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E. WASHBURN HOPKINS & CHARLES C. TORREY

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OF THE

AMERICAN ORIENTAL SOCIETY.

EDITED BY

E. WASHBURN HOPKINS, AND CHARLES C. TORREY

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A Distinguished Family of Fatimide Cadis (al-Nu'mān) in the Tenth Century.—By RICHARD GOTTHEIL, Professor in Columbia University, New York City.

I. INTRODUCTION.

IN the whole of Mohammedan history there are few epochs quite as interesting as that during which the Shi'a propaganda manifested itself politically in Egypt, maintaining there for more than 200 years a kingdom which was a center of commercial and literary activity. The religious side of this propaganda was kept alive by the usual Alid tergiversations, and from out of this upbuilding came much of the turmoil in which Druse and Ismailian pretensions were hatched.

It seems to have been a somewhat simple matter for the people of Egypt to pass from one system to another. They were willing to take their religion as it was given to them, and at no time do they seem to have thought with Goethe :

“ Was du ererbt von deinen Vätern hast,
Erwirb es, um es zu besitzen.”

In spite of the large Coptic element in the population,¹ it had not been too difficult a task to impress the faith of the prophet upon the land of the Pharaohs. Egypt is the classic home of the corvée ; and, whether used by an old Pharaoh in dragging his statue to the place of its permanent situation, or by 'Amr ibn

¹ This has been excellently set forth in Butler's *Arabic Conquest of Egypt*, Oxford, 1902.

al-'Asi in re-cutting the canal that once joined lower Egypt to the Red Sea, or by Ismail Pasha in helping the French to build a Suez Canal, it shows a more than ordinary apathy on the part of the inhabitants, and a singular willingness to acquiesce quietly in the stings and goads of fortune. In the same manner, it does not seem to have been too difficult for them to pass from the Sunnite faith to the Shi'ite (if faith it may be called), when Jauhar al-Kā'id conquered the country in 969 for his master al-Mu'izz; and they were as ready to fall back again upon the Sunna when the Kurd Saladin, in September, 1171, caused the Khutbah to be pronounced in the name of the Abbāsid caliph, al-Mustaḍī.

One reason for the ease with which these changes were effected must be found in the small difference it made to the people at large whether in the official utterances Ali was blessed or cursed. That was food for the theologians and a tid-bit for the jurists. The lower classes had to live their every-day and humdrum life as they had done in the past; and the differences between Sunnite and Shi'ite actual practice seems to have been small—to us they appear infinitesimal.¹ The geographical writer al-Muḳaddasī has an interesting passage on the observances peculiar to the Fatimides.² He says: "There are three classes of Fatimide peculiarities. The first is one in which the (orthodox) Imams were also divided, as the long inserted or supererogatory prayer³ at the morning devotions and the audible recitation of

¹ This is due to the fact that the Shi'a system was developed at a time when the other and canonical legal systems were already in existence. Both the Sunna and the Shi'a, as regards their religious practices, are built up from one and the same basis. See Von Kramer, *Culturge-schichte*, vol. 1, p. 501; id. *Herrschende Ideen*, p. 539.

² In de Goeje, *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum*, vol. iii, p. 237. 16. On the *مذهب أهل البيت* see Ibn Khaldūn, *Muḳāddamāt* (ed. Beirut, 1886), p. 390. A list of works on Shi'a Fikḥ is given by al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, p. 219. On some other and equally minor points of difference, see the end of the poem by Dā'ūd ibn 'Umar al Baḡir al-Anṭākī in his *كتاب تزيين الاسواق* published by Goldziher, *Beiträge zur Literaturgeschichte der Šī'a in Sitz. Ber. der Wiener Akad.*, vol. lxxviii, p. 520, and compare Tornauw, *Le Droit Musulman*, Paris, 1860, p. 24.

³ De Sacy (*Chrestomathie Arabe*, vol. 1, p. 162), says that the *تسبوت* is the prayer containing the formula *إِنَّا لَكَ قَائِمُونَ*; but see the tradition

the basmallah,' the *waitr** which goes with the rak'a, and the like. Their second peculiarity is to return to some of the observances of former generations, as the double repetition of the

cited in Lane, col. 2566 **أفضل الصلوات طول القنوت** and al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, ed. Krehl, vol. i, p. 204, s.v. **باب القنوت**; al-Shirāzi, *al-Taṭbīḥ*, (ed. A. W. T. Juynboll, Leiden, 1879), p. 24. 21; al-Sha'rānī, *Kaṣḥf al-Ghumma*, Cairo, 1281, vol. i, p. 85. It is evident that the **قنوت** is a sort of supererogatory prayer (the Mohammadans call such **يقنوت بعد الرفع من الركوع**) inserted between the rak'as (**نوافل**) The silent prayer between the rak'as is called **دعاء** (Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, vol. ii, p. 252). A. Querry, *Droit Musulman*, vol. i, p. 81, calls it "le recusement." while Tornauw (*l. c.*, p. 37) explains it thus: "le Kenut, qui consiste à élever les bras après l'accomplissement des pratiques mûkrennot et à répéter des interjections ferventes. Le Kenut n'est point obligatoire." See, also, Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, pp. 101. 1; 482. 2. Curiously enough, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Khūwārazmī in his *Mafāṭīḥ al-'Ulūm* (ed. Van Vloten, 1893), p. 21, says **القنوت دعاء الوتر!**

* See the traditions on this point in al-Bukhārī, vol. i, pp. 197, 198, 201, and al-Nawāwī, as cited by Goldziher, *Beiträge*, pp. 457, 522, and in Ibn Sa'd, vol. v. (Leiden, 1905) p. 266 (when Mohammed recited the first Sura he was not heard to add the basmallah. Asked about this, he answered: **لو أسررتها لجهرت بها**). Until the year 258 A. H. the basmallah was recited aloud in Fustāt; then a change was made; but al-Jauhar reintroduced the older practice in 303 A. H.; see de Sacy, *l. c.*, vol. i, p. 163. The Shāfi'ite practice was in this respect, as in so many others, in consonance with that of the Shī'a. See the quotation from Abu-l-Fidā on p. 220, n. 3; and Abū al Naḥḥāl al-Tunturī **مختصر الحاربي** (Kazan, 1899), p. 11. Al-Zamaksharī (*al-Kaṣḥshāf*, ed. Lees, vol. i, p. 5), has an interesting note upon the different usage in this respect. According to him, the difference depended upon the question whether the basmallah was or was not an integral part of the Sura; the "readers" (**قرّاء**) of Medina, Baṣra and Damascus held that it was not, and therefore did not read it aloud when it occurred in a prayer (**ولذلك لا يجهر**) (**بها عندهم في الصلوة**); but those of Mecca and Kufa did. See, also, al-Baiḥāwī, vol. i, p. 3.

* The **وتر** is a prayer accompanied by an uneven number of rak'as—from one up to eleven. See al-Shirāzi, *al-Taṭbīḥ*, p. 27. 5.