

Isma‘ili Da‘wa and Politics in Fatimid Egypt.

Hatim Mahamid

This paper will discuss the mutual influence between politics and the Isma‘ili *da‘wa*, particularly after the establishment of the Fatimid government in Egypt. Some questions arise at this point, such as: ‘what were the circumstances that influenced the developments in the role of the *da‘wa*?’ and, ‘had the office of *dā‘ī* undergone a process of politization as a result of the personal political interests promoted by the viziers?’ In examining these questions, I will attempt to emphasize the interrelations between the Isma‘ili *da‘wa* and the political circumstance during the Fatimid regime in Egypt.

Prior to al-Mahdī's appearance on the scene by the beginning of the tenth century, the *da‘wa* mechanism had a more theoretical aspect, whose purpose was to overthrow the Abbasid rule, which the Isma‘ilis and several other Shi‘i movements deemed illegitimate. On the other hand, the *da‘wa* served as a means to establish the universality of the Isma‘ili Imamate. However, with the constitution of the Fatimid rule in North Africa (Ifrīqyā) the Isma‘ilis had found it difficult to effect a doctrinarian union among the various factions of the Shi‘a. Furthermore, the Isma‘ili Fatimid government was faced with a demanding political trial, without the support of an applicative and established judicial system to assist it in addressing the challenges of the new situation.

Following the occupation of Egypt by the Fatimids in 969, the *Ismā‘īliyya* managed to enforce its political authority for nearly 200 years, during which it did not succeed in converting the Sunna, nor did it coerce the local residents to convert their religious belief, as had been claimed by several scholars.¹

The propaganda and preaching institution (*da‘wa*) formed a central ingredient of the Fatimid establishment – both religious and political.² The Fatimid caliphate put a special emphasis on the strengthening, systematization and overt institutionalization of the *da‘wa*. Judge al-Nu‘mān bin Ḥayyūn is considered the first Fatimid legislator to have created a considerable body of knowledge, for the use of the Isma‘ili judiciary and *da‘wa* systems, in addition to having written historical essays relating to the *Ismā‘īliyya*.

Historical sources available today show that despite the linkage between the office of the Isma‘ili judge (*Qāḍī*) and that of the missionary (*Dā‘ī*), it was not before the days of Imām al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh (r. 996-1021) that the first official appointment, that of the judge Ḥusayn bin ‘Alī bin al-Nu‘mān (999-1004),³ had been made for the office of "Judge of Judges" (*Qāḍī al-Quḍāt*) and "Preacher of Preachers" (*Dā‘ī al-Du‘āt*). Later in the Fatimid period, the missionary functions were transferred to the viziers.

The function of chief *dā‘ī* was of utmost importance in the Fatimid government and served as a central pillar in the propagation and reinforcement of the Isma‘ili mission both in areas under direct Fatimid domination, and those outside the state boundaries (*ḡazīra*). The hierarchy of the da‘wa establishment was organized with the utmost care and precision, beginning with the chief *dā‘ī* and ending with the Isma‘ili initiate (*mustaḡīb*), the main objective being the perpetuation of the Isma‘ili propagation and its success.

The Fatimid palace was not only a center of political authority but also the seat of the chief *dā‘ī*, known as the *Maḡlis al-Dā‘ī* or *Maḡlis al-Da‘wa*. Meetings and assemblies of the senior Isma‘ili ‘ulama were held in the palace, both for decision-making purposes or as sessions of Isma‘ili training and education.⁴

The enforcement of Fatimid authority over all aspects of administration – political, civilian and religious – was gradual so as not to provoke unrest within the local Sunni majority.⁵ In 364/974 (A.H./C.E.) the Isma‘ili judge ‘Alī bin al-Nu‘mān was appointed chief judge of the Fatimid state,⁶ thus ending the predominance of the Sunni law system for the duration of the Fatimid period. In fact, the chief judge was often involved in *da‘wa* activities and bore the additional title of "Preacher of Preachers" (*Dā‘ī al-Du‘āt*). Such were the Banū al-Nu‘mān during the first Fatimid period.⁷

The authority over the da‘wa remained generally in the hands of the presiding chief judge, up until 441/1049 when the last of the al-Nu‘mān’s sons, al-Qāsim, left office. Consequently, Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan bin ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Yāzūrī (d. 450/1058) was appointed vizier and responsible for the da‘wa authorities, in an attempt to keep him away from the influence of al-Sayyida al-Wālida, the mother of Imām al-Mustanṣir. Thus, for the first time, the vizier took hold of the Isma‘ili da‘wa.

The appointment of vizier Badr al-Dīn al-Ġamālī (1072-1094) marked the beginning of a new period, dominated by mighty and powerful viziers who were nicknamed "the viziers of the sword" (*wuzarā' al-sayf*). They took control of nearly all administrative authorities including the Isma'ili mission. They appointed preachers, missionaries and judges as their delegates, and came to be known by the title of "Guiding missionaries of the Isma'ili believers and guarantor of the judges of the Muslims" (*Hādī Du'āt al-Mu'minīn wa-Kāfil Quḍāt al-Muslimīn*).

Isma'ili Da'wa and Education

The Fatimids made use of the tradition that mosques have been centers of Islamic life, to propagate and reinforce the Isma'ili doctrine among the populace, as exemplified by judge al-Nu'mān ibn Ḥayyūn at *al-Manṣūriyya* mosque during the rule of the Caliph al-Manṣūr and Caliph al-Mu'izz in Ifrīqyā (North Africa). Due to the fact that the Isma'ili religious interpretation and da'wa relied on both esoteric (*al-bāḥīn*) and exoteric (*al-zāhir*) meanings of the holy scriptures (and other religiously-related phenomena) and the educational system was also adapted to these principles. The Fatimids were therefore extremely cautious in conducting lessons and da'wa sessions.

With his appointment as chief judge of the Fatimid state on behalf of Imām al-Manṣūr in Northern Africa, al-Nu'mān undertook a complex and multi-faceted duty: administering the Isma'ili law; training judges and notaries (*'udūl*) for future dispatching to remote lands; preaching and holding sermons in *al-Manṣūriyya* mosque; and teaching the Isma'ili doctrine to initiates and other occasional listeners. The sermons held by al-Nu'mān became a regular educational venue at the *al-Manṣūriyya* mosque – an Isma'ili educational institution in its own accord. However, what distinguished the Isma'ili teaching was the fact that the lectures given by al-Nu'mān required the prior approval of the Imām, who also determined the guidelines concerning the method of teaching and performing da'wa with respect to its exoteric and esoteric components, and to the aimed audience. This was due to the fact that the Imām was considered the highest source of interpretation (*ta'wīl*) and knowledge (*'ilm/ḥikma*).

We find al-Nu'mān's method being implemented under the Fatimid rule in Egypt in the form of "sessions of wisdom" (*maḡālis al-ḥikma*). *Maḡālis* were arranged according to the mastery level of the participants and their affinity to the

ruling class: *al-awliyā'*, *al-ḥāṣṣa*, *ḥurum* (the caliph's wives), sessions dedicated to the simple folk, to foreigners and sessions for women held in *al-Azhar* mosque. The books and teaching materials used by the *dā'ī* in these sessions also required the caliph's prior approval.⁸

Among other responsibilities, the chief *dā'ī* was also the supervisor of the state's Isma'ili educational system, his main task being to direct the scholars and 'ulama in propagating the principles of the *Ismā'īliyya* and strengthening its foundations. Thus, it is difficult to separate between religious preaching conducted for missionary purposes and for the reinforcement of the Isma'ili doctrine, and religious education whose objectives were to prepare 'ulama, missionaries and functionaries' who worked in the Fatimids' service.

The founding and functioning of the Fatimid educational and religious institutions was inspired and directly supported by the Fatimid caliphs (central government). Consequently, they acted as missionary centers in the service of the *Ismā'īliyya*, both directly and indirectly. The gatherings, lectures, sermons, and lessons (*mağālis al-da'wa lmağālis al-ḥikma*) conducted in these institutions attracted students and inspired individuals not only from among the Isma'ili adherents but also from other religious streams in the population. According to al-Maqrīzī, one of the lessons held by the Isma'ili judge Muḥammad bin al-Nu'mān in 385/995 was so overcrowded that the result was the death of eleven people.⁹

The Cairo mosque *al-Azhar* acted as a multipurpose institution in the service of the *Ismā'īliyya*. It was built by the Fatimid commandant Jawhar al-Ṣiqillī as a symbol for the Fatimid Isma'ili rule and a place to be used by the Fatimids and their adherents for conducting the Isma'ili religious rituals, so as to prevent friction with Egyptian Sunni devotees. Heinz objects to the above contention and argues that since it was built, *al-Azhar* functioned exclusively as an educational institution.¹⁰

Heinz's claim raises a number of important questions: Can we isolate purely educational goals from missionary objectives in the context of a religious Isma'ili establishment? And in a broader context, is such a division of purposes possible in Islamic educational institutions of the medieval age? 'Alī bin al-Nu'mān who was chief *dā'ī* and judge until his death in 374/984, held his first lessons at *al-Azhar* mosque in the month of Ṣafar 365/ October 975.

Vizier Ya'qūb ibn Killis (d. 380/990) was the first to formalize the Isma'ili educational activity at *al-Azhar* with the assistance and funding of the Fatimid government (Caliph al-'Azīz).¹¹ In 378/988 Ibn Killis received the official authorization of Caliph al-'Azīz's to undertake the tutoring of 37 students of the Isma'ili law. Al-'Azīz also allocated stipends and salaries for the students and their supervisors as well as accommodations in the mosque's vicinity.¹²

Despite the great controversy surrounding al-Ḥākim's capricious policy and his mysterious lifestyle, he was considered one of the mightiest Fatimid caliphs who strived for the formalization of the Isma'ili mission and education. The Cairo *Dār al-'Ilm* was also an institution devoted to Isma'ili da'wa through the teaching of rational and philosophical sciences, as well as a place for acquiring religious and general education.¹³ One additional indication to the missionary function of *Dār al-'Ilm* was the appointment of the chief *dā'ī* as the supervisor of this institution, thus reinforcing the connection between education and da'wa, both of which served one major goal – the buttressing of the *Ismā'iliyya*.

The number of students and adherents who attended the study sessions (*mağālis*) at the Fatimid palace grew substantially during the reign of Caliph al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh (d. 411/1021). Separate sessions for men and women were held almost daily.¹⁴

Several reasons may have influenced the establishment of *Dār al-'Ilm* by al-Ḥākim: overcrowded lessons and *mağālis al ḥikma*; the need to separate lessons and *mağālis* according to the topic being studied; and possibly the Imām's own ambitions. Despite its distinct Isma'ili character, the institution had drawn numerous students from various origins and religious schools, some of which belonged to the Islamic orthodoxy, particularly to the *Šāfi'iyya*, *Mālikiyya* and *Ḥanafīyya*.¹⁵ Al-Maqrīzī indicates that *Dār al-'Ilm*-type institutions spread all over Egypt during the Fatimid period, reaching a total of nearly 800.¹⁶ Not only the *Dār al-'Ilm* benefited from the increased support of al-Ḥākim but also institutions such as *al-Azhar*, *al-Muqs* and *Rāšīda* mosques. To fund the various maintenance and regular functioning expenses of these institutions al-Ḥākim endowed ample waqf.¹⁷

The libraries at the Fatimid palace and the *Dār al-'Ilm* in Cairo were placed under the direct supervision of the chief *dā'ī*.¹⁸ These libraries were badly damaged and looted in times of crisis, particularly during the "great crisis" (*al-šidda al-'uḡmā*)

of al-Mustanşir's period and at the end of the Fatimid era following the abolishment of the caliphate by Şalāḥ al-Dīn.

Uprisings that broke up in Cairo during the "great crisis" disturbed the regular activity of *Dār al-ʿIlm* and interfered with its educational and missionary goals. The second half of the Fatimid period was characterized by a decrease in the Fatimid Ismaʿili educational and missionary activity, which was overshadowed by the political struggles among viziers, army commandants and governors, in addition to the schisms within the Fatimid dynasty.

The Fatimid educational system also spread outside Egypt into various cities of Fatimid Syria, although in a more limited form. Despite the little facts we have regarding these institutions, we may assume that apart from *daʿwa*, the Fatimids attempted to propagate the Ismaʿili doctrine in various regions outside Egypt through their educational and religious institutions.

The Shiʿi mission was serviced in Aleppo by an institution named *Dār al-Daʿwa*¹⁹. Additionally, the library of Sayf al-Dawla al-Ḥamadānī had a secondary destination as a *Dār al-ʿIlm*.²⁰ According to Ibn al-Furāt's version, the Ismaʿilis strengthened their position in Aleppo during the second half of the 5th/11th century, mainly as a result of the support received from the Seljuq city commander, Emir Raḍwan bin Tutuṣ. The best indication of the status attained by the *Ismāʿīliyya* in Aleppo was the erection of a special mosque in the service of its adherents, in addition to the establishment of a *Dār al-Daʿwa*, and the unhindered functioning of these two institutions. As a result, numerous Ismaʿili adherents were drawn to the city from Persia as well as from various other Syrian regions. The historian Ibn al-Şaḥna mentions that the majority of Aleppines at the beginning of the 6th/12th century were under the influence of the Shiʿa.²¹ The traveler Ibn Jubayr claims that during his journey through Syria in 580/1184 (the reign of Sultan Şalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī) the Shiʿi adherents in Damascus outnumbered the Sunni adherents.²²

The new vacancies in the Fatimid administration proved to be a factor that served the *Ismāʿīliyya* well, particularly during the first Fatimid period. Scholars and clergymen from various regions moved to Egypt to offer their candidacy to the available administrative and religious judiciary positions. Several of these religious appointments were carried out despite the fact that the chosen candidate belonged to one of the orthodox schools of Islam. These scholars came from various origins: some

were from the East while others came from various regions in Syria itself. This phenomenon highlights the decisive, albeit mostly unintentional, role played by these high-ranking appointments in "converting" the religious perceptions of the office bearers to the *Ismā'īliyya*. Ya'qūb ibn Killis for instance, came from Baghdad and was of Jewish origin. Later, he converted to Islam and served under the Fatimids as a vizier, legislator and Isma'ili teacher.

The previously mentioned vizier al-Yāzūrī (d. 450/1058), served under the Fatimids and contributed to the growth of the *Ismā'īliyya*, belonged to the Ḥanafī school and served as a judge in the city of Ramleh. Later, during the reign of Caliph al-Mustanṣir he moved to the Fatimid palace in Cairo and subsequently was appointed vizier and then chief judge and chief *dā'ī* of the *Ismā'īliyya*.²³

Various historians claim that it was al-Yāzūrī who launched the missionary campaign against the Abbasids and chose the renowned Isma'ili *dā'ī* al-Muayyad fī al-Dīn al-Šīrāzī. Thanks to the financial and moral support supplied by Al-Yāzūrī, al-Muayyad succeeded in gathering numerous new initiates in Iraq, among them the Turkish commander of the Abbasid army in Baghdad, al-Basāsīrī.

Schisms Within the Isma'ili Da'wa and Politics

The unconditioned belief in the holiness of the Imām (*al-wilāya*) is one of the main pillars of the Isma'ili creed, one endowing the Imām with saintly qualities. This custom of endowing the Imām with eminent religious qualities was strongest during the first Fatimid period, but seemed to be decreased significantly after al-Ḥākim's reign. Thus, revealing the Imāms themselves as political leaders resulted in a disruption between their perceived religious qualities and their political status.

The Fatimid *da'wa* highlighted the saintly attributes of the Imām, which were said to be transferred unto him by way of inheritance in the form of a divine spark. Endowing the Imām with divine qualities is also apparent in the writings of Ibn Ḥānī' al-Andalusī, a poet who dedicated his work to the Isma'ili *da'wa*.²⁴

The third Egyptian caliph, al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh, was the most radical of the Fatimid caliphs, whose followers divinized through the *da'wa*. Several historians describe him as strange and eccentric at times. The number of those who affirmed al-Ḥākim's divine authority grew during his reign, reaching 16,000 people according to

the historian Ibn al-Furāt. As previously mentioned, al-Ḥākim's period is considered a time of lively activity in both education and Isma'ili da'wa.²⁵

Interesting is the fact that the missionaries who promoted the divine image of Imām al-Ḥākim were of foreign origin, particularly from Persia. Such as Ḥamza bin 'Alī al-Zawzanī (al-Labbād), Muḥammad bin Ismā'īl al-Darazī (Naštukīn), Ḥasan bin Ḥaydara al-Firgānī (al-Aḥram/ al-Ağda') and others.

The *da'wa* disseminated in Egypt by these missionaries was twofold: promoting the divine image of Imām al-Ḥākim, and simultaneously execrating the name of the first three caliphs of the Islam. Seeing the unrest this raised among the Sunna adherents, al-Ḥākim helped his missionaries flee to Syria, according to some sources, and provided them with financial and moral support in order to enable them to continue their *da'wa* activities. The missionary work in Syria gave birth to a new faction within the *Ismā'īliyya*, known as *Ahl al-Tawḥīd* or *al-Daraziyya* (the Druze), named after the missionary Muḥammad al-Darazī. This community later became a separate sect with its own independent beliefs and religious principles.²⁶ After his mysterious disappearance (or murder), Imām al-Ḥākim's image of a divine incarnation grew even stronger among his followers, to such an extent that his death was denied and his disappearance considered a miracle. It appears that the promulgation of al-Ḥākim's sanctity may have been considered as hindering the Isma'ili *da'wa*, and was one of the factors which brought his sister, Sitt al-Mulk, to conspire his murder.

The branching out of the *Ahl al-Tawḥīd* (the Druze) can be considered as the first schism within the *Ismā'īliyya* during the Fatimid period in Egypt. It was a product of the radical propaganda against the Sunna and the intense belief in the divine qualities of Imām al-Ḥākim. It is noteworthy that apart from al-Ḥākim's missionaries, the majority of the other prominent Isma'ili *dā'īs* (propagandists), who were in Egypt and gained renown during the Fatimid period, were also of Persian origins. Let us list several of these missionaries: Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī (d. after 410/1020); Al-Muayyad fī al-Dīn al-Šīrāzī (d. 470/1078); Nāṣir-i Khusraw (d. 481/1088); Ḥasan ibn al-Šabbāḥ (d. 518/1124) arrived in Egypt during al-Mustansīr's reign in 471/1078. Ḥasan al-Šabbāḥ became a protagonist of the Isma'ili *da'wa* in the East and established a center for the *da'wa* activities in the *Alamūt* fortress. He was

also the leader of the al-Nizāriyya faction after the death of Imām al-Mustanşir in 487/1094.

During the second part of the Fatimid period in Egypt, and particularly in the aftermath of the great crisis (*al-šidda al-‘uẓmā*) there was a decline in the status of the Fatimid caliphs vis-à-vis the authority of the mighty "viziers of the sword" (*wuzarā’ al-sayf*). This weakening of the caliphs, the restrictions imposed on their authorities and the accession disputes and conflicts within the Fatimid dynasty had a negative impact on the Isma‘ili *da‘wa*. Four major schisms have marred the image of the Fatimid government in this period:

1. ***Al-Nizāriyya and al-Musta‘liyya***; a schism between two sons of the Caliph al-Mustanşir – Nizār and Aḥmad (al-Musta‘lī). The split within the Isma‘ili *da‘wa* gave birth to a severe schism within the *Ismā‘iliyya*, with each side trying to justify its rights and claims to authority. In a political attempt to prove his father's legitimate right to the scepter, Imām al-Āmir bin al-Musta‘lī (d.524/1130) went on a missionary journey. He summonsed a general assembly with the participation of Isma‘ili ‘ulama and clergymen, administration officials and other dignitaries, and made Nizār's sister publicly acknowledge al-Musta‘lī's right of ascendancy. This public acknowledgment is known among historians by the name of *al-Hidāya al-Āmiriyya* (the Āmirī guidance).²⁷
2. ***Al-Ḥāfiẓiyya and al-Ṭayyibiyya***: Following al-Āmir's assassination in 524/1130, a dispute over the caliphate broke out between al-Ḥāfiẓ, the cousin of the late Caliph al-Āmir and the supporters of al-Āmir's infant son, al-Ṭayyib.²⁸ This led to another schism within the political circles of the Fatimid dynasty as well as within the *da‘wa* establishment. This new schism, nicknamed *al-Ṭayyibiyya*, was once again focused outside the Egyptian borders, particularly in Yaman and India, by way of the Ṣulayḥid dynasty. In Egypt, the moderate faction of the *Ismā‘iliyya* continued its activities, struggling for existence in the shadow of the political conflicts.
3. **The dispute over the succession of Imām al-Ḥāfiẓ (Ḥasan and Ḥaydara)**. The dispute over the title of crown prince (*wilāyat al-‘ahd*), which broke out in 527/1133 between the two sons of Caliph al-Ḥāfiẓ, Ḥasan and Ḥaydara, gave birth to another schism.

4. **The involvement of the mighty viziers (viziers of the sword):** In the period of who were originally army commanders and were known as the "viziers of the sword", the Isma'ili *da'wa* depended heavily on the attitude of the vizier toward the *Ismā'īliyya*.

Let us review several cases in which the viziers of the sword attempted to undermine the *Ismā'īliyya* in the Fatimid state. Vizier Badr al-Dīn al-Ġamālī set up a campaign to strengthen the Armenian elements in the army and within the general population by initiating the renovation of Christian religious establishments in Egypt. The most acute and outstanding change took place during the tenure of vizier al-Afḍal bin Badr al-Dīn al-Ġamālī (487-515/1094-1121). Besides playing an active role in determining the successor of Imām al-Mustanṣir, he also abolished some of the *Ismā'īliyya* customs that prevailed in Egypt since the establishment of the Fatimid regime, and particularly such Isma'ili rituals as the birth ceremonies of the Prophet, 'Alī, Fāṭima and the ruling Imām.

In 524/1130, following the assassination of Caliph al-Āmir, vizier Kutayfāt (Aḥmad) the son of al-Afḍal, attempted to remodel the governing policies of the Fatimid state according to the *Imāmiyya*, a rival Shi'i faction whose conceptions were opposed to those of the *Ismā'īliyya*. In addition, he appointed Sunni judges for the *Šāfi'iyya* and the *Mālikiyya* beside the Imami and Isma'ili ones. This was considered a revolutionary step that contradicted the governing principles to which the state had been adhering since the beginning of the Fatimid regime in Egypt, the days of Imām al-Mu'izz²⁹. Although short-lived, this move was certainly viewed as a novelty and precedent in the Fatimid government of this period. It was also as a sign of the growing weakness of the Isma'ili *da'wa* and its potential inability to withstand similar future maneuvers, and of the extent of political involvement in the religious and *da'wa* affairs.

As part of the succession dispute between the two heirs of Imām al-Ḥāfiẓ, his son Ḥasan adopted a hostile policy toward the Isma'ili judges, clergymen and his father's followers³⁰. After doing away with Ḥasan as a contender to the throne, Imām al-Ḥāfiẓ took an opposite direction, leaning more and more on the Isma'ili clergy (*arbāb al-'amā'im*) for staffing key functions in the state administration. Additionally, he appointed Christian functionaries such as the priest Abū Nağāḥ and the Armenian

vizier Bahrām to high-ranking offices. Despite his attempts, al-Ḥāfiẓ did not succeed in improving the status of the the *Ismā‘īliyya* and in restoring it to its past splendor.

Towards the end of the Fatimid period, the Isma‘ili *da‘wa* experienced a gradual decline vis-à-vis the Sunni propaganda, which started to gain strength in Syria under the auspices of the Seljuqs/ Zangids, whose influence managed to infiltrate the rows of the Egyptian orthodoxy as well. This tendency gained even more impetus when Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī moved to Egypt after being requested by the last Fatimid caliph al-‘Āḍid to restore peace and order. In 564/1168 Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn was appointed vizier of the Fatimids and at the same time continued to be the commander of the Zangid army in Egypt, and a loyal soldier of Sultan Nūr al-Dīn Zangī in Syria. This duality of authorities has given Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn formidable power and status, which he promptly used to persecute the *Ismā‘īliyya* in Egypt. His policy was twofold: on the one hand he continued to weaken the *Ismā‘īliyya* by replacing its judges with Sunnis, particularly from among the Ṣāfi‘iyya (Ṣadr al-Dīn ibn Dirbās); on the other hand he took assertive steps to strengthen the Sunna by erecting educational establishments (madrasas) to service the orthodoxy, in the same manner as the Zangids had done in Syria.³¹ Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's actions gradually led to the complete abolishment of the Fatimid caliphate in 567/1171. Egyptian loyalty and political association was officially transferred to the Sunni Abbasid caliphate.³²

Isma‘ili da‘wa and Abbasid Counter-Propaganda

Isma‘ili *da‘wa* had existed in the eastern Islamic lands even before the rise of the Fatimids in Egypt, posing a challenge to the Abbasid rule in the region. Vis-à-vis the Isma‘ili *da‘wa*, the Abbasid counter-Fatimid propaganda also gained strength. Its missionaries conducted fierce campaigns against the customs and tenets of the Shi‘a, in order to discredit any arguments supporting its legitimacy to rule over the Islamic community. Sensing the imminent danger of the Isma‘ili *da‘wa*, the Abbasid caliph al-Qādir (r. 991-1031) decided to launch a counter campaign. In 402/1011 he summoned a meeting in Baḡdad to which were invited several senior ‘ulama, judges and clergymen. The outcome of this meeting was a protocol (*maḥḍar*) which strongly negated the Fatimid claims to the ancestry of ‘Alī bin Abī Ṭālib and his spouse Fāṭima, daughter of the prophet Muḥammad. According to the ‘ulama of Baḡdad, the

Fatimid caliph al-Ḥākim was a descendant to the missionaries of al-Ḥawāriḡ sect. The Abbasids also claimed that the Fatimids were heretics who, with their customs and philosophy repudiated the Islam. Several nicknames used by the Abbasids denoted this alleged heresy – *kuffār*, *fussāq*, *fuḡḡār*, *mulḥidīn*, *zanādiqa*.³³

The Abbasid propaganda against the Fatimids continued to receive official authorization from of the Abbasid caliphs, who kept close council with the ‘ulama of the Sunna in Baḡdad. In 444/1052, following a series of bitter clashes between the Shi‘a and the Sunna in Iraq and in the eastern Islamic lands, the Abbasid caliph al-Qā’im summoned in Baḡdad a meeting with ‘ulama, judges and clergymen, in order to think up ways to contradict the Fatimid claims. Once again, the ‘ulama issued a decree that denied the legitimacy of the Fatimid rule, and negated their ancestry to the descendants of ‘Alī and Fāṭima. They went on to attribute the Fatimids to one of the Amgushid groups (*al-Maḡūs*), known by the name of *al-Dīṣāniyya*. Copies of the protocols (*maḥḍar*) of the Bagdadi ‘ulama's decision were made public and circulated in various regions with the intention of strengthening the counter Fatimid propaganda.³⁴

Following the demise of the Fatimid Caliph al-Mustanṣir (d. 487/1094), and attempting to capitalize on the schism between the *Nizāriyya* and the *Musta‘liyya*, the Abbasid caliphate (Caliph al-Mustazḥir, r. 1094-1118) issued another protocol (*maḥḍar*), which again denounced the Fatimids. This protocol was also made public and read aloud in the presence of senior officials. The protocol declared that the Fatimids were heretics and denied the legitimacy of their political and doctrinarian claims.³⁵

Sunni propaganda often took the form of educational-religious and intellectual activities, characterized by a strong Sunni revivalist current. Sunni historians and clergymen invested great efforts in writing historical and religious works, in which they spoke against the Shi‘a, denying its reasoning on the one hand, and highlighting the blessings of the Sunna on the other. The Sunni Abbasid judge Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Bāqlānī (d. 403/1012) who was in office during the reign of the Abbasid Caliph al-Qādir wrote an essay named *Kaṣf al-Asrār wa-hatk al-Astār*. In it he responds to the challenges posed by the *Ismā‘īliyya*, discloses the secrets of its philosophy and portrays it in a negative light.³⁶

Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġazālī (d. 505/ 1111) was an illustrious sheikh. Some of his works deal with the revival of the Sunna and the defamation of the various Shi‘i factions. Among his major works in this context we find *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*, *Al-Munqiz min al-Ḍalāl*, *Al-Qisṭas al-Mustaqīm*, and *Ḥuḡḡat al-Ḥaqq*. Another essay, which dealt directly with the *Ismā‘īliyya* and the denial of its claims was *Faḍā’ih al-Bāḥiniyya wa-Faḍā’il al-Mustaẓhiriyya*. In this work, al-Ġazālī draws a comparison between the Fatimid Shi‘a, which he depicts in grim outlines, and the blessings of the Sunni regime of the Abbasid Caliph al-Mustaẓhir.³⁷

The *da‘wa* competition also motivated the construction of religious educational institutions, which serviced the orthodox schools of Islam. The Seljuq vizier Niẓām al-Mulk is considered the first to establish a system of religious institutions, which was known by his name, *al-Niẓāmiyya*, and was supported by waqf endowments made by senior officials. Niẓām al-Mulk himself also wrote a book, named *Siyāsat-Nāmeḥ*, in which he expounds on the Sunni religious sciences and refutes the innovations and the Shi‘i movements, the theologians (*al-Mutakallimūn*), the philosophers, the Sufis and the Isma‘ilis (*al-Bāḥiniyya*). Niẓām al-Mulk's negative attitude towards the *Ismā‘īliyya*, is probably what induced its adherents to plot his assassination in 485/1092.

The Seljuq domination of Syria enabled their masters (the Zangids) to initiate revivalist operations in the region both by concentrating actions against the *Ismā‘īliyya* and by erecting educational institutions to service the Sunna, emulating the *al-Niẓāmiyya* madrasa in Iraq. By the end of the Zangid period (569/1173) there were 27 institutions in Damascus and 19 in Aleppo, among them centers for religious higher education including madrasas, ḥānqāhs, ribāṭs and zāwiyyas. The beginning of the 6th/12th century saw an escalation in the struggles between the Sunnis and the Isma‘ilis within Syria, especially after the death of the ruler of Aleppo Raḍwān bin Tāj al-Dawla Tutuṣ (d. 507/1113). The ensuing uprisings took the lives of many Isma‘ilis. The rest fled to the Lebanon and Naṣīriyya mountains. The most crucial period for the victory of the Sunna in Syria was that of Sultan Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Zangī, who worked persistently in all possible ways for its revival.

It is clear that historians, Sunni ‘ulama and Abbasid officials have constantly attempted, in various ways, to harm the Fatimids, to create a negative image of their dynasty and to delegitimize their claim to the caliphate. Several historians intentionally diminished the importance or caliber of the Fatimid rulers in Egypt, assigning them titles that were irrelevant to their status such as: the emirs of Egypt (*Umarā’ Miṣr*); the rulers of Egypt (*Aṣḥāb Miṣr*); the caliphs of Egypt (*al-Khulafā’ al-Miṣriyyūn*).³⁸ Others used the title of *al-Khulafā’ al-‘Ubaydiyyūn* instead of *al-Fāṭimiyyūn*.³⁹

We find even more negative images being used by historians and Sunni ‘ulama who were under the influence of the Abbasid propaganda or that of the rulers in Syria and Egypt after the abolition of the Fatimid regime. For example, the Syrian historian of the Ayyubids Ibn Waṣil al-Ḥamawī, in his essay *Mufarriğ al-Kurūb fī Aḥbār Banī Ayyūb* (a work dedicated to the history of the Ayyubids and their qualities), emphasizes the negative image of the Fatimids. He denies their alleged ancestry to ‘Alī and Fāṭima and even ascribes them Jewish origins. As previously mentioned, there were historians who even referred to the Fatimids as heretics, and made use of such titles as *al-Malāḥida*, *al-Mağūs*, *Ḥizb al-Šayāḫīn*, *al-Bāḫiniyya*, *al-Rāfiḍa* and so on. These historians accused the Isma‘ili *da‘wa* of being fallacious and untruthful, of calling to heresy and of giving birth to superstitions (*da‘wat al-ilḥād*, *da‘wat al-mubḫilīn*, *al-kufr wal-bid‘a*).⁴⁰

In a propagandist act, following the abolition of the Fatimid caliphate in 567/1171, Sultan Nūr al-Dīn ibn Zangī sent his judge, Šihāb al-Dīn ibn Abī ‘Aṣrūn to the court of the Abbasid caliph in Bağdad with messages from the sultan, to spread the news of the Fatimid downfall throughout Iraq. The Abbasid caliph showed his satisfaction and appreciation by sending presents, grants and blessings to the rulers of Syria and Egypt, Nūr al-Dīn Zangī and Šalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī. He also sent black pennants and other Abbasid symbols to be distributed among the ‘ulama and mosque preachers in Syria and Egypt, as an indication of the enforcement of the Abbasid rule and of the Fatimid defeat.⁴¹

Summary

In the same manner as the Isma'ili *da'wa* fulfilled a central role in the rising of the Fatimids to political power and their proliferation during the first Fatimid period, so were the Fatimid politics the main reason behind their downfall. Contradictions with the basic principles of the Isma'ili doctrine regarding the inheritance of the Imamate and the differences in educational background and opinions among the missionaries have given birth to bitter schisms within the Fatimid dynasty, schisms which were also reflected in the Isma'ili *da'wa* and doctrine. These have rendered the Fatimid Isma'ili regime vulnerable to enemies from within and without. And since the Fatimid authority in Egypt has remained the weakest and most moderate stream of *Ismā'īliyya*, particularly during the second Fatimid period, it has lost many of its political powers together with its religious and doctrinarian characteristics.

Notes

¹ See, Heinz Halm, *The Fatimid and their Traditions of Learning*, (London, 1997), pp. 30-40.

² On the Isma'ili doctrine and the organization of the *da'wa* see, Farhad Daftary, *The Isma'ilis: Their History and Doctrines*, (Cambridge, 1990); Bernard Lewis, *The Origins of Isma'ilism*, (Cambridge, 1940); Wladimir Ivanow, "The Organization of the Fatimid Propaganda", *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 15, (1939), pp. 1-35; Muṣṭafa Ğālib, *Tāriḥ al-da'wa al-Ismā'īliyya*, (Beirut, 1965).

³ The appointment *sijill* was issued on Şafar 389/February 999; Abū al-'Abbas Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Şubḥ al-A'şā fī Şinā'at al-Inşā*, (10), (Muḥammad Qandīl al-Baqlī ed.), (Cairo, 1972), 384-388.

⁴ The secrecy of the Isma'ili *da'wa* makes it difficult to trace its exact phases of organization. Regarding the *Dā'ir al-Du'āt* and the arrangement of its office and activities within the Fatimid palace see, Taqiy al-Dīn al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Ḥiṭat*, (2), (Cairo, Būlāq Pub., 1970), p. 227; Ibn al-Furāt, *Tariḥ Ibn al-Furāt*, (4), (Ḥasan Muḥammad al-Şammā' ed.), (Basra, 1967), pp. 139-140. See also, Muṣṭafa Ğālib, *Tāriḥ al-da'wa...*; 'Abd al-Mun'im Māğid, *Nuẓum al-Fāṭimiyyin wa-Rusūmuhum fī Mişr*, (1), (Cairo, 1985), p. 185; Marshal G. S. Hodgson, *The Order of Assassins*, (New York, 1955); A. Hamadani, "The *Dā'ir Ḥātim ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ḥamīdī* (d. 596 H. / 1199 A.D.) and his Book *Tuḥfat al-Qulūb*", in *Oriens*, vol. 23-24. (1974), pp. 258 – 300; Bernard Lewis, *The Origins...*; Ivanow, "The Organization of the Fatimid Propaganda".

⁵ See the promissory letter (*amān*) distributed by the Fatimid commander Ğawhar al-Şiqillī during the conquering of Egypt, Taqiy al-Dīn al-Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz al-Ḥunafa bi-Aḥbār al-A'imma al-Fāṭimiyyin al-Ḥulafā*, (1), (Ğamāl al-Dīn al-Şayyal ed.), (Cairo, 1967), 103-106. Also regarding the Fatimid government and administration in Egypt see, Yaacov Lev, *State and Society in Fatimid Egypt*, (Leiden, 1991). Yaacov Lev, "The Fatimid Vizier Ya'qūb ibn Killis and the Beginning of the Fatimid Administration in Egypt", in *Der Islam* (58), (1981), pp. 237-249. Jacob Mann, *The Jews in Egypt and in Palestine under the Fatimid Caliphs*, (1-2), (New York, 1970). See also, Ḥātim Maḥāmīd, *al-Taṭawwurat fī Niẓām al-Ḥukm wal-Idāra fī Mişr al-Fāṭimiyya*, (Al-Quds, 2001).

⁶ See Ibn Ḥağar al-'Asqalānī, *Raf' al-Aşar 'an Quḍāt Mişr* (part of an essay by al-Kindī abū 'Umar Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-Wulāt wa Kitāb al-Quḍāt*) (R. Guest ed.) (Leiden, 1912), pp. 585-589; Abū Bakr bin 'Abdallāh ibn al-Dawadārī, *Kanz al-Durar wa-Ğāmi' al-Ğurar*, (6), (Şalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munağğid ed.), (Cairo, 1961), p. 174; Al-Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz...*, (1), p. 223. The Banū al-Nu'mān continued to hold judiciary positions after their father's death. The patriarch al-Nu'mān ibn Ḥayyūn served under the Fatimids in North Africa and is considered the founder of the Isma'ili law and one of the most

prominent Isma'ili doctrinarians of the Fatimid dynasty. He died in Egypt in 363/973 after arriving there with the Caliph al-Mu'izz li-Dīn Allāh. The last of the judges from among the Banū al-Nu'māns was al-Qāsim bin al-Nu'mān. He was dismissed in 441/1049 and replaced by Abū Muḥammad al-Yāzūrī, who also served as vizier under Caliph al-Mustanşir. See also, Šams al-Dīn ibn Ḥallikān, *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, (5), (Iḥsān 'Abbās ed.), (Beirut, 1968), p. 415.

⁷ The Abbasids too had a similar official in the service of their religious propaganda (*da'wa*). His title was known in the Shi'a as *Ḥuḡḡa* or *Ḥāḡib*. During the Fatimid period this function was known as *Dā'ī al-Du'āt*, see: Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭaṭ*, (2), p. 226.

⁸ See, *Ibid*, (1), p. 391.

⁹ *Ibid*, (2), p. 326. Part of the lessons and sermons held in the Fatimid palace during the reign of Caliph al-Mustanşir were known and published under the name of *al-Maḡālis al-Mustanşiriyya*. See, Ṭīqat al-Imām 'Alam al-Dīn (al-Dā'ī), *al-Maḡālis al-Mustanşiriyya*, (Kamāl Ḥusayn ed.), (Cairo, 1947). The chief *dā'ī* under al-Mustanşir, Al-Muayyad fī al-Dīn al-Šīrāzī, also held numerous preaching and *da'wa* sessions for the *Ismā'īliyya*, known as *al-Maḡālis al-Muayyadiyya*. See also, 'Abd al-Mun'im Māḡid, "*al-Ta'līm 'ind al-Faḡimiyyin*", in **Al-Tarbiya al-'Arabiyya al-Islāmiyya**, (1), (Amman, 1989), pp. 265-266.

¹⁰ See, H. Halm, p. 41.

¹¹ Al-Azhar was established in Cairo as a mosque and educational institution for the Fatimids. On the educational procedures in al-Azhar see, al-Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭaṭ...*, (2), p. 226; *ibid*, (4), pp. 49-55, 192. See also, Muḥammad 'Abdallāh 'Anān, *Tārīḥ al-Ġāmi' al-Azhar*, (Cairo, 1942).

¹² On the biography of Ya'qūb ibn Killis see, Ibn Ḥallikān, (7), pp. 27-35; Ibn al-Şayrafī, *al-Isāra ilā man Nāl al-Wazāra*, (Abdallāh Muḥliş ed.), (Cairo 2000), p. 21; Yaakov Lev, "*The Fatimid Vizier...*", pp. 237-249. On the role played by ibn Killis in the educational organization and implementation at al-Azhar mosque see, 'Abd al-Mun'im Māḡid, "*al-Ta'līm 'ind al-Faḡimiyyin*", pp. 268-270.

¹³ See, al-Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭaṭ...*, (2), p. 334-335, 356. On the organization and activity of the Dār al-'Ilm in Cairo see, *ibid* (2), p. 254; *ibid*, (4), p. 49; Yūsuf al-'Ish, *Dūr al-Kutub al-'Arabiyya al-'Āmma wa-Şibh al-'Āmma li-Bilād al-'Irāq wal-Şām wa-Mişr fī al-'Aşr al-Wasīf*, (Beirut, 1991), pp. 104-127; 'Anān, *Tārīḥ al-Ġāmi' al-Azhar*, 49-59; H. Halm, pp. 71-78.

¹⁴ On the lessons (*Maḡālis al-Da'wa*) at the Fatimid palace see, *Ḥiṭaṭ...*, (2), pp. 222; 324-326; *ibid*, (4), p. 158.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, (2), p. 334-335; Yūsuf al-'Ish, pp. 110-113, 127.

¹⁶ 'Abd al-Mun'im Māḡid, *Tārīḥ al-Ḥaḡāra al-Islāmiyya fī al-'Uşūr al-Wuṣṭā*, (Cairo, 1985), p. 164. Although this number is uncertain, it indicates the vast prevalence of this type of institution during the Fatimid period.

¹⁷ On al-Ḥākim's waḡfiyya for these institutions see, Muḥammad 'Abdallāh 'Anān, *Al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh wa-Asrār al-Da'wa al-Faḡimiyya*, (Cairo, 1959), 390-393; 'Anān, *Tārīḥ al-Ġāmi' al-Azhar*, 160-164.

¹⁸ On the Fatimid libraries see, Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭaṭ...*, (2), pp. 253-254.

¹⁹ Abū al-Faḡl Muḥammad ibn al-Şaḡna, *Al-Durr al-Muntaḡab fī Tārīḥ Mamlakat Ḥalab*, (Damascus, 1984), p. 35; Yūsuf al-'Ish, p. 163.

²⁰ On the educational and *da'wa* functions of the library of Sayf al-Dawla al-Ḥamdānī see, Yūsuf al-'Ish, pp. 159-160.

²¹ Ibn al-Şaḡna, pp. 109-110.

²² Muḥammad bin Aḡmad ibn Ğubayr, *Riḡlat ibn Ğubayr*, (Beirut, 1984), p. 252. Naşir Khusraw, too, claimed before him in his travel accounts in the area in 1047-1050, that the Shi'a was majority in some of the Syrian cities. See, N. Khusraw, *Safar-Nāmah*, (Yaḡyā al-Ḥaşşab ed.), (Cairo, 1970), pp. 48, 50, 53.

²³ See the biography of vizier al-Yāzūrī, Ibn al-Şayrafī, pp. 42-47; Taqiy al-Dīn al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Muḡaffā al-Kabīr*, (3), (Muḥammad al-Ya'lāwī ed.), (Beirut, 1991), pp. 366-408; Al-Maqrīzī, *Itti'āz...*, (2), pp. 236-247; Muḥammad bin 'Alī ibn Muyassar, *Aḡbār Mişr*, (Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid ed.), (Cairo, 1981), pp. 16-17; Ḥātim Maḡāmīd, pp. 43-48, and see pp. 212-214 the excerpt from the manuscript by Ibn al-Ġawzī, *Mir'āt al-Zamān*, Paris manuscript, No. 1506, ff. 29-30, Arabe. Biographies of administration functionaries in the Fatimid palace show that many among them originated in eastern lands and thus did not adhere initially to the *Ismā'īliyya*. This is an indication of the extent of tolerance shown by the

Fatimids towards ‘ulama, scholars and functionaries who belonged to different religious streams. See for example the biographies of numerous Fatimid viziers included in Ibn al-Şayrafī’s work, *Al-Işāra ilā man Nāl al-Wazāra*. On the role played by the Jewish family Banū Tustar in the Fatimid service in Egypt see, Moshe Gil, *Hatustarim: Hamishpaḥa Ve-hakat*, (Tel Aviv, 1981), (in Hebrew).

²⁴ See the whole poem: Muştafa Ğālib, pp.195-198

²⁵ See, Ibn al-furāt, (4), p. 154. On al-Ḥākim’s qualities see, Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Ḥaṭīb, ‘*Aqīdat al-Durūz*, (Amman, 1980), pp. 37-80; Abdallāh al-Amīn, *Dirāsāt fī al-Firaq wal-Maḍāhib al-Qadīma al-Mu‘āşira*, (Beirut, 1986), pp. 158-160.

²⁶ Muştafa Ğālib, pp. 224-227. On the growth of the Druzi faction after the death of Caliph al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh, and the Druzean belief system and da‘wa see, ‘Abdallāh al-Amīn, pp. 142-162; Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Ḥaṭīb, pp. 103-118.

²⁷ Ibn Muyassar, pp. 99-101; Al-Maqrīzī, *Itti‘āz...*, (3), p. 87. See also, S. M. Stern, “*The Epistle...*”, pp. 20-31. In this context see also the *sijill* (document) of the *al-Hidāya al-Āmiriyya*, Al-Şayyal, pp. 205-230.

²⁸ Several versions exist regarding the existence of an heir to the Imām al-Āmir. On the schism between the al-Ḥāfiẓiyya and al-Ṭayyibiyya see, S. M. Stern, “*The Succession...*”, pp. 193-212.

²⁹ Ibn Muyassar, pp. 114-115; Al-Maqrīzī, *Itti‘āz...*, (3), p. 142.

³⁰ Regarding the steps taken by the Emir Ḥasan against the Isma‘ili judges see, Ibn Zāfir, *Akhbār al-Duwal al-Munqaḥi‘a*, (Andrey Ferry ed.), (Cairo, 1972), p. 46; Ibn Al-Qalānisī, *Ḍayl Tārīḥ Dimaşq*, (Amidrose, ed.), (Beirut, 1908), p. 242; Ibn Muyassar, p. 120; Al-Maqrīzī, *Itti‘āz...*, (3), p. 151; Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḥitaḥ...*, (2), p. 318.

³¹ Şihāb al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥman Abū Şāma, *Kitāb al-Rawḍatayn fī Aḥbār al-Dawlatayn, al-Nūriyya wal-Şalāḥiyya*, (1), (Muḥammad Ḥilmī and Muḥammad Muştafa Ziyāda eds.), (Cairo, 1965, p. 486; ‘Izz al-Dīn abū al-Ḥasan ibn al-Aṭīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīḥ*, (9), (Beirut, 1983), p. 110; Al-Maqrīzī, *Itti‘āz...*, (3), p. 319; Abū al-Maḥāsīn ibn Taġrī Bardī, *Al-Nuġūm al-Zāhira fī Mulūk Mişr wal-Qāhira*, (5), (Cairo, 1935), p. 385; Ğalāl al-Dīn al-Suyyūfī, *Ḥusn al-Muḥāḍara fī Tārīḥ Mişr wal-Qāhira*, (2), (Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm ed.), (Cairo, 1967), pp. 5, 153.

³² Abū Şāma, (1), p. 488; Ibn al-Aṭīr, (9), pp. 111-113; Al-Suyyūfī, (2), p. 216; Al-Maqrīzī, *Itti‘āz...*, (3), p. 325; Ibn Taġrī Bardī, (5), 355-356.

³³ Ismā‘īl bin ‘Umar Abū al-Fidā’ Ibn Kaṭīr, *Al-Bidāya wal-Nihāya fī al-Tārīḥ*, (11), (Aleppo, undated), pp. 321-322.

³⁴ On the assembly of the ‘ulama in Baġdad see, Ibn Muyassar, p. 13; Ibn Kaṭīr (12), p. 70; Ibn al-Aṭīr, (8), p. 64; Ibn Taġrī Bardī, p. 53.

³⁵ Ibn Muyassar, p. 63.

³⁶ Ibn al-Aṭīr, (11), p. 322.

³⁷ Ibn al-Furāt, (4), p.155.

³⁸ See, Ibn al-Aṭīr, (8), pp. 70, 72, 83. He refers to Caliph al-Mustansir by the title *Şahib Mişr* (the Owner of Egypt / the Ruler of Egypt). Ibn Muyassar, 13, 63, refers to the Fatimid caliphs with the title *al-Khulafā’ al-Mişriyyun* (the Caliphs of Egypt). Ibn Kaṭīr names them *Aşḥāb Mişr*, *Aşḥāb Mişr wal-Şām* (the Rulers of Egypt and Syria) and occasionally *Mulūk Mişr* (the Kings of Egypt). See Ibn Kaṭīr, (11), pp. 314, 319, 321; *ibid*, (12), pp. 70, 286;.

³⁹ On these titles see, Ibn al-Furāt, (4), pp. 151-172. Ibn Kaṭīr also names them *al-Khulafā’ al-‘Ubaydiyyūn*. See, Ibn Kaṭīr, (11), pp. 314, 317, 319; *Ibid*, (12), pp.70, 286.

⁴⁰ Ibn al-Furāt, (4), pp. 154, 155, 176-177. When describing the protocol issued by the Abbasid caliph and the ‘ulama in Baġdad to denounce the Fatimids and the Ismā‘īliyya, Ibn al-Aṭīr refers to the Fatimids by such titles as Amgushids and Jews (*al-Dişāniyya min al-Maġūs wal-Qaddāhiyya min al-Yahūd...*). Ibn al-Aṭīr, (8), p. 64; See also, Ibn Kaṭīr, (12), pp. 70, 289-290.

⁴¹ See, Ibn al-Furāt, (4), pp. 173-183.