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‘Umâra’s odes describing the Imâm.

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‘Umâra’s odes describing the Imâm

1

Whilst living in Egypt during the period of the Fâtimid dynasty, the poet ‘Umâra al-Yamanî¹ 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 Fâtimid Imâms, who also resided in Al-Qâhira.

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

I ‘Umâra, Najm al-Dîn, Abû Ȇamza, ibn Abî l-Hasan ‘Alî b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Zaydân al-Ḥakamî, Al-Faqîh al-Yamanî, of the tribe Sa‘d, of the tribal conglomeration Madhîj, an author of Arabic poetry and prose, born 515/1121 in Murtâ in the Wâdî Wasâ‘ in Yaman, was executed in 569/1174 in Cairo, by order of Ȇalâh al-Dîn (Saladin) b. Ayyûb. In 531/1136-37 ‘Umâra’s father took him to the town of Zabîd in the Tihâma region, in order to let him study Shâfi‘ite *fiqh* under the supervision of the Shâfi‘ite *faqîh* ‘Abd Allâh b. al-Abbâr.

Having finished his studies, ‘Umâra began to work as a teacher and a jurisprudent giving *fatwâs*, but he was also a trader and merchant and used to travel with some regularity between his home town Zabîd and the town of ‘Adan in Southern Yaman. In Zabîd the reigning dynasty consisted of the Banû Najâh of Ethiopian origin. The state power over ‘Adan had fallen into the hands of Muḥammad b. Saba’ (of the Ḥâfiṣî *Da’wa* of Egypt) one of the Shî‘ite overlords of the Zuray‘id dynasty. It was in this period that ‘Umâra, by now a Shâfi‘ite *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-Fâtiķî, whose estate had remained undivided for a long stretch of time. In reference to this activity, the Zabîd people gave him the *laqab* Al-Fardî.

During one of his pilgrimages to Mecca, ‘Umâra succeeded in becoming acquainted with an influential queen, the lady, *Al-malika al-ḥurra* ‘Alam Umm Fâtiķ (the mother of Fâtiķ II of a dynasty of Abyssinian slaves, the Najâhids). She lived in Zabîd and had considerable influence in the affairs of the Banû Najâh, as she was the widow of Al-Manṣûr al-Najâhî. 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 Fâtiķ II. She was often accompanied by the *wazîr* and general, Abû Muḥammad Surûr al-Fâtiķî, who was originally an Ethiopian slave and later became one of ‘Umâra’s acquaintances in Zabîd. However, ‘Umâra’s trading and regular visits to the Shî‘ite *Dâ’î* of ‘Adan, the Muḥammad b. Saba’ just mentioned, were not appreciated by the people in his home town.

‘Umâra became increasingly involved in the intrigues between these two towns; and his dealings with a certain ‘Alî b. Mahdî of the dynasty of the Mahdids who was an enemy of the Najâhids complicated the situation further. It is also useful to note that the *Dâ’î* of ‘Adan was not only interested in ‘Umâra’s trading activities but also in his talents as a poet of praise. It was on the invitation of this *Dâ’î* that ‘Umâra 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 ‘Adan, ‘Umâra 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

The identity of the Imâms in these odes is not always obvious. In one poem though, a reference is definitely made to Imâm Al-Zâfir: we are told that the poet arrived too late. As Al-Zâfir had died a few months earlier, the poet was unable to pay him his respects. After Al-Zâfir, the Fâtimid 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-'Âdîd.

In these poems, we do find a semi-anonymous Imâm being praised. According to 'Umâra, 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 Fâtimâ, 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 *'Ulâ*. 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 Ka'ba. 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 *haram*.

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 'Umâra 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 Fâtimid Era, eventually emerges in the figure of Al-'Âdîd.

their subject a description of the excellent qualities of the local amîr Yâsîr b. Bilâl. There must have been other poems composed in honour of Muhammâd b. Saba' and his son 'Imrân b. Muhammâd, 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, 'Umâra 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 Fâtimids as an

ambassador from Mecca. He arrived at his destination in Cairo just after the murder of Al-Zâfir billâh, the Fâtimid 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 Talâ'i b. Ruzzîk of Twelver Shî'ite sympathies, who was to act as regent (*kâfil*, or *kafîl*) for the child Imâm whose official religious persuasion was Ismâ'îlî, thus adhering to the Sevener Shî'a. (See the article "Umâra" [P. Smoor, shortened by the editor], *El*, new edition.)

1.1

‘Umâra’s career began in the Yemen. His book *Târîkh al-Yaman*² and his memoirs *Al-nukat al-‘aṣriyya*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 ‘Alam 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 Shî‘a group. On the contrary, being Sunnites and probably also supporters of the Shâfi‘î law school, which inclined towards the Sunnî school of thought, they had little respect for the Shî‘a. Although ‘Umâra had benefited from sufficient education in Zabîd to obtain the Shâfi‘î qualification of *faqîh*, and had also studied the laws of inheritance, he nevertheless indulged his interest in the Shî‘a elsewhere. He did this by trading and travelling to and from ‘Adan, where a Shî‘î Dâ‘î was in power.

Due to his Shî‘a connections, ‘Umâra 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 ‘Aydhâb (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, ‘Umâra 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 ‘Omârah 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 ‘Abd Allah Baha ad-Dîn al-Janâdî*, ed. Henry Cassels Kay, London 1892.

³ The Memoirs and part of the poetry by ‘Umâra were edited by Hartwig Derenbourg: *‘Oumâra du Yémen sa vie et son œuvre*, vol. I (*Autobiographie et récits sur les Vizirs d’Égypte. Choix de poésies [Fîhi al-Nukat al-‘aṣriyya fî akhbârî l-wuzarâ’l l-Miṣriyyâ]*), Paris 1897; vol. II (Partie arabe - Poésie, épîtres, biographies, notices en arabe par ‘Oumâra et sur ‘Oumâra [Fîhi Takmilatu dîwân shî‘ri ‘Umâra al-Yamanî wa-nubadhu min tarassulâthi wa-tarâjîmihî wa muntakhabâtun li-‘Umâra al-Yamanî wa-fî sîratihî wa-fî akhbârî zamânihi wa-mu‘âṣirîhi wa-fîhrîstu asmâ’l rîjâli wa l-nisâ’i wa l-duwâli wa l-kutubi wa-aydân fîhrîstu l-buldâni wa l-umamî wa l-qabâ’ili wa l-milâl], Paris 1902 (edition of the Arabic text of ‘Umâra’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 ‘Oumâra 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 *Fîhrîs al-makhlûqât al-muṣawwara*, I, *Al-Adab*, *qism III*, Cairo 1980, p. 164: a photocopy of the *Dîwân* ‘Umâra al-Yamanî which derives originally from a manuscript in the Khizânat al-Ustâdh Muhammad al-Manûmî, Rabat. This will be referred to as *Ms Rabat*.

2

The Fâtimid Imâm, whom the poet 'Umâra encounters for the first time at his residence in Cairo in Rabî' 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 'Abbâs of the Berber tribe Şanhâja. After he had climbed his way up to the position of Vizier in Egypt, 'Abbâs, together with his son Naşr, conspired against the Imâm Zâfir who was eventually assassinated as a result of their actions.⁴ Zâfir'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 'Abbâs and his son Naşr were both of Armenian descent. 'Abbâs was descended from a forefather named Bâdis. Dadoyan says (p. 143-144): "According to Ibn Muyassar, the *mamlûk* Yânis was a present to Al-Afdal from his original owner Bâdis, the grandfather of 'Abbâs, Vizier of Caliph Al-Zâfir bi-Amr Allâh (...)" and (note 170): "To the present, the name Bâdis is a distorted transliteration of the Armenian name Avedis. Armenian historians consider this figure and 'Abbâs (as) Armenians. 'Abbâs is mentioned as the "stepson" (F. Daftary, *The Ismâ'îlîs*, p. 270) of the Vizier Al-'Adîl b. Sallâr, the governor of Alexandria. From 1150-1154 he was the Vizier of Caliph Al-Zâfir bi-Amr Allâh (1149-1154), a son of Al-Hâfiż." As a comment on this I would like to give some more details of the origins of the "stepson" 'Abbâs 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 Al Ruzzîk. On the basis of Al-Maqrîzî, *Itti'âz*, 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 'Abbâs, Al-Hasan b. 'Alî b. Yaḥyâ b. Tamîm b. al-Mu'izz b. Bâdis. In the same year, the *sayyida* Bullâra fled from Mahdiyya, accompanied by her husband Abû l-Futûḥ b. Yaḥyâ b. Tamîm and their son 'Abbâs. The husband died shortly after the refugees had arrived in Alexandria. There the widow, Bullâra, was remarried, this time to the Governor of Alexandria. 'Abbâs became a *rabîb*, a stepson, and was raised as a son by 'Alî b. al-Salâr, the Governor. In *Itti'âz*, III, p. 188 there is a reference to a lineage: ... b. Bâdis b. Zîrî b. Munâdî. On the basis of the information of *Itti'âz*, III, p. 187-188, it is apparent that 'Abbâs and his son Naşr descended from the Zîrids, "There were nine members of the Banû Bâdis b. Zîrî b. Munâdî who became kings and they ruled from the year 361 until 543 H."

In his poem (to rhyme *maş'adu*) our poet, 'Umâra, mentions 'Abbâs as one who was descended from a royal line. This poem was written in praise of Imâm Al-'Âdîd and Ruzzîk, who

became Vizier after Talâ'i', in 556 H, whilst the latter is recalled as one who brought an end to the injustice of Vizier 'Abbâs and his son Naşr, verses 41-43, "Al-Şâlih 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 Munâdîn 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 *maş'adu*, see Appendix.)

Elsewhere in a poetical reflection (to rhyme *râ'imû*) on the misdeeds of 'Abbâs and his son Naşr, which is addressed to Talâ'i', we can hear the words of the palace Chancellor Al-Qâdî al-Jâfî. He emphasises the fact that the evil Vizier 'Abbâs 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-'Imâd al-İsfahânî al-Kâtib, *Kharîdat al-qâşr wa-jarîdat al-'âşr, qism shu'arâ' Mişr*, ed. Ahmed Amîn, Shawqî Dayf, İhsân 'Abbâs, Cairo 1951, vol. I, 190; Shîhâb al-Dîn 'Abd al-Rahmân b. Ismâ'îl b. İbrâhîm al-Maqdisî al-Dimashqî known as Abû Shâma, *Kitâb al-Rawdâtaynî fi akhbâr al-dawlatayn I-Nûriyya wa I-Şalâhiyya*, edition İbrâhîm al-Zaybaq, Beirut 1997, II, 8 (ed. Cairo 1288 H., vol. I, 141).

For more on the Vizier 'Abbâs and his murderous son Naşr, see Şâlih al-Dîn Khalîl b. Aybak al-Şafâdî, Al-Wâfi bi l-wafâyat IX ed. Josef van Ess, Wiesbaden 1974, p. 151-153, dealing with "Al-Zâfir Şâlih Mişr Ismâ'îl b. 'Abd al-Majîd, who is Abû l-Manşûr al-Zâfir b. al-Hâfiż"; *op. cit.*, vol. XVI ed. Wâdâd al-Qâdî, Wiesbaden 1982, p. 646-648, dealing with "Al-'Abbâs b. Abî l-Futûḥ b. Yaḥyâ b. Tamîm b. al-Mu'izz b. Bâdis, Vizier of Al-Fâ'iz 'Isâ al-'Ubaydî", who arrived in Al-Qâhira accompanied by his mother, Bullâra (Ballâna, Balârima, Ballâza, according to other manuscripts); *op. cit.*, vol. XXI ed. Muhammed al-Hujayrî, Wiesbaden 1988, p. 138-139 dealing with "Alî b. al-Salâr the Vizier Abû l-Hasan al-mulaqqab bi l-'Adîl al-Kurdî al-'Ubaydî Sayf al-Dîn, the Vizier of Al-Zâfir Şâlih Mişr."

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 Țalâ’i’ b. Ruzzîk. The murderers, the “wicked” Vizier ‘Abbâs and his son Naşr, were killed. In fact, Naşr 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 ‘Abbâs and his son.⁵

2.1

The new Vizier Țalâ’i’ developed himself into a protective patron. Furthermore, it was Țalâ’i’ who offered ‘Umâra 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 ‘Umâra because he greatly valued Odes, particularly in a financial sense. One fact that is certain is that the first Vizier, Țalâ’i’, displayed strong sympathies towards the creed of the Twelver *Imâmiyya*. In that sense he did not fit closely into the framework of the Fâtimids’ *Ismâ’îlî* Imâm. However, in ‘Umâra’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-‘Âdîd), who served as the last Imâm, the last of the long line of Fâtimids.

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-‘Âdîd.

⁵ Regarding the outcome of the revenge attack organised by the sister of the murdered Imâm Al-Zâfir from the palace in Al-Qâhirah and what became of ‘Abbâs and his son Naşr, see Abû l-‘Abbâs Shams al-Dîn b. Khallikân (who lived from 608 to 681 H.), *Wafayât al-a'yân wa-anbâ' abnâ' al-zamân*, edition Ihâsân ‘Abbâs, Beirut 1968, III, p. 493.

Taqî al-Dîn Abû l-‘Abbâs Ahîmad b. ‘Alî al-Maqrîzî (who died 845 H.) in his *Itti’âz al-hunâfâ bi-akhbâr al-a’immati l-Fâtimiyîn al-khulafâ’*, edition Muhammad Hîlmi Muhammad Ahîmad, 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

‘Abbâs’s, Naşr b. ‘Abbâs: On 27 Rabî’ I, 550 H, Naşr arrived at the palace in Al-Qâhirah; he was carried, imprisoned in an iron cage which the Franks (scil., the Crusaders) had made for him. On 18 Rabî’ II, already dead, he was transported from the palace, having been tortured and having had his right hand hacked off. When Naşr arrived in Al-Qâhirah 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 *Itti’âz*, 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 *talabi* which strangely enough makes absolutely no reference to the Imâm.⁶ This poem is mainly a description of Talâ'i', who is referred to as Kâfil or Kafil, 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 (*mu'ârada*) of, Abû Tammâm's well-known comparison of the "sword" and the "pen".⁷ Thus we find 'Umâra recalling the style of this previous poet,

١ إِذَا قَرَرْتَ عَلَى الْعَلِيَاءِ بِالْغَلَبِ
 ٢ وَاخْطُبْ بِأَلْسُنِ الْأَغْمَادِ مَا عَجَزَتِ
 ٣ فَمَا اسْتَوَى الْخَطُّ وَالْخَطْبُ فِي وَهْجِ

فَلَا تُعَرِّجْ عَلَى سَعْيٍ وَلَا طَلَبْ
 عَنْ نَيْلِهِ أَلْسُنُ الْأَشْعَارِ وَالْخُطَبْ
 وَلَا الْكَتَابُ يَوْمَ الرُّوعِ كَالْكُتُبِ

- 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-khat*) and the spear (*al-khatfi*) 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, Talâ'i' 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 أَلْقَى الْكَفِيلُ أَبُو الْغَارَاتِ كَلْكَلَهُ عَلَى الزَّمَانِ وَضَاعَتْ حِيلَهُ النُّوبِ

⁶ 'Umâra's poem to rhyme *talabi*, 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 *basîf* 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-Şâlih, 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-la'ibi*, dedicated to the 'Abbâsid Caliph Al-Mu'tâsim, 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 'Ammûriya, see *Dîwân Abî Tammâm*, ed. 'Azzâm, Cairo 1964, I, p. 40-74, poem of 71 lines in metre *basîf*. There is an allusion to this identical poem in poetry composed (more than two centuries previous to 'Umâra) by the Fâtimid Al-Qâsim b. al-Mahdî, see P. Smoor, "Al-Mahdî's Tears: impressions of Fâtimid 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 :

صَوَاعِقُ فِي الْوَغَى تَنْقَضُ مِنْ سُحْبِ
إِلَّا وَتَغْدُو بِهَا الْأَجْسَامُ فِي صَبَبِ
لَمْ يَأْخُذِ الْمُلْكَ بِالْتَّدْرِيجِ فِي الرُّتبِ
مَعَ صِدْقِ أَفْعَالِهِ فَقُرِّ إِلَى لَقَبِ

٤٣ كَانَ لَعْنَ الْمَوَاضِي فِي أَكْفَهِمْ
٤٤ فَمَا تَرَوْحُ بِهَا الْأَرْوَاحُ فِي صَعَدِ
٤٥ رَقَاهُمُ الرُّتبَةُ الْعُلْيَا أَخْوَهُمْ
٤٦ يُلْقَبُ الصَّالِحُ الْهَادِي وَلَيْسَ بِهِ

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-Şâlih 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’î⁸ 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 Fâtimid Imâm Al-Muṣṭansîr, Al-Afḍal once rode unceremoniously into the Imâm’s palace on horseback, Muṣṭansîr’s appointed successor, Nizâr, rebuked – in fact insulted – him with the words : “Get down from your horse, oh carrier of misfortune, oh Armenian!” Thus يَا تَحْسُنُ يَا أَرْمَنِي⁹, according to Al-Maqrîzî (in the *Itti’âz*), 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!”, يَا تَجِسُّ يَا أَرْمَنِي, 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, *Itti’âz*, III, p. 11-12, and Jamâl al-Dîn Abû l-Mahâsin Yûsuf b. Taghrî Bardî al-Atâbakî (who lived from 812 to 874), *Al-nujûm al-zâhirah fî mulâk 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 Talâ'i' 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-Afâl. As far as our poet 'Umâra is concerned, he was himself of pure Arabian descent and, therefore, felt obliged to justify Talâ'i'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 مَتَوَجٌ مِّنْ بَنِي رُزِّيْكَ تَنْسَبُهُ
٤٨ زَاكِيَ الْعَرَوْمَةِ إِلَّا أَنَّ مَنْصِبَهُ

بِيْضُ الْمَسَاعِيِّ إِلَى جُرْثُومَةِ الْعَرَبِ
فِي الْمَجْدِ أَعْظَمُ أَنْ يُعَزَّى إِلَى 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.

Talâ'i' himself makes a great impression as the representative of antithesis: he wears armour which is both “massive” and “silent” (*i.e.*, two meanings of *sâmit*), but has a lion’s roar which is “speaking” (*nâtiq*) 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 أَرْضَتُهُ عَنْ هَفَوَاتِ النَّاسِ قُدْرَتُهُ
٥٣ ذُو صَامِتٍ أَعْرَبَتْ عَنْهِ زَمَاجِرُهُ
٥٤ كَالسَّيْلِ وَاللَّيلِ لَا يَنْجُو طَرَيْدُهُمَا
٥٥ يُزْجِيْهِ أَرْوَعُ مِنْ غَسَانَ مُنْذُ رَمَى
(...)

فَمَا يُكَدِّرُ صَفَوَ الْحَلْمِ بِالْغَضَبِ
بِنَاطِقٍ مِّنْ صَهْيَلِ الْخَيْلِ مُصْطَحِبِ
مِنْ الْمَنِيَّةِ بِالْإِمْعَانِ فِي الْهَرَبِ
بِعَزْمِهِ نُوبَ الْأَيَّامِ لَمْ تَثِبِ

٦٩ تُشِيرُ نَقْعَ دُخَانٍ تَحْتَهُ لَهَبٌ
٧٠ يَحْكِي مَجْرُ عَوَالِيَّهَا إِذَا رَحِلتْ

إِنَّ الدُّخَانَ لَنَمَّامٌ عَلَى الْلَّهَبِ
عَنْ مَنْزِلٍ مَسْحَبَ الْحَيَّاتِ فِي الْكِتَّبِ

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-Musta'li became the new Imâm after Mustansîr's death. Al-Musta'li removed any final chance which Nizâr may have had

by plastering him behind a wall whilst still alive. On this, see Al-Maqrîzî, *Itti'âz*, 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 (*Arwa’*) 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 :

| | |
|--|---|
| فاصُلُبْ عَلَى مَلَةِ الْأَوْثَانِ وَالصُّلُبِ | لَانَتْ صَفَاهُ عَدُوْ أَنْتَ قَارِعُهَا |
| وَفَوْقُهُنَّ أَسْوَدُ الْغَابِ لَمْ تَغْبِ | فَعِنْدَكَ الضُّمَرُ الْجُرْدُ الَّذِي عَرَفُوا |
| لَمْ تَرُوا إِلَّا بِرْقَاقَ الدَّمِ السَّرَّابِ | تَزَوَّرُهُمْ سَرَّابٌ إِذَا ظَمَئَتْ |
| وَأَنْتَ أَشْفَقُ مِنْ أَمْ لَهُ وَأَبِ | وَمَا تُحَاضُ عَلَى دِينِ الْهُدَى أَبَدًا |

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-damî 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 ‘Umâra, the Vizier Ṭalâ’î is as tough as an iron hammer against the rocks of the enemies. However the poet also emphatically draws attention to Ṭalâ’î’s sympathetic side. Although the Vizier is an *Imâmî* and thus not an *Ismâ’îlî*, the poet will never criticize the special *Ismâ’îlî* 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-Żâfir is cited as the addressee. We know, however, that 'Umâra arrived in Egypt after this Imâm had been assassinated by the wicked Vizier 'Abbâs and his son Naşr. It cannot therefore be Al-Żâfir 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 Naşr are mentioned as the “evil” opposites of the “good” Vizier Țalâ'i' and his “good” son. However, the truth was quite different. Previously Țalâ'i' had been in the employ of precisely this same “wicked” Vizier 'Abbâs. Țalâ'i' was employed by 'Abbâs as his *muqaddam* in a battle against an aged predecessor Vizier Ibn Maşâl. In earlier days, therefore, Țalâ'i' supported 'Abbâs 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 (Țalâ'i') honorific name “Al-Malik al-Şâlih” (= the Godly King) and the Imâm:

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>وَضِيَاءُ بَدْرٍ أَمْ حَنِينُ جَمَالٍ سُقْيٌ الْوَحْيٌ مِنْهَا بِنَوَّءٍ شَوَّالٍ</p> | <p>١ أَسْمَاءُ قَدْرٍ أَمْ سَمَاءُ جَلَالٍ وَمَقْرُّ مَلْكٍ أَمْ قَرَارَةُ رَحْمَةٍ</p> |
|--|---|

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 *hanînu jîmâli*, consists of 52 lines. The following lines of prose form an introduction, *Ms Rabat*: “In honour of Al-Żâfir and his Vizier Al-Şâlih, he also said the following ...”.

¹¹ Compare this to Al-Maqrîzî, *Itti'âz*, III, p. 197, where we find the following:

“Ibn al-Salâr began to prepare 'Abbâs and appointed him in charge of a great army. He ('Abbâs) marched out quickly, fearful that the people would unite together behind Ibn Maşâl. Afterwards, he departed for Dilâş, accompanied by Țalâ'i' b. Ruzzîk in the position of one of his generals. Subsequently

he lined himself up against Ibn Maşâl and several battles ensued with varying results. Finally the outcome of the battles was such that on Sunday 19 Shawwâl, both Ibn Maşâl and Badr b. Râfi', the Bedouin general, were killed. It is said that the numbers killed totalled 17,000. Having been proved the strongest, 'Abbâs turned back towards Al-Qâhira, bearing the head of Ibn Maşâl with him. On Thursday 23 Dhû l-Qâda, impaled on a spear, this head was carried through Al-Qâhira and Mişr (Old Cairo). His (Ibn Maşâl'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-Żâfir bi-Amr Allâh Abû l-Manşûr Ismâ'il b. al-Ḥâfiẓ li-Dîn Allâh Abî l-Maymûn 'Abd al-Majîd b. al-amîr Abî l-Qâsim Muḥammad b. al-Muṣtanṣîr”).

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.

| | |
|--|--|
| لَعَظِيمٌ هِيَبَتِهِ يَسِيرُ بِبَالِي | ٤ بَلَغْتَنِي هَذَا الْمَقَامَ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ |
| سِرْرٌ مِنَ الْإِعْظَامِ وَالْإِجْلَالِ | ٥ أَتَأْمَلُ النُورَ الْمُبِينَ وَدُونَهُ |
| فِي الْخَلْقِ مَهْدِيٌّ بِبِلَادِ جَهَّالٍ | ٦ وَأَشَاهِدُ الْمَهْدِيَّ إِلَّا أَنَّهُ |

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 ‘ulamâ’ 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 *hanîfi* (monotheistic) religion, and the *qibla* of the Symbols.” In particular the Symbols (the *amthâl*) make the *Ismâ’îlî* approach in this poem clear.

| | |
|---|---|
| زُهْرُ الْكَوَاكِبِ مِنْ مَكَانٍ عَالِيٍّ | ١١ هَذَا هُوَ النُورُ الَّذِي شَهَدَتْ لَهُ |
| الْعُلَمَاءُ فِي الدُّنْيَا عَلَى الْجَهَّالِ | ١٢ هَذَا هُوَ النَّبِيُّ الَّذِي افْتَخَرَتْ بِهِ |
| فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا أَمَنَتْ مِنَ الزَّلَّالِ | ١٣ هَذَا هُوَ السُّرُّ الَّذِي لَوْلَمْ تَكُنْ |
| وَاسْتَغْنَى عَنْ نَظَرٍ وَاسْتَدْلَالٍ | ١٤ هَذَا هُوَ النَّسْلُ الْجَلِيلُ فَشَقَّ بِهِ |
| الَّذِينَ حَنِيفُونَ وَقِبْلَةُ الْأَمْثَالِ | ١٥ هَذَا أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَعَصْمَةُ |

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 ‘Ulamâ’ 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 (*hanîfi*) religion and the prayer-direction of the symbols.

Verses 23-24 describe the high regard for Al-Zâfir and the Vizirate of Ṭalâ'i', 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-Zâfir, in the period before 'Umâra arrived in Egypt. However, it seems more probable that the term "Al-Zâfir" (the Victorious) simply refers to the Vizier. The new Vizier gives rise to a paronomastic figure of speech: there is the emergence of Ṭalâ'i', the *tulû'* of Ṭalâ'i'. He was one of the Governors, one who dared to stand up against the bad Vizier 'Abbâs. And in this manner 'Abbâs is succeeded by the good Vizier here referred to as Al-Zâfir:

| | |
|---|---|
| بَنَظِيرِهِ أَهْلُ الزَّمَانِ الْخَالِي بِتَحْمِيلِ الْأَعْبَاءِ وَالْأَثْقَالِ مُذْ بَاتِ يَكْلُؤُهَا وَنِعْمَ الْكَالِي | ٢٣ لِلظَّافِرِ الشَّرَفُ الَّذِي لَمْ يَفْتَخِرْ ٢٤ الصَّالِحُ الْمَلِكُ الَّذِي عَضَدَ الْهَدَى ٢٥ قَامَتْ عَيْنُ الْخَلْقِ مُلْؤُ جَفُونَهَا (...) |
| اضْطَرَبَتْ وَآذَنَ ظِلُّهَا بِزِوْالِ بِجَلَادِ أَعْدَائِكُمْ وَجَدَالِ أَحَدٌ لِأَبْنَاءِ النَّبِيِّ مُوَالِي | ٢٧ وَأَغَاثَ دُولَةَ آلِ أَحْمَادَ بَعْدَمَا ٢٨ لَوْلَا طُلُوعُ طَلَايِعِ وَدَفَاعُهُ ٢٩ لَمْ يَبْقَ فِي أَعْمَالِ مِصْرَ كُلُّهَا |

23 Al-Zâfir 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-ṣâlihi 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 Al Ahmad, after it had been brought into confusion, and after its shadow had acknowledged that it would soon end.

28 If the emergence (*tulû'*) of Ṭalâ'i' 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.

2.1.6

In contrast to the Vizier Ṭalâ’i‘ and his son Al-Nâṣir b. Ṭalâ’i‘, who represent the “goodly”, we once again come across the pair who represent “evil”, namely the blackguardly Vizier ‘Abbâs and his son Naṣr.¹²

Ṭalâ’i‘ is addressed in the poem with the following words:

| | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|----|---|
| ٣٤ | وَهُمَا حَلِيفَا ذَلَّةٍ وَنَكَالٍ | ٣٥ | تَرَكْتَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْكَرَامَةِ وَابْنَهُ |
| | مُحَمَّرٌ تَهْمِي بَوَيْلٍ وَبَالٍ | | جَادُتُهُمَا مِنْهُ سَحَابَ نِقْمَةٍ |

- 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 | أَوْضَحْتَ مِنْ سُنَّةٍ وَمِثَالٍ | ٣٧ | إِنَّ الْأَجَلَ النَّاصِرَ اتَّبَعَ الَّذِي |
| ٣٨ | لَمْ تُوتَ مِنْ رَيْبٍ وَلَا أَسْتَعْجَالٍ | ٣٩ | وَكَفَاكَ مَا اسْتَكْفَيْتَهُ بِسِيَاسَةٍ |
| ٣٩ | فِينَا بِسِيرَةٍ مُعْجَبٍ مُخْتَالٍ | ٤٠ | زانَ الشَّبَبَةَ بِالْوَقَارِ وَلَمْ يَسِرَّ |
| ٤٠ | فِي الْخَلْقِ لَمْ يَعْلَمْ لَهُمْ بَخَالٍ | ٤١ | مَلَّا غَدَا بِخَالٍ عَدْلُكَ يَقْتَدِي |
| ٤١ | خَطْوَ الْمَظَالِمِ بَعْدَ طَولِ مَجَالٍ | | كَفَتْ مَهَابَتُهُ الْأَكْفَفَ فَقَصَرَتْ |
| | وَرَعَّا عَنِ الْأَرْوَاحِ وَالْأَمْوَالِ | | وَبَسْطَتْ رَاحَتَهُ فَامْرُ فَيْضًا |

- 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 ‘Abbâs 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'i' were given to him by virtue of an honorary missive (*tashrif*) from Imâm Al-Fâ'iz, on 4 *Rabi'* II, in the year 449 H.¹³ However in line 47 of the poem cited below (rhyme *jimâli*), 'Umâra 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:

| | |
|--|---|
| عدم النظير وقلة الأشكال | ٤٢ ملكٌ إذا استثناكَ أصبحَ يشتكى |
| بمناقب الأقوال والأمثال | ٤٣ ما تُنكرُ الأُملاكُ يوم تفاخرٌ |
| ووحيدٌ في الفضل والإفضال | ٤٤ إِنَّ ابْنَ رُزِّيْكَ يَتِيمَةً دَهْرَهِ |
| غيثٌ أنزالٌ ولَيْثٌ نزالٌ | ٤٥ وَإِنَّهُ يَوْمَ الشَّجَاعَةِ وَالنَّدَى |
| ما نَفْعُ أَسْمَاءٍ بلا أَفْعَالٍ | ٤٦ تَرَكُوهُ فِي أَسْمَائِهِ لَا فَعْلَهِ |
| قولاً يصرُفُهُ لسانُ الحال | ٤٧ مَلِكٌ تَقُولُ لَهُ مَسَاعِيَ مَجْدِهِ |
| فالدَّهْرُ مِنْ حَسَنَاتِ فَعْلَكَ حَالٍ | ٤٨ لَا تَفْتَخِرْ إِلَّا بِنَفْسِكَ وَحْدَهَا |
| وعَجِبْتُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ رَخِصٍ غَالٍ | ٤٩ تَغْلُو وَتَرْخَصُ رَفْعَةً وَتَوَاضِعًا |

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'i', see Ibn Taghrî Bardî, *Al-nujâm al-zâhira*, V, p. 311 and Al-Maqrîzî, *Itti'âz*, 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'i' (and his son) were not the first to be given the honorary title *malik*, before Ṭalâ'i' the Fâtimid Vizier Riḍwân al-Walakhshî, who was employed by Al-Hâfiẓ billâh, had also been honoured with the same title of “King” (see *Itti'âz* 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:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| في الصالح الهدى أعزّ مثالٍ | ٥٠ فاسلَمْ أميرَ المؤمنينَ مُبَلَّغاً |
| عينُ الهدى لِكُمَا زَوَالَ ظلَالٍ | ٥١ وَتَمَلِّيا صَرَفَ الْحَيَاةِ وَلَا رَأَتْ |
| مَحْرُوسَةُ الْغَدَوَاتِ وَالْأَصَالِ | ٥٢ هَنِيَّتُمَا مَا شَعْتُمَا وَعَلَّاكُمَا |

50 Fare thee well, Oh *Amîr* of the Believers, for whom Al-Şâlih, 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-Ζâfir or Al-‘Âdîd.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-Nâṣr Allâh, and his Vizier Al-Malik al-Şâlih...”.

This poem was probably recited by ‘Umâra on the occasion of the inauguration of Ṭalâ'i' in Al-Qâhira, after the departure of the previous Vizier ‘Abbâs with his son Nâṣr and their retinue. The poem does, therefore, possibly date from the time *Rabi'* II, 449 H., or shortly afterwards, see *Itti'âz*, III, p. 219.

٤٩ فَاسْعَدْ بِأَيَّامِ ماضِيهَا وَمُقبلَهَا
 ٥٠ مُمْتَعًا بِبقاءِ الصالِحِ الْمَلِكِ الْمَهْمَانِيِّ إِذَا مَا جَفَى ابْنًا وَالَّدُّ حَرَبُ

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-Şâlih 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 فِي صَدْرِهِ فَائِزٌ بِالنَّصْرِ مُحْتَجِبٌ
 ٧ مُبَارَكُ الْوَجْهِ مَيمُونٌ نَّقِيبُهُ
 بِنُورِهِ وَتَاجُ الْعِزِّ مُعْتَصِبٌ
 تُجْلِي بِطَلْعَتِهِ الْأَحْدَاثُ وَالنُّوبُ

6 On the dais of his throne Fâ'iz bi l-Nâṣr (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 *mamduh* and, using the figure of speech *iltifât*, addresses his words directly to the Imâm.

١٢ وَأَنْتُمُ الْعُرْوَةُ الْوُثْقَىٰ فَلَا انْفَصَمْتُ وَحُبُّكُمْ فِي دُخُولِ الْجَنَّةِ السَّبَبُ
 ١٣ وَفِي مَدَائِحِكُمْ فَخْرٌ لِمَادِحِكُمْ وَمُنْقَلْبُ

12 You are the Strong Grip (*al-'urwa 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 ‘Umâra says the following:

١٥ مناقبُ كالنجوم الزُّهر قد ملئتُ
بحسنٍ أوصافها الأسماع والكتبُ
١٦ جاءتْ لها سورةُ القرآنِ مادحةً
وما عسى يتعاطى الشعرُ والخطبُ

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 لله في أهلٍ هذا القصر سابقٌ
من الإرادة في أسرارها عَجَبُ
١٨ لما أرادَ ابنَ باديسَ إِزالتَهمْ
والناصرون لأنوارَ الهدى غَيَّبُ
١٩ آبَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ يَدُ إِلَيْهِ وَيَدُ
تُعْزِي إِلَى آلِ رُزِّيكِ وَتَنْتَسِبُ
لولا الوزيرُ أبو الغاراتِ ما خَفَقَتْ
للنصرِ في القصرِ راياتٌ ولا عَذَبُ
٢١ ولا اعتزَى لعلَّيٌّ عندَ نازلةٌ
من القبائلِ لَا عُجمٌ ولا عَربٌ
٢٢ لما جَلَبْتَ إِلَيْهِ الخيلَ مُقْرَبَةً
لم يَحْمِمْهُمْ مِنْكَ إِلَّا الشَّحْطُ وَالهَرَبُ
٢٣ أضافَكَ الْمُلْكُ لَا جَعْتَ زَائِرَهُ
كرامةً مَا لَهَا إِلَّا الظُّبَا سَبَبُ
٢٤ وَلَى وَيَا بَعْسَ مَا أَوْلَى مَوَالِيَهُ
ولو تَفَانَيْتَمَا لَمْ يُنْجِهِ الْهَرَبُ
٢٥ وَأَيَّدَ اللَّهُ دِينَ الْحَقِّ مِنْكَ بِذِي
يَدٍ لَهَا فِي الْوَغْنِ التَّأْيِدُ وَالْغَلَبُ

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 ‘Alî 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.*, ‘Abbâs, 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-Haqq* for You.

Through the Vizier, Allah subsequently supported the *Dîn al-Haqq* (= 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-Zâfir. The following poetic passage develops this line of thought:

٢٧ والمرءُ مِنْ هُمْ فَاسْتَغْنَىٰ بِهِمْتَهِ عَمَّا بَنَاهُ لَهُ جَدُّ مَضِيٍّ وَأَبُٰ
 ٢٨ حَمَىٰ حَرَيْمَ الْمَعَالِي عَزْمَهُ فَغَدَّتْ أَكْنَافُهُ كَعَرِينِ الْلَّبِثِ يُجَنَّبُ
 ٢٩ يُصَاحِبُ الدَّلَبَ فِيهَا الشَّاةُ مُؤْتَمِنًا عَلَى الْمَغِيبِ وَإِنْ أُودِيَ بِهِ السَّغَبُ
 ٣٠ فَمَا يُرَىٰ الرُّوحُ فِيهَا وَهُوَ مُخْتَطِفٌ وَلَا يُرَىٰ الْمَالُ مِنْهَا وَهُوَ مُنْتَهِبٌ

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 (*harîm al-ma'âlî*) 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 *Itti‘âz* (III, p. 238 and 243):

“Al-‘Âdîd (...) received the *bay‘a* after the transference of Al-Fâ’iz (the deceased Imâm) and after the time of the *salât*, on Friday, 17 *Rajab* 555 H. ‘Âdîd 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-Şâlih b. Ruzzîk rode to the palace in mourning attire. He summoned Muflîh the *zimâm al-qâṣr* (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-Şâlih) replied: ‘Introduce me to the oldest of them.’ After which the head of the house mentioned one by name.

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

Şâlih 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-Hâfiż, named ‘Abd Allâh, but he is neither mature nor of age (he is not *bâligh*).’

Şâlih 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. Şâlih 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 ‘Abd Allâh ‘Âdîd has become one and a half years older. See *Itti‘âz*, III, p. 244). Şâlih 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 *salât* was said for him after which he (the deceased) was carried to his tomb. Al-Şâlih took ‘Abd 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 *bay‘a* after which they did so, too.

He gave him the honorary name Al-‘Âdîd 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 ‘Abbâs.

Once Al-‘Âdîd had been given the *bay‘a*, he rode on a horse with the *mizalla* carried above his head, Al-Şâlih 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 *bay‘a*, he would be given 1000 *dînârs*. However, when Al-‘Âdîd received the *bay‘a* 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 *Qâti‘ al-Khulafâ*’, the Destroyer of the Caliphate.’ And this happened exactly as she had said.”

3.1

By the phrase “*Qâti‘ al-Khulafâ*”, the aunt was, of course, referring to the second meaning attached to the word “‘âdîd”, 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 *nâsṣ*, as to the successor of the child Caliph Al-Fâ’iz, whose original name was in fact ‘Isâ; secondly ‘Isâ al-Fâ’iz had no son, which meant that his successor could be an *ibn ‘amm*, someone like ‘Abd Allâh al-‘Âdîd.

The casual remark made by Țâlâ’î, regarding the way in which Al-‘Âdîd was finally selected from the group of sons and nephews, who had, at the request of the Vizier, been brought together by the *zîmâm al-qasr*, 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.” (*Itti’âz*, III, p. 249)

3.2

In ‘Umâra’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 ‘Umâra gives is that there was in fact a *nâsṣ* designating Al-‘Âdîd. One simply needs to read his poetry to appreciate this. However, in his poetry ‘Umâra has to acknowledge the fact that this Caliph, Al-‘Âdîd, 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 ‘Umâra 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-‘Âdîd.¹⁵ In his poem ‘Umâra 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-‘Âdîd on his ascension to the throne” (In addition Ms D reads: “... and congratulating the Imâm Al-‘Âdîd”). Ms Rabat reads the following in the margin: “This belongs to the art of funeral odes and congratulations.”

most attention to Al-‘Âdîd 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 إِلَى الورى وعَهْدِي بِهِ بِالْأَمْسِ وَهُوَ ذَمِيمٌ
٤ وَسَرَّ قُلُوبًا بَعْدَ مَا كَانَ سَاءَهَا فِي كُلِّ قَلْبٍ جَنَّةٌ وَجَهَنَّمُ

- 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-‘Âdîd 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 ‘Umâra, this garden begrudged “us” the paradisiacal closeness of Al-Fâ’iz.

٥ لَعْنَ عَرَضَتْ لِلْفَائِرِ الطَّهْرُ نَفْلَةُ
٦ وَإِنْ حَسَدْنَا جَنَّةَ الْخُلْدِ قُرْبَهُ
فَعَنْ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مُقْيِمٌ
فَقُرْبُكَ مِنَّا جَنَّةُ وَنَعِيمٌ

- 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-‘Âdîd’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 Tâlâ’î the news of the change of Imâm. He wrote to Tâlâ’î telling him in a few words the extent to which he had been affected by this death. In *Rawdatayn*, I, p. 124, and quoted in *Itti’âz*, 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-Zâfir b. al-Hâfiż. After him reigned his *ibn ‘amm* Al-‘Âdîd b. Yûsuf b. al-Hâfiż. He was the last of the Caliphs of Egypt. Because of (the Vizier) Al-Şâlih

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

١ هناءً بنعمتي قل عن قدرها الشكرُ وصبر الرزء لا يقوم به الصبرُ
 ٢ مضى الفائزُ الظهرُ الإمامُ وقام بالإماممة فيما بعده العاضدُ الظهرُ
 ٣ إماما هدى لله في نقل ذا إلى كرامته وفي إقامة ذا سر
 ٤ فعش أبداً واسلم يا كفيلهم تدفع عنهم كل حادثةٍ تعرو

- 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-'Âdîd 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 *nâs*, 'Umâra 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-'Âdîd,

٧ ورثت الهدى بالنص منه وقوله أخي وابن عمي إن عدمت يقوم
 ٨ وقد سن ذاك المصطفى في ابن عميه فمن شرفكم حادث وقديم
 ٩ حكت بيعة الرضوان بيعتك التي يصح بها الإيمان وهو سقيم

- 7 You have inherited the Just Leadership through the designation (*nâs*) on his (Al-Fâ'iz's) authority and through his declaration: “My brother, and the son of my uncle ('ammi) will serve when I am no longer here.”
- 8 Al-Muṣṭafâ had already made a precondition regarding the son of his uncle ('Alî), 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 *bay'a* given to You resembled the *bay'a* which Rîdwân gave (to the Prophet), as a result of which the Belief which had become sick became healthy again. (See *EI*, Supplement, s.v. *Bay'at Rîdwân*)

The inauguration (*bay'a*) which the Vizier Ṭalâ'i gave to the Imâm Al-'Âdîd, who was not yet ten years old, resembled the inauguration which the angel Rîdwân 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 Rîdwân was mentioned, 'Umâra's

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

3.3

Concerning the useful combination of Imâm and Vizier, ‘Umâra 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-Šâliḥ.¹⁷ This successor, the son Al-Nâṣir al-Muhyî “Abû Shujâ”, appears as Regent in a *takhallus* 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 *mamdûh* here is Al-‘Âqîd, whose installation as Imâm had occurred in 555 H. as we mentioned earlier,

يُزُورُكَ وَافِدًا فِي كُلِّ عَامٍ
بِتَحْرِيمِ الْمَبَاحِ مِنَ الطَّعَامِ
بَعِيدٌ لَا يَؤُولُ إِلَى التَّزَامِ
وَوَجْهُكَ دَائِمًا بَدْرُ التَّمَامِ
وَيَصْحَبُكَ الْكَمَالُ عَلَى الدَّوَامِ
بِرْؤُيْتِكَ الْحَلَالَ مِنَ الْحَرَامِ
سَوَى أَيَّامِ كَافِلَكَ الْهُمَامِ

١٨ وَهُلْ شَهْرُ الصِّيَامِ سَوَى هَلَالِ
١٩ جَعَلْتَ لَهُ عَلَى شَعْبَانَ فَضْلًا
٢٠ وَبَيْنَكُمَا عَلَى التَّحْقِيقِ بَوْنُ
٢١ إِذَا مَا تَمَّ أَدْرَكَهُ مَحَاقُ
٢٢ يَعُودُ مِنَ الْكَمَالِ إِلَى اِنْتِقَاصٍ
٢٢ وَلَوْ ذَهَبَ الْمَحَاقُ بِهِ عَرَفَنَا
٢٤ سَمَوْتَ عَنِ الْهَنَاءِ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ

- 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 *Sha'bân* (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-‘Âqîd and Nâṣir al-Dîn, son of Al-Malik al-Šâliḥ, and said the following ...” Ms *Rabat*: “He said also in praise of Al-‘Âqîd 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 *haram*). 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-'Âdîd with the words :

| | |
|----|--|
| ٢٦ | لَعْنٌ نَظَمْتُ لِيَالِي الْمُلْكِ عَقْدًا |
| ٢٧ | وَإِنْ صَرَفْتُ صَفَاتُكَ فَهُوَ مِنْهَا |
| ٢٨ | وَإِنْ كَرُمْتُ خَصَالُكَ فَهُوَ مِنْهَا |
| ٢٩ | رَعَى حَرَمَ الْخَلَافَةَ مِنْهُ طَرْفَ |
| ٣٠ | وَحَاطَ سَوَامِهَا مِنْ كُلِّ خَطْبٍ |
| ٣١ | وَبَاشَرَ عَنْدَ نُصْرَتِهَا الْمَنَيَا |
| ٣٢ | وَنَاطَ وَلَاءَهَا بِعُرَى وَفَاءٍ |
| ٣٣ | جَعَلْتَ زِمامَ أَمْرِكَ فِي يَدِيْهِ |

عَلَيْكَ فِإِنَّهُ سُلْكُ النَّظَامِ
^{١٨} بِمَنْزَلَةِ الْوَفَاءِ مِنَ الدَّمَامِ
^{١٩} بِمَنْزَلَةِ الْوَفَاءِ مِنَ الدَّمَامِ
^{٢٠} طَرِيفٌ عِنْدَهُ خَيْرُ الْمَنَامِ
 فِيَّا لِلَّهِ مِنْ رَاعِي سَوَامِ
 مُبَاشِرَةً اصْطِلَاءً وَاصْطِلَامَ
 يُصَانُ^{٢١} عَنْ انْفُصَالٍ وَانْفِصَامٍ
 فَرْدٌ إِلَيْكَ تَدَبِّرُ الزِّمَامِ

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*: بِمَنْزَلَةِ الْفَرِيدِ مِنَ الْحُسَامِ

¹⁹ This line 28 does not occur in *Ms D*, it is only found in *Ms Rabat*.

²⁰ *Ms Rabat*: طَرِيفٌ عِنْدَهُ خَيْرُ الْمَنَامِ

²¹ *Ms Rabat*: يُصَانُ

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 (*taraf*) from him was enough to protect the *haram* 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-Şâlih by his son Al-Nâşir appears similar to that of the Imâm himself, as there is even at this lowlier level the suggestion of a *nass* (designation):

| | |
|--|----|
| وَذَلِكَ مِنْ تَمَامِ الْإِهْتِمَامِ | ٢٧ |
| يُشَارُّ بِهِ إِلَى عَضْدِ الْإِمَامِ | ٢٨ |
| يُشَرِّفُ سَامِيَ الرَّتْبَ السَّوَامِيَ | ٢٩ |
| تَقْطَعُ دُونَهُ نَفْسُ الْكَرِامِ | ٤٠ |
| بِذَلِكَ رَمِيَّةً مِنْ غَيْرِ رَامِ | ٤١ |

37 He (the father: *Talâ'i'* al-Şâlih) supported his monarchy by means of *Abû Shujâ'*, and that has ensured the most complete ambition (*min tamâmi l-ihtimâmi*).

38 Then the countenance of ‘Âdîdic monarchy shone; thereby an allusion was made to the ‘Ađud (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-Nâşir al-Muhyî 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.

At this point it is interesting to note, how ‘Umâra in verse 38 of his poem (*ka l-sihâmi*) publicly contradicts the ominous content of the Imâm's honorific title Al-‘Âdîd (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-‘Ađud, 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 *nass* for the succession, is indirectly mentioned in connection with his son as his successor:

بذلك رمية من غير رام
يُجلّي رأيه سدف الظلام
يُريه كُلَّ خلفٍ من أمام
تُوزع بين عفوٍ وانتقامٍ
مشَّتٌ بين السكينة والغرام
على الحيينِ من يَمِنِ وشامٍ
ترفعها عن النَّفَر اللئام
فيَغلبني ويَجْمِعُ في اللجام
وَعَرَفَ المسْكَ يَنْفَحُ في الختام
كَانَ النَّاسَ مِنْهَا في مَنَامٍ

٤١> ولم يَكُ نَصٌ والده عَلَيْهِ
٤٢ وَذلِكَ رأيُ مُحْتَنِكَ خَبِيرٍ
٤٣ يَرِي الأَشْيَاءَ مِنْ أَمْمٍ بِفَكْرٍ
٤٤ تَبَيَّتْ بِأَمْرِهِ الْأَقْدَارُ فِينَا
٤٥ إِذَا مَا الْحَلْمُ خَفَّ مِنْ سُطَّاهُ²²
٤٦ بِهِ طَالَتْ بَنُو رُزَيْكَ بَاعًا
٤٧ مُلُوكٌ عَلِمُوا هُمَ الْقَوَافِي
٤٨ أَقْصَرُ عن²³ عَنَانَ الْمَدْحُ فِيهِمْ
٤٩ وَأَسْتَرَ شُكْرَهُمْ خَجَلًا فِيَدُو
٥٠ لَقَدْ حَسْنَتْ بِدَوْلَتِهِمْ لَيَالٍ

<41 Due to this the *nass*, 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 ('urâm).

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: إِذَا مَا الْحَلْمُ خَفَّ مِنْ سُطَّاهُ

²³ Ms Rabat: أَقْصَرُ مِنْ

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 *lâmi‘u* (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 :

– Talâ‘i‘ is the Regent who protects the Islamic dwelling. Verse 28, the Polytheists are humbled by *qaṭâ‘i‘u* “feudal property” and by *qawâti‘u* “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-Muhyî

²⁴ Poem to rhyme *lâmi‘u*; 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-‘Âdîd, he says the following...”.

²⁵ For lines 28-29 of the poem to rhyme *lâmi‘u*, see also infra the text and translation of these two verses. We should take into account the many activities of the fleet, *uṣṭûl*, when it was under the final command of Vizier Talâ‘i‘ and his son Ruzzîk. Ibn Muyassar Tâj al-Dîn Muḥammad b. ‘Alî b. Yûsuf b. Jalâb Râghib (died 677 H), *Al-muntaqâ min Akhbâr Miṣr, intaqâhu Taqâ al-Dîn Aḥmad b. ‘Alî al-Maqrîzî* (died 814 H), ed. Ayman Fu‘âd Sayyid Cairo 1981, p. 153, informs us sub anno 550 H, “The fleet (*uṣṭûl*) put to sea in the direction of Sûr (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 Dirghâm and a number of other *Amîrs*. (...) On 5 Sha‘bân, 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 Talâ‘i‘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-nîrâni*, in which Talâ‘i‘ 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 (Bâḥr 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 seen before. / How I love galleys of war (*shawâniya*), whose murderous acts have made their enemies hate them (*walahâ l-‘udâtu shawâni*). / 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 Sha‘bân, in order that the two nations should cooperate (*kay yatalâ‘ama l-shâbâni*), You caused the envoys of Ibn Qasîm (scil., Nûr al-Dîn Zankî) to return to him. / Using his name, the omen (*al-fâ‘lu*) confirmed that Syria should be split into two parts, divided between You both (*yaghdû l-Shâmu wa-hwa ‘alaykumâ 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.” (*‘Imâd al-İsfahâni al-Kâtib, Kharîdat al-qâṣr wa-jâridat al-‘aṣr qism shu‘arâ’ Miṣr*, ed. Ahmad Amîn and others, Cairo 1951, vol. I, p. 211.)

is the Regent's sword, but he is not alone: other members of the *Āl Ruzzīk* 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 'Âdîd, oh Supporter of the *hanîfî* (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 'Âdîd, 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:

فَلَا السُّرْبُ مَطْرُوقُ وَلَا الشُّرْبُ ضَائِعٌ
تُنَاضِلُ عَنْ دِينِ الْهُدَى وَتُمَاصِعُ
قَطَائِعُ مِنْ اسْطُولِهِ وَقَوَاطِعُ
عَقَائِلَ مَحْبُوبٍ إِلَيْهَا قَلَائِعُ
يُخَافُ الْمَنَاوِي فِي حَدِّ الْمَنَازِعِ
يُجَدُّ الْأَمَانِي دُونَهَا وَالْمَطَامِعُ
هُوَ الْكَفُّ عَنْدَ الْبَطْشِ وَهِيَ الْأَصَابِعُ
وَبَيْنَ الْعَدَى سُدُّ مِنَ الْعَزِّ مَانِعُ
وَصَارِمُهُ فِي حِيثُ تَهْبُو الْقَوَاطِعُ
لَقَدْ جَلَّ مَتَبْوَعُ لَدِيهَا وَتَابِعُ
وَبَدْرٌ وَلَا اسْمٌ وَفِعْلٌ مُضَارِعٌ
فَمَنْ نَهْشَلُ فِي دَارِمٍ وَمُجَاشِعُ

٢٦ حَمَى حَوْزَةَ الْإِسْلَامِ عَنْ كُلِّ طَارِقٍ
٢٧ وَكَثُرَ أَعْدَادَ الْفُتُوحِ بِعَزْمَةٍ
٢٨ وَدَوْخَ صُنَّ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَبِرْهَمٍ
٢٩ وَفِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ تَجَنَّلَيِ الْعَيْنُ مِنْهُمْ
٣٠ وَجَرَدَ مِنْ ذُخْرِ الْأَئِمَّةِ صَارَمًا
٣١ سَمَا النَّاصِرُ الْمُحَيِّي إِلَى الْغَايَاةِ الَّتِي
٣٢ فَأَمْسَتْ لَهُ مِنْ آلِ رُزَيْكَ أُسْرَةً
٣٣ إِذَا رَكِبْتَ مِنْ حَوْلِهِ حَالَ جَيْشَهُ
٣٤ خَلِيلُ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَذُخْرَهُ
٣٥ مَنَاقِبُ مَجْدٍ لَمْ عَرَّتْهَا كَلَالَةٌ
٣٦ كَأَنَّهُمَا فِي رُقْبَةِ الْمَجْدِ كَوْكَبٍ
٣٧ إِذَا ذَكَرْتَ غَسَانًا يَوْمًا عَلَاهُمَا

تُشَرِّبُ بِالْأَشْعَارِ فِيهِ الْمَسَامِعُ
 بَدَا مِنْهُ وَجْهٌ رَائِقٌ الْحُسْنُ رَائِعٌ
 فَلِيسَ لَهُ فِي الْفَضْلِ طُرَا مُنَازِعٌ
 يُؤْرِخُ فِيهِ بَعْضًا مَا أَنْتَ صَانِعٌ
 وَقَائِعٌ مِنْ أَفْعَالِكُمْ وَصَنَائِعُ
 لَكُمْ وَلِيَالِيهِ إِمَاءٌ خَوَاضِعٌ
 إِلَيْكُمْ إِلَى أَنْ أَوْجَعَتُهُ الْأَخْادِعُ
 لَكُمْ بِفُتُوحٍ نَصْرُهَا مُتَابِعٌ
 مَدَى الدَّهْرِ مَا غَنِيَ الْحَمَامُ السَّوَاجِعُ
 مُقِيمٌ الْأَوْاخيِّ مَا أَقَامَ مُتَالِعٌ

٢٨ فِيَا عَاصِدَ الدِّينِ الْحَنِيفِ وَخَيْرَ مَنْ
 لِيَهُنَكَ عَامٌ لَوْ تَجَسَّمَ شَخْصَهُ
 ٢٩ فَأَقْرَرَتْ لَهُ الْأَنَامُ ظَنِيرًا بِفَضْلِهِ
 ٤٠ وَمَا فَضَلَ الْأَعْوَامَ إِلَّا كَانَهُ
 ٤١ جَلَتْ صِبَغَ لَوْثَيٍ لِيلَهُ وَنَهَارَهُ
 ٤٢ فَأَيَامُهُ الْغَرُّ السَّعِيدَةُ أَعْبُدُ
 ٤٣ شَنِى عَامٌ خَمْسٌ جَيْدَهُ مُتَلَفِّفًا
 ٤٤ وزَارَكُمُ الْعِيدُ السَّعِيدُ مُبَشِّرًا
 ٤٥ فَمُتَّعَ كُلُّ مِنْكُمَا بِوَلَيْهِ
 ٤٦ وَلَا زَالَ هَذَا الدَّهْرُ وَقْفًا عَلَيْكُمَا

- 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 (*qatâ’i’u*) and cutting swords (*qawâ’i’u*) 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-Muhyî 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 *qawâ’i’* 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 Mujâshi' (i.e., Farazdaq's clan), among the federation of Dârim ?²⁶

38 Oh 'Âdid of the *hanîfe* 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'i qu l-husni râ'i'u*).

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 *'ilm 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 Mutâli' continues to stand (near Bahrayn between Al-Sawda and Al-Ahsâ').

²⁶ Ad verse 37 the following:

Kitâb al-Aghâñî VII, 44 (Aghâñî 2 VIII, 16) and *Aghâñî* X, 3 (Aghâñî 2 XI, 62) give the following information. First *Aghâñî* 2 VIII, 17:

The poet Al-Akhtâl 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 Mujâshi' which was part of the larger tribe of Dârim. The reference is to a poem by Al-Akhtâl, 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 l-ladhi yahjâ Banî Dârimin fa-innaka qad qadaya 'alâ Sâhibinâ faqul abyâtan wa qâli li-Sâhibinâ 'alayhi fa-qâla l-Akhtâl*:

"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-Akhtâl also says:

"Be silent Oh Kulayb ! Mujâshi' 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 *Aghâñî* X, 3 (XI, 62), an extra line:

"Be silent Oh Kulayb ! Mujâshi' 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 ‘Umâra, there is the suggestion of intense cooperation between an Imâm and a Vizier similar to that between two loyal friends, a *wâlî* to a *wâlî*. Moreover in the poems dedicated to Al-‘Âdîd, 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-‘Âdîd as the Imâm to whom the Regent must be loyal, but also the prostration which is owed to Al-‘Âdîd. Thus every visitor, even including a poet who strives to have his poems applauded, receives direction from ‘Umâra 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-Qâhîra.

3.4

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

| | |
|----|--|
| ٥ | أَمْلَمْسَا نَوَالاً أو شَواباً |
| ٦ | وَعَلَ العَاصِدَ الْهَادِي قَدِيرٌ |
| ٧ | فَلْقٌ عَصَا الْإِقَامَةِ فِي مَقَامٍ |
| ٨ | تَرَى الْجَبَهَاتِ وَالْأَقْدَامَ فِيهِ |
| ٩ | وَلَوْلَا الْحَظُّ مِنْ أَجْرٍ وَفَخْرٌ |
| ١٠ | وَسَلَمٌ بِالسُّجُودِ عَلَى إِمَامٍ |
| ١١ | وَقَبْلٌ تُرْبَ سَاحِتَهِ فَمِنْهَا |
| ١٢ | وَإِنْ أَذَنْتَ جَلَلْتَهُ عَلَيْهِ |
| ١٣ | لَعَلَّكَ أَنْ تَرَى فِي الدَّسْتِ وَجْهًا |

- 5 Oh searcher of a gift or a reward, one You prepared out of need or as a condolence!
- 6 Maybe Al-‘Âdîd 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: شفاعة للعيون من السقام

- 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-‘Âdîd is a matter of course. However, ‘Umâra 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 *qaṣîdas*. For example in the *qaṣîda* (rhyme *maqbûlu*)²⁹ the so-called ‘Âdîdic majesty gives rise to the kissing of a carpet:

| | |
|---|--|
| ٢ | بَهْرَ الْجَلَلُ الْعَاصِدِيُّ خَوَاطِرًا |
| ٣ | عَظِيمَتْ مَهَابُّتُنَا لِمَوْقِفِكَ الَّذِي |
| ٤ | حَرَمْ نُقَابِلُ مَنْكَ فِيهِ قِبْلَةً |
| ٥ | تَتَغَيَّرُ الْأَرْوَاحُ فَوْقَ بَسَاطِهِ |

- 2 The ‘Âdîdic majesty (= *Ms Rabat*, “‘Âdîdic 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 *Haram* 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-‘Âdîd and his Vizier Al-Şâlih” (= *Ms D* and then *Ms Rabat*): “He also said in praise of Al-‘Âdîd and his Vizier,...”

3.4.1

In the poem to rhyme *wa l-hijri*,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 Ka‘ba, he is presented as an object of exceptional honour:

| | |
|---|---|
| ١ | سجوداً فهذا صاحبُ الرُّكْنِ والْحِجْرِ |
| ٢ | وَهَمْسَاً لِأصْوَاتٍ وَغَصْنَاً لِأَعْيُنٍ |
| ٣ | أَلَا حَبَّذا دَسْتُ الْخَلَافَةَ كُلُّمَا |
| ٤ | إِمَامٌ هَدَى أَرْبَى عَلَى كُلِّ غَايَةٍ |

- 1 Make a prostration, for this is the Lord of the Cornerstone and of the Hijr, 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-‘Âdîd 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 ‘Umâra could, in fact, have had a problem with ‘Abd Allâh al-‘Âdîd’s extreme young age, he is not even ten years old. At the same time, as ‘Umâra’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 *Itti‘âz*, but less than ten. When ‘Umâra, as a Shâfi‘ite *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 *‘âqil 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-‘Âdîd, but precisely the even younger Al-Fâ’iz was challenged. According to *Itti‘âz*, III, p. 223 the ‘Abbâsid Caliph Al-Muqtâfî wished, for this reason, not to accept Al-Fâ’iz. In his place the ‘Abbâsid wanted to appoint Nûr al-Dîn Zankî as Governor of Egypt.

³⁰ Poem to rhyme *wa l-hijri*, 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-‘Âdîd 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-‘Âdîd 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-Saghîr" and describes his command and suitability as "amr al-Sabi".³¹

As far as 'Umâra is concerned, in his poem (to rhyme *al-hijri*), in which he had in 'Abd Allâh al-'Âdîd established the presence of "perfection, although in years he ('Âdîd) had not, as yet, shouldered ten" no further comment regarding his age is made. In the following lines 'Umâra 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:

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>٦ مَدْحَنَاهُ بِالْقُرْآنِ فِي النَّظَمِ وَالنُّشْرِ</p> | <p>٦ وَلَوْ قُدْرَتْ أَفْعَالُهُ حَقَّ قَدْرُهَا</p> |
| <p>٢٠ تُنْيِفُ عَلَى بُرْجِ السَّمَاكِينِ وَالنَّسْسِ</p> | <p>(...) وَخَيَّمَتْ فِي أَكْنَافِ عَالِيَّةِ الدُّرَا</p> |
| <p>٢١ بِمَكْنُونِ مَا لِلَّهِ فِيهِ مِنَ السُّرِّ</p> | <p>٢١ تُخَاطِبُهَا الْجُوزَاءُ سَرًّا وَخُفْيَةً</p> |
| <p>٢٢ بُنَاهَا وَلَا اسْتَمْطَاهُ فَرْعَوْنُ لِلْكُفَّرِ</p> | <p>٢٢ هِيَ الْصَّرْخُ إِلَّا أَنَّ هَامَانَ لَمْ يُشَيِّدْ</p> |

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 *Simâks* 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 Fir'awnu li l-kufri*).

3.4.3

The palace where Imâm Al-Âdîd lives is a sacred precinct. It resembles the Ka'ba 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 ‘Umâra compares the people who come to the palace to offer their petition to Pilgrims :

| | |
|---|---|
| ٣٣ شَبَهَتْ قَصْرَكَ وَالْخَلَائِقُ حَوْلَهُ | تَعْنُو عَلَى حُرُّ الْجَبَيْنِ وَخَدَّهُ |
| ٣٤ بِالْبَيْتِ وَالرُّكْنِ الْخَلَقُ رُكْنَهُ | وَالوَافِدِينَ إِلَى نَدَاكَ بُوْفَدَهُ |

- 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 Ka‘ba), 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-‘Ādīd)³²

3.5.1

In ‘Umâra’s poem *muttasimu* (see Appendix) dedicated to Al-‘Ādīd, 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 وَأَصْبَحَ الْقَصْرُ مَحْجُوْجًا وَمُنْتَجِعًا | كَانَمَا حَلَّ فِيهِ الْحَلُّ وَالْحَرَمُ |
| ١٧ قَصْرٌ يُقَبَّلُ بِالْأَفْوَاهِ تَكْرِمَةً | وَالرُّكْنُ يُومَى إِلَيْهِ حَتَّى يُسْتَلِمُ |
| ١٨ قَدْ زَادَ فِي شَرْفِ الْأَمْلَاكِ بَلْ خَطَرِ الْأَفْلَاكِ أَنْ قِيَامَهَا لَكُمْ خَدَمُ | فَمِنْ مُلُوكِ عَلَيْ أَبْوَابِكُمْ زُمْرُ |
| ١٩ وَمِنْ مَلَوَّنَاتِكِ عَلَيْ أَبْوَابِكُمْ زُمْرُ | وَمِنْ مَلَوَّنَاتِكِ عَلَيْ أَبْوَابِكُمْ زُمْرُ |

- 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 ‘Umâra’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-‘Ādīd 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-‘Ādīd 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 'Umâra's poem *lâmi'u*, 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 فَأَنْتُمْ نَبِيُّ الدَّهْرِ زُهْرَ مُنِيرَةٌ
 ١٤ إِذَا كَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَقَعَ عَلَيْكُمْ
 ١٥ وَقَدْ بَدَّ مُوسَى كَيْدَ فَرْعَوْنَ مُرْضِعًا
 ١٦ وَكَلَمَ عِيسَى وَهُوَ فِي الْمَهْدِ قَوْمَهُ

غَوَارِبُهَا حَتَّى الْمَهَادِ طَوَالُ
 فَسِيَّانَ كَهْلٌ فِيهِ مَنْكُمْ وَيَافِعُ
 وَحَرَمٌ مِنْ خَوْفٍ عَلَيْهِ الْمَرَاضِعُ
 بِمَا ذَهَلَتْ مِنْهُ الْلَّمَاءُ وَالْمَسَامِعُ

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 (*murdi'an*, a woman who gave him her breast when he was still a baby), although the wet-nurses (*al-marâdi'u*), for fear of Pharaoh, had become inaccessible. (Cf. Koran concerning Moses, *Sûra* 20, verses 36-40 and *Sûra* 28, verses 7-13.)

16 Jesus (‘Isâ) 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 *‘âqil*, 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 ‘Isâ” (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 *lâmi'u*, compare note 24 above.

³⁵ Ibn Khaldûn, *Muqaddima*, second edition 'Abd al-Wâhid Wâfi, Cairo 1965, vol. II, *Al-bâb al-thâni fi l-'umrâni l-badâwi wa l-*

umami l-wâjhiyya, mawdû' (no. 53) *Fâsl fi amri l-Fâti'mi wamâ yadhhabu ilayhi l-nâsu fi sha'nihi wa-kashfu l-ghitâ' an dhalika*, p. 916.

When still a very young child, Moses was also a remarkable person, capable of a *mu’jiza*, in a period of time which preceded the well-known miracles as summarised in the Koran. ‘Umâra 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 *lâmi’u*), it is said that the whole of humankind must become a foster mother to the newly appointed ‘Abdallâh al-‘Âdîd.

٤٠ أُقِرَّتْ لِهِ الْأَنَامُ ظَهِيرًا بِفَضْلِهِ فَلِيسَ لَهُ فِي الْفَضْلِ طُرًّا مُنَازِعٌ

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-‘Âdîd and Al-‘Âdîd is more important than Moses who can only acquire one wet nurse!

In his poem (to rhyme *muttasimu*) dedicated to Al-‘Âdîd,³⁶ ‘Umâra pleads that both understanding and wisdom can exist without maturity. According to this poem the Imâm is the “Supporter” of the (monotheistic) *Hanîf* 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 *bay’â*. 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 ‘Isâ who died so young, alias Al-Fâ’îz, and then to the surviving ‘Abdallâh al-‘Âdîd.

وَقَدْ كَادَتْ عُرَاهُ مِنَ الْإِنْشِقَاقِ تَنْفَصِمُ
بِحَبْلِهِ وَبِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ يَعْتَصِمُ
تَكَشَّفَ الظُّلْمُ وَانْجَابَتِ الظُّلْمُ
وَالنَّارُ لَوْلَمْ يُرَفِّعْ لَمْ يُرَفِّعِ الْعِلْمُ

٣ العَاصِدُ عَاصِدُ الدِّينِ الْحَنِيفُ
٤ خَلِيفَةُ بَاتَ دِينُ اللَّهِ مُعْتَصِمًا
٥ لَمَّا أَنَارَتْ لَنَا أَنْوَارُ بَيْعَتِهِ
٦ وَأَشْرَقَ الدِّينُ وَالدُّنْيَا بَيْعَتِهِ

3 Al-‘Âdîd is the Supporter (*Al-‘âdîd*) of the *Hanîfî* 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 *bay’â* had given us light, injustice was taken away and darkness vanished.

6 Religion and the *Dunyâ* gave light through his *bay’â*: 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-‘Âdîd, the poet then makes a happy pronouncement about the Prophet Jesus and the Imâm Jesus (‘Isâ) Al-Fâ’îz, using words with the following meaning: “You have inherited from both ‘Isâ and ‘Isâ. Jesus, the son of Mary ruled once his arm became strong.” However, the Fâtimids ruled earlier, even before they were weaned (*fuṭîmû*). Here a parallel can be drawn to a passage of Al-Qâdî al-Fâdîl, 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 Fâtimâ.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 ‘Umâra presented for the sake of a paronomastic figure of speech, *hilm* as opposed to *hulum*,

| | |
|----|---|
| ٧ | وَرَثْتَ عِيسَى وَعِيسَى رَحْمَةً وَهُدًىٰ |
| ٨ | كَانُوكُمْ بَيْنَاتٌ بَيْنَهَا رَحْمٌ |
| ٩ | سَادَ ابْنُ مَرِيمَ لَمَّا اشْتَدَّ سَاعِدُهُ |
| ١٠ | وَالْفَاطِمِيُّونَ شَادُوا قَبْلَ أَنْ فَطَمُ |
| ١١ | أَنَّ الْحُظُوظَ بِلَشْمِ الْأَرْضِ تُقْتَسِّمُ |
| ١٢ | خَلَائِقُ اللَّهِ لَا فُرْقَانٌ بَيْنَهُمْ |
| ١٣ | قَدْ أَخْبَرَتْ سُورُ الْفُرْقَانِ أَنَّهُمْ |
| ١٤ | وَرْبُّ حَلْمٍ أَتَى مِنْ بَعْدِهِ الْحَلْمُ |
| ١٥ | الْكَهْلُ وَالْطِفْلُ شَرْعٌ فِي شَرِيعَتِهِمْ |

- 7 From both Jesus (‘Isâ) and the other ‘Isâ, 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 *Shari‘a*; by the time maturity comes much patiently acquired insight has already been gained.

³⁷ See P. Smoor, “Fâtimid Poets and the ‘Takhallus’ that Bridges the Nights of Time to the Imâm of Time”, *Der Islam* 68, 1991, p. 261, where Al-Qâdî al-Fâdîl is quoted acknowledging his laudation for the Fâtimid dynasty in poetry in a *takhallus* 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 Fâtimâ.” (*Dîwân Al-Qâdî al-Fâdîl*, ed. Ahmad 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 *nâs*, that he was to be succeeded by Al-‘Âdîd.³⁸ Al-Fâ’iz had, at least according to ‘Umâra, most certainly done this and in so doing he followed the well-known example of Mohammed. Hence the *nâs* came from ‘Isâ, as the descendant of Haydar (scil., ‘Alî) and Fâtima; not from the other ‘Isâ, 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 ‘amm* is Al-‘Âdîd, and, in this context, Al-‘Âdîd resembles ‘Alî, the *ibn ‘amm* 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 ولا ؤكَ مفروضٌ على كلّ مسلمٍ
 ٢ إِذَا المَرْءُ لَمْ يُكْرِمْ بِحُبِّكَ نَفْسَهُ
 ٣ ورَثْتَ الْهُدَى عنْ نَصْ عِيسَى بْنَ حَيْدَرٍ وَفَاطِمَةٌ لَا نَصْ عِيسَى بْنَ مَرْيَمْ
 ٤ قَالَ أَطِيعُوا لَابْنِ عَمِّي فَإِنَّهُ أَمِينِي عَلَى سُرِّ الْإِلَاهِ الْمَكْتُمِ
 ٥ كَذَاكَ وَصَى^{٣٩} الْمُصْطَفَى فِي ابْنِ عَمِّهِ إِلَى مُنْجَدٍ يَوْمَ الْغَدَيرِ وَمُتْهِمِ
 ٦ عَلَى مُسْتَوَى فِيهِ^{٤٠} قَدِيمٌ وَحَادِثٌ وَإِنْ كَانَ فَضْلُ السَّبَقِ لِلْمُتَقَدِّمِ

- 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 *nâs* (a designation) from ‘Isâ the descendant from ‘Alî (= Haydar) and Fâtimah, not the *nâs* from Jesus (‘Isâ) the son of Maryam. (Al-Fâ’iz was in fact called ‘Isâ, his full name was Al-Fâ’iz bi-Nâşr Allâh Abû l-Qâsim ‘Isâ b. al-Zâfir bi-Amr Allâh Ismâ’îl, see Al-Maqrîzî, *Al-Muqaffâ* VIII, p. 742).
- 4 He (Al-Fâ’iz) said: “Be obedient unto my ‘ibn ‘amm’ (Al-‘Âdîd), 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 ‘amm” (‘Alî) 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-‘Âdîd, and as an aside pronounced eulogies for Al-Fâ’iz.” The poem is dedicated to

Imâm Al-‘Âdîd 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*: كَذَاكَ أَوْصَى

⁴⁰ Ms *Rabat*: عَلَى يَسْتُوِي مِنْهَا

3.5.3

Unfortunately, the poet tells us, no-one abided by this *waṣīya* (testament), as a result of which the 'Abbâsids gained the chance to obtain power. If this *waṣīya* 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 Fâṭîmids' coins, the very coins which another poet, namely 'Arqala from Damascus, continued to value, even after the fall of Al-'Âdîd, as a stable remnant of the dynasty. A dynasty which he now curses. Indeed, 'Arqala would happily accept 'âdîdiyyât as payment for his odes which were now dedicated to the subsequent dynasty, the Ayyûbids!⁴¹

3.6.1

'Umâra knows absolutely nothing about these later developments in his poem *maghnamî* and, therefore, we see how, by way of a stylistic feature, he includes in his poem the primordial "covenant" of the Imâm. The word "ahd" 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 ('ahd) with God because they found it too heavy, are now set against an Imâm whose short life span (whose short 'ahd) 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 'Arqala al-Dimashqî, poem *dînârî* about Saladin, *Kharîdat al-qâṣr wa-jarîdat al-'âṣr, qism shu'arâ' al-Shâm*, ed. Shukrî Fayṣal, Damascus 1955, vol. I, p. 179, the additional fourth line is from Ibn al-'Imâd al-Imâm Shihâb al-Dîn Abû l-Falâh 'Abd al-Ḥayy b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-'Akarî al-Ḥanbâlî al-Dimashqî (who lived from 1032 to 1089), *Shadharât al-dhahab fî akhbâr man dhahab*, edition Maḥmûd and 'Abd al-Qâdir al-Arnâ'ût, Beirut 1991, vol. VI, p. 365: "Amongst all the words which 'Arqala wrote about him (= Saladin) belong those which now follow. Salâh al-Dîn had promised him that he would give him 1000 *dînârs* when he became king (occupier) of Egypt. 'Arqala came to him and praised him with (inter alia) the following lines of verse:

يَا إِلْفَ مُولَا يَا إِعْسَارِي
أَلْلُ لِلصَّالِحِ مُعْنِي عِنْدَ دِينَارِ
أَحْسَنَى مِنَ الْأَسْرِ إِنْ حَاوَلْتُ أَرْضَكَمْ
وَمَا تَفِي جِنَّةَ الْفَرْدُوسِ بِالْتَّارِ
مِنْ بَعْضِ مَا خَلَفَ الطَّاغِي أَبُو الْعَارِ
فَجُدْ بِهَا عَاصِدَيَاتٍ مُسْقَرَّةٌ
عُنْتَقًا ثَعَالًا كَاعِدَائِي وَأَطْمَارِي
حُمْرًا كَاسِيَافَكَمْ عَرَّا كَخِيلَكَمْ

"1. Say to Al-Ṣalâh, my supporter in my poverty: 'Oh friendship of my master! Where have the 1000 *dînârs* 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, 'âdîdiyyât embossed with a script, coins which were left behind by that Tyrant (*Tâghî*), 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."

وَجَدَ مَضِيَّاً عَنْهَا وَلَمْ يَتَقَسَّمْ
وَلَوْ أَنَّهُ نَالَ السَّمَاكَ⁴² بِسُلْمٍ
لِغَيْرِهَا فِي أَقْطَارِهَا دَوْرٌ دِرْهَمٌ
وَأَنْتَ أَبْنُ بَنْتِ الْمُصْطَفَى⁴⁴ حِينَ تَنَّتَمْ
وَلَا كُلُّ عِيَدَانِ الْفَتَى بِمُقْوَمٍ
قَوَاعِدُ رَضْوَى تَحْتَهُ وَيَلْمَلِمٍ
وَأَحْيَيْتَ مِنْ أَعْلَامِهَا كُلَّ مَعْلَمٍ
أَمِينَا⁴⁵ وَعَهْدُ الْعَصْرِ لَمْ يَتَصَرَّمْ
أَفَادَكَ مَعْنَى الْعِلْمِ قَبْلَ التَّعْلُمِ
وَكَسْتَ كَأْجَسَادَ مِنَ الْلَّحْمِ وَالدَّمِ
حَرَاسَةً مَعْصُومًّا بِالْبَصِيرَةِ مُلْهَمًّا

وَأَتَيْتَ مَيرَاثَ الْبَسِيْطَةِ عَنْ أَبِ
لَكَ الْحَقُّ فِيهَا دُونَ كُلِّ مُنَازِعٍ
وَلَوْ حَفَظُوا فِيهَا وَصِيَّةَ لَمْ يَكُنْ
فَمِنْهُمْ فَرُوعٌ⁴³ فِي قُصْيٍ قَصِيَّةَ
وَمَا كُلُّ حَضْرَاءُ الْغُصُونِ بِنَبْعَةٍ
تَحَمَّلْتَ مِنْ ثَقْلِ الْخَلَافَةِ مَا وَهَتْ
وَجَدَدْتَ مِنْ رَسْمِ الشَّرِيْعَةِ مَا عَفَا
وَقُمْتَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ بَيْنَ عَبَادَهُ
لِيَعْلَمَ⁴⁶ أَنَّ اللَّهَ جَلَّ جَلَالَهُ
وَانِكَ نُورُ الْهُدَى مَتَجَسَّدٌ
وَانِكَ مَحْرُوسُ الْمَكَانَةِ عَنْدَهُ

- 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 (*wasîya*) 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 ‘Abbâsids) far-reaching roots (= *Ms Rabat*, *Ms D* reads here: “far-reaching branches”) extend as far back as Quşayy, 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 Nab’ 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 Rađwâ and Yalamlam would stagger.
- 14 And You renewed the scribblings of the *Sharî'a* 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-‘Âdîd 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*: وَلَوْ أَنَّهُ نَالَ السَّمَاكَ.

⁴³ *Ms Rabat*: فَمِنْهُمْ عُرُوقٌ.

⁴⁴ *Ms Rabat*: وَأَنْتَ أَبْنُ بَنْتِ الْمُصْطَفَى.

⁴⁵ *Ms Rabat*: أَمِينًا.

⁴⁶ *Ms Rabat*: لِتَعْلَمُ.

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 'Umâra, 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-'Âdîd. 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. 'Âdîd seems to be the Supporter of the *Hanîf* 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 'Umâra, we learn how the vizierial throne is now occupied by the kingship of Al-Nâşîr, the son of Țalâ'i' b. Ruzzîk. By the time and date of composition of this poem, Țalâ'i' (scil. Al-Malik al-Şâlih) had already died.

3.6.3

At the end of the poem (to rhyme *muttasimu*) we see how 'Umâra repeatedly enumerates four elements which must confirm the Imamate of Al-'Âdîd. 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’i’s daughter to the Imâm Al-‘Âdîd. 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’i and thus revenging his death. The murder had, in fact, no further consequences for the Vizier’s dynasty because the Imâm allowed Ṭalâ’i’s son Al-‘Âdîl Ruzzîk to be considered as a successor to the Vizierate. Thus, as an Imâm, Al-‘Âdîd did not let down the Ruzzîk clan.

3.6.4

In reality the situation was totally different because the Imâm Al-‘Âdîd 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’i.

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

| | |
|--|---|
| نصرُ الْهُدَى وَالنَّدَى وَالسِيفُ وَالقلمُ | ٢٠ قادَتْ إِلَيْهِ زِمامَ الْمُلْكِ أَرْبَعَةُ |
| الْعِلْمُ وَالحَلْمُ وَالْمَعْرِفَةُ وَالْكَرْمُ | ٢١ وَهَذَبَتْ مِنْهُ خَلْقَ الدَّهْرِ أَرْبَعَةُ |
| الْعَهْدُ وَالْوَعْدُ وَالْمِيثَاقُ وَالذَّمْنُ | ٢٢ وَصَاحَبَتْ مِنْهُ قَوْلَ الصَّدْقِ أَرْبَعَةُ |
| الْأَصْلُ وَالْفَرْعُ وَالْأَخْلَاقُ وَالْيَتَمُ | ٢٢ وَصَدَّقَتْ مَادِحِيهِ مِنْهُ أَرْبَعَةُ |

- 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-‘Ādīd. He is, on the one hand, seen as a descendant of the line of Mohammed and, thereafter Fātima, 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 Yūsuf his father, his orphaned son, ‘Abd Allāh, eventually ascended to the throne of the Imamate as Al-‘Ādīd.

4

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

٢٥ تَبَسَّمَ الدَّسْتُ مِنْ رُزِّيْكَ عَنْ قَدْرِهِ الْأَقْدَارُ وَالْهَمَّ
 ٢٦ مُقَابِلٌ فِي مَقَامِ الْمَجْدِ مُقْتَبِلُ الْأَيَّامِ لَا صَغَرٌ فِيهَا وَلَا هَرَمٌ
 ٢٧ أَصْمَ أَبْلَجُ مِنْ عُثْمَانَ زَيْنَتُهُ أَنْ لِيْسَ مِنْ شَيْمَتِهِ الْكَبُّرُ وَالشَّمَّ
 ٢٨ يَدْنُو وَيُبَعِّدُ فِي حَالَتِي نَدَى وَرَدَى كَالَّدَهْرِ يُنْعَمُ أَحْيَانًا وَيَنْتَقِمُ

- 25 The throne smiled, revealing a king descended from Ruzzīk, 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 ‘Uthmān 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 ‘Uthmān’s modesty or imperfections of honour and pride when compared to the superior position of the Imām, be seen as a concession to the aversion of the Shī‘ites? This would be difficult in view of his Shāfi‘ite education which taught him to respect ‘Uthmān. Or does this statement mean something completely different: is it a positive appreciation of ‘Uthmān, although this would be surprising in the environment of the Fātimids? ⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Compare on the question of ‘Uthmān, Wilferd Madelung, *The succession to Muhammad, A study of the early Caliphate*, Cambridge University Press 1997, p. 80, where we find an interesting

opinion: “While ‘Uthmān 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 ‘Umâra 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 ‘Umâra’s words, the *mizalla*, the ceremonial Parasol which the Imâm has carried above him during his procession in Al-Qâhira.

The *mizalla* had already been described in the poetry of Ibn Hâni’ Al-Andalusî (see my article about a figure of style, known as *takhallus*)⁵⁰, however, this object appeared to retain importance even during the latter stages of the Fâtimids’ career. ‘Umâra’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 *bay’â* for Al-‘Âdîd, which was mentioned previously, we saw how the *mizalla* was carried round the town when the new Imâm was making his tour: “When Al-‘Âdîd was given the *bay’â*, he rode on a horse and the *mizalla* was carried over his head. Al-Şâlih (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 *mizalla* is ‘Umâra’s poem to rhyme *tawhîdu*.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-‘Âdîd 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-‘Âdîd; they received provisions for the journey which consisted of Your piety during the night session. The month of *Shawwâl* (the month after *Ramâdân* when Fasting ends) is at the same time a ‘îd and a ‘abd. This information is only of significance because of the figure of speech *tajnîs al-muṣahhaf*, where, in the case under consideration, the *yâ’* of ‘îd is replaced by the *bâ’* of ‘abd.

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 ‘Alî. As an intimate and favourite of Muḥammad, twice the Prophet’s son-in-law, he could better rival ‘Alî’s close kinship ties with the latter than could the rest.” See also *op. cit.*, p. 122-123.

⁵⁰ P. Smoor, “Fâtimid Poets...” p. 232-262. In general on the *shamsa*, see H. Halm, “Al-shamsa, Hängekrone 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-tawhîdu*, edition Derenbourg, *Nukat-Dîwan*, 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-‘Âdîd 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 | نَرَكَتْ لِياليِ الصُّومِ عَنْدَكَ مِنْزَلًا |
| ٤ | وَتَرَحَّلَتْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا زَوَّدَتْهَا |
| ٥ | وَلَقِيَتْ عِيدَ الْفَطْرِ مِنْكَ بَغْرَةً |
| ٦ | شَرَفَتْ بِكَ الْأَيَّامُ حِينَ مَلَكَتْهَا |
| ٧ | شَوَّالٌ عَبْدُكَ إِنْ رَضِيَتْ وَإِنَّمَا |
| ٨ | فِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مِنْ عُلَاقَةٍ إِشَارَةً |
| ٩ | فَأَفَدْ أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَمْ تَزَلْ |
| ١٠ | مَا السُّرُّ فِي عُودِ الْمَظَلَّةِ أَنَّهُ |
| ١١ | مَا ذَاكَ إِلَّا أَنَّهُ نَظَرَ الْوَرَى |
| ١٢ | فَصَغَىٰ وَلَا كَنَّ الْمَهَابَةَ وَالْحَيَا |
| ١٣ | حَسَدَتْ مَظَلَّتَكَ النَّجُومُ لَأَنَّهَا فَلَكُ |
| ١٤ | وَتَبَسَّطَتْ فِي طَلَبِ السِّيَادَةِ عُذْرَهَا |
| ١٥ | وَتَشَرَّفَتْ لِمَا غَدَتْ رَتَاجُهَا |
| ١٦ | مَا فَازَ بِالْتَّشْرِيفِ إِلَّا مُقْلَةً |
| ١٧ | تُومِي بِطَرْفَكَ نَحْوَهُمْ فَتَرَاهُمْ |
| ١٨ | دَانُوا بِحُبٍّ خَلِيفَةٍ مَا فَوْقَهُ |

- 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.

- 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 ‘abd, Your slave (= D, “a play on words is made with ‘Your ‘abd’” = R), if You agree to this because the *tašhîf* from the word “‘abd” is, when written, “‘îd”.
- 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 (*mazalla*) 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 *Ramadân*, 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 *wahy* 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 ‘Umâra’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, *Şâlih*, has already died. All the honour is subsequently reserved for his successor and son, the Regent Al-‘Âdil. Hence the one scion of the Banû Ruzzîk succeeds the other, at least according to ‘Umâra, 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 *hall* and *‘aqd* are attributed to the *tadbîr* of the new Regent,

مَلْكُهُمْ وَلَكَ بِيَعْهُ وَعَهْوُدُ
 لَوْ كَانَ عُودًا مَاسَ ذَاكَ الْعُودُ
 فِيهِنَّ وَعْدٌ صَادِقٌ وَوَعِيدٌ
 أَصْغَى إِلَيْهَا الْجَمْعُ الْمَشْهُودُ
 لِسَمَاعِهَا أَوْ تَقْشِيرُ جَلُودُ
 مِنْ دُونِهِ يَتَصَدَّعُ الْجَلْمُودُ
 وَلَهَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ الْكَرَامُ جَنُودُ
 بِكَفِيلِهَا مَرَرْ لَهَا وَعْقُودُ
 وَصَّى سُلَيْمَانًا بَهَا دَأْوُدُ
 وَالنَّصْ يَبْطُلُ عَنْهُ التَّقْلِيدُ
 إِلَى تَدْبِيرِهِ مَرْدُودُ
 مِنْهُ وُجُودٌ فِي الزَّمَانِ وَجُودُ
 فِي عَصْرِهِ نَصْرٌ وَلَا تَأْيِيدٌ
 كَمَا لَا يُنَكِّرَانِ شَدِيدٌ
 أَنْتَقَالُهَا لِلْحَامِلِينَ تَؤْودُ
 مَا فَوْقَهَا لِلْطَّالِبِينَ مَزِيدٌ
 أَطْنَابٌ لَهُ وَعْمُودٌ
 سَكَنَتْ بَهَا الْأَطْوَادُ وَهِيَ تَمِيدُ

٢١ شَخَصْتُ إِلَيْكَ نَوَاطِرُ الْأَمْمِ الَّتِي
 ٢٢ حَتَّى صَعَدْتَ عَلَى ذُوَابَةِ مِنْبَرٍ
 ٢٣ بَشَرْتَ بَلْ أَنْذَرْتَ بِالْحَكْمِ الَّتِي
 ٢٤ لَيَّنْتَ قَاسِيَةَ الْقُلُوبِ بِخُطْبَةٍ
 ٢٥ لَا مُنْكِرٌ أَنْ تَسْتَكِينَ جَوَارِحَ
 ٢٦ وَالْوَحْيُ يَنْطَقُ عَنْ لِسَانِكَ الَّذِي
 ٢٧ يَوْمٌ جَلَتْ فِيهِ الْإِمَامَةُ عَزَّهَا
 ٢٨ أَمْنَتْ خَلَافَتُكَ الْخَلَافَ فَأَبْرَمَتْ
 ٢٩ بِالْعَادِلِ ابْنِ الصَّالِحِ اَنْتَظَمْتَ فَهَلْ
 ٣٠ أَغْنَى عَنِ التَّقْلِيدِ نَصْ إِمَامَةٍ
 ٣١ لَا شَيْءٌ مِنْ حَلٌّ وَعَقْدٌ فِي الْوَرَى
 ٣٢ مَلْكٌ أَغَاثَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَحَاطَهُمْ
 ٣٣ وَرَثَ الْكَفَالَةَ عَنْ أَبٍ لَمْ يَفْتَرِقْ
 ٣٤ قَسَمًا بِمَجْدِ أَبِي شُجَاعٍ إِنَّهُ قَسَمٌ
 ٣٥ لَقَدْ اسْتَقْلَلَ أَبُو شُجَاعٍ بِالِّتِي
 ٣٦ وَاحْتَطَ مِنْ شَرَفِ الْمَسَاعِي غَايَةً
 ٣٧ تَدَارَكَ الْإِسْلَامَ حِينَ تَمَاثَلَتْ^{٥٣}
 ٣٨ وَأَفَرَ طَائِشَةَ الْقُلُوبِ^{٥٤} بِعَزْمَةٍ

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 *bay'a* 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 (*wahy*): rocks are split asunder by less.

⁵³ *Ms Rabat*: حينَ تطاولتْ.

⁵⁴ *Ms Rabat*: طائِشَةَ الْعُقُولِ.

- 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 (*Kafilahâ*),
- 29 Al-‘Âdil b. al-Şâlih, through whom it could be organised. Has David perhaps entrusted it to Solomon ?
- 30 The *nâsṣ* from an Imamate has no need of the *taqlîd*, because the *taqlîd* is invalidated by the presence of a *nâsṣ*.
- 31 Among the people there is nothing to bind them together (*‘aqd*) and nothing to loosen their ties (*hâl*) 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 Shujâ‘ is a strong oath, which neither of them will deny.
- 35 Abû Shujâ‘ 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 ‘Umâra’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 *şadâ* (at least according to the writings of ‘Umâra’s days) away, namely the “rust” (*sâda‘un*) of the doubtful and the “thirst” (*sadan*) of the yearning.

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

As far as the *mizalla* 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 *mizalla*, 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-‘Âdîd 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.

أُوقاتُهُنَّ إِلَى اللِّقَاءِ صَوَادٍ
تَجْلُو صَدَىٰ^{٥٦} الْمُرْتَابِ وَالْمُرْتَادِ
أُمُّ تُرَاوِحُ لَثْمَهُ وَتُغَادِي
كَالْبَدْرُ أَوْ كَالْكُوكَبِ الْوَقَادِ
لَوْلَا اعْتِمَادُ رِتَاجَهَا بِعَمَادِ
ذَهْبِيَّةٍ لَيْسَتْ بِذَادِ عِمَادِ
مِنْ تَحْتَهَا الْجَوْدِيُّ فَوْقَ جَوَادِ
يَعْلُو مَحَلَّ الْأَنْجَمِ الْأَفْرَادِ
وَكَذَا السُّيُوفُ تُصَانُ فِي الْأَغْمَادِ
وَالْعَيْنُ يُحَجِّبُ نُورُهَا بِسَوَادِ
ثُوبَ الْخُشُوعِ وَهِيَةَ الْأَسَادِ

فَتُضَايِقُ الْعَرَصَاتِ بِالْأَشْهَادِ
قَبَسٌ عَلَى قَسَمَاتِ وَجْهِكَ بَادِ
لِلَّهِ أَفْضَلَ قَانِتِ وَسَجَادَ
شُرَفَاتِهِ شَرْفًا عَلَى الْأَعْوَادِ
عَوْنُ إِلَاهِ لَهَا مِنَ الْأَمْدَادِ
وَاسْتَنْجَدَتْ بِمَدَامِ الْأَكْبَادِ
نَادَى رَشَادُكَ أَهْلَ ذَاكَ النَّادِي

٣ يَهْنِي أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مَوَاسِمُ
٤ وَتُنَيِّرُ تَحْتَ النَّاجِ غُرْتُكَ التَّيِّ
٥ وَتَزُورُ مَجْلِسَكَ الْمَقْدَسَ بِالْهَنَاءِ
٦ وَتَلُوحُ فِي ظَلِّ الْمَظَلَّةِ طَالِعًا
٧ وَكَانَهَا فَلَكُ وَجْهُكَ شَمَسُهُ
٨ حَسَدَتْ بِسَاطَ الْأَرْضِ فِيكَ وَمَا دَرَّتْ أَنَّ السَّمَاءَ لَهَا مِنَ الْحَسَادِ
٩ نَشَرَ الْمُدِيرُ بِهَا عَلَيْكَ غَمَامَةً
١٠ فَغَدَا الْوَرَى يَتَعَجَّبُونَ وَقَدْ بَدَا
١١ قَدْ قُلْتُ إِذْ عَلَتِ الْمَظَلَّةُ فَوْقَ مَنْ
١٢ لَمْ تَعْلُ إِلَّا خَدْمَةً وَصِيَانَةً
١٣ وَالْقَلْبُ أَشْرَفُ وَالضُّلُوعُ تَحْوَطُهُ
١٤ لَمَّا بَرَزَتِ إِلَى الْمُصَلَّى لَابِسًا
(...)

١٨ حَتَّى إِذَا وَافَيْتَ سَاحَةَ مَجْمَعِ
١٩ قَابَلْتَ مَحْرَابَ الصَّلَاةِ وَلِلْهُدَى
٢٠ وَقَضَيْتَ نَافِلَةَ السُّجُودِ وَلَمْ تَرَ
٢١ وَصَعَدَتْ ذَرْوَةَ مَنْبِرِ أَبْقَيْتَ فِي
٢٢ وَنَطَقَتْ مِنْ فَصْلِ الْخَطَابِ بِخُطْبَةِ
٢٣ ذَرَفَتْ دُمُوعُ الْخَلْقِ عَنَّ سَمَاعِهَا
٢٤ ذَكَرْتَ قَاسِيَةَ الْقُلُوبِ وَإِنَّمَا

^{٥٦} Ms Rabat: تَجْلُو صَدَى.

- 3 Let the *Amîr al-Mu’mînîn* 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 *Mizalla*, 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 *Mizalla*) 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 ‘imâdi*).

(There is of course an allusion here to the sinful Koranic people of the ‘Âd, Dhât al-‘Imâd, 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 ‘Âd we sent our brother Hûd; he said: ‘O my people, serve Allah ; ...’”

- 11 I said: “When the *Mizalla* 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 *Musallâ*, 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 *mîhrâb* 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 ‘âqid of that religion.

Finally (at the end of the poem *tushâkiluhu*) ‘Umâra 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-Şâlih) 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 صُومُ تَبَسَّمَ عَنْ غُرَّةِ الْفَجْرِ مِنْ لَيْلٍ عَيَّاطِلُهُ
٦ وَدَعَتْ هَذَا وَدَاعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ كَمَا قَابَلَتْ هَذَا بِمَا الرَّحْمَانُ قَابِلُهُ

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-‘Âqid and his Vizier Al-‘Âdil b. al-Şâlih”, and (Ms Rabat): “He also spoke in praise of Al-‘Âqid and his Vizier Al-‘Âdil b. Ruzzîk, at the feast of the Breaking of the Fast in the year 557 (H.).”

وأقبلٌ من السعدٍ ما يهديه نائلُ
أسماعُ قومٍ إلى ما أنتَ قائلُ
رحابه من رقاب خفَّ آهُلُ
مالتَ أعليه وارتَجَتْ أسفالُ
حتَّى إذا ضاقَ بالأشهاد واستمَعَتْ فَصَلَ الخطابةَ من قُربٍ مَحافلُ
لمْ يُبْقِ فَضْلُكَ في الأفَهَامِ منْ صَدَاءٍ إِلَّا وعَقْلُكَ في الأفَهَامِ صَاقِلُهُ⁵⁸

فاسعدْ بعامِ أتاكَ العامُ يَحْمِلُهُ
لما أظلَّكَ عيدُ الفطرِ وافتَرَقتْ
زُرْتَ المُصْلَى ولو لا ما حَلَعْتَ على
واهْتَرَ شوقاً فلو يَسْطِيعُ مِنْ يَرِه
حتَّى إذا ضاقَ بالأشهاد واستمَعَتْ
لمْ يُبْقِ فَضْلُكَ في الأفَهَامِ منْ صَدَاءٍ إِلَّا وعَقْلُكَ في الأفَهَامِ صَاقِلُهُ⁵⁸

(. . .)

والأجرُ والفَجْرُ أدنى ما تُحاوِلُهُ
بصُرِّ القَبْولِ على وجهِ يُقابِلُهُ
لَكَ اللَّوَاءُ الَّذِي جَبَرِيلُ حَامِلُهُ⁵⁹
أشبَهْتَ هُدِيَ رسولَ اللهِ حينَ بَدَأَتْ
وَشَاهِدُ الْحَقِّ لَا تَخْفِي دَلَائِلُهُ
وَالنَّاصِرُ الذَّخْرُ كَافِيهِ وَكَافِلُهُ
وَالْفَارِجُ الْخَطْبُ لَمَّا ضَاقَ نَازِلُهُ

تَرْنُو إِلَيْكَ عِيُونُ الْخَلْقِ شَاخِصَةً
وَفِي الْمَظَلَّةِ وَجْهٌ لَمْ يَزِلْ أَبْدَأَ
وَرَايَةُ الْمَلْكِ وَالْإِسْلَامِ يَحْمِلُهَا
وَفِي جَبِينِكَ نُورٌ مِنْ نُبُوتِهِ
قَدْ أَيَّدَ اللَّهُ دِينَا أَنْتَ عَاصِدُهُ
الْكَاشِفُ الْكَرْبُ لَمَّا عَزَّ كَاسِفُهُ

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 *Musallâ* 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 *Musallâ*) 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*: الذي التأييد حامله لم يُبْقِ لفظكَ في الأوهامِ منْ صَدَاءٍ إِلَّا وَعَظَكَ بالآفَهَامِ صَاقِلُهُ.

⁵⁹ *Ms Rabat*: لم يُبْقِ لفظكَ في الأوهامِ منْ صَدَاءٍ إِلَّا وَعَظَكَ بالآفَهَامِ صَاقِلُهُ.

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 tuhâwiluhu*).

16 And the *mizalla* 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-‘âdid*), 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-tâhrîf* as between *kâshif* and *kâsif* is probably originally intended here.)

4.7

In the poem *maqbûlu* the so-called ‘Âdjidic majesty is portrayed, and once again the Parasol is made use of. In this poem the palace is a *Haram*, 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 ‘Umâra says, we accept that the biography of the Imâms appears in “our” (i.e., ‘Umâra’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 *mizalla* shines the radiance of the Imâm. However, the question is posed, how can the *mizalla* rise above one who himself gives shade to the whole of mankind? ‘Umâra 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 Ka’ba. This implies, it seems to me, that ‘Umâra is secretly putting the Imâm on a par with the Ka’ba. The following quotation from the poem *maqbûlu* should be considered,

| | |
|---|---|
| يَبْدُو عَلَيْهَا التَّاجُ وَالْأَكْلِيلُ مَنْ ظَلَّهُ فَوْقَ الْأَنَامِ ظَلِيلُ فَصُعُودُهَا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ نُزُولُ وَتَصُونُ مَتْنَ السَّيْفِ وَهُوَ صَقِيلُ | ٢١ وَجَلَوْتَ مِنْ تَحْتِ الْمَظَلَّةِ غُرَّةً فَتَعْجَبَ الرَّاؤُونَ كَيْفَ عَلَّتْ عَلَى فَأَجْبَتْهُمْ لَا تَعْجَبُوا لِصُعُودِهَا وَالْجَفْنُ تَعْلُو الْعَيْنَ تَكْرَمَةً لَهَا |
|---|---|

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

تَعْلُو عَلَى أَسْتَارِهِ وَتَطْوِلُ⁶¹
سُجِّبَتْ لَهُ فَوْقَ السَّحَابِ ذِيولُ

٢٥ وَتَسْتَرُ الْبَيْتُ الْحَرَامُ وَقَدْرَهُ
٢٦ شَرَّفَتْ عِيدَ الْفِطْرِ حَتَّى أَنَّهُ

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 ‘Umâra’s pronouncement which compares the stone Ka‘ba from Mecca to the “Imâmitic Ka‘ba” in Cairo; in his poem to rhyme *rajabu*,⁶² verses 13-17, we hear the following:

٤ رَحِيٌّ وَأَنْتَ إِذَا دَارَتْ لَهَا الْقُطْبُ فَإِنَّمَا الدِّينُ وَالدُّنْيَا وَأَهْلُهُمَا
٥ بِالْعَاصِدِ اشْتَدَّ عَضْدُ الْحَقِّ وَامْتَسَكَتْ عُرْيَ الْهُدَى وَهُوَ فِي إِمْسَاكِهَا السَّبَبُ
٦ خَلِيفَةُ لَوْ تَرَاهُ عَقْدُ بَيْعَتِهِ
٧ تَدَارِكَ اللَّهُ شَمْلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِهِ
٨ وَآلَفَ اللَّهُ أَشْتَاتَ الْقُلُوبَ عَلَى
٩ عَمِّتْ رَعَايَتِهِ أَقْصَى رَعَيَتِهِ
١٠ وَأَصْبَحَ النَّاسُ إِخْرَانًا بِنَعْمَتِهِ
١١ قَرَّتْ عَيْنُ الْلِّيَالِي مِنْ خَلْفِهِ

⁶¹ *Ms Rabat*: وَتَسْتَرُ الْبَيْتُ الْحَرَامُ وَقَدْرَهُ يَعْلُو عَلَى أَسْتَارِهِ وَتَطْوِلُ:

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-‘Âqid and Al-Nâṣir (the son of Ṭalâ‘î) 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-‘Âqid and of Al-Malik al-Nâṣir and did so in order to congratulate them both.”

بَصِدْقٍ مَا أُوْدَعْتُ مِنْ ذَكْرِهِ الْكُتُبُ
 إِلَى السَّجْدَةِ لِهِ الْأَدْفَانُ وَالرَّكْبُ
 فَلِلْحَقِيقَةِ سَرُّ عَنْكَ مُحْتَجٌ
 وَمِنْدَلُ الْهَنْدِ لَوْلَا عَرْفُهُ حَطَبُ
 مِنْ دُوْحَةِ الْمُصْطَفَى الْهَادِي الَّتِي كَرْمَتْ فِيهَا الْمَنَابِتُ وَالْأَغْصَانُ وَالشَّعْبُ
 وَلَمْ يَمِّنْ سَلْفُ أَنْتُمْ لَهُ عَقْبُ

١٢ أَعْرُّ تَشَهِّدُ لِي أَنْوَارُ غُرَّتِهِ
 ١٣ إِذَا رَأَتْهُ عَيْنُ الْأَمَّةِ اسْتَبَقَتْ
 ١٤ لَا تَنْظُرُنَّ مَجَازًا حِينَ تَنْظُرُهُ
 ١٥ وَكَعْبَةُ اللَّهِ لَوْلَا قَدْرُهَا حَجَرُ
 ١٦ مِنْ دُوْحَةِ الْمُصْطَفَى الْهَادِي الَّتِي كَرْمَتْ فِيهَا الْمَنَابِتُ وَالْأَغْصَانُ وَالشَّعْبُ
 ١٧ أَحْيَيْتُمْ ذَكْرَهُ فِينَا وَسْنَتُهُ

- 4 The Religion and the World and the inhabitants of both are simply millstones, when they rotate, then You become the axis (*qutb*) around which they turn.
- 5 Through Al-‘Âdîd 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 *bay‘a* were to have become weaker, then the Seven Radiant ones (the planets) would have preceded us in this *bay‘a*.
- 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 (*majâzân*) when you look at him, but the deepest essence has a secret which is still hidden from you.
- 15 Because Allah’s Ka‘ba 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 ‘Umâra has replaced the Ka‘ba in Mecca, which is built of stone, by a Ka‘ba in Cairo, which is built from *imâmitic* stones.

APPENDIX TO ‘UMÂRA’S ODES DESCRIBING THE IMÂM

Text and translation of the newly discovered poems by ‘Umâra al-Yamanî

Poem to rhyme *mas’adu*. 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 *mas’adu*.

| | |
|----|--|
| | وقال في العاضد أيضا |
| ١ | أسماء مُلْك تَحْتَهَا لَكَ مَقْعَدُ |
| ٢ | ورواقُ مَجْدٌ أَشْرَفَتْ حُجْرَاتُهُ |
| ٣ | وضياءُ وَجْهِ العاضدِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ |
| ٤ | القَائِمُ الْمَخْصُوصُ بِالشَّرْفِ الَّذِي |
| ٥ | أَبْوَانَ أَحْسَنَتِ النِّيَابَةَ عَنْهُمَا |
| ٦ | عَمَّتْ رِعَايَتُكَ الرَّعَايَا فَاسْتَوَى |
| ٧ | وَجَمَعَتْ شَمْلَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ بِبَيْعَةِ |
| ٨ | وَسَمَّتْ أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ خَلَافَةً |
| ٩ | وَوَرَثْتَ عَنِ عَيْسَى بْنِ عَمْكَ مَنْصِبَأ |
| ١٠ | إِنَّا نَرَاكَ وَمَا نَرَاكَ وَإِنَّمَا |
| ١١ | حَسَدَتْ جَوَارِحُنَا عَلَيْكَ عَيْونَا |
| ١٢ | نَبَاءُ مِنَ النَّبَاءِ الْعَظِيمِ تَجَسَّدَتْ |
| ١٣ | شَرَفُ تَسَاوَى فِيهِ مِنْكُمْ أَشَيْبُ |

⁶³ *Ms Rabat*: على إِرْهَةِ وَمُحَمَّدٌ الَّذِي أَبْتَى.

⁶⁴ *Ms Rabat*: فِي يَسْطُ.

⁶⁵ *Ms Rabat*: وَسَمَّتْ أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ خَلَافَةً.

⁶⁶ *Ms Rabat*: وَهُوَ يُمَهَّدُ.

⁶⁷ *Ms Rabat*: غَيْرُونَا.

⁶⁸ *Ms Rabat*: نَبِيَا مِنَ النَّبَاءِ الْعَظِيمِ تَجَسَّدَتْ.

١٤ وسُرِيرَةُ دَرَجِ الزَّمَانِ وَحُكْمُهَا

١٥ يَهْنِي الْمَوَاسِمَ أَنَّ مُطْلَقَ ذَكْرِهَا

١٦ رَجَبٌ مِنَ الْحَرَمِ الَّتِي حَرَمْتِي

١٧ لَوْ كَانَ ذَا شَخْصٍ إِذَا لَشَمَ الشَّرَى

١٨ مَلْكُتَ أَرْجَابَ الزَّمَانِ فَصَرْفُهُ

١٩ لَكَ مِنْ لَيَالِيهِ إِمَاءٌ خَضْعٌ

٢٠ كَمَا مَلْكُتَ بِيَاضِهِ وَسَوَادِهِ

٢١ وَقَسَمْتَ فِيهِ جَمِيلَ فَعْلَكَ قَسْمَةً

٢٢ أَمْلَكْتَ الْعُلَيَا بِشُكْرِكَ تَصْعُدُ

٢٣ وَالْأَمْسِ مَسْرُورٌ بِهَا زَوْدَتِهِ

٢٤ شَيْمٌ إِذَا أَسْنَدَتْ أَخْبَارُكَ

٢٥ نَظَمَتْ مِنَ الْقَرَانِ غُرْ صَفَاتِكَمْ

٢٦ وَإِذَا تَنَاوَلَتِ السَّعَادَةُ مَادِحًا

٢٧ يَا حُجَّةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي بُرْهَانَهَا

٢٨ أَبْقَى لَكَ الرَّحْمَانُ كَافِلَكَ الَّذِي

٢٩ هُوَ بَابُ رَحْمَتِكَ الَّذِي مَنْ لَمْ يَصِلْ

٣٠ وَكَفِيلُ دُولَتِكَ الَّذِي بَغَنَاهُ

٣١ فَوَضَتْهُ فِي الْأَمْرِ إِلَّا أَنَّهُ

٣٢ يَعْتَدُ أَمْرُكَ طَاعَةً وَعِبَادَةً

٣٣ نَصَرَتْ بَنُو رُزْيِكَ آلَ مُحَمَّدٍ

٣٤ حَفَظُوا لَآلِ الْحَافِظِ الْحَرَمِ الَّتِي

٣٥ قَوْمٌ إِذَا فَعَلُوا الْجَمِيلَ تَعَمَّدُوا

٣٦ شَادَ الْأَجَلُ النَّاصِرُ الْمُحِيَّيُ لَهُمْ

٣٧ ذُخْرُ الْأَئَمَّةِ بِلْ وَلَيْهُمُ الَّذِي

٣٨ عَصَدُ الْإِمَامُ الْمُقْتَنِي لِفَضَائِلِ

٣٩ لَيْثٌ يُرِيكَ الْبَرَقَ فِي مَتْنِ الضُّبَا⁷⁰

طُرَّا فوالدُهُ الْأَجَلُ السَّيِّدُ
 من معاشرٍ بضيائهِ لمْ يهتدُ
 الصافي وأصلحَ رايُهُ ما أفسدُ
 بيدِ لها في كلِّ صالحةٍ يَدُ
 أصعدَ فَأَنْتَ بها أَحَقُّ وَأَنْجَدُ
 منها القصائدُ والقنا المتقصدُ
 ما فازَ بالحَمْدِ اللسانُ ولا اليَدُ
 لمْ يُدْرِ ما معنَى الحجَّى والسودَدُ
 كانَ الْكَمَالُ حَكَايَةً تُسْتَعْبُدُ
 نَفَدَ الْكَلَامُ وَفَضَلُّكُمْ لَا يَنْفَدُ
 لِأَجَلٍ مَنْ يُشْنِي عَلَيْهِ وَيُحْمِدُ
 إِيَّاهُ فِيهَا نَسْتَعِينُ وَنَعْبُدُ

- ٤٠ إِنْ قَادَ أَمْلَاكَ الزَّمَانِ وَسَادَهُمْ
- ٤١ الصَّالِحُ الْهَادِي الَّذِي عَضَدَ الْهُدَى
- ٤٢ وَأَزَالَ جَوَرَ بَنِي مُنَادٍ عَدْلَهُ
- ٤٣ وَاسْتَنْقَدَ الْأَيْمَانَ مِنْ أَيْدِيهِمْ
- ٤٤ مَلَكُ تَقُولُ لِجَهْدِهِ رَتِّبُ الْعُلَى
- ٤٥ أَثْنَى عَلَى آلَئِهِ بِمَنَاقِبِ
- ٤٦ لَوْلَا حَمِيدُ فَعَالَهُ وَمَقَالَهُ
- ٤٧ لَوْلَا شَرِيفُ خَلَالَهُ وَجَلَالَهُ
- ٤٨ لَوْلَا الْعِيَانُ وَمَا تَرَى مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
- ٤٩ لَمْ أَخْتَصِرْ صَرْحَ الْمَدِيْحِ وَانْمَا
- ٥٠ وَالْحَمْدُ أَدْنَى خَدْمَةً مَفْرُوضَةً
- ٥١ وَبَقَاؤُكُمْ لِلَّهِ أَكْبَرُ نَعْمَةً

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 *hanînu jimâli* consists of 52 lines. The following lines of prose form an introduction, *Ms Rabat*: “In honour of Al-Zâfir and his Vizier Al-Şâlih, he also said the following...”

وضياء بدرِ أم حنينِ جمال
 سُقِيَ الْوَحْيُّ مِنْهَا بِنَوَءٍ شَوَّالٍ
 سَمِحْتَ بِمَا لَمْ يَحْرِ في آمالي
 لَعَظِيمٌ هِيَبَتِهِ يَسِيرُ بِبَالِي
 سَرِّيْرَ مِنَ الْإِعْظَامِ وَالْإِجْلَالِ
 فِي الْخَلْقِ مَهْدِيٌّ بِبَلَادِ جَهَالِ
 أَرَى مِنْ رُتْبَةِ عَلَوِيَّةٍ وَمَعَالِ
 عَوْلٌ عَلَى هَذَا الْمَقَامِ الْعَالِي
 مِنْ ذَائِقَيْنَ حَقِيقَةً بِمَجَالِ
 أَوْلَائِي مَنْ يَشْرِي هُدَى بِضَالِّ

- ١ أَسْمَاءُ قَدْرِ أَمْ سَمَاءُ جَلَالٍ
- ٢ وَمَقْرُ مَلَكٍ أَمْ قَرَارُ رَحْمَةٍ
- ٣ لَا ذَمٌّ عَنِي لِلِّيَالِي بَعْدَ مَا
- ٤ بَلَغْتَنِي هَذَا الْمَقَامَ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ
- ٥ أَتَأْمَلُ النُّورَ الْمُبِينَ وَدُونَهُ
- ٦ وَأَشَاهِدُ الْمَهْدِيَّ إِلَّا أَنَّهُ
- ٧ قَسَماًً أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِمَا
- ٨ إِنَّ الْمَمَالِكَ وَالْمُلُوكَ بِأَسْرِهَا
- ٩ أَقْسَمْتُ مَا فَوْقَ الْبَسِيْطَةِ مِثْلُهُ
- ١٠ ضَلَّتْ بَصِيرَةُ مَنْ يُوَالِي غَيْرَهُ

رُّزْحُ الكواكبِ من مَكَانٍ عَالِيٍّ
 الْعُلَمَاءُ فِي الدُّنْيَا عَلَى الْجَهَالِ
 فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا أَمْنَتْ مِنَ الْزَلْزَالِ
 وَاسْتَغْنَتْ عَنْ نَظَرٍ وَاسْتَدْلَالِ
 الدِّينِ الْخَنِيفِ وَقَبْلَةُ الْأَمْثَالِ
 لَمْ يَرْضَ مِنَّا صَالِحُ الْأَعْمَالِ
 وَأَجَلٌ مُنْتَسِبٌ لِأَكْرَمِ آلِ
 مَسَّ الْمَحَاقِّ وَلَا اِنْتِقَاصَ كَمَالِ
 أَطَابَهُ (أَغْلَاهُ) فَضَلُّكُمْ عَلَى الْأَمْثَالِ
 مَا كَانَ مُفْتَخِرًا عَلَى شَوَّالِ
 عَنْ قَدْرِ أَيَّامٍ بِأَهْبَتِهِ وَلِيَالِ
 لَحَظَتْهُ عَيْنُ السَّعْدِ وَالْإِقْبَالِ
 بِنَظِيرِهِ أَهْلُ الزَّمَانِ الْخَالِيِّ
 بِتَحْمِلِ الْأَعْبَاءِ وَالْأَنْقَالِ
 مُذْ بَاتَ يَكْلُؤُهَا وَنَعْمَ الْكَالِيِّ
 بِسَحَابِ الْأَرْزَاقِ وَالْأَجَالِ
 اضْطَرَبَتْ وَآذَنَ ظَلُّهَا بِزَوَالِ
 بِجَلَادِ أَعْدَائِكُمْ وَجَدَالِ
 أَحَدٌ لِأَبْنَاءِ النَّبِيِّ مُوَالِيِّ
 خَوْفُ الرَّدِّيِّ وَمَسْوُرَةُ الْعَذَالِ
 إِلَى عَدَمِ النَّصْرِ وَكَثْرَةُ الْخُذَالِ
 حَتَّى آتَتْ بَعْبَاسٍ لِشَرِّ مَعَالِ
 وَالْحَوْلُ يُظْلِلُ حَيْلَةَ الْخَتَالِ
 وَهُمَا حَلَيْفَا ذَلَّةَ وَنَكَالِ
 مُحَمَّرَةٌ تَهْمِي بَوَيْلٍ وَبَالِ
 أَوْضَحَتْ مِنْ سُنَّةٍ وَمَثَالِ
 لَمْ تُوتْ مِنْ رَيْبٍ وَلَا اِسْتَعْجَالِ
 فِينَا بِسِيرَةٍ مُعْجَبٍ مُخْتَالِ

- ١١ هذا هو النورُ الذي شهدَتْ لَهُ
- ١٢ هذا هو النَّبَّا الذي افْتَخَرَتْ بِهِ
- ١٣ هذا هو السُّرُّ الذي لَوْ لَمْ تَكُنْ
- ١٤ هذا هو النَّسْلُ الْجَلِيُّ فَتَقَ بِهِ
- ١٥ هذا أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَعَصْمَةُ
- ١٦ لَوْلَا الصَّلَاةُ عَلَى أَبِيهِ وَجَدَهُ
- ١٧ يَا خَيْرُ مَعْزُو لِخَيْرِ أَرْوَمَةِ
- ١٨ تَهْنِي الْأَهْلَةَ غَرَّةً لَكَ لَمْ تَخْفَ
- ١٩ رَمَضَانُ مُثْلُ سَوَاهِ إِلَّا أَنَّهُ
- ٢٠ لَوْلَا وُجُوبُ صِيَامِهِ وَقِيَامِهِ
- ٢١ شَرَفَتُمْ مَقْدَارَ لَيْلَةَ قَدْرِهِ
- ٢٢ وَكَذَالِكَ مَنْ لَا حَظَّتُمُوهُ مِنَ الْوَرَىِ
- ٢٣ لِلظَّافِرِ الشَّرَفُ الَّذِي لَمْ يَفْتَخِرْ
- ٢٤ الصَّالِحُ الْمَلِكُ الَّذِي عَضَدَ الْهَدَىِ
- ٢٥ نَامَتْ عَيْنُونُ الْخَلْقِ مَلْئُ جَفُونِهَا
- ٢٦ زَحْفَتْ سَحَابُ ثَوَابِ وَعِقَابِ
- ٢٧ وَأَغَاثَ دُولَةَ آلِ أَحْمَدَ بَعْدَمَا
- ٢٨ لَوْلَا طُلُوعُ طَلَايِعِ وَدَفَاعُهُ
- ٢٩ لَمْ يَبْقَ فِي أَعْمَالِ مَصْرَ كُلُّهَا
- ٣٠ لِلَّهِ عَزَمَتْهُ الَّتِي لَمْ تَتَنَاهَا
- ٣١ نَصْرُ الْأَئِمَّةِ غَيْرُ مُنَقَّلَبٍ
- ٣٢ مُسْتَنْصِحًا صَدِقَ النَّفْوسِ
- ٣٣ ضَاقَتْ عَلَيْهِ بَهَا مَذَاهِبُ رَايِهِ
- ٣٤ تَرَكَتْهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْكَرَامَةِ وَابْنَهُ
- ٣٥ جَادَتْهُمَا مِنْهُ سَحَابُ نَقْمَةِ
- ٣٦ إِنَّ الْأَجَلَ النَّاصِرَ اتَّبَعَ الَّذِي
- ٣٧ وَكَفَالَ مَا اسْتَكْفَيْتُهُ بِسِيَاسَةِ
- ٣٨ زَانَ الشَّبَيْبَةَ بِالْوَقَارِ وَلَمْ يَسِرَّ

في الخلقِ لم يعلقْ لهم بخلالِ
خطو المظالم بعْد طولِ مجالِ
ورعاً عنِ الأرواحِ والأموالِ
عدمِ النظيرِ وقلةِ الأشكالِ
بمناقبِ الأقوالِ والأمثالِ
في الفضلِ والإفضالِ
غيثُ أنزالٍ وليثُ نزالٍ
ما نفعُ أسماءِ بلا أفعالٍ
قولاً يصرفهُ لسانُ الحالِ
فالدهرُ من حسناتِ فعلكَ حالِ
وعجبتُ من شيءٍ رخيصٍ غالِ
في الصالحِ الهادي أعزُّ مثالِ
عينُ الهدى لكُما زوالَ ظلامِ
محروسةُ الغَدَواتِ والآصالِ

٣٩ لماً غدا بخلالِ عَدْلِكَ يقتدي
٤٠ كَفَتْ مَهَابَتُهُ الْأَكْفَ فَقَصَرَتْ
٤١ وبَسْطَ راحَتَهُ فَامْرَ فَيَضَا
٤٢ مِلْكٌ إِذَا اسْتَشَنَكَ أَصْبَحَ يَشْتَكِي
٤٣ ما تُنْكِرُ الْأَمْلَكُ يَوْمَ تَفَاخِرٍ
٤٤ إِنَّ ابْنَ رُزِّيْكَ يَتِيمَهُ دَهْرَهُ وَوَحِيدَهُ
٤٥ وَإِنَّهُ يَوْمَ الشَّجَاعَةِ وَالنَّدَى
٤٦ تَرَكُوهُ فِي أَسْمَائِهِ لَا فَعْلَهُ
٤٧ مِلْكٌ تَقُولُ لَهُ مَسَايِيْ مَجْدَهُ
٤٨ لَا تَفْتَخِرْ إِلَّا بِنَفْسِكَ وَحْدَهَا
٤٩ تَغْلُو وَتَرَخَصُ رَفْعَهُ وَتَوَاضُعَهُ
٥٠ فَاسْلَمْ أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مُبْلَغاً
٥١ وَتَمَلِّيَا شَرَفَ الْحَيَاةِ وَلَا رَأَتْ
٥٢ هَنِيَّتُمَا مَا شَئْتُمَا وَعَلَّا كُمَا

Poem to rhyme *lâmi‘u*, *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-‘Âdîd, he says the following...”

كَلَامٌ عَلَيْهِ رَوْنَقُ الْحَقِّ لَامِعٌ
لَا غَنَاهُ نُورٌ لِلْأَبْوَةِ سَاطِعٌ
وَإِنْ ذُكْرَتْ آلَوْكُمْ فَهُوَ وَاسِعٌ
يُقَصِّرُ دَانٌ عَنْ مَدَاهُ وَشَاسِعٌ
إِلَى اللَّهِ إِذَا أَنْتُمْ لَهُ الْذَرَائِعُ
هُدَىٰ مِنْهُ خَفِيٌّ وَذَائِعٌ
فَلَا هُوَ مَكْتُومٌ وَلَا هُوَ شَاسِعٌ
بُودٌّ وَلَا أَوْمَاءٌ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ نَاكِعٌ
سَيُولٌ بِبِيْضِ الْمَكْرُمَاتِ دَوَافِعُ

وقال أيضاً يمدح العاضد
١ أَجَلُ كَلَامٌ أَوْدِعَتْهُ الْمَسَامِعُ
٢ وَهَذَا مَقَامٌ لَوْ تَرَكْنَا مَدِيْحَهُ
٣ يُضيِّقُ مَجَالُ القَوْلِ فِي مَدْحَ غَيْرِكُمْ
٤ وَقَدْ نَطَقَ الْقُرْآنُ فِيْكَ بِكُلِّ مَا
٥ وَلَا كُنَّمَا نُشْنِي عَلَيْكُمْ تَقْرِيْبًا
٦ وَلَلَّهِ فِيْكُمْ أَدْوَرُ نَبُوَيَّةٌ وَسَيِّرٌ
٧ تَرَاهُ وَأَسْتَارُ الْمَهَابَةِ دُونَهُ
٨ وَلَوْلَا كُمْ مَا باشَرَ الْأَرْضَ سَائِدٌ
٩ حَلَّلْتُمْ مِنَ الْعَلَيَاءِ حَيْثُ تَفَجَّرَتْ

١٠ فَلَا غَرَوَ أَنْ حَلَقْتَ فِي جَوَّ سُودَدٍ

١١ وَأَصْبَحْتَ لِلْدُنْيَا وَلِلَّدَنِ عَاصِدًا

١٢ حَلَقْتَ لِهَذَا الدِّينِ قَلْبًا وَنَاظِرًا

١٣ فَإِنْتُمْ نَبِيُّ الدَّهْرِ زَهْرَ مُنِيرَةٌ

١٤ إِذَا كَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَقَعَا عَلَيْكُمْ

١٥ وَقَدْ بَدَّ مُوسَى كَيْدَ فَرْعَوْنَ مُرْضِعًا

١٦ وَكَلَمَ عِيسَى وَهُوَ فِي الْمَهْدِ قَوْمَهُ

١٧ تَمَلَّ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِدُولَةٍ

١٨ لَوَاءُ تَوْلَى اللَّهُ رَفِعَ مَنَارَهُ

١٩ وَزِيرٌ أَقَامَتْهُ الْخَلَافَةُ كَافَلًا

٢٠ تَقُولُ لُهُ مَهْمَى أَتَى تَسْتَشِيرُهَا

٢١ وَمَا فَوَّضَتْ إِلَّا إِلَى رَأْيِ مُشْفَقٍ

٢٢ حُسَامٌ لُهُ سُمْرُ الرِّمَاحِ مَخَاصِرُ

٢٣ إِذَا صَالَ فَالصَّعْبُ الشَّكِيمَةُ مُذْعِنٌ

٢٤ لُهُ دِيَمَا بَاسٍ جَزِيلٍ وَنَائِلٍ

٢٥ نَدَى وَرَحَى فِي السَّلْمِ وَالْحَرْبِ لَمْ يَزَلْ

٢٦ حَمَى حَوْزَةُ الْإِسْلَامِ عَنْ كُلِّ طَارِقٍ

٢٧ وَكَثُرَ أَعْدَادُ الْفَتُوحِ بِعَزْمَةٍ

٢٨ وَدَوْخَ صُنْ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَبِرْهَمٍ

٢٩ وَفِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ تَجْتَلِي الْعَيْنُ مِنْهُمْ

٣٠ وَجَرَدَ مِنْ ذُخْرِ الْأَئِمَّةِ صَارِمًا

٣١ سَمَا النَّاصِرُ الْمُحَيِّي إِلَى الْغَایِةِ الَّتِي

٣٢ فَأَمْسَتْ لَهُ مِنْ آلِ رُزِّيْكَ أُسْرَةً

٣٣ إِذَا رَكِبْتَ مِنْ حَوْلِهِ حَالَ جَيْشَهُ

٣٤ خَلِيلٌ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَذُخْرُهُ

٣٥ مَنَاقِبُ مَجَدٌ لَمْ عَرَّتْهَا كَلَالَةٌ

٣٦ كَأَنَّهُمَا فِي رُقْبَةِ الْمَجْدِ كَوْكَبٌ

٣٧ إِذَا ذَكَرَتْ عَسَانٌ يَوْمًا عَلَاهُمَا

٣٨ فِيَا عَاصِدَ الدِّينِ الْحَنِيفِ وَخَيْرَ مَنْ

بِهِ طَائِرُ النَّسَرِينِ دُونَكَ وَاقِعُ

بِشَرَعَتِهِ رُضِيَ الْهُدَى وَالشَّرَاعِ

وَغَيْرُكَ لَحْفَانُ لُهُ وَأَضَالَعُ

غَوَارِبُهَا حَتَّى الْمَهَادِ طَوَالِعُ

فَسِيَانَ كَهْلٌ فِيهِ مِنْكُمْ وَيَافِعُ

وَحَرَمٌ مِنْ خَوْفِ عَلَيْهِ الْمَرَاضِعُ

بِمَا ذَهَلَتْ مِنْهُ الْلَّمَاءُ وَالْمَسَامِعُ

لَهَا اللَّهُ كَافٌ وَالْكَفِيلُ طَلَائِعُ

وَلَنْ يَخْفَضَ الْأَعْدَاءُ مَا اللَّهُ رَافِعٌ

يُفَاؤِضُهَا فِي أَمْرِهَا وَيُرَاجِعُ

أَجَدُّ مَا تَرَى وَاصْدَعُ بِمَا أَنْتَ صَادِعٌ

يُبَادِرُ فِي أَغْرَاضِهَا وَيُسَارِعُ

وَبِيَضُ الْسَّيَوِفِ الْمَرْهَفَاتِ يَتَابِعُ

وَإِنْ نَالَ فَالْعَاصِي الْقَرِيْحَةَ طَائِعُ

وَفَأُهُمَا هَامٌ مَدَى الدَّهْرِ هَامِعُ

وَفَأُهُمَا هَامٌ مَدَى الدَّهْرِ هَامِعُ

فَلَا السَّرْبُ مَطْرُوقٌ وَلَا الشَّرْبُ ضَائِعُ

تُنَاضِلُّ عَنْ دِينِ الْهُدَى وَتُمَاصِعُ

قَطَائِعُ مِنْ اسْطُولِهِ وَقَوَاطِعُ

عَقَائِلَ مَحْبُوبٌ إِلَيْهَا قَلَائِعُ

يُخَافُ الْمَنَاوِي فِي حَدَّهِ وَالْمَنَازِعُ

يُجَدُّ الْأَمَانِي دُونَهَا وَالْمَطَامِعُ

هُوَ الْكَفُّ عَنْدَ الْبَطْشِ وَهُوَ الْأَصَابِعُ

وَبَيْنَ الْعَدَى سُدٌّ مِنَ الْعَزِّ مَانِعُ

وَصَارِمُهُ فِي حِيثُ تَهْبُو الْقَوَاطِعُ

أَقَدْ جَلَّ مَتَبْعُ لَدِيهَا وَتَابِعُ

وَبَدْرٌ إِلَّا اسْمٌ وَفِعْلٌ مُضَارِعٌ

فَمَنْ نَهْشَلُ فِي دَارِمٍ وَمُجَاشِعٌ

تُشَرِّبُ بِالْأَشْعَارِ فِيهِ الْمَسَامِعُ

بَدَا مِنْهُ وَجْهٌ رَائِقُ الْحُسْنِ رَائِعٌ
 فَلِيسَ لَهُ فِي الْفَضْلِ طُرَا مُنَازِعٌ
 يُؤْرِخُ فِيهِ بَعْضُ مَا أَنْتَ صَانِعٌ
 وَقَائِعٌ مِنْ أَفْعَالِكُمْ وَصَنَائِعُ
 لَكُمْ وَلِيَالِيهِ إِمَاءٌ خَوَاضِعٌ
 إِلَيْكُمْ إِلَى أَنْ أَوْجَعَتُهُ الْأَخَادِعُ
 لَكُمْ بِفُتُوحٍ نَصْرُهَا مُتَابِعٌ
 مَدَى الدَّهْرِ مَا غَنِيَ الْحَمَامُ السَّوَاجِعُ
 مُقِيمٌ الْأَوَّلِيَّ مَا أَقَامَ مُتَالِعٌ

٣٩ لِيَهْنَكَ عَامٌ لَوْ تَجَسَّمَ شَخْصَهُ
 ٤٠ فَأَفَرَّتْ لَهُ الْأَنَامُ ظَهِيرًا بِفَضْلِهِ
 ٤١ وَمَا فَضَلَ الْأَعْوَامَ إِلَّا كَانَهُ
 ٤٢ جَلَتْ صَبْغَ لَوْثَيٍ لِيلَهُ وَنَهَارَهُ
 ٤٣ فَأَيَّامُهُ الْغُرُّ السَّعِيدَةُ أَعْبُدُ
 ٤٤ شَنِي عَامٌ خَمْسٌ جَيْدَهُ مُتَلَفِّفًا
 ٤٥ وَزَارَكُمُ الْعِيدُ السَّعِيدُ مُبَشِّرًا
 ٤٦ فَمُتَّعَ كُلُّ مِنْكُمَا بِوَلَيْهِ
 ٤٧ وَلَا زَالَ هَذَا الدَّهْرُ وَقْفًا عَلَيْكُمَا

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-‘Âdîd he also said the following...”

وَمُوسَمٌ بِدَوَاحِ الْعَزِّ مُتَسَمٌ
 وَشَمَلُهَا بِيَامِ الْعَصْرِ مُنْتَظَمٌ
 كَادَتْ عُرَاهُ مِنَ الْإِنْشِقَاقِ تَنَفَّصَمُ
 بِحَبْلِهِ وَبِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ يَعْتَصِمُ
 تَكَشَّفَ الظُّلُمُ وَانْجَابَتِ الظُّلُمُ
 وَالنَّارُ لَوْ لَمْ تَلْحُ لَمْ يُعْرَفِ الْعَلَمُ
 كَأَنَّكُمْ بَيْنَاتٌ بَيْنَهُمَا رَحْمٌ
 وَالْفَاطِمِيُّونَ شَادُوا قَبْلَ أَنْ فُطِمُ
 أَنَّ الْحَظْوَظَ بِلَشْمِ الْأَرْضِ تُقْتَسِمُ
 خَلَائِقُ اللَّهِ لَا فُرْقَانٌ بَيْنَهُمْ
 وَرَبُّ حَلْمٍ أَتَى مِنْ بَعْدِهِ الْحَلْمُ
 مِنَ الْكَمَالِ وَمَا سَنُوا وَمَا وَسَمُ
 أَلْبَابُنَا مِنْكَ كَانَتْ فِيكَ تَحْتَصِمُ
 عَلَى لِقَائِكَ مَاضٍ وَهُوَ مُنْصَرٍ

وَقَالَ أَيْضًا يَمْدُحُ الْعَاصِدَ
 ١ عَامٌ عَنِ السَّعْدِ وَالْإِقْبَالِ مُبْتَسِمٌ
 ٢ وَدُولَةٌ فَضْلُهَا فِي الْخَلْقِ مُنْتَشِرٌ
 ٣ الْعَاصِدُ عَاصِدُ الدِّينِ الْحَنِيفُ وَقَدْ
 ٤ خَلِيفَةٌ بَاتَ دِينُ اللَّهِ مُعَتَصِّمًا
 ٥ لَمَّا أَنَارَتْ لَنَا أَنْوَارُ بَيْعَتِهِ
 ٦ وَأَشْرَقَ الدِّينُ وَالدُّنْيَا بِبَيْعَتِهِ
 ٧ وَرَثَتْ عَيْسَى وَعَيْسَى رَحْمَةً وَهُدًى
 ٨ سَادَ أَبْنُ مَرِيمَ لَمَّا اشْتَدَ سَاعِدُ
 ٩ أَئْمَمَهُ مَا عَلِمْنَا قَبْلَ رَؤْيَتِهِمْ
 ١٠ قَدْ أَخْبَرَتْ سُورُ الْفُرْقَانِ أَنَّهُمْ
 ١١ الْكَهْلُ وَالْطِفْلُ شَرَعُ فِي شَرِيعَتِهِمْ
 ١٢ وَقَدْ رَأَيْنَا عِيَانًا فِيكَ مَا شَرَطُوا
 ١٣ إِنَّ الْأَهْلَةَ لَوْ يَعْلَمُنَّ مَا عَلِمَتْ
 ١٤ يَلْقَاكَ مُسْتَقْبِلٌ مِنْهَا فِي حِمْدَهُ

فَلَيْسَ يُعْرَفُ مِنْهَا الْأَشْهُرُ الْحَرْمُ
كَأَنَّمَا حَلَّ فِيهِ الْحِلْ وَالْحَرْمُ
وَالرَّكْنُ يُومِي إِلَيْهِ حَتَّى يُسْتَلِمُ
الْأَفْلَاكُ أَنْ قِيَامَهَا لَكُمْ خَدَمُ
وَمِنْ مَلْوَائِكَهَا بِالذِّكْرِ تَزَدَّهُمُ
سَاعَاتُهَا فَرَصُّ لِلأَجْرِ تَغْتَنِمُ
كَأَنَّ يَقْطَطَهَا فِي ظَلَّهَا حَلْمُ
وَمَنْ بِهِ كُشْفَتْ عَنْ وَجْهِهَا الْغُمَّ
لِلنَّصْرِ قَادِمَهَا فِيهَا وَلَا قَدَمُ
فَلَمْ يَخِيِّمْ بِهَا خَوْفٌ وَلَا عَدَمُ
تَنْحَطُ عَنْ قَدْرِهِ الْأَقْدَارُ وَالْهَمَّ
الْأَيَّامُ لَا صَغْرٌ فِيهَا وَلَا هَرَمُ
لِيَسَّ منْ شِيمَتِهِ الْكَبُّرُ وَالشَّمَمُ
تَرْضَى الْإِمَامَهُ عَنْ يَوْمِيهِ وَتَرَأَمُ
نَصْرُ الْهُدَى وَالنَّدَى وَالسَّيْفُ وَالقَلْمُ
الْعِلْمُ وَالْحَلْمُ وَالْمَعْرُوفُ وَالْكَرْمُ
الْعَهْدُ وَالْوَعْدُ وَالْمِيثَاقُ وَالذَّمْ
الْأَصْلُ وَالْفَرْعُ وَالْأَخْلَاقُ وَالْيَتَمُ
وَالْعَدْلُ وَالْجُودُ وَالْإِيمَانُ مُلْتَعِمُ
لَا هُلْ ذَا الْفَنُّ أَقْدَارُ وَلَا هَمُّ
فِي صَوْبِ رَاحْتَكَ الْأَنْوَاءُ وَالْدَّيْمُ
مَعْرَفُ حَكَمَتْ أَنْ تَعُورَ الْحَكْمُ
إِلَى نَدَاكُمْ فَأَسْتَحِي وَأَحْتَشِمُ

١٥ حَرَّمَتْ عَدْلًا شُهُورَ الدَّهْرِ قَاطِبَةً
١٦ وَأَصْبَحَ الْقَصْرُ مَحْجُوْجًا وَمُنْتَجَعًا
١٧ قَصْرٌ يُقْبَلُ بِالْأَفْوَاهِ تَكْرَمَةً
١٨ قَدْ زَادَ فِي شَرْفِ الْأَمْلَاكِ بِلْ خَطْرِ
١٩ فَمِنْ مُلْوُكَ عَلَى أَبْوَابِكُمْ زُمْرَ
٢٠ وَإِنَّ أَيَّامَكُمْ دَامَتْ مُخْلَدَةً
٢١ وَأَنَّ دُولَتَكُمْ مِنْ حُسْنِ سِيرِتِكُمْ
٢٢ وَالنَّاصِرُ الذَّخْرُ كَافِيَهَا وَكَافِلُهَا
٢٣ أَبُو الشُّجَاعِ الَّذِي لَوْلَاهُ مَا نَهَضَتْ
٢٤ أَعْزَّ بِالْبَلَاسِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ حَوْزَتَهَا
٢٥ تَبَسَّمَ الدَّسْتُ مِنْ رُزِّيَّكَ عَنْ مَلِكٍ
٢٦ مُقَابِلٌ فِي مَقَامِ الْمَجْدِ مُقْتَبِلٌ
٢٧ أَشَمَّ أَبْلَجُ مِنْ عُثْمَانَ زَيْنُتَهُ أَنْ لِيَسَّ
٢٨ يَدِنُو وَيُبَعِّدُ فِي حَالَتِي نَدَى وَرَدَى
٢٩ الْكَافِلُ الْخَلِفَاءُ الرَّاشِدِيُّونَ وَمَنْ
٣٠ قَادَتْ إِلَيْهِ زَمَانُ الْمُلُكِ أَرْبَعَةً
٣١ وَهَذَبَتْ مِنْهِ خَلْقُ الدَّهْرِ أَرْبَعَةً
٣٢ وَصَاحَبَتْ مِنْهِ قَوْلَ الصَّدْقِ أَرْبَعَةً
٣٣ وَصَدَّقَتْ مَادِحِيهِ مِنْهِ أَرْبَعَةً
٣٤ فَالْجَلْوُرُ وَالنَّجْلُ وَالْإِشْرَاكُ مُنْصَدِعٌ
٣٥ لَوْلَاكَ بَعْدَ أَبْيِ الْغَارَاتِ مَا رُفِعَتْ
٣٦ هَذَا الشَّنَاءُ الَّذِي جَادَتْ مَغَارَسُهُ
٣٧ عَوَارِفُ مِنْ جَمِيلِ الصَّنْعِ حَمَّلَهَا
٣٨ إِنِّي لَيَعْجِبُنِي شِعْرِي وَأَفْرَنِهُ

TRANSLATIONS

Summary: poem to rhyme *maṣ'adu*

The first 27 lines concern the Imâm. He is addressed as: “You have inherited from ‘Isâ 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-Hâfiż.

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 ‘Umâra 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 ‘Abbâs and his son Naṣr are descended. Naṣr murdered the Imâm and almost certainly did so on the orders of his father, ‘Abbâs, who was at that time Al-Zâfir’s Vizier.)

Translation of poem to rhyme *mas'adu*

Ms D: “Concerning Al-‘Ādīd 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-‘Ādīd 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 ‘Alī 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 *bay'a* which watched over the organization of the kingdom when it was shattered.
- 8 You, Oh *Amīr* of the Believers, have personified a Caliphate which through both your hands was dissolved and secured.
- 9 You have inherited a position from ‘Isā, the son of Your uncle, a position which had already been introduced before the nights of the cradle (*layālī 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-‘azīm*), 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 Ahmad 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 (*şifât*) 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 *mamdûh* 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 rahmatika*); 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 (*‘ibâda*), 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 (*ta’ammadû*); 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’i’ al-Malik al-Şâlih) 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-Şâlih, 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. ('Abbâs and Naṣr broke their oaths of loyalty when they murdered Al-Zâfir.)

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 *qaṣîdas* 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 *madîh*; 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 Țalâ'i' were given to him on the basis of an honorary proclamation (*tashrif*) from Al-Fâ'iz, the date of this proclamation being 4th day of *Rabi' II*, in the year 449 H. However, in line 47 of the poem to rhyme *jimâli*, ‘Umâra emphasises that in respect of this Vizier these were not merely ecstatic words.

Translation of poem to rhyme *jimâli*

Ms Rabat: “In honour of Al-Țâfir and his Vizier Al-Şâlih, 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 ‘Alawid 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 ‘*Ulamâ*’ 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 (*hanîfi*) 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 *Ramadân* 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-*Zâfir* 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-*Şâlihî*) is the Pious One, the King (*Al-Şâlihi 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 Ahmad, after it had been brought into confusion, and after its shadow had acknowledged that it would soon end.

28 If the emergence (*tulû'*) of Ҫalâ'i' 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 'Abbâs to the worst end.

33 Because of the souls the directions of his banners were narrow, while the sly-eyed people (*al-hûlu*, according to the *Lisân al-'Arab*: 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-Nâşir (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-Şâlih*, 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 *lāmi‘u*

“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 *ad’ura 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 ‘Âdîd 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, ‘Isâ spoke to his people.

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

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

Al-Nâşir al-Muhyî 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’mînîn*, 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 ‘Âdîd, oh Supporter of the *hanîfî* (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 ‘Âdîd, 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 *lâmi‘u*

Ms Rabat: “In honour of Al-‘Âdîd, 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 ‘Âdîd (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 (*murdi‘an*, a woman who gave him her breast when he was still a baby), although the wet-nurses (*al-marâdi‘u*), for fear of Pharaoh, had become inaccessible. (Cf. Koran concerning Moses, sura 20, verses 36-40 and sura 28, verses 7-13.)
- 16 ‘Isâ 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’mînîn*, may You enjoy for a long time a *Dawla*, over which Allah is the protector, and *Talâ’i’* 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 (*qatâ'i'u*) and cutting swords (*qawâti'u*) 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-Ñâṣir al-Muhyî 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 *qawâti'* 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 Mujâshi' (i.e., Farazdaq's clan), among the federation of Dârim?

38 Oh 'Âdîd of the *hanîfîte* 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-husni râ’i’u*).

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 *‘ilm 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 *Mutâli‘* continues to stand (near *Bâhrayn* between *Al-Sawda* and *Al-Ahsâ’*).”

Summary: poem to rhyme *muttasimu*

A year smiles and lo and behold, a *Dawla* and the Imâm of the century! Al-‘Âdîd 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-‘Âdîd. The Light of his inauguration, his *bay‘a*, shines over us. He has inherited from ‘Isâ (his father) and ‘Isâ (Jesus). The son of Mary only ruled when his arms became strong. However, the Fatimids ruled even before they were weaned (*futimû*). (N.B.: there is a parallel with a poetic passage in Al-Qâdî al-Fâdîl, 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 (*hilm*) comes even before adolescence (*hulum*).

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-Nâşîr Abû l-Shujâ‘ is Guarantor. The throne smiles, revealing a Ruzzîk king who encounters young days. He is proud, unlike

‘Uthmân who was not proud; and this was precisely the *zîna* (beautiful aspect) of ‘Uthmân! (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-‘Âdîd was, incidentally, an orphan and, at the end of his Vizirate, Dirghâm 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-‘Âdîd 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-‘Âdîd is the Supporter (*Al-‘âdîd*) of the *Hanîfî* 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 *bay‘a* had given us light, injustice was taken away and darkness vanished.
- 6 Religion and the *Dunyâ* gave light through his *bay‘a*: if the fire had not appeared the beacon would never have been recognised.
- 7 From both ‘Isâ and the other ‘Isâ, 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 *Shârî‘a*, 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-Shujâ‘, – 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 ‘Uthmân 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 tardâ l-imâmatu ‘an 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-‘Arab*: “wa-yawmâhu: yawmu nu‘min wa-yawmu bu’sin fa l-yawmu hâhunâ bi-mâ’nâ 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. ('Umâra 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."