



‘ABD-AL-‘AZĪM AL-ḤASANĪ

‘ABD-AL-‘AZĪM AL-ḤASANĪ, ABU’L-QĀSEM B. ‘ABDALLĀH B. ‘ALĪ B. AL-ḤASAN B. ZAYD B. AL-ḤASAN B. ‘ALĪ B. ABŪ ṬĀLEB, Shi‘ite ascetic and transmitter buried in the main sanctuary of Ray. Little is known about his life. He must have been born before the year 200/815, probably in Median. There he was a companion of Imams Moḥammad al-Javād (203-20/818-35) and ‘Alī al-Hādī (220-54/835-68). When the latter, on the order of the caliph al-Motavakkel, moved to Sāmarrā’ in 233/848, ‘Abd-al-‘Azīm evidently followed him there. Later he seems to have been forced to go into hiding from the government and to have stayed some time in Ṭabarestān before coming to Ray. According to the contemporary scholar Aḥmad b. Moḥammad b. Kāled al-Barqī of Qom (d. 274/887-88 or 280/893-94), he lived there, still concealing his identity, in the house of a Shi‘ite in the Sekkat al-mawālī in the quarter of Sarbānān. He spent the time in worship and fasting and used to visit, outside the town, a tomb which later faced his own grave, stating that a descendant of Imam Mūsā was buried there. This tomb was later identified as that of Ḥamza b. Mūsā. After ‘Abd-al-‘Azīm’s death, he was buried under an apple tree (*šajara toffāh*) nearby on the initiative of a Shi‘ite who, in a dream had heard the Prophet state that a descendant of his would be carried from Sekkat al-mawālī and be buried under it. His shrine was later called *mašhad al-šajara* after the tree. He died probably before Imam al-Hādī, though Šarīf al-Mortažā and Shaikh al-Ṭūsī state that he was also a companion of Imam Ḥasan ‘Askarī (254-60/868-74).

As a descendant of the Prophet, a companion of Imam ‘Alī al-Hādī, and a



transmitter of traditions of the Imams, ‘Abd-al-‘Azīm evidently held a position of high authority in the nascent Emāmī Shi‘ite community in Ray. Imam al-Hādī is reported to have told a visitor from Ray to rely on ‘Abd-al-‘Azīm’s answers in all problematical religious matters. The titles of his works still known in the 4th/10th and 5th/11th centuries illustrate his role as a religious teacher: 1. a book on the daily ritual duties, *Ketāb yawm wa layla*; 2. books containing his transmission, *Rewāyat ‘Abd-al-‘Azīm*; 3. a book on the speeches of ‘Alī, *Ketāb koṭab Amīr al-mo’menīn*. None of these is extant, but Kolaynī, Ebn Bābūya, and others quote numerous traditions transmitted by him from Imams al-Javād and al-Hādī and, and with chains of transmitters, from the early Imams. His tomb was evidently venerated by Shi‘ites soon after his death. According to a report first quoted by Ebn Qūliya (d. 367/976) in his *Kāmel al-zīārāt* (ed. Mūsā ‘Abd-al-Ḥosayn al-Amīnī, Najaf, 1386/1966, p. 324), Imam al-Hādī told a Shi‘ite from Ray that visiting the tomb of ‘Abd-al-‘Azīm was as meritorious as visiting the tomb of Imam Ḥosayn. Not much later, Ṣāḥeb Ebn ‘Abbād, Buyid vizier in Ray, wrote an epistle on the rank and virtues of ‘Abd-al-‘Azīm, praising in particular his support of the doctrine of divine unity and justice (*al-tawḥīd wa’l-‘adl*), an aspect of ‘Abd-al-‘Azīm’s teaching which agreed with Ebn ‘Abbād’s own endeavor of furthering a combination of Shi‘ism and Mu‘tazilite theology. Ebn Bābūya, who partially supported Ebn ‘Abbād’s efforts, also composed a tract on the life of ‘Abd-al-‘Azīm (*Aḵbār ‘Abd-al-‘Azīm b. ‘Abdallāh al-Ḥasanī*), which is lost. The tomb of ‘Abd-al-‘Azīm had evidently been built up as a shrine by the time of Ebn ‘Abbād, who describes it as a *mašhad*. In the Saljuq age, the Shi‘ite vizier Majd-al-dīn Barāvestānī Qommī provided generously for its restoration. It was restored, greatly enlarged, and provided with liberal endowments by the Safavid Shah Ṭahmāsp. In 1270/1854, the tomb was gilded and the hall provided with mirror work on the order of Nāṣer-al-dīn Shah Qājār (for the history of the shrine, see Ray).

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