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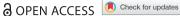Radboud University, Leiden, Netherlands

ABSTRACT

In this article, I study how Imāmī imams ʿAlī al-Hādī (d. 868 CE) and al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (d. 874 CE) attempted to police boundaries. While their excommunications have hitherto been treated through the lens of doctrinal discipline, I argue that we should not situate doctrine within practice. Religious leaders like the Imams used the politics of boundaries in order to meet challenges to their authority. By studying acts of excommunication we get a more precise sense of where the practical power of the imams lay: their ability to mobilise figures of localised authority in the far-flung communities that recognised the imamate. Such mediatory figures were needed to gain assent for imamic commands within their networks. Conversely, local actors were also constantly constructing their own sense of deviance autonomously. This could conflict with imamic commands, or could be confirmed by an imamic imprimatur. The construction of deviance was a multi-polar process.

Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi has recently argued that the central criteria for drawing boundaries in pre-occultation Imāmī Shīʿism were not questions of orthodoxy, but of orthopraxy. He suggests that "exaggeration" or "overstepping" in religion (*ghuluww*) primarily meant the abandonment of the ritual duties of Islam.[1] In this article, I shall look at the question of how Imāms attempted to police boundaries. However, I shall suggest that, by erecting a dichotomy of doctrine versus practice, scholars of early Islam risk missing a fundamental point: religious leaders like the Imāms aimed to draw boundaries largely in order to address political challenges to their own authority. Such challenges may be related to the violation of doctrine or praxis, but it is fundamentally the opposition to authority that makes them worthy of the attention of religious leaders. In this article, I shall focus on boundary creation and exclusion in the form of acts of excommunication in the Imāmī[2] Shīʿī community during what I am calling the

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[1]Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, "Les Imams et les *Ghulāt* : Nouvelles réflexions sur les relations entre imamisme 'modéré' et shiʿisme 'extrémiste'", *Shii Studies Review*, 4/1–2 (2020): 5–38.
[2]I use the term "Imāmī" in a slightly broader sense than Ansari, who defines Imāmī Shīʿism as "a tendency which has its roots in the Shīʿism known as 'Jaʿfarite'; that is to say, that of the adepts of the imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq". He calls this "a Shīʿism which is non-Zaydi … and non-Wāqifī." This problematises his own definition by emphasising the fluidity of

"late imāmate", that is, during the tenure of the tenth canonical imām, ʿAlī al-Hādī (d. 868 CE) and the eleventh imām, al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (d. 874 CE), after whose death the imāmate collapsed, and the doctrines of Twelver Shīʿism froze succession in the imāmate in anticipation of a final, awaited, messianic twelfth imām. My consideration of boundary construction in the Shīʿī community has been enriched both explicitly and implicitly by comparison with other religious groups, especially minority groups under the Islamic empire, to be found in the articles on excommunication in this special issue of *Al-Masāq*.[3]

Excommunication is a widespread mechanism that exists in various forms in religious groups. It tends to be both punitive and symbolic: it is a way to mark and formalise boundaries that may otherwise be invisible or ambiguous. Excommunication can be briefly defined as the exclusion from the ritual and social life of a religious community.[4] The central term used to describe acts of excommunication in Imāmī Shīʿism is *barāʾa*, a term with Qurʾānic sanction,[5] which literally means declaring oneself to be free from, innocent of and separated from someone or something.[6] Here, I shall focus on declarations of *barāʾa* against individuals, with its corollary practice of cursing (*laʿn*), though it should be emphasised that acts of communal *barāʾa* were also important mechanisms for reaffirming sectarian splits with former co-religionists.

Maria Dakake has studied the dynamics of *walāya* and *barāʾa* in the earliest history of Shīʿism, without, however devoting much attention to how *barāʾa* was deployed after the foundational moment of Imāmī Shīʿism around the time of Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq.[7] Etan Kohlberg's 1986 article "*Barāʾa* in Shīʿī Doctrine"[8] is a seminal contribution to the study of *barāʾa* in Imāmī Shīʿism but, as its title suggests, it is primarily focused on *barāʾa* as theology, more or less assuming that the boundaries that excommunication was meant to police were pre-existing and essentially real. Likewise, Kohlberg does little to investigate the political dynamics of excommunications pronounced by imāms versus those pronounced by non-imāms. In this article, by contrast, I take as my central assumption the idea that deviance was produced by intentional acts taken by community leaders (imāms and others) as well as by more anonymous social processes.[9] In doing so, I am

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communal categories, noting that it is only "towards the middle of the Minor Occultation (from 260 to 329 [AH]), that is to say probably before 290 [AH], that we could situate the turning point where the Imāmiyya were clearly distinguished from other non-Zaydi tendencies." Hassan Ansari, *L'imamat et l'Occultation selon l'imamisme: Etude bibliographique et histoire des textes* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), p. xix. In this article, I shall frame the Imāmī community as based not on purely doctrinal questions, but rather on the politico-doctrinal act of acknowledgement of allegiance (*walāya*) to a particular living imām of a specific lineage: the (usually father-to-son) succession of men directly descended from Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq.

[3]See my introduction to this special issue for a fuller articulation of an explicitly comparative framework for understanding boundary construction and social structure in different religious communities.

[4]Latin, ex-communatio, expulsion from the community, but more specifically the "communion", the holy rituals of the Eucharist that form the central expression of participation in the community. For more detailed discussion of definitions, see the introduction to this journal issue.

[5]See Q 9: 113–114, where *barāʾa* is used for Abraham's cutting ties with his impious father, and is related to the Medinan believers' separation from the polytheists, and their resulting lack of need to seek forgiveness.

[6]Hence the use of *barāʾa* to refer to a receipt or quittance, a document that declares you free of the obligation to pay a debt or a tax burden.

[7]See Maria Massi Dakake, *The Charismatic Community: Shīʿite Identity in Early Islam* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), esp. 63–69.

[8]Etan Kohlberg, "*Barāʾa* in Shīʿī doctrine", *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 7 (1986): 139–175.

[9]Lamont and Molnár focus attention on the importance of the interplay between symbolic boundaries and the concrete networks of social interaction in creating communal boundaries: "At the causal level, symbolic boundaries can be thought of as a necessary but insufficient condition for the existence social boundaries". Michèle Lamont and Virág Molnár, "The study of boundaries in the social sciences", *Annual Review of Sociology*, 28 (2002): 167–195.

bringing to the study of early Shīʿism a framework that has long roots in sociology, expressed in Howard Becker's statement:

> Social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance, and by applying those rules to particular people and labeling them as outsiders. From this point of view, deviance is not a quality of the act the person commits, but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an "offender." The deviant is one to whom that label has successfully been applied; deviant behavior is behavior that people so label.[10]

Doctrinal and political orthodoxies were contested within the community and could be renegotiated across generations, as is clear in the shifting meanings of *ghuluww* "exaggeration" over the generations.[11] Acts of excommunication in the Imāmī community do not merely punish transgressions like heresy, they also *produce* deviance by marking it out as clearly visible and distinct from non-deviant forms of thought and behaviour.[12]

In investigating cases of excommunication during the late Imāmī imāmate, I shall propose three main arguments. First, while most scholars of early Shīʿism approach deviance as an issue of doctrine, in the cases studied here the political and financial aspects are crucial. Second, I show that there is a strong connection between excommunication and a resultant physical violence, which it sanctions. Third, I show how excommunication lays bare the fundamental structures of the mediation of authority in the community. By studying the excommunications pronounced by the imāms against individuals, and the way in which the community responded to these acts, we can understand more clearly how the community was defined, managed and policed by multiple, sometimes competing, stakeholders. In what follows, I shall proceed case-by-case in order to clearly understand the shared characteristics and the divergences between individual cases.

Studying Excommunication

There are several related concepts and acts that relate to and bleed into excommunication in different ways in different historical circumstances, including apostasy, unbelief and heresy,[13] oaths, curses, magical imprecations, execution, ostracism,

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[10]The classic statement of the production of orthodoxy and deviance in sociology was made by Howard Becker: *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance* (New York: The Free Press, 1963), p. 9.

[11]Wadād Al-Qāḍī, "The development of the term *Ghulāt* in Muslim literature with special reference to the Kaysāniyya", in *Akten des VII. Kongresses für Arabistik und Islamwissenschaft*, ed. Albert Dietrich (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976), pp. 295–319. For a recent and highly suggestive study on how to navigate the boundaries between *ghuluww* "extremism" and "moderation", see Amir-Moezzi, "Les Imams et les *Ghulāt*".

[12]Thus, while Kohlberg places the followers of a son of Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, ʿAbd Allāh al-Afṭaḥ, among those who "abandoned the Imāmiyya", instead we should see that the act of excommunicating groups such as the Faṭḥiyya was a way of recreating the Imāmiyya to their exclusion.

[13]Scholarship on the construction of religious deviance in Islam has tended to focus around the term *takfīr*: the declaration that someone is an unbeliever (*kāfir*), and their beliefs are *kufr*. For a summary of literature on *kufr*, see the introduction and footnotes to *Accusations of Unbelief in Islam: A Diachronic Perspective on* Takfīr, ed. Camilla Adang, Hassan Ansari, Maribel Fierro, and Sabine Schmidtke (Leiden: Brill, 2015), pp. 1–17. While *takfīr* is primarily categorical in its connotations, a declaration of someone's wrong beliefs and practices,[13] *barāʾa*, which emphasises separation and disassociation, emphasises the social aspect of the act. *Barāʾa* can itself be a punishment that follows a judgement of *takfīr*: just as a recognition of *kufr* can lead to execution as punishment, it can also lead to the social punishment of *barāʾa*. Below we shall see cases in which the pronouncement of *barāʾa* is associated with *kufr*.

banishment, and self-imposed exile. In some contexts, excommunication has been formally defined and legislated: most notably in various Christian churches that have used institutions of excommunication to discipline their lay members and clergy.[14] In Judaism and Christianity, over many generations, increasingly formalised understandings of excommunication resulted in precise terms to designate clear divisions in what kinds of acts or beliefs could be punished by excommunication. Specific concepts and corresponding formulae were developed for excommunicating on the grounds of specific kinds of transgression.[15] In the case of Imāmī Shīʿism, there simply was less time to develop formal procedures in the century between the foundation of the Imāmī imāmate from around the time of Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq[16] and the cases studied here from the mid to late ninth century CE.

For excommunication to be an effective measure, it must have a chance of being implemented with real societal effects: this is one way of distinguishing an act of excommunication from a mere curse, which might employ excommunicatory language without any hope of practical implementation.[17] Further, in order for an excommunication to function, a community must have sufficiently distinct boundaries to make exclusion meaningful, and must have a leader with sufficient authority to be able to pronounce such an exclusion. Sunnī communities have historically not tended to develop institutions of excommunication in this sense. Before the emergence of Sunnism, the early caliphs probably did have sufficient authority to decree an execution, but execution tended to be a more immediate and effective tool to punish deviance, making redundant the purely social and soteriological punishment of excommunication. Some executions carried out by early caliphs were, however, accompanied by excommunicatory language and ritual.[18] Below the level of ruler, Sunnīs tended to lack clear, unitary central authorities in religious hierarchy able to pronounce excommunications, while the association with state authorities brought the punishment of major religious transgressions to

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[14]See Philip Wood's contribution to this volume.

[15]See, for example, the institutions designed to deal with known transgressors versus excommunicating generalised or anonymous deviants, through the ḥerem setam as implemented by the Jews of the Cairo Geniza, in S.D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, volumes I–VI (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967–1993), II: 340–341. For a specific example from Maimonides's letters in translation, see Joel Kraemer, "Six unpublished Maimonides letters from the Cairo Genizah", *Maimonidean Studies*, 2: 61–94.

[16]The Twelver Shīʿa recognise a line of imāms going back to ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 661). However, the Imāmī imāmate, with its formalised succession from father to son, appears to have been established around the time of Muḥammad al-Bāqir (d. ca. 735 CE) or his son Jaʿfar, as can be seen from the fact that, before then, succession to religious authority does not seem to have been limited to a single lineage. See Abū Muḥammad al-Hasan b. Mūsā al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq al-Shīʿa*, edited by Helmut Ritter (Istanbul: Maṭbaʿat al-Dawlah li-Jamʿiyat al-Mustashriqīn al-Almānīyah, 1931). For competing conceptions of imāmate, see Patricia Crone, *God's Rule: Government and Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), pp. 70–124.

[17]See for example the excommunicatory statements in oaths suggesting that an oath-breaker will be separated from the community, and his property and marriages declared null and void, which very often employ awe-inspiring language, but are not expected to be enforceable. See Jürgen Paul, "An oath of fealty for Tekesh b. Il Arslan Khwārazmshāh", in *Explorations in the Medieval and Modern History of Central Asia: Societies, Cultures, Texts*, ed. Dilorom Alimova and Florian Schwarz (Tashkent: Akademnash, 2019), pp. 275–287. Of course, not all excommunications were successful, but the intent and the institutional and societal framework must be there.

[18]In this special issue, Hassan Bouali and Georg Leube explore the extent to which symbolically charged executions and historiographical acts of *damnatio memoriae* can be seen to function as excommunicatory acts. See also Andrew Marsham, "Attitudes to the use of fire in executions in Late Antiquity and early Islam: The burning of heretics and rebels in late Umayyad Iraq", in *Violence in Islamic Thought from the Qurʾan to the Mongols*, ed. Robert Gleave and István Kristó-Nagy (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), pp. 106–127.

become the prerogative of state authorities.[19] By contrast, Khārijī, Ibāḍī[20] and Imāmī Shīʿi Islam did have institutions that we can usefully name "excommunication".[21]

Historical Background

The cases studied here are drawn from the imāmates of the final two manifest imāms to occupy the institutional office of the imāmate: the tenth canonical imām, ʿAlī l-Hādī (d. 254/868), and the eleventh canonical imām al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (d. 260/874). This was one of several periods in the history of the imāmate that appears to have generated a large number of excommunications, including the later imāmate of Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq and the aftermath, and the accession of ʿAlī l-Riḍā and the splitting off of the *wāqifa*.[22] ʿAlī l-Hādī acceded to the imāmate as a child, and was thus initially reliant upon a coterie of the Shīʿī elite, while also being subject to ʿAbbāsid surveillance.[23] Nonetheless, he was imām for a long period of time; around 34 years from his father's death in 220/835 until his own death, and his practical authority grew during his tenure. The cases studied here appear to come largely from the late part of his imāmate, as well as from the tenure of his son al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī, which lasted a turbulent six years before the imāmate collapsed. In 874, al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī died with no apparent heir and, despite the efforts of a brother, Jaʿfar, to claim the imāmate, no alternative imām was ultimately recognised who might carry on the imāmic line. Instead, a group of imāmic agents attempted to maintain continuity in community institutions, ultimately claiming to be representatives of a hidden imām with whom they alone could communicate. After several decades, communications were thought to be cut off entirely.[24] The advent of this new era of occultation (*ghayba*), therefore, represented a dramatic shift in the structures of authority and the doctrinal centre of gravity of the Imāmī, later Twelver, community. The acts of excommunication studied here immediately precede this era of

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[19]For examples of the relationship between state and religious scholars (usually employed by the state as *qāḍīs*) in implementing the death penalty for religious transgressions, see especially the series of cases detailed in Amalia Levanoni, "*Takfīr* in Egypt and Syria during the Mamlūk period", in *Accusations of Unbelief in Islam: A Diachronic Perspective on* Takfīr, ed. Camilla Adang, Hassan Ansari, Maribel Fierro, and Sabine Schmidtke (Leiden: Brill, 2016), pp. 155–188.

[20]See Ersilia Francesca, "Self-defining through faith: The *walāya* and *barāʾa* dynamics among the early Ibāḍis", in *Accusations of Unbelief in Islam: A Diachronic Perspective on* Takfīr, ed. Camilla Adang, Hassan Ansari, Maribel Fierro, and Sabine Schmidtke (Leiden: Brill, 2016), pp. 29–41.

[21]Griffel confuses the issue rather when he notes that, "Unlike Roman Catholicism, Islam has no central institution or legal body authorized to engage in excommunication and also no generally accepted legal procedures whereby jurists or courts can reach such a verdict". Frank Griffel, "Excommunication", in *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought*, ed. Gerhard Bowering, Gerhard et al. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012). Griffel fails to compare like with like. Roman Catholicism is a denomination within Christianity that has its own set of defined institutions, but of course, Catholic institutions have no authority over Calvinists or Mennonites, any more than the excommunications pronounced by Shīʿī Imāms were effective for Sunnīs. Likewise, Ibāḍī communities have had institutions of excommunications in various periods, see Francesca "Self-defining through faith".

[22]It would be difficult to accurately quantify these cases, which often do not have specific cases, and whose veracity is often contested by different factions within the Imāmiyya. See in particular the controversy over whether the imāms really cursed Zurāra and Yūnus, discussed in Kohlberg, "*Barāʾa*", pp. 163.

[23]Shona Wardrop, "The lives of the Imams, Muḥammad al-Jawād and ʿAlī al-Hādī and the development of the Shiʿite organisation" (PhD Diss., University of Edinburgh, 1988), pp. 7–9; Madelung, "ʿAlī al-Hādī", in *EIr*.

[24]The announcement of this final "greater occultation" was not as clearly defined as later Twelver accounts tend to suggest. Nawbakhtī had already announced the end of direct communications with the hidden imām in 290/903, before the ultimate canonisation of this position sometime after 329/940. For details, see Edmund Hayes, *Agents of the Hidden Imam: Forging Twelver Shīʿism (850–950)*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022) pp. 85–87; 212; Hussein Ali Abdulsater, "Dynamics of absence: Twelver Shiʿism during the minor occultation", *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft*, 161/2 (2011): 305–334, p. 327.

occultation. Given that the occultation was characterised by a collapse in imāmic authority, the earlier challenges to authority, and the imāms' responses to them through acts of excommunication are important attestations to how authority was wielded in the community.

The major sources that provide us with material on Imāmī excommunication are the bio-bibliographical works, particularly al-Kashshī's *Rijāl*.[25] Al-Kashshī died at some point towards the mid-tenth century CE, and thus was operating within living memory of many of the acts of excommunication under study, minimising his ability to provide a picture sanitised by generations of reassessment. He thus gives an exhilaratingly messy and contested account of the followers of the imāms. By contrast, al-Ṭūsī's *Kitāb al-Ghayba*[26] displays far more interest in editorialising and providing a harmonised and simplified vision of the past, which underscores the by-then crystallised doctrine of the occultation, which was yet to take full shape at the time of al-Kashshī.[27] Al-Kashshī's reports are not an objective witness to, but rather a part of the process of the creation of, the Imāmī community. Nonetheless, these reports do not just rehearse hagiographical stereotypes but provide valuable evidence for real historical processes. While the status of individual members of the community is clearly contested in these reports, it is likely that, in their broad features, they present a picture of how excommunication was applied by the imāms and their representatives. In order to retain the complexity of the conflicts studied, I shall avoid relying on sources that merely provide retrospective statements of orthodoxy ("he was an exaggerator (*ghālī*)") with which *rijāl* sources are replete. Instead, I shall focus on fuller accounts that provide details of the practical mechanisms through which authority was concretely contested, even though they may well promote certain agendas. That is to say, I am less interested in the ultimate judgement of a man as having been loyal or disobedient to the imāms than I am in the processes of negotiation within the community.

Excommunications during the Imāmate of ʿAlī al-Hādī

Al-Sharīʿī

The first case we shall study is positioned as a matter of both heterodox doctrine and also a political challenge. Al-Tūsī, in his treatise on the occultation, *Kitāb al-Ghayba*, presents a chapter on "the censured ones who claimed Gatehood (*bābiyya*)", a potted history of infamy and betrayal of the imāms in the late imāmate and early occultation, and he begins with Abū Muḥammad al-Sharīʿī. As with many of the cases in this period, the excommunication is promulgated by an imāmic letter. Al-Ṭūsī's informant[28] states:

> [Al-Sharīʿī] was the first person who claimed an office which God had not appointed him to, and for which he was not fit, and lied against God and against his proofs (*ḥujaj*) (AS) [i.e. the

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[25]Abū ʿAmr Muḥammad b. ʿUmar al-Kashshī, *Ikhtiyār maʿrifat al-rijāl*, ed. Mahdī al-Rijāʾī (Qumm: Muʾassasat Āl al-Bayt, 1404 H [1983–8]).

[26]Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī, Shaykh al-Ṭāʾifa, *Kitāb al-Ghayba* (Najaf: Maktabat al-Ādāb al-Sharqiyya, 1423 AH [2002]).

[27]In contrast to al-Ṭūsī, for example, al-Kashshī provides next to no information about the four envoys (*safīr* pl. *sufarāʾ*) who played an important part in al-Ṭūsī's vision of occultation-era authority structures in the Twelver community.

[28]The ḥadīth transmitter, Abū Muḥammad Hārūn b. Mūsā l-Talla l-Ukbarī, d. 385 AH. For details on this transmitter, see Ansari, *L'imamat*, 76–79.

imāms] and connected to them what does not pertain to them and what they are free from (*barrāʾ*). So the *shīʿa* cursed him and disassociated (*tabarraʾa*) from him, and the rescript (*tawqīʿ*) of the imām was issued, cursing him and disassociating (*barāʾa*) from him.[29]

Al-Ṭūsī's idea that al-Sharīʿī was the first such claimant seems odd, given that such claims can be traced back to esoterists such as Abū al-Khaṭṭāb from the generation of imām Ṣādiq onward.[30] However, al-Ṭūsī's statement clearly reflects an occultation-era sense that resistance to the agents of the hidden imām had not begun only upon the death of the eleventh imām, but rather was preceded by a rise in challenges to legitimate authority during the imāmate of imām al-Hādī. The "office which God had not appointed him to" implies that he positioned himself as the imāms' intermediary, and perhaps claimed to be an imāmic hypostasis of divinity himself. Al-Ṭūsī thus packages al-Sharīʿī's transgression with that of those who opposed the occultation, thus tarring new opposition with the brush of older heresies.

Al-Ṭūsī's informant then goes on to say that al-Sharīʿī put forward doctrines of "unbelief and heresy (*kufr wa-ilḥād*)", emphasising doctrinal heterodoxy as the reason for the excommunication. The accusation that al-Sharīʿī lied against God and the imāms places him as a stereotypical esoterist "exaggerator" (*ghālī*) who divinised the imāms. The doctrinal aspect of the excommunication, then, is clearly emphasised, but is wrapped up with a political dimension. We are told that it is "the *shīʿa*", presumably the local community, who first cursed excommunicated (*tabarraʾa*) al-Sharīʿī, and only thereafter was this turned into a formal ruling by the issuance of a rescript (*tawqīʿ*) by the imām. We must thus suppose that the imām responded to complaints from the community and supported the plaintiffs over any defence that may have been put forward by al-Sharīʿī or his supporters.

Ibn Bābā and al-Fihrī

Ibn Bābā and al-Fihrī were excommunicated through a letter purportedly written by imām al-Hādī. In spite of a paucity of contextual information, a few key elements emerge from this case. The issue of violence as the result of excommunication is particularly noteworthy. Al-Kashshī quotes imām al-Hādī's letter of excommunication:

> I declare my disassociation to God from al-Fihrī and al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. Bābā al-Qummī, and I disassociate from them both. And I warn you (sg.) and all of my followers, and I curse them, may God's curse be upon them. They feed off the people, in our name,[31] they are sowers of discord and harmers, may God harm them and throw them back into discord (*fitna*).

> Ibn Bābā claims that I have sent him as a prophet and that he is a Gateway (*bāb*) to Him [God], may God's curse be upon him, may Satan sneer at him (*sakhara minhu*) and lead him astray, and may God's curse be upon whomever accepted that [doctrine] from him. Oh Muḥammad! If you are able to smash his head with a rock, then do it, for he has harmed me, may God harm him in this world and the next![32]

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[29]Al-Ṭūsī, *Ghayba*, 397.
[30]See Kohlberg, "*Barāʾa*", for the statements made against some of these earlier heterodox figures.
[31]This is an interpretation. The literal translation would be "eaters who eat the people by us".
[32]Muḥammad b. ʿUmar al-Kashshī, *Ikhtiyār maʿrifat al-rijāl*, ed. Mahdī al-Rijāʾī, volumes I–II (Qumm: Muʾassasat Āl al-Bayt, 1404 H [1983–4]), vol. 8, p. 805.

This excommunication is, again, intrinsically political and financial: it is not pronounced in response to an individual's false doctrines alone, but because the actions of the accused have ramifications for the wider community. Ibn Bābā is singled out for his claim to be a prophet sent by the imām, thereby placing the imām in the position of God, a sender of prophets, and his claim to be a Gateway (*bāb*), a charismatic representative of imāmic or divine guidance. An unauthorised claim to mediate for God represents a political threat as it undermines the imām's authority to arrange his own hierarchies of authority and mediation within the community. It is this fact that provoked a severe statement of excommunication. The communal dimension of the alleged heresies is reflected in the contagious nature of the pronounced excommunication: this excommunication is not only related to these two heresiarchs, but is also extended to all who follow their doctrines.

Ibn Bābā and al-Fihrī also posed a financial challenge, for they appear to have been collecting imāmic revenues under false pretences. By calling them *musta'kilayn* literally "those who feed off" the people, the imām evokes the greed of the monks and rabbis mentioned as taking the wealth of their flock in Qur'ān 9:34. Collecting and distributing *khums* and *zakāt* is the prerogative of the imāms,[33] and so unauthorised collection of revenues is a violation of imāmic authority.

As a result of this excommunication, the imām indicates that killing these excommunicants is legitimate, indeed recommended. This letter does not contain explicit mention of the source of legitimacy for this order. However, in the following case, we see the mobilisation of a legal formula that shedding of the deviant's blood is licit, which also makes sense of this case.

Fāris b. Ḥātim al-Qazwīnī

Fāris b. Ḥātim b. Māhūya al-Qazwīnī is the best documented excommunicant of the late imāmate. Like Ibn Bābā and al-Fihrī, in spite of the evocation of the language of heresy, Fāris's excommunication was clearly related to the political threat he posed to imāmic authority, and it ended with an act of dramatic violence. Again, we see a financial aspect. Before his excommunication, Fāris was resident in Samarra,[34] but acted as an agent of the tenth imām, al-Hādī, for a community in the mountainous region of the Jibāl in Iran, where his hometown of Qazwīn is located. As agent, he was responsible for collecting and sending the canonical alms tax to the imām. At some point he stopped this, and the imām tried to install other agents. Taken together, the reports regarding Fāris suggest that it took three separate agents to displace Fāris's influence from the three areas of Hamadān, Dīnawar and Qazwīn. However, the reports surrounding this case suggest that the imām's alternative appointees failed to gain full support from the community in the Jibāl so that the imām was forced to send increasingly severe letters cursing and excommunicating Faris.

Fāris is also remembered for backing non-canonised imāms, first Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad, who predeceased his father, imām al-Hādī, then another son of al-Hādī,

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[33]See Edmund Hayes, "Alms and the man: Finance and resistance in the legal statements of the Shiʿi Imams", *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies*, 17 (2017): 280–298. http://www.hf.uio.no/ikos/forskning/publikasjoner/tidsskrifter/jais/volume/vol17/v17_06k_hayes_280-298.pdf

[34]Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad b. ʿAlī al-Najāshī, *Rijāl* (or *Asmāʾ muṣannifī al-shīʿa*), ed. Mūsā al-Shubayrī al-Zanjānī (Qumm: Muʾassasat al-Nashr al-Islāmī: 1407 H [1986 CE]), p. 310.

Jaʿfar "the Liar". It seems plausible that Fāris's excommunication may be related to this struggle for the imāmate.[35]

In 248/862-3, a letter was sent to imām al-Hādī by a father and son with the *nisba* Hamadānī, indicating their probable residence in Hamadān in the Jibāl.[36] They asked for clarification as to which of two rival agents they should deal with: Fāris, or ʿAlī b. Jaʿfar:[37]

> May I be your sacrifice.[38] Things have reached us that were being reported about Fāris and his dispute with ʿAlī b. Jaʿfar which led to them excommunicating (*yubarrī*) each other. So if you see fit[39] to grace me with what you know regarding those two, and which one is appointed to manage my interactions[40] with you, so that I do not bypass him and go to someone else while I had that request, then please do so, God willing.[41]

The act of excommunication does not appear to have originated with the imām. He is called in to arbitrate between two agents who have excommunicated each other, creating communal confusion. In another version of the same letter, it is complained that "people were confused between the two [agents] and they had started to excommunicate each other".[42] In response to the letter, the imām writes, scolding his followers:

> Things like this should not be asked about or doubted. God has magnified the status of ʿAlī b. Jaʿfar.[43] God the exalted, has forbidden that likeness should be drawn to Him. So seek out ʿAlī b. Jaʿfar with your needs, and avoid Fāris and prevent his involvement in any of your affairs or your needs. Do that, you and whoever obeys you from among the people of your region. For it has reached me what he has distorted [in preaching] to the people, so do not turn to him, God willing."[44]

This letter does not express a formal statement of excommunication, but it does order the exclusion of Fāris from the network of imāmic agents. It acknowledges the favoured status of the rival agent and provides a warning against Fāris, who now appears to be branded as a renegade. There is an allusion to heresy in the suggestion that Fāris was drawing likenesses between God and creation, probably by claiming divinity for himself or the imāms. But the meat of the letter deals with authority structures and community administration. In addition to confirming the appointment of Fāris's rival as imāmic agent, the recipients of the letter are also given an indication that they should act as transmission points in the network for mediating imāmic influence out into the community. The imām does not name the Hamadānīs as agents, but they appear

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[35]Certainly Fāris's connection to Jaʿfar gained significance in retrospect, and Jaʿfar's bid for the imāmate was called into question by some precisely because he was said to have approved of the heresiarch Fāris, whom his father had cursed. See Hossein Modarressi, *Crisis and Consolidation in the Formative Period of Shiʿite Islam* (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1993), pp. 153, 164 Muḥammad b. ʿAlī Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī, *Kamāl al-dīn wa-tamām al-niʿma*, ed. ʿAlī Akbar al-Ghaffārī (Tehran: Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmiyya, 1395 AH [1975 CE]), pp. 56–57.

[36]There is some confusion as to the identity of the letter writer. One report says it was written by "Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Hamadānī with his son Jaʿfar" (al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, II:809) while another mentions the next generation, Mūsā b. Jaʿfar b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad (al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, II:807). It is likely that we should read the latter report as "*qāla Mūsā b. Jaʿfar min Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad*", instead of "*qāla Mūsā b. Jaʿfar bin Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad*".

[37]Also known by the nickname "the Sick One (*al-ʿalīl*)".

[38]This is a standard polite letter opening found frequently in letters on papyri, and not, as is sometimes implied, an address that is uniquely used in addressing the Imāms.

[39]Note that "*in raʾayta an tamannu*" is also a formula that is standard in petitions and informal requests, as attested to by letters on papyri. Communication with Petra Sijpestejin.

[40]Literally "needs" (*hawāʾij*).

[41]Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, II:807

[42]Ibid., 809–810.

[43]The other version has "God has magnified the dignity (*ḥurma*) of The Sick One (*al-ʿalīl*)". Ibid.

[44]Ibid., 807.

clearly as community leaders of some standing and authority, for the imām gives instructions to be followed by both the recipients of the letter and "whoever obeys you". By gaining the obedience of these men, then, we understand that the imām secures the obedience of a broader section of the local community.[45]

Further letters contain an intensified rhetoric against Fāris beyond this initial command to avoid him as an agent. Concrete details are sparse. In one letter, the imām instructs, "do not join with [Fāris], and if he comes to you then treat him with scorn".[46] This implies an extension of the social punishment: a more extensive social ostracism than merely avoiding him as an agent for imāmic business. In response to another letter seeking clarification, the imām writes in terms that appear to confirm a more complete sense of excommunication:

> Declare Fāris a liar and expose him (hatakūhū), may God exile him and humiliate him (akhzāhu), for he is a liar in what he claims and describes. Therefore, preserve yourselves from plunging [into ignorance] (al-khawḍ) and talking about those things, and guard yourselves against consulting with him and do not give him a path to seek evil, may God be sufficient provision against him and whoever is like him. [47]

Although this letter does not use the key words of excommunication (barāʾa) and cursing (laʿn), the language is excommunicatory in its associations: "liar" (kādhib) is a keyword often used for heretical figures,[48] and the phrase "may God distance him" is synonymous with cursing and excommunication.[49]

The correspondence surrounding Fāris indicates the great difficulty of uprooting an agent once he was firmly embedded in the community as an imāmic representative. The imām did not rely upon just one agent to enforce his actions against Fāris. Instead, multiple agents were involved. In one report, a key agent in excommunicating Fāris is ʿUthmān b. Saʿīd al-ʿAmrī.[50] The report suggests a complicated multilateral process of alliance formation. Al-ʿAmrī orders one man to find another man to make contact with a third man who is based on Fāris's home turf of Qazwīn, in order to establish contact between the imām and the local in Qazwīn and thereby to reroute communications away from Fāris as agent. Al-ʿAmrī transmits the cursing of Fāris and orders the payment of imāmic revenues via the new line of contact established.[51] Al-ʿAmrī's efforts

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[45]This structure of representation is visible in various letters ascribed to the imāms in this period. See especially Edmund Hayes, "Epistolary imamate: Circular letters in the administration of the Shiʿi community", in *The Ties That Bind: Mechanisms and Structures of Social Dependency in the Early Islamic Empire*, ed. Petra Sijpesteijn and Edmund Hayes, forthcoming.

[46]Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, II:806.

[47]Ibid.

[48]Jaʿfar al-Kadhdhāb; Musaylima, Abū al-Khaṭṭāb. See Hayes, "The imām who might have been: Jaʿfar 'the Liar', his followers, and the negotiation between political realism and esotericist idealism", in *Reason, Revelation, and Esotericism: The Construction of Scholarly Authority in Shīʿi Islam*, ed. Edmund Hayes and Rodrigo Adem (Leiden: Brill, 2021), pp. 73–106, esp. 73.

[49]*Lisān al-ʿArab* defines laʿn (cursing) as "The exiling (al-ibʿād) and ejection (al-ṭard) from grace; or it is said: the ejection and exile from God". Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, [n.d.]) vol. 13, p. 387.

[50]ʿUthmān b. Saʿīd was one of the four men ultimately canonised as envoys (safīr) of the hidden imām. See Hayes, *Agents*, especially chs 3–4. Mysteriously, only al-Kashshī gives his name as Ḥafṣ b. ʿAmr al-ʿAmrī, but it is clearly the same man. Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, II: 813. It is important to note that al-ʿAmrī comes to be strongly associated with the legitimist cause of al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī and his hidden son in opposition to the claimant to imāmate associated with Fāris: Jaʿfar "the Liar". Thus we cannot discount the possibility of retrospective massaging of the facts to support the gathering orthodoxy in support of al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī and the doctrine of the occultation of the hidden imām. Even so, the details in this case of the careful recruiting of support at different nodal points of the community appear plausible.

[51]Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, II: 809.

show how much care and work had to go into recreating a functioning network of authority once an agent's actions had disrupted existing networks.

In another set of reports, we learn of yet another agent: Ayyūb b. Nūḥ depicted as a replacement for Fāris. In these reports, the financial dimension is highlighted. A certain ʿAlī b. ʿUbayd Allāh al-Dīnawarī,[52] writes to the imām, saying that Fāris had been sent various objects of value intended for the imām, but the imām never received these items, and so he decommissioned Fāris as his agent and cursed him. This was, we are told "the reason for [Fāris's] betrayal [of the imām] (*sabab khiyāna-tihi*)".[53] This implies that Fāris's misappropriation of money had not initially been an act of open rebellion, but that, once his position as agent was threatened, Fāris took radical steps to ensure his position of authority. We can deduce that, after the imām fired Fāris as his agent, Fāris started collecting imāmic revenues in his own name.

Ayyūb b. Nūḥ transmits the text of a more explicit excommunication sent to him from the imām which again highlights the factor of money:

The imām sent a rescript (*tawqīʿ*) about Fāris in his handwriting for delivery:

May God curse him, and redouble the punishment upon him. For how great is what he has dared against God (AJ) and against us in lying about us and misappropriating the wealth (*amwāl*)[54] of our followers (*mawālī*). May [God] be sufficient in his punishment and retribution.[55]

This statement of cursing here has excommunicatory force. The letter provides valuable instructions for us to understand how imāmic excommunications were disseminated:

… Therefore broadcast the acts of Fāris amongst our Jabalī companions and others amongst our followers (*mawālī*). However, do not overstep and pass that [information] to opponents other than them, so as not to put Fāris's faction on their guard (May God curse him). But avoid him and guard against him, (May God be suitable in providing for him). And we ask God for safety in religion and in the world, and to please us in it. Peace.

Again we see the mechanisms for spreading news and gaining assent. Remarkably, the imām advises his correspondent not to spread information about the excommunication spread beyond trusted members of their social network. In general, these imāmic letters are highly targeted, in stark contrast to the intentionally public excommunications issued by Christian and Jewish authorities such as those dealt with by Philip Wood and Moshe Yagur in this volume. In the late imāmate, the position of the imām appears to have been highly fragile, such that he needed to carefully build support before issuing an open excommunication.

A later source, Shaykh al-Ṭāʾifa al-Ṭūsī's *Kitāb al-Ghayba*, reports a further letter from the imām, against Fāris, dated to the year Rabīʿ al-Awwal 250/864,[56] which gives us a sense

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[52]He is also referred to in our reports as "the man from the Jibāl region" (*al-jabalī*). Dīnawar is less than 400 km from Qazwīn, and less than 150 km from Hamadān.

[53]Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, II:808–809.

[54]This word is typically used for the alms-taxes sent to the imām.

[55]Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, II: 808–809.

[56]The text is evocative but tantalisingly elliptical: with regard to the case of Fāris, the imām asserts "that the inner meaning (*bāṭin*) is with me, according to what I have shown you regarding the one you asked about – that is, Fāris, may God curse him". This suggests that Fāris had been claiming to be a legitimate interpreter of the esoteric dimension of events, challenging the Imām's own prerogative in this regard. Al-Ṭūsī, *Ghayba*, 252–253.

of the way in which such excommunications were certified by imāmic signature: "I have written in my handwriting on the night of Tuesday on the ninth night of Rabīʿ al-Awwal 250, and I rely upon God and I praise him greatly".[57] Among extant physical documents from this period, this formula is reserved for legal documents, suggesting that this letter had a formal, legal function. The key word in this latest excommunication letter is not *barāʾa*, but *laʿn* (cursing), and we are given some hints as to its consequences: isolation, cutting off, banning from office. Likewise, we are given a hint as to how these sanctions are to be disseminated and enforced: the imām relies upon his representative, the recipient of this letter,[58] who is instructed to prevent the imām's other followers from fraternising with Fāris. In this case, the final letter appears to carry no restrictions on the widespread dissemination of the letter. Is this because the imām finally felt confident enough to announce his opposition to Fāris openly?

Fāris's story had a dramatic conclusion which, like the cases of Ibn Bābā and al-Fihrī, indicates a connection between imāmic excommunication and violence. Eventually, at the imām's instruction, Faris was assassinated as he left the mosque, presumably in Samarra, where he lived. As the story is told, the imām calls for an assassin, guaranteeing paradise for him, issuing a decree to this effect:

> This Fāris, God curse him, acts as a sower of discord/temptation (*fattān*) with regard to me, and preaches innovation (*bidʿa*). His blood may be shed with impunity (*dammuhu hadar*) by any who kills him, and whoever it is who relieves me of him and kills him, I guarantee paradise for him, by God.[59]

The transmitter[60] says that he heard the end of the story directly from the assassin, Junayd:

> [Junayd said:] Abū l-Ḥasan [imām al-Hādī] sent a message to me ordering me to kill Fāris b. Ḥātim, God curse him, and I said "No, until I hear it from him, telling me verbally to do that",

> [Junayd] said: so [The imām] sent to me and called for me, and I went to him. He said, "I order you to kill Fāris b. Ḥātim". And he gave me dirhams that he had with him, saying, "Buy a weapon with this and show it to me".

> I bought a sword and I showed it to [the imām] and he said, "Return this and get something else". [Junayd] continued: So I returned it and I took a cleaver (*ṣāṭūr*) instead and I showed it to him and he said "Yes to this".

> Then I came to Fāris just as he had left the mosque between the sunset prayer and the night prayer, and I struck him on the head and flung him down, and did it a second time and he fell down dead. Then an outcry arose and I threw away the cleaver that was in my possession. Then people crowded round, and I was arrested, since they did not find anyone there but me. But they did not see a weapon on me nor a knife. They searched the alleys and the houses but they did not find anything, nor did they find a trace of the cleaver after that.

The narrative implies that the assassin was miraculously protected from harm, as the incriminating weapon disappears. Though this miraculous element draws it near the category of hagiography, the threat of violence resembles the cases of Ibn Bābā, al-Fihrī and

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[57]Ibid.
[58]A certain man from Qazwīn, named ʿAlī b. ʿAmr al-Qazwīnī.
[59]Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, II:807–808.
[60]Saʿd [b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Qummī].

Fāris b. Ḥātim, suggesting that a similar logic was applied to excommunicants in these cases, encapsulated in the phrase applied to Fāris, that "his blood may be shed with impunity" (*dammuhu hadar*).[61] The imām had no access to the coercive power of the state, and so the narrative resembles extra-judicial assassination, although it is reasoned as a fully legitimate execution. For this reason, Junayd had to be protected by miracles, rather than by legal institutions. This is not to say that there were no institutional supports for Junayd within the imāmic community: following the assassination, we are told that he received a stipend until his death.[62]

Excommunications during the Imāmate of al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī

Ibn Nuṣayr

The next imām, al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī, inherited the challenges within the community that had existed in the time of his father, imām al-Hādī. After Fāris's execution, his sister now led his followers and continued their opposition to the new imām. The followers of Fāris and his sister then formed the core of support for imām al-ʿAskarī's brother, Jaʿfar "the Liar", in his bid for imāmate thereafter.[63] Other cases of "deviance" show a continuation between the imāmates of al-Hādī and al-ʿAskarī, and into the occultation era. Thus, Muḥammad b. Nuṣayr, the eponym of the Nuṣayrī sect, was cursed during the Imāmate of al-Hādī, but explicitly excommunicated only after al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī's death by Abū Jaʿfar al-ʿAmrī, the agent of the hidden imām. The reason for the excommunication is not given, but Ibn Nuṣayr was claimed as a *bāb* by his followers, which suggests that he may have represented a threat to those who claimed to mediate for the hidden imām.[64]

ʿUrwa al-Dihqān

Under al-ʿAskarī, too, we see a continuation of financial issues as a key component of excommunications. The Baghdadi agent ʿUrwa b. Yaḥyā, known as "the *dihqān*" (Persian landowner), began his activities under imām al-Hādī but was cursed by al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī.[65] Al-Kashshī's informant tells us that "he used to lie about" Imāms al-Hādī and al-ʿAskarī, which suggests doctrinal heterodoxy, but also:

> He stole [the imām's] revenues (*amwāl*) for himself instead of [the imām] and he lied about him until Abū Muḥammad [al-ʿAskarī] [AS] cursed him, and ordered his *shīʿa* to curse him, and to pray for his downfall (*al-duʿā ʿalayhi*), because of his stealing of the revenues, may God curse him.[66]

A further report gives more details:

> Abū Muḥammad (AS) cursed him and that was because Abū Muḥammad [AS] had a treasury (*khazāna*) and Abū ʿAlī b. Rāshid used to manage it (may God be please with him), and

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[61]See also the related phrase "his blood is licit [to be shed]" (*dammuhu ḥalāl*), a phrase used with reference to the law of war, and to infidels who do not submit to Muslim rule or Muslims who leave the community through apostasy.
[62]Modarressi, *Crisis and Consolidation*, 72 n. 95.
[63]See Hayes, "Imam who might have been".
[64]Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, II: 805; Hayes, *Agents*, 157–158.
[65]*Dihqān*s were the traditional gentry of rural Iraq who had struck bargains with the Muslim conquerors on their arrival in Iraq, avoiding being displaced as elites, and often having a role in tax collecting and community administration. There are a number of men named "*al-dihqān*", among the followers of the Imāms, a phenomenon that merits further investigation.
[66]Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, II: 843.

then it was transferred to ʿUrwa and he stole from it for himself, and then burned the rest of what was in it,[67] so Abū Muḥammad [AS] became angry at that and cursed him and disassociated from him (*bariʾa minhu*) and prayed for his downfall (*daʿā ʿalayhi*) and that gave him not a day's or a night's respite before God took him to Hell.

And [the imām] said [AS]:

I had a session [of prayer] to my Lord this night of (such and such),[68] and then the torch of dawn was lit, and that fire [the sun] was not extinguished until God killed his foe (may God curse him).

Although violence is not carried out in this case, the imām's prayer to God is seen as causing the death of the excommunicant. another suggestion that, once cursed and excommunicated, the imāms' enemies were expected to meet their deaths, whether by direct assassination or by other means.

ʿAli b. Hasaka and al-Qāsim al-Yaqṭīnī – Qumm, Escalation, Violence

Doctrinal heterodoxy is emphasised in the reports on the cases of ʿAli b. Hasaka and al-Qāsim al-Yaqṭīnī, both active in Qumm. As in previous cases, the imām's order against these men was preceded by a letter to him requesting clarification about:

A group of people who engage in theological speculation (*yatakallamūn*)[69] and read Ḥadīth which they ascribe to you [the imām], in which are things that disgust the hearts,[70] but which we are unable to reject since they reported them from your forefathers (AS) and which we are also unable to accept due to what they contain.[71]

Amir-Moezzi, has linked this phrase "things that disgust the hearts" as relating in particular to abandoning the ritual duties of Islam and, certainly in this case, the accusation of heresy is based on the allegorical interpretation of such things as *ṣalāt* prayer, *zakāt* alms and the Ḥajj pilgrimage, which are interpreted as signifying particular heroes of esoterist Shīʿī history.[72] As a result they were assumed not to be performing the ritual duties themselves. In response to the petitioner's request for clarification, the imām writes simply, "This is not our faith, so avoid it" (*laysa hādhā dīnanā, fa-iʿtazalhu*).[73] This response includes neither cursing nor disassociation, and so it appears that, at this point, the men were not excommunicated. The imām's response provides a solution to an epistemological-doctrinal problem, rather than a political problem.

The report in which the imām does explicitly excommunicate Ibn Ḥasaka and al-Yaqṭīnī implies a political dimension more strongly, for the petitioner to the imām repeats the doctrinal outrages of ʿAlī b. Ḥasaka that we see in other reports, and then closes his letter with the statement that "the people incline towards him greatly".[74] Ibn

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[67]The burning was presumably designed to cover his tracks, but it raises the question of what this storehouse contained. Presumably not gold or silver, but perhaps costly textiles or some other flammable items.

[68]I.e. a date was mentioned in the original letter which was not transmitted in this version.

[69]The doctrines ascribed to these people are not those of the archetypal *mutakallimūn*, the Muʿtazila. Here, then, this could mean merely "they talk / chatter".

[70]See discussion of this term in Amir-Moezzi, "Les Imams et les *Ghulāt*", 15–16.

[71]Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, II: 802–803.

[72]For this style of what Amir-Moezzi calls "personalizing Quranic exegesis", see Amir-Moezzi, "Les Imams et les *Ghulāt*", 20 n. 74.

[73]Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, II: 803.

[74]Ibid., 804.

Ḥasaka is seen not only as an isolated eccentric with dangerous ideas, but rather as someone who is gaining a following.

The imām replies in a strongly worded letter, presenting an orthodox view of the imāms as heirs to the Prophetic mission of disseminating and enforcing the true ritual observances that God demands of humankind:

> Ibn Ḥasaka lied, may God's curse be upon him, for I do not recognise his position[75] amongst my followers (mawālī) may God curse him. And by God, God did not send Muḥammad and the prophets before him except with the [primordial Abrahamic religion of] ḥanīfiyya and prayer and zakāt alms and fasting and Ḥajj and allegiance [to the imāms] (walāya) … I declare my disassociation through God from whoever articulates [their doctrine], and I flee (antafī) to God from that doctrine. So shun them, may God curse them and force them into a narrow path. And if you found one of them alone, then smash his head with a rock.[76]

Again we see here the idea that an act of cursing and excommunication is to be followed with violent reprisal. The repetition of killing with a rock that we met in the case of Ibn Bābā and al-Fihrī could be a case of migrating tropes, but it suggests more strongly that this was a recognised punishment for heretics. It has clear resonances with the rabbinic punishment of stoning, which was prescribed for a raft of 18 sins from preaching idolatry to magic,[77] though stoning was usually reserved in Islam for adultery or fornication (zināʾ).

Aḥmad b. Hilāl al-ʿAbartāʾī

Regarding Aḥmad b. Hilāl al-ʿAbartāʾī, we are told that the imām wrote to his agents (quwwam) in Iraq as follows: "Beware of the imposter Sufi (al-ṣūfī al-mutasannī)!"[78] Aḥmad b. Hilāl al-ʿAbartāʾī,[79] was, like ʿUrwa, also referred to as al-dihqān, indicating that he had roots in the old Persian landed gentry.[80] Ibn Hilāl's supporters in the local community in Iraq were loath to accept the imām's warning:

> Aḥmad b. Hilāl had made the Ḥajj fifty-four times, of which 20 were made on his own two feet … And the Ḥadīth transmitters (ruwāt) from among our companions (aṣḥāb) in Iraq used to meet him and write [Ḥadīth] from him and denied what existed in condemnation of him (ankarū mā warada fī madhammatihi).[81]

Clearly, Ibn Hilāl was both a scholar and an ascetic, a spiritual athlete whose arduous acts of piety resulted in a potent reserve of personal charisma. Part of Aḥmad b. Hilāl's charisma at this time may have come from his great age: al-Najāshī notes that he was born in 180/796–7 and died in 267/880–1,[82] and so would have been in his mid to late 70s when

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[75]Literally, "what he has (mā la-hu)". Alternatively we might read "mālahu" (his property). In either case the meaning is more or less the same, but its implications are somewhat obscure.

[76]Al-Kashshī, Rijāl, II: 804.

[77]See "Capital Punishment", in Jewish Encyclopedia, https://jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/14061-stoning, accessed 27 July 2022.

[78]Al-Kashshī, Rijāl, 2: 816.

[79]We should not confuse him with Aḥmad b. Hilāl al-Karkhī as Jassim Hussain does, The Occultation of the Twelfth Imam: a Historical Background (London: Muhammadi Trust; San Antonio: Zahra Trust, 1982), pp. 99–102. For a correction of this mistake, see Modarressi, Crisis and Consolation, 67 n. 63.

[80]A study of aristocratic Persian identity among followers of the imāms remains to be carried out.

[81]Al-Kashshī, Rijāl, II: 816–817.

[82]Al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 83.

al-ʿAskarī cursed him. The Iraqi community were not happy with the imām's condemnation, wishing neither to reject the imām's words nor to give up their ascetic hero. As a result, the imām was forced to write again:

> We have ordered to be sent to you what I have learnt about the imposter Ibn Hilāl (may God not have mercy upon him). He continued (may God not forgive his sins, nor overlook his error) to intervene in our affair without permission or approval from us, to issue independent judgements (*yastabidd bi-raʾyihi*) and to avoid debts to us,[83] not performing any of our orders except that which he fancies and wills (may God will the fire of hell for him for that). We endured him patiently until God destroyed his life through our prayer (*daʿwa*). A group of our followers (*mawālī*) informed us about him during his lifetime[84] (may God not have mercy upon him) and we ordered them to report that one of our higher ranked followers (*al-khāṣṣ min mawālīnā*). And we flee to God (*nubarrīʾ*) from Ibn Hilāl (may God have no mercy upon him) and from anyone who does not disassociate from him.

This is a clear statement of *barāʾa* excommunication, but it is notable that it is proclaimed posthumously. The phrase "we endured him patiently until God destroyed his life" suggests that there was no such proclamation during Ibn Hilāl's life. The nature of the crimes committed is, as so often, not explicit. Doctrinal heterodoxy is not mentioned among them by the imām.[85] The condemnation of Ibn Hilāl making his own independent judgements says nothing about the types of doctrines espoused, but rather refers to the way that he was exercising his own independent authority, which therefore presented a politico-epistemic challenge to imāmic authority.

A political and financial challenge appears prominently in this letter. Given the pattern suggested by the other cases of excommunication studied here, it seems reasonable to suppose that the "debts" mentioned in the imām's letter refer to the fact that Ibn Hilāl, too, was refusing to send canonical Islamic dues to the imām. While we have mention of execution or assassination, violent intent is present, as the imām claims responsibility for his death, through his prayers to God.

The letter provides instructions for dissemination and enforcement, which prove to have been difficult tasks in this case. Agents are to carry the news both to the immediate region and beyond.[86] The excommunication is to be contagious,[87] extending from Ibn Hilāl to anyone who does not disassociate from him. However, we are told, "After that, a group was determined to deny what [the imām] issued regarding [Ibn Hilāl] and they reverted to him". Ibn Hilāl's followers are clearly unable to believe that this man whom they perceived as holy could have later turned to evil. There followed another letter from the imām, affirming God's ability to determine as he sees fit:

> And you knew all about the affair of [Aḥmad b. Hilāl] the *dihqān* (may God's curse be upon him), and his service and the length of his status as a companion [i.e. a follower of the imām], but then God replaced his faith with unbelief when he did what he did. And may

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[83]It is possible that this refers to non-financial obligations.

[84]Literally, "in his days".

[85]Al-Najāshī mentions nothing about doctrinal heterodoxy. Al-Ṭūsī, on the other hand, says that Aḥmad b. Hilāl was an exaggerator (*ghālī*), but also indicates that he was a valued transmitter who transmitted a majority of the primary collections of imāmic Ḥadīth (*uṣūl*). Al-Ṭūsī, *Fihrist*, ed. Muḥammad Ṣādiq Āl Baḥr al-ʿUlūm (Qumm: Manshūrāt al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, no date), p. 36. Al-Ṭūsī's judgement as to his doctrinal heterodoxy may be in large part due to his knowledge of the cursing of the imām.

[86]Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, II: 816–817.

[87]For the idea of the contagion of excommunication and its problems, see Elisabeth Vodola, *Excommunication in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), pp. 16–17.

> God bring him swiftly to his revenge, nor tarry. Praise be to God who has no partner, God's prayer upon Muḥammad and his family. Greetings.[88]

We have little framework for understanding what he did "when he did what he did", but the political, financial and epistemic challenge to the imām in this case is clear. Crucially, Aḥmad b. Hilāl has built up esteem, both as a companion of the imām, and for his own piety, and this proves very difficult for the imām to disturb despite repeated attempts

Analysis

There is a tendency in the scholarship on early Shīʿism to assume that all conflict in the community was related to a binary choice between doctrinal "exaggeration" and "moderation". The cases studied indicate that community management involved more diverse calculations than purely establishing orthodoxy.[89] Imāmic excommunications certainly responded to doctrinal threats (especially heterodox beliefs and heterodox hermeneutics), but they also responded political threats (i.e. posing a challenge to imāmic authority or imāmic hierarchies) and financial challenges (especially the refusal to send canonical Islamic dues to the imām). The cases studied see shifting combinations of these elements, and even doctrinal concerns are prosecuted only when there is a distinct political threat. Epistemic challenges and financial misappropriations are both visible in their dimension of political threats to imāmic authority in these cases.

Agents such as Fāris or a spiritual athletes like Aḥmad b. Hilāl had direct relations with their communities, and a built-up stock of symbolic capital, which gave them authority that was to a great extent autonomous, especially when combined with *ghulāt* ideas about Gatehood which allowed for Gates themselves to embody divine guidance alongside the imām. In these circumstances, it was difficult for the imām to reach the followers of these men to persuade them to heed his warnings. In the case of Ibn Hilāl, the imām had to wait for God to heed his prayers and end his life. Likewise, the imām's stream of letters cursing Fāris did not persuade the hard core of his followers, who remained loyal even after his death.

Techniques and Technologies

The difficulty in promulgating excommunications was intrinsically tied to the need to rely on delegates appointed to embody imāmic authority in local communities, who thereby became themselves a source of authority and therefore potential threats. At moments of conflict, it was not simple for local communities to tell who and what really issued from the imām. This is why certain protocols of communication developed. Conflictual cases show us how the imāms and their representatives built political support, person by person, family by family and community by community, with letters as a key technology. In the cases of Fāris b. Ḥātim and Aḥmad b. Hilāl al-ʿAbartāʾī, the imām is forced to send numerous strategically worded, carefully targeted missives to ensure conformity with his will. The authority of the letter was confirmed by its bearer, and vice

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[88]Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, II: 816–817.
[89]In the cases of ʿUrwa al-Dihqān and Aḥmad b. Hilāl, we see no direct mention of doctrinal heterodoxy in the narrative reports, for all that they may have been lumped together as heretics in the retrospective memory of the Twelver biographers.

versa, hence the significance of letters of appointment and confirmation for agents. As we see most distinctly in the case of Fāris b. Ḥātim, several messengers and agents were employed to open and establish several channels of communication simultaneously, in case one channel failed.[90] Clearly the imām and his chancery were in frequent communication with multiple members of each local community, each of whom might represent a sub-set of the community including family, clan, tribe and other associates,[91] and might be used to reach out further in case of need. One might be tempted to suggest that the contingent, messenger-dependent process of establishing an excommunication was due to the imām's weakness and the weakness of communal institutions. Certainly the imām has nothing like the *barīd* postal service of the government. However, in more established Christian or Jewish communities, we see a similar pattern in which the ability to make an excommunication effective is contingent upon the political dynamics surrounding it, including the support one has from one's theoretical subordinates as well as the assent of the wider community.[92] In communities where the coercive power of the state could not be directly called upon, a leader had to engage in tactical manoeuvring to establish communal assent for an act of excommunication.

Given the difficulties of establishing (imāmic) authority, the material techniques and technologies of transmitting authoritative information bore a significant burden. In the cases surveyed, the promulgation of excommunications was primarily achieved through letters carried by authoritative representatives. The authority of the imām was thus represented by both the messenger and the physical letter itself. The imām's letters rely on the familiar formula "it has been written" + date, which typically comes at the end of contemporary letters on papyri. However, the imām's letters add an emphasis, drawing attention to the visual authentication of the letter through recognition of the imām's handwriting: "I have written in my handwriting" (*katabtu bi-khaṭṭī*).[93] In contemporary letters that have survived as physical documents, this mention of handwriting is restricted to legal-administrative contexts in which we see witnesses described as writing "in his handwriting" (*wa-kataba bi-khaṭṭihi*).[94] This suggests that the imām was drawing upon contemporary legal-administrative practice to give binding force to his excommunicatory decrees. In addition, this attestation to the imām's own handwriting appears to have had a charismatic force provided by a physical object directly produced by the imām, and which could visually and materially attest to the imām's intervention in local communities.[95]

[90]See also the comparable cases of agent-appointment in Hayes, "Epistolary imamate".

[91]A common idea expressed in correspondence with the imāms is that of "your people" expressed in euphemistic phrases such as "those behind your back", that is the people in the community represented by this pivotal figure. See Hayes, "Epistolary imamate".

[92]See for example, Yagur's and Wood's contribution to this issue, and Marina Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community: The Jews of the Fatimid Caliphate* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014).

[93]For the "it was written" formula without mention of handwriting, see, for example, P.SijpesteijnArmyEconomics (https://www.apd.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/apd/show2.jsp?papname=SijpesteijnArmy&line=12, accessed 19 April 2022); P.Giss-s.Arab. 6 (https://www.apd.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Grohmann_Giss_60&line=7, accessed 19 April 2022).

[94]For examples of "it was written", including mention of "his handwriting" or "my handwriting", see, for example, P.Cair.-Arab. 48, a bill of exchange (*ḥawāla*) for the outstanding portion of a bride's nuptial gift that has fallen due, (https://www.apd.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Grohmann_APEL_48&line=30, accessed 19 April 2022); or P.Steuerquittungen 33 (https://www.apd.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Diem_Steuerquittungen_330&line=5, accessed 19April 2022). Thanks to Fokolien Kootstra for drawing my attention to the use of this phrase in witness statements.

[95]Following the death of the eleventh imām, handwriting was a key locus for asserting claims to represent the imāmate. See references to "handwriting" Hayes, *Agents,* especially pp. 82-3, 129-130.

Language and Style

The language employed in the decrees of excommunication is diverse. It appears that there is no fixed form in which to pronounce an excommunication. In the letters, epistolary style is an important factor determining the nature of pronouncements of excommunications. We see overlapping vocabularies, which establish a family resemblance between cases. In addition to the mention of *barāʾa* (literally, "quittance") and its derivatives (*tabarraʾa, barī*), excommunications are pronounced by declaring a curse (*laʿn*) upon the excommunicant. While *barāʾa* tends to be pronounced by the human declarer of an excommunication, the literal agent of the act of cursing tends to be God himself. If the imām can be relied upon to faithfully represent divine commands, as Imāmī dogma suggests, then his calling down a divine curse lends an irrevocable quality to an act of disassociation. Thus, though we do see curses without explicit statements of excommunicatory disassociation (*barāʾa*), we do not see excommunications without curses. Likewise, cursing sometimes seems to be a preliminary to an act of excommunication, or the affirmation of an excommunication that has taken place in the past.

Consequences of Excommunication

The elliptical nature of these Imāmī excommunication reports means that it is often difficult to gather precise details as to what practical consequences were implied by excommunication. There are some clues, however. In the case of Fāris b. Ḥātim, the imām orders, "do not gather with him";[96] "be earnest and severe in cursing and exposing [Fāris] and cutting ties with him (*qatʿ asbābihi*) and diverting our followers (*aṣḥāb*) from him and negating his appointment to office (*amr*)". This implies a severance of all social contact, and suggests that the agent bearing the information, and those who heard, it were expected to ensure that this ban was observed. In other cases beyond those studied above, we encounter other clues, as in the case of the general excommunication of the *wāqifa/ māmṭūra* group who believed in the occultation of the Imām Mūsā Kāẓim. In this case, al-Hādi writes to his agent telling him to curse them during the *qunūt* as part of the daily ritual prayers.[97] Al-ʿAskarī also issues an order to disassociate from this group, specifying the ban as meaning that one must not visit their sick, go to their funerals or pray over their dead.[98] In the occultation period, we are given yet more details by Ibn Bābawayh in his creed, which specifies that one should not give excommunicants alms or aid them in any other way: one may not perform pilgrimage or its rites on behalf of them, pray behind them or accept their testimony.[99] Thus, a general picture emerges of social and ritual separation, which would mean that an excommunicant must either find a new communal framework to exist in or live as a pariah. Kohlberg notes that Ibn Bābawayh limits the actual enforcement of disassociation to those who have free choice and will not suffer violent reaction to their actions, but he allows that, in a situation in which *taqiyya* prevails, the strictures of excommunication might have to be suspended.[100] This mainly obtains in cases in which Shīʿīs are living in a region

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[96]Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, II: 806.
[97]Kohlberg, "*Barāʾa*", 163.
[98]Ibid.
[99]Ibid., 153.
[100]Ibid., 153–154.

ruled by non- Shīʿīs who might react badly at having such communal punishments enforced. Here, the cases in Qumm in which stoning is recommended, are clearly free from such concerns. However, in the case of Fāris, his execution was carried out in Samarra, a town full of non-Shīʿī people, and the narrative is suffused with the fear of potential discovery.

Other than cursing during ritual prayer, we see no explicit mention of ceremonies for excommunication. Our sources suggest no equivalent to the "bell, book and candle" of the Catholic Church, or the reading out of excommunications at public festivals that S.D. Goitein mentions with regard to the Jews.[101] However, it is worth pointing out that the inclusion of litanies of the cursed is a common feature of Shīʿī liturgical texts such as prayers and *ziyāra* texts.[102] While most of these list the famous anti-heroes of the past, it is possible that the inclusion of more contemporary figures in such litanies might have been a way to ritually affirm the boundaries established by figures in authority, in a way comparable to the diptychs of the Jacobite Church that Wood discusses in this volume, which perpetuated established boundaries and separated excommunicants and their followers permanently.

Repentance or Irrevocability?

Although the Islamic conception of apostasy contains frameworks for encouraging repentance and rehabilitation (*istitāba*),[103] the cases above provide no explicit mention of frameworks for repentance and reintegration comparable to thosecommonly found, for example, in cases of Christian excommunication.[104] Shīʿī cursing and *barāʾa*, rather than being a tool for disciplining and reintegrating erring members of the flock, appears to have had an irrevocable quality more comparable to the major excommunication or anathema of Christian churches, which expels an excommunicant permanently from the community of the faithful.[105] However, the Shīʿī cases surveyed do hint that the imām may have already given opportunities for erring followers to return to the right path. In the case of Aḥmad b. Hilāl, the imposter Sufi, the imām says in his letter that he had already "endured patiently", perhaps indicating that there was a long window of time in which the imām attempted to reintegrate his disobedient follower into his flock. Kohlberg's survey also indicates that earlier imāms were generally tolerant of doctrinal missteps, and only used excommunication as a last resort, partially due to the fragility and small size of the Imāmī community.[106] It is likely that our sources downplay the offers of rehabilitation to men who were ultimately cursed and excommunicated, for the Shīʿī community was deeply discomforted by signs that imāms (and by association, God) might change their minds.[107] Once God's curse was pronounced upon an

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[101]Goitein notes that excommunications were pronounced at times of pilgrimage to a shrine at Dammūh, when many people from different locations were present to hear it. Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, V: 22.
[102]See Kohlberg, "*Barāʾa*", 152.
[103]Frank Griffel, "Toleration and exclusion: Al-Shāfiʿī and al-Ghazālī on the treatment of apostates", *Bulletin of School of Oriental and African Studies*, 64 (2001): 339–354.
[104]Vodola, *Excommunication*, 7–12.
[105]Ibid., 14–16.
[106]They contrast themselves with Khārijites who are too quick to anathematise opponents. Kohlberg, "*Barāʾa*", 167–168.
[107]See, for example, the tortured debates surrounding the question of *badāʾ*, in relation to the idea that God changed his mind about who should succeed to the imāmate when the designated successor died prematurely. Ignaz Goldziher and Arthur Tritton, "Badāʾ", in *EI2*.

excommunicant, it confirmed the doom of sinners whose extreme actions had led them beyond hope of rehabilitation.[108]

Violence

The cases studied here imply an integral relationship between excommunication and physical violence. While the dramatic execution of Fāris b. Ḥātim might seem to be an exception, on closer inspection, we see that violence against the excommunicant is implicit or explicit in nearly all of the cases surveyed. Even in the case of ʿUrwa al-Dihqān, in which the excommunicant apparently died of natural causes, the imām claims to have destroyed him through prayer.

While it seems sometimes casual and informal, this violence is both legally legitimated and suffused with symbolism. While the Imāmī imāms did not have the coercive apparatus of a state at their disposal, they could nonetheless make an authoritative pronouncement that an excommunicant's "blood is to be shed with impunity", and recommend that their followers should "smash his head with a rock". This latter phrase appears somewhat standard, appearing both in the case of Ibn Bābā and al-Fihrī, and in that of ʿAlī b. Ḥasaka and al-Yaqṭīnī, and it may recall biblical punishments of stoning, though I have found no evidence for this. Fāris b. Ḥātim was slaughtered with a meat cleaver, rather than a sword as originally proposed, introducing a clearer symbolic dimension. The cleaver indicates his bestial, inhuman nature as one who has turned away from divine guidance. This symbolism recalls Umayyad penal practice, in which the execution of heretics could draw upon a pregnant symbolic vocabulary of slaughter by throat-slitting on "the feast of sacrifice" after Ramadan, ʿĪd al-Aḍḥā.[109] Many Imāmī Ḥadīth traditions describe the difference in essence between the faithful who are truly human, and the bestial unbelievers.[110]

The legal legitimation of these acts is visible in the phrase that the excommunicant's "blood can be shed with impunity" (*dammuhu hadar*). This phrase is associated with the law of apostasy, the law of war and laws regarding the defence of one's self, family and property against a violent assailant. While the case of the apostate is most relevant to that of the excommunicant, all of these cases share in the idea that one's actions have threatened the individual or the community, and that the normal protections accorded to a member of society who poses no threat are therefore suspended, and a violent response is warranted. Excommunication removes its targets from the community of grace, leaving them without any legitimate community to protect him, and thereby theoretically excluded from Muslim society more completely even than the non-Muslim protected peoples (*ahl al-dhimma*). In such cases, like the outlaws of pre-Islamic Arabia, an excommunicant's life was forfeit. The caliphs and their governors could draw upon the apparatus of the state with its legitimating vocabularies of spectacular public violence in their production and demarcation of deviance. But the imāms had to rely upon more informal and personal mechanisms to demarcate perceived heresy. The imām had

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[108]In the case of Ibn Nuṣayr, for example, we are told that, after being cursed, he attempted to gain an audience with the envoy (*safīr*) to the hidden twelfth imām, Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. ʿUthmān, "to win over his heart or apologise to him", but was refused entrance by the envoy and removed by his chamberlain. Al-Ṭusī, *Ghayba*, 247.
[109]Andrew Marsham, "Attitudes to the use of fire", 123–124.
[110]See Etan Kohlberg, "Imam and community in the pre-*ghayba* period", in *Authority and Political Culture in Shiʿism*, ed. Said Arjomand (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), pp. 25–53.

appointed agents, but no clearly designated specialists in violence like the police, army and executioners appointed by the state. However, the acts of violence prescribed by the imāms were inscribed with legal language and symbolism designed to show them as legitimate acts of retribution, rather than extra-judicial assassinations.

Conclusion

In spite of the centralising vision of authority intrinsic to the idea of imāmate, when we study acts of imāmic excommunication, we see that imāms are far from being the only force determining the boundaries of the Imāmī community. The imām had to delegate his authority to mediators to get things done. But these agents and other extra-imāmic figures of authority could also pose a potential challenge, especially when they drew upon other sources of authority embedded in local networks of status, or claims to authority through Ḥadīth preservation, or unusual piety. In the same period as the imāmic excommunications studied here, a local head of the powerful Ashʿarī clan in the town of Qumm, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā l-Ashʿarī pronounced a series of excommunications and banishments targeting men who transmitted Ḥadīth that he considered to be heretical, and in one case an imāmic letter surfaced exonerating one of the men so excluded.[111] These cases show a local actor aiming to cement an epistemic and methodological orthodoxy apparently autonomously from the imām, although nominally in service of the principles of the imāmate. Imāms could rely on this kind of locally-based authority to cement their own, but they could not remove it when it proved inconvenient. The power of the imāms lay in their ability to successfully mobilise figures of local authority who could gain the assent of their local networks, to fulfil their commands and direct acts of violence if need be. Conversely, local actors' understanding of deviance could be strengthened by an imāmic imprimatur to clarify or confirm local acts. The construction of deviance was a multi-polar process.

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[111]Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾirī, *Rijāl*, ed. Muḥammad Riḍā al-Ḥusaynī al-Jalālī (Qumm: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 1380 S/1422 Q [2001 CE]), pp. 66–67, 93–94; Al-ʿAllāma al-Ḥillī, *Khulāṣat al-aqwāl*, ed. Jawād al-Qayyūmī (Qumm: Muʾassasat al-Nashr al-Islāmī, 1417), p. 63.