

Aḥmad b. 'Atā' (d. 309/922) and is preserved in the *Tafsīr* of Sulamī. It has been edited by P. Nwyia in MUSJ 43/1968/181 ff. and is distinguished by speculation based on letters of the alphabet and the doctrine of four-fold meaning in Scripture (cf. for instance 188 ad 1, 1). There as well the first four caliphs, i.e. not only Abū Bakr and 'Umar but even 'Uthmān are addressed as "the lights of earth" (ibid. 212. l. 16). Cf. on this version Nwyia, *Excégèse coranique* 156 ff. and Böwering, *Mystical Vision of Existence* 141 f.

2.1.3.3-3.4 The Decline of the Kaysāniyya

As old as Abū Ḥamza al-Thumālī may have become, he still represents a new type. He is brought into the "Imāmite" picture of history by his providing a bridge back to Zayn al-Ābidīn. The "Saba'iyya" had wasted no thoughts on Zayn al-Ābidīn; they only thought about 'Alī, possibly also about Ḥusayn or Mukhtār, but not about the son of Ḥusayn who sat in far-off Medina. Nor were they concerned about the prerogative of the Ḥusaynids. This made it easier for the Zaydī groups to take over the idea of *raj'a*; conversely, that is why the early adherents of *raj'a* were ignored by Najāshī.¹ Naturally, the Imāmites knew about this lacuna; after the death of Ḥusayn almost everyone in Kūfa, so they said, had "fallen away".² But now the boot was on the other foot. Saba'ite was now only an empty word, and the Kaysānites, deprived of a living Imam since the turn of the century,³ died out. The Imāmites happily illustrated this through the example of

Ismā'īl b. Muḥammad b. Yazīd, called al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī,

on whose verses – as well as those of Kuthayyir – the bulk of their heresiographical materials about the sect are based;⁴ ultimately he converted to Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (*tajafara*) and composed eulogies on him. Then one even had him defend *raj'a* in the Rāfiḍite sense, without reference to his earlier Imam.⁵ But the matter is full of problems. From a later point of view, the poet would in fact have had a reason for becoming resigned. He was allegedly only born in 105/723, that is to say almost a quarter of a century after the death of Muḥammad b.

1 Kashshī, as we saw, is more liberal.

2 Kashshī 123, ll. 8 ff.

3 This, if we assume that Ibn al-Ḥanafīyya's son, Abū Hāshim, had been acknowledged in advance and did not come into play simply through Abbasid propaganda; but otherwise even earlier. On the development in general cf. Halm, *Gnosis* 43 ff.; on Abū Hāshim 78 ff.

4 Thus already Friedländer in: JAOS 29/1908/36 ff.

5 Mufid, *Fuṣūl* 1, 58, ll. 4 ff./61, ll. 3 ff. from bot.; *Bihār* x, 233, ll. 7 ff.

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