

**IDRĪS**, person mentioned twice in the **Ḳurʿān** (second Meccan period): XIX, 57/56-58/57, “And mention in the Book Idrīs; he was a true man (*ṣiddīk*), a Prophet. We raised him up to a high place”, and XXI, 85-86, “And [make mention of] *Ismāʿīl*, *Idrīs*, *Dhu 'l-Kifl* —each was of the patient, and We admitted them into Our mercy; they were of the righteous” (tr. A. J. Arberry). Among the explanations suggested for this name, obviously **foreign** and adapted, like the name *Iblīs* [*q.v.*], to the pattern *ifʿīl*, may be mentioned that of Casanova (in *JA*, cciv, 358, followed by Torrey, *The Jewish foundation of Islam*, New York 1933, 72) which connects it with ‘Ezra (under the Greek form Ἐσδραῶς), and that which considers it to be a corruption of Andreas and referring either to the apostle Andrew (T. Nöldeke, in *ZA*, xvii, 84 ff.) or to a person with the same name, the cook of **Alexander the Great** who achieved immortality by accident, according to the romance of **Alexander** (R. Hartmann, *ibid.*, xxiv, 314 ff.). In any case, the brief references in the **Ḳurʿān** have been sufficient for later **Muslim legend**, often filled out with material from apocryphal Biblical and Rabbinical sources, to identify him with characters in the **Bible** and the Apocrypha who ascended into Heaven: most frequently with **Ḥanōkh** (**Enoch**, Arabic spelling **Akhnūkh**), more rarely with **Elijah** (*Ilyās*) or **al-Ḳhidr** (**Ḳhaḍīr**). On the other hand, as a result of the syncretism practised by the Hermetists, the astrologers and the alchemists, whose speculations are not easy to distinguish from one another and whose ideas tend to become identical, especially among the “Sabeans”, **Idrīs** has been introduced into the **genealogy** of the “Hermes” (*Hirmis* [*q.v.*], pl. *Harāmisa*); this thread can be traced from **Abū Maʿshar** (*K. al-Ulūf*), whose sources have not yet been identified, to **Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa**, not to mention still later compilations. Similarly **Idrīs** has been credited with a number of wise sayings, and **Muslim** mystic thought, particularly that with a philosophico-theosophical tendency, gives him a place among its mythical illuminati; Ibn al-ʿArabī describes him as “the prophet of the philosophers”; a number of works were attributed to him (Ibn Sabʿīn [*q.v.*] wrote a commentary on one, cf. **Ḥādīdjī Ḳhalīfa**, ed. Flügel, iii, 599, no. 7170); he is credited also with various inventions, arts of **divination** like **geomancy** and *zāʾirādja* [*q.v.*], and with useful arts, particularly that of writing (which again connects him with **Hermes** and with the Babylonian **god Nabū**) and that of making garments (an **attribute** grafted by **Balʿamī** onto the Iranian myth of **Gayōmarth**); this reputation assured him a place among the patron saints of the craftsmen's **guilds** and the representative figures of the *futuwwa* [*q.v.*].

Sunnī **legend** generally places **Idrīs** between Adam and Noah; it makes him the recipient of a number of revelations in the form of **holy** books (*ṣuḥuf*); it relates how he entered into Paradise while still alive, never to leave it again (this is an idea which, in the Jewish Aggada, is attached to the 3rd century Palestinian rabbi, **Yehoṣḥuʿa ben Levi**); the Prophet is said to have met him during his ascension to Heaven. The **Shīrī legend** concerning him (**Ibn**

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**Bābūya**, d. 381/991) is a combination of Biblical stories of **Elijah** (I Kings XXI, XVII and XIX; II Kings I, 9-15, in this order) and of **Elisha** (II Kings VII) adapted to the theory of *ghayba* [*q.v.*].

(G. Vajda)

For *ḥadīth*, see A. J. Wensinck, *Handbook*, s.v. (e.g. **Bukhārī**, *Ṣalāt*, 1, Krehl, i, 99-100

*Anbiyāʿ*, 4, Krehl, ii, 335)

[Djāhīz](#), *Tarbiʿ*, ed. Pellat, 26, § 40

[Yaḳūbī](#), i, 9 (Smit, *Bijbel en Legende*, 11)

[Ṭabarī](#), i, 172-7

idem, *Tafsīr*, xvi, 63 ff., xvii, 52

[Masʿūdī](#), *Murūdj*, i, 73 (Pellat, i, 30-1, § 62)

[Maḳdisī](#), *al-Badʿ waʾl-taʾrīkh*, iii, 2

[Balʿamī](#), tr. H. Zotenberg, i, 95-9 (ed. M. [Dj. Mashkūr](#), Tehrān 1337/1958, 4, 19, 20)

[Ibn Bābūya](#), *Ikmal al-dīn fī iḥbāt al-ghayba*, Tehrān 1301/1884, 75-80 (tr. G. Vajda, in *REJ*, cvi (1941-5), 124-33)

[Thaʿlabī](#), *ʿArāʾis al-maḳālīs (Kīṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ)*, Cairo 1381, 31 ff.

[Ibn Djulḍjul](#), *Ṭabaḳāt al-aṭibbāʾ waʾl-ḥukamāʾ*, ed. [Fuʿād Sayyid](#), Cairo, 5-8 (whence derive the notices by [Şāʿid](#), [Ḳifī](#) and [Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa](#))

*Al-Biruni's Chronology*, tr. E. Sachau, 188

[Mubashshir b. Fātik](#), *Mukhtār al-ḥikam* ("Los Bocados de Oro"), ed. A. Badawi, Madrid 1958, 7-27

[Suhrawardī](#), *Hikmat al-ishrāk*, ed. H. Corbin, 10, 300

[Ibn al-Aṭhīr](#), i, 44

*Mukhtaṣar fī dhikr al-ḥukumāʾ al-yūnāniyyīn waʾl-millīyyīn*, ed. M. T. Dāneshpažūh, *Farhang-i Īrān-Ẓamīn*, vii (1959), 310

[Ibn Kathīr](#), *Bidāya*, i, 99 ff. (who shows his usual mistrust of legendary stories)

[Ibn Khaldūn](#), *Muḳaddīma*, tr. Fr. Rosenthal, i, 229, 240, n. 372, ii, 317, 328, 367 f., iii, 213

*Kīṣṣat Idrīs*, legend copied circa 1500, MS Paris, Bibl. Nat. Arabic 1947 (included as an example of the many texts of late date and of modest

literary level)

D. Chwolsson, *Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus*, St. Petersburg 1856, index

I. Friedländer, *Die Chadirlegende und der Alexanderroman*, Leipzig 1913, index s.vv. Henoch and [Idrīs](#)

H. Thorning, *Baṣṭ madad al- taṭwīk* (Türkische Bibliothek, xvi, Berlin 1913), 72, 94, 96, 268-9 ( [Idrīs](#) and the trade [guilds](#))

J. Horowitz, *Koranische Untersuchungen*, 38, 47, 88, 166

D. Sidersky, *Les origines des légendes musulmanes*, 21

K. Ahrens, *Muhammad als Religionsstifter*, Leipzig 1935, 125

A. E. Affifi, *The mystical philosophy of Muḥyi d-Dīn Ibnul ‘Arabi*, Cambridge 1939, 21, 110

L. Massignon, *Inventaire de la littérature hermétique arabe*, in A. J. Festugière, *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste*<sup>3</sup>, i, Paris 1950, 384-400 (= *Opera Minora*, i, 650-66)

G. Wiet, *L'Égypte de Murtadi*, Paris 1953, 87, n. 1

M. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *Mahomet*, Paris 1957, 419 f.

M. Plessner, *Hermes Trismegistus and Arab science*, in *St. Isl.* , ii (1954), 45-59

H. Corbin, *Avicenne et le récit visionnaire*, Paris 1954, 16

idem, *L'imagination créatrice dans le soufisme d'Ibn Arabi*, Paris 1958, 29

idem, *Histoire de la philosophie islamique*, i, Paris 1964, 179

O. Yahya, *Histoire et classification de l'œuvre d'Ibn Arabi*, [Damascus](#) 1964, i, 201

Y. Marquet, *Sabéens et [Ikhwān al- Ṣafā](#)* , in *St. Isl.* , xxiv (1966), especially 52-61.