



## 'ASKARĪ

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'ASKARĪ, ABŪ MOḤAMMAD ḤASAN B. 'ALĪ, the 11th imam of the Twelver Shi'ites, known also as al-Şāmet, al-Hādī, al-Zakī, etc. He was born in Medina, the son of an *omm walad* called Ḥodayṭ or Sūsan. His date of birth is not known for certain. Nawbakṭī, (*Feraq*, p. 79) and Qomī (*Maqālāt*, pp. 101f.) give Rabī' II, 232/November-December, 846; Kolaynī (*Kāfi* I, p. 503) says either Rabī' I/October-November, 846 or Ramażān/April-May, 847; while *Tāriḵ Baġdād* (VII, p. 366) states that he was born in 231/845-46. In 233/847-48 or 234/848-49 he and his father, 'Alī al-Hādī, were taken by the caliph al-Motawakkel to 'Askar Sāmarrā (hence their *nesba* 'Askarī). According to Imamite tradition, his father designated Ḥasan al-'Askarī as his successor a few months before his death in 254/868 (Shaikh Mofīd, *Erşād*, p. 335); his elder brother, Abū Ja'far MoḤammad, was already dead by this time (Nawbakṭī, p. 78). It seems, however, that his right to the succession was challenged by his brother Ja'far.

Ḥasan al-'Askarī's short imamate was uneventful, though he is said to have been imprisoned for a while by the caliph al-Mo'tamed (r. 256-79/870-92). He died on 8 Rabī' I 260/January 1, 874 in Sāmarrā (Ebn Kallekān gives 8 Jomādā I/March 1 ) and was buried next to his father in the latter's house. His estate passed to his mother and his brother Ja'far. During his imamate small groups of extremists (*ġolāt*), who ascribed prophetic or even divine qualities to the imams, continued the activities which they had in part begun under his predecessor. They included the Namīriya, the adherents of MoḤammad b. Noşayr Namīrī (Nawbakṭī, p. 78) in Kūfa, the Eşhāqīya of Eşhāq b. MoḤammad Naḳā'ī Başrī in Başra, Baghdad, and Madā'en (Kaşşī, *Rejāl*, ed. Moştafwī,



Mašhad, 1348 Š./1969, pp. 530f.; *Tārīk Baġdād* VI, pp. 378ff; cf. the traditions in *Kāfi* I, pp. 508ff.), and the Ḥasakīya, the supporters and disciples of ‘Alī b. Ḥasaka, in Qom (Kaššī, pp. 516f., 520, 521). Since ‘Askarī had died without leaving any obvious heirs, certain groups of his followers believed that he had been carried off by God (*ġayba*) and awaited his return or resurrection; others surmised that he had left a son called Moḥammad (known as Moḥammad al-Qā’em), who had been born a few years before ‘Askarī’s death (according to the Imamite tradition in Ša’bān, 255/July-August, 869; *Kāfi* I, p. 514) or even posthumously (Nawbakṭī, pp. 84f., 90ff.). One sect maintains that he had left a concubine with child and that she would one day give birth to the Mahdī; other groups endorsed the imamate of one of ‘Askarī’s brothers, Moḥammad or Ja’far (cf. Nawbakṭī, pp. 79ff.; Qomī, p. 102ff.). Of all these groups only the Emāmīya survived, who believe that ‘Askarī’s son Moḥammad was taken up by God (*ġayba*), and they await his return.

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Ebn Kaḷlekān (Beirut), II, pp. 94-95.

*EI*<sup>2</sup> III, pp. 246-47.



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