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as missionaries, while 'Amr was active as a teacher in Basra. Tradition is sparse in both cases.

### 2.2.6.3.1 *The Circle around Wāṣil*

The only ones among Wāṣil's pupils about whom we can find out slightly more are his *du'āt*. Ṣafwān al-Anṣārī praised them in a poem, revealing some names in the process.<sup>1</sup> A marginally more recent account by Abū l-Hudhayl was preserved by 'Abd al-Jabbār.<sup>2</sup> Ka'bī, too, seems to have relied on this,<sup>3</sup> going into more detail in some places and adding a further name.<sup>4</sup> Nashwān al-Ḥimyarī quoted from him directly in his *K. al-ḥūr al-ʿīn*.<sup>5</sup> Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār repeated the material from Abū l-Hudhayl in the fifth *ṭabaqa* of his work, where he used a different list of names which also included other pupils; its origins are not known.<sup>6</sup> It was copied by the Zaydite imam al-Manṣūr billāh who had it from Ḥākīm al-Jushamī.<sup>7</sup> Non-Mu'tazilite sources only rarely contain relevant material.

#### 2.2.6.3.1.1 *The du'āt*

Ṣafwān al-Anṣārī described the practice of the missionaries or canvassers dispatched by Wāṣil. They would join caravans,<sup>1</sup> some of them conducting business at the same time.<sup>2</sup> Upon reaching their destination they did not reveal their intentions immediately but first established an atmosphere of mutual trust, frequently by providing legal advice.<sup>3</sup> We hear nothing of political propaganda, the objective apparently being religious debate.<sup>4</sup> They were trained for this in Basra; it seems that Wāṣil also gave them written instructions and templates for discussion.<sup>5</sup> Their appearance was that of *khaṭībs*, with turban

1 Cf. p. 436 below.

2 *Faḍl* 237, 5ff.

3 *Maq.* 66, ult. ff.

4 Sulaymān b. Arqam (see p. 357f. below).

5 P. 208, 6ff.

6 *Faḍl* 251, 2ff.

7 *Shāfi* I 137, 11ff. (with significant errors).

1 Text XII 1, v. 23.

2 See p. 356 below regarding 'Uthmān al-Ṭawīl.

3 Text XII, v. 8; also p. 356 below.

4 Ibid., vv. 14f. Regarding the dialectical skill of the *du'āt* cf. v. 2.

5 See p. 306 above.

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THE ARKÂN AL-ISLÂM ACCORDING TO AL-SIJISTÂNÎ:  
FASTING IN WAITING FOR THE QĀ'IM

Antonella STRAFACE  
Naples

The present work aims at examining the “pillars of islām” according to Abū Ya'qub al-Sijistānī, one of the most outstanding Ismā'īlī “missionaries” (*du'āt*) of the IV/X century, who originally belonged to the Qarmaṭiān branch of Ismā'īlism.<sup>1</sup>

Although nothing definitive is known on the origin of Qarmaṭism and on the first stages of its evolution, it seems that from the time of the schism of Salamiyya (286/899),<sup>2</sup> which brought about the formation of the two factions of Fāṭimids and Qarmaṭians, the political purpose of the *qarāmiṭa* aimed at the re-establishment of the true leader of the community (Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl, the *Mahdī-Qā'im*). This aim required the struggle against the “usurpers” politically as well as doctrinally. In this respect it must be noted that Qarmaṭism was deadlocked on the political level after the aforementioned schism, while on the doctrinal level some elements of its formulation were preserved by the Fāṭimid *da'wa*.<sup>3</sup> Among the Qarmaṭiān authors whose works survived, Abū Ya'qub al-Sijistānī deserves a prominent place.

This *dā'ī*, who formed together with Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī and Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Nasafī the early generation of “missionaries” charged with political-doctrinal activities, can be considered a pioneer of philosophical Ismā'īlism. In fact he contributed significantly in shaping a doctrine in

<sup>1</sup> Scarce and uncertain are the biographical details of this *dā'ī*, who was compelled, like his predecessors, to operate clandestinely. A native of Sistan, al-Sijistānī later went to Rayy where he succeeded Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī in the directing the *da'wa*. The date of his death is uncertain too, even though from a clear allusion contained in the *Kitāb al-iftikhār* he probably was still alive in 360/971, a hypothesis that seems to be plausible since, according to some sources, al-Sijistānī was killed when Khurasan came under control of Maḥmūd of Ghazna in 392/1002.

<sup>2</sup> See among the others Daftary, *A short history* 45-50.

<sup>3</sup> Poonawala thinks that the decision of the Fāṭimids to preserve a good deal of Qarmaṭiān works can be considered a kind of containment strategy so as to better control their adversaries and, if necessary, fight them off. See the introduction of Poonawala in al-Sijistānī, *Kitāb al-iftikhār*.

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