

returned to Tanla in Egypt where he lived an ascetic life and died. Al-Badawi achieved the very high sufi (q.v.) rank of al-Qutb (q.v.), 'The Pole'. Many miracles are ascribed to him and his tomb in the mosque at Tanla receives many pilgrims. The Sufi order of the Ahmadiyya, which is called after him, is immensely

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popular in Egypt. The Mawlid (q.v.) of al-Sayyid Ahmad al-Badawi is celebrated every year in Tanla with much festivity, ceremony and procession. The dhikr (q.v.) is performed on the roofs of houses and many infants and young boys are circumcised during the mawlid. This is perhaps the most famous of all the mawlids to take place in Egypt and is of great antiquity. (See Ahmadiyya (2); Khitan; Tasawwuf.)

Badawiyya See Ahmadiyya (2); al-Badawi, al-Sayyid Ahmad.

Badr, Battle of The first major battle fought between Muhammad supported by the Medinans, and the Meccans in 2/624 at Badr, to the South-West of Medina (q.v.). The Meccan forces, commanded by Abu Jahl (q.v.), were defeated and about seventy Meccans, with Abu Jahl among them, were killed. The Qur'an indicates that angels fought on Muhammad's side at the Battle of Badr (see w.9, 12 of Siirat al-Anfal (q.v.)). The Muslim success in the battle gave immense prestige to the infant Islamic community in Medina and dealt a major blow to the pride of the Meccans.

Baghdad Major city in the Middle East, and capital of modern Iraq from 1339 40/1921. It was founded in 145/762 near the River Tigris by the 'Abbasid caliph al-Mansur under the name Madinat al-Salam meaning 'City of Peace'. The city became the centre of the 'Abbasid caliphate until 656/1258 and was also occupied for substantial periods by the Buyids (q.v.) and the Saljuqs (q.v.) during this time. Baghdad was sacked by the Mongols (q.v.) in 656/1258 but later achieved some prominence again in the pre-modern period under the Ottomans (q.v.) in the 11th/17th century. Baghdad was heavily bombed in the 1991 Gulf War. (See 'Abbasids; Harun al-Rashid; Kazimayn.)

Bahá'ís Members of new religion, deriving from Babism (q.v.), founded by Baha'ullah [Bahá'u'lláh] (q.v.), and propagated by the

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latter's son 'Abd al-Baha' ['Abdu'l-Bahá]. Bahá'ís believe in an utterly transcendent God who has, none the less, manifested Himself through a continuing chain of prophets who include many of the great figures familiar to adherents of the three major monotheistic

religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The Bab and Baha'ullah also have prophetic rank. The Bahá'ís believe that all the religions which have prophets possess an intrinsic truth. Because the Bahá'ís, technically speaking, are an offshoot of an offshoot of an offshoot of the Ithna 'Asharis (q.v.) they have often been regarded as gravely heretical Muslims, and sometimes subjected to persecution and execution.

Baha'ullah (1233/1817-1309/1892) Founder of the Bahá'ís (q.v.). Born into an aristocratic family in Tehran, he became an early disciple of the Bab, though he never actually met him. While in prison in Tehran he underwent a profound mystical experience. In 1279/1863 Baha'ullah announced himself as 'The Man whom God shall reveal', in fulfilment of a prophecy by the Bab; and later he openly announced his mission in Edirne. He is buried in Haifa in Israel. (See Babism.)

Bahira Name of a Christian monk and hermit encountered by Muhammad while on a trading expedition to Syria with his uncle Abu Talib (q.v.); Muhammad at the time was aged about twelve. Bahira recognized the seal of prophethood on Muhammad and he forecast great things for the Prophet.

al-Balad (Ar.) The title of the 90th sura of the Qur'an; the name here most likely means 'The City' (i.e. the city of Mecca (q.v.)) or possibly just 'The Land'. The word al-balad from which the sura derives its name occurs in both the 1st and 2nd verses. The sura belongs to the Meccan period and has 20 verses. The sura underlines the idea that man has been born to a life of hardship and that he has a choice, either to follow the difficult path of charity and generosity or, in his arrogance and disbelief, forget his fellow man. The sura ends with a warning about Hell-fire. (See al-Nar.)

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