Al-Jāmiʿah: Journal of Islamic Studies
Vol. 63, no. 2 (2025), pp. 259-282, doi: 10.14421/ajis.2025.632.259-282

A UTOPIAN LIFE, YET NOT ANTINOMIAN
Abrogation of Sharīʿa and the *Qiyāma* Doctrine in Ismāʿīlī Thought

Yusuf Sansarkan
Kütahya Dumlupınar University
email: yusuf.sansarkan@dpu.edu.tr

Abstract

Early Ismāʿīlī belief describes the advent of the seventh imam as qiyāma. However, this qiyāma does not signify the end of the world. Rather, it marks the end of the era of concealment (satr), which began with the first imam, and the beginning of the era of revelation (kashf). This event is also understood as the moment when the Sharīʿa (Islamic law) will be abolished. Throughout history, certain Ismāʾīlī groups have believed that the Qāʾim, the seventh imam, had already appeared and attempted to live a utopian life without Sharīʿa. These beliefs, along with historical experiences associated with them, gave rise to accusations of antinomianism (ibāḥa) against the Ismāʿīlīs. The present study seeks to clarify the Ismāʾīlī understanding of the abolition of Sharīʿa by examining the views of prominent missionaries (dāʿī) who may be regarded as the founders of this intellectual tradition. It argues that Ismāʿīlī authors generally agreed that the Sharīʿa would remain in force until qiyāma, after which a period without it would begin.

[Dalam keyakinan awal Ismāʿīlī, kemunculan imam ketujuh digambarkan sebagai qiyāma. Namun, qiyāma ini tidak menandakan akhir dunia. Sebaliknya, ia menandai berakhirnya era penyembunyian (satr), yang dimulai sejak imam pertama, serta dimulainya era peningkapan (kashf). Peristiwa ini

https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

© 2025
Y. Sansarkan

ISSN: 0126-012X (p); 2338-557X (e)
Al-Jamiʿah Research Centre, Yogyakarta- Indonesia
https://aljamiah.or.id

juga dipahami sebagai saat ketika hukum Islam (Sharīʿa) akan dihapuskan. Sepanjang sejarah, beberapa kelompok Ismāʿīlī meyakini bahwa Qā'im, yaitu imam ketujuh, telah muncul dan berupaya menjalani kehidupan utopis tanpa Sharīʿa. Keyakinan-keyakinan ini, bersama dengan pengalaman historis yang berkaitan dengannya, memunculkan tuduhan antinomianisme (ibāḥa) terhadap kaum Ismāʿīlī. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk memperjelas pemahaman Ismā'īlī mengenai penghapusan Sharīʿa dengan menelaah pandangan para misionaris terkemuka yang dapat dianggap sebagai para perintis tradisi intelektual ini. Kajian ini berargumen bahwa para penulis Ismāʿīlī pada umumnya sepakat bahwa Sharīʿa akan tetap berlaku hingga qiyāma, setelah itu barulah dimulai suatu periode tanpa keberlakuannya.]

Keywords: Ismāʿīlīsm, Sharīʿa, resurrection, the Resurrector.

A. Introduction

Ismāʿīlī theology is known for its esoteric nature. Just as religious doctrines have an outward form, they also possess an inner meaning that not everyone can grasp. The Ismāʿīlī understanding of Sharīʿa (also referred to as the law in this article) must be seen in terms of the distinction between exoteric (*ẓāhir*) and the esoteric (*bāṭin*). For this perspective, Ismāʿīlīs have attributed esoteric meanings to its rulings. Some Ismāʿīlīs argue that exoteric aspects will one day be abolished. They compare this understanding to a seed and its shell, suggesting that the shell represents the exoteric while the seed, the essence, remains hidden behind the conditions are not suitable. They contend that when the conditions are ripe, the shell will no longer be necessary. The maturation of these conditions will occur at *qiyāma* (also referred to as the resurrection in this article). Therefore, there is an undeniable connection between resurrection and abrogation of Sharīʿa.

Q*iyāma* refers to the end of the era of concealment (*satr*) and the beginning of the era of revelation (*kashf*), which occurs with the appearance of the person who will initiate this transformation. This figure is called the *Qā'im* and is also known as the *Ṣāḥib al-Qiyāma* (also referred to as the Resurrector in this article) based on the belief that he will serve as the sole authority over people on that day. With his appearance, the Sharīʿa wil come to an end, ushering in a period in which its inner meanings are revealed. The prerequisite for this era without the law is the occurrence of resurrection.

A number of studies have examined the Ismāʿīlīs' concept of *qiyāma* and their approach to Sharīʿa. These studies offer valuable insights into meaning of the resurrection, afterlife, propethood, and abolition of the law. While Nomoto[1] and Hollenberg's[2] focus more on propethood and the Resurrector, Buckley and Kasimov's[3] concentrate on the practice of abolishing the law among the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī. De Smet offers reflections on the Ismāʿīlī perspective on hell,[4] whereas Avcu discusses practices related to the abolition or application of the law, revealing that although local Ismāʿīlī groups experienced brief periods without it, Ismāʿīlīs in general applied and did not oppose it.[5] Building on these findings, this study argues that almost all Ismāʿīlīs believe that the law will be abolished as part of their belief system. Since the prerequisite for its abolition is the resurrection, the study focuses on the event's connection with the removal of the law. Recognizing this connection is crucial for understanding their views on the law and its eventual abrogation.

While later works are referenced as needed, this study primarily focuses on sources from the early Ismāʿīlī and Fāṭimid periods. The period preceding the establishment of the Fāṭimid state in 297/909 is referred to as the early period. This periodization is motivated by the significant changes in Ismāʿīlī ideology that occured after the state's foundation.[6] Some differences exist between the official Fāṭimid doctrine and the earlier teachings that are relevant to this study. For instance, the concept of seven imams became ambiguous in Fāṭimid doctrine, and the Resurrector was referred to as *Ṣāḥib al-Qiyāma* rather than Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl. Those defending earlier doctrine maintaining the number of imams at

[1] Shin Nomoto, "Early Ismāʾīlī Thought on Prophecy According to the Kitāb al-Islāh by Abū Hātim Al-Rāzī (d. ca. 322/934-5)", PhD. Dissertation (Montreal: McGill University, 1999).

[2] David Hollenberg, *Beyond the Qur'an: Early Ismāʿīlī Ta'wil and the Secrets of the Prophets* (Columbia (S.C.): University of South Carolina Press, 2016).

[3] Jorunn J. Buckley, "The Nizârî ismâ'îlîtes' Abolishment of the Sharî'a During the 'Great Resurrection' of 1164", *Studia Islamica*, no. 60 (1984), pp. 137–65; Orkhan Mir-Kasimov, "The Nizārī Ismaili Theory of the Resurrection (Qiyāma) and Post-Mongol Iranian Messianism", in *Intellectual Interactions in the Islamic World: The Ismaili Thread*, ed. by Orkhan Mir-Kasimov (London: I.B. Tauris & Company, Limited, 2020) pp. 323-52.

[4] Daniel De Smet, "Isma'ili-Shi'i Visions of Hell: From the 'Spiritual' Torment of the Fāṭimids to the Ṭayyibī Rock of Sijjīn", in *Locating Hell in Islamic Traditions*, ed. by Christian Lange (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2016), pp. 239–67.

[5] Ali Avcu, "Erken Dönem İsmaililiğinde Şeriatın Neshi Sorunu Üzerine", *Cumhuriyet Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, vol. 8, no. 2 (2009), pp. 267–87.

[6] Farhad Daftary, "The Earliest Ismāʿīlīs", *Arabica*, vol. 38, no. 2 (1991), p. 214.

seven, argued that Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl was the expected Resurrector. In this respect, Qāḍī Nuʿmān (d. 363/974) and Aḥmad Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī (d. after 411/1020) can be considered representatives of Fāṭimid Ismāʿīlīsm, whereas early Ismāʿīlī thought is mostly traced through Jaʿfar b. Manṣūr al-Yaman (d. 360/970), Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. 322/933-934) and Abū Yaʿqub al-Sijistānī (d. 393/1003). Jaʿfar was a contemporary of Qāḍī Nuʿmān, lived in the same city, and maintained close connections with the Fāṭimid caliphs; however, the content of his works does not fully align with official doctrine.[7] Abū Ḥātim was a Qarmaṭī who did not join the Fāṭimids,[8] while al-Sijistānī was a *dāʿī* based in Sīstān, far from Fāṭimid center. His works suggest that he accepted the Fāṭimid *daʿwa* towards the end of his life, but he likely continued to defend most of his earlier views. At the very least, his views on the imams contradict the new Fāṭimid ideology.[9]

B. Understanding Sharīʿa in Ismāʿīlīsm

In general, Ismāʿīlīs understand Sharīʿa as the set of rules established by the prophets to maintain order in society. Beginning with Adam, the legislating prophets (*ulu'l-ʿazm)* brought these laws to their communities and governed according to these laws.[10] Since Sharīʿa consists of regulatory necessary for social order and governance, it naturally varies from one society to another and from one prophet to the next. Nevertheless, the underlying truth behind it has remained constant since time immemorial. Within this dualistic framework, the *ẓāhir-bāṭin* distinction appears in the form of *Sharīʿa-haqīqah* (truth). During the period of concealment, when the deeper truth cannot be understood, adherence to the outward law becomes necessary. For instance, the purpose of ablution is purification. This purification may refer either to the removal of physical imupurity or, in its inner meaning, to distancing

[7] David Hollenberg, "Neoplatonism in Pre-Kirmānīan Fātimid Doctrine: A Critical Edition and Translation of the Prologue of the Kitāb al-fatarāt wa-l-qirānāt", *Museon*, vol. 122, nos. 1–2 (2009), p. 259; Fârès Gillon, *The Book of Unveiling: Early Fatimid Ismaili Doctrine in the Kitāb al-Kashf, attributed to Ja'far b. Manṣūr b. al-Yaman* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2024), p. 43.

[8] Nomoto, "Early Ismāʾīlī Thought on Prophecy", p. 26.

[9] Abū Yaʿqūb al-Sijistānī, *Kitāb al-Iftikhār*, ed. by Ismail K. Poonawala (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2000), pp. 174–5.

[10] For a comprehensive definition of *Sharīʿa* see, Abū Ḥāṭim al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-Iṣlāḥ*, ed. by Hasan Mīnūchehr and Mahdī Moḥaghegh (Tehran: Institute of Islamic Studies, 2004), p. 57.

oneself from the enemies of God.[11] While act of worship and legal regulations may change over time when understood in their apparent meaning, their inner meanings remains valid, as in the case of distancing oneself from the enemies of God.

Qāḍī Nuʿmān (d. 363/974) refers to the distinction between *ẓāhir* and *bāṭin*, stating that the Sharīʿa of the *ulu'l-ʿazm* is founded on two fundamental principles, one outward (*ẓāhirī*) and the other inward (*bāṭinī*).[12] Jaʿfar b. Manṣūr al-Yaman (d. 360/970) likewise emphasizes the necessity of their coexistence, arguing that those who abandon the inner meaning and act only according to outward form, or vice versa, deserve punishment.[13] Aḥmad Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī (d. after 411/1020) highlights the unity of knowledge (*ʿilm*) and action (*ʿamal*) in relation to this distinction.[14] Nāṣir-i Khusraw (d. 465/1073) illustrates the relationship between the outward and inward by comparing them to water and soil, noting that if they are separated both are harmed.[15] Abū Yaʿqūb al-Sijistānī (d. 393/1003) similarly likens the outward aspect to the unprocessed ore and the inner meaning to its refined form, emphasizing that the latter constitutes the true essence of the former rather than merely a balance between the two.[16]

It is not appropriate to evaluate the Ismāʿīlī based on the basis whether Sharīʿa and religion are synonymous.[17] Their distinction between *ẓāhir* and *bāṭin* indicates an implicit differentiaton between *ḥaqīqah* and *sharīʿa*, even when it is not explicitly stated. Al-Kirmānī responded negatively to the question, "Is Sharīʿa religion?" According to him, religion has several meanings, and the one closest to human experience being obedience. He maintains that obedience does not originate from

[11] Al-Sijistānī, *Kitāb al-Iftikhār*, p. 231.

[12] Qāḍī Nuʿmān, *Asās al-Ta'wīl*, ed. by Aref Tamer (Beirut: Manshūrāt al-Dār al-Saqāfa, 1960), p. 33.

[13] Jaʿfar b. Manṣūr al-Yaman, *Kitāb al-Kashf*, ed. by R. Strothmann (London, New York, Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 123.

[14] Aḥmad Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī, *Majmūʿatu Rasāili'l-Kirmānī*, 2nd edition (Beirut: Muassasa al-Jāmiʿiyya, 1987), p. 143.

[15] Nāṣir-i Khusraw, *Dostlar Sofrası*, trans. by Mehmet Kanar (Istanbul: Şule Yayınları, 2015), p. 139.

[16] Abū Yaʿqūb Al-Sijistānī, *al-Maqālīd al-Malakūtiyya*, ed. by Ismail K. Poonawala (Tunis: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2011), p. 236.

[17] About the division between religion and Sharīʿa see, René Guénon, "Ḥaqīqa and Sharī'a in Islam", in *Sufism: Love and Wisdom*, ed. by Jean-Louis Michon and Roger Gaetani (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2006); İlhami Güler, "Din, İslam ve Şeriat: Aynilikler, Farklılıklar ve Tarihi Dönüşümler", İslâmiyât, vol. 1, no. 4 (1998), pp. 53–76.

Sharīʿa and relates instead to the individual. Those who perform righteous deeds, he argues, may therefore be considered obedient and religious.[18] This views suggests that al-Kirmānī regards Sharīʿa as only one aspect of obedience rather than identical with religion itself. His position serves here as an examle of broader Ismāʿīlī perspective. The Ismāʿīlī are well-known for their esoteric approach, which distinguishes between the outward law and the hidden knowledge undelying it. Nāṣir-i Khusraw, for instance, compares Sharīʿa to the human senses, which are diverse and multiple, while truth resembles the soul, which is one and unchanging.[19] Similarly, al-Sijistānī maintains that the rules of Sharīʿa rest upon deeper edoteric truths, indicating that the two are distinct.[20]

Although the Ismāʿīlī emphasize the necessity of Sharīʿa and the unity of knowledge and action, they view it as a veil that conceals the ultimate covering the truth.[21] In this framework, truth forms the inner core, and Sharīʿa serves as a protective shell. During the era of concealment, the dominance of the physical world prevents people from fully perceiving spiritual realities,[22] making guidance through Sharīʿa necessary.[23] Sharīʿa thus appears as a system of commands and prohibitions that regulates behavior and requires continual worhsip. For this reason, al-Sijistānī and Nāṣir-i Khusraw compare it metaphorically to hell. Nāṣir-i Khusraw explains that the fire of hell represents certain human qualities, though most people cannot grasp its deeper meaning.[24] Al-Sijistānī emphasizes the universality of Sharīʿa, likening it to fire, which exists everywhere, and for which everyone is responsible. Truth, corresponding to paradise, lies beyond spatial limits and can be attained only by those permitted to reach it.[25] He further notes that fire is necessary for life but descructive when misused, and similarly, Sharīʿa without its inner dimension, the

---

[18] al-Kirmānī, *Majmūʿatu Rasāili'l-Kirmānī*, p. 144.

[19] Nāṣir-i Khusraw, *Dostlar Sofrası*, p. 139.

[20] Al-Sijistānī, *Kitāb al-Iftikhār*, p. 231.

[21] Abu Ishaq Quhistani, *Haft Bab*, ed. W. Ivanow (Bombay: Ismaili Society, 1959), p. 65.

[22] According to Ismāʿīlī, the period from Adam to qiyāma is a time when truths are conceald, known as the era of concealmant (*dawr al-satr*). For more information see, Yusuf Sansarkan, İsmâilîlik ve Neoplatonizm: Ebû Yaʿkûb es-Sicistânî Örneği, ed. by Abdullah Demir (PDF: Oku Okut Yayınları, 2023), p. 140.

[23] Al-Sijistānī, *al-Maqālīd al-Malakūtiyya*, p. 298.

[24] Nāṣir-i Khusraw, *Dostlar Sofrası*, p. 93.

[25] Abū Yaʿqūb al-Sijistānī, *al-Yanābīʿ*, ed. by Mosṭafa Ghālib (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-Tijārī, 1965), p. 139.

bāṭin, leads to doubt, confusion, and incorrect judgment.[26]

The Ismāʿīlī believe that six prophets, or *nāṭiq*, bearing Sharīʿa have appeared throughout human history.[27] These prophets are Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muḥammad. They are known as the *ulu'l-ʿazm* prophets. Each established a Sharīʿa suited to the needs of their time and people. Every prophet has a successor (*waṣi*), who is responsible for interpreting the apparent meaning (*tanzīl*) of the prophet's message. While the prophet conveys the apparent meaning, the successor understands the inner meaning (*ta'wīl*) and applies it when necessary. Following the successors, the chain of imams continues. A new cycle begins when a seventh imam appears as a new *nāṭiq* who brings a new Sharīʿa, completing the cycle. These prophetic cycles are limited to the aforementioned prophets. Muḥammad, regarded as the sixth *nāṭiq*, represents the final Sharīʿa. The arrival of the expected seventh imam will complete this cycle as it did with previous prophets.[28]

Al-Kirmānī divides the three early Sharīʿa among six prophets. Adam, Noah, and Abraham each introduced a new law. When the period of Abraham's Sharīʿa ended and Moses appeared, he adopted Adam's law, renewed it, and implemented it. Similarly, Jesus renewed Noah's law, and Muḥammad renewed Abraham's.[29] Al-Kirmānī explains this classification by arguing that the number four represents the position and form of the number one. According to this logic, Moses is placed first, Jesus second, and Muḥammad third. Thus, the history of the prophets is divided into two main parts. His subsequent statement that the Torah, the Gospel, and the Qur'an exist may further clarify this classification. The absence of books from the time of Adam, Noah, and Abraham supports the view that their Sharīʿa continued through the writing of Moses, Jesus, and Muḥammad, respectively. In other words, like other Ismāʿīlī, al-Kirmānī acknowledges six distinct Sharīʿa. However, he argues that the essence of the first three prophets' laws is preserved in the last three prophets' teachings. As a result, only the text of the last three prophets have survived to later periods.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 138.

[27] Khalil Andani, "A Survey of Ismaili Studies Part 1: Early Ismailism and Fatimid Ismailism", *Religion Compass*, vol. 10, no. 8 (2016), p. 196.

[28] Henry Corbin, "Cyclical Time in Mazdaism and Ismailism", in *Cyclical Time and Ismaili Gnosis*, ed. by Hermann Landolt, trans. by Ralph Manheim (London: Kegan Paul International and Islamic Publications), p. 90.

[29] Aḥmad Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī, *al-Risālatu'l-Waḍiyya fī Maʿālimi al-Dīn we Usūlihī*, ed. by Muḥammad ʿĪsa al-Ḥarīrī (Kuwait: Dār al-Qalam, 1987), p. 97.

However, not all Ismāʿīlī accept the existence of six Sharīʿa. The question of whether Adam possessed Sharīʿa has been debated by al-Sijistānī and others. In his work *Kitāb al-Iṣlāḥ*, a refutation of Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Nasafī's *al-Maḥṣūl*, Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. 322/933-934) shows that al-Nasafī also considered the period of Adam to be without Sharīʿa.[30] Al-Kirmānī sided with Abū Ḥātim in the debate, arguing that Adam possess a Sharīʿa, in opposition to Al-Sijistānī.[31] Al-Sijistānī, however, contends that the first period lacked Sharīʿa to demonstrate that the Resurrector (*Qā'im*) period could exist without it. He interprets the term "'azm" in the verse "*wa lam najid lahu 'azma*"[32] as synonymous with Sharīʿa, concluding that Adam did not possess it.[33] Approaching the same verse differently, Qāḍī Nuʿmān accepts Adam as bearer of Sharīʿa, but does not count him among the *ulu'l-'azm*, citing Adam's transgression of what was forbidden as the reason.[34] Abū Ḥātim argues that Adam indeed the possessor of Sharīʿa and explains that *'azm* refers to the abrogation of a previous Sharīʿa. Since no Sharīʿa existed before Adam, there was no need for him to possess *'azm*.[35] Despite these differing approaches, the missionaries cited here limit the *ulu'l-'azm*, the prophets possessing *'azm*, to five. With the exception of al-Sijistānī, howevwer, the others accept that all six prophets introduced the Sharīʿa. Nevertheless, Ismāʿīlī generally agree that the each prophet established a Sharīʿa which abrogated that of the previous prophet. According to this view, the final Sharīʿa came into effect with Muḥammad, and while the previous laws were abrogated. With the return of the Resurrector or the coming of The Resurrection, the final Sharīʿa will also be abrogated, and the era of revelation (*kashf*) will commence.

C. Qiyāma: Not the End, but the Beginning of a New World

Ghālib states that the Ismāʿīlī use the term *qiyāma* (the Resurrection) with several different meanings. One meaning refers to the death of a person and the return of the soul, that is, the individual *nafs* (*nafs al-juz'iyya*), to the universal *nafs* (*nafs al-kullīyya*). It can therefore be understood as a

[30] Al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-Iṣlāḥ*, p. 60.

[31] Aḥmad Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī, *Kitāb al-Riyāḍ* (Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfa, 1960), p. 176.

[32] Q. Ṭāhā [20]: 115.

[33] Al-Sijistānī, *Kitāb al-Iftikhār*, p. 141.

[34] Qāḍī Nuʿmān, *Asās al-Ta'wīl*, p. 41.

[35] Al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-Iṣlāḥ*, p. 59.

minor resurrection. A second sense may be described as an intermediate resurrection, which marks the end of an imam's era or a minor historical cycle. The great Resurrection, by contrast, refers to the end of the era of concealment that began with Adam and will conclude with the appearance of the Resurrector.[36] In general usage, Ismāʿīlī employ the term primarily in this third sense. Accordingly, *qiyāma* may signify either the end of worldly life or the end of the era of concealment and the beginning of the era of revelation. Corbin interprets the end of each prophet's era as a form of resurrection. According to him, the great cycle that encompasses the prophetic eras of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad, will culminate with the return of the Resurrector. This event is called the Resurrection of Resurrections (*Qiyāmat al-Qiyāmat*).[37] The concept of the resurrection, however, involves more than the transitions between the prophetic eras described by Corbin. Ismāʿīlī *dāʿī*s such as Qāḍī Nuʿmān, al-Sijistānī, and al-Kirmānī do not refer to a minor resurrection. Instead, they emphasize the return of the seventh imam and the beginning of the era of revelation. For the Ismāʿīlī thinkers, the resurrection, understood as the end of worldly existence, carries a similar meaning. The essential distinction is that on that day, the Resurrector will rule.

An early example of the resurrection narrative appears in the works of Jaʿfar b. Manṣūr al-Yaman. According to this account, the seventh imam will appear in al-Ḥaramayn, enter Mecca with support of Gabriel, and wage a prolonged war for Medina. With Gabriel's assistance, Medina will fall, and people will flock to the Resurrector, who will then sheathe his sword. God will forgive those who repent but destroy those who persist in their stubbornness by raining stones upon them. The Resurrector will break the cross, kill the pig, destroy churches and synagogues, and make religion exclusive to God. This will end *shirk* (idolatry/polytheism) and usher in the *fajr* (dawn). Under his rule, a peaceful and secure order will be established on earth. Innovations (*bidʿa*) will cease, and people will return to their original state.[38] As seen in this narrative, the reckoning will be complete before the end of worldly life, and the utopian era of peace and order will begin with the rule of the Resurrector.

Jaʿfar b. Manṣūr al-Yaman concludes by stating that everything will be revealed and that people will live in peace under the true religion,

[36] Mosṭafa Ghālib, *al-Imāma wa Qāʾimu'l-Qiyāma* (Beirut: Maktaba al-Hilāl, 1981), p. 303.

[37] Corbin, "Cyclical Time in Mazdaism and Ismailism", p. 97.

[38] Manṣūr al-Yaman, *Kitāb al-Kashf*, pp. 32–5.

without indicating what will follow. His statement that the *fajr* will begin and that people will be as they were on the day they were born implies the beginning of an era without Sharīʿa law will begin, namely the era of revelation, since one meaning of *fajr* is revelation. The idea that people will be as they were on the day they were born suggests a profound transformation that frees them from the confusion of *shirk* spread by the people of *ẓāhir*. In other words, humanity will become aware of the truth, and their souls will be prepared to receive the truths that the Resurrector will reveal. Nomoto notes that, like Jaʿfar, Abū Ḥāṭim also stated that, "in the seventh cycle the [religious] affair would return to what it emerged from". Nomoto connects this idea to the view of Al-Sijistānī and Qarmaṭians that the seventh cycle would be lived without Sharīʿa, as in the first cycle. However, he argues that Abū Ḥāṭim did not share this interpretation and understood the return to humanity's origins differently.[39] Perhaps Abū Ḥāṭim meant that, just as humans originally emerged from spiritual realm, they would undergo a similar spiritual transformation with the advent of the Resurrector. This may explain why he described the era the Resurrector as the partner (*zawj*) of the simple realm.[40]

Another resurrection narrative appears in *al-Mabdaʾ waʾl-Maʿād*, a work by the Yemeni *dāʿī* Al-Walīd, who died in 612/1215. Al-Walīd explains how long the rule of the Resurrector will last on earth and even provides a specific date. He compares the eras of speaking beings since Adam to the stages of pregnancy and describes the Resurrector's as the moment of birth. Before the Resurrector arrives, his *ḥujja*[41] will prepare the conditions, take control of the earth, and compel people to obey him. When he emerges, all those who have lived since Adam will gather before him, including imams and their opponents from every era. The Resurrector will then order the killing of his enemies, and a fire descending from the sky will destroy their bodies. The era of revelation will last fifty thousand years, beginning with the descendants of the Resurrector. After this period, successive eras of concealment and revelation will follow.[42]

[39] Nomoto, "Early Ismāʿīlī Thought on Prophecy", p. 56.

[40] Shin Nomoto, "An Early Ismāʿīlī-Shīʿī Thought on the Messianic Figure (the Qāʾim) according to Al-Rāzī (d. ca. 322/933-4)", *Orient*, vol. 44 (2009), pp. 29–30.

[41] In the Ismāʿīlī hierarchy, the representative of the hidden *imam*. See, Farhad Daftary, "A Major Schism in the Early Ismāʿīlī Movement", *Studia Islamica*, no. 77 (1993), p. 135.

[42] Ḥusain b. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Walīd, *al-Mabdaʾ waʾl-Maʿād fiʾl-Fikriʾl-Ismāʿīlī* (Dımask: Dār ʿAlāuddīn, 2007), p. 50.

Both Jaʿfar and al-Walīd describe a scenario in which the resurrection occurs when people are spiritually renewed and the Resurrector return to inaugurate the era of discovery while worldly life continues. Al-Sijistānī approaches the subject differently, arguing that the resurrection will be spiritual rather than bodly. He considers it meaningless for people to be resurrected in physical bodies after the great era has ended, insisting that a new different life must begin at tis turning point. Since bodies decay and disintegrate in the ground, they cannot be connected to eternal realities.[43] Disdaining matter, he gives it no place in the afterlife and considers the soul alone worthy of existence. According to him, the pleasures of this new life will be spiritual and sublime, not material.[44]

The imam of the final era is called *Ṣāḥib al-qiyāma* because he is regarded as the sole authority on the day of resurrection, when all people since Adam will be held accountable. Al-Sijistānī clearly states that on this day, the Resurrector, not God, will judge.[45] What God is believed to question, according to the *ẓāhirīs*, is understood as the final inquiry. Al-Sijistānī argues that it is mistaken to assume that the good wil go to heaven and the bad to hell,as this would leave no space for God to exercise His power and render worldly life meaningless.[46] His position shows that he accepts a spiritual re-creation and envisions a new life under the Resurrector's leadership. The differences in this life are the absence of the body and the absence of Sharīʿa. Once souls attain the capacity to understand these truths, the Resurrector's guidance will establish a society living with knowledge of the reasons and background of religious practices.

Al-Sijistānī's view that a period of revelation will occur is confirmed by his debate with Abū Ḥātim. While discussing the existence or nonexistence of Adam's Sharīʿa, al-Sijistānī argued that a life devoted to *tawḥīd* but without Sharīʿa was possible during the period of the Resurrector. He stated, "If there is no tawḥīd without action, then *ʿaql*, *nafs*, angels, *jadd*, *fatḥ*, *khayal*, and other sublime beings do not know tawḥīd."[47] This suggest that a new life will begin after the return of the Resurrector, one without Sharīʿa, meaning no formal rules or ritual

[43] Al-Sijistānī, *al-Maqālīd al-Malakūtiyya*, p. 183; Al-Sijistānī, *al-Yanābīʿ*, p. 160.

[44] Paul E. Walker, *Early Philosophical Shiism: The Ismaili Neoplatonism of Abū Yaʿqub al-Sijistānī* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 136.

[45] Al-Sijistānī, *Kitāb al-Iftikhār*, pp. 185–6.

[46] *Ibid.*, p. 192.

[47] Al-Kirmānī, *Kitāb al-Riyāḍ*, p. 202.

obligations, which he considered burdensome, while tawḥīd will continue.

Because al-Sijistānī did not recognize the Fāṭimid caliphs as imams,[48] he clearly identified the seventh imam, Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl, as the authority on the day of resurrection, even naming him explicitly. Among the dāʿīs affiliated with the Fāṭimids, however, the perspective shifts slightly. Although the official Fāṭimid ideology rejected the occultation of Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl, it did not entirely abandoned its prior understanding of resurrection or the notion of a great imamas the ultimate authority on that day. Following the establishment of the Fāṭimid state, the removal of the seven-imam limit and the abandonment of the belief in Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl occultation replaced earlier expectation with a belief in a distant future resurrection similar to that of non-Ismāʿīlī Muslims.[49] At the same time, the early understanding of the Resurrector persisted in text under the name *Ṣāḥib al-qiyāma*. This concept appears in the works of Qāḍī Nuʿmān and al-Kirmānī. Although Qāḍī Nuʿmān sometimes specifies that the Resurrector will be the seventh[50] when referring to *Ṣāḥib al-qiyāma*, this does not excludes the Fāṭimid imams. He considers the Resurrector to be the seventh of the *nāṭiqs*.[51] Al-Kirmānī, by contrast, defines the Resurrector and the *Ṣāḥib al-qiyāma* as the closers of the last era without mentioning the number seven.[52]

There is disagreement regarding whether the resurrection will be spiritual or physical. Generally, Ismāʿīlī authors suggest that bodies will not be resurrected, presenting a different approach. It is not possible to determine precisely what al-Kirmānī thought on this matter. In *Rāḥatu'l-ʿAḳl*, he asserts that the inhabitants of paradise will be resurrected in a spiritual form, free from physical constraints.[53] Yet in his treatise *Hazāinu'l-edille*, al-Kirmānī argues that soul cannot be resurrected without a body, basing this argument on the teachings of the Fāṭimid caliph al-Muʿizz

[48] Andani, "A Survey of Ismaili Studies Part 1", p. 200; Nomoto, "Early Ismāʿīlī Thought on Prophecy", p. 288; Although it is stated that Al-Sijistānīembraced the Fāṭimids towards the end of his life, it is understood that this did not go beyond mere acceptance. Indeed, he did not change his understanding of the *imam* in his works, nor did he abandon the name Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl. For a similar view see, Avcu, "Erken Dönem İsmaililiğinde Şeriatın Neshi Sorunu Üzerine", p. 170.

[49] Farhad Daftary, İsmaililer: Tarihler ve Öğretileri, trans. by Ahmet Fethi (İstanbul: Alfa, 2017), p. 215.

[50] Qāḍī Nuʿmān, *Asās al-Taʾwīl*, p. 351.

[51] *Ibid.*, p. 41.

[52] Aḥmad Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī, *Rāḥatu'l-ʿAql* (Beirut: Dār al-Andalus, 1983), p. 583.

[53] *Ibid.*, p. 585.

li-Dīnillāh (953–975).[54] This contradiction suggests that al-Kirmānī was unable to completely abandon the early teachings. Despite constructing a spiritual afterlife within his system of thought, he could not contradict a point clearly stated by the imam. For this reason, while defending spiritual resurrection in his fundamental work, which reflects his thought system consistenly, he was likely compelled to accept the official ideology in his treatise, which was intended as a critique of society.

Providing further details from the works of various dāʿīs would not contribute to the objective of this study. The Ismāʿīlī understanding of resurrection is mentioned to emphasize that they did not believe the righteous would go to heaven and the wicked to hell eternally after the reckoning. At the end of the concealment period, resurrection will occur, either with both soul and body or only with the soul. According to some, the Resurrector will question all resurrected people, and the wicked will be destroyed by fire. According to others, the wicked will be sent to hell beneath the earth. The righteous, meaning the Shiʿites who believe in imamate, will live a life similar to ours, but utopian, without Sharīʿa and full of happiness. This life was particularly longed for by the early Ismāʿīlī. After this life, which will last thousands of years, the *satr-kashf* cycle will continue. This is the Ismāʿīlī theory of resurrection in broad strokes. However, some began the era of revelation by disregarding resurrection and reckoning when they believed in the appearance of the Resurrector, and they also abrogated Sharīʿa. The following section will provide examples of this and discuss the Ismāʿīlī approach to the abrogation of Sharīʿa.

D. Abrogation of Sharīʿa: A Utopian Life

The first section of this study examines the Ismāʿīlī approach to Sharīʿa. Some claim that the Ismāʿīlī reject Islamic rules and live without them. The label of *ibāḥī* (antinomian) applied to the Ismāʿīlī can be traced back to the early period of their formation. While the Mubarakiya were still in their formative stage, it isreported that the Khaṭṭabiya abolished the laws and made everything permissible.[55] Al-Ghazzālī states that they were absolutely *ibāḥī*, yet they denied this when questioned.[56] Historical

[54] Al-Kirmānī, *Majmūʿatu Rasāili'l-Kirmānī*, p. 208.

[55] Al-Ḥasan b. Mūsa al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq al-Shīʿa* (Beirut: Manshūrāt al-Riḍā, 2012), p. 117.

[56] Abū Ḥamīd al-Ghazzālī, *Faḍāiḥ al-Bāṭinīyya*, ed. by ʿAbdarraḥmān Badawī (Kuwait: Dār al-Kutub al-Thaqāfiyya), p. 46.

documents indicate that the Khaṭṭabiya believed the Sharīʿa had been abrogated, although only regionally and on a small scale. It should be noted, however, that all of these attempts were directly related to resurrection. The Ismāʿīlī understanding of resurrection could fosters such behavior, and as a result, some negative experiences occurred, which sometimes become a general label used by opponents of the Ismāʿīlī.

Referring to the Qarmaṭīs' plundering of Mecca while claiming that *Sharīʿa* law had been abolished, Daftary states that the Ismāʿīlī' opponents accused them of *ibāḥa* for this reason, but criticizes this as an overly generalizing approach.[57] According to Daftary, the Ismāʿīlī were negatively portrayed by the ʿAbbāsids from the founding of the Fāṭimid state. Figures such as Ibn Rizām, Akhū Muḥsin, al-Baghdādī (d. 429/1037), Niẓām al-Mulk (d. 485/1092), and al-Ghazzālī (d. 505/1111) carried out campaigns of black propaganda.[58] Erbaş notes that the ideas attributed to Ibn Rizām, which formed the basis for Niẓām al-Mulk's view, were actually put forward by Akhū Muḥsin to discredit the Ismāʿīlī.[59] Evaluating al-Ghazzālī's approach to the Ismāʿīlī, Walker presents an example of anti-Ismāʿīlī sentiment, stating "...it must also be admitted, and especially noted, that al-Ghazzālī's principal aim was to expose, refute, and condemn..."[60] This deliberate anti-Ismāʿīlī stance exaggerated the belief in a period without Sharīʿa, which already existed in the Ismāʿīlī system, and collectively accused the Ismāʿīlī of *ibāḥa*. Avcu point tho this fact by naming scholars, such as Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1025), al-Ḥammādī (d. 470/1077), and al-Baghdādī, who claimed that the Ismāʿīlī believed that the ruling Sharīʿa was lifted for those who possessed esoteric knowledge.[61] In other words, the black propaganda against the Ismāʿīlī included the claim that they collectively opposed Sharīʿa.

On the other hand, as mentioned above, some Ismāʿīlī, beginning with the Khaṭṭabiya, are reported to have believed that Sharīʿa had been abolished. The opponents of Sharīʿa who emerged during the founding of the Fāṭimid state appear to reflect a lawless period in early Ismāʿīlī thought. However, this is not significant in terms of the relationship

[57] Daftary, İsmaililer: Tarihler ve Öğretileri, p. 215.

[58] Farhad Daftary, "The Ismailis: A Misrepresented Shi'i Muslim Community", *Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Veli Araştırma Dergisi*, no. 102 (2022), pp. 13–4.

[59] Furkan Erbaş, "Fâtımîler'in Nesebi Hakkındaki Tartışmalar", *Cumhuriyet İlahiyat Dergisi*, vol. 29, no. 1 (2025), p. 36.

[60] Paul E. Walker, "Shahrastānī and the Ismailis: A Critical Reappraisal of the Evidence", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 143, no. 2 (2023), p. 423.

[61] Avcu, "Erken Dönem İsmaililiğinde Şeriatın Neshi Sorunu Üzerine", p. 268.

between resurrection and the abolition of Sharīʿa, which is the focus of this study. In other words, since opposition to Sharīʿa in theory and in practice is linked to the perception of the resurrection, there is no contradiction with the thesis that Ismāʿīlī accepted resurrection as a prerequisite for the lawless period. As Gillon points out, the increase in opposition to Sharīʿa and the rebellions that occurred during the founding phase of the Fāṭimid state resulted of disappointment due to the failure of the promised lawless environment and miracles to materialize, despite the establishment of the state.[62] This provides further evidence that the Ismāʿīlī believed in a period without Sharīʿa, but awaited the resurrection, that is, the return of the Resurrector, for it occur.

Among Ismāʿīlī, it is commonly believed that Muḥammad's Sharīʿa, like that of other prophets, will come to an end. Since Sharīʿa law was abolished with the advent of a new prophet, it is expected to end with the appearance of the Resurrector. In other words, their focus is not on the abolition itself, but on the return of the Resurrector and the beginning of the era of revelation. Within their system of thought, Ismāʿīlī do not long for a lawless life, but rather for a transparent and sinless one. This expectation has sometimes led to the misconception that the Resurrector has already returned. If he has come, then the era of concealment is over, the era of revelation has begun, and the law is considered abrogated. Qāḍī Nuʿmān himself noted the existence of such a misconception. Citing the example of Adam, who fell from grace when the light of *ta'yīd* was cut off from him due to his desire for a time without law, he stated that Adam was forgiven, but many people perished and fell into *ibāḥa* in similar circumstances.[63]

One event he mentioned occurred during the reign of ʿUbaydillāh al-Mahdī (909–934), when the Fāṭimid state was newly established. The group accepted a young man as the Resurrector, believed that he received revelations. They claimed he was the Mahdī and that he had made forbidden things permissible. They also claimed that Abū ʿAbdallāh al-Shīʿī (d. 298/911) was not dead. ʿUbaydillāh al-Mahdī violently suppressed the *ibāḥa* movement, killing those who participated, including the young man who claimed to be the Mahdī.[64] Another false Mahdī incident occurred among the Qarmaṭians of Bahrain in 319/931. Abū Ṭāhir

[62] Gillon, *The Book of Unveiling*, p. 424.

[63] Qāḍī Nuʿmān, *Asās al-Ta'wīl*, p. 67.

[64] Qāḍī Nuʿmān, *Iftitāḥ al-Daʿwa* (Beirut: Muassasa al-Aʿlamī li'l-Maṭbūʿāt, 2005), p. 198.

al-Jannābī (d. 332/944) believed that a young man named Zakariyā al-Isfahānī was the Mahdī and handed over administration to him. However, when Zakariyā declared things that were forbidden as permissible, issued rulings contrary to Islam, and had the state's leaders killed, Abū Ṭāhir announced to the people that Zakariyā was a false Mahdī and had him executed.[65] According to Ibn al-Athīr, Zakariya was chosen as the Mahdī to settle scores among the state's leaders. Allegedly, Ibn Sanbar, one of the state leaders, made a secret agreement with him to eliminate his rivals in exchange for accepting him as the Mahdī.[66] Whether or not this agreement existed, the incident ended in failure and caused even greater turmoil.

Although this study focuses on early Ismā'īlī, an example from the Nizārī Ismā'īlī illustrates the subject further. A period without Sharī'a occured in Alamūt for a time. In 559/1164, Hasan II announced that he had met with the hidden Imam and that the burden of law had been lifted from him. To convince his followers, he demonstrated this by breaking his fast during Ramadan and inviting others to do the same. This period without law continued for a while among the Nizārī Ismā'īlī until Hasan III reinstated the rules, ending this period.[67] In other words, a period of revelation was experienced in Alamut, followed by the beginning of a new period of concealment. This transition is reflects the Ismā'īlī belief that periods of concealment and revelation occur sequentially.[68] Corbin explains that these cycles will end with the great resurrection.[69] However, the Nizārī attempt ultimately failed, as seen when thir Hasan cursed of his ancestors and burned their books to restore the law.

The examples provided to illustrate the relationship between Sharī'a and resurrection in Ismā'īlī history are sufficient. As these cases demonstrate, the Ismā'īlī interpretation of resurrection has occasionally led to the formation of movements that almost always failed. The details of these movements and their failures are beyond the scope of this study. It is important to note that the Ismā'īlī believed Sharī'a would be abrogated and at times put this belief into practice. This belief and practice are inseparable from the concept of resurrection. The belief

[65] For a detailed narration see, Ali Avcu, *Karmatîliğin Doğuşu ve Gelişim Süreci* (Sivas: Cumhuriyet Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2011), p. 259.

[66] 'Izz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi't-Tārikh*, vol. 7, ed. by Abū al-Fidā 'Abdallāh al-Qāḍī (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1987), p. 76.

[67] Buckley, "Abolishment of the Sharî'a", pp. 143–5; Abu Ishaq Quhistani, *Haft Bab*, p. 23.

[68] Mir-Kasimov, "The Nizārī Ismaili Theory of the Resurrection", p. 326.

[69] Corbin, "Cyclical Time in Mazdaism and Ismailism", p. 97.

that the resurrection would occur at an unspecified time, along with the expectation of an era without law, made it inevitable and indispensable. This analysis emphasizes resurrection to reiterate that the Ismāʿīlī are not opposed to Sharīʿa before the conditions are ripe. Due to the aforementioned examples, they have collectively been declared opposed to law. However, as Daftary points out, they have consistenly adhered to it.[70] Al-Sijistānī makes it clear compliance with law carries no special privilege. He asks, "If the purpose of Sharīʿa is to ensure world order, why should a person who lives orderly, harms no one, and possesses knowledge of the truth be obliged to comply with Sharīʿa?" He answers negatively, arguing that a person who lives harmlessly must have good morals, and that good morals can only be protected by Sharīʿa. Therefore, a period without Sharīʿa is not possible until resurrection or the return of the Resurrector.[71]

Qāḍī Nuʿmān does not explicitly address the possibility of a period without Sharīʿa, but he makes statements that imply it. He states that Muḥammad's Sharīʿa will continue until the end of worldly life, and that the Resurrector will appear with his own law in the end times. He adds that the first six nāṭiq were forbidden from revealing secrets, but the seventh will do so.[72] This implies that the Resurrector will initiate the era of revelation.[73] The truths hidden behind the Sharīʿa are what the earlier prophets did not disclose. Since the era of concealment continues, those who preceded the Resurrector were forbidden from revealing these truths. In contrast, the seventh's permission to disclose them indicates the beginning of the era of revelation. This inference is confirmed by Qāḍī Nuʿmān's interpretation of the story of Adam. According him, Adam was punished because he desired something that did not belong to him and whose time had not yet come, being provoked by Satan. What he desired was *ibāḥa*, which was reserved for the period of the Resurrector. Adam's violation was conscious; he succumbed to the allure of a free life under Satan's influence. Indeed, Sharīʿa can be burdensome and arduous.[74] Qāḍī Nuʿmān's assertion that *ibāḥa* was reserved for the Resurrector and his claim that Adam turned to the forbidden tree to escape the drudgery

[70] Daftary, İsmaililer: Tarihler ve Öğretileri, p. 210.

[71] Abū Yaʿqūb Al-Sijistānī, *Kitābu Ithbāt al-Nubūāt*, 2nd edition (Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1982), p. 65.

[72] Qāḍī Nuʿmān," *Asās al-Taʾwīl*, pp. 344–5.

[73] *Ibid.*, p. 334.

[74] *Ibid.*, p. 66.

of work indicate that he accepted a period without Sharīʿa, even if it was spiritual. His statement that Resurrector will emerge with Muḥammad's law should not be understood to mean that he will continue it; but rather to emphasizes that law existed at the time of his emergence.

Like Qāḍī Nuʿmān, al-Kirmānī's statements on the abolition of law appear contradictory. He clearly states in *al-Riyāḍ* that it will not be abolished.[75] However, in *Rāḥatu'l-ʿAql*, he asserts that its provisions will be revoked.[76] This contradiction can be resolved by noting that al-Kirmānī divides the rulings into two categories. According to him, they are either obligatory or non-obligatory categories. The obligatory rulings, such as those concerning retribution, inheritance, and marriage, regulate human relations, while those concerning worship are non-obligatory. Although worship was not obligatory in the era before Adam, the rules governing human intearctions remained valid.[77] From this, it can be inferred that al-Kirmānī argues that law will be abrogated; however, unlike al-Sijistānī, he maintains that certains provisions must persist. His approach mayhave been a precaution against *ibāḥa* criticism directed at the Ismāʿīlī or an acknowledgment that humans with bodies cannot live without rules, reflecting the physicality of the pre-Adam era.

The Ismāʿīlī seem to agree that a concealment era without law is impossible, while there will be no law in the era of revelation. The fundamental question concerns the timing of this era. Since the resurrection signifies the return of the Resurrector, and the Resurrector is Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl, one might assume that the era of revelation has already begun. Daftary cautiously suggests that al-Nasafī may have thought this way,[78] and some claim that al-Sijistānī held this view early in his life.[79] However, none of al-Sijistānī's existing works contain such a claim; in fact, his works contain statements that contradict this idea. Al-Kirmānī's *al-Riyāḍ* quotes Sijistani's now-lost book *al-Nuṣra*, revealing that he argued that there was no Sharīʿa in the era of Adam. By contrast, Abū Ḥātim, whom al-Sijistānī refuted, and al-Kirmānī, who compared the two, maintain that Adam was subject to Sharīʿa. Al-Sijistānī concluded that "if the era of Adam was lived without Sharīʿa, then the era of the

[75] Al-Kirmānī, *Kitāb al-Riyāḍ*, p. 202.

[76] Al-Kirmānī, *Rāḥatu'l-ʿaql*, p. 586.

[77] Al-Kirmānī, *Kitāb al-Riyāḍ*, pp. 191–2.

[78] Daftary, İsmaililer: Tarihler ve Öğretileri, p. 215.

[79] Ali Avcu, *Horasan - Maveraünnehir'de İsmailîlik*, 2nd edition (İstanbul: Marmara Akademi Yayınları, 2018), p. 281.

Resurrector can also be lived without it." Although he does not state this explicitly, his use of the past tense when discussing the absence of Sharīʿa during the era of the Adam's era support the view that it had been abrogated for a certain period.[80] Conversely, Abū Ḥātim already accepted that the Resurrector would not legislate law. In other words, al-Sijistānī was not attempting to convince him thst the future era would be lawless, since Abū Ḥātim already held this view.[81] Therefore, it can be concluded that Al-Sijistānī denied the Adam's law because he believed it had been abrogated when he wrote *al-Nuṣra*. Just as people in Adam's era attained monotheism without Sharīʿa, a person in the current era can rightly believe in God without adhering to it. This was likely what al-Sijistānī sought to defend.

Unlike al-Nasafī, Abū Ḥātim and al-Sijistānī, who made clear statements about the abolition of law, the ambiguous and contradictoryremarks of Qāḍī Nuʿmān and al-Kirmānī suggests that they were unable to articulate their position clearly. This may indicate a shift in post-Fāṭimid Ismāʿīlīī thought. The difficulty for the official Fāṭimid sect in acknowledging a lawless period may have prevented it dāʿīs from doing so. Conversely, accusations of *ibāḥa* against the Ismāʿīlī would have cause the state, whose population was not entirely Ismāʿīlī, to approach the issue cautiosly. For these reasons, both Qāḍī Nuʿmān and al-Kirmānī emphasized the validity of Sharīʿa, yet spoke inconsistently about its abolition. Al-Sijistānī spoke clearly about the abolition of law during the resurrection, yet he also emphasized the validity of law and impossibility of life without it. This seems to contradict his views on resurrection and suggests that he reformulated his ideas on law and the Resurrector's era. However, it is important to approach his interpretation cautiously, given the questionable nature of the source. Al-Kirmānī himself notes that some of al-Sijistānī's writings may have been altered or supplemented.[82] Similarly, al-Nasafī's view that law was abolished from the moment Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl first appeared raises questions. Daftary cites the plundering of Mecca by the Bahraini Qarmaṭians as a possible justification for thus view.[83] If al-Nasafī held such a position, it challenges the early Ismāʿīlī system of thought, in which the abolition of law depended on the return of the Resurrector from occultation. This

[80] Al-Kirmānī, *Kitāb al-Riyāḍ*, p. 204.
[81] Al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-Iṣlāḥ*, p. 63.
[82] Al-Kirmānī, *Kitāb al-Riyāḍ*, p. 210.
[83] Daftary, *İsmaililer: Tarihler ve Öğretileri*, p. 215.

condition could only arise after Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl went into hiding, raising the important question of how al-Nasafī arrived at his conclusion.

E. Conclusion

The *bāṭinī* perspective acknowledges that there is a truth behind the visible world that not everyone can comprehend. These truths have been concealed due to human inadequacy or as a form of punishment. Similar ro Plato's allegory of the cave, humans act without knowing the real reason for their actions, that is without understanding the underlying wisdom. Because of this secrecy, Sharīʿa becomes a burden placed on people to guide and regulate them. The day when punishment will end and people will see the truth will inevitably come. According to the Ismāʿīlī, this day is called resurrection (*qiyāma*). They argue that Sharīʿa will be abrogated, though not during its current period of practice. Instead, it will occur at the end of the ongoing period of concealment that began with Adam. Resurrection is the prerequisite for this abrogation, and its result is the revelation of truths, realities that people cannot currently grasp.

The belief that people must ultimately recognize the truth, and that believers who understand it will reach a stage where they refrain from committing evil, shows that abrogation does not imply that everything becomes permissible.. The Ismāʿīlī' longing for the day when the truth will be revealed, together with their conviction that this moment will coincide with the appearance of the the Resurrector, has at times led to the emergence of individuals falsely claiming this role.

Announcements that law had been abolished following such appearances have resulted in accusations that the Ismāʿīlī made forbidden acts lawful and permitted immorial behavior. However, the localized nature of these claims, along with statements by Ismāʿīlī authors emphasizing that the abolition of law does not mean eunrestricted permissibility, indicates that these accusations are unfounded. Some missionaries maintained that moral and social norms would always remain binding. Others argued that, during the period of unveiling, people would attain a level of spiritual awareness that naturally discourages wrongdoing, eliminating the need for Sharīʿa. The potrayal of the Ismāʿīlī as a community without rules that condones immoral acts is therefore largely the result exaggerations by their opponents.

One conclusion is that the belief in the return of Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl as the Resurrector existed in early Ismāʿīlīm and continued in

Fāṭimid Ismāʿīlī thought under the titles *Qāʾim* or *Ṣāḥib al-qiyāma*. In the early period, the imams were enumerated, and it was generally accepted that the seventh imam had entered occulatation and that the era of concealment would end with his return. Over time, however, uncertainty arose concerning the exact number of imams. Although the Resurrector was still described as the one who would bring the seventh era of its completion, he was no longer spesifically identified as Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl. During the Fāṭimid period, missionaries taught the figure who would preside over the final era would appear at an unspecified time. They did not, however, describe this event as a return from occultation. In this context, the issue of abolishing law also became more ambiguous than in earlier periods. Missionaries either avoided addressing the matter directly or stated only that worship would would eventually be lifted.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Andani, Khalil, "A Survey of Ismaili Studies Part 1: Early Ismailism and Fatimid Ismailism", *Religion Compass*, vol. 10, no. 8, 2016, pp. 191–206, https://doi.org/10.1111/rec3.12205.

Avcu, Ali, "Erken Dönem İsmaililiğinde Şeriatın Neshi Sorunu Üzerine", *Cumhuriyet Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2009, pp. 267–87.

----, *Karmatîliğin Doğuşu ve Gelişim Süreci*, Sivas: Cumhuriyet Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2011.

----, *Horasan - Maveraünnehir'de İsmailîlik*, 2nd edition, İstanbul: Marmara Akademi Yayınları, 2018.

Buckley, Jorunn J., "'The Nizârî ismâ'îlîtes' Abolishment of the Sharî'a During the 'Great Resurrection' of 1164", *Studia Islamica*, no. 60, 1984, pp. 137–65, https://doi.org/10.2307/1595512.

Corbin, Henry, "Cyclical Time in Mazdaism and Ismailism", in *Cyclical Time and Ismaili Gnosis*, ed. by Hermann Landolt, trans. by Ralph Manheim, London: Kegan Paul International and Islamic Publications.

Daftary, Farhad, "A Major Schism in the Early Ismā'īlī Movement", *Studia Islamica*, no. 77, 1993, pp. 123–39.

----, *İsmaililer: Tarihler ve Öğretileri, trans. by Ahmet Fethi*, İstanbul: Alfa, 2017.

----, "The Ismailis: A Misrepresented Shi'i Muslim Community", *Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Veli Araştırma Dergisi*, no. 102, 2022, pp. 11–26, https://doi.org/10.34189/hbv.102.001.

----, "The Earliest Ismā'īlīs", *Arabica*, vol. 38, no. 2, 1991, pp. 214–45.

De Smet, Daniel, "Isma'ili-Shi'i Visions of Hell: From the 'Spiritual' Torment of the Fāṭimids to the Ṭayyibī Rock of Sijjīn", in *Locating Hell in Islamic Traditions*, ed. by Christian Lange, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2016.

Erbaş, Furkan, "Fâtımîler'in Nesebi Hakkındaki Tartışmalar", *Cumhuriyet İlahiyat Dergisi*, vol. 29, no. 1, 2025, pp. 29–50, https://doi.org/10.18505/cuid.1620941.

Ghālib, Mosṭafa, *al-Imāma wa Qā'imu'l-Qiyāma*, Beirut: Maktaba al-Hilāl, 1981.

Al-Ghazzālī, Abū Ḥamīd, *Faḍāiḥ al-Bāṭinīyya*, ed. by 'Abdarraḥmān Badawī, Kuwait: Dār al-Kutub al-Thaqāfiyya.

Gillon, Fârès, *The Book of Unveiling: Early Fatimid Ismaili Doctrine in the Kitāb al-Kashf, attributed to Ja'far b. Manṣūr b. al-Yaman*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2024.

Guénon, René, "Ḥaqīqa and Sharī'a in Islam", in *Sufism: Love and Wisdom*, ed. by Jean-Louis Michon and Roger Gaetani, Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2006.

Güler, İlhami, "Din, İslam ve Şeriat: Aynilikler, Farklılıklar ve Tarihi Dönüşümler", *İslâmiyât*, vol. 1, no. 4, 1998, pp. 53–76.

Hollenberg, David, *Beyond the Qur'an: Early Ismāʿīlī Ta'wil and the Secrets of the Prophets*, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2016.

----, "Neoplatonism in Pre-Kirmānīan Fātimid Doctrine: A Critical Edition and Translation of the Prologue of the Kitāb al-Fatarāt wa-l-Qirānāt", *Museon*, vol. 122, nos. 1–2, 2009, pp. 159–202, https://doi.org/10.2143/MUS.122.1.2037156.

Ibn al-Athīr, 'Izz al-Dīn, *al-Kāmil fi't-Tārikh*, vol. 7, ed. by Abū al-Fidā 'Abdallāh al-Qāḍī, Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1987.

Al-Kirmānī, Aḥmad Ḥamīd al-Dīn, *Kitāb al-Riyāḍ*, Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfa, 1960.

----, *Rāḥatu'l-'Aql*, Beirut: Dār al-Andalus, 1983.

----, *Majmūʿatu Rasāili'l-Kirmānī*, 2nd edition, Beirut: Muassasa al-Jāmiʿiyya, 1987.

----, *al-Risālatu'l-Waḍiyya fī Maʿālimi al-Dīn we Usūlihī*, ed. by Muḥammad 'Īsa al-Ḥarīrī, Kuwait: Dār al-Qalam, 1987.

Mir-Kasimov, Orkhan, "The Nizārī Ismaili Theory of the Resurrection (Qiyāma) and Post-Mongol Iranian Messianism", in *Intellectual Interactions in the Islamic World: The Ismaili Thread*, ed. by Orkhan Mir-Kasimov, London: I.B. Tauris & Company, Limited, 2020, 323-52.

Nāṣir-i Khusraw, *Dostlar Sofrası*, trans. by Mehmet Kanar, Istanbul: Şule Yayınları, 2015.

Al-Nawbakhtī, al-Ḥasan b. Mūsa, *Firaq al-Shīʿa*, Beirut: Manshūrāt al-Riḍā, 2012.

Nomoto, Shin, "Early Ismā'īlī Thought on Prophecy According to the Kitāb al-Islāh by Abū Hātim Al-Rāzī (d. ca. 322/934-5)", PhD. Dissertation, Montreal: McGill University, 1999.

----, "An Early Ismāʿīlī-Shīʿī Thought on the Messianic Figure (the Qā'im) according to Al-Rāzī (d. ca. 322/933-4)", *Orient*, vol. 44, 2009, pp.

19–39, https://doi.org/10.5356/orient.44.19.

Qāḍī Nuʿmān, *Asās al-Taʾwīl*, ed. by Aref Tamer, Beirut: Manshūrāt ad-Dār al-Thaqāfa, 1960.

Quhistani, Abu Ishaq, *Haft Bab*, ed. by W. Ivanow, Bombay: Ismaili Society, 1959.

----, *Iftitāḥ al-Daʿwa*, Beirut: Muassasa al-Aʿlamī liʾl-Maṭbūʿāt, 2005.

Al-Rāzī, Abū Ḥāṭim, *Kitāb al-Iṣlāḥ*, ed. by Hasan Mīnūchehr and Mahdī Moḥaghegh, Tehran: Institute of Islamic Studies, 2004.

Sansarkan, Yusuf, *İsmâilîlik ve Neoplatonizm: Ebû Yaʿkûb es-Sicistânî Örneği*, ed. by Abdullah Demir, PDF: Oku Okut Yayınları, 2023.

Al-Sijistānī, Abū Yaʿqūb, *al-Yanābīʿ*, ed. by Mosṭafa Ghālib, Beirut: al-Maktaba a-Tijārī, 1965.

----, *Kitābu Ithbāt al-Nubūʾāt*, 2nd edition, Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1982.

----, *Kitāb al-Iftikhār*, ed. by Ismail K. Poonawala, Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2000.

----, *Al-Maqālīd al-Malakūtiyya*, ed. by Ismail K. Poonawala, Tunis: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2011.

Al-Walīd, Ḥusain b. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad, *Al-Mabdaʾ waʾl-Maʿād fiʾl-Fikriʾl-Ismāʿīlī*, Dımask: Dāru ʿAlāuddīn, 2007.

Walker, Paul E., *Early Philosophical Shiism: The Ismaili Neoplatonism of Abū Yaʿqub al-Sijistānī*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

----, "Shahrastānī and the Ismailis: A Critical Reappraisal of the Evidence", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 143, no. 2, 2023, https://doi.org/10.7817/jaos.143.2.2023.ar017.

Al-Yaman, Jaʿfar b. Manṣūr, *Kitāb al-Kashf*, ed. by R. Strothmann, London, New York, Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1952.