

## **'Ulamâ' and the Early Abbâsid State: A Study in the Relationship**

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The relationship between the '*ulamâ*' and the State (Caliphate/Sultanate) during the Abbâsid period has been much debated by scholars concerned with the study of early Islam. Since the period saw formative development in religious thought as well as initiative towards defining and regulating the relations between the Caliphs and the '*ulamâ*', it is not surprising that much of the debate on question of religious authority has tended to be focussed on this period.

Abbasid patronage of the '*ulamâ*' and their relation with the religious scholars constitute dominant themes of Abbâsid religious policies in general and, for that reason, are crucial for any understanding of that period as a whole. Religious trends in Abbâsid society have been little studied with reference to the initiatives or policies of the Caliphs and Sultans vis-a-vis the '*ulamâ*' or religious elite notwithstanding the fact that this period presents the most ideal view of the '*ulamâ*'s' role and their relationship with the Caliphate and the Sultanate. The Caliphs and the Sultans gave full moral and material support to '*ulamâ*' not only for the performance of their duties, but to uphold their dignity and independence of opinion. The latter had to perform their function as the custodians of '*ilm*' i.e. the religious patrimony of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) especially his Hadith apart from acting and carrying out their primary constitutional function—the defence and maintenance of religion. Their '*ijma*' (consensus) represented the '*ijma*' of the Muslim people and constituted the foundation of Islam itself. By giving up the easy, lucrative life, an '*Âlim*' gained a great following among the Muslim masses

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and was followed more loyally than a commander in the field or a leader whose leadership was uncontested. The ultimate decision on matters of constitutional law and theology rested in the hands of '*ulamâ*'.<sup>1</sup>

This paper is an attempt to see some meaningful aspects of '*ulamâ*'s' functioning during the Abbasid period that witnessed a broad based activity of '*ulamâ*' and institutionalisation of their creed. The study obtains more importance considering the modern scholars' agreement of a sharp conflict between the State and the '*ulamâ*' during the Abbasids that ultimately resulted into the separation of Religion and Politics.

The first generation of the scholars of Islam after *Sahâba* was *Tâbi 'ûn* (designated followers), subsequent generations are called '*ulamâ*'. With the passage of generations, the term '*ulamâ*' became a collective word referring to all manner of scholars of religion, including the judges who administered the law of Islam; professors of Islamic law, hadith transmitters, Imâms, preachers, legal advisors, sufis and private individuals with some proficiency in religious matters<sup>2</sup>. The term '*âlim*' should not be confused with *kuttâb* who were meant for the removal of illiteracy and the teaching of *hisâb* (reckoning), grammar, poetry, *akhbâr* (history) and above all the Quran.<sup>3</sup>

During the first five centuries of Islam, '*ulamâ*' developed their own practices and organisations independently of the State. Yet through the activities of independent '*ulamâ*' and the minority of the scholars who enjoyed personal or state patronage, the informal education, organisational and social pursuits of '*ulamâ*' grew into regularised practices and resulted in an international system of scholarship during the early centuries of Islam. Still there was no proper and regular professionalisation of '*ulamâ*'. Towards the end of eleventh century we witness the establishment of law schools, Hadith academies and Sufi centres demonstrating the institutionalisation of Muslim scholarship and professionalisation of the '*ulamâ*'.

In the beginning of the Abbâsid period, the *tâbi 'ûn* and subsequent generations of the '*ulamâ*' journeyed throughout the Islamic territories to pursue and disseminate the religious knowledge.<sup>4</sup> The tradition of *Rihla* (travel) in search of learning continued to dominate the educational and career patterns of later '*ulamâ*' too. In fact upto the end of 14th century the term *Rihla* was synonymous

with the journey of exceptional scholars in the quest of learning.<sup>5</sup> *Rihla* was also important in the sense that 'ulamâ' from areas as distant as Spain, north Africa and Central Asia brought personal communication with one another and as a result a network of scholarly contacts began to extend across the Islamic world. The 'ulamâ' travelled as participants in a host of professional and social as well as religious practices that grew up around the exchange of religious information. Thus pilgrimage and travelling to gain religious knowledge were frequently combined together.<sup>6</sup>

Travelling in order to spread the religious doctrine or viewpoint was additional motivation before the 'ulamâ'. New generations of scholars continually restarted the process of travelling for education, increased reputation, job opportunities, and social, professional and family ties. An 'Âlim might wed the daughter of a native born or immigrant professor in his home town or in the course of his travels, and a new professor in town might marry into an established scholarly family. Thus, intercity marriage alliances began to exist further re-inforcing the international association of 'ulamâ'.<sup>7</sup> This international system of scholarship and exchange of 'ulûm' resulted in strong social bonds and a coherent, satisfying life of travel, adventure and learning. This system also provided the mechanism for standardisation of Islamic education, society and culture. In this environment where the scholars of Khurasan and Spain read books by *muhaddithin* of Iraq, 'ulamâ' from Damascus filled the law professorships in Baghdad and the scholars from all over the Islamic world were journeying to meet and study with one another, the result was the creation of a strong cosmopolitan, influential elite.<sup>8</sup> Following is a nice summary of the scale of the international character of 'ulamâ' and the usage of one another's scholarships in the light of their mutual ties:

Three of the most famous *muhaddith*-historians of medieval Islam, Al-Khatîb al-Baghdadi, Ibn 'Asâkir, and al-Sam'âni, were the compilers of the great biographical dictionaries of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and their careers and writings illustrate the far-reaching connections among 'ulama' and the workings of the international system of scholarship. Al-Khatîb al-Baghdadi (392/1001-463/1070) was a celebrated *muhaddith* from Baghdad, Ibn 'Asâkir (499/1105-571/1175) was a distinguished legal scholar and *muhaddith* and member of a prominent

Damascene family of 'ulama' and al-Sam'âni (506/1112-562/1167) was a noted scholar from Marv. All three scholars resided in or travelled to Syria, Iraq, and Khurasan, and Ibn 'Asâkir journeyed to Marv, where he met al-Sam'âni. Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi visited Damascus twice, writing and teaching his works, from 444/1052 to 445/1053) on his way to Mecca and for eight years between 451/1059 and 459/1066.<sup>9</sup> Baghdadi's major work was the *Ta'rikh-i Baghdād*—a combination of city description and alphabetical biographical dictionary. The form in which al-Baghdadi put his work was his original contribution to the historiography of Islam.<sup>10</sup> Although al-Baghdadi died thirty years before Ibn 'Asâkir was born, the teachers of Ibn 'Asâkir were scholars who studied with al-Baghdadi while he was in Damascus. They also had travelled to Baghdad and studied al-Baghdadi's work with his colleagues and students, for *Ta'rikh Baghdad* enjoyed immediate renown. Ibn 'Asâkir composed *Ta'rikh Madinat al-Dimashq* in the same format. In 535/1140 al-Sam'âni came to Damascus. He renewed his acquaintance with Ibn 'Asâkir, whom he had met when Ibn 'Asâkir was travelling in Khurasan. After leaving Damascus, al-Sam'âni sent Ibn 'Asâkir a book of his fond memories of Damascus. Ibn 'Asâkir replied in poetry. Al-Sam'âni wrote *Ta'rikh Marv*, as well as a continuation of al-Khatib al-Baghdadi's *Ta'rikh Baghdad*. 'ulamâ' directed their travels to study with the most noted men of their generation in order to ensure themselves place in chains of authorities stretching into the past and through their own students, into the future. They were in their own estimation living links between generations of 'ulamâ'. These organised pursuits constituted an international system of Muslim learning.<sup>11</sup>

An 'Âlim was bound to express his approval or disapproval for a given doctrine or opinion. If he failed to speak out against what he thought was bad, he was shirking his duty as an 'Âlim, for his silence would actually amount to a vote for the opinion he opposed. To speak out, therefore, against opinions or practices from whatever quarter they issued was both a duty and courageous act highly admired by the Muslim masses, an act which found its way into the biographies of such 'ulamâ'. He was courageous because it meant speaking out against men in power, men who could make or break one's career, men who could make all the difference between a life in rags or in riches.<sup>12</sup>

Ibn Muqaffa' considers the role of 'ulamâ' essentially as functionaries of the Caliph, co-opted into the state apparatus. Serving as the Caliph's *sahâba* (companions) is one of the functions he has in mind for them. More striking is his suggestion that they should act as moral administrators, so to speak, of the communities they live in, serving to discipline and reform the people, restrain them from *bid'ah* (innovations) as well as *fitan* (civil strife), supervise their affairs, and report to higher authorities on matters they can not themselves handle.<sup>13</sup> The Caliphs and the Sultans alike made direct contact with the 'ulamâ' and requested them to accept the official positions as upholders of the *Shar'iah*. The former depended upon the latter to exert their authority and to exploit the opportunity they had found, for direct relations with the Islamic community as leaders rather than as monarchs.<sup>14</sup> The famous Imam Ghazzâli had been marking time in Nizam al-Mulk's court enjoying the full support and patronage of Caliph as well as Sultan before the latter sent him to Baghdad to teach at the Nizâmiyya.<sup>15</sup>

The rulers needed the support of the Muslim masses and there was no other way to it than through the 'ulamâ. Instituting colleges or mosque colleges, monasteries and other institutions of learning with large salaries for the professors and scholarships for a number of select students, was one way to attract the loyalty of the 'ulamâ. As long as the intellectual that could convince the Muslim masses that he was performing the sacred duty, he had their loyalty. He lost it, however, whenever he appeared to be pursuing worldly success.<sup>16</sup> The Caliphs' concern to seek the support of the 'ulamâ' goes back to the days of Abbasid revolution. There is some evidence to suggest that the Abbasid *du'ât* (revolutionary propagandists) actively sought to cultivate the favour of the religious circles and 'ulamâ'; their purpose apparently was not only to enhance their support-base but also to bolster the "Islamic" credentials of their movement in the face of serious contrary accusations.<sup>17</sup>

In diverse times and places 'ulamâ' have mostly shunned state appointments. The 'ulamâ' with the least followers were those who were in the employ of government, because their official status and lucrative positions served to dampen their zeal for protest. The 'ulamâ' with most numerous and most fervent followers were those who lived the life of frugality as Muslim intellectuals

independent of the government, free to speak out their minds, in contrast to their brethren who allowed themselves to be muzzled.<sup>18</sup>

Instead of accepting the official positions the '*ulamâ*', after accumulating enough knowledge and the *Ijâza* (document certifying proficiency), looked for positions either at home or abroad. By teaching and forwarding their education at the places of their residence, the '*ulamâ*' attracted fairly large numbers of students to their respective circles. The numbers of students and sizes of crowds in attendance were significant ingredients in a scholarly reputation. The increase in the number of scholarly relationships explains how '*ulamâ*' were accepted and taken care of and provided employment around the Islamic world. But obtaining the position of an *Âlim* of mass acceptance and popularity was very difficult while comparing it with the position of a judge that was easily obtainable by studying Islamic law and rituals. That is why the vast mass of students, who worked for a living, attached themselves to jurists; for only through the jurists who represented law and ritual, was it possible to secure the posts of judges and preachers says Jâhiz in a well-known passage: Our experience is that the study of traditions or the exegesis or the Quran upto fifty years will not qualify a man as 'jurist' or render him eligible for a judicial post. These honours can only be attained by studying the writings of Abu Hanifa and such like and by committing to memory legal formulae for which a year or two are amply sufficient. One who does this is appointed after a short time, judge over a town, nay, over an entire province.<sup>19</sup>

The Abbasids had of late realised that an '*Âlim* or a holy man might not somehow threaten the stability of the regime, challenge the authority of the Caliph or at least condemn such a challenge. The mere refusal of a scholar to associate himself with the government, by accepting a judicial position for instance, may have been seen, and perhaps often intended, as an affront to the much publicized religious commitments of the Caliphs. It could equally have been perceived as an adverse comment on the legitimacy of the ruling establishment. Such '*ulamâ*' did not accept also the official position because they expressed serious reservations about associating with a regime which was felt to fall short of, if not violate, ideals that many scholars held dear to their hearts.<sup>20</sup> Stories about particular '*ulamâ*' stoutly refusing an appointment in the judiciary, or being coerced to accept it, are

not necessarily fictitious either. For there certainly were scholars who were opposed to any form of association with an unjust and impious government, or they may have had other reasons to refuse an official appointment. However, this never meant that no one was available for a certain position, but rather that the particular individual whom the Caliph, for his own reasons, wanted to occupy that office was not always willing to do so.<sup>21</sup> Such scholars were numerous and most famous and unrelenting of these was the Kufan *muhaddith* Sufyân al thawri (d. 161/778) a scholar in whom medieval biographical dictionaries show considerable interest but who remains an unusually enigmatic figure. A stringent refusal to serve in the judicial administration, and in fact to leave anything at all to do with the Caliphs even to give them moral and religious advice—is widely attributed to him, and seems in general to be a credible representation of his attitude. He is quoted of as advising a fellow scholar:

*“Be aware of al-Umarâ’ (rulers), of drawing close to and associating with them. Do not be deceived by being told that you can intercede for the wronged and avert [evil] which the wicked Qurra’ have taken as a ladder [to self promotion].”*<sup>22</sup>

Such scruples, coupled with Sufyan’s criticism of the ruling authorities, and not least his influence among fellow-scholars could not have endeavoured him to the Abbasids, and it is not surprising that he is said to have spent his last days in hiding.

The rulers some times resorted to the policies of appeasement vis-a-vis ‘*ulamâ*’ in order to gain their sympathies. They wooed and lulled the ‘*ulamâ*’ to the tune of the State whenever they saw an *Âlim* with such inclination. But on most occasions the rulers failed in their designs. Sâhib bin Abbâd (d. 384/994) refused the invitation of the Sâmanid prince to become his vizîr on the ground, among others, of the difficulty of removal; having four hundred camel loads only of theological works. The catalogue of his library filled 10 volumes.<sup>23</sup> There are some reports however, according to which the Caliph intended to promulgate *Muwatta* of the Madinese jurist Mâlik bin Anas (d. 179/795) as the single and uniform basis of legal decisions in the empire, certain accounts even asserting that it was al-Mansur himself who commissioned the *Muwatta*. Mâlik for his part, remained unimpressed with what the Caliph intended, rather dissuading him from doing so.<sup>24</sup>

However the '*ulamâs*' refusal to associate with the Caliphs or with the existing power structures was not a call to arms against the ruling house. Such '*ulamâ*' proved a guiding example for others and as well as an advice.

More important aspect of this refusal should be considered as the '*ulamâs*' determination to retain their independence and autonomy in society which they evidently saw as being compromised by associating with the ruling elite. For their part, it was precisely this jealously guarded autonomy in society which the rulers often viewed as potentially subversive.<sup>25</sup> The rulers could not afford to annoy the '*ulamâ*', for it was tantamount to alienating the masses and purchasing their wrath. The instance of Shafi'i-Ash'ari scholar Abu Hâmid al-Isfara'ini whom the Caliph al-Qâdir allegedly intended to remove from the position of Qâdi of Baghdad. Isfarâ'ini wrote to the Caliph saying that he did not have the power to fire him; where as he (Isfarâ'ini) could write a note to Khurasan, and with two or three words have him (the Caliph) removed from the Caliphate.<sup>26</sup> Another instance is that of a Hanbali traditionalist Ibn al-Baqqâl who died in 440/1048. He made his statement in the Caliphal *diwân* in the presence of the *vizîr* Ibn Hâjib al N'umân (d.421/1030). "The Caliphate is like a tent, and the Hanbalis are its tent-ropes; if the tent-ropes fall, the tent is sure to follow."<sup>27</sup>

The two reputed '*ulamâ*' of the period the Sharîf Ibn J'afar and Ibn Ishâq al Shirâzi demanded that the *diwan* put a stop to prostitution in Baghdad, which was a concession held by Sultans's resident agent. But the Caliph did not pay much heed to the demand for fear of annoying the Sultan's agent and subsequently the Sultan. Some years later, in the flood of 466/1073, during which the Caliphal palace underwent extensive damage, Sharîf Abu J'afar called out to one of the Caliph's agents to deliver the following message to the Caliph, who incidentally was the Sharif's first cousin. "*You wrote and we wrote and our answer has come back before yours*" meaning that the Caliph was supposed to write to the Sultân about the matter of the houses of ill repute, and did not do so, or did so, but was not prosecuting the matter with sufficient energy; whereas Sharîf Abu J'afar's invocations to God regarding the matter, brought back the answer in the form of a flood which was disastrous to Caliphal palace. The Caliph finally put a stop the prostitution in Baghdad, with Nizâm al Mulk 's help in the reimbursement of the



resident agent.<sup>28</sup> Sharîf Abu J'afar and before him Ibn al Baqqâl, and scores of other Hanbalîs and other traditionalists, were capable of prodding the Caliph to act and carry out his primary constitutional functions, namely the defence and maintenance of religion.

Again the '*ulamâs*' distrust of associating with the rulers or of accepting official appointments must not be exaggerated. It does not mean that '*ulamâ*' considered the State, or its rulers, to be illegitimate or to be wary of the corrupting influences. Nor does the refusal to become a *qâdi*, for instance, necessarily signify an indictment of the ruling establishment. The position of a *qâdi* was being declined even during the period of Umar I and the famous tradition that "*one who is made a qâdi is slaughtered without a knife*" says more about the moral responsibility that the position of the judge entailed than it does about anything else.<sup>29</sup>

There was an official initiative to give some kind of a public recognition to certain '*ulamâ*'. To try to do so was not to make government officials out of these '*ulamâ*', it was an effort rather to make the contours of the religious milieu more determinate and perhaps more amenable to Caliphal influence, by defining who its chief representatives were to be.<sup>30</sup> Of the varied expressions of Caliphal patronage of the '*ulamâ*', that in terms of monetary assistance was perhaps the most tangible. Employment in government bureaus above all the judiciary was one of the forms of monetary patronage; whether motivated by purely economic experiences, by some taste for prestige and power in society or by the concern to promote the interests of the religious circles they hailed from, numerous individuals are likely to have always been available for the positions open to them.

There are instances in the sources whereby the Caliphs gave monetary benefits to those '*ulamâ*' even who were not a part of the state bureaucracy. In fact the number of such '*ulamâ*' (in the absence of any statistics whatsoever) was more than those who were having state employment. The former were benefited by the system of state pensions '*atâ*'. It appears that besides regular allowances to a rather large number of people in the holy cities, and probably only to the select elsewhere, sums of money have frequently been distributed to benefit a wide base of religious life. The institution of *atâ*' was more extensive under the Abbasids than under the Umayyads and its beneficiaries more numerous under the former.

The display of largesse was often most spectacular on the occasion of Caliphal visits to holy cities of the Hijaz. Eighty thousand inhabitants of Madina reportedly received al Mahdi's *ata* ' in the year 164/70-81.<sup>31</sup> Harûn al -Rashid is said to have distributed two thousand dirhams each among the leading *Qurra* of Kufa on one of his visits there. Al-Mahdi is reported to have sent three thousand dirhams to Shu'ba bin al-Hajjaj (d. 160/776) of Basra to distribute the money there, Al-Mamun on one occasion, sent fifty thousand dirhams to Muhammad bin Abdullah al-Ansari (d. 215/830), a Hanafî jurist of Basra, to have the amount distributed among the *fuqahâ* of the town.<sup>32</sup>

Among other scholars who were beneficiaries of the Caliphal patronage or of the leading functionaries of the State include at Layth b S'ad and Ibn Abi Dhi'b. Kufan Hadith scholars Abu Bakr bin Ayyâsh and Waki bin al Jarrah were both given sufficient money by Harun al-Rashid. The respected Murji'ite traditionist from Khurasan Ibrahim bin Tahman (d. 163/780) received a regular pension from the State, as the Basran traditionist Affân bin Muslim al-Saffâr (d. 220/835) also did. Ibn Ishaq, the famous biographer of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) had written the *sirah* under the patronage of al-Mansur while al-Waqidi (d.207/823) no less illustrious a scholar of the Prophet's life and career, was to serve as *Qâdi* for Harun al-Rashid and later for al-Mamun. Abu Yusuf, the Hanafî chief *Qâdi* wrote, as is well known, his *Kitâb al-Kharâj* for Harun al-Rashid and the well known *kitab al-Jawâmi* ' was written and compiled by him for the celebrated vizîr Yahya bin Khalid al Barmaki. Similarly Ibn Sallâm is said to have written his *Kitab Garib al-hadith* for the caliph al-Mamûn. Al-Muttawakil is also known for his patronage of some of the leading Sunni '*ulamâ*'. Shu'ba is remembered to have said, "all, except a few, of those from whom *hadith* is reported used to receive '*atâ*.'" <sup>33</sup>

Soon after its foundation, Baghdad became the hub of the religious and cultural life of the empire. Visits of the '*ulamâ*' from across the empire to the Caliphal residence shows the inclination of the State towards the religious elite. The '*ulamas*' visits to the Caliphal court may, in fact, be regarded as a more or less institutionalised medium of royal patronage. Among the numerous scholars who visited Baghdad, several are expressly stated to have been invited or summoned by the Caliphs, or they are reported to have visited the Caliphs while in

Baghdad. Many of these who came to the Caliphs were also appointed to judicial and administrative positions. Moreover, in the absence of any institutionalised mechanism for the recruitment of officials in the administration or judicial bureaucracies, the opinion of such visiting 'Ulamâ' may have mattered considerably and might even have been an informal mechanism. There are several instances which depict the Caliph insisting that if a given scholar would not himself serve in the administration then he must recommend someone who ought to, are to be interpreted in this light<sup>34</sup> The instance of 'Isa bin Musa, popularly known as Ganjar who was offered the qâdiship of Bukhara but declining to accept it he was ordered, at least, to recommend somebody else for that position, is a case in point.<sup>35</sup>

و دیگر عیسیٰ بن موسیٰ (ایتمی المعروف به غنچار بود که) رحمه الله اور اقتضاد اند قبول نکرد،  
سلطان فرمود: اگر قضا تنگی کسی را اختیار کن کہ به وی دھیم [آشھم] قبول نکرد

Given the Ibrahims revolt that had represented a massive threat to Abbâsid legitimacy, there seem to have been more concreted efforts in its wake to refurbish the latter; such efforts naturally involved cultivating better ties with the 'ulamâ' and there are indications that they were not without success. There is an instance of Harûn al-Rashid worrying about the subversive potential of an 'Âlim from the family of 'Umar I. When the 'Âlim is contacted by the Caliphal agents to unravel his actual intentions the 'Âlim affirms a firmly quietist stance. "By Allah, I would not like to meet Him even with just a cupping-glass full of the blood of a man from the Muslims" Harun, however, is said to have remained sufficiently apprehensive of the 'Âlim not to allow him to preach in Baghdad: "I could endure him in Hijâz", the Caliph is quoted as saying, "but he has made his way to the seat of my power and is seeking to subvert my followers."<sup>36</sup>

Though the Caliphs were keen to develop cordial relations with the 'ulamâ', they were by no means prepared to allow the latter to become independent foci of popular allegiance in society. If moreover, an 'Âlim also took the function of امر بالمعروف و نهی عن المنکر seriously, as many did, suspicions about him could multiply. Instances of conflict between the piety minded and ruling elite, of

their mutual suspicious and strained relations are an indisputable part of the evolution of religious trends and Caliphal policies in early Abbâsîd society.

'*Ulamâ*' also felt scared sometimes to speak against the existing power structures, for the punishments inflicted on several '*ulamâ*' included executions, mutilation, flogging, and imprisonment. But there was more to the '*ulamâ*'s subsequent quietism than the effects of intimidation. During the period under review the quietist political stance was gaining ground. A generation after Abu Yusuf, Ahmad bin Hanbal too was to endorse quietism, in more forceful terms and under more trying circumstances.<sup>37</sup>

In an age when literacy and means of communication were severely restricted, local preachers, holy men, and all those who took it upon themselves to "command that which is proper" could be not only very effective but, to many, also very threatening. This is reflected from the fact that al-A'ta bin 'Utba of Hims reportedly complained to a fellow Âlim, 'Ali bin Abi Talaha, in the wake of Abbasid massacres of their Umayyad rivals; "... we loved the *Âl* (family) of Muhammad (ﷺ) only because of the love for him [sc Muhammad], but if they oppose his *sirah* and act in contravention of his *sunna*, they are the most hateful of people to us."<sup>38</sup>

Thus '*ulamâ*' escaped the official eye and preferred to be quiet performing their duty of *أمر بالمعروف* and *نهي عن المنكر* "such pious kept to ones home and mosque, hold their tongue and avoid trouble".<sup>39</sup>

كان رجالاً صالحاً ملتزماً لبيته و مسجده، حافظاً للسانه، معتزلاً عن الفتن.

He, therefore, accepts no gifts from men of wealth, power and influence whose bidding he would be expecting to do in return.<sup>40</sup>

لا يأخذ من السلاطين والاعوان والاركان الدولة شيئاً

In spite of some clear references in the sources of '*Ulamâ*'s quietism during the days of *fitan* demonstrated a practical manifestation of *أمر بالمعروف* *نهي عن المنكر*. This point is perhaps best illustrated with reference to the revolt of the 'Âlid Muhammad bin Abdullah "*al-Nafs al-Zakiyya*"

and his brother Ibrâhim in 145/762, in Madina and Basra respectively, during the reign of al-Mansur. Among the large number of 'ulamâ' who joined it included Malik bin Anas and Abu Hanifa the eponyms of the Mâliki and Hanafî *madhhabs* Misar bin Kidâm, well known Madinese like Muhammad bin Ajlân and Ibn Abi Dhi'b, a former Qâdi of Madina Abd al-Aziz bin Muttalib al-Makhzumi, *mahadithun* like Abu Bakr bin Abi Sabra, Sh'iba bin al-Hajjâj, Hushaym bin Bashir, Abbad bin al-'Awwâm and Yazid bin Harun and many others. It was even claimed that "none of the *fuqahâ'* stayed back" from Ibrâhims revolt and that the *ashâb al-hadith* all rebelled together with him. Among other reasons for the 'ulamas' support of the revolt one could be the latters' doubts about the legitimacy of the Abbâsid rule and dissatisfaction with the conduct of the Caliph or his governors to a romantic sense that the pristine purity of early Islam might somehow be brought back. <sup>41</sup>

**References and Notes**

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4. Gilbert, *op.cit*, p. 107.
5. Tibawi, *op. cit.*, 226
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9. Ibn-'Asâkir, *Tahdhib al-Ta'rih al-Kabîr (Ta'rih Madinat) al-Dimashq*, pp. 398-401, Ibn Khalikân, *Waffayat al-A'yân*, (trans), II, p. 253.
10. Jacob Lassner, *The Topography of Baghdad in the Early Middle Ages*, Wayne State University Press, 1970, pp. 34-36.
11. *Ibid.*
12. Makdisi, *ibid.*
13. Zaman, M. Qasim, *Religion and Politics Under the Early Abbasids*, Brill (Leiden, New York), 1997, p. 84. For more details about Ibn al-Muqaffa', see : EI (2) and J.D. Latham, "Ibn al-Muqaffa' and Early Abbasid Prose" in *Cambridge History of Arabic Literature*, Cambridge, 1990, pp. 48-77; Ibn al-Muqaffa's suggestions are of considerable interest for articulating the possibilities that may have existed, or been considered, at the outset of the 'Abbasid rule. This also suggests the vision of a determinate religious establishment working as part of the administrative bureaucracy, somewhat in the ancient Persian tradition. Ibn al-Muqaffa's advice can also be interpreted as a plea to the Caliph to check the autonomy of the religious scholars and to make them dependent on himself. The suggestion concerning the Caliph's enactment of legal doctrine says as much with reference to the need for uniformity of legal practice in the empire, and the advice to co-opt the 'Ulama' into the service of the state can also be construed to have similar implications.
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15. Makdisi, *op.cit*, p. 159.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 166.
17. Al-Durri andMuttalibi (eds), *Akhbâr al-Dawla al-Abbâsiyya*, Beirut, 1971, pp. 282 ff.

18. Makdisi, *op. cit.*, p. 166.
19. Margoliouth, D.S. and Khuda Bakhsh, S., (tr.) *The Renaissance of Islam*, Delhi, 1979, p. 171.
20. Arnold, T.W. and Nicholson, R.A. (eds), *The Refused Dignity*, Cambridge, 1922, pp. 401-99; Also see: Goitein, S.D., "Attitudes Towards Government in Judaism and Islam", in *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions*, Leiden, 1966, pp. 196-213; Coulson, N.J., "Doctrine and Practice in Islamic Law," BSOAS, XVIII, 1956, pp. 211-26.
21. Zaman, *op. cit.*, p. 153.
22. On Sufyan, see, Ibn S'ad, *Tabaqat*, Beirut, 1985, VI, pp. 371-74.
23. *The Renaissance*, *op. cit.*, p. 174.
24. Crone, Patricca and Hinds, Martin, *God's Caliph*, Cambridge, 1986, pp. 86 ff.
25. For more details see Patricia Crone, *Pre-Industrial Societies*, Oxford, 1989, pp. 55 ff.
26. Subki, *Tabaqât al-Shafi'iyâ*, 6 Vols. (Cairo, Hussainiya Press, 1905-6, Vol. III, p.26.
27. Ibn Abi Y'ala, *Tabaqât al-Hanabila*, ed. Muhammad Hamid al-Fiqi, Cairo, 1988-89, Vol. II, p. 189.
28. Ibn al-Jawzi, *Al-Muntazam fi Tâ'rikh al-Mulûk wa'l Uman*, Hyderabad, 1357-58, Vol. III, pp. 272-73.
29. For this tradition see. Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, II, pp 230, 265; Ibn Maja, *Sunnan*, II, P. 774. Also see Waki', al-Qadi Muhammad bin Khalfa, *Akhbâru al-Quddât*, Cairo, 1947-50, Vol. I, pp 7-13.
30. Malik bin Anas, probably the most distinguished Madinese jurist of his day, may be taken as an example of such Caliphal recognition. He is said to have been one of the men whom al-Mansur sent to Muhammad al-Nafs al-Zakiyya's family to ask that the fugitive Muhammad and Ibrahim be handed over to the Caliph. Having been the Caliph's emissary did not apparently stop Mâlik from backing-through a *fatwa*, it is said— the revolt itself, though he did not otherwise take any part in it. He remained under a cloud for some time after, and may have suffered some official persecution as well" [Zaman, *op. cit.* p. 148].
31. Salih Ahmad al-'Ali, *Al-Hijâz fi Sadr al-Islam*, Beirut, 1990, pp 379-434.
32. Al-Khatib Baghdadi, *Tâ'rikh Baghdâd*, V, Cairo, 1931, p. 409.
33. *Ibid.*, XII, 408.
34. Al-Fasawi, Yaqub bin Sufyan *Kitab al-M'arifa Wa'l Tâ'rikh*, Baghdad, 1974-76, II, pp. 441 f.

35. Abu Bakr Muhammad bin J'afar al-Narshakhi, *Tārīkh i-Bukhāra* (Per), Tehran, 1363, A.H., p.5.
36. Bosworth, C.E. (tr.), *The History of al-Tabari*, Vol. XXX, Albany, 1989, pp. 317-23.
37. Ibn Abi Ya'la, *Tabaqat al-Hanbila*, Cairo, 1952, I, pp. 26 f. ; Z. Ahmad, "Some Aspects of the Political Theology of Ahmad bin Hanbal," *Islamic Studies*, XII, 1973, p.55.
38. Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, *Tahdib al-Tahdib*, Hyderabad, 1325,-27 A.H., VII, p. 341.
39. Ibn Rajab, *Dhayl 'Ala Tabaqat al-Hanabila*, ed. H. Laust and S. Dahhan, Damascus, 1951, Vol. I, p. 48.
40. Ibid.
41. For details of the revolt see al-Tabari, *Ta'rikh*, ed. M.J. de Goeje, Leiden, III, pp. 189-265; H. Kennedy, *The Early Abbasid Caliphate*, London, 1981, pp. 76 ff and 200 ff.