AL-SULTĀN AL-ḤATTĀB’S TREATISE ON THE I’GĀZ AL-QUR’ĀN

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The author of this treatise dealing with the i’gāz al-Qur’ān is a Yemeni dā’ī al-Sultan al-Ḥattāb b. Ḥasan (or Ḥusayn) b. Abī al-Hifāz al-Ḥaḡūrī al-Hamdānī (d. 533/1138). He came from a family of chiefs of al-Ḥaḡūr, a clan of Hamdān inhabiting the northwest district of Yemen, and lived during the reign of the Sulayḥid queen Arwā when the latter’s power and the Fāṭimid influence in Yemen were waning. He was also a poet, warrior, and a ruler in the district of al-Ḥaḡūr. After the death of the Fāṭimid caliph al-Āmir (d. 524/1130) when the Yemeni da’wa severed its relation with the Hāfīẓī da’wa in Egypt in the name of al-Āmir’s son Ṭayyib, al-Ḥaṭṭāb held the second highest rank, al-māḍīn, in the hierarchy of the Mustaʿfī-Ṭayyībī da’wa and played an important role in shaping the destiny of the Iṣmāʿīlī community in Yemen.

The risāla, as stated in the introduction, was compiled to support the views expressed in another risāla entitled Risālat al-burḥān al-anwar fī i’gāz sūrat al-kawṭar (Treatise concerning the most illuminating proof about the i’gāz of sūrat al-kawṭar, i.e., the 108th chapter of the Qur’ān entitled “Abundance”) and also to rectify the errors contained therein. It further stated that the latter treatise was composed to refute an anonymous tract on muḥḍurat al-Qur’ān ( rejoinder to the Qur’ān), hence imitation of it. Unfortunately, the name of the author of risālat al-burḥān is not mentioned, however it appears that he was a prominent, learned man and that he had forwarded a copy of his treatise to al-Ḥaṭṭāb, thereby seeking his


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favor. Contents of al-Ḥaṭṭāb’s risāla and elucidation of the key concepts contained therein have been dealt with elsewhere, hence the following pages are devoted to presenting its text.

The Attribution of the Treatise to al-Ḥaṭṭāb

As far as I was able to ascertain there is no internal reference to this treatise in other extant works of al-Ḥaṭṭāb, however an absence of such a reference could be explained by the fact that the above risāla deals with an exoteric aspect (zāhir) while the remaining works deal with esoteric aspects (bāṭīn). Moreover, it is possible that this treatise was compiled later than the rest of his works. The fact that the authorship of this treatise has never been disputed in Ismāʿīlī literature is a sufficient proof that it is an authentic work of al-Ḥaṭṭāb.

Its attribution to al-Ḥaṭṭāb is first mentioned by Muḥammad b. Ṭāhir al-Ḥārifī (d. 584/1188), who has reproduced the whole treatise in his classic chrestomathy entitled Maṣmūʿ al-tarbīya. Al-Ḥārifī, a student of ʿAli b. al-Ḥusayn b. Gaṭfar b. Ibrāhīm b. al-Walīd (d. 554/1159), who held the rank of maṣūlīn to the second ḍāyī, Ibrāhīm al-Ḥāmīdī (d. 557/1162), was not far removed from al-Ḥaṭṭāb’s times. Al-Ḥārifī was also closely associated with Ibrāhīm al-Ḥāmīdī and his son Ḥātim al-Ḥāmīdī (d. 596/1199) who he served as his maṣūlīn. It is reported by Ḥātim al-Ḥāmīdī that his father had studied with al-Ḥaṭṭāb and following the latter’s death Duʿayb b. Mūsā al-Wādiṭī, the first ḍāyī of the Mustaʿlī-Tayyibī daʿwa (d. 546/1151), appointed Ibrāhīm al-Ḥāmīdī in al-Ḥaṭṭāb’s place. Ibrāhīm al-Ḥāmīdī’s close association with al-Ḥaṭṭāb is also

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