَفِ العَلَمُ
٧ ورِثْتَ عيسى وعيسى رحْمَةً وَهُدىً كَأنّكمْ بَيّناتٌ بينَهما رَحِمُ
٨ سادَ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ لَمّا اشْتَدَّ ساعِدُهُ والفاطميّونَ شادوا قبْلَ أنْ فُطِمُ
٩ أئمّةٌ ما عَلِمْنا قَبْلَ رؤيتِهم أنَّ الحُظوظَ بلَثْمِ الأرْضِ تُقْتَسَمُ
١٠ قدْ أخْبَرَتْ سُوَرُ الفُرْقانِ أنّهمُ خلائقُ اللّهِ لا فُرْقانٌ بينَهُمُ
١١ الْكَهْلُ والطِفْلُ شَرْعٌ في شريعتِهمْ ورُبَّ حِلمٍ أتى منْ بعْدِه الحُلُمُ
١٢ وقَدْ رَأيْنا عِياناً فيكَ ما شَرَطُوا منَ الْكمالِ وما سَنُّوا وما وَسَمُ
١٣ إنّ الأهلّةَ لو يَعْلَمْنَ ما عَلِمَتْ ألْبابُنا منكَ كانتْ فيكَ تَخْتَصِمُ
١٤ يَلْقاكَ مُسْتَقْبِلٌ مِنْها فيحمَدُهُ على لِقائِكَ ماضٍ وهْوَ مُنْصَرِمُ

١٥ حَرَّمْتَ عدْلاً شُهورَ الدَهْرِ قاطبةً فَلَيْسَ يُعْرَفُ منها الأشْهُرُ الحُرُمُ
١٦ وأصبَحَ القَصْرُ مَحْجوجاً ومُنْتَجَعاً كأنّما حلَّ فيه الحِلُّ والحَرَمُ
١٧ قَصْرٌ يُقَبَّلُ بالأفْواه تَكْرِمةً والرُكْنُ يُومى إليه حتّى يُسْتَلَمُ
١٨ قدْ زاد في شرَفِ الأملاكِ بلْ خَطَرِ الأفْــلاكِ أنّ قيامَها لكمْ خَدَمُ
١٩ فمِنْ مُلُوكٍ على أبوابكم زُمَرُ ومِنْ ملوائكةٍ بالذكرِ تزْدحِمُ
٢٠ وإنّ أيّامَكمْ دامتْ مُخلّدةً ساعاتُها فُرَصٌ للأجْرِ تُغْتَنَمُ
٢١ وأنّ دولتكمْ من حُسن سيرتكم كأنّ يقْظتَها في ظلّها حلُمُ
٢٢ والناصرُ الذخْرُ كافيها وكافلُها ومَنْ به كُشفَتْ عن وَجْهها الغُمَمُ
٢٣ أبو الشُّجاع الذي لولاهُ ما نَهَضَتْ للنَّصْرِ قادمةٌ فيها ولا قَدَمُ
٢٤ أعزَّ بالباسِ والإحْسان حوْزَتَها فلم يخيّمْ بها خوْفٌ ولا عَدَمُ
٢٥ تبَسّمَ الدَسْتُ منْ رُزَيْكَ عن مَلِكٍ تَنْحطُّ عن قَدْرِه الأقْدارُ والهِمَمُ
٢٦ مُقابلٌ في مقامِ المَجْدِ مُقْتبلَ الأيّامِ لا صِغَرٌ فيها ولا هَرَمُ
٢٧ أشَمُّ أبْلَجُ منْ عُثمانَ زينتُهُ أن ليـــــسَ من شيمَتِه الكبْرُ والشَمَمُ
٢٨ يدْنو ويُبْعِدُ في حالَتَيْ نَدىً وردىً كالدَهْرِ يُنْعِمُ أحْياناً ويَنْتقِمُ
٢٩ الكافلُ الخلفاءَ الراشدينَ ومَنْ ترضىَ الإمامةُ عن يوميْهِ وتَرْأمُ
٣٠ قادتْ إليه زِمامَ المُلكِ أربعةٌ نصرُ الهُدى والندى والسيفُ والقلمُ
٣١ وهَذَّبتْ منه خلقَ الدَهْرِ أربعةٌ العِلْمُ والحلمُ والمعروفُ والكرَمُ
٣٢ وصاحَبَتْ منه قولَ الصدْقِ أربعةٌ العَهْدُ والوَعْدُ والميثاقُ والذمُ
٣٣ وصَدَّقتْ مادحيه منه أربعةٌ الأصْلُ والفرعُ والأخْلاقُ واليَتَمُ
٣٤ فالجَوْرُ والنَجْلُ والإشْراكُ مُنْصَدِعٌ والعَدْلُ والجُودُ والإيمانُ مُلْتَئِمُ
٣٥ لولاك بعد أبي الغاراتِ ما رُفِعتْ لأهْلِ ذا الفنِّ أقْدارٌ ولا همَمُ
٣٦ هذا الثناءُ الذي جادتْ مغارسهُ في صَوْبِ راحتكَ الأنْواءُ والديَمُ
٣٧ عوارفٌ من جميلِ الصَنْعِ حَمّلَها معارفٌ حَكمَتْ أنْ تَعْوَرَ الحكَمُ
٣٨ إنّي لَيُعْجِبُني شعْري وأقْرَنُهُ إلى نَداكُمْ فأسْتَحِي وأحْتَشِمُ



AnIsl 35 (2001), p. 549-626 Pieter Smoor

## TRANSLATIONS

### Summary: poem to rhyme *maṣʿadu*

The first 27 lines concern the Imâm. He is addressed as: "You have inherited from ʿÎsâ al-Fâ'iz." This was predetermined even before "the nights of the cradle". The idea of an emanation emerges, first the Great Communication, then Lights, then a Body. It makes no difference whether the Imâm is old or young. There is a secret journeying forward through the course of time.

(New section discovered in *Ms Rabat*: verses 18-44)

Collectively the Rajabs form the Time. The nights are female slaves, the days are male slaves. The person praised is the king of both black and white times and the black and white inhabitants of those times are loyal to You.

Your qualities (*ṣifât*) appear both in the Koran and in poetry, making the reciter of the Koran and the reciter of poetry equal to one another.

As for the Regent, he is the Gate of Compassion, the Gate of the Sustenance of Life. There is loyalty (*walâ'*) from the Banû Ruzzîk for the clan of the Imâm al-Ḥâfiẓ.

Regarding Al-Ajallu Nâṣir, the "Resurrector" and the "Treasure Chest", some comments are offered: he governs the *Dahr*, he is a Lion. His father supports the Just Leadership and has caused the injustice of the Banû Munâdin to cease. And his father was told by Glory: "Rise up!"

(End of the newly discovered section.)

Verse 45 is about ʿUmâra himself and his relationship with the Imâm: the seeing with one's own eye. Perfection is not an "unlikely tale". It is to do with His existence which is a benefaction from Allah. There follows a passage from the Koran: "Him we ask for help and Him we worship" for the Imâm's existence is a benefaction from Allah.

In verse 42 the Banû Munâdin are named, but who they are is not disclosed. (The Banû Munâdin are members of a royal dynasty from whom ʿAbbâs and his son Naṣr are descended. Naṣr murdered the Imâm and almost certainly did so on the orders of his father, ʿAbbâs, who was at that time Al-Ẓâfir's Vizier.)

## Translation of poem to rhyme *maṣʿadu*

*Ms D*: "Concerning Al-ʿÂḍid he said the following:

1 Is it the heaven of a kingdom, below which there is a seat for You? Or the throne of godliness, above which there is a place of ascension for You?

2 Is it a portico of fame, the rooms of which are high? Or a Palace of glory plastered with stars?

3 Is it the radiance of the countenance of Al-ʿÂḍid the son of Mohammed in the crown? Or the light of Just Leadership which flames up?

4 He who arises is personified by honour; his glory is continued by ʿAlî and Mohammed:

5 Two forefathers, whose replacement You have provided through organization and regulation.

6 Your protection was, broadly speaking, for all subjects; thus the Polytheist and the Monotheist received equal shares of Your justice.

7 You have united the group of Muslims through a *bayʿa* which watched over the organization of the kingdom when it was shattered.

8 You, Oh *Amîr* of the Believers, have personified a Caliphate which through both your hands was dissolved and secured.

9 You have inherited a position from ʿÎsâ, the son of Your uncle, a position which had already been introduced before the nights of the cradle (*layâlî l-mahdi*) had come.

10 We can see You, and we cannot see You; only our thoughts follow (You) as a result of the designation (*naṣṣ*) of You as successor.

11 Due to You our limbs are jealous of our eyes; our eyes are envied because of Your majesty.

12 You are information from the great communication (*al-naba' al-ʿaẓîm*), whose lights have become a body, but the Light itself did not become a body.

13 You are an honour which makes the greying elderly, the middle-aged and the beardless youth all alike amongst Your people.

14 And You are a secret on the path of time, who moves among Your folk and re-appears again.

15 May it make the Feasts happy that the looseness of their notation has now been clarified and recorded on a date in Your name.

16 *Rajab* belongs to the sacred affairs which You have made respectful, thus its threads are generally a sacred fabric; but this *Rajab* is unique.

17 Oh had it (*Rajab*) only been a personality when it kissed the earth in praise of what Your forefather Aḥmad had conferred upon it!"

(Beginning of the recently discovered passage.)

"18 You became king of the *Rajabs* of Time, thus its vicissitudes served You and its stars were extremely fortunate.

19 As far as the nights of time are concerned, You have subdued female slaves; and likewise with regard to its days, male slaves.

20 Precisely in this way, You were king of the black and white territory, whose black and white inhabitants were loyal to You.
21 You divided the beauty of Your energy, dividing it equally amongst them, as You scattered it.
22 Its highest angels have risen up to thank You, whilst its lowliest kings have been brought to prostration by Your reputation.
23 Yesterday was delighted with the provisions with which You furnished it, and Today and Tomorrow are happy due to Your proximity.
24 When communications about Your character derive from an *isnâd* which emanates from Your excellence, then they are traced to the Prophethood.
25 Your radiant qualities (*ṣifât*) of leadership have been set in poetry based on the Koran, thus the reciter of the Koran and the reciter of poetry are equal.
26 When Fortune grips a eulogist he sings a hymn of praise; however, the fame of the *mamdûḥ* makes him blessed.
27 Oh Argument of Allah, whose evidence cannot be rejected, like the Sun blinding in its light.
28 May the Merciful sustain Your Regent for You; a Regent through whom Your exaltedness is protected and assisted.
29 He is the Gateway to Your Compassion (*Bâbu raḥmatika*); and the gate of the sustenance of life (*bâbu l-rizqi*) is slammed shut for those who are unable to pass through.
30 And by praise and by songs, the Warrantor of Your dynasty will renew its beautiful aspects.
31 This dynasty delegated the issuing of commands to him; however, at the same time, he introduced and executed things on the authority of Your exaltedness.
32 He counted Your order as a part of obedience and worship (*ʿibâda*), if it is possible to worship people other than Allah.
33 The Banû Ruzzîk helped the Clan of Mohammed, thereupon Allah will help and support their affairs.
34 For the Clan of Al-Ḥâfiẓ, they retained respectful positions which were ensured by the genuineness of their "loyalty" (*walâ'*).
35 When they desire to do something beautiful, the members of this (vizieral) clan do so deliberately (*taʿammadû*); and when they see the mistake of a wrongdoer, they put their swords in their sheaths (*taghammadû*).
36 Al-Ajallu al-Nâṣir al-Muḥyî (the son of Ṭalâ'iʿ al-Malik al-Ṣâliḥ) raised up glory for them, the extremely glorious and proud demean themselves before it.
37 He is the "Treasure Chest of the Imâms"; or rather their friend, for whom their little fingers were crooked and united (in the enumeration of his good qualities).
38 The Support of the Imâm, Achiever of virtues which include the governing of his *Dahr* and his material possessions.
39 He is a short-haired thoroughbred; a Lion who shows You the lightning on the blade of a sword which cuts as he brandishes it. (Alternative version: He is a short-haired thoroughbred; a lion who shows You a bolt of lightning on the back of the Zephyr, cutting like a sword as he brandishes it.)

40 Although he led and ruled over the kings of Time in their totality, his father is the most majestic, the overlord (*al-ajallu al-sayyidu*):
41 He is Al-Ṣâliḥ, the Just Leader who has supported the Just Leadership (scil., the Imâm) in the midst of a people who did not allow his radiance to lead them.
42 His pure justice caused the injustice of the Banû Munâdin to cease and his insight reformed what they had brought about in their wickedness.
43 He rescued the sworn treaties from their hands with a hand which was effective in all its pious deeds. (ʿAbbâs and Naṣr broke their oaths of loyalty when they murdered Al-Ẓâfir.)
44 He is a king to whose Glory the ranks of the exalted chant the following: 'Rise on high, because You are the bravest and the most suitable!'"

(End of the recently discovered passage.)

"45 He (the poet) praised his (the Imâm's, or the Vizier's) favours, using praiseworthy qualifications, including the *qaṣîda*s and the broken spearshafts (*al-qaṣâ'idu wa l-qanâ l-mutaqaṣṣidu*).
46 Were it not for the praiseworthiness of his deeds and words, then neither the tongue nor the hand would have garnered praise.
47 Were it not for the nobility of his qualities and his majesty, then the deeper motif of neither intelligence nor might would have been known.
48 Were it not for seeing with one's own eyes, and what one sees of his excellence, then perfection would have become an unlikely tale.
49 I have not summarised the explanation of the genre of *madîḥ*; however, it is simply that my words are exhausted, yet Your excellency is inexhaustible.
50 And laudation of the most majestic person who has ever been glorified and praised, is the most obvious compulsory duty.
51 Your existence is the greatest benefaction bestowed by Allah. For that we ask Him for help and we worship Him."

## Summary: poem to rhyme *jimâli*

In this poem, the first theme is one of religiously-orientated praise of the Imâm, followed by a eulogy to the King. It appears that the title *malik*, "King", is of significance to this poem. It may be that the Vizier has recently been appointed "King" by the Imâm. The titles of Ṭalâ'iʿ were given to him on the basis of an honorary proclamation (*tashrîf*) from Al-Fâ'iz, the date of this proclamation being 4th day of *Rabîʿ* II, in the year 449 H. However, in line 47 of the poem to rhyme *jimâli*, ʿUmâra emphasises that in respect of this Vizier these were not merely ecstatic words.

## Translation of poem to rhyme *jimâli*

*Ms Raba*t: "In honour of Al-Ẓâfir and his Vizier Al-Ṣâliḥ, he also said the following:

1 Is it a heaven determined by fate (*qadar*) or a heaven of majesty? And the glow of a full moon or the desires of camels?

2 Is it the establishment of a kingdom or the foundation of Compassion, from which the Revelation was watered by rain clouds from Shawwâl?

3 I offered the nights no reprimand; You have given to me so generously something which could never have entered into my expectations.

4 You have enabled me to attain this position, one which I would never have aspired to due to its awesomeness.

5 I observe the manifest light, in front of which a veil of esteem and awe hangs down, however.

6 And I behold the *Mahdî*, but he is a *Mahdî* amongst men in the land of ignorant folk.

7 Oh *Amîr* of the Believers, I swear an oath by what I see here of an ʿAlawid rank and an exalted position:

8 'That the Kingdoms and Kings form in their entirety a support for this high rank.'

9 I swore that on the face of the earth there was no-one like Him to be found among the tasters of deep truth.

10 The insight of people who are loyal towards another than the Praised One, these people would sell Just Leadership in exchange for back-sliding.

11 This is the Light to whom the shining stars have borne witness from a high place.

12 This is the Message, as a result of which the *ʿUlamâ'* have taken pride in the *Dunyâ* rather than the Ignorant.

13 This is the Secret: and should You never have been on earth, then it would have had no protection against tremors.

14 This is the clear line of Descent; so put your faith in it and dismiss all speculation and questions of proof.

15 This is the *Amîr* of the Believers, and the Protector of the monotheistic (*ḥanîfî*) religion and the prayer-direction of the symbols.

16 Had there not been benefaction for his father and his forefather, then he would not have been satisfied with our pious works.

17 Oh You, the Best, who can be traced back to the best origins, and oh You, the most Distinguished who are a descendant of the most noble clan (*âl*)!

18 The crescent moons are indeed fortunate in Your radiance, which was never fearful of contact with darkness, nor of diminution of perfection. (scil., due to his radiance the Imâm himself is an eternally full moon.)

19 *Ramaḍân* is the same as the other months, except that Your favour gave it good value, placing it above its equals.

20 Were there not the obligation of its Fast and its other activities, then it would have been no prouder than *Shawwâl*.

21 You were highly exalted, just as the importance of its *Qadar*-night is exalted above the importance of the days and the nights, and that which accompanies them.

22 Similarly, one amongst mankind who is observed by You, is equal to one who is noticed by the eye of fortune and success.

23 Al-Ẓâfir has so much Honour that no other person from a bygone age could boast of such honour.

24 He (scil., the Vizier Al-Malik al-Ṣâliḥ) is the Pious One, the King (*Al-Ṣâliḥi al-maliki*) who supports the Just Leadership by bearing both burdens and heavy things.

25 The eyes of the people have been plunged into deep sleep since he started guarding them by night; and how pleasant is this Guardian!

26 The clouds of reward and punishment carry with them clouds of sustenance and preordained death.

27 He helped the Dynasty of the Âl Aḥmad, after it had been brought into confusion, and after its shadow had acknowledged that it would soon end.

28 If the emergence (*ṭulûʿ*) of Ṭalâ'iʿ had not taken place, and if he had not defended You by fighting against and disputing with your enemies,

29 Then there would not have been one person left in all the districts of Egypt who would have remained loyal to the sons of the Prophet.

30 What marvellous powers of decision he has, neither bowed down by fear of ruin, nor by the council meeting of censors!

31 The Victory of the Imâms does not change into a Defeat or a multitude of deserting people.

32 Thus he sought advice from the truthfulness of the souls, until they had brought ʿAbbâs to the worst end.

33 Because of the souls the directions of his banners were narrow, while the sly-eyed people (*al-ḥûlu*, according to the *Lisân al-ʿArab*: the Crusaders) continually practised the deceit of the stealthy hunter.

34 After they had been elevated, since they both became allies of low behaviour and underwent exemplary punishment, You have abandoned him and his son.

35 His (scil., the Vizier's) clouds of Red Revenge throw themselves against the pair of them, filled with Woe and Disaster.

36 Indeed, Al-Ajallu al-Nâṣir (scil., the son of the Vizier) has imitated what you had made clear through Sunna and Example.

37 You should obtain satisfaction from what you have entrusted to leadership (*siyâsa*), unaffected by doubt or haste:

38 He adorned youth with dignity, and when he was amongst us, he did not lead the life of a conceited braggart.

39 When he came amongst the people to imitate the characteristics of your Justice, for their sake, he did not hold tightly to disorder.

40 Awe of him was sufficient for the hands of his people because, after a protracted period, it restrained injustice.

41 And you have unclosed his palm; command then an abundance of grace in godly fear for the safety of human spirits and riches.

42 Any king would begin to complain about the absence of an equal or a like minded soul, but You are an exception.

43 On the day that they boasted to each other about the good quality of their words and deeds, the kings themselves did not deny

44 That Ibn Ruzzîk is the unique pearl of his *Dahr* and will be unparalleled in his excellence and charity;

45 And that on the day of bravery and abundant dew, he is a rain cloud of gifts (*ghaythu anzâl*) and a lion on the field of battle (*laythu nizâl*).

46 They named him freely, not paying attention to his actions, but what is the use of names without deeds?

47 He is a king, for whom the ambitions of glory speak favourable words, words the Language of Things would like to take charge of.

48 Be proud of nothing but Your soul alone, then the *Dahr* will be ornamented by the pure jewels of your deeds.

49 You are both expensive and cheap, in highness and humbleness; and I was surprised by something which was both cheap and expensive.

50 Fare thee well, Oh *Amîr* of the Believers, for whom *Al-Ṣâliḥ*, the Just Leader, has been given (*muballaghan*) as a most noble example.

51 And may both of You enjoy for a long time the high honour of life and may the eye of Just Leadership never see the end of your shadows.

52 May You both be happy for as long as you desire, while your mutual Loftiness is protected in both its morning and its evening hours."

## Summary: poem to rhyme *lâmiʿu*

"The most distinguished word is a word of deep truth. The Koran has related everything about You. We praise You, because You are a dividing screen between us and Him: Allah has in you a number of *adʾura nabawiyya* (Prophetic Abodes) and a *sayr* (an orbit). From these Just Leadership emerges both secretly and openly.

You are descended from on High. You are an *ʿÂḍid* for the *Dunyâ* and *Dîn*. For religion You are both the heart and the pupil of the eye, and the other people are but simply ribs.

Oh Prophet of the *Dahr*! You bring light. When the *amr* (command) of Allah descends, both old and young are equal. As a baby, Moses found a wet-nurse for himself, although Pharaoh had forbidden the wet-nurses to offer help through their milk. As a baby, ʿÎsâ spoke to his people.

(Verse 17:) Oh *Amîr* of the Believers, Allah is the protector of Your Dynasty; and Ṭalâʾiʿ is the Regent. This Regent has protected the dwelling of Islam. (verse 28:) The Polytheists are humiliated by *qaṭâʾiʿu* "the feudal system of property", *i.e.*, their lands have been taken from them and meted out to the Believers; and by *qawâṭiʿu* "swords" from the fleet of the Regent.

(Verse 29:) Women have been unveiled, but they loved their veils greatly.[71]

Al-Nâṣir al-Muḥyî is the Regent's sword, but he is not alone: other members of the Âl Ruzzîk offer support. He (the Regent) is a star and a friend of the *Amîr al-muʾminîn*, both his *Dhukhr* (Treasure Chest) and his Sword. This friend and the *Amîr* are like a Star and a Full Moon. Both can also be compared to a phenomenon which appears in Arabic grammar: a noun and an imperfect tense who agree with each other.

The tribal federation of Ghassân is easily surpassed by both of them. (Here the Regent and his son are apparently being referred to, because these two members of the clan of Ruzzîk were affiliated to the Ghassân).

However, one might ask what the position of the others was, for example Nahshal and Mujâshiʿ? Both of these were sub-clans of Dârim, to whom the poet Farazdaq once belonged. And Farazdaq was of pure Arabian lineage.

On behalf of a specific year, congratulations are being offered, and the following is said:

Oh ʿÂḍid, oh Supporter of the *ḥanîfî* (monotheistic) religion! May you be congratulated on the year which has gone by. Humankind is now Your wet-nurse.

*ʿÂmu khamsin* (Year Five) has become a person and is inclining its neck towards You. Oh ʿÂḍid, may both You and Your Regent be like a *walî* (loyal friend) to each other and may You remain so for all *Dahr*!

Thus the Imâm and the Regent will continue to support each other. The *Dahr* must be a *waqf*, in order to maintain the Brotherhood for them."

[71] An alternative translation would read: "but they loved the sails greatly".

## Translation of poem to rhyme *lâmiʿu*

*Ms Rabat*: "In honour of Al-ʿÂḍid, he said the following:

1 The most distinguished word which was entrusted to the hearing of man, is a word over which the radiance of deep truth is sparkling.

2 Here is the highest rank: suppose that we had refrained from eulogising him, then the light of fatherhood shining on high would have been sufficient for him.

3 In the eulogising of others the sphere of speaking is limited; but if Your beneficence is named then it is greatly increased.

4 The Koran has pronounced everything about You, in Your domain both those close by and those far removed are most imperfect.

5 When seeking proximity to Allah we praise You, because You act as a screen in front of Him.

6 Among Your people Allah has Prophetic abodes (*ad'urun nabawiyyatun*) and an orbit (*sayrun*), from which Just Leadership emerges, both in secret and openly.

7 You can see him, although the veils of awe are still between him and us; thus he is neither hidden nor yet far and wide renowned.

8 And had You not wandered there, then no prince would have treated the earth with love, and no corrective power would have made a sign towards the earth.

9 You have descended from on High to the place where torrents clear themselves a path, whilst driving foaming blessings forwards.

10 Thus it is no surprise that You circle around in the air of Lordship, where a bird from the constellation of the Two Eagles alights at a lower point.

11 And You have become an *ʿÂḍid* (Supporter) for World and Religion, through whose revelation Just Leadership and Laws have been satisfied.

12 For this religion You have been created as a heart and an eye, whilst others than You form the tissue and the ribs.

13 Oh Prophet of the *Dahr*, thus Your people are shining luminous people, whose peaks rise up above even the highest ground.

14 When the Command of Allah descends upon your people, then young and old become as one.

15 Once before, Mûsâ had suppressed Pharaoh's plot by using a wet-nurse (*murḍiʿan*, a woman who gave him her breast when he was still a baby), although the wet-nurses (*al-marâḍiʿu*), for fear of Pharaoh, had become inaccessible. (Cf. Koran concerning Moses, sura 20, verses 36-40 and sura 28, verses 7-13.)

16 ʿÎsâ spoke to his people when he was still in the crib, with something which caused bewilderment to people's lips and ears. (Cf. Koran concerning Jesus, sura 3, verses 45-49.)

17 Oh *Amîr al-Mu'minîn*, may You enjoy for a long time a *Dawla*, over which Allah is the protector, and Ṭalâ'iʿ the Regent.

18 You are a banner, whose shining light Allah has raised, and enemies will never lower that which Allah himself has justly raised.

19 The Caliphate has created as Warrantor a Vizier, who will take charge of its business and control it.

20 Whenever the Vizier comes in order to advise it, the Caliphate says to him: "What is your opinion? Ensure that you bring to realisation whatever you plan to realise!"

21 It (the Caliphate) only gave authority to one who was sympathetic, one who dealt with the aims of the Caliphate both promptly and quickly.

22 He is a Sword, he has the shafts of spears as sceptres, whilst the brightness of the sharpened swords follows on behind.

23 When he attacks with violence, then the untamed are subdued despite having no bit in their mouths; and should he give anything, then the wills of the rebellious will become pliant.

24 As long as the *Dahr* continues, there shall be two types of rain; abundant severity and gifts which drip down.

25 Dew in peace and a millstone in war, the sources of abundance of these two find no end when flowing from the palms of his hands.

26 He guards the dwelling of Islam against every nocturnal raider; hence neither the herd is attacked nor the drink wasted.

27 He has made the number of his conquests plentiful through a resolution which struggled to defend the religion of the Just Leadership and argued on its behalf.

28 The pride and the anger of the Polytheists was humbled by the divisions (*qaṭâ'iʿu*) and cutting swords (*qawâṭiʿu*) of his fleet.

29 And every day the Eye (of the Conqueror) strips the veils from the well-protected women, for whom the veils are a beloved thing.

30 He drew a Sword, namely his *Dhukhr al-a'imma* (Treasure Chest of the Imâms), the sharpness of which caused his intentions to be feared and his targets to be fearful.

31 Al-Nâṣir al-Muḥyî rose to the challenge, but the wishes and desires of others were aimed at a target far below.

32 The Âl Ruzzîk were a family to him, such that in an attack he was the hand and they were the fingers.

33 When this family rode alongside him, there appeared between his army and the enemy a barricade of defensive strength.

34 He is the Friend of the *Amîr* of the Believers; he is his *Dhukhr* and his Sword, there where the *qawâṭiʿ* have risen on high.

35 With the honourable characteristics of glory which are not unexpectedly weakened, both a leader and a follower are equally majestic.

36 In the sight of glory these two are a Star and a Full moon, or alternatively a noun and an imperfect tense. (They are congruent and the one controls the other.)

37 When, on a certain day, Ghassân announces the Loftiness of them both, what then are people such as Nahshal and Mujâshiʿ (*i.e.*, Farazdaq's clan), among the federation of Dârim?

38 Oh ʿÂḍid of the *ḥanîfite* religion, the best ever to have had poetry recited about him, poetry which bathes the ears whenever it is recited!

39 Let this year congratulate You, if it chooses to be an embodiment of Your person, then it will appear with a countenance, pure in beauty and brilliance (*râ'iqu l-ḥusni râ'iʿu*).

40 Humankind as his wet-nurse recognised that he achieved excellence, because in all his excellence he had no rival.

41 He only transcended the years by their being chronicled in him that which You were going to do. (Notice the *ʿilm al-ghayb* ascribed to the Imâm here.)

42 Statutes and edicts of Your actions took away the stamp of uncleanness from its nights and its days.

43 Its shining and happy days are male slaves to your people and its nights are humbled female slaves.

44 Year Five bowed with its neck inclined towards Your people, until the veins in its neck became painful.

45 The Feast of fortune has visited You and Your people with the happy tidings of victories, victories which will be duly continued.

46 Allow each one of the pair of You to enjoy his *walî* (his friend) for the duration of the *Dahr*, and for as long as the cooing doves sing.

47 May this *Dahr* never cease to be a *waqf* for either of You, You who maintain the bonds of brotherhood for as long as the mountain Mutâliʿ continues to stand (near Baḥrayn between Al-Sawda and Al-Aḥsâ')."

## Summary: poem to rhyme *muttasimu*

A year smiles and lo and behold, a *Dawla* and the Imâm of the century! Al-ʿÂḍid is the "Supporter" of the monotheistic religion. The handles have almost been broken off, but there is still the cord of Allah and the Caliph holds on to that cord. Then there is also the religion of Allah which holds tight to the cord of the Caliph Al-ʿÂḍid. The Light of his inauguration, his *bayʿa*, shines over us. He has inherited from ʿÎsâ (his father) and ʿÎsâ (Jesus). The son of Mary only ruled when his arms became strong. However, the Fatimids ruled even before they were weaned (*fuṭimû*). (N.B.: there is a parallel with a poetic passage in Al-Qâḍî al-Fâḍil, to which the present author refers in his article in *Der Islam* 68, 1991, p. 261.)

Luck comes from kissing the ground and there is no distinction made between the Imâms: the elderly and the child are alike. Thus wisdom (*ḥilm*) comes even before adolescence (*ḥulum*).

The moons argued with one another about the Imâm. Through him all the lunar months of the *Dahr* have become equally sacred. The Imâm stands above the Moon! (After all, he himself, and not the thin moon's disc, determines when the Fasting should begin and end.)

The Palace is for pilgrims. Kings and heavenly spheres are the servants of the Imâm. Kings are beside his door, angels push each other aside with the *dhikr*. The *Dawla* is in a dream influenced by the Imâm's way of life, his *sîra*. Al-Nâṣir Abû l-Shujâʿ is Guarantor. The throne smiles, revealing a Ruzzîk king who encounters young days. He is proud, unlike

ʿUthmân who was not proud; and this was precisely the *zîna* (beautiful aspect) of ʿUthmân! (It is not certain whether the poet intends to be mocking or ironic with this description.)

The Imamate is content with the *Kâfil*, the Regent. He acquires the reins of the kingdom in four ways. The morals of the *Dahr* were made civilised in four ways. The speaking of Honesty was distinguished in four ways. Those who praised him were confirmed in four ways: including *al-Yatam*, the Orphanhood. (The Imâm Al-ʿÂḍid was, incidentally, an orphan and, at the end of his Vizirate, Ḍirghâm confiscated the "orphans' money".)

Polytheism was split and belief was restored. The new Vizier arrived after the death of his father Abû l-Ghârât. At the end of the poem the theme of poetry in exchange for great gifts emerges.

## Translation of poem to rhyme *muttasimu*

*Ms Rabat*: "In honour of Al-ʿÂḍid he also said the following:

1 Here is a year that smiles with luck and success, and a feast permeated with the aroma of nobility.

2 And a *Dawla* whose excellence is spread amongst the people while its totality is regulated by the Imâm of the century.

3 Al-ʿÂḍid is the Supporter (*Al-ʿâḍid*) of the *Ḥanîfî* religion, when its handles were almost broken and split.

4 A Caliph whose cord the religion of Allah continues to grasp, while the Caliph holds onto the cord of Allah.

5 Once the lights of his *bayʿa* had given us light, injustice was taken away and darkness vanished.

6 Religion and the *Dunyâ* gave light through his *bayʿa*: if the fire had not appeared the beacon would never have been recognised.

7 From both ʿÎsâ and the other ʿÎsâ, You have inherited mercy and Just Leadership, as though both of them were offspring of the same womb.

8 The Son of Mary only ruled once his arm had become strong; however, the Fatimids ruled even before they were weaned. (Here the present author reads *sâdû* instead of *shâdû*, otherwise the reading would be "they constructed even before they were weaned". Concerning Jesus, cf. Koran sura 3, verses 45-49.)

9 Before we saw the Imâms, we did not know that portions of good luck were dealt out to those who kissed the ground.

10 The suras from the Koran (*Furqân*) have announced that they are creations of Allah amongst whom no difference (*furqân*) can be made.

11 The elderly person and the young child are alike in their *Sharîʿa*, by the time maturity comes much patiently acquired insight has already been gained.

12 With our own eyes we have seen in You what humankind proposed as a precondition for perfection; and what humankind established as law; and what humankind earmarked.

13 If the waxing moons knew what our intelligence knows of You, then they would quarrel amongst themselves over You (scil, in order to be allowed to own You).

14 One of these moons will come to meet You and whilst he is waning another passing moon will praise him because he has met You.
15 Through justice You have hallowed all the months of the *Dahr*, so that the sacred months are no longer distinguished from the others.
16 The Palace has become a place of pilgrimage, and of grazing, as if both the profane and the sacred have been brought together there.
17 Out of respect a Palace is kissed by mouths; the corner stone is held in focus until one touches it.
18 The honour of the kings, or rather the importance of the heavenly sphere, is increased because its management consists of Your servants.
19 There are groups of kings and angels at your door, groups which push each other aside with the *dhikr*.
20 May Your days be long, whilst the hours are opportunities which can be used as rewards.
21 May Your *Dawla* live in such a beautiful way that its vigil becomes like a dream in the shadow of its biography.
22 Al-Nâṣir the "Treasure Chest" is its protector and its Warrantor, and the one who removes the bewilderment from its expression:
23 Abû l-Shujâʿ, – had he never been, then no single vanguard and no foot would ever have taken a step towards victory.
24 Through severity and goodness he strengthened the enclosure, so that no fear and no poverty could put up their tents within it.
25 The throne smiled, revealing a king descended from Ruzzîk, against whose honesty fates and ambitions have sunk to the lowest levels.
26 He met in the ranks of fame the still young days, who were neither contemptible nor elderly.
27 He is superior and radiant, his adornment comes from ʿUthmân who was neither proud nor haughty.
28 Mercy brings him closer, while destruction distances him: just as the *Dahr* who sometimes does good and then revenges himself once more.
29 The Warrantor for the Justly-proceeding Caliphs and for himself, over whose days of comfort and sorrow the Imâmate is both content and merciful. (… *wa-man tarḍâ l-imâmatu ʿan yawmayhi wa-tar'amu*).[72]
30 The reins of the kingdom were forwarded to him through four subjects: the Victory (*naṣr*) of Just Leadership, Well-Being, the Sword and the Pen.
31 And, via him, the morals of the *Dahr* were made civilised in four ways: Scholarship, Long-suffering insight, Eminent Morals and Magnanimity.

[72] *Lisân al-ʿArab*: "wa-yawmâhu: yawmu nuʿmin wa-yawmu bu'sin fa l-yawmu hâhunâ bi-maʿnâ l-dahri ay dahrâhu kadhâlika".

32 And, via him, the speaking of honesty was accompanied by four items: a Contract, a Promise, the Primordial Covenant (*al-mîthâq*) and Family Honour.

33 The words of anyone who provides him (the Imâm) with praise, are via him confirmed by four things: a Root, a Branch, Morals and Orphanhood.

34 Injustice, ill-treatment and Polytheism have been cut to pieces; and once again Justice, Charity and Belief are healed.

35 Had You not come after Abû l-Ghârât, then neither fate nor ambition would have been raised in favour of the people of this Art. (ʿUmâra begins to speak about his poetry here.)

36 It is this laudation whose nursery brings forth a good yield, because rains (announced by the stars) have showered upon Your hand.

37 He loaded benefactions with good deeds. Knowledge uttered the judgement that wise sayings were all but blind.

38 My poems suit me well, and I also associate them with Your generosity; however, I remain modest and unassuming."



AnIsl 35 (2001), p. 549-626 Pieter Smoor